NEWS

The State of the Art

Life is an ongoing irony…so is collecting mining antiques. In the last five years, we have seen the hobby readjust its medium from the written newsletter to the computer. On-line auction services have actually dragged many more artifacts out of the national stockpile. Look at the amount of material that regularly sells on eBay! One would think that with the multitude of collectors competing online for these widely advertised item, that prices would be driven to stratoshperic levels. Not so! The laws of supply and demand have prevailed, and lamps that would have sold for $1000 five years ago are going for $325.

Some lament the days when their summer vacation meant meandering the rural shops in the Mother Lode for the occasional overlooked rare item. We all miss the long-distance visit of a fellow collector whose only way to self-educate was to manually inspect his colleague's collection.

But people are resiliant, and they respond to changes in a productive way. Now, more than ever, we have organized trips to defunct mining sites that are both archeologic and full of comraderie.

While we sit home at our keyboards homing in on our latest acquisition, we are also planning the next 4WD trip to an abandoned mine site where we will face physical challenges and then enjoy the primal aftermath of a burning fire and storytelling! It don't get no better 'n that.

Our semi-annual collector's meets have become family vacations for many. A week off is standard, and the greatlocations are great places for breaking loose from our daily grind.

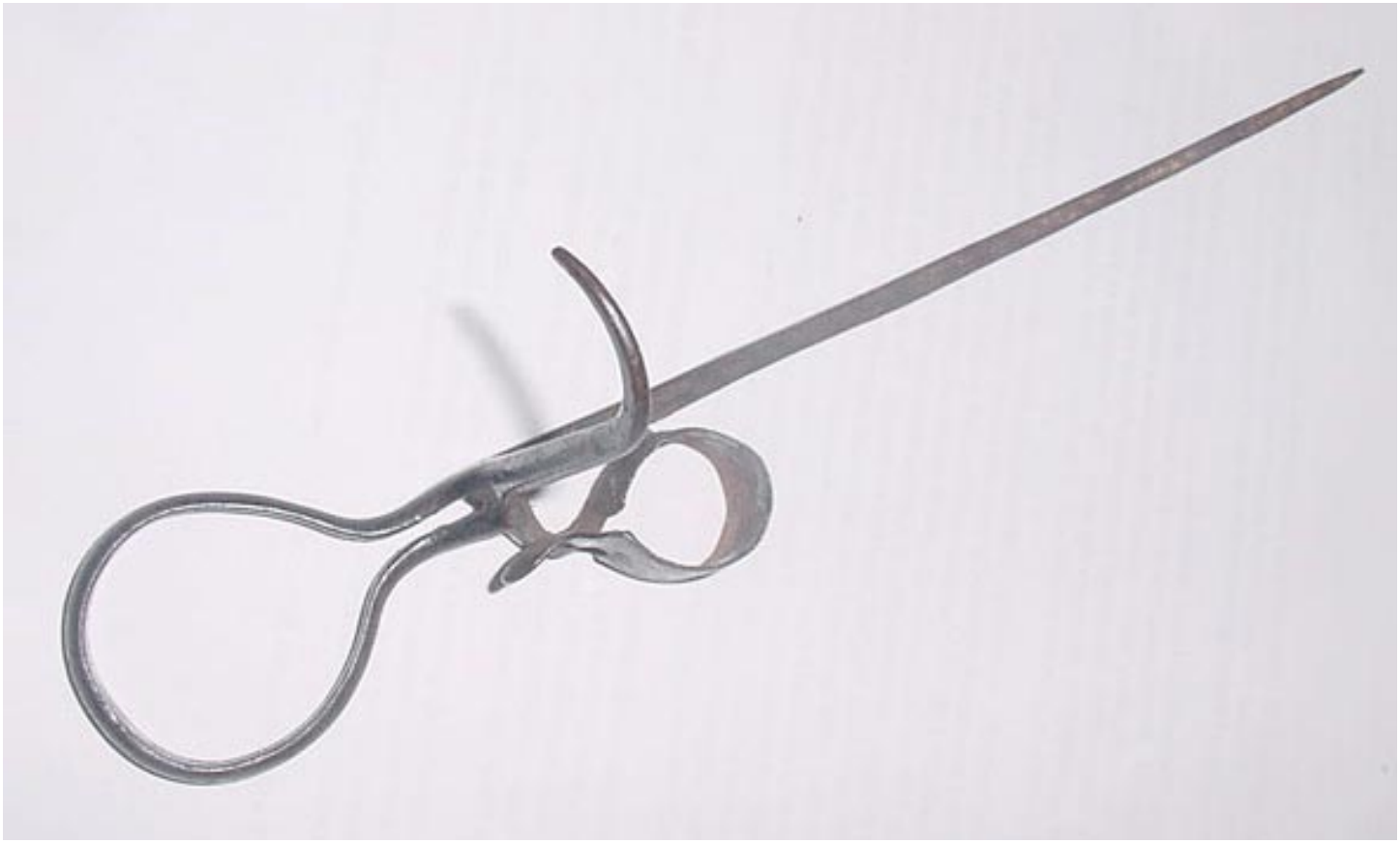
So yes, the times are changing, but maybe not for the worse. We are finding more artifacts at lower prices. And, we have reintroduced the human element with organized get-togethers.

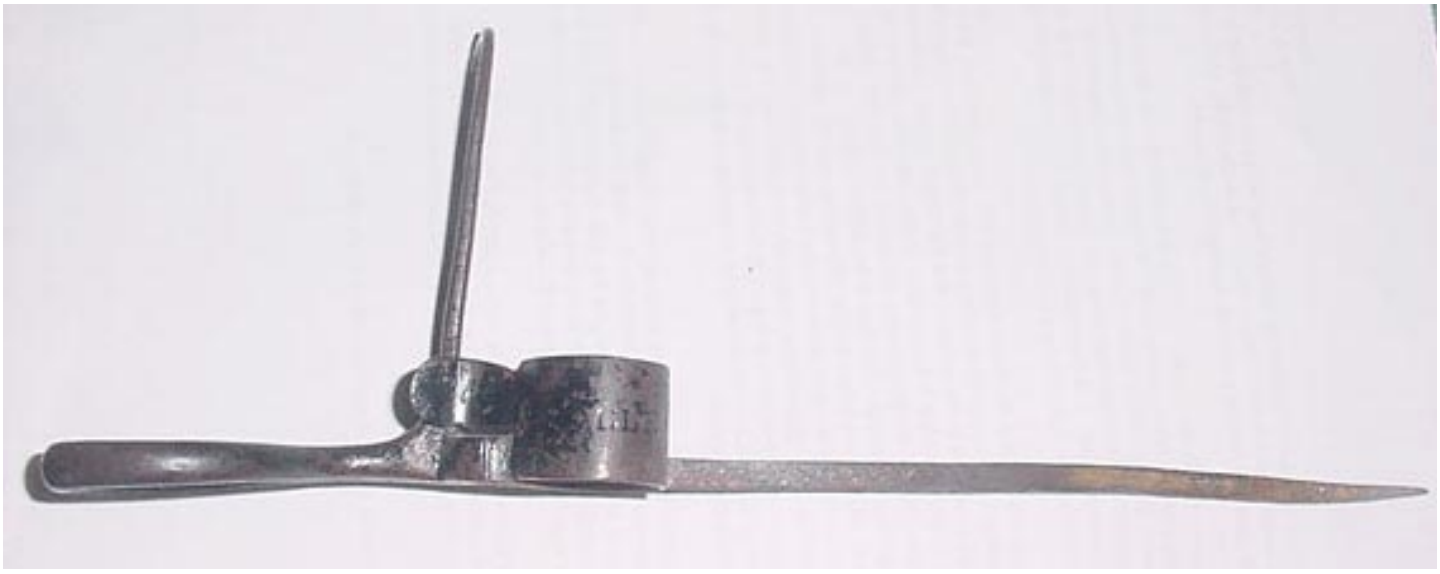
On the other hand, I don't think we'll ever match the excitement we once had, when a newsletter or magazine would come in the mail, and we'd flip straight to the trade/sale section.

