

Notes on the V. L. Lamp
by Jim Steinberg

In the period of use of Sunshine and oil lamps within the mining industry, the V. L. Lamp is of rather late vintage. The lamp shows patent dates of September 14, 1909 and November 20, 1909 with other patents pending. The V. L. lamp was prominently displayed in the Miner's Sunshine fuel advertisement of the Standard Oil Company. These ads were running in "Mining and Engineering World" in 1912 and 1913, a period of time in which carbide lamps were becoming widely available and used in the eastern coal fields.

The V. L. Lamp has a number of interesting features. As in all Sunshine style lamps, special features were present to insure that the fuel stayed in a liquid state while the lamp was burning. Many Sunshine lamps insulated the fuel in the spout with a double wall, and others utilized copper conductors to transmit the heat to the bottom of the lamp. The fuel heater on the V. L. Lamp is unique. First, it has a hinged tin hoop (a) which is heated in the flame when it is in an upright position. The hoop is riveted (c) to a copper collar (d) which is the visible portion of a copper heat conductor that extends to the bottom of the lamp (see advertisement).

The spout and body of the lamp consist of a single piece of Japanned tin (some V. L. Lamps are reported to be brass). with a web (b) adding further support to the spout. The back of the lamp is crimped (e). Another striking feature is the use of spot welds to attach the cap hinge (f) and the hook (g). It is worth noting that the V. L. Lamp in the Standard Oil advertisement has a brace holding the hat hook onto the lamp.

Artwork and measurements based on a V. L. Lamp in the collection of Len Gaska.



The V. L. Lamp

Miner's Sunshine

Brightest and Cleanest Light a Miner Can Use

Office of
STATE INSPECTOR OF MINES
Room 110 State House
INDIANAPOLIS

STANDARD OIL COMPANY:

Gentlemen:—Some two years ago I gave you a recommendation on Miner's Sunshine, stating at that time I had always advocated it's use in our mines and that my reason for this was it produced better light and comparatively no smoke at all.

I am pleased to state that my views regarding this product are the same today, if not even stronger than they were at the time I gave you the recommendation referred to and, furthermore, in making our rounds of inspection I find practically every mine of any consequence using Miners Sunshine.

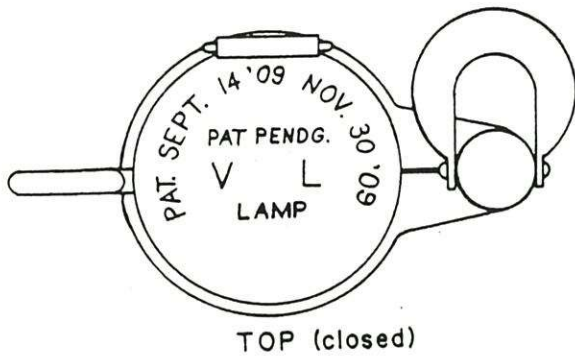
It is my desire and I should like very much to see the time when Miner's Sunshine takes the place of oil entirely in the mines.

You may rest assured that not only myself, but my deputies (who agree with me that Sunshine is better than oil) will take pleasure in recommending it's use, fully believing that in so doing we are aiding a good cause.

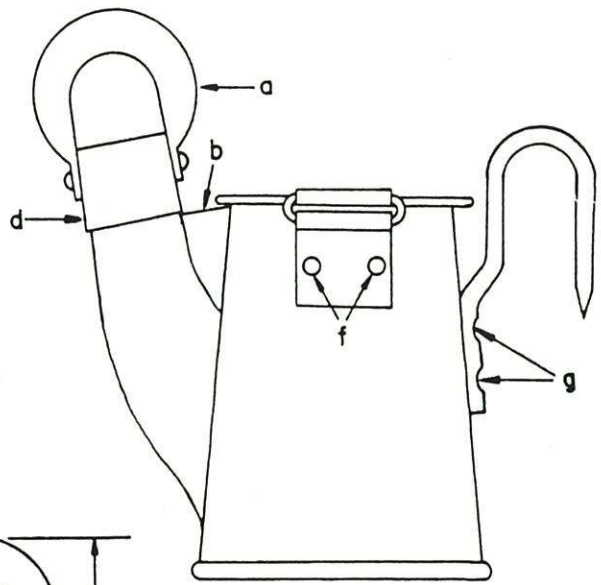
Yours very respectfully,
(Signed) JAMES EPPERSON,
Inspector of Mines.

STANDARD OIL COMPANY

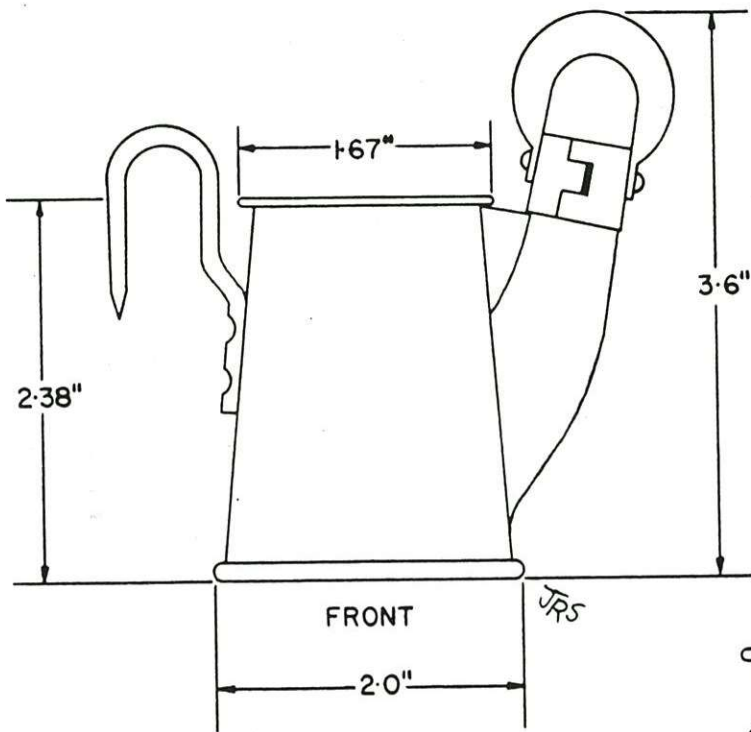
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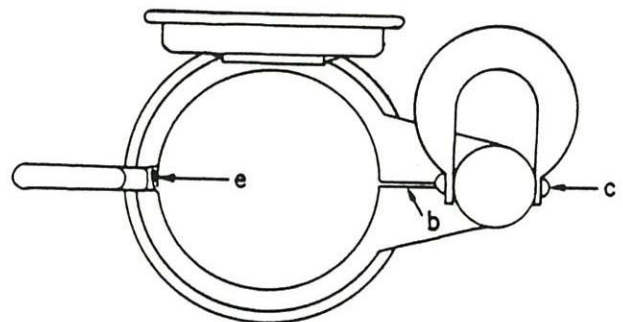
TOP (closed)



REAR



FRONT



TOP (open)

THE V L LAMP