

CHAPTER 3

AUSTRALIA

From 1831 onwards there was a government grant given to families and single men emigrating to Sydney Australia. The requirement was mainly for agricultural workers, carpenters, smiths, wheelwrights, bricklayers and masons.

The voyage would take about four months to complete and when the emigrants arrived in the colony they were allowed up to ten days free access to the ship in order to allow them time to find suitable employment ashore.

Ships often left from Deptford calling at Plymouth and then to Cork in Ireland collecting emigrants on the way.

The depot at Deptford was a specially fitted out building arranged with bedding in distinct apartments separating the married from the single and where the emigrants were expected to assemble two days before the date of embarkation. On arrival they were counted off into messes of eight or ten each and supplied with food and accessories for the day.¹

The first we hear of Henry Castle in Australia is in August 1832 when a convict Joseph Smith ex "Lady Harewood" was assigned to H. A. Castle as a warehouse man².

An interesting aside is that the name Henry Augustus Castle is used by the Australian parties involved and although this is not his baptised name we have been told that Henry added the middle name Augustus, in Australia only, in order to distinguish himself from an ex-convict in the colony of the same name. The latter was sentenced to life at Berkshire Assizes on 14th July 1817 for sheep stealing. He was granted release in December 1828 and eventually became a landowner at Boorowa NSW.³ The name Augustus was subsequently discontinued by our Henry after his return to London. Picture right from Castles Archives.



HENRY CASTLE

We do not know exactly when Henry emigrated to Sydney or how he travelled, but we do know that he was active in business there in 1832 at a site in George Street. The business continued to prosper and it is clear that it developed as a Ship and Anchor Smith supplier with a large amount of goods being imported as evidenced by the cargoes from various vessels.

Henry was active in building up contacts in the expanding colony and in April 1833 we note that the Colonial Secretary's Office announced the acceptance of supplies to the Colonial Service during the year 1833 and included in the list was Henry A. Castle – By command of His Excellency the Governor, Alexander McLeay. Henry was mainly supplying Picks and Axes and other tools. The prices varied between 1s. 8d and 3s.8d.

**COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE
SYDNEY, 9th APRIL, 1833.**

*The following Tenders having been accepted for Supplies to the Colonial Service during the year 1833, are published for the information of those concernedHenry A. Castle
Felling Axes, 1s. 8d.; Pick Axes, 3s. 8d; Road Picks; 3s.5d.; Grubbing Picks, 2s. 5d.;
Grubbing Hoes, 3s. 1d.; and Quarry Picks, 3s. 4d. each.; Quarry Wedges, 2 3/4d.;
Iron Mauls, 4 3/4d.; and Smiths' Rubber Files, 1s. 5d. per lb.....*

By Command of His Excellency the Governor⁴

Many of the imported goods were often advertised, as below, in the local press and we have quoted from many of these entries as they demonstrate the level and scale of activity involved.

"Just Landed per Enchantress and on sale at the workshop of the undersigned a quantity of superior small chains suitable for topsail sheets and ties and rudder chains, also about 50 tons of assorted iron."

H A Castle
George Street
13th May 1833 ⁵

The *Enchantress* was also the ship that brought Richard Dawson, Henry's subsequent partner in business, Sarah House and their young daughter to Sydney arriving on 24th April 1833. They benefited from the assisted passage scheme.

Henry was married in Sydney on 27th July 1833 at St James Church, Sydney to Miss Harriet Nash of Taunton Somersetshire.

"MARRIED,
At St. James's Church, on Saturday
last, by the Rev. RICHARD HILL,
Mr. H. A. CASTLE, of George Street, Sydney,
to Miss HARRIET NASH, of Taunton, Somersetshire." ⁶

It is not known if Henry knew Harriet before she arrived in Australia and this to some extent depends on the date of Henry's arrival in Sydney, which, as mentioned above, is not known exactly at the present time. Harriet was born 21.12.1814 and therefore 18 at the date of her marriage to Henry. Even if Henry had not left England until 1831 Harriet would have been only fifteen or sixteen when she first met Henry. Certainly, it could be that they met for the first time in Sydney in 1833 as Harriet, her mother and stepfather Abel Salter Trood arrived there in May on the *Westmoreland*, which leaves only two months for Henry and Harriet to have met, become acquainted, betrothed and married. Whilst it is possible it seems unlikely in the circumstances.

