

All One
A History and Analysis of

THE DERWENT DISTILLERY

and

ARTILLERY BREWERY,

(1820)

Gore Street,
SOUTH HOBART
Tasmania

Peter MacFie,

©

April 1994

Contents

Contents.....	2
Introduction	3
History of the Site.....	4
The Derwent Distillery.....	4
Loane's Derwent Distillery	4
Hackett's Derwent Distillery.....	4
Location of the Derwent Distillery.....	5
Layout and Operation.....	5
End of the Derwent Distillery.....	6
The Artillery Brewery.....	7
Thomas Pascoe, Brewer.....	7
William Gracie, Brewer.....	7
Enter the Cascade Brewery.....	8
The Derwent Woollen Mills & Steam Joinery	9
Recent Site History	9
Hickman's Joinery	9
Bibliography.....	10
Illustrations	10
Appendix.....	11
Plans	11
Photographs	11

Introduction

After European Settlement in 1804, the Hobart Town Rivulet on which the Artillery Brewery is situated was the colony's first industrial area. Using water power to drive machinery and a supply of pure water from the slopes of Mt Wellington, a number of industries, including distilleries and later breweries, were established along the Rivulet.

Statement of Cultural Significance

The former Derwent Distillery and Artillery Brewery represents a unique record of Tasmanian industrial history. The section which survives is located on the part of the original distillery site.

The surviving structures date from 1873 when William Gracie demolished the former brewery and built his new Artillery Brewery of stone and brick. (see below) The extant buildings are, the i) home of the brewer, and ii), the brewery store house.

The carefully-laid brickwork of the house contrasts with the rubble and brick material used in the brewery buildings. Construction material -stone and brick- used in the Brewery Store is identical to those visible in photos in the now demolished 5 storey brewery.

Based on initial research, the structure and site are of cultural significance for the following reasons.

Derwent Distillery

1. The site of the first distillery in Tasmania.

Artillery Brewery

2. The extant structures relate to the mid 19thC brewing industry.
 - a) a building representative of the 19thC brewing industry
 - b) a relatively undisturbed example of industrial architecture.
 - c) the brewer's house relates to the traditional proximity of owner to premises.
 - d) the importance of the Hobart Rivulet to 19thC industrial Hobart.

Johnstone's Woollen Mills.

3. The site of the former Johnstone Woollen Mill
 - a) represents one of the first of two such mills to be erected in Tasmania in 1874.

History of the Site

The Derwent Distillery.

Loane's Derwent Distillery

Until 1820, the new Settlement of Hobart Town had no legal alcohol industry. Imported spirits and illegal distilleries abounded, and in an effort to overcome 'grog fever', in January 1820 the government relaxed its attitude and allowed contraction of two breweries. One of these was R. W. Loane's Brewery¹ at Gore Street.

On January 22, 1820, the Hobart Town Gazette reported,

The foundations of an extensive brewery were laid in the presence of a number of persons by R. W. Loane Esq.²

On completion, Loane's structure does not appear to have been used as a brewery, as in January 1822 it was advertised as intended for a brewery, but was let as a store or warehouse. (Button, p.53) By August 1823, Loane had the brewery under way once more, with a water race on the opposite side of the rivulet, which transferred water over the creek by a raised platform. In December of 1823 the building was operating as the 'Derwent Distillery.'³

T. Y. Lowes⁴, also a distiller on the Rivulet, recalled Loane's being the first. 'I recollect that your premises in Macquarie Street were nearly finished when I arrived here in April 1823 and under the direction of Mr Forrest (?) spirits were manufactured there a very short time afterwards.'⁵

John Walker- another Hobart brewer - recalled in 1836 that he had supplied the Derwent Distillery in December 1823 with cracking barley and malt for the building and was in operation long previous to that time.⁶

Hackett's Derwent Distillery.

While two other distilleries were operating on the Rivulet in the 1820's- Lowes, of Cascade Grove, and Midwood's Sorell Distillery at Cascades- by 1830 only Loane's was still productive.

