THE HUENEfeld CO.

The Huenefeld Co. was founded in Cincinnati in 1872 as Schröer & Huenefeld by John H. Schröer (1847-1919) and Ernst H. Huenefeld (1838-1931). Huenefeld bought out Schröer in 1877, and the business then operated as a proprietorship under the name E. H. Huenefeld. It was incorporated in 1906 as The E. H. Huenefeld Co. and became The Huenefeld Co. in 1910.

Beginning on Pearl Street between Walnut and Vine, the early company was as an importer and dealer in tin plate and metals, tinner’s tools and machines. By the 1880s it added wood- and coal-burning stoves to its jobbing business and began manufacturing. Ernst Huenefeld invented various wood-burning stoves and ovens in the 1890s. He established a foundry in Augusta, Kentucky to produce cast-iron parts for stoves and washing machines manufactured in Cincinnati. Huenefeld’s portable oven was first produced in 1898, and in 1909 he patented and manufactured the world’s first successful glass-door oven. Walter E. Huenefeld (1885-1964) joined his father’s company in 1904, was elected vice president in 1910, succeeded his father as president in 1931, and was responsible for many of the manufacturing improvements and product developments during his sixty-year career.

In 1904 the company moved to 2701 Spring Grove Avenue, at the northwest corner of Spring Grove and Straight Street, from its original and early locations on Pearl, Main, and North Streets. The business grew rapidly, and the 1914-1916 addition to the Spring Grove plant doubled its manufacturing capacity.

The company was widely known as a manufacturer of ranges, stoves, ovens, heaters, furnaces, refrigerators, washing machines, and other household products. Boss, Royal, Success, and Uneda were but a few of the trade names of its products. Export sales were an important part of the business through the years, and products were exported to more than forty-three countries in the 1960s. Its kerosene-fueled stoves in particular saw strong demand from Latin America, Africa, the Middle and Far East, and countries where electricity, gas and coal were unobtainable. The Cincinnati company was one of the nation’s largest manufacturers and exporters of kerosene stoves until 1966, when the manufacturing divisions were sold to United States Stove Company in Chattanooga, Tennessee and The Union Metal Manufacturing Company in Canton, Ohio.

Founder Ernst H. Huenefeld was born 1838 in Ladeben, Germany, near Bremen, and emigrated as a boy in 1845 to Ohio. In addition to his manufacturing success in Cincinnati, he became a major financial supporter of German Methodism in Ohio. Huenefeld was an incorporator of Bethesda Hospital and Deaconess Association in Cincinnati in 1896. He served as trustee and treasurer of that institution and was a major supporter of Bethesda Hospital. In 1908 he donated the Clifton estate “Scarlet Oaks” to Bethesda for a retirement community. Among other institutions, he also served as a trustee of German Wallace College, now Baldwin-Wallace College, in Berea, Ohio, near Cleveland. He died 1931 in Cincinnati at the age of ninety-two and is buried in his family mausoleum in Spring Grove Cemetery.