

KEEN ROBINSON & COMPANY

From the two separate beginnings of Thomas Keen, established in 1742, and Matthias Robinson, who started in 1764, there began the roots of one of the top mustard manufacturing concerns.

Keen & Son merged with Robinson & Company in 1862. They were one of the firms reported to Mr. Boucher, Controller of the Circulation Department in the Post Office, as being in infringement of the regulations by using a full name die. At that time Rushton gave the Company's title as KEEN, ROBINSON, BELLEVILLE & COMPANY. The Chief Clerk of the Post Office, Mr. R. Parkhurst, ordered that a call be made to suppress the practice. The Inspector of Letter Carriers is recorded as being unsuccessful.

In 1900, Finch, Rickman & Company of Staines were absorbed. This was followed by an amalgamation in 1903 with the famous mustard company J & J COLMAN LIMITED of London, who had an extensive factory in Norwich. This must have just about 'sewn-up' the mustard business.

Various locations are recorded. In 1874, 6, Garlick Hill, London, E.C, was given. In the early 1900's a factory known as 'New Central' could be found in Denmark Street, with offices in St. George Street, London, E.1.

Products from this company which have stood the test of time are, Keen's Blue, Robinson's Patent Barley and Patent Groats.

Three different perfin dies are recorded in the Identities Catalogue.

(1) KEEN 10,10,10,13
& Co 14,8,6
4½mm. (1)
Cat. No. 67.

Issues Reported

Q.V. 1d plates : 106, 113, 116, 119, 120, 122, 123, 125, 134,
136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 144, 146, 147, 148,
149, 150, 151, 153, 156, 158, 159, 160, 163,
164, 169, 172, 174, 178, 179, 180, 191, 193,
196, 200, 206, 212, 216, 217, 219.
1½d plates : (1), 3
2d plate : 13
(2½d plate 17 mauve is unconfirmed)

Member P. G. Day has an example without the "& Co" on a 3d on 3d, plate 21. Careful examination fails to detect any sign of the possible missing punctures, or to elucidate any reason for this.

London killer type postmarks are in evidence. All facts pointing to an early Sloper client.

FN/K1

