

Burrell Gas Detector

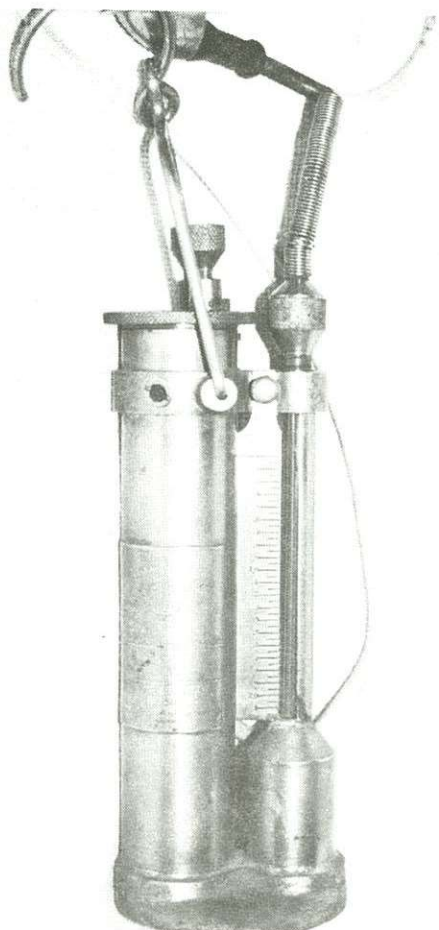
An early portable gas detector for use in coal mines was developed by George A. Burrell, of the Federal Bureau of Mines, prior to 1920. This device was made of nickel-plated brass. The key feature is a platinum wire bridge, which glows by the current from an electric battery. This example from my collection is powered by an Edison Model P rechargeable cap lamp battery pack.

The wire, however is used to consume gas, rather than be viewed directly. A sample of air is first drawn into a combustion chamber above the water level. The glowing wire then burns the gas. When this occurs water is drawn up and the level is viewed through a "gauge-glass" window.

While a reliable means of detecting gases in a coal mine, the Burrell Gas Detector never saw very extensive use and is a relatively rare mining collectible today.

Dave Johnson

Mine Gases and Ventilation, James T. Beard.
Published by McGraw-Hill, N.Y., N.Y., 1920.



Bolivian Mining Stamp

Bill Wade sent us this photo of a postage stamp he has found showing an assortment of artifacts:



Grier Bros. Superintendent's Lamp

Heretofore unpublished is the photo of this unusual carbide cap lamp. It is nickel-plated, unfired, and Steve Loftin's.

