



The three Owen Jones revolvers: top, No. 8; center, the unmarked specimen; bottom, Enfield Mark II No. 281.

# The Presentation of the Owen Jones–Deringer Revolvers to the Sealed Pattern Room at Enfield Lock.

Henry M. Stewart Jr.

*There are three items of especial interest in this Bulletin: it records the first overseas meeting of the American Society of Arms Collectors, it is the fiftieth of these Bulletins, and it records the first presentation of arms in the name of the Society, through the generosity of Henry M. Stewart Jr., to a major arms museum. The story of that presentation and those arms is told here, beginning with Mr. Stewart's presentation at the banquet on Tuesday evening, May 1.*

Members of the American Society and Guests: after the glorious days of our meeting here in London and the vast treasures of arms and armor we have seen I feel as though I were "carrying coals to Newcastle" standing here before you. Mr. Frank Caldwell of Enfield Small Arms Factory, having cut Her Majesty's Seal, lets me hold up for your examination one of America's rarest cartridge revolvers, the Deringer Army Revolver chambered for the Cal. 44 Old Model Colt Cartridge, designed by Owen Jones, and made at the Philadelphia Deringer Pistol and Rifle Works. The only other specimen known to have been offered for sale in recent years was in the William Locke Collection and that also is now in my personal collection.

I am sure all of you are familiar with the Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield Lock, as it is the envy of the world's research facilities, with the most complete group of automatic weapons in the world. In the early 1850s the Enfield Sealed Pattern Room was established to retain the pattern arms whose specifications must be equalled, in arms produced for the British Empire and now the United Kingdom. The curator of the Sealed Pattern Room, Mr. Herbert Woodend, is well known at Smithsonian Institution, the National Rifle Association, and leading American museums. We regret he could not be here due to a prior commitment.

For many years it was thought that the Owen Jones–Deringer Army Revolver was the prototype for the Enfield Mark I and Mark II Revolvers that were the official British sidearm from 1880 to 1889, when they were superceded by the Webley. Recent discoveries have added another Owen Jones American Deringer-made revolver as the true prototype, linking the Deringer Army and the Enfield revolvers. Thereby hangs the tale for this evenings short speech.

Circa 1936–37 a lady was in the rear of her home in Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania, burning documents, letterheads, and sundry papers. She was Mrs. Louise Jones Faries, wife of Dr. Clarence Faries, and the daughter of Owen Jones. Many of you will recall the assistance she gave John Parsons in his Deringer book.

As she was burning these records, Harriet Croft, wife of S. Harold Croft, appeared and, on expressing interest, was given papers, letterheads, Henry Deringer's Deed Box, and the guns of Owen Jones and Henry Deringer. All of our wives should be so lucky!



It was my fortune to purchase all these arms from Robert Abels, and in the October, 1971, *PAGCA Bugle*, I wrote of Owen Jones and his inventions, the combination 22/32 cal. revolver with turnaround barrels and extra cylinder in butt; the spur trigger Owen Jones–Deringer Cal. 32, pocket revolver, and the Army Revolver with a tool kit below barrel. I noted his return to England and his Patent No. 624 of Feb. 14, 1878, by his attorney W.R. Lake, covering the large Jones–Deringer revolver. After studying further, I wrote another article, in the March, 1983, *Bugle*, establishing that the second revolver, in double action, was the true prototype of the Enfields and the point at which it was developed at the Deringer works, etc. When Owen Jones returned to England he obtained eleven more British patents, one on a magazine rifle and the remainder on machine gun developments, to #5539 of March 16, 1894. His last known English address was 17 Keppel Street, Russell Square, London. Mr. A.W.F. Taylerson, eminent author of the trilogy, *The Revolver*, and I have been in correspondence since 1957 and I owe a great deal to the pointed questions for which he required answers in developing the Owen Jones arms story. The ideas incorporated in the Enfield revolvers by Owen Jones were traced in detail, all of which are available to the interested student.

Mrs. Stewart and I discussed this work and felt that the correct thing to do was return the Jones-Deringer models and other arms used in the development (5 pieces) to Mr. Woodend for placement in the Enfield revolver development case at Enfield Lock. We, as Americans, can be proud that the early designs of Deringer developed into the Mark I and Mark II Enfield, the official British sidearm, an honor that eluded Col. Colt. Our American Society President, John Chalapis, visiting the Stewart Gunroom on Horseshoe Trail and learning of the plan, suggested we do it at the London



**Mr. Frank Caldwell opening the sealed container holding the Owen Jones revolver.**



**Henry Stewart telling the story of the revolver.**



**Presenting the gun to Mr. David Brighton.**

Meeting. May I herewith offer that "These Deringer Arms be presented from the Stewart Collection to the Sealed Pattern Room of the Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield Lock, as a gift from the American Society of Arms Collectors at their London Meeting April 24 to May 1, 1984, as a small measure of thanks to our kind hosts of the United Kingdom."

May I introduce our English guests here for this presentation.

1) Mr. A.W.F. "Tony" Taylerson, recent past president of the Arms and Armour Society, and able co-discoverer of this arms chronology.

2) Mr. Frank Caldwell, PQE, Enfield Lock, of Sealed Pattern Room. Would that time permitted the story of his help in getting the arms here!

3) Mr. David Brighton, Director, Ministry of Defense, Royal Arsenal West, Woolwich, London S.E.

Mr. Brighton, it is my privilege and pleasure to make this presentation to you for the American Society of Arms Collectors.

(Mr. David Brighton accepted the arms with fitting remarks, they were returned to casing and sealed by Mr. Frank Caldwell, and returned to Mr. Herbert Woodend, Curator of Sealed Pattern Room, Enfield Royal Small Arms Factory.)

