

# CARBIDE SUPERINTENDENT'S LAMPS

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Carbide "superintendent's lamps" are a specific category of lamp characterized by a number of features. The most obvious is the handle, consisting of two elongated and hinged loops large enough to admit four fingers. Between these loops there is typically also a hook. Superintendents could afford to hold a lamp in one hand, because they were supervising rather than partaking in the heavy two-handed work of the miner.

Most superintendent's lamps are also about twice as large as the average cap lamp, but definitely not large enough to qualify as an eight-hour lamp. They are the intermediate size, and typically carry a somewhat larger reflector than a cap lamp (up to 7 inches across on some models). The larger reflector throws a broader beam for inspection purposes.

Nickel plating is also typical of superintendent's lamps, probably for no other reason than that it looks better and is more expensive, signifying higher rank.

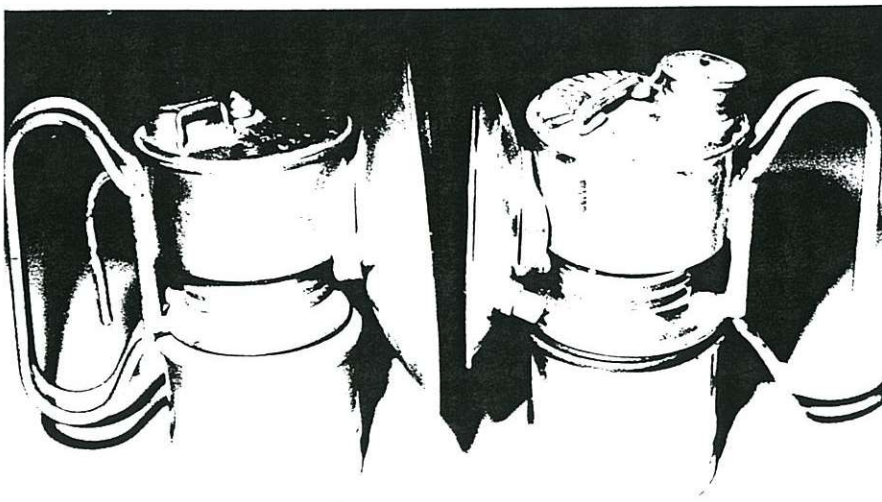
Many models of superintendent's lamps are adaptations of standard cap lamps, made by the substitution of handle loops and perhaps a larger reflector or a taller carbide chamber. The early



Ted Bobrink collection



Mark Bohannan collection



Guy's Dropper "Tall Boys,"  
Wendell Wilson collection



Baldwin, Justrite, Gee-Bee, Gem, and Simmons models are all the same size and shape as the corresponding cap lamp by the respective manufacturers. Others, like the ITP shown here, are independent mid-size lamps not incorporating cap lamp body parts.

The pictured ITP lamp was found recently with its original black and white box with printed instructions. It was made by the John Simmons Company of Brooklyn, New York. Stamped in

red ink over the John Simmons name is "Dewar Mfg. Company 28-30 35th St. Brooklyn, N.Y." This suggests it was part of stock taken over when the Dewar company purchased two original Baldwin patents from Simmons in 1921. The lamp is 4.75 inches tall and has a 3.12 inch reflector. Although this particular example is unmarked, some were stamped "ITP" ("It's Trouble-Proof") on the bottom and carry the Baldwin patent date of August 8, 1916.

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## THE UNION CARBIDE POCKET CAN

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Most carbide cap lamps will only burn for about 2 1/2 to 3 hours on a charge of carbide, so they must be refilled two or three times during a shift. In order to accomplish this, the miner must carry extra carbide with him underground. The carbide pocket can is one such way of doing this. The carbide pocket can is a small, usually concaved container designed to fit in the miner's boot or hip pocket.

The UNION CARBIDE pocket can is one of the few cans that are lithographed. It measures 3.9" high to the top of the cap, 3.4" wide, and 1.5" deep. There are quite a few different color shades and wording variations found with this can, but they are all lithographed in gray, blue and white. The bottom and top (including the cap) are electroplated with cadmium and the top is also embossed as shown.