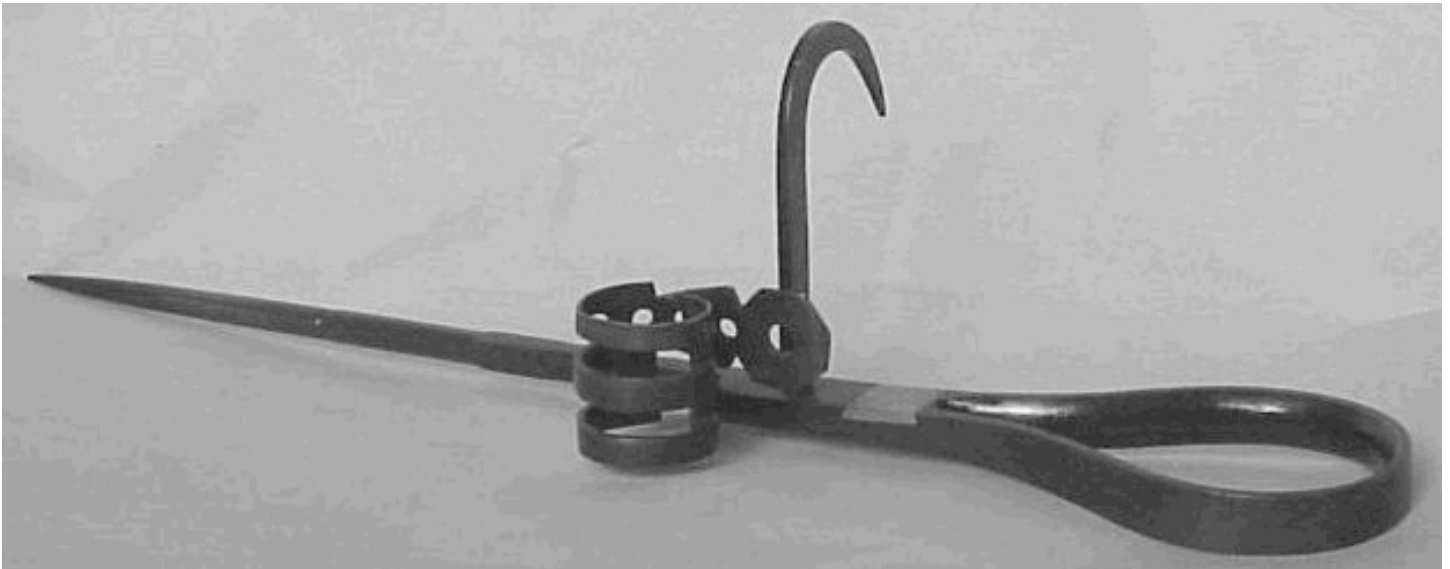


# Perforated Candlesticks

*by Dave Johnson*

Collectors are drawn to items with unusual aspects that make them stand out from others. The following eight miners' candlesticks differ from the standard pattern by having holes, or perforations, in their handles, thumb levers and thimbles. The perforations are purely decorative and take the form of round holes or slots. In Wilson & Bobrink's book, *A Collector's Guide to Antique Miners' Candlesticks*, only 10 examples of sticks with perforations are illustrated among the multitude of candlesticks shown.

On each of sticks shown here, the perforations are not the only decorative work found. Each has other file work on the spike, thimble, thumb lever or handle. The easiest of these decorative perforations to make would be the round hole. The long slots would be more difficult and the most difficult would be the angled slots found on one of the thimbles. The other file work is of varying degrees of difficulty.



