

Appendix D

Company Overview and History

In 1936 John Ernest Lawrence set up a haulage business for the purpose of transporting milk churns from farms in Pembrokeshire to local dairies.

During the war years, the business was involved in the transportation of construction materials to airfields near the Pembrokeshire coast, and following the war the business began to operate as a coal merchant at Clarbeston Road where the company still has its base.

The coal business continued to be successful until oil became widely available, and in 1953 the business became a distributor of Regent (later Texaco) fuel, only becoming independent of Texaco in 1998, when a decision was taken to purchase product on the spot market to improve margin and price competitiveness. In 2012 the company returned to the Texaco brand and it continues to trade with Valero as a branded distributor.

J.E. Lawrence soon developed into the booming agricultural machinery business, and the business became a New Holland dealer in 1955.

The business was incorporated in 1957, and in 1959 Ernest Lawrence's son John joined the company on completion of his apprenticeship with New Holland at Stonehouse. John Lawrence's technical knowledge was reflected in the growth of sales during the 1960s and 1970s when the agricultural machinery industry was at the height of its success. He became Managing Director in 1973 on the sudden death of his father, and continued to expand both the oil and machinery businesses until his own death in 2001, when his son Richard took over.

Richard has worked for the company since 1983. He completed an agricultural engineering apprenticeship before moving on to the transport management training that would enable him to take on the responsibility for the company's tanker fleet. From 1990 he became more involved in machinery sales and has led the company into the ground care machinery market.

In 2008 the company became main dealers for JCB's range of agricultural machines throughout South and West Wales. This resulted in an immediate and significant expansion to the company's trading area and brought in customers from further afield. The need for qualified engineers together with associated vehicles, parts stock, diagnostic equipment, etc. has more than doubled since 2008 and there is now an urgent need for more workshop and parts storage space to accommodate the engineers and support staff as well as the increasingly bigger machines coming in for repair.

The company has continued to develop its core businesses to the present day. The agricultural machinery department has increased its sales throughout the years of industry decline by concentrating on innovative and high quality products, and currently the oil department has eight tankers delivering approximately twenty five million litres of fuel to over 10,000 homes and businesses in Pembrokeshire, West Carmarthenshire and South Ceredigion.

There are currently 45 employees but this number is limited by the lack of available space in the buildings at the Clarbeston Road site. With extra space there would be an immediate need for at least five new employees and it is likely that this number would increase as the company evolves at the new Green Bower site under the management of Richard Lawrence and his son Ellis who has recently commenced his training.