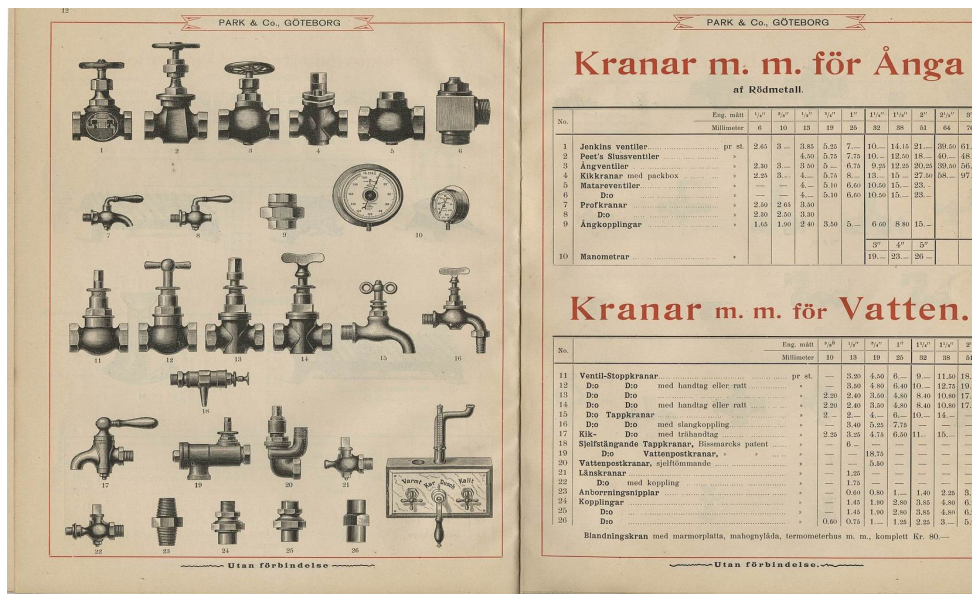


Our product range at the turn of the century (1900)



The photo below shows a spread from a product catalogue/price list published by the Gothenburg-based company Park & Co in 1900. The company was founded in 1890, existed right up to the 1980s and is now a part of Ahlsell.



Around the turn of the last century, Park & Co sold products such as pipe parts, taps, pumps, steam-boiler tubes, splash trays, toilets, valves, fire hydrants, gas cookers, pipe tools, baths, washbasins and fire-fighting appliances. The range of taps included a mixer tap that could switch between hot and cold water or between a bath and shower. It was probably designed for exclusive apartments and villas in the city.

Gothenburg has almost always been one of Sweden's largest export ports, and the city has an old tradition of trade carried on by many commercial enterprises. Dutch merchants played a major role in the city's foundation in the 1600s. Incidentally, 1899 was a founding year for several large Swedish companies: Åhlén & Holm (now Åhléns), Kooperativa Förbundet and Svenska Pressbyrå.

Sweden's very first lorry went into service with AB Göteborgs Förenade Bryggerier in 1900. Business and trade also benefited from other innovations during the late 1800s: quotations and orders could be sent by telephone and telegraph.

Sweden had already seen a long period of intensive building by 1900, which was reflected in the sales of most trading companies with ranges similar to that of Park & Co. Archived statistics record that in 1890, the year in which the company was founded, Park & Co sold goods to a value of 77,000 Swedish crowns, corresponding to almost four million crowns today. In 1900 sales reached 436,000 crowns, approximately 20 million in today's money.

A book, exhibition and other historical materials are produced in conjunction with Centrum för Näringslivshistoria that helps us find relevant documents, photographs and a lot more that we now use to record our history. Should you have any photographs and documents that may be of interest, or if you can suggest where they may be found, please contact Camilla Weiner, CIO of Ahlsell, on +46 8 685 70 62, camilla.weiner@ahlsell.se.