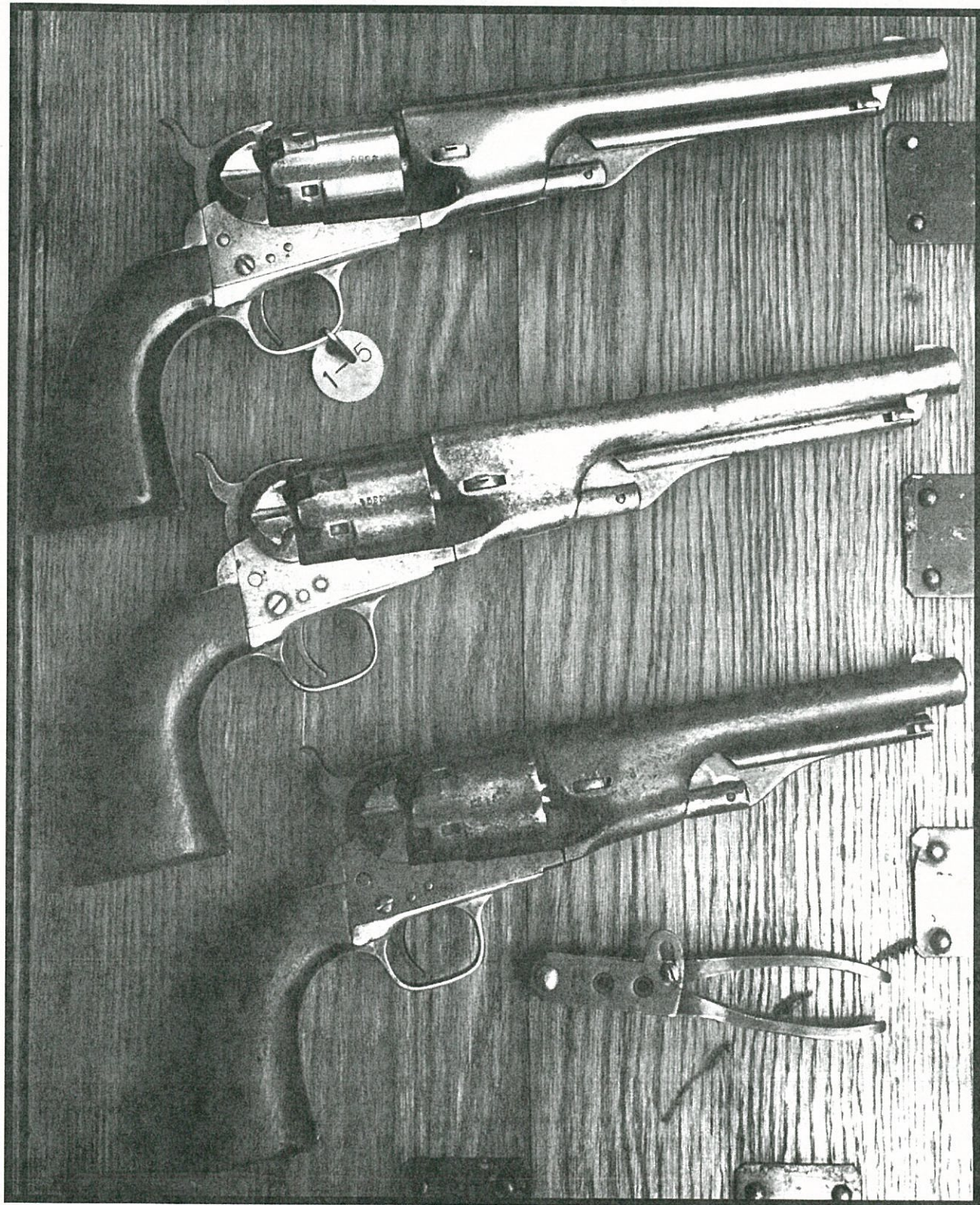


EXT 14
Plated Army
2366



Three 'Ben McCulloch Colts'

Among the surviving Ben McCulloch Colts are the three of 1,000 shown here. They include #2588 (top), a first shipment gun which is the finest example to surface thus far, with some original blue—*Bob McAlister Collection*. Also pictured are #2394 (center), another first shipment gun, with barrel shortened 3/8-inch, and #2493, a second shipment gun, with barrel shortened two-inches—*both from the Milo & Carolyn Mims Collection*.

The Ben McCulloch Colts . . .

1,000 Six-Shooters for Texas

Colt revolvers associated with the Confederacy have a special appeal for collectors. This appeal is enhanced when the pistols are also associated with a famous rebel.

by MILO MIMS

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The complete story of the Ben McCulloch Colts—the 1,000 Model 1860 Army revolvers that McCulloch obtained from Colt for Texas—has never been told. Many Colt collectors have heard or read of their existence, however, the guns could not be definitively documented because the published information was incomplete, confusing and, in one very important case, incorrect as well.

