

## UNKNOWN MARTIAL PISTOLS, 1797 to 1816

By Lt. Col. R.C. Kuhn

Let us forget today and go back to 1797. At that time the United States population was 4,000,000. The Army had 3,126 men and the Marine Corps 881 men. What we now call the Navy was then a part of the Army. The Navy as a separate unit was created in 1798. Enlistments were for 2, 3, and 4 months or for one year. To again orient our minds to the facts in this era I cite the Army's pay scale:

<u>RANK</u>	<u>PAY/MONTH</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>PAY/MONTH</u>
COLONEL	\$75.00	2nd LIEUT.	\$25.00
LT. COLONEL	\$60.00	SERGEANT	\$ 6.00
MAJOR	\$50.00	CORPORAL	\$ 5.00
CAPTAIN	\$40.00	PRIVATE	\$ 4.00
1st. LIEUT.	\$30.00		

Whiskey then was a part of the ration and it cost the quartermaster from 40 to 60 cents per gallon.

In another "National Archives" period I found this:

### RETURN OF MILITARY STORES ON HAND

Philadelphia	May 1st, 1781	Brass Pistol Barrels .....	93
	1793	Brass Pistol Barrels .....	80
Manchester, Va	Dec. 14, 1793	Implements, Brands.... U.S.	1
		Implements, Brands.... C.A.	1

and that "C.A." could be quite interesting when you look at this:

<u>PERIOD IN UNITED STATES HISTORY</u>	<u>NAME GIVEN MILITARY STORES</u>
1774 to 1781 Continental Period	1777 Commonwealth Magazine
1781 to 1789 U.S. Confederation	1782 Continental Arsenal
1789 to date United States of America	1794 National Armory
	1892 Springfield Armory

So you see that the "C.A." could be the "Continental Arsenal" brand.  
The "Presidents" of this period were:

1774 .... Peyton Randolph	1781 .... John Hanson
1774 .... Henry Middleton	1782 .... Elias Boundinot
1775 .... Peyton Randolph	1783 .... Thomas Mifflin
1775 .... John Hancock	1784 .... Richard Henry Lee
1777 .... Henry Laurens	1785 .... John Hancock

1778 .... John Jay  
 1779 .... Samuel Huntington  
 1781 .... Thomas McKean

1786 .... Nathaniel Gorham  
 1787 .... Arthur St. Clair  
 1788 .... Cyrus Griffin  
 1789 .... George Washington

The National Archives records show the following production statistics on the Harper's Ferry Armory: (R.G. 92 Box 48 )

<u>PRODUCTION PISTOLS</u>	<u>PATTERN PISTOLS</u>
1806 .....none	1806 ..... 8
1807 .....2880	1812 ..... 4
1808 ..... <u>1208</u>	1819 ..... <u>6</u>
Total .....4088	Total .....18

An 1834 letter of report says of the pistols:

Caliber .69 were bright finish  
 Calibre .54 were bright and some browned finish

During 1813 and 1814 inspector H. H. Perkin was paid \$40 per month. Later in 1841 ordnance inspectors received, free rent, 18 cords of fire wood and \$800.00 per year.

From 1797 to 1807 most pistol contracts are missing or never existed as per the following parts of a letter to Secretary of War from Purveyor's Office, Philadelphia.

"5th July 1800

Sir:

I had the honor to receive your letter on the 2nd with the inclosures, with respect to Mr. Ketland's claim on account of locks imported. I had previous to the receipt of your letter made enquiry into the circumstances attending it, and though the date of Mr. Francis' order is between four or five years ago, yet as it appears that the number will not be exceeded including these, and that the order has been verbally continued from year to year. Col. Hodgdon agree with me in opinion it would be best to purchase them especially as by letting them be sold to others it would be opening the security against embezzling public arms by having them marked "United States" as these are so marked. It is a misfortune that almost the whole of Mr. Francis' contracts were verbally made without any memorandums in his books or knowledge of the circumstances communicated to Mr. Govett his clerk etc, etc.

