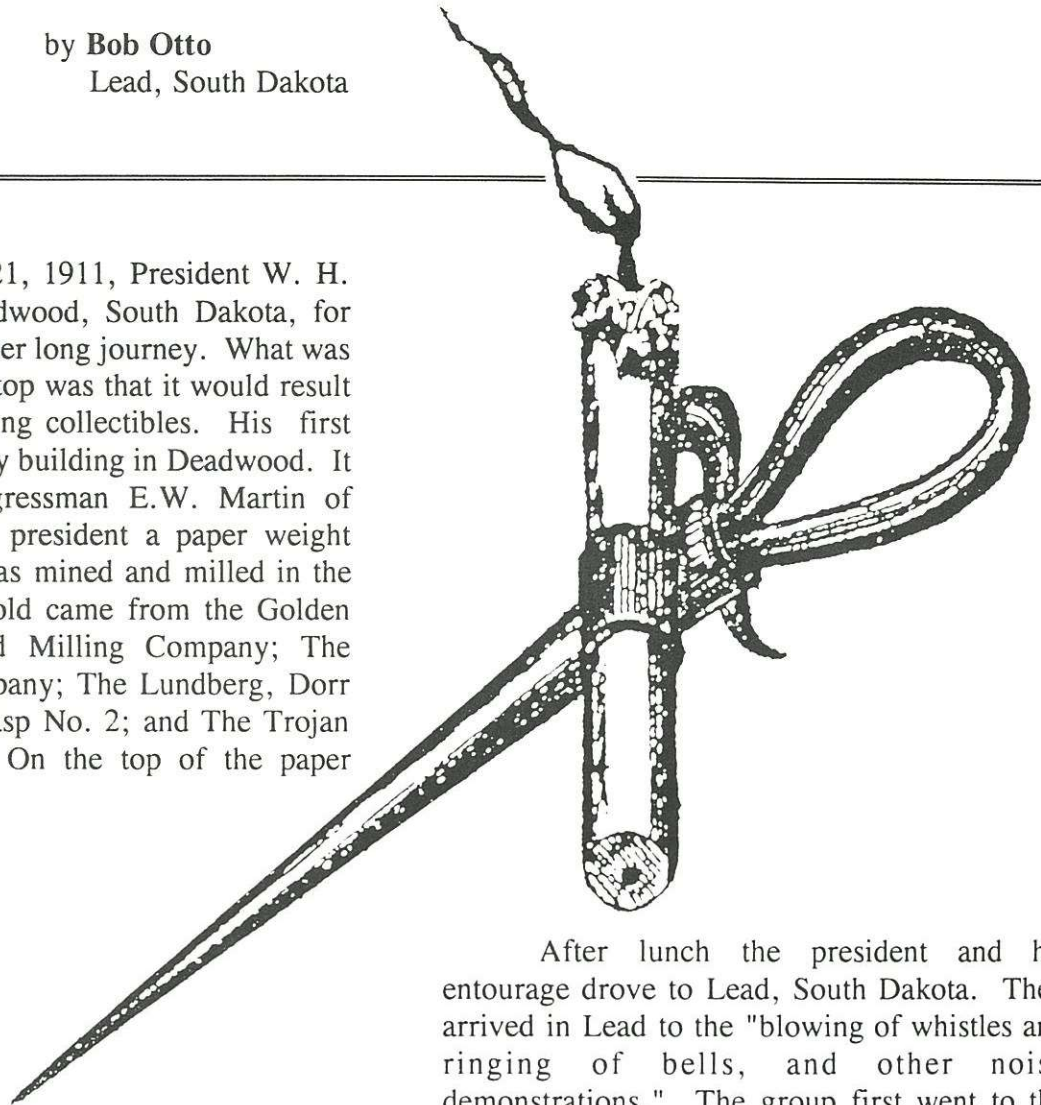


A "GOLDEN CANDLESTICK" FOR PRESIDENT TAFT

by **Bob Otto**
Lead, South Dakota

On October 21, 1911, President W. H. Taft arrived in Deadwood, South Dakota, for another stop on another long journey. What was different about this stop was that it would result in some unique mining collectibles. His first stop was at the county building in Deadwood. It was here that Congressman E.W. Martin of Deadwood gave the president a paper weight made of gold that was mined and milled in the Black Hills. The gold came from the Golden Reward Mining and Milling Company; The Mogul Mining Company; The Lundberg, Dorr and Wilson; The Wasp No. 2; and The Trojan Mining Company. On the top of the paper

