

## GRIDLEY, JOHN CRANDON (1904 - 1968), industrialist

**Name:** John Crandon Gridley  
**Date of birth:** 1904  
**Date of death:** 1968  
**Spouse:** Joan Marion Gridley (née Merrett)  
**Child:** Richard Crandon Gridley  
**Child:** Christopher John Gridley  
**Parent:** Mary Ellen Gridley (née Michell)  
**Parent:** William Joseph Gridley  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** industrialist  
**Area of activity:** Business and Industry  
**Author:** Richard Gridley

John Gridley was born on 28 May 1904 in Cardiff, the only son of William Joseph Gridley and his wife Mary Ellen (née Michell). He was educated at Cardiff and at Queen's College Taunton, Somerset. He played rugby for Glamorgan Wanderers. His early commercial training was in a Cardiff coal and shipping office that became a subsidiary of Powell Duffryn, the largest coal producers and distributors in Europe before World War II, for whom he spent several years in France and Spain. In the 1930s he remained with the Powell Duffryn Group, becoming a director of the parent company and several subsidiaries.

In 1933 he married Joan Marion Merrett, daughter of **Herbert Henry Merrett**. They had two sons, Richard Crandon and Christopher John. The marriage ended in divorce in 1950, and he remarried in 1951.

In 1943-44 he served the government as the British Joint Chairman of the Anglo-American Economic Mission in North Africa and later became Economic Advisor to the British Ambassador in Paris. For his services in North Africa and France he was appointed CBE in 1945. When the European Coal Organization established headquarters in London in 1945 he was its first chairman, leaving in 1946 to become the first Marketing Director of the new National Coal Board. In 1949 he joined Mobil Oil as chairman of its UK company, and remained in this position until his death in 1968. In 1962-63 he was president of the Institute of Petroleum, presiding over its jubilee celebrations.

He was always keenly interested in education. From 1954 to 1962 he was a member of the University Grants Committee, a committee that advised on distribution of government funding among universities. In 1959 he became a member of the Marshall Aid Commission, which awards Marshall Scholarships for American graduates at British universities. In 1962 he became a crown-nominated member of the Court of London University, of which he became deputy chairman. Though members of the University of London were not normally eligible for honorary degrees, in 1967 the Court awarded him an honorary Doctor of Laws 'as proof of the universal admiration and respect in which he was held'.

John Gridley died on 25 November 1968 at Cwrt-yr-Ala House, Michaelston-le-Pit, Glamorgan.

### Author

**Richard Gridley**

### Sources

Obituaries: *The Times*, 26 November and 28 November 1968; *The Daily Telegraph*, 26 November 1968

*Who was who?*

Family records

### Additional Links

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