Another Candlestick Variation

by Herb Dick and Dave Thorpe

Just when we thought we'd seen it all, another major variation of the C. Cleaves candlestick is found. This is a simple style and made somewhat more crudely than others reported. Some black paint remains. If the paint is original, this suggests it to be more recent. The most obvious design change is the split handle. The thimble tab is oriented like conventional sticks as compared to the right angle arrangement seen on most Cleaves sticks. The hook is round and comes straight off the top of the shank. This was spotted in California.





Claim Markers:
An Accidental Collection

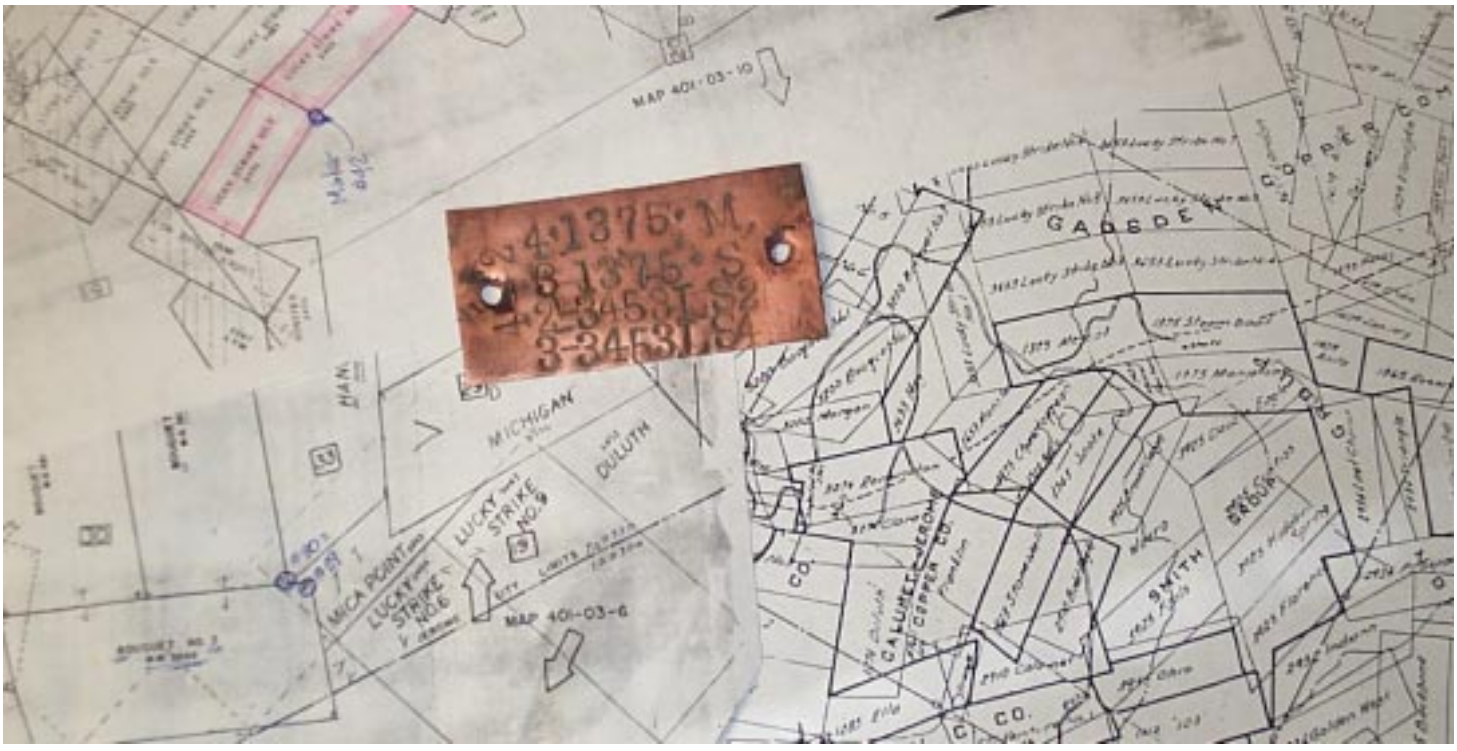
by Barbara "Blue" Boelter

Since moving to Jerome Arizona in 1984, I've learned that any hike can become a collecting experience here. I have old bottles on all my windowsills, a crowd of rusty tricycles in the yard, and some strange copper plaques on some of my doors. What are those you may wonder. I did too, but this is how it came about.

These copper plaques decorate the the antique doors in the author's home. One day while walking in open country that surrounds Jerome, near an old mine shaft and foundations of long-gone headframes, I took a little shortcut back to the main trail. It was the first time I'd gone down this little dry wash. Pushing through some brush, I ran into a steel pipe about 3' high. It didn't move, so I had to stop a moment. It was a 3" diameter pipe, filled with concrete and set in concrete. It was rusted and pitted with age, but as I grasped the top to go by, I felt something different on the back side. It was a smoother rectangle, rivetted to the pipe at top and bottom, invisible in its darkened color-match with the pipe. It was barely hanging on, the iron-based rivets being rusted through. With a slight tug, it came off in my hand. A touch of green on the back hinted at a composition of copper. It went in my pocket and back home with me.

As time goes on more of the copper tags are found in the hills around Jerome, Arizona. When I flattened out the pipe-curve and cleaned it up, hand-stamped letters and numbers showed up. I couldn't make any sense of it, but knew it must be mining-related. It was definitely pure copper, about 4 ounces of it, roughly 2" by 4". I had that thought: Hmm, I wonder if there are more of these out there?

Sure enough, next time I was out there, I spotted a similar pipe from a distance and made my way over to it. It bore the same type of plaque, so I pried on it with a pocket knife till it came free. I had begun a collection. I started carrying a multi-tool with me. Wondering if there was an alignment factor, I walked straight forward in a line set by the first two pipes. There, an equal distance away, in the middle of thick bushes, I found my third copper plaque.



Remnant of Early Life in a Mining Town

Bill Collins, Santee, CA

I recently purchased a fraternal society ribbon for a group in Quarry, Iowa. Earlier in the day I had been to an antique show in Long Beach and had found nothing but an Autolite cap lamp. On the way home I stopped in Carlsbad on the chance that something (or anything) might make the trip worthwhile.

