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Cowan's Historic Firearms and Early Militaria Auction Hits \$1.52 Million

Colt Single Action Sheriff's Model Revolver Highest Selling Item of 1,256-Lot Sale

CINCINNATI (May 18, 2007) – A Colt single action Sheriff's model revolver sold for \$92,000 and highlighted Cowan's Auctions May 2007 *Historic Firearms and Early Militaria* sale. The auction, which drew over 1,400 absentee bids, generated total sales of \$1.52 million from 1,256 lots.

"It was the best collection of Winchester made items to come to light in many years," said Jack Lewis Jr., head of Cowan's Historic Firearms and Early Militaria department.

"We were very pleased to see some of the premier collectors in the field at the sale. Collectors of bowie knives, powder horns and Kentucky rifles, were all there," said Joe Moran, Cowan's Historic Firearms and Early Militaria department specialist.

Highlighting the first day of the sale was the Hunter Winchester collection, an assortment of accoutrements sold from the estate of Clarence R. Hunter. The collection brought in over \$375,000. The Hunter lots included two Winchester baseball bats and a fielder's glove that sold for a total of \$1,035. Four-lot and six-lot Winchester gun oil cans brought \$977.50 each, and Winchester gun grease tubes sold for \$862.50. A Winchester lawn mower fetched \$747.50.

Winchester advertising, from the Hunter collection, also was auctioned. A Winchester window two-sided display panel fetched \$2,300 and two lots of three Winchester display signs sold for \$1,092.50 and \$1,840, respectively. A Winchester .22 caliber cartridge smokeless powder sign brought \$1,150 and two sets of Winchester display cards sold for \$2,530 and \$3,450.

Bowie knives sparked excitement on the second day of the May 2-3 sale, when thirty-five of the famed weapons were auctioned. A J. Nicholson & Sons half horse and half alligator bowie knife sold for \$24,150 and a W. Sanderson Sheffield large folding bowie knife brought \$19,550.

Cartridge boxes were in demand, reflecting the increasing popularity of these items, especially from the 1920's and 1930's. Proving that finding nostalgia in its original state provokes any collector, a group of thirteen .22 caliber cartridge boxes advertised as Copperhead sold for \$1,495, eleven Peter's cartridge boxes fetched \$977.50 and ten Savage cartridge boxes sold for \$632.50.

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Local items were featured, including a Peter's league paper shot shell empty box that sold for \$2,185. Peter's Cartridge Company was located in King Mills, Ohio, and made ammunition for a long period of time. Peter's Cartridge was eventually bought by Remington Arms in 1934.

Auction surprises included a leather hunting pouch from the 1800's, in great condition and accompanied by the original accoutrements (powder horn and measure) sold for \$12,650 and four Winchester paint cans that brought \$1,150. Also, a Revolutionary War-era saber made by Louis Prahl sold for \$4,312.50.

Cowan's next *Historic Firearms and Early Militaria* auction is slated for November 2007. For more information please contact Jack Lewis Jr., 513-871-1670, firearms@cowans.com.

Highlights of the *Historic Firearms and Early Militaria* Auction, held May 2 & 3, 2007 at the Starlite Ballroom in California, OH include (all prices include 15% buyer's premium):

\$92,000 PAID FOR COLT SINGLE-ACTION SHERIFF'S MODEL REVOLVER

45 caliber, 3.5" barrel, serial number 172734, barrel with two-line address on top. Left side of barrel with caliber markings in a banner. Left side of frame with two-line patent dates. Frame is a black powder frame with ejector release screw in the front under cylinder pin. Factory engraved with carved bull's head pearl grips, silver-plated finish. Backstrap with factory inscription Johnnie Johnson. Inscription on bottom of butt reads Mrs. Roberto. Accompanying this revolver is original factory letter. This revolver was shipped to H. Woodhaus & Son on September 15, 1897.



WINCHESTER MODEL 1886, DELUXE TAKEDOWN RIFLE SELLS FOR \$29,900

45-90 caliber, 26" octagonal barrel, full magazine, serial number 139382. Top of barrel with standard Winchester markings between rear barrel and front sight. Top of barrel behind rear sight elevator PW proof marked 45-90 WCF. Winchester logo and Model 1886 marked on upper tang. Fancy 2X checkered forearm, checkered straight grip and shotgun buttstock. Steel shotgun buttplate. Serial number on lower tang along with patent markings.



J. NICHOLSON & SONS 1/2 HORSE 1/2 ALLIGATOR BOWIE KNIFE GARNERS \$24,150

7.75" blade, 1.5" wide and 0.2" thick. Marked on blade at ricasso on left side J. Nicholson & Son. Blade etched with nice floral designs and Volunteer in a banner. Silver coffin-head-shaped butt with 1/2 horse and 1/2 alligator. Pearl handles. Red leather sheath embossed with The Real California Goldfinder's Knife.



