

A Hardhat for Mine Draft Animals

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A large number of coal mines and some hard rock mines utilized draft animals for underground haulage. These animals were required to work standing upright in order to pull their loads. Due to the height of many mine passages, there was a constant danger of these animals striking their heads on some overhead obstruction. Since many mining companies valued their draft animals to a greater degree than they did miners, care was taken to protect these animals.

To this end, on March 12, 1901, Albert C. Young, of Amesville, Ohio, received Patent No. 669,909 for a mine cap for draft animals. This leather device was to be strapped on the animals' head and consisted of a leather head protector over the top of the skull and flexible covers over the ears in a single piece unit. I'm sure that if this device were ever produced it would have proven to be difficult to put on an animal.

On the back cover of the Fall 1993 Eureka! is a catalog ad showing a mule's hard hat. This would appear to be the commercial incarnation of this patent.

669,909. MINE-CAP FOR DRAFT-ANIMALS. ALBERT C. YOUNG, Amesville, Ohio. Filed Oct. 7, 1899. Serial No. 732,918. (No model.)



Claim.—1. A shield for the purpose set forth, conforming in shape to the top portion of the head of a draft-animal and extending over the forehead, the crown between and in rear of the ears and the portions at the sides below the ears, the shield having openings therein for the passage of the ears therethrough, a reinforce extending centrally over the front and rear portions of the shield and between the openings for the ears, the reinforce and the portion of the shield therebeneath having ventilating-openings therein, and insulating ear-covers attached to the shield over the openings for the ears and also having ventilating-openings therein.

2. A mine-cap for protecting the head of draft-animals, comprising a leather shield having a permanent shape conforming to that of and fitting down flat over the top portion of the head of the animal, said shield forming a complete and continuous covering for the portion of the head to which it is applied and adapted to extend down over the forehead to the eyes, over the crown between and in rear of the ears and over the side portions of the head adjacent to and outside of the ears, openings being formed in the side portions of the crown inwardly from the adjacent side margins of the device, a reinforce extending centrally over the exterior of the shield and broadened over the forehead and at the rear behind the ears, and insulating ear-covers secured to the shield over said openings and conforming in shape to the ears of the animal to be protected, the shape of the shield permitting the use of a single fastening means to hold it in practically-applied position.