

E. DIXON LARSON

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Dec. 27. 1982

Dear Mr. Barton:

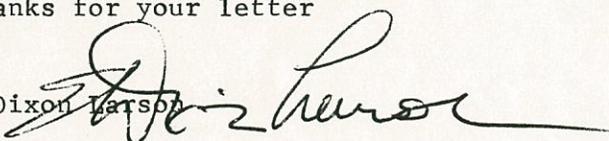
Re: Your letter of December 18. 1982 - Colt #5607

We know that the Springfield Armory Received Lot 6 of Colts from the range of 5522 - 6530 Feb. 17. 1874. Included in this lot was some that had been turn ins from Company K. A very few were issued to Companies D & I which included the turn ins from Company K which could account for the no. 5607 having formerly been with Company K. Thus it is possible the Cavalry Colt is what it was purported to be. Holster should be the 1858 Remington Civil War type.

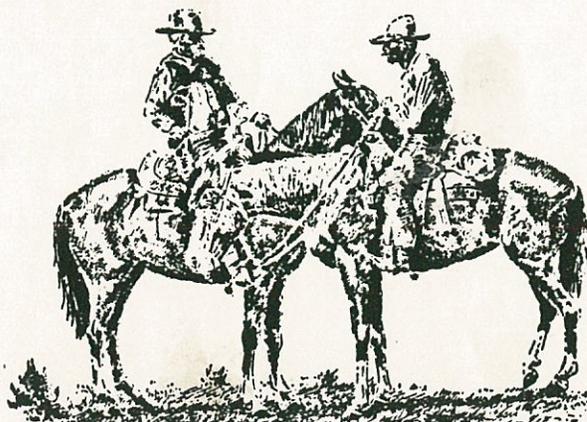
Custer relics are most interesting and a big field in their own right. I especially like the Springfield Carbines that were turned in by the 7th to the Bozeman Armory M.T. after the fracas. Most of these are in the correct number range and many re-stocked and arsenal marked. They never saw the fracas but were with the 7th on the expedition and consequently have some status.

Thanks for your letter

E. Dixon Larson



P.S. Suggest you write for the Dec. 17th issue of Gun Week as I have a feature on Custer Guns.
EDL/rn



December 1, 2017

Research on the story attached to Model 1873 Colt Single Action Army Serial #5607!

The story as told by Richard Barton (Long time owner of the above Colt). The Colt came out of Company K of the 7th Cavalry as a deserter gun.(Indicated by letter response from E. Dixon Larson to Richard Barton, dated Dec 27, 1982) In researching this gun, it is known that Serial #5607 comes out of Lot 6 which includes Serial #5522-6530. Lot 6 was one of the main sources of Colt Revolvers issued to the 7th Cavalry in April 1876 prior to the Black Hill expedition including the Battle of Little Bighorn.

Colt Single Action revolvers with documented 7th Cavalry history or Little Bighorn battle association include serial numbers as follows:

Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #5505
Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #5637
Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #5740
Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #5743
Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #5773
Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #6048
Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #6067
Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #6269
Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #6405

This revolver #5607 is in the range of known 7th Cavalry/Battle of Little Bighorn Single Action revolvers.

Further research as to the possibility that the revolver was from Company K of the 7th Cavalry lead to the RM Vivas & Son reference Library. This research uncovered the information detailing known Benteen-Reno commands Colt Revolvers serial numbers known to be Custer/Little Bighorn guns. The following is a list from RM Vivas & Son Reference Library.

Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #386
Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #1418
Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #2499
Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #5529
Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #5743
Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #5773
Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #6559

As you can see, Colt Revolver #5607 falls between #5529 and #5743 on the list. There is a strong probability that Revolver #5607 came out of a Benteen-Reno company of the 7th Cavalry/Little Bighorn Battle.

The story goes that #5607 came out of Company K of the 7th Cavalry.(Richard Barton letter reply). Researching the Battle of the Little Bighorn in "Custerbattlefield.org" as to which Company was under which command, it is noted that Captain Frederick Benteen

commanded Companies H, D, and K. The information that revolver #5607 falls within known Colt Revolver, Model 1873, Benteen-Reno Commands Serial Numbers and Captain Benteen commanded Company K leads credence to the probability Colt #5607 could have been a Benteen Company K revolver.

