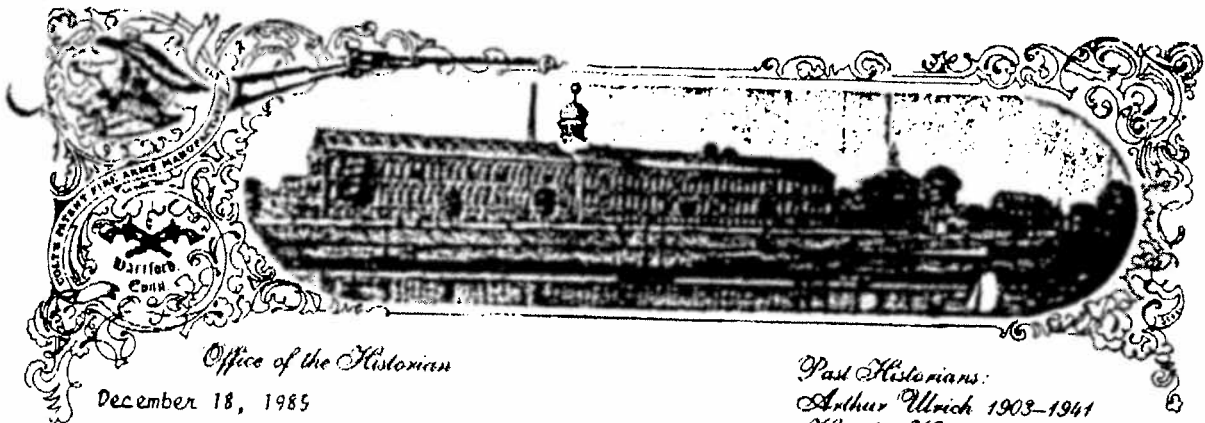


49616-18



Office of the Historian

December 18, 1985

Past Historians:

Arthur Ulrich 1903-1941

Harold Hart 1942-1945

Charles Colas 1950-1965

Ron Wagner 1957-1972

In response to your request for historical information, we have researched our records and located the following pertinent data:

COLT NATIONAL MATCH AUTOMATIC PISTOL

Serial Number:	C160887
Caliber:	.45/c
Barrel Length:	5"
Finish:	Blue & Nickel
Type of Stocks:	Not Listed
Shipped To:	Camp Perry National Matches
Address:	Camp Perry OH
	For: Colt Patent Firearms Co. Booth
	August 15, 1930
Date of Shipment:	
Number of Same Type	
Guns in Shipment:	25

Remarks: Work was processed on Colt Factory Order 18398/25.

We trust the information supplied above will be of interest.

Sincerely,

*M.S. Huber*

M.S. Huber  
Historian

MSH:bc



## CLASSIC MINIATURE DISPLAY MACHINEGUNS!

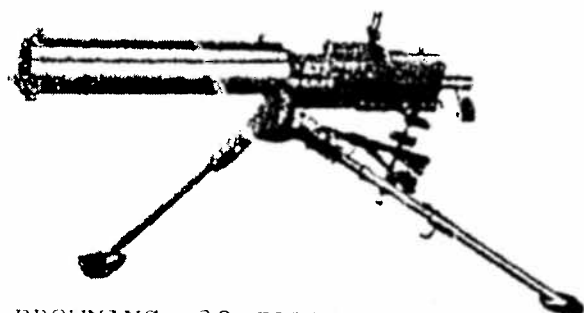
BEAUTIFULLY HANDCRAFTED 1/4" SCALE NON FIRING BELT-FED REPLICA MACHINEGUNS! CLASSIC GUNS THAT CHANGED THE HISTORY OF WARFARE FOREVER! MINIATURE FIREARMS HAVE BEEN AVAILABLE FOR YEARS MADE IN SWITZERLAND, ITALY, U.S. AND RUSSIA! BUT THEY HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY EXPENSIVE! HANDCRAFTED IN CHINA BY NORINCO! INCREDIBLY DETAILED! PARTIALLY OPERATING ACTIONS WITH FULLY FUNCTIONING ADJUSTABLE TRIPOD ASSEMBLIES AS ON THE ORIGINALS! NOT EVERY INTERNAL PART WAS DUPLICATED BUT THESE DO NOT COST \$10,000.00! ALL STEEL CONSTRUCTION WITH WOODEN GRIPS! EACH HAS A CLOTH CARTRIDGE BELT WITH 3 DUMMY ROUNDS. A BEAUTIFUL DISPLAY ITEM! VERY LIMITED PRODUCTION! ONLY 300 OF EACH PRODUCED!!

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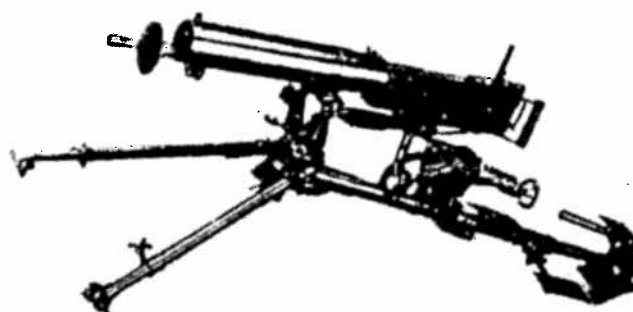
**IN STOCK AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE SHIPMENT!**



**VISA & MASTERCARD ACCEPTED! NO SURCHARGE!**



BROWNING .30 CALIBER WATER COOLED  
U.S. WWI AND WWII MILITARY ISSUE!  
23"x12.5"x11". 9 POUNDS!  
**\$450.00!**



MAXIM 8MM HEAVY MACHINEGUN  
GERMAN WWI MILITARY ISSUE!  
30"x16"x15.5". 14 POUNDS!  
**\$495.00!**



BROWNING .30 CALIBER AIRCOOLED  
THE WWII U.S. MILITARY ISSUE!!  
24"x12.5"x8". 7 POUNDS!  
**\$395.00!**



BROWNING .50 CALIBER M2HB  
U.S. WWII ISSUE TO DATE!!  
36"x19"x10". 14 POUNDS!  
**\$495.00!**

### *Colt National Match, Caliber .45 Serial Range C162000-C215083*

National Match pistols were produced in the Government Model serial range. They were often called "Colt Government Model National Match." These pistols were specially manufactured to higher standards, but they were not identified in the production ledgers. Consequently, there is no reliable estimate of total production. They were produced randomly in the C162000 to C215083 serial range, covering a span of 53,000 pistols. Of these, some 25,000 were sold overseas and 6,575 were transferred to Colt's military contract in 1942, leaving 21,500 pistols produced for the domestic market. Most National Match pistols were sold through Colt's retail dealers in the United States. A rough estimate of production is likely fewer than 3,000, or less than 14% of the 21,500 Government Models produced for domestic sales.

A prototype National Match pistol was demonstrated by J. Henry (Fitz) Fitzgerald at the annual Camp Perry National Matches in August 1930. Regular production, however, began in 1932. Colt first advertised National Match pistols in the January 1932 catalog of Colt Firearms, to wit:

#### **New "NATIONAL MATCH" .45 Caliber Automatic Pistol**

*For many years there has been an insistent demand for the Colt Government Model Automatic Pistol — equipped for Target Shooting.*

*To answer this demand the Colt Government Model is now available with Super-Smooth, Hand-Honed Target Action—Selected "Match" Barrel—and "Patridge" Type Sights. This Arm will be known as the Colt "NATIONAL MATCH" Model and will appeal especially to lovers of the regulation .45 Automatic Pistol. It is equipped with all regular safety features and is identical in operation and size with the Government Model. Price \$40.75*

The earliest National Match pistols known to this writer are serial numbers C162997-C163003, shipped to the U.S. Coast Guard at Curtis Bay, Maryland, on January 27, 1932. Patridge-type sights consisted of a 1/10"-wide oval profile front sight and rectangular rear sight aperture.<sup>20</sup> The Stevens Adjustable Rear Sight and fixed ramp-type front sight with serrated face became available in 1935 at about C177000. (See Figure 5-19, page 75.) The Swartz Firing Pin Safety was installed intermittently beginning in early 1938 at serial number C185006. The lanyard loop was omitted on mainspring housings. Full blue was the normal finish, the same as on standard Government Models. Nickel finish and customized options were offered at extra cost. (See page 76.) The hand-honed trigger pull and improved sights enhanced target scores, but the inherent accuracy was not significantly improved.

All regular and replacement match barrels were marked with a circled "M.B." on the left lug to denote Match Barrel. This symbol was in addition to other standard markings. Early National Match barrels were unmarked except for the circled "M.B." on the left lug. The second marking was ".45 COLT" stamped on top of the chamber. In 1935, beginning in about the C177000 serial range and extending through the end of production, the left side of the chamber was marked "COLT .45 AUTO MATCH." (See Figure 9-12, page 213.)

<sup>20</sup> Patridge-type sights, proposed by E.E. Patridge in 1898, generally refer to a rectangular front sight blade with a vertical rear surface and a square or rectangular rear sight aperture.

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Thanks for the great letter. I'm sure that it will start an interesting discussion. Personally, I have found that Colt records are often open to interpretation and mistakes, while Winchester records are almost rock solid in their accuracy and completeness.

