



BUSINESS SERIES 3b

## Retailers

**The Hocken Collections contain extensive records of a wide range of retailers throughout Otago and Southland.**

Now known as Aburns Glass 2005, the firm of **S.F. Aburn Ltd** dates from 1903 when it was founded by Samuel Felix Aburn, a glass retailer and glazier. It became a limited liability company in 1927 and the Hocken holds an archive of the company comprising various accounting books 1903–1969, the Articles of Association 1927, 21 volumes of tender books and contracts 1935–1969, correspondence 1905–28, 1950–59 and a few photographs.

One of the major Dunedin retailers is **Arthur Barnett Ltd** and although the Hocken holds virtually no archives of this company it does have copies of two histories. Gordon Parry was the author of *Arthur Barnett—Retailer Extraordinary*, a 36-page book published in 1959. There is also a 159-page centenary history by Jim Sullivan entitled *One Hundred Years of Loyalty—The Story of Arthur Barnett Ltd 1903*. A modest archive contains copies of annual reports 1965–66, 1970–1983, 1985 and 1987–88 as well as copies of the company newsletter *News & Views* 1977–1988 and various items of correspondence. Many Arthur Barnett records were destroyed in a disastrous fire in 1959.



*Samuel Felix Aburn, founder of the painting and glazier firm in 1903, stands second from right in this group of painters photographed probably in the Edwardian years. Note the length of the brushes! [AG-65/1/1]*

The Hocken holds no archival material for **Butterfields**, the Dunedin furniture manufacturer and retailer, but it does have a copy of the 20-page booklet published in 1993 entitled *Butterfields—125 years of Continuous Business 1858–1993*. Francis J Butterfield closed the retailing side of the business between 1874 and 1924 but continued the manufacture of furniture throughout the entire period of its history. The manufacturing unit was known as the Otago Chair Company, but it changed its name to Otago Furniture Co. in 1983. There were branches of the firm at Christchurch, Invercargill and Timaru, but in 1988 the four shops were leased to Nees Ltd. To avoid confusion with this change, Butterfields was renamed Chasmont Finance Ltd, a finance company still in business in 2006.

Another major 20th century retailer was **Brown, Ewing & Co. Ltd**, established in 1902 to take over the business of Thomas Brown who sold drapery and furnishings. This business had been established by Thomas Brown, Ralph Ewing and John Glendining in 1866. Archival material held by the Hocken includes the Memorandum and Articles of Association, Share Transfer Journals 1901–56, shareholders' registers 1902–57, Dividend books 1921–53, journals 1948–58, annual reports 1946–56, a brochure published in 1898 entitled *Jubilee*

*Souvenir of Brown Ewing & Company*, sundry staff files and papers relating to the liquidation of **A & T Inglis Ltd** and its purchase by Brown Ewing & Co. in 1955. Inglis continued in business under its own name for a further two years when its identity was submerged into Brown Ewing & Co. Founded in 1863, Inglis had from 1869 operated in the same premises at 71–81 George Street, Dunedin, but by 1873 it also had branches in Invercargill, Oamaru and Port Chalmers. The history of A & T Inglis is contained in Margaret Paul's 84-page illustrated book *Calico Characters & their Clientele – A History of A & T Inglis, Department Store, Dunedin 1863–1955*, published in 1998. Brown, Ewing & Co. was taken over by Hays of Christchurch in 1960.

Motor vehicle retailer **Cooke Howlison & Co.** was originally established in Dunedin by F.A. Cooke and Edward Howlison in 1895 as a cycle manufacturer and importer. The company's major cycle brands were 'Record', 'Swift' and 'Jubilee'. The firm later had agencies for motor cycles and vehicles, becoming one of the principal franchise holders in Dunedin with the major General Motors brands of Buick and Chevrolet, and more recently the Holden, Toyota and BMW vehicles. The company was sold to Eric and Graeme Marsh in 1963 and they in turn



*The Mantle Department of the Drapery and General Importing Company at the time of its opening in 1884.*  
[Muir & Moodie photo, DIC archive 91-057]

acquired the Christchurch General Motors franchise of Blackwell Motors in 1979. The Hocken holds no archives of this company but it does have a copy of the 1995 illustrated history titled *Celebrating 100 Years of Service 1895–1995*. Early records of the company were lost or destroyed during shifts of the company's premises.

