EARLY TOBACCONISTS OF LAUNCESTON 1835 - 1920



Tony Walker, HRA

For the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery

July, 2026

INDEX

Introduction	3
Early Tobacconists of Launceston 1835 – 1920	4
Prominent Early Tobacconists	11
R D Burls	11
Charles F Taylor	13
William (Billy) Dedman	14
Barney Collins	16
Harry Stoner	18
Patrick Monaghan	20
Dens of Iniquity	23
The Totalisator	28
James Ah Catt and Tobacco Growing in Tasmania	30
List of Launceston Tobacconists 1890 – 1920	36

INTRODUCTION

Tobacco was always a highly prized commodity in the early colony of Van Dieman's Land. It was imported from first settlement and sold by grocers and general merchants. Self-described tobacconists first appear in the 1830s and 40s, but these stores were still not restricted to tobacco products. John Mitchell was prominent amongst these and in 1849 opened a specialized store for tobacco products and paraphernalia. This seems to have been Launceston's first true tobacconist shop.

Tobacconists' shops have always been associated with hairdressing, and have often included meeting rooms, reading rooms or "cigar divans" for leisurely smoking. Some of the larger establishments included billiard rooms. Naturally they became popular meeting places, frequented mainly by young men.

These shops were often run by "sporting men" – either active sportsmen like Billy Dedman, captain of the City Football Club or Charles Taylor, a sporting patron and prominent racehorse owner. Tobacconists were always associated with sport and were frequent donors of prizes and trophies to sporting clubs.

In the 1880s, there was a brief experiment into tobacco growing in Tasmania, through the Chinese community led by James Ah Catt. A number of plantations existed around Launceston, but the venture failed, partly through racial prejudice and lack of Government support, but principally because the Tasmanian climate proved unsuitable for tobacco culture.

Inevitably, as male meeting places, gambling became part of the tobacconists' operation, and this was accelerated by the introduction of the totalisator in the 1880s, which was installed in at least four of the city's tobacconists.

There was growing community concern about tobacconists' shops becoming gambling dens and corrupting the young men of Launceston. There were numerous attempts to curb gambling, none of which were successful, although police did launch sporadic raids on tobacconists' stores. The Suppression of Betting and Gambling Act of 1916 seems to have been finally effective in returning tobacconists' stores to their original function.

Tobacconists also brought two innovations of dubious value to Launceston – cannabis and poker machines. Cannabis cigarettes for medicinal purposes are first advertised in 1869 and continued to be sold through tobacconists for the next 20 years. Poker machines were introduced in the early 1900s and quickly became a popular feature in tobacconists' shops.

Tobacconists adapted to changing tastes over the years, as cigarettes gradually displaced cigars, pipes and snuff. This change was greatly accelerated by the invention of cigarette making machinery in the 1880s.

Although tobacconists' stores seemed to have had relatively frequent changes of ownership, and insolvencies were common, Launceston had two tobacconists of remarkable longevity. Patrick Monaghan started in Brisbane Street in 1897 and Edward Teague in Brisbane Street in 1911. Both traded as family concerns for 100 years and Monaghan's and Teague's became Launceston institutions.

EARLY TOBACCONISTS OF LAUNCESTON 1835 - 1920

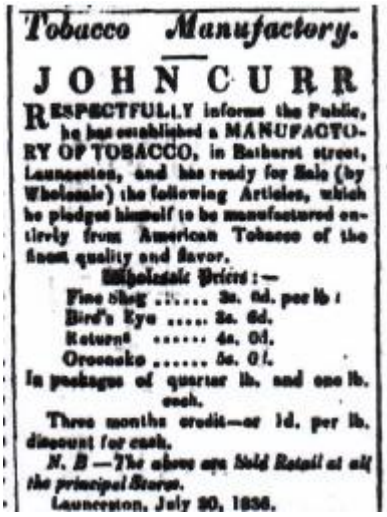
In the early days of the colony, tobacco was imported by general merchants and sold by grocers. It was predominantly used for pipe smoking and cigars, and used almost exclusively by men. Snuff[1] was being imported but by that time its popularity was waning. The main varieties of tobacco advertised were Brazil, negro-head[2] and English shag.

Smoking was widespread and in 1831, 8,442 lbs. of tobacco was imported into Tasmania. The duty on spirits and tobacco in 1832 amounted to £12,300, about two thirds of all Government revenue. The first colonially grown tobacco was imported from Sydney in 1833.

The first mention of a specialised tobacconist is in 1835:

> *Nothing like a good cigar*
>
> *And only to be obtained at the*
>
> *TOBACCONIST, CHARLES ST.,*
>
> *Where are always on hand, Woodville's Havannah, Manilla, Bengal, Sandalrays, Chinsurah, Cheroot, Shag, Returns, Virginia, and Negrohead Tobacco; Snuffs of all descriptions.*[3]

This is probably the shop of H. Harris in Charles Street, who had previously been advertising tobacco products.



Tobacco Manufactory.

JOHN CURR

RESPECTFULLY informs the Public, he has established a MANUFACTORY OF TOBACCO, in Bathurst street, Launceston, and has ready for Sale (by Wholesale) the following Articles, which he pledges himself to be manufactured entirely from American Tobacco of the finest quality and flavor.

Wholesale Prices:—

Fine shag ..... 3s. 6d. per lb.
Bird's Eye ..... 3s. 6d.
Returns ..... 4s. 0d.
Orcoaka ..... 5s. 0d.

In packages of quarter lb. and one lb. each.

Three months credit—or 1d. per lb. discount for cash.

N. B—The above are Sold Retail at all the principal Stores.

Launceston, July 20, 1836.

In 1836, John Curr was advertising a tobacco manufactory in Bathurst Street, processing imported American tobacco.[4] This appears to be a short-lived venture, as it is not mentioned again.

Although smoking was so popular, there were still some warnings of the health risks. A doctor with a regular column in the Cornwall Chronicle did not mince words:

> *Tobacco belongs to the class of drugs called narcotics, and is possessed of many of their most noxious qualities. The excessive use of tobacco, in whatever shape it is taken, heats the blood, hurts digestion, wastes the fluid, and relaxes the nerves. Smoking is particularly injurious to lean, hectic, and hypochondriacal persons: it creates an unnatural thirst, leading to the use of spirituous liquors: it increases indolence, and confirms the lazy in the habits they have acquired; above all, it is pernicious to the young, laying the foundation of future misery…*[5]

Tobacco products continued to be sold through grocers and general merchants until the 1840s, when specialized tobacconists began to appear.

[1] Powdered tobacco for inhalation
[2] An American tobacco mixed with molasses
[3] Cornwall Chronicle, 13 June 1835, p.3
[4] Cornwall Chronicle, 20 Aug., 1836, p.4
[5] Cornwall Chronicle, 10 Feb, 1838, p.1



TOBACCO! TOBACCO!!

A FRESH shipment of Tobacco just landed, and on sale at the Store of the undersigned. Square fig tobacco, at 2s. 10d per lb.; a splendid sample of Barratt's best small square fig; Ladies' twist and English cut tobacco's of first-rate quality; two cases of fresh London snuffs of every kind.

Consumers of those articles are strongly invited to call at

MITCHELL's Tobacconist,
Charles-st., Launceston.

Dec. 6.



EX "POTENTATE."

TOBACCO!
AND TOBACCO PIPES

LANDED, and on Sale, about SIX TONS OF TOBACCO (Barratt's) in packages of 500lb. which sized packages, it is well known to judges of tobacco are of a superior quality to any imported; good tobacco had been long looked for, but it is now arrived, and on sale at Mitchell's; a real treat to those who smoke and chew!!!

Tobacco pipes, 1000 gross!!! just landed; these pipes are of a medium size—plain and fluted bowls—in good condition, and will be sold at low prices.

JOHN MITCHELL.

Charles-street, Launceston, March 9.

The first to advertise was John Mitchell in 1843.[6]

In 1847, he moved to larger premises opposite his old shop in Charles Street, and by 1849, he was importing significant quantities – six tons of tobacco and 1000 gross pipes. [7] The Cornwall Chronicle commented on the transaction:



TOBACCO
AND
SNUFFS

Ex "Prince of Wales."

THE Undersigned having purchased FIVE TONS OF PRIME TOBACCO (being more than half the quantity brought out by the above vessel) is enabled to supply the public with an article of the finest quality, at lower prices than any house on this side of the island.

He is also in receipt of ENGLISH SNUFFS of every variety.

2,000 gross of small bowled Pipes, and 500 gross Tappington's Matches—very superior—by the above arrival.

JOHN MITCHELL.

Charles-street, Launceston. 276

Duty on Tobacco— The sum of £103 8s. 6d. for duty on 1879 lbs. of Tobacco, was paid at the Customs, this morning, by Mr Mitchell. Tobacconist of Charles Street, being the largest amount, (as we are informed) ever paid at once, by a single individual in Launceston.[8]

Mitchell was also importing other grocery items, but in 1849, moved the tobacconists supplies to a separate specialized shop next door, managed by his son.

In 1851, he offered a £10 reward for the capture of a brawny thief who had stolen "a piece of Barrett's twist tobacco, weighing about 200 lbs."

Another early tobacconist was R. Sykes, who advertised in 1845:

ON SALE, by the undersigned— 20,000 of real good old Manilla CIGARS, at £2 10s. per thousand; Nos. 3 and 4, &c, are of late importation and first-rate quality, cheaper than any other house in town, either by box or bundle. Every kind of Snuffs, and Snuff boxes, Cigar cases, English, Dutch and Scotch Pipes, Cavendish, Cut, and Negrohead Tobacco, at all prices according to quality. One ton of Dutch Cut Tobacco at 3d. per pound, in bond; a few kegs of Negrohead, in bond, weighing 200 lbs., at 10d. per pound. R Sykes,

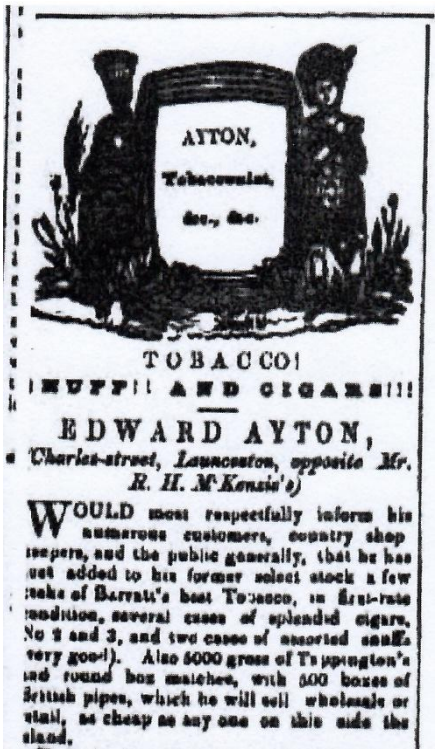
Wholesale and Retail Tobacconist, Elizabeth- street, Launceston.[9]

---

[7] Cornwall Chronicle, 14 Mar., 1849, p.438
[8] Cornwall Chronicle, 24 Jan., 1849
[9] Cornwall Chronicle, 22 Feb., 1845, p.3

In 1847, Sykes teamed with Mr Robins to manufacture Lucifer matches which were described by the Cornwall Chronicle as “in nearly every respect fully equal to the far famed Tappington's of 'Safe and Silent' notoriety” and urging their purchase to keep money in the colony.[10]

In the following year, his Elizabeth Street premises were destroyed by fire and, as he was uninsured, this seems to be the end of his venture.


AYTON,
Tobacconist,
&c., &c.

TOBACCO!
SNUFF!! AND CIGARS!!!