At long last, in a new book to be published by this writer soon, a Civil War-period puzzle is pieced together to reveal the complete picture and to establish, once and for all, a distinctive Texas Confederate variation of the Colt 1860 New Model Army—the Ben McCulloch Colts.

The following article and photos are excerpts from the book and appear here for the first time as a preview prior to publication. Watch for an announcement of the book's limited edition release in the next issue of "The Texas Gun Collector."

Introduction

For more than forty years, Colt collectors have known that the largest number of Model 1860 Army pistols shipped south just before the Civil War went to Colt's New Orleans agents—Kittredge & Folsom. This information was first published in a copyrighted article by John E. Parsons in the March, 1955, issue of *The Texas Gun Collector*. The article, entitled, "New Light on Old Colts," was subsequently published as a monograph by Parsons.

"Recent discovery in a remote attic at Colt's of four volumes of serial records relating to Civil War times," wrote Parsons, "throws new and revealing light on production of that period." He went on to report that "The largest consignment of all (i.e. sales by Colt to southern states), 1100 Army pistols, went to Kittredge & Folsom in New Orleans between March 28th and April 9th (1861). This firm was of Northern origin, but its customers undoubtedly had Confederate sympathies," concluded Parsons.

This revelation by Parsons was most interesting, but the plot thickened in 1959, with the publication of *Colt, A Collection of Letters and Photographs About the Man—the Arms—the Company* by James I. Mitchell. In his book, Mitchell published letters from Ben McCulloch, the former Texas Ranger and close friend of Sam Colt, revealing that it was Texans who had the "Confederate sympathies" referred to by Parsons and that they were the recipients of Colt's Army Pistols via Kittredge & Folsom in April of 1861.

But there was a 100-pound fly in the proverbial ointment—Parsons had written that there were 1,100 guns shipped between March 28th and April 9th to Kittredge & Folsom. And, Colt history writers had naturally repeated this number, ad infinitum, since 1955, based upon Parson's report. However, all other records researched in recent years by this writer, including those at the Texas State Archives and at the Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin were in agreement: 1,000 guns were ordered from Colt by Major Ben McCulloch and 1,000 guns were delivered to him in New Orleans for trans-shipment to Texas. How do we separate the 1,000 from the 1,100 described by Parsons? Who got the additional 100 guns?

This writer called Ms. Kathleen Hoyt, Colt Historian, at the Colt plant in Hartford for help. The discrepancy was explained and Ms. Hoyt kindly said that she would research the records and advise.

Shortly thereafter, a letter from Ms. Hoyt was received which contained the following important information: "I have checked the records on shipments of 1860 Army Model revolvers shipped between March 28th and April 9, 1861 to Kittredge & Folsom in New Orleans and can advise that the quantity was 1,000 units.

"The revolvers were packed 50 per box," continued Ms. Hoyt. "Five boxes totaling 250 guns were shipped on March 28th and fifteen boxes totaling 750 guns were shipped on April 9th."

Continued on next page

The Ben McCulloch Colts continued

Finally, we had a definitive answer—it was 1,000 guns, instead of 1,100—a fact which agreed with our Texas research documents. Perhaps Parsons miscalculated while examining the original old volumes, or maybe he'd been supplied with inaccurate information. In either case, it can now be said with authority that all of the 1,000 Colt Model 1860 Army pistols shipped to Kittredge & Folsom in New Orleans, and delivered to Major Ben McCulloch upon their arrival there in April of 1861, were ultimately bound for Texas—a Confederate state that had seceded from the Union two months before.

The good news for Colt collectors today is that 1,000 secondary Confederate Colts—all associated with a famous Texas Ranger, who would ultimately be killed in action as a Confederate General—can be specifically identified by the Colt History Department. The number of surviving guns is, of course, a mystery, but the great opportunity for discovering previously unknown specimens is exciting.

A Preview of the Narrative History

“Pistols . . . tonight on the New York steamer,”¹ wrote Major Ben McCulloch on April 9, 1861, from his room in New Orleans’s elegant St. Charles Hotel. “I will ship them to Cross & Hensley at Port Lavaca,” continued McCulloch, “and will direct them to forward the first 250 to Austin at once.”

The letter, addressed to Henry McCulloch, his brother, was being hand-carried back to Texas by a trusted family friend so that word could be forwarded to Texas Governor Edward Clark in the event that the regular mails were interrupted. The drums of war were beating hard—seven southern states had already seceded, Fort Sumter was under siege, rumors were rampant, ships from the south were being seized in New York Harbor, and there was even talk of a blockade of the south.