Bendix Hallenstein established **The Drapery and General Importing Company** in Dunedin in 1884 as a retail clothing store for the 'middle classes'. Until 1906 the store was run as a co-operative venture whereby shareholders received a special discount based on the business done over the past year, but thereafter shareholders received discounts directly from purchases. Branches were steadily established at Christchurch, Wellington and Wanganui and later at places such as Palmerston North, Hamilton, Te Awamutu, Otorohanga, Lower Hutt, Invercargill, Napier, Dannevirke and Rotorua. There was also a London buying office. In 1965 the long name was formally changed to **D.I.C. Ltd**, the name by which the company had been universally known. In 1983 H.W. Smith Ltd. purchased a controlling interest in the company and in 1984 came the first entry into the Auckland market with the purchase of George Court and Sons Ltd. The parent company changed its name to Apparel Holdings in 1986, although the stores retained the DIC name. The Dunedin branch was sold to Arthur Barnett Ltd in 1987 and the DIC Dunedin store finally closed on 31 March 1991.

The DIC archives held by the Hocken largely centre on shareholders and financial records. However there is also a run of annual reports from 1943 to 1973 and an excellent photographic coverage of various DIC branch buildings, staff and staff functions, shop windows and the Board of Directors in 1963, 1969, 1972, 1976 and 1978. There are also general meeting minutes from 1929 to 1988 (Ref 93-119). For a brief overall history of the company, long-time staff member and former managing director H.C. Harford assembled a range of documentation and reports (Ref 95-124) and these papers and Gordon Parry's *Retailing Century – The first 100 years of the DIC Ltd 1884–1984* (published 1984) provide a potted history of one of New Zealand's prominent retailers. David R. Godwin in an MBA thesis in 1982 produced a 219pp assessment of why the company should have a central buying facility; a copy is held by the Central Library. In a separate archive reference—ARC 0041/003 within the Hallenstein Bros. records, owners of the DIC (see Bulletin No 54 – Business Series 2b on Manufacturing)—are the important business records which includes yearly record books 1898–1921, balance sheets 1905–1907, managing

directors' correspondence 1920–1939, Board of Trade correspondence 1913–1920 and other papers relating to the interface between the DIC and its parent.

Some records are held of **D.S.A. Limited** (Drapery Supply Association) which opened in Dunedin on 22 March 1890. They include stock books 1890–93, a booklet on summer fashions 1925–26, sundry photos and advertisements and newspaper reports of the company's 75th anniversary in March 1965. The firm was founded by James Dick and Hunter McKechnie, and James Dick's son, Gordon Dick, was chairman when it went out of business in 1966.

**John Edmond** was an importer and merchant, but for most of the company's history the retail store in Princes Street was its main identity in Dunedin. Edmond arrived in Dunedin in December 1861 and set up as a sail-maker and ship chandler. From 1877 to 1881 the business was known as Edmond, Forsyth & McNeill. John Edmond became a limited liability company in 1920. A branch was opened in Invercargill in 1894 and Timaru in 1910, the Timaru branch later expanding with the purchase of England McRae Ltd in 1961. The company moved from Princes Street in 1985 when it set up a new centre in Orari Street targeting Do-it-yourself (DIY) customers. The Hocken Collections hold only a small amount of archival material, including the wills of John & Christina Edmond, sundry leases, share transfers and some balance sheets of the 1890s, 1917–19, and 1921. There are also photographs of the shop premises and some members of the Edmond family, a copy of G.W. Harte's centennial history *The First Hundred—John Edmond Limited 1862–1962*, and *A Bridge of Remembrance*, a separate account written by former staff member J.N. Armour. Many of the John Edmond business records were destroyed by fire.