The only items that piqued my curiosity were these two ribbons. They were fairly plain, the usual gold lettering on red for parties and parades and silver on black for funerals. I couldn't read anything but the location: Quarry, Iowa. Remembering the neat ribbon that Bob Schroth had found for a Croatian fraternal group in Bisbee, AZ, I decided to take a chance that Quarry was a real mining town and not just named for a local family.
Once home I dug out my past copies of Eureka (April 1997 and July 1997) and compared the inscription: Rad/Vzbuzeni Skalniho Ducha, to that on Bob's ribbon. Nothing matched. Using the Internet I checked the Croatian dictionary sites. No luck. I finally e-mailed a contributor to one of Croatian sites. The reply message was "try Czech."

The Czech-Slovak web dictionary was only a little helpful. Cislo means number. Skalniho can mean rock, mountain, cliff, and a half dozen other things. At another web site I found the translation for C.S.P.S. It stands for the Cesko-Slovanska Podporujici Spolek; this means the Czecho-Slovanic Benevolent Society. They were founded in St Louis, Missouri in 1854, and are now the Czechoslovak Society of America. In addition to providing insurance the C.S.P.S. provided for burial costs, schools, cultural preservation, social events, and general community well being of its members. Only the larger lodges are active today. Bob Guthrie informed me that fewer than 100 people now live in Quarry. As was true for Croatia, the Czech and Slovak homelands were once part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until its break up after World War I. My supervisor's cousin just happened to be touring in the Czech Republic at this time so we e-mailed him the information with a scan of the ribbon. The coffee-shop interpretation came back: "Order/Waking the Mountain Ghost." The "mountain" translation is understandably wrong when you consider that Iowa is dominated by mostly flat land to gently rolling hills.

From the Internet I found that Quarry, Iowa is located in Marshall County and was established in 1868 by the LeGrand Quarry Company. The company quarried fossiliferous limestone. Some exceptional crinoid fossils have been recovered from this site. The limestone was used to build the Quarry railroad depot in 1868 and the Marshall County courthouse in 1884. The quarry continues to be operated by Martin Marietta Materials for limestone aggregates. So it was a mining town after all. At three other locations in the state, Martin Marietta operates underground limestone mines.

I contacted Petr Sztacho, a Czech geologist and mineral dealer from Prague. Petr usually has a room at the Tucson show (Executive Inn) and participates in the mining show as well. Petr's rough translation was: "Society of Inspire the Ghost of Rock." I felt I was getting close to the answer so I took one more stab at it and contacted the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Carmen Langel, the curator provided the official translation from a list of C.S.P.S. lodges. The translation is "Lodge/Awakening of the Rock Spirit." Now that I know more about the circumstances of this organization I am convinced that the local quarrymen were poetically referring to their profession.

Abbreviated Stick

by Bill Bowman

While in Nevada, I found this item in a pile of coal dust and scrap metal near what was apparently the blacksmith shop for the mine I was visiting. The shaft nearest the "shop" (about 100 ft. away) is caved and has not been used since the late 1800's or very early 1900's.

Henry Boker Blasting Tool

by Dave Johnson

Many American mining artifact collectors are familiar with the name Henry Boker, manufacturer of the LIGHTNING and SUNSET miners' candlesticks. There are also Henry Boker frog lamps, which have turned up most commonly in Mexico. The Boker Frog lamps apparently did not find a ready market in the U.S. as very few have turned up here.

Henry (Heinrich) Boker established a hardware and cutlery manufacturing business in the early 1800s in Remscheid Germany. Many Boker cutlery items are stamped HENRY BOKER, SOLINGEN, Solingen being a town in close proximity to Remscheid. In 1837, Hermann Boker, Henry's brother, moved from Solingen to New York City and established Hermann Boker and Co., U.S. Agents for Heinrich Boker. Some years later a manufacturing facility was listed in Newark, New Jersey.

Boker received an order from the U.S. government to produce 45,000 1860 Pattern Cavalry Sabers, 1,646 Artillery Sabers and 569 NCO Sabers, most of which saw service in the Civil War, and are stamped HENRY BOKER, SOLINGEN. Hermann Boker & Co. contracted with the U.S. government to import muskets, rifles and pistols of European manufacture for use in the Civil War.

In 1867, Boker expanded his import business to Mexico when he opened a branch in Mexico City, which accounts for the relatively large number of Boker frog lamps that have been found in Mexico. Boker also supplied European firearms to the Mexican government.

The Boker tool in the open position. Note the copper punch on the lower handle.

The 1881 Trenton, New Jersey City Directory lists the Trenton Vise and Tool Works at 90 Union St. with Hermann Boker & Co. as proprietors. Thus, Boker apparently had manufacturing plants in Trenton and Newark.

In perusing the internet recently I came across a wide variety of Henry Boker manufactured items. These include swords, daggers, a wide variety of knives, tin shears, sardine can shears, scissors, wick trimmers, leather cutters, carpenters' braces and bits, folding rulers, straight razors, cork screws, wine bottle corkers, pocket scales, hide scales and others.
A Henry Boker item of special interest to mining artifact collectors will be the blasting cap crimper/fuse cutter tool pictured here. I recently obtained this unique piece from a dealer in Australia. It measures 7" in length. The end of one handle is a solid copper tipped punch and the other is a flat screwdriver type blade. In the European style, it is hinged at the end rather than being hinged liked a pliers, as is common in the U.S. made crimpers. Notice that the hole for crimping the cap is slightly offset so that the handles must be opened slightly to admit the cap. When the handles are compressed the cap is crimped, when the handles are released the cap may be withdrawn. The fuse cutter is below the crimping hole. Notice the pin above the fuse cutter that prevents the handles from closing together and crimping the cap too tightly. This is a well-made tool that any mining artifact collector would be proud to own.

For a history of the Boker company, see this interenet link: http://www.bokerusa.com/history.asp

The Boker tool: close-up views of the business end.

Lamp Restoration - Before & After

Dave Johnson

After adding a lamp to their collection, many collectors are faced with the question of whether or not they should take steps to restore the lamp, if needed. If the lamp has missing parts that are obtainable there isn't any question whether or not this should be done, and the same is the case with lamps that have had parts replaced incorrectly, or in the case of damaged parts for which original replacements are obtainable. Then there is the question of cleaning the lamp. Some collectors like their lamps left as they were found no matter how nasty they may look, others clean them to the extent of removing active rust, crusty deposits, etc., some hand polish metal parts and a few mechanically buff the metal to a mirror finish. This last technique does nothing for the lamp but decrease its value to other collectors since buffing removes details in the metal making the lamp look very distinctly unlike it was manufactured, remember that buffing is forever.

There are two other aspects of lamp restoration to consider. The first being the removal of dents and the straightening of bent parts such as the hook on a carbide lamp or oilwick lamp, or any part of a candlestick. The second being the replacement of rusted metal whether in the form of pinholes or metal parts that are rusted partially away.

A lamp with "character", prior to restoration.

Some collectors state that dents give character and a look of authenticity to a lamp that a mint-in-the-box lamp does not possess. However, offer any lamp with or without dents and see which one sells faster and which one brings a higher price, the answer is obvious. I prefer my lamps sans dents and to this end I began to experiment many years ago with

removing dents from carbide, safety and oilwick lamps. Having seen the results of others' abortive attempts at dent removal I had a fair idea what not to do. The cardinal rule of dent removal is to never use a sharp edged tool like a screwdriver. I have seen lamps, from which dents could easily have been removed with the right tools, defaced by some over zealous seller with a screwdriver. Sharp-edged tools leave sharp outward protrusions on the surface of the lamp when inserted in the lamp and pushed outward. What these have actually done is stretch the metal outward. The only way to even partially remove these is to insert something in the lamp that can be pushed on from the outside, this allows the protrusions to be pushed inward against the inserted piece.

