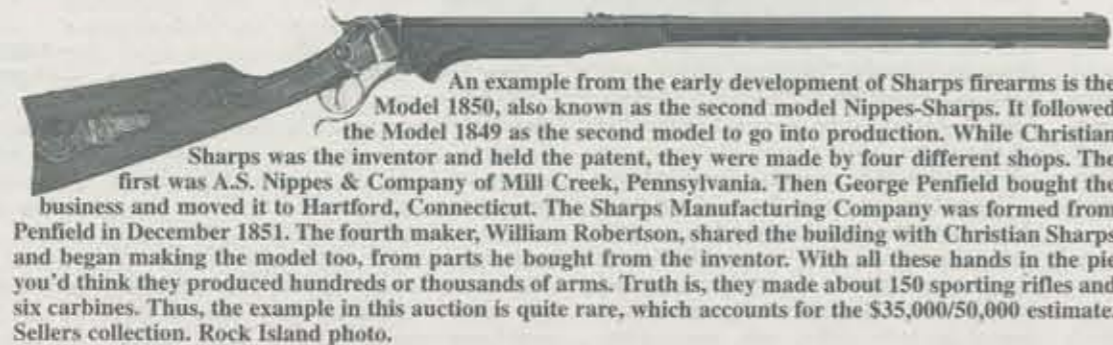




Carlos Gove was an Old West blacksmith, gunsmith, and gun dealer. This tomahawk is an example of his work. Estimate is \$18,000/25,000. Sellers collection. Rock Island photo.



Horace Smith and Daniel Wesson are credited with developing the self-contained metallic cartridge, which fits into a handgun's revolving cylinder. But the concept of a bored-through cylinder had been previously patented by Rollin White. He eventually assigned his patent to Smith & Wesson in 1856, and the rest is history. The gun shown is an original Rollin White patented revolver, which he made for Daniel Wesson. From the Frank and Karen Sellers collection, the estimate is \$25,000/35,000. Rock Island photo.



An example from the early development of Sharps firearms is the Model 1850, also known as the second model Nippes-Sharps. It followed the Model 1849 as the second model to go into production. While Christian Sharps was the inventor and held the patent, they were made by four different shops. The first was A.S. Nippes & Company of Mill Creek, Pennsylvania. Then George Penfield bought the business and moved it to Hartford, Connecticut. The Sharps Manufacturing Company was formed from Penfield in December 1851. The fourth maker, William Robertson, shared the building with Christian Sharps and began making the model too, from parts he bought from the inventor. With all these hands in the pie you'd think they produced hundreds or thousands of arms. Truth is, they made about 150 sporting rifles and six carbines. Thus, the example in this auction is quite rare, which accounts for the \$35,000/50,000 estimate. Sellers collection. Rock Island photo.



New Haven, Connecticut, gunmaker A.A. Kellogg obtained some of the Model 1878 Sharps sporting rifles and had master engraver L.D. Nimschke apply gold inlay and other enhancements. The rifle shown here is one of these, estimated at \$25,000/50,000. Sellers collection. Rock Island photo.



Only 320 Model 1853 Sharps shotguns were made from 1854 to 1856. Few were engraved, which accounts for the rarity of this example. Gustave Young, a master engraver of the period, provided gold inlay and the artistic panel scene. The estimate is \$50,000/75,000. Sellers collection. Rock Island photo.



German immigrant Frank W. Freund came to America in 1857, fought for the Union in the Civil War, then moved to Cheyenne, Wyoming, and opened a store. He realized he could improve upon the design of the Sharps rifle. When the company ignored his innovations, Freund took out his own patents and altered the Sharps to his liking. Some he did not change. Both types bear his name. This example is an engraved Model 1874 from his Freund armory in Wyoming. It's estimated at \$50,000/75,000. Sellers collection. Rock Island photo.

Model 1886 Winchester also sold for \$57,500 (est. \$40,000/60,000).

A sidelock double-barrel rifle made by Daniel Fraser, .600 Nitro caliber, in a case, sold for \$115,000 (est. \$90,000/120,000). An authentic Old West stagecoach attributed to the Abbot-Downing Company of Concord, New Hampshire, sold better than expected at \$109,250 (est. \$50,000/70,000).

In a group of Model 1876 Winchester rifles offered, one in excellent condition in .50-95 express caliber sold for \$34,500. An example with a half-nickel finish and deluxe wood reached \$115,000. A carbine attributed to the Northwest Mounted Police was \$6325. A musket with British proofs and Baker sights sold for \$20,700.

