

THE UNDERGROUND LAMP POST

- NOT A HIPPIE NEWSPAPER -

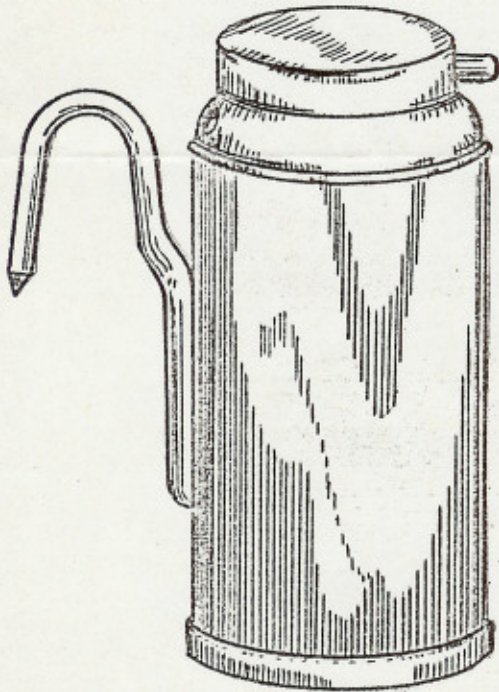


Vol. II, No. 4

Spring, 1975

The Underground Lamp Post, devoted to old mine lamps, carbides, and candle-holders. Mini-editor: Henry Pohs, 4537 Quitman St., Denver, Colorado, 80212

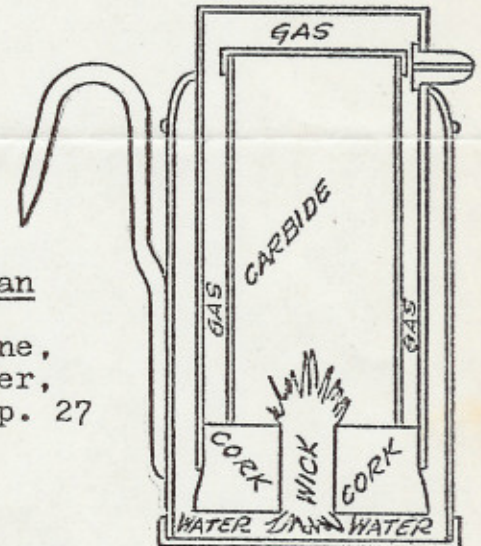
Standard Carbide Cap Lamp - Two separate pieces of correspondence arrived at our desk within the same week concerning the elusive STANDARD Carbide Cap Lamp. Each included a separately different illustration from old catalogs as reproduced below. Quite a coincidence!



Mines and Minerals Magazine, September, 1902

The Michigan Miner Magazine, November, 1902, p. 27

Brass
3" tall
1-1/2" diameter



STANDARD Carbide Cap Lamp
Mfg. by John Cummings & Co.
Tunnelton, West Virginia

Now that we know what the Standard lamp is, who has ever seen one?

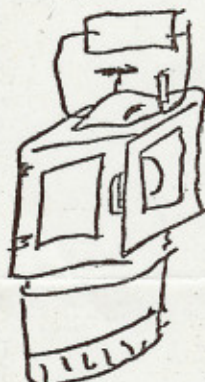
Reflectors - Neal Bullington sends the following information from American Fork, Utah. "I'd been wondering why all the old miners' lamps I find around here have such a thick coating of smoke and crud on the reflector. I assumed that they would want to keep the reflector clean for maximum light production. I happened to mention this to a friend of mine who used to work in the lead/silver mines locally back in the 1940's. He laughed and said that he had found out about this practice the hard way. His first day on the job he'd come into the mine with a bright shiny new Guy's Dropper on his cap, and the first man he encountered was a big crusty old miner who looked like he'd just come in off a weekend drunk. This character took one look at the bright beam of light and growled, 'Black that reflector before I kick your ---!' In short, they didn't want the light in their eyes every time someone looked their way. My friend also said that although he had known his father to mine using one of the regular carbide 'hip flasks', he and all the fellows he worked with just carried their carbide in pipe tobacco cans." Thanks, Neal.

Trade - Ralph Blankenbecler, P. O. Box 207, Coeburn, Va., 24230, offers the following items for trade: ●Big Boy, ●Justrite, ●brass Columbia Model "C" automatic, ●mint Brilliant Searchlite, and ●lots of metal scrip. He will trade for cap lamps.

