

THE FINISHING TOUCH...



W. T. Johnson & Sons

THE TEXTILE FINISHERS



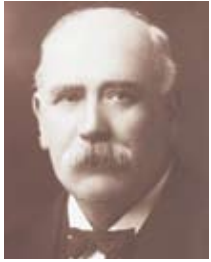
“My great-grandfather was a man of vision and passion in an age when those terms were not lightly used. His foresight and dedication put our family firm on excellent foundations, and we are immensely proud to be still building on the uncompromising tradition of quality he began over 90 years ago.”

Paul Johnson, 2006



The original Bankfield Mills – built in 1829 and the home of W.T. Johnson & Sons since 1910. The building is still in use today within the current W.T. Johnson & Sons site.

The Johnson Family



Walter Thomas



Walter Marshall



Frank



Tom



David



Peter



Paul



Dan

A Textile Heritage

Four generations of textile finishing expertise

By the mid-19th century Huddersfield had a well established reputation for the manufacture of fine worsteds, fancy tweeds, and woollens and there were several large woollen mills in and around the town.

One of these mills was Glendenning's where, in 1910, the middle-aged Walter Thomas Johnson made the bold decision to take his skills as Foreman Finisher and set up his own, specialist finishing firm. It would prove to be a wise decision for, within a few decades, the large mills began to close one by one, beaten by cheaper offshore competition.

Meanwhile, Walter Johnson's specialist finishing firm quietly grew and prospered. From the outset, Walter was joined by his eldest son, Walter Marshall ('W.M.') and, later on, his other two sons, Tom and Frank joined the firm, followed in turn by the next generation, David and Peter.

Keeping it in the family

The specialist skills and experience of these master textile finishers has been passed down through the generations. W.M.'s son, Peter, has played a pivotal role in guiding the firm over the past fifty years and now, his sons, Paul and Dan, are following in his footsteps, preparing the company for future growth.

One of Peter's key skills has been in refining the existing plant technology and creating innovative new machinery to perform highly specific finishing functions. Several of the machines in the Johnson's mill are unique in the world, enabling the company to create bespoke, high quality finishes on an ever increasing range of fabrics.

Paul and Dan share their father's passion for textiles and, together with their highly skilled workforce, they are constantly improving their techniques and processes.



Huddersfield nestles high in the foothills of the Pennines at the juncture of the Colne and Holme valleys, where the River Colne meets its tributaries, the Holme and Fenay Beck.



An Ideal Environment

Huddersfield's unique place in the world textile industry

The history of textile manufacture in England is intricately woven into the history of Huddersfield itself. For over 700 years, weavers have been attracted to this area of West Yorkshire by a combination of conditions ideal for sheep grazing, and a plentiful supply of soft water streams for washing or scouring wool.

Those early weavers took for granted Huddersfield's fortunate confluence of topography, geology and climate that is almost unique in the world. These conditions create an ideal micro climate and water supply that is as important to the textile producers of England as 'terroir' – the combination of environmental factors - is to the master wine-makers of France.

These waters are created high up in the Pennine hills, where prevailing southwest winds off the Atlantic carry moisture-laden clouds onto the hillsides. The resulting 50-plus inches of annual rainfall saturates the surrounding landscape, percolating through the geological foundations of local gritstone and shale.

By the time this water reaches the valley floor it has been filtered and softened through layer upon layer of stone, creating pure, clean, consistent, soft water that is the envy of woollen producers worldwide. For this supremely soft water, together with the region's combination of cool climate and high relative humidity, is a fabric finisher's dream.

This unique 'Huddersfield factor' is why high quality textile producers from all over the region – and increasingly, further afield – rely on W.T. Johnson & Sons to provide the finishing touch that represents the essence of premium quality English worsteds for demanding customers around the world.





A Highly Valued Workforce

The company employs over 90 skilled finishers, nearly all from the local area, and many have been with the firm for most of their working lives.

It takes many years for a finisher to master the skills that go into producing the superb finishes for which W.T. Johnson & Sons are famous. The firm's commitment and investment in ongoing multi-skill training ensures that each staff member develops the core textile finishing skill-base. But just as important are the personal development skills that are an integral part of this programme of continuous development. It all makes for a very comfortable, teamwork environment built on trust, mutual respect and shared values.

