

MUNITION WORK.

Barraclough, Professor S.	Grieve, W. H.
H. E.	Joy, W. B. F.
Campbell, E. F.	Kidd, H. C. J.
Essermann, N. A.	Medcalf, W. H.
Gibson, Professor A. J.	Poyitt, D. G.
Grant, R.	

MANUFACTURE OF MUNITIONS.

The call for munitions to help the Mother Country in the struggle then raging on the Continent roused the members of the Engineering Profession to a great pitch of excitement, and the news that Canada was making great efforts towards establishing factories for the output of shells, machine-gun parts, aeroplanes, and even submarines, acted like a spur to our enthusiasm. Many impromptu meetings were held in Sydney, and our esteemed President (Mr. J. W. Bragg), an ardent worker in the cause of Empire unity, convened a special meeting of the Council to devise ways and means whereby the practical help so freely offered could be best utilised.

The special meeting took place in the rooms of the Royal Society Council's room of the Engineering Association on November 17th, 1915, at 8 p.m., of which we append a resume of the business transacted:—

Special Council Meeting held at Royal Society's Rooms, 5 Elizabeth Street, Sydney, on Wednesday, 17th November, 1915, at 8 p.m.

Mr. J. W. Bragg (chair), Messrs. Fildes, Stobo, Thompson, McNamara, Sinclair, Julius, Tournay-Hinde, Reeks, Harricks, Saunders.

The President stated that he had called the meeting together for the special purpose of assisting in the manufacture of war munitions. He gave a summary of the situation in regard to the manufacture of high explosive shell cases, and stated that he had been requested by Mr. Russell Sinclair, a member of the Munitions Committee, to endeavour to obtain the assistance of the Association in the manufacture of these shell cases.

The President therefore moved that the Engineering Association take such steps as may be considered necessary to assist in the manufacture of war munitions. The motion was seconded by Mr. Reeks and carried unanimously.

After discussion it was resolved that a Company be formed to be called the N.S.W. Engineering Association Munitions Coy. Ltd. with an authorised capital of £12,500 in 25,000 shares of 10/- each. The Company to start operations when 10,000 shares had been fully subscribed.

It was resolved that three Committees be appointed to deal with the matter: an Organising Committee, Labour Committee, and Machine Committee.

It was resolved that Messrs. Bragg, Julius, and W. Sinclair be the members of the Organising Committee.

It was resolved that Messrs. Saunders, Tournay-Hinde, B. Grant, and Reeks be the members of the Labour Committee.

It was resolved that Messrs. Harricks, Fildes, Forbes-Mackay, and H. Kidd be the members of the Machine Committee.

It was resolved that the Provisional Directors of the Company be the Members of the Organising Committee and the Chairman of the Labour Committee and the Machine Committee.

It was resolved that Mr. J. McNamara be appointed as Secretary of the Company.

It was resolved that a meeting of the Council be called for Thursday, 25th instant, at 8 p.m., in order that the Committees may report progress.

It was notified that the Pastoral Finance Association had offered a floor of their building free of charge.

Mr. W. Sinclair notified that he had received firm offers of lathes, shafting, etc., free of charge.

Following upon the meeting of 17th November, many of the members had informal conversation regarding the question of labour to operate the proposed factory, and a special meeting held on 25th November at 5 Elizabeth Street was convened in order to arrive at some conclusion as to how we were to carry on the work.

It is interesting to know that over 70 offers, both from highly skilled mechanics and others willing and capable of handling the necessary plant, were received by the Hon. Secretary, as well as many others that we felt we could utilise in some other channel when necessity arose. The meeting referred to, at which the following were present, treated with the various special, we might say important, matters enumerated herein.

Special Council Meeting held at Royal Society's Rooms, 5 Elizabeth Street, Sydney, on Thursday, 25th November, 1915, at 8 p.m.

Mr. J. W. Bragg (chair), Messrs. Hart, Saunders, McNamara, McEwin, Thompson, Reeks, Harricks, Fildes, Bromwich, W. Sinclair, Julius, and Tournay-Hinde, members of Council, and Messrs. German, Forbes-Mackay, Hector Kidd, Russell Sinclair, Walker, visitors. The President extended a welcome to the members of the Munitions Committee and the members of the Sub-Committees, and the Hon. Accountant, Mr. Walker.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed. It was resolved that Mr. Saunders act as Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Labour matters.

The Secretary read the report of the Organising Committee.

It was resolved that Engineer Commander Bromwich be appointed a member of the Organising Committee.

Mr. Walker notified that he had seen the Secretary and several members of the Stock Exchange, and that all the members of the Stock Exchange would be prepared to act as Honorary Brokers to the proposed Munitions Company.