At that time the Distillery was operated by Hackett, 'whose gin is generally esteemed.'⁷

Born in 1800, James Hackett and his wife Jane arrived from Cork in 1828. In 1829 he took over the Derwent Distillery, erecting a new still in 1830. Here they raised a family of seven children.⁸

¹ Roland Walpole Lone – see ADB

² (Loane, p. 14)

³ (op cit p. 54)

⁴ Thomas Yardley Lowes – see ADB

⁵ (CSO1/101/2432. p.60)

⁶ (ibid p. 62)

⁷ (Loane, p. 14)

⁸ (Correspondence File, TSA)

Location of the Derwent Distillery.

Under the regulations covering distilleries, owners had to apply annually for the renewal of their leases. From 1829, Hackett applied to the Colonial Secretary, describing and drawing sketches of his distillery and its facilities. (see below)

The Distillery was built 'within a few months after Colonel Sorell's memorandum.'

Gore Street. Located there on the request of Hackett, by 1835 a 'good bridge had been erected to give access to his door.'⁹

Layout and Operation.

In 1835, encroachment on Loane's land resulted in a claim by him for compensation. Surrounding correspondence shows that in 1823 surveyor Evans had indicated the distillery was to be located '100 yards from Rayner's Mill and 20 yards from the creek...' the aim being to give Loane 'a good square.'¹⁰ (The original reserve of Loane's was 10 1/2 acres, including land over the creek. This was later reduced to a little over 7 acres and finally a little over 1 acre on the existing site. The rest was allocated by the government to other purchasers.)

A second small plan (2 inches square) shows the location of the buildings in December 1835. The distillery was located in the centre of the block with buildings on the eastern boundary (near the current building site) and another on the western boundary adjacent to Rayner's Mill. Other structures are shown on a small lane running into the block.¹¹

A map dated August 1837 indicated the Distillery was located in the south eastern corner of the block ie, the corner where the surviving building stands.

A map of 1842 indicates that the surviving buildings are located on part of the site of the original Derwent Distillery.¹²

Hackett's Plans

Hackett's drawing reveals the layout of the distillery c1835. A wall apparently surrounded the distillery, which was a rectangular (brick?) building housing the equipment. A 'Dwelling House' and 'Spirit Store' conjoined separately were located on the Rayner's Mill boundary. On the other side of the Distillery was the 'Corn Store & Spirit Store.'¹³

The Dwelling House and Store appear to coincide with the location of the existing house and store. Whether the house dates from this period is uncertain.

The Distillery consisted of 13 pieces of equipment. The largest and vital component was a 110 gallon still, the property of Hackett, 'firmly fixed within the walls which surround it.'

⁹ (CSO1/101/2432, p. 52)

¹⁰ (ibid, 31.5.36, p. 3)

¹¹ (CSO1/ op cit December 1835. p. 52A. See appended.)

¹² (Button, Plate 20)

¹³ (CSO1/101/2432,, p. 262)

By 1832 the buildings had grown around the perimeter of the buildings containing the still. (see plan)

In 1835 Hackett supported the application of John Scott Turnbull the new leasee.

A surveyed plan of R. E. Burnett in 1842 also shows a group of buildings on the southern boundary, covering the existing site. (As noted below, the surviving buildings appear to date from a later period.)

End of the Derwent Distillery.

Closure of the distillery resulted from a change in colonial government policy. Concern over lost revenue caused by local distilling reducing imported spirits, resulted in Lt Gov Franklin introduced legislation to abolish the local industry in favour of brewing. (Spirits were again imported and boosted government coffers!) These ideas were attacked in the local press, but still implemented. Local distilleries were compensated after much legal wrangling.¹⁴

James Hackett was made insolvent, and his two farms at Brown's River were sold. Granted some compensation by Lt Gov Franklin, Hackett and his family returned to Britain, seeking unsuccessfully for further restitution. (A son, James jnr settled and married Leila Mary Friend at George Town, Tasmania)¹⁵

¹⁴ (Hartwell, p. 150)

¹⁵ (C/F, TSA)

The Artillery Brewery.

Thomas Pascoe, Brewer.

