

Jennison Hardware Co.

by Dave Johnson

In 1853, Charles E. Jennison founded Jennison & Co., later to become the Jennison Hardware Co., in Bay City, Michigan. Originally dealing in mill and lumbering supplies, stoves, household goods, builders' hardware, cutlery, tools, paint and supplies, farm wagons, agricultural implements and iron and tin goods, the firm was later expanded to include a wholesale steel operation for local industries. The Jennison Hardware Co. continues in operation today as a wholesaler of hose belting and packing, hand tools, wire, power tools and hardware.

Both face and driver's lamps were produced with the Jennison Hardware Co. label. The face lamp in my collection appears to be a Grier Bros. product. The hook, hook brace, and cap hinge, as well as the spout and font, are all identical to both a tin and a copper Grier Bros. lamp in my collection. The Jennison Hardware Co. had to have the lamps made by another firm as they had no manufacturing facilities of their own. The Jennison Hardware Co. label is one that is rarely seen today. The only idea I have as to when the Jennison Hardware Co. lamps were being manufactured and sold is based upon a crude inscription on the base of my lamp which reads: W. Knapp Central Mine Aug. 25/99. I would be interested on knowing what other varieties of Jennison Hardware Co. lamps exist.



The Bay City-Saginaw area of Michigan was the home of numerous coal mines in the 1890-1930 period. In 1910, there were 25 coal mines operating in the area. By 1950 only one small mine remained in operation.

Sources:

The Bay County Story, L.E. Arndt, 1982

The Industries of the Bay Cities, 1889

