

NOVEMBER MEETING

————— Second Speaker —————

50 Years of Megger Instruments

A talk by Graham Heritage, Managing Director

Reported by Alan Lee

After introducing himself Graham stated that he was proud of the company's record and the 50 year connection with Dover. Megger is a privately owned company that employs over 1,300 people worldwide. With development and manufacturing in Germany, Sweden, the USA as well as the UK. They employ around 250 staff locally and have many offices in Europe and other countries around the world. Megger products cover almost every application in the electrical supply industry. They trade worldwide and Dover is their HQ. Around 2/3 of goods are exported to some 180 countries, only a relatively small amount to Europe. Graham thinks that the export side will continue to provide opportunities for growth after Britex.

Donald Macadie MBE was born on 14th August 1871 in Halkirk, Caithness, Scotland. He became a senior engineer at the General Post Office (GPO) primary responsible for the British Telecommunications systems. He had great dissatisfaction with the instruments they were using due to the large number and weight he had to carry around. His frustration led him to invent the first single test meter able to measure Amps, Volts and Ohms (the AVO or AVOMeter). The GPO had no interest in his invention so he approached the Automatic Coil Winder and Electrical Equipment



The first AVOMETER

Company (ACWEECo). The first AVOMeter went on sale in 1923. In 1932 he received an MBE for his work on a Post Office Sorting Machine design.

Between 1923 and 1957 improved models were introduced including two military models a Braille meter (1951). Over this time success led the company to expand many times over.

In 1952 the company supplied equipment to the British North Greenland Expedition. The Panclimatic Model 8XS AVOMeter was lost overboard during a storm in Baffin Bay. Four days later it was washed up on shore, dried out over a paraffin stove and found to be working. When returned to AVO Westminster it was still within the original limits of accuracy.

1957 ACWEECo moved to Vauxhall Bridge Road, London and changed its name to AVO Ltd. The company needed to expand and Dover was chosen as AVO branch factory No. 2.

In 1960 the War Department identified a 232 acre site at Western Heights/Archcliff as surplus. A 12.5 acre section, containing a military hospital and Archcliffe Yard and stables, was deemed suitable for the proposed AVO site. AVO set up a temporary factory within Archcliffe Fort and in January 1963 produced the first Dover

AVOmeter. In 1964 production started in a new purpose built building at Archcliffe and by 1965 the millionth had been produced, totally justifying the move.

The new factory, Avocet House, was divided into five main sections with a three floor office block and an adjoining administrative floor. The factory area consists of a machine shop, assembly shop and the air-conditioned 'clean air' floor. Housed in the old military buildings, was an engineering laboratory, a drawing office with a print room and a comprehensive engineering library and a sales office.

In March 1966 the machine shop at the new factory was in production. By May about 700 people were employed. On 24th October the site was officially opened by Admiral of the Fleet, the Earl Mountbatten of Burma. In November employees families were invited to view the factory.

1967: Metal Industries sold Thorn Electrical Industries the company.

1979: The FOSTER division moved to Dover. In October Thorn and EMI merged to become Thorn EMI. The work force was now over 800.



A Factory Worker shows Lord Mountbatten product Opening of Megger Factory Acliffe Dover 1966



1964 Temporary Production at new Building at Archcliffe Yard

1980: A new office block opened on the site of the old military buildings.

1985: RECORD Chart Recorders move to the Dover factory.

1986: Evershed & Vignoles were taken over and their production moved to Dover (Sydney Evershed had invented the insulation tester in 1889).

1987: Became Megger Instruments Ltd. following a management buyout.

1991: Taken over by the Thyssen Bornemisza Group (TBG) and the enlarged group became AVO International.

2002: Became Megger Instruments Limited.

2016: Celebrated its first 50 years of the new factory in Dover.

Since Donald Macadie MBE invented the first single test meter the company in its many guises has been at the forefront of supplying the electrical industry's needs, but with a much larger range of electrical equipment.