Not everything at a Martin auction is expensive. A reproduction pepperbox pistol sold for \$86.25. An Allen & Thurber real pepperbox in fair shape was \$460. A 1911-17 LeFever Arms catalog went at \$373.75. A LeFever 1918 catalog did better at \$575. In German Second World War pistols, a group of ten P-38s ranged from a high of \$747.50 to \$488.75.

Go to Greg Martin's Web site (www.gregmartinauctions.com) for more information. On the East Coast on June 27,

Alderfer Auction & Appraisal in Hatfield, Pennsylvania, offered about 480 lots of guns and accessories. Highlights were a Winchester Model 1886 rifle, .38-56 caliber, octagonal and round barrel, \$6325 (includes buyer's premium); a Colt Single Action Army revolver, 7 1/2" barrel, shipped in 1886, with factory letter, \$3575; a Brown Bess flintlock musket, 2nd model, with bayonet, \$3080; a Colt single-action revolver, shipped 1895, with letter, \$2200; a seven-barrel volley gun by H. Pieper Liege, \$2860; a double-barrel shotgun by Churchill, 12 gauge, \$2970; and a Spencer Model 1865 carbine, \$2200.

**Supreme Court Rules Against Gun Collector, Now in Prison**

On June 21 U.S. Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer issued the court's opinion to uphold a previous appeals court decision to put Victor A. Rita Jr. away for almost three years for lying to a grand jury about buying a gun kit for a Second World War Russian submachine gun, which had been rendered inoperable. His plight may have simply faded away, except two weeks



Kerr revolvers were made from 1859 to 1866 at the London Armoury in England. Their best customer was the Confederate States of America, which may have purchased up to 8000 guns. A year after the Civil War ended, so did the London Armoury. This example, serial number 814, is an engraved, early production model in a factory case with accessories. From the collection of the late Val Forgett, it's estimated at \$15,000/22,500. Rock Island photo.

used to assemble a PPSH-41 sub-machine gun, as machine guns that could not be possessed legally without registration. In April 2003, ATF agents began a nationwide recall of the PPSH-41 parts kits, contacting customers who had purchased the kits from InterOrdinance and asking customers to turn the kits over to the ATF. One of the customers discussed the recall with an InterOrdinance employee, who had advised him not to turn the kit over to the ATF.

"Petitioner [Victor Rita] had purchased a PPSH-41 parts kits from InterOrdinance in January 2003. At the time, petitioner was an asylum officer with the Department of Homeland Security. ATF agent Bonnie Levin contacted petitioner and informed him of the recall. During a conversation on September 4, 2003, petitioner agreed that he would turn the kit over to the agent the following week.

"After speaking with Agent Levin, petitioner placed a call to InterOrdinance. Two days later, he mailed the PPSH-41 parts kit to the company. Petitioner did not attend the scheduled meeting with Agent Levin. Through his attorney, petitioner subsequently turned over a different parts kit that he had purchased from InterOrdinance, one that was not the subject of a recall.

"On October 27, 2003, petitioner testified before a federal grand jury in the Western District of North Carolina that was investigating InterOrdinance's sales of PPSH-41 parts kits. Petitioner denied having any telephone conversation with InterOrdinance before he returned the kit to the company. Petitioner also claimed that Agent Levin had not asked him to turn over the PPSH-41 parts kit to ATF.

"Based on the two false statements before the grand jury, petitioner was charged in an indictment with two counts of perjury, two counts of making false statements and one count of obstruction of justice. A jury found him guilty of all five charges."

Victor Rita, now 59, had no criminal record. He has 25 years of military service. He served with the U.S. Marine Corps in Vietnam and later joined the U.S. Army and Army Reserve. He is also a veteran of the first Gulf War. He received over 35 medals, commendations, and awards for service to his country.

In February 2006 the U.S. government dismissed all 83 counts against InterOrdinance except four for failure to maintain proper records.

# The Firearms Column

by Robert Kyle

A rare opportunity to bid on items from one of the most significant private arms accumulations in America—if not the world—will occur when part one of the Frank and Karen Sellers collection is offered by Rock Island Auction in Moline, Illinois, September 8-10.

"His collection is rich in history as it pertains to our country and rich in history in the development of firearms," said auction president Patrick Hogan. "Frank has every model of Sharps, except one. His collection has over fifty serial-number-one firearms as well as prototypes, patent models, and rare and exotic variations. The collection is simply too large and important to present at one auction. Our December eighth through tenth auction will feature the balance."

