

# Jacob Truby

By Jim Whisker

Jacob Truby (1795-) was a gunsmith in Kittanning, Armstrong County in western Pennsylvania and German, Darke County, Ohio. The latest version of Don Hustslar's collection of Ohio gunsmiths places Truby in German between 1821 and 1831. Truby owned lot no. 17, Water St., Kittanning, Armstrong County, Pa. There were two men named Jacob Truby, contemporaries, in Armstrong County. They have been confused in part because the gunsmith Jacob Truby left the area unexpectedly. The gunsmith was not the man discussed in the county history. The non-gunsmith died in 1857 and there is an estate on file for him. That man was married to Mary Ann Lauffer (1775-1860) and he and his wife are both buried at Rambaugh Cemetery.

The gunsmith Jacob Truby was born on 9 July 1795, a son of Michael and Anna Maria (Kline) Truby. Michael Truby, the father of Jacob, died on 30 July 1842. His obituary contained some interesting genealogical information. It noted that Michael was 83 years old and was a son of Col. Christopher Truby. Michael was a Revolutionary War drummer, at age 16, and was at Ft. Pitt under Col. Brodhead; and had defended Hanna's Town when attacked by Simon Girty.

Michael Truby, Jr., born on 9 June 1791, was a gunsmith and blacksmith. He, too, was a son of Michael Truby, Sr., and Anna Maria (Kline) Truby. He married Mollie, daughter of gunsmith Coonrod (Conrad) and Catherine

(Zartman) Schreckengost. Michael was active in Kittanning borough through 1834, or later.

While a young man, Jacob Truby's family moved to Armstrong County. There he married Catherine Mechling, born on 7 March 1795, daughter of Michael and Anna Maria (Altman) Mechling. The marriage apparently proved to be unhappy as well as childless. At least, no children were noted in the U. S. Census.

