

# Fairy Lamp Club Newsletter

Articles combined from several issues

## CLARKE'S FOOD WARMER AND THE PANNIKIN - PART I by Jim

I have wanted to write about Clarke's food warmer for some time. It is without a doubt the most frequently asked question – "What is this thing?"

Originally, I considered this to be a simple article with a brief explanation that I could use to answer all those who inquired about them. The more information I collected, however, the more I grew to appreciate its long history and the role it played in making the name "Clarke" the most recognized name in fairy lamps. A simple explanation just would not do. A more in-depth article was needed.

For many of us, Clarke's food warmer is often incorrectly referred to as a "Pannikin." It is an object of mixed interest – either you love them or you hate them. There are few without an opinion when it comes to this unusual device.

### Exactly what is a Pannikin?

Almost every reference defines Pannikin as: a noun \pa-ni-kən\ pan + -nikin (as in cannikin) "a small pan or cup (*usually made of tin*). It is a British term dating back to 1823.<sup>1</sup>



In the case of Clarke's food warmer, the "Pannikin" is the pottery cup used to hold the food or beverage.

The term "food warmer" refers to the complete device which includes the Pannikin, nursery hand lamp, tin stand and separate water reservoir.



The following photo illustrates the relative sizes of three of the four known sizes of food warmers (three shown on the left). The fourth food warmer shown in this photo is a different design but is well documented.<sup>2</sup> I will highlight the features of this unique food warmer a little later.



Photo: *Fairy Lamps* by Ruf & Ruf, Appendix B, pg. 230

This photo also shows how each stand was "adjusted" to accommodate the various sizes of Pannikin. The base is the same on each

<sup>1</sup> [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pannikin](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pannikin)

<sup>2</sup> A complete description of each of these food warmers is available in *Fairy Lamps* by Ruf, Appendix B.

size food warmer and the legs were adjusted to fit the size of the water cup and Pannikin. Also in the photo, third from the left, there is no handled brass holder for the shade. Is it missing? Perhaps – perhaps not. I will discuss that a little latter.

Clarke's Pannikin came in four sizes: No. 1 - ½ pint, No. 2 - ¾ pint, No. 3 - 1 pint, and No. 4 - 1½ pints.<sup>3</sup> While documentation exists that identifies four sizes of Pannikin, most advertisements and catalog prices only include three sizes, Numbers 1, 2, and 3. The largest size, No. 4 1½ pint is rarely advertised and, to the best of my knowledge, no one has any in their collection. It is not clear if this size was a late entry to the line or an early option that was discontinued.

It is important to note that "pint" refers to the British measure, or about 20 ounces, compared to the U.S. pint, 16 ounces.

### **U.S. and British Patents and British Registration Dates**

From a simple beginning Clarke grew into a thriving candle manufacturing business. If it were not for Clarke's creative development of devices to use his candles, however, I doubt that many would even remember who he was.

It was in 1857 that Clarke patented his first night light hand lamp, later to become known as "The Burglars Horror" and "Pyramid Nursery Lamp."

In Clarke's original patent description for the hand lamp, shown below, he clearly explains the purpose of the shallow porcelain candle cup was to hold water and he suggests that the handled brass tray could be used with or without a domed shade or porcelain cup.



September 29, 1857- Patent No 2505

CLARKE, Samuel. - Improvements in apparatus for burning "night lights and mortars." A tray with raised sides and a handle is made of such size as to conveniently admit into the middle of it a small dish containing water. A night light encased in paper or other material is placed in the dish. The sides serve as a gallery for a glass chimney which is cylindrical and "made with a comparatively small hole at the domed top." In the sides "and within the glass" are numerous small air holes.

If the night light is made without a cover, the dish is dispensed with, and a glass for the reception of the night light is placed in the middle of the tray.

Samuel Clarke's patent for his first night light hand lamp was a modest beginning to what was to be known as a "fairy lamp" some thirty years later.

It was this simple hand lamp that became the heat source for Clarke's "Pyramid" Nursery Lamp Food Warmer.

---

<sup>3</sup> Advertisement for Clarke's New and Improved Food Warmer, *Clarke's Fairy Lamps* by Dorothy Tibbetts.



As indicated in this advertisement,<sup>4</sup> Clarke's "Pyramid" Nursery Lamp and Food Warmer were patented in England on December 27, 1883, Patent Number 5877.<sup>5</sup>

It is important to note, however, that Clarke's "Pyramid" Nursery Lamp Food Warmer was introduced much earlier than the British patent date indicated in the ad.

**MOSCOW EXHIBITION, 1872.**  
1<sup>ST</sup> AWARD—FIRST GRAND SILVER MEDAL TO SAMUEL CLARKE, LONDON, FOR HIS PATENT PYRAMID NIGHT LAMP FOOD WARMER.  
2<sup>ND</sup> AWARD—FIRST GRAND SILVER MEDAL TO SAMUEL CLARKE, LONDON, FOR HIS PATENT PYRAMID NIGHT LIGHTS.  
PRIZE MEDAL AWARDED, LONDON 1873.  
Prize Medal Awarded at the Paris Exposition, 1867.  
**SAMUEL CLARKE'S**  
**PYRAMID NURSERY LAMPS & FOOD WARMERS.**

In this advertisement dated July 3, 1881 from an unknown periodical, Clarke promotes several awards he received for the "Pyramid" Nursery Lamp and Food Warmer. The awards were:

PARIS EXPOSITION – 1867<sup>6</sup>

- Prize Medal Awarded

MOSCOW EXPOSITION – 1872<sup>7</sup>

- First Grand Silver Medal for his Patent Pyramid Night Light Food Warmer
- First Grand Silver Medal for his Patent Pyramid Night Lights

