

The 'Wolf of Leeds' Colibri No. 85 Cap Lamp

by Mick Corbridge

As many collectors know, the many hours spent trailing around car boot sales with that searching eye trained upon the slim chance of spotting a rare example of a lamp, rarely pays off, but sometimes it does - why else would we do it? Anyway it paid off for me recently when whilst at such a event, I spotted, and rapidly purchased, the lamp shown below. This find was a brass Colibri type (No.85) carbide cap lamp manufactured by 'The Wolf Safety Lamp Company of Leeds which was confirmed by the embossed banana shaped badge details on the front, and the incuse lettering on the top of the lamp. The best part of this lamp was it's fine condition: unfired and as new. Unfortunately, the push on brass parabolic reflector originally supplied with this design of lamp was missing, but the original early form ceramic jet was still in place. The wire cap mounting hook is complete, but I am unsure if a brace as shown in advertisements for this lamp was ever fitted, or was removed; the clean neat condition of the rear of the lamp makes it difficult to tell. The advertisement information for this lamp was found in the 'Wolf of Leeds' 1911 carbide lamp catalogue (see below).

COLIBRI LAMP No. 85.



It is interesting to relate that after the collapse of 'Wolf of Leeds' a year later in 1912, this pattern of carbide cap lamp was transferred to the new 'Wolf of Sheffield' (see 1914 advertisement below).

WOLF
ACETYLENE
MINERS
LAMPS

COLIBRI TYPE, WORN ON THE CAP.
 PERFECT SAFETY

Extensively and increasingly used in place of Candle or Oil Lamps carried on the miners cap.

Lowest Weight.
 Strongest Construction,
 Brilliant Light.

CHEAP INITIAL COST
 CHEAP UPKEEP

Refilled from Carbide Flask conveniently carried by the user

WRITE FOR CATALOGUE-WOLF SAFETY LAMP CO., SHEFFIELD

The 1914 ad showing that Wolf of Sheffield later manufactured this pattern of cap lamp.

The remaining company at Leeds ('Cremer Lamp', later to become 'Premier Lamp'), continued to manufacture of the original similar 'Wolf of Leeds' cap lamp: the 'Colibri No.86'. This is evidenced by the 'Wolf of Leeds' advertisement dated 1911, and the photograph (below) showing my 'Premier'- Colibri 86 handlamp dated around 1930. The handlamp has the exact same water tank and reflector as the cap lamp No.85, but is modified with a rear spade mount as well as a bail & hanging hook. Additionally it was fitted with a taller base.

COLIBRI LAMP No. 86.