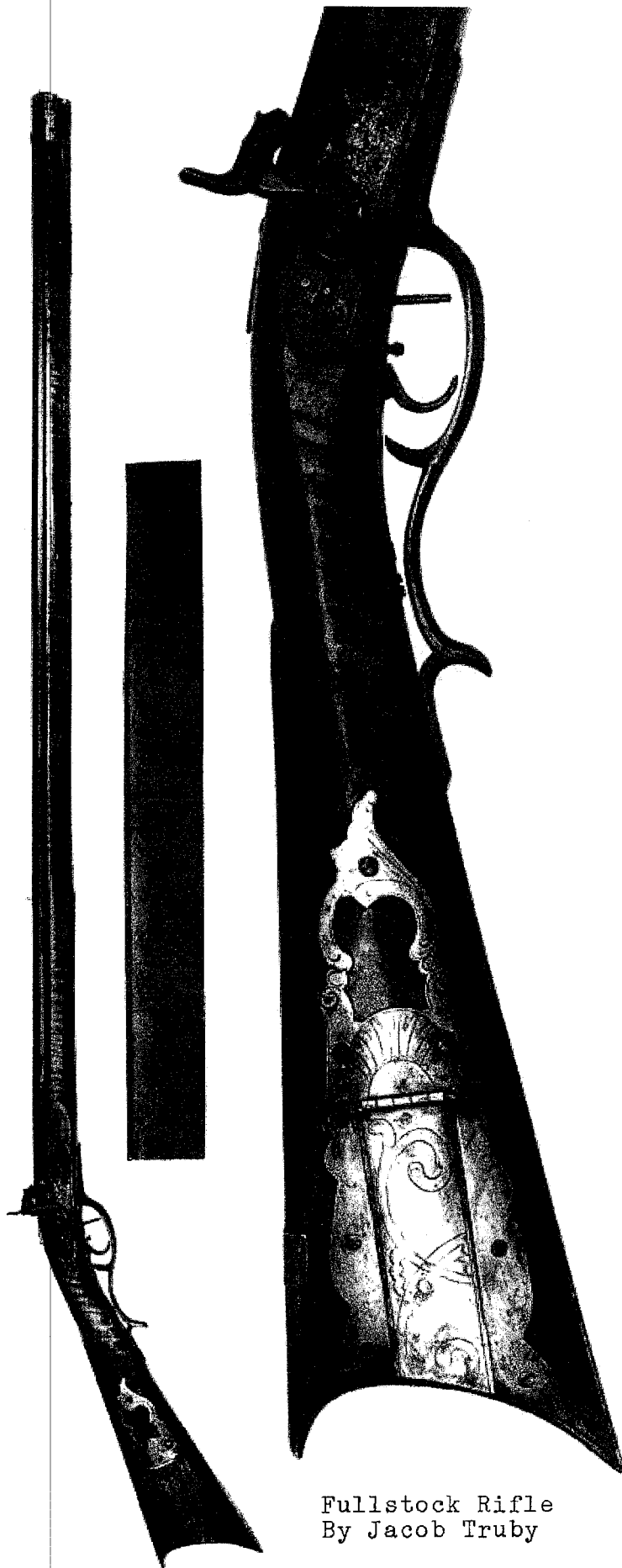
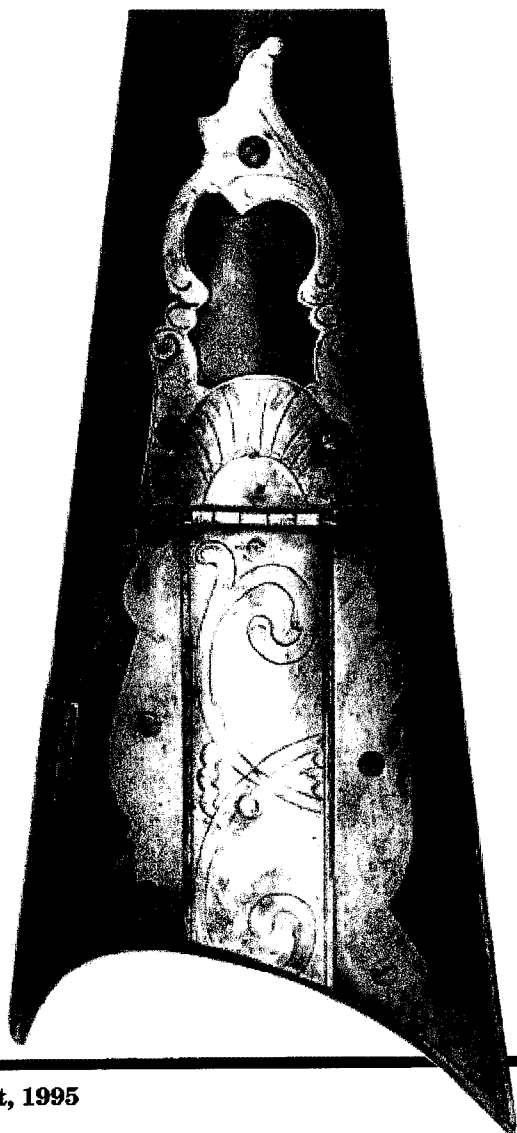
The first notice we have that Truby had deserted his wife and had left the area was a notice in 1831 that the Armstrong County sheriff was going to auction off Jacob Truby's two story frame house, kitchen, large shop and large building. These properties were sold by the high sheriff debts brought in a suit by Lisha Robinson. These buildings were purchased by Philip Mechling, brother of Catherine Mechling Truby. She continued to occupy the house until her death.

Tax lists show her as an inhabitant, but not as a widow, and no record notes anything of children. Neither is there any record of a divorce. Catherine died on 24 June 1866 and her tombstone stands in Kittanning Cemetery.

When Jacob left the area he apparently never returned to Kittanning. Gardner, in his three reference books, placed Truby in German in 1857. Hustslar guessed that Gardner must have found an entry in an earlier directory, probably of

1859.. Truby may have spent the remainder of his life in Ohio. The last reference Hutslar noted was in an 1864 Gazetteer listing as gunsmith in German, Darke County, Ohio, which was about the same time his wife died in Pennsylvania. The family name appears in Greene County in the 1860 U. S. Census.

I have seen only one gun made by Jacob Truby. When I first saw it, I had absolutely no problem considering it a Western Pennsylvania style. If I were to hazard a guess, based on the patchbox style especially, I would say that he was associated with Samuel Zimmerman (1803-1889) or with whomever Zimmerman may have apprenticed.



