

French slipper bath was invented late in the Seventeenth century. Benjamin Franklin brought one of first back to America.

At the kind of bath depended on the taste of the individual. But in France the French had a receptacle that provided both rest and heat for the bather. This was the "slipper bath," so called because it was shaped like a gigantic slipper or shoe. The last word in luxury here, these tubs were made of copper and some even had wheels for moving from room to room. Under the seat, which was in the heel of the shoe-shaped tub, some of the better models had grates for heating the water, while a spout in the toe provided drainage.

Benjamin Franklin fell for these slipper baths and brought one home from France with him. He thus became one of the first to introduce bathtubs into this country.

TUBS OF WOOD

About this time there also were soft baths, in which one could recline while bathing—a chaise longue affair found in the more luxurious Parisian homes of the 1850's. Other refinements were "sea bathtubs," fashioned like a couple of waves, and others with a Dutch oven effect.

It wasn't until the latter part of the Nineteenth Century that running water was common in homes.

in carved wood, during the "Victorian" period. This achieved a size and attractiveness never equaled. Following these massive tubs came the first heated wall run tubs, which left an odd space underneath that was practically impossible to clean. Along with this style went the lavatories with marble tops, some with an unusually collection of pipes in plain view, as enclosed in wooden cabinets into which water leaked constantly.

NEW TUBS NEAT, SAFE

The 1940 bathtub is built low for safety, some being only 16 inches high, while their bottoms are flattened for the same reason. An interesting feature of these new tubs is the flat rim for seating. Others have seats built at the corners or the ends.

Modern bathtubs are of iron and steel, with highly glazed porcelain enamel finish and are set off by attractive, chrome-plated fittings. Although many homes today have separate shower stalls, by far the majority still prefer the combination tub with shower head in the wall above.

Shower baths in America date back to Civil War days. A Union commander named Muldoon is reported to have started the custom, at the same time recruiting many men for the Northern Army. His promise of a bath at the end of a long day in the field was fulfilled by perforating the bottom of a bucket. The bucket was hung in a tree, and while one soldier poured water through it, the others stepped under it for their bath.

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