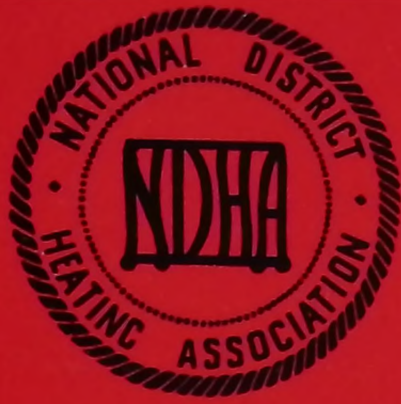
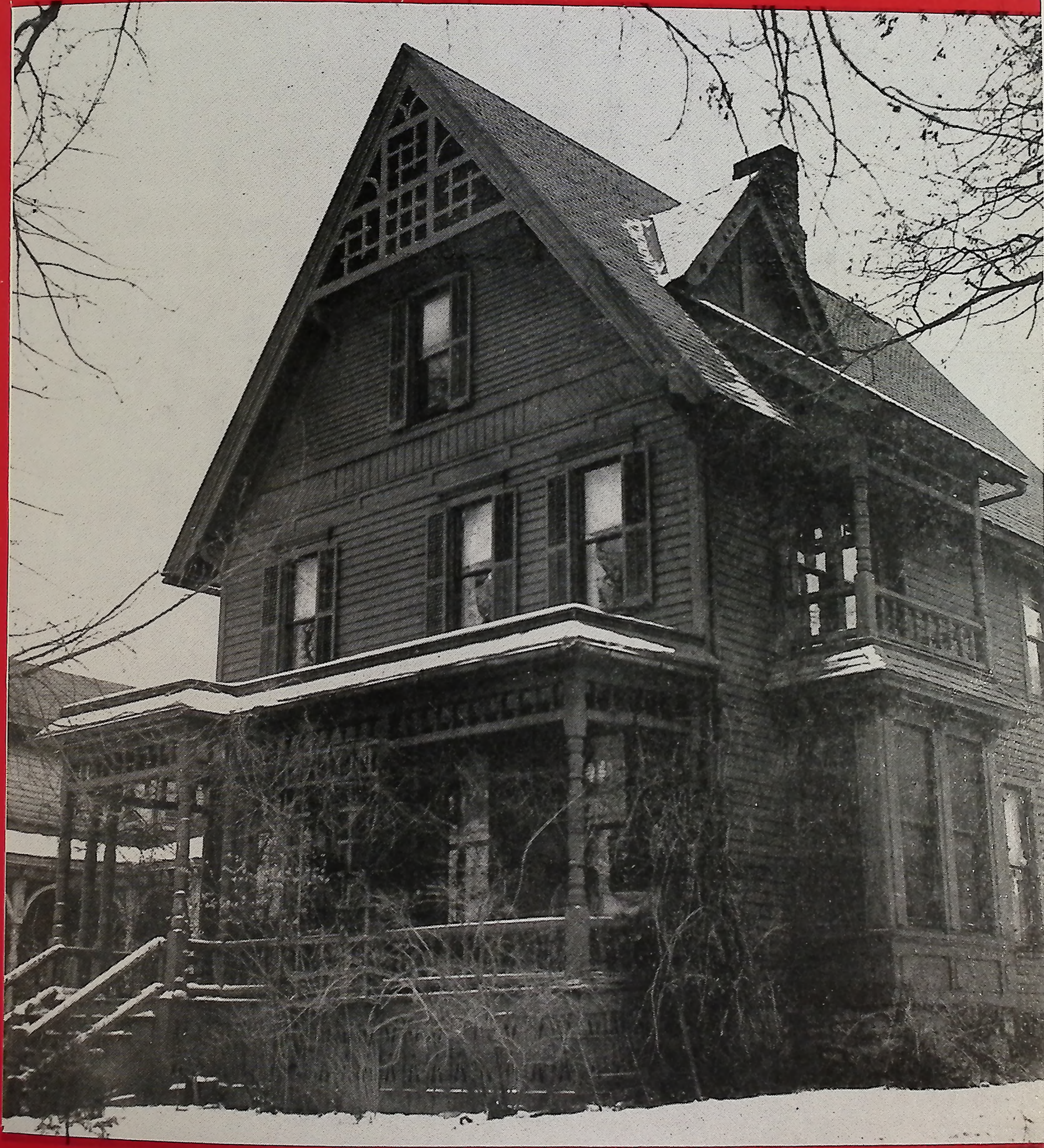


