

1938 to 1942



Guide Fog & Driving Lights

By: William C. "Bill" Anderson, P.E.

Guide fog or driving lights are an often-prized accessory for collector car owners as they were in days gone by. Typically, these lights were dealer- or owner-installed, even though they were a listed factory accessory that could be ordered with a new car. Guide was a GM division responsible for lighting products. Therefore, any person interested installing accessory lights on a GM car would have been selected from the Guide catalog. However, Buick offered three general styles – Round 6-11/16 inch diameter (these are typically shown in Buick literature), 5-3/4 inch oval-shaped lights were new for 1941, and Super-Ray models.

GM offered several different fog lights and driving lights in the late 1930s and early 1940s. The models offered had a range of sizes to appeal to a variety people with different tastes and budgets. All Guide models were available through a dealer's parts department. However, the marque accessory brochures generally featured only one model of Guide light. Chevrolet offered a lot of accessories in order to increase the bottom line. While any period correct Guide light would be correct for any GM automobile, those desiring to install Guide lights as part of restoring their car should use those shown in the marque's period literature to minimize judging questions regarding authenticity.

There are lights made by B-L-C (B-L-C = Brown-Lipe-Chapin (Syracuse, NY)) that are the same as Guide lights. It is believed that B-L-C lights were made by Guide and offered under the B-L-C brand at auto parts stores, Sears, Wards, etc. The B-L-C lights are identical to Guide lights of the same model.

Guide also advertised its products in national publications. An ad that appeared in the *Saturday Even Post* before World War II as shown at the right.

Drive safely at night with the help of Guide

FOG LAMPS
Make your car safer in all weather . . . install Guide Fog Lamps with the new two-tone lens, and enjoy safe illumination in rain, snow, sleet or fog. Handsomely finished in heavy chrome—designed to light up the road without annoying glare—Guide Fog Lamps are as handsome as they are different. Fit any car.

"NIGHTHAWK" LAMP
This distinctively-designed Guide Lamp combines the advantages of the amber lens and special bulb cap, for safe illumination in snow, fog, rain and sleet—plus the advantages of the clear lens for ordinary driving conditions. It is styled to harmonize with modern streamline design . . . precision-built to maintain its efficiency in long, hard service. Can be installed on any car.

GLARE-PROOF MIRROR
Here is a Guide safety product totally unlike any other mirror you have ever seen. At a touch of the finger, you can "turn off" blinding glare from headlights behind, and yet retain clear vision of the road in back of you! Another touch of the finger, and the Guide Mirror returns to "day" position—clear and brilliant, with none of the half-screened effect that ordinary smoked or colored glass mirrors give. Make your car safer with a Guide Glare-Proof Mirror.

Available at service stations, car dealers and accessory stores—wherever Guide products are sold.

Guide LAMP
Division of General Motors Corporation
Anderson, Indiana
WORLD'S LARGEST MANUFACTURER OF AUTOMOTIVE LIGHTING EQUIPMENT

ROUND GUIDE FOG & DRIVING LIGHTS

The Guide 2001-K light was introduced in 1940 and is shown in most factory literature for 1941 Buicks. These lights were 6-11/16 inches in diameter, have a brass ID tag, and come with clear lens or bi-color lens. The commonly seen all amber color lens are not correct for Buick.

