

QUEEN VICTORIA MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

CHS 39

GUNNS LIMITED COLLECTION

Timber Industry, Tasmania
Builders, Launceston

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INTRODUCTION

The timber construction and hardware firm J and T Gunn's was founded in 1871 by brothers John and Thomas. In February 1907 it was registered as a limited company under the *Companies Act, 1869* and became known as J and T Gunn Ltd. It did not become a proprietary company until July 1961. In 1986 the Company was publicly listed as Gunn's Kilndried Timber Industries. The name was changed to Gunn's Limited in 1993.

J and T Gunn's began as a building firm, but had expanded into saw milling, timber processing and hardware retailing by 1875. Its first major project was the construction of St Andrew's Anglican Church at Evandale in 1871.

Gunn's commenced business from an old timber yard near the southern end of the Tamar River. It continued to use the yard until 1964, when the land was transferred to the Crown and it became part of Royal Park. In 1875, as a result of expansion in the building industry, Gunn's also established premises in Brisbane Street. Here the Company entered into the timber and hardware business, to ensure the supply of materials for itself and the building industry as a whole. In 1881 the business expanded further. A new building was constructed at 45 Brisbane Street, and was eventually extended to include 53 Brisbane Street. It housed a steam powered joinery works and a log sawmill. Further expansion and the need for retail premises resulted in the construction of another building at 50 Brisbane Street. This building was destroyed by fire in 1931, but was rebuilt the same year. It was remodelled in 1955 to compensate for lost floor space and was further extended in the 1960s. In 1961 the building at 45-53 Brisbane Street was sold, due to the advent of large building materials which could not be handled easily at the site. This portion of the business was moved to the eastern end of Cimitiere Street. In 1980 the Company's head office and retail hardware store followed.

A wide variety of construction projects was undertaken by Gunn's, including private homes, churches, schools and commercial buildings. In times when work was scarce, rather than laying off employees, houses were built which employees could then purchase. They were sold at low cost on an installment basis with no deposit required. In addition, engineering projects were undertaken, such as the reconstruction of the Briseis Dam near Derby, which had been washed away by flood waters in 1929, and the construction of Launceston's first tramway system.

Saw milling and timber processing grew in importance for the Company between the two world wars. Gunn's has operated Bush and Sawmills at various times at Prossers Forest, the Camden, Diddleum Plains, Rose's Tier, Lilydale, Upper Esk, Cressy, Beaconsfield, Silver Plains, Longford, Legerwood, Ringarooma, Branxholm, Nabowla, Campbelltown, Underwood and Cloverdale, Deloraine, Smithton, Devonport, Austin's Ferry, Royal Park, Brisbane Street, Lindsay Street and Waverley.

Over the years, Gunn's has also merged with and taken over a number of other companies. These include Hinman Wright and Manser, H T Russell, W and G Genders Pty Ltd, Kilndried Hardwoods Pty Ltd, Kemp and Denning, the Kauri Timber Company, Tasmanian Veneers and Hiddings Hardware.

Some records of Hinman Wright and Manser, W and G Genders Pty Ltd and other companies are included in this collection. Hinman Wright and Manser was established in 1884. Although it operated on a smaller scale, this business had similar interests to Gunn's and was taken over by Gunn's in 1955. Gunn's building work was gradually transferred to Hinman Wright and Manser at

that time. W and G Genders were hardware merchants and wholesalers. The firm became a limited company in 1917 and a proprietary company in 1921, and operated from premises in Cameron Street. W and G Genders was taken over by Gunn's in the early 1980s. Gunn's retail hardware operations then became known as Gunn Genders and continued under this name until 1993.

The collection was donated to the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in August 1998.

1.Minutes of Meetings

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|-----|---|-----------|
| 1/1 | W and G Genders Pty Ltd, minutes of meetings (directors and shareholders) | 1917-1944 |
| 1/2 | W and G Genders Pty Ltd, Staff Superannuation Board minute book of meetings | 1950-1979 |

