The Dairy Heritage of Northern Tasmania

A Survey of the Butter and Cheese Industry

by Jill Cassidy

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COVER PHOTO: Homewood dairy farm, Wilmot, c.1906. *(QVMAG collection, courtesy George Richards)*

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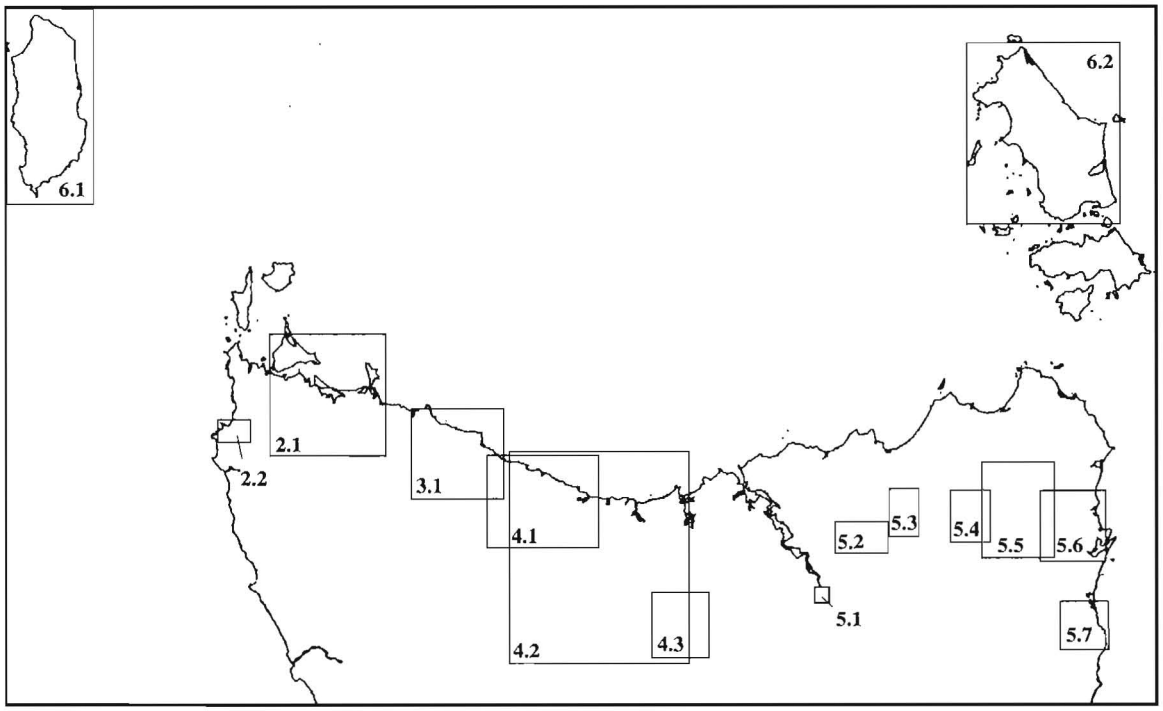
CONTENTS

LOCATION DIAGRAM FOR MAPS IN THE TEXT



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NOTES

1. This report is dealing only with Northern Tasmania, but there were few factories in the south. Of 24 butter factories or creameries listed in the *Statistics of the State of Tasmania* in 1914-15, only three were in the south: at Oatlands, Hobart and Sorell. The picture for cheese is similar. Of 21 listed cheesemakers, there were only two in the Bruni district and one in Tasman, producing less than four per cent of the state's total. By 1945-6 the Sorell and Oatlands factories had closed and three small Hobart factories were producing a total of 64 tons a year, a minuscule amount (see Figure 1.5). There are now no factories in the south.

2. Map references are from the Lands Department 1:25 000 series, except where noted.

ABBREVIATIONS

AOT:	Archives Office of Tasmania.
Born of Necessity:	Godfrey, Margery, and Neilson, Ron, *Born of Necessity*, Smithton, 1992.
DPIF:	Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries.
JCAT:	Journal of the Council of Agriculture.
QVMAG:	Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery.

CHAPTER ONE

A SHORT HISTORY OF DAIRYING IN TASMANIA

1.1 Nineteenth century dairying

Dairying in some form was carried on in Tasmania from very early times, but generally operations were only very small scale. Families would try to keep a house cow to provide milk for the family, and churn a little cream for butter. Those who operated on a commercial level might have only three or four cows to provide part of a town milk supply. Up to 1830 there were few good dairies in the colony and large quantities of salted butter and cheese were imported from Sydney.[1] Most dairying was centred on the larger towns to provide milk. The Van Diemen's Land Company had a cheese room at Woolnorth in the 1820s[2] and in 1835 one butter churn was in use,[3] but in 1840 manager Edward Curr, complaining that butter was very scarce, suggested it might be desirable to establish a small dairy,[4] indicating that dairying had not remained a priority.

Gradually some people made efforts to put dairying onto a stronger footing. Cattle were mostly beef producers and farm workers, but some good dairy strains were imported, and by the 1850s Tasmania was self-sufficient in dairy produce[5] with both butter and cheese being exported. As the second half of the century wore on more dairy produce was exported, particularly from the north of the state, as a result of the spread of settlement into the prime dairying areas of the north-east and north-west. In 1858 exports of butter and cheese from Hobart were worth 810 pounds, but from Launceston their value was 5892 pounds. Ten years later dairy exports from Hobart had almost doubled to 1340 pounds, while Launceston's had increased over three times to 18 019 pounds. In the same year (1868), 777 pounds worth of dairy produce was imported to the state, probably during the winter time when cows dried off.[6]

All of this production was farm-based, but there were two distinctly different types of farm involved. There were some very big properties where large numbers of cows were milked and considerable quantities of butter and cheese made, often as part of a mixed-farm operation: for example, Bowerbank, Wesleydale and Dunorlan in the Deloraine area and Pardoe, Northdown and Aul Derrig in the area of Wesley Vale. (See Chapters 4.5 and 4.4.)

Many of these larger farms were in the east. In 1902 the *Weekly Courier* described the area of Falmouth, Break O'Day and along the coast north and south as the area "where the dairy has for half a century been the staple product".[7] St Marys in particular was known as the centre of Tasmanian cheese production. Even where the bush had not already been cleared there was little of the dense forest which made settlement in other parts of the north such a problem, while the cool nights made cheese-making more viable by allowing milk to keep overnight before it was made up the next morning. The distance from the large population centres also encouraged the production of cheese because of its keeping properties, while the development of mining in the north-east in the 1870s provided a ready market.

One dairy farmer in the area was Robert Cadman who settled at Ascot Vale, St Marys, in the early 1860s. His entry in *The Cyclopedia of Tasmania* in 1900 said that he was "known far and wide for the perfection to which he has brought cheese-making in the district". Milking sixty cows on average, he used practically all the milk for cheese, with a yearly output of five to six tons. Quality was also important, and Cadman had won many prizes for his cheese in Tasmania and other countries including India, where he won the medal and certificate at the Calcutta International Exhibition of 1884.[8] Other well-known dairy farmers, all of whom began in the 1870s, were George Oliver of Balaclava at St Marys, Lohrey in Dublin Town and Thomas Treloggen at St Helens.[9]

But dairying was also carried on by the cocky farmer. During the 1870s and particularly the 1880s settlers moved in large numbers to the relatively unsettled north-east and north-west. In the thirty years to 1891 the north-west increased its population from 6 per cent of the colony to 15 per cent, and by 1891 the north-west and north-east contained well over half of all land sown under pasture. But unlike the earlier-settled districts, the new farms were quite small. The average size of these new

properties was only 143 acres compared with nearly 2000 acres in the midlands.[10]

In such circumstances, dairying was a godsend. In heavily timbered areas from Pyengana and Ringarooma to Sheffield and Marrawah, the selector could clear a few acres (and perhaps make some money from the sale of timber) and while the stumps remained in the ground, could graze a few cows. Clearing the land enough to make it fit for the plough would have taken some years. His wife and daughters could make up any surplus cream into butter and exchange it at the local shop for a few groceries. Thus butter provided a regular, if small, income to a family living what was basically a subsistence existence.

Dairy herd on partially-cleared land, Marrawah 1920s. *(QVMAG, courtesy Nicholls family)*

The experience of the Skemp family was typical. Settling at Myrtle Bank in 1883, they gradually took to dairying and in a few years had over a dozen cows. Their butter was sold in the Launceston mart or traded for groceries. A shilling a pound was a good price, though when there was a glut they received less than sixpence. As with nearly all dairy farmers they fattened pigs on the skimmed milk, and sold the pork in Launceston for from between twopence and sixpence a pound. Surplus stock and old cows were fattened and sold.

This pattern of dairy farming continued well into the twentieth century, with farmers supplementing their often very low income by hunting, timber-getting or working for wages on someone else's farm when the opportunity arose. In the 1870s it was helped along by the development of the mining communities in the north of the state where potted butter and cheese found a ready sale.[11]

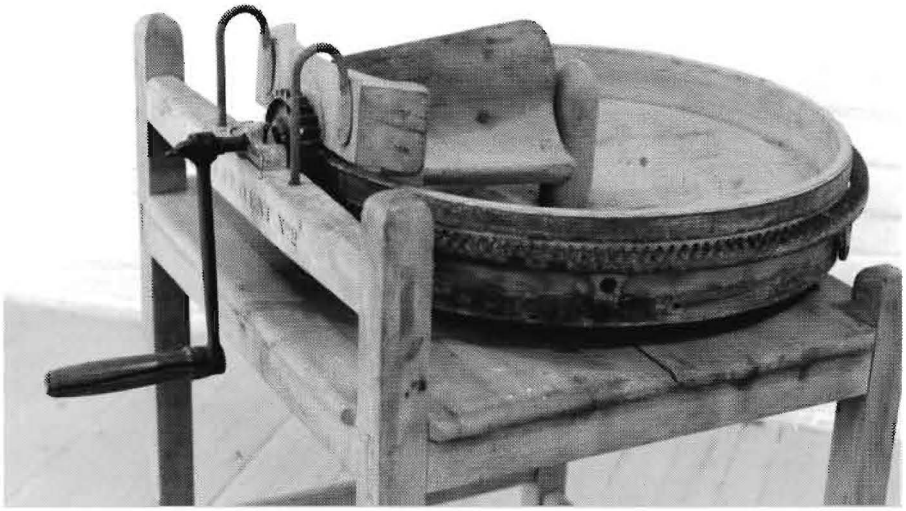
By the time of the 1891 census, there were 445 dairy farmers in the state, 265 of whom were women. The value of dairy products had continued to increase. In 1859-60 the total value of milk, butter and cheese produced in the state had been 168 440 pounds, but thirty years later it was almost double that at 302 630 pounds.[12]

1.2 The coming of change

But the dairying industry was set to undergo sweeping changes in the wake of new developments. The first of these involved new technology. Farm buttermaking was a time-consuming and laborious business. Milk was left to stand overnight in large, shallow pans to allow the cream to rise. The cream was then skimmed off and placed in a churn which was turned by hand for up to an hour, depending on the weather, until the butter formed. The buttermilk was then worked out of the butter using pats, the butter was placed in half-pound or pound moulds, six pound "rolls" or 56 pound boxes, and taken to be sold. If the butter could not be sold fresh in a matter of days, it was heavily salted to preserve it and packed in barrels or earthenware jars. This was known as potted butter and

always attracted lower prices, particularly towards the end of winter when it was likely to be increasingly rancid.

A large cream-setting dish (with broken spout) and a cream ladle nearby. *(John Leeming photo, courtesy Dick Capple)*



After the butter was churned, buttermilk was worked out using either pats or this type of mechanical butterworker. *(John Leeming photo, courtesy Dick Capple)*

Another problem with this system was that contamination by flies, dust, rats or dirty milking practices was a fact of life, and consumers suffered accordingly. Some farmers did their best to prevent such contamination. The dairy at Wesleydale, Chudleigh, was described in 1883: "The dairy is large and cool, with cement floor, centre and side benches, and has perfect ventilation through perforated blinds. I counted forty creamers of milk set, and some very nice butter, not made up, and in tubs".[13] This was obviously a big dairy, but smaller dairies could attempt such standards. The same correspondent remarked in a discussion of the Kentishbury district that: "An elderly lady, Mrs Crack, at [a] one hundred acre farm, showed me her dairy, a marvel of cleanliness. Several tubs of sweet butter were ready for sending away, but she is in no hurry: her butter will keep."

Butter from such establishments would attract the highest prices, which is why butter was branded. But a great deal of inferior butter still made its way into the market place, where the stock description of the worst was that it was not fit for axle grease.[14]

But a better system for producing butter which allowed for at least some form of quality control was

on the way. Between 1875 and 1879 Gustaf de Laval, a Swede, invented a mechanical milk separator which did away with the need to leave milk to set in open pans for many hours. The invention spread rapidly to Australia. By 1881 it was being used in New South Wales and the following year Victoria followed suit. By 1885 it was in general use in those colonies. Initially separators were large and not suitable for small dairies, so their use prompted the development of factories. Often these were creameries where milk was separated and the cream forwarded on to a large central butter factory. As a result of the example of Denmark and New Zealand, cooperative factories were favoured if the farmers were in possession of sufficient capital to fund the factory themselves. They then received more for their cream in the form of a share of the profits at the end of the year.[15]

Earthenware jar for potting butter. *(John Leeming photo, courtesy Di Tement)*

But the New Zealand success with the factory system of dairying had other results as well. In the 1880s, as a result of the development of refrigeration, substantial amounts of New Zealand factory-made butter suddenly came onto the New South Wales market, posing a serious threat to the local industry. It became obvious that, in order to compete, the butter factory system had to be adopted on a widespread scale, and the cooperative system spread rapidly.[16]

By the 1890s the New South Wales and Victorian dairy industries had been transformed. Victoria in particular surged ahead after its Commissioners on Vegetable Products visited Kiama in New South Wales in 1888: a bonus of twopence a pound was given to production of factory butter and a fund was established to help finance the building of new factories.[17] By 1895 there were 200 butter factories and 300 creameries in the colony.[18]

These developments in the other colonies had almost immediate ramifications in Tasmania. In the early 1880s the quantity of butter imported annually from Victoria hovered around 50 000 pounds [22 680kg]. In 1888 it jumped to 342 000 pounds [155 147kg][19]. Tasmanians found that they could not sell their own produce as readily and were forced to come to terms with the fact that consumers preferred the consistency of factory-made butter, as its quality was known to be at least reasonable, even if it was not quite up to the standard of the best home dairies. The time was ripe for Tasmania to follow the example of its northern neighbours if its dairy industry was to remain viable.

1.3 The first factories 1889-1900

The first areas to respond, in about 1889, were Scottsdale and Oatlands. The 1890-91 Post Office Directory lists both the Parattah Dairy Company Limited, Parattah, and the Scottsdale Co-operative Dairy Co. Ltd, Ellesmere. Details of the Parattah venture are sketchy, but at a meeting in March 1892 to discuss the possible setting up of a factory in the Latrobe area, reference was made to an attempt "by influential gentlemen of Launceston and Hobart" to start a factory at Oatlands which had failed. The Chairman, Dr Young, advised that "the affair at Oatlands was a large dairy and not a factory. There were also good reasons for the failure." He did not elaborate.[20]

More details are available about the Scottsdale factory. In 1890 the Scottsdale correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* referred to it by saying: "High hopes were entertained here of the Scottsdale butter factory, but, unfortunately, those hopes were destined not to be realised. The venture was launched under the most favourable auspices, with the experience of other factories to guide it, and the general goodwill and assistance of the farming community. Unfortunately, after a short existence, the concern that ought to have been a forerunner of many others in the same line, ended its days causing loss to all concerned."[21]

On 6 January 1890 the *Launceston Examiner* had the following advertisement:

> W. Lade has received instructions from the liquidators of the Scottsdale Butter Factory to sell by public auction on the premises, Creek Lawn, Scottsdale, on Tuesday, January 7, 1890, at 12 noon:
>
> 1 3 h.p. Tangye steam engine, semi-portable, nearly new
> 1 4 h.p. boiler, nearly new
> Lot of extra fire bars for boiler
> Lot shafting and pulleys
> 1 saw bench and circular saw
> 1 De Laval cream separator, 90 gals [410 litres] per hour, for horse works or steam
> 1 large churn up to 100lb [45kg] butter
> 20 10-gall [45l] collecting cans
> 2 milk cisterns
> 10 cream cans
> 70 butter crocks, 40 to 80lb [18 to 36kg]
> 1 set Avery's scales to 4cwt [200kg]
> 1 block and tackle
> 1 120 gallon [545l] tank
> 1 20 gallon [90l] ditto
> 1 bay cart horse
> 1 set chaise harness
> Leather belting, lot bricks
> 1 spring dray
> 1 spring float
> Dairy factory buildings.

Four days later the Scottsdale correspondent of the same paper commiserated:

> The last act in the Scottsdale Dairy Company took place on Tuesday, when all the effects belonging to the Company were sold by auction, drawing together a large concourse of people, prices ruling in some instances high. It is a pity and a heavy loss to the district that such a Company should fail to make a paying business of the concern, and failing to make it pay in such a season as we have at present is more to be deplored. Such companies pay in New South Wales. Private farmers even in this district can make a paying business of it, and do well, topping the market with their butter. The bulk of the plant belonging to the factory was bought by a resident, and I am certain he will have a different tale to tell a few months hence. Butter factories, including cheese making, etc., ought to be the very life of such a district as ours, and if another is started it should be on the co-operative principle...[22]

In May the *Daily Telegraph* correspondent visited the West Scottsdale farm of R.G. Ladbury who bought most of the plant, and gave further details. A Tasmanian-made four horse power multitubular

boiler supplied steam to the Tangye Soho engine. After describing the use of the separator (despite saying that the "method of skimming, or rather separating, the cream by means of centrifugal force is now so well known that a description is scarcely necessary"), he goes on: "The result [of using a separator] is a saving of over 20 per cent of cream, a superior butter, and an enormous saving of time and labour. Rancid cream, too often the result of the old setting and skimming system, is entirely avoided, and the cream can be churned when it is sufficiently ripe and before it turns sour."[23]

Contemporary papers appear to give no reasons for the failure of the Scottsdale factory, but at the meeting at Latrobe in March 1892 referred to above, a Mr. Westbrooke:

> ...asserted that it was entirely due to bad management. The directors appointed as manager a gentleman just arrived from England who, though acquainted with the theory of buttermaking, had no practical knowledge whatever. Hence the failure. The farmers, however, who had sent their milk to the factory had had such a taste of what benefits might have been theirs under another regime, that they would like a new start. The Scottsdale failure certainly should not act as a damper on [the people at the meeting], and they should also remember that this dairying must be the dairying of the future.

It is interesting to note a further comment from R.D. Stewart. He "did not see that very great benefits would accrue to the large holders, but he thought the small holders, with a few cows, would chiefly be benefited, as the large ones were able to do their dairying quite well at present." In fact, Stewart himself was dairying on quite a big scale at his property at Pardoe, producing cheese with a good reputation (see Chapter 4.4.).[24]

A further reason for the early failures was provided by W. Aikenhead at a similar meeting in 1894, when he remarked that "the first two butter factories in the Colony, at Oatlands and Scottsdale, had failed through insufficiency of capital..."[25] This was to be a perennial problem of the new factories.

After such a disastrous start there was little interest anywhere in setting up factories for some time, although the subject continued to be discussed. At the Tasmanian International Exhibition in Launceston in 1891, a working Model Dairy was set up and its manager, A.P. Bartlett, gave lectures on cooperative dairying and butter and cheese factories. Doubtless, the onset of severe depression in the 1890s contributed to the general reluctance to fork out money for a new venture, yet ironically it was the depression which led to the establishment of factories, largely as a result of very low prices for agricultural and other produce. In August 1891 the *Launceston Examiner* referred to the "past few seasons" as "very disappointing", with only limited demand for barley. Places such as St Marys found the problem worsened by the decrease in profitability of the north-east tin mines, which had led to declining numbers of miners and therefore a reduced market for dairy produce.[26]

In July 1891 a meeting was held in St Marys to "take into consideration the advisableness of establishing a cooperative dairy company". In an obvious move to improve on past mistakes, J.G. Davies related his experiences visiting cooperative factories in New South Wales. After agreeing that "the formation of the company [was] the only means of making dairying profitable", the meeting decided to proceed and formed a committee for the purpose, but there was no concrete result at this time.[27]

But there was much encouragement to farmers to continue such considerations. The newspapers played a very big role, keen to promote what they saw as a possible saviour of the farming community and the colony as a whole. In July 1891 the *North-West Post*, for example, quoted extensively from an article in the Victorian paper, *The Leader*, which extolled the formation of butter factories. It pointed out the increased profit, the "immense saving" of labour, and the uniform quality of the product as the main recommendations. It went on to advocate cooperative factories as the best way of ensuring farmer support, as "when the price of milk at the factory is low, as it must necessarily be at certain times of the year, they [the farmers] are apt to discontinue the supply". This was to be a continuing problem in Tasmania too.[28]

Newspapers were also quick to see the benefits that refrigeration brought. When in 1880 the *Strathleven* had been the first ship with a refrigerated hold to arrive in London from Australia, it carried not only meat but also eighty casks of butter. The opening up of the British market to

Australian dairy produce was thus possible, particularly as Australian butter arrived in Britain during the winter when northern hemisphere farmers, such as the Danes, were unable to keep up the supply. The Tasmanian newspapers often printed the prices realised by Victorian and New South Wales butter in London. The *Launceston Examiner*'s "own correspondent" was just joining the chorus of similar calls when in January 1892, noting the high prices for Victorian butter in London, he wrote that farmers should help themselves by establishing a butter factory. He felt it was better to build factories rather than have individual farmers export their produce as one person's bad butter would condemn everyone else's. It would also be "another nail in the coffin of slavery to which our woman kind have been subjected for so long... It is hard drudgery."[29]

By early 1892 it was time for action, and it was to occur, not at the older dairying areas around Deloraine and St Marys, but at Wynyard on the North-West Coast. Here the generally depressed conditions which had led to very low prices for potatoes were coupled with evidence of a decline in yield for this staple crop. The expansion of the potato export trade had been a very significant factor in the development of the coast, as it was the ideal crop for the higher rainfall areas, but with difficulties in selling farmers were facing ruin. Fortunately, the same climatic conditions were also ideal for dairying, and there must have been enough cows to encourage those interested to begin firm plans for building a factory.[30]

On 29 January 1892, the Prospectus of the Table Cape Butter and Bacon Factory was drawn up by a committee of management which included C.B.M. Fenton, a prosperous Wynyard farmer and member of parliament. His role was crucial. He had visited the "Pioneer" butter factory at Cobden in Victoria, and a man trained there, F.A. Callaway, was appointed to supervise the building and operation of the factory. Wynyard was chosen as a convenient site presumably because it was a port but also because it was central and "eminently suited to the producers in the Boat Harbour, Flowerdale, Calder, Mount Hicks, Cam, and adjacent districts", according to the prospectus.

The committee decided to follow the trend and announced in the prospectus that the "factory will be worked purely on the cooperative principle, by which no one from the largest shareholder to the smallest producer, will get more than his share of the profits." The prospectus did not take up the suggestion of some writers that all suppliers should be forced to take shares, only "strongly recommend[ing] that every intending producer should become a shareholder in order to secure a vote, or a number of votes, in the management of the company". It is interesting to note this version of cooperation. There was always a feeling that the "correct" type of cooperative was one where only suppliers of milk could share in the profits, but in practice the non-supplying shareholders (or "dry" shareholders) were often the only ones able to provide the much-needed capital, while the small farmers with just a few cows were not in a position to advance extra money to buy shares. The struggle for factories to become "real" cooperatives was one that was to be an oft-repeated saga in the history of the factories (see for example Chapter 1.5 and the histories of Yolla, Chapter 3.2, and the Tasmanian Produce and Cool Stores, Chapter 5.1), and indeed was still going on after the amalgamation of most of them to form UMT (United Milk Tasmania Ltd) in 1981.[31]

The Table Cape Butter and Bacon Factory Co. Ltd was quickly off and running, and the factory on the banks of Big Creek was opened on 28 September 1892. From the beginning it was a success, with the regular monthly cheque for cream the chief attraction for farmers. (The original intention to manufacture bacon was not proceeded with, although a separate company did attempt it for a few years.) In its first year the factory exported thirty tons of butter, and in 1899 in their annual report to shareholders the directors were able to boast that "during its seven years of existence [the company] has never failed to pay a 10 per cent Dividend, and a Bonus to suppliers". The bonus was the dividend to suppliers paid at the end of the year after all other expenses, including the 10 per cent dividend to shareholders, had been taken care of.

The success of this factory is really remarkable when compared with the other factories which were to follow in the next few years. The wisdom of appointing a Victorian-trained man for the job of manager was apparent. Even at the opening Fenton "referred in glowing terms to the manager, Mr F.A. Callaway", and there seems little doubt that in his position as factory manager till he resigned in 1902, Callaway's insistence on the production of the highest quality butter was what "made and maintained the reputation of the 'Lighthouse' brand of butter", as the 1902 Directors Report put it. Fenton too was instrumental in the factory's success, beginning with his visit to Victoria. Always keen to promote the venture, he was said to have taken samples of butter around Hobart during breaks

in parliamentary sittings. It was largely as a result of his work that the lighthouse on Table Cape had been built, and it was therefore appropriate that "Lighthouse" became the brand name for the butter from the factory with which he was also associated. At the opening Fenton also "thanked the Press for its ready assistance in the venture".[32]

Once definite moves had been made in Wynyard, other areas quickly became interested. The meeting in Latrobe already referred to which took place in March 1892 thoroughly discussed a proposal to set up a factory in the West Devon area, probably at Latrobe, but it was hampered by the fact that very few farmers had turned up. M.D. Heatley asserted that they "certainly did not want to make it a local affair, but there was the English market open to them, where good prices for a good article were a certainty... It was certainly necessary for farmers to look about for a new source of income when prices were so low...for oats." A motion, "That it is desirable to establish a butter factory in the [Latrobe] district", was carried unanimously, but a suggestion for a committee was not proceeded with and although a decision was made to appoint a canvasser to hold meetings at Sheffield, Sassafras and New Ground, the meeting broke up with little apparent achievement. Probably the suggestion of H. Murray that it might be advisable to await the results of the Table Cape venture helped those present to make haste slowly.[33]

Shortly after this meeting, a new development helped the cause of butter factories. As part of an Australian movement to better educate farmers and as a result of an act passed in 1891, the Tasmanian government appointed a Council of Agriculture. It consisted of eleven members chosen to represent the main branches of arable and pastoral farming, and was an advisory body intended to receive, discuss and disseminate new ideas and techniques. It maintained contact with farmers through local Branch Boards of Agriculture, of which 28 were set up in Tasmania during the first year of the Council's operation.[34]

Dairying was a particularly significant part of the Council's operations. This reflects partly the prevailing belief in the growing importance of the industry, and partly the fact that it was an industry where new developments were happening regularly and where information about such advances could and should be disseminated widely. At its second meeting in June, 1892, a motion was passed: "That this Council make enquiries as to what would be the cost of an expert to lecture at various centres re dairies and creameries with a view to the establishment of factories and creameries in Tasmania".

It quickly set up a travelling dairy to demonstrate the latest techniques in butter making. A committee of farmers in any district could apply for the dairy to visit, but had to provide: "carriage of plant from nearest railway station, a building for housing the plant 20ft by 15ft [6m by 4.5m] with flooring (for plant alone), horse to work the separator, a daily supply of at least 50 gallons of milk, a labourer to assist in the rough work, [and] a sufficiency of clean water for washing butter and cleaning up." In return, any farmers could visit and ask questions while ten pupils, "either male or female" could obtain a course of special instruction. In announcing the setting up of the dairy, the new *Journal of the Council of Agriculture* mentioned, in an apparent reference to Oatlands and Scottsdale, that "one reason - and perhaps the strongest reason - why some dairy factories have not succeeded is because the directors and shareholders have had to trust entirely to the manager, and if they were not fortunate in getting a good man they were at the mercy of the incompetent one. The travelling dairy...should therefore afford sound and widespread information". By July 1892 a manager of the dairy, James McCormick, had been appointed from Queensland where he had operated a similar scheme, and by October the dairy was at work in the first district, St Marys.[35]

Possibly as a result of the Council's activities, a meeting of people interested in the formation of a butter factory was held in Launceston in August 1892. The chairman was Henry Button, proprietor of the *Launceston Examiner*, who opened the proceedings:

> he considered there was great room for improvement in the art of butter making...and what Victorians could do could be accomplished by the people of Tasmania. The progress of Victoria in the manufacture of butter had been made by leaps and bounds. It was useless for people to say the Tasmanian-made article was as good as it could be made, for it was not. He had seen tubs of butter turned out on the counters of the grocers' shops in Launceston, which were interesting from a geological point of view, so clearly defined were the various strata. [They should] follow the example of those in Victoria by establishing a factory, with outlying creameries.

T. Hopkins made the interesting point that it was necessary for Tasmanians to do something "or the project would be undertaken by the people of Victoria; indeed such a course had been already hinted". Percy Hart also spoke, and he was later appointed the convenor of further meetings.[36]

Hart was a successful businessman and evidently played the same role for Launceston that Fenton did for Wynyard. His obituary in 1945 refers to the factory as if it was his. By October 1892 nearly all the shares in the Northern Tasmanian Dairy Co. had been applied for and the factory was working in Cape's store (now the C.H. Smith building in Charles Street) by December.[37]

This company was also quick to erect creameries in outlying districts so that milk could be separated locally and the cream sent in to Launceston, usually by train. Two were erected, probably by the end of 1892, in the Scottsdale area at Ellesmere and Springfield. The fact that farmers there were prepared to have another go at the factory system despite having their fingers burnt three years before speaks volumes for the perceived necessity of having the factories. As the *Daily Telegraph* correspondent wrote in November:

> That a pressing necessity exists for a departure from the old hand-made article is admitted on all sides, and the farmer who trusts to a winter demand for potted butter may find himself left with a stock in hand, the public preferring the fresh Victorian factory butter, which will be imported in spite of Customs duty. With all our neighbours employing improved dairy machinery, we will not much longer be able to compete on the old lines, and the sooner this truth is realised the better.

The company also erected creameries at St Marys and later Dunorlan and Bishopsbourne. A planned creamery at Ringarooma did not eventuate; instead the company built a second small butter factory there. Presumably the lack of a railway to bring the cream from Ringarooma to Launceston caused the change of plans (see Chapter 5.1).[38]

By now developments were occurring apace. In October 1892 the *Launceston Examiner* editorial was able to say that:

> Present appearances augur favourably for the future of our dairying industry... Thanks to the operations of a section of the Tasmanian press, and also to the Council of Agriculture, the necessary information was rendered easy of access. The present revival started at Table Cape, Launceston followed, then Scottsdale, Ringarooma, Burnie, and Ulverstone took the movement up in earnest; while from St Marys, Latrobe, and Chudleigh good results may confidently be anticipated in the near future.

By the end of 1893, aside from Launceston and Table Cape, there were factories at Burnie (with a creamery at Elliott), Flowerdale, Ringarooma, Sheffield (with at least one creamery at Lower Barrington), Stanley and Ulverstone. By 1900 these had been added to by factories at Derby, Irish Town (south of Smithton), Lilydale, North Motton, Pyengana and Claude Road (south of Sheffield). Creameries had been built at Caveside, Forest, Mt. Hicks, Riana and probably Nook (near Sheffield). (See relevant chapters.)[39]

1.4 Problems in the 1890s

That so many factories could be started during the depressed decade of the 1890s was a tribute to the persuasive skill of the organisers, but not necessarily to their financial knowledge. Nearly all experienced some form of financial difficulty, with the shining exception of Table Cape at Wynyard. By 1894 both the Launceston and Ringarooma factories of the Launceston-based Northern Tasmanian Dairy Co. plus the creameries had been sold. By the end of the decade the factories at Ulverstone, Sheffield (with its associated creameries) and probably Flowerdale had closed, while the Stanley factory had changed hands. Of those remaining, the factory at Burnie run by the Emu Bay Cooperative Butter Factory Co. Ltd. only just survived a period in 1894 when it was very close to bankruptcy, while the other factories were either producing cheese or were small proprietary factories

on someone's farm and were quite small ventures.[40]

Dairying was thus shown to be not the easy solution that it had seemed. One of the biggest problems was readily apparent. At a meeting of the newly-formed Tasmanian Dairy Factories Association in February 1894, the chairman pointed out that: "the trouble all or nearly all the factories suffered from was shortness of capital... In nearly every case the factories had started without sufficient capital, and had to borrow from the banks at a high rate of interest. Once started, and the object secured, the public held off, the farmers wanting their money to buy cows, and the investor his little to invest." This problem could only have been made worse by the setting up of so many factories, a point noted by John Henry M.H.A. in 1894. The same meeting also adverted to the problem of finding sufficient space on ships carrying butter to England, although this was to be only a temporary problem.[41]

A further problem was cartage. Roads in many areas were still abysmal, being practically impassable in winter. The coming of the railways had been a godsend, and some factories had been located next to stations (for example St Marys) but these were useful for sending milk to the factories only when the farmer had some way of getting cans to the station. Nearby creameries helped by reducing the distance milk had to be carried. But farmers still had to cart fresh milk each day or else pay a carrier to do it for him, and carriers were not always forthcoming.[42]

But in many cases the problem lay with the farmers themselves. At a meeting in September 1894 to consider the advisability of establishing a central butter factory and cool stores at Devonport, John Hope of the Kentish Butter Factory at Sheffield was reported to have complained that: "farmers were slow to move, and it took a great deal to drive anything into their heads. He had spoken to a number about the proposal and they all acknowledged it would be a good thing, but when he referred to them taking from one to ten shares, then it was another matter... It was a great pity that the farmers could not be taught that it was a good thing to put capital into."[43]

But it was not just farmers' reluctance to support the factories financially that caused the problem. Considering the difficult financial times this might be considered reasonable. But the farmers also felt no compulsion to send their milk to the factory on a regular basis. Winter dairying was almost unheard of, although winter was the most profitable time of the year to produce butter. Despite pleas in the press for farmers to go in for dairying in the winter, few if any did so, and the factories were forced to close for several months each year. Even in the summer farmers supplied the factories only when they felt it was worth the trouble of carting it, or if the price was high enough. In 1894, for example, the Burnie factory was forced to pay threepence per gallon for milk, even though this resulted in a loss on export butter shipments, because to lower the price would reduce supplies too much. As Stokes puts it, the root of the problem was the fact that the farmer could survive without the dairy factory, whereas the latter could not survive without the farmer.[44]

By 1900 the industry was in a sorry way, and not just because of the struggle that the factories were facing. The number of cows in the colony had increased from 34 000 in 1891 to a peak of 43 000 in 1896, although by 1899 this had reduced somewhat to 41 000. However, the quality of the cows was very poor. The Van Diemen's Land Company had imported milking shorthorns earlier in the century and some cows showed the influence of this lineage, but most were still dual purpose animals which were set to produce milk only when the price for meat was uneconomic. A survey of milk yields in West Devon in 1900 suggested that of 3000 cows, fewer than 500 would much exceed the supposed minimum economic yield of 130 pounds [59kg] of butter per cow per annum, while a large proportion would give less than 80 pounds [37kg]. A member of the East Wellington Branch Board of Agriculture pointed out that "it did not pay the private individual to import high class stock for the simple reason that the ordinary farmer was averse to paying 5 shillings for the service of a bull when he could, by running his cows on the road, get the services of a scrubber for nothing."[45]

The attitude of farmers thus referred to was one of the main stumbling blocks to progress. At a meeting in 1899, one Castles was reported to have said that: ...in theory they were recommended to go in for certain breeds of cattle. He could fetch mongrel cattle that would give more milk than pure bred ones. There had been a great deal said from time to time about the inferior class of cattle in Tasmania, but he got letters regularly from Victoria, and learned from them that Tasmanian cows milked as well, if not better, than the Victorian." When others stated that "cases of mongrel cows being good milkers were very rare" and produced a newspaper cutting with information about

Denmark, "Mr Castles said there was too great a tendency in Tasmania to follow the experience of farmers in other colonies, or in other parts of the world. That information was of little use in Tasmania, as the conditions were different..."[46]

All farmers may not have been so wary of change as Castles, but as "Risdon" mentioned in the *Weekly Courier*, there was an innate conservatism amongst them that was not conducive to innovation. Along with the fact that old farmers did not like cutting up farms into the necessary divisions for dairying, there was the (understandable) "distaste for the monotonous daily round". This was probably one of the chief reasons why farmers did not embrace dairying wholeheartedly. Twice a day, every day, they had to be home for the milking. The bigger the herds, the more milking. As a result, farmers tended to go in for dairying only when other forms of farming were not profitable.[47]

By 1900 dairy exports had dwindled to nothing and 810 000 pounds of butter were imported. With federation, the state's industry would no longer be shielded by Customs duties and it was possible Victorian butter would swamp the Tasmanian market, although the reverse could apply as the market in the other states would soon be open to Tasmanian produce. There was a general feeling that something had to be done to ensure the long-term future of the industry.[48]

1.5 The boom period 1900-1912

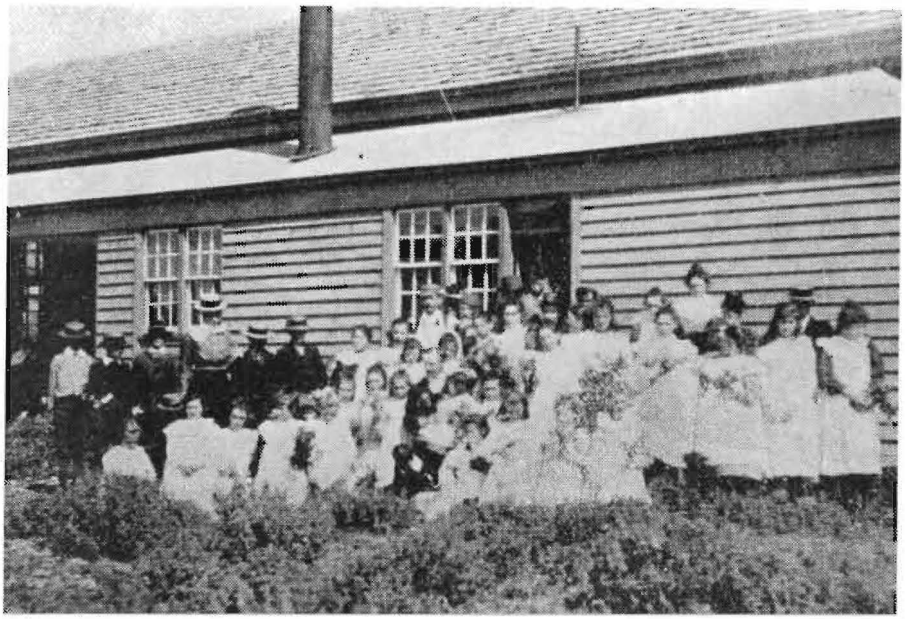
The usual response when things were not going well was to call in an expert. Tasmania excelled itself by calling in three. As a result of a suggestion emanating from the Launceston Branch Board of Agriculture, the government in 1899 engaged H.W. Potts from Victoria in 1899 to lecture around the state on improved and scientific dairy farming. (Potts was later appointed principal of Hawkesbury Agricultural College.) At the same time, the general opinion amongst those qualified to know that the general run of dairy stock was very poor, led to the invitation to Mr McNab, of Tullamarine, Victoria, a well-known dairy breeder, to tour the state and lecture on the importance of breeding good dairy cows. His visit was followed by the government's appointment of Augustus Conlon as Dairy Instructor. Conlon took up his appointment in 1900 and seems to have been an excellent choice. He worked tirelessly for the betterment of the industry, despite opposition from some quarters, and apart from a break from 1915 to 1918 when he ran the state farm at Deloraine, continued to do so until his retirement in 1928 at the age of 70.[49]

His was not an easy task, as he had to overcome the prejudice and conservatism of farmers referred to above. In 1905 at a meeting of the West Devon Agricultural Society to discuss a forthcoming visit by Conlon, the general feeling was reported to be that he could teach them nothing they did not know already. Yet it was plain that this was not the case. Conlon visited all areas of the state, giving practical demonstrations on cheese and butter making. The thrust of his lectures can be gained from a report of a visit he made to Springfield, near Scottsdale, in 1903. He inspected local dairies and judged them to be in good condition, but felt the milking yards needed to be looked after more carefully. More practically, he gave a demonstration of making cheese using no elaborate accessories, "the object being to show that a good cheese could be produced with ease on any farm." And in his demonstration of butter making, he left the butter in a granulated condition to show that this was better than "the old method of churning into a lump."[50]

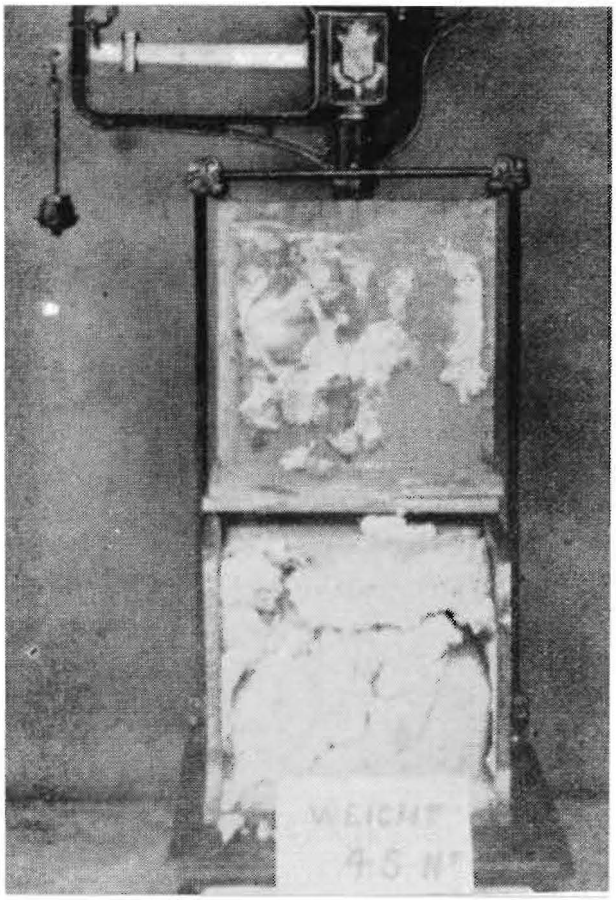
Of course, such reports did not bring overnight changes. The following year, after complaints in the *Examiner* about "a deal of inferior butter and cheese submitted at the Launceston auction marts", Conlon was called in. Following an examination, he "agreed that there was substantial room for improvement". The "butter was frequently of fair quality, but was invariably overworked", being churned to a "greasy consistency", while the cheeses were "very poor samples and sometimes unmarketable".[51]

Conlon gave his opinion on all matters relating to dairying. When asked about the milking competitions held at the various agricultural shows, he stated that they were useless because the cows were in abnormal conditions at the showgrounds and still expected to do their best. He advised that

the tests be carried out on the farm before the show with a steward in attendance, although if the cow did not turn up at the show it should be debarred. It is not known if his advice was followed. Conlon persevered, however. The factories were quick to seek his advice, and by 1908 he was able to report on "the now thoroughly awakened interest of the dairyman in the importance of a better understanding of the more technical branches of his own industry. This is fully evidenced by the increased number of applications for information on subjects which were treated with absolute indifference only a few years ago". Following occasional earlier dairy schools, he began annual schools at Pardoe near Devonport in 1909.[52]



Conlon and visitors at a dairy school at Pardoe 1901. (*Weekly Courier, 14 December 1901, p.1225, AOT)*



Newspapers helped to educate dairy farmers as shown in this photograph which demonstrated how butter should not be packed. The accompanying text pointed out that the box contained only 45 pounds instead of the possible 56, no paper or cloth had been used to line it, and the lid which is pictured above the box had three pounds of butter sticking to it. (*Weekly Courier, 27 September 1902, AOT*)

The perceived necessity for more information and discussion led to further developments around the same time. The Tasmanian Dairymen's Association was formed in 1908, and there were moves to initiate a Butter Factories Association two years later, although it was not until 1912 that the Tasmanian Butter and Cheese Factory Managers Association was finally formed. Moreover, in 1910 the Department of Agriculture was finally set up to give formal help to the state's farmers. Finally the role of the newspapers in disseminating information was still crucial and should not be overlooked.[53]

But it was not just the experts which kept the dairy industry going after 1900. Technological breakthroughs played their part. In Tasmania the first separators were being used by large farmers by about 1885, Ranson of Springfield and the Hunter Brothers of Longerwood being the first to import them. By the late 1880s small hand separators which could be bought for 25 pounds became available to the small farmer. They gradually took on in Tasmania and by 1890 the *Launceston Examiner* was giving separate quotations for fresh, potted and separator butter. After the turn of the century their use spread rapidly. By the 1904-5 season, the unusual demand for separators was being noted in the newspapers (for example, 26 were sold in the Deloraine district alone in the few months of the season to January 1905), and factories were taking more cream than milk. As a result creameries associated with factories began to close, and by the end of 1907 only one, at Ridgeley, was still in operation. However, there appear to have been a few privately-run creameries, such as one at Ulverstone, which may have been still running as late as the 1920s (see Chapter 4.2).[54]

The on-farm use of separators had widespread ramifications. Mixed farms with small dairies of 8 to 15 cows became common. Dairying became possible further from the centres of population as the volume of cream was much less than the equivalent volume of milk from the same cows. Farmers did not have to waste time carting their milk to creamery or factory and waiting for it to be separated before carting the skim milk home. In fact, the factories were quick to set up schemes whereby a horse and cart would come around to the farm to collect the cream. Where this did not happen, the railways once again were of great use. Thus in 1905 a Launceston factory was able to get supplies from the North-West Coast, Exton and Deloraine, Scottsdale and others in the north-east, and (by means of a cart) Patersonia. Another benefit of the new separating system was that, as cream lasts far better than milk (the sour taste being quite acceptable for butter making), it did not have to be sent daily to the factories. Twice a week pick-up was quite normal (as at Patersonia), and at the beginning and end of the season when supplies were not so great, this could be reduced to once-weekly. Dairy farming thus became far less time-consuming and a more attractive proposition.[55]

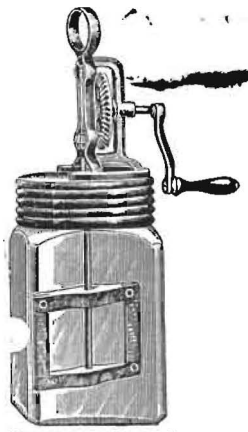
The use of farm separators had other repercussions. Butter factories had paid for milk according to the number of gallons, but paying for cream by volume was fraught with difficulty. Depending on how fast the separator was spun, the cream obtained from it could be either very rich or very watery. Obviously it was in the farmer's best interests to make it as thin as possible if he were paid by volume, whereas for the factory the important criterion was how much butterfat the cream contained. Fortunately for the factories, a reliable tool was at hand to determine rapidly the quantity of butterfat in cream. This was the Babcock test, named after the American who invented it in 1890. This simple chemical test was first used in Australia in 1892, but does not seem to have been widely used in Tasmania until the development of farm separators made it a necessity. Even then there was much vocal opposition from suspicious farmers, which led to the Council of Agriculture asking Conlon to "suggest the best and fairest system of paying for cream, so as to reasonably protect the suppliers". But Conlon's answer was that payment on butterfat was the best.[56]

The problem as far as the farmers were concerned was that it was the factory which ran the test and thus determined payment, and there was no way the farmers could test the accuracy of the test result. Antagonism over test results remained a problem in the industry until the 1970s when the Babcock test was replaced by the Milko Tester, which used electronic devices to measure the fat or protein in milk. There were many examples of farmers leaving one factory in disgust and moving to a rival one because they felt their cream had not tested high enough. There were also examples, referred to in the press, of factories telling new suppliers that their cream had received a better test just to retain that supplier's cream. The problem was exacerbated by the fact that the butter factories were usually small concerns in a small community. It was a brave factory manager who could stand up to an irate farmer, especially when there was another factory within easy distance only too happy to take a rival's supplier, even though it was well understood that it would probably only be a matter of time before the farmer concerned objected to the results at the new factory and took himself and his cream back to the first. In 1916 the Ringarooma Council even entered the fray when the farmers complained of low

tests, with a proposal to add the testing of cream to duties of the municipal inspectors, but no action was taken.[57]

Advertisement for Alpha-Laval separators, date unknown. A similar advertisement in the *Weekly Courier* 24 May 1902 claimed over 300 000 had been sold world wide. *(QVMAG)*

However, these problems were only minor and the use of the Babcock test worked well. The test had another effect as well: farmers could use the results of the test to determine which cows in their herd were good milkers, and which were not worth the cost of their feed. Although the development of its use in such a way was predictably slow, in the long term it was to have far-reaching benefits.



HOUSEHOLD GLASS CHURN

SOLE AGENTS FOR QUEENSLAND AND TASMANIA, ALSO IN N.S.WALES FOR WATSON, LAIDLAW & CO., GLASGOW.

Mr. Quadrant
~~114~~ St. John Street.

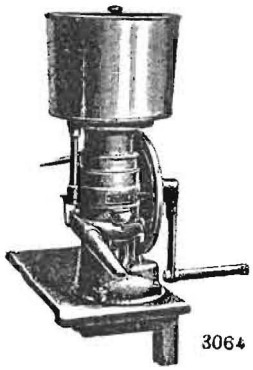
Launceston, Dec 13 1904

M.....

Bought of W. A. PRESTON & CO.,

"PRINCESS" Cream Separators & Dairy Supplies, etc.

"PRINCESS"



100 GALS. PER HOUR.

W. A. PRESTON

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"PRINCESS"

CREAM

SEPARATORS

HAND POWER AND STEAM TURBINE.

CHURNS

BUTTERWORKERS

CREAM CANS, TESTERS

SEPARATOR OILS, AND ALL DAIRY SUPPLIES.

HORSE AND COW RUGS.

The Launceston firm of W.A. Preston & Co. advertised that they carried separators and other dairy requisites on their letterhead 1904-5. *(Salisbury collection, QVMAG)*

Testing for butterfat at North-Western's Burnie factory c.1930. This was one of the few roles women had in butter factories for many years. *(QVMAG)*

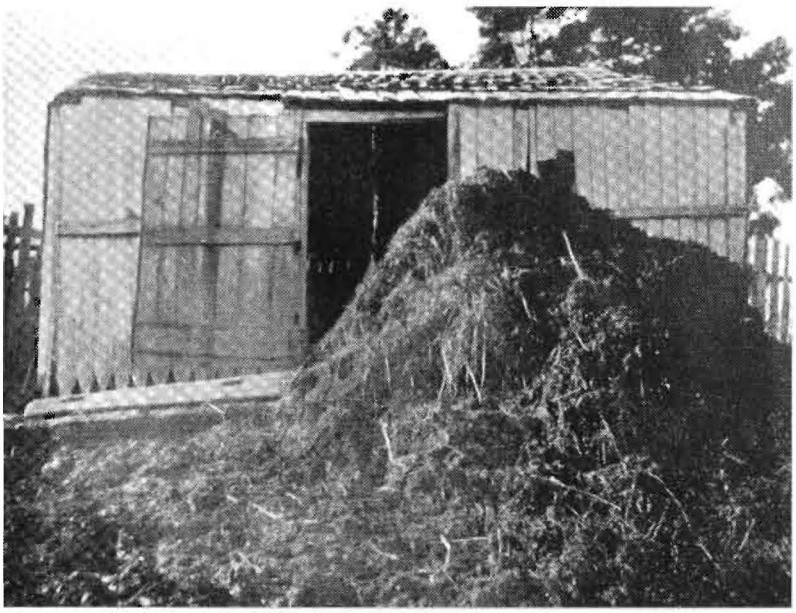
The move to farm separating had one further consequence: the condition of farm dairies became of much greater significance. The inspection of dairies was carried out under the Health Act by medical officers appointed by the local town councils, although in 1904 Conlon too was appointed an inspector. In 1905 at Burnie, Conlon remarked on the "absence of cleanliness in the milking sheds [which] was very marked. There seems to be a lack of nearly every essential necessary to keep the milk free from germs." Dr L.G. Thompson, the medical officer of health at Launceston, was more specific. In his annual report in 1906, after declaring many dairies insanitary, he detailed "plugs of rag in leaking cans, ill-fitting lids [and] storage of milk in laundries and living rooms".[58]

However, the councils often lacked the will to improve conditions. In 1908 the *Examiner* noted the directive from the town clerk that "all cowsheds and dairies must be thoroughly cleansed and limewashed before the 31st inst." and went on:

> It is to be hoped that the council's officers will see that the injunction is carried out, and not be allowed to prove [a] dead letter... Also, it is advisable that a surplus (sic) visit be made to some of the dairies at milking time, as two or three samples of milk brought under my notice recently were disgusting in the way of containing filth... The trouble, it is possible, will be found in the terribly neglected state the cows are allowed to fall into, and the practice of milking in grimy clothes. A little more inspection in these matters is required, as clean bails are not the only things necessary. We are sadly in need of a good dairy act.[59]

Following a litany of similar complaints a Dairy Act was passed in 1910, coming into force on 1 January 1911. The regulations under the Act make interesting reading, indicating well some of the problems with dairies. Dairies (and factories) had to be registered. Separators and cans had to be cleaned first in cold water, then by steaming. Cream had to be protected from the sun, and whey put in different containers from the cream cans. Cowbails were to be kept clean and to have a weatherproof roof, non-absorbent and sloping floors, and a drain running the full length and another 30 feet [9m] beyond the sheds. The walls and ceiling were to be limewashed twice a year. Manure heaps and piggeries were to be a certain distance away, and udders and hands were to be clean. These would seem to be fairly basic requirements, but the shock they must have provided to farmers

is well illustrated by the *Weekly Courier* which, after listing the regulations, noted that they "appear more severe than they will probably work out in practice, as the department is not likely to make the mistake of requiring that they shall be observed in their entirety straight away." Indeed Benson, the director of the newly formed Department of Agriculture, stressed that the regulations "would only be enforced in extreme cases". In the event they were enforced only in factories, and dreadful conditions in dairies were still being found in the 1930s. (See Chapter 1.6.)[60]



Poor conditions in the dairy industry.

Milking shed at Dover, with manure heap outside.

Public tip and dairy on same premises, Queenborough.

(Journals and Papers of Parliament, *Vol LIX 1908, Paper No.41: the Annual Report for 1907-8 of the Department of Public Health*)

However, it was in the thinking farmer's interests to improve conditions on his farm, and with the amount of publicity given in the press to the comments of Conlon, the various health officers and others, the word spread. In 1910 Conlon was able to comment on "...the increased amount of attention which has been given by dairymen generally to the erection of improved buildings, more particularly milking sheds and cow stalls. This tendency to rise to a higher plane has also been very noticeable in the information sought and supplied during the year on all subjects connected with improved methods in the equipment of dairies and factories, the manufacture of butter and cheese, ensilage-making, testing of dairy herds and allied subjects."[61]

An elaborate cow barn erected in 1905 at Homewood, Wilmot, by the Richards family. *(QVMAG collection, courtesy George Richards)*

The new technology combined with greater knowledge of the requirements of successful dairying helped to put the dairy industry on a much stronger footing in the decade after 1900. However, other factors played a part. One was the increase in settlement into the best dairying areas in the state, particularly in the far north-west at places such as Marrawah and Nabageena (then called Sunny Hills). Areas in the north-east such as Pyengana and Goulds Country were also receiving more settlers at this time, and dairying played its traditional role of helping clear the land. It would take some years before dairying in the north-west would become of prime importance. In 1902 the *Weekly Courier* pointed out that in that area potatoes were the staple, with dairying an auxiliary, compared with the Falmouth and Break O'Day region where dairying was the staple. However, the increasing importance of dairying in the north-west was helped by the arrival of a number of people from Gippsland, a strong dairying Victorian area. Their presence was noted as early as 1903, with the added comment that they were going into dairying. In 1917 their presence in Irish Town, south of Smithton, was cited as the chief reason why dairying had become the major industry there.[62]

The activities of the Closer Settlement Board should also be mentioned. Dedicated to the plan of settling small farmers on the land, the Board was formed in 1906 and soon afterwards purchased Cheshunt Estate at Meander, dividing 13 397 acres into 61 farms. It went on to buy Mt Pleasant, Brinktop, Frogmore and Woolmers, and parts of the Formosa Estate at Cressy, the Native Plains Estate at Merseylea and the Banjeston Estate at Sorell. The smaller farms thus formed were ideal for mixed farming, with dairying playing some part.[63]

After the nadir of 1900 when no butter was exported, the tide started slowly to turn the other way. The report for the Council of Agriculture for 1900 noted a considerable activity in dairying since Conlon took up his duties. By 1903 Conlon could state in his annual report that while in 1900 810 000 pounds [365 000kg] of butter had been imported, the following year this had declined to 760 000 pounds [354 000kg], and by 1902 had fallen again to 614 000 pounds [280 000kg]. But he had a word of warning as well, saying that "dairying has reached a very critical stage" and that a vigorous Government policy was needed for the industry to be firmly and successfully established.[64]

In the event it was probably not government policy as much as market forces which led to a boom. In 1901 the Council of Agriculture reported that heavy yields of farm products and high prices "have militated against the extension of the factory system" in the dairy industry. But by 1903 prices for potatoes were very low, following an excellent season on the mainland, and with the encouragement of newspapers such as the *Weekly Courier* which ran a series of articles in May and June encouraging farmers to turn to dairying, more cream began to arrive at the factories in the spring. This was the time of the big demand for separators. By March 1904, the various factories were reporting a bigger output and larger exports than ever before. Low prices for potatoes were not the only reason. The *Weekly Courier* also pointed to the good season for growth of pasture and the fact that more land was

being cleared. In 1904 A.C. Hall of Burnie told the *Weekly Courier* that potatoes were profitable only near the railway or the sea, and that dairying was much better, and by December the same paper reported that output at the factories was "enormously" increasing and even more land was being cleared for next year.[65]

These and following years were boom years for the building of factories. New factories at Deloraine (1901) and King Island (1902) were added to in 1903 by a large butter factory and cool stores at Lindsay Street, Launceston (to replace a smaller existing one), a second butter factory at Wynyard, and a cheese factory at Montagu. In 1904 there were new factories at Smithton, Wilmot, Marrawah and Burnie (the second), while a second factory started up in Launceston in 1905. Two of these, the factory at Wynyard and the second Launceston factory, were short-term affairs, but the remainder lasted for quite some years. The Cool Stores in Launceston also provided necessary refrigeration for butter, hitherto unobtainable.

Further butter factories were built at Yolla (1906), Ulverstone (1907), Goulds Country (1908) and Ringarooma (the second, in 1908), while new factories began operations in existing buildings in Launceston (the third, in 1906) and Scottsdale in 1910. Cheese factories were built at Gunns Plains and Cheshunt (both 1909). In 1911 factories were built at Devonport and Riana, and probably by this time there were two small ones at Camden Hill Road and Myrtle Bank. The latter part of the boom was partly a result of the potato blight which was devastating crops, with the result that more farmers went into dairying. Along with this, farmers were noticing the impoverishment of the soils which monoculture had inflicted. There was a growing feeling that mixed farming, with a dairying component, was best.[66]

Despite the big increase in production represented by this flurry of building activity, there was no problem in selling the product. The West Coast mines, which had probably been what kept the factories going in the lean years, still provided a large and profitable market, and any surplus could be exported. Thus in 1905, the Table Cape factory sold 270 000 pounds [130 000kg] in Tasmania, 68 400 pounds [31 000kg] in London and 43 000 pounds [20 000 kg] in Melbourne. The value of butter and cheese exports from the state rose rapidly from 7000 pounds in 1902 to 16 200 pounds in 1904, 21 200 pounds in 1906 and 34 800 in 1908. Locally, the best Tasmanian butter brought the top prices, but butter was still being imported, partly because high rail freights meant North-West Coast butter was more expensive in Hobart than mainland butter which could take advantage of cheap steamer charges. There were also moves to get the words "Tasmanian butter" printed on export butter, as at this time it simply went as Australian with that from the other states.[67]

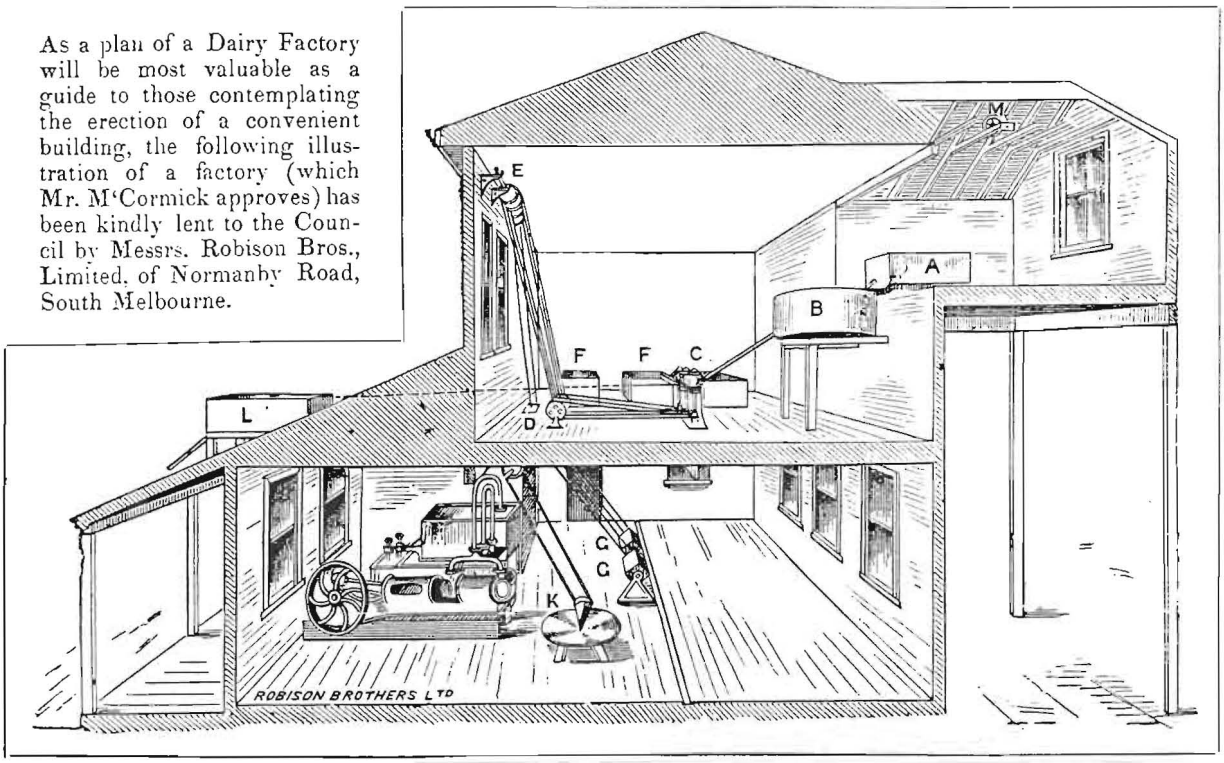
By 1912 the boom was over. Only one area, Flinders Island, was yet to build its factory (in 1922). But even by the beginning of 1910 there were doubts expressed about the wisdom of the boom. The manager of the Launceston-based Tasmanian Produce and Cool Stores was reported as saying that it was silly to have so many new factories. It was much better to send cream to an existing one, and he suggested some should amalgamate. But the problem was the primitive transport of the time, together with a widespread feeling amongst farmers that their local district should be able to support a factory. When the Riana factory was opened in 1911, the chairman of directors explained that "the intention of the company was not to clash with any other company...[but] it would enable butter to [be] made of finer quality than would be possible if the cream were carted a long distance in the hot summer weather". The local correspondent of the *North-West Post* added that it would "save the suppliers a deal of expense in paying for cream carting to Burnie".[68]

Most of the factories were built on the gravity principle, as exemplified by the illustration in the pamphlet, "Modern Dairying", which was distributed in connection with the Travelling Dairy in 1893 (see next page). The final sentence reads: "Where practicable, the factory could be erected at the foot of a hill, and thus do away with the hoisting of the milk." Several were in fact built this way, including Table Cape (both the first and second) and the second Wilmot factory. Mostly they were impressive, three storey affairs which used lifts for raising the milk to the top storey to allow gravity to feed the separators and churns.

By far the majority of the factories started as proprietary companies, despite much encouragement to have cooperatives. The *Weekly Courier*, for example, referring in 1901 to the fact that cooperation was "almost universal" on the mainland, prophesied that farmers would go to the wall without it. Cooperation had been tried in other fields, so the concept was not entirely new to Tasmania. The

West Devon Farmers' Cooperative Association Limited was formed in Ulverstone in 1889 with a capital of 5000 pounds for farmers to cooperate in the purchase and disposal of goods, while the North-Western Farmers Association Ltd with a capital of 10 000 pounds was started in 1898 to assist cooperation amongst farmers, although it was in liquidation by 1905.[69]

As a plan of a Dairy Factory will be most valuable as a guide to those contemplating the erection of a convenient building, the following illustration of a factory (which Mr. M'Cormick approves) has been kindly lent to the Council by Messrs. Robison Bros., Limited, of Normanby Road, South Melbourne.



"The illustration represents a factory worked on what is known as the `gravitation' system. In the design of this building our aim has been to arrange the plant in such a manner as to reduce the labour in working same to a minimum, besides keeping in view the greatest cleanliness in working. Special attention has also been paid to the lighting of the factory.

The working of the plant may be briefly described as follows:- The milk is raised by means of the hoist M from the vehicle below, and emptied into the milk-weighing tank A. Upon a valve on the discharge pipe of tank being opened, the milk will flow into the milk-receiving tank B. The latter tank is provided with an outlet pipe having branches with valves leading to the separators C, and so arranged that the milk from tank B may be allowed to flow to each of the separators at one time, or to any given separator only.

Our illustration shows the plant arranged so that the cream separated from the milk may be run into cream-tanks placed in a cool storage chamber during hot weather; and if not required to cool, it may be run into the churns G on the ground floor. The churns, after being charged, are set in motion, and after the butter is made it is removed to the butter-worker, to have the moisture worked out and the butter salted.

The cream separators and skim milk tank L are arranged to allow the skim milk to readily gravitate from separators to skim-milk tank.

Our working drawings show two cool storage chambers, one for cooling the cream in warm weather, and the other for storage of the butter. The refrigerator for keeping these chambers cool is also arranged to supply plenty of cold water for churning the butter. Probably the cool rooms and refrigerator may be done away with, as your climate is so much milder than ours.

Where practicable, the factory could be erected at the foot of a hill, and thus do away with the hoisting of the milk."

A suggested design for a butter factory. *(Department of Agriculture, Tasmania, Bulletin No.2, "Modern Dairying", Hobart, 1893, pp. 53-54)*

But by 1908 the *Weekly Courier* could point to only "two or three" dairy factories which were being worked satisfactorily on the principle of cooperation. One reason why proprietary concerns were able to compete more than successfully with the cooperatives was that they generally paid more for cream initially. The quoted price for cream was regulated by the current market quotations and fixed in advance. With cooperatives, the price paid was generally a little lower so that a bonus could be paid at the end of the year. For many farmers it was better to get the definite price than wait to see if a

bonus would be paid. Moreover, the cooperatives had no tie over their suppliers. There was nothing to stop a shareholding supplier from sending his cream to a rival proprietary company if he thought he would benefit. The situation remained unchanged until 1921 by a judgement re the Port Huon Fruitgrowers Cooperative Association Ltd. which ruled that shareholders were always bound to dispose of their product through the cooperative, not just when it suited them.[70]

The other reason for the smaller number of cooperatives was the fact that factories needed quite a lot of capital to begin, and farmers generally were not in a position to provide it in sufficient quantities. When the North-Western Cooperative Dairy Co. Ltd began in Burnie in 1907 in competition with the Emu Bay Cooperative Butter Factory which had started in 1893, the local correspondent wrote that:

> [although] associated with [this] venture are many worthy aspirations, [and] the true principles of co-operation are extolled...the directors of the [Emu Bay factory] speak as men of experience, who have weathered the storms of adversity, and still are able to pay a dividend of 10 per cent. and show a small margin between gross and net receipts. ...while the shareholders of the new co-operative institution may truthfully say the Emu Bay factory should pay a bonus as well as a dividend, and so divide the proceeds, yet I am afraid they will find it desirable to enlist the aid of the non-supplying and purely shareholding element.[71]

The truth of this had already been demonstrated at Yolla. Farmers there had been unsuccessful in persuading the Table Cape directors to run their factory on cooperative principles and so had started their own factory, yet when they actually came to finance the company, they found they had to accept help from the proprietary Dehle (pronounced "Daly"), Bennison and Co. (see Chapter 3.2). This Hobart company supplied dairy machinery and sold dairy produce and was financially involved with several new ventures. Its predecessor Dehle and Murdoch bought the troubled Ringarooma factory in 1894 and Dehle, Bennison and Co. continued to run it until 1908. As well as helping with the establishment of Yolla, Dehle, Bennison and Co. also gave financial help to the first Wilmot factory in 1904 and opened its own Launceston factory in the same year (see relevant chapters). A similar role was played by the Melbourne-based firm of Bartram and Co., factory fitters and butter exporters. They bought Launceston's Tasmanian Dairy Co. in 1894 and in the following few years built factories at St Marys, Pyengana and Derby (see Chapter 5.1). A third company, the Hobart firm of Murdoch Brothers, was also a supplier of capital, setting up the Ulverstone factory in 1907 (see Chapter 4.2) and as late as 1939 building a new cheese factory at St Marys (see Chapter 5.5).

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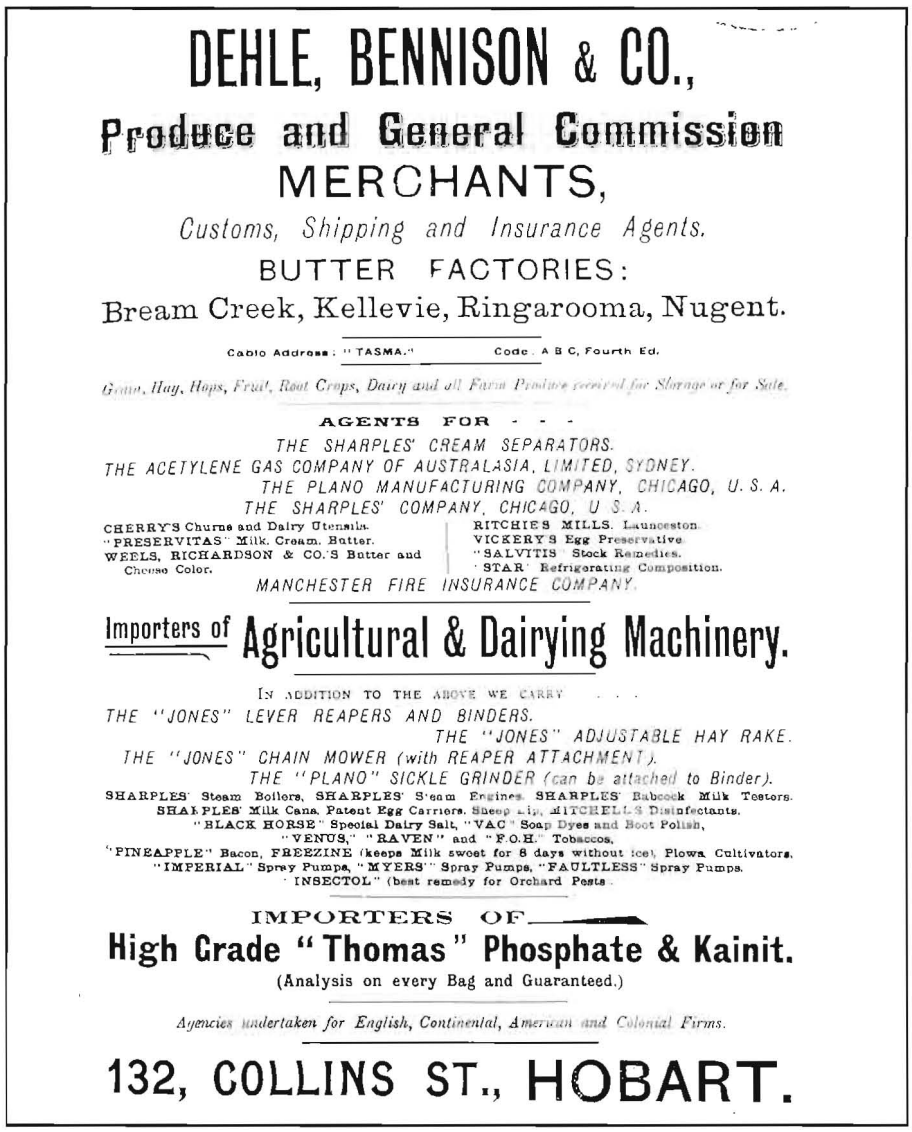
Advertisement for Dehle and Murdoch 1896-7. (*Post Office Directory 1896-7, p. 51*)

But the principles of cooperation were firmly believed in, and gradually cooperatives took over some of the proprietary concerns, for example the Murdochs' Ulverstone factory and the North-Western

Cooperative Dairy Co. Ltd, which was formed to take over the existing factory owned by the Tasmanian Produce and Cool Stores of Launceston (see Chapters 4.2 and 4.1.2). By 1916 some cooperative butter factories on the North-West Coast had established stores to supply farm and household requirements as well. However, as late as 1924 the Department of Agriculture was still urging dairy factories to go the way of Denmark and have cooperatives.[72]



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Advertisement for Dehle, Bennison and Co. 1900. (*Post Office Directory 1900, p. 51)*

1.6 Consolidation 1912 - 1940

By 1912 the Tasmanian dairy industry was on a very firm footing. The years 1911 and 1912 were extraordinarily good years, as Fig.1.1 indicates.[73]

Year	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914
Butter made (in 1000 pounds)	1 780	3 317	3 278	2 754	2 432
Cheese made (in 1000 pounds)	464	480	523	442	409

Fig.1.1 Butter and cheese manufacture in Tasmania 1910-1914. *(Statistics of the State of Tasmania, 1914-15)*

There are two noteworthy features of this table: firstly, the huge increase in butter in 1911, almost doubling the previous year; and secondly, the fact that the figures for cheese are relatively much more stable. It is butter that has mostly reaped the benefit of the increase in dairying. 612 tons of this large output, or over 40 per cent, was exported to Melbourne for transhipment to the English markets. A third point should be made. Although there is a decline in production in 1913 and 1914, the level does not drop off to anywhere near pre-1911 levels. In fact these years were bad for dairying because of dry weather which limited the amount of grass, but more cows were actually being milked. The earlier problem of factories facing closure because farmers were not interested in supplying does not seem to be repeated.[74]

In 1915, the Agent-General engaged an expert to report on the condition of Tasmanian butter which arrived in London, and he stated that he had interviewed importers of Tasmanian butter "and their views were that butter of rare quality was made in Tasmania". He went on to say that he was "convinced that Tasmanian factories can put on the British market brands of cheese that cannot be surpassed by export countries". However, these comments referred only to the top end of production and a lot of consolidation was needed. Following the proclamation of the Dairy Act, various dairymen, most of whom were factory managers, held a meeting in 1911 with Benson, the newly appointed Director of Agriculture. The large quantity of second class butter which was exported was referred to, along with the fact that no Tasmanian butter was graded superfine (later called "Choice"). First class fetched five pounds a ton more than second. The blame was fixed on dairymen, and the meeting asked Benson to appoint two dairy supervisors. They were appointed just prior to the First World War. Other problems mentioned at the meeting were the lack of cool storage on the interstate boats, and "the careless way in which cream cans were handled on the government railway". The following year the first cool (louvred) trucks for carrying cream on the railways were used, and these greatly improved conditions.[75]

However, the butter factories themselves could have done more to improve the quality of butter made. The effect of poor milking practices could have been largely negated if pasteurisation was carried out in the factories, but it was almost unheard of. Table Cape had installed a pasteuriser soon after it began, but when cream started to be separated on the farm, pasteurisation was discontinued. In 1913 the Department of Agriculture asked the Devonport factory to install a pasteurising plant as an experiment, but in 1916 the *Weekly Courier* bemoaned the fact that pasteurisation had made little or no progress in Tasmania, although in New Zealand it had made great headway.

However, this situation changed quickly. Table Cape had been forced to install it by 1915 to destroy a fungus which was lowering the quality of its product. Perhaps this example helped the other factories make the move; perhaps it was the influence of Conlon and the press which joined forces to persuade them. But whereas in 1917 only two factories had pasteurisation, by the following year there were twelve. The Ulverstone factory was able to report in November that since it had installed pasteurising equipment it had made no second grade butter, while at the same period last year it had made four tons. The type of pasteurisation installed was the "batch" type, where one vat of cream was treated at a time. The alternative was the "flash" or high temperature, short-time, method, while about 1933 the vacuum treatment process was introduced from New Zealand.[76]

A major improvement came about with compulsory cream grading. When suppliers were paid solely on the amount of butterfat, it did not matter what condition the cream was in, although factories would not buy it in a putrid state. The farmer had no real incentive to take care of his cream by keeping it cool and dirt-free and stirred regularly before pick-up. Mr McHugh of the Penguin Council pointed out that: "Cream should not be allowed to be exposed to the sun for hours, as it nearly always was in his neighbourhood", as it could only produce pastry butter (the lowest class). The answer was to grade the cream on arrival at the factory, although the factory managers were very strongly opposed to it. But in 1919 the government passed amending legislation which provided for the grading as well as the testing of cream and milk in factories.[77]

At the first school for butter factory managers held by the Department of Agriculture in 1919, 23 people gained their certificates. Graders were taught how to distinguish between Choice, First and Second grade cream by taste. Cream that was not even good enough for Second grade was adulterated with a small amount of kerosene (later replaced by a harmless blue dye) which rendered the cream unfit for human consumption, and returned to the supplier. This meant that the supplier could not attempt to sell it elsewhere, but he could feed it to his pigs. The new system had spectacular

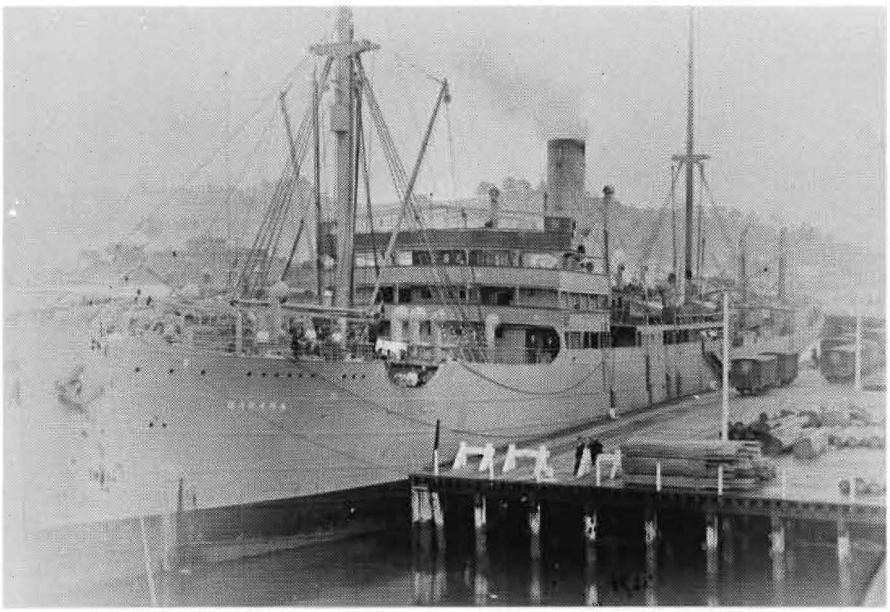
results. In 1921 80 per cent of Table Cape's butter was graded Choice, compared with 26 per cent the previous year. In reporting these figures, the *Weekly Courier* gave most of the credit to compulsory grading, although it felt that pasteurisation also helped.[78]

The effect on all Tasmanian butter can be gauged because of the appointment of a Commonwealth butter grader in Tasmania as a result of a contract with Britain to supply butter for the war effort. W.A. Herkes arrived in 1917 to grade boxes of butter before shipment, and Fig.1.2 indicates the improvement he noted.[79]

Year	1917-18	1918-19	1919-20	1920-21
% Choice	12.2	19.9	36.2	55.8
% First	53.2	56	45.1	21.9
% Second	34.5	23.8	18.5	22

Fig.1.2 Improvement in grades of Tasmanian export butter 1917-1921. *(Weekly Courier, 7 April 1921, p.4)*

In 1921 Tasmania for the first time was the best state for the percentage of Choice butter. Even when the Imperial contract expired that year, the grader remained, and hopes were expressed that Tasmanian butter could at last be exported direct to England without having to be re-graded in Victoria. What was necessary was cool storage on the interstate boats, and by the end of the year it was announced that the *Nairana* would soon have an insulated chamber for carrying butter. The same year saw the first direct shipment to England from the north-west, when the S.S. *Bakara* left Burnie with 25_371 boxes of butter, although the first consignment from the north-west to leave direct from Tasmania had been in 1918 when 10 000 boxes left the newly-built Somerset freezing works and were sent by refrigerated truck to Hobart for shipping. (The first direct shipment from Tasmania as a whole had been in 1911 from Launceston - see Chapter 5.1).[80]



The S.S. *Bakara* at Burnie in 1921 loading butter for the first direct shipment to England. *(QVMAG)*

The opening of freezing works at Somerset in December 1917 also helped the industry. They were originally intended only for meat, but the butter factories were quick to apply for space at a time when a shortage of shipping space combined with a boom year had left the factories with excess butter. It took some months for a satisfactory deal to be arranged with the management of the works, but eventually a price agreeable to all was set, and from then on the works were used frequently for butter. With the example of Somerset before it, Tasmanian Produce and Cool Stores, which had opened in Launceston in 1903, started for the first time to store butter in large quantities, with 13 000 boxes from the north-east there in March 1918.[81]

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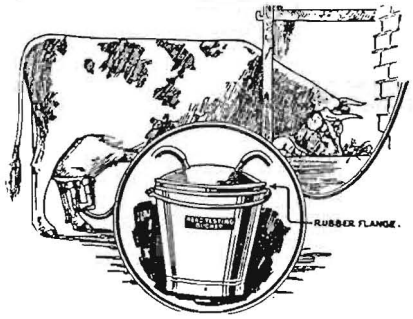

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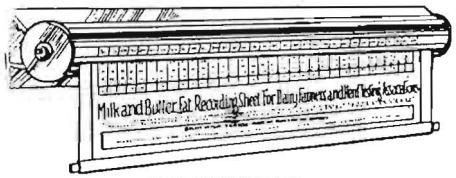

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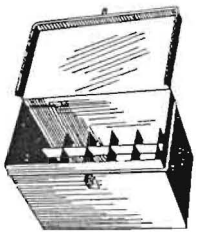

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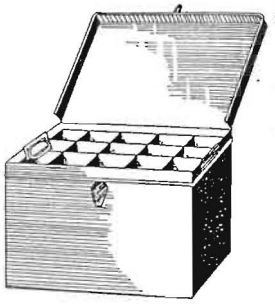

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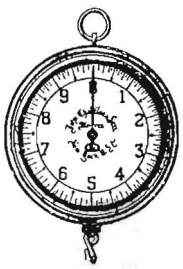

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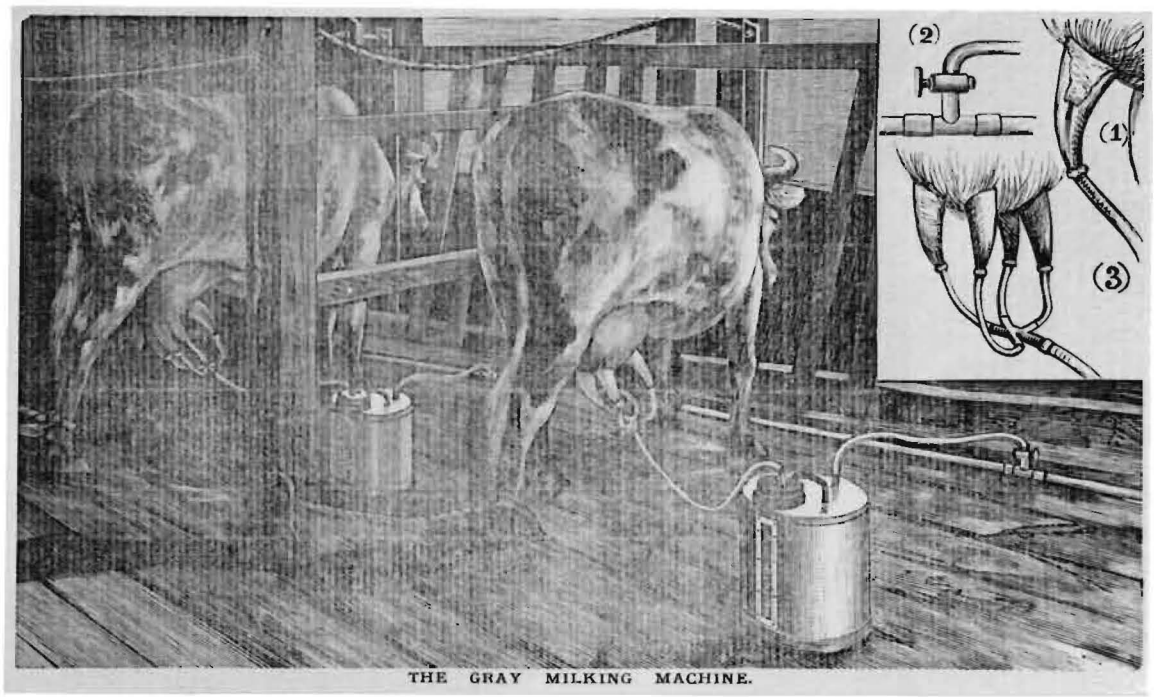
Regulation design, with glass covered dial. Weighs to 30 lbs., three times around the dial, registers each 10 lbs. on stem above hook. Nickel rim, **52/6 each.**

Herd-testing equipment as advertised in the catalogue of D.& W. Chandler, a Melbourne firm, date unknown. *(Diprose collection)*

The farmers themselves were also attempting to improve quality. In a Department of Agriculture Bulletin on how to improve the dairy industry, the Director Benson referred to the poor class of cow still in use. The 51 996 cows in the state yielded an average of 227 gallons of milk per annum. Benson pointed out that in England a cow yielding less than 500 gallons was not worth keeping,

while some gave 800. He suggested using bulls with a good pedigree, not "mongrel" bulls, and importing cattle for a quicker improvement. The quarantine laws laid down a mandatory 90-day quarantine period, but he suggested allowing cows in from the mainland with no quarantine period as long as they had their certification, thus considerably reducing the expense. This latter call had been made for years, but even when the Director of Agriculture asked for it nothing happened, as in 1915 people were still calling for the change.[82]

But there were concerted efforts to improve herds. A herd testing association was formed at Yolla in 1912-13, and herd testing began in 1915. A report in February 1916 that testing at Yolla was "giving satisfaction" was followed two years later by the news that testing had begun at Gunns Plains, Riana, Chudleigh, Ringarooma and Winnaleah. Official recording of pure-bred dairy cattle began in 1917, with 53 cows from eleven herds. This led gradually to an increase in stud herds, so that by 1953 there were 729 pure-bred cows in 61 herds. Importations of pure bred cows or bulls were noted in the press, as when W.W. Ford of Circular Head imported a Shorthorn bull in 1918 and J.F. Moore of Marrawah imported two Friesian cows and two bull calves in 1920. Jerseys were also in big demand.[83]



An illustration of the Gray Milking Machine imported by W. Crosby, M.L.C., in 1893. *(Journal of the Council of Agriculture, July 1893, p.146)*

A move to ease the work load of dairying was also made about this time. Milking machines had been available from the early 1890s, and one was imported in 1893. By 1900 the Lawrence-Kennedy machine had been imported into Victoria, where it was improved by Terang farmer Alexander Gillies. The Lawrence-Kennedy-Gillies (LKG) machine soon became one of the most popular brands, with 300 of them said to be in use in Australia and New Zealand by 1905, In 1902 a Lawrence-Kennedy was imported into Tasmania by W.W. Ford of Stanley, and a number of people were invited to witness a trial of the machine. According to the *Weekly Courier*, "all present expressed surprise at the simplicity and rapidity of the machines and the cleanliness of the work done". But the general opinion of machines was that expressed by the same paper in 1904 when, commenting on the shortage of labour, it ventured the opinion that when milking machines were perfected they would be a boon. They were felt to pay only for herds over 50.[84]

However, during the First World War, partly as a result of a shortage of labour and perhaps simply a part of the more scientific approach to dairying, there were widespread moves to use machines. Once again Yolla was to the forefront. In the 1913-14 season, there were only four machines in the district; by the end of 1917 there were 20. Earlier in 1917 when there were only eleven, there were said to be more in this district than anywhere else, but in most areas a few progressive farmers began to use them. Ringarooma had at least four in operation by February 1914. A very common brand was the

Ridd. On the other hand, of 206 suppliers to the North-Western Co. at Burnie, only one had a machine in 1917. For most people, it was far cheaper to use family members. P. Clingeleffer told North-Western's Annual General Meeting that "his daughter did all the dairying on his farm", and there was a very good return for very little expense. His daughter's thoughts are not recorded.[85]

In 1928 the situation had changed little. A special article on milking machines in the *Weekly Courier* said in part:

> In certain districts and in isolated cases they are employed regularly and with effect. In others they are conspicuous by their absence. On the East Coast and particularly in the St Marys district milking machines are employed by practically every farmer who makes a business of milking, and from enquiries made these machines give every satisfaction. In many cases it was stated that without them the position would be hopeless. In the north and north-west although dairying is a general practice among farmers few extract the milk by the aid of machinery. An impression that seems to have become more or less general is that milking machines are more trouble than they are worth.

