

# The St. Albans Raid

## The Confederate Raid On St. Albans, Vermont October 19, 1864

John D. Hamilton

During the latter course of the Civil War, Confederate forces undertook a number of operations along the northern U.S. border with Canada that were intended to disrupt the Union's focus on the military situation in the south. In particular, by inciting uprisings along the northern border with Canada, it was hoped to achieve several goals that would further the Confederate cause. Those aims included organizing the escape of prisoners of war and arousing dissident northern factions such as the Sons of Liberty. Both groups were to join in creating armed insurrections in northern border cities such as Chicago, bring the horrors of war to the people of the north, appropriate money that could be used by the Confederacy to finance the war, draw away Union manpower and material from active southern battlefields, and adversely effect Republican hopes in the Presidential election of 1865. President of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis, activated this plan in March 1864.

The subject of Confederate naval operations on the Great Lakes was previously the subject of a paper presented to A.S.A.C. by Steve Selenfriend and Ted Myers at the Pittsburgh meeting in October 1998. However, in commemoration of our meeting here in Burlington, this article will discuss the land operation that came to be referred to as the "St. Albans Raid"—the northernmost engagement of the Civil War.

James A. Seddon (1815-1880), Secretary of War for the Confederacy, had issued orders that authorized ". . . any fair and appropriate enterprises of war against our enemies, . . . and employ such soldiers as may be collected in any hostile operation offering, that may be consistent with the strict observance of neutral obligations incumbent in the British provinces."

The Hon. Jacob Thompson (1810-1885) of Mississippi, the Hon. Clement Claiborne Clay, Jr. (1816-1882) of Alabama, and James P. Holcombe of Virginia were appointed Special Commissioners of the Confederate States Government in Canada. Thompson had served as Secretary of the Interior under President Buchanan, and Clay had won election to the U.S. Senate in 1854 and 1859. Their task was to aid and abet any of the enterprises that might create havoc in the north. By the end of May 1864, Thompson, as head of the delegation, had established his headquarters in Montreal. However, it was in Toronto where the hotbed of Confederate civilian refugees and military escapees had congregated. The leader of the raid, 21-year-old Bennett H. Young, had been imprisoned at Camp Douglas, but escaped to Canada and enrolled as a divinity stu-



dent in Toronto. Upon contacting the Confederate commissioners in Montreal with a plan to raid northern border towns, he made his way to Richmond via Halifax, Bermuda, and Wilmington to obtain final approval. At Richmond, he was commissioned a provisional First Lieutenant in the Confederate Army and assigned to return to Canada, organize a special company of escapees, and create havoc along the border. By the very act of escaping from Union prison camps, escapees had already proven their daring and abundance of resource. Young returned to Canada and went alone into Vermont where he selected St. Albans for his initial attack.

The prosperous town of St. Albans, some 16 miles from the Canadian border, was a center for the building and repair of railroad locomotive engines and passenger and freight cars, and a hub for the Central Vermont Rail Road. It also had four financial banks—the State Bank, the St. Albans Bank, the First National Bank, and the Franklin County Bank. The raiders targeted only the latter three inasmuch as the State Bank's cash-on-hand operation was considered inconsequential. Additionally, Young did not want to spread his men out too thinly because the force under his command comprised only 21 escaped Confederate soldiers, few of whom were over 24 years of age.

### The raiders were as follows:

Bruce, Alamanda Pope	Lackey, Samuel Eugene
Butterworth, Daniel	Moore, Dudley
Collins, Homer Bworn	Price, Lewis
Collins, Thomas Bronsdon	Scott, George
Doty, James Alexander	Spurr, Marcus A.
Gregg, Samuel Simpson	Swager, Charles Moore

Higbie, Charles	Teavis, Squire Turner
Hutchinson, William Huntley	Teavis, William T.
McGorty, Joseph	Wallace, Caleb McDowall
McInnis, John	Young, Bennett Henderson
Moss, John E.	

Young arrived in St. Albans on the 10th of October and checked into one of the hotels as a divinity student. Young spent his days in St. Albans locating and spying out the banks and livery stables. He also made excursions out of town to check out the several possible escape routes back to Canada. Young even had the audacity to pay a call on the Governor's mansion where Governor Smith's wife showed the "nice-mannered" divinity student about the mansion, stables, and grounds. It was Young's intention to burn the Governor's mansion to the ground.

Young's men, dressed in civilian clothing, filtered into St. Albans days before the 18<sup>th</sup> of October by various routes and checked in at different hotels. The 18<sup>th</sup> had originally been selected as the day of the raid, but as it turned out, that was the town's market day and Young concluded that there would be too many people present for his men to control, so they decided to wait until the following day.

At 3 o'clock in the afternoon of the 19<sup>th</sup>, the raiders all assembled in the center of town and told people on the streets they were Confederate soldiers, although none of Young's men were in uniform. One raider, Joseph McGorty, wore a "butternut suit," but this would not have been recognized as a Confederate uniform by most of the citizens living in a town on the Canadian border. Young carried a Confederate uniform in his satchel that he had had made in Montreal, but he did not wear it during the raid. All of the raiders carried satchels and later maintained that they all had worn some component that might have identified themselves as Confederate soldiers, even an item as small as a single military button. However, each was armed with a "belted pair of Navy sixes." Later, authorities at the Canadian town of Stanbridge identified several of the captured revolvers as being of Colt manufactory, but the captives did not tell the Justice of the Peace there where they had gotten their arms.

The raiders were also prepared with 50 four-ounce bottles of Greek fire (naptha, sulfur, and elemental phosphorus), which would burst into flames when the flasks were broken and the chemicals made contact with the air. They ordered all citizens on the streets to gather in the public square where they could be held at bay and more easily controlled. Of greatest concern was a possibility that an alarm might reach the railroad shops and foundry four blocks away, where over 200 workmen might prove to be a force not within their power to control.

The raider's initial orders to proceed to the public square were met with jeers from the populace, thereby inciting the Confederates to begin shooting at men who hesitated

to go. Bennett Young was seen to have shot one citizen in the back, jeweler Collins H. Huntington, who thought Young was merely intoxicated and paid no attention to his orders. Another man, a visiting New Hampshire building contractor named Elinus Morrison, attempted to take refuge in a store, but was shot in the abdomen and died two days later. Ironically, it had been rumored that Morrison was thought to be a southern sympathizer.

