

Miners' Flask *by Dave Johnson*

When travelling to the mine, and while working, the miner had to have a means to carry enough fuel for his oil wick lamp to last through the shift. Many firms produced pocket flasks and belt mounted flasks, also known as cadgers, for this purpose. These oil flasks were mainly manufactured of tin and occasionally of brass or copper.

On April 20, 1893, John Zweig, of Bellaire, County of Belmont, Ohio filed application for a patent for "a certain new and useful miners' flask."

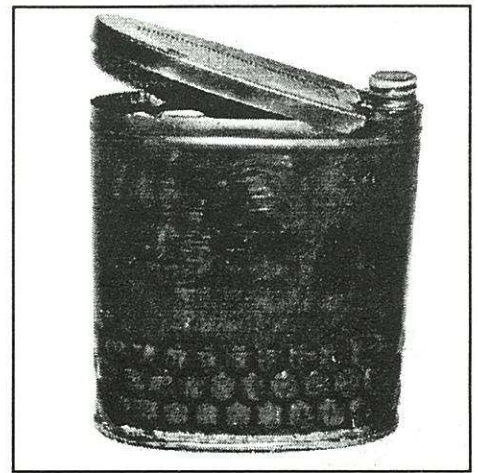
A patent, No 518,203, was granted on April 10, 1894 to John Zweig, assignor of one-half to Harry Venison, also of Bellaire.

The object of the patent was "to produce an improved flask for miners' use, by which his lamp, and wick, matches, and oil enough for an entire day's consumption may be conveniently carried about his person."

The flask, as manufactured, measures 4 5/8" tall. The oval shape measures 4 1/4" by 1 3/4" across. The cap to the oil reservoir measures 1/2" in diameter. The oval lid has a match striker and is stamped:

PATENT APPLIED FOR

The patent drawing does not show the match striker on the lid. The flask has three compartments under the lid: one beveled for the lamp, one for



matches, and one for wicking. The oil reservoir is exactly as indicated in the patent drawing. The patent drawing does not indicate the three rows of hexagonal bumps that form a hand grip around the lower third of the flask.

This rare item is a great addition to anyone's collection.