DISTRICT HEATING

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY SINCE 1915



JANUARY, 1955 — VOL. XL, No. 3



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AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL DISTRICT HEATING ASSOCIATION

WHERE DISTRICT HEATING BEGAN*

Back in the early sixties Mr. Birdsill Holly, who had invented the great 'Sybills' steam fire engine and the rotary pump, moved his machine manufacturing business from Seneca Falls, N. Y., to Lockport, N. Y., where he organized the Holly Manufacturing Company for the manufacture of sewing machines, skeins and boxes, flat irons, sinks and many other articles of iron and brass. Later the company took up the manufacture of cistern pumps of all kinds and began building rotary pumps on a large scale. This necessitated larger and more modern shops.

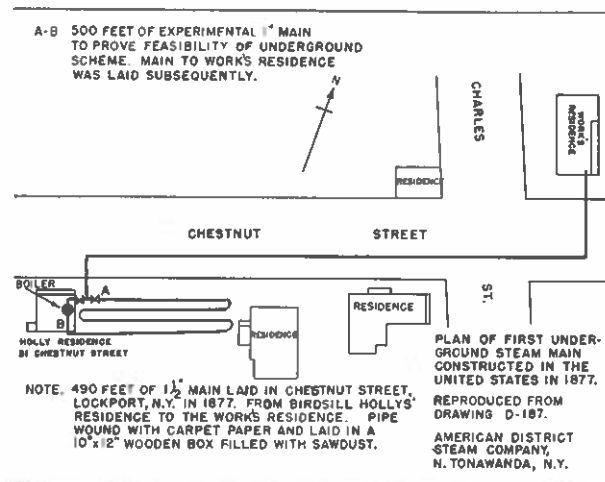
Mr. Holly next perfected the system, now in universal use by water works, of pumping water under pressure into mains laid underground. The demand for this system became so great that shops for the manufacture of pumping machinery had to be more than doubled.

So far, all of Holly's inventions had met with instant success. However, when next he advanced the scheme of heating buildings by steam from pipes laid underground, this newest idea was greeted with much criticism and pronounced by leading engineers, mechanics and trade papers as 'foolish, visionary and totally impractical.'

Mr. Holly was by no means the originator of the idea of district steam heating. It had been hoped for and predicted by engineers for half a century, and many costly efforts had been made in European cities to introduce it, without success. In several of our large cities, however, buildings were being heated successfully with steam from their own boilers.

Failing to obtain either financial or moral support, Holly made experiments at his own expense to demonstrate his theory. He began his experiments by running an underground line from a boiler in his cellar, around the back yard and then to a radiator in one of the rooms in his home at 31 Chestnut St. in Lockport (see cover picture). He checked up and found that there was apparently no difference between the results obtained when the

pipe was run through the yard and to the radiator than when steam was conveyed directly from the boiler in the basement. As a result of his initial tests, Mr. Holly approached some of his Lockport friends, telling them that he would like to raise a little money in order that his experiments might be extended by carrying the piping system more extensively through his yard. The money was raised and the experiments continued.



The First District-Steam Lines

Again the results were apparently the same, the steam having lost only a small part of its heat by condensation. Mr. Holly was convinced that several city blocks could be heated successfully from one central boiler plant. His confidence was shared by several others who went with him in forming a company which installed a small underground system in Lockport in the summer of 1877, with one mile of underground mains serving five stores, seven residences and two churches.

Following the death of Mr. Holly in 1894, his son, Birdsill A. Holly III, who died in 1953 lived for many years in the home which is shown on the cover as it is today. We are able to show the cover picture through the kindness and skill of Walter A. Schulmeister of S. E. Dockstader, Inc. who made several trips to Lockport to get just the right results.

*This information comes from the "Adseo Advocate," a magazine printed many years ago by the American District Steam Company.