



by Dave Johnson

Known best to collectors of blasting items, the Miner's Supply Co. was located in St. Clair, Pennsylvania, which lies in the southern Anthracite Coal Basin. This firm is known mainly for its production of the Daddow & Beadle's Miner's Safety Squibs. However, the firm's name appears on at least one variety of miner's oil-wick cap lamp. I have been unable to find any information concerning the manufacture of oil-wick lamps by this firm. Whether this firm actually manufactured the lamp within its own factory or had the lamp manufactured by a jobber with its name stamped on it is unknown at this time. One fact is known about this lamp - it is a rare and desirable name for collectors of oil-wick lamps.



"St. Clair, on the line of the Mill Creek and Mount Carbon Branch of the P. & R. R. R., 5 1/2 miles north of Pottsville, was settled in 1840, and now contains a population of 6,500. It is situated on Mill Creek, and is in about the center of the Southern Anthracite Coal Basin. There are several large collieries in operation in its immediate vicinity. It contains 9 churches, a shovel factory, machine works, several good hotels, a number of large stores and the manufactory of the Miner's Supply Co. Daddow & Beadle's Safety Squibs, of which they are the sole manufacturers, have a national reputation, and have been the means of saving thousands of lives."¹

"The only factory in St. Clair of extent is the one in which Messrs. Daddow & Beadle's **Miner's Safety Squibs** are manufactured by the **Miner's Supply Co.** These squibs are used in the firing of blasts in the mines. The early custom was to leave the construction of these necessary articles to the ingenuity of the individual miner to contrive, and while squibs, proving ineffectual in their application, were thus easily manufactured, there was imminent danger in their use. Through the ingenuity and skill of the late S. H. Daddow, Esq., a patent squib, which combines safety with utility, was invented, and was duly acknowledged and patented September 6, 1870. The factory produces from 30,000 to 40,000 squibs daily, and they are sent to nearly every mining district in the United States. These articles are made at much less cost than the miners were formerly able to manufacture for themselves. The late S.H. Daddow, Esq., the successful inventor of this valuable auxiliary in the process of mining, departed this life on the 23rd day of March, 1875, after a short but painful illness. He was still comparatively young, and had for some time past labored successfully in the interests of the coal region"²

The 1875-76 St. Clair Business Directory listed N.T. Beadle as Manager with a business address of Second and Patterson. The 1879-80 Directory listed Nimrod T. Beadle as Manager with a business address of Second and Russell. The Miner's Supply Co. first appeared in Boyd's Pottsville Directory in 1872 and remained listed until 1929 when the directory was discontinued.³

References

1. St. Clair Business Directory 1879-80.
2. McCool, Sarah Ann. Schuylkill County Historic Gleanings. Published by Thos. J. Forster in the Shenandoah Weekly Herald, February 7, 1874 - November 27, 1875.
3. Boyd's Pottsville Directory.



Two versions of Miner's Supply Co. Oil wick lamps (tin). The stamp mark on these lamps is shown as the title of this article. (Dave Johnson collection)



MINER'S SUPPLY CO
ST. CLAIR
SCHUYKILL CO. PA



A third, and completely different Miner's Supply Co. Oil wick lamp (tin) with accompanying side stamp. Note patent date (April 25, 1876) stamped on top of door. (Bob Schroth collection)