Three raiders were assigned to each of the three banks, from which they collected a claimed \$256,000; \$83,000 from the St. Albans Bank, \$75,000 from the Franklin County Bank, and \$98,000 from the First National Bank. Most of the cash was in the form of privately issued bank notes. In their haste, the raiders missed several sacks of gold coin and sheaves of signed but uncut bank notes.

The remaining raiders were occupied in crowd control, using their incendiary grenades in firing hotels and other buildings around the square to create confusion, and in securing horses and equipment for their escape. They would have succeeded in firing the entire town but for the failure of the chemical compounds with which they were armed. They had hoped to leave the town a burning inferno in retaliation for Union destruction in the Shenandoah Valley. Later this was offered in court as a prime motive for the raid, not for the robbery.

St. Albans had a population of about 4,000, which were more cantankerous Yankees than the raiders could contain. Suddenly, citizens began firing at the raiders from their windows, although most of the weapons fired were old, and the firing proved ineffective. However, one of the raiders, Charles Higbie, was wounded as they fled. A generalized skirmish ensued in which other citizens were wounded.

As the raiders departed and began their race for the border, Captain George P. Conger (1st Vermont Cavalry) quickly formed a posse of about 50 citizens and a few soldiers to give chase in buggies and on horseback. They were shortly followed by a second hastily organized posse of about 40 men, many of who were members of the Ransom Guard, a St. Albans militia company.

Thanks to the telegraph, Vermont's Governor (and a St. Albans resident), John Gregory Smith, was immediately notified of the raid at the state capitol in Montpelier and began taking steps to mobilize his State's forces. He quickly requested and received authorization from Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton for access to federal ordnance supplies stored at Vergennes. Smith initially requested enough bridles, saddles, sabers, pistols, carbines, etc., to equip 500 men.

At 7 p.m. that evening in New York City, Major-General John A. Dix, Commander, Department of the East, received Governor Smith's telegraphed plea for help and authorized the Provost-Marshal at Burlington to mount a force to "find the marauders and in case they are found on our side of the

line, pursue them into Canada if necessary and destroy them." Dix reiterated the necessity that "pursuit must be instant and continuous if carried across the line" [border].

At the Governor's direction, the acting Assistant Provost-Marshal-General at Brattleboro, Major William Austine, hastily collected about 100 convalescents and 30 of the Veteran Reserve Corps and, with two officers from Brattleboro General Hospital, departed by express train for St. Albans some 200 miles away, where they arrived at 8 a.m. the following morning. With news that the Confederates had been captured, the detachment of convalescents was sent back, replaced by 60 of the Veteran Reserve Corps under a Capt. Nickerson. By October 22<sup>nd</sup>, Governor Smith had returned to St. Albans to encourage the organization of cavalry forces at several points on the frontier. These troops were to be kept in readiness against the threat of further incursions, particularly against St. Johns, Vermont.

#### RETREAT, PURSUIT, AND CAPTURE

Young and his men headed northeast toward Sheldon, Vermont (eight miles from the border) intent on robbing the Missisquoi Bank there. They then set fire to a bridge over Black Creek to delay pursuit, but found the bank was closed that day. At this point the raiders split up, taking three different routes north. Young and his men pushed on and reached the Canadian border, where they changed into "civilian" clothing and dispersed. Some were captured at Stanbridge East, Waterloo, Dunham, and Frelighsburg. About \$88,000 was found on the 14 men who were captured.

The next day Young learned that seven of his men had been arrested and were being held at Philipsburg. He therefore felt compelled to surrender to the Canadian authorities and make a case for the Confederate operation, which they contended broke no Canadian law and was in retaliation for outrages committed in the Shenandoah Valley and elsewhere in the Confederate states. However, before Young could reach the authorities, the pursuing group from St. Albans captured him at a farmhouse where he was resting. They roughed him up and proceeded to haul him back to St. Albans in an open wagon. At the gate of the farmhouse, he seized an opportunity to eject his captors from the wagon and drove north toward Philipsburg. He was soon overtaken and faced another beating when a British Major happened upon the scene and interceded. In his attempt to reason with the Americans, the officer informed them that five others of the raiding party had just been arrested in Philipsburg, and two more at St. Jean-sur-Richelieu, and that all seven were to be sent to St. Albans the next day. Mollified by this, Young's captors agreed that the officer should be allowed to take Young under their escort to Philipsburg. Other raiders were also being held at Frelighsburg.

As it happened, however, Lord Monck, Governor General of Canada, had ordered local troops to assist in arresting the raiders, but there was no arrangement to return any prisoners to St. Albans. On the contrary, Canadian militia had been alerted to prevent recurrence of another posse entering Canada or of angry American vigilantes from coming to seize the captured raiders. Of the 21 raiders, 14 were captured, while 7 escaped through the Maritime Provinces. Only one of the raiders ever managed to return to Richmond and turn over any cash from the banks.

Canadian authorities swiftly moved Young and the other captives further away from the border to St. Jean-sur-Richelieu, where they were all held under most hospitable and friendly circumstances while awaiting their fate in the courts of Canada. Meanwhile, Governor Smith learned that a hasty trial was to be held before the local magistrate on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. At Smith's request, the Governor General of Canada ordered the legal proceedings removed to Montreal, to be heard by Judge Charles Joseph Coursol. Therefore, after a few days, Young and his comrades were sent to Montreal, where they were again confined under cordial conditions and extended a great deal of sympathy by the citizens of that city.

#### EXTRADITION DEMANDED

Extradition of the raiders was demanded by the United States Government. It was then realized that a historic trial and legal battle was in the making. The American incursion across the border to apprehend Young and his party aroused great indignation among the Montreal population. The Confederate Commissioners in Canada had no trouble in securing the services of Montreal's leading lawyers. Therefore, a Queen's Counsel was forced to act as attorney for the United States in the Canadian courts.

The U.S. contended that Young and his men were not Confederate soldiers. Their extradition was demanded for the criminal offenses of murder and robbery under the laws of Vermont. They were arraigned on November 7<sup>th</sup> for an enquiry into the facts of the raid.

