

The Carson-Beale Hawken, a .56 caliber plains rifle from the 1850's period.



"Kit Carson," as he looked during the Fremont expeditions of 1842-43-44. A wood engraving from a sketch provided by Jessie Benton Fremont, originally published in Upham, *Life—of Fremont*, 1856, page 185.



"Midshipman Beale" as he looked during his ride across Mexico carrying dispatches in 1848. A wood engraving from an oil painting (now in Decatur House), published in Fremont, *Memoirs of My Life*, 1887, page 580.

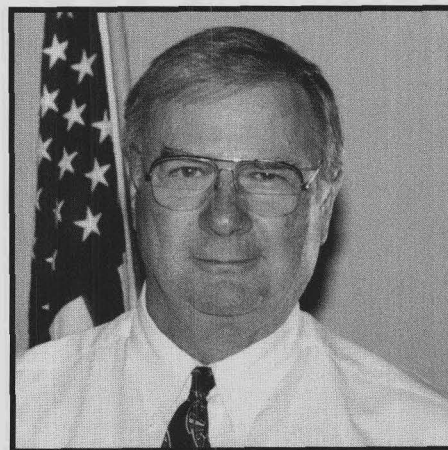
# The Carson-Beale Hawken—Its Identification and Recent History

Lee Burke, with the collaboration of Bill Pirie

The Carson-Beale Hawken is a classic Hawken plains rifle of the 1850s period, marked on the barrel: S. HAWKEN. ST. LOUIS. It is a half stock, muzzle loading, percussion rifle weighing a little over 12 pounds. All furniture is of iron, and the .56 caliber, 36 inch barrel is secured to the maple stock by a "patent" hook breech and two flat keys set in oval escutcheons. The connection between Kit Carson, Edward Fitzgerald Beale, and this particular Hawken rifle is documented by recorded history, published statements, correspondence, and a particularly instructive photograph published in 1912. Taken together, this documentation provides a complete record through to the present owner of the gun. Major points in the line of evidence are:

1. The gun was made in the mid-1850s.
2. Carson and Beale became acquainted in 1846, and were close friends until Carson's death in 1868.
3. In 1871, Beale wrote that Carson's Hawken was "mine now."
4. The Carson-Beale Hawken is pictured in a book published in 1912, with the statement that Carson gave it to Beale, and Truxtun (Beale's heir) had given it to Theodore Roosevelt, who in turn had given it to the Boone and Crockett Club.
5. The gun pictured in the 1912 book is a medium weight Hawken plains rifle, typical of that particular type of gun in all respects.
6. Discernable in the 1912 picture are several distinctive flaws: a sliver missing from the forend, a peculiar bolt in the top of the wrist, and cracks in the wrist and in the butt stock.
7. In a dispersal sale in 1972, the Boone and Crockett Club offered an S. HAWKEN plains rifle with a description matching both the general characteristics and the unique details of the 1912 picture.
8. John H. Batten acquired the gun from the 1972 sale, and it subsequently passed to his nephew William Q. (Bill) Pirie, in whose collection it resides today. Comparison of the actual gun and the 1912 picture leaves no doubt that they are the same gun.

In the following discussion these points will be presented in detail for your consideration.



## ORIGIN OF THE GUN

Two marks give definite limits on how early the gun could have been made. First, the barrel is stamped on the top flat, between the breech and rear sight, with the mark of Samuel Hawken: S. HAWKEN. ST. LOUIS. This mark indicates that the gun was made (and marked) in the period from May 8, 1849, when brother Jacob Hawken died,<sup>1</sup> to the latter part of the 1850s, when Samuel sold out in St. Louis and went to Colorado.<sup>2</sup> Prior to May of '49, when Jacob and Samuel ran the shop together, the mark used was: J. & S. HAWKEN. ST. LOUIS.

Further constraint is had from a second mark stamped on the bottom flat of the barrel near the breech: POSTLEY. NELSON & Co, which was the name of a company located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, engaged in the manufacture of barrels and locks in the period from 1852 to 1875.<sup>3</sup> The gun, therefore, must have been assembled and made available for use during, or subsequent to, the year 1852.

Some of the gun's fittings exhibit characteristics which are datable, in a qualitative way, and together would place the gun in the "middle" of the S. HAWKEN period. Early features include: a) the terminal ramrod pipe is secured by a transverse iron pin through the stock, instead of the later use of a screw from inside the barrel inlet; b) the rear sight has a moderately long base, while later guns tended toward a narrow based Leman type rear sight; c) the front sight is a silver blade set in a copper base, instead of the later silver or brass in an iron base. The assumption is that the sights now on it are original to this gun.



Carson in his later years, about 1866, in U.S. Army uniform as Colonel, 1st Regiment, New Mexico Infantry (and Cavalry), and Brigadier General by Brevet, U.S. Volunteers. At this time he was the Commanding Officer of Fort Garland, Colorado Territory. A wood engraving from a photograph published in Conard, "Uncle Dick" Wootton . . . , 1890, p. 188.



General Edward Fitzgerald Beale about 1876. Beale served as Brigadier General of the California Militia for only four months in 1856, but savoring the title, he retained it for life. A wood engraving from a photograph, published in Bonsal, *Edward Fitzgerald Beale* . . . , 1912, frontis.

A later feature is found in the butt plate and the forend nose cap: both are castings such as those offered by suppliers like Tryon; earlier examples of these two items show forging and brazing. Dating this shift to castings is uncertain and may well have been earlier than generally supposed.

It is theorized that hand forging was relatively slow and inefficient, and to keep up with the flood of business brought in by the gold rush, Samuel found it more expeditious to buy ready-made furniture. Combining the early and late implications together is the basis for putting this gun in the approximate "middle" of the S. HAWKEN period, or about 1855 plus or minus a year or two.

