

Colin Perry

Born 1940. Businessman, traveller & hunting enthusiast.
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The following account of Colin Perry's life was given at his funeral on 4th March 2022 at Shelsley Beauchamp by his friend Bill Andrewes. It is reproduced with Bill Andrewes' kind permission.

1. Introduction

There are not many men who have had a public punch up with Dominic Cummings and died in their own home. Colin, of course, was an exception in that and in much else.

I want to reflect on what made him so special. And if anyone doubts that he was special they only have to look around to see how packed the church is with many others following online.

To set the scene. Colin was born in 1940 into a country family obsessed with hunting; the eldest of four brothers. Prep school at Old Hall, Wellington followed by Winchester, Cambridge and INSEAD. As gold plated an education for a business career as you could imagine.

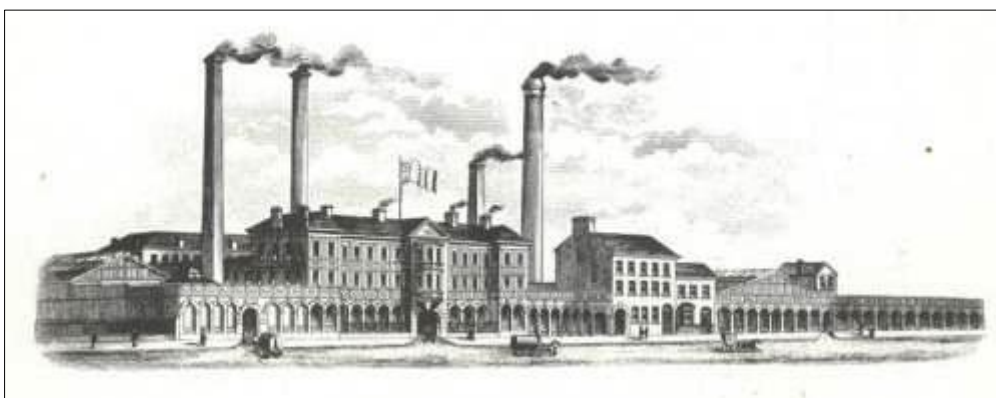


Clare College, Cambridge.

On October 6th 1966 he married Rebecca who would remain at the centre of his universe for 56 years. Colin's working life started in London and In 1968 Georgina came along. The family moved to Philadelphia where Alex was born. In 1972 they returned to England and eight years later moved to Great Blakes where they have been ever since.

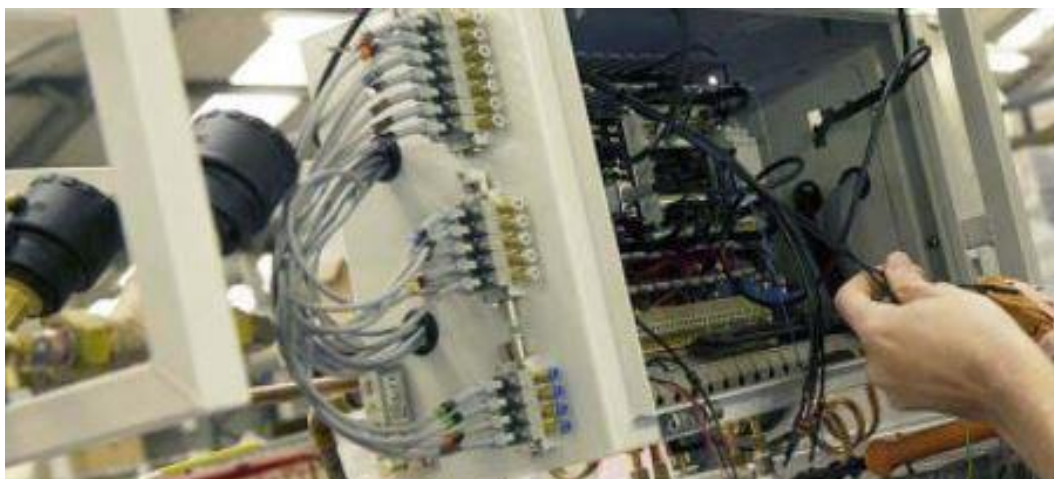
2. Business Career

Colin's business career started at Corn Products, followed by spells in Metra Consulting and International Computerprint. But Colin first came to public notice when he took over as Managing Director and then Chairman at the Birmingham Mint where he propelled the business from a turnover of £2.8 million and no profit to a turnover of £44 million and a profit of £4 million. He left the Mint in 1989 and bought LTE Scientific where he has been owner and Chairman ever since. He had a myriad of other non-executive jobs too numerous to list.



The Birmingham Mint in the 19th Century.

Alongside this business career Colin was deeply involved with the Confederation of British Industry ending up as Chairman of the CBI's Small and Medium Enterprises Committee. Probably his most important contribution was his participation in the Company Law Review which instigated the first changes to UK company law for forty years.



Inside the LTE Scientific factory.

He was a convinced European which is what led to his clash with Dominic Cummings. They had appeared on TV on either side of a discussion on the merits of the European Monetary Union. Colin got the best of the argument which infuriated Cummings who accosted Colin as he was leaving the

studio and tried to push him down the stairs. That was in 1999; but Colin had the last laugh when he told the story two years ago in an interview with Emily Maitlis on Newsnight which went viral and appeared in all the papers.