I'm actually getting ahead of myself here, let's start with the correct way to remove dents. Since dents are generally made from the outside, the obvious way to remove them is from the inside pushing out. The problem with most dents is how to get proper access to them to push them out. Here is where your personal ingenuity comes into play. You must fashion tools that allow you to reach behind any dent you want to remove. These tools must all have rounded edges and smooth surfaces. The easiest dents to remove are those that do not require any reaching or bending around an internal part. A good example is the copper oilwick spout shown here before, during and after the dent removal process. A smooth steel rod in inserted in the spout of slightly smaller diameter than the spout. The lamp is them pressed down and the dent gently tapped out with a small plastic hammer. The two secrets of successful dent removal that I can share with you are that the tool is most easily and effectively used when held in a bench vise, which leaves both hands free to work the lamp, and don't be in too much of a hurry, work slowly and methodically. Small dents can be pushed out in one motion but larger dents must be worked slowly across their entire surface. I have had to make specific tools to work out a single dent that could not be reached with existing tools.

The most difficult dents to remove in oilwick lamps are those that occur where the miner beat his oilwick against his boot to raise the wick and dented the wick tube and the lamp base, as well as where the vertical font sides meet the bottom. The most difficult dents to remove in carbide lamps are those that occur wherever there is significant change in the surface plane, such as where the top and side of the water chamber meet or where the side and bottom of the carbide chamber meet. Also any soldered joint that is dented has the potential to come apart when the dent is pushed out, another good reason to take your time and work slowly.

If you look at the before photos of the brass Scottish oilwick (shown on page one) you might wonder where to even start removing dents since there is more dented than non-dented surface. Looking at the before photos you might also ask why I even bought the lamp to begin with, the answer is that I saw potential in the lamp, I saw what it could be, not what it actually was at the time. It took approximately 3 1/2 hours using half a dozen different tools toachieve the results seen in the after photos. The finished result is a lamp that no one would be ashamed to put in their collection.


Partially Done Side View


Partially Done Side View


Partially Done Closeup View


After Closeup


After Side View


After Side View

I have found steel parts to be the easiest to work with, copper and brass more difficult and less forgiving, and aluminum by far the most difficult. When bent too far and then bent back aluminum has a nasty tendency to crack. Straightening the aluminum bonnet on the safety lamp shown here was a rather difficult task. While dents push easily out of copper and brass, it is more difficult to obtain a smooth surface than it is with steel.

Now let's look at rust restoration. How many of us have seen otherwise nice looking steel oilwicks riddled with pin holes even though the rest of the surface looks good. How did this occur without rusting the rest of the external surface. The answer is that it occurred from the inside out, most likely the result of an unused cotton wick being left in the lamp. The cotton absorbs water from the air and wherever the wick touches steel rust occurs. I have seen oilwicks where the spout has become paper thin because of internal rust.

There is a way to salvage these lamps and prevent further damage. I first clean the internal surface with a steel or brass brush and then apply a product made by Devcon called Wear Resistant Liquid, it is an epoxy compound filled with a fine grade of ceramic that is used to reline worn equipment and for making wear resistant forming dies and fixtures. It is meant for industrial use only and can be difficult to get used to working with.

Shown in photos here are a Trethaway Bros highspout oilwick (next page) and a Trethaway Bros. brass dome lid oilwick that I experimented on many years ago and have kept just as conversation pieces. I would not consider either lamp to be collectible in the condition in which I found them so there was no reason why I shouldn't experiment with them. As can be seen in the before photo of the highspout oilwick is that the entire end 1/2" of the spout was partially rusted away and the rest of the lamp was riddled with pin holes (not as obvious as the spout end). I was able to fill all the pinholes from the inside and rebuild the spout end to its'original dimensions and thickness (see photo). The nice thing about this product is that once it starts to set up it becomes the consistency of modeling clay (short duration) and can formed as desired. It can then be filed and sanded as needed.

On the two examples shown here I had not yet learned how to color the material to match the color of the lamp. When mixing the epoxy I found that I could add filings, rust dust, and other materials to change the color of the epoxy (originally dark gray) to match the color of the metal in the lamp. I can now fill pin holes so that the only way they can be detected is with a magnifying glass. I always apply the material from the inside on the lamp. I have tried other commercially available products like PC7 but have not been happy with them. For those, like myself, who cannot solder, this material can also be used to reattach parts and close broken solder joints. It can also be used to keep stress cracked brass from opening up. A thin coating applied internally over the crack will prevent further cracking and separation, and the nice thing is that it cannot be seen.

To close the rust repair subject let me advise all collectors to pull dry unused wicks from all their steel oilwicks. Wicks that have sunshine fuel soaked into them do not have this problem as the moisture cannot be absorbed when the fuel is present.

Now if you want to start working on dent removal go find a couple of junk lamps and have at it.

Clothed Skeleton Found in Mine

by Christian Auer

I live in Austria, a country with a long mining tradition and many thousands of abandoned mines waiting to be explored. I have done just that for more than 20 years now. Old mines beginning with the 15th century up to mines from WW2. I know mines 500 years old where you can crawl mile after mile, where you see the workings and resting places of the old miners, where you believe them sitting just around the corner! I`ve got a large working tool collection from such mines.

Well, normally we are a team of three friends but luckily I missed this one tour. So my two friends went to explore a completely unknown small lead mine at the Obir mining region, Carinthia, Austria. The mine was closed about 1860. Although there was a large entrance the mine itself was very narrow. One of my friends climed up to a higher adit but fell down from about 2m with a loud cry. On the upper adit there was a skelleton sitting!
Again thats a true story and if you don`t believe me, check out the picture.

The skeleton had still a rotten hat and shoes on. Next it there was a pipe and an empty bottle. So my friends ran down the mountain and informed the local police. They went up with them and brought the bones down. Investigations started and they really found out what happened!

They found a news paper from 1890. An article described the disappearance of a young noble man. Well, the skeleton from a person 2 meters tall and with good teeth (not normal at that time!) was exactly that noble man. They also found out that he lost very much money in gambling. He committed suicide but in a place where nobody could find him. So nobody could claim the money from his family because nobody knew he was dead!
He went to that 30 years abandoned mine, sat down, smoked his last pipe and drank a poison from that bottle my friends found... and died there!

Vest-Pocket Safety Lamp

Dave Johnson

When pictured alone, it looks like a standard Davy-style safety lamp, but it is actually a vest-pocket safety lamp. When sitting next to a Hughes Bros. vest-pocket safety lamp and a Baby Wolf safety lamp you can see just how small this lamp really is. It measures 5 1/8" tall, excluding the hook, and has a base that is 1 1/4" in diameter.

This is not a toy or miniature copy of a working lamp, it is a working lamp. It has a standard two-piece steel gauze, a working wick raiser, a windshield or flame guard, the top is hinged exactly like the larger Davy lamps, as is the latch that holds the top tightly on the gauze, and everything is perfectly proportioned. The gauze top is blackened from the lamp being used and the fuel vessel and wick still retain some residual of the old fuel with its' distinctive odor and greenish color that I have seen in so many other safety lamps over the years. The lamp has some light wear to it, it was obviously used but not abused.

