

## Findlay & Co's *Illustrated Catalogue* 1874-75

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**ABSTRACT:** Dunedin mill owner George Findlay published New Zealand's first cottage plans for sale to the public in March 1874. His extensive steam-powered factory bounded by Cumberland, Castle and Stuart Streets supplied all requisites for "cottages, doors, sashes, mouldings, architraves and every description of furnishings for building purposes." The only surviving copy has 30 pages of elevations and floor plans for seven cottages of three to seven rooms. At 1/8 inch to the foot, according to the *Otago Witness* (9 May 1874) they were "prepared so as to be fit to be put into a builder's hands" and "contain[ed] not fancy sketches but drawings which are practical and to scale."

It was boom time in Dunedin, the wealthiest city in the colony, with immigrant demands for housing and for furnishing. Renegade printer Samuel Lister produced another catalogue in July 1875 but this time for George Street cabinetmakers Craig and Gillies, yet both catalogues shared some designs in common. This paper examines what prompted New Zealand's first completely illustrated architectural plans, woodware and furnishing publications to be made, what they contained and most interestingly how they were made.

Colonial New Zealand's two oldest surviving trade catalogues were printed in 1874-75 at a time of unprecedented growth. Premier Julius Vogel's ten-million-pound external borrowings had funded his "great public works" scheme focussed on road and rail infrastructure, tele-communication and sea trade links. Local industry was encouraged to become self-sufficient with less reliance on imports while immigration incentives fuelled local demand for products and housing. Small business owners expanded into substantial premises with imposing street frontages. George Findlay's mechanised timber processing mills had benefitted hugely from Dunedin's burgeoning population, so much so, that he owned one of the city's largest factories covering one third of a central-city block bounded by Stuart, Castle and

Cumberland Streets.

George Alexander Findlay's (1837-79) story was typical of many hopeful migrants. Born in Newton-On-Ayr, Ayr, South Ayrshire, he arrived from Glasgow on 20th August 1860 with wife Jane (McCubbin) and daughter as steerage passengers on the *Pladda*.<sup>1</sup> They settled in Tokomairiro for the next three years. In April 1864 he was issued a licence to operate the George Hotel, Port Chalmers, became a Member of the Naval Brigade and leased a house. A month later, in May, a newly-born daughter died, an event all too common with streets awash with "mud, manure and decaying matter."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Shipping News" p 4.

<sup>2</sup> "Spring had the greatest mortality rate for consumption

Findlay's (1879) obituary noted "some short time after his arrival in the colony he [had] commenced business with his brothers as timber merchants in Princes Street South" and following a fire a partnership was formed with John Murdoch. Certainly by 1869 Findlay and Co. were shipping timber around Otago and offering an impressive range of processed timber products for house building and making good profits.<sup>3</sup>

For Sale a Large Stock of all descriptions of Building Materials.

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(tuberculosis), and autumn for diarrhoea, dysentery and 'continued fever of the typhoid type'." *Wood Dirt, Filth and Decay in Arcadia* pp 24, 32; "Notices: Died" p 4.

<sup>3</sup> "Shipping News: Coastal shipment of 200 feet of timber to Kakanui" p 2; "Otago Timber Yard and Steam Saw Mills [Advertisement]" p 4.

Timber of every description.  
H.T. palings, shingles, and posts and rails  
Laths and pickets, American and colonial  
Doors, sashes, and casements.

...

Architraves, skirting, moulding, &c.  
Galvanised iron, ridging, spouting, &c.  
Nails, screws, washers, &c.

Just landed, ex Gembok, from New York, a large shipment of, shelving, T. and G. lumber, &c. Oregon beams, good dimensions.

To arrive, ex *Otago*, from Glasgow, 200,000 feet red and white deals, 11 x 3 and 9x3; 250,000 feet T. and G. Baltic.<sup>4</sup>

By May 1873 Findlay & Co. had purchased the freehold "Jago's free stores" on the corner of Cumberland and Stuart Streets for £2,600 and a further £1,000 was spent on adjacent sections in September 1874.<sup>5</sup> Jago's old galvanised iron and wooden workshops were replaced by mid-1875 with a "substantial two-storey brick building with seven large arched gateways ... for the passage of drays."<sup>6</sup> The building followed the pattern adopted by large British factories with machinery on the upper floor "over the engine and boiler" with the ground floor occupied by "offices and a clerks'

<sup>4</sup> "Otago Timber Yards [Advertisement]" *Bruce Herald* (19 December 1873) p 1.