One other feature often noted as a timing indicator (e.g. Baird, 1968, p. 49) is the "slant breech," or rearward slope, of the surface between the back side of the breech plug and the face of the hooked-breech housing, which is observable on this gun. Although many "late" guns exhibit this feature, it is found on occasional guns throughout the Hawken production period, including a few marked J. & S. HAWKEN (Jerry Gnemi, personal communication, and see Hanson, 1979, p. 52-53). It appears the "slant breech" was utilized more and more through time, but it does not alone have diagnostic value in dating a Hawken.

#### THE CARSON-BEALE CONNECTION

Christopher "Kit" Carson (1809-1868) and Edward Fitzgerald "Ned" Beale (1822-1893) first crossed paths in late 1846, as the California "Bear Flag Revolt" was turning into the Pacific phase of the U.S. war against Mexico. Carson (a member of Fremont's California expedition) and Beale (a Midshipman in the U.S. Navy), through independent circumstances, found themselves thrown into service with General Stephen Watts Kearny at the time he was approaching San Diego, California, after a long march overland from St. Louis with a small contingent of U.S. Army troops. In his first engagement on December 6, 1846, at the village of San Pasqual, Kearny was badly beaten by Californian vaqueros armed with lances, and ended up surrounded and trapped on a rocky hill, with many wounded, no water, and little food.<sup>4</sup> After two days in this bleak situation, Beale volunteered to go for help to San Diego, some 30 miles away, where substantial American forces were located.

Knowing that Carson and Chemuctah, a Delaware Indian also from Fremont's command,<sup>5</sup> were most familiar with the country, Beale requested their company on this mission. When darkness fell, the three proceeded to sneak through the lines of lancers surrounding the American's position. After 24 fearful hours of hiding and crawling over

rocky ground studded with cactus, the three made it to San Diego, and a relief column was quickly dispatched to aid the besieged Kearny. The bonding between Carson and Beale during this short, intense experience was further strengthened a few months later, when the pair was ordered out on courier duty, carrying dispatches across the continent to Washington, D.C.

Beale, not yet hardened to frontier life, had suffered severely in the hands-and-knees trek from San Pasqual to San Diego. When the courier party departed California on February 25th, he was still extremely weak, so much so that Carson had to help him on and off his horse for most of the first month out, and generally shepherded him thorough the entire journey. On arrival in Washington in late May, Beale was down to 111 pounds and looked cadaverous (Thompson, 1983, p. 24), but he had managed to survive, and personally delivered his dispatches to the Navy Department. Carson could only admire his courage and tenacity, and through the rest of their lives, these two were close friends.

In the years that followed, their careers took different paths. Carson settled in Taos, New Mexico, and after trying ranching and livestock speculation, spent the rest of his life in government service as an Indian Agent or Military Officer. Beale continued to traverse the continent as a military courier for several years, but eventually quit the service to immerse himself in the affairs of California. He became a prosperous stockman, directed an innovative program for the acculturation of Indians of the southern San Joaquin Valley, held several offices of importance, both state and federal, in the region, and picked up the sobriquet of "General" along the way. Beale also travelled frequently between California and the family base in the east, and took a prominent part in the goings on in the national capital.

Little is known about later contacts between Carson and Beale. It is possible that Carson visited Beale at his California ranch in late 1853. This would not have been a good time for Carson to give his gun away, however, for he had just delivered a huge flock of sheep to market in Sacramento and was enroute back to New Mexico with the proceeds.<sup>6</sup> Under the circumstances, Carson probably kept the arms he had come with.

Beale recorded a visit of several days to Carson's place in Taos in January of 1859 (Beale, 1859, p. 30; Thompson, 1983, p. 115), and it seems the two had quite a time. When Beale found it was time to leave, Carson accompanied him back down the road to Santa Fe, unwilling to let the party die. This jaunt resulted in the two making a hurried rendezvous with a group of Comanches to discuss travel rights on a road Beale had just finished laying out right through their country. In my opinion, this occasion has a good fit in time, circum-

stance, and context for Carson to have given the Hawken to Beale.

That Beale did own a Hawken rifle which formerly belonged to Carson is based on no less than Beale's own statement, as shall be seen in the following section.

#### BEALE WRITES: CARSON'S HAWKEN IS "MINE NOW"

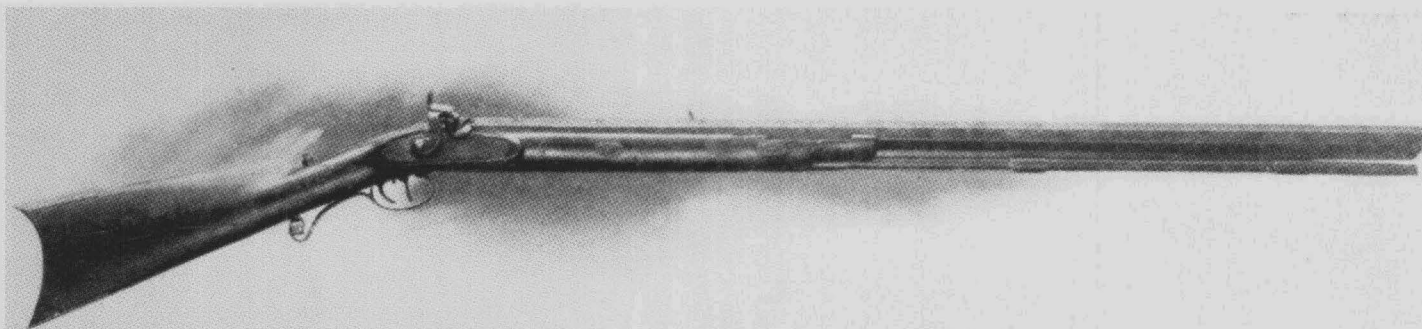
A few years after Carson's death in May of 1868, California poet Joaquin Miller composed a long, allegorical poem in which an old frontiersman, an Indian maiden, and a young westerner were caught in front of a raging wildfire on the prairie (Miller, 1871, p. 243). In fleeing for their lives, the old frontiersman goes down first, and the Indian maiden too is lost at the last moment, while the young westerner reaches safety just as the flames are engulfing him. Unfortunately, Miller had chosen to name his allegorical young westerner "Kit Carson," which brought down a storm of ridicule and criticism on his head from Edward Fitzgerald Beale.

