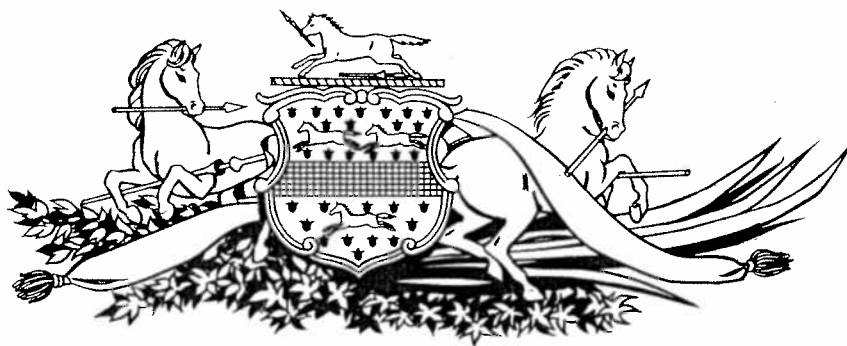


the Book of **Colt**
Firearms



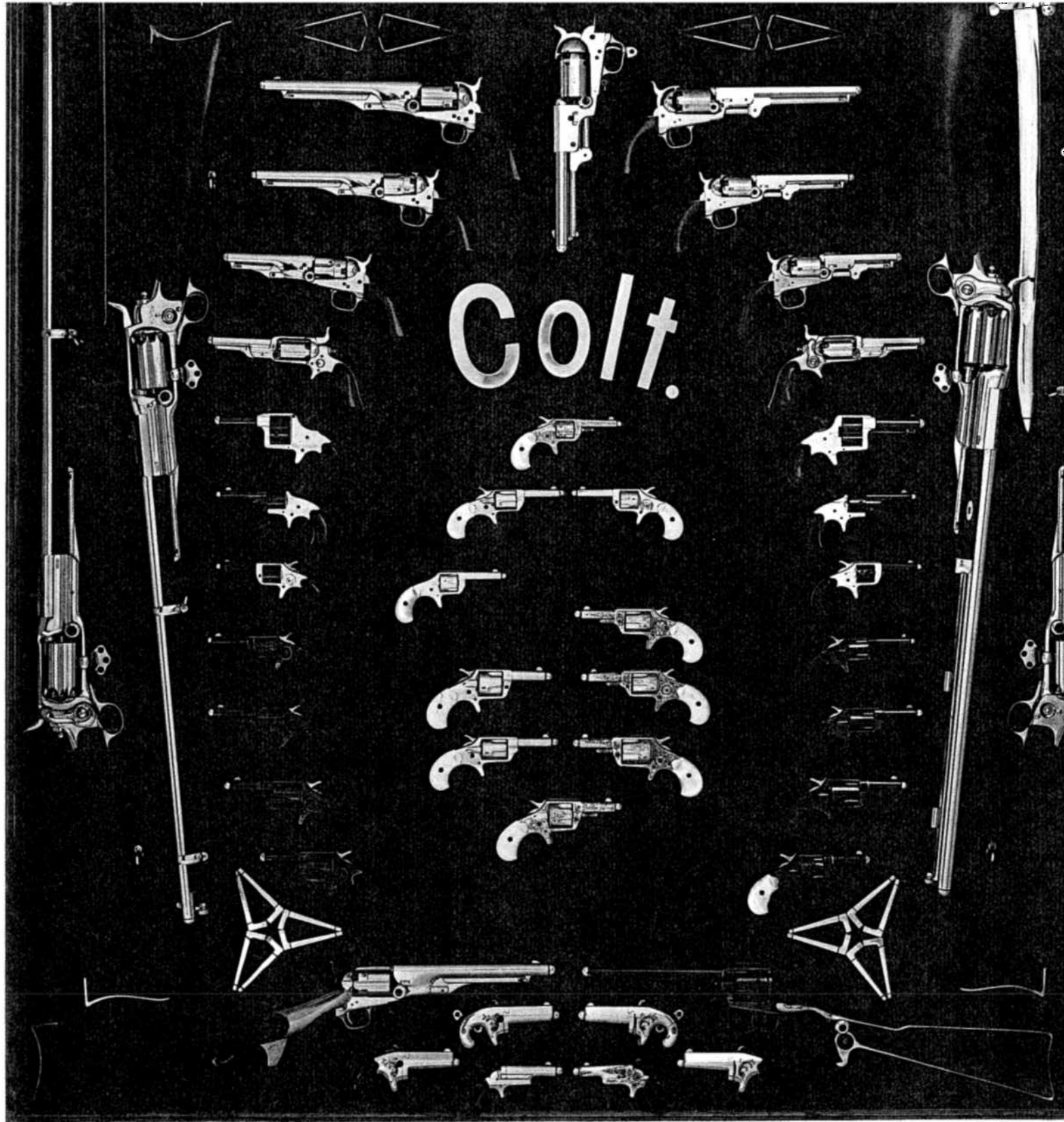
R. L. Sutherland
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The Book of Colt Firearms

