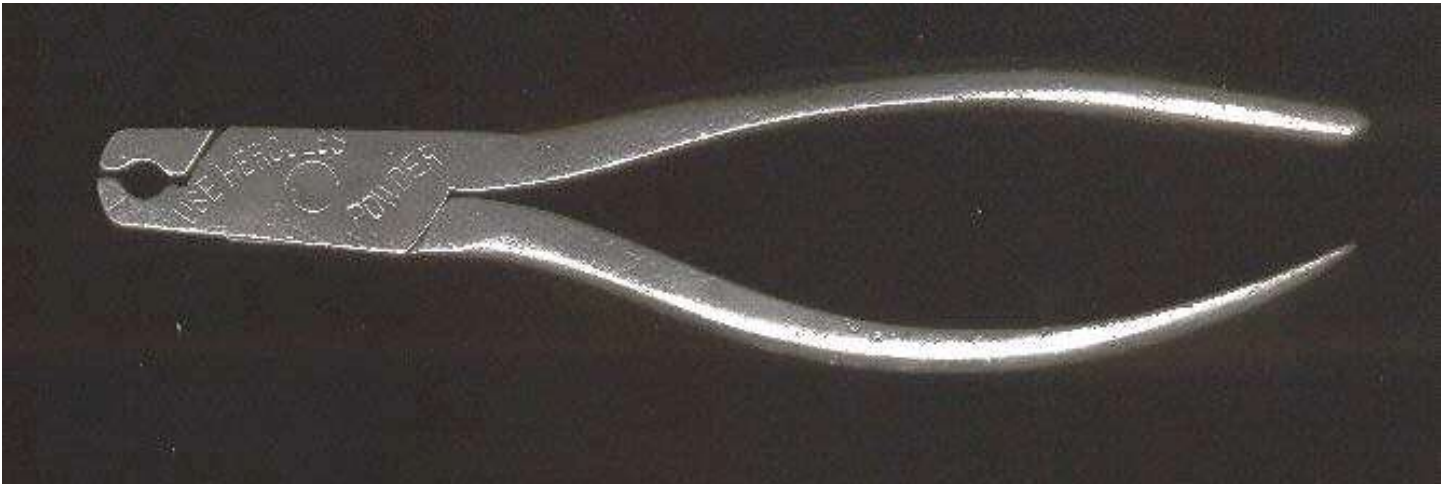


California Crimper

by Ted Bobrink

Over the years I have tried to collect all of the known blasting cap crimpers called "CALIFORNIA CRIMPERS" sold by the famous California Cap Company of San Francisco, California. These are crimpers identified with the gang stamped name "CALIFORNIA" or "CALIFORNIA CRIMPERS" on them. I believe them to be the earliest production made crimpers and the fact that they show up being advertised on the sides of 1880s California Blasting Cap tins is proof.



Last week I picked up a pair of unique California Crimpers that advertise using Hercules Powder made by the California Powder Works of San Francisco, Ca. One side of the crimpers are stamped with the regular known "CALIFORNIA CRIMPER" type stamp and the other side is stamped "USE HERCULES POWDER"

To my knowledge these are the only blasting cap crimpers known to advertise dynamite or anything else for that matter manufactured by someone else. At the time these crimpers were made the only blasting powder and dynamite manufactured with the name Hercules Powder was that manufactured by The California Powder Works of San Francisco, Ca. The only other Hercules Powder sold was owned by Dupont and did not exist for well over another twenty years.

The fact that both the California Cap Co

and the California Powder Works were owned and operated out of San Francisco in the 1880s and dealt with a related product like explosives makes sense.



The early "California Crimpers" are very unique in design in having a long narrow nose. This style comes with no fuse cutter and at 6" they are quite long for just being crimpers. One of the handles is made into a dynamite poke and the stamping on both sides is very bold. Overall finish is smooth. It also appears that this crimper was made in Germany as evidenced by the stamping on the side (below).