Man who claims Dominic Cummings assaulted him is set to be interviewed by Emily Maitlis in BBC documentary

- BBC producers set to interview man claiming Dominic Cummings assaulted him
- Colin Perry alleges Cummings grabbed him by the lapels and pinned him to wall
- The alleged clash two decades ago reportedly came after explosive radio debate

By [GLEN OWEN](#) POLITICAL EDITOR FOR THE MAIL ON SUNDAY

PUBLISHED: 02:08, 16 February 2020 | **UPDATED:** 16:24, 26 February 2020

Extract from the Mail on Sunday, 16th February 2020.

That's the business side of Colin's life so what about the fun. Let's start with Travel.

3. Travel

For Colin there was business travel, holiday travel and adventure. This thirst for adventure started at Cambridge where he travelled with friends, sometimes on a motorbike, to Europe and the Middle East and it never waned. If a place ended in ...stan and was hard to reach Colin and Rebecca had to go there; Tajikistan. Uzbekistan, Bhutan, Mongolia, Georgia, Armenia, Pakistan, China, Libya, India, Vietnam, Thailand, Romania, Hungary, Slovenia, Iran, Ethiopia, Sweden, Finland, North and South Ossetia, Chechnya and Dagestan, the Caucasus, Ecuador, the Galapagos islands; oh and of course Italy and Spain. Transport included cars, trains aeroplanes, horses, motor-bikes, push bikes, and of course, a lot of walking. Most of these adventures were arranged by Colin for him and Rebecca on their own. Colin didn't "do" groups.

To say the world was his oyster is an understatement. It was his back garden.

4. Hunting

And then there was hunting

As I said earlier Colin was born into a family obsessed with fox hunting. His parents were both Masters of Hounds and at one point his mother was the longest serving master in the UK. When someone told her that her husband had been taken to hospital after what proved to be a fatal heart attack all she said was “not now; hounds are running”. So this passion was in Colin’s genes. And how lucky for the Ludlow hunt it was. Colin and I have been privileged to be part of the Ludlow Hunt for longer than I care to remember. As well as being a great companion in the field Colin has been the source of so much sound advice and help. Colin’s role in steering the hunt through the legal minefield of company and tax law has been of immense benefit. No words of mine can do justice to his contribution and he will be sorely missed

That said Colin’s experiences in the field were not always without incident. As I stopped hunting before my friend, I found myself in the role of supernumerary paramedic. On one occasion at Downton, Colin came unstuck and we had to call the air ambulance. Colin was attended by a very attractive lady doctor but sadly Colin put such a brave face on his injuries that the lady took off again without him; or me. Very sad as we had both been looking forward to taking him to hospital.



The Ludlow Hunt.

5. Reading and DIY

Colin was also a voracious reader. His taste tended to the academic rather than the recreational. He loved biographies and histories, but his interests were extremely broad. I asked Rebecca about this and she told me that he kept one book upstairs and one downstairs. After Colin died, she was tidying up. The upstairs book was Canterbury Tales and the downstairs book a translation of Virgil's Aeneid. Now I call that broad

Rather surprisingly I think Colin was also an inveterate DIYer. Not always with perfect results. His weakness was his confidence that no job was too big or too difficult. Colin thought that a small window in their stone built Welsh cottage should be enlarged to take advantage of the magnificent Snowdonia scenery So one day, after breakfast he decided to do it; he took out the window and started to remove the stones; carefully; one by one. The window got bigger and bigger until the wall started to crumble and the roof to fall in. At which point Colin showed his wisdom and called a builder. You can imagine that slow self-deprecating smile with which he told the story.

6. Family Life

So what was Colin really like? He was very intelligent with a phenomenal memory for detail. He had rather austere, almost presbyterian outlook on life; he was personally very modest.

He could not stand dishonesty or deviousness and certainly didn't suffer fools at all,- never mind gladly. He held strong opinions on many subjects but only after doing his homework; having formed a view he was not afraid to let people know.

As the result at times he could appear to lack empathy; he took the view that everyone was entitled to their own opinion but, if it differed from his, they should be willing to defend it. One comment in a letter to Rebecca from a female friend was "I always enjoyed my conversations when sitting next to Colin at dinner until we disagreed; then it was every man for himself". He was actually very kind. Out hunting he always welcomed visitors or newcomers. Several people writing to Rebecca remarked on his patience in helping them. He could appear stubborn, but he was too intelligent to stick to a point if he realised he might be wrong.

He had prodigious energy. He regularly visited his factory in Manchester and his schedule was:- 5.00 am start; three hour drive to his office; work all day. Early bed? certainly not. Opera, concert or a play in Manchester or Leeds; work all next day and drive home. Not bad at 80.

So what is missing from this picture; possibly the most important thing of all. His family. At the very centre of Colin's life was his family.... all of you here at the front.

He was a devoted husband, even if sometimes exasperating (that's Rebecca's adjective not mine), proud father of Georgina and Alex; loving father -in-law to Tess; adored and adoring grandfather to Katya, Grace and Olivia. And before he died Katya had passed into Cambridge and he was looking forward to hunting with Grace and Livvy . What more could any grandfather want.

One final story, borrowed from Alex. The family were staying in the mountains outside Cape Town - one of the great wine growing areas of the world. One evening Colin went out to buy a bottle of wine for dinner and returned, beaming with a truly awful bottle; he was beaming because of the fun he had had in buying it from one of South Africa's notorious wire-grilled liquor shacks. The lesson Alex learned was that for Colin life is not really about the rewards so much as the richness of the experience. That I think sums up Colin's life and we should all celebrate a life lived completely to the full, and one that has benefited so many.