Thank yous - Many thanks to the following locations for postage for this issue: Utah, Missouri, New Jersey, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Ohio, Illinois, Virginia, Texas, and West Virginia. Though unsolicited, it sure helps!

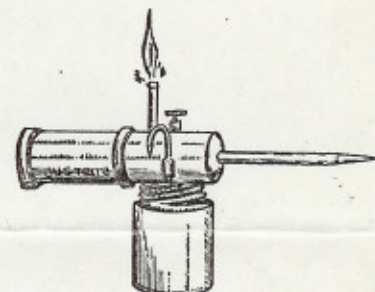
CARBIDE LAMP
WOODEN BODY
CARBIDE CONT. METAL
WATER RES. METAL
3 SIDES SLIDE UP & DOWN

DRAWING BY
OWNER:



ONLY MARK
AGO ON LAMP

Wooden Lamp - Joseph Chervy in Union, New Jersey, offers the sketch shown to the left which he picked up on one of his lamping excursions. We have no other information except as shown on this original drawing. Our eastern coal field experts sure should be able to run this one down.



JUSTRITE #77
Carbide Stick Lamp
Burns 5 to 5½ hours
Heavy brass shell and hook
Sharp pointed steel stick

Foreign - Rane L. Curl, NSS Board member from Ann Arbor, Michigan, has listed the following: "I have two carbide lamps that have not previously been mentioned. They apparently are not miners' lamps, but may be of some interest. ●An Italian hand-held lamp. I am missing the burner, but suspect that is an upright burner tube and there was no reflector. It is marked (stamped) ERIDANO (which is related to an old name for the Po River). It is also marked B12, and has a symbol on the bottom. What is particularly interesting is that it had no gaskets. The seal is a water-seal. I have often used the outer flask as a beer mug at caving events. ●A Portugese hand-held lamp. Galvanized steel bottom but brass top, the whole rather gaily painted green with white and gold line decorations. The carbide chamber is 4.5 inches tall; the water chamber about 3 inches; and the burner tube extends about 3 inches further. Water valve handle stamped - UNIADINDUSTRIAL - CESAR - LDA. Does anyone have any information about lamps of these sorts?"

ADDENDA ANTIQUARIA.

201

AN EARLY MINER'S LAMP.

Mr. Henry Rothery, of Summergrove, Whitehaven, communicates a find, by his son, in a cellar of his house, which was built about 1756 by James Spedding, son of Carlisle Spedding, the famous mining engineers. This is an implement which Mr. Rothery thinks preceded the steel wheel-lamp, invented by Carlisle Spedding about 1730 to give a light in coal-pits charged with fire-damp. It consists of a thick block of wood on one side of which a gun hammer has been fixed, the flint being still in it. A trigger six inches long has been attached. On the top and at the side of the block are grooves for rods to run in. By quickly working these rods the trigger would be alternately set and pulled and the flint striking against steel an intermittent stream of light would be obtained.

Pre-everything - Harry Kelsey in Altadena, California, has come across the reference to the right in his research of all things researchable (mostly history). We can't visualize it and this is the very first such reference we have ever had on a lighting device (mechanical) prior to the Spedding "steel Mill" of 1730 or 1750. Perhaps one of our British correspondents will run it down.

Reference: Transactions of the Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian & Archaeological Society, New Series, Vol. 15, (1915), p. 201.

Richard Finch - Rich Finch, one of our oldest lamp tramp friends, has returned from his geological work in Honduras and is now located at the following address: Richard C. Finch, Box 5062, Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville, Tennessee, 38501. He has the following items for trade:

- Fleming Special - 8-hour carbide lamp, unfired, perfect condition, rare lamp;
- Zar carbide cap lamp - unfired in beautiful shape except that the reflector and tip are missing; a substitute reflector, very similar to the original, has been fitted;
- Wolf - 8-hour lamp, late model, used, but complete and in "okay" condition;
- Dewar - various brass Dewar 8-hour lamps, used, in "okay" condition;
- ITP - 8-hour lamp, unfired, just like those John Leahy advertised in the Lamp Post some time back;

●Justrite - repair box No. 2 - empty, in pretty good shape;

●Justrite - carbide flask, new:

●Guy's Dropper - carbide flask, new, unmarked, round type, not very old, perfect condition;

●Wide variety - odd repair parts for Justrite, Dewar, Auto-Lite, and Hansen.