<sup>5</sup> "Commercial" (3 May 1873):2; "Commercial" (2 September 1874) p 2.

<sup>6</sup> "Messrs Findlay & Co.'s New Building" p 20.

department, and part taken up by a builders' ironmongery establishment."<sup>7</sup> Stables, seasoning rooms and a timber yard to the rear had access to rail with additional "large quantities [of timber] on the jetties, and on the water frontage of the Government ground in Castle street."<sup>8</sup>

The *Otago Witness* ran a large article on the new "Steam Saw & Planing" factory which had barely been in business two years and was already employing 70 hands. Findlay's central Dunedin mill boasted huge machinery and ambitious transport networks suggesting a strong credit line supported by large profit forecasts.

The timber yard fronts Castle street, and is near the railway line, and from the latter a branch line may, if it is required, be brought in, and when the Clutha line is opened up for any distance from Dunedin this will probably be done, and trucks full of timber or manufactured material sent direct from the yard. In the yard are stowed large stacks of timber of all kinds, for instance, red pine, black pine, kauri, totara, blue gum, Oregon, American and Scotch deals. In the yard is a very powerful jib crane capable of lifting from six to seven tons [with] a sweep over a circle of about 60ft. in diameter. It is so placed that it lifts the heaviest logs as they arrive off the timber wagons on to the travelling

<sup>7</sup> "Messrs Findlay & Co.'s New Building" p 20.

<sup>8</sup> "Messrs Findlay & Co.'s New Building" p 20.

carriage of the breaking-down saw [which] is capable of cutting through a log five feet in thickness.<sup>9</sup>

Findlay's vertical saw alone was milling 60-foot kauri logs into half a million super feet of timber per month.<sup>10</sup> His ambition was to be amongst the largest timber processors "in the Colony" built on ever increasing settler demand for housing as already observed with Auckland's huge kauri logging mills. Incredibly, within two years Findlay & Co. were even building railway carriages having "a shed erected especially for this work, capable of holding eight carriages at one time ... [equipped with] a universal shaping and curving, grooving and rabbeting machine [capable of] turning out four carriages a month."<sup>11</sup>

Vogel's assisted migration plan had fostered a new class of settler focused on the personal betterment and in particular the opportunity for home ownership. In 1874 alone more than 38,000 new settlers arrived putting significant pressure on cheap housing while over the decade New Zealand's population had grown

<sup>9</sup> "Messrs Findlay and Co.'s Saw Mills And Factory" p 12.

<sup>10</sup> "To Contractors and Builders [advertisement]" p 5.

<sup>11</sup> "Otago Local Industries. Railway Carriage Building" p 2.

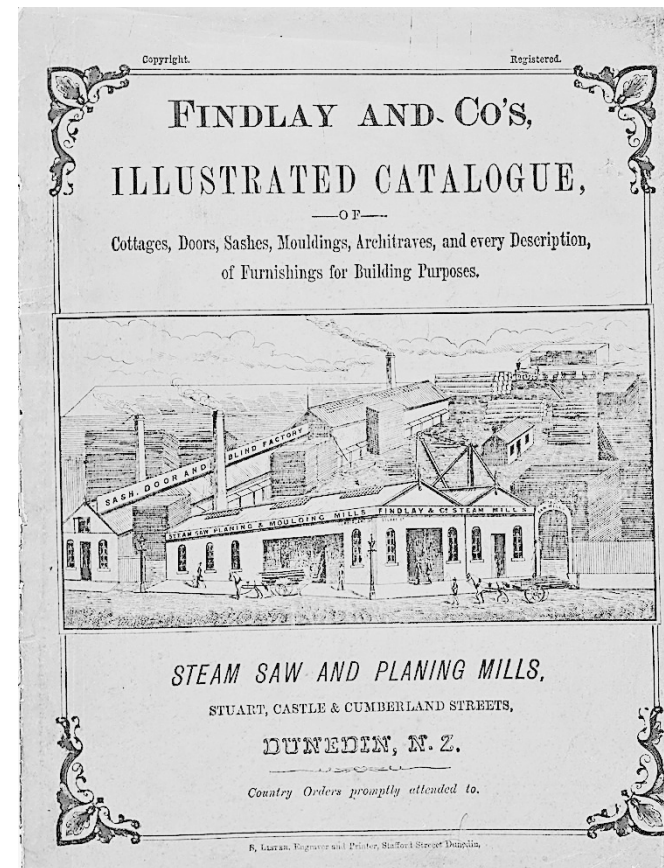
from 256,000 in 1871 to 491,000 in 1881, an increase of 91%.<sup>12</sup>