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(The story of the Owen Jones-Deringer revolvers and their development, as told by Mr. Stewart in *The Monthly Bugle*, the publication of the Pennsylvania Antique Gun Collectors Association, No. 161 of March, 1983, and reprinted here with permission, follows.)

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In England, Owen Jones is referred to as "the American inventor." My records indicate that Owen Jones was English and came to Philadelphia to work at the Deringer Pistol and Rifle Works about Spring Garden Street, between 1st and 2nd Streets, Philadelphia, Pa. While in Philadelphia, Owen Jones married the daughter, by his first marriage, of Dr. Jonathan Clark of Merion, Pa. Dr. Clark later married Eliza, Henry Deringer's second daughter, and supervised the Deringer Works during H. Deringer's last years, and his son, I. Jones Clark (Joney), later ran Deringer until the end. The Owen Jones' daughter, Mrs. Louise Jones Faries, was born in England when Mr. and Mrs. Jones returned there, but on her mother's death was brought back to America by Jones and raised by Eva Deringer Clark, daughter of Dr. Clark's second marriage. Jones spent the remainder of his life back in England with last known address at 17 Keppell Street, Russell Square, London. Eva Clark inherited the bulk of the Deringer estate as well as the Dr. Clark estate, and left everything to Louise Jones Faries, daughter of Owen Jones and wife of Dr. Clarence Faries, Merion, Pa. Forgive this long paragraph tracing Owen Jones, but the arms collection including the Faries Estate arms has yielded some important material: Owen Jones and the Deringer Rifle Works need more search and study, both here and in England, and clues may be herein.

The large single action revolver with tube under barrel made at Deringer was covered in American Patent No. 200,794 granted February 26, 1878. This extraction system

was a feature of the Enfield Mark II British revolver so the big Jones Deringer revolver has been loosely accepted as the prototype. In the collection were other arms that were recognized from study of A.W.F. Taylerson's *The Revolver 1865-1888*. In addition there was a hitherto unphotographed and unrecognized Owen Jones model in double action. This model unleashes a line of thinking that will startle English arms scholars if the jig saw pattern can be fitted together on the evidence. I submit it to my peers for a more learned judgment.

Pictured is a new progression of models: the top revolver is Ser. No. 8. O. Jones Patent No. 179,026 of June 20, 1876 and O. Jones Patent No. 189,360 of April 10, 1877 cover an extraction system wherein the extractor revolves on cocking but the cylinder will revolve only when cartridges lock the cylinder to the extractor. Unloaded, if you cock the hammer, it does not revolve the cylinder. Ser. No. 8, chambered for the Colt Old Model Cal. 44 cartridge, does not revolve the empty cylinder. However, on Ser. No. 31, for the Colt Old Model Cal. 44 cartridge, the cylinder revolves as hammer is cocked! The Wm. Locke Collection had a plated model, catalogued as Ser. No. 6 and Cal. 42 erroneously. Adding this to my collection, I found it to be Ser. No. 9 and chambering the Colt Old Model Cal. 44 cartridge. Ser. No. 9 revolved the cylinder on cocking. Barrel stampings on No. 9 and No. 31 are "Pat. June 20, '76-April 10, '77-Feb. 26, '78" with no stamping on Ser. No. 8. Between No. 8 and No. 9 we have the important connecting of cylinder and extractor to revolve cylinder, empty or loaded, actually a needed feature.

The second model from top was in the collection, yet ignored until Ser. No. 9 was acquired from the Locke Collection. Suddenly it became important in the evolution sequence in that the cylinder did not revolve on cocking hammer either single or double action. This indicates its manufacture before Ser. No. 9 with the patent dates on barrel and, while same in cylinder non-revolving action, it could precede No. 8. Note the American ribbed barrel styling, while otherwise it more closely approaches the Mark II Enfield pictured below. This revolver, totally unmarked, shows "cut and try" fitting of frame, barrel and even springs found on prototype arms. If we stop at this point it appears a possible prototype, but let's go further and open up the whole can of worms.

All written studies indicate the ejection system as Owen Jones and the lock mechanism as Warrant Kaufmann et. al. for the Enfield Mark II. Examine Fig. 2,<sup>1</sup> the American Double Action Model chambered for Cal. 44 Colt Old Model ammunition and examine in *The Revolver 1865-1888* Figure 8, "Kaufmann & Warrant's Revolver Lock" and they appear identical. Note the left grip of these guns is shorter than the right grip. The American model has side plate removed in picture but two other models in the collection, Fig. 3 (like Taylerson's Fig. 17, De Mouncie or Plate 24, Thornton's Patent) and Figure 4 (like the Spirelet ABCD Patent Revolver) have side plates that swing open to expose the mechanism. Those in the collection are unfinished "in the white" specimens with tie-in relationships of center pins, extrac-

tors, etc., that all point to the same workmanship. Whose?

The foregoing is all food for thought and research. I will be most happy to join anyone to further the study. If the American style double action revolver can be dated by the patent improvement of revolving the cylinder on cocking not being present it would precede Jones' English Patent of February 14, 1878 (No. 624. Lake W.R.). I have tried to pinpoint Owen Jones' return to England and conclude it was between February and April of 1878, the year that his daughter Louise Jones Faries was born. In any event a system invented in the United States was adopted for the official British sidearm of 1880-1889 and the revolver developed at Deringer in Philadelphia achieved an honor that eluded Samuel Colt.

1) As shown in this abridgement.



**Mr. Brighton responding to the presentation and accepting the gift for the Pattern Room.**



**Mr. A.W.F. Taylerson acknowledging his introduction. On the left, Mr. Frank Caldwell, and on the right, Mrs. Stewart.**

We regret that Dr. Eugene Heer of the Swiss Institute of Arms and Armour did not provide a copy of his talk on the origin of the wheellock for use in this Bulletin.