Hangon Keksi biscuits

‘The moonlight sweetens a pilot’s way, and Hangon Keksi biscuits their eater’s day.’ - Hangon Keksi advert from 1926

Hangon Keksi biscuits and the advertising slogan ‘to smile like a Hangon Keksi biscuit’ are one of the first things that come to a Finn’s mind when Hanko is mentioned. And no wonder – the biscuits were manufactured in Hanko from 1910. The original name of the factory was Suomalais-Englantilainen Biscuittehdas, ‘Finnish–English Biscuit Factory’, and its managing director was Nils Adolf Lindsay von Julin, a pharmacist. The factory was the first of its kind in Finland, and its technical manager was a Mr. Hutton from Great Britain. A new factory building was finished in 1916, at the end of Appelgrenintie road, next to the railway. Later, the biscuit factory was bought by Hemming Elfving, and became the largest company in its field in Finland. In addition to biscuits, it also produced liquorice and other sweets. In the late 1920s, misters Elfving and Fazer, friends and business partners, tossed a coin for which of them would buy the other’s factories. Fazer won. After the Winter War (1939–1941), the biscuit manufacture was relocated to Helsinki. The ownership of the trademark has changed a few times over the years, as well.

The reputation of Hangon Keksi was based on three factors in particular. The first one was a broad range of excellent products. The second was delivery of these far and wide: every corner store had an impressive array of tin boxes full of Hangon Keksi biscuits, from which the customer could choose a suitable selection. Hangon Keksi was also one of the leading advertisers of its time, and the biscuits were marketed in an exemplary way. The smiling Hangon Keksi biscuit, appearing in constantly changing adverts, was in fact the man on the moon.

A round-faced Hangon Keksi biscuit, the most popular of the assortment of 81 biscuits, still smiles from the wall of the Hangon Keksi factory, today the technical office of Hanko. Below, there is the text ‘Tässä talossa – I detta hus, 1916–1940’, referring to the operations ‘In this house’ in that time.

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Source: Birgitta Ekström Söderlund and Marketta Wall, Hangossa kuin ulkomailla konsanaan II (In Hanko – almost like abroad II)