

Birmingham Stove & Range Company (Atlanta Stove Works) Time Line

February 11, 2017

1889 – (September 19) - **The Georgia Stove & Range Company** (GS&R) is organized with Capital Stock of \$50,000.

Officers:

President: G. B Everett

Vice-President: W.I. Zachry

Secretary/Treasurer: A.L. Greene

Board of Directors:

A. J. Orme E.P. Black

E. F. Clark W.I. Zachry

V.M. Barrett A. L. Greene

J. E. Maddox W. I. Sims

G. B. Everett

The main range and top seller was the Barrett Range. This design forced the fire “to loop the loop” and very efficiently and evenly heat the entire oven. Salesmen would set one up in front of stores that sold ranges and cook a full breakfast using only a newspaper to prove its superiority to other ranges.

1890 – (April)

Officers:

President : G.B. Everett, President;

Business Manager: W.R. Shropshire

Secretary: T.J. Jefferies, Secretary

Superintendent : D.A. McLean

It is listed that they make Stove Fixtures, Grates, Iron Kettles, Pots and Skillets.

1890 - (October) The First Annual Meeting of George Stove and Range is held.

The foundry has doubled in size, and capacity has trebled.

The officers have changed :

Officers:

President : A.S. Seals, (Greensboro)

Vice President: W.I. Zachry

General Manager: W.R. Shropshire

Secretary/Treasurer: T.H. Jefferies

Board of Directors:

A.J. Orme A.S. Seals,

Vason M. Barrett, W.R. Shropshire

W.I. Sims [John R. Dickey](#)

J.W. Morrow W.I. Zachry

C.J. Simmons

1892 –Georgia Stove & Range Company, in court proceedings, as \$25,000 of the original \$50,000 Capital Stock was not paid to the company by J.E. Maddox and J. M. Moore.

Sam D. Jones attends the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta as a Delegate.

1892 – (December) The Georgia Stove & Range Company is advertised as going up for auction to the highest bidder. This auction includes: all goods, inventory, materials, patent rights, patterns, books and all property belonging to said company, Lock, Stock and Barrel. Advertised as being, “enabled to “take off heat” on day of purchase.”

Mr. Shropshire and Jefferies are available to show the property.

1893 – (January) The Georgia Stove & Range Company is sold to C.W. Hunnicutt for \$12,775. He also assumed the liabilities of \$11, 529.81 making the actual price paid \$24, 304.81. C. W. Hunnicutt (b. 2/27/1827, d. 1/20/1915) President, Alexander S. (Stephens) Seals (b. 12/29/1858) hired as Vice-President, General Manager and John R. Dickey Secretary/Treasurer.

1894 – The name now found primarily is the **Georgia Stove Works (GSW)**. A specific announcement of a name change has not yet been found, but it appears that after 1894 It is now Georgia Stove Works, not Georgia Stove and Range.

1895 - **Georgia Stove Works**, continues making the Barrett Stove, offers hollow-ware accessories along with their stoves, but did they have help? (**See 1897**).

Atlanta, Georgia hosts the “Cotton States and International Exposition” September 18-December 31. Sam(uel) D. (Dews) Jones attends and decides to move to Atlanta.

1897 – Georgia Stove Works and Atlanta Stove Works names are both being used during this year by different papers. During this time a Major Economic Depression was taking place. The papers are full of strikes and arrests at foundries.

It is in a May of 1897, in an article that reports on the Phillips & Buttorff (P&B) strike, that it is revealed that Phillips & Buttorff Manufacturing Company had been selling stoves to Atlanta Stove Works.

(Did jobbers make cookware for them?)

(Re: the ASW in the P&B statement: Were they stating the name of the foundry, or were they saying Atlanta’s Stove Works as it was the only stove works in Atlanta?)

Then in December a strike is reported at the Georgia Stove Works, after GSW cut wages by 10%. So the name goes back and forth, ASW, GSW.

1898 – (**May?**) Reorganized as Atlanta Stove Works

The Founders are:

President: C.W. Hunnicutt

Vice President & General Manager: Alex S. Seals

Secretary/Treasurer: John R. Dickey

A new modern plant is being built.