The last part of the story indicates that the Colt #5607 was a deserter gun. Further research using Nichols "Men With Custer" indicates that in April 1876 63 men were assigned to companies B, C, G, and K by the Cavalry Depot and 2 men reenlisted directly into their companies. This date is right before the Black Hills Expedition.

Thanks to "Men With Custer" we know how all 65 enlistments ended.
7 were killed on 25 June 1876 at the Battle of Little Bighorn
1 was killed on 30 Sep 1877 at Snake Creek
1 was discharged because of his under age enlistment
8 received disability discharges
1 received an honorable discharge early
29 completed their enlistments
18 deserted

This information indicates that a large number of men deserted after the Battle of Little Bighorn. (27%).

The belief that Colt #5607 was a deserter gun lies in the fact that the revolver is in excellent condition. Colt #5607 is a Gold Seal Revolver as outlined by John Kopec and its condition exceeds other Custer Range Colts that he has examined. Also #5607 escaped the recall and never had its barrel shortened, which means it was not under Army control during the recall.

Included with Colt 1873 Revolver #5607 is a historically correct holster. It is a 1858 Remington Civil War flap type. This is the correct holster that would have been used at the Battle of Little Bighorn, further adding the strong possibility that the story has merit. The holster was with the Colt when Richard Barton acquired it as referenced by the Letter Reply from E. Dixon Larson dated December 27, 1982.

Unfortunately hard evidence does not exist to prove definitely that the story concerning Colt #5607 is factual but the circumstantial evidence shows the story has basis and the strong possibility exists that the story following this revolver could be based on fact. The hard fact that cannot be disputed is the high condition of Colt Revolver #5607 as indicated by everyone who has ever inspected the revolver.

This 1873 Colt Revolver #5607 had to mean something very special to someone for it to have survived all these years in the condition that it is currently in. Whether it was a curse or a shrine will never be known. I do know how it feels to hold it in my hand and gaze at its beauty and wonder who else has handled it throughout history.


Ray D Shinpaugh, CPA

Little Bighorn [edit]

We ask you, humbly, to help.

Hi reader in the U.S., it seems you use Wikipedia a lot; that's great! It's a little awkward to ask, but this Friday we need your help. It's December 8 and time is running out to help in 2017. We're not salespeople. We're librarians, archivists, and information junkies. We depend on donations averaging \$15, but fewer than 1% of readers give. If you donate just \$3, the price of your Friday coffee, Wikipedia could keep thriving. Thank you. — Jimmy Wales, Wikipedia Founder



MAYBE LATER CLOSE

External video



Gall

C-SPAN Cities Tour – Billings: Battle of the Little Bighorn , 38:44, C-SPAN Park Ranger Steve Adelson describes the battle on-site

While the Terry–Gibbon column was marching toward the mouth of the Little Bighorn, on the evening of June 24, Custer's Indian scouts arrived at an overlook known as the Crow's Nest, 14 miles (23 km) east of the Little Bighorn River. At sunrise on June 25, Custer's scouts reported they could see a massive pony herd and signs of the Native American village roughly 15 miles (24 km) in the distance. After a night's march, the tired officer who was sent with the scouts could see neither, and when Custer joined them, he was also unable to make the sighting. Custer's scouts also spotted the regimental cooking fires that could be seen from 10 miles (16 km) away, disclosing the regiment's position.

Custer contemplated a surprise attack against the encampment the following morning of June 26, but he then received a report informing him several hostiles had discovered the trail left by his troops. Assuming his presence had been exposed, Custer decided to attack the village without further delay. On the morning of June 25, Custer divided his 12 companies into three battalions in anticipation of the forthcoming engagement. Three companies were placed under the command of Major Marcus Reno (A, G, and M) and three were placed under the command of Captain Frederick Benteen (H, D, and K). Five companies (C, E, F, I, and L) remained under Custer's immediate command. The 12th, Company B under Captain Thomas McDougall, had been assigned to escort the slower pack train carrying provisions and additional ammunition.

Unknown to Custer, the group of Native Americans seen on his trail was actually leaving the encampment and did not alert the rest of the village. Custer's scouts warned him about the size of the village, with Mitch Bouyer reportedly saying, "General, I have been with these Indians for 30 years, and this is the largest village I have ever heard of." Custer's overriding concern was that the Native American group would break up and scatter. The command began its approach to the village at noon and prepared to attack in full daylight.