It was resolved that the name of the Company be altered from the N.S.W. Engineering Association Munitions Co. Ltd. to Munitions Ltd.

It was resolved that the Board of Hon. Directors shall consist of five members of the Engineering Association of New South Wales, with power to add to their number, including the names of gentlemen who are not members of the Engineering Association of N.S.W., for the time being to be ex officio Chairman of the Board.

It was resolved that the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Manufacturers each be requested to appoint a representative on the Board of Directors.

Mr. Forbes-Mackay notified that Mr. Hector Kidd had been appointed Chairman of the Machinery Committee.

Mr. Kidd stated that the report of the Machinery Committee, was not yet available, but that matters were well in hand and a report would be submitted to the next meeting.

Mr. Saunders reported that the Labour Committee had made but little progress. Mr. Reeks had

made an appointment with the Secretary of the Amalgamated Engineers, but the Secretary had failed to keep the appointment.

It was decided that it would not be advisable to approach the Executive of the Amalgamated Engineers again until some arrangements had been arrived at between the Union and the Munitions Committee.

Pending receipts of advice on this position, the Labour Committee had held its hand.

Mr. German explained that the Munitions Committee had entered into an arrangement with the Trades and Labour Council, not with the Society of Amalgamated Engineers, that unskilled labour may be employed provided no skilled labour is available and skilled labour wages are paid.

Mr. Russell Sinclair explained the labour position with particular reference to the negotiations of the Munitions Committee with the Trades and Labour Council and the Society of Amalgamated Engineers. He suggested that nothing should be done with regard to labour matters without consulting the Munitions Committee.

It was resolved that the Organising Committee take the necessary steps to get the best man possible from the Trades and Labour Council as a Director of the Company, with a view to assisting the position regarding labour.

It was resolved that on page 2 of the Prospectus of Munitions Ltd., under the heading "Necessity for the Company," that the words "and even by amateurs in their homes" be omitted, and that the last sentence under the same heading "The Company in its operations will in no way conflict with the firms who are at present engaged in making shells" be omitted. Under the heading "Method of Working," on the same page, the word "voluntary," on the second line, be omitted, the words "free of rent," on the seventh line, be omitted, and

the first sentence in the second paragraph under the same heading "Such voluntary workers will, during such time as they contribute their services, be subject to the same discipline as the other employees of the Company" be omitted.

It was resolved that a note be added to the form of application to the effect that shares in the Company will be transferable. It was resolved that the authorised capital of the Company be £15,000, divided into 30,000 shares of 10/- each, 25,000 shares to be offered for subscription at once, payable in full on application, the balance of the shares to be held in reserve.

It was resolved that the Preliminary Expenses of the flotation of the Company be met out of the funds of the Engineering Association of New South Wales, such Expenses to be refunded on the flotation of the Company.

It was resolved that the next Special Council Meeting be held on Thursday, 2nd December, at 8 p.m.

Owing to the important nature of the undertaking and the critical time through which the Empire was passing, we feel fully justified in setting down the full context of the proposed Company to be operated by the Engineering Association of N.S.W., and which was as follows:—

MUNITIONS LIMITED.

Under the auspices
of

THE ENGINEERING ASSOCIATION OF NEW
SOUTH WALES.

CAPITAL, £15,000.

Divided into 30,000 Shares of 10/- each payable in
full on application.

HONORARY DIRECTORS:

- Mr. J. W. BRAGG, President of the Engineering Association of N.S.W. and Governing Director of Gibson, Battle & Co. Ltd.
- Mr. WILLIAM SINCLAIR, Councillor, Engineering Association of N.S.W. and Director of Wildridge & Sinclair Ltd.
- Mr. G. A. JULIUS, Councillor, Engineering Association of N.S.W., Consulting Engineer, Sydney.
- Mr. HECTOR KIDD, Member Engineering Association of N.S.W., Consulting Engineer, Sydney.
- Mr. FRANK SAUNDERS, Vice-President Engineering Association of N.S.W. and Director of Frank Saunders Ltd., Sydney.
- Engineer Commander G. H. BROMWICH, H.M.A. Naval Dockyard, Garden Island, Sydney.

HONORARY SOLICITORS:

- Messrs. STEPHEN, JAQUES & STEPHEN, O'Connell Street, Sydney.

HONORARY BROKERS:

- All the Members of the Sydney Stock Exchange.

HONORARY ACCOUNTANTS:

- Messrs. JORDAN, WALKER & Co., Public Accountants, 113 Pitt Street, Sydney.

HONORARY SECRETARY:

- Mr. J. McNAMARA, Hon. Secretary Engineering Association of N.S.W.

