

IN MEMORIAM

JOHN MANN
aged 69Died 4th January 1952
Joint Founder Palmer Mann & Co.Ltd.
1st July, 1919

I first met Mr. John Mann on the 20th November 1899. This was in No.9 James Street, Liverpool, in the office of Mr. J. J. Verdin Cooke. He was the most remarkable man I had met up to that time. He could do shorthand, he could even use a typewriter (a thing I had never seen before) and could add up figures two at a time. I had just left school and hadn't reached my fourteenth birthday. Within a week or so this event did take place and probably through his good offices I was told I could go home early. Mr. Mann was $3/4$ years older than I was and I didn't for years dare call him by his Christian name. I was very happy there until I was faced with a problem of some magnitude. Quietly and most confidentially he took me into the back office and informed me that unless I could get my Mother to provide me with a pair of long trousers and a bowler hat I was going to get the "sack". I didn't want this to happen because I didn't know quite what it meant, but went home and told my Mother of the conversation. My whole future depended upon quick action and on the following Monday morning I walked up the stairs in full regimentals. I can see that "blocker" to-day. It had a lovely red silk lining and thank heaven, I was kept on. Those are my early recollections of Jack Mann and for the whole of the intervening 52 years he has been my near and dear friend. Except for a short period of a few months he and I have worked together, shoulder to shoulder. We have been in daily touch with each other and whilst there may well be more lengthy business comradeships on record, it is quite long enough for me to ask you to try to imagine my feelings this week.

Tuesday was a day I had long dreaded. Whilst Providence doesn't work to a slide-rule, I quite naturally felt that one day this partnership would be broken and I would have to say good-bye to my lifelong friend. I had hoped, and very devoutly hoped, that it would be delayed for many years to come and I had often visualised him living in what I used to call semi-retirement and enjoying a measure of ease and rest. This was not to be, and perhaps he would have preferred to be in harness to the last. It stands to reason that during those 52 years differences of opinion would arise between us, and arise they did, but I can put it on record that never once did we separate at the close of day with any feeling - not even a slight feeling - of bitterness. What I now say is no flight of fancy but in all my experience I have never known a more generous-hearted man and when I say generous, I am not referring only to money matters but to matters of the spirit. Habitually, he would take on his shoulders blame for anything that had gone wrong which had nothing whatsoever to do with him. Another trait in his character was his untiring energy and often unlimited optimism. He did not know the meaning of the word "defeat", and often when I perhaps had passed a casual remark that stocks were climbing, he would say "leave it to me - I'll shift it". But I dare not go on. It is not my intention to write a long tribute to my friend although I could fill many pages and am almost tempted to do so.

Suffice it now to say that my heart is very heavy and as long as I live I shall miss his presence in the Office here. With that I say "Goodbye - Jack - I have revelled in your friendship and have often felt and feel it now more than ever, utterly unworthy of all the faith I know you placed in me."

J. A. P.