Cheers,

Stuart

On Sep 8, 2004, at 5:16 PM, Moses Power wrote:

**Stuart,**

**Here's a ricochet for you. It's a very interesting subject to discuss in a forum like Man At Arms.**

**Thanks for providing a place for collectors to voice their opinions.**



9/9/2004

Thank you for the great work that you and your staff do to make *Man At Arms* the best collector journal extant.

The new format looks great, keep up the good work.

I would like to toss my two cents worth in concerning the recent article in vol. 26 no.4 about the Colt National Match Pistols, and the subsequent letter from the author Mr. Williams in the Ricochet section of vol. 26 no.5. The pistol in question #160887 has been in my collection for five or six years.

In my limited experience, there have been many occasions on which I have owned Colt arms that could not be verified by Colt Factory records, or that had been totally different in appearance from the available records. In fact, any collector of Colt percussion arms is forced in most cases to rely on their "eye for guns", and not on a paper record that does not exist. Colt Single Action Army Revolver collectors also have a lot of experience along these lines, because of the many errors and omissions in factory records for the Single Action. After all, we are talking about the labor of a clerk, not that of a gunsmith. The more important the job the less room for mistakes.

It is fortunate when Colt Records confirm the features of a certain piece, and many times the information provided by the Colt Historical Department greatly enhances the value of the piece. But more importantly, the gun in question has to stand on its own. For example, although the record shows that gun was factory engraved, the piece itself must demonstrate this fact. There are many guns around that were built to match factory records. If the engraving and originality of finish do not measure up to the standard of factory work, then the paperwork becomes irrelevant. The reverse is also true. If the gun measures up, and the paper does not match, then I'll bet on the gun. Although both are important, when there is a discrepancy between the record and the appearance of the gun, I choose to base my decision on the physical evidence that the gun shows me.

In the case of the pistol in question, a Colt Model 1911 A1 #160887, there have been many occasions on which the finish of this pistol has stood on its own merits, including when I bought it, and when Mr. Pauli bought it. Also, when Mr. Huber saw it in the mid 80's, and when Mr. Gangel described it in his June 2004 auction catalog. At one time or the other, the pistol appeared original to all of the above people, and many more besides. Are we all wrong? This pistol is well known to many Colt Auto collectors, and has been handled and examined by the best of them. Many, including myself, consider it to be factory work all the way. The discrepancy with the factory record is also a well-known fact that was disclosed to me before I purchased the pistol. There never was "a good sales story" attached, except that the pistol was shipped to J. Henry Fitzgerald at Camp Perry in 1930. In fact, to me, the true value of this pistol lies in the fact that it was one of 25 shipped to Fitz so that he could demonstrate Colt's New National Match Pistol to the shooters assembled there. I think that even if someone had parkerized this gun, I still would like to have it in my collection simply for its historical value. That's why I bought it, not because it was two-tone, although that finish makes a fine looking and great shooting pistol. And yes, the numbers are definitely original, and untampered with. This old Colt shoots a one inch, seven shot group at 15 yds. from a rest, exactly what Fitz was out to prove.

Finally, in Vol.26 No.4, the Roll Of Honor section of *Man At Arms* pictures a wonderful Colt Navy revolver that ironically illustrates my position that a good gun stands on its own merits. The work on this revolver makes its originality obvious, while the factory record simply describes it as a "blue" gun. The piece contradicts the record. I'll put my bet on the Navy Colt. Looks good to me.

You have my permission to print all, part, or none of this, at your discretion.

Yours Truly,

# THE TEXAS GUN COLLECTOR



Thanks AGAIN for a great MAGAZINE.  
It seems that the record has been put  
in error ONCE AGAIN.

In my letter of Sept. 5th 2004 to  
Ricochet, I referred to a Colt Navy revolver  
pictured in the Roll of Honor section of  
Vol. 26, No. 4, as proof that the Colt  
Factory records some times do not record  
special features that are obviously original  
to the gun in question.

When my letter was printed in Vol. 26, No. 6  
the Colt Navy somehow, human error, became  
a "M 1878 revolver". Again this illustrates  
the problem that we have in transcribing  
information. As a one-time editor of  
The Texas Gun Collector, I understand this  
situation completely.

This error prompted Kurt House's  
response in Vol. 27, No. 1. I am familiar  
with Mr. House's Revolver, and I consider  
it one of the finest examples extant, but  
I made no reference regarding it in  
my letter to MAN At Arms MAGAZINE.  
Another example of the fallibility of  
the written word.

**From:**  
**To:**  
**Sent:**  
**Subject:**

Dear Stuart,

Here's another Ricochet for your aptly named column.

I would like to respond to Mr. Pauli's letter in the last issue, hopefully as my final word on the subject of the Colt National Match pistol # 160887.

First of all, I apologize for my confusion regarding Mr. Pauli's ownership of this pistol, but in Mr. William's letter to Man At Arms Vol.26 No.5, He stated that Mr. Pauli " owned the pistol several years ago",so I assumed that this was true.Perhaps Mr. Williams could shed some light on this matter.

Secondly, the pistol in question #160887, was made in 1930 and pre-dates the manufacture of "National Match" marked pistols by 2 years, but it exhibits all of the characteristics of a target version of a Government Model Colt. Also, according to Donald Bady in his fine book " Colt Automatic Pistols", on page 263 he states " On the occasion of the 1932 National Matches at Camp Perry, a target version of the .45 Government Model was introduced. This pistol, with standard markings and serial number,was described as having a hand honed action, and a selected match barrel." The pistol in question here also has standard markings and serial number, a hand honed action, and a selected match barrel, which is stamped circle M.B. on the left lug. Pre-National Match target pistols had standard slide markings.The "National Match" roll die mark did not come into use on target pistols until sometime in 1932. I am not aware of the exact serial number at which the use of this mark commenced. Pistol #164055,manufactured in late 1932, has the "National Match" mark.

Regarding the factory work order number for this pistol, it is #18398/25. The order was for 25 cal.45 Government Model pistols to be shipped to Camp Perry National Matches, Camp Perry Ohio. for the Colt Patent Firearms Co. Booth. August 15th,1930. This fact alone makes it a true National Match pistol, regardless of the slide marking. When Mr. Marty Huber went to the Colt records in 1985, he was able to locate the special order for these pistols. Whether he made a "mistake" or not, the pistol sure matches the description that he gave it in his letter.

Finally regarding the nickel finish on the frame, I am of the opinion that it was applied when the pistol was new, but in this case finish is a rather moot point because of the historical significance of this particular piece, and does not substantially effect the value one way or the other. Opinions are something else that we all have in common.

Since Mr. Pauli ended his letter talking about logic and truth, I felt that a response with my logical conclusions was in order, and that the truth is evident in the pistol itself.

3/28/2005

Jan 3/19/08

RON

Please consider this note  
A paid in full receipt for the  
Colt National Match Pistol #160887

I purchased this pistol years  
ago from W. R. Powell of Rowoke, Texas.  
He bought it from the family of  
J. Henry Fitzgerald. The pistol was shipped  
to Fitz at Camp Perry in August of 1930.

The two tone finish is  
absolutely original, a fact which has  
been openly debated among knowledgeable  
collectors. You have my complete file on  
the pistol.

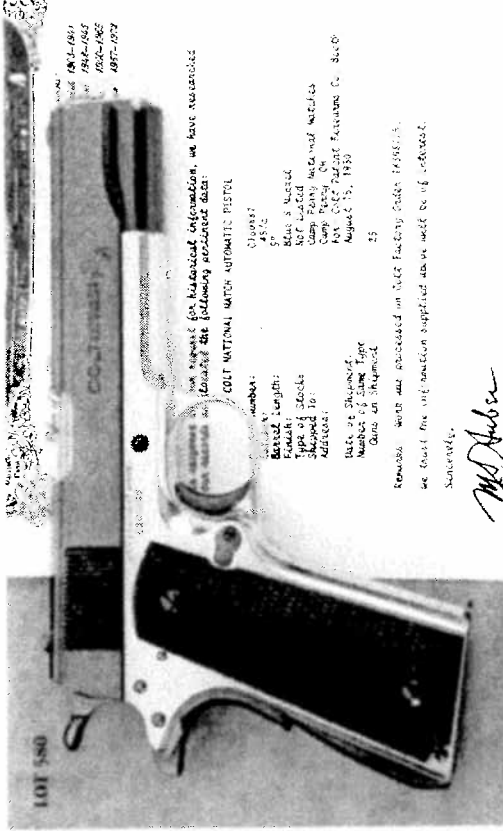
Nice to have you back in the  
game! I will commence a search for a  
good military Henry rifle.

Yours truly,



# LOT 580

Colt National Match semi-auto pistol, .45 cal., 5" barrel, blue and nickel finish, checkered wood grips, shipped to Camp Perry National Matches, Camp Perry, Ohio, for Colt Patent Firearms Co. Booth, August 15, 1930, 25 guns in shipment, special Factory Order #18398, #C160887, with factory letter verifying all features, except stocks not listed. This rare Colt Gov't Model is one of the earliest shipped for the Model's introduction to Camp Perry where this model pistol was demonstrated by Colt's famous targetman "Fitz". Pistol shows standard markings with no National Match. Pistol remains in fine to excellent condition with 96%-98% original blue on slide and small parts, 97%-99% original nickel on frame, grips are excellent, interior is excellent. One of the most important pre-war National Match arms, and rare in two-tone finish. Est.: \$6,000-\$9,000.