The pistols he was referring to were the first 250 of 1,000 New Model Army revolvers his friend, Samuel Colt, had agreed to provide to McCulloch and Texas on the cuff. Granting credit in stirring times like these would seem foolhardy to most, but Sam Colt couldn’t deny an old friend, or the State of Texas—where his guns had earned much of their legendary reputation.

McCulloch’s quest for the Colts had started six weeks earlier, when, after serving the Secession Convention as the Texas Military Commander at San Antonio in the bloodless capitulation of all U.S. forces in Texas, he wrote Sam Colt

on February 24: “Texas will have to defend . . . against the Indians and will need a thousand or two of your Army size pistols. Could they be sent to some house in Galveston or New Orleans . . . ? Write me immediately at Austin . . . tell me how to proceed so as to have the state buy 1,000 or 2,000. We will need them forthwith and must have them here by the first of April or they will be too late for those who take the field against the Indians.”²

McCulloch’s reference to “Indians,” was serious. It wasn’t a code-word for northern invaders as some have surmised, although he was obviously aware of the value the new Colts might eventually have to Texas Confederate troops. But, the withdrawal of U.S. forces in Texas (15 per-cent of the entire U.S. Army³) left the huge frontier undefended, except for the ever-present Texas Rangers and mounted militia. More

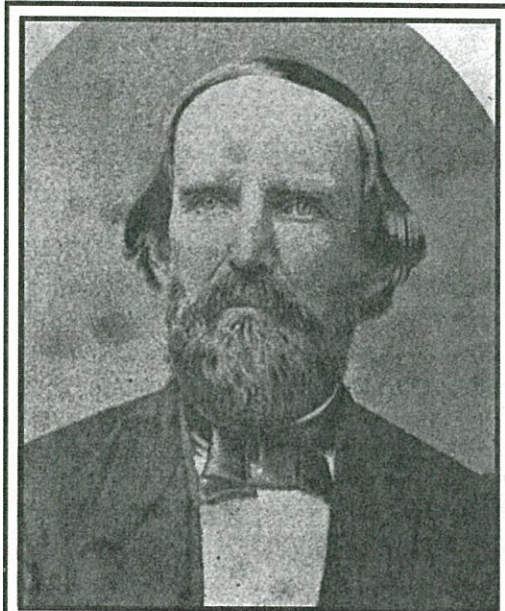
state troops were being organized who would attempt to occupy the soon-to-be abandoned U.S. forts, but they needed six-shooters to get the job done. And, although the Texas forces under McCulloch had seized the U.S. Arsenal at San Antonio, most of the firearms there were outdated single-shot muzzle-loading pistols and rifles. The U.S. troops, throughout the twenty permanent military installations in Texas,⁴ had been allowed to keep their personal sidearms. Colt Dragoons and/or 1851 Navy six-shooters, under the surrender terms, as they made their way south for transport back east.⁵

Less than two weeks later, Major McCulloch received the following: “An Ordinance to Authorize the Purchase of Arms for the Use of the State—We the people in Convention assembled, do declare and ordain . . . that Major Ben McCulloch⁶ (sic) is hereby ap-

pointed Commissioner to purchase, or otherwise obtain, for the State of Texas, one thousand Colt’s revolvers and one thousand Morse Rifles; and he is hereby authorized and empowered to pledge the faith of the State of Texas, for the fulfillment of any contract or contracts he may enter into pursuant to this ordinance”⁷

With the ordinance in hand, McCulloch headed east, taking a stagecoach to the Texas railhead at Alleyton, “the cars” from there to Galveston, and a steamship to New Orleans, passing through there on March 15, reported *The Picayune*, “enroute for Montgomery, Alabama.”⁸

McCulloch was a colorful and well-known figure in his time and his comings and goings were typically front-page news in Texas newspapers and in nationally-circulated periodicals as well. He was a particularly hot topic at this time because of his involvement in the surrender of the U.S.



Major Ben McCulloch had an urgent request of Colonel Sam Colt: 1,000 New Model Armys for Texas—Photo by Vannerson, circa 1861, Library of Congress.

Army's Department of Texas—a most controversial affair that had resulted in the U.S. villification of McCulloch as a treacherous rebel and in the labeling of General David E. Twiggs, U.S. commander in Texas, as a traitor, who had conspired with the Texans weeks before the surrender.⁹

So, as McCulloch continued eastward, the newspapers followed his movements, and *The Richmond Dispatch* reported on March 21, that, "Col. (sic) Ben. McCulloch passed through Mobile on Saturday (March 16) enroute to Richmond to purchase arms for Texas. He will stop at Montgomery, with the view of inducing President Davis to order a regiment of mounted riflemen for the protection of the frontiers of Texas."¹⁰

Before arriving in Richmond, however, McCulloch made a daring trip north, into the stronghold of the enemy—the City of Washington. Arriving on the night of March 23, he went immediately to the home of California Senator William M. Gwin—¹¹ an old and trusted friend, with whose daughter, Lucy, he'd been romantically linked for several years.¹²