EDWARD AYTON,
Charles-street, Launceston, opposite Mr. R. H. M'Kenzie's)

WOULD most respectfully inform his numerous customers, country shop keepers, and the public generally, that he has just added to his former select stock a few cases of Barratt's best Tobacco, in first-rate condition, several cases of splendid cigars, No 2 and 3, and two cases of assorted snuffs very good). Also 5000 gross of Tappington's and round box matches, with 500 boxes of British pipes, which he will sell wholesale or retail, as cheap as any one on this side the island.

Another prominent early tobacconist was Edward Ayton who first advertises in 1847, and operated from Honey Dew House in Charles Street.

He seems to have run this concern for some years until buying the Nile Hotel at Nile Bridge in 1856 and starting a Royal Mail coaching business.

According to the 1849 census, there were 11 tobacconists in Tasmania and at least three of them were in Launceston.

A hairdressing salon was usually a part of any tobacconist’s operation, and they frequently had reading rooms, meeting rooms and billiard parlours. Some also offered a Cigar Divan, a premium cigar lounge with a relaxed, club-style space where customers could purchase and smoke cigars.

RUMPFF AND MOSES.
Frankfort House, Brisbane-street.
R. and M. have also opened next door to
their establishment a Cigar Divan, where they
intend to keep only first-class tobacconist's goods.[11]

Many were run by “sporting personalities”, and this became more common as gambling was introduced, with the introduction of the totalisator in the 1880s, and poker machines after 1900. Tobacconists’ shops tended to have relatively short lives and insolvencies were common. Between 1850 and 1900 there are more than 50 individuals listed a tobacconists in Launceston in the contemporary papers.
Rather than an exhaustive chronology, I have profiled some of the more prominent in the Chapter Prominent Launceston Tobacconists.

[10] Cornwall Chronicle, 1 Sep., 1847, p.3
[11] Launceston Examiner, 21 Apr., 1860, p.3



TO LOVERS OF SMOKE.

The greatest variety of Tobacco's, Snuffs, Cigars and Pipes in Tasmania!!!

THE Undersigned having just returned from Melbourne, begs to inform the public in general that he has carefully selected from the first houses a superior Stock of Tobacco, Cigars, Pipes, Snuffs, &c., &c., &c., viz.—

TOBACCOS:

Best Negrohead; Cavendish, the stick; ditto pound plug; ditto ditto assorted; and Bird's Eye,

at 6s., 7s., 8s., and 9s.

HAVANNAH CIGARS:

Madura, Colorado Claro, M.D. Rg Fbi Cabs, Hipros.

The Oldest MANILLA CIGARS in Tasmania.

Cheroot and Havannah-shaped; Young Queens, and Swiss Cigars.

SNUFFS!

English Prince's Mixture, Black Rappee, Turpeth Mixture, No. 37, Lundy, Lundyfoot,

Colonial assorted, Prince's Mixture, Gilt's Black Rappee, Plain and assorted Scotch.

Varied Assortment of Pipes

Real Meerschaums, plain and silver mounted; Briarwood and Maple, assorted; Stereoscopic pipes; clay pipes of every description, amongst which will be found the Terrified amber-washed long Parlor pipes, and pipe stems assorted—horn and amber, plain and straight, silver and gilt mounted.

Pipes carefully fitted with horn or amber mouth-pieces, on shortest notice.

MATCHES:

Wax Vestas, Fusees, Vesuvians; Fancy Match-boxes, in variety; Cockrell's Aromatic Pills, for use after smoking.

Pen and Pocket Knives, very Cheap.

Fancy Tobacco-pouches, Tobacco-cutters, &c.

ALWAYS ON HAND—

Best cut-up Tobaccos—Negrohead, Cavendish, Aromatic, Bird's Eye, and Prince of Wales' Mixture.

☞ An inspection of the above Goods is particularly requested, the same will be sold for small profits. Terms cash.

A liberal allowance made to Country Storekeepers.

R. T. EDWARDS,

New York House, Brisbane Street.

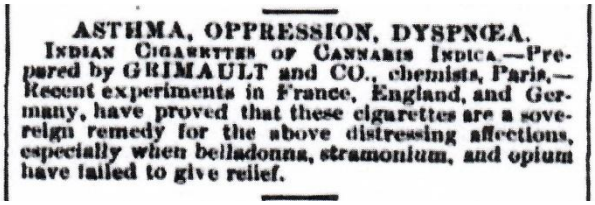
July 18. 1863

R T Edwards took over the store of Mr. Frith in New York House in Brisbane Street and set up as a tobacconist.

This ad from 1863[12] is a good illustration of the range of stock carried by tobacconists of the day.

Edwards was also active in the gold mining field and would exhibit his finds in the tobacconist's shop window.

Cigarettes begin to appear in 1869. Surprisingly, all of the early advertisements are for herbal cigarettes for medicinal purposes, notably cannabis.[13]



ASTHMA, OPPRESSION, DYSPNŒA.

INDIAN CIGARETTES OF CANNABIS INDICA.—Prepared by GRIMAULT and CO., chemists, Paris.—Recent experiments in France, England, and Germany, have proved that these cigarettes are a sovereign remedy for the above distressing affections, especially when belladonna, stramonium, and opium have failed to give relief.

If opium had failed, I imagine cannabis may have helped, at least with "oppression".[14]

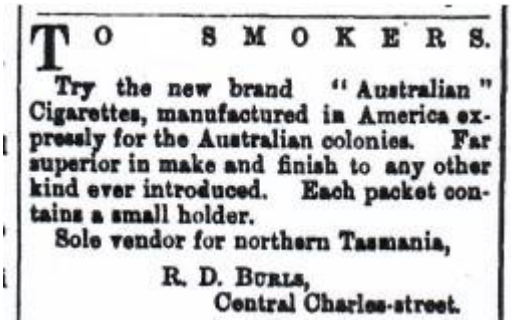
The first mention of conventional tobacco cigarettes is not until 1875, when J. M. Davies of Havana House advertises; "*1 case cigarettes. Cannon, Rubies, Brilliants, Glowworm, and a variety of other brands, containing the choicest Turkish tobacco.*"[15]

Cannabis cigarettes are still advertised for their therapeutic value, promising relief of "asthma, nervous coughs, chronic laryngitis, hoarseness, loss of voice, facial neuralgia, and insomnia."[16]

In 1879, tobacconist Henry Weymouth was advertising: *"choice assortment of Vanity Fair Cigarettes and Cut Tobaccos in 1, 2, 4, and 8oz. packets. The best brand in the market.*[17]

[12] Cornwall Chronicle, 22 Jul., 1863, p.7
[13] Cornwall Chronicle, April 18, 1870, p.16
[14] Cannabis cigarettes continued to be frequently advertised for the next 20 years
[15] Cornwall Chronicle, 19 Feb., 1875, p.2
[16] Launceston Examiner, 5 Aug., 1875, p.4
[17] Cornwall Chronicle, 17 Mar., 1879, p.3

In 1880, J. M. Davies was advocating: *"SMOKE the celebrated Pinafore Cigarettes, seldom equalled, never excelled."*[18]


TO SMOKERS.

Try the new brand "Australian" Cigarettes, manufactured in America expressly for the Australian colonies. Far superior in make and finish to any other kind ever introduced. Each packet contains a small holder.

Sole vendor for northern Tasmania,

R. D. BURLS,
Central Charles-street.

By 1980, the Australian market was apparently big enough to attract a specially branded Australian cigarette, which was offered by R. D. Burls in Charles Street.[19] Shortly after, he was announcing the arrival of the first shipment of Kimball's Excelsior Cigarettes.

While some were rolling their own cigarettes, the consumption was fairly limited until the mechanisation of cigarette production in the early 80s. In the United States the preference was still strongly for cigars and pipes. In 1879, there were 500,000 pounds of tobacco going into cigarettes against 20 million pounds going into cigar production and 40 million pounds sold as tobacco.[20]

But cigarettes were coming into their own – a story in the Launceston Examiner describes the latest London trends:

> *SMOKERS may be interested to know that an unprecedented rage for cigarettes has set in. All London smokes tobacco delicately twisted in paper. Pipes are obsolete: cigars have for the time lost their place, and everywhere cigarettes are triumphant.*[21]

Great strides were being made in American cigarette production:

…a cigarette machine which makes over 100,000 cigarettes per day (the work of sixty hands) has been invented. The consumption of cigarettes in the United States has increased enormously of late. The revenue returns for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1880, show that 408,000,000 cigarettes were made in that year, an increase of over seventy per cent, on the preceding year. It is estimated by some manufacturers that the figures for the current year will be nearly 1,000,000,000.

The machine referred to is so perfect and rapid in its work that fourteen of them would suffice to manufacture for the entire demand, and a moderate-sized room would be all the space required.[22]

With the introduction of mechanisation, cigarettes began to be more freely imported and advertised in the late 1880s. Irvine and MacEachern, better known as wine and spirit merchants were also prominent in imported tobacco products and were advertising: *"JUST RECEIVED, A CONSIGNMENT OF CHOICEST EGYPTIAN CIGARETTES."*[23] Tobacconist Leslie Jolly was promoting *"La Belle Creole cigarettes. Latest out."*

Cigarette brands advertised included Old Judge, Cameo, Opera Puffs, Sunny South, Vanity Fair, Turkish, Purity, Stars and Stripes and Kaiser-I-Hind.

In 1889, the Launceston Examiner announced the latest trend which combined two vices:

[18] Launceston Examiner, 15 Apr., 1880, p.4
[19] Launceston Examiner, 20 Nov., 1880, p4
[20] Cornwall Chronicle, 5 Jun, 1879, p.2
[21] Launceston Examiner, 14 Jun., 1882, p.3
[22] Launceston Examiner, 4 Oct., 1882, p.4
[23] Launceston Examiner, 28 Jul., 1888, p.2

The brandy cigarette is the latest thing from Boston. It is made of tobacco that has been soaked in brandy, and the smoker is enabled to keep mildly intoxicated without touching a drop of liquor.[24]

Many people smoked "for some ailment or to sooth the fevered nervous system". An Italian scientist claimed to have proved the disinfectant power of smoking.

For years it has been accepted that tobacco smoke is a disinfectant. Smokers have actually been invited into the houses of people who did not smoke to disinfect a room, say of measles: But disinfectants are not necessarily antiseptics, although most people confound the two. An Italian scientist has recently demonstrated that tobacco smoke is both.

He devised an apparatus consisting of two funnels placed with their mouths opposed and sealed with paraffin. To each of the small ends of the funnels he attached tubes, which were so arranged that a cigar could be placed in one end. The smoke was thus drawn into the large space made by the funnels, in which was laid a plate containing cultures of various micro-organisms or germs. The latter were subjected to the action of tobacco smoking for half an hour, chiefly the smoke of Virginia and Carvour cigars and cigarette tobacco, therefore not so powerful or pungent as the plebeian shag. The result of Dr. Tessarini's experiments proved that tobacco smoke really does possess the power of preventing the development of micro-organisms. Some are even destroyed thereby, whilst the growth of others is retarded.[25]



By 1892, the sale of cigarettes had far outstripped cigars and 2,000,000,000 cigarettes were being produced annually in the state of New York alone.[26]

Tobacconist businesses were doing well and in 1895, there were eight in Launceston:

Leslie Jolly, 98 Brisbane Street; James Ah Catt, 71 Brisbane Street; Catt & Collins, 151 Charles Street; Charles Taylor, 63 St John Street; John W. Bradshaw, 99 St John Street; James Ah Catt, 133 St John Street; Samuel Adams, 66 Tamar Street and Victor Shaw, Quadrant.

In 1895, the American Tobacco Company set up in Hobart, manufacturing cigarettes from imported cut tobacco. Duty on the tobacco was 3s. per lb., whereas duty on imported cigarettes was 7s. per lb. The solely American-owned company had the exclusive rights to the machinery used in cigarette manufacture, so a virtual monopoly in Tasmania. Despite the Company's protests, the government enacted a 2s. in the pound excise duty on cigarettes made in the colony.

