



George Methven was born in Dundee and from an early age enjoyed watching engineers at work. At age 12 he was apprenticed to the engineering trade, then worked in mills in Ireland, until at age 28, he became foreman of the Duttonbrook Ironworks in Liverpool.

He emigrated to New Zealand in 1874 as an assisted passenger on the *Corona*, and for several years worked as foreman for Reid & Gray in Oamaru. In 1886 he began his own business in the back of his home in Goodall Street, Caversham, producing farm implements, fireplaces and other goods from ironcastings that he carried home on his back.

The business grew, and after 10 years Methven leased a section in Crawford Street, with a substantial brick building and plant, producing agricultural, woodworking and dairy factory machinery.

Methven had a special interest in equipment for lessening work in the home, and began specializing in taps and other light castings for plumbers, a popular copper boiler that did not stain clothes, baths, boiler frames and other household goods. 'Methvenise your home' advised the advertisements.

After 1910 the factory moved to a new location in Andersons Bay Road where it grew to cover more than a hectare and employed over 100 mechanics, engineers and artisans. In the 1990s the factory was shifted to Auckland and the buildings and land sold.

Methven used his mechanical enthusiasm in private life, building the first locally-made motor car in Dunedin in 1903. He retired from active involvement in business in 1909, and after the death of his wife in 1920, he moved to Wellington to live with a married daughter, where he died on 2 February 1928, in his 90th year, survived by two daughters and three sons.

He is buried in Dunedin's Southern Cemetery, next to his wife Jessie, marked with a lovely marble headstone which unfortunately has been broken by vandals.