



Celebrating
150 YEARS
of fine fabrics

JAMES HARE

SINCE 1865



Alfred Smith

The history of the 'House of Hare'

1865 —1900's



This Page (Top)
James Hare

This Page (L+R)
Arthur Hare & Clifford Hare

Opposite Page (Top)
Queen Victoria

Opposite Page (Middle)
James Hare with some of his employees

Opposite Page (Left)
Old company logo illustrating James Hare travelling to work with his wife and daughters

Opposite Page (Right)
From humble beginnings on Clare Street



— 1865

James Hare sets up in a cottage on Clare Street, Leeds, purchasing odd fabric lengths and selling to train drivers or guards who in turn sold them to London tailors.

— 1876

The company moves into a Leeds city centre warehouse as it develops into a bona fide woollen merchants.

— 1882

The horse and carriage logo is designed. The original version shows the founder, James Hare, travelling to the office every day from his home, accompanied by his wife Mary Ellen and daughters Florrie and Kate.

— 1892

Arthur and Clifford Hare, the founder's sons, join the business.

— 1901

James hears that Queen Victoria is seriously ill. In those days, everyone wore black following the death of a monarch, and so he sinks all his savings into black serge. On her death, the company sells 250,000 metres of black cloth. This is a turning point, as a business which was previously limited to the north of England became known throughout the country.

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1865 —1900's



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— 1903

The costume department opened.

— 1905

Face Cloth was successfully introduced.

— 1908

James Hare died and the business was taken over by his sons Arthur and Clifford.

JH

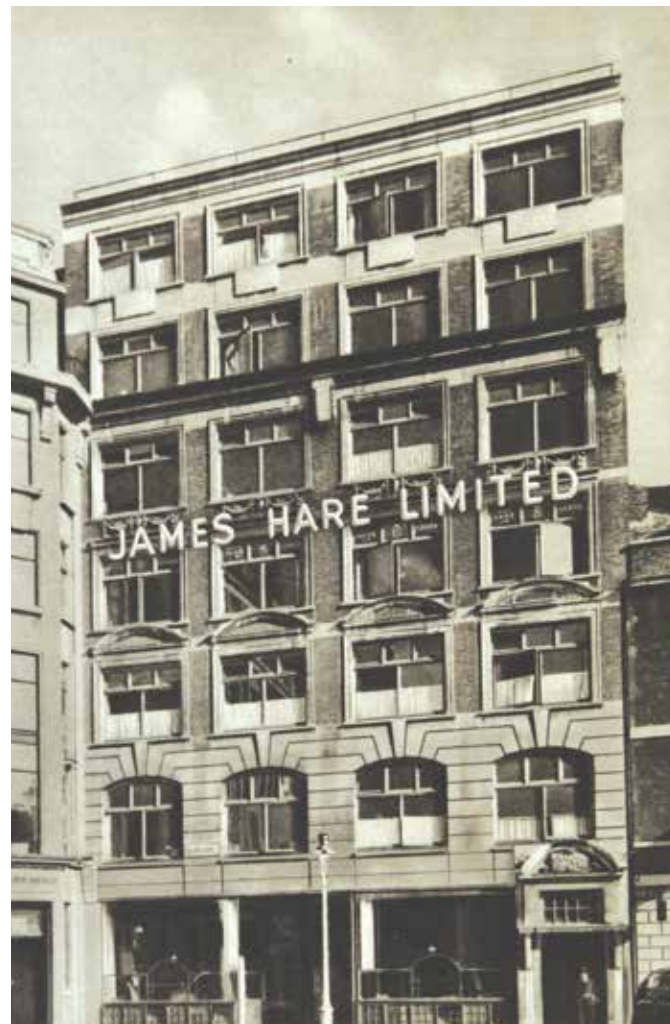


The story of James Hare is one of small beginnings. With nothing but experience and an understanding of the needs of the tailoring trade, James began the business single-handedly distributing cloth bought from small weavers.

The company's values were 'upright dealing', 'honest value' and 'full satisfaction'. In the words of its founder, "to us this reputation is a very precious thing. We treasure it as we treasure our dignity. For this reputation – this dignity – this family pride – gives our customers full confidence that we shall never sell anything that in quality and sterling worth might be held to be below that high standard set for us".



1910 —1920's



This Page (Top)
Bunches for the tailoring trade

This Page (Left)
London offices, Grafton House,
Golden Square W1

This Page (Right)
Wellington Street Warehouse,
Leeds

This Page (Bottom)
Harris Tweed booklet

Opposite Page
Manufacturing at Arlington Mills



— 1913

The company launched into the manufacture of woollens and worsteds, starting off with 7 looms. At the Leeds headquarters, there were twisting and weaving units, dye mills and a finishing department, supplying both the male and female tailoring trades throughout the British Isles.

