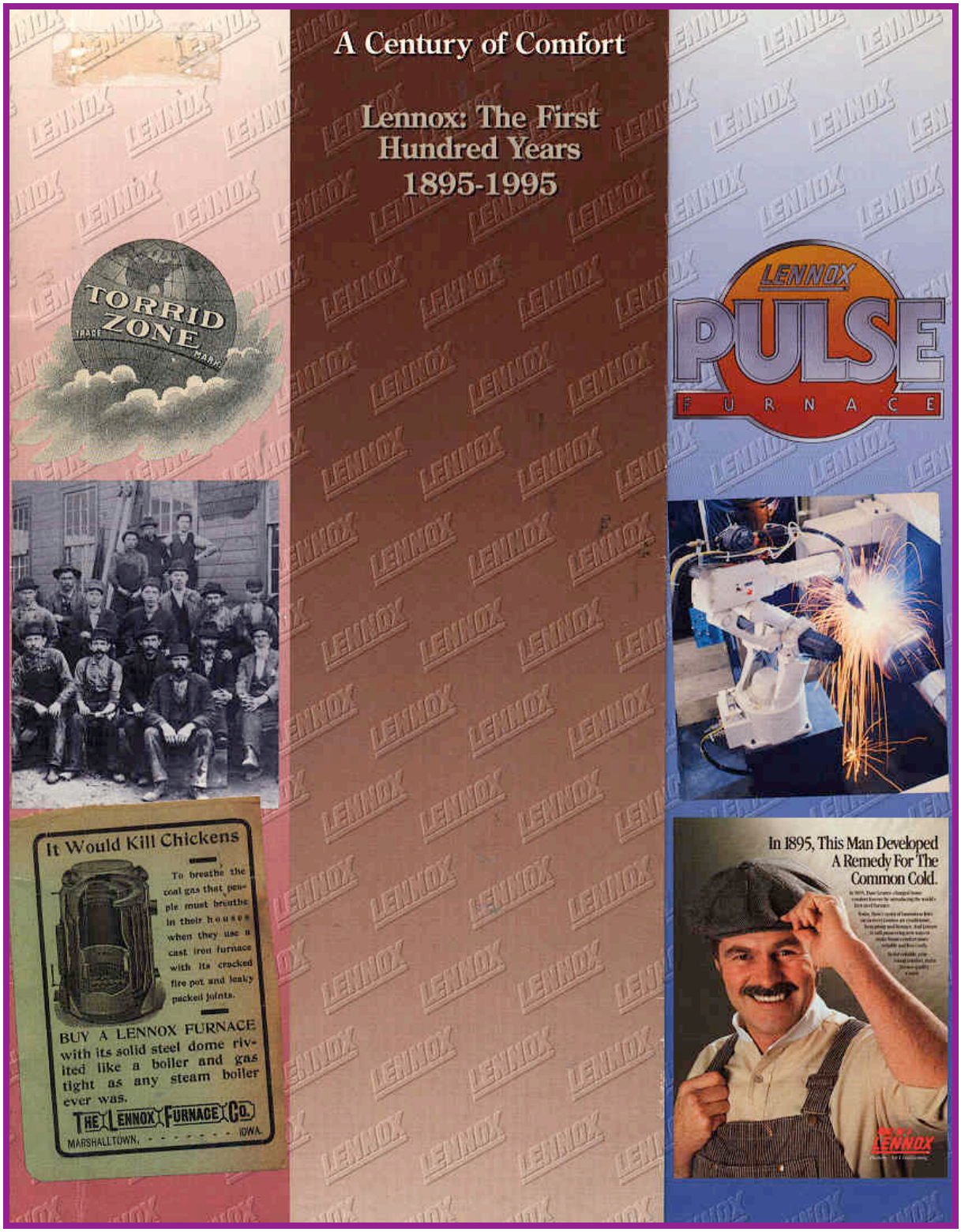
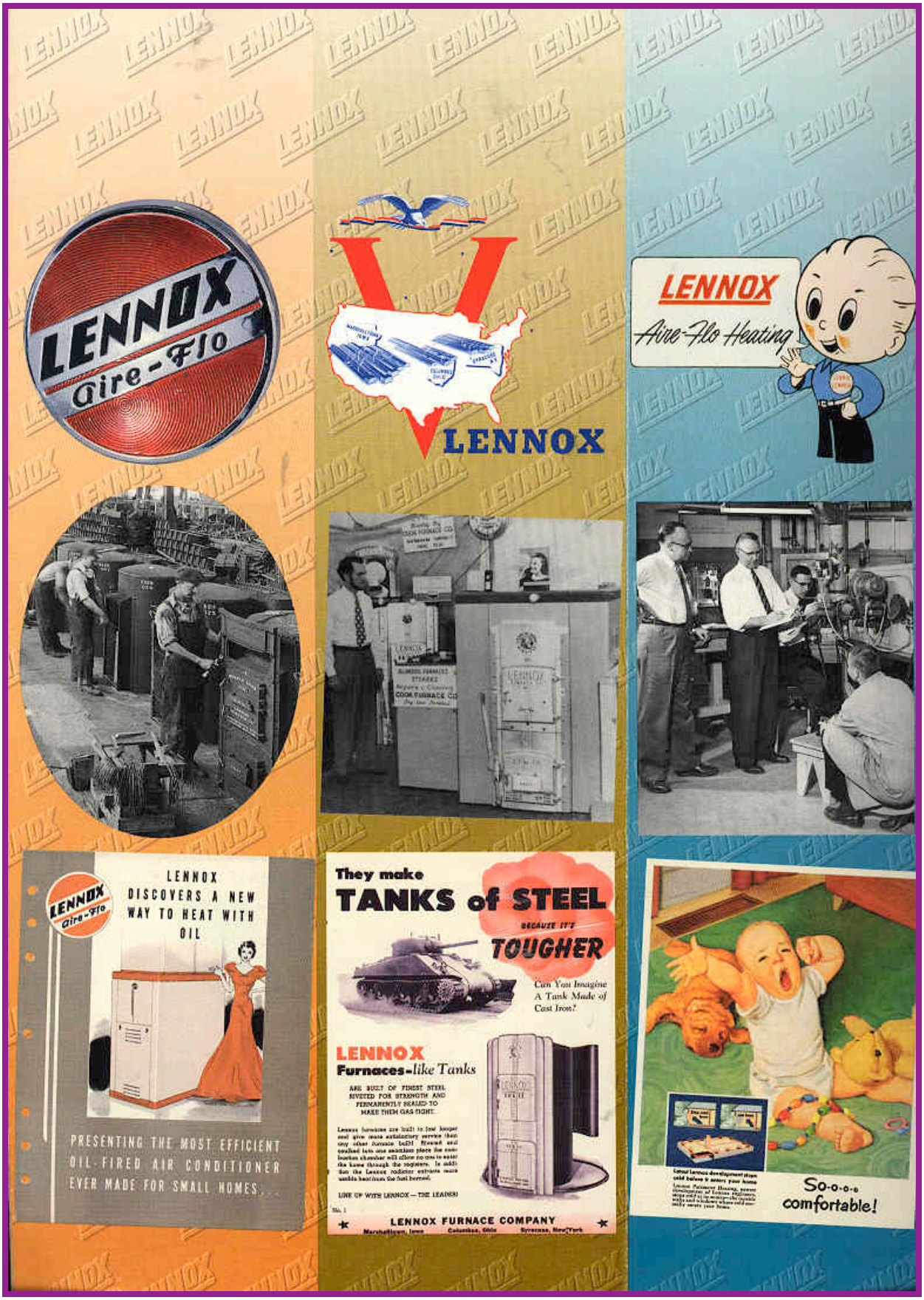
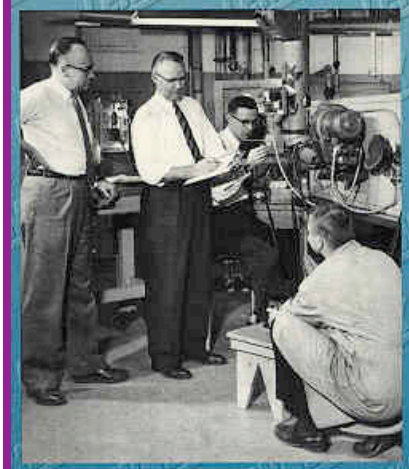