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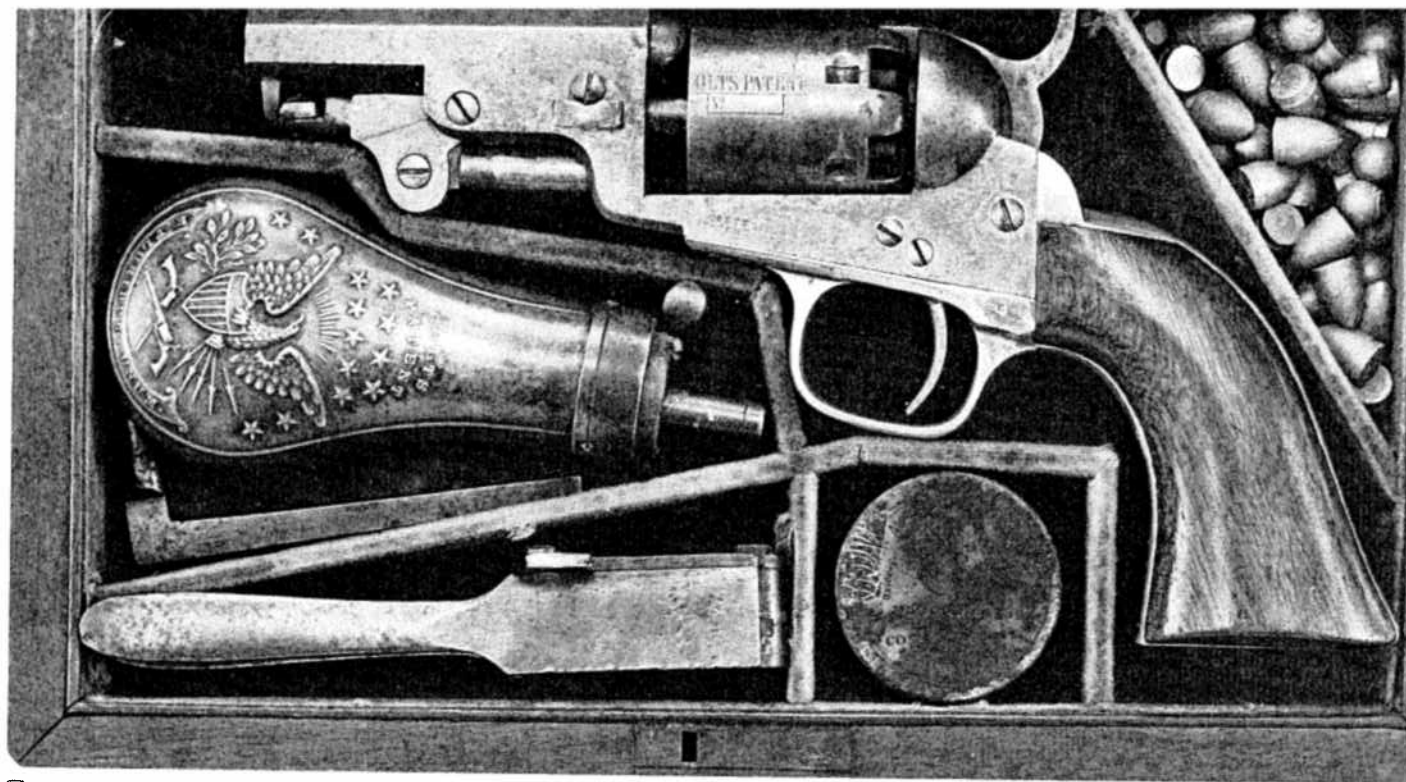
PUBLISHED BY ROBERT Q. SUTHERLAND
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI



THE COLT HARTLEY & GRAHAM DISPLAY BOARD OF 1877. Color Plate One

The original Colt Display Board exhibited from c. 1877 into the early twentieth century by arms dealers Hartley and Graham of New York City. Dragoon, Pocket, Navy, Army, and Sidehammer percussion arms are displayed along with Deringer, Cloverleaf, Old Line, New Line, and Single Action Army revolvers from the early cartridge era. All of the percussion weapons were polished bright and many of the cartridge arms were engraved, gold, silver, or nickel plated, and fitted with rosewood, pearl, or ivory grips. 58" wide x 64" high, excluding contemporary decorative frame.

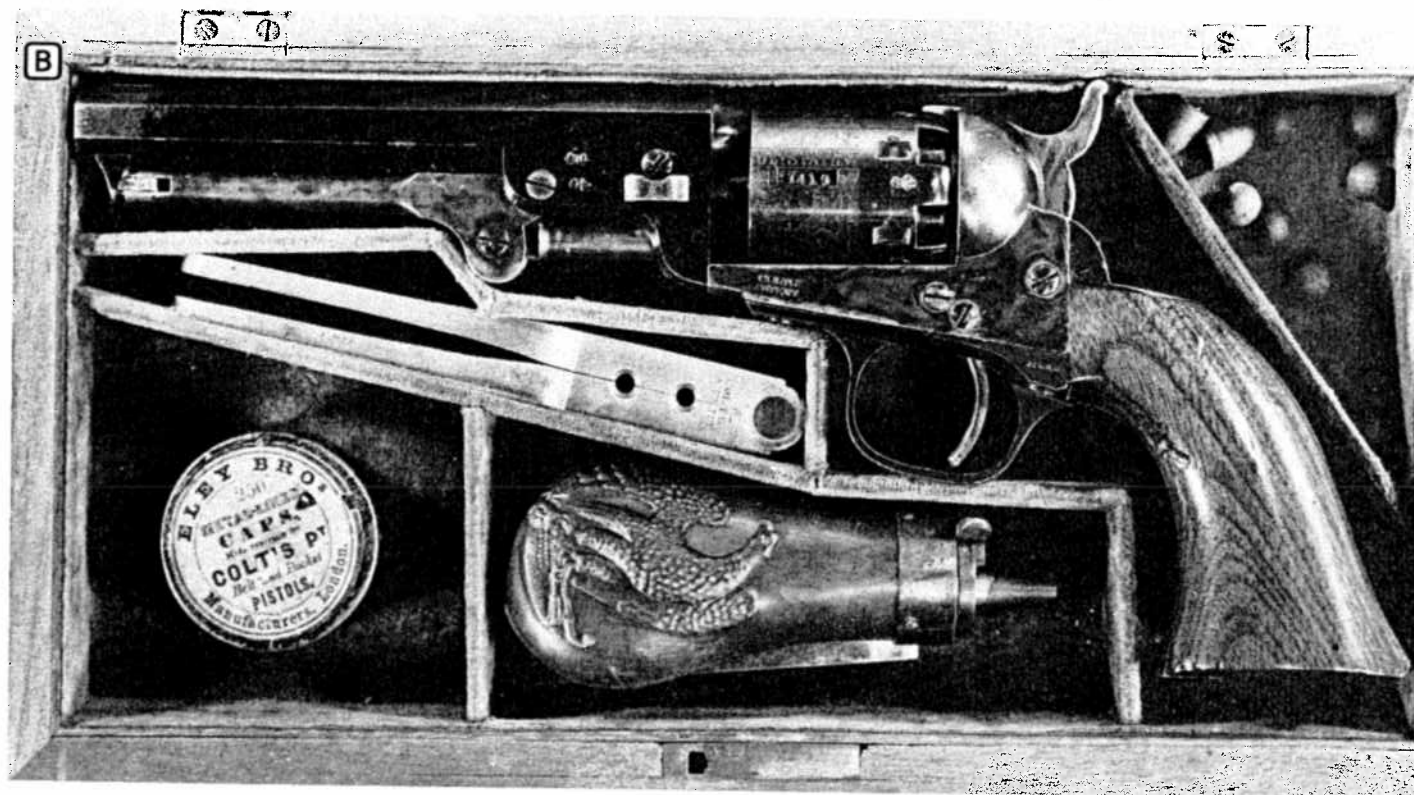
Robert Q. Sutherland Collection



Ⓐ Serial #183768. One of the rarest variations in the entire Model 1849 production: 3" barrel with attached rammer lever. No serial number on cylinder, and may have been shipped with this feature. Lack of number could also indicate the cylinder had been replaced. The author has seen a few exquisitely engraved arms in the percussion period which do not have serial number stampings on the cylinders; and on an extremely limited basis, cylinders lacking numbers have been noted on production arms of the period.

