

HISTORY OF JOHNS PERRY CASTINGS

INTRODUCTION

When the First Fleet arrived in Australia the feeling of isolation must have been frightening. Many months of sailing separated them from their home country. They were on the other side of the world, and largely dependant for their existence on supplies which had been brought on board ship.

Little had changed by the time Tasmania, or Van Diemen's Land as it was then called, was settled, and both free settler and convict suffered very severe deprivations during the first few years. The first settlements were at Hobart in 1803, and at Port Dalrymple (Tamar River) in 1804. Food was naturally the prime concern, and although it had been expected that the settlements would become largely self supporting after the first year, this did not happen. There were several occasions during the first few years when they were close to starvation. During the most desperate times, the inhabitants lived on kangaroo meat, supplemented by meagre amounts of the dwindling supplies of salt meat and flour etc.

Clothing and tools were also a major problem. In this present day we complain if an item cannot be obtained "off the shelf" or at most with only a short delay. In those early years in the colony, a delay of a year could be reasonably expected, for that was the sailing time for a return trip to England. Although skilled tradesmen were encouraged to migrate, a large proportion of the free settlers were engaged on basic subsistence needs, mainly food, so that frequently tradesmen came from the unwilling ranks of the convicts.

Blacksmiths were undoubtedly most important in maintaining and building implements, as well as shoeing the horses. However, iron was in very short supply, for even fourteen years after the founding of Sydney, Governor Hunter when urgently in need and looking for additional sources of supply, wrote (22nd March, 1802) to Under-Secretary King

concerning the process of coal - "cinders, after coal tar is extracted, would answer every purpose of an iron foundry, the country abounding with so much ore." On 20th July, 1805, Governor Phillip King wrote to Under-Secretary Cooke of the desirability of accepting an iron moulder as an immigrant to New South Wales, adding the comment that "there has never been one of that trade in the colony."

Whether that iron moulder actually migrated to New South Wales is not known, but it seems that Van Diemen's Land was to wait for more than twenty five years before its first iron or brass moulder entered the trade in the colony.

The 1830's saw several foundries established in Van Diemen's Land. In Hobart Town (as it was then known), Thomas Tilley had arrived in the colony on 19th June, 1832, and appears to have set up his foundry shortly afterwards, for he is described as an ironfounder in the baptismal record of the birth of his daughter of 5th November, 1834. Robert Russell and his family arrived in Hobart Town on 30th May, 1832. He was described as a "Blacksmith, and iron and brass founder". Apparently he started a business on his own account shortly after landing, for an advertisement in the Hobart Town Courier of 14th December, 1832, stated that he had already been operating for six months. Henry Davidson arrived from Leith on 30th September, 1832, and it is thought started the Derwent Iron Foundry in Barrack, Hobart Town, sometime prior to 1838, when he went into partnership with Alexander Clark.

In Launceston, John Williams established a small iron foundry in Wellington Road, in 1833. We cannot ascertain with certainty the origin of John Williams, but one possibility is that he was an unwilling immigrant to the colony in 1818. Records show that a John Williams (a very common name in those days) was tried at Warwick on 28th March 1818 for being too enterprising in the manner in which he obtained money - he forged his own bank notes. He was then aged 21 years, 5 feet 5 inches (165 cms.) in height, had light brown hair, grey eyes, and was a brass founder by trade. His sentence, which was for life, was

served in the Launceston area. He was to all intents and purposes free in 1831 when he gained a conditional pardon (the condition was that he not return to England).

Whether or not this is the right man we can only guess, but the small iron foundry started by John Williams in 1833 has a history of continuous operation to the present, even though ownership has changed on several occasions.

Although Williams began in a small way, his business filled a definite need in the community, for it provided an alternative to the lengthy wait for goods ordered from England, or even New South Wales, by ship.

In 1835 Williams married Susannah Lehrle at St. John's Church, Launceston.

William Peter, then aged about seventeen years, arrived from Dundee, Scotland, in 1837, and obtained employment with John Williams. In 1843 John Williams retired, possibly to become a farmer. William Peter bought the business, and continued to supply iron castings for agricultural machinery as John Williams had done. He was joined after some years by his brother James.