Centenary brochure


LENNOX
Aire-Flo
LENNOX
LENNOX
Aire-Flo Heating
LENNOX
DISCOVERS A NEW
WAY TO HEAT WITH
OIL
PRESENTING THE MOST EFFICIENT
OIL-FIRED AIR CONDITIONER
EVER MADE FOR SMALL HOMES...
They make
TANKS of STEEL
BECAUSE IT'S
TOUGHER
Can You Imagine
A Tank Made of
Cast Iron?
LENNOX
Furnaces-like Tanks
ARE BUILT OF FINEST STEEL
RIVETED FOR STRENGTH AND
PERMANENTLY SEALED TO
MAKE THEM GAS-TIGHT.
LINE UP WITH LENNOX — THE LEADER!
LENNOX FURNACE COMPANY
Marshalltown, Iowa Columbus, Ohio Syracuse, New York
So-o-o-o
comfortable!

LENNOX

Aire-Flo Heating



LENNOX

DURACURVE

HEAT EXCHANGER

LENNOX

PULSE

FURNACE

A Century of Comfort

Lennox: The First Hundred Years 1895-1995

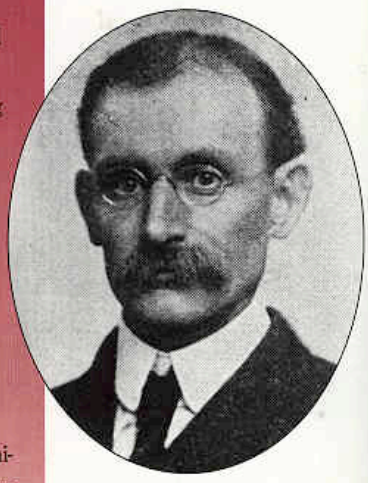
To all Lennox employees and dealers, past, present and future: for establishing, nurturing, and continuing the traditions which make the world a more comfortable place in which to live.

1. A New Heat Wave: 1895-1926

Carrying only a few personal belongings and a bag of tools, a quiet-looking young man of 26 stepped from a train at the Marshalltown, Iowa railroad station on July 4, 1881. His name was David Lennox, just in from Chicago and looking to start a machine shop. "I walked from the railroad station to the town well," he later recalled, "and water never tasted better."

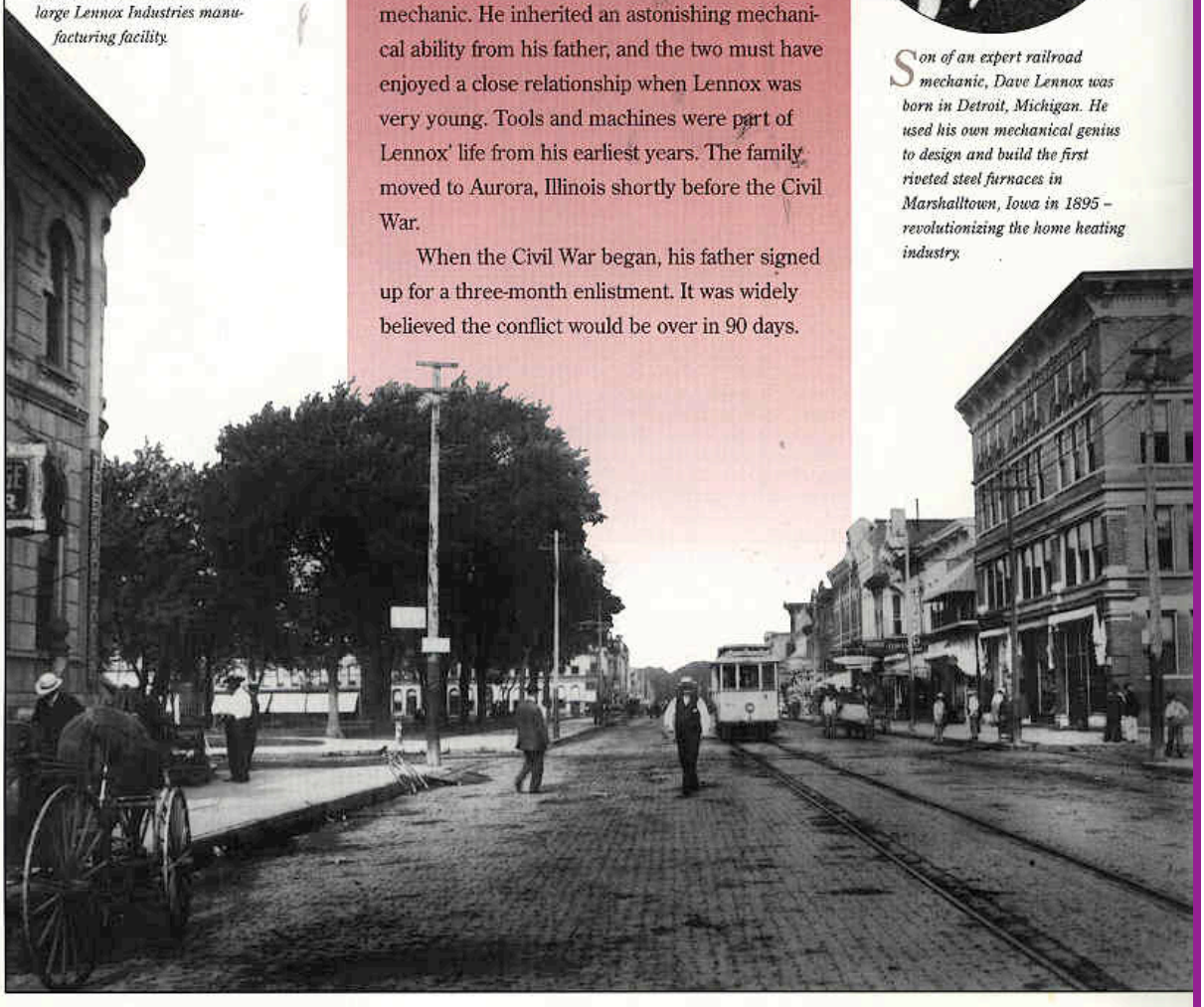
Lennox was born in Detroit, Michigan on April 15, 1855, the son of an expert railroad mechanic. He inherited an astonishing mechanical ability from his father, and the two must have enjoyed a close relationship when Lennox was very young. Tools and machines were part of Lennox' life from his earliest years. The family moved to Aurora, Illinois shortly before the Civil War.