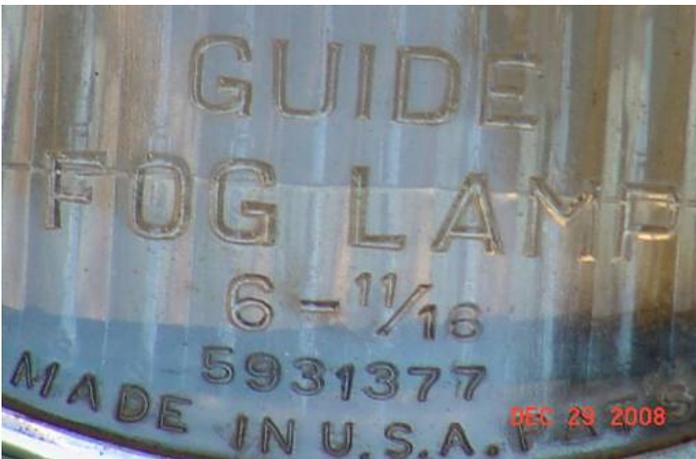
Guide 2001-K Light



1941 Buick with 6-11/16" Light mounted as specified in Buick Service Bulletins.



Guide Fog Light (left) and Driving Light (right).



Lens detail for 6-11/16 inch. This is the same detail for two color or single color lens. Both lens types have the same cast-in part number.



Guide 6-11/16" Light. ID is mounted at the top center on the back shell.

General Rules For Collection And Restoration

Following are four rules for those interested in adding a Guide fog or driving light to their collector car:

- Lights with ID tags are more desirable
- Bi-color lenses are more desirable
- Pre-war ID tags are brass – not chrome plated
- Pre-war lights are not sealed beam (except for the Cadillac in-fender fog light)
- Guide Super Ray lights do not have brass ID tags

OVAL-SHAPED GUIDE FOG & DRIVING LIGHTS

These lights, Guide 859-C were new for 1941 and have a 5-3/4" oval housing and lens (actually more of a rounded rectangle) with a brass ID tag. This light is similar to one for a Chevrolet, but differs in detail. Some say that this light was specifically designed for Buick, but proof of this contention has not been found in any Buick literature.

1941 Buick Model with the Guide 859-C Lights



Close-up view showing light mounting. Note position closer to center obtained by reversing the Guide mounting brackets from that specified in the Buick Service Bulletin.



Guide 5-3/4 inch Oval Lights showing ID Tag placement.



Close-up view of ID tag on oval light.

*1941 Buick 71C in the Bulgari Collection (former Newton Cope car and referenced in **Restoration Facts, 1941 Buick** by William C. Anderson) with Guide 859-C lights and bi-color lens.*

Guide Model 859-C and B-L-C Model 859-A



B-L-C also offered these same lights under their name, but it's best to stay with Guide. It is believed that B-L-C was a brand supplied by Guide for auto parts stores, e.g., Wards, Sears, etc. that wished to offer a comparable product. It is noted that the light's component parts are interchangeable between Guide and B-L-C.

Accessory Light Switch & Knob for 1941 Buick



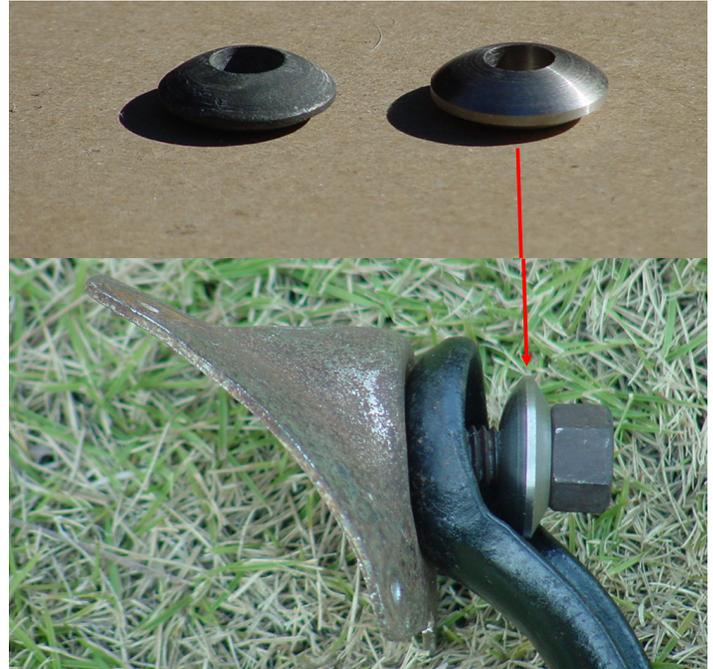
This was a switch specifically intended for these lights and mounted on the right side of the center dash panel. The "ACCESSORY" labeled knob was removed and replaced with the "FOG LIGHT" knob when these lights were installed in 1941.

