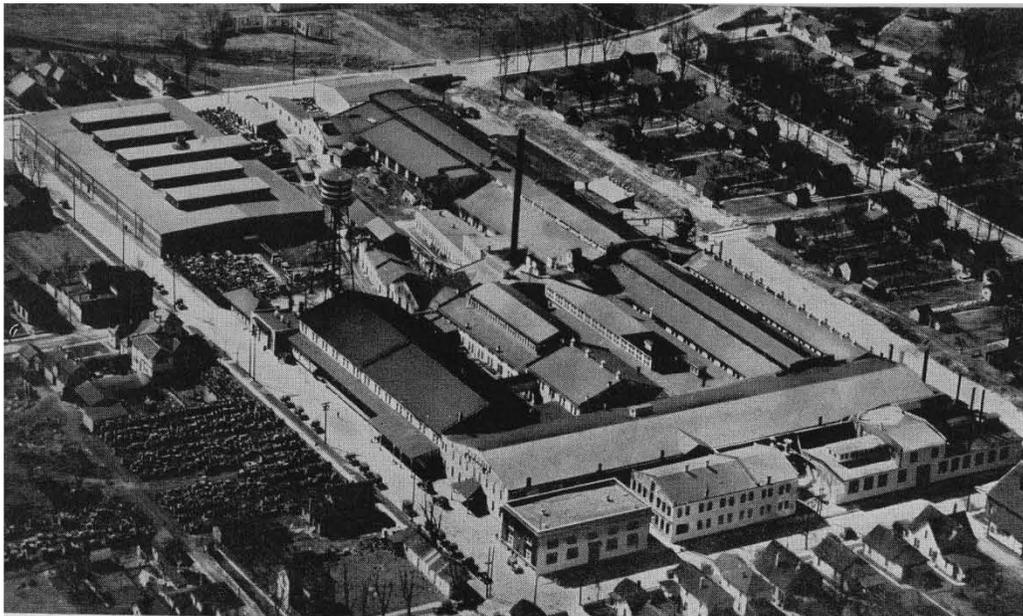


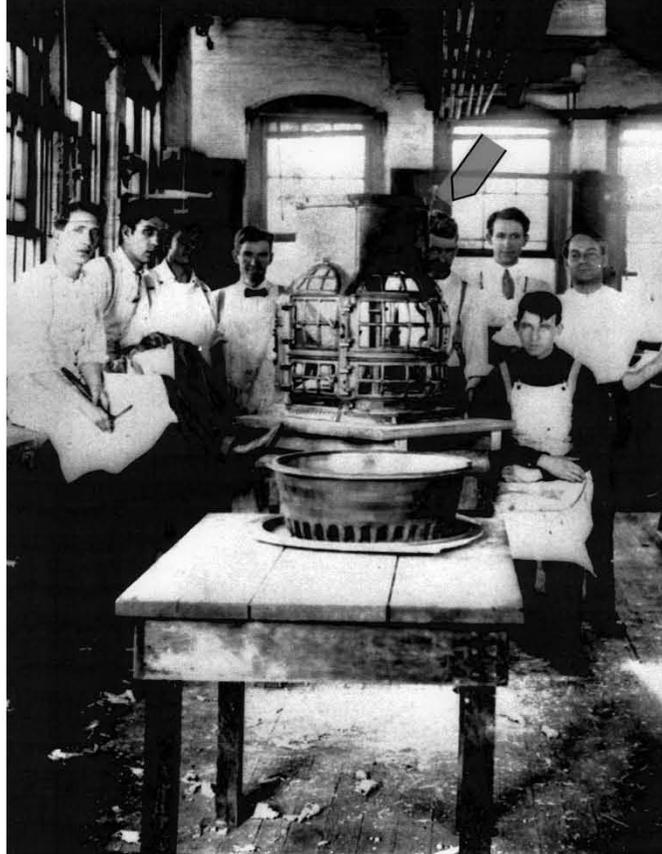
Favorite Stove and Range Company



In 1887, the Favorite Stove and Range Company moved to Piqua from Cincinnati. The new firm became the city's largest manufacturer. It was also the first new business to be brought to Piqua Board of Trade, a predecessor of the **Chamber of Commerce**. The company had a major impact on the community. Piqua became known as the "Favorite City" with several local firms also adopting Favorite as part of their name. The area west of the factory on College Street became known as Favorite Hill because houses were built on the hill for use by company employees.



