

## HERB GLASS, BULLVILLE, NY 10915

---

*Antique Firearms for Museums and Collectors*

---

FIREARMS CONSULTANT

845-361-3021  
HERB GLASS, JR.  
845-361-3657

1350 STATE RTE 302  
POST OFFICE BOX 25

May 25, 2005

Mr. Steve Ardia  
3 West Lake Street  
Skaneateles, NY 13152

Dear Steve:

I certainly enjoyed seeing an old friend again the day Herb Jr. handed me the Samuel Bowles Stocked Model 1860 Colt Army serial number 151,313/S. This magnificent Colt is exactly as I remember it when I first saw it 54 years ago. As requested we have completely and thoroughly examined it. Additionally, I suspect you would enjoy more of the story of how I found it.

In 1951, Robert Tompkins, a prominent antique dealer and personal friend from Sheffield, Massachusetts called and said that while buying some fine early furniture at a home near Springfield, he had been offered the pistol. I immediately drove to Massachusetts and he introduced me to the owners. After a most pleasant visit, I purchased the gun and they arranged a visit to see the previous owners, close neighbors in an area of lovely old homes, who were descendants of the Boston Judge who had gotten the gun directly from Samuel Bowles. After my visit with them, they wrote the letter - excerpts from which are quoted in the letter you received with the gun. They wished to remain anonymous so I did not pass along their complete letter when I sold the gun, in December of 1951, to Gerald Fox, a prominent collector from Springfield.

At some point Mr. Fox cased the gun, hence the reference to it being cased in the paperwork John Gangel provided to you. I have found in our files a photo of this casing taken after he sold the set to Herbert Green in 1955. A copy of this photo is enclosed - and the case is obviously not an original Colt case. Most probably Mr. Fox had it made to fit the gun, stock and accessories he found to enhance the outfit. This explains why, at some time later, the gun and stock became "uncased" again.

As I stated previously, the gun is exactly as I found it in 1951. The light cylinder scene is typical of deluxe presentation "extra polish" arms and we have seen it many times on these guns. The lovely finish on the Bowles Army is completely original and indicative of this special series of guns. Yet another indication of this "specialness" is the presence of the "four screw" frame on a gun serial numbered in the 151 thousand range.

For another example of this see the cased "Eustace Barron" Army Models serial numbered 150,156 and 150,157 pictured in the "Book of Colt Firearms" and other publications.


The fact that the inscription is cut through the finish indicates that the gun was possibly not a factory presentation or, if it was, it was a hurried, last minute one. The Bowles name having been incorrectly spelled without the "e" on the inscription is perhaps further evidence of this; although even a factory engraver could easily make this simple error. We certainly have seen original inscriptions with misspelled names over the years, the name itself usually explaining the engraver's quandry: i.e., "should 'Bowls' be spelled with an 'e'?"

The mismatched serial number on the buttstock buttplate did not bother me in 1951 and it does not today. That is because it is a factory error, the proof of which is as follows: there is a lovely factory inked number "313" in the wood under the buttstock lower tang. This, of course matches everything else. Then, on the same piece of wood, under the buttplate, is another factory inked number "8052" - the last four digits of the buttplate being "8032". This factory error lends more credence to the last minute presentation theory and to the obviously special nature of the series of deluxe presentation arms as it existed within the factory with its massive production of standard guns.

I have always liked this gun; of all the fine Colts I found in private homes in the old days this is one of the ones that I remember vividly. Samuel Bowle's distinguished career as a journalist spanned the decades leading up to the Civil War and through Western expansion, and his extensive travels to the South and West during these exciting periods make for great history. Incidentally, copies of his books, "Across the Continent" published in 1865 and "The Switzerland of America" in 1869, would be great additions to this story if they could be located.

This is a superb and lovely gun, completely factory original, and I appreciate the opportunity to re-examine it and relive a most pleasant memory.

Sincerely,



Herb Glass

Enc.



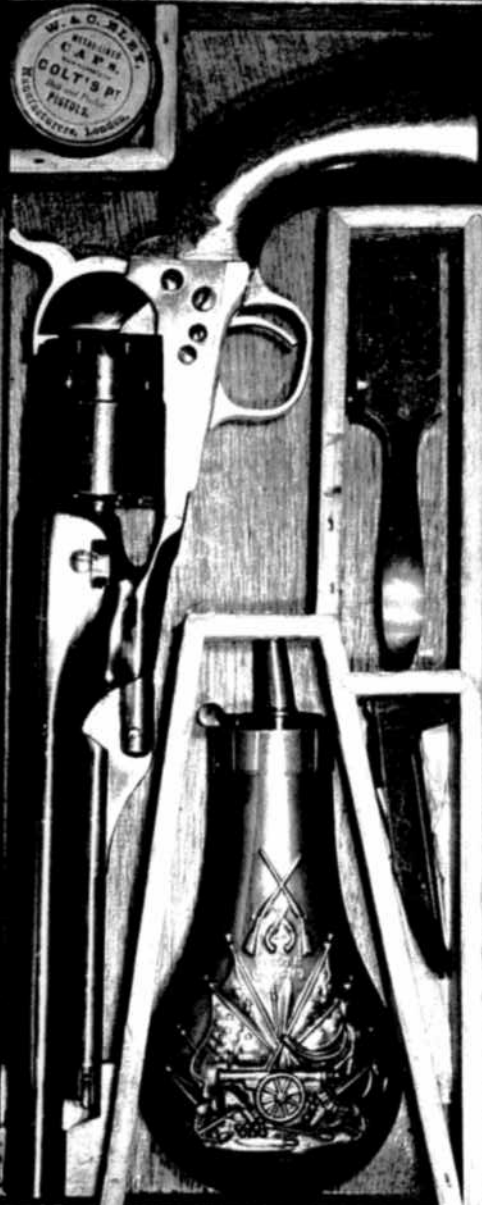
W. & A. G. R. S.  
COLLECTOR



**CARTRIDGES**  
16 per box  
Colt's Patent Revolving Pistol  
Manufactured by D. C. CASE & Co.  
WINDHAM, N. H., U.S.A.  
J. J. Smith & Co. Sole Agents for the Province, N. Y.



W. & O. SMITH  
COLLECTOR



REVOLVING PISTOL  
NEW MODEL  
COLT'S PATENT  
FABRIQUE  
W. & O. SMITH, LIMITED, LONDON

REVOLVING PISTOL  
NEW MODEL  
COLT'S PATENT  
FABRIQUE  
W. & O. SMITH, LIMITED, LONDON

CARTRIDGES  
COLT'S ARMY PISTOL  
11 per 1/2 Caliber  
Manufactured by D. C. B. & Co.  
WINDHAMPTON, ENGLAND, U.S.A.  
Birmingham, England, U.S.A.  
W. & O. SMITH, LIMITED, LONDON, ENGLAND, U.S.A.