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The History Of YORK International

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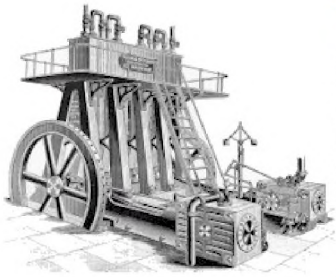
From Modest Beginnings

Founded in 1874 in York, Pennsylvania, YORK International Corporation has a rich heritage of providing space conditioning and refrigeration products. Since its modest origin, YORK has become the largest, independent manufacturer of air conditioning, heating and ventilation systems as well as industrial refrigeration equipment in the world. YORK International today stretches the span of the globe and is a true multi-national corporation, employing over 23,000 employees. It possesses service, marketing, and sales offices situated in over 125 countries throughout the world as well as 29 manufacturing facilities located in 13 different countries.

Over the years, YORK equipment has been supplied to leading companies in many industries including Food Processing, Beverages, Oil and Gas, Transportation, Institutional Banks, Hospitals, both Summer and Winter Sport Complexes, and more. Of course, that's all in addition to the millions of private homes throughout the world that are heated and cooled with YORK residential HVAC equipment. Visit our **Featured Projects Section** to learn about some of our highlighted projects.



1874 - 1885

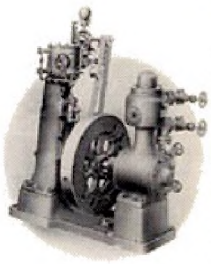
On September 7, 1874, Stephen Morgan Smith, Jacob Loucks, Oliver J. Bollinger, George H. Buck, Robert L. Shetter and Henry H. LaMotte pooled their resources to form the York Manufacturing Company which manufactured washing machines, corn planters, and water wheels. Stephen Morgan Smith, the first president of the York Manufacturing Company, who later became a successful pioneer in the development of hydraulic turbines, contributed two patents to the new company: the Success Washing Machine (a mechanical clothes washing device) and the Success Clothes Wringer.

Steam engines and boilers were added to YORK's catalog of products in 1881. Eventually, these engines were manufactured to drive compressors. In 1883, the company's president began to focus on the related technology of ice-making machines.

Through an initiative with George Jarman in 1885, YORK introduced its first ice and refrigerating machine, the Jarman Ice Machine. The need for ice-making machines had been recognized when John Gorrie, a physician, had discovered that cooler air halted the spread of malaria. The first machine, with a capacity to produce eight tons of refrigeration, was sold in 1885 to Water Valley Ice and Cold Storage Company in Water Valley Mississippi.

1890 - 1906

In 1889, an unusually warm winter limited the amount of natural ice available, and produced a demand for "artificial ice" to prevent food spoilage. Phillip Glatfelter, the president of YORK, made an effort to educate the public and to promote company products throughout this demand and through the next 10 years of a shaky economy. In 1897, YORK recruited Thomas Shipley from Frick to help modernize YORK Manufacturing. In 1898, under Shipley's direction, YORK built the largest ice-making machine in its history. Shipley also lead an initiative to standardize the measurement of a unit ton of refrigeration. This was one of the first times YORK and its competing rivals worked together to set standards for the industry. These leaders established the Ice Machine Builders Association of the United States and later the American Society of Refrigeration Engineers which exists as **ASHRAE** today. During this time period, the York Manufacturing Company continued to grow, even expanding into international markets with sales in Japan.



1908 - 1919

In 1908, York Manufacturing Company won a highly publicized contract with Eastman Kodak and business again grew rapidly. In 1914, YORK installed a revolutionary comfort system in the Empire Theater in Montgomery, Alabama. It was among the first installations of "air washing" and ventilation that eventually became known as air conditioning.

YORK also started producing for a new venue: steamships transporting perishable goods. As World War I got underway, the company turned its focus to producing for battleships and army camps, and to building an ice and cold storage plant for American forces in Europe.

