

J. H. MILNES LTD

NEW CHAPEL FARM, PENISTONE,
SHEFFIELD S36 6AQ ENGLAND

T E L : 0 1 4 4 (0) 1 2 2 6 7 6 6 2 5 1

17/05/2018

In 1988 I left school to work on New Chapel Farm owned by my Dad which was 150 acres of mixed livestock/arable with a herd of 100 milking cows and 75 followers.

In 1992 I started as a sole trader, J H Milnes trading as a part time business alongside working on the family farm with my dad at New Chapel Farm on Hartcliff Road in Penistone.

I used to manufacture bale grabs and attachments for front end loaders in any spare time that I had and these were built in the farm's workshop. I used the profit from the business to develop trailer braking valves especially for the agricultural market as I could see an opening for a system to increase safety as trailers were getting larger.

In 1995 I developed a new hydraulic trailer braking valve we started selling this to all trailer manufacturers in the UK and also had a few foreign customers. Business was slow and I needed to generate some more money to keep this going so I started selling vintage tractor parts which I imported from Turkey and the business was still part time. I would do vintage show/rallies at weekends for sales. I used the farm workshop and a spare room in the house to store my parts.

In 1998 my business was growing and the farm income was declining due to low milk prices. We continued for three years and then after the foot & mouth outbreak in 2001 we made a decision to sell the milking cows off. I would help my dad on a part time basis cutting hay and general labour and work more time full time on my business.

June 1998 J H Milnes Ltd was set up we were still selling the vintage tractor parts, the braking valve side was growing and I kept getting asked by customers for used tractors and machinery so I started to source these and sell the odd few.

In 2000 I set on an employee to help me and I also had some part time staff as the business was growing. We took out all the stalls in the old existing cattle buildings in 2001 and used the milking parlour building for storage of trailer braking & tractor parts. We had customers in New Zealand and Norway wanting tractors and telehandlers so we refurbished them and shipped them over.

In 2003 we were asked by a customer in Norway to build some trailers so I hired a draughtsman to draw the chassis and trailer body and we manufactured the trailers within the old cattle buildings that had been used for milking cattle.

By 2005-06 we could not keep up with all the orders so we started buying trailers from Rolland Remorque in France and Kane Trailers from Northern Ireland to fill all the orders we had. The trailer braking business was expanding and we took on extra staff to help and we had 5 workers employed building the braking systems for the trailers.

J.H Milnes Limited used the buildings to the east of the site, the yard to the south east corner, the inspection pit, the yard and lean to next to the barn and the field adjacent to the barn on the west side of the farm for parking tractors to be refurbished. Old vintage tractors have been stored in the building adjacent to Hartcliff Road and in the barn when it is not being used for storage of hay and straw.

In early 2008 the recession hit and the Norwegian customer we were supplying the trailers to said they did not want any more for the time being. We had quite a few tractors in stock so we advertised those in the UK and all were sold within a week so we concentrated on refurbishing used tractors.

In 2009 - 2010 the trailer braking parts were still being sold and we were also selling trailers from Rolland & Kane in to the UK market. The business was very good within the UK as farming seemed to be going through a boom. The family farm was still being run by my dad and I helped him when I could as the land was planted with cereals and grass.

In 2011 we decided to concentrate more on refurbishing used tractors as this seemed to be a niche market, the trailer braking parts were still selling very well and this was growing year on year. We stopped manufacturing trailers and altered the work place areas within the cattle sheds to strip, repaint parts and maintain tractors for re sale. We refurbished the inside of the old cattle shed so it was easier for us to work on the tractors on line so that body parts could be cleaned and painted as the engines and gearboxes were inspected and repaired as need be in another building. I attach a plan of the buildings and yard that are being used. The areas that have been used for the business but are our residential dwellings and the farm yard building for parking the agricultural machinery adjacent to Hartcliff Road are shown on the attached plan number JHM 2018-01. The buildings and areas that are used and have been for the past 16 years are shown coloured blue.

By 2012 we re-roofed all the old cattle sheds to make the buildings more weather tight and at this time we had 11 employees. I employed a dedicated sales man to look after the braking side of the business whilst I look after the buying, repairing and selling of the tractors and Fastrac side.

To date the business is still selling refurbished tractors, trailers, braking parts and parts for modern tractors. We currently have 10 employees working on the second hand tractors and new trailer parts. We sell them all over the world as we have a very good reputation and I attach a letter from one of our customers in New Zealand.

The farm is still being run by my dad and me as it is all down to grass and we make hay for winter feed and run a flock of sheep to graze it off once we have done three cuts of hay.



John Harvey Milnes