Another theory is that Harriet or the family were acquainted with Richard Dawson or his family and this may have led to some prior contact between Henry and Harriet prior to 1831. Richard came from Westbury-on-Severn near Bristol not too far from Taunton where Harriet Nash was brought up and lived with her mother Amy and father-in-law up to their departure for Sydney in 1833. A further connection could be via the Harden family who were landowners at Edington, near Bridgewater in Somerset. James Harden married Henry's sister Isabel in 1834, who was four years older than Harriet, but it is possible that the families had known each other for several years beforehand. The date ranges appear to fit. Furthermore, the Dawsons may also have known the Hardens. Unfortunately, it seems we will never know for sure, as the permutations are considerable, but the circumstantial evidence is compelling.

One more remote point of interest relates to the fact that the Dawson family and the Beatson family - see Chapter 4 - both came originally from the same area in Fifeshire, Scotland. The Dawsons from Dysart and the Beatsons from near Kinghorn. Another connection may exist here with the Castles and the Dawsons and how they came to know each other through their both knowing the Beatsons.

On the business front we further learn in September 1833 that Mr H. A. Castle of George Street has imported, per *Orwell*, a treble purchase winch or crane capable of raising 5 tons in weight which he advertised for sale, or if not sold it was his intention to hire it out to merchants, ship owners and others. The advertised sale price was 40 guineas.⁷

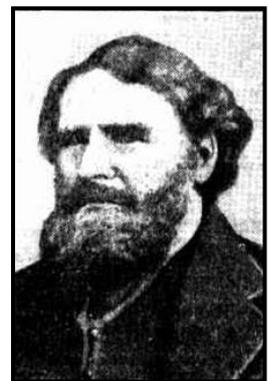
At that time the Newspaper Company visited the workshop and stores of the H. A. Castle business and admitted that they were not aware that there was a blacksmith's manufactory of such extent in the neighbourhood. The workshop contained seven fires with extensive

fittings and there were between 25 and 30 men employed there. The stores were well stocked with whaling gear and other iron materials in general use for shipping.

Subsequent cargoes indicate the depth and extent of Henry's stock of goods for sale. Chain cables and anchors were prevalent in addition to various items of plant and machinery such as cross-cut saws, iron cranes, iron triangles for weighing and even English fire bricks. He was also manufacturing to order and advertised *"every description of iron work completed in a workmanlike manner"*.⁸

Henry's business clearly involved significant contacts with various shipping companies and it is noted that in October 1833 he was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Australian Steam Conveyance Company. At that time the company had under construction a "Parramatta Steam Boat". Eighteen sawyers, shipwrights and labourers were working on the vessel at Clarence Town on the Williams River. A two cylinder steam engine was under construction in Sydney and the Government had an iron gang of convicts clearing the Parramatta River in order to improve navigation in readiness for the vessel's completion.⁹

The next notable development in Henry's Australian ventures occurred on 1st January 1834 when he announced that he had taken Mr Richard Dawson as a partner in his business of Ship and Anchor Smith and which would be carried on under the name of CASTLE & DAWSON, George Street, Sydney.¹⁰ Picture right from Harry Irwin Archives.



RICHARD DAWSON

The Castle & Dawson partnership planned for a rapid expansion in business and in early February 1834 they announced that they had purchased an interest in the Australian Carron Foundry located at Darling Harbour, where every description of IRON and BRASS work may be done from the best materials and workmanship.¹¹

On sale at the foundry were Verandah and Balcony Railings; Kitchen Ranges with ovens and boilers complete; Small ranges with ovens; Elliptic, Register, Romford and Sham grates.

At the end of February 1834 Castle & Dawson negotiated with the Australian Agricultural Company at Port Stephens for the supply of coke from Newcastle to their Sydney foundry. The quotation, sent by letter, was for two tons of coke per week at a price of two guineas per ton. The letter was signed by Sir Edward Perry, who was Commissioner to the Australian Agricultural Company.

Further sources of information continue to demonstrate the extent of the new business when in March 1834 a newspaper report stated that

"We understand that the buoy alluded to in a former number, as intended to be laid down at Norfolk Island is being made by Messrs. Castle & Dawson. It is on the same construction as those in use by the East India Company, His Excellency having decided in favour of the plan, when submitted to him by those gentlemen".¹²

In the same month staff were being recruited by the business. The advertisement was as follows:

"WANTED IMMEDIATELY"

*Three or four good moulders for an Iron Foundry; also two or three Pattern Makers, to whom liberal wages will be given and constant employ.
Apply to Castle & Dawson, George Street; or The Australian Carron Foundry, Darling Harbour.*¹³

Henry and Richard were working very hard indeed together to expand the business and it was reported in the press that:

"Messrs Castle & Dawson are making preparations for carrying on their business on a very extensive scale, on the vacant premises, on the waterside premises opposite the gaol".¹⁴

Convicts were also assigned to the business and were often treated harshly if misbehaving.