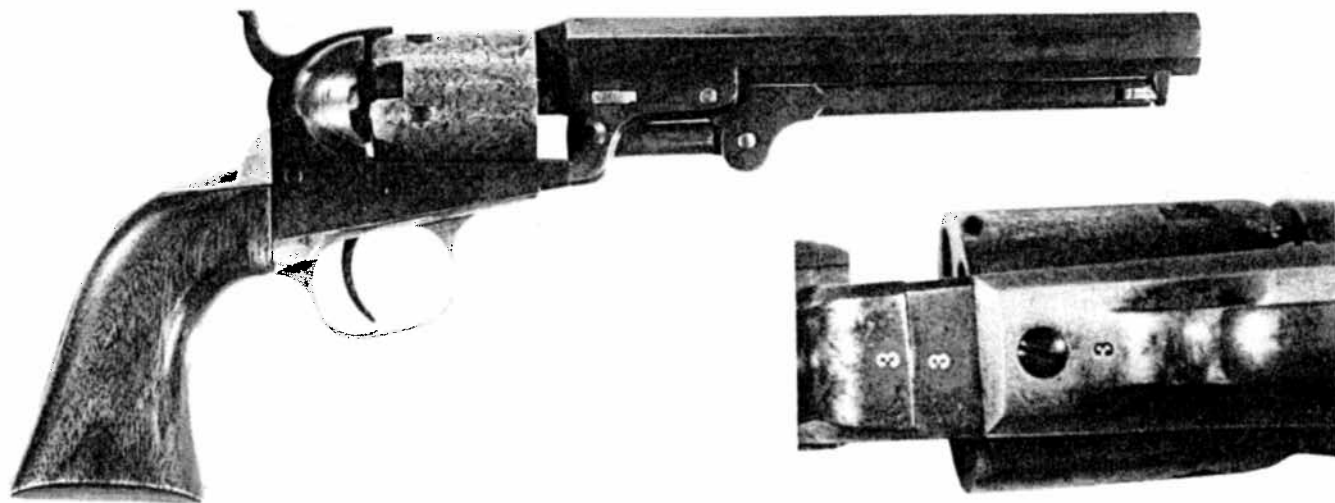
Casing with complete and correct accessories. Iron mould. Wear in the box proves this 3" barrel revolver was originally cased in a size box.

Robert Q. Sutherland Co



Ⓑ Serial #297419/L. Model 1849 Pocket Model with 5" barrel; 6 shots; blued steel backstrap and triggerguard. The L stamping signifies the revolver was destined for sale in England. New York U.S. America barrel address. British proofmarks stamped on the cylinder perimeter and on the left side of the barrel lug. Eagle flask, brass bullet mould, Eley Brothers percussion caps, L-shaped screwdriver nipple wrench case of varnished mahogany, lined in reddish velvet in the American style.

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☐ Serial #3, Model 1849 Hartford Pocket Revolver, marked on the barrel lug, frame, triggerguard strap, buttstrap, cylinder pin, and cylinder. The original Civil War Colt factory inventory ledger #4 lists Serial #1, #2, #4, and #5 of this Model as "From Model Room Decr. 31st 62". Specimen #3 (above) is believed to have been the missing piece. The revolver is from the period of the introduction of spring steel into the Colt production, and may be an early specimen; note that the inventory listing simply shows that items were in stock, and does not date a piece as to exact manufacture. Spring steel first appears in Colt advertising literature c. 1860 to 1861. *Robert Q. Sutherland Collection.*

THE MODEL 1849 POCKET REVOLVER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 108

Three-inch barrels were standard, as were 5-shot cylinders, small round triggerguards, and solid barrel lugs (contours vary). Some early pistols have the short frame found on most Baby Dragoons. A limited few were produced with a hole bored through the lug for loading without removal of the barrel; it is probable that these had a brass loading tool similar to that shown with the Model 1862 Trapper's Pistol. Engraved specimens also are scarce. Any barrel lengths other than 3" are considered unusual and in good demand. All pistols bear the two line New York City address except for a very few hand engraved arms with "Saml Colt" in old English script. It is estimated the total of Wells Fargo revolvers manufactured was about 6,000. One specimen has been observed with *Wells Fargo* markings on the backstrap. There is no evidence to show that this model was widely used by that colorful firm. The authors regard the Wells Fargo model designation as a misnomer. Faked pistols will be encountered in this model and collectors should exercise caution against their acquisition.