If President Lincoln had known that McCulloch, the fierce partisan chief and devout rebel, was only a few blocks from the White House, he might have kept one eye open while attempting to sleep in the Lincoln bedroom. Certainly, the new President had heard the false, but widely circulated, rumor earlier that month that McCulloch "was encamped in northern Virginia with five hundred Texas Rangers prepared to dash across the Potomac on 4 March, murder or kidnap Lincoln in the inaugural, and take over the capital."¹³

Although he had no designs on the person of Lincoln, his boldness in going into the heart of Washington was pure Ben McCulloch—straight into the enemy's camp—just like he'd done when scouting Santa Anna's forces for General Zachary Taylor before the Battle of Buena Vista in the War with Mexico.¹⁴

But, "It was deemed imprudent by his friends for him to remain in Washington on account of the part he took (in the surrender of) the Forts in Texas, and they advised him to go to Alexandria,"¹⁵ If McCulloch was discovered and detained by Federal officers while east of the Potomac River, it might mean the end of his mission to secure arms for Texas and the end of his freedom as well.

The next day, after crossing the Potomac into Alexandria, Virginia, McCulloch met with another old friend, Texas Senator Louis T. Wigfall, who later wrote that, "Ben McCulloch was here yesterday (March 24). He came on to buy Colt's pistols for a mounted regiment in Texas, which

he is authorized by the Confederate States to raise. He has gone to Richmond where I'll meet him tomorrow."¹⁶

Before he left Alexandria, McCulloch enlisted his old friend and business associate, George W. Morse (inventor of the center-fire cartridge and the Morse rifle), to go to Hartford in his stead and deliver the Texas Ordinance to Colt.

Writing Colt from Alexandria, on March 24, 1861, in a letter hand-carried to Hartford by Morse, McCulloch advised: "Mr. Morse will show you an ordinance passed by the convention of Texas. I will ratify any contract made by Mr. Morse in accordance with its provisions . . . Texas greatly needs the arms at present, they are to be placed in the hands of the Rangers who take the place of the regular troops who are now leaving the state."¹⁷

McCulloch's letter was accompanied by another letter dated

March 24 to Colt from Senator Wigfall, who added, "Mr. Morse, who is acting for Major Ben McCulloch, visits you for the purpose of purchasing arms for a mounted regiment in Texas. The ordinance which will be shown you gives Major McCulloch full authority to make the contract and I am satisfied that the money will be paid at the time specified by the Confederate States."¹⁸

Just four days later, the first shipment of New Model Army pistols left Hartford for their trip to New Orleans via the Port of New York and, "The guns were packed 50 per box. Five boxes totaling 250 guns were shipped on March 28th . . ."¹⁹

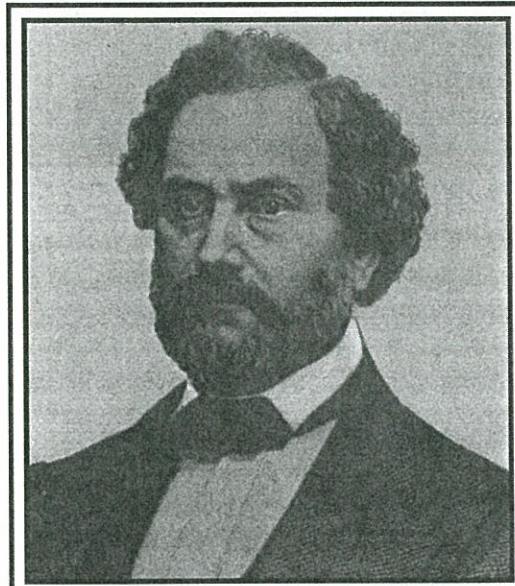
The reason only one-fourth of the guns were shipped initially may well have been because of the on-going seizure of ships in New York at the time. Colt's people probably figured

it was prudent to start with 250 and if they got through to New Orleans, it would be safe to forward the remaining 750. Coincidentally, the same vessel the first 250 were shipped on, the 253-foot side-wheel steamer *Bienville* of the New York, Havana and New Orleans Line, had been seized in New York Harbor on March 23, when it arrived from New Orleans with a southern cargo. Customs agents refused to honor the Confederate States clearance on the vessel, seized its \$800,000 cargo, and the ship was not released until March 29.²⁰

Two days later, when the steamer *Bienville* left New York Harbor at noon on April 1, 1861, with a northern cargo bound for New Orleans via Havana, among the items listed on the ship's manifest was a consignment for "Kittredge & Folsom."²¹

As the side-wheel steamer made its way south along the Atlantic coast, The United States Secretary of the Treasury,

Continued on next page



Colonel Sam Colt came through for his old friend, McCulloch, and for the State of Texas—Rose Collection, Western History Collection, University of Oklahoma Library.