The horizontal rings that hold the gauze at the top and bottom are knurled. The windshield is decoratively scalloped along its' top edge, with each scallop being holed, and bottom has a serrated edge. The bottom is copper with the rest of the lamp being brass except for the steel gauze and wick raiser.

This lamp was reportedly found about 25 years ago in the cellar of an old home in Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania. I was able to add it my collection recently when the previous owner decided to sell his collection and offered it on Ebay, along with some other safety lamps. I think it is one of the neatest safety lamps I have seen, it is definitely unusual.

Are There Variations of the Imperial?

by Dave Thorpe and Dave Johnson

A particularly ornate cap lamp made by Justrite is most commonly found with the X-ray stamp on the bottom. Yet, other stampings are also found, one with Fulton EM. HAW. CO., and the other with Imperial Hardsocg. Both were specialty lamps made for other firms. The Fulton is thought to have been made for the Emmons Hawkins Hardware Co. of Huntington, West Virginia. The Imperial, found only in nickel-plating, was sold by the Martin

Hardsocg Co., a supplier of mining equipment. Fultons are found only in brass. While most are identical to the X-ray, some major variations exist. But that is not the subject of this article.

For years it has been rumored that a major variation of the Imperial existed in a Louisville collection. Few had seen it, those that did seemed to recall a different reflector set-up, possibly set-screw. Dave Johnson was kind enough to visit this collector and provide photographs of this curious lamp.

The first view says it all. The lamp is not different from other X-rays except that it is missing the square reflector brace. Like all other Imperi-

als, it is nickel-plated over unpolished brass. Also, like all other nickel-plated X-rays, the lamp is equipped with a brass reflector. Of note are the short ribs on the base. All Imperials are found with such ribbing. This differs from common Xrays, most of which have ribs double that length. A few Xrays, however, have short ribs as well, and these are roughly ten times rarer than the lamps with the longer ribs.

The next photo shows the inset stamping of the base, and this of course is what makes it an Imperial.

Finally, an inside photo shows the dropper mechanism. A length of screw threads protrudes from the end, and this is said to be another characteristic of Imperial lamps. Looking over the various Xray lamps available to me, I find a variety #of lengths protruding from the dropper, from none at all to about 3/8". It is likely that the run of lamps Justrite destined to be Imperials were all made this way. The most compulsive collector will no doubt examine a lamp for this as a means of verifying that the top is not a mere nickel-plated Xray! On the other hand, the lamp is so rare, most will not care. After all, it is the base which makes it an Imperial.

With these photos, we can now conclude that (to date), no variations of the Imperial cap lamp exist. This lamp needs only a reflector brace to make it complete. In any form, the Imperial represents a "must have" for cap lamp collectors.

Fancy Butte Sticks

by Al Winters

Here is a candlestick from Butte. The thimble, claw and hook are one peice and slide off the spike.

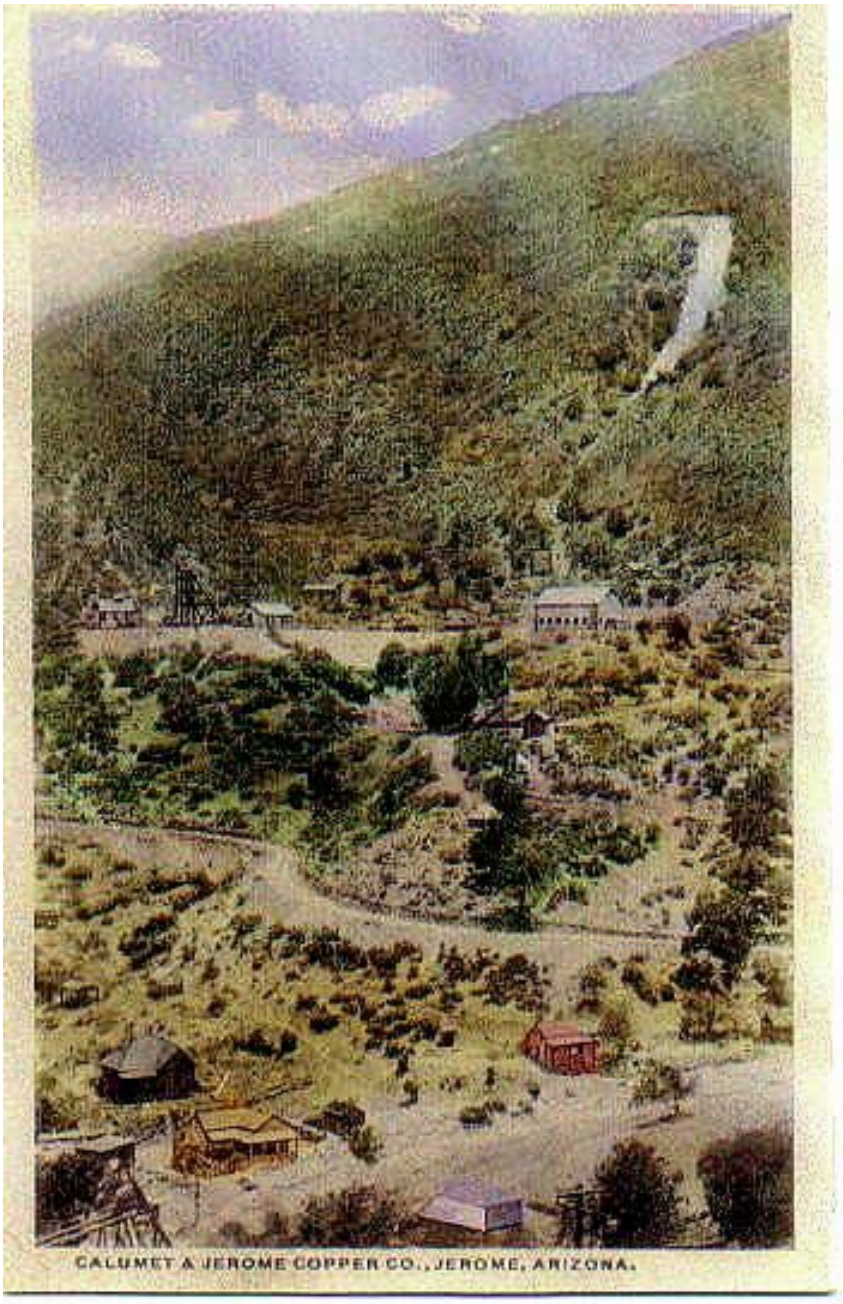
Below is another candlestick from Butte that was probably originally from the UP. A friend in Butte thought that is may have been an advertizing stick

Oil Wick Tail Lamp

Ted Bobrink

This is the first oil wick lamp I have seen with the large clip on the back. It attaches nicely to an ore car, and I would guess this was its intended purpose.

I think I have seen it in a catalog advertisement, but can't seem to locate the ad. This is a Dunlap's Pittsburg lamp.



Into the Calumet and Jerome

by Dave Thorpe

The view seen on this postcard is almost exactly the way Steve Smith and I saw it on February 13, 2002. We stood on the balcony of Blue Boelter's rural home in Jerome, Arizona. This was the Calumet and Jerome copper mine.

