

it ran perfectly to their amazement.

He had a shop in the village of Kingston, Ohio. It is said that at a certain time each day a shaft of light would shine thru the ceiling of the shop and that at that time he would regulate his watches each day by the sun's rays. He also made a few rifles having inherited this desire from his father George Barnhart. ("Matthias Barnhart")

On his trip to Chillicothe to fix the clock, another writer reports:

He wore a suit of home-made, homespun and home-dyed butternut jeans with a battered straw hat and was barefooted. He climbed up into the town clock tower looked the clock over and watched it just for a few moments, and then reached in and loosened one of the rods. He took it out and straightened it and put it back into place and climbing down said the job was finished. And it was finished. The clock ran as right as a trivet from then on.

When asked what his charge was for the service, Barnhart scratched his head and thought for a minute, and replied: 'Well, seeing as it's for the county I guess I'll charge you \$2.50. If it had been any one else, I'd have charge \$3.00.' He was paid and walked back home eminently satisfied with what he had done and with the pay given him. ("Quaint Tales of Old Chillicothe: The Barnhart Family," E. S. Wenis)

Simon is also reported to have invented a corn harvester:

He constructed a contrivance which was built on a longitudinal plan whereby small plough shares were suspended from a U-shaped, bowed shaft arrangement for the horse. The driver walked alongside

and the shares turned up the earth from each side of a corn row. He was pleaded with time and again to secure a patent on his plan and idea, but said he would not do it. Any one who wanted to use his idea was perfectly welcome to use it. ("The Barnhart Family")

In talking about a shotgun in his collection made by William the Younger, Harold Barnhart also talks about a shotgun made by Simon:

I also have one made by William's brother Simon almost identical except the stock is of walnut. Simon evidently used a ball load in it occasionally and it has been finished with several rifle grooves in the barrel. These grooves are not spiral but are straight cut from the breech to muzzle. This type of rifling was only seen in the early Kentucky and was evidently copied.

Another interesting story in the family history is Simon's encounter with a local who was reputed to be a witch:

In True Hollow, there lived a witch named Simon True. He was a mean man. At onetime it was said that his horse died, and he hitched up his wife to plow his fields. One day Simon Barnhart was walking down the road with his favorite rifle. As he was passing in front of the house of the witch, the witch came out and asked Simon if he would sell him his rifle. Simon said that it was his own rifle and that he didn't want to sell it. Then the witch placed his thumb on the stock of the rifle, and carved a line around his thumb. He then said to Simon that he might as well sell the gun to him, because he would never be able to hit anything with it again. Shaken, Simon went on his way.

On the way home, Simon stopped to shoot at a squirrel, but he missed it. On down the road he passed a house that had burned down, and he stopped there. Taking a shingle from the ruins, he marked a target on the shingle with his thumb, using ashes from the ruins. He set it up against the remains of the house and paced back to fire at his target. But as many times as he tried and as hard as he tried, he could not hit the target. He took the rifle back to the witch and sold it to him. It is not known how, but later Simon reacquired the rifle. This rifle is the Simon Barnhart rifle displayed at the Ross County Historical Society, and the thumb mark can still be seen on it. (Story relayed to me by Richard Barnhart, in January 1996.)

Simon and Nehemiah passed away in 1888, and William the Younger died on February 3, 1891, the last of the known Barnhart riflemakers.

The Barnhart gunsmithing enterprise can perhaps be divided into the following two eras:

Early, From 1812 to 1844, George and William the Elder learned the trade and built early flintlocks, through to the time of adoption of the percussion lock, around 1825 to 1830. In response to customer demand, they then made percussion rifles, and made shotguns as well. (Although Dillins in The Kentucky Rifle makes an excellent case that many shotguns from this era were in fact worn out rifles). Each had his own shop, but they exchanged both labor and design influences. They journeyed to other gunsmiths and expanded their expertise and shared their expertise with others. They needed apprentices and took mainly William the Younger and Nehemiah into the business.

During this period, they developed the classic styles of silver inlay for which these rifles are sometimes known. (According to Dillins, one of the rifles pictured in The Kentucky Rifle had the gunsmith's name inlaid in the barrel in silver). Early barrels during this period were hand forged, with a later adoption of commercial barrels, although they appear to have retained the expertise for making hand forged barrels. Locks were primarily purchased, and were usually English imports.

In terms of style, there are some extant rifles that show the Pennsylvania Golden Age influence. Rifles by William the Elder exist that show incised carving on the stock and large Pennsylvania patchboxes that can be associated with the Golden Age Era. But in large, the work by George and William the Elder during this time was driven by customer demand, and their customers were closer to the frontier and needed practical weapons more often than show-piece weapons. Accuracy of fire was of utmost importance to both the brothers and their customers, and their rifles were prized for their accuracy. Customer demand also greatly distorts the ability to classify these rifles according to periods, styles or influences, since the rifles were primarily made on demand to a customer's specifications.

