

HISTORY
OF
J. KITCHEN & SONS

Arnold Riches

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(written in about 1944)

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

Arnold Riches' story is a fascinating one; not just for the story of a family and its Company, but for the insight it gives into life in early Melbourne. Sometimes his flair and his creative imagination leave fact a little behind, as can be seen in chapter one, comparing his text with the notes by my father, Colin Kitchen.

I have a poor quality photocopy of the typewritten manuscript by Arnold Riches. There are several hand-written alterations, at times almost illegible. Some are improvements or corrections and have been incorporated into this version, others are notes, added here as footnotes, here noted (*A.R.*).

Colin Kitchen did much research, in Melbourne and in England, specifically in Reading. He checked many old records such as shipping lists, birth certificates etc. Thus he found several errors in this text. His corrections, mostly in the first chapter, have been added as footnotes to the text, here noted (*C.K.*).

I found it a fascinating read, as much for the story of the development of soap, involving brief excursions into retailing, advertizing and much more. My foot notes are marked (*T.K.*).

As much as possible, I have endeavoured to keep to Riches' original text. However a few changes have been made:

- 1 Riches capitalised many nouns, almost obsessively, most have been changed to lower case
- 2 Many changes were made to the original typescript, before it was photocopied, presumably by Riches. I have kept these.
- 3 Chapter ordering has been changed, at the suggestion of my father, putting them in better chronological order.
- 4 A few of the longer paragraphs were broken up into several smaller ones.

Tony Kitchen, May 2002

Chapter I BEGINNINGS

In the busy, charming little town of Wallingford, rich in English history and set in the lovely Berkshire countryside with the Thames gently flowing by, lived John Kitchen and his sons during the early fifties of the last century. The family had originally lived in Yorkshire, but the last few generations of the Kitchens had settled in this beautiful old town that had known Alfred the Great. It was here in 1799 that John Kitchen was born¹.

Little is known of John Kitchen's early life, as a boy he longed to become a builder of houses, but his parents decided he should learn the trade of soap and candle making. In those days, Soap and Candles were mostly made by housewives or wholesale grocers; there were very few manufacturers who specialised in the making of specific products. John was apprenticed to his Uncle Burgis; he learnt the trade well, and became a first class soap and candle maker.

His boyhood and youth wore times of exciting happenings. Napoleon was threatening England with invasion; when he was six years old he heard his parents discussing the thrilling victory of Nelson at Trafalgar and when John was a youth of fifteen, Wellington smashed Napoleon at Waterloo. Then following the war were times of stress, unemployment and industrial unrest. Veterans of Waterloo, as a favour, were given licences for begging. The industrial revolution was in full swing, the conditions of factories and child labour were scandalous, repressive measures were used against working men's organizations, the leaders of which, with rogues, thieves, and felons, were sent to Australia to help build up the vigorous young dominion that John was later to make his home.

In 1825, at the age of 26, John married Ruth Freeman. She died in 1853 leaving him four sons and four daughters. His second wife was Mrs. Hogan, a widow, whom he married in Australia. There were no children by the second marriage.²

John was a man of very determined character, with the courage of his convictions. His uncompromising outlook is shown when on one occasion, while riding in a bus on a very hot day, he asked the conductor to open the window, the conductor sullenly refused, whereupon John promptly smashed the window with his walking stick. He was dogmatic and held strong opinions which he did not hesitate to express. Once at a religious meeting where a famous Preacher was speaking, he showed his disagreement by, loudly banging his stick on the floor and saying "No! No! No!" in a very audible voice.

With his four sons, Phillip, Joseph, John Ambrose and Theophilus, he kept a store in Reading³, and as was common with grocers in those days, he made his own soap and candles. The Kitchens were a religious family and John was a strong supporter of the temperance movement, which did not make him popular with a certain class of the Wallingford citizens, especially as he had the strength of character to oppose them. Early in Queen Victoria's reign, heavy drinking and drunkenness was the rule, and courage was needed to fight against it. John entered the fray with characteristic energy but he encountered such strong opposition that it practically ruined his business.

He was a Christadelphian⁴ by religion, and though when a boy his parents were very poor, and at a time when half the population of England was illiterate, he managed to educate himself, and could write very forcibly. In 1876 in Melbourne in a pamphlet with the somewhat long-winded title "A Congregationalist Minister becomes obedient to the truth and 'Un-Revs' himself and gives up a salary of £400 a year", he wrote an introduction in which, in very vigorous language, he championed the cause of the Christadelphians.

A story is told that John, basing his belief on an alleged prophecy in the Book of Revelations in the Bible,

¹ John Kitchen was born at Long Crowmarsh, across the Thames from Wallingford in Oxfordshire, in 1799. (C.K.)

² In 1825 he married in Bristol, and his daughter Eliza was baptised in August 1826 at Alkerton, Gloucestershire. Six children were baptised between 1828 and 1837 at Watlington in Gloucestershire, and by 1840 he had moved to Reading, where he lived until he came to Australia. Meanwhile his brother Thomas was in business in Wallingford.

John's first wife was Ruth Freeman from Reading. She died in 1853 and in 1864 he married Mary Hogan in Melbourne. (C.K.)

³ John's grocery was never at Wallingford, and from about 1840 was at Reading. By 1851 the sons who were old enough had other employment. (C.K.)

"Reading" should therefore replace "Wallingford" in the subsequent pages. (T.K.)

⁴ The Christadelphian sect was founded in U.S.A. in 1848. It is doubtful that they reached Reading in time for John to have joined them there though he seems to have had similar beliefs. It is more likely he joined them in Melbourne. (C.K.)

believed in the imminent coming of our Lord. After having given away all the groceries and contents of his store to the citizens Wallingford, of he led them to a mountain - or perhaps it was one of the Chiltern Hills - where they awaited the great event. To everyone's intense disappointment nothing happened, the Wallingford townsfolk, in spite of having received free groceries, felt they had been duped, and together with the anti-temperance element, returned to Kitchen's stores and smashed the windows to give vent to their feelings. A slight variation of the story is that John Kitchen and his neighbours awaited "the coming" in the parlour at the back of the store, and while on their knees in prayer, suddenly heard a loud report. Expecting it to be a signal for the beginning of their anticipations, they rushed outside, only to find it was the sound of a gun from one of the local sportsmen. Whatever version of the episode is true, it appears to have some foundation, as it has come from several different sources, and gave John's opponents an opportunity to attack him and drive him from Wallingford.

It is probable that after the loss of their business, the family decided to try its luck elsewhere. Australia was a land of promise where fortunes were being made in the goldfields. They decided they would inquire into and explore the possibilities of going to the new world.

Of the four sons Philip was the eldest; he was delicate and suffered from poor health all his life; he was born in 1831, but unlike his father, was very quiet and reserved. Both he and Theo were members of the Plymouth Brotherhood. John Ambrose, who had been a member, left the faith to join the Church of England. Philip later established in Australia, soon after the business was commenced, the Bible and Tract Society in Melbourne for the distribution of Bibles and religious literature. Theophilus, who was born at Reading, England, in 1841, was the most energetically religious of the four sons, practically all his spare time was given to a religious pursuits, and he was very lavish in his contributions to the Church and charities.

Philip and John Ambrose did not agree with Christadelphianism, and tried to influence their father against it, but without success. Later, in Australia, John had a box fixed in the entrance of Flinders Street Railway Station, Melbourne, so that members of the public could take the literature he placed in it every morning. From a hiding place the two sons used to watch their father, and as soon as he had gone, rush in and clear the box. For years the old man thought his message was "getting across". If he had discovered what really happened, there would probably have been "an end of the world" for the two boys.

John Ambrose, the first of the family to come to Australia, at the age of 19, was born in Watlington, Oxfordshire, on the 27th February, 1835. He began his career in a lawyer's office, but legal work did not appeal to him. He was faced with the problem of finding a new job, at the same time that his father's grocery store was practically ruined. He looked around; things were very difficult in England; the condition of the workers was appalling and there was little to encourage young a man without influence or wealth.

Why not go to Australia? He had heard the wild, fantastic tales of the fortunes to be made out of the Victorian Goldfields, the wealth that Australia offered only for the taking, and the Arabian Nights stories and impressions sent to England by Governor Latrobe. He talked the matter over with his father and brothers, who probably agreed to follow him if the reports he sent were satisfactory. Whatever it was, he set sail from Liverpool for Melbourne in "The Champion of the Seas" on 12 October, 1854⁵.

It was the first voyage of the "Champion of the Seas" to Australia. The ship was a new vessel built in America by Donald McKay for James Baines and Co. and was then the last word in comfort, she had spacious accommodation for passengers and her fine woods, gilt and stained glass used in her interior decoration, contrasted strongly with the usual Liverpool-Melbourne immigrant vessels. She had a top-gallant fore-castle, a deck house 50 feet long abaft the foremast, and a smaller one on the quarterdeck. She had a long poop, with passenger accommodation under it. Her stern was more handsome than many of McKay's ships, and was ornamented with the Australian coat of arms and gilded scroll work. The "Champion of the Seas" was widely renowned for two other decorative features; her figurehead of a British tar of the day in full rig; bell-bottomed trousers, tarpaulin hat, which he was waving in a tattooed hand. The other was an extraordinary binnacle on the fore end of the poop deck. This was either a sailor or a black boy, life size, holding the compass bowl in his arms. It was so extremely lifelike that it led to many a misunderstanding, and was probably, on that account, dispensed with. The "Champion of the Seas" carried the usual rig of the fine clippers of her day, full topsails and three skysails, together with the complete outfit of stunsails and other extras. Her sail spread 12,500 square yards of sailcloth, she sailed from Boston for Liverpool under the command of Captain Alexander Newlands, who had supervised her building for Mr. Baines;

⁵ with his twenty-year old cousin, Henry. (C.K.)

she was 16 days in crossing. She traded to Melbourne all her days, excepting when, with the "Lightning" and James Baines, she was requisitioned to carry troops to Calcutta at the time of the Indian Mutiny. She foundered off Cape Horn in 1877⁶. But the "Champion of The Seas" was no modern liner; with only one thousand nine hundred and forty seven tons and 252 feet length, it did not mean that John Ambrose would exhaust himself with exercise, indeed he never made the voyage again because, as he said afterwards, "I was ill every day except one, and that was when the ship was in port." Passengers in those days had to take everything except their water and food, and that very often was not edible unless they made certain of it when booking their passage. Butter kept in kegs soon became rancid; vegetables lasted a very short time, even the water was not safe to drink without boiling it. One was very well advised to take such things as dried fruit, tea, salt, sugar, beer and anything for medical purposes. The companies merely supplied space, a very small cabin, just enough to turn round in and hardly that on the bunk, for which you had to bring your own bedding and mattress; even the candles that lit the passenger to bed he supplied himself. Cabin passengers had their food cooked and served to them, but those travelling second class had to cook their own food. Quarrelling and fights were by no means unusual on the voyage, as can be well imagined when one reflects that so many people were cramped in so small a space.

On Christmas Day⁷ 1854 the "Champion of the Seas" entered Port Phillip after a voyage of 75 days, which was a record. John Ambrose had probably very little luggage to take ashore, which was fortunate, for the cost of taking one's goods into Melbourne was terrific. William Howitt, writing of that period, said it cost as much to take one's luggage from the ship in Port Phillip to Melbourne as it did 13,000 miles from England to Port Phillip. Even the charges for taking passengers from the ship to the shore were exorbitant, a pound being demanded for the short trip.

On landing there was sort of inn, Liardets, with a clean well-furnished sitting room, where one could have a drink and wait for the omnibus for Melbourne. Then the "bus" would arrive, drawn by two wretched horses. It was a long, tumble-down wagon that looked as though it would fall to pieces. It had no covering, just a miserable narrow plank either side to serve as seats. Into this vehicle crammed a dozen people with their luggage, their carpet bags, baskets, brown paper parcels, birdcages and inmates, and anything else that they could take. All these were loaded in such a manner calculated to give most inconvenience to the passengers.

Dejectedly the passengers must have surveyed the scenery - sand, mud and swamp, swamp, sand and mud - relieved here and there by a few starved trees, and not a shrub or blade of grass was to be seen. On dusty, glaring days, it sent the spirits down to the depths. The cattle seemed as wretched as were the human beings on the road. "The rainy season's not over," the driver would observe apologetically, as they rolled along at walking pace, the "bus" lurching from side to side owing to deep ruts in the heavy soil.

As a railway was opened in September 1854, it may be imagined that John Ambrose would have travelled to Melbourne by train. This is doubtful, as the first and only engine on this first railway in Australia, Sandridge (now Port Melbourne) to Melbourne, was constantly breaking down. On November 29th the first railway engine made in Australia refused to work any more, and all traffic was stopped until the arrival of an imported engine from England. This was made by the famous Robert Stephenson & Co., but it did not start its regular journeys until December 26th, the day John Ambrose landed at Port Melbourne. The probability is, therefore, that he travelled by road, or on foot.

Hot and tired, John Ambrose descended from the "Bus" outside the Melbourne Post Office. He inquired for letters from the mail boat⁸, but they had not yet arrived. Depressed and hungry, he set out to look for accommodation - no easy task in the Melbourne of the fifties.

Melbourne in 1854 must have been a very bewildering city to a young man used to a quiet English country town. The streets were thronged with traffic and a busy crowd of people were hurrying to and fro on the business. Carriages, omnibuses and cabs plied as actively as in London. In Bourke Street and Elizabeth Street, lines of drays a quarter of a mile long standing against the footpath were being loaded with boxes, casks, barrels, bales and packages. The rolling and crunching of the wheels of carts, the cries of the bullock drivers, the oaths and raucous songs from the bars and windows of the public houses, the shouts and clamour from the auction rooms, the long

⁶ From letter to "The Age" from Mr. David Little. (A.R.)

⁷ Family tradition says John Ambrose arrived on Christmas Day, but shipping records show the ship arrived on 26th December. Probably the ship arrived in Port Phillip on Christmas Day, and port officials would have been on Holiday. (C.K.)

⁸ "Letters from the Mail Boat....Surely he had been on the Mail Boat! (C.K.)

trains of loaded drays passing through the city, the smart carriages and people hastening along on horseback, all added to the din and roar of the Melbourne with which John Ambrose first became acquainted.

He arrived with eight golden sovereigns in his pocket, a tiny sum to face life with in this new, hard country. In the early fifties the cost of living was excessively high, butter was four to five shillings a pound, cabbages 1/6 each, eggs 4/- a dozen, and everything else relatively as expensive. Rents were monstrously high, two small rooms, poorly furnished, let for £4 and £6 a week; two empty ones of the very meanest description for £2. The innkeepers had turned their stables into sleeping-places, and a man gave 5/- a night for a third of a horse's stall, good straw and a blanket and rug. Hundreds of people who couldn't find accommodation camped on a site known as Canvas Town, extending from what is now Moray Street to St. Kilda Road. Very probably John Ambrose visited Canvas Town with a view to living there. Here he could pitch a tent, providing he paid the government five shillings a week for the occupation of this waste land. Canvas Town was arranged in streets named after the London thorough-fares - Regent Street was the main one, and there was Holborn, and the Strand, and many others. Here vice, crime and immorality, misery, refinement, filth and decency, lived side by side. In those tents lived human beings with all their worldly possessions; babies were born there and people died. Here men and women, who had known the comfort of English life, cursed the day when they left to come to this town of hardship, of which they had never dreamed possible. Here John Ambrose must have felt his heart sink, and it needed all his courage to face the future.

But John Ambrose was not one to let depression and unpleasant surroundings get the better of him. Finding his sovereigns soon disappearing, with his last few pounds he invested in a quantity of books bought at an auction sale. These he re-sold at a considerable profit. Then he made a number of journeys to the Caledonian diggings on foot - a distance of about 27 miles. There he sold books and copies of "The Argus" to the miners. On other occasions he sold groceries and candles. Soon he had saved about £40; he decided he would try his luck at gold mining, so he went to Mount Blackwood; it was one of the nearest "diggings" to Melbourne, only fifty-five miles away, one could go by coach but it cost £4; John Ambrose walked.

Provisions and everything else were expensive at the diggings, and he needed every penny he could take with him. It was a very hazardous undertaking with the certainty of hardships, and only great luck would make him rich. The roads to the mines were very bad; if he went through the Black Forest it was dangerous, as many outrages had been committed there. It was here bushrangers robbed the returning digger of the gold he had so laboriously won, and then brutally murdered their victim.

Human life at the diggings was held cheap, justice corrupt, the police inefficient and callous. The indifference to human suffering of the multitude of people, in their eager search for gold, was appalling. Few made their fortunes; for the majority it was hardships, exposure, dysentery, broken health, and for many death. John Ambrose must have experienced and seen the miseries and triumphs of the goldfields while searching for gold, but without success. He was at the goldfields when he had heard of the arrival of his father and two brothers in Melbourne on the "New Great Britain", after a voyage of just over four months. He had little money, so he walked back to Melbourne from Mount Blackwood in two days.

John Kitchen found no difficulty in finding work in Melbourne. He immediately secured the position as manager of a small tallow candle business in Prahran. There is no record of what the brothers did in 1855; Philip presumably knew the trade, and may have worked with his father or for another manufacturer. Theophilus was only a boy of fifteen, and probably began to learn the trade that was to be his life vocation, under his father's guidance. Perhaps they worked as grocers and chandlers, a business they both knew, or maybe John Ambrose introduced them to the goldfields, where they saw the possibility of a big market for miners' candles. Whether it was this, or the experience John Kitchen had acquired in Australia encouraged them to start on their own account, is not known, but early in 1856 they all joined forces and started making tallow candles.

They rented a small house in Bridport Street, Emerald Hill now (South Melbourne). It was a small, single-storied building about 12 foot square. The candle frames they obtained cheaply by buying them out of bond from the Customs. The fats, which they procured from the butchers, they obtained themselves on the small barrow, and their products they likewise took round to sell to the grocers. The boiling down was done in old coppers in the back yard, and while the father and brothers worked late into the night at the candle frames, John's second wife would sit reading to them by the soft light of one of the tallow candles.⁹

⁹ John's second wife... his second marriage did not take place until nine years later, in 1864! (C.K.)

By hard work, and the business acumen of John Ambrose, they began to succeed, though the profits they made were very small indeed. Their first difficulty arose in 1857 when the local council gave them a month's notice to move from the locality to a suitable distance from the township because they were carrying on a noxious trade. John wrote to the council explaining that he had commenced his factory before the council came into existence, adding that no complaint had since been made. He said he had entered into a renewed lease of the premises for two years, not expecting any action by the council. Owing to the difficulty of finding premises outside the town, in November John asked for an extension of twelve months to enable him to find a place suitable for their purpose. At a council meeting, the chairman moved that Mr. Kitchen be advised that the council could not comply with the request. One of the Councillors, a Mr. Service, said he did not like to see Mr. Kitchen turned away at one month's notice, especially as no complaint had been made against the premises. On May 3rd, 1858, John requested the council to ask the Government to grant a lease of 10 acres of land west of the railway for the erection of a slaughterhouse, and if this were granted, that the council should lease to Mr. Kitchen and sons a portion of the land for building a candle factory. The council agreed to do this, and gave an extension of five months to carry on the factory in Bridport Street. The site for the slaughterhouse yard that the council secured was in a different locality, and intended for a dairy yard. The factory was later built on its present position outside the boundary of South Melbourne.¹⁰

In 1859, John Kitchen and sons started manufacturing candles north-west of the Hobson Bay Railway, as the site was then described.

¹⁰ Site of the Factory:

The "Age" report of the fire on 28th February 1860 reports the site as the junction of Sandridge and Emerald Hill Roads (now apparently Crockford Street and Ingles Street) South-east of the railway.

Street directories say west side of Bay Street next to the "Fountain Inn" (which is at the junction of what are now Bay Street and Crockford Street) and later (1856) either the factory or dwellings were in Raglan Street near North Port station.

Other evidence confirms that the factory was not established on the present site until 1869, when they also had an office at 3 Queen Street Melbourne (C.K.)

Chapter II FIRE AND A RIOT

The factory built at Sandridge was a wooden structure, worth about £400. The land around was swamp, and floods constantly caused difficulties and stoppage of work. Behind the factory was the Port Melbourne Lagoon, then a beautiful sheet of blue water, crystal clear. Here the men would shoot wild duck and fowl for sport, and, as an extra special treat, for Sunday dinner.

In those days, conditions of labour every week were extremely hard. Working hours were, in general, from 8 to 8 and from 8 to 5 on Saturdays. Little was done to alleviate the lot of the worker, as it was considered he was a free man and able to look after his own interests. In Australia, conditions were more favourable for him than elsewhere, for there was a shortage of labour, and he could demand higher wages. Sailors frequently ran away from the dreadfully hard conditions on the sailing ships, and would apply for a job as they passed the factory on the way from Port Melbourne to the city. They were a rough and broke brutal type of men, as may be seen from an experience of one of the foreman in the factory, who on one occasion just arrived in time to cut a man down and save him from being hanged. It appeared that man had robbed his companions of tobacco, and in revenge they proceeded to hang him. It may be they are only intended to threaten him, but their victim was very nearly killed, and only the prompt action of the foreman saved him.

The Kitchens worked in the factory, sharing the conditions of labour, and were on very good terms with their workpeople. They lived on or near the premises in two cottages next to the works. They experienced very few labour difficulties, until a man named John Harrison joined them. His business was deliver candles to the grocers, and because of negligence in his work, John Kitchen was obliged to dismiss him. The sequel was an important one in the history of the firm.

Monday, February 27th, 1860, was one of those sweltering hot days that makes work in the heat impossible, so John Kitchen decided to stop work in the afternoon, and by 3 o'clock all the factory fires were put out, the only men working were two labourers on sanitary alterations. With the exception of the Kitchens, the only other person on the premises was George Morrel, a labourer who slept there. At 9 o'clock John Kitchen went to bed.

A little before midnight he was awakened by George Morrel yelling "Fire, Fire", at the top of his voice. Jumping out of bed he rushed to the window and saw flames bursting from the roof of the stable. He hastily got into his clothes, called to his sons and they rushed over to the factory to save as much of the property as possible, but the fire was quickly spreading, and, in the absence of an effective fire-fighting equipment and outside help, it soon got out of control.

To assemble the Emerald Hill Fire Brigade to put out a fire at night, the police had to call on members of the Brigade at their homes and get them out of bed, then the Brigade mustered round the place where the look-out firebell and hosereel were kept. When they were all gathered, they either placed the reel on the first fire cart that arrived or rushed with it on foot to the scene of the fire. However energetic, agile and quick the members of the Brigade were, fire in a wooden building was bound to get a good start on them and by the time the Emerald Hill Brigade arrived the fire was burning like a merry truant.

Outside the burning factory a large crowd of people had gathered to watch the fire and give gratuitous advice to the firemen. The inhabitants of Sandridge, who had their own fire brigade but no uniforms, considered it was their fire and contended with the Emerald Hill men for position of the branch hose. While they were arguing the Melbourne Fire Brigade arrived.

The insurance companies at that time kept their own fire brigades and the Melbourne fire fighting organisation was under their control. When the Melbourne men arrived on the scene - twenty minutes after receiving the alarm - they found the altercation between the Emerald Hill Brigade and the people of Sandridge still going on. Mr. William Bencraft, Magistrate and Superintendent of the United Insurance Companies' Fire Brigade, in an endeavour to preserve order and then extinguish the fire, rather arbitrarily demanded possession of the hydrant. This was a signal for the Sandridge and Emerald Hill men to join forces against the Melbourne Brigade. They refused to hand over the hose. Mr. Bencraft announced that he was a magistrate saying "I am a Justice of the Peace of this colony and the City of Melbourne and in such capacity I call upon you to lay down the hose and go off the ground to prevent bloodshed." Receiving howls of derision from the mob he ordered that the hose be handed to his men and he directed them to take charge of it. As the Melbourne "Argus" and "Age" newspapers described it, one

of the most disgraceful and brutal riots took place. In a few seconds there was pandemonium - the Melbourne men were attacked, they were struck in the face, they were kicked and generally assaulted in the most murderous manner. Finally Bencraft was rendered unconscious from a blow on the face from a ruffian's boot, and, but for the interference of some troopers and members of the public, who drove the mob from the vicinity, he would certainly have been murdered. Later the police arrived and order was restored, several men being arrested.

Meanwhile Kitchen's factory was burned to the ground, only the chimney stack was left standing. Fire and riot had thoroughly destroyed buildings. Very little of the property was saved, a few candle frames and some of the manufactures. It was a great loss to the Kitchens and meant that they would have to start again, practically from the beginning.

At an enquiry into the cause of the fire, John Kitchen gave evidence. He said "I am the proprietor of the premises in which the fire occurred on Monday night last about midnight, I carry on the business of candlemaker. The premises are situated in Sandridge, they are of wood. I was partly insured on the building, only to the amount of £300, the value of the building was about £400, the stock and plant were worth about £700 and was not insured. I was not pressed by anyone for money, I was doing a good business... I, and my sons slept on the premises that night, one of the workmen remained also on the premises that night, he slept on the hay over the premises, close to where the fire commenced... I had no quarrel with anyone but dismissed a man about three weeks ago, he has been at Sandridge ever since, I suspect this man of setting the premises on fire, John Harrison is his name."

After hearing the evidence of many witnesses the jury was of the opinion "that the premises had been wilfully set on fire by one John Harrison and the said John Harrison was guilty of arson". Harrison was committed for trial but was acquitted by the judge who directed the evidence disclosed a case of mere suspicion.

As a result of the riot several men were each fined £5 and costs or a month's imprisonment. The foreman of the Emerald Hill Fire Brigade made a report to the council and after an investigation they upheld the Brigade's action, but the Brigade disbanded and asked the council to arrange a new system of fire protection.

Chapter III

LEGAL PARTNERSHIP

As often happens when people and nations have had to face a disaster, they have reorganised themselves and emerged strengthened by the experience; so it is frequently with commercial and other organisations. This was the case with the Kitchens by the autumn of 1860 the business was in full working order again and John and his sons decided they would enter into a legal partnership which was drawn up and signed on 19th November, 1860.

The agreement was for seven years between John Kitchen, Philip Kitchen, John Ambrose Kitchen and Theophilus Kitchen, to carry on a business for the manufacture of soap and candles, under the title of John Kitchen & Sons. Each partner was allowed to draw only two pounds ten shillings a week; he could not buy or contract for anything in excess of five pounds without first the consent of the other partners. Proper accounts were to be kept and approved and signed by all the partners each month. If one of the partners wished to resign he had to give three months' notice; six months' notice was required if two of the partners desired to resign and then the partnership could be dissolved. There was also a clause for arbitration in the event of a dispute. It was a simple legal document drawn up for the mutual benefit so as to avoid any disputes likely to interfere with their business then in its delicate infancy.

At the age of twenty two, Theo, a young married man, restless to succeed, probably feeling the progress of the business not fast enough for him, decided he would open a grocery store in North Melbourne. No doubt he acquired valuable experience and knowledge of the grocers' and public's requirements, which were of value to John Kitchen and his sons in building up the business, but he soon found he preferred working with his father and brothers, for he was re-admitted to the partnership on June 1st, 1864, by an agreement dated 2nd August, after having retired the previous March.

While Theo was running his grocery business, an Act was passed by the Parliament of Victoria "for the incorporation and regulation and winding up of trading companies and other associations" known as the "Companies Statute 1864". Under this Act, on May 18th, 1864, J. Kitchen & Sons was first registered. There being no copy of the Articles of Association of this registration in existence, it is not possible to state the capital with which the Company was registered, but as the partnership agreement indicates, it is presumed that the Company was an unlimited one. An important addition to the agreement was the necessity of an official general meeting every six months.

On the 11th June, 1868, the partnership agreement was renewed, dating from June 1st, for 10 years. The capital of the Company was divided in equal shares among the partners and they all agreed to accept an equal share of the responsibilities of the Company. Their salaries were to be three pounds a week from the profits, but no extra money could be taken without the consent of the other partners. The rest of the conditions were the same as those of the 1860 agreement.

For expansion and to build up the business, additional capital was required and while there is no record of the date, it is probable this was that time when Mr. Keep, father of the prominent Melbourne family, offered to lend them the money. John Ambrose, with his keen sense of business, immediately saw the necessity of this, but his two brothers, Philip and Theo were not sure that borrowing money was consistent with their religious principles, and it needed all John Ambrose's powers of persuasion to get them to agree. Later, when the money was repaid, Mr. Keep was so delighted at their success, that he presented John Ambrose and Theo with a silver tea and coffee service, sending them the following letter from London:

3 Primrose Hill Road,
London N. W.
Nov. 21st, 1877

Messrs. John A. & Theo Kitchen,
My Dear Sirs

I have this day forwarded per s. s. "Whampon", a case addressed to Edward Keep & Co., which will be delivered to you on arrival.

The case contains a Silver Tea and Coffee Service, for each of you, which I hope you will accept and

cherish as a pleasant memento of our long, and large business and friendly connection.

It gives me, I assure you, as much pleasure to make the present as it can afford you to receive it. I know it will pleasantly recall difficulties overcome, dark times lived through, doubts dispelled and confidence rewarded.

Sincerely wishing long life and happiness to you both.

I am,
Yours very truly,
EDW'D KEEP

The business was now making steady progress and developing into a sturdy organisation. In the 1866 exhibition¹¹ J. Kitchen & Sons received a medal in recognition of the excellence of their soap, and early in 1870 they bought out Gossage Bros. factory at Footscray and transferred all this soap making there. The whole of the works at Sandridge were under one roof, a small galvanised iron building. The hours of work were similar to those elsewhere - six o'clock in the morning to six o'clock at night and an early break on Saturday at five o'clock in the afternoon. John Ambrose was in charge of the city office, his staff was Mr. Pell, the "chief clerk", and a boy from the factory who spent his mornings helping at the office. When the sailing ships arrived once a month from England, "The Argus" put out a special small edition with about two paragraphs of the "latest" news from England of the Franco-Prussian war. The cost of the paper was sixpence and John Ambrose sent the office boy for a copy as soon as it was printed.

In an 1865 John Kitchen, then 66 years of age, was living in pleasanter surroundings at Waterloo Street, St. Kilda, while his sons lived in the cottages adjoining the factory, so as to be near their work. By 1873 they, too, were all able to live in a residential district at Pakington Street, Kew, leaving the works in their absence, in charge of a foreman. During this year, on the 3rd July, the partnership agreement was again renewed for ten years. John Kitchen had virtually retired on five pounds a week, and the three brothers drew seven pounds a week each because of the active participation in the business, this being incorporated in the agreement. A new clause, which shows how the business was growing, was that every six months stocktaking and a review of the accounts had to be made; the profits being equally divided among the partners as were the liabilities. Another addition was that in the event of the death of any of the three sons, the deceased share shall remain in the partnership and his salary cease, but three pounds a week would be paid to his estate and the usual share of the profits. On the death of John Kitchen his share also was to remain in the business but 8% of the profits to be paid to his estate.

In 1876 they decided to open a branch in Wellington, New Zealand; Joseph Kitchen, another brother, went over to manage it. Two years later they purchased Mr. W. H. Carwardine's soap and candle business at Sandhurst and asked him to go to New Zealand for three years and personally superintend the soapmaking and manage the factory in association with Joseph Kitchen., at a very generous salary of £500 a year and 10 per cent of the profits. Later Mr. Carwardine returned from New Zealand and was again appointed manager of the Sandhurst factory, succeeding Mr. J. Cousins, Senior. New Zealand proved a tough proposition, the story of which belongs to a later part in the firm's history.

On the exploration of the 1873 agreement, J. Kitchen & Sons was re-organised, the Company being incorporated under the Companies Statute on the 30th January, 1883. The list of shareholders and the capital was registered on the 6th July of that year. The nominal capital was to be 30,000 shares of £150,000 at £4.10.0 per share and the number of shares paid up was 15,445. Old John Kitchen held just the nominal number of 10 shares, Philip 4,759, John Ambrose 4,387, the Theo 5,279, John Hambleton (son of John Ambrose) 10, and Joe Frith 1,000. As it can be seen it was still a family affair, with one exception, Joe Frith, who was a friend of the brothers. They sold him a thousand shares on the understanding that he would re-sell them to the Kitchens at the end of three years, or any other time mutually agreed upon, as they wished to keep the shares in the family. In a letter to Frith at the time, John Ambrose mentioned how successful the firm was and that the "profits had been very large, averaging about 25 per cent on the capital invested during the last five years". Even in 1882 when business generally was bad and their opposition made heavy losses they showed a 10% profit. The shares in the Company when available were well sought after; Messrs. Robison Bros., who made machinery for J. K. & S. and had just valued the whole of the plant, were prepared to take £20,000 worth of shares at five pounds a share - the market value at the time, but Kitchens

¹¹ 1861 International Exhibition at Melbourne, J. Kitchen & Sons first exhibited their soap, candle and tallow. (A.R.)

did not sell.

In short space of 27 years John Kitchen and his sons had built up from the humblest beginnings one of the leading soap, candle and allied industries in Australia and New Zealand, but the business was still young and only in the youth of its progress. The firm, besides manufacturing soap and candles, was making glycerine, washing blue, soda crystals and baking powder, but John Ambrose was well aware that, to maintain the premier position they had attained, it was necessary to engage a first class manufacturing chemist, with a thorough knowledge of up-to-date methods. It irritated him to see Lewis & Whitty, a smaller firm, sending out large quantities of borax soap, while he had no one with the knowledge to make a similar product.

At this time, 1884, a Mr. George Payne Clarke, who was manufacturing manager for the Apollo Candle Co., and one of the leading authorities on the manufacture of soap, glycerine and stearine in Australia, had just completed a contract with the Apollo Company. Kitchens were anxious to secure his services, but they did not wish to offend the Apollo people, as they had been friendly competitors, and exchanged information and made selling agreements with them for some years. Clarke, who felt he was worth a higher salary, had had an offer of about a thousand a year, from Drivers, a New Zealand firm, but he promised the Apollo and Kitchens not to settle until he had discussed the matter with them. The Apollo was a reasonably big concern which manufactured and traded in Brisbane and elsewhere in Queensland, as well as in Victoria, with their factory at Footscray. Whether it was partly with a view to sharing Clarke's services, for he was an expensive man for one firm, is not clear but negotiations were entered into for an amalgamation of the two companies, though Kitchens were not very keen on it, as it meant they would cease to be what was practically a family proprietary company, and they feared the dividends and profits would not be so big if they amalgamated. On the other hand, if they refused the amalgamation, the Apollo would inevitably join with Lewis & Whitty, and to fight them would be very disadvantageous to the Kitchens, who almost certainly would have lost Clarke's services. The decision to amalgamate was left almost entirely to John Ambrose and Philip, as Theophilus had gone to England on business for J. K. & S., with instructions to look for a manufacturing chemist had to buy some machinery, but these two matters were cancelled when the amalgamation was decided on, Theo having been consulted by letter and cable.

The separate companies that went into voluntary liquidation, where each allotted 17,500 shares of the new company. The capital of the company was £250,000 divided into shares of £5 each. J. Kitchen & Sons properties, including those in New Zealand, were valued at £119,350 and those of the Apollo Company at £96,485.

