

THE UNDERGROUND LAMP POST

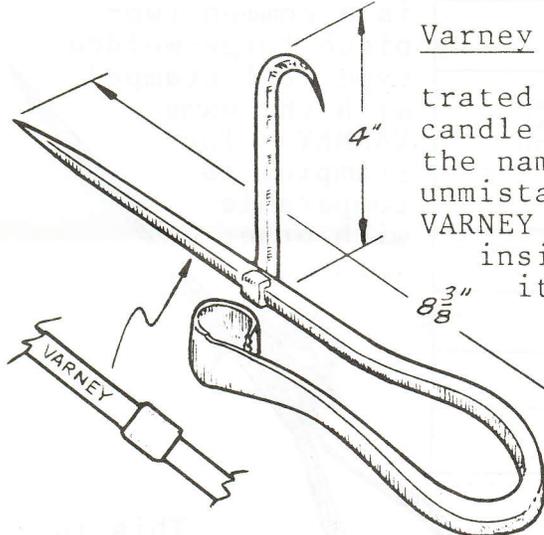


- MINERS WERE THE FIRST ECOLOGISTS -

Vol. V, No. 4

Spring, 1990

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



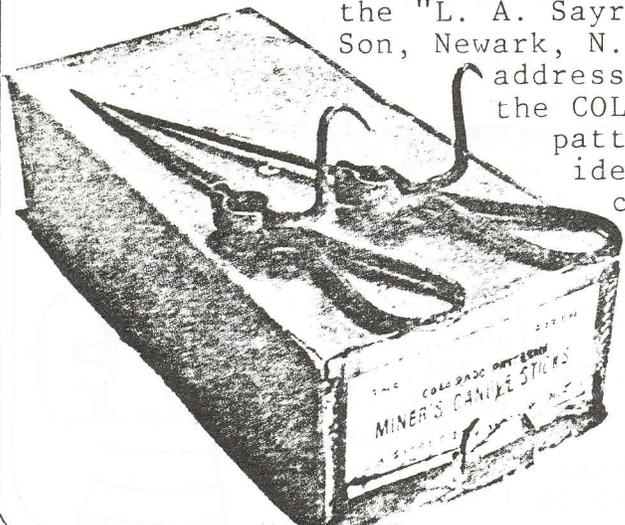
Varney candlesticks - We have recently examined a miner's candlestick as illustrated at the left. Although the thumb-piece on the candle thimble has been broken away, the surprise was the name on the bottom of the shaft . . . VARNEY in the unmistakable roll stamp style of the more well-known VARNEY candlestick design. The hook is copper brazed inside the wrap-around joint with the shaft. Could it be an early attempt at economical mass manufacture for the trade?

Another interesting VARNEY specter arose when we spotted the miner's journal advertisement below, right. "Made from octagon stock"! In all of our early discussions and writings we have always assumed that Nathan Varney started with square stock. Most collectors had any reason

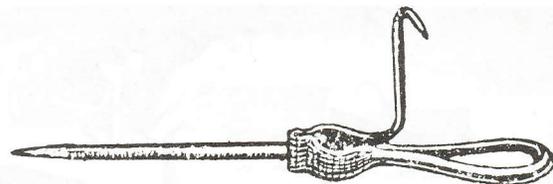
to believe otherwise. Now, with this clue, careful microscopic examination of numerous VARNEY candlesticks (with many different names roll stamped on them) by several professional metallurgists reveals tiny scale-like impressions on the surfaces of all of the square shafts and a relatively smoother surface on the octagon handles. This suggests that it may have been the square shafts which were reworked in either a swaging or a forging operation to leave the scale marks. Also, the intersection length between the shaft and the handle on many candlesticks does suggest progression from octagon to square rather than from square to octagon.

So, the plot thickens. Having never answered the question of whether all of the VARNEYS were manufactured at one location or at the numerous sites per the roll stamped names, we now wonder just which shape of stock did Varney start with. Will anyone ever know? Comments are welcome.

