

AS SOCIAL PRESSURES ON SMOKERS INCREASE,  
WILL THE SNUFF TAKING HABIT RETURN?

## WAITING FOR THE UPTURN IN SNUFF

If television and the national press are to be believed there has never been a time when all those who enjoy tobacco have been under such great pressure to give up the habit or, failing that, only to consume it in secret, preferably when no-one else is present.

Smoking seems destined, if the more irrational of antis get their way, to become a new solitary vice in place of one which cranky educationalists seem all set to promote to the role of spectator sport.

### ILLOGICAL FURY

What seems to rouse the opponents of nicotine to heights of illogical fury is the sight of any tobacco smoke, irrespective of what is producing it. If this were not so pipe smokers and almost all those who take pleasure from cigars could go about their lawful occasions unassailed by any criticism on the grounds of health.

Pipe and cigar smokers continue to be attacked by those who have swallowed the wholly unsupported case that 'secondary smoke' might prove to be a health hazard to non-smokers.

The fact that there is growing evidence which shows the contrary is unlikely to prove acceptable to the closed minds of anti-smokers. They may have some justification in the cases of allergy or breathing problems which may cause distress but not danger in a smoking atmosphere. But this is a problem which can be solved given tolerance and goodwill. Better still is the provision of adequate ventilation systems; but this will not prevent pressure for a ban on smoking in public places, in shops, offices and other places of work and on the transport taking people to and from their jobs.

### DEPRIVATION

Many smokers are now being faced with the prospect of several hours of deprivation — the word is not ill-chosen — before reaching the privacy of a home where smoking is permitted.

But this is no new difficulty. For well over a hundred years there have



*The wide range of snuffs offered by Samuel Gawith of Kendal. The company has been grinding snuff since the reign of King George II in the town which has been associated with the tobacco making district of Westmoreland. Kendal was ideally situated to take advantage of the local geography providing water power for the snuff machinery while being within reach of the west coast ports receiving tobacco laden ships.*

been whole industries where smoking at work could not be allowed, and in some, like mining, where the tea-break or time out for a smoke in a permitted area was impossible during a long shift.

The tradition of tobacco produced and consumed without combustion is a long and honourable one and the stories of chewing tobaccos, snuffs and other ways of getting the satisfactions of nicotine without first setting fire to it is by no means the least interesting chapters of most histories of the smoking habit.

*Gallaher is also in the snuff market with High Toast, High Toast Well Scented, Irish 'D' High Toast and Genuine Irish as well as the traditional Wit & Wisdom Menthol Snuff.*



Traditionally chewing tobaccos had their following among the more rugged sections of society — seamen, cowboys, coal face workers and indeed snuff, in its heyday, was a high fashion habit with its habitués ranging from Queen Anne herself and the intellectuals of her reign to the bucks of the Regency period.

### CONVENIENCE

The convenience of the omnipresent cigarette from the turn of the last century onwards rapidly undermined the markets for every other form of tobacco use and snuff was affected the more so because it was already failing out of fashion. If ever the stage was set for a return to favour it must surely be the present time.

If to 'show smoke' is to become an offence against the conventions or the rules of society the taking of snuff can offer comfort to the deprived.

Above all snuff taking is an inexpensive habit since for many years the product has been free from excise duty which in the case of combustible smoking products was high to start with and as far as cigarettes are concerned goes up year on year.

Just why the expected boom in snuff which is predicted annually by journal-

ists in their reports on the Chancellor's latest excesses has not yet materialised is hard to understand.

That the expectations are great must surely be deduced from the considerable promotional effort and expenditure which has been, and continues to be invested in Skoal Bandits the oral snuff which has found great success in the US and other European countries.

The success of the Skoal product from US Tobacco must have been hindered by the continuing bitter campaign waged against it by antagonists who see the prospect of an alternative to the cigarette as in some way side stepping their efforts to have nicotine banned, although all their earlier efforts were concentrated on smoke producing tobacco.