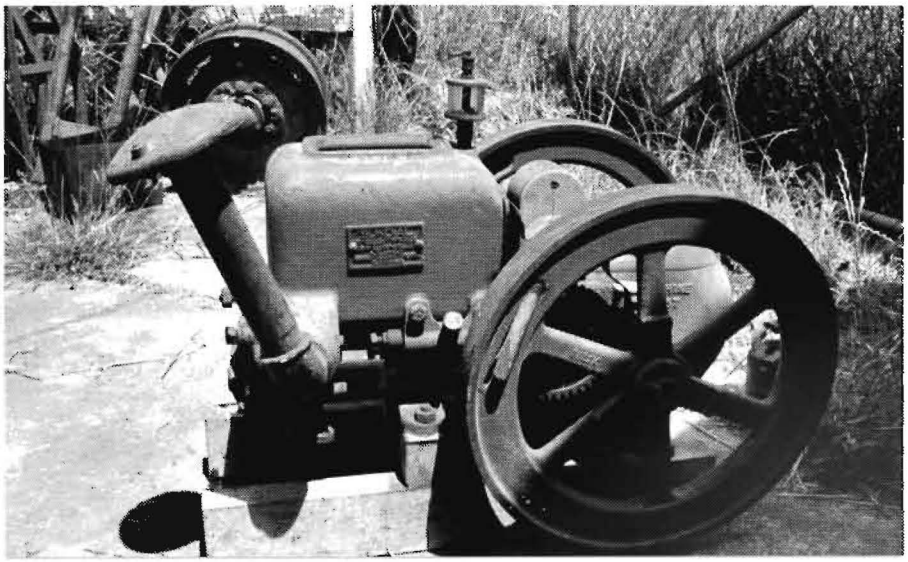
A.W. Loone in his book *Tasmania's North-East* published the same year confirms this when he says: "dairy experts will at once tell you that cows are now milked by machinery, and not by hand. Yes, many hundreds of cows are, but many thousands of cows are not."[86]

Doreen Saltmarsh aged six milking at Springvale, Myrtle Bank, 1935. *(QVMAG collection, courtesy Ray Saltmarsh)*

Even into the thirties and forties, when small petrol-driven machines became more common, the most usual way of milking was to employ all the family members, some as young as seven or eight. Many people raised on a dairy farm can recall getting to school late because they had to finish their quota of cows first. As Loone says, "unless the man on the land has his own family to do the work, dairying on this coast, with the present high rate of wages, cannot be made to pay a reasonable profit... [A] farmer should have from six to nine of his own family to help him." Even by 1940 by far the majority of cows were hand milked and it was not until after the Second World War that milking machines became general, although even in the 1970s those with smaller herds could find it quicker to milk by hand.[87]

Milking Time at Native Plains, Railton.

The family milking at Native Plains, Railton, 1928. *(Weekly Courier 4 April 1928, Launceston Reference Library)*



A Sundial engine commonly used to power milking machines in the 1930s. The machines were difficult to start and unreliable. *(Courtesy Nell Carr)*

* * *

By the 1920s the dairy industry was on a sound footing. In 1924 Milford McArthur could write:

> During the last few years a decided impetus has been given to dairying, of which the North-West Coast is the stronghold. Herd-testing and grading have meant a lot to this industry, which has a big future before it. At the same time, its importance has only become apparent of late years. There are, however, indications that it has now reached a stage when it may be called a staple industry, and its prospects are at the present time very bright. On the North-West Coast the pioneering period has passed and modern factories have been established. The total production of butter established a record in 1922, with 5,717,000 pounds. Butter production was about 50% greater than the average about ten years ago, and is the one important land product that of recent years has shown marked growth.[88]

At about this time a sudden slump in the London market, which even threatened the viability of some factories (see for example Chapter 6.2), led to the Commonwealth Government passing the Dairy Produce Export Control Act in 1924. The Dairy Produce Control Board which was set up helped

prevent the wild fluctuations in the market which had hitherto plagued the industry, and was also able to effect cuts in shipping rates and insurance premiums. From this time on both state and federal governments were always receptive to ideas which would benefit the dairy industry and it was able to develop with greater confidence.[89]

Meanwhile, the factories began to consider rationalisation. As early as 1918, many of the North-West Coast factories formed an association and quoted a uniform price for butterfat, so that cream would no longer be sent past factories into another district. Those involved were Duck River at Smithton, Table Cape, Yolla, the two Burnie factories, Ulverstone and Devonport. In 1920 a proposal was put forward to amalgamate the Wilmot and Ulverstone factories, but it is not known whether anything further was done. It is possible that they did combine, because Wilmot had certainly closed before the later amalgamation involving Ulverstone. Riana appears to have closed in the mid-twenties as well. In 1922 a suggestion favouring amalgamation of several coastal butter factories was debated at a North-West Butter Factories Association meeting, possibly because of the very low prices for butter that season. However, debate was deferred. It appears that when it came to the crunch, each factory wanted to remain open and let its competitor close.[90]

But the question of amalgamation did not go away. One of the chief reasons for this was the development of road transport which allowed factories to draw supplies from an ever wider area. This meant there was less need for each district to keep its own factory going and many of the smaller factories began to close. By 1930 the factories which had closed included the cheese factories at New River, St Marys, Forest, Irish Town and Nabageena, while butter factories at Wilmot and Riana and Deans and Oliver's at Myrtle Bank had also closed. In 1927 a proposal to amalgamate Emu Bay, North-Western and Table Cape was mooted but eventually turned down by two of the three. The chief dairy supervisor, Atkinson, then suggested another merger involving Yolla, Table Cape, Emu Bay and Duck River and valuations of the companies were carried out, but once again nothing eventuated. In the end the first major amalgamation occurred in 1928 when North-Western at Burnie merged with Emu Bay, also in Burnie, and the Ulverstone factory. The latter two were immediately closed down. North-Western then bought the two factories at Devonport and Deloraine to become by far the largest dairy company in the state (see Chapter 4). In the 1930s North-Western also bought the new Round Hill factory at Burnie and closed it, while it sold the Stanley factory to Duck River which closed it (see Chapter 2.1). The Duck River butter factory also bought the cheese factory at Broadmeadows in 1939. As a result, the North-Western, Yolla and Duck River factories were able to distribute large amounts to producers by way of deferred pay.

The reductions in overhead costs had been a substantial factor in bringing about this position. Even when no official amalgamations occurred, substantial savings eventuated through tacit agreement between companies and among suppliers. In 1942 Table Cape (which had not been involved in any amalgamation) reported : "A few years ago there were as many as four cream lorries from different companies running on most of the roads in the district, but today overlapping is almost eliminated, due to careful management and to the realisation by the dairymen themselves that they were paying for this duplication of services". As a result, cream cartage costs for Table Cape had reduced from five pounds five shillings per ton of butter manufactured in 1931-2, to three pounds five shillings in 1938-39.

In the north-east the two Ringarooma factories, which had talked about amalgamation for years, were effectively amalgamated when the new North-Eastern Cooperative Dairy Co Ltd built a new factory at Legerwood which opened in 1933 (see Chapter 5.3). The new company made moves to join with some of the other factories in the north-east, but these were unsuccessful. Amalgamations were obviously the way to go, but it would be the 1980s before all factories united (to form United Milk Tasmania Ltd), although one big holding factory for Northern Tasmania for both proprietary and cooperative factories was suggested as early as 1939.

The moves in the 1920s and 1930s to rationalise were not completely successful. Not long after North-Western closed the Emu Bay and Ulverstone factories, others started new factories in the same areas. Within five years North-Western had bought the Round Hill Dairy Co. at Burnie and closed it, but it was not until the 1960s that it finally took over the Coastal Dairy Company at Ulverstone. It was as a result of these new factories that North-Western in particular pressed for a new policy which came into effect by 1935. New factories would be given a licence only if it could be proved that it was in the best interests of the industry. There is no doubt that the industry benefited from having

only a limited number of butter factories, but unfortunately the policy was still in operation in the 1950s when new developments were happening, and they initially proved a big stumbling block to Milan Vyhnalek in his efforts to establish a totally different type of factory (see Chapter 4.1.4).[91]

Meanwhile, more moves had been made to improve the quality of butter. As early as 1919 Conlon had suggested that the 1910 regulations, which had hitherto been administered only in relation to factories, should be also applied to dairies which had not improved enough, but as dairy supervisors worked almost entirely as herd testers, they could not carry out any inspections. The local Councils had the authority under the Health Act to inspect but seldom did. In 1931 the Chief Dairy Officer reported that "the majority of milking sheds in Tasmania are in a deplorable condition, with earth or slab floors" and rough walls which could not be properly cleaned. The matter became urgent after 1927 when the United Kingdom prohibited the use of boric acid as a preservative, which meant that poor quality butter was more noticeable. Adverse comments about the quality of Australian butter led to a federal investigation into the dairy industry. The committee reported in 1930 that in Tasmania "the general standard of cleanliness of premises is low, and the proportion of low grade cream reaching the factories is high". A second report by a Mr Wigan the same year, as well as endorsing these comments about milking sheds, found that many of the factories were also most unsatisfactory.[92]

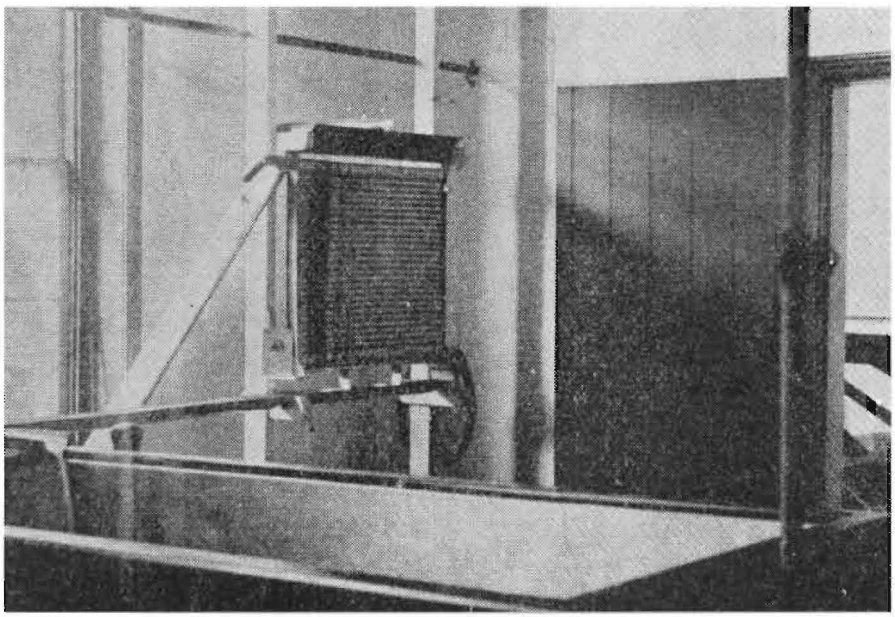
NORTH-WESTERN CO-OPERATIVE DAIRY CO. LTD.,

Since the advent of summer temperature, much of the cream received at the factories is in a slightly fermented, yeasty and tallowy condition. This condition may be obviated by suppliers giving more attention to cooling the cream and keeping it cool.

Cool the cream immediately it comes from the separator spout, or when separating is finished. If no other means are available, stand the cream vessel in cold water and stir occasionally until the animal heat is removed; blend at twelve hour intervals and keep temperature down until despatch to the factory. See that the cream is protected from the sun while waiting for collector.

Yours faithfully,
A.S.WEATHERHEAD

Factories attempted to educate farmers as to the best methods of improving the quality of cream. This note was written c.1930 by the manager of the Devonport butter factory. *(QVMAG)*



The best method of cooling cream before refrigeration was by having it run down a water-filled metal cooler. A milk cooler is shown here in use at Pardoe 1901. *(Weekly Courier, 14 December 1901, Launceston Reference Library)*

There had been a steady decline in the percentage of Choice butter made, from 78 per cent in 1926-7 to 65 per cent in 1929-30, a situation made much worse the following season when the Commonwealth graders improved the standard and graded only 18 per cent Choice. In addition, a massive 30 per cent was Second grade that year. It was obvious something had to be done, and in

1930 the state government passed a new Dairy Produce Act, amended in 1932, which was much stricter than its predecessors and was administered more firmly. For the first time large numbers of farmers were visited and told to comply with the regulations or risk losing their registration. Dairies had to be built of suitable materials and particularly they had to be kept clean. In 1932-33, 2000 visits were made by department officers to look for contamination. Factories too were regulated, and the Yolla factory, both Ringarooma factories and the Heritage factory in Launceston were told to rebuild (see Chapters 3.2, 5.1 & 5.3).[93]

DAIRY BUILDINGS

The Dairy Produce Regulations administered by the Tasmanian Department of Agriculture require that at every farm dairy there must be a milking shed in which the cows shall be milked and a dairy house which shall be used for the storage of dairy produce. At one time it was required that the dairy be built some distance from the milking shed, but the modern practice is to have the two buildings under one roof with an air space at least three feet wide separating the two buildings.

The main consideration in the construction and layout of dairy premises is that they be constructed so that they may be kept clean and in a hygienic condition and will permit the storage of milk or cream away from dirt, heat, flies, etc. They should also be planned in such a way as to make the task of the dairty farmer as easy as possible and to ensure that the level of production of cows milked in them will not be depressed through any defects in site, layout or water supply. Buildings need not be elaborate or expensive, and indeed, some of the more simply constructed and cheaper buildings are the easiest to keep clean and serve well the purpose for which they were constructed.

There are, however, certain minimum requirements which must be met. These are:

(a) *All floors in milking sheds are dairies must be constructed of a hard waterproof material such as concrete, and shall be so graded that the washings will run into suitable drains.*

(b) *All wholly enclosed milking sheds must be lighted and ventilated, to the satisfaction of a supervisor, by suitable openings in the walls or the roof.*

(c) *Every milking shed and dairy must be well and permanently drained, to the satisfaction of the supervisor, and no drains may be drained directly into a sewer unless such sewer is effectively trapped. Open concrete drains must extend at least 30' from the dairy premises.*

(d) *The dairy must be sufficiently lighted and ventilated, to the satisfaction of a supervisor. The ventilation must be at least 12 sq. ft. of ventilating space, arranged in equal proportions on two opposite sides of the room.*

(e) *All openings in dairies must be fitted with fine fly[proof screens and doors hung so that they are self closing.*

(f) *The internal walls and ceiling of a dairy must be finished so as to afford no lodgment for dirt.*

(g) *All walls must be impervious to a height of at least 12 inches, but preferably 4 feet.*

(h) *All fittings must be so constructed that they may readily be removed for cleaning purposes.*

(i) *Every milking shed and dairy must be kept scrupulously clean in every part.*

(j) *Adequate water must be available for washing down and adequate steam or boiling water must be available at the dairy for washing and sterilizing utensils and equipment.*

(k) *Provision must be made for cooling milk to a temperature of not more than 60°F. immediately after milking.*

(l) *No milking shed or dairy shall be situated within 50' of a stable or within 100' of a pig sty or fowl house.*

(m) *Fowls and pigs must not be permitted to enter the milking shed or dairy.*

DESIGN AND LAY-OUT OF BUILDINGS

In the design and layout of buildings the following features require consideration:

(1) *The selection of the site.*

(2) *Convenience for use.*

(3) *Ease of cleaning and drainage.*

(4) *Adequate lighting and ventilation with protection from dust, water and flies.*

(5) *Adequate water supply.*

Regulations governing the building of dairies. *(From L.G. Ashton (ed), Dairy Farming in Australia, Tasmanian Edition, 1956, pp. 360-61)*

There were difficulties with the new system. The dairy officers were reluctant to put a farmer out of business, particularly in the early 1930s when low prices for dairy produce meant that dairymen could not afford to make the required improvements. Some farmers were not prepared to make even minimal changes (see memorandum re R. Lee, below), but on the whole the regulations had highly satisfactory results. In 1931-32 29 per cent of butter was graded Choice, an increase of eleven per cent on the previous year, and there had also been a huge increase in the amount of butter opened up true to grade in London. Three years previously only seven per cent of Tasmanian butter graded in London had remained true to its original Australian grading, whereas in 1931-32 over 90 per cent remained true. By 1940 Tasmania ranked high among the states in the percentage of Choice butter.[94]

There was a full 5 gallon can of cream in the dairy badly fermented, this had the lid on tightly - apparently ready to send when a lorry called. Besides this, there was probably 2 or 3 separations in a Kerosene tin, into which Lee separates hot cream on top of cold. This cream was putred (sic).

Apparently, all washing up is done in cold water. There is a yellow greasy slime over everything and the aroma of all utensils is appalling. A wooden block is used for standing the utensils on. This is grease and water soaked and is in a filthy condition. There were two rags in the dairy as used by Lee for washing up. These were white once, but have now taken a khaki colour, and the aroma from these cloths is shocking. The pipe connection from the vat to the Separator Tap is so much clogged with stale milk and filth that it is puzzling to me how the milk runs through. An ordinary lead pencil would not go through the opening.

The milking buckets consist of 2 kerosene tins and one small tin bucket, which is red with rust inside and 4 holes in the bottom of this bucket are plugged with rag.

The dairy house is an old dilapidated building, with boards falling off the sides etc. and has a wooden floor. Several other articles are stored in the dairy.

The cow shed building, made of slabs is in keeping with the rest of the buildings of the farm.

It is leaning over at a rather dangerous angle, whilst the slab floor is practically rotted away in parts. It is an open shed, and in the front of this building is a manure heap with just enough room for a track for the cows to walk around the corner into the shed.

Generally speaking, conditions existing on the place are exceptionally bad, and in my opinion there is very little hope of improving them. Even if an attempt were made to bring these premises up to a reasonable standard, they would then be in a much better condition than the living quarters on this farm, for it would be necessary for you to see the condition of this man's house to believe it.

I am of the opinion that Lee should not be granted a certificate to allow him to carry on dairying, unless some drastic changes are made in his methods.

Part of dairy officer O.J. Wrightson's report on a farm at Rulla, near Burnie, 9 March 1937. Lee was given 28 days to bring his premises up to scratch or his licence would be cancelled. *(DPIF files, Archives No. H 170/5-1)*

By 1940 dairying had become a well-regulated, profitable industry. The 1934 Commonwealth Dairy Produce Equalisation Scheme meant returns to producers were no longer based on overseas prices but on the cost of production. As the 1930s wore on, the effects of the depression were less felt and increased stability led to a steady expansion. Production had increased considerably, as Figure 1.3 indicates.[95]

Presumably there was now no need to import butter during the winter, although the exact date that this happened is unclear. In 1917 the *Weekly Courier* was still making the point that Tasmania should be able to make enough butter for its winter consumption, and as late as 1920, 10 000 boxes of butter had to be imported when a short growing season had led to cows drying off in January. In 1940 winter dairying was still unusual, except for those who supplied whole milk to the towns. There was not a repeat of the 1917 situation when factories kept going through the winter (to take advantage of the new Imperial contract by which Britain bought all surplus butter, although it was also a particularly good dairying season). The North-West Coast had become the state's premier dairying region; in 1931 there were 2455 dairymen supplying factories in the north-west, 1258 supplying factories in Launceston and the north-east, and 735 in the south.[96]

Year	1921	1936-7	1937-8
No. of butter cheese & milk factories	33	43	44
Butter made (pounds)	3 476 000	8 148 000	9 206 000
Cheese made (pounds)	723 000	2 834 177	3 554 706

Fig.1.3 Production of butter and cheese in Tasmania 1921-38. (*Statistics of Tasmania, 1940-41*)

Although there were so many factories a considerable amount of butter was still made on farms. In the 1929-30 season a quarter of all butter made was from farm dairies. Officers of the Department of Agriculture could regret this, but by demanding that such dairies be registered and making the branding of butter compulsory, they were able to bring about an improvement in the quality. In 1937 there were 5000 premises which made butter, although many of them made it only for a short time at the beginning and end of the season when the factories were closed.[97]

1.7 Cheese 1890 - 1940

The history of cheese is somewhat different from that of butter. In the days before butter factories, cheese was quite popular with some farmers because of its ability to keep without refrigeration. But it was harder to make than butter. Because it used whole milk, it had to be made every day. The evening milk was kept overnight, then the morning milk was added and the cheese made in vats. The process lasted all day, before the cheeses were ready to put into the maturing room for daily turning. The actual process involved back-breaking work, bending over the vats to stir the milk, cut the curd and later gather up the cheese to put into moulds. It was no wonder that when James Wardlaw of Falmouth stopped making cheese in 1926 after making it since 1900, he wrote on the dairy door: "Last cheese made. No never again as long as I live". Because of the work involved, with the coming of the butter factories cheesemaking on the farm declined in popularity. It was much easier, and often more remunerative, to send the cream to a factory and let the hard work be done there.[98]

But cheese continued to be made in the more remote areas where distance from market meant butter was not easily marketable. It was usually the preserve of the larger farmers. This was partly because, unlike butter which could be made for a profit from just a few cows, cheese needed large quantities of milk. Moreover, the equipment needed was somewhat more complex than that for butter, and therefore generally out of reach of the small farmer. Whereas butter could be churned in a spare corner of a room, cheese needed a separate building with at least two rooms, one to house the vats and one to store the cheeses for the several months it took for them to mature. This latter room was often lined with tin to make it rat-proof. It was possible for the smaller farmer to make cheese in small tubs, but as this was even more of a grind than making it on a larger scale it was generally done by only a few. The scientific reasons why cheese was better on some days than others were largely unknown, and a lot depended on the skill of the cheesemaker. Therefore cheese was made only by people who had the necessary knowledge, which was often passed down through families.

There were several families whose name was well known for cheese. John Woodberry (or Woodbury) was well-known for his cheese at St Marys and Falmouth and later when he moved to Bowerbank at Deloraine. Two of his sons, Charles and Frank, also made cheese, at Dairy Plains near Deloraine and at Marrawah respectively. Members of the highly-regarded Gourley family (sometimes spelt Gourlay) from Victoria made cheese in factories at Marrawah, Montagu, Forest, Dovecote (Stanley) and Broadmeadows from just after the turn of the century to the 1970s. The le Fevres were another well-known family. James le Fevre learnt the art from James Wardlaw at Falmouth, then made cheese at Pyengana. His descendants were still making cheese there and at Winnaleah until 1980.[99]

The travelling dairy (see Chapter 1.3) had some success with cheesemaking. When McCormick visited Latrobe in 1892, two pupils subsequently ordered cheesemaking plants, although the remainder intended "to manufacture cheese on a small scale with primitive appliances such as two tubs and a large lever press". Dairy Expert Conlon also instructed in cheesemaking, introducing farmers to the new system which used Canadian knives instead of wire curd-breakers so there was no loss of matter; to the use of the rennet test to find the correct time to rennet the milk; and to the tinned steel American can hoop, whereby cheese was turned out next morning already bandaged and ready to go on the shelf. This indicates that up until then farmers had been making mild cheese using American methods which kept less well than the matured cheddar which Conlon was instructing in. This might also explain the letter from an irate reader of the *Weekly Courier*, who in 1904 complained that: "When the Woodburys, C.B. Heazlewood, Treloggen and several others were cheesemaking in the old-fashioned way you could hardly go wrong for a good [cheese]." Now all was tasteless.[100]

It is often almost impossible to differentiate between a cheese factory which bought in milk and a large farm cheesemaking operation. In contrast to butter, the cost of equipping a cheese factory with the necessary implements did not require large amounts of capital, and therefore many of the state's cheese factories were sited on farms, thus saving the expense of carting milk from farm to central factory. This was the case, for example, with cheese making at Dovecote farm at Stanley, started by W.W. Ford in 1893. Two early central factories were at St Marys and Pyengana. The former was built as a creamery for the Tasmanian Dairy Company in Launceston, but was converted to cheese by 1897 at the latest. The Pyengana butter factory, built by the same company, changed to cheesemaking in 1902. In both cases the reason was that the distance from market was too great for anything else. Cheese factories were also built in the 1890s at Irish Town (south of Smithton) and at Claude Road, the latter being farm-based. (See relevant chapters.)

With these new factories, there was a big jump in the quantity of cheese made, as Figure 1.4 shows.

Year	1891	1898	1900	1901
Cheese made (pounds)	58 800	113 000	146 000	268 000

Fig.1.4 Production of cheese in Tasmania 1891-1901. *(Statistics of Tasmania, 1901)*

Cheese joined in the boom time of 1900-1912, with factories being built at Marrawah (1902), Montagu (1903) and New River near Ringarooma (1911), and three farm-based ones at Gunns Plains (1906), Cheshunt (1909) and Green Point, Marrawah, (by 1912). (See relevant chapters.) Production reached 731 290 pounds [330 000kg] in 1909, although 124 693 pounds [56 000kg] was also imported, and cheese was exported to England for the first time in 1911. In 1914 the principal cheese factories in the state were said to be St. Marys, Pyengana, Gunn's Plains, Cheshunt, Derby and Circular Head Several of these were farm-based.[101]

But cheese seemed to be more vulnerable to market fluctuations. The factories at Gunns Plains and Cheshunt had closed by 1915, after a bad season the year before when there was a lot of cheese on the mainland and it was hard to sell. Then in 1916 the War Office called for more cheese and production doubled. A new factory was built at Redpa, Scottsdale Butter Factory bought a cheese plant, and plans were announced to build cheese factories at Smithton and Flinders Island. But in 1918 the Department of Agriculture announced that the production of cheese in factories had actually declined because so many people were making cheese on farms. In 1914-15, 141 393 pounds [63 500kg], or nearly one third of the state's cheese, was from farms, and almost ninety per cent of this came from the four municipalities of Fingal (57 972 pounds), Portland (25 020), Deloraine (23 431) and Ringarooma (19 700). By 1921 the cheese market once again had deteriorated. The Marrawah and Irish Town factories closed early because of the collapse of the market. In 1922 a factory at Nabageena replaced the Irish Town factory, but it lasted only three seasons (see Chapter 2.1).[102]

In general, butter brought twice as much as cheese per pound wholesale, but when the 1930s depression led to very low prices for butterfat the manufacture of cheese became much more remunerative. New factories were built at Robbins Island, Broadmeadows near Smithton, on the Wigg Brothers property at Marrawah and at several places on King Island, although these latter were

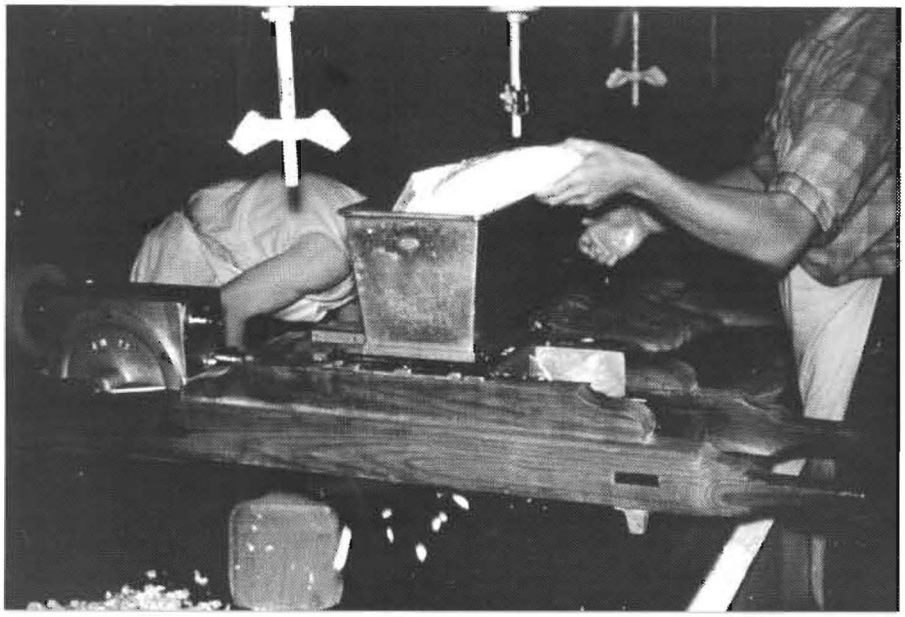
short-lived. One at St. Mary's was built by the end of the decade to replace the earlier one which had burnt down in the 1920s. (See relevant chapters.) State cheese production rose from 954 463 pounds [432 400kg] in 1929-30 to 3 554 706 pounds [1 588 000kg] in 1937-8. On the outbreak of war in 1939 farm cheese production dropped dramatically. Whereas one quarter of all cheese in 1929-30 was made on farms, in 1940-41 this had fallen to only six per cent. This was mainly the result of government subsidies on butterfat (see below), but also partly the result of a shortage of labour on farms due to the war. The municipality which made the most farm cheese in 1940-41 was Fingal with 100 421 pounds, followed by Portland with 50 980 pounds. Cheesemaking remained confined to the more isolated parts of the island and still involved back-breaking work.[103]

The back-breaking work of making cheese can be seen in this series of photographs taken in the early 1960s. They were taken at the relatively large cheese factory at Montagu in the far north-west, but the process was basically the same on farms. *(Derek Coker photographs, QVMAG)*

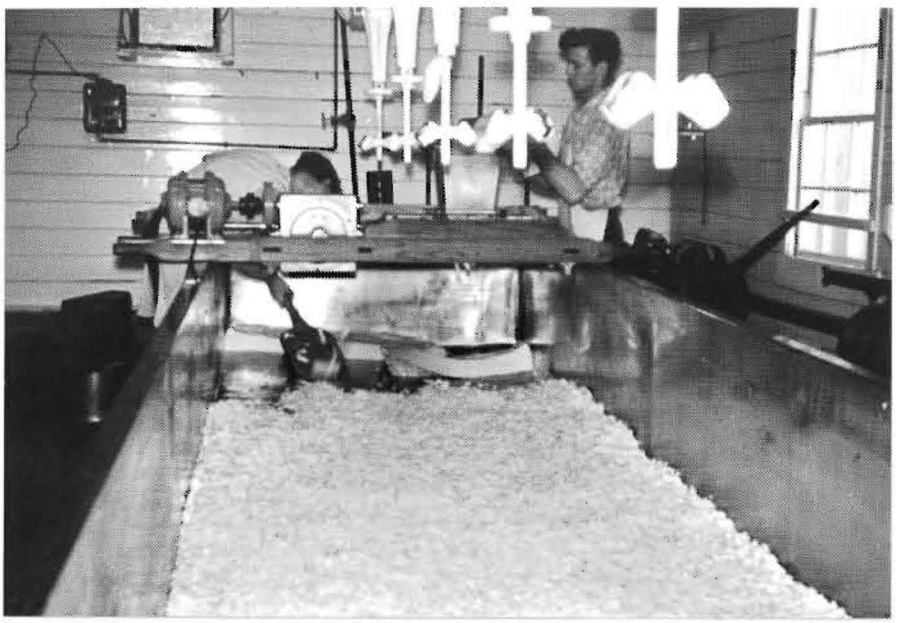
Weighing the milk as it arrived in cans.

Stirring the milk as it heated. (Master cheesemaker Joe Gourley is walking by.)

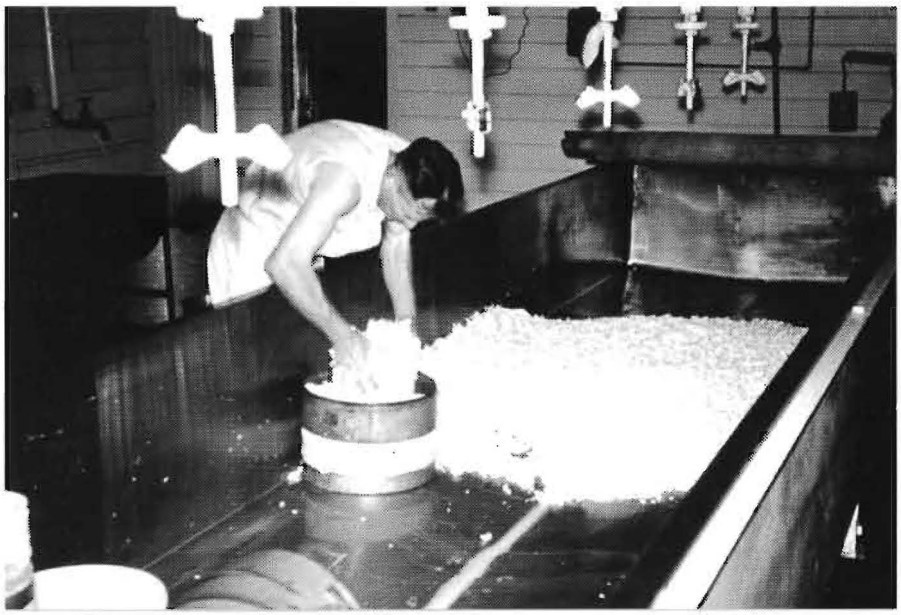
Cutting the curd and letting the whey drain out.



Mincing the solid lumps of cheese.



Mincing the lumps of cheese.



Filling the cheese hoops.

Putting the hoops into the long cheese press which squeezed out excess whey through small holes in the hoops.

Storing the cheeses while they matured, a process taking several months. The cheese had to be turned regularly, daily in the early weeks.

Farmers taking the whey back to feed to pigs or calves.

1.8 Rationalisation 1940 - 1994

The Second World War had a big impact on dairying. In order to encourage dairying, the federal government heavily subsidised production. But as the subsidy was paid on butterfat content, only suppliers to a central factory qualified as it was only there that the butterfat content was measured. The result was that many people stopped making both butter and cheese on the farm, preferring to supply the factories instead. This move was accelerated by the shortage of labour caused by farm workers enlisting. After the war, fewer people were inclined to make their own butter except for their own use, although some were making it even into the 1970s and 1980s. Only a few farm-based cheese factories survived into the 1950s, and these were confined to the more isolated areas such as Pyengana and Marrawah (see relevant chapters).

With so many men away, the hard work on farms often had to be done by women. Thus it was the women particularly who suffered when, as a way of saving fuel, new regulations were brought in that trucks were not to go right to the dairy but instead cans of cream had to be left at the farm gate. A can of cream is very heavy, and women found it difficult to lift, as the letter from Mrs Stephens (below) shows. The regulations were not changed at the end of the war, and cream continued to be collected at the gate until the advent of bulk milk collection in the 1960s.[104]

Moltema
February 16th 1942

To G.G. Salier
Deloraine

Dear Sir,

In reply to your note re cream stand. I have not had one erected, for the simple reason, that I absolutely refuse to lift a ten gallon cream can full, onto a stand. Mrs Tracy and I have no help on the farms, and although Mrs Tracy has a stand erected, she is unable to lift the cream into it.

We are both doing our share to help with the war by letting our husbands go, surely you, or any other dairy officer, don't expect us to half kill ourselves by carting cream to the road, to say nothing of lifting it into stands. I'm sure you wouldn't like to see your own wives doing it.

If you insist that the stands be built, I'll just have to give up sending cream to the factory.

Yours sincerely
(Mrs) P.J. Stephens

Letter showing some of the difficulties brought by the Second World War. *(Chris Donaldson)*

During the war the prices for foodstuffs such as peas and potatoes were very high, and factories for dehydrating vegetables for overseas shipment were set up, for example in Smithton. The promise of good returns, combined with the shortage of farm hands, induced many farms to go out of dairying. Over 2000 dairy cows of productive age were slaughtered in Launceston alone in 1943-44. Following the war potatoes suffered from unstable markets and, initially, irregular shipping and after a particularly good year in 1946, the crop gradually declined in importance. The demand for dehydrated vegetables also declined, and once again dairying came to the fore. It was helped along by a sympathetic federal government which in 1947 guaranteed dairy farmers a set price for their produce for the following five years, and also provided an annual grant to assist farmers to secure greater output per cow and per farm.[105]

During the war the influence of the Americans had led to renewed demands for higher standards of hygiene and a move was made to administer the regulations more stringently, although attempts to force farmers to rebuild inferior dairies met with problems in the period after the war when building materials were in very short supply. Of course, many farmers used the difficulty as an excuse, and Department of Agriculture officers were keen not to license anyone who they felt was not making an effort.[106]

The war had two further effects. The first was soldier settlement, by which returned soldiers were given an opportunity to set themselves up on small farms. Although the scheme had many problems, it was more successful than a similar scheme after the First World War, and many farms, particularly on King Island and in the far north-west, were ideal for dairying, so that the industry received further encouragement. The second effect was the arrival in Tasmania of European settlers. This began during the war with the advent of Italian prisoners of war, at least one of whom took to making yoghurt during his stay in the Ringarooma district. After the war, the large influx of migrants eventually led to demand for a much wider array of dairy products than had hitherto been required, and several migrants attempted to satisfy the demand. The best-known was Milan Vyhnalek who eventually started Lactos for the manufacture of continental cheeses, but others in the 1950s included George Ertler from Forth who made soft cheeses and yoghurt and George Amentus who made Greek cheese at Marrawah. (See relevant chapters.)[107]

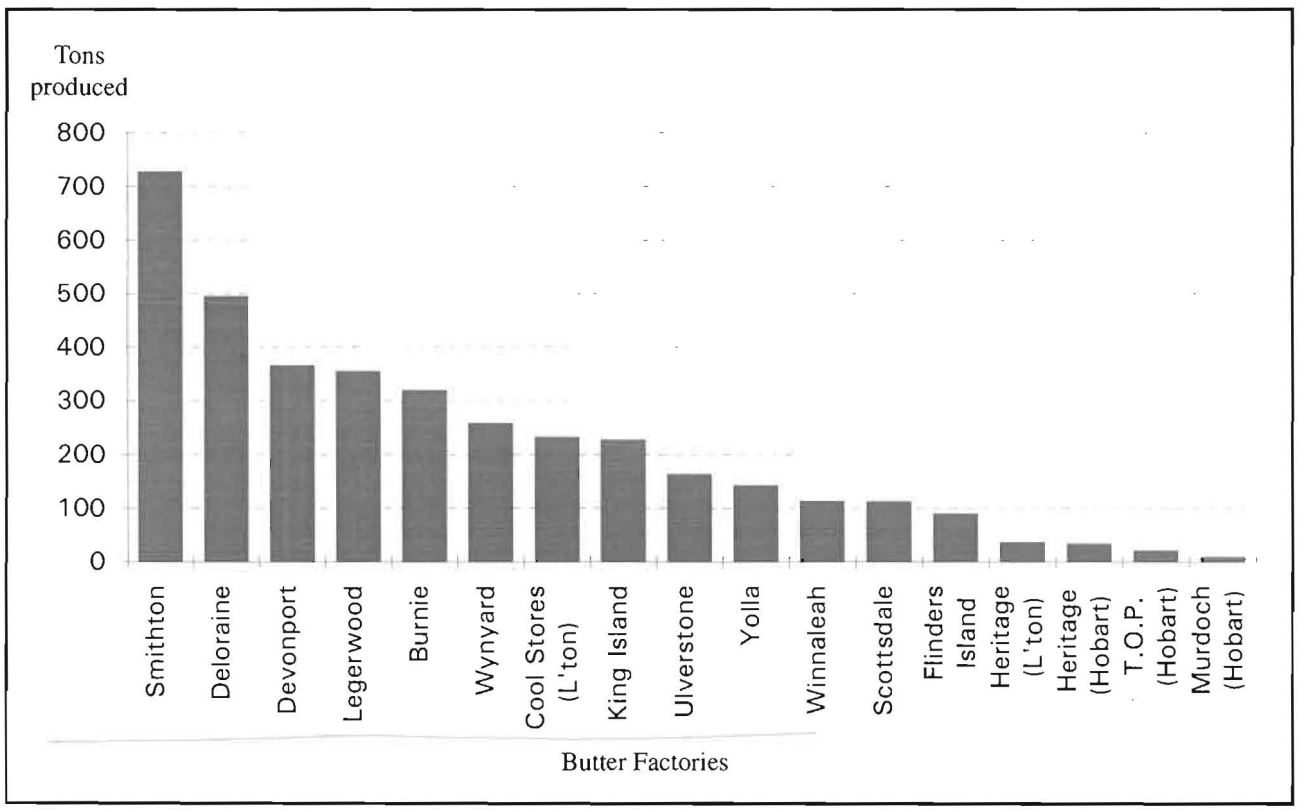


Fig 1.5 Production of Tasmanian butter factories 1945-6. *(DPIF files, Archives No. H176/2-4)*

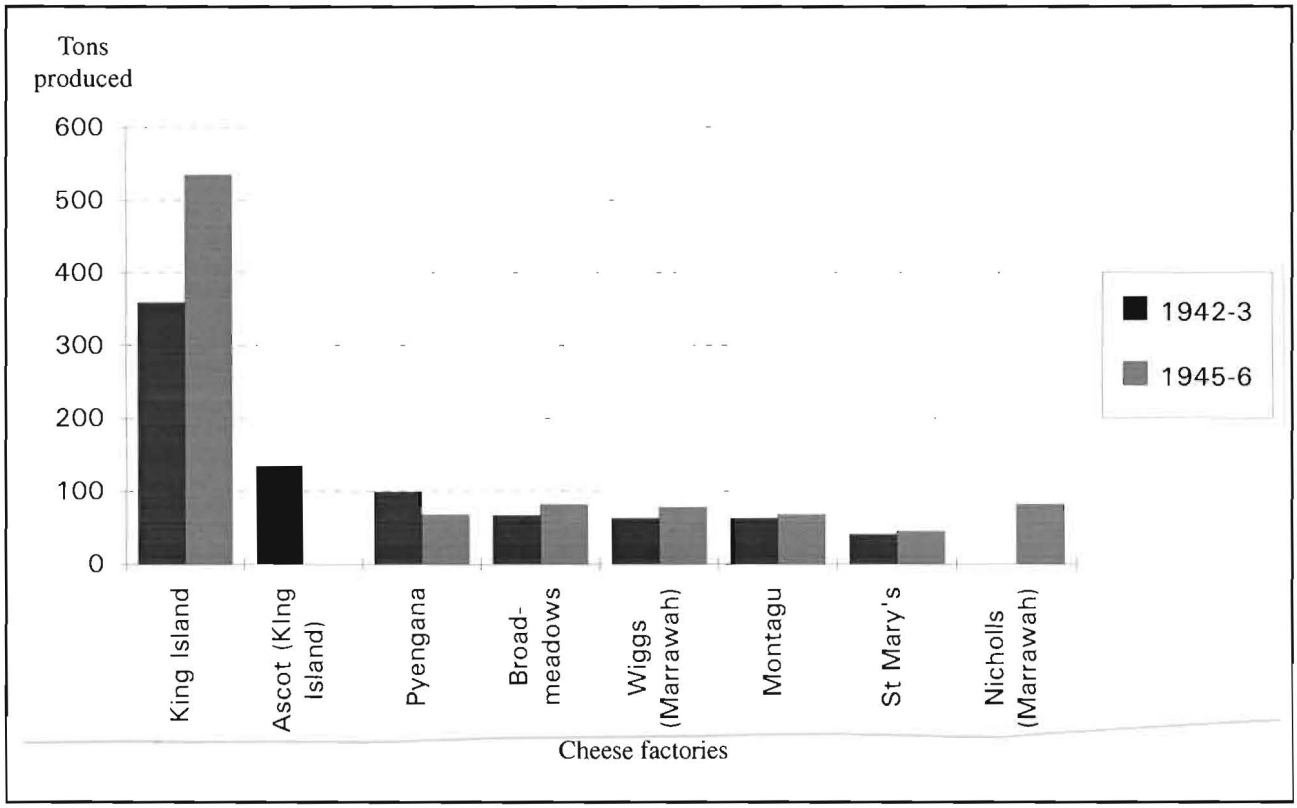
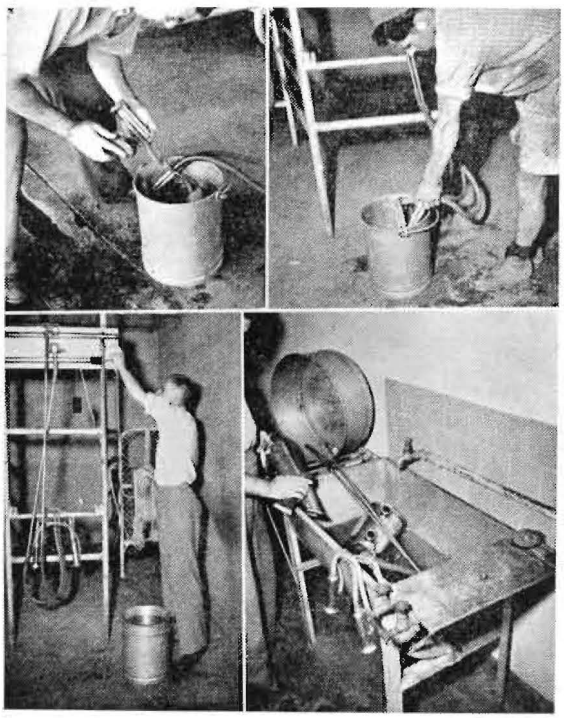


Fig 1.6 Production of Tasmanian cheese factories 1942-46. *(DPIF files, Archives No. H176/2-4)*

From the late 1940s dairying began a period of steady expansion, with Britain taking any butter that Australia could produce. The Duck River factory at Smithton was the biggest producer. In 1951 the factory produced 1000 tons in a season for the first time, but just six years later it had doubled this to 2000 tons. In 1966 the factory made 3294 tons and in 1971 it produced 4106 tons in its best-ever performance. Similar, if not quite so spectacular, expansion was achieved by the other factories.[108]



Four stages in the efficient cleansing of a milking machine. Top left: Cleansing teat cups, tubing, etc., with warm water and washing compound. Top right. Drawing clean water through teat cups to rinse milk out of the lines. Bottom left: Inserting the pipe travelling brush in the milk pipe. Bottom right. The weekly cleansing of the dismantled parts of the machine.

Dairy farmers were instructed on how to carefully clean their milking machines. *(Dairy Farming in Australia, Tas edition, 1956)*

The increasing output of the factories was made possible by changes on the farms. As the wages of rural workers grew and the number of children in a family declined, mechanisation became more and more widespread, helped by the spread of electricity to rural areas. By the 1950s the use of a milking machine was economical even for a herd with only ten cows. But as the decade progressed, and even more so in the decades that followed, such herds became less and less common. The industry was traditionally one which gave quick returns on land settlement, and gradually many of these farms became uneconomic and changed to other forms of farming. Downturns in the industry in 1975 and again in 1984 accelerated this process, and led to dairying being carried on only in the most suitable areas. Long-established areas such as St Marys now have no dairy cows at all. Meanwhile those farmers that remained in the industry continually increased the size of their herds, as Fig.1.7 (next page) shows.[109]

As the size of herds increased, the design of dairies became more important, with walk-through sheds being increasingly replaced by the more efficient herringbone design. In more recent years the biggest herds have been milked in rotary dairies which can handle up to 50 to 60 cows at a time in a continuous process (see Chapter 7). Not only has the size of the herds increased, but also the amount of milk per cow has risen dramatically. In 1938 the average cow produced 1665 litres of milk each year; by 1974 this had increased to 3165 litres. This had been brought about by improved pasture management, which for the first time allowed winter dairying on a wide scale, and better breeding techniques, especially the use of artificial insemination. This has meant that although the amount of milk produced has risen, the number of farmers in the dairy industry has declined, from 6300 in 1960 to 3100 in 1971 to 900 in 1993.[110]

The factories were able to handle the increased volumes of cream, but they were to face big challenges in the 1960s. As the British market began to look more problematic with Britain's proposed entry into the European Economic Community, dairy companies were forced to look more towards the Asian market. But butter was not a saleable commodity there, and for the first time the factories began to consider diversifying into different products. This process was accelerated by the changing nature of the Australian market and increasingly sophisticated tastes of the Australian public. No longer was Kraft Processed cheese in the blue pack the only one asked for by the customer. New types of cheese, yoghurt and flavoured milk were but some of the possibilities. Casein too was in high demand.

Year	1958-59	1968-69	1978-79	1988-89
No. of farmers with:				
20 cows or less	4700	1221	304	4
20-59	1816	864	332	160
60-99	1219	1139	480	390
100-199	246	666	437	139
200+	14	109	114	205
Total No. of farms	8040	3981	1667	903
Av. herd size		65	70	103

Fig.1.7 Changing herd sizes and numbers of dairy farms in Tasmania 1958-1989. *(Dunford, Carryl, "Changing Patterns of the Tasmanian Dairy Industry", Year 12 Assignment, Mount Nelson College, 18 March 1991, p.20)*

Some factories had already started to produce different products. As early as 1917 the Yolla factory was considering manufacturing casein, although it is not known if anything was done. In the 1920s Cadbury's chocolate factory had opened in Hobart, thus competing for supplies with the established factories. It had in fact led to the closure of the long-lasting Pembroke butter factory at Bream Creek, because it took all of that factory's supplies. In 1947 Cadbury-Fry-Pascall, as it was then known, opened a factory at Cooee to condense milk, following this with one at Edith Creek in 1949 to concentrate and spray dry milk. At about the same time the factory of A. Wander at Quoiba was started to produce "Ovaltine". The Peters Ice Cream factory was set up in Launceston in 1954, while the establishment of the new cheese factory, Lactos, has already been referred to.

The opening of these factories, plus the (unsuccessful) attempts by Bakers Milk Pty Ltd to set up a diversified milk products factory in the early 1960s, encouraged the butter factories to change to a whole range of new products. But if factories were to produce new products they needed to collect milk, not cream. Baker's Milk in Hobart had already initiated bulk collection of milk by tanker. The first of the butter factories to collect this way was Table Cape in 1963 when it went into cheese production (see Chapter 3.1), and the other factories soon followed suit, although some cream cans were still being received as late as 1985. There were several results. For many farmers, it was the reason to leave dairying, as collection by milk tanker required the purchase of a refrigerated tank for holding the milk for collection, sometimes the remodelling of the yard to allow the tanker room to drive in and turn around, and the guaranteeing of a certain minimum quantity of milk. No longer could someone keep one or two cows on the side of the road and send a gallon-can of cream to the factory every few days. For those who remained in the industry, pigs lost their importance as there was no more skim milk available to feed them on, and the raising of pigs became a specialised industry and not a sideline for dairying. With less importance given to butterfat, more and more farmers turned to Friesians rather then Jerseys, as the former produced more gallons of milk per cow with a lower content of butterfat. Moreover, a significant proportion of the farmer's income came from the selling of surplus calves and culled cows for beef, for which Friesians were very suitable.

Table Cape's first bulk milk tanker had too high a centre of gravity, and when it stopped suddenly for a train crossing, the movement of milk inside the tank caused the vehicle to tip over. *(QVMAG)*

For the factories it was an expensive time too. New products meant new machinery, especially the new and very expensive automatic machines. The requirements for increased capital and large volumes of milk combined with the ability of the new milk tankers to transport milk to where it was required forced the next and major round of rationalisation and amalgamations.

The first major change was at Devonport. North-Western, the state's largest dairy company, built a new factory at East Devonport for the manufacture of butter, roller dried powder and later casein. As a result, the factory at Spreyton Road, Devonport, closed in December 1964. Needing further supplies of milk, North-Western purchased the Coastal Dairy Co.'s butter factory at Ulverstone in 1965, closing it in 1972. The reduced supplies of cream were then diverted to the company's Burnie factory, until that too was closed in 1976. The company moved Devonport's roller driers to

Deloraine, and that factory began producing roller dried Denkavit and later butter oil and cheese. Devonport began manufacturing spray dried milk powder in 1974.

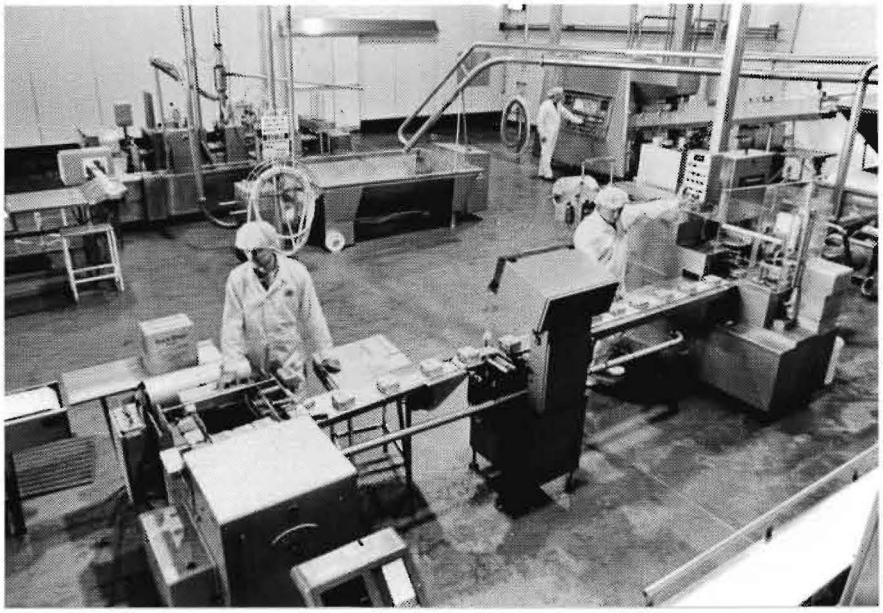
Five tankers lined up outside the Table Cape factory 1965. *(QVMAG)*

Meanwhile Table Cape began the manufacturing of cheese in 1963, taking over the Yolla Dairy Co. and using their building. But the scale was too small, and by August 1965 it had built a new cheese factory at its Wynyard site and closed Yolla. The Duck River Company at Smithton was slower to diversify as it had a large output of butter (see above) and the highest level of local sales. It also already owned two cheese factories, the one at Broadmeadows which it had bought in 1939, and one at Montagu which it bought in 1948. But in 1965 it began the manufacture of casein, and in 1969 bought Cadbury's milk powder factory at Edith Creek.

Continued economic pressure and competition, particularly the entry of Britain on 1 January 1973 into the European Economic Community which resulted in the loss of the British market for butter, resulted in the amalgamation of Table Cape and Duck River in February 1973. The new company was known as United Milk Products Ltd and it was the largest dairy company in the state. Immediate rationalisation occurred. The Broadmeadows cheese factory was closed, and its plant transferred to the Wynyard butter factory building. All butter was now made at Smithton, with cheese being made at Wynyard. The Montagu factory had been closed by Duck River in 1966. The increasing scale demanded of factories had forced the two Marrawah cheese factories of Nicholls & Sons and the Wigg Brothers to close in the 1950s.

The North-Eastern Co. based at Legerwood had begun rationalisations some years earlier, buying the Winnaleah factory in 1946 and the Pyengana factory in 1952 and closing both. In 1966 it amalgamated with the Scottsdale company. The arguments in favour of amalgamation put forward then are relevant to all the factories. It was pointed out that machinery was expensive: whereas a wooden churn used to cost $800, a new stainless steel churn cost $24 000. After amalgamation it would be possible to employ a top man as general manager, as a much higher salary could be afforded. More technical controls would be possible with a higher turnover of milk. Pick-up of milk would be able to be rationalised where previously two trucks had covered the same area. And finally, and one of the main reasons: "the butter industry is in danger of being ruined by private enterprise". Scottsdale voted in favour of amalgamation, and in 1970 it was closed. In 1973 North-Eastern took over Toppa Products (Tas) Pty Ltd, which owned the Lindsay Street factory and Cool Stores in Launceston and closed them.

Some factories had closed of their own accord. F.W. Heritage & Co. Pty Ltd closed their Launceston factory about 1960, and their Hobart one in 1969. In 1969 the cheese factory at St Marys closed because of too few suppliers, and cream supplies were then railed to Deloraine. For the same reason the Flinders Island factory closed in 1974, and the King Island factory, in an effort to stay open, changed to bulk milk supplies the same year and began making milk powder as well as butter.[111]



Automated buttermaking at Devonport c.1990. *(QVMAG)*

The relative size of the Tasmanian mainland factories in 1979 can be seen in Fig.1.8 (below). It shows that North-Western had lost its dominant position as the premier dairy company. By this time too it was facing some difficulty due to the immense distances its trucks had to travel, from Circular Head to the Tamar River and into Cressy and Longford. There was also a greater interest in cash cropping amongst its farmers, which gave it little opportunity for expansion. Since the 1960s it had also been facing growing competition from Lactos, Cadburys and Bakers Milk. North-Eastern was facing similar difficulties with a move to share cropping around Scottsdale and a relatively small percentage of the milk supplies. In 1981 North-Western amalgamated with United Milk Products and North-Eastern to form United Milk Tasmania Ltd, or UMT. The series of amalgamations was complete.[112]

Automated cheesemaking at Wynyard c.1990. *(QVMAG)*

In 1982 the Legerwood factory stopped the manufacture of butter and concentrated on producing milk powder. Deloraine stopped making cheese, and continued for a few more years making limited quantities of butter oil until it finally closed. The Smithton factory was closed in 1983. This left UMT with three factories, but only one of them still makes butter. Over the last thirty years cheese has become much more important. In 1962 225 tons of cheese were produced in the state, but fourteen years later this had increased to 13 206 tons. Over the same period, butter production had remained reasonably constant at around 9000 tons. In November 1994 of the 1.4 million litres being

delivered to UMT, 800 000 litres was used for cheese at Wynyard, over 300 000 litres for milk powder at Legerwood and the remainder (about 300 000 litres) for butter and powder at Devonport. There is even some cooperation with the proprietary company Lactos, as Lactos butter comes from the same Devonport factory.[113]

UMP	29%
North-Western	19%
Lactos	15%
North-Eastern	12%
Bakers Milk	15%
Cadburys	5%
Betta Milk	3%

Fig.1.8 Relative size of Tasmanian dairy factories 1979, calculated from the percentage of the total milk supplies each attracted. *(Victorian Study Tour booklet 1979, in UMT 9/14, QVMAG)*

Thus after one hundred years the industry has rationalised in the best interests of both suppliers and shareholders. In 1894, John Hope of the Kentish butter factory had said that "the original idea of the Council of Agriculture was to have three large butter factories, one at Evandale, one at, say, Devonport, and the other at Table Cape..." Legerwood has replaced Evandale, there is a new large cheese factory at Burnie, and butter is much less important than cheese, milk powder and other products, but the idea has finally come to fruition.[114]

The relative sizes of Tasmanian dairy factories in 1993 can be gauged from Fig.1.9

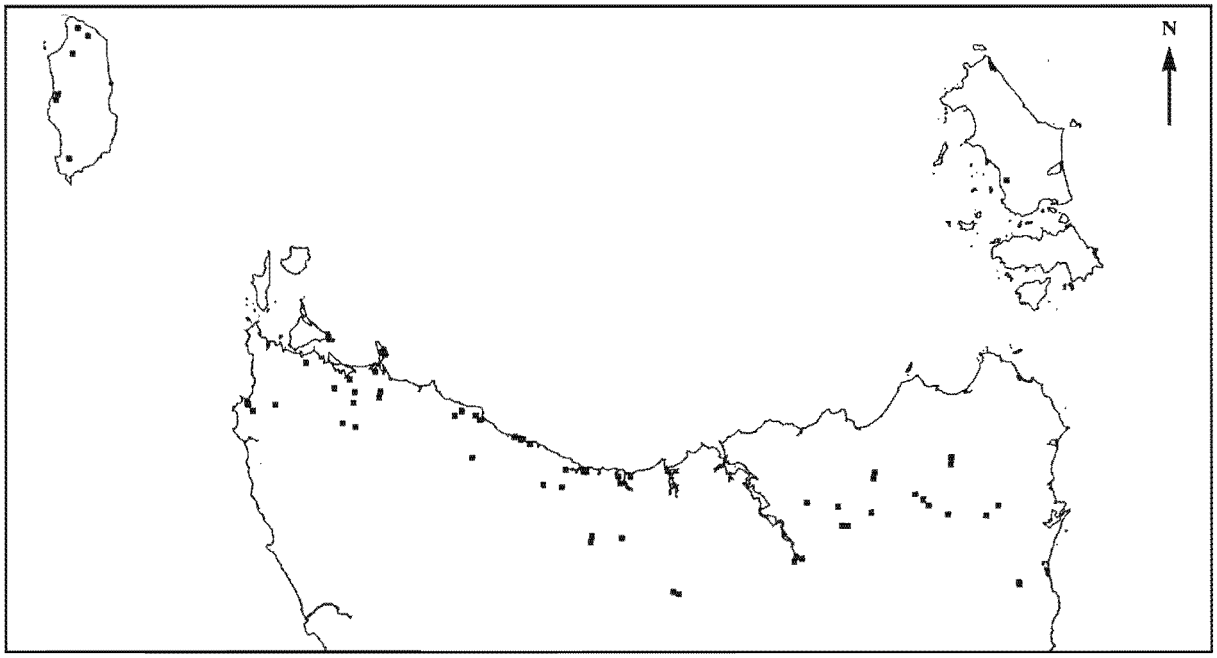
76 farmers supply	Tasmaid at Quoiba and Hobart
107 " "	Cadbury's
21 " "	King Island factory
154 " "	Lactos
456 " "	UMT, including a joint venture with Classic Foods at Edith Creek. Milk is diverted there as required.

Fig.1.9 Number of suppliers to Tasmanian dairy factories 1993. *(Figures supplied by Ken Rose, DPIF, 30 March 1993)*

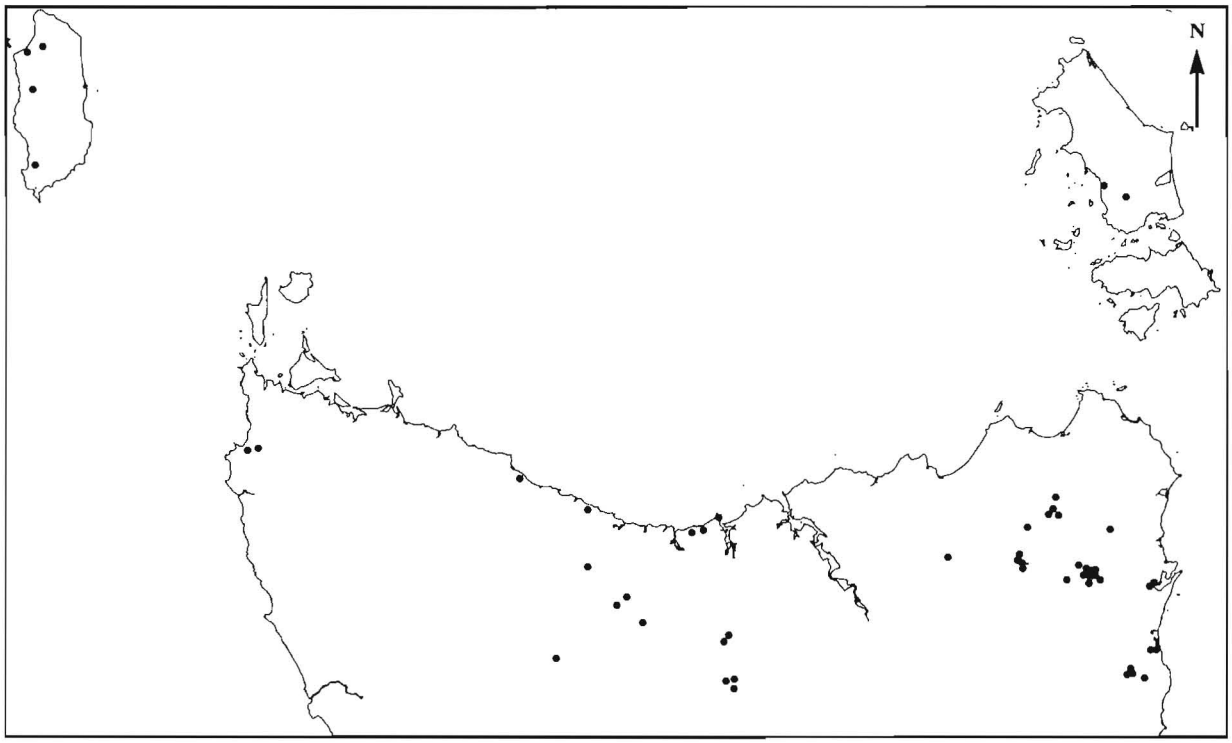
It is interesting to note that farm cheesemaking has never completely died out, and there has been a recent increase in the number of farms involved. About 1985 new private factories started up at Hillwood, making Italian-style cheese, and at Exton for Swiss-style cheese. Since then John Healey has begun making cheddar at Pyengana, there are two firms making goat cheese (Walter Pape at Latrobe, and Lorraine and Geoff Mance at Westhaven Dairy in Launceston), Milan Vyhnalek has begun a new specialty cheese venture at Mella near Smithton and Jane Bennett is making cheese at Ashgrove near Elizabeth Town. There is also a sheep cheese producer at Bothwell. It is noteworthy that few of these new concerns make cheddar cheese; they are more interested in other types of specialty cheeses.[115]

Rationalisation has left Tasmania with a number of buildings related to the early history of the industry. The remainder of this report will deal with the history of the individual factories and the buildings associated with them. All central factories are dealt with, but although some attempt has been made to deal with farm cheesemakers because of their importance in the total picture, this report cannot be taken as providing a complete listing. This particularly applies in the St Marys area and probably Deloraine.

Map 1.1 BUTTER & CHEESE FACTORIES OF NORTHERN TASMANIA

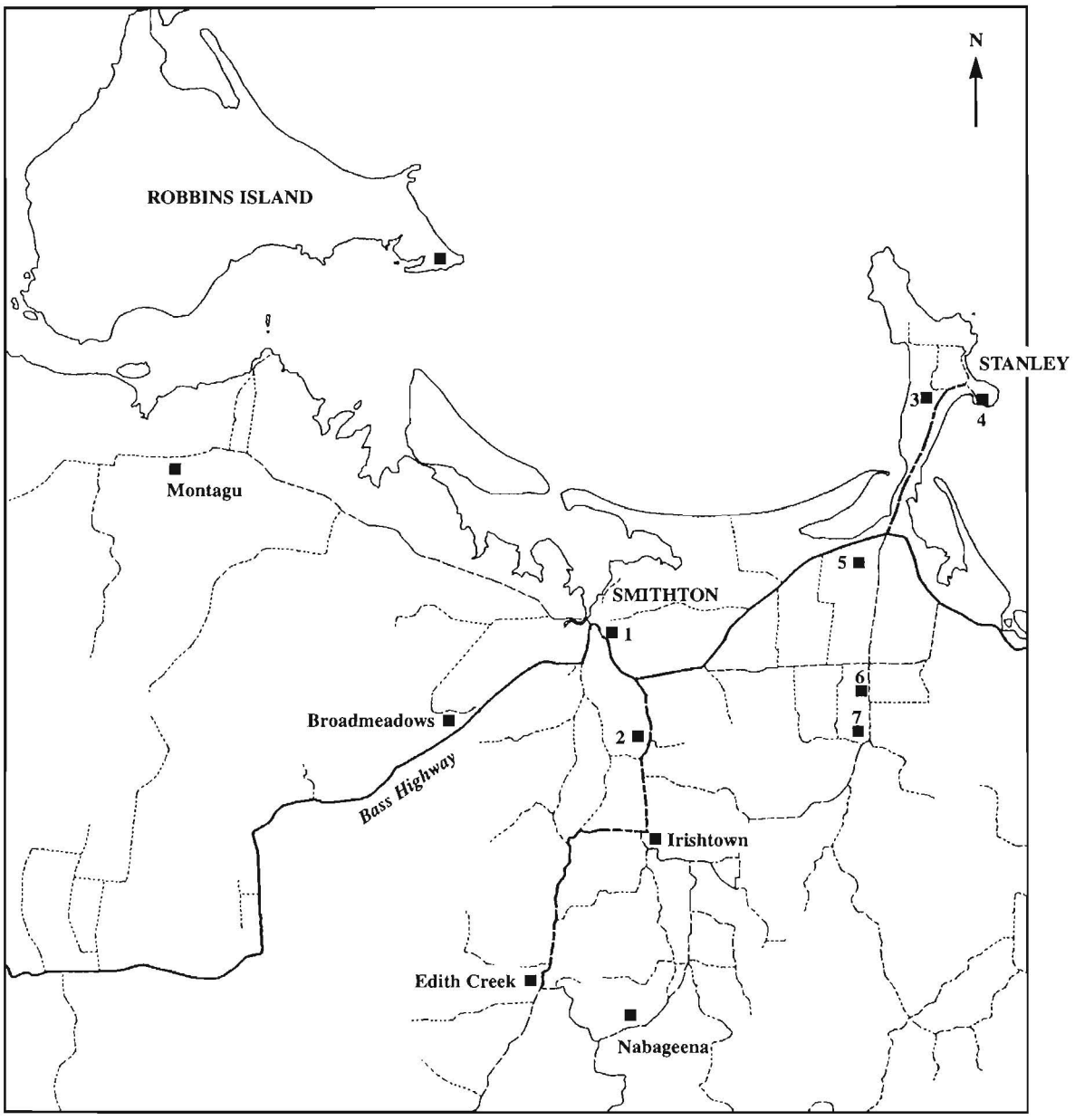


Map 1.2 FARM CHEESEMAKERS OF NORTHERN TASMANIA (mentioned in the text)



Scale: 10 km

Map 2.1 STANLEY TO MONTAGU



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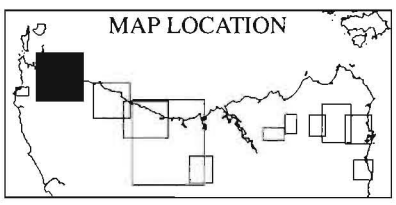


KEY:

Sites not labelled on the map:

■ Factories

1. Duck River
2. Pulbeena
3. Dovecote
4. Stanley
5. Pascoe
6. Forest
7. Mengha

CHAPTER TWO

THE CIRCULAR HEAD AREA

2.1 Stanley, Forest, Irish Town, Nabageena and Edith Creek

Some dairying was carried on in the Stanley area from quite early times. The Carroll family made cheese at their property, Seaside, at Green Hills. They had the property from the 1840s until 1914, although the dates when they made cheese are not known. Their cheese house is still standing. There were probably several farmers in the area who made cheese or butter and Stanley was quick to join in the move to establish factories in the 1890s.

In 1893, just a year after the Table Cape factory had started, two factories were in operation. One of these was the Dovecote Butter and Cheese Factory, situated about 2 kilometres from Stanley just down from the present motel on Dovecote Road (map reference Stanley 547859). It was begun on land leased from the V.D.L. Company by William Wilbraham Ford, a major leaser and owner of land in the Circular Head area. He has already been referred to as an importer of milking machines in 1902, and of a pure-bred bull in 1918 (see Chapter 1.6). *The Cyclopedia of Tasmania* of 1900 describes the factory.

> [It was] started by Mr Ford in 1893, and by perseverance and the excellent quality of his products he has established a reputation for the "Dovecote" brand of butter and cheese. A thorough plant has been erected, the latest labour-saving appliances being utilised. The dairy, which receives milk from over 100 cows, is excellently situated, with tram lines running to factory and piggeries. Mr. Ford has taken six first prizes for his exhibits at various agricultural shows in the colony. During the season of 1899-1900 he turned out about 14 tons of cheese and a small amount of butter, there being five milkers employed besides a man in the factory.[1]

His daughter remembers the overhead lines which took milk cans to the factory from the nearby dairy. Ford used milk from only his own cows, as did many other farm cheese factories. By 1903 he had evidently stopped making butter, as a letterhead from this time mentions only "Dove Cot [sic] Cheese Factory. W.W. Ford Proprietor". Perhaps he had decided to leave butter making to the other Stanley factory. Forty pound cheeses were made, packed three to a box and sent to Melbourne.[2]

The back of the Dovecote factory building in 1993 with Stanley in the background. The small roof in the foreground covers a stone-walled well which supplied water to the factory.

Ford had a very significant effect on the cheese-making of the whole Circular Head area. He engaged the Gourleys from Warnamboul in Victoria to make his cheese. The Gourleys were master cheese-makers, and one or other members of the family eventually worked in most of the Circular Head factories. There were three brothers, John Andrew (Jack), Edward Graeme (Ned) and Frank, and each seemed to work in many of the factories, but they are particularly associated with one factory

each. J. Gourley is listed in the 1900 *Post Office Directory* as cheese-maker, Stanley, so it was probably Jack who worked at Dovecote initially, although the family remembers Ned as being the one to set up that factory. Although in 1902 E. Gourley is listed at Forest, it was Frank who later managed the Forest factory, while Ned ran Dovecote with the help of Frank's son, also Frank but called "Hoc". Ned worked at Montagu too occasionally, probably after Dovecote closed for the season, and at least in 1922 he was working at Marrawah (see below). He may well have been there a lot longer, as he is known to have been good friends with Joe Moore, the Marrawah cheesemaker. Jack is also known to have worked at the Marrawah factory, but in particular he managed Montagu. Jack's son, Edward Joseph (Joe) later took over Montagu and was manager there when it closed, moving to the Broadmeadows factory for a few years until it too closed. "Hoc" was assistant manager of Montagu in 1927, and he also worked at Broadmeadows after Dovecote finished.[3]

ROBERTSON & GARDNER,
FARM, DAIRY PRODUCE,
AND
POULTRY SALESMEN.
TELEPHONE 2237.

AUCTION SALES EVERY TUESDAY AND THURSDAY.

Rialto,
468 to 474 Flinders Lane West,
Melbourne, Feb 1st 1913. 19

VICTORIAN AGENTS . . FOR
Chr. Hansen's Danish Dairy Preparations
Butter and Cheese Coloring
Rennett,
Junket Tablets,
Cheese Bandage,
Salt, &c.,
126 First-Class Awards.

PRICES ON APPLICATION.

REPRESENTING
R. & W. DAVIDSON Ltd.
London & Glasgow.

To Manager,
National Bank of Tasmania.
Stanley.
Tasmania.

Dear Sir:-

Enclosed please find cheque for £53/9/7 which please place to the credit of Messrs Gourley & Kelleher. Kindly acknowledge as usual.

Faithfully Yours,
ROBERTSON & GARDNER.

A letter from Robertson and Gardner in 1913. *(Tierney Collection)*

The Ford Dovecote factory continued for many years, but at some time it was bought by Robertson and Gardner, Melbourne agents for dairy produce. This was the company to which the Fords had always consigned their cheese. This firm too was of major importance to the Circular Head area, buying and running several factories. Just when they bought Dovecote is unclear. The *Post Office Directory* lists them as the owners from 1927, but it is probable that they bought it much earlier; they bought the factory on Moore's land at Marrawah in 1913. Mr Gardner would visit from Melbourne each August and ask the local farmers if they were prepared to deliver milk. Many farmers sent milk there in preference to the local butter factory because the cheese factory paid more. The factory usually worked from September to February, with Ned and "Hoc" living in a 4m x 3m lean-to on the

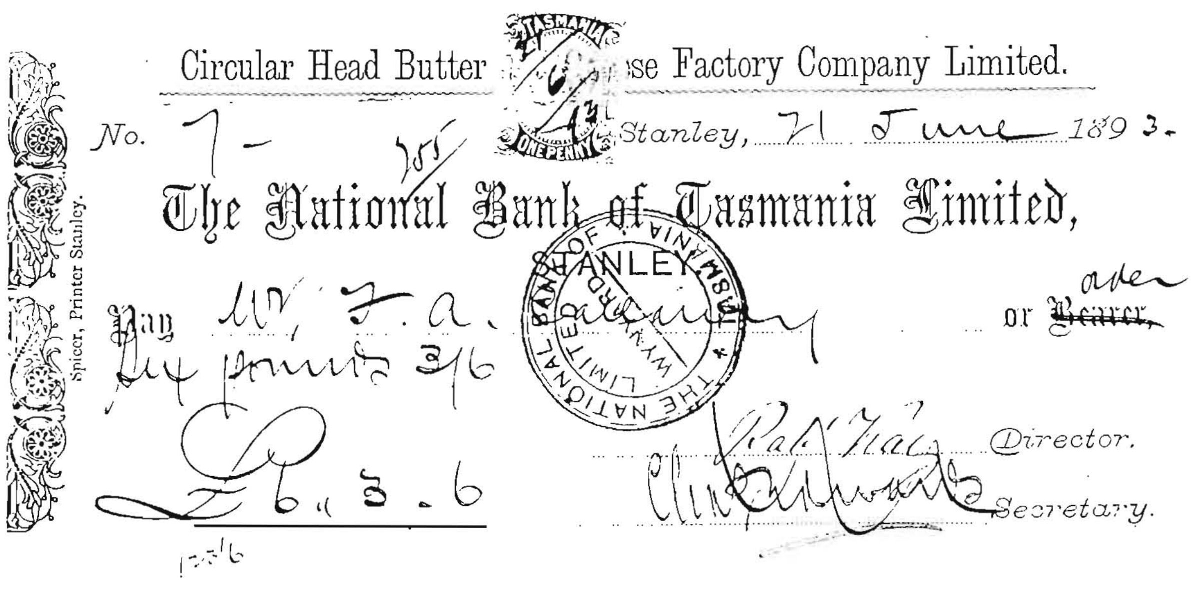
eastern side. They cooked their meals on the boiler. In the winter Ned went to Montagu, while "Hoc" lived in Stanley and worked on the boats. The factory was still registered with the Department of Agriculture in 1936, but had closed by 1942. In 1946 the Nicholls family from Marrawah bought the boiler and removed it to their own factory at Green Point. The Dovecote factory building is now used as a barn.[4]

The other Stanley factory was set up by the Circular Head Butter and Cheese Factory Company Ltd which was formed in February 1893. Some of the directors were L. Anderson, J.L. Waters, Charles Ford, Pat Vale, and Robert Viaz[?]. The secretary was Charles Edwards. The company received help from Bartram and Sons, factory fitters of Melbourne, and also from F.A. Callaway of the Table Cape factory. The company leased the old Van Diemen's Land Company stone store (map reference Stanley 562857), designed by John Lee Archer and built near the wharf in 1844 and by August the factory (i.e. the interior) was said to be "faithfully and substantially constructed", with plant being installed. By this time Edwards had been replaced as secretary by one Grubb. The factory was working by December, when the *Launceston Examiner* correspondent noted that a "cause for rejoicing is the opening of the Stanley Butter Factory, as farmers have a chance to get a little ready cash, which lately with most tillers of the soil has been almost a minus quantity".[5]

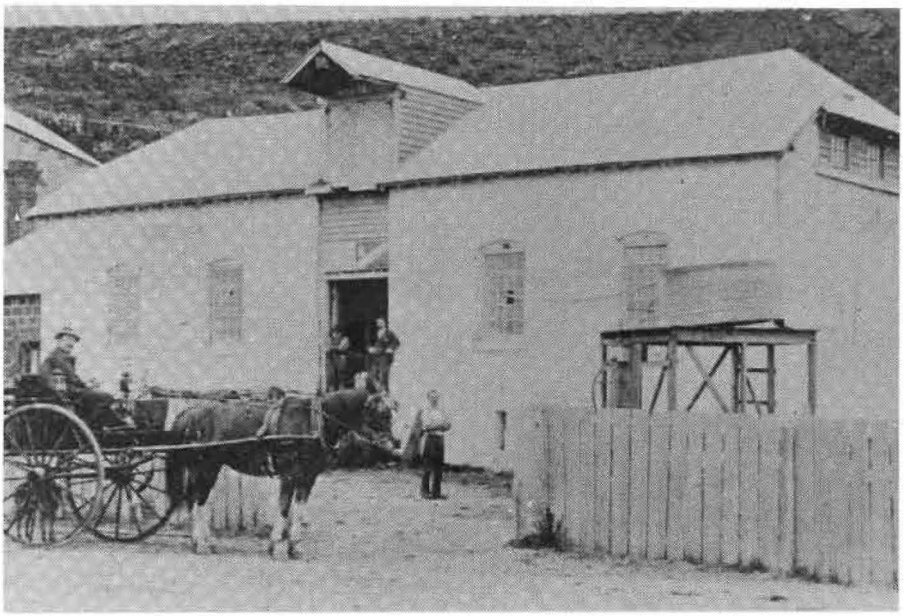
The company, as with so many of the dairy companies of the 1890s (see Chapter 1.4), soon found itself in difficulties, and in 1894 it is listed in the *Post Office Directory* as owned by Charles Edwards, its first secretary and son of one of the pioneer storekeepers of Stanley. Under his management the factory seemed to do well enough, with a creamery opened at Forest. His entry in *The Cyclopedia of Tasmania* of 1900 states that:

> ...by careful management, and general excellence of the products turned out, [he] has been so far pecuniarily rewarded, that he has found himself in a position to extend operations to a factory at Duck River [Smithton]. He does a very large trade throughout the colony, the "Stag" brand of goods being familiar in most households, but especially in the mining centres of the West Coast. [The] cheese and butter factory is situated adjacent to the wharf, at Stanley, and is conveniently placed for shipping purposes. De Laval separator machinery, driven by an 8 h.p. engine boiler, is utilised, and turns out about 20 tons of butter per annum, whilst about the same quantity of cheese is produced at the Duck River establishment.