The new company, under the title, J. Kitchen & Sons and Apollo Company Ltd., commenced trading and held their first meeting of directors on Monday, 2nd February, 1885, John Ambrose Kitchen in the chair. The first directors of the Company were Messrs. Philip Kitchen, John Ambrose Kitchen, John Hambleton Kitchen, Charles Campbell and the Hon. Thomas Loader, who was elected the first chairman of the Company. John Ambrose Kitchen was to be managing director of the Company for a period of five years at a salary of £1,000 a year, providing John Ambrose, Theophilus and Philip Kitchen held together held not less than four-fifths of the shares allotted to them. Theophilus was to assist in the management of the Company as manufacturing director at a salary of £1,000 a year.

With the Apollo machinery, which would not be required, now that the Footscray factory was merely a boiling down establishment, they decided to start a business in Sydney. In February John Ambrose went there and concluded a preliminary agreement with a Mr. Charles Upfold and a Mr. Alfred William Gilles, for the formation of a soap and candle manufacturing concern in New South Wales.

At Newcastle, N.S.W., a soap and candle business had been founded by Mr. Charles Upfold in about 1864; he was a man of considerable skill and ability in his trade, having learnt the business of soap making with the famous English firm, John Knight. At 18 years of age he went to America and there for two-and-a-half years he was manager of a soap factory in New York. After returning to England he sailed for Australia, in 1859. He tried but failed to make a fortune as a digger in the goldfields, and returned to his trade as a soap maker, first at Ballarat, Victoria, where he had sought gold, and then with Peter Logan of West Maitland, N.S.W., whose descendants are still making soap. After working at Morepeth, Newcastle and Tamworth, N.S.W., where he established his own factory, he had commenced business - Upfold Soap Works - at Wickham, Newcastle, where he could obtain cheap coal, there being three mines within a radius of two miles, and cheap tallow was also available. The factory was erected near a tidal creek with a good watercourse, making an excellent place for a soap factory in those days, when the disposal of the lye was haphazard and, if let loose on good land, ruined it. Mr. Upfold was a short sturdy man, inclined to be stout, with a very quick temper; if anything went wrong he would blaze up in anger, but he never bore

malice and the trouble was soon completely forgotten. Ordinarily he was one the most genial persons one could wish to meet, a shrewd businessman as well as a good tradesmen. He joined partnership with a man named Hutchinson and in about 1878, after Upfold had paid a visit to England, they amalgamated with Alfred William Gilles and formed the Sydney Soap Co. They had their offices at 19-21 Sussex Street and works at Abattoir Road, Balmain, as well as at Newcastle. Subsequently they were joined by Benjamin Edward Gilles and Gilles Morton. Later they gave up their works in Balmain, Sydney, and changed their office to 50 Clarence Street. It was with this company John Ambrose arranged to form an organisation in association with Kitchens, for the manufacture of soap and candles in New South Wales.

The new company was called The Sydney Soap & Candle Company Ltd. and was registered on 25th July, 1885, though according to an agreement dated 11th June of the same year it had actually commenced trading in April.

The first subscribers who formed the company were Charles Upfold, who held 1445 shares, Benjamin Edward Gilles, 723, Gilles Morton, 723, Alfred William Gilles, 1445, Philip Kitchen, 690, John A. Kitchen, 690, Thomas Loader, 690, John H. Kitchen, 690, Charles Campbell, 690. It will be noticed that the Sydney subscribers held the majority of shares, 4336, and Melbourne 3450. The first directors were Alfred William Gilles, Charles Upfold, Benjamin Edward Gilles, John Ambrose Kitchen, Thomas Loader and George Payne Clark. Alfred William Gilles was elected first chairman of the Company for three years from its registration. Charles Upfold was appointed Superintendent of Manufactures, Benjamin Edward Gilles, Secretary, and Gilles Morton as Accountant and Salesman, all at a salary of two hundred and forty pounds per annum each.

Freehold land at Waratah and Germantown, Newcastle, and at Goulbourn, Argyll; leasehold land at Wickham, Newcastle, and the Works, together with soap and candle manufacturing plant and machinery, horses and vans, chemicals and other manufacturers etc, belonging to the Sydney Soap Company were placed at the disposal of the new Company. An entirely new stearine candle manufacturing plant from Melbourne, with other machinery, presses, vats, stills, pumps, pans, boilers, engines, candle plant, filter casks, hydraulic cylinders and other articles, previously the property of the Apollo Candle Company were transferred to the new Company.

But the first meeting of the Directors of the Company, Mr. G. P. Clarke, formally offered his services as Manufacturing Manager, and after a lengthy discussion, terms were agreed on, and he joined the Company in that capacity. It was understood that Mr. Clarke would be loaned to the other company, which would pay his salary while engaged by them, any time when mutually agreed between the different parties. The new organisations had thus acquired the services of a first-class chemist, who they realised was now essential to the business of soap and candle manufacturing. Mr. Clarke was destined to play an important part in the history of Kitchens; he was an Englishman with an outstanding knowledge of the scientific and chemical side of soap, candle and allied manufactures, holding the highest degrees as a chemist. He was born at Over-Darwen in Lancashire on the 18th January, 1851, and, as a boy went to the Taunton Grammar School; from where, at the age of 16, he matriculated to the London University, where he obtained science degrees. This secured him a position with a firm of oil manufacturers and refiners in Belgium. In 1874 he came to Australia under an engagement to the Apollo Candle Co., as their Manufacturing Manager with whom he remained for twenty years until the Company amalgamated with Kitchens. He then joined the Sydney Soap and Candle Company.

John Kitchen & Sons, and the associated companies now operated in Melbourne, Sydney, Newcastle, Brisbane and New Zealand, and was one of the largest organisations of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere.

Chapter IV THE BANK CRASH AND THE NINETIES

With the commencement of the Nineties, the prosperous and easy money decade ended in Australia. Banks were pressing for repayments of overdrafts, money was dear in London, wool was down and employment was increasing rapidly. To appreciate the difficulties the Company found prevalent at that time, it is worthwhile glancing at the economic background of Australia during that period.

Australia had been the speculators paradise, money had been poured into the colonies. English capital was pushed in by finance companies and colonial banks competed for the favour of lending money to the public. In the early eighties Australia was enjoying undreamt prosperity, the price of wool was steady, the refrigerator had solved the problem of sending meat and butter to England, the world, and especially the new German Empire, needed Australia's gold, which was still being discovered, together with silver, lead and zinc.

In the first five years of the eighties about thirty million pounds sterling, at low rates of interest, were invested by the British in Australia. The banks thought that land as a security was a good investment; why not, if wool and sheep were? The inevitable result was that land, especially in Melbourne - the new and flourishing city - fetched exorbitant prices, bearing no relation to the rents that could be paid to use it. Drought had come again to Australia, with the exception of Victoria, with the consequence that the loaned money was invested there, and Melbourne became the financial centre of the colonies. Land banks sprang up, aggravating the position; a block of land at the corner of Elizabeth and Collins Streets was bought for the unheard of price of £700 a foot and then later sold for £2,300 a foot. Property in Toorak near the site of the present Governor's present residence sold for £8,000, which a few years previously could have been purchased for £400. Land was bought not for use but for speculation; the inflated prices were bound, sooner or later to burst, as they did by 1890; at such prices it became unsaleable. The land banks, with no realisable assets, crashed. Barings of London fell, William Westgarth & Co., who held a large amount of Victorian issues, swiftly crumbled to pieces and lowered the prices of all Australian stocks. By the middle of an 1892 twenty-one financial concerns of various kinds were in suspension, hundreds of people went through the insolvency courts, and within a month twelve banks in Australia, with liabilities of over a hundred million pounds, suspended business.

All classes of people and most businesses were affected by the bank crash, and the Kitchen organisation and its members were not excepted. John Ambrose alone lost a small fortune, and he had to sell his beautiful home "Elsinore" in Wellington Street, Kew. In July 1890 John Ambrose and Theo resigned their directorships of the Company 'temporarily', as John Hambleton, who had also lost heavily in the financial orgy of land speculation, had done earlier in June. It was then that John Hambleton went over to New Zealand, to manage the business until it was disposed of in 1894. The Hon. Thomas Loader, the Chairman of the Company, was hit by the financial crash though it did not affect him badly until 1896, when he resigned his seat on the board. The Sydney Soap & Candle Co. voted him £100 to help him over his financial difficulties and later his fortunes recovered and he resumed the chairmanship of the Company.

J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. weathered the storm remarkably well, though they suffered from the dullness of the trade in 1892 and 1893. Reductions of about 20% were made on all Directors' and Managing Directors' fees and savings were affected on salaries, except those of under about two and three shillings a week. The most important matter that affected the Company was the suspension of the City of Melbourne Bank, the Company's bankers, with whom they had an overdraft of about £70,000. The bank, in common with all financial houses, was calling in its advances and the Directors had some very anxious hours, for the bank was entitled to take immediate possession of the properties mortgaged to it unless their demand was complied with in six days, a not unlikely procedure at that time. Fortunately, the Kitchens had other properties which they placed with the bank as security and so overcame what might have been a disaster.

During these financially difficult times, on March 17th, 1893, a fire broke out in the works at Port Melbourne, but this time it was no repetition of the unpleasant occurrence of the fire of 1860. While the men were at lunch at about 10 minutes to 2 o'clock and the premises were almost deserted, black smoke was seen rising from the oleine store, a wood and iron building - flames soon shot through the roof and the foreman of the works, Mr. Hubert O'Brien, who lived in a cottage adjoining the factory, was summoned immediately. He telephoned the Metropolitan Fire Brigade and then directed the men, who had been trained to some extent in fire fighting, to hold the fire in check. Both of the powerful pumps the firm had installed for pumping water from the river to the factory were put in use and when the fire brigade reached the scene, which they did it very quick time, they found that

excellent work had been accomplished by pouring water on the adjoining building, it being seen from the first that it was absolutely impossible to put out the flames in the building where they had first broken out. The fire raged for about an hour and a half, but fortunately the wind being from the north, the flames were driven from the other buildings. Water on the fire being quite useless, recourse was made to caustic lye. A discovery had been made 20 years previously in the old works that lye, a liquid obtained in the of manufacture of soap, was most powerful in quenching fire. Wherever this liquid, of which a thousand gallons were used, was thrown on the flames they were completely put out, but the heat caused it to explode with a sound like a bomb. The office roof caught fire several times but the lye effectively put it out, the Oleine Store Building burned with an intense fierceness, as may be guessed from the fact that oleine is an oil extract from tallow, and once the fire had got a hold there was no possible chance of extinguishing the flames.

The damage done consisted of the total destruction of the Oleine Storehouse and its contents and the partial burning of the Office and the two adjoining rooms. The books were safely removed from the Office and also the contents of the rooms without much damage to them. There were no serious casualties but several of the men were badly scorched and others were burned by the caustic lye. Fifty pounds was distributed by the Company among the men who had fought the fire, with the directors expression of thanks for the willing and energetic assistance given by the workmen.

The water supply from the main which ran along the road was so bad that had it not been for the firm's two pumps and the caustic lye, the fire might have been far more disastrous in its effects. The damage to the property was assessed at £3,760 but the insurance was for a only £3,383 so the loss to the firm was about £377, which was very nearly the value of the damage done to the factory in 1860 when it was completely destroyed. Fortunately, the business was not interrupted and deliveries were made as usual.

At the elections for the Victorian Parliament in 1894, the Liberals were returned in majority and Sir George Turner became Premier. The new Parliament was pledged to some form of tariff revision though Turner had been vague during the election campaign as to what precise duties he would drop. Not long after the new Government attained office, he appointed a Tariff Board, which was in effect a Commission, to inquire into the question of a revision of fiscal duties. The report of the Commission favoured many reductions in duties, including those on candles, which brought not only a protest from employers but from the Labour Party as well. The Trades Hall Council passed a resolution "emphatically protesting against the recommendation of the Tariff Board as being calculated to injure and possibly destroy several important industries."

Kitchens knew that the proposed reduction from 2d to 1d per pound duty on imported candles would do enormous harm to the business and a energetically attempted to persuade Parliament to retain the tariff, or at least not make the reduction so heavy. John Ambrose wrote an open letter to the Premier, copies of which were printed in pamphlet form, protesting against the abnormal reduction recommended by the Commission.

The evidence given before the Board by two of the witnesses, he said, was absolutely untrue. These witnesses stated that a ring or arrangement existed between the local manufacturers for the purpose of making large profits at the expense of the public and that the price of locally made candles in New South Wales is, and has been, 2d a pound less than that obtained by manufacturers in Victoria, and also Victorian companies had been selling candles at Albury at 2d per pound less than at Wodonga. John Ambrose emphatically denied the existence of any arrangement to maintain prices; on the contrary he said that competition had reduced them so low that there was only a bare margin for profit. On the second point he commented that the price of candles in the Sydney market was on a par with the prices in Victoria and that, compared with the prices charged by the Sydney Soap & Candle Company for six years ending December 1894, the difference was under one farthing (0.23d) per pound. To the third assertion he replied that no Victorian made candles whatever had been sold in Albury or any other border town in New South Wales, either by this company or any other Victorian party for many years. The statements by the same witnesses that there had been extravagant expenditure by Kitchens and the Sydney Company he denied and said they were absolutely false.

He drew the Premier's attention to the fact that there were three organisations in Victoria manufacturing stearine candles and the capital invested was £200,000, employing 400 people paid about £40,000 annually in salaries and wages. The tallow consumed each year was 4,000 tons and the total annual expenditure for manufacturing purposes in Victoria without including goods imported and irrespective of profit and dividends was not less than £250,000. In addition there was a great number of people indirectly employed in the industry supplying acids, casks, boxes paper etc. who would all be affected by a fall of trade in the industry.

The candle industry, he wrote, was initiated and nourished under Protection, and in the belief that Protection was the settled policy of the country large sums of money were invested in it; when the industry was first established, the price of candles was about 11d a pound, now in 1895 stearine candles were only 5¼d a pound. The lowest priced candle, an excellent second quality, was only 4¼d a pound.

In the report by the Commission, the opinion was expressed that tallow being on the spot a duty was not required, but it overlooked that the difference between Colonial and European prices of tallow was much smaller than previously owing to reduction of freight expenses by nearly one half. On the other hand, the Australian manufacturers worked under other disadvantages, the continental makers by increasing their output reduced the price of their manufacture and could ship their surplus product at lower rates than they were prepared to accept in their home market. The continental employer paid wages fifty per cent lower than Australian and much of the work was done by women at a few pence per day. In Australia there was no local market for by-products (oleine, glycerine and pitch), which had to be shipped to England getting much lower return than the continental competitors. Also the Australian manufacturers had to pay more for machinery which they had to import and repair.

Concluding, John Ambrose said that, if Parliament endorsed the recommendation of the Commission that a duty of one penny a pound be put on block paraffin, the candle manufacturers would be willing to accept a reduction in duty of one halfpenny a pound upon stearine candles until some future time when assisting industries shall have come into existence which would absorb this industry's by-products. He appealed to the Premier to recommend to Parliament that the duty upon stearine candles also be one and a halfpenny a pound instead of the proposed one penny.

But Sir George Turner had no intention of giving a lead on the question himself. He had told electors on the eve of the election ". . . that if the people thought some other form of taxation was best, he would not be particular about his own proposal." He had no well-defined attitude on the tariff problem himself and so he left it to Parliament. Kitchens therefore prepared a pamphlet which they circulated to the members of the Legislative Assembly refuting certain mis-statements made during the debate on tariffs. In addition to the points raised in John Ambrose's letter to the Premier, the pamphlet asserted that the firm lost from £6 to £7 on every ton of by-products they shipped to Europe, the quantity sent being about 1,000 tonnes annually. Replying to one member it stated the local market could not utilise one-fifth of the total production of glycerine and, as for oleine, the production of which is more than three times as great as that of glycerine, the market does not absorb ten tons during the year. The statement in the House that mining candles had deteriorated was untrue; since 1880 quality had improved by four degrees of melting point and the price had lowered by over forty per cent. Imported candles, it was pointed out, are invoiced in Australia at less than cost and at twenty per cent less than to any other part of the world in the hope of crushing out the local manufacturers, and the amount by which the duty was reduced would simply go into the pockets of the foreign manufacturers.

It had been stated during the debate that the industry was initiated under Free Trade. It was true that candle making had started under Free Trade but everyone interested in that industry had lost their money and it was abandoned. J. Kitchen & Sons had started after an imposition of the one penny duty, but were unable to make any headway until the duty was increased to two pence. Even after this, the Apollo Company Ltd., lost large sums of money before the amalgamation with Kitchens was brought about.

The propaganda against the various duties proposed by the Commission and the influence of the Labour Party had its effect. In spite of the Government's pledge to a general reduction of tariffs, the changes made were generally very unimportant and far different from those proposed by the tariff board. But there were exceptions and, unfortunately for Kitchens, the duty imposed on candles was reduced to a penny per pound. This was what one of the most serious checks the Company had received in its progressive career; it was a blow from which the candle manufacturing side of their business did not recover until the duties were increased in 1908, and it was only due to the aid of the modern machinery and methods of production that the Company had acquired that they were able to compete under very difficult conditions in the market at all. They were, for many years to come, exposed to the competition of candles made under cheap labour such as those manufactured in Burma by coolies at a wage from fivepence to ninepence day, and to candles moulded in Australia from imported cheap paraffin wax manufactured in America by the Standard Oil Trust. The Company was forced to devote more attention to the output of bone dust, the export of tallow, oleine and pitch and later to the cultivation of cotton for the oil from its seed.

In 1897 the New South Wales tariff on imported candles was reduced still lower to only a halfpenny per

pound. A year earlier there was some talk about Sydney becoming a manufacturing centre of Australia under the auspices of Free Trade. In an interview, John Ambrose expressed himself very forcibly on the matter; to a reporter he gave the following interview:

"I am interested in a similar establishment (soap and candle manufacturing) in Sydney employing about 150 hands. Although as yet only half the duty has been taken off, they have been obliged to reduce salaries of the officers by 25% and the men by 20% and to get rid of many of the latter consequence of the competition with cheap importations. We have works in Sydney worth about £30,000; when the duty is removed altogether I will take £5,000 for them. Our industry will simply be strangled out of existence, and this is how Sydney is to become the manufacturing centre of Australia."

Australian Star, 16th April, 1896

Just before Federation the Sydney Company found the candle trade so bad that they close down their stearine works, and, to keep the trade together, imported stearine and wax, as it was cheaper than manufacturing it. They hoped that in the following year, when Federation was to take place, a duty would be imposed and the candle trade retrieved. However, Federation did not take place until nearly two years later in 1901. Everyone filled up stocks in expectation of the duty being put on but in December it was reduced, instead of increased, to a penny a pound. The importers reduced their prices to about the same as the companies' quotations, so the position remained very much as previously except the Sydney Company had large stocks of candles on hand, as had everyone else and business was dull because of the overloaded market.

Even in those early days the invention of the electric light began to threaten the candle industry. Anticipating the illumination of buildings for the celebration of Federation and the opening of the Federal Parliament, Kitchens planned to have ready thousands of candle "fairy lights" or "block lights" as they had done for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee but few years previously. For six months they manufactured candles in preparation for the event, the men worked overtime and their wives and children at home made the wire holders that held the candles upright in the glass containers. Thousands were ready when the authorities decided to illuminate the buildings by electricity.

It was the first big blow to the prestige of the candle illuminations. But even this doughty competitor did not affect the demand for "block lights" and Kitchens could have sold many more than they manufactured. It is worth noting that the candle has not died out and still has its place even in these days of fantastic inventions.

The closing years of the century held no particularly exciting events for the Company. In March 1898 John Hambleton Kitchen, Charles Campbell and later in the year Thomas Loader were in London attempting to raise a debenture loan of from eighty to a hundred thousand pounds but they did not meet with success.

When J. H. Flack, who joined the board in January 1898 and was elected chairman when Thomas Loader went to London, resigned his directorship in September 1899 to go to England his business partner Mr. T. J. Davey was elected in his place. Mr. Davey was a handsome man with the appearance of an artist rather than a man of business. He was born in Bristol, England, in 1844, and received his education there at the Fairland Lodge School.

In 1857 he came to Victoria, arriving on his birthday. His first experiences in Australia were on a station at Lindenow, then he went into business as a storekeeper at Sale. Four years later, on returning to Melbourne, he turned his attention to mining and other interests; then in 1872 he commenced business as an incorporated accountant. Later Mr. T. Cole and Mr. E. H. Flack joined him as partners in his business, becoming Davey, Flack & Co.; when that firm was dissolved in 1899, he established with Mr. E. J. Balding the business of Davey, Balding & Co., public Accountants. In 1891 Mr. Davey became a town councillor, being elected for the Lonsdale ward of the City of Melbourne. He was destined to become, first, Acting Lord Mayor of Melbourne, while Sir Henry Weedon was in England in 1907, and later Lord mayor for the years 1910-11 and 1911-12.

While a member of the Council he was instrumental in founding the Electrical Supply Department, which became one of the most successful and profitable of the corporation's enterprise. His wide knowledge of finance which he, as a councillor and then alderman, placed at the disposal of the City of Melbourne was also in great demand by many business houses. He was one of the founders of the Incorporated Institution of Accounts of Victoria, which became the Commonwealth Institute of Accounts. Kitchens were fortunate in securing him as a member of their board, of which he later became Chairman.

Since he left Australia in 1894 John Hambleton had been carrying on a successful agency in London,

buying and selling on behalf of the Company and its associates and keeping a keen lookout for any inventions, discoveries or new machinery that might be of valuable to the organisation. He visited America in 1899 and became acquainted with the Twitchell process for the splitting of tallow in the making of stearine. The patent of this process was held by the Emery Candle Company of Cincinnati, Ohio and had been invented by their factory manager, Ernest Twitchell. The method entirely dispensed with the use of autoclaves, and the process was cheaper to work and gave equally good results. Kitchens agreed to pay John Hambleton as agent for the Emery Candle Company a royalty of twopence a hundredweight on all tallow operated upon by them by this process in any of their factories in Australia, except in New South Wales, where the Sydney Soap and Candle Company had made a separate agreement.

The process was a secret one and every care was to be taken not to let it be known to other manufacturers and this agreement was for a period of five years. It was a great triumph for John Hambleton to have attained the exclusive rights of this process for the companies he represented and Kitchens showed their appreciation by presenting him with an honorarium of £150 for his services. The Twitchell process proved a great success and it is now one of the most important methods used in the industry as a commercial with that for splitting fats in the production of fatty acids, candles, soaps and glycerine.

With the nineteenth century coming to an end, the Federation of the Australian colonies was being planned, delegates from each of the States had gone to London to watch the passage of the Australian Commonwealth Bill through the Imperial Parliament. After various amendments had passed through both Houses and received the Queen's assent in July 1900, the Commonwealth of Australia was destined to come into being on January 1st, 1901.

Chapter V

NEW ENTERPRISES

The Company suffered a great loss on the death of the chairman there on. Thomas Loader, in February 1901. As chairman he had steered the Company through many vicissitudes. His help to the Sydney Company in its great financial difficulties had been very much appreciated by them, and his jovial personality, sound advice, mature judgement and his kindness of disposition had endeared him to his colleagues. Thomas J. Davy succeeded him as chairman.

For some time, the Sydney Company had been making objections to the Melbourne Directors because they were unable to compete in the New Zealand market (though in actual fact they had done so and made Kitchens liable to damages) owing to an agreement made by Kitchens when they sold the branch in New Zealand not to trade in the colony. If this was to continue to Sydney Company asked Kitchens to cancel the agreement between them restricting their trade in Melbourne and Queensland. There were also other agreements, entered into by Kitchens many years previously, it may trading under the new conditions very unfavourable. With the coming of Federation and consequently free trade between the States, it meant that the Sydney Soap and Candle Company would send goods to Victoria; this would constitute a breach of the agreements made by J. Kitchen & Apollo Co. Ltd. with other companies in Melbourne, because the Kitchen directors were on the board of the Sydney Company, Kitchens being liable to very heavy damages. Already they had broken the agreement with Lewis and & Whitty by making baking powder at Ballarat and were liable for a penalty of £3,000 for this and any further breach. Lewis & Whitty were taking no immediate steps but it was a continual threat. Again, the Sydney Company had manufactured articles which were prohibited to Kitchens and who, though not actually making them themselves, were liable for damages. The establishment of Federation, a political event outside their control, had made circumstances unfair to Kitchens in the carrying on of their business and a solution had to be found.

Another matter that was causing the Melbourne directors a good deal of worry was the liability in respect of the uncalled capital of the Company amounting to one pound per share. At the time of the formation of the Company in 1885, valuations of land and plant were very high due to the boom period and the page-up capital was considerably inflated.

After discussing the matters with the Company's solicitor, Mr. G. H. Downer, John Ambrose presented a scheme to his co-directors for the solving of these problems. He first suggested the cancellation of liability on uncalled capital, which was the chief object in his scheme of reconstruction. The desirability of getting rid of the liability of the £1 per share on the Company's Capital was obvious, he said, and would undoubtedly raise the market value the shares besides being a great relief to individual shareholders. John Ambrose argued, as there was no possibility of a call being made at that time, it was better to take the matter in hand at once. Though the shares were normally at £5, of which £4 were paid up, owing to the drop in land values and plant from the time when the Company had been established at the considerable out-of-date plant which the Company had never used, the shares were not intrinsically worth more than £3. He therefore proposed that the paid-up capital be written down in a new Company to £3 per share by a revaluation of the assets. He pointed out that by the voluntary liquidation of the present Company and the formation of a new Company to purchase the assets and liabilities of the existing Company they would dispose of the objectionable agreements that restricted their trade. He suggested a slight alteration in the name of the new firm, leaving out the word company said that the firm's title would be J. Kitchens & Sons & Apollo Ltd. A little publicity would be essential but not harmful, and no doubt the bank would be very glad to continue the firm's account on the same terms as heretofore and the cost to the scheme would be very small, only about £200 to £250.

The directors discussed John Ambrose's proposals and decided to adopt his suggestion for reconstruction of the Company, but only reduced the shares to £4 each fully paid-up, so that the shareholders would receive a £4 share without liabilities in the new Company for every share they held in the existing Company. There was to be a capital of £250,000 divided into 62,500 shares of £4 each. They proposed that the new company should be named "J. Kitchen & Sons Ltd" instead of the clumsy title it had been working under. The proposals were adopted and the new Company was incorporated on the 27th September, 1901. The directors of new Company were Thomas James Davey, Charles Campbell, John Ambrose Kitchen, Theophilus Kitchen and Andrew Newell. John Ambrose and Theo retained their positions as Managing Director and Manufacturing Director respectively and there were no alterations in the personnel for the new organisation.

Although the Melbourne directors held half the shares in the Sydney Soap and Candle Company, they had

practically no control over its policy or management. The Sydney directors went their own way with little or no regard for the Melbourne interests. John Ambrose had been working for some time to change the state of affairs when something happened that brought things to a head. A clerk at the Wickham office, Newcastle, in whom Charles Upfold had put a great deal of confidence, had been receiving and pocketing debts due to the Company which he had not accounted for, and also had by false representation obtained cheques from the managing director for accounts that had already been paid. The defalcations amounted to just over £700. A.W. Gilles quarreled with Charles Upfold blaming him for not taking more care when he was signing the cheques and said he should have scrutinised the accounts more carefully, and that the office at Wickham was inefficient. Upfold retorted that the Wickham office was better organised than the Sydney one, which required a good overhauling. Both points of view were justified and after the auditor had advised a number of alterations to be made at the Wickham office, attention was turned to Sydney. It was seen that the business required a complete investigation and re-organisation. John Ambrose talked the matter over with Charles Upfold and suggested that his son John Hambleton be brought out from England to take charge and overhaul the structure of the business. Upfold agreed and John Hambleton was approached, and accepted the chairmanship and managing directorship of the Company. He settled his affairs in London, forming the company of Bennie & Kitchen with J. R. Bennie, with whom he had jointly represented the companies' interests in London.

In October 1902, Charles Upfold and A.W. Gilles resigned their seats on the Sydney Soap & Candle Co.'s board, but their services were retained by the Company. John Hambleton Kitchen was elected a director and chairman of the Company and appointing appointed managing director. He immediately set about his task of re-organisation. In the office only those who were efficient were retained. In the sales department he found that the Company was most unsatisfactorily represented in country districts. The firm had only two travellers who were not able to call on country stores more than about once in every three weeks. In the meantime the Company's interests were in the hands of the wholesalers who had no special interest or inclination to push the Sydney Soap & Candle Company's products. Between the very infrequent calls competitors got in and took much of the business that should have gone to the Company. John Hambleton immediately remedied this by engaging another three travellers. The re-organisation did not suit the two Gilles and frictions arose with the result that the Secretary, Gilles Morton, was asked to resign; it appears he refused, for in August, his employment with the Company was terminated. At the half-yearly meeting of shareholders in November 1903, both A.W. Gilles and Gilles Morton attacked the management, A. W. Gilles speaking at length, but when the vote on the adoption of the balance sheet was taken they were the only two dissentients. Except for a number of letters, and attendance at some of the half-yearly meetings until 1909, when they sold their interests in the Company, the association of A. W. Gilles and Gilles Morton with the Company had come to an end.

The success of J. Kitchen & Sons can to a large extent be attributed to the retinue of devoted, energetic and able sons of the Kitchen family. John Ambrose, Theo and Philip had perhaps more than their father, established the business on its firm foundations. Then came John Hambleton who inherited a his father's business ability and reputation for personal integrity, and he was soon contributing his share to the firm's progress. His quick perception for new developments, new openings and new opportunities were proving to be of great value. Theo's son, William J. Kitchen, after studying chemistry in London, was working as his father's assistant and devoting his skill and energy to the manufacturing side of business at Port Melbourne. He lacked the uncompromising drive of his father but his ability, integrity and devotion to his job, together with his lovable character, won the affection of workpeople in the factory, assured and able succession to control the manufacture of the firm's products. Philip's son, J. J. Kitchen had not entered the business, having adopted the profession of medicine, and in that capacity he was associated with the firm as their doctor, attending to the infrequent accidents that occurred in the factory.

At the beginning of the century yet another son of John Ambrose was making his mark with the firm; he was Frederick William Kitchen, John Ambrose's son by his second wife. He too had inherited his father's qualities and ability and with his brother John Hambleton, was to contribute to the stability and reputation of the business. From a minor position in the firm he had learnt the commercial aspects of the firm's activities and, early in the nineteen hundreds, was in charge of the rapidly expanding sales department.

The first years of the new Company, J. Kitchen & Sons Ltd, were not favourable from a point of view of business. Owing to the heavy rise in the cost of tallow early in 1902 and the new Federal Tariff which proved prejudicial to the Company's interests, the year was not as profitable as could be wished; 1903 showed no improvement; on the contrary a loss of £104 was shown on the balance sheet at the second annual meeting of shareholders. This did not mean there was anything radically wrong with the Company, but unquestionably, the profitability of candle making had been impaired by tariff legislation; there was no doubt the directors would have

to devote their attention in other directions. The obvious products, besides soap, on which to concentrate were a greater output of bone dust and an increase in the export of glycerine, tallow, oleine and pitch, and the production of edible oils.

The Company had been using coconut oil and cottonseed oil for some considerable time, though they did not extract the oil themselves. Both were excellent as ingredients of edible fats which the Company was now manufacturing, and, to appreciate the importance of the industry, it is worthwhile examining its development. Margarine had originated in France when, in 1869, the French government offered a prize for discovery of an artificial substitute for, but cheaper than, butter. A French chemist, Mege-Mouries, after investigating the formation of fat in milk, produced a substance similar to butter, though more fluid, which was called "oleomargarine"; for this he was awarded the prize. Subsequently, by making it more solid, he succeeded in converting their product to a very good imitation of butter. This was originally sold in Paris under the name of margarine and proved to be of great value during the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, when Paris was under siege. The production of margarine - it was called Butterine by many until well laws were made decreeing that all artificial butter should be sold under the name of margarine - soon developed in other countries. Kitchens began to manufacture it in Australia in the early 'eighties, sending for experts to come out from England to advise them, and later under the direction of G. P. Clarke.

Lever Bros. of Port Sunlight, England had opened a plant on the present site at Balmain, in Sydney, for the extraction of oil from copra and cotton seed, and Kitchens were purchasing the requirements from them. In 1901 Theo went into the question of the firm manufacturing their own cotton seed oil and coconut oil. He reported to the Board in favour of installing a plant capable of putting through about 2½ tons of copra in a working day of about eight hours. After correspondence to England on the matter, he recommended that William J. Kitchen should visit Europe and America to inquire into the business generally and its developments abroad and, with John Hambleton, purchase the plant for extracting the oils, obtain manufacturing information, if available, and buy the machinery in England. This was agreed to and William J. Kitchen left for Europe in April 1902, and purchased the plant which was later it erected at Port Melbourne.

Even at that early date they began to consider growing their own cotton, for in 1903, when Theo was in Brisbane, he made inquiries about it and saw a Mr. Grimley of the Acclimatisation Society. Mr. Grimley had just returned from a visit to North Australia, where he had been trying to induce farmers to grow cotton, peanuts and sunflowers, all of which gave valuable oils. At Rockhampton he had met a large number of farmers and forty of them each promised to put in one acre of cotton to try it. Already one of them was growing peanuts and intended to increase his acreage. Soon cotton was being grown in Queensland on a small-scale, and Theo visited a plantation where he picked some himself. Later the firm undertook a cotton growing enterprise in Queensland, of course not for the cotton but for the cotton seed. The Company also encouraged farmers to grow it, even supplying them with seed for the purpose gratis, and agreed to purchase the crops resulting from their efforts. The cotton was then ginned, so as to separate the seed, and exported for sale in London. The bulk of the seed was treated for oil and the rest was resold or given to the farmers for growing.

Kitchens were on good terms with most of the competitors, and John Ambrose was always anxious to know what they were doing. They bought their coconut oil from Levers, whose "Sunlight" soap was the only serious rival to "Velvet". When in Sydney in 1906 he was invited to visit Lever's Works and his impressions are best given in his own words: -

"At the invitation of Mr. Meek, the managing director, Mr. J. H. Kitchen and myself paid a visit to these Works, which to me was most interesting and instructive. I had always fallen in with the current opinion that these people were carrying on a Works that were very badly managed and showing annually a considerable loss; my visit entirely changed all this, and as far as I could see, the Works were thoroughly well and economically managed. The Company is doing a very large business, and from the conversation we had with Mr. Meek we both left the place under the conviction that Mr. Meek was telling the truth when he said that every department of the business was paying a fair profit. All the machinery seems thoroughly up-to-date and labour saving in the last degree. A great many girls were employed in the place, which by-the-by I have advocated for many years past in Port Melbourne. The rapidity with which the stamping of Sunlight Soap was done was something wonderful, and the machine kept twenty girls constantly wrapping.