Surviving Examples of 'Ben McCulloch Colts'

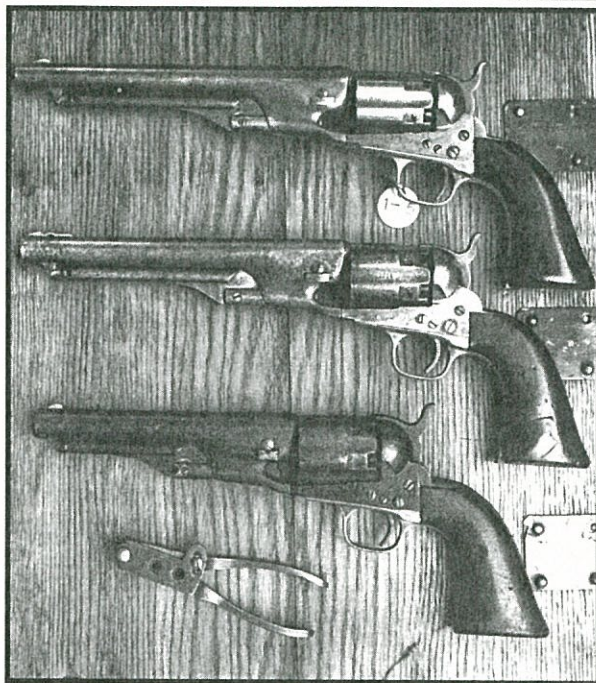
In the Texas area, only five of the Ben McCulloch Colts have come to this writer's attention so far—three from the first shipment of 250 and two from the second shipment of 750—all of which appear in photographs on this page. As you will note, serial numbers are not sequential.

The known guns are as follows:

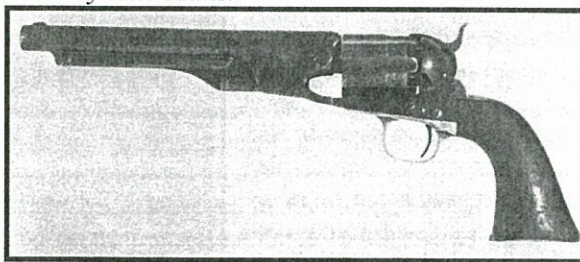
- #2394.....shipped March 28, 1861
- #2493.....shipped April 9, 1861
- #2588.....shipped March 28, 1861
- #2658.....shipped March 28, 1861
- #4392.....shipped April 9, 1861

All of the known guns have fluted cylinders and four of the five have Hartford-marked barrels, while #4392 has a New York-marked barrel. They were all originally shipped with 8-inch barrels. Factory letters on all five guns indicate shipments in lots of 50, which agrees with Colt Historian Kathleen Hoyt's research.

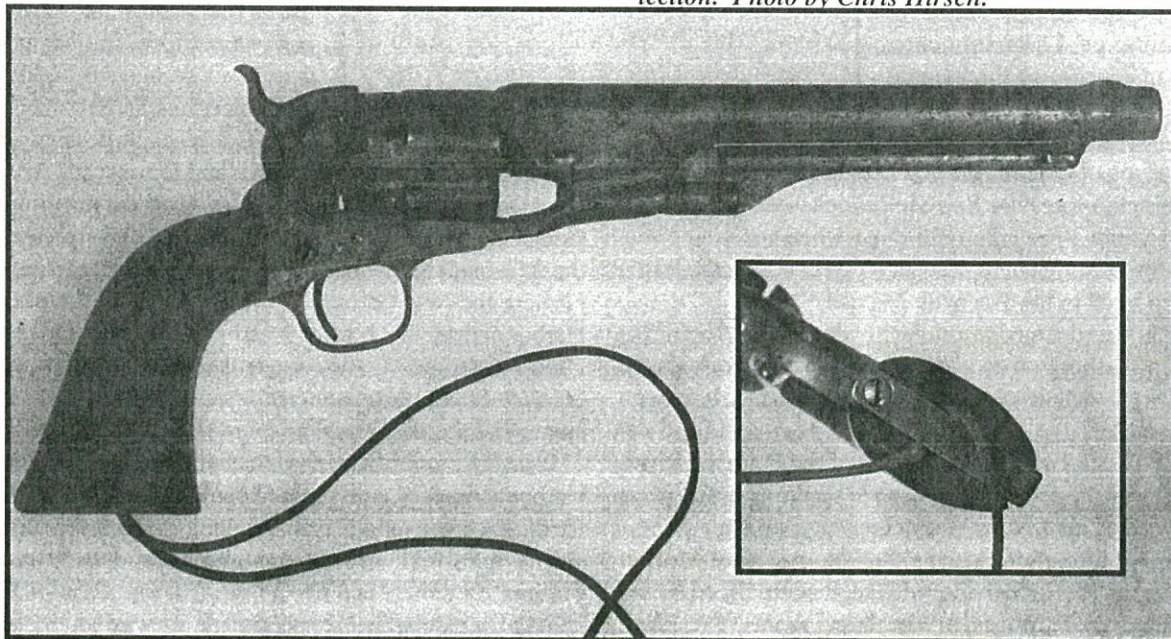
If you own or know of a Ben McCulloch Colt, please contact this writer, Milo Mims, at: P.O. Box 701314, San Antonio, TX 78270; or call (210) 491-0870; or e-mail at texicanica@aol.com. Certainly, there are more of them out there and we would like to include them in the upcoming book. Thanks.