Beale found it outrageous that Carson would be depicted as abandoning the maiden while saving himself (allegory be damned), and considered the poem a slur against Carson's good name. To retaliate, Beale published a lengthy ode of his own in August, 1871, deriding Miller openly and painting Carson in a totally heroic light.<sup>7</sup> In this composition are the lines which connect Carson, Beale, and the Hawken rifle (Thompson, 1983, p. 189; 1984, p. 146-147):

"... Oh, Kit, my heart beats quicker, even now old fellow, when I think of the time twenty-five years ago,—when I, so worn from a hurt could go no further, begged you to leave me there and save your self, I see you leaning on that old long Hawkins gun of yours, (mine now) and looking out of those clear blue eyes at me with a surprised reproach, as one who takes an insult from a friend. . . ."

The words "mine now" clearly refer to Carson's Hawken rifle, so the gun, at that time, was in Beale's possession. As Beale wrote this discourse for publication, and discussed it with friends having appreciable stature in the literary world (Thompson, 1984, p. 147), the statement must be a good as his word.

Beale's pride in his association with Carson was not a one-time thing, and many who came in contact with him were made aware of the connection. Charles Nordhoff, author and newspaper correspondent, interviewed Beale at his California ranch in 1872 and noted the Carson friendship (Nordhoff, p. 230). H.G. Ashmead wrote a sketch in 1901, recalling an evening at Beale's Chester, Pennsylvania home "nearly thirty years ago" (in 1872 or 73), where he found



### The Gun Used by Kit Carson

This gun was given by Kit Carson to General Beale, after a brush with the Indians in which Carson claimed that General Beale had saved his life. It was afterward presented by Truxtun Beale to Theodore Roosevelt, who in turn gave it to the Boone and Crockett Club.

There are two pictures of the Carson-Beale Hawken, separated by more than 80 years: here a picture and caption of the gun presented in Bonsal, 1912, opposite page 288; on page 73/14, is a photograph of gun number 11 offered in the Boone and Crockett Club sale of 1972, as it appears today.

“... Here and there in the corners and at every convenient place where space could be found were relics associated with Kit Carson, Commander Stockton, “Rough and Ready” Captain Charlie May, Brigham Young, Indian Chieftain with *unpronounceable* name, and other conspicuous personages who had been associated with Beale in the past. . . .”

He does not say what those “relics” were, but a Hawken rifle formerly Carson’s could have been among them.<sup>8</sup>

When Beale moved his family from Chester to the newly refurbished Decatur House in Washington, D.C. in October of 1873 (Thompson, 1983, p. 293) the collection of western relics was taken along. Bonsal (1912, p. 293) records this recollection of Decatur House:

“—there were in strange corners and nooks, which General Beale would only reveal and explore with his young son’s boy friends, medals to [Commodore] Truxtun [a Revolutionary War Naval Officer] and to George Beale for his gallantry in the fight with Macdonough on the Lake [during the War of 1812], and lances—fearful and awe-inspiring weapons were these captured from the Mexican-Californian cavalry at the battle of San Pasqual—and how interesting this or that lance was because it had lodged in the thigh or the breast of those paladins of the plains, Godey or Kit Carson!”<sup>9</sup>

Again no mention of a Carson gun is made in this text, but Bonsal’s book also presents an illustration which is the key to the identification of the Carson-Beale Hawken.

“THIS GUN WAS GIVEN BY KIT CARSON  
TO GENERAL BEALE”

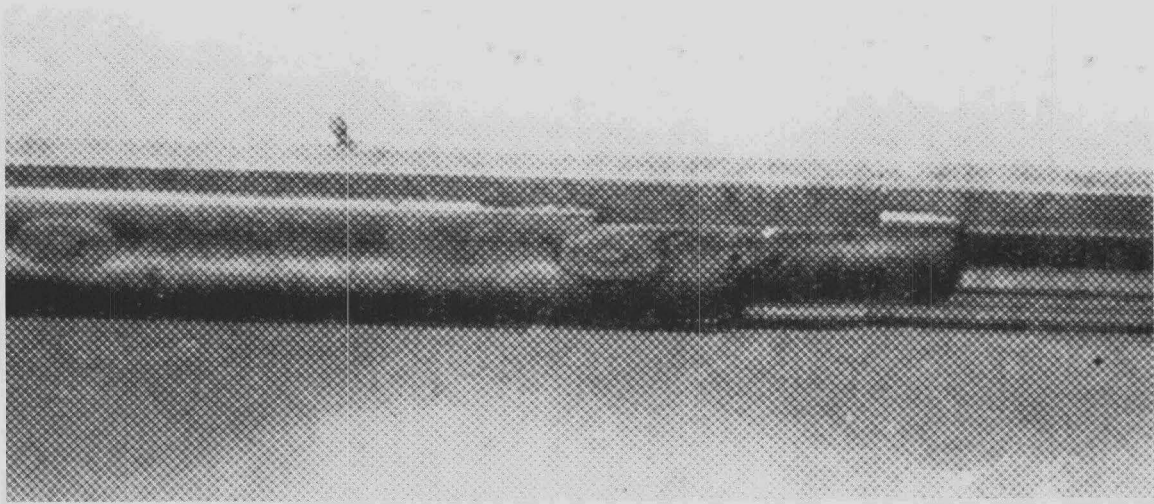
At the turn of the 19th century, many of Beale’s

contemporaries and associates had been honored in published biographies, some by several such studies and in multiple editions. Nothing, however, had been written for Edward Fitzgerald Beale. After selling the California ranch in 1911, eighteen years after his father’s death, son Truxtun Beale (1856-1936) decided to launch the work himself. He gathered a quantity of written material pertinent to his father’s career, and “engaged” Stephen Bonsal (1865-1951) to edit the material and prepare a text (Briggs and Toudell, p. 280, but without supporting reference). The result of their efforts was *Edward Fitzgerald Beale—A Pioneer In The Path Of Empire*, published in 1912. Stephen Bonsal’s name is on the title page as author, and he signed the “Introductory Note” dated January 6, 1912, but the 1912 copyright was given to Truxtun Beale.<sup>10</sup>

