


THE BRASS FRAMED CONFEDERATE COLTS
SPILLER & BURR
AND
GRISWOLD & GUNNISON

AT THE OUTBREAK OF THE CIVIL WAR, THE SOUTH FOUND ITSELF FACING A SEVERE SHORTAGE OF ARMS MANUFACTORIES WHICH COULD EQUIP ITS LOYAL SONS WHO WERE RALLYING TO "THE CAUSE," TO DEFEND THEIR HOMELAND.

SAM GRISWOLD, FORMERLY A CONNECTICUT YANKEE, WHO MOVED TO GEORGIA IN 1822, AND ESTABLISHED A FACTORY FOR THE MANUFACTURE OF COTTON GINS, UNDERTOOK THE TASK OF PRODUCING HANDGUNS FOR THE CONFEDERACY. THE GRISWOLDVILLE MANUFACTORY RETOOLED ALMOST OVER NIGHT, AND USING SOME SLAVE LABOR, BEGAN THE MANUFACTURE OF THE GRISWOLD & GUNNISON BRASS FRAMED REVOLVER, COPIED FROM THE COLT NAVY PATTERN. THE FIRST REVOLVERS WERE PRODUCED IN JULY OF 1862, AND CONTINUED TO BE MADE UNTIL THE LATTER PART OF NOVEMBER 1864, WHEN THE FACTORY WAS DESTROYED BY YANKEES IN THE BATTLE OF GRISWOLDVILLE STATION.

GRISWOLD & GUNNISON WERE THE MOST PROLIFIC OF HANDGUN MANUFACTURERS FOR THE CONFEDERACY, PRODUCING SOME 3500 BRASS FRAMED REVOLVERS DURING THEIR OPERATION. THEY ARE THE MOST RECOGNIZABLE OF THEIR CONFEDERATE HANDGUN BROTHERN, AND EVEN THOUGH THEIR MORTALITY RATE WAS EXTREMELY HIGH, THERE ARE MORE SPECIMENS KNOWN THAN ANY OTHER MAKE.

EDWARD SPILLER, A BUSINESSMAN FROM BALTIMORE, BUT A STRONG SOUTHERN SYMPATHIZER, BECAME A PARTNER, WITH A VIRGINIAN, FROM RICHMOND, DAVID BURR, A BUILDER OF STEAM ENGINES, TO PRODUCE HANDGUNS FOR THE CONFEDERACY. TEAMING UP WITH A LIEUTENANT COLONEL IN THE CONFEDERATE ARMY, JAMES HENRY BURTON, SPILLER AND BURR OBTAINED A CONTRACT WITH THE CONFEDERATE GOVERNMENT TO SUPPLY THE 15,000-.36 CALIBER HANDGUNS. SUCH GUNS WERE TO BE OF THE COLT NAVY PATTERN.

APPARENTLY, AT ABOUT THIS SAME TIME, ONE SAMUEL ROBINSON, FROM RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, SOON TO BECOME THE RENOWNED MANUFACTURER OF THE ROBINSON "SHARPS" CONFEDERATE CARBINE, HAD PLANNED TO MANUFACTURE HANDGUNS OF THE WHITNEY NAVY PATTERN, FOR THE CONFEDERACY.

IT IS BELIEVED THAT COLONEL BURTON, WITH SPILLER & BURR ACQUIRED THE ROBINSON HANDGUN MACHINERY AND BEGAN MANUFACTURING A .36 CALIBER REVOLVER MODELLED ON THE WHITNEY NAVY RATHER THAN THE COLT. THEY BEGAN THIS OPERATION IN ATLANTA GEORGIA, DUE TO BURTON'S TRANSFER THERE BY THE CONFEDERATE GOVERNMENT.

THE SPILLER & BURR FACTORY IN ATLANTA, AFTER TURNING OUT SOME 600 REVOLVERS, SOLD OUT TO THE CONFEDERATE GOVERNMENT WHICH MOVED THE MANUFACTORY TO THE MACON ARMORY AT MACON, GEORGIA, WHERE AN ADDITIONAL ESTIMATED 700 REVOLVERS WERE PRODUCED OR ASSEMBLED. NO MORE THAN 1300 SPILLER & BURR REVOLVERS WERE PRODUCED, MAKING THEM EXTREMELY RARE AND HIGHLY SOUGHT AFTER CONFEDERATE PRIZES.