By 1851 the site was operating as the Artillery Brewery run by Thomas Pascoe. In October of that year, and in January the following year, Pascoe had 3 convicts assigned to his Brewery; Lawrence Dwyer (transported per *Duke of Richmond*), John Heyes, (per *Cygnets* 2), and William Dibbin (per *Asia* 6.)¹⁶

By this time it had been enlarged with the addition of a substantial stone and brick structure on the lower side of the rivulet, together with a number of malt kilns.¹⁷ (These were the buildings destroyed in the 1967 bushfires.)

In 1861 Pascoe advertised the premises for lease. Included in the sale was brewing equipment. Attached to the brewing establishment was attached a

‘... commodious brick dwelling house of 14 rooms, with stable, piggery and every other desirable requisite.’ ‘In addition there were two malt houses with kilns capable of drying 600 bushels of malt per week. (These are visible in photographs; one located on the creek end of the Brewery Store, the other on the western end of the main brewery.) The cellars (three in number) the largest and coolest in the colony have been erected at considerable expense.... there are stores adequate to contain 10,000 bushels of grain.’¹⁸

Thomas and his wife Selina (or Cecilia) Pascoe reared at least 5 children in the home. Two of the boys were registered as entrants to Hutchins School, William in 1852, and Thomas jnr in 1854.¹⁹

In 1860 Pascoe advertised the brewery for sale. A year later J. L. Stewart became the lessee.

Thomas Pascoe became licensee of the *Bridgewater Hotel*, and died in Hobart in 1894 aged 84.²⁰ At the time of his death, his son Thomas jnr was a maltster in Launceston.

William Gracie, Brewer.

By 1873 the Artillery Brewery was owned by William Gracie, with its value half that of 20 years earlier. An advertisement for Gracie’s Artillery Brewery exists, as does a cartoon of William Gracie.²¹

Gracie had married in Hobart in 1844, and was licensee of the *Golden Gate Inn*, Harrington Street, Hobart in 1855.²²

William Gracie purchased the ‘Artillery Brewery’ in 1873, after 16 years with the Cascade Brewery. *The Mercury* reported,

¹⁶ (Con 152, Tasmanian State Archives)

¹⁷ (Button, p. 57)

¹⁸ ‘ (Mercury 7/12/1860 p3 c4)

¹⁹ (TSA indexes)

²⁰ Tasmanian Mail 7/4/1894 p20)

²¹ (Bingham, p.42)

²² (HTG 13/11/55)

The establishment was formerly carried on by Mr Pascoe, but for a considerable time past has been unoccupied, and some of the buildings have been allowed to fall almost into ruins. When Mr Gracie took possession the old brewery building was pulled down and a new one of stone and brick erected, and at the present time the brewery, malt houses and other buildings form a square.²³

The main brewery building was of 5 floors, with louvre windows. (see facsimile reproduction for full description.) The floor was flagged with stone, 124 ft long and 24 wide. The brewery had a capacity of 200 hogsheads per week. These were raised from the cellar and despatched to a loading stage outside the brewery by means of a winch.

The machinery for crushing the malt etc was powered by a Scotch made steam engine of 8 horse power, with an 8 foot fly wheel. Near the engine was a wash house where the casks were cleaned with a steam jet. The engine also provided hot water.

The brewery had two malt houses; one over the cellar, the other

'... where at present all the malting is done, occupies one side of the square. The malting floor measures 90 by 20 feet, and there is a stone cistern in which about 100 bushels of barley can be steeped at one time, while about 300 bushels per week can be worked on the floor. The kiln here is about 20 ft square, and has a floor of perforated tiles now considered far preferable to the wire floors. Over the malt floor is another large granary in which there are two immense bins, one for barley and one for malt.There is also a large quantity of hops in bales, and every thing had the appearance of business. Mr Gracie intends to give preference to Tasmanian grown hops....

In addition to the buildings described, there are a number of stores and offices in which may be seen sacks of corks and packages of isinglass used in the clearing of ale and beer, and piles of casks in all sizes. Mr Gracie has not yet commenced brewing (but) will most likely be in operation in the next two or three days.²⁴

Enter the Cascade Brewery.