— 1914

During the upheaval of the First World War, when the cloth manufacturing and dye trades were in a chaotic condition, Hare's were the only people who unconditionally guaranteed their dye wares. In the words of Clifford Hare, the founder's son, "Hare's dyes are part of the Hare scheme of excellence".

— 1921

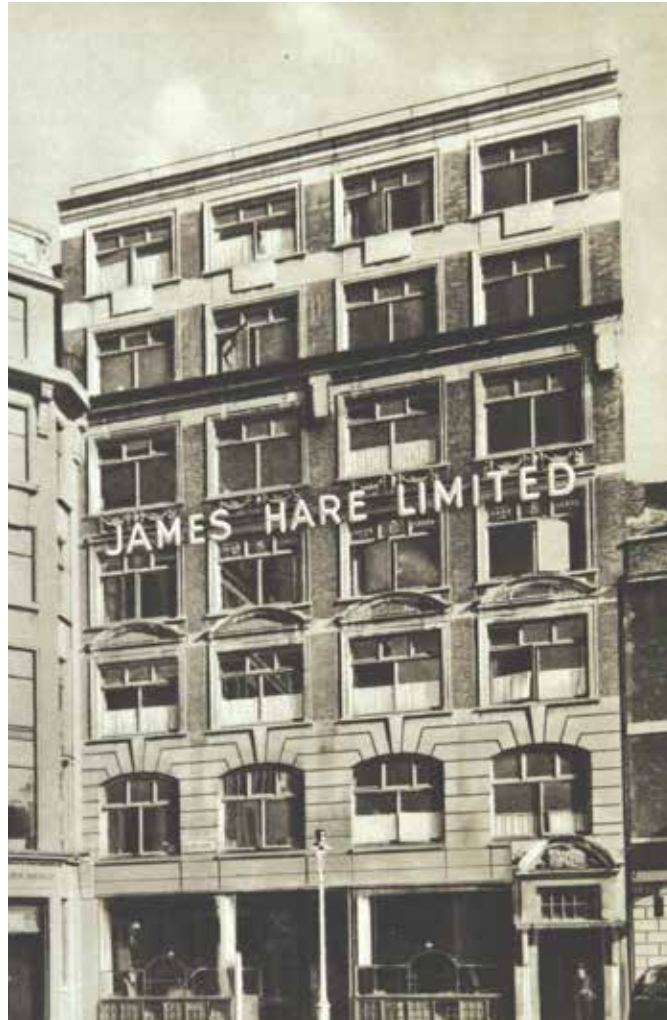
Arthur Hare was on holiday at a hotel in Southwold. One evening in the bar, he had a conversation with a London banker whose views on the world financial situation were grave. The next morning Arthur headed home and called a conference with his brother, a decision was made to drastically reduce stocks with huge price reductions. Two months later the financial crisis came to a head and although James Hare suffered, they fared better than the rest of the trade.

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— 1926

James Hare were the first company to introduce bunches for the tailoring trade, made at the company's headquarters. The firm's accountants once calculated that the cloth used each year for those bunches would make a carpet two yards wide that would stretch from Leeds to Carlisle!

— 1929

The company was amongst the first to recognise the unique beauty of Harris Tweed. Mr. Herbert Morris, the only non-family Director, loved the Islands and spent his holidays there. Through his foresight and guidance, Hare's became the largest stockist of Harris Tweed in the world.

James Hare becomes a fully operational cloth manufacturing mill and the biggest stockist of Harris Tweed in the world. Known as the "Cloth Headquarters of the British Isles", it became the largest textile distribution house in Great Britain.



1930 —1950's



This Page (Right)
James William Hare grandson

This Page (Left)
Dress by David Hartnell

This Page (Bottom Right)
The clothing manufacturing
department

This Page (Bottom Right)
James Hare's car fleet



Opposite Page (Top)
Telephone and answer machine

Opposite Page (Right)
Establishing subsidiary company
in Canada

Opposite Page
Queen Mary & the Duchess
of Gloucester

— 1931

The company made its entire fleet of cars available to the election candidates supporting the National Government including the services of its chauffeurs, road representatives and department managers. Its press release announced that "this is the best contribution we can make towards the success of the National Government".

— 1932

James William Hare and Clifford Ronald Pitt Hare, grandsons of the founder, join the firm.

— 1933

James Hare expanded its operations into the manufacture of garments for the tailoring trade, making raincoats, school uniforms, sports jackets and blazers.

— 1935

2,000,000 yards of fabric is despatched from the warehouse.

— 1937

A record number of orders is despatched, 1,168 parcels by 12 noon on the Wednesday following Easter.

firm's policy was always to install latest equipment in order to improve the service offered to their customers. James Hare Ltd. became the first company in Britain, outside of London, to install a teleprinter and an answer machine. They boasted that if a custom tailor placed an order at 9am, the material will be on its way to the station by 9.10am.



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— 1939

Queen Mary and the Duchess of Gloucester posed for a photograph on the James Hare stand at White City, London.