OFFICES:

- C/o Messrs. JORDAN, WALKER & Co., 113 Pitt Street, Sydney.

BANKERS:

- The Bank of New South Wales, Sydney; Head Office, George Street, Sydney.

THE COMPANY'S ORIGIN.

The Engineering Association of New South Wales has been requested by the State Munitions Committee in terms of the following letter to undertake the Manufacture and Supply of Munitions of War.

(COPY.)

N.S.W. Munitions Committee,
Sydney, 19th November, 1915.

J. W. Bragg, Esq.,
President,
Engineering Association of N.S.W.,
Sydney.

Sir,—

The Federal Munitions Committee having accepted the offer of the N.S.W. Government for the manufacture of 40,000 shell bodies, and the Minister for Defence, through the Federal Munitions Committee, having recently definitely stated that shells are urgently required, has issued a statement of which the following is an extract:—

“All shells that can be produced in Australia are urgently required at the present time, and for at least eight months to come. The manufacture of munitions is more important than private work, and any firm is justified in putting aside private work to make shells. The State Munitions Committee are therefore invited to investigate and report to the Federal Munitions Committee as to any firms which are not contributing to the manufacture of shells and other munitions, which in their opinion, are capable of doing so, and to indicate what output they should be called upon to contribute.”

J. W. Bragg, Esq.,—

19th November, 1915.

The Executive of the N.S.W. Munitions Committee, while being pleased to report that the established Engineering firms have so far shown their willingness to cooperate by making shells, feel that there are a great many others outside of the established engineering firms who are desirous and could assist, and they think that the Engineering Association which is a representative body of Engineers, could well assist in working out some scheme by which available voluntary and other labour could be given an opportunity of serving their country by the production of shells, either by forming a central

works for the manufacture of shells, or in some other scheme which would give effect to the wishes of the Defence Department and meet the urgent demand.

The N.S.W. Munitions Committee will give you any assistance in any scheme your Association will develop, and do give you the assurance that all the shells you can manufacture for the next eight months are wanted and will be accepted if in accordance with the specification.

Yours truly,
 A. E. CUTLER,
 Organising and Executive
 Member N.S.W. Munitions
 Committee.

The Council of the Engineering Association, after careful consideration of this letter, and with the object of securing the best results from the energies and equipment available and offering in Sydney, more particularly in the small engineering workshops, have decided that the formation of a Limited Liability Company, to be worked under the auspices of the Association, would be the best way of meeting the situation and accomplishing the purpose desired by the State Munitions Committee, and especially seeing that liabilities will necessarily be incurred, contracts entered into and the functions of a trading body generally undertaken. Such action has the approval of the Munitions Committee. Further, by the formation of a Company, the money which the people of New South Wales are now asked to contribute by the purchase of the Company's shares, can be put to its best service without delay.

THE COMPANY'S OBJECT.

The object of the Company is to engage in the Manufacture and supply of Munitions of War for the service of the Empire and its Allies.

NECESSITY FOR THE COMPANY.

The Minister for Defence has clearly indicated that every possible shell that can be manufactured in Australia is required. The Imperial Government,

though they have at their disposal huge Munition Factories, have found it necessary to foster every effort, and shells are now being manufactured by the smallest shops in Great Britain. It is obvious that no one can look on anything which is being done in this direction as being too small. It is the clear duty of New South Wales to do whatever it can to assist.

METHOD OF WORKING.

It is intended as far as possible to take advantage of the services of the numbers of men who are willing and anxious to be of some assistance in this respect. Suitable machine tools and plant, which will be adapted for this work, have been offered by various firms, and it is intended to establish factories, at once, one each side of the Harbour, for which suitable premises have already been offered, and to commence operations forthwith.

CONTROL OF COMPANY.

The control of the Company shall be vested in Directors, all of whom are well known professional and business men who are giving their services gratuitously. Many of these are Members of the Engineering Association engaged in the various branches of the profession in Sydney.

THE COMPANY WILL NOT PAY DIVIDENDS.

As the object of the Company is an entirely patriotic one it is hoped and believed that the people of New South Wales will willingly afford it the necessary support by taking up shares, particularly as the money subscribed will be at once applied in a cause of vital importance to all. It is to be clearly understood, however, that the earnings of dividends for Shareholders is no part of the Company's function and that all profits that may accrue from the Manufacture of War Munitions and the result of the sale to the Munitions Committee, at the scheduled rates will be used either in the development of the

Company's objects by increasing the efficiency of the factories, or will be distributed among the various patriotic funds in such manner as may be approved by the Shareholders. The Company will go into voluntary liquidation immediately the necessity for the manufacture of munitions disappears—that is to say, practically at the end of the War, and ten shillings per share, being the amount of Capital contributed, will, if sufficient assets are available, be returned to the Shareholders: any surplus assets will be donated to patriotic funds as the Shareholders may determine.

