



L to R: David, Mark and Victor Truman with their fleet of Bailey trailers

Up for a challenge - Truman Contractors (EM) Ltd

Back in 1966, Victor Truman's father died unexpectedly leaving him, his mother and sister with 30 acres and 8 cows. Victor was twenty two at the time and working for a local farm contractor. The family solicitor was clear in his advice: "Sell up as quickly as possible. If Victor takes over, you'll be bankrupt within the year!"

That was as much of a challenge as Victor needed. He milked the cows every day, bought his first tractor and built a contracting business that is now one of the best known in the East Midlands with three generations of the family involved: his son Mark (48) and grandson David (21).

The family farm 200 Ha at Hill Top Farm, Old Dalby near Melton Mowbray. They have a 400 strong dairy herd including 250 milking cows plus dry cows and followers. These are milked in a robotic parlour built and fitted by Truman Contractors' structural subsidiary.

Their traditional farm contracting side operates a fleet of six Bailey trailers, 16 and 18 ton grain models with removable silage kits serving a Claas Jaguar forage harvester and a Claas 770 Lexion combine according to the season.

"Rather than taking on too many new customers, we have grown our existing ones over the years" explains Mark Truman, "providing a stubble to stubble, fixed rate service to most of them. Besides harvest work this involves our 6 furrow Kvernland plough, two 4m Kuhn combination drills, slurry tankers and a 5000 litre, 36m Knights sprayer."

Their core business is based on forage and grain harvesting for local dairy and arable farmers within 15 miles radius plus biomass (maize and whole

crop) harvesting for Severn Trent Water's ADP programme which can take them as far as Stoke on Trent. Grain harvesting takes them across to the A1 and they have invested in a Bailey dual fuel bowser largely to support the Lexion.

"Originally the bowser was a bit of a luxury as only the combine and a couple tractors operated on Adblue" explains Mark. "But three years on all the tractors feature Adblue and the bowser has come into its own. The Lexion no longer returns to the yard from start of harvest till the finish, 3,500 acres later!"

"I think I must have bought one of Tom Bailey's first tippers" says Victor. "The sales rep' at Sharmans said 'they're a bit more expensive but they are the best". We've operated Bailey for over 30 years."

Trumans work on a two year replacement plan for the trailers, replacing 3 trailers each year. "Of all our kit, the Bailey trailers are the ones that hold their price best" according to Mark "therefore they're the easiest purchase decision we have to make."

The company also have two other Bailey trailers: a 15 tonne tipper for moving FYM and an 8 tonne low loader for drill and plant moving.