

A FOLDER FROM BODIE

By Steve Rush

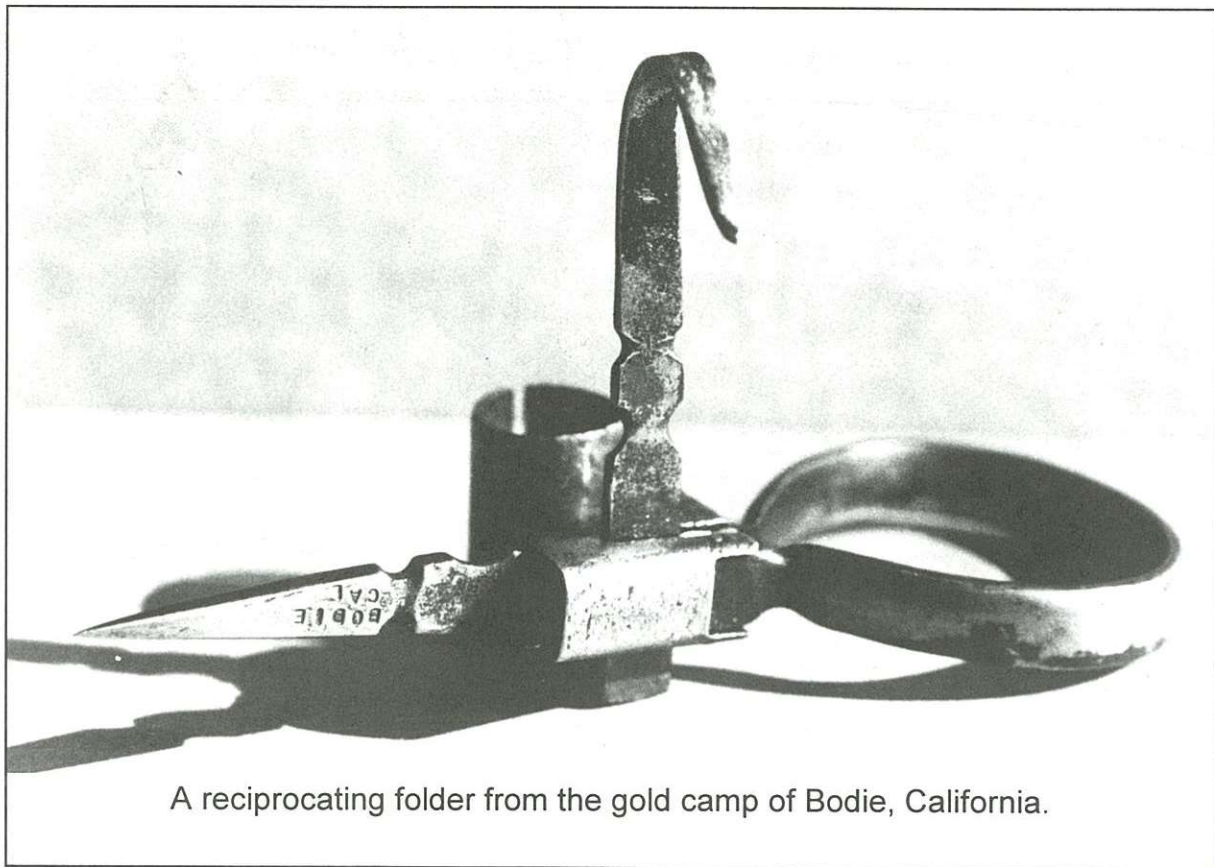
Miners candlesticks are tough to find anymore outside the collecting fraternity. With the exception of common garden variety blacksmiths sticks, you could visit dozens of antique shops and shows without coming upon a truly good stick.

The folding candlestick illustrated here was found at a local Denver antique show, and due to a couple things such as the very fair price and the stamping of a famous California

gold camp, I came near passing it up. Folding sticks are generally found on someone else's shelves these days.

This stick is of the reciprocating type design, with the hook and spike folding into the handle. The thimble also swivels to be folded flat, and a clasp holds it all together. A similarly designed stick is depicted as number 253 in the Wilson-Bobrink Miner's Candlestick book.

BODIE CAL is stamped on



A reciprocating folder from the gold camp of Bodie, California.