There is a small archive of **James Gray & Sons Ltd**, a drapery and menswear business in Milton, 1874–1972. This includes accounting records 1923–1963, wages records 1957–63, annual accounts 1913, 1922, 1943–63 and a file of Gray family correspondence.

The Hocken holds a brief four-page history of the Dunedin menswear company **Hamel & McKenzie**. John H.F. Hamel came to Dunedin in 1873 and in 1889, in partnership with his brother Edward, he established a hat shop named Hatters. The company was renamed Hamel & McKenzie in 1938, and from that time became solely a menswear shop. In 1992 it was renamed Hamels and currently trades in George Street as a branch of Munns, the Man's Store.





*How the hardware department of John Edmond's Princes Street shop looked after refurbishment in 1955.*  
 [Franz Barta photo, John Edmond archive 90-043]

**Matheson and Roberts Ltd** was a Dunedin horticultural retail (and mail order) seed and plant retailer and the Hocken Collections hold a number of mainly accounting records including ledger 1928–1959, cash books 1949–1963, bills payable book 1921–28, bills payable journal 1931–40, mail-order book 1956–60, sales book 1961–74, record of account holders 1937–59, company returns 1939–52 and papers relating to insurance 1920–1958.

Another major Dunedin retailer and furniture manufacturer was **Wm. Nees & Sons**. Members of the family came to Dunedin in 1862 and set up business as cabinetmakers the following year. Other family members followed the gold discoveries and were also involved in sawmilling in various parts of New Zealand. The Dunedin business was incorporated in 1903. The Hocken holds no company archives, but it has a copy of *On Your Nees – The story of H.G. Carl & H.F. William and their families 1790–1996*, written by C.L. Nees and distributed as a restricted publication amongst family members. The 185-page book is essentially a family history, and the company has only limited coverage. The company itself went into receivership in 1990, but branches at Dunedin, Alexandra,

Invercargill, Oamaru and Timaru continued trading until sold.

There is a small archive of **Otago Leather Goods Ltd** and **George Newey Ltd**. The first company was incorporated as a leather goods retailer in June 1932 and took over Newey's, as the company was called, the following year. Both companies continued under their own names. The Otago Leather Goods archive includes directors' minute books 1932–1974, shareholders' register 1939–1974 and a ledger 1960–1980. The Newey items include the directors' minute book 1939–1976, cash book 1939–1959 and a ledger 1967–1975.

The Hocken holds the financial records—minute books 1929–1981, ledgers 1922–1979, journals 1961–1979, cash books 1922–1979, as well as balance sheets 1923–1929, indent books 1931–1936, wages books 1922–1974 and other records—of **Patterson Bros. Ltd**, menswear retailers at 24 The Octagon, Dunedin. The business was established in 1922 by Henry M Patterson and his brother Thomas W. Patterson. It became a limited liability company in 1932, and family members continued to run it until it was sold in 1978.

**W. Penrose & Co. Ltd**, commonly known as Penroses, was another well-known Dunedin retailer. The Hocken holds 21.3 linear metres of the records of this company. They include the company minute book 1924–72, annual accounts 1944–80, journals 1974–96, ledgers 1946–95, cash books 1971–90, daily sales books 1956–81, sales analysis and bank records 1980–95, trial balances 1980–95, staff and payroll records 1952–1996, newspaper advertising scrapbooks 1959–1994, company photographs 1920–1990, some correspondence 1953–95 and papers relating to the liquidation of the company 1994–96. The company was established in 1909 and closed its premises on the corner of St Andrew and George Street in 1995.

Furniture manufacturer and retailer **Scoullar & Chisholm Ltd** has nearly 13 linear metres of archives in the Hocken Collections. They include directors' minute books 1899–1944, annual reports 1899–1960, annual balance books 1899–1960, ledgers 1874–1912, 1921–1960, journals 1935–1953 and cash books 1925–1960. The Hocken has gold medals won by the company at the Wellington Exhibition in 1885, certificates for the New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition 1889–1890, and also scrapbooks, correspondence and other papers. One particularly interesting item is a 590-page *Cookery Book & Household Management* compendium which contains not only recipes for every conceivable occasion, but also discusses preserving, menus, small points of etiquette, and the essential role of pure air in maintaining perfect health! The basic recipe book was an American publication, sold to (or through) retail agents in different cities. Scoullar & Chisholm held the rights for Dunedin, and their book included photographs of Scoullar & Chisholm premises and stock, and listed all the items that the company could provide in furnishing a 4-room cottage for £36. In Christchurch the franchise was held by a prominent retail grocery, which added its photos in the same way.