During the ten years of John William's ownership of the foundry, and the first few years of William Peter's proprietorship, Van Diemen's Land had been making considerable progress in the agricultural sphere, and also recorded a substantial increase in population. In 1825 the population was just under 24 000, and the wool industry was set to assume a dominant role in the economy. In 1830 sheep numbers were almost 700 000. By 1836 this had increased to over 900 000, and by 1851 to one-and-three-quarter million. Cattle numbers were also on the increase - so much so that there was such an abundance of meat that only the very best joints were saleable. The census of 1851 showed the population had grown to 70 130, of which 30 488 were free immigrants, 21 590 had been born in the colony, and the remainder (18 052) were prisoners of the crown. Launceston was the service centre for much of this agricultural growth with a population of 10 855, while substantial numbers had settled in some surrounding towns,

such as Longford and district 3 829, Westbury and district 2 842, and Campbell Town 2 319. As well, Launceston was for a time a major source of supply for the new settlement at Melbourne.

It was with this background of increasing market possibilities that William Peter made the first major expansion of his business. Recognizing a need in the community, he commenced the manufacture of stoves, and these were to remain in production for over one hundred years. The name "Peter's stove" was to become famous throughout the colony, and at least in the earlier years, Victoria also. The simplest model, the "Peter's Colonial Oven" graced many a humble dwelling, and because of their solid cast iron construction, gave a lifetime of service. By 1853 business had prospered to the extent that he found the need for more labour, so advertised in the Launceston Examiner for a "moulder who thoroughly understood his business as well as an apprentice".

In 1854 Peter saw the need for greater facilities to be offered to his customers than his foundry gave, and accordingly placed the following advertisement in the Launceston Examiner on several occasions during the latter months of the year:

Millwright and Engineering
in connection with the Wellington-street Foundry.

William Peter having had it under consideration to sanction the commencement in business of Mr. Edward Hamilton, as millwright and engineer on his foundry premises, in Wellington-street, and having ample accomodation for such business in connection with the foundry, he has arrived at the decision to afford Mr. Hamilton the desired opportunity of placing himself before the public for their patronage.

Mr. H. will immediately make the requisite preparations for executing any orders that he may be favoured with.

Another notice was printed immediately below this stating Mr. Hamilton's willingness to receive orders.

William Peter had been granted two joining lots of land which together totalled close to 1 3/4 acres (.7 Hectare)

and had frontages on Wellington and Maitland Streets, so it is understandable that he could afford to let space to Edward Hamilton.

In the same (1854) William Henry Knight arrived in Launceston from Yorkshire, in charge of four skilled workmen, to install machinery in a sawmill being built by Messrs Grubb and Tyson on the Pipers River, in the Lilydale district. He had the machinery, which was manufactured in England, dragged over the rough hilly country to the site of the mill, where he remained working for two and a half years. At this time he decided to settle in Tasmania, so moved into Launceston and sent to Yorkshire for his wife and family to join him. At this time he also entered into partnership with Edward Hamilton in the Millwright and Engineering business operated from William Peter's premises.

This partnership was dissolved in 1859, when William Knight set up in business on his own account. He rented premises from William Peter, and as a millwright and engineer, traded as the "Phoenix Works". His business activity for the next eighteen or so years is best described in the "Jubilee History of Tasmania" published in 1888.....

"confined himself solely to the manufacture of mill and agricultural machinery, an occupation which gave employment to two men and himself. Owing to the construction of the Launceston and Western railway, business with Mr. Knight began to improve, he having received the contract to supply all the ironwork used for building the bridges, gates, etc. along the line. In addition to this contract, he had also one to manufacture the ironwork necessary for between forty and fifty goods wagons to be used on the road. To execute this work in an efficient manner, he imported into the colony the first superior steam hammer used in Tasmania. After the completion of this contract, Mr. Knight's business began to increase very steadily, and in 1875 the large factory where the business is now carried on, was commenced, but not completed until 1876. At the later date gold and tin, in paying quantities, were discovered in various parts of the colony. This important occurrence gave a still further impetus to Mr. Knight's business as he was

the recipient of large orders from the new companies which were being constantly organised.