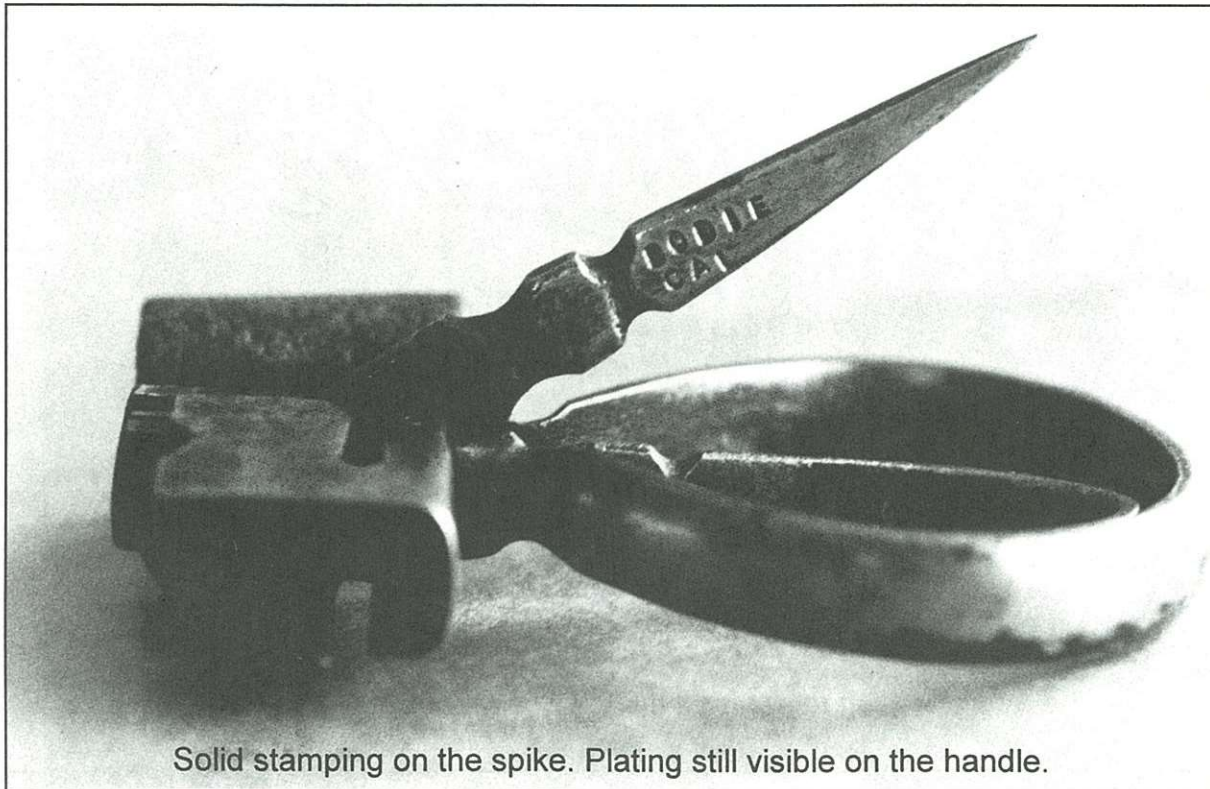
one side of the spike with the name IRWIN stamped on the opposite side. The candlestick shows evidence of plating, and the workmanship is very good. The book Bodie Bonanza lists a William Irwin and a William A. Irwin as the superintendent and assistant superintendent, respectively, of the Standard Consolidated Mine in Bodie.

The dealer I purchased this stick from claimed to have obtained the folder with a box of bits and spurs from a fellow in Oregon. Many reproduction candlesticks are still out there in the "wild", and with the cost and stamping you can bet I held my

hand lens to this beauty a long while before buying it.

Could it be a presentation candlestick made for one of the William Irwin's associated with the Standard Consolidated Mine? Maybe. Speculation to say it is, I feel. A recent immigrant from Colorado to California who is a real professional when it comes to his opinion of old metal looked closely at the stick and said he thought it may be quite old (then asked what I wanted for it... the real clincher!)

A nice find, either way, that encourages you to continue the hunt. If anyone has any information regard-



Solid stamping on the spike. Plating still visible on the handle.

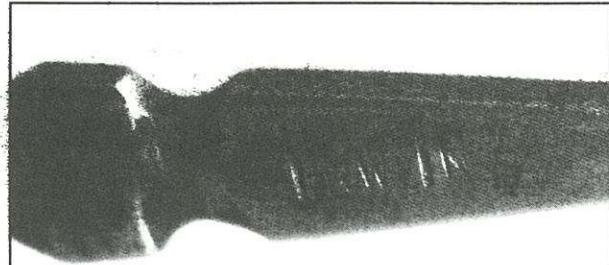
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ing this stick (good or bad news) call Steve Rush at (303) 670-9158.

REFERENCES:

Loose, Warren. BODIE BONANZA, The True Story of a Flamboyant Past. Exposition Press, 1971.

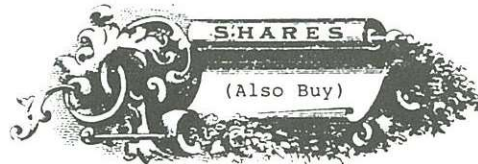


Irwin stamping on spike. Presentation stick for William Irwin, superintendent of the Standard Consolidated Mine?



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