When the Civil War began, his father signed up for a three-month enlistment. It was widely believed the conflict would be over in 90 days.



Son of an expert railroad mechanic, Dave Lennox was born in Detroit, Michigan. He used his own mechanical genius to design and build the first riveted steel furnaces in Marshalltown, Iowa in 1895 – revolutionizing the home heating industry.

Both Dave Lennox and future Lennox president and owner D.W. Norris walked these streets of Marshalltown, Iowa near the beginning of the 20th century. Birthplace of the furnace company that would later become Lennox Industries, Marshalltown is still home to a large Lennox Industries manufacturing facility.



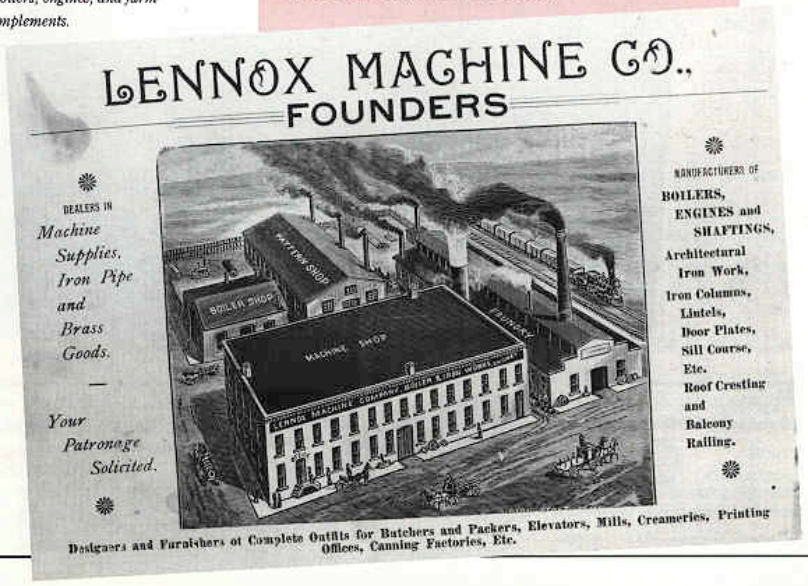
But the war dragged on, and Lennox' father re-enlisted for three years. "When my father left home the second time," he said, "I never saw him again."

The Lennox family moved to Chicago, where Lennox' mother ran a grocery store and he worked at various machine shops. As he worked, he continued to develop his almost instinctive knowledge of tools and the ways they could be used.