LONDON EXPOSITION – 1873<sup>8</sup>

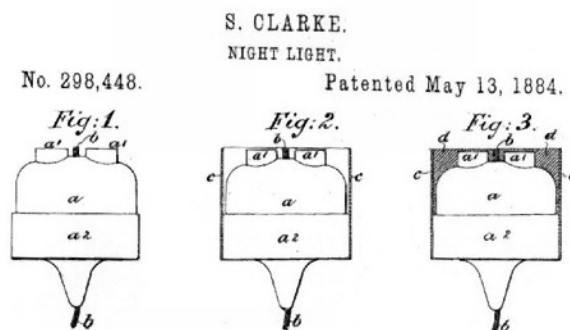
- Prize Medal Awarded

There are other awards, but these are among the earliest.

In the same ad that mentioned the British patent date, there was also a reference to an American patent number 298,448 dated May 13, 1884. This U.S. patent is a little easier to research. There is, however, a problem.

### Clarke U.S. Patent 298,448 – Night Light

This U.S. patent number is assigned to Clarke's improved candle, or night light.



There is no reference to Clarke's "Pyramid" Nursery Lamp, Food Warmer, or even a Pannikin. But, let's not give up too soon.

While searching for other U.S. Clarke patents, I discovered the patent for the Pannikin, patent number 399,742, March 19, 1889 and the Food Warmer, patent number 334,747, January 26, 1886. It is interesting to note that this "improved" Pannikin was

<sup>4</sup> Considered to be from the Illustrated London News, c. 1890.

<sup>5</sup> I have made several efforts to locate this patent at the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) in the UK but without success.

<sup>6</sup> Universal Exposition, April 1 - November 3, 1867; 41 countries participated with 52,000 exhibitors. [www.expo2000.de/expo2000](http://www.expo2000.de/expo2000).

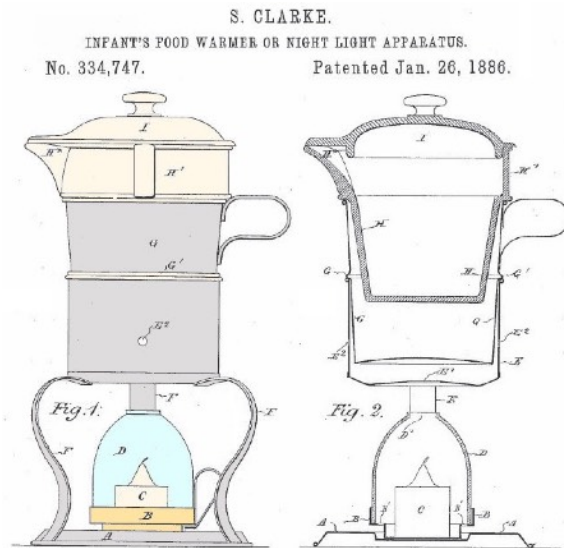
<sup>7</sup> Polytechnic Exhibition – May 30 – to the end of 1872. [www.russianmuseums.info](http://www.russianmuseums.info)

<sup>8</sup> Third Annual International Exhibition, April 14 - October 31, 1873. [www.calisto.slv.vic.gov.au](http://www.calisto.slv.vic.gov.au)



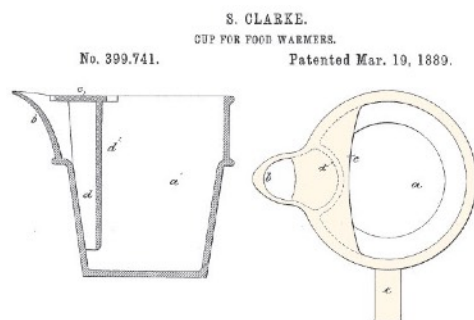
patented over three years after the food warmer was patented in the U.S.

### Clarke U.S. Patent 334747 – Infant's Food Warmer or Night Light Apparatus



This patent drawing shows Clarke's food warmer just about as we know it today. It includes all the principle components; the stand supporting the hot air chamber, the water reservoir that fits on top of and within the hot air chamber, the earthenware cup and lid (Pannikin), and of course, the handled night lamp with glass dome and a pyramid candle. The only component that appears to be missing is the handle for the stand that is attached to the hot air chamber. An oversight that was probably quickly remedied the first time it was put to use.

### Clarke U.S. Patent 399741 – Cup for Food Warmers



In the description of this cup Clarke explains the purpose of the design:

*"The object of my invention is to form cups of this kind in such a manner that food may be readily be poured out or drunk up from them without spilling, and also in such manner that any grease or scum floating on the surface may be stopped back and retained within the cup."*

This is an interesting description in that it refers to drinking from the cup. That explains why the handle is 90 degrees from the spout. It is also interesting that the cup is designed for a right-handed person and does not include a separate lid. The lid, with a minor modification, would be added later.



Pottery Gazette January 1, 1889 <sup>9</sup>

This improved Pannikin had already received a British Registered Design Number 91241 on January 11, 1889, fifteen months prior to the granting of the U.S. patent.<sup>10</sup> The "old shape" referred in the advertisement is the shape shown in Clarke's U.S. Patent 334747 – Infant's Food Warmer or Night Light Apparatus.

### Clarke's Food Warmer Advertisements

There is no doubt that Clarke spared no expense when it came to advertising his products. He was indeed a marketing genius and his skills were generously applied to marketing his food warmers. These ads are

<sup>9</sup> This ad from the Pottery Gazette, January 1, 1889 clearly shows the Rd number 91241 which was not granted until January 11, 1889.