When the case was called in Police Court on December 7<sup>th</sup>, magistrate Coursol conceded that his court did not have proper jurisdiction and the prisoners were discharged. The funds taken in the raid were returned to them. However, at the immediate behest of the U.S. representative, their extradition was demanded for having committed criminal offenses outlined under terms of the Webster—Ashburton Treaty of 1842. The U.S. position was that the prisoners were guilty of robbery, arson, assault, and murder, which were extraditable, and their status as soldiers under orders from the Confederate government to raid upon U.S. territory was disputed. Justice James Smith of the Superior Court issued a warrant to rearrest

the raiders. However, with collusion from the Montreal police chief, the warrants were not immediately served, giving the raiders time to escape. They were subsequently rearrested near Quebec, probably heading to the Maritimes and the next vessel southward bound.

The trial became a celebrated event, forcing an issue between England and the United States. A 30-day delay was granted in order to enable messengers from Richmond to return with certified copies of Young's commission and orders from the Confederate Government and other records to show that the prisoners were Confederate soldiers acting under orders of their government. An appeal was made to President Lincoln to allow a Canadian lawyer passage to Richmond to bring back the necessary documents demanded by the Canadian court. Lincoln refused his consent. Every possible effort was made to prevent any messenger from Richmond from bringing back the papers. However, just before the trial ended, the necessary documents arrived bearing the great seal of the Confederacy. A young Kentucky widow, whose identity was never revealed, smuggled the papers through to Canada. Young and the other defendants were discharged on April 5, 1865, by the court upon the grounds that they were Confederate soldiers entitled to the status of belligerents and duly authorized by their Government to engage in expeditions against the United States.

As regards to such acts of lawlessness or violence, the Queen's Counsel in England opined, "As a matter of fact, raids of this description have been consistently permitted and justified by and on behalf of the United States. On what principle then can they be denied to the so-called Confederate States? It is for the belligerents themselves to deal with these questions; and where authority, either expressed or implied, is given by one belligerent to do the act, it is an act of war for which alone the belligerent is responsible."

The legal battle was not quite over. The Attorney General of Canada held Young and his five men on a warrant from Toronto, which charged a violation of the neutrality laws of Canada in that the raiders fomented the plan on Canadian soil. Young and his men were immediately transferred to Toronto and again incarcerated. After four days of delay, they obtained an examining trial in which the only testimony against Young was provided by Col. Thompson's former secretary and confidant Godfrey J. Hyams. Hyams' unsupported testimony was discredited and Young was released on a \$10,000 bond, which was promptly furnished by Canadian sympathizers. The war ended April 12, 1865. Finding no case could be further made against Young, he was finally released months later.

#### CLOSING THE BARN DOOR AFTER THE HORSE IS GONE

As a result of the raid, measures were immediately undertaken to strengthen troop dispositions along the north-

eastern border. Frontier cavalry units composed of seven companies from New York State, three from Massachusetts, and two from Vermont (the 1st and 2nd Vermont Cavalry) were assigned to guard their respective areas. For this duty, 1,500 Vermonters were trained in Burlington and occupied new barracks in St. Albans under the command of Bvt. Major General George Jerrison Stannard. However, these forces were subsequently disbanded in the summer of 1865.

Among the arms transferred by the Ordnance Department to Vermont on December 13th, 1864, were 1,200 Cavalry Sabers (at \$6.70 each) and 1,200 Remington Carbines (at \$23.00 each) under voucher No. 23,374. On the same date, 1,200 sets of Horse Equipment (at \$37.85 each) were transferred under voucher No. 23,376, while under voucher No. 23,378, 1,200 Remington Army Pistols (at \$12.00 each) and 120,000 Ballard Carbine Cartridges (at \$24.00 per thousand) were also sent.

In as much as the Ballard carbine cartridge was a special .44 long rimfire (.44-33-250), and the cartridge for the Remington carbine took a .46-caliber short rimfire cartridge, it is believed that the carbines transferred to Vermont were incorrectly recorded by the storekeeper and actually were Ballards. Additionally, the first delivery on the Remington carbine contract did not occur until February 1865. Thus, no Remington Carbines were available to the Ordnance Department on the date the transfer was recorded. The author is grateful to ASAC member Howard M. Madaus for information supplied regarding this transaction.

#### POSTSCRIPT

The day after Magistrate Coursol's decision, General Dix issued General Order No. 97, which directed that in the event of further depredations by Confederate marauders, U.S. troops were "*if it be necessary, with a view to their capture, to cross the boundary between the United States and Canada . . .*" and "*to pursue them wherever they may take refuge, and if captured, they are **under no circumstances to be surrendered**, but are to be sent to these headquarters (New York City) for trial and punishment by martial law.*" This policy was fraught with the possibility that if Confederates residing in Canada were to create further incursions across the border, and were dragged back across the border, such action might cause the start of another armed conflict between Canadians and Americans. General Dix was forced, by direction of the President, to rescind his "hot pursuit" policy just three days after issuing it.

Clay found that he might be arrested for having authorized Young's raid upon St. Albans and for receiving the "captured" money as an agent of the Confederate States. Rather

than jeopardize the Confederacy's already tenuous status in Canada, it was deemed best that this proceeding should not occur. By then, the Canadian Government was in a panic and willing to extradite Confederates upon reasonable pretext through fear of exposing Canadians to the bitter enmity of the United States. Clay left Canada and turned himself in to U.S. authorities in Georgia, where he was arrested and incarcerated at Fortress Monroe before being eventually released from solitary confinement, one year after the war ended.

During the Civil War, the status of peace along the Canadian-U.S. border was precarious and already roiled by the Trent Affair of 1861, the toll on Union shipping taken by English-built Confederate sea raiders such as the *Alabama* and the *Florida*, and for providing haven for those who launched terrorist actions on the Great Lakes. All these factors fueled talk of annexing Canada. At the end of the war, the Fenian Raids into Canada maintained this dangerous atmosphere and the abrogation in 1866 of the U.S.-Canadian Reciprocity Treaty embittered it. Fear of American annexation and development of a spirit of greater unity among British North Americans lent impetus to the movement toward Canadian federation, which bore fruit in the organization of the Dominion of Canada on July 1, 1867.

Of the \$208,000 proven taken in the raid, only \$75,000 was recovered as a result of the hot pursuit. The Canadian Government ultimately voted \$50,000 to the St. Albans banks as a relief to their losses, although all three banks were eventually forced to close their doors.

