



The Pearson Story

Pearson Candy Company was founded in 1909 by P. Edward Pearson with the assistance of his two brothers John Albert and Oscar F. Pearson. A few years later, two more brothers Waldemar and C. Fritz joined the Minneapolis-based company, which began as a candy distribution firm, doing a little bit of manufacturing on the side.

The Nut Goodie Bar, one of the company's first manufactured products, made its debut in 1912 as a premium 5-cent candy bar, and was met with much success. Pearson's Salted Nut Roll was introduced in 1933 at the height of the depression and soon changed its name to the Choo Choo Bar in an effort to distinguish it from its competitors. Later the Choo Choo name was dropped and Pearson's name was prominently displayed on the wrapper so consumers could always find it in the store amidst other competing Salted Nut Rolls.

By the end of World War II, the Pearson brothers decided to drop their distribution business and concentrate solely on candy manufacturing. Undaunted by the passing of two brothers, the firm stayed in the family. The youngest brother, William Henning Pearson joined the family business in 1944, as did George Pearson, son of founder P. Edward Pearson.

In 1951, Pearson's purchased the Trudeau Candy Company of Saint Paul, known for the famed Seven-Up Bar. It was this acquisition that brought the Mint Pattie to the Pearson line. In 1959 - an appropriate climax to Pearson's 50th anniversary celebration - the company moved from a downtown St. Paul location to a brand new manufacturing plant at its current address on West Seventh Street.

The Pearson family sold the business in the late 1960's to ITT/Continental Baking. Managing from New York, ITT was unfamiliar with the candy business and chose to sell the company after ten years. A confectionery partnership purchased Pearson's in 1979, but the owners again operated from out of state and their focus shifted away from Pearson's branded products. During this time period, fans of Pearson's candies had trouble finding their favorite products in stores. Sales dipped and loyal Nut Goodie followers were further confused by a total wrap re-design and flavor change.

For over a decade, the firm successfully weathered the ups and downs that came with the changes in ownership. In 1985, two Pearson employees purchased Pearson Candy Company. Their sole intention was to give the Pearson brand the attention it so richly deserved, and return the Nut Goodie and other Pearson products to the quality that had made them famous. The Nut Goodie's original wrapper and recipe returned, as did loyal customers.

Along with the Salted Nut Roll and Nut Goodie, Pearson's Mint Patties - in the distinctive green and silver wrap - continue to set the standard by which others are measured. In early 1998, Pearson's also acquired the Bun Bar trademark from Clark Bar America. The Bun brand, which was first manufactured in the early 1900's, has a similar history to Pearson's Nut Goodie. Pearson's initially offered Bun Bars in maple and vanilla flavors and has since added caramel.

As we celebrate our first 100 years, we not only reflect on our rich history, but lay the foundation for a strong future. We are honored to continue a tradition started by the Pearson brothers so long ago. Pearson Candy Company is pleased that our candies have brought enjoyment to so many generations and proud that our candies are still produced entirely in the USA!