



### History of Duncan Brothers

Mr. Walter Duncan, a Scotsman came to India in November 1858 and set up a company called Playfair, Duncan and Company to deal in cotton, his brother Mr. William Duncan joining him later. The two brothers decided to open their own account and set up a company called Duncan Brothers and Company in Calcutta on 1st January 1875. Thus began the history of Duncan Brothers.



Mr. Walter Duncan



Mr. William Duncan

### Making Tea the Business

Although the Company first became involved in tea in 1865, its actual stride in tea began from 1880 onwards. Jute was later added to the portfolio but tea continued to be the primary business and it grew steadily over the years. By 1923 the Company had in its agency 60 estates in Dooars, Assam and Sylhet encompassing 20,000 hectares and a crop of 14.50 m Kgs of tea.

### The 1947 Scenario

With the partition of India, Duncan Brothers (Pakistan) Ltd., came into being on the 20th January 1948 with its office in Chittagong and assumed the interest of the Company's estates in Sylhet. The assured market in the western Pakistan backed up a steady growth and soon the Company became a leading producer in the country.

### The Company since 1971

The War of Liberation left the tea industry in ruins. The assured market in West Pakistan was lost. The Company's losses from 1971 to 1974 were heavy. At this juncture the Lawrie Group came forward and eventually assumed the interest of Longbourne Holdings, the holding Company for Duncan's estates in Bangladesh.

### Duncan Brothers (Bangladesh)

The boom in world tea in 1976-77 helped in the quick reconsolidation of the Company by 1980. Having set its feet firmly in tea again, the Company decided to enlarge its commitment in Bangladesh and it set up an insurance company, a leasing company and a joint venture company called Duncan Products Ltd.

Duncan Brothers at present is not just a company anymore, it is a group with thousands of people working for it at different levels. The company which was set up by Mr. Walter Duncan and Mr. William Duncan in 1859 has now become a prestigious corporate body and shows the promise of a future longer than its history.



The Trophy

### Worldwide Operation of Lawrie Group plc : Associate of Duncan Brothers

The Lawrie Group which is incorporated in the U.K. has interests in a wide range of activities in different countries of the world. Its major investments are in the U.K., India, Bangladesh, East and Central Africa, the U.S.A., Switzerland and Brazil.



Wrotham Place, the Lawrie Group's corporate headquarters in Kent, U.K.



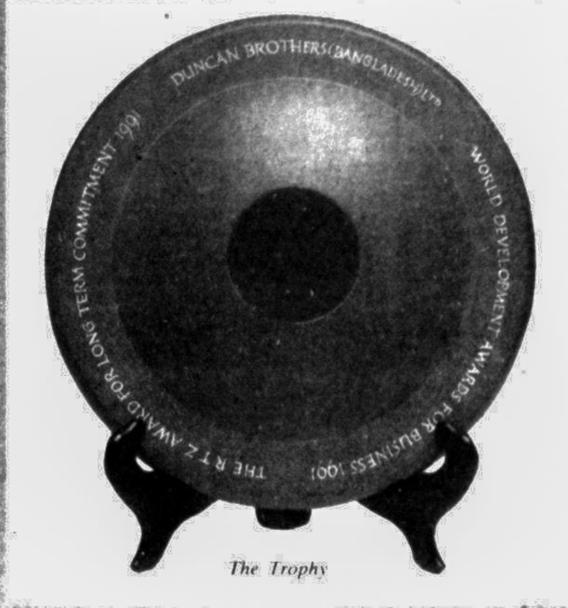
Duncan Lawrie Bank at 1, Hobart Place, London SW1

In the United Kingdom the group owns the private bank Duncan Lawrie which offers banking, investment and other financial services to an international clientele. The group's portfolio in the U.K. also includes investments in property, cold storage, ware-housing and distribution, commercial fishing and fish processing.

In India, Bangladesh, Kenya and Malawi the group's interests are principally in tea with a total cultivated area of 32,000 hectares making the group one of the largest producers of tea in the world with an annual crop in excess of 60 million kgs.

In this sub-continent the group's history goes back to 1868 when Mr. Alexander Lawrie set up the Company styled Balmer Lawrie & Co. for business in clearing, forwarding and shipping. The Company later acquired the agency of tea estates and collieries and also went into the warehousing of tea and manufacture of paper and cement.

## World Development Award For Long Term Commitment



The Trophy

Duncan Brothers wins the World Development Award for Long Term Commitment for 1991.

