

Brass Founders with a view of the Brass House in Broad Street, Birmingham and Miscellaneous Businesses

Seven Brass Founders are listed in the upper engraving with a view the Brass House above. The Birmingham Metal Company founded the Brass House in 1781; a consortium of local brass founders set up to free themselves from suppliers who raised the price of copper in 1780. The engraving shows the outside of the building. Next to the works is a canal. Though the water cannot be seen, a raising device is shown which would enable the movement of goods up and down the canal bank. Heating zinc (calamine) and copper together produces brass. The toy industry was a major consumer of brass, for buckles, buttons and badges. Horse and carriage fittings were made from the product as were whistles, taps, and plumbing equipment. By the early 19th century, Birmingham had become the most important centre for brass making in Britain.

Beneath this advert a collection of business cards show the variety of trades in the local economy; most have a direct link with brass making.