

Extract from a book 'Ports of the Bristol Channel' (published 1893)

Tovey Brothers, Funeral Furnishers and Carriage Proprietors,
7 Dock Street,
Central Mews, Dock Street;
156, Commercial Road and
Chepstow Road, Maindee, Newport (Mon.). –

The foundation of this important concern was laid in 1860 by Mr. Daniel Tovey, the father of the present proprietors, who commenced as a funeral furnisher in Dock Street, with workshops at the rear. Subsequently Mr. Tovey took his sons into partnership, and at his death they (Messrs. George and James Tovey) continued the business under the style of Tovey Brothers.

After a time the trade outgrew the original premises at No.7, Dock Street and Messrs. Tovey then built a commodious establishment at Chepstow Road, Maindee, including carriage-houses and stables. This is now one of their branches. Still the business continued to increase, necessitating extensions of premises, and about two years ago the firm purchased the large carriage manufactory in Dock Street, formerly conducted by Mr. Stone. This place they have converted into their "Central Mews," and here they keep the majority of their horses and carriages.

The buildings form a very large block, covering over fifteen hundred square yards of ground. The spacious carriage-rooms contain a very complete stock of vehicles of all kinds and for all purposes, and this part of the premises has lately been provided with a patent carriage hoist, by Medway, of London, for lifting vehicles of any weight to the higher floors. The side wings of the block contain body-making workshops for carriage building, painting and polishing rooms, etc., and here there is much valuable and efficient machinery driven by a twelve-horse gas engine, including a patent chaff-cutter capable of cutting one ton of hay per hour, and also planing and sawing machinery.

In these workshops the firm build many of their own coaches and mourning carriages for the funeral department, and they give employment to a numerous staff of highly skilled workmen. The remainder of the large central establishment in Dock Street comprises large drying sheds and storage for timber, and an extensive range of perfectly appointed stables, where about thirty horses are kept, including a valuable stud of seven magnificent Belgian black horses for funeral work.

The mews throughout are admirably built, and exhibit many improvements which have been carried out by Messrs. Tovey since they acquired the premises. The whole establishment is well heated and thoroughly ventilated, and is one of the finest places of the kind in this part of the Kingdom.

The branch mews at Maindee afford accommodation for fifteen more horses, as well as for a large number of carriages of various kinds. The funeral furnishing department still very largely engages the firm's attention, and is conducted upon a most complete and extensive scale.

For this department there is a branch order office at 156, Commercial Road. Messrs. Tovey Brothers also take a leading position as carriage masters, and do a great business in letting out for hire drags, wagonettes, phaetons, brakes, gigs, broughams, hansom and four-wheel cabs, all admirably appointed vehicles, well horsed, and provided with experienced drivers. In all cases the scale of charges is moderate.

The business of this firm is, in its entirety, the largest of its kind in the district, and has an excellent reputation of over thirty years' standing. It is still increasing, and its success is as well merited as it is substantial.

Messrs. Tovey Brothers grow a large portion of their own feeding stuffs, having for this purpose, at Llantarnam, a farm of one hundred acres, which also affords excellent grazing. The partners, Messrs. George and James Tovey, personally administer the business with marked ability and the sound judgement that comes of long experience. Their practical skill and active enterprise are well known, and have contributed in a very large degree to the development of this notable concern and the satisfaction of its wide circle of patrons.