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Joseph B. Cooke safety lamp

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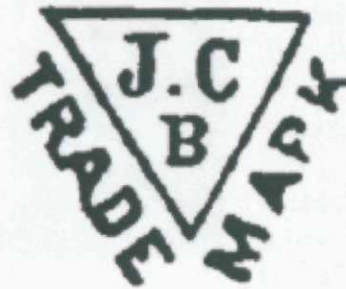
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Safety Lamp

by Jim Van Fleet

I'm happy to report a lamp find from central Pennsylvania, a fairly unusual one from the home turf of American Safety and Mine Supply and other US lamp manufacturers. When I found this beauty in a local antique shop, all I knew was that it was a Davy style safety lamp, and I guessed it might be from a European maker. The lamp top bears a very faint maker's stamp, possibly a triangle, with the letters C and B visible.



The original owner was

proud of this lamp, or very protective, and had his name stamped on it in large bold letters, both on the oil font and the lamp body. 'Edwin W. Davies' was my second clue that this was likely a British or Welsh safety lamp.





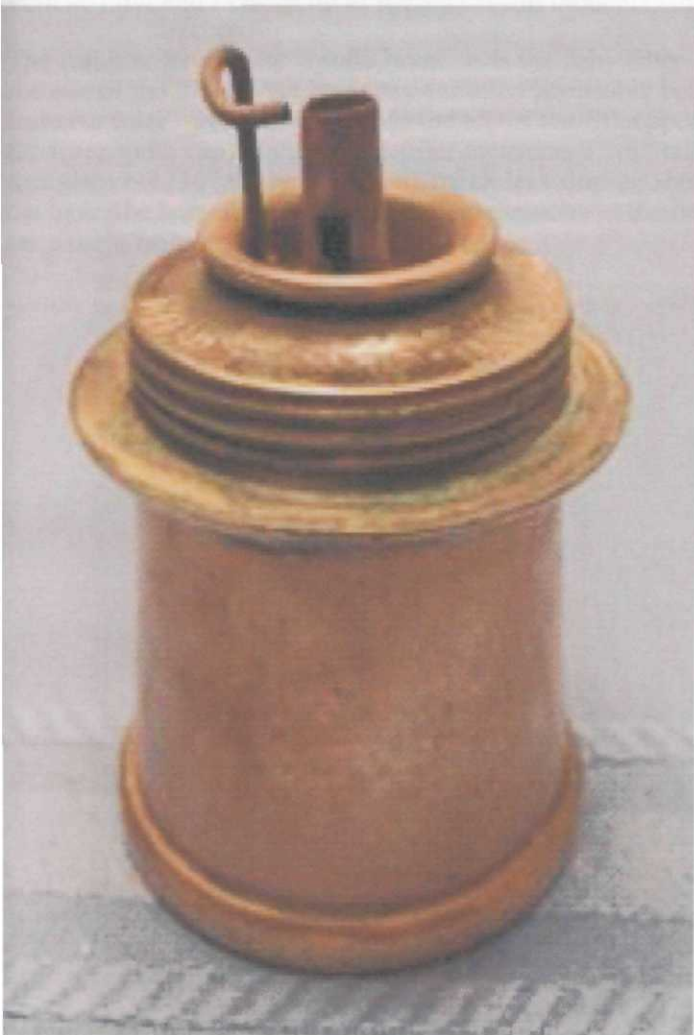
In the age of the Internet and instant gratification, it took me only one day and two emails to find out what I wanted to know! Manfred Stutzer, the Eureka! correspondent and resident expert on safety lamps suggested that the maker was Joseph Cooke, Birmingham. David Barrie, author of *The Wand of Science* reference book and web site (<http://www.thewandofscience.co.uk/>) confirms the maker, and sent me

some very helpful text and images from his safety lamp references, including a drawing of the complete logo. The stamped numeral 10 on both the lock and the oil font is also a common Cooke feature.

As David points out, the hinged wind shield "was a Cooke speciality; you could just open it when you needed to do a gas test, closing it when the ventilation current was too strong." Joseph Cooke apparently made safety lamps in Birmingham from 1854 to 1918. Having found out this much so easily, I did some genealogical research and found an Edwin W. Davies, born in Mountain Ash, Wales in 1864. He emigrated to the United States in 1884 and lived in Kinston, PA where he worked as a superintendent at a coal mine. A passport photo from 1923 is shown right.



The lamp body is brass, including the hook and the locking eye on top. It stands 8 inches tall not counting the hook. The hinged parts of the wind shield are held together with a wire pin, possibly steel. The wick holder and wick "pricker" inside the oil font look like they are steel. The very bottom of the lamp is also steel, and these all show some minor rust. The lock is a simple threaded steel screw. Although the lamp appears to have been polished with Brasso or some similar white paste (which fills in the lettering and makes Edwin's name stand out), it is still an amazing example of preservation and the durability of brass.



Baby Wolf Safety Lamp Filler by Dave Johnson

It seems there is no end to the new mining artifacts that keep appearing. Anyone other than a newbie artifact collector is aware of the full-size and baby Wolf safet Most collectors, if they don't own one, have at least seen the Wolf safety lamp filler, but how many of us have seen a Baby

