

# THE PATENTED OIL WICK LAMP OF E.K. ROLLINS

by Tony Moon  
Sandy, Utah

Who is E.K. Rollins? His name does not appear on any oil wick lamps and yet he patented one of the more practical oil wick lamps that, judging from the number found today, must have been quite popular as it was made by a number of manufacturers in Pennsylvania.

On June 12, 1883 a patent was granted to Edward K. Rollins of Scranton, Pennsylvania, for a miner's lamp as shown in the patent illustration shown in Figure 1. The patent was assigned to Hunt Brothers and Company (Limited) of Scranton. The essential feature of the patent is the one piece cylindrical body and spout with soldered seams only at the top of the spout and at the back of the cylinder. This eliminated the soldered seam normally found between the spout and the lamp body. The patent logically claimed that the lamp would not leak oil as readily as lamps with conventional

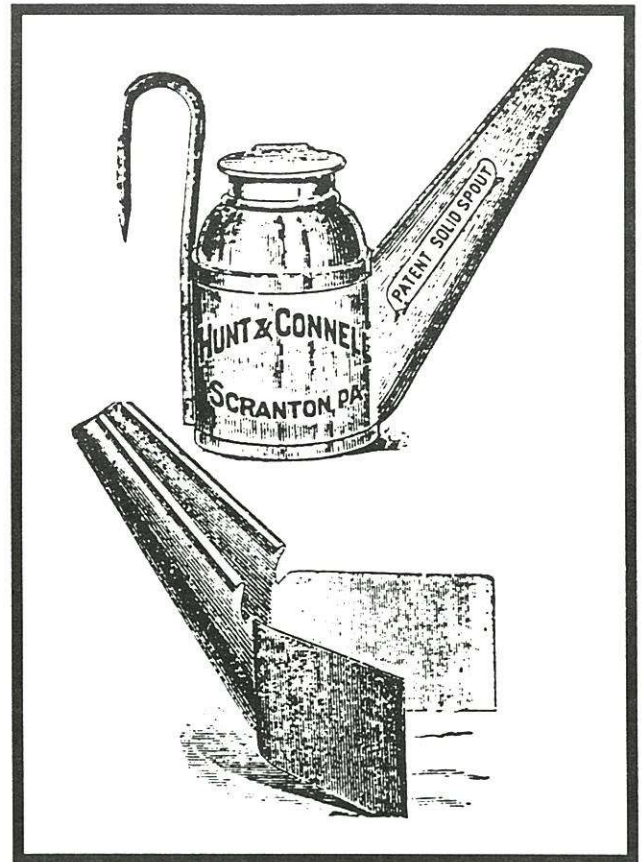


Figure 2. The solid spout miner's lamp as illustrated in *The Engineering and Mining Journal*.

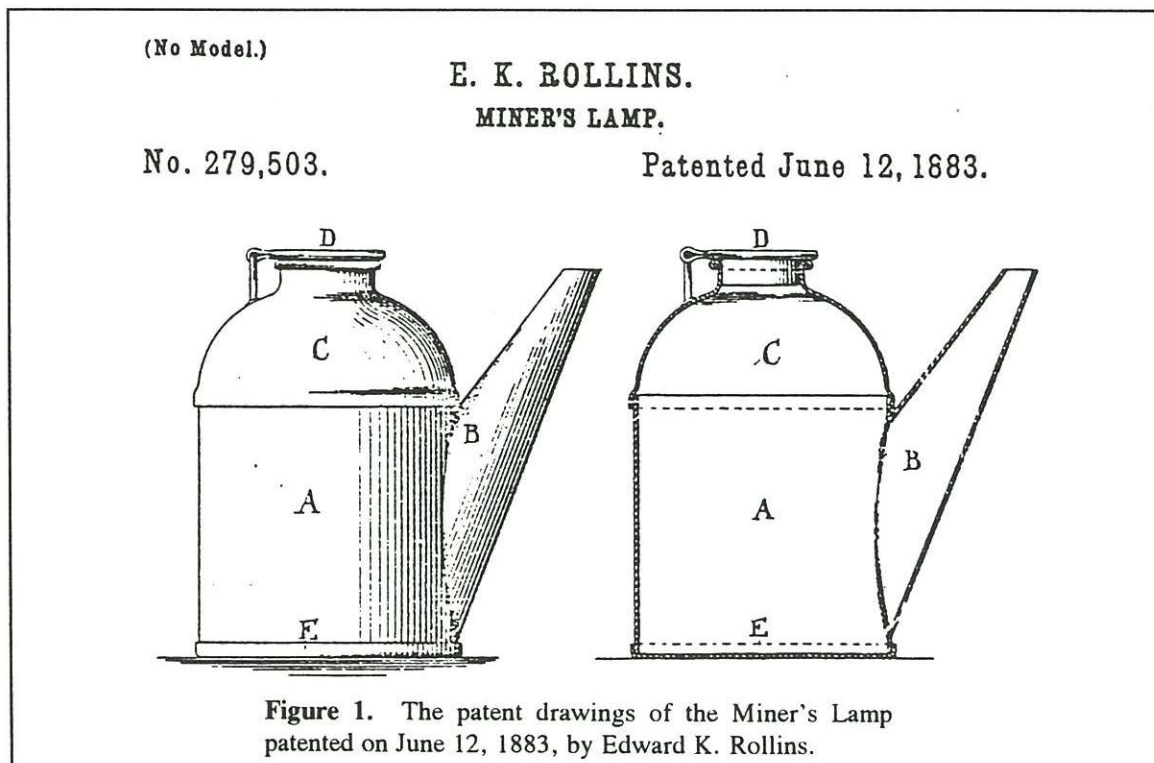


Figure 1. The patent drawings of the Miner's Lamp patented on June 12, 1883, by Edward K. Rollins.

construction. Excessive heat would sometimes melt the spout/body seam in conventional lamps and many of us have seen well used oil wicks with this problem.