We request for historical information, we have researched and located the following information data:

COLT NATIONAL MATCH SEMI-AUTOMATIC PISTOL  
 .45 CAL.  
 5" BARREL  
 BLUE & NICKEL  
 WOOD GRIPS  
 CAMP PERRY NATIONAL MATCHES  
 CAMP PERRY, OHIO  
 AUGUST 15, 1930  
 25

REMARKS: WE HAVE RESEARCHED ON COLT FACTORY ORDER #18398.  
 WE FOUND THE INFORMATION SUPPLIED ABOVE TO BE CORRECT.  
 Sincerely,  
 M. J. Anderson

# Collecting Colt's

Man At Arms  
Vol. 26 #4

# National Match Pistols

by Kevin  
Williams

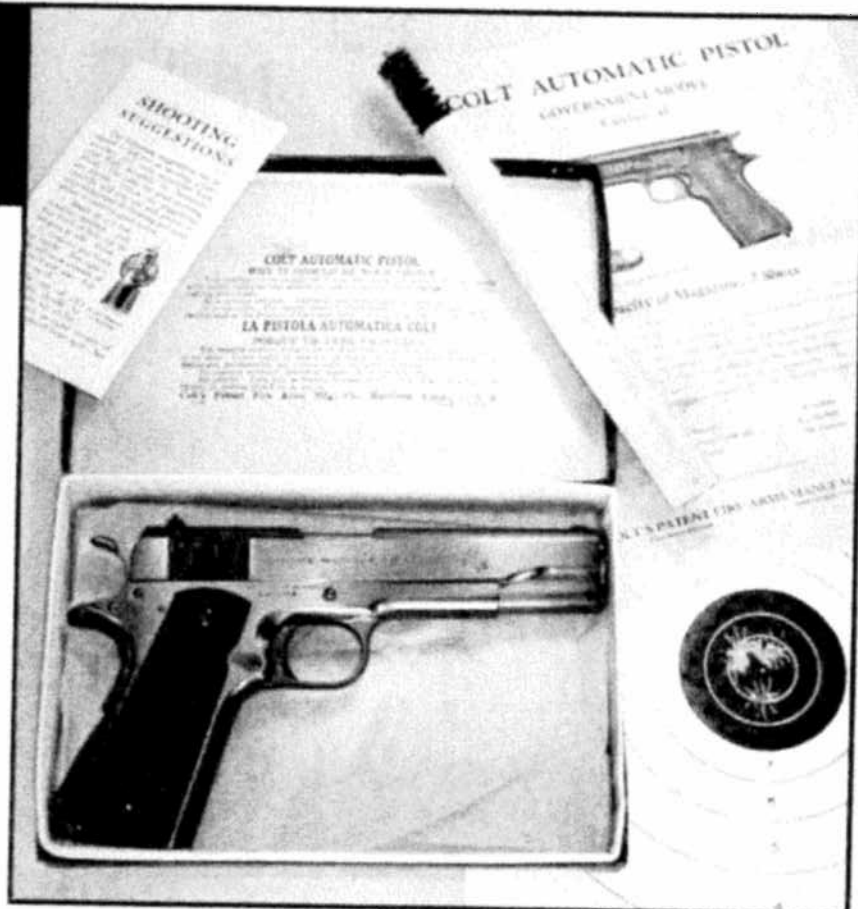
THE TERM "National Match" can be confusing. Colt has used the term over the years to describe different series of 1911 pattern pistols. In addition, the term has been imitated by other manufacturers and has also been used to describe military pistols reworked for the annual competition — the "National Matches" — at Camp Perry, Ohio. Various rifles used in competitive matches are designated National Match as well. The focus of this article is the various National Match pistols and specifically Colt's National Match Government Model pistols sold commercially between 1932 and 1941 or 1942.

## The Pre-National Match

Colt's large (O frame) .45 automatic was adopted by the U.S. Ordnance Department in 1911, hence the official designation Model of 1911, or M1911.

The pistol was offered commercially as the Government Model (GM) beginning in 1912 and was quite successful with American customers and foreign governments. When WWI ended, there were many veterans who were comfortable with the .45 auto, and N.R.A.-sponsored shooting matches became quite popular. However, shooting bull's-eye targets at various ranges demanded a level of accuracy that was often missing from the standard Government Model. Enter J. Henry FitzGerald. "Fitz" was a police instructor, gunsmith and ballistics expert in addition to being an employee and well-known promoter for Colt in the 1920s and 1930s. Prior to 1919, he noted that complaints about the .45 automatic included sights not being attached to the barrel, short sight radius, poor trigger pull and loose slide. In his book, *Shooting*, published in 1930 he says:

*A few shots from a properly sighted .45 automatic will convince the most skeptical that it is a wonderful arm and very accurate, extremely so if fitted with the .45 Colt Match Bar-*



A 1935 Colt National Match Government Model with box and contents.



Fitz working on a .45 auto at Camp Perry.

rel. These barrels were first used in 1919 and after months of experimenting at the Colt factory, I took forty of these match barrels to the National Shoot that year and the records made at this shoot convinced the most doubting that the .45 automatic equaled any of the large caliber side arms in existence.

Fitz would also fit wider sights when requested. His book goes on to describe how to improve the trigger pull and that the barrel-to-slide fit is critical but that slide-to-receiver fit is not. A study of the Colt shipping records of the 1920s shows many special order guns with improved trigger pulls, match barrels and wider sights to improve accuracy. I refer to these guns as "pre-National Match" pistols. They have a circled "M.B." (match barrel) on the left lug of the barrel and may have smoothed actions and/or special order sights.

Fitz had 25 special guns made up on Colt factory order #18398/25 to demonstrate at the 1930 Camp Perry National Matches. These were the first National Match pistols, although they are not roll-marked as such. The other characteristics were present however — match barrel, Partridge sights, smoothed action, no lanyard loop —



and they had one other fascinating feature — the frames were nickel plated. This made a beautiful and unique two-toned pistol that would highlight these guns with Fitz' usual flair for showmanship.

### The Prewar National Match

In January 1932, the Colt catalog listed the first National Match (NM) model with "a hand-honed velvet smooth target action—selected 'Match' barrel—and 'Partridge' type sights." At introduction, a National Match Government Model cost \$40.75. A standard Government Model cost \$36.75. The advertisement mentions the three primary differences between the National Match and the standard Government Model, i.e., a tighter barrel, better sights and a hand-polished action, which included virtually all of the internal working surfaces. The National Match pistols had two cosmetic differences — "National Match" was roll-marked on the right side of the slide, and the lanyard loop was eliminated from the bottom of the mainspring housing. Colt's beautiful carbonia (furnace) blue was the standard finish.

The pistols were wrapped in brown tissue paper and shipped in a standard Colt box of the time, although the box had special labels. Included in the box was a four-page instruction brochure, a cleaning brush and a test target. The target was signed, usually by Jim Malloy, and both the target and the bottom of the box were serial numbered to the pistol. Various hang tags and brochures were also included, e.g., "Shooting Suggestions" or "Special Instructions" (the latter was dropped in early 1934).

In 1935, an adjustable rear sight, designed by Colt Assistant Works Manager Harry A. Stevens, became available and, in fact, became the standard offering. However, the fixed sight model was still available. Given that it cost \$5.00 less and that official matches still required fixed sights, it seems that more pistols were



MR. SHOOTER:

If you are a lover of the Colt .45 Caliber Government Model Automatic Pistol, you will be interested in the announcement on this page — an announcement that is made after repeated requests from shooters in every part of the country for the .45 Caliber Automatic Pistol — fitted with a hand finished target action.

The Colt "NATIONAL MATCH" has all of the features of dependability and safety found in the famous Government Model and in addition is supplied with a hand-honed velvet smooth target action — selected "Match" barrel — and "Partridge" type sights. The "NATIONAL MATCH" brings you that smoothness of action so essential to target shooting.

We know the "NATIONAL MATCH" Model will appeal to you. Won't you ask your local dealer to show you this newest Colt Model at once.

Very truly yours,

COLT'S PATENT FIRE ARMS MFG. CO.

E. W. Dinkels  
Manager Fire Arms Division



Colt announces the National Match, February 1932.

## — TABLE 1 —

### MAY 1, 1937, COLT PRICING

Government Model .....	\$41.50
National Match — Adjustable sights .....	\$50.00
National Match — Fixed sights .....	\$45.00
Pearl stocks .....	\$15.00
Ivory stocks .....	\$8.75
Carved ivory (one side) .....	\$17.25
Checking front strap .....	\$3.50
Checking back strap .....	\$2.00
Grade A engraving .....	\$15.00
Grade B engraving .....	\$25.00
Grade C engraving .....	\$45.00
Nickel finish .....	\$5.00

11,391 commercial pistols for domestic sales. Author R.L. Wilson estimated that 10,000 National Match pistols were made, but that would have been 88% of Colt's domestic production. Charles W. Clawson estimated that fewer than 3,000 National Match pistols were made. Timothy J. Mullin estimated fewer than 1,500 of them were made, and he located about 140 examples before publishing his book *American Beauty* in 1999.