The following is from R.G. 45 Receipt Book of John Harris:

<u>PISTOLS DELIVERED</u>			
<u>Assembled and Fitted from Government Parts</u>			
<u>Thomas Annely</u>		<u>John Miles</u>	
8-8-1797	22 Pistols	8-16-1797	50 Ship Pistols
9-15-1797	10 Ship Pistols	9-8-1797	50 Ship Pistols
10-10-1797	10 Ship Pistols	11-10-1797	50 Ship Pistols
12- 9-1797	20 Ship Pistols	4-9-1798	2 Ship Pistols
3-23-1798	10 Ship Pistols	10-16-1798	100 Horseman's Pistols

Thomas Annely continued

4- 5-1798     40 Ship Pistols  
                  112 Total

John Nicholson, Jr.

8-16-1797     50 New Ship Pistols  
 10-19-1797     50 New Ship Pistols  
 2- 7-1798     40 New Ship Pistols  
 3- 3-1798     2 New Ship Pistols  
                  142 Total

Frederick Schnider

3-27-1798     26 Ship Pistols  
                  26 Total

Robert McCormick

8- 6-1799     82 Horseman's Pistols  
 8-10- 1799     16 Horseman's Pistols  
 12-11-1799     100 Pistols  
                  198 Total

R.G. 107 & 45 National Archives

Simeon North

Contract 3-9-1799 for 500 pistols @ \$6.50 each, .59 caliber, 8 1/2" barrel. This is the first contract for North & Cheney, Berlin pistols.

2- 7-1800     10 Horseman's Pistols  
 1-24-1801     490 Horseman's Pistols  
                  500 Total of contract

Additional contract 2-6-1800 for 1500 pistols @ \$6.00 each.

9-11-1802     1500 Horseman's Pistols  
                  1500 Total of contract

Grand Total North & Cheney Pistols 2000

R.G. 94 Box 1 and entry 30 book 291

Henry, Guest & Brong.

1- 2-1808 Contract for 800 pistols @ \$5.00 each, delivery in six months.  
 1-13-1809     65 Pistols  
 7- 6-1809     184 Pistols     Thomas Palmer, Inspector  
 7- 8-1809     66 Pistols  
 7-14-1809     9 Boxes of Pistols  
 8-16-1809     1 Box of Pistols  
 10-2-1809     1 Box of Pistols  
 9-19-1810     184 Pistols  
                  499 Pistols & 11 Boxes

John Miles continued

12-23-1798     100 Horseman's Pistols  
                  352 Total

Joseph Morgan

8-20-1797     10 Ship Pistols  
 10- 9-1797     12 Ship Pistols  
 10-25-1797     6 Ship Pistols  
 11-16-1797     10 Ship Pistols  
 12-23-1797     12 Ship Pistols  
 5-16-1798     16 Ship Pistols  
 6-16-1798     18 Ship Pistols  
                  84 Total

Jacob Cook

Two contracts, 11-19-1807 for 300 Pistols and 3-28-1808 for 1200 Pistols @ \$5.00 each delivery to be made in four months.

8-15-1808	44 Pistols	
1-12-1809	18 Pistols	
4- 1-1809	4 Pistols	Thomas Palmer Inspector
	<u>66 Pistols</u>	Total Delivery

Joseph Henry

Two contracts, 11-19-1807 for 300 Pistols and 3-28-1808 for 1200 Pistols @ \$5.00 each Delivery to be made in six months.

10-27-1808	406 Pistols	
3- 6-1809	288 Pistols	Thomas Palmer Inspector
4-15-1809	112 Pistols	
6-23-1809	193 Pistols	
9- 11-1809	141 Pistols	Daniel Pettibone Inspector
12-26-1809	97 Pistols	Thomas Palmer Inspector
7-30-1810	231 Pistols	Thomas Palmer Inspector
	<u>1468 Pistols</u>	Total Delivery

William Calderwood

One contract 4-21-1808 for 120 Pistols @ \$5.00 each, delivery to be made in six months.

6-30-1808)		
9-27-1808)	60 Pistols	
10-19-1808	20 Pistols	
11 - 2-1808	20 Pistols	
11 -21-1808	17 Pistols	
12-22-1808	3 Pistols	
	<u>120 Pistols</u>	Total Delivery

A. & J. Anstead

One contract 4-22-1808 for 100 Pistols @ \$5.00 each, delivery in six months.