The lamp was given publicity in the July 31, 1886 edition of *The Engineering and Mining Journal*, one of the very few articles on oil wick lamps in this publication. The *E & MJ* illustration is shown in Figure 2 and, as can be seen, the lamp was now made by Hunt & Connell of Scranton.

The author has six examples of this lamp in his collection and these are shown in Figures 3, 4, and 5. The lamps in Figures 3 and 4 are essentially identical except for the maker's markings and the hook details. The lamps in Figure 5 were both made by Trethaway and have



**Figure 5.** Oil wick lamps made by Trethaway Brothers of Parsons, Pennsylvania. The lamp on the left is marked Alex E. Hunt, while the lamp on the right with the unusual flat hook is marked Trethaway Bros.

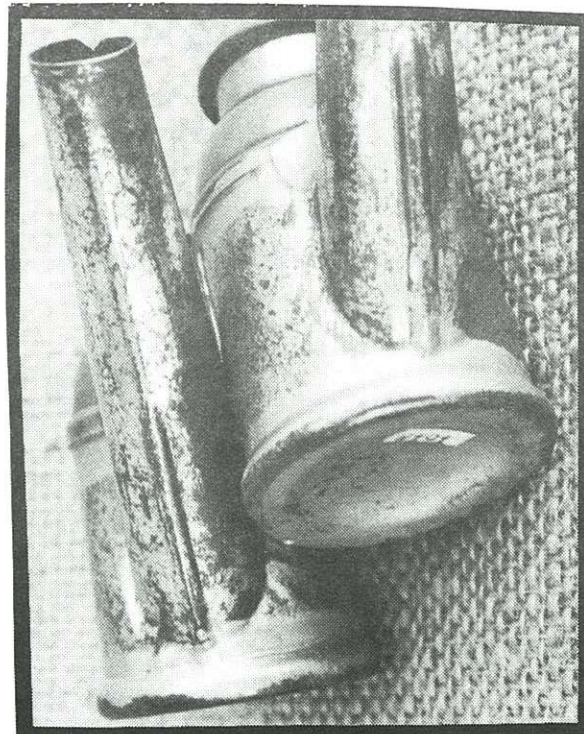


**Figure 3.** Oil wick lamps by Hunt & Connell (left) and Quinn & Murray (right) both of Scranton.



**Figure 4.** Oil Wick Lamps made by Alex E. Hunt of Scranton. Note the unusual double and flat hooks.

the characteristic hollow, curved base. Both of these lamps have an unusual reinforcing rib at the base of the spout as shown in Figure 6. All the lamps are tin except for the upper curved portion of the body which is brass. The markings on the various lamps are shown in Figure 7.



**Figure 6.** Details of the lamps by Trethaway showing the reinforcing rib at the base of the spout.

HUNT & CONNELL  
PAT'D  
JUNE 12  
1883 PA.  
SCRANTON, PA.

QUINN & MURRAY  
MAKERS  
SCRANTON PA.

ALEX E. HUNT  
SCRANTON, PA.

TRETHAWAY  
BROS.  
PARSONS, PA.

Figure 7. The markings on the solid spout oil wick lamps. Alex E. Hunt marking has two lettering styles, one roman and the other straight letters.

## THE BUCKEYE CARBIDE

### AREA LAMP

by Errol Christman  
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I recently got a large area carbide lamp that I did not have before. The lamp is called "The Buckeye" and is painted black with yellow letters. I was also able to get an advertisement insert flyer for this brand of lamp. The flyer is 9 inches high by 8 inches wide and a portion of it is shown to the right.

PRICE, Each \$7.50

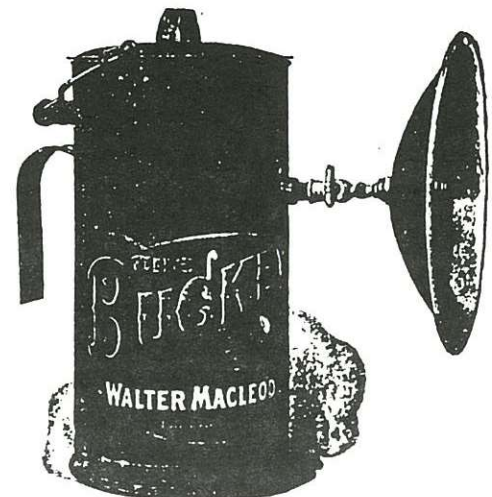
Throws a strong, white light, and is indispensable around mines

Weight, 10 lbs.

Size,  
6x12 inches

Carbide  
Charge, 2 lbs.

PRICE  
Each .. \$15



"BUILDER" PATTERN