2.Legal Records

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|-----|--|-----------|
| 2/1 | J and T Gunn Ltd: Commissioner of Crown Lands to F J Gunn re leases to obtain timber for sawmilling purposes; agreements to purchase timber; agreement with H B Lade and others to erect a sawmill and deposit sawdust; Commissioner of Crown Lands to J and T Gunn Ltd re lease for the purpose of erecting a sawmill and residences; agreement with Briseis Tin Consolidated NL to build an office and a house; agreement with Irene Daphne Stanwix for lease of land at 46a Brisbane Street (copy) | 1908-1946 |
| 2/2 | J and T Gunn Ltd: Tas Milk Bars (Hobart) Pty Ltd debenture and certificate of registration of mortgage or charge; F J Gunn, schedule of deeds relating to Criterion Hotel, St John's Street held by Ritchie & Parker; James French to Walter Read re extension of lease of premises in Paterson St (copy); F Lindsay Gunn to Walter Read re lease of Brisbane Hotel, Launceston; lease to James Wing; agreement with Australasian Scale Company Pty Ltd for extension of lease; agreement with R A and C R Amos re H P Portable Engine and Camel Hair Belting; agreement with Joseph Humphreys to employ and release (includes receipt and list of assets) | 1882-1942 |

3. Shareholders' Records

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|-----|--|-----------|
| 3/1 | W and G Genders Pty Ltd share register | 1917-1942 |
| 3/2 | W and G Genders Pty Ltd share register | 1917-1953 |

4. Records of Mortgages

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|-----|---|-----------|
| 4/1 | J and T Gunn Ltd register of mortgages (includes register of debentures) See also items 5/1 and 5/7 | 1907-1912 |
|-----|---|-----------|

5.Gunn's Private Records

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|-----|----------------------------|-----------|
| 5/1 | J and T Gunn Ltd deed book | 1908-1945 |
|-----|----------------------------|-----------|

5/2	Private journal	1907-1950
5/3	Private journal	1908
5/4	Private journal	1951-1975
5/5	F J Gunn cash book	1901-1923
5/6	J and T Gunn private ledger	1891-1900
5/7	J and T Gunn Ltd ledger (includes mortgages)	1901-1930

6. Correspondence

6/1	J and T Gunn Ltd letter book re property inspections	1898-1916
6/2	Letter book re hardware orders etc.	1899-1916
6/3	Letter book re mortgages	1905-1910
6/4	F Lindsay Gunn (Hobart) letter book (F Lindsay Gunn was sent to Hobart to look after the Company's southern interests. In 1906 Gunn's took over the business of Cheverton's which in the following year amalgamated with F E Crisp to form Crisp and Gunn)	1908
6/5	F Lindsay Gunn (Hobart) letter book	1908

7. Financial Records

7/1	J and T Gunn Ltd balance sheets	1913-1914, 1946
7/2	J and T Gunn Ltd (Brisbane Hotel) balance sheet	1914
7/3	Accounts	1913-1914
7/4	Department accounts	1921-1941
7/5	W and G Genders Pty Ltd journal	1951-1952
7/6	Journal	1952-1955
7/7	Journal	1955-1958
7/8	Journal	1961-1964
7/9	Journal	1964-1967
7/10	Journal	1967-1970

7/11 Journal	1970-1973
7/12 Journal	1973-1974
7/13 Journal	1977-1979
7/14 J and T Gunn journal	1900-1902
7/15 Journal	1903-1907
7/16 Journal	1906-1908
7/17 Journal	1924-1950
7/18 J and T Gunn Insurers Pty Ltd journal	1955-1974
7/19 J and T Gunn Ltd departmental journal (painters)	1950-1960
7/20 J and T Gunn Pty Ltd town & country journal (builders)	1963-1969
7/21 J and T Gunn Pty Ltd departmental journal (builders)	1970-1972
7/22 J and T Gunn Pty Ltd town & country journal (painters)	1961-1971
7/23 Clark's Metalworks Pty Ltd journal	1955-1974
7/24 W Lockett and Sons Pty Ltd journal (includes 1955 balance sheet)	1955-1961
7/25 Hinman Wright & Manser journal	1956-1965
7/26 Romcke (Tasmania) Pty Ltd journal	1961-1974
7/27 J and T Gunn Ltd cash book	1935-1936
7/28 J and T Gunn Ltd cash book	1939-1944
7/29 J and T Gunn Pty Ltd cash book	1944-1966
7/30 J and T Gunn Ltd cash book	1953-1961
7/31 J and T Gunn Pty Ltd cash book	1961-1969
7/32 J and T Gunn Ltd payments cash book	1941-1945
7/33 Payments cash book	1945-1947
7/34 Payments cash book	1947-1950
7/35 Payments cash book	1950-1953