9- 8-1808	49 Pistols	delivered Schukill Storeroom, not inspected
2- 2-1809	54 Pistols	" " " " "
4-22-1809	<u>Notation</u>	"103 Pistols inspected this day"
	103 Pistols	Total Delivery

Adam Leitner

One contract 5-31-1808 for 200 Pistols @ \$5.00 each, delivery in six months.  
NONE DELIVERED

John Shuler

One contract 6-4-1808 for 300 Pistols @ \$5.00 each, delivery in six months.

John Shuler continued

4-22-1809	70 Pistols	
5-25-1809	22 Pistols	
6-28-1809	44 Pistols	
7- 3-1809	13 Pistols	Thomas Palmer, Inspector
8- 7-1809	12 Pistols	Daniel Pettibone, Inspector
10- 4-1809	30 Pistols	Daniel Pettibone, Inspector
	<u>191 Pistols</u>	Total Delivery



Lt. Col. R.C. Kuhn

Martin Fry

No contract found. Was paid on the basis of \$5.00 each

6- 8-1809	54 Pistols	Thomas Palmer, Inspector
9- 5-1809	30 Pistols	Thomas Palmer, Inspector
9- 2-1809	24 Pistols	Daniel Pettibone, Inspector
4-25-1810	62 Pistols	Jacob Shough, Inspector
8-16-1810	1 Box Pistols	
9- 3-1810	30 Pistols	Jacob Shough, Inspector
	<u>200 Pistols</u>	and 1 box of Pistols Total Delivery

R.G. 45, R.G. 217 & R.G. 92

Simeon North

Navy contract 6-30-1808 for 2000 Pistols @ \$5.87 each, delivery to be made in 18 months

8-24-1809	1 Pistol to Navy Department,	.64 Caliber, 10" Barrel
9-26-1809	12 Pistols to Secretary of Navy	
9-30-1811	4 Pistols to Secretary of Navy	
12-10-1812	<u>1984 Pistols</u> to Navy Yard	
	<u>2001 Pistols</u>	Total Delivery

Simeon North was granted an additional contract on 12-4-1810 for 1000 pistols "of equal quality and of the same size" at \$6.00 each. The records show that 1000 pistols were delivered and on 5-2-1816 North was paid \$6000.00 plus \$36 for transportation of the pistols. This made a grand total of 3000 pistols for North.

Simeon North

Army contract 11-18-1811 for 2000 Pistols @ \$5.9375 each, to be of .69 caliber 9" barrel

1- 6-1813	84 Pistols	Pin fastened barrels
10-29-1813	272 Pistols	" " "
1-28-1814	200 Pistols	" " "
3-25-1814	84 Pistols	" " "
6-28-1814	200 Pistols	" " "
9-26-1814	50 Pistols	" " "
	<u>890 Pistols</u>	Total Delivery

In May 1813 the ordnance department wanted the Wickham barrel band used to fasten the barrel to the stock. They amended North's contract and extended the completion date and added 50¢ more to the contract price of each pistol. Gradually North finished

the pin fastened "1811 Model" as he had many pin fastened stocks on hand when the contract was changed. The balance on this contract were of .69 caliber, 9" barrel, brass side plate, trigger guard and umbrella shaped butt cap but with an iron barrel band. These were delivered.

6-22-1814	200 Pistols
6-28-1814	250 Pistols
11-26-1814	150 Pistols
6-7-1815	400 Pistols
2-22-1815	<u>150 Pistols</u>

1150 Pistols Delivered @ \$6.4375 each, Grand Total 2040 Pistols

And now about the famous 1808 Deringer! As far as the record show that we have been able to locate there isn't any such Deringer Model nor Pistol. The earliest Deringer entry in the National Archives is as follows:

Philadelphia  
June 26, 1811

Trench Coxe, Purveyor P.S.  
Bot of Henry Deringer

1 Pair of Pistols . . . . . \$8.00

Received June 27, 1811 from Trench Coxe P.S. the above eight dollars in full \$8.00

Henry Deringer

And then in R.G. 217, Records of General Accounting Office of George Harrison, Navy Agent at Philadelphia I find:

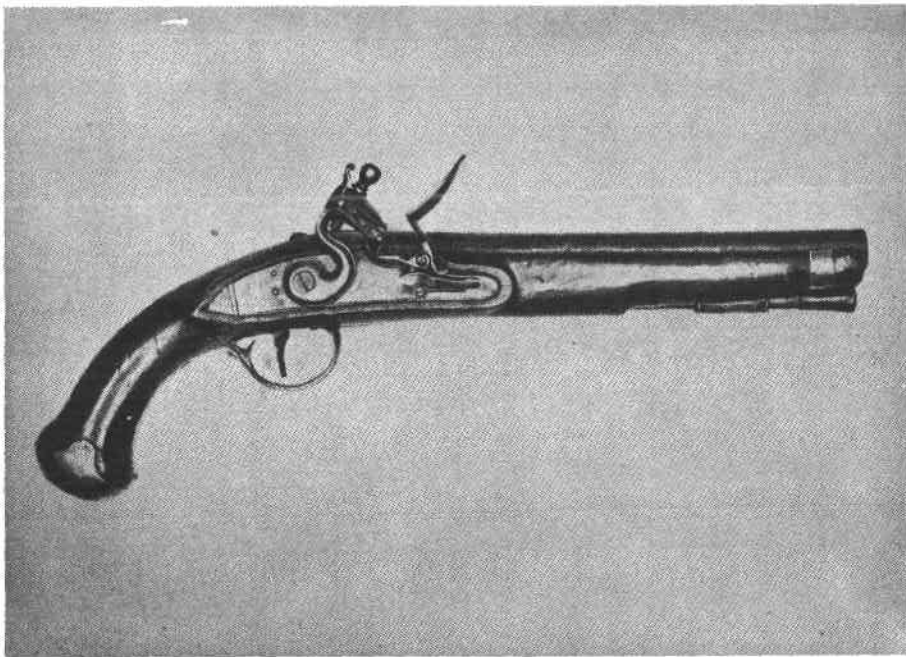
		<u>PAID</u>	
April . . . . . 1813	Jacob Bretz	34 1/2	pair of Pistols . . . . . \$455.50
June . . . . . 1813	Joseph Henry		Pistols . . . . . 375.00
June . . . . . 1813	Joseph Henry		Pistols . . . . . 689.00
June . . . . . 1813	Joseph Henry		Pistols . . . . . 390.00
May . . . . . 1814	Henry Deringer		Pistols . . . . . 280.00
May . . . . . 1814	Henry Deringer		Pistols . . . . . 581.50
July . . . . . 1814	Henry Deringer		Pistols . . . . . 281.00
July . . . . . 1814	J. Henry		Pistols . . . . . 1080.00
July . . . . . 1814	J. Henry	50 pair Pistols and 25 Muskets . . . . .	1036.25

In the absence of any price per pistol I assumed seven dollars each and arrived at these numbers, delivered:

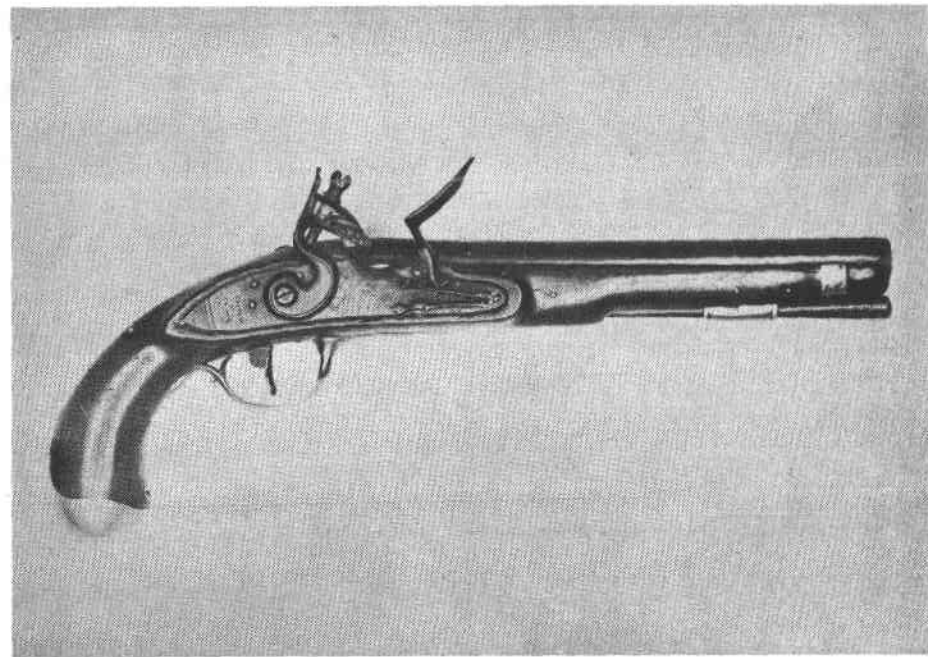
Jacob Bretz	.....	69 Pistols
Joseph Henry	.....	460 Pistols
Henry Deringer	.....	<u>163 Pistols</u>
		692 Pistols Total Delivery