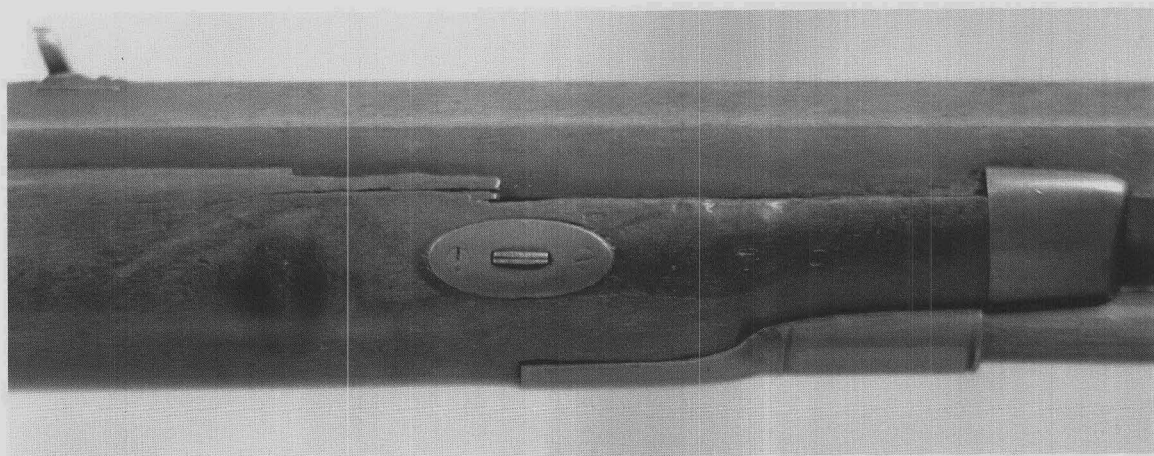
For the most part, the book is put together from government reports, official correspondence, and published material authored by Edward F. Beale. Details concerning family affairs and personal transactions, which are so important to the present study, must have come from Truxtun himself.

His most important contribution was a full page illustration opposite page 288 of “The Gun Used by Kit Carson,” from which the gun can be uniquely identified—truly an instance in which one picture is worth a thousand words—together with a caption giving the succession of ownership to that time.

The pictured gun (Bonsal, opp. p. 288) is a half stock percussion rifle of medium weight and proportions. The ramrod is held by two ramrod pipes attached to a rib under the barrel. Two oval escutcheons for the barrel keys are



A close-up of the forend of the gun in Bonsal's picture. Note that the missing wood is identical to . . .



. . . the "narrow sliver lacking side of forend" of gun number 11, Boone and Crockett Club sale, 1972, as it appears now.

discernable in the forend, and the rear sight on the top flat of the barrel slopes noticeably toward the rear, positioned about half way between the escutcheons. Double-set triggers are protected by a trigger guard which terminates at the back in an oval scroll. The plain undecorated stock is of a simple design, with both the comb and the belly following straight lines. The crescent butt plate is of medium curve. This gun could not be anything other than a classic Hawken plains rifle, both generally and specifically.<sup>11</sup>

Of special value, for purposes of identifying this particular gun, are the flaws which can be seen in the picture. A fairly wide sliver is missing from the forend between the nose cap and the forward escutcheon, with a very thin extension of this sliver missing for about an inch to the rear of that escutcheon. A horizontal crack is discernable in the wrist, from just above the triggers to the top of the wrist about where the rear barrel tang bolt should be; what appears to be a bolt with a nut on it protrudes from the top of the wrist at

that position. Several distinctive, nearly horizontal wiggly cracks are visible in the butt stock; a long one runs from near the rear end of the trigger guard back toward the center of the butt plate, with a slight step-down about half way back. Another crack, shorter in length, is present near the butt plate, just above the long crack.

Accompanying the 1912 picture is this caption:

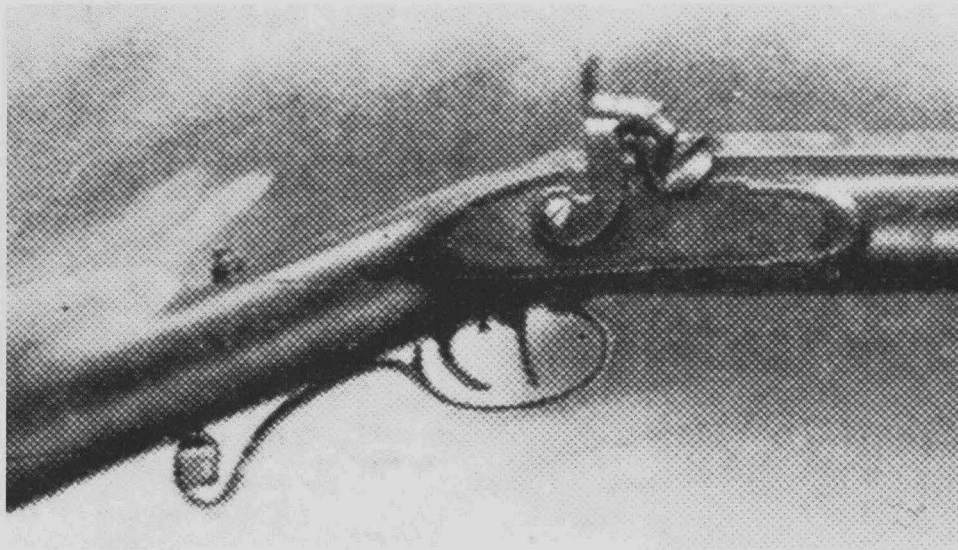
**The Gun Used By Kit Carson**

This gun was given by Kit Carson to General Beale, after a brush with the Indians in which Carson claimed that General Beale had saved his life. It was afterward presented by Truxtun Beale to Theodore Roosevelt, who in turn gave it to the Boone and Crockett Club.