<sup>10</sup> The application for the U.S. patent was filed on May 21, 1888, less than six months after the granting of the U.K. Registered Design.

an invaluable source of information and provide insight into the options offered to his customers and correct terminology.

The following are just a few things gleaned from various advertisements:

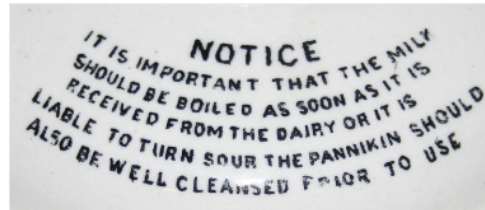
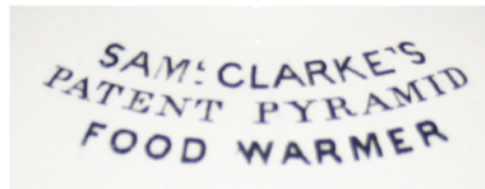
- The correct name for the food warmer is "Clarke's 'Pyramid' Nursery Lamp Food Warmer" or simply "Pyramid" Nursery Lamp.
- Replacement components, i.e. lid, porcelain Pannikin, tin Pannikin, and night lamp were sold separately.
- The food warmer was offered without the Pannikin to be used only as a means to heat water.
- The term "Pannikin" was occasionally spelled "Panakin."
- Shades for the Night Lamp (Burglar's Horror) were offered in clear, frosted, and opaline glass.
- An unknown U.S. distributor was at 25 & 27 Exchange Alley, Newark, New Jersey.
- The brass tray for the Night Light was offered in lacquered or bronzed.
- Various vaporizers were available to be used in place of the Pannikin.
- The half-pint food warmer was offered in a "cheaper quality" at a reduced cost.

## Markings

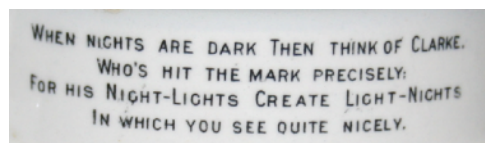
There is little doubt that Clarke's food warmer, Pannikin, nursery lamp, and pyramid night light are the most "decorated" of all of Clarke's products. They are covered with Clarke's advertisements, registered design numbers, slogans, and yes, even warning labels. The following are a few examples worth noting.

### *The Pannikin*

The Pannikin itself has been documented containing the following labels and designs.



This label is often found on the inside of the lid and on the outside of the Pannikin. It is also found with and without the reference to the U.S. patent.



Very few Pannikins are marked with the size and price. It is interesting that Clarke would "permanently mark" his Pannikin with the price. In this case the price, 6 shillings, would have been for a complete "Clarke's Pyramid Nursery Lamp Food Warmer."

The Registered Design number — R<sup>d</sup> 91241 is also found on Clarke's "Improved Pannikin."

Finally, on the side of the cup is a stylized version of the British Royal Family Coat of Arms.



The official British Royal Family Coat of Arms, shown below, is worthy of explanation.



On the left, the shield is supported by the English Lion. On the right it is supported by the Unicorn of Scotland.<sup>11</sup>

The coat features on the banner below the shield the motto of British Monarchs:

**DIEU ET MON DROIT**

*(God and my right)*

On the belt around the shield, known as the Order of the Garter, is the expression:

**HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y  
PENSE**

*(Evil to him who evil thinks).*<sup>12</sup>

This statement supposedly originated when King Edward III was dancing with the Countess of Salisbury. Her garter slipped down to her ankle, causing those around her to respond with sniggers at her humiliation. In an act of chivalry Edward placed the garter around his own leg, saying, "Honi soit qui mal y pense", and the phrase later became the motto of the Order of the Garter.<sup>13</sup>

The shield is quartered; the first and fourth quarters are the three guardian lions of England; in the second quadrant the rampant lion of Scotland; and in the third, a harp for Ireland.

In consideration of others who have contributed to this issue, I will continue this article in the next issue of the newsletter.

#### **CLARKE'S FOOD WARMER & THE PANNIKIN – PART II** by Jim

This article is continued from FL-XLIX-5. The previous article covered:

- What is a Pannikin?
- U.S. and British Patents and British Registration Dates
- Clarke U.S. Patent 298,448 – Night Light
- Clarke U.S. Patent 334,747 – Infant's Food Warmer or Night Light Apparatus
- Clarke U.S. Patent 399,741 – Cup for Food Warmers
- Clarke's Food Warmer Advertisements
- Markings

One would think we have exhausted all the information available on the Clarke's Food Warmer, however, as you will see in this article, we have only begun to scratch the surface of this utilitarian device.

*The Water Reservoir*

<sup>11</sup> The unicorn is chained because in mediaeval times a free unicorn was considered a very dangerous beast. Only a Virgin was able to tame the beast.

<sup>12</sup> [www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk](http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk)

<sup>13</sup> [www.en.wikipedia.org](http://www.en.wikipedia.org)



The water reservoir is a simple tin cup that holds the water for the Pannikin to sit in.



It is usually unmarked but there are some interesting exceptions.

The cup has been found stamped:

- Trade Mark Pyramid
- Trade Mark Fairy
- Cricklite
- It has also been found with an oval brass plaque marked "Clarke's....."

Since the trade names, "Fairy", "Pyramid", and "Cricklite" were registered over a nine year period, 1880-1889, it would seem to be logical that they could be used to help date the food warmer. However, specific trade names, such as "Pyramid" had been used long before and after they were registered.<sup>14</sup>



Occasionally, however, all three trade names are found together on the same water reservoir.



