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Records of William Green & Son (Grenson) Ltd.,
of Upper Queen Street, Rushden.

Accession 1978/118

William Green began making shoes in 1866, in the front room of a private house in Green's Yard, Rushden. The business gradually expanded, later being transferred to a factory opposite Wymington Hill, until in 1895, the present factory in Upper Queen Street was built to manufacture men's high-grade leather footwear. This factory has been expanded several times since that date. In 1913 a factory in Station Road, Irchester was opened under the name of The Wholesale and Export Shoe Co. Ltd. to make welted footwear. It became part of The Grenson Group in 1929 and from 1950 onwards, it was run as a making unit for cemented and moccasin footwear and administered from Rushden, until its closure in 1978.

William Green died in 1901 and his son, Mr. Charles Arthur Kersey Green, took over the business. The Rushden business became a Limited Company in 1929 and The Grenson Group was also formed at this time, when Mr. Charles William Sydney Green became Managing Director.

During the war, the Irchester factory joined with Nortons Shoes in the manufacture of Service footwear. The Rushden factory also manufactured Service footwear, naval officers' footwear and flying boots amongst other types of footwear.

In 1945, Mr. Charles William Sydney Green became Chairman and in 1947, Mr. C.A.K. Green died, having been retired from the business for some years.

Mr. C.W.S. Green ceased to take an active part in the Company from 1973, when Mr. James William Heyden Green was appointed Chairman and Mr. C.W.S. Green was elected Honorary Life President.

The Company specialises in the production of men's high-grade quality leather footwear sold under the brand name "Grenson", a contraction of Green & Son. The shoes are often made of unusual leathers such as that of camel, water bison or sealion. Another speciality is the handsewn trimming of uppers, with workers operating both from their own homes and in the factory. William Green & Son Ltd., in the 1930's, were one of the first shoe companies to use the silhouwelted method of footwear construction, a combination of the cemented and welted methods. In the early part of the twentieth century they were also one of the first shoe companies to start an instock business with retailers and in 1960, they were among the first to make cemented footwear in the high-grade range.

The shoes today are sold to retailers and certain leading high-grade outfitters in Britain and exported to many Countries abroad. The Company employs about 420 people in 1978.

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William Green & Son (Grenson) Ltd.

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| 1 | Letter Book | Sept 1900-April 1922 |
| 2 | Xerox Copy of booklet "The Grenson Centenary - 4 Generations of Shoemaking History". | 1966 |

April, 1978.