Buick Fog/Driving Light Mounting Brackets Left & Right (Black original cast iron, Reproduction in bronze)



The Buick part numbers for the brackets were 5932053 Left and 5932054 Right. The cast iron brackets were painted semi-gloss black. The clamps were cadmium plated.

Clamping Bolts



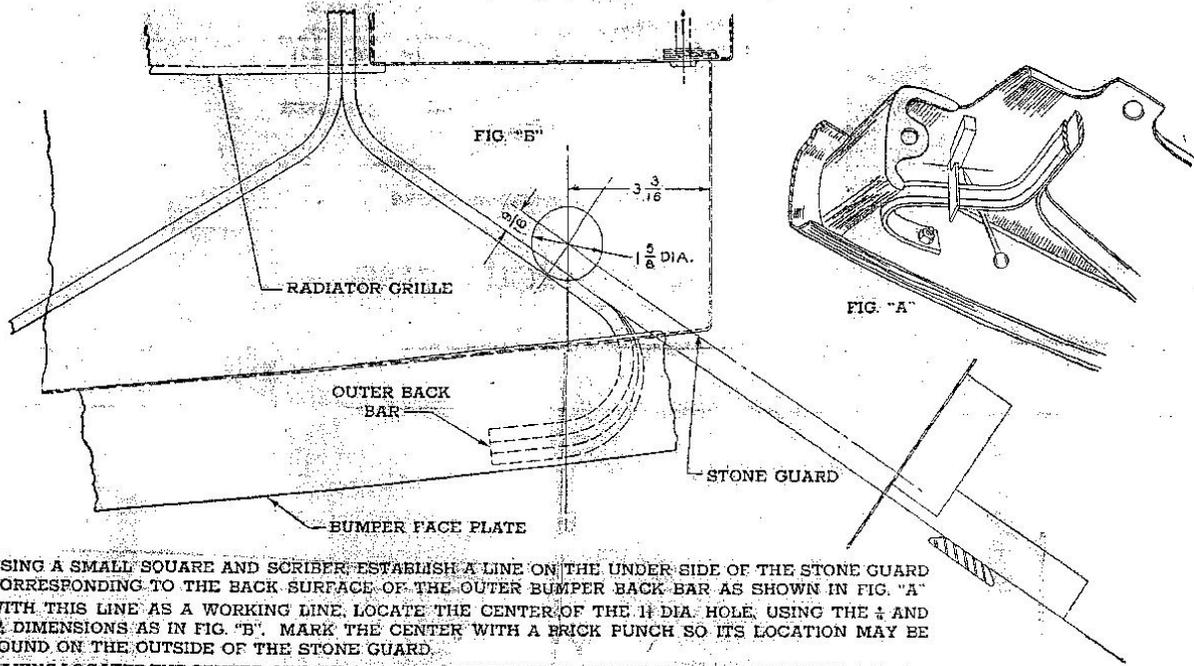
The original clamping bolts were 5/16 – 18 x 1 inch long with heads marked "AA." A special washer with a spherical face that mounts into the bracket enables alignment of the lights.

Brackets used on Chevrolets, and possibly Pontiacs, were shorter than those used by Buick.

Samples of the original wiring on the Guide lights installed on Buicks and Cadillacs confirm that the wiring was the standard lacquer-coated fabric/rubber insulation and it was silver colored. See following photo. YnZ Yesterdays Parts can supply silver colored wire in 14 AWG.