2. Significant Model 1849 variations noted include: *Barrels*: Pin front sights were standard, but German silver or iron blade sights on blued steel bases will be found dovetailed onto the muzzles of a very few pistols made after c. 1860. Some revolvers after that date have German silver blade sights without bases. Loading cutouts on the right side of the barrel lugs were not bevelled as standard until the #120000 serial range (some specimens appear with this feature intermittently from about #63000 on up). A slight bevel was then standard until approximately Serial #164000; thereafter a pronounced bevel was standard. Differences will also be noted in lug contours on the barrel and the loading lever, on the lever latches, on the distance in from the muzzle that the lever catch is positioned, and on the machining of the muzzle (a limited number of high serialized pistols in the #331500, #332000, and #339000 serial ranges, have been noted crowned). Part-round, part-octagon barrels are not of factory record, and those that have been seen and checked are not legitimate factory work. The authors do not believe any part-round, part-octagon barrels were produced by Colts. One of the rarest variations in the Model 1849 appears in the #170300 and #183700 serial range: 3" barrels with short rammer assemblies. Only about one to two hundred pistols of this unusual and impractical pattern were produced. The Navy type lever latch began in the #267500 serial range.

3. *Hammers*: Were customarily cross-hatched with a file. On some hand engraved pistols the knurling was neatly engraved. A few high serial pistols have knurling in the fashion of early cartridge arms, with a pattern having sharp points and a border around the knurl. Roller bearing hammers and straight mainsprings were standard. Slight variations will be found in hammer contours.

4. *Frames*: Show only slight variations in contours. An extremely rare exception is the bevelled or scalloped recoil shield which has been found on pistols in the #31000, #83000, #98000, #119000, and #140000 serial ranges. The design, considered so rare as to be special order or experimental, was an attempt to prevent binding of the cylinder by exploded caps. A groove was cut on the top of the frame flat just forward of the recoil shield, and the shield itself was bevelled on both sides. Specimens are known with and without attached loading levers. Serial #140198 of this variation is illustrated, as is #98982.

5. *Triggerguards*: The basic shapes overlap somewhat as the changes were not precise. The earliest shape of rounded guard was small and almost rectangular in profile (serial approximately #14200 through #170000). This guard was made slightly more oval during the early production, after only a few thousand were made. Blued iron specimens with matching backstraps appear in the serial ranges #112000, #151000, and #153000; perhaps 200 total in all.

The other variation in the guard was a noticeable increase in size; serial approximately #120300 through #340000, with about Serial #153000 the major transition point. In this variation a few guards will be found, with matching backstraps, in blued steel:

