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THREE PIGEONS

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A VICTORIAN CAST IRON STOVE GRATE,

c.1865, by Smith and Wellstood Ltd.

the rectangular stove with sliding doors to the front and an arched grate-front pierced with ventilation holes to the rim, raised on a shaped apron with three cabriole legs, the stove top with two circular hobs with the original lifting handle and a pierced foliate cast hob-cover with an anthemion surmount, cast over-all with foliate and geometric ornament and flanking grotesque masks,

DIMENSIONS: 63cm (24^{3/4}"") High, 44cm (17^{1/4}"") Wide, 44cm (17^{1/4}"") Deep, including apron and finial

STOCK CODE: 42801



HISTORY

In the 1830s, as a teenager, James Smith left Scotland for the United States. Stephen Wellstood, a fellow Scot, got him placed on an apprenticeship in a metalworker's workshop.

Smith was intrigued by the American methods of heating and eventually established a business making and selling the new American type of enclosed cooking ranges and stoves in Jackson, Mississippi. Realizing these innovative products offered significant advantages in efficiency and cleanliness over the open fires commonly used in Europe, he returned to Scotland, and arranged for the manufacture of his own versions, initially at the Bonnybridge foundry of George Ure.

Smith's wife, also a Scot, was uncomfortable after 10 years in the heat of Mississippi and was keen to return home. Smith seems to have made a number of Trans-Atlantic passages. On one, in 1854, he was ship-wrecked and ended up adrift in a zinc-lined basket for a couple of days.

He was picked up by the Cambrai.

That year, Ure, Smith and his old friend Stephen Wellstood formed a new company as 'The Columbian Stove Works'.

Auguste Escoffier, Mrs Beeton, Florence Nightingale and Captain Scott were among their famous clients. They started selling their innovative stoves under the "Esse" brand name - stoves that in one form or another have been in continuous production since.