Rich prefers carbide cap lamps to hand lamps for trading, and American manufacture to foreign. He will trade any item for items of equal value, which depends on rarity and condition. He is especially interested in the following lamps with emphasis on the asterisks:

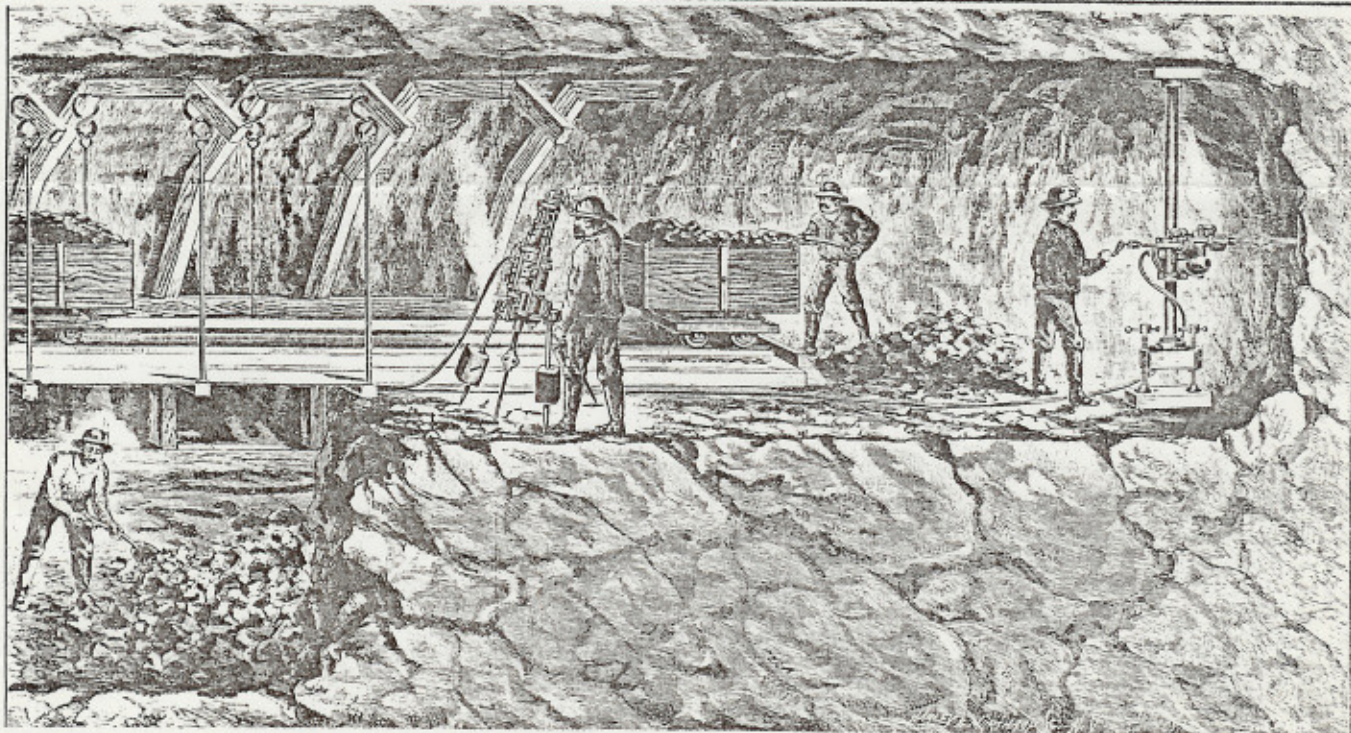
Acme	Columbia	Gee-Bee	Pathfinder	Standard
American	Daylight	Hydrolite	Pocahontas	Springfield
Anthracite	Defender	Imperial	Pioneer	Safe Sport
Arrow	Ever-Ready*	LU-MI-Num Hand*	Reimann	Scranto
Big Top	Elkhorn	Maumee-Duplex*	Shanklin	Union Carbide
Black Diamond	Float-Feed	Milburn "A"*	Squarelite	Shure Lite
Copper Queen	Fulton	Ni-Ba	Somner-Herman	Wolf*
Arnold's Carbide Candle		Brilliant Search Lite		

Rich has the following non-carbide items for trade:

●"Frog" type oil lamp, complete, in functioning condition, though pitted a bit with rust, age unknown, could be Spanish colonial, came out of the Republic of Honduras, see picture on page 5 of Pohn's book, same type;

●Wrought iron miners' candelholders from Honduras, age unknown.

Editor's note - good luck - we'd like to find some of those carbides too!



Underground drilling with oil wick cap lamps in the Niagara Falls, N. Y., tailrace tunnel about 1890. Illustration from Appleton's Cyclopaedia of Applied Mechanics, published in 1892.