The early 1900s saw growing opposition to the poker machines and other gambling that were common to most tobacconists, and this aspect is more fully covered in the chapter Dens of Iniquity.

[24] Launceston Examiner, 11 May, 1889, p.2
[25] Launceston Examiner, 14 Mar., 1889, p.2
[26] Launceston Examiner, 15 Apr., 1893, p.8

In 1911, Edward Teague founded a tobacconists shop at 102 Brisbane Street and this was to become Launceston's longest running tobacconist, managed by the Teague family until 2012.[27]

Its nearest rival was Monaghan's, founded in Brisbane Street by Patrick Monaghan in 1897 and run by the Monaghan family for 100 years until sold in 1997.

The number of tobacconists' shops in Launceston was increasing as the city grew, with 10 stores operating between 1905 and 1920.

Despite the frequent warnings on the health hazards of tobacco, smoking was well entrenched in the society and during the first world war the Examiner did not want to see our brave lads deprived of their tobacco.

A Tobacco Fund.

To Fill the Empty Pipes in the Trenches. The least that can be done for our brave soldiers at the front, and for our sailors too, is to see that all their requirements are met. There is nothing Tommy Atkins craves for more than something to smoke, and the Overseas Club has taken up the matter, and established a fund to see that he gets it.

There are no tobacconists' shops in the trenches. Smokers do not need to be told what it means for a man in the very front of the firing line to be cut off from the solace of his pipe or cigarette. In most cases it is a man's sole comfort. It is open to everyone to gladden the heart of a hero in khaki by filling his pipe and giving him the cigarette he so dearly loves.

The Overseas Club has arranged with Messrs. Martins, Ltd., London, to make up a special Overseas Club shillingworth. The parcel will contain a quarter of a pound of fine smoking mixture, allowed to go duty free, fifty choice cigarettes, and a box of matches. If purchased in the ordinary way the cost of the parcel would be 2s 9d. Every shilling subscribed will send this acceptable gift to a soldier. The War Department forwards it free.[28]

The Suppression of Gambling Act passed in 1916, seems to have been largely successful in removing most gambling from tobacconists' shops and they reverted to their more traditional role of hairdressing and selling smokers' requisites.

[27] The Teague store did move to smaller premises next door in Brisbane Street in the mid-1990s
[28] Examiner, 14 Feb., 1915, p.3

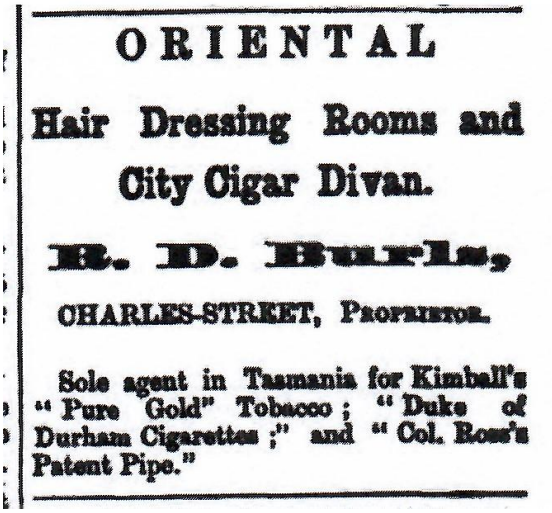
PROMINENT EARLY TOBACCONISTS

R.D. BURLS

R. D. Burls took over the fancy goods business of James Brickhill in central Charles Street, opening on the 8th of December, 1877, with "a new and varied stock of toys, fancy goods, Christmas presents, tobacconist's sundries, etc."

In November, 1880, he was advertising:

> *TO SMOKERS.*
> *Try the new brand " Australian " Cigarettes, manufactured in America expressly for the Australian colonies. Far superior in make and finish to any other kind ever introduced. Each packet contains a small holder. Sole vendor for northern Tasmania,*
> *R. D. Burls,*
> *Central Charles-street.*[29]


ORIENTAL
Hair Dressing Rooms and City Cigar Divan.
R. D. Burls,
CHARLES-STREET, PROPRIETOR.
Sole agent in Tasmania for Kimball's "Pure Gold" Tobacco; "Duke of Durham Cigarettes;" and "Col. Ross's Patent Pipe."

The following year he abandons fancy goods and decides to specialize as a tobacconist:

R.D.BURLS TOBACCONIST, CENTRAL CHARLES-STREET, Wishes to inform the public of Launceston that having entirely relinquished the Fancy Goods business, he is now prepared to offer the best and largest assortment of TOBACCOS, CIGARS, PIPES,
AND GENERAL TOBACCONISTS' WARE ever exhibited in Launceston. Nothing but the best brands kept in stock.[30]

By September,1881, he had opened a second branch, next to the Criterion Hotel in St. John Street.

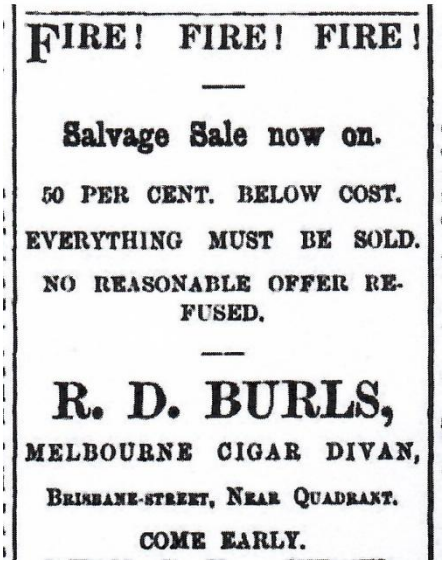
In 1882, he "purchased from Mr. John Solomon the business lately carried on by Mr M. Hyams, Brisbane Street, as tobacconist, and that he will be prepared to offer the cheapest and largest assortment of tobaccos, cigars, cigarettes, walking sticks, etc., as he is now going to Melbourne to purchase, and will open, after extensive alterations, within a fortnight."[31]

This new shop duly opened as the Melbourne Cigar Divan, where the Daily Telegraph noticed a boon to pipe smokers:

> *A Novelty — Yesterday our attention was attracted to the window of Mr R. D. Burls, tobacconist, Charles Street - by the exhibition of several novelties in pipes, amongst others we specially noted Colonel Ross' condensing smoke filter pipes, which are intended to screen the smoke from all deleterious matter. This is managed by the help of a non-conductor of heat (which is introduced into the stem of the pipe) with an absorbent, in the shape of a small piece of sponge, which only allows the condensed and harmless part of the smoke to be drawn into the mouth. To persons suffering from week lungs or imperfect digestion, these pipes will be of*

[29] Launceston Examiner, 18 Nov. 1880, p.4
[30] Launceston Examiner, 20 Oct., 1881, p. 3
[31] Launceston Examiner, 28 Oct., 1882, p.1

great value, preventing as it does all expectoration, and aiding the digestive organs in their daily work.[32]


FIRE! FIRE! FIRE!

Salvage Sale now on.

50 PER CENT. BELOW COST.

EVERYTHING MUST BE SOLD.

NO REASONABLE OFFER REFUSED.

R. D. BURLS,

MELBOURNE CIGAR DIVAN,

BRISBANE-STREET, NEAR QUADRANT.

COME EARLY.

In June, 1884, a fire caused extensive damage to the St. John Street store, and business was transferred to Charles Street, offering a half price "salvage sale" at Brisbane Street.

In September, 1884, Burls sold the Charles Street business for £200 to wholesale tobacconist William Hirsch of Melbourne, but continued as manager.[33] The reason for the sale was his looming insolvency, with the first meeting of creditors held on September 20 that year.

Tobacconist Robert Harris of Charles Street purchased the bankrupt stock from the Brisbane Street Cigar Divan and J. S. Dismore took over the City Cigar Divan in Brisbane Street.

Burls put the insolvency down to bad debts and extravagant living and left the colony in 1885.

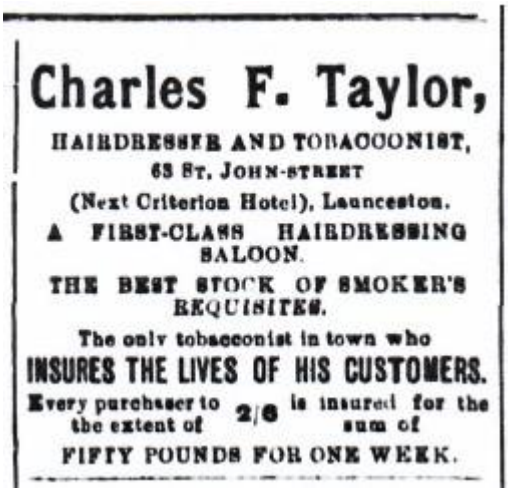
[32] Daily Telegraph, 24 May, 1884, p.2
[33] Daily Telegraph, 12 Sep., 1884, p.1

CHARLES F. TAYLOR 1884 - 1907

Charles F. Taylor purchased the tobacconist and hairdressing business of Mr. F. Warren in February, 1884, with premises at 63 St John St., next to the Criterion Hotel, and traded there for 27 years. Taylor was principally a bookmaker, advertising himself as a "Tasmanian cash fielder". He was the first to introduce a totalisator to his tobacconist shop in October, 1886. He advertised a totalisator service on all major races at his St John Street store until the totalisator was limited to racecourses in 1894. Despite the ruling, totalisators continued to be used in tobacconists, although they were occasionally raided by police. In 1901, Taylor took 3,261 totalisator bets on the Melbourne Cup on race day alone.[34] Like many tobacconists, he was prominent in racing circles and ran the totalisator at Mowbray and T.T.C. race meetings. Taylor supported many sporting clubs, donating trophies at different times to the North Esk Rowing Club, the Launceston Football Club, the Union Football Club, the Railway Cricket Club and for Pigeon Shooting. The Launceston Examiner praised his generosity:

> *It is not often that football is encouraged in the manner with which it is being done by Mr. C. F. Taylor, tobacconist, St. John Street, who has always been a staunch supporter of the game. Mr. Taylor has offered four trophies to be contested for during the present season by the Launceston and Union Football Clubs. For the best all round player in the Launceston first twenty, a "smoker's companion" is offered, which contains two silver-mounted briar pipes, valued at £2 10s. For the best man in the second twenty of the same club a handsome cigar case will be presented. The case is nicely worked in different woods, and should be well worth winning. For the best all round player in the first twenty of the Union Club, a meerschaum pipe, mounted with a snake, will be presented, and for the best man in the second twenty a similar pipe, mounted with an eagle's claw, will be given. The trophies are all valuable, and will doubtless produce some keen competition during the season. The articles mentioned are now on view at Mr. Taylor's shop, and are worthy of inspection.*[35]

His betting was not confined to racing – he took bets on many sports and even the municipal elections. In 1887, won the tender to conduct a totalisator on the grounds of the Launceston Regatta. In 1887, he was elected Hon. Secretary of the first Launceston Stock Exchange and advertised himself as a share broker.


Charles F. Taylor,
HAIRDRESSER AND TOBACCONIST,
63 St. John-street
(Next Criterion Hotel), Launceston.
A FIRST-CLASS HAIRDRESSING SALOON.
THE BEST STOCK OF SMOKER'S REQUISITES.
The only tobacconist in town who
INSURES THE LIVES OF HIS CUSTOMERS.
Every purchaser to the extent of 2/6 is insured for the sum of
FIFTY POUNDS FOR ONE WEEK.

In 1896, Charles Taylor was the first tobacconist in Launceston to install electricity, lighting the shop and hairdressing saloon, and driving the tobacco cutting machine.