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#### CONTACTS

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# Harper's Ferry Sword Bayonets Model 1841 and Model 1855

Richard Lee Berglund

During the 1850's, warfare in Europe changed; armies could no longer march face to face and fire volleys from smooth bore muskets. The French Rifle a'Tige and the Pattern 1853 Enfield Rifled musket, fielded in European conflicts, demonstrated that the rifled barrel and conical bullet were superior to the smooth bore musket in both range and accuracy. New small arms technology had drastically changed the face of war.

A letter written by J. Pierce Jr. in Portland, Maine, in May 1854, to the Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis, could have been the impetus for the Ordnance Board to formalize a new series of rifled arms utilizing the "Minie" -type bullet. The Board's report of June 26, 1855 included recommendations for the alteration of the 1841 Rifle and the new 1855 Rifle, both of which were to be fitted with sword bayonets.

Portland, Maine  
May 30th 1854.  
Hon. Jefferson Davis  
U.S. Sec of War:

Sir,

Permit me respectfully to ask your attention to the letter regarding experiments with the Minie' Rifle, Published in a newspaper I send herewith—the N.Y. Tribune of Dec 16, 1853, which paper, however false in political statements, may be correct in these details. I take this liberty, Sir, from a strong conviction that it would be of very great advantage to our army if one or two regiments were provided with these weapons; and having no doubt that the contemplation of the experiment may have been seriously held in your mind, believe as a mere citizen, in hope of forwarding some reasons for the measure, possibly unnoticed by you before, I may communicate this statement without your deeming it obtrusive or ridiculous even if it is unimportant—The value of the Minie' Rifle for military purposes appears established in England and France by these facts . . .

I remain Sir, with great respect,

Your obedient servant,

J. Pierce Jr.<sup>1</sup>

After extensive testing of arms and projectiles, a projectile design developed by James Burton, Master Armorer at Harper's Ferry Armory, was adapted by the Ordnance Board



in 1855. Work was underway at the national armories to develop the models for the 1855 pattern and to bring older arms up to this new standard. Smooth bore muskets were rifled and sighted. The 1841 Rifle was adapted for the sword bayonet and new sights were affixed to the rifle to take advantage of the increased range and accuracy of the Burton design Minie' bullet.

Albert Harden, in his early book, *The American Bayonet*, classified the sword bayonets used on the 1841 Rifle into the three categories: Type I Ring Attachment, Type II Stud with Guide, and the Model 1855 Sword bayonet (stud without guide). The classifications are based on the method of attachments described in Figures 2 to 6.

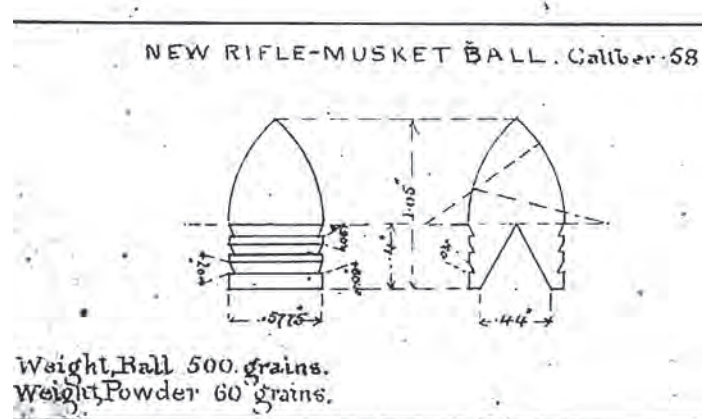


Figure 1. Burton's modified design for the Minie bullet (from Harper's Ferry NHP).



Figure 2. Left to right: ring attachment; stud with guide; stud without guide.



Figure 3. Left to right: ring attachment, stud with guide, stud without guide.

*TYPE I RING ATTACHMENT BAYONET*

Harper's Ferry production reports for FY 1854 show that 1,646 sword bayonets for rifles with ring attachment and 590 percussion rifles for the Type I bayonet were manufactured (Figures 7 and 8). The Type I bayonet uses a folding ring as the upper barrel attachment and a complex rotating key in the cross guard to lock the bayonet to the barrel. The blade has a stopped fuller and the bayonet has an S guard. There are two examples of Ring Attachment Bayonets with a C guard. Some Type I bayonets were fitted to rifles and have an alphanumeric mating number stamped on the upper finial of the cross guard. The corresponding rifle was also stamped with matching mating numbers on the face of the

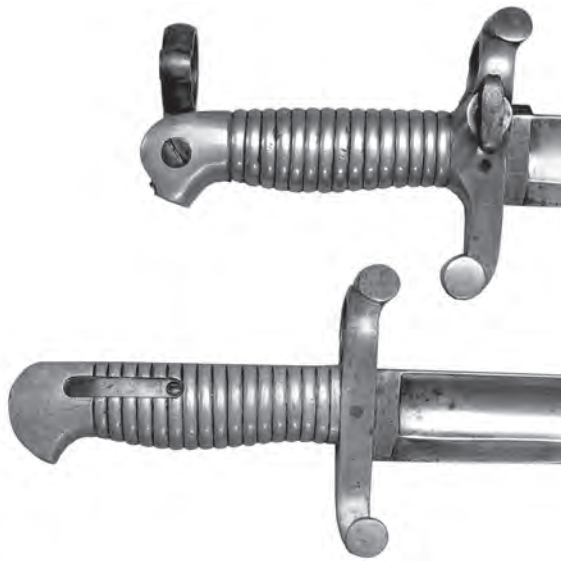


Figure 4. Top: S guard: upper finial points forward, lower finial points aft. Bottom: C guard, finials point forward to tip of blade.

muzzle and the tang of the butt plate. (Figures 9 and 10)

The rifle adapted for the Type I bayonet was fitted with a screw adjustment rear sight and the muzzle had two grooves cut at right angles to lock the bayonet in place. The caliber remained .54. Harper's Ferry correspondence (Clowe to Colonel Craig) indicates shipment of the Type I rifles and bayonets to the Saint Louis Arsenal for distribution.

