

# Dairying 100 years ago

Farms had tools made from iron and steel.

There was steam to power machines, then petrol power and later electricity. Tractors slowly replaced horses to work farms. Small farm machinery was often adapted from horse drawn equipment.

Farmers improved their pastures, with some fertilisers being used, and some irrigation systems to water pastures.

There were railways and trucks to transport milk to market.

Refrigeration began to be used, first in milk factories and then decades later in houses.

# Consumer packaging— Laurel Butter

Camden Park Estate made butter at Menangle from the 1890s to 1948 under its own brand of Laurel butter.

Laurel butter showcased the move to modern packaging and branding of dairy products.

Mass-produced wooden butter boxes replaced butter casks made by coopers.

Laurel butter was exported in branded boxes to Britain.

Laurel butter was sold in Sydney shops, packaged ready for the kitchen table in Laurel wrappers.

Article image: Camden News, 19 August 1948.



## MENANGLE NEWS.

### Butter Factory Closes.

After being in operation since 1895 Camden Park Estate Pty. Ltd. has recently closed the butter making section of their Central Creamery and in future cream from these districts will go to the Dairy Farmers Milk Co. factory at Moss Vale for treatment. This change has been brought about by the diminishing quantities of cream available for butter making due to the ever increasing demand for milk for the City trade.

Before the demand for fresh milk became so great, butter played a big part in the dairyfarming scheme of the district, and the factory production was as high as seventeen tons per week, and "Laurel" brand butter held a popular place in the city trade, also at times a good deal was purchased for the London markets.

# Consumer packaging— milk bottles

In 1920 Camden Park Estate established the Camden Vale Milk Company which sold milk under its own brand.

Before milk bottles, milk was delivered to houses by a milkman who poured it from a tank into a billycan or jug.

In 1925 milk was sold in bottles in Sydney for the first time. They were wide-necked milk bottles with a cardboard top.

From 1935 narrow-necked milk bottles with foil caps replaced the old, unhygienic wide-necked bottles.

Cartons and plastic milk bottles have now replaced glass.



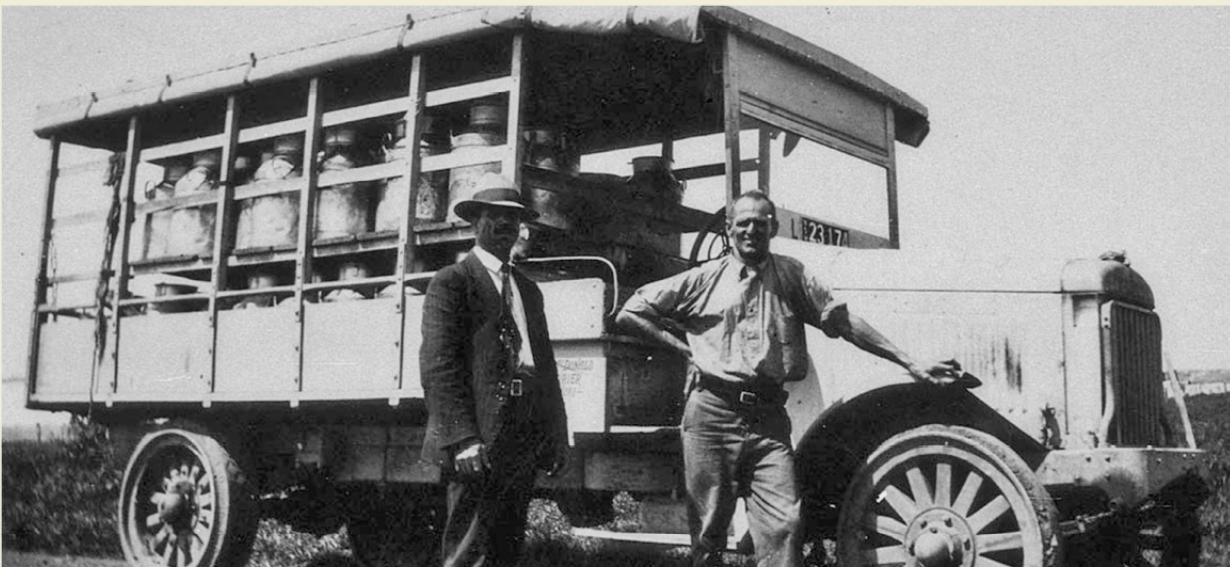
# Transport revolution— horse to truck

In the 1900s, transport of milk cans from farm to factory changed from horse and cart to motor vehicles.



**A farmer takes his can of cream to the road for pick up by horse and cart. Farmers used to put their cans of milk or cream on roadside stands to await pickup.**

**Right: A horse-drawn wagon taking cans of cream to a butter factory.**



# Transport revolution— cans to tankers

By 1970 milk cans and roadside stands were obsolete. Farms now stored their milk in large stainless steel refrigerated vats.

