

1902 Globe, A. T. Candlestick

by Bill Collins

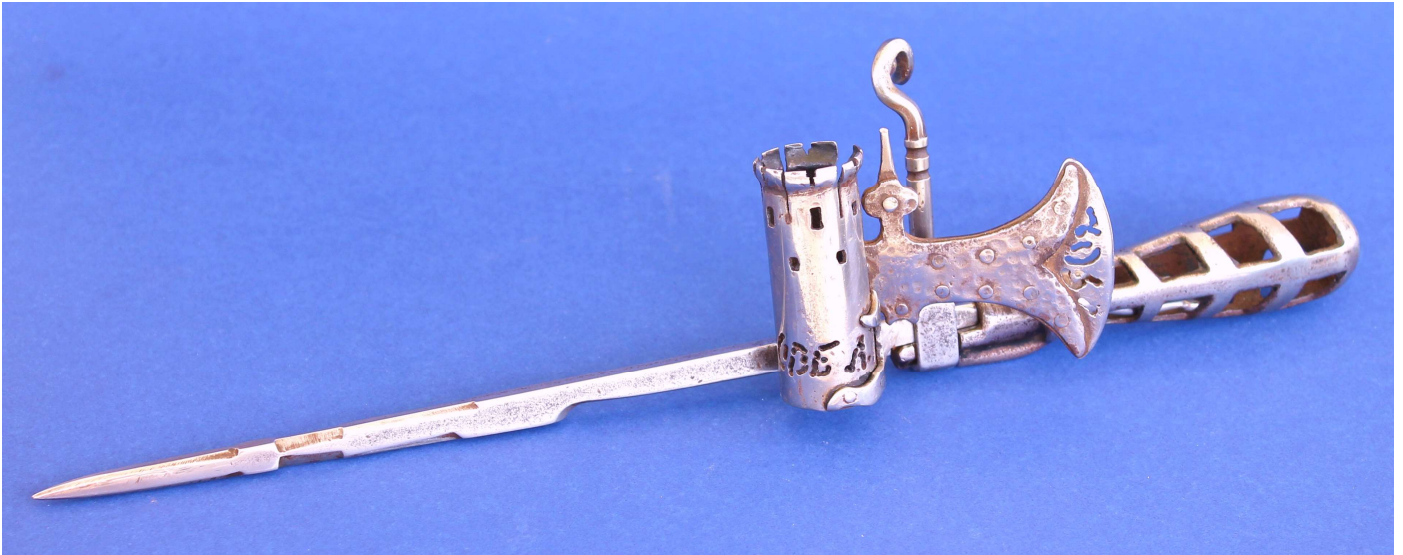


Fig. 1 – Globe, A.T. 1902 Fancy Candlestick, thimble side

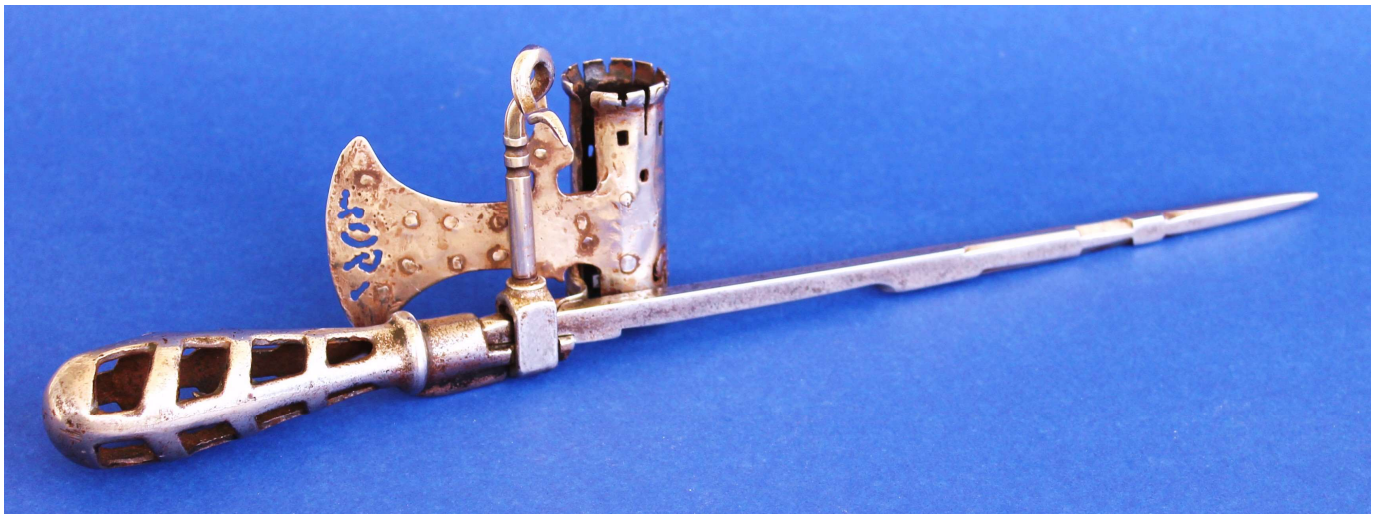


Fig. 2 – As seen from the hook side

The annual Tucson Gem & Mineral Show of 2013 brought thousands of people to town for a chance to buy something new for their collections whether it was mineral, fossil or mining related. I traveled early from The Villages with the car loaded down with mining stuff. I just hoped it would sell well enough to cover the new stuff I knew I wanted. The week before our annual mining show left me with more than enough time to buy lapidary material for a member of our local gem & mineral club and then set out looking for family Christmas presents and treasures for myself. At one of the bigger hotel/motel operations I spotted the Dick Campodonico candlestick auctioned off last November by Paige Auction in Portland, OR. The winning bid had been made by Dave Lewis, a retired Salt Lake mineral and mining artifact collector and dealer now living in St. George, UT. His son, James, was working for one of high-end mineral dealers and the candlestick was in the bottom of one of their cases. Things were a little slow at the moment so we talked about his dad and the shop in the old

Trolley Barn in downtown Salt Lake City and the annual appearance of Dave at the Executive Inn in Tucson every February. James said he could do better on the posted asking price of \$7400 net. I left my card. Over the next 3 days I gave it a more inquisitive look. By the 5th day, while kneeling down on the concrete floor I spotted the small mining tool (driller's spoon) tucked away in the handle. I asked to see the stick in my hands and we carefully took it apart. James had spoken to his dad and I was offered the stick at an even greater discount and sworn to secrecy. I decided there was no way I could pass it up and made arrangements to buy it that day.



Fig. 3 The “stove lid” handle



Fig. 4 The spike with driller's spoon ornamentation



Fig. 5 The thimble and thumb tab from the thimble side



Fig. 6 The thimble and thumb tab from hook side

It was advertised as a Superb Reciprocating Miners Candlestick but it really is a Superb Disassembling Candlestick. The candlestick consists of four major pieces. Fig. 1 shows the assembled candlestick from the thimble side and fig. 2 shows the stick from the hook side.

The hollow handle has an old “stove handle” appearance and the spike is only moderately fancy for the first 5 inches and then rather plain with short trapezoidal cut out area for the thimble attachment. The most interesting part is the driller’s spoon, shown in fig. 4, formed at the rear end of the spike.

