

HEATING STOVES

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The cast iron stove is the one household item that had more effect than any other on the lives of Americans during the 19th century. In fact, its effect was felt not only on the homefront, but also on canal boats and railroad passenger cars, too. Stoves helped to increase mobility. Likewise, stoves helped to decrease the amount of labor needed to heat a house.

Prior to the 1830s, the options for heating a dwelling were almost limited to the traditional fireplace. Houses heated by fireplaces were often quite cold, because 90 percent of the heat went up the chimney with the smoke. Fireplaces also consumed great quantities of wood.

By the 1830s, there was a greater requirement to heat households, businesses and public buildings. This also demanded a cheaper form of fuel, because forests were beginning to be depleted. By the mid-19th century, coal began to replace wood. Locally, coal was shipped in on the canal and railroad. Thus, with the shift to coal for heating, the popularity of cast iron stoves greatly increased.

The first stove invented by Benjamin Franklin in 1740 was not much more than a fireplace which he called the "Pennsylvania Fireplace." From this crude idea, many technological improvements came about.


In 1816, James Wilson of Poughkeepsie patented a stove similar to Franklin's, which he called the "Franklin Stove." It radiated more heat and used less wood than the traditional masonry fireplace.

Consequently, by the 1830s, stove-making had begun to flourish in America. This was due in part to improved smelting furnaces, which yielded a more highly refined iron. This allowed for thinner stove plates and tighter-

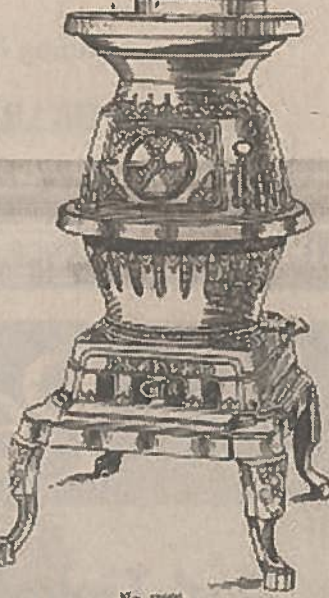
HEATING STOVES.
Firewood.

No. 1199. The **Elwood Heating Stove**, for wood only, a well made stove, mounted with brass iron body. Has full air inlet footed and two covering doors under wide top.

Length of fire		Height.	Weight.	Price.
No.	Chamber.			
19	19 in.	45 in.	37 lbs.	\$4.00
22	22 in.	47 in.	40 lbs.	5.00
25	25 in.	49 in.	43 lbs.	6.00



No. 1199.



No. 1200.

DUKE CANNON STOVE.
For hard or soft coal.

No. 1200. Four sizes. The Duke is the best and most complete oilless stove of its class in the market. It is a powerful heater at a very low price. It has a sliding feed door, the top is arranged so that a drum can be attached if desired.

No.	Height.	Weight.	Price.
12	30 in.	35 lbs.	\$3.00
15	33 in.	40 lbs.	4.00
18	36 in.	45 lbs.	5.00
21	39 in.	50 lbs.	6.00

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Stoves could be molded in a variety of designs that reflected Americans styles and aesthetics.

During the early 19th century, the box stove was very popular. It was constructed of six plates, stood on detachable legs and was easily placed wherever you wanted it. The stovepipe, itself, was often used to heat bedrooms in upper stories of the house by simply having the pipe run through the ceiling above and then into the chimney on the second floor level.

One local stovemaking was Norman Bedell, who built a foundry along the canal in Albion in the late 1820s. By the late 1830s, he was in partnership with a Richard Berry; in 1848, Richard G. Berry, the son of Berry and son-in-law of Norman Bedell, was also involved. By 1851, the Bedell and Berry Co. had reached a production level of 20 cast iron stoves per day at their foundry.

This business enterprise also employed 20 men that year. By the mid-1850s, 75 to

Detroit. Naturally, it was easy to ship in pig iron on the canal, cast it and then ship out the finished merchandise.

It is interesting that, although the kitchen fireplace and brick baking oven were taken over with a cooking range, home designers still kept the traditional fireplace in the parlor for aesthetic reasons. Albert Bolles wrote in his 1879 "Industrial History Of The United States," that "The

open fire was the true center of the home life, and it seemed perfectly impossible to everybody to bring up a family around the stove."

In the mid-19th century, foundries were producing stoves in a price range from \$5 to \$25, not unlike the one shown here. While this doesn't seem like much, we must remember that a common laborer at that time period was earning \$1 a day. Records of the Universalist Church at Childs indicate that in 1877, they bought three cords of dry wood from Mr. Comstock for \$1.50 per cord. Their cord was also a true cord of 4x4x8 feet.

Setting up the stove every fall was quite a chore and a test of patience. Many people years ago would take down the pipe to clean it and move out the stove for the fair weather months. Putting it all back together again was not an easy task. After World War II, people didn't want to bother with several stoves in various rooms to heat their homes, and consequently, central heating became normal.

Locally, we do find central heating being used in the mid-19th century in finer churches and homes of the well-to-do. One example is our county courthouse, which was originally heated with two furnaces in 1858.

Our illustration is from the 1897 Sears Roebuck catalogue.