When Lennox combined this inherited practical knowledge with his own special inventive genius, he must have been excited by the possibilities. It was a boom era for industrial America, when railroads were starting to stretch from coast to coast and scientific pioneers such as Bell, Carver, Edison, Maytag, and Firestone were laying the foundations for the next century. For inventors and manufacturers, it seemed an age of almost daily discovery — an age ideally suited to the talents of David Lennox, who had stepped off the train at Marshalltown with little more than a head full of ideas.

Dave Lennox started 'The Lennox Machine Company' when he first came to Marshalltown in 1888. Lennox got his start as a manufacturer of architectural materials, boilers, engines, and farm implements.

The 'Torrid Zone' furnace, flagship product of the early Lennox furnace line. Billed in many early advertisements as "riveted like a boiler" and "a practical smoke consumer," the popular Torrid Zone design changed little from 1895 to the mid 1930's – when Lennox ushered in a new era in home comfort.



After some tough bargaining with the owner, he found a room in Marshalltown — 20 x 20 feet for $7 a month rent. "For the first few months I didn't make enough to pay the rent," he said. Finally he ran into Ed Sears, a local businessman looking for someone to make staples rapidly and for a good price. Lennox designed a staple-cutting machine which increased production while lowering costs. It was an instant success. Now he could pay his rent and expand his business as well. The reputation of the Lennox Machine Shop started to grow beyond the Marshalltown city limits.

A New Kind of Furnace

One day in 1895, Ernest Bryant and Ezra Smith from nearby Oskaloosa, Iowa dropped by Lennox' shop, eager to show him their plans for a new kind of furnace. The few furnaces used to heat homes at that time were made entirely of cast iron, which warped and cracked after extended use and caused smoke and coal gases to seep into houses. Their design, Bryant and Smith explained to Lennox, was far more durable: riveted steel was used for the heating surface and iron castings for the grates, fronts, and other parts. Could he help them make the iron castings for their furnaces?

Among a group of investors who bought the Lennox Furnace Company from Dave Lennox in 1904 was D.W. Norris. The purchase price was $54,789.14. Today, Lennox International Inc. has sales of over $1 billion, and all company stock continues to be privately held.

Lennox Furnace Company employees take a break for a group photograph around 1905.

1895
Dave Lennox builds first riveted steel, coal-fired gravity furnaces

First pro football game played in Latrobe, Pennsylvania

First complete performance of Tchaikovsky's ballet, *Swan Lake*

1896
First modern Olympic Games held in Athens, Greece

Plessy vs. Ferguson decision establishes legality of 'separate but equal' facilities

1898
Battleship Maine blown up; Spanish-American War begins

1903
Orville and Wilbur Wright first to fly a powered airplane; aviation age begins

John Norris Sr. born

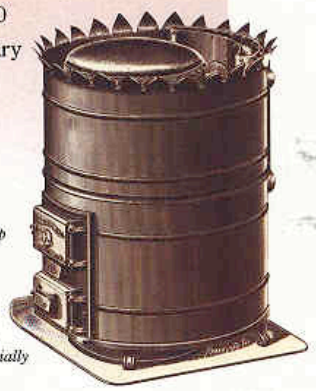
1904
Dave Lennox sells furnace business to a group of Marshalltown investors, including D.W. Norris

Lennox sells 600 furnaces in first year under new ownership

Lennox reluctantly agreed. His business was growing and he was planning his own projects, including improving the designs of trowels, heavy-duty shears, and other tools.

"I didn't feel at home making furnaces," he said many years later. But he understood the importance of Bryant's and Smith's ideas. When the two inventors were unable to pay Lennox for the iron castings because they couldn't find financial backers, he took over their patents and started reworking and improving their original design. Sweating for long hours in what one observer described as "sort of an overgrown blacksmith shop," Dave Lennox began building the first Lennox furnaces.

The superiority of Lennox' redesigned furnace was obvious, and Lennox furnaces quickly became popular. But by 1904, Lennox was tired of the furnace business. He was much more excited about his plans to manufacture heavy tools, especially shears. An interested group of local businessmen bought the furnace business from Lennox for $54,789.14 — and during their first year of ownership, the Lennox Furnace Company sold 600 furnaces. One of the primary new owners was David Windsor (D.W.) Norris.