Nationwide occupancy statistics for 1871 averaged 4.48 people per house rising to 4.88 by 1874 and 5.12 in 1881 showing increasing pressure throughout the decade for affordable housing. However, this should be balanced against the increase in number of rooms per dwelling over the same period demonstrating a general improvement in house size and domestic wealth creation.<sup>13</sup> For example, in 1871 cottages of one to two rooms (which included tents numbering 2,404 principally in the goldfields) numbered 22,998, reducing to 19,612 in 1874 and halving to 10,077 by 1881, despite a near doubling of real population growth. Affordability then favoured the new middle-class owners of three to four room houses with 17,700 residences in 1871, rising to 21,000 in 1874 and doubling to 35,061 by 1881, slightly ahead of population growth.

In March 1874 Findlay's had issued their first trade catalogue of elevations and floor plans for eight cottages from three to seven rooms.

<sup>12</sup> Statistics for the 1871-81 decade were exclusive of Māori and Chinese "Census: 1871-1916" np.

<sup>13</sup> In 1871 the number of dwellings in New Zealand was 57,200; rising to 61,300 in 1874 and 95,750 in 1881.



**Figure 1:** Findlay and Co.'s *Illustrated Catalogue* cover showing their factory between May 1873 and March 1874. The forced perspective between the foreground building and rear courtyard suggests lithographic printer Samuel Lister merely added to an existing engraving. Alexander Turnbull Library, Eph-B1 Build 1874.

At 1/8 inch to the foot, they were "prepared so as to be fit to be put into a builder's hand [and that] people in the country would find the catalogue very useful to them, as [the catalogue] contains not fancy sketches but

drawings which are practical and to scale."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> "Messrs Findlay and Co.'s Saw Mills And Factory" p 12.

Despite importing timber and hardware, Findlay's investment in machinery and buildings showed they profited mostly from their locally manufactured materials to the building trade.

"WANTED, Tenders for the Erection of a Four-roomed Cottage (labor only) Apply Findlay and Co., Stuart street."<sup>15</sup>

George Findlay's evident success from steerage migrant to large factory owner was similarly reflected in the numbers of larger merchant-class homes built with five or more rooms. In 1871 there were 16,400 such dwellings nationwide keeping pace with population growth rising to 19,700 by 1874 but then 1881 they proportionately increased to 34,600. As symbols of success they indicated a clear overall increase in domestic asset creation ahead of population growth. Findlay's commercial base, Dunedin and environs, had a spectacular increase in house building far beyond the national average over the 1871-81 decade with a population increase from 14,800 to 42,700. It then is unsurprising to note the rapid expansion of colonial steam saw and planing mills to supply the housing market.

<sup>15</sup> "Wanted, Tenders [Late Advertisements]" p 3.

Findlay's catalogue included an additional 12 pages of fancy wood mouldings, skirtings, scotias, architraves, door patterns, window sashes, chimney pieces, wooden fence railings, shop counters, and furniture "Turnery." The modern factory had been fitted with American and Scottish saws, and a Dunedin-made moulding machine "for manufacturing doors, sashes, and mouldings of every description [alongside their] joinery, turnery, and glazing departments."<sup>16</sup> Machined ornamentation economically transformed any simple cottage façade and interior with its single reception room into a modestly fashionable Victorian residence to satisfy even the poorest steerage migrant family. Despite the random application of such debased classical decoration, the now ubiquitous colonial villa emerged to architecturally typify many of our older inner-city suburbs and small-town main streets.