It is obvious that the Carson-Beale Hawken was clearly identified in 1912.

**BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB SALE OF 1972**

At a meeting in late 1971, the Executive Committee of



The wrist and lock area of the gun in Bonsal's picture. Gun number 11, Boone and Crockett Club sale, 1972, was described as having a "clean crack completely through at wrist with very crude brass nut and bolt repair."



Boone and Crockett Club sale gun number 11, as it looks today, after the "crude repair" was remedied.

the Boone and Crockett Club "decided that the Club should not be a repository for miscellaneous firearms and should retain in the Gun Room at Sagamore Hill only those guns having personal significance to Theodore Roosevelt and the Roosevelt family."<sup>12</sup> In the months which followed, an appointed "Gun Committee" designated 13 firearms to be retained, and 30 to be sold. Mr. A.B. Roosevelt, grandson of Theodore Roosevelt<sup>13</sup> and "Hon. Chairmen of the Sagamore Hill Committee," spent time in council with the gun committee on two occasions, reviewing the entire inventory and approving the division made.

Among the arms listed for sale was gun number 11:

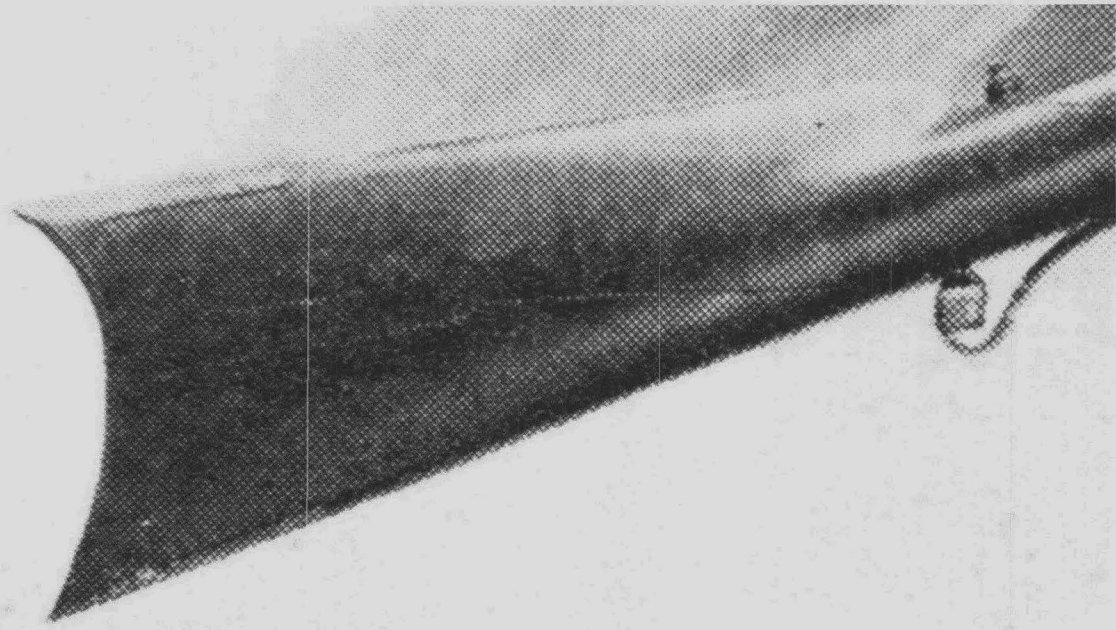
"11. American percussion half stock Plains rifle by same maker and fully marked "S. Hawken—St. Louis" on its medium weight 36 inch octagon barrel. Approximately .56 caliber. Bore will scour out about very good. Showing smooth even wear and use with deep age brown metal. Mechanically excellent. Double set triggers. Typical Hawken half stock with

double wedge fastening. Iron Furniture. Stock of maple showing wear and use consistent with gun. Clean crack completely through at wrist with a very crude brass nut and bolt repair. Number of line cracks and breaks on butt stock which will require repair. Narrow sliver lacking side of forend. Weight 12 lbs."<sup>14</sup>