“Richard Smith an assigned convict to Messrs. Castle & Dawson was brought before the bench for drunkenness and insolence. He was sentenced to receive 50 lashes and to be returned to his employers.”¹⁵

Henry was clearly mixing well with local business persons and an announcement on 28.3.1835 that Mr H.A. Castle, along with John Lord and two other Directors of the Australian Steam Conveyance Company, was acting as Steward for a Dinner. Dinner tickets, including wine, for 12s 6d, followed a General Meeting of Shareholders at the Royal Hotel, Sydney on 31st March 1835 to celebrate the *Australia* going into service as a Parramatta River steam packet. Shareholders living at Parramatta and vicinity were conveyed to and from the meeting and dinner, free of charge, on the *Australia*.¹⁶

By April 1834 there is firm evidence of the growth and diversification of the business through the purchase of property within Sydney, a sure indication of mounting prosperity within the Castle & Dawson partnership.

Extract from a news item: ¹⁷

*“Six building allotments in Cumberland Street, and one in New George Street, Bunker's Hill, the property of Richard Lang, Esq., were sold by auction, by Mr. Blackman, yesterday and realized the following prices :
Lot 1. 18 feet 4 inches frontage in Cumberland Street, 49 feet depth to Castle and Dawson, at £4.12s.6d per foot. £84.5.10
Lot 2. at £3.17s. 6d. £71.0.10.”*

On Sunday the 14th September 1834 the birth of a daughter, Harriet Augusta, to Henry and Harriet at their residence in Prince-street, was announced in the Sydney Morning Herald on 18th of September 1834. This was their first child.

A further child Henry George was born on 5th July 1836, although no public announcement has been traced.

Throughout 1834 evidence of the breadth of the Castle & Dawson Foundry business became increasingly evident from further newspaper articles.

“We did not believe that the foundry of Messrs. Castle and Dawson was of half the extent we now find it to be. In time, as the colony advances, and encouragement for the manufacture of machinery is afforded, the foundation which these gentlemen have laid to the prosecution of their business will, we have no doubt, be both lucrative and permanent. By the shipment from Newcastle of coals for Sydney, the consumption of wood has been greatly abridged; and families find that the use of coal is by far the most economical of the two. At the foundry in question, a number of grates, calculated for coal fires, have been manufactured with a neatness and success rarely excelled in England.”¹⁸

“We have the satisfaction of bearing ample testimony to the skill of Messrs. CASTLE & DAWSON, who by effecting some excellent improvements in our printing press, have enabled us to extend our paper to its present size. These gentlemen have, in fact, offered to give a warranty that they will make a press equal to one by CLYMBER or COPE, for less than it can be imported at. This news will, we hope, be received favourably in the sister colony, where we presume a foundry has not yet been commenced, capable of performing work of the description in question. Our experience of Messrs. CASTLE & DAWSON enable us, though out of the usual way, to recommend them to our brother editors as worthy of their best patronage.”¹⁹

The partnership continued to diversify into different areas of business activity demonstrated as follows:

“The meeting for encouraging the introduction of gas was very respectably attended on Tuesday night, and many resolutions were moved; but the principal one was, that a requisition should be sent round, and presented to Sir John Jamison, soliciting that he will become the President, and inviting other influential

gentlemen to bestow their attention upon this very important undertaking. Messrs. Castle & Dawson are confident that they are fully able to complete the proper machinery, so that the chief obstacle is thus happily removed.”²⁰

A continuing flow of advertisements, similar in nature to those already outlined above, was maintained throughout 1835 demonstrating the wide range of products supplied by the partnership mainly to the shipping trade, captains, boat builders, house builders and others. Matters of specific interest were:

*“The extensive machinery lately imported by Sir John Jamison, at an immense expense, was yesterday taken from the foundry of Messrs. Castle and Dawson, where it had for some time been undergoing a few necessary alterations, and forwarded to Regentville. Upon the success of Sir John's spirited experiments, much future advantage from irrigation will no doubt be shewn to arise, and his example will probably become very generally followed.”*²¹

Note: Sir John Jamison (1776-1844), surgeon and landholder, was the owner of “Regentville” (the site of the present Sydney suburbs of Regentville and Jamisontown, near Penrith). Information about him is available from numerous web sites, particularly that of the Australian Dictionary of Biography. From those sources it is clear that he used an imported steam engine to pump water from the Nepean River to irrigate what may have been Australia's first vineyard, where, by 1835, 30,000 – 40,000 vines, of 200 varieties, were under irrigation.