7/36 Payments cash book	1953-1956
7/37 Payments cash book	1956-1959
7/38 Payments cash book	1959-1960
7/39 Payments cash book	1960-1961
7/40 Payments cash book	1961-1963
7/41 Payments cash book	1962-1963
7/42 Payments cash book	1963-1964
7/43 Payments cash book	1964
7/44 Payments cash book	1964-1966
7/45 Hardware cash payments book	1967-1969
7/46 W and G Genders Ltd ledger	1916-1919
7/47 W and G Genders Pty Ltd general ledger	1950-1969
7/48 J and T Gunn Ltd general ledger balances	1902-1939
7/49 Purchases ledger balances	1902-1948
7/50 General ledger	1902-1911
7/51 General ledger	1908-1911
7/52 General ledger	1911-1914
7/53 General ledger	1914-1920
7/54 General ledger	1921-1926
7/55 General ledger	1925-1934
7/56 General ledger	1935-1943
7/57 General ledger	1943-1948
7/58 J and T Gunn ledger (individual entries listed in Excel workbook .xls)	1896-1906
7/59 Ledger, town, no 1	1902-1905
7/60 Ledger, country, no 2	1904-1907

7/61 Ledger, town, no 3	1905-1907
7/62 J and T Gunn Ltd, country ledger balances	1940-1945
7/63 Country ledger balances	1944-1948
7/64 Country ledger balance	1947-1956
7/65 Town ledger balance	1941-1945
7/66 Town ledger balance	1944-1947
7/67.1 Town ledger balances	1946-1947
7/67.2 J and T Gunn, departmental ledger (contract) (individual jobs not yet listed in digital form - see index 7/67b)	1897-1902
7/67.3 J and T Gunn, index to item 7/67a (by A-Z alphabetical)	1897-1902
7/68 J and T Gunn, departmental ledger (contract) (individual entries listed in Excel workbook .xls)	1902-1907
7/69 J and T Gunn, departmental ledger (jobbing) (individual entries listed in Excel workbook .xls)	1902-1905
7/70 J and T Gunn Ltd, departmental ledger	1904-1920
7/71 Departmental ledger	1941-1948
7/72 Departmental ledger	1942-1964
7/73 Departmental ledger (builders)	1950-1958
7/74 Departmental ledger (joiners)	1950-1956
7/75 Departmental ledger (painters)	1950-1958
7/76 Day book	1920-1930
7/77 War Savings certificates (trustees register)	1944-1945
7/78 War Savings Groups (record of subscribers; contributions; certificates etc)	1944-1945
7/79 J and T Gunn, bank book in account with National Bank of Tasmania Limited	1885-1888
7/80 Romcke Specialized Woods; Gunn's Timber and Hardware, Building Materials Buyer's Guide	1988

8. Stock Records

8/1 W and G Genders Pty Ltd stock book 1920s

9. Shipping Freight Records

9/1 J and T Gunn Ltd, British and foreign ships freight book 1912-1945

10. Set Up and Work Specifications

10/1 Hinman Wright and Manser, set up and work specifications for yards, departments etc 1958-1959

10/2 J and T Gunn Ltd and Hinman Wright and Manser, set up and work specifications for yards, departments, mills etc 1958-1965

11. Ephemera

11/1 J and T Gunn, The highest object of art is to make useful things beautiful; Our new wall papers are open for your inspection, season 1904; Christmas greeting/advertisement 1903

11/2 Sabah Joseph Nohira sells drapery and fancy goods, dress making to order, 32 Esplanade and Gunn Street, Inveresk, Launceston (envelope) c1903

12. BRENDAN LYONS' RECORDS USED IN 'ALL GUNNS BLAZING'

J & T Gunn Ltd Records

12/1 J & T Gunn Ltd, private ledger 1907-1965

12/2 Share Register 1907-1980

12/3 Newspaper cuttings scrapbook relating to the firm (includes Ernest Whitfeld's articles on 'The River Tamar', c1912) 1910-1958

Dennis Hodgkinson Material (compiled for an intended publication to celebrate the centenary of J & T Gunn Pty Ltd in 1975)

12/4 *Examiner* etc articles on buildings constructed or added to by J & T Gunn 1876-1981

12/5 Handwritten, typed notes, newspaper obituaries etc on the Gunn family and the firm 1897, 1910, 1969, 1978

12/6 Dennis Hodgkinson's correspondence re writing a history of J & T Gunn Ltd 1973-1986, nd