#### CURIOUS EVIDENCE

Some of the vilification of oral tobaccos together with some curious medical evidence based on the effects of the snuff taking rituals of one African tribe, may have rubbed off on more traditional products but it has been suggested that what is lacking is example and personal experience.

How long is it since readers saw anyone enjoying a pinch of snuff in public, or even in company? Snuff taking seems to have gone underground in more senses than one, and one can almost visualise snuff 'speakeasies'



Wilson's of Sharrow products show the wide range of different packs available to the snuff trade, from tins, jars, plastic boxes and dispensers to foil sachets. The company, which exports much of its snuff, is also a wholesaler of snuff as well as other tobacco and allied products.

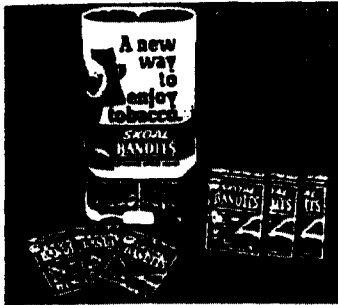
# McChrystal's

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Above left. Skoal Bandits smokeless tobacco in miniature 'tea' bags has created a new interest and also became a target of the anti-tobacco activists. Undeterred, US Tobacco has recently announced plans for a significant expansion of its East Kilbride factory to supply the U.K. but also to fulfil the growing market for Skoal Bandits in Europe.

Below left. Hedges L260 snuff, which has been a leader in its field for many years. It is supplied by Permafex, our illustration shows that it is available in four sizes of tins. Also from Permafex are the Hedges Beau Brummell Camphor Snuffs, which are also amongst the best sellers and which are of such benefit to users.

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where, as in the days of prohibition in the States, secret knocks on hidden doors admitted those in search of a drink in a haven where alcohol could be served.

### OUT OF THE CLOSET

It is time snuff takers came out of the closet and adopted the flamboyant rituals and ceremonial of the great days of the product.

There are signs that it is already coming into fashion again among the trendy young and although they make life difficult for the retailer by the rapid changes in demand as flavour preferences come and go they could represent the market of the future.

On a more mundane level at this time of year the occasional and seasonal snuff takers return to the tried and trusted medicated snuffs which will be their stand-by during the long months of winter with its accompanying ailments.

At least one leading snuff manufacturer believes that loyalty to the product is being built up through the interest of the young in the floral and fruity flavoured snuffs and of the not quite so young, in the menthols and

mint which are of such benefit to the nasal passages.

Look through the products listed by the six leaders in the snuff market in their price lists (and in the Tobacco Trade Marketing Directory — Ed) and it is the menthol brands which are among their best sellers.

### THE LEADERS

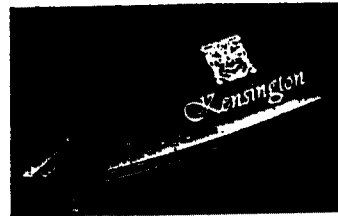
Gawith Hoggarth with C M Camphorated Menthol; Samuel Gawith with Menthol and Mellomint; Hedges with only two brands but both market leaders — Beau Brummel a camphor snuff and the famous Hedges L260 menthol flavoured; Wilsons of Sharrow — Camphor and Mild, Extra Strong Menthol, McChrystals New Medicated and Riley's Brown Menthol. Smith the Snuff Blender of Charing Cross Road offering over-eighty varieties among them many menthol mint, camphor and eucalyptus types — the choice is a wide one. Almost all these products have been tried and tested over many years and all have their following.

