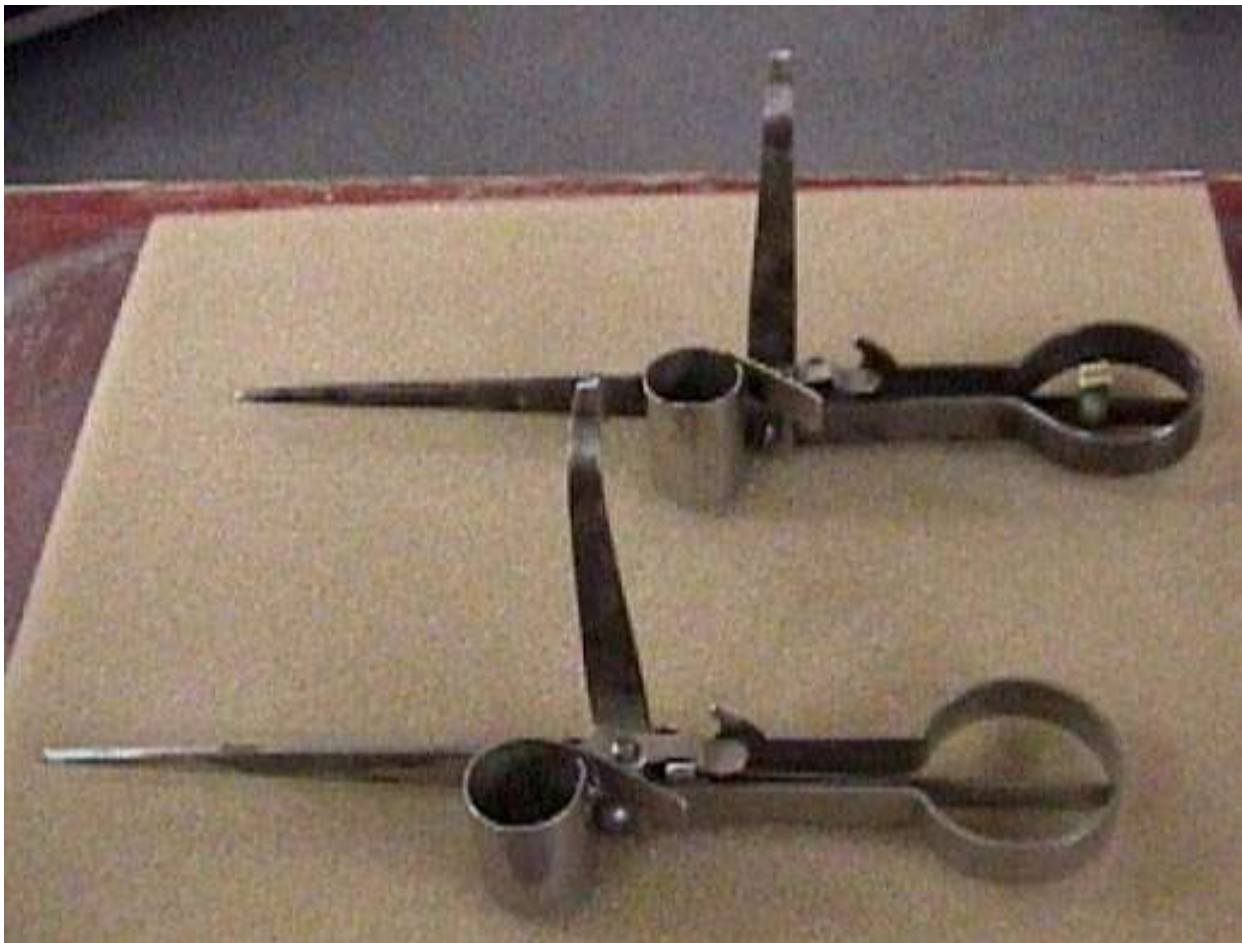


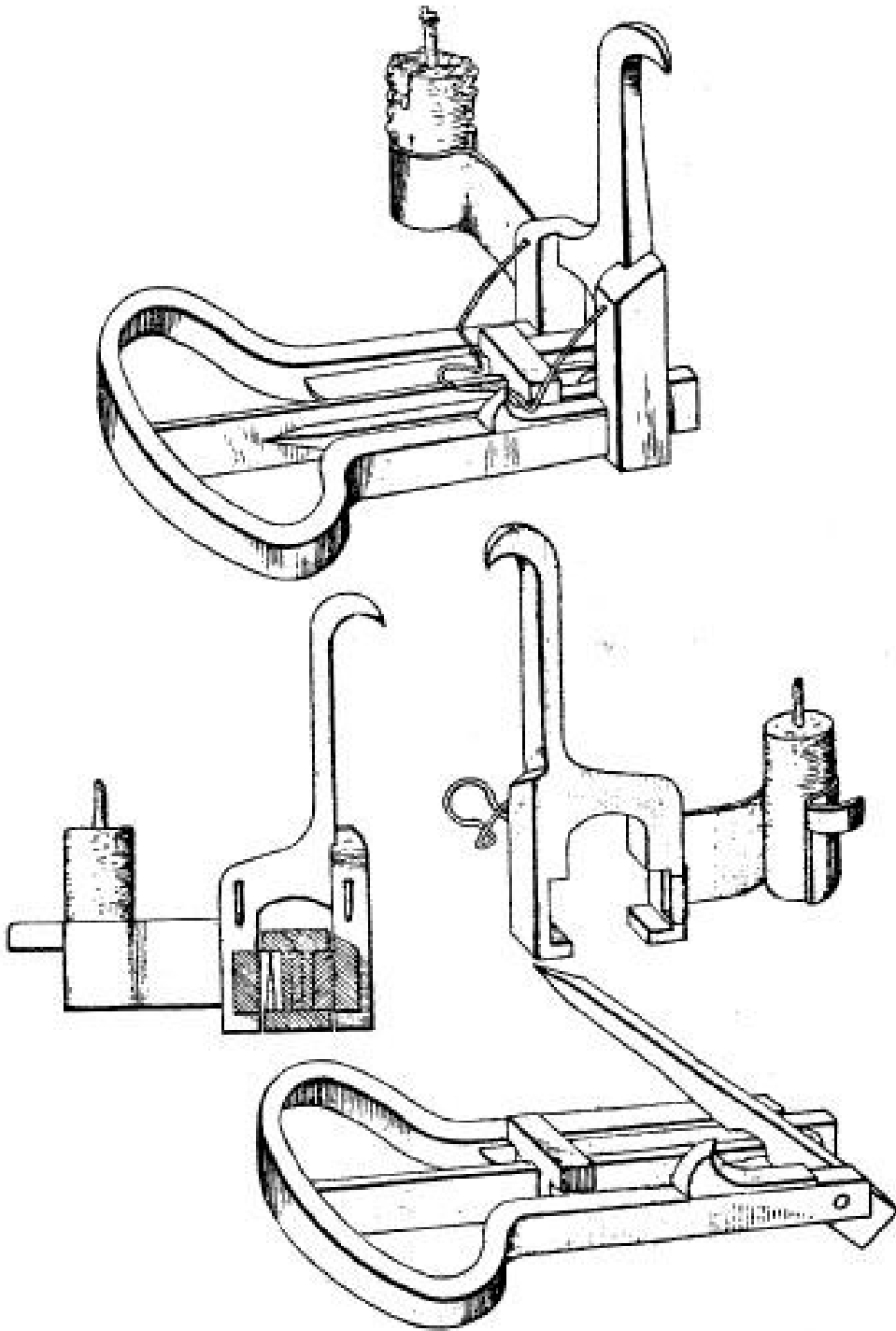
Amede Bernier Patented Candlestick

by Leo Stambaugh

The Amede Bernier patented miners candlestick is the most intricate and functional fuse tool stick I have seen. Patent #631,270 of August 22, 1899, claims as unique the combination of a disassembling stick with a folding spike which functions as a blasting cap crimper, fuse cutter, and powder punch, a separate locking knife blade for cutting fuse and cartridge, and a spring clip which locks the handle to the Thimble/hook and releases the two parts so that the candle can be hung on the sidewall while the miner set fuses and caps to the dynamite cartridge. There is also a guide bar from the pivot point back through the middle of the handle which guides a locking slide into a position to lock blade and spike so they won't fold into the handle at the wrong time.



In the first photo you can see the two Berniers I have. The top one has been used and still holds up nicely. The lower stick has not been used and retains most of its thin nickle plating. The lower stick has a shorter length by about 1/4 inch, and the handle is made of lighter metal stock than the upper stick. All other dimensions are the same. The second photo shows the stick in two pieces and you can see the crimper notch on the body of the handle. The last photo shows the knife blade in position to cut, with the spike in the perpendicular position it allows for use as a powder punch and also allows for the locking slide to hold both parts in position.



1899 Patent illustration.

The Bernier stick was manufactured and sold in the Cripple Creek district of Colorado, I have counted seven in collections in varying conditions. Henry Pohs had one that had lost its thimble and hook and had a home-made replacement attached to it. It is always nice to find a complex mechanical stick that was functional enough to go into production and use in the mines.