Fullstock Rifle  
By Jacob Truby



# John P. Mosser



By Jim Whisker

John P. Mosser (Moser) (1833-). John was the first child of Peter Moser and Anna Beer. Peter was born on 28 April 1809, Canton of Bern, Switzerland; and Anna on 14 February 1814, in Sonnenberg, Jura Mountains, Switzerland. In 1825 Peter's family moved to America, settling in Wayne County, Ohio, and on 13 April Peter purchased land in Wayne County, Ohio, (Deed Book 8, p. 461). The Wayne County Recorder's Office described that land as southwest quarter, section 15, Twp. 16, range 11, containing 56 acres, 14 perches. On 27 October 1832 Peter married Anna. On 18 September John P. Moser (Mosser) was born. Peter believed so strongly in the value of education that he started his own school, known as the Moser School. Anna died on 30 June 1901; Peter died on 13 June 1907, aged 98 years.

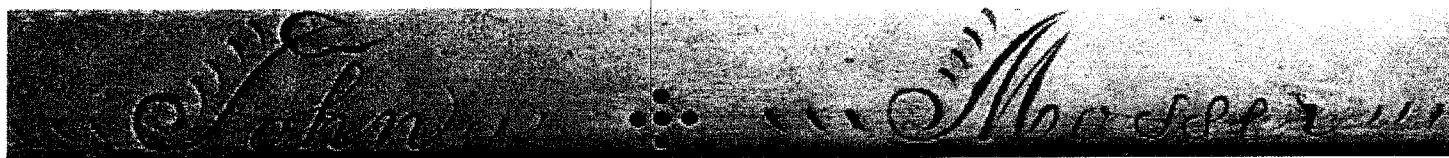
John was raised in Wayne County. I assume that he learned the gunsmith's trade in his youth, and there has been no suggestion that Peter was a gunsmith, but we do not know with whom John did apprentice. On 1 May 1856 he married Elizabeth Basinger, daughter of Peter and Magdalena (Lehman) Basinger. This was a triple wedding in which Catharine P. Mosser, John's sister, married John P. Hostetter; and John J. Bixler married Barbara Welty.

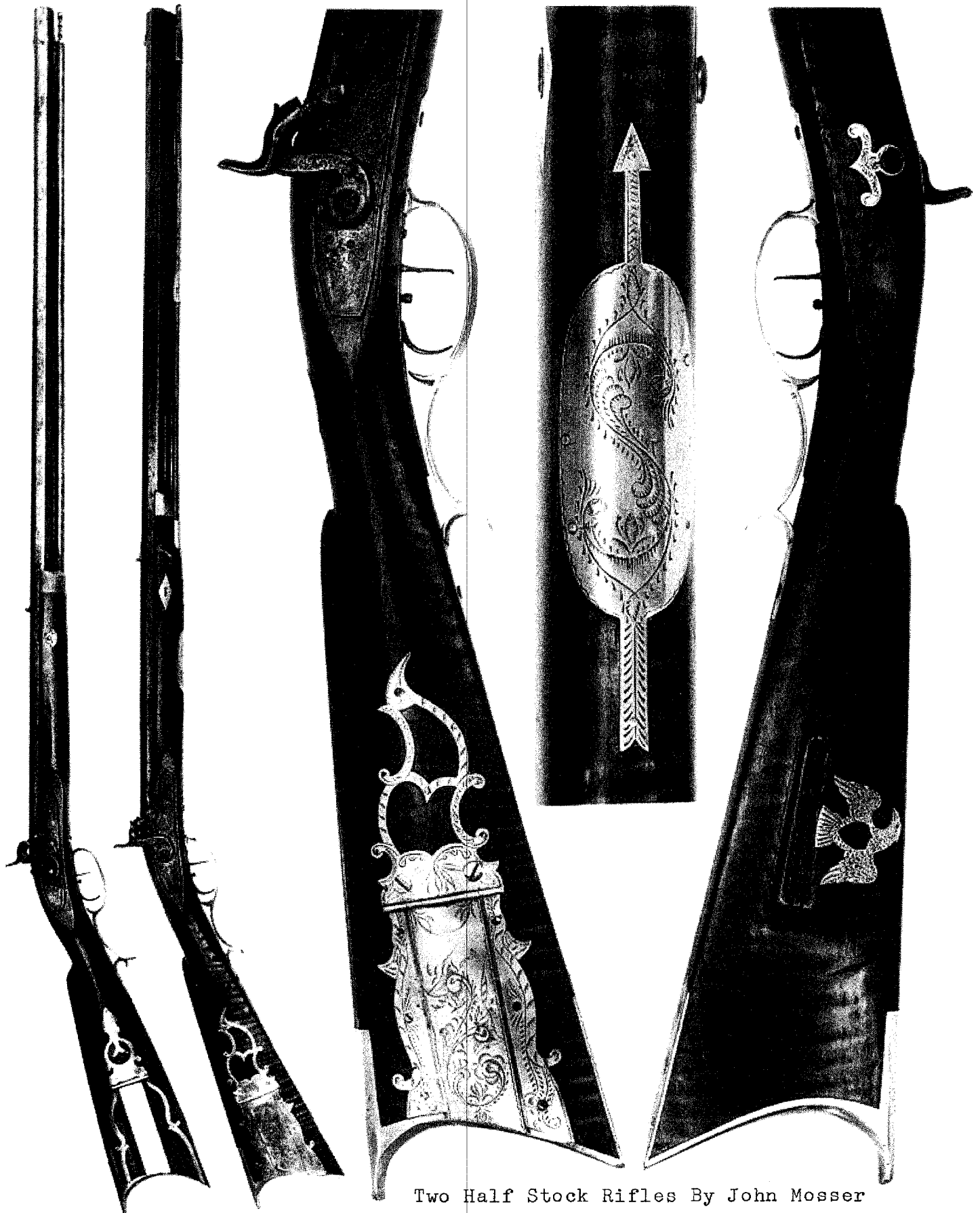
On August 1856 John and Elizabeth purchased from David and Elinor Fickes for \$4000 some 80 acres in the southwest quarter, section 10 Twp. 16, range 11, Wayne County. On 13 April 1890, John and Elizabeth received 80 acres adjoining their homestead from the estate of her father, giving them a total of 160 acres. As was true of most late gunsmiths, and many earlier ones too, John earned most of his livelihood from farming.