Hogan said about 30% of what Sellers acquired over 40 years will be offered in September. The author of many gun books and articles, Sellers is best known for *Sharps Firearms*, the bible of this Civil War and buffalo hunting weapon, first published in 1978 and reprinted many times. Sellers, who writes catalog descriptions for Rock Island Auction, described his own guns in the September catalog. He will also attend the sale.

Included in the over 2700 lots in Rock Island's September sale will be 14 Kerr revolvers from the Val Forgett collection; almost 200 Colt New Service revolvers from the William "Wild Bill" Powell estate; a show display of 25 Second World War Liberator pistols from the Ralph Hagen estate; 14 miniature, scale model guns from the Joseph Kramer collection; and 60 rare single-shot rifles collected by Jim Drummond, a California rancher and vineyard owner.

"The list of guns is huge, and the auction is expected to top seven million dollars," Pat Hogan said. For more information, go to Rock Island's Web site (www.rockislandauction.com) or call (800) 238-8022.

**Hollywood Guns Donated by Tom Selleck to National Firearms Museum**

Visitors to the National Firearms Museum just outside Washington, D.C., in Fairfax, Virginia, can see seven guns used by actor Tom Selleck in some of his Westerns. He donated a reproduction Henry rifle, a Model 1876 Winchester, a Schofield revolver, a Colt Richards conversion revolver, a Colt open-top revolver, a Colt Single Action Army revolver, and a Model 1886 Winchester.

Also on display in a special exhibit of L.C. Smith shotguns are personal hunting arms used by Humphrey Bogart and Clark Gable. For more information, go to the museum's Web site (www.nationalfirearmsmuseum.org).



This classy Model 1886 Winchester has the distinction of having appeared on exhibit in the Paris Exposition Universelle in 1889. Engraved with a unique English scroll style by the master of his time, John Ulrich, the .45-90-caliber rifle has its original case. Estimated at \$60,000/80,000, it sold for \$92,000. Greg Martin photo.



Not something for everyday deer hunting, this Model 1873 Winchester is one of the most decorative known. Under its gold plating are relief-carved game and hunting scenes. The monogram WES indicates it was the property of General William E. Strong of the Indian Wars era. The date "Jan 1st 1875" also is engraved. Author R.L. Wilson used three views of this rifle in his book of Winchester engravings. The strong estimate of \$250,000/350,000 did not deter bidders, who sent it to a \$632,500 finish. Greg Martin photo.



A Civil War presentation snare drum, bearing a plaque stating it was given to George L. Miller by Company F of the 14th Massachusetts Volunteers on July 14, 1862, sold for \$23,000 (est. \$20,000/23,000). Greg Martin photo.

**Hollywood Guns and Real Ones Bring over \$8 Million in California Auctions**

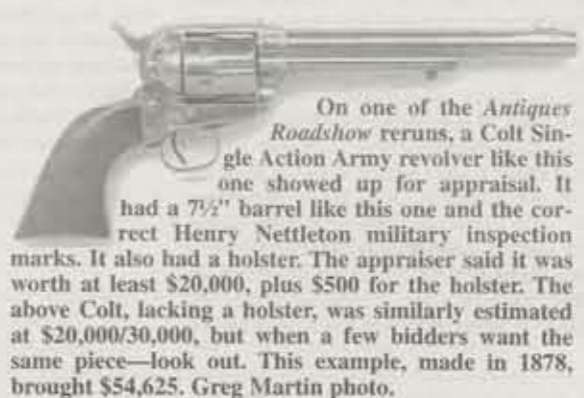
A pair of California auction companies attracted the attention of collectors worldwide in June. Famous Hollywood movie guns were sold by Little John's Auction Service. At Greg Martin Auctions classic Colts, Winchester, and a real stagecoach crossed the block when the company celebrated with a fifth anniversary auction.

The Stembriage armory collection at Little John's on June 5 consisted of over 460 lots from the company that provided the motion picture industry with guns for over 80 years. The most important rental guns were eventually identified, cataloged, and removed from the inventory by Walter J. O'Connor, a firearms expert and movie star authority, who had the foresight that the props should be preserved for posterity.

This group was later purchased



Winchester's plan in the 1880's to make a special line of Model 1873 rifles called One of One Thousand and charge a whopping \$100 for them sounded like a good idea. For some reason, however, they made only 136. This shortfall has resulted in soaring values for this specimen. It wasn't long ago that they sold for around \$100,000. Greg Martin had this one, serial number 18387, in his June auction estimated at \$200,000/300,000. Would someone pay that much? Yep, and more. It went at \$356,500. Greg Martin photo.



