



PROTECTIVE COATINGS EUROPE



April-June 2012

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REVIEW

Across the Generations

by David H Deacon This is the first issue of PCE to cover the 'Across the Generations' theme which features companies that have many years of experience working in the paints and coatings industry.



Frederick Albert Clover surveying the works in 1920 (top right, without a cap).

FA Clover Ltd

The first company to be featured is FA Clover Ltd, painting contractors, who are now into their fourth generation.

The second company featured is Elcometer Ltd, equipment suppliers to the coating industry. They are into their third generation in that role, but as a family company are now into their seventh generation!

Frederick Albert Clover started F A Clover in 1917. He had previously owned a Bakers trading firm. He married Beatrice Beaumont and in about 1912/13 he became ill and he left the bakery and went to work in the painting business owned by his father-in-law, William Beaumont, so the story begins.

William Beaumont is worthy of note. He had worked as a gas lamp lighter for the Gasworks. In those days, when the demand for gas was reduced, the workers used to paint the gasholders. William offered a lump sum price for this service, his bid was accepted and he went into business as a painting contractor. It is generally regarded, that W G Beaumont was the first independent industrial painting contracting business.

After a few years Fred and William parted company and Fred Clover set up in business on his own account. The business was moved to Richmond in the 1920s and the Clover business is still based there. Bert Clover, the eldest of three children, was born in 1912. He, and his brother Frederick, went to work for their father in the early 1920s.

The firm continued to do a great deal of work for the gas industry. The work expanded and the steel for the Bodleian Library, Oxford, Shell House and Fulham Power Station, were taken on. In 1935 Fred Clover Snr retired and Bert took over the business.

Once the war was over and re-construction started, there was a great deal of work. The Gas Industry, the London Docks, and the expanding BBC Transmission Services, provided a large proportion of the workload. In 1958, David Clover started working for his father, Bert Clover. Ian Clover joined in 1962, and was made a partner in 1964. In about 1967, Bert decided to retire and his two sons continued the business.

The FA Clover Company then started to engage in foreign contracts based on its UK reputation and experience. This drive to expand outside the UK took the company to over 20 countries worldwide. As painting in the UK Gas Industry started to decline work was sought in other construction areas. Bridge painting, with the demand for quality and experience became a major part of their business.



Most of the steel bridges on the M25, including the magnificent QEII Bridge at Dartford, were painted. During this period the partnership transferred into

the present Limited FA Clover Company.

David's step son, Mark Kelly joined the family company in the 1980s and was appointed Project Manager on the new construction of the famous QEII Bridge, subsequently working abroad with the company on many of the overseas projects. Mark was once again

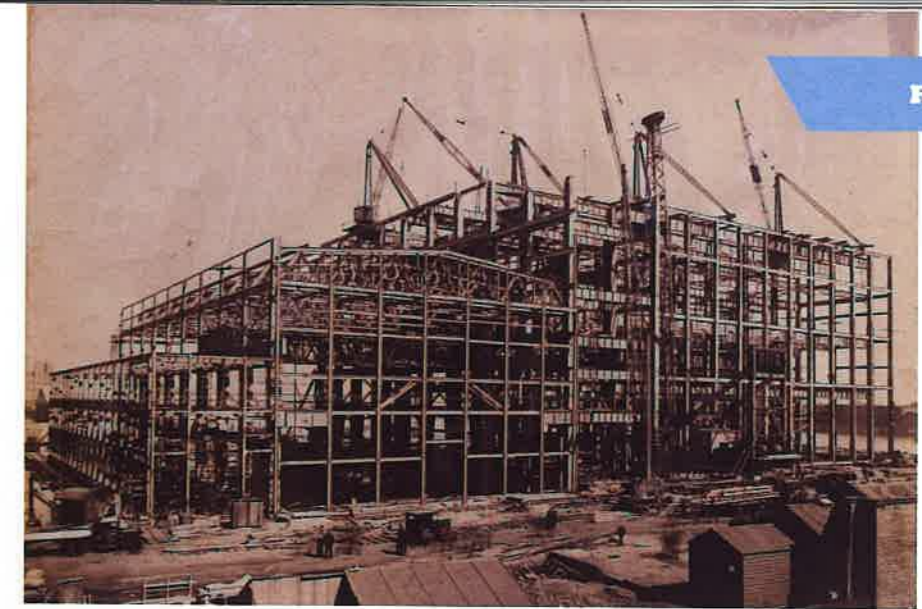
appointed Project Manager on the QEII Bridge when FA Clover undertook the first major maintenance painting 20 years later. He has remarked that, - "you can tell you've been in the industry a while, when you begin to undertake projects for the second time around".

James Clover, Ian Clovers son and FA Clover's great grandson joined in the mid nineties, starting on the LUL Putney Bridge Project. His first day at the company involved drug & alcohol screenings - needless to say he passed! He thought it contrasted to the story his father Ian told him about his first day of work with his father in 1962. Having quoted for a contract in one of London's Docks, the deal was sealed by everybody taking a very large glass of warm neat whisky, the first time he had ever tried hard spirits (or so he claimed to his father).

A recent prestigious contract was the evaluation coating trials for the refurbishment of the iron frame of the Cutty Sark. FA Clover was selected by the project team to carry out many different surface preparation techniques and apply four different paint suppliers' products. The experience of the operators and their comments influenced the final specification for the 50 year coating life of this unique vessel.

Mark & James are looking forward to taking the company into its centenary year in 2017. So much has changed in terms of material, plant and communication technology over the past 95 years - although they believe one thing remains constant - the most important factor in any company are the people who work for it.

The knowledge and experience FA Clover has gained "Across the Generations" can be put down to carrying out all their own basic/advanced training and using family groups to pass on their knowledge and experience to maintain the high reputation that the company has gained, not only in the UK, but worldwide.



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Top: F A Clover team painting the Royal Festival Hall, circa 1949 or 1950; inset: A younger Mark Kelly in action; Bottom: Fulham Power Station, 1934; Opposite page: Bodleian Library, Oxford University 1938.

