

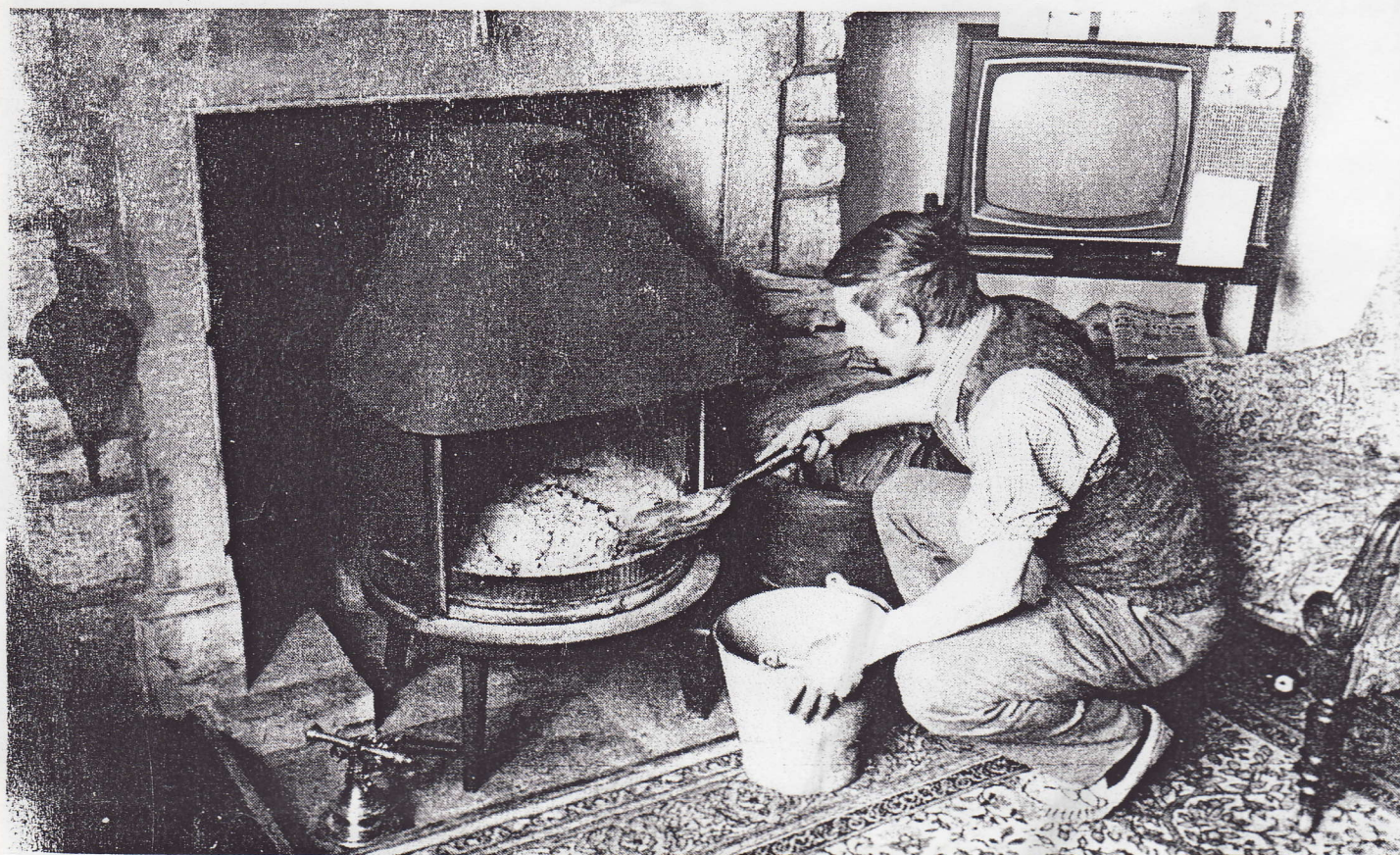
A pioneer took to selling after 200 inquiries

Among the first users of the large number of imported wood-burning stoves that have been sold in Britain since the mid 1970s, is Wiltshire farmer Mr Dick Knight. He saw some Norwegian stoves at the 1974 Royal Welsh Show and decided to buy one in the hope of overcoming difficulties with a smoking chimney in his farmhouse. It solved his problems and steeply reduced the log consumption of the fireplace it replaced and at the same time heated the sitting room much more effectively.

