

Railroad or Mining?

Submitted by Tom Stranko

I have had this forever. It looks like a RR tail end lamp (a marker lamp) but it seems to have the anti-explosion gauze seals around the two inlets. It's made by the Dressel Co. of Virginia who made a lot of regular RR hand lanterns.



Top gauze.



Bottom gauze removed from base.



The little "foot" is a casting that allows the lamp to be locked into a bracket on a wall, etc.

I think it had a lock of some kind to keep the top from being opened by an unauthorized person. I see the outline in solder of something right in line with the lid latch that could have locked down the lid. It does not say a thing about being a MSA certified lamp etc. I always figured it was an underground mine car lamp or perhaps a fireless locomotive lamp. Any ideas?

An opinion from Jim Baird (RR lamp expert):

The lantern is by "DRESSEL" who made short globe RR lanterns using this frame (1920-1940). The mounting bracket was used on trolley cars to hang on the rear as a tail marker, with red globe. The factory modifications, both top and bottom, would lead me to believe it was set up as a safety lantern, in a permanent position. Could have been mining or around fuel tanks in the rail yard? Hard to say without old literature as to it's purpose, definitely a possible mining lantern with a question mark?

