

# C. Cleaves - Still Another Variation Appears

*By Bill Collins*

The recent Holabird-Kagin Americana Western Tribes & Treasures Auction turned up a new variety of C. Cleaves candlesticks. This particular candlestick is not described or pictured in the articles by Dave Thorpe in *Eureka!* Issues 37 (Summer 2001) and 38 (Spring 2002). It appears to have many of the attributes of those sticks along with several previously unseen features.



**Fig. 1 - C. Cleaves fuse-cutter candlestick. The thimble side of the closed candlestick.**



**Fig. 2 - C. Cleaves, a view of the hook side of the closed candlestick.**

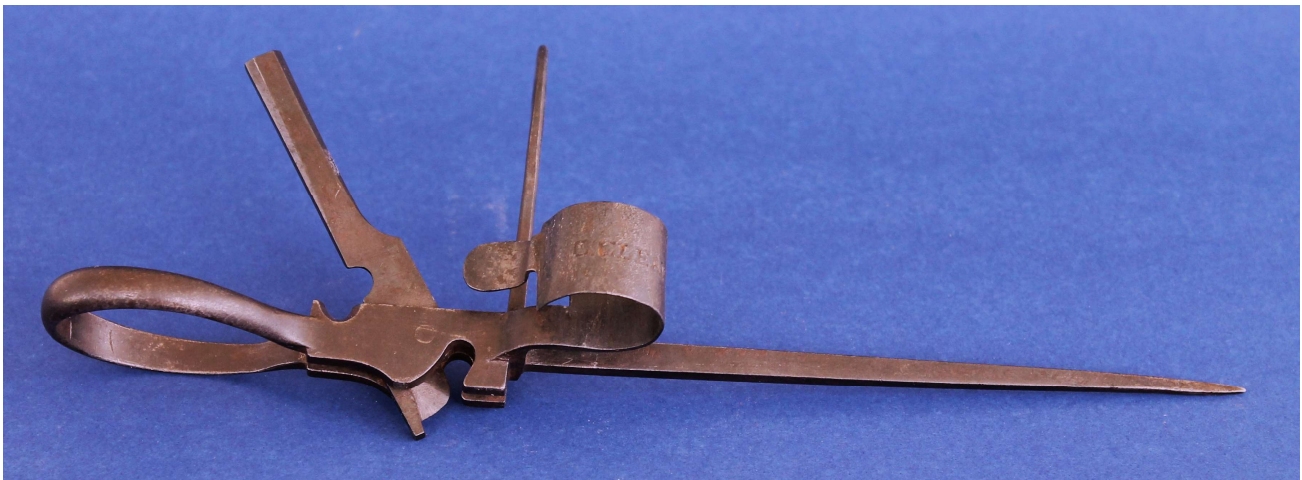


**Fig. 3 - C. Cleaves fuse-cutter thimble: very plain without castellations.**

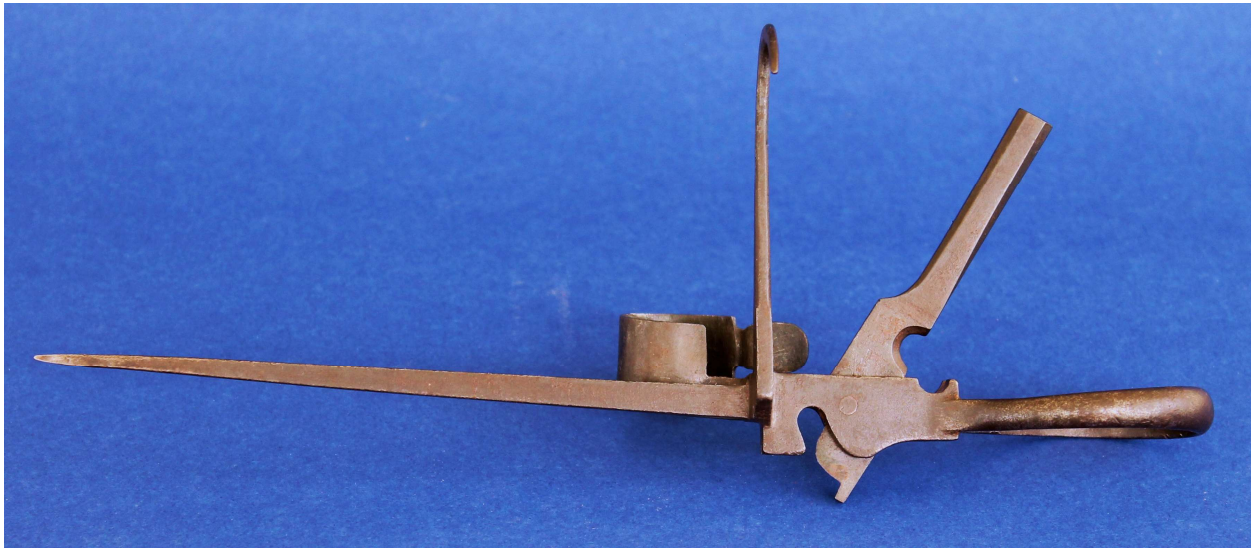
The basic candlestick (figures 1 and 2) is a fuse-cutter somewhat similar to the two folding bar models shown on pages 9 and 10 in *Eureka!* 37. The basic stick has a tear-drop-shaped handle with a short ( $3/32$ " ) step up from the spike to the cutting platform which can be seen in figure 2. The major differences are: (1) a short, plain thimble with only "C. Cleaves" for ornamentation as shown in figures 1 and 3, (2) a hook that is offset to the left of the spike and beveled at approximately  $1/2$ " above the top of the platform to form a flattened octagonal bar extending to just before the bend in the hook as seen in figure 4, (3) a fuse-cutter that is a rounded knife blade with a forward, protective rectangular  $1/8$ " long protuberance, as seen in figures 5 and 6, and (4) a thumb tab seen in figures 1 and 4 that is of a standard design (i.e., not located forward of the hook), or not 'Cleavesian' to coin a new term. This thumb tab is somewhat similar to the ones found on the more simple sticks shown on page 12 of *Eureka!* 37 and pages 2 and 3 of *Eureka!* 38. Figures 7 and 8 show the relationships of the two styles of Cleaves thumb tabs to the hooks. The standard C. Cleaves stick was obtained from Dave Thorpe at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual MAC hosted by Tony Moon in June 1990 at Concord, CA.



