The following information has been collated from several e-mails from Garry Lall, a painter and decorator in Newcastle, who has developed an interest in the growth/history of paint manufacturing in the North East

(e-mails from Garry Lyall): - You may perhaps recall that I emailed you quite a few years ago regarding the Newcastle upon Tyne site of British Paints/Berger Paints. I was never employed at any of the group companies as I am only 38 years old, but as an ex Painter & Decorator I always have maintained an interest in the coatings industry- especially in the local vicinity.

Many things got in the way of my being able to reply to you back then, but I am pleased to say that I have carried out a fair amount of research for you and I now have some information for you regarding BPL/Berger and also Resinous Chemicals Ltd (RCL).

Gateshead site

John Dampney formed his company, (J.Dampney & Co. Ltd) in 1906. An American company named The Dampney Company was later formed in 1917 under licence and is still trading today in the USA. See the link below for their information:
http://www.dampney.com/Content.asp?id=5

its says:

Celebrating Our 95th Year

INTRODUCTION TO DAMPNEY COMPANY, INC.

HISTORY

Since 1917, Dampney Company, Inc. has manufactured technically advanced, corrosion resistant protective coatings for specialized applications in industries including refining, chemical processing, primary metal, utility, pulp and paper and OEM. Our valued customers include many of the world's largest corporations.

Dampney Protective Coatings

Dampney's experience in the field of high performance coatings dates back to 1906 when English researcher John Dampney first produced and marketed Apexior, a unique protective coating capable of preventing corrosion of the internal surfaces of steam boilers, turbines, and auxiliary equipment. Application of Apexior coatings solved many costly corrosion problems for the English power industry. A market for Apexior quickly developed here in the U.S. power industry. To fulfill this growing demand, a group of U.S. investors incorporated The Dampney Company of America in Boston, Massachusetts in 1917, manufacturing and marketing Apexior brand corrosion-resistant coatings under license from the English firm of J. Dampney and Co., Ltd.

Success in this demanding application in the U.S. power industry established Dampney's reputation as a pioneer in the field of corrosion control and inspired our corporate mission: to develop high-performance protective coatings for special exposures, operating conditions, and end uses. Dampney's Thurmalox coatings exemplify our commitment to solving industry's most extreme coating problems. Our Thurmalox line offers solutions for harsh environments including extreme temperatures, corrosion under insulation, high-build corrosion, hot water-side corrosion, and in-service hot equipment applications.

TODAY'S TECHNOLOGY

Dampney continues to develop and improve industry's choice of innovative, right-the-first-time coating systems for protection against hostile environments in atmospheric, immersion, and underground applications. Coating systems are based on a broad range of polymers and pigments resistant to chemicals, extreme heat and weather. Individual coatings and systems are tailored for application to masonry, metal, plastic, and wooden surfaces.

PRODUCT LINES

Our primary product lines include:
• THURMALOX High Temperature Industrial Protective Coatings - for metal structures subjected to high temperatures and corrosive environments.
• THURMALOX High Temperature Protective Coatings for the OEM Market - for metal products and applications subjected to high temperatures and various environments.
• EPODUR 100% Solid Novolac Systems - for secondary containment, flooring and concrete restorations.
• APEXIOR Protective Coatings - for water-side corrosion prevention of steam generating equipment and auxiliaries.
• DYMACRYL Water Repellent Masonry Stains - for concrete and masonry surfaces.
• ELASTOID High Build Elastomeric Rubber Coatings.
• ENDCOR Corrosion Resistant Coatings - for general industrial maintenance.
• EPODUR High Solids Epoxy Coatings - for long-term, heavy duty protection in aggressive chemical, industrial, and marine environments.

Dampney's coating application news articles have appeared in leading technical publications, including: American Painting Contractor, Chemical Engineering, Chemical Processing, Journal of Protective Coatings and Linings, Plant Engineering, Plant Services, Gas Industries, and others.

Case histories describing the application of our coating systems under demanding or unusual service conditions are available, as well as a partial client list of engineering and construction firms who specified these products, and refining, chemical processing and utility corporations who use these protective coatings.

Dampney supports the leading technical and trade associations serving the protective coating and paint industries, and is a member of the National Paint and Coatings Association (NPCA), National Association of Corrosion Engineers (NACE), and Steel Structures Painting Council (SSPC).