I have surveyed 452 pistols that fall in the serial number range from C162000 to C215083. Of these, 279 are National Match guns, 89 are standard Government Models, 45 shipped to Brazil, 34 shipped to Argentina and 5 are military conversions. Of the 279 National Match pistols surveyed, 51 have Stevens adjustable sights. Only three or four have factory nickel finish. Ivory and pearl stocks, checkering to the front and/or back straps, and three levels of engraving were also offered as factory options (see Table 1) but are rare.

Having effectively disarmed itself after WWI, Great Britain entered WWII with almost no small arms. In 1940, the British government bought virtually all of Colt's pistol inventory — over 14,000 guns. Included in this inventory were 63 National Match and 309 Super Match pistols.

Colt stopped all commercial production in 1942 to devote its capacity to U.S. military contracts.

#### Prewar National Match Details

The 1920s and 1930s saw many changes in Colt's 1911 (O frame) pistols. From January 1920 to February 1924, over 40 revisions were made in markings, tolerances and small parts. In early 1924, the military pistol had the new "A1" features implemented, and Colt implemented those same changes with its commercial pistols, starting with serial number C138532. The year 1929 saw the introduction of the Super .38 pistol, and during the thirties Colt introduced the Ace (.22 caliber), the National Match and Super Match (Match features in the Super .38 caliber pistol), the Service Model Ace, the Swartz safety, and conversion units to shoot .22 caliber cartridges in a .45 or vice versa.

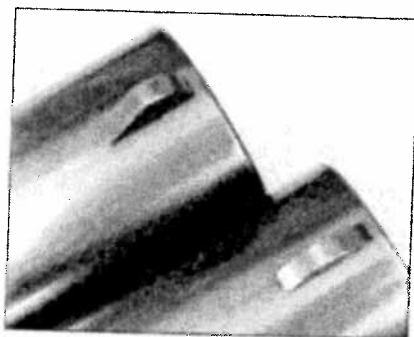
Pinning down the exact date or serial number of some changes to Colt pistols is difficult for a number of reasons: 1) Colt used batch manufacturing practices that resulted in pistols not being completed in strict numerical sequence; 2) As they were completed, pistols were racked in the shipping room and went out in more-or-less random fashion; 3) Changes to small parts and markings were often "slip-streamed" into production, creating transition periods where old and new

parts were used; 4) Special orders could result in features that seem out of sequence; 5) Colt rarely threw anything away; rejected parts were often reworked and reused later; 6) Owners have replaced barrels or magazines or swapped other parts over the years; 7) Colt's record keeping was not entirely accurate; 8) Almost as soon as the Government Model appeared, gunsmiths such as Buchanan, King and Pachmayr started supplying and installing aftermarket sights, barrels, triggers, stocks and other parts — these are sometimes confused as factory options, and, in fact, Colt offered King sights as an option and 9) Owners sometimes returned their pistols to Colt for rework or installation of newer parts — adjustable sights, for example. Colt usually marked the triggerguard of reworked pistols with a symbol such as K, &/or a T. The parts were often marked with the serial number to keep them together, but rework information will not be mentioned in factory letters, as those records were destroyed. With these limitations in mind, listed on the next page are best estimates as to when specific features changed.

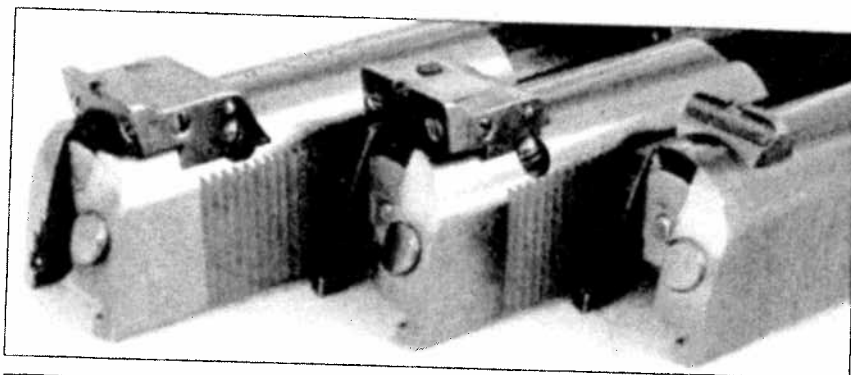
**Barrels:** Barrels are the very essence of the National Match .45. Many collectors believe they were not "fitted" individually but were merely standard barrels that were selected because they happened to have slightly tighter tolerances. However, Fitz was certainly hand-fitting barrels into Government Models before the National Match pistol was available. Other well-known shooters and authors of the day (Walter F. Roper and Lt. Col. Charles Askins, for example) write about the Colts as having "finely fitted" or "hand fitted" barrels. The National Match guns had "hand-honed" actions and, based on observations of the mating surfaces of both National Match and standard Government Model pistols, this honing may have included the barrels. There are several variations of barrel markings (see Table 2) that generally follow the barrel markings in the plain

The sight was fragile and unreliable and was modified or redesigned numerous times. The many variations in the Stevens sight are not well documented (finish and specific screw shapes and sizes). Only Type I (a. and b.) and Type II.a. have been observed on original prewar National Match pistols. But it is important to understand the major variations in order to identify sights that may be replacements. See Table 3 and the photographs for details.

**Front sights:** the standard (and most commonly encountered) front sight for the Patridge (fixed) rear sight had a rounded profile and was  $\frac{1}{16}$ " thick.



(above) Left: Serrated ramp used with adjustable rear sight. Right:  $\frac{1}{10}$ -inch rounded sight used with Patridge rear sight.



(top) Left to right: Stevens Type II, Stevens Type I, Patridge rear sights. (above) A NM pistol that has had Ace-type sights installed and front strap checkered. (inset right) King rear sight.

However,  $\frac{1}{8}$ " and other widths were offered as options, and special orders might include bead, square or undercut front blades. The Stevens sight usually came with a ramped and serrated front sight, although examples of undercut and square blades have been seen.

### — TABLE 3 — **STEVENS SIGHT VARIATIONS**

Type	Features	Introduced
I.a.	Small lateral adjustment screw, located in slide cut	1935
I.b.	Large lateral adjustment screw, located in slide cut	1936
II.a.	Lateral adjustment screw located in sight, rear locking screws	Mid-1939
II.b.	Lateral adjustment screw located in sight, rear locking screws are replaced by a spring in the sight.	1942
III.	Large adjustment screw located in slide cut, but rear locking screws are replaced by a spring in the sight.	Postwar
Coltmaster	Similar to Stevens, but design simplified and profile different.	Postwar

**Magazines:** Three magazines were used in National Match pistols. All were highly polished. The first was two-toned (top half of magazine is bright metal, bottom half is blue) with no markings on the bottom and was used up to about serial number C175XXX. The second was two-toned with the bottom plate marked "COLT" over "45 AUTO" and was used until about serial number C199XXX. The third type was all blue with the same marking on the bottom and was used until the end of production. Again, there were significant overlaps in the usage of the three magazines.

Guard bought seven pistols (C162997-C163003) in 1932 and another half dozen in 1940. Also in 1940 the Marine Corps bought fifteen (C201076-C201090). Individual officers sometimes purchased National Match pistols privately. At least two were shipped to CCC Camps in the 1930s and one is known to have gone to an officer stationed in the Panama Canal Zone.

### The Postwar National Match

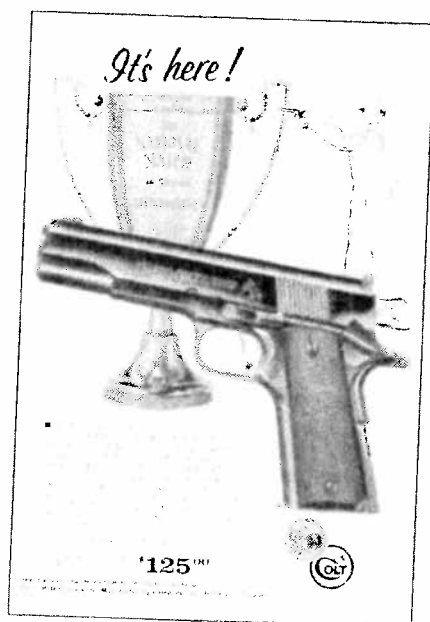
In 1957, Colt reintroduced a "National Match" pistol with adjustable sights and trigger, slanted slide serrations and a chemically blued finish. It was officially designated the "Colt Gold Cup National Match," although "Gold Cup" wasn't added to the slide until 1970. These pistols are



1924 Colt Transition Model.



Springfield Armory NM.



Far Left:  
Ad for Colt Gold Cup National Match, introduced in 1957.

serial numbered 26-NM to 37025-NM and the retail price at introduction was \$125. Many of these were bought for military shooting teams. The Coast Guard seemed especially fond of them for competition. From the 1970s to the present there have been a wide variety of Colt pistols that use the term National Match.