Findlay and Co.'s 30-page catalogue is the oldest surviving trade catalogue in Australasia, however, there may have been at least one earlier pamphlet. The lithographed cover featured an image of the factory, a single-storey complex of buildings with

<sup>16</sup> "Messrs Findlay & Co.'s New Building" p 20.

confused perspectives indicated an aerial view had been added to an older image originally drawn at ground level. The (later) elevated portions showed the rear timber yard, drying rooms and a small locomotive on the horizon suggesting the "combined" image was drawn first in mid-1873, around the time Jago's buildings had been purchased, with later additions to the cover illustration by early 1874. The *Illustrated Catalogue* had included a calendar for 1874 suggesting it was to be an annual publication."<sup>17</sup> Indeed by June 1875 the *Otago Daily Times* carried an update for Findlay's sawmills and factory detailing their newly fitted 70 horse power boilers and

<sup>17</sup> "Every Description of Timber constantly on hand. T & G Scotch and Baltic Deals and Weatherboards, Spruce Deals, Oregon Planks and Beams any size. Sydney Cedar, Clear Pine, Chestnut, Walnut, and Ash, @ per foot. Kauri in Log and in Stock all sizes: Hardwood, Jarrah, Black Pine, Totara, Red Pine, White Pine, do. White Pine Box Stuff, American T & G, Lumber, Shelving, Dressed Ceiling Battens, & c., & c., English Iron, Best Brands, Scotch, do., do., Doors D.M. and R.P.; Glass, do., do., Sashes, Primed and Glazed, all sizes; Casement Windows, do., do., Mouldings, Architraves, Cornice, Skirting, H.T. Palings, H.T. Posts & Rails, ditto Shingles, Hurdles, Pickets, Laths, Ridging, & Spouting, & c. Portland Cement, Plaster of Paris, Fireclay, Lime, Fire Bricks & Tiles, Glazed Drain Pipes, Slates, Spikes, Nails, & c.". Findlay and Co *Findlay and Co.'s Illustrated Catalogue*.

a massive vertical saw by Glaswegian firm Messrs M'Dowell and Sons: "Messrs Findlay and Co. have lately published a new edition of their illustrated catalogue which contains among other things a map of the Province."<sup>18</sup> In 1879 another *Illustrated Catalogue* was produced advertising a new range of "Coachmakers' and Wheelwrights' Manorial [sic] [products] of every description."<sup>19</sup>

The engraver and printer Samuel Lister (1832[?]-1913) was a controversial character with a vigorous disrespect for convention. His opinionated mouthpiece *The Otago Workman* attacked the church and clergy "as sanctimonious hypocrites, the Queen and the aristocratic principle as expensively useless," and he lampooned anybody who claimed deference or put on airs.<sup>20</sup> His legendary disregard for convention extended to his sharp print trade practice. Indeed, his contradictory perspectives illustrating Findlay's rear courtyard, factory and timber stocks may have saved redrawing the entire

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<sup>18</sup> "City Improvements" p 2. "Otago Timber Yards [Business Notice]" p 1.

<sup>19</sup> "Totara Spokes, Naves [hubs], and Kauri and Oregon Felloes [advertisement]" p 24.

<sup>20</sup> Lister established *The Otago Workman* in 1887; Olssen "Lister, Samuel" np.

image but it also set the tone for Lister's thrifty work ethic. The reuse of an earlier factory image for the cover suggested rapid expansion by Findlay in well less than two years and an economical work approach by Lister to recycle an already engraved lithographic stone. Even Findlay's catalogue paper was coarse, unbleached, uncoated, of varying grades with fibrous plant material and little or no cotton content.<sup>21</sup>

Ventures to find printing-grade lithographic stone in New Zealand were unsuccessful so it had to be imported at considerable expense, with the best stones coming from Bavarian limestone quarries. Wyman and Sons' *Grammar of Lithography* (1885) described the scale of an average printery:

It is obvious that a stone weighing several hundred pounds is no easy matter to run in an out of a press by hand, and it is equally clear that, when many stones are required, they occupy much room and demand great strength in the buildings in which they are stored. So much is this the case that a lithographic printer usually speaks of having so many tons of this material on his premises.<sup>22</sup>

Universally printers recycled lithographic

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<sup>21</sup> Blake "Learning to Read Old Paper" np.

<sup>22</sup> Richmond *The Grammar of Lithography* p 156.

stones by grinding off old images many times over, suggesting that for Findlay's 1874 catalogue cover image to be updated Lister must have retained the original engraved stone.