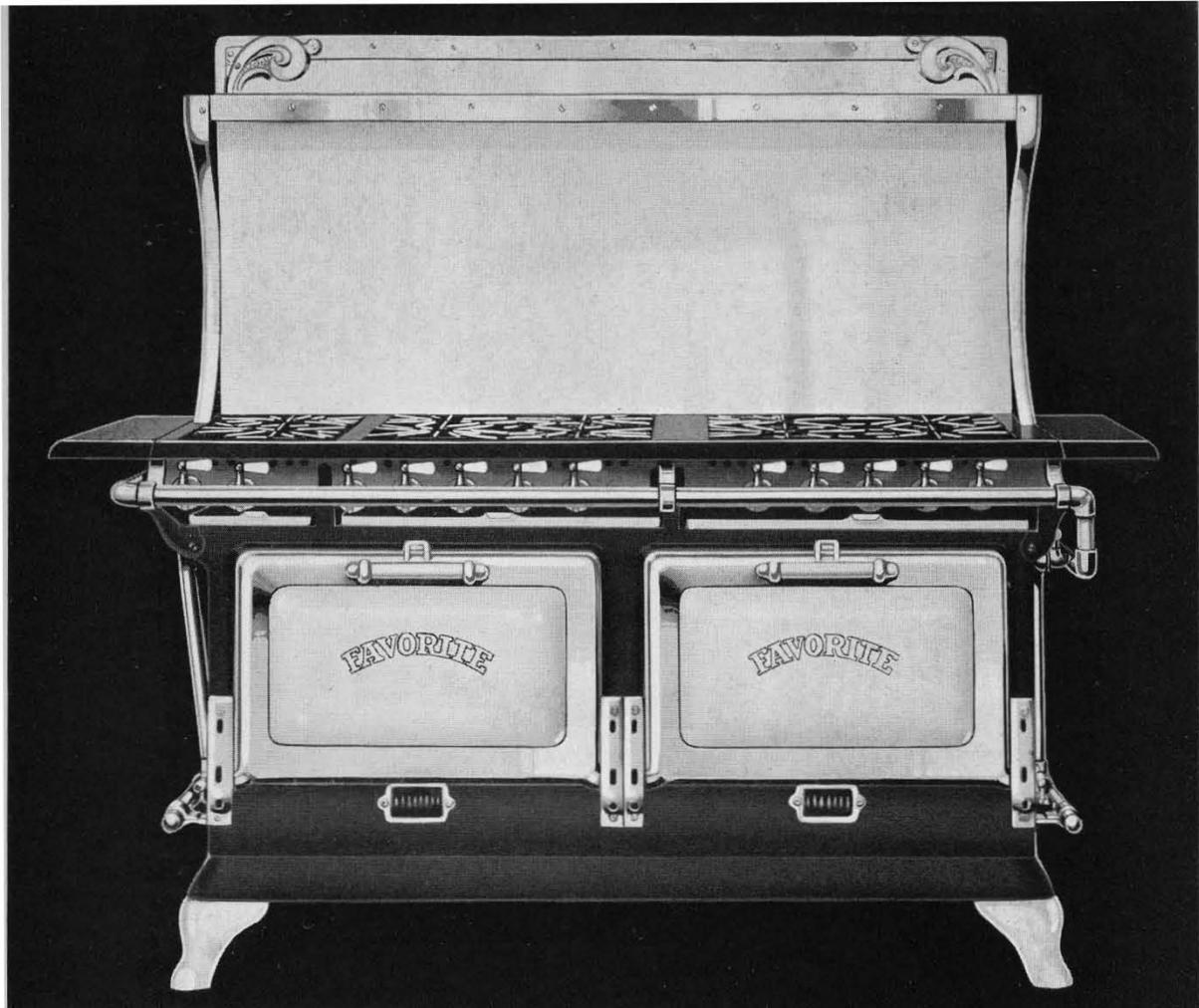
The original firm was organized in 1848 by William C. Davis and known as the W. C. Davis Company. After the Civil War, the Cincinnati firm became known as the Great Western Stove Works. In 1872, **William King Boal** purchased a partial ownership in the firm. By 1880 he had taken over the firm, renaming it the Favorite Stove Co.



Boal visited Piqua during the first week of June of 1886. On June 25 of that year, he signed a contract with the city to bring the Favorite Stove and Range Company to Piqua. The new plant was located on eight acres of land bordered by Young, Weber, and South Streets and the Hydraulic Canal (now College Street). The firm began operations on February 23, 1887 with eight brick buildings and over two hundred sixty employees. By 1896 the company had expanded to over three hundred employees and was producing in excess of fifty thousand stoves each year. A **strike** hit the firm in 1919 with demands for a twenty-five percent increase in wages for common laborers. The strike lasted eleven days. The workers may have been represented by a **Socialist union** known as the Industrial Workers of the World (Wobblies).

W. K. Boal died on January 02, 1916 and was succeeded as president by his son, **William Stanhope Boal**. Boal was president until 1923 when he became Chairman of the Board of Directors. During the next five years, the company went through three presidents until William C. Katker took over in 1928. The Great **Depression** hit the company hard. With the death of Boal on December 17, 1933, the firm reorganized and, by 1935, had been liquidated. The Foster Stove Company of Ironton, Ohio (Lawrence County) purchased the patents, patterns, dies and trade marks for the Favorite Range products at the time of the liquidation. The Foster Stove Company's Favorite Gas Ranges were sold in Piqua in c.1937 by the Atlas Gas Store, 203 North

Main Street. The store was operated by O.O. Millhouse, agent for the Atlas Fuel Gas System.



FAVORITE 112-22 HOTEL RANGE

Katker took over what was left of the business, renaming it the Favorite Manufacturing Company. The new firm produced coal and wood heating stoves, furnaces, hollow ware, gas cooking stoves and parts for old Favorite Stove & range Company items. Molding work for the new firm was handled by the Champion Foundry Company of Piqua. In 1937, Katker's company employed twenty-five moulders and iron workers at the Champion plant and a dozen or so assemblers at the Weber Street plant. After World War II, demand for Favorite products diminished and by 1958 the firm suspended operations.



The Library Archives contain only a very limited number of Favorite Stove and Range Company catalogs. It is not possible for us to determine the age of a particular stove or range by its model number.

Piqua Public Library
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