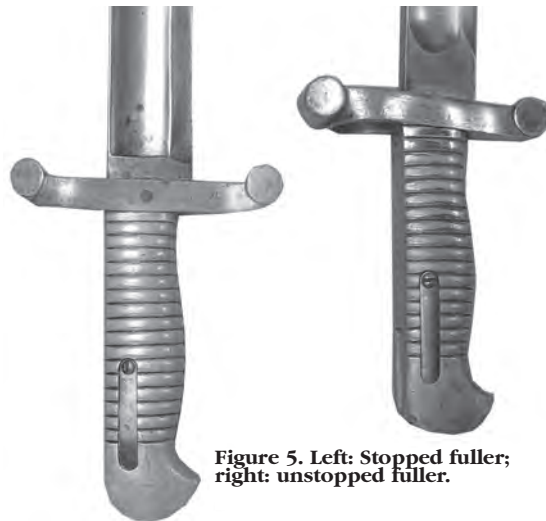


Figure 5. Left: Stopped fuller; right: unstopped fuller.



Figure 6. Markings on ricasso.

May 3rd

I respectfully inform you that the 200 long-range sights screw pattern, will be shipped to St. Louis Arsenal, today; and the 300 Rifles with Ring attachment, long range sights of same pattern, will be shipped to same arsenal on Monday next. . .

May 25th

I have the honor to inform you, as requested that 200 Rifles with Sword Bayonet, Ring attachment and screw sights for long ranges, with appendages, will be issued tomorrow to St. Louis Arsenal, under Order for Supplies No 180. dated 24th May. Inst.<sup>2</sup>

In 1855, the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen was refitted with new uniforms and arms at Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis (Figure 11). Their newly issued dark blue jacket had a high hiked collar trimmed with emerald green lace. The

dark blue cap had green piping with a green pompom, and the trousers were sky blue. It is likely the Regiment was issued the Type I Model 1841 Rifle. Unfortunately, the Type I bayonet attaching ring and key lock proved to be complex, fragile, and costly—all possible reasons that so few rifles were fitted with the Type I bayonet. Clowe reported the cost of fabrication to Colonel Craig:

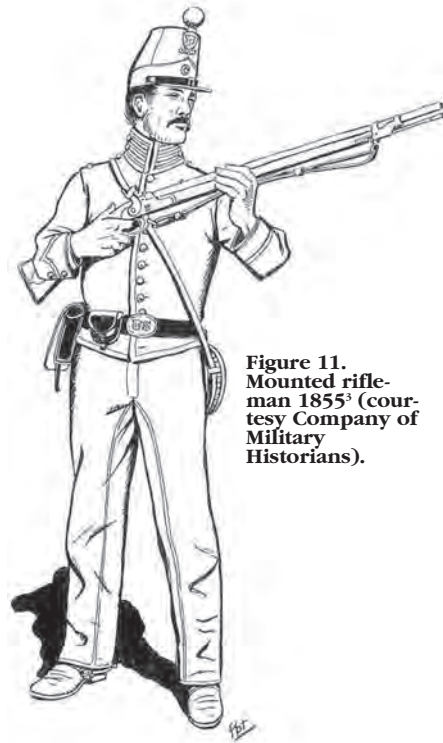


Figure 11. Mounted rifleman 1855<sup>3</sup> (courtesy Company of Military Historians).

The cost of fabricating Sword Bayonet with Ring [including labor & materials] \$4.25

The cost of fabrication Sword Bayonet with Stud attachment [labor & materials] \$3.87<sup>2</sup>

#### TYPE II STUD WITH GUIDE BAYONET

The Type II bayonet used a stud with guide on the barrel of the rifle to attach the bayonet to the barrel. The bayonet's hilt was cut to accept the one-inch stud guide. The blade has a stopped fuller, and all examples of the Type II bayonet have a C guard (Figures 12 and 13).

Harper's Ferry production reports for FY 1854 show that 1,639 sword bayonets for rifles, stud with guide attachment, and 40 musicians bayonets were produced at the armory. During FY 1855, 3,179 Type II bayonets were produced for a total production of 4,858 bayonets.

The rifle modified for the Type II bayonet was affixed with the Screw Adjustment Rear Sight or a Soldered-on Slide

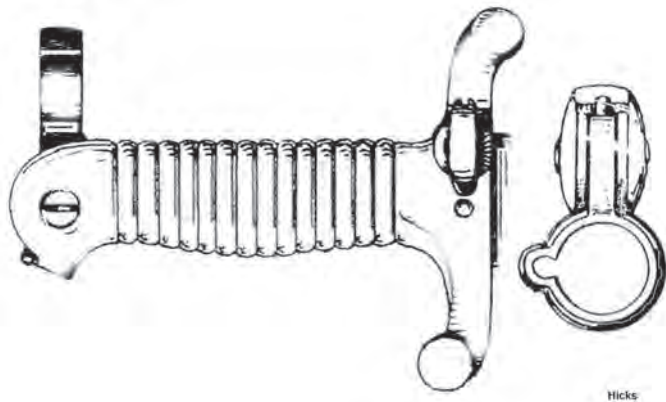


Figure 7. Ring attachment bayonet.

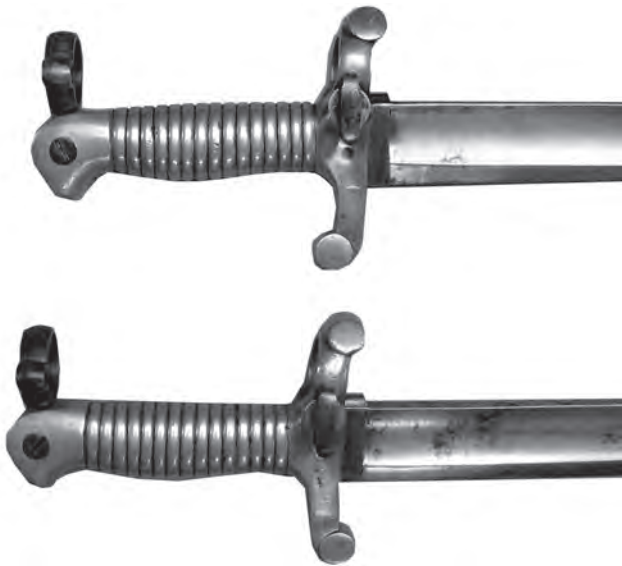


Figure 8. Top: Type I S guard. Bottom: Type I C guard.



Figure 9. Screw adjustment sight.



Figure 10. Alterations to muzzle to secure Type I bayonet.



