

A Glorious History

The industrial revolution of the late 1700s made Britain the workshop of the world. It also brought slums, poverty and ill health to many of the country's factory workers.

By 1833, despite average wages rising to around 46 pence per week, the lack of any welfare state or health care provision made the challenging living and working conditions worse for those who needed it most.

From the appalling social conditions and the desire for people to help each other came friendly societies - groups of individuals committed to supporting each other in times of sickness or death. Through small regular contributions help could be offered to members in need.

The poor social conditions were not helped by the availability of cheap poor quality alcohol from the public houses in which many of these new friendly societies held their meetings, collected their premiums and paid out their claims.

Many friendly societies were organised for people working in particular trades or industries or living in certain communities. Some, like ours, were founded by and for members with particular religious, political or social beliefs.

On 25 August 1835 a small group of men, already committed to the total abstinence of alcohol, met in Mrs Meadowcroft's Temperance Hotel in Bolton Street, Salford, to discuss a friendly society for those who had already 'signed the pledge'.

The name Independent Order of Rechabites comes from the biblical story in Jeremiah where the sons of Rechab were commanded to drink no wine.

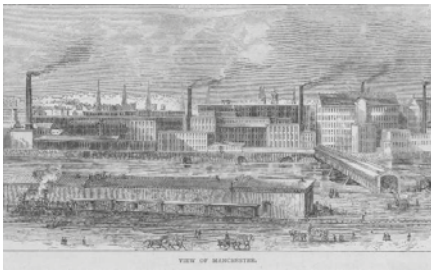
From its first procession on New Year's Day in 1836 the organisation grew rapidly with local groups known as 'tents' being formed throughout the country.

In 1842 contributions of 2 shillings per year for the under 35s entitled you to £5 death benefit and a further penny a week provided you with a sickness benefit of half a crown (12½p).

From these humble beginnings grew an organisation that would provide low cost funeral benefits, affordable sickness insurance and regular savings plans to many thousands of members throughout the country, for over 185 years.

In 1999, as part of its plans to serve Members into the next century, the Society centralised all its various local groups and regions into one Manchester based head office.

Trading since 2002 under the name Healthy Investment, today the Society is a modern, growing financial services mutual that welcomes all investors. It is committed to being an ethical provider of ethical savings and investment products to everyone.



Life in the early 1800s was hard. As the industrial revolution took hold we moved quickly from a nation of land owners and farmers to a nation of factory owners and mill workers. With no welfare state to help, people had to help themselves.



Out of these desperate conditions rose friendly societies. Workers' mutual aid clubs to help financially in times of ill health or death. Many of these societies were small local associations based in local communities helping Members in times of hardship. Some, like ours, grew into national organisations.



The Rechabite Friendly Society was different. It didn't meet in the local pub like many friendly societies did. If you had to pay your penny towards your sickness fund in the back room of the local, sometimes the premiums didn't get paid.



This is Bolton Street in Salford where, in 1835, in Mrs Meadowcroft's Temperance Hotel, the Rechabite Friendly Society was formed.



This is our first Chairman Joseph Goode who, along with others, was responsible for organising the Rechabite's first procession on New Year's Day 1836.



In those early days you could only take out a policy with the Independent Order of Rechabites if you had signed 'the pledge' not to drink alcohol. Whilst anyone can now invest with the Society, we still promise not to invest Members' money in alcohol industries.



In 1842 2 shillings (10p) a year could buy you £5 of life insurance and a further penny could get you half a crown (12 1/2 p) of sickness benefit.



In 1917 the Society moved into a new head office in Parsonage Gardens, central Manchester. It also had 9 regional offices from Edinburgh to Guernsey.



The years after the war, with the formation of the National Health Service, saw a decline in Membership as basic state benefits offered support to those in need. That's why we focused on growing our range of products to include savings plans and mortgages.



It wasn't until 2002 that we introduced the name Healthy Investment. It's only a trading name, and whilst we now allow anyone to invest with us, we're still Rechabites at heart – ethical – mutual – friendly – modern.



In 2007 the Society moved to its new offices in Bury, Greater Manchester. With most of our business now conducted by telephone and email we no longer needed to be in the middle of the city. Being just north of Manchester gives us the best of both worlds.



We now look after over £150 million of Members' money and have over 110,000 Members. We provide a range of ethical savings and investments that include ISAs, Junior ISAs, Investment Bonds and Tax Exempt Savings Plans. All ethical products from an ethical provider.

HealthyInvestment
ethical investments since 1835

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