Prominent amongst these was the Tasmanian Gold Mining Coy., located at Beaconsfield, as well as other mines in the vicinity. To fulfil these orders it was necessary to employ additional hands, and consequently Mr. Knight was obliged to increase his staff of workmen to sixteen, and as time went on, and with it an accumulation of order took place, more workmen had to be engaged."

The large new factory referred to was on just over $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres (1.87 hectares) of land granted to him, adjacent to that owned by William Peter, and bounded on the other three sides by Wellington, Howick, and Maitland Streets. Part of this land is where the Metropolitan Transport Trust depot now stands.

A price list put out in 1874 gives an interesting look at some of the standard lines he produced, and their prices :

Phoenix 4-wheel double speed reaping and mowing	machine	£35
2-wheel ditto		£35
Impulsoria or double horsehead horseworks with peg drum; thrasher and shaker complete with wheels and axles		£60
Circular horseworks with motion complete		£19 10s.
Chaffcutters		£6 10s. - 17
Double furrow wheel ploughs with seat		£18
Single iron ploughs		£9
Winnowing machine		£12
ditto with porcupine		£15
Patent mangle and wringing machine		£7
Cheese press		£6 10s.
Patent sausage filler		£4

Around the mid 1870's William Knight's health began to fail, and despite a rest and recreation trip away from Launceston and his business, did not improve. He was unable to take any further active part in the management. He died in 1878, and the following death notice appeared in the Launceston Examiner :

KNIGHT. At his residence Wellington Street Launceston on

the 24th April, after a long and painful illness, Mr. William Henry Knight, Millwright and Engineer, in the 53rd year of his age.

The business was now managed by his son, also William H. Knight, who had been born in Yorkshire about 1852, assisted for a time by his brother Henry, who died at the early age of 24. Both served their apprenticeships under their father. William Knight, Junior, continued to manage the business in the interests of the Estate until 1895, when he purchased it and ran it on his own account. This date of purchase was possibly influenced by the death of his mother.

William H. Knight expanded still further on the extensive manufacturing enterprise developed by his father, so that in "The Jubilee History of Tasmania" it was described as "at present one of the most prominent and important industries in Australasia."

He added an iron and brass foundry in 1882, and when in 1885 he was awarded a large government contract to build iron bridges for the developing railway system, he bought more new plant, including an hydraulic portable riveting machine. This the first such unit to be worked successfully in the Australasian colonies. Notable work done during this decade included iron work for the Forth River swing bridge, an 84 ft. (25.6m) iron bridge for Fisherman's Dock in Hobart, two bridges on the Derwent Valley Railway line. He also built the bridge at Corra Lynn, and his manufacture identity plate can still be seen from the road on the upstream side. 1886 saw him building two hundred coal hoppers for the Government Railway Department in a factory which covered 2½ acres (1 hectare) and provided employment for sixty men.

A photograph of the "W. H. Knight, Phoenix Works" stand at the Tasmanian Exhibition at the Albert Hall, Launceston in 1891-92 shows an impressive array of awards, including a First Award for a one hand power brick press for moulded and plain bricks, First Award for iron furniture, a First Award for a 4 h.p. vertical engine and steel boiler, and another for a 4 h.p. horizontal steam engine and steel boiler. He had a Second Award for iron verandah and

baleeny posts, panels, brackets, frieze and ornamental castings. Special First Awards were given for a 14 h.p. horizontal steam engine 'Phoenix' and for wrought-iron double riveted high pressure navigation tubes.

In 1903 he produced the impressive gates for the City Park, which still stand to greet visitors approaching from the Cameron Street direction. He also built the railings around the Princes Square and the General Hospital. ~~He built the highly decorative cast-iron railings which once stood outside the public buildings in St. John Street, Launceston. Complete with its elaborate four-sided posts and pointed caps, it now stands at the Launceston Show Ground.~~

In 1915 William Knight formed his business into a company with the name W. H. Knight Pty. Ltd. with a paid-up capital of £10 000 of which he himself held £5 250, with the remainder held by members of his family. Included in this family shareholding were his two sons, William (the third generation in Tasmania to have this name) and Henry, possibly named for his uncle who had died when 24 years old.