DURING the winter of 1974-75, FARMERS WEEKLY visited Mr Knight at Castle Farm, Marshfield, nr Chippenham, to report on the Farm Folk Museum that he and his wife Mary were establishing in 15th century buildings on their 70 acre farm. It was a cold day, and after

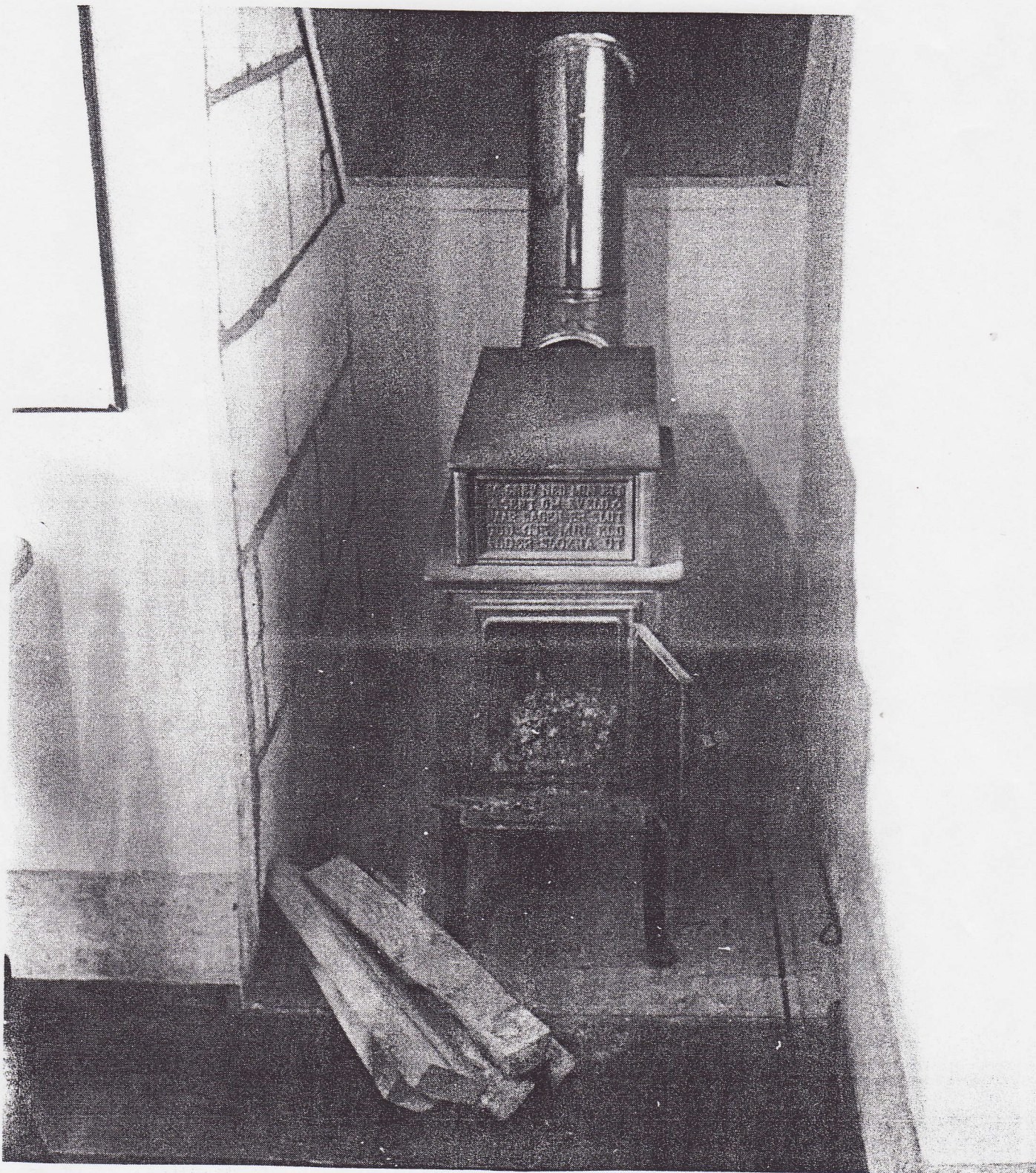
our reporter and photographer had thawed out in front of the newly installed Norwegian stove, they were so impressed with it that two weeks later a picture of it appeared in the magazine.

This picture resulted in more than 200 inquiries about wood-burning stoves arriving



Mr Dick Knight gets rid of the ashes at Castle Farm, near Chippenham, Wilts.

