

**Ida's
Notebook**
by
Ida Risser



This morning the thermometer said that the outside temperature was 21 degrees. However, our house is a comfortable 70 degrees as I dress for breakfast.

All of this got me to thinking of dressing in the house where I was born. It was a large 10-room house. And, the only heat was a big black stove in the kitchen. So, we learned to dress in a hurry in the bedroom where I and two sisters slept — three in an old red rope bed with a chaff bag for a mattress. We wore long underwear and long brown stockings, held up by garters, to keep warm. A black stove pipe ran

through our room to the chimney.

There was another stove in the house and only on Sunday was this parlor stove lit. It had a lot of fancy nickel trim and sat on a metal pad in the living room with the horsehair sofa and chairs. My mother had them recovered one time and I was told that the material had to be shipped from Europe.

The cookstove had a reservoir on the side for warm water. It was used to wash dishes in a dry sink, which still stands in the family room in my present house.

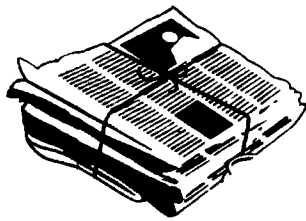
My father many times told us never to pour kerosene on the slow burning fire, but rather dip the corn cobs into a tin of kerosene and add them to a slow fire.

Both wood and coal were burned in the stove depending on the weather. The very first job that I was given was to pick up wood chips to start the fire. And, I remember disliking the job a lot. Now I can simply adjust a thermostat on the wall and get whatever temperature that I want from our fuel oil furnace in the basement.



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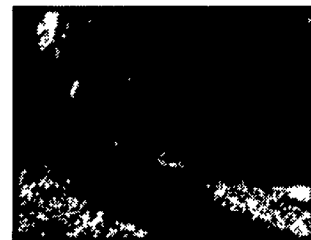


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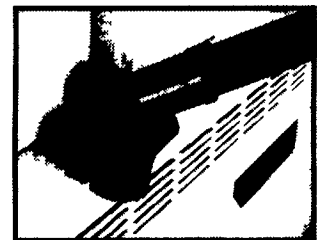
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