From top, #2588—Bob McAlister Collection—and #2394 and #2493—Milo & Carolyn Mims Collection. Photo by Milo Mims.



Number 4392 (above), a second shipment gun and the highest serial number so far—Chris Hirsch Collection. Photo by Chris Hirsch.



Ben McCulloch Colt #2658—a first shipment gun which has been modified with an undercut in the walnut grips to allow the use of a lanyard (inset)—Jim Hopkins Collection. Photos by Chris Hirsch.

2366
3727

The Ben McCulloch Colts continued

Salmon Chase, closed the Port of New York to all New Orleans-bound commerce, announcing on April 3rd that "no more goods will be entered at this port and bonded for transportation to the gulf states until further notice."²² The first 250 of the Ben McCulloch Colts had managed to slip out of New York just under the wire. The rest of the guns would have to be sent to New Orleans by another route.

Meanwhile, McCulloch had received news at Richmond that the first guns were on their way and on March 29, he wired his trusted personal agent in New Orleans, A. Glenn & Co., via Morse's Magnetic Telegraph Company with instructions to: "Write Gov. Clark of Texas that (the) pistols are on the way to New Orleans."²³ But there was an apparent snag in the deal, and McCulloch added: "Will not be delivered without the money. Have the Legislature appropriate the funds to pay for them immediately. Cost twenty five dollars each & express charges. Ben McCulloch."

Unfortunately, the Texas Treasury was broke and while the original ordinance for the purchase of arms provided that: "the purchase money for said arms shall not be made payable until the first of August," Colt was out of the country, in Havana, and his agents in Hartford and New Orleans were not about to give McCulloch that much credit on their own. The bottomline here rested solely with Colonel Colt.

On April 2, McCulloch wrote Sam Colt from the Spotswood House in Richmond with a plea for credit: "If consistent with your views and interest you will confer a favor on the rangers of my state by telegraphing your agent in New Orleans to close the contract on the Conditions of the Ordinance of the Convention, in the event of my not being able to otherwise raise the funds to pay for the pistols. The rangers will take the field immediately and cannot do well without them. I will leave in the morning for New Orleans and will be there by the 7th and will stop at the St. Charles Hotel." The original letter bears the following handwriting of Sam Colt, who had just returned from Havana—"Telegraph Mr. McCulloch and our agents also."²⁴

McCulloch arrived at the St. Charles Hotel in New Orleans a day early, on April 6, and since Colt's wire had not arrived as yet, he began writing an appeal to Governor Clark: "I have just arrived in this city and learn from Col. Colt's agents that part of the thousand pistols will be here in a day or two and the rest very soon. It would be better for the State if the money could be raised and the pistols paid for at once. All my agent (George W. Morse) could do was to have them forwarded to this place, as Col. Colt was not at home and he (Colt's agent) does not think himself authorized to close a bargain on the conditions of the ordinance."²⁵

As luck would have it, right in the middle of McCulloch's letter-writing to Governor Clark, he was interrupted by a message from Kittredge & Folsom and he added the following good news: "Colt's agent is just in receipt of a telegram ordering him to turn the pistols over to me on their arrival . . . I have telegraphed Colt to send the others by Adams Express . . . these pistols are much better than any ever used in our state and will give satisfaction to the Rangers without a

doubt . . . I shall remain here and forward them as they arrive."²⁶

Sam Colt had come through for his old friend, Ben McCulloch, and he had once again extended credit to the State of Texas. The guns were now on the cuff, and as the United States teetered on the brink of Civil War, Colt undoubtedly knew he was taking a calculated risk.

McCulloch's decision on April 6 to have the remaining 750 guns sent via Adams Express was not only prudent, but necessary, considering the fact that no steamships bound for the Gulf were being allowed to leave the Port of New York. Adams Express utilized much more circuitous routes, via both rail and riverboat, and they would typically beat the ocean-going New York mail steamers to points south with the latest newspapers from the north. There was no crackdown as yet on goods traveling south on the rails and rivers, although that would change in very short order.