In 1897, he came up with an unusual promotion, offering free life insurance to his customers. Anyone spending 2s. 6d. in the shop in one week was covered for £50 against their death.

In 1911, his building in St. John Street was sold and became the first Tasmanian branch of the Bank of New South Wales.

Taylor remained active in the racing industry for several more years as a racehorse owner.

[34] Launceston Examiner, 4 Nov., 1891, p.3
[35] Launceston Examiner, 16 April, 1886, p.2

WILLIAM (BILLY) DEDMAN

Many sporting personalities were attracted to the tobacconists' trade, but probably the best known was W. Dedman. Dedman played for Carlton in Melbourne and moved to Launceston in 1881 as Captain/Coach of City Football Club. He was also an accomplished cricketer and a prominent amateur thespian. In 1884, he took over a tobacconist business in Brisbane Street.

> *New Business. — On Saturday evening last Mr W. Dedman, the late and popular captain of the well-known City team of footballers, commenced business in those centrally situated premises adjoining the Brisbane Hotel, lately occupied by Mr C. A. H. Williamson, as tobacconist, etc. Mr. Dedman booted the leather for the last time in the recent great match City v. Launceston; but he ' kicked off' most successfully in his new sphere on Saturday evening, and did a brisk business, principally with his old football friends connected with every club in the North.*
>
> *The window was well arranged with photos of the Railway and City teams, a group of the Southern Tasmanian team who played against Essendon on their first visit, a large framed group of St. Joseph's Band, and the handsome silver cup presented to Mr L. Sams for the highest batting score during the recent visit of the Tasmanian cricketers to New Zealand. There is also connected with the shop a good-sized reading-room, where all the Tasmanian and Victorian papers are kept. It is also Mr Dedman's intention to make his establishment a sports depot, similar, though on a smaller scale, to Messrs. Boyle and Scott's, of Melbourne, where all articles, for indoor as well as outside pastimes will be kept in stock.*[36]

The Brisbane Street store was known as Dedman's Sporting Hall. Dedman was very active in promoting sport and was responsible for forming Junior Football and Cricket Associations. Many sports club meetings were held at his Sporting Hall. His popularity led to the sporting community to organise a benefit night in his honour.

> *W. Dedman, who, during the past five years, has occupied such a leading position in the sporting world of Launceston. Whilst willing always to extend his support and help to sport generally, it is in the football field especially that Mr. Dedman's prowess and assistance have been most prominent.*
>
> *The public of Launceston who flock in hundreds to witness the king of winter pastimes can fully appreciate the eminent services local football has derived from Mr. Dedman, and it is only necessary to compare the game as now played in - Launceston with that ruling prior to his advent with the Hotham team, nearly five years ago, to thoroughly understand how the game and local players have improved, chiefly through Mr. Dedman's agency. The City Club, with which he has been closely identified since its establishment, are indebted to him for the position they have now attained, and doubtless they will not prove ungrateful on his benefit night. The entertainment, which will consist of a comedy-drama, "The Colonel's Will," and a concert, takes place on Friday evening in the Academy, and will be under the management of Mr. J. C. O'Mara, who has secured the leading amateur dramatic talent of the town, and doubtless the performance will prove alike satisfactory to the performers, the public, and the beneficiare. We may mention that Mr. Dedman has taken part in no less than a hundred benefits since his sojourn in Launceston, and footballers will be interested to learn that he has*

[36] Daily Telegraph, 15 Sep., 1884, p.2

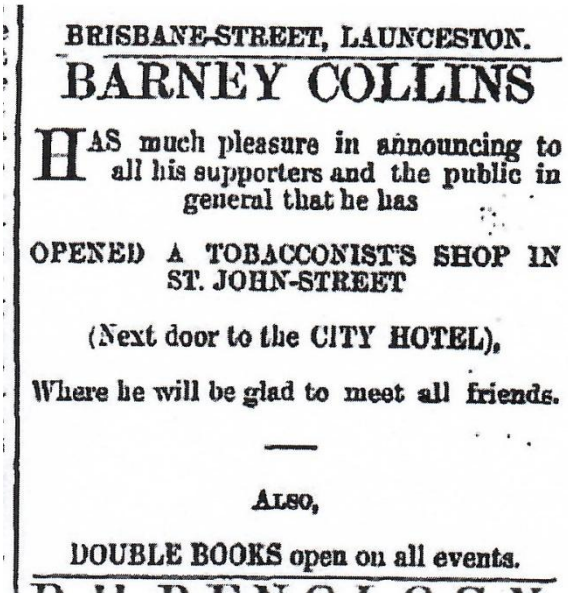
kicked 884 goals during his football career, a record that will bear comparison with that of any Australian footballer.[37]

Sadly, Dedman's business skills did not match his sporting prowess. He ran into financial difficulty and returned to Victoria in 1889.

[37] Launceston Examiner, 6 Mar., 1886, p.2

BARNEY COLLINS

Barney Collins was a prominent sportsman, captain of the City Football Club. In 1888 he was advertising as a bookmaker, operating from James Ah Catt's premises in Brisbane Street and had a totalisator at the Launceston Regatta. He soon opened his own tobacconist and betting shop.



BRISBANE-STREET, LAUNCESTON.

BARNEY COLLINS

HAS much pleasure in announcing to all his supporters and the public in general that he has

OPENED A TOBACCONIST'S SHOP IN ST. JOHN-STREET

(Next door to the CITY HOTEL),

Where he will be glad to meet all friends.

—

ALSO,

DOUBLE BOOKS open on all events.

By announcement in our advertising columns it will be seen that Mr Barney Collins, long and favourably known in almost every kind of sport, has commenced business on his own account in St. John Street, next to the City Hotel, as tobacconist. All the favourite brands of tobacco and cigars are to hand at moderate rates, also a large stock of the best pipe ware. In addition, Mr Collins will carry on his totalisator on the different events, as they take place throughout the colonies.[38]

By 1892 he was operating Catt and Collins tobacconist business at 151 Charles Street and ran that business for many years. He died in 1930 with the Examiner publishing his obituary:



Barney Collins' tobacconists shop in Oddfellow's Hall, St John Street

MR. B. V. ("BARNEY") COLLINS
In his 70th year, an old and popular identity of Launceston passed away at the Public Hospital yesterday. The late Mr. Collins came to Launceston from Victoria in 1885 to play with the City Football Club, captained by W. Dedman, and was a member of the team which defeated the southern premiers (Railway) for the first time. For many years he was in business in Charles Street with the firm of Catt and Collins, tobacconists. He was one of the best-known identities in racing circles and became associated with the totalisator when it was first introduced in Launceston, and, accompanied by Mr. Edward Smith, he used to operate a "tote" on the rowing races at the Tamar Regatta. He was one of the oldest "tote" hands in the State, having been an operator on the

[38] Daily Telegraph, 11 Aug., 1888, p.2

first machine at Mowbray. He and Mr. Smith conducted a "tote" in country centres in most of the northern parts of Tasmania. They used to carry the machine from place to place in a float, and it often took three days to go to and come from a meeting in the country. Mr. Collins's health of late had been seriously impaired, but he was employed on his job on the totalisator at the last meeting at Mowbray.
At a meeting of the Northern Tasmanian Totalisator Staff Association last night, members stood in silence for a few moments as a mark of respect to the memory of a popular colleague.[39]

[39] Examiner, 25 June, 1930, p.10

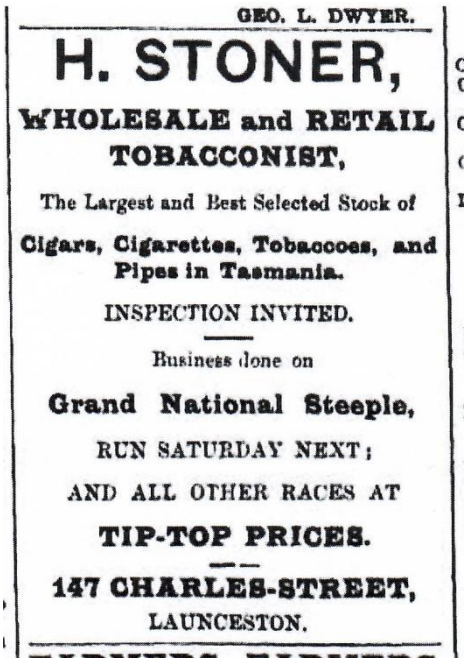
HARRY **STONER 1888 -1903**

Harry Stoner was born in London and arrived in Launceston in 1879. He was described as a "wholesale and retail tobacconist and commission agent." Stoner clearly was a bookmaker first and a tobacconist second. He started by using the premises of Henry Atkinson in Brisbane Street to take bets, advertising:

> ***H. S T 0 N E R***
> *Wishes to inform his clients that he has opened a fresh book on the V.R.C. DERBY and CUP, £20 to 2s, and £100 to 10s. TWO CUPS, £50 to 2s. Straight-out books on CAULFIELD CUP, V.R.C. DERBY, and MELBOURNE CUP. PLACE BOOK ON CUPS.*
> *H. STONER will be pleased to see clients at Mr. H. Atkinson's, Tobacconist, Brisbane Street, every evening from 7 till 8.*[40]

By 1894, Stoner had taken over Launder and Jones tobacconist business at 116 Brisbane Street, and had a billiard saloon in St John Street advertising:

> *H. STONER, TURF COMMISSION AGENT (Member Victorian Club), 116 BRISBANE STREET.*
> *CAULFIELD and MELBOUBNE CUPS Books Open on all Events.*
> *TOBACCONIST.*
> *Choices Brands Cigars, etc.*
> *FIRST-CLASS HAIR-DRESSING SALOON. Also,*
> *BILLIARD SALOON, adjoining Monks's City Hotel, St. John Street. Two First-class Tables.*[41]


GEO. L. DWYER.

H. STONER,

WHOLESALE and RETAIL TOBACCONIST,

The Largest and Best Selected Stock of Cigars, Cigarettes, Tobaccoes, and Pipes in Tasmania.

INSPECTION INVITED.

Business done on

Grand National Steeple,

RUN SATURDAY NEXT;

AND ALL OTHER RACES AT

TIP-TOP PRICES.

147 CHARLES-STREET,

LAUNCESTON.

The following year he moves in to larger premises at 147 Charles Street with the Examiner reporting:

NEW HAIRDRESSING AND BILLIARD SALOON.

Mr H. Stoner has closed his billiard saloon at the Bijou Hall, and in its place has opened more commodious premises at 147 Charles-street, where he will, in future, cater for his patrons in a more extensive manner. In the front there is a well-furnished tobacconist's shop, stocked with all the latest novelties in pipes and other articles dear to smokers and an assortment of the best tobaccos, and immediately to the rear is a thoroughly equipped hairdressing saloon, fitted up with all modern appliances. Upstairs he has a large and airy billiard saloon with two tables[42]*, and in the course of a month or so he intends to add a third. The whole place has been tastefully painted and furnished, and will be opened to-day.*[43]

[40] Launceston Examiner, 8 Oct., 1888, p.4
[41] Launceston Examiner, 12 Sept., 1894, p.1
[42] Stoner was at one time Tasmanian billiards champion.
[43] Launceston Examiner, 8 Jun., 1895, p.5



GENERAL GRANT was the most distinguished soldier, and the most inveterate smoker of his time. He, however, insisted on having the best tobacco, and so does

H. STONER,

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TOBACCONIST,

Agent for Ogden's Celebrated Midnight Flake Tobaccoes and Otto de Rose Cigarettes, Manillas, Campania General, Eiffel Towers, Favourites, etc. Finest selection of STICKS in the city.

THE HAIRDRESSING AND SHAVING SALOON

is the most sumptuous apartment in Tasmania, and the ARTISTS IN HAIR are peerless in their profession.