Elizabeth Basinger Moser died on 1 January 1912; and John P. Mosser died on 18 March 1912.

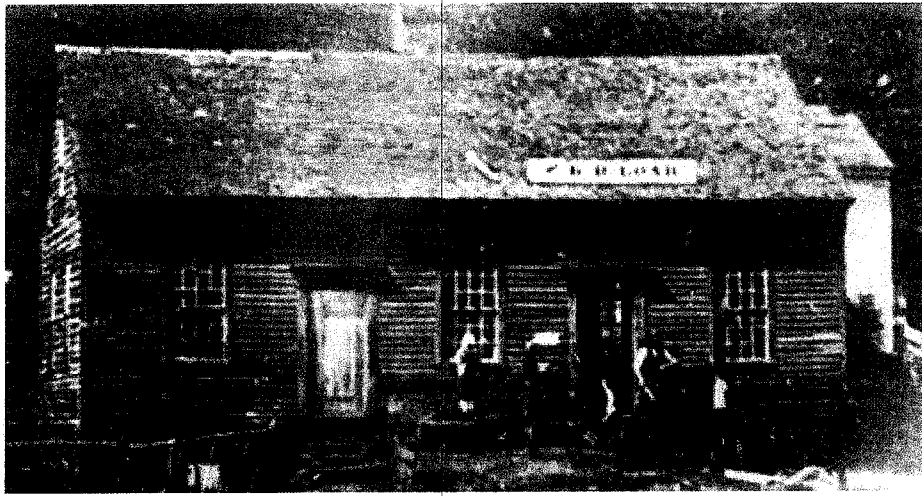
I have seen and photographed two Mosser guns and know of a third. Two use the fish motif as the patchbox finial. Two are half-stocks and the third a full-stock. Two were stocked in maple with a minimum of curl and the third in walnut. As we know guns of this vintage rarely had more decoration than a few silver (or german silver) inlays and this is true of Mosser's work. His guns probably show better architecture than most late Ohio half-stocks.

I am deeply appreciative of the genealogical information provided by Mrs. Irene Hostetter and Keith A. Shifflett.





Two Half Stock Rifles By John Mosser





## Benjamin B. Loar Licking County Gunsmith

By

Paul L. Zeiher

Benjamin B. Loar was born in Ohio on November 10, 1821. His parents were George W. and Elizabeth R. Loar. His wife Sara, was born in Newark, Ohio. The daughter of Asa and L. Langstaff. Benjamin and Sara had 6 children, four daughters and two sons.