A Mr McGinnis was in charge of the butter factory. In 1899 the factory became the Circular Head Butter, Cheese and *Bacon* Factory and 1000 pigs were killed, "while in 1900 the number is expected to be very largely increased."[6]


Circular Head Butter ... se Factory Company Limited.
No. 7 Stanley, 21 June 1893.
The National Bank of Tasmania Limited,
Pay Mr F. A. ... or order
£6 . 3 . 6
Director.
Secretary.
Spicer, Printer Stanley.

The seventh cheque drawn by the Circular Head Butter, Cheese and Bacon factory in June 1893. *(Tierney collection)*



The Circular Head Butter, Cheese and Bacon factory at Stanley, 1900. *(The Cyclopedia of Tasmania, Maitland and Krone, Hobart, 1900, Vol.II, p.321)*

Soon afterwards, the company changed ownership yet again. In 1901 a cooperative company was formed "after considerable difficulty", according to the *Weekly Courier*, and in October "finally decided to take over Mr Charles Edwards' plant on the conditions offered." Edwards was appointed manager and secretary. "This company, which makes the manufacture of cheese a specialty, is going to pay a 10 per cent dividend and distribute 150 pounds among suppliers as a bonus. The authorities also intend to erect cheese-making apparatus at Marrawah and Montague (sic), in addition to the factory at Stanley and the plants at Duck River and Forest. The company finds the making of cheese much more profitable than the manufacture of butter." The takeover by a cooperative may have been triggered by an upsurge in dairying. In 1901 the *Weekly Courier* announced that a great many more cows would be milked than during recent years, and the Forest creamery was expected to be open much earlier than usual.[7]

But by 1906 the new company was in trouble. Conlon visited the company in March at the request of the directors; probably they hoped he could help them out. However, by November H.A.Kirby had been appointed liquidator. The manager of the Van Diemen's Land Company wrote that "[I] regret that I cannot see my way to reduce the rent below 12 shilling per week, which under the circumstances you ought to consider a very reasonable rent". The assets of the company were bought by Ernest Plummer, who spent 300 pounds on new machinery and other improvements at the Stanley factory, ready for re-opening in September 1907. The *Circular Head Chronicle* described the factory thus: "The cream carts discharge their loadings on to a platform facing the top street. A tramline has been constructed from the staging to the factory, and the cream cans are placed on a trolley and run into the receiving room on the top floor". The cream then flowed by gravitation to maturing vats on the second floor, and finally to the churns on the ground floor.[8]

Plummer was still at Stanley in 1913 when he announced that the factory was opening for the season, but it is probable that it was soon after this that the factory was bought by the Emu Bay Cooperative Butter Factory Co. Ltd of Burnie. A cheque dated February 1916 from the Emu Bay company and drawn on the National Bank in Stanley indicates that they had certainly bought it by that date. Roly Mollison was working there at least by 1922 when he passed his examinations for tester and grader, and he had become manager by the time it became the property of the North-Western Cooperative Dairy Co. Ltd after its amalgamation with Emu Bay and Ulverstone in 1928 (see Chapters 1.6 and 4.1). He retained that position.[9]

There was always strong rivalry between the Stanley factory and that at Smithton run by the Duck River Company (see below) and North-Western was eager to continue its expansion by amalgamating with Duck River. In 1934 it was advertising: "Dairymen. Support the amalgamation of Butter Factories and cut down on your expenses by sending your cream to the North-Western Co-operative Dairy Co., Stanley, which is owned by the shareholders, and is purely co-operative." In 1936 discussions commenced between Duck River and North-Western about the zoning of cream collection in the Smithton-Stanley area. Duck River refused to amalgamate, but offered to buy the Stanley

factory. North-Western's shareholders rejected the sale in June 1937, but the directors decided to sell anyway. In 1936 they had had problems with several boxes of over-moisture butter, and in April 1937 they had received a letter from the Department of Commerce advising that seven boxes of "Dial S" butter had been rejected "on account of putrefactive conditions". North-Western was considering closing the factory and replacing it with one at Irish Town, but found they could not transfer licences. They would therefore have been pleased to rid themselves of the problem. Outraged shareholders from Circular Head called an Extraordinary General Meeting for August to protest against the sale, but the meeting resulted in overwhelming support for the directors by 615 votes to 29. Duck River closed the Stanley factory by October 1938. It was said that North-Western later regretted selling, as the factory had given it a foothold in the rich dairying area of Circular Head, at a time when it was seeking to expand. The building is still in use, but was never used as a butter factory again.[10]

Meanwhile the other factories of the Circular Head Butter and Cheese Factory Co. Ltd had also had a chequered history. The 1902 *Post Office Directory* lists E. Gourley as the manager of the Forest cheese factory, presumably the one referred to by the new cooperative company. This could well have been the old Forest creamery of Edwards' time. The factory was on the western side of the Mengha Road past its intersection with the Back Line Road (map reference Smithton 522742). Frank Gourley later became the manager, working there until it closed. He may have been there in 1907 when he won a prize at the Smithton Show for dairy produce. Plummer took over the Forest factory at the same time as that at Stanley, announcing in August 1907 that it would be opened as soon as sufficient inducement offered. By early 1913 the factory was owned by Robertson and Gardner, the Melbourne firm which also bought Dovecote, and the managers were Gourley and Kelleher. The factory seems to have finished by the 1920s. There are no remains except for a dip in the ground near the road to show where the ground had been cut away to allow farmers to bring their milk into the factory.[11]

Site of the Forest cheese factory, Mengha Road. The dip in the fenceline indicates the factory site.

There were other factories at Forest. A bacon, butter and cheese factory was said to have been operating between 1902 and 1910 at Pascoe, just off the Sleepy Hollow Road (map reference Smithton 518793). The present house on the road is on the site of the factory manager's house, which burnt down about 1980. The factory produced the "Acme" brand of bacon and was owned by Edwards, but he moved because of the poor water supply. There are no remains of the factory. In 1907 Charles Edwards was noted as possessing a farm at South Forest, and in 1913 the S.S. *Marrawah* loaded 45 cases of cheese "on account of Mr C. Edwards (Mengha factory)" at Stanley and sailed with it for Melbourne. Presumably this was the same Mengha factory which was offered unsuccessfully to the Duck River company in 1914, and it may have been the same factory at South Forest remembered to have been on Plummer's Road (map reference Smithton 518724) which was run by the Pooles. A sawmill was later built on the same site.[12]

The other factory in this area was the one at Irish Town. It is listed in the *Post Office Directory* in 1899, with Charles Edwards proprietor. Trethewie refers to the cheese factory as having been built

by Harry Waters of Stanley in 1899 near the "log" road, with James Matters as the manager. This is probably the J. Mathieson listed as manager in the 1902 *Post Office Directory*. A "log" road (usually called a corduroy road) was a series of round spars a few inches in diameter laid side by side across the track. It was built across the swamp at Pulbeena, and the factory was on the western side of the Irishtown Road just south of its junction with the old railway line (map reference Smithton 438722).[13]

Conlon gave demonstrations of cheese making at the factory in 1900, and it was possibly under his influence that the cooperative was formed to take over the company in 1901. In 1904 the Duck River Cooperative Butter Factory Ltd began in Smithton, and this may well have led to problems for the Circular Head Company. At a dinner given by the directors of Duck River in 1907, E. Smith said that before Duck River started, the Irish Town factory was paying only two and a quarter pence per gallon, but afterwards it paid fourpence a gallon. Smith suggested it was trying to run the cooperative out. By this time the factory and the company had been bought by Plummer. In August he called tenders for carting cream (perhaps he did not know that cheese requires milk, not cream) to the Irish Town Cheese Factory, adding that it would open "as soon as sufficient inducement offers". Plummer was still the owner in 1913, but the factory was put up for tender in 1915 and he had sold out to the Emu Bay company by 1917 when that company reported that its Irish Town factory had turned out 24 tons of prime cheese, the majority being sold in the state. Presumably Plummer sold it to Emu Bay at the same time as he sold the Stanley factory, by 1916.[14]

The move of the Emu Bay company into the Circular Head area is of interest. Dairying was going ahead by this time, as an article in the *Weekly Courier* in 1911 pointed out.

> Of late years Circular Head has been going over to the production of more milk, and now that the Irish blight has brought partial disaster on to the potato industry, dairying is likely to make rapid strides... Originally when dairying was extensively carried on in the Circular Head district, some fine herds existed, as they were formed from some of the best cattle ever imported into the Commonwealth. They were brought out by the V.D.L. Company. They were a fine type of Shorthorn, and while capital beef cattle, were also great milk producers, and in the district some were reputed to have given as high as 60 pounds of milk per day. When the development in mining took place, dairying was given up for grazing, and the owners sold their fine dairy cattle for beef. As a consequence, the principal industries of Circular Head became grazing and potato-growing, and these they have remained for many years...
>
> "Dairying has always been looked on as too great a tie. With tuber growing, it has been only a case of putting in the crop and waiting, compared with milking and looking after cows. Now, however ... the Irish blight has brought about a change in things. The successive visitations of blight have placed such a tax on their finances that farmers have been compelled to look elsewhere for a more certain means of good returns and attention has been turned to dairying... Dairying is going ahead rapidly, and within the last 12 months the supply to the local butter factory has doubled... A very fine class of cheese is produced in this part of the island, and the supply is not equal to the demand, most of which comes from West Australia and Queensland. Nearly every pound manufactured is exported, with the exception of odd lots sent to Strahan and Hobart. The cheese factories are run chiefly in districts where the carriage of cream is a difficult matter.

In 1914 the *S.S.Marrawah* on one trip to Stanley loaded 241 cases of cheese valued at 700 pounds, and 148 boxes of butter worth 300 pounds.[15]

Presumably the Emu Bay company was looking to expand into an area where dairying was promising big things. The Irish Town district in particular had become the mecca for a number of Gippslanders who took up dairying in a big way. In 1921 the *Weekly Courier*, noting the large number of milking machines being installed that season, says that it shows "the thorough confidence farmers have in the permanency of the industry..." At this time, the North-Western Cooperative Dairy Co. Ltd, also at Burnie, was providing strong competition for Emu Bay. At some time a new factory was built in Irish Town to replace the one at Pulbeena. It may well have been the Emu Bay company which did so, and it is this second factory which is remembered by residents of the area. It was on the north-eastern corner of the intersection of John's Hill Road and Young's Road, just south of Irish Town (map reference Lileah 438683). It is possible that Emu Bay kept both factories running for a while, as the *Weekly Courier* has a reference in 1918 to "both the butter and cheese factories at Irish

Town".[16]

Just how long the Irish Town cheese factory operated is difficult to determine. It was certainly going in February 1922, when the *Weekly Courier* noted that it had had a lower supply of milk for January. Trethewie says it had closed by 1922 and the machinery was taken to the new cheese factory at Nabageena, but Frank Fahey, manager of both, was at Nabageena before Irish Town. In 1922 when he successfully passed his test as a cream tester, he gave his address as Irish Town. Fahey moved to Devonport by 1926 (and later to Winnaleah and Legerwood - see Chapters 5.3 and 5.4). The factory, working or not, was taken over by North-Western following the amalgamation with Emu Bay, and an option was taken over the lease in 1930, and again in 1936 (when they were considering closing Stanley - see above), but the options were not taken up, although the factory was listed in the *Post Office Directory* in 1931. There are no remains of either Irish Town factory.[17]

The Nabageena factory was built by the Emu Bay company by the end of 1922, after they had canvassed the district to gauge interest. It was built with wooden walls and an iron roof on the northern side of the South Road where it crosses Edith Creek (map reference Lileah 433614). However, it only worked for three seasons until 1924. In 1929 the North-Western company were proposing to sell the machinery to the Wigg Brothers for their new cheese factory at Broadmeadows (see Chapter 2.2), and to lease the property to Mr Gaby. The factory survives as a garage.[18]

The only other dairy factory in this area of the Circular Head municipality is the Edith Creek factory (map reference Togari 396632), built by Cadbury's in 1949 to concentrate, and spray dry, milk. In 1969 it was bought by Duck River as part of its diversification programme, and used to manufacture skim milk powder. In 1980 it was used to dry and package whey powder following initial processing at the Wynyard factory. The plant was closed temporarily in 1988 when a new drier for whey protein was erected at Wynyard, but the plant now operates to package a range of food products.[19]

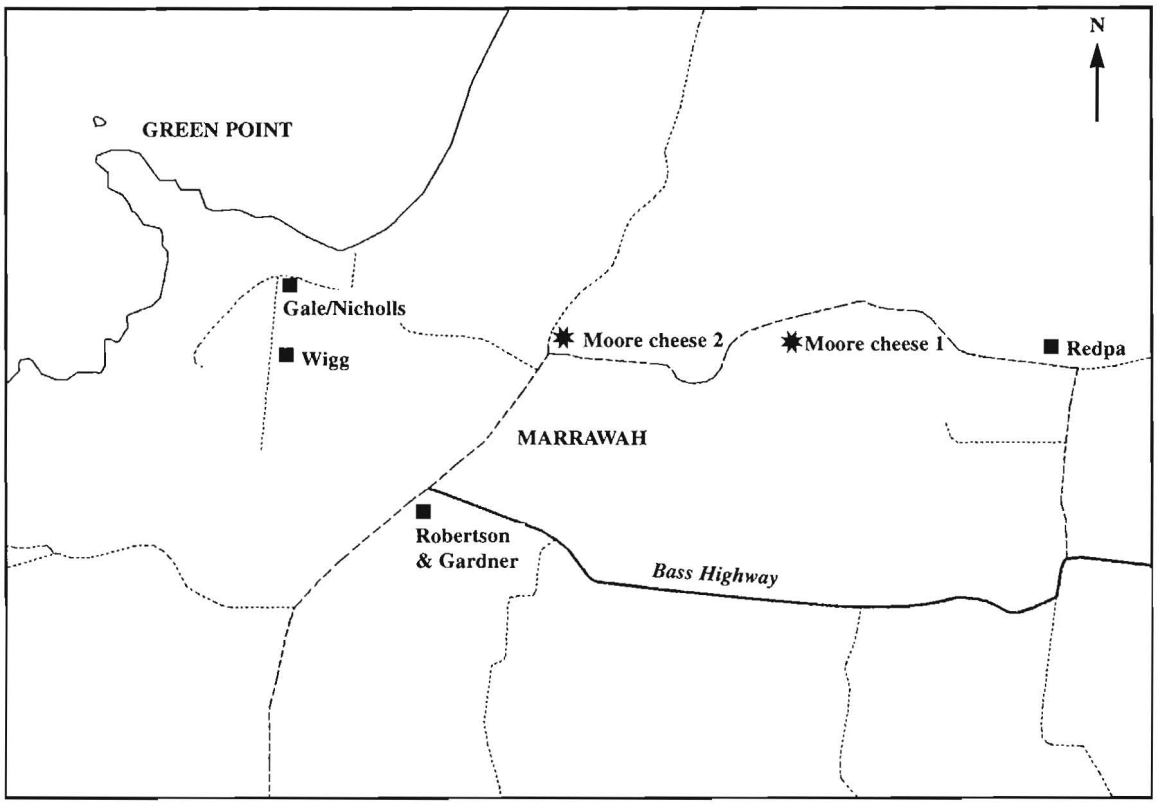
2.2 Montagu, Marrawah and Broadmeadows

In 1902, the newly-formed Circular Head Cooperative Factory announced that it was intending "to erect cheese-making apparatus at ... Montague[sic]" (see Chapter 2.1). The factory opened in 1903 on the southern side of the West Montagu Road, just to the east of the bridge across the Montagu River (map reference Montagu 259835). But in August 1906 the Montagu correspondent of the *Circular Head Chronicle* was informed "that the cheese factory here is not likely to open this season, which will be a disappointment to many milk suppliers". The Circular Head company went into liquidation soon afterwards, and its assets were bought by Plummer, who informed farmers the following August that the factory would be opened as soon as sufficient inducement offered. K.C. Laughton, Breheny and Edwards [Charles?] took over in 1908, but in June 1910 it was reported that Joe Moore, proprietor of the Marrawah Cheese Factory, had bought the Montagu "cheese and butter" factory. He installed Jack Gourley as manager. It is possible that Gourley had been working in W.W. Ford's Marrawah factory which was the one Moore had leased, but as Moore himself was a cheese-maker, he invited Gourley to take the position at Montagu. By 1913 Robertson and Gardner had bought Montagu, leaving Gourley as manager.[20]

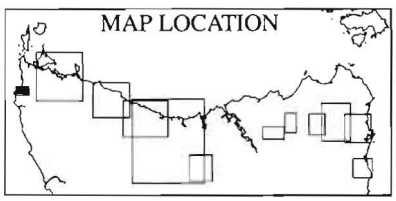
Gourley was an outstanding cheese-maker, and the product of the Montagu factory gained a high reputation. In 1914 the *Weekly Courier* announced that the manager of the Army and Navy Auxiliary Stores, London, had frequently drawn the Agent-General's attention to some Tasmanian cheese which came from the Montague [sic] Cheddar Factory and equalled anything in England. In 1919 Gourley secured a First Class Certificate for cheese sent to England, and in 1936 his cheese again won high praise. The occasion was written up in the *Advocate*[21]:

> The 43rd annual conference of the Factories Managers and Secretaries Association was held in Melbourne during the present month. Messrs Robinson [sic] and Gardner, of Flinders Lane Melbourne, obtained first prize for the whole of the Australia for their cheese, and in another class lost by a point.
> "Messrs Robinson and Gardner have won many prizes from their factories in many parts of

Map 2.2 MARRAWAH AREA



Scale: 1 km



KEY:

■ Factories

✸ Farm Cheese

Victoria and Tasmania. Their last success was achieved by their manager at Montagu (an isolated district in the far north-west coast of Tasmania), Mr John Gourley. Messrs Robinson and Gardner showed good judgment in appointing the Gourley Bros as managers of their factories in Circular Head.
"There are Mr J.A. who has won many prizes, and Ned and Frank Gourley. What wonderful cheese-makers they are. In the initial stages they were trained in the Western Districts of Victoria, when milk was bought by quantity and not butter-fat test.
"[When Robertson and Gardner bought the factories], improvements were made in machinery and management and the firm employed the Gourley Bros to manage the Dovecot [sic], Montagu and Marrawah factories. The firm of Robertson and Gardner has taken its managers of the different factories in Tasmania to lectures by Victorians and Commonwealth dairy experts. The wisdom of this expense is indicated by the results of the management of Mr J.A. Gourley at Montagu... The firm [of Robertson and Gardner] has been a great factor in Circular Head in keeping the dairying industry alive during lean periods."

The factory continued in operation after the Duck River Company bought it in 1948, with Jack Gourley at some time retiring to be replaced by his son, A.J. (Joe) Gourley, who had begun working at the factory at the age of fifteen. He usually had two others helping. In the early to mid-1940s production was around 65 tons annually and in 1949 the factory produced seven tons of cheese a week. In 1966, with the buildings getting old and the boiler requiring replacement, the factory was closed and Joe Gourley moved to the Broadmeadows factory. The building is still standing, although rapidly deteriorating.[22]

The Montagu factory in the early 1960s. *(Coker photo, QVMAG)*

* * *

It was obvious that Marrawah would turn to cheese-making because of its isolated position. In 1911 the *Weekly Courier* pointed out that:

> The far north-west corner is one of the sections of the state most suited for dairying. There is an immense scope of land that could be utilised for the purpose. In an article last week it was pointed out what a fine stretch of new country existed for 30 miles back from Stanley and away down to the Marrawah district. In this new country dairying is practically the only industry for the settlers, as, though so much of the land is of fine quality, it is rather too far out of the way, until better facilities are provided, for agriculture... In the new Marrawah country the farmers are progressing well as a result of the butter and cheese making.[23]

In 1902 the newly-formed Circular Head Cooperative company announced their intention "to erect cheese-making apparatus at Marrawah and Montague". The factory at Marrawah was built on land belonging to W.W. Ford on the Arthur River Road (map reference Marrawah 051660). This must be the factory sometimes referred to as one Ford built. The company probably continued there until

1906 when it went into liquidation (see above); certainly by June of that year the lease had been taken over by Frank S. Woodberry who called the establishment the Woodlands Cheese Factory. Woodberry was one of the family which was well-known for cheese at Falmouth and Deloraine (see Chapters 5.5 and 4.5).[24]

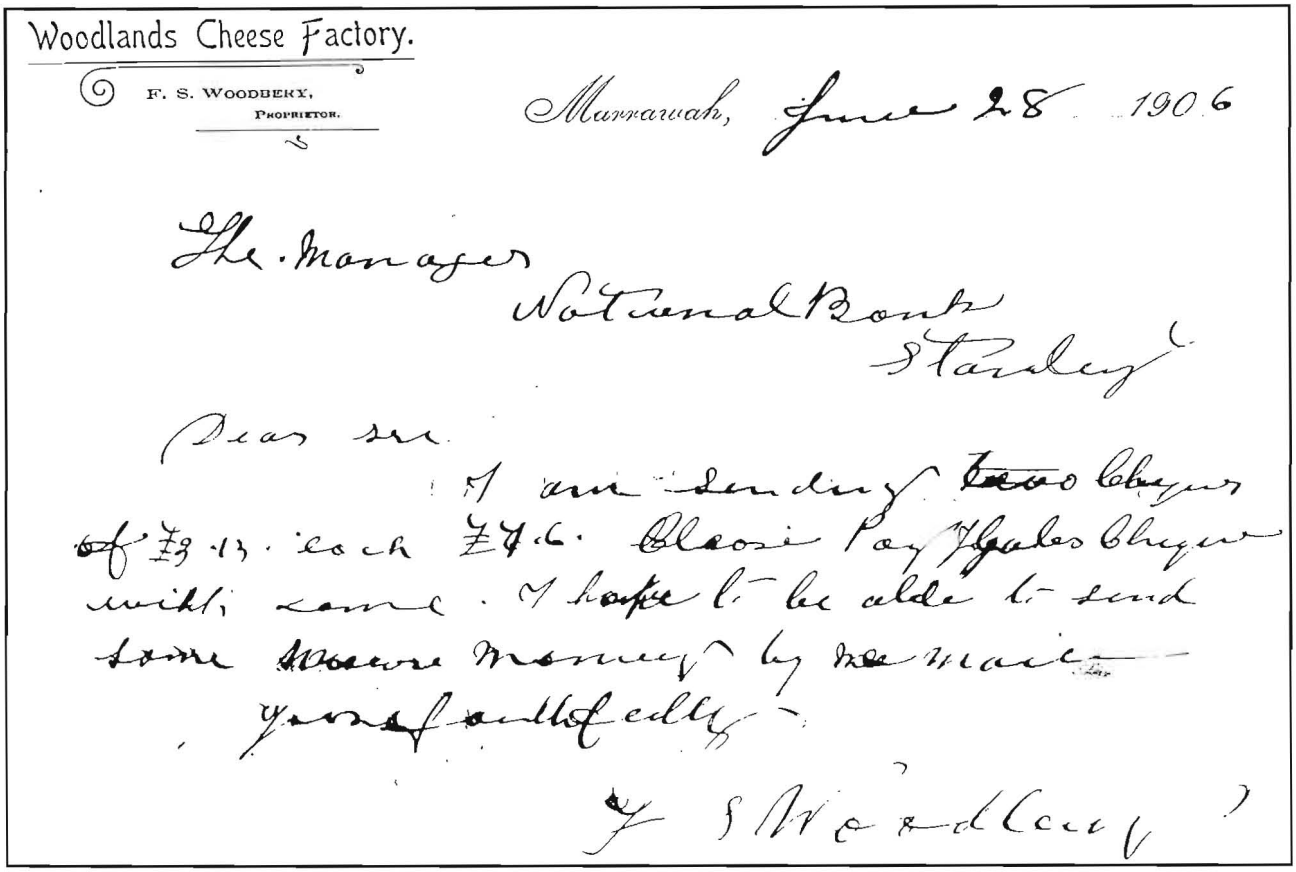
Marrawah in the early years of the twentieth century. The photograph was taken soon after 1900 by T.R.G. Williams who wrote on the reverse: "Scene at Marrawah where the cheese factorys [sic] are situated." It is not known whether one of the factories is in the picture. *(AOT)*

In September that year he announced in the Circular Head Chronicle that he would soon commence operations. The report went on: "Mr Woodberry intends milking about 200 cows and he has the promise of a good deal of outside support. This make of cheese has obtained a good name for quality, and commands a ready sale of unlimited quantity at top market prices. The proprietor has added a complete butter-making plant to his factory, as well as a sawmilling plant, and is now in a position to deal with farmers in any way." However, Woodberry was in some financial difficulty. He wrote to his bank manager at Stanley asking him to pay W.W. Ford 37 pounds that Woodberry owed, on the strength of some cheese Woodberry was sending to Robinson [sic] and Gardner, Melbourne; and similar letters ("I hope to be able to send some more money by next mail") reinforce the idea that he was in trouble. There are no more references to Woodberry, and he left Tasmania owing Ford quite a deal of money.[25]

The factory was then run by Joe Moore. Josiah Thomas Moore had been born at Wesley Vale. When his mother died, the family moved to New Zealand where Joe learnt how to make cheese. In 1892 Moore was making cheese at Pardoe (see Chapter 4.4), and he later made cheese at Narrawa (see Chapter 4.3) and Port Sorell, before moving to Gippsland. From there he was brought to Stanley to make cheese, working for some time in Ford's Dovecote factory. He moved to Marrawah in 1903 and evidently built a small factory in 1905, although its location is unknown. In August 1907 it was announced that Mr Moore had rented the factory and plant of the defunct Circular Head Cheese Co. and he was intending to start making cheese on September 2. W. Ford was said to intend milking 150 cows, Moore himself 25 and others 10-20. In 1909 Finlayson Brothers sent a cheese press screw to "J.T. Moore, Marrawah Cheese Factory", and in 1910 he was doing well enough to buy the Montagu factory (see above). Walter Woodberry helped Moore in his factory. Moore also had a sawmill at Marrawah, and he cut wood in the winter when there were no supplies of milk.[26]

Moore made a success of the factory. In 1908-09 up to 1000 gallons of milk were received daily and butter equipment was being installed. In 1911 Moore was making 80 tons of cheese a year, and seven tons of butter. Although most of the cheese was exported, butter was sent to supply the flourishing town of Balfour. An article on his factory in the *Weekly Courier* announced that Moore manufactured cheese on the New Zealand principles instead of the old Cheddar system, and following his receipt of advice from Victoria, he no longer used cooling vats. He had noticed an increase in supply from 300 gallons a day in 1907 to the present 1000 gallons. His furthest supplier was only two and a half miles [4k] away. The Victorian Agent-General's report on his cheese read: "Fairly good flavour, short curd, good colour. General condition of the cheese is very good. Great care is apparent in grading and selection." Moore was objecting to the new regulations brought in under the Dairy Act (see Chapter 1.5) which prohibited the carrying of whey in cans used for cream. He

asserted that there was no problem if the cans were clean, and released the Victorian report to prove his point.



Woodlands Cheese Factory.

F. S. WOODBERY, PROPRIETOR.

Marrawah, June 28 1906

The Manager
National Bank
Stanley

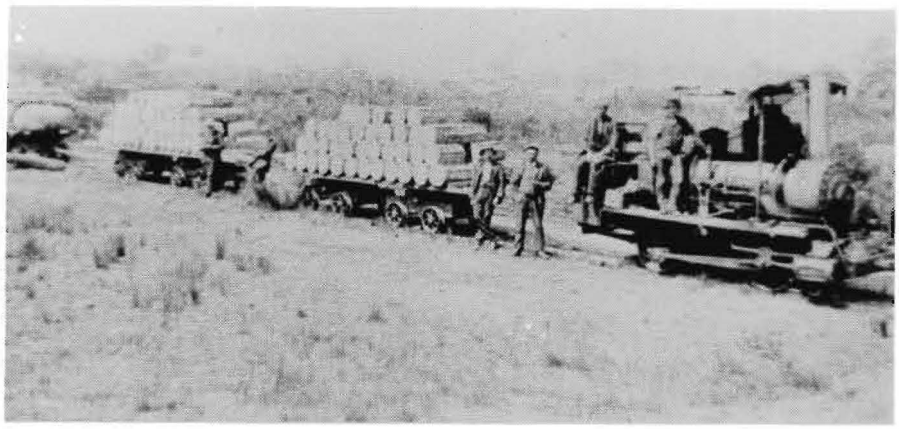
Dear Sir

I am sending two cheques of £3 13 each £7 6 Please pay Gales cheque with same. I hope to be able to send some more money by next mail

Yours faithfully

F S Woodbery

Letter from F.S. Woodberry to the Manager, National Bank, Stanley, 1906. The letter reads: "I am sending two cheques of 3 pounds 13 shillings each, 7 pounds 6 shillings. Please pay Gales [?] cheque with same. I hope to be able to send some more money by next mail." *(Tierney collection)*

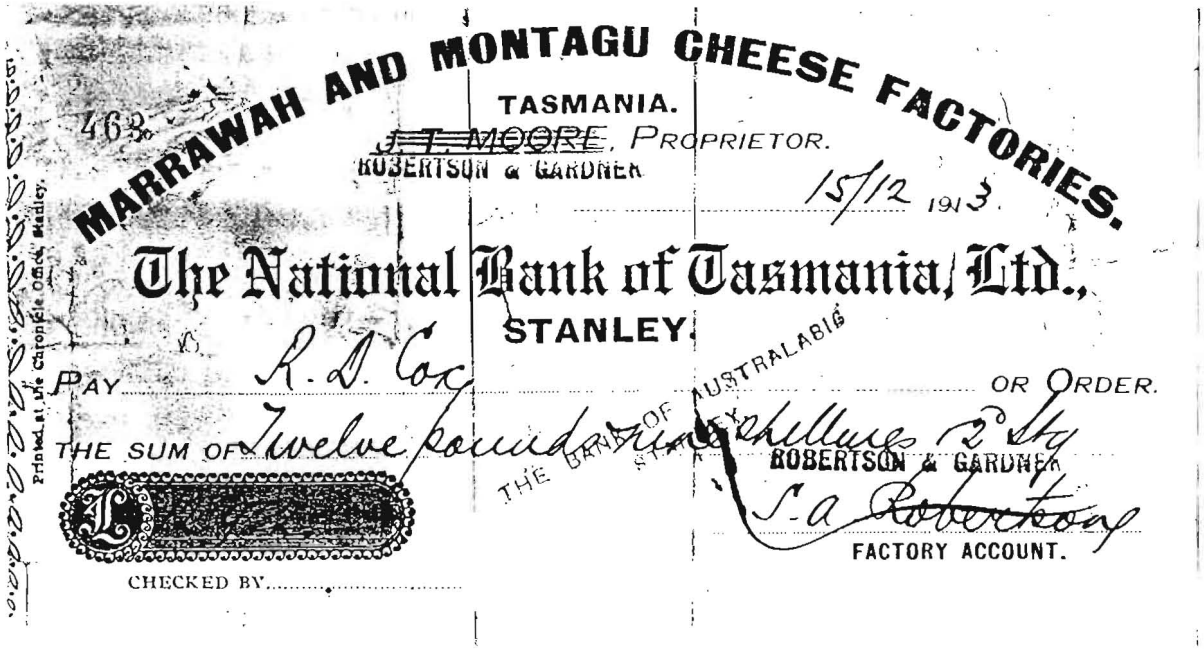


The Marrawah-Togari tram with a load of cheese c.1916. Each hexagonal case held four 40-pound cheeses. *(QVMAG)*

Moore described the difficulties of getting his cheese away. It had to be carted over 22 miles [35k] to Montagu, then wait three days or weeks to go to Stanley, where it was trans-shipped for Melbourne. He announced that next year he intended to send all his cheese to London, rather than dump it on the Melbourne market. In fact he had already sent the first direct shipment of Tasmanian cheese direct to London and secured top prices. The problem with cartage was partially solved in 1913 when a tramway was finally built to Togari where goods could be transferred to the Smithton train. Initially the tram was horse-drawn, but later small locomotives took over. Cheese was always an important item of cargo and the first tram took nine and a half tons.[27]

By 1913 Moore had sold both Montagu and Marrawah factories to Robertson and Gardner. During the First World War the Marrawah cheese factories were reported to be working at full capacity with

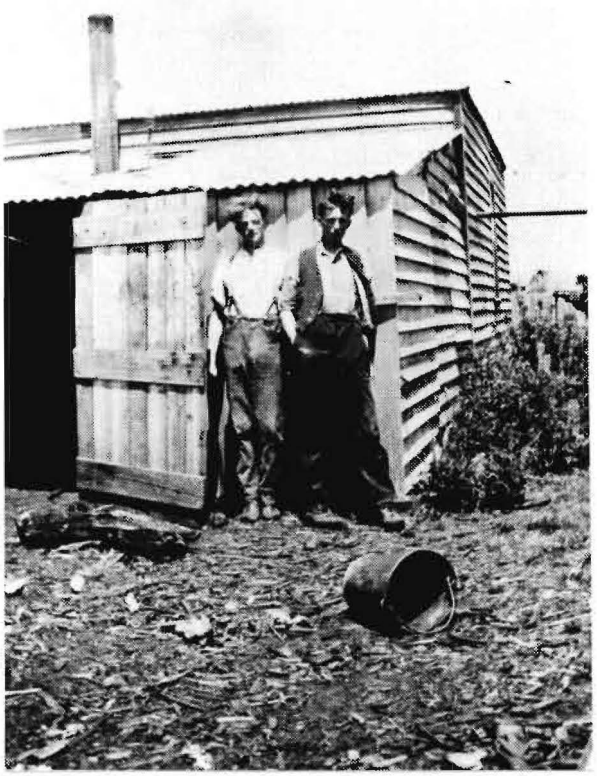
cheese being sent away weekly. In 1922 Ned Gourley was the cheese-maker at Marrawah and the factory was still working in 1934, but it had stopped by 1936. Only part of the concrete foundations now remain.[28]


MARRAWAH AND MONTAGU CHEESE FACTORIES.
TASMANIA.
463
J. T. MOORE, PROPRIETOR.
ROBERTSON & GARDNER
15/12 1913
The National Bank of Tasmania, Ltd.,
STANLEY.
PAY R. D. Cox OR ORDER.
THE SUM OF Twelve pounds nine shillings 2d Stg
ROBERTSON & GARDNER
FACTORY ACCOUNT.
CHECKED BY.....

Cheque for the Marrawah and Montagu cheese factories after they had been bought by Robertson and Gardner 1913. *(Tierney collection)*

Remains of Robertson and Gardner's Marrawah cheese factory 1993.

The selling of the factories did not mean Moore went out of cheese-making. He seems to have always been a keen dairyman; in 1920 he imported two cows and two bull calves, all Friesian. By 1917 he had built a factory at Redpa, then known as East Marrawah, behind the shop on the Comeback Road just before its intersection with the Welcome Swamp Road (map reference Marrawah 114675). The creek nearby which supplied the water is still called Moore's Creek. Moore's son Jack made the cheese there in the last few years, and Ernie Hortle also helped. Moore consigned his cheese to Robertson and Gardner. The factory was still producing in April 1934, but closed soon afterwards. There are no remains. Moore then made cheese from his own herd of 30-40 cows at "Golden Hill" on Comeback Road (map reference Marrawah 088677), and later still in a little shed on the north-eastern corner of Harcus River Road and Comeback Road (map reference Marrawah 064675), although this time it was just for his own use. The first of these is no longer there, while the second (later enlarged for a shearing shed) is in ruins.[29]



Jack Moore (R.) and Ernie Hortle outside Redpa factory c.1930. *(Moore photo, QVMAG)*

The remains of Moore's last "factory" April 1993. His original shed was later enlarged for use as a shearing shed.

The cheese factories in Marrawah were only a few kilometres from Green Point on the coast, but in the days of poor communication this distance was too great to be easily covered. In 1910 Alf Gale at Green Point felt that cheese was the answer to poor transport, and having first learnt the art from an employee of Joe Moore, he too set up a factory on the south-eastern corner of the intersection of Green Point Road and Hanson's Road (map reference Marrawah 037683). The factory was being run by Bob Smith when the property was bought from Gale by soldier-settler John Nicholas Nicholls in 1921, and it was Smith who taught Nicholls' son Ernest how to make cheese. J.N. Nicholls and Sons' cheese was sold on the Tasmanian market and became very well-known.[30]

However, getting the cheese to market was still very difficult, a point made by the *Weekly Courier* in 1921. Noting the "marked progress" at Marrawah where a large number of soldier-settlers and others were acquiring land, the newspaper commented that this was despite "the fact that Marrawah is probably the most isolated and worst served district in Tasmania". The wooden tramway charged "tremendous rates" and averaged about three miles an hour. Obviously farmers would not have been pleased that year when the collapse of the cheese market caused the cheese factories to close early and

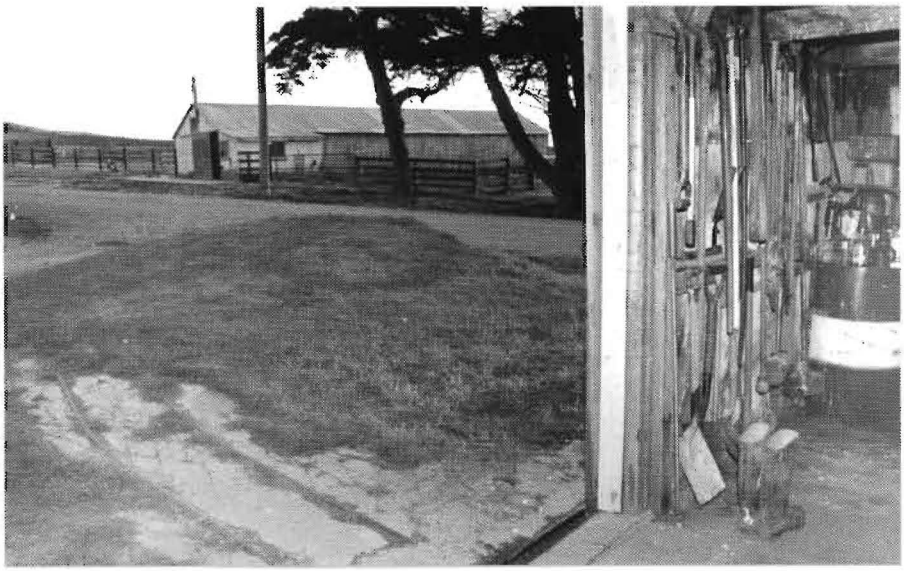
cream had to be sent to Smithton. Later the wooden tramway was replaced by iron rails, but when the section from Marrawah to Redpa was closed, it still took a full day for the settlers from Green Point to drive a bullock waggon laden with cheese to Redpa to catch the train. In the late 1940s the Nicholls family had one of the state's largest herds with up to 300 cows, and they were supplied with the milk from another 200 belonging to neighbouring farmers. In 1945-6 the factory made 82 tons of cheese, but by the early 1950s it was in trouble. The Nicholls family had difficulty in finding labour in 1951-2, with a Dutch family staying only a few months, while at the same time improved transport meant that the factory was coming into direct competition with the Duck River butter factory. Finally in 1952 the Nicholls stopped making cheese and sent their cream by train to Smithton. The factory remains as a workshop and general storage area.[31]

Bob Smith, cheese-maker, stirs the vat while Ernest Nicholls checks the cooking temperature at Nicholls' cheese factory early 1920s. *(Nicholls photo, QVMAG)*

Bullock waggon loaded with cheese leaving J.N. Nicholls and Sons' factory at Green Point, Marrawah, mid-1920s. *(Nicholls photo, QVMAG)*

The final factory in Marrawah was built by the Wigg Brothers just a few hundred metres from Nicholls'. James Wigg went to the East Coast and learnt to make cheese, then returned by 1934 to build a factory with his brother Jack on their farm at Green Point on Hanson's Road (map reference Marrawah 035675). The factory bought milk from surrounding farms and in 1944-45 the Marrawah factory made 103 tons of cheese.[32]

Patsy the pony bringing milk cans from the milking shed to the Nicholls factory. The pony would make the 100-metre trip without guidance. *(Nicholls photo, QVMAG)*



When the pony died, the Nicholls family installed tracks to rail the cans from shed to factory. The remains of the tracks can be seen in this 1993 photo of the factory building, with the milking shed in the distance.

In 1953 the Department of Agriculture advised that extensive repairs were necessary for the coming season. At this stage Milan Vyhnalek, who had arrived as a refugee from Europe in 1950, had made contact with the Wiggs and made arrangements to lease the factory at no charge for three years, with the right to purchase the factory and plant for 10 000 pounds, provided he carried out the necessary repairs. After he had spent some months repairing, he was advised that as the original licence had lapsed, he had to apply for a new one. However, the major butter factories opposed the granting of the licence as "not in the best interests of the industry", and when the licence was not granted Vyhnalek lost all the money he had invested in repairs. He was forced to move to Burnie and begin again. The following year George Amentus leased the factory for a year to make Greek cheese, mainly fetta, but with no pasteurisation or refrigeration the cheese was "blowing" through contamination, and Amentus left. The factory did not run again, and is now used for storage.[33]

The other factory that the Wigg Brothers ran was at Broadmeadows on the Mella Road, just west of its junction with the Bass Highway (map reference Mella 372737). They started the factory because of the difficulty of getting good grades for cream sent to distant factories. One of the Wiggs had sent cream to the Smithton factory and 60 per cent was graded Choice, but of the cream sent further on to the Ulverstone factory, only 10 per cent was Choice because of the distance covered. The Broadmeadows factory may have had some connection with the Ulverstone factory. The Wiggs' Tassie Cheese Company Pty Ltd which owned Broadmeadows had the same secretary, C. Smith, and the same head office address (15 Wilmot Street Burnie) as the Coastal Dairy Company Pty Ltd which ran the factory at Ulverstone.

The Wigg factory building in 1989 prior to being renovated. *(Wigg photo, QVMAG)*

The Broadmeadows factory was built in 1934, using the plant from Nabageena (see Chapter 2.1) and water from a bore. J.F. Wigg, jnr, was the manager. In 1936 the Duck River company of Smithton was discussing buying the factory, but it was not taken over until April 1939, and only then after the suppliers stipulated that it be maintained as a separate unit and the profits and losses divided among them. During the war, as a result of the high demand, the factory made 300 tons of cheese annually, but production soon dropped after the cessation of hostilities. In 1945-6 only 82 tons were made. By this time its manager was Frank Gourley (Hoc). After Montagu closed in 1966, Broadmeadows continued as the last of Tasmania's country cheese plants. Joe Gourley moved from Montagu, and John Rix was the factory manager when the amalgamation of Duck River with Table Cape to form UMP and the decision to concentrate cheese production at the Wynyard factory led to Broadmeadows' closure in 1973. The plant was installed in the old butter section of the Wynyard factory for the making of rinded cheddar. The Broadmeadows factory building is now used as a barn.[34]

Broadmeadows factory building from the rear 1993.

2.3 Smithton

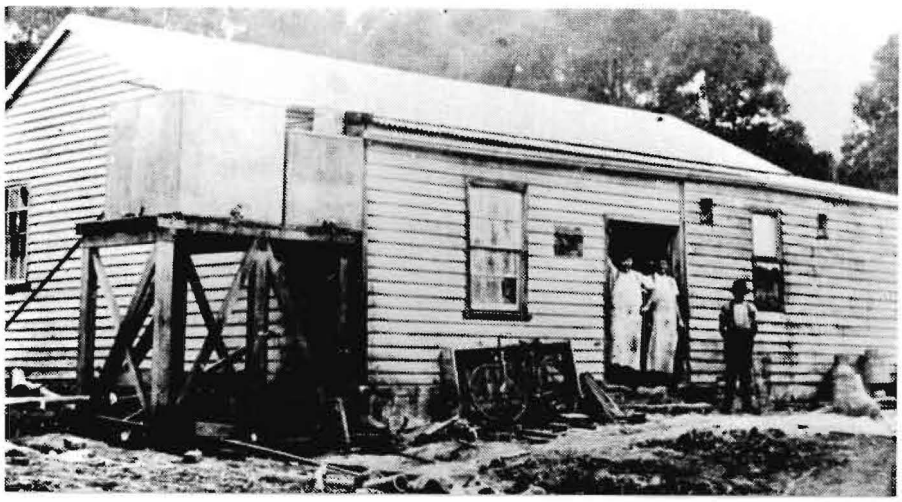
The first factory in Smithton was the cheese factory started by Charles Edwards some time between 1895, when he bought the Circular Head Butter and Cheese Factory Co. Ltd, and 1900 when in *The Cyclopedia of Tasmania* he described starting the factory at Duck River (see Chapter 2.1). Looking at its name, the company must from the beginning have intended to make cheese. In 1900 the Duck River factory was turning out 20 tons of cheese a year, and on 4 October 1902 the *Weekly Courier* refers to the new cooperative company as having plants at Duck River and Forest, but the 1904 *Post Office Directory* does not list a factory there despite mentioning the company's butter factory at Stanley and its cheese factories at Forest, Irish Town and Marrawah, so presumably it had closed by then. Its location is unknown.

The company which was to last the longest in the Circular Head municipality was one of the last to start. The Duck River Co-operative Butter and Bacon Factory Co. Ltd built its factory in 1904 in Goldie Street, Smithton (map reference Smithton 420766). It was largely the result of the efforts of Gippslanders, who discovered Mowbray Swamp to the south and west of Smithton and developed it for dairy farming. Until that time, Irish Town had been the major settlement. Determined to start the right way, the directors of the proposed company approached Conlon to give advice, and perhaps under his influence, made the decision to become a cooperative. Despite considerable initial difficulties, they remained a cooperative company throughout their history. Considering that the only other attempt to set up a cooperative in the area, the Circular Head Butter and Cheese Factory Co. Ltd, failed after just a few years (see Chapter 2.1), the Duck River company did very well to survive.[35]

The factory began operations towards the end of 1904, closing for the winter in May 1905 after what it said was a successful season. However, affairs were not quite so rosy. Only 227 of the 3000 shares authorised had been taken up, and only six tons of butter had been made for the year. As the Table Cape factory at Wynyard was making seven tons a week in the same period, it is obvious that the Duck River factory was very short of suppliers. Even shareholders did not always support their company, as evidenced by the frequent exhortations in annual reports to shareholders to: "Support your own company. You own the factory. You get the profits," and there are frequent references to the need to send canvassers out to the various districts to seek support for the cream carts. There are stories of paying suppliers with unsigned cheques, which gave the company sufficient time to find the money to meet them. In November 1905 they employed a new manager, G.K. Webb from the mainland, which may indicate troubles with their first. Webb seems to have been quite good, obtaining "western district prices" for their butter the next season, and in 1906 he was reappointed for two pounds ten shillings a week, with the added comment that he was "allowed to take a contract for wood cutting if he desired to." Obviously, his hands were not too full with large supplies of cream.[36]

In 1906 it was reported that there were several new suppliers when probably dozens were wanted; six or seven farmers at Marrawah were said to be keen to supply and would cart their cream half way, provided the company could carry it the other half, but it is not known whether the company could oblige. The collapse of the Circular Head company in 1906 may have given the Smithton factory cause for hope (in fact, the new factory may have caused it), but when Plummer took over the following year, the situation became even grimmer for the fledgling cooperative and at the annual meeting the chairman urged farmers to rally round the company. The Irish Town factory was offering keen competition, almost doubling the price for milk in what was seen by the directors of Duck River as a deliberate bid to run the cooperative out.

That it was very nearly successful can be seen from an entry in the Duck River minute book for February 1908 which reads: "The manager reported that the supply was decreasing at such a rate that it was absolutely necessary to curtail expenses as much as possible in every direction to compete and give as good a price as the opposition. He suggested that he would personally cart the cream, supply wood and do the clerical work, and any other work that was to be done, in order to reduce the expenses." At the next meeting the manager Lynch, who had replaced Webb the previous October, reported that the supply was still falling and he had accepted a position elsewhere but would work the factory at night while the supply warranted it.[37]



The first factory of the Duck River Co-operative Butter and Bacon Factory Co. Ltd, Smithton, in 1904. *(QVMAG)*

The cooperative struggled on, and the position started to improve. In 1909 the new manager Johnstone was welcoming good supplies of cream as a result of the slump in potato production, the effect of the Irish potato blight and soil impoverishment (see Chapter 1.5). From then on, the supplies continued to improve as more settlers moved into the prime dairying areas of Irish Town, Nabageena, Montagu and the like. In 1911, for example, the Mackay Brothers of Sunny Hills (Nabageena) were milking 30 cows and carting the cream the 12 miles [19k] to the Smithton factory, and another six in the area were reported as starting to milk cows. By 1911 the factory's position appears to have consolidated enough to give cause for optimism, and to induce the directors to try to find the money to buy outright the land on which their factory was sited.[38]

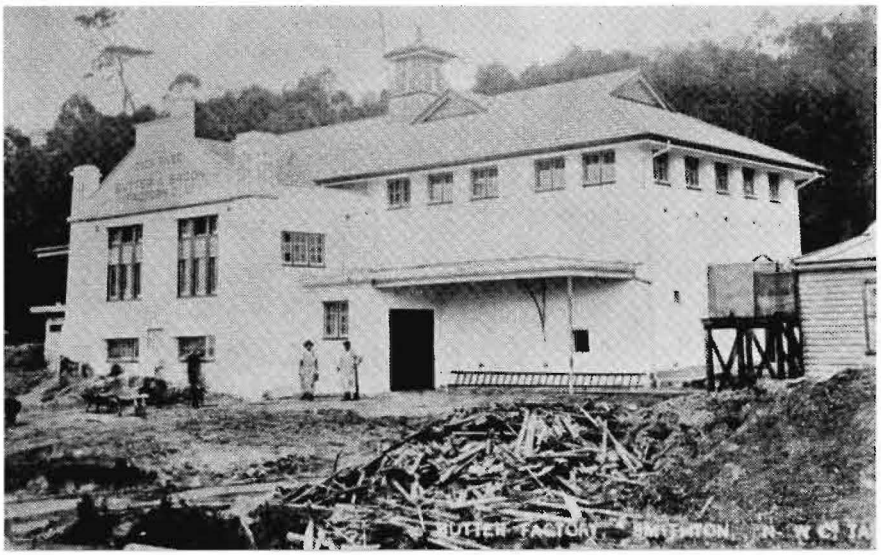
Site of the first factory and later the manager's residence, immediately to the south of the second factory building 1993.

In 1911, the boom production year for all factories (see Chapter 1.5), the factory produced 26 tons of butter, but still showed another loss as its plant was quite inadequate. The original wooden factory had been built for the minimal sum of 84 pounds. Calls were made for a new building to replace the old, but it took some years before the idea became reality. The factory was still facing strong competition, and in 1914 it advertised: "Dairymen! Support Co-operation and send your cream to the above factory. Highest possible price paid for cream." In 1915, with a production of 36 tons, the company found itself practically free of debt and could plan for a new building. There were discussions about going into cheese production, which at the time was very profitable because of the First World War (see Chapter 1.6), but wisely these were not followed up and by May 1917 work began on the "urgently required" new butter factory. Progress was slow, and it was still the old factory in which 89 tons of butter were produced in 1917-18, another boom year. The annual report for 1918 commented that, despite the record output, "the quality of the butter was not very good, principally due to the conditions under which the butter had to be manufactured in the old factory, which was totally unfit for the purpose". The pasteuriser could not be used properly because the refrigerator was too small, and the boiler was not powerful enough.[39]

The new factory of reinforced concrete, painted white, was built right next to the old, on the northern side, and was opened on 25 September 1918. It was expected to cost three thousand pounds, including plant and equipment, but in the event cost six and a half thousand. It appears that the directors were not going to make the mistake of building something which would only have to be replaced after some years. The "best designs of the mainland" had been copied, and the *Weekly Courier* was impressed. "The factory building is a palatial one... It may be said that a lot of unnecessary expense was incurred, but the fact that the old factory was a very dilapidated affair probably induced the directors to err on the side of liberality..." The building had cost the company dearly; the directors had even taken out personal loans to cover the expense. But it remained in use, with several additions, until the factory finally closed down in 1983.[40]

With a new building and a stable management (G.H. Carr was manager from 1913 to 1929), the Duck River company went ahead. In 1920 it was one of the first to buy a "large motor lorry" for the collection of cream, and the extension of the railway to Smithton in 1922 also helped supplies. During the 1920s the company held talks with other North-West Coast factories about amalgamations (see Chapter 1.6), but felt itself in a strong enough position not to join in. In 1937 it was able to buy

the Stanley factory and close it (see Chapter 2.1), which gave it a monopoly of butter-making in the state's best dairying area. Serious problems with quality control, which surfaced in the early 1930s and led in 1936 to the factory being constantly under the supervision of an officer of the Department of Agriculture, were gradually solved. The appointment of the highly-regarded Joe Wilson as manager in 1936 must have helped. From 1938 the factory regularly established new records for butter production, and in 1941-2 not only was the record amount of 700 tons of butter produced, but the factory was the lowest producer of inferior butter in the Commonwealth.[41]



The second Duck River factory. *(Weekly Courier, 10 October 1918, Launceston Reference Library)*

In 1939 a new wing was added to the factory, along with a store room for produce and a manager's residence on the site of the old factory. The company also established a modern piggery and bought the Tassie Cheese Company's factory at Broadmeadows. This was added to in 1948 with the purchase of the Montagu cheese factory. In 1958 the total cheese production from the two factories was 165 tons. By this time the last remaining factories at Marrawah were closed and the Duck River company had a monopoly of all butter and cheese production in its area.[42]

In 1946 Joe Wilson was replaced by his brother Arthur as manager, and it was Arthur who oversaw the expansion of the company after the war. The factory made the seemingly-miraculous amount of 1000 tons of butter in 1950-51, an event celebrated with a dinner hosted by Premier Robert (later Sir Robert) Cosgrove, who had pledged to do so in the late 1940s if the factory ever topped 1000 tons. At the dinner, he was said to have promised a repetition when the factory produced 2000 tons in a year, but when the factory achieved just that only six years later in 1957 there was no dinner. Nine years after that production reached 3000 tons and in 1971 the top production of 4106 tons was achieved. During these years the factory was the greatest single butter-producing unit in Tasmania. The original factory had to be extended several times, with a company garage added in 1944, a replacement for that in 1955, and further extensions to the factory and a new store and offices in 1958. (The offices are now the Circular Head Council Chambers). The butter room was greatly enlarged in 1960, a new boiler room added in 1962 and in 1965 a casein plant was installed. In 1969 the Edith Creek plant of Cadbury Schweppes Pty Ltd was bought for the production of skim milk. The bacon factory also expanded after the war, with a new factory built in 1951.[43]

The Duck River company took its cooperative role very seriously, providing a wide range of services to its suppliers. The store which opened in 1937 to sell mainly cream cans, pig food and dairy equipment, steadily grew until by 1958 it was providing veterinary supplies, cars, tractors, washing machines, and grocery and delicatessen items. The garage which the company built in 1944 to service its own fleet of vehicles was expanded in 1955 to repair and service the cars, tractors and trucks of its suppliers. Suppliers' milking machines were quickly mended so the supplier could continue to get cream to the factory. Schemes were introduced which allowed farmers to borrow money free of interest to pay for improvements on the farm in the winter, using the cream cheques in the spring to pay back the debt.[44]

In the late 1960s, the Duck River Cooperative Butter Factory Company Ltd began talks with the Table Cape Butter and Bacon Factory Co Ltd of Wynyard about a possible merger. It had been realised that

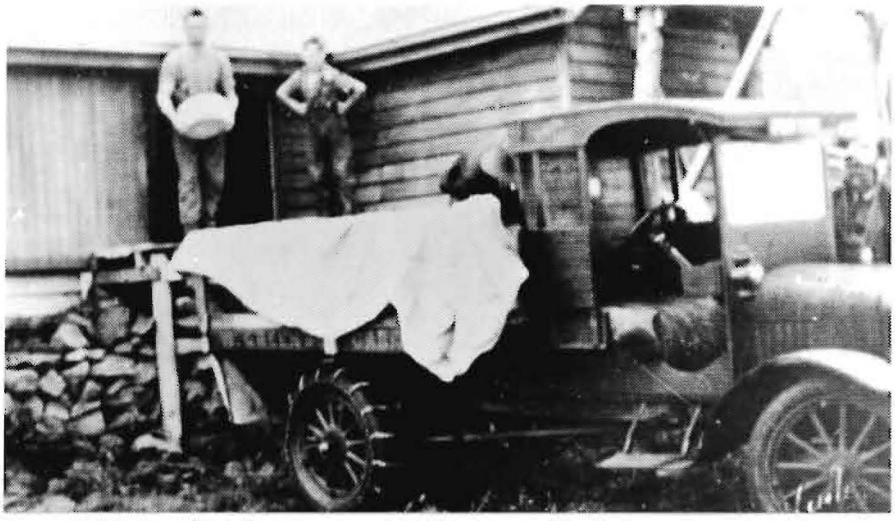
with the escalating costs of milk and cream collection, administration and marketing, rationalisation of resources should replace the intense competition between factories which was costly and not in the best interests of suppliers. The neighbouring North-Western Cooperative Dairy Co. Ltd, aware no doubt of the competition such a large company would provide, attempted to amalgamate with Table Cape itself, but its moves were rejected by shareholders and on 31 January 1973 the Duck River and Table Cape companies were replaced by a new company, United Milk Products Ltd (UMP). Butter manufacture was centralised at Smithton, and cream and milk collection routes were rationalised. The following year talks were begun with North-Western about amalgamation, but the talks broke down.[45]

With the demise of Table Cape's "Lighthouse" brand of butter, Duck River butter dominated the Tasmanian market in the 1970s, having 60 per cent of total sales. But this was to be its swan song. Rationalisation of the industry was so obviously in the best interests of everyone involved that talks on amalgamation with the other major companies, North-Western and North-Eastern, continued through the 1970s, and they finally joined to form the new company United Milk Tasmania Ltd (UMT) in 1981 (see Chapter 1.8). The new company was then faced with the decision on what to do with its factories. By this time the Smithton factory was getting old and in need of substantial upgrading, while both Devonport and Wynyard factories were much more modern. The decision was therefore made to close Smithton in early 1983 and transport the milk to the company's other factories. "Duck River" butter is now produced at Devonport.

The closure of Smithton meant that there were no butter or cheese factories in the area which produces over 50 per cent of the state's milk, although this situation has now changed with the opening of Milan Vyhnalek's new cheese factory at Lacrum. Both the 1918 Duck River building and the later additions, although not the manager's residence, are still standing and in good repair. They are currently in use as a sports centre.[46]

2.4 Robbins Island

Dairying began at Robbins Island in the very early days. In 1893 it was reported that Mr Reid was carrying on extensive dairying operations there and a man and his daughter from the island had visited the travelling dairy at Stanley. Dairying continued, with some butter being made and sent away on the boats. But the main era for dairying came in the early 1930s when the Holyman family took to dairying in a big way, utilising the beef cattle already on the island. 12 000 acres were eventually cleared and at one stage 400 cows were milked, initially by hand, in three big dairies. Holyman built a cheese factory not far from Holyman House on the eastern end of the island (approx. map reference 1:100 000 Circular Head 360911). As a means of keeping the cheese room cool, this scion of the shipping family employed the novel method of digging a 70 metre trench which terminated in the cheese room, lining the trench with twelve-inch [300mm] pipes which were then covered, and at the other end placing a ship's ventilator which could be turned to face the prevailing winds. Eventually a pipeline was also installed to take the whey from the cheese factory to the pig sties.

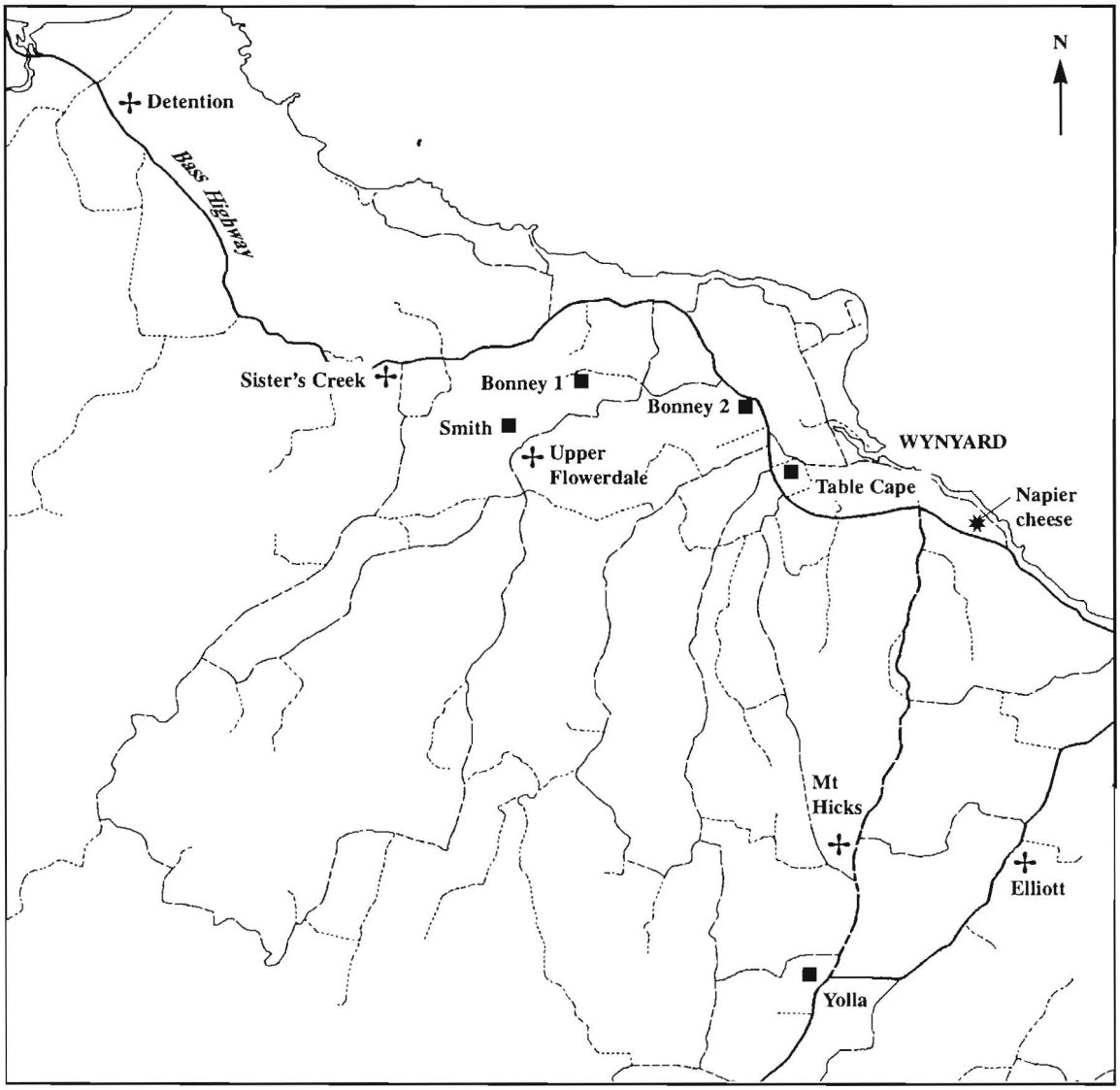


Horace and Peter Davern loading cheese from the factory c.1935. *(Hammond photo, QVMAG)*

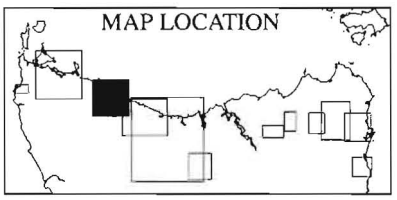
To make the cheese, Holyman employed Horace Davern from St Marys who had learnt his cheese-making in Pyengana. Davern arrived in 1931 and had to wait for the factory to be built before starting work. The cheese was shipped by the *Naracoopa* and consigned to the London merchants, Foley Brothers, who bought it for between four and a half and sixpence a pound.. Occasionally before his death in a plane crash, Vic Holyman took the cheese out by plane. In about 1940 Davern left for Flinders Island (see Chapter 6.2). The cheese factory worked again under Jack Mason from Mt Gambier for about two seasons from 1948, but when a major breakdown occurred, the Holymans decided against repairing and from then on cream was sent to Montagu to be picked up by the Buckbys and later Denny Ennis for cartage to the Duck River factory in Smithton. The remains of the Robbins Island factory were flattened by a storm in 1993 and the rubble was buried.[47]

Loading cheese onto the Holyman Foxmouth 1935. *(Hammond photo, QVMAG)*

Map 3.1 TABLE CAPE AREA



Scale: 1 km



KEY:

- ■ Factories
- ✢ Creameries
- ✸ Farm Cheese

CHAPTER THREE

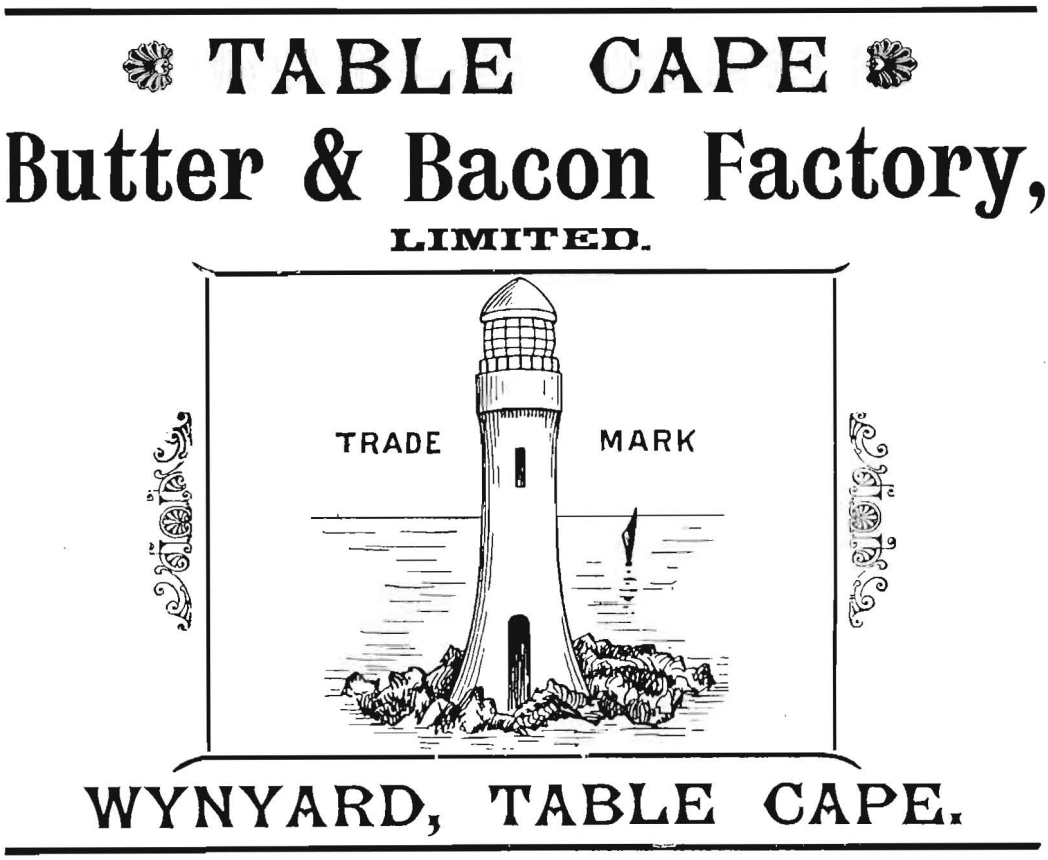
THE TABLE CAPE AREA

3.1 The Table Cape Butter Factory

The beginnings of the Table Cape Butter and Bacon Factory Co. Ltd, the first successful dairy company in the state, have already been described in Chapter 1.3. The first meeting of directors (Roberts, Fenton, Duniam, Mackenzie, Cole and Shekleton) was held in March 1892, with Fenton unanimously elected chairman. The managers of various Victorian factories were written to and asked to nominate suitable persons for the position of manager, and Frederick Archer Callaway from the Pioneer factory in Cobden was appointed. The appointment was of great importance. Callaway was manager for the first crucial ten years of the company's existence, during which time it never failed to pay a dividend of 10 per cent to its shareholders, as well as a bonus to its suppliers. The annual Directors' Reports consistently mention his value during this time, as in 1898 when Fenton reported: "The quality of Butter made still maintains its reputation, for which your Company is indebted to Mr. Callaway's able management; the Stored Butter especially reflecting great credit on his skill as a Butter-maker, as, after being kept for more than six months, it has turned out in splendid condition". When Callaway resigned in 1902 to go into flour-milling, he was made a director and was on the board for nineteen years, for eight of these as chairman. He resigned the directorship only to enable him to take up the position of secretary, which he held until his death in 1945, thus serving the company for fifty-three years. There is no doubt that he was of great importance to the Wynyard company, and indeed to other factories, for he was always willing to help when asked.[1]

Callaway supervised the erection of the wooden building on the eastern side of Big Creek (sometimes called Deep Creek) south of what is now Inglis Street (map reference Wynyard 913615). He also supervised the purchase of plant and equipment. There were three "De Laval" separators, capable of separating 400, 250 and 150 gallons per hour [1800l, 1100l and 700l respectively]. Two "Cherry" box churns could produce 200 pounds [90kg] and 500 pounds [220kg] of butter, and there was a circular revolving table-type butter worker. All machinery was operated by steam power, and water was pumped from the creek. The company decided to manufacture butter under the "Lighthouse" brand, in recognition of that symbol of Table Cape. The first milk was received on 21 September 1892, and the factory was immediately successful. As Fenton later reported, it had to sell butter initially at the market rate of fivepence to sevenpence a pound [450g], but within a few months Table Cape butter was in such demand that it could be sold at elevenpence or a shilling. By March 1893, buoyed by success, the company was already planning creameries at Mt Hicks Road (near Yolla) and Sisters Creek, and later in the year a large packing room and a cool butter store room were added to the factory.[2]

The Table Cape factory c.1892. *(QVMAG)*



Advertisement for the Table Cape factory 1898. *(Post Office Directory 1898)*

In 1893 the factory had produced 27 tons of butter, but as more farmers turned to dairying the following year output went up to 61 tons and the year after that it was 79 tons. The quality was also good. The Directors' Report for 1896 announced that the butter exported to London had received a "very satisfactory" price, "being as high as 111 [shillings] per cwt [50kg], nearly as high as the choicest Victorian Factories, and much above the average, while in the local or Tasmanian market the superiority of our butter is being recognised more and more, and our sales in this direction are correspondingly greater." This was part of the reason why the quantity exported that year (14 000 pounds [6300kg]) was less than the preceding year (72 800 pounds [32 000kg]). The factory also received the first of one of its many prizes in 1896. "We sent a small parcel of butter (3 cwt [150kg]) to Sydney to compete for a 50 pound prize offered by the N.S.W. Government, and although we did not secure the coveted prize, we were not disgraced as we got a small prize of two pounds two shillings, which, considering there were hundreds of factories competing is not so bad."[3]

In 1898 the company added a complete pasteurising plant to the factory and to the creameries, and in 1900 a "De La Vergue" refrigerating plant was added. The same year two new creameries were built at Upper Flowerdale and Rocky Cape. These examples of expansion contrast strongly with the difficulties being faced by the other butter factories at this time (see Chapter 1.4) and indicate the continued success of this pioneer among butter factories.[4]

The local farmers were delighted. In 1892 they had been on the verge of bankruptcy with very low prices for potatoes, and little chance of picking up work anywhere else. In previous years the building of the local breakwater and lighthouse had provided employment, but these projects had both finished and little else was in the offing. With the factory the returns for dairying were double what they had been previously, and it quickly became the principal industry of the area. Ten years after the factory began its secretary, C.J. Fenton, son of the founder C.B.M. Fenton, was reported as saying: "Every farmer who has engaged in dairying in the surrounding districts is in a better position than those who have not. Many of the producers were in almost an insolvent condition when the factory started, but now they are doing well. By getting their monthly cheque they are able to buy goods for cash, and can

make a pound [20 shillings] go as far as 25 shillings under the old system". And it was not just the farmers who benefited. In 1905 a hotelkeeper pointed out that business was first class in the Wynyard area, principally because the butter factory was distributing 1700 to 2000 pounds per month "in solid cash" among the farmers in the district. 1904-5 was a very good year for all factories (see Chapter 1.5), and the seven to eight tons being manufactured weekly by Table Cape at this time indicate that the monthly cheques would have been particularly healthy, yet it is obvious that the factory was in all years very beneficial to the neighbouring districts.[5]

The factory was able to draw on supplies from surrounding areas through the building of its four creameries. In 1893 the first two were built at Sisters Creek on the south-west corner of Myalla Road (formerly Creamery Road) and what is now the Bass Highway (map reference Mawbanna 798643); and on Camp Creek at Upper Mount Hicks on the western side of Mt Hicks Road just south of its junction with Nunn Road (map reference Calder 928503). The former area is now just a paddock, but some foundations of the Mt Hicks creamery are still visible. They were only small buildings, requiring room only for a boiler and a large separator, and each cost about 230 pounds to build and equip. They were expected to open in September 1893 in time for the ensuing season. The creamery at Sisters Creek was run by a Mr Tyrell for some years, and when he left in 1902, the then-chairman Duniam expressed regret, saying he had "carried out the duties of [the creamery] with satisfaction and efficiency". The other at Mt Hicks was built on the Heazlewood farm and was run by the farm's owner. It serviced the rapidly-expanding Camp Creek [Yolla] area, and in 1903, the year for which figures are available, had by far the biggest supply of milk of all the creameries. Whereas for the month of October the best of the other creameries at Sisters Creek had paid out 76 pounds and the factory had paid 286 pounds, Mt Hicks' suppliers were paid 370 pounds.[6]

Mt Hicks creamery foundations 1993.

In July 1900 the directors reported that: "After much consideration... [they had] decided to establish new Creameries at Upper Flowerdale [now called Moorleah] and Rocky Cape [Detention], and these will be in operation during the approaching season, when it is fully believed these new sources of supply will prove a profitable adjunct to the Company, in addition to vastly improving the prospects of residents in those districts." That at Upper Flowerdale is said to have been possibly built on the eastern side of the Preolenna Road, at the bottom of the hill just south of Magees Road (map reference Wynyard 832619). There is a house there now. However, as this same location has been given for Anderson's cheese factory (see Chapter 3.3) there is some confusion. The creamery was run by W. Powlett who was one of the largest landholders, and it is therefore likely that the creamery was on his farm. If so, the location is unknown. The Detention creamery was on the eastern side of the Bass Highway just south of its junction with Wilson's Creek (map reference Rocky Cape 712719). A shed occupies the exact spot and may have been built on the creamery's foundations.[7]

Unfortunately, the company had chosen a bad time to build creameries. Farm separators were coming into vogue (see Chapter 1.5) and it is doubtful if the new creameries were ever profitable. In his 1903 report, Chairman Duniam, announced that "the home separator is the new idea of many, and agents of same are actively canvassing the district and inducing many to purchase. Arrangements have been made for collecting the cream on behalf of [the] company". As a result, he had also to point out that

"any extension of creameries in the future will require very careful consideration judging from the poor support received from some already in existence." In October that year when Mt Hicks paid out the 370 pounds referred to above, Flowerdale paid out 27 pounds and Rocky Cape a miserly 21 pounds.[8]

Creamery at Upper Flowerdale.
(Weekly Courier, 30 May 1903, Launceston Reference Library)

Two years later in 1905 he reported: "The increase in supply of cream and corresponding decrease in milk has led to the closing of the Flowerdale Creamery, and the other creameries will be closed also if the supply of milk falls below a payable quantity. The plant and buildings will be disposed of..." Finally he announced the following year: "The Creameries at Sisters Creek and Detention were closed much earlier than usual, and the Home Separator having become general throughout the district will no longer be required, and have been dismantled. The Mt. Hicks and Flowerdale Creameries and Land have been sold..."[9]

After the turn of the century the Table Cape factory started to face more competition. In July 1903 the Director's Report mentioned that there had been a large decrease in the supply of milk, partly because some suppliers had left dairying for "the more profitable occupation of potato growing" and partly because of "competition by another local factory. Suppliers having now a choice between the two systems, Co-operative and Proprietary, can judge for themselves." This was probably the factory built by Arthur Bonney at Flowerdale (see Chapter 3.3).[10]

Also in December 1903 the *Weekly Courier* reported that a new creamery had been opened on the Calder Road and another would probably be erected on Henrietta Plains [south of Yolla] the following year. It is not known where the Calder Road creamery was, nor which factory was involved. It does not appear to have lasted, as there are no further references.[11]

But a far more serious threat was to come a few years later. By 1906 the Table Cape company had closed its creamery in Mt Hicks which had serviced the rich dairying area of Camp Creek [Yolla] (see above). Moreover, from 1903 onwards it had begun not to pay a bonus at the end of the year. This was explained by Duniam at the time: "In connection with the price paid for milk your Directors would like to mention that they prefer paying the highest possible price each month rather than keeping the price low to enable them to distribute a bonus at the end of the year." It is probable that this new method of payment was brought in to counter the attractions of the new proprietary company referred to above. Proprietary factories were always able to quote a higher price for butterfat as they did not have to worry about paying a bonus at the end of the year. But obviously suppliers were not happy with this new state of affairs, and when those at Yolla found their local creamery closed they began to object.[12]

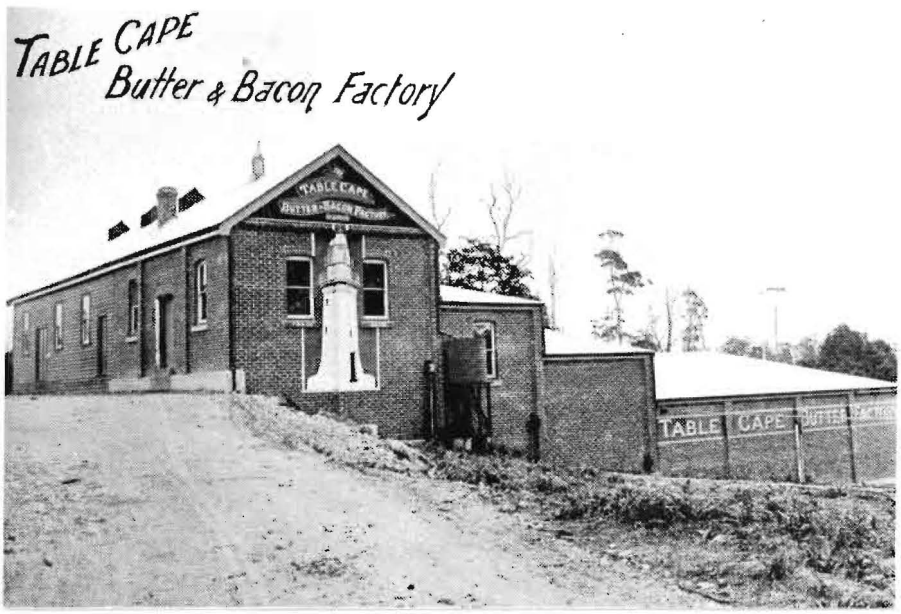
In June 1906 the *Weekly Courier* reported that "an effort is to be made to make the Table Cape butter factory entirely cooperative". The alternative, supported by a section of suppliers, was to erect a new and "absolutely cooperative" factory at Camp Creek [Yolla]. The directors of Table Cape were obviously not happy at the thought of some of their best suppliers leaving and tried to accommodate

the discontented as much as possible, suggesting reducing the maximum dividend payable to shareholders from ten to five per cent. Before an Extraordinary Meeting of shareholders was held to consider changes, the directors pleaded for unity, trusting that "Suppliers will not only continue their Support, but endeavour to increase it, and thereby improve their profits by proportionately reducing the manufacturing expenses by centralising the whole of their product." But to no avail. The meeting did not satisfy the dissidents, and in July they decided to erect a new factory. The Yolla factory opened for business in November 1906 (see Chapter 3.2).[13]

The loss of such a large part of its supply had important ramifications for Table Cape. It had for a year or two been talking of the possibility of erecting an "up-to-date factory ... to put us on an even footing with other leading factories we have to compete with". (The competing factories would have been the two at Burnie. The Emu Bay Co. had upgraded its factory in 1905 and the new Tasmanian Produce and Cool Stores factory had opened in 1904 - see Chapter 4.1.1. & 4.1.2.) Tenders had already been called for a new brick building for Table Cape by the time of the Annual Meeting in July 1906, but the loss of supply from the Yolla area severely reduced the company's ability to pay for it. At the extraordinary meeting it had offered shares to the smaller suppliers "to turn it into a partly cooperative concern", but the new share issue proved unsuccessful. Finally the company decided to repair the old factory and establish a fund for the new building.[14]

The Table Cape company was probably lucky in one respect. The increasingly flourishing state of the dairy industry at this time (see Chapter 1.5) meant that the factory was able to continue, and without too much distress. The directors were able to report in 1907: "It is satisfactory to note that the business done during the past year compares favourably with other years, although another factory has been established in the district. We feel, therefore, that our mode of conducting business is still approved, not only by shareholders but by the general public". In fact there had been a decrease of only 13 tons of butter made in the year, from 150 the year before, so the directors had cause to be satisfied. In 1908 the *Weekly Courier* reported that "the two factories at Table Cape are flourishing", and by 1910 the Wynyard company was finally able to go ahead with its new building.[15]

As preparation the company sent its most experienced director, Callaway, to Victoria to study the most modern factories and interview leading officers of the Victorian Dairy Department. It was decided to build the new factory about 100m up the hill from the original one to take advantage of the slope, thus allowing the process of making butter to be carried out without having to resort to pumping (see Chapter 1.5). The factory was built by Jones and Burley for a contract price of 598 pounds, and with the addition of a new boiler house and a room for the storage of empty cans plus some new plant, the final cost was 1381 pounds. Chairman Callaway reported: "Considering its permanent nature and spaciousness, this may be considered reasonable". In later times the old wooden factory was repositioned behind the new brick factory and used for can storage, and it is possible that the move was made at this time. The new building was in use towards the end of 1910.[16]



The second Table Cape butter factory building, photographed in 1919. *(Weekly Courier, 7 August 1919, Launceston Reference Library)*

Also about this time a committee of suppliers was able to purchase a parcel of 1000 shares held "by a firm in a distant part of the state" and distribute it among the suppliers, so that the company approached more closely the ideal of the cooperative. This was also another boom year for factories, and Table Cape achieved record production two years in a row. The previous highest output had been in 1905 when the factory produced 160 tons of butter. In 1911 this was bettered by a 170-ton output, and the following year a new record of 183 tons was set, with 60 tons being sold for a very good price in London. The quality of the butter was excellent, and around this time "Lighthouse" butter brought the top price of 130 shillings per hundredweight [50kg] in London, or two shillings more than any other Australian butter.[17]

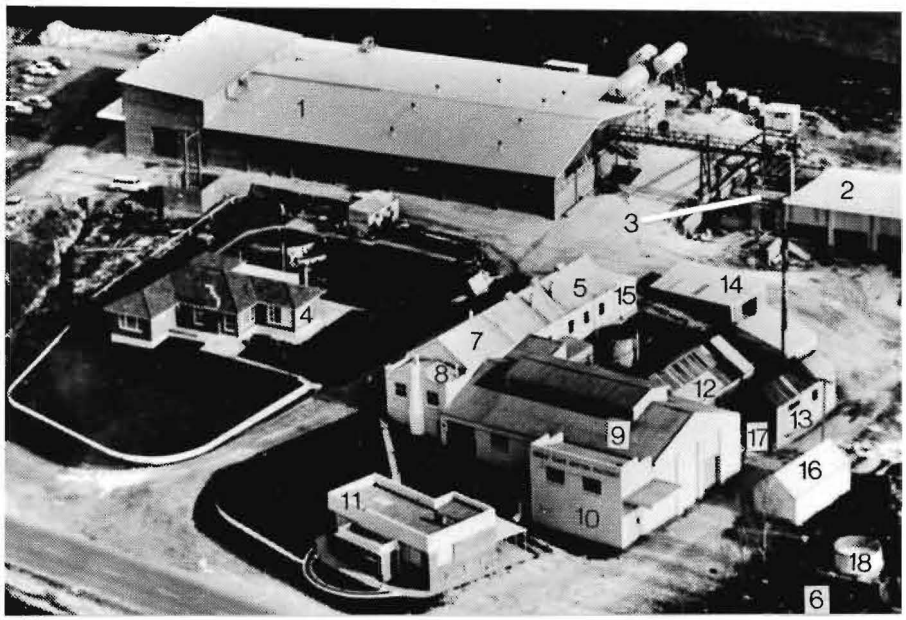
However, in the years 1912-14 the factory faced a severe problem with the quality of the cream coming to the factory, and this led to a considerable loss. It took some time for the problem to be traced to a fungus which affected most cream, and for the solution, pasteurisation, to be implemented. New Zealand factories had been pasteurising separator cream for some time, and the Table Cape company found that on installing a pasteurising plant and employing a New Zealand expert for a year, "the good name associated with the "Lighthouse" brand for so many years [was] restored". Other factories were quick to follow Table Cape's lead (see Chapter 1.6).[18]

From then on the development of the factory was fairly straightforward. The amount of butter produced annually from 1905 to the mid 1930s averaged around 130 tons, although there were wide fluctuations around this figure, from the 180 tons in 1912 mentioned above and 178 tons in 1932, to 94 tons in 1928 and the very low 72 tons produced in 1915, the result of a very dry season and devastating bushfires; this figure is reminiscent of the very early days of the factory. A proposal to amalgamate with the North-Western and Emu Bay companies of Burnie in 1926 came to nothing, and although a meeting was held in 1928 to discuss selling the business to North-Western, which was in the process of taking over Emu Bay and Ulverstone at the time, that too was rejected.[19]

Table Cape continued on alone, celebrating in 1935 when it won the Australian championship for butter. It was around this time too that production began gradually to increase. By 1939 production was up to 320 tons, which necessitated extensions to the factory. A test room and office was added to the front, and a three-dimensional representation of a lighthouse replaced the original drawing on the front wall. A marked decline in output towards the end of the war was halted as soon as the war ended, and production rose quickly from 288 tons in 1947 to 607 tons in 1955. Again alterations to the factory were needed, and in 1956-8 the cream processing, storage and manufacturing sections were enlarged and modernised, and a new cool room and room for carton storage added. In 1960 the company bought the Wynyard Freezers at East Wynyard for use as a cool store. In 1963 the best ever production of 1298 tons was reached. This expansion was occurring under the managership of Eric Neilson, who had been appointed in 1932 and continued with the factory until 1971. He was particularly pleased to repeat his feat of 1935 by winning the Australian Championship trophy again in 1966, Table Cape being the only Tasmanian factory at that stage to have won the award twice.[20]

Pouring cream into vats at the Table Cape factory 1950s. *QVMAG)*

But major changes for Table Cape began in the 1960s. In 1963 the company bought its old rival, the Yolla butter factory, and converted it for making rindless cheddar cheese. The move was so successful that the Yolla building quickly proved totally inadequate, and by August 1965 a new, large cheese factory had been built next to the butter factory at Wynyard. In the year that followed the company made 1340 tons of cheese and sent it to Japan, the United States, Singapore, Malaya, Ghana and Venezuela. Three years later the annual output was up to 2815 tons of cheese, while 1257 tons of butter were made. In 1970-71 a major extension was made to the cheese factory and production became almost completely mechanised. A "Cheddarmaster" system from New Zealand and a continuous cheddaring tower were able to make cheese with very little human intervention. Twelve bulk presses, each capable of holding one ton of cheese, replaced 750 cheese hoops. The heavy manual labour of the cheese factory had gone for good, at least for "Table Cape" cheese at Wynyard.[21]



An aerial view of the Table Cape factory complex 1965. *(QVMAG, courtesy Ron Neilson)*

1. New cheese factory under construction.
2. Unfinished amenities block.
3. Boiler house.
4. House built in 1957 for Ron Neilson, production manager. Used for offices 1994.
5. Wooden 1892 factory, repositioned. Used in 1965 for can storage. Now demolished.
6. Foundations of first butter factory, now under cement.
7. Cream receival room. Part of original 1910 factory.
8. Test room and office added 1939.
9. The 1910 butter factory, upgraded and rebuilt 1957. The (unseen) side wall and back wall are still the original walls.
10. Below: cool room. Above: carton making and carton storage.
11. Table Cape office built c.1954.
12. Engine and boiler room.
13. Wood waste-fired boiler added c.1951.
14. Shed for storing sawdust.
15. Skillion and unloading canopy.
16. Shed for storage of wooden shooks for butter boxes (repositioned).
17. Original position of 16.
18. Tank for buttermilk, which was sold for pigfood.