The meandering dirt road in the lower part of the photo is Allen Springs Rd., which remains a 4WD byway in its journey around and over Mingus Mountain. There are no longer any buildings left, save the foundation of the large one in the center. The tailings seen higher up the ridge are now five times in size. For those who venture into abandoned mines, it is the size of the tailings dump that attracts their interest, for it represents the extent of passage that may be available.

Unmaintained roads in Arizona are vicious on motor vehicles. Our drive up Allen Springs Rd. was done at a creep in low-range, as I imagined lugs of tire tread tearing loose and sidewall lacerations from the sharp serrated rocks. Creosote bushes threatened the truck's body panels with off-roaders' pin-striping. We began on foot at a point on the photo corresponding to the crest of the ridge on the far left.

It would be bushwhacking from here to the top of the tailings pile, and there was not even an animal trail to follow. As everywhere in Arizona, there is no living thing that does not have thorns or claws. Forearms and clothes were soon shredded. It was all uphill, and we were gasping for more air than this mile-high country offered.

At no time could we even catch a glimpse of the workings through the underbrush, but with a lot of luck and Steve's instinct, we emerged exactly on top of the tailings.
Our knowledge of this mine was third hand word of mouth that an adit penetrated far into

the mountainside, possibly going all the way through. A raise, or upward shaft from the inside was also mentioned, as well as the possibility of bad air. A partially caved entrance now confronted us.

After a few yards of crawling, the passage opened to a height of 5 feet 10 inches...Steve and I are both just over 6 feet tall. The sound of helmets bashing the ceiling was continuous, as were our comments. The floor was hard packed mud with numerous puddles. There was no track or hardware of any sort. There were numerous panels of sheet metal along the route measuring about 3 by 3 feet, and we still wonder what purpose these served. Also numerous, were wooden pegs in the ceiling that resembled survey markers without the copper tag. An occasional peg had day-glo plastic tape hanging from it with a number written on it. How we wished that even one of these pegs might have its copper tag, for this has recently become a collectible item for some, and even as a souvenier, we would have treasured the find.

Every few hundred feet we found a side passage, but none went more than a hundred feet. before abruptly ending. This was an exploratory adit. After what was estimated to be a quarter mile of tunnel we found the raise. The upward shaft was about 20 degrees off vertical and rose past the point we could see. At the bottom was a sickly pile of wet rotten timbering that had come crashing down years ago. The shaft walls were slick wet and impossible to climb. Still, not an artifact other than shattered wood and sheet metal.
Now and again we would comment about the air seeming heavy, ever mindful that a rising heart-rate would mean an immediate retreat. This is the first sign of carbon dioxide, though carbon monoxide strikes without warning. The possibility of bad air was playing scary games with our minds.

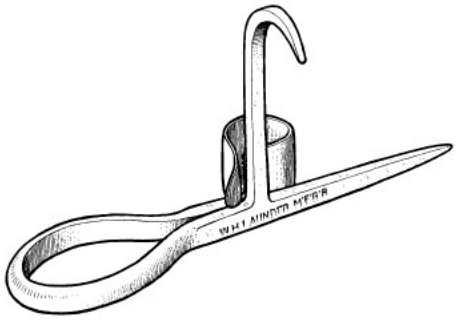
We continued on and soon began to see carbon signatures on the walls, maybe a dozen or so, each with a dates ranging from 1926 to 1928. One family name occurred with some frequency: Rabano. Finally, our tunnel just ended. There was no cave in, the work had simply stopped. We headed back, and still had not learned how to avoid head bashing on the ceiling. One particular impact between Steve and the rock caused a snap in his neck that I could hear from ten feet ahead. He stopped to curse and examine the offending rock. There it was: another wooden peg. As if by providence, this one had a copper disc nailed to its end. We had found a survey marker! Though we checked all remaining pegs even more carefully, not another turned up.
There is a strange feeling when emerging from a cave or mine, especially one where there have been certain unknowns and fears. It is sort of a quiet but joyous celebration of just being out. The sunlight and the colors it illumiates are ever so sweeter. Just the open feeling of the atmosphere is exhilarating. Add this to the view we had ignored on our climb up the mountain: the Verde Valley with Sedona's red rock cliffs in the background. We took a few pictures.

There were two options for the descent. A Nantucket sleigh ride down the tailings pile, which Steve opted for, or a reverse of the gaunlet of brambles. I took the latter, and we met back at the truck. We compared our survey marker to two others known in the Jerome area, and thought ourselves pretty dandy for joining this elite club.

Note: Postcard photo, compliments of Blue Boelter.

W.H. Launder Sticks Compared

Dave Thorpe



W. H. Launder sticks are not common. They are somewhat crude in their quality of workmanship. But, each is gang-stamped on the right side of the shank: W. H. Launder M'F'G'R. At the 2002 Tucson show five examples were compared. Each was of the same general design. All Launders are short sticks, ranging from 7 to 8 inches. Hook height is variable as are the specifics of the various curves. No jigs were used in making these sticks. On the following page one can see the differences in stick length. None appear to have been shortened.

The sticks compared belong to Leo Stambaugh, Randy Marcotte, Bob Schroth, Dave Thorpe, and Tony Moon. As a rule, these are not high-dollar sticks, as they are fairly crude. On the other hand, they are a gang-stamped, identifiable candlestick that is highly valued by any owner.

I like to think of them as a poor man's C. Cleaves. The blacksmith is known, and they are stamped with his name. Perhaps as time goes on, we'll learn more of this blacksmith.

Tucson 2002

by Dave Thorpe, photos by Dave DesMarais and Jack Purson

Here are the photos of the Tucson Mining Artifact Collectors show, hosted by Don Dalton and Terry McNulty. This one is a typical scene in the show room showing master deal-maker Bob Schroth at left. He had the largest number of items for sale: dozens of candle-sticks, oil wicks, carbides, tins, boxes, and books. On the right (foreground) is Terry Berardy (San Francisco, CA). He brought some interesting items, collected personally, that included drill bit sharpeners, a dyamite cooler, and several boxes. Next, behind him is Randy Marcotte of northern California. Shortly after this photo, he bought a large lot of candlesticks from Bob. Behind him, from Georgetown, Colorado, is Leo Stambaugh. Behind Leo is Chuck Tesch from Wyoming, always in search of the rare stick. Tucked away in the corner on the left, is Larry Kuester of southern California.

Here is a shot from the center of the room. With his back to us in the black hat is blasting expert John Kynor.. He brought a W. H. Launder candlestick that was sold to Dave Thorpe. In the center with the grey shirt is Leo Stambaugh.

Below, Leo is seen again at his table of very collectible Colorado artifacts. The famed Justrite stick-lamp was present, but alas, no price listed....trade only!

On the right is Mike Nevius, of Nevada City, California. He will be hosting the western show in June. The miniature ore car, seen in the background is a reproduction. These were for sale at a very reasonable price. Below is the auction which followed dinner. At the far right is Cap Tin Bob (Schroth) with his finger raised high. The photo does not do justice to the animated performance Bob gave. Immediately in from of him is Al Winters of the Homestake Mine. He and Chuck Tesch assisted Bob in the auction.