MANUFACTURING CAPABILITIES
Continuous modernization and expansion of our Everett, Massachusetts plant gives us the manufacturing flexibility and capacity to meet increased demand for standard and custom coatings, and the ability to produce new and innovative coating systems. Our state-of-the-art manufacturing processes include a computer controlled formula maintenance, batch production, and inventory control system, as well as a computer controlled color matching system.

As a result of our capital investments, we have optimized our cost control, production efficiency and quality assurance programs.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT
Our well equipped product laboratory enables us to develop new and better coatings to meet industry's ever changing needs. We adhere to strict manufacturing quality control standards, and with our testing facilities, we help solve customers' coating and corrosion problems and carefully evaluate existing and new protective coatings, systems and raw materials.

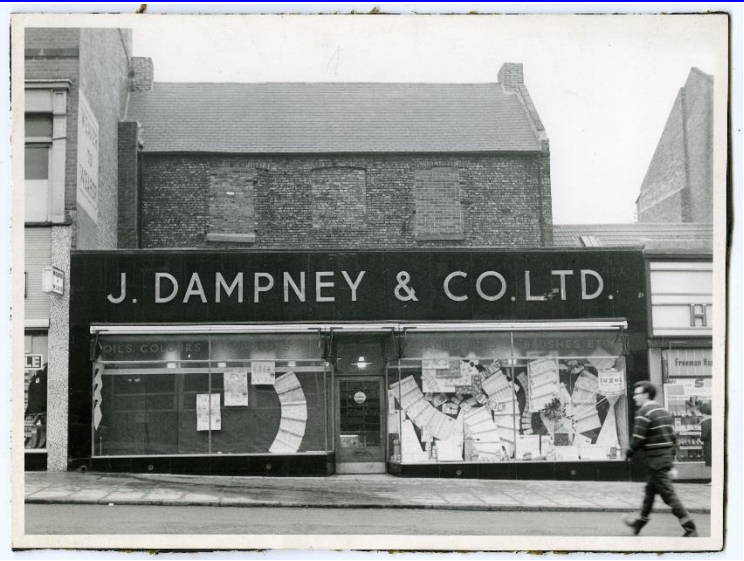
TECHNICAL SERVICES
Dampney provides quality coating products tailored to each customer's requirements, backed by technical service to ensure the coating's most effective use. Our protective coating technical service entails making a comprehensive survey; analyzing the results and making recommendations; providing laboratory services, surface preparation and application guidance; as well as field inspection and periodic follow-up after project completion. Dampney's technical service assures maximum protection at the lowest total cost.

The former Hoyle, Robson & Barnett Colour Works was located in Gateshead (on the other side of the river Tyne from Newcastle) in a place named Bill Quay. This was purchased by John Dampney at some point in the early 20th century.

Please see this link for evidence of this from Gateshead Council:
http://isee.gateshead.gov.uk/detail.php?t=objects&type=all&f=&s=bill+quay&record=18

Item Description: This photograph, taken by Charles Taylor in 1898 to illustrate his recollections “My Life and Times2 vol. 3”, shows the river front at Bill Quay. Barnett’s Paint Works is shown in the centre of the picture. The frontage displays “Hoyle, Robson and Barnett Ltd. Manufacturers of Paints, Dry Colours, Varnishes etc. Established 1818”. That year Richard Hoyle, a Cambridge chemist, took over an old colour works. A paint works had been established in Bill Quay as early as 1787. It was then described as a “Paint House” and was occupied by a chemist named Harrison. After various changes of ownership of the business, Barnett became principal shareholder in 1856. In the early 20th century Dampney and Co. became the new owners of the business. The factory had its own quay. Bill Quay Terraces are shown behind the works.

The Dampney Company also had a retail outlet on Gateshead High Street which can be seen here:
http://isee.gateshead.gov.uk/detail.php?t=objects&type=all&f=&s=dampney&record=0



The Bill Quay site was used as a pigment works by Dampney, BPL and by Berger successively.

http://www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/collection_information/cldload/?collno=568

A gentleman named Harry Creswick Hill worked there as a Chemist and eventually became the Works Manager in 1950:

Collection name: H. C. Hill Papers
Collection code: GB 033 HCH
Date range: 1967-1983
Extent: 1 box
Language: English
Created by: H. C. Hill (1916-2005)
Held by: Durham University Library, Archives and Special Collections