But another even more significant change was on the way. In January 1973 Table Cape amalgamated with Duck River to form United Milk Products Ltd, and in order to rationalise production, the decision was taken to stop the manufacture of butter at Wynyard (see Chapter 2.3). The state's first successful butter factory was going out of the business of making butter. The feelings that this aroused can be gauged by the following editorial from the *Advocate* of 9 February 1973.

> There will be general regret at Wynyard, particularly among those of older generations, that after some 80 years "Lighthouse" butter is to be discontinued. Perhaps it was one of the inevitabilities of the merger of the Duck River and Table Cape dairy co-operatives into the single firm of United Milk Products Ltd. The merger sought, as all mergers do, to rationalise the effort

of two factories and make them more economical in production. That it may do but it is sad that the same sort of desire for progress which saw the butter-makers starting work in the 1890s should now be responsible for putting an end to their activities. "Lighthouse" butter has had a long, proud innings; it is a first-class product which has won its share of awards in the national dairy field. Other local butters there will be, but for a long time some shoppers are going to feel a little sad when the shelves yield no "Lighthouse."

The Wynyard factory continued to make "Table Cape" cheese for both local and overseas sales, while at the same time the plant from the old Broadmeadows factory which had just been closed (see Chapter 2.2) was transferred to the Wynyard butter factory building and the traditional Duck River rinded cheddar was made there for a few seasons. Cheese production at Wynyard reached 8458 tons in 1979, and it is not surprising that the company was endeavouring to think of a way of utilising the whey which was the by-product of cheese production. In 1980 the company decided to utilise the old butter factory, extensively modernised, to process whey, with the final drying and packaging to be undertaken at the Edith Creek factory. After the formation of UMT in 1981 (see Chapter 1.8) and despite considerable early difficulties, whey processing continued and now all whey processing is centred at Wynyard. The factory has now become a totally computerised 14 000 tonne integrated cheese and whey protein complex, the only one of its kind in Australia, with its cheese consistently winning awards as the best in Australia.[22]

Despite these major changes the 1910 butter factory building is still in use, although much altered, but the original 1892 wooden building, part of which was used for storage until quite recently, was demolished by UMT about 1991.[23]

3.2 Yolla

The origins of the Yolla butter factory have been detailed in the preceding section, with dissatisfied suppliers of the Table Cape company wanting to erect an "absolutely cooperative" factory at Camp Creek [from 1906 known as Yolla] after the closure of the Mt Hicks creamery. It is quite possible that, knowing that Table Cape was planning a new building, they originally wanted that building to be erected at Yolla instead of Wynyard. This would have been a reasonable request, considering that in October 1903 the Mt Hicks creamery supplied almost half the cream received at the Table Cape factory. But Table Cape's manager, Rose, opposed the idea and in July 1906 the suppliers from Yolla formed the Yolla Dairy Company to build their own factory. Provisional directors were Wills, Heazlewood, Neale, Smith and Hyland. William Heazlewood had been the manager of the Mt Hicks creamery, while John Hyland became the secretary of the new company.[24]

However, setting up an "absolutely cooperative" factory required a considerable amount of money, and when the Hobart firm of Dehle [pronounced "Daly"], Bennison and Co offered to finance the factory their offer was quickly accepted. With some justification the local correspondent of the *Weekly Courier* wondered why therefore the farmers had broken away from Wynyard, "from which good dividends have been obtained". Gustave Dehle was to be chairman of directors until the liability was paid off in 10 years, and all produce of the factory was to go to Dehle, Bennison and Co.[25]

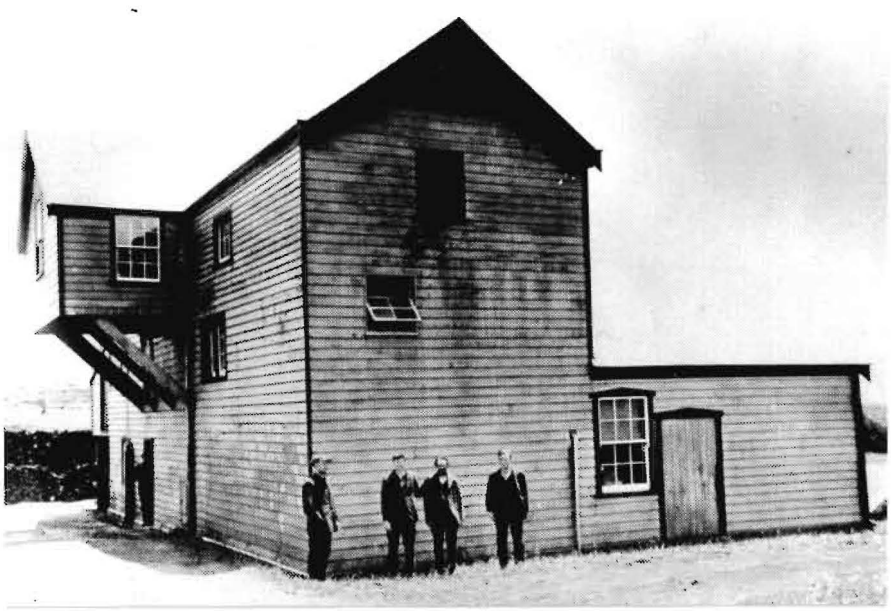
The three-storey wooden building was built on the western side of the road just south of the junction of the Mount Hicks Road and what is now the Murchison Highway (map reference Yolla 920462). The builder was W. Newport and the foreman was Walter Wright, who was assisted by Bert Pullen, Bert Neale, Syd Diprose and H. Walters. Wright later described the process of getting a water supply. "I put Walters, who was not a carpenter, to sink a well 12 feet across to supply water. You could nearly always get water at 20 to 30 feet. When the well was too deep for Walters to throw up the clay, I put on a man to pull it up with a number of tins on a rope. Bert Pullen built a brick ring round the top of the well and the ring was then undermined and let down to about eight feet. A spring of water broke through the bottom." Quite why a well was needed when Big Creek flows nearby was not made clear.[26]

The factory cost 2200 pounds to build and was officially opened on 8 November 1906. The crowd of 200 included the correspondent of the *Weekly Courier.* "The chairman of directors, Mr. Gustave

Dehle, pointed out that the people in the district now had almost every essential to make dairying a success. They possessed suitable country, and a vast extent of it, consisting of easily cleared "myrtle" land, extending back 30 miles to Mount Bischoff. They also had a modern factory, second to none in Australia, so that it rested with the suppliers to make the best of the their exceptional opportunities."

The correspondent described the plant:

> The factory of three floors is installed with two Cherry concussion churns, each of a capacity of 400lb [180kg]; Cherry butter worker, of 2cwt [100kg] capacity; Douglas Ideal rotary buttermilk pump; refrigerating and cool rooms; 10h.p. horizontal engine, made by Coulsell Bros. of Melbourne; Moore steam pump of 1000 gallons [4500l] per hour capacity; large surface duplex condenser; 12 h.p. horizontal multitubular under-fired Coulsell boiler; four tinned steel cream vats, each of 200 gallons [900l] capacity; large surface cream cooler of latest cone type, with a cooling capacity of 400 gallons [1800l] per hour; two steam vats fitted with steam pipes for cleansing the cans; Dobson patent steam hoist, and Wizard 24-bottle turbine Babcock tester; besides cream balance, flask, etc.[27]



The first Yolla butter factory 1906. *(QVMAG)*

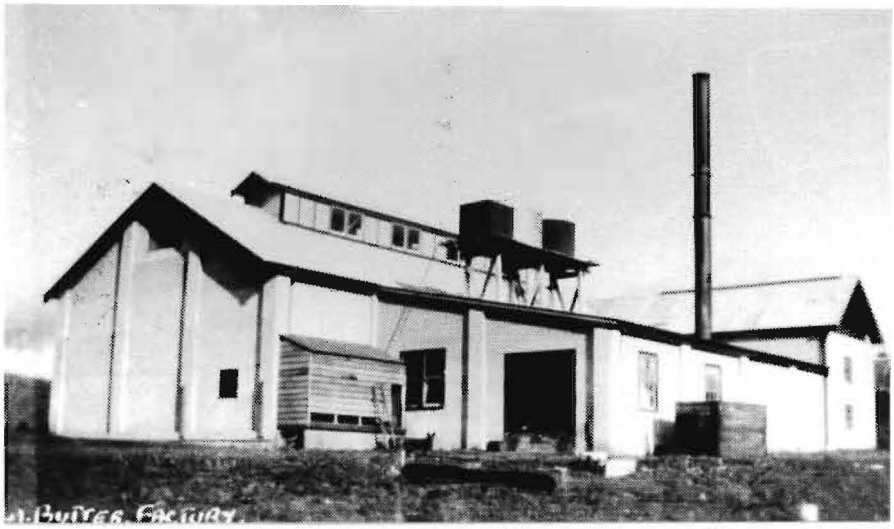
The factory was successful despite being in direct competition with Table Cape, although in the early years the amount of butter produced was not up to the quantity of its Wynyard competitor. In 1909 its output was 55 tons, a record for Yolla but fairly low compared with Table Cape's output of 137 tons in 1907, the year Yolla had started (see Chapter 3.1). Yolla sent about one-fifth to England, another fifth to Melbourne, and the remainder was sold locally. In the boom year of 1911 it produced 89 tons while Table Cape's output was almost double that (see Chapter 3.1). But the quality was always good. On opening day the *Weekly Courier* correspondent had reported that "the quality of the butter is all that could be desired". In 1911 all of Yolla's butter was graded first class, a most impressive feat. In 1920, when all factories were endeavouring to improve quality (see Chapter 1.6), Yolla was reported as having never made a box of second grade butter. The following year only half of one per cent of their output was not graded "Choice".[28]

Part of the reason for this was that since 1908 Yolla had always paid by results, as recommended by Conlon at the opening of the factory. It also collected cream three times a week, rather than the usual twice, thus ensuring the high quality of the cream. Yolla also seems to have been well served by its managers. The first manager, Wilson, had worked in Victoria and New South Wales, but he was soon replaced by A.V. Gooch who, when he left to manage North-Western's Burnie factory in 1911, took "a first-class reputation with him from Yolla". Gooch was replaced as manager by Frank Brown, who had worked at North-Western's butter factory. He was to stay until 1920 when he again followed Gooch, replacing him as manager at Burnie (see Chapter 4.1.2).[29]

The factory gradually improved its output. In 1914 it was reported to be the only north-western factory to have increased its production in a poor year, and in 1928 it produced 115 tons, compared

with Table Cape's 94 tons (see Chapter 3.1). The reasons for its success seem to be a combination of a well-run company and progressive suppliers. Yolla was the first area of the state to form a herd-testing association, in 1912-13, which may have been run by the factory, and it was also an area where farmers were quick to install milking machines on quite a widespread scale (see Chapter 1.6). The first to be installed in the area was at Seaview in 1914. The company was also very supportive of its suppliers, being possibly the first to set up a general store which was still in operation long after the factory itself had closed down. It also looked at the possibility of making casein as early as 1917 (see Chapter 1.8).[30]

In 1931 the Department of Agriculture, as part of its campaign to improve butter quality generally and ensure the highest possible standards in its butter factories (see Chapter 1.6), informed the Yolla Dairy company that unless it rebuilt its factory the following year, its premises would not be registered. As a result the old factory was pulled down in the winter of 1932 and replaced with a modern brick building no longer on the gravity design. The builders were Carter and Pearce of Burnie.[31]



The second Yolla butter factory 1930s. *(Smith photo, QVMAG)*

The factory continued to do well. In 1943 it produced 146 tons to Table Cape's 64 tons. But after the war the picture changed. Its output continued to increase, but not at the same rate as its competitors. In 1957 it made 322 tons, when Table Cape had reached the figure of 607 tons two years before. Its record production of 354 tons was reached in 1962, its last full year of operation as a butter factory, when the following year Table Cape produced 1261 tons. There are several reasons for its relative stagnation. In 1947 Cadbury's began collecting milk, and it chose to collect along sealed roads. Thus it picked Riana, Flowerdale and Yolla, enticing suppliers by paying four and a half pence more for butterfat. The Yolla butter factory's production went down to 127 tons. At the same time dairying was going ahead right along the coast, and factories on the main road and railway routes were better placed to take advantage of this expansion. It has also been suggested that the company, with farmers on the board, expected to be able to employ good managers without paying them enough. This was often the problem with the smaller factories. In one glaring instance the manager Alan O'Borne, who had served the company as manager since 1937 and was an excellent butter-maker, was dismissed because the shop did not make enough money. He was immediately employed by Arthur Wilson at Duck River.[32]

Thus by 1962 Yolla was only a small factory which had been losing money for several years and was ripe for takeover by another factory seeking to expand. Arthur Wilson, manager of Duck River, had suggested to his board that they buy the factory but he was turned down. Instead it was bought by Table Cape on 1 January 1963 and, in what might have been seen as something of a gamble, it was immediately stripped of its butter plant, and cheese equipment was brought in instead. Suppliers were encouraged to provide whole milk to the first tankers. But the gamble paid off. The chairman Jack Game wrote in 1964: "Our cheesemaking venture at Yolla has been an unqualified success. Total cheese manufactured during the year was 305 tons. The quality of cheese made has been excellent and is reflected in the fact that the Australian Dairy Produce Board has contracted with your company for the supply of 560 tons of rindless cheddar cheese for the Japanese market in the coming season."

The following year 913 tons were produced at Yolla, but the venture had been too successful for the continued viability of the factory. To cope with the demand the factory had to work continuously with three shifts a day, and the amount of effluent pouring into the creek caused it to become fly-blown. By August 1965 a new large cheese factory had been built at Wynyard (see Chapter 3.1) and Yolla as a dairy factory closed for good. The factory and manager's residence was sold for $6000 in 1973 after the formation of United Milk Products Ltd. In 1985 it was restored and turned into a restaurant and craft gallery. In the late 1960s the Yolla Dairy Company sold its general store on the corner of Mt Hicks Road and the Murchison Highway, and finally the company was wound up in 1977.[33]

The general store, once owned by the Yolla Dairy Co. Ltd, in 1993.

3.3 Flowerdale

The district of Flowerdale began to be settled around 1880 and, as usual in a densely forested area, dairying soon became the principal industry. The first butter factory was set up by two young English brothers, James and Vernon Smith, who had arrived in Flowerdale around 1890. They felt they were too far away from the Table Cape factory to send their milk there, and by January 1894 they had cleared enough of their land to build a small factory four chains from a creek on their farm. Their plant consisted of a Laval Windsor hand power separator with couplings for driving by power, a Bradford's patent Chariemont diaphragm churn, and a Normanby Delaiteuse centrifugal butter.

The exact location of the factory is unknown. The Smiths lived at the end of Magees Road at Moorleah (map reference Wynyard 829625) with their property extending down to the Flowerdale River to the north. They probably used the creek to the north of the homestead. The factory was listed in the *Post Office Directory* as belonging to V. Smith and Sons, although when it was first built it was described as established "by the enterprise of James Smith". Vernon Smith was the buttermaker. In January 1894 the factory was being supplied with 90 gallons [409l] of milk a day and it had sent 14 hundredweight [711kg] of butter to England (along with that of Table Cape). The factory appears to have gone out of business towards the end of the decade, and as the Smith homestead was destroyed by a bushfire in February 1898, it is more than likely that the factory was burnt then too.

The Smiths continued with dairying and in 1903 when "Risdon" from the *Weekly Courier* visited Flowerdale, they were milking about 30 cows. Believing that Flowerdale was too cold for Jerseys or Alderneys, they kept pure Durhams, including a pure Durham bull. They supplied the Flowerdale creamery, although the following year they were planning to make cheese.

By this time Flowerdale was going ahead. "Risdon" reported that a big advance had been made about ten years previously (i.e. since about 1893), and the last four years particularly had seen growth. "The choice potato land particularly has risen greatly in price, also the dairying properties, for to speak of the one industry the other must be mentioned, the same soil being adapted to the two." It is not surprising therefore that the Table Cape company had set up a creamery in Upper Flowerdale in 1900 (see Chapter 3.1) to take advantage of the increase in dairying. A.P. Anderson also made cheese on

his farm on the eastern side of the Preolenna Road, at the bottom of the hill just south of Magees Road (map reference Wynyard 832619). There is a house there now. "Risdon" said of him: "Perhaps the chief dairyman in the district is Mr. A.P. Anderson, of Upper Flowerdale [Moorleah].... At present Mr Anderson milks about 38 cows, mostly Devons or Durhams, and he uses their produce for cheese-making. He is the chief cheese-maker in the district, and finds a ready market for his goods on the West Coast."

"Risdon" also noted that: "Mr J.T. Bonney conducts a private butter factory, having a very complete Sharples plant. Among his herd are some very fine Ayreshires." This was actually Arthur T. Bonney. His butter factory is called a creamery in Roberts' book on Flowerdale, but the two names were often used interchangeably. It was where a creek crosses the road about half a kilometre east of Robin Hill on the unnamed road which goes west from near where Gates Road joins Preolenna Road (map reference Wynyard 848640). A bridge was built over the Flowerdale River due north of the factory so that milk could be collected from Boat Harbour. It is not known exactly when the factory was built, although if this was the proprietary factory referred to as competition for Table Cape in their 1903 Report (see Chapter 3.1), it would have been built in the preceding twelve months. But in June 1904 it was destroyed by fire after Bonney and his staff had left one evening. The *Weekly Courier* said that "he had worked up a good connection."

Bonney must have had confidence in the dairy industry, because in October 1903 (i.e. while the Flowerdale factory was still operating) the *Weekly Courier* reported that the new butter factory erected by Mr Bonney at Wynyard had been completed and operations would begin shortly. This would be the factory that according to Roberts was built by "Bonney and Newport" on Daisy Banks near where the main highway crosses the Inglis River (approx. map reference Wynyard 901631). Newport was to be the builder of the Yolla factory too (see Chapter 3.2). It appears that this factory was not very successful and by 1908 Bonney had left Flowerdale and moved to Gunns Plains (see Chapter 4.2). There are no remains of any of Flowerdale's dairy buildings.[34]

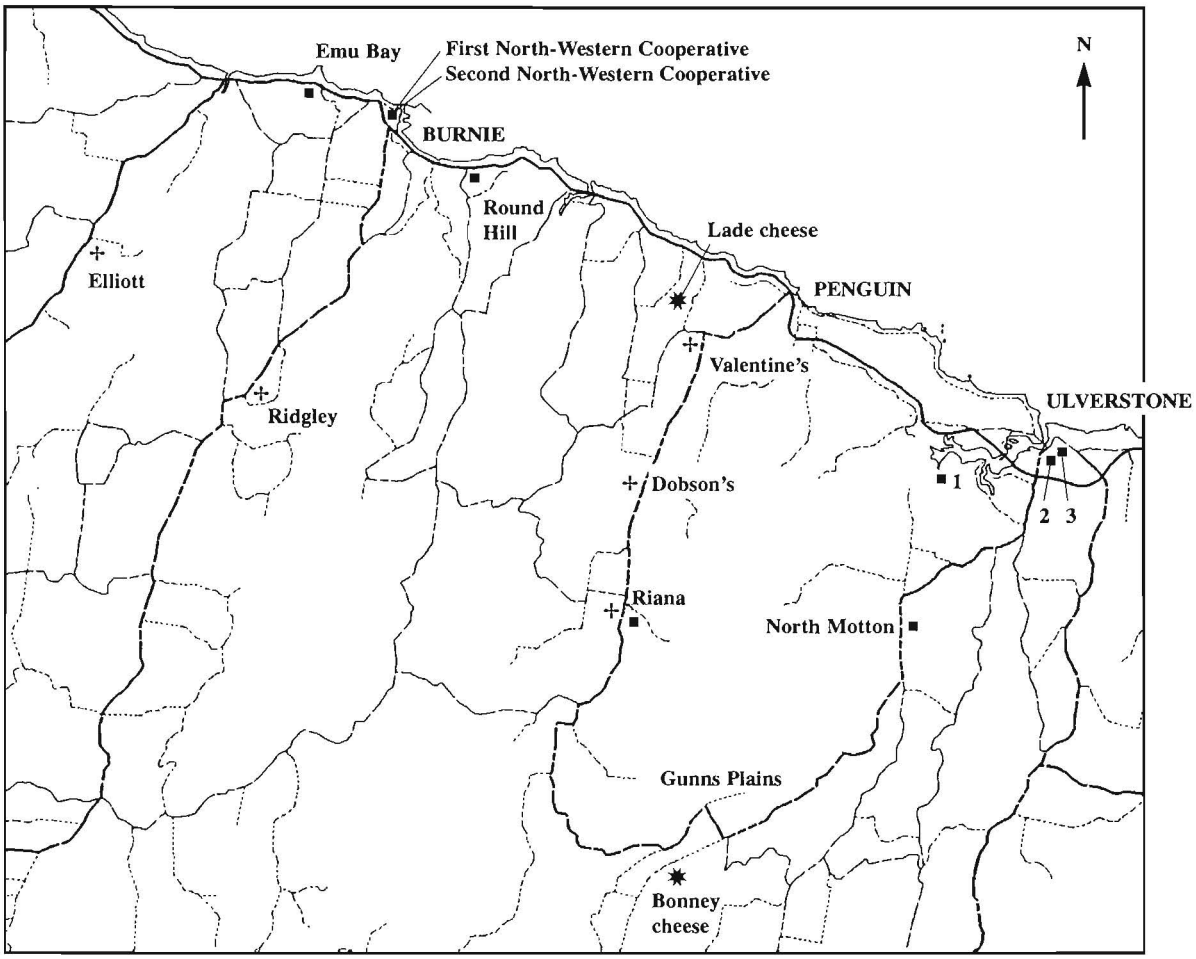
3.4 Wynyard farm cheese

There was one other cheese-making venture in the Table Cape area, although probably because of the proximity of the butter factory there was much less cheese made here than in Circular Head. E.E. Napier came in 1931 from St Marys where Napiers had been making cheese at Sunny Banks for some years (see Chapter 5.5). Napier brought the plant from Sunny Banks and had two carpenters build his wooden factory and cowshed on his farm just to the east of what is now the Seabrook Golf Course (map reference Calder 968596). The factory was designed in the same way as that at Sunny Banks.

Napier milked 60 cows and from their milk made 200 to 240 pounds of cheese daily. His brand was a capital "N" with a half circle to the left, but much of his cheese was marketed without a brand. A considerable quantity of his output was sold through Burgess Brothers in Hobart, and some went to Furmages at Deloraine.

After less than ten years Napier was forced to give up dairying when the prevalence of contagious abortion in his herd meant he had to get rid of his cows for twelve months. It was the beginning of the war and he went into cropping and never went back to dairying. The cheese factory is now used as a storage shed.[35]

Map 4.1 BURNIE TO ULVERSTONE



KEY:

Sites not labelled on the map:

■ Factories

1. First Ulverstone factory (possible location)
2. Ulverstone Cooperative
3. Coastal Dairy Co.

✢ Creameries

✸ Farm Cheese

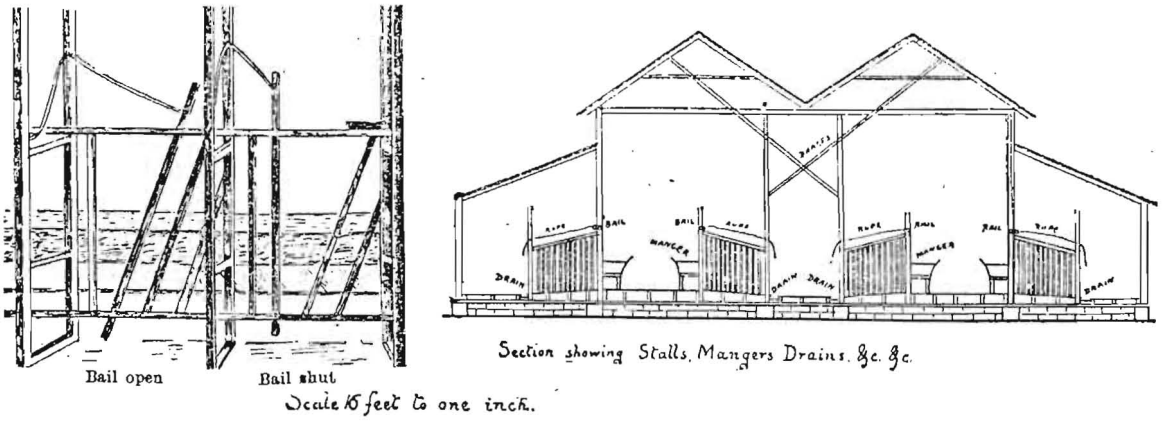
CHAPTER FOUR

THE NORTH-WESTERN DISTRICT

4.1 Burnie

4.1.1 Emu Bay Company and creameries

The Burnie area was quick to become involved in the movement to establish butter factories, the Emu Bay Butter Factory Company being the fourth after Wynyard, Launceston and Ringarooma to begin receiving milk. The company was the brainchild particularly of Captain William Jones who had played a key role in the development of Burnie. At his property "Uplands" on both sides of Cooee Creek he developed, among other things, a sawmill and a brickworks.



Sketches of Captain William Jones' cow-barn, Uplands. The description reads in part: "But his last move is one of his best. It has taken the form of a cow-barn, and that cow-barn is perhaps the best in the country. It is 82ft long by 57ft broad, and contains 52 roomy stalls. These stalls are arranged in four rows, so that 26 cows stand head to head facing along each of the two feeding passages, which are 4ft wide and made to accommodate a tramway so that the food can be run straight from the steaming vats in the store-room and transferred from the trucks into the mangers..."
(Journal of the Council of Agriculture, Sept-Oct 1894, No. 9, p.141)

When he heard of the new developments in dairying elsewhere he responded enthusiastically, helping

to form the company of which he became chairman of directors and providing land for the butter and cheese factory. He also became a keen dairyman. In 1894 he was described by "Eucalypt" in the *Journal of the Council of Agriculture* as an "enterprising individual [who] has been the mainstay of the local butter factory, for with that as with everything else he touches he has not done anything by halves. Soon after the butter factory was erected on Coo-ee Creek he took over the buttermilk and fed it to pigs, the quantity enabling him to keep a large herd." Jones also imported a Tamworth boar to improve the herd's breeding. He slaughtered the pigs at his own abattoir and then processed them at his Brookside Bacon Factory, just downstream from the butter factory.

But Jones went just a little too far with his enthusiasm, judging by the description of his cow-barn (see previous page). He had yet to learn that cows in Australia did not require the elaborate stabling necessary in the harsher climate of Europe. Others were later to make the same mistake (see for example Miller, Chapter 5.2).[1]

Moves to set up the factory were made at least by October 1892 and, perhaps influenced by the Table Cape example, directors went to Victoria to study the industry there. There was obviously considerable opposition, ridiculed by the *Wellington Times* when describing the opening:

> Despite a good deal of opposition, some of which apparently proceeded from jealousy, some from the proverbial conservativeness of farmers, and some from pure "cussedness", those who saw so plainly the immense benefits to be derived from it - for the farmers in particular and the district in general - have succeeded in attaining their object. There are in every community certain obstinate individuals who delight in opposition merely for opposition's sake... With such persons it is as hopeless to argue as to endeavour to teach a cow to dance a jig.

The butter and cheese factory was built at "Uplands", immediately on the western side of Cooee Creek just south of a small bridge which comes off Brickport road (map reference Burnie 055556). Built by T. Kenner, the factory was almost certainly wooden, with concrete floors throughout. It contained six rooms in the butter factory: receiving room, separating room, butter making room (the largest, at 16 feet by 24 feet [5m by 7m]), cool chamber with double walls filled in with sawdust as insulation, office, and engine room. There were two rooms in the cheese factory: the cheese-making room (43 feet by 15 feet [13m by 4.5m] and the curing room. The two buildings were separated by a six feet [2m] passage. No plant had been bought for making cheese "as there will be no milk available for cheesemaking at present". The plant for the butter factory consisted of an Alpha-Laval 300 gallon [1360l] separator, a 300 pound [136kg] Cherry churn and a Cherry butter worker. The manager was Mahon, and his assistant Haines.

The factory took its first milk on 24 January 1893. However, there were problems. The company had hoped to use the creek to provide water power, but had been unable to raise sufficient capital and had to hire a 4 h.p. portable engine which in the long run was more expensive. The fact that the factory opened in January and thus could operate for only half the season meant that there was a reduced throughput in its first year, and only 17 347 gallons [77 000l] were processed. The following December the *Examiner* reported that the factory was doing well, with 1000 gallons [4500l] being put through every day and the creameries expected to contribute 700 gallons [3180l] a day. "The directors are to be congratulated in the successful issue of what appeared to be at first an uphill fight." Mahon had been replaced as manager by W. Vagg.

But by April the company had been brought close to bankruptcy by a shortage of ready cash, the result partly of the difficulty of exporting to England that season. The directors were hoping to make only enough butter for profitable markets and then turn the surplus into cheese, but were having problems raising enough money to buy the cheese plant. Their plan was a far cry from the previous year's confident prediction that there would not be enough milk for cheese; perhaps those who had opposed the factory had had reasonable grounds after all.[2]

The factory struggled on, despite having to pay an uneconomic threepence per gallon for milk because the management knew that any reduction on that price would have so reduced the supply that the factory would have been forced to close. A shareholder who was also a trader helped by purchasing large quantities of butter at a halfpenny more per pound than the prevailing price of tenpence. The following season the company was finally able to put in the cheese plant, and the 1894-5 season was the turning point for the company. With a production of a respectable 56 tons of butter and 10 tons of

cheese, it was able to pay a dividend of 10 per cent to its shareholders.[3]

The plan to run the factory with water power never came to fruition, but a water wheel approximately 3m in diameter was in operation immediately south of the bridge over Cooee Creek. This may have been built initially for Jones' sawmill, but later it was used to pump water to overhead storage tanks in the butter factory. The wheel was in use when the factory closed.

The company planned to set up creameries very soon after it started, and the first was built at Gale's Corner on the Cam Road [Elliott]. It was erected halfway between Deaytons Lane and Petersons Lane on the eastern side of what is now the Murchison Highway, just a few metres from the present hall (map reference Calder 975501). A large farm workshop has now been built on the same spot and the ramp the cream carts used to back up to is still visible. The creamery building itself was moved to the South Elliott Road (map reference Yolla 952457), but was destroyed by a storm around 1960.

The old creamery at the beginning of the century.

Elliott creamery c.1900. *(Harnett, Ray W., History and Recollections of Elliott and Village Lane, 1859-1983, between pp. 54-55)*

The Elliott creamery site 1993. Only the concrete block on the right is original. Farmers used to back their drays up to this to unload.

It is noteworthy that the Elliott creamery was less than five kilometres in a straight line from Table Cape's Upper Mt Hicks creamery which had opened at around the same time (see Chapter 3.1) and, like that one, the Elliott creamery was to be the chief supplier for its parent factory. In fact, it was the largest creamery of all those on the North-West Coast.[4]

Cam Road [Elliott] residents bought 500 shares in the Emu Bay factory, and helped in the building of the creamery by digging a well for the water. The separator, which could handle 330 gallons [1360l]

an hour, and other machinery was put in by Bartram and Sons' engineer, Mr Ross. The first manager was Alf Hilder, whose son Rowley took the cream to the factory. Rowley was later to work in another of Emu Bay's creameries (see below) and later still to become chairman of the North-Western Cooperative Dairy Co. Ltd and a nationally known figure in the dairy industry. Other managers of the creamery were Harry Biggins and Bill Cameron, Biggins being listed in the *Post Office Directory* from 1896 until the creamery closed.[5]

When the *Examiner* correspondent visited in December 1893 the creamery had obviously been going for some time. He wrote that it was "still working satisfactorily", and that there was "quite a lively scene" between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. "when cart after cart comes in from different directions, each with their load of milk to be separated, and for the time being makes the bush in point of traffic look quite townlike."[6]

The second Emu Bay creamery was at Pine Road [Riana]. It is probable that this was built soon after that at Elliott as the *Examiner* report about the Emu Bay factory in December 1893 quoted above mentions "creameries". The location is unclear. Residents remember three creameries. The first was run by Valentines on the south-west corner of the intersection of Pine Road and what is still called Creamery Road (map reference Stowport 185471). It appears likely that this was Emu Bay's but it may have been built by the West Devon factory which was at Ulverstone (see Chapter 4.2). Later dissatisfied customers went to what appears to have been a privately-run creamery run by Dobson on the west of Pine Road just north of Copes Road (map reference Stowport 165419). The remaining foundations of Dobson's creamery were in recent times used to make a farm dam nearby. There was also a third further south on the western side of Pine Road just south of Stotts Road (map reference Riana 159379). This could well have been the Riana creamery of the Deloraine factory (see Chapter 4.5), although as it was very near to the later butter factory run by Emu Bay it may have belonged to that company. This creamery building, weatherboard with a paling roof, was later moved across the road and used as a farm shed for many years. It was pulled down about 1960.[7]

The site of Dobson's creamery, Riana, 1993. The creamery's foundations were used to help make the dam.

The creamery at Stirling, near Ridgeley, 1911. *(Weekly Courier, 16 February 1911, Launceston Reference Library)*

The company later opened a creamery at Stirling, near Ridgley, employing the young Roland Hilder as manager (see previous page). It was located on Mount Road, just opposite Metaira Road (map reference Stowport 029451). There is now a garage on the exact spot. In 1907 the company announced the closure of the creameries at Pine Road and the Cam because "home separating is now the vogue". It is probable also that by then the Yolla factory which had opened the previous year (see Chapter 3.2) was taking much of the Elliott creamery's supply. Emu Bay kept the Ridgley creamery open and it was still in active operation in 1910, by which time it was the only factory-owned creamery in the north-west. It was almost certainly closed by 1914.[8]

From its shaky beginnings the Emu Bay company went on to be very successful, although it was never quite as big as its early rival at Wynyard. In the 1901-2 season it processed two thirds the quantity of milk that Table Cape processed, but the directors were happy to point out that they had received the good price of 11.4 pence per pound, "almost three farthings better than the price obtained by the larger factory at Table Cape". Conlon inspected the factory which he pronounced "well and creditably kept". In 1905 the company announced that in its twelve years it had produced 660 tons of butter and 77 tons of cheese, and it celebrated by erecting a new brick buttermaking room and installing new machinery. By this time too Thomas Anson had been appointed as manager. He was to remain there until the factory closed.

The Emu Bay butter factory at unknown date. *(QVMAG)*

This year too was an unusual year for the company, and perhaps other companies. Although it was a boom year for butter production, the company found that it had to cope with the effects of the removal of protection between the colonies that had come with Federation in 1901. The effect had been delayed by bad seasons on the mainland which had left Tasmania facing little competition. But by 1905 the mainland states had recovered and could now compete more aggressively. Thus the Emu Bay company, which in common with other factories had sold as much butter as possible on the local market and exported the surplus, had found it "necessary to be able to work profitably on the basis of shipping largely to London. Inasmuch as this is the first year in the company's history in which this has been done, [the] directors were much gratified at the successful result."[9]

However, by this time it was facing stiff competition from a second Burnie factory, and within two years the situation had been made worse by the opening of new factories in Yolla (1906) and Ulverstone (1907 - see Chapters 3.2 & 4.2). There was also considerable interest in cooperatives, and the Emu Bay company found itself under pressure from dissatisfied suppliers. When the other Burnie factory was taken over by a cooperative in 1907 (see Chapter 4.1.2), the *Weekly Courier* at least supported the older company, commenting that "while the shareholders of the new co-operative institution may truthfully say the Emu Bay factory should pay a bonus as well as a dividend, and so divide the proceeds, yet I am afraid they will find it desirable to enlist the aid of the non-supplying and purely shareholding element".

The chairman of Emu Bay, R.S. Sanderson, confidently said "he did not anticipate any serious loss

of business. Suppliers had expressed satisfaction with the returns for the past year. They had been continually on the upgrade for the past 12 years..." O.G. Norton, another director, was reported to have said: "Surely the declaring of a 10 per cent dividend was not begrudged to those who had put their money into the company. Instead of some suppliers grumbling about the dividend, they would be better employed seeing that their cows were properly fed and cared for." But the tide was turning in favour of cooperative institutions and in 1911 Emu Bay also became a cooperative.[10]

It was about this time too that Emu Bay began to expand. By 1910 it had discontinued cheesemaking and it was regarded as a "Model Butter Factory" with fine brick premises, but it probably could not counter the success of the other coastal factories. Yet another one was starting up in 1911 at Devonport (see Chapter 4.4). Emu Bay's first move was to set up a branch factory at Riana, near where it had previously had a creamery and only a short distance from the creamery which probably belonged to the Deloraine factory (see above). The wooden factory was built just to the east of Pine Road on the southern side of Cookes Road (map reference Riana 160378). The builder was Tulloch, and Emu Bay manager Anson superintended the installation of machinery. At the opening on 2 November 1911, the chairman Sanderson explained "that the intention of the company was not to clash with any other company, but he considered the establishment of a factory at Riana was a step in the right direction, as it would enable butter to be made of finer quality than would be possible if the cream were carted a long distance in the hot summer weather". A lot of second grade butter had been hitherto produced with the cream. The local farmers also benefited by not having to arrange to get their cream to Burnie.[11]

The Riana factory on opening day. The section on the left was where the butter was made. The right-hand part jutting forward was where the butter was packed. *(Weekly Courier, 3 November 1911, Launceston Reference Library)*

This bank was dug out to allow the building of the Riana butter factory.

The factory was managed at first by Arthur Pullen who owned the local shop, then Henry Archer who was still there in 1922 when he qualified as a grader, although he was later replaced by one Corrigan. But the factory was not to last much longer. It is probable that it was suffering from being in a relatively out-of-the-way place and by now transport had improved so that cream could be transported more easily to the Cooee factory. The Riana factory was about to be sold by the time of the 1925 Report. It was later pulled down and the timber used to build three houses, including the one right next to it on the Pine Road. The only visible remaining sign of the factory is the cutting in the bank to the east which was made to allow room for the building.[12]

Some time between 1913 and 1917, the Emu Bay company ventured into the Circular Head area, buying the Stanley butter factory and the Irish Town cheese factory (see Chapter 2.1). In 1917 it reported that their three factories (Cooee, Stanley and Riana) had produced 122 tons of butter, while Irish Town had made 24 tons of cheese. At some time the Irish Town factory was sold and a new one started up at Nabageena, certainly by 1925 (see Chapter 2.1).[13]

But the Emu Bay factory itself was not to last much longer. By now its rival at Burnie, the North-Western Cooperative Dairy Co. Ltd, had grown to such an extent that it could rival the earlier factory. From the beginning of its history it was realised that "two [factories] cannot be expected to make a fortune in the one town and district", and the two companies began amalgamation talks as early as March 1920, with further discussions with various factories taking place at intervals during the 1920s. Finally talks took place between Emu Bay, North-Western and Ulverstone and an agreement was reached to amalgamate. The new North-Western Co-operative Dairy Company Limited was incorporated on 1 September 1928, and the Emu Bay factory was closed soon afterwards. The manager Anson went to the North-Western's other Burnie factory, and the Emu Bay factory was converted for the manufacture of plasterboard. In 1945 North-Western sold for 20 pounds the old wooden building and it was removed from the site, but at the same time the 1905 brick building was renovated and it remained when the site and buildings were sold in 1949. In January 1995 its roof was damaged by a fire which destroyed surrounding buildings, but it was otherwise in good repair.[14]

4.1.2 The North-Western Cooperative Dairy Co. Ltd

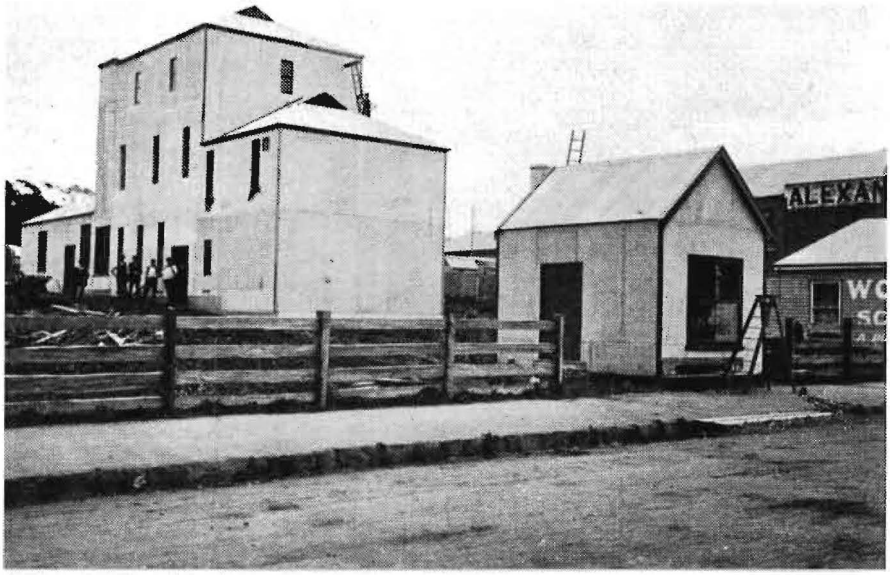
A little over ten years after the Emu Bay factory began, a second was started in Burnie by the Launceston firm, the Tasmanian Produce and Cool Stores Ltd which had been formed in 1902 (see Chapter 5.1). This company was obviously attempting to gain a foothold in the rich dairying area of the north-west. Soon after the Burnie factory started in 1904 the manager, Mr Lonie, pointed out that within 30 miles [50k] of Burnie 13-14 tons of butter were being produced every week.[15]

The factory was begun in a small wooden building at approximately 16 Marine Terrace half-way between Cattley Street and Ladbroke Street (map reference Burnie 081546). It is unclear whether the building was already in existence or whether the company had it built. On 10 December 1904 the *Weekly Courier* announced that the "newly-opened" factory was turning out one ton of butter a week, while twelve months later this had increased to two tons. In May 1905 F. Stenning, manager of the Cool Stores, announced that the company would be building a creamery on the corner of Nietta and Bates Road at Blackwell Park (or Blackwood Point), Upper Castra, presumably to supply the Burnie factory. It is not known whether it was actually built. If it was, it was a bad time, as other factories were starting to close their creameries at this time.[16]

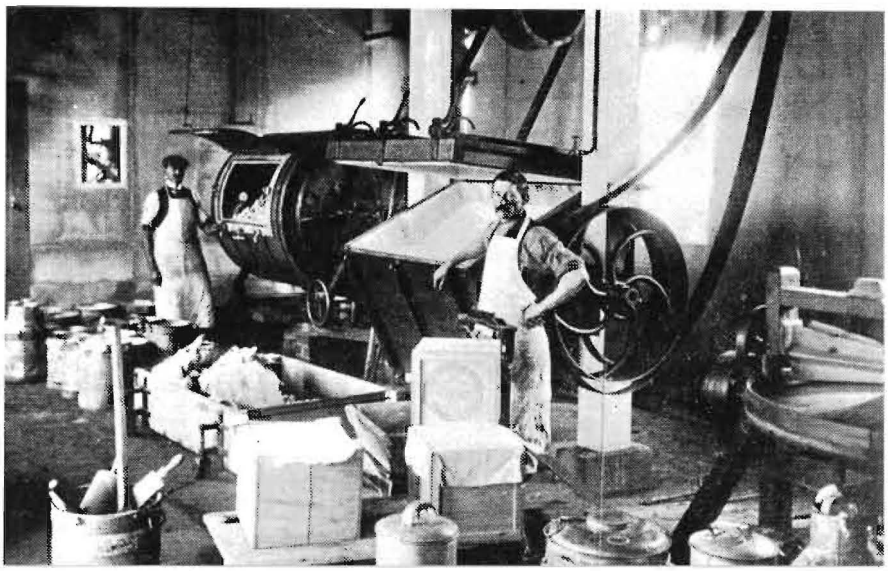
However, the Burnie factory was not run by the Launceston firm for very long. In August 1907 a meeting of interested suppliers appointed a deputation to interview the company about the possibility of leasing their Burnie plant so that it could work as a cooperative. The response was favourable; perhaps the difficulties of running the factory along with others that the Cool Stores owned at Launceston, Pyengana, Derby and St Marys helped them decide to relinquish it. At any event, the North-Western Co-operative Dairy Co. Ltd was formed to acquire the factory, and John Hayes, Samuel Walker, Robert Somerville, Peter Clingeleffer and Charles Rossman were appointed directors, with Hayes as chairman. The new company re-opened the factory for business on 25 September 1907, with C. Purdie, "a gentleman thoroughly conversant with all branches of the

dairying industry", as manager.[17]

The first year of the company was "most successful", with supplying shareholders being paid a bonus on milk supplied. The company appears to have acquired the Brookside Bacon Factory very early in its history. This factory had begun in 1895, and the move was yet another attempt by butter factories to become involved with what was seen as an obvious corollary, but as in most other areas bacon-processing turned out to be uneconomic and the factory shut very soon afterwards. But buttermaking continued, from 1908 under the managership of G.H. Kest, and by 1910 the company had built itself new premises further down Marine Terrace not far from the intersection with Spring Street. The new brick premises opened on 13 October 1910.[18]



The new North-Western butter factory 1910. *(Weekly Courier, 20 October 1910, Launceston Reference Library)*



A corner of the churn room of the new North-Western factory. *(Weekly Courier, 20 October 1910, Launceston Reference Library)*

But the company was in deep trouble, and came close to closing the factory doors forever. Part of the trouble may well have stemmed from the new factory, which was a very impressive structure for a relatively new company. But there was also another problem. At the 1911 annual general meeting the directors, while being able to point out that the production of butter that year had doubled, added:

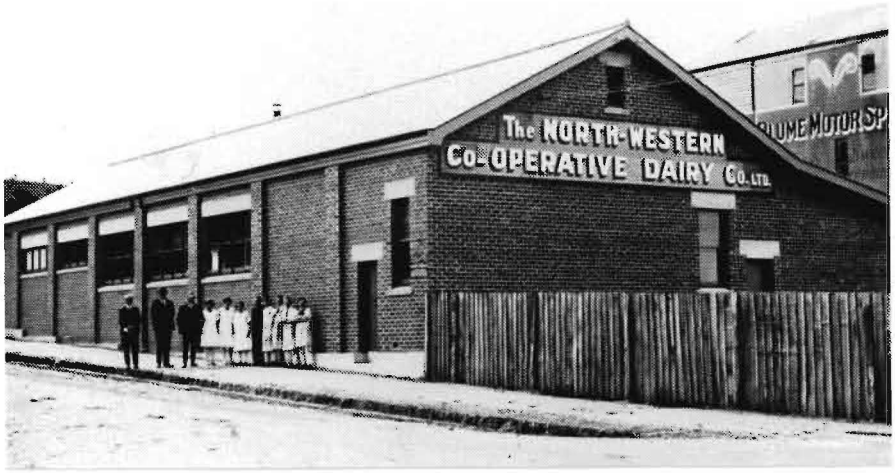
> Your directors regret, however, that in consequence of certain troubles in the management, the year's work has resulted in a loss. You have already had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the cause of the trouble, and it would be inadvisable to go into the matter here. The directors have secured the services of Mr H.V. Gooch, who brings a first-class reputation with him from Yolla factory, and are sanguine that the company has now a practically assured future, owing to the loyal way in which the shareholders have rallied to their support.

At a special meeting it was decided to increase the capital from 1000 pounds to 2500 pounds, an indication that the factory had been severely undercapitalised.[19]

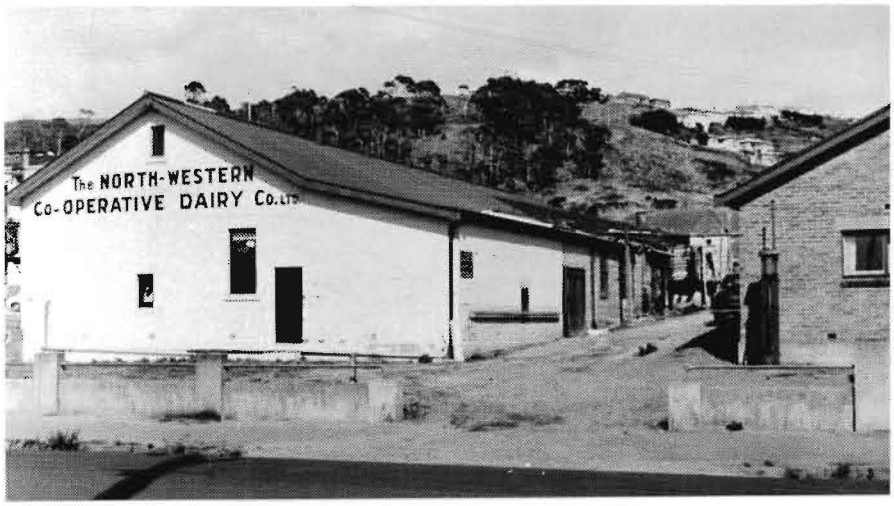
Just to make things worse, a new factory at Devonport that year (see Chapter 4.4) took some of the Burnie factory's supplies and it was probably just as well that 1911 was such a good year for dairying statewide (see Chapter 1.5). The company survived and gradually improved its position from then on so that it was not in danger of closing, although in 1917 it was still not up to the size of its rival, Emu Bay. That winter when the factory kept open, possibly because of the war for which Britain was requiring large quantities of dairy products (see Chapter 1.6), North-Western had 61 suppliers compared with Emu Bay's 82.

It drew its supplies from Penguin to Myalla (west of Table Cape) and in the boom period of the summer of 1917 had 206 suppliers, an increase from 128 the previous year. But many were small "billycan" suppliers and only one had a milking machine (compare Yolla Chapter 3.2). Many years later the factory still had a large proportion of these small suppliers. On one occasion the secretary was asked to advance money on the strength of one billy of cream, instead of requiring the supplier to wait for the monthly cheque. The request was refused.[20]

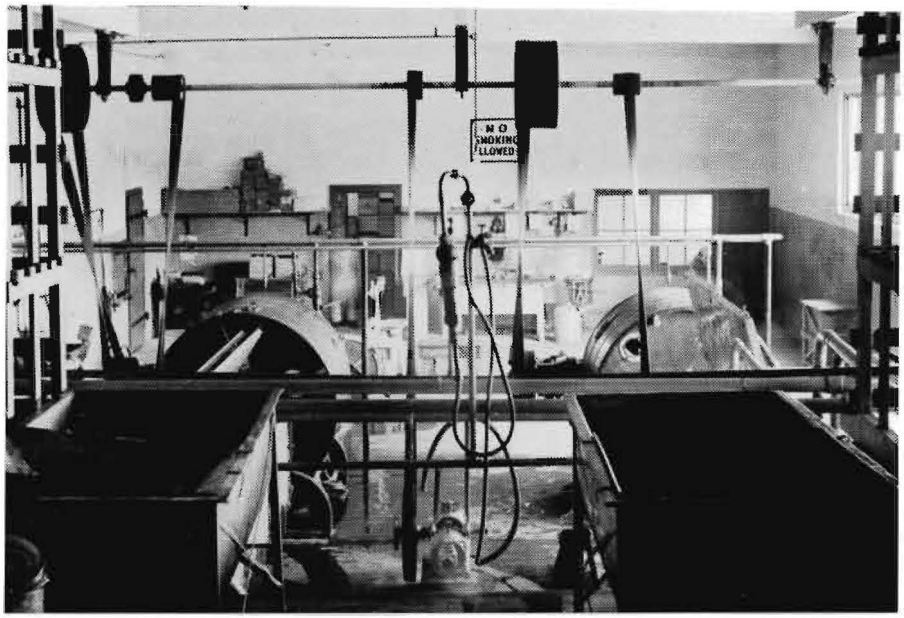
Despite its small suppliers and competition from other factories, North-Western appears to have become about the same size as its competitors on the coast. In 1927 it made 123 tons of butter, compared with Table Cape's 107 tons for that year. But it had large plans. In 1920 it authorised its secretary to confer with Emu Bay about a proposed amalgamation, although nothing eventuated at that time. In 1923 the company decided to enter the bacon curing business again, this time with more success. It leased premises from the North-Western Co-operative Freezing and Canning Co. Ltd at Somerset, and in January took in its first pigs. The venture was unprofitable in its first years, but a new manager in 1926 turned that around and it operated successfully until 1951 when the Freezing and Canning company cancelled the lease.[21]



The third North-Western factory c.1930. *(QVMAG)*



The same building at a later date. *(QVMAG)*



Interior of the 1927 North-Western factory c.1930. *(QVMAG)*

The bacon venture made the North-Western directors aware more than ever of the advantages of size. In attempting to borrow the necessary money they had run into some difficulties. They had increased their capital to 10 000 pounds through the issue of new shares in 1923, and in 1926 approached Emu Bay and Table Cape about amalgamation, stating that they wanted to be a big company so that they could approach any bank for assistance. In a statement very revealing of the company's plans, they said that if they controlled "the whole of the butter produced" they could approach the Commonwealth for assistance. The proposed company was to be called the Amalgamated Butter Co. Ltd and Duck River was also to be invited to join.[22]

But once again the plans fell through and North-Western went ahead on its own to build a modern factory next to its existing one, on the northern corner of Marine Terrace and Spring Streets. The new brick factory opened on 26 October 1927. Soon amalgamation talks were again revived, the reasons given being to effect economies in working costs and to ensure more efficient management. It was also pointed out that a large company was needed "to cope successfully with the now greatly changed conditions of marketing". This presumably refers to the new system brought into operation as a result of the Commonwealth Government's Dairy Produce Export Control Act 1924 (see Chapter 1.6). This time there was success, with Emu Bay and the Ulverstone Butter Factory agreeing to amalgamate. It is possible that the decision was helped by the fact that those two factories were getting out of date and it would cost the respective companies a great deal to rebuild, while North-Western had already done so.[23]

There appears to have been some luck involved too. Frank Brown, appointed as manager in 1920 (see Chapter 3.2) and general manager in 1925, was later found to have been allowing butter to be made with a high over-run; over 20 per cent of moisture was allowed, instead of the 15 per cent legally allowable. This was not discovered since most of the company's butter was sold on the West Coast and therefore not subject to the inspections regularly carried out on export butter. The result was that North-Western butter had an edge on its competitors which were therefore more willing to acquiesce in the proposed amalgamation. (See below for more of Brown.)[24]

It is significant that when the new company eventuated on 1 September 1928 its name was the North-Western Cooperative Dairy Co. Ltd. Although the old company of the same name was careful to always mention an amalgamation, the move is generally called a takeover in private conversation, and it certainly appears as if this was how it was generally regarded. A letter to shareholders in 1928 talks of the possibility of "acquiring" other butter factories such as Emu Bay and Ulverstone.[25]

The new company immediately set about reorganising the dairy industry on the North-West Coast. The Ulverstone and Emu Bay factories were closed, and although the company kept its options open, it did not reopen the cheese factory at Nabageena which had belonged to Emu Bay. It reached agreement with Table Cape about the zoning of cream collection areas, but talks with A.V. Stenhouse about similar arrangements with regard to his two factories at Devonport and Deloraine (see Chapter

4.4 and 4.5) led quickly to an agreement to buy them both. Change of ownership was effective from 1 July 1929.[26]

This meant that North-Western was, at least temporarily, without competition from east of Wynyard to the Tamar River, and it still had a stake in the Circular Head area through its ownership of Emu Bay's old Stanley butter factory. Even after selling this in 1937 (see Chapter 2.1) it continued to be by far the largest of the dairy companies operating in northern Tasmania until the formation of UMP in 1973. In 1931 its four butter factories produced over 1000 tons of butter, while the company was also considering other products such as ghee and dried milk, although nothing eventuated at this time.[27]

The Burnie factory was averaging 350 tons annually by 1936, and after a slow period during the Second World War, it participated in the general growth of dairying thereafter. Competition from a series of new factories established on the coast to handle milk (Cadbury's at Edith Creek and Cooee in 1947, followed by Wander Ltd at Spreyton for the manufacture of Ovaltine, Lactos at Burnie for the manufacture of cheese, and Baker's Milk) seem not to have caused too many problems, and production at the Burnie factory continued to rise. By 1954 North-Western was forced to begin extensive alterations and additions to the factory to enable it to cope with increased output, and these were completed by 1957. Quality was high. Burnie Butter won the Australian championship in 1969, was second in 1958 and third in 1965 and 1971.[28]

But once whole milk began to be collected the Burnie factory was in trouble. Its central location near the heart of Burnie, once an advantage, now meant that it had no room to expand. Even though the head office of the company was situated there, it was not surprising that when a modern factory capable of handling bulk milk was needed in the early 1960s, it was built at East Devonport (see Chapter 4.4.) and the Burnie factory's days were numbered. The growing success of Lactos may well have had an impact as well. The Burnie factory finally closed on 26 March 1976, the head office was transferred to Devonport and the Burnie building sold to the Tasmanian government. The building is still there, although with some alteration.[29]

4.1.3 Round Hill

A very short-lived butter factory was located at Round Hill, Wivenhoe. Begun by R.G. Cook and Frank Brown, the newly-dismissed manager of North-Western (see 4.1.2), the Round Hill Dairy Company Ltd set up a factory in 1931 in a leased building which had once been a brewery on Main Road (map reference Burnie 107529). Also involved was A. John Rose. He had formerly been manager of Stenhouse's Deloraine factory, and now left North-Western which had employed him after they bought Deloraine (see Chapter 4.5). A churn was acquired from Duck River for 30 pounds, while a freezer and coils were purchased from the Yolla Dairy Co. for 50 pounds. Choice butter was made under the "Round Hill" brand, while "Wivenhoe" was for First Grade.

The company survived only a few years. In 1934 the directors were considering selling because of a decline in production, and by 1936 they were unable to pay the deferred pay to suppliers and meet their other commitments. North-Western agreed to buy the factory to remove competition from the town, and when the sale was finalised at a price of 1250 pounds, the factory was immediately closed. The building is now being used by a timber firm.[30]

The building which housed the Round Hill butter factory, photographed in 1993.

4.1.4 Lactos

The story of butter and cheese in Burnie would not be complete without mentioning the success of cheese manufacturer Lactos. However, as its history has been well-documented, principally in the book *Lactos 1955-1980* by Senator Jindrich Nermut, only a brief sketch will be given here.

Following the failure of Milan Vyhnalek's attempt to gain a licence for cheese-making at Green Point, Marrawah, due to opposition from the major dairy companies (see Chapter 2.2), he moved to Burnie and was able in 1955 to begin making cheese under the licence of the Betta Milk company whose surplus milk he used, and from whom he leased the land on Old Surrey Road, Burnie, to build his factory. Moves were being made by other migrants at this time to manufacture continental cheeses, for example by George Amentus in Marrawah (see Chapter 2.2) and George Ertler in Forth (see Chapter 4.4). However, Vyhnalek was able to become extremely successful, developing his company into the largest manufacturer of specialty cheeses in Australia and a considerable exporter as well. Vyhnalek's success preceded by some years the move into cheese production by the established dairy companies, which in the 1950s were concentrating almost entirely on butter production.

The Lactos factory has been subject to fire three times, so the present building stems only from 1980.[31]

4.2 Ulverstone, North Motton, Gunns Plains and Sulphur Creek

Ulverstone was another town to be interested in the setting up of butter factories at a very early stage. In April 1892, just three months after the Table Cape Prospectus was drawn up, the *Coastal News* reported proposals to establish a cooperative butter factory. At the second meeting of the Council of Agriculture in June a letter was received from Dr McCall, M.H.A. of Ulverstone, enquiring whether the Council was prepared to send an expert in butter-making "by the factory process" to advise a committee of interested gentlemen. They were looking to establish a factory on the North-West Coast on "a rather extensive scale" and were likely to succeed, which probably means that those involved were well-known and active in the community.[32]

A meeting to set up a cooperative company was held in 1892, but it took some time before the West Devon Butter and Cheese Ltd factory began working. Possibly the directors had difficulty raising the necessary capital. Directors Raymond, Frampton and McDonald recommended a site on North Motton Road (now Preston Road) "near Captain Burt's residence". The land belonged to Mason and Burt and had "splendid water power", presumably from Mason's Creek. E.W. Lloyd, a local builder, was appointed clerk of works and sent to Wynyard to take measurements and invite Table Cape's manager Callaway to Ulverstone to advise about sites. R.E. Hamilton was appointed secretary and the company advertised in Victoria for a manager.

This proposed site is interesting. On Henslowe Road at approximately the same site as described above there was a creamery operating from early times. It used water brought from Mason's Creek by means of two or three hydraulic rams, and raised about two metres by means of a water race. On the same site were cool rooms, the first in Ulverstone, insulated with charcoal which was burnt on director Fred L. Frampton's property. The creamery was run by one Davis who also later ran a bacon factory on the same site. As the butter factory in the event did not use this site, it is possible that when initial work showed that the site was unsuitable for a factory, the creamery was started instead on the same spot as a means of supplying cream to the central factory.[33]

In August 1893 the company announced it would be using Skeleton Creek as its motive power. Upstream of where it joins the Leven is quite steep and therefore it could provide a good head of water. The factory appears to have been situated near where Skeleton Creek joins the Leven, about one kilometre west of Ulverstone (approx. map reference Ulverstone 265424). But by October 1893 the company's plan to use water power was in trouble. One Cann had been employed to clear the water race site but Lloyd's certificate was objected to as it did not state that the work had been done to his satisfaction and according to specifications. By November water was seeping under the butter factory dam (site unknown), and although the company decided to buy a 12-inch [300mm] diameter

Victor turbine from Bartram and Son, it could not find the necessary capital and the directors had to personally go into debt in order to pay for a steam engine. As with the Emu Bay factory (see Chapter 4.1.1), the greater running costs of a steam engine put further considerable strain on the company's finances.[34]

The factory began accepting milk on 4 December 1893, although the official opening was held on 7 December. There were eight rooms and a De Laval separator capable of handling 330 gallons [1580l] per hour. The building had cost 221 pounds and had been built by George King, and the first manager was Robert Pretty, although he was replaced two months later by G.H. Rowe. Dr McCall was chairman of directors and the butter was produced under the "Kangaroo" brand.[35]

The factory had a short history, and it is quite possible that it suffered from lack of supply. In March 1894 it was announced that a creamery was to be established at Sprent by W.J. Andrews on his land to work in conjunction with the West Devon factory. By 1895 another had been built at Penguin, although it is possible that this was the creamery on what is still called Creamery Road south-west of its junction with Pine Road (map reference Stowport 185471), but see Chapter 4.1.1. In July 1894 a newspaper reported that the factory was "struggling well" through the winter and that a fair supply of milk enabled the factory to work three days a week, which was really quite a good result. But a meeting called for September 1894 about establishing another factory in the Devonport area was not attended by a representative from West Devon, "as they were at present in some difficulty [and] they could not see their way clear to assist."[36]

In 1895 the company made 56 000 pounds [23 500kg] of butter and paid a dividend. The *Post Office Directory* for 1894 lists the West Devon Cheese and Butter Factory at Ulverstone and Stanley, but whatever the connection with Stanley was, by 1896 only Ulverstone is listed. Dr J. McCall was still chairman. The factory is listed in *Walch's Almanac* in 1897, but that is the last reference and it closed its doors in 1898. There appear to be no signs now of the factory, but portions of a water race dug near where Skeleton Creek joins the Leven are still visible and could well have belonged to this first Ulverstone factory.[37]

Ulverstone was without a factory for ten years, although the Tongs Brothers at North Motton attempted to fill the gap. Their factory was on their farm on the western side of Skeleton Creek to the east of Preston Road (map reference Kindred 254373). The Tongs Brothers were well-known in dairy circles. Alfred Tongs is thought to have been the first in the Ulverstone area to import a separator, and in 1918 he imported a valuable Jersey heifer. It is possible that it was the separator that encouraged him to call his operation a factory, as it is believed that the butter was made by a number of women in the old style. The factory was listed in the *Post Office Directory* from 1899 to 1922, but it is most unlikely that it was in active operation for all that time. It is probable that it began when the Ulverstone factory closed, and ceased or considerably reduced its activity in 1907 when the new Ulverstone factory opened. There is now nothing left of the building.[38]

The factory system of butter-making eventually arrived in earnest at Ulverstone in 1907, when the Hobart-based Murdoch Brothers started a factory on the corner of James and Grove Streets (now 20 and 22 Grove Street). Their motivation may have had something to do with the fact that their Hobart rivals, Dehle, Bennison and Co., had the previous year opened a new factory at Yolla (see Chapter 3.4) and they were looking for an opening on the coast. The new factory was wooden with an iron roof. It made an average of 25 cwt [1270kg] of butter a week.[39]

But within two years the growing move towards cooperatives (see Chapters 3.4 and 4.1.2) led to moves for a takeover of the company. In July 1909, following a lecture by Conlon on cooperation, delegates met to "consider the terms on which Messrs Murdoch are prepared to sell their butter factory at Ulverstone" and were said to be in favour of a cooperative venture. Twelve months later a cooperative company had been formed, with C.A. Dunning as one of the directors, and it purchased the factory as a going concern for 1900 pounds in November 1910. Dunning continued to be active in the company, being chairman at least in 1924 and secretary in 1926.[40]

It was a very good time to buy into the factory as the industry was entering a boom period (see Chapter 1.5). The first report of the Ulverstone Cooperative Butter Factory Co. Ltd. in 1911 detailed a successful year, with plans to add a cream receiving room and office. By November it was reported that production was seven tons a week, or a six-fold increase on 1907, largely as a result of the potato

blight (see Chapter 1.5). Of the 240 farmers who supplied cream to the factory, many milked only a few cows. A 23-cow herd, owned by W. Russell of Kindred, was significant enough to be commented on by the *Weekly Courier* correspondent.[41]

The factory was not without its troubles. As was often the case with factories, the drainage of effluent proved to be a problem and "the Grove Street drain complaint" troubled the council for some years. At one stage a call by the Chief Health Officer to abate the nuisance might have "crippled the dairying industry of the district", according to A.E. Ellis of the factory, but a crisis was averted with the decision to install a sewerage scheme. The factory continued on a sound footing. Even when a new factory began at Devonport in 1911 (see Chapter 4.4), the number of Ulverstone suppliers actually increased, to 264. Unusually, the factory was able to continue through the winter as enough suppliers (25 in 1912) continued to dairy in what was traditionally the off-season. The manager, R.J. Morley, was credited with a lot of this success. When he left for Victoria in 1915, the correspondent for the *Weekly Courier* said that he had done "a great deal to work up the dairying industry in the North-West". It is not known who replaced him, but in 1922 E.B. Palliser was evidently the manager.[42]

By 1917 the largest herds supplying the factory were at Gunns Plains, where E. Hobbs had 50-60 cows and W. Last 40-50. The following year the factory installed an 800-gallon [3630l] pasteurising plant. But by the 1920s the factory was experiencing difficulties. In 1924 a slump in the London market and competition from another factory which had begun to collect cream in the district (North-Western? Devonport?) led to a slump in production from 103 tons to 75 tons and an overall loss to the company.[43]

Carting cream to Ulverstone from Gunns Plains 1906. *(White photo, QVMAG)*

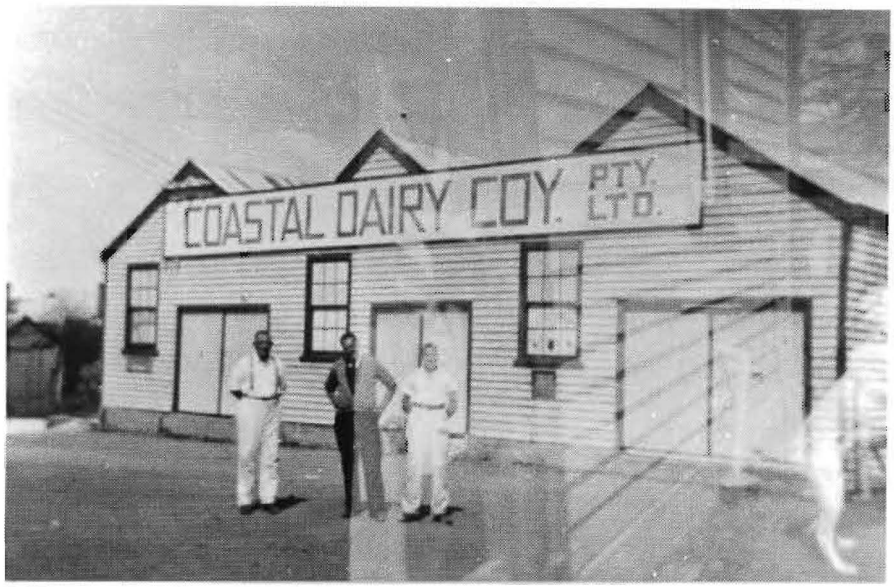
Ulverstone butter factory 1920s. *(White photo, QVMAG)*

In 1926 production had increased again to 114 tons, and the following year a record 172 tons was made. However, the London market again proved a problem and the company had difficulty selling its butter. There is some cause for thinking that the company was in financial difficulties, and eventually the Ulverstone factory amalgamated with Emu Bay and North-Western in 1928 and was closed (see Chapter 4.1.1).[44]

However, it did operate later for a short time. As a result of the April 1929 floods, the bridge over the Emu River at Wivenhoe and the railway bridge over the Blythe River were destroyed. Cream from farms east of the Blythe could not be sent to Burnie, and T. Anson of the old Emu Bay factory was sent to Ulverstone to reopen the factory. By 1931 the factory was closed again due to faults in butter manufacture, but the board rejected an offer for its purchase with the explanation that "we intend to manufacture butter there at the earliest possible time, which will make our chain of factories complete." However, the factory was never reopened and in 1936 it was sold for 650 pounds with the proviso that it could not be used for a butter factory. The wooden building with an iron roof was bought by H.L. Heazlewood who demolished it and built two houses on the site.[45]

North-Western's efforts to prevent competition from the Ulverstone area were unsuccessful, however, as in 1933 a new butter factory started in the area. The Coastal Dairy Co. Pty Ltd was set up by four members of the Rose family and three others. A.J. (John) Rose had managed the Stenhouse butter factory in Deloraine (see Chapter 4.5), temporarily worked for North-Western at Burnie when they bought the Deloraine factory and then moved over to the Round Hill factory when it was set up in 1931 by Frank Brown (see Chapter 4.1.3). Brown also was associated with the Coastal Dairy Co. for a time.

The seven original shareholders of the Coastal Dairy Co. were John Rose, his wife Mary, and their son Bob and daughter Zillah; and Lorrie Brown, Edna Brown and Stuart Smith. The two Brown women were probably Frank Brown's daughters; by 1939 their surnames had changed. By that time too Brown himself was also a shareholder. The new proprietary company leased and later bought an old flour mill in use as a grain store at 48 Alexander Road and converted it into a butter factory. In its first year it made the respectable total of 121 tons of butter.[46]

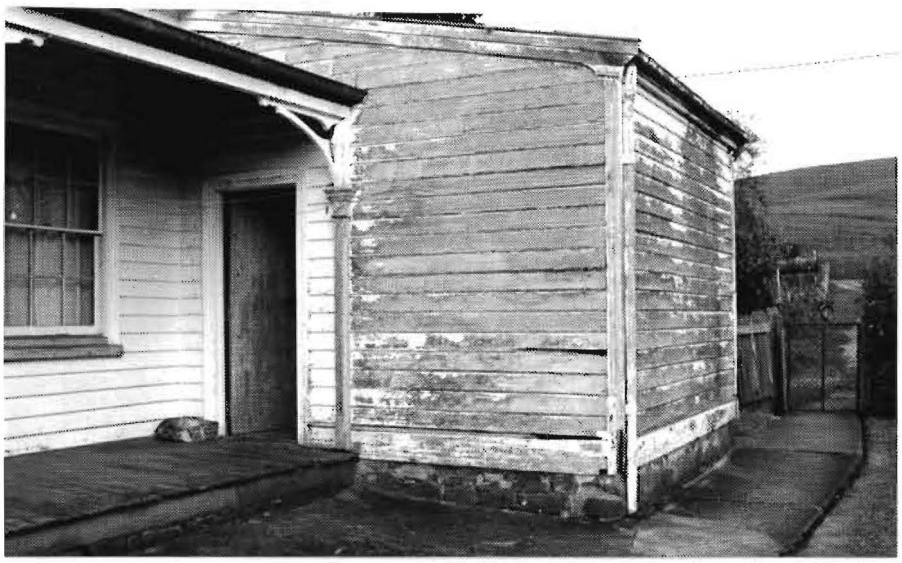


The Coastal Dairy Co factory 1950s. *(White photo, QVMAG)*

It was an unusual step to set up a new factory at this time when the general move was towards the closing down of small factories (see Chapter 1.6), but the "Clover" brand of butter was quite popular and the company continued as a family-run concern until April 1965 when it was bought by North-Western. In the early to mid-40s it consistently produced between 164 and 175 tons annually, a low figure compared with the bigger factories but still well ahead of the factories at Winnaleah and Scottsdale and even ahead of Yolla (see Figure 1.5). In its last full year of operation the factory turned out 396 tons, a relatively small amount compared with Duck River's 3000 tons for the same period. By this time small-scale operations were definitely on the way out and as early as 1960 the

factory had been offered to North-Western, but they had refused to pay the 60 000 pounds asking price. In 1965 they bought it for 56 000 pounds, and continued to operate it until 21 April 1972, although in 1967 the name was changed to Dairyland Pty Ltd. The building was later bought by Luck and Haines who demolished it to allow for their own expansion.[47]

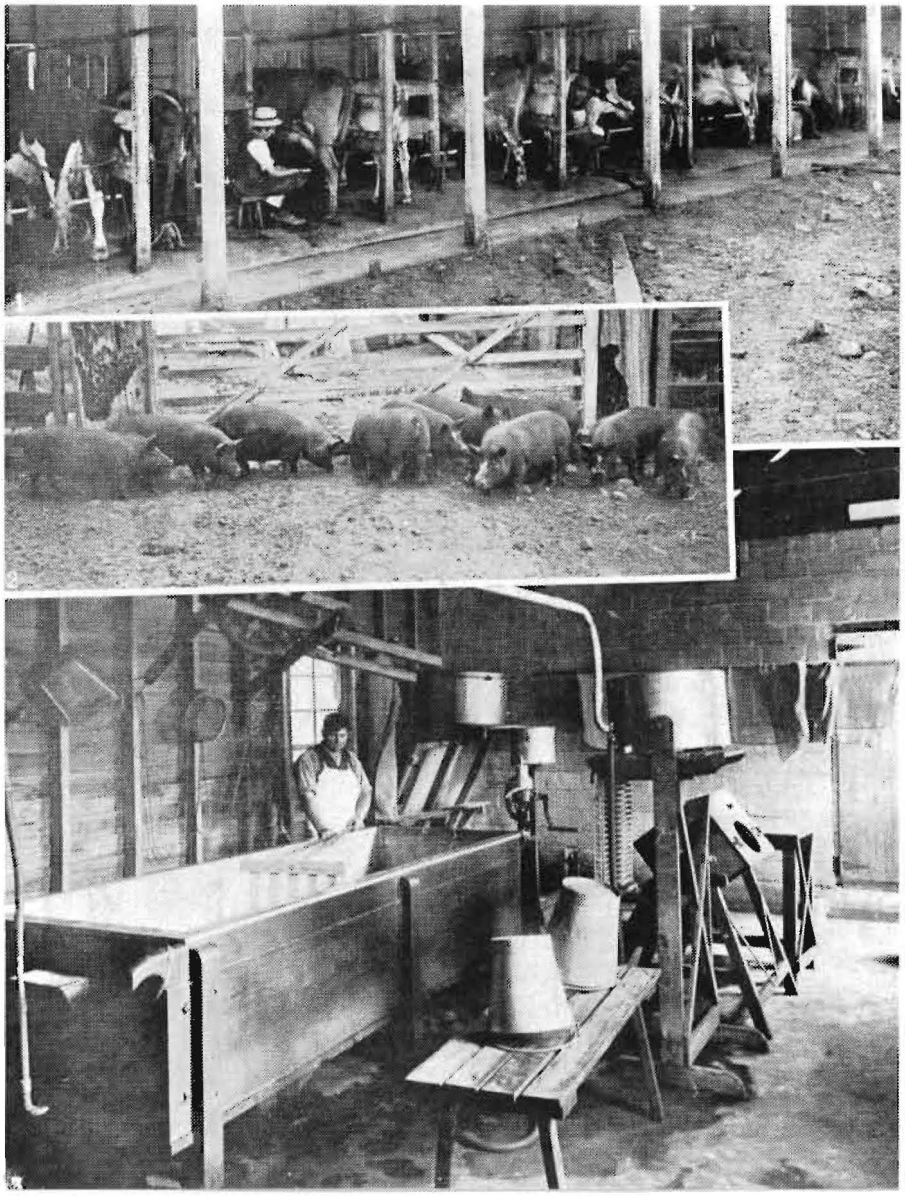
Not far from Ulverstone were two well-known farm-based cheesemakers. At Sulphur Creek was John Lade, who came from the Rosegarland property at St Marys in 1893. In 1891-2 at the Tasmanian Exhibition in Launceston he had won the First, Second and Highly Commended awards in the competition for cheese over 10 pounds [4.5kg]. On his Sulphur Creek property Ripple on the west side of Creamery Road (map reference Stowport 182483) he and his two sons made cheese until 1914, milking an average of 108 Durham cows by hand. When Conlon visited in 1905, they had a modern cheese plant and John was referred to as an "old and experienced cheesemaker". Some cheese was sent each year to the Hobart Show, and probably Hobart was the market for all the cheese made. When George Lade went to the First World War there was no-one left to make cheese and the plant shut down for good. The weatherboard maturing room, an extension to the homestead, is still there with much of its wooden shelving intact.[48]



Lade's cheese room attached to the house, Sulphur Creek, in 1993. It was in use 1893-1914.

