

Imperial Light/ Allen Liversidge Update

by Mick Corbridge

In my recent article 'British Carbide Lamp Manufacturers Founded From The Original Business Of Friemann & Wolf' - (part 1, EUREKA No. 28), I stated that a badge existed showing a link between 'Imperial Light Ltd.' & 'Allen Liversidge'. The article had covered the fact that 'Cremer Lamp & Engineering Co. Ltd.' had links with 'Imperial Light', & I was wanting further evidence of these company links.

Whilst at the recent miners lamp event held at Wilnsdorf in Germany, I was lucky enough to negotiate with the owner of the lamp in question, which led to me acquiring the lamp. Next day, whilst still at the event, I couldn't believe my eyes when across in the next row, I noticed the distinctive large size & shape of the badge on a similar looking lamp. Rushing round to the table in question I picked up what at first I thought to be a identical lamp as to the one I had purchased the day before. Closer examination revealed several differences, those in the badge being the most important. This gave the sole manufacturer of the lamp to be 'Imperial Light Ltd.', i.e. with no mention of 'Allen Liversidge'. I instantly purchased this second lamp, and was soon sat behind my table comparing the differences.



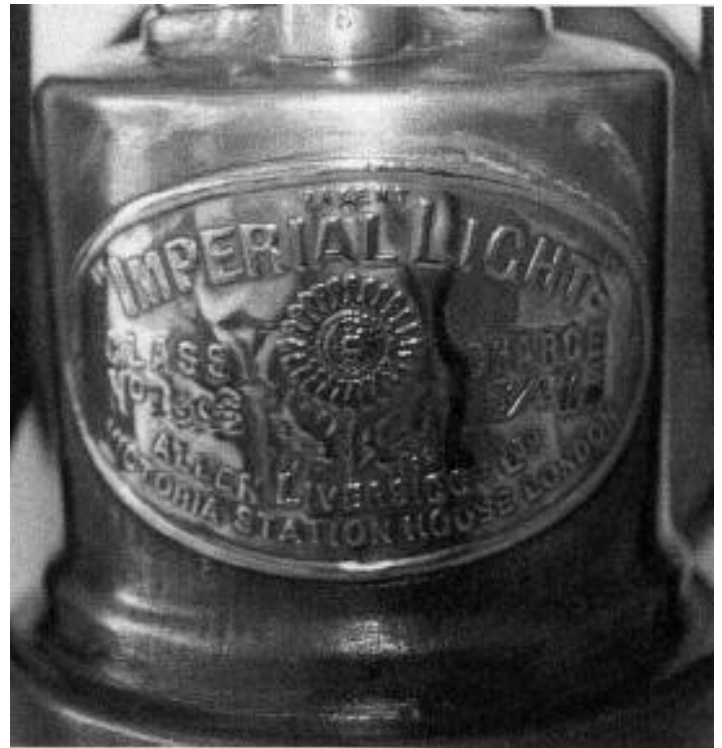
The two 'Imperial Light' lamps. (The earlier lamps on the left.)

This second lamp was in a fairly poor condition having had several solder and plated repairs made to the body of the lamp, and it generally looked the older of the two lamps. The cast bridal was thinner & of a more basic shape, the skirt rim on the bottom of the water tank was thinner, the brass water door, water control tap and thumb screw nut were all of a more elaborate design. The outstanding feature of this second lamp was its gas feed pipe which was a heavy polished cast brass pipe having a universal coupling with a large position lock nut for setting the angle of the brass reflector & jet. The first lamp, (which is in excellent condition), has a slightly larger polished chromed steel reflector & is fitted with a double burner fishtail jet. Both embossed brass badges are of the same very large size, 10 x 6 cm.), & show - Patent 'Imperial Light' across the top, underneath which is the company flowerhead logo. The earlier lamp states that it is a class 'Z' along with its serial No., whilst the later pattern lamp states it to be a class 'Y' also along with its serial No. Both lamps then show its charge to be 3/4 lb. of carbide. The early pattern lamp then gives the same company name & the address as Victoria Street - London, whilst the later style lamp shows 'Allen Liversidge' - Victoria Station House - London.



A view of the two elaborate badges. The lamps are 29.5 cm tall.

These two lamps are a great find for me as they somewhat help to confirm recent information that I had located about the company links that I was seeking. It appears likely that sometime around 1912, R.Cremer of 'Cremer Lamp & Engineering Co. Ltd.'- Leeds, acquired control of 'Imperial Light Ltd.' This dates the earlier lamp pre this period i.e. around 1910 ?. Then as mentioned in my original article, at the start of the First World War, Cremer rapidly returned back to his home country of Germany. This left 'Imperial Light' in need of a new backer and controller, and it looks as though this is when Allen Liversidge came to the rescue by purchasing all of the original company shares left by Cremer. This dates the later of my two lamps as post 1914; as we know Cremer left in 1914, and Allen Liversidge became a limited company in 1914, (P.Appleton - Eureka No.20 page 10). If this scenario is correct, it answers my original question in that Cremer was not directly linked with the firm of 'Allen Liversidge', and hence 'Allen Liversidge' was not a company formed from the original business of 'Friemann & Wolf' - Germany. If any reader can throw further light on this period in the history of the companies in question, their comments would be greatly welcomed & appreciated



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