

REDLER MEMORIES - JOINED REDLER 1964

Prior to which I had been involved in Research & Development in the Grain Handling and oil-fired continuous drying process equipment.

In the course of, and over the 1950's and early 60's inevitably my paths crossed with Redler equipment in various sectors of the Food, Milling and Brewing industries, I like many others was mesmerized by the efficiency and utter cleanliness of these systems.

I had heard so much and read in Trade Journals, such glowing reports and of the continuing growth of Redler in Stroud. I was hooked.

Having seen a national advertisement for the post of Erection & Service Manager, I applied and was successful, commencing with the company in 1964.

Redler were growing with diversification into many new fields of materials handling and with the acquisition of H. J. H. King Ltd, the brewing and malting markets were expanding and open to us.

Many sectors of the milling, brewing and malting industries were struggling to meet demand with equipment and plant very much the same as it had been during the pre 1939 years. Industries in general realised the need to invest in new, higher capacity and to some degree new levels of automation. Notably, the Whisky and the distilling

industries in Scotland.

GROWTH - hence Redler were very successful and were awarded contract to re-model several of the well known Scottish distilleries and malting plants. Demand for the Redler systems allowed us to open a small factory on the outskirts of Edinburgh thus minimising the transport costs of such things as structural steel, shutes, ducting etc.

ROSE ISLE MALTINGS
PENCAITLAND
SANAGHER - EIRE

The technical design always remained in Dudbridge together with manufacture of the major Enmasse and malting plant equipment.

With this growth period and the move to increasing demand for a greater degree of automation control systems a new department was established, I.E. Electrical and Control Systems. Complete design and manufacture also another 'string to our bow'.

11A/11B.

Redler systems were now finding their way into many diverse areas and industries, demand for higher capacity equipment were being made in all new contractual enquiries and documentation. In the course of a few years, where 100TPH had been acceptable, now rates of 1000 TPH were required.

IRVINE (19)
PARTICLE BOARD
COAL EXPORT-
13/14 IMMIBRAM.
COLOUR/COAL.

Dock installations where loading and unloading of large bulk carriers were involved, continuous 24 hours working was the norm. Very high demurrage would be involved if the equipment broke down or failed to meet the capacity and timescales set.

THAMES GRAIN
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REDLER equipment usually met these criteria. 100,000 tonne ocean-going vessels were usually involved.

A sizeable number of Engineers were involved with the installation of these plants, who were followed by Commissioning Engineers who would tune and set the complete and sometimes very complex plants to meet the contractual performance and capacities.

MARS
/ SA

A separate group of Service and Commissioning Engineers were employed and were always available to move to any part of the world at very short notice. A wonderful group of people, all injected with the same REDLER dedication.

As RDD has told us briefly, REDLER had licensing agreements in several parts of the world, South Africa being an area where growth in many industries were emerging.

In 1976 I was asked if I would move to South Africa/Johannesburg to take on the role of Managing Director of that area. At short notice I accepted the challenge and opportunity. We were to build up the design and manufacturing business in Southern Africa with the backup of REDLER in Stroud.

A cultural shock, working out of Dudbridge, living in Kings Stanley to living and working on the outskirts of Joahhnesburg.

This period coincided with the SOWETO uprising a few short miles down the road.

Our workforce soon built up to 150, a ratio of 120 black Africans to 30 white Europeans, the majority of the Africans came in daily from Soweto and were a super

bunch of people, all of whom soon became proud and loyal REDLER people. Some of these men had been involved with engineering at various levels and soon became very conscientious and hard-working.

Of the 30 Europeans, 6 were from the UK with 3 ex-REDLER UK Draughtsmen, 1 of whom had 30 years service with H.J.H. King Ltd and therefore had malting plant experience. The other 2 ex-REDLER UK had both 30 years of experience on REDLER. The remainder were Portuguese Artisans, comprising boiler makers, fitters, welders, and sheet metal workers. A very capable and well-experienced bunch, all of whom came from either Angola or Mozambique in recent years, following independence of Portuguese colonies, good men all of whom soon became solid and loyal REDLER employees.