*Stick 1:  
Perforated  
thimble &  
octagonal  
thumb  
lever*

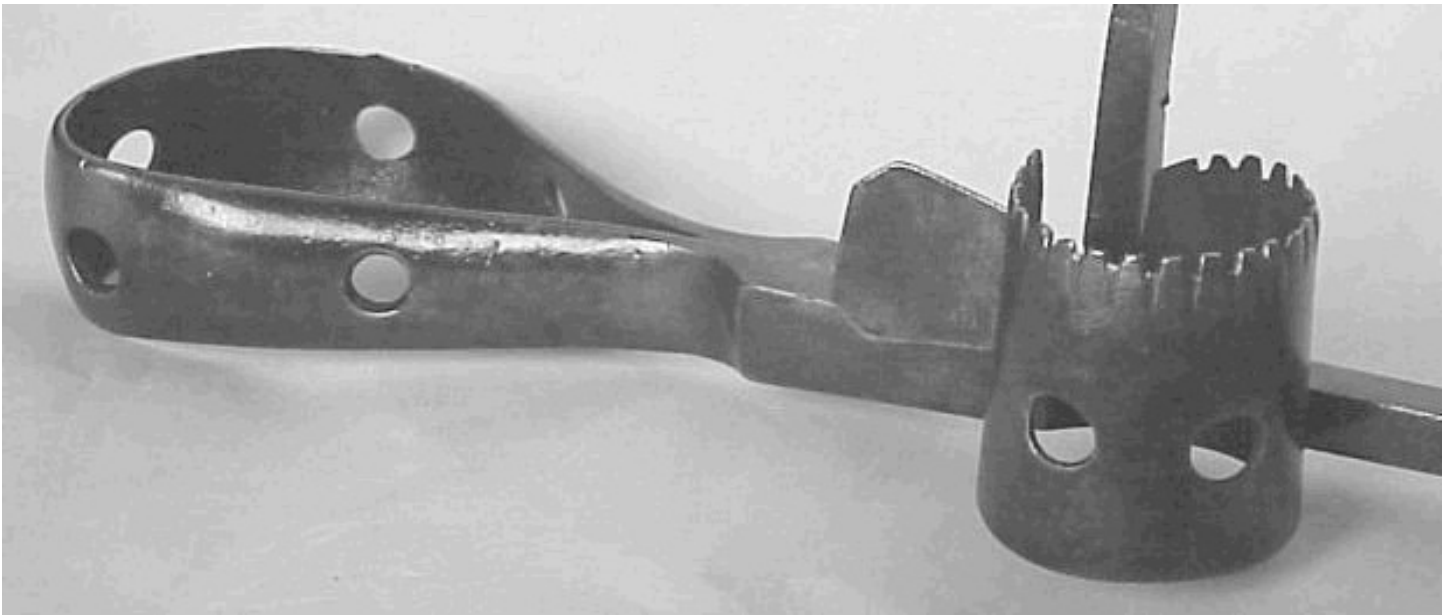
Stick 1 features 4 round holes in the thumb lever and thimble as well as 2 slots that go most of the way around the thimble. The thumb lever is octagonal with a hole in the center. The spike goes from square at the point to octagonal, then back to square with tapered edges. There is a brass inlay where the handle separates.



*Stick 2: Perforated thimble.*

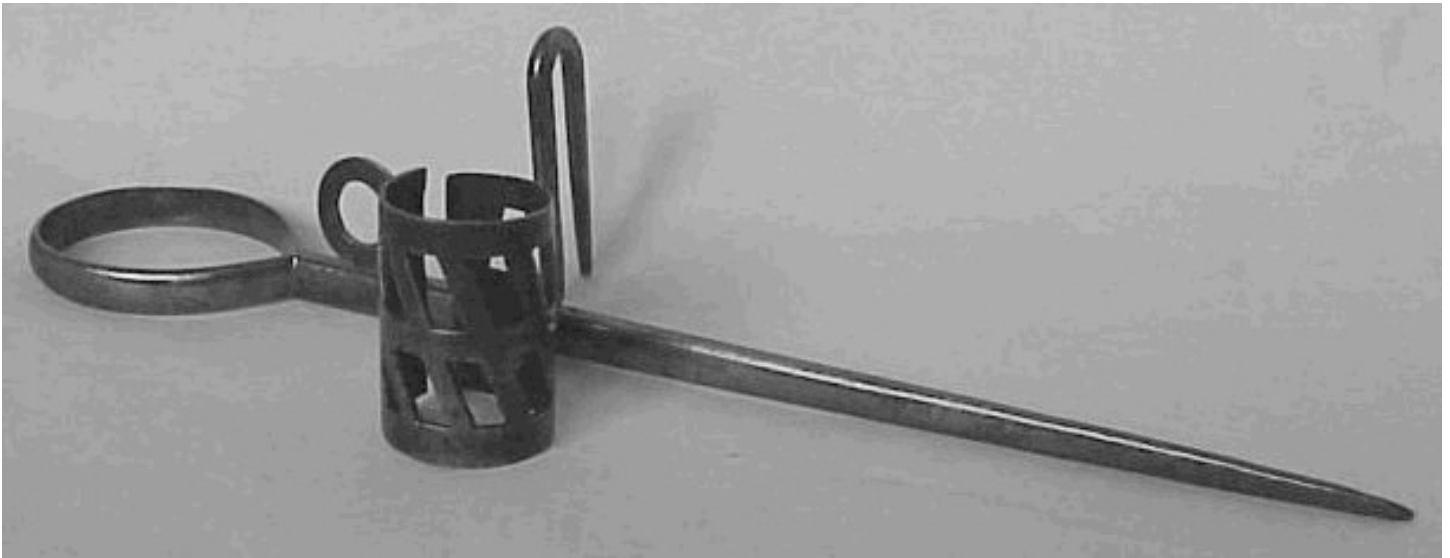
Stick 2 has a thimble with 12 holes, 6 on the top half and 6 on the bottom half. There is a short square slot in the center of the thimble toward the spike. The thumb lever is heart-shaped with a center-ridge that extends across it and part way around the thimble.