An interesting photograph in a private collection shows a label with the "L. A. Sayre & Son, Newark, N. J." address and the COLORADO pattern identification.



Miners' Candlesticks.

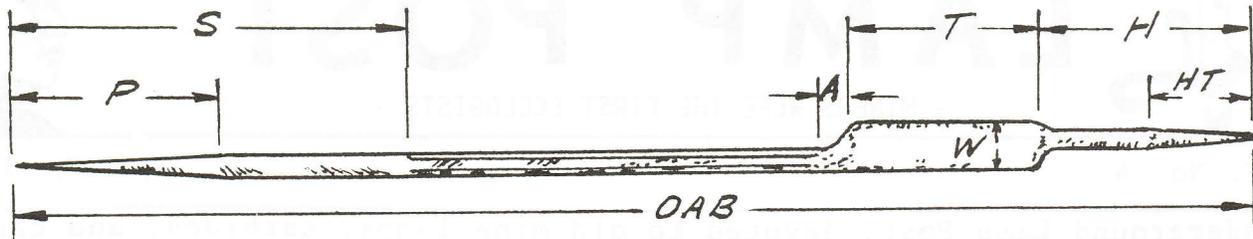


Octagon Tool Steel, Blued Finish, Flat Spring Candle Holder.

Per Dozen
No. 10 - 1/4 In. Steel, 10 In. Long,
Wt. Per Dozen 4 Lbs. \$5.50

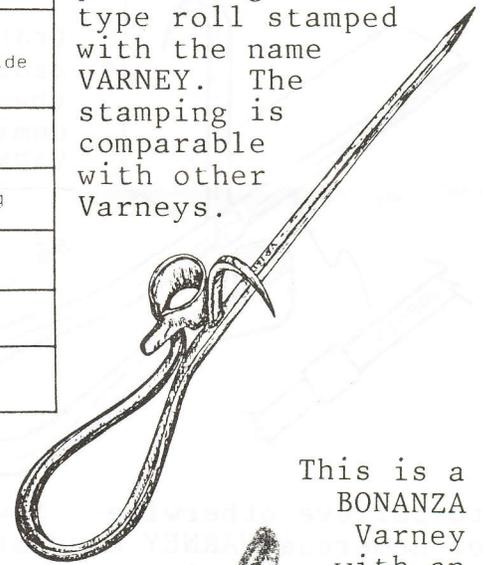
Open Stock.

More Varney - A standard VARNEY candlestick flattened out would look like this and would have the dimensions on the table below.



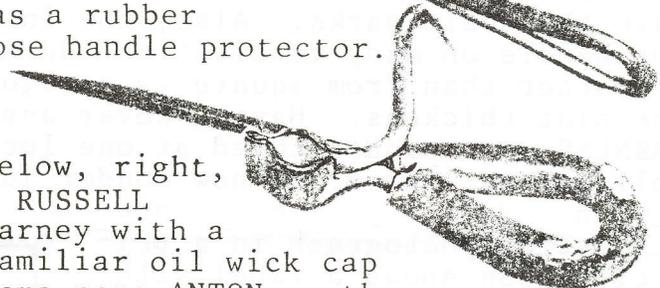
	DESCRIPTION	SIZE (Approx.)
OAB	Overall blank; 1/4 in. (6.35 mm) OCTAGON tool steel stock	25-1/2 in. (647.7 mm) long
T	Forged candle thimble clip	4 in. (101.6 mm) long W = 5/16 in. (7.94 mm) wide 1/16 in. (1.57 mm) thick
A	Transition area	1/2 in. (12.7 mm) long
H	Hook; forged to 1/4 in. (6.35 mm) round	4-1/2 in. (114.3 mm) long
HT	Hook tip; forged to a tapered point	2 in. (50.8 mm) long
S	Spike; forged to 1/4 in. (6.35 mm) square	8 in. (203.2 mm) long
P	Point; 4-sided, tapered to a point	4 in. (101.6 mm) long

The candlestick below is a common two-piece forge-welded type roll stamped with the name VARNEY. The stamping is comparable with other Varneys.

