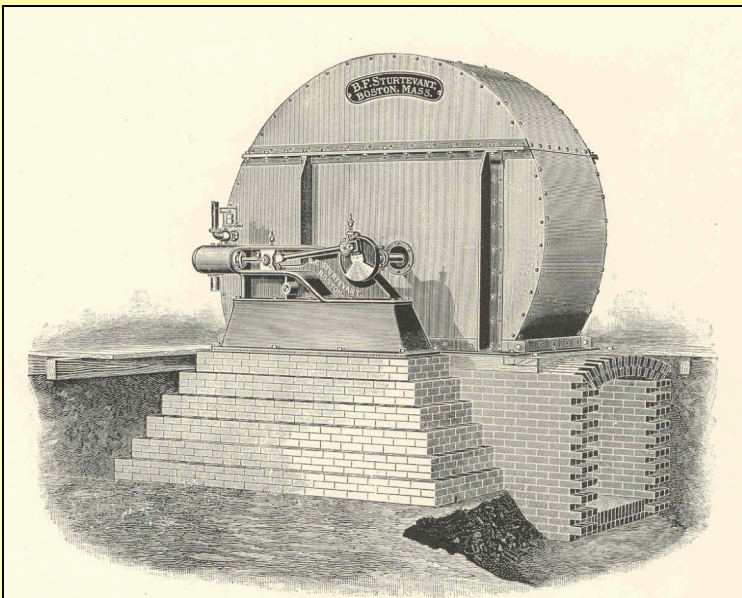


# Hall of Fame

Landmark equipment that shaped the history of h&v

## 1861 – Centrifugal fan

[Benjamin Franklin Sturtevant]



The fans we use today had their genesis in the mind of a Maine shoemaker, Benjamin Franklin Sturtevant, an inventor and mechanical genius born in 1833. He did not remain a shoemaker for long. Sturtevant succeeded in designing a practical shoe pegging machine and invented a wood veneer lathe which cut a strip of veneer from a log.

The machine produced a quantity of fine wood dust which annoyed the workmen. Sturtevant's inventive mind took up the challenge and he designed an exhauster which whisked the dust away from the work benches, permitting his men to work in comfort. The centrifugal fan, or fan blower, was no new thing. But in the past its natural advantages of low noise and minimum friction had been overshadowed by its poor air handling capacity. By careful attention to correcting the design flaws in the

casing and impeller, Sturtevant transformed the simple fan blower into a pressure blower that became a boon to industry.

Being the first to apply sound engineering principles to these early crude devices, Benjamin Sturtevant can accurately be called the father of the American fan industry, having built the first commercially successful blower in 1864.

Later, as B F Sturtevant, the firm produced large centrifugal fans with matching steam engines and drives (electric motors for fans came only into common use in the early 20th century). By the turn of the century, Sturtevant was producing fans with cased air heaters attached and also dual-duct apparatus. The business prospered and sold fans for ventilation, exhaust systems and for boiler mechanical draught applications, virtually monopolising the supply of boiler fans for American ships.



More pictures and details of historical products can be found on the CIBSE Heritage Group website at: [www.hevac-heritage.org](http://www.hevac-heritage.org)