So now for the first time we see Henry Deringer delivering 163 pistols. And they were the 1814 Model and not the 1808 Model.

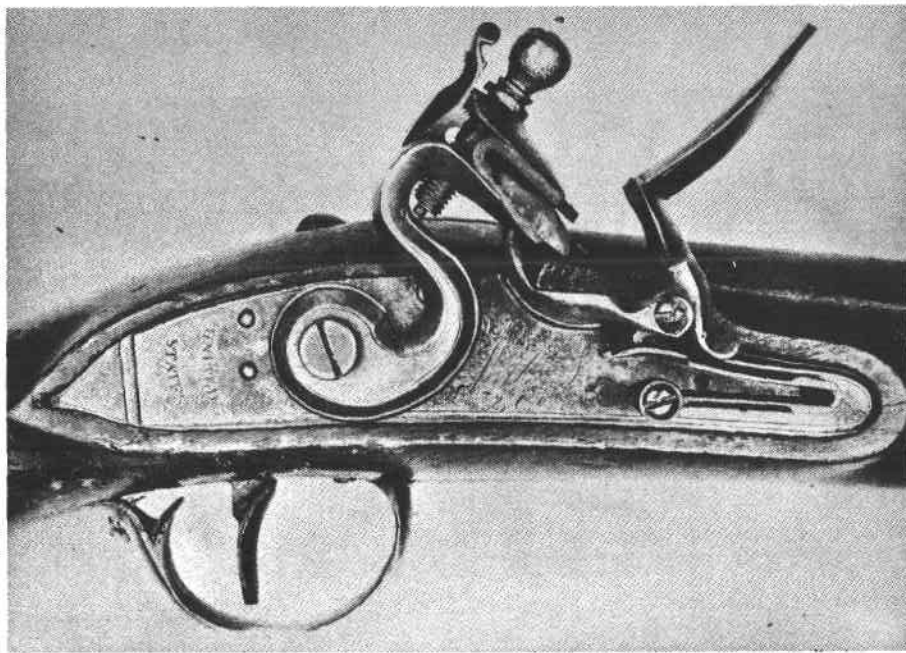
My next discovery was a foot note at the end of May 1810 Contract which said, "April 7th 1814 20 Boxes containing 42 each ready to be delivered etc. See Jos. Hull's letter of Apr. 3rd." Jos. Hull's letter has not been found. On June 23rd 1814 inspector H. H. Perkin says, "I expect to complete the order for Philadelphia in 10 or 12 days."