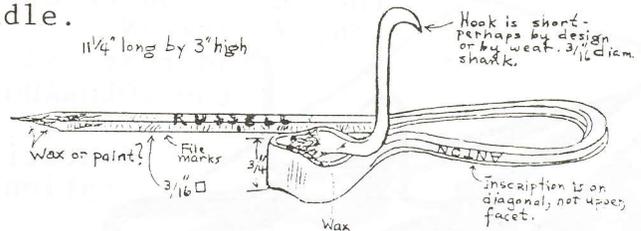


This is a BONANZA Varney with an interesting pig tail spike.

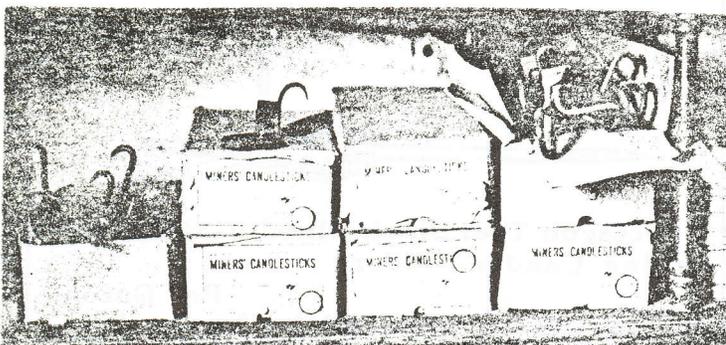
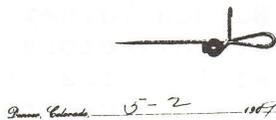
This candlestick marked VARNEY has a rubber hose handle protector.



Below, right, a RUSSELL Varney with a familiar oil wick cap lamp name ANTON on the handle.

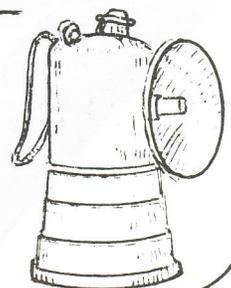


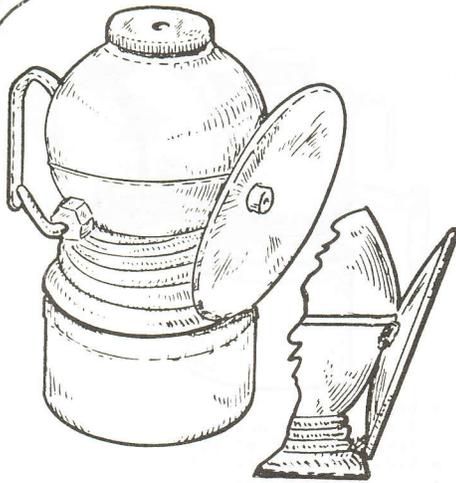
N. E. VARNEY
Manufacture of
THE "VARNEY"
MINER'S CANDLESTICK
1830 Lawrence Street



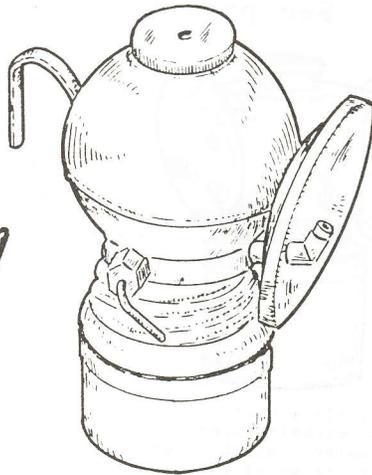
Boxed VARNEYS on a museum shelf in Virginia City, Montana.

I. D. - Bob Otto, 516 Miners Ave., Lead, SD, 57754, needs help identifying this lamp. The only marks are BRAY "CETO" 14 LITRES on the burner.