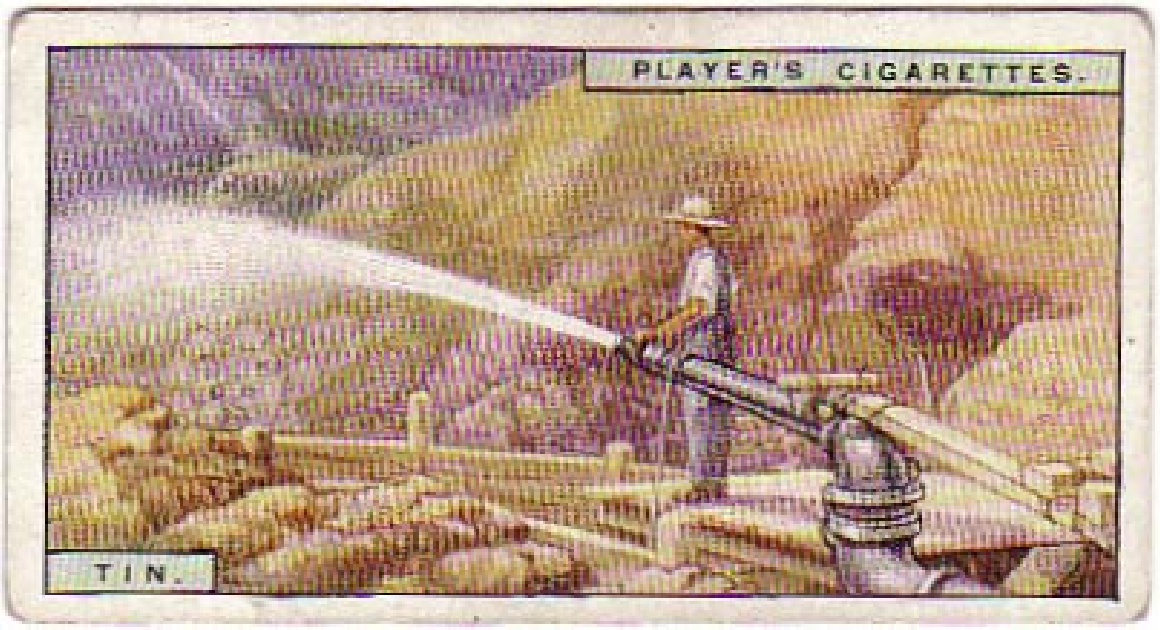
On the left is Jerome newcomer Blue Boelter, and tucked in behind her is Dave Thorpe. Note the regulation table cover. Dave's table displayed his usual array of aftermarket gaskets as well as several nice cap lamps. On the right foreground is Terry Berardy, and in the back is Gary Brinkley. A final shot below shows Mike Bergman's table. Mike, a Chicago mineral dealer, also caters to the artifact collectors as a sideline. He brought several high-end safety lamps.

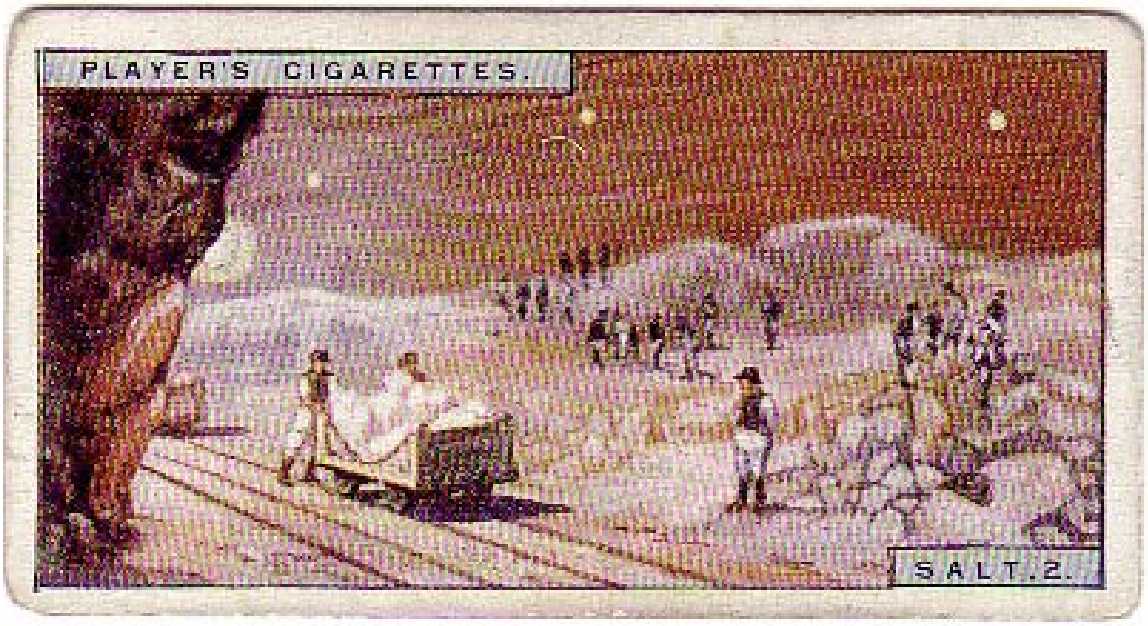
Here are some other photos of the auction items taken by Jack Purson:

