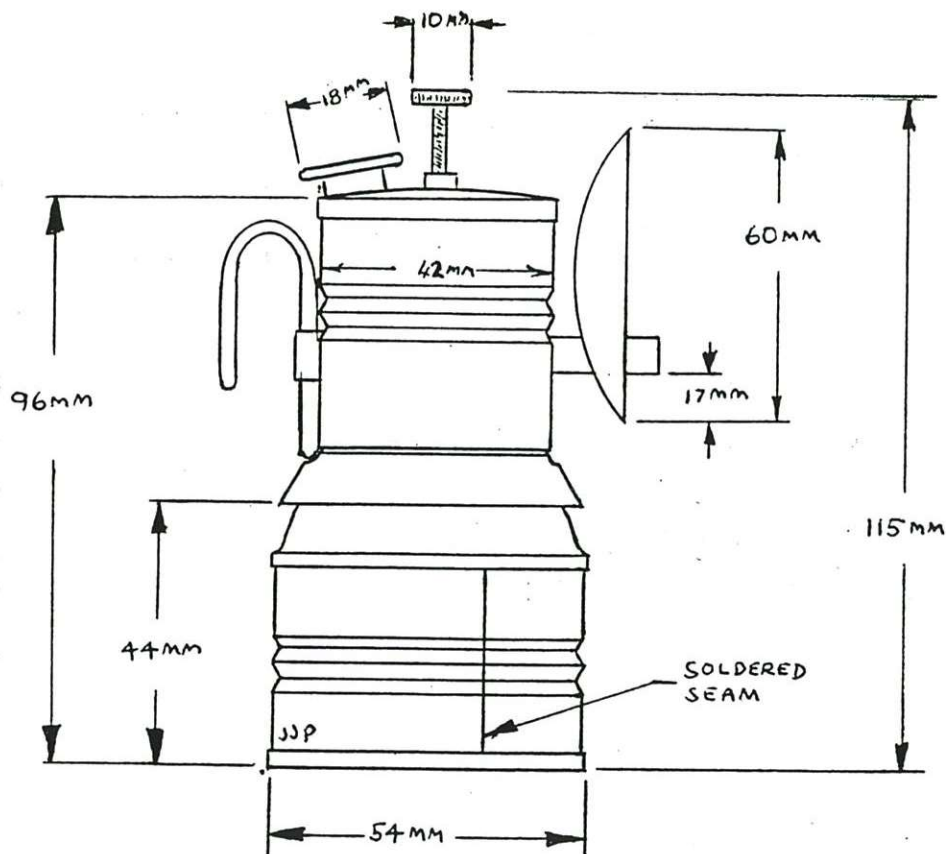


# Unidentified Carbide Cap Lamp

by John Podgurski

I recently picked up the cap lamp pictured below and, after discussions with several collectors regarding its identity, have yet to come to any conclusion. Having observed several varieties of Scrantons, Scrantos, Non-Justrite Victors and other unidentified lamps, I believe the lamp shown is earlier in vintage than any of the lamps mentioned. From the illustration, similarities can be seen in the design of waterfeed, waterdoor, oilwick cap lamp style hook, and the fixed soldered reflector. The construction of the water chamber and base, however, indicate earlier, more primitive methods. The fancier rolled crimp of both parts and the soldered *vertical* seam present in both water chamber and base, lead one to believe that the lamp parts were formed and assembled by hand. This is in contrast to the seamless construction of the lamps mentioned above.

The lamp was found in the Anthracite Coal Fields of Pennsylvania which by itself is no indication of the lamps's origin. The author, however, has a spare bottom for the same lamp. This bottom was found over 10 years ago when my uncle was cleaning out his garage. Having also visited the Smithsonian Institute, and observing a majority of the collection in storage, lamps of similar construction are present in the collection. These lamps however, are mainly identified through tags listing patents. In fact, many lamps in the collection may be the only one in existence. It was common practice for inventors to submit the actual item in conjunction with the various patent drawings for verification. These patent items are now in the Smithsonian Collection. Many of the items obtaining patents were never manufactured in quantity.



The sketch (above) is included with dimensions for comparison to any other unidentified lamps in private collections. If anyone can help with the identification of the lamp, or wishes to discuss the theories presented, please forward your reply to myself or Dave Thorpe.