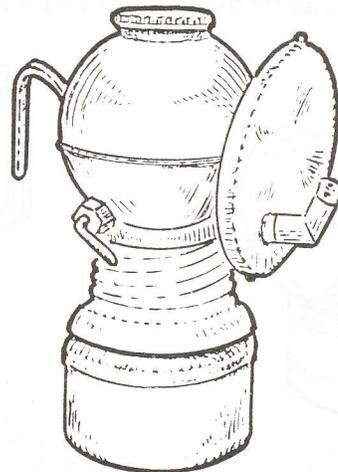




- Brass
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter spherical top
- Flat wire hook
- 4.0 in. (101.6 mm) tall
- 1.9375 in. (49.21 mm) diameter bottom
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter nickel-plated reflector with rolled edge - soldered to top and to burner tube



- Brass
- 2.125 in. (53.98 mm) diameter spherical top
- Flat wire hook
- 0.25 in. (6.35 mm) neck above threads
- 4.0 in. (101.6 mm) tall
- 1.9375 in. (49.21 mm) diameter bottom
- 2.125 in. (53.98 mm) diameter nickel-plated reflector - soldered to top and to thread flange

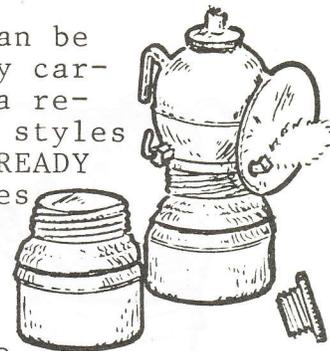


- Brass
- 2.125 in. (53.98 mm) diameter spherical top
- Flat wire hook
- 4.0 in. (101.6 mm) tall
- 1.9375 in. (49.21 mm) diameter bottom
- 2.125 in. (53.98 mm) diameter nickel-plated reflector - soldered to top and to burner tube - with hood pin
- Reflector hood and lens



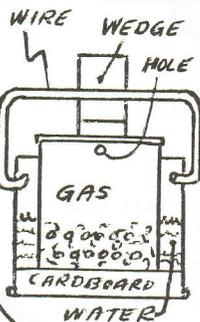
- Brass
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter spherical top
- Flat wire hook
- 0.25 in. (6.35 mm) neck above threads
- 4.375 in. (111.13 mm) tall
- 1.9375 in. (49.21 mm) diameter bottom
- 2.125 in. (53.98 mm) diameter nickel-plated reflector - soldered to top and to burner tube

EVER-READY - Various design changes can be noted when comparing many carbide cap lamps of the same name. In a recent effort to categorize the various styles of the well-known spherical-top EVER-READY lamp, we have identified the five types shown here . . . one of which may never have been manufactured. Categorization leads to a listing of the major comparable design features of each style. This listing may eventually lead further to a system of identification for each type. Our guide for these illustrations and listings was to try to differentiate between major features in the spirit of how the manufacturer may have considered his product. Sometimes there are actual sales model numbers as a guide (over 100 in the case of JUSTRITE lamps, but none in the EVER-READY line). Major differences could be sizes, different shapes, different hooks, permanent reflector sizes, etc. Less significant differences could include interchangeable reflectors, internal sizes and functions, interchangeable tops and bottoms, number of fasteners, minor lettering, and insignificant materials. We certainly may not have yet covered all of the EVER-READY types. If anyone knows of variations other than shown here, we certainly would like to hear about them.



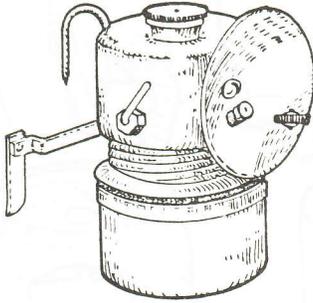
- From an advertisement
- With oil wick burner

never have been manufactured. Categorization leads to a listing of the major comparable design features of each style. This listing may eventually lead further to a system of identification for each type. Our guide for these illustrations and listings was to try to differentiate between major features in the spirit of how the manufacturer may have considered his product. Sometimes there are actual sales model numbers as a guide (over 100 in the case of JUSTRITE lamps, but none in the EVER-READY line). Major differences could be sizes, different shapes, different hooks, permanent reflector sizes, etc. Less significant differences could include interchangeable reflectors, internal sizes and functions, interchangeable tops and bottoms, number of fasteners, minor lettering, and insignificant materials. We certainly may not have yet covered all of the EVER-READY types. If anyone knows of variations other than shown here, we certainly would like to hear about them.