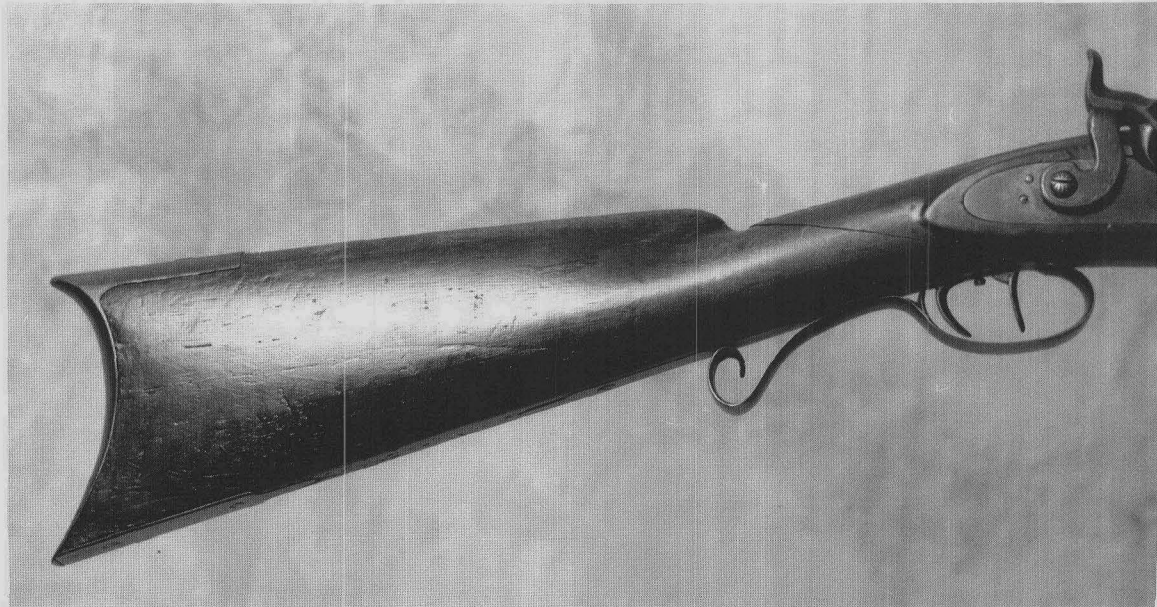
A general characterization of the piece, composed from elements in the above listing would read: *Typical Hawken percussion plains rifle with medium weight barrel, half stocked with double wedge fastening, and double set triggers*, which is exactly what the gun pictured in Bonsal happens to be.

Even more diagnostic are the listed flaws:

- \* "Narrow sliver lacking side of forend."
- \* "Clean crack completely through at wrist with very crude brass nut and bolt repair."
- \* "Number of line cracks and breaks on butt stock which will require repair."



Butt stock of the gun in the Bonsal picture, showing "Number of line cracks and breaks on butt stock which will require repair" described for gun number 11, Boone and Crockett Club sale of 1972.



Repairs completed on the butt stock of gun number 11, but the pattern of the cracks still matches those seen in the Bonsal picture.

Each of these flaws correlate directly to features which can be observed in the 1912 illustration, and together with the general characterization, provide an irrefutable tie between gun number 11 in the Boone and Crockett Club sale, and the gun pictured in Bonsal in 1912. Earlier, this gun must have been the subject of Edward Beale's statement "mine now."

Boone and Crockett Club member John H. Batten was the successful buyer of gun number 11 in the 1972 sale, and the gun has remained in his family ever since.<sup>15</sup> Batten was a competent gunsmith in his own right, and effected the repairs needed to put the gun in sound condition, but he did

not eliminate the features which prove its identity. The pattern of cracks in the right side of the butt stock is readily recognized (though difficult to photograph); the nut-and-bolt repair at the wrist is gone, replaced with a new rear tang bolt, but the "crack completely through" still stands out; and the sliver missing from the right side of the forearm remains exactly as it was, a perfect and distinct battle scar from times past.

#### CONCLUSIONS AND AFTERTHOUGHTS

The history of the Carson-Beale Hawken is anchored by two important events: Edward Fitzgerald Beale's 1871 state-



ment that Kit Carson's Hawken was "mine now," and Truxtun Beale's presentation of the picture and caption in 1912. You may have noticed that Edward's nostalgic recollection in 1871 of Carson leaning on his Hawken "twenty five years ago" places the recalled event in the year 1846. If Carson had a Hawken in 1846, it would not have been marked S. HAWKEN, but most probably J. & S. HAWKEN. Any student of the Hawken line knows this now, but Edward did not, and probably would not have cared. The circumstances under which the gun was obtained, necessarily before Carson's death, could not have been related to Miller's poem and Edward's reaction, three years after Carson's death. Edward *did* know that he had a Hawken formerly Carson's, and simply projected it back to one of the most memorable periods in his life. This literary license is, to me, understandable and acceptable.

Truxtun's presentation of the picture and caption in 1912 was, to a great extent, a statement from his father by proxy. He must have heard the stories so many times that he, more than anyone else, was qualified to make the tie that binds past to present. In a single graphic stroke, Truxtun identified the Carson-Beale Hawken, and through the accompanying caption brought it up to date historically.

After 1912, the gun was sequestered (in rather rough condition) at Sagamore Hill for sixty years, followed by some twenty years in the collections of a family with great appreciation for the real things of history. Meanwhile, the specific knowledge offered in the picture had faded into general obscurity, and there was little immediate connection between newly emerging historical studies of Beale and students of the material culture of his era. Guidance from Heather Palmer, Collections Specialist, Decatur House (in a letter to William Q. Pirie, postmarked October 2, 1992), in directing attention again to the information in Bonsal's book, was the turning point of the study. That was the day the lights came back on, and this almost forgotten chapter of history was illuminated once more.

Weathered, splintered, broken and repaired, the Carson-Beale Hawken suffered the rigors of hard use and long exposure, remedied now by the attention needed to keep it sound and presentable. Scarred and worn as it is, nothing has been lost of the sense of utility, reliability, and careful balance between power and portability, which made it a trusted favorite on the plains and in the mountains. Hawken plains rifles occupy a position of considerable renown in their own right; the tie to Carson and Beale places this particular gun among the most elite in the realm of historical western arms.

In pursuing this study, I have come to realize I should be thankful for a lot of little things which, taken singly, might

appear to have little historical importance: old friends; a rustic California poet; the words "mine now"; missing forend slivers and a crude bolt repair; a son's motivation to do something for his father's memory; accurate descriptions of flaws; gracious and dedicated keepers of our national heritage; and collectors who do not erase history in the process of doing their "collecting."

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#### NOTES

1. The year of Jacob's death is frequently mentioned in writings about the Hawken brothers, but the day, in the spring of that year, is not; and often, when a day is given, it is given incorrectly. For complete and documented details of Jacob's passing, see Hanson, 1979, p. 86-88.

