

## COLMAN'S OF NORWICH

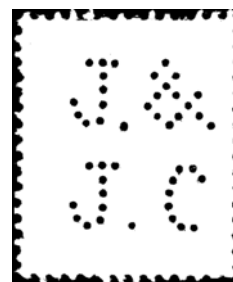
Maurice Harp

There can be few companies in the world with such a proud tradition and heritage as Colman's of Norwich. Their history dates back to 1814, a time when George III was on the throne and Wellington was preparing to defeat Napoleon at Waterloo.

**Colman's**  
*of Norwich*

It was in that year that Jeremiah Colman, a flour miller of ten years experience took over a mustard manufacturing business based on the river Tas, four miles south of Norwich. In 1823 Jeremiah took his adopted nephew, James, into partnership in the new firm J & J Colman. The partnership prospered and in 1836, a London branch was established.

Following the deaths of his great uncle Jeremiah in 1851 and his father James just three years later, young Jeremiah James Colman found himself head of a firm which employed 200 people and was in the process of moving its present location at Carrow. The transfer took some time and was finally completed in 1862.



J4350.01

The famous Colman bulls' head trade mark dates from 1855 although it was originally registered for a 'Starch for laundry and manufacturing purposes'. The Colmans signature appearing on mustard labels was written by Edward Colman one of the three nephews of the founder Jeremiah.



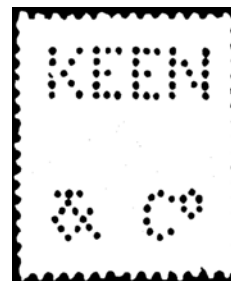
In 1866 the firm received the ultimate accolade. Queen Victoria granted a special Warrant as Manufacturers to Her Majesty. This Royal Warrant is still carried on all Colman's products today.

Jeremiah James Colman was something of a visionary with ideas on employment years ahead of his time. He realised a healthy and happy workforce would be more productive and

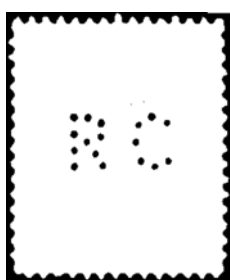
took steps to achieve this. In 1864 he built a subsidised school for his employee's children. A kitchen was set up in 1868 to provide hot meals at affordable prices and in 1878 one of the very first industrial nurses, was appointed to assist the company doctor in the dispensary and to visit sick employees.

In 1875 the company also took the step around this time in getting its stamps perfined using die J4350.01. This one die was in use until around 1939 and appears to have been mainly used by their London office with London EC and Lombard St cancels predominating. A Birmingham cancel has also been recorded. No other die is known used by the company.

In 1903 Colman's bought out rival mustard manufacturer, Keen Robinson & Company, originally Keen & Son, who were founded in 1742. The company had been successful in making their product a household name, hence the phrase "as keen as mustard." The Robinson's name is still famous today for its lemon barley water and its range of baby foods. Only one perfin die is known used by Keen Robinson and that is K0670.01, which was only used for a short period between 1870 and 1879.



K0670.01



R0810.01M

In 1896 the partnership became a limited company with Jeremiah James Colman becoming the first chairman. The Colman's expansion continued with the acquisition of two smaller mustard manufacturers and in 1938 the company merged with Reckitt & Sons. The new company Reckitt & Colman had a diverse range of products and grew to become one of the UK's most successful businesses. Surprisingly although there are a number of perfin dies associated with Reckitt & Son prior to the amalgamation there is only one die associated with Reckitt & Colman R0810.01M which was in use by a number of companies between 1941 and 1975.

In 1973 the company celebrated 150 years of business since the partnership, J & J Colman with the opening of the Mustard Shop, in Norwich. In 1995 Unilever purchased the Colman's brand.