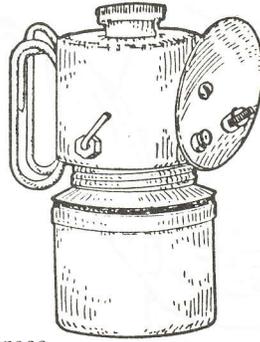


Lamp lore - Bob Shoemaker, P. O. Box 2689, Grass Valley, Cal., 95945, has sent photos and a sketch of a home-made carbide lamp from Chile. Tops are removed from two tin cans. The larger (bottom) can has a thin piece of porous cardboard in its bottom; the other can has a small hole punched near its end seam. Carbide is in the top (inside) can. A wooden wedge under a wire holds the cans together. Water between the cans seeps through the cardboard into the carbide. The acetylene gas coming out of the hole is regulated by tightening or loosening the wedge. Bob says, "It really works!"

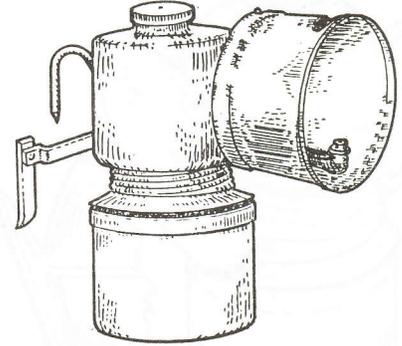
BRITE-LITE carbide cap lamps. See page 5.



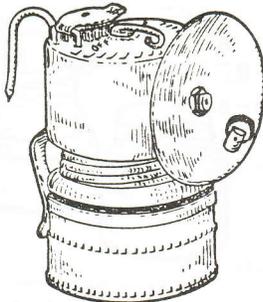
- Brass
- Steel, black enamel
- Brass, nickel-plated
- Side water control lever
- Top-center water cap
- Round hook
- Low burner
- Swivel-arm braces
- Plain bottom
- 3.25 in. (82.55 mm) tall body
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter nickel-plated reflector
- Advertised as "Type M" miner's lamp and "Hoppe Brite-Lite"



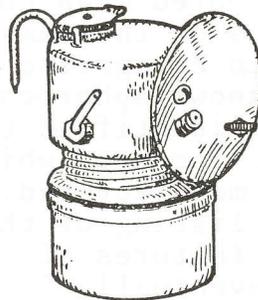
- Brass
- Steel, black enamel
- Brass, nickel-plated
- Side water control lever
- Top-center water cap
- Round hook
- Square-beaded bottom
- Low burner
- No braces
- Superintendent's handles
- Plain bottom
- 4.25 in. (107.95 mm) tall body
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter nickel-plated reflector
- Advertised as "Type F" foreman's lamp and "Hoppe Brite-Lite"



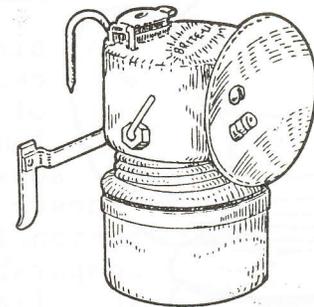
- Brass
- Steel, black enamel
- Brass, nickel-plated
- Side water control lever
- Top-center water cap
- Round hook
- Low burner tube
- Swivel-arm braces
- Plain bottom
- 4.25 in. (107.95 mm) tall body
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter nickel-plated reflector
- Reflector hood
- Advertised as "Type D" driver's lamp and "Hoppe Brite-Lite"



