

A New Era in the Country Kitchen

By Alfred T. Child and George Boynton Child in The Delineator

One of the most pressing needs in the country kitchen is for an efficient summer stove, one that will lighten the burden of hot weather cooking as effectively for the country woman as the gas stove has done for the woman in the city.

The oil stove of the early type was a very poor appliance for cooking. Only part of the oil was burned economically, and some of it was given off from the burners as soot, which stuck to the walls and the equipment of the kitchen. Now the wonderful improvement in the burners has made the combustion of the oil far more efficient. By bringing more oxygen to the burners under the right conditions, the flame is converted into a clear, blue flame of high heating capacity.

A Stove at Little Cost

The first cost of these stoves is very moderate. The expense of operation per burner is only three-quarters of a cent to one cent and one half per hour, according to the height of the flame and the efficiency of the burner. In obtaining these figures, fifteen cents was taken as the price of oil per gallon. In the best stoves a gallon of oil will last from twenty to twenty-five hours for a single burner. City gas at \$1.25 per 1,000 cubic feet costs 21 cents per hour for the standard top burner. Electricity at 10 cents per kilowatt hour costs 5 cents an hour for a six-inch hot plate.

These oil stoves are available to every woman who wishes to find a good cookstove for the summer season. For those who merely spend their summers in the country, they perfectly meet every need. Besides the cookstove there is now on the market a water heater with oil burners, to furnish hot water for the summer household.

It is well for families who spend all the year in the country, especially if they have no heating system, to use the oil stoves to supplement a good coal or wood range. In summer the bulk of the cooking can be done on the oil stove, and in winter it can be used for all emergency cooking. This will be found a great convenience when the fire is banked for the afternoon, and one wants to make afternoon tea or heat the radiator for the fireless cooker.

Oil Stove and Fireless Cooker

We have often been told by women that they have not found the fireless cooker a resource, if one must depend on the kerosene stove to heat the radiators. This may be true of some of the cheaper stoves. But the best blue flame stoves will heat a soapstone radiator hot enough to roast meat in twenty to twenty five minutes. When possible,

keep the stones on a steam radiator or on the back of the coal range when not in use. Cover them with an inverted agate-ware plate or asbestos pad. These two points are time savers.

The lack of surface on which to move utensils about when cooking, may be obviated by having a good zinc-covered shelf close to the stove, where the portable oven may be kept when not in use. The oven may be warmed over one of the burners, and set on the shelf to receive food to be kept warm till time to serve. A hot fireless cooker stone will serve the same purpose, and will require only one burner to heat it. Where there is a coal or wood range in the kitchen, arrange if possible to place the oil stove near it. The top of the range then becomes a very convenient place on which to keep the portable oven and the utensils while cooking.

The portable ovens have recently been greatly improved. One often hears the complaint that a portable oven will not brown. Lots of them do not bake satisfactorily, yet we have tested several that bake in a perfectly satisfactory manner. We have just tested one which is exceptionally well made and well insulated. It also has a line of holes across each end, half-way up the inside of the oven. These holes allow the hot currents of air to play across the centre of the oven and tend to make the cake on the lower shelf brown nicely, and to make the one on the top shelf bake on the bottom.

This oven has another advantage. The top part of the lining is removable. It can be drawn out and pushed across the centre of the oven in place of the upper grate or second shelf. Then you have a small oven, quickly heated, requiring only a small amount of heat to operate, in which a pie or a pan of muffins can be baked for dinner or breakfast.

Country kitchens are not the only places that can profit by introducing these stoves. Oil stoves are extensively used in the small towns; in church kitchens; in small cafeterias and tea-rooms. They are used by demonstrators for the extension work of the agricultural colleges. They are practical, if protected by a simple shack of some kind, for canning clubs. They fill the greatest need in the busy farm home, where resources are fewer than in the city, and the housewife often has to carry on various industries besides the simple cooking of food.

The Care of the Stove


The care of the blue flame stoves is very simple. In the wickless type, the asbestos kindlers should be renewed every six weeks, as a general rule. Wicks in the wick stoves will last a season. A new wick should be put in about every six months if used all the year round. They come all stretched on perforated metal cylinders.

Glass reservoirs and glass indicator tubes tell the height of the oil in the supply tank. Never let the oil run out. This is especially necessary in the wick stoves. The wickless stoves require to be set perfectly level in order to have an even height of flame on each burner. Cleaning up about the stoves is made much easier if the stove is equipped with one of the new enameled drip pans, which come with one type of stove. The surface of the stove, particularly the drip pan, should be wiped off every day with a soft piece of cheesecloth kept for the purpose. Of course care must be used not to allow food to boil over on the cooking surface or into the burners. This causes trouble even with a gas stove, and the burners of an oil stove are more work to clean than the gas burner.

Manufacturers of the best oil stoves keep a full supply of wicks and repair parts, and will send them to customers promptly if the dealer does not carry them. If the lacquered surfaces become worn, the spots or the whole surface may be renewed at small expense. One firm sells a lacquer for this particular purpose. It is very easy to apply, and one small can is more than enough to go over the whole surface of the stove.


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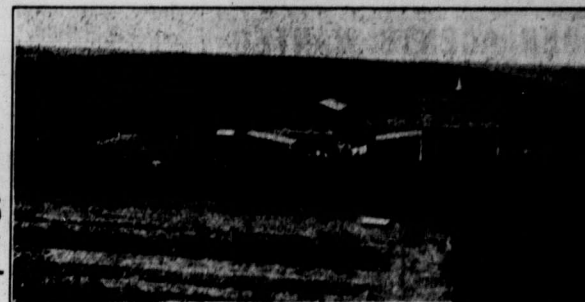
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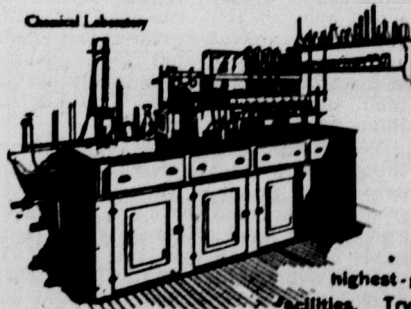
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