5607 was indicated by m Barton to have come from Company K of the 7th Cavalry. (known Benteen - Reno commands guns include # 5529, 5743 (from RM Uvas & Son Reference Library) Benteen commanded Company K.

#5607
1873
45LC
7 1/2

RM Vivas & Son

Purveyors of Fine Small Arms
Reference Library

John Kopeck
530-222-4440

The Bighorn

ARTICLE TITLE: **Serial Numbers of Known Custer/Little Bighorn Guns**

AUTHOR/SOURCE: Excerpted from: Custer Battle Guns By John S. du Mont

SYNOPSIS: This list contains serial numbers of uns known to have been used by US forces at the Battle of The Little Bighorn / Custers Last Stand

KEYWORDS: US United States Military Battle of The Little Bighorn Custers Last Stand Armstrong George Custer

DATE ADDED/EDITED: 1/11/4

Exerpts from:

Custer Batle Guns
By John S. du Mont, 1974
The Old Army Press
1513 Welch
Ft. Collins Colorado 80521
University of Montana-Missoula Library
M
978
C9872D

John A Kopeck, com
authentication

Approximately 38,030 rounds of Springfield carbine ammo and 2954 rounds for Colt pistols were expended or lost during the conflict by **Benteen-Reno commands.**

- Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #386
- Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #1418
- Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #2499
- Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #5529 5607 my GUN
- Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #5743
- Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #5773
- Colt Revolver, Model 1873, #6559
- Winchester Carbine, Model 1866, #17720, Indian rifle
- Winchester Rifle, Model 1866, #21220, Indian rifle
- Winchester Carbine, Model 1866, #123674, Indian rifle
- 1 Spencer Rifle, #18529, taken from Cheyenne at Chadron Creek 10/24/1878
- 1 Old Colt's Revolver (Navy Model), #59102, taken from Cheyenne at Chadron Creek 10/24/1878
- 1 Henry Rifle, #20446, taken from Cheyenne at Chadron Creek 10/24/1878
- 1 Henry Rifle, #8972, Indian rifle
- 1 Henry Rifle, #8862, Indian rifle
- 1 Henry Rifle, #2194, Indian rifle

National Arms Co., Derringer, #2443, .41 ca., Custer family inventory listed
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #1196, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #3146, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #3197, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #12221, Turned in by Capt. Henry Jackson, 7th Cav.
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #16160, Turned in by Benteen, 7th Cav., 'unserviceable at Battle of Little Big Horn' & late '76 campaign
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #16680, Turned in by Benteen, 7th Cav., 'unserviceable at Battle of Little Big Horn' & late '76 campaign
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #16687, abandoned after battle
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #17425, Turned in by Capt. Henry Jackson, 7th Cav.
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #17485, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #17497, Turned in by Capt. Henry Jackson, 7th Cav.
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #17895, Indian decorated
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #17940, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #17974, abandoned after battle
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #18137, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #18141, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #18202, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #18383, Turned in by Capt. Henry Jackson, 7th Cav.
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #19714, abandoned after battle
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #20498, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #21023, Turned in by Benteen, 7th Cav., 'unserviceable at Battle of Little Big Horn' & late '76 campaign
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #21313, Turned in by Benteen, 7th Cav., 'unserviceable at Battle of Little Big Horn' & late '76 campaign
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #21439, Turned in by Benteen, 7th Cav., 'unserviceable at Battle of Little Big Horn' & late '76 campaign
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #21483, Turned in by Capt. Henry Jackson, 7th Cav.
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #21551, Turned in by Benteen, 7th Cav., 'unserviceable at Battle of Little Big Horn' & late '76 campaign
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #21553, Turned in by Benteen, 7th Cav., 'unserviceable at Battle of Little Big Horn' & late '76 campaign
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #21561, Turned in by Benteen, 7th Cav., 'unserviceable at Battle of Little Big Horn' & late '76 campaign
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #21573, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #21609, Turned in by Benteen, 7th Cav., 'unserviceable at Battle of Little Big Horn' & late '76 campaign
Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #21669, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance

Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #21685, Turned in by Benteen, 7th Cav., 'unserviceable at Battle of Little Big Horn' & late '76 campaign

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #21841, Turned in by Benteen, 7th Cav., 'unserviceable at Battle of Little Big Horn' & late '76 campaign

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #22268, Turned in by Benteen, 7th Cav., 'unserviceable at Battle of Little Big Horn' & late '76 campaign

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #33155, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #33815, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #34723, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #35487, Turned in by Capt. Henry Jackson, 7th Cav.

