

Passage (overhead) Lamp

Lamp, magazine, Passage (Overhead lantern)

For lighting passageways in magazines a circular lantern was often employed. This type was dropped, from the casemate above the shell or cartridge passage, through a circular hole in the floor of the casemate above. The lamp sat in a tube which protruded into the passage. Hinged doors closed off the tube, similar to the ones used on the cartridge or shell lifts. Such lanterns were certainly employed in the basement magazine at Fort Gilkicker (and others such as Coalhouse and Bovisand). In this case the tube itself protruded for a short distance into the passage surrounding the body of the lantern. The lantern had a flange which rested on the York stone slab or the bottom of the tube. If the distance from the top of the tube to the bottom was great then a pole with a hook could be employed to insert and retrieve the lamp.

A sealed pattern for this lamp can be found in the National Army Museum collection. It bears the label Lamp, Magazine, Passage 3627

Lewis in his 'Permanent Fortification for English Engineers', describes the overhead lamp :-

'The overhead lamp is cylindrical in form - somewhat like a railway carriage lamp, but it burns a candle like the wall lamp. the lower part, which is of glass, is 8 inches deep and 8½ inches in diameter. the upper part, of copper, is 8½ inches high and 9 inches diameter. The difference in the diameter of the two parts forms a shoulder on which the lamp can be supported. The overhead lamp is always used by being lowered down a tube. The lower end of this tube would be made of iron, and the lower edge would be either turned in, or have a ring of angle-iron riveted on to it to form a rim on which the lamp may rest. The rim would be covered with india rubber. It will be seen that when the lamp is not in position, there is an open communication between the lamp passage and the magazine, which is objectionable. A wire guard

should be fixed round this lamp in low passages.'

The lamp went through at least three modifications in its life time. In §2146 (28th. October 1870) it was recorded that new patterns of magazine, passage and wall lamp of superior construction to those approved were sealed.

The List of Changes for 1872 records in **§2573 Lamps, magazine Passage 26th. June 1872 (together with Wall, & To light in opposite directions)**

Patterns of these (three) lamps have been sealed to govern future supplies. The passage and wall lamps are of an improved construction. The candle sockets and holders are interchangeable in the (three) lamps.

Again in **§3857 (17th. December 1880)** it was recorded that yet another improved pattern (Lamps Passage, Wall Mark II) had been sealed. These differed from **§2573** in having no reflectors, or fittings to receive the same.

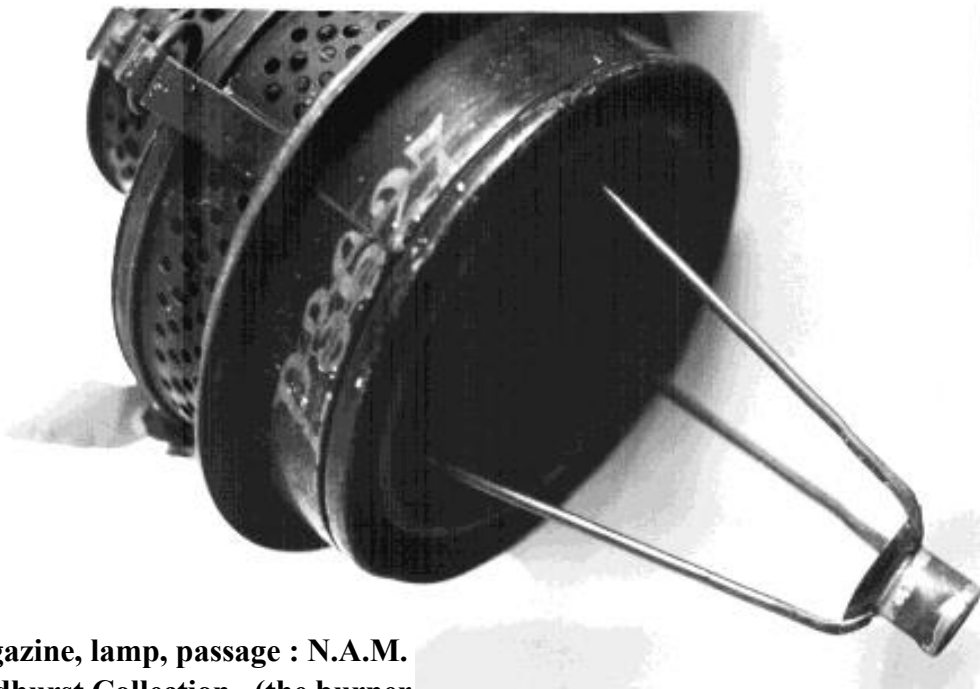
The Abstracts of proceedings of the Department of the Director of Artillery for the quarter ending 31st. March 1881 records that the Secretary Woolwich has sealed the pattern for **Lamp, magazine, Mark II, passage, round, reflector removed.**

The List of Changes for June 1896 details the following changes to the passage lamp :-

§8426 Lamps. magazine, Passage (Mark IV) to burn candles, circular glass bottom

Patterns of the above-mentioned magazine lamps have been sealed to govern future manufacture and alteration of existing store. They differ from the previous pattern in §7252, in the following particulars.

In the passage lamp, the socket is attached by wires to a ring resting on the existing ledge round the interior of the lamp.



Magazine, lamp, passage : N.A.M. Sandhurst Collection (the burner and glass are missing)

A lamp modified for modern usage was sold at auction by 'Antiques Atlas'. The manufacturer was G. Polkey Ltd of Birmingham.

*Suspending sockets for the passage lamps will be supplied from Woolwich on demand.
The ventilation of the passage lamp has been increased as follows :- the inner smoke cone has been removed, and 12 holes ($\frac{1}{8}$ -inch full in diameter) have been drilled through the glass globe, at a height of $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inches from the bottom, and equidistant from one another.*

The alterations in the ventilation of lamps in use and in store will be carried out locally but the drills for making the holes in the glass of the passage lamps must be specially hardened.

Extant lamps

One can be found in the N.A.M. collection, (no. 40426-40427) originating from Didcot Q.A.D. It bears the maker's plate Birmingham. A pile of several wire frames for the burners of partition lamps was found in the basement of Spitbank Fort, Spithead.