The four points of our compass are Cleanliness, Smartness, Efficiency, and Civility.

In 1897, before leaving on a trip to England, Stoner tried to sell the Charles Street business as a going concern, but without success. He returned in November 1898 and continued the business until selling it to E. A. Sullivan in 1903.

In all of that time, bookmaking or “turf commission agent” was clearly his main pursuit and he at times made books up to £5000 on the Caulfield and Melbourne Cups.

He was a prominent figure at race meetings throughout the colony until the Suppression of Gambling Act was enacted in 1916.

PATRICK MONAGHAN



P. Monaghan[44] first advertises as a bookmaker in 1894, employed by C. F. Taylor's, who had a tobacconists shop at 63 St. John St.[45] He was a frequent advertiser over the next three years opening books on all major races, from the same address.

In February, 1897, he announces that he is opening his own hairdressing and tobacconist business in Brisbane Street, opposite the Launceston Hotel.[46]

The Examiner welcomed his venture:



On His Own--The ambition of every energetic young man to have a business of his own is a most commendable one, and one that should be cherished. The most important move in this direction that has been made within the last few days will be gathered from an advertisement in another column, where it Is mentioned that Mr. P. Monaghan, who made so many friends during the lengthy period he was in the employ of Mr. C. F. Taylor, St. John Street, has opened a tobacconist shop and hairdressing saloon at 102 Brisbane Street, in those premises opposite the Launceston Hotel, till recently in the occupation of the late Mrs. Allen. This shop has been completely rebuilt internally, and all altered and furnished to suit the requirements of the trade. All acquainted with Mr. Monaghan will wish him success in his venture, and from his extreme popularity and well-known aptitude for business he should have no occasion to regret going "on his own."[47]

A couple of weeks later the Examiner visited the shop and their correspondent's description gives us a good word picture of a tobacconist's shop of the times.

> *Such a material alteration has been made to the premises as to render them almost unrecognisable. The interior has been subdivided into three compartments. The first entered is the shop proper, and here is everything that smokers-and their name is legion-can possibly require, all the most modern requisites having been supplied by Mr. Monaghan, who has an eye to the convenience of his customers. The fittings are of the most elaborate description, and were completed by Messrs. J. and T. Gunn, the show cases and glass counter being a special feature. Mr. Monaghan's long experience in the trade enables him to buy in the best houses.*

[44] Not to be confused with P. G. Monaghan who was official handicapper for most racing clubs for many years. Patrick Monaghan was also P. G. (Gervase). Monaghan, but the two do not seem to have been related.
[45] Daily Telegraph, 3 Nov., 1894, p.1
[46] Launceston Examiner, 6 Feb., 1897, p.1
[47] Launceston Examiner, 6 Feb., 1897, p. 10

The shaving saloon is beautifully fitted up the three mirrors being encased in blackwood frames of high-class workmanship, and were made at Messrs. W. Coogan and Co.'s establishment. The electric lamps, of which there are three in this department, are on what is known as the sliding scale, and can be raised or lowered at will to suit the convenience of patrons.

There is a beautifully fitted lavatory and urn to each chair, which enables the artist to go through his work most expeditiously. The artist who presides over the gentlemen's saloon is Mr. Hewlett, who is well known in the city. The Federal Toilet Club should command extensive patronage, as the system enables patrons, for a small monthly fee, to secure a private mug and brush. The host of spotless towels observable would lead the visitor to the conclusion that he shad unconsciously entered a drapery shop on a small scale.

The ladies, too, have been well looked after. A private waiting-room, comfortably furnished, has been set apart, where they may wait their turn in complete privacy. Children's wants have also been studied. Mr. Smith, specially engaged in Melbourne, presides over this department.

The perfumery window is a new idea in connection with tobacconists' establishments, but Mr. Monaghan has on hand a large stock of assorted perfumery of best quality. The lavatory, besides being replete with every convenience, is supplied with hot and cold water apparatus, by which the patron can be supplied with the required temperature in a few seconds.

In the reading-room will be found all the current literature of the day, in the perusal of which, and a quiet smoke at the same time, patrons of the "Federal Establishment" can await their turn with that degree of comfort which tends to good fellowship. Smokers and others should give "The Federal" a call, if only to observe the progressive character of the proprietor.[48]



The Daily Telegraph reported that Mr. Monaghan's business was so brisk he had been obliged to hire more staff and put in an extra chair in the hairdressing saloon. [49]

Although Monaghan's main function with Charles Taylor seems to have been as a bookmaker, in his own business he was a vigorous promoter of both his hairdressing salon and tobacconist's shop.

In August, 1897, Monaghan's Brisbane Street business is in liquidation and advertised for sale, but continued to run a tobacconists shop at 119 Brisbane Street, next to Ladbrook's and operate as a bookmaker in Brisbane St for many years, and in 1909 was advertising a "first class hairdressing saloon". He later became President of the Master Hairdressers' Association.

Monaghan's shop was sporadically raided by police for its gambling activity, and this aspect is covered more fully in the chapter, Dens of Iniquity.

Monaghan became a prominent Launceston citizen, known for his charitable work – he instituted the Christmas Stocking Fund through local newspapers, and was a leading supporter of many sporting clubs.

[48] Launceston Examiner, 20 Feb., 1897, p.10
[49] Daily Telegraph, 27 Feb., 1897, p.4

He ran his Brisbane Street tobacconist store for 29 years up until his death in 1926. His obituary read in part:

> *For 29 years the late Mr. Monaghan was the proprietor of a tobacconist, confectionery, and refreshment business in Brisbane-street. As a boy he learnt the tobacconist business when serving his time with the late Mr. Charles Taylor, whose shop was situated in St. John-street, on the site of the E.S. and A. Bank. When he commenced on his own account the now up-to-date establishment in Brisbane Street was little better than a dingy shop. The growth of the business is a testimony to the organising ability and acumen of one who was recognised generally to be a keen business man. He*
>
> *was always actively engaged, and had been advised more than once to ease up. This he did not do, and his death resulted from heart trouble and other causes.*
>
> *The late Mr. Monaghan was a prominent supporter of numerous sporting bodies, and it will never be known just how much money he gave away to sporting, charitable, and other organisations. He instituted the Christmas stocking fund, of which the whole of the proceeds was divided between the Empty Stocking funds of the two Launceston daily papers. Included among the many offices held by the late Mr. Monaghan was that of president of St. Joseph's Band.*[50]



Monaghans in the Mall

The Monaghan family continued to trade from the same premises at 121 Brisbane Street for 100 years, finally selling the business in 1997.

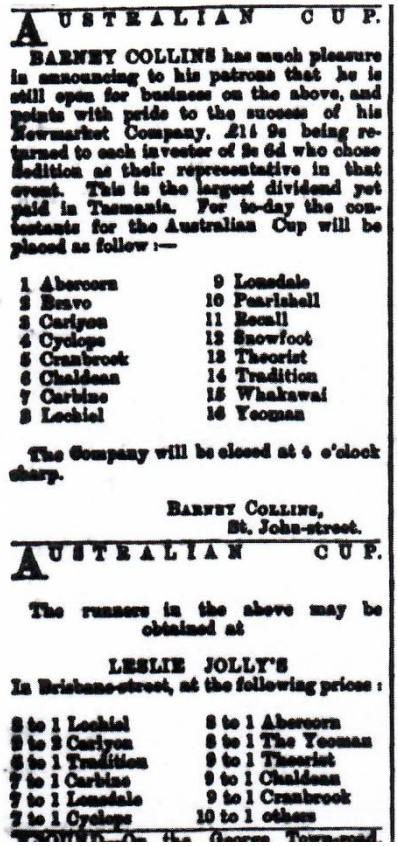
[50] Examiner, 9 Feb., 1926, p.5

DENS OF INIQUITY

The combination of tobacco, gambling and in many cases, billiards, made tobacconists popular meeting places, regarded by many as a bad influence on the youth of Launceston. As early as 1882 the Launceston Examiner was commenting about the advertising material displayed:

> *Some of our readers may have noticed in some of the tobacconist's shops about Launceston, photographs of actresses in scanty attire smoking some particular brand of cigarette…*[51],

and by 1890, the Mayor of Launceston, Samuel Sutton, was describing them as "*gambling dens, which were in existence to the detriment of our rising generation."*[52]



AUSTRALIAN CUP.

BARNEY COLLINS has much pleasure in announcing to his patrons that he is still open for business on the above, and points with pride to the success of his Newmarket Company. £14 9s being returned to each investor of 2s 6d who chose Medition as their representative in that event. This is the largest dividend yet paid in Tasmania. For to-day the contestants for the Australian Cup will be placed as follow :—

1 Abercorn	9 Lonsdale
2 Bravo	10 Pearlshell
3 Carlyon	11 Recall
4 Cyclops	12 Snowfoot
5 Cranbrook	13 Theorist
6 Chaldean	14 Tradition
7 Carbine	15 Whakawai
8 Lochiel	16 Yeoman

The Company will be closed at 4 o'clock sharp.

BARNEY COLLINS,
St. John-street.

AUSTRALIAN CUP.

The runners in the above may be obtained at

LESLIE JOLLY'S
In Brisbane-street, at the following prices :

8 to 1 Lochiel	8 to 1 Abercorn
8 to 1 Carlyon	8 to 1 The Yeoman
8 to 1 Tradition	9 to 1 Theorist
7 to 1 Carbine	9 to 1 Chaldean
7 to 1 Lonsdale	9 to 1 Cranbrook
7 to 1 Cyclops	10 to 1 others

"Junius" in the Examiner commented:

"Crowded all day," I was informed in walking down St. John Street on Cup Day was the state of the tobacconists' shops, …. The youths were crowding to have their half-crowns deposited on the totalisator, and the owners reaped their harvest on this day. The Municipal Council have expressed their disapproval of the gambling carried on at these dens by drawing up a by-law to prevent it, but as they have not yet put it into force…"[53]

Tobacconists, Barney Collins and Leslie Jolly, were openly advertising as bookmakers for the Australian Cup of 1889.[54]

In 1891, a deputation visited the Attorney General to protest against gambling, which they alleged was being carried on in tobacconists' shops.

