

THE HISTORY OF CONFECTIONERY IN YORK

At York's Chocolate Story, you will be introduced to some members of the founding families of York's confectionery industry:

- **Mary Tuke (c.1725).** One strand of the Rowntree story can be traced all the way back to 1725 and a remarkable woman called Mary Tuke. Mary and her family were Quakers, a religious group who favoured the cocoa industry because it offered workers an alternative to strong drink. She met resistance from the Merchant Adventurers' Company, whose rules determined that a licence was required by them in order to trade, and she was deemed ineligible being neither widow nor daughter of a member of the company. It was another Quaker, Henry Isaac Rowntree, who bought the Tuke cocoa and chocolate business over a century later.
- **Henry Issac Rowntree (1837 – 1883).** In 1860, Henry Isaac Rowntree joined the Rowntree business. In 1862 he bought out the chocolate and cocoa-making department and a legend was born. At first the business struggled – that was until Henry's older brother, Joseph, joined the business.
- **Joseph Rowntree (1836 – 1926).** With Joseph's help the business flourished. Rowntree's Fruit Pastilles and then Fruit Gums were launched and, in 1897 after Henry died, the company released their famous Elect Cocoa. The factory continued to thrive and Joseph decided to use his wealth to tackle poverty through philanthropic works to improve working and living conditions for factory workers. The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust still exists to this day.
- **Mary Ann Craven (1829 – 1902).** After her husband died in 1860, Mary Craven ran the Craven's business for more than 40 years, right up until her death in 1902. She wasn't very tall and apparently, she used to have a high chair she would sit on so she could oversee the packing of the confectionery!



- **Joseph Terry** (1793 – 1850). Around 1767, William Bayldon and Robert Berry established a business selling cough lozenges, lemon and orange candied peel and other sweets. In 1823, Joseph Terry married Robert Berry's niece and joined the firm, later establishing "Terry and Berry." The business was renamed 'Terry's' five years later when Robert left the business. Clever use of the new railways saw the company's products being sold in 75 towns across the north of England.
- **Frank Terry** (1877-1960). Frank took over the business, along with his son Noel, after Joseph's death in 1898. They established products such as Spartan, All Gold and Terry's Chocolate Orange. Frank was knighted in 1936 and made a High Sheriff of York in 1945.

THE PEOPLE OF YORK

Many York families' livelihoods depended on the confectionery industry, and often different generations of the same family worked in the factories. In its heyday, 14,000 people worked for confectionery companies in the city; today it's just over 2,000.

People in York have a strong emotional attachment with the industry, with many recalling their time in the factories as a very happy part of their life which brings back fond memories. There are still confectionery manufacturers in York today, from Nestlé UK through to artisan chocolatiers taking their skills into the 21st century.

We have a collection of photographs that have been generously donated by Nestlé, The York Press and the descendants of Mary-Ann Craven. You can see some of these fantastic images in our People of York Gallery.



CRAVEN'S CONFECTIONERY



The Craven's confectionery factory used to stand where the Coppergate Shopping centre and the Jorvik Viking Centre is today. They were well known for their boiled sweets, toffees and French Almonds and the picture to the left shows a man working in the French Almond Room at the Craven's factory.

TERRY'S CONFECTIONERY

The Terry's business had a strong family focus. Here we can see the Board at Terry's as it was in the 1960's. The board at this time included many members of the Terry family. It was not unusual for different generations of the same family worked for the confectionery manufacturers of York so the combined service of a father and son could be as much as 80 years!



ROWNTREE'S

This man is George Harris. Mr Harris worked at Rowntree's during the 1930's and was responsible for developing the products regarding marketing and advertising of the brands. Mr Harris was Marketing Director and Chairman of Rowntree's from 1941 to 1952.



During the war, staff at the confectionery manufacturers switched from making sweets, to making ammunitions. Here are some of the ladies that helped. One lady that contacted us told us of the camaraderie working with the other girls and described this period as one of the happiest times of her life.

In the heyday of Rowntree's chocolate production ladies decorated all chocolates by hand. Staff would often sing together whilst working. One lady who got in touch with us recalls her time at Rowntrees in the 1960's when the radio came through loudspeakers, and everyone would sing along to 'Hey, Mr Tamborine man!'



continue the story...

continuum
HERITAGE
attractions

continuum
icon
attractions

continuum
explore
attractions

continuumattractions.com