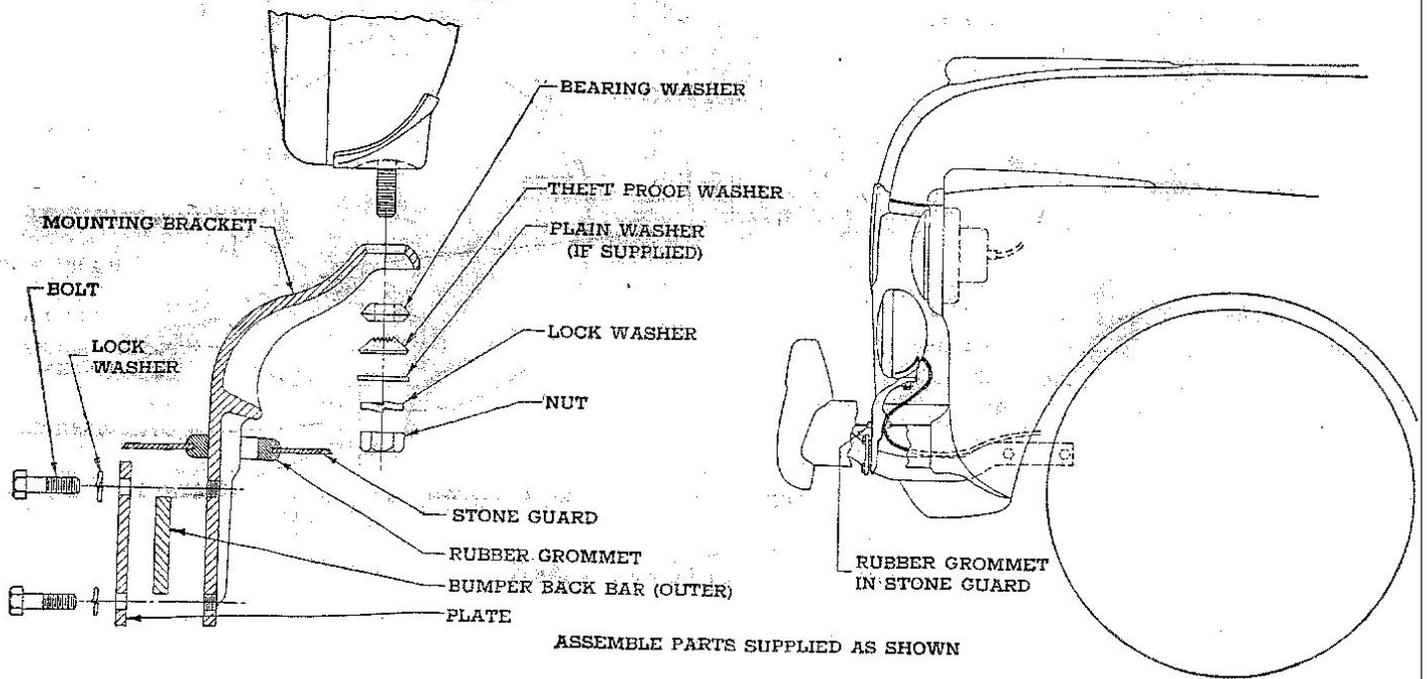


The Buick Service Bulletin providing instructions on how to install Guide accessory lights on a 1941 Buick is provided on the next page.



1. USING A SMALL SQUARE AND SCRIBER, ESTABLISH A LINE ON THE UNDER-SIDE OF THE STONE GUARD CORRESPONDING TO THE BACK SURFACE OF THE OUTER BUMPER BACK BAR AS SHOWN IN FIG. "A"
2. WITH THIS LINE AS A WORKING LINE, LOCATE THE CENTER OF THE 1/2" DIA. HOLE, USING THE 3/4" AND 3/4" DIMENSIONS AS IN FIG. "B". MARK THE CENTER WITH A BRICK PUNCH SO ITS LOCATION MAY BE FOUND ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE STONE GUARD.
3. HAVING LOCATED THE CENTER, CUT THE 1/2" DIA. HOLE IN THE STONE GUARD BY ANY CONVENIENT METHOD.