SERIAL NUMBER RANGES

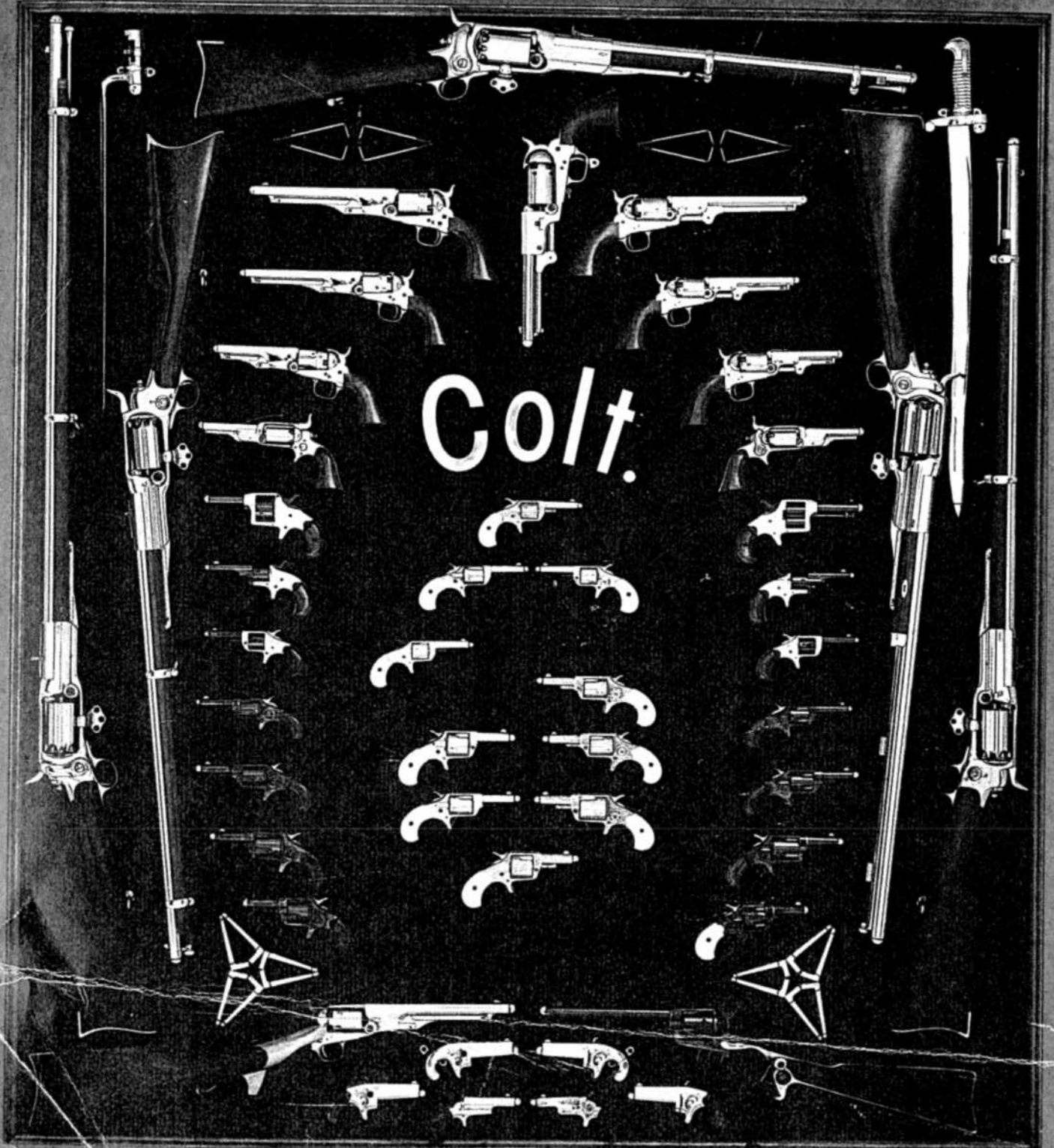
112000	153000	185000	213000
113000	157000	205000	296000
148000	165000	212000	297000

Trigger lengths became longer as the guard sizes increased. Variations will also be noted in the bevelling on the guard straps.

