

The Origins of Golly

It is widely understood that due to illness just before the first world war, John Robertson (son of James Robertson) was advised to go abroad for convalescence and so chose to visit America. Whilst recovering he noticed that many young children played with little rag dolls with pop eyes that were made from the off cuts of old clothing.

John Robertson was so intrigued by the popularity of these dolls that he decided to use them as a mascot and trademark for the Robertson's range of products. The dolls were affectionally referred to as a "Golly" by the children, a term John Robertson understood as a young child's mispronunciation of the word "Dolly" and so the world famous trade mark was born.

On return to England John Robertson put his idea to the company board. During 1910 the Golly trade mark idea was accepted and Golly as he was known was included on Robertson literature and products as well as appearing on price lists and labels. Golly was an instant hit, so much so that the enamel badges (brooches) soon followed in 1928 with the first badge produced being a golfer. Badges continued to be produced until 1939 when due to the war and in particular the shortage of metal, production was halted.

The war finished and during 1946 the production of badges returned to normal. Designs changed and Golly got an update from the old pop eyes to the more familiar eyes left version that we are familiar with today, the old Golden shed logo on the chest disappeared and the new Golly with straight legs and that familiar smile was born. Shortly after came new designs including fruits, even Golly pendants and the history of Golly was born.