

THE HOSKINS FAMILY:

Charles Henry Hoskins, a native of London, was brought to Australia by his parents at the age of two in 1853. As a young man he became a partner with his brother G. J. Hoskins in a general engineering business in Sydney, which in course of time came to specialise in the manufacture of iron and steel pipes. In 1908 they took over the Lithgow ironworks of William Sandford, which they modernised and expanded, producing steel and pig-iron on the largest scale attempted until then in Australia. The search for high-quality coke for these works led to the acquisition of their first Illawarra property at Wongawilli.

Charles Hoskins in 1919 bought out his brother's interest in the company, and formed a new company, Hoskins Iron and Steel, which made extensive additions to the Lithgow works and expanded production still further. However, the exhaustion of inland iron-ore deposits in New South Wales, and the high freight costs, led to a decision to move the works to Port Kembla.

Before this could be put fully into effect Charles Hoskins died (1926), but his work was carried on by his sons Cecil (afterwards Sir Cecil) and Arthur Sidney Hoskins. In 1928 the first Port Kembla blast furnace, then the largest in Australia, was completed and blown-in. The same year the Hoskinses formed a new company, Australian Iron and Steel Ltd., which seven years later merged its interests with B.H.P. Limited, the operator of the other big Australian steelworks, at Newcastle.

The Hoskins brothers continued, as managing director and as manager and a director respectively, to take an active part in the control and operation of the A.I.S. works for many years, and were also active in many forms of service to the community. It is appropriate that the family's name should be perpetuated in the works to whose creation and development they contributed so largely.