



**ARMORY AND OFFICE,**

*Hartford, Conn.*

October, 2007

*No* To Whom It May Concern

*Bought of*

**THE SHARPS RIFLE COMPANY.**

Sharps rifle Serial #C53426 has been located in the original records of the Sharps Rifle Manufacturing Company, predecessor to the Sharps Rifle Company. It is listed in their Order Book as an Octagon Rifle, later termed the Model 1874 Sporting Rifle and was invoiced at the Hartford factory on April 30, 1872 to N. Curry & Bro., gun and sporting goods dealers of San Francisco, California. The rifle was further described as being .44 caliber, using the 2 ¼ inch shell, with a 30 inch full octagon barrel, double triggers, globe and peep sights and oil-finished stocks. The weight was not listed, but the price of \$47 less dealer discount suggests that it was a rifle of standard weight, i.e., not to exceed 12 pounds.

This rifle was subsequently modified in a manner similar to those Sharps rifles altered and signed by Henry Slotterbeck of Los Angeles. He usually changed barrels and calibers and added his own markings. He often re-stocked with deluxe wood. A "Pacific" style ramrod is most often seen on his guns, along with a trademark bow and arrow German silver inlay in the buttstock.

Not all of the Slotterbeck traits are seen on #C53426. The original barrel is retained, a plus for the Sharps collector. The rifle is restocked in burl walnut with a left-handed shooter cheekpiece with German silver inscription plate. The Pacific ramrod is in place. The Sharps globe and peep sights have been removed and replaced with a Ballard tang vernier sight and blade front sight. The rear barrel elevator sight may be original to the gun; some early Sharps sporting rifles are seen with this type of sight, particularly the Model 1869. The fore-end cap is consistent with those found on marked Slotterbeck guns.

A case of ten Octagon Rifles in various configurations was sent to the Curry firm on April 30, 1872. At least one other from this order is known to have been modified in much the same manner as C53426, retaining the original barrel. In fact, it appeared at the 2011 Denver Gun Show, asking \$38,000.