The Findlay & Co.'s *Illustrated Catalogue* carried eight advertisements with two of particular note. Oddly potential competitors, cabinetmakers Craig and Gillies, appeared along with ironmongers Parke & Curle who also offered to supply their own "Illustrated catalogue of prices on application."<sup>23</sup> We can infer that this was an even earlier, but now missing, colonial trade catalogue. So, by June 1875 several illustrated trade catalogues had been printed in Dunedin suggesting some colonial businesses had achieved such a scale as to be able to pay for artwork and printing and to commercially afford to distribute their catalogues for free. In July Lister then produced one for Craig and Gillies with a Findlay and Co. advertisement featuring an entirely redrawn full-page image of their new two-storey factory.

Jobbing carpenters and cabinetmakers Andrew Craig and John Gillies first formed a

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<sup>23</sup> *Findlay and Co.'s Illustrated Catalogue* p 26.

working relationship in Dunedin's Octagon by 1862, a year before arch-rivals North and Scoullar (later Scoullar and Chisholm) had been established.<sup>24</sup> Until the 1880s those two businesses largely dominated the furniture trade in Dunedin, a wealthy city burgeoning with new migrants infected with gold fever. A photograph of Princes Street, taken by William Meluish in 1858, probably New Zealand's earliest known streetscape images, showed two rows of mostly weatherboard buildings separated by a wide, rutted and muddy roadway. In 1867 Craig and Gillies set up a warehouse near Meluish/Mundy's photographic studio at The Cutting, Princes Street, after acquiring James MacKay's cabinet making business established in 1860.<sup>25</sup> It

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<sup>24</sup> Shipping figures indicate Craig and Gillies were the dominant importers. Scoullars employed 40 workmen, Craig and Gillies 43, Larnach and Guthrie 175, J. Inglis and Co. 230, and Herbert, Haynes and Co. 110 employees. "Measures, Not Men" p 2. John Gillies arrived at Port Chalmers on the *Lord Ashley* in early 1862 from Australia, practicing as an itinerant cabinetmaker by 1863 and in partnership with Andrew Craig by 1865. "Craig and Gillies [advertisement]" (9 December 1871) p 2; "Craig and Gillies [advertisement]" (23 October 1877) p 3.

<sup>25</sup> Meluish had established his photographic "business in a very inadequate building on the corner of Dowling and Princes Street" in 1856 which he sold to Daniel Louis Mundy in 1864. Three years later he moved to

allowed them to claim that they possessed "one of the largest stocks of Scotch, English and Colonial-made furniture that has ever been shown in Dunedin."<sup>26</sup> Their stock perfectly illustrated the range of British fashions being imported.

Walnut drawing room-suites, covered in green Damask; ditto in French tourney; walnut cheffoniers, plate-glass doors and backs, oval and circular walnut tables, walnut card tables, whatnots, Canterburys and Co.; dining-room suites, Spanish mahogany chairs in hair-cloth and Morocco, patent telescope tables, mahogany loo tables, mahogany sideboards and cheffoniers, dumbwaiters, night commodes, bedroom suites, wardrobes, chests of drawers, washstands, marble tops, looking glasses, wood and caned bottomed chairs, hair and flock mattresses, feather beds, bolsters, and pillows, iron and brass bedsteads, children's cots, and Co., and Co.<sup>27</sup>

By 1872 they had extended their range to include "American Chairs in Great Variety," and three years on, their new carpet department promoted: "Floor Cloths, Choice Patterns in all widths. ... Brussels, Tapestries,

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Christchurch to go into partnership with Graham La Mert. Main and Turner *New Zealand Photography from the 1840s to the Present* p 7.

<sup>26</sup> "Craig and Gillies [advertisement]" (16 October 1867) p 2; "Craig and Gillies [advertisement]" (12 February 1868) p 8.

<sup>27</sup> "Craig and Gillies [advertisement]" (25 May to 19 June 1867) p 1.

Kidders, Unions, Felt, Felt squares, Hearth Rugs. Cocoa, Persian, and China Matting. Door mats, for outside and inside use."<sup>28</sup> Competitors Henry North and Arthur Scoullar were also promoting their regular shipments of Brussel's carpets, German Heinz, and Lipp and Sohn pianos, Austrian bentwood chairs, Bridgeport organs, American chairs and iron bedsteads from Birmingham.<sup>29</sup> Products from around the globe were pouring into Dunedin.