The family story is; ASW had borrowed money to build this new foundry, but it wasn’t enough. The banker who had loaned the money told Sam D. Jones what a good investment this foundry would be. Sam D. Jones invests in Atlanta Stove Works, and there was a change in officers;

President: Alexander S. Seals is

Vice President: Sam D. Jones is made Vice-President in October.

Sam D. was a sharp business man and in a short time saw that the pricing for their stoves was wrong and in fact the foundry was selling their stoves for less than they took to make. Showing their contractors this fact he was able to renegotiate contracts and the foundry began turning a profit. The only skillets shown in catalogs are called Stove Spiders and only offered in sizes 6-9.

1899 - September 22 at age 40, ASW President Alexander S. Seals dies of tuberculosis. Sam D. and his brother Bolling Jones Sr(I) purchase the Atlanta Stove Works stock from his estate in October. The two (2) brothers now control approximately 82% of the corporate stock. Sam D. Jones becomes President and his brother Bolling Jones, becomes Vice-President.

****1902** - Atlanta Stove Works creates the Alabama Manufacturing Company in Birmingham, Alabama to make hollow ware (cast iron cookware). The entire product is taken by the ASW. To help, 80 convicts were leased from the State of Alabama for labor in this foundry. This is the first cast iron hollow ware (cookware) foundry in the State of Alabama and the first to use convicts for this type of manufacturing. After serving their time and if they were a good worker they would usually hire them. With stoves and ranges the business was often cyclical, heating stoves sales would peak in the winter and then bottom out in the summer. Cookware sales were a constant, especially when compared to heaters, and most other stove and range companies also sold cookware, so the dollars were there, making this a good expansion. ASW if they made it, stopped making cookware at this point. This was "an up to date plant, the entire product of which is taken up by the ASW." "...to be shipped from wither from Birmingham, Ala., or Atlanta, Ga." This the point where it appears that Alabama Manufacturing takes over the cookware production from ASW. The only skillets shown in catalogs are called Stove Spiders and only offered in sizes 6-9.

****1911** - Alabama Manufacturing Co. is renamed the, Birmingham Stove & Range Co. (BS&R) after buying the stove and range patterns from a foundry that had gone under. B. Harry Hartsfield is Vice-President and General Manager S. J. Price (Sr.) Secretary/Treasurer. S.J. Price is Sam Jones Price. The foundry now makes ranges/stoves and cast iron cookware.

1911 - August 1st, the contract between the State of Alabama, for convict labor, and the Alabama Manufacturing Co. expires and is not renewed.

1915 - Original BS&R plant burned (Was in North Birmingham) newspaper states unknown origin, but family history has it starting in the porcelain enameling section, a total loss.

1916 - Land acquired and construction commenced to replace building previously lost to fire. This land was located on the corner of 27th Avenue North and Huntsville Road (now called Shuttlesworth Drive). Approximate cost \$50,000. Bolling Jones Jr. (II) graduates from UGA.

1917 - Saunders Jones Sr. (I), son of Sam D. Jones, is elected VP of ASW.

1920's - BS&R is the first to manufacture gas stoves in Birmingham; Majic Baker and Red Mountain

1926 - Sam D. Jones retires and is succeeded by his son, Bolling H. (Henry) Jones Jr (II) as President of both ASW and BS&R. Sam D. becomes Chairman of the Board. Bolling Jones Jr. (II) was Sam D.'s son who was named after his Uncle Bolling Jones Sr. (I).

1929 - This catalog's skillets are still the Stove Spider, now only offered in sizes 7-9, but no regular skillets are yet offered. The earliest this catalog could be from is 1929, but could have been used until early 1930's, like 1932.

1930 - Sam D. Jones dies April 6, 1930.

1930's – The Red Mountain Line started. This is the first of the “regular” skillet series, offered in sizes; 3-14 (Yes the 3S was included in that.) Thus far, the earliest Red Mountain catalog is probably after 1934, due to there being in this catalog a corn stick pan, which Wagner had a patent on until approximately 1934. This catalog also helps with the date that BS&R used as it's conception date, the earlier 1902 date, that was the start of Alabama Manufacturing. (30 years + 1902 = 1932), pretty close for almost 100 years ago. This is the same thing they did with the start date of ASW using the 1889 Georgia Stove and Range start date as their start date.

