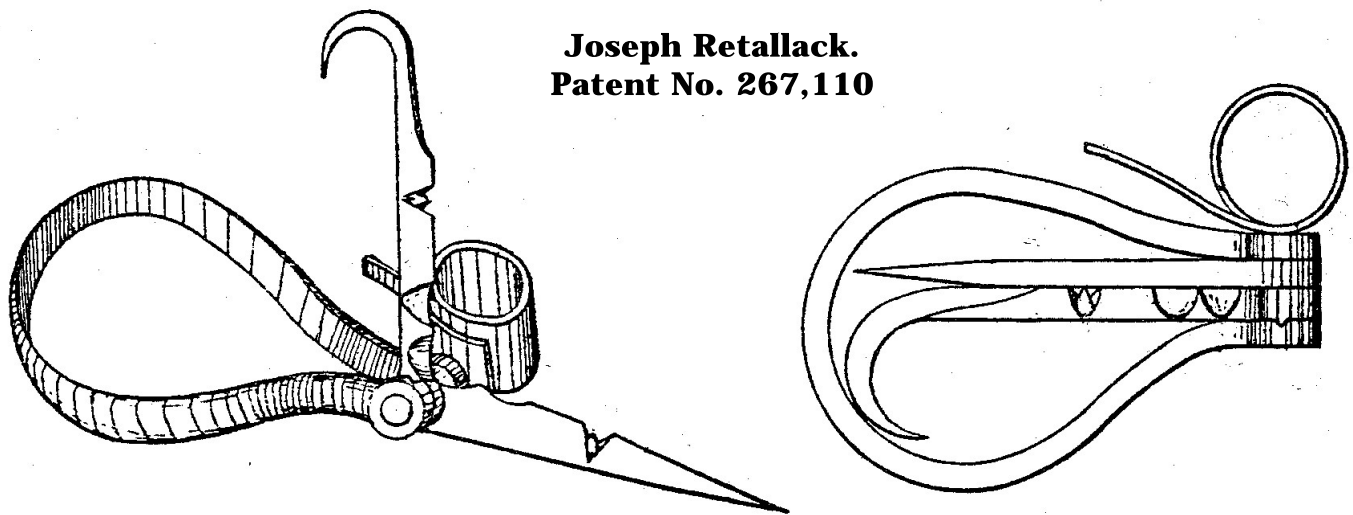


Mechanical Tool Candlesticks

by Al Winters

There are several varieties of manufactured and blacksmith produced candlesticks which incorporate either a knife blade, blasting cap crimper, fuse cutter or fuse splitter. Wilson and Bobrink classified these types as "Mechanical Candlesticks" and some of the most desirable within this category in my opinion, are the C. Cleaves models. Mechanical candlesticks such as the Cleaves were built for the miner to work and perform the extra duties of cutting and capping fuses for blasting. All such candlesticks are rare and were never popular probably because of their extra cost and the difficulty and somewhat dangerous requirement to hold and operate the candlestick tool while cutting fuse as well as crimping blasting caps while attached to a lit candle only an inch or so away. Regardless of their true functionality these mechanical wonders to some collectors, represent the ultimate in candlestick collecting.

Even more difficult to find are mechanical tool sticks that fold. Eleven folding sticks that incorporate fuse cutters, crimpers or knife blades were patented and of those, 5 are currently known to exist. To my knowledge, the known folders are the Neils Larsen--Mill City, CO 1874 (in the Henry Ford Museum); Charles Des Moinaux--Leadville, CO 1882 (in the Leo Stambaugh collection); Joseph Retallack--Central City, CO 1882; John Martin--Tuscarora, NV 1883; and, David James--San Fran., CA 1890 (in the Henry Pohns collection). Other non-patented folding tool sticks also exist such as illustrated by candlestick #241 in Bobrink's book on page 121.



**Joseph Retallack.
Patent No. 267,110**

Shown above, is the patent illustration for a candlestick by Joseph Retallack of Central City, Colorado on November 7, 1882. A photographed example is shown on the next page.



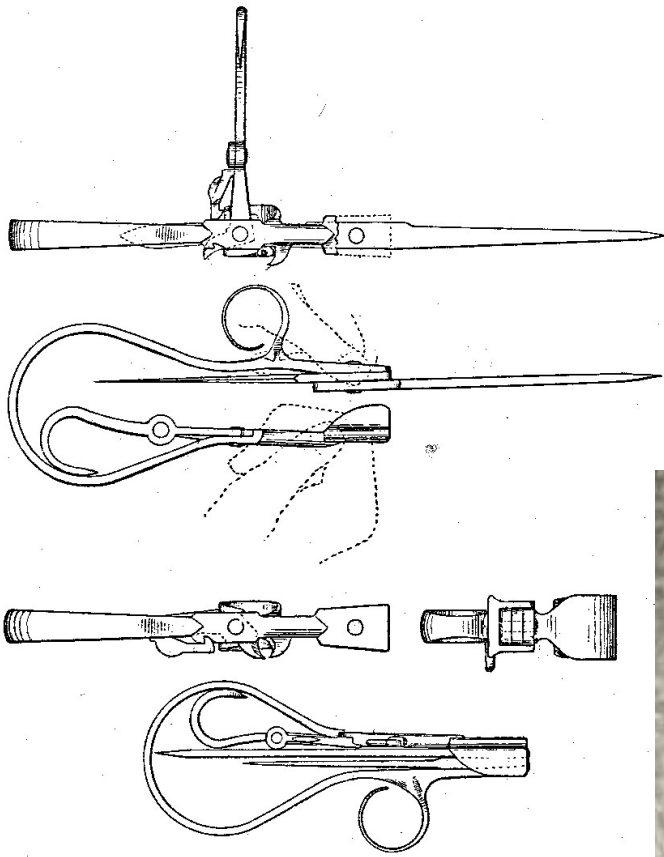
This folder (7.5--4.5in) was found in Retallack's Colorado home and originally acquired by Leo Stambaugh. The Retallack hook incorporates a knife edge cutter while the spike has both a serrated cap crimper and fuse cutter indentation.

The Retallack stick shown left folded, and below fully deployed.

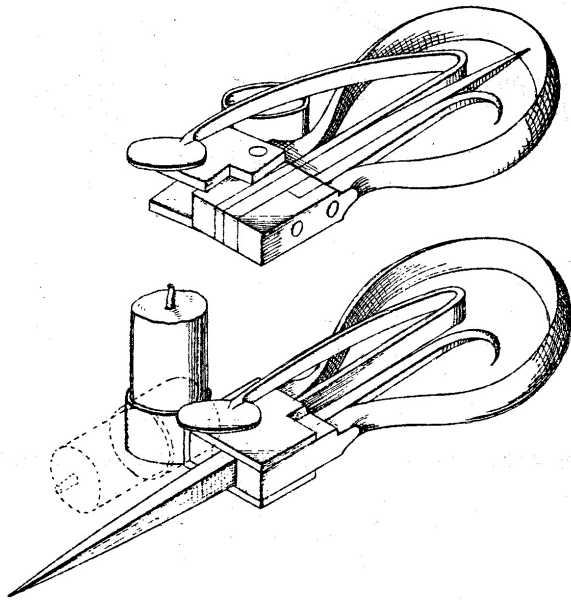


John C. Martin of Tuscarora, Nevada obtained this patent on April 3, 1883 (No. 275,057). His illustration nicely demonstrates how the stick can be spread apart to disengage the locking mechanism.

The example shown below (8.25--5-in) incorporates a foldout knife blade and a blasting cap crimper at the lower section of the hook.



This candlestick is a non-patented mechanical tool folder (7.5--4.25-in). It is similar to the 1882 Hume and Tate patent (shown in the illustration) but incorporates a fuse cutter and crimper lever and fixed blade bar.



The last set of photos also illustrate a non-patented mechanical wonder from Arizona. This stick was originally acquired by the late Charlie Moore of Globe, Arizona and in my opinion is certainly one of the best folding candlesticks that I have seen. The stick is 11-in. long and folds to 6-in. A fuse cutter and crimper is incorporated into the handle with a cutting bar that also serves to lock the hook and spike in position. The mechanical mechanism resembles a regular Blasting Cap Crimper and contains two small holes that may be for cutting and stripping blasting wire(?). This stick could have been patented as it contains several very unique features and is of gunsmith quality