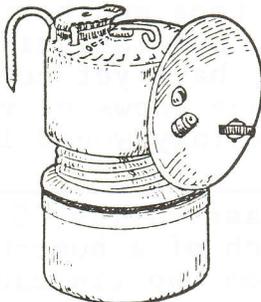
- Brass
- Top water control lever
- Round hook with flat extension
- Center burner
- No braces
- Square-beaded bottom
- 3.25 in. (82.55 mm) tall body
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter brass reflector
- BRITE-LITE name on bottom



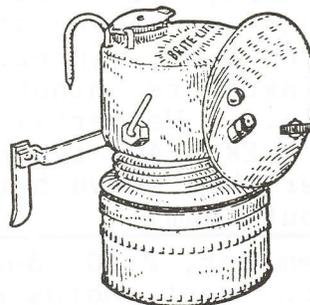
- Brass
- Side water control lever
- Round hook
- Low burner
- No braces
- Plain bottom
- 3.25 in. (82.55 mm) tall body
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter reflector
- No name on the lamp



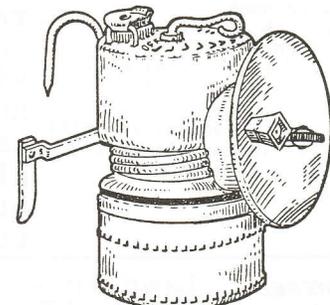
- Steel, black enamel
- Side water control lever
- Round hook
- Low burner
- Swivel-arm braces
- Plain bottom
- 3.25 in. (82.55 mm) tall body
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter reflector
- BRITE-LITE name on top



- Brass
- Top water control lever
- Round hook
- Low burner
- No braces
- Plain bottom
- 3.25 in. (82.55 mm) tall body
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter reflector
- No name on the lamp

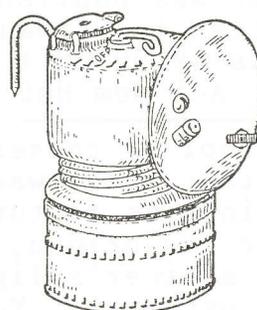
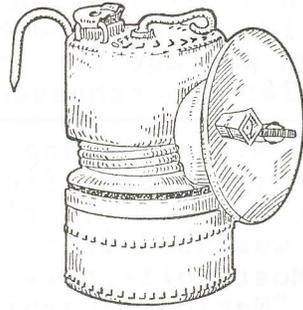
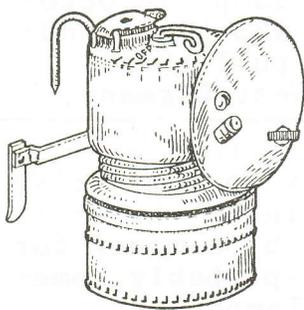


- Steel, black enamel
- Side water control lever
- Round hook
- Low burner
- Swivel-arm braces
- Square beaded bottom
- 3.25 in. (82.55 mm) tall body
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter reflector
- BRITE-LITE name on top
- Advertised as "American Bull Dog" and "150"



- Steel, black enamel or Brass
- Top water control lever
- Round hook
- Center burner
- Swivel-arm braces
- Square-beaded bottom
- 3.25 in. (82.55 mm) tall body
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter reflector
- BRITE-LITE name on bottom
- Advertised as "American Bull Dog" and "150"

BRITE-LITE carbide cap lamps - Beginning on page 4 we have illustrated and described the various sizes and shapes of the BRITE-LITE line of lamps manufactured by the Harker Manufacturing Company, of Cincinnati, Ohio. Same parameters as EVER-READY on page 3.