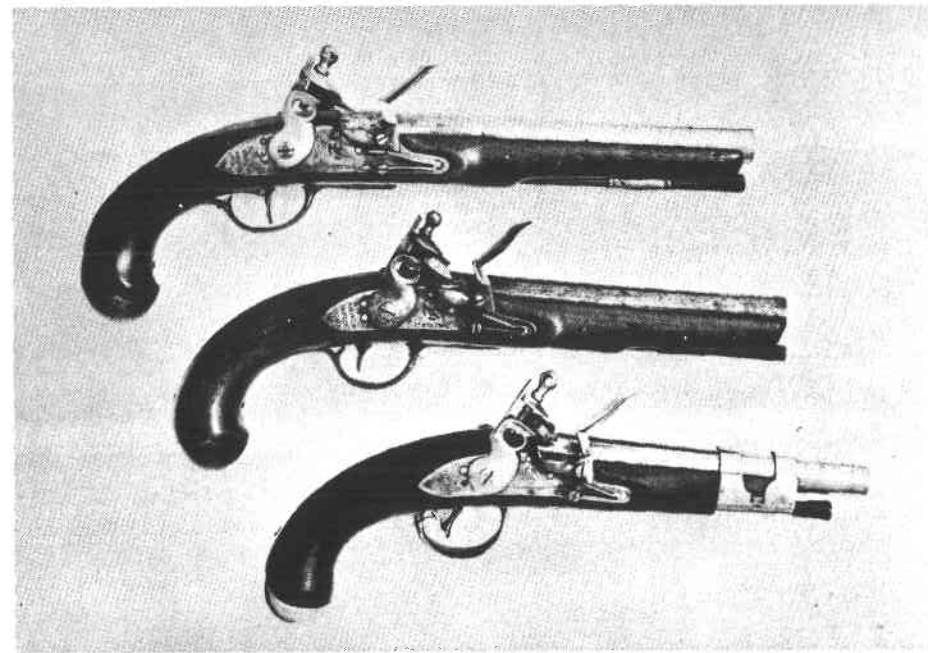
McCORMICK, ARMY PISTOL



McCORMICK, NAVY PISTOL



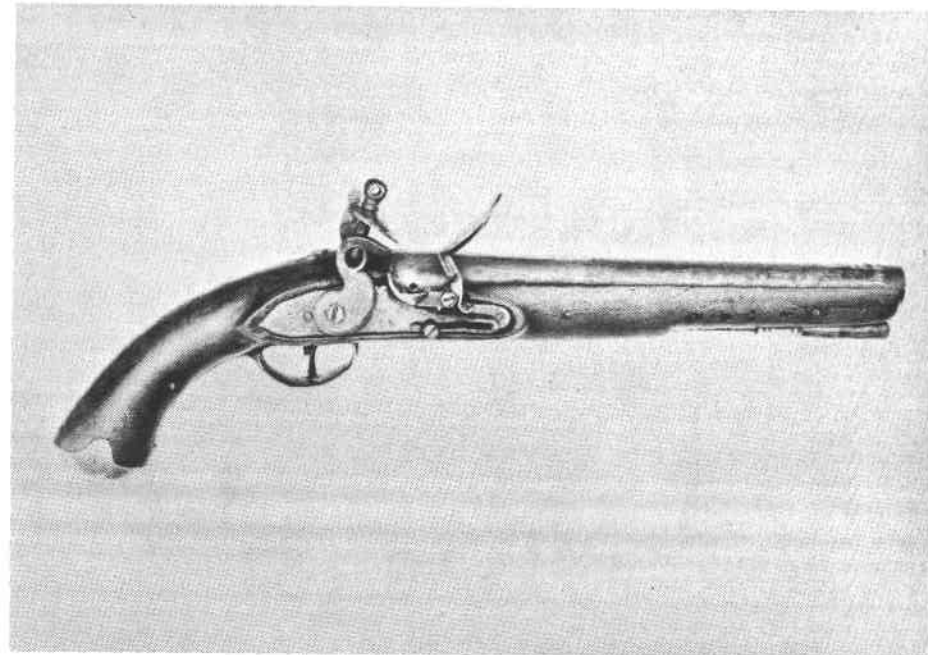
McCORMICK LOCK



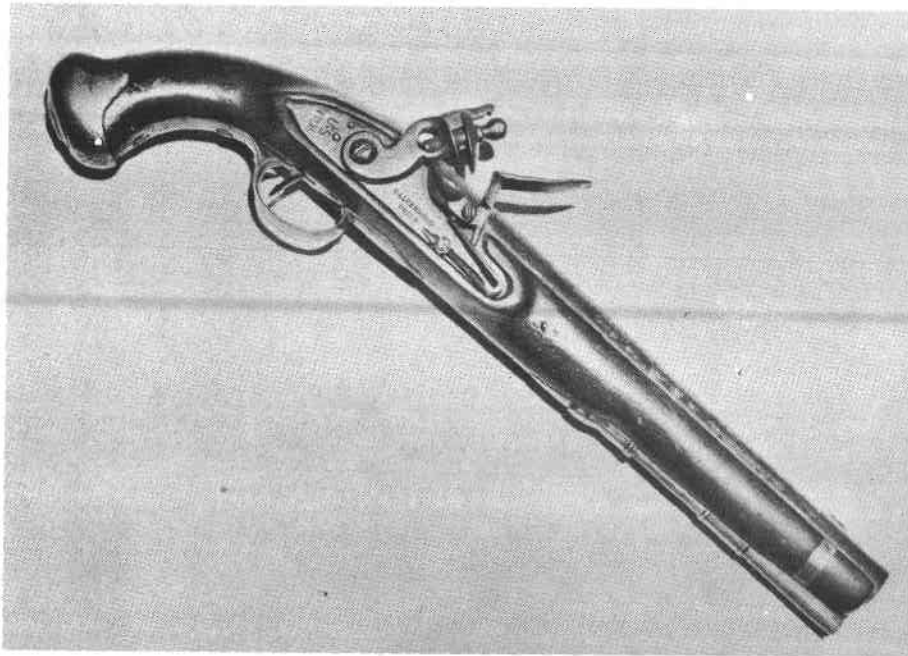
SIMEON NORTH PISTOLS



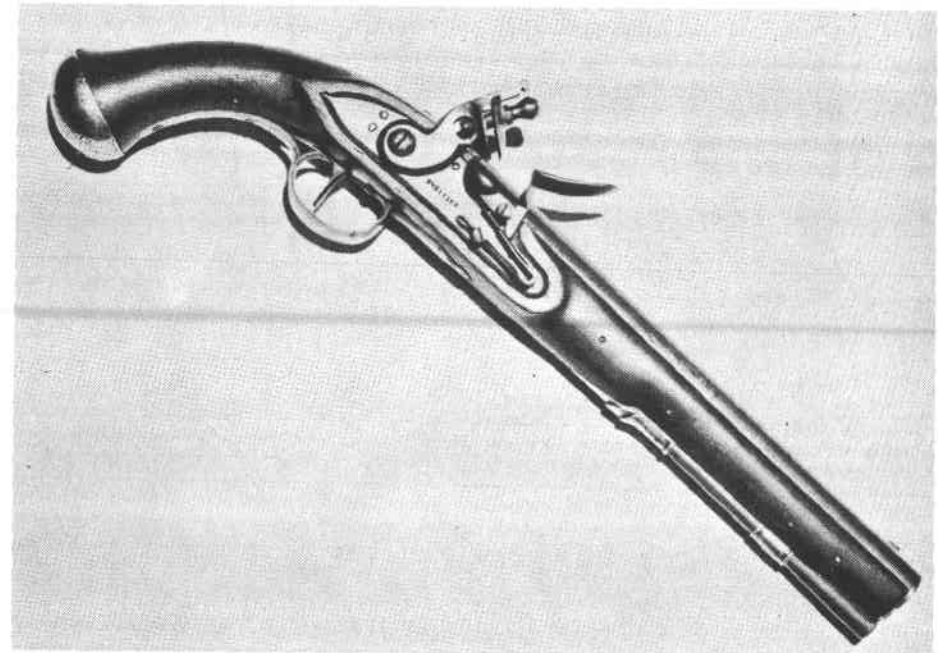
NORTH AND CHENEY, BERLIN



J. HENRY, PHILA.



CALDERWOOD, PHILA.



SWEITZER WITH P. BRONG ON BARREL



We see George Harrison's paid bill for 692 pistols made by Bretz, Deringer and Henry and sent to Philadelphia. On July 6th 1814 the Navy says to "send 12 boxes of 42 each of North's pistols to Geo. Harrison at Philadelphia." The paid bills for 692 pistols are not dated and North apparently still had those 20 boxes of 42 pistols each, on hand. The Navy Secretary, Mr. Crowninshield says on Jan 26, 1815 to Jos. Hull, "See how much North will charge for 2000 pairs of boarding pistols with bar at the side to hook in a belt. They must be 9" and musket caliber." Feb. 11, 1815 North says by letter to Secretary Crowninshield "do you have a pattern --- if not I'll make a couple and then price them." March 23, 1816 North says to Navy, "I'll make the pistols like the one I left at your Jan. 1800 and with belt hook at \$18.00 per pair." May 10, 1816 North says he has 1400 Army Pistols on hand 600 more to be finished in a few months. The Army didn't want them as they had a new one, the Model of 1816 .54 caliber. North then offered them to the Army at the same price, \$7.00 each.