"The Toilet Soap Department was an eye opener; the Sydney Co. and ourselves had been playing with this department for some years, the Sydney Co. doing scarcely anything in toilet soaps, and most of the trade we are doing is in a very low class soap that gives us no profit, whereas Lever Bros. have made a large department of it;

there were twenty girls wrapping toilet soap, practically of a high-class quality, got up very artistically, and this soap is to be found now in nearly every store and chemist's shop in New South Wales. To me it seemed very hard to see this trade taken up so successfully by new people. The box making arrangements were very good. The printing machines for the boxes I was especially taken with, as the designs were most artistic; the boxes were all imported on the flat and put together at a very small labour on the Factory, either with tongued and grooved machine, or a nailing machine.

"It is evident that their business is a progressive one, as they are now adding very largely to their Soapery, building a considerable addition. There were six large soap pans, each capable of turning out 40 tons of soap; three were in full boil.

"The Glycerine Department also was much larger than I expected to see, and, from the large number of men working in it, it seemed to me that they got a very large quantity of glycerine, and that the statement they got 9% of glycerine from the Soap fats, against ours of probably five, I should say, was likely to be correct.

"The Coconut Oil making department was also very instructive. Mr. Meek considers they are putting through about 10,000 tons of copra annually; they are now giving up £17 for their Copra. They consider it can be grown for little more than half this; their coconuts are now just coming into bearing, and they expect within a very short time to be independent of the outside copra market, as they will get sufficient from their own growing. This department alone must in the future give them a handsome profit on Sunlight soap over and above their competitors, who have to buy copra at so high a price.

"Altogether I was very much impressed with what I saw, and I consider we should take into consideration the importing of boxes on the flat, the printing of our own cartons and boxes, and making them up at our Works. The machinery might involve a considerable outlay, but if we do not keep up to date with such a competitor as Lever Bros. it must mean eventually disaster to our Company."

It was probably due to seeing how successful Levers were with their copra plant, and the optimistic prospects of the coconut plantation that made Kitchens consider a similar venture. Also realising that they had to find fresh sources of revenue, and new fields had to be exploited, these considerations turned their attention to coconut growing for supplying their own copra requirements. Immediately on his return from Sydney John Ambrose put the question before the board; the other directors hesitated but he pressed the matter and urged them to consider it favourably, as Levers had decided to buy large plantations for this purpose, which would enhance the value of the islands in the north of Australia, and therefore, J. K. & S. should take steps to secure land at once. In October 1906 enquiries were made as to the possibilities of growing coconuts in Queensland, and the Instructor in Tropical Agriculture at Cairns informed them it was possible, and suggested there was suitable land near the Daintree River and between Port Douglas and Cardwell, especially about Port Douglas, but difficulties in finding labour made it impossible in Australia.

When Theo Kitchen was in Sydney in January 1907 he had long conversations with Mr. Meek of Levers, who gave him every assistance he could and advice on finding a suitable plantation. He saw the Burns Philp Company, as they were anxious to do anything they could to help them into planting in the islands, because it meant an increase in their freight business. Theo gathered information about the Solomon Islands from several people who had been there, he learnt that there was plenty of land with anchorage to be obtained, but it had recently reached rather high prices. While in Sydney he was put touch with the Rev. C. W. Abel of the London Missionary Society, who had been in charge of in an industrial mission at Kwato, an island close to New Guinea, being only half a mile from the mainland. Mr. Abel was thought to be a good businessman and very practical, because he had successfully carried on the mission, it was said, under very great difficulties. Theo Kitchen visited Mr. Abel at Katoomba, where he was staying while in Australia. He told Theo Kitchen that New Guinea was, in many respects, preferable to the Solomons, it was much more accessible, labour would be cheaper, and the climate better. No doubt his personal sincerity and enthusiasm for the territory he was interested in was genuine, but naturally coloured by his own experiences of the district, which certainly had a very good climate, and the comfortable conditions he lived in; and his recommendations persuaded Theo it was an ideal place for a coconut plantation. He added it was under Commonwealth Government control, although at this time it was not included in the Commonwealth tariff legislation, but a commission had been appointed to inquire into the government of New Guinea and it was quite evident that favourable changes were to be made. Mr. Abel said the reason so little had been done in New Guinea was the want of a fixed tenure of land, but this had recently been arranged on an almost perpetual lease - the first ten years for nothing, and afterwards at a nominal rental; the only doubt was whether the climate was as favourable

for growing of coconuts as in the Solomons. He advised Theo Kitchen that a man of experience should be engaged to select suitable land in either territory and then give information and if necessary be available to start the planting.

In February, 1907, Mr. Abel visited Melbourne and was invited to meet Kitchens' directors at a special board meeting, who, after asking him many questions, requested him to make inquiries on their behalf for suitable land in New Guinea. This he consented to do and promised to let them have the information they required in about a month's time. Later his report was received, and it was largely due to Mr. Abel's enthusiasm and Theo Kitchen's prejudice in favour of anyone connected with the Church, that got the better of his usual perspicacity, that Kitchens eventually bought the plantation. They entrusted Mr. Abel with the selection of the land, when they should have engaged an expert. And even to a man with previous experience on a coconut plantation, the selection of land was not easy. Not only did private persuasion induce Kitchens to start in New Guinea that government information was also affected that encourage them to start a plantation there. An extract from a government report on growing of coconuts in Papua shows this very clearly, it reads -"This (coconuts) is a very remunerative and most reliable industry, and one that should receive quite as much attention as rubber cultivation. The natural conditions are, in every way, suitable, and skilled labour or extensive plant is not required in the production of copra; Papua being outside the hurricane belt, possesses an great advantage in this respect over such places such as Fiji, the New Hebrides and Samoa. The trees begin to yield in five years and are in full bearing when eight or nine years old. A full-grown tree should yield 60 nuts a year and with 50 planted to the acre that area should yield 3,000 nuts, or half a ton of copra, worth £10. A factor of great importance in connection with the copra industry is the absence of large fluctuations in the price of that product and a remote possibility of any serious slump in prices as the demand for oil is unlimited."

Who wouldn't be impressed by such golden reports?

With all this bright, promising information, Kitchens optimistically entered into the business of copra production and set about the formation of a company, first sending Fred Kitchen to apprise them on the property they had leased. The land that Mr. Abel selected is at Lauiam, about 30 miles from Samarai, which is at the south-eastern point of New Guinea. Fred Kitchen's impressions of the place are best given in his own words: -

"The journey from Melbourne to Samarai, via Cooktown, as I went, takes within a day or two of three weeks, even when time is saved by taking a train to Brisbane; the alternative route, via Solomons, of course taking longer. The route I took via Cooktown and Port Moresby, gives one eighteen to nineteen days at Samarai; in the present case, practically all this time was valuable, but for future visits of inspection eight to ten days should be ample.

"It was fortunate that my steamer had to stop at Port Moresby for nearly two days; this gave me plenty of time to go into details as to growing, planting etc., with Mr. Staniford-Smith, and he gave up one for morning to me, but I was somewhat disappointed that he could not give me more information and he did. At Port Moresby I also ascertained that our application for the land had been accepted. I have since instructed the Government we are going ahead at once with plantation work, and have asked for Lease to be prepared; this will be done as soon as the land is surveyed; the survey was commence while I was at Samarai, but cannot be finished for two or three months. In the meantime a bill has been drafted and sent to Melbourne for approval, which provides for right of renewal of Lease up exploration of the ninety-nine years. In Lease we undertake to plant one-fifth of the selection in five years, two-fifths in ten years, and three-fourths during the first twenty years.

"I made Samarai my headquarters, although I spent a lot of time with Mr. Abel at Kwato; we are fortunate in having our land so near Samarai, this town being the 'Business Capital' of Papua. Our land, by water is about thirty miles from Samarai, the Government Steam Launch, 'Ruby', taking about five hours to do the trip. The Government are now cutting a track across the mainland to Waga-Waga; this is a mission station just on the other side of the bay from our land; if the track is made fit for a horse to travel it will very much reduce the distance between our land and Samarai; at the same time I do not consider this will be any immediate benefit to us.

"The year is divided into two seasons, the South East and North West; the former which extends from about June to October is the cooler and drier, but there is really no dry season, and there is very little variation in the temperature; but during the North West, or Summer Season, the atmosphere is very much more humid, and consequently more unpleasant. I was fortunate in being in Papua during the coolest

months of the year, and therefore having nothing bad to say of the climate. If what I am told is correct, there is nothing for anyone coming from the south to be frightened of, as far as heat is concerned, as long as they arrive and get away during the South East Season.

"The rainfall at Samarai is good and general all the year round, and from what I could learn the rainfall at Lauiam (our plantation) is much the same as at Samarai. It is said that anything from 50 inches per annum is usually enough for coconuts, so we should not have to complain of insufficient moisture.

"Samarai appears to be quite a healthy place, as far as that goes, the mainland, where our land is situated, is healthy enough but for malaria fever, and this, in most cases, does not take a very serious form, and it is certain that the proper use of quinine makes one immune from malaria. My experience teaches me that so far as future trips of inspection are concerned there is nothing whatever to be afraid of as to one's health, as long as due care is exercised.

"There are three hotels at Samarai, any one of which are quite comfortable, and good enough for anyone to stay at.

"The authorities appear to be doing all in their power to assist in the opening up of the country. Mr. Campbell, the resident magistrate at Samarai, sent his assistant, Mr. C. O. Turner, with Mr. Abel and me in the Government Launch 'Ruby' to inspect the land; it was a great advantage having their 'Ruby', and Mr. Turner was a great assistance, as he knows the country perhaps better than any white man in Papua.

"We arrived at their destination soon after mid-day, and it was at once seen that there was no anchorage on the coast line, but what both Mr. Abel and Mr. Turner described as the best anchorage in Milne Bay is at Gili-Gili, as will be seen by sketch map. Gili-Gili Island makes an outer anchorage, but under the shelter of the island is a small bay with ten to twelve feet of water within six feet of the water's edge; this will be a first-class anchorage for any boat we may wish to take in. My idea is that later, when we have copra to bring to Melbourne, we will be able to run a small ketch, with the carrying capacity of 70 to 100 tons, right into this bay, where we could load her without building even a small jetty; such a boat might bring coal to Samarai, where the price today is just on 40/- a ton, or some other cargo, and return with a cargo of copra to Melbourne. It is unfortunate that our land does not front on to the anchorage, and that the land next to ours and fronting the anchorage, has been taken up by the London Missionary Society; however, their land only runs along the coast some 200 yards, and I therefore, applied for another five acres adjoining; this has a frontage onto the anchorage, and it is my idea to use this five acres as our drying ground when the copra comes in later on; there will be no difficulty in connecting this with our large block, as the government reserve one and a half chains all around the foreshore as roadway.

"It was very unfortunate that I should arrive during one of the wettest times that can be remembered, the first seven months of the year producing nearly as much rain as is usually experienced during the whole year, and this was followed by a further fall of five inches just before I arrived at Milne Bay. On arrival we at once started out through the country, following native tracks, or walking in the beds of creeks. It was nearly four o'clock before we left the boat, and as Mr. Turner knew the land so well he undertook to act as guide, but to show how easy it is to lose oneself in the jungle on our land, we had not walked for more than half an hour before we had completely lost our way; however, we walked on, expecting to come across a native village and get a guide, but it was not until it had been dark for half an hour and we had just made up our minds that we should have to camp out all night, that we stumbled across a native village, and we were very glad to get back to the boat about eight. Next morning we left Mr. Abel behind, as it was still raining hard, and he did not care to face it again after the wetting of the previous night. Mr. Turner and I started off at a few minutes to nine o'clock, taking Banuamai as guide, the man from whom our land was purchased by the government; we walked solidly for nine hours, during which time something like three inches of rain fell, and we were all the time over our ankles in mud, or in a creek with water varying from our knees to our waist; we, therefore, could not cover as much ground as I would have liked, but I saw sufficient to give me a good idea of the country; I really covered the whole of the 3,500 acres South East of Maivara Creek, but did not do so much of the 1,500 acres west of the creek, but from what I did see of the 1,500 acres I confirmed Mr. Turner's opinion that it is much the same as the 3,500 I travelled through; Schroder says, if anything, it is better. Of course it is not so near the coast, but it is near enough to get all the sea breeze that is to be had on the coast itself. Mr. Abel says some

of the best coconuts he has seen are growing behind this country, that is, farther from the coast. I was also told by Mr. Westland (the man who comes from Ceylon to manage the Rubber Coy. Mr. Bloomfield was starting in Papua) that some of the best coconuts in Ceylon are growing one hundred miles inland.

"As far as one can judge from a hurried inspection of virgin country covered with dense growth, our land is one huge flat; a few small hills are to be found at the back, that is along the boundary farthest from the sea, and here and there dotted right through the land are to be found sago swamps; these swamps are very nasty, varying in extent from an acre or two to say thirty acres, and in many places up to one's waist in depth. It may be possible to drain them, but I should not think this would pay, and, at any rate at first, we must merely pass them by as we go ahead with our clearing and planting. There may also be some patches of soil not suitable, but all I came across, with the exception of the swamps already mentioned, is suitable for coconuts. Mr. Turner and others, who know our land well, say that we should get at least 3,500 acres of good coconut land out of our 5,000. I was inclined to say more than this, but I am content to take the figures of those who know the land better than I do. The whole of the land is what is commonly called 'scrub' land. The growth is thick, but there is no great quantity of large timber. I can hardly understand this, considering the depth and undoubted quality of the soil, but it may be that the land has mostly at one time or another been cleared by the natives for their gardens, and as they never make a garden two years in succession on the same spot, the large timber has all been removed.

"I have already mentioned that I saw the country under exceptional circumstances, so far as rain was concerned. The water is at present kept from getting away on the surface by fallen logs, which honeycomb the surface of the land, and when it is remembered that the country is very flat, and also that the sun in most places does not penetrate the foliage, it can be understood how very wet such a place would be after a few inches of heavy rain, and certainly I was at first frightened that our land was nothing more or less than a swamp, but this is not the case; only a very few days after I was there the surface was quite dry again, and when the land is cleared, I am quite certain that will be nothing to fear from too much moisture. The native beaten tracks, which one has to follow, were slushy mud, varying from ankle deep to the top of one's boots, and in some places nearly to one's knees; but just in from the track, even where water was lying, the soil was quite free and open; every now and then as I walked through, I took up a handful of earth and tried to work it into a solid ball, but it was too open and gritty to stick.

"One point that struck me very strongly is the coral that can be seen all through the soil; evidently the land has been formed on a coral bed by the continuous washing down of soil from the mountains, thus forming a rich open soil; everyone appears to agree that the ideal soil for coconuts is a sandy loam and mixed with rotten coral, and our soil appears to me to comply with this in every way; perhaps it is not quite as sandy as some would like, but it is free and open with no sign of stiffness, and judging by the way the native-planted coconuts are doing where they had been planted inland, ours must be a success when planted properly.

"In saying our land is suitable for growing coconuts, I want it to be understood that I do not say we have the best land to be had in New Guinea; so far as this goes, I must go by what I am told, as I had no time to go around looking at other land, but everyone spoken to who knows anything of land in New Guinea, says the one thing, that there may be better land in small lots of 100 acres or so, but there is nothing better to be had in one lot. Mr. Staniford-Smith is of the opinion that our land is as good for coconuts as anything he has seen, with the exception of Java, but there, there is no more good land available. Mr. Schroder (our manager) says that our land is as good as any he has seen in the Solomons.

"The whole land is situated at the end of Milne Bay, and the South East trade winds blow right up the bay, so at least for six months in the year it is under the influence of sea breezes, more or less strong. The authorities now appear to agree that is not so much salt water that the coconuts require as the fresh sea breeze, and, as I have already said, this is just what our trees will get.

"Schroder just had time to spend two days at Lauiam and return to Samarai in time to catch me before I left; I would have gone with him, but there was a chance of not getting back again in time to catch the steamer. I am glad that I saw him again, as it was interesting to hear what he had to say after seeing the place. I have already said he was favourably impressed with the land, but he confirmed Mr. Staniford-Smith that there were not suitable seed nuts available, and he strongly advises sending to the Solomons for our seed nuts. Mr. Staniford-Smith also recommended this. Mr. Westland recommends getting the

seed nuts from Ceylon, and gave me the name of W. H. Wright, Mirigama, Ceylon, who would send us very good nuts; this is the man whom Lever Bros. have some seed from. Of course it is impossible really to tell from seeing the nuts which are likely to give the best returns. Mr. Westland says that the nuts in Ceylon are larger and have thicker flesh than the Solomon Island nuts, which he saw as he came through, but, on the other hand, the Solomon Island trees bear very much more freely, than the Ceylon trees, but this he accounts for by the difference in soil, Ceylon being far behind the Solomons in this respect. It must not be lost sight of that it is more than possible that when the Ceylon nuts are grown in the Solomon Islands or Papua and bear more freely owing to the better soil, that the nuts will be smaller than when growing in Ceylon and bearing fewer nuts; at the same time Mr. Westland points out that the Ceylon nuts have less fibre than the Solomon Island nuts, and this would allow the Ceylon variety to bear as many nuts as the Solomon Island variety, and at the same time maintain the superiority in quality.

"I had a long talk with Mr. Meek (Lever Bros.), in Sydney; he says that he has gone very carefully into the question of seed nuts, and they are now experimenting with many different varieties, but they have not yet had time to ascertain the result; but one thing he is certain of, from experiments his company have made, and that is that there is not sufficient variation in the percentage of oil's in different copras to make this point worth considering; this being so the only thing to be considered is the quality of copra to be got from a tree; here again Mr. Meek is of opinion that there is not much difference in nuts from different parts; he says so long as the nuts are a good shape and size, and have not too much husk, he would plant them. He quotes one authority as having planted nuts from extra good trees alongside nuts taken from poor trees, and one has done equally as well as the other. We could plant all the good local nuts procurable; this would give Schroder an opportunity of comparing the nuts, and it would give us sufficient to keep us going till Schroder had time to report to us, when we could order more. I am of opinion Schroder's judgment as to what is good seed can be relied on.

"Many people predict that labour will be a difficulty, but after going closely into this I am not afraid of it. It maybe that in a few years labour will be a little dearer, and even more costly to recruit, but I do not believe we will be stuck up for want of it.

"Authorities appear to differ as to how soon trees coming to bearing, some say five years, others eight to ten before any crop can be looked for. Mr. Abel planted some trees just seven years ago in a bad position on a hill in bad soil; most of these were spoilt by cows, by taking one which had been left alone, I counted the nuts on it, and they numbered seventy. I am not sure how long the nut takes to ripen. Capt. Svensen says one year. If this is the case, then the total number of nuts on a tree at any time should give about the day the annual production of that tree. I, therefore, take it Mr. Abel's tree at seven years is producing seventy nuts per annum; the annual production of a good tree is put down at one hundred (100) nuts when in full bearing. Capt. Svensen quotes these figures, but goes on to say he considers two hundred (200) nuts is nearer the mark when trees are properly grown. To satisfy myself, I took some of Mr. Abel's trees and had them countered; we took a bunch of eight trees all planted about 12 feet apart, and on ordinary soil, they had been planted over thirty years; these trees average 172 nuts each; now, it must not be overlooked that they were planted twelve feet apart instead of thirty feet, and no trouble had ever been taken with them; one special tree we counted at two hundred and eighty nuts on it, and a tree of the same variety in Samarai is said to have over four hundred nuts on it, but this variety of nut is not much use, being very small, and the flesh being very thin. However, to go back to the ordinary trees, and to be on the safe side, we will take an average tree at seven years as producing seventy nuts, at eight years eighty, at nine years ninety, at ten years one hundred nuts. Taking fifty-four trees to the acre, this should give us 3,780 nuts per acre at seven years. Mr. Abel says it takes 5,100 Papua nuts to make a ton of copra; others say 5,600, to be on the safe side, let us take the largest estimate, we then get 300 cwt. 2 qrs. of copra from one acre.

"I cannot close my report without saying a word or two in connection with the work Mr. Abel has done for us; he has really been a great assistance to us in many ways; of course it was he who selected the land in the first place, and we might say to some extent worked us up finally to go into the enterprise; he was also of great assistance to me in many ways during my stay in Papua, and besides all this, he will always be a stand-by and one to refer to in the future. He has Mission Stations dotted all along Milne Bay, and the teachers at the stations will hear at once if anything goes wrong at Lauiam, and will lose no time in reporting the fact to Mr. Abel, who would immediately, on learning if anything were wrong, advise Mr. Whitten; this, in itself, will be a great advantage to us. It is impossible to put down in figures what benefit

Mr. Abel has been, and will be, to us, but I certainly think the Company should make him some small present; he absolutely refuses to take any remuneration for what he has done, or to accept any direct donation in aid of his Industrial Mission, but at the same time I think if the Company can see its way clear to send some present to his "boys", it would be acceptable."

It is very easy to see why Kitchens entered the coconut plantation business; everything conspired to encourage them and the obvious sincerity of Mr. Abel clinched the matter. J. Kitchen & Sons Ltd acquired five thousand and five acres of land on lease situated at Milne bay, Papua. On 5th March, 1908, with a capital of £150,000 a company was then formed to control the enterprise, called the Commonwealth Copra Co. Ltd. which bought the plantation interests from Kitchens for the cost price of £1,255/18/6. The first subscribers and directors of the Company were T. J. Davey (chairman), J. A. Kitchen, F. W. Kitchen, J. H. Kitchen and G. P. Clarke, and Mr. Fred Kitchen was appointed Managing Director. The capital of the Company was £50,000 in £1 shares, the Sydney Soap & Candle Co. holding a third interest.

The first manager of the plantation was Niel Schroder, a Norwegian sailor, who became a planter in the Solomon Islands for some years and then later at Doine near Samarai. He proved to be a good manager, but in October 1910 he resigned because he had been suffering from fever and was dissatisfied with his salary. Mr. Wright, son of the Ceylon planter mentioned by Mr. Fred Kitchen previously, succeeded him, remaining with the firm until 1929. The work on the plantation started in 1907 but there was comparatively little planting done until 1910, as up to then only 407 acres were cultivated; in 1911, 949 acres were added, in 1912, 113 acres and by 1913, a total of 3,228 acres were under cultivation. The work on preparing the land and planting it was done partly by plantation labour and partly by contract; the contract labour proved much more expensive than in the Solomons, costing about twice as much, as did the plantation labour, clearing, and planting.

The cost of bringing coconuts into bearing at Gili-Gili was in the region of £30 per acre, whereas at Lever's plantation it was, on the average, only about £20. Crops on the first plantation (1907-10) were very slow, by 1914 only a small quantity had been shipped. This compared very badly with the Solomons which gave a first crop in the sixth year of age of 2½ cwt. and 5 cwt. in the seventh. The Solomon Island labour was better than in Papua, one Solomon Island "boy" doing twice as much as the "boys" at Gili-Gili. Though labour was more plentiful in Papua, it was not an advantage because it was not used as economically as in the Solomons, where the management had to be much more efficient to make up for the lack of it.

In common with most pioneers, Kitchens found that the cost of exploring and gaining knowledge in a new activity can be very expensive, up to £120,000 was invested in the enterprise and return was very poor indeed. When Mr. Fred Kitchen had seen two hundred coconuts growing on a tree on Mr. Abel's estate during his first visit to Papua it was not pointed out to him that only about fifty or sixty of the nuts matured; the rest of the young fruit are eliminated in the course of natural selection in exactly the same way that only a small proportion of the blossoms on a tree grow to apples. It followed that the estimates to obtain 13 cwt. of copra an acre was a long way out, in actual fact only about 5 cwt. was obtained from Gili-Gili, and even in the Solomons the average yield was only in the region of 11 cwt. The land also proved to be very poor soil for growing coconuts, a matter which an expert might have foretold when observing how light the timber was that came from the land, of which quite a lot eventually turned out to be barren as far as the production of copra was concerned. But, taking all things into consideration, Kitchens were very lucky in the coconut enterprise, for even if they had obtained the best possible experts to advise them, it is likely they would have still started in Papua, as the knowledge of the subject was in its infancy; even Levers, who got the best possible advice, found their problems vastly different from those of Ceylon, where the advisers had obtained their knowledge and experience. The labour problems in the Solomons were quite unforeseen; the natives there belonged almost entirely to the Melanesian race, whose ancestors were warriors and headhunters. These men of battle and fine physique, it was thought, promised to make good workmen for the very arduous work entailed in clearing the thick bush and then growing coconuts. But with the introduction of civilisation, these Solomon Island natives lost their virility and became lazy; work to them was a poor substitute for fighting and hunting, with the result that native labour had to be obtained from other islands.

Kitchens, like Levers, soon discovered that, to become successful coconut planters, a constant supply of fresh capital was required; in July 1913 it was found necessary to increase the working capital of the Commonwealth Copra Co. Pty. Ltd., from £50,000 to £100,000 and again in March 1914, it was increased to £120,000 by an issue of further one pound shares.

Chapter VI THE BRANCHES

While the centre of Kitchens activities was in Melbourne they had an interest in all the markets in Australia. By a policy of expansion, from the very early days the firm's factories and agents covered the whole of the continent. The small Victorian branches were originally purchased when there was very little competition for the local country tallow, which could then be purchased for about £4 to £5 a ton cheaper than in Melbourne; this enabled the local manufacturer to get his material for soap making at a very low rate, the result being good profits from small businesses. By 1902 the situation had completely changed; there being severe competition for tallow in all parts of the state at Melbourne prices, transport costs were the only advantage the local maker had in his favour. Then again, until the nineteen hundreds or thereabouts, no Melbourne soap maker attempted to sell his soap in the country in competition with a local factory, but with the beginning of the new century came easier transport facilities and every Melbourne soapmaker had his country traveller and did a considerable business all over the state, even cutting prices to get the business. Also improvements made in the manufacture of soap, together with modern machinery had enabled the factory at Port Melbourne to produce considerably more cheaply than that at the country branches, and proprietary lines that were well advertised, like "Velvet" and "Lotus", had seriously affected the small country factory's trade. If the sale of soap had been the only consideration in the nineteen hundreds, it would have paid the Company to close all its Victorian branches, but as the local soap factories were undoubtedly a considerable help to the sale of candles, which was considered a most important trade, they were kept open wherever it was possible.

The first business to be purchased, as far can be ascertained, was Gossage Bros. which was bought in 1870. Then in 1876 Kitchens went further afield and establish their business in Wellington, New Zealand. A few years later it in 1878 H. W. Carwardine's business and factory at Sandhurst just a few miles outside Melbourne was bought by the firm, Mr. Carwardine being engaged by the Company with whom he remained for many years.

After the amalgamation with the Apollo Company 1885 there followed a remarkable growth of the business. In 1887 branches were opened at Sale, Echuca and Wangaratta. Klappworth's property at Sandhurst and Thomson River plant were purchased. To follow the acquisition and development of the more important branches it will be necessary to take them individually. As it was one of the largest will first be concerned with the Queensland business.

QUEENSLAND

The Apollo Candle Company commenced manufacturing at Bulimba on the banks of the Brisbane River in 1877 with John Clarke Donaldson, a canny Scot, as the manager. The river was used as a means of transporting coal those days, and the oleine and stearine were taken from the Bulimba works in punts for shipment, though deliveries to the stores were made by a horse and dray across the Bulimba ferry.

The business prospered until the field became crowded with competitors - fair and otherwise. The trade sank into a deplorable condition and for a long time the business was run without profit, one of the most obstinate opponents being Peter Morrison Campbell. J. Kitchen & Sons and Apollo Co. Ltd. came to an agreement with him and in June 1891 they formed the Brisbane Soap Co. Ltd., with the capital of £12,500 divided into 10,000 shares of £1/5/0 each. Half the interest in the Company was held by P. M. Campbell and the other half by the Kitchen organisation. The first directors were P. M. Campbell and J. C. Donaldson; they were to hold office until 1896 and P. M. Campbell was elected managing director for the first five years. An agreement was made that neither Kitchens nor the Brisbane Company would associate themselves with any other soap manufacturing concern within 100 miles of Brisbane, and the Kitchens should be the sole selling agent for the business.

For the first three or four years the Brisbane Soap Company had a hard fight but they showed their opponents they meant business and the company began to make good profits. In September 1894 they purchased the soap works of R. Ruddell, Bundaberg, after having previously bought the Townsville works from Campbell, which had at one time belonged to Louis J Maass. Then they built and operated works at Charters Towers, at that time a flourishing mining town of 30,000 people. But very soon a disagreement developed over the management of the works which made Kitchens desirous of selling their interest in the business and in June 1899 John Hambleton went to Brisbane to negotiate the sale; after prolonged negotiations it fell through as the price Campbell wanted was considered too high. By 1902 the Brisbane Soap Co. had secured by far the largest proportion of the Queensland soap trade, particularly in the north where they had no opposition. The candle trade also was practically

in their hands, with the exception of some interstate competition which at that time was not serious. There were further disagreements over the management of the business and Kitchens again endeavoured to sell their interest or buy Campbells but they were unable to agree on terms. Finally Campbell resigned and Donaldson took over the Managing Directorship. In 1908 Kitchens again offered to buy Campbell's share in the Brisbane company but he would not sell. In 1909 the Ross Soap Co., Brisbane, was formed after the business of the late Peter Ross had been purchased from his executors. The capital of the company was £10,000, divided into 10,000 shares at £1 each. J. C. Donaldson controlled the company on behalf of Kitchens, who acted as selling agents for the firm, and P. M. Campbell was offered an interest in the company but declined it. The business in Queensland was eventually settled when in February, 1916, P. M. Campbell purchased Kitchens' interest in the Brisbane Soap Company for £10,000, both parties agreeing that each should retain the right to their respective brands; P. M. Campbell sold his Townsville works to J. K. & S. Ltd. later, in about November; J. C. Donaldson sold his shares in the Ross Soap Company to J. K. & S. at the same time and was given the management of the two Kitchen businesses in Brisbane.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Kitchens are originally had no intention of commencing a branch in South Australia; it was force of circumstances that made them into enter into competition there. W. H. Burford & Sons of Adelaide had been spoiling the soap trade for the Sydney & Candle Company in New South Wales for some time. Kitchens had tried to persuade Mr. Burford to confine his trade to South and Western Australia, without success. The Sydney Company reported that Burfords were doing about 8 to 10 tons of soap a week in Sydney and requested the Melbourne directors to put pressure on W. H. Burford & Sons to prevent their goods from going into the Sydney market. Mr. Burford refused to come to terms with Kitchens and informed him that if he continued his opposition in New South Wales they would have no alternative but to commence trading in Broken Hill, West and South Australia. As no agreement was made John Ambrose said: "We will have to show him that it is not in his interest to send goods to either Sydney or Melbourne. It will be a hard lesson for him to learn, but he will have to learn it. If he wants to do a New South Wales trade, he will have to manufacture on the spot." John Ambrose then began to explore the possibilities of opening a branch in Western Australia and that led with the result that negotiations were entered into with H. Marsh & Co, Fremantle, and in October 1900 a company, J. Kitchen & Sons & Marsh & Co Ltd, Waymouth Street Adelaide, was registered. The capital of the company was £20,000 pounds of £1 shares, 5,000 a which were issued on formation, 2,500 to Henry Marsh and William Essex and 2,500 to J. A. Kitchen, T. Kitchen, T. Loader, Charles Campbell and T. J. Davey jointly on behalf of J. Kitchen & Sons and Apollo Co. Ltd., all of whom were directors of the new company - Henry Marsh was elected Chairman and Managing Director. It was agreed that Kitchens would not sell candles in South Australia, leaving the market to be competed for by Marsh & Co. But in June 1902, because of Burfords' persistent opposition in Sydney, both in soap and candles, Kitchens took over the Sydney Soap and Candle Company's business in Adelaide for the purpose of fighting Burfords.

John Ambrose wanted to put Kitchen's candles on the Adelaide market before it was lost to competitors, but he knew that Mowlings of Melbourne were about to start there; if he did this he knew that Burfords would come to Melbourne as competitors, but as Mowlings were opening an agency, this was inevitable; the only way to do this was to start at once. He did not fear Burfords' competition in Victoria very much, as he knew that they were financially weak and he thought their candles a very inferior product. Mr. Marsh of course had to be considered; it was pointed out to him that more competition in Adelaide was inevitable, so that a further union was desirable to carry on the fight. After a conference between Mr. Upfold and John Ambrose on the one side and Mr. Marsh and Mr. Essex on the other, it was agreed that J. Kitchen & Sons & Marsh Ltd. should purchase Marsh & Co of Adelaide, and the matter was settled as soon as possible so that they could enter the Adelaide candle market before it was too late. By November 1902 purchase was completed.

Burfords had a very firm hold of the South Australian trade for several reasons; firstly, the very conservative character of the trade was to their advantage; South Australians bought from established firms in the state and anyone from outside was looked upon unfavourably as an interloper. Burfords played on this, using the fact that Kitchens were not a local company, with great effect; secondly, several of the big retailers refused and none of the wholesale houses would stock Kitchen's goods owing to a peculiar trade custom of discounts that had been going on for years. Burfords had manoeuvred the wholesalers and some of the retailers completely into their hands by offering them a large discount of 10% if they put down a thousand pounds, and even if prices rose they still got the goods at the price it prevalent at the time of the deal and Burfords even paid 3% interest on the thousand pounds until it was spent. This often meant that Burfords lost money but they didn't seem to mind though eventually the policy defeated its own ends, but in the meantime it kept out competitors. A similar, though smaller discount was

allowed to smaller buyers. Another system Burfords inaugurated was the exchange of soap to farmers for the fat, this gave me great hold on the country stores as well, for when a farmer ran out of soap he would automatically ask for a Burfords product, and in addition Burfords got raw-material at a ridiculously low price.

When Kitchens' travellers called on the big wholesalers and retailers there were constantly met with the question "Why should we push your goods at great trouble to ourselves without some inducement?" and the salesmen were powerless as they could not make any concession owing to an arrangement on prices between the makers, while the custom of the Burford trade discounts was overlooked and allowed to stand. Kitchens had a very hard fight; the wholesalers only bought from them when they were compelled to do so by the growing demand for the firm's products. By advertising they forced the wholesalers to a limited extent, but they relied mostly on the direct trade with the small retailer, a Kitchen traveller in 1904 calling on two hundred and sixty shops in the suburbs, got two hundred and twenty orders - about five-sixths of the storekeepers stocked Velvet. There was a continual increase in the sale of Velvet soap and grew in popularity, but it took a long time to break down local prejudice and it was not until 1907 that they were beginning to be looked upon as local manufacturers.

