

F & G Smart (Shopfittings) Ltd joined idea in 1954 making them our longest standing members. But the company's history starts long before that.

In the mid 19th century Francis Smart and his sons Frederick & George were cabinet makers in Gloucester.

Frederick Smart walked from Gloucester to Birmingham where he started trading in joinery and woodwork and was soon joined by his younger brother George. Together they rented premises in Slaney Street and F & G Smart was established in 1870. They manufactured shop furniture and were joined by George's father-in-law who was a brassfounder and patternmaker from Aston.

In the early days, before electricity, all of the machinery was powered by one large steam engine. This turned a series of shafts, pulley wheels and belts which transmitted the power to the individual machines as required. With the advent of electricity the steam engine was replaced with an electric motor.

George was very progressive and with the help of his son George Stanley Smart they acquired and established other businesses including the Birmingham Coach and Motor Brassfoundry Company, Smart and Parker Cycles and G.S. Smart & Co.

During the First World War they manufactured ammunition boxes for the Ministry of Defence.

George Stanley's son, Norman Stanley Smart started work at the Birmingham Coach and Motor Brassfoundry Company and soon moved it to the Slaney Street premises around 1926.

Norman Smart was supplying coffin furniture and horse drawn carriage fittings which were cast in the foundry, together with high quality shopfittings and display equipment. In 1926 they purchased a light fitting company that supplied specialist light fittings, mainly to churches and museums.

During the Second World War they produced components and assemblies for Spitfires, Stirling and Lancaster bombers.

Norman Stanley's son, John Smart joined the business in 1953 and was responsible for moving the company to more modern premises in Highgate Road in 1959. In 1962 they purchased 'Townsend's' who produced



Photographs from top:
 Tyseley Industrial Estate Premises 2009
 Current Management Team left to right: Tim Tween, Nigel Smart, Nick Roche, Paul Plant
 Tom Ashford aged 76 with John Smart (4th generation) and Norman Smart (3rd generation). Tom Worked for Smarts for 59 years starting in 1899 and retiring in 1958 having worked for four generations of the Smart family
 Horses and carts outside Slaney Street Premises Circa 1907
 Slaney Street premises 1953
 Inside the Slaney Street factory 1953



shopfittings and bakery equipment. The range included wedding cake stands and icing turntables, mainly for the export market.

John's son, Nigel Smart joined the business in 1977. A new showroom was created and the business continued to expand at such a rate that it outgrew the Highgate Road premises.

In 1989 the company moved to its present address at Tyseley Industrial Estate where it has an extensive showroom, large warehouse and plenty of parking and loading facilities.

In 2007 a new website was launched - www.smartshopfittings.co.uk - and in 2009 Smarts launched another website predominantly for Tegometal Trade Customers - www.fgsmart-tegometal-service-center.co.uk

In a recent statement Nigel Smart (5th generation) commented "We have survived two world wars, the general strike of 1926, the power shortages and short time working of the 1970s and now the worst global recession since the 1930s. We are very optimistic and looking forward to a successful future. We believe that our success is due to the loyal support of our many long standing customers and the support of our suppliers and staff."