ALLOTMENT OF SHARES.

25,000 Shares in the Company are now offered to the public. The Company will go to allotment as soon as 10,000 shares have been applied for. Shares will be allotted in priority according to receipt of application. Where no allotment is made the amount paid with the application will be returned in full. Where the applicant is allotted a smaller number of shares than he applied for, the balance remaining after payment for the shares allotted will be returned to the applicant.

THE POSITION OF SHAREHOLDERS.

The Company being a Limited Liability Company, and the shares being fully paid, any person purchasing shares will have no further calls to meet, and whether the Company's operations are profitable or not will incur no further liability beyond the original 10/- per share.

MEMORANDUM AND ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION.

Copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Company may be inspected at the Company Offices or at the Offices of the Company's Solicitors. Shares may be applied for as per the form annexed, and forms of application may also be

obtained from the Company's Brokers, the Secretary of the Company, or from any of the Directors of the Company.

FORM OF APPLICATION FOR SHARES.

To the Directors of Munitions, Limited.

I request you to allot me shares in Munitions, Limited, and I hereby agree to accept the same, and I authorise you to register me as the holder of such shares. I enclose £, being payment in full in respect of the said shares.

Name in full
(State whether Mr., Mrs., or Miss)

Address

Description

Date

Signature

The acquisition of machines, buildings and voluntary labour, together with the necessary capital, was readily procured so soon as by December 1st, 1915, and a memo. was forwarded to the Chairman of N.S.W. Munitions Committee advising him of our position, but with regard to labour the percentage of skilled operators offering was not as high as expected on account of many of the private workshops having entered into contracts with the N.S.W. Munitions Committee for the manufacture of 18-pounder H.E. Shells.

We, however, offered to start with a few skilled operators, and to later use diluted labour to augment our output, and as some little trouble was possible with the labour organisations an assistance for help from the said Committee was asked by the Association.

In reply to this an assurance was given by Mr. A. E. Cutler, the organiser and executive member of the N.S.W. Munitions Committee, that such help would be forthcoming if needed, but he did not anticipate any of the trouble we were afraid of.

Offers of Building and Plant were made to Munitions, Ltd., by the following firms:—

The Pastoral Finance Association.

Sydney Ferries, Ltd.

T. M. Goodall & Co.

Luke Muras.

Co-operative Wholesale Co. of Alexandria.

Curry Brothers.

Davies & Gehon.

R. L. Scrutton.

Zollners, Ltd.

Standard Waygood & Hercules, Ltd.

The latter firm were prepared to place the whole of their extensive plant at Harris Street, Ultimo, in the hands of Munitions, Ltd., for a period of 12 months, with the free use of certain tools, also the use of much other plant suitable to our requirements. A letter was sent to this firm carrying the thanks and appreciation of Munitions, Ltd.

It was unfortunate that a hitch occurred at this juncture with regard to the class of steel required for the manufacture of shell bodies, and the issue of a guarantee that a continuous supply of raw material would be forthcoming from the contracting body in Melbourne, and it was with regret that we learned that no definite assurance could be given that the manufactured article would be accepted by the Commonwealth authorities.

The following brief extracts from a letter sent to the Executive of the N.S.W. Munitions Committee practically put an end to what could be considered a very laudable and patriotic project from this Association, viz.:—

“We thank you for the opportunity which you offered us in November, 1915, to assist in the manufacture of shells, but considering the present conditions we cannot see that any useful purpose would be served by our taking further steps towards the establishment of a central factory until we can be assured by you that the troubles now existing are overcome, etc.

“And the course which we have indicated seems to us to be the only one open, but shall be pleased to hear from you when you have anything definite to communicate.”

Had the efforts put forward in the United Kingdom and America not quite overcome the shortage of war material, there is no doubt but that munitions in Australia would have become an established fact; but it is now history that not only was the leeway made up, but a surplus stock of all munitions, etc., was really available.

REPATRIATION.

From many and varied sources during the last period of the War, discussion was rife among the many branches of the engineering and other professions as to the best means for placing the younger men returning from the front.

It was obvious that owing to the youth of the great proportion of our men that their careers would either be seriously interfered with or in many cases receive a direct check. It was necessary that suitable means should be provided, and that very quickly, whereby these young fellows would be guided and directed into channels of employment most suitable to their individual capacities.

A letter received by the then President, Mr. D. F. J. Harricks, from that earnest worker, Mr. C. A. Le Maistre Walker, reading as follows:—