Looking over the factory in those days we should have found it rather small and not too well planned, though it was capable of turning out about six or seven tons a week and the plant was worth about £1,500. The soap and candles manufactured were of a good quality, the soapmaker being a man who understood his trade and an economical worker. The factory needed alterations and these were about to be done with various new plant to be installed, for the candle machines were poor and new soap frames were needed. A new digester was almost ready for delivery and, when fixed in the new building, the tallow would be blown from the digester into a new vat at the top of the building and run by gravitation to where it is required and save all pumping; these alterations would save labour and increase output. Space was very much required, especially for the candle room and the fat melting room. Soon the new buildings and plant were put into operation and the efficiency of the factory very much improved. The foundations of the South Australian business were well laid and despite strong and determined opposition the business was soon showing a profit. In 1913 the title of the company changed from J. Kitchen & Sons & Marsh Ltd. to J. Kitchen & Sons Ltd.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

In the West, where the Fremantle business had been started by Henry Marsh and amalgamated with Kitchens, trade teemed with difficulties. It was especially troublesome to run as the works were very inconveniently situated at Beaconsfield - about two and a half miles from Fremantle - were decidedly hilly and rough road made cartage extremely expensive. The position of the factory was also awkward for obtaining labour, as there was practically no population nearby. Marsh had gone there because the health authorities would not have allowed him to build in a populated area. The buildings were of galvanised iron, originally worth about £400 - Kitchens had enlarged them since they came into the business - and the land worth about £60 an acre. In the early days a fair business was done and the prospects reasonably good. Theo Kitchen Jnr. was the business manager and F. F. Anderson, son of Mr. Anderson of Anderson & Mitchell, the Tasmanian agents for the firm, Manager of the factory and in charge of soapmaking. Theo Jnr., who was also a practical man and experienced in the trade, felt optimistic about the business, and advised that more plant and buildings be installed. William J. Kitchen visited Fremantle and saw that the works either wanted enlarging or, preferably, selling, and then he suggested the Company should purchase the Swan Works near Fremantle. Besides being better situated for labour, this factory was near the city and would save transport and storage costs. Kitchens were prepared to buy the Swan Soap & Candle Company's property if Henry Marsh would find half the capital required, but as he refused, the matter fell through and the Swan business was later purchased by Burfords.

Labour in Fremantle was scarce because the gold mines at Kalgoorlie, where big money could be earned, attracted the men. Employers often had to personally seek workmen from the city streets and the men were very independent and truculent. The business did not improve sufficiently to warrant the continued manufacture of soap and candles, and in August 1904 John Kitchen & Sons & Marsh & Co. Ltd. closed the factory and sold the Fremantle branch to Theo Kitchen Junr. and L. G. H. Saxon, who formed the T. Kitchen & Co. They ceased manufacturing and acted as agents for the Kitchen concerns and for MacRobertsons, the confectioners; the agency, however, was far from satisfactory. Early in 1909 Theo Kitchen, Senr., visited Perth and he found the business in a very bad condition. In June that year J. K. & S. Ltd. took it over again, continuing it as an agency selling MacRobertson and their own products which were manufactured in Melbourne. The firm began manufacturing again, in 1910, at Beaconsfield, West Australia, sending for Mr. F. F. Anderson from Melbourne to supervise the factory. The following year a building close to North Fremantle Railway Station was purchased and equipped under

the direction of W. J. Kitchen. The branch was now established on a firm foundation and in face of stern competition began to make progress.

It was shortly after his return to West Australia in 1909 that Theo Kitchen was taken ill, did not return to his duties again, and, after an illness of five months, died on 1st November. William J. Kitchen, his son, succeeded him as manufacturing director.

TASMANIA

Kitchen's first became interested in the Tasmanian market when a competitor started a factory there in 1899. Theo Kitchen went over late that year to inquire into the possibilities of trading and perhaps manufacturing; but, after he had reported, the Company decided not to open a factory and it was not until October 1901 that they appointed Anderson, Mitchell & Co. their agents. Mr. J. S. Anderson had been a partner in the Tasmanian Soap & Candle Co., which was taken over by R. Miller & Co. Anderson's share of the proceeds from the sale were about £800 and with this money he started in business with the relative, a Mr. Mitchell, in about 1899. In 1901 they were in difficulties for the want of capital and when approached to represent Kitchens' interests in Tasmania, they gladly accepted the agency selling their own registered brands of soaps and candles to Kitchens. The Sydney Soap & Candle Co. had been trading in Tasmania for a few years through an agent in Hobart, and in December 1901 they sold their Tasmanian business to Kitchens, who undertook to buy all the stearine for the trade from them. The business, during the first year, was fair but at low prices. Miller & Co. were Kitchens principal opponents, and were proving to be difficult and obstinate competitors. Kitchens had a very hard fight but within about two years they were being regarded as the leading soap and candle firm in the island. Anderson had proved to be a good agent, and as he had been identified with the trade in Tasmania for many years, he was popular, especially in Launceston, where he was better known than in Hobart. Kitchens' share of the soap and candle trade in Launceston was about one third and very nearly one half of the whole trade in Tasmania by 1904. A year later things had changed, competition had increased, especially in cheap soaps and wax candles, though Velvet soap sales were steadily on the upgrade. Mowlings, and especially a man called Metz, were cutting prices very heavily. This competition had affected a R. Miller & Co.'s business very considerably and Miller had approached Kitchens for them to buy his business, but Kitchens realised that if they manufactured there it meant giving up their agent, Anderson, and this they were very loath to do, so the business was not purchased at the time.

The trade in Tasmania increased and that turnover for the year ending July 1906 amounted to £18,000, and it would have been larger if it had not been for the opposition of Metz, who was selling candles at impossibly low prices. Metz was able to cut his price because he made good profits from his fat melting business, as also did Miller. The only way of getting remunerative prices in Tasmania was to force Metz and Miller to pay full prices for their fat, and Kitchens could only do this by being in a position to buy and melt it themselves; they, therefore, looked around for a plant to suit their purpose and recommended the purchase of Thos. Hogarth's Bone Mills at Sulphur Creek, Evandale, about nine miles from Launceston. Some months elapsed, when in February 1907 John Ambrose urged his fellow directors to purchase the Mills and offered £500 for them, which was accepted.

The mill was difficult to work at first, as the labour obtainable was not suitable, but an experienced man was sent over from Melbourne, and, after supervision by W. J. Kitchen, the mills were serving their purpose, enabling Kitchens to regulate the price of fat, and other melters were compelled to pay good prices. There were only four fat melters in Tasmania - Kitchens, Metz, Miller and Evans - the latter giving up his business when he saw that higher profits were no longer obtainable. This had the effect of obtaining fairly satisfactory prices for the firm's products in 1908. By that year the candle trade in Tasmania was divided almost entirely between J. Miller & Co., C. Metz & Co., G. Mowling & Son and Kitchens; the soap trade was chiefly in the hands of Miller & Co., Lever Bros. and Kitchens, the three other manufacturers - Metz, Mowlings, and Lewis & Whitty doing a small proportion. Levers were selling "Sunlight" and "Old Home"; Miller's chief line was "Marvel" and they were selling all other classes of soap. Kitchens top line was "Velvet". "Daisy" was taking the place of unregistered brands which the Company was doing its best to get away from, though their ordinary bar soaps were selling well. Taking the Tasmanian trade as a whole, it was very satisfactory, having made very good progress during the seven year since the commencement of the firm's activities.

THE SMALLER BRANCHES

As can be seen each state had its central business organisation and new factories and businesses were constantly being acquired. There was a branch at Bendigo which had commenced in about 1891 and was one of

the most successful of the branches. The Ballarat business had been purchased in August 1898 and a factory built in Shepparton in the same year. Near the Port Melbourne factory was the Footscray works. Here, for many years, the Company did a large and profitable business in fat melting and steaming of green bones. This branch had been a great help to the stearine department and a source of considerable profit to the Company. It had originally been the factory of the Apollo Candle Company but, when they amalgamated with Kitchens, the soap and candle making plant was taken down and transferred to the other factories, and it was retained as a boiling down establishment. As already recorded Kitchens had had a factory at Footscray in the early days and when they bought out Gossage Bros. early in 1870 they transferred the whole the soapmaking there. In 1871 these works were closed and all manufacturing was done at the Port Melbourne factory (then known as Sandridge), to eliminate the necessity of managing two works so far apart.

In the early 1900, Kitchens were again at Footscray, where they employed about a dozen men. Outside the factory one would find some of Kitchens' vans with fine well groomed horses, the pride of Mr. David Yates, who was in charge of the stables at Footscray and Port Melbourne. The working week in the early nineteen hundreds was a long one of about 72 hours and the drivers had plenty of time to spare attending to the brushing and combing of the horses; nothing could be found to criticise about the appearance of these handsome animals with the beautiful glossy coats. Mr. Theo Kitchen took a special pride in the fine horse teams, keeping a close watch on their appearance, and Kitchens horses were "the talk of Melbourne". Mr. Yates' care was rewarded for many years by a succession of prizes they won at the Melbourne shows.

THE SYDNEY COMPANY

When it was established¹ the Sydney business was not a branch of Kitchens but a separate organisation in which the Kitchen & Apollo Company was interested.

In the first year of its existence it went ahead rapidly. At the first general meeting of shareholders, after only eight months of trading, the chairman announced that, after allowing for depreciation, bad debts and the like, there was a net profit of £12,150 and the Company paid a dividend at that time of eight per cent per annum. It was decided that the factory should be established in Sydney, and in 1886, the following the formation of the Sydney Soap & Candle Company, a boiling down establishment, situated on the present site of the factory at Alexandria, was purchased from a Mr. Hudson. In those days, there were only a few factories in Alexandria, and Kitchens were practically surrounded by Chinese market gardens. Transport often presented immense difficulties, especially after heavy rains when large areas in the district would be flooded, and Alexandria presented the appearance of a lake district. Sometimes the roads were impassable. On one occasion, one of the Company's carts outside the factory, sank deep into the mud, and it was there for weeks before it could be dug out again. In 1887 the works at Alexandria were in a very satisfactory condition and Mr. Godfrey, the factory manager, was thanked and given an increase in salary for his work in establishing them. In April, 1888, Mr. Godfrey was again authorised to approach Cooper Estates for a further 10 to 20 more acres around the factory and in July the Company purchased 15 acres at £525 per acre.

The Sydney and Melbourne companies exchanged information on inventions, discoveries and improvements in their trade. Mr. Theo Kitchen visited the New South Wales factories and gave advice on the management, new processors, manufacturing problems and anything else they might require. The services of Mr. G. P. Clarke were shared by both companies in an agreement made in March 1890, though most of his time was occupied by J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd., who, of course paid the bulk of his salary. When the directors or Mr. Clarke visited America or Europe, if desired, the interests of both firms could be represented and expenses shared. Naturally, the Melbourne Company, being the larger concern with greater facilities at its disposal, was more active in this direction.

As early as 1892 directors of J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. favoured the removal of the works at Newcastle to Alexandria, which was a boiling down establishment, but after Mr. Clarke had advised them and drawn up plans, the Sydney Directors decided not to move them. Melbourne also recommended changes to the S. S. C. C. bookkeeping system. John Hambleton Kitchen went over to Sydney to make suggestions and generally improve the office routine. It must not be inferred that the Company was inefficient, much was being done to improve trade, such as spending £200 (a large sum for those days) on advertising on the railway hoardings and stations, and using improved packages.

¹In 1885 (A.R.)

At Alexandria, in 1889, new stables were built, capable of accommodating fifty horses (this is now the Soda Store on the left as one enters the factory gates) and an Oil Room. Also at this time additional land was bought at Alexandria and new machinery was purchased from abroad for installation and the production of Toilet Soaps at Newcastle. In June, 1895, a cottage was erected costing £67/10/0. It appears that no further property was bought until November, 1910, when the buildings and plant of the Colonial Fertilisers Co. Ltd., at Alexandria was purchased for £3,800. Then in August, 1911, just over an acre of land was purchased from Sir W. C. Cooper for £490/16/8. In February, 1913, a margarine factory was erected for £879 and in July an additional small piece of land was purchased.

The Company was only very occasionally affected by strikes and the following incident emphasises that good relations that existed between the firm and the staff. In the great maritime strike of 1890, which involved a practically every maritime calling and eventually included miners and shearers, the carters of S.S. & C.C. were among the strikers, and A. W. Gilles, the chairman, temporarily became a driver of the lorries and trailers, as did other directors, and the secretary of the Company. The late A. E. Beaumont told this amusing story of one of the many brawls that used to occur between the amateur drivers and the strikers, when it was not uncommon to see a vehicle overturned and its contents scattered over the roadway. "One of the directors of the Company during these troublous days was taking a load of soap to Balmain, and in his inexperience at the ways and powers of horses, tackled a rather steep hill, which he found he was unable to negotiate; the horses and dray ran back and the whole outfit would have gone over steep declivity, at the foot of which now stands the soap works of Messrs. Lever Bros. only for the timely and friendly help of some of our own carters, who were on strike. They had evidently followed the dray with a view to criticising the amateur driver, but when they found him in difficulties and danger, they sportingly came to his assistance, and the load preceded as intended and was duly delivered."

The Sydney Company passed through a very critical period between 1893 and 1896. On the 18th December, 1893 they decided that the sum of £10,000, part of an undivided profit of the Company in standing to the profit & loss account, be divided among the shareholders according to the number of shares held by them respectively, amounting to 16/8 per share.

In 1894, when the Company was in a difficulty, Charles Upfold loaned them about £6,000. Later in August, to obtain an overdraft from the Union Bank of Australasia, the Company mortgaged the land, building, plant and stock at Newcastle and Alexandria, and assigned the book debts as security. Two years later, in April, when Mr. Upfold approached the Bank of New South Wales, with a view to taking over the Company's account, the bank agreed on condition that £30,000 was found by the Company. After a conference with the Melbourne directors, Charles Upfold agreed to become responsible for an advance of £10,000 from the Bank of New South Wales, secured by a bill of sale over the stock and book debts of the Company, which agreed to repay the debt to the bank at the rate of £1,000 a year. Mr. Campbell, on behalf of the Melbourne shareholders, agreed to clear off the Federal Bank debt of the Company, which was about £15,000, the security being land, plant and buildings of the Company. The cash credit with the Bank of New South Wales of £10,000 was to be applied to the liquidation of the overdraft to the Union Bank of Australasia and other financial requirements.

In July 1896 Sydney Company issued £30,000 worth of debentures, bearing 6% interest for 10 years. For the time being at least the Sydney Company's financial difficulties had been successfully met. At the half-yearly meeting in November 1896 Mr. Charles Upfold was thanked for personally becoming responsible to the Bank of New South Wales for the amount of the Company's account at a very critical moment in the Sydney Company's history.

After going through the depths of depression, the Sydney Company began to prosper when John Hambleton Kitchen took control in 1902. If that overworked word "genius" can be applied to a business man, John Hambleton Kitchen certainly deserved it, for he undoubtedly saved the Sydney Soap & Candle Company from bankruptcy and converted the business into a flourishing success. By 1908 - four years after he became managing director - it was paying a dividend of five per cent per annum, and continued to pay an increased interest of six per cent and 1909 and 10% in 1910, 1911, and 1912, when the Company changed its name.

John Hambleton had long considered the title, Sydney Soap & Candle Co. Ltd., to have little or no individuality or exclusiveness; there were Soap & Candle Companies in other states that could easily be confused with, but yet had no association at all with the Sydney Company, also it was very easy to register a company with a similar title that might damage the business. On the other hand, the name Kitchen had become a associated throughout Australia with business integrity and besides being the biggest manufacturers of their kind in Australia

the reputation and excellence of Kitchen's product had made a name a household word that was universally respected throughout the country. John Hambleton decided to clarify the position and reconstruct the Company; in 1912 Kitchen & Sons was formed (that the initial J. was omitted to distinguish it from the Melbourne company) and the new organisation acquired all the interest of the Sydney Soap and Candle Co., which went into voluntary liquidation.

The Sydney Company developed a very successful oil business blending and supplying oils for lubricating and many other purposes. Branches were established in all the other states, entailing a separate return for income tax purposes of the whole of the Company's business in every state; to eliminate this unnecessary repetition of the firm's entire business activities, a new Company was formed to operate this enterprise, it was called the Neptune Oil Co. Ltd., formed in 1909, with a capital of 50,000 shares of £1 each. T. J. Davy, John Ambrose Kitchen, G. P. Clarke and John Hambleton Kitchen were the first directors.

Early in his career the Sydney Company found it necessary to look for larger premises. Originally it had occupied offices in Clarence Street, and then moved to 337 Kent Street. A description of the neighbourhood in the eighties by a contemporary; when Kitchens first became interested in the New South Wales Company, gives some idea what the district was like. He writes² "... is interesting to compare Kent Street then and now. It would now be looked on a slummy area; houses or hovels perched higgledy piggledy on the rocks on both sides of the street, or nestled round a kind of courtyard, where level space permitted. There were hoardings at intervals, and goats wandering about at will, chewing off the posters as high as they could reach." When the S.S.C.C. moved into Kent Street, in 1889, it was improving, and the directors were able to arrive in their shiny toppers without fear of having things thrown at them. The Company occupied the lower part of the building, which was lit by gas, and was quite modern for those days. In August 1904, on the suggestion of Mr. C. Upfold, electric light was installed. An employee who remembers this innovation tells us that the delight and interest the new invention roused can hardly be realised by people today.

Under John Hambleton's progressive direction the Sydney Company soon had to find more room for expansion, and in July 1906, the firm leased the first and second floors of 365 Kent Street. In May 1920, the whole of the property was purchased, and today it is the Head Office of the Company.

² "The firm of Cadbury", by I. A. Williams (A.R.)

Chapter VII

FIRST YEARS OF THE NEW CENTURY

John Ambrose Kitchen proved to be correct in his estimate that the lowering of the duty on candles would be detrimental to the trade. If we look at the balance sheets of the Company for the first years of the new century they do not disclose a particularly prosperous state of affairs, though perhaps they are more pessimistic in appearance than in fact. Since the last dividend paid by J. Kitchen & Sons and Apollo Co. Ltd., (which was 1½%,) the new company - J. Kitchen & Sons - had only paid 1¼% in 1902, nothing in 1903 as the balance sheet showed a loss of £104, 2% in 1904 and 2½% in 1905 and 1906. But there had been a big increase in the earnings of the Company since 1902, the gross income having nearly doubled from £24,445 to £45,443 in 1906, but trade expenses had also increased and relatively remained very high, then £19,814 in 1902 and £40,737 in 1906. An increase in trading expenses does not mean a decrease in profits for the sale of goods manufactured any more than the payment of a small dividend indicates bad trade, though admittedly it does not point to a flourishing and thriving business; the directors may declare a small dividend because they wish to place more money to the reserve fund. Trading Expenses are a comprehensive item covering Directors' and auditors' fees, salaries, interest, plant depreciation, replacements, advertising, bad debts, the usual trading expenses and the rate of interest paid on loans; all these are included under this item in the balance sheet, but the actual sums of money spent separately are not shown, the items being given as a complete cost. When one takes into consideration the interest to be paid on loans amounting to £77,356 in 1906, and for what appears to be a substantial sum, £19,393 reserved for depreciation of buildings, machinery, rolling stock etc., over the four years under review, the profits for that period were fair and, but for these items, would have been considerably higher. The market value of Kitchens £4 paid up shares in 1907 was only about twenty seven shillings, the rate of interest to an investor buying on these terms being 7.40 per cent; this was the market's method of intimating what rate of interest at that time it expected on its investment.

There is no doubt that the reduction of the tariff on candles since Federation had impaired the profit earning capacity of the Company in spite of other activities they had undertaken, but the business of tallow shipping and bone dust had fortunately saved the Company from what might have proved a disaster. In 1908 a duty of twopence a pound was imposed on candles imported from abroad, except those from Great Britain and the Netherlands East Indies, the duty on candles coming from those two countries being three halfpence. From then on the expensive stearine manufacturing plant, which had been partially idle for some years, began to produce again and this at once assumed a different complexion. By 1910 per dividend of five per cent was paid and this was maintained and increased to seven per cent until the outbreak of the war in 1914.

During the few years before the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, few things have importance happen to Kitchens; there were minor matters like small fires and floods; several rival businesses were purchased; the South Australian business had been absorbed; the Employees' Benefit Society was established in 1910; electricity, then a new form of power for lighting and driving machinery, had been installed. James Cuming, who had been a director in 1898-99, died in 1911. He was also a director of Messrs. Cuming, Smith & Co. and had done much valuable work for the Company. His son had joined J. K. & S. as a director in 1905.

The decade before the Great War marked an extensive change and improvement in the wages, hours and conditions of workmen. In 1905 the Federal Parliament had passed an Act constituting a Court for Arbitration and Conciliation of industrial disputes, and in 1907, on the resignation of his predecessor, Mr. Justice Henry Bournes Higgins was appointed President. In 1911 he was presiding over wages boards for various industries throughout the Commonwealth. The wages boards existed to prescribe minimum wages but had no direct relation to industrial disputes; its authority was only in its own state and its decisions were frequently inconsistent with those of adjoining states; the Board consisted generally of representatives selected by employers and employees in equal numbers with a neutral chairman. J. K. & S. had been singularly free from labour troubles, but in 1911 the men at Footscray were called out by the union for an increase in pay; this was granted and the strike was soon over. Mr. Justice Higgins was at this time presiding over Boards that were inquiring into the soap, candle, fertiliser and allied industries in Victoria, and visited Kitchens' factories. The wages in the trade generally were increased in 1911; engine drivers, tinsmiths, plumbers, carters etc. had higher rates granted them and in 1912 the soap wages Board increased men's pay by amounts varying from three and five shillings a week and boy's between one shilling and sixpence to five shillings - the woman's rate of pay remained the same.

John Hambleton had seen the possibilities of markets outside Australia, when he drew the board's attention of the possibility of increasing the Company's export trade. In January, 1892 he outlined a scheme for selling the firm's products in India, China, Japan and even in England, with the result that a consignment of Kitchens Oil Soap

and Primrose Soap was sent to O'Connells, the London agents, with instructions to distribute it to three of London's largest department stores, Civil Service, Army and Navy, and Whitelys - a quantity was also sent to Madras and Calcutta.

In March 1901 the board approved a proposal of Mr. J. Younger, one of the firm's senior travellers, to go on a trip round the world. He visited South Africa, Burma, the Straits Settlements, Batavia, China, Japan, Canada, U.S.A., England and Scotland. Mr. Younger was successful in opening up the South African and Eastern markets for the firm. Wishing to extend their South African Trade, the Company sent Mr. Fred Kitchen on a trip there in 1905. He found the market overcrowded with competitors and the only soap except Sunlight, that sold was Blue Mottled. "The everlasting Blue Mottled", as he called it held 95% of the South African soap sales, and for Kitchens to compete was, he thought, completely out of question. The firm's "Daisy" soap was on the market, though not "Velvet", because Levers had registered the name themselves throughout South Africa. It was doubtful if Kitchens could compete in the candle trade, as the prices were so low and very few stearine candles were sold, the bulk of the sales going to paraffin wax. Mr. Fred Kitchen was successful in booking a few orders for "Daisy" which was everywhere praised, but Blue Mottled was good enough for the natives, who did all the washing, so the orders were only small. He obtained a few small orders for tallow and oleine and finding that little could be done with soap and candles, he set to work to see what possibilities there were in the glycerine market. He found that the quality the Company supplied to the Australian Explosives Co. was very much better than that supplied to South Africa and much cheaper. He got in touch with a dynamite company at Johannesburg that consumed some 300 tons of glycerine a month, and arranged to supply them with all the glycerine Kitchens could spare. They would not accept less than 30 tons a month; Kitchens immediately ordered a new glycerine plant, to enable them to produce the additional 320 tonnes of dynamite glycerine a year which would give a handsome profit of over a thousand pounds. Yet in spite of this success, at the time Mr. Fred Kitchen felt his visit to South Africa had been most unsatisfactory, though actually he had started what turned out to be a very remunerative trade.

On the 14th February, 1914, when George Payne Clarke died at his home at Waratah, Newcastle N.S.W., Kitchens lost one of their most able and popular colleagues, and as manufacturing chemist and adviser they knew he would be difficult to replace. The Company presented his wife with a cheque for one thousand pounds in recognition of her husband's long and valuable services. John Hambleton left Australia in March, for England, to find a man to take Mr. Clarke's place, and he arranged with a Mr. Ernest Briggs of Bristol to fill the position but with the outbreak of war, Mr. Briggs joined the forces and was unable to take over the post. While in England, John Hambleton also completed negotiations with Levers for the rights of the process known as "Hydrogenation of Fats". He signed a contract with Lever Bros. Ltd. in England, which was ratified on his return to Australia.

Mr. Fred Kitchen was appointed a director in March 1914. At that time the capital of the Company was increased to £401,952; he was also elected a director of Kitchen & Sons, Sydney, joining his nephew, A. J. Kitchen, who had been a director of the Sydney Company since 1912 and his cousin, W. J. Kitchen, who had been a director since 1911. It was about this time that Mr. Clifford Hambleton Kitchen, third son of John Hambleton, entered the business. With the entrance of Ambrose John Kitchen in 1907 and now his brother, Clifford, the fourth generation entered the Company.

Chapter VIII

A NEW ALLIANCE

John Kitchen and his sons had started their business when the industrial revolution of the last century was just beginning to get into its stride. It was inevitable that some businesses would grow, some fail, and others be absorbed by their successful competitors; this was the natural outcome of competition, and then, as certain as night follows day, the big organisations would form trusts, combines, syndicates, cartels, and in some cases monopolies. The monopoly is a vastly different thing from a combine, it tolerates no rivals, demanding complete and absolute privilege whether it is state or private. The trend towards combination in the industry is no new thing, and to illustrate the difference between a modern combine and the old monopolists, it is interesting to look back into the history of soap making.

The history of soap monopolies in England goes back to Elizabethan times when monopoly had its legal foundation in the granting by the Crown to corporations or individuals exclusive right to carry on a certain trade, generally under the guise of a patent, for which royalties were paid to the Crown. In 1631 James I granted a patent to several courtiers who swore they would make soap cheaper and better than the soap makers of London, of whom there were about twenty. They established themselves as "The Society of Soapmakers of Westminster" and promised a high royalty to the King on all soap they manufactured, undertaking to supply the Crown with 5,000 tonnes of soap annually and were prepared to deliver wholesale. This gained them several privileges but they were not able to overcome their rivals and tried to encourage them to amalgamate with promises of great profits, but the London soapmakers would not join them. An exhibition of washing was given in the presence of the Lord Mayor and influential persons and the Society was granted further privileges because it was found that the Society's soap was better than that of the old London soapmakers. These men, in turn, then tried to join the society and gain the privilege of monopoly, but now the Society would have none of them. It exercised its authority and obtained, besides the right of search of its rivals, the prohibition of potash (which the society, in its process of manufacture, did not use), thereby cutting off the raw materials from the competitors, and, further they obtained a Royal Proclamation forbidding the use of anything but vegetable fats in the making of soap; the London soapmakers used only animal fats and this secured their complete defeat. Newcomers could only make soap at the discretion of the Star Chamber which permitted no one to interfere with the Society's interest.

A special ordinance was passed that no soap could be made "outside a circle of one mile round London, Westminster and Bristol". A contemporary describes the state of affairs in these words, "Many citizens of London were put out of an old trade in which they had been bred all their time and which was their only livelihood, by Knights, Squires and Gentlemen, never bred up to the trade, upon pretence of a Project and New Invention, which in truth was not so, their persecutions of the soapmakers of London in the Star Chamber been beyond example in respect of the manner of proceedings and of the sentence itself, who for using fish oyle and not obeying their searchers, were fined it great summes, imprisoned at three several times about twenty months, their goods extended, their Pannes, Fats etc. broken and destroyed, their houses of great yearly value made unuseful, their families dispersed and necessitated and their estates almost ruined." People were not allowed to make soap even for their own private use and the price of soap reached an impossible height, when in 1634 it was stated that soap, which had cost 2d a pound formerly, has risen to between sixpence and a shilling a pound. In 1639 the business was purchased by another company with plant and material for £20,050, an extremely high price for those days. A year later the position was reversed, the old London soapmakers came back again by promising the Crown larger royalties, and formed themselves into a corporation, they then obtained a monopoly and exercised it just as ruthlessly, if not more so, than their predecessors. There were protests and complaints, "These men will have no competitors in their gains, they are well knowing by experience how to taste a greater sweetness of gain than the other sope-projectors, having for twenty years together gained much riches by monopolising the sope boyling mystery into 8 or 10 men's hands, to the ruine of many a family". This most unpopular monopoly maintained itself for many years and it is not known when it was abolished. When Charles I attempted to govern without Parliament he tried to raise money by granting patents, one of them to a Soap Corporation, whose preparation so injured both the linen and washerwomen's hands that it was called "Popish Soap", and London housewives believed that these injuries were symbolic and that its use was also injurious to the soul.

It will be seen the modern combine is a very different thing to the old monopoly, it has none of the privileges that the Crown used to bestow on monopoly and has to face legitimate competition. The combine of today is certainly an improvement on the number of small competing capitalists of nearly a century ago. These small units of production were bound to be expensive and the competition between them wasteful; the possibility of research and improved methods of manufacture were remote compared to the resources of a big modern

organisation. Wages were kept to the lowest possible limit and conditions of work bad, because the owner could not afford to improve them. The possibilities of advancement for the individual employee were poor compared with a large modern scale organisation with opportunities are not limited by ownership in the concern in which he works; the chance of rising to the top for an employee in a modern combine are far greater than those enjoyed by his father or grandfather. A case in point is the present chairman of Kitchens who joined the firm as an employee in 1923. While a monopoly is probably a bad thing, even when it is a State one, a combination can be a benefit both to the worker and consumer and, as combination is the inevitable outcome of competition, one organised on the lines of that about to be described as the best possible type.

Kitchen's and Levers' business relations had been of a most cordial nature since the latter firm had started in Australia in 1891, they competed in the market with a freedom from bitterness that might well be envied by other industries. When Sir William Lever (afterwards Lord Leverhulme) visited Australia in 1914 he was able to arrange an amalgamation on the most amicable terms. From that time on Lever Bros. Ltd. enters decisively into the history of J. Kitchen & Sons, and a brief resumé of Lord Leverhulme's career is necessary to link up the two businesses.

William Hesketh Lever was born in Bolton, in the North of England, in 1851; his father was a wholesale grocer there and William joined his father's business, Lever & Co., at the age of 16. He learned the grocery trade well, starting as a soap cutting boy (the soap in those days was delivered by the manufacturer in long bars and cut up by the grocer) and finally became a traveller for his father; in 1877 he established and managed a branch of the firm in Wigan. However he was not attracted by the idea of running a grocery business and decided he would specialise in the selling of soap but in a new way. At that time the soap manufacturer stamped the name of the grocer on the bars he sold. Lever's idea was to establish a soap unrivalled for quality and sell it under a registered name, or what is now known as a propriety article. He consulted a patent agent in Liverpool, W. P. Thomson, asking him to suggest a name for a soap that would be simple, easy to remember and pronounce, and obvious in a Court of Law if an imitation was attempted. A half-a-dozen names were suggested, which at first did not appeal to him, but on consideration, one of them, "Sunlight", suddenly struck him as being ideal. It was a fortunate choice for he was able to register it not only in Great Britain but in every other country that had a trade marks Act.

The first Sunlight Soap was manufactured for Lever, not by him. It was made chiefly from vegetable oils, which lathered more freely and was more efficient than a tallow soap, then generally in use; the soap became popular and when the manufacturers saw this they wanted to increase their charges. Lever decided to make the soap himself, he talked the scheme over with his brother who agreed to join him in the venture. They then approached their father for a loan, who, although opposed to the idea, admired his sons' initiative and agreed to lend them part of the money to start the business. With £4,000 capital they looked around for a factory and leased the soap works of Winsor & Co., chemical manufacturers at Warrington, who were running a soap business as a sideline and were glad to dispose of it. The brothers took the factory for six years, with the option to purchase the property during that period; this was August, 1885, though it was five months before they turned out the first soap, in the meantime been busily engaged in experiments. Lever had practically no knowledge of soapmaking and he left this side of the business entirely in the hands of P. J. Winsor, who had been manager of the old business, and E. Wainwright, the soapmaker. Lever concentrated on sales and the organisation of the business; he introduced the advertising of soap as it had never been done before, with such success that it is common knowledge today. By 1913, when Lever made his fourth trip around the world, the business was a world-wide organisation; he acquired further interest on this journey and it was at this time he became associated with Kitchens. John Ambrose had written to Levers in England asking for particulars and the terms they would require from Kitchens for permission to use a new process called "Hydrogenation of Fats". He received a reply stating that Sir William Lever was taking a world tour and would discuss the matter with him personally.

Sir William and John Ambrose Kitchen met in Melbourne; they discussed the new process and Lever suggested a plan for amalgamation by which Kitchens would retain complete autonomy in their business. All the family, with the exception of John Ambrose and Frederick Kitchen were opposed to it. John Hambleton and William, who were in Sydney at the time, came over to persuade John Ambrose against it, "We can manage quite well without the patent rights" said John Hambleton to his father.

"Jack, you know full well this company must always remain a second rate one unless we have this knowledge," his father replied; - "I say we must have it, even if Lever's conditions were not satisfactory, which they are!" He added later "You see, my boy, we get this advantage - with a stroke of the pen we are rid of all our shareholders and return as near as possible to a private company again".

John Ambrose brought the rest of the family, with the exception of Eric, William Kitchen's son, round to his point of view, and the negotiations with Sir William Lever proceeded to a satisfactory conclusion.

The Company was not in any financial difficulties, as it might have been supposed; on the contrary they were doing very well, but an association with Levers meant a considerable strengthening of the business. They would also acquire, on the most favourable terms, the rights of the expensive new process which would have been costly to have exploited themselves. It was obvious Kitchens had little or nothing to lose by the scheme and plans for amalgamation and the sale of shares were commenced. In March 1914 the newspapers were amazed at a request by the Directors of Kitchens to the shareholders of the Company to consider an increase of the capital from £250,000 to £401,952 by an issue of 37,988 new shares of £4 each and an addition £200,976 to the paid-up capital. The Directors further asked for authority to issue any all of the said 37,988 shares to "such persons at times for such consideration and on such conditions in all respects as the Directors may think fit and without offering the said shares or any of them to existing members of the Company." "The Age" commented "It will be surprising if the population doesn't remind some of the shareholders of the adage about buying a pig in a poke." The reason for this unusual request to the shareholders was that the directors in the negotiations with Levers for the rights, interests and privileges of the amalgamation, required such authority to increase the capital so that Levers could purchase the 50,244 newly issued shares.

In exchange for the shares they sold to Levers, Kitchens received one hundred thousand fifteen per cent preferred ordinary shares of Lever Bros. Ltd., Port Sunlight, England, which they agreed to re-sell to Lever over a period of five years; the Kitchen shares sold to Levers were held in trust by the Kitchen Directors. Levers also acquired £33,621 worth of £175,000 share capital of J. Kitchen & Sons, Sydney. The directorate of the companies remained the same and no member of the English company was given a seat on the Kitchen Board. The transaction was as satisfactory one for both parties; Kitchens, on the one hand received a favourable price for their shares, while they retained control of the business, and Levers, on the other hand, secured their high price specialities from attack by the largest soap makers in the Commonwealth, and they protected the rights and interests of the Companies concerned in the utilisation of oils and fats for soapmaking.

Lord Leverhulme also set up an organisation for the co-ordination of the industry, which he called the General Management Board, the members were Joseph Meek, Chairman; J. R. Campbell, T. J. Burton, who represented Levers, and J. H. Kitchen, Deputy Chairman; F. W. Kitchen, W. J. Kitchen and A. J. Kitchen, who represented the Kitchen interests, and George Fulton represented the Pacific Plantation, which had, as previously explained, acquired the Kitchen concern, the Commonwealth Copra Co. Pty. Ltd.