FREDERICK R. EDMUNDS

OWNERSHIP AND TRANSFER RECORD

Name Reilly (Coin dealer) Address Auburn N.Y.
Alterations made to arm during period of ownership nipples replaced (Crozier wasn't sure if so or not)

brought in to Crozier's gun shop (Homer N.Y.) and sold to
Crozier as a Colt. According to Crozier, it had "been in the [Reilly's] family"

Name Jerry Crozier Address Homer, N.Y.
Alterations made to arm during period of ownership none

Sold to Thayer July 15, 1969.

Name Charles W. Thayer Address Dept. of Geology, Univ of Penn.
Phila PA. 19104.
Alterations made to arm during period of ownership

Name Address
Alterations made to arm during period of ownership

Name Address
Alterations made to arm during period of ownership

Name Address

Received the firearm described in the foregoing Bill of Sale:

Address of Seller

Federal Firearms License No.

Name of Seller

SIGNED AND SEALED this day of 19

I certify that the above information is true and complete, and that I have the right to sell and give possession of the firearm described.

BILL OF SALE FOR ANTIQUE FIREARMS

RECEIVED OF RUSS PRITCHARD, residing at 23 Maple Road
Waynesboro, Va 22186, the sum of Three Hundred dollars (\$ 300.00) and
1/2 in trade in full payment of the following described firearm:

Maker's Name GRISWOLD

Maker's Address GRISWOLDVILLE, GA.

Country and Date of Manufacture CSA, Civil War

Model 2nd (Octagonal bbl housing) Serial Number(s) 2491, VII, II

Condition (See other side for NRA Condition Standards) VG.

Ignition System perc

Barrel(s) one Barrel(s) Length 7 7/16"

Caliber(s) or Gauge(s) .36

Over-all Length 14" Weight

Accessories Included none

Markings, Engravings and Inscriptions (Describe) ser. no "2491" on R frame, cyl., R
bbl. housing, sub. ser. "1" on underside of wedge, top flat loading lever, R of
hammer (internal), R of trigger (inside), not on hand, front of trig. guard. VII chase on
brass on L side backstrap at butt (inside grips), L side trig. grd (under grips), R.
side bottom of frame. II on rear of cyl, under bbl behind latch lug, rear of frame (R), trig. grd at
Stocks or Grips (Describe) butt. Anchor scratched on butt of backstrap. Muzzle of cyl. numbered
1 to 6 between chambers
plain walnut(?), oiled.

Repairs, Alterations and Replacements (Describe) NONE

Historical Claims (Authenticity and Origin of Arm and/or Inscriptions, etc.)

GRISWOLD & GUNNISON 2nd MODEL REVOLVER
SN 2491

\$ 3000.00 very good

Charles W. Thayer, Parksburg, PA

February 8, 1980

Note on Rev.

U-40

4500-

Sold some unmarked extra
family silver that was of
no use and bought this gun
for myself on my 40th birth-
day. Silver was at a high
that it has never achieved
since

I purchased from
Horse Soldier -
Gettysburg, Pa,
for \$16000 @
1994

From the Gun Room of



Henry M. Stewart, Jr.

To whom it may concern:

In view of all the rumors and conversation as to its authenticity and at the request of purchaser, Mr. Russ Pritchard, I have exhaustively examined Griswold Ser #2491 brass frame revolver both on its own merits and alongside two accepted genuine specimens #810 and #1746. In addition I have had Mr. Larry Beyer, former head of KCA Model Makers Shop and thoroughly conversant in metals and tools, check all facets of gun singly and against #810 and #1746. The opinion of both of us is that #2491 is genuine as a Confederate Griswold revolver.

I personally purchased #810 for \$10.00 from a barber shop in Ephrata, Pa. circa 1939 and have absolute confidence in its authenticity as a standard for comparison of methods of manufacture and markings. The #2491 revolver conforms in all aspects to this standard of the rounded barrel frame model as well as the same 2nd model #1746.

Very truly
Henry M. Stewart Jr.

Wynnewood Pa
Feb 23, 1980