Late - 1930's - (Probably 1939) "Piggy" Greenfield (BS&R Salesman in Louisiana) suggested turning the charcoal Sad Iron Heater into a Fish Fryer. The Sportsman Grill is invented. (Patents filed 1940. TM Registered 1941, TM later assigned to Lodge, 1994).

1933 - Bolling Jones Sr. (I) dies.

1938 - Legally renamed; before this time ASW and BS&R were separate companies, they became known as The Atlanta Stove Works Inc. D.B.A. Birmingham Stove & Range Co.. Prior to this a holding company called Republic Stove held all the stock. Holding Companies became illegal in 1938, hence the changes.

1941 - This is the last time Stove Spiders are offered.

1942 - 1945 - World War II Years. Pig Iron was claimed by the government as a war material. Foundries not producing items for the war effort were reduced to using 100% scrap and they never knew what would show up. Once a load of lawnmowers came in as scrap, the foundry workers were fixing them up and taking them home rather than melting them down. Another time they had an explosion while melting scrap, so they started looking through the scrap and started finding Civil War cannon balls some were loaded with gunpowder, no one was hurt. They also melted the trolley tracks in Birmingham as they weren't in use anymore. Very little if any cookware was made as BS&R concentrated their limited resources on their larger profit items, i.e. stoves and ranges, not cookware. BS&R also cleaned armored castings for the Navy "Ducks" in their tumblers.

1940's - After the war BS&R began making gas heaters and they remained one of their top sellers for many years.

1947 - Saunders Jones II [son of Bolling Jones Jr. (II)] begins working at ASW. City Salesman, Assistant to General Manager, Factory Manager, Assistant to President. (all in Atlanta 1947-1959)

1948 - BS&R's Porcelain enameling plant burns down, again, it is not rebuilt.

1949 - Began casting iron Lawn Furniture (or as Saunders Jones II called it, Cemetery Furniture).

1950's - Automation starts coming into play. Hunter and P&B molding systems come onto the molding floors. Before this time molding was done on the running floor, by true men. The running floors were long and had rows of sand from one end to the other. These men were paid by the piece, “piece work”. The more they produced (that is the item made to the very end as a sellable product) the more money they made. They would work as fast as they could until 8 hours was up, or until they ran out of sand and “hit the wall” on the other end of the running floor. The average was approximately 250 molds in 8 hours, 300 in 8 hours for smaller molds and 180 for larger molds. The largest molds were Sugar Kettles typically 20 gallons in size. A good man could mold 30-40 of these in a day. In the South these were used primarily for laundry and rendering lard in the fall. (One man started buying them and made Barbeques out of them. That man called them Cook-N-Tools). After making the molds, the molders would have to fill their molds with the molten iron. A hard, tough, yet skilled job. After automation, less skilled craftsman were needed and piece work started dying out, probably along with things like; molder's marks and pattern marks, which originally had been used to identify which molder had made what item and who got paid for casting that item.

1954 - Century line starts, named by General Manager, S.J. Price Sr., “Made to last 100 years!” taking the place of the Red Mountain line. ASW's label continues.

1957 - Atlanta Stove Works, Foundry-Closed. BS&R continues to produce products under both the ASW and BS&R names. ASW's labeled line continues. This building was for other endeavors, bending steel for gas heaters and even including a try at furniture, (Bolling Hall furniture).

1959 - S.J. Price Sr., General Manager of BS&R retires after serving for 50 years (1909-1959). October 10 Saunders Jones II [son of Bolling Jones Jr. (II)] becomes the GM at BS&R.

1960-1969 - Saunders Jones II Vice President & General Manager of BS&R

1966 - The first of the automated molding machines installed, DISA-Matics. (A vertical molding machine that had the sand stored above in a hopper). With this machine a mold could be made every 15 seconds. Tab and bolted on knob handles on lids were introduced with the first DISA-Matics as the protruding finger technology had not yet been perfected. (Protruding finger technology refers to the curved finger-like handle on a lid. Sand is packed around that finger on the lid pattern, the finger is retracted back into the lid and the pattern is removed from the sand mold leaving a looped handle void to fill with molten iron). Teflon on Cast Iron first appears, first Wagner with their grid bottomed Teflon skillets, then BS&R copied them including the grid bottoms, shortly thereafter. This was a short-lived series as Teflon was difficult to work with and came off easily. (Makes me wonder if some of these grid bottomed pieces were never Teflon coated but simply sold plain).