The other cheesemaker was Arthur Bonney who had begun his career in Flowerdale (see Chapter 3.3), but moved to Levenside at Gunns Plains by 1908. In 1909 the *Weekly Courier* reported that, with help from Conlon, he had just installed a large cheesemaking plant and intended to make cheese "on factory lines". He was making at a rate of nine tons a year until disaster struck in 1910 when his whole factory was destroyed by fire. This was the second time a factory of Bonney's had been ravaged by fire (see Chapter 3.3) but, nothing daunted, Bonney rebuilt. The new plant had arrived by November 1911 and was installed and operating by 1912, at which time he was described as one of the largest dairymen in the state, milking 60 cows.[49]

The *Weekly Courier* gave a detailed description of the operation. Bonney was using milking machines, as did others in the district, in what from the description is obviously a walk-through dairy and equally obviously something the correspondent had never seen before. The cheese maturing room was made of brick and had revolving and reversible shelves for holding the cheese, which was marketed under the "Gold Leaf" brand. Bonney continued to make cheese for several more years, but 1915-16 was a bad year for a number of dairy farmers at Gunns Plains with many cows unable to provide milk, and Bonney did not make cheese. By March 1918 he had taken over the State Farm at Deloraine (from Dairy Expert Conlon) and in 1922 he sold his Gunns Plains farm. The brick cheese room is still there (map reference Loyetea 176289) with "1911" scratched in the concrete, but the dairy was demolished in the 1970s, although a new one was rebuilt on the original floor.[50]



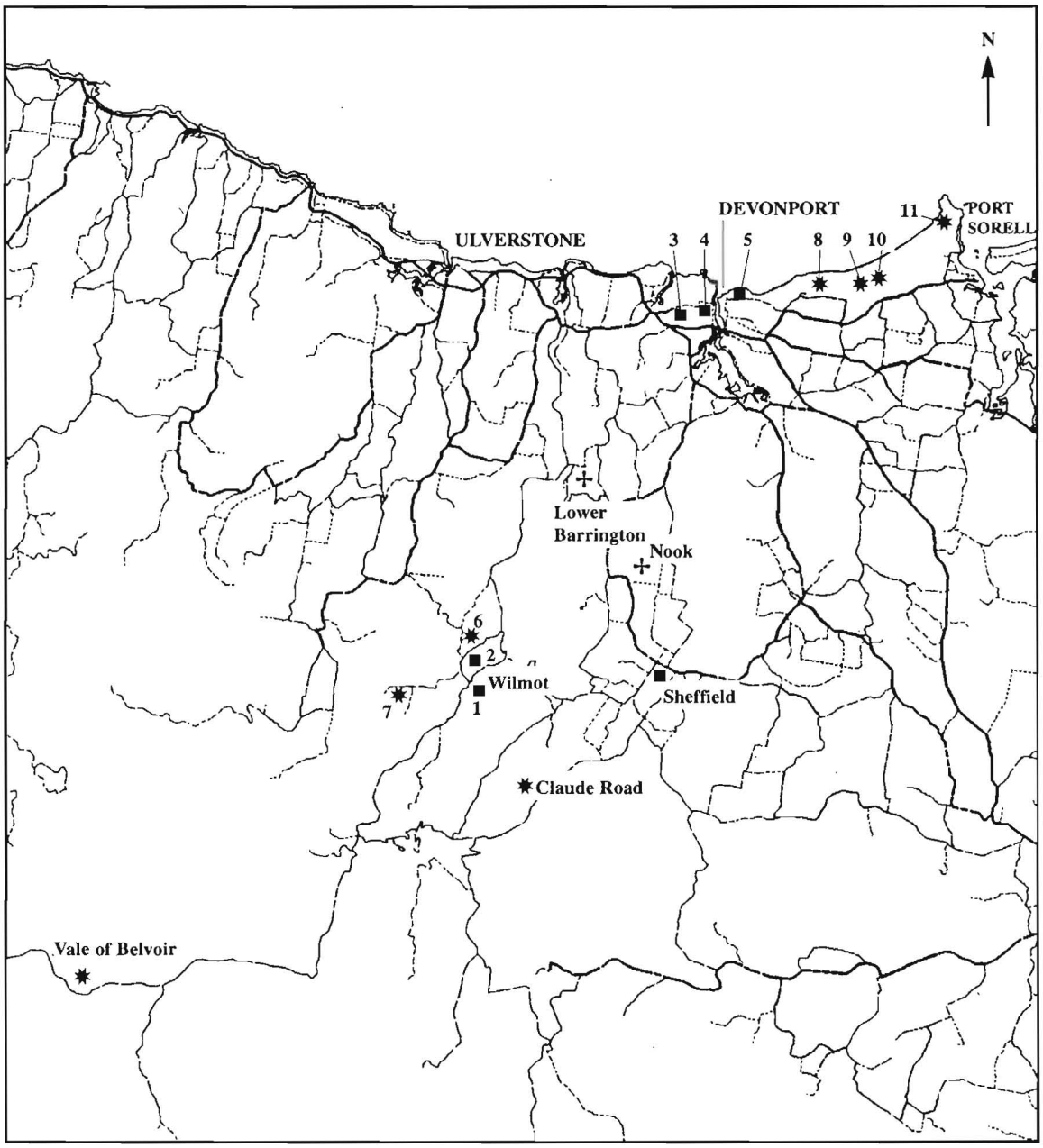
A.T. Bonney's farm at Gunns Plains 1913.
Top: The milking shed.
Centre: Some of Bonney's pigs, fed with the whey from cheesemaking.
Bottom: Making cheese in the factory. Note the butter churn to the right.
(Weekly Courier, 13 February 1913, Launceston Reference Library)

4.3 Kentish

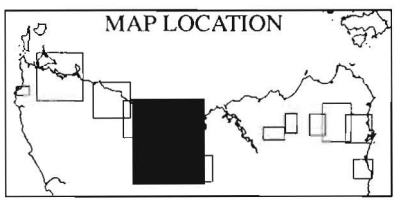
Sheffield was another town where the butter factory movement quickly took hold. As early as March 1893 what was called a cooperative company for the manufacture of butter, cheese and bacon was being formed there, largely as a result of a visit of James McCormack and his Travelling Dairy (see Chapter 1.3). At a gathering assembled at Barrington to farewell the dairy, over 200 shares were subscribed within ten minutes for the construction of a creamery.

The Kentish Butter and Cheese Factory Company drew up its rules along the same lines as the Tasmanian Dairy Co. in Launceston (see Chapter 5.1), and its first directors were T.J. Clerke, W. York, C.A. French, James Boucher, G. Waterhouse, J. Husband and John Hope who became the chairman. The factory was built at what is now 14 Main Street, Sheffield, and was opened on 12 October 1893. It was operated by T.J. Clerke. The creamery, run by J.B. Charleston, was opened at Lower Barrington on 20 October. It was situated on the north-west corner of the junction of Lower Barrington Road and Paloona Road at the head of a creek (map reference Castra 396291). Another creamery, built by Kelcey, was opened at the Nook Falls (map reference Railton 423244). It was probably powered by a waterwheel, but its dates of operation are unknown.[51]

Map 4.2 DEVONPORT & KENTISH



Scale: 1 km



KEY:

Sites not labelled on the map:

■ Factories

1. First Wilmot
2. Second Wilmot
3. Ertler: Devonport
4. First Devonport
5. Second Devonport

✢ Creameries

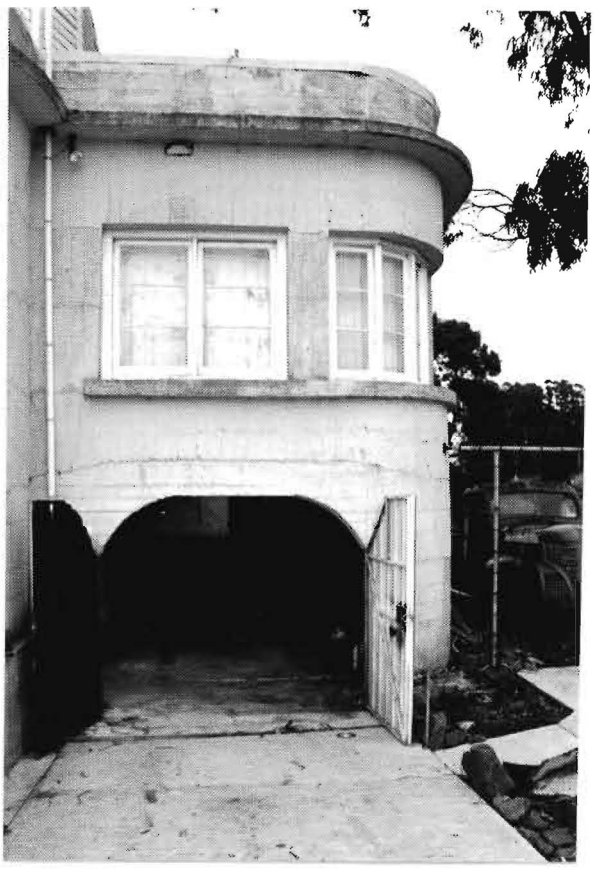
✸ Farm Cheese

6. Richards
7. Williams (Narrawa)
8. Pardoe
9. Aul Derrig
10. Northdown
11. Larooma

Don Falls 1993, site of the Nook creamery.

The Kentish factory was the first in the area of Devonport to be established but it was not a success. It appears that the supply was never very good, with directors pleading to farmers to increase the amount of cream delivered to the factory. In the 1894-5 season total production reached only 41 tons, a figure not high enough for a dividend to be paid. Presumably in an endeavour to encourage farmers, the factory kept open during the winter for that year at least, with the manager making up boxes on the off-days to help meet working expenses.[52]

As with other factories, the market from the West Coast mines was important. The factory struggled on until 1898, when drought conditions on the mainland led to such high crop prices that many farmers abandoned dairying for cultivation and the factory was forced to close. It was let to Bartram and Sons for three years at 30 shillings per week while working or 10 shillings per week while standing. Mr Christensen for Bartram and Sons said they would re-start the factory provided they had a guarantee of at least 200 gallons daily, but even this very low figure was not met as it appears that the factory never reopened.[53]



The garage floor which is the only surviving remnant of the Kentish butter factory.

It was eventually bought by Mr Cohen and used as a store until 1907, when the Belton brothers bought it and opened it as a bacon factory. This factory was still in operation in 1911 and perhaps until 1916 when it was listed in the *Post Office Directory,* but shortly thereafter the building was destroyed by fire. In the mid-1940s Alf Rowe used the same foundations to build a house which was later used as a Youth Hostel for many years. It has only recently been converted into a private house again. The only surviving remnant of the factory is the concrete garage floor which still shows the marks where machinery stood, although whether this was from the butter factory or the bacon factory is unclear. The Lower Barrington creamery was in ruins by the early 1920s.[54]

With the closure of the Kentish factory, dairying almost disappeared from the area except for a few who continued to make farm butter and cheese. There were moves in 1901 to restart cooperative dairying operations, but nothing eventuated, probably due to fear of another failure. In 1902 a correspondent to the *North-West Post* articulated what was probably a fairly widespread feeling when he said of the Kentish factory: "...one of those useless objects employed by the Government, called a dairy expert, persuaded the people that it would benefit the district to have a butter factory. The district erected one with their own money...but when they saw that it would pay them better to close it and produce other lines, like a wise people they did so."[55]

One who continued with dairying was William Henry, the original manager of the Van Diemen's Land Bank, who took up 1000 acres in the Claude Road area in the 1890s and called it Gowrie after his home in Scotland. When pastures were established, the partnership of Henry and Moon began dairying with 100 cows and ten people to milk, a very large concern for the time. Jim Barber was employed as the manager of a cheese factory, which was built between the Claude Road and the Dasher River (map reference Wilmot 354106). It is thought that the factory lasted only a few years (perhaps only until the Wilmot butter factory opened - see below). The wooden building was then converted to a dwelling, but in the 1950s it was destroyed by a bush-fire. The foundations are still visible just past the bend and to the left of a track to a gravel pit.[56]

Foundations of the Claude Road cheese factory 1993.

Two others who continued with dairying in a big way were George Williams and the Richards family further west at Wilmot. George Williams had come from Pardoe and was a progressive dairyman, said to be the first in Wilmot to own a milking machine. He built a cheese factory at Narrawa at his home to the south-west of the junction of Lehmans Road and Narrawa Road (map reference Wilmot 275173). In evidence to the 1902 Railway Enquiry he reported that in 1901 he had made 13.5 tons of cheese, with the produce taken by cart to Leith at a rate of 25 shillings a ton or to Devonport for 30 shillings a ton. In 1905, he was reported to be "evidently" the largest dairyman in the state with 140 cows and plans to increase the number to 400 the following season. He had also converted to Canadian cheddar cheese, and had the latest appliances: American hoops, knives, gang presses and jacketed vats. Unfortunately Williams lost the whole of his factory and cheese plant to fire in June the same year.[57]

He rebuilt, but it is not known if he ever dairied on the scale anticipated. His grandson remembers that in the 1920s he had about 120 cows. His new cheese room was a large wooden shed built on legs with metal around the legs to render it rat-proof. Three cheesemakers employed by Williams

were Len Griffiths, James Richards (see below) and George Bramich. Williams was still making cheese into the 1930s and its high quality is still remembered. He also made butter for a period each year for home use and to supply storekeepers. There is now no trace of his dairy and factory, although the homestead is still there.[58]

During the summer when the Narrawa grass dried off, Williams drove his herd across Middlesex Plains to the Vale of Belvoir where cheese and butter was made and carted by bullock team to Wilmot, Sheffield and Devonport. Accompanied by his grandson Reg Bramich, he was still doing this in the 1920s with a herd of about 120, but by then only butter was made at the Vale. The buttermakers were Gladys Griffiths and Victoria Lucas and the party would spend about ten weeks there. The cowshed and cheese room were just north of where the old Van Diemen's Land track crosses the creek (map reference Pencil Pine 074995), but the only remains are a mound where the fireplace or perhaps the boiler was.[59]

Reg Bramich at the site of the Williams factory, Vale of Belvoir, 1993. The mound in the foreground marks where the chimney or perhaps the boiler was situated. The huts in the background are later structures.

Remnants of the old Van Diemen's Land track to the Vale of Belvoir 1993.

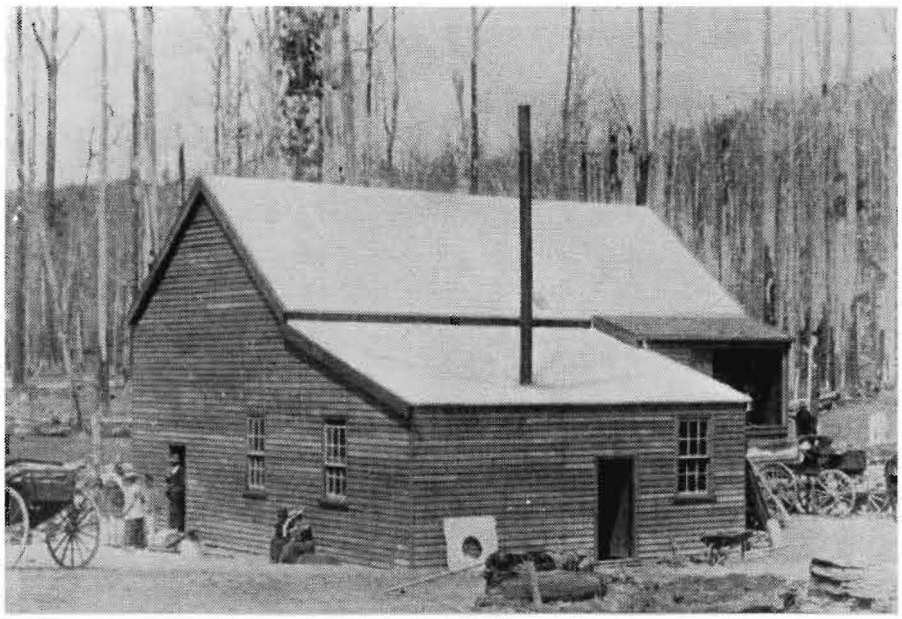
The other large-scale farm dairying was at Homewood on the Richards' property. John Richards and his younger brother James drove a herd of Durham cross cattle from Caveside in 1895 and began scrubbing the land to the west of Wilmot Road roughly opposite where Frankcombe's Road joins it. In 1902 John was milking 35 cows and averaging six pounds [3kg] of butter, which was evidently made by his wife Jane as she won First Prize at the West Devon Agricultural Society Show at Ulverstone in 1902 for the best box or tub of butter. Although his herd was not in the same league as Williams', he still had almost twice as many cows as another dairy farmer, R. Quaile, who was also commented on by the *Weekly Courier* correspondent in 1902. Butter was carted to Railton, evidently to be taken by train to market.[60]

John Richards also employed his brother James, who had worked for George Williams (see above), to make cheese which was carted to Devonport. The cheese house on Homewood was built by T.

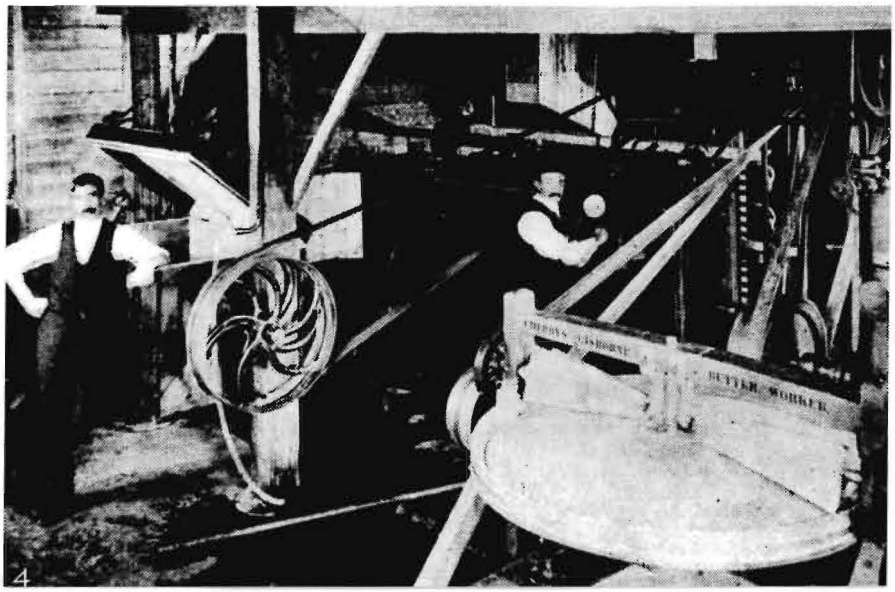
Hill and consisted of split timber walls with chaff or sawdust as insulation. It was built on the west side of a small creek (map reference Wilmot 310197). James was regarded as a very good cheesemaker, but around 1906 he moved to King Island where he is believed to have worked in a cheese factory. With the opening of the Wilmot butter factory (see below) most of the Richards' cream went there, but a little cheese continued to be made. The cheese room finally collapsed just a few years ago.[61]

Richards' farm 1906. The cheese room is the second building from the left. The cheesemaker James Richards is in the centre foreground next to the cow. *(Richards photo, QVMAG - courtesy Len Fisher)*

With so many people interested in dairying in the Wilmot area it is probably not surprising that by 1904 there were moves to set up a butter factory. A.C. Dehle of the Hobart company Dehle, Bennison and Co came in June to give advice and the decision was taken to set up the Wilmot Cooperative Butter Factory. George Williams gave an acre of land near Fall's Creek and building began almost immediately to designs supplied by William Newport, engineer to Dehle, Bennison and Co. This company in fact owned the factory as only 60 of the possible 1500 shares had been taken up by November. The 1905 *Post Office Directory* lists Dehle, Bennison and Co. as at Hobart and Wilmot. The factory, costing 1700 pounds, was built on the southern side of Williams Road just before the Sheffield Road, now the Lake Barrington Road, goes off to the north (map reference Wilmot 313171).[62]



Eastern view of the Wilmot butter factory 1904. *(Weekly Courier, 12 November 1904, Launceston Reference Library)*



Interior of the Wilmot factory 1904. *(Weekly Courier, 12 November 1904, Launceston Reference Library)*

The Wilmot Dairy Factory Co. was officially opened a few days before 5 November 1904 by Dairy Expert Conlon. Local directors were R. Quaile and John Richards, mentioned above as keen dairy farmers, M.U. Maddern, J.W Geale, J.B. Charleston and R.F. Luttrell. The factory had a 400-pound [180kg] Cherry concussion churn, and the manager was C.R. Bamford (or Bomford), who had formerly been the manager of the Tasmanian Produce and Cool Stores' Launceston butter factory. The factory began with a supply from almost 500 cows and the management had good expectations of another 300 in a short time, so the problem of short supply faced by the Kentish factory does not seem to have been repeated. Indeed the factory did well, producing over one and a half tons weekly by December. It was of course an ideal time to start a factory, as dairying was going ahead everywhere (see Chapter 1.5).[63]

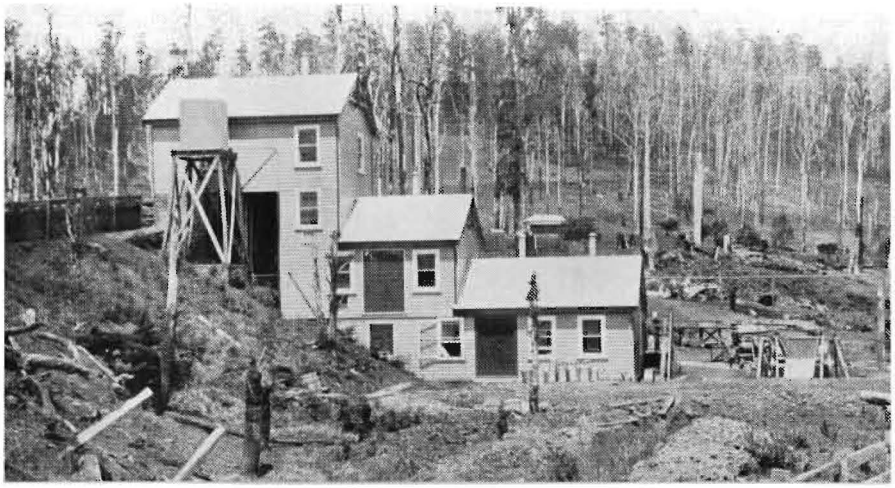
A wagon to collect cream was, at least initially, sent regularly to Kindred, Kentish, Staverton and Sheffield, with residents of the last who supplied Wilmot said to be regretting that their local factory had closed. By July 1905 the local directors had taken over from Dehle, Bennison and Co. and after a full year's operation they were able to announce a slight profit. In 1906 Bomford returned to Victoria and he was replaced by H. Lonie, jnr, as manager. He was evidently the son of the man who was manager at the Burnie factory of the Tasmanian Produce and Cool Stores (see Chapter 4.1.2.). In 1905-6 the factory made 31 tons, indicating that it was a relatively small concern. Even in the boom year of 1910-11, only 39 tons of butter were produced, and this was an increase of 16 tons over the previous year.[64]

However, quality was high under the manager D.E. Forbes. In the 1911-12 season "Wilmot butter was 100% First grade and was beaten by only one point for the highest average grade in Tasmania." As "Lumeah" in the *Weekly Courier* pointed out: "This is highly creditable when it is remembered that the butter, after being taken out of the cool room at the factory, has to be carted 28 miles in a wagon to port. It has then sometimes to lie on the wharf, and afterwards stand the journey to Melbourne as ordinary cargo, and is perhaps three or four days before it gets back under cold storage conditions." The difficulties of transporting the butter to market were such that in the hot summer weather the wagon took the long laborious route to Devonport at night to minimise spoilage.[65]

But the Wilmot factory was to face two body blows. The first was the opening in 1911 of a Devonport factory (see Chapter 4.4) which aggressively entered Wilmot's territory and competed for supplies. Two days a week a cart went from Devonport to Sheffield via Barrington, and two days a week it went via Nook, collecting as much as a ton and a half of cream per trip. A cart from Wilmot still regularly collected in the Sheffield district and the Wilmot factory certainly could not have liked this competition. The relative scale of the two operations can be judged from the fact that in November 1911 the Devonport factory in total paid out 2000 pounds for cream, while that at Wilmot paid 800 pounds. It is interesting to note that some Sheffield farmers were also supplying the Launceston butter factories. It is probable that this was a long-standing practice, as according to the *Post Office Directory* for 1898-9 the Launceston-based Tasmanian Dairy Company had a creamery at

Sheffield. In fact it is possible that they took over the Nook and/or the Barrington creamery when the Kentish factory folded.[66]

The second blow for Wilmot was even worse: by August 1912 the factory had burnt down. But the local farmers felt that their prosperity was due to the development of the factory and they immediately made plans to rebuild. While the rebuilding was going on a temporary plant was put into use and the remaining cream was taken to Ulverstone. The new factory was built on the north-west corner of the junction of Narrawa and Main Roads (map reference Wilmot 315184). The decision to move may have been taken because the first site was somewhat swampy, but the new position had two distinct advantages. The first was the proximity of Falls Creek which enabled the factory to use water power, and the second was the steepness of the terrain which meant that the factory could operate using gravitation (see Chapter 1.5).[67]



The second Wilmot factory 1913. *(Weekly Courier, 30 January 1913, Launceston Reference Library)*

The new factory was in use by the middle of January 1913 and was fully described in the *Weekly Courier*, with "Lumeah" calling it "as complete and up-to-date a plant as there is in this state. This is something for a new back district like Wilmot to be proud of." The building was erected by carpenter James Charleston on four levels, "and the cream has not to be handled from the time it leaves the carts until it reaches the churn." The cream receiving room abutted the roadway and cream could be tipped into vats at that level, pass through a cooler on the next floor, then through to a cream maturing room on the next floor and finally into the 600 pounds [270kg] combined Simplex churn on the ground floor. Water for washing butter was from a nearby well. To provide power a small wooden weir had been constructed across the Falls Creek about 90m upstream, with the water being diverted into a channel to then pass over a water wheel three metres in diameter and two metres wide. Although there had been earlier attempts, for example at Emu Bay and Ulverstone (see Chapters 4.1.1 & 4.2), Wilmot was the only water-powered factory in the state.[68]

The total cost of the factory was 1500 pounds. There were about 90 suppliers, with few herds above 20 cows. An exception was R. Quaile, the chairman of directors, who had increased his herd to 35 and was also unusual in milking through the winter, although only about 10 cows were kept in milk as a rule. He was said to be "the largest dairyman" supplying the factory. Quaile was to install a water-powered milking machine, probably in late 1913.[69]

The Wilmot factory continued to function until at least 1920 when in January it was reported as making almost a ton a week. At that time the manager was Lee Sandman. But in August that year there was a proposal to amalgamate the Wilmot and Ulverstone factories. A ton a week at the height of the season is not a very large output and improved transport is known to have been a factor in the factory's closure, as it was much less difficult to convey cream to a coastal factory. Nothing more can be stated with certainty. Possibly there was a dwindling supply as in 1915 it was reported that nearly all the cows had gone from West Kentish, although in 1917, a boom year, many farmers in Claude Road were said to be turning to dairying. Whatever the situation, by 1926 R. Quaile was chairman of the Ulverstone Butter Factory which implies that the Wilmot factory had closed, and in the same decade the building was destroyed by fire. A house which is still standing was built on the foundations of the first butter factory, but the second site is still vacant, although with some stonework which may be remnants of the building.[70]

4.4 Devonport and environs

Although the Devonport area was slow to get its own butter factory, dairying was carried on nearby from quite early times. This particularly occurred on the several thousand acres of reclaimed marsh land adjacent to the coast which stretched from the Mersey River east to Port Sorell. The beach was the only road to Port Sorell and this was the way cheese and butter was taken to market.[71]

Marcus Loane started mixed farming on the 500 acres of Aul Derrig, Northdown, in 1855, supplying both the local market and the Victorian goldfields with cheese and kegs of butter. Family legend has it that the cheese was pressed down with men's feet. Later he employed one Bryan as cheesemaker. When the *Mercury*'s special correspondent went "Through Tasmania" in 1884, Loane had a herd of 35 mostly Durham, Hereford and Devon milking cows, some of which were of nearly pure breed, and the dairyman was making cheese. Loane still had an "extensive dairy" in 1900, but he stopped making cheese soon afterwards. The cheese house was next to a creek on the flats (map reference Devonport 554423). There are no remains of the cheese house.[72]

The nearby Northdown property of 700 acres was also known for its dairying, with the Stott family dairying at the Sugarloaf from the mid-50s. In 1884 the property had 50 dairy cows and Northdown cheese had obtained first prize at the Latrobe show. The cheese house was a 6m by 4m building excavated inside for coolness to a depth of over a metre, with the excavation lined with blackwood staves. It was located adjacent to the Northdown homestead (map reference Devonport 564425). It is still standing, although it was moved 50m to the east in about 1958.

The Wilsons at Larooma at Wilson's Point, Port Sorell, were also dairymen making cheese and butter from the 1850s onwards. Henry Wilson's entry in the 1900 *Cyclopedia of Tasmania* states that "for the past fifty years [he] has lived the life of a...dairy farmer". His son Lisle Wilson made cheese from the 1880s until 1910. According to his entry in the 1931 *Tasmanian Cyclopedia*, "the Larooma cheddar cheeses [were] of excellent quality, finding a ready market". The cheese house was near the homestead (approx map reference Port Sorell 614461), but it was moved this century to Northdown (map reference Devonport 560426). The Dumbletons at Taroona not far to the south also made cheese at least in the 1890s.[73]

But perhaps the best-known of these dairy farms was at Pardoe where the Devonport airport now is. In the 1860s the area which was to form the dairy pastures for the next fifty years was sown to grass, and in the 1870s the property was bought by Robert Stewart. By 1884 he was already well-known for cheese production, with several families employed milking 80 cows to produce 12 or 13 tons of cheese a year which, according to the correspondent going "Through Tasmania", stood "A1 with the public, and demand would not flag with double the production". Stewart was using two Huon pine tubs of 4ft 6inches [1.4m] in diameter and 2ft 6in [0.8m] in depth, plus another of half that capacity. The cheese was pressed into "tubs of inch thick blackwood staves, stoutly hooped, having perforated sides". This was before the metal American hoops became common. A new cheese room had just been built with shelves of Huon pine as the oil from the wood had been found to deter mites and small flies.[74]

By 1892 the *Daily Telegraph* in its daily quotations of market prices was quoting Pardoe cheese separately, the only cheese to be so singled out. Stewart went to meetings in the 1890s which were to discuss the feasibility of setting up a butter factory in the area, but his view was that such factories benefited the smaller farmer with a few cows "as the large ones were able to do their dairying quite well at present" (see Chapter 1.3). But by 1895 Stewart had engaged the Launceston firm of J.& T. Gunn to build a new butter and cheese factory on the dunes close to the sea on his property. "Ploughshare" from the *Examiner* had visited it by February of that year and was highly impressed, writing that it was "a fine, substantial structure" which "far surpasses anything of the kind hitherto attempted in Tasmania". The factory building was 71 feet [22m] long and 23 feet [7m] wide "inside the walls". The solid concrete floor "looks as if it had been built for all time" and was topped by brick walls which were plastered inside. Inside, the building was divided into three rooms of roughly equal dimensions for the separator room, the cheese room and the butter room, although at the time of "Ploughshare"'s visit the churns had not been installed. A milking shed for 20 cows at a time was nearby.

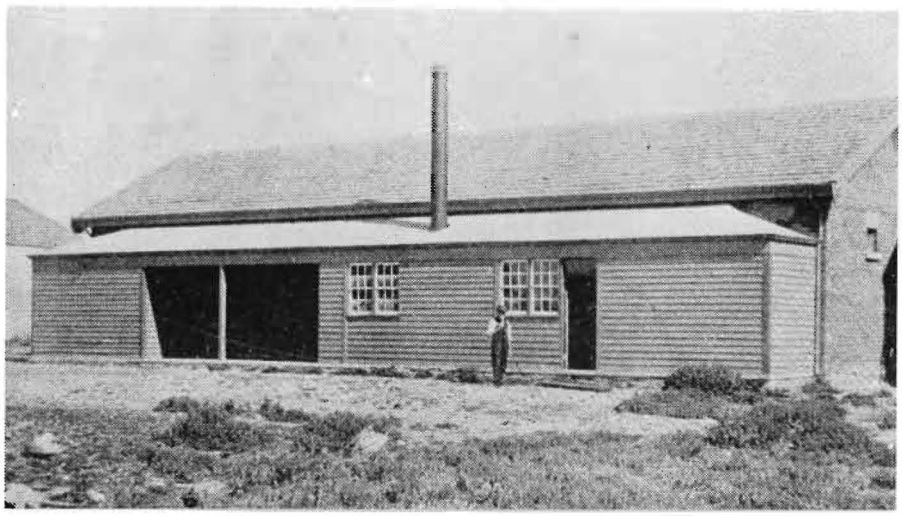
In 1901 the "Messrs Stewart" brought their factory up-to-date with modern appliances for both cheese

and butter and announced they were in a position to treat milk from 600-700 cows. They were trying to arrange for an outside supply, explaining they were prepared to purchase milk outright or run the factory on cooperative principles. The outcome is not known.[75]

However, Dairy Expert Conlon was so impressed with the facilities that he accepted Stewart's offer to hold practical demonstrations of cheese and butter making there. The first of these was held in 1901. In 1905 the Stewarts sold out to Arthur Hart of Exton, who indicated his interest in new advances in dairying by purchasing a Lawrence-Kennedy-Gillies milking machine for eight cows shortly afterwards. Five months later he was said to be well-satisfied with it. However, in 1907 he sold Pardoe to W.H. Room.[76]

Conlon again used the "modern and extensive dairying plant" at Pardoe for full-scale Dairy Schools in 1909 and 1910. It is interesting to note that he imported cultures for soft cheeses - Camembert and Brie - to demonstrate the methods of making them. It was to be another forty-five years before such cheeses were made commercially in Tasmania (see Chapter 4.1.4). For the second school in 1910 it was "Room and Balstrup" who made their factory available. The Norwegian brothers of G. & M. Balstrop possibly originally leased but then bought the property, and they were the last of the cheesemakers at Pardoe. They were listed in the *Post Office Directory* for 1910-11 but the factory evidently closed soon afterwards, possibly because of the opening of the Devonport butter factory (see below).[77]

The Pardoe factory was near the homestead just behind sand ridges at Moorlands Beach (map reference Devonport 522428-9). A dirt road now runs between the ridges and the site of the factory, which was part of an impressive series of buildings which included the dairy and stables. The Devonport airport runways are not far away. The buildings were burnt down about 1950, but the foundations still remain to show quite well the extent of this important factory.[78]



The Pardoe factory in 1901. *(Weekly Courier, 14 December 1901, AOT)*

The foundations of the Pardoe factory in 1993. The concrete floor "built for all time" has so far lasted well. The metal structure has been added in recent times.

Moves to have a central butter factory in the Devonport area began as early as March 1892. Just two months after the Table Cape company issued their prospectus a meeting was held to discuss setting up a butter factory in the West Devon area, probably at Latrobe, but it was hampered by the fact that very few farmers had turned up, and nothing eventuated (see Chapter 1.3). A second meeting was held in 1894 at which it was moved: "That, in order to develop the butter and eventually the pork industry, it is resolved that a company be formed, to be called the Devon Butter and Cool Storage Company, at Devonport, with a capital of 10 000 pounds, with creameries at West Devon, Sheffield, Barrington, Railton, Nook, Thirlstane, Sassafras, Latrobe and wherever sufficient inducement offers".

The grandiose nature of these plans had some of the more cautious people in the room asking where they would get the necessary finance and the motion was eventually passed with no mention of the capital required nor of where any creameries might be built. The problem was that cool storage would certainly have improved marketing conditions for butter (although the problem faced by some factories in the 1893-4 season when there was a shortage of shipping space to England was not repeated) and was probably essential for the development of the pork industry which the meeting also had in mind, but it did require a large amount of capital which was difficult to raise at this period of the 1890s (see Chapter 1.4).

One of the reasons for discussing the setting up of a factory was the very low prices being paid for potatoes (12-20 shillings a ton) and wheat (three shillings a bushel was a maximum price), but these sort of prices hardly gave farmers much spare cash to contribute, as the problems the other factories were facing made only too obvious (see for example Emu Bay, Ulverstone, Kentish and Launceston). Parochialism was mentioned but in general most speakers were happy to see the factory located at Devonport because of its advantages as a port. It was decided to appeal to the government for help but the appeal was unsuccessful and nothing more was done for over a decade.[79]

In 1906 when the butter factory movement was well under way and showing considerable success elsewhere (see Chapter 1.5), there were plans to set up a butter factory and cool stores at Devonport with Gustav Dehle from the Hobart firm of Dehle, Bennison and Co. agreeing to finance them. He had already financed Wilmot in 1904 and Yolla in 1906 (see Chapters 4.3 and 3.2), but again nothing eventuated. It was not until 1910 that firm plans - for a butter factory only - were made, although even then a planned public meeting had to be postponed when the guest speaker, A. Wilson, the manager of the South Gippsland Cooperative, could not leave Victoria. But by July 1911 directors had been elected, all shares had been applied for and a site chosen on the Spreyton Road at West Devonport near the Victoria Bridge (map reference Latrobe 465394). The site, on an acre belonging to G.W. Murray, was said to be "an ideal spot for a factory, as it is within reasonable distance of the railway, and there is also a good drainage into the river".[80]

The factory was a wooden building lined with iron and with a concrete floor, and was erected by the Wilson brothers. Complete with machinery it cost 1500 pounds and it was powered by electricity. The directors were J. Luck (chairman), H. McFie, H. Rockliff, J. Brown and C. Wallis, and they appointed S.C. Anderson as manager. This was probably a good appointment, as Anderson was a Dane who had for some years been the Government Dairy Expert in New Zealand. Anderson and secretary P. O'Dea spent some time in the Sheffield and West Kentish districts getting support from the farmers, and they engaged W. Pullen to cart cream from Barrington. The Kentish area was obviously regarded as one of the best sources of supplies for the new factory and the butter brand adopted had a view of Mount Roland on it. By December a ton and a half of cream was being gathered on each trip the Devonport cart took to Sheffield, twice a week by the Nook road and twice a week via Barrington.[81]

It is of interest to note that "Messrs Griffiths and O'Grady's motor-bus" was employed to collect cream. According to the *North-West Post*, "This should prove a most expeditious method of conveying the produce to the factory". It is also almost certainly the first example of a butter factory using motor transport, although it is not certain how long it continued to operate.[82]

The Devonport and Districts Cooperative Factory began working on 27 October 1911. The *North-West Post* commented that: "There is nothing elaborate, yet everything necessary is in the factory", while a "Victorian gentleman" remarked that "their factory was one of the most efficient and up-to-date that he had seen erected for the money". The "Simplex" churn had a capacity of 1300 pounds [600kg]. In November the factory paid out 2000 pounds for cream and by December it was making

four to five tons of butter a week, a most impressive start. Quality was high as well, as the first shipment to London topped the prices for Australian butter. It was, of course, a very good time to start a factory as 1911 was a boom time for dairy production (see Chapter 1.5). Even in June output was over four tons a week and management was thinking of extending the building.[83]

But the dream start belied an uncertain future. Although it started life as a cooperative, by 1915 it is listed in the Devonport Assessment Roll as owned and occupied by Edwards and Strettle, so it had quite quickly become a proprietary concern. In the 1916 *Post Office Directory* it was named simply the Devonport Butter Factory. It is possible that Arthur Weatherhead from Victoria became the manager at this time; he was certainly there by May 1919 when he noted that the butter that season was much better due to pasteurisation. This comment is itself of interest, as the Devonport factory had been asked in 1913 to install a pasteuriser as an experiment (see Chapter 1.6). Obviously the experiment had not lasted long.[84]

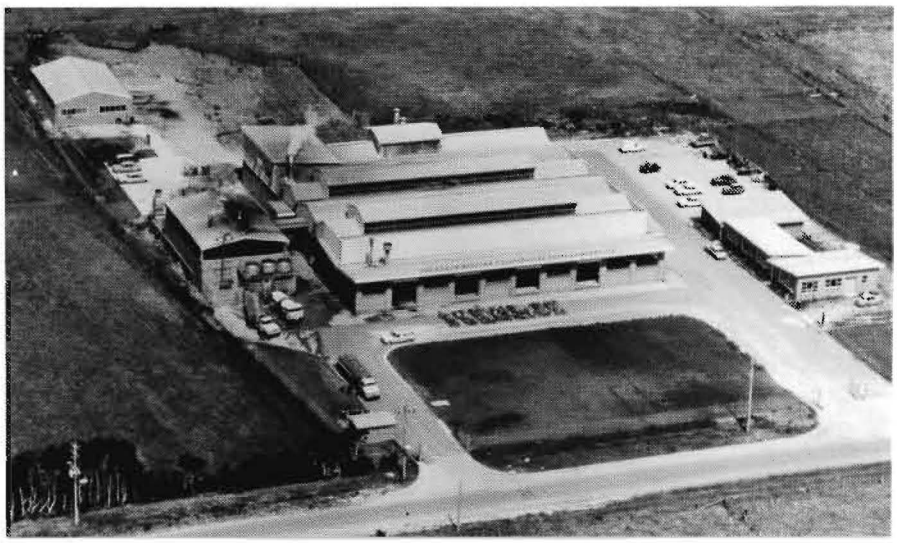
It is known that the factory failed again, and it is more than probable that this was around 1920. In 1921 Charles Edwards was listed in the Assessment Roll as the owner, but there was no occupier. (It is not known if this Charles Edwards had any connection with the owner of the Stanley butter factory - see Chapter 2.1). Later that year the "Devonport Butter Factory Pty Ltd" was inserted in the Assessment Roll. In 1922 A.S. Weatherhead was listed as the manager again and he continues to be from then on. As his daughter recalls that when the factory failed Weatherhead temporarily lost his position and then was brought back, it is most likely that the failure was around 1920-21. It is of interest that while Weatherhead was not working there he and his tester, Miss Isobel Lowther, attempted to support themselves by making soft cheese in jars, but they experienced some difficulty with its keeping quality. Lowther also returned to the factory when it reopened. She is remembered for having invented a means of condensing milk, the directions for which she sold to Cadbury's.[85]

When the factory failed some farmers were left with valueless cheques, but fortunately it was during the winter so the problem was smaller than it might otherwise have been. Prominent produce merchant Alexander Fyfe Stenhouse eventually took over the factory, with his employees Jack Coleman and Athol Mather the financial managers. Under their control the factory survived, but in 1929 Stenhouse sold both the Devonport and Deloraine factories to North-Western for 7000 pounds, thus helping to make North-Western the biggest dairy company in the state (see Chapter 4.1.2). Weatherhead remained as manager until his death in 1936.[86]

The second Devonport factory built in 1936. A portion of the original wooden factory can be seen on the right. *(QVMAG)*

He was replaced by C.E. Armstrong, who had been at Ringarooma (see Chapter 5 3). In that same year North-Western decided to upgrade the Devonport factory and built a new brick one right next door at a cost of 1987 pounds. The original building remained as a can store. In the early to mid-40s Devonport had the third largest production of butter in the state, behind only Smithton and Deloraine (see Figure 1.5). In 1958 the factory was upgraded again at a cost of almost 10 000 pounds to cope with the ever-increasing supply being experienced by all factories (see Chapter 1.8). But by 1961 North-Western had decided to diversify and move into products other than butter. For this they needed to collect whole milk for which a new, bigger site was necessary. They eventually settled on

land at East Devonport, fittingly called Pardoe Downs, already a well-established dairy name. The new building in Caroline Street was finished in May 1964 and a start was made with the manufacture of butter in August, to be followed by roller dried skim milk powder for stock in December. The old Devonport factory was closed in May and was later to be demolished to make way for the widening of Spreyton Road.[87]



An aerial view of the Caroline Street factory, East Devonport, 1967. *(QVMAG)*

The factory at East Devonport has been progressively extended to cater for different products (casein in 1966, spray dried powder in 1974) and for the transfer of the head office from Burnie in 1977. Following the amalgamation in 1981 of North-Western with the other major dairy companies to form United Milk Tasmania Limited (see Chapter 1.8), rationalisations occurred which ironically left Devonport, which had been one of the last areas to set up a butter factory, the only factory on the Tasmanian mainland which makes butter.[88]

In the 1950s another small cheese factory was begun by Hungarian-born Alec Ertler, who had made sheep cheese before migrating to Australia in 1939. In August 1954 there was a meeting of the Dairy Factories Registration Board to determine Ertler's application to operate premises on his son Stephen's Forth farm as a cheese factory. Unlike Vyhnalek (see Chapter 2.2), Ertler does not appear to have faced opposition from the chief dairy factories. Perhaps this can be put down to the fact that North-Western supplied the butter necessary for Ertler to make his processed cheese. His first factory was a cement brick shed about 5m x 8m with a cement sheet roof built on the northern side of Forthside Road just before it takes a sharp right-hand bend towards Bellamy Road (map reference Kindred 392376). He began by making cream cheese and possibly cottage cheese which he sold to delicatessens in Devonport, Launceston and Hobart. The necessary milk was bought from a neighbour, Bert Porter.[89]

The cheese sold very well and the farm premises quickly proved to be too small, so Ertler went into partnership with his son George and built much larger cement brick premises at 39 Don Road, Devonport. They were registered there by September 1955. They brought out a European cheesemaker to help them make pecorino, parmesan, provolone, mozzarella and fetta cheeses, and they also made Mersey Valley cheese. By this time, and possibly earlier, they used the label "Alex Food Products". It is thought that less attention was paid to cream cheese after the move to Devonport. At some stage Ertler had also begun making yoghurt for a friend and that expanded to be part of the business, with sales in Devonport and later Hobart. He was the first to make yoghurt in commercial quantities. By this time the Ertlers had a truck picking up milk from a number of suppliers. They had some association with the Melbourne importers Soccomin who in 1959 financed a study tour by George to Italy.[90]

But the factory faced problems. Milk was expensive to buy, and there was tough competition from subsidised imports of Italian cheese. In 1960 the factory was closed and 125 tons of cheese transferred to Lactos. However, Alec continued to make yoghurt in the wooden dairy at his son Stephen's farm a little to the west of his original factory (map reference Kindred 390376). At the beginning he used milk from Stephen's cows, but when Stephen stopped dairying in 1963, Alec

bought milk in. Every week about 160-200 pint [570ml] jars of yoghurt were made with the label "Forthdale Dairy Farm". Ertler finally stopped in 1966. The original factory was pulled down c.1990, but the second in Don Road is still there, although considerably altered from the street side by its present owners, Gunns. The farm dairy is also still there.[91]

4.5 Deloraine and environs *

The Deloraine area played a large part in the dairy industry in the nineteenth century, with several large farms being used for extensive dairying operations. Part of the reason for this was the cool weather which, in the days before refrigeration, was necessary to promote the keeping of the butter and cheese. One large dairy was at Wesleydale, Chudleigh (map reference Mole Creek 535996), a description of which is quoted in Chapter 1.2. There in 1883 40 dishes of milk were set for the cream to rise for the making of butter. Other well-known dairies belonged to John Woodberry at Bowerbank whose obituary mentioned that he was well-known for superior class butter and cheese, and W.F. von Bibra at Dunorlan House on Elmers Road (map reference Deloraine 633063). In December 1893 it was reported that the latter's house, furniture, barn "the creamery and all utensils, including engine, two separators and two cheese presses etc" were destroyed by fire. This was obviously a large-scale operation. There was also the Warren family at Rosedale in the Caveside district. In the 1880s, and possibly earlier, they milked 100 Devons and made both cheese and butter, storing it on shelves they erected in one of the Wet Caves along Lingers Road. When the storage cupboards were full, the produce was taken to Launceston for sale.[92]

The existence of such dairies might explain why the area was slow to set up a central butter factory. A second reason could well have been the existence of the railway which allowed cream to be sent easily to the Tasmanian Dairy Company factory in Launceston which began in 1892 (see Chapter 5.1). This company set up its first creamery in the Deloraine district at Caveside on the southern side of the Chudleigh-Caveside road where it crosses Cubit's Creek (map reference Mole Creek 546941). Clement Byard the manager put through 42 gallons on the first day, 14 December 1892, and was able to deliver one can of cream to the Chudleigh railway station. Byard lamented the fluctuating support of the farmers, and was pleased the following March when he "got word from Town [Launceston] to offer fourpence a gallon for milk, and to lend cans". But it was too late in the season for this to lead to a sudden rise in the amount of milk delivered, and the creamery soon closed for the winter. It continued operating in the summer months until at least 1898, with Byard carting wood, cleaning the firebox, maintaining the engine, supervising two separations daily and then delivering the cream to Chudleigh.[93]

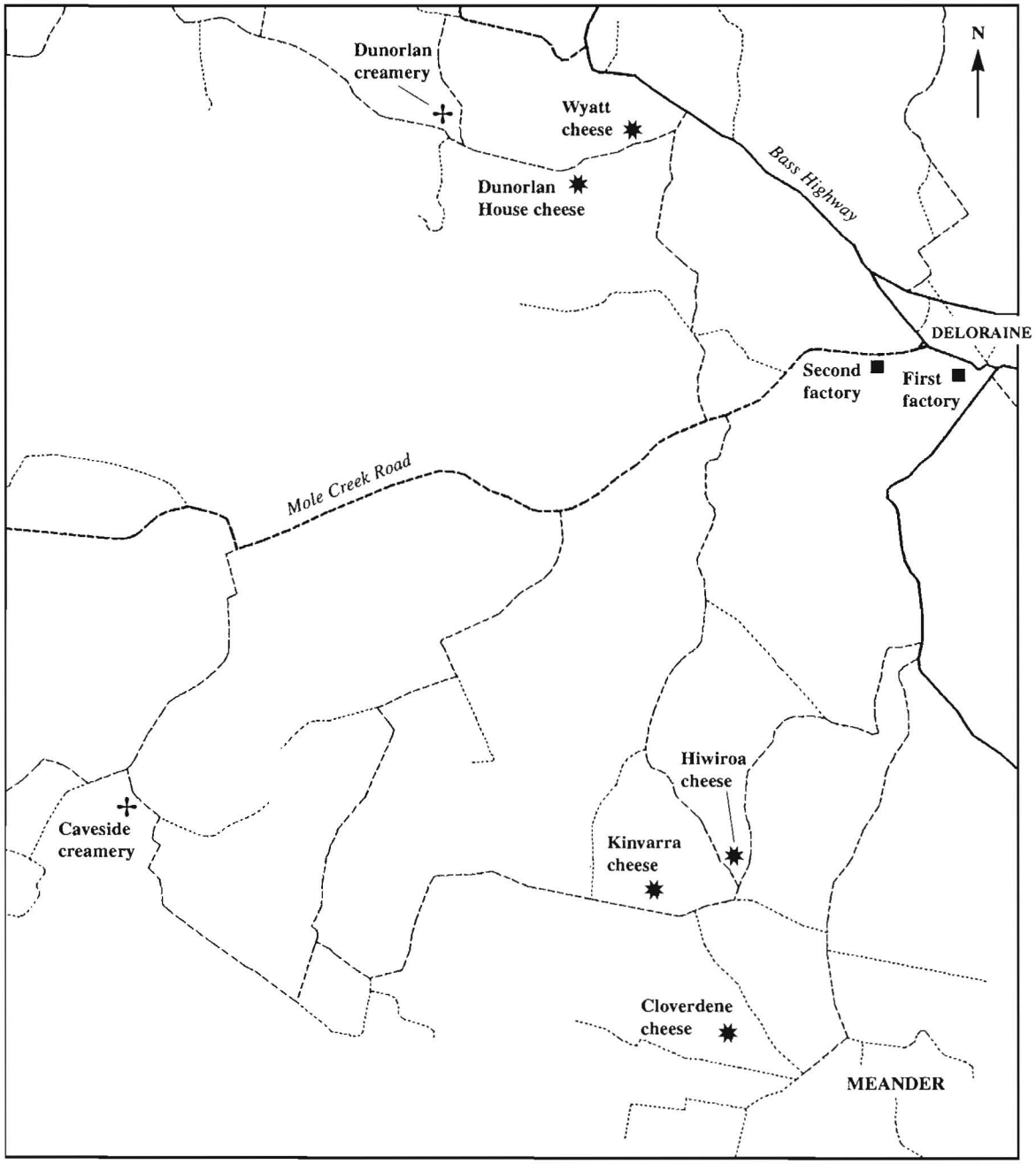
A year after the Caveside creamery began, two more opened at Chudleigh and Dunorlan to forward cream to the Launceston butter factory. The site of the Chudleigh creamery is unknown, but as that at Dunorlan was next to the railway station (map reference Deloraine 609074) it is possible and indeed likely that the Chudleigh one was next to the station too, as it would have made the sending of cream to Launceston much easier.[94]

Once again there were problems with supply, with farmers reported to be reluctant to send their milk because they did not know if it would pay. Many had sold their cows because of the depression, and considerable dissatisfaction was caused by the factory lowering the price from threepence to twopence halfpenny. By November it was reported that the flow of milk to the Dunorlan creamery was steadily increasing, and it must have worked reasonably well as it appears to have been still in operation at least in 1896 when William Burke was listed as its manager in the *Post Office Directory*. However, the creameries had closed by 1900 at the latest.[95]

But there was always a strong local feeling that Deloraine should not have to rely on Launceston. Commenting on the opening of the Chudleigh creamery in 1893, for example, the *Deloraine-Westbury Advocate* wished the creamery success, but felt that Deloraine should have been able to support a butter factory itself. But the feelings did not turn to action until 1900 when the dairy expert

* Much of the information in this section has been taken from the author's *Deloraine's Industrial Heritage: A Survey*, Launceston, 1986. However, it has been considerably re-written in the light of further research.

Map 4.3 DELORAINE & ENVIRONS



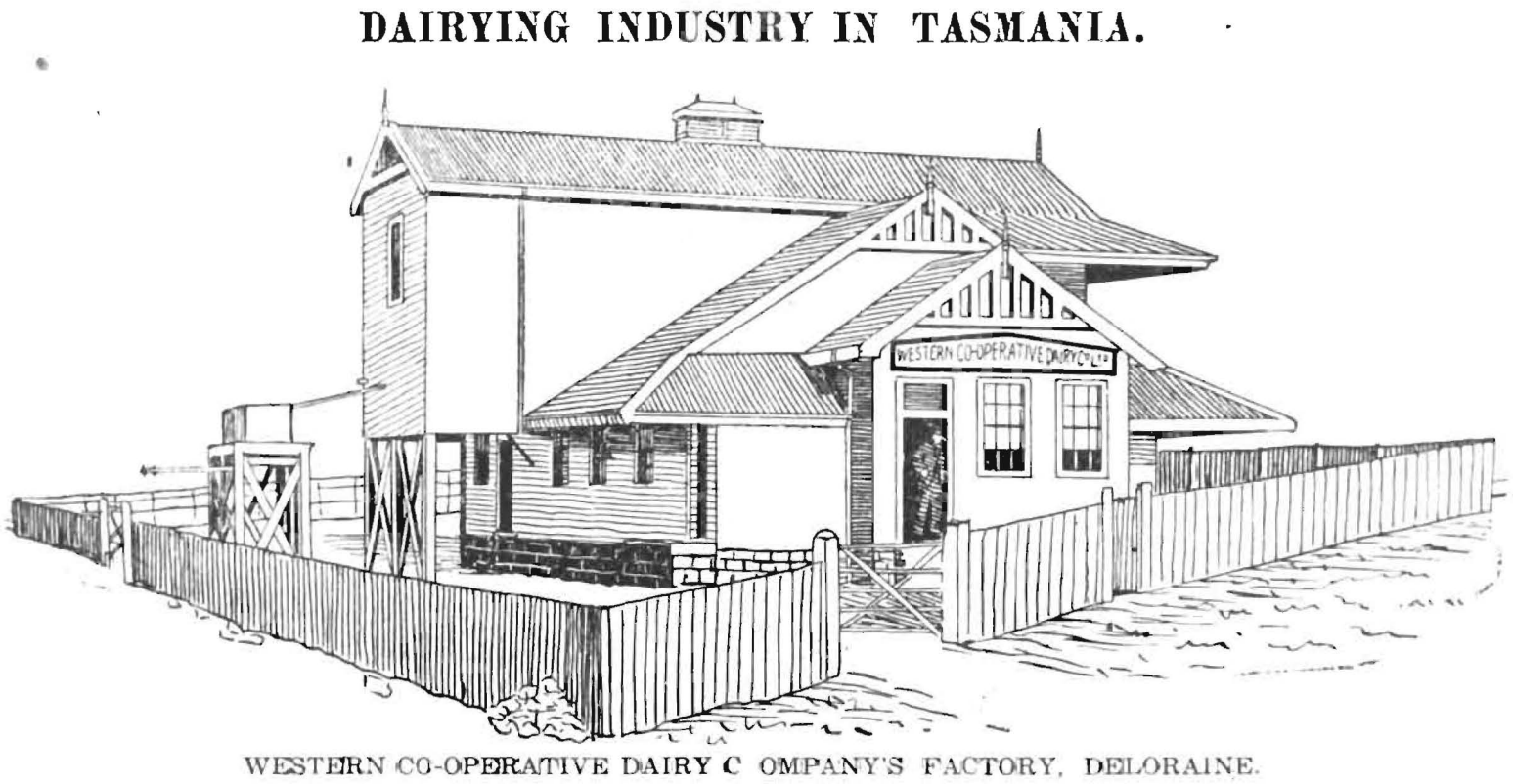
KEY:

- ■ Factories
- ✸ Farm Cheese
- ✢ Creameries

Potts (see Chapter 1.5) delivered a lecture to a "goodly gathering" in the Deloraine Town Hall. Some months later Conlon also addressed a meeting, and in July "a numerous and representative gathering of the business and farming interests of the community" met at the Council Chambers and decided to form a cooperative factory with a capital of 4000 pounds in one-pound shares.[95]

M. Bloch, who had been instrumental in setting the wheels in motion, was appointed temporary joint secretary with R.P. Furmage, and 550 shares were applied for in the room. The thinking behind the company was made apparent a few days later at a meeting of the provisional directors, who unanimously agreed to the following opinion: "It is generally acknowledged that the want of uniformity in our dairy products has hitherto prevented successful competition with the imported and factory-made article. The fact of 40 000 pounds being paid annually for imported factory-made butter proves the existence in our midst of a profitable market". The prospectus referred to previous times: "In the experience of our past history, it has been proved that Deloraine is essentially a dairy centre, and it is desired that the support of the farmers and others interested in the general welfare of this district will be extended to this venture, either as suppliers or shareholders, to revive the industry."[96]

The *Daily Telegraph* correspondent was enthusiastic, pointing out that when creameries ran in the district, farmers could get one shilling per pound for butter and would not supply milk for the low prices offered, but with butter at fourteen to seventeen pence a pound, it would now pay to supply the factory. It was expected, he went on, that a bacon factory would be started later on because of the pigs reared on skim milk. It was generally hoped that the factory would make dairying once again a major occupation in the district; there had been 3000 cows in the area but low prices for butter, attributed to inferior methods of manufacturing, had led to the culling of herds, so that in 1900 there were less than 1500. Presumably the culling had occurred around 1890 when imported factory-made butter began to have such an impact (see Chapter 1.2). It was indeed a good time to start promoting dairying, for by now much of the land around Deloraine had been worn out by continuous cropping and no fertiliser, but dairy cows could be fed on a field of clover.[97]



Sketch of the Deloraine factory. *(Examiner, 23 February 1901, AOT)*

In September the first general meeting of shareholders in the Western Cooperative Dairy Company Ltd elected as its first directors Thomas Walker, W.F. Von Bibra, Henry Reed (chairman), J.P. Sullivan, a Mr Alcock and Mark Bloch, the last being managing director. Later Norman Rock was appointed secretary at 50 pounds per annum and Hugh Rose of Moe, Victoria, was appointed factory

At a Meeting of the Provisional Directors on Thursday, August 2nd, it was resolved to print the following unanimous opinion of those present :—

It is considered desirable that the industry should be started and placed upon a sound footing in this district. That this is possible has been amply proved by the success of factories existing on the North-West Coast and other parts of Tasmania, working on lines similar to those now proposed. It is generally acknowledged that the want of uniformity in our dairy products has hitherto prevented successful competition with the imported and factory made article. **The fact of £40,000 being paid annually for imported factory-made butter proves the existence in our midst of a profitable market.** In the experience of our past history, it has been proved that Deloraine is essentially a dairy centre, and it is desired that the support of the farmers and others interested in the general welfare of this district will be extended to this venture, either as suppliers or shareholders, to revive the industry.

It is considered desirable that **all suppliers should be Shareholders.** Being a Co-operative company, the accumulated profits will annually, or half-yearly, be divided in the shape of a dividend to Shareholders not exceeding 7 per cent. per annum, and a Bonus to suppliers on the usual lines.

The lowest number of Shares on the register to any one holder to be not less than five.

The Directors already have the guarantee of sufficient cows to warrant the erection of the Factory.

The Company to be considered floated when 3000 Shares shall have been applied for.

A General Meeting of Shareholders who have paid their subscriptions up to and including allotment (in all 5/- per share), to be called within 14 days of the date of allotment, to appoint Directors, frame Rules, and transact all necessary business.

Part of the Prospectus for the Deloraine butter factory. *(QVMAG)*

manager. Rose later returned to Victoria but recommended his brother A. John Rose as manager and this recommendation was agreed to. (It is possible that these Roses are unrelated to the John Rose who was later manager of Wynyard - see Chapter 3.1). Field offered land at the corner of West Parade and Goderich Street on its north-western corner for 100 pounds, and when this was accepted, the Deloraine Road Trust agreed to build a road along West Parade to the factory at the cost of five pounds.[98]

A. Luttrell designed the factory which was speedily erected and on 15 February 1901 the factory was opened by Henry Reed in the presence of the Premier, the Chief Secretary, several other parliamentarians and a number of leading residents. By then the factory had been working for a fortnight (the opening had had to be delayed owing to the death of Queen Victoria) and consumers had rated the butter, sold under the "Deloraine" brand, equal to anything from the mainland. The plant included a Sharples turbine cream separator and a 400 pound churn. The ripening rooms were insulated by nine-inch charcoal all round the walls and it was explained that a refrigeration plant was yet to be installed although urgently needed. Bloch had admitted that the milk supply was fairly limited owing, he thought, to the lateness of the season, but he hoped to produce four to five tons weekly in the next season.[99]

But the factory had severe problems, supply being a continuing difficulty. In the four months the factory worked that season it made a total of 3.6 tons, an amount some factories made in a week. The cost of manufacture had thus been proportionately greater. At the first annual meeting in July 1901, the shareholders gave authority to borrow up to 1000 pounds, if necessary mortgaging the property, to buy a refrigerator and for any other purpose required, but it was obvious that things were not going so well when von Bibra moved a vote of no confidence in Bloch as managing director, with the motion seconded by Bowman, although "out of deference to the shareholders" the motion was withdrawn.[100]

The company attempted to solve its supply problem by fitting out two new creameries at Riana and Chudleigh to add to those already opened at Caveside (once again operated by Clement Byard) and the Needles. Presumably those at Chudleigh and Caveside were the old Tasmanian Dairy Company ones. The location of the Needles creamery is not known, although there seem to have been some difficulties as in January 1902 the manager Rose discussed the possibility of moving it ready for the following season. It is surprising that the distance to Riana was not felt to be a difficulty. The location of this creamery is also something of a mystery (see Chapter 4.1.1). It was opened in December 1901 with high hopes that it would "add materially to the turnover at the central factory", but the following November supply to the creamery was poor with many farmers concentrating on potatoes. A group of residents of Sassafras, New Ground and Moriarty also tried to set up a creamery but evidently nothing eventuated.[101]

The main factory reopened in September 1901 and although a shortage of grass at that time reduced supplies, by December it was making a ton of butter a week, a reasonable quantity. 131 boxes were exported to England during the season, realising satisfactory prices, and Conlon reported that 26 cases formed the first consignment exported under the Government brand under the Exported Products Act 1901. However, the factory was still in trouble. Ominously, there was no quorum present at a meeting in January 1902, only twelve shareholders showing up, so there had to be an "informal gathering". The directors informed those present that the company had yet to make a profit, and admitted that there would be "a little difficulty" in meeting payments of 300 pounds that would soon be due.[102]

A special meeting had to be called two months later to consider Dehle, Bennison and Co.'s demands for immediate payment of the 300 pounds owing for the machinery, and the shareholders decided to issue debentures, while managing director Bloch, in a masterly understatement, opined that perhaps it was "not wise" to sell their butter through a rival firm while owing money to Dehle, Bennison and Co. The factory struggled through until the end of May when it closed, ostensibly for the season, with the *Weekly Courier* correspondent hoping for better supply next season.[103]

However, the company finally folded "owing to friction". The factory remained closed for two years until 1904 when Norman Rock, the defunct company's former secretary, bought the land, buildings, plant and "three creameries". He chose a good time to buy, as the dairy industry was just beginning

to boom (see Chapter 1.5) and farmers were reported to be intending to increase the number of cows. The *Daily Telegraph* correspondent felt that although it had "proved a frost" when run by a company, the factory should surge ahead now that it was "run by such a deservedly esteemed resident as Mr Rock". The company had paid for butterfat according to the Babcock test, a fact of which farmers were suspicious (see Chapter 1.5), and Rock soon announced that at the desire of farmers he would pay by the actual churn results of each supplier's milk. However, later that year Rock asked Dairy Expert Conlon to come to Deloraine and when the latter demonstrated the superiority of payment for butterfat delivered, Rock decided to re-adopt this system.[104]

Rock was able to make the factory pay. As early as December 1904 output had reached one and a half tons weekly and was expected soon to be twice that, although in May 1905 the total output for the seven month season was given as 29 tons or an average of one ton a week. Conlon pronounced the butter intended for export to London as high class and suitable in every way for the British market. In 1908 Rock announced excellent returns for the previous shipment to London, securing 128 shillings, only two shillings less than the record price.[105]

With the advent of farm separators (see Chapter 1.5) the creameries were gradually discontinued. Those at Caveside and Chudleigh are not listed in the *Post Office Directory* after 1902 so it is possible that Rock did not reopen them. The Caveside creamery was later moved to a new site on Pool Road opposite Brook Hill (map reference Mole Creek 541945) and with additions, is still in use as a residence, the only creamery building in the state known to be still in existence. The Needles creamery is listed in the *Directory* until 1907 and the Riana one until 1910, although these dates can be taken only as a guide to their operation. The demise of the creameries led to other problems, with Rock complaining that the majority of farmers were not yet sufficiently impressed with the importance of cooling the cream immediately after separating it, and keeping it in a pure atmosphere. The initial hopes of a bacon factory were realised in 1905 when A. Woodberry announced he had opened one, but it is unclear where it was or if indeed it lasted any time.[106]

The Deloraine factory in the 1930s, after renovations. *(Crowden photo, QVMAG)*

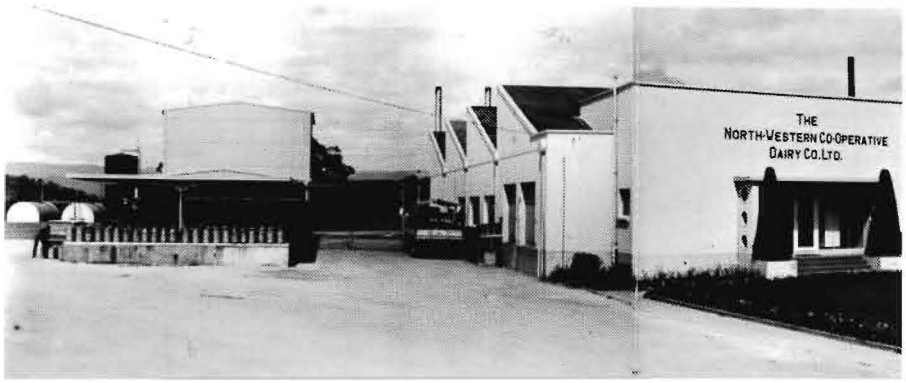
Rock continued as owner and manager of the butter factory until 1923. In 1910, when moves were being made elsewhere to set up cooperatives, he announced he was willing to sell out if a cooperative company was formed, but no changes were made. In 1921 the *Weekly Courier* bemoaned the fact that "Deloraine should be one of the best dairying districts of the state, but the industry remains somewhat inactive". Dairying started to improve in the 1920s after the land was cut up for soldier settlement as it was eminently suited to 150 acre blocks, already cleared, and a family had only to milk 15 or 20 cows to keep a family. However, it is quite likely that Rock was not able to take advantage of the upturn as in 1924 the factory was taken over by the Devonport Butter Factory which was owned by Alexander Fyfe Stenhouse (see Chapter 4.4). Mr A. John Rose became the manager. He had been at the factory in 1922 when he passed his tester's certificate (as did his wife Mary) and he was possibly the son of the Hugh Rose who was the first manager. In July 1927 the factory did not have a tenant and it seems that it remained empty until bought by North-Western along with the

Devonport factory in 1929 (see Chapter 4.4). Gordon Douglas was installed as manager in Deloraine in 1932 and John Rose was transferred to Burnie. He later worked at the Round Hill factory and then set up the Coastal Dairy Company at Ulverstone (see Chapters 4.1.3 and 4.2).[107]

In 1931 the building was "renovated and partially reconstructed" and new machinery added to enable the factory to run more efficiently and to cope with increasing business. It may also have been in an effort to forestall the Department of Agriculture which was becoming increasingly strict over the fulfilment of its regulations (see Chapters 1.6, 3.2 and 5.1). The larger building was still wooden, with concrete foundations. [108]

The factory site had always been something of a problem. As early as 1911 there were complaints that butter and oil leaked into the Meander, and the sanitary inspector had to ask Rock to make alterations to the disposal of drainage. By the 1940s similar complaints were being heard and when in 1948 the dairy supervisors reported adversely on the building, it was decided to build new premises. The decision must have also been influenced by the amount of butter being made. At 495 tons for the season 1945-6, Deloraine's production was second in the state only to Smithton and a clear 130 tons ahead of the third biggest factory, Devonport (see Figure 1.5). The new factory was built just out of Deloraine on the Mole Creek Road (map reference Deloraine 691030). Building began in 1951 with R. Hay supplying day labour at a cost of 9750 pounds, and was completed by September 1953. In its first year the factory became the second single factory in Tasmania (after Duck River - see Chapter 2.3) to make over 1000 tons of butter in a season. The old factory was sold the same year for 825 pounds. It was later demolished.[109]

The new factory did very well for a number of years, with its butter winning the Australian Championship in both 1964 and 1967, with a third place in 1956 and a second in 1971. Although Emu Bay had made cheese in its early years, Deloraine was in modern times the first of the state's butter factories to diversify, with the production of butteroil beginning in September 1962. Peak production was reached in 1974 with a total of 2444 tons (butter equivalent).[110]



The second Deloraine factory c.1960. Note the cans at the can receival bay. *(QVMAG)*

Deloraine continued to diversify with the installation of an evaporator, ordered in 1967, to supply Cadbury's with milk concentrate, but the contract lasted only until July 1971. Devonport's roller driers were relocated there in the mid-1970s, yoghurt manufacture was begun in 1978 and in the same year North-Western finally went into cheese production with a new cheese plant opened at Deloraine. But after the amalgamation to form UMT in 1981 (see Chapter 1.8) all cheesemaking was centred in Wynyard and Deloraine's cheese factory closed in 1982 after just four years. The factory continued to make butteroil for a few more seasons but the plant was eventually relocated to Devonport and the Deloraine premises sold. The Bendigo Pottery Works used the building for some years, but in 1994 it was empty.[111]

As was the case elsewhere, some butter continued to be made on farms even after the Western Cooperative Dairy Company Ltd began in 1901. Indeed one of its directors, W.F. von Bibra, was advertising his own private butter factory at Dunorlan in the *Post Office Directory* from 1899 until 1907, although he had certainly made butter before this time (see above). In 1910 moves were made to set up a factory at Mole Creek, but nothing eventuated. Farm butter probably continued to be made on some farms, particularly at the beginning and the end of the season, until the Second World War (see Chapter 1.6). It was certainly made by Donald William Bowman at Cheshunt well into the 1920s, being sold to a Launceston shop.[112]

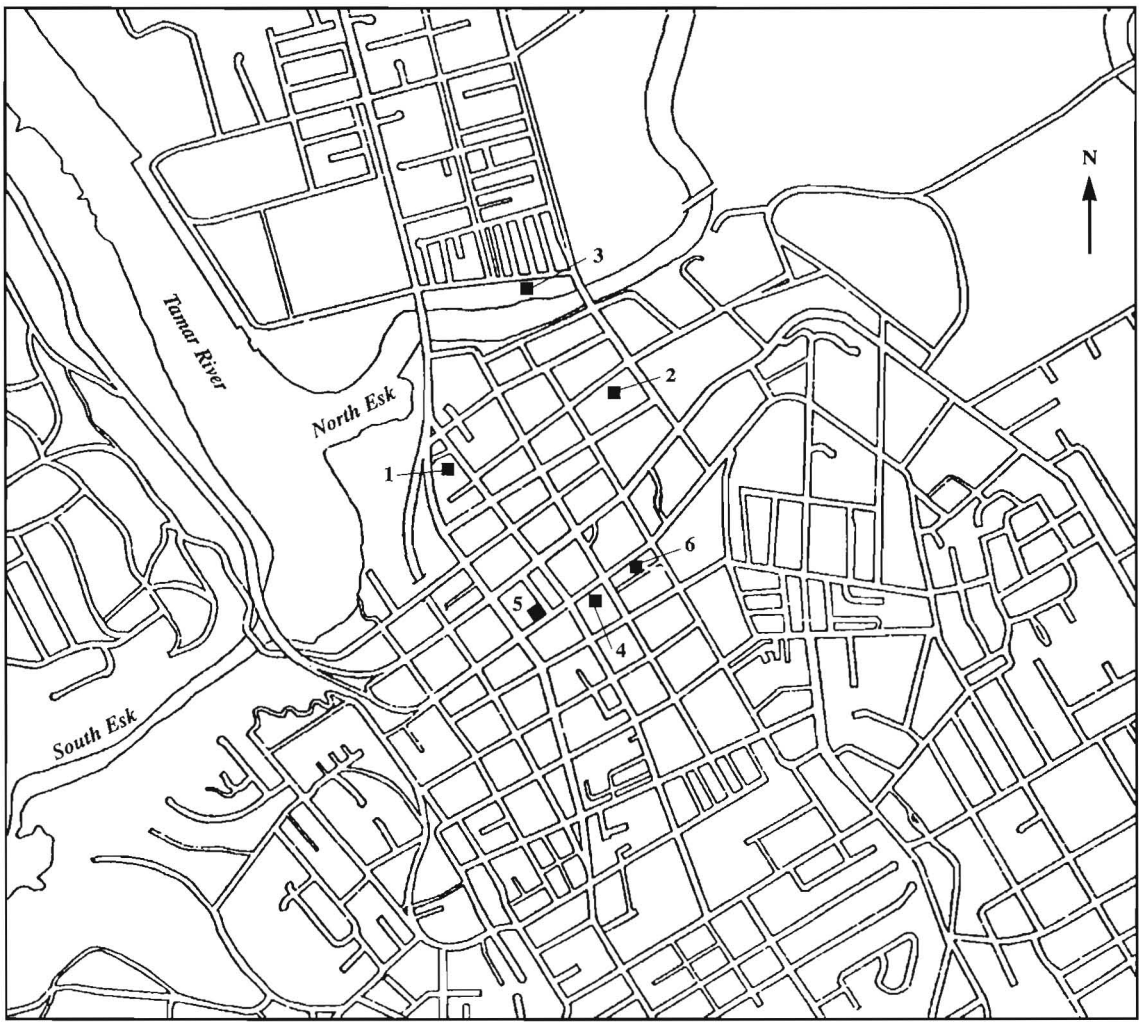
The production of cheese continued to be based on the farm for some time, and early in the twentieth century the Deloraine area produced a considerable proportion of the state's total. In 1914-15 23 431 pounds [10 445kg] of cheese were being made in the Deloraine municipality, or 17% of the state's total of farm-made cheese. Early this century well-known cheddar cheese was produced by A.J. Bramich of Dairy Plains. By 1911 he had installed plant recommended by the Department of Agriculture and he continued to make a good quantity of cheese until 1921. Hardy of Montana was another who made cheese, and Charles Woodberry whose farm was on the north-western corner of the junction of Western Creek Road and Dairy Plains Road (approximate map reference Mole Creek 572913) listed himself as a cheesemaker in the 1900-01 *Post Office Directory*, although this son of John Woodberry of Falmouth and Bowerbank fame does not seem to have been particularly successful. It is quite possible that von Bibra continued making cheese at Dunorlan even after the fire which destroyed his two cheese presses (see above). Dunorlan was taken over in 1919 by the Closer Settlement Board and there was certainly no cheese made after that time.[113]

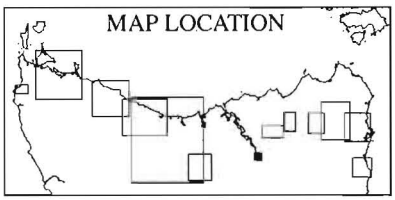
One of the major developments in cheese occurred at Meander on the newly-subdivided estate of Cheshunt. In 1908 Frederick Bowman sought Conlon's advice for developing a cheese manufactury at Cloverdene (approximate map reference Quamby Bluff 663895). Until this time his cream had been supplied to an unidentified factory. His new cowhouse with good cement floor and good drainage was commented on favourably in December 1908 by the *Weekly Courier* correspondent who went on to say that a site had been located for the erection of a cheese-making room. Jim Petterwood was employed as cheesemaker.[114]

Shortly afterwards Bowman's two sons also began making cheese, Adrian M. Bowman at Kinvarra with help from the Petterwoods, and Donald Bowman at Hiwiroa where Humphrey Sherriff was the cheesemaker. In each case the building was substantial and was placed alongside the cowshed. All three farms milked about 80 cows. Cloverdene stopped making cheese early, but Hiwiroa (map reference Montana 663927) and particularly Kinvarra (map reference Montana 648923) continued on for some years until a bad season in 1914-15 when cheese was difficult to sell on the mainland caused their closure. It is not clear whether Kinvarra ever reopened its cheese factory, but it seems doubtful. All the buildings on Cloverdene have now vanished, but the two cheese factories on Kinvarra and Hiwiroa remain, although in a very dilapidated condition.[115]

One of the last private cheese factories to be built was at Hawthorn on the western side of Dunorlan Road (map reference Deloraine 644073). Here in the early 1930s the Wyatts were faced with very low prices for their butterfat - sixpence a pound, and for two months only five and a half pence - and decided that rather than send their cream to the butter factory they would make their own cheese. They built an extension on the dairy with a shingle roof because it was cooler than iron, and bought a vat twelve feet long, a rake for stirring the curd, a mill for cutting it into strips and hoops and moulds. They then commenced making 40 pound, 20 pound and occasionally 10 pound cheese, at first to be sold in local stores and later sold entirely to the Launceston wholesalers Johnstone and Wilmot. Their lowest price was sixpence a pound, and as from each pound of butterfat they made two and a half pounds of cheese (late in the season it could come close to three pounds), it was definitely more profitable than sending their cream to the butter factory. All the milk from their cows, usually thirty although it did get up to fifty, was thus put into cheese production until 1942 when Hedley Wyatt went to the war and the factory closed.[116]

Map 5.1 LAUNCESTON





KEY:

Sites not labelled on the map:

■ Factories:

1. Tasmanian Dairy Company - first factory
2. Tasmanian Dairy Company - second factory
3. Tasmanian Produce & Cool Storage Company (Cool Stores)
4. Dehle, Bennison & Company
5. F.W. Heritage & Company - first factory
6. F.W. Heritage & Company - second factory

CHAPTER FIVE

LAUNCESTON AND THE NORTH-EAST

5.1 Launceston and environs

Dairying in the vicinity of Launceston was always necessary to provide milk and butter for the town's population. When Samuel Skemp arrived in 1882 "Elphin Road was in the country with dairy farms on either side", and such farms could be found elsewhere on the outskirts as well.[1]

In August 1892, even before the Table Cape factory had opened, a meeting of people interested in the formation of a butter factory was held in Launceston (see Chapter 1.3 for more details). Chaired by Henry Button, the meeting heard from Mr Blabey who had visited some establishments in Victoria. Percy Hart was appointed convenor of further meetings and he was a driving force behind the resultant factory. His obituary in 1945 refers to the factory as if it was his. In October it was reported that nearly all the shares in the Northern Tasmanian Dairy Company had been applied for and by December 7 the factory was operating, thus making it the second working factory in the state after Table Cape, which had opened in September (see Chapter 3.1). The word "Northern" was not used again.[2]

A 1994 photograph of the C.H. Smith building, site of the Tasmanian Dairy Association's butter factory.

The middle section of this building, photographed in 1994, was the building used by the Tasmanian Dairy Association for its butter factory. *(John Leeming photo, QVMAG)*

The factory was set up in Cape's store on the corner of Canal Street and Charles Street, which is now part of the C.H. Smith group of buildings. The butter brand was "Kangaroo". The *Launceston Examiner* reported that: "The Tasmanian Dairy Company's factory in Charles-street is now in full working order, and has merited the favourable opinion of the large number of persons who have visited it." The factory was said to be making good quality butter and a "choice lot" had been forwarded to Hobart the day before. Mr. Spence was said to be well satisfied and the paper went on: "...there can be no doubt that as soon as the farmers recognise the advantages which the company offers them the business will extend very rapidly". T.W. Spence was the manager, although the 1893 Assessment Roll lists Charles Nicholls as the occupier of the factory.[3]

The company was quick to erect creameries in outlying districts. That at Caveside was opened on 14 December (see Chapter 4.5) and two in the Scottsdale area at Ellesmere and on the Springfield Road almost certainly by the end of the year (see Chapter 5.2). The following year two more were opened at Dunorlan (see Chapter 4.5) and Bishopsbourne, next to the railway station in each case. There was an early plan to build one at Ringarooma as well, but it was certainly operating as a butter factory by December 1893 (see below) and probably never functioned as a creamery (see Chapter 5.3). Probably the lack of a railway or any other easy form of transportation caused the change of plans.[4]

The company also had something to do with another advance. In February 1894 the *North-West Post* reported:

> A forward step has just been taken with respect to the dairying industry. During last week, owing to the intense heat, it was found by the officials of the Tasmanian Dairying Association impossible to make butter during the daytime, and even in the cool of the night some difficulty was experienced in producing supplies. A syndicate who were impressed with the desirability of procuring a cool atmosphere procured a refrigerating plant from Melbourne, and this will likely lead to the establishment of a cool storage, where not only milk can be rapidly cooled, and butter kept in good permanent condition and ice manufactured, but butchers may be able to store their meat, and thus prevent the immense waste which is now unavoidable in the hot weather.