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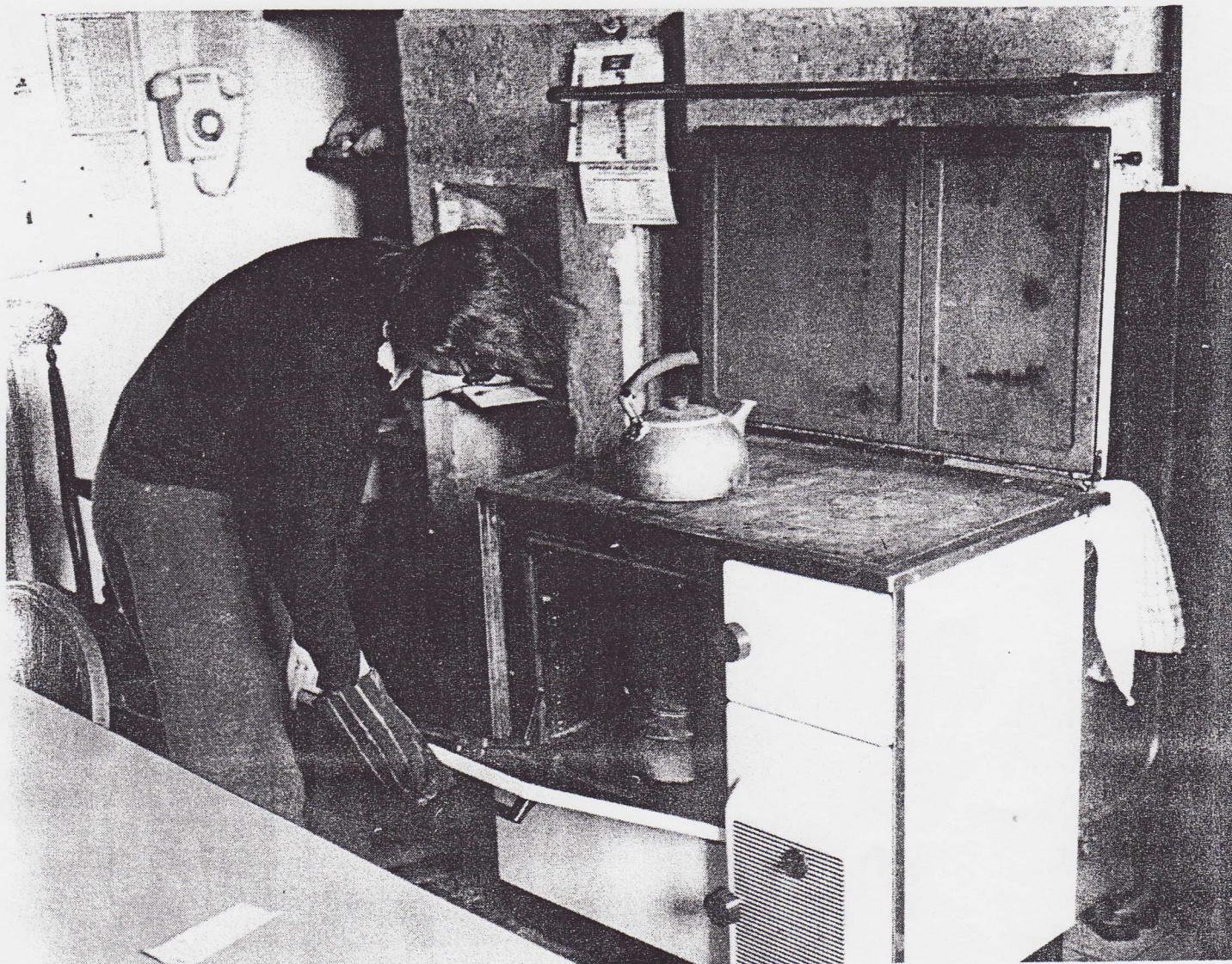
The Norwegian Jotul stove in the lounge proclaims: "I am sitting by my fire late at night when the day is ended. God save my fire from ever going out."

at Castle Farm, and before long Mr Knight was persuaded to become an agent and sell them to other farmers. He is still doing this today, and has also installed two more stoves to heat his farmhouse. One heats the lounge, and the other, an Austrian model installed in the kitchen, also does most of the farmhouse

cooking and runs seven radiators.

Some of the wood he uses is farm grown, but most of it comes from a local sawmill. He pays £6 for 18cwt bundles of 6ft lengths of various sized waste timber. These are cut up on a tractor-operated sawbench, and if necessary big logs are split with a tractor-mounted splitter

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The Austrian Tirolia stove in Mrs Mary Knight's kitchen heats all the water, seven heating radiators and does nearly all the family's cooking.

which drills into their sides.

Most of the logs are burnt on the Austrian Tirolia stove installed in the kitchen. It is kept going right through the winter and heats all the water and seven radiators. Most of the farmhouse cooking is done either on it or in its oven, which Mrs Knight finds suitable for all types of cooking. Total wood usage is estimated at about 20 tonnes a year for the three stoves.

The kitchen stove needs little maintenance. Flues are cleaned out every three weeks and the chimney swept twice a year. Ashes are emptied daily when the stove is used to heat radiators. In 1978 the kitchen stove cost £650, the chimney lining £200 and four radiators and plumbing to extend on old three-radiator system a further £300.

Mrs Mary Knight says she only uses her electric cooker for grilling and deep fat frying when the wood-burning stove is alight.

The other two stoves in the house are Norwegian Jotul models. The one in the sitting room (the first installed) can be opened up to give an open-fire effect, while the Jotul in the lounge is of a different design, takes logs up to 27in long and provides only background heat in the large lounge.

Mr Knight says that although wood-burning stoves are excellent for heating, hot water and cooking, before anyone buys one, they should make sure that they have a reliable source of wood. He says that many stoves now being sold will also burn coal, which is an advantage when wood is in short supply. Because a lot of cheap wood pulp is now being imported, the Forestry Commission and private timber growers could soon be putting more home-grown timber planned for pulp on the wood-burning stove market.

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A pile of logs at Castle farm and the saw to cut them (inset).