**Fig. 4 - C. Cleaves fuse-cutter offset hook.**



**Fig. 5 - C. Cleaves fuse-cutter cutting blade from the thimble side. The curved blade fuse-cutter from the thimble side.**



**Fig. 6 - C. Cleaves fuse-cutter cutting blade from the hook side. The curved blade fuse-cutter from hook side.**

The fuse-cutter itself is a one-sided blade that begins and finishes its cut on the hook side of the stick. The cut-out for the fuse-cutter is more prominent in that it is deeper (1/2" on centerline) and more vertical (45°) than what is shown on the sticks in *Eureka!* 37. The fuse-cutter handle becomes a tapered and flattened octagonal bar once it passes the fuse-crimper. The fuse-crimper begins and finishes the crimp on the thimble side of the stick. The cutting and crimping platform is flat with squared edges at the sides. A conversation with Hal Post confirmed that the stick shown on his website: <http://www.halslamppost.com> has these platform edges rounded. Hal's variation of the stick has the pear-shaped handle and an ornate thimble.



**Fig. 7 - C. Cleaves fuse-cutter & standard stick. A view showing the relationships of the thumb tabs to the hooks as seen from the handles.**



**Fig. 8 - C. Cleaves fuse-cutter & standard stick. A view showing the relationships of the thumb tabs to the hooks as seen from above.**

From looking at all the variations of candlesticks that Charles Cleaves produced it is abundantly clear that he was just as much an artist as he was a blacksmith. Creativity was probably only controlled by how much you were willing to pay for one of his candlesticks and the amount of time you allowed him to craft it. Each stick seems to be an object of creativity unleashed from the ho-hum job of ordinary day-to-day blacksmithing.

Stick dimensions:  
Length: 10 3/8 inches (261 mm)  
Thimble height: 0.81 inch (21 mm)  
Thimble arm: 0.32 inch (8 mm)  
Hook height: 3 3/8 inches (84.7 mm)