In February, 1915³, the Company became a proprietary one and the name was altered to J. Kitchen & Sons Proprietary Ltd. It is interesting to compare the Factory of 1856, that little twelve foot building, occupied by the Kitchen family, with the premises controlled by the Kitchen companies, which covered one hundred and seventeen acres and employed about one thousand four hundred people in 1914.

³1914

Chapter IX THE 1914 WAR AND AFTER

The Great War of 1914-18 started while Kitchens were completing the negotiations with Levers for the amalgamation of the businesses. Because of her isolated position and the Japanese joining the allied cause, Australia was comparatively unaffected by the outbreak of hostilities, and it was some time before the repercussions of the conflict were felt, chiefly by lack of ships bringing and taking goods to and from the country. Many new industries started and manufacturers had to make raw materials which previously they had imported, for instance, Kitchens began to make their own caustic soda. Australia was in the throes of a general election when the war began, but both of the political parties came out wholeheartedly on the side of the Mother Country, the Leader of the Opposition saying the war would go on to "the last man and the last shilling." The directors of the Company decided that all permanent employees volunteering for active war service were to have the army pay made up to the full amount earned by them in peace time in the service of the Company and that the jobs would be kept open for them on their return.

Clifford Hambleton Kitchen, who was an officer in the Citizen Forces, joined up soon after the war broke out, and in 1915 he was a Lieutenant Instructor at Liverpool, New South Wales; later in the year he went to England to join the Royal Flying Corps, where in 1916 he met with a flying accident and suffered very serious injuries that were, some years later, to be the cause of his death. One hundred and sixty one men joined the colors, nineteen of them gave their lives for their country on active service - the names are given in the Roll of Honour at the end of this book¹. Kitchens were generous contributors to various war charities and appeals, they also inaugurated a scheme whereby employees could purchase war loans, the firm loaning the money until it was paid for by a weekly deductions from the employees' wages.

Tallow, one of the most essential raw materials used in the manufacture of soap, was of particular importance to Great Britain as a source of glycerine, which is one of the constituents of cordite, the propellant used by Great Britain and Japan, but not by the other allied countries, America, France and Russia. All the available oils in England, previously used for making glycerine, were being used for foodstuffs, so that all the tallow possible was sent to Great Britain; naturally, the prices soared. In December, 1916, the Prices Commissioner had fix the price of soap at the prices prevailing on August 1st, 1916, but with the rapid rise in costs of raw materials the soap makers soon found they were making soap at a loss; in about three months tallow had advanced £10 per ton, costed soda had risen from £20 to £30, coconut oil from £44 to £56 and silicate from £6 to £15, but the manufacturers were compelled to sell soap at the August 1st, 1916 prices. Efforts were made to get the Price Fixing Committee to stabilise the price of tallow but without success. The Chief Prices Commissioner was asked either to allow the price of soap to be raised or the cost of tallow to be lowered. Repeated applications were made to the authorities for permission to increase the price of soap but nothing was done; the soapmaker was compelled to sell at a loss or, alternatively, discontinue business. The Prices Commissioner made a recommendation to the Assistant Minister, but action was delayed with disastrous results to the workers, for the position became so bad that seven of the principle soap factories, including Kitchens, ceased to manufacture, throwing hundreds out of work. This was on the 21st March, 1917; on the 29th of that month, Senator Russell, the Minister controlling commodities, announced after interviews with soapmakers and tallow producers, that he had decided to suspend the soap prices order until the tallow market became more normal. In the meantime he instructed the Federal Prices Commissioner to make an investigation into the soap manufacturing industry, with a view to ascertaining the cost of manufacture and of distribution.

At the same time a conference was held between the soap manufacturers, the tallow producers and the Federal authorities to fix the price for tallow, and the conference appointed a committee of three to arrive at a working basis for the fixing of the price of tallow. The members of the committee were Mr. W. H. Clarke, the Chief Commissioner, Mr. McArthur, for the tallow produces, and Mr. Fred Kitchen representing the soapmakers. The committee advised the creation of a "pool" as a solution for the tallow problem and the basis agreed upon was as nearly as possible the average price ruling for tallow during the six previous months. The Melbourne "Argus" described the proposals " . . . the scheme proposed is that the whole of the tallow produced in Australia (approximately 70,000 tons a year) is to bear the levy of £1 per tonne from April 2nd, to be re-adjusted from week to week so as to enable soapmakers to have their tallow requirements (approximately 14,000 tons) met on the basis of the difference between the market value of tallow and the price at which the conference agreed to make that

¹ No, at least not in my copy (T.K.)

tallow available. It was agreed upon by the conference that the basis for the purchasing price to be paid by soap manufacturers to be £37/10/0 for mixed tallow of good colour, and that any purchase made on and after today in excess of that rate should be reduced to the basic rate by a corresponding allowance from the pool . . . Shippers are to stand aloof from the market for both this and next week's sales. The local manufacturers are to have the market to themselves and the tallow will be sold to them if the bids are reasonable. It is presumed that under such an arrangement no manufacturer will be allowed to ship tallow." It will be seen that in spite of the "pool", an advance in soap prices would have to be granted as soapmakers still had to pay heavy prices for tallow, this was done on 29th March, as described above.

A great many accusations were levelled at soapmakers that they were making excessive profits during the war, but in a report published by the Interstate Commissions, after an exhaustive enquiry, it was stated "... the Interstate Commission do not support the conclusion . . . but there was profiteering on a large scale or much of it at all in Australia during the war."²

Not only did tallow advance in price but everything else increased, wrappers went up three hundred per cent, cases by about fifty per cent and hoops and iron nails by three hundred per cent. The following table gives comparison in pre-war prices for soapmakers' raw materials and the prices in September 1917:

	July 1914 - per ton			September 1917 - per ton		
Tallow	£26/ 0/ 0	to	£27/10/ 0	£50/ 0/ 0	to	£51/15/ 0
Coconut Oil	£40/10/ 0	to	£42/ 0/ 0	£50/ 0/ 0	to	£55/ 8/ 0
Caustic Soda	£10/12/ 6	to	£12/11/ 0	£33/17/ 8	to	£55/ 0/ 0
Silicate of Soda	£6/ 2/ 9	to	£6/15/ 0	£10/ 0/ 6	to	£12/17/ 0
Resin	£13/10/ 0	to	£14/ 5/ 0	£10/12/ 6	to	£33/10/ 0
Oils (other than Coconut)	£39/10/ 0			£72/ 0/ 0		

(These prices obtained from parliamentary papers, 1917)

These were by no means the highest prices reach during the war, tallow at one time going up to about £100 per ton. In 1918 a new regulation under the War Precautions Act provided that the Minister of Defence could take control of all tallow supplies and that the producer should place at the disposal of the Minister in the quantity he specified and that the compensation price was not to exceed £45 a ton.

Glycerine was in great demand, and Kitchen's plant was working at full capacity; in passing, it is interesting to note that the British Government, in order to save cargo space required for tallow, considered even erecting a plant in Australia to extract glycerine required for their own use. The sale of glycerine was regulated in 1917; records of glycerine produced and disposed of and of the price received had to be kept by the producer and no one was allowed to sell it at less than £200 per ton net delivered, plus the cost of packages and containing vessels.

Margarine, another of the firm's products, was required in England owing to the shortage of butter, and in 1917 a proclamation was issued in Australia revoking that of 1914, in which the exportation of margarine containing any ingredient or material which had effect of causing margarine to resemble butter, was prohibited; the new order only prohibited the export of margarine containing any oil or other matter not necessary to the manufacture of margarine, thus easing the position for the manufacturer to some extent.

During the war the capital of the Melbourne Company had been increased to £500,000 by an issue of 12,500 shares at £4 each in 1915, and in January of the following year £48,048 of the reserve fund was capitalised by way of a bonus of 12,012 shares divided pro rata among the shareholders.

When the end of the war came, John Hambleton Kitchen, in Sydney, and William and Frederick Kitchen

² Official history of Australia in the War of 1914-18 (Vol. XI) by Ernest Scott

in Melbourne, were the leaders of the firm's activities, with John Ambrose giving them his mature advice, but owing to his great age, not able to take the part in the business as he had done hitherto. The year that followed the war was one of great industrial unrest; the Company was working under extreme difficulties, owing to the upheaval of war and extraordinary condition of the markets following the cessation of hostilities. Due to the increase in the cost of living, wages were going up; at Port Melbourne all male adult employees and their wages increased by five shillings a week with a minimum of seventy four shillings, and all female employees received an extra half a crown, with a minimum of thirty seven and sixpence a week. The number of working hours were being reduced and the prices of many of the Company's products were falling; State and Federal taxes were increasing, the Sydney Company's tax aligned amounting to £17,000 for 1920. The balance of trade was very much against Australia and banks were refusing to negotiate drafts, so as to reduce imports and conserve a balance of cash reserves; they would not grant large credits to the storekeepers, who were thus forced to buy stocks in small quantities. While the Company, in 1920, did a successful year's business, it required all the skill of the management to prevent the position from becoming serious and every care had to be taken owing to falling markets. John Hambleton had warned shareholders of the difficulties ahead and the first half of 1921 was bad for trade, the Sydney Company showing a loss, but business picked up later in the year, although prevailing conditions were still unfavourable. By 1923, owing to sound policy, the Company was again making substantial profits.

On the 24th May, 1922, John Ambrose Kitchen, the last surviving member of the family who founded the business, died at the age of 87. But for him they would have been no J. Kitchen & Sons in Australia, for it was he who first came to the new land, broke the ground, and paved the way for his father and brothers. In the last few years he had not been able to attend to the business with the same energy of his young days, and the last few winters he went to Queensland to avoid a rigorous Melbourne climate, but he took a keen interest in the Company's affairs, and at the previous half-yearly meeting in May 1921 had been re-elected a director and attended the meeting personally. John Ambrose was a fine old Victorian gentleman whose kindly personality had become part of the Kitchen business and it was through him more than any other member of the family that the Company had gained a reputation for integrity and honesty. His career had not been a spectacular one like some of the industrialists and businessmen who have ridden roughshod over their competitors leaving a trail of misery behind them, but that of a kindly human person succeeding by honest and decent methods at a time when businessmen were not very tender-hearted or considerate. His religious principles had guided him and given him a sound moral basis for his business activities without making for religious intolerance. With his death the Kitchen family lost one of their finest sons. Besides being a pioneer in the Australian soap and candle trade, John Ambrose might also be considered one of Australia's first orchardists, the well known Toomuc Valley Apple Orchard, Pakenham, Victoria had been planted and carried on under his direction, and it was this orchard that pioneered the export of apples to England.

Lord Leverhulme paid another visit to Australia in 1924, and one of his chief objects was to introduce and expand his scheme for co-partnership, which he had introduced in his English organisation. He explained it to the Directors of Kitchens, who readily agreed to offer it to their employees. A dinner was given in Lord Leverhulme's honour for this purpose at the Masonic Hall, Colin Street, Melbourne on Friday, February 1st, 1924, with 480 employees of J. Kitchen & Sons Pty. Ltd., above the age of twenty, were invited. Mr. W. J. Kitchen was in the chair and besides Lord Leverhulme, were Mr. Fred Kitchen, Mr. d'Arcy Cooper, Mr. A. J. Kitchen and Mr. Meek of Levers.

In a witty, provocative and humorous speech, Lord Leverhulme outlined the growth of the idea and the proposals to introduce it to the Kitchen concerns; he said he had been working on the scheme for many years, it was full of difficulties and not hastily undertaken; he did not think that any board of directors, or any employer could expect a member of the staff to be thinking about his work and how better to do it, except on one basis, and that is, if the efforts and thoughts result in economies and increased business, then it must be done as partners. If he could not make them partners in some way in that success of the business, he could not logically, and with the self respect of his colleagues and shareholders, ask them to give a further thought to the business. He explained that scheme in these words -

"Now working on those lines the idea of the issue of certificates came to me. I decided that we would have these in the form of certificates which would have a nominal value based upon the currency of pounds, shillings and pence, but would have no actual value because they would not be paid for in cash. I decided that a certain number of certificates should be allotted each year to members of the staff, the men who had been with us the greater number of years would get more, and as time went on they would increase their holdings, and that would put the shareholders and employees on the exactly the same footing. Whatever I have got, whatever any man who is worthy and saving has got, he has got it as a result of accumulations from year to year. The worker will get his

certificates, and they will accumulate from year to year.

"If at any time the business meets with disaster and pays no dividends, the shares of the shareholders, bought with cash, and the certificates of the co-partners, issued to them from year to year without cash, will neither of them receive any dividend. Now, then, you see I think I have linked up profit sharing and loss sharing. It is true that the shareholders have had to save money to buy their shares, but I put that as no greater qualification for rights beyond 5% interest on capital than the co-partner who has attended to his duties and has been granted the certificate, on the basis of the service he renders, receiving them without cash. I want to feel we are all on the one footing.

"In the one case the shares are purchased by cash, it may be in the open market, on the Stock Exchange, or any other way, and in the other case they are acquired by the exercise of diligence, thought and care in the business and service rendered, and further it should be said that the profits are divided exactly in the same ratio, shareholders and co-partners, with this difference, that the co-partners, because they paid no cash, received 5% less interest. Co-partners, if they choose, can buy 5% preference shares, or even 8% preference shares, then, of course, they would go beyond and be 3% ahead of the ordinary shareholders. They could buy those shares, and combine the certificates and preference shares together and by doing that be on a level or in advance of the ordinary shareholder. That is the system, and I believe, if we look at it in the right way it will place us on the basis of equal rights.

"Some people say, 'We want equality', and since I have landed in Australia I had been interviewed by a newspaper man who wanted to know if our co-partnership was not divided equally among the members of the staff. I said 'Oh, no, it could not be that, how could it be?' If I were to say to one of the members of the staff who occupied a high position, and who rendered very important service, that he would only receive the same interest in the business as a labourer, he would go to someone else who would treat him better, he might go anywhere, the whole world is open to him, and certainly he would go somewhere where they would appreciate him better. If I said to the labourer, 'You should receive this', if he were a self respecting labourer he would say to me, 'Well, it is very good of you, very generous of you, but I do not think I have earned it'. I know he would. I have had many men come to me and say that very thing to me when I have proposed advantages to them. This is a pride in everyone of us . . . So that we must have here, in justice, a division according to the services rendered.. You cannot talk of equalising human beings. We are not even born equal, and as we progress through life we are not equal. There can be no equalising of human beings. There can be equality of rights and principle, and, after all, that largely depends on character, and there is no equality in character . . . How shall we say that profits are to be divided? . . . Now it is really the workers who make the profits? I dare say Karl Marx would say it was, and they did make them. But let us see."

(Lord Leverhulme now refers to a debate he attended).

"I had there the men who said they made the profits, and no division I was making was fair because the workers made the profits and they ought to have them. I said, 'Certainly, if you make them you ought to have them, but have you ever thought over it, because if you make the profits, what a lot of simpletons you are. You think you're making profits here at Port Sunlight, but you know, everyone of you in the trade, that lots of soapmakers are losing money. You know plenty of them are, and if you did not know that, you will find very often many firms gazetted in the papers as failures, or as unable to pay dividends and so on. Why not, all of you, if you think it is you who are making these profits, and that it is not the Chairman or the Board of Directors who are making them, go to these soap makers who are losing money, and say to them 'Here is the firm's balance sheet where we work. We have been making these profits for Lever Brothers; we live under good conditions at Port Sunlight, they treat us very well; but you see they take too much of the profits; they do not divide the profits justly or equally with us, and we do not think it is right. We will make these profits for you if you will engage us and give us the profits.' I then said to our staff at Port Sunlight, 'Now, in the first place these losing firms will give the profits to you (if you can make profits for them) because it would stop their losses. If you said you wanted 90% of the profits, I think you could make a better bargain even than that, and will tell you candidly you could have and 99% because you would have stopped their losses, and be still better off than they were, and that would be a great gain to them. Go to them tomorrow and tell them that. Then I will take for every man who leaves my work a corresponding man from their works, and I will set him up at your jobs. I will take the men who could not make profits, but only losses, for the firms they had been with, and they would be able to make profits for Lever Bros'

" . . . I think that is the test of it. Could anybody transform an unsuccessful works into a successful works simply but by taking the workers away from a successful works; it cannot be done. The fact of the matter is that it is not labour that is the source of wealth. If it were true that labour were the source of wealth, well then the world would be a different place to what it is, a widely different place. It is the few thinkers, organisers and efficient managers who with deep thought, and those who think deepest and see furthest make a greater success . . . It is equally true that the workers cannot make them without the Directors, and the Directors cannot make do without

the workers.

“... It has been 15 years since I put the Co-Partnership into operation, and I have never had any cause to regret it. There were difficult times throughout the war and after the war... There was an enormous slump in business all over the world after the war, and I believe it even reached Australia, yet we were all as happy as we could be working together. . . We paid out last year £240,000 or thereabouts. I have not seen the exact figures yet, but we paid out about £240,000. Now, if that were a mere payment for nothing in return, then it would mean we are handicapped compared with other soap makers, as other soap makers do not have to bear any such additions to wages or salary. . . But if it links us all together, if it gives us 17,000 co-partners and creates a 17,000 man power about business, do you not think we have an uplift for business . . . If any man or woman receiving a certificate thinks it is a kind of gratuity, he or she is unworthy of Co-Partnership. If any man or woman accepting a certificate feels he or she is a partner in the concern, they are like those in a boat going out fishing, as they do in the United Kingdom on partnership terms, and that is right . . . That is the spirit of comradeship, and if that is not realised then Co-Partnership is merely an added burden on the business that the business cannot carry.”

The scheme was adopted and a trust was formed to administer it. Certificates were issued to those of the staff who applied and were divided into four classes: - Directors, Managers or Foremen, Salesman, and the General Staff. The system of allotment was based on service, with a special allotment for special services and suggestions. Dividends were to be paid on the amounts of the accumulated certificates, just as they are paid on ordinary shares, but as they contributed no capital to the business, they rated, for dividend purposes, at five per cent less than ordinary shares. Co-Partnership involved no monetary responsibility whatever and the certificates have no market value. The disposal of the certificates was at the discretion of the directors of the trust, but any employee could appeal if he felt he had been overlooked or unfairly dealt with.

The Co-Partnership Plan was strongly opposed by the trade unions, they seemed to be suspicious of it, fearing it would lead to a speeding up in work and fewer employees, which the scheme certainly never intended. The secretary of the Manufacturing Grocer's Union said that the chief reason for the Trades Hall Council's rejection of J. Kitchen & Sons' scheme was that it would destroy the influence and power of trade unions in the factories. Once a worker obtained a small interest in the factory, it would mean a gradual defection of his allegiance to trade unionism; this sounded uncommonly like the fear of a trade union boss for his job. The Co-Partnership scheme aimed solely at giving the employee an interest and benefit in the concern he worked for; Lord Leverhulme's past record and reputation pointed to the fact that he had striven to give the workers an interest in the job, that he endeavoured to stimulate their ambition and thrift, and he sought to give his employees good home surroundings.

The scheme was launched in spite of the objection of the Trades Hall and had every prospect of being as successful as it was with the Lever concerns. But when Viscount Leverhulme died unexpectedly, after a sudden attack of pneumonia, the plan had to be abandoned, as it depended on Lord Leverhulme's personal possession of the shares in the Company.

Chapter X

MR. FRED W. KITCHEN

Frederick William Kitchen was born on January 31st, 1879, at Kew, Victoria. During his childhood the first big bank crash occurred, but except having to move with the family from Kew to Oakleigh and then to Finch Street, East Malvern, it did not affect him very much. He was attending the Caulfield Grammar School with his elder brother, George, and his only cares were schoolboy ones. Part of the time they were at Caulfield they were boarders, then later as day boys, when they had to walk from their home in East Malvern to school - a distance of about three miles.

He was average at his school work and not particularly brilliant in any of the subjects; he was just an ordinary normal schoolboy, very keen on play and sport, being good enough at football to be in the first team at school. During the holidays, with his brother, George, he used to go into the country hunting rabbits and wallabies with the dogs.

In those days the mistaken idea that it was good for boys to start work at fourteen or earlier was prevalent. This notion, together with the deep trade depression, and perhaps owing to the losses his father had suffered in the bank crash, were the reasons why he started work so young. Later in life he regretted he had not had a longer time at school and enjoyed the benefit of an extended education. Life had shown him the value of culture and he was sorry he had not been able to take a course of academic study in his younger days. However, long working hours and taking office work home night after night, prevented him from studying literature and similar subjects; but when one is young education is irksome and it is no hardship to leave school.

Mr. Fred entered his father's office early in January, 1893, just before his fourteenth birthday. It is not, as often supposed, an enviable experience to join the business owned by one's father. You have to live up your parent's reputation and your parent expects you to be smart and set an example to the other employees; every little mistake you make is noticed and enlarged on. At first there is a barrier of reserve between yourself and other members of the staff and often a feeling of prejudice. John Ambrose intended that Mr. Fred should learn the business thoroughly from the bottom; he began like any other office boy starting with the firm, with the difference he received no salary at all, just the usual pocket money allowed him at home. When Mr. Burke, the Secretary, saw that he was working well he recommended that the boy should receive a salary and he got his first wage of 2/6 a week. Later Mr. Burke managed to get him 5/- and when he was given 7/6 he said he felt he had become a great and independent man.

His first jobs were copying invoices in the Day Book and running messages; in common with the other boys he often had to go long distances on icy cold days and poor Fred, who suffered from chilblains, used to sometimes come home with his feet bleeding, causing his mother much concern. He often worked late at night, and, fearing for his health, she protested to his father, asking if it were necessary for him to do the night work, saying he was too young to come home alone so late at night.

His father thought he would not be a success at the office as he felt he did not work hard enough, but one of his brothers, Ernest, who was then travelling for the firm, told his mother that Fred was working too hard, and when it was pointed out to John Ambrose he saw that the boy left at a reasonable hour.

It was by no means all work and no play in the early days, and lifelong friendships were made with other members of the staff. Mr. Fred soon became popular with the other boys and joined and then there are "illegal" midday game of cricket in the office. During the lunch hour chairs, stools and forms were moved aside and the room cleared for "test match style" cricket. A ball was made of paper and string and the office ruler served as a bat. The game was played furiously and the ball had constantly to be renewed, it received such a whacking. Sometimes for a change tennis would be substituted for cricket, played over a long desk, which took the place of a net.

Though Mr. Fred was small and far from robust, he did very well at sports, and could play a hard day's tennis, which he thoroughly enjoyed. After leaving school he took part in a great deal of amateur athletics, being exceptionally keen and good at running, especially as a sprinter. He ran against the Victorian champion, who gave him only about four yards start in the hundred and one hundred and fifty yard sprints. As young man he played a good deal of tournament tennis, practising at the Camberwell Club and often playing there with J. C. Blair. One sport was barred in the family - racing - but Mr. Fred took an early interest in it and he would often go off to a race meeting when the family thought he was at tennis. A friend told an amusing story of meeting him at Flemington

one afternoon. Mr. Fred walked up to him, "I'm not here!" he said, and then disappeared into the crowd.

When he was chairman Mr. Fred regretted that, having so little free time, he was to some extent removed from his old colleagues and could not see them as often as he wished. He never forgot his old associates and was always one with his staff, whether he was manager, managing director or chairman. At the Company's social functions and picnics, he entered into the fun and joined in the sports, starting the races, holding the tape or first into the water for a swim.

He soon settled down to his work, realising that what he learnt at the beginning would give him a better understanding and a more thorough knowledge for an executive position later. But it was by no means a certainty that he would be given an important job just because he was a Kitchen; he knew that other members of the family had started with the firm and, as they were not suitable, no soft job was found for them. Promotion went by merit, a Kitchen who did not possess it, was no better off than anyone else. Mr. Fred was keen to learn and from the beginning he found he liked commercial life and decided to make it his career. He worked so hard, not only at the office, but at home at night, that he had little time for hobbies or outside interests. Naturally he made rapid strides and, after serving his time in the office, was transferred to the Sales Room; here he found work congenial to him and soon became Sales Manager. He re-organised the department and increased its efficiency. One of his most successful introductions was the method of door to door canvassing for selling soap. He found it sent up the sales of Velvet soap better than anything else.

He quickly mastered the administrative side of the business, and by 1900 was able to act as secretary while Mr. Burke was away. Then he became sub-manager and Manager in quick succession; he was entrusted with important missions to the branches; he went to South Africa to expand the market for the firm's goods there; he visited Tasmania to inquire into the difficult conditions prevailing on the island and then, in 1907, to Papua to report on the opening of the coconut plantation.

All these activities were valuable experience for his future positions. It was said later that he was astonishingly quick in making important decisions and that he arrived at his conclusions more by intuition than reasoning. The fact was that he had such a thorough grasp of all the ramifications of the business that he was able to size up a situation immediately. His experience also helped him become a shrewd track judge of character and he showed keen appreciation in picking the right men for specified positions, rarely making a mistake. By nature, he was quiet and of a retiring disposition but his wide business experience brought him in touch with all kinds of men, whom in the ordinary he would never have met. He acquired the ability quickly to understand any question that was being explained to him; he seemed a jump ahead in thought.

One of his colleagues who was closely associated with him in his later years said he never knew another man who was so loved by his employees; to them all he was "Mr. Fred", a title of affection which he had retained from the days when he was a junior partner. He acquired the knack of getting the best out of the men working under him, not by fear, but by friendship and ability to lead. He loathed servility and disliked "Yes Men"; if one had a proposal or grievance to put before him one was certain of a fair hearing. He would try to raise all possible obstacles; this was not to discourage but to find out if the matter had really been considered thoroughly. He took the opposite point of view that he might test the courage of one's convictions and see what stamina the proposer possessed. A beginner might at first be discouraged but he soon learnt the value of Mr. Fred's objections.

When he became Manager most of the responsible work fell on his shoulders. John Ambrose was getting on in years and he was satisfied that Mr. Fred could relieve him of much of his work. Mr. Fred, though not a director, attended board meetings because he had a thorough grasp of the business and was in closer contact with all activities than anyone else. The Board Meetings were very solemn affairs. In the morning a boy would prepare the room, placing blotters and pads round the table for each director; then after lunch the directors would arrive - Mr. Cuming, tall, thin, with a well trimmed beard and a serious expression; Mr. Newell, a determined American, short, with an appearance of doggedness and tenacity; the chairman, Mr. Davey, Lord Mayor of Melbourne, handsome and debonair; and then Mr. William J. Kitchen would amble in from the works to join John Ambrose and Mr. Fred already in the boardroom waiting for them.

When the world gathered, the chairman would ring a loud resounding bell for Mr. Burke, the Secretary. Mr. Burke rather resented this unceremonious summons, and on the sound of the bell, an expression of resignation, mingled with sorrow, would spread over his face; then it seemed that Mr. Burke's neck would suffer from a momentary stiffness, which secured by rubbing it up and down with the palm of his left hand. After a few moments

thus engaged, he would rise sedately from his chair and with the studied leisureliness go over to the safe and bring out the minute Book and other documents as though he was saying to himself "I'll keep those directors waiting for ME; ringing a bell like that". After this Mr. Burke would walk majestically across the office and disappear into the boardroom. Of course ordinary mortals did not know what went on in there but, judging from the writing pads, the directors were great doodlers.

Mr. Fred lived at home until he was married in 1905 to miss Myra Anabel Bruford, daughter of J. H. Bruford, the then Auditor General. There were two children of the marriage - Barbara and Frederick Bruford. Mr. Fred was very much a family man and was at his happiest when playing with his children.

His business career could be divided into two parts the first of which came to an end in 1914. During the preceding years he had gathered knowledge and experience fitting him for positions of responsibility. He had become well-known in Victoria's business world; he was a member of the Victoria Chamber of Manufacturers and had been on the Council of the chamber since 1904. He had developed into an indefatigable worker with all commercial details of the business at his command, he had gained the respect of and was regarded affectionately by his colleagues and the firm's employees.

When Sir William Lever met him in 1914 he immediately recognised Mr. Fred's business ability and his admiration for him continued for the rest of his life. It was very probable that Lever suggested it was time Mr. Fred was made a director, for in March 1914 he was elected to the Board of both the Sydney and Melbourne companies.

When the war broke out in 1914 Mr. Fred was virtually directing the business in Melbourne. His father, who was 79 years of age, was obviously too old to do the actual day to day work involved in the direction of the business though he took an active interest in the Company. W. J. Kitchen was content to look after the manufacturing, having very little knowledge or inclination for commerce. Mr. Fred tried to enlist in the A.I.F. but was rejected by the medical authorities. He was disappointed that he was unable to join the fighting forces, but his services proved to be of great value to the country in an administrative capacity. When all available suppliers of glycerine were required by the government, some system of control had to be organised. The authorities asked him to evolve a scheme to regulate the industry; he suggested, and then organised, the glycerine "pool" whereby all glycerine manufactured was placed at the disposal of the government for military and civilian use.

Besides attending to his ordinary duties at Kitchens, he worked on many committees, and represented the soapmakers when the Minister in charge of foodstuffs and commodities arranged a conference between the tallow and the soap manufacturers and the Prices Commissioner, in an attempt to stabilise the price of tallow and soap. He was also witness on behalf of the soapmakers at the Interstate Prices Investigation Commission in 1918.

In November 1925 he was formally appointed Chairman of the Company, though he had, to all intents and purposes, held the position since his brother, John Hambleton had died early in the year. One of the first schemes he introduced as Chairman was free life assurance policies for employees beginning in January 1926. With the death of Lord Leverhulme, Co-Partnership has to be dropped but the directors of the Company were anxious to offer something to the employees in its place. Free life assurance was adopted and made available to all employees of the Company over twenty years of age who had completed one year of service with the firm. The amounts assured were from £100 upwards, the Company paying the premiums, with no medical examination required. The policy became payable in the event of any employee becoming permanently invalided or at death. No special terms were required to obtain this benefit, the Company only asked that work was done loyally and to the best ability of the recipient, a request that was made of a worker in any case. The scheme was explained by Mr. Fred at a special meeting in Melbourne, and similarly by other directors in Sydney and at all the branches; it was successfully launched and became popular with the employees, many of whom, and their dependants, obtained benefits.

The amicable relationship between the workers and the Company was shown in 1928 when Mr. Fred announced the firm had decided to recognise long service, by presenting an inscribed gold watch to each employee who had completed twenty-five years, or more, service. When a list was made out, it was found that no less than one hundred and thirty employees were due to receive them, Mr. Fred himself included. He said at the presentation that he was proud so large a number of men had been with the Company for over a quarter of a century and one woman, Miss Amiss had been the first and was in now head typist, with the record of twenty-nine years' service.

Mr. Fred endeavoured to get a spirit of co-operation among the members of the staff; he encouraged the young men and persuaded those holding executive positions to help their subordinates all they could and show them

everything they knew. He was aware that sometimes men at the top feared that when they taught the men under them too much they might be assisting them to positions superior to themselves. This would not happen while they felt they were helping for the common good. He said "the way to get promotion for ourselves is to help other men in the organisation to succeed. Men who are not afraid of losing their own position by teaching others are the men who are going to get the bigger positions for themselves."

In 1926 an innovation was an interstate conference of managers under his chairmanship. Papers were read and discussed dealing with all the activities of the business. The meeting of executives from all the states to discuss their problems and aspects of the business generally was so successful that it was decided to repeat it in three years' time. At the conference in 1929 Persil was first discussed as a new product for Australia. Mr. Fred had the opinion that flakes and powders would sooner or later take the place of laundry soaps to a large extent; he based his opinion on the trend of the trade in other countries. He told the conference he had decided to put a new soap powder on the Australian market, even though it might to some extent take the place of the firm's well-known laundry soaps. His choice was Persil. It was already a success in England and on the Continent, because it was different from soap in the action of washing. He explained, when Persil is mixed with warm water, millions of oxygen bubbles are set free and the washing water becomes an active solution that drives out dirt. His confidence in Persil was justified as is well known now by its large sales and popularity with the public.

About this time there was a dispute about the manufacture of margarine. The dairy producers' interests had always opposed the manufacture of margarine because they considered it threatened their industry. Strenuous efforts were being made by them to restrict the making of margarine. When evidence was given before a Parliamentary Select Committee, a complaint was made by one of the witnesses that if it were not for the margarine industry 7,000 tonnes of second grade butter would be sold to the pastrycooks. But the fact that the pastrycooks preferred margarine because it could be made to a suitable texture, hardness and melting point was overlooked. It was also alleged that a great proportion of colored labour was used in its production. Actually the basic raw materials in Australian margarine at that time were animal fats produced by Australian cattle. In the manufacture of margarine the Australian beef producer was enabled to market one of his most important by-products, all the other ingredients produced in Australia or British possessions. Giving evidence before the Dairying Industries Commission, Mr. Frederick Kitchen said - "The dairying industry is attempting to legislate margarine out of existence; I deny the allegations that margarine was inferior to butter in nutritive content; that a great proportion of it was made by foreign labour; that it was served as butter. When made from animal fat I contend it is equal in food value to butter." He said that "the bulk of the margarine used in the Commonwealth is 100% Australian. There was nothing to prove that people are deceived by camouflaged margarine as very little is sold for table use. The dairy industry is trying to kill margarine manufacture because his product is, to some extent, superseding butter for cooking purposes. The most charitable thing I can say is that the bogey arises from ignorance."

Asked if he thought that, when the public realised that a large amount of margarine went into cakes and pastry, it would receive a shock? he replied " . . . an unbiased person, after investigation would be just as pleased to use it in his own household as I am." It was emphasised that margarine is not sold as a substitute for butter but as an alternative. The margarine manufacturers are as much opposed to the sale of a product containing butter fats as the dairy industry and agreed it should be prohibited.

A margarine, that in taste, food value and texture is equal to butter, it now sold for table use, though the sale of it has been voluntarily restricted so as not to impair the dairying interest. Margarine has proved to be of inestimable value for the troops during the war.

Mr. Fred was a very staunch Australian and advocated the necessity of secondary industries for this country; he also tried to persuade people to spend their holidays in Australia, and was one of the party of sixty Melbourne businessmen to spend their holidays in central Australia and to popularise "See Australia First". They saw a great part of the continent which is unknown to most Australians, going into the interior, visiting Alice Springs and north of Barrow Creek.

Outside his activities with the Company he had developed many interests. He was a prominent member of the Victorian Chamber of Manufacturers, of which he was elected President in 1933, and re-elected for a further term in 1934. During his Presidency the Chamber followed a very progressive policy, the premises were being modelled on extensive scale and brought into line with their stature and scale of the Chamber's activities. When the Victorian Centenary was celebrated he was honoured by election as President of the Associated Chambers of Manufacturers and acted as host to the gathering of representatives from all the states at the meeting held in

conjunction with the Centenary Celebrations. He was also chairman of the committee that arranged the All-Australian Centenary Exhibition held in Melbourne and had the privilege of conducting H. R. H. the Duke of Gloucester round the exhibition.