Later in 1835 we find the following news of development

*“We have pleasure in informing our friends who are about erecting steam engines in the colony, that we were last week gratified to see two pieces of machinery cast, one of which weighed between 1500 & 1600 lbs weight, at the foundry of Messrs. Castle & Dawson, for a twenty horse engine, for Mr John Teale, of Windsor, for the purpose of grinding corn. We also perceived a six horse engine, which those gentlemen were manufacturing for themselves, for the purpose of melting the metal and turning their large lathes, which with their other machinery presents a very business like appearance, and we trust that they will continue to receive orders as fast as they can supply them. It was very obvious that the colony required such an establishment. Their outlay must necessarily be very large.”*²²

Behind the scenes there is some evidence of the challenges and skills needed in managing such a large and expanding enterprise.

*“Thomas Jackson, assigned to Messrs. Castle & Dawson was charged by his employer with having abstracted from their stores 12 shirts, value 25s and two small loaves of sugar, value 5s; found guilty, for which he received the sentence of 12 months to an iron gang.”*²³

A more serious matter is illustrated in a letter dated July 6th 1835 sent to the Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser by a C. M. Crighton.

Sir,

Having observed in your widely circulated paper of the 30th ult, a paragraph in praise of some castings and machinery manufactured by Messrs. Castle & Dawson, at the Australian Foundry, George Street, I think it but justice to state, that I am a partner in the establishment, and that I am the individual who superintends the foundry department; the whole castings being manufactured under my immediate inspection, and also that I am the person to whom any praise is due (which has been lavished for some time on Messrs. Castle & Dawson), for the present state of perfection of the Australian foundry; further that I am induced to declare myself of the firm from the various advertisements in which my name seems to have been wilfully omitted for these few months past.

I am Sir
Your most obedient
C. M. CRIGHTON²⁴

It is clear from the above that Crighton was the probable previous owner of the foundry in which Castle & Dawson purchased an interest in February 1834. It seems that the dissatisfaction of Crighton may have continued for a further ten months or so because we find in May 1836 the following advertisement;

"NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Mr C. M. Crighton has this day parted with his share and Interest in the Australian Carron Foundry to Messrs. Castle & Dawson, who will settle all accounts connected therewith.

*WITNESS - F. A HAYNE
Sydney May 13th 1836"*²⁵

It is interesting that the name of the business is shown as the Australian Carron Foundry; however, we cannot trace any connection with the Scottish firm of Carron so the change of name is not understood at the present time, although it is first mentioned as early as March 1834. Perhaps there were two businesses owned.

As we have noted previously theft from the company stock was possibly a frequent occurrence. Notices regarding this type of problem did appear in the press from time to time.

*"The noted stretching blacksmith and nailer, who appealed to the public for liberal support in his trade in December 1834 agreeing to turn out the large quantity of 36,000 nails in twenty-four hours, has unfortunately been deprived of public patronage, the court having transported him for stolen property being found in his possession belonging to Messrs. Castle and Dawson."*²⁶

CASTLE & DAWSON.

*Who also beg to inform the Public, that they having now completed their Colonial Manufactured STEAM ENGINE, which will enable them to cast Machinery, of any weight at 48 hours' notice and also bore out Cylinders, and fit up any description of Machinery. September 14, 1835."*²⁷

An announcement by the Colonial Secretary's Office dated 8th February 1836 shows that Castle and Dawson were successful in tendering for "supplies for the Colonial Service" for the year 1836, thus continuing the supply function carried out in previous years. On this occasion they supplied pitch, tar, black, white and green paint together with linseed oil and turpentine.

By 1836 the partnership was providing a full range of developed products on a regular and frequent basis ex-stock in addition to one-off machinery manufacture and foundry work, tailor-made to order, as evidenced by an advertisement in the Sydney Herald dated 22nd February 1836. This advertisement offered for sale 200 tons of iron, flat iron, bolt iron, boiler plate, sheet iron, chain cables and anchors for vessels five to four hundred tons, paint, oil, turps, pitch, tar, resin, rope of all sizes, patent galleys for vessels, cast iron verandah or balconies, bells of all sizes, black oil, a quantity of machinery, fittings for a windmill, smut machines and dressing machines. The advertisement also claimed that Castle and Dawson "are also prepared to complete any description of Brass and Iron castings of any weight".