Mining Cigarette Cards

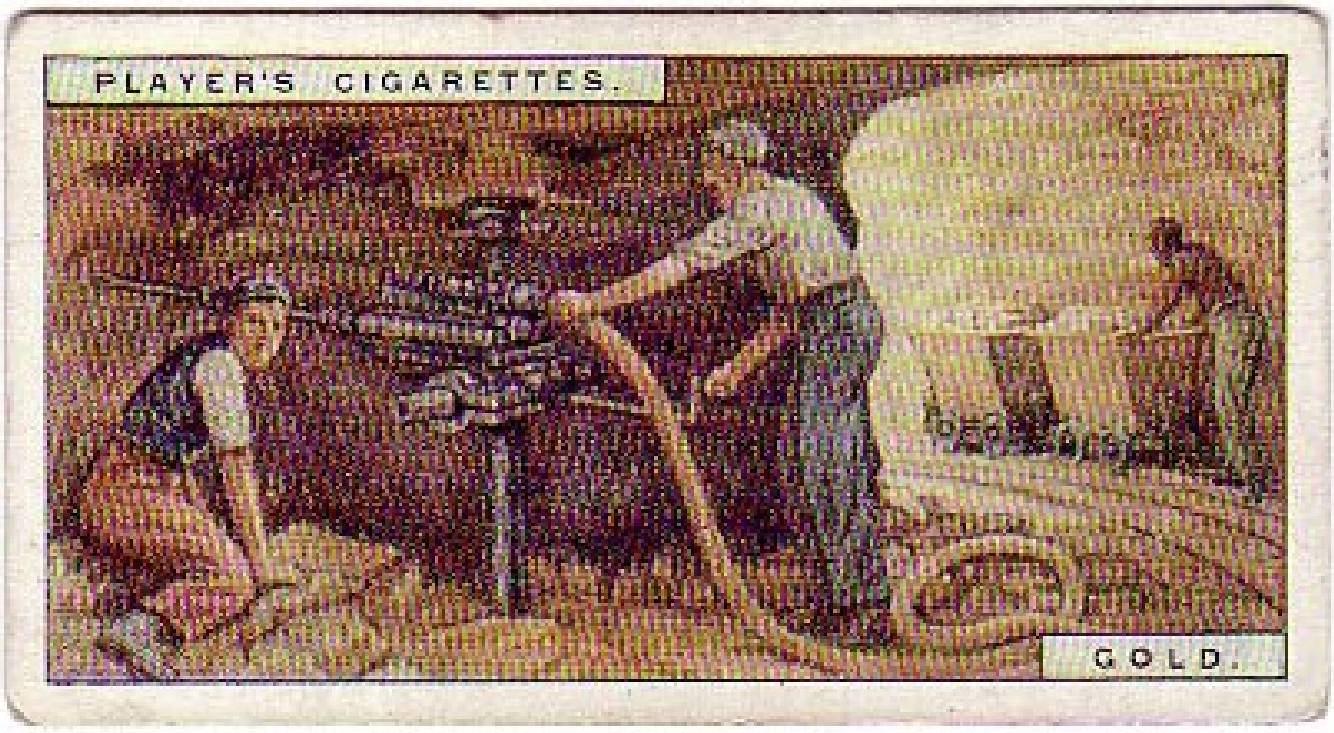
by Stephen McCabe

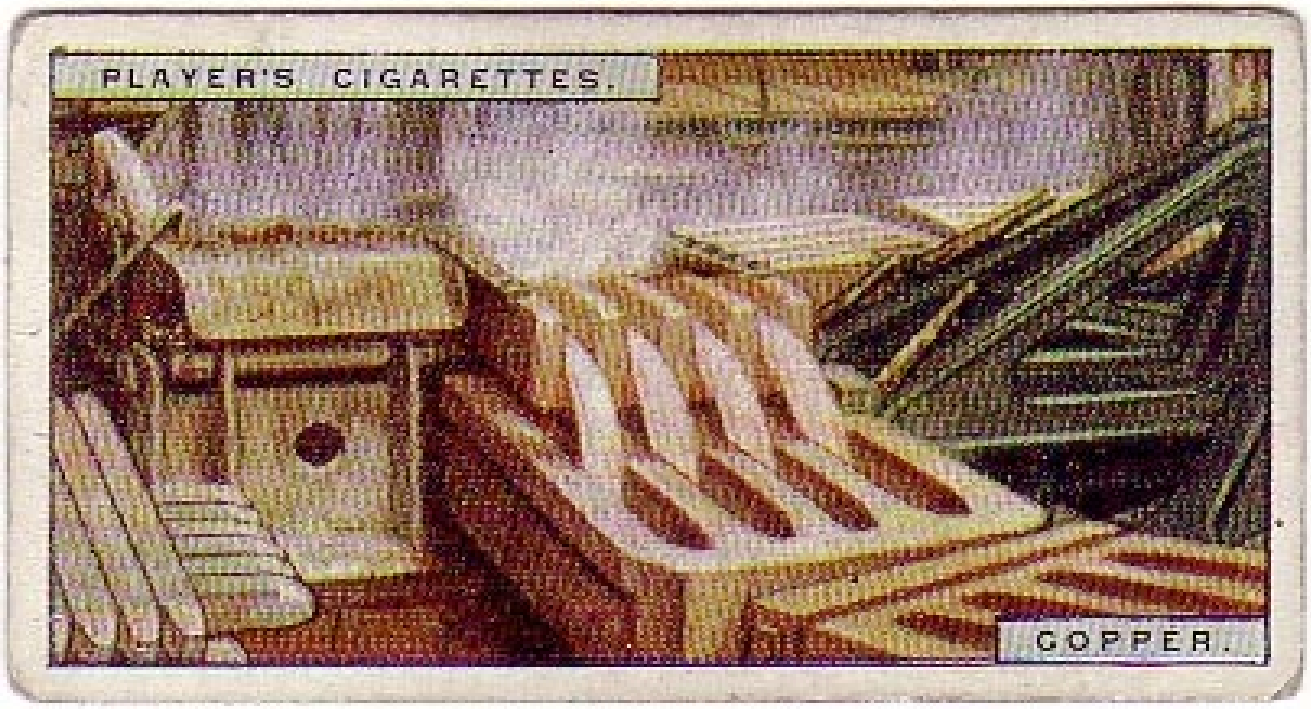
I am always fascinated by the amount of related collectibles one can find which depict mining areas and operations. Here are a number of cigarette cards three of which were presented by Mark Bohannan in MAC Issue Number 15 Summer 1992 page 38 but were featured in black and white. I think and believe you would agree that colour really adds to there attraction.

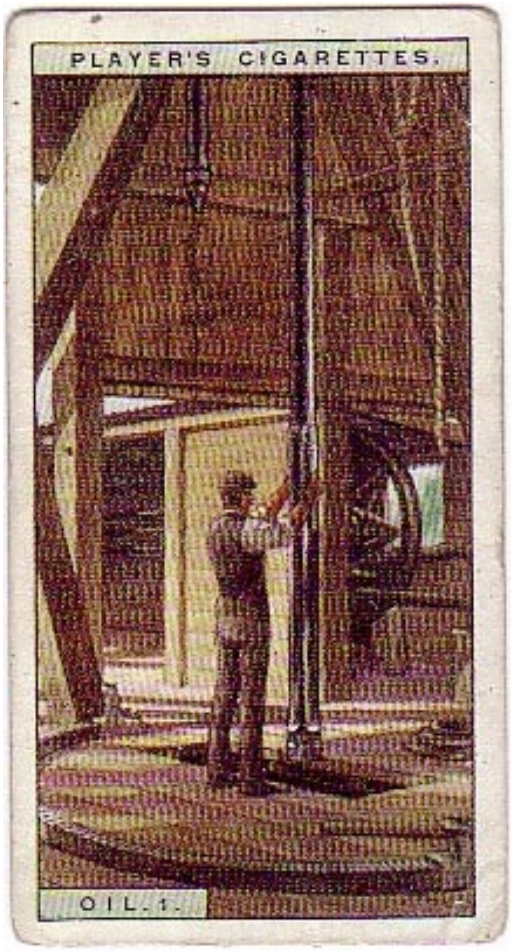




As Mark stated these cards were issued by John Player & Sons which was a branch of the Imperial Tobacco Company (of Great Britain & Ireland), Ltd. These cards are part of a 50 card series relating to (primary) Products Of The World, of which the scanned images plus a few missing ones feature mining. Other topics include Pearls (at least 2), Apples, Silk (2), Rice (2), Wool (?), Bananas (2), Sugar (3), Wheat (?), Cotton (3), Coconuts (2), Coffee (2), Rubber (3), Tea (?), Dates plus others which I do not have. These were purchased in October 2001 at the famous beach suburb of Manly for $10.00.







I think I would have walked passed them had one of the mining related cards not been on top of the pile. They measure 68mm by 36mm with information on the back about the subject and country in question, and appear to be accurate representations of machinery and mining methods. All are individually numbered as follows Coal 1 (No.4), Coal 2 (No.5), Copper (No.16), Gold (No.22), Oil 1 (No.23), Pearls 2 (No. 26), Salt 2 (No.35), Tin (No 46). Can anyone add to the mining related cards of this series as several are still missing plus I would imagine other minerals would be depicted?