1967 - 2nd DISA-Matic installed, costing \$154,000. Cornbread Skillet by Billy Washburn (Foundry Foreman) and Mike Bryan (Personal Mgr.) is created. Billy's wife wanted a way to have more crust on her cornbread. They made a pattern and poured the first divided corn bread skillet. Of course, the other guys in the foundry wanted one for their wives, so they made more. Saunders and other managers always ate at a local dinner, they asked the owner if they could leave a few there and see if they would sell. He agreed, they left some and the next day they were all gone. Production started. The patent process was started, but never completed. This became a great seller, 500,000 pieces/year were sold in 1967 and 1968. After 1968, due to competitors copying the design sales dipped to 30,000 pieces/year. Management encouraged this type activity and frequently workers/management would work on projects on the weekend.

1968 - 4 Disa-Matics now operating. BS&R would end up with a total of 8. (When they had 8, General Motors even sent their experts to BS&R so they would have an idea on how to set up the ones they (GM) were purchasing). It was within this time-frame with this massive increase in production capacity that GHC, who owned both Wagner & Griswold, contacted BS&R about making their cookware for them. This deal never went through.

1969-1983 - Saunders Jones II becomes President of BS&R

1970's - The Arab Oil Embargo. During this time, everything petroleum based rocketed upwards in price. The demand for wood/coal burning stoves also rocketed upwards. Foundries were unable to keep up with demand. New foundries opened to try to fill this void. Even BS&R with all their capacity could not fill all the orders they received for wood/coal burning stoves. Reportedly there was a 2-year waiting list on some orders. Stores would try to bribe the warehousemen to sell them stoves. The demand was that high. The production of cookware dropped as the resources went to trying to fill this flood of stove orders. Downside to these "happy times" is when the embargo ended, foundries were left with high capacity, bloated payrolls, large stockpiles of materials (that had also increased in price during the "rush" and then dropped) and now, no demand. Foundries that had been full of life, folded. This was the last hurrah for stove foundries.

1973 - Bolling Jones Jr. (II) dies, his son, Saunders Jones II becomes President of ASW & BS&R.

1975 - New melt facility with a holding furnace built. First melt from this facility was September 26

1976 - Lady Bess line (wood handles) introduced runs through 1984. (TM Filed, 1977, TM Registered 1978, Cancelled 1984). The mark H-1 is first seen cast on items.

1977 - A&B Parts Division created as a parts depot for ASW and BS&R stoves and heaters. November 15, Hugh Rushing joins BS&R. (A&B stood for Atlanta & Birmingham.)

1979 - 8B (Old #7) Skillet, 10-1/4" diameter, appears in a price guide, February (Hugh Rushing). This allowed 2 skillets to be on one Disa-matic pattern, doubling production. **October 5** the labels were rotated 180°. This idea came from Cleo Moreman. Originally the label was placed to be easily read when the cookware was sold from a shelf and the customer picked up the skillet by the handle. By now a good portion of their cookware was displayed on racks and hung by pegs. This rotation would have the labels in the proper position for hanging from a rack.

1980's - BS&R hit with multiple lawsuits over their gas heaters and carbon monoxide. A massive, think expensive, recall was begun. "...the gas heater recall including our finding out that draft hoods had been bent while stacked in storage while we waited the CPSC's threat to ban unvented heaters. When these heaters were miss-installed, the products of combustion, including CO were released. While there were lawsuits, the CPSC voted a finding of "no significant" defect due to the impressiveness of our recall efforts. Over 98% of the heaters sold were found and repaired with new draft hoods. Efforts included Spanish language posters on telephone poles in parts of Texas where large numbers of heaters sold, the first time such a thing had been done. That was one of the major projects which I was proud to have worked on." (Hugh Rushing) During this time liability insurance was also skyrocketing and the coverage falling. The demand for wood/coal stoves was low, most of the Jones family were in banking and other ventures, and sold when the Wisely Group offered to buy their shares.