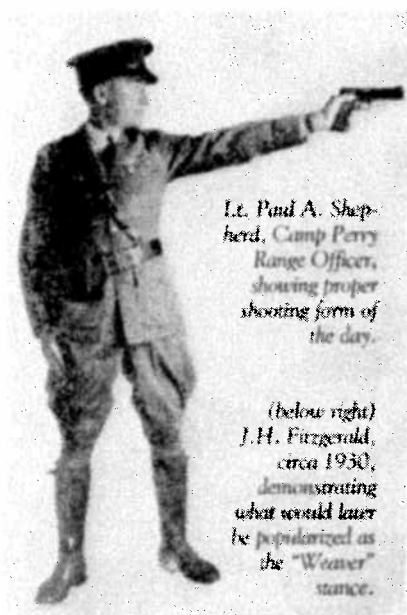
### The Springfield Armory National Match Pistols

A third group of pistols is often called "National Match." These were standard M1911A1 service models modified at Springfield Armory (SA) for use by military shooting teams at the annual Camp Perry competition. The program started in 1954 and lasted through 1968, although the last year's pistols were modified at Rock Island Arsenal. The base pistol was not always a Colt. Any serviceable M1911A1 pistol, whether Colt, Remington Rand, Ithaca or US&S, was used.

Often the frame is made by one manufacturer and the slide is from a different contractor. Features vary by year (see table on next page) and some pistols were updated and used multiple years. Others were sold by the Director of Civilian Marksmanship (DCM) to the public.

Springfield Armory pistols from 1957 and 1958 may be found with the front strap pad removed and may have plain or stippled front straps. All of





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Samuel C. Lisker, [www.coltautos.com](http://www.coltautos.com)



I would like to thank John Lay, Dan Duffy, Stewart Yonts, Chuck Clawson, Tim Mullin, Sam Lisker, Lowell Pauli and other collectors who have helped with this article. Please contact Kevin Williams by email at [kevin@kwill.com](mailto:kevin@kwill.com) if you wish to contribute to the ongoing research into these pistols.

### U.S. HANDGUNS OF WORLD WAR II The Secondary Pistols and Revolvers

**By Charles W. Pate.** Covers all of the pistols used by United States forces except the M1911, including Smith & Wesson "Victory" Models, High Standard .22s, H&R revolvers, Iver Johnson revolvers, and a wide variety of Colts, such as the Official Police, Commandos, Detective Specials, Pocket Automatics, the Service Model ACE, Woodsman Match Targets, .38 Super Automatics and much more. Also included is an incredibly detailed historical section dealing with the procurement and distribution of these pistols. The previously unpublished serial number lists make this a "must buy" for all collectors of martial pistols. 8.5"x11", 515 illus., 368 pgs. **Hardcover. \$39.00 + \$4.50 p/h**



### THE GOVERNMENT MODELS The Development of the Colt Model of 1911

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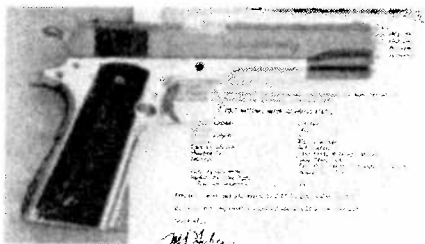
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*Man At Arms*  
Vol. 26 No. 5

## NATIONAL MATCH CORRECTION FROM THE ARTICLE'S AUTHOR!

Some new information has come to light about the special order pistols sent to Camp Perry for the National Matches in 1930 (see the author's article in the previous issue of *Man at Arms*).

Most of the information in the article about these pistols is correct. However, the most prominent feature of the 25 pistols—the nickel-plated frame—is not original. There is a Colt factory letter that confirms all the information I reported on page 15 of the article in the last issue (volume 26, number 4). However, this letter has been double-checked by the current Colt historian, Kathy Hoyt, and found to be in error with respect to the



Blue & Nickel finish. Lowell Pauli (historian for the Colt Collectors Association and well-known collector) owned the pistol several years ago and grew suspicious of the nickel plating. He had Ms. Hoyt double-check the records in 1997 and then had her check again when the pistol appeared in a recent auction catalog.

The batch of 25 pistols were specially made and shipped to Fitz at Camp Perry, but they were all blue when they shipped in 1930. Errors on factory letters are rare but they do happen, and this episode points out the dangers for collectors who rely too heavily on a good sales story, even when documented. There is simply no substitute for due diligence and experience, as demonstrated by Mr. Pauli.

Sincerely,

Kevin Williams

## MORE ON PICTURE

I enjoyed seeing the Emmett Mine photograph which appeared in the #3, 2004 issue on page 6. I am familiar with the photograph, as originals are in two public collections in Colorado.

[Readers might be interested in the item summary from one of these copies.] "A Colorado National Guardsman stands on a hill and looks over the Emmett Mine in Leadville (Lake County), Colorado. The soldier guards the mining property during a labor dispute between mine owners and miners who belonged to the Western Federation of Miners labor union. He wears a military uniform with a blanket draped over his

shoulders, an ammunition belt at his waist, and holds a rifle with a bayonet in one hand. Ore processing buildings and tailing piles are in the distance." The image is attributed to photographers O'Keefe & Stockdorf and it is dated 1896...

Edward W. Killam

## BANNERMAN'S ISLAND

For your information, Bannerman's Island has just re-opened for tours. We took the inaugural boat ride with a tour of the island...

I was most impressed; my wife was not. There is not a whole lot to see and what you can see is all roped off since the buildings are in ruins as a result of a massive fire (arson) in 1969. If you like boat rides and a rough climb (up some 68 wooden steps) and then walking gingerly past poison ivy and exposed tree roots, then it's fun.

These New York liberals describe Bannerman as the founder of the first army-navy store. We all know he was a lot more than that. A railroad excursion from Grand Central Station to Cold Spring or Beacon (NY) is soon to be scheduled, but in the meantime, a car ride to Newburgh Landing, in Newburgh, NY, is the only way to get there. Here is a website if any readers are that interested:  
[www.prideofthehudson.com](http://www.prideofthehudson.com)

The best view of the castle is from the eastern shore of the Hudson River, and MetroNorth railroad made it a little easier to see without getting hit by a train. Bannerman used the castle as a giant billboard to advertise his store in lower Manhattan (501 Broadway; it was a parking lot the last time I was down there).

Tom Vasti

*Editor: The boat line is still advertising the trip ([www.prideofthehudson.com](http://www.prideofthehudson.com)) as a cruise around the island with a historical lecture but with no stop, so readers should definitely call ahead before making travel arrangements.*

*While I've got your attention, a reader sent in this photo of a wireshot musketball found in a 1715 shipwreck. Nifty, huh? I have never seen anything quite like this in musket size before.*



## POSITIVE FEEDBACK

I just wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed two recent issues of *Man at Arms*. I feel that all too often we criticize those things which do not find favor with us, but neglect to say what gives us pleasure.

In issue #3 for 2004, I thought the article entitled "The Newbury Cap Guard for Revolvers" was most interesting and informative, even for someone like me who doesn't collect percussion revolvers. The second item was Charlie Pate's rifle-musket part changes. I have seen these tables numerous times and at first I wondered just why it was appearing again, so I took a closer look at it and found to my surprise that it predated others I had seen and went only so far as the M1870, which was noted as "not finally adopted." My recollection of this table was the one in Fuller's Springfield Shoulder Arms, which took things up to 1873. Then there is another table in Waite & Ernst's *Trapdoor Springfield*, which carries things up through the '77 carbine. There may be even more with later vintage.

Issue #4 of 2004 had the very interesting article by Mike McWatters on the M1913 "Patton" Saber. Just a couple of weeks ago I saw one of the replica ones. No one who ever saw an original could be fooled by one of these. What I find interesting about this saber, besides its background story, is the lack of knowledge of the L. F. & C. contract models as to the number made. I searched in vain through Crowell's *America's Munitions 1917-1918* trying to find a reference to the saber contract. There is no problem with auto pistols, revolvers, mess kits, knives, forks and spoons for same, trench knives and hundreds of other items, but no sabers. It's almost as if someone in the Ordnance Department was too embarrassed to admit that sabers were even ordered. So far as I can find, only 6,000 cavalry were sent to Europe, and I don't believe they saw action. The 30,000 plus sabers made by Springfield would have been more than adequate.

In Appendix I of *The Last Bright Blades*, it is stated that on March 22, 1918, a contract for 15,000 M1913 Sabers was awarded to Landers, Frary & Clark. On the other hand, Burt Kellerstedt in his *Swords and Sabers of the Armory at Springfield* gives the number for L. F. & C. as 93,000. That's quite a spread. Isn't it interesting that we know far more about Nathan Starr's 1818 contract and production of infantry swords and cavalry sabers than we do about a contract made 100 years later?

Thanks for two great issues. Just thought I should let you know that I enjoyed them.

Philip Leveque

## EXCAVATED PEPPERBOX

*[Editor's Note: this letter is from my big brother, who lives in Germany.]* Stuart, I thought you might enjoy this photo of a pepperbox that Dad found at the battlefield in Cedar Creek, Virginia in 1965.

We drove down there in a '65 Pontiac  
(continued on p. 70.)