The business must have been profitable as references do occur to separate property purchases made in locations other than Lower George Street or Darling Harbour. Henry may also have owned his private residence in Prince-street.

An advertisement on 28th November 1835 in the SG & NSW confirms this assumption "Sale of fourteen allotments of land in that truly flourishing village of Burwood near Powell's Creek" and the paper further noted that four of the allotments had frontages "passing the land of Messrs. Castle and Dawson". In addition, a note in the New South Wales General Post Office directory for 1836 mentioned Castle, H. A. & Dawson, Richard,

Blacksmiths, Lower George Street. Mr Castle, Cumberland Street; and Mr Dawson, corner of Gloucester Street Sydney.

After May 1836 nothing significant appears in the Sydney press about the activities of the partnership and then suddenly without any prior indication publicly the following announcement appeared in the Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser on 27th December 1836 p.3

NOTICE

*THE PARTNERSHIP heretofore existing between Castle and Dawson
is this day dissolved by mutual consent. All debts due to the Firm to be paid
to Richard Dawson, who will settle all claims against them*

(signed) W.(sic) A. Castle

Richard Dawson

Witnesses John Lord

Robert Duke

Sydney, December 24, 1836

We can only surmise about what had happened, however, during 1835 the Castle family were struck by personal tragedy when their dear daughter Harriet Augusta died on 14th December that year aged 1yr, 3mths. Details on the headstone were as follows:

*"SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF HARRIET AUGUSTA, ONLY DAUGHTER OF HENRY
AUGUSTUS AND HARRIET CASTLE, WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE 14 DECEMBER 1835 AGED
1 YEAR 3 MONTHS"*

Harriet Augusta was buried in the Sandhills Cemetery, also known as the Old Devonshire Street Ground, which was at the southern end of the city at that time. In preparation for the construction of Sydney's Central Railway Station on that site, in 1901, graves and gravestones were moved to Bunnerong Cemetery, later called Botany Cemetery and now called the Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park. Botany and Bunnerong are eastern suburbs of Sydney.

Henry's decision to retire from the partnership appears to have been precipitate and quite unexpected. There were obviously family concerns, not least the impact of the death of Harriet Augusta. In addition, Harriet was also pregnant, carrying Henry George, at that time, and this may have affected her concerns for the future of the family. Health issues may also have played a part in a climate that was often inhospitable.

Harriet's mother Amy could also have been influential in the decision to leave Sydney. However, Amy and her husband Abel Salter Trood had set up a school in Sydney covering a wide curriculum of subjects for their pupils. As far as we know Amy and Abel remained in Sydney after Henry and family returned home. However, a contradiction has arisen in that Amy appears to have been residing with the family back home, in 1841, in Rotherhithe, according to the UK Census that year. However, her name is shown as Amy Nash her former married name. Nonetheless, Amy was back in Sydney by 1842 and assisting her husband Abel once again with the school administration. They both finally returned to England in 1843. They appear to have set up a school in London, but eventually moved to Newton Abbot in Devon.²⁸

Certain anecdotal misgivings have also been expressed regarding the personal relationship between Henry and Richard and as we have noted above there were stresses arising from the Chrighton episode, which point to possible areas of discontent, and as we shall learn shortly there were other commercial problems which came to a head sometime after Henry's return home. Nonetheless it is surprising that Henry should have decided to return back to England when he had achieved such an apparent level of business success in the New South Wales colony.

One further important matter relates to a ship's captain by the name of William Ascough, who was the captain of many convict ships plying between England and New South Wales. We have already described this connection in Chapter 2 and that William was Henry Castle's best man at his wedding in July 1833. Clearly the two men were therefore very close friends and it is more than possible that William played a substantial part in originally persuading Henry to emigrate to Sydney. William was a landowner there and obviously influential in the community. As he was some thirty years older than Henry he would have acted as a mentor as well as a friend. Tragically William Ascough drowned in a ferry boat accident in Broken Bay, NSW, on 11th June 1836 whilst travelling to visit his estate on the Hawkesbury River.²⁹ If this background story is accurate then the effect on Henry would have been devastating and added to all the other matters arising at the time would have been more than enough to persuade him to return to Rotherhithe. We will never know for sure but for certain the decision to leave Sydney for good was made sometime in 1836.

We are greatly indebted to Harry Irwin, a descendant of Richard Dawson, who supplied most of the information regarding the developments in Sydney and whose researches of the local newspapers and other records revealed such a rich source of knowledge about Castle & Dawson as well as about the family and relatives.

CHAPTER 3 - REFERENCES

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