

## Hardware Catalogs as Sources of Information

by Len Gaska

I suspect that virtually all of the more experienced mine artifact collectors know that old hardware catalogs can be valuable sources of information. The novice collector, on the other hand, may be unaware of the illustrations, dates, and other information often contained within general hardware catalogs.

Between 1900 and 1940, virtually all hardware companies sold mining lights and other mining equipment such as blasting supplies. Even catalogs into the late 1950's sometimes contain interesting information. Even more valuable than general hardware catalogs are those devoted primarily to mining. Examples are catalogs from The Mine and Smelter Supply Co., Hendrie & Bolthoff, and the Keystone catalog. These catalogs are much more rare than general hardware catalogs and are prized by many collectors.

General hardware catalogs prior to 1910 are quite rare and consequently very difficult to find. Catalogs dating from about 1915 to 1935 are much more plentiful and are also the most valuable to carbide lamp collectors as this period covered most of the rise and fall of many of the carbide lamp manufacturers. Many of the catalogs of that era also contain interesting and valuable information on other mining related collectibles such as blasting machines and cap crimpers.

Prices for old hardware catalogs vary greatly from several dollars to well over \$100. Unfortunately, it is often difficult to pay more than a few dollars for a catalog that might contain only a page or two of useful information for the mine artifact collector. But consider that the older catalogs are fun to look at and are also sought by tool and hardware collectors, so are often a sound investment.

When evaluating a hardware catalog, the index is the only practical means of locating mining related ads. Some of the hardware catalogs are over 1000 pages in length, so an index is invaluable. Product listings are not always standard, so one should check a variety of categories such as mining, miners, lamps, lanterns, blasting, and perhaps a few others that escape me at the moment.

Following is a sampling of some of the interesting ads and illustrations I have found in my personal hardware catalog collection. My first (and sometimes only) glimpse at a product was through these ads.

**EXTRA PARTS FOR MINERS' LAMPS**

**"Auto-Lite" Repair Parts**

UNIVERSAL LAMP CO. Chicago, U. S. A.

**Auto-Lite**

A complete assortment of standard repair parts for all makes of acetylene miners lamps.

**Contents of Box**

- 72 felts.
- 72 rubber gaskets.
- 24 sparking flints.
- 36 lava tips.
- 6 complete lighters.
- 6 felt holders.

Per Assortment  
No. ALRB—Auto-Lite repair assortment; weight each 1¼ lbs. **\$6.00**  
One assortment in a carton

**Witte Hardware Co.**  
**Catalog No. 26, 1926**

## MINERS CARBIDE LAMPS

### SUN RAY

#### With Round Hook



Float feed automatically regulates water supply and rakes the carbide. Steady, even flame. Round wire cap hook; non-leaking water cap, prevents water trickling down miner's back or face.

No. 15—Nickel finish; aluminum reflector; sparker lighter; height 3½ inches; burning capacity 3 hours; weight 5 ounces . . . . . Each \$ . . . . .

One in a box.

#### With Adjustable Handle



Handle is adjustable to three positions, making it possible to use lamp as cap or hand lamp. Can be suspending from button, carried on belt, or handle can be wedged into rock crevice.

Equipped with windshield making it wind, drip and shot proof; reflector 2½ inch diameter, 2 inches deep; sparker lighter.

No. 240—Nickel plated brass; height 3½ inches; burning time 3 hours; weight 5½ ounces. . . . . Each \$ . . . . .

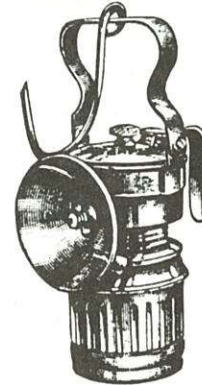
One in a box.

**L. H. Kurtz Co.**  
Catalog No. 28, 1928

## MINERS CARBIDE LAMPS

### GUY'S DROPPER

#### BIG BOY SUPERINTENDENTS



Large size, with hot tinned steel bale and hook. 3½ inch chrome plated reflector with flame protector. A perforated hydrolator or perforated tube backed by a filtering material to keep it from getting clogged with carbide smudge. Distributes water over 3 square inches instead of one point. Constant water-flow produces a steady, brilliant flame during entire burning time of lamp. Heavy brass body with a hot tinned steel bottom reinforcement, polished and lacquered.

**Burning capacity, 10 hours on ½ lb. carbide.**

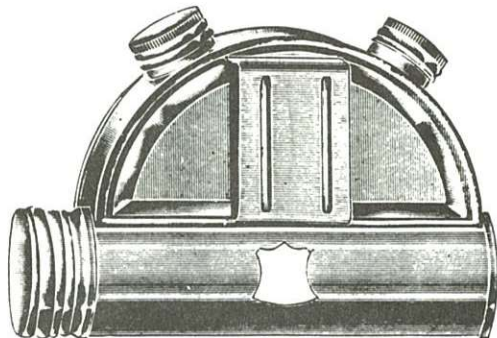
Height overall, 9 in.; diameter bottom, 3 in.