In this case, I think it is pretty safe to assume that the food warmer was produced after the trade name "Cricklite" was registered in 1889. (*But, not necessarily.*)

#### *The Food Warmer Stand*

The food warmer stand is designed to support the water reservoir, Pannikin, and the Nursery Lamp. As discussed previously, the base remains the same and the legs and heat chamber are adjusted to accommodate the various sizes of Pannikin and water reservoir.



The stand is typically marked in two places.



On the top of the stand, around the heat chamber, is an embossed brass plaque that is soldered to the tin stand. It is typically embossed "Clarke's Pyramid Food Warmer."

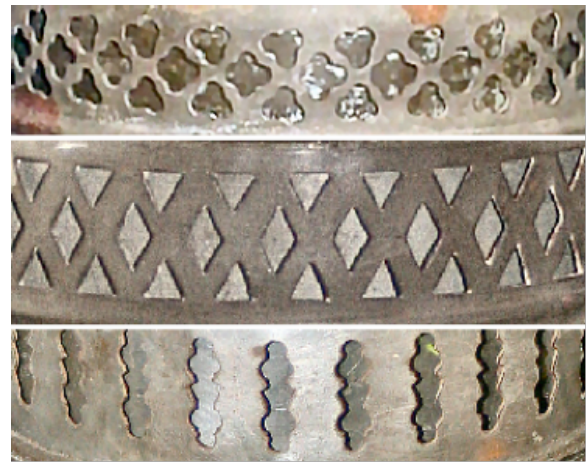
<sup>14</sup> [\*Antique Glass & China\*](#), Geoffrey Gooden, 1966.



The base of the stand is embossed "Clarke's Pyramid Food Warmer" twice around the area reserved for the Nursery Lamp. This embossing is common to most stands and is typically shown in Clarke's advertisements. There are, however, 1881 advertisements showing the stand with no embossing.

The base of the stand is surrounded with a series of air holes, both outside the legs and inside where the Nursery Lamp rests. Considering how irregular the spacing of the holes is, it would appear that they were hand punched. Then again, I suspect the entire tin stand was fabricated one at a time by hand — a very labor intensive project to be sure.

The heat chamber portion of the stand is perforated to allow the heat to flow around the water chamber and escape.<sup>15</sup> The perforations are always present but of different designs.



Perhaps the design of the perforations could indicate a specific time period, but they could also be an indicator of a manufacturer.

### *The Nursery Lamp*

Clarke's Nursery Lamp — also referred to as the "Burglar's Horror" in some advertisements — is typically comprised of three parts; the handled brass lamp cup, the pottery candle cup, and the glass shade. However, we know from Clarke's patent description that the lamp can be used with or without the pottery candle cup.<sup>16</sup>



In nearly every advertisement of the Nursery Lamp shown in connection with a food warmer, the shade is clear. Yet, most examples are found with a ribbed shade in either clear or frosted and the shade is often

<sup>15</sup> The purpose of the openings in the heat chamber was described (but not illustrated) in Clarke's U.S. Patent Number 334,747 granted in 1886.

<sup>16</sup> The use of the pottery candle cup was described in Clarke's 1857 "Improvements in apparatus for burning night lights and mortars" British Patent Number 2505.



(but not always) embossed on the inside "S. Clarke's Trade Mark Pyramid."



We also know from an undated advertisement that the shades were offered in clear, roughed (frosted), and opaline.<sup>17</sup>



The brass lamp cup is typically embossed on the bottom "S. Clarke's Trade Mark Pyramid" — the same embossing found on the ribbed shades. They are also found with no embossing or embossed with "S. Clarke's Fairy Patent Trade Mark Pyramid".<sup>18</sup>



The handle of the Nursery Lamp is embossed: "For Burning The Pyramid Night Lights Sam<sup>L</sup> Clarke Patentee."

The word "Patentee" may or may not be present. Again, this could be a possible indicator of the date of manufacture.

In addition to the common brass lamp cup, there is a seemingly rare pottery variant.<sup>19</sup>



It is not clear, however, that this variant was to be used with a food warmer, although it certainly could have. The sturdiness of the pottery lamp cup would make it more suitable as a stand alone hand lamp.



One of the most unusual features of the lamp cup is the integral candle cup. It is molded right into the base and is marked "For Clarke's Patent Pyramid Night Lights" and includes Clarke's trademark. The base is also embossed with "88" on the bottom. In all likelihood, this is a maker's mark. However, could it also be a date (1888)?

<sup>17</sup> In addition to a selection of shades, this same advertisement indicates that a "tin Pannikin" was also available. (Ref. Pull6000.jpg)

<sup>18</sup> For additional information on Clarke's Nursery Lamp read "Clarke's Patented Hand Lamp – 1857", FL-XXXVIII-8.

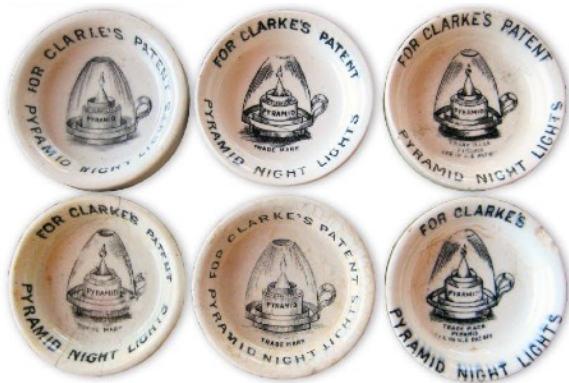
<sup>19</sup> Also identified as U-155.

### *Pottery Candle Cup*

The pottery candle cup is typically missing from the Nursery Lamps, probably due to its small size and less than obvious purpose — even though it is shown in the trademark illustration.