In 1919 the Knight family sold the business to a newly formed company under the name W. H. Knight (1919) Pty. Ltd. of which Mr. A. E. Perkins was the major shareholder. Mr. William Knight did not survive for long after the sale of the business, as the Tasmanian Mail carried this obituary in its issue of 4th March, 1920 :

The death of Mr. W. H. Knight occurred at Launceston on Tuesday night, at the age of 68 years. Deceased was at one time prominent in the engineering life of that city. During the period of his management of the well-known Phoenix Foundry, Wellington, many notable works were undertaken and successfully carried out in various parts of Tasmania. Knight foundry contributed many fine pieces of machinery to various Tasmanian mines, and there are bridges today which speak eloquently of the class of work he turned out. He leaves a grown up family of sons and daughters.

We must now return to the 1860's to follow the development of William Peter's foundry. He, like William Knight, was able to increase the size of his works, and expand the range of castings which he could offer. An invoice in the possession of Launceston's Queen Victoria Museum is headed "Wellington Street Iron and Brass Foundry" and as well as showing illustrations of two stoves, states "every description of iron and brass castings - pumps of all sizes". The invoice was to the Launceston Water Works for thimbles and branches charged at the rate of four pence per pound (about 7.5 cents per kg.). In 1863 he advertised stoves, ovens, pumps, sash weights, air bricks, gratings and castings. In 1874 he made the largest wheel to be cast in Launceston up to that time, with a diameter of 28ft. (8.53m) comprised of twelve segments. It was joined by another Launceston firm, Archibald and Jackson, and used at the battery at Leura reefs.

In April 1875 Mr. Swift supplied him with the first pig-iron which had been produced in Tasmania. He tested its quality by manufacturing from it ovens, railings, pulleys, and tramway wheels, which were found to be durable. However despite the initial promise shown, a high chromite content caused the venture to fail, and the mine had to close in 1877.

William Peter retired in 1883, and the business was taken over by Peter and Saul, these partners being his brother James, and nephew Charles James Saul. Mr. Saul was born in Carlisle, Scotland, on 5th March, 1848, and gained his training with the Caledonian Company, Glasgow, and the Eagle Foundry Company, Greenlock, where he obtained his knowledge of marine engineering. He came to Australia at the age of twenty-seven, and worked at Koch's Pioneer Company, Long Gully (near Bendigo, Victoria) and Hawkins Hill Consolidated Company, Hill End, N.S.W. before coming to Tasmania in 1883 to become the partner in Peter and Saul. They now called their works the Vulcan Foundry.

Peter and Saul gained a high reputation for the marine and stationary engines which they produced. They made a specialty of the manufacture of ornamental castings, and their ironwork graced a number of major buildings in Launceston,

including the Academy of Music, Bank of Australasia (now A.N.Z. Bank) and the Custom House. The mining boom gave ample opening for the supply of the wide variety of machinery needed in that industry, so that the number of employees was doubled. They produced the first iron steam dredge in the northern part of the island. This was used on the Tamar River. However it was in the field of marine engines that the partnership made a particular impact on the local scene. Extracts from newspaper cuttings of the period, unfortunately not dated, tell the story :

"It may be interesting to state that the manufacture of marine engines, which is a new industry in Launceston, has, with other branches of engineering, been established at the Vulcan Foundry during the last four years..... Amongst other work done by the firm they have engined the steam launches Heather Bell, Minx, and Lily, the Linda making the fourth vessel. The engines turned out have been highly creditable, and the only matter for regret is that the scope in Launceston for this new industry is so limited."

and from another cutting :

"Messrs Peter and Saul are also just completing a 5-horse power engine for a steam launch for Mr. David Dally.....
We understand that the firm is the only one in the north by whom marine engines with the accompanying fittings and boilers are made, the whole of the work being designed and carried out under the superintendance of Mr. C. J. Saul..... The firm have recently undertaken loam-moulding, which is a new department, and their initial attempts in this line of manufacture have proved entirely successful, the castings being exceptionally clean. Three cast-iron Chilian mills of formidable dimensions have just been completed for the Mount Bischoff Tin Mining Company.....and we believe are the largest yet made in the colony, being over 6ft. in diameterand weighing 25 cwt. each.....Another ponderous piece of workmanship was cast on Wednesday night in the shape of a cast-iron kettle or cauldron, the handiwork of Mr. James Peter jun. The receptacle is to be used for refining tin, and is to the order of the Mt. Bischoff Company's Smelting Works in town. The iron is

1 5/8in. thick, the cauldron is 3 ft diameter inside, 3ft 6in deep, weighs 30 cwt, and is capable of holding 3 tons of tin. It is thus gratifying to find our local tradespeople adapting their energies to the requirements of the times."