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #36442, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #37178, Turned in by Capt. Henry Jackson, 7th Cav.

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #37225, Turned in by Capt. Henry Jackson, 7th Cav.

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #38853, Turned in by Benteen, 7th Cav., 'unserviceable at Battle of Little Big Horn' & late '76 campaign

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #39149

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #39253, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #39448, taken from a Cheyenne

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #42259, recapture from indians, Chief of Ordnance, Ordnance Notes, No. CXV, October 1, 1879

Springfield Carbine, Model 1873, #43617, Turned in by Capt. Henry Jackson, 7th Cav.

.50 Caliber Carbine, Model 1866 & 1868, #5283, Indian rifle

.50 Caliber Carbine, Model 1866 & 1868, #13203, Indian rifle

.50 Caliber Carbine, Model 1866 & 1868, #32261, Indian rifle

.50 Caliber Carbine, Model 1866 & 1868, #33149, Indian rifle

Return to RM Vivas & Son Reference Library [Main Page](#)

Email: Robert@VivasAndSon.com

The April, 1876 7th Cav recruit return listed 63 men assigned to companies B, C, G, and K by the Cavalry Depot at Jefferson Barracks, St. Louis, MO and 2 men who reenlisted directly into their companies. Of the 63 assigned by the depot 9 had prior Army enlistments and one had Navy service. There were then 12 men who are known to have had prior service.

Thanks to Nichols' "Men With Custer," we know how all 65 enlistments ended. I have looked only at these enlistments to see how many of these men deserted.

Of the 12 men with prior service:

- 2 were killed on 25 June 76 at the LBH.
- 1 was killed on 30 Sep 77 at Snake Creek.
- 1 received a disability discharge.
- 1 received an honorable discharge about a year early, but Nichols did not give the reason.
- 6 completed their enlistments.
- 1 deserted.

The deserter was the man with Navy service. His record in Nichols is not clear but he appears to have served later in the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps and to have received a pension.

Of the 53 men without prior service:

- 3 died.
- 2 were killed on 25 June 76 at the LBH.
- 1 was discharged because of his under age enlistment (Theodore Goldin).
- 7 received disability discharges (although not stated as the cause, 2 of these men had been wounded at Snake Creek).
- 23 completed their enlistments.
- 17 deserted.

Of the 17 deserters:

- 11 were not apprehended. 3 of these men appeared to have received some sort of amnesty later in life. 1 committed suicide shortly after his desertion.
- 1 surrendered and was discharged by order of a court martial.
- 5 were apprehended

Of the 5 apprehended deserters:

- 2 deserted again and were not apprehended
- 1 was discharged by order of a court martial.
- 1 was discharged by order of a court martial and escaped.
- 1 was courtmartialed but escaped; it's not clear if the court martial reached a decision.

Of the 65 men on the recruit return 18 deserted, 2 deserted twice.

The order of their desertions were:

7 Jul 76
Littlefield, Co B (deserted again 22 Jan 77)
Williamson, Co G

17 Jul 76
Bonner, Co B (deserted again 6 Sep 76)

30 Sep 76
DeTourreil, Co B

15 Oct 76
Chapman, Co E (Originally assigned to Co B but transferred to Co E before the LBH)

2 Jan 77
Henderson, G. , Co B

2 Feb 77
Callan, J., Co B

29 Mar 77
Barsantee, Co B (present at the LBH)
Clark, Co B (present at the LBH)

17 Apr 77
Morrow, Co B

22 Apr 77
Caldwell, Co B
Tinkham, Co B

2 Sep 77
Tulo, Co G

19 Nov 77
Doll, Co B

15 Aug 78
Dwyer, Co G (present at the LBH)

10 Apr 79
Rowland, Co G

29 Jun 79
Simons, Co B

25 Mar 80
Criswell, H., Co G (present at the LBH)

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