IRON INDUSTRY PROPOSED FOR ILLAWARRA

The “Wollongong Argus” of November 5, 1892, reported proposals for the establishment of an iron industry in Illawarra in the following terms:

“Mr. W. Davies interviewed the Minister for Works in Sydney on Thursday and discussed with him the prospects of an iron industry in Illawarra. Mr. Lyne referred to his iron-pipe policy, announced some time ago, and told Mr. Davies that if a manufactory were established in Illawarra the Government would be prepared to give contracts for iron pipes to the amount of £150,000. We understand that Messrs. Lahiff and Davies are in earnest about the project, and have in view the flotation of a company with a capital of £30,000, about 75 per cent. of which they estimate would place the establishment in working order. With the certain prospect of trade from the government, they think that the project should be well received. The price offered for pipes is £7/10/0 per ton, which is £1/10/0 more than the price of the imported article as tendered. Mr. Lahiff has been endeavouring to induce the Mount Pleasant Company to take a lead in the matter, and possibly they may do so.

“An extract from the Mines Department report of 1891 furnished us shows the iron ores received from Mount Pleasant for an analysis to be of five different kinds.”

The report goes on to state that a person tendering for supply of pipes had advised that he would use locally made iron if he could get it at the same price as imported.

Davies, the Wollongong ironfounder, was given 41 hours to find a guarantee that he could find the capital of £20,000 to erect the pig iron making plant.