Figure 12. Type II bayonet stud with guide.

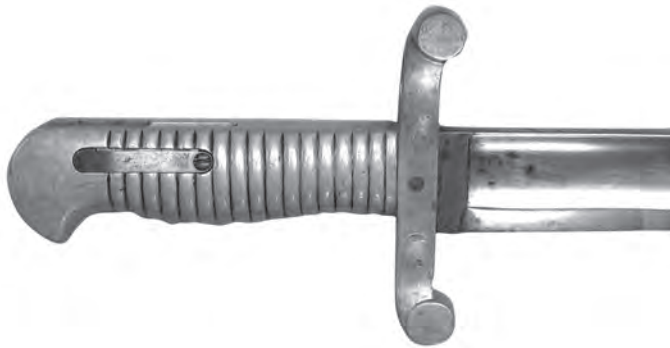


Figure 13. Type II bayonet showing stopped fuller and C guard.

Adjustment Rear Sight. The front band of the rifle was replaced with a shorter band made to clear the bayonet stud on removal. The stud with guide was braised to the barrel, and an iron-tipped ramrod cupped for the conical bullet was used. The Type II alteration is found in both .54 and .58 caliber (Figures 14 and 15).

Some examples of early production Type II bayonets have an alphanumeric mating number stamped on the upper finial of the cross guard. The rifle is also stamped with corresponding mating numbers on the face of the muzzle and the tang of the butt plate.

Clowe to Craig

March 13<sup>th</sup> 1855:

In consequence of the Rifles heretofore made at the Army without Bayonets, it was never deemed necessary to

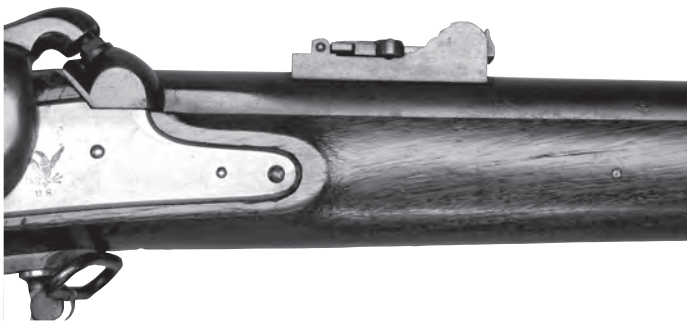


Figure 14. Type II rifle soldered on rear sight.



Figure 15. Type II short front band, stud with guide, iron-tipped ramrod.

size the barrel at the muzzle with the exactness necessary for the interchange of bayonets of a particular uniform size—In making Sword Bayonets for the Rifles heretofore fabricated, the hilts have been made to fit the smallest sized muzzles, and Reamers have been prepared to facilitate the fitting when needful, one of which will be sent to St. Louis and the other to Carlisle Barracks, where these kind of Rifles have been sent, or will be sent.” The barrels are now being made of accurate diameters so that the Bayonets will interchange.<sup>2</sup>

The 1841 Rifles of this type, modified to accept the Type II bayonet and with soldered-on slide adjustment rear sights, were issued to the newly formed 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> infantry (Figures 16 and 17).

The 9th and 10th Infantry Regiments were new, raised in 1855, when the Army had been increased by two regiments of foot and two of horse. These were uniformed much like their older counterparts, but with slightly different equipment—knapsack straps and belts, and the musicians were buglers instead of drummers. Also they were rifle regiments.

Upon activation at Fort Monroe by Col. George Wright, the 9th Infantry was sent to the west coast where it held the frontier in the Cascade region, building forts and roads necessary for expansion and defense. Part of it served under the Colonel in the Spokane Expedition in 1858. Some of its troopers were detailed as escort of the Fort Benton—Walla Walla wagon road construction project.

The 10th Infantry, organized at the Carlisle Barracks in 1855, was the last of the new regiments . . . .

It received a rigid course of instruction, especially in marksmanship with much target practice while it was spread all over the West. Individual proficiency records were kept by which men were classified. The Tenth, with its specially uniformed men, was given the honor of leading the Utah Expedition of 1857. Two of her companies wore white shirts; three more wore gray ones with hats of the same color and two with black.



Figure 16. Alphanumeric mating numbers.



Figure 17. Mating number on tang of butt plate.

Another company wore blue shirts and black hats. It is said that this organization established the "double quick" as the marching time in the formation of the line in 1858.<sup>4</sup>

Records indicate that 40 Musicians Bayonets were fabricated in FY 1854. Fortunately, one example of the Type II Musicians Bayonet was available for study and permits dating the characteristics of the early production Type II bayonets.

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

"I have forwarded by Express today a small box containing a sword hilt, adjusted to a slide, for a Sword Bayonet for Musicians in conformity with your instructions of the 16th inst, differing only in a single point, which it was thought a sufficient justification for a departure from the letter of your instructions. The groove in this hilt is cut somewhat longer than is necessary for the length of the stud, in order to secure the Slide close down to the flats of the hilt. This is effected by a dovetail at the end of the groove, and a corresponding one in the end of the tongue of the slide."

June 20 1855

"I have to inform you that I have shipped this day by Adams & Co Express, 100 Rifles, with Sword Bayonets, adjusted with long range sights, with appendages complete except bullet mould, and 4 Musicians Swords in further execution of Order No 198 to Carlisle Barracks." (Figures 18-21)

The Musicians Bayonet was made so it could be used on Type II 1841 rifles; however, the slide would only fit the bayonets fabricated for musicians because the tongue on the slide was longer than the guide slot on standard Type II bayonets. Later production Type II bayonets can be identified by

the inspector initials stamped on the ricasso. All examples examined have *PB* over *P* for Phillip Burkhart (Figure 22).

#### MODEL 1855 SWORD BAYONET

The Model 1855 Sword Bayonet was designed for the new Model 1855 Rifle. Armory reports for FY 56 indicate that two sword bayonets for the Model 1855 Rifle were produced: the Model 1855 Sword Bayonet, which was used on altered Model 1841 Rifles (1855 alteration); and the Model 1855 Rifle, in which the bayonet has a C guard, the fuller is unstopped, and the stud attachment has no guide (Figures 23 and 24).

