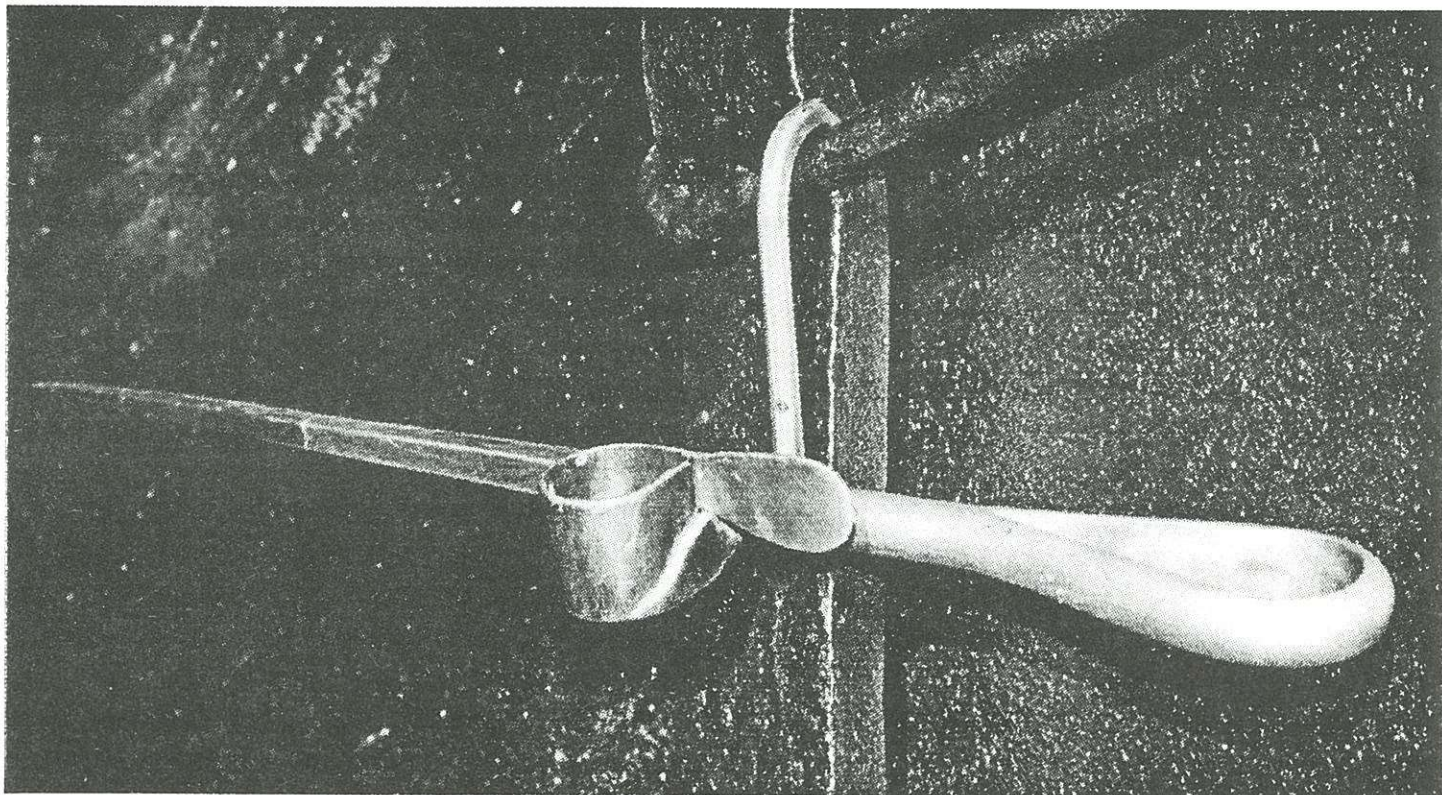


A Brass Candlestick: What's the Point?

by Dave Thorpe



A brass candlestick hangs with an unusual steel point hangs from the latch of an ore car.

Most brass candleholders were never intended for use in the mine. The metal is not hard enough to keep a point. Instead they were used as fancy presentation pieces. Brass has an attractive appearance and could easily be formed into intricate designs.

This stick is an exception, for it is not fancy, and was intended for actual use. The body of the stick is entirely brass, while the first three inches of the point is steel. In all probability a steel shank runs down inside the shaft of the stick as a means of attaching the point and giving added strength.

For many years this stick remained in a museum in Custer, South Dakota. Last year the museum closed and the contents were distributed amongst several family members and buyers. One of the family members resided in Phoenix, and had obtained three nice sticks in his share of the goods.

One was a steel gal-leg stick. Another steel stick had an eight-sided shaft and a slip-over hook riveted onto the shank. The third stick is the brass one shown here.

In the above photo, it is hanging onto the end of an ore car. Although not fancy, this is the first candlestick I have seen that is brass and was intended for use by miners.