1924 - 1939

In 1924, with YORK's equipment, San Joaquin Light & Power in Fresno, California became the world's first air-conditioned office building. Soon after, YORK installed a single one-ton fully automated unit in a Denver, Colorado orphanage. After making great strides in the dairy industry (cooling milk to slow the growth of bacteria), YORK again set a milestone by providing equipment for Eastman Kodak's Park Works plant in Rochester, New York. This plant was the largest refrigerating plant in the world at that time. In 1927, after purchasing the Artic Ice Machine Company, YORK consolidated many of its subsidiaries and sales offices and was formally renamed the York Ice Machinery Corporation or YorkCo for short.

In 1930, the DuPont company developed a non-toxic, inflammable compound referred to as Freon-12 which lead to explosive growth in the air conditioning industry. In 1935, YORK developed the first single-room air conditioner, which became an instant hit and led to contracts with some of the world's most recognizable landmarks. With the evolution of the past ten years, YORK changed its name from the York Ice Machinery Corporation to York Corporation to better reflect their product line.

1940s

During World War II, YORK contributed to the design and manufacture of the Strato-Chamber which simulated flight at 45,000 feet and helped to improve the performance of aircraft operating at high altitudes. YORK also made substantial contributions to building refrigerators to preserve food for the nations troops. Between 1941 and 1945, YORK supplied $132 million in production and services to the war effort. In 1946, YORK shifted to post-war peacetime production and joined the food freezer market. YORK founded the YORK Institute for Refrigeration and Air Conditioning to help some of the 1,200 YORK employees released from the military after the war. In 1949, the concept of "ice cubes with a hole" was introduced as YORK debuted its Model 450 Automatic Ice Maker for hotels, restaurants and hospitals.

1950s

YORK prepared for the Korean War by reviving an effort to improve productivity though cooperation among industries. The company spent substantial time pursuing government contracts including one to design and build weather test chambers for research on rockets and guided missiles for the US Navy. Orders also increased for the textile, chemical, and passenger ship industries. Minute Maid selected YORK to refrigerate its 2.5-million-square-foot warehouse, YORK's largest civilian order. In 1953, YORK employees made improvements to a modulated temperature control device, later known as the thermostat.

Due to sluggish sales and tough economic times, YORK initiated a reorganization of the company into three divisions: Industrial, Commercial, and International. In 1955, YORK Corporation was purchased by Borg-Warner and in 1956 became known as the York Division of Borg-Warner. During this time, YORK released the Turbomatic compressor which was selected for the US Navy's fifth super aircraft carrier. In 1958, YORK's revolutionary heat pump was selected for both heating and cooling purposes for the 1960 Olympic Games in California. This was the first of many Olympic Games to which YORK contributed.

1960s

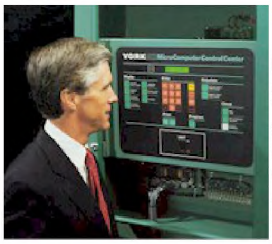
During the 1960s, YORK contributed to many historic projects, including the "race to the moon" and major advancements in Naval submarine technology. In 1964, YORK initiated a "Total Quality Control" program to reduce costs while upholding quality. During this time period, YORK completed several high profile installations for John Hopkins University (at that time, air-conditioning was rare on college campuses), the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, and the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station in York County, Pennsylvania. In 1965, YORK was selected to air condition the NASA Kennedy Space Center's Vehicle Assembly Building (the world's largest building at the time). Although residential sales declined during this time, YORK continued to grow internationally.

YORK also contributed to the field of hyperbaric medicine with the development of a hyperbaric chamber that helped to increase the oxygen pressure in a patient's lungs. This hyperbaric chamber was credited with saving multiple lives, including that of a two-month-old child.

In 1968, the headquarters for the YORK International Division of Borg-Warner was moved from Chicago, Illinois to York, Pennsylvania.

1970s

As businesses realized the investment value of providing a comfortable environment for their employees, residential sales also expanded, and air-conditioning became less of a luxury and more of a necessity. When America experienced inflated oil prices in the early 1970s, YORK contributed to the solar energy effort by producing the first sun-powered absorption system to heat and cool an elementary school. The need for fuel efficiency prompted YORK to produce multiple new energy efficient products and brochures to educate the general public. In 1979, YORK introduced the Turbo-Modulator™, the first variable speed control for centrifugal chillers. This product cut annual energy use by 30 percent. Concerns about environmental issues were also raised during this decade, particularly about the depletion of the earth's ozone layer by chlorofluorocarbons such as Freon-12 (commonly used in the air-conditioning and refrigeration industry).