Three days later, on April 9, the second shipment of pistols, "fifteen boxes totaling 750 guns,"²⁷ left Hartford via Adams Express—on the same day that the first 250 guns finally arrived in New Orleans.²⁸

Over the next few days, as McCulloch made arrangements to have the first shipment sent on to Texas and while he waited for the arrival of the second shipment, all hell was breaking loose in Charleston Harbor. The first shots of the Civil War were fired by Confederate batteries in the early morning hours of April 12 at Fort Sumter—the besieged bastion of U.S. Army occupation in Confederate South Carolina.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

We must leave Major McCulloch in New Orleans for now, with news of the outbreak of the Civil War swirling around him, as we end our preview of the narrative history here. The rest of the story, including what happened to the guns after they finally reached Texas, will be featured in the upcoming book. Look for an announcement of its limited edition release in a future issue of *The Texas Gun Collector*.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

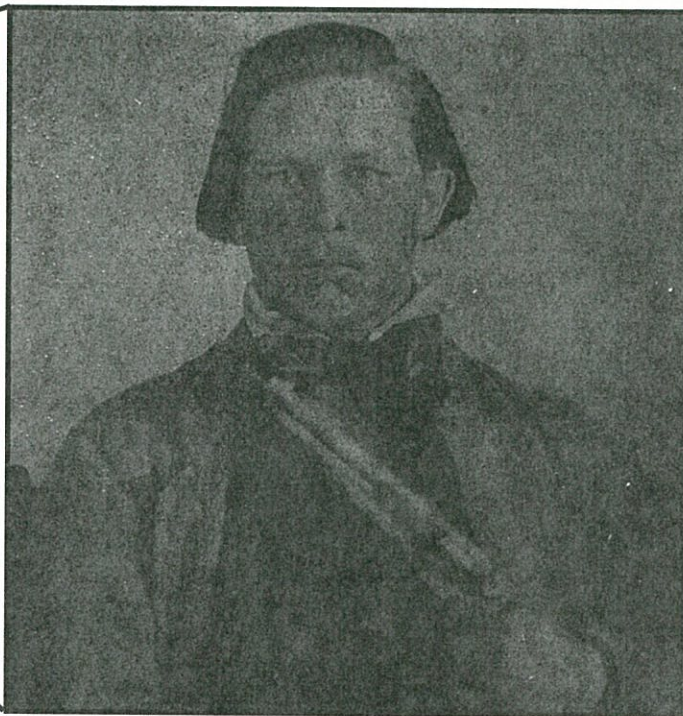
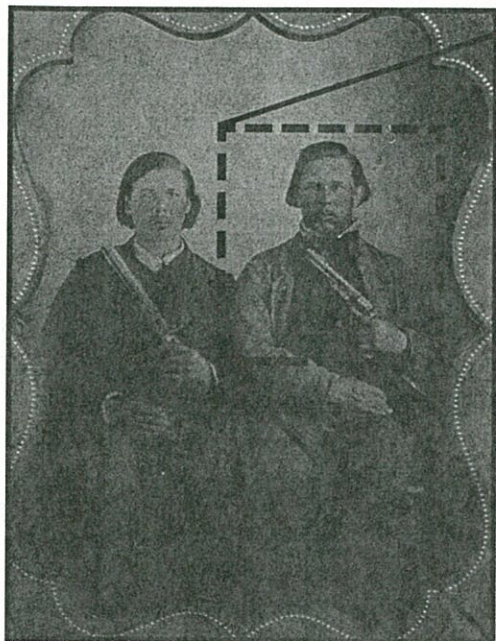
This writer extends special thanks to Ms. Kathleen Hoyt, Historian, Colt's Manufacturing Company, for her help in researching and documenting the numbers that confirm the provenance of the Ben McCulloch Colts. Special thanks, too, to Colt collectors Jim Hopkins, Chris Hirsch and Bob McAlister for providing photographs of their guns or for making their guns available for photos. More thanks, too, to Greg Gibbs for allowing the use of his Civil War-period photos of Confederate soldiers with Colt fluted Armys, and to Jose "Che" Guerra for sending this writer, in 1994, a photocopy of John E. Parsons' ground-breaking article, "New Light on Old Colts," which appeared in the March, 1955, issue of *The Texas Gun Collector*.

END NOTES

¹McCulloch Family Papers, Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.

Continued on next page

Confederate Soldiers with Colt Fluted Armys



Upon their arrival in Texas, the Ben McCulloch Colts were issued to Texas Confederate troops. We don't know if the two soldiers depicted here in the half-plate ambrotype (top) or the sixth-plate ambrotype (bottom) were from Texas, but they are armed with fluted Armys. Since about half of early production went south, and half of that went to Texas, the odds are 50-50 that these soldiers are Texans. Please note: the Army in the top photo has a 7.5-inch barrel, while the Army in the bottom photo has an 8-inch barrel—*Collection of Greg Gibbs. Copyright Greg Gibbs.*



The Ben McCulloch Colts continued

² James I. Mitchell, *Colt, a Collection of Letters and Photographs about the Man, the Arms, the Company* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: The Stackpole Company, 1959).