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\$21,850 PAID FOR FINE FIRST NATIONAL CONFEDERATE FLAG

Hand-sewn from linen, 66 x 37.5", the stripes 13.5" in width, with a 25.25 x 26.5" two-piece canton adorned with a double-applied medallion of 11 hand-cut and -sewn stars, each 5-5.5" from point to point. Hoist of heavy linen, retaining remnants of three cloth ties.



The size and hand-made nature of the flag suggest that this color was made by a skilled homefront seamstress, perhaps for patriotic display. The eleven stars present in the canton argue for a construction date sometime between mid-April to mid-May of 1861, when the states of Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina joined the original seven secession states. A very fine, frameable example, retaining bright colors.

W. SANDERSON SHEFFIELD LARGE FOLDING BOWIE KNIFE FETCHES \$19,550

With embossed rampant British lion. 7.75" blade, 13.75" overall length. Silver quillon, lion head and coffin shaped grips. Stamped on blade W. Sanderson Sheffield. Patriotic etching Equal Rights Equal Law and Justice For All. Horn handles with silver pins and name plate.



WINCHESTER MODEL 1866 RIFLE SELLS FOR \$19,550

.44 RF caliber, 24.5" octagonal barrel, serial number 37489. Full magazine, walnut buttstock and forearm with sling swivels. Top of the barrel with Winchester markings. Blued finish. Brass frame, noscap and buttplate.



WINCHESTER MODEL 1873 FIRST MODEL RIFLE SELLS FOR \$14,950

Circa 1874 .44 caliber WCF, 24" octagonal barrel, serial number 2152. Front jack sight and rear adjustable combination tang peep sight. Buckhorn rear barrel sight. Raised thumbprint dust cover. Receiver with raised rail to accommodate the dust cover. No cleaning rod in butt.



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\$14,950 PAID FOR WOLFE & CLARK'S NEW YORK BOWIE KNIFE

With 9.5" single-edged clipped end steel blade with 7" false-edge and 2 ornamental Spanish notches just in front of choil, forged bolster, stamped on left face Wolfe & Clarks/New York, with cast German silver quillon/guard engraved on each side with shells, 2-piece antler grip with German silver escutcheon on each face, grip attached with 8 German silver rivets, total length 14" (see Flayderman, 2004: 360-361). Wolfe & Clarke are listed in N.Y.C. Directory as being at 193 Maiden Lane, from 1836-1844 and were importers of hardware and firearms.



PAIR OF SILVER SCOTTISH PISTOLS BY MURDOCH SELLS FOR \$14,375

Circa 1750-1775, .62 caliber, 7.75" barrels. The barrels are scroll engraved in four sections, fluted near the breech, a band, an engraved section, and then an octagonal line-engraved flared muzzle. Smooth bore with scroll engraved locks signed T. Murdoch. Engraved stocks, scrolls, and foliage in a continuous Celtic interlaced scrollwork engraving and inlaid silver along the top of the butt. The buttcap is scroll engraved silver. There are three engraved horizontal silver panels and one vertical, followed by a triangular finial on the underside of the stock. Complete with a vacant oval escutcheons near the breech. This type of lobate stock was designed by Thomas Murdoch and later copied by others. The ramrods are original as well as the engraved belt hooks. The Scottish-style triggers have engraved silver heads. Birmingham proofs on the barrels.



UNSIGNED PENNSYLVANIA FLINTLOCK RIFLE FETCHES \$13,800

.50 caliber smoothbore, 41" octagonal barrel. Unsigned flintlock Kentucky rifle, attributed to Fredrick Sell of Littlestown, PA. Brass hardware with engraved patchbox with five piercings. This rifle shows typical "Sell-styling" throughout. Curly maple stock shows both relief and incised carving, relief-carved C-scrolls and tendrils appear around the barrel tang. Typical "Sell-style" carving on both sides of the lower ramrod thimbles and on the cheek side of the butt. Finely carved forestock moulding, complete with graceful curved trigger.



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POWDER HORN AND LEATHER HUNTING POUCH SELLS FOR \$12,650

Double-sided bag with fringes and a powder horn with horn powder measure. Complete with shoulder strap.



VOLCANIC ARMS CO. LEVER-ACTION PISTOL SELLS FOR \$12,075

.41 caliber, 8" barrel, serial number 1482, engraved brass frame with walnut grips.



About Cowan's Auctions, Inc.

As one of the nation's leading auction houses with sales approaching \$15 million, Cowan's has been helping individuals and institutions build important collections for more than a decade. The company's four divisions of Historical Americana, American Indian and Western Art, American/European Furniture, Paintings and Decorative Arts, and Historic Firearms & Early Militaria hold semi-annual cataloged sales that routinely set records for rare offerings. Recent specialty auctions have featured dolls, toys, advertising, clocks, watches, shaving mugs and barbershop collectibles.

Through its extensive mailing list of more than 10,000 collectors, dealers and institutional clients, each Cowan's auction typically attracts more than 1,000 bidders from across the globe. To learn more about Cowan's visit our website at www.cowans.com.

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