Established two years after the 1861 Otago gold rush by Henry North and Arthur Scoullar, the firm occupied a three-storey building on the corner of Rattray and Maclaggan Streets for most of its life. R. Chisholm joined the partnership in 1868, North retired in 1880 and the business became known as Scoullar & Chisholm, being incorporated in 1889. A branch was opened at Wellington in 1885. The Dunedin business moved to the Harvest Court building in George Street in 1970.

The Hocken has 10 volumes of sales records of the firm of grocers and traders, **Traill & Roxby**. A.W. Traill appears to have been the principal of the concern and some of the customers included Hon.

H.J. Miller, Arthur Briscoe, Mrs Caroline Valpy, James and Francis Fulton, Thomas Ferens, George Grey Russell and Mary Halstead. In the 1880s there are also sales to Stewart Island residents such as Mrs Wohlers, Thomas Leask, Doug Hanning, Manuel Goomes and Fleming Gilkison. The 1860 Accounts book records that a bag of coal cost 11/6 and one dozen mousetraps 14/-. The books encompass the period 1860 to 1887.

There are quite a number of records of small country stores as well as notebooks listing prices of good supplied. They include an 1860–62 notebook of **Alexander Duthie**, who supplied stores to the goldfields; records of **Fortrose Stores Ltd**; a debtors ledger of **Hampden General Merchants** 1864–65; cash book of **Henderson and Brooking** who had a store at the Dunstan 1863–64; a store account book for **L. Henderson**, Stewart Island; a 1914–20 ledger from the **Hindon General Store**; an order book from the **Kuri Bush Store** 1906–08; a day book 1888 of Green Island grocer **John McLean**; five ledgers 1906–1943 from **Palmerston Supply Stores**; and a folder of receipts from **Gordon Steel, Heriot Store** 1940–41. Other sources for the costs of supplies since the 1850s are the many family records held by the Hocken Collections e.g. Harwood papers, Hampden Historical Society and the diaries of the early run holders.

Records held of some other hardware retailers include the letter-book of the **City Hardware Store**, Dunedin 1899–01; a day book 1876–1903, sales records 1892–1895, wages book 1911 and a ledger 1934–1947 for **Robert Templeton & Son**, of Waikouaiti; and more extensive records of **McCurdy and Sons**, of Dipton. This company was established in 1878 as a saddlery, moving into hardware and grocery items later, and members of the McCurdy family ran the business until 1981. Papers held include ledgers 1897–1981, day books 1902–20, cash books 1901–19, stock registers 1900–17, sundry correspondence and accounting records 1901–1986.

**Turnbull & Jones** was an important New Zealand manufacturer and importer of electrical goods, but in Dunedin its major presence was its retail premises on the corner of Moray Place and Stuart St. The company was founded in 1899 by Robert Turnbull of Wellington (brother of Alexander Turnbull of library fame) and R.C. Jones, the Union Steam Ship Company electrician, based in Dunedin. The company became the leading supplier of electrical goods, with many branches throughout New Zealand. In 1969 Neil Holdings Ltd became

the major shareholder and in 1984 the company was sold to Cory-Wright & Salmon Ltd. It later passed to the ownership of Tyree Power Construction, which was jointly owned by Westinghouse of the USA and Cory-Wright & Salmon. The Hocken Collections hold no Turnbull & Jones archives but has a copy of the 216-page history, *Turnbull & Jones 1899–1984: First in the Industry* (1988) by Les Boyles.

