

## **Early Modern Cast Iron Products in Sri Lanka**

**Kusumsiri Kodithuwakku**

Sigiriya Project, Central cultural Fund, Sigiriya.

---

### **Introduction**

With the advent of the Industrial Revolution, cast iron which is a variety of iron has been used for production purposes, is placed on high recognition. Cast iron contains a very high concentration of Carbon composition (2.5% - 5.0%) among different varieties of iron compounds. This metal which take a crystalline form is very fragile. But this metal could easily be moulded in creative activity. It has an ability to withstand different environmental conditions and a very low level of deterioration. There is no destruction by rusting, other than when broken into small pieces.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century cast iron has been used as a favourite medium in creative industry and there is a parallel in similar creative work during the same period in Sri Lanka. Most of the cast iron products seen in Sri Lanka have been those that have been produced in Great Britain and later imported. Most of these could be seen in Colombo City and takes a very special place in various productions made out of cast iron. There had been a proliferation of small scale cast iron products to areas outside Colombo. Though they expounded these projects as works of art, many of them were entwined in aspects of contemporary life in society. Even today some of these productions are being used in our day today life. These cast iron productions could divided into following simple categories and thus be described as follows.

### **Building and Architectural Decorations.**

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century cast iron had been used liberally in various building constructions. We could identity two special constructions in Colombo Town. They are Edinburgh Market and old railway station. The foundation stone for the Edinburgh Market was laid on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1870 by Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh,