

The Lu-Mi-Num 'Handy Tool'

by Dave Johnson



Most collectors of mining artifacts are familiar with the uniquely designed Lu-Mi-Num cap and hand lamps produced by Fred R. Belt. A successful salesman for the Justrite manufacturing Company, Fred Belt left Justrite to start his own company in 1922, the Fred R. Belt Company, of Chicago. His were the only cast aluminum cap and hand lamps made by an American manufacturing firm.

Handy Tool for the Lu-mi-num Lamp

SCREW DRIVER
— ALSO USED TO
PUT ON RUBBER
GASKET, DRIVE
OUT LAVA TIP
AND CLEAN CAR-
BIDE CUP.

TO CLEAN THREADS
TO UNSCREW TIP-
HOLDER
TO CLEAN THREADS

Case-Hardened Steel
ONE FREE WITH EVERY LAMP
EXTRA TOOLS 10c EACH

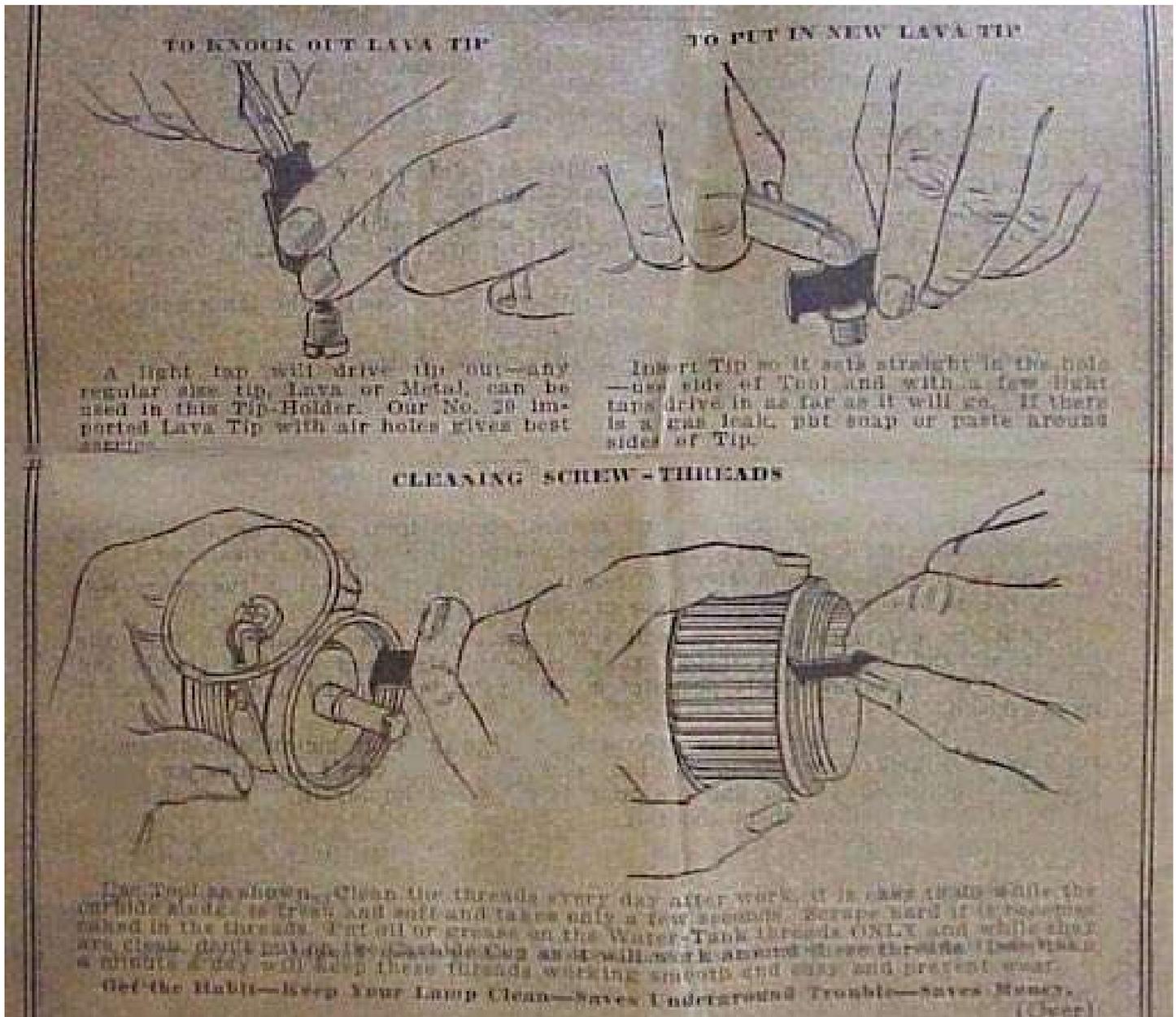
TO PUT ON RUBBER GASKET

Hold Gasket with finger as shown and force into groove with flat side of Tool— If it buckles, draw Tool backwards.