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Contents:
Papers of the late Mr H.C. (Harry) Hill, formerly of British Paints (WA) Ltd:
1. Personal correspondence and correspondence re British Paints (WA) Ltd and the Ikeja and Apapa Manufacturers' Association, Nigeria, 1967-1983

2. Letters of applications for jobs at British Paints (WA) Ltd, Nigeria 1968-1971
3. Ephemera, Nigeria: invitations, programmes, flyers etc,1966-1971
4. Press cuttings, Nigeria 1970-1971
5. 2 tourist maps, Nigeria
6. Copies of Nigerian newspapers and pamphlets
7. 5 diaries written by Mr Hill in Uganda: January - April 1979; April 1979-March 1980; March - July 1980; September 1980 - March 1981; March - June 1981

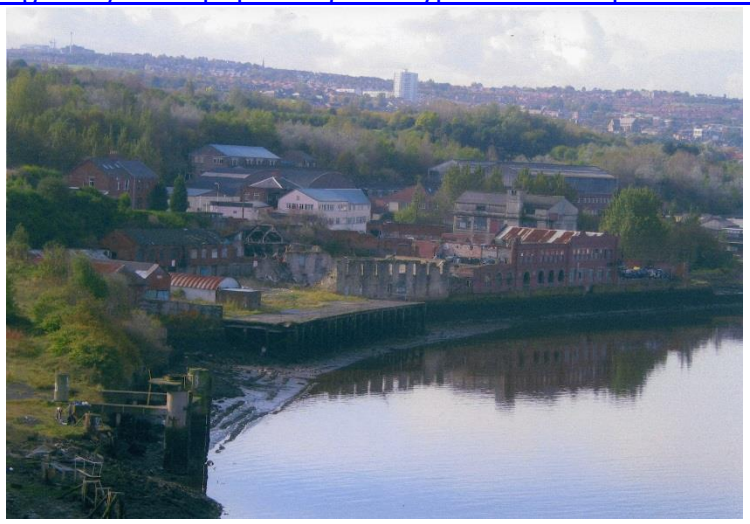
About the creator:
Harry Creswick Hill was born 15 July 1916 and brought up in Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne. Started work for British Paints Ltd in Newcastle, then worked as a chemist in their dye works at Bill Quay, becoming works manager in the late 1950s.
He worked for them at Ikeja, Nigeria 1967-71 and in Uganda 1978-81. He died 17 October 2005.

Provenance:
Presented by David Hill April 2010 (Accession Misc.2009/10.150).

Access:
The collection has not yet been sorted or catalogued. For this reason, it is not normally possible to consult the collection.

Another fellow named Gordon McRae also joined British Paints at Bill Quay as a Chemist in 1946, and subsequently became Works Manager after H.C. Hill. Gordon McRae remained in this post until the closure of the factory in 1969. The site remained closed and eventually fell into disrepair:

http://isee.gateshead.gov.uk/detail.php?t=objects&type=all&f=&s=paint&record=0



Title: British Paints site, Bill Quay

After the 1969 closure of Bill Quay, Gordon McRae was appointed Works Manager at Portland Road, and became Director of Manufacturing in 1975, with responsibility for both the Portland Road and Dunston sites. He succeeded Mr Arthur Duell, who sadly died after a long and distinguished career with Berger Chemicals.
Some anecdotal information is that an oil tanker named the Esso Exeter, which had been built at at Vickers Armstrong's Walker yard had an impact with the Bill Quay factory described as follows:

'The Esso Exeter started her career with a flourish, for when launched on 5th January, 1955, she moved stern-first across the river instead of turning and hit the premises of British Paints at Bill Quay, causing some damage to their boiler house'.

An article can be found here regarding it:
http://www.shieldsgazette.com/community/cookson-country/when-the-boat-really-did-come-in-1-1302118

Here is a link to some good images of Dampney's products being advertised:
http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/J._Dampney_and_Co
And some advertising for British Paints:
http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/British_Paints

Finally, it is well documented that Dampney's paint was used on the Tyne Bridge after it was built. The original paint recipe was reproduced when it was repainted for the Millennium:

http://www.twmuseums.org.uk/discovery/buildingbridges/the-tyne-bridge/

Newcastle site
I will now go on to describe the separate parts of the Newcastle sites.

