

Miners' Blasting Tools

Dave Johnson

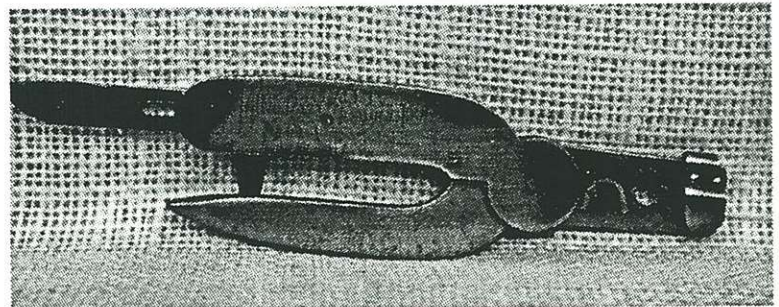
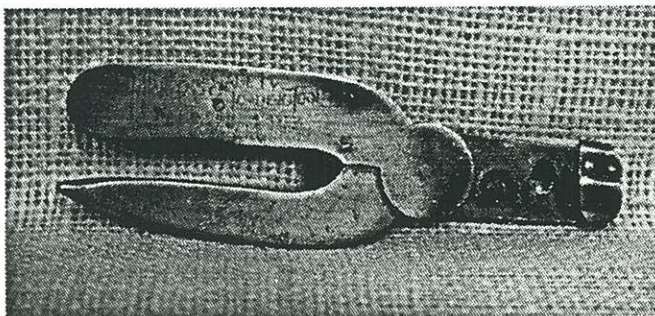
Miners needed specialty tools to cut and split fuse, crimp blasting caps and punch dynamite. These tools were patented as miners' combinations tools, miner's knives, miners' implements and miners' fuse pliers. Today most collectors merely refer to these specialty blasting tools as cap crimpers. However, most patented tools did more than crimp blasting caps.

The earliest patent I have found was granted to William Rosecrans, of San Francisco, on February 24, 1880. This simple tool had the stated purpose of cutting off the fuse and crimping the cap to the end thereof. The next patent I was able to find was granted to John Jones, of Oregon City, Oregon, on January 9, 1883. This patent was for a more sophisticated tool which had a stated purpose of splitting and compressing the fuse and for securing the cap on the end of the same. The latest patent I found was granted to John Yourek, Jr. and Stephen Yourek, of Thayer, Illinois, on March 17, 1925. It is noteworthy that not a single patent originates East of the Mississippi River and all are from hard rock mining regions.

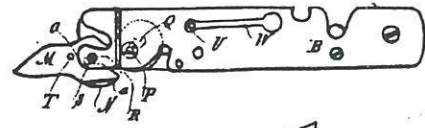
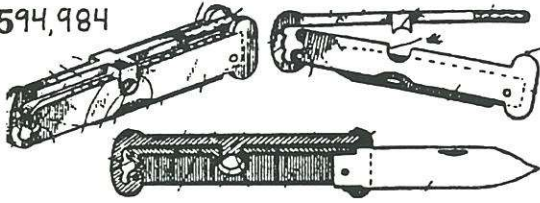
In all I have located 17 patents for these specialty blasting tools. These are:

224,957	William Rosecrans, San Francisco, CA	February 24, 1880
270,315	John Jones, Oregon City, OR	January 9, 1883
309,637	Isaac Martin, Ouray, CO	December 23, 1884
313,414	George Freund, Durango, CO	March 3, 1885
463,912	Richard McVitty, Snohomish, WA	November 24, 1891
567,068	George Bergen, Leadville, CO	September 1, 1896
572,808	Martin Killian, Central City, CO	December 1, 1896
580,235	Alfred Strum, Wickes, MT	April 6, 1897
594,984	William Chapman, Yellville, AR	December 7, 1897
613,698	Harry Martin, Salt Lake City, UT	November 8, 1898
692,637	Alfred Des Moineaux, Silverplume, CO	February 4, 1902
725,420	Alfred Des Moineaux, Silverplume, CO	April 14, 1903
753,048	Alfred Des Moineaux, Silverplume, CO	February 23, 1904
883,648	George Landers, Boise, ID	March 31, 1908
1,047,910	Clements Aragon, Ely, NV	December 24, 1912
1,184,746	Ole Lanson, Lead, SD	May 30, 1916
1,529,857	John Yourek, Jr., Thayer, IL	March 17, 1925

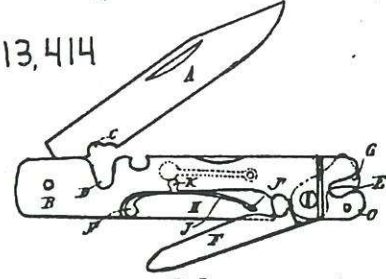
The question for collectors is how many of these patents were actually put into production. The accompanying photo of the Des Moineaux Miner's Safety Loading Tool demonstrates that at least one patent was actually produced. This example, from my collection, features a punch, fuse splitter, fuse cutter, crimper and retractable knife blade.