# RICOCHET

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Man at Arms Vol. 26 No. 6

## HUGE RESPONSE TO NEW DESIGN OF MAN AT ARMS

*Editor — In the last issue's editorial, I asked readers to give their opinions about some of the design changes we have been making to the magazine. Thanks to everyone who responded! And boy, what a response it was — piles of letters and emails.*

*It's great to have feedback, because otherwise I'm flying blind. So please, keep it coming. I don't always have time to answer each letter individually, but I do read them all and take them very seriously.*

*The results? Well, I'm happy to say that everyone who responded liked the design changes on the inside of the magazine. The new look of the Table of Contents and the bigger pictures were particularly popular. So I guess we're on the right track.*

*The response to the new cover design ran 96% positive and 4% negative/uncertain. The positive comments mostly pointed to the increased clarity and bold appearance. A number of subscribers actually drove to bookstores to see how it stood out in the newsstand setting. All I can say is, "You guys are the best."*

*The three less positive responses that we received indicated that the new cover looked less dignified and sophisticated than the old one. "Don't mess with a good thing," would best describe their comments. I actually agree. I liked the old cover, too. But although I loved how it looked, we had been getting complaints for years that it didn't communicate the topic of the magazine well enough and was hurting sales, so it would be pure stubbornness on my part not to give something else a try.*

*One thing that really made me especially happy was that all three readers with ambiguous or negative reactions to the new cover were real gentlemen about it with truly constructive suggestions and an understanding attitude. Once again, "You guys are the best."*

*Needless to say, we cannot print every one of the letters, but a sampling will be mixed in with the other letters below.*

## MAGAZINE CONTENT COMMENTS

Over the past few months, I have found *Man at Arms* increasingly interesting. I find myself reading it cover to cover, even on subjects in which I am not particularly interested.

Regarding the latest issue (revised format) I applaud your action. Simply, there was a lot to read, browser friendly, well arranged. The same informative articles plus the "Miss Manners" & the preservation items, as well as the insert illustrating the "Pea Ridge" sword. Anytime the editorial staff can present features more interesting than the advertisements, they are doing a good job. In your

case an excellent job.

Keep up the good work, *Ted Stry*

## COLT RECORDS & AUTO PISTOLS

Thank you for the great work that you and your staff do to make *Man at Arms* the best collector journal extant. The new format looks great; keep up the good work.

I would like to toss in my two cents worth concerning the recent article in Vol. 26, No. 4, about the Colt National Match Pistols and the subsequent letter from the author, Mr. Williams, in the Ricochet section of issue No. 5. The pistol in question, #160887, has been in my collection for five or six years.

In my limited experience, there have been many occasions in which I have owned Colt arms that could not be verified by Colt Factory records, or that had been totally different in appearance from the available records. In fact, any collector of Colt percussion arms is forced in most cases to rely on their "eye for guns" and not on a paper record that does not exist. Colt Single Action Army Revolver collectors also have a lot of experience along these lines, because of the many errors and omissions in factory records for the Single Action. After all, we are talking about the labor of a clerk, not that of a gunsmith. The more important the job, the less room for mistakes.

It is fortunate when Colt Records confirm the features of a certain piece, and many times the information in question has to stand on its own. For example, although the record shows that a gun was factory engraved, the piece itself must demonstrate this fact. There are many guns around that were built to match factory records. If the engraving and originality of finish do not measure up to the standard of factory work, then the paperwork becomes irrelevant. The reverse is also true. If the gun measures up, and the paper does not match, then I'll bet on the gun. Although both are important, when there is a discrepancy between the record and the appearance of the gun, I choose to base my decision on the physical evidence that the gun shows me.

In the case of the pistol in question, a Colt Model 1911 A1 #160887, there have been many occasions in which the finish of this pistol has stood on its own merits, including when I bought it, and when Mr. Pauli bought it. Also, when Mr. Huber saw it in the mid-80s, and when Mr. Gangel described it in his June 2004 auction catalog. At one time or the other, the pistol appeared original to all of the above people, and many more besides. Are we all wrong? This pistol is well known to many Colt Auto collectors and has been handled and examined by the best of them. Many, including myself, consider it to be factory work all the way. The discrepancy with the factory record is also a well-known fact

that was disclosed to me before I purchased the pistol. There never was "a good sales story" attached, except that the pistol was shipped to J. Henry Fitzgerald at Camp Perry in 1930. In fact, to me, the true value of this pistol lies in the fact that it was one of 25 shipped to Fitz so that he could demonstrate Colt's New National Match Pistol to the shooters assembled there. I think that even if someone had parkerized this gun, I still would like to have it in my collection simply for its historical value. That's why I bought it, not because it was two-tone, although that finish makes a fine looking and great shooting pistol. And yes, the numbers are definitely original and untampered with. This old Colt shoots a one-inch, seven-shot group at 15 yards from a rest, exactly what Fitz was out to prove.

Finally, in Vol. 26, No. 4, the "Roll of Honor" section of *Man at Arms* pictures a wonderful Colt M1878 revolver that ironically illustrates my position that a good gun stands on its own merits. The work on this revolver makes its originality obvious, while the factory records simply describe it as a "blue" gun. The piece contradicts the records. I'll put my bet on the M1878 Colt. Looks good to me. *Tom Power*

## MUZZLE THIS END

I like the new cover — it states the theme.

I liked your put-down of the Kennedy press conference. The "stands" the guns were resting on are actually evidence boxes that I designed.

The first one I made had an obscure Russian pistol on it. I used a similar drawing of an AK-47 on the long box. After selling quite a few of these, I started to get suggestions that the "gun" on the boxes frightened bystanders when the CSI guys were carrying evidence to court appearances. So, we came up with the arrows (which probably frightened archeryphobes). We also offer cable ties which are reusable. They are threaded through the holes to hold the gun in place.

If you have ever seen a police evidence locker with long guns stacked like cordwood and pistols thrown in a tub, you will know how helpful these boxes are — especially when the gun is to be returned to the original owner.

I keep pistols in my collection in the small boxes. They are intended to be placed on shelves just like books in a library.

*Michael F. Carrick*

## L.F. & C. M1917 PATTON SABERS

On the Ricochet page of *Man at Arms* issue #5, Philip Leveque questioned my production figures on L.F. & C. M-1917 Patton sabers that are listed in my book, *Swords and Sabers of the Armory at Springfield*.

*(continued on p. 10.)*



# RICOCHET

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## FROM THE CONSERVATOR AT SPRINGFIELD ARSENAL

Your "Tools and Techniques" article in this month's (Oct. 2004) *Man at Arms* was terrific. Very balanced and well explained. I really wish I had your skills as a wordsmith. There is one point, however, where I must not have been clear with you [when you interviewed me] — and that is the matter of treating the "insides."

In fact, I have argued long and hard for the necessity of cleaning and coating all internal metal surfaces. But I think I know how you could have gotten the idea from me. You may have read or heard me say that — in general — I do not believe in treating the interior surfaces of wooden stocks. This is because most of them are unfinished and the open grain will suck up both solvent and aqueous cleaning materials — spreading any dirt, oil or grease further into the wood. If there are internal accretions on a stock, I'll mechanically remove them as best I can either with a micro-spatula or (very carefully) with a scalpel — but I make no other effort to "clean" or coat these inner wooden surfaces.

Our standard stabilization treatment at Springfield Armory NHS includes complete disassembly, cleaning and coating of all metal parts. Copper alloy parts are coated with Inralac, and silver parts — if I had any — would be coated with Agateen #27 nitrocellulose lacquer (it is a beautiful coating material that is very resistant to corrosion by atmospheric sulfur, a real problem in some places).

Also, I don't want to give the impression that I normally use Renaissance Wax in the lab. I don't. It is awfully expensive and I suspect it has a much lower melting point than the microcrystalline wax I do use (which has a melting point of 195 degrees F). I use Be Square 195, which I purchase from a conservation supply house in bulk, in granular form. I heat and dilute the crystals with mineral spirits until I get the cold-working properties I like (a bit stiffer than Ren. Wax). I then heat my ferrous parts up to around 210 degrees and hold this temp. for between 15 and 30 minutes before applying the wax. I immediately blot off the excess before the wax has a chance to set up (chill). There are a few variants on this procedure that I use, but that's pretty much it. I recommend Ren. Wax because it is a pure microcrystalline wax (once the solvent evaporates) and because it is packaged in small containers and is readily available — unlike Be Square 195.

I'd be grateful if you could clarify my position to your readers in a future issue — about whether to treat or not to treat internal metal surfaces. Otherwise, I'm delighted with your article and believe you have done the collecting world a real service. I'll add it

to my list of recommended reading and make lots of extra copies to give out.

All the best,

Dave Arnold, *Conservator*  
Springfield Armory Museum

## OFFENDED BY EDITORIAL

I just read "from the editor" in the Dec. 2004 issue of *Man at Arms*. My reaction to it is — "gee I hope he's just kidding." However, I do believe comments like that require a rebuttal.

Your musing displays selfish, sexist and elitist attitudes, which only worsen rather than mitigate the unfavorable stereotypical images that too many people have of gun owners, including the gun collecting community.

As a woman, I resent your expectation that all women should take on the role in life that your mother did. Hers was a thankless and futile effort. Obviously her unselfishness didn't rub off on you.

Furthermore, girly pictures may be fine in certain men's magazines; as are "beefcake" pictures in similar women's magazines. However, have I been wrong in assuming that *Man at Arms* has more dignity and further welcomes readers of both sexes?

As for the "Too Stupid to Own a Gun" rule: a few points are in order here. A gun shop, no matter how small and obscure, is like any other retail establishment. If it's open, a patron has a right to ask questions about the merchandise, etc; instead of being treated like a party crasher. Rather than snub the guy, your owner friend and the rest of you could have been open and gracious enough to postpone watching the movie in order to share your knowledge; whether it be about guns, collecting or the etiquette thereof. You might have acquired a friend. In today's hostile environment, the gun owning and collecting community needs all the friends it can get.