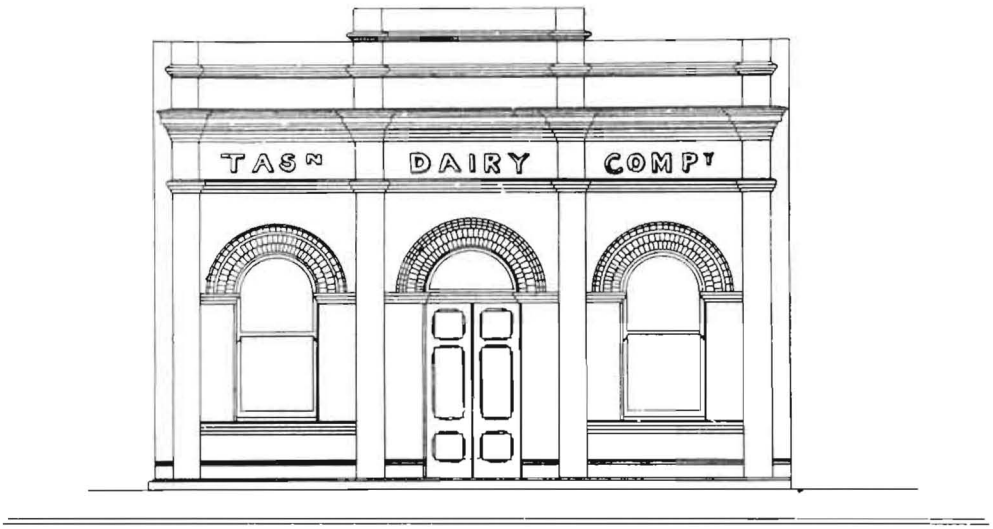
In fact cool stores were not set up until 1903 (see below).[5]

The company (sometimes called an Association) was reported to have sold 951 pounds worth of butter by March 1893 and in December that year it shipped 160 boxes of butter to England, 120 from Launceston and 40 from Ringarooma. This was the fourth shipment to England that season. But the company was in trouble, largely it would seem because it tried to follow the Victorian model too quickly, setting up a number of creameries and two factories before allowing time to see if they would work.[6]

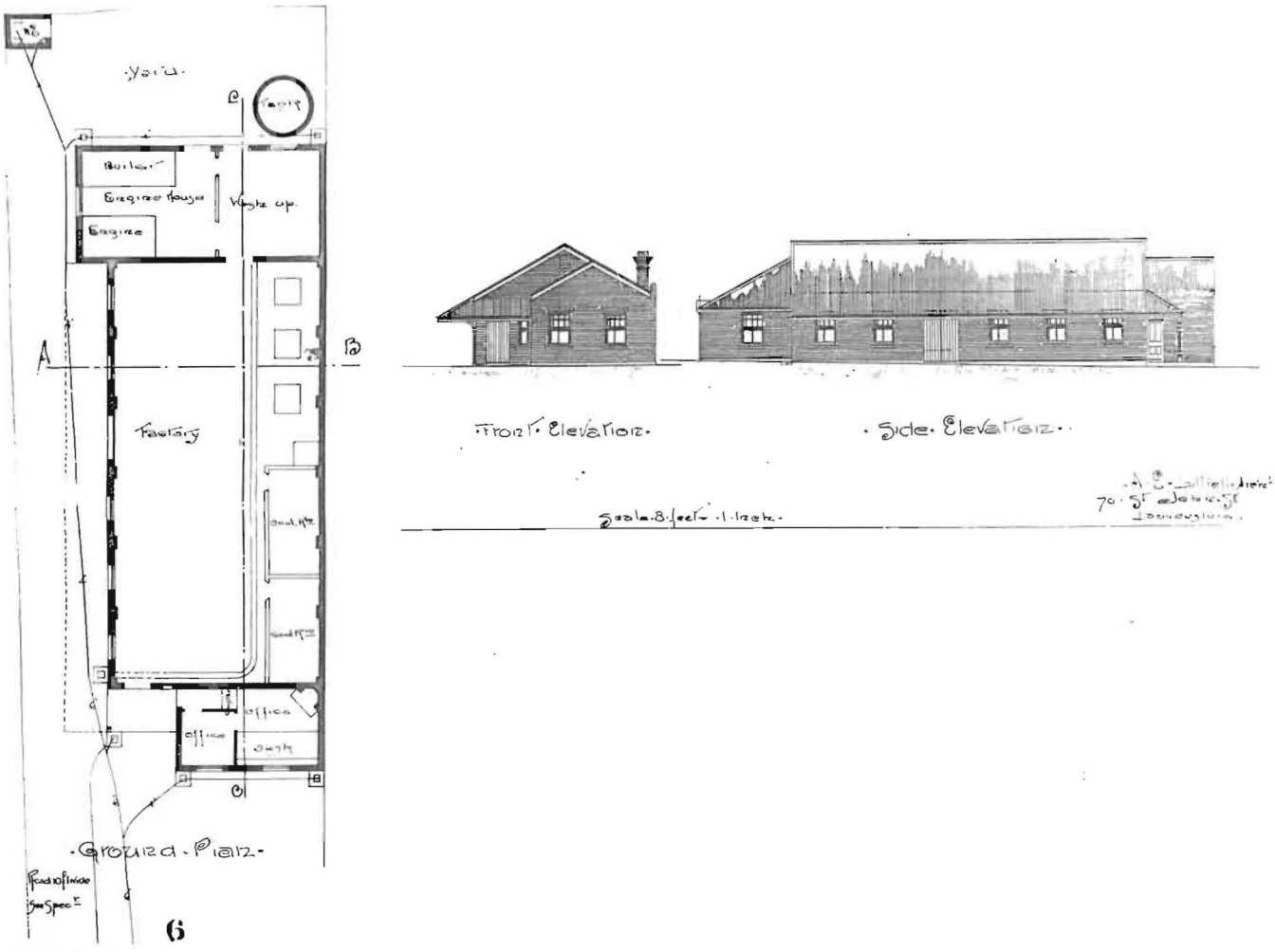
When Percy Hart spoke to the annual meeting of shareholders in 1894, he explained that the factory had never worked at full capacity because of an inadequate supply of milk at some of the creameries. The Ringarooma factory had been sold, probably to the Hobart-based Dehle and Murdoch (see Chapter 5.3), and the two new creameries had been built at Dunorlan and Bishopsbourne. There had been several additions to the Launceston factory, but the public, including some shareholders, did not buy enough in the peak season and they had to export to London. But delays and the heavy charges involved eroded any profit. Finally the whole of the plant and the creameries were sold to Bartram and Co., the Melbourne-based factory fitters and butter exporters. The winding up of the association was in the end put down to insufficiency of capital, the indifference of dairy farmers and the apathy of shareholders. It was a story to be repeated in several other centres in the decade ahead (see for example Chapters 4.2 and 4.3).[7]

Bartram and Co continued to operate the Launceston factory under the name of the Tasmanian Dairy Company. It is possible that Percy Hart was still involved as his obituary implies it. A creamery was built in the prime dairying centre of St Marys by October 1894, and in 1895 at the end of the season the manager Gosling announced that there had been an increase of 56 tons of butter made over the previous year when the Association had run the factory. The Charles Street premises proved to be inadequate and in August 1895 architect Alfred E. Luttrell made application to the Launceston City Council to build a new factory at 19 Cameron Street for the Tasmanian Dairy Co. This is approximately the site of the present Novotel carpark. The new factory was to have stone

foundations, brick walls and an iron roof and to comprise one room 26 x 30 feet [8m x 9m] with 12 foot [4m] ceilings. Presumably it was operational by the end of the year. The company also built butter factories at Pyengana (1895) and Derby (1897) (see Chapter 5.4), and converted the St Marys creamery for the manufacture of cheese by 1897 (see Chapter 5.5). It gradually phased out the creameries, presumably starting with the uneconomic ones referred to by Hart. In 1896 the Bishopsbourne creamery was managed by H. Paton, according to the *Post Office Directory*. But by 1901 only the Springfield creamery was still operating.[8]



Front elevation for the Tasmanian Dairy Company's Cameron Street factory built in 1895. *(Launceston City Council, 1991:AD:95)*



Plans for the Tasmanian Dairy Company's new 1895 factory. *(Launceston City Council, 1991:AD:95)*

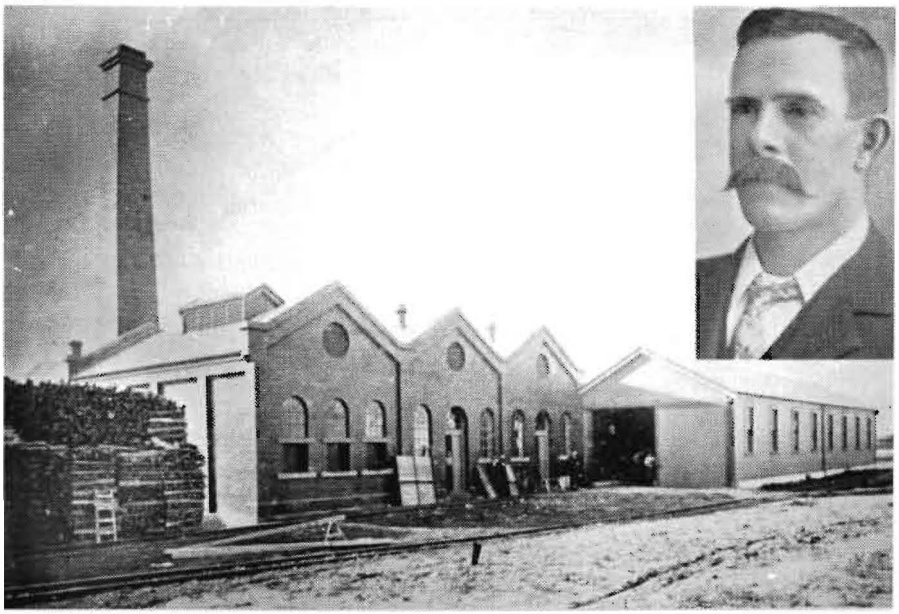
Advertisement for the Tasmanian Dairy Co. 1896-7.
(Post Office Directory, 1896-7, p.379)

But Bartram and Co were not to run the business for very long. It must have been difficult keeping a firm eye on affairs from Melbourne. In 1901 the new local Tasmanian Produce and Cool Storage Company was set up with W.H. Ferrall as chairman of directors. It was to be of great importance in Launceston. It is of interest that an early newspaper reference refers to it as the Tasmanian *Cooperative* and Cool Storage Company; evidently this was yet another example of early hopes for a cooperative not being realised. According to the *Weekly Courier* the company was particularly interested in the provision of cool storage for both the local market and the "new export trade interstate", but its first move was to take over the business of the Tasmanian Dairy Co. from Bartram and Co. on 1 October 1901. In December the new company sent 188 boxes or nearly five tons of butter to London; this was believed to be the largest consignment ever sent from Tasmania in one shipment.[9]

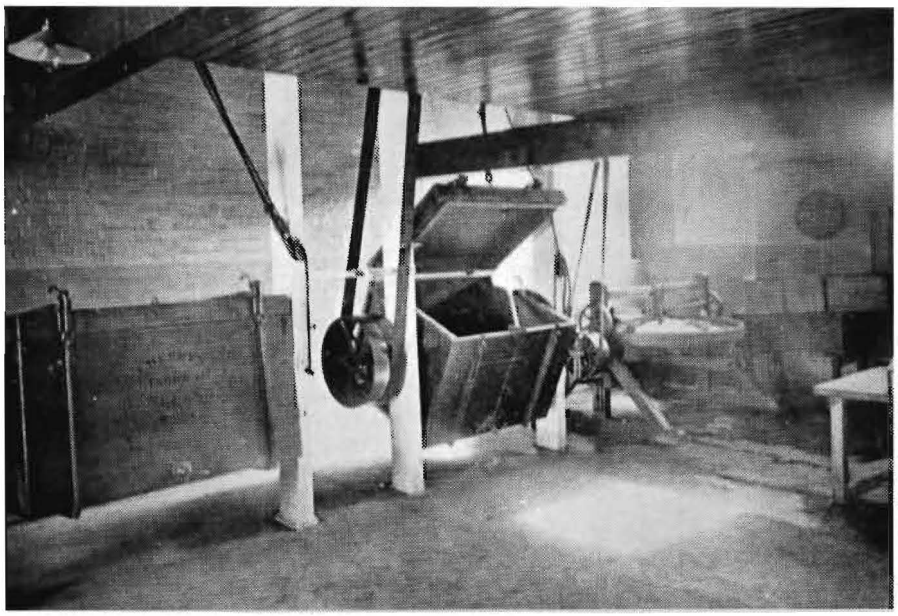
At a meeting of shareholders in February 1902 the manager, John Christensen, reported that the Cameron Street factory was well-equipped, "with refrigerating machine and insulated rooms, storerooms and offices... Cream and other produce is received daily from all parts of the country" (i.e. country areas). Supplies had increased from every area, particularly St Marys and Pyengana. The factory also stored the butter and cheese from the other factories and had agencies for dairy machinery and other requisites. In the four and a half months to 15 February the company had paid 5260 pounds for cream, and over December and January 25 tons of butter had been shipped to London. Some cheese had also been exported. Thomas Bourke, C.H. Hookway, J.C. Ferguson and J.T. Cramp were re-elected directors. Later that year, presumably to cope with increased supply, J.& T. Gunn designed and built an additional room for the Cameron Street factory, twelve feet [4m] high with concrete foundations, brick walls and an iron roof.[10]

But the company was still interested in cool storage. In January 1902 a second issue of shares was announced to help establish freezing works. By March the Minister of Lands advised that the company could lease land on the North Esk and two weeks later a freezing machine of 18 tons was ordered. Walter Panton of New Zealand prepared plans for the new building and Charles Adams and Sons' tender of 2987 pounds was accepted in June. The works at what is now 17-33 Lindsay Street were formally opened on 12 May 1903 in front of 200 guests including Sir Edward Braddon. The wooden freezing buildings contained a holding store capable of accommodating 10 000 cases of

mutton, six freezing chambers measuring 25 feet [7.6m] by 11 feet [3.3m] and capable of freezing 500 sheep daily, two chilling rooms the same size, and a butter store. The railway ran through the packing shed and extended the whole length of the freezing building. A brick section included a boiler house, engine room and butter factory and measured 35 feet [10.7m] by 20 feet [6m].[11]



The Tasmanian Produce and Cool Storage Works and Mr John Christensen, manager. *(Weekly Courier, 16 May 1903, AOT)*



Tasmanian Produce and Cool Storage Works butter room. *(Weekly Courier, 16 May 1903, AOT)*

The company, usually called the Cool Stores, continued to occupy the Cameron Street building for some years. It is unclear whether butter was made at both of its Launceston factories, although from 1907 the Cameron Street building was described as offices in the *Post Office Directory*. It seems unlikely that they operated simultaneously. The company made "Icicle" and "Coronet" brands of butter, and cheese was made under the "Pic-Nic" label. The location of the new factory near the wharf and with the railway running right through was of great benefit, and cream continued to be sent by train to the factory from all round the north for several decades. A newspaper advertisement in 1906 reads: "Dairy Farmers, Send us Your Cream. The Tasmanian Produce and Cool Stores Co. are buyers of fresh cream, either delivered at their Factory, Launceston, or on board train or steamer addressed to their Factory".[12]

Although the Tasmanian Produce & Cool Storage Co. was to last many years, it was not always able to declare a dividend. The annual report for 1904 which was quite a good dairying year (see Chapter 1.5) admitted that the company had given high prices for milk and cream at the beginning of the season but supply had been greater than demand and the resultant fall in the market, both Australian

and British, for cheese and butter had led to the Cool Stores suffering a loss. It was hoped that the next season would be profitable. However, in 1904-5 the company recorded a loss of 791 pounds in the first half of the year, which was only partially compensated for by a profit of 189 pounds in the second half.[13]

Advertisement for the Tasmanian Produce and Cool Storage Co. Ltd 1905. *(Post Office Directory, 1905, p.145)*

The reasons for the loss were not revealed, but two factors must have played a part. By December 1904 the company had expanded still further with the establishment of a factory at Burnie where the dairy industry was beginning to progress well. Establishment costs must have been high, and perhaps the new venture was not particularly profitable as it disposed of the factory three years later to the newly-formed North-Western Cooperative Dairy Co. Ltd (see Chapter 4.1.2) and from then on concentrated its attention on the north-east, although it continued to receive cream from at least as far west as Sheffield (see Chapter 4.3).

Also by the end of December 1904 the Cool Stores was facing some spirited competition closer to home when the Hobart-based firm of Dehle, Bennison and Co. (suppliers of dairy produce and machinery and successors to the Dehle and Murdoch which had bought the Tasmanian Dairy Association's Ringarooma factory - see above) opened a butter factory at the rear of their store at 93 York Street, Launceston. The manager was John Christensen who had resigned as manager of the Cool Stores by October (to be replaced by Frank Stenning).

According to the *Weekly Courier*, the factory had a 400-pound [180kg] Cherry churn and was powered by an electric motor "and so far as is known this is the only butter factory in the world so driven". By January the factory was making four to five tons a week, a very large total, and the supply was coming from the North-West Coast, Exton, Deloraine, Scottsdale and others in the north-east, and Patersonia by means of two carts weekly. The biggest supplier was Henry Reid (sic) of "Rockfield", Chudleigh, who had 73 cows. This is the only known reference to this factory, and there is no way of telling how long it lasted, as assessment rolls simply list the company name. However, Dehle, Bennison and Co. later became F.W. Heritage and Co. Pty. Ltd. which had a butter factory in the Kingsway and later in York Street (see below) so it is possible that the factory continued until the Kingsway factory opened.[14]

Despite the advent of this factory, by the end of the season the Cool Stores' various factories had made 228 000 pounds [103 tons] of butter, of which 178 000 pounds [56 tons] had been exported. In December 1905 the Launceston factory alone was making three tons of butter a week and Burnie was making two, which was quite a respectable total. Stenning resigned by August 1907 and was probably replaced by a Mr. Manley who was certainly the manager by April 1909. At that time the company seemed to be going quite well. It was making three to six tons of butter a week at its Launceston factory, and one and a half tons at Derby. 150 tons of cheese had been made in a good year at the three factories at Pyengana, St Marys and Ringarooma, and large quantities were sold to Victoria.[15]

However, supply was a problem. In 1910, at a time when more factories were being built elsewhere, Manley was quoted as saying that it was silly to have so many new factories as it was better to send cream to existing factories. He went on: "If butter is made at Deloraine it will have to be brought to Launceston to be shipped". He also thought amalgamations were a good idea. The Launceston factory was faced with the fact that most local dairying was for the town milk supply, and the factory was forced to depend on dairying areas further afield. But when new factories started up at Ringarooma (1908-9), Scottsdale (1910) and Devonport (1911) (see relevant chapters) farmers were likely to send their cream to the local factory, particularly if it was a cooperative. At the Annual General Meeting in 1911 Manley asked for more support from the shareholders so that a dividend could be paid, and a few weeks later moves were being made to turn the company into a cooperative. Manley was quoted as saying that the company was anxious for more supplies, not extra capital.[16]

By November the company had over 200 suppliers (compared with 68 four years previously) from as far west as Railton and right across to the east coast, and by December it was acting as a cooperative. The following year it reported a very large increase in business now it was a cooperative, but explained that buying out its partners in the Ringarooma Dairy Co (see Chapter 5.3) had cost some money. In 1911 it had participated in a new venture, being the first Tasmanian company to ship butter direct to England rather than via Melbourne. The following year supplies at its Derby factory were so great and putting such pressure on inadequate plant that the decision was taken to close Derby and rail the cream to the Launceston factory (see Chapter 5.4). In 1916 the company was said to be in a sound position, turning out an extra fifteen tons of cheese compared with the previous season, although less butter was made because there were fewer dairy cows. In 1918 Henry Edward Fowell had become the manager and it was a good year for the company, with nearly 200 tons of butter being made at the three factories (Launceston, Ringarooma and a new one at Winnaleah - see Chapter 5.4). The following year after another good season, A.C. Ferrall retired as managing director and Fowell was made general manager.[17]

But the company still had problems. In 1921 the Tasmanian Produce and Cool Storage *Cooperative* Co. Ltd and its liquidator Fowell sold its business to a new company called the Tasmanian Produce and Cool Storage Co. Ltd. Strangely enough, the primary intention was to make the company a cooperative, so obviously the change in 1911 had not worked. There were about 4000 shareholders in 1925, from as far afield as Pyengana, St Marys, Bothwell, Flinders Island, Wynyard and the mainland. The directors were A.C. Ferrall, Philip Perry (from Longford), Tom Bourke, William Tucker (Winnaleah), George Barnard (Gravelly Beach), Charles Graves (Ringarooma), Reg Grubb (Lemana Junction) and Henry Fowell.[18]

The company was forced to close its Ringarooma factory in 1932 (see Chapter 5.3), but the Launceston factory continued to do reasonably well. In 1942-3 the Launceston factory was producing 179 tons and this had increased to 234 tons three years later. This was not far below the production of Table Cape (see Figure 1.5). But in 1947 the company was obviously in trouble. Shareholders at a special meeting agreed to sell all their shares to an unknown purchaser. Fowell gave the main reason for the sale as the fact that the purchasers had a large amount of capital which was necessary to install an up-to-date pasteurising milk plant. They would also provide a regulated supply of milk to Launceston. He regretted the passing of the old company, but said the sale was in the best interests of shareholders.[19]

In 1949 the United Dairies and Cool Stores of Tas. Ltd was formed to acquire the Tasmanian Produce and Cool Storage Launceston, the Tasmanian Milk Co. Pty Ltd and Amalgamated Dairies Pty Ltd. By June 1950 the sale was complete. At this time the Cool Stores were producing butter, milk, cream and skim milk at their Launceston factory and 10 tons of cheese a week at Pyengana. But by 1952

United Dairies itself had appointed a receiver-manager, L.C. Connell. He was advised by Armstrong, the Chief Dairy Officer, that the previous owners had been told that the milk pasteurisation premises were not of a satisfactory construction and were not satisfactorily equipped. Before registration, an assurance had to be given "that either the present milking rooms would be extensively extended or new premises constructed and that the equipment be brought into line with modern requirements". Presumably the necessary alterations were made as the certificate was issued in January 1953.[20]

But a year later on 1 January 1954 Toppa Products (Tas) Pty Ltd bought the business. This time the new buyers were able to keep going, but the manufacturing side of the business gradually declined. In 1963 they were making only butter and table cream and using the premises for cold storage, and towards the end they were making only a very small amount of butter. Presumably as other factories such as the Legerwood-based North-Eastern Cooperative Dairy Co. Ltd expanded (see Chapter 5.3), Toppa found it increasingly difficult to compete, considering the new demands for greater scale and mechanisation. Eventually North-Eastern bought the factory and closed it at the end of 1973. Much of the original building has been demolished but part is still there with a woodheater retailer and a paint shop in the premises in 1994.[21]

The factory at 19 Cameron Street, originally built by the Tasmanian Dairy Co. and taken over by the Cool Stores, was reopened as a butter factory in the 1906-7 season by H.S. Oliver. Oliver had had some experience in Victoria selling separators and milking machines, and may have had something to do with the Dehle, Bennison and Co. butter factory in York Street (see above), because early in 1906 he was representing the firm of James P. McMeekin and Co. with the same street address as Dehle, Bennison and Co. His son remembered him having a small factory there. In 1904 he had been present at a meeting of Ringarooma suppliers during a dispute with Dehle, Bennison and Co. (see Chapter 5.3). But in 1906 he took over Cameron Street and began making butter with cream from 31 suppliers. The following year this had increased to 116 suppliers and by 1908-9 he had 174. His advertisement in the 1909 *Post Office Directory* describes H.S. Oliver and Co. as "dairy produce merchants, butter manufacturers, ice and cool storage works, importers of cream separators, milking machines and dairy requisites". The business was known as the Olive Butter Factory and the brand of butter was "Olive".[22]

Oliver also had something to do with the new Ringarooma Cooperative factory founded in 1908 and he was for a time sole agent for their "Ringarooma" brand butter. Oliver lasted at Cameron Street until 1914 when the business fell on bad times. In 1914 the *Post Office Directory* lists the building as occupied by the Launceston and North-Eastern Dairy Co. Ltd, a company which seems to have been Oliver's (see Chapter 5.3), but by the following year the building was empty. It appears as if the building was never used again as a butter factory and in later years it was demolished.[23]

Shortly after the Cameron Street factory ceased operations, a new butter factory was built in Launceston on the western corner of the junction of York Street and the Kingsway. It was built by 1917 for F.W. Heritage and Co., represented by Richard F. Dehle. This was the Hobart company which had taken over Dehle, Bennison and Co, which had previously had a factory at 93 York Street (see above). It is not known whether this latter had continued in operation until the new factory was built. Heritage also had a Hobart factory. There was a connection between the company's grocery operation and the butter factory, as people sent their cream to Heritage in return for groceries. As a result the company did quite well, and this may have been the reason why the Cool Stores had to restructure in 1921 (see above).[24]

In 1931 following the introduction of a new Dairy Act (see Chapter 1.6) the factory was asked to comply with certain conditions to bring the factory up to a satisfactory standard. Evidently some effort was made and the factory retained its registration, but by 1935 the Chief Dairy Officer condemned it as unsatisfactory and Heritage was forced to build again, this time at 59 York Street. Frank Heyward was the architect and J. & T. Gunn the builders of the new brick, concrete and steelwork building with a fibro roof. The outer walls were to be covered on the outside only with Durabestos, and the cost was 3000 pounds.[25]

The new building was in two parts. The wholesale grocery section fronted on York Street while the butter factory was at the rear and cream was received through the Vincent Street entrance. At least in the 1940s there were no pick-up trucks run by the company and people had to arrange their own

delivery. The factory had only one churn and it operated on a relatively small scale: in 1945-6 its annual production was only 37 tons. It presumably faced the same sort of problems that Toppa did, as the larger scale operations of the 1950s eventually caused this small city-based factory to be uneconomic. The building was sold to Legacy in 1968, although it had already been closed for some years. The building is still there although the original sliding door at the back has been bricked over. The first Heritage factory in the Kingsway operated for a time as a restaurant called The Old Butter Factory but is now in 1995 a paper shop.[26]

The presence of butter factories in Launceston, especially associated with a good transport system, meant that surrounding areas were less inclined to set up their own factories. However, there were a few small ones in earlier times. The first was at Lilydale, begun by that indefatigable entrepreneur Ludwig Bardenhagen. He built the small wooden factory two doors from his shop on the corner of Station Road and the main road (map reference Lilydale 180332), and used water channelled from Rocky Creek by means of a wooden flume constructed on the side of the main road. In 1896 he owned 30 cows but had to buy milk because all the milk and cream he produced was sold as butter. His brand of butter, the "Wheat Sheaf", attracted large orders from both Launceston and Lefroy. In 1899 one male and one female were employed at the factory to produce 1400 pounds [634kg or less than one ton] of butter valued at 700 pounds. The machinery was valued at 100 pounds and the land and building was worth 50 pounds.[27]

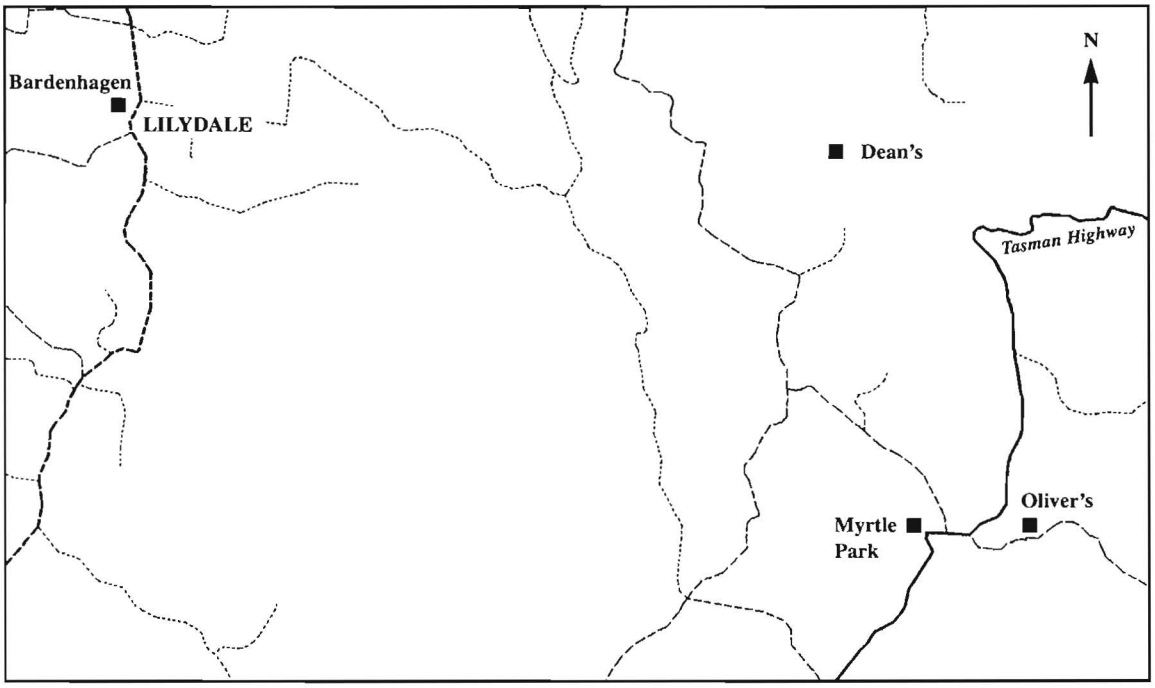
In 1903 he was purchasing supplies from neighbouring farmers who kept a few cows as a sideline, but in 1904 the *Weekly Courier* pointed out that he had "a private creamery, but does not always keep it in use". It is unclear if by this time Bardenhagen was actually only separating cream, as people sometimes used the term creamery when they meant butter factory. He continued to insert the "Lilydale Butter Factory" in the *Post Office Directory* until 1916 but it is unlikely it was much used, although it is remembered to have been working in 1914. In 1904, in describing the bigger operation of James Wilson, the *Weekly Courier* correspondent reported that there was hardly another dairyman in the district unless it be Mr Bardenhagen".[28]

Wilson's farm was Maxwellton Braes on North Lilydale Road and he had "one of the best managed dairies in Tasmania, ... scrupulously clean" with a sloping concrete floor. He practised winter dairying and made butter for a Launceston outlet. In 1908 Wilson turned to the provision of table cream which he continued until 1917 when he left to take over the management of the Relbia Farm and Dairy Co.[29]

The other dairy factories near Launceston were in the vicinity of Targa (Myrtle Park). This was one of the areas already mentioned which dairying helped to establish because it gave selectors a small regular income (see Chapter 1.1). By 1900 most settlers had 15-30 cows, the butter being sent to Launceston shops. Mrs James Millwood was known "for the splendid butter she made" at least by the 1880s. The Launceston butter factories later sent round vehicles to collect cream, but the charge of two shillings and sixpence per can for cartage led to moves to set up a cooperative factory in the Patersonia district in 1909, although nothing eventuated. The Lisle goldfields also provided a market for butter.[30]

Bardenhagen's small butter factory in Lilydale. The photograph was taken just before its recent demolition. *(Bardenhagen photo, QVMAG)*

Map 5.2 LILYDALE & MYRTLE BANK FACTORIES



The remains of Dean's butter factory 1993.

Three small privately owned factories were started, however. The first and evidently the one that worked for the longest was Dean's. It was begun by George Dean on his farm at Myrtle Bank near Kidd Creek (map reference Lisle 292326) and was later run by his son Alfred. George Dean's obituary says he was the first to prove the suitability of Myrtle Bank for dairying and he was quite progressive, being the first in the area to buy a milking machine. The factory had certainly started by 1912 when Alfred advertised in the *Post Office Directory* and could well have begun earlier. Local residents suggest as early as 1900. Dean bought in cream from surrounding farmers and had a large steam-driven churn. The factory stopped making butter around 1922, probably as a result of better motor transport which allowed cream to be taken more easily into Launceston. The machinery was sold in the late 1920s. The foundations of the factory and the cowshed are still there with a few collapsed timbers.[31]

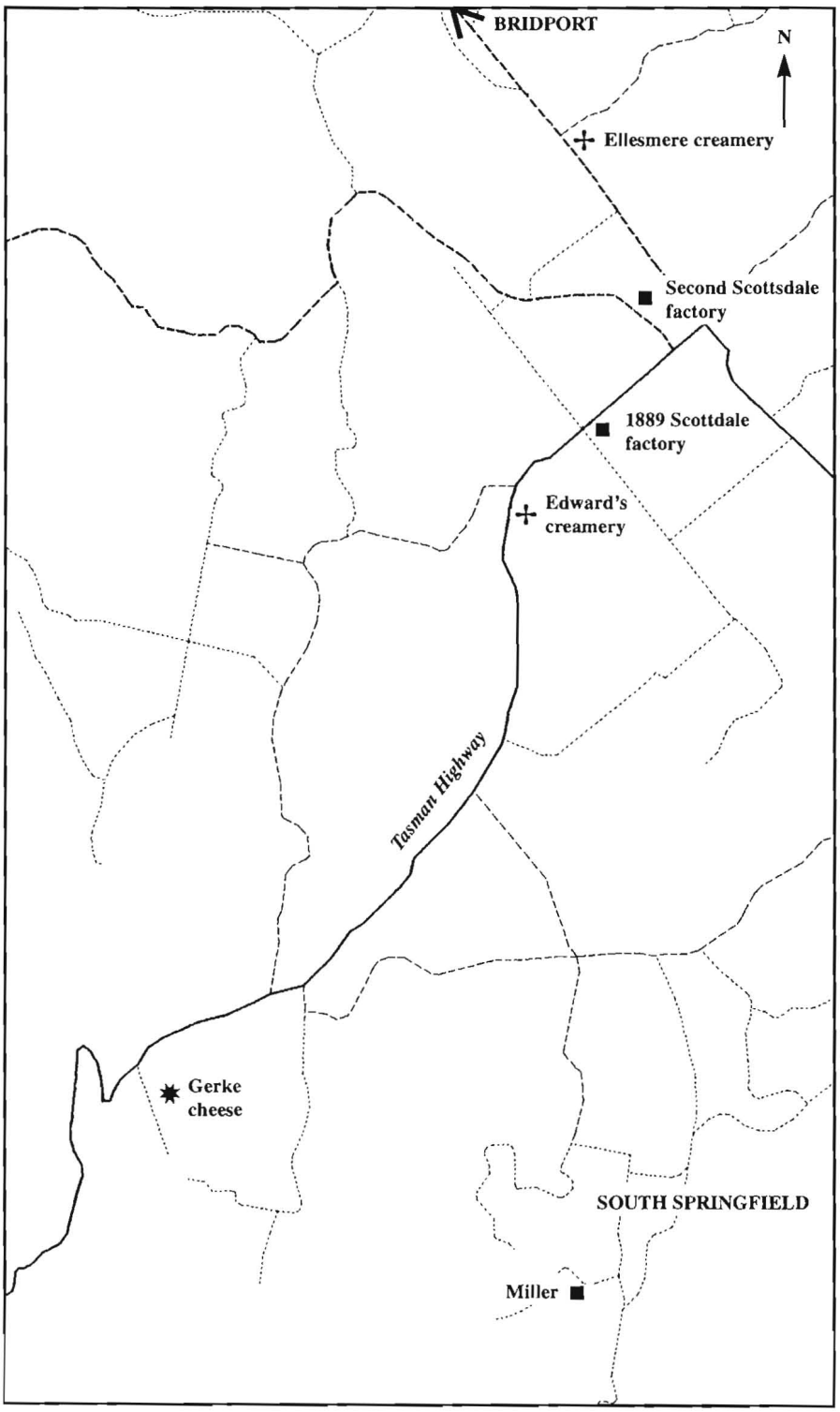
A second factory was begun by Tom Oliver on the northern side of Camden Hill Road between it and Seven Time Creek (map reference Patersonia 323263). This Oliver may have been related to the H.S. Oliver who had the Olive Butter Factory in Launceston (see above). The buttermaker was Ellen Imlach (nee Millwood) and there was a steam-driven churn. The brand was "Oliver". The factory appears to have run for about five or six years around 1910 or 1915. But Dean had too much of a hold, the factory did not pay and it eventually closed. There are no remains. The third factory was on the Myrtle Park farm, owned by Fred Hart but managed by Bob Frieboth. It was at what is now the entrance to the Myrtle Park recreation area between the house and what is now the Tasman Highway (map reference Patersonia 306265). It seems to have run for only one or two seasons around 1914 and its brand was "M.P." There are no remains.[32]

5.2 Scottsdale

Scottsdale was an area well-suited to dairying. Settlers did not arrive until the 1850s but by 1881 the district had its first agricultural show, complete with competitions for cheese and butter. The Hookways were one family who went into dairying, with Mrs Hookway making cheese from 30 cows by about 1870. By 1890 the district was well-known for its dairying, with the *Daily Telegraph* correspondent commenting that "it will be difficult to find elsewhere in this island better grass and clover crops than in Scottsdale and Ringarooma; the excellent North-West Coast soil even is by the best judges considered inferior to ours for grazing purposes."[33]

James Ranson was one of the best-known dairymen. In 1878 Ranson settled on his property Fairfield (to the west of what is now the Tasman Highway at Springfield - map reference Springfield 408389) and around 1885 imported one of the first two separators in the state, a de Laval driven by horse power. It is not known how many followed his example but in 1889 the Scottsdale Show

Map 5.3 SCOTTSDALE



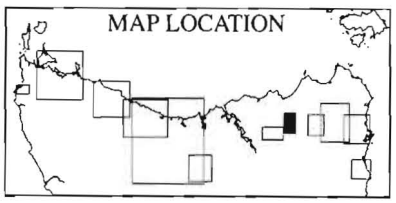
Scale: 1 km

KEY:

■ Factories

✸ Farm Cheese

✢ Creameries



introduced a class for machine-separated cream. In 1890 Ranson was making 132 pounds [60kg] of butter per week, wrapping each pound in a piece of cloth "which has never been in use before" and packing the butter in 33-pound [15kg] boxes made on the farm. He received top prices. For the preceding four years he had won first prize at the Launceston Show for machine-made butter, and he had won three prizes at the last Scottsdale Show. In 1904 Ranson was milking 64 cows, mostly Ayrshires and Durhams, and making 432 pounds [195kg] of butter a week which he sent to Alfred Harrap and Son in Launceston. His separator "of the old type" was still going.[34]

With farmers such as Ranson and the Hookways, it is probably not surprising that it was the Scottsdale area which in 1889 was one of the first in the state to set up a butter factory (see Chapter 1.3 for details). The factory was at Creek Lawn. Evidently this was on Hurst Creek on the Scottsdale side of Minstone Road presumably on the main road (approx. map reference Scottsdale 420420). Through a combination of poor management and lack of capital the factory stopped working after just a few months and the factory was sold. There are no remains.[35]

However, when the state's second successful factory started in Launceston in 1892 (see Chapter 5.1) it was quick to turn to Scottsdale for its supplies, using the railway which had been opened to Scottsdale in 1889. T.W. Spence, the factory manager, and F.W. Briggs, a director, met Scottsdale farmers on 2 November 1892 to explain that, although the prospectus had given the impression that three and a half pence per gallon of milk was guaranteed, in fact the Association would pay for milk on a sliding scale, regulated by the price of butter. The farmers agreed that this was fair and it was decided to erect two creameries at once, one on Mr Bird's farm at Ellesmere and one at the junction of the Springfield and West Scottsdale roads on Mr W. Edwards' farm.[36]

The first of these was on the south-east corner of the junction of Burnside Road and Bridport Road (map reference Scottsdale 418454), about 100m towards North Scottsdale. The creamery was managed by George Bird. The second was on the eastern side of the Tasman Highway just south of where Sledge Track joins it (map reference Scottsdale 411410), and was managed by William Edwards. According to the *Tasmanian Mail* the Scottsdale creameries were "looking up" in November 1893 after the price of milk was lowered from threepence per gallon to two and a half pence. "I should think the reason is that hand-made butter is being crushed out of the market by the separator butter which is being made in town and does not get knocked about like the butter sent in from the country."[37]

When the Tasmanian Dairy Association sold out to Bartram and Co by August 1894 (see Chapter 5.1) the Scottsdale farmers met to discuss the implications and farmers were canvassed to support two creameries. In November it was reported that there was more support from farmers and one of the creameries was doing well. The implications are that support had been a bit slow and that either one creamery was not doing well or it was not operating at all. However, both creameries were working in 1900 according to the *Post Office Directory*, but by 1902 after the Cool Stores took over from the Tasmanian Dairy Co (see Chapter 5.1) only the Springfield creamery was still going. It is not listed in the *Directory* after 1902 and may have closed soon afterwards as more farmers separated their own milk (see Chapter 1.5). A concrete slab was some years ago the sole remains of the Ellesmere creamery, but even that has now gone. The wooden Springfield creamery may well have been resurrected in 1910 for a short time (see below) but later it fell into decay and was demolished. Its foundations were later used for the barn which now occupies the spot.[38]

Around 1901 a factory appears to have been started in Springfield, but little is known of it. In December of that year the *Weekly Courier* correspondent described the visit to Springfield of E. Bonner, inspector of dairies under the Health Act, who expressed himself fairly satisfied with the condition of dairies and noted much scrubbing of land around Mt Scott. The correspondent went on to say that T. McDonald, the manager of "the local factory", was kept busy, and continued: "A great many people are taking their milk to the factory, as the price paid compensates them better than if they separated it themselves". Two years later the correspondent commented: "An effort at cooperation has already been made at Springfield, but because of the opportunities for general interference in the constitution of the company it fell through". The location of this factory is unknown.[39]

Although the creameries and factories had closed, dairying continued its important role in the Scottsdale area. In 1903 2000 cows, mostly Durham and Ayrshire, were being milked at Springfield, 60 by James Ranson and an average of 20 by the other larger farmers. Numbers of people milked a

handful. By then most farmers used separators and sold their cream to the Cool Stores' Launceston factory, which sent carts round to the farms. Richard Lethborg had a dairy which covered a fifth of an acre and was considered one of the best and most hygienic. Henry Gerke was another big dairyman, making cheese on the Sideling to the east of what is now Whish-Wilson Road (approx. map reference Lisle 371340) and selling it for sixpence a pound in Scottsdale. The *Weekly Courier* correspondent, in noting all this activity, went on: "It is greatly to be regretted that all these dairymen do not combine and form a cooperative company." With so many cows so close together he felt it would be ideal, and he pointed to the profits of Table Cape and the experience of New Zealand.[40]

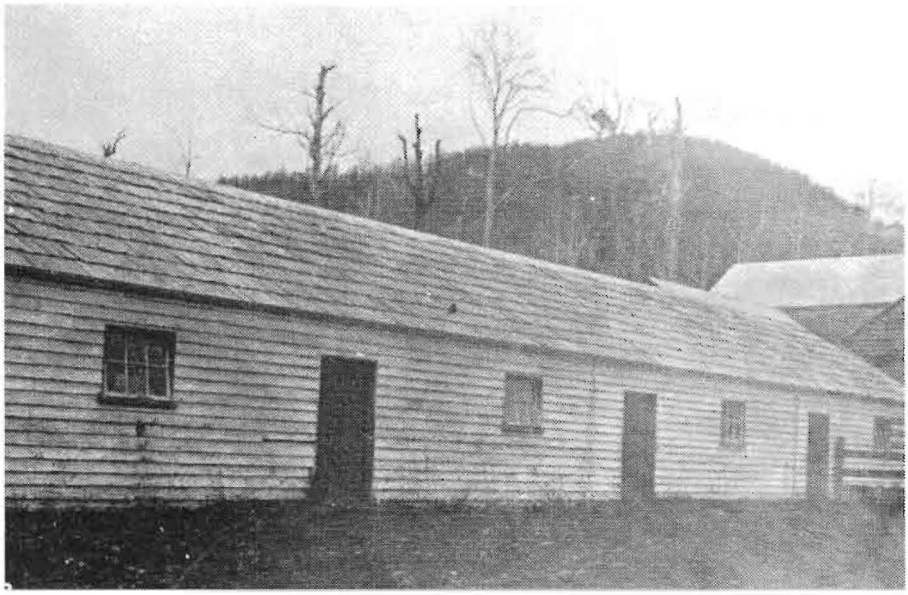
But it would be some years before such a company was formed. Ranson left for a new farm at Legerwood in July 1905 and Lethborg made a similar move. Butter continued to be made on farms, with the *Weekly Courier* correspondent commenting in 1911 that "Scottsdale is always noted for the high class of its potted butter". Gerke finished making cheese by 1914. There are no remains of his cheese room.[41]

However, there was an attempt to set up a private large-scale dairy manufacturing plant. In August 1909 it was announced that one of the most up-to-date dairy plants in Tasmania was being built at Springfield by Mr E. Miller. This was at his 100-acre farm, Myrtle Grove, at South Springfield. The dairy and associated buildings were a little south of the Great Forester River and to the west of Headquarters Road (map reference Springfield 419317). Miller was British and built his establishment on the grand scale. The complex included two silos, a wooden cheese factory, a brick cheese-ripening room (with sawdust between two layers of bricks for insulation), a large cowshed and a dairy. All were cement-floored.

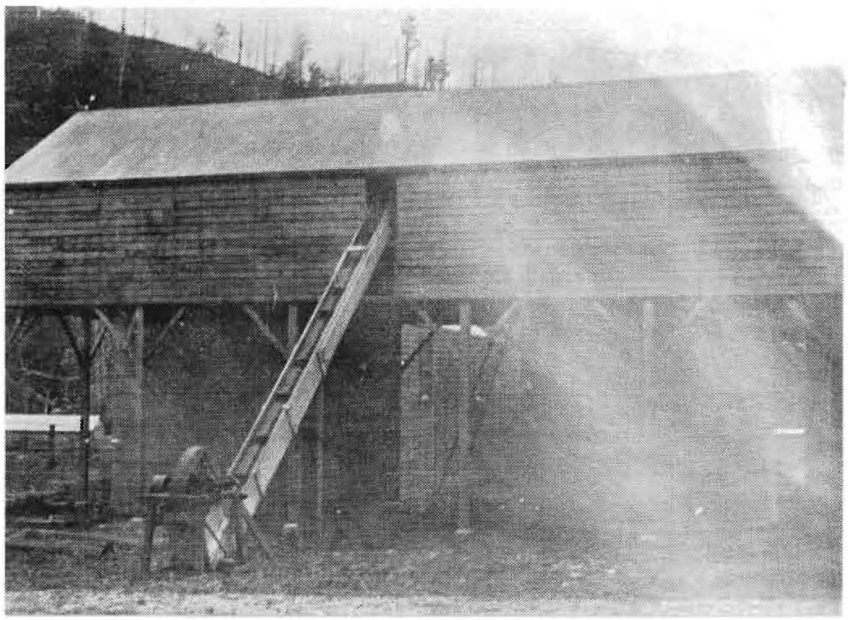
The mistaken belief that cows needed to be stabled in a cowshed could well have been a result of Miller's British background, although the buildings and their internal arrangements were designed by the manager, W.J. Cox, who had been a student at Hawkesbury College. (See Chapter 4.1.1 for a similar mistake.) The cowshed, where the cattle were fed all year, had 24 stalls running each side of central tramlines which brought fodder to feedbins on each side of the lines, and the floor had a drain near the wall on each side to help wash away droppings. The silos were capable of holding 75 tons each and were situated outside the eastern end of the cowshed, with a large roof over the two of them. The dairy was a walk-through dairy, almost certainly one of the first to be built in Tasmania. The *Weekly Courier* correspondent spent some time explaining its workings: obviously he had never seen one like it. Unlike the later conventional walk-through dairy doors which were pushed outwards with a pole (see Chapter 7), Miller's pine doors were on rollers which slid across when required.

By 1910 another manager, Berwick, was milking 70 cows by machine. However, as the price for cheese that year was uneconomic Miller installed a buttermaking plant capable of turning out three tons a week and announced that he would buy cream. He soon had 20 outside suppliers. However, probably because of the distance from market it appears that Miller preferred to make cheese and his product had a good reputation.

Miller's cheese factory and boiler house 1911. *(Weekly Courier, 19 January 1911, Launceston Reference Library)*



Miller's "stable for cows" with silos at the end. *(Weekly Courier, 19 January 1911, Launceston Reference Library)*



Miller's twin silos at the end of his cowshed. *(Weekly Courier, 19 January 1911, Launceston Reference Library)*

The site in 1993 of Miller's factory, looking across the foundations of the cheese factory to the shed which has been built over where the cowshed used to be.

Miller gradually bought up much of the surrounding land (by January 1911 he owned 600 acres) but the business was probably always over-capitalised and when rabbits and bracken fern took over it finally failed. At a sale of equipment, possibly in 1928 (by which time the business was called Miller and Miller) the 6 h.p. Tangye engine was sold to James le Fevre of Coranderrk, near Winnaleah (see Chapter 5.4), and the mechanically-driven churn and butter-worker were sold to Roy Diprose of Ringarooma (see Chapter 5.3). Some time in the 1920s the property was leased to a Czech, Mr. Vaiba, and he was still making cheese in 1937. But by 1939 the property was sold to the Forestry Commission. Many of the buildings have gone, although the foundations are still visible. Commission workers used the brick cheese room until it burnt down about 1970. The floor of the cowshed complete with tramlines is still visible where a new store has been built over it, but the only original building of this large complex still remaining is a wooden workman's hut.[42]

Not long after Miller began operations at South Springfield, moves were finally made towards establishing another cooperative factory in Scottsdale. It is interesting to speculate why such a prime dairying area had waited until the very end of the boom factory-building period to build its own factory. Undoubtedly the failure of the first factory in 1889 would have caused a certain amount of caution, and this would have been reinforced by the failure of the Springfield factory soon after 1900. Along with this was the fact that where farmers were making butter with a good reputation they were able to sell it easily, as evidenced by the *Launceston Examiner's* Scottsdale correspondent in 1890 who noted that "Private farmers ... in this district can make a paying business of it, and do well, topping the market with their butter". At least in the initial stages, factories seemed to do better in areas where dairying was carried on by farmers operating on a much smaller scale, and where each housewife had made up just a few pounds daily.[43]

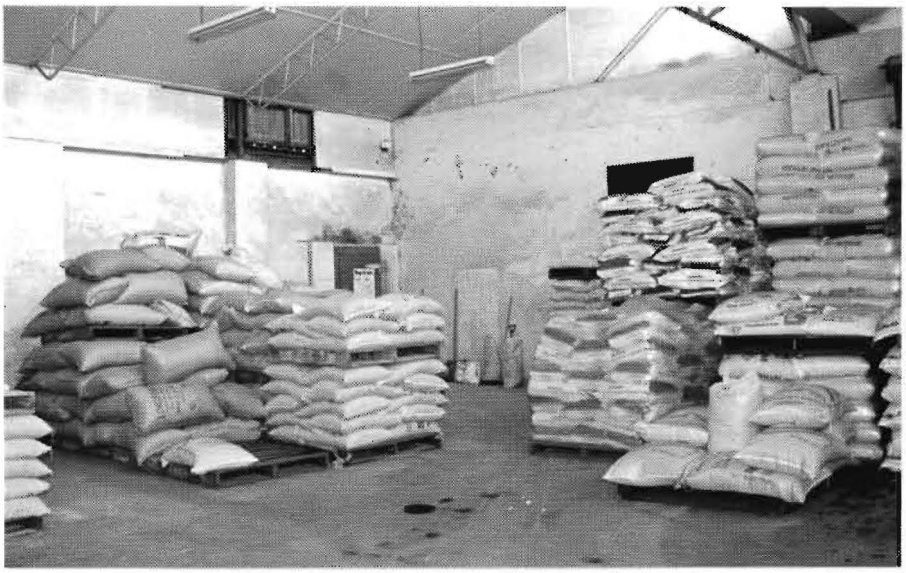
The final impetus for establishing a factory probably came from activities elsewhere. There had been a flurry of factory-building across the north in the preceding few years as the industry started to boom (see Chapter 1.5), and there was always a feeling in each area that it should be able to support its own factory. Until now most of Scottsdale's cream had gone to the Cool Stores in Launceston, and it could hardly have gone unnoticed that when the Ringarooma butter factory had burnt down in 1908 the locals had quickly built their own cooperative factory (see Chapter 5.3).

In August 1910 the *Weekly Courier* correspondent noted a proposal to set up a cooperative butter factory in Scottsdale. By October the installation of plant was being considered, and by 24 November the factory was up and running. The effect this must have had on the Cool Stores can be imagined. In fact, it was the following year that the company attempted to become a cooperative (see Chapter 5.1). In 1910 the *Weekly Courier* correspondent noted that there was active competition amongst the private companies for Scottsdale cream and that there would be four firms operating. If this included Miller and the Cool Stores, the fourth firm may have been Oliver's of Launceston, or it may have been the Ringarooma Cooperative factory.[44]

The Scottsdale butter factory October 1911. *(QVMAG)*

The new factory began on W.J. Edwards' Fairview farm. As this was the location of the earlier Cool

Stores' creamery, it seems very likely that the same building was used (see above). From the beginning it was regarded as a temporary arrangement until a new factory could be built near the railway station. The same W.J. Edwards was the contractor for the three-storey wooden factory erected in William Street right next to the railway line (map reference Scottsdale 426434), and the factory in its new location opened for business on 27 September 1911, although the official opening was not until 12 October. (There is an unexplained entry for 11 September in the Ringarooma Cooperative's minute book that the Scottsdale company was to be charged one shilling per pound for the manufacture of their butter. Perhaps cream was being delivered too early and Scottsdale had to make some hasty arrangements.) Chairman of directors was A. Coplestone, owner of four dairy farms on the Great Forester River. The factory seems to have been a success from the start. In February 1914 it was producing five tons a week although the best of the season was past, and the Scottsdale area was still able to supply cream to "several" Launceston factories, according to the *North-East Advertiser*. In November 1917 the factory was making four tons a week.[45]



1993 photograph of the churn room of the 1935 Scottsdale butter factory. The partially obscured door slightly to the left of centre led to the cool room, while the almost completely hidden opening to the right of centre led straight to the railway. This allowed for ease of loading.

But by 1935 there were problems. In 1934-5 the factory was sixth poorest in the butter factory competitions. One factor was the carelessness of farmers, which continued to bedevil the factory. At the 1951 Annual General Meeting M. Jessup noted that when he was first associated with the factory he "was concerned at the very poor cream quality, this factory being one of two producing the poorest butter in the state". He congratulated the dairymen on the improvement since then.[46]

But a much more serious reason for the poor quality threatened the very viability of the factory. In September 1935 Armstrong, the Chief Dairy Officer, reported that butter was being made in unsatisfactory premises, which owing to the requirements of the 1930 Dairy Act (see Chapter 1.6) meant that the factory was forced to rebuild. What happened is very similar to what had happened a few years previously with the Ringarooma Cooperative (see Chapter 5.3). With little surplus cash and still suffering from the depression, the cooperative had to raise enough capital to replace the wooden building with a new cement brick one. As at Ringarooma, one of the directors came to the rescue, with Chairman of Directors George Gowland mortgaging his farm to keep the cooperative afloat. A speaker at the 1951 AGM said "the factory owed its existence to the actions of ... Mr G. Gowland and Mr D. Ford. At that period the factory existed on promissory notes and post-dated cheques." (Denis Ford had been appointed secretary-manager by 1934 and continued until 1945). Possibly as a result of these problems the North-Eastern factory at Legerwood was considering trying to absorb the Scottsdale Cooperative during the 1930s, although nothing eventuated for another thirty years. The new building was presumably being used for at least some of the 1935-6 season. Some parts of the ground floor of the original wooden building remained (see below).[47]

During the early 1940s the factory was able to achieve a slight but steady increase in production, rising to 113 tons in 1945-6. This made it one of the smallest factories in terms of production, only the Flinders Island factory and the small Launceston and Hobart factories producing less (see Figure 1.5). However, the factory participated in the post-war expansion of the industry. In 1950-51 production had increased to 204 tons and two years later it was almost 300 tons, with plans afoot for

expansion. A new 40-box churn was to be bought and L. Strickland prepared plans for factory extensions. Until this time the attached office on the south-eastern side and the detached refrigeration plant on the south-western side were housed in the remaining parts of the first wooden factory, but the extensions could well have resulted in their demolition. The additions were completed by September 1953, but it is unclear exactly what was added.[48]

However, the Scottsdale factory was never one of the bigger producers and events in the 1950s and 1960s began to have an effect. At this time thousands of acres of land were developed throughout the north-east and with the development of irrigation and an increase in farm mechanisation, cash cropping particularly of vegetables became much more important, so that dairying in the Scottsdale area experienced a relative decline. As the need for large-scale dairy manufacturing became more apparent (see Chapter 1.8) small units like Scottsdale found themselves less able to compete and amalgamation talks resumed with the North-Eastern Company based at Legerwood. Even with a record production of 602 tons for 1964-5 the arguments in favour of amalgamation (see Chapter 1.8) proved decisive and the two companies combined, effective from 1 July 1966. The Scottsdale factory kept going for a few more years until it finally closed in 1970. The 1935 building is still in use as a store for UMT Hopkins.[49]

5.3 Ringarooma and environs

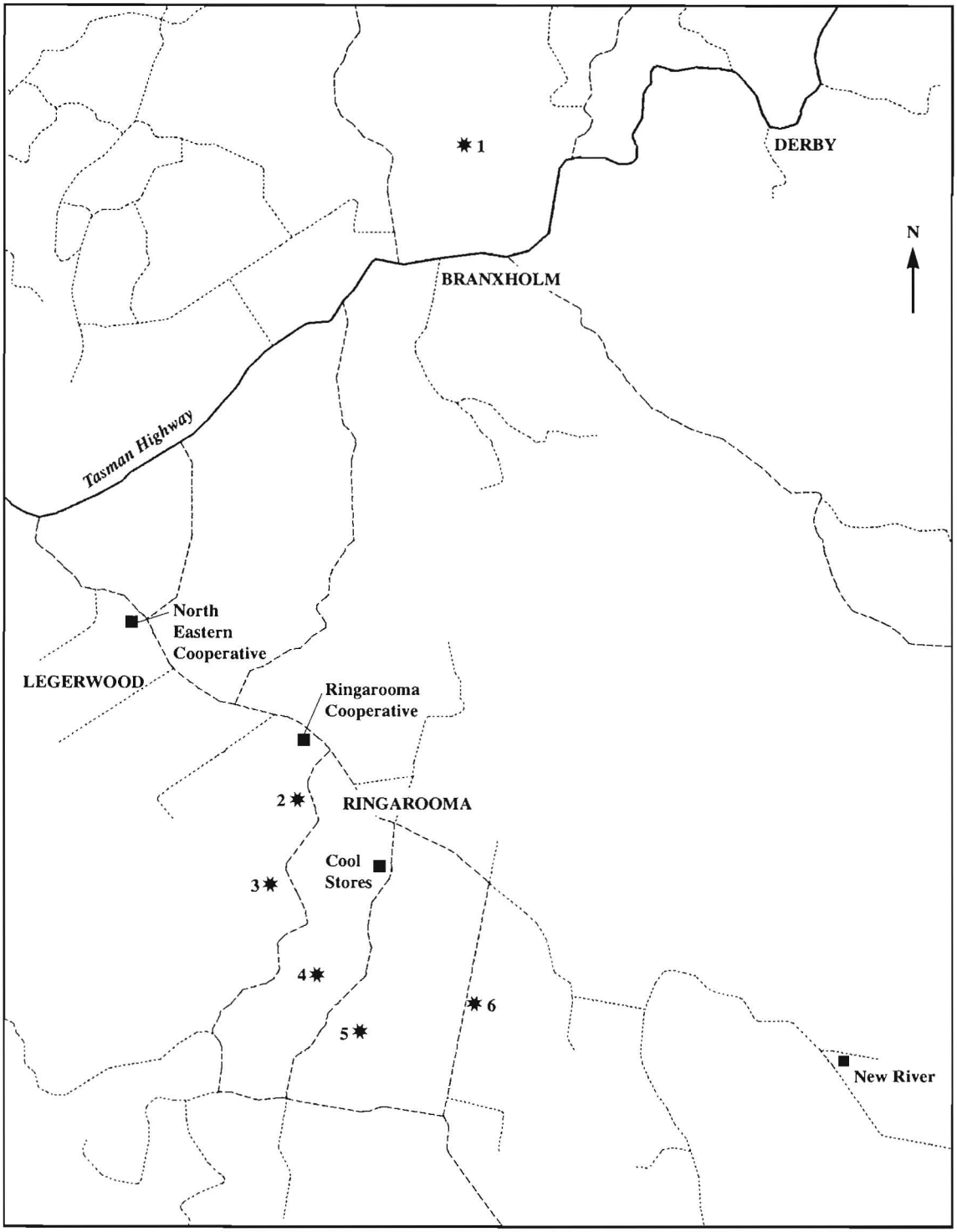
The Ringarooma district, like that of Scottsdale, quickly proved its worth for dairying. As the heavily timbered ground was cleared, farmers built up their herds. One of the first to go in for dairying was George Fry. In 1914 the *Weekly Courier* reported that "nearly half a century back cheese made at "Sunnyside" Estate, then the property of the late George Fry, was awarded first prize and a medal at a competition at Melbourne". In one year Fry exported 50 tons of cheese to Queensland. Sunnyside, also known as Brookmead, is now part of Mineral Banks (approx. map reference Ringarooma 645325). At the first Scottsdale Show in 1881, Fry won the prize for cheese not less than 20 pounds, while his wife was commended for a tub of butter, not less than 100 pounds and not less than two months since potted. Almost 50 years later the reputation of Fry and his children was still high, with A.W. Loone writing in 1928 that the Frys "certainly did know how to make cheese and butter".[50]

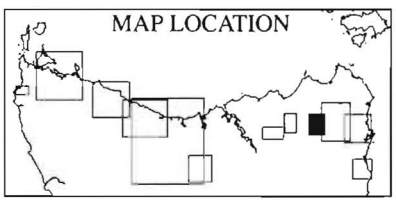
Others went in for dairying too, especially after the opening of the tin mines in the 1870s provided a ready market. Thus the suitability of the district for dairying was proved early on. Nevertheless, considering the lack of transport it is surprising that it was chosen so early as the location for a factory. The railway came to Scottsdale in 1889 but was not extended to Legerwood and Branxholm until 1911. But, nothing daunted, Percy Hart on behalf of the Launceston-based Tasmanian Dairy Association (see Chapter 5.1) built a factory at Ringarooma by the end of 1892. The initial plans were to build a creamery, but the lack of good transport must soon have shown this to be impracticable and from very early times it was producing butter. In December 1893 when the Association shipped 160 boxes of butter to London, its fourth consignment that season, forty of the boxes were from Ringarooma.[51]

But by mid-1894 the *Journal of the Council of Agriculture* reported that Hart was having problems and offering to sell the factory at cost price "or work it upon the guarantee of 500 cows". (Interestingly the Journal says "Hart", not the Association. He was the chairman and obviously the prime figure.) The guarantee of cows suggests that supply was a problem, but when the factory was sold by September the *Journal* reported that the factory was well-supplied, but that the distance from Launceston and "other difficulties" had prompted the sale "on satisfactory conditions".[52]

The buyers of the factory were not revealed, but by the time of the 1898-9 *Post Office Directory* the owners are given as Dehle and Murdoch. This was a Hobart-based company which also had creameries at Bream Creek and Kellevie. But by 1900 the company had been dissolved, and replaced by the two new companies of Dehle, Bennison and Co. and Murdoch Brothers. (See Chapter 1.5 for more details of these companies.) Dehle, Bennison and Co. took over the Ringarooma factory (and those at Bream Creek and Kellevie) and were to have considerable interests in other parts of the north (see for example Wilmot Chapter 4.3 and Yolla Chapter 3.2). Murdoch Brothers, on the other hand, concentrated their attention in the south, particularly in Hobart and the area of Oatlands, although they

Map 5.4 RINGAROOMA





KEY:

Scale: 1 km

Sites not labelled on the map:

■ Factories:

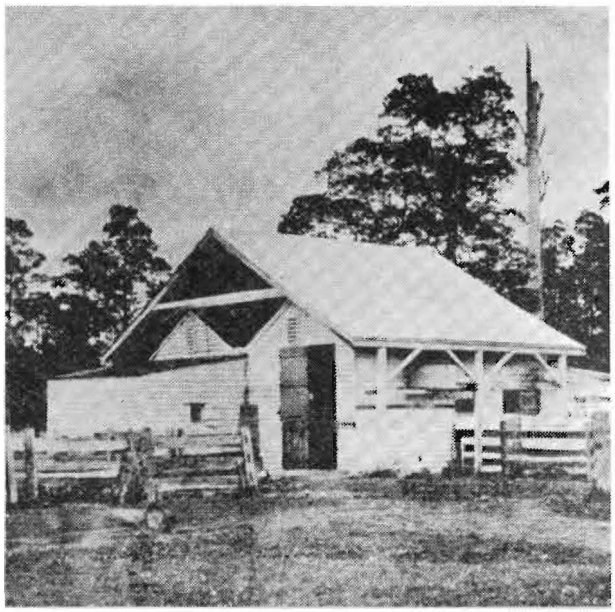
✸ Farm Cheese:

1. Branxholm Estate
2. Peters
3. Ravenscroft
4. Pleasant Banks
5. Northview
6. Kidd

were to renew their northern interests briefly in 1907 when they opened the Ulverstone Butter Factory, and for a somewhat longer time in the late 1930s when they built a cheese factory at St Marys (see Chapter 5.5).[53]

In January 1904 the *Weekly Courier* in an article on dairying in Ringarooma reported that Dehle, Bennison and Co were the "principal shareholders" of the factory and then added: "For a few years the concern paid good dividends, but it then fell on comparatively bad times, but during the past 18 months it had made better progress, and is evidently returning to its earlier prosperity". In the preceding month the factory had made an average of one and a half tons a week, while in a year it made about 50 tons. This would have been enough to make the factory profitable but it is still a fairly small concern: in 1905-6 the Table Cape factory made 163 tons, admittedly in a boom year (see Chapter 3.1). At least winter dairying was practised as a result of the area's good rainfall which allowed it to have green grass almost year round. This was an improvement on 1901 when the factory closed for a few weeks in July as only a few practised winter dairying, interestingly supplying stalls for their cows.

Of an estimated 750-800 cows in the area in 1904, about 610 supplied the factory from up to seven miles away in the Ringarooma, Albert, New River and Maurice districts. This is not much more than the 500 cows Hart demanded as a minimum to run the factory. There were also not a large number of suppliers, with just 29 farmers involved, although the herds were generally of a good size. The largest herds were owned by T. Peters with 50, and E. Singline and J. Robinson with 40 each. Most herds had around 20 or 25 cows. D. Banks was said to be the manager of the factory, "and is a most energetic officer". He had replaced E. Godden who had been manager in 1901 and was almost certainly the D. Blanks who was still manager in 1908. (Blanks was appointed manager of the Ringarooma Cooperative factory in 1911, although he seems never to have taken up the appointment). The butter quality was high. Four tons of butter had been recently sent to London and, when analysed, had received 97 points out of a possible 100. The plant was Cherry's Gisborne churn and buttermaker.[54]



Dehle, Bennison and Co.'s Ringarooma factory in 1904. *(Weekly Courier, 9 January 1904, AOT).*

The relatively small output from such a prime dairying area might indicate dissatisfaction amongst suppliers and indeed this came to the surface later in 1904. On 19 March Conlon delivered a lecture on dairying which appears to have galvanised the local farmers into action. Within two weeks there were moves to set up a cooperative factory, with Conlon wired for information on the cost of a new dairy plant. Conlon suggested it was suicidal to set up in opposition to the present factory, and suggested a cooperative be formed to take it over. According to the *Weekly Courier*, dairymen were dissatisfied with the way the current factory worked, "considering Hobart, whence it is supervised, as too distant for the management to be satisfactory". They were also owed money. Local resident A.H. Edwards kept a diary in which he recorded the events of the following few months. According to his diary, at a meeting of the Ringarooma Branch Board of Agriculture on 9 April "an animated discussion upon the dairying industry resulted in a unanimous approval of the suggested course of

closing the company and settling matters by liquidation."

At a meeting of factory creditors on 16 May, a "lively time" was said to have ensued, and on 28 May Dehle himself was present to tell what was obviously an equally lively meeting that he declined to pay suppliers the money owing, but offered 1000 shares as security. When the suppliers refused to accept this, Bennison suggested that the plant would be offered for sale. The suppliers arranged to consult a lawyer. Finally, on 23 June Dehle agreed to pay all claims conditional on the suppliers signing an agreement for three years, presumably pledging to supply the factory. By 30 July Edwards could make the brief diary entry: "Milk suppliers paid".[55]

The proposal to start a cooperative was dropped for the time being, but relations between management and farmers remained tense. In December this was attributed to low tests for cream, which Conlon blamed on the farmers for using separators badly and allowing too much milk into the cream. Two months later a new de la Veryne refrigerator was installed at the factory and it was announced that the factory's butter had been awarded 98 out of a possible 100 points at the Victorian Government grading depot. Such good news, however, was followed in December 1905 by the report that it was possible that the factory would change hands. In fact it was still in Dehle, Bennison and Co's name in 1908, but the report indicates some continuing difficulties. The Launceston-based Cool Stores was becoming interested in the district (see below) and may have wanted to take over the butter factory. They may indeed have taken some shares in the Company.[56]

The factory continued under its old management, however, which may explain why in 1907 Conlon branded the increase of interest in dairying as "deplorably low", asserting that the output of the butter factory was not at all commensurate with the capabilities of the district. In February 1908 S.F.O. Diprose, said to have one of the best farms in the district, was reported in the *Weekly Courier* as saying: "We have had an unfortunate experience at Ringarooma, and at one stage I was inclined to relinquish dairying". Although he had been a supplier to the Ringarooma factory in 1903, his cream was now sent to Oliver (presumably in Launceston - see Chapter 5.1) thus bypassing the local factory altogether, but he felt a cooperative was desirable and said he would "warmly support" one. The opportunity came the very next month. On 25 March the *Examiner* reported that two days earlier: "The well-known Dehle, Bennison and Co's butter factory at Ringarooma was totally destroyed by fire". The fire had started in the engine room during the absence of Blank, the manager.[57]

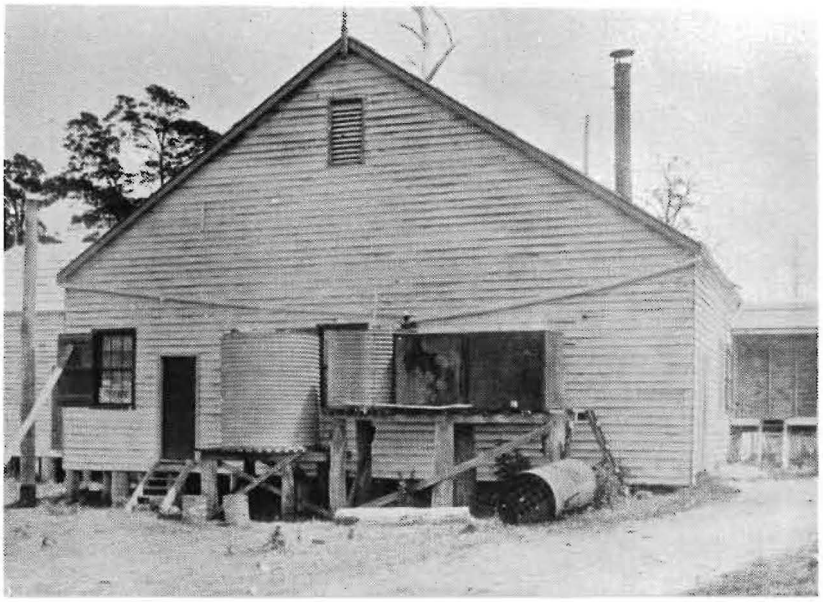
The fire had a big impact on the dairy industry in the Ringarooma area. Seizing their opportunity, residents quickly formed the Ringarooma Cooperative Butter, Cheese and Bacon Factory Co. Pty Ltd and built a new butter factory (see below). Dehle, Bennison and Co. did not rebuild. The problems of the preceding few years and the difficulties of competing with the new cooperative factory no doubt influenced their decision to withdraw from Ringarooma. However, the Launceston-based Tasmanian Produce and Cool Storage Co. Ltd [the Cool Stores] decided that the time was right to gain a foothold in this rich dairying area.

They had been interested in moving into the Ringarooma area for some time. In April 1904, at the time of the row with Dehle, Bennison and Co., New River landholders wanted the Cool Stores to erect a local cheese factory and in January 1905 Frank Stenning, manager of the Cool Stores, visited Ringarooma and declared himself much impressed. Farm cheesemaking was quite important in this area (see below) and one of the reasons why the butter factory's supplies were not as good as expected, but no doubt the local farmers would have been very pleased to have let the back-breaking work be done at a central factory. However, the Cool Stores did not proceed further at this time, probably being a little wary of opening up in opposition to the existing butter factory. However, once that factory had been destroyed the Cool Stores took their opportunity.[58]

A new company, the Ringarooma Dairy Co. Ltd, was formed with the Cool Stores as major partners. The Cool Stores' secretary, R. Manley, was also the secretary of the new company. It is quite possible that Dehle, Bennison and Co. were involved as well as the Cool Stores were not the only shareholders, but in August 1912 it was announced that the Cool Stores had bought out their late partners, although without specifying them, and thereafter they were sole owners. This was also the time when the Cool Stores turned itself into a cooperative (see Chapter 5.1).[59]

The Ringarooma Dairy Co. built a cheese factory near what is now the recreation ground to the west of the East Maurice Road (map reference Ringarooma 616333). It is possible that this was the same

location as for Dehle, Bennison and Co.'s factory and it would almost certainly have been built in 1908. By April 1909 the Cool Stores announced that, as well as making butter at its two factories in Launceston and Derby, it had made 150 tons of cheese in a good year at its three factories at Pyengana, St Marys and Ringarooma. Large quantities of cheese were sent to Victoria and Western Australia. However, from the beginning it must have been considered a possibility that Ringarooma would make butter as well, as one listing in the 1909 *Post Office Directory* describes it as a cheese and butter factory.[60]



The Tasmanian Produce and Cool Storage Co. Ltd's cheese and butter factory, Ringarooma. *(Weekly Courier, 19 February 1914, AOT)*

It is not known why the decision was taken to manufacture butter on an ever-larger scale, and gradually phase out cheesemaking. It is likely that the difficulties of carting milk for cheese from farms that covered such a wide area meant that the Cooperative butter factory, which required only cream, was able to get more supplies. The decision finally to build a cheese factory at New River must have also played a part. It is possible that the Cool Stores was involved in this new factory as there was apparently a Launceston connection. It was built on the southern side of Robinson's Road just before it crosses the bridge (map reference Ringarooma 680305). The New River factory was working by 23 November 1911. It operated for only a few years, evidently subject to the fluctuations in the cheese market that seemed to bedevil all cheese factories (see Chapter 1.7). The factory was managed, at least for some of its life, by Mr Vyvyan, and one of the cheesemakers was Harry Stingel. After the war the market for cheese dropped out and the factory had closed by 1920. It was used for dances but was later destroyed by fire. There are no remains.[61]

Just what the effect the New River factory had on the Cool Stores' Ringarooma factory is problematic, but it is certain that the latter gradually switched to buttermaking. It appears that it was still making cheese as well in the 1912-13 season, but by the following year it was making only butter and there are no further references to it as a cheese factory. In February 1914 the factory was turning out four tons of butter a week.[62]

The switch to butter production, of course, brought the factory into direct competition with the Cooperative Ringarooma factory which had started about the same time. Interest in setting up a cooperative had been evident as early as 1904, and in February 1908 remarks favouring one had been reported in the *Weekly Courier* (see above). So it was not really a surprise when just ten weeks after the existing factory burnt down, a committee in favour of a cooperative was reported to be canvassing the district.[63]

On 12 June 1908 occurred the first meeting of provisional directors of the Ringarooma Cooperative Butter Cheese and Bacon Factory Co. Ltd, with Henry Sweetland Oliver voted to the chair. This was the same Oliver who had the Olive Butter Factory in Launceston (see Chapter 5.1) and he was to play a big role in the first few years of the new factory. His factory at 19 Cameron Street was given as the registered office for the cooperative while the new factory was being built, he assisted W.M. Heathorn in drawing up plans for the building, and Oliver was eventually appointed agent for the

cooperative's butter. As early as 1906 Oliver had been agent for James P. McMeekin and Co, the company which supplied the new factory's machinery. However, although he put his name forward for election as director, he was overlooked.[64]

The factory was built on land offered for lease and later sold by J.C. Ranson just to the north of the junction of the West Maurice and Ringarooma roads (map reference Ringarooma 604352). The builder was W.M. Heathorn. The large wooden building cost 330 pounds, and the machinery 360 pounds. R.L. Pollock from Victoria was appointed manager and the factory began operations in October 1908. It had a shaky start. Its first season's production was only 35 tons and costs had actually exceeded the capital in hand. When Oliver inquired in February 1909 why he had not received much butter to sell, he was told that most butter was sold locally and thus did not even make it into Launceston. Obviously exports were not possible. In September 1910 the *Weekly Courier* noted that there was some dissatisfaction with the cooperative concern and the proprietary companies would receive more support, although this was hotly denied by the cooperative which reported that they now had a freezing plant and cream was coming in freely. By 1910 the factory and the Cool Stores' factory were agreeing on a uniform price offered for butterfat, and in 1911 this agreement probably included Oliver who was also collecting in the area. By the end of 1911 Oliver lost the agency for Ringarooma butter.[65]

The Ringarooma Cooperative Butter, Cheese and Bacon Factory Pty Ltd at unknown date. The three white-coated men in the centre are (L to R) Claude Armstrong, factory manager, and Arch Graham and Horace Targett, factory hands. *(QVMAG)*

1911 was a very good year for dairying and both factories benefited. In February 1911 the *Weekly Courier* announced that the hitherto "clean" district of the north-east had had its first outbreak of the dreaded potato disease, the Irish blight, at Ringarooma. As elsewhere in the state, this led to an upsurge in the main alternative, dairying (see Chapter 1.5). At their third annual general meeting in August 1911 the Cooperative's shareholders were told that output the preceding season had increased by 50%, the factory would be soon turning out the massive amount of 20 tons a week and all local business people were taking shares. At the beginning of the next season the Cooperative wrote to Conlon for information on the cost of setting up a cheese factory, although nothing seems to have eventuated.[66]

The two factories continued in competition for the next two decades. The fact that they could both exist, especially with the New River factory also in operation, indicates that the district was at last fulfilling its potential as a fine dairying area, although in 1916 less butter was made because there were fewer dairy cows. Herd testing began towards the end of 1916, and in the boom year of 1917 it was announced in March that although cream supplies to the factories were declining, one of the factories was still turning out three tons a week. In 1919 the Cooperative added a refrigerator to their two pasteurisers, but the Cool Stores' factory never had refrigeration, relying instead on a foot of charcoal insulation between its walls.[67]

By the 1920s, when rationalisation of the industry was progressing everywhere in the state, the

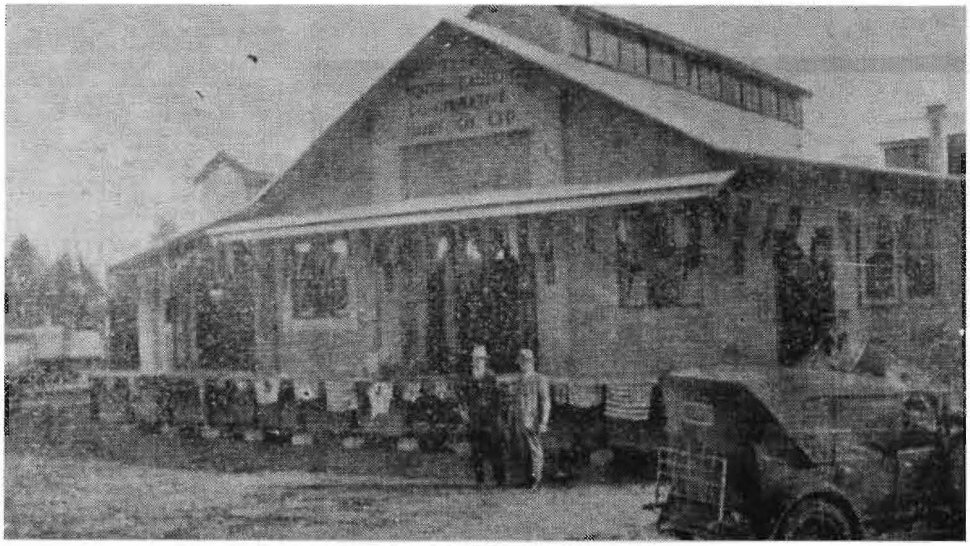
question of amalgamation of the two butter factories became an important and never-ending topic for discussion. This was associated with plans to build a new factory. The Cool Stores regularly approached the Cooperative, always from a position of greater strength, but the Cooperative resisted any attempt to take it over. As early as 1921 the Cooperative company was looking for a suitable site, but as it was hoping to build after amalgamation and amalgamation proposals fell through in July 1923, nothing was done. In 1924 there were further plans for building, but the poor outlook for export butter again caused plans to be deferred. In 1926 the Cooperative was accused by the two Launceston factories (Cool Stores and Heritage and Company) of collecting cream in their defined districts, but the Ringarooma company was unrepentant. In 1929 when the question of amalgamation was raised again, the directors explained their policy: "We are ready for any amalgamation of factories in the North and North-East on a truly co-operative basis."[68]

In the event it was the Department of Agriculture which brought matters to a head. As a result of the Dairy Act of 1930 (see Chapter 1.6) the Ringarooma factories were inspected and when they were found to be below the required standards, their managements were told that both factories would have to be rebuilt before the start of the 1932 season. This must have caused immense consternation to all concerned. It was during the depths of the depression, and it was obvious to everyone that it would be foolhardy to build two new factories. In April 1931 Fowell of the Cool Stores was invited to Ringarooma to discuss the new buildings. The Cool Stores, probably feeling they were in a position of strength because of their much larger operations which included several factories, offered to absorb the Cooperative.[69]

In January 1932 an extraordinary meeting of the Cooperative's shareholders agreed by 19 votes to 11 that they would accept the Cool Stores' conditions, but subsequent correspondence led to the directors deciding in April that it was impossible to consider further negotiations, and they approached North-Western about a possible amalgamation, although nothing further was done in this direction. A new Cool Stores' proposal was eventually forthcoming. At a lengthy extraordinary meeting on 19 August 1932 some Cooperative shareholders were in favour of acceptance because of the relatively healthy state of the Cool Stores and the fact that, as one speaker put it, the Cooperative really had nothing; but eventually the offer was rejected 33 votes to 23. The Cooperative had decided to go it alone.[70]

This was a remarkably brave move, with butter bringing low prices (see Chapter 1.7). The Cool Stores may have hoped that the venture would fail so that they could move in, but they made no move to build their own factory and from then on their suppliers had to rail their cream to Launceston or Winnaleah. At another extraordinary meeting of the Cooperative's shareholders on 5 September 1932 the decision was taken to authorise the raising through shares of an extra 8500 pounds (the Cooperative's capital at the time was only 1500 pounds), the building of a new factory and the changing of the name of the cooperative to the North-Eastern Co-operative Dairy Co. Ltd. With the help of Clark of the North-Western Cooperative, a site had been chosen a few miles away from Ringarooma next to the Legerwood railway station (map reference Springfield 580370) The proximity to good transport would mean that the movement of both heavy machinery and later cream was relatively easy, and the factory could be supplied from the whole of the north-east. Indeed, many of the company's shareholders were from Branxholm, Derby and Winnaleah. Thus the "Ringarooma" brand of butter would no longer be made in Ringarooma.[71]

In October 1932 Purse and Son's tender of 2115 pounds was accepted and they began work on the new reinforced concrete factory. In 1940 the then-chairman John Bennett referred to the difficulties of re-building and re-equipping during the depth of the depression when butterfat was sevenpence per pound. He did not mention the fact that he had used his own farm as security for the money borrowed from the bank to finance the new factory, a feat which parallels a similar event by George Gowland at Scottsdale a few years later (see Chapter 5.2). The difficulties were obviously enormous but the new factory opened in May 1933. Two years later the factory produced a record 154 tons and the following year won six of the seven events in the Tasmanian Butter Competitions. Its production continued to rise from then on, as happened in most dairy factories in the 1930s, and its future was secure. Later in the 1930s it even contemplated amalgamating with Scottsdale, although nothing eventuated. In 1937 Claude Armstrong was replaced as secretary-manager by George Dehais, who was to remain with the Cooperative (except for a brief period) until 1972.[72]



The new North-Eastern Co-operative Dairy Co. Ltd's factory. *(Weekly Courier, 25 May 1933, AOT)*

During the early 1940s the Legerwood factory overtook Burnie as the fourth-largest butter producer in the state after Smithton, Deloraine and Devonport. Then in September 1946 in a move which must have given management a certain degree of quiet satisfaction, the rapidly-expanding Cooperative bought the Winnaleah factory from the Cool Stores for 2250 pounds, closed it, and made arrangements for the area's cream to be brought to Legerwood by truck. Winnaleah's manager, Frank Fahey, replaced Dehais who had resigned, but when Fahey in turn resigned in 1948 to manage the Heritage factory in Launceston (see Chapter 5.1) Dehais returned, this time to stay. In 1952 the Pyengana Cheese Factory was bought for 3500 pounds from United Dairies, which had taken over from the Cool Stores, and closed.[73]

The rapid post-war expansion of the industry coupled with the takeover of two of Legerwood's main rivals for supplies caused the amount of butter produced to rise very quickly, from 355 tons in 1946 to 604 tons in 1951 to the highly significant 1009 tons in 1958. In 1970 the figure reached 2921 tons. The original factory was naturally far too small to handle the increased quantities. The butter room end of the factory was enlarged in 1950, and in 1956 a new board room was built (along with a silo for bulk wheat at the rear of the store). From 1959-61 the factory was altered to allow for new machinery to be fitted. But eventually it was decided to build a complete new butter factory, and work began in 1964 after Hinman, Wright and Manser's tender of 34 139 pounds was accepted. The new factory was in operation by 24 September 1965, although not officially opened until 22 October, and a milk drying plant was installed in the old factory by early December.[74]

Moves to amalgamate with Scottsdale had occurred as early as the 1930s (see Chapter 5.2), but in the rapidly-changing conditions of the 1960s it was not surprising that the idea was finally proceeded with. Scottsdale was the largest of North-Eastern's competitors, but was still only producing 602 tons in 1964-5, and with the move to bulk milk collection elsewhere it must have been obvious that the sensible thing was to combine (see Chapters 1.8 and 5.2). The amalgamation took effect on 1 July 1966, with the formation of the North-Eastern Co-operative Dairy Society Ltd, seven of whose directors were from the old North-Eastern and three from the Scottsdale Cooperative. The change from Company to Society enabled the new society to take advantage of very favourable borrowing terms. All suppliers had to become members of the Society. North-Eastern gained a monopoly in the north-east around 1970 when the St Marys cheese factory ceased production (see Chapter 5.5) and cream was brought to Legerwood via the Mathinna Road.[75]

Diversification began in 1965 with the production of buttermilk powder to A.W. Wander Ltd (Ovaltine), and was followed in the 1966-67 season by concentrated whole milk for Cadbury-Fry-Pascall Ltd. Butter production of course continued, with Legerwood winning the Australian Butter Championships in 1971. In 1972 a new milk processing building was added to the complex. In 1974 the Society finally won out over its old rival, the Cool Stores, by buying Toppa Products (Tas) Pty Ltd which owned the old Lindsay Street buildings. A new company, Nedco Cold Stores Pty Ltd, was registered after North-Eastern took effective control from 1 January 1974, and the buildings were used for cold storage of its own butter and other company's goods. In 1975-6 a spray drier was installed at Legerwood. Finally in 1981 to take advantage of economies of scale and allow the society

to participate in cheese and whey production, it amalgamated with United Milk Products and North-Western to form United Milk Tasmania Ltd (see Chapter 1.8). Butter production stopped in 1982 and the Legerwood factory concentrates on the production of various powders.[76]

The Ringarooma Cooperative's manager's house, photographed in 1993. It is believed that part of the house was at some time used as an office for the factory.

The original wooden factory built by the cooperative in 1908 was demolished some time ago, but the manager's residence next door (date unknown) is still in use as a private house. The Cool Stores' 1908 factory was used as a barn for some years after its closure, but was later demolished. However, some of the reinforced concrete building of 1933 is still on the factory site at Legerwood, although with almost every extension since 1933 part of a wall might be demolished to allow for the bigger buildings. It is estimated that only 10% of the original factory survives.[77]

* * *

The Ringarooma district was also very important for its farm cheese, with George Fry (see above) being but the first of many cheesemakers. As well as the Frys, Loone remembered James Andrews and family and R.J. Oliver and Sons. When the *Weekly Courier* described the area in 1904, Steingle, R. Styles, T. Oliver and J. Salter made cheese which they sold locally or in Launceston. This T. Oliver may well have been related to the Tom Oliver who later had a butter factory on the Camden Road near Targa (see Chapter 5.1). When Conlon visited in 1907, he was surprised at the low supplies to the butter factory, noting that cheesemaking was the chief attraction. The building of the two butter factories must have made some difference. In 1914-15 only 14 percent of a total 141 393 pounds Tasmanian farm cheese was from the Ringarooma municipality (see Chapter 1.7), but by 1929-30 the picture was changing again. Of 192 880 pounds of cheese made on Tasmanian farms, 93 860 pounds or almost half was made in the Ringarooma municipality.[78]

It was about this time that many farms in the municipality took to cheesemaking because with the low prices for butterfat prevailing, making cheese doubled the value of the milk (see Chapter 1.7). A leading light in this was Roy Diprose who in 1927-8 began making cheese with plant he bought on Flinders Island and transported to his farm, Pleasant Banks, now part of Cliffden to the west of East Maurice Road. Loone wrote in 1928: "During the past milking season Mr. Roy Diprose has started cheese-making at Ringarooma. He has been milking 70 cows, and one Launceston merchant informed the writer that he had purchased 12 tons of Diprose's cheese this year, and that it had given every satisfaction to their customers." Diprose went on to milk 100 cows annually at Pleasant Banks and from their milk he made "Anchor" brand cheese which was the best of his cheese, evidently due to the better artificial pasture. His factory (map reference Ringarooma 606317) was a barn built by Frank Diprose in 1900, then converted in 1928 by flattening out kerosene tins to line the cheese maturing room and installing celery pine shelves. The building with its additions is still there, although without the walk-through dairy which was once attached. Diprose stopped making cheese around 1940 and went into sawmilling.[79]

Diprose's Pleasant Banks cheese factory, photographed in 1993. The cheese was made in the central area, the boiler room was to the left and the cheese maturing room to the right.