The Model 1855 alterations of the Model 1841 Rifle used a screwed-on rear sight (the long-range slide adjustment or the Model 1858 Rifle sight), Model 1855 Rifle front sight, short front band, bayonet stud without guide, iron-tipped ramrod, and is found in .54 and .58 caliber (Figures 25-27).

Examination of Model 1855 Sword Bayonets shows examples with no marking on the ricasso, with US stamped on the ricasso, and with US stamped on the ricasso and an iron pin in the grip to act as a stop in the guide slot (Figure 28).

#### ALPHANUMERIC MATING NUMBERS

When Type I and Type II Sword Bayonets were fitted to individual rifles, they were numbered in an alphanumeric sequence beginning with A1 and progressing to A99, B1 to B99, and so forth.



Figure 18. 10th Infantry Musicians on Utah Expedition (courtesy Utah Historical Society).

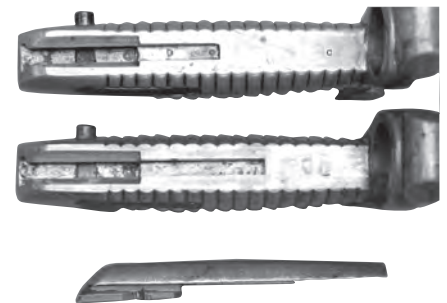


Figure 21. Top: Type II bayonet guide slot; center: Musicians bayonet; bottom: slide.



Figure 19. Musicians bayonet with slide attached.



Figure 20. Musicians bayonet and slide.



Figure 22. Later production Type II bayonet, inspected on the ricasso PB over P.

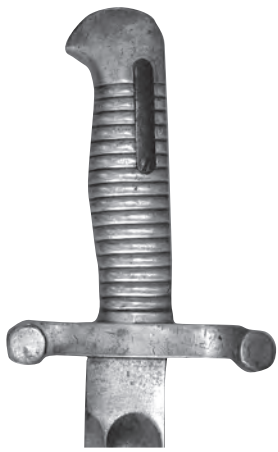


Figure 23. Model 1855 sword bayonet showing unstopped fuller.



Figure 24. Model 1855 sword bayonet guide slot.



Figure 25. Model 1855 screwed-on long-range rear sight.



Figure 26. Model 1858 rear sight.

- A1 to A99 = 99
- B1 to B99 = 198
- C1 to C99 = 297

This system enables exact identification of the fitting, for example, F 39 would be the 534th bayonet mated (fitted) to a rifle, calculated as follows:

- A to E = 5 letters
- $5 \times 99 = 495$
- $495 + 39 = 534$

Mating numbers of Type I and Type II sword bayonets have been observed as follows:

**Type I**

- Manufactured in FY 1854 at Harper's Ferry
- 1,646 Ring Attachment Bayonets produced
- 590 Rifles altered to accommodate the Ring Attachment Bayonet



Figure 27. Model 1855 alteration, short front band, lug without guide, 1855 rifle front sight, and iron-tipped ramrod.

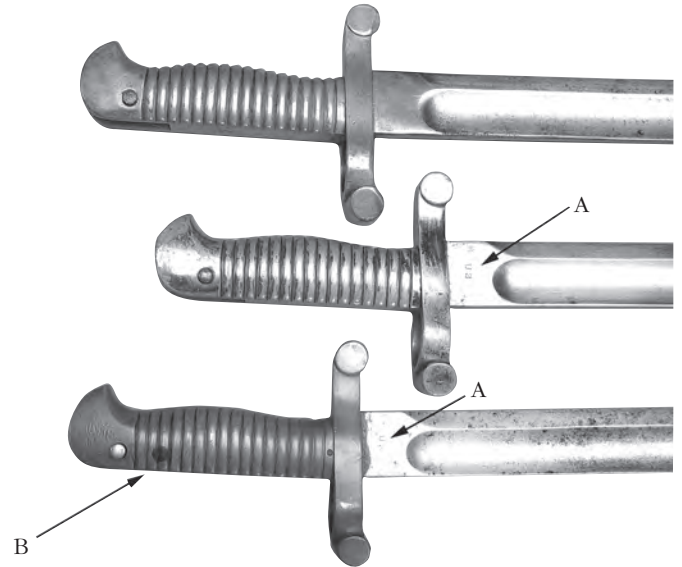


Figure 28. A: U.S. on the ricasso; B: iron pin.

**Known Mating #'s**

- A 19\* (Figure 29)
- A 21
- A 35
- A 54
- A 61
- B 29
- B 43
- C 1
- C 18
- C 25
- C 36
- D 3
- D 4
- D 23\*\*
- D 24
- D 40
- F 7
- F 39\*\*
- F 39 = 534; Total observed examples: 18.
- \*Stamped on the flat of the cross guard.
- \*\*C Guard.



Figure 29. Mating numbers.

## Type II

- 1,639 Stud Attachment and 40 Musicians Bayonets manufactured in FY 1854
- 3,179 Stud Attachment Bayonets manufactured in FY 1855
- **Total FY 54 and FY 55 production = 4,858**
- 2,690 1841 Rifles altered for the Stud Attachment Bayonet FY 1854
- 1,050 1841 Rifles altered for the Stud Attachment Bayonet FY 1855
- 945 1841 Rifles altered for the Stud Attachment Bayonet FY 1856
- **Total = 4,685**

Mating Numbers

## Type II

Sword Bayonet

A 19

E 10

J 8

J 16

J 31

K 25

N 7

O 15

R 38

S 1

S 16

T 14

**Total observed examples 12**

**T 14 = 1895**



Figure 30. Alexander Zang, Co. H, No. 80, 39th New York State Volunteers (from the Vernard Bond Collection), outfitted with a Model 1841 rifle (note short front band), sword bayonet, and the 1855 rifleman's belt.

The Harper's Ferry Model 1841 Sword Bayonet evolved over a period of several years to its last and final form, the Model 1855 Sword Bayonet, which was manufactured for the altered 1841 Rifle and the 1855 Rifle until 1861 when the armory ceased to operate under federal control (Figure 30).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank the following individuals for guidance and assistance: Frank Harrington, Birdie Partridge, Paul Davies, Fred Gaede, Paul Johnson, Dan Altheimer, and Phil Leveque.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Records Group 156, *Entry 5 1855 Letters Sent to the Secretary of War 1812-1889*.

<sup>2</sup>National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Records Group 156, *Entry 21 1855C Letters Received 1812-1894*.