The pottery candle cup was designed to hold a small amount of water for the candle to rest in.<sup>20</sup> It is found with a variety of different markings.



Perhaps the different markings can be attributed to the very long period (over 50 years) the pottery candle cups were in production. The hand lamp trademark shown in the center of each candle cup was registered in 1876<sup>21</sup> but was likely in use for many years prior.

One of the designs reads: "Reg. in US Patent Off." It is not clear, however, if this refers to

the trademark itself or the Pyramid candles in general.<sup>22</sup>

### *Variants to the Food Warmer*

Considering the long period that the Clarke's Food Warmer was in production, it should be no surprise that there are variations to the design. Some of these variations may have seen limited production and are seldom found.

The first of these variants was illustrated in *Fairy Lamps* by Ruf & Ruf, Appendix B, pg. 230. For lack of a better term, I refer to this food warmer as the "straight-legged" variant.



It has many unusual features, some obvious, some not so obvious. The most obvious may be the Pannikin itself.



The Pannikin has no integral finger handle. Instead it has a tin handle attached to a tin

<sup>20</sup> Clarke's original patent No 2505, September 29, 1857.

<sup>21</sup> *Antique Glass and China - A Guide for the Beginning Collector* by Geoffrey Godden, pg.86.

<sup>22</sup> There are several U.S. Patents related to Clarke's candles – U.S. Patent Nos 298,448 (1884), 329,536 (1885), and 343,567 (1886).

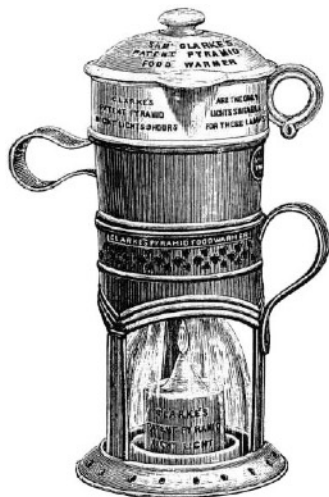
band that goes around the cup and is formed to fit around the spout. As you see, the spout does not include the "pour from the bottom" feature that Clarke so heavily promoted.<sup>23</sup> In addition, the Pannikin lid has a tab that extends over the spout which is common prior to the Clarke's "Improved Pannikin" design.

The Pannikin, typically covered in advertising, is only marked once on the lid with "Sam<sup>L</sup> Clarke's Patent Pyramid Food Warmer."

Some additional features of this food warmer include:

- The water reservoir is unmarked.
- The stand is marked on a brass plaque "Pyramid Food Warmer." It does not include the name "Clarke."
- The handle on the stand appears to be of a heavy metal instead of formed tin.
- Finally, the stand is too small to accept the fairy-size Nursery Lamp. The stand is shown with a pyramid-size fairy lamp but even that does not fit very well.

While this design is a rarely seen variant, a very similar model is well documented in Clarke's 1888 Catalog Price List.



While this illustration is not exactly like the photo, it illustrates one very important design feature. It was not designed to take the

Nursery Lamp with the handled brass lamp cup. Instead, it was designed to take only a glass shade, pottery candle cup, and of course, a pyramid candle. This explains why the complete Nursery Lamp will not fit within the stand and, equally important, why there are air holes within the center section of the base.

Another interesting feature of this stand is the circular label (barely visible in the drawing) on the water reservoir. I was fortunate to see this model recently and the circular label is a brass plaque marked with Clarke's name. The exact wording I am unable to recall. (*I was not fortunate enough to have my camera with me.*)

While this variant of the Food Warmer is well documented, others remain a complete mystery.



This unusual stand is shown with a pyramid-size fairy lamp, water reservoir, and Pannikin. However, it is not known if this unusual stand was designed to be a food warmer. It may have had another unknown purpose entirely.

The stand is approximately 5 5/8" high and 5 5/8" diameter. The bent metal legs and rings are riveted together and painted green. The carrying handle is attached to one of the legs. The stand is embossed around the bottom ring "S. Clarke Pyramid Trade Mark". The

<sup>23</sup> Clarke U.S. Patent 399,741 – Cup for Food Warmers, March 19, 1889.



pyramid-size lamp cup fits nicely in the tapered supporting ring. (The handled brass lamp cup will not fit within the stand.) A No. 1, half pint, water reservoir and Pannikin fit nicely in the upper supporting ring.

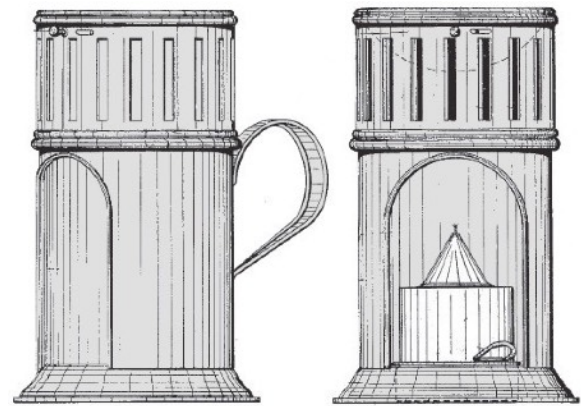
The following unusual stand consists of a Clarke Pannikin, a tin water reservoir, and a pierced tin tapered base with an opening to accept a heat source, presumed to be a candle but may have been designed to accept a small oil lamp.<sup>24</sup>

I have included this unusual device as a preamble to the next article, *Clarke Vaporizers, Inhalers, and Kettles*.



I think this stand has been adapted to fit the Clarke Pannikin and was perhaps a vaporizer produced by another company competing for Clarke's share of the market.