Britannic Works The Newcastle site of the Britannic Works was especially built for J. Dampney & Co and was completed by 1941. The architects were T.A. Page Son & Bradbury (Thomas Alexander Page & Ronald Bradbury of South Shields). It was described in issue No. 537 of The Architectural Review magazine in 1941 as follows:
'Bulding set for a paint factory, intended to replace existing ones. The building has several floors designed as five sectors. It has six loading docks and five lifts. The structure is reinforced concrete, brick facades, windows and fire doors and stainless metal'.

The Royal Institute of British Architects website here shows some images of the factory:
http://www.ribapix.org/index.php?a=wordsearch&s=gallery&w=dampney&go.x=0&go.y=0

I have included all seven of the above full-size photographs as an attachment to this email for you. The site had multiple divisions operating out of it once it had become Berger, as it was known both as Berger Paints and Berger Chemicals until around 1980 - 1981. Newcastle Council's planning records also show it just called 'Berger' on one application.

Below are some links to job advertisements from different years, illustrating the the divisions that operated out of the Portland Road site:
1973 - Berger Chemicals

http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=2507&dat=19730913&id=QpFAAAAAIBAJ&sjid=-KQMAAAAIBAJ&pg=6392,3007075

1986 & 1987- Berger Elastomers:

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=fetjwSi-rwMC&pg=PA58&lpg=PA58&dq=berger+%22portland+road%22+tyne&source=bl&ots=byd1u54Pq-&sig=fqWfG5sHVslvPJO20TNLMFZ1tqY&hl=en&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=w8kcb4FHZMMC&pg=PA84&lpg=PA84&dq=berger+%22portland+road%22+tyne&source=bl&ots=nFISRrLQfk&sig=bYCSVdodEfxlrEfRquG3JkWjncI&hl=en&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false

The building was entirely out of use by 1988 as Newcastle City Council's planning records show that applicatins were made to convert what the applicants called a '*former paint factory and offices*' into flats and shops. The permission was granted but no work was carried out until AMEC

construction won a contract in 1993 to convert the building into halls of residence for Northumbria University. That work was duly completed and the exterior of the building still looks as it did back in old days. The clock on the roof has been preserved and still functions to this day.

Wincomblee Works

A second site at Portland Road called the Wincomblee Works (*The name Wincomblee comes from the area now known as Walker, which was previously named Wincomblee Village many many years ago*) was located at the rear and across the road from the Britannic Works - directly opposite the main entrance to Portman House. It was built and expanded upon over a period of years to accommodate further manufacturing facilities, especially between 1978 - 1984, which saw new buildings for workers' locker rooms, a smoking area, a boiler room, a fork-lift truck battery charging area and a also new warehouse built.
Wincomblee Works was demolished down to the concrete floor pads in its entirety sometime between Feb 1996 and Jan 2000. In it's place now stands a new development of student accommodation named 'Portland Green'. One of the photographs that I have sent you shows both the Britannic Works & Wincomblee Works sites around the late 1960's or early 1970's.

Portman House

Portman House was the Research & Development building for British Paints, and it still stands and looks exactly the same outside as it did in the old photographs that I have seen on the internet. The British Paints 'compass' logo proudly sits cemented into the tiles at the main entrance. (I have taken a picture of this from Google Street View) and included it for you.

Paint manufacture ceased at Newcastle around 1980 - 1981, (a Hansard parliament document references the Paints Division being closed in 1983) and Berger Elastomers remained and produced aircraft sealants and associated products.
The factory was known as Courtaulds Aerospace/Elastomers International (part of PRC International Inc) from 1988 until it closed in the 1990's. (*Courtaulds bought Products Research & Chemical Corporation, and took over from Berger circa 1989 and continued to manufacture aircraft sealants and aerospace products).* Ownership of the site transferred to Akzo Nobel in 1990 when they purchased Crown Berger. Old satellite imagery shows the Wincomblee Works buildings still present in 1996.

General

I visited the Newcastle site in April 2009 and took some photographs of the former Britannic Works, and of the flattened Wincomblee Works site. The rubble and dirt in some of them are actually the remains of the Wincomblee Works site. You will find these images attached to this email for you. I have also attached some older photographs that I found on the internet.

Below are links to some advertising by British Paints from various years -they both show an alternative BPL logo.