In the course of his remarks, Mr Burgess drew a vivid word picture of the terrible cases of embezzlement that had occurred recently in the other colonies, which, he said, were owing in a large extent to the facilities placed in the way of young people in the shape of gambling. He then described a scene he had witnessed in front of a tobacconists' shop in Launceston, which ran a totalisator, round which were gathered over 100 young men, waiting for the result of a horse race. He hoped the Attorney-General would bring in a bill to deal with the evil, and if so, he would be acting in the best interest of the young and the public generally.[55]

In 1893, the Launceston Examiner was again critical of the Government's inaction on the matter:

> *In this colony an attempt was made to strike at one prolific source of injury to the morals of our youth by the suppression of totalisators in tobacconists' shops, but owing to some flaw in the act it is rendered nugatory, and they are as flourishing as ever. Yet no one who watches these places when any principal race is being run can fail to be struck by the number of youths and boys who are to be found investing their half-crown or five shillings on the machine. How*

[51] Launceston Examiner, 9 Nov., 1882, p.2
[52] Launceston Examiner, 12 Jun., 1890, p.3
[53] Launceston Examiner, 15 Nov., 1890, p.7
[54] Launceston Examiner, 5 Mar., 1889, p.4
[55] Launceston Examiner, 23 Apr., 1891, p.3

the money is acquired is best known to the investors, but if the truth could be ascertained many a downward career could be traced to the pernicious influence of these establishments.[56]

According to the Examiner "the Legislature passed an enactment prohibiting the use of totalisators in tobacconists' shops, but owing to the neglect on the part of the Attorney- General to include the usual penalty section, the measure is inoperative. The consequence is that several places of business in the city have developed into gambling saloons, where every week sweeps are negotiated on the leading colonial races."[57]
Eventually the bill was corrected and totalisators limited to those operated by racing clubs. The police began to take measures against tobacconists' betting shops, but without much effect:

"Totalisator mania" has been the complaint lately, and the police have had it strongly. The proprietors of the machines in the city were heavily pressed yesterday, the rush during the afternoon having been unprecedented. The summonses that had been issued against the proprietors of the totalisators had naturally put them on the qui vive, and a "little bird" whispered to several that the police intended to come down on them when business was at its height. The police, however, did not prove smart enough, for when application was made to enter the premises of those who it was supposed were running the machines they found the doors were closed, and the police were disappointed. Of course they had the power of breaking the doors open, but they did not avail themselves of that privilege, and when subsequently a visit was made to the premises the illegal machines were not found.[58]

Gambling in tobacconists seems to have gone on largely unimpeded well into the 1900s, with poker machines added to the attractions, as pointed out by a correspondent to the Daily Telegraph:

Sir, — A lot has been said and written about Tattersall, but if the people of Launceston would do something to put down the poker machines in the Launceston tobacconists' shops, they would do some good for the rising generation. "Tattersall' is legalised by Act of Parliament, but poker machines are not. The majority of our police force must be non-smokers, or when they go for their tobacco in some of the shops, they would see youths of tender years putting in their 'tray bits' (3d) into those machines. They are prohibited in Hobart, and also on the N.W. Coast. What has become of the Anti-Gambling League that was started in Launceston a couple of years ago? - Yours, MODERATION.[59]

In 1905, police made their first raid on a tobacconist, descending on Patrick Monaghan's Brisbane Street establishment on November 9, two days after the Melbourne Cup, but finding nothing incriminating.[60] As a correspondent drily pointed out, if police were serious about the problem they may well have raided two days before the Cup, rather than two days after.

The newspapers clearly played these raids and their attendant trials for comedy value, as in this verbatim example of testimony during a trial of Patrick Monaghan in1906;

Henry Atherton said he knew the defendant and his premises. He remembered the Epsom Handicap run in September last, and recollected a transaction he had with defendant in reference to this handicap.

[56] Launceston Examiner, 14 Jun., 1893, p.3
[57] Launceston Examiner, 13 Dec., 1883, p.2
[58] Launceston Examiner, 8 Nov., 1893, p.5
[59] Daily Telegraph, 4 July, 1905, p.6
[60] Daily Telegraph, 10 Nov., 1905, p.2

Mr Law: Well, what did you give that money for?

Witness: For two horses.

Mr Law: Were you buying the horses for the 5s?

Witness: I wish I was. (Laughter.)

Mr Law: Well, did you give the defendant money with any hope of gaining some in return.

Witness: Well, I didn't have much hope in that direction, but I thought I'd have a 'go.' (Laughter.)

Mr Hall: Well, put it this way. If your horse won, did you expect to get a dividend?

Witness: Well, yes, if you put it that way, I suppose I did. (Laughter.)[61]

Police raids on tobacconists continued sporadically over the next 10 years but with few successful prosecutions. The newspapers of the time treated the raids and subsequent trials as light hearted entertainment and the sympathies of the public were largely with the tobacconists being pursued. A few examples of the reporting are worth quoting for their entertainment value alone. These two were on Jack Nelson's tobacconist shop in the Empire Theatre at 99 St. John Street:

A POLICE RAID ALLEGED TOTALISATOR BETTING

DESCENT ON J. NELSON'S SHOP. FIFTEEN MEN ARRESTED.

On Saturday afternoon unusual activity was manifested round the streets. 'Punters' Point,' on account of the big races in Melbourne, had more than its usual quota of habitues, all of whom were busy discussing the chances of the candidates for the Newmarket Handicap and other races. Knots of men were gathered in front of the shops where it is stated that racing men can 'get a bet on' without any trouble, and were discussing things quietly. At 2.30, however, they were electrified by the news that the police were raiding Nelson's tobacconist's shop in St. John Street, as they suspected that totalisator betting was being carried on there.

The raid was very cleverly planned. Detective-Inspector Donovan, who directed operations, knew that he had a most difficult case to handle, for if he or any of his satellites were to be seen in the neighbourhood, the game would be up, and they would have to retire with their hands empty. The police are very reticent about the whole affair, and very little information, save the bare fact that they arrested fifteen men and secured a quantity of papers and a number of poker machines, can be gleaned from them. Particulars obtained outside, however, show that at 2.30 a cab with a pair of horses attached was smartly driven down St. John Street from the direction of Elizabeth Street. It pulled up in front of the City Hotel, but long before it stopped Inspector Donovan, Detective Masters, and Sergeant Chamley had tumbled out of it and sprinted towards Nelson's. Those standing close by, seeing three men jump out of a cab and run towards the shop, made a move also to hear the latest bit of information. 'By jove, that Donovan,' said a man who had started to run towards the shop as soon as he saw the cab pull up. The mention of the name was quite sufficient, and then all outside the shop knew what was happening, and thanked their stars that they were outside!

[61] Daily Telegraph, 29 Nov., 1906, p.3

Inspector Donovan, who had charge of the operation, it seems, had planned very carefully, and had actually gone to the lengths of placing a man within the enemy's lines. Considering the trouble to which the proprietor of the shop is alleged to go in order to guard against police interference, this move on the part of the generalissimo was smart. It seems that quite recently a young fellow who had had dealings at the shop had expressed the desire to don the uniform and join the 'force.' He was accordingly sworn in, after passing the necessary examinations, and made a constable, but in order to prove his worth he was made an instrument for the raid. He was directed to go to Nelson's shop for the purpose of making a wager shortly before 2.30, and at that time to be in the room where the betting was said to be taking place and be ready to confiscate any papers or instruments in the room. The selection, it is stated, by persons who were caught, was a wise one, for the novice in detective work carried out his instructions to the letter, and it was through his agency that the alleged incriminating documents were secured. The back door of the shop was locked so that attack from the rear was looked upon as being guarded against, but really this precaution on the part of the proprietor only completed the trap of the police. They had placed one man at the back to secure any person or persons gaining exit that way, and as it was next door to impossible for anyone to get past the three stalwart figures who rushed in by the front door those inside were trapped. The raiders were safeguarded by a special warrant, and, once inside, they had things their own way. Fifteen men were found on the premises, whilst a sum of £47 6s 4d, five poker machines, and a quantity of papers were secured.

As stated above, the news of the raid electrified everyone in the street, and persons rushed from all directions to watch the proceedings. St. John Street was literally jammed with a struggling mass of men, who gave vent to their feelings by booing the guardians of the law as they appeared. Cabs were chartered to convey the prisoners to the gaol, and the vehicles had the greatest difficulty in approaching the shop. The excuses given by the men arrested were amusing. All of them disclaimed any knowledge as to horse racing at all. One man, it appears, was going to the Post Office, and had simply called in to buy a postage stamp, and was caught in the shop by the police just as he was moistening it to put on the letter. All the others were buying tobacco or cigarettes, but it was very unfortunate for them that the craving for the weed came on them at such an inauspicious moment. The incident caused the greatest excitement throughout the town, and was the principal item of conversation throughout the afternoon and night.[62]

Nelson was convicted and fined 20 shillings.

Nelson was again in court when a disgruntled client testified against him in 1912:

Mr. Hall were you in Nelson's shop much in November?

Yes, almost every day.

And what goes on there?

His customers either play on the poker machine in the little back room, or else cards. They are continually betting.

Mr. Clarke is there betting in Nelson's shop on many races?

[62] Daily Telegraph, 2 Mar., 1898, p.8

Yes, I've bet with him on almost every race in Tasmania for the last two years.

Mr. Hall do you know the names of others who bet with him? Yes, I could tell you 50 others if required.

If Nelson says he made no bets with you that day, what then?

He would be committing perjury.

Nelson has a tobacconist's shop?

Yes, he keeps it for a blind.

How do you know that?

I've been mates with him for a couple of years, and ought to know what goes on.[63]

Nelson was fined £40 for his second offence.

Magistrates were often not sympathetic to the police prosecutions. When police charged tobacconist, St. Clair Hazeldene, on the basis of a single bet laid by an undercover policeman, the magistrate commented:

" It is a constant practice amongst friends to have a wager between themselves on horseracing on different events throughout the year. That does not make it a business of betting on their part"[64]

Clearly police were choosing to turn a blind eye to the tobacconists' gambling activities, but protests continued:

Sir, Sometime ago there were several cases of street betting before the court, and two or three of the offenders were fined. This seemed to keep the evil in check for a while, but it is again becoming a curse. There are about 10 or 12 so-called "bookies" hanging about the corner of Brisbane and St. John Streets every race day, and if one watches there, he can see them booking wagers and laying "doubles" with book and pencil in hand quite openly. Surely this sort of thing ought not to be tolerated. If names are required, I will only be too pleased to furnish the Superintendent with about a dozen of them, and at least three tobacconist shops where betting is carried on. Yours, etc.,

G. Thomas York-street, Launceston.[65]

It wasn't until 1916, when the passing of the Suppression of Gambling Act made it very much easier for police to obtain convictions, that any real headway was made to curb betting on tobacconists' premises.

[63] Examiner, 31 Jan., 1912, p. 7
[64] Examiner 15 Dec., 1912, p.7
[65] Examiner, 30 Jan., 1913, p.2

THE TOTALISATOR

The mechanical totalisator first appears in Australia at a race meeting at Sydney's Randwick course in May, 1879, with Atticus in the Leader predicting: *"the occupation of the bookmaker's bids fair to vanish …. before the latest novelty of mechanical gambling".*

He goes on to describe the process:

> *Every person who wants to bet puts his money on a horse, the name of which is indicated by a number on a board attached to the machine. When the race is over, the entire money invested minus a commission for the proprietor of the gambling machine, is divided amongst those who have backed the winning horse.*[66]

The totalisator was first used in Tasmania at a race meeting at Mowbray in February, 1880:

> *Among the many contrivances on the course for persuading visitors to speculate was a novelty here, which only arrived by the steamer on Wednesday, namely, that about equally praised and abused invention, the totalisator. This invention offers the fairest method of speculating on a race yet brought forward, and "'The Vagabond," who has taken it under his protection from its introduction on the other side, avers it will yet do away with the whole fraternity of bookmakers. Although the principle was hardly understood by many of those who saw it yesterday, it was very fairly patronised, and we should imagine it will do well at the Elwick meet.*[67]

The Cornwall Chronicle put it into verse:

> *Said the mild Mr Bean, there's a novel machine*
>
> *Which I think that each wise legislator*
>
> *Would do well to allow at our races just now*
>
> *And its name is the Totalisator.*
>
> *Oh, the Totalisator,*
>
> *The ingenious Totalisator*
>
> *If a bet you would make, pray deposit your stake*
>
> *With the fair-dealing Totalisator.*[68]

By 1886, tobacconists were investing in the machines for their shops with the first installed by Charles Taylor in St John Street offering a Derby and Cup double in October, 1886.

James Ah Catt acquired the totalisator in the following year.

Its popularity can be gauged from the following ad:

[66] Launceston Examiner, May 1, 1879, p.3
[67] Launceston Examiner, 13 Feb., 1880, p.2
[68] Cornwall Chronicle, 24 Oct., 1879, p.3

TOTALISATOR open on the Newmarket Handicap, 5s, to be run on Saturday. Australian Cup Totalisator open on Monday. The public are requested to call early to avoid the crush, and to tender the exact money, as we haven't the time to give change. Charles Taylor, Tobacconist.[69]

The totalisator was fiercely opposed by bookmakers, who threatened to boycott race meetings where the totalisator was employed, but it was formally adopted by the Tasmanian Turf Club in 1886:

A well-attended meeting of the committee of the Tasmanian Turf Club was held at the Brisbane Hotel yesterday, Mr. Charles Youl in the chair. It was unanimously decided that the totalisator should be used inside and outside the saddling paddock at all meetings of the Club, and that the right of using it should be let by tender.[70]

In 1888, Barney Collins installs a totalisator in his St John Street tobacconist shop, next to the City Hotel, and he is soon joined by tobacconist, H. Atkinson, in Brisbane Street.