2. There is no consensus as to when Sam Hawken quit making and marking guns. Hanson (1979, chapter 7) gives a most comprehensive discussion of the known facts, and offers several possible theories regarding the end of S. HAWKEN production. I find it difficult to accept that Sam would strike out for new surroundings without taking his S. HAWKEN stamp and a few personal tools. My own working hypothesis is that Sam did leave behind in the St. Louis shop a number of completed and marked S. HAWKEN guns, and a variety of marked S. HAWKEN barrels. The guns may have been sold off by others over a few years, and the barrels used up over an even longer period of time; but if it says S. HAWKEN, it is because Sam Hawken was responsible for its manufacture. This may apply only to the barrel, and there are several late, highly sophisticated guns for which this may be the case. There are enough Hawken-type rifles around with strange marks, or no marks at all, to account for the production of entirely new guns after Sam's departure. Again, this is my own working hypothesis, and I'm open to a continuing discussion.

3. The first three letters of POSTLEY are somewhat unclear, but were immediately recognized by Hawken specialist Jerry Gnemi, who also provided the location and working period from his reference material.

4. For a full account of the incident at San Pasqual and events which followed, see Thompson, 1983, Chapter 2, from which this synopsis was taken.

5. Chemuctah is recognized by name only in Joseph T. Downey's *Filings From An Old Saw*, which consists of a series of newspaper articles originally published in *The Golden Era* (newspaper), San Francisco, during the period from January 9 to July 3, 1853, relating events in California in 1845-1847 (see Downey, 1956, p. 89).

6. Carson's 1853 sheep drive to California is covered, to the extent of the knowledge available, in Carter, 1968, p. 132-134, which is based on Carson's own dictated autobiography. Beale's El Tejon Ranch was about 60 miles north of Los Angeles, and Carson's route from Sacramento to L.A. would have taken him right through it.

7. Gerald Thompson (1984, p. 135-152) provides the complete text of both Miller's poem and Beale's response, plus an interesting analysis of this literary conflict. Thompson notes that Miller's poem, "Kit Carson's Ride," first appeared in an American publication in *HARPER'S WEEKLY*, August 5, 1871, and Beale's response, "To The Editor Of The Republican—Kit Carson's Ride," was published in the Chester *DELAWARE COUNTY REPUBLICAN* (Pennsylvania) sometime in August, 1871. The substance of the Miller-Beale conflict was covered in Bonsal on pages 284-288, in a greatly reduced and edited summary, but the "mine now" passage was related (p. 287) with only a few alterations.

8. Thompson refers to the Ashmead sketch in both his 1983 book, and his 1984 article on the Beale-Miller conflict. The 1983 usage conforms to the content of the original sketch. His 1984 usage includes a substantial extrapolation in stating, on page 137 (and echoed in captions facing page

147), that Carson's Hawken and an autographed photo of Carson were particularly conspicuous in Beale's study in Chester, PA. One could argue that this is a rational interpretation, but Ashmead did not write it. Briggs (Briggs and Tradal, 1983) makes the same leap of faith on page 273 by placing around Beale at Decatur House (Beale's home, after October 1873, in Washington, D.C.) many mementoes including

"—a framed and signed photograph of Kit Carson; and Kit's own rifle, which he had given to Beale." Briggs saw no need for footnotes, so the source of this assumption is unknown. The distinction between fact and extrapolation should not be lost or overlooked.

A picture of Carson, apparently an illustration removed from a book (Chris Slusher, Assistant Director, Decatur House, note to Bill Pirie, June 30, 1995), is now retained in family papers gathered by Mrs. Marie O. Beale (1880-1956), Truxtun's second wife (Koonts, Mary, et al, *Finding Guide to the Archival Collection of Decatur House*, National Trust for Historic Preservation, July, 1994). The source and date of this particular book illustration is not currently known, but my own studies indicate that it was reproduced from a photograph taken by Mathew Brady (see Meridith, p. 323, No. 75) in the last year of Carson's life, and most probably just a few months before his death. I can also say from my own experience that the inscription on it has no resemblance to Carson's signature. This photo, with inscription, is reproduced in Thompson, 1984, opposite page 147.

9. Neither Godey nor Carson suffered lance wounds at San Pasqual. This part of the story must have been the result of Beale's inclination to stretch a good tale a little bit taller.

10. Stephen Bonsal was an accomplished and prolific writer in the field of international politics and diplomacy, with more than fifteen books to his credit (OCLC OnLine Listing, July 10, 1995). As a Member of the U.S. diplomatic corps, he was involved in the affairs of the capital and fulfilled many assignments overseas (*Concise Dictionary of American Biography*, Fourth Edition, 1990, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, p. 106). It is my speculation that Bonsal and Truxtun became acquainted through their mutual involvement in diplomatic work, and Truxtun prevailed on Bonsal help him with the book. I have entertained the thought that Stephen Bonsal may have been a childhood chum of Truxtun Beale, but have not yet found anything to support the possibility.

11. For an interesting and instructive display of a number of Hawken plains rifles together, see the collection of seven Hawken rifles assembled by Jim Serven shown in Serven, 1974, p. 78-79; also shown in Baird, 1968, p. vi-vii.

12. The quotes and details in this section, and the reference to Mr. Roosevelt's participation, are derived from a letter, with enclosed sale procedures and gun list, from Robert M. Ferguson (Gun Committee Chairman) to the members of the Boone and Crockett Club, dated August 21, 1972, retained in the personal papers of John H. Batten now in the possession of William Q. (Bill) Pirie.

13. A.B. Roosevelt (Archibald Bulloch Roosevelt, Jr., 1918-1990) was 54 years old and an official in the Central Intelligence Agency in 1972, stationed in Washington, D.C. (The New York Times, 1990, p. 515; Trosky (*Contemporary Authors*), 1989, p. 368).