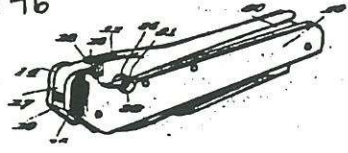
594,984



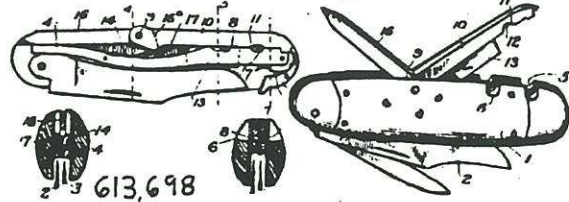
313,414



1,184,746



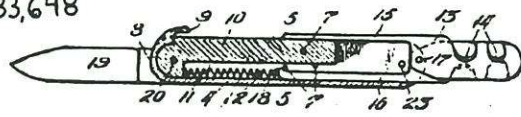
725,420



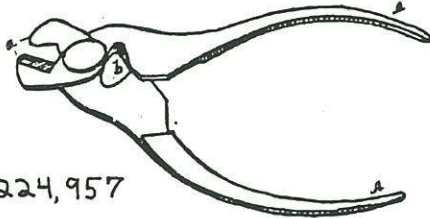
753,048



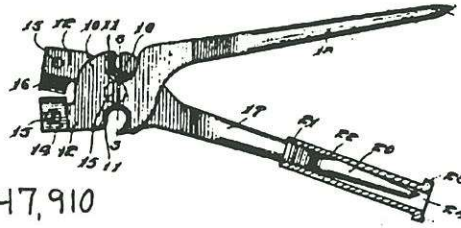
883,648



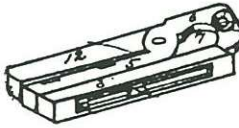
224,957



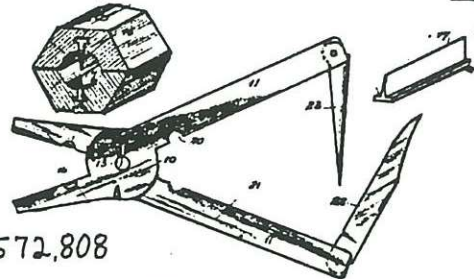
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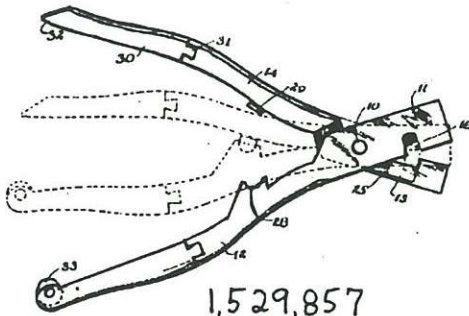
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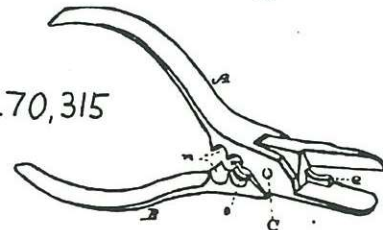
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1,529,857



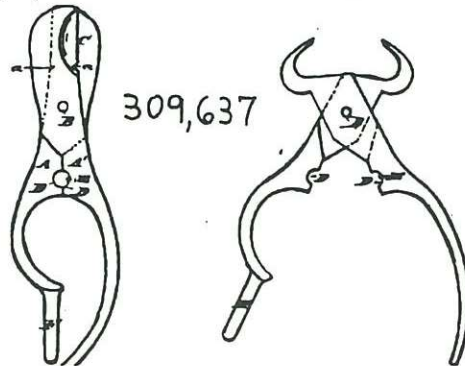
270,315



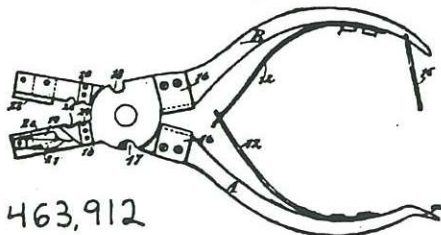
567,068



309,637



463,912



692,631