1980s

In 1981 Borg-Warner (YORK's parent company) acquired the Westinghouse air conditioning division, which manufactured **Luxaire**, Fraser Johnston, Westinghouse, and Moncreif brands. YORK began implementing computer technologies to help run operations more effectively, to cut costs and to improve company-wide communications. In 1986, after two Borg-Warner reorganizations which tried to deal with the recession of the time, the YORK Air Conditioning Division of Borg Warner was spun off into an independent company which would become the largest independent air conditioning manufacturer in the world: YORK International. As the company strived to succeed as an independent firm, many new employee benefits were implemented and multiple acquisitions helped the company to grow. Two key acquisitions included the **Frick** Company, a leader in industrial refrigeration, and **Bristol Compressors**, a manufacturer of small compressors.

1990s

YORK continued to increase market share both domestically and in foreign markets through carefully selected acquisitions of companies such as the Miller Picking Corporation of Pennsylvania, Evcon Technologies of Kansas, and Seveso Clima of Italy. The company now also included **YORK Snow** and its associated company, **YORK Neige**. These snowmaking companies provided downhill, slalom, ski-jumping and alpine courses for the Winter Olympic Games in Albertville, France as well as many more Olympic Games to follow. Figure skating, speed skating and luge/bobsled events at the Winter Games in Lillehammer, Norway were made possible due to YORK's ice refrigeration technology. YORK also became the official air-conditioning company of the 1996 Summer Games in Atlanta, Georgia.

Simultaneously, YORK continued to take steps to increase competitiveness and improve efficiency through a company wide reorganization and the development of new product lines, such as the innovative Triathlon unit which utilized natural gas for heating and cooling. In 1995, the Environmental Protection Agency recognized YORK as a Charter Partner in the agency's Energy Star Program. At a conference in April 1995, the EPA praised YORK as the only major manufacturer offering high-efficiency air conditioning and refrigeration equipment.

Some **Featured Projects** that highlighted this decade included refrigeration and air conditioning for many of the world's submarine fleets, a complex air conditioning system for the English Channel Tunnel, and the installation of massive centrifugal chillers for the Kuala Lumpur City Centre in Malaysia, the tallest building in the world.

2000 and Beyond

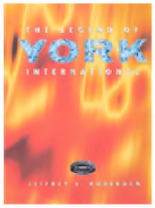
The YORK International Corporation of today and the York Manufacturing Company of yesteryear are vastly different in some ways, but exceedingly alike in some very fundamental ways. Create a compelling vision, one that takes its employees to a new place, and translate that vision into reality. Create an organizational structure where ideas come through unhampered by people who are fearful. Embrace problem-finding, not just problem solving. And most importantly, seek to create a sense of shared objectives, worthy of people's support and dedication.

Ultimately, in great leaders and the organizations surrounding them, there is a fusion of work and play to the point where, as Robert Frost says, "Love and need are one." What the YORK Creed established in the 19th Century remains true for the 21st Century and beyond. To remain true to the following, lifted from the pages of York Manufacturing Company's 1892 product catalog:

> "Employ nothing but the best labor. Use nothing but the best materials. Guess at nothing but TEST EVERYTHING. Guarantee our work as second to none in the country. Challenge the world to produce, either in design, workmanship or combination, a better machine, or one giving better results."

Thus, it must always be with YORK products - a Creed for yesterday, a Creed for today, a Creed for tomorrow.

Today, YORK operates in a decentralized environment whereby our business units are accountable for their individual success as well as the success of YORK in its entirety. Please visit **Engineered Systems Group** (ESG), **Unitary Product Group** (UPG), **YORK Refrigeration** (YR), **Bristol Compressors** and Asia Pacific.



This timeline only represents highlights from YORK International's intricate history. Excerpts have been taken from "The Legend of YORK International" a documentary book by Jeffrey L. Rodengen, Sandy Cruz (Illustrator), and Karen Nitkin (Editor).

This book is available for purchase from YORK International. If you are interested, please contact the **Webmaster** with a request.