

ANOTHER AMERICAN SAFETY LAMP MANUFACTURER:
Handlan-Buck Mfg. Co.

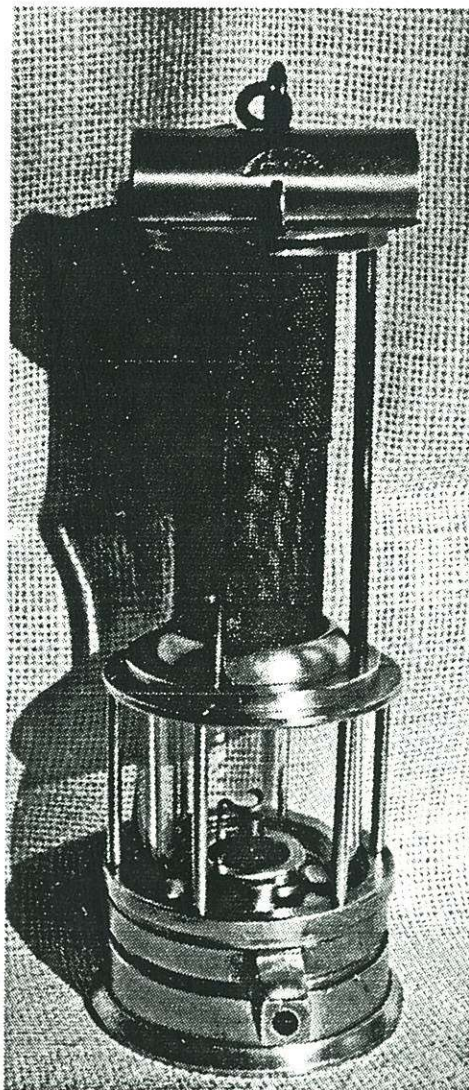
Dave Johnson

An oil wick lamp produced by *M. M. Buck & Co.* of St. Louis has been previously reported.¹ *M. M. Buck* were in the business of manufacturing and wholesaling railroad headlamps, lanterns and supplies from at least 1869 to 1902. I have seen two railroad lanterns marked *M. M. Buck & Co.* at railroad memorabilia shows.

Recently I have acquired, through trade, a beautiful unbonnetted Clanny safety lamp marked Handlan-Buck Mfg. Co. St. Louis. Believing there to be a link between my *M. M. Buck* oilwick and this Handlan-Buck safety lamp I contacted the St. Louis County Library. They were nice enough to send me photocopies from the 1906 and 1912 Book of St. Louisans and the 1899 Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis.

From these sources I learned that *M. M. Buck & Co.* was established in 1845 and manufactured railroad supplies. In 1895 Alexander H. Handlan bought out Mayron M. Buck and changed the firms name to the *M. M. Buck Manufacturing Co.* In 1901, Handlan changed the firm name to the *Handlan-Buck Manufacturing Co.* The firm is listed as manufacturing signal lamps, lanterns, headlamps, truck drills, metal flags, machine shop, mill foundry and mine supplies.

Alexander Hamilton Handlan was born in Wheeling, Virginia (now W.V.) on April 25, 1844, the son of riverboat Captain Alexander H. Handlan. The junior Handlan served



in the Quartermaster Corps. during the Civil War. He moved to St. Louis in October of 1868 and took a job with *M. M. Buck & Co.* He later became a partner in the firm and in 1895 bought out his partner, who was by then rather aged. Handlan was at the same time President of the Handlan Warehouse Co., President of the Marquette Trust Co., owner of the Planters Hotel and Vice-President of the citizens Bank.

His son, Alexander H. Handlan, served as Secretary and Manager of the Handlan-Buck Manufacturing Co., as well as Director of the Handlan Warehouse Co. Another son, Eugene W. Handlan, served as Vice-President and Treasurer of the Handlan Buck Manufacturing Co., Director of the citizens Bank. Secretary and Treasurer of the Marquette Trust Co. and Home Silver Mining Co.

The safety lamp shown here is marked Handlan-Buck Mfg. Co. St. Louis on the top and on the base. The entire lamp is manufactured of brass with the exception of the 3 steel upper posts, the hook and gauze. The entire lamp differs from any other American brand safety lamp I have seen. No parts from Everhart, American Safety Lamp & Mine Supply Co. or Hughes Bros. are compatible with this lamp. What we have is a new American manufacturer's namebrand safety lamp.

The lamp measures 9 1/2 inches tall, 1 5/8 inches to the base of the glass, 3 3/4 inches to the top of the glass, and 8 1/2 inches tall to the top of the upper posts. There are 6 lower brass posts around the glass. There is a wire wick raiser and set screw lock for the base. The lamp is very well constructed.

Clemmer has speculated that Handlan-Buck may have manufactured the S.E. Simmons carbide cap lamp. Has any other collector seen or heard of another example of a lamp by this manufacturer?