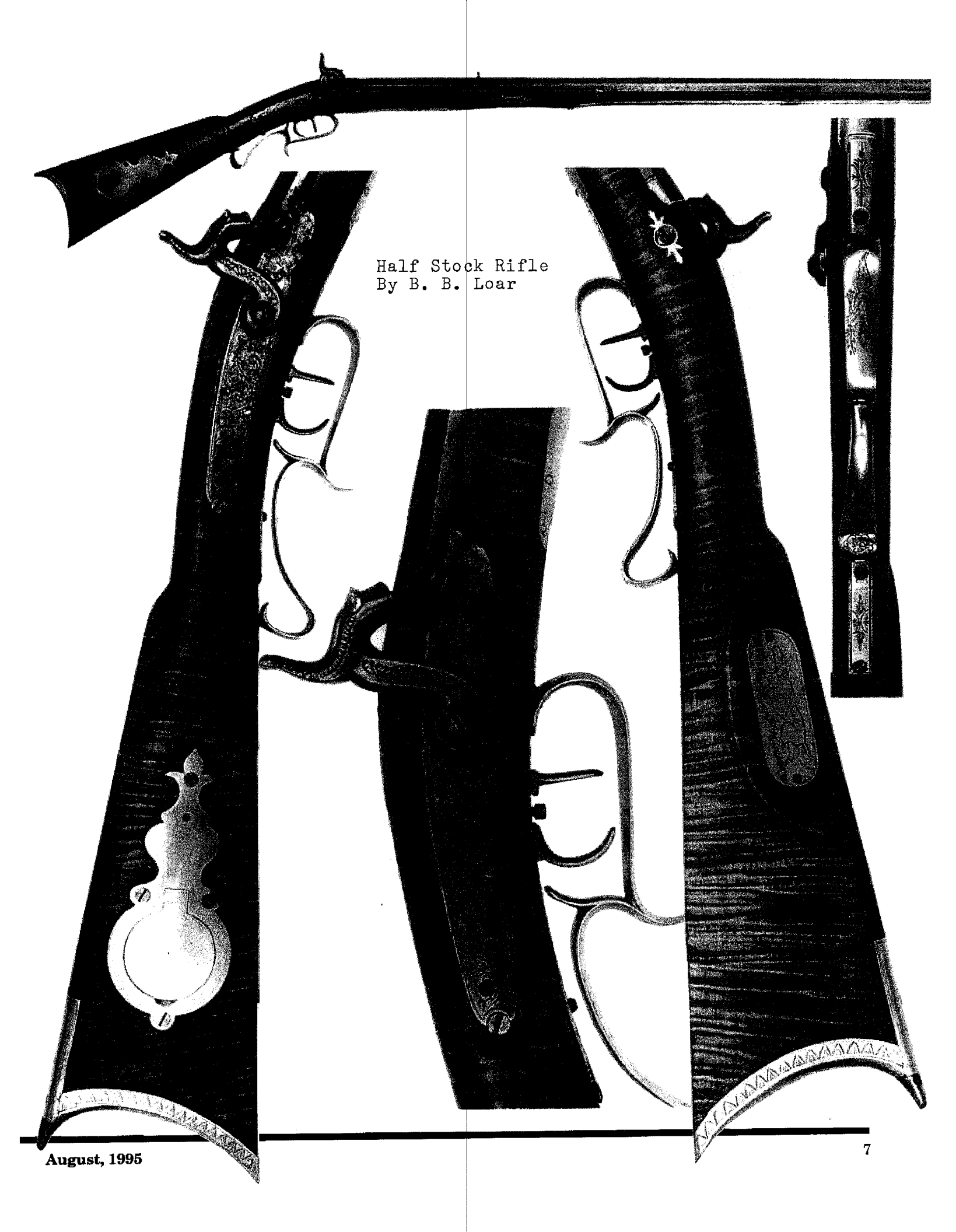
Benjamin was working as gunsmith in Granville (Licking County) before 1850. According to Norris Schneider in his book Muskingum Valley Gunsmiths the daguerreotype of his gun shop above was taken about 1845, Donald Hutaler reports that it was taken prior to 1848.

Not much is known as of where Benjamin learned the gunsmith trade. Whether he was apprenticed to another gunsmith or self taught is a question unanswered at this time.

The 1850 Census lists Benjamin Loar, 28, gunsmith, Born in Ohio, Wife Sara, 30 born in Ohio. Two children Louisa 6 and Stewart 4 born in Ohio, Resident Granville.