You're entitled to think anything you want, but don't put such trash in print. In my estimation, you have violated the "Too Stupid to be the Editor of a Gun Collecting Magazine" rule.

(Mrs.) Diane Hintz  
cc: Wayne R. LaPierre

**Editor** — I wrote a fairly lengthy response to this letter, which I sent to Mrs. Hintz, explaining that I think she has either misread or misinterpreted the editorial in question. I am not going to reproduce that here, because I don't want to bore you. But if anyone requires a copy I will be happy to provide it. The short version? I gave no opinions about women's roles in life. I did not suggest girly pictures for our cover. And I wasn't actually in the gun shop when the story took place, so scolding me for snubbing him seems a bit much.

## A DIFFERENT VIEW

Your "From the Editor" column in Volume 26, Number 6 was one of the most pleasant pieces that I have read anywhere for quite some time. You summed up by stating that what your topic had to do with old guns and swords was a conundrum. Perhaps the common denominators are age and authenticity.

As with numerous old guns and swords, many of our seniors and pioneers have aged gracefully. Others have seen better days. Whatever the case, they may be finished as far as being top of the line and in their prime, but they haven't been refinished by the vanities of plastic surgery, body-enhancing drugs or faddish diets. Just as a collector prizes a certain piece for its inherent power, beauty and mechanical ingenuity, so too do we recognize, perhaps with a nagging sense of guilt, that similar attentive regard is merely pathos with respect to our senior citizens. And even though the entirety of our seniors may not or should not be so esteemed, even a refinished lower end of the market weapon is deserving of some sympathy and respect.

Wayne Currie

## RE: COLT RECORDS & UNRECORDED DATA

I join with my Texas friend Tom Power who thanks you for producing the best magazine extant for gun collectors. Keep up the good work. Now I would like to comment on what Tom said regarding my gun, the spectacular factory engraved Colt 1878 that was featured in your Roll of Honor in Issue No. 5.

What Tom does not know is that the Colt factory letter has now been obtained showing the gun engraved with the following additional features:

*Factory engraved:*

*Yes, along with the initials "P.G." engraved on the backstrap.*

*Special notation:*

*50 Yard sight*

*Shipped to:*

*Cornwall & Smock*

*Date of Shipment:*

*July 30, 1892*

*Number of Same Type Guns in Shipment:*

*1*

So, there is no longer reason to speculate about the gun, as we have it from the Colt factory records. The reason for the lack of proof of the gun was that originally, when the letter was requested from Colt, one digit in the serial number was wrong, thus the letter sent out was for another gun. However,  
(continued on p. 10.)

...the letters continued...

EVERYONE knew the gun was factory engraved by Helfricht, and all of the experts in the field agreed it is the finest Colt 1878 known, and some went so far as to say that it is "...the most spectacular engraved Colt cartridge revolver known," which is saying quite a lot.

Interestingly, I am now researching who "P.G." was, as I have identified Cornwall & Smock as a high-profile attorney partnership, evidently located in Hartford, Connecticut. Undoubtedly, the mysterious "P.G." on the backstrap referred to one of their illustrious clients or associates. Any reader who can provide information on some famous Hartford person in 1892 with those initials will receive a hearty Texas-style reward from me!

Kurt House

necessity of cleaning and coating all internal metal surfaces. But I think I know how you could have gotten the idea from me. You may have read or heard me say that — in general — I do not believe in treating the interior surfaces of wooden stocks. This is because most of them are unfinished and the open grain will suck up both solvent and aqueous cleaning materials — spreading any dirt, oil or grease further into the wood. If there are internal accretions on a stock, I'll mechanically remove them as best I can either with a micro-spatula or (very carefully) with a scalpel — but I make no other effort to "clean" or coat these inner wooden surfaces.

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(Mrs.) Diane Hintz  
cc: Wayne R. LaPierre

**Editor** — I wrote a fairly lengthy response to this letter, which I sent to Mrs. Hintz, explaining that I think she has either misread or misinterpreted the editorial in question. I am not going to reproduce that here, because I don't want to bore you. But if anyone requires a copy I will be happy to provide it. The short version? I gave no opinions about women's roles in life. I did not suggest girlie pictures for our cover. And I wasn't actually in the gun shop when the story took place, so scolding me for snubbing him seems a bit much.

## A DIFFERENT VIEW

Your "From the Editor" column in Volume 26, Number 6 was one of the most pleasant pieces that I have read anywhere for quite some time. You summed up by stating that what your topic had to do with old guns and swords was a conundrum. Perhaps the common denominators are age and authenticity.

As with numerous old guns and swords, many of our seniors and pioneers have aged gracefully. Others have seen better days. Whatever the case, they may be finished as far as being top of the line and in their prime, but they haven't been refinished by the vanities of plastic surgery, body-enhancing drugs or faddish diets. Just as a collector prizes a certain piece for its inherent power, beauty and mechanical ingenuity, so too do we recognize, perhaps with a nagging sense of guilt, that similar attentive regard is merely pathos with respect to our senior citizens. And even though the entirety of our seniors may not or should not be so esteemed, even a refinished lower end of the market weapon is deserving of some sympathy and respect.

Wayne Currie

## RE: COLT RECORDS & UNRECORDED DATA

I join with my Texas friend Tom Power who thanks you for producing the best magazine extant for gun collectors. Keep up the good work. Now I would like to comment on what Tom said regarding my gun, the spectacular factory engraved Colt 1878 that was featured in your Roll of Honor in Issue No. 5.

What Tom does not know is that the Colt factory letter has now been obtained showing the gun engraved with the following additional features:

*Factory engraved:*

*Yes, along with the initials "P.G." engraved on the backstrap.*

*Special notation:*

*50 Yard sight*

*Shipped to:*

*Cornwall & Smock*

*Date of Shipment:*

*July 30, 1892*

*Number of Same Type Guns in Shipment:*

*1*

So, there is no longer reason to speculate about the gun, as we have it from the Colt factory records. The reason for the lack of proof of the gun was that originally, when the letter was requested from Colt, one digit in the serial number was wrong, thus the letter sent out was for another gun. However,

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# RICOCHET

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## BROWN BOLT ACTIONS

I enjoyed (as usual) reading your "From the Editor" column in the latest issue (Vol. 27, #1) of your magazine, especially your purchase of the Brown Bolt Action rifle. I bought one from a collector at the Baltimore show in 1999.

I enjoy collecting, restoring and shooting each firearm and like conversions greatly. The Brown I have is .58 centerfire, like the one in Garavaglia and Worman's *Firearms of the American West, Vol. II* from the Pioneer Museum in Colorado Springs, Colorado. If yours is centerfire, you can shoot it, which would make for an interesting article. The great workmanship (in the Dutchman inlays of the lock mortise, etc.) and the connection to the Ballard and Marlin companies is good stuff.

Keep up the good work. Your magazine is first rate!

Jim Billings, Michigan

## KENDALL UNDERHAMMER FAN

Many thanks to you and your staff for the years that I have enjoyed your magazine. I anxiously look forward to receiving each issue.

I am writing you about the fine article entitled, "The Guns of David Hall Hilliard" by R.W. Ballou. I have been a collector of Pennsylvania/Kentucky rifles for years and have belonged to the Kentucky Rifle Association since 1968.

Some years ago, I acquired an extremely nice underhammer rifle and have kept it in my collection as an example of arms of this nature. There seems to have been very little information available on these arms — at least to me. Many years ago, I purchased a copy of that fine book *Gunsmiths and Gun-makers of Vermont* by Warren R. Horn. In this book, I found the maker of my underhammer but little further information.

It was made by Nicanor Kendall and marked "Smith's Improved Patent Stud Lock" on the tang. It appears to be .45 cal. with a 24-inch barrel. There is a lot of high-quality engraving on this gun, including a silver cap box with a Federal period looking eagle.

There were times I felt like selling or trading this gun, which fortunately I haven't done — something collectors are wont to do with almost always later misgivings.

Thanks again for the magazine and my sincere thanks to Mr. Ballou. I now know a lot more about Nicanor Kendall and the history of underhammer firearms.

Bill Ruggie, Florida

## THOMPSON SMG IN KOREA

It seems every issue of your magazine contains a number of things of interest — speaks well of your publication.

While my collecting interest is firmly

rooted in the 19th century, the article by Tracie Hill about the Thompson rang some bells!

I was a Platoon Sgt./Acting Platoon Leader in Korea. On one occasion we were rushed to relieve the Turkish Brigade (attached to the 25 Inf. Div.). Some of the boys found left-behinds in the Turks' bunkers, and one was a Thompson!! Probably left from WWII, but just how it got to Korea, I wouldn't know. I checked it out mechanically, and since ammunition was no problem decided to use it on the next recon patrol I took out (we ran one every other night at the time). No reason to actually use the Thompson, fortunately, but the bloody thing was so heavy, I decided never again!

I don't know what use the Thompson saw in later disagreements we were engaged in, but maybe this one was one of the last Thompsons in combat??

Anyway, I couldn't resist a rather harmless war story.

Charles R. Nichols, New York

## COLT PYTHON MARKING?

Do any readers out there know what the initials "INS" stand for.

