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At the same time, Mayor Crowe pointed out that he didn't think water had anything to do with high insurance rates, that there was plenty of water for domestic and fire. Still, "the insurance companies have borne hard on Sydney but I am told the town is partly to blame. We were told to proclaim a brick district before the boom got well underway"--this would be a kind of fire wall--"... but met with little sympathy from most citizens... affected.... We have now a fire limit which prohibits the erection of any but brick and stone buildings between Dorchester and Wentworth streets." This decision seems to have been made only in the previous few days--it was resisted on the basis of cost and inconvenience, and a smaller district than first desired was proclaimed--certainly nothing had been built under this new decision. The mayor continued: "Meantime, however, some buildings which are no better than firetraps have been built on this street, with the result that insurance in those blocks is hard to get and very expensive." Not 10 days later: "TODAY'S BLAZE The Most Disastrous Fire in the History of Sydney." An insurance man called it "hardly unexpected," and pointed out that every new house connected tended to "weaken the force." The newspaper insisted it wasn't true that for two hours of the fire "there was 'not a drop of water.'" The mayor tried to explain: the reservoir was not dry and it was not true the steel company's main was cut off for repairs. Actually, "the water had been turned off between Wentworth and Pitt Streets for the purpose of making a connection--an event that might occur at any time." Two days later the town worked out a water deal with the steel company. The company was to furnish 9 million gallons a year at \$400. Any extra would cost 4% cents every thousand gallons. The company would pay \$10 for the meter. TEXT CONTINUED BELOW At 8:30 on the evening of Saturday, February 2nd, 1901, "the slumbering energies" were awakened in the blast furnace of the Dominion Iron and Steel Company, and heat for the first time applied to those monsters of production which will yield the first manufactured iron in the history of Cape Breton. The ceremony was simple and quiet • in fact it may be said there was an absence of ceremony altogether. (This may have been because of the death of Queen Victoria about one week before.) The modern method was followed in charging the furnace. An immense altar of wood was built at the base, upon which~was piled a quantity of blank coke, and then in regular order and proportion stratas of coke, iron ore and limestone. This fabric being completed. Miss Edith Gettings, sister by adoption of Mr. McCreary, superintendent of the works, applied the first match, and the flame leaped merrily.... As to what hour and date the first product of pig iron would appear, (McCreary) stated that it depended altogether upon conditions, and that the present state of the atmosphere was unfavourable to rapid production.... (He) was safe in hoping that by Tuesday afternoon at the latest the crucible would be tapped. (February 6th they reported the first cast of pig iron.) In that product is the budding materialization of the hopes and efforts of the gentlemen who have invested their capital in the mighty enterprise, and of the citizens of Sydney who



have encouraged its establishment. The crowning incident of the day was the crowning of the molten iron. This work, which was witnessed by quite a number of people, was not accomplished without much labor and danger, not only to the workmen but to the spectators as well. After the bar was driven well in, it was by relays of muscular young men, who wielded huge sledgehammers, withdrawn. A sudden flash, a sullen roar, and the hoarse shouts of the men proclaimed the "open door." Out rushed the molten mass, and within the space, probably of a minute, the moulds or pigs fronting the furnace were filled. "I've seen worse results than that," Moxham told Mr. Coffin. remarked Mr. "Yes, very much," replied the gentleman addressed. By February 11th Sydney was told that Mr. Whitney "is pleased as a boy with a new sled over the success of the first casting of pig iron." (49)