The judges while conferring the honour said :

"We are satisfied that Duncan Brothers provide welfare services which go well beyond minimum government requirements, especially in health care, water supplies and housing. They serve as an example to other employers that good social practices can be achieved consistent with profitability even in the very difficult and impoverished environment of Bangladesh. Duncan Brothers are innovators in rubber planting on their tea estates and are now being followed by other tea companies. Their insurance services were started in 1985, and the Commonwealth Development Corporation believe that their joint venture into leasing which began in 1989 could contribute significantly to employment and exports. Duncan Brothers are a long established firm, now managed by Bangladeshis, who set a good example to other employers and who take the pioneering approach of ploughing their profits into new developments designed to improve the economy. They are an associate company of the Lawrie Group plc."

The World Development Awards for Business have been created by Centre for World Development Education to encourage British Business, by recognizing its achievements, to play an expanding role in supporting economic and social progress in the developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The Awards aim specially in encouraging British Companies to be aware of their impact on the developing countries where they operate, the search for ways of increasing the cost efficiencies and most significantly in stimulating increased British private investment in these countries.



Mr. H. K. Fitzgerald, Chairman of the Lawrie Group plc receiving the trophy from the Rt. Hon. Lynda Chalker MP, U.K. Minister for Overseas Development on 11.12.91

### Duncan Brothers : present portfolio

**Tea**  
The group's primary business is still tea. It manages ten estates in Sylhet namely Amo, Nalua, Chandpore, Mazdehee, Allynugger, Chatlapore, Lungla, Shumshernugger, Etah and Karimpore encompassing an area of 6500 hectares under tea and producing about 9 million Kgs of tea, one fifth of the country's production. The group adopts latest cultivation and manufacturing techniques to increase yields and improve quality progressively. It is the pioneer in introducing computer in the tea estates for fast and accurate management information.

### Worker Welfare Projects

As an employer, the group maintains a healthy relation with the workers. The housing, medical and other welfare services provided by the company go well beyond the minimum government requirement. In fact 70% of the groups population live in pucca houses connected to piped water distribution system.

A primary health care project, first of its kind in the private sector has been introduced with emphasis on mother and childcare and immunization for ensuring a proper health regime for the population of 45,000 in the ten estates. Hospitals have been staffed with qualified doctors. Additionally a group of medical, surgical and gynaecological consultants hold clinics periodically in the estates for dealing with complicated cases. This project has been acclaimed and commended everywhere for the results that have been achieved.



Line health visitors under Primary Health Care Programme at Lungla Tea Estate



A cluster of labour houses at Karimpore Tea Estate

### Diversification and growth

Duncan Brothers Bangladesh began to diversify and enlarge its commitment in this country in the early eighties.

### Rubber :

Rubber was the area where diversification was aimed first to utilise the land not suitable for tea. Being the forerunner in the private sector it is committed to produce 1000 tonnes by the turn of the century.

### United Insurance :

The group diversified next into the field of general insurance forming in 1985 a Company called United Insurance Company Ltd., jointly with Shaw Wallace Bangladesh Ltd., National Brokers Ltd., and Octavius Steel & Company of Bangladesh Ltd.

### United Leasing :

Duncan Brothers sponsored a leasing Company set up in 1989 in joint venture with the Asian Development Bank, Lawrie Group plc and the Commonwealth Development Corporation. The Company, second of its kind in the country, has developed a fairly large portfolio and it is contributing significantly to industrialisation, employment and export.

### Duncan Products Ltd. :

In 1988 Duncan Products Ltd., was set up in joint venture with the Lawrie Group plc. The Company now produces commercial plywood, flush doors, tea chests. It has plans to embark soon on production of bottled mineral water, manufacture of glass tumblers and marketing of rubber sheets etc.

### Chittagong Warehouses Ltd. :

Duncan Brothers was actively connected with this warehousing Company since its inception in 1948. The group has recently acquired the controlling interest in this Company which offers warehousing facilities to the tea industry.

### A future longer than its history :

Duncan Brothers takes a long term view of its commitment in Bangladesh and its responsibility towards the people working for it. The policy is to build slowly and consistently using its internal expertise and its own financial strength. Such commitment entails ploughing back of the profits which the group has been doing continually in the past years. The aim however is not to over-stretch and weaken the base but grow steadily, brick on brick, as it did in the last one hundred years.

The philosophy of the group is aptly expressed in a statement made recently by Mr. Gordon Fox, the Chairman of Group's apex Company.

"Many companies in the Group are in excess of 100 years old. These enterprises have acquired particular skills, traditions and ethos, and we see ourselves more in the nature of custodians or trustees than as owners. That is we do not see these assets as objects or commodities or bits of paper that can be traded, but rather as living entities from which, if properly managed, we might earn an attractive return on our investment, but also, and indeed primarily, towards which as individual enterprises we have a responsibility of ensuring continuity, development and progressive growth."