

Erbele Fuse Pliers

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The fuse pliers shown above were found by Scott Brady and show stamping on the handle that reads ERBELE FUSE PLIERS. This is the first example to be reported in modern times. Mark Bohannon's book, *Blasting Cap Crimper Patents*, shows that these crimpers were patented by John F. Erbele, of North Dakota, in 1929. The 74 known patents range from 1880 to 1961, but there are only nine patents more recent than these.

Looking at the head of the pliers, one can see an offset arrangement of the distal teeth, somewhat like a parrot's beak. This in fact is the unique feature of the Erbele pliers. The upper tooth, as seen in the photo is actually a transverse knife blade and was used to splitting the fuse so as to prepare it for splicing.

Just inboard of the splitter, is a fairly standard cap crimper. The inside handles are used as a fuse cutter. This area can be seen in the photo as the square notch in the upper handle. A close-up photo and patent drawing are shown next.



Fig. 2.



Fig. 1

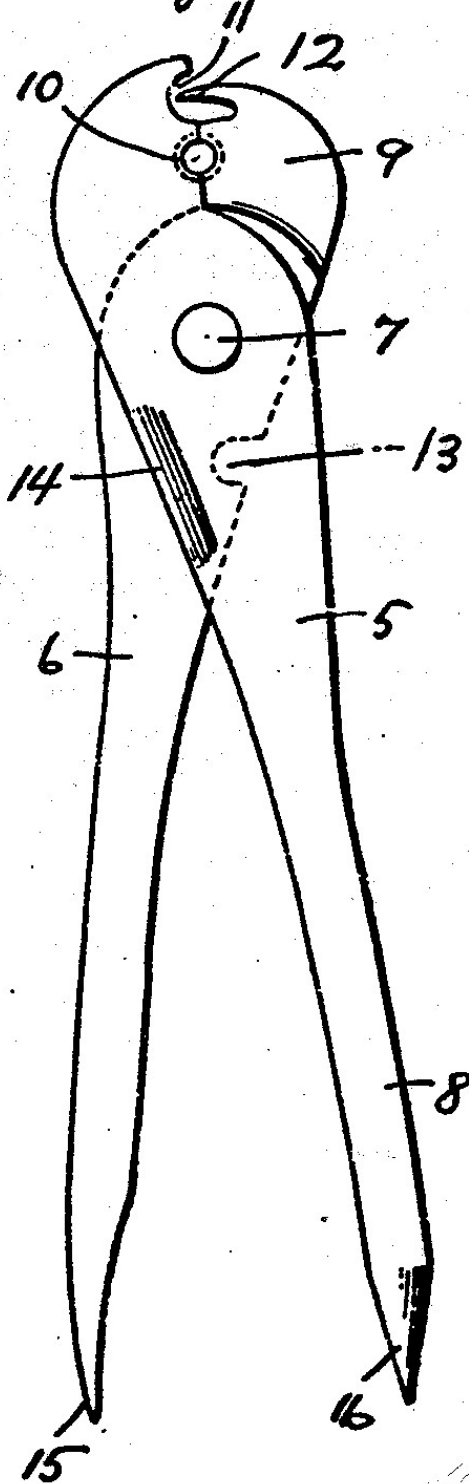
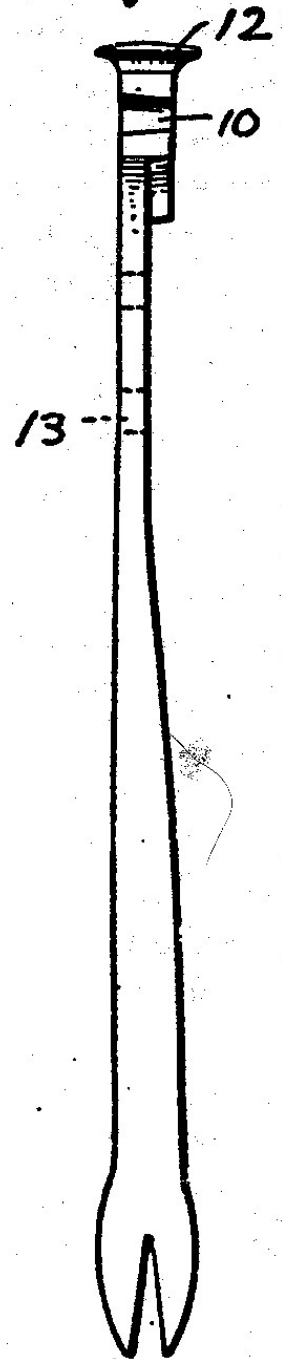


Fig. 3.



So what is the split end on the tip of the handle? According to the patent, area 15 is a nail puller! The other handle end is of course the familiar dynamite punch.