Among his other business interests he was a founder and member of the Board of Victorian Chamber of Manufacturers Insurance Ltd. and a member of the Board of Messrs. Dudgeon & Arnell Pty. Ltd., the tobacco manufacturers. He was also interested in, and a director of the Toomuc Valley Apple Orchard at Pakenham, which was started by his father had become one of the largest orchards of its kind in Victoria.

His health, in later life, prevented him from taking part in sport to any great extent, but he was still a very enthusiastic tennis player, liked golf, and was a keen gardener. For some years he was interested in racing and several horses owned by him had important successes; they won the Moonee Valley Cup, the Adelaide Birthday Cup and the Maribyrnong Plate; Tookarby and Vantry were two of his horses that enjoyed much popularity.

When the Company held picnics for the employees he joined in the fun, lunched with one of the many groups under shady trees and presented the prizes to the winners of the sporting events, thoroughly enjoying himself.

In 1928 he joined the board of the Alfred Hospital, taking a very keen interest of the work of that institution. Later on he was chairman of the Hamilton Russell House Committee, an intermediate section of the Alfred Hospital. He became a deputy-chairman of the Alfred Hospital House Committee, as well as being a member of the Building and Nurse Training School Committees.

It was not until 1923 that he found time to take his first trip to England. He went again in 1935, when he was appointed by the government to act as the representative of the Australian Employers at the International Labour Conference held in Geneva. While in England he was guest of honour at a dinner given by the Lever Organisation. In a speech, Mr. d'Arcy Cooper, the chairman of Levers, paid great tribute to his business ability. When he arrived at Boston, in the United States of America, he was met by Mr. Francis Countway, of Levers, who was the highest salaried men in America at that time. Mr. Countway almost embraced Mr. Fred and his first question was - "how is it you're so darn prosperous down there?"

Mr. Fred was suffering from poor health at that time, but his prodigious energy drove him in a tireless search for information and he was worn out at the end of each day. His active mind was too strong for his constitution, but while he was busy, and no matter how strenuous the work, he was happy. Perhaps if he had been a less energetic man his health would have benefited more from the journey, though he liked life on board ship and enjoyed the trip immensely.

Back in Melbourne he started work again. There was no economic necessity for him to go on working at high pressure, but he was not a man who was content to enjoy a life of leisure even though he must have known that to go on working must mean increased strain. Those who knew him intimately were aware that it must be taking a great toll of his health. Despite the suffering he experienced, he never allowed it to embitter him and his kindness and understanding endeared him with his fellow workers. Even with his multitude of business affairs, when nearly every minute of his time was mortgaged, he found time to write - not dictate - letters personally to his colleagues and employees who were away - perhaps on a visit to England, happy in sending them introductions so that they could enjoy their stay in the Mother Country.

When Mr. Gifford, who shared a great deal of Mr. Fred's work, lost his daughter up in 1937 he seemed to break up and never recovered from the blow. Mr. Fred had the additional strain of Mr. Gifford's work to carry, and this, together with the business difficulties caused by the outbreak of war in 1939 were too much for him. His doctors told him to take things easier, he tried to follow their advice and would arrive at the office in the morning determined not to tax his energies, but before the day was out he was working with his usual force and was exhausted when he arrived home. Inevitably he had to pay and on 18th March, 1940, he collapsed in his office; he was rushed home but died that night.

He had lived his life with a zest for work and play, a very human and lovable man. In business he had never ridden roughshod over his fellows, neither was he guilty of condescension to his subordinates, and by his kindness he had won the affection and esteem of all who had come in contact with him. With his death another stage in the story of J. Kitchen & Sons had passed into history.

The board of management of the Alfred Hospital registered their appreciation of him: -

“It is with deep regret that we record the passing of a valued colleague, Mr. Frederick W. Kitchen. His able advice and sound judgment will be sadly missed by the members of the board of management of the Alfred hospital. Mr. Kitchen joined the board of management in 1928 and devoted considerable time to the affairs of the hospital.”

The “Industrial Victoria” also paid tribute to him: -

“As President of the Chamber of Manufactures and the Associated Chambers, his capacity for dealing with difficulties, his keen financial faculties and his powers of organisation were used to the full. He is a loss not only to the organisation which he directed but to the manufacturing community in general.”

Chapter XI

MANUFACTURING AND COMMERCIAL PURPOSES

The first soap to be made in Victoria was produced in 1845 - only 10 years before John and his son started their little business. A man named James Jackson, then owner of Toorak, manufactured it. He had great difficulties to contend with, being obliged to use soda crystals as an alkali and afterwards soda ash. However, he succeeded in making an article superior to the imported soaps from New South Wales and England.

The manufacturing methods the Kitchens used when they commenced were very crude, John (Ambrose) sat in the kitchen night after night making tallow dips, earning the nickname of the "Candle King". The candle frames they later obtained were old fashioned, and the moulds into which they pour the melted tallow were like a roll of organ pipes with strings hanging into them. The candles were trimmed and the ends cleaned off by hand with an old-fashioned type razor blade in a firm handle. This way of finishing off the candles lasted for many years, and the principle of making candles by pouring the melted fat into cylinders, is still essentially the same. Even in the early eighties the candles were taken one by one, inserted into a brass mould and the protruding ends cut off evenly. It was a long process, but as there were only two machines in use, making ninety six each at a "lift" (today a machine makes about five hundred and eighteen) it was not difficult to keep pace with them.

Unlike many manufacturers in the early days, Kitchens were keen to take advantage of all the inventions and improvements in the industry. Most candle and soapmakers, when told by manufacturing chemists they were losing large sums annually by letting their 'lyes' flow away to waste, answered they were making enough profits from their soap and there would not bother to install additional expensive plant. Again, often manufacturers were completely in the hands of their soapmaker who invariably opposed any new invention and refused to adopt an improvement. The soapmaker feared it would affect his livelihood which depended, he thought, on his jealously guarded soap boiling recipe. These so-called practical men really gave a new idea or discovery a fair trial and frustrated, by all the means in their power, chemists even of the highest ability. Only when the employer was a soapmaker himself could a new method be fairly tried. This is where Kitchens had an advantage; John knew the trade, as did his son, Theo, after him.

The first important discovery that they adopted was the manufacture of stearine. John Kitchen had a prejudice in favour of the tallow candle, so it was left to his sons to experiment. Stearine had been discovered by Chevreul, as a result of his researches early in the century, and experimented with in Victoria some years before Kitchens began to make it, but they can claim to be one of the pioneering firms to manufacture it commercially in Australia. The superiority of the stearine candle is that it burns with a clear, smokeless flame, it does not gutter and is particularly suited for hot climates because it does not bend when exposed to warmth, obviously a great advantage in many parts of Australia. Kitchens began to make stearine in about 1868, and soon the product became popular, winning recognition in the 1870 International Exhibition held by the Agricultural Society of N.S.W.

The first soap they manufactured was similar to that made by the housewife, over a fire in a copper ore in large iron pots in the backyard. It was a period because of John Kitchen's experience and knowledge of the trade. Soap made from tallow was, in reality a composition of stearate and palmitate of soda and glycerine, part of which was set free during the process of saponification. Before proceeding it should be explained that saponification means when the fatty acids (tallow, coconut oil, etc.) are blended or united with the caustic soda solution in the course of being boiled, and the spent lyes are the liquid that sinks to the bottom of the pan after the tallow and caustic have saponified. The waste or spent lyes contain the valuable glycerine, and were lost in the old days when disposed of in sewers or on waste land. The by-products which we get now either remained in the soap or were thrown away. The quality of the soap was tested by a very crude methods; the soapmaker would taste it to see if there was too much alkali, or he could determine its quality by the feel of it when cold.

Glycerine was the first important by-product recovery in the making of soap; it had been discovered in 1779 by a Swedish chemist named Scheele. Accidentally he found that the action of lead oxide upon olive oil produced a peculiar sweet substance separated from the oil; however, it was not until 1812 that Chevreul, a French chemist determined its manufacture and called it glycerine. Even then it was not used very widely until Nobel discovered its use in high explosives.

When in 1879 Kitchens decided to refine glycerine, they sent to Messrs. Geo. Bennie & Co., of Glasgow, for plant and a man with a thorough knowledge of the trade, though more in the extraction of oil and manufacture of tallow than glycerine. The Company commenced to make it in 1880 and the following year were refining a

reasonably good glycerine. They realised there was plenty of room for improvement, and Philip, who was in England, negotiated with Thomas Testro, who was thoroughly conversant up-to-date methods, to come to Australia.

They had also established a laboratory and asked Philip Kitchen and John Connell & Co., the Company's agents in London, to find a young chemist who was capable of analysing soap, soda, potash and the materials used in the manufacture of the firm's products. Theo Kitchen had some knowledge of chemistry but required a man to assist him who understood laboratory work and the testing of glycerine and fatty acids. Later it was realised that an expert chemist, experienced in the industry, was required, with the result they got in touch with Mr. G. P. Clarke, and finely amalgamated with the Apollo Company. It can be seen that even in those days they were anxious to get the best possible services at the disposal.

In about 1885 it was decided to use the naphtha process of freeing the oil from the stearine, which necessitated the use of a certain quantity of kerosene with the fat while pressing it. This process was considered too dangerous to follow in the factory proper, so by dumping dray loads of sand and an earth in the swamp an "island" was built up on which a small brick building could be erected. A "road" of planks was placed on banked sand for communication between the factories. The candles manufactured under this process - which by the way, is no longer used - were called "Petrolene Patent Candles", and are still on the market but not made by the naphtha process. The night shift did their work by means of light from gas lamps fitted to the outside of special windows; the lamp frames were the size of the windows at the front, tapering to a small oblong at the back, and the inside composed of polished reflectors, which gave quite a good light. As the business grew, it became necessary to add to the building, and the swamp land was reclaimed, by carting tons of earth and sand to it, until it was solid enough for building. Many hundreds of tons of sand came from the excavation for the Coode Canal, then under construction.

The reclamation of the land took many months. On the site of the present Candle Room at Melbourne, the contractor lost a horse doing the work. As the haulage was very heavy, two horses were required to pull a load of sand over the newly filled portions; a leader of one of the teams went too far and fell into the quagmire. The horse very quickly sank to its withers and in an effort to save it, its next was neck was broken. The only thing to do was to free the unfortunate animal and it rolled back into the mire where it quickly sank.

The introduction of paraffin wax cheaply imported from America, affected Kitchen's business very adversely. It had been used first in the manufacture of candles outside Australia during the 'fifties. When sold in Australia, a purely paraffin wax candle was found to bend in the hot weather and had to be stiffened with a percentage of stearine. Though not so good as the stearine candle, it made great headway because of its cheapness and the Company had to manufacture them to meet the competition. Since the commencement of war in 1939, Kitchens and most of the candle manufacturers in Australia have agreed to make stearine candles only, with a view to producing the maximum amount of glycerine for war purposes.

One of the next most important steps in the manufacturing progress of the Company was the acquisition of the Twitchell process by John Hambleton in 1899, already described. It is a method especially suitable for low grade fats. The process consists of steam boiling the fat progressively with half its bulk of water and a small proportion of sulpho-aromatic compounds in the large wooden vat.

In 1895 the Company introduced to Australia the production of toilet soap by machine milling. It was one of the most progressive steps in the manufacture of the Company's products. Instead of mixing perfumes with the melted soap, it was "milled" and pressed in by machine. First, a good quality of soap containing no resin is made in the ordinary way; it is cut into slabs and they are inserted into a machine that literally tears them to ribbons. These pass over a drying apparatus by means of a conveyor and then are delivered dry and shredded. Perfume is poured over them and they are then pressed, rolled and shredded again until a perfume is thoroughly impregnated into the soap. Then the shavings are subjected to further pressure and the toilet soap comes out of the mouth of the machine in a long narrow slab ready for cutting into small pieces and stamping. This method of producing toilet soap is still used, giving the finest kitchen soap with the perfume and colouring thoroughly infused.

Many other inventions, improvements and discoveries were acquired and used but they are too numerous to describe in detail. Progress was made in all directions with new raw materials, new scientific methods, new machinery and new products. Where John and his sons obtained only two finished products from the tallow they melted, now many things are produced. First, there are the two alternative primary products - soap and black acids - the foremost of by-products from these two sources is glycerine. In the case of soap, it is found at the bottom of

the pan, in the lye solution, after the addition of salt has freed the glycerine and caused the soap to come to the top. In the splitting of the black acids by the Twitchell process, it is drawn off in a form called sweet water, and, when distilled and filtered twice, becomes pure glycerine. It has a sweet taste and besides being used in the manufacture of nitro-glycerine for explosives, it forms the basis for many of the cough mixtures and is widely used in toothpastes, cosmetics, synthetic enamels and for medicinal purposes are generally.

From the black acids, which are purified by boiling and distilling, "white acids" are obtained, containing stearine and oleine. These white acids are moulded into cakes and under high pressure (20 tons per square inch) the oleine is squeezed out. The stearine is further purified and is then ready for making into candles or for use in rubber manufacture, for making wax matches, waterproof cements, pitch, paint bases, protective coatings and the production of cosmetics. The oleine, or the soft part of the fatty acids is used for making soft or industrial soaps, for lubricating the woolen fibres in the textile industry, for lubricating oils, for the making of sheep-dip, orchard and fly sprays, disinfectants and carbon paper etc.

As is well known, animal tallow is not the only source of soap; it can be made from vegetable oils, like those expressed from the coconut and cotton seed. The residue from the coconut, after the oil is pressed out, is known as a oil cake, and makes excellent fattening food for cattle, horses and poultry.

Most soap in Australia is made from tallow, coconut oil and resin, saponified with caustic soda. The pans in which the soap is made are large iron vessels, lagged with wooden laths, capable of holding about sixty tons of soap. The quantity of melted tallow and a weak solution of caustic soda are simultaneously poured from pipes into the pan, then open steam penetrates the mixture in the pans by means of perforated pipes, and the contents are gradually boiled. After saponification, which takes several days, salt is added to the mixture, to separate the soap from the lye and free the glycerine; it is allowed to stand for about twelve hours and then the lye is drawn off. To ensure complete saponification, the process is repeated until the mixture becomes clear and smooth. The heat is turned off, the pan covered over and left to stand for several days. It settles into two layers, the top contains the superior soap, the bottom a dark coloured poorer quality soap, known in the trade as "nigre". While hot, the soap is run into mixing machines, where perfume and other ingredients are added. After this it is run into a frame beneath the mixer. The frame is like a huge iron box or mould, measuring 6' x 5' x 1½' inside, and carried on a small truck. For about two days the soap is left in the frame to cool and set; the sides of the frame are then removed and there remains the large solid block of soap. First, it is cut into three large slabs by drawing a single steel wire through it; each slab is then sent to a machine that pushes it through a series of cutting wires, making it into small slabs; then automatically they are pushed at right angles through a further series of cutting wires and the soap is cut into bars. These are inspected and then placed on racks for drying; when sufficiently dry they are stamped with the name of the brand by a machine and then carried by conveyor belt ready to be packed for the consumer.

The manufacture of Kitchens' famous washer, Persil, is a much more complicated procedure. First a boil of the very best soap is made in the way already described. This is then conveyed by a pipe to another large vessel or enclosed pan where further ingredients are added. When these have thoroughly mixed the liquid soap is forced through pipes at great pressure and sprayed into a huge cooling chamber, where it falls like very fine snow. Then it is taken to the packing machine which automatically makes the packets, fills and seals them and delivers them ready to be sent out to the consumer.

When the goods are made, the next problem is to sell them. In the early days it was relatively simple; the local grocers and shopkeepers were approached and persuaded to buy the candles and soap which were delivered on a barrow by members of the family. When the business grew, new markets had to be found and the obvious way, was to engage a traveller, if possible one with a connection. In the first year of the Company, John Ambrose combined the management and control of the business activities with the responsibility for selling the firm's goods and acted as traveller. The first representative to be engaged, as far as can be ascertained was J. Tappin; he joined Kitchens in 1868 and remained with them until he retired in 1910. It appears he represented them in Ballarat at first, where he had other agencies; then it in about 1886, he took charge of the city and Geelong territory; by 1895 and his sales amounted to £23,700 for the year. Another traveller at the time the business was beginning to expand was Mr. Kerr Johnstone, but of whom little is known other than that he was in charge of Melbourne sales in 1870.

The traveller was the aristocrat of the employees, he was the man who sold the firm's products and, therefore, only second in importance to the directors. Independent, frequently highly paid, he worked on commission and was more in the nature of an agent than an employee. His "connection" was essentially a personal matter that could be taken from one firm to another regardless of their products. The traveller, whose personality

pleased his clients and who often mixed with them socially, was the successful salesman. There was no sales tie-up with the firm's advertising even if it existed, the traveller frequently deciding what his client should stock and winning his gratitude for saving him the trouble of thinking of for himself. Prices were not fixed, the storeman or grocer charged what he liked. There was little or no sales policy, except to sell as much as possible at a profit. The travellers' prestige was heightened by the fact that he generally possessed a buggy and looked the gentleman. To add to his independence, to say nothing of his income, he often carried other lines, such as flour, confectionery and jam which made a queer alliance of the products he sold.

John Ambrose frequently had a difficult task dealing with his travellers; they possessed the temperament of a leading actor and had to be dealt with gently but firmly. He never minded paying them large sums in commission, as is instanced by a story told by J. S. Sandeman, who at one time, was the if one of the firm's representatives. Sandeman tells how one month he received a cheque for £120 in commission. John Ambrose called him into his office and pointing to a chair asked him to sit down.

"You've had a good month, Mr. Sandeman?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Do you think you can do it again?" asked John Ambrose.

"I'll try."

"You go and do it, we like it as much as you," said John Ambrose with a broad smile.

There were plenty of interesting opportunities for the salesman. Mr. J. Younger, who had joined Kitchens in 1883, suggested to the directors in 1900 that he take a world tour and open a markets in South Africa and the East. Terms were agreed to and Mr. Younger had a very successful and interesting tour.

Gradually, with the application of advertising and the adoption of proprietary lines, the position of the traveller changed. Velvet soap, the sales of which had at first been poor, was not popularised in the market by being "pushed" on the grocer by the travellers so much as by house to house canvassing; but it was not until much later that salesmanship was approached from a planned, scientific point of view. Mr. Fred Kitchen saw that a completely new attitude was required in the firm's selling organisation, and when Mr. Gifford visited England in 1928, he asked him to find a really first-class Sales Manager.

Mr. Gifford sought the advice of Lever's directors in England and they suggested a Mr. H. A. Wilkins, who had been with them some years previously. He had recently marketed the beauty preparations and cosmetics of the English actress and beauty, Gladys Cooper. Wilkins joined Kitchens and sailed for Australia, arriving in November 1928. He was a man with a forceful personality, courteous, and of great charm, he got the best out of people by gaining their confidence. If he asked the office boy to catch the post with an important letter, it was never with a threat but by making the boy feel he was doing him a personal favour. He held the view that the only justification for the sales manager was to make it easier for the salesmen to sell the firm's goods and he thought no sales manager could succeed unless he had the confidence and enthusiastic co-operation of the salesmen. He brought his travellers together, working like a cricket team under his captaincy, and a very successful team it became.

Under his direction, Kitchens' selling methods were revolutionised, he linked the sales and advertising, making them allies in sales drive campaigns. He was courageous in his publicity, introducing broader and stronger advertising and spending what had been until then, outrageously large sums of money. He carefully analysed the markets and introduced scientific planning in his sales campaigns; advertising became the servant of the sales department, not its master.

One of his greatest triumphs was the introduction of Persil to Australia in March 1932. There had been many washing powers offered to the public previously, but none of them had really become popular; there seemed to be a general prejudice against them. The public did not appear to want them, the grocer and storeman did not view them favourably, and the salesman experienced great difficulty in selling them. Wilkins knew he had a good product, and, in spite of opposition, determined to sell it successfully.

First he seemed to set himself an obstacle. The retailer had up to then often reduced the price of proprietary lines in order to obtain sales, regardless of the fact that it caused a good deal of dissatisfaction among consumers, who sometimes saw the same article cheaper just after they had purchased it. Mr. Wilkins insisted, by written agreement, on a fixed retail price or he refused to supply. This also had the effect of setting a high value

on Persil. Then he toured every state personally to examine local problems; for instance, to see if the local water was hard and difficult for washing. Before offering Persil to the public he started what was new then, a campaign of anticipation. Stickers appeared on the grocer's windows with three words "Persil is coming"; it set people talking and asking what Persil was. Then when all the retailers were supplied a day was fixed for sales to commence; "Persil is here" substituted for "Persil is coming". Radio, press, poster, and even little stamps, told the public about Persil. A new innovation was the organisation of washing squads, teams of women visited housewives in their homes, helping them and showing them how to wash with Persil under actual home conditions. The whole campaign was different from any ever used before in launching a soap in Australia. Persil was a tremendous success; it had come to stay.

Mr. Wilkins examined Australian sales problems thoroughly. He found that advertising costs were in the ratio of five to two times as much as before 1914. In other words, it required £50,000 to produce the result that once could be obtained with £20,000 - not to buy the same amount of space, but to get the same result. He saw that advertising could not be relied on to sell as it did formerly; he, therefore, introduced various selling schemes. He offered advantages both to the trade and consumer; to the trade he offered a quantity free when a number of cases were purchased; to the public he offered a "tie-up", that is, several of the Company's products for a reduced price or one product free with the purchase of another. These schemes were a great success; better than price reductions, for they popularised the Company's goods and increased sales. He encouraged his travellers to raise every possible objection to a selling scheme, discussed it with them in detail and provided them with answers. This had an excellent affect on their morale, for they found they had the right answer and were able to sway the customer and secure the order.

Each State, in 1930, had its own selling organisation and Head Office felt that the New South Wales market could be expanded. Wilkins decided the organisation there needed an energetic, astute and, most important, a man who could gain the enthusiastic co-operation of his sales staff. His choice fell on Mr. H. C. Nankervis, the manager of the South Australian branch.

Mr. Nankervis was born in Kadina, South Australia, and educated at Moonta Grammar School. He entered the National Bank in South Australia and, some time after being transferred to Broken Hill, he joined the Bank of Western Australia, remaining with them for several years. He then became manager for the South-Western Timber Hewers and for this post, in 1915, he joined Kitchens in Adelaide. A tall, athletically built man, with abounding vitality, he had made a big success as manager of the South Australian branch. His popularity was well demonstrated when he left to take up his new job in Sydney. The factory employees gave him a gold wristlet watch, the office staff presented him with a travelling rug and the travellers a cut glass wine set and tray.

Wilkins found in Nankervis a lieutenant who worked harmoniously with him, both men consulted each other to their mutual advantage and the Sydney Sales prospered under the new manager. Many schemes like those in Victoria were instituted in New South Wales. Mr. Nankervis successfully co-operated with his staff, encouraging them to new objectives rather than maintaining their present sales. He also picked promising young men, whom he fostered for future important positions, many of whom have now justified his foresight.

Mr. Wilkins success and ability was recognised when he was appointed a director of the Company in 1933. A few years later he was offered the direction of Lever's business in Canada, and he left Australia in 1936, his departure being sincerely regretted by all his colleagues at Kitchens. Unfortunately, his very promising career was cut short by his death in Canada in 1938.

His successor at Kitchens, naturally enough, was Mr. Nankervis, who has continued to direct the Company's sales policy until the present day. He was appointed a Director in 1939. Mr. S. H. Walker, who had been working with Mr. Wilkins as his right-hand man, continued in a similar capacity with Mr. Nankervis. Mr. Walker had joined the Company in 1911, as a boy, and was in the Melbourne office when the war broke out in 1914. He joined up and, after being on active service right through the war, returned in 1919 to gain actual experience on the road and then occupy the post of Victorian Sales Manager. In 1930 he went to Western Australia to manage the branch there, then about two years later he was appointed Assistant Sales Manager to Mr. Wilkins. In 1943, besides being Assistant Sales Director for Australia, he took over the Sales direction for New South Wales.

The next problem, after the establishment of a Sales organisation built on your ideas and methods, is how to keep it running smoothly and efficiently, for it is easy to let it get out of control or run into disuse. Mr. Nankervis not only kept it in good order has improved it during his long term as sales director.

In the service of salesmanship, one of the most outstanding growths in commerce since the end of last century is the progress of advertising. It is an old and obvious method of selling one's goods, yet only comparatively recently has it become a profession in its own right. In 1770 Dr. Johnson had said that the practice of advertising was so perfect that no further improvements could be expected; his conclusions proved to be more than premature.

When John Kitchen and his son started up their little factory, advertising in the press was confined to bald statements; shipping companies announced their sailings and theatres their shows. Displayed advertisements were practically unknown, except in a few magazines and directories. Probably Kitchen's first printed advertisement, if it can be called such, appeared in the Melbourne Directory in 1861. Under the heading "Candle & Soapmakers" was the simple announcement "J. Kitchen & Sons, Candle & Soapmakers, Sandridge; Office, 11 Little Collins Street".

Posters and painted signs were Kitchen's first most popular form of advertising. They felt posters gave a more permanent value for money than newspapers that only lasted a day; the painted signs were often crude and roughly executed on fences or any other available space. Posters in those days consisted of extravagantly designed lettering, with no illustrations, pasted haphazardly on the sides of houses, walls and anywhere else the bill poster could put them.

Exhibitions, though not considered a form of advertising as they are today, were an excellent medium for publicity. A firm exhibited to gain prestige for their products, not to give samples and advertising literature to the public. The object was to win praise and medals; the publicity was acceptable but incidental. Kitchens exhibited as soon as the opportunity offered. It occurred in 1861 at the International Exhibition in Melbourne. This was the first since 1854 and was preliminary to the exhibition to be held in London. Kitchens showed their candles, soap and tallow, though no awards were given at this Exhibition. Curiously enough neither the Gossage nor Hobson Bay companies were represented. In 1866 the Inter-Colonial Exhibition of Australia was held at Melbourne. The catalogue and official records give an amazing description of Kitchen's exhibits. "... *A collection of soaps, much of it deserving to rank as 'high art' so elaborate is the manipulation it has undergone and though the soap in its unadorned state may be far removed from a vile thing it of a surety is made to look more precious than its wont under the decorative skill of the hands which have turned it into apples and pears, peaches and nectarines, oranges and lemons - to say nothing of cameo-like medallions and marble - or may we say bas - relief. Messrs. J. Kitchen & Sons and Messrs. Tilley & Clark make a great display of these wonders.*" It goes on to say that Kitchens "*showed pure soap made from the very best materials for which a prize medal was awarded them.*" They received a special mention for the excellence of their yellow soap and an honourable mention for toilet soap, soap "fruits" and tallow candles. There was only one exhibit of stearine candles by G. W. Praagst, the sole manufacturer of them at that time.

After this they were regular exhibitors, receiving silver medals at the International Exhibition in Victoria in 1873 and 1875 and Philadelphia in 1876. They won gold medals at the Melbourne International Exhibition of 1880, the International Exhibition, Amsterdam, 1883 the Centennial International Exhibition, Melbourne in 1888, and many others. The success of the products and the recognition they received at those exhibitions did much to popularise their goods with the public, probably more than direct advertising would have done in those days.

A great deal of time, trouble and money was spent on the exhibits; when stearine candles were first shown in Melbourne by the Company they were exhibited in a small glass case, measuring about two feet by three feet, three sides of which would glass and the base and back were lined with blue velvet plush. Kitchens exhibited at one of the first of the Royal Agricultural Society shows held on the St Kilda Road in 1870, on the site of the present Police Barracks. The exhibit was small and composed mostly of empty soap and candle boxes, attractively arranged. On them was stacked, in pyramid and other shapes, packets of candles and bars of soap. There being no Sales Manager or Advertising Executive, the display was in the charge of Mr. Kerr Johnston, the town traveller. He was assisted by a boy named W. J. Stocker, who was destined to become one of the firm's oddest employees. A few years later, under Theo Kitchen's direction, Stocker and another man named J. Newall prepared an elaborate exhibit for the exhibition of 1880. Three months were spent on making the candles and models. They were nearly finished when the great floods of the that year occurred. The factory was six feet under water, and Mr. Stocker, fearing for the candles and moulded stearine exhibits, took a boat and rowed from Fountain Inn, in Bay Street, about half a mile to the factory. He paddled over the factory fence, which was well under water, and into the candle room, where he found his exhibition materials floating like small ships. He rescued them and placed them on high shelves in the storeroom. The work had to be hastily repaired and finished, then it took over a month to erect the exhibit,

but it was worth it for it won the gold medal. The design was based on the trade mark and was described in the guide to their exhibition¹:

“J. Kitchen & Sons have also a splendid show. The case is octagonal in shape, having four projections. The base of the octagon shows no less than 85 kinds of stearine and paraffin candles, forming in various designs and vary in size and colour. The sides are broken by niches in which are placed statues composed of stearine. On the base rests a boat, in which stands a figure holding a candle, and over her head is a canopy of beautifully worked stearine which is supported by eight Corinthian columns, artistically carved. In the four projections are arranged soaps of all kinds. Oils of different kinds, soda crystals and glycerine are also shown.”

The Company was so gratified with its success that all the employees were invited to a picnic, cabs being hired to take the picnickers to Doncaster. There at Doncaster Hall two “sit down” meals were provided with a programme of sport events. This was the first picnic held by the Company.

Kitchens became famous for the stearine figures and models; the centrepiece which attracted a great deal of attention at the Exhibition of 1888 was a seven foot model of Captain Cook, cast in stearine by the Company. In more recent years - 1924 - a thirty foot high ten ton stearine lighthouse was shown at the Melbourne Exhibition and then at the 1925 Adelaide Exhibition. This, too, was the central and most striking feature of the Exhibition, where its tall glistening white tower dominated the halls.

The modern exhibition became, to all intents and purposes, just an advertising medium. The old competition for medals had been abandoned and exhibitors strove to attract the public, with a view to selling. Kitchens erected expensive and attractive stands and prettily dressed girls demonstrated the goods and gave away samples. Models of Solvol men slowly moved their arms up and down to attract attention to the selling counter. Stalls built to resemble an age worn Cinderella Castle with Princess and Fairy Godmothers to attend Cinderella and to attract kiddies; a huge Noah’s Ark with animals that nodded their heads and flashed their eyes. These, and such like paraphernalia, Kitchens used in their modern exhibits. The old stearine models were still shown; one was a scene that might be a page from the story of Shackleton’s or Scott’s Polar explorations, it showed a model ship held fast in the frozen sea, the dogs, the sleigh and men in their furry garments, cunningly made from stearine to show you that electrine candles will not bend or lose shape. Then there were models of the Sydney Harbour Bridge made from soap, as well as oil fields, anchors, witches and dozens of other things, cleverly shaped from the firm’s products. These were the exhibits and attractions that made a Kitchen show for a modern Exhibition; advertising pure but not simple.

Kitchens were great poster and sign advertisers, and concentrating on this medium, their posters became famous. When Prime Minister Barton was advocating his White Australia Policy, they brought out a poster showing an Aborigine Mother scrubbing her small boy with Velvet soap, while another smiling child sat in the background with a white face. The child in the process of being cleaned was howling lustily and the caption in large letters was “It’s no use you’re crying, dat fellah Barton says dis mus’ be a White Australia”.

The early pictorial posters were typical of Victorian art, often painted by famous artists, the craftsmanship was perfect and aimed at realism. Frequently they were pictures of beautiful idealised womanhood and childhood, but from the modern point of view overcrowded with superfluous drawing and lettering. Kitchens produced one of these posters to advertise their Velvet soap and it became a very well known picture on the hoardings. It depicted that character Nydia, a blind flower-girl in Lytton’s “Last days of Pompeii”, her hand clutching a bar of Velvet soap. In the background is Vesuvius; the surroundings of those of a Roman villa with tiled floors, pillars and pedestals. One of them bears the words “Even Blind Nydia’s fingers can feel the charm of Velvet soap”. To the modern eye there is a touch of unconscious humour but to the Victorian those posters were representative of the finest commercial art.

Sometimes there would be poster “wars”. Kitchen’s Velvet soap had, without doubt, the largest sale in Victoria. One day the Preservene Company brought out a poster with the wording “Preservene largest sale in Victoria”. This infuriated John Ambrose; he immediately got in touch with Varley’s, the firm’s Printers, and said to them “Print the biggest poster you can and put this on it -

‘Who is telling the truth? For every ton of any other soap, 50 tons of Velvet Soap is sold in Victoria’.

The poster caused a sensation. The wording was copied on the blackboards in schools and young scholars were asked to find the grammatical error. It is not known if John Ambrose’s intended that mistake but the publicity was invaluable and Velvet sales went up in leaps and bounds.

Kitchens did not use the press as a medium, to any extent, until later in the ’nineties. They were very astute advertisers and employed the one-inch double column spreads just above the leading article in the centre of the news pages. Lotus soap was one of their leading lines, and they advertised it freely, using periodicals as well as newspapers, especially the “Melbourne Punch”. The “copy” was

¹ Guide to the International Exhibition, Melbourne, 1880, at Mitchell Library

headed with catchphrases, like "Such is fame", and then went on to describe how one pound of Lotus soap would wash as well as three pounds of common soap.

"The Age" and the "Argus" advertisements were all set up in one style, a one-inch double-column being set in two sizes of type, 10 pt and 8 pt. The heading was generally in capital letters and the text in a mixture of capitals and lower case letters. The choice of words on the whole, very good; in advertising "Velvet" the advertisement appeared like this -

THE NEWEST LUXURY IS VELVET "SOAP"
Luxurious Fine Linen
Luxurious Soft Flannels
Luxurious Soft Hands After Washing
A Luxurious Bath
J. Kitchen & Sons, Apollo Company Ltd.

In 1897 for the Diamond Jubilee, they well publicised their Gipsy Lights as "the most effective and economical way of illuminating, easily attached to Public and Private Buildings, complete with patent tip for rapid lighting". On the 22nd June, the day of the celebrations, a special announcement appeared -

"The proprietors of Lotus soap congratulate the Queen's loyal subjects throughout Victoria on her Majesty having this day completed sixty years of her happy reign,
J. Kitchen & Sons & Apollo Co. Ltd."

Some advertising ideas came in the most unexpected way; on one occasion a shopkeeper called at the office and suggested Kitchens put an advertisement on both sides of his cardboard box of fire kindlers, which he sold in very large quantities. John Ambrose asked Mr. J. S. Sandeman, who was in the Salesroom at the time, whether he thought it would be a good advertisement. Sandeman replied he thought it would, as nearly all the suburban houses had fire stoves and the fire lighters were popular and would be in everybody's home. John Ambrose told Sandeman to think of something to put on the boxes. Going back into the General Office he saw a gentleman standing at the counter waiting to give an order, he went over to attend to him and noticed the man wore large watch chain, from which hung a Maltese Cross. It immediately flashed across Sandeman's mind that it would be make a good design if he substituted "Use Velvet soap" or "Burn Electrine Candles" for the words on the Cross. He scribbled the idea on paper and took it into his chief. John Ambrose, who suffered from poor eyesight, lifted the writing close to his eyes, scrutinised it for a minute, then said "Did you do this, Sandeman?"

"Yes, Sir, was the reply.

"Umph, well we'll adopt that."

And so, the trade mark was born which now covers millions of packets, wrappings, boxes and advertisements everywhere.