Following a fire in April 1874 colonial architect Robert Lawson, designer of Dunedin's First Church, Larnach Castle and the sprawling neo-gothic Seacliff Lunatic Asylum, also designed Craig and Gillies imposing new warehouse on George Street just off the Octagon. Lawson's "novel as it is handsome" new three-storeyed Oamaru white stone, Port Chalmers blue stone, brick and cement building featured a novel façade of "one arch sprung from double pilasters on each side. The arch will be filled in with glass, and above it a series of semi-arched openings

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<sup>28</sup> "Craig and Gillies [advertisements]" (22 December 1875) p 7.

<sup>29</sup> Scoullar and Chisholm, advertising copy files, January 1886-September 1911.

subdivided with moulded pilasters."<sup>30</sup> There was striking comparison to Fowler and Hill's (1877) Shoreditch High Street, London, showroom warehouse for cabinet ironmonger Edward Wells and Co.<sup>31</sup> It was all very modern; even Craig and Gillies' basement was fitted with a hydraulic lift.<sup>32</sup>

Craig and Gillies' catalogue and separate price list featured their new premises on the cover. In December 1875 they inserted a substantial advertisement in the *Tuapeka Times*. It finished by saying:

To provide for a rapidly increasing business C. and G. have recently erected, in Great King street, extensive manufacturing premises with the latest improved machinery, which will enable them to effect a great saving in cost of production, a benefit of which will accrue to their customers. Furnished Price Lists in accordance with Catalogue, will be presented or forwarded on Application.<sup>33</sup>

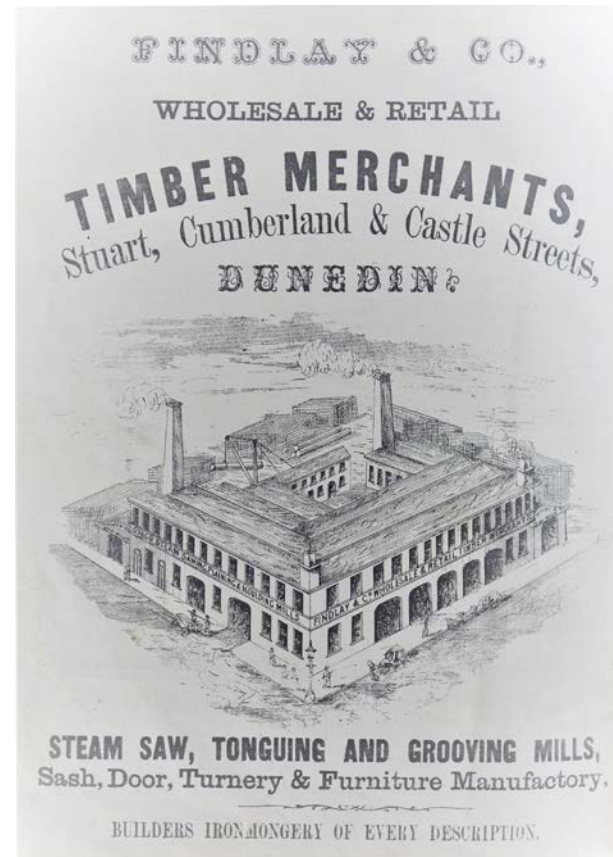
This was the first mention of their newly

<sup>30</sup> "The Otago Daily Times" p 2.

<sup>31</sup> Craig and Gillies building measuring 36 x 70 feet was demolished late in the 1960s and the site is now occupied by the Dunedin Civic Centre. English Heritage *Behind the Veneer* p 7.

<sup>32</sup> "The Otago Daily Times" p 2.

<sup>33</sup> "Craig and Gillies [advertisement]" (22 December 1875) p 7.



**Figure 2:** Findlay and Co.'s new two-storey brick factory drawn by Samuel Lister in July 1875 from an advertisement in Craig and Gillies' *Illustrated Catalogue*. Collection: William Cottrell.

printed *Illustrated Catalogue of Furniture* and thereafter it was infrequently and variously referred to in newspaper advertising until late 1878.

Parties about to furnish will find here a most extensive stock to choose from, extending from the plainest to the

most handsome furniture. Special designs made to order. Illustrated price lists and estimates on application.<sup>34</sup>

Findlay's catalogue was no furniture book

<sup>34</sup> "Craig and Gillies [Business Notices]" p 4.

however their page of "Turnery" was also reprinted by Lister in Craig and Gillies' own *Illustrated Catalogue* along with Findlay's new premises in a full-page advertisement.<sup>35</sup> It suggested a relationship between the two firms despite their apparent conflicting trade interests. Findlay, for example, had separately advertised those very same turnery products along with their own catalogue in September 1875.