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=daMj2fV6Z3oC&pg=PT1&lpg=PT1&dq=British+Paints+Ltd,+Newcastle&source=bl&ots=P23r6ZaMzC&sig=nyYEGrghnjQFxq41Jm0_QrCxad0&hl=en&sa=X&ei=_gD0UJTOG_DP0AXP24GABg&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=6bkiDQbphSwC&pg=PA79&lpg=PA79&dq=%22british+paints%22+portland+road&source=bl&ots=yrvRcdLg71&sig=6mQZs9TpUzL-

VNVP_vFiPHqIxhE&hl=en&sa=X&ei=sdP1ULLMGOK-0QWL-4DgBA&ved=0CEgQ6AEwCQ#v=onepage&q=%22british%20paints%22%20portland%20road&f=false

Whilst on the subject of advertising, I can confirm that I have found evidence that British Paints used to use the torpedo device as an advertising mark. I have included an advert attached to this email. It was also registered as a Trademark in 1963 as per this link:

http://trade.mar.cx/US72179021/

I have also included old newspaper articles that I found during my research, which details the case of a serious fire started deliberately at the Britannic Works in 1961. There was also a second, far more deadly fire at the premises in 1968, in which 8 people lost their lives. I could not find any more information on this apart from there two links here:

http://www.fireambulance.f9.co.uk/p135.htm

http://www.fire-engine-photos.com/picture/number26551.asp

Following on from the historical information referred to in the Hackney Archives (I have not been there, just online) , I visited the Tyne & Wear Archives Service in Newcastle, and I can tell you that the documents held there are nothing more than a single piece of A4 paper, which simply refers the reader back to the Hackney Archives! So all of the information pertaining to Berger is indeed held at Hackney.

Resinous Chemicals Limited

I used to pass the RCL site at Cross Lane in Dunston once or twice a week in 1988. The site was made up of numerous grey tanks and had a green sign at the main gate that simply said 'Resinous Chemicals Limited' in white lettering. I can confirm that the sign was changed at a later point to the green and white 'RCL' logo that you have on your website. The official name of the works was Wellington MIlls, (as it was adjacent to Wellington Road) although sometimes this was not used and simply 'Cross Lane' used instead. During the 1970's the site was known as Berger Chemicals and Berger Chemicals RCL . There was a large fire there in late April or early May 1978 and Tyne & Wear Fire Brigade confirmed the site name.

11. Fire at Dampney's Britannic Paintworks, Shieldfield – 25 July 1937.
This serious fire caused £150,000 of damage and put 600 people out of work – just before the workforce were preparing to go on strike. This was the third fire at the works in 18 months. All seven fire appliances and 100 men fought the blaze for 8 hours. The new turntable ladder was used as a water tower but it got so close that the paintwork was scorched. Superintendent Burrows was not pleased! The fire spread to the Newcastle Gear and Engineering Company and the local school, but there was little extra time off for the children as the summer vacation began in the following week.

From 1980 - 1983 it was known interchangeably as Berger Paints and Berger Chemicals RCL - Resinous Chemicals Limited, and from 1983 onwards it became just Resinous Chemicals Limited. A lot of development began taking place on the site to expand it. Gateshead Council's planning records show that between May - Oct 1981 a lorry park, loading dock, and replacement single-storey office block were all built. Further work took place between 1983 -2004 to further expand the production capabilities - the most notable being the installation of three 10,000 gallon alkyd resin tanks in March 1988.

Akzo Nobel acquired RCL when they purchased Crown Berger in 1990. In February 2003 Akzo sold the unsaturated polyester (UPE)business within RCL to DSM Composite Resins, who switched production of UPE to their Ellesemere Port plant in Liverpool. Remaining resins production at Dunston was relocated to Silvertown, UK and Bergen op Zoom, the Netherlands. The transfer was completed by early 2004 and RCL closed in 2004 with the loss of 115 jobs.

Akzo Nobel European operations manager Doug Smith said the cost-cutting move was *'to make the firm more competitive in overseas markets'* and *'the plant did not fit with the firm's long term plan to concentrate on European markets'.*
The former RCL site has been demolished and completely cleared of all buildings.

So, there we have it. Quite a bit of information there for you that has taken me some time to research. I'm sorry that the email is so long though! I also have quite a bit on information on G.A Frater and it's history, location, and dealings etc if you would like that.

I do hope that you find this useful, and that it will be of interest to your members. I found it very interesting to research.

Kind regards …… Gary Lall

P.S.

After all that reading, for some light (but still Berger-related) relief - there are two videos on YouTube of classic Berger Paints TV adverts from 1976 and 1979 respectively:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQNJongQT7Y
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eOmBfObwjko