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|--------------------------------------|---|-----------|
| 12/7 | Dennis Hodgkinson's interviews and notes concerning former Gunn's employees and the firm: D Alexander, A C Atkinson, Clarrie Clephane, C W Coombs re Crisp & Gunn, Gordon Cumming, Hugh Cunningham, Keith Darcy, Alexander Douglas, James Gibson, Ted Gray snr & jnr, Wally Hollingsworth, John James; Mrs Jameson, Clem Langford, Quentin McKenzie, Jack McKercher, Harold Masters, Alf Milner, Tom Orr, E Parsons, George Paton, Len Purse & Andy Waugh, Vaughan Ratcliff, J Routley, A W Ruffin; A L Scott, Peter Snodgrass, Gerald Stephenson, Tom Stephenson, H F Sydes, Tom Tandy, A G Taylor, Alfred Weymouth, George Wilkinson, Louis Williams, Silvanus Wilmot | 1975-1976 |
| 12/8 | Dennis Hodgkinson's miscellaneous handwritten and typed notes re history of J & T Gunn Ltd | c1975 |
| 12/9 | J & T Gunn Ltd, typed, handwritten notes on trams, <i>Examiner</i> photographs of trams, 19/3/1976, 22/5/1976, 9/2/1979, 7/12/1979 | 1976-1979 |
| 12/10 | SS <i>Yambacoona</i> , typed, handwritten notes etc | 1899-1917 |
| 12/11 | Crisp & Gunn, typed, handwritten notes etc on firm and Crisp family; <i>Crisp and Gunn Ltd, Hobart: price list</i> (Hobart, 1910); <i>Mercury</i> 7 June 1923, 5 July 1924; letterhead, 24/8/1944; <i>Fred. H. Crisp, timber merchant</i> , advertising card, nd | 1910-1975 |
| <i>Brendan Lyons Material</i> | | |
| 12/12 | Material used by Brenda Lyons in writing the history of J & T Gunn, <i>All guns blazing</i> (includes questionnaires sent to house owners) | c1996 |
| 12/13 | Manuscript notes from Kilndried Timber Industries minutes, 1985-1996; Gunns minutes, 1989-1998 | 1985-1998 |
| 12/14 | Material relating to Lemonthyme and Southern Forests Commission of Enquiry | c1987 |
| 12/15 | <i>Examiner</i> articles concerning Gunns Limited | 1990-1998 |
| 12/16 | Draft chronology for Gunns history | 1996 |
| 12/17 | Correspondence re Gunns Limited book | 1995-1998 |
| 12/18 | Answers to questionnaire by R A Ferrall, Keith Hardman, B W Moir and Kees Van Der Kley | 1996-1997 |

Miscellaneous Records

12/19	J & T Gunn, LCC list of plans for buildings constructed by the firm	1897-1921
12/20	List of <i>Weekly Courier</i> photographs and references to J & T Gunn	1901-1935
12/21	[Kilmarnock House] specifications for residence Elphin Road for J Ingles, with accounts	1903-1904
12/22	J & T Gunn correspondence re building the Church of England, Beaconsfield	1906-1909
12/23	Hinman Wright & Manser, LCC list of plans for buildings constructed by the firm, 1911-1923; billhead, 1890; <i>Examiner</i> photograph of Patons and Baldwins, 16/9/1933; letterhead 29/7/1952; contract re Invermay Primary School, 1982	1890-1982
12/24	Briseis Consolidated N.L., specification for construction of a rock fill dam, Cascade River, Tasmania; handwritten notes	1935
12/25	Gunns Limited: J & T Gunn, photocopies of billhead 1879, 1904; letter re new church, 1904; insurance forms, 1912-1913; proprietary company certificate, 1961; Gunns centenary 1875-1975, one folded colour page; Gunns Group newsletter, June 1996, March 1998; Gunns Limited annual report 1997)	1879-1998

13. Photographs

13/1	Sundry photographs to those registered individually in the QVMAG database	1900s-1990s
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OTHER SOURCES

QVMAG, Community History, CHS 24

QVMAG, Community History, 1998.P.1373 and 1374

QVMAG, Community History, 1993.OH.0038; 2000.OH.0006; 2000.OH.0004; 2000.OH.0003A-B; 2000.OH.0008; 2000.OH.0005; 2000.OH.0009; 2000.OH.0002 and 2000.OH.0007

QVMAG, Community History, LCC 2, 'J & T Gunn Ltd' (1910-1922), 'Hinman, Wright and Manser Ltd' (1920-1921)

Brendan Lyons, *All Gunns Blazing*, Launceston, 1998