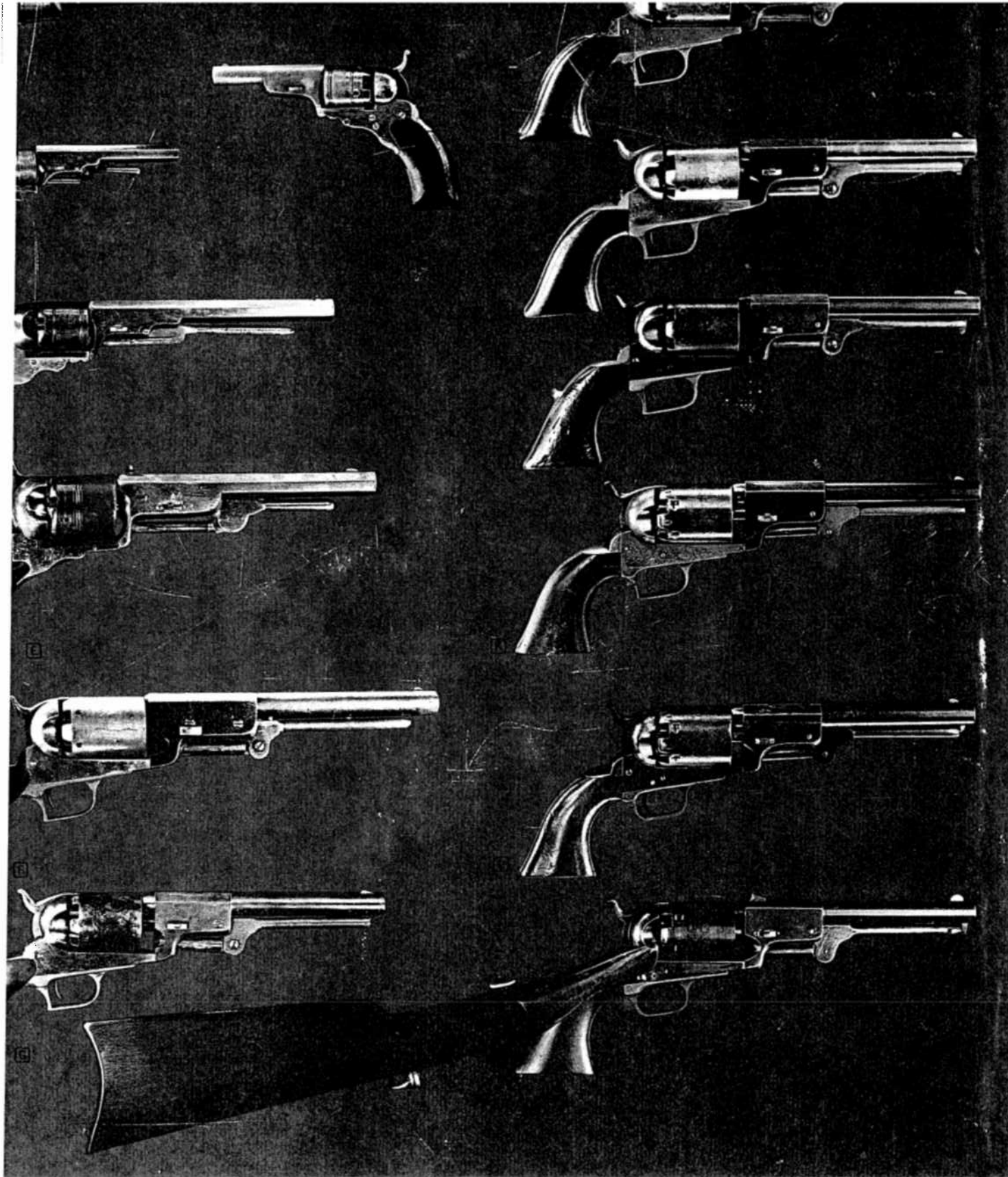
6. *Cylinders*: Five chambers were standard until the serial range #187000; thereafter both five and six chambers were produced, with the six-shot pattern predominating. Locking pins between the chambers were standard on all Model 1849 pistols. Cylinder roll die: Ormsby's name was part of the die — ENGRAVED BY W.L. ORMSBY NEW YORK — and can be seen faintly on a narrow panel above the COLTS PATENT up to about Serial #80000, thereafter this marking became increasingly difficult to read. New dies, or recut originals, were prepared but after about the #150000 range the panel is seldom seen. It did

(Continued on Page 115)

The Book of Colt Firearms



*R. L. Sutherland
R. L. Wilson*



an extremely small sampling of the hundreds of Colt firearms pictured and discussed in minute detail from the earliest model of 1832 through the present.

- Serial #1 - The John Pearson Prototype Colt revolver.
- Serial #342 - Baby Paterson revolver 28 caliber.
- Serial #182 - Pocket Paterson No. 2 Model revolver with lever, 34 caliber.
- Serial #676 - "Texas" Holster Model Paterson revolver with attached lever.
- Serial #1 - Paterson Experimental revolver, predecessor to the Walker, 5 shot, 54 caliber.
- Serial #D Company No. 204 - Walker revolver.
- Serial #1142 - Whitneyville Hartford Dragoon revolver. Grip curved into frame.

- Serial #1215 - Whitneyville Hartford Dragoon revolver, grip flat against frame.
- Serial #M - Model gun of the First Model Dragoon revolver.
- Serial #2716 - Fluck Model Dragoon revolver.
- Serial #156 - Second Model Hartford English Dragoon revolver.
- Serial #16 - Third Model Hartford English Dragoon revolver.
- Serial #17022 - Third Model Dragoon with detachable stock; U.S. marked.