

INDUSTRY IN THE HIGHLANDS: ROSE STREET FOUNDRY AND AI WELDERS



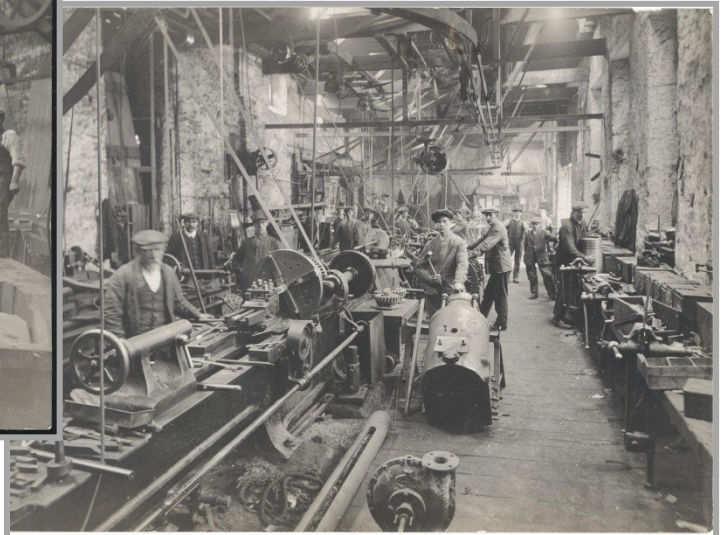
Although not the first iron foundry to have operated from premises on Rose Street, the foundation of the Northern Agricultural Implement Foundry Company in March 1872 marked the beginning of a business that was to become a world leader in the field of automated welding equipment. The Company began as a general iron foundry as evidenced by its earliest price list and despite difficult trading conditions returned a profit in its first year of trading.

It grew with the expansion of the Highland Railway and in the 1890s, a decade which saw considerable expansion of the Rose Street facility, changed its name to the Rose Street Foundry & Engineering Company. In 1908, Sam Hunter-Gordon joined the Company as manager initiating a family involvement that was to last for seventy years and inspire its success.

22 October 1872

Scale of Charges for Castings

Plough Metal	12/- per cwt
Sash Weights	11/- "
Threshing Mill Castings	18/- "
Castings under 28 lb. weight	16/- "
Pulleys & small Castings over 4 lb.	18/- "
The Toothed Wheel, small Castings	2 1/2 to 3 1/2 per lb.
Spills, Bars, & Columns	10/6 to 11/8 per cwt
Rail Plates, & Bar	1/5 each

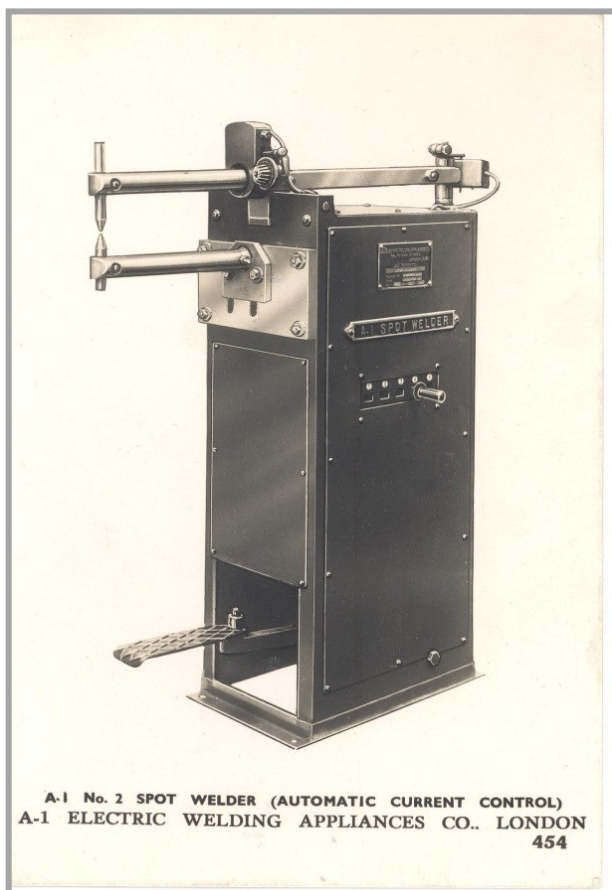
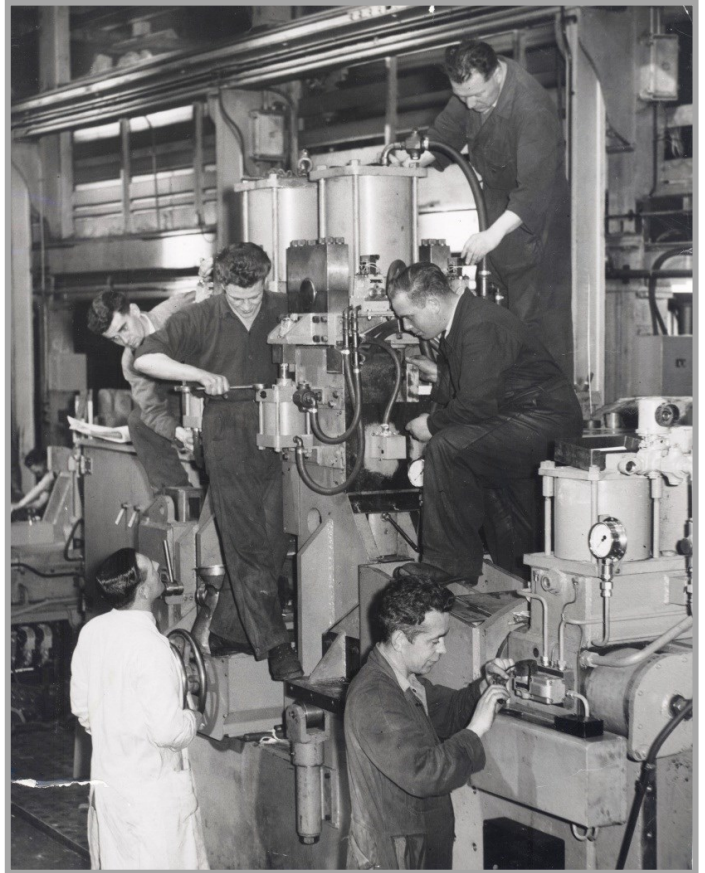


INDUSTRY IN THE HIGHLANDS: ROSE STREET FOUNDRY AND AI WELDERS

With the 1920s came recession and recognising the need to diversify A.I. Manufacturing, a bankrupt Bradford based business specialising in resistance welders, was purchased.

Continuing recession forced the closure of the foundry side of the business in 1931, however the Company was now well established as a global supplier of resistance welders. During WW2 Inverness-built welding equipment played a significant part in the manufacture of Spitfire propeller hubs and operation PLUTO (Pipeline Under the Ocean).

To more accurately reflect its work and products, in March 1945 the Rose Street Foundry and Engineering Company changed its name to Resistance Welders Ltd.



The development of specialist machinery such as rail welders, wheel rim welders for the automotive industry and ring welders for gas turbine and jet engines saw the Company prosper and in 1965 the name A. I. Welders Ltd was adopted. The recession of the early 1980s again saw tough trading condition and AI Welders was acquired by American based Verson in 1985. Relocating to a new site on the Longman Industrial Estate did little to improve prospects. Verson A. I. ceased trading in 1991 and following a management buyout A. I. Welders was re-established a few months later but on a much reduced scale. The Company finally ceased trading in early 2014 after almost 142 years in business.