Diprose bought the nearby farm of Ravenscroft in 1930 and established a dairy there as well, once again milking 100 cows and making cheese, this time under the "RD" brand. The house and dairy burnt down in 1932, and were replaced by a new wooden building (map reference Springfield 599331). In June 1937 the farm was sold to Eric Thompson and the resident cheesemaker Douglas Street continued to make cheese there until c.1946-7. A proportion of their cheese was sold to H.E. Round, retail grocer of Launceston, but over three quarters was exported to England through Hobart agents John Bailey McGregor Bros and Stokes and Hammond. The dairy and cheese room are still standing, although the dairy has been much modified.[80]

Roy Diprose also helped his brother-in-law Percy Edwards go into cheesemaking at his farm on the Branxholm Estate. Loone wrote in 1928: "Mr. Percy W. Edwards milked last year a dairy of not less than 120 cows, and in the flush of the milking season was milking up to 160 cows." Edwards' dairy had been regarded as probably the largest on the coast, but in 1928 he had stopped dairying. However, in 1931-2 with Diprose's help, Edwards converted a large stable barn to a cheese factory and dairy (map reference Derby 627439). The following year another dairy was built on the farm's station flats for the milking of 100 cows to supply the factory. Roy Diprose was the cheesemaker at first, later replaced by Winnie Edwards. An outbreak of cattle brucellosis (contagious abortion) about 1939 led to the herd being sold and the factory stopped working. It is still standing as a barn and shearing shed, with the tin-lining of the cheese room still intact. The vat was sold to George le Fevre at Winnaleah, but it had to be cut down as it was too big. It was later sold by the Howards to Healey at Pyengana.[81]

The barn used as a cheese factory on Edwards' Branxholm Estate, photographed in 1993. Only the left-hand section was converted for cheesemaking.

There were a few others who made cheese in the 1930s. James Peters and his sons used the milk from about 30 cows to make cheese in a small wooden factory at Riversdale just west of the West

Maurice Road (map reference Ringarooma 403343). This factory was only used for about five years, but the cheese storage room still stands. Norman Mountney made cheese for a similar period at Northview to the east of the East Maurice Road (approx. map reference Ringarooma 612309) but the factory and the rest of the buildings were later destroyed by fire. Finally Jack Kidd made cheese for a year or two at Waratah to the east of C423 (map reference Ringarooma 628313).[82]

5.4 Derby to St Helens

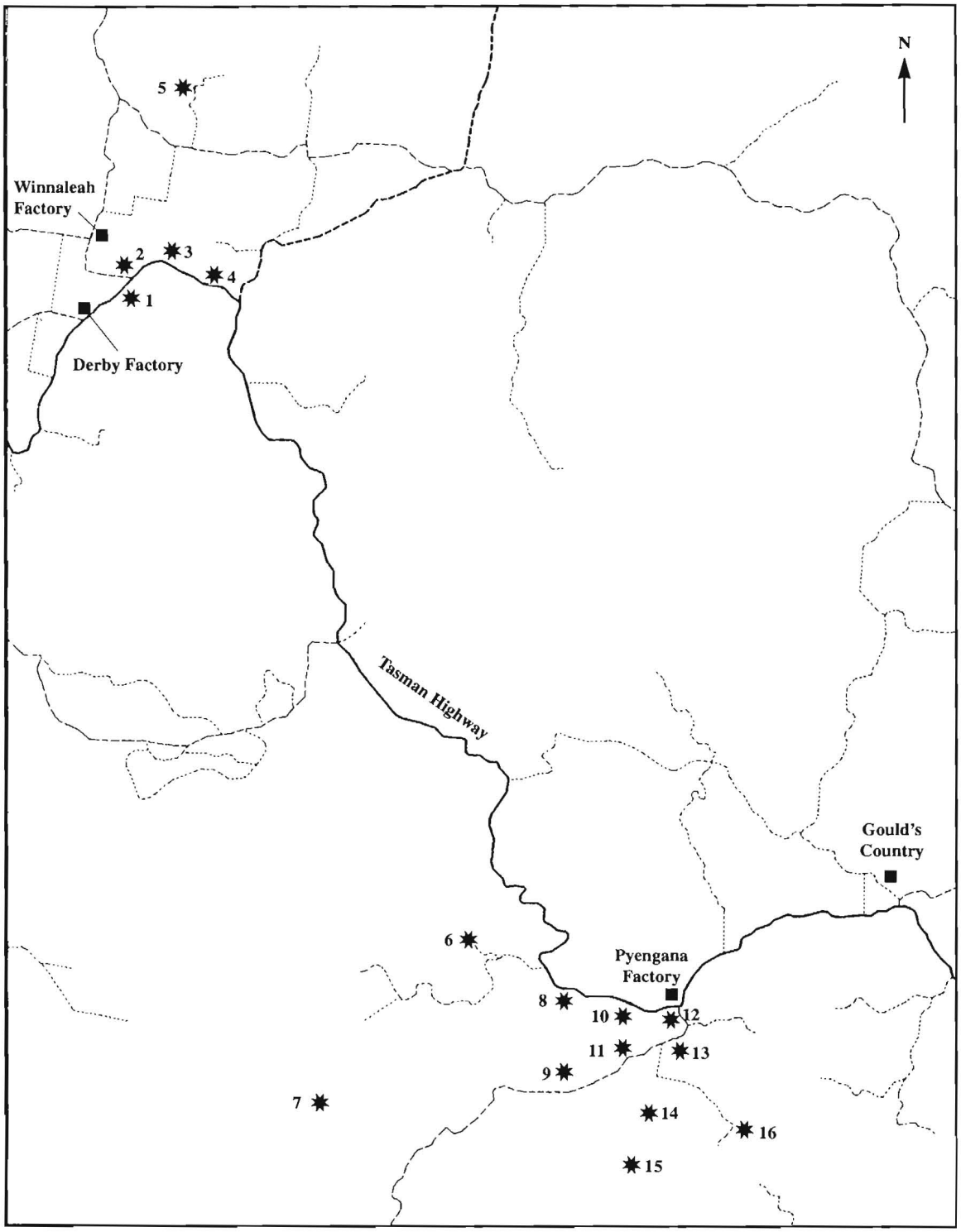
In 1897 the Tasmanian Dairy Co., which already owned factories at Launceston, St Marys and Pyengana and creameries at Scottsdale (see relevant chapters), built a new butter factory between Derby and Winnaleah to take advantage of this rapidly-developing area. Although actually closer to Winnaleah, it was always called the Derby Butter Factory, except to the locals who called it McKimmie's because it was on R. McKimmie's land. The wooden factory was built on the western side of the Tasman Highway about 300m east of its junction with the Derby Back Road (map reference Derby 692478). The manager was Fred Rose (no relation to the Roses of Wynyard, Deloraine and Ulverstone - see relevant chapters).[83]

The Derby Butter Factory soon after its opening in 1897. *(Dobie photo, QVMAG)*

In October 1901 the Launceston-based Tasmanian Produce and Cool Storage Co. took over the business of the Tasmanian Dairy Co. (see Chapter 5.1) and thus the Derby factory. In February 1902 the manager of the company, J. Christensen, reported: "At Derby a small butter factory is being worked with moderate success, but it being a new district with a large tract of partly cleared country around it which is better adapted for dairying than anything else I know of, coupled with the fact that I have the assurance of the settlers that they will increase their herds next season, and supply the factory in a proper manner, leads me to believe that Derby will be a very profitable branch in the very near future." The following year Christensen met farmers at the factory to try to persuade them that uniformity of product was most important and that the Tasmanian market would be continued to be dominated by Victorian butter while so much home-made butter continued to be made. The cream price was set at eight and a half pence for the coming season, but at least three former suppliers decided to make their own instead.[84]

But supply did improve. In 1909 the factory was making one and a half tons a week, and in 1912 it was reported that the supply of cream had trebled in the preceding five years. However, this was too much of a good thing, and the quantity put such a strain on Derby's inadequate plant that the Cool Stores was collecting all the cream and taking it to Launceston for manufacture. This decision must have been influenced by the fact that the railway to Branxholm had opened in 1911, which made transport to Launceston more feasible. The Derby factory ceased operating and Rose opened a shop in Branxholm. There are no remains of the factory.[85]

Map 5.5 WINNALEAH TO GOULD'S COUNTRY



KEY:

■ Factories

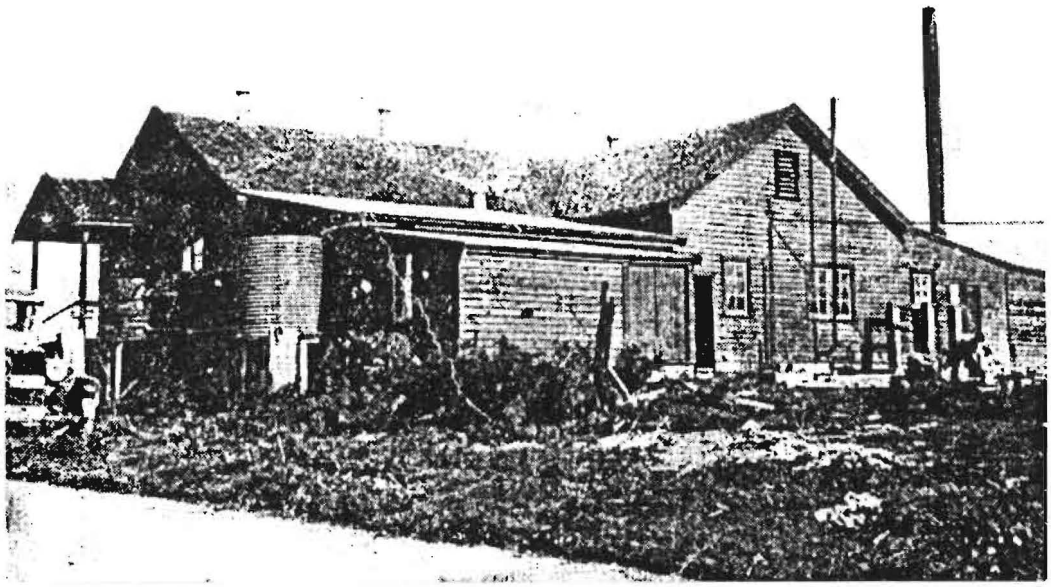
Sites not labelled on the map:

✸ Farm Cheese

1. Howard
2. Northholme
3. Ave Vale
4. Coranderrk
5. Toronna
6. Lohrey
7. Dobson
8. Davern
9. Becker
10. Le Fevre
11. Terry
12. Haley
13. Bob le Fevre
14. Jestrimski
15. Kohl
16. Strochnetter

But within a few years another factory had been opened in the district. The 1915 Assessment Rolls record a butter factory in Winnaleah owned by Oliver and Woods, with Oliver the manager. This is the Henry Oliver who had a butter factory in Launceston (see Chapter 5.1) and was involved with the setting up of the Ringarooma Cooperative factory (see Chapter 5.3). In 1914 Oliver's Launceston factory is listed in the Assessment Rolls as occupied by the Launceston and North-Eastern Dairy Co. Ltd (see Chapter 5.1) and the Winnaleah factory was owned by this same company (ironically in view of the fact that the Winnaleah factory was eventually to be bought by a company with a very similar name - see below). It is not known if Oliver had the factory built; in the light of his financial difficulties it seems more likely that he occupied an already-standing building. By 1915 Oliver had left the Launceston factory and he was not to last very long at Winnaleah either. In August 1917 the *Weekly Courier* reported that the directors of the Tasmanian Produce and Cool Stores Co. had bought "the premises at Winnaleah lately occupied by the North Eastern Dairying Co. and hope during the coming season to open a butter and cheese factory".[86]

The Cool Stores obviously did not want a competitor to become successful in an area it had always regarded as its own, and 1917 was an excellent dairying year (see Chapter 1.6). The site was on the eastern corner of Winnaleah Road and Hardwicke Road and close to the new railway station, although the railway did not open until 1919. However, on the Saturday night of 18 May 1918 the factory was destroyed by fire. It was decided to rebuild, a tender was accepted by 18 July and the new factory was in operation by 14 November 1918 when it was announced that the factory was one of many which was now pasteurising its milk (see Chapter 1.6). The plant and wooden building with shingle roof cost 1500 pounds.[87]



The Winnaleah Butter Factory in 1932. *(Weekly Times photo, QVMAG)*

The factory was managed by W.G. Palmer for some years, certainly until 1922. In 1933 the ex-Victorian Alan O'Borne became manager. He had worked for the Cool Stores since 1924 and had been manager at Ringarooma since 1928. The factory was always one of the smaller factories but it was well-managed. In the 1934-5 Tasmanian butter factory competitions which rated the factories on cleanliness and presentation Winnaleah came fifth. O'Borne went to manage the Yolla factory and was replaced by Frank Fahey who had been manager at the Irishtown and Nabageena cheese factories (see Chapter 3.4 & 2.1). In 1941 it was doubtful if the factory would reopen in the spring because of low supplies, almost certainly as a result of the shortage of labour owing to the war, and the North-Eastern Dairy Cooperative was considering a takeover although nothing eventuated at this time. In 1942-3 the factory made a low 70 tons, but two years later it had increased this to 87 tons and in 1945-6, its last full year of operation, it made 114 tons.[88]

In 1946 Dehais resigned as manager of the Legerwood factory and Frank Fahey applied for the post on the understanding that the Winnaleah factory would amalgamate if Fahey was appointed at Legerwood. The purchase was completed by 18 September, with North-Eastern paying 2250 pounds to the Cool Stores, which at this time was in some financial difficulty and probably happy to relinquish its second last branch factory. Arrangements were made for cream from the Winnaleah area to be taken to Legerwood by truck. The factory was demolished and some parts of it used in the

Legerwood factory, but the manager's house next to the factory in Hardwicke Road, which had originally come from Lottah, is still standing.[89]

The earliest of all the butter factories in this area was at Pyengana. The area had been surveyed in 1863 as Upper George's River, and gradually settlement had occurred. But the district's isolation had been a problem and it was probably not a surprise that the area was keen to start a butter factory. By the middle of 1894, less than two years after the Table Cape factory had started, farmers in the area met to decide on the building of a factory although there was considerable discussion about whether it should be built at St Helens near the port or at Pyengana near the cows. By September it had been decided to ask Mr Gosling of the Melbourne-based Bartram and Co to erect a butter factory at St Helens and a creamery at Pyengana. By this time Bartram and Co. had bought the Tasmanian Dairy Co. (see Chapter 5.1) with its factory at Launceston and creameries at Scottsdale.[90]

The company wisely decided to build at Pyengana, and the butter factory opened in 1895 with W.R. Smith as manager. The wooden factory was built on the main road to St Helens on what is now called Factory Hill next to Factory Creek on the eastern side of the Tasman Highway just north of the St Columba Falls Road (map reference Pyengana 846297). Smith was still listed as manager in the 1900 *Post Office Directory*, and it was at this time that *The Cyclopedia of Tasmania* described the area as a large farming and dairying district with the local butter factory having a considerable weekly output. In October 1901 the Tasmanian Dairy Co. was taken over by the Launceston-based Tasmanian Produce and Cool Storage Co. Ltd (see Chapter 5.1) which therefore now controlled the Pyengana factory. In February 1902 the company's manager, J. Christensen, reported: "At Pyengana a butter factory is at present working, but owing to the distance from the market, and the difficulty of getting the butter delivered at frequent and regular intervals, the article does not arrive in the condition that it otherwise would. I would, therefore, strongly recommend that a cheesemaking plant be added, as the necessity for quick transport with cheese is not so great as with butter, and I feel sure that we will get a good market for it."[91]

A new building was added and by the end of 1902 cheese was being produced as well as butter, the cheese being rated as the equal of, if not better, than the cheese produced at the St Marys factory. The prices paid for milk were the highest in Tasmania in 1902, with suppliers being paid at least fivepence a gallon for one month. The manager Jack Coleman raised the ire of suppliers early in 1903 by insisting that no milk would be received after 8.00 a.m. A meeting was told that the ground was too rough to lay down such a rule. Coleman agreed to receive milk up to 8.30 but insisted that milk still had to be early. In the 1904-5 season the factory, described only as a cheese factory, produced 40 tons of cheese with transport being the chief difficulty. In reporting this the *Weekly Courier* added: "There are numerous evidences of the good the factory is doing in circulating money and creating a market near at hand..." In October 1905 when the factory reopened for the season Mr Molphy was the new manager, and the main dairy farmers in the district were listed as Rattray with 65 cows, Brown, Lefevre and R. Terry with 45 each and A. Becker with 40.[92]

The Pyengana Cheese Factory c.1908. *(QVMAG)*

The remains of the whey tank at the Pyengana cheese factory in 1993.

In 1908 Henry Oliver addressed farmers in the area and there were moves to establish a cooperative butter and cheese factory in the area in partnership with the one Oliver was organising in Ringarooma (see Chapter 5.3). According to Gwen Webb in her book *Pyengana A New Country*, the Pyengana factory was in fact at this time registered as a cooperative with Oliver's North-Eastern Dairy Co. with its headquarters in Ringarooma, but in 1909 it was part of the Cool Stores' stable. In that year the three Cool Stores' cheese factories at Ringarooma, St Marys and Pyengana made a total of 150 tons of cheese in a good year, with large quantities being sent to Victoria and Western Australia. In 1913 the *Weekly Courier* reported that the Pyengana cheese factory turned out one of the largest outputs of cheese in the state, close to 100 tons a season, although there were many farm cheesemakers in the area as well.[93]

The factory continued making cheese for many years, with later managers being Jack Ryan, Duncan Fraser, his son Jack Fraser who was manager certainly between 1933 and 1945, and Jack Thompson. In 1922 the factory received 1600 gallons daily although several farmers were still also making cheese and many sent cream to the Winnaleah factory. In 1933 the factory produced 110 tons, most of which was exported, and the cheese was said to have a good reputation. During the Second World War a shortage of labour in the area was the possible cause of a decline in supplies but the factory was still able to produce about 100 tons each year, although in 1945-6 this had dropped dramatically to 68 tons. By 1950 the factory was owned by United Dairies and Cool Stores which had taken over from the Tasmanian Produce and Cool Stores Co. (see Chapter 5.1), but in 1952 United Dairies accepted an offer of 3500 pounds from the North-Eastern Cooperative Dairy Co. Ltd for the Pyengana factory. North-Eastern had been regularly collecting cream from the district at least as early as 1949. The factory was immediately closed and the building and plant were sold. The building still stands, used as a barn.[94]

The only other central factory in this area was at Gould's Country. In 1908 the *Weekly Courier* announced that a new butter factory was to be established there by Robert Johnston to serve Goshen, Gould's Country, Lottah and Blue Tier. The area was said to have a long milking season. The wooden building was situated in the narrow area between the Ransom River and the Lottah Road opposite Chook's Nook (map reference Blue Tier 901328) and it was said to be almost completed in June 1908, so it would have opened in the spring. In 1914 the factory was turning out one and a half tons in the height of the season, quite a respectable total. The factory was listed from 1917 onwards in the *Post Office Directory* as belonging to Mrs M. Johnston so presumably Robert Johnston had died by then, and although it continued to be listed till 1922 local residents remember it stopping earlier. Around 1922 the building and some plant was bought by the newly-formed Flinders Island Cooperative Cheese, Butter and Bacon Factory Co. Ltd and shipped from Bridport in the "Linda" to become the new Flinders Island factory (see Chapter 6.2).[95]

* * *

Farm-based butter and cheese formed a major part of the dairy production of this district for well over a century. In 1914-15, 25 020 pounds of cheese were made on farms of the Portland municipality.

This was 18% of the state's total farm-based production. In 1929-30 this had risen to 38 980 pounds (20%) and by 1940-41 had risen still further to 50 980 pounds (30%). One of the earliest producers was John Treloggen at St Helens. The first settlers came into this district in the 1830s and Treloggen arrived about 1852, making cheese from the milk of a herd of Devon cows. His Alanvale dairy was just to the north of the township, between Colchis and Mosquito Creeks (map reference St Helens 045256). His son Thomas continued to make cheese under the "TT" brand, although from about 1900 it was actually Thomas' son John William who was the cheesemaker. In 1904 a reader of the *Weekly Courier* wrote that: "When the Woodburys, C.B. Heazlewood, Treloggen and several others were cheesemaking in the old-fashioned way you could hardly go wrong for a good [cheese]". In 1913 the *Weekly Courier*, mentioning that Thomas Treloggen had been making cheese for 35 years, went on to report that Treloggen had made 17 tons of cheese that year, a record, and also that he made a ton of butter a year when there was not enough milk to make cheese. All of his produce went to Hobart where the TT brand was "familiar and popular". Cheese stopped being made at Alanvale about the time of the First World War, but the wooden cheese room is still standing.[96]

The 1915 *Post Office Directory* lists a St Helens butter factory, and this was probably that operated by Treloggen. In 1919 John Treloggen established a herd of milking shorthorns at the other Treloggen property, Martha Vale, less than a kilometre to the west of Alanvale (map reference St Helens 039256), and butter was made by his children Annie and Trevor to supply the local shops. Surplus cream was sent by bus to St Marys and then by train to the Heritage factory in Hobart. The commercial production of butter stopped in the late 1930s. After the Second World War the North-Eastern cooperative Dairy Co. Ltd sent a truck to collect cream, although this stopped about 1990. The split timber dairy still stands at Martha Vale, and has the date "1935" etched into the concrete of the milking shed, although it could have been cemented some years after it was built.[97]

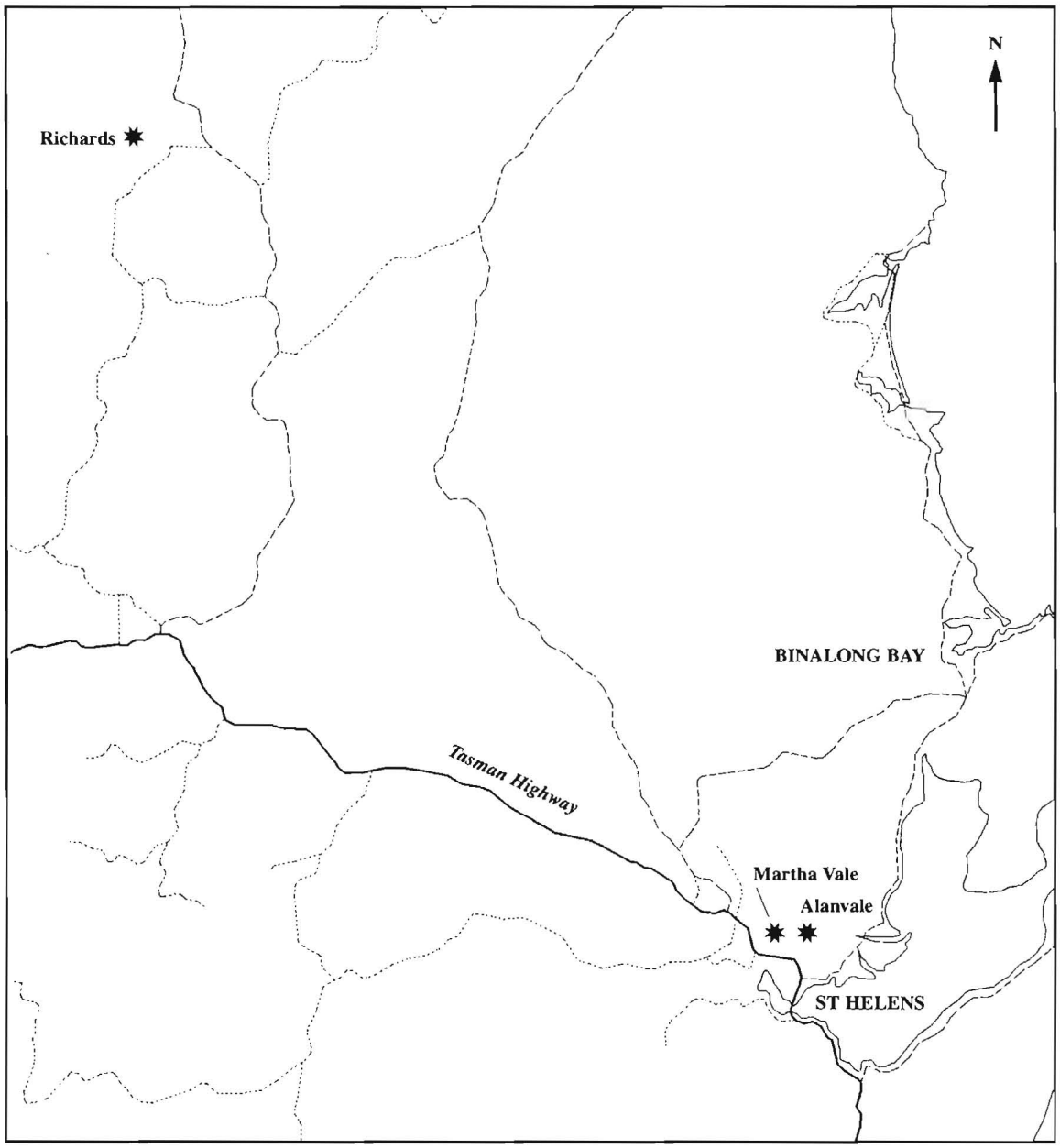
The Martha Vale milking shed and butter room, St Helens, photographed in 1993.

Other butter producers in the St Helens area were Abe Chappell who in the very early years made butter at the Priory, 4-5k out of the town, and George and Fanny Richards who made butter from the late 1920s through to 1950 at their farm at the end of Richards Road at Musselroe (map reference Spurr's Rivulet 899431).[98]

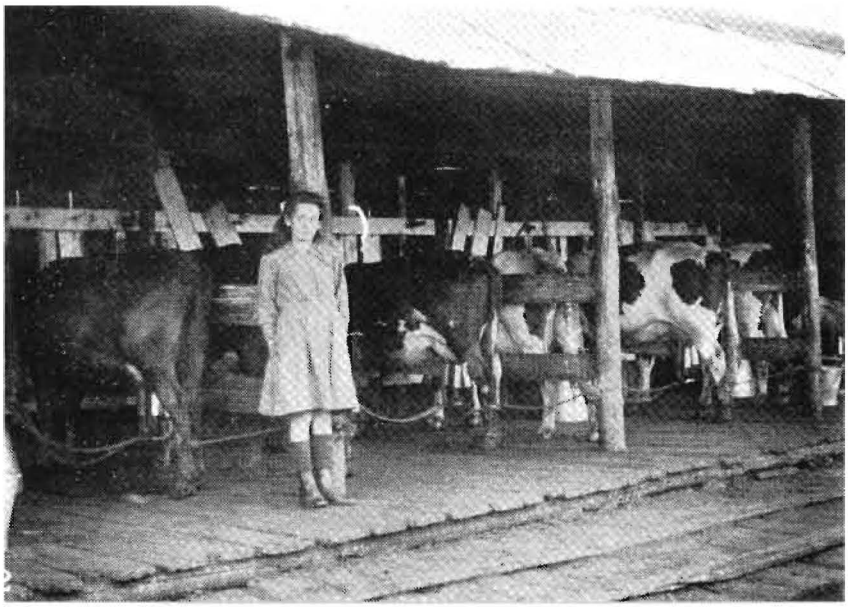
With an area ideal for dairying but still relatively isolated, it was no doubt inevitable that farm cheesemaking would be established in the Pyengana area. Before the advent of motorised transport and reasonable roads this district remained difficult of access from both directions, and there was no railway to improve matters as there was in other localities. The minefields of the north-east also provided a ready market. George Brown at Ballo, north of the Tasman Highway near Hattol, was credited with being the first man to bring a dairy herd into Pyengana. He made butter and cheese for the minefields and in 1934 he was reckoned as having been a leading cheesemaker.[99]

Another early cheesemaker was James Le Fevre who moved to Pyengana in 1887. He had worked making cheese with the well-known John Woodberry of Glencoe (see Chapter 5.5) and soon set up a cheese factory on the northern side of the Tasman Highway which ran through his Pyengana farm (map reference Pyengana 834296). In 1920 Le Fevre was reported as having a large herd of 64 cows

Map 5.6 ST HELENS AREA: FARM BUTTER & CHEESE



which were milked by machine in one and a half hours, but there is no mention of him still making cheese and he appears to have stopped early this century. In 1934 his son George was supplying the factory. George's son Bob Le Fevre worked in the Pyengana cheese factory for seven years until 1941 when he began making cheese on his own farm on the southern side of St Columba Falls Road before its junction with Kohl's Road (map reference Pyengana 846286). For a period Le Fevre was the only cheesemaker in the valley. He stopped about 1980 when the high cost of wages made continuation too expensive.[100]



Cows being milked by machine at J. Le Fevre's Pyengana farm. *(Weekly Courier, 11 March 1920, AOT)*

George's brother James moved from Pyengana to the property Coranderrk near Winnaleah in 1915. With the help of his seven sons he milked 150 cows by hand and made cheese in his factory (map reference Derby 725487). When Coranderrk was burnt out between the wars Le Fevre moved to Rosewood to the south of the Tasman Highway where his sons George and Lewis made cheese for many years. Bevis and Claire Howard later took over and made cheese there until the boiler blew up in the 1980s. The cheese house is still standing (map reference Derby 702485). Meanwhile Bert Rattray, James' brother-in-law, bought Coranderrk in 1933 and employed Jack Salter to make cheese until he went to the Second World War about 1940. The cheese house is now in ruins.[101]

The Rattray cheese house (in ruins) and milking shed at Coranderrk, near Winnaleah, photographed in 1993.

W.A. Rattray had been one of the early pioneers of Pyengana, owning thousands of acres of bushland which were scrubbed and laid down to artificial pasture for the grazing of cattle. In 1918 it was reported in the *Weekly Courier* that the Rattray Bros at Pyengana "who carried on dairying in about the largest way in this state" were to go in for grazing as it was difficult to find the labour to

milk, although the same paper announced in 1920 that W.A. Rattray and Sons had milked 100 cows that season. They were not known for cheesemaking.[102]

An early pioneer family which was famous for cheesemaking were the Jestrimskis. In 1895 Jacob Jestrimski built a cheese factory on his property on Kohl's Road (map reference Pyengana 839268) for his son Hugo to make cheese, and it continued to be used for some years. At some time the Jestrimskis stopped making cheese and supplied the local factory instead. Certainly they were doing so about 1930, but when the price for milk dropped too low because of the depression, they reverted to cheesemaking. In 1934 it was reported that they were famous for their cheese and their produce was much sought after. At that stage they possessed one of the most modern cowyards, accommodating 60 cows under one shed with automatic provision for feeding.[103]

Around 1950 Don Jestrimski stopped making cheese as the price for supplying cream was better, but in 1954 a new cheese factory was built near the first one (map reference Pyengana 840268). In 1959 Jestrimski and neighbour Terry Healey applied to be registered as a cheese factory to take advantage of better conditions under the Dairy Produce Equalisation scheme. The application was opposed by the North-Eastern Cooperative Dairy Co. Ltd as "not in the best interests of the industry" and the application was eventually refused. However, Jestrimski continued making large quantities of cheese, eventually without Healey as partner when the latter's son went into haymaking instead. The cheese was mainly sent to Burgess Brothers in Hobart and was sold around the state and overseas. Cheese stopped being made by Hugh Jestrimski in 1994 when regulations demanding that the milk be pasteurised were enforced. Both cheese factories still stand.[104]

In 1934, along with Jestrimski, both Kohl and Strochnetter were said to be famous for their cheese with their produce much sought after. Franz Kohl began making cheese on his small farm at the end of Kohl's Road around 1896, selling some over the hill at Mathinna. He stopped around 1935, but the cheese house and cheese maturing room are still there (map reference Pyengana 835254). Charlie Strochnetter made cheese from about 1920 (or perhaps earlier) till about 1935 at his farm on Powers Rivulet to the east of Powers Road (approx. map reference Pyengana 862263). There are no remains.[105]

A number of other farmers made cheese at Pyengana. August Becker moved from Glencoe at Falmouth and made cheese at his farm near the South George River to the north of the St Columba Falls Road (map reference Pyengana 814280) from about 1900 till about 1925, with the help of his son Dick in the latter part. In 1920 the *Weekly Courier* reported that the Becker Brothers had a large number of cows. Loone wrote that Becker went into cheesemaking on a fairly large scale, and later in life, when he sold his property and retired, Mr J. Woolley continued the cheesemaking business on Becker's old property. Woolley appears not to have lasted very long.[106]

William Davern learnt cheesemaking from James Wardlaw at Chain of Lagoons and made cheese at his farm on the main road near Hattol (approx. map reference Pyengana 817300), before leaving probably by 1920 for St Marys. His son Horace was later cheesemaker at Robbins Island, Flinders Island and St Marys (see relevant chapters). In 1920 Peter Haley was milking 55 cows and making fine cheese as well as supplying the factory. His farm was Brookside on the south-west corner of the junction of the Tasman Highway and the St Columba Falls Road (map reference Pyengana 847294). In 1928 Loone wrote that P. Haley and Sons were large cheesemakers. There are no remains of his cheese house. Richard Terry made cheese for a few years around 1900 near his hotel on the St Columba Falls Road (approximate map reference Pyengana 833283). The Lohreys made cheese from the late 1920s to the 1940s at their farm on Linda Vale Road (map reference Ringarooma 793313). There appear to be no remains. Finally Hector Dobson made cheese for a few years after the Second World War at his farm on the Forest Lodge Road (map reference Victoria 755267).[107]

Cheesemakers outside the Pyengana area included W.T. Tucker who in 1910 built an up-to-date factory and installed a 200 gallon capacity plant for cheddar cheese at his farm, Northholme, at Derby (map reference Derby 702490). Dairy Expert Conlon instructed there and it began manufacturing soon after 1 December 1910, but it does not appear to have made cheese for long. Reg Mackenzie in partnership with Sam Oliver at one stage made cheese at Toronna to the west of Toronna Road north of Winnaleah (map reference Pioneer 719538). And in the 1950s Neil Mountney made cheese for a few years at Ave Vale, Winnaleah (map reference Derby 713494).[108]

5.5 St Marys and Falmouth

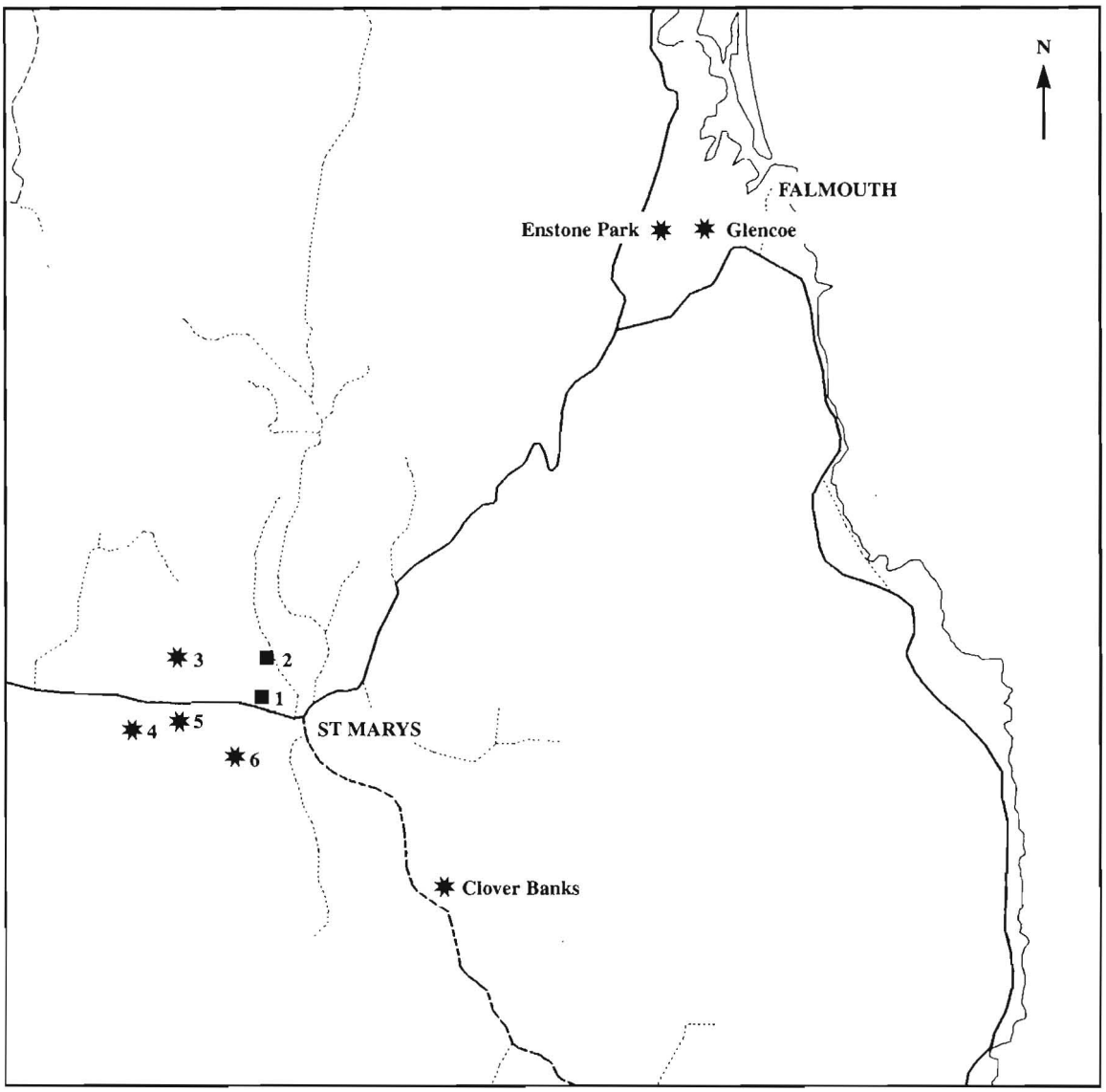
The St Marys and Falmouth district turned early to dairying, partly because of the cool nights which were good for the keeping properties of dairy produce. In 1902 the *Weekly Courier* referred to the area of Falmouth, Break O'Day and along the coast north and south as the area "where the dairy has for half a century been the staple product". Falmouth in particular was quick to adopt dairying as a suitable activity on the flat lands stretching north and south. The two large properties of Glencoe and Thompson Villa, the latter later renamed Enstone Park, were to the forefront in this move.[109]

When Archibald McIntyre bought Glencoe by 1841, he instituted an "expanded dairying operation", which indicates dairying had already been in progress. Michael Steel from the nearby Thompson Villa bought Glencoe in 1862 and let it to John Woodberry from the Break O'Day Plains who since his pardon in 1852 had built a considerable reputation as a butter and cheese maker. Glencoe was famous for cheese during John Woodberry's time. He milked over 100 cows and his cheese sold for up to one shilling and sixpence a pound wholesale, two shillings and sixpence retail. Most of it was shipped from Falmouth on the *Robert Burns*, but an increasing quantity went overland to Hobart and later to the Portland tin mines. James Le Fevre senior was taught at Glencoe at this time, before moving to Pyengana (see Chapter 5.4). In 1882 Woodberry left for Deloraine (see Chapter 4.5) and was replaced by August Becker as tenant. Becker was also a cheesemaker, but in 1885 he bought an Alexander separator so he could concentrate more on butter as the price of cheese had slumped. When in 1899 his lease was terminated, Becker also went to Pyengana (see Chapter 5.4) and James Wardlaw moved into Glencoe, eventually buying the property.[110]

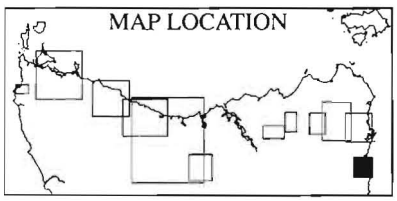
The interior of the second Glencoe dairy, built 1901, photographed in 1993.

The interior of the second Glencoe dairy, built 1901, photographed in 1993. Note the separator and cheese press.

Map 5.7 FALMOUTH & ST MARYS



Scale: 1 km



KEY:

Sites not labelled on the map:

■ Factories
1. First St Marys Factory
2. Second St Marys Factory

✸ Farm Cheese
3. Top Marshes
4. Crosby Davern Cheese
5. Llondavra
6. Sunny Banks

Sample only: many more farm cheesemakers are known to have operated in this area.

Robert Wardlaw had established a farm at Chain of Lagoons by 1856 and was also a specialist dairyman. When his son James moved into Glencoe, he built a new cheese room and a 52-bail milking shed there and 104 cows were milked by hand (map reference Scamander [Falmouth] 051034). He made cheese every day from 1900 until about 1926, and when he finished he celebrated by writing on the dairy door: "Last cheese made this day; never again". The old cheese room is still standing at Glencoe, although the date of its building is uncertain. It was certainly used by Becker, and could have been in use much earlier. The 1901 dairy and cheese room are also still there, although somewhat dilapidated.[111]

Meanwhile dairying was also carried on at the nearby Thompson Villa, now called Enstone Park. By 1848 there were outbuildings there which could well have included the dairy and cheese room. In 1855 Michael Steel bought Thompson Villa and that year from 30 cows he made about 80 pounds of cheese a day from 30 cows. He wrote to his father: "My presses are rather of a rude kind, a large beam stuck in a tree and a log under which the cheese vat stands and the beam is weighted by the old iron work of poor Uncle's machinery." The following year he was able to sell butter at the good price of two shillings per pound. Steel's dairyman was Charles Slatter who devised a useful ventilation system for his brick cheese and butter storage room. From 1864 Thompson Villa concentrated on fat cattle, but when the railway to St Marys opened in 1886 and the centre of the district shifted there, Steel found other farmers could compete in supplying cattle and he reverted to dairying, although he concentrated on butter rather than cheese. Steel purchased an Alpha-Laval separator capable of handling 80 gallons an hour, one of the first to do so. The brick cheese storage room is still standing at "Enstone Park" (map reference Scamander [Falmouth] 043034).[112]

Flagstones in the cheese room at Thompson Villa, now Enstone Park, photographed in 1993.

In 1900 *The Cyclopedia of Tasmania* reported that the two estates of Glencoe and Thompson Villa had at times had a total of 220 cows. As well as these and Wardlaw's farm there were also four or five dairy farms at Four Mile Creek where cheese was made and taken up the back track to Irish Town. But there was also a lot of cheese made around St Marys, particularly after the railway opened in 1886 which made markets much more accessible.[113]

Two well-known St Marys cheesemakers in the nineteenth century were Robert Cadman and George William Oliver. According to Cadman's entry in *The Cyclopedia of Tasmania* in 1900, he was "known far and wide for the perfection to which he has brought cheese-making in the district". He milked 60 cows on average and made five or six tons of cheese a year. He had been on his farm, Ascot Vale, since about 1860 and had won many prizes for his cheese in Tasmania and other countries including India where he won the medal and certificate at the Calcutta International Exhibition of 1884. The same publication said of Oliver that he had been "producing cheese, butter and bacon successfully for 25 years" on his farm, Balaclava on Gardener's Creek Road. As late as 1934 his son George Robert was referred to as "George Oliver of cheesemaking fame". Oliver's cheese was taken by cart to Hobart, but production on the farm stopped about 1921.[114]

There were many other cheesemakers in the area and several of these later took their skills to other parts of the state. John Lade made cheese on the Rosegarland property (approximate map reference St Marys 977976) and won all the prizes for cheese over ten pounds [4.5kg] at the Tasmanian International Exhibition 1891-2 before moving to Sulphur Creek about 1893 and making cheese there (see Chapter 4.2). A Mr Beckett spent many years making cheese in St Marys before moving to Upper Castra by 1902 and making cheese from 28 cows.[115]

In 1905 Conlon visited the St Marys Show and pronounced the cheese and butter there as of excellent quality, particularly the cheese. With so much dairying activity in the area it is perhaps not surprising that there were moves quite early on to set up a butter factory, although other factors played a part. Around 1890 farmers were noticing that the north-eastern tin mines were less profitable as a market for dairy produce because there were fewer miners, and this induced them to pursue new avenues. In July 1891, even before plans had been made to set up the factory at Table Cape (see Chapters 1.3 and 3.1), a meeting was held at St Marys "to take into consideration the advisableness of establishing a cooperative dairy company". J.G. Davies related his experiences visiting cooperative factories in New South Wales. Speakers felt that "the formation of the company [was] the only means of making dairying profitable". It was agreed to form a company, and a committee was appointed of G. Becker, Napier, Slater, F. Harvey, Lohrey, Morey and Davies.[116]

The next month James Anderson of the Harefield Estate gave a lecture on practical dairying and buttermaking, in which he labelled the pan method inefficient because cream was lost. He told the meeting that all "progressive butter makers should have a separator" and farmers should arrange for half their cows to be milked in winter. Chairman of the meeting, dairy farmer Lloyd Hardy, said he was in favour of the cooperative dairy system. Little seems to have been done at this time, however. The following year the newly-established Travelling Dairy under the managership of James McCormick (see Chapter 1.3) visited St Marys as its first stop. In announcing this, Mr Piesse of the Council of Agriculture noted that the district "had always been noted for its dairy industry. Of course there were men in that district who had had long and successful experience in the industry, but it was one of the best signs of the utility of the Council's action when these men were willing to learn". In November August Becker placed his factory at Falmouth at the disposal of the Dairy for a course of instruction.[117]

St. Marys cheese factory c.1900.
(Oliver photo, QVMAG)

But it was to be almost two years before a factory was finally built. "Doubting" farmers were said to be the cause for the delay, but by the middle of 1894 a feeling that "the first dairying district in Tasmania has remained behind" while factories had opened up in other areas, led to definite moves finally being made. As the general feeling was that the local farmers could not afford a cooperative, they accepted "a very liberal offer" from Bartram and Son to build a factory, leaving the farmers an option of purchase later. It was gleefully announced that the whole of the milk production from the "luxuriant Falmouth marshes" would go the St Marys factory, with both Becker and Steel agreeing to use their separators and send up the cream. Land opposite the railway station on the main road was

given by R. Cameron and the 21 x 24 feet [6m x 7m] building was opened on 13 October 1894 (map reference St Marys 982960). The building was usually referred to as a creamery for supplying cream to Bartram and Son's Tasmanian Dairy Co. Launceston butter factory (see Chapter 5.1). The mention of the Falmouth cream indicates that in fact butter was made locally, but that may have indicated confusion on the part of the reporter. Even with the proximity of the railway station, however, St Marys was obviously too far away to operate satisfactorily as a creamery and by 1897 at least, probably earlier, it had converted to the manufacture of cheese.[118]

From 1 October 1901 the Tasmanian Dairy Co.'s business was taken over by the Tasmanian Produce and Cool Stores Co (see Chapter 5.1) which thus owned the St Marys factory. In February 1902 the company manager, Christensen, reported that: "At St Marys a cheese factory capable of converting 1000 gallons of milk into cheese every day is being successfully worked, and the quality of the cheese meets with general approval." In 1902 the factory turned out a record quantity of cheese. In 1904 as part of a general inspection of dairies Conlon visited most of the suppliers to the factory and reported that steps should be taken to improve the condition of supply at the producer's end. In 1905 the supply of "milk and cream" to the factory was well maintained despite a bad season. In 1909 the three Cool Stores' cheese factories of Pyengana, Ringarooma and St Marys produced a total of 150 tons, large quantities of which were sent to Victoria and Western Australia.[119]

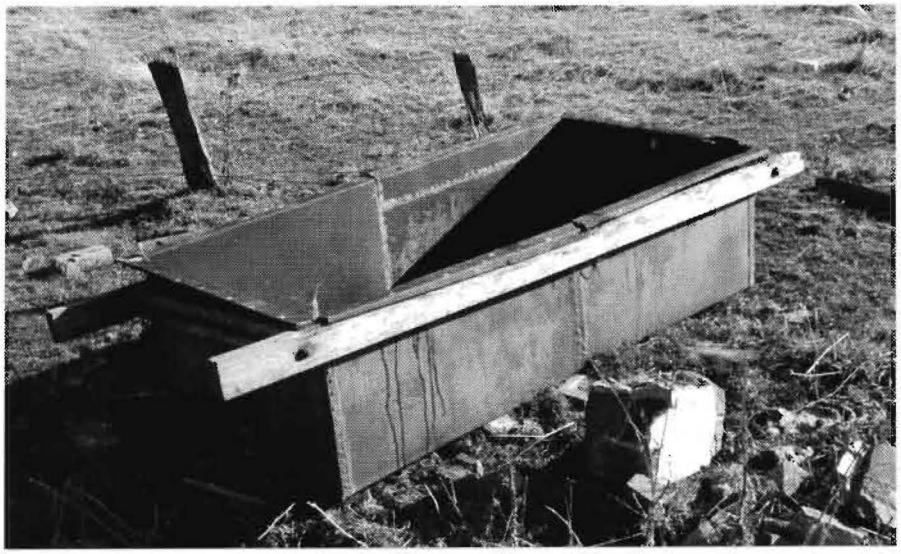
But in 1912 the *Weekly Courier* reported that although the cheese factory was still going and receiving over 1000 gallons a day in the height of the season, there should be more suppliers. There were actually fewer cows milked in the district than there used to be. Much of the cheese was going to Western Australia. The factory appears to have closed soon afterwards, possibly during the early part of the First World War when the cheese market collapsed. The manager of the factory was Gil Ormond McHarg. The building remained for some time, but seems to have burnt down some time in the 1920s. There are no remains.[120]

The St Marys district reverted to making cheese only on farms. In 1914-15 the Fingal municipality made 57 972 pounds of cheese on farms, which was 40% of the state's total of 141 393 pounds of farm-based production. By 1929-30 the total had dropped a little to 42 620 pounds but the proportion had sunk to 22%, while in 1940-41 the total had more than doubled to 100 421 pounds and the proportion had increased to 60%.[121]

This farm-based cheese was made on a number of different properties and the following brief survey cannot be considered in any way a complete listing. There were some large farms close to St Marys. Cameron's property to the west of the township had nine dairy farms on it, many of whom made cheese. But smaller settlers in the hills around also made cheese. Many of these were German families, and families such as Becker, Spier and Lohrey were well-known for their cheese. In 1912 the *Weekly Courier* reported that Mr Lohrey on Daisyburn at Dublin Town had been making cheese for the 35 years he had been on his property, and that most farmers in the area did the same. Irish Town settlers were also cheesemakers.[122]

The interior of the Top Marshes cheese storage room in 1993.

The interior of the Clover Banks cheese storage room, photographed in 1993.



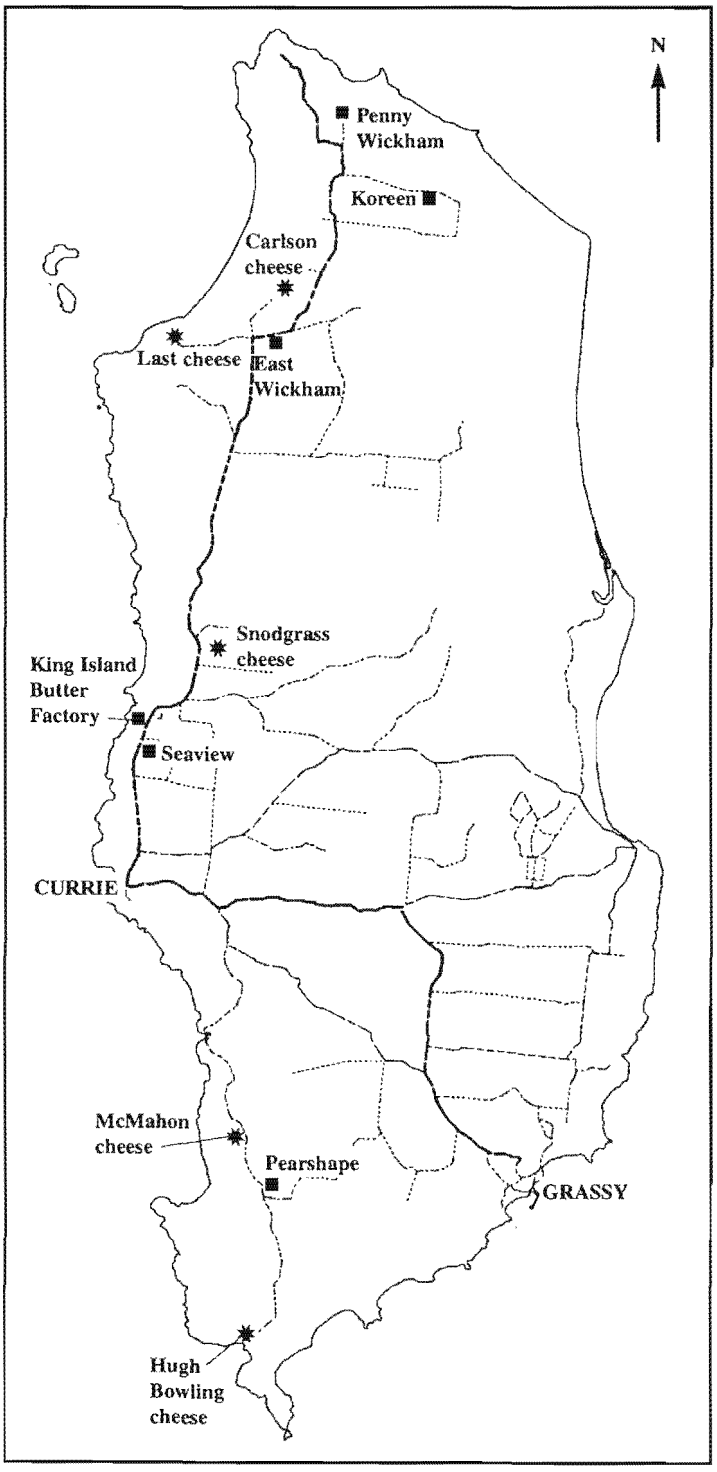
Crosswell Davern's cheese vat, photographed in 1993.

Some of the bigger names in cheesemaking were in a cluster to the west of the township. The Wardlaws at Llondavra just south of the main road (map reference St Marys 969960) were probably the biggest, but there were also the Daverns who made cheese at nearby Ascot Vale after Robert Cadman; Fred Salter and his son Gordon who made cheese into the late 1930s on their property Top Marshes opposite Llondavra; and the Napiers at Sunny Banks. Here cheese began to be made about 1920, at first by E.E. Napier who in 1930 left to set up a cheese factory in Wynyard (see Chapter 3.4), and later by Bill Lohrey. The Lohreys also made cheese at Cullenswood in the 1920s before moving to Clover Banks in 1930 and making cheese on a smaller scale, from 20 cows instead of 60, until 1934. The Bullocks made cheese at Bryar Wah. The farm cheese factories on Top Marshes (St Marys 969966) and Sunny Banks (St Marys 977953) still remain in good condition, while the Crosby Davern cheese maturing room (St Marys 964959) and that at Clover Banks (Gray 009930) also remain.[123]

However, there were moves to build a new central factory at St Marys by the end of the 1930s, this time by the Hobart-based dairymen Murdoch Brothers. Many farmers already sent cream to the Murdoch Bros' Hobart factory, or to the Cool Stores in Launceston. The factory appears to have been built about 1938-40, and it may well have been a response to the war-inspired federal government subsidy of dairying which was paid only to farmers who supplied a central factory (see Chapter 1.7). The factory was a large concrete structure erected by the builder Bert Markey at 4 Gardeners Creek Road. Most of the farm cheesemakers gave up production on their farms and supplied the factory, so that farm cheesemaking became much less important. But during the early 1940s the factory consistently produced less cheese than the other Tasmanian cheese factories, a total of 44 tons in 1945-6 being its highpoint.[124]

This may have been why Murdoch Bros were happy to sell in 1948 to the newly-formed St Marys Cooperative Dairy Society, which had Garth Napier of Sunny Banks as chairman of directors. Napier was a prime instigator of the formation of the cooperative. The factory was managed in turn by Jim House, Horace Davern who came from stints at Robbins Island and Flinders Island, and finally Murray Berwick. But as dairying became more and more the province of big operators and more farmers in the district stopped dairying, the factory became increasingly less viable and it finally closed around 1970. The building is still standing in excellent condition.[125]

Map 6.1 KING ISLAND



KEY:

■ Factories

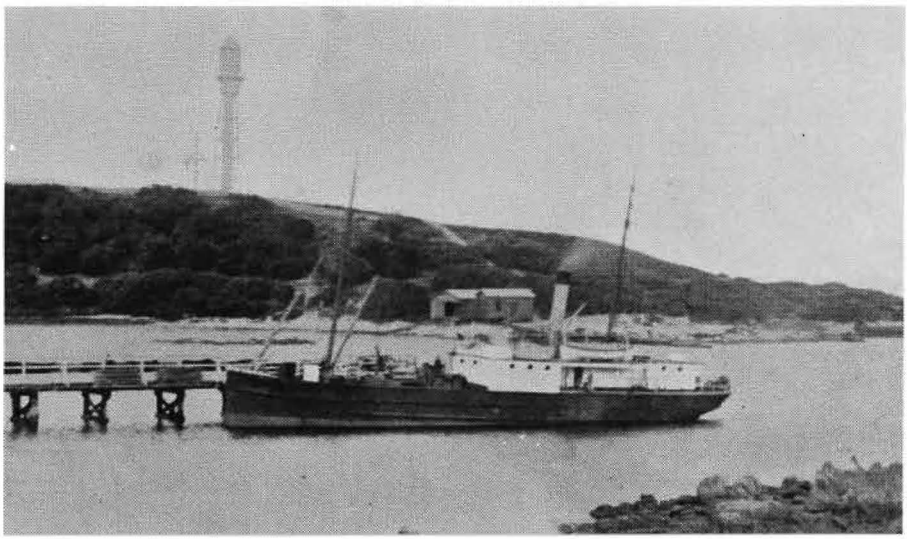
✸ Farm Cheese

CHAPTER SIX

KING AND FLINDERS ISLANDS

6.1 King Island

Two problems had to be overcome before the dairy industry on King Island could eventuate. The first of these was the prevalence of what came to be called coastal disease, which led to the early death of cattle. Once it was realised that cattle raised or spelled on sound land experienced no problem, dairying quickly became the major industry. Any industry was also dependent on shipping, and the building by the newly-formed King Island Shipping Co. of the *Yambacoona*, which made its first voyage in 1899, provided farmers with a regular service. In 1898 the island had a population of 155, and there were soon flourishing farms along the west coast at Surprise Bay, Fitzmaurice Bay, Porky Lagoon, Yellow Rock and Yambacoona.[1]



The *Yambacoona* at Currie jetty. *(Weekly Courier, 26 December 1903, AOT)*

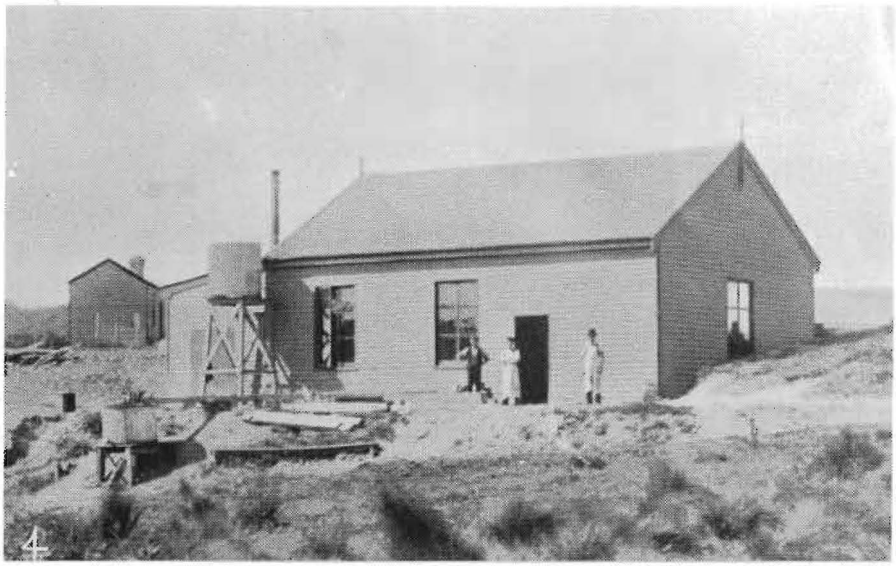
The equable climate of King Island makes it ideal for dairying and, as elsewhere (see Chapter 1.1), dairying proved to be a very useful activity for settlers establishing themselves. In 1903 the *Weekly Courier* reported that D.B. McMahon at Sea View was regarded as one of the pioneer dairymen. He was said to have been producing butter for five to six years, and in the best of the season his herd of 70 cows averaged as much as nine or ten pounds [4-4.5kg] of butter per week. As a result of efforts by people such as McMahon, farm butter was being shipped to both the Tasmanian mainland and Melbourne before the turn of the century. In 1899, for example, the *Tasmanian Mail* reported that regular shipments of butter were being sent from King Island to Strahan, and in October 1901 the *Weekly Courier* announced that the *Yambacoona* had taken 26 boxes of butter from the island and that output was increasing week by week.[2]

It must have been this steady growth which induced the larger dairymen to establish a butter factory, presumably to reduce the need for the daily grind of buttermaking on the farm. The first moves were made in October 1901, and at a meeting of interested people on 2 November a Mr Cooper gave a great deal of information about the working of the mainland butter factories. A provisional Board of Directors was appointed. By March 1902 the shareholders had appointed Ernest Cooper as chairman of directors and Fred Robinson secretary and treasurer, and a tour of inspection of several possible sites with the Dairy Instructor, Conlon, had led to the selection of a site for the factory on Porky Creek on the west side of the North Road, about 10k north of Currie (approximate map reference * King Island YA323828). Water could be obtained from a spring about 15 chains away. J.& T. Gunn of Launceston were to be asked for plans and specifications, and Conlon agreed to consult with

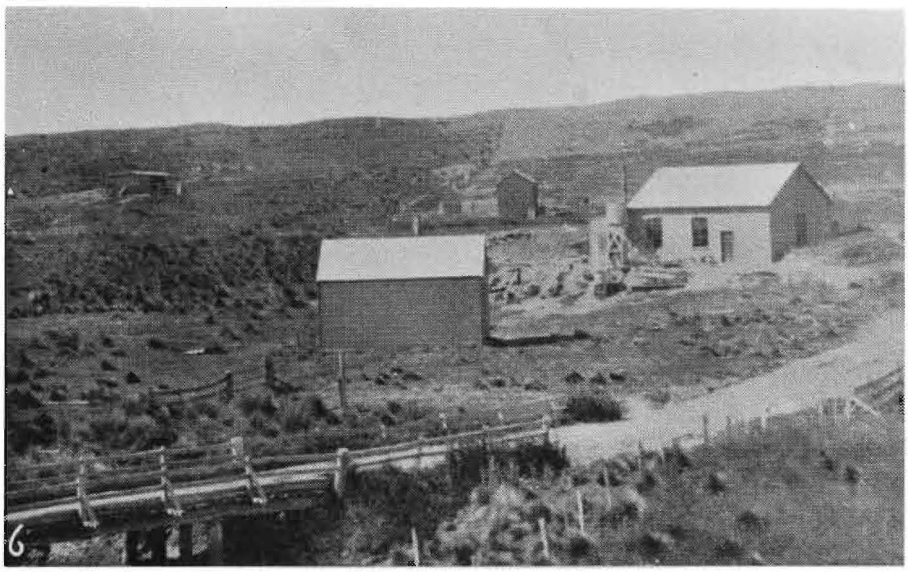
*Note: map references for both King and Flinders Islands are only approximate. They are from the 1:100 000 map series.

Gunns about the erection of suitable wooden buildings. Work on the foundations began in May and the first milk was received at the King Island Dairy Factory on 28 August 1902.[3]

Roland Mollison came from Burnie's Emu Bay factory to be the first manager, and in January 1903 the *Weekly Courier* reported that the factory was "successful beyond anticipation". A ton of butter was being made every week from 500 cows and the butter had won a good reputation on the mainland. Gradually more and more suppliers bought their own separators and set up what the *Weekly Courier* correspondent called "creameries", although it is not clear whether they did in fact separate for other farmers. By June 1903, such "creameries" had been set up by Stephenson and Gunn at Yambacoona; Melville Stephenson at Loorana and Porky; Cooper and Sons at Whistler's Point; and Archie Johnson at Wickham. Within a week of opening, the factory had bought a wagon to collect cream from the more distant farms at Surprise Bay, and a little over a year later this was travelling 14 miles [22k] north and 18 miles [29k] south twice a week. The factory no longer separated milk.[4]

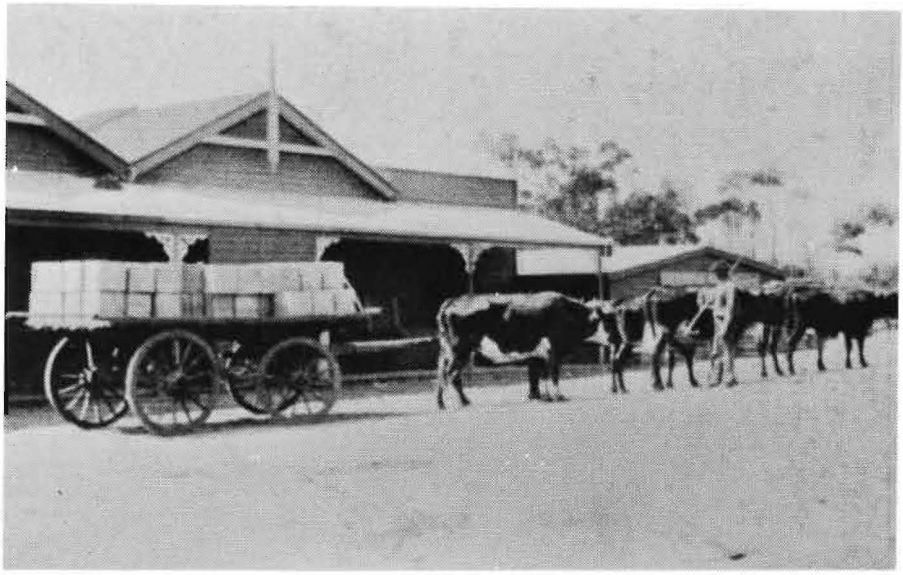


The King Island butter factory. *(Weekly Courier, 26 December 1903, Launceston Reference Library)*



Site of the King Island butter factory. *(Weekly Courier, 26 December 1903, Launceston Reference Library)*

The enterprise seems to have been initially very successful. Local farmers were pleased to support it, presumably because butter was such a readily-exportable article. Certainly boxes of butter were easier and cheaper to transport to market than stock, although there were occasional complaints to the shipping lines that melted butter was running out of the boxes by the time the ships reached port. Dairying rapidly became the principal industry on the island.[5]



A load of butter from the King Island butter factory. *(Weekly Courier, 26 December 1903, Launceston Reference Library)*

Although some farmers continued to make butter and cheese privately (see below), the *Weekly Courier* correspondent reported proudly in March 1903 that during the best months the factory output was up to a ton and a half per week, but within a fortnight even this had been exceeded with the factory turning out two tons weekly. The manager confidently predicted three tons a week in the next season as most farmers were still using cattle that had been bought for beef production. The number of milch cows was also expected to double to 1000 for the new season. Due to the mild climate, feed was available year-round and the factory continued to operate through the winter. By early December 1903 output had increased again to two and a half tons. The island's population was also rising, up to 500 by January 1904.[6]

King Island butter was sold in a number of different markets. In October 1902 the *Yambacoona* took 30 boxes to Hobart, while the following July some butter went to Strahan and some to the Tasmanian Produce and Cool Storage Co. in Launceston (see Chapter 5.1), although whether this was for distribution locally or for cool storage until it could be exported was not made clear. As mentioned above, butter was also sent to the Australian mainland and "usually commands a high price", according to the *Weekly Courier* correspondent.[7]

In February of the boom dairying year of 1904 (see Chapter 1.5), the butter factory output was said to be constantly increasing, with the *Yambacoona* expected to take 100 boxes on its next trip. The monthly cheques to dairymen were also getting larger. There may have been some problems with supplies as in 1905 the company resolved to pay a bonus of at least 50% of the yearly profits to those suppliers who had not sold butter, cream or milk outside the company. But by the end of 1905 land was purchased for enlarging the factory site, and the factory was added to in 1908. Renamed the King Island Cooperative Dairy Factory Co. Ltd. by at least July 1909, it negotiated during 1908-9 with Salisbury's Engineering in Launceston to install a new boiler.[8]

Little is known of the operation of the butter factory for the next decade. A steadily-increasing population may have improved supplies to the factory, but it probably faced a downturn in production during the 1914-18 war when at least one private cheese factory was set up (see below) and drought conditions on the mainland encouraged many farmers to start fattening cattle for the Melbourne market. Moreover, one fifth of the male population enlisted for the war and the consequent shortage of labour led to a slackening of general development and would have certainly caused problems in the labour-intensive dairy industry. In the 1920-21 season the annual production at the butter factory was only about 45 tons, and ten years later T.H. Monger wrote that before 1920 the factory had had a similar nominal amount "for many years".[9]

But the situation changed dramatically in the 1920s, largely as a result of the Soldier Settlement scheme. Recognising the suitability of King Island for dairying, the state government set up a number of farms of what were considered the right size for dairying. Generally they were capable of carrying about 30 cows, although one big dairy is reputed to have had up to 150. Many were located at Egg Lagoon in the north, which was reclaimed and grassed ready for settlement by the beginning of

1921. In the 1921-22 season the output from the butter factory almost trebled, with 132 tons being manufactured. This was the start of a steady increase throughout the 1920s (see Figure 6.1), and by the end of the 1920s the King Island factory was the largest producer of butter in the state.[10]

YEAR	TONS PRODUCED
1920-21	45 tons (approx)
1921-22	132 tons
1922-23	205 tons
1923-24	164 tons
1924-25	230 tons
1925-26	(not known)
1926-27	231 tons
1927-28	(not known)
1928-29	249 tons
1929-30	283 tons
1930-31	314 tons

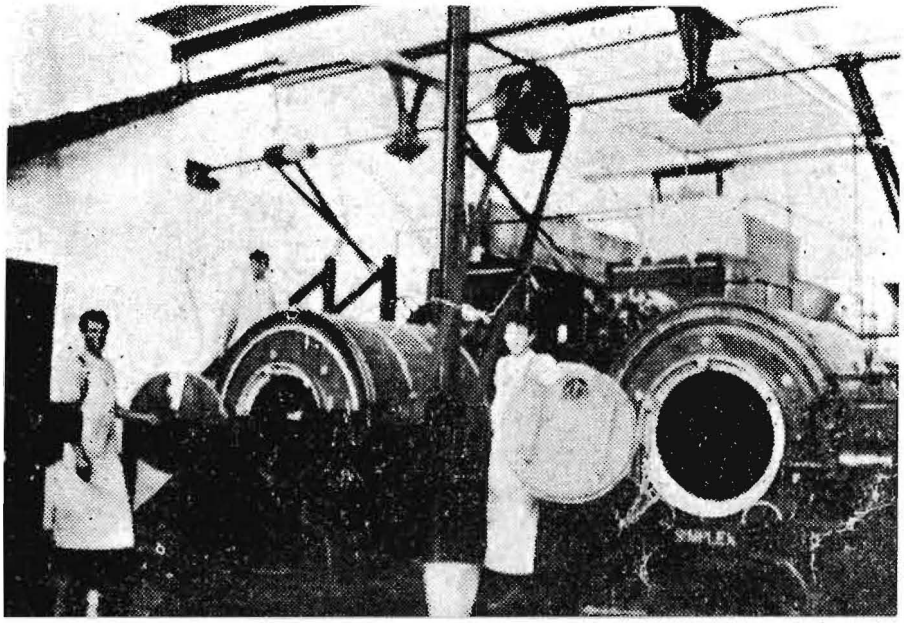
Figure 6.1 Output of the King Island Cooperative Dairy Factory Ltd 1920-1931.
(Monger, T.H., King Island, Currie, 1931, p.14)

The rapid increase in production quickly put enormous pressure on the factory. A new 18-case churn was added to the existing 9-case churn and the manager, W.H. Haine, with two men was reported to be turning out an average of six tons a week in February 1922. A new refrigeration unit was also bought about this time. However, the 20-year-old factory was unable to cope with the ever-growing supplies and in 1924 a new and up-to-date factory was built of concrete 150m to the north. It cost 4200 pounds to build and 5000 pounds to equip, and was capable of an output of 18 tons a week. It is not known if an earlier problem with drainage, which let factory effluent drain straight into the river, was solved at this time.[11]

The second King Island butter factory. *(Monger, T.H., King Island, Currie, 1931, p.27)*

Meanwhile, private butter and cheese makers had continued to operate even after the opening of the factory in 1902, largely because of the transport difficulties. Of the larger concerns, the Bowling family was well-known for the butter made at their various properties. Hugh Bowling of Surprise Bay (map reference YA363543) had a contract to supply butter to a Hobart biscuit factory around 1900. McMahon made cheese at Boggy Creek (map reference YA360635) c.1900-1910 and (most unusually) Stilton cheese was made by Carlson at Yambacoona (map reference YB383022) soon after the turn of the century.[12]

About 1912 Jane Snodgrass employed Gippslander Blain as cheesemaker on her Loorana farm to the east of the North Road (map reference YA351858). This was to have interesting consequences. Blain had been trained along with a number of Western District farmers by the Gippsland and Northern Cooperative Co., which then marketed the produce. Blain subsequently trained many of the island's cheesemakers and much, and possibly all, farm-produced cheese from the island was marketed through the Gippsland and Northern Cooperative. Before Blain left to start up on his own, he trained Reg Humphreys who continued to make cheese for Jane's son, Peter, for many years. In the 1920s Peter and his wife Eleanor had a contract to supply as much cheese as possible to the London market.[13]



Churn room of the King Island butter factory. *(Monger, T.H., King Island, Currie, 1931, p.27)*

In 1914 Will Bowling set up what was called the first cheese factory, almost certainly the one referred to in the *Weekly Courier* as opening in April of that year. The cement brick building, approximately 6m by 9m, was on his farm to the east of the North Road at Boobyalla (map reference YA315811). Arthur Hardman bought the property c.1917 and kept the factory going, employing Ted Wicks as cheesemaker. It closed at an unknown date, although before 1934. Blain left the Snodgrass family at Loorana c.1916 and bought a farm at Yambacoona. Before 1919 he was making cheese again, later teaching Bill Bell and in the early 1930s Horace Connolly to work as his cheesemakers. His factory was to the south of the East Wickham Road at Yambacoona (map reference YB370000). Holland and Haines in the 1920s set up the biggest dairying property on the island at Koreen, with four share farmers supplying milk to the factory to the south of Haines Road (map reference BS450067).[14]

By 1921 the *Weekly Courier* could say that "the local butter and cheese factories are famed for the excellence of their product". Part of the reason for this is said to be that the product remained unpasteurised and therefore the natural flavours remained. In 1922 when the butter factory was turning out six tons a week, most of the big dairymen were said to have their own butter churns and there were several cheese factories. These private producers also participated in the expansion of dairying in the 1920s. In 1924 the island exported 300 tons of butter and 130 tons of cheese, a record which remained for several years. The island's cheese was said to be "of particular merit" and found a ready market. The returns from dairying were so good that many large pastoral estates converted to dairying and by 1931 there were over 5000 head of dairy cattle on the island.[15]

However, the 1930s were to bring big changes, due to the onset of the depression. The price for butterfat dropped from eighteen pence a pound in 1929-30 to sevenpence a pound by 1933 (sixpence if the factory carted the cream) and many dairy farmers were soon in extreme difficulties, particularly those with smaller farms which were now not really viable. As in other areas of the state, some farmers were forced off their farms, while many others only just survived.[16]

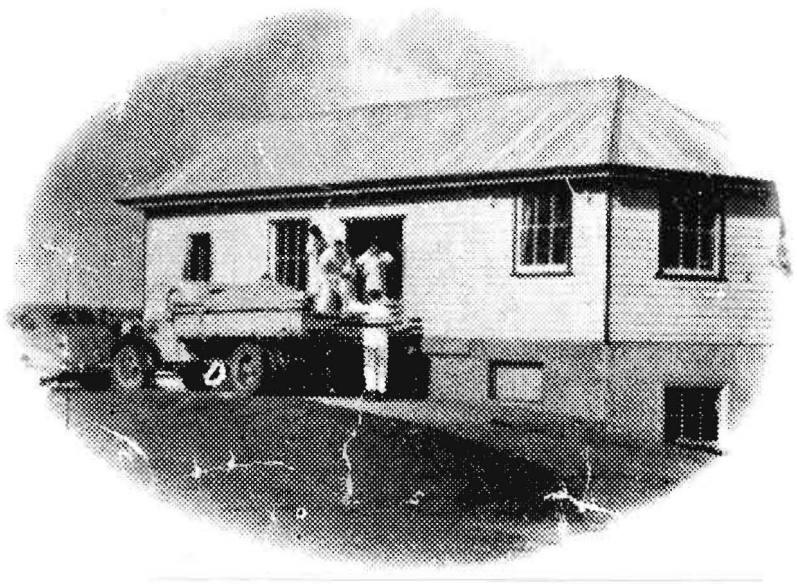
As noted elsewhere (see Chapter 1.7), while the price for butterfat was so low, that for cheese became much more attractive and there were soon moves towards establishing more cheese factories on the island. Part of the impetus for this came from the poor management of the butter factory. In 1933 the factory had produced only 6% Choice butter, compared with 56% in the previous year. Dairy Officer Sandman visited the factory in 1934 and found that the packing of the cream pumps was "in a shocking condition" and "he had never seen packing in such a filthy state". His supervision of manufacture led to a marked improvement in quality, but both the manager, Brown, and the Chairman of Directors, Clemons, had been antagonistic and he had not been made welcome. When he left, the quality declined once again.

Suppliers were also voicing complaints about the manager at least by 1931, and by 1934 they were

openly questioning the weighing and testing at the factory. Less than 50% of suppliers were said to have confidence in Brown as manager. An investigation showed that Brown had falsified returns to the Department of Agriculture to mask a high over-run. He pleaded guilty at the subsequent prosecution. The poor quality of butter was also due to the quality of cream being supplied to the factory, but as one of the main culprits was the chairman, Clemons, who seemed to be making no effort to improve his premises, rapid improvement seemed a long way off.

As a result of the general dissatisfaction, one of the biggest shareholders decided on action. In 1933 A.E. (Archie) Gunn, a former director of the factory, withdrew his supply and constructed a cheese factory at Reedy Lake (later called Penny Wickham - map reference YB408100). The following year A.E. Gunn Pty Ltd began both butter and cheese manufacture at Seaview (also known as Ascot), utilising and extending the old Bowling/Hardman building (see above) which he had purchased from Hardman along with a few acres on which to build a house for the manager and other necessary buildings. He added a huge room with two big churns for buttermaking, two offices and a garage to service his trucks. This new venture was only two kilometres from the Cooperative's Loorana factory. It is noteworthy that he obtained his butter licence just in time. By 1936 new butter factories had to prove their operation was in the best interests of the industry (see Chapter 1.6), and the Cooperative would no doubt have vigorously opposed the granting of a new licence.

In 1935 Gunn built another cheese factory at Pearshape on the north-east corner of the junction of South Road and Millers Road (map reference YA371608). Finally, as a considerable quantity of the milk processed in his Reedy Lake factory came from the East Wickham area, in 1936 he employed one Medcraft to build a large timber and concrete factory on the southern side of the North Road a little before the East Wickham Road begins (map reference YB380003). In July 1936 the *King Island News* reported: "Good progress is being made with the erection of the new cheese factory at East Wickham (adjacent to Mr Jasper Bell's homestead)". It was designed to be Gunn's main factory, and whey butter was also planned to be made there, although it appears that it never was. Ray Quinn was the cheesemaker.

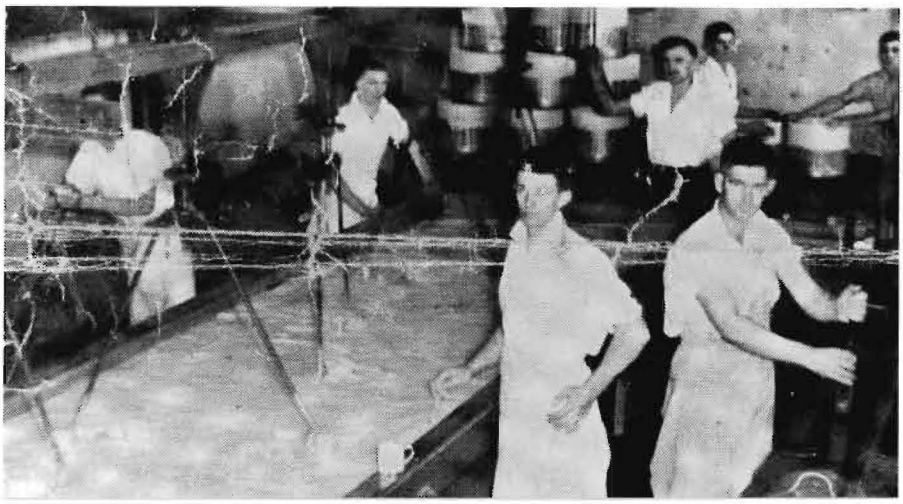


Gunn's Wickham cheese factory.
(Weekly Times, 21 May 1938)

The effect on the Cooperative butter factory was alarming. In December 1932 it had 74 suppliers (and was making twelve tons of butter a week). By December 1936, when all of Gunn's factories were operating, the Cooperative was down to 28 suppliers with a total of 1550 cows, while Gunn had 40 suppliers with 2340 cows, including 1020 of Gunn's own cows. (The three private cheesemakers of Blain, Haines and Snodgrass had a total of 500 cows.) Output from the Cooperative had naturally declined as well, from 338 tons in 1933, down to 229 in 1934, 176 in 1935 and 151 in 1936.

Gunn had been able to attract suppliers not only because of the general dissatisfaction with the Cooperative, but also because he could pay higher prices. As the output of the Cooperative declined, overheads per ton of butter naturally increased and the profits of the factory were eroded still further, thus making Gunn's prices even more attractive. In March 1937, for example, Gunn's paid fourteenpence per pound of butterfat in milk, while the Cooperative paid only twelvepence. Gunn's

manager, J.M. Hyndes, was also very helpful to suppliers, visiting any dairyman who asked for advice, while the Cooperative felt that the cost of a similar service to their suppliers would not be warranted.



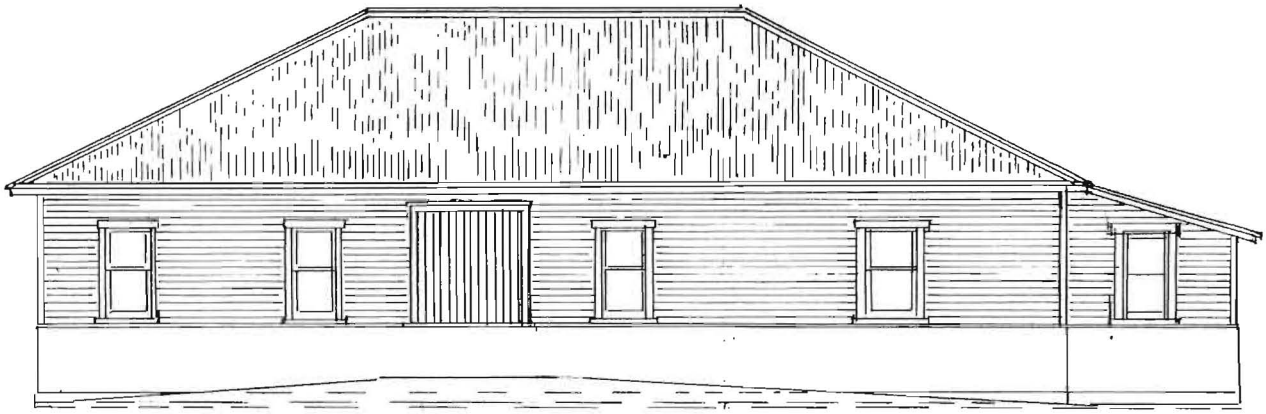
The manufacturing room of the Wickham cheese factory. *(Weekly Times, 21 May 1938)*

Branding cheese at Gunn's Reedy Lake factory. *(Weekly Times, 21 May 1938)*

Desperately trying to return to profitability, the Cooperative made a belated attempt to diversify, applying to erect a cheese factory at East Wickham. Unfortunately, their application reached the Department of Agriculture after Gunn's, and the Department felt that although one cheese factory in the area was warranted, two were "not in the best interests of the industry" (see above and Chapter 1.6). The Appeal Board upheld this decision. The Cooperative then applied for a dried milk licence, and when this too was refused took the matter unsuccessfully to court.