The fanciest parts of the candlestick are the thimble and thumb tab (Figs. 5 and 6). The thimble is in the form a castle tower complete with a notched parapet, 10 windows staggered on two levels of five for defense, and the cutout inscription GLOBE A. T. at the bottom. An end view of the castle thimble is shown in fig. 7. The thumb tab is in the form of a modified halberd, a 15th to 18th century weapon of war, complete with ax blade and pike, the hook portion of the halberd has been eliminated as it would have been wrapped into the thimble itself. The ax blade has been formed from two pieces of steel. The second piece was added starting inside the thimble to give support to the tab. It also allowed the blacksmith to make the thumb tab fancy since it was the custom of halberd blacksmiths to spice up their work. The steel extending from the thimble to form the tab has been joined to this second piece with 14 rivets. The reinforcing portion of the tab is truncated like a split fish tail leaving only the first section of metal to form the curved end of the blade. This portion has been inscribed by cutting out the date 1902. The thimble is attached to the thimble arm by a fancy, squiggly backward C-shaped contrivance with four rivets. The thimble arm ends in a short (Greek capital Pi) Π-shaped trapezoidal section which fits into the slot cut into the spike. A small rectangular sleeve with a threaded hook having a very unusual combination of bends tightens down to lock everything in place; this is shown in fig. 8.



Fig. 7 (left) – An end view of the thimble

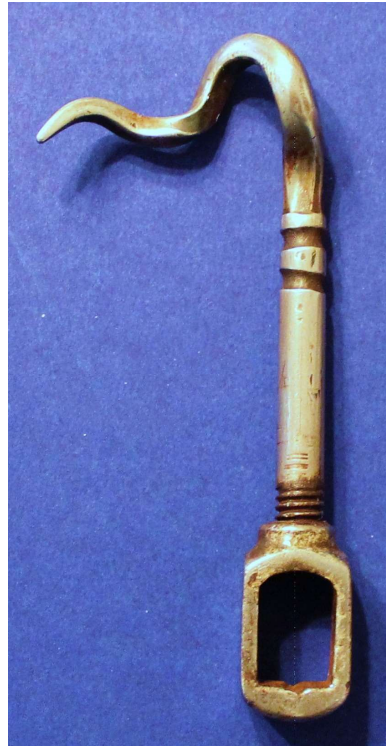


Fig. 8 (right) – The sleeve & hook

To assemble the stick the sleeve is first placed on the lower platform extension of the handle, pushed up and oriented vertically. The spike is then inserted spoon first until it reaches its stop. The thimble/thumb tab is placed on the top side of the stick and slid toward the handle until it drops into the trapezoidal slot. The hook is then tightened down to lock it all in place. The assembled stick with the spoon end of the spike visible is shown in fig. 9. Unfortunately there are no records to indicate which Globe area blacksmith made the stick and there are no records of ownership before Dick Campodonico. Placing the sleeve on backwards and attaching the hook leaves the hook in a useless backward position. The stick is then quite difficult to disassemble to correct the mistake. I know this first hand. This candlestick was certainly constructed for presentation purposes only as it is totally impractical to use.



Fig. 9 – Candlestick with the driller's spoon visible inside the handle

An example of a halberd head is shown in fig. 10. This weapon is from the period 1770-1780 and was standard British issue. Its usefulness was probably limited to pulling cavalry men from their horses rather than its original intent for piercing armor since the world had moved into the era of firearms. The halberd head is approximately 10.4 inches long was mounted on a pole approximately 7 feet long. It can be viewed at the Morristown National Historic Park in Morristown, NJ.



Fig. 10 – A British halberd from the late 1700s (photo: NPS.gov)

The castle and halberd figure into the design of the stick remains a mystery. Perhaps the blacksmith was from Cornwall, England, where medieval castles are common and battles were fought. Perhaps the blacksmith was a bit more educated than the rest of the crowd and was able to read Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* which was first published in 1889. Perhaps he was just a dreamer.

Candlestick dimensions:
Overall Length: 13 ³/₄ inches (345.13 mm)
Spike length: 12 ⁷/₁₆ inches (312.18 mm)
Thimble height: 2 ⁷/₁₆ inches (62 mm)
Thimble arm: 1 ¹/₈ inches (28.24 mm)
Hook height (including sleeve): 3 ¹/₂ inches (87.85 mm)