The trader who locates and matches the needs of the snuff market has a

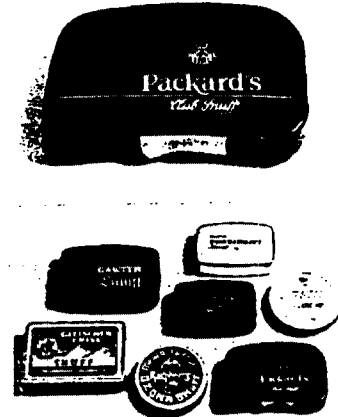
loyal following. The largest company in the field, the Imperial owned J & H Wilson Limited of Sheffield, dominates much of the market including as it does the medicated elements of the Dr Rumneys — Mentholypus, Brown, Singletons, Super Menthol and Illingworth's No. 1 and Kerglow ranges of products and Extra Strong and Finest Menthol snuffs under the J & H Wilson name.

It is J & H Wilson which in recent years has been doing most to revitalise

Packet dispensers are increasing in numbers. Below top, Kensington Menthol Snuff from J & H Wilson, below centre, a different dispenser for Packard's (Pöschl) which is part of the wider range (bottom) of the snuff from Pöschl's Landshut, Germany mills distributed in this country by Gawith Hoggarth.



McChrystals snuff comes in four sizes of tins as well as a handy pocket dispenser which is thumb operated. These dispensers are available for McChrystals Mild Lemon, Anisette, Super-mint, Violet, English Menthol and Highland Ice varieties. McChrystals, the Leicester based snuff firm, also produce Bradshaws, Rileys and Sturco in varying flavours.



# Britain's leading snuff grinder and blender

**J. & H. Wilson Ltd**

Westbrook Mill, Sheffield, S11 8YY England



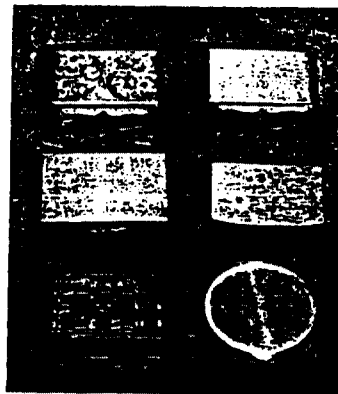
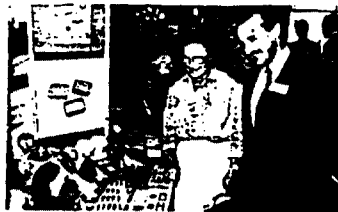
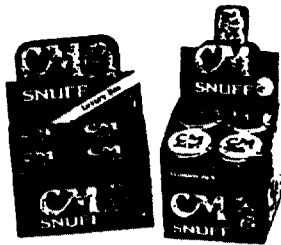
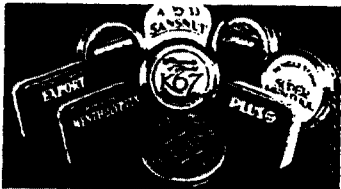
Also incorporating the famous Dr Rumney's, Singleton's and Illingworth's ranges of snuffs

the snuff market by its advertising leaflet and sampling offers backing a strong sales effort. All the companies in the field have moved into new styles of packaging and presentation of their popular products which should make them fully acceptable to a modern audience.

Snuff is still poised for a breakthrough into new growth areas. It offers excellent profit to retailers compounded by the small area needed to stock and display a product range which will reflect the seasonal opportunities of January and February.

Taking advantage of this demand could lay the foundations of a continuing year round demand once a shop is known to be one in which snuff takers — male and female — will find what they want.

The time for new stockists to experiment with snuff and for existing retailers to maximise custom with the display material which all the suppliers are ready to provide is now. Make snuff the new year resolution and add a new dimension to turnover.



*Below left, Illingworth's, Dr Rumney's and Singleton Snuffs now distributed by J & H Wilson. Above, Gawith Hoggarth's CM, camphorated menthol. It is the company's best seller now available in modern display packs. Above right, amongst the accessories of snuff taking is the snuff mill — a traditional receptacle, the one illustrated is the property of J & H Wilson, admired by Mrs Meeham of Turmeu's, Liverpool, and Trevor Dinnigan of J & H Wilson on that company's stand at NATOBEX. Right, some of the finest snuff boxes can be found at G Smith & Sons in the Charing Cross Road.*