

History on Your Doorstep

Tameside Inventors & Inventions

Denton Hat Works and the Attaboy hat

- James Marlor founded a hat manufacturing business in a small building off Ashton Road, Denton in 1850. Various members of his family were involved in the manufacture of hats in the town in later years.



Victoria hat Works, Wilton St, Denton

- The Denton Hat Co Ltd was founded in 1921 by Harry Greenhough, the great grandson of James Marlor. He started his business in a shed at the rear of a cottage in Town Lane. The business grew and it moved to the Vinery Hat Works on Town Lane near Melbourne Street. This company was the last firm of hat manufacturers to be established in Denton.



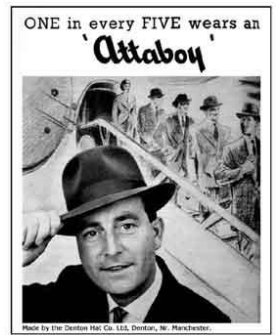
Victoria hat Works, Wilton St, interior

- The business continued to expand and in 1932 it moved into the Victoria Hat Works on Wilton St. The premises were originally shared with Marlors Ltd, but when they closed the Denton Hat Company occupied the entire building.
- Harry Greenhough was joined by his brother, Walter, who controlled the advertising and dispatch side of the business, while Harry controlled the technical side.

- The Denton Hat Company created its popular 'Attaboy' range of hats and the 'Attaboy' Trade Mark was registered on the 20 January 1937.



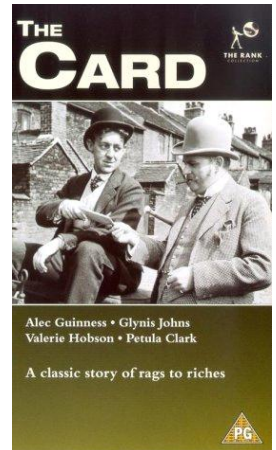
- The company was inherited by Harry Greenhough's identical twin sons, John H and Harry R Greenhough. John began work in 1946 and Harry in 1947. During the 1950s the company was understood to have made one in every five hats worn in England.



- It's trade name, Attaboy, was one of the best known and the company's products were used by stars of the time including Wilfred Pickles and seen in films such as the 1952 Alec Guinness drama The Card.



Wilfred Pickles wearing the Attaboy in an episode of 'For the Love of Ada'



- By 1964 Victoria Hat Works in Wilton Street employed more than 300 staff and in the same year it produced more than 400,000 hats.
- When fashions changed fewer people wore hats. Manufacturing was moved briefly to premises in Stockport, but the business was wound up in 2000.



Statue near Denton Town Hall 'Tipping the Denton Linney'

- The brothers retired aged 75, but as they lived opposite each other, they planned to meet quite often.
- The Victoria Hat Works building was demolished in 2003 to make way for the Crown Point North retail park.