In the Manufactures Index of 1850 he had \$125.00 invested in his business. He had one hand at \$33.00 per month. For the year ending 1 June 1850 he purchased 36 barrels at \$72.00 and coal at \$151.00. He produced 36 guns valued at \$432.00 and miscellaneous articles at \$151.00

Benjamin made many styles of rifles both hunting and target. Most were half stock and made of walnut. His rifles were marked B. B. Loar Granville O. Forrest Tilton always said that his rifles were not very eye appealing.



Half Stock Rifle  
By B. B. Loar

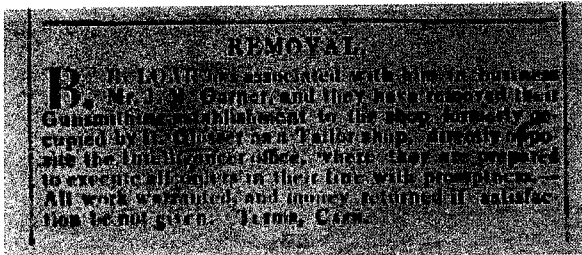
The 1860 Census lists him as living in Granville Township with a Newark Post Office address. He evidently moved to a farm north of Granville but kept his business in Granville.

A private collector in Licking County has a rifle marked Loar/Garner. We had been unable to identify Garner until recently when AOLRC member C. R. MacFarland came up with the following Granville newspaper article.

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#### REMOVAL

B. B. Loar has associated with him in business Mr. J. M. Garner and they have removed their gunsmithing establishment to the shop formally occupied by J. Glosser as a tailor shop directly opposite the Intelligeneer Office, where they are prepared to execute all orders in their line with promptness. All work warranted and money returned if satisfaction be not given. Terms, cash.



Garner was born in 1820. He came to Ohio from Pennsylvania. In 1860 he was forty years old and working in Bellefontaine (Logan County). He was probably in his thirty's when he was in Licking County with Loar. At that age we can assume that he was already a master gunsmith. Another possibility is that he may have been the hand working for Loar in the 1850 Census.

With the population of Gran-

ville Township decreasing and two other gunsmiths, M. J. Hough and T. A. Jones, working in Granville plus the coming of the cartridge rifle Benjamin probably felt there was not enough business to survive. About 1876-1877 he moved to Newark. The population of Newark had increased from 4,138 in 1840 to 10,613 in 1880.

It is unclear whether he worked his trade after moving to Newark. The first information on him appears in the 1883 Newark City Directory. The directory lists him as watchmaker, doing business at 323 South Side Square and living at 518 Commodore Street. After 1884 and prior to 1891 the city renamed some streets and renumbered the city lots. The 1891-1892 Newark City Directory lists Benjamin B. Loar, watchmaker 23½ South Park Place, home 62 Commodore Street West.

Benjamin's wife Sara died in 1888. After her death he married the widow Mary Jane Smith. She had been born in Pennsylvania in 1836.

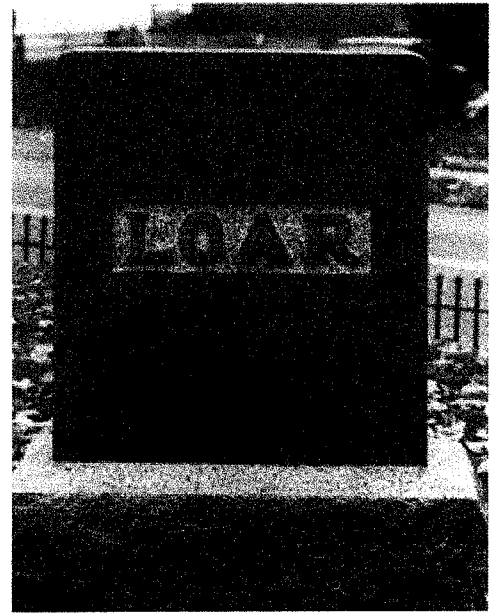
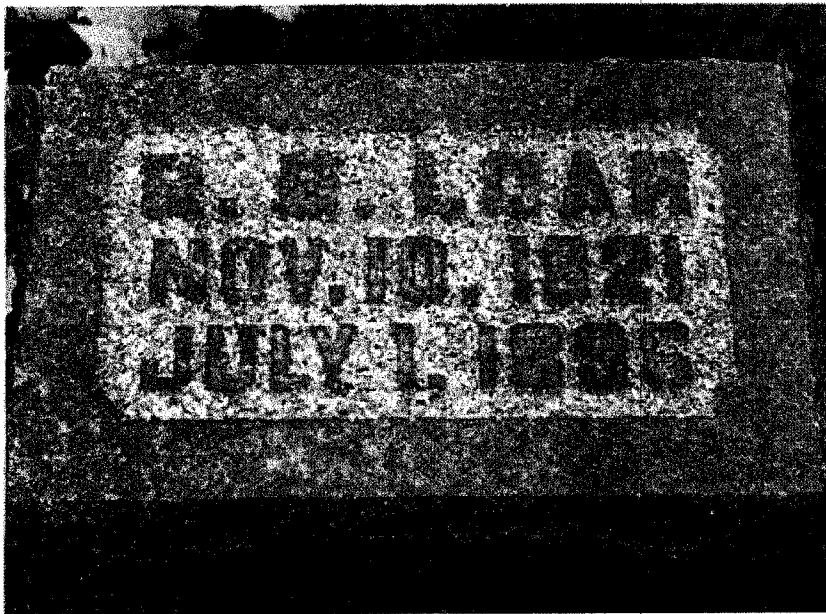
After a long illness of gastric intestinal disorder Benjamin died July 1, 1896.