14. Another S. Hawken rifle listed in the Boone and Crockett Club's dispersal sale of 1972, as item number 10, was a massive 18 pound gun which has been very well illustrated in subsequent publications and auction catalogs (see Wilson, 1992, p. 49, and the catalogs mentioned below). This gun is sturdily stocked in walnut without barrel keys, is nicely checkered at the wrist, and the scroll in the grip of the trigger guard is circular in outline. With a tall folding tang sight and a turned muzzle to take a starter, the gun is outfitted for possible use in target shooting. The ramrod pipes are dovetailed directly into the bottom flat of the extra large barrel, with no under rib. Design of the lock and snail area is quite sophisticated, suggesting a relatively late production date. The gun shows little use, and has apparently not suffered extended exposure to the elements in the great outdoors. This

exceptionally fine gun would not easily be confused with the gun pictured in Bonsal opposite page 288.

Christie's (Christie, Manson, & Woods International, Inc., of New York) offered this gun at auction on October 7, 1981 as item "31 AN HISTORIC AMERICAN PERCUSSION HEAVY WEIGHT TARGET OR HUNTING RIFLE." It appeared again as item 172 in "Collector's Firearms Auction," April 26 & 27, 1994, conducted by Little John's Auction Services, Inc., of Orange, California, with an excellent array of photographic illustrations.

15. The Carson-Beale Hawken passed from the estate of John H. Batten to his nephew William Q. (Bill) Pirie in 1990.

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## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CARSON-BEALE HAWKEN



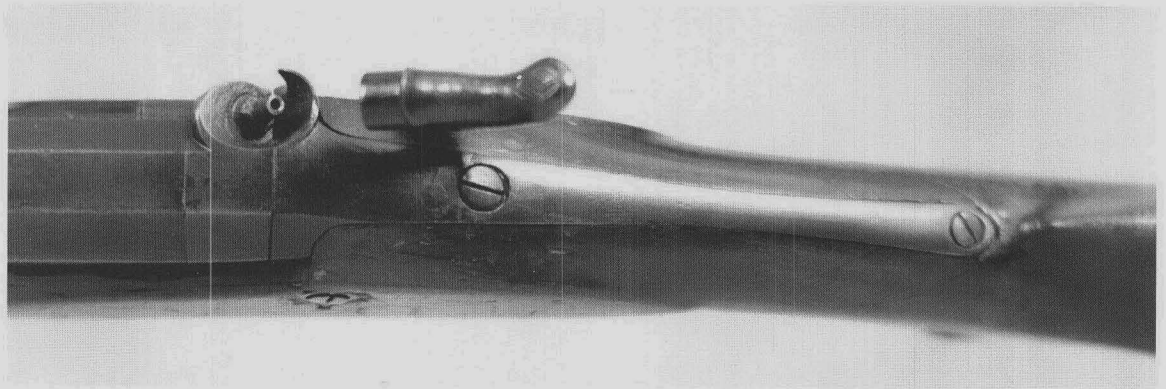
Left side of stock showing the "beaver-tail" shape of cheek piece.



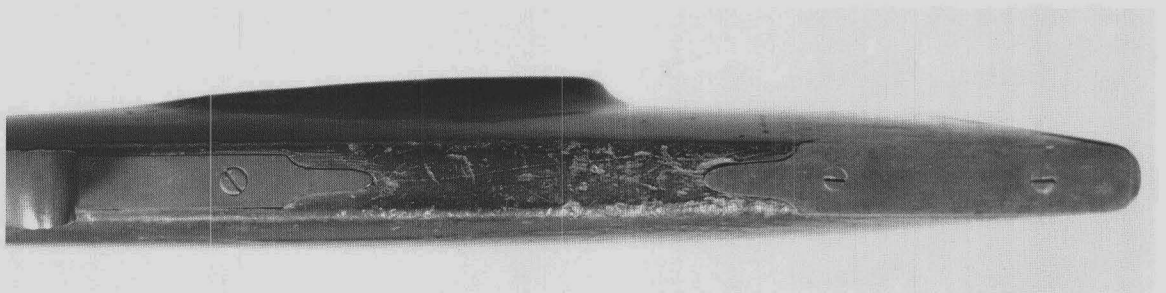
Lock at full cock to show the design of the snail. Lock is unmarked except for the number "14" on inside of lock plate and hammer.



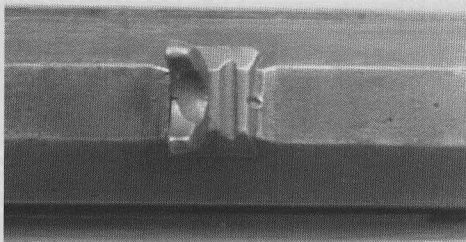
Counter-lock side, showing the inletted tear-drop shaped lock bolt washer and the "slant breech" characteristic.



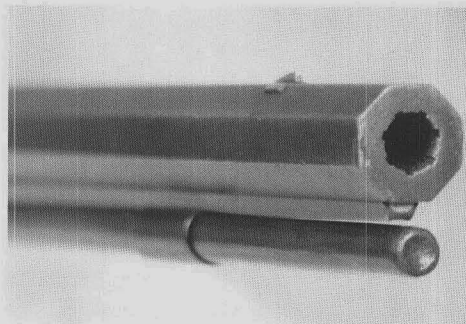
Barrel breech and typical long tang. Both tang bolts engage the trigger bar. The rear tang bolt is a replacement, formerly a "very crude brass nut and bolt repair."



Finials of the toe plate and trigger bar are simple and matched.



Rear sight is a basic open Kentucky type semi buckhorn, with very fine notch and a moderately long base.



The .56 caliber bore has typical Hawken 7-groove rifling with the centered groove at the bottom. Ram rod thimbles are attached to the under rib.



Barrel mark S. HAWKEN-ST. LOUIS struck with two separate dies. The die for St. Louis was held slightly cocked.