<sup>3</sup>Todd, Frederick P. *American Military Equipage 1851-1872, Vol. II*. Providence: The Company of Military Historians, 1977.

<sup>4</sup>Ness, George T., Jr. *The Regular Army on the Eve of the Civil War*. Harms: Toomey Press, 1990.

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## An Editorial

Frank M. Sellers

You have by now received your copy of my new book *Baby Hammerless Revolvers*, printed jointly by the American Society of Arms Collectors and myself. They were handed out at the business meeting earlier. The test will be later this afternoon.

I would like to apologize to the two people who came here this morning actually wanting to hear a talk on Baby Hammerless revolvers. Most of you have little or no interest in these and similar arms which you consider to be “beneath the dignity” of this organization. I define “these” as anything that comes under the purview of the Federal Firearms Regulations. Many of you feel that these are not collectable and that is the subject of this talk.

The American Society of Arms Collectors is considered to be the apex or very top of arms collector groups in America, and in many minds the whole world. I have heard less complimentary terms used, but by the time a collector has advanced far enough in his collecting area to merit the honor (or gain the recognition of their peers) of membership, they will have also advanced in years. There is nothing wrong with advancing in years. In fact, it has much to recommend it over the alternative. We have discussed at past meetings the need to encourage some younger collectors. After all, if we don't bring the younger collectors along, there will be no one to buy our prized collectibles when we are finished with our stewardship.

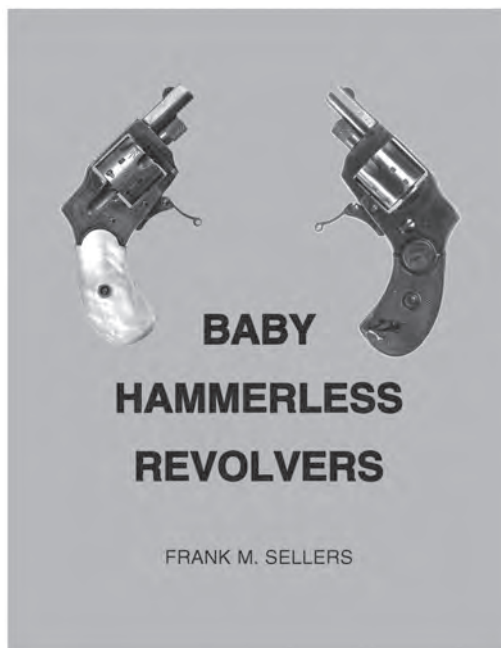
But what do the younger collectors collect? Almost by definition, the younger collector has less money to spend on his hobby than the older collector. With a smaller budget, the collector is forced to collect less expensive items. A young collector trying to balance house payments, car payments, children, etc., has little money to spend on expensive collectibles. The Kentucky rifles, U.S. Martial pistols and Colt revolvers, which have long been considered the pinnacle of arms collecting are well beyond the means of



today's beginning collectors. Even Winchester, Smith & Wesson, Sharps and Civil War guns, which forty years ago were looked down on as less desirable, are now bringing prices that would blanch an old-time advanced collector.

So what is left for the person who would like to collect today? You will notice that I used the word “person” instead of “man”, as most of us would have used forty years ago. Some of the new collectors are women. We actually have members who are of the female persuasion. Harry and Henry are undoubtedly spinning in their graves.

There are many areas of economical arms collectibles. Bayonets, small rifles, flare guns and many handguns come to mind immediately. The last category would include the Baby Hammerless revolvers here today. Like the others mentioned, and many others which will come to mind if you give it some thought, the Baby Hammerless revolvers were made in sizable quantities, so they are not rare in an of themselves. They were made in sufficient variety that a “whole” collection cannot be put together over night. You have to work for it! I have been collecting them seriously for more than forty years and there is still



one which I have not been able to find. (Our new member Jim Supica has one, but he also collects Baby Hammerless revolvers.)

The Baby Hammerless revolvers present a “problem” for many of you. Over half of the production was made after 1898, and thus a “firearm” under Federal Regulations. There is no reason for this to be a problem unless you live in one of those states (and some cities) which virtually outlaw the possession of *any* handgun. For the rest of you, it should not be a problem but from conversations at the meetings you think it is a problem. The problem is, I think, one of perception. Just because you are not interested in something, does not mean that others are not.

The American Society of Arms Collectors is a small society. It was designed to be a small society and we like it that way. There are many collectible fields represented within the society including most of the major antique fields. A comparison of the older Society directories with the most recent shows a more diverse group than it is now. We have not had a member interested in horology in many years, but that does not mean that we should shun a prospective member because he or she does not collect what we do.

There are many collector organizations in existence today that did not exist when our society was formed. Some of the largest organizations are for collectors of items that are either not represented or not well represented here. For that to come to mind immediately are the National Automatic Pistol Collectors Association, which does have some members here, the Ruger Collectors Association, the High Standard Collectors Association, and the Browning Collectors Association. All of these organizations have larger memberships than some of the “mainstream” collectors clubs representing the older collectibles.

Why should these organizations have larger memberships than the older ones? For the same reasons mentioned above: they are plentiful, they are interesting and **THEY ARE AFFORDABLE**. You don’t have to be rich to collect them (although some might argue that point in regards to the Brownings). A younger person can afford to collect them. If there are that many people interested in them, I don’t think we, as an association, should look down our noses at them. While I personally would not want to collect any of them, I do not think that is a reason to deny membership to a collector in one of these fields membership in our club if he or she was otherwise qualified for membership under the bylaws and rules. Another thing to consider is that collectors change their minds occasionally. A collector of Rugers today might become the Kentucky collector of tomorrow.

There have been many changes in the American Society of Arms Collectors in the twenty-nine years that I have been a member. Happily, most of them have been for the better. I think it is time for another change. It is time we gave some consideration to the modern collectors. We do not need to have a massive recruiting drive to get a large influx of collectors of modern, but we need to think about it and some of us may need a fresh look at what is going on in the collecting world. Too many members think that the only show that is a gun show is Baltimore, and would not think of going to something like (HORRORS) the Tulsa show which has more attendees for each show than Baltimore has in ten years. The number of displays of some of the groups mentioned above sometimes outnumber the total tables of some of the antique only shows.

**SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT!**