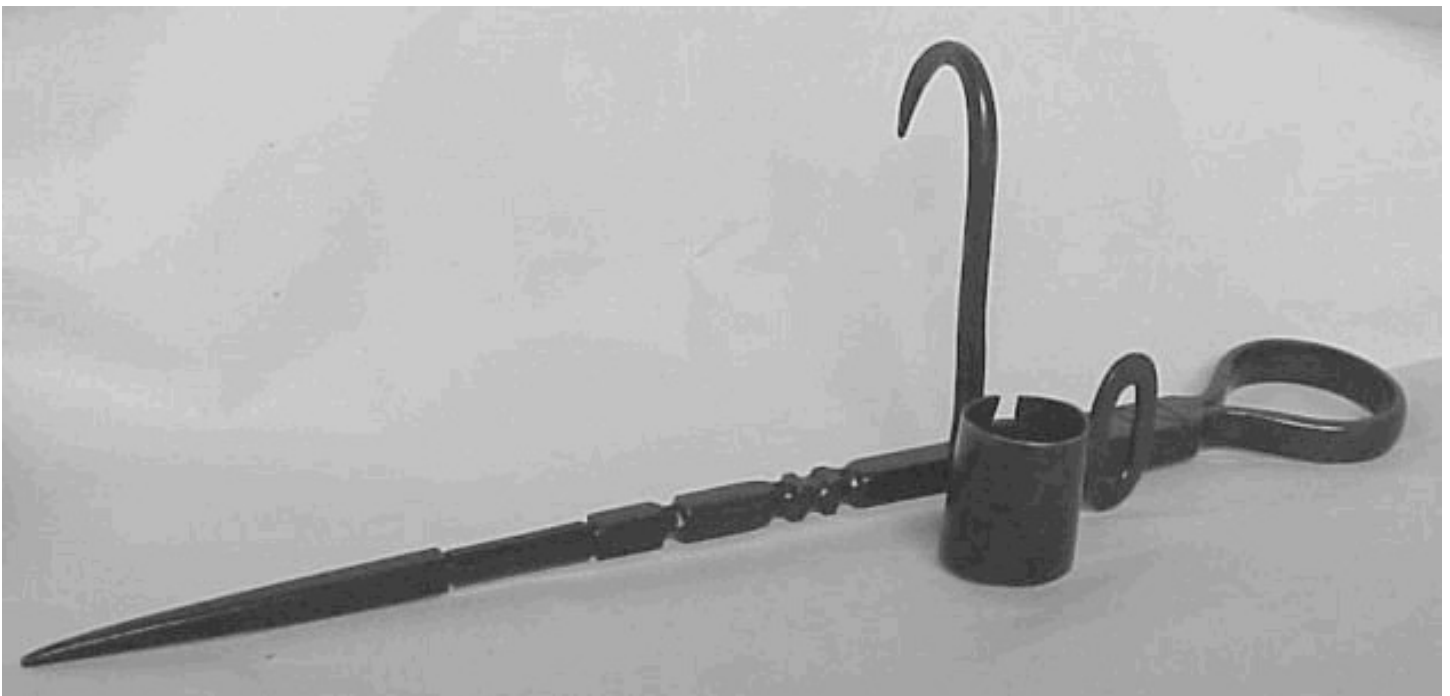
*Stick 3: Perforated Thimble & Handle.*

Stick 3 has a wide handle with 5 holes evenly spaced around it. The thimble has 4 holes going around its circumference. There is filing at the top of the thimble.



