

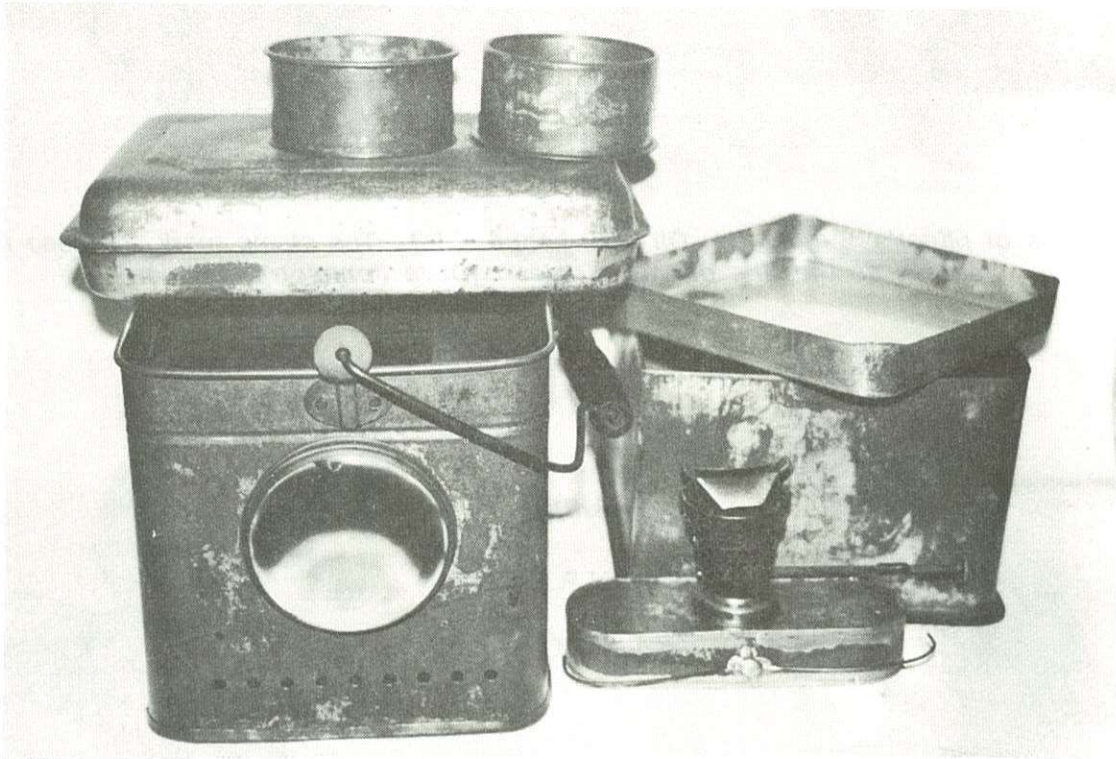
## Lunch Bucket Lamp

by Dave Johnson

Prior to the development of effective insulated containers for the storage of food and beverages, most miners had to settle for room temperature coffee and food. However, at least one enterprising individual designed a lunch bucket for miners that could warm a miner's coffee and pasty (cornish meat pie) or other dishes while he worked. It could also light his way to the mine and home again in all weather conditions.

This unique lunch bucket has a compartment for liquids on the top, with a removable drinking cup. Below the liquid compartment at one end, sits a small oil lamp with an adjustable wick. This lamp can heat the liquid compartment above it and the food compartment behind it. The wick is adjustable with a removable knob that inserts in the side of the bucket and stores inside the bucket.

There is a small food tray, about sandwich size, which sits across 2/3 of the space below the liquid compartment, and which lifts out through the top of the bucket. Below this, going 3/4 across the bucket, is a larger compartment that is removable through the bottom of the bucket and which is held in place by a swivel hook on the end of the lamp opposite the lens.



*Disassembled lunch bucket lamp*

The temperature of the food and liquid can be adjusted by means of a hinged plate which raises and lowers to deflect the flame away from or toward the food and liquid. The glass bullseye-style lens in front of the lamp is 3" in diameter and 3/4" thick in the center. The lens is held in place by a threaded tin collar that screws onto the front of the bucket.



Construction of the bucket is of tin, with a steel bail and wooden handle. The lamp reservoir is tin, while the burner assembly and wick adjustment knob are brass.

The only marking on the bucket is: PAT. MAR. 20, 97.

The bucket was acquired at the estate auction of the former owner of a hardware store in Brazil, Indiana. Brazil is in the northern section of the Indiana coal field which lies in the southwest section of the state. This area was the site of numerous underground coal mines prior to 1925. Mining today is limited to surface coal mining.

Two identical buckets were sold at this auction and I was lucky enough to acquire one of them, along with an unmarked oil-wick lamp, oil cadger, and two turtle shell helmets. Several other mining items were sold at this auction, among them, a boxed Justrite Victor, several other boxed Justrites and several small Justrite parts boxes.

Other than the duplicate bucket which sold at the auction I have not seen any other examples of this bucket. Surely some other examples have survived. Does anyone know of others?



*Fully assembled side view*



*End view showing 3/4" thick glass lens*