

# An Early Patent Date

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The first patent awarded in the United States for a miner's oilwick lamp was patent number 35,264 awarded to William Seybold on May 13, 1862. However, two earlier patent dates appear on a lamp in my collection. June 2, 1857 and October 27, 1857. I have been unable to find a June 2, 1857 patent that has any tie to this lamp. The October 27, 1857 date is patent number 18,498 awarded to John K. Chase of New York, NY for an improved metallic screw cap for jars. The patent reads: "this improvement consists in forming a thin elastic screw cap out of a solid piece of sheet metal by spinning up the same out of a single plate, without casting, chasing or swaging, by which a cap is obtained without joint, seam, or flaw, for covering glass, metal or earthen cans or jars, the elasticity of the screw serving to fit the unequal threads thereon, and the seamless cap insuring tight joints".

This is not the only oilwick to have a patent date that does not relate to the lamp itself. The "Winfield" lamp having patent dates of March 30, 1858, extended to March 30, 1872 assigned to the California Fruit Jar Co. is another. The true Winfield patent dates are May 3, 1871 and May 7, 1872. These patents are for a lamp with a screw lid, while the patent dates on the cap are for the cap itself. The pictured brass and copper lamp measures 2 1/16" tall, the font is 1 1/8" in diameter, and the spout is 2 1/8" long, making this a very small oilwick lamp. The hook, cap, threads and shoulder are brass while the font and spout are copper.