They are stamped into the frame of my 1965 Colt Python under the left grip.

Jon Love, California

## WAX ON...WAX OFF

For decades, I have used a high quality paste floor wax to protect my firearms. It did a particularly good job on those modern-made muzzle loading rifles I used in hunting. With routine cleaning after each use and re-application of the wax, I found no evidence of black powder corrosion after years of shooting.

Comes now the February 2005 issue of *Man at Arms* magazine, and your "Tools and Techniques" article, wherein the writer advises the use of "microcrystalline" wax.

What have I missed? What do I look for on a wax container's label that would reveal that it is "microcrystalline"? What brand name do I ask for, and in what type of establishment might it be found? Have I been shopping at the wrong stores?

Obviously, I could use some guidance in this matter. Perhaps you could ask the article's writer to further elaborate on this matter.

And while on the subject, let him/her know that I thought the article was very well written, further enhancing what I feel is a premier magazine on the topic of gun and arms collecting.

I remain, yr hmble and obt servant.

Charles Taylor via the internet

Editor — Thanks for the kind words on the "Tools and Techniques" article.

What you have been doing isn't really wrong...just a little short of perfect. Nearly all over-the-counter wax products, whether they

are floor wax, shoe polish, etc., are made from organic wax. Organic wax, if it is a very high quality type like carnauba wax, can be very good...in fact, many museums still use it...but when it breaks down with age, it does technically create relatively minor acidic bi-products. So, over the long haul, organic wax is not quite as good as inorganic wax (which is almost chemically neutral). Inorganic wax is also finer, thinner and clearer — which means that it is less noticeable on the gun. Carnauba wax leaves something of a satiny finish. I kind of like this satin appearance, but it does alter the look of the metal, which you might not want on highly finished guns, etc.

The most popular commercial brand of inorganic wax for conservation use is Renaissance Wax, which is available from dealers on the internet. You are not going to find it in a local store and it is pretty expensive. For most uses, I feel that carnauba wax is just fine, but Renaissance Wax is technically better from a chemical point of view, and for delicate applications it is doubtless preferable.

## A CORRECTION

Thanks again for a great magazine. It seems that the written record has been put in error one more time.

In my letter of September 5, 2004, to Ricochet, I referred to a Colt Navy revolver that was pictured in the Roll of Honor section of *Man at Arms*, Vol. 26, No. 4, as proof that the Colt factory records sometimes do not record special features that are obviously original to the gun in question. When my letter was printed in Vol. 26, No. 6, the Colt Navy somehow, human error, became a "M 1878 revolver." This illustrates again the problem that we have in transcribing even the most simple information. As a one time editor of *The Texas Gun Collector*, I understand this situation completely.

This error prompted Kurt House's response in Vol. 26, No. 1. I am familiar with Mr. House's revolver, and I consider it one of the finest examples extant. But I made no reference or comment regarding it in my letter to *Man at Arms* magazine.

Yet another example of the fallibility of the written word.

Yours Truly,

Tom Power

Editor: Yup, our fault. Overzealous proofreading, I'm afraid.

## NATIONAL MATCH, CONTINUED

I have been following the comments in the Ricochet column regarding Colt National Match s/n C 160887. Since I have been involved briefly with the gun back in 1997 and have been mentioned in the column several times, I thought I would put in my two cents

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last letters continued...

I actually never owned the gun, but I had it on approval from a well-known dealer. In the process of inspecting the gun, I noticed some things about the nickel that made me suspicious. The gun also had the National Matches and the slide of a rolled National Match: it was rolled on a Government Model. This didn't seem logical, so I called Kathy Hoyt, the Historian at Colt. She confirmed that the gun went out of the factory as an all Blue Government Model. Therefore, I returned the gun to the dealer. I concluded that at the time of the letter, a mistake was apparently made in reading the words and information from two entries was combined. Anyone who has ever viewed the factory records can readily see how easily one could make this mistake.

The Colt Factory Records are sparse to the least. They were intended to only record the shipment of guns. Sometimes we are lucky enough to find a factory work order associated with the gun we are researching. We know something special was done to the gun, but unless a special notation was made, we wouldn't have any idea what it might be. the gun had any special features and a work order number was shown, one could assume those special features were factory. However, Colt can't state any special features in their letters unless the work order notation says specifically what was done, most do not. We collectors would like to see much more information in the factory letters, but Colt can't assume what was done. They can only report what they see in the records.

Early on in my collecting experience I determined that one must buy the gun, not the story. If the story is not logical it is probably not true.

Very truly yours,

Lowell E. Pauli

Historian, Colt Collectors Association, Inc.

ICOCHEAT

Write to man at arms magazine  
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# RICOCHET

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## A REAL "WISH YOU WERE THERE" PICTURE

In regards to the article on Lieut. Worden's sword, it appears the quillon represents a "monkey's fist," which is a woven weighted ball used at the end of a heaving line for passing lines between ships and shore. Usually a lead ball is the weight inside. Also, here is a photo of your loyal reader actually inside the *Monitor* turret when I worked as a volunteer at the Mariners Museum. You can see the two Dahlgrens before they were removed and one of the gunport shutters behind me. This was a great day that your readers might enjoy seeing.

David Millman

## NATIONAL MATCH REVISITED

Here's another "Ricochet" for your aptly named column.

I would like to respond to Mr. Pauli's letter in the last issue, hopefully as my final word on the subject of the Colt National Match pistol #160887.

First of all, I apologize for my confusion regarding Mr. Pauli's ownership of this pistol, but in Mr. Williams' letter to *Man at Arms* (Vol. 26, No. 5), he stated that Mr. Pauli "owned the pistol several years ago," so I assumed that this was true. Perhaps Mr. Williams could shed some light on this matter.

Secondly, the pistol in question, #160887, was made in 1930 and pre-dates the manufacture of "National Match"-marked pistols by 2 years, but it exhibits all of the characteristics of a target version of a Government Model Colt. Also, according to Donald Bady in his fine book *Colt Automatic Pistols*, on page 263 he states, "On the occasion of the 1932 National Matches at Camp Perry, a target version of the .45 Government Model was introduced. This pistol, with standard markings and serial number, was described as having a hand honed action, and a selected match barrel." The pistol in question here also has standard markings and serial number, a hand honed action, and a selected match barrel, which is stamped "circle M.B." on the left lug.

Pre-National Match target pistols had standard slide markings. The "National Match" roll die mark did not come into use on target pistols until sometime in 1932. I am not aware of the exact serial number at which the use of this mark commenced. Pistol #164055, manufactured in late 1932, has the "National Match" mark.

Regarding the factory work order number for this pistol, it is #18398/25. The order was for 25 cal. 45 Government Model pistols to be shipped to Camp Perry National Matches, Camp Perry, Ohio, for the Colt Patent Firearms Co. Booth, August 15th, 1930. This fact alone makes it a true National Match pistol, regardless of the slide marking. When Mr. Marty Huber went to the Colt records in 1985, he was able to locate the special order for these pistols. Whether he made a "mistake" or not, the pistol sure matches the description that he gave it in his letter.

Finally, regarding the nickel finish on the frame, I am of the opinion that it was applied when the pistol was new, but in this case finish is a rather moot point because of the historical significance of this particular piece and does not substantially effect the value one way or the other. Opinions are something else that we all have in common.

Since Mr. Pauli ended his letter talking about logic and truth, I felt that a response with my logical conclusions was in order, and that the truth is evident in the pistol itself.

Yours Truly,

Tom Power, Texas

*Editor — Since everyone with an interest in this topic seems to have had their chance to chime in, I'm officially cutting off this topic. Thanks to everyone for contributing to a very interesting and well-reasoned discussion.*

## MORE MEMORIES OF THOMPSON SMGs

I noted Charles R. Nichols' letter in [the most recent] magazine. I



thought the following might also interest you.

I was an aircraft armorer with the 25th Fighter Interceptor Sqdn of the 51st FIW, F 86, stationed at K 13 from early November 1951 thru early October 1952. Along with my aircraft, I was the small arms man for the squadron.

Early in the spring of '52, my armament officer told me to run up to Wing Supply and pick up a "box" of submachine guns stored there that needed to be inventoried/cleaned and returned to the point of origin. Two of us went up there, and sure enough there was a "box" 4'x4'x18" deep full of M3 grease guns — the late model without the charging lever on the right side below the bolt. We took them back to the armament shack on the line for the dirty work. The armament office informed me, "Goldstein, you're going to live with these 'til they go back; no way to secure them." We were still considered a non-secured area at that time and everyone was armed or had a weapon close by — M1/M2 carbines and some personal weapons. Anyway, I dug the grease guns out of this shipping box and guess what? Six (6) THOMPSON SUBMACHINE GUNS were at the bottom of the box! They had all been back to Thompson, or whoever, after WWII and reworked. All had new wood and were reparkerized flat black. It appeared that they had not gone back to the field or ever been reissued. How they got to the 51st is anyone's guess. There were extra 30-round magazines...six I think. I don't remember if they had the original early folding elevation sight or the later stamped peep sight.

It took two full days to clean everything up, make a manifest, etc. This meant that two of us "lived" with them at night. I kept one loaded all of the time, but that's another story. The bottom line is, when we took them back, I only sent five of the Thompsons. I kept the other in my foot locker with the two magazines loaded. There was no record of

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