³ J.J. Bowden, *The Exodus of Federal Forces from Texas, 1861* (Austin, Texas: Eakin Press, 1986).

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Official Records, War of the Rebellion*, 1889 ed., "Series 1, Volume 1."

⁶ The spelling of McCulloch's last name often became "McCullough" in written instruments and publications of his time because the "ch" at the end of his name was silent.

⁷ Texas State Archives.

⁸ *The New Orleans Picayune*, March 16, 1861.

⁹ Major J.T. Sprague, U.S.A., *The Treachery in Texas* (New York: Press of the Rebellion Record, for the New York Historical Society, 1862).

¹⁰ *The Richmond Dispatch*, March 21, 1861.

¹¹ Mrs. D. Giraud Wright, *A Southern Girl in '61* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1905).

¹² Thomas W. Cutrer, *Ben McCulloch and the Frontier Military Tradition* (Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993).

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Victor M. Rose, *The Life and Services of Gen. Ben McCulloch* (Austin, Texas: The Steck Company, 1958 facsimile of the 1888 Edition).

¹⁵ Wright, quoting her mother, Mrs. Louis T. Wigfall, wife of Texas Senator Wigfall.

¹⁶ Wright, quoting her father, Senator Louis T. Wigfall.

¹⁷ Mitchell.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Kathleen Hoyt, Historian, Colt's Manufacturing Company, in a letter to Milo Mims dated March 24, 1995.

²⁰ *The New Orleans Picayune*, March 30, 1861.

²¹ *Ibid.*, April 10, 1861.

²² *Ibid.*, April 3, 1861.

²³ Texas State Archives.

²⁴ Mitchell.

²⁵ Texas State Archives.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Hoyt to Mims, 1995.

²⁸ *The New Orleans Picayune*, April 10, 1861.

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Design, layout and photo-imaging of this eight-page feature on "The Ben McCulloch Colts," was done on the Adobe PageMaker (Version 6.0) computer program by Milo Mims.

A Pre-Civil War History of Major Ben McCulloch

Born in Tennessee in 1811, McCulloch grew up with Davy Crockett as a neighbor and family friend and eventually followed him to Texas in 1836. Enroute to a rendezvous with Crockett, young McCulloch came down with the measles and was delayed long enough to miss out on the Alamo siege and massacre. Soon thereafter, he joined the forces of Sam Houston, another old family friend, who plucked him from the ranks and put him in charge of one of the *Twin Sisters* cannon at the Battle of San Jacinto.

Following his participation in this triumphant battle for the birth of the Republic of Texas, McCulloch worked as a surveyor and Texas Ranger, earning a reputation as a fierce partisan who could scout, lead and fight among the best of them. He and his younger brother, Henry, were legends in their own time on the frontiers of Texas, ranking with the likes of Jack Hays and Samuel Walker.

During the War with Mexico, McCulloch served as Chief of Scouts for General Zachary Taylor and the expeditions of his Spy Company made national news in the pages of *The New Orleans Picayune*. His exploits before the Battles of Monterey and Buena Vista earned McCulloch Brevet ranks in the U.S. Army of Captain and then Major—a rank McCulloch continued to associate with himself after his discharge in 1848 and up until the outbreak of the Civil War.

In 1849, Major McCulloch joined the California Gold Rush and while a fortune eluded him, his reputation as a fighter earned him the title of Sheriff of Sacramento in an election held the same day that fellow Texas Ranger Jack Hays won the election for Sheriff of San Francisco. Shortly after his return to Texas, in 1853, McCulloch was appointed United States Marshal for Texas by President Franklin Pierce, a post he held until his resignation in 1859.

Throughout his career as a Ranger and lawman, McCulloch was a strong proponent of Colt's pistols, worked occasionally as an agent for Colt, and was also involved financially with both the Morse and Joslyn rifle patents. He was a connoisseur of the latest developments in firearms technology and a crack shot, quite capable of impressing crowds while demonstrating the best guns available.

Just before being appointed Commissioner to purchase arms for the State of Texas, McCulloch had been in command of Texas troops who seized the Alamo and Arsenal and other main buildings in San Antonio, thereby convincing General David Twiggs to surrender the public property and U.S. forces to the Commissioners of the Texas Secession Convention on February 17, 1861.

Often a confidant with politicians and power-brokers in Washington, McCulloch's reputation as a partisan chief, his involvement in the seizure of San Antonio and subsequent reports that he was traveling toward the U.S. capital, spawned national rumors that he and a band of Rangers were going to attempt to kidnap Abraham Lincoln—M.M.