There was public disquiet expressed about tobacconists' shops turning into "gambling dens", but this did not diminish their growing popularity. In 1892, the Government passed an Act banning the use of totalisators in tobacconists' shops, but neglected to include the penalty clause, so the betting went on unabated.

While tobacconists no longer advertised their totalisators, the activity was continuing virtually uninterrupted until police raids (with a conspicuous lack of success) began in 1905. These were described more fully in the previous chapter.

The Suppression of Betting and Gambling Act, which became operative on January 1, 1916, finally began to curb the gaming activities of tobacconists.

[69] Daily Telegraph, 25 Feb., 1887, p.1
[70] Launceston Examiner, 14 Dec., 1886, p.2

JAMES AH CATT AND TOBACCO GROWING IN TASMANIA

In 1862, Mr T. D. Webb wrote a long letter to the Cornwall Chronicle advocating the culture of tobacco on the north coast of Tasmania.[71] He pointed out that although "the soil is so rank after clearing that it will grow nothing but potatoes", it was rich in potash and would be ideal for tobacco. Two ounces of seed would produce an acre of plants, so capital was not required, only the labour of tending to the crop. With tobacco fetching 1s. 6d. per lb. in Melbourne, he calculated that a diligent farmer could earn £80 per acre on the crop. He goes on to give detailed information on the planting and care of the plant and points out that Launceston tobacconist, Mr. R. T. Edwards, has tobacco seed for sale.

Mr. Edwards was quick to seize the opportunity, advertising the following week:

> *TOBACCO SEED! TOBACCO SEED!*
> *Real Virginia and Connecticut:*
> *warranted genuine — on sale at*
> *R.T. Edwards Tobacconist,*
> *New York House, Brisbane Street.*[72]

Clearly a number of residents were attracted by the idea of growing their own tobacco and in 1863, Mr. Edwards exhibited the first Tasmanian grown and made cigars:

> *COLONIAL CIGARS There are now on view at the shops of Mr. Edwards, tobacconist, and Mr. Kirkbride, fruiterer, Brisbane Street, some samples of cigars manufactured from tobacco (Virginian leaf) grown by Mr. Attley and Mr. Wade, of this town. Though new, the cigars are said to be excellent, and now it has been proved that the soil and climate of Northern Tasmania are admirably adapted for the growth of tobacco suitable for manufacturing purposes, there seems to be no reason why a new and profitable industry should not be established.*[73]

The Cornwall Chronicle was enthusiastic about the commercial potential of tobacco culture:

> *Amateur Tobacco Manufacturers*
>
> *Numbers of gentlemen in this district appear to be determined, not only to grow, but to manufacture their own tobacco. Almost every garden of any pretensions has its miniature tobacco plantation. Calling on a friend the other day, who was enjoying ' the weed,' he exultingly told us that he was literally "smoking his own tobacco"; he had cultivated the plants (the Virginian variety), had cured them, and had employed a carpenter to make a small screw press, by the aid of which the leaves were pressed into hard cakes prior to being cut into orthodox ' plugs.' This gentleman is only one of a host or amateur tobacconists. This home culture, manufacture, and consumption cannot fail to have a beneficial effect on the progress of tobacco manufacture in this colony; it will familiarise the community with the peculiarities of the plant, and will show them how, with a little industry and enterprise, a great trade may speedily grow up in our midst.*[74]

[71] Cornwall Chronicle, 16 Aug., 1862, p.5
[72] Cornwall Chronicle, 27 Aug., 1862, p.1
[73] Launceston Examiner, 16 Apr., 1863, p.5
[74] Cornwall Chronicle, 2 May, 1863, p.3



James Ah Catt had a tobacco manufactory in Melbourne and could see the potential for tobacco production in Tasmania. Working with the local Chinese community he began planting around 1879. There is a brief reference in the Examiner to "the Chinese tobacco growing industry" in June, 1880[75], and in the Tasmanian, a "Celestial purchasing a small farm for tobacco growing at Scottsdale" in 1881[76].

With tobacco now being grown in the colony, James Ah Catt decided to establish a tobacco manufactory. Ah Catt & Co. opened in St. John Street in April, 1883, under manager James Whitelaw, who had nine years' experience in the tobacco industry in Melbourne. James Ah Catt was a Cantonese who had emigrated to Victoria during the gold rush, married in Beechworth, then moved to Tasmania for the tin mining. He had also been involved in the tobacco industry in Victoria for 14 years. Twelve hands were employed at his factory, with more to come from Melbourne, and the firm had its own plantations in Invermay and Scottsdale, and had leased 30 acres for planting at Calstock, near Deloraine. The factory was set up to produce "tobacco in all its forms, from the twist and square cut to the cigar".[77]

A correspondent to the Daily Telegraph describes a visit to the factory in July, 1883:

> *LOCAL MANUFACTURED TOBACCO AND CIGARS.*
> *To the Editor.*
> *Sir, feeling a little curious as to the manufacture of tobacco and cigars, I visited the establishment of Messrs. Ah Catt and Co., of St. John Street, where to my surprise, I found no less than 17 hands actively employed in the industry. I was shown over the works by one of the firm, a very pleasant, intelligent, and agreeable Chinaman, talking very good English, who seemed anxious for me to learn as much as possible of the business in the short time I was there. On entering the main building, we find a number of hands — some taking the stalks from the leaves of the plant, some pressing the tobacco, and others twisting it into figs[78]. Further on, we found two Chinamen making cigars. I was presented with one just from the hands of the workman, and I must confess that I never smoked a finer cigar. I also had the pleasure of smoking a pipe of tobacco — their own manufacture — which smokes quite equal to the imported article; and why not, as I learn that Messrs Ah Catt and Co. have been manufacturing tobacco and cigars in Melbourne for the past 14 years. If experience counts for anything, they undoubtedly have it. I would advise that the Tasmanian Government keep out any excise duty, and in less than two years, instead of 17 hands employed, there will be upwards of 200. Success to the promoters is the wish of*
> *Yours, etc.,*
> *David H. Johnstone.[79]*

According to the Launceston Examiner[80], the company produced one ton in 1881/2 and five tons in 1882/3. Because the leaf needs to be cured, production from the local product had only started in

[75] Launceston Examiner, 14 Jun., 1880, .2
[76] The Tasmanian, 3 Dec., 1881, p.1151
[77] Launceston Examiner, 23 June, 1883, p.2
[78] a type of pressed, flaked, or plug tobacco designed for smoking.
[79] Daily Telegraph, 14 July, 1883, p.3

April, 1883. American Virginia leaf tobacco was also imported for processing. Production costs were about double those in Victoria, with the Tasmanian product selling for more than 3s. per lb. The imported American leaf cost 2s. plus 3s. excise, so 5s. per lb. landed, and was only used for cigar production. The company at that stage (August, 1883) had 16 acres under tobacco at Invermay, with further plantings planned at Deloraine and Lefroy. They were supplying seed free to farmers, with a guaranteed price of 10d. per lb. for all the leaf they can supply.

But trouble was brewing, as the Government in Hobart was seemingly unsympathetic to the project. The Launceston Examiner argued the company's case:

> *Mr. Jas. Whitelaw (who was for nine years manager of a large tobacco factory in Victoria) went to Hobart and interviewed the Premier with the view of ascertaining what encouragement or discouragement Government intended to offer to this new industry. He explained the heavy outlay the firm had gone to, the position they now stood in, and that it depended upon the Government whether more land was taken up for tobacco growing and the factory extended, or the contracts already made with growers cancelled, and operations at the factory contracted. He stated that to impose a heavy excise duty would be to put a stop on operations altogether, and asked on behalf of the firm that they should be allowed to work, say, three years, without being taxed, and they would then have sufficiently established their business to meet an excise duty without injury. The Premier gave Mr. Whitelaw no definite answer, and referred him to the Treasurer; but feeling he had been rebuffed he, perhaps unwisely, did not seek the Treasurer, and returned to Launceston.*
>
> *The matter was alluded to in the Assembly on Wednesday evening last, and neither Mr. Giblin nor Mr. Dodds, had even a good word to give the firm for their industry and enterprise, let alone any encouragement. Mr. Dodds stated the Government were informed the trade was carried on by Chinamen, who were not using tobacco leaf grown in the colony, but were importing the leaf from Victoria and manufacturing it here. He urged that the importer of manufactured tobacco must be protected and asked for a vote of £250 to enable the Government to find out what was going on, so that, if necessary, they could take steps in the matter.*
>
> *The Hon. W. R, Giblin, who would have given a monopoly for ten years, and a bonus as well, to a rabbit preserving firm, said he had in his office samples of tobacco from Launceston that no expert could distinguish from tobacco imported. It was being sold at 3s per lb., the amount that was paid in duty on the imported article - it was " quite obvious that no trader could import the article and compete with the manufacturers of the Tasmanian article." He did not, however, accuse the local manufacturers of using imported leaf, but said " a representative from the Chinese manufacturers at Scottsdale had waited on the Government a few months ago and stated they hoped to extend their operations very much and supply a larger demand than they were doing at present. No objection was raised by them to the proposal that an excise of 1s per lb be imposed on their manufactures, but they expressed a hope that it would not be levied for a year or two until their manufactory had been fairly established.*
>
> *The Treasurer, who is perfectly well aware the duty of 3s per lb. on imported tobacco leaf prevents it being used in the manufacture of common tobacco that is sold at 3s and 3s 6d per lb., would not even give the firm credit for using the locally grown article, though the agricultural statistics record its production, and the Premier misrepresents, though no doubt unintentionally, from ignorance of the subject, the statements made to him by the Company's manager of their Launceston factory, and both Ministers ignore the fact that the local company can only manufacture the ordinary classes of fig and cake tobacco, and do not enter into competition with the importer of the aromatic and finer classes of American tobacco; and as*

[80] Launceston Examiner, 18 Aug., 1883, p.2

for cigars, while their leaf costs 6s per lb. to import, and even the imported cigar boxes pay 10 per cent duty, they certainly need no excise on top of the Customs duty. It speaks volumes for the interest taken by our representatives in local affairs that not a single member from Launceston was able to correct the misleading statements of Ministers or give the real facts of the case. In Victoria, tobacco growing and manufacture is an important industry, but it was allowed twenty years to get a start before the first excise duty (1s. per lb. on tobacco, cigars, and snuff) was imposed……

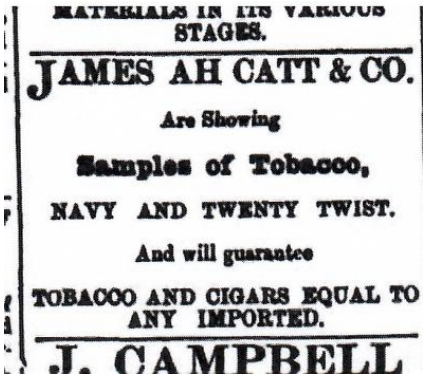
The Government allocated £250 to send two officers north to investigate the industry, despite the Examiner assuring them that *"to obtain the fullest information need not cost them a five-pound note".*

The appointed officers duly arrived in Launceston in September, 1883, and inspected the tobacco manufactory and the plantations, but there was a general expectation that an excise was coming. Certainly, there were no incentives offered to encourage the establishment of a new industry.