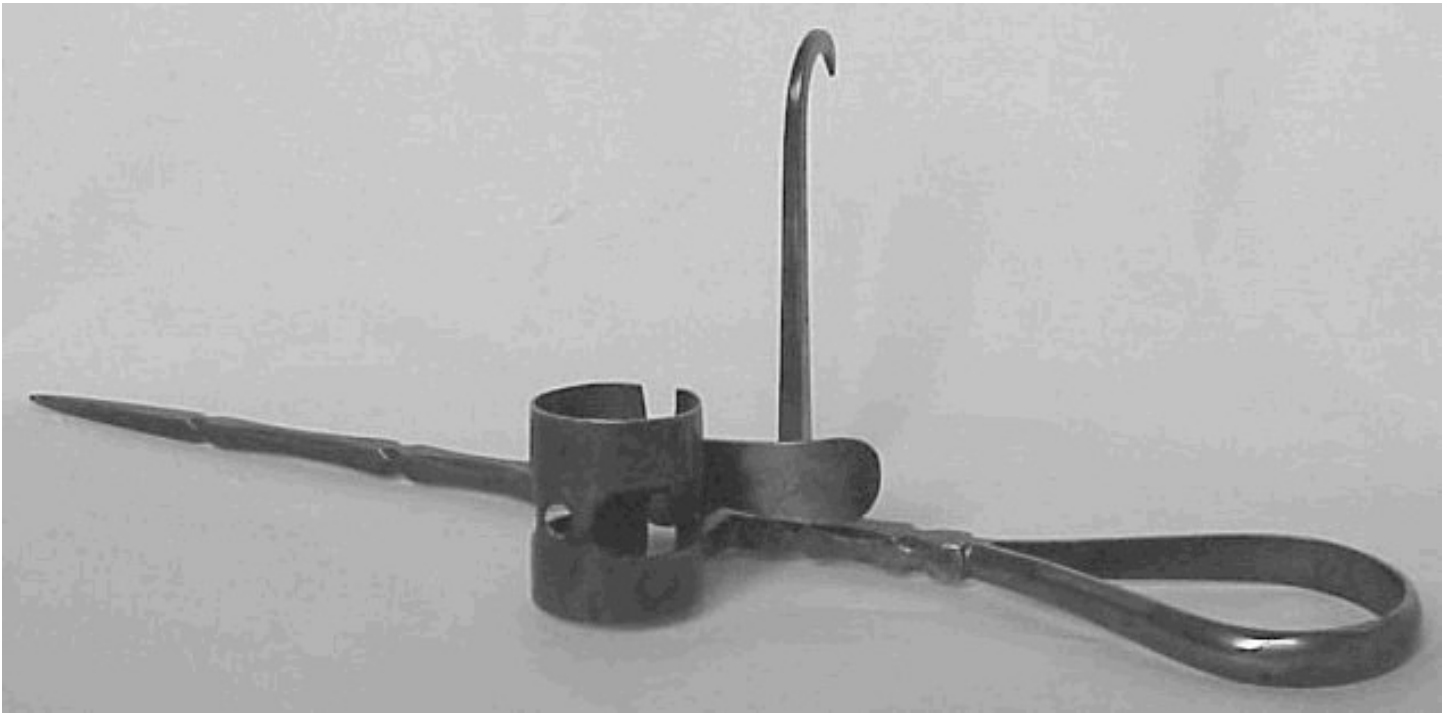
*Stick 4: Perforated thimble & thumb lever with Lake Superior hook.*

Stick 4, with its Lake Superior style hook, has a most unusual holed and slotted thumb lever, along with a very unusual thimble featuring angled slots.



