Historic Fireplaces & their evolution

Historic Fireplaces before 1680

The inglenook is one of the oldest forms of fireplaces, evolved from the smoke bay and the transition from open fires.
This example has the surviving pot cradle and built in side seat and salt store, with later added cornice mantel.

They are often associated with later inserted bread ovens.
The dome of the bread oven interior is often delicately shaped.

Higher status rooms have stone fireplaces, usually with a Tudor arch.

These fireplaces are often marked with apotropaic witches marks to ward off evil spirits which might come down the chimney.
Higher status fireplaces might be enhanced with a carved mantelpiece.

**Historic Fireplaces 1680 to 1700**

In the late 17th century the traditional stone fireplace started to evolve into a more classical form.
Bolection mouldings and cornice mantelpiece are a feature of the late 17th century. Note the cast iron fireback, a feature of open fireplaces of the 16th and 17th century, though often now reproduction.

Bolection fireplaces were simplified to just stone surrounds, even in high status buildings.
Around 1700 a brief fashion for corner fireplaces occurred.

Historic Fireplaces before 1700 to 1750

In the early 18th century, eared fireplaces become fashionable and marble replaced stone.
This unusual rusticated fireplace of the early 18th century has an overmantel above in a hogarthian baroque style.
This early 18th century fireplace has a torus (semi convex) moulding of thick bound laurels.

From the mid 18th century more restraint is used in the carving of fireplaces, though they still have a baroque flavour.
Historic Fireplaces 1750 to 1830

The late 18th century became well known for high quality carved marble fireplaces.
The poor fared less well but there were advances in cast iron hob grate technology.

Fireplaces also made use of ironwork for reinforcing structure.
Regency fireplaces were characterised by reeding and circles

Timber fireplaces became more slender at this period.
In the reign of William IV, fireplaces become plainer and more severe in their form.
Mid 19\textsuperscript{th} century fireplaces become more opulent with half round openings for richer households.
The Italian white marble with corbels becomes a standard pattern.

By the late 19th century whole fireplaces are of cast iron.
Cast Iron Ranges are also an important feature in Victorian kitchens.
Historic Fireplaces After 1900

From the 1890’s designs influenced by the slender verticality of art noveau become popular.
Increasingly appreciated are the 1930’s Art deco designs.