Gracie's investment appears to have been a failure. In 1882 the brewery property had been acquired by the newly floated Cascade Brewery Co., which still operates further up the Rivulet. The acquisition was part of an expansion which resulted in Cascade Company taking over most of its Hobart-based competitors.²⁵

In 1883, the 'Gore Street Cottage' beside the old Artillery Brewery was rented by James Aikman for 50 pounds. From Hawthorn, Victoria, Aikman was a new partner in the expanded Cascade Company purchased by Syme and Co. He came from a family of brewers long established at Bath, UK.²⁶

²³ (Mercury 6/6/1873, p.2 c7)

²⁴ (ibid)

²⁵ (Bingham, pp. 41-8)

²⁶ (op cit, p. 41-8)

The Derwent Woollen Mills & Steam Joinery

The brewery site was leased to Messrs Johnstone and Co. from Launceston, who used the premises as a woollen mill, operating there until 1898. The factory was probably operated by steam, as early photos show no sign of water wheels. David and Archibald Johnstone, Scottish woollen manufacturers, were also responsible for the development of the woollen cloth manufacturing industry in Launceston.²⁷

How the woollen mills altered and adapted the former brewery is unclear at this stage.

(The new premise was downstream, in Molle Street, opposite Collins Street, and was known as The Derwent Woollen Mills and Steam Laundry.²⁸ These are still standing, and were in recent years Gadsen's can factory.)

Recent Site History

Hickman's Joinery

The early 20thC use of the site is unclear without further research.

However, post-World War II, the premises were owned by Mr Frank Hickman, who used the present building as a joinery workshop. The vanished brewery building was used for storage of timber for the joinery business. Mr Hickman was a master builder and craftsman, responsible for construction of ocean-going yachts which sailed in the early Sydney- Hobart Yacht Races, featuring Huon pine in their construction. These included the much admired *Carol J*.

In the 1960's teenage Hobart rock band - the *Brotherhood of Myrtle*- used the old brewery premise for band practice. Band members included Frank Hickman's son, Richard (known as 'Rinkle' - guitarist), plus Rob MacFie (bass), Roger Pickering drums, Paul Reid keyboards and Mick Huxtable vocals. On one occasion local blues guitarist Phil Manning (member of influential Australia blues group *Chain*) also jammed with the band. (The author can recall helping the band lug heavy amplification gear up the wooden stairs in the old brewery.)

During the disastrous bushfires of February 1967, the large brewery caught fire, shown in graphic pictures on the day. The ruined shell was subsequently demolished. Hickman's continued to use the joinery shop until the mid 1970's.

²⁷ (Morris-Nunn and Tassell, p.18)

²⁸ (ibid, p.18)

Bibliography

(Unless otherwise stated, all books are held by the Tasmaniana Library.)

Bingham, Mike *Cascade: A Taste of History*, Hobart 1991.

Button, John *The Rise and Fall of the Hobart Town Rivulet; an historic preservation study*, TCAE, Hobart, architectural thesis, 1978. (TSA)

Hartwell, R. M. *The Economic Development of VDL 1820 to 1850*, MUP, 1954.

Loane, Derrick *This Our Fathers Did for Us, the Story of a Pioneering Family in Tasmania*, Launceston, 1991.

Morris-Nunn, M. and Tassell, C. *Launceston's Industrial Heritage, a Survey, Part One*, (Australian Heritage Commission report) Launceston, 1982.

Rayner, Tony *The Hobart Rivulet Historical Study*, City of Hobart, 1988.

Illustrations

Letter from James Hackett, Derwent Distillery, 27/12/1834.

Artillery Brewery, to be let to tender. (Advert.)²⁹

Tasmanian Industries, Artillery Brewery³⁰

Two Cartoons of William Gracie by Tom Midwood.

i) ³¹

ii) ³²

²⁹ Mercury 7/12/1860 p3 c4

³⁰ Mercury 6/6/1873 p2 c7

³¹ nd c1870. NS 1012/1211.