- Steel, black enamel or Brass
- Top water control lever
- Round hook
- Low burner
- Swivel-arm braces
- Square-beaded bottom
- 3.25 in. (82.55 mm) tall body
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter reflector
- BRITE-LITE name on bottom
- Advertised as "American Bull Dog" and "150"

- Steel, black enamel or Brass
- Top water control lever
- Round hook
- Center burner
- No braces
- Square-beaded bottom
- 3.25 in. (82.55 mm) tall body
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter reflector
- BRITE-LITE name on bottom
- Advertised as "American Bull Dog" and "150"

- Steel, black enamel or Brass
- Top water control lever
- Round hook
- Low burner
- No braces
- Square-beaded bottom
- 3.25 in. (82.55 mm) tall body
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter reflector
- BRITE-LITE name on bottom
- Advertised as "American Bull Dog" and "150"

- Brass, black enamel
- Side water control lever
- Round hook
- Superintendent's handles
- Low burner
- No braces
- Square-beaded bottom
- 3.25 in. (82.55 mm) tall body
- 2.25 in. (57.15 mm) diameter steel reflector
- BRITE-LITE name on top
- AIME emblem on side

For trade - Jeff Shanks, 1351 Apple Blossom Dr., Yardley, Pa., 19067-6417, has the following trade items: Several old stock certificates; Shoulder candlestick; Baldwin stick for carbide light; Shanklin stick for carbide lamp; "The Gem" carbide lamp which looks like a bicycle lamp; Several spout lamps - Frostburg, Husson, Dunlap, and T. F. Leonard; Zar base; Baldwin base; and Gem oil flask.

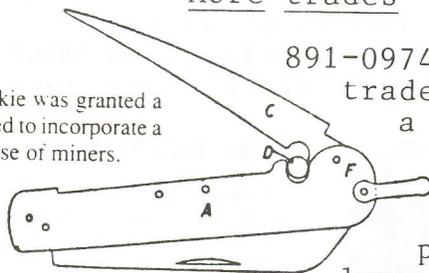
More trades - J. Roger Mitchell, 19 Eric Lane, Glen Riddle, Pa., 19037, 215-

891-0974, has sent us this drawing and his trade list. He has: A water vessel for

a wooden bird cage - excellent condition; Cupule for gold assay from the Haile Gold Mine in Lancaster Co., South Carolina; and lots of spare parts for JUSTRITE and AUTO-LITE

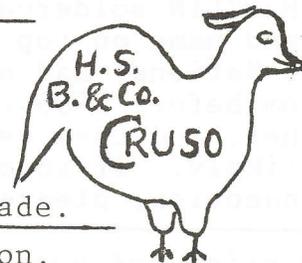
lamps. He would like to trade for cap,

powder, or carbide tins. The drawing is from the National Knife Magazine, February, 1990, page. 27. Mr. Mitchell also would like to learn about ECCLES flame safety lamps.



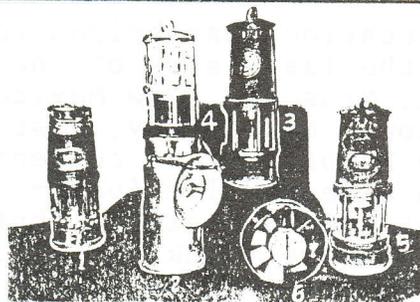
On June 20, 1885, D. Hickie was granted a patent for a rope knife modified to incorporate a blasting cap crimper for the use of miners.

Trades, again - David Johnson, 6807 Homestead Dr., Indianapolis, Indiana, 46227, has a oil wick cap lamp with this rooster trade mark which we had never seen before. This logo is stamped on the base inside a conventional CROWN ring trade mark. David also has a #2 Justrite metal parts and lamp display case with lots of parts for trade.



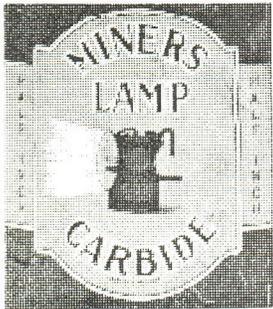
And . . . trades - L. and E. Wilson, "Talking Timbers",

Murrumbateman, N. S. W. 2582, Australia, offer the following for trade: 1, NAYLOR twin-wick, safety lamp; 2, PINNACLE No. 5 carbide lamp; 3, HAILWOOD & ACKROYD flat-wick safety lamp; 4, KOEHLER U. S. safety lamp; 5, NAYLOR single-wick safety lamp; and 6, An anemometre from the Broken Hill mines in Australia.