In 1937 they applied for a licence for their Loorana factory to produce cheese and casein as well as butter, but as the factory was not satisfactorily equipped it was registered only for butter production.

In 1938 the Cooperative applied to build a casein factory near Easton Johnson's property on the Pegarah Road (map reference for the property YA424738). The factory was to be of weatherboard on top of a four foot concrete wall, with cement floors and fibro cement interior walls and ceilings. But this application too was refused on the basis that there were not enough cows to supply yet another factory, that the factory would cost a great deal more than the 2000 pounds budgeted for it by the Cooperative, and that the market for casein was uncertain.[17]



Plan for the proposed King Island casein factory. *(DPIF files, Archives No. H 171/4-2)*

By this time, the number of dairy cows on the island had increased to 8000, and of the 380 tons of butter and 850 tons of cheese exported, A.E. Gunn Pty Ltd was producing half the butter (190 tons) and 90% of the cheese (760 tons) from its four factories. The competition between the two companies was intense, with each sending representatives around the island signing up support and forecasting the imminent closure of the other. Some people signed up for both! There was widespread support for amalgamation as competition was reducing the return to suppliers, but the terms proved the sticking point. Many people were in favour of a cooperative system, but the Cooperative had been more inefficient in the past. One solution advanced was to make Gunn's manager, Jack Hyndes, the general manager of the cooperative. In 1937 Gunn agreed to sell, but although his assets were valued at 10 893 pounds, he demanded 12 800 and negotiations broke down. He then offered to buy the Cooperative for 5837 pounds which the Cooperative regarded as too low a price.[18]

On 18 August 1937 the Town Hall was packed for a ballot on the question. 147 people voted to transfer the Cooperative to Gunns, while only 100 voted against, but the constitution demanded a three-quarters majority so the stalemate continued. The disarray in the industry attracted the attention of successive Ministers for Agriculture, and in June 1938 Minister Robert Cosgrove finally achieved the breakthrough in negotiations. The King Island Dairy Factory Ltd was to go into voluntary liquidation in order to form a new company which would buy the assets of A.E. Gunn Pty Ltd for 15 750 pounds, with the government lending 10 000 pounds. The extra money was to cover the cost of additional plant that had been bought by Gunn since the valuation of the previous year.

A meeting of almost 300 shareholders approved the plan, and the relief was almost tangible. According to the *King Island News*: "Immense enthusiasm was displayed and everything went with a swing, hardly a dissentient note being perceptible throughout the evening". The Cooperative's manager, Jack Brown, was appointed liquidator, with the company's auditor assuring the shareholders that "he had found Mr Brown to be above reproach in character, and his work of the highest order". The new company was to be called the King Island Cooperative Dairy Products Ltd.[19]

The dairy industry was now ready to go ahead. Production had increased threefold between 1933 and 1938, although duplication of costs had prevented the suppliers from profiting as much as they should. In the first year of operation the new company made 683 tons of butter and 231 tons of cheese. A loss of 4000 pounds in 1939 was converted to a profit of the same amount in 1940. The other private cheesemakers - Blain, Snodgrass and Haines - had stopped making cheese by 1940, as a result of the wartime federal government subsidy for dairying which was given only to those dairymen who supplied a central factory (see Chapter 1.7). However, two new families started up

about 1940. They were the Lasts who had a small factory south of the Yellow Rock Road (map reference YA332000), and Billy Miller who utilised Gunn's old Pearshape factory.[20]

But the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 was to change the situation for dairying yet again, and the new company with a new manager soon found itself in difficulties. With the shortage of labour brought on by enlistments in the services, supplies to the factories were limited. To rationalise expenses, the decision was taken to centralise all buttermaking at the old Cooperative factory at Loorana and all cheesemaking at Gunn's East Wickham factory. A new brick building was erected on the latter site by 1944 and the other cheese factories, including the large Seaview (or Ascot) factory, gradually closed down. In 1942-3 Ascot had produced 135 tons of cheese, compared with 359 tons from the other factories including an amount made at the Loorana butter factory. The new brick building at East Wickham had a whey separator installed and produced up to 160 gallons [726l] of whey cream a day. The Wickham factory was therefore probably the largest supplier of cream to the Loorana butter factory, which probably made the cream into cooking butter. But despite (or perhaps because of) rationalisation and reasonable production, in 1943 the company had a debt of 15 000 pounds to the Agricultural Bank and it was forced to devalue its shares by 50%.[21]

Production at the East Wickham cheese factory gradually increased from 359 tons in 1942-3 to 535 tons in 1945-6, thus making it by far the largest cheese producer in the state (see Figure 1.6). The factory had 5 x 1000 gallon [4500l] vats and in the spring it operated on two shifts, making cheese after each milking and not just in the morning. However, there were problems with marketing and from 1945 the company worked in conjunction with Kraft Walker Cheese Co. Kraft wanted to get into an area which could provide 30 000 gallons [136 000l] of milk in the spring. However, it found cartage on King Island roads expensive, as was the employment of two men full-time to make export crates so that the cheese arrived in Melbourne in good condition. The last straw came when Kraft bought a considerable amount of new equipment, including a large boiler, only to be told by Holymans that their ships would be unable to handle the weight of the boiler. Kraft sold the new equipment to a Strathmerton factory and on 30 June 1947 all cheese production stopped at East Wickham and the excess plant was sold. King Island Dairy Products would now concentrate solely on buttermaking.

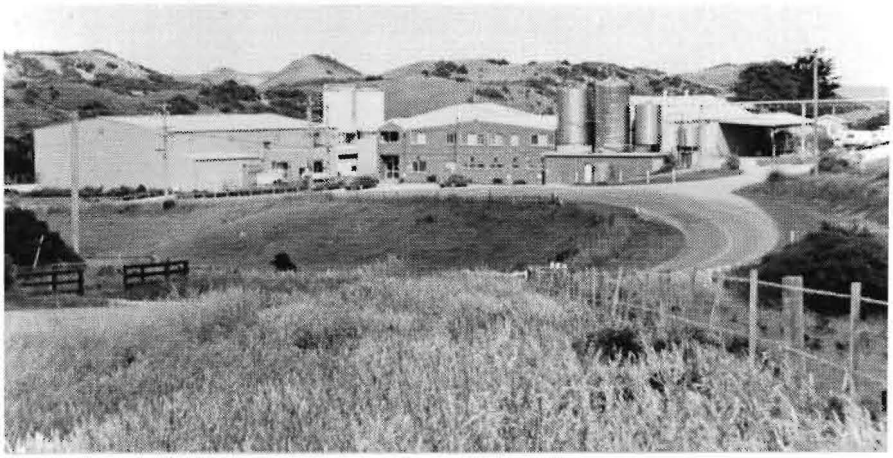
Fortunately for the factory, the situation for buttermaking brightened considerably after the war. The demand for butter in Europe was unlimited and the Federal Government Subsidy on butterfat rose so sharply in 1948-9 that the Lasts were forced to abandon cheesemaking. In 1942-3 the Loorana factory had produced 187 tons of butter. By 1945-6 this had increased to 228 tons (see Figure 1.5), and by 1948-9 production had doubled to 468 tons. The debt to the Agricultural Bank was soon paid off. With a new Soldier Settlement scheme in operation by the 1950s, supplies continued to increase and by 1955 the factory and plant was quite inadequate. With the help of a government grant, a new factory was built in 1956 at a total cost of over 100 000 pounds. This included provision for a general store as the company sought to diversify. It also took over agencies for petrol products and later fertilisers and machinery, and began to trade in cattle and wheat.

In 1959 the factory reached its peak number of suppliers (197) with 920 tons of butter being made. Peak production of 1070 tons was reached in 1964-5. However, the industry then experienced a steady decline as many older farmers left the industry and the approaching entry of Britain into the European Common Market meant that the market for butter was becoming uncertain. By 1974 there were only 61 suppliers and the factory output had declined to the equivalent of 530 tons of butter. In an attempt to remain viable, the company began collecting whole milk and diversified into skim milk powder and buttermilk powder. In 1976 they began manufacturing casein, almost 40 years after the cooperative had originally attempted to do so. An attempt at conversion to spray milk powder in 1975 proved disastrous when the world price for powder suddenly slumped.

By 1977 a receiver-manager had been appointed to King Island Dairy Products, and although it continued to trade, the collapse of the company led to many farmers leaving the industry, which led to unviable levels of milk production and a general run-down of the factory. In 1978 the company was bought by W.J. (Bill) Kirk, who began to make a new range of products. An early attempt at manufacturing Mozzarella cheese was not very successful, but the production of Emmenthal cheese curd to be supplied to Kraft Foods Ltd in drums enabled the company to get back on its feet. Kirk then produced Romano cheese and later butter. Efforts to improve the quality of herds started to pay off, and in 1982-3 the number of suppliers increased to 24 (it had been as low as 15) and the amount

of milk production increased for the first time for 23 years. The company returned to profitability for the first time in nine years.

However, in 1984 Kraft Foods advised that they would no longer take the Emmenthal cheese curd and management decided that the only future for the company lay in specialty gourmet products with direct marketing. The production of Cape Wickham Brie met with immediate success, but the company was unable to find the large amount of capital required to change products. In 1985 the factory was placed once more into receivership, and the following year Transequity Ltd bought it and called the new company King Island Dairies Pty Ltd. In 1988 the company was bought by Agricorp Ltd and run by The Island Food Co. In 1994 the factory had forty full-time employees and produced brie, camembert, different varieties of cheddar (including smoked cheddar) and blue cheese, as well as triple cream and other products. Butter has not been made at the factory since about 1987.[22]



The King Island factory in 1994. All that remains of the 1924 and 1956 factories are incorporated into the complex of additions to the central brick office section. *(Island Food Co. photo, QVMAG)*

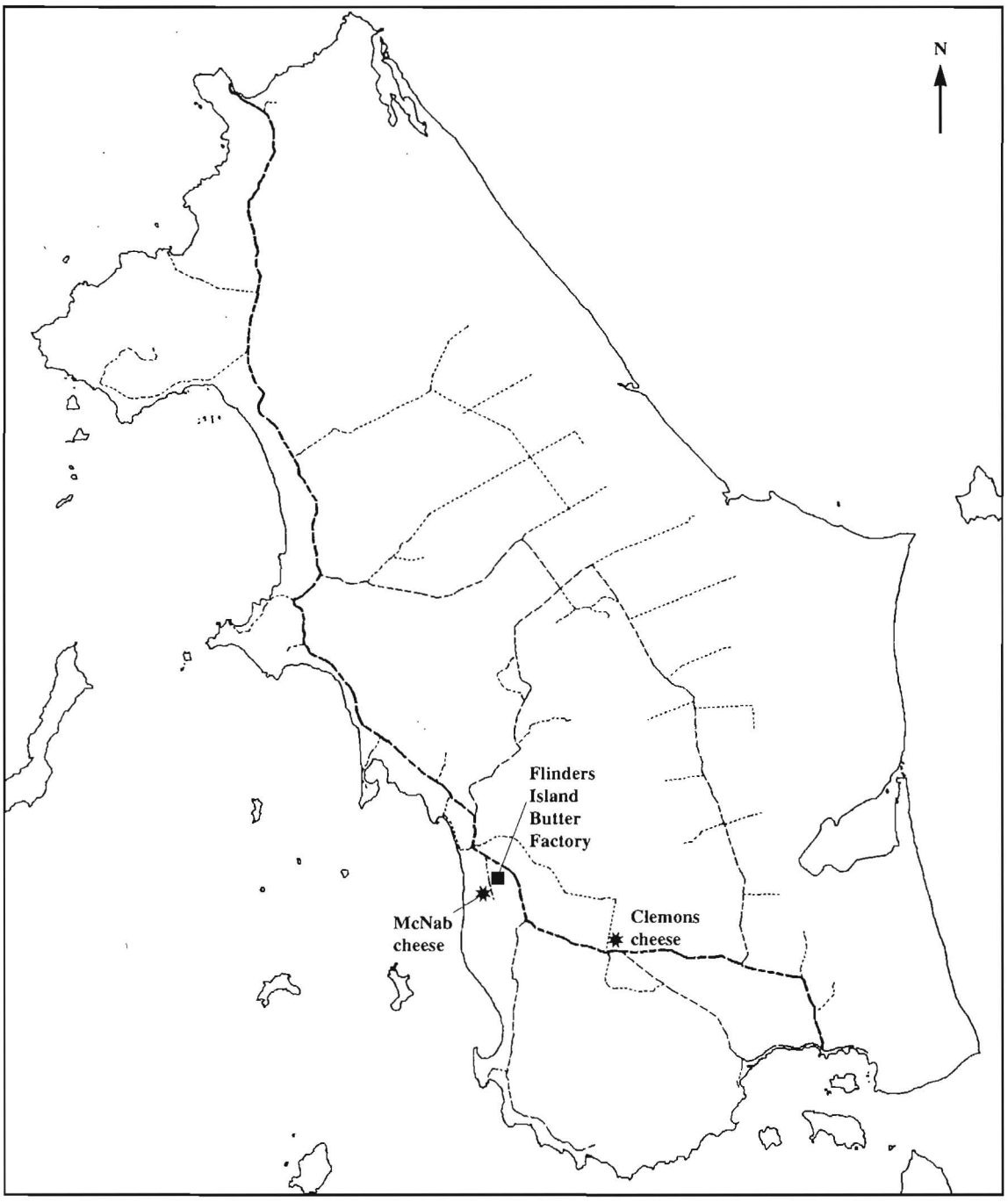
Building developments at Loorana since 1980 have all occurred around the original 1922 butter factory, and no part of the original is now visible. A new building for the manufacture of blue cheese was built 50m to the north in 1993, using "sandwich panel" - colourbond walls with foam between. The brick East Wickham factory remained vacant for many years after its closure in 1947. It operated as a tearooms for some time, but was vacant again in 1994. Of Gunn's other factories, the Seaview factory was demolished around 1992, although the concrete slab remains, and the Pearshape factory is used as a barn. Of the private cheesemakers, the Koreen factory has been demolished, but the Last factory has been incorporated into a shed and Snodgrass's factory has been converted into a private skateboard rink. The cheese factory on the end of Blain's milking shed is still standing.[23]

6.2 Flinders Island

Because of the drier climate, the dairy industry on Flinders Island was never as big as that on King Island, and it developed later. It was 1914 before the first moves were made to set up a butter factory there, and this was some time after factories had been built in the other areas of the state. But even then Dairy Expert Conlon advised against the idea on the grounds that there were too few cows yet on the island. At the time the only butter being made was for personal use.[24]

In 1917, a big year for dairying everywhere (see Chapter 1.6), the *Weekly Courier* reported that there was a lot of support to erect a cheese factory in the coming year. Presumably cheese was chosen rather than butter because of its keeping qualities which made export easier. The site proposed was said to be the water reserve near where the main road crossed Salt Water Creek about three miles [5k] from Whitemark. Salt Water Creek is about 1k south of the eventual butter factory. A Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Flinders Island Co-operative Cheese, Butter and Bacon Factory Company Limited were drawn up and it is possible that a small second hand cheese plant was bought, but at the first meeting of shareholders on 5 March 1918 it was clear that the company would have difficulty raising the necessary capital. Only seven people had taken up shares, with farmer Harry McNab, hotelkeeper J.P. Connolly and farmer W. Martin taking 50 shares a-piece and four others a total of 40. The company never manufactured cheese.[25]

Map 6.2 FLINDERS ISLAND



Scale: 1 km

KEY:

■ Factory

✷ Farm Cheese

Harry (Sandy) McNab was one of the enthusiastic supporters of the new company. He had come from the dairying area of South Gippsland in about 1915 and was keen to have a dairy factory established. About the same time as the disappointing shareholders' meeting, and presumably soon afterwards, McNab approached Alfred Trueman of the Fairhaven area near Emita. Trueman had been making a little Cheshire cheese, selling some locally and shipping the rest to a Launceston grocer, and McNab proposed that Trueman build a new cheese factory on McNab's land near Whitemark where there were several farmers who had dairy cows, and attempt to re-form the company later.[26]

Trueman built a four-roomed dwelling and then the wooden factory next door on six acres of McNab's land to the east of what is now Butter Factory Road just south-east of Whitemark (map reference ER878571). Water was supplied from a well and a large underground tank. The second-hand cheese plant may have been bought at this time and cheesemaking began by the spring of 1920. However, it was soon obvious that only a few farmers would be in a position to cart milk daily to the factory, and despite McNab's heated opposition the decision was taken to stop the production of cheese and instead develop the site for the manufacture of butter. Cream was much easier to transport, particularly as it needed to be done only twice weekly.[27]

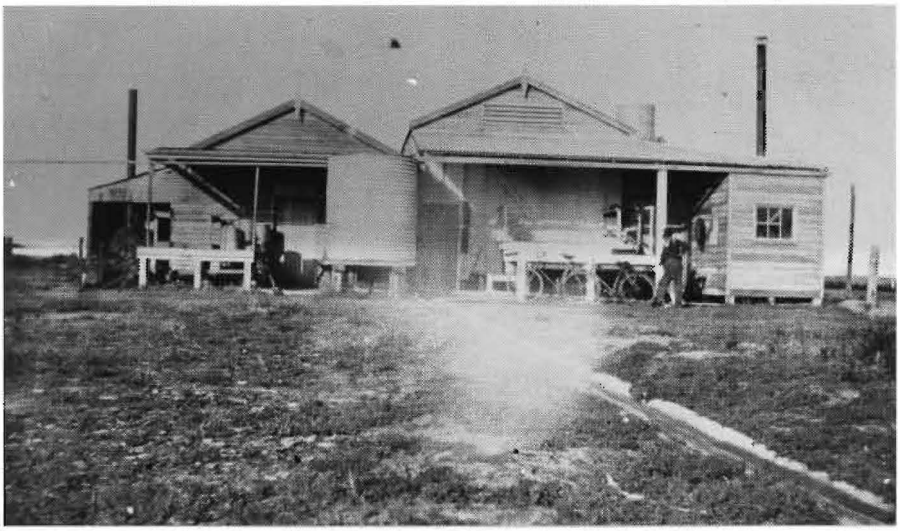
McNab immediately (about 1920) built a large cheese factory across the road (map reference ER877569), engaged Bill Evans from New South Wales as cheesemaker and made cheese from his herd of over 100 cows plus a few small suppliers from Locotta. However, a slump in the market and possibly tension within the factory personnel led to this business collapsing around 1921-22. McNab left the island soon afterwards. It is quite possible that McNab used Trueman's cheese plant. Certainly a cheese plant was stored for some years in the 1920s in the local dance hall, with the milk vat (covered by a cloth) used as a table and the cheese curing shelves as seating.[28]

The McNab cheese factory.
(Furneaux Historical Research Assoc. Inc. Museum)

Meanwhile, support for a butter factory company grew and the Flinders Island Cheese, Butter and Bacon Factory Ltd was formed, the first meeting of directors being held on 18 November 1921. L.L. Webster was elected Chairman, and the other directors were Trueman, Hay, Cronly and Blundstone. This time 75 people had applied for 886 shares which was a much healthier start. Trueman was allotted shares in return for handing over the factory building and house to the new company, although as he was also owed 200 pounds a few months later this presumably was part of the deal. He was also appointed manager. The building and some of the plant of the now-defunct Goulds Country butter factory (see Chapter 5.4) was bought for 100 pounds, shipped from Bridport on the *Linda*, and placed in position next to the Trueman cheese factory near Whitemark.[29]

However, the start for the factory was anything but smooth. Although many people had applied for shares, they were more reluctant to actually pay up when asked, and the company struggled along for some time with insufficient capital. Part of the reason for this was a slump in the demand for dairy produce which had affected dairy producers everywhere in the state, so that farmers were unwilling to put money into a venture which was at that time not looking promising. There was also considerable doubt expressed about the suitability of the chosen site for the factory. A site at Pats River north of Whitemark was inspected and acknowledged by the directors to be superior with respect to drainage,

but the expense of moving was not thought to be warranted. The purchase of an urgently needed refrigerating plant had to be postponed until further capital was available. The Chairman of Directors, Webster, ended his first report with the plea: "... if we all work together and put up with the position and have faith in the Island the company and the industry and a little deeper searching in our pockets besides encouraging others to do the same we will come out all right".[30]

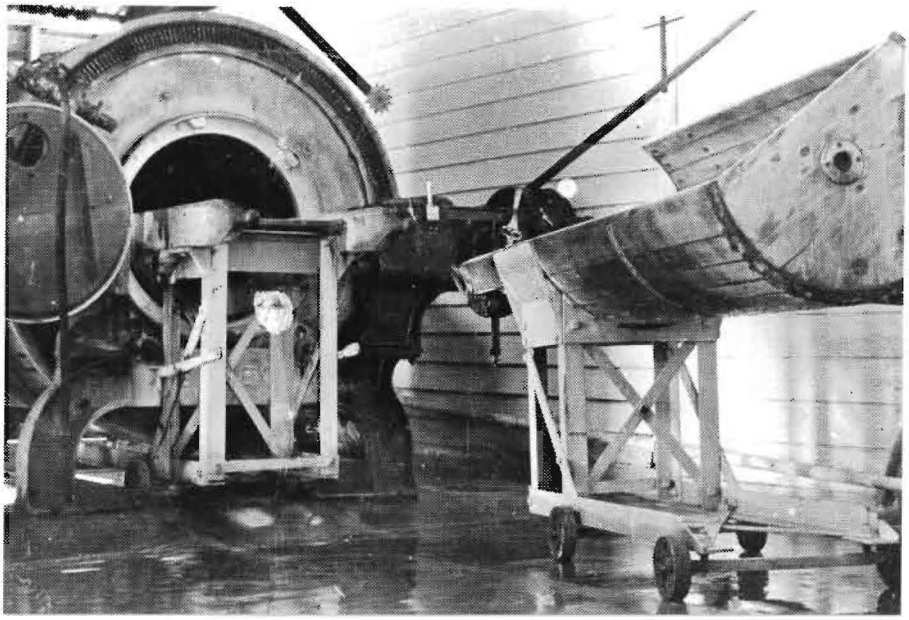


The Flinders Island butter factory c.1930. The building on the left is the original cheese factory, and that on the right is the Goulds Country butter factory building. *(Furneaux Historical Research Assoc. Inc. Museum)*

Despite its problems, the factory was ready to receive its first cream in October 1922. In July 1923 the factory contracted for three cream carters to start operations which helped to increase the supply, especially when the newly imported motor trucks were pressed into service, as they could travel to the more distant areas. By June 1924 there were 40 suppliers, but the collapse of the London butter market that year could have had catastrophic consequences. Fortunately, the Melbourne firm of Weddell and Co who had supplied equipment for the factory (and to whom its butter was consigned) agreed not to press for immediate payment, and by also temporarily deferring the butterfat payments to suppliers the company weathered this difficult time.[31]

Although the factory was very important for the island's economy, it is clear that it was never a large operation and often had to struggle. The depression which began in the late 1920s affected output and in 1932 the factory produced only 60 tons. An office was added to the building in the early 1930s. In 1935-6 production climbed to 111 tons and the company was able to pay its first dividend of 5%. The following year the boiler room and can shed were added. In 1945-6 the factory manufactured the relatively small output of 90 tons, with only the tiny factories in Hobart and Launceston making less (see Figure 1.5). It remained very much a family affair. In 1948 John Trueman was appointed manager/secretary in place of his father Alfred who had retired a little earlier. When John left in 1953, he was replaced by Joe (R.T.) Ellwood who had married Alfred Trueman's granddaughter. Ellwood had commenced work at the factory in 1937 and continued there until the factory's closure in 1974.[32]

The Flinders Island butter factory 1939, after additions in the early 1930s. *(Furneaux Historical Research Assoc. Inc. Museum)*



Butter churn and large "dreadnought" butter trolley in the Flinders Island butter factory c.1940. *(Furneaux Historical Research Assoc. Inc. Museum)*

In 1949 the company's name was changed to the Flinders Island Dairy Co. Ltd. It participated in the general expansion of the industry after the Second World War as some herds of up to 100 cows became established, but most of the larger farmers preferred the less time-consuming types of farming. When the Land Settlement Board refused to make many farms available to soldier settlers as dairy farms, it was obvious that supplies would always remain relatively low, and in fact decline as people left the industry. From the peak of 150 tons in the 1950s, production gradually declined to 113 tons in 1965, 94 tons the following year, and 70 tonnes in 1973. Money had been put aside for re-equipping the factory, but the supply did not warrant it. In February 1974 the factory closed its doors, and the following year the company was wound up voluntarily.[33]

There was only one other major attempt on the island to manufacture cheese. About 1939 Dr Clemons set up a cheese factory on his farm at Ranga on the northern side of the Lady Barron Road (map reference ER945532). The farm was managed by Ern Terry, and Horace Davern came from Robbins Island (see Chapter 2.4) to be the cheesemaker, using the milk from Clemons' herd of about 80-100 cows. The property was sold about 1945, cheese production ceased and Davern moved on to the St Marys cheese factory (see Chapter 5.5).[34]

The butter factory of weatherboard and flat iron, on a concrete base extending about half a metre up the wall, is still standing. The original Goulds Country building which was used as the churn room and for holding the cream-holding vats has been somewhat altered internally, particularly by the replacement of the wooden inside walls with iron. The Trueman cheese storage room, later used as a box-making room for the butter factory, is also still standing. After a few years' use as a motor garage, the factory is now part of a private home and an effort is being made at restoration, although some of the machinery has been sold to Victoria. The nearby McNab cheese factory was still there in 1994 with additions to make it into a house, although the whole was in a very dilapidated condition. The Clemons/Terry factory has been demolished.[35]

CHAPTER SEVEN

DAIRIES AND MILKING SHEDS

In the course of conducting research for the study of butter and cheese factories, the writer became aware that some farm dairies and milking sheds of Northern Tasmania were of particular significance. The following brief study is not intended to be exhaustive. It merely mentions some of the more interesting of those found, and perhaps provides a guide for assessing others.

* * *

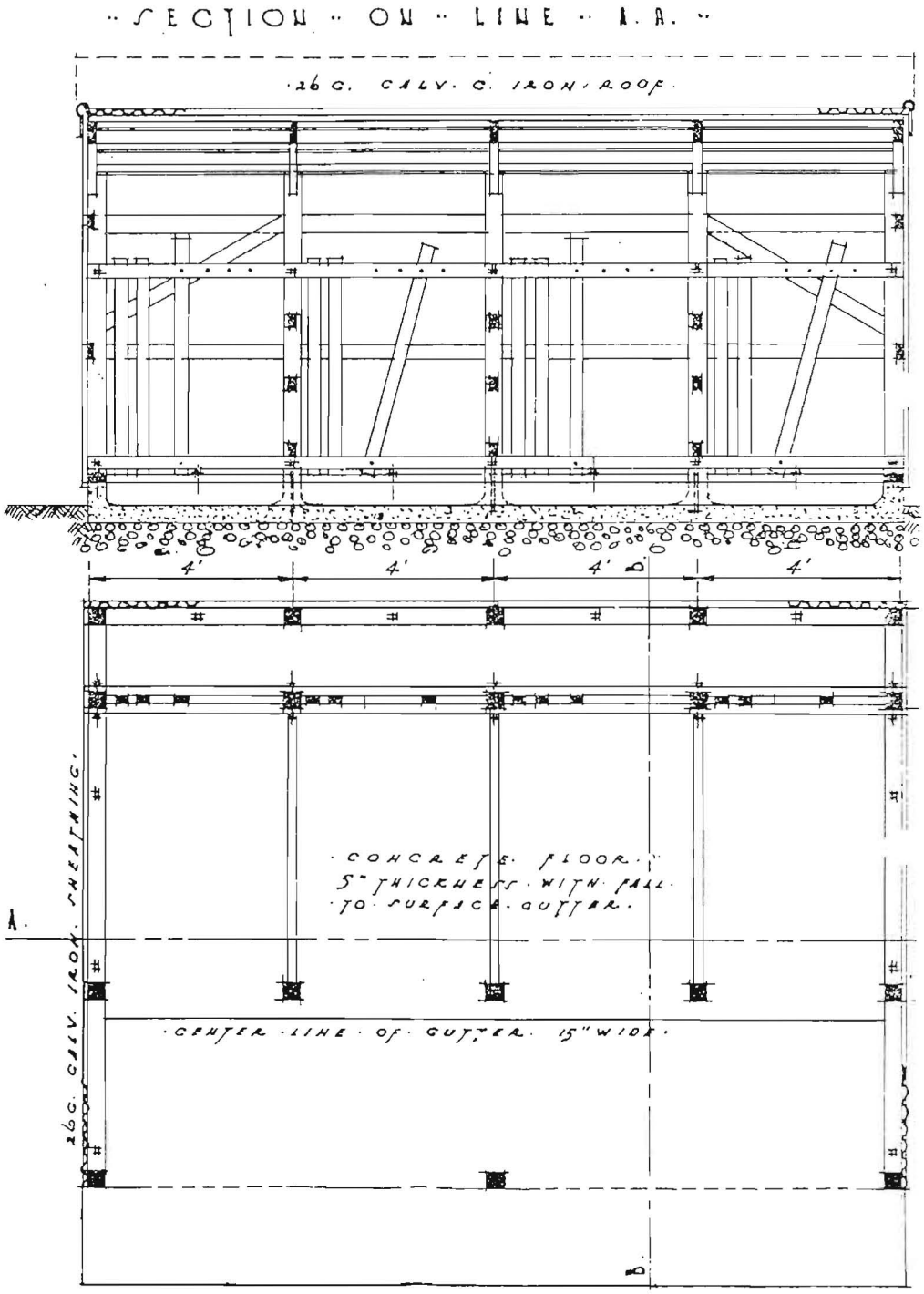
A nineteenth century milking shed could be one of a variety of designs. Wealthy landowners could afford to build milking sheds along the lines of those they were used to in Europe: large, complex structures where many cows could be milked under cover and even stabled during the winter, with separate cool rooms or even separate buildings for the butter and cheese making operations. Such structures can be found at Wesleydale at Chudleigh (map reference Mole Creek 535996) and Glencoe at Falmouth (map reference Scamander [Falmouth] 051034. But a big proportion of cows, almost certainly the majority, were simply milked in the open paddock. That this could occur with even larger herds is obvious from the description of the West Scottsdale farm of R.G. Ladbury in 1890, the *Daily Telegraph* correspondent remarking that for Ladbury's herd of 40 cows: "The cows are milked in the open whenever the weather permits; for rainy days a comfortable and well-drained shed is provided." For buttermaking, the "dairy" was often the kitchen, although Ladbury had a separate room.[1]

Interior of the Wesleydale cream setting room, photographed in 1993.

As is obvious from the quotation above, the first use of sheds was simply to provide protection from the weather. But another advantage of a shed was that it provided a means of tying up a cow during the milking. At some stage it became normal practice for this to be accomplished by means of a vertical wooden bar which could be locked by a wooden peg in an upright position next to the cow's neck, thus preventing the animal from moving either forwards or backwards. A leg rope completed the immobilisation and the cow was ready for milking.[2]

Just when this development occurred is difficult to determine and the writer has not attempted to do so. However, it was certainly a necessary advance once milking machines were used, and the system can be seen in illustrations of milking machines in the 1890s. (See for example the illustration of the Gray milking machine in Chapter 1.5.) Its use was widespread in the early years of the twentieth century, and when in 1910 Dairy Expert Conlon was able to comment approvingly on: "the increased amount of attention which has been given by dairymen generally to the erection of improved buildings, more particularly milking sheds and cow stalls" (see Chapter 1.5), it seems certain that it was almost always this style of shed which was being erected. It was later labelled a "back-out shed", as the cow backed out of the shed at the completion of milking. Such sheds continued to be

built for the greater part of this century, especially by smaller farmers with only a few cows, and as late as 1938 when other types of sheds were becoming much more common the Department of Agriculture was still putting out a brochure which described the construction of a four-stall back-out milking shed.[3]



Plan of a Four Stall Milking Shed. *(Department of Agriculture, March 1938, Circular No.10)*

There are a number of such sheds still extant, and although very few commercial dairy farmers would now use one, one back-out shed was still being used to milk 110 cows in Riana until 1991. What is thought to be one of the earliest still standing is off St Patrick's Head Road at Irish Town near St Marys (map reference Gray 021962). It appears to have been there since the turn of the century.[4]

The major problem with a back-out shed is that it is inherently inefficient, with milked cows being taken back into the yard and mixing with those waiting their turn. The next major advance in milking shed design was the walk-through. In this type, a cow once milked would walk through a door in front of it and away from those cows waiting to be milked. Because the door was pushed open by a

lever near where the farmer stood, he did not have to leave the spot.

Two of the stalls of a nine-bail back-out dairy off St Patricks Head Road, Irish Town, in 1993. It is no longer in use.

It is possible to be a little more specific about the date of the introduction of walk-through dairies. In 1895 "Ploughshare" in the *Examiner* mentioned that the farm of Pardoe at Wesley Vale (map reference Devonport 522428) had a milking shed which milked 20 cows at a time, "and the special methods of entrance and exit do away with the possibility of crowding and confusion". Unfortunately he does not go into any more detail, so that it is impossible to know how this was achieved. But at least two walk-throughs were described in great detail in the newspapers of the time, and the descriptions leave no doubt that the writer had not seen such an arrangement before. They were at Myrtle Grove, the Miller property at South Springfield (map reference Springfield 419317), described in January 1911, and at Arthur Bonney's Levenside property at Gunns Plains (map reference Loyetea 176289), described in November 1912. Both these operations were seen as large and progressive and were therefore obviously in the vanguard of the new development. It is noteworthy too that the Miller system used doors on rollers which slid across as required; there was still room for experimentation at this time. It would be interesting to know if Dairy Expert Conlon had had anything to do with the new design.[5]

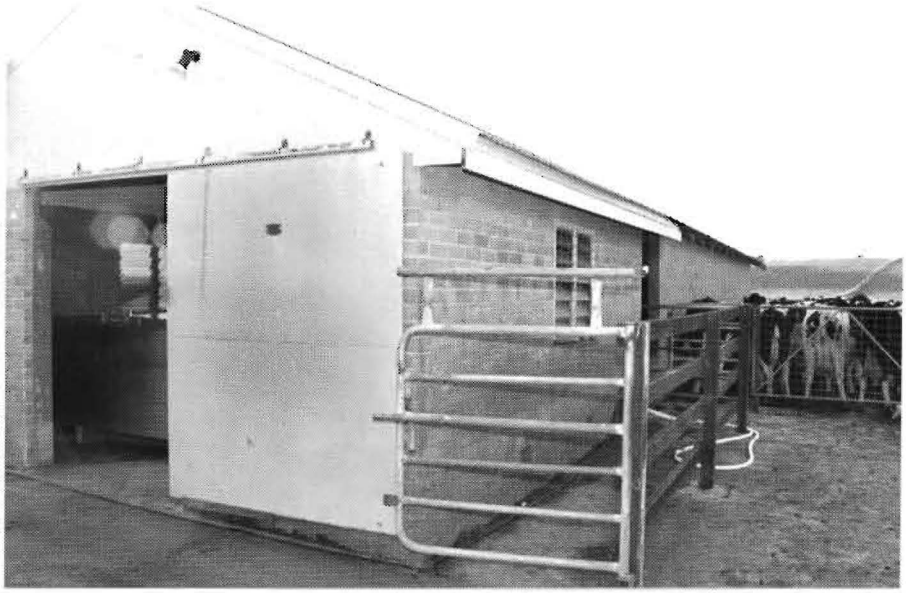
Although the walk-throughs were much more efficient, they naturally did not come into general use for some time. Farmers would not think of replacing a good functioning dairy. They would wait until it needed upgrading and then consider the new development. Again, this was often associated with the introduction of milking machines. By the 1920s walk-throughs were starting to appear in most districts. One of the first in the Ringarooma district was that built by Tomkinson at Trenah on what is now Wattle Banks in the early to mid-1920s. Probably the first in the St Marys area was at the Napier farm at Sunny Banks (map reference St Marys 977953). It was built in 1923 in readiness for the arrival of the family's first milking machines. There are many walk-through dairies still standing, and some are even in use by commercial dairy farmers such as John Midgeley at Riana.[6]

Walk-through sheds were generally made of timber with concrete floors, although after the 1930-32 Dairy Act farmers were encouraged to have at least the lower part of the walls made of concrete as well to allow for easy and thorough cleaning. A few, such as that at Sunny Banks, were made entirely of concrete.

Almost simultaneously with walk-throughs came the echelon shed, the common variety of which was later called the herringbone shed. The main principle behind this new advance was that it was much easier for the farmer to do his job if the cows were elevated in some way. Those doing the milking did not have to stoop so much and, more importantly, as the cows were on an angle close together they could be dealt with much more quickly. Moreover, as the cows were quieter when side by side, there was less need for elaborate immobilisation. Double the number of cows could be milked in a given time using the herringbone shed, which not only saved on labour costs but increased the time cows could graze and therefore produce more milk.[7]

The first man to develop this type of shed was W.L. Boyce of Casino, New South Wales, who patented his Echelon Milking Stalls in 1910. When M.A. Callaghan published his *Dairying in Australia* in 1912 he devoted several pages to a description of the stalls, recommending them especially for farmers with large herds and milking machines. By that time the first of them had been built in Tasmania. Fred Ford, brother of William Wilbraham Ford of Stanley (see Chapter 2.1), built the first echelon shed at his farm at Marrawah in 1911 (map reference Marrawah 062668). He was given a special brass plate with the number "T.1" to indicate that his was the first in Tasmania to pay the ten shillings per stall required by Boyce. The shed was demolished about 1967-8 and replaced by a longer building using the same foundations, but the plaque remains on the door of the new shed.[8]

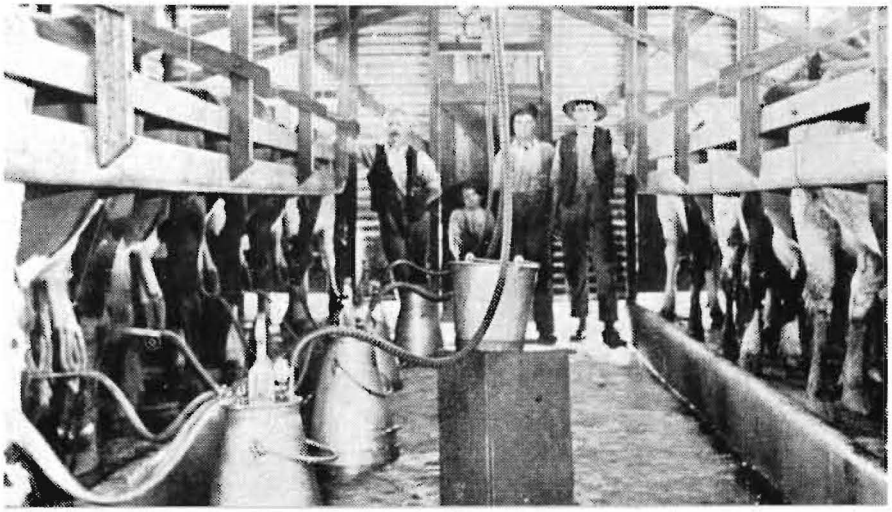
The Echelon Milking Stalls plaque at Marrawah. The plaque reads:
Milking Stalls
Patented by
W.L. Boyce
Casino N.S.W.
Patent No Aust 17817 5th May 1910
Regd No T1
Raynor and Co Engravers
Sydney



This milking shed, photographed in 1993, was built on the same site and with the same width as Fred Ford's echelon shed.

Within a year the second echelon dairy was built at Marrawah by Gale and Lawson on the western side of Hanson's Road, 50m south of Green Point Road (map reference Marrawah 037683), just across the road from their cheese factory (see Chapter 2.2). This shed was in use until the later owners Nicholls stopped milking about 1968. It is still standing, although with some additional iron on the outside.[9]

The third was built, possibly as a result of trip to New Zealand, by William Heathorn of Talawa, near Ringarooma, in 1912 (map reference Maurice 571293). He built it mainly of blackwood, and its plaque with the "T3" to show it was the third in the state was prominently displayed. The shed was later modernised and extended, but some of the internal beams and walls are still visible. It is no longer in use for milking.[10]



The interior of Gale's milking shed. *(Weekly Courier, 13 March 1913, p.21, AOT)*

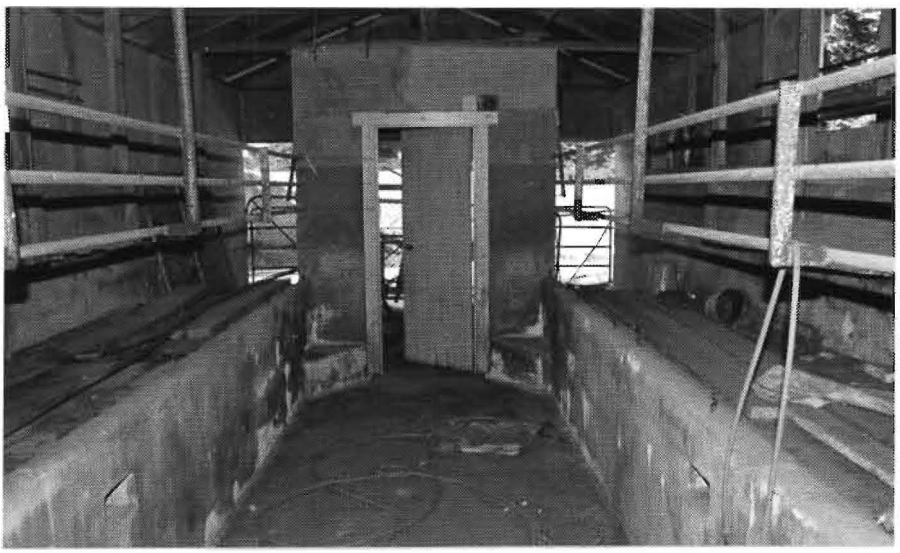
Heathorn's Talawa echelon shed in 1993. Some of the original shed can be seen behind the front extension.

This dairy became a model for a few progressive farmers in the Ringarooma area who emulated the design without bothering to pay patent fees, and its spread is indicative of how such developments could occur. The first to copy the idea was Dan McDougall, a neighbour of Heathorn's at Talawa. His shed was seen by Roy Diprose (see Chapter 5.3) who persuaded his brother-in-law Alec Edwards to build one when he established a dairy on the station flats of his property, Branxholm Estate, in 1932. This was built on the northern side of the railway line to the east of the road going to Red Hills (map reference Derby 612425). It became a shearing shed and is now used as part of a hop farm. When Roy Diprose's house and dairy at "Ravenscroft" burnt down in 1932, Diprose employed the builder Eli Barnett to build the fourth herringbone of the district (map reference Springfield 599331). Barnett then made an identical one for Edgar Holmes on Holmes Road to the east of West Maurice Road (map reference Ringarooma 620316). Both these dairies are still in use although with alterations.[11]

The same sort of influence, although much later, can be seen in Yolla where Graeme Smith, after seeing one of the echelon sheds at Marrawah, persuaded Aubrey Crisp to build something similar on his Yolla farm. The mostly timber shed was built in 1953 and was the first herringbone shed in the Yolla district. It is still standing in reasonable condition, although not in use.[12]

However, this type of shed where the cows were elevated did not become generally popular for some time. The principal reason for this was that it was not very satisfactory for hand milking, and even when milking machines became much more common it was thought necessary for their use to be followed by hand milking (stripping) to remove the best milk. It was thus not until after the Second World War when hand stripping was found to be unnecessary that the use of the elevated shed became general. It was also about this time that the expansion in the dairy industry led to ever-

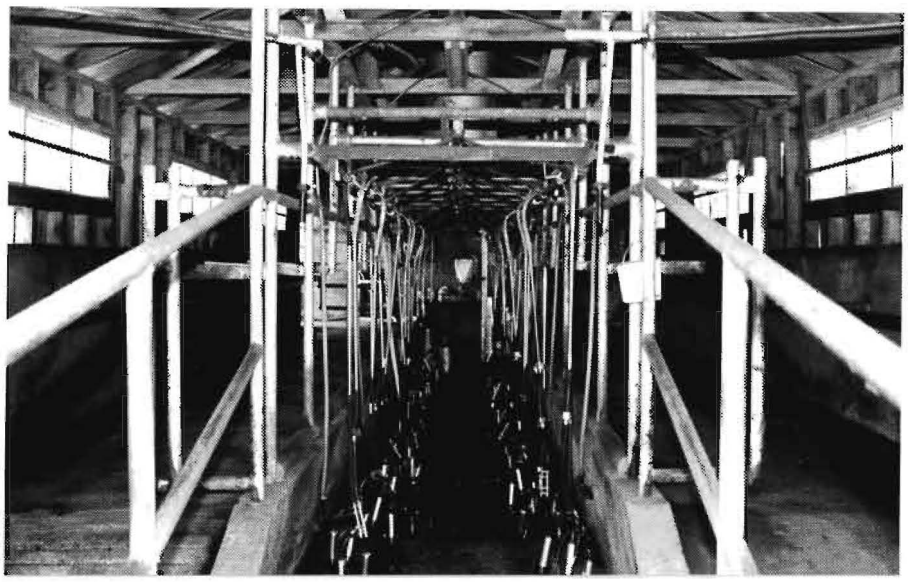
increasing herd sizes. When an average herd was 15-20 cows, the design of the shed was relatively unimportant. As the size of herds increased to perhaps several hundred cows (see Fig.1.7), shed design became increasingly significant.[13]



Interior of the first echelon shed in Yolla, photographed in 1933.

The first fully-elevated shed in Tasmania was built in 1950 by H.C. Haines at Cranleigh Park to the east of the Ruby Flats Road at Ringarooma (map reference Ringarooma 621348). From then on a few farmers started to experiment with different versions of the same basic idea. Haines' shed, for example, had the cows one behind the other. Some sheds were double-sided, some single-sided. Some of the double-sided ones had one exit and entry, some had one for each side. In some sheds the cows walked up a ramp, while in others the operator descended into a pit. By 1959 when the Department of Agriculture was encouraging farmers to adopt the new design there was a relatively standard format which was followed by most farmers.[14]

It was this format from the Department of Agriculture which was used by Don Simons in the late 1950s when he built a new dairy on the western side of Nook Road at Nabowla (map reference Lisle 296395). It was designed to milk 150 cows, although at its peak it milked up to 280 cows. It is still in use for 150 cows, virtually unchanged, although corrugations have been added to the concrete ramps to help prevent the cows from slipping as they move up to be milked. The progressive farmers who had put in the new herringbones were often called upon to demonstrate the idea to others. Don Simons' dairy was the subject of a field day, and photographs of it were used by the Department of Agriculture to promote the new design. Similarly when in 1957 Luke Tracey at Bentley, Chudleigh, used New Zealand plans to convert a stable to take herringbones he had many people interested in viewing it.[15]



The interior of the Maryvale milking shed.

Herringbones are now the most common form of dairy shed in use, although there have been some changes to the standard design. It is now more usual for the cows to remain on level ground and for the men to descend into pits. Whereas cows used to be on an angle and the first cow finished would walk forward and out, these days they are more generally placed side by side and milked in batches. Where in the 1950s herringbones were built with cement floors and lower walls, with the rest of the walls timber and the roof of iron, it is much more usual now for the walls to be built entirely of concrete blocks or brick. Older herringbones have sometimes been later modified in these ways to enable easier cleaning.[16]

The major advance since the herringbone has been the rotary dairy, a highly expensive development which can only be justified with herds of several hundred cows. They are therefore still relatively rare, although there are some in every area of the north. In the most common design, a circular concrete platform is mechanically rotated while cows step on. They are milked during one rotation of the platform, with the operator working on the outside, and then back off again when milking is finished. One of the first rotary dairies in Tasmania and the first in the north-east was A. & N. Wagner's rotary turnstile dairy at Winnaleah, built in 1979, where 530 cows can be milked in one-and-a-half hours. As herds get progressively bigger, more rotary dairies are likely to be built.[17]

APPENDIX 1: Table Showing Opening and Closing Dates of Factories in Order of Opening

Years	1889-1899	1900-1909	1910-1929	1930-1949	1950-1969	1970-1995
Factory						
Scottsdale (first)	Began 1889 *Closed 1889*					
Wynyard (Table Cape)	28 Sept 1892					*Still going*
Launceston (Tas Dairy/Cool Stores/Oliver's)	Opened by 7 Dec 1892 Charles St. New factory Cameron Street by Dec 1895?	Leased by Oliver from Cool Stores 1906 New factory Cool Stores Lindsay St. 12 May 1903	*Closed 1914*			*Closed 1973*
Ringarooma (Tas Dairy/Dehle/ Cool Stores/ Cooperative)	Opened by Dec 1892	*Burnt down 23 March 1908* New factories: Cool Stores 1908 Cooperative 1908		*Closed 1933?* New factory May 1933 Legerwood		*Still going*
Burnie (Emu Bay)	24 Jan 1893		*Closed 1928*			
Sheffield	12 Oct 1893 *Closed 1898*					
Stanley (Dovecote)	1893			*Closed between 1936 & 1942*		

Years	1889-1899	1900-1909	1910-1929	1930-1949	1950-1969	1970-1995
Factory						
Stanley	Opened by 2 Dec 1893			*Closed Oct 1938*		
Ulverstone (first)	7 Dec 1893 *Closed c.1897*					
Flowerdale (Smiths)	Opened by Feb 1894 *Closed c.Feb 1898?*					
St Marys	13 Oct 1894		*Closed 1915?* *Last confirmed date 1912*			
Pyengana	1895				*Closed 1952*	
Smithton cheese	Between 1895 & 1900	*Closed by 1902?*				
Lilydale (Bardenhagen)	Opened by 1896	*Closed?*	*Closed?*			
Derby (Winnaleah)	1897		*Closed 1912*			
North Motton (Tongs)	c.1899	*Closed?*	*Closed?*			
Irish Town	1899			*Closed by 1930* *Last confirmed date 1921*		
Myrtle Bank (Deans)		1900?	*Closed 1922?*			
Springfield		1901 *Closed 1902?*				
Marrawah (Moore/ Rob & Gardner)		1902-3		*Closed between* 1934 & 36		

Years	1889-1899	1900-1909	1910-1929	1930-1949	1950-1969	1970-1995
Factory						
Deloraine		c.Feb 1901				*Closed 1985?*
Forest		1902	*Closed by 1920s* *Last confirmed date 1913*			
King Island		28 Aug 1902				*Still going*
Montagu		1903				*Closed 1966*
Wilmot		Opened by 5 Nov 1904	*Burnt down 1912* Second by Jan 1913 *Closed between 1920 & 1926*			
Burnie (Cool Stores, later North-Western)		Opened by Dec 1904	2nd factory 13 Oct 1910 3rd factory 26 Oct 1927			*Closed 1976*
Launceston (Dehle/Heritage)		c. Dec 1904	*Closed 1917?* New factory 1917 Kingsway	*Closed 1933* New factory 1933 York St	*Closed c.1960*	
Smithton (Duck River)		1904				*Closed 1983*
Yolla		Nov 1906			*Closed 1963*	
Ulverstone (second)		1907	*Closed 1928*			
South Springfield (Millers)		1909		*Closed late 1930s*		
Gunns Plains (Bonney)		1909	*Burnt down 1911* New factory 1912 *Closed 1915*			

Years	1889-1899	1900-1909	1910-1929	1930-1949	1950-1969	1970-1995
Factory						
Scottsdale			Opened by 24 Nov 1910 New factory 27 Sept 1911			*Closed 1970*
Marrawah (Gale/Nicholls)			1910		*Closed 1952*	
Camden Hill Road (Oliver)			1910? *Closed 1914?*			
Devonport			27 Oct 1911		*Closed May 1964* Second factory May 1964 East Devonport	*Still going*
Riana			31 Oct 1911 *Closed by 1925*			
New River			23 Nov 1911 *Closed c.1920*			
Winnaleah (Oliver's)			1914 *Closed 1917*			
Winnaleah (Cool Stores)			1917 *Burnt down 1918* New factory 14 Nov 1918	*Closed 1946*		
Redpa			Opened by 1917	*Closed c.1933*		
Flinders Island			Oct 1922			*Closed 1974*
Round Hill				1931 *Closed 1936*		

Years	1889-1899	1900-1909	1910-1929	1930-1949	1950-1969	1970-1995
Factory						
Ulverstone (Coastal Dairy)				1933		*Closed 1972*
Marrawah (Wiggs/Amentus)				c.1934	*Closed 1954*	
Robbins Island				Early 1930s *Closed c.1948-9*		
Broadmeadows				Opened by 1936		*Closed 1973*
St Marys (second)				1939?		*Closed c.1970*
Burnie (Lactos)					1955	*Still going*

APPENDIX 2: The Dairy Heritage of Northern Tasmania

The following is a list with photographs of all surviving butter and cheese factory buildings. Some farm cheese factories are also included and a few milking sheds and dairies which are known to be significant. They are in the order in which they were mentioned in the text.

SEASIDE, GREEN HILLS, STANLEY

Name: Seaside farm cheese factory

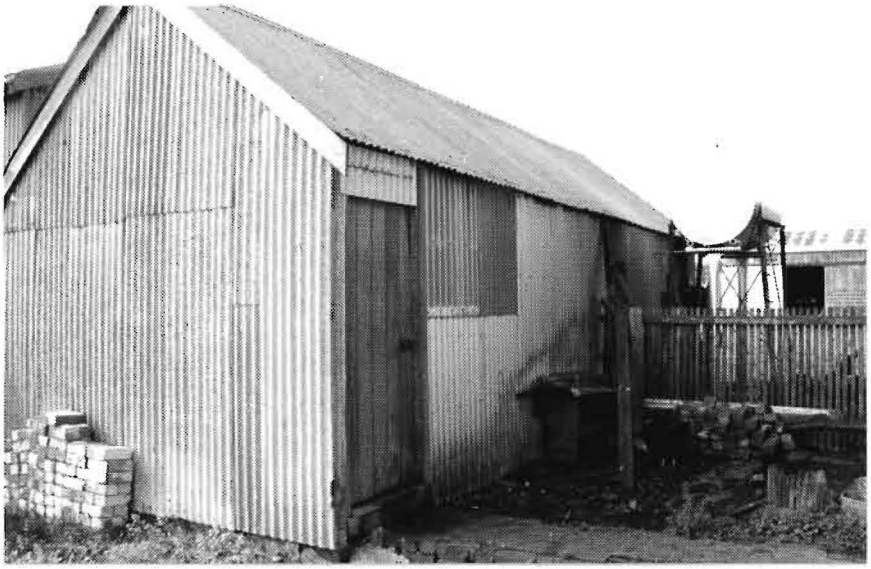
Date: Before 1908

Material: Timber with (later) iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent, although with modern repairs in iron.



DOVECOTE ROAD, STANLEY

Name: Dovecote Cheese Factory

Date: 1893

Material: Timber with (later) iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Reasonable, with some obvious repairs

WEST MONTAGU ROAD, MONTAGU

Name: Montagu Cheese Factory

Date: 1903

Material: Timber with (later) iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Poor

CNR GREEN POINT ROAD AND HANSONS ROAD, GREEN POINT, MARRAWAH

Name: Gale/Nicholls Cheese Factory

Date: 1910

Material: Timber with (later) iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good

HANSONS ROAD, GREEN POINT, MARRAWAH

Name: Wigg Cheese Factory

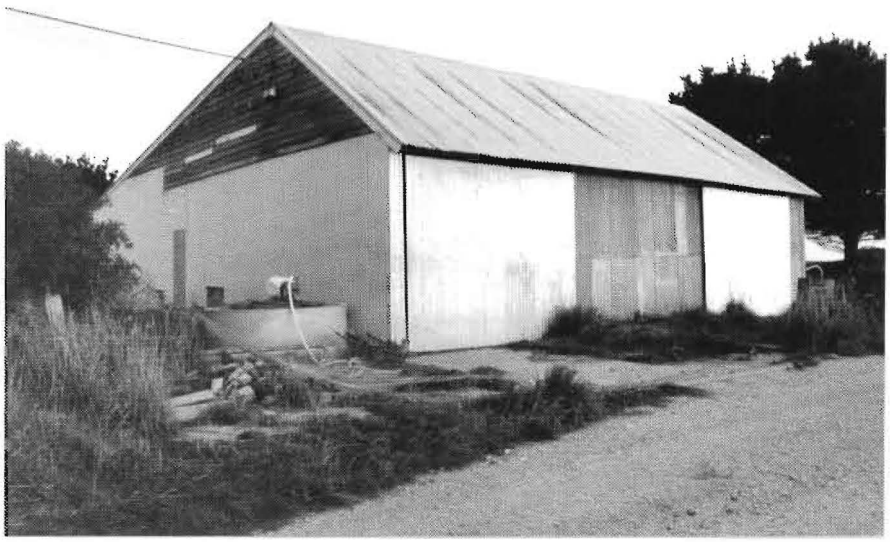
Date: c.1934

Material: Timber, although extensively repaired with iron

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent, although with extensive modern repairs



MELLA ROAD,
BROADMEADOWS

Name: Broadmeadows Cheese Factory

Date: c.1935

Material: Timber with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good

GOLDIE STREET,
SMITHTON

Name: Duck River Cooperative Butter Factory

Date: 1918, with later additions

Material: Reinforced concrete

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent, although needing painting

INGLIS STREET,
WYNYARD

Name: Table Cape Butter Factory

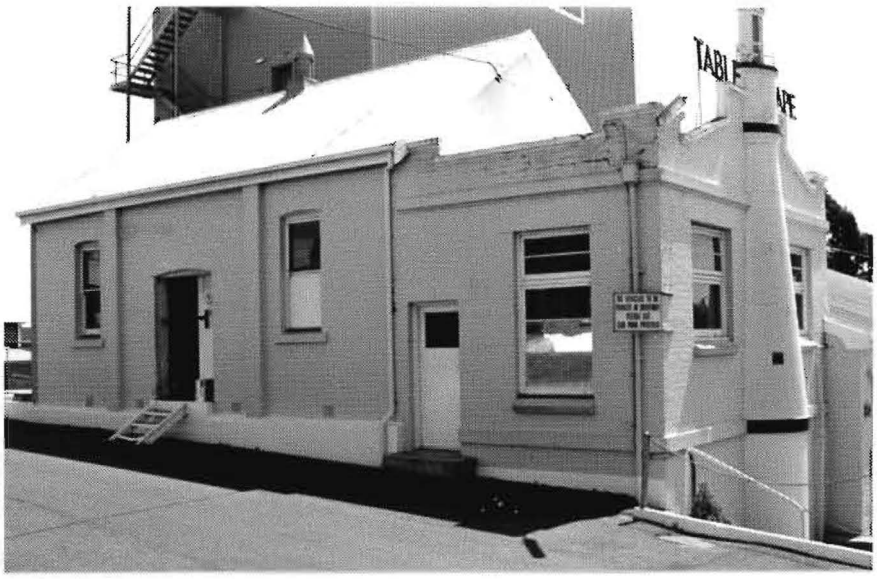
Date: 1910, 1939

Material: Brick with iron roof

Architect:

Builder: Jones and Burley (1910)

Condition: Excellent



MURCHISON HIGHWAY, YOLLA

Name: Yolla Butter Factory

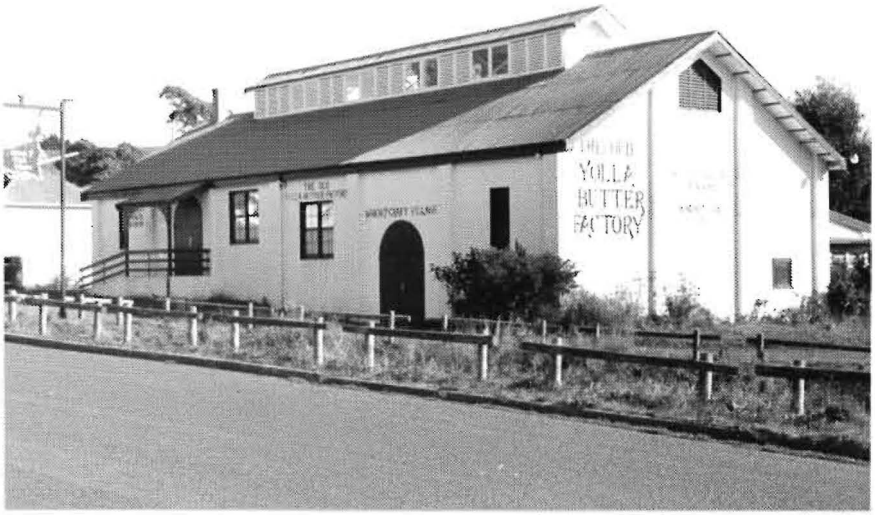
Date: 1932

Material: Brick and timber with iron roof

Architect:

Builder: Carter and Pearce

Condition: Excellent



OLD BASS HIGHWAY, WYNYARD

Name: Napier farm cheese factory

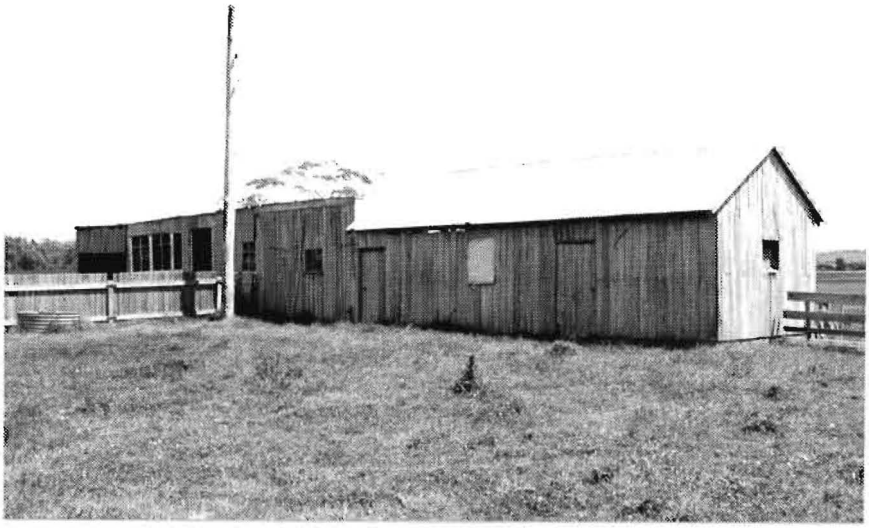
Date: 1931

Material: Timber with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good



BRICKPORT ROAD, BURNIE

Name: Emu Bay Butter Factory (partially obscured brick building to the left of centre)

Date: Probably 1905

Material: Brick

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Possibly unstable roof, following fire in December 1994. Previously excellent.

CNR MARINE TERRACE AND SPRING STREETS, BURNIE

Name: North-Western Cooperative Dairy Co. Ltd Butter Factory

Date: 1927, with later additions

Material: Brick with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent, although Marine Terrace frontage is much altered.

LEVENSIDE, GUNNS PLAINS

Name: Bonney farm cheese factory

Date: 1911

Material: Brick and timber with (later) iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Brick storage room excellent, wooden cheese-making room fair.

39 DON ROAD, DEVONPORT

Name: Ertler Cheese Factory

Date: c.1955

Material: Brick

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent, although with extensive additions on the eastern side

DUNORLAN ROAD, DUNORLAN

Name: Hawthorn farm cheese factory

Date: Early 1930s

Material: Timber with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Reasonable

ELMER'S ROAD, DUNORLAN

Name: Dunorlan House farm cheese factory

Date: 1894

Material: Timber with (probably later) cement rendering on one side and (later) iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good

POOL ROAD, CAVESIDE

Name: Caveside creamery

Date: 1892

Material: Timber with (later) iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good, although with later additions to convert it to a dwelling. The building has been moved from its original location.

MOLE CREEK ROAD, DELORAINE

Name: Deloraine Butter Factory, later UMT

Date: 1953, with later additions

Material: Rendered brick with iron roof

Architect:

Builder: R. Hay

Condition: Excellent.

CHESHUNT, MEANDER

Name: Kinvarra farm cheese factory

Date: c.1910

Material: Timber

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Central section reasonable, remainder ruined

CHESHUNT, MEANDER

Name: Hiwiroa farm cheese factory

Date: c.1910

Material: Timber with shingle roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Very poor

17-33 LINDSAY STREET, INVERMAY, LAUNCESTON

Name: Tasmanian Produce and Cool Storage Co. Ltd Butter Factory (Note: it is likely but not certain that the building which remains housed the butter factory)

Date: 1903

Material: Brick with iron roof

Architect: Walter Panton

Builder: Charles Adams and Sons

Condition: Excellent. The railway lines can also still be seen.

CNR KINGSWAY AND YORK STREETS, LAUNCESTON

Name: Heritage and Co. Butter Factory

Date: 1917

Material: Brick

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent

59 YORK STREET, LAUNCESTON

Name: Heritage and Co. Butter Factory

Date: 1935

Material: Brick and concrete with Durabestos covering and iron roof

Architect: Frank Heyward

Builder: J. & T. Gunn

Condition: Excellent, although with minor changes to the Vincent Street end.

WILLIAM STREET, SCOTTSDALE

Name: Scottsdale Butter Factory

Date: c.1935

Material: Concrete brick with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good

RAVENSCROFT, RINGAROOMA

Name: Ravenscroft farm cheese factory

Date: 1932

Material: Timber with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Reasonable to good, although with extensive repairs in iron

WEST MAURICE ROAD, RINGAROOMA

Name: Riversdale farm cheese factory

Date: 1930s

Material: Timber with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Reasonable to good

TASMAN HIGHWAY, PYENGANA

Name: Pyengana Cheese Factory

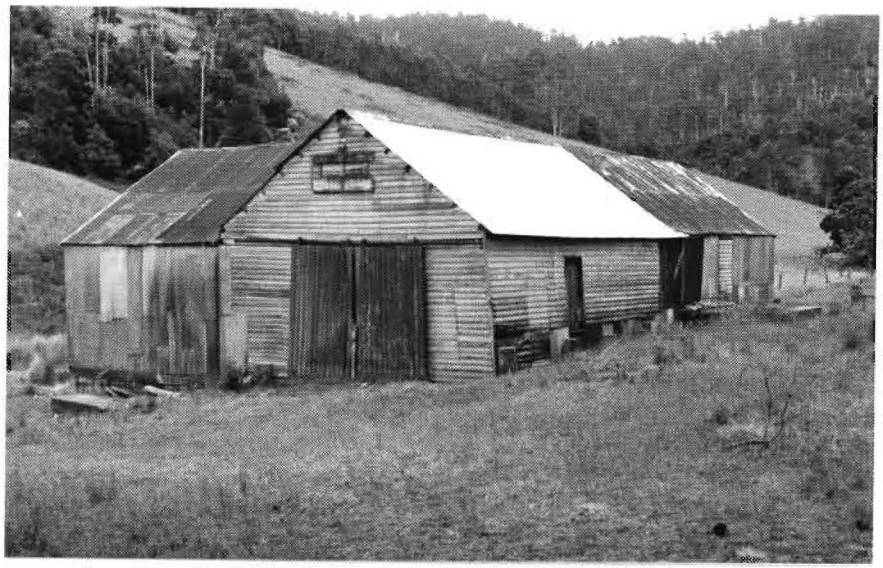
Date: 1895(?), 1902

Material: Timber with (later) iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Reasonable



ALANVALE, ST HELENS

Name: Treloggen farm butter and cheese factory

Date:

Material: Timber with (later) iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good

ST COLUMBA FALLS ROAD, PYENGANA

Name: Le Fevre farm cheese factory

Date: 1941

Material: Timber with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent

KOHLS ROAD,
PYENGANA

Name: Jestrimski farm cheese factory

Date: 1895

Material: Timber with (later) iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good

KOHLS ROAD,
PYENGANA

Name: Jestrimski farm cheese factory

Date: 1954

Material: Brick with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent

ROSEWOOD, TASMAN
HIGHWAY, WINNALEAH

Name: Le Fevre/Howard farm cheese factory

Date: c.1930

Material: Timber with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent

KOHLS ROAD,
PYENGANA

Name: Kohl farm cheese maturing room

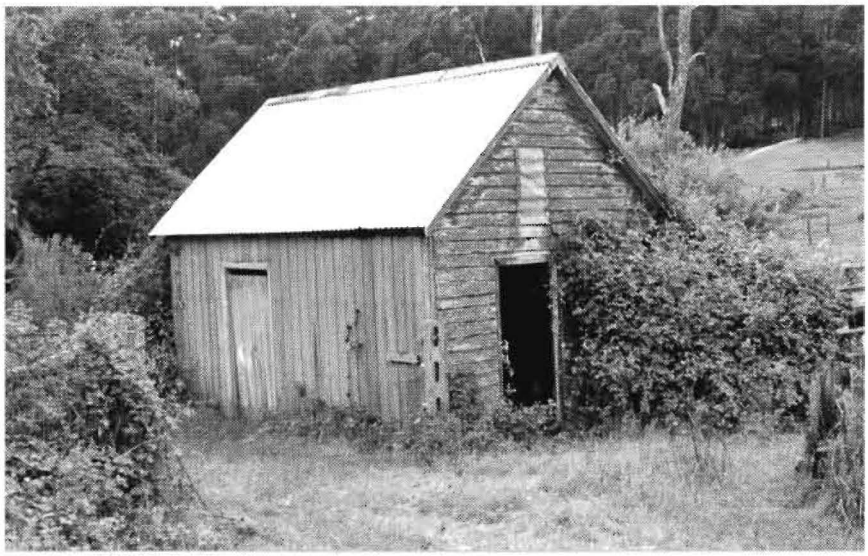
Date: c.1896

Material: Timber with (later) iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Reasonable to good



KOHLS ROAD,
PYENGANA

Name: Kohl farm cheese factory

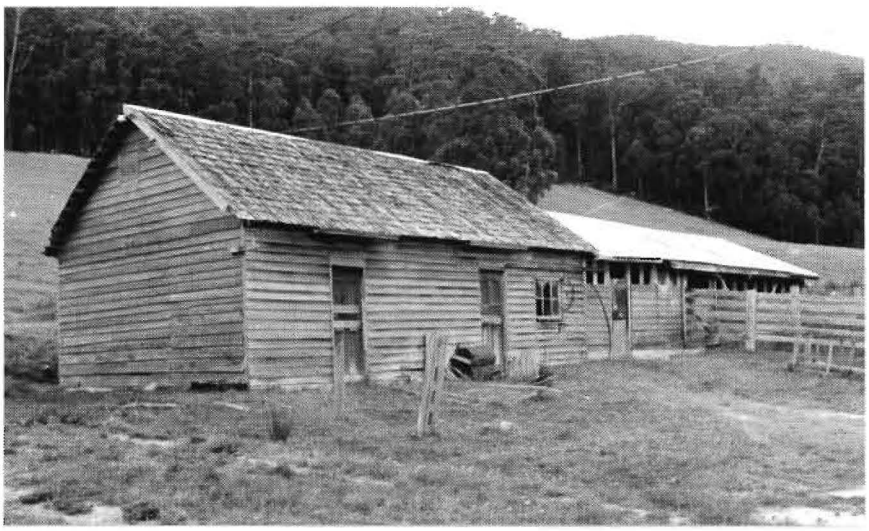
Date:

Material: Timber with shingle roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Reasonable



ENSTONE PARK,
FALMOUTH

Name: Enstone Park farm cheese room

Date: 1848(?)

Material: Brick and stone with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good

TOP MARSHES, MAIN ROAD, ST MARYS

Name: Top Marshes farm cheese factory

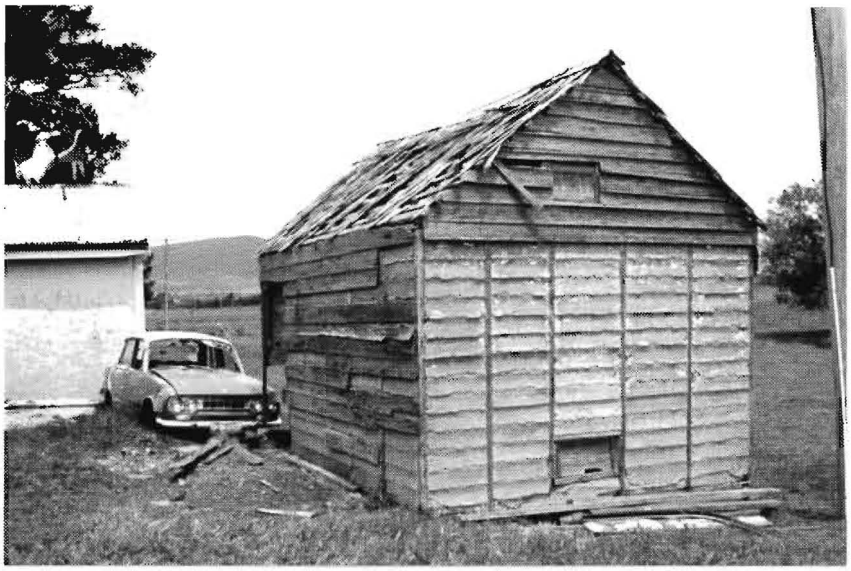
Date:

Material: Timber and concrete with shingle roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Fair



TOP MARSHES, MAIN ROAD, ST MARYS

Name: Top Marshes farm cheese storage room

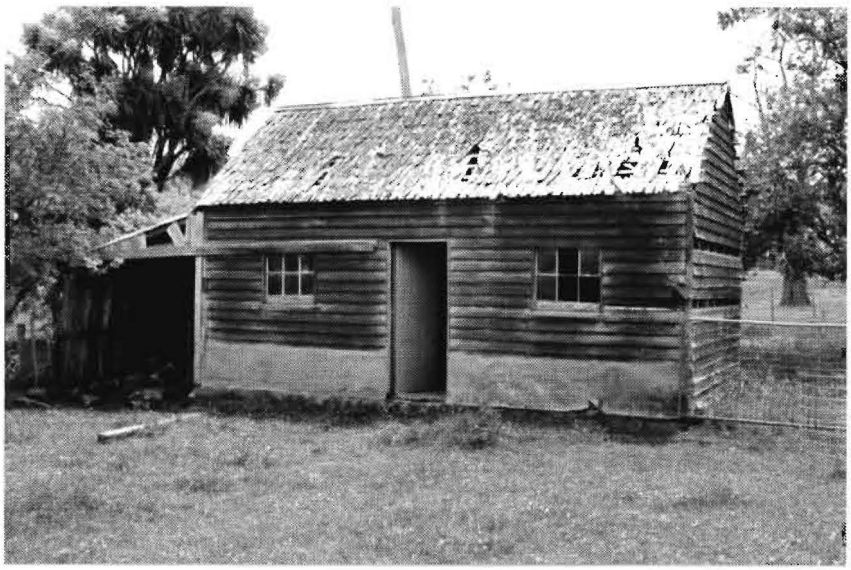
Date:

Material: Timber with shingle roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Reasonable



SUNNY BANKS, ST MARYS

Name: Napier farm cheese factory (Note: adjoins significant milking shed)

Date: c.1920

Material: Timber with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent.

CLOVER BANKS, ST MARYS

Name: Lohrey farm cheese factory

Date: 1930

Material: Timber with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent

MAIN ROAD, ST MARYS

Name: Crosswell Davern's farm cheese storage room

Date:

Material: Timber with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good

4 GARDENERS CREEK ROAD, ST MARYS

Name: St Marys Cheese Factory

Date: c.1939

Material: Concrete with iron roof

Architect:

Builder: Bert Markey

Condition: Excellent

CNR SOUTH ROAD AND MILLERS ROAD, KING ISLAND

Name: Gunn/Miller cheese factory

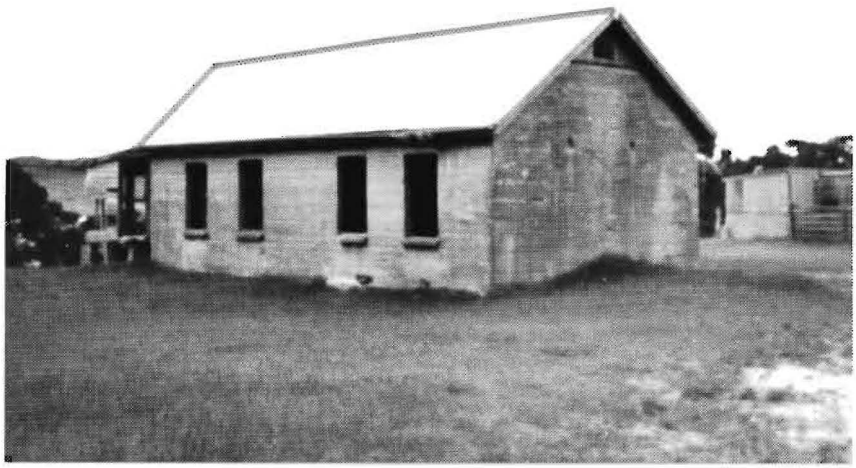
Date: 1935

Material: Brick with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good



NORTH ROAD, YAMBACOONA, KING ISLAND

Name: East Wickham Cheese Factory

Date: 1944

Material: Brick

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent

BUTTER FACTORY ROAD, FLINDERS ISLAND

Name: Flinders Island Butter Factory

Date: 1908 (in Gould's Country), 1920 (relocated), additions c.1935

Material: Timber with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good

WESLEYDALE, CHUDLEIGH

Name: Wesleydale cream setting room

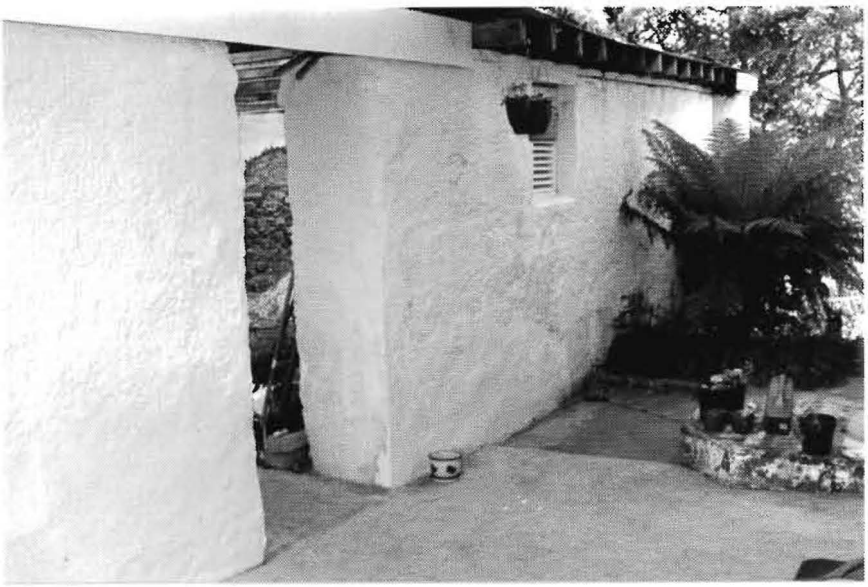
Date: Early-mid nineteenth century

Material: Rendered stone

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent exterior. Hipped roof was removed c.1986.



GLENCOE, FALMOUTH

Name: Glencoe dairy (first)

Date: Mid-nineteenth century

Material: Stone with (later) iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good.

GLENCOE, FALMOUTH

Name: Glencoe dairy (second)

Date: 1901

Material: Stone with shingle roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Fair

ST. PATRICKS HEAD ROAD, IRISH TOWN
(near St Marys)

Name: Back-out dairy

Date: c.1900

Material: Timber with shingle roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good

SUNNY BANKS, ST MARYS

Name: Napier milking shed (Note: Adjoins farm cheese factory)

Date: 1923

Material: Concrete and timber with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent.

HANSONS ROAD, MARRAWAH

Name: Gale/Nicholls echelon shed

Date: 1912

Material: Timber with (later) iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent

HOLMES ROAD, RINGAROOMA

Name: Holmes dairy and milking shed

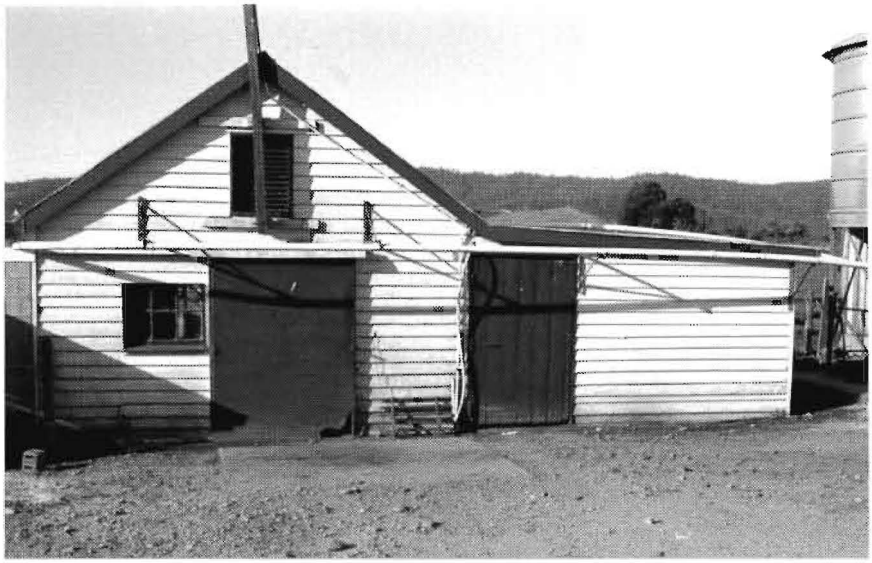
Date: Early 1930s with later addition

Material: Timber with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good



YOLLA

Name: Crisp echelon milking shed

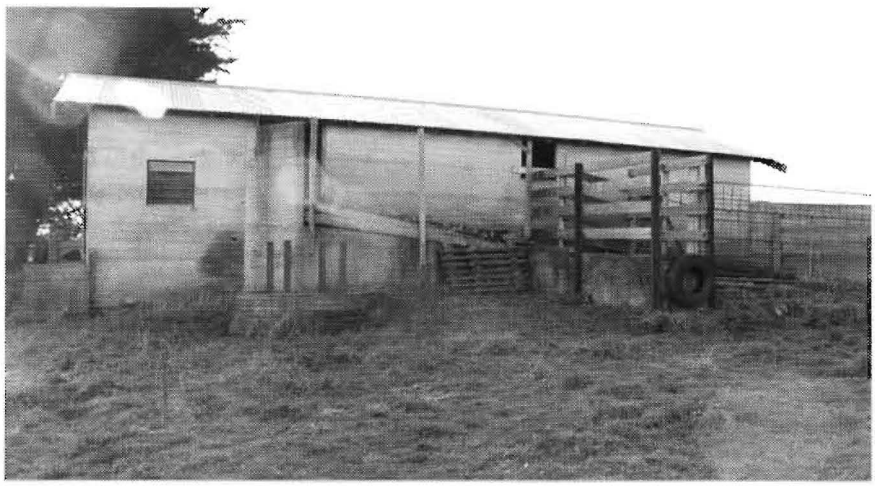
Date: 1953

Material: Timber and concrete with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good



CRANLEIGH PARK, RINGAROOMA

Name: Cranleigh Park herringbone milking shed

Date: 1950

Material: Brick with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Good

MARYVALE, NOOK
(near Scottsdale)

Name: Maryvale milking shed

Date: 1950s

Material: Concrete and timber with iron roof

Architect:

Builder:

Condition: Excellent

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Margaret Diprose (Legerwood), tester;
Tom Diprose (Legerwood), cheese-maker and engineer;
Joe Ellwood, manager of the Flinders Island butter factory;
Dot Hayes (Smithton), daughter of Horace Davern, cheese-maker;
Les Hayes (Smithton), dairyman on Robbins Island;
Dick Hooper, dairy farmer at King Island and Beaconsfield;
Hugh Jestrimski (Pyengana), dairy farmer and cheese-maker;
Reg Johnson (Burnie), managing director of North-Western Dairy Cooperative Pty Ltd;
Les Neilson (Smithton), factory manager at Duck River;
Dick Nicholls (Marrawah), dairy farmer;
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CHAPTER FIVE

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CHAPTER SIX

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CHAPTER SEVEN

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15. Simons: Hunt, H., op.cit., pp.285-6, & Ashley Targett, 14 December 1993.. Tracey: Don Tracey and Beryl Tracey, 7 February 1994.
16. Ken Rose, 30 March 1993 and field observations.
17. Ken Rose, 30 March 1993, and Alf Wagner interview, QVMAG 1993 OH 31A & B.