

AUSTRALIAN JOINT COPYING PROJECT

FOSTER AND BRAITHWAITE

Records, 1896-98

Reel M975

**Foster and Braithwaite
22 Austin Friars
London EC2N 2BU**

**National Library of Australia
State Library of New South Wales**

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HISTORICAL NOTE

The London stockbroking firm of Foster and Janson was founded in 1825 by James Foster (d. 1861) and Richard Janson (d. 1830). Following Janson's death, Foster was joined by Isaac Braithwaite and the firm was renamed Foster and Braithwaite in 1833. The firm was based in Austin Friars in the City of London from 1863 to 1970. In 1867, a new deed of partnership established the dominance of members of the Braithwaite Family, which continued for the next century.

Joseph Farmer (1814-1890) established a draper's shop in Pitt Street in Sydney in 1840. His nephew William Farmer (1832-1908) joined him in 1848 and took control of the firm in 1854. In the following years William Farmer had several partners and the firm had various names, but from 1869 onwards it was Farmer & Co. The firm branched out from drapery and became one of the largest departmental stores in Sydney. It became a public company in 1897, with Sir William Farmer as chairman. Farmer & Co. was taken over by Myer in 1961.

The softgoods merchants A. McArthur & Co. were established in Sydney in 1841 by the Irish-born Alexander McArthur (1814-1909) and his brother William McArthur (1809-1887). In 1848 the firm of W. & A. McArthur was established in London. The Australian firm expanded rapidly and soon had branches in Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane and Auckland. In the 1860s the firm moved into banking and finance. Following the death of Sir William McArthur and the retirement of two old members of the firm, it was decided to combine the management of the English and Australian firms. W. & A. McArthur became a limited liability company in 1898, with Alexander McArthur as the chairman. The firm was reconstituted in 1908 after liquidation.

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1 **Farmer & Co.**

Records of Foster and Braithwaite concerning the formation of Farmer & Co. as a public company and the raising of capital on the London market, 1896-97.

The records comprise correspondence, mainly with the solicitor Alfred Shephard who acted for Sir William Farmer, financial papers, a list of assets and liabilities of the company, and an alphabetical list of people who had applied for shares. There is also a draft agreement between (1) Sir William Farmer and John Pope, and (2) Farmer & Co.

2 **W. & A. McArthur, Ltd.**

Records of Foster and Braithwaite concerning the formation of W. & A. McArthur as a public company, 1898. George Braithwaite was trustee for the debenture stock holders.

The records comprise correspondence between George Braithwaite, Alexander Ormrod and the solicitor E.T. Hargraves dealing with the articles of association, the auditing of the books of the English and Australian companies, and the issuing of a prospectus. There are also draft agreements between W. & A. McArthur and Thomas Lowthian (Manchester) and between Thomas Lowthian, Foster and Braithwaite and Lawson & Ormrod.