Milk tankers called at each farm. They pumped this milk from the vat onto the truck and took it to the factory.



**Left: A refrigerated milk vat on a dairy farm.**

**Right: A Camden Vale tanker unloading milk collected in bulk from farms, c1970.**



Photo: Laurie Anderson

**Bulk milk tankers leaving the Camden depot by steam train in the 1960s. The milk was taken to Darling Harbour for distribution in Sydney.**

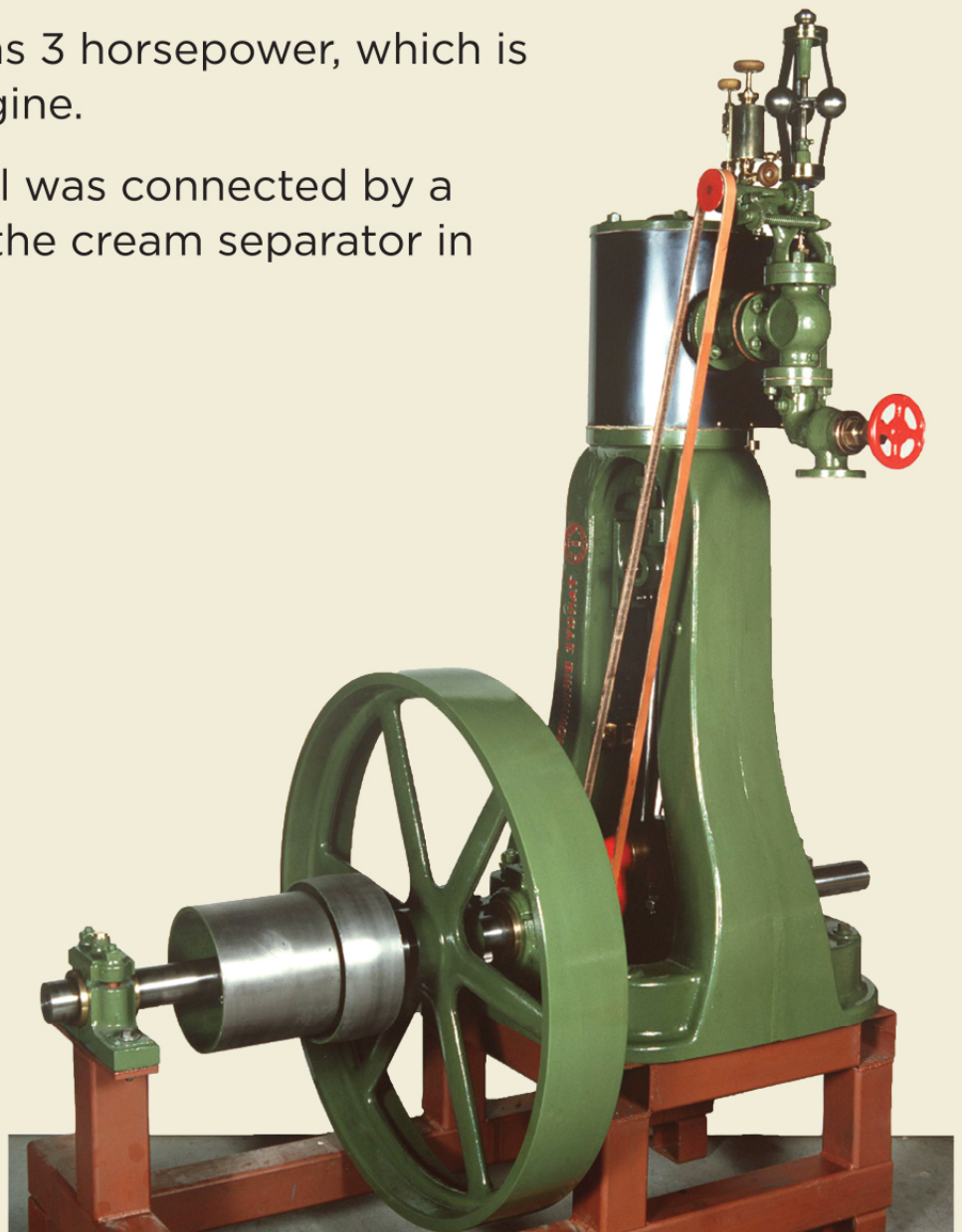
# Engine room for the creamery

In 1898 the coach house was converted to a creamery powered by steam.

The steam engine and boiler were housed in this room. You can still see the mounting blocks for the steam engine, and the hole in the roof where the boiler's chimney went through it.

The steam engine was 3 horsepower, which is small for a steam engine.

The engine's flywheel was connected by a large leather belt to the cream separator in the next room.



**A vertical steam engine like this one drove this creamery.**