The Wheeler and Wilson Sewing Machine

A Machine that Changed Lives

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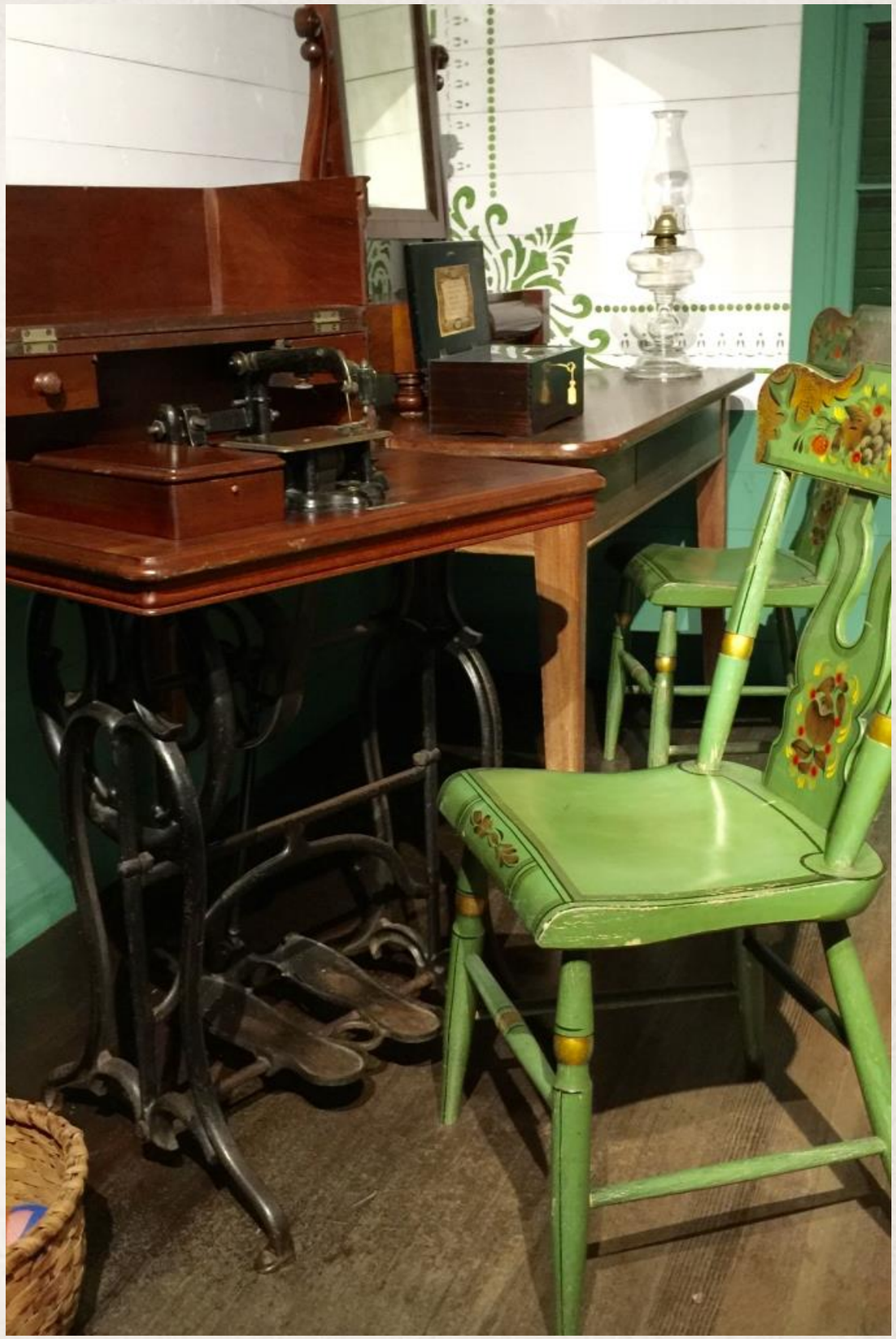
Wheeler and Wilson Sewing Machine
DAR Museum
Texas Period Room



- Elias Howe Jr, the father of the sewing machine
- The Howe patents were not manufactured
- Allen Wilson first to patent the sewing machine and have his design manufactured

Wheeler and Wilson Sewing Machine

- Allen Wilson's unique and groundbreaking design had three patented elements:

- The rotary hook with lock-stitch mechanism

- A stationary circular bobbin

- Four motion cloth feed

- The best sewing machine of its day with awards in U.S. and Europe

- Designed to be first lightweight practical sewing machine for the home

Sewing Machine Impacts

- First time-saving device to ease 19th century women's chores
- Reduced the time to make a garment by 90 per cent
- Stronger thread developed by Clark and Coats
- Paper patterns introduced by Butterick
- Installment plan buying introduced
- Service contracts Introduced
- Ready-made clothing industry exploded with reduced prices and increased opportunities for women

Sewing Machine Impacts

- Gave rise to related industry of sewing machine parts and attachments
- Total value of sewing machine exports from 1869 - 1900 estimated at $90 million
- Piecework now available to women working at home to earn extra income
- Rise of “sweat shops” with immigrant and child labor
- Unsafe and inhumane working conditions resulted in formation of International Ladies’ Garment Workers Union in 1900