Stocks were typically made of traditional curly maple, although I am sure there are exceptions to this (see my note on rope stains below). Early rifles by George may have in some cases lacked a butt plate, and there are several reports that George's signature was at least in some cases stamped as "G. Barnhart" on pewter, which was then inlaid into the top of the barrel. Other rifles show "G. Barnhart: stamped directly on the barrel. William the Elder by all accounts chiseled in script,

as “.W. Barnhart” or “Wm. Barnhart” or “W. . Barnhart”. Sometimes, William’s chisel script is a little uneven around the “nh” of Barnhart”. In most cases, the signatures are viewed on the top of the barrel, holding the lock towards you with the barrel in the right hand. However, there are known exceptions to this. In at least some instances, George’s signature is found the other way around, viewed with the barrel in the left hand.

The brothers always bored and rifled their own barrels. Barrels used were in all known cases octagonal, with a seven groove rifling. George’s rifling machine now resides in the Ross County Historical Society Museum.

Late. William the Elder and William the Younger produced side by side from 1844 to whenever William the Elder retired from the business. During this time period, the cartridge rifle technology supplanted the caplock muzzleloader’s less efficient workings. Since William the Elder died in 1867, perhaps we can assume that he produced in diminishing quantities through about 1865. Nehemiah undoubtedly started producing in his own right during this period, before his departure for and after his return from Columbus, Nebraska, date unknown (one account places Nehemiah in Nebraska during the period of the civil war). Simon also produced in limited quantities during this time. His guns were stylistically the most diverse of the family, as he used at least in some cases walnut for the stocks instead of the curly maple used by the other family members. Simon also made at least some of his barrels and locks by hand, and his locks are typically marked with an arrow through a capital H. Probably the most rifles, and certainly the most extant rifles were produced in this period.

Stylistically, the oval cap box became prevalent in the fancier rifles, again probably in response to what the customer wanted. The main theme of William the Younger’s rifles was generally an eagle, either inlaid or on an oval, above the cheek piece, with as much additional inlay as the customer wanted. The shape of the butt and the trigger guards generally evolved with the styles of the era, except that in many cases the trigger guard was built up from brass stock rather than being sand cast.

Nehemiah, son of William the Elder, signed his guns in chiselled script as did his father. Nehemiah had a very steady hand and his signatures are very nicely done. Simon and William the Younger, sons of George, stamped their signatures as did their father. William the Younger stamped his signature “W. Barnhart”, and Simon stamped his as “.S. Barnhart”. Again, the signatures are typically viewed on the top of the barrel, holding the lock towards you with the barrel in the right hand.

It is not clear whether other Barnharts tried their hands at gunsmithing. Matthias, a brother of Nehemiah, may have, but this conclusion is by no means clear. It is also quite possible that a family member would have made a rifle for himself in his father’s or brother’s shop, with help, and signed the rifle in his own name. It is also likely that William the Younger and Nehemiah would have needed apprentices or sons, since it is very difficult to do everything yourself, especially tasks like hand forging a barrel or boring and rifling. We do have an account in the family history that a son of William the Younger had wanted to follow in his father’s footsteps, but was discouraged by his father, who believed

that the time of the muzzleloader had past. Perhaps this son had assisted his father at one time. Nehemiah would also likely have needed help, but who these people would have been will probably not be discovered.

There is also some suggestion in Hutslar's volume on Gunsmiths of Ohio: 18th & 19th Centuries, that joint endeavors have also been documented, particularly between William the Elder and his son Nehemiah (reference the entry for D. A. Schutte at p. 341). The author would like to hear from anyone who has more information on joint endeavors, or information on any other family members who produced or signed these rifles. The

author would also like to hear from anyone who has a rifle that appears to have been signed "M. B." or "M. Barnhart" (the author knows of what appears to be one). Any further information on this would be greatly appreciated by the author.

The author would like to continue this endeavor in another article with some reflections on the stylistic features that distinguish the Barnhart rifles from other Ohio, Pennsylvania and Kentucky rifles. Any photographs of your prized possessions will be greatly appreciated and eagerly poured over. Written thoughts are also greatly appreciated.



Joseph Rider

Licking County Gunsmith & Inventor



by

Paul L. Zeiher

Joseph's parents, Ephraim and Juliana Rider came to America from Holland. They settled in York County, Pennsylvania. York County is located in the Blue mountains of southern Pennsylvania. Joseph was born there on May 17, 1817. In 1833 at the age of 16 Joseph left home and moved to Wooster, Ohio [Wayne County]. There he learned the trade of making shoes. This was probably the beginning of his career as an inventor. He invented and patented an adjustable boot and shoe pattern. At the time of his death it was in use at all the boot and shoe manufacturers in the country.