LAYOUT OF MOUNTING BRACKET HOLE



ASSEMBLE PARTS SUPPLIED AS SHOWN

FOR 1941 BUICK CARS

SUPER RAY FOG & DRIVING LIGHTS

About 1938, Guide introduced the first generation Super Ray driving light with the badge behind the lens. The light shell is topped with a “helmet”. The second generation Super Ray, which followed in about 1939, has a vertical badge on the exterior face of the lens and a decorative band that curves around the top of the lamp shell. The third generation of Super Rays was introduced in 1941. Of the three generations of Super Ray lights, the second generation (circa 1939 & 1940) seems to be the most available. The Super Rays have a 7-7/8” lens.

Super Ray First Type circa 1938



Super Ray Second Type circa 1939



The helmet at the top in the prior version has been removed and a decorative band has been added to the shell which extends to the back of the lamp.

The Super Ray Third Type was introduced in 1941 with fairly extensive changes. It has a 7-7/8" diameter round lens and came with either a clear or bi-color lens. The bi-color Super Ray lens is ultra rare. In general, the third (and last) generation of Super Rays are rare. The Super Rays were seen mounted on a 1941 Series 90 in a WW 2 period movie. If they can be found, this third generation

of Super Ray lights are expensive. There are several differences from prior versions — reflector with concentric rings, bezel (note hood at top), badge and lens with a vertical peak and marked "Passing Light" rather than "Driving Light." The third type Super Ray shell is the same as the prior versions, but lacks the holes for the Buck Rogers helmet (first type) or the decorative band (second type).

Third generation Super-Ray

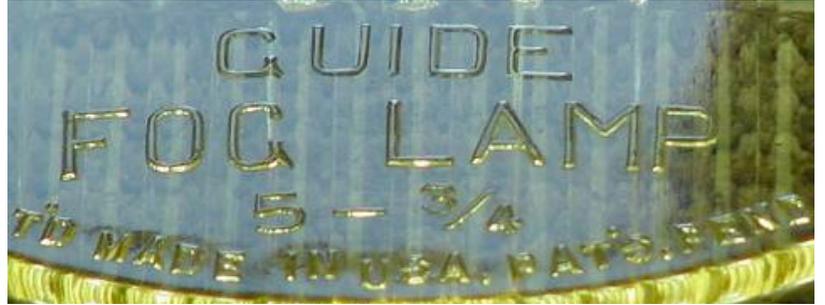


Note hood at top of bezel and horizontal badge and bar as contrasted with the vertical bar and shield of the prior generations.

OTHER GUIDE LIGHTS

Guide 856-G round 5-3/4" light; application unknown. Brass oval ID tag (not chrome plated), clear lens or bi-color lens.

1941 Oldsmobile Guide Round Light



The Guide round (Guide part number unknown) 5-3/4" light was designed for the 1941 Oldsmobile and has a unique circular pattern on the lens (this light is shown in 1941 Oldsmobile literature).

Guide round (Guide part number unknown) 6-11/16" light with a "hooded" bezel (1941 GM application unknown)



CHEVROLET

A discussion of the 1941 Guide lights would not be complete until it includes the 1941 / 1942 Chevrolet oval (rounded rectangle) fog light, Guide 859-F. This is the cousin of the Buick oval light. However, the bezel, housing shell, reflector, & lens are different (but similar in size) than the Buick light. Comparing the 1942 Guide Chevrolet oval fog light with the Buick of same design finds that they are different lights in all respects.

It is believed that the 1941 Guide 859-C oval fog light was intended for Buick use only. In any case, it's an attractive and distinctive light that is period correct.

Guide oval ID tag for the Chevrolet light



1942 Guide Chevrolet Light (large emblem)



1941 Guide Chevrolet Light (small emblem)



Date coded reflector.

Acknowledgement: I am indebted to an anonymous donor, for reasons of privacy, for the pictures included in this article. This person has been collecting and restoring Guide lights for many years.