On one of the *Antiques Roadshow* reruns, a Colt Single Action Army revolver like this one showed up for appraisal. It had a 7 1/2" barrel like this one and the correct Henry Nettleton military inspection marks. It also had a holster. The appraiser said it was worth at least \$20,000, plus \$500 for the holster. The above Colt, lacking a holster, was similarly estimated at \$20,000/30,000, but when a few bidders want the same piece—look out. This example, made in 1878, brought \$54,625. Greg Martin photo.



The Cartwrights in the *Bonanza* TV series, like most good cowboys, carried Colts. When all three of their authentic Single Action Army Colts were offered, it seemed fitting that Lorne Greene's brought the most money. As the patriarch, he played Ben Cartwright. His sold for \$44,800. The Dan Blocker (Hoss Cartwright) sidearm sold for \$42,560. The one for Michael Landon (Little Joe) followed up with \$36,960. The estimate for each was \$5000/10,000. Little John's photos.

by Robert Petersen, founder of Petersen Publishing Company. His line of special interest periodicals started in the mid-1940's with *Hot Rod* magazine. His love of cars was equalled by a fondness for firearms, which spawned *Guns & Ammo* magazine. Later came *Motor Trend* magazine and many others.

Petersen had planned to create a museum using the Stembriage collection. It would be adjacent to his automotive museum. On March 23, 2007, he died of cancer. He was 80. The guns he acquired from Stembriage retained ID tags for which film and/or actor used it. The high prices they earned revealed that guns used by imaginary heroes can be more valuable than those connected to real Old West lawmen and lawbreakers.

Han Solo was the make-believe hero in *Star Wars*. His futuristic ray gun weapon, called a DL-44 Heavy



Authentic Old West stagecoaches don't often become available at auctions, which accounts for why this one sold for \$109,250, well above the \$50,000/70,000 estimate. Made in Concord, New Hampshire, by Abbot-Downing Company, it was one of the coaches in a stage route operated by Ben Holladay in the mid-19th century. Greg Martin photo.



The hefty pistol John Wayne is resting on the shoulder of Kim Darby is a reproduction Colt Walker model made by the Replica Arms Company in Italy. Used in the 1969 film *True Grit*, for which Wayne won an Academy Award, the gun was actually carried by Darby; Wayne was sighting it in for her in this photo. It sold for \$35,840. A few minutes earlier an identical Colt sold for \$45,920. How could anyone top John Wayne? If he's Clint Eastwood, and the Colt Walker appeared in the classic *The Outlaw Josie Wales*. The catalog did not state that this Colt was actually carried by Eastwood, only that it was in the picture. Now for some movie trivia. Clint Eastwood (real name, well, Clinton) turned 77 on May 31. John Wayne (1907-1979) was born Marion Morrison. Kim Darby turned 60 on July 8. Her real name is Deborah Zerby. Little John's photos.



Who'd have thought that the futuristic ray gun carried by Harrison Ford as Han Solo in *Star Wars* was really a modified Second World War Model 1896 German "broomhandle" Mauser pistol? Its naturally odd design lent itself to space-age customizing. The "1896" in the model designation means the concept was developed that long ago. The gun sold out of this world at \$201,600. The pocket change estimate was \$3000/6000. Little John's photo.

Blaster, was actually a real military gun, ironically one that may have seen combat against the Allies. It's a modified Second World War German Model 1896 Mauser semiautomatic pistol, serial number 64673, commonly called a "broomhandle." Timing couldn't have been better to sell this item; the media was buzzing with *Star Wars* talk because the original film celebrated its 30th anniversary in June. Carrying a modest estimate of \$3000/6000, it sold for \$201,600 (includes buyer's premium).

The Ringo Kid was another creation from Hollywood. He was John Wayne's character in the 1939 film *Stagecoach*. The memorable gun The Kid used was a Winchester model 1892 carbine with an extra-large lever and short barrel. Two identical examples were on the set during shooting. One was in the Stembriage collection. Estimated at \$15,000/30,000, it sold for \$128,800.

Another mythical hero, Indiana Jones, used a Smith & Wesson Model 1917 .45-caliber revolver in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. It sold for \$72,800 (est. \$2000/4000).

The three examples just mentioned were real guns, but reproductions in the right hands in the