The Sydney Company was also advertising very extensively, though in 1885, the year the Company was formed, they solemnly resolved not to spend more than the enormous sum of three hundred pounds per annum! They had revised their ideas and decided to allot £1,000 for advertising. The introduction of "Siren Soap" in New South Wales cost £1,109, spread over about three years; today, in one year alone the amount would be in the region of about £14,000. At this time the directors decided to spend two hundred pounds of the money allocated for advertising on prizes.

This was a new scheme to Australia that had been introduced from America. Charles Upfold, when on his visit to England and the United States in 1895, on behalf of both companies, had studied the working of the scheme. He brought back the rough draft of a booklet, for which Mr. G. P. Clarke wrote the copy, and selected the illustrations. On the front page was a picture of five buxom washing girls, with the title "How Soap is Made" and the name of the Company. It described the manufacture of soap and was illustrated with photographs of the Works, the different departments and an appallingly printed picture of the gifts. In exchange for wrappers, on which were printed coupons, prizes from a tie-pin to a solid silver watch were offered. Today the booklet seems a poor example of printing for which to go abroad, but at that time, when the reproduction of photography had only recently been introduced, it was considered a perfect specimen of advertising literature.

Mr. Clarke seems to have been responsible for much of the advertising. In the "Sunday Times" on July 15, 1894, appeared a full page advertisement for "Magic Cleanser", which was his work. In the column on either side of the displayed advertisement is a description of a visit to the works by a reporter piloted round by Mr. Clarke; the displayed copy is an example of what should not be written. In the form of questions, it is asked, "Why buy Magic Cleanser Soap when other kinds will do your washing in DOUBLE the time and at TWICE the expense". "Why buy Magic Cleanser Soap when other kinds will ROT your clothes effectively" and so on. To crown them is, "Many Soap Pirates keep the yes out of their Soap and put it in to their advertisements". The words "Magic Cleanser", were repeated twenty times in one line after the other. Such was advertising by the Sydney Soap and Candle Company in the nineties.

Competitors like Pears had, for many years used very expensively illustrated advertisements; even before half-tone blocks were invented, when pictures had to be engraved by hand, they had full pages in the periodicals. Kitchens did not enter this field of displayed press advertising until about 1913, when they took double half column pages in "The Age". These were straightforward typeset advertisements with rule borders. It was not until some years later they began to use illustrations.

About this time the Company's advertising in Melbourne was handled by the Successful Advertising Agency. In 1916 Mr. Fred Kitchen felt their publicity required fresh ideas and a new approach to the public. He looked around for a live man to conduct the Kitchen advertising. Buckley & Nunn's advertising manager, Mr. M. V. Bleechmore, was considered one of the best publicity men in Australia; Kitchens offered him a very high salary and he joined them. He changed the psychology of their advertising, instead of showing that soap involved work, wash tubs, coppers, scrubbing, and the like, he concentrated on publicity with happy wives and clean clothes. He eliminated all the paraphernalia connected with washing and introduced an atmosphere of leisure in the advertisements; he began a policy of window displays and fancy packages and was responsible for many of the very fine exhibition stands and models.

Bleechmore remained nine years with the Company, when he resigned to become publicity manager of the British Imperial Oil Co. Limited. He was succeeded by F. E. Knofel, a young member of the Adelaide sales staff, who had been highly recommended by Mr. H. C. Nankervis. A very fine department, with its own personnel of artists and copywriters, was organised by Mr. Knofel, and eventually all the advertising of the other states was directed by him from Melbourne Office.

By 1931 the Company's advertising had grown to such proportions that it was considered necessary to place it with an agency that had all the facilities required for modern publicity. The account was entrusted to Lintas Proprietary Limited, Mr. Knofel joining them as a director and taking most of his staff with him. Since then Kitchen's advertising has been controlled by the Lintas agency in co-operation with the Company's Directors. An advertising department, now directed by Mr. Bruford Kitchen, is maintained to collaborate with the agency.

Today we take for granted all the complexities of the modern office, the typewriters, adding machines, telephones, duplicating machines, dictaphones, office systems, shorthand, the lifts that save our tired feet, and the electric light that saves our eyes and health. While it is pleasant to reflect on the days gone by, one cannot honestly believe in the "good old times" of daily drudgery and long hours in uncongenial conditions. Improving the office routine is not so spectacular as introducing new methods of manufacture or showing off a startling publicity "stunt", but its importance to the success of a business is none the less real. From the time when John Ambrose had all his letters copied in the clumsy "Letter Press Book" to the clear typewritten duplicate, constant progress has made the lot of the office staff pleasant.

Offices in the days when 11 Queen Street was opened were generally like the dismal affairs that Charles Dickens so vividly describes in his novels. Everything seemed to conspire to make the office worker's life a dreary one; there were no pleasant young girls to lend a sense of colour and brightness, for it was not until 1900 that the first woman joined the staff. John Ambrose strove to make his office as pleasant a place as possible, keeping it clean and healthy. He was strict but fair. He never allowed bad language; if a member of the staff swore in his hearing he had to go; this was a relief from the strong and violent language of the Melbourne diggers prevalent at that time. It did not mean there was an atmosphere of solemnity; on the contrary John Ambrose had a great sense of humour, which he shared with his small staff.

From the time they agreed that "proper accounts" should be kept and signed by every partner each month, John Ambrose kept them with meticulous care and Minutes of the Board Meetings seem verbose when compared to those of the present day. His care for the efficiency of the office routine had a lot to do with the success of the business, and his choice of staff in such men as Arnold Kelsey, who became the Secretary and then in business as the firm's accountant, showed he appreciated ability when engaging employees.

Until a decade or so ago there was no plan in the production of the firm's goods; as much as possible was manufactured and then sold, regardless of profit. Nowadays the year's production and sales are estimated with astonishing accuracy, enabling raw materials to be purchased according to needs and production with the minimum of waste.

The improvement in accountancy methods during the same period has been very marked; in the old days statements of the Company's trading and profit or loss were general; with the modern method, accounts are balanced quarterly, every item been shown in detail, and the nett, not the gross, profits and particulars of each of the Company's products can be seen at a glance. This, in the event of a fault, making it so much easier to discover and remedy.

Besides commercial progress and improvements, the Company has striven to make the conditions of labour better for its workers; it has sought to improve the social welfare of its employees and given the consumer improved labour saving products and service. The business is now so well established and runs so smoothly that it seems impossible it could ever be otherwise. Yet systems, no matter how

perfect, must have human beings to run them and the Kitchen concern has been fortunate both in sons and employees who have built the business on the strong foundation on which it now stands.

Chapter XII

THE LAST FEW YEARS

From 1925 until Mr. F. W Kitchen's death the history of the Company was so closely associated with him that little of importance happened in which he was not concerned. The business, as the reader will have realised, had always been a family affair; not only the directorate but also the employees felt they were members of the family circle. During the 'twenties most of the older generation passed on and by the 'thirties a new generation was controlling the Kitchen interests. Mr. Fred Kitchen in Melbourne and Mr. Jack Kitchen in Sydney were directing the Company's interests from Victoria and New South Wales. New directors elected to the board were Mr. W. G. L. Sear in 1931 and Mr. H. H. Wilkins's in 1933. When Mr. Burke retired in 1933 Mr. G. H. Rushworth was appointed secretary. Mr. Nankervis, who was in charge of the Sales Department, New South Wales, and then General Sales Manager when Mr. Wilkins went to Canada, joined the board in 1939. In Brisbane the business was directed by one of the most optimistic and cheerful of men, Mr. R. W. Thomas.

It was during the 'thirties that a far reaching rationalisation scheme was carried out. It originated in 1928 when a disastrous fire occurred in the factory at Fremantle, Western Australia. Practically the whole of the premises was destroyed. The management was faced with a tremendous difficulty in meeting the public demand and keeping storekeepers stocked with its products. The storekeepers co-operated magnificently; those who had large stocks generously offered to help the Company supply customers who had run out of goods. But even so, some rapid method of replenishing the supply of Kitchen's soap and candles had to be found. Burfords, their trade rivals, were turned to for assistance and they ungrudgingly gave their help. Kitchen's goods were made at the Burford factory and then packed and sold by the Kitchen organisation. The scheme worked remarkably well and soon it became obvious that it was wasteful for two separate organisations to be marketing goods made in the same factory. The directors of both Kitchens and Burfords decided to rationalise the situation and formed a new company, Soap Distributors Ltd., to control the manufacture and distribution of both the Companies' products. It involved a tremendous amount of detail work and reorganisation of the two Companies' business methods in West and South Australia. Friendly rivalry was replaced by enthusiastic co-operation which has been advantageous to the producers, the retailers and the consumers ever since.

A new scheme for the benefit of the staff was offered to employees in 1937, so that they could retire at 65. Voluntary payments of ten per cent of their salary, five of which is paid by the Company, are set aside for superannuation fund. It proved a most popular scheme and many men who are now enjoying a comfortable retirement once subscribed to it.

History repeated itself when the fat melting industry was transferred to Port Melbourne in 1937. It had been moved before in 1871, after Kitchens had bought Gossage's factory at Footscray and, for a short time, melted their fat there. When the Apollo Company amalgamated with Kitchens, Footscray was once again the tallow manufacturing centre. Finally in 1937, a modern plant was installed at Port Melbourne, thus bringing the whole of the manufacturing into one area and so saving time and transport.

With the declaration of war in 1939, the Company was once again asked to supply all the glycerine possible for war purposes. The defence authorities collaborated with the producers to obtain the maximum amount of glycerine. There is no method as simple, economical and efficient for the production of glycerine as in the making of soap. The Company has placed all its glycerine at the service of the Government for the war effort.

Since the war started many employees have joined the armed services, all of whom will have the positions waiting for them when they return. The shortage of staff has created a very real problem but the employees have loyally co-operated with the management in meeting the many difficulties that have arisen.

On Mr. Fred. Kitchen's death in 1940, Mr. Jack Kitchen became chairman of the Company. He held office only until the end of the year, when he retired for reasons of health leaving his cousin, Frederick Bruford Kitchen, to carry on the Kitchen tradition.

Mr. G. H. Rushworth, who succeeded Mr. Jack Kitchen as chairman, had made remarkably rapid progress with the Company since he joined it in 1923. In a very short time he was entrusted with many important matters of organisation with the Company. Having shown such outstanding ability as an Accountant, and then As Secretary of the Company, he was elected to the Board of Directors and appointed Managing Director in 1940. On Mr. A. J. Kitchen's retirement at the end of the year he became chairman. In 1943 he visited Canada when he acquired a wide experience and knowledge of the industry in that country.

It will be seen that Kitchens, like any other big industrial or commercial concern, depends for its success and prosperity on the men and women who work in its organisation, and, it is not dependent on any individual or group of individuals but on the devotion of the personnel it recruits and attracts as the years go by.

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CHRONOLOGICAL INDEX

- 1799 John Kitchen senior born
- 1832 Philip Kitchen born.
- ? Joseph Kitchen born.
- 1835 John Ambrose Kitchen born, on 27th February.
- 1841 Theophilus Kitchen born.
- 1851 G. P. Clarke born.
- 1854 John Ambrose Kitchen arrived in Australia on Christmas day.
- 1855 John, Philip & Theophilus Kitchen arrived in Australia.
- 1856 John Kitchen and his three sons commenced business in Bridport Street.
- 1857 Council gives J. Kitchen notice to remove Works.
- 1857 J. Kitchen & Sons make application for land west of Railway.
- 1858 J. Kitchen & Sons erect Factory on present site.
- 1859 February 27th, fire destroys Factory.
November 19th, first legal partnership.
Office opened, 11 Collins Street, Melbourne.
- 1861 J. Kitchen & Sons exhibited at the International Exhibition Victoria.
New cottage built side of works.
- 1862 Rateable value of works and three cottages £74.
Permission granted to tear water's surface at Municipal Abattoirs.
- 1863 Record flood at Works.
Mr. J. H. Kitchen born.
- 1864 Theophilus resigned March, rejoined June.
First company registered May 18th.
Mr. W. J. Kitchen born.
Chas. Upfold founded his Soap Works at Newcastle.
- 1865 John Kitchen moved to St Kilda.
- 1866 Awarded medal Victoria International Exhibition.
- 1868 Partnership renewed for 10 years.
Office, 3 Queen Street, Melbourne.
- 1870 Bought out of Gossage Bros.
Agricultural Society, N.S.W., medal awarded to J. Kitchen & Sons.
J. A. Kitchen left Plymouth Brethren and joined Church of England.
- 1871 Footscray Works closed.
- 1873 Partnership renewed for further 10 years.
Medal International Exhibition Victoria awarded to J. Kitchen & Sons.
- 1876 Branch of J. Kitchen & Sons established in Wellington, N.Z.
Medal Philadelphia International Exhibition awarded J Kitchen & Sons.
- 1878 Medal Exhibition Paris awarded to Apollo Stearine & Candle Co.
W. H. Carwardine's business at Sunbury purchased.
- 1879 J. H. Kitchen commenced work with Firm.
F. W. Kitchen born.

Medal Sydney International Exhibition to J. Kitchen & Sons.

- 1880 Gold Medals awarded to J. Kitchen & Sons and Apollo Stearine Candle Co., Melbourne International Exhibition.
Fire at Factory - 6 ft. underwater.
- 1883 Company incorporated on exploration of Agreement.
Medal awarded to Apollo Stearine Candle Co., Amsterdam Exhibition.
- 1885 February J. Kitchen & Sounds and Apollo Stearine Candle Co. Ltd amalgamated.
John Connell & Co. appointed London agents for J. Kitchen & Sons and Apollo Co. Ltd.
Sydney Soap & Candle Co. formed.
April Sydney Soap and Candle Co. commenced business.
May Mr. G. P. Clarke officially leaves J. Kitchen & Sons & Apollo Co. to join Sydney Soap & Candle Co.
July J. Kitchen & Sons and Apollo Candle Co. Ltd. purchased Brisbane for £400 (see below).
Sydney Soap & Candle Co. registered.
August Sydney Soap & Candle Co. purchased Lewis & Whitty plant from J. Kitchen & Sons & Apollo Co. Ltd.
Agreement on markets between J. Kitchen & Sons and Apollo Co Ltd. and Sydney Soap & Candle Co.
Mr. C. Upfold appointed general manager at Newcastle at £500 per annum.
November First meeting of shareholders of J. Kitchen & Sons and Apollo Co Limited, dividend 8d, profits £12,150.
First meeting of shareholders of Sydney Soap & Candle Co. 10% dividend.
December Sydney Soap & Candle Co. advertising not to exceed £300 per annum.
J. Kitchen & Sons and Apollo Co. Ltd. purchased Brisbane land for £400 (see below).
- 1886 January Philip Kitchen resigned directorship of J. Kitchen & Sons and Apollo Co. Ltd. due to ill health.
Theo Kitchen elected a director of J. Kitchen & Sons.
Medal awarded at Colonial and Indian Exhibition, London.
February Theo Kitchen appointed Manufacturing Director, salary £750 per annum.
April J. Kitchen & Sons purchased New Zealand business of J. Kitchen & Sons, £5,000.
All fat melting to be done at Sandridge.
May J. Kitchen & Sons and Apollo Co. Ltd. - interim dividend 7% per annum.
Sydney Soap & Candle Co. to pay J. Kitchen & Sons and Apollo Co. Ltd. ¾% for purchase of tallow.
June Loan of £25 to South Melbourne Council for construction of Normanby Road.
July Sandridge works insured for £58,500.
J. Kitchen & Sons and Apollo agree not to send goods to New South Wales.
J. H. Kitchen's salary, £500 per annum, for two years 8/7/1886.
September Joseph Kitchen to take charge of sales in Wellington in N.Z.
Profits for 12 months ending 20th September, £10,803 - 9% dividend.
November Mr. Robert Davis, secretary, resigns to manage New Zealand branch.
J. H. Kitchen appointed secretary of J. Kitchen & Sons and Apollo Co. Ltd.
December New office to be erected at Sandridge, costing about £200.
Mr. Tappin appointed head traveller at salary of £700 per annum.
S.S.C.C. report success of Cold Water Soap sales.
January Mr. Theo's plans for new Candle room approved.
Mr. Davies N.Z. Agreement 3 years at £200 per annum and residence.
February Exhibit at Adelaide Jubilee International Exhibition not to exceed £100.
April S.S.C.C. raise prices of Petrolin Candles to 6d and Brilliants to 5¼Hd.
S.S.C.C. purchase coconut oil from J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd.
J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. medal at Adelaide Jubilee International Exhibition.
May J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. interim dividend 7%.
S.S.C.C. half-yearly meeting 10% dividend.
August Wangaratta business and factory purchased by J. K. & S. for £950.
J. H. K. instructed to purchase Echuca business for under £1,500.
J. H. K. and W. J. K. congratulated on Jubilee illuminations.
New building for draining purposes, 25th August to be erected £150-200.
September J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. to purchase Burnside Works, N.Z., and to cease making candles at Dunedin.
J. H. K. resigns post of Secretary 20/9/87.
Mr. Mendell appointed Secretary 29/9/87.
October Special advance of £65,000 City Bank.
Klappworths property, Sandhurst, to be purchased, price not more than £1,000.
Slaughtering Yard Co., property at Sale purchased for £800.
November J. H. K. to visit N.Z. and if possible close John Batger's business, Auckland.
Thompson River Plant purchased for £1,500.
- 1888 January Special advance £70,000.
February Valuation for rating Footscray property £1,250.
March Mortgage in favour of Bank of A/Asia over property in Wellington, N.Z. for £8,000.
S.S.C.C. decided to commence Oleo-Margarine manufacturing.
April J. H. K. associated with J.A.K. as Managing Director.

		S.S.C.C. decided to bring out a "Pearl" composite Candle.
May		Hon. Thomas Loader to visit Europe. J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd., dividend 8%. S.S.C.C. half-yearly General Meeting dividend 10%. S.S.C.C. decide to open branch at Broken Hill but on enquiry find it impossible.
June		S.S.C.C. Chairman reports traveller embezzled money and stole goods.
July		S.S.C.C. purchased land at Botany from Mr. Cooper for Factory.
August		S.S.C.C. decide to manufacture Soda Crystals.
September		Mr. Upfold reports preferable to Import Soda Crystals.
October		S.S.C.C. seventh Half-yearly Meeting 10% dividend. J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. purchase lots 18, 22, 24, and 26 of Section 63, Port Melbourne property fronting Normanby Road and Ingles Street.
November		Scarcity of tallow in Sydney. S.S.C.C. close Works at Tighes Hill. S.S.C.C. to sue Victorian, Soap & Candle Co. & Uptons for trade mark infringement. J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. 7 th Half-yearly General Meeting 8% dividend.
December		J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. take 28 Finders Lane West on 7 years lease at £225 per annum. J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. awarded Gold Medal Centennial International Exhibition, Melbourne.
1889	January	S.S.C.C. move to 337 Kent Street, Sydney. S.S.C.C. head subscriptions to Protection League with £100. S.S.C.C. order Toilet Soap Press with set of dies from T. R. Bennie, London February Valuation of Melbourne property £67,000. New Stables at Alexandria capable of accommodating 50 horses and Oil room completed. J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. notified by Secretary of Centennial Exhibition they had received 1 st Order of Merit and Special Mention. Brisbane factory and land offered at £35,000.
March		Mr. Kemp appointed Manager Botany Works. A. W. Gilles to visit England, half salary from S.S.C.C. Drought seriously affected business in Sydney price of Tallow etc., & fat as high as 42% loss on Island, fat trade dull in Candles. Soap, trade good at low prices, Cold Water Soap selling better, Mr. Upfold Chairman in Mr. Gilles' absence.
May		J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. half-yearly meeting, 8% dividend. Mr. T. Testro asks for £1,000 a year, on renewal of his agreement in 8 month's time. As Sunlight Soap, is not registered in N.S.W. S.S.C.C. apply for registration in their name.
June		Mercantile Bank request S.S.C.C. to reduce their a/c. Mr. Clarke terminates his agreement with S.S.C.C. and a new one entered into. Mr. Godfrey appointed inspector at Alexandria Works at £700 per annum.
July		S.S.C.C. offer Bank £4,145 if required.
September		Agreement of sale of land to S.S.C.C. from Mr. Charles Cooper signed. J. K. & S. grant W. Lucas, Western Australia, £100 credit in materials to start a Soap and Candles Moulding Works.
October		Half-yearly meeting S.S.C.C., dividend 10%. S.S.C.C. request J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. to send an expert to advise them on manufacture of Oleo Margarine, Mr. W. J. Kitchen to go to Sydney on this matter.
November		J. E. Kitchen to go to N.Z. to attempt to unite several businesses. J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. 9 th Half-yearly General Meeting, 8% dividend.
December		J. P. Bennie, London, requested to engage Butterine expert for J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd.
1890	January	G. P. Clarke granted permission by S.S.C.C. to go to N.Z. on behalf of J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd.
March		J. K. S. & A. Co. Ltd. and S.S.C.C. appoint Mr. G. P. Clarke as Inspector of Works at £1,000 per annum. S.S.C.C. to use better packages with parchment paper to absorb grease, for "Pearl" Candles to sell at 4¼d to 5d. S.S.C.C. buy Candle Boxes from Norway. G. P. Clarke sends a report from N.Z. J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. decide to terminate Testro's agreement.
April		1 st Floor and Stable at back of 326 Flinders Lane, leased. S.S.C.C. 10 th Half-Yearly General Meeting, 5% Interim dividend. Alexandria land valued at £1,000 per acre. Mr. Testro sent to Dunedin.
May		J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. 10 th half-yearly General Meeting, 4% interim dividend.
June		Mr. Kelsey appointed Secretary to J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. Mr. G. P. Clarke's agreement for 5 years confirmed, ¼ share by S.S.C.C. Mr. G. P. Clarke to visit Europe and America.
July		J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. Fire Insurance cover for £65,000. N.Z. business shows net loss of £12,032 for ?????.
August		Strike at S.S.C.C. Works.
October		valuation of properties for purposes of loans, Port Melbourne £50,000 Footscray £25,000. S.S.C.C. 11 th Half-yearly General Meeting. 10% dividend per annum S.S.C.C. Butterine Dept. £99 profit, kept open for prospects. J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. Balance Sheet very satisfactory, dividend 10% per annum. Managing J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. Expenses, Managing dividend £600, Manufacturing dividend £600, Commercial dividend £1,000, Works Manufacturing, £700
November		J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. purchase D. Quinn's Fat Trade for £850.

J. K. & S. and & A. Co. Ltd. Half-yearly meeting, 10% per annum.
 J. K. & S. and & A. Co. Ltd. Directors' Fees raised.
 Apollo Chambers, Flinders Lane now J. K. & S. and & A. Co. office.

- 1891 January Brisbane property and stock worth about £22,000
 February Mr. Mack to manage Brisbane branch.
 February Bank account transferred to Federal Bank.
 April J. K. & S. and & A. Co. Ltd. Half-yearly General Meeting, 10% dividend per annum.
 S.S.C.C. Half-yearly general meeting, 10% dividend per annum.
 Amounts to replace to credit of shareholders bearing 7% interest, payable when funds of Company Permit.
 Queensland Soap Co., J. C. Donaldson to be appointed a director by deed.
 S.S.C.C. Wycombe office and store to be closed.
 S.S.C.C. Mr. Cousins to be responsible for transfer of manufacturing materials.
 S.S.C.C. increase number of travellers.
 June T. W. Butcher & Co.'s fat & Bone business purchased by J. K. & S. & A. Co. for £250.
 J. K. & S. and A. Co. and Peter Morrison Campbell sign agreement to manufacture soap and soda crystals in Brisbane.
 July Mortgage to secure overdraft with "Federal Bank on Alexandria Land and Works" by S.S.C.C.
 J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. recommend Sydney changes in Bookkeeping system.
 S.S.C.C. to spend £200 on advertising on hoardings at Railway Stations due to competition.
 Experiments on Glycerine extraction from Tallow previous to Soak or Stearine making, also improvements on margarine manufacture.
 Mr. Theo to enquire and report on Cottonseed Oil Manufacture.
 Brisbane Soap Co Ltd. formed.
 J. K. & S. A. Co. Ltd. adopt a new process of manufacture.
 Theo's and J. A. 's salaries increased by £500 per annum each.
 August Alterations at Warrnambool to cost £250.
 J. H. K. to visit Sydney to improve management.
 Joseph Kitchen suggests "Board of Advice" in N.Z.
 J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. to get an expert from Europe on Oleo margarine and Butterine manufacture.
 November S.S.C.C. board asks Mr. G. P. Clarke do advise them on the cost of removing works to Alexandria and to draw up plans for Candle and Soap Factory.
 Mr. Cousin given a bonus of £5 by S.S.C.C. for services.
 J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. 13th half-yearly meeting, 10% dividend per annum.
 December Gold Medal awarded to J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. by the Villiers & Heytesberg Agricultural Ann. for collection of soaps.
- 1892 January J. K. & S. & A. Co Ltd. Board Inclined to favour removal of Works from Newcastle to Alexandria.
 J. H. K. introduced possibilities of Indian., China, Japan. and S. African Markets, also London market to be tested with best Primrose Soap at Civil Service Stores, Army & Navy Stores and Whitelys.
 J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. send Soap to Madras & Calcutta.
 J. A. reports Jap Candles are high quality.
 Oil & Primrose Soap to be shipped to O'Connell Co., London.
 February Sydney asks Melbourne if it is possible to help S.S.C.C. with their Candle output. " .
 City of Melbourne Bank request reduction of overdraft.
 J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. complain S.S.C.C. not sending returns.
 J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. decide to manufacture Butterine.
 Estimated expenditure £250.
 March. Contract of sale T. W. Butcher to J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd.
 Mr. Chas. Campbell resigns Directorship to go to Europe. Mr. Wm. Yule elected.
 Imperial Institute Exhibition (London), Trustees's request J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. to send a permanent exhibit.
 N. Z. business bad trade.
 June Levers bring action against S.S.C.C. for Infringement of Sunlight Wrapper design.
 July Mr. J. A. Kitchen (for private reasons) tendered his resignation as a Director.
 Mr. Theo Kitchen (for private reasons) tendered his resignation as a Director.
 J. H. Kitchen also resigned about this time.
 City of Melbourne Bank requests reduction of account.
 August Power of Attorney granted J. H. K. for sale of N.Z. property.
 September Management at Alexandria unsatisfactory.
 November S.S.C.C. 15th Half-yearly General Meeting,, 10% dividend.
 Lever Bros. Case settled for £375 against S.S.C.C.
 J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd., 15th Half-yearly General Meeting, Dividend 7%. dull trade.
 J. A. K., Theo K., and J. H. K. re-elected Directors of J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd.
 December J. H. K. reports N.Z. business not sold, he is asked to take over management of same.
 Mr. Clarke recommends J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. to do its own brass work.
- 1893 January Wm. Yule resigned, Chas. Campbell elected a Director of J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd.
 March Fire at Port Melbourne, damage valued at £3,760.
 £50 distributed to men employed at the fire.
 Directors' fees and all salaries, except under 35/- to be reduced.

		Refrigeration Plant to be installed, total cost £760.
		J. H. K. reports £2,000 loss on N.Z. business in 6 months.
May		Autoclave process saves £916 in 6 months.
June		Suspension of City of Melbourne Bank.
June		Autoclave at Brisbane.
July		Fire at Bendigo Works.
August		J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. to use Fidelity Guarantees.
		Federal Bank. In liquidation.
October		Electric light considered for Works.
November		J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. Ninth Annual report., dividend for last 6 months 6%.
		S.S.C.C. seventeenth Half-yearly General Meeting. 10% dividend payable, 7% in Bills, 3% to credit of Shareholders.
December		Samples requested from India.
		S.S.C.C. capital to be issued up to £100,000.
		F. W. Kitchen joined firm during this year, at 13 years of age.
1894	January	Mortgage request for Brisbane freehold from Bank of Australasia.
		Mortgage of above settled.
February		J. K. S. & A. Co. Ltd. insure under Employers' Liability Insurance.
March		Boilers to be replaced after 20 years' service.
		Number of directors on S.S.C.C. increased to seven.
		Solvent process for recovery of fat adopted.
May		S.S.C.C. request Melbourne Directors for signatures to £5,000 guarantee, refused.
June		Deed of Covenant with New Zealand Candle Co., Wellington.
		J. H. received £200 bonus for sale of New Zealand business.
		J. H. to go to London with Letter of Credit as part agent for firm and S.S.C.C.
		S.S.C.C. votes £100 for "Protection" propaganda.
August		S.S.C.C. document for security for Union Bank of Australasia signed.
		S.S.C.C. to make tests of Capt. Frederick's disinfectant soap.
September		Purchase of soap works at Bundaberg Queensland.
		Stocks of candles accumulated owing to poor trade.
October		Price of paraffin wax very low; 100 tons ordered.
		S.S.C.C. to make composite candles, because of competition.
November		J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. 19 th Half-yearly General Meeting 10% per annum dividend.
		S.S.C.C. 19 th Half-yearly General Meeting 10% per annum dividend, 6% in cash, 4% credit.
1895	5 January	Larcenies at works, 3 workmen arrested.
		Mr. Clarke and S.S.C.C. to register his patent for "Extract" of Meat".
		Sale Slaughtering Co.'s property transfer signed.
		Mr. T. Loader to visit England.
		Solvent process and problem of disposal of bond dust.
February		S.S.C.C. to appeal to Supreme Court against Alexandria Municipal Council cancelling licence.
		Mr. Upfold to visit England and America for both Companies.
May		Mr. Clarke submitted to S.S.C.C. proposal for solidification of oleine.
		Tariff reduced on candles in Victoria; protest to Premier.
June		Electric light at works.
		S.S.C.C. to erect a cottage at Alexandria for £67.10.0.
		New 10-ton plant for solvent process to be ordered.
July		Townsville works; Management poor.
August		Brisbane works; bad trade.
		New account opened with Bank of Australasia.
		Free Trade affecting S.S.C.C.
		Solidification of oleine to be tested at Newcastle.
		Tallow to be sold in London, samples by mail boat.
September		Claim from City of Melbourne Bank for payment of overdraft.
		Milling cold soap process; plant to be installed by S.S.C.C.
		S.S.C.C. to place two soaps on market similar to Kitchen's manufacture.
		Lewkowitsch consulted re solidification of oleine? S.S.C.C.
October		Phenyl formula and licence to manufacture; agreement signed.
		Mortgage of shares in S.S.C.C.
November		21 st Half-yearly General Meeting J. K. & S. and A. Co. .Ltd., 6% per annum dividend.
		Mr. T. Loader returns from Europe.
		Lewkowitsch consulted by S.S.C.C. and J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd. re extraction of salt and crude glycerine from spent lye.
		New soap pan, and ten soap frames, estimated cost £200.
		21 st Half-yearly General meeting of S.S.C.C., dividend 10% per annum.
		S.S.C.C., not to go on with solidification of oleine process.
December		Bank of Australasia request deed of Brisbane branch; released.
		New property bought at Townsville.
		Bank of Australasia Debenture and Mortgage deeds signed.

Clifford H. Kitchen, son of J. H. Kitchen was born in England during this year.

- 1896 January Hours of soap room only reduced from 59½ to 53¼ per week.
Payment of calls on shares in Brisbane Soap Co.
S.S.C.C. to allot £1,000 for advertising, £200 of which was for Gift Prizes.
- February S.S.C.C. send to America for printing of Illustrated booklet.
Large quantity of plant required at factory, Port Melbourne.
- March New glycerine refining plant approved.
S.S.C.C. to install similar plant.
Mr. Thomas Loader resigned chairmanship of Company.
Mr. Charles Campbell elected chairman.
- April Bank of New South Wales agrees to accept S.S.C.C. account if Company finds £30,000.
S.S.C.C. in financial difficulties; C. Upfold guarantees £10,000, Melbourne Shareholders to clear Federal Bank debt.
- May S.S.C.C. Bank account now with Bank of New South Wales.
Mr. Clarke and Mr. Upfold accept 25% reduction on their S.S.C.C. salaries.
- June J. K. S. & A. Co. Ltd. and S.S.C.C. jointly pay for Lewkowitsch information on solidification of oleine.
- July S.S.C.C. vote £100 for Mr. Loader to assist him in his financial difficulties.
Purchase of "Sunlight" recipe from Mr. Lewkowitsch by Sydney and Melbourne Companies.
- September New glycerine recovery and extraction plant inspected by board.
To oppose application for registration of "Sunlight Soap".
- October Mortgage of shares held by Kitchen in S.S.C.C. to Bank of Australasia.
Brisbane trade loss of £282.
Bonus to J. A. and Theo of £50 cash for year.
- November Bonus to Arnold Kelsey, Secretary, for £25.
S.S.C.C. issue £30,000 of debentures.
Mr. Theo asked to go to America and England on behalf of both companies.
Mr. Theo elected director of S.S.C.C.
- December Telephone to be installed to W. J. Kitchen's private house.
- 1897 February S.S.C.C. to exhibit at Easter Agricultural show.
- March J. K. & S and A. Co. to exhibit at Brisbane Exhibition.
Death of Mr. B. E. Gilles.
- April Mr. Theo instructed to open in London account for firm with Bank of Australasia.
Union Oil Co. purchased.
- November 25th Half-yearly General Meeting J. K. & S and A. Co. 3½% dividend per annum.
25th Half-yearly General Meeting S.S.C.C.
Mr. A. R. Kelsey appointed auditor of S.S.C.C.
- 1898 January Mr. J. H. Flack appointed a director.
Melbourne directors decline to join Mr. Upfold in security for S.S.C.C. bank.
- March Charles Campbell resigns Chairmanship; T. Loader elected.
James Cuming elected director.
C. Campbell to visit America and Europe on behalf of the Company.
J. H. Kitchen as agent for Company to negotiate a loan of about £100,000 in London.
Prospectus of proposed issue of debentures.
- May Agreement signed for sole right to manufacture Izal Soap.
Lancashire boiler with Galloway tubes to be bought.
- June Glycerine plant to be extended.
Request from Sydney to go security with C. Upfold refused.
Mr. Upfold asked Melbourne to sell its interest in S.S.C.C.
Board would favour them if offered £15,000.
Proposal to sell Brisbane business.
- July John Kelsall, Ballarat, offers his soap business for sale.
Burfords apply for word "Apollo" to be registered in Western Australia - to be opposed.
- August John Kelsall's works purchased for £1,000.
- September Registration of "Velvetta" in N.S.W.
- October Death of Philip Kitchen.
New copper still installed; cost £878.
- November Mr. T. Loader resigns Chairmanship to go to Europe.
Mr. J. H. Flack elected Chairman.
Mr. Clarke reports on manufacturing loss at Port Melbourne.
Mr. Loader given authority on matter of proposed loan London.
J. H. K. instructed to interview Twitchell re his process in America.
K Bennie appointed, by J. H. K. to do his business while away from England.
27th Half-yearly General Meeting J. K. & S and A. Co. Ltd, no dividend.
27th Half-yearly General Meeting S.S.C.C.
New soap branch opened at Shepparton.
- December Levers negotiate to purchase S.S.C.C. Melbourne.