Business opportunities blossomed in all areas of Southern Africa, applications in the gold mines and coal fields around Johannesburg and the Transvaal. Huge grain Co-operatives, with Maize, Sorgum, Wheat, Barley, Sunflower - all bought and stored in huge concrete silos with both road and rail intakes and outloading facilities over weigh-bridges.

As with the UK and European markets the complete turnkey tenders were required. I.E. all Civil Works, Mechanical Handling, Control Electrics, Installation and Commissioning.

Cape Town and Cape Province were good market areas, a product area very similar to southern UK and Europe. One of the first big enquiries came from 'TIGER OATS' -

(16)
TELEGRAPH - 05/01

Doug made the reference. How satisfying it was to sit around the TIGER OATS Boardroom table to discuss a major handing and milling project with the Company started by DANIEL REDLER, Arnold's brother. The Engineers with whom we dealt all knew the name, the origin and of course the product. We won the contract initially on product name, but had to fight on price. Several copies of the REDLER system were on offer.

A number of repeat orders were taken from the same company during my years in SA.

Other major milling companies in the Cape followed suit. Ironically many engineers and milling staff in those companies had emigrated from the UK, having worked for companies like SPILLERS, RAND HOVIS, SIMON CARVES, they all knew REDLER.

South African Breweries were big in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg, Salisbury and Bulawayo in Rhodesia.

Orders were obtained in all these plants, both malting and brewing. Many engineers were ex-UK, some of whom we knew from companies such as GUINNESS, WHITBREAD, BASS etc. and some from the major European maltsters.

Moods of change came eventually to all the Southern African countries, markets and contractual conditions, payments, exchange rates etc. making business life somewhat more difficult, REDLER still continues in SA in a Licensing Agreement basis.

I returned to the UK in 1982 to join the REDLER UK Board of Directors.

Takeovers, new lords and masters had changed things quite a lot, but the REDLER product name still flourished around the world. Major contracts were now being won in places like China, Turkey and the Middle East.

We designed, manufactured, installed five major 1000 TPH Grain Terminals at seaports around Turkey. The complete turnkey contracts were carried out on a joint-venture basis.

FOR EXAMPLE

TEKIRDAG
BANDIRMA
IZMIR
ISKENDERUN
ANTAYYA

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OTHER PARTS OF WORLD
SAUDI ARABIA - 18
VITORIA - BRAZIL - 19
20 - SHANTON.

Civil Works - John Laing International Ltd

SALMAN PAC 17A

Mechanical/ Electrical - Redler UK

We were jointly responsible for the selection of Turkish sub-contractors.

Our paymaster was the World Bank in Washington, we got paid on progress. The Turkish Government Sector for Agriculture T.M.O. signed our multi-discipline payment certificates. We always got paid. The joint-venture contracts were worth £38m - what would it be worth today?

We set up joint-venture offices in ANKARA, to which I commuted for a week every month for a period of 3 years, making numerous REDLER/Turkish friends.

Retirement was looming, but further joint-venture markets were on the horizon, this time in China where REDLER went into a joint venture agreement with BASS to

build a malting, brewing, dock grain-handling plant. Good Fun, the contract meant REDLER had to accommodate three groups of Chinese (Male and Female) to Dudbridge for a period of training in all aspects of the overall operation. We also took the individual parties to various similar sites around the UK.

The business was done in Chinese/Cantonese language, which meant we had to employ a Cantonese-speaking Chinese man from Hong Kong.

21/22
TAKING OVER THE SITE
SWAMP OF BANANA
PLANTATION.

Altogether a wonderful experience, which involved me in 3 trips to China. It was great to hear these Chinese people telling people we now have 'REDLER'.

To conclude, the end-product - BEER from the first plant can be bought here in Stroud at Waitrose in tins - CHANG TOI. Tastes Good.

It is satisfying after 20 years of retirement, to know that the REDLER name is still revered Worldwide.

Finally, all us 'OLDIES' still meet once a year - the topic 100% REDLER.

Ken Bucknell

July 2009