

George Waller & Sons- History

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Images: - Stroud Museum in the Park

Sources: - Graces Guides

Official Wallers Centenary History – 1973

Images the property of Stroud Museum in the Park

At some time before 1832 James Burton, father in law of George Waller founded an engineering company at Bankside, Southwark. Its main products involved the supply of gas pumping equipment for the gas supply industry & pumps & sluices for the sewage industry. On his death (1834) the business was run by his 2 sons, & George Waller was made an apprentice. In 1845 they had to move factories as the land was required to build London Bridge Station. The new site lacked a foundry & most of their castings were supplied by Ferrabees of Phoenix Ironworks, Thrupp.



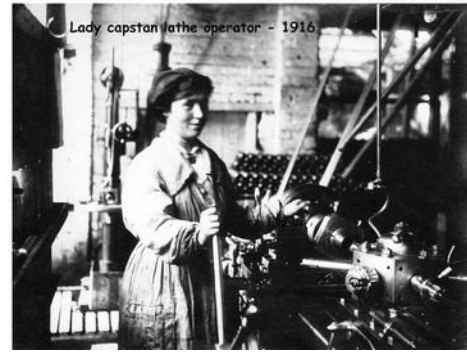
In 1855 the company went bankrupt. George Waller purchased the company & was renamed 'J Burton & Sons and Waller co'. In 1879 Waller patented a 4 bladed compressor, which became the mainstay of the company for the next 55 years.



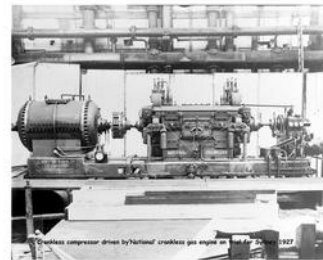
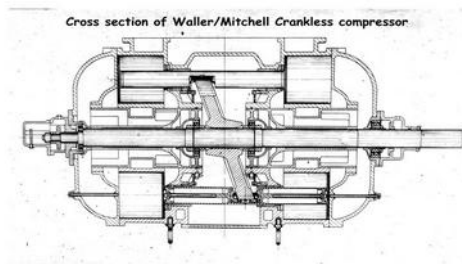
In 1873 Wallers moved their business to the 'Phoenix Ironworks', Thrupp, continuing the production of its existing products.

On George Waller's death his son George Waller junior took over & on his death in 1913 his son Bertram Braund Waller took over the management of the firm. He was an energetic & forward thinking man who expanded its customer base across the then British Empire & the wider world (Japan, South America).

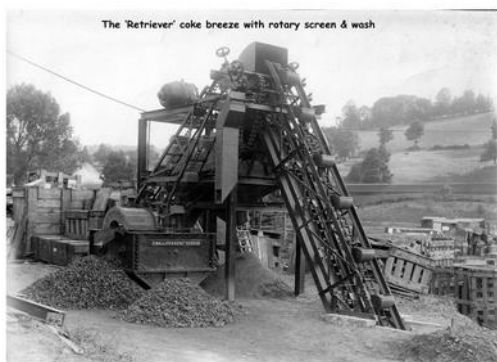
In 1915 as well as its existing products it made Artillery shell cases, which were then completed by No.5 Filling station, Quedgeley .This product was made by specially trained lady machinists.



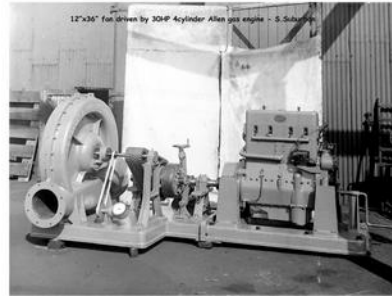
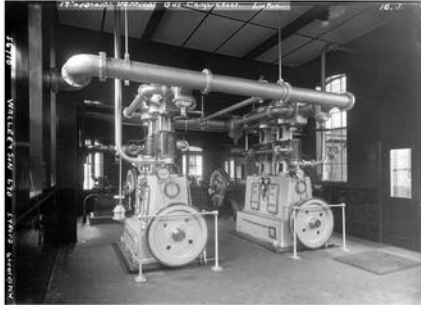
In the mid-1920s they produced a unique Swashplate (crankless) compressor to augment their product range.



In late 1920's they introduced range of Coke (a by-product of the Gas distillation process).breaking, washing & grading plants, & equipment to unload railway waggons using hydraulic rams.

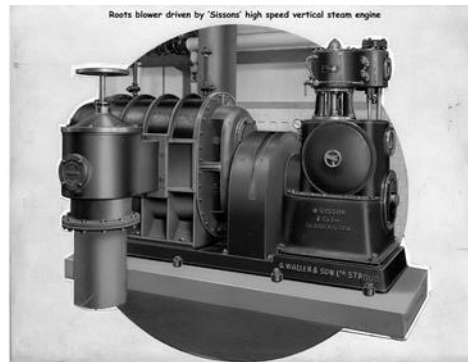
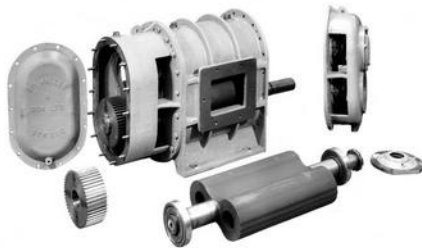


In the mid 1920's they produced large vertical & centrifugal turbo compressors powered by various means- steam engines, steam turbines, oil & diesel engines & electric motors.



In 1935 Wallers developed their Crankless compressor to be able to compress town gas to 3000-5000 psi .This was intended to charge steel cylinders with gas. These were to power Buses & Lorries. However a change in the legislation rendered this system to be unsafe. This was not in vain as the Admiralty used them in submarine compressed air systems. This product continued to be made until the company closed in 1970's.After the demand for rotary bladed compressors declined in the1930's the company decided to make Roots type blowers which were much more efficient.

Exploded view of component parts of a Roots blower



WW2 saw the production of hand cranked turbo exhausters for Air Raid shelter ventilation, Submarine air compressors & admiralty test benches.



Admiralty Generator test bench Mk5 - 1940's



The last of the Waller family (Bertram Braund) that was interested in the firm died in 1942 & the company was sold to 2 of its main competitors, Brian Donkin & WC Holmes. In 1949 this grouping was named BHD. In 1973 a controlling interest was acquired in BHD by the Hanson Trust (whose main business was asset stripping) .So 100years after it moved to Stroud the company was sold & closed down.

All this was not completely finished as 3 senior figures of Wallers formed a new company 'Roots Systems' Stonehouse which is still operating today. The old factory buildings are occupied by a sub contract engineering company ' Impcross'.