While not the same design, the following U.S. Patent was issued to Arthur Chambers, Thorncliffe, England on September 27, 1898 — about the same period that Clarke was promoting his own line of medical vaporizers.



The design uses a concave cup to hold the medication to be vaporized. The candle is held in place by a tin cup with a ring handle. What is most interesting is that the patent description promotes the use of Clarke's pyramid candles.

The patent description reads:

*"The holder receives the lower end of a candle of the kind well known and largely used as 'pyramid night lights' which when once lighted are capable of giving, without attention, a steady flame for many hours."*

On one hand Mr. Chambers endorses the use of Clarke's candles and, at the same time, is competing for his share of the vaporizer market.

It is an interesting device but I believe it to be an inappropriate marriage. I would love to be proven incorrect.

### **CLARKE'S VAPORIZERS, INHALERS, & KETTLES** by Jim

There is little doubt that Clarke had a successful product in his line of food warmers. Not being one to rest upon his successes, he adapted the same tin stand and Nursery Lamp to market a line of vaporizers, inhalers, and kettles. Once again, Clarke was adapting his product to fit the needs of his consumers.

These devices were used to vaporize medication to relieve congestion brought on by illnesses such as Bronchitis and

<sup>24</sup> Image source: Islington Artefacts Library, London, [www.objectlessons.org](http://www.objectlessons.org)

Influenza. The medication could have been simple home remedies or medications promoted to prevent contagious diseases. *(In at least one instance, Clarke even promoted his own brand of medication.)* The medication was vaporized into a steam to enable the patient to breathe it in while they slept or to breathe in by means of an inhaler.

The following advertisement, although undated, is typical of several published in the late 1880s through the 1890s. It illustrates how Clarke adapted his food warmer stand to accommodate "The Fairy Inhaler."

This design was registered by Clarke as R<sup>d</sup> N<sup>o</sup> 168132 on March 13, 1891. The complete device (Nursery Lamp, stand, and inhaler) was marketed as the "Bronchitis Lamp" even though the stand still carried the embossing "Clarke's Pyramid Food Warmer" on the base.



The porcelain inhalers came in three sizes to fit each size of food warmer stand.



The porcelain inhaler was used without the water reservoir. It apparently sat directly above the Nursery Lamp.

The inhaler had two porcelain tubes. One tube was be used to inhale the medicated steam. It was held in place with a cork at the top of the vessel. The second tube on the side (integral to the vessel) was used to allow air to enter the chamber when the inhaling tube was used.<sup>25</sup>



The inhaler is marked on both sides. One side reads:

**THE "FAIRY"**  
CLARKE'S REGISTERED  
**INHALER**  
N<sup>o</sup>. 168132

The reverse side reads:

<sup>25</sup> The exact purpose of the tubes is undocumented. The term "inhaler" has led me to this logical conclusion.

**CLARKE'S FAIRY "LIGHTS"**  
should be used in the lamp for the  
**INHALER & BRONCHITIS KETTLE.**

**PYRAMID LIGHTS**  
for warming food.

It is interesting to note that Clarke differentiates the use of Fairy Lights and Pyramid Lights (candles). Perhaps the Pyramid Lights did not produce enough heat to vaporize the medication and the double wick Fairy Lights were necessary to heat the fluid.

*(The term "Bronchitis Kettle" will be explained a little later.)*



This vaporizer was advertised in the *Pears Christmas Annual*, 1897.

The advertisement reads in part:

**"FAIRY" BRONCHITIS LAMP**  
Made in Copper  
*"Worth its weight in gold."*

The also states:

Double Wick "Fairy" Lights should be  
burned in this lamp.

And finally, the drawing of the vaporizer is marked:

**CLARKE'S**  
Trade  
**"CRICKLITE"**  
Mark

It is very curious that the trade name "Cricklite" is associated with this vaporizer. This trade name usually brings to mind another of Clarke's products.<sup>26</sup>



Unfortunately, I do not have a very good photo of this vaporizer. However, the water reservoir (kettle) with a wooden handle and the spout cap do indeed appear to be copper and the food warmer stand appears to be tin.

Finally, there is this advertisement from the *Illustrated London News*, January, 1892 promoting Clarke's "Fairy" Combination Lamp.<sup>27</sup>

The Combination Lamp includes a Pannikin, inhaler, kettle, and a stand that

<sup>26</sup> The trade name "Cricklite" was registered by Clarke in 1889 and is typically associated with Clarke's line of formal lighting.

<sup>27</sup> Image source: [www.allposters.com](http://www.allposters.com)



accommodates all three devices. And, of course, Clarke's Nursery Lamp is common to all purposes.



The description included with this advertisement clearly explains exactly what a "Fairy" Bronchitis Kettle is. In addition, it explains what Clarke's inhalers were used for and why they were important to have in the home. The advertisement reads in part:

**INVALUABLE TO SUFFERERS FROM  
BRONCHITIS, INFLUENZA, ETC.**

**FOR PREVENTION OF INFLUENZA**  
Clarke's specially prepared Bacillus  
Destroyer for use in the Combination Lamp

**FOR RELIEF OF BRONCHITIS, ASTHMA,  
ETC.**

Clarke's specific (Pine) Inhalation for use in  
the Inhaler.

The strong objection to the ordinary Bronchitis Kettle is that a fire in the bedroom is imperative and the amount of steam emitted is greatly in excess of what is required. The **"Fairy" Combination Invalid's Lamp** will diffuse the proper and equal amount of steam throughout the night by using the "double wick" Fairy Lights. Boiling water should be put in the Kettle and Inhaler.