Problems were already arising for the fledgling industry as revealed when the matter was discussed again in the Legislative Assembly in August, 1884:

The Premier read a letter from Messrs. Jas. Ah Catt and Co., dated, 21st July, which shows their endeavour to introduce this industry has not proved remunerative so far. As we have already stated, the firm has tobacco plantations at Deloraine, Invermay, Lefroy, Scottsdale, and Pipers River, with a factory at Launceston, but so far, the experiment has not proved so satisfactory as was anticipated. The climate, they find, is not altogether suitable for the growth of the tobacco leaf, owing to the early frosts, and then the Tasmanian grown leaf requires several years' seasoning before use. Out of nine tons of tobacco manufactured in 1883, only three tons were sold, and out of 40 hands previously employed at the factory, only three now remain, and these are engaged in making cigars, for which American leaf has to be used. Ah Catt and Co. state they have invested £5000 in the venture and complain that they are heavily taxed in everything they use - rum, gum arabic, liquorice, molasses, cigar-boxes, timber for tobacco boxes, imported leaf, etc. They ask the Government to assist them by the remission of some of these duties, or otherwise they will be compelled to abandon the enterprise. If the import duty on the unmanufactured leaf were reduced from 3s. to 1s. per lb., they would have no objection to the imposition of a moderate excise duty. Mr. Braddon thought the duty on the raw leaf should be made considerably lower than that on manufactured tobacco, which would be an important concession.[81]

The factory in St. John Street continued to operate, using a mixture of American and local tobacco leaf, and the firm exhibited at the Tasmanian Exhibition of 1885. Ah Catt then changed the company name to the Virginia Tobacco Company.


MATERIALS IN ITS VARIOUS STAGES.

JAMES AH CATT & CO.

Are Showing

Samples of Tobacco,

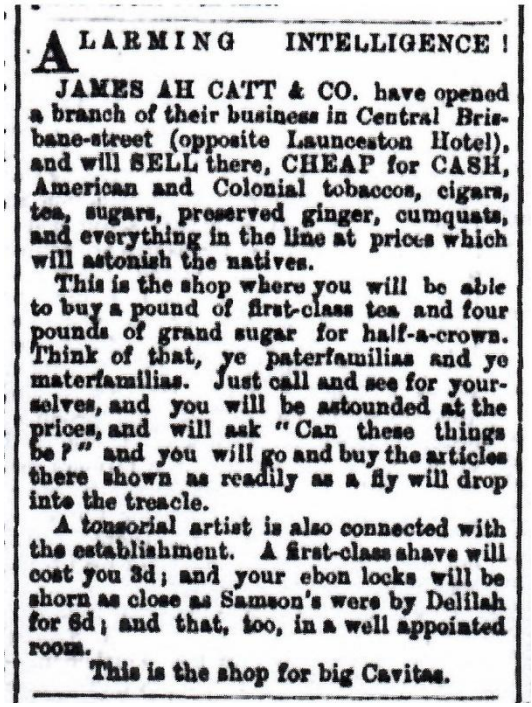
NAVY AND TWENTY TWIST.

And will guarantee

TOBACCO AND CIGARS EQUAL TO ANY IMPORTED.

J. CAMPBELL

[81] Launceston Examiner, 8 Aug, 1884, p.2



ALARMING INTELLIGENCE!

JAMES AH CATT & CO. have opened a branch of their business in Central Brisbane-street (opposite Launceston Hotel), and will SELL there, CHEAP for CASH, American and Colonial tobaccos, cigars, tea, sugars, preserved ginger, cumquats, and everything in the line at prices which will astonish the natives.

This is the shop where you will be able to buy a pound of first-class tea and four pounds of grand sugar for half-a-crown. Think of that, ye paterfamilias and ye materfamilias. Just call and see for yourselves, and you will be astounded at the prices, and will ask "Can these things be?" and you will go and buy the articles there shown as readily as a fly will drop into the treacle.

A tonsorial artist is also connected with the establishment. A first-class shave will cost you 3d; and your ebon locks will be shorn as close as Samson's were by Delilah for 6d; and that, too, in a well appointed room.

This is the shop for big Cavitas.

In 1886, James Ah Catt opened a store in Brisbane Street to sell their product and the ad is worth reproducing for its colourful language: [82]

The shop also included a totalisator and Ah Catt was taking bets on both football and racing.

By this time the prospect of a tobacco growing industry in Tasmania had been largely abandoned, and the Launceston Examiner lamented its passing:

Messrs. Ah Catt and Company, between 1880 and 1885 spent nearly £8000 in endeavourlng to establish tobacco culture and manufacture in Tasmania, and their reward has been grossly misrepresentation in Parliament by Mr. Dodds, a refusal to allow the slightest concession, and a threat of an excise duty immediately it could be found their enterprise would prove remunerative, which, thanks to the want of encouragement accorded by Messrs. Dodds and company, it has not been.[83]

It is interesting to contrast the Government's treatment of these Chinese entrepreneurs with that of the flamboyant Italian aspiring vigneron Diego Bernacchi, who at the same time was granted a 10-year lease of Maria Island at a peppercorn rental, with a £2000 bonus to be paid after the production of £5000 worth of wine. James Ah Catt felt that his main mistake was trying to establish the industry at the wrong end of the island, but racial prejudice certainly played its part.
There was already a growing concern about Chinese immigration and in 1887 the Tasmanian Government had imposed a poll tax of £10 on Chinese arrivals.[84]
In May, 1888 James Ah Catt was denied passage to Melbourne on a steamer "because their agent was informed by the Victorian Government that if their steamers conveyed any Chinese thither the boats would be either delayed at the outer anchorage or ordered into quarantine."
Ah Catt was a highly regarded citizen of Launceston who had business interests in Victoria and needed to travel between states.

The Launceston Examiner was rightly indignant:

> *If this is not interfering with the rights of a naturalised British subject, which Mr. Ah Catt is, and has been for years past, we should like to know what is? Mr, Ah Catt fell back upon his prerogative as a British subject and, as such, specially solicited from the Victorian Government an assurance that he might travel in Victoria without further molestation than that of having to produce his naturalization papers, and this assurance the Government declined to give. The Ministry, which should set an example of obedience, grossly and shamefully violated the law. We have no wish to see an incursion of Chinese, but we do sincerely desire to see just laws justly administered. What irony it is to apply the term of " brother" to a Chinaman when the feeling with which he is regarded is that of bitter hatred.*[85]

[82] Daily Telegraph, 26 June, 1886, p.3
[83] Launceston Examiner, 19 June, 1886, p.2
[84] This was a comparatively modest charge compared to the £100 imposed in other states.
[85] Launceston Examiner, 19 May, 1888, p.4

Ah Catt had had enough and announced:

> *NO T I C E.*
> *In consequence of the dastardly action of the Australian colonies generally, I intend giving it best, and now wish to inform everybody I want to sell off. Groceries, teas, fireworks, everything, in fact, will be sold regardless of cost. Great bargains will therefore be obtainable by those who call first*.
> *J as. Ah Catt, St. John Street, Launceston*.[86]

He sold the Brisbane Street business to Mr. A. J. Locke.


LAUNCESTON
TONSORIAL SALOON,
71 BRISBANE-STREET
(NEXT SUTTON'S COFFEE PALACE.)

This well-known Saloon has been placed under the management of Mr W. J. ROWELL, so long and favorably known in connection with the business in Launceston.
Best Brands Tobacco and Cigars kept.

JAS. AH CATT Proprietor.

Although he did visit China, James Ah Catt returned and was active in business for many more years, running the tobacconist's shop at 151 Charles Street with Barney Collins, and in 1894, buying the tobacconist's business at 71 Brisbane Street, next to Sutton's Coffee Palace, where he installed W. J. Rowell as manager.

The factory and wholesale tobacconist's business in St. John Street continued to operate for some years and in 1888, Ah Catt won at least a partial victory by having the duty on unmanufactured tobacco reduced by 1s. per lb..[87]

He retired from active business in 1897, and died 10 years later, with the Examiner publishing this obituary:

> *James Ah Catt died in 1907 at his residence, Welman Street, at the age of 68 years. The deceased had not been well for some weeks, and a fortnight ago contracted influenza, from which he never recovered. Mr Ah Catt was a native of Canton, China, and came to Australia nearly 50 years ago. He spent about 20 years in Victoria, and then settled in Launceston, where he established the business of a wholesale merchant. He also had a tobacconist business in Charles Street, which was managed by Mr. B. Collins. About 10 years ago he disposed of the wholesale house in St. John Street, and since then had not taken an active part in trade matters.*
> *Mr. Ah Catt, who was esteemed for his benevolent qualities, was a liberal supporter of mining both here and in Victoria, being one of the largest speculators in Launceston for a number of years. He was largely interested in the Lefroy field in its early days, and on the opening up of the tin fields also invested much capital. The deceased was also a good patron of sport, and was the principal supporter of the original City Football Club. He leaves a widow and a family of two, a son and a daughter. The deceased was universally esteemed, and it was always his desire to see his countrymen respect the laws of the state, which they invariably do.*[88]

[86] Daily Telegraph, 21 May, 1888, p.1
[87] Launceston Examiner, 7 Jul., 1888, p.5
[88] Examiner, 16 Nov., 1907, p 4

LIST OF TOBACCONISTS IN LAUNCESTON 1890-1920

1890

George Roland Lawrence, Brisbane Street

James Ah Catt St John Street

Barney Collins St John Street

Leslie Jolly Brisbane Street

Arthur and Horace Ritchie (Ritchie & Co.) Brisbane Street

William James Rowell Quadrant

Charles F Taylor St John Street

William Robert Woodgate Brisbane Street

1895

Leslie Jolly 98 Brisbane Street

James Ah Catt 71 Brisbane Street

Catt & Collins 151 Charles Street

Charles Taylor 63 St John Street

John W. Bradshaw 99 St John Street

James Ah Catt 133 St John Street

Samuel Adams 66 Tamar Street

Victor Shaw Quadrant

1900

Samuel Adams 66 Tamar Street & 77 Brisbane Street

Catt & Collins 151 Charles Street

Arthur Graves 66 George Street

A.H. Ritchie 102 Brisbane Street

Henry Stoner 147 Charles Street

Charles F Taylor 63 St. John Street

George Wilton 72 George Street

1905

A H Ritchie 102 Brisbane Street

Catt & Collins 151 Charles Street

Charles F Taylor 63 St. John Street

Samuel Adams 66 Tamar Street & 77 Brisbane Street

M A Collinson 17 George Street

P G Monaghan 121 Brisbane Street

1910

St Claire Hazeldene 62 Brisbane Street

S E Holland 151 Charles Street

A Jones 69 Brisbane Street

William Jones 147 Charles Street

P G Monaghan 121 Brisbane Street

J P Montgomery 102 Brisbane Street

J Nelson 99 St John Street

Clem Ritchie 62 Charles Street

Charles F Taylor 63 St John Street

A Tevelein 69 Paterson Street

1915

T J Green 151 Charles Street

St Claire Hazeldene 62 Brisbane Street

W Jones 69 Brisbane Street

William Jones 147 Charles Street

J Lonergan 99 St John Street

P G Monaghan 121 Brisbane Street

J Nelson 69 Brisbane Street

Clem Ritchie 62 Charles Street

Sun Hang Ack & Co. 137 St. John Street

E J Teague 102 Brisbane Street

1920

C J Falling 99 St John Street

P A Foley 72 Brisbane Street

T J Green 155 Charles Street

James E Jinks 69 Brisbane Street

W Jones 69 Brisbane Street

William Jones 147 Charles Street

Sun Hang Ack & Co. 137 St. John Street

E J Teague 102 Brisbane Street

A G Wingrove 62 Brisbane Street

P G Monaghan 121 Brisbane Street