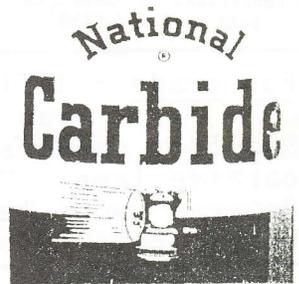


Mine lamp book - A new book is available which covers the company history and products of the old German lamp manufacturer A. E. Reusch in Daden, West Germany. Reusch was the producer of the famous Reusch rooster-frog lamp. They also produced acetylene mining lamps and coffee mills. The book was published with an exhibition of lamps in October, 1989. It is written in German, has 104 pages, and has 133 black-and-white photos. Price is 49.90 DM + 5.00 DM postage from the publisher: Verlag Zander/Schardt, Auf dem Hof 1, D-5241 Emmerzhausen, West Germany.

Miner's lamps - One school of conservative mine lighting collectors will claim that if it wasn't designed specifically as a miner's light with certain definitive features, it isn't a miner's light. Liberals will hold that whatever its origin, if it was used in a mine by a miner for mining purposes, it is a miner's light. Most collectors are probably somewhere in between these extremes. Mention "National Carbide Lamps" to any number of different collectors and you will get just as many different opinions. Many of the National Carbide large, wide-base lamps were certainly used in and around many mines, but their original design may have had a more general use and a lesser mining use in intent. Now, enter a WOLF (mine lamps)-and-NATIONAL (general use lamps) cooperation and the picture becomes fuzzier. Jim Van Fleet, 222 Market St., Mifflinburg, Pa., 17844, has sent us the following information.



An interesting, and possible unique business arrangement concerning carbide lamps, was the connection between the Wolf Safety Lamp Co. and the National Carbide Co. Two different styles of National Carbide cans depict a WOLF cap lamp in the label. These cans come in 2 lb. (0.907 kg) and 10 lb. (4.536 kg) sizes, and the later style can bears a copyright date of 1935.



Less well-known is the National Carbide Lantern No. NC-30 as pictured in an ad from a 1948 hardware company catalog. The lamp is clearly a WOLF hand lamp model 900 with a brass plate soldered to the side of the lamp base. The plate reads:

NATIONAL CARBIDE
LANTERN

342 MADISON AVENUE - NEW YORK, NY

Both of the WOLF/NATIONAL Carbide Lanterns I have seen were steel with a brass collar and threads.

Unlike other lamp brand "changes"

(SHANKLIN soldered over, or ZAR name plate over BALCO brand name) the WOLF brand name on top of the lamp is left intact. We can only guess that Wolf and National had a mutually satisfactory business arrangement that lasted from before 1935 through at least 1948. Their products depended on each other, and they were both based in the New York area, so this doesn't seem unlikely. If anyone has additional examples of the Wolf/National Carbide connection, please add them to the puzzle we are piecing together.



No. NC-30 National Carbide Lanterns

A small dependable hand lamp adapted to meet requirements of car inspectors, signal and maintenance men.

Will burn about 8 hours on one charge of National mine lamp carbide provided water is added after 4 hours. Produces clear white light.

Shipping weight, 2 pounds.

No. NC-30each \$4.00

Printing and postage - Kind help from the following locations has helped to whittle down the deficit from the last issue of the Lamp Post: Wisconsin, Illinois, California, Virginia, Missouri, New Mexico, Nebraska, Colorado, New York, Michigan, Indiana, Arizona, New Jersey, West Virginia, Canada, Florida, Germany, France, and South Dakota. This current issue comes to you courtesy of funds borrowed from an already-slim (part-time employment only) household budget. Our mail continues to tell us that our readers still enjoy lamp and lamp related news. Sincere thanks to all.

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