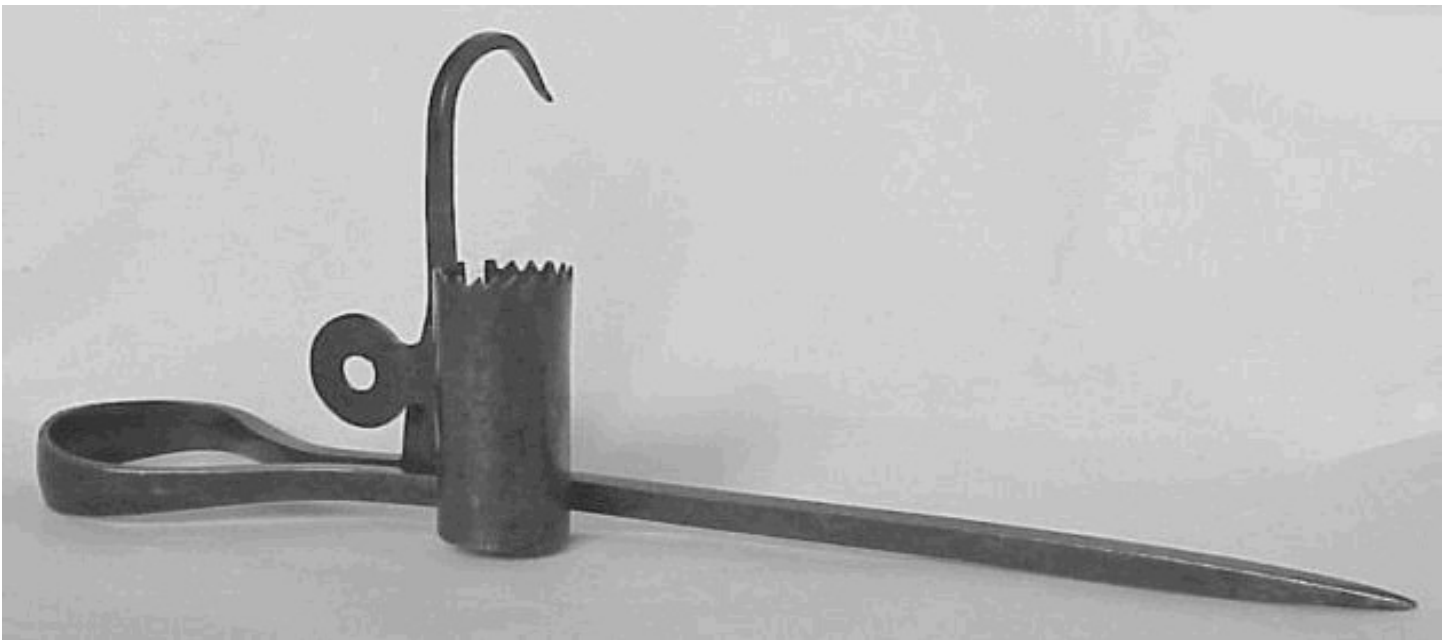
*Stick 5: Perforated thumb lever.*

Stick 5 has a large oval hole in the thumb lever and lots of fancy filing in the spike toward the point and toward the handle.