The following is the obituary which appeared in The Newark Advocate July 1, 1896.

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#### The Veteran Jeweler Expires at his home on Commodore Street this afternoon

Mr. B. B. Loar, the veteran south side jeweler died this afternoon at 12:30 o'clock at his home on Commodore Street after an illness of five months aged about 73 years. The deceased had lived in Newark about 20 years and was highly respected by all who knew him. He leaves a



wife and 5 children to mourn his death. The children are Mr. Frank Loar of this city, Mrs. M. D. Henderson of Topeka Kansas, Mrs. Carrie Pratt of this city, Mrs. Grant Smith of Mt. Vernon Ohio and Mrs. M. A. Cady of this city. The funeral will take place from the home on Friday afternoon at 2:00 o'clock.

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Benjamin's will is as follows:

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In the name of the Benevolent Father of all. I, Benjamin B. Loar of Newark Licking County, Ohio, do make and publish this my last will and testament.

Item 1st. I desire that all my just debts and funeral expenses be first paid.

Item 2nd. I give and bequeath to my beloved wife Mary Jane Loar, in addition to her dower interest in my estate, four (4) shares of stock of Home Building Association of Newark Ohio held by me in said association which shares are of the par value of one thousand dollars

when paid in full; and should I die before said stock is paid in full then I desire that the same shall be paid up out of my estate and I make said payments to that extent a charge upon my estate it being my intention to give my said wife one thousand dollars, fully paid, in addition to her dower interest in the remainder of my estate as afore said.

Item 3rd. All the rest and residue of my estate both real and personal after the payment of the above specific legacies, I give, devise and bequest to my children and to them and their heirs and assigns forever. I hereby revoke all former wills made by me.

In testimony where of I have here unto set my hand and seal this 20th day of June, A. D. 1890.

Benjamin B. Loar

Signed, sealed and executed by the said Benjamin B. Loar as his last will and testament in our presence and signed by us in his presence as witnesses and at his request.

F. J. MacKensie  
Chas. N. Follett



Mary Jane Loar was the administrative of the estate and the attorney who handled it was Charles H. Follett. When it was finalized Mary Jane's share was \$8707.16. The balance was divided among the five children.

Benjamin is buried at Cedar Hill Cemetery Newark Ohio Section 7 West Lot #639. Benjamin's wife Sara and Mary Jane along with his daughter Martha Ann are buried along with him in the family plot.

After Benjamin's death Mary Jane moved to Mount Vernon, Knox County, to be with her son Grant and daughter-in-law Lulu Elida Smith. It's

interesting to note that not only was Lulu her daughter-in-law she was also her step-daughter. Mary Jane died in Mt. Vernon, Ohio. The following obituary appeared in the Newark Advocate May 24, 1915.

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Mrs. Mary Loar, 76, died at her home in Mount Vernon Saturday evening. She is survived by two sons. Mr. Charles Smith of this city and Mr. Grant Smith of Mount Vernon. The funeral was held at her late home this afternoon at 1:00 o'clock and the body was brought to this city and interment made at Cedar Hill.

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