

Has the Powell Patent Candlestick been Found?

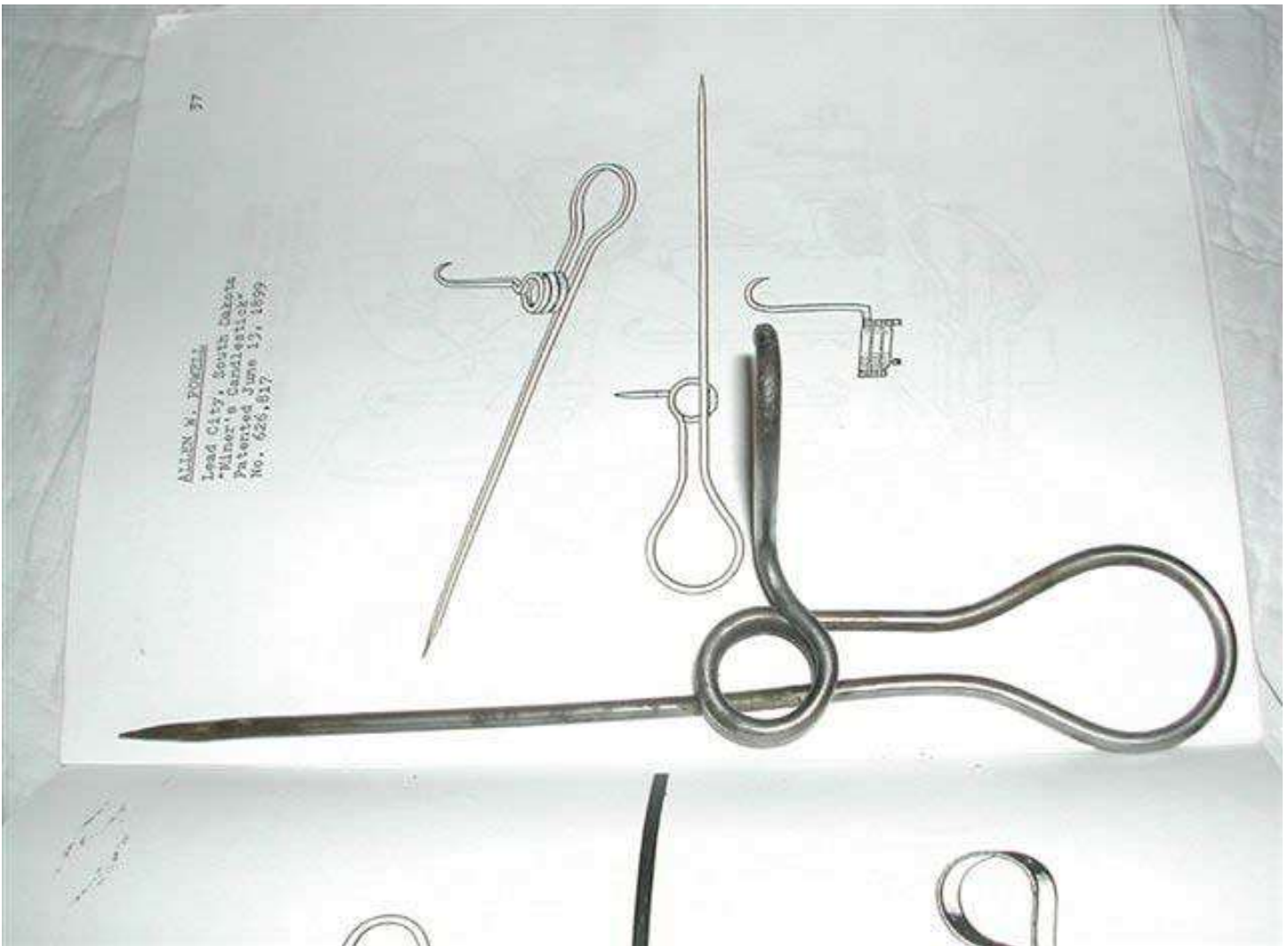
by Al Winters



The top stick which closely follows the Powell patent is compared to the better known Steel Coil stick sold by Pacific Hardware & Steel Co.

Patented candlesticks are typically unusual and often more complexly constructed than blacksmith holders. They were also generally more expensive to manufacture and seldom were a financial success. For that reason few were made and are very rare with many unknown to exist. Each year or two a previously unknown patent example turns up. As most examples are unmarked or do not exactly follow the patent design it is always somewhat speculative that the stick is the actual patent example. One stick that has eluded collectors for many years is the Allen W. Powell stick patented in Lead, South Dakota on June 13, 1899 under the patent #626,817. The Powell patent covers a very simple design that should have been inexpensive to mass produce but to my knowledge no examples have yet

turned up. The stick I have recently acquired is believed to have been produced under the Powell patent. It is made of spring steel, follows the patent design exactly but is constructed of round stock instead of square stock. This change from square to round would have been a logical modification for inexpensive mass production. The stick was formed in a jig and is almost a kissing cousin to the common Steel Coil stick marketed by Pacific Hardware & Steel Company of San Francisco. What if any connection exists between the two designs or timing of production is unknown but the steel coil is shorter, has 1/2 turn less in the thimble, is reversed in the spike position and therefore would be less expensive to produce and market. If anyone has any comments on the stick, patent, or speculation let me know. While someone may have a marked stick that exactly follows the patent as to square stock versus round, for the time being, I have labeled the stick the Powell Patent. Tony Moon has informed me that he has a similar stick that he acquired back in the 70's. It is in poor shape but I'm convinced it's the same.



The candlestick is compared to Powell patent drawings in Wendell Wilson's book of candlestick patents.