R.G. 45 Entry 209 Journal 1815-19 page 69 says

"Sept. 16, 1816 Contracted with Simion North for 1000 Ships Pistols."

R.G. 45 Entry 217 Misc. Letters #1 Page 111 says

"Capt. Evans at New York has been directed to order an inspector to Middletown to inspect your (North's) thousand pistols and when he shall have inspected them you will deliver them at the Navy Yard, New York to the order of Capt. Evans" 16 Oct. 1816

R.G. 217 4th Auditor #25 book (Navy), also R.G. 92 (Army)

Navy Yard N.Y. Storekeeper S.T. Anderson received from Simeon North on Nov. 16, 1816 .....1000 Pistols.

And on Nov. 29, 1816 the Navy accountant, 4th Auditors Office sent Jos. Hull \$7000.00 for Ordnance. This apparently was to be sent to Simeon North for the 1000 pistols as on Dec. 9, 1816 Hull says to the Navy 4th Auditor, Constant Freeman, "I hereby acknowledge to have received from the Treasury of the United States draft #7379 on H. R. Pynchou Cashier of the New Haven Bank for seven thousand dollars for which I hold myself accountable at your office. (Signed) Joseph Hull, Navy Agent. The balance of North's pistols were apparently sold to Boston privateers in 1815 as per Maj. Hick's letters in Vol. II Page 110-11.

And now I will identify, decipher and prove the Tryon flintlock pistol.

R.G. 92 National Archives

Geo. W. Tryon received from John M. Taylor, M.S.K. US Arsenal 1 pistol barrel, 1 stock, 1 lock, 1 cap, 1 guard. April 28, 1814

Hick's Vol. II Page 64

Commissary General Office  
Philadelphia, May 19, 1814

M. T. Wickham  
U.S. Inspector of Arms.

Sir:

Mr. Tryon has consented to make the pistols with wipers etc. at \$6.50 per pair. Please to examine the pistol made by him critically and give me your opinion of it. I send by bearer both pistols. Will be glad to see you after such examination. What is Starr's saber for non-commissioned officers?

Respectfully

Collender Irvine

Commissary General's Office  
Philadelphia May 25, 1814

Jno. M. Taylor  
M.S.K.

Sir:

Please issue to Mr. Geo. W. Tryon for the purpose of making pistols, 276 pistol locks, 276 pistol stocks, 276 barrels, 276 sets of brass mountings sufficient to have made 276 pistols.

Collender Irvine

Commissary General

R.G. 92 National Archives

George W. Tryon ----- Received from John M. Taylor on May 27, 1814. 276 pistol barrels, 276 pistol stocks, 157 pistol locks, 119 musket locks, 540 heel plates.

Hick's Vol. II Page 65

Commissary Generals Office  
Philadelphia April 14, 1815

Mr. Wickham

Sir:

Mr. Tryon called this morning and informed me that the pistol stocks delivered him are exceptionable. I desired him to return them informing that he should receive good ones in lieu of them, please attend to it.

Collender Irvine

Hick's Vol. I Page 42

Statement of Contracts made with Commissary General of Purchase etc. for Ordnance

stores remaining unexpired and for which money will be required to the end of 1816.

Commissary Generals Office  
Philadelphia Nov. 3, 1815

276 pistols .... To be repaired by G.W. Tryon, Philadelphia and delivered to the U.S. Arsenal at \$3.25 Dollars each .....\$897.00

Commissary Generals Office of Purchases Entry 45 Page 80

Geo. W. Tryon delivered Dec. 21, 1815 at \$2.81 each .....276 pistols.

This explains the "Tryon" on the English Ketlish lock and also "Tryon Philadelphia" on the Birmingham English proof-marked brass barrel.