1984 - Majority of Shares sold to Wisely Group, Oscar Wisely becomes President. Saunders Jones II remains on as Executive VP. Inventory and other assets were sold to finance this buyout.

1986 - December 31, the legal name of Atlanta Stove Works D.B.A. Birmingham Stove and Range Company is changed to A&B Foundry. (The trademarks; ASW, BS&R, Century were still used/retained). The new focus was to be more on commercial/jobber castings.

****1987** - Martin purchases A&B Foundry's (ASW D.B.A. BS&R) gas heater, wood and coal stove patterns and jigs. BS&R and Martin had both made gas heaters, but as liability insurance costs continued to climb (one year the insurance rates climbed from \$285,000 to \$800,000) Martin and BS&R had come together. BS&R had the larger capacity so they made the heaters for themselves and for Martin and the two split the insurance costs. Both distributed the heaters using their own networks, and their own brand names. BS&R was primarily a stove and range foundry that also made cookware. The stoves and heaters were the bread and butter for this company. The loss of this income, in spite of the expensive gas heater recall may have been the beginning of the end.

1988 - Con Brio line introduced using the old Lady Bess patterns, but now with ceramic handles, selling primarily on the west coast. Saunders Jones II retires, but stays on as a consult (unpaid).

1989 - Hugh Rushing and Frank Martin create the "Handy Dan Cornstick Pan". They created this pan by cutting two 7S corn stick pans and welding them together with a aebleskiver handle. This handle allowed the cook to place and remove the pan from the oven without having the oven mitt get in the cornbread. May 25, A&B Foundry begins participation in the Alabama, State Board of Corrections Work Release program.

****1991** - May 31, A&B Foundry (Birmingham Stove & Range Co.), Closed.

Disa-matics are purchased by Robinson Foundry in Alexander City; AL. Robinson ran A&B (BS&R) labeled cookware using those purchased DISA-Matics and A&B (BS&R) patterns. Robinson did NOT sell any of the cookware, it was still labeled Century. A&B (BS&R) purchased the cookware from Robinson Foundry. (Robinson Iron was split off of Robinson Foundry and Robinson Foundry later closed). A&B (BS&R) sold the cookware. In June, Hugh Rushing leaves company (VP Marketing for BS&R/A&B) for the Cookware Manufacturers' Association becoming their Executive Vice-President in 1992. At this time, Lodge is casting their; Lawn Furniture, Potpourri pots and the Sportsman Grill for A&B (BS&R).

1992 - February 21 Saunders Jones II leaves A&B Foundry

****1993** - January 6, A&B Foundry (BS&R) took Chapter 7 Bankruptcy. BS&R relinquishes patterns of the Sportsman Grill to Lodge to satisfy debt. Lodge has the Sportsman Grill TM assigned to them in 1994.

Questions or Comments are welcome, and may be posted on the Wagner & Griswold Society FB page or Forum

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/56688022987/>

<http://www.griswoldandwagner.com/cgi-bin/yabb/YaBB.pl?board=ASWBSRPublic>

Main Sources;

Saunders Jones II, President of BS&R (1973-1984), Exec. VP (1984-1988)

Clee Moreman, Sales Manager- BS&R.

Mr. Blankenship

Hugh Rushing, VP Marketing BS&R/A&B (1977-1991),

Saunders Jones Jr.

Joe Robinson, Son of the Founder of Robinson Foundry, later President/Owner of the same, working there from 1960-2006.

Researchers; Dwayne Henson, Cheryl Watson, Tom Penkava

Compiled by Dwayne Henson

FUTURE COMPILATIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE, AS RESEARCHER(S) TIME PERMITS. Such as: CITATION COMPILATION LIST FOR THIS TIMELINE, IN DEPTH INDIVIDUAL HISTORICAL BIOGRAPHIES OF PERSONS INVOLVED IN THE HISTORY OF THE BUSINESS AS IT EVOLVED, EXTENSIVE NEWSPAPER & TRADE PUBLICATION ARTICLES, AND MUCH MORE!

As with any endeavor to research and compile historical information, it just takes a bit of time, and it should be expected that some dates and information will change over time, as more resources become available.