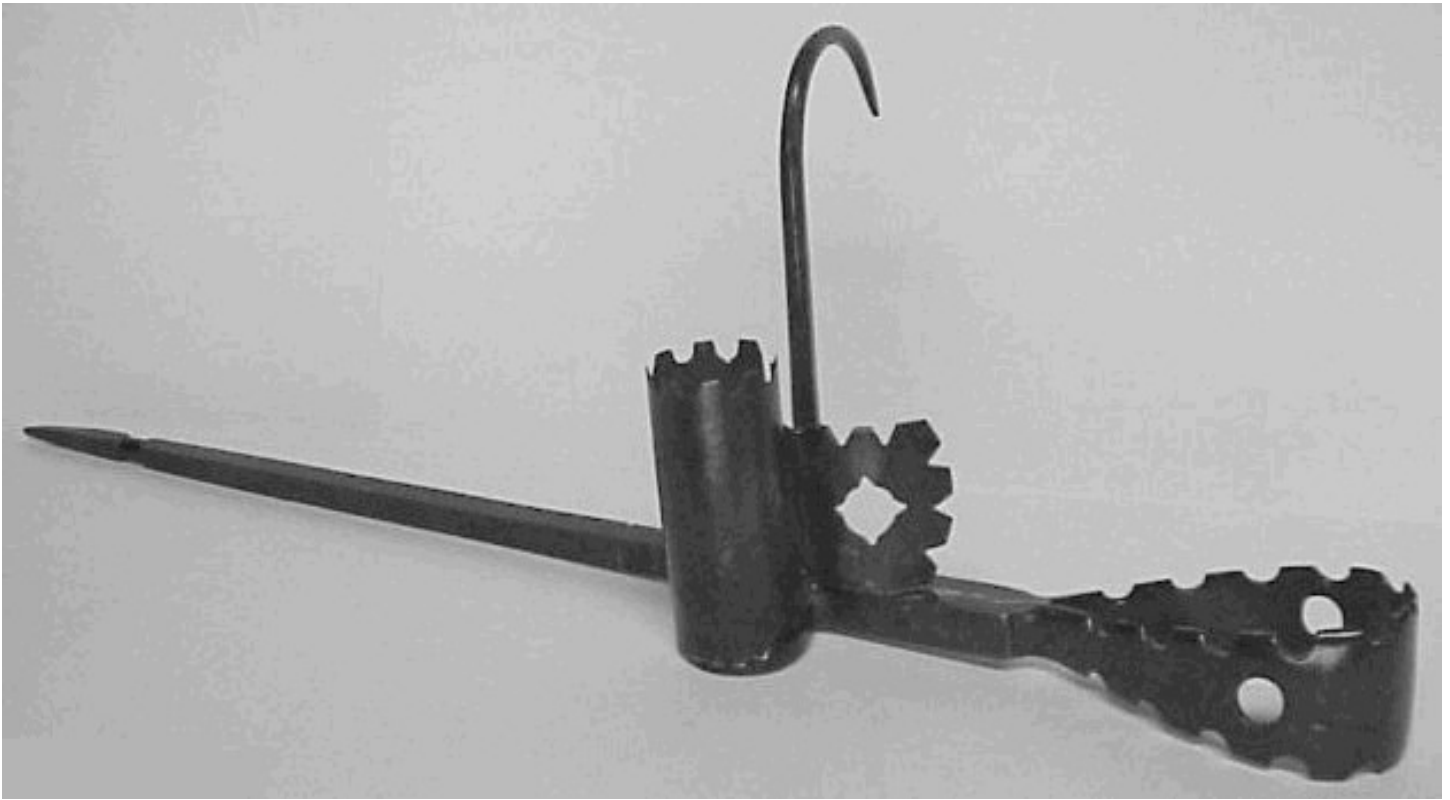
*Stick 6: Perforated thimble.*

Stick 6 has a thimble with a single round hole with two elongated slots with round ends on each side. The spike has fancy filing along its entire length.



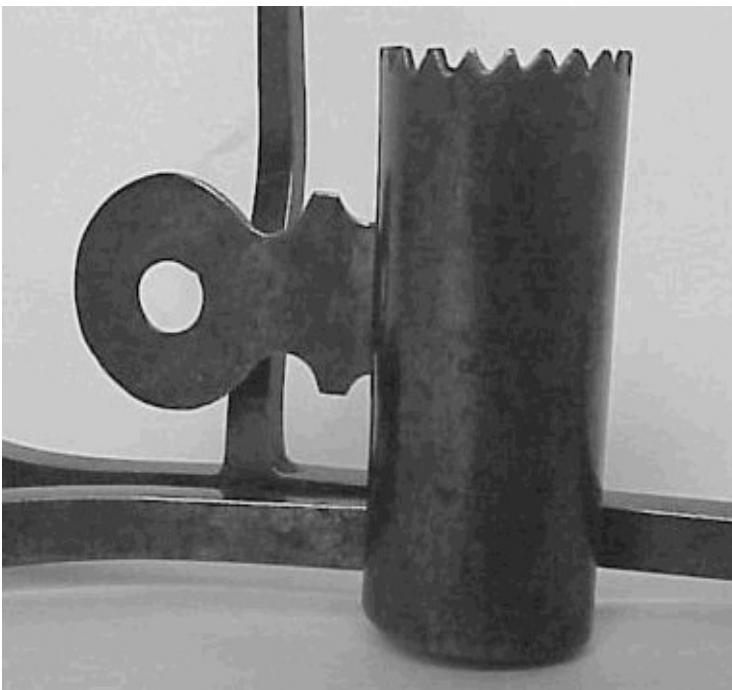
*Stick 7: Perforated fancy thumb lever. (see close-up opposite page)*

Stick 7 has a fancy thumb lever with a hole in the center. The thimble is exceptionally tall with filing around the top edge.



*Stick 8: Perforated fancy thumb lever & handle.*

Stick 8 features a tall thimble with file work around the top edge. The handle has two opposing holes and file work around the top and bottom edges. The thumb lever has a round hole in the center with 4 points coming out of it, and there is filing around the top and side edge of the thumb lever. The spike has filing in two places along its length. This stick sat on a mantle for more than 30 years before I acquired it.



Of the eight sticks pictured, only one has a Lake Superior style hook, the rest have western style hooks. It is the Lake Superior stick that has the perforations that were the most difficult to produce.

Each of these sticks was a working stick with indications of actual use. Many fancy sticks were never meant to be used, and were either presentation pieces or designs meant to show the skill of the craftsmen who made them. These perforated sticks are, at one time, both fancy and utilitarian.