These articles were probably written about 1887. The partnership was dissolved in 1890, and Charles Saul went into business on his own account, operating from premises on the corner of Charles Street and Esplanade, concentrating on marine engineering.

William Peter died on 25th February, 1891, and the following obituary appeared in the Examiner :

"Our obituary notices record the death of an old and respected resident of Launceston, Mr. William Peter, at the age of 72. Mr. Peter was born at Dundee, Scotland, and emigrated to Tasmania when quite a young man, arriving in Launceston about 1837. He obtained employment at a small foundry in Wellington Street, belonging to Mr. John Williams, and some time in the forties, when Mr. Williams retired, we believe to enter into farming pursuits, Mr. Peter carried on the business on his own account, and "Peter's Foundry" has been a household word in Launceston for close upon half a century. By industry, energy, and integrity Mr. Peter built up an extensive business, and amongst other inventions that found favour with the public "Peter's Stoves" come most readily to mind. His brother Mr. J. Peter joined him after he had been some years in the colony, and when Mr. Wm. Peter retired from business about seven or eight years ago it was carried on by his brother and nephew, Mr. Saul being taken into partnership. In business, as as in private life, Mr. Wm. Peter was noted for his straightforward and conscientious dealing and though he never took any active part in public affairs he was much esteemed by a wide circle of friends and acquaintances."

The death notice in the same paper notes that he died at his residence in Maitland Street, which indicates that his home was on land joining the rear of the foundry.

Shortly after this William's brother James also died, and the management came into the hands of James' sons, James,

John and William. James, as the senior of the three, was the head of the firm, which now traded as Peter Brothers. They continued to manufacture their line of stoves and ovens, and advertised themselves as "Brass, Iron and Bell Founders", claiming to be the only bellfounders in the colony. Their stoves varied in size from the 21 inch (53 cm.) Peter's Colonial oven, to the huge island range custom made for the Launceston General Hospital.

Another extract from a newspaper of the day, probably written about 1920 sums up the activities of the firm :

".....the above firm was established by Mr. W. Peter, sen., and although many changes have taken place the family interest remains. Today the main guiding hand directing the business is Mr. J. R. Emms, works manager, The firm has now been nearly 70 years stove making during which time it has retained its name for good work.....
 ...and the placing of an order with them will not only obtain a first-class article, but will be advancing and giving employment to families living in Tasmania. The firm have a complete plant and competent staff for the manufacture and repair of all kinds of milling and agricultural machinery, smith's work, and castings of all description. Sawmill plants (Lowe's design), capacity from 3000 ft. daily, circular saw benches, pendulum saws, friction clutches, pulleys, all sizes, gear wheels, all sizes, tram wheels for iron rails, specially designed flanged wheels for wood rails; guaranteed will not run off on curves. Used by all leading sawmillers. Truck brake gear and all ironwork, exhaust fans and blowers, pumps for waterworks, country towns, or private estates, water wheels, screw propellers, bells, from small hand bell up to ½-ton in weight, builders' ironwork, ornamental gates, fences and railings. Agricultural machinery comprising "Peter" farm rollers, driven tine harrows, ploughs, double and single, cattle and pig troughs, all kinds of cast and chilled plough shares and wheels. Saw milling plants are also made for the big mills here and on the mainland, and two complete plants are now being constructed. The whole works bespeak prosperity and activity, and a great tribute to their merit is that repeat orders are more the rule than the exception."

Mr. J. R. Emms, Works Manager, mentioned in the above newspaper extract, became one of the real 'identities' of the firm. Commencing employment just before the turn of the century, his temporary two weeks engagement stretched into sixty years. He finally retired at the age of about eighty, although for the previous couple of years his working day had been reduced to about four hours. Known to everyone as Joe Emms, and in later years 'Old Joe', right to the end of his career he was capable of drawing a plan in the most meticulous manner, his steadiness of hand being the envy of many a younger person. He died a few months after his retirement.