Directors in complete agreement if same can be effected on reasonable terms.

- 1899 January Melbourne refuse to sell whole of their shares in S.S.C.C. to Levers.
Advertising Siren £4.10.0 for 10 weeks.
Mr. A. R. Kelsey resigns post of Secretary from 1st February.
Mr. E. R. Burke appointed Secretary for 3 months at £2.1.0 per week.
- March Mr. Cuming resigns directorship, C. Campbell elected.
Death of H. O'Brien who was with Company since it started.
- May Offices to be moved to Port Melbourne.
Mr. E. R. Burke appointed Secretary permanently at £17.10.0 per month.
- June G. P. Clarke's agreement with J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. terminated.
- July J. H. K. an agent disposes of Twitchell's process to S.S.C.C. for 5 years.
- August J. H. K. as agent disposes of Twitchell's process to J. K. & S. & A. Co. Ltd. for 5 years.
New offices City and Port Melbourne.
- September Siren waxed wrappers 150,000 at 5/4d per 1,000.
Agreement for tenancy of 24 Queen Street Melbourne.
J. H. Flack resigns directorship to go to England.
Mr. T. J. Davey elected director.
New factory started in Tasmania by a competitor.
J. A.'s and Theo's remuneration now to be raised to £350 per annum.
- October Theo to go there and report (Tasmania).
Patent fuel economiser to be installed.
J. H. K. received £150 honorarium for services in obtaining Twitchell process.
- November £10,000 to be written off.
Secretary's salary raised to £20 per month.
New digester to take 80 tons of fat.
29th Half-yearly General Meeting J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd.; dividend 1/- per share per annum.
29th Half-yearly General Meeting S.S.C.C.
Introduction of Siren Soap cost £1,109.
- December Flinders Street offices acquired.
Not to commence works in Tasmania.
J. A. to attend Quarterly Meetings of S.S.C.C.
G. P. Clarke's services for one month at £100.
Low pressure steam main - great success.
Sydney system of advertising adopted; £500 to be spent experimentally.
- 1900 January 1st Meeting at Port Melbourne offices.
- March Protest to Sydney Directors that Mr. J. A. K., though in Sydney was not invited to Board Meeting.
- March Word "Siren" to be registered throughout Australia..
- April S.S.C.C. require more capital, which is to be raised by Melbourne and Sydney Companies.
J. A. to attend Tariff Conference in Adelaide and report on possibilities of trade in W.A. and Broken Hill.
- June S.S.C.C. second Issue of debentures authorised.
Decided to open branch in Western Australia and approach Mr. Marsh on matter..
- July Glycerine annual output 100 to 150 tons.
- August S.S.C.C. neglect to send proper notice Board Meetings.
Appointment with Marsh decided.
- October Appointment of W. Thompson & Co. as agents in Colombo and Bombay.
- November £10,000 to be added to General Reserve.
£10,000 to be added to the Depreciation Replacement Reserve.
£2,500 written off stock sheet valuation.
J. Kitchen & Sons & Marsh Ltd. Incorporated.
31st Half-yearly General Meeting J. K. & S. and A. C. Ltd.; dividend 1½% per annum.
- December F. W. K. Acting Secretary while Mr. Burke on holiday.
31st Half-yearly General Meeting S.S.C.C..
Loan for S.S.C.C. of £1,000 for 3 months.
- 1901 January J. A.'s and Theo's salaries £1,000 per annum.
Purchase of C. Atkins & Co. oil business.
- February Death of Hon. Thomas Loader.
- March T. J. Davey elected Chairman.
Andrew Newell elected director.
Mr. J. Younger to do world trip.
- April Burfords offered Western Australian business.
- May T. J. Davey elected director of S.S.C.C.
Increase to 5 directors; W. J. Kitchen elected a director.
- June Decided to procure coconut oil plant.
J. A. Kitchen presents his scheme for re-organisation of Company.
Voluntary liquidation of J. Kitchen & Sons & Apollo Co. Ltd. discussed.

- July Soap works to be altered at approximate cost of £1,950.
Agreement with Thompson, Thomas & Co.
J. H. K to return to London on behalf of both Companies.
- September Articles of Association of new Company.
Voluntary winding-up of J. K. & S. and A. Co. Ltd.
First Meeting of Directors of new Company on 30th September.
- November General Statutory Meeting of J. Kitchen & Sons Ltd.
- December 33rd Half-yearly General Meeting of S.S.C.C.
Residence for Manager at Alexandria Works - erect a cottage costing £170 approximately.
- 1902 February W. J. Kitchen to visit Europe and America.
- March. £1,00 loaned to S.S.C.C.
- April Mortgage on land., buildings and plant at Bulimba, Queensland.
Mortgage to Bank of Australasia to secure £50,000 and other indebtedness on Footscray land.
Mortgage to Bank of Australasia to secure £50,000 over land, buildings and plant at Port Melbourne, branches and Footscray.
Mortgage to Bank of Australasia to secure £5,000 over land, plant and buildings at Bulimba, Queensland.
Debenture to secure £50,000 and all further Indebtedness to Bank of Australasia over property of Company, except book debts and land.
W. J. K. and J. H. authorised to purchase Copra Milling Plant in England.
- May Interim Dividend of 1/- per share.
- August Decide to establish a Soap and Candle Agency in Adelaide.
J. K. & S. and S.S.&C.C. to purchase Marsh & Co's business in Adelaide.
- October A. W. Gilles resigns as Chairman and Director of S.S.&C.C.
Chas. Upfold resigns Directorship of S.S.&C.C.
J. H. Kitchen elected Director, Chairman and Managing Director of S.S. & C.C. for term of 5 years at £1000 a year.
Vote of thanks to Gilles and Upfold for services.
55th Half-yearly Meeting of S.S.C.C.
- November Twitchell agreement renewed for 5 years.
2nd Half-yearly meeting of J. K. & S.
- December £2,444 paid for Marsh & Co's Adelaide business.
- 1903 May Chas. Upfold elected a Director of S.S.C.C.
Sales staff increased by three by S.S.C.C.
Gilles Moreton, Secretary of S.S.C.C., asked to resign.
S.S.C.C. announced past year of bad trade.
- June Copra store to be built at Port Melbourne.
Agreement to sell Coconut Oil to Burfords.
- August Echuca property to be sold.
Gilles Moreton employment as Secretary to S.S.C.C. to be terminated immediately.
- October Land at Sale sold.
- November 4th Half-yearly meeting.
37th Half-yearly Meeting of S.S.C.C. A. W. Gilles and Gilles Moreton raised objections.
Hobson Bay Soap & Candle Co. purchased.
- December Hollander & Govett to exhibit 100 posters for S.S.C.C. for £12:10:0 per month.
F. J. Thomas appointed Secretary S.S.C.C.
- 1904 January Fire In Still Room at Port Melbourne.
Cotton Gin to be purchased.
- May Interim dividend 6d per share.
- August On suggestion of Mr. Upfold electric light installed in S.S.C.C. offices at 337 Kent St., Sydney.
S.S.C.C. obtain Government contracts for chandling and lubricating oils.
J. K. & S. sell???
- 1905 April F. W. Kitchen to visit South Africa on business.
- May Interim dividend 2½% per annum.
- August Vice Regal visit, to Works at Port Melbourne.
- October Death of Mr. Charles Campbell.
Mr. J. Cuming elected Director.
Mr. Marsh resigned directorship with J. K. & S. & A. Ltd.
Mr. A. E. Hamilton appointed director of J. K. & S. & A. Ltd.
- November Additions to be made to Margarine Building.
8th Half-yearly Meeting - dividend 2½% per annum.
41st Half-yearly Meeting of S.S.C.C.
- 1906 March Echuca property sold for £50.
Kensington Manufacturing Works purchased for £2,750.
- May Interim dividend 2½% per annum.
Kensington Works leased to A. Falk & Co.

- December 10th Half-yearly Meeting - dividend 2½% per annum.
43rd Half-yearly Meeting S.S.C.C.
- 1907 February Evandale Bone Mills, Tasmania, purchased for £500.
March Rev. C. W. Abel attends Board Meeting to advise on land for Copra growing and is asked to select site in Papua.
May T. Kitchen & Co., West Australia, in money difficulties.
Interim dividend 2½% per annum.
July 5000 acres selected by the Rev. Abel and Mr. Whitten on behalf of J. K. & S.
Mr. F. W. K. to visit New Guinea and act on behalf of Company.
S.S.C.C. lease 1st and 2nd floors at 365 Kent St., Sydney, at £200 per annum for 4 years from July 1st.
August F. W. K. puts Coconut Plantation scheme before S.S.C.C. directors.
S.S.C.C. to take one-third share in Coconut Plantation.
Credit to T. Kitchen & Co. (W.A.) is to be limited.
September F. W. K. purchases additional 5 acres of land at Gilli Gilli.
November Property at Queen Street, Melbourne purchased.
12th Half-yearly Meeting - Dividend 2½% per annum.
45th Half-yearly meeting of S.S.C.C.
J. H. Kitchen's agreement with S.S.C.C. renewed.
J. H. Kitchen to visit Europe.
December T. Kitchen & Co. appointed Agents in West Australia.
- 1908 March Commonwealth Copra Co. incorporated, New offices to be fitted with Electric Light.
G. P. Clarke acting Chairman of S.S.C.C.
A. E. Rudder appointed Customs Agent for S.S.C.C.
May J. K. & S. offer to purchase P. M. Campbell's interest in Brisbane Soap Co. for £12,000 or sell their interest to him.
Interim dividend of 2½% per annum.
Sale of land at Kensington to Corp. of City of Melbourne.
Interim dividend of 5% per annum paid by S.S.C.C.
September J. K. & Marsh pay a £1,000 dividend.
November 14th Half-yearly meeting - dividend 2½% per annum.
Chas. Upfold resigns from board of S.S.C.C.
December 47th Half-yearly meeting S.S.C.C. - dividend 6% for second half -year.
Contract to purchase P. Ross' business, Brisbane.
Ross Soap Co. Ltd. incorporated in Brisbane.
Chas. Upfold thanked for his long service to the S.S.C.C.
- 1909 March. Agreement with J. C. Donaldson on a loan of £2,791
April T. Kitchen & Co's agency with J. K. & S. terminated.
Theo Kitchen ill after visit to West Australia.
May Dividend 3½% per annum for 6 months.
June Mr. J. Cuming to visit West Australia re T. Kitchen & Co.
J. K. & S. Ltd. (Perth) accept MacRobertson's Agency.
F. J. Thomas resigns Secretaryship of S.S.C.C.
Chas. A. Maxwell appointed Secretary of S.S.C.C.
Interim Dividend at rate of 6% per annum paid by S.S.C.C.
July J. K. & S. Ltd. withdraw agency from T. K. & Co. permanently.
Clement Larrett to act for J. K. & S. in Perth.
D. O' Brien died.
Transfer of T. Kitchen & Co's business, plant and freehold to J. K. & S. Ltd.
November Theo Kitchen died on first of month.
Lease of Brisbane premises to Tan Breweries Ltd.
16th Half-yearly General Meeting - dividend 2¼% for 6 months.
Neptune Oil Co. registered.
December 49th Half-yearly General Meeting - dividend 6% per annum for half-year and 10/- bonus per share.
J. K. & S. Co. Ltd. lose Court Case against Brisbane Soap Co.
Number of Directors of S.S.C.C. to be four.
- 1910 January W. J. Kitchen, Manufacturing Director, at £1,000 per year.
February J. Kitchen Sons Ltd. Employee's Benefit Society to be formed.
Mr. J. Tappin retired.
April Thomas Chambers appointed Works Manager for S.S.C.C.
May Dividend 5% per annum for six months.
S.S.C.C. dividend 10% per annum for six months and 10/- bonus per share.
June Debentures to Walter Hall and Mercantile Mutual Fire Ins. to be redeemed by S.S.C.C.
August Additions to Alexandria Factory.
November Three and half ton "Leyland" Petrol motor purchased.
Colonial Fertilisers Co. Ltd. plant and buildings Alexandria purchased by S.S.C.C.
S.S.C.C. open new account with Bank of N.S.W.
18th Half-yearly General Meeting - dividend 3½% per annum for half year.

51st Half-yearly General Meeting - dividend 10% for half year.
Purchase of Redmon's business for £210.

- 1911 January £25 subscribed to Employees' Picnic.
February New Fremantle Factory site to be purchased for £4,000.
Directors recommend that a dividend of £30,000 be divided among shareholders.
6,000 unissued shares at £5 each be offered to shareholders.
Meeting to consider dividend of £30,000 adjourned.
March Meeting to consider dividend of £30,000 adjourned sine die.
May Interim Dividend 6% per annum for half-year.
Interim Dividend 10% per annum for half-year by S.S.C.C.
New Margarine Works to be erected at Alexandria.
Directors of S.S.C.C. to be five.
W. J. Kitchen elected Director of S.S.C.C.
July Electric Plant (Siemens) to be purchased.
August Land purchased by S.S.C.C. from W. C. Cooper at Alexandria for £490/16/8.
October Death of J. Cuming.
November 20th Half-yearly General Meeting - dividend 4% for half-year.
53rd Half-yearly General Meeting of S.S.C.C. - dividend 10/- per annum for half-year and bonus 10/- per share.
December Purchase of Stodart & Co's business at Stawell.
- 1912 February Mr. G. P. Clarke and wife to visit Europe at S.S.C.C. and J. K. & Son's expense.
March Mr. Wm. Whitten of Samarai, interviewed by Melbourne Directors, expressed his approval of management of Commonwealth Copra Co.'s Plantation.
Interim Dividend of 7% per annum for half-year.
May S.S.C.C. Interim Dividend of 10% per annum for half-year.
Directors of S.S.C.C. to be six.
Mr. A. J. Kitchen elected a Director of S.S.C.C.
Company take 200 shares of £1 each in Victorian Chamber of Manufacturers.
July Frederick Bruford Kitchen born.
September At Extraordinary General Meeting of S.S.C.C. an interim dividend of 10% per annum for half-year be paid and bonus of 10/- per share.
Resolved to re-construct Sydney Soap & Candle Co. and form Kitchen & Sons Ltd., Sydney.
Kitchen & Sons Ltd. incorporated in N.S.W.
November J. Kitchen & Marsh Ltd. to be changed to J. Kitchen & Sons Ltd.
22nd Half-yearly General Meeting - dividend 7% per annum, for half year.
Death of Mr. H. G. Wragg.
To take shares in Victorian Chamber of Manufacturers.
All Australia Exhibition.
J. H. K. granted 12 months leave of absence by Kitchen & Sons Ltd. - G. P. Clarke acting Chairman.
- 1913 January J. Kitchen & Sons & Marsh Ltd. name changed to J. Kitchen & Sons Ltd.
February Erection of Margarine Factory at Alexandria for £879.
Purchase of land at Waratah (Peter St.)
May Interim Dividend 7% per annum for half year.
June 1st Half-yearly General Meeting of Kitchen & Sons Ltd.
Capital of Commonwealth Copra Co. Pty Ltd. to be increased to £100,000.
July Purchase of small piece of land at Alexandria.
August Fire in Margarine Factory, Alexandria - damage £1,538.
October New account opened with Bank of N.S.W. by Kitchen & Sons Ltd.
Articles of Association to be altered giving power to increase capital out of reserves.
Board recommended £33,489/12/0 out of reserve fund to be divided in form of bonus shares, one, for every five shares held by Shareholders.
November 24th Half-yearly Meeting - dividend 7% per annum for half year.
December £33,496 out of reserve fund divided amongst Shareholders.
Strike at Footscray.
2nd Half-yearly General Meeting of Kitchen & Sons Ltd. - dividend 5% per annum.
- 1914 January J. K. & S. guarantee £5,000 overdraft to Commonwealth Copra Co. Pty. Ltd.
Mr. James Gilbert appointed Secretary and Manager J. K. & S. Ltd., Adelaide.
Mr. Charles Kerr retired as Secretary & Manager of J. K. & S. Ltd., Adelaide.
February Mr. G. P. Clarke died on 14th of month at Waratah.
March Increase of capital to £401,952 authorized.
Fred W. Kitchen appointed a Director of Company.
500 shares taken in Victorian Chamber of Manufacturers Co-op. Ins. Co.
Fred W. Kitchen appointed Director of Kitchen & Sons Ltd.
Mrs. G. P. Clarke granted £1,000 in recognition of her late husband's services.

		Mr. J. H. Kitchen to visit England to find a man to succeed Mr. G. P. Clarke and acquire new process "Hydrogenation of Fats", J. K. & S. and Kitchen & Sons to share Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Kitchen's expenses.
		Alteration to Articles of Kitchen & Sons, i.e. only those holding 25 shares or more entitled to vote - one vote each 25 shares.
May		Interim dividend 7% per annum for half year.
June		3rd Half-yearly General Meeting, Kitchen & Sons Ltd. dividend 5% per annum for half year.
		Agreements with Levers signed on the 13 th of the month.
July		All goods in transit overseas to insured against war risk.
August		War Declared on the 4 th this month.
		100 Guineas subscribed to Lord Mayor's patriotic Fund.
November		Sale of shares to Lever Bros. Ltd.
		100,000 15% preferred ordinary shares of Lever Bros. Ltd. Port Sunlight to be issued to J. K. & S. Ltd.
		Interim dividend of 7% for 7 months and 27 days up to 27 th November, 1914 be paid.
		Trust A/c to be opened with Bank of New South Wales.
		50,244 shares to be issued and allotted to Lever Bros., Port Sunlight and to be held in trust on behalf of Lever Bros.
		Interim dividend of 5% per annum paid by Kitchen & Sons Ltd.
		Levers purchase 60,000 shares in Commonwealth Copra Co. Pty. Ltd.
		15% preferred ordinary shares of Lever Bros. Ltd., Port Sunlight issued to J. K. & S. Ltd.
December		£500 bonus voted to Directors other than officials.
		33,621 shares of Kitchen & Sons Ltd. transferred to Lever's trustees.
		Purchase of Henry James Perkins Soda Crystal Manufacturing business, Richmond, for £75.
1915		J. H. K. reports to Sydney Board on his visit to England.
		25,000 shares transferred to J. K. & S. as per Agreement with Lever January 1914.
February		£100 contributed to Belgian Relief Fund.
April		Name of Company altered to J. Kitchen & Sons Proprietary Ltd.
		Alterations to Articles of Association.
May		Thos. Chambers appointed Manager at Newcastle.
		Sale of Lever shares as per agreement.
		Dividend at rate of 7% for 4 months 3 days.
June		Kitchen & Son pay a dividend of 5% per annum for period 28th November, 1914 to 31 st March. 1915.
		Permanent employees volunteering for active war service to have wages made up to full amount earned in service of Company and to be employed again on return.
July		£500 donated to Lady Stanley Red Cross Fund.
August		"Sanitol" Registered by Sydney Company.
		Margarine factory to be erected on site of stables.
		New stables to be erected corner of Ingles & Quinn Streets.
September		Application to Purchase and Close Peter St., Waratah.
		Goodwill of J. K. & S. valued at £25,000.
November		Kitchen & Sons transfer £25,000 to Machinery depreciation and Replacement Reserve Fund.
		Sale of 20,000 Lever shares as per agreement.
		Kitchen & Sons Pay dividend., 5% for six months.
December		J. K. & S. capital increased to £500,300 by issue of 24,512 shares at £4 each.
		Directors' fees fixed at Chairman £250 per annum, others £200 per annum, each.
1916	January	48,048 of the Reserve Fund to Be Capitalized by Issue of 12,012 shares of £4 each to shareholders.
		£10,000 to be invested in 1925 War Loan.
February		P. M. Campbell to purchase J. K. & S. interests in Brisbane Soap Co. for £10,000.
		J. C. Donaldson to sell his shares in Ross Soap Co. To J. K. & S.
		J. C. Donaldson to manage the two businesses in Brisbane at a salary of £1,000 per annum and 2½% net profits of Company.
April		Eric Kitchen appointed Assistant Works Manager of Melbourne Works.
May		Dividend at rate of 7% per annum for six months.
		Kitchen Sons' dividend at rate of 2½% for the half year.
July		Scheme to Assist Employees to Invest in War Loan.
August		Land adjoining factory at Port Melbourne purchased.
		Directors express sympathy to relatives of six employees killed on active service.
September		Purchase of further land at Port Melbourne.
November		Purchase of Townsville Business.
		20,000 Lever shares sold as agreement.
		Dividend 7% per annum for half-year and bonus of 2/- per share.
December		Kitchen & Sons dividend 7%, making 10% on year.
1917	March	£25 contributed to Navy League.
May		Purchase of rights of process for regulating fats from W. G. Rendall, by Kitchen & Sons.
		Purchase of patent for forcing liquid from cans, by Kitchen & Sons.
		£250 subscribed to British Red Cross.
		Dividend at rate of 7% per annum for six months.
June		Dividend at rate of 5% for six months paid by Kitchen & Sons.
		£50 contributed to Italian Red Cross Society.

- J. A. K. and W. J. K. visit Queensland to improve business there.
£50 donated to Y.M.C.A. appeal.
- September Sale of 20,000 Lever shares as agreement.
- October Further £10,000 invested in War Loan (Liberty) contributed £2,000 per month.
F. W. K. appearing before Prices Investigation Commission.
- November Dividend at rate of 7% per annum for half year and 2/- bonus per share.
Dividend 5% for half year by Kitchen & Sons Ltd.
Agreement with Levers on hardening of fats process.
£100 contributed to Reinforcement Referendum Campaign.
- 1918 January Agreement with American Company on use of trade mark "Velvet".
£25 contributed to Alfred Hospital building appeal.
- February £500 contributed to State War Council of Victoria Appeal.
- April £20,000 of Commonwealth Government Stock (War Loan) to be applied for.
- May Interim dividend at 10% per annum for half year.
- June Thomas Chambers, new agreement.
Kitchen & Sons dividend 5% for six months.
Kitchen & Sons purchase Standard By-Products Ltd. for £2,510.
Directors express sympathy to J. C. Donaldson, whose son Archie Donaldson. has been killed on active service.
- July Sale of land at Townsville.
£250 contributed to French Red Cross Appeal.
- September Sale of 20,000 Lever shares as agreed.
- November Armistice signed 11th of month.
£20,610 of first War Loan to be sold.
Dividend of 10% per annum for six months.
- December Dividend for Kitchen & Sons half year 5%.
New Office and Laboratory erected at Alexandria costing £800.
Pipe Line to River from Newcastle Works nearly completed.
New Shed for Oil storage at Alexandria to be erected, cost approximately £930.
- 1919 January £100 contributed to National Union.
- March J. H. granted 12 months leave of absence to visit England.
- April Agreement with Manufacturing Grocers Employees Federation of Australia.
Babcock & Wilcox boiler purchased for £2,357 minus Mechanical Stoker.
Interim dividend 8% per annum for half year.
- June 20,000 Lever shares sold as agreement.
£50 contributed to Anzac Fund.
Kitchen & Sons Dividend at rate of 5% per annum for six months.
- November Dividend at rate of 12% per annum for half year.
- December Agreement with J. K. H. and Kitchen & Sons as Managing Director for 5 years at £1,750 per annum.
Ditto - Agreement with A. J. K. but for £750 first year, £850 second year and then as agreed.
Agreement between Kitchen's Directors and Associated Enterprises Ltd., Lever Bros., and Lord Leverhulme.
Kitchen & Sons dividend 5% for half year.
- 1920 February New Motors and new Toilet Soap building at Port Melbourne to cost not more than £3,605.
"Anchor" Trade Mark agreement.
- April Bendigo re-building approximate cost £1,800.
Wage increases for employees, male adults by 5/- per week, female 2/6d per week, male adults minimum 74/-, female adults 37/6.
- May 365 Kent Street purchased from W. F. Lawson for £14,000.
Interim dividend 10% per annum for six months.
- June Death of James Cuming.
Kitchen & Sons dividend 5% for six months.
Kitchen & Sons apply for £5,000 of second Peace Loan.
Kitchen & Sons convert £5,000 of first to second Peace Loan.
Assignment of business assets and goodwill of Anderson & Wick Box factory to J. K. & S.
- July £10,000 to be invested in second Peace Loan.
£10,000 converted of first Peace Loan.
£25 to Queen Victoria Hospital appeal.
£100 contributed to Y.M.C.A. Building Fund.
- September £10 donated to Australian Industries Protection League.
- October Mortgage for £2,000 from J. F. Neilson to the Company on property in Middle Park.
Employees dining room proposal at Port Melbourne considered.
- November Dividend at 5% for half year.
- December Kitchen & Sons dividend 5% for half year. Chairman's pessimistic report on outlook.
- 1921 March Employees' Picnic -Directors grant £25 and holiday with pay.
- May Interim dividend 10% per annum for half year.
J. H. Kitchen elected director in place of late J. Cuming.

	June	Kitchen & Sons' loss for half-year ending 31 st March. £12,803 dividend 5% for half year.
	August	£50 donated to National Union.
	November	Dividend 5% for half year. Kitchen & Sons dividend 5% for half year, profits £21,538.
1922	March	Purchase by Kitchen & Sons of Solo Soap Co. Ltd. of Cootamundra for £4,000.
	April	Death of A. R. Kelsey.
	May	Death of John Ambrose Kitchen on 24 th of the month.
	June	Dividend of 10% per annum for half year. Kitchen & Sons dividend 5% for the half year. Agreement with Anderson. & Mitchell Ltd., to act as Agents In North Tasmania.
	August	Donation of £20 to J. K. & S. Cricket Club.
	October	Kitchen & Sons dividend 10% per annum for 3 months out of 9 months' profits.
	December	J. Kitchen. & Sons, dividend 5%. for 3 months out of 9 months profits,
1923	January	Mr. G.H. Rushworth joined firm at Melbourne. Purchase of Lewis & Whitty's business. Purchase of land in Ingles Street, Port Melbourne, from O.T. Ltd. for £7,400.
	April	Mr. F. Gifford appointed sub-manager Melbourne Office. Dividend 10% per annum, for half year. Kitchen & Sons dividend 5% for half year.
	June	Exchange of land with City of Port Melbourne, Quinn St.. Discharge of J. F. Neilson's Mortgage.
	August	Conference with Burfords & Levers on prices for Candles, called by Candles Ltd. Protest against duty on Caustic Soda. £50 donated to National Union. £50 donated to Japan Relief Fund.
	October	Kitchen & Sons' profits for half-year £28,306 (£9,806 belongs to Candles Ltd.).
	November	Dividend 10% per annum for half-year.
	December	Kitchen & Sons dividend 5% per annum, for half-year.
1924	January	Sale by Sydney and Melbourne Companies of their Candle plant etc. to Candles Ltd. Meeting of employees addressed by Lord Leverhulme on co-partnership. £20 donated to Employers Federation.
	March	Dividend 10% per annum for half year.
	April	Agreement with T. Chambers for 3 years. Purchase of R. Miller & Co. Pty. Ltd., Hobart. Amalgamation by purchase of Sydney Company. Amalgamation by purchase of Kitchen & Sons Ltd., Adelaide. Amalgamation by purchase of Ross Soap Co. Ltd. Dividend paid by K. & S. of 3% on paid up capital of Company. £50 donated to National Union.
	June	Increase of capital to £1,000,000 by issue of 125,000 new shares of £4 each. 31,810 shares issued to Lever Bros. for £127,240 in full payment. Interim dividend of £2.30586928 per share. 83,190 shares of £4 each offered to Shareholders. Neptune Oil Co. Share Account debited £90,000 and transferred to special Reserve Account and then converted into 22,500 new shares of £4 each allotted. Contract with Victorian Railways for Supply & Stores.
	July	Ambrose John Kitchen elected director of Company. New administrative building to be erected at Port Melbourne costing approximately £26,300. Proposed to adopt plans suggested by Lord Leverhulme for Sydney Soap Factory. Mr. A. E. Hamilton of Adelaide, granted 100 guineas honorarium with thanks for his past services.
	August	Mr. J .S. Cousin elected a director of the Central Board. Mr. F .H. Gifford elected a director of the Central Board.
	November	T. J. Davy resigns Chairmanship, which he had held for 23 years. J. H. Kitchen elected Chairman, W. J. Kitchen Vice-chairman. Consent that Inglis Ltd. register "Goldenia" except for soap.
	December	Dividend 5½% per annum for half year. Agreement with Council to lay water pipes from Hunter River to Works, Newcastle. Purchase of land at Cootamundra, for £125.
1925	January	Sale of 120,000 shares in Commonwealth Copra Co. Pty. Ltd. for £40,000. John Hambleton Kitchen died at Monte Carlo on 22 nd of month.
	February	Sale of land at Newcastle to Broken Hill Pty. Ltd for £750.
	May	Interim dividend 5½% per annum. for half year. Death of Lord Leverhulme on 7 th of the month. Death of W. J. Kitchen on 21 st of the month.

- Mr. W. G. L. Sear appointed Factory Manager at Port Melbourne.
£50 donated to National Union.
Sale of Queen St. Melbourne to General Accident Assurance Co., for £25,350.
Sale of property at Richmond for £14,000.
Printing Department opened 6th of the month.
- September Transfer of land at Warrnambool to W. L. Hart.
Dividend 6½% per annum for half year.
Application for patent moulding Sand Soap blocks.
- November F. W. Kitchen appointed Chairman.
Purchase of land at Cootamundra for £425.
Interim dividend 6½% per annum for half year.
- 1926 March Interim dividend 6½% per annum for half year.
April Purchase of Hudson Tallow business at Newnham, Tasmania.
Sale of land at Evandale, Tasmania, for £25 to T. R. Hogarth.
Sale of Neptune Oil Co. Ltd. to Lever Bros. Ltd. for £132,100.
October Dividend 6¾% for 6 months, making 10% for year.
Purchase of 1,000 £1 shares in Manufacturers Insurance Pty. Ltd.
First Managers' Conference at Melbourne.
November Sale of divested assets of Neptune Oil Co. to Levers for £42,366.
December "Solvol" trade mark registered in Great Britain, New Zealand, South Africa and Rhodesia.
- 1927 January Death of T. J. Davey.
February Lease of premises at rear of 365 Kent St.
March Interim dividend 15% per annum for six months.
April Death of Andrew Newell.
October Remuneration of Directors fixed.
December Operations commence in new Soap Works, Alexandria.
- 1928 April Dividend 7½% for six months, making 15% for year.
Purchase of business of R. Tingley & Son.
May Burford's shares in Candles Ltd. transferred to Company.
C. H. Kitchen appointed manager, Alexandria.
September Dividend 5% per annum for 12 months.
£325,314 transferred to General Reserve.
To manufacture for Persil Australia Pty. Ltd. and the purchase of 100 shares in that Company.
Capital to be Increased to £1,500,000 by creation of 125,000 £4 shares by £500,000 from General Reserve Account and allotted.
Exhibited at Melbourne Show.
August Exhibited at Brisbane Show.
Exhibited at Adelaide Show.
October New office at Launceston opened.
- 1929 January Power of Attorney in favour of J. S. Cousin to act for Company in New South Wales.
North Fremantle Factory destroyed by fire.
Fire at Newcastle Factory.
March Interim dividend 6½% per annum for half year.
Purchase of Rexona Pty. Ltd.
April Transfer of land at Fremantle.
Transfer of land-6t Alexandria.
Contract to supply Victorian Railways with soap etc.
October £100,000 transferred to General Reserve.
Interim dividend 5% per annum for half year.
Manager's Interstate Conference.
Persil to be introduced to Australian market.
December Death of C. H. Kitchen.
- 1930 May Interim dividend 5% per annum for half year
June Mr. E. C. Nankervis appointed Sales Manager, Sydney
December £150,000 transferred from Appropriation Account and General Reserve
- 1931 March Sale of sundry business of the Neptune Oil Co. Ltd.
April Mr. W. G. L. Sear elected a Director.
June Interim dividend 5% per annum for half year.
July Application and acceptance of 100,000 fully paid shares of £1 each in Lever's Pacific Plantations Pty. Ltd.
December Sale of 30 Burford shares to Levers.
- 1932 January £75,000 transferred from Appropriation to General Reserve.
Edible Fat Trade Agreement.

May	Harold A. Wilkins elected a Director.
July	E. R. Burke resigned Secretaryship of Company. Mr. Geoffrey Harrington Rushworth appointed Secretary. £119,999 transferred to No. 2 Reserve Account. £18,461 transferred from Appropriation Account to General Reserve Account.
August	Capital of a Company increased to £1,620,000 by creation of 30,000 new shares of £4 each.
November	Rationalisation scheme agreement with Soap Distributors Ltd and Burford and Sons Ltd. Agreement with Edible Oil Industries for sale of Edible Oil and fat businesses.
1934	May Transfer of land at Newcastle to Broken Hill Pty. Ltd. December £62,750 transferred from General Reserve to Appropriation Account. £243,000 transferred from Appropriation to No 3 Reserve Account. Capital of Company Increased to £1,863,000 by creation of 60,750 new shares of £4 each.
1935	August Purchase of Peter Street, Newcastle. October Purchase of shares in Candle Ltd.
1936	March Interim dividend 10%. November Final dividend for year ending June, 1936, 10%. Application for shares in Australian Candle Co. Pty. Ltd.
1937	February Transfer of land at Footscray. March Mr. H.A. Wilkins resigns Directorship. Fat Melting commenced at Port Melbourne after transfer from Footscray. May Transfer of Geo. Cox shares. June Transfer of land at Ballarat East. Interim dividend 5%. £133,334 transferred from General Reserve to Appropriation Account. £931,500 transferred from Appropriation to No. 3 Reserve Account. Capital of Company increased to £2,794,500 by creation of 232,875 new shares of £4 each.
1938	January Transfer of land at Wangaratta. Application for 34,995 £1 shares in Lever Bros. (Queensland). June Transfer of land at Newcastle. July Purchase of Fatty Acids business and Plant from Candles Ltd. November Dividend 12½%. December Transfer of Burford shares to Company.
1939	January Mr. G. H. Rushworth resigns Secretaryship. Mr. W. McPherson appointed Secretary. May Mr. Harry Chatterton Nankervis elected a Director. June Interim dividend 10%. December Dividend 5%.
1940	March F. W. Kitchen died on 19th of the month. April Mr. W. McPherson resigns Secretaryship. Mr. Ernest Enoch Rutter appointed Secretary. June Dividend 10%. Pension scheme is associate associated with A.E.P. August Mr. G. H. Rushworth appointed a Director and Managing Director. October Transfer of land at Footscray. Purchase of 10,000 shares in J. & E. Atkinson Pty. Ltd. December Dividend declared. Mr. A. J. Kitchen resigns Chairmanship of Company. Mr. G. H. Rushworth appointed Chairman of Company.
1941	June Declaration of Dividend December Purchase of 24,999 shares of Soap Distributors Ltd. from Burfords. Total number of Kitchen shares 698,625.
1943	Mr. G. H. Rushworth appointed director of Canadian company. Mr. C. Massey appointed chairman of J. Kitchen & Sons Pty. Ltd during Mr. Rushworth's absence.
1944	February Siren Soap renamed "Velvet" thus making the name universal throughout Australia. July Mr. Rushworth returned from Canada. November Mr. Massey returned to Canada.