When the "Inhaler" is required, simply remove the lid from the Kettle and place in the Inhaler, the contents of which will be kept at the proper temperature. The same instructions refer to the Registered China Pannikin when the Lamp is required as a Food Warmer.

It is interesting to note that the lid on the kettle is perforated to allow the steam to escape.

Clarke's vaporizers and inhalers were clearly utilitarian in nature. They served a specific purpose and he paid little attention to promoting the decorative qualities of his line of fairy lamps. Or, so it would seem.

There are several ads promoting the use of Clark's decorative fairy lamps in his vaporizers. None, however, are as impressive as this color version of Clarke's 1887 catalog advertisement.



This advertisement illustrates all three sizes of fairy lamps, No. 1a "Fairy", No. 2a "Pyramid", and No. 3a "Wee", each in a uniquely designed vaporizer stand.

I wish I had actual examples of each model to show you, but I only have one.



This is Clarke's Model No. 1a shown in the advertisement. It is a standard handled brass Nursery Lamp cup with a brass arm to hold the brass medication cup.<sup>28</sup> The handled brass lamp cup is marked as normal. In addition, the supporting brass arm is marked "Clarke's Pyramid Vaporizer."



In addition to the Nailsea shade, the vaporizer consists of a concave medication cup, Nursery Lamp handled brass cup with supporting arm, and a pottery candle cup.

I suspect many are wondering why are Clarke's food warmers and vaporizers so important. For me, the answer is simple. If it were not for the success of these utilitarian devices, Clarke's decorative fairy lamps may not have been developed. These devices are certainly the genesis of what was to follow and contributed greatly to Clarke's unsurpassed marketing skills.

Finally, I am deeply indebted to everyone who contributed photos and detailed information to support this article. They are Brian, John, Graham, Lloyd, and Connie. Without their support, this article would not have been possible.

### CLARKE'S FOOD WARMER AND PANNIKIN – PART III by Jim

Just when you thought you knew all there is to know about Clarke's Food Warmer, additional information shows up. For those of us who relish new information, this is good news. For others, prepare yourself for additional boring information related to this seemingly uninteresting and "ugly" device.

In Part II<sup>29</sup> of this series I went to great lengths discussing aspects of the Clarke's Food Warmer. I thought it was interesting, but I doubt that many shared my enthusiasm. Well, here we go again.

A subsection of the previous article was titled "*Variants to the Food Warmer.*" Included in the section were two variants that we had little information.



The variant shown on the left had never been seen before and, in addition to the unusual design, appeared to have a ring to support a pyramid-size fairy lamp.

The variant shown on the right was a documented "straight-legged" design, but

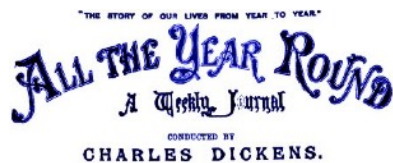
<sup>28</sup> A 1904 advertisement indicated that this vaporizer could be used for disinfectants or perfumes.

<sup>29</sup> FL-L-2, Clarke's Food Warmer & Pannikin – Part II, February 2009

the Pannikin has a metal band around the porcelain cup. What we did not know is: "Was the metal band original or added later?"

I am pleased to report that now we have additional information on both of these food warmer variants.

I am constantly on the hunt for information related to fairy lamps. Sometimes new information shows up when you least expect it. Such was the case recently when I was scanning through an 1889 issue of *All the Year Round – A Weekly Journal*, Volume 65.



This journal is a collection of short stories and other human interest articles. It is, for the most part, free of advertizing except for a few ads in the back of the publication. One of those ads certainly got my attention.

**CLARKE'S IMPROVED PANNIKINS (Registered)**  
**FOR USE WITH**  
**CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" NURSERY LAMPS.**

By this invention any liquid food can be poured out, or drunk, without scum or grease passing through the spout, and prevents spilling when poured into a Feeding Bottle, so objectionable with all other Pannikins. These Pannikins will fill the old "Pyramid" Nursery Lamps, and can be purchased separately. N.B.—Ask for CLARKE'S PANNIKIN, and see that his name and the registered number (Registered 91,342) is on the Pannikin, and trade mark "PYRAMID". Clarke's Patent "PYRAMID" or "FAIRY-PYRAMID" NURSERY LAMPS are the only Lamps suitable for these Lamps. No Panicle or other dangerous material used in the manufacture of Clarke's Lamps.

Complete with Registered Porcelain and Tin Pannikin, 2s. 6d. each.  
 Extra Registered Porcelain Pannikins, No. 1 .. 9d. each, " 2 .. 1s. " " 3 1s. 2d. "

Complete with Tin Pannikin only, 1s. 6d. each.  
 Extra Porcelain Lids, No. 1 .. 3d. each, " 2 .. 4d. " " 3 .. 6d. "

**THE 1888 "PYRAMID" NURSERY LAMP.**  
**CLARKE'S "PYRAMID" & "FAIRY LIGHT" FOOD-WARMER COMPANY, LIMITED.**  
 Works: Cricklewood, London, N.W. Show Room: 31, Ely Place, E.C.

There it was! The same unknown food warmer stand that was discussed in the previous article. This ad identifies the food warmer as

"THE 1888 'PYRAMID' NURSERY LAMP."

This ad also confirms that the ring is indeed designed to support a pyramid-size fairy lamp. While any standard pyramid-size lamp cup will likely fit, the illustration shows it with a lamp cup similar to R-45 and R-104.



It is similar because the swirled ribs on the lamp cup shown in the ad are to the left instead of the right. In addition, it is shown with a plain diamond-point shade instead of a shade that matches the lamp cup.