³² Weekly Courier 13/3/1913 p23.

Appendix

Plans

Buckingham 13. Locations and Industries on Hobart Rivulet. nd c1830

Plan of Loane's Distillery, December 1835.

Plan of Mr Loane's Allotments in the Report to the Committee, 31st May 1836.

Plan of Loane's Distillery, 1836

Burnett Site Survey August 1842.

Photographs

View of Artillery Brewery including bridge, water race, and Rayner's Mill.³³

View from West Hobart, showing the Brewery, including two conjoined malt houses.

Note ruins of Rayner's Mill.³⁴

View of Brewer's House, Store and Brewery. Note missing malt house³⁵

View of Store and Brewery c 1950³⁶

Views c 1966³⁷

Views c 1966³⁸

³³ (30/837 nd c 1900 TSA)

³⁴ (NS 30/7721 TSA)

³⁵ (NS 1029/61 Aug 1947 TSA)

³⁶ (NS179/3/7 TSA)

³⁷ (NS165/192A TSA)

³⁸ (NS165/192B TSA)

Index

- | | |
|--|--|
| Aikman, James..... 8 | hops.....8 |
| alcohol abuse..... 4 | Hutchins School7 |
| alcohol production 4 | Huxtable, Mick.....9 |
| ale..... 8 | inns |
| Artillery Brewery..... 3, 7 | <i>Bridgewater Hotel</i>7 |
| barley..... 8 | <i>Golden Gate Inn</i>7 |
| beer 8 | Johnstone Woollen Mill.....3 |
| breweries 3 | Johnstone, Archibald9 |
| Brewery Store..... 3, 7 | Johnstone, David.....9 |
| <i>Brotherhood of Myrtle</i> 9 | Loane, Roland Walpole 4, 5, 11 |
| Brown's River..... 6 | Lowes, Thomas Yardley.....4 |
| Burnett, R. E. 6 | MacFie, Rob.....9 |
| bushfires 9 | malt4, 8 |
| Cascade Brewery 7 | malt houses7, 8, 11 |
| Cascade Brewery Company..... 8 | malt kilns7 |
| Cascade Grove 4 | Manning, Phil9 |
| Cascades 4 | Messrs Johnstone and Co.....9 |
| Corn Store..... 5 | Midwood, Thomas Haigh.....4 |
| cracking barley..... 4 | Midwood, Tom.....10 |
| Derwent Distillery..... 3, 4 | Pacoe, Thomas jnr7 |
| Derwent Woollen Mills and Steam | Pascoe, Cecilia (Mrs Thomas)..... <i>See</i> |
| Laundry 9 | Pascoe, Selina (Mrs Thomas) |
| Dibbin, William 7 | Pascoe, Selina (Mrs Thomas).....7 |
| distilleries 3 | Pascoe, Thomas7, 8 |
| Dwyer, Lawrence 7 | Pascoe, William7 |
| Forrest, Mr ?..... 4 | Pickering, Roger9 |
| Franklin, Lt.Gov. Sir John..... 6 | Rayner's Mill.....5 |
| Friend, Leila Mary <i>See</i> Hackett, Leila | Reid, Paul9 |
| (Mrs James Jr) | ships |
| gin..... 4 | <i>Asia 6</i>7 |
| Gracie, William 3, 7, 10 | <i>Carol J</i>9 |
| grog fever..... <i>See</i> alcohol abuse | <i>Cygnets 2</i>7 |
| Hackett, James 4, 6, 10 | <i>Duke of Richmond</i>7 |
| Hackett, James jr 6 | Sorell Distillery.....4 |
| Hackett, Jane (Mrs James) 4, 6 | Spirit Store.....5 |
| Hackett, Leila (Mrs James Jr) 6 | spirits4, 6 |
| Heyes, John..... 7 | Stewart, J. L.7 |
| Hickman, Frank 9 | Syme and Co.....8 |
| Hickman, Richard 9 | Turnbull, John Scott.....6 |
| Hickman's Joinery 9 | Walker, John4 |
| Hobart Town Rivulet..... 3, 8, 10 | woollen mill9 |