Turnery, including all designs in spiral work executed in a superior manner and at low rates. Furniture of every description always on hand and made to order, the whole of the timber for the manufacture of which is seasoned and steam dried. Price Lists and illustrated Catalogues, to be had on application.<sup>36</sup>

There was a relationship between the two companies as Findlay had purchased Craig and Gillies' sawmills at Seaward Bush, Southland, to supplement his own bush stands on the Otago Peninsula and Waikawa. Both firms had modern mechanised factories capable of manufacturing identical furniture related components, so was there a division of machine resources or was it simply that the

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<sup>35</sup> *Findlay and Co.'s Illustrated Catalogue* p 24; *Craig and Gillies's* [sic] *Illustrated Catalogue of Furniture* p 46.

<sup>36</sup> "Findlay and Co. [advertisement]" (29 September 1875) p 3.

ever-increasing demand for furniture simply could not be satisfied by all Dunedin's furnishing warehouses?

Lister had printed both "Turnery" pages 18 months apart and while they were similar, they were not identical. One design was noticeably altered. Findlay's two curtain rods appeared all wooden, but Craig and Gillies' end finials were changed to spun brass. Their *Price List* did say "Window pole in [Australian] Blackwood, ends various coloured wood and buttons complete with rings ... Brass Brackets and Rosettes."<sup>37</sup> The latter brass fittings were imported but the woodturnings were Dunedin-made as Findlay's did import blackwood. It does appear that the two factories dedicated machines, such as copy-lathes, to separate tasks for in-trade wholesale supply. Even so, such alliances with other Dunedin furniture warehouses were untypical.

In addition to manufacturing architectural fittings Findlay's American machines could as easily produce (more) expensive furniture. A single employee was able to operate several continuously running machines producing

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<sup>37</sup> *Retail Price List of Household Furniture* p 44.

high value products with low unit costs to quickly recover the original investment.

The chief work done is the cutting of curved and circular work such as sofa scrolls, sofa legs, brackets and chair legs, and chair backs ... in any pattern "seen from the illustrated catalogue" [sic] The "four lathes constantly at work ... turned out ... washstand legs, legs for toilet tables and sofas, bedposts, and ornamental rails, banisters, curtain poles and rings, & co."<sup>38</sup>

Craig and Gillies, and North and Scoullar, were major importers and manufacturers so Findlay and Co.'s impressive expansion strongly suggests high profits even in a competitive market as their advertising clearly showed:

[An] "immense clearing sale of surplus stock of English and Colonial made Furniture, [with] Catalogues of particulars."<sup>39</sup>

By December 1876 they had a contract for £2,000 to supply cabinets for the new museum in addition to an order from Otago Railways for five new carriages.

Exactly three years after Findlay's *Illustrated Catalogue* was issued, they held a social function for 250 employees and friends in

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<sup>38</sup> "Messrs Findlay and Co.'s Saw Mills and Factory" p 12.

<sup>39</sup> "Findlay and Co. [advertisement]" (29 July 1876) p 3.



their very own "Railway Shed [all] beautifully decorated with flags, ferns, and flowers." Speeches by George Findlay senior and George Findlay junior referred to their firm's rapid growth from "cutting up timber in a very small way" to sash and door making, to furniture making and finally carriage making. With the latter it was particularly noted in the *Otago Daily Times* that local work was equal to any in the world.<sup>40</sup>

In the last three decades of the nineteenth-century, housing had created the largest component of domestic wealth, with the numbers of dwellings being built continually increasing the accumulated value of property. Dunedin, for example, recorded price increases of up to 100 percent in the two years 1874 to 1875 with 16 percent of the city's total house numbers being built during that same time, exactly when the first trade catalogues appeared. Meanwhile high freight charges and customs duties dissuaded the continual inflow of immigrants from bringing bulky household items, further creating an immediate demand for furnishings as they set up in their new homeland. It was no surprise then that Dunedin woodware firms had

undergone a decade of constant growth in good economic times with a continually expanding client base.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> "Social Gathering" p 2.

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<sup>41</sup> "Over twenty years, the increase in the total value of imports to New Zealand had only risen from £7,000,655 in 1864 to £7,663,888 in 1884." Petersen "Signs of a Higher Life" pp 52, 85-88, 96.

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