The second discovery came from the *Paris Universal Exposition of 1867 – Catalog of the British Section*. This is a very large document filled with over 300 illustrated pages of the latest in labor technologies. In fact, the theme of the exposition was "The History of Labour."

Before I get into the Clarke Food Warmer exhibit, let me give you some idea of the scale of this exposition.

- The exhibition area covered over 170 acres.
- The exhibition was open for 217 days.
- Forty-one countries participated in the exposition with over 52,000 exhibitors.
- There were between 11,000,000 and 15,000,000 visitors!

These are astounding statistics even by today's standards, let alone in 1867.

Among the hundreds of illustrations and articles in the catalog was one for the Clarke



Pyramid Food Warmer. It is written in both English and French.

Group V. Class XLIV.]

SAMUEL CLARKE.

133

SAMUEL CLARKE'S new Patent Nursery Lamps and Food Warmers, with Porcelain Panakins, having Spouts.

Nouvelles Lampes Pyramides pour Chambres d'Enfants et à Chauffer les Aliments, avec Vases de Porcelaine à bec, de SAMUEL CLARKE, brevétés.

No. 1 holds half-pint food, besides water; price 3s. 6d. each. No. 2 holds three-quarters pint food; price 6s. each. No. 3 holds one pint food; price 6s. Clarke's hot water lamp, price 2s. 6d. each. Clarke's pyramid night lamp, 9d. and 1s. each.

CAUTION.—The Patentee begs to state that he can warrant the Food Warmers to answer the purpose for which they are recommended ONLY when the Pyramid Night Lights (9 hours) are burned in them.

CLARKE'S pyramid night lights (9 hours) are increased in size, and give the most light, they are therefore best suited for nursery lamps: 8d. per box of 8 lights.

N.B.—All night lights not protected by a lamp are extremely dangerous, and should not be used.

The pyramid night lights burn best when newly made, and should be kept in a cool dry place.

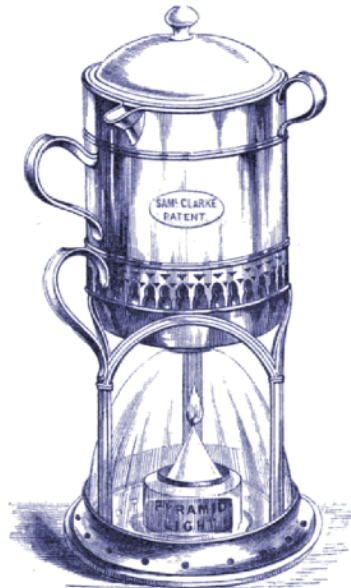
Le No. 1 contient une demi-pinte (29 centilitres) d'aliments en outre de l'eau; prix 3s. 6d. (4 fr. 35.) Le No. 2 contient trois quarts de pinte (42 centilitres) d'aliments; prix 6s. (6 fr. 2s.) Le No. 3 contient une pinte (56 centilitres) d'aliments; prix 6s. (7 fr. 50.) Lampes à chauffer l'eau de Clarke, prix 2s. 6d. (3 fr. 10.) Lampes veilleuses pyramides de Clarke, 9d. et 1s. (9d. les et 1 fr. 20.) chaque.

AVIS.—L'inventeur, breveté, fait observer qu'il ne peut garantir l'usage satisfaisant de ses Lampes à chauffer les aliments qu'AUTANT qu'on y brûle ses Veilleuses Pyramides (durant 9 heures).

Les veilleuses pyramides de Clarke (durant 9 heures) ont leur dimension augmentée, et donnent le plus de lumière; ce sont donc celles qui conviennent le mieux pour lampes de chambres d'enfants; 8d. (80 cen.) la boîte de 8 veilleuses.

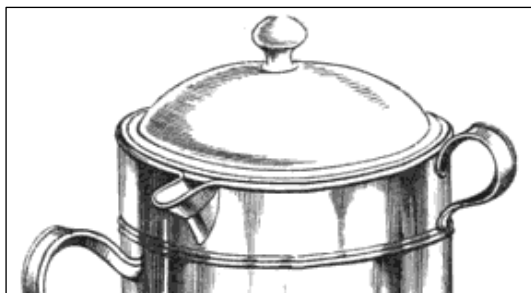
N.B.—Toutes veilleuses non-protégées par une lampe sont d'un usage extrêmement dangereux, et ne devraient point être employées.

Les veilleuses pyramides brûlent le mieux lorsqu'elles ont été récemment fabriquées, et doivent se conserver dans un endroit frais et sec.



SAMUEL CLARKE, Pyramid Night Light Works, 110, Albany-street, London.

At first glance the food warmer looks similar to the "straight-legged" designs we have seen before. It also confirms once again that the early designs did not use a handled brass lamp cup. It also shows something else – a metal band around the porcelain Pannikin.



How do we know it is a porcelain Pannikin? The article is titled "SAMUEL CLARKE'S NEW PATENT NURSERY LAMPS AND FOOD WARMERS, WITH PORCELAIN PANAKINS<sup>30</sup>, HAVING SPOUTS."

There are a couple of other interesting features in this article. First, the Pannikin lid has no advertising. Perhaps this is simply artistic license or perhaps the labeling came later. Secondly, the address for the Clarke Pyramid Night Light Works is 110 Albany Street, London. This is an address you do not see very often. Since it is identified as "Night Light Works," could this be the location of the plant prior to moving to Cricklewood?

Perhaps this will be the end of what we know about Clarke's Food Warmer...but I wouldn't bet on it. 😊

<sup>30</sup> The spelling "Panakin" is as it appeared in the catalog. It is incorrect.