



# Support material #4

## 1909 Kitchens

For families living in the early 1900s, electricity was not available at the flick of a switch like it is now. When electricity was available, it was usually used only at night for lighting a room. Electrical appliances were gradually becoming available for household use, but were mainly limited to those who were wealthy.

One hundred years ago, the room called the 'kitchen' was used to entertain guests and usually had a large table and chairs for family members and friends. The scullery was a room usually located just off the kitchen and was used for food preparation, cooking and washing clothes.

The kitchen range was the heart of the house in the early 1900s (see the sketch below). Stove tops heated the kettle, pans, saucepans and cooked food.

The stove was heated by burning wood or coal. Heat from the fire was used to cook on the stove and to heat several ovens. Some of the heat was directed to a warming drawer that kept food warm, or to heat water.

Gas stoves were beginning to become available, but were still in the process of development.

In the 1909 kitchen, there were taps dispensing cold water but hot water had to be heated in a big pot on the stove.

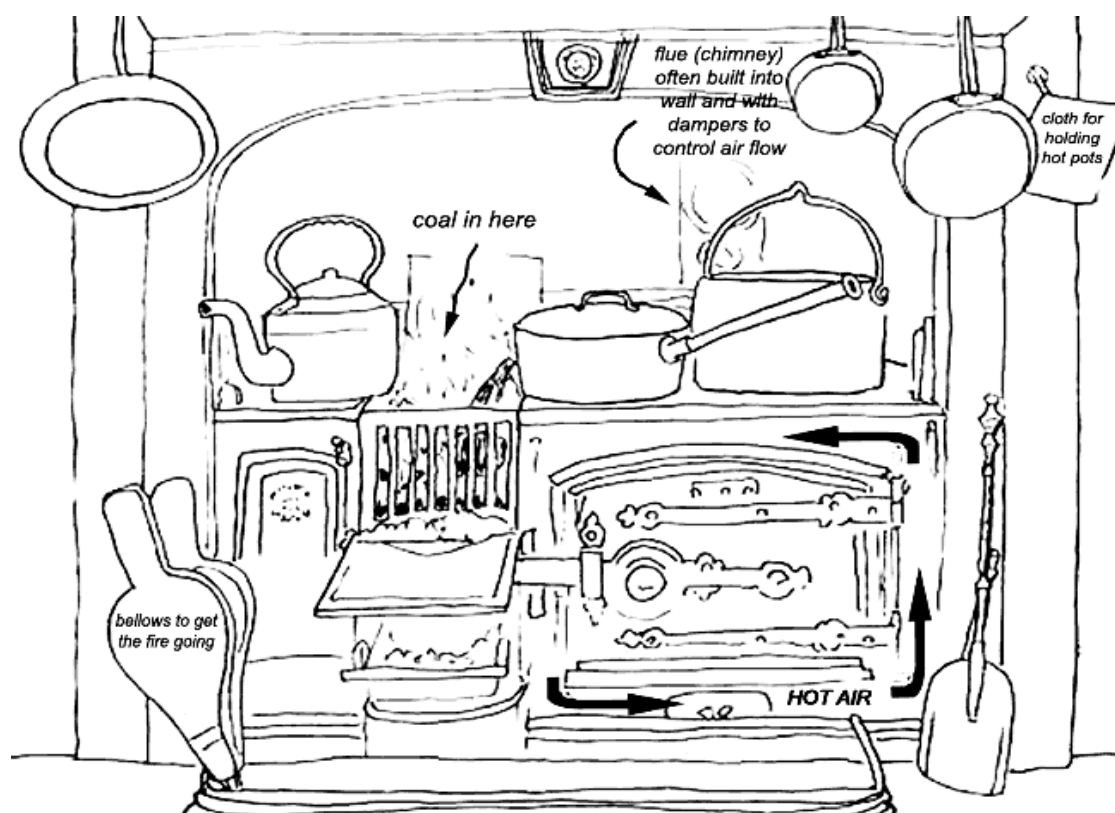
Any electrical appliances that were available were new inventions, so they needed constant monitoring and there was a risk of burns.

Because the stove worked by burning fuel in an iron chamber, touching any part of the stove's surface could produce a nasty burn. There was also the danger from open flames in ovens.

Heating water was done by boiling water in the stove-top kettle. The surfaces of both the kettle and the stove would become very hot.

### Sources

- [www.inventors.about.com](http://www.inventors.about.com)
- [www.greatachievements.com](http://www.greatachievements.com)
- [www.1900s.org.uk](http://www.1900s.org.uk)



Original sketch from Hampton, R. (2009 forthcoming). A Jersey Family, Seaflower Press, with annotations by Pat Cryer - (see [www.1900s.org.uk](http://www.1900s.org.uk)).