Joseph met the widow Mrs. Jane Zimmerman and they were married July 2, 1840 in Wooster. Joseph and Jane had four children; two sons, Charles M. and Louis H.; two daughters, Clementine and Fanny. Jane had a daughter, Mary by her previous marriage. Joseph accepted and cared for her as his own.

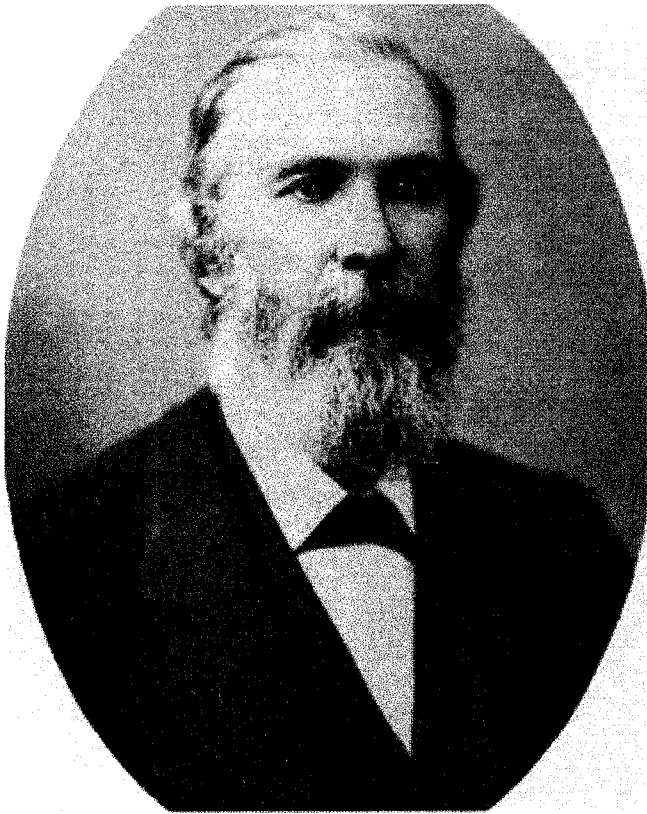
Joseph and another person purchased a jewelry store in Newark, Ohio [Licking County]. The Rider family gathered their belongings and moved to Newark in 1853. Joseph kept Newark as his home the rest of his life. One of the first contracts they had was to build a town clock for the City of Ithaca, New York.

In 1858 Rider invented a double action percussion revolver. According to Norris F. Schneider in his book Muskingum Valley Gunsmiths, Rider sold the idea to Dill, Dean and Martin. Eliphalet Remington bought that firms interest in the invention and paid Rider twelve brace of revolvers and four hundreds acres of Ohio land for his remaining rights.

Working for Remington in 1859 Rider perfected the revolver action that continues in use today. His invention turned the cylinder, cocked the hammer and fired the gun by one motion of pulling the trigger.

In 1862 Philo Remington acquired the breech lock invented by Leonard M. Geiger and employed Rider to help improve the breech loading mechanism. The result of their work was the Remington Rolling Block Rifle. This has been called the best single shot rifle ever produced and the most famous of any remington firearm.

An article in the Newark American Tribune dated Friday, March 22, 1901 states that his gun was purchased by the following foreign countries: Denmark, Spain, Egypt, Mexico, the principal South American Republics, Russia, France and by the United States Navy. The article



Joseph Rider

goes on to say that during the Franco-Prussian War Mr. Rider's income was four hundred dollars a day from the royalty on his gun alone.

Joseph's son, Charles M. [1844-1929], was mustered into Company C - one hundred and thirty-fifth Ohio National Guard on May 2, 1864. Charles must have inherited some of his father's talent. On April 12, 1889 he was issued patent number 400,712 for a breech loading firearm. The patent covered a combined hammer and breech block which swung to the side to load. On June 4, 1889 he was issued patent number 404,733. This was a device for automatically operating the stop clock of a gas burner. Charles was the manager of the family jewelry store.

According to Hill's History of Licking County published in 1881, Joseph was a member of the Franklin Bank of Newark.

In the cornerstone of the Licking County Court House, item number 23, is a copy of the specifications and a diagram of Joseph Rider's improvement in firearms.

From 1853 until his death, Joseph was issued over 100 patents in a number of different fields. He dealt in real estate and owned considerable amount of property in Newark and Columbus, Ohio and a farm in Franklin County.

In the Newark City Directory he always listed himself as an inventor, rather than a gunsmith. All his firearm patents were issued