Peter Brothers, and W. H. Knight had always had a close geographical affinity, even though fierce rivalry existed between the two. W. H. Knight Senior, started his business on a rented portion of William Peter's premises, and later moved to adjoining land. During the 1920's business pressures must have been greater for both firms, with the mining boom over, and the depression looming. So it was that in 1926 the two concerns decided to amalgamate, and became W. H. Knight & Peter Bros. Pty. Ltd. with a paid-up capital of £11655 (\$23310). The principal shareholders were Frederick Ralph, Samuel Docking, Robin Evans, Arthur Pepper (of the Brisbane Street store) and Harry Cane (of Hobart). The only shareholder from either of the original families was Mrs. Elizabeth Dinah Peter, who lived in Welman Street, Launceston, and who, on her death gave her home to the Presbyterian Church to be used as a home for the aged. The head of Peter Brothers for over thirty years, Mr. James Peter, and his wife moved to Melbourne, where while living at Northcote, they celebrated their golden wedding on 14th November, 1933. Mrs. Peter was Harriet, daughter of William Jones, grazier, of Freshwater Point near Launceston.

W. H. Knight and Peter Bros. Pty. Ltd. ran into financial difficulties in 1929, and went in liquidation. A new company, Phoenix Foundry Pty. Ltd. was formed by some of the shareholders in the previous company, but with the notable addition of Mr. Frank Wells, of the Hobart firm of Johnson & Wells. A new factory was built on the old Peter Brothers site and fitted with some new equipment, including two electric welding machines. Stove production continued, and reached thirty a month. The old W. H. Knight site on the corner of Howick and Wellington Streets was sold to the Launceston City Council, and became the new municipal tramways depot, replacing the older inadequate sheds on Invermay Road, which are now part of the Railways Institute.

Phoenix Foundry Pty. Ltd. survived the depression years although the work force was not large, there being 27 employees in 1933. In 1937 they made the steel framework for the Australian National Airways hangar at Western Junction,

this being notable for its welded construction instead of bolts or rivets. During the years of the Second World War, the efforts of the company were geared to production of items needed for the war effort. Among items produced were many thousands of shells for artillery, steering gear, funnels, and skylights for 300 hundred ton cargo boats, and a pontoon bridge. Seventy-five sets of steam and exhaust pipes were cast and machined for Garratt locomotives, and components for 45 steam winches, and many oil tanks, for ships. Cranes with a three ton lift and a 35ft. (10.7m) span were also built for ships. Food production was also important for the war effort, and to aid this aspect the company built single furrow ploughs specially designed for planting potatoes. These included a casting of about 1 cwt. (50kg.).

The post-war years saw an upsurge in the mining and manufacturing industries, and the company expanded its work force to keep pace with the demand. The operation was a fully integrated factory with foundry equipped to make iron and non-ferrous castings, a steel fabrication shop, and a machine shop. However, much equipment was old and out-dated, and a steady programme of modernization was commenced. In 1954 the foundry was expanded to include the facility for making steel castings by the installation of an additional furnace and Tropenas converter. In the late 1950's it became a public company, with a name change to Phoenix Foundry Limited, and extended its operations to Devonport with the development of a shipyard which traded as Phoenix Shipbuilding and Engineering Co. Pty. Ltd. The drive to build ships came from Mr. Bruce Thompson, who had succeeded Mr. Sam. Docking as Manager in 1955 on the latter's retirement.

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Sam Docking had been Manager since the death in 1921 of Edwin Perkins. This was with W. H. Knight (1919) Pty. Ltd. As well as being widely known in business circles, Mr. Docking worked tirelessly for the Masonic fraternity in the establishment of the Fred French Masonic Nursing Home and its associated units for the elderly. Docking Court, where the units stand, was named for him. Bruce Thompson continued as Manager until his untimely death in 1964, when he was succeeded by Mr. Arthur Templeton.