Some records are held of retail jewellers, including those of **Daniels Jewellers Ltd**, which was originally established as Dawsons Ltd on 20 May 1908. These include minute books 1912–63, balance sheets (incomplete) 1909–60, work books 1968–71, some photographs and other sundry documents in the period 1919–81. There is also a minute book of **P. Hayman (N.Z.) Ltd**, wholesale jewellers and importers, which was owned by R.T. Little and A.D. Lindsay from its formation in 1953 until its voluntary liquidation in 1970. The Hocken also has J.B. Hislop's book *Pure Gold and Rough Diamonds: gems from the scrapbook of a travelling watchmaker and jeweller in Otago and Southland* (1943). **Robert Strong** opened a shop as a watchmaker in Naseby in 1868 and it continued under his son, William, until 1967. The Hocken has an extensive file of Strong family records including day books 1867–1961, stock books 1880 to just beyond 1898, watch job book 1882–84, income books 1941–42, 1951–52, 1954–44, and some sundry related papers. Included in the records of **MacKinnon & Rutter Ltd**, Dunedin watchmaker & jeweller, are Otago and Southland files of the N.Z. Horological Institute 1951–81, becoming the Watchmakers Guild of NZ 1982–83. The archive also has catalogues from wholesalers 1968–1983. The minute book of the Dunedin Watchmakers, Jewellers and Related Trades Industrial Union of Works from 1936–1954 is held under AG-598. There is also a history of *Moller and Young: A Century of Progress 1897–1997* which deals with the history of Dunedin engraver C. Moller & Sons 1862–1979 and then **Brandwell Moller Ltd** from that date. In 1897 Moller and Young opened a branch in Christchurch.

Minor items in the Hocken include a folder from coal merchant **William Ellis** containing an instruction on the boundaries and the functions of the Coal Trade Committee 1918, together with a circular letter relating to coal distribution and an application form to supply coal. **R. Hannah & Co. Ltd** was a leading national footwear retailer and the Hocken holds two customer account ledgers from the Dunedin branch (1941–60) which came from the company's George Street shop prior to demolition in

1979. Two ledgers, 1910–1915, are held for the Port Chalmers butcher **T.J. Harrison**.

Linked to the retailing businesses are the records of the **Otago Retailers Association** with its minute books 1944–1984, executive minutes 1956–87, conference committee minutes 1962–80, education committee minutes 1971–73, town planning committee minutes 1973 and school uniform committee minutes 1985. Within this archive there are papers of the Otago Drapers' and Clothiers' Industrial Union of Employers 1909–1920 and the Otago Drapers', Clothiers' and Boot Retailers' Association 1933–46. Files are held of the Otago Master Grocers' Association/Otago Retail Grocers & Supermarket Association and include minute books 1969–70, 1985–96, membership records 1925–1966, ledgers 1970–86, correspondence 1962–77, 1980–1996 as well as some early photographs of the 1920s/30s.

Among records lodged by the Otago & Southland Employers Assn are minute books 1924–68, membership records 1939–72, cash books 1942–64, annual reports 1967–73 and correspondence 1952–65 of the **Otago & Southland Retail Tobacconists and Registered Hairdressers' Assn**, and some files 1973–76 from the New Zealand body of the same organisation.

There are also the files of the **Dunedin Central City Businessmen's Assn**, an organisation established in March 1958 by 26 retailers around the Exchange, Rattray and Princes Streets to Dowling Street, to promote their area then facing decline as more and more retailers moving to George Street. The Association faded away in the early 1970s once George Street had become the centre of retail shopping in the city. The Hocken has the minute books 1958–72, correspondence 1958–70, files on promotions, redevelopment proposals, bus section ends, decimal currency and under-verandah lighting as well as annual reports 1960–1970. There are also newsletters 1966–69 and membership lists.

Most of the records listed in this Bulletin are available for public inspection but some companies still require permission to be given to study their records. In most cases, this is freely given to genuine researchers.

*This bulletin has been prepared by Ian Farquhar, with assistance from Hocken Collections staff, Shirley Hay and George Griffiths, and designed by Gary Blackman, February 2007, for the Friends of the Hocken Collections, P O Box 6336, Dunedin.*