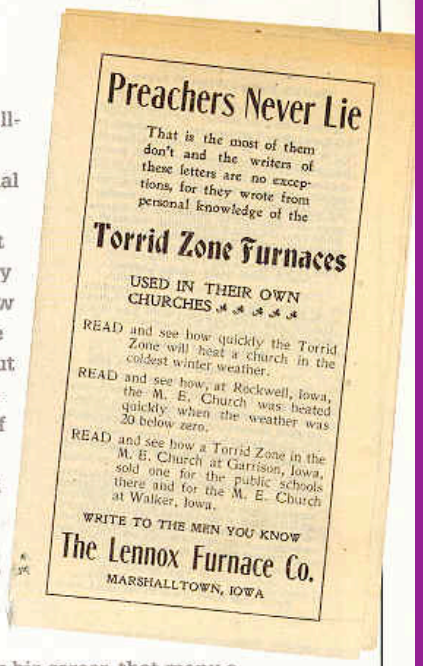


Looking for more efficient ways to keep their students and congregations warm, schools and churches were enthusiastic buyers of Lennox equipment from the company's earliest days. Lennox designed this room heater especially for that market.

Warming Up The Congregation, 1905

"Dear Sir:

"Next to a good sermon, a good furnace and a well-heated meeting house are essential to attract large audiences; in fact when the mercury drops down below the zero point we are not so sure but what the furnace is needed first. Of course it is the good sermon and religious duty that get people out to church but every pastor has learned at some time during his career, that many a good sermon, after hard, conscientious effort, has been frozen out by poor heating arrangements.


Preachers Never Lie

That is the most of them don't and the writers of these letters are no exceptions, for they wrote from personal knowledge of the

Torrid Zone Furnaces

USED IN THEIR OWN CHURCHES

READ and see how quickly the Torrid Zone will heat a church in the coldest winter weather.

READ and see how, at Rockwell, Iowa, the M. E. Church was heated quickly when the weather was 20 below zero.

READ and see how a Torrid Zone in the M. E. Church at Garrison, Iowa, sold one for the public schools there and for the M. E. Church at Walker, Iowa.

WRITE TO THE MEN YOU KNOW

The Lennox Furnace Co.

MARSHALLTOWN, IOWA

"We enclose a brief pamphlet description of our Torrid Zone hot air furnaces and room heaters ... we want you to read what other pastors say about our furnaces and then to write to some of them personally. If you will send us a rough pencil plan of your building we will give you an estimate of cost ...

"Remember that the pastor who lays before his people their particular wants and then tells them how to fill them is usually the one who gets the most support ... let us hear from you.

"Sincerely,

"The Lennox Furnace Company"

New York City policeman arrests woman for smoking in public

1906
Upton Sinclair novel *The Jungle* leads to Pure Food and Drug Act

1907
Mother's Day established as national observance

1908
General Motors Corporation formed

1909
Robert Peary is first to reach the North Pole

1910
W.E.B. DuBois founds NAACP

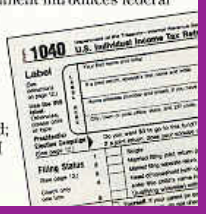
1911
Roald Amundsen is first to reach the South Pole

1912
Ocean liner *Titanic* strikes an iceberg and sinks on maiden voyage

1913
Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* first performed in Paris

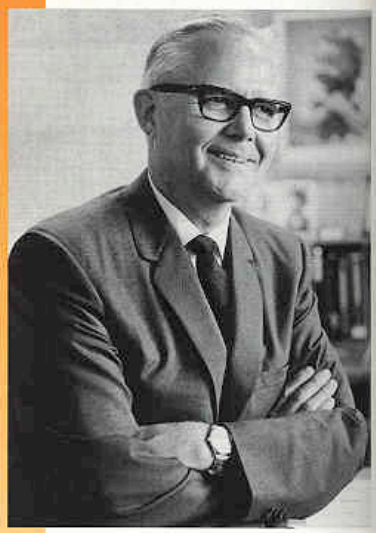
16th Amendment introduces federal income tax

1914
Archduke Franz Ferdinand assassinated; World War I begins


1040 U.S. Individual Income Tax Return

2. Crusade for Innovation: 1927-1939

Dave Lennox might have been starting to think seriously about selling his furnace business when John Windsor Norris was born in Marshalltown on August 5, 1903. As a boy, one of John Norris' summer chores was delivering milk to a couple of neighbors in what a family member described as "an enormous 12-cylinder Packard." Before he graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Norris began working for the Lennox Furnace Company as a furnace cleaner in the summer of 1925. His first full-time job after graduating in 1927 was as a salesman in the company's new factory in Syracuse, New York.



