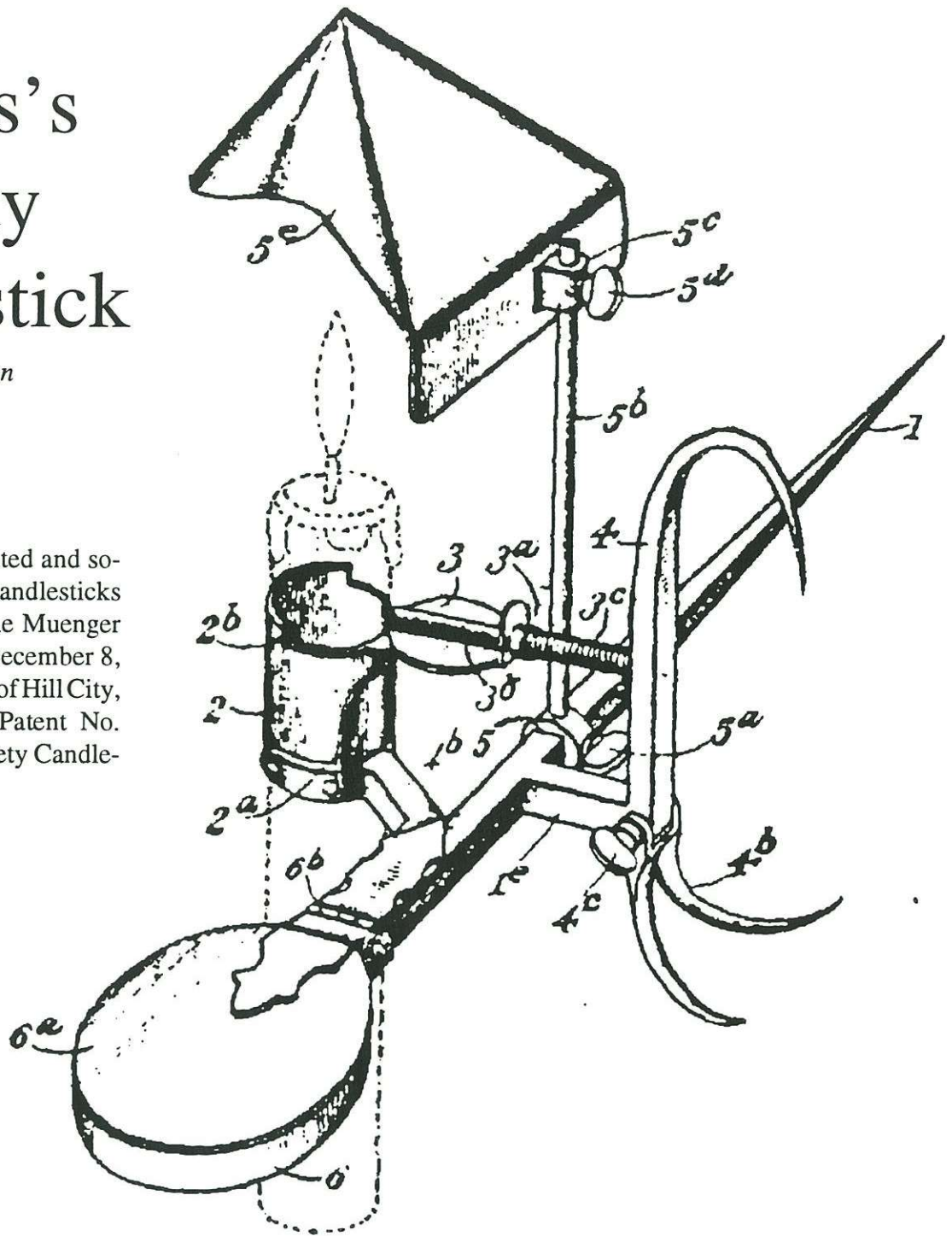


Miners' Safety Candlestick

Dave Johnson

One of the most complicated and sophisticated mechanical candlesticks ever patented has to be the Muenger Safety Candlestick. On December 8, 1908, Frederick Muenger, of Hill City, South Dakota, received Patent No. 906,449 for a Miner's Safety Candlestick.



This stick featured no less than five movable parts. The first of these was a match receptacle in the handle loop with a hinged cover. Second was an adjustable locking claw hook below the hanging hook. Third was a spring loaded candle snuffer, or extinguisher, that was designed to put out the candle flame when the candle burned down to the top of the thimble. Fourth and fifth was an adjustable shield that covered the candle to prevent the flame from being extinguished by dripping water in wet mines. This shield could be adjusted up and down the upright support, as well as the support adjusted in and out the length of the spike. All of these features appear individually in some form or another on other sticks, but this is the only one to incorporate all these features in a single stick.

It is doubtful that this stick could have withstood the abuse of daily use in hardrock mining without being damaged.