

Wall Lamp

Description

Designated **Lamp, Magazine, Wall**, it has a flat back and two plate sides at right angles to it. The front has three glass windows, the central one being parallel to the back whilst the other two are at 45 degrees to it and are much smaller in width. It has a carrying handle hinged and shaped to fit a hook, enabling it to be hung. The back is hinged, allowing it to be opened for replacing the candle. In the centre of the back, low down, is another D shaped handle to assist in placing the lamp into a recess.

Lewis (Permanent Fortification for English Engineers -1898) describes the wall lamp thus :-

"The wall lamp is 16³/₄ inches high, 9⁷/₁₂ inches wide, and 6³/₄ inches from front to back. It is made of copper, and burns a candle which is kept in position by being forced up by a spring like a carriage lamp. It will burn for eight hours. Enough chimneys are issued for use in draughty places. This lamp is intended to stand in a recess or on a shelf."

The chimney appears to be taller than, but of a similar pattern to, that of the 'Both Ways' lantern and the patterning and door fittings are also comparable. Both lanterns were fitted with a removable tray which held a candle holder. The carrying handles of both lanterns are similar.

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 Wall, 5th. March 1873 (together with Passage, & 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.

In 1881 the Directory of Artillery reported that the secretary Woolwich had sealed a new pattern of this lamp as '**Wall, fittings and reflector removed**'.

The department of the Director of Artillery was informed in 1883 ^{WO33/43}

that it having been found that in some old pattern magazine lamps no support for the candle socket would be left after the removal of the reflector, Commisary general Woolwich 08/10/83 thinks that it would be more satisfactory to withdraw them than attempt to alter them. Forwards paragraph for list of changes 18/10/83 . Director of Artillery 18/10/83 approves.

The list of changes for 16th. June 1896 details more alterations to the wall lamp thus :-

8426 Lamps. magazine, Wall (Mark IV)

To burn candles; one large and two small glass sides.

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.

The brass movable candle sockets have been replaced by tin open sockets, supported in the different lamps as follows :-

In the Bermuda partition and wall lamp, the socket is fixed to a movable tray, which fits into the bottom of the lamp.

The ventilation of the partition, passage, and wall lamps has been increased as follows:-

In the wall lamp, the inner smoke cone has been removed. Sockets with false bottoms for the Bermuda, partition, and wall lamps, and suspending sockets for the passage lamps will be supplied from Woolwich on demand. The alterations in the ventilation of lamps in use and in store will be carried out locally.

Uses

This type of lamp was employed for lighting magazines by placing the lamp in a recess specially prepared for it. Recesses in which such lanterns were employed can be positively identified by the stop fitted to the slab which forms the floor of the recess. This stop, which fits the three front facets of the lamp, prevented the lamp from being pushed against the glass when inserted from the rear of the recess. If the lantern was inserted from the front, i.e. from the chamber that it was to illuminate, then the glass was fixed into a hinged frame which was lockable. If access to the recess was provided from the rear, i.e. from another adjacent chamber or from the lighting passage then the inner frame was fixed and had no hinges. Both types had a copper frame to protect the glass from accidental breakage. The fixed variety also had a bar across the glass on the inside to prevent the lamp from hitting the end stop and toppling against the glass. If this lamp was used in a recess with no back access then the lamp stop may not be present. In some of the Portsmouth forts this lamp was also used to light stairs and passages by hanging it on a hook. These hooks are to be found at the top and bottom of stairs, at such a height that a man can pass under the lamp without hitting it. They can also be found in Artillery stores and an alcove in a barrack room.

Known sites in which this lamp was used.

This lamp was used in the forts of the Gosport Advanced Lines, such as Fort Brockhurst, for lighting the main magazines. It was also used in the forts of Portsdown Hill for the magazines and for lighting stairs. It was employed in the fortifications known as the 'London Mobilisation Centres' of the 1880s and Fort Reigate, for example, has lamp recesses for it with stops and frames. Fort Borstal in the Chatham defences has identical fittings in its lamp recesses for the same wall lamp. The recesses fitted to Fort Gilkicker in the 1890s, as part of the magazine modifications for the new 6-inch and 9.2-inch armament, have recesses above the issuing hatches for this lantern, complete with lamp stops.

Extant examples

An example of this type of lantern employed in the wall recesses of magazines has already been supplied to Fort Nelson and it has been used to fabricate others for use within the fort.

Original examples can be found in the Sandhurst collection of the National Army Museum (no. 40435-40436 with tray 40429) and in the Royal Armouries collection at Fort Nelson, Fareham Hants. The one at Sandhurst bears the makers plate 'J.M. Timmis & Co. Birmingham 1901'





This example appeared at auction on EBay in 2020. 1897 Griffiths & Browett wall lamp. The dealer was in America and the asking price was \$400 US (approx £299). It appears to be in great condition.