TO REMOVE TIP-HOLDER

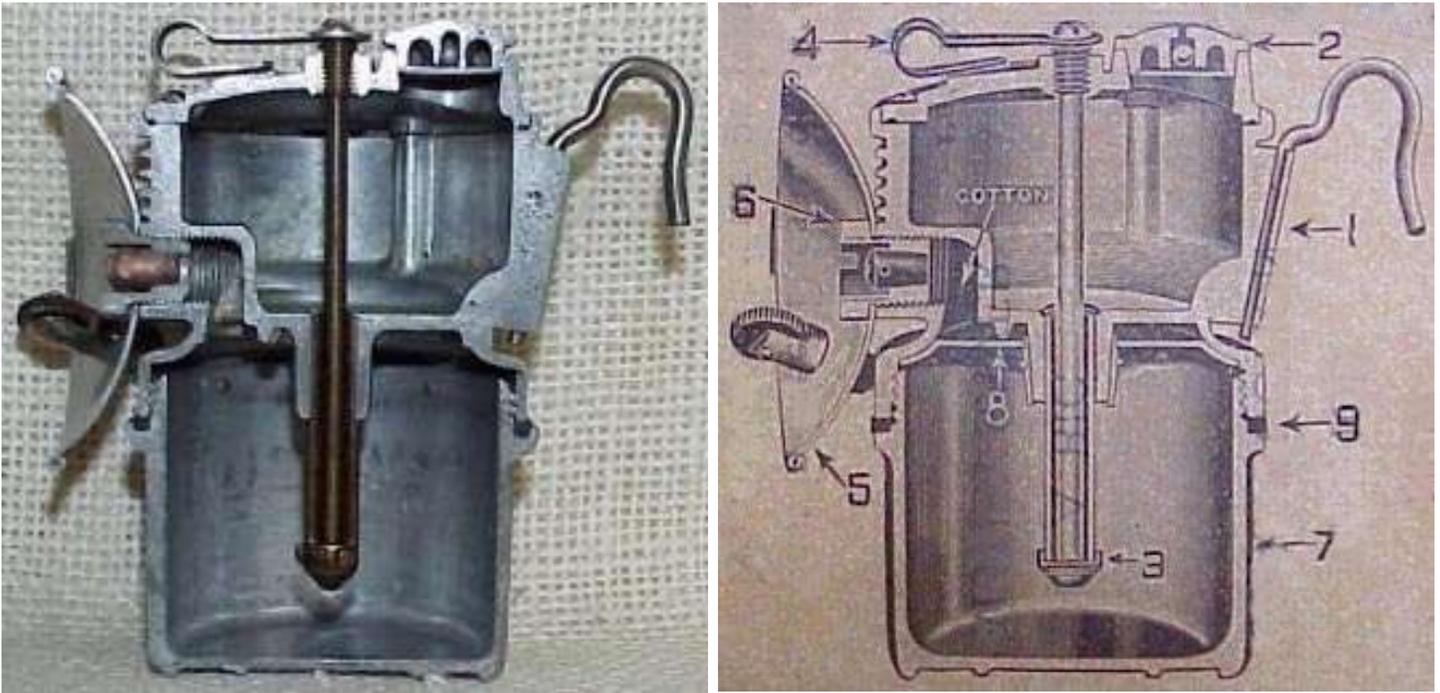
Should unscrew easy— If it turns hard, put oil or grease on the threads— graphite grease is best.

For collectors interested in collecting variations, the Lu-Mi-num cap lamp can be found in three varieties, 1) the early threaded or screw base with a cast aluminum reflector and wire cap hook, 2) a lug mounted base with the same reflector as the first model and a wire cap hook and 3) a larger nickel-plated steel concentric ringed reflector and a spade hook. There are also at least three known varieties of the Lu-Mi-num hand lamp.



The recent purchase of an early screw or threaded base model cap lamp brought the added premium of two double-sided instruction sheets from the Fred R. Belt Company and a tool that was sold with the lamps. The first sheet was the instructions for operating the lamp, including a cut-away drawing of the lamp, which goes well with the salesman sample cut-away version of the lamp in my collection. The second sheet was the instructions for the "Handy Tool" which could be used as a 1) screw driver, 2) to put in and remove the rubber gasket, 3) to clean the threads, 4) to unscrew and screw in the tip holder, and 5) to knock out the lava tip and to put in a new lava tip.

According to the sheet describing the use of the tool, every lamp came with one of these tools or the tool could be purchased separately for 10 cents. If these tools came with every Lu-Mi-Num lamp why haven't more of them been found by collectors over the years? The only explanation I can give is that without the instruction sheet illustrating them a collector would have no idea what they were, especially since they have no marking of any type to identify them. How many of these have we all passed over at flea markets just lying in boxes of junk?



Cut-away lamp compared to that on instruction sheet.



Covering all known variations of the Lu-mi-num cap lap are: above, screw-threaded lamp, below left, lug-mounted lamp, and below right larger plated steel reflector and narrow spade mount.