— 1945

The company issued an uplifting Christmas press release to its customers at the end of the war, announcing "How absurd are these rumours that 'Britain is finished... a little tired, perhaps... but finished NO! We at James Hare Ltd, are proud to share in speeding Britain's recovery: in doing so, we maintain and enhance our own tradition of craftsmanship and service".

— 1951

The export department is established with subsidiaries opening in Canada and Germany.

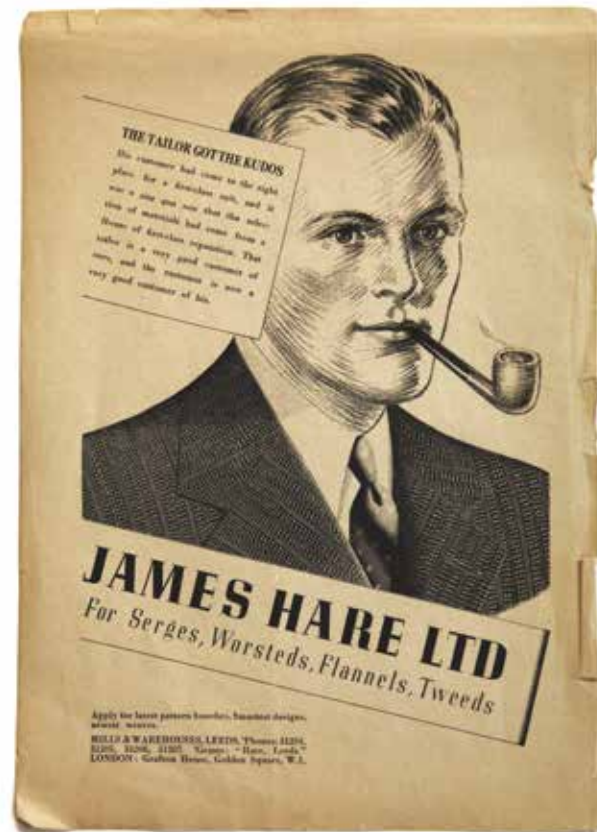
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1960 —1990's



This Page (Top)
James Hare, the current chairman,
joins the firm on his 21st birthday

This Page
Press advertising

Opposite Page
Special Day, '91 Collection &
Touching the Sky Collection

— 1961

Hare's was the first woollen merchant to advertise, earning themselves the nickname "The Quality People". A press office was opened in Fleet Street, London, with a staff of artists, designers, writers and photographers.

— 1964

James Hare, the founders great grandson and current Chairman joined the firm.

— 1984

Tim Hare, the founders great grandson and current Managing Director joined the firm.

The international name of "Hare of England" is sold, and then reopens as a silk distributor for the fashion trade. It is the first company to offer no minimums to small designers, thereby bypassing fabric retail shops. It became the leading importer of silk dupion, just at the time when the puff ball trend takes off.

— 1989

Sold millionth metre of silk.

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1980's is a huge period of
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— 1995

Stocks the largest colour range of silk
dupion in Europe.

— 1999

Moves into the Interior Design business
supplying silks for the furnishings trade.

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The 1980's is a huge period of
change for the company. The woollen
manufacturing firm is sold, along with
the brand "Hare of England". It re
establishes itself as a silk merchant
becoming the leading supplier of the
bridal and fashion trade.



2000 —Today



This Page
Catwalk images

Opposite Page (Right)
James Hare Pimlico and
Evolution ranges

Opposite Page (Top)
The Hare Family today

—2000

Charlie and Saffron Hare, the founder's great-great-grandchildren joined the firm.

—2002

The interior plain silk range is increased to over 600 shades.

—2004

A range of cushions and throws are introduced.

—2005

Exports to over 34 countries worldwide.

—2008

First upholstery collection is introduced.

—2009

Silk wallcovering service is opened. Virtually all the wonderful silks can be paper backed to order.

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Today, James Hare is Britain's leading specialist. It is still owned and run by the Hare family, producing luxury fabrics for the demanding world of fashion and interiors. Firm favourites among leading designers and decorators, as James Hare luxurious fabrics are used worldwide.

The business has progressed over generations but it continues to abide by the founder's principals of bringing the customer only the best of British quality and service.



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The Hare Family today

—2010

Distribution in the Far East is established including China, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia and New Zealand.

—2011

Two showrooms in Beijing are opened.

—2012

London showroom for fashion fabrics is opened.

—2014

Representation in Germany and the United States is established.

—2015

James Hare celebrates its 150th anniversary. The company is marking its remarkable history with two distinctive interior collections, Evolution and Richmond, which fuse heritage inspirations with contemporary style.

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Today, James Hare is Britain's leading silk specialist. It is still owned and run by the Hare family, producing luxury textiles for the demanding world of fashion and interiors. Firm favourites with leading designers and decorators, James Hare luxurious fabrics are famous worldwide.

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