The Johnson family ethos is 'if we look after our employees, they'll look after us'. And they do – the workforce skill-base and perfectionist attitude is an invaluable part of the company's success and helps to drive their goal to be the world leader in high quality textile finishing.



EKOFAST

The cornerstone of many of W.T. Johnson & Sons' finishes. High temperature continuous setting giving permanent softness and stability with 100% continuity. W.T. Johnson & Sons' two machines are unique, having been developed from the original.



Producing the Finest Quality

Timeless processes, fine-tuned for the future

The textile finishing industry uses vast quantities of water, and one of the secrets of W.T. Johnson & Sons' success is their unusual water supply.

In the late 1930's, the firm's founders realised that it would be of long-term benefit to the company to invest in their own water supply, independent of the local water company. Little did they realise that it would take over two years and 1500 feet of bore hole to find the elusive water source.

This unique deep-ground resource is today a source of great pride to the company, for it provides a pure, natural, uncontaminated and consistent supply of famously soft Pennine water for all their finishing processes which local water companies simply cannot supply. This is absolutely crucial for producing consistently soft fabric finishes, because washing, or 'scouring', is the first stage in the three-stage finishing routine of washing, drying and setting.

The end results of these processes are the products for which W.T. Johnson & Sons are world famous: beautifully finished worsted and wool blended high value fabrics, produced for the luxury end of the international clothing trade. But it's not just about the water. It's how they use it that really counts.

Innovative Engineering Skills

W.T. Johnson & Sons decision to spend on their extraordinary bore hole was a key moment in the company's history. It set the pattern for forward-thinking capital investment in machinery, processes and people that continues to this day.

It means that the firm can not only buy the very best finishing machinery available, but they have also developed the innovative engineering skills and textile experience that allow them to design and build original machinery and processes, unavailable anywhere else in the world. An overview of W.T. Johnson & Sons' processes is shown on the following pages.

As a result, they can create both branded and bespoke textile finishes and produce them consistently, month after month, year after year, for a very demanding worldwide market.



HIGH TEMPERATURE BATCH DECATING

The machine provides a range of permanent finish options with the best available batch to batch control.



JET SCOUR

Ground breaking machine allowing scouring and softening of the most delicate of fabrics.



DOLLY SCOUR

The original wooden scouring dolly. An essential part of any wool finishing plant. The dolly remains the vessel of choice for scouring and developing the finest wool fabrics.



MILLING

A full range of milling is offered from light crush to blind flannel. W.T. Johnson & Sons' skills have resulted in the processing, on commission, of renowned branded milled fabric. A variety of machines are used from single milling machines to large, computer controlled, combination scouring and milling machines illustrated above.



DRYING

A combination of state of the art mechanical water removal and gas fired drying allows for maximum machine efficiencies. In addition, fabric dimensions and residual moisture levels can be precisely controlled.



SOLVENT SCOUR

Uniform and complete cleaning without affecting the fabric in any other way. Environmentally sound technology.



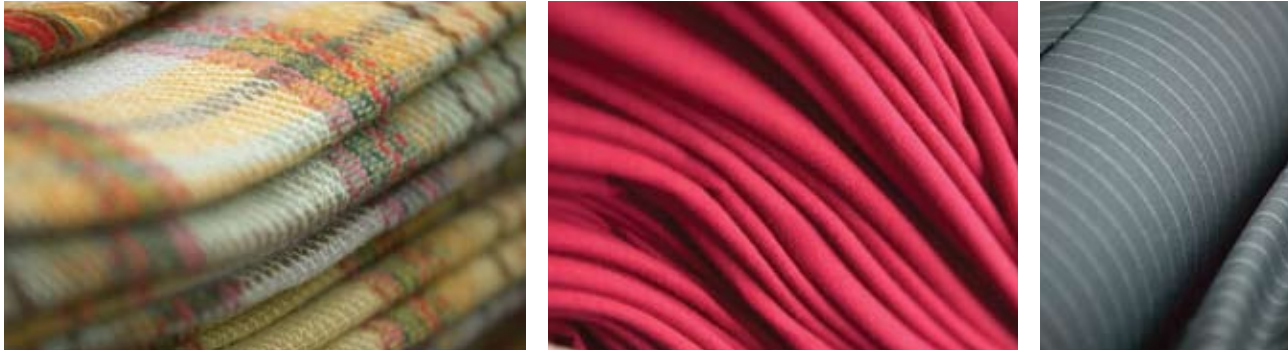
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The final part in the creation of the traditional English merchant finish, which has been recognised the world over.



CUTTING

Variable degrees of cutting from smart, high performance suiting to traditional natural woollens. Swiss made precision machinery with absolute control.



Allied Applications

Fabric Dyeing

W.T. Johnson & Sons have the specialised machinery and expertise to apply high quality fabric dyes to a range of worsted, wool blend and other fabrics. They use both traditional and modern equipment to achieve the desired results, whether it's producing small lots for fashion colours or large runs for product colour continuity.

Their dedicated colour lab can create new colour variants; they can accurately match existing colours and have developed innovative dyeing techniques to produce exciting and original fabric effects.

Chemical Company Partnerships

Close partnerships have been developed with selected chemical companies, allowing W.T. Johnson & Sons to provide highly specialised finishes for a range of textiles.

Specialised Skills

W.T. Johnson & Sons are continually broadening their product portfolio, utilising specialist skills and experience to produce unique finishes for the upholstery industry, technical textiles, fashion accessories and other specialised applications, for example cotton, silk, linen etc.



COLOUR LABORATORY

This contains a computerised match prediction system that measures colour and then calculates the required recipe. The lab dyeing machine provides for the accurate dispensing of dye for producing small shade cuttings for customer shade cards or as trials prior to bulk dyeings.



JET DYEING

These soft flow machines were selected for their ability to process a wide variety of fabric including mohair, polyester and heavy woollens. These pressure vessels can operate at high temperature and are particularly economical with water and energy.



WINCH DYEING

The traditional Yorkshire winch has a kind action and is suitable for a wide range of quality wool and wool blend fabric. A range of machine sizes give flexibility of dye batch.



FULL INSPECTION SERVICE

W.T. Johnson & Sons can offer its customers a full inspection and make up service. This ability to provide a one stop shop for customers who send pieces for dyeing, finishing and despatch is increasingly valuable to textile manufacturers.

 COOLSTRETCH™

 SILVERSHIELD®

 NANOBLOC®

 V.V. FINISH®

Designing for the Future

With such intuitive technical skills in-house, W.T. Johnson & Sons have the ability to work hand-in-glove with fabric and fashion designers to create the next generation of specialised finishes. They have an unsurpassed knowledge of how to make fabric look, feel and perform for every application, from the finest gentlemen's worsted suiting to specialised safety clothing and upholstery fabrics.

By using this knowledge, creating extraordinarily close relationships throughout the supply chain, and utilising market intelligence, W.T. Johnson & Sons can engineer fabric finishes that exactly fit each requirement, customer by customer.

In the luxury market, this specialisation has been a proven asset, giving the firm an unrivalled reputation for innovation, anticipation and superb quality that adds value to everything they produce.

Leading Through Research and Development

The firm's talented Research and Development people have forged close links with local universities, chemical companies and textile industry organisations. Together, they are constantly pushing the frontiers, investigating new technologies and processes to improve quality, broaden the portfolio of finishes and products and speed up turnaround.

In parallel, they are creating new fabric finishes that accentuate functionality while maintaining the all-important aesthetics of look, feel and drape. These finishes now include W.T. Johnson & Sons own brands: V.V., Coolstretch, Silvershield, Nanobloc and Antique. Each was developed to provide superior finishing capabilities. They are also working with the Soil Association on a range of organic finishes.

Ongoing investment in skilled people and innovative processes is producing the finishes of the future that will keep the W.T. Johnson & Sons 'Made in England' label the byword for textile finishing quality.



FINE TAILORING

W.T. Johnson & Sons are proud to provide the very finest quality finished fabrics used by talented tailors to produce the most highly prized made-to-measure suits in the world.



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