The largest ship built in the Devonport yard was the 'King Islander', for the North-west coast - King Island-Melbourne run. She was of the roll-on roll-off type, or as some humorists insisted, because of her stock carrying facilities, a trot-on trot-off type. The shipyard was closed in the mid 1960's. 1961 saw the opening of a further subsidiary, Phoenix Engineering (Bell Bay) Pty. Ltd., to

service industries in the George Town region from a factory built on land leased from the Port of Launceston Authority. In 1963 the castings operation was moved from the original site in Wellington Street, to new larger premises at Franklin Village, on the southern outskirts of Launceston. The steel fabrication remained on the original site at Wellington Street, while the machine shop had been moved in 1957 to a new building nearby with a frontage on Frankland Street.

It was at about this time that the production of the famous fuel stoves and ovens finally ceased, due to a steadily diminishing demand. They had been in continuous production for over one hundred years, but finally modern technology won, with electric and gas stoves taking their place. However there are still "Peters" stoves in use, and they have become collectors items.

In a take-over in 1965, Johns Perry Limited (then Johns & Waygood Limited) bought Phoenix Foundry Limited and its subsidiaries. Johns Perry already had a steel fabrication factory in Hobart, and in 1972 all the Tasmanian operations were renamed Johns Phoenix. Major restructuring and re-naming took place within the Johns Perry group in 1978. The foundry, at its now further enlarged factory at Franklin Village, was re-named Johns Perry Castings. The machine shop in Frankland Street, Launceston, and the Hobart steel fabrication works, were closed, and the Launceston steel fabrication was combined with the Hayward crane operation to become Johns Perry Hayward. Shortly after this the Bell Bay operation was closed, as was a small factory at Wynyard which had been built a few years previously.

At the peak of activity over four hundred were employed throughout the State, with steelwork and castings being supplied to a very wide range of industries.

The last link with the original site at 160 Wellington Street (first known as 22 Wellington-road) came in 1983 when Johns Perry Hayward moved to new premises at Western Junction, near Launceston airport. This move was made necessary through the acquisition of the premises to make way for the new southern outlet road.

Johns Perry Castings continues to operate after more than one hundred and fifty years of continuous production, but the methods and the finished article are very different from those early days. Gone are the coke furnaces, and in their place are electric induction, and arc, furnaces, and while some moulds are still made by hand, many are now done by machine. Most of the castings are now in steel, with customers able to select the specification they need for their particular application. Carbon, stainless steels, and alloy steels of various types are available. Some are designed specifically to resist abrasion, others heat, others corrosion. Quality control is an important part of the foundry operation, with special equipment installed to ensure that the casting adheres strictly to specification. The company keeps itself informed of the latest developments in foundry technology to ensure that its customers are offered the best possible product for their needs.

Due in small manner to the quality offered, Johns Perry Castings has become one of the leading manufacturers of quality castings in Australia. Castings are supplied to industries where safety is of paramount importance, such as components for heavy trucks, high pressure valve components for oil and gas, high integrity pump casings and impellers for use in power stations. There are many applications in the mining industry where steel castings are needed, such as rock crushing and earth moving machines ranging in size right up to the giant units used in big open cut mines. If present tourism hopes eventuate, the company may soon be supplying, once again, the cast steel toothed centre rack for a re-opened ABT railway at Queenstown.

Tasmanian Journal

AND SPORTING NEWS.

Published Weekly. See Don't Forget.

Vol. 1 No. 1. SILVERSTONE, TASMANIA, JULY, 1901. Price, 3d.

A Greeting

ESTABLISHED 1840

FROM

PETER BROTHERS

TO

TASMANIAN AXEMEN:

We are all proud of the Royal way you carved out the big chips before our Royal Visitors, and we can now suppose you are settling down once again to carve yourself out a home in the virgin forests of our Island, and may you never be found wanting a Good Joint to Carve, a Good Appetite to Enjoy it, and a **SHRIMPING OVEN** to Bake it in.

Special to our Farmers

The Frowly Potato—the homey spud—is just now good property, and likely to still further improve in price, so now then is the time to give yourself a treat in the shape of one of PETER BROS. IRON ROLLERS.

BURNS, IRON, AND BELL FOUNDERS,

And Manufacturers of the Celebrated

Rollers of 3, 4, and 5 feet, Best Cast Iron, and the Handmade Wheel.