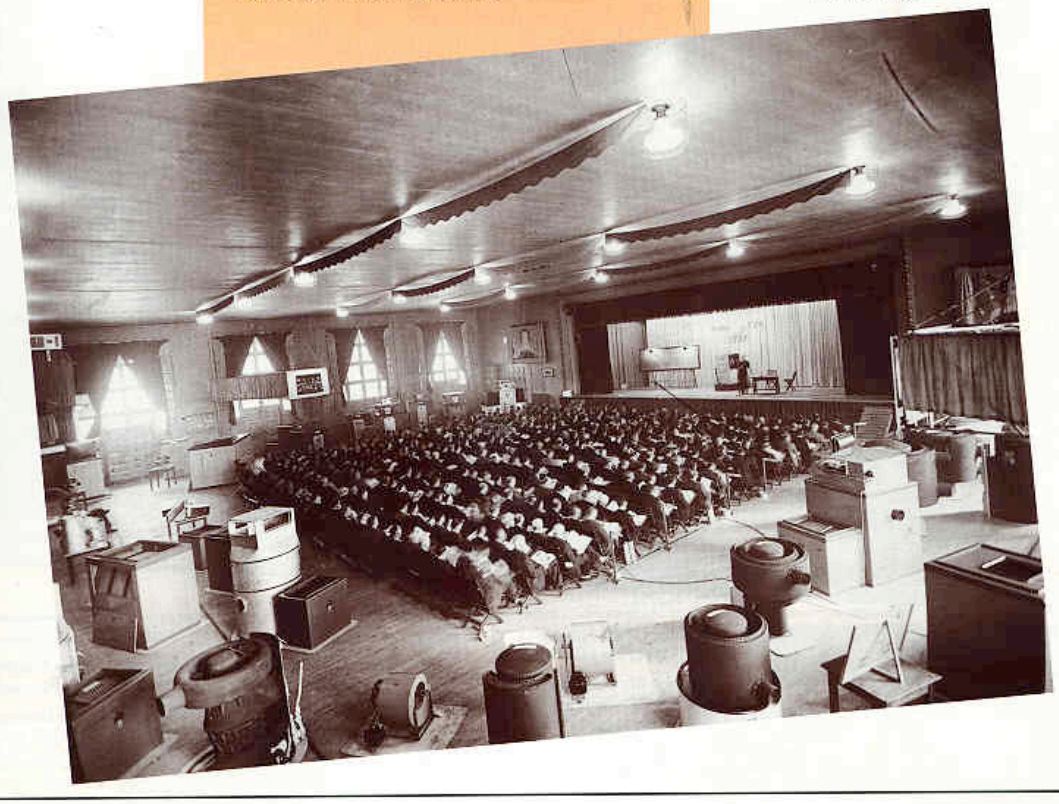
From the company's earliest days, Lennox dealers used the latest technology (such as the automobile) to assist them in their marketing efforts.

Starting with Lennox as a part-time furnace cleaner in 1925 while he was still attending the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, John Norris Sr. joined the company full time after graduating in 1927. His pioneering work in forced-air heating technology revolutionized the home heating industry.

John Norris was interested in engineering new products at a time when the heating industry was on the brink of fundamental change. He had developed plans to put blowers on furnaces so warm air could be pushed through longer pipes and heat larger homes and buildings. But despite Norris' enthusiasm, his father showed little interest in these new-fangled ideas.

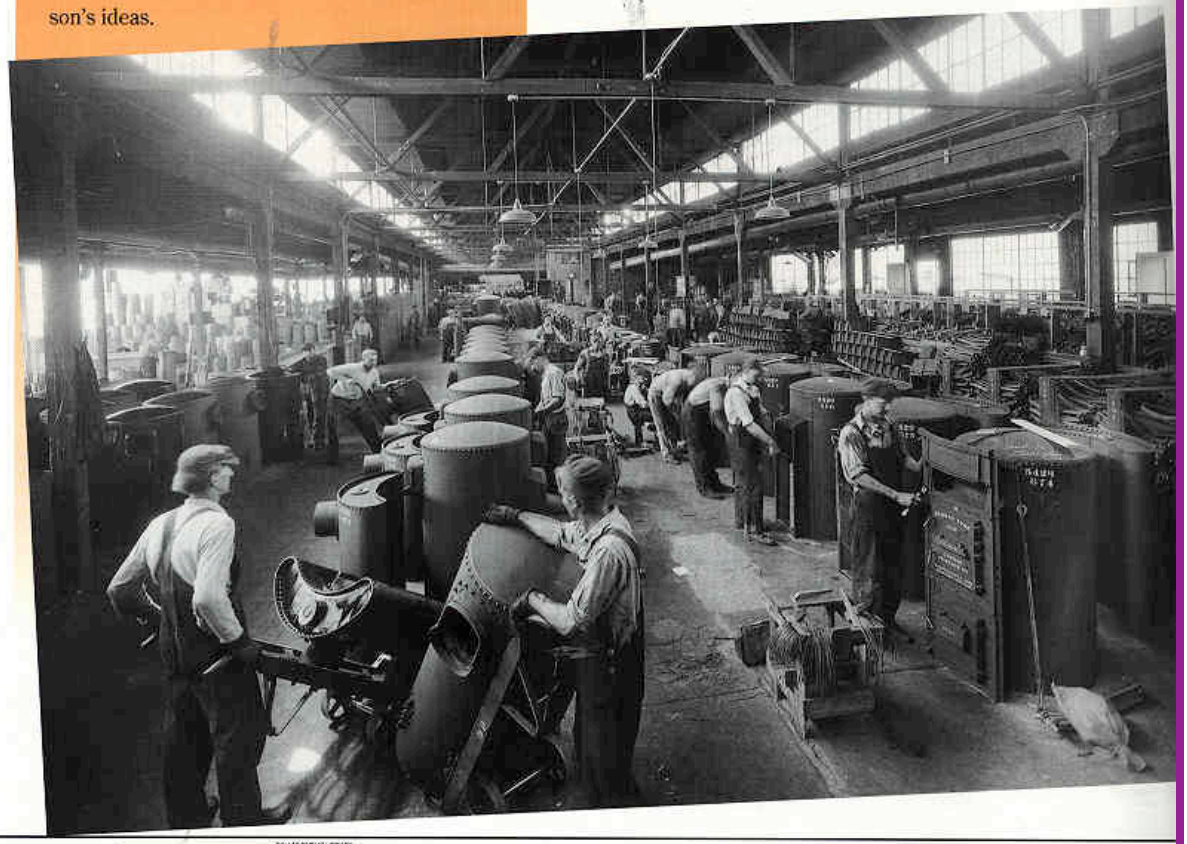
Unable to convince his father by talking about the benefits of forced-air heating, John Norris decided to actually prove it to him. He found a secluded corner in the rear of a Lennox warehouse — a place he was certain D.W. would never visit. Piling tools and other equipment into the dim, cramped space, Norris began quietly experimenting with blowers, oil burners, and gas furnaces with another engineer, F.H. 'Whit' Whitcombe.

Lennox dealers gather at center court in the Marshalltown High School gymnasium for John Norris Sr.'s speech at the 1937 dealer meeting.



Norris' secret project was nothing less than developing an entirely new home heating system. Realizing more people used their basements for living space, he concentrated on building a smaller, quieter, cleaner furnace. He also worked on developing the technologies involved in sizing pipes and locating registers in the new system.

Once Norris felt he had developed a practical product, he showed it to a group of Midwestern dealers. They were excited, and their excitement finally persuaded D.W. Norris of the practical value and market potential of his son's ideas.



Assembling Torrid Zone furnaces on a busy factory floor in the 1930's. Lennox managed to thrive during the Great Depression partly by securing government contracts such as heating the barracks for workers in the Civilian Conservation Corps.

1927
Charles Lindbergh flies nonstop from New York to Paris

Lennox acquires Armstrong Furnace Company

First talking motion picture, *The Jazz Singer*

John Norris Sr. graduates from MIT; begins Lennox career as salesman in Syracuse

1928
Disney releases the first films starring Mickey Mouse

Many women take up flying after Amelia Earhart becomes first woman to fly the Atlantic

1929
Stock market plunges; Great Depression begins

NY Museum of Modern Art opens

Airship *Graf Zeppelin* flies around the world

Ernest Hemingway writes *A Farewell to Arms*

'St. Valentine's Day Massacre' Chicago gangland slaying occurs