

# Sharps toffee of Maidstone

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For much of the 20th century, Maidstone, in Kent, was the home of Sharps toffee. Sharps toffee was advertised by a character called Sir Kreemy Knut, and its makers once claimed to be the largest toffee manufacturers in the world.

## A grocer and his wife's sweets

The business was started by Edward Sharp. According to Maidstone Museum, in 1876 he opened a small shop on Week Street, in Maidstone, which at first was a grocery. Grace's Guide gives the founding date as 1877. Alongside the groceries, he sold a small selection of sweets made by his wife. They became so popular that he gave up the grocery trade altogether and concentrated on sweets.

## From ice rink to toffee factory

As the business grew, Sharp needed more room. He turned a local ice rink on the bank of the River Medway into a factory, and the firm later built a new factory three times the size of the old one. One of its products was Kreemy toffee. By the early 1920s it was advertising Sharp's Super Kreem Toffee.

## Sir Kreemy Knut

Its character, Sir Kreemy Knut, was the face of Sharps from 1919. By 1921 Sharps claimed to be the largest toffee makers in the world, and at the British Industries Fair in 1922 it advertised itself as the largest manufacturers of toffee in the world.

## Trebor Sharps

In 1961 Edward Sharp and Sons was acquired by Robertson and Woodcock, the makers of Trebor, and in 1968 the name was changed to Trebor Sharps. Trebor itself was bought by Cadbury Schweppes in 1989. Toffee went on being made in Maidstone until 2000, when the factory closed.

The Sharps name did not disappear entirely. In 2008, when Tangerine Confectionery bought a group of sweet brands from Cadbury, the deal included Sharps of York, alongside Barratt and others.

## Maidstone's toffee town

Maidstone joins other British towns with a toffee maker, like Halifax with Mackintosh's: see [John Mackintosh, the toffee king of Halifax](#). For more old British toffees, see [old fashioned toffee](#).

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