

Museum objects are irreplaceable evidence of our history and heritage and can really bring your lessons to life. Each of these downloadable resources explores one of the objects in our collection.

For even more ideas, discover our loan boxes at <http://schoolloans.readingmuseum.org.uk/> and search our amazing online database at <http://collections.readingmuseum.org.uk/>

### Huntley & Palmers Biscuit Tin - Motor van



Follow this [link to online database](#) to see the object's full record

#### DESCRIPTION

Object: Huntley & Palmers tin  
Museum object number: 1992.2.286  
Date: 1937-1939  
Material: tin  
Size: is 21.5 cm long, 10.5cm wide and 8.8 tall

This is a Huntley & Palmers **biscuit tin**. It is a miniature delivery **motor van**, complete with a driver, opening doors and moving wheels. When the biscuits were finished it became a toy.

It was packed with sweet breakfast biscuits or ginger nuts, a popular biscuit made with sugar and ginger. The biscuits were wrapped in paper to keep them fresh.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Reading **Huntley & Palmers** business started as a Victorian shop in 1824. By 1898 they had a huge factory employing over 5000 people. They were the **biggest biscuit maker** in the world and exported across the globe; manufacture lasted until 1976.

Huntley & Palmers biscuit tins were made in Reading by their sister company **Huntley, Bourne & Stevens**. They made a range of biscuit tins that doubled up as toys, including canons, buses, globes, cameras, houses and books. The tins came in cardboard boxes with the tin design on them, exactly like a toy from a toy shop. They were also used to hold money, jewellery and smaller toys, like tin soldiers. Most biscuits though were sold loose in shops and scooped out of a glass jar for customers.

Huntley & Palmers used vans from the 1920s. This tin is modelled on a real type of van. The blue and white colour was printed straight onto the tin (this is called offset lithography). The number plate is HP 1937, probably the year when the tin was made. Above the windows it has an advert for Tribrek, the breakfast cereal produced by Huntley & Palmers between 1934 and 1943. There is also a little royal crest on the side with the words 'By Appointment'. H&P could proudly display this logo because it was the official biscuit supplier for the royal family.

## LINKS TO OTHER OBJECTS

There are other biscuit tins from the Huntley & Palmers Toy Tin range in our collection. They show the wide range of designs and can give students inspiration for designing their own. These are a few examples.

- [Mechanical Biscuits leaflet](#)
- [Perambulator Tin](#)
- [London bus tin](#)
- [Camera tin](#)

See also our [Loan Boxes database](#) for related objects.

## IDEAS FOR ACTIVITIES

- **Design your own tin**  
Students can be inspired by Huntley & Palmer's tins to design their own. It could be a favourite toy, their home or the school. They can make a real tin from cardboard and decorate it with their pictures.
- **Write a story**  
What happened to your biscuit tin? What life did the tin have before it was in the museum? Were the biscuits made by someone special?
- **Three precious objects**  
What three things would students want to keep safe in a tin?