

# The Felix Lamp

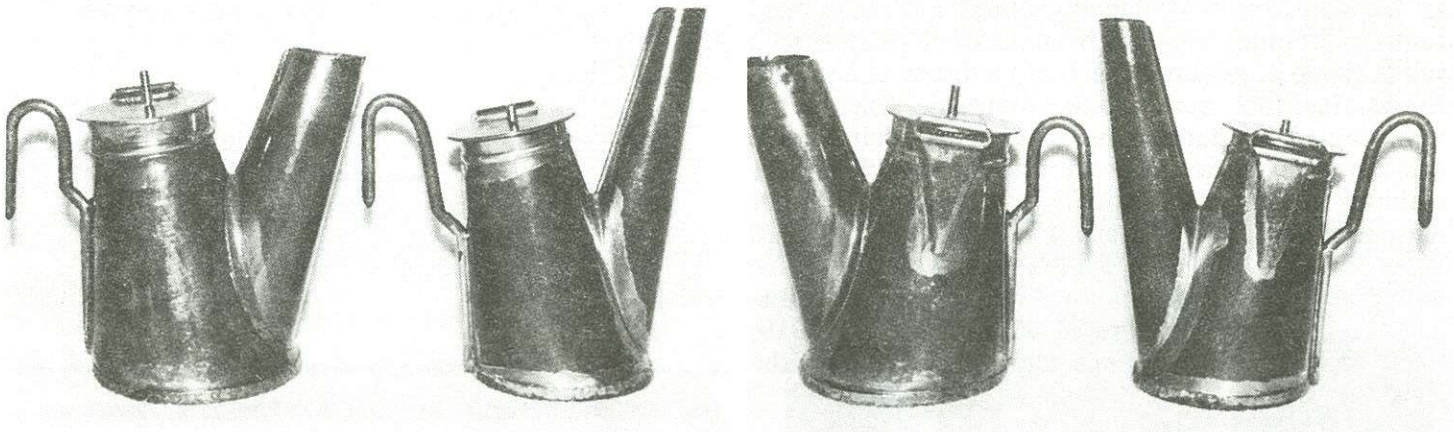
by Dave Johnson

The Felix Lamp is an oddity among oil wick lamps due to its rather unique design. Known as the lean-back or "drunken" lamp, the Felix Lamp has a shape unlike most other oil wicks. Trethaway Bros. produced a lamp very similar to the Felix, in three distinct models.

The back (hook side) of the lamp is vertical, while the front (spout side) slopes back to the brass collar.

The spout rises at a higher angle than most other lamps. The Felix Lamp is almost always stamped so lightly that the name and patent date cannot be seen on anything but unfired lamps:

FELIX LAMP  
SHAMOKIN PA.  
PAT'D JULY 31, 94

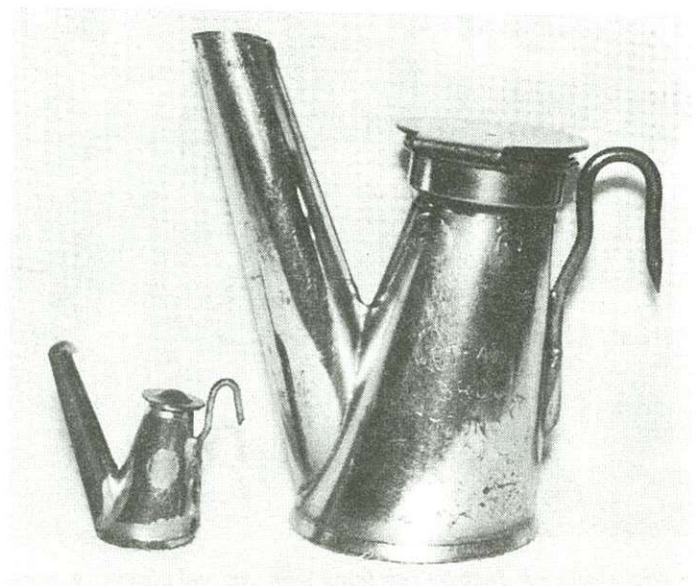


*Felix oil wick lamps (left and right side views). Notice breather tubes and hinge difference with Trethaway lamps (next page).*

Information on the producer of this lamp is very sketchy. Known primarily as a stove manufacturer and tinner, Charles D. Felix lived and worked in the town of Shamokin, Pennsylvania during the latter 19th century.<sup>1</sup>

On July 31, 1894, Felix received a patent on the unique design of his lamp.<sup>2</sup> Apparently this design was copied by Trethaway Bros. who began producing a very similar lamp at about the same time. However, in 1896 Felix won a patent suit against them for patent infringement. The Trethaway lean-back is relatively scarce compared to the Felix Lamp. In light of all the many other Trethaway Bros. products that have survived, one must assume that it was produced for only a short time.

In 1901 at the age of 44, Felix committed suicide.<sup>3</sup> His widow survived until 1944 when she died at 84 years of age.



*Miniature Felix (L) and Trethaway Bros. (Felix style).*

## References

1. The 1887 Shamokin City Directory lists Felix as a stove manufacturer, at 69 E. Sunbury St. In the 1896 directory he is listed as a tinner, with his business located at the corner of Sunbury and Washington St. and residing at the corner of Liberty and Dewart St.
2. U.S. Patent Office. No. 23,526 patented July 31, 1894.
3. Shamokin Cemetery Records 1901 reveal that Charles D. Felix died on November 19, 1901 at the age of 44 years and 29 days. The cause of death is listed as suicide.



*Felix style Trethaway Bros. Oil wicks*

# W. E. Wells Oil Wick Lamp

by Dave Johnson

When compiling the survey of oil wick names published in *EUREKA!* Issue #1, I inadvertently deleted a name from my own collection! According to the stamping on this lamp, W.E. Wells was the successor to D.P. Highberger:

**W. E. WELLS  
SUC. TO  
D. P. HIGHBERGER  
WILKINSBURG, PA.**

True Highberger lamps are found with three different markings:

1. THE HIGHBERGER (in a diamond logo)
2. D.P. HIGHBERGER, IRWIN, PA
3. D.P. HIGHBERGER, WILKINSBURG, PA

Thus far I have obtained no information on W.E. Wells, but I am actively pursuing the matter and will publish any information uncovered.