Stock	Height			
No. A3052	Mrs. No. 810	body 6 in.	Wt. doz. 24 lbs.	Each \$7.50

One in a box.

**Baker & Hamilton**  
Catalog No. 107A, 1958

## MINERS' CARBIDE CANTEENS



Made of Tin. Compartments for Carbide, Water and Matches; Where Miners' Acetylene Lamps are Used these Canteens are Needed.

Per Dozen

NO. 21—Length, 5¾ Inches; Width, 1¾ Inches; Height, 4¼ Inches; Holds ½ Pint Water; 7½ Ounces Carbide; Weight Each, 6¼ Ounces. . . . . \$7.50

One in a Box

**Strevell Paterson Hardware Co.**  
1919

## AMERICAN BULL DOG CARBIDE MINERS LAMPS



Fig. 41475D

Extremely light weight—4¾ ounces. Gives steady white flame, 14 candle power.

Perfect water feed that will not clog, insuring steady light without jiggling or pounding. Has top water feed control, graduated so that user can feed exact amount of water required.

Made entirely of No. 24 gauge brass. Burns 20 per cent less carbide. Reflector 2¼-inch polished brass and easily detached for cleaning.

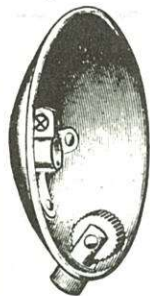
Prices upon application.

**Queen City Supply Co.**  
Catalog C, 1922



## EXTRA PARTS FOR MINERS' LAMPS

### REFLECTORS



The Matchless Reflector Lights the Gas with a Rub of the Hand. Brass, Size, 2 1/2 Inches. has Lighter Attached; is Adjustable to Fit Around Tip Holder by Means of Tightening Screw in Collar.

Each  
No. 26—Weight per Dozen, 13 Ounces... \$0.35

One Dozen in a Package

### CARBIDE CONTAINERS

Pocket Carbide Can: Made of Light Steel: Tin Coated: Ribbed: Double Seamed and Sliding Cover: Air Tight, Concaved to Fit the Boot or Hip Pocket: Holds Full Day's Supply; the Most Convenient and Safest Carbide Supply Can on the Market; Rustless.



Each  
No. 77—Capacity, 7 Ounces; Weight per Dozen, 1 3/8 Lbs.... \$0.15  
.17

**Strevell Paterson Hardware Co.**  
1919

## BLASTING MACHINE RHEOSTATS

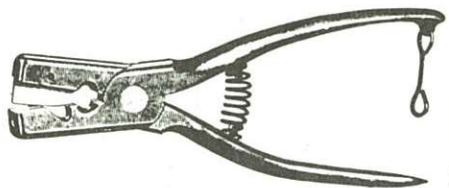
### Hercules



A small instrument offering the easiest and most effective means of testing the strength of a blasting machine without actually firing a series of electric blasting caps. This instrument gives a resistance equal to from 5 to 100 electric blasting caps, with 30 feet copper wires.

Each  
No. HR—Rheostats... \$17.00

**Witte Hardware Co.**  
Catalog No. 26, 1926



### Prince

Fuse cutter and cap crimper combined; made of solid bronze metal with forged tool steel blade; fitted with tempered steel coil wire spring and wire end catch.

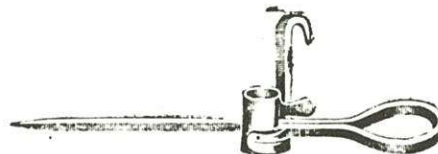
Per Dozen  
No. P—Length 6 3/4 inches; weight per dozen 5 1/2 lbs.... \$32.40  
Half dozen in a box

**Witte Hardware Co.**  
Catalog No. 26, 1926

## MINERS' CANDLESTICKS.



No. 4—3/4 in. Bessemer steel rod, 8 in. long, flat spring steel candle socket, w't per doz. 2 lbs.,  
per dozen ..... ADE \$2.40  
LOOSE.



No. 10—California pattern, length 10 in., forged steel rod and hook, spring steel candle holder, w't per doz. 3 lbs. .... per dozen CCJ \$5.50  
TWO DOZEN IN A BOX.



No. 11—Varney, made from one piece 1/2 in. octagon tool steel, blued finish, length 12 in., w't per doz. 6 lbs., per dozen ..... CIJ \$6.50

*This is an extra well made candlestick. The point is extra sharp.*

**Hibbard, Spencer, Bartlett**  
circa 1915

If you have any interesting catalog ads in your collection, please send us copies with information on the catalog. Include the name of the catalog, the number, and the year if given.