weight were engraved the words, "Presented to William H. Taft, President of the United States, Deadwood, South Dakota, October twenty-first, nineteen hundred eleven." While the front and back were both engraved with the words "Black Hills." This little knickknack was made and engraved in Deadwood from fifteen ounces of gold and was worth \$300 in 1911. After the usual round of speeches all the dignitaries went to the Franklin Hotel for lunch. Each guest received a gold stick pin with a miniature gold pan at the top, across which were laid a shovel and pick. The pin was attached to each persons place card.



After lunch the president and his entourage drove to Lead, South Dakota. They arrived in Lead to the "blowing of whistles and ringing of bells, and other noisy demonstrations." The group first went to the Homestake Assay Office. Here the president watched the pouring of the large gold bricks that were sent to the U.S. Mint in Denver each month. The president's entire group then went on to the Ellison Hoist directly above the old Assay office and descended into the mine on the double-deck cage. Mine-Foreman O'Brien led the tour to the 1100' Level where they visited the underground horse stables, the pump station and "other machinery." They then went to the Star Hoist where they were hoisted back to the surface. The following are some quotes from the Lead Daily Call newspaper where all the information for this article came from.

"When in the mine, the president, turning to one of the party accompanying him, remarked: 'I can see big buildings, battleships and armies when ever I want, but it is only once in a lifetime that a person has an opportunity to see such things as these,' pointing to the different workings through which the party was passing."

"It was a weary, sweaty, gasping president with soiled clothing and wilted collar that climbed into the cage with a acetylene miner's lamp in one hand and a chunk of gold-bearing quartz, picked up in the mine, in the other. Perspiration poured from his face as he stepped from the cage with a sigh of relief when it reached the surface, but he gasped: 'It was fine--a great sight."

The president went on to the steps of the Hearst Free Kindergarten where he was introduced by Lead Mayor Howard. The crowd was estimated to be close to fifteen thousand

people. Then, in the words of the Lead Daily Call, "E.R. Rostinshear, a miner, on behalf of the men working in the mines, presented the President with the golden candlestick. The President expressed his gratification and pleasure on receiving the beautiful gift, and made a few remarks complimentary and approving of men who worked and delved in the depths of the earth."

According to the newspaper, the "golden candlestick" was manufactured from Homestake gold by Frank Thorpe, a Black Hills jeweler. "It is an exquisite piece of work and of regulation size." The illustration shown in this article is a copy of the illustration that the paper ran with a picture of President Taft. Is it an accurate picture of the gift or just a generic picture of a candleholder? Who knows? At present, there is no record that any of these gifts still exist. I don't know about you, but I wouldn't mind receiving any one of these items as a gift.

BLACK HILLS MINING COLLECTOR'S MEET

by Brad Ross
Gillette, Wyoming

I might be a little prejudice, but from all reports the first annual Black Hills Mining Collector's Meet (or convention) was a great success! This get together was a little--no--a lot different than most of the events that have taken place in the past. The focus of the Black Hills Meet was to have a chance for many collectors to gather to buy, sell, and trade and an opportunity for collectors to experience what mining is all about with tours of the Black Hills Mining Museum, surface and underground tours at one of the most famous gold mines in North America, and even a traditional miners lunch. More details of all of these as I go.

As with most get togethers, this one started out on Friday night with many of the collectors that came in early getting together to discuss latest finds and maybe a little trading and buying. People came from all over, even two other countries were represented (Seigbert Zecha and Karin Seelbach from Germany, as well as Udo Matern from Canada). Al Winters had a reception at his house for many of the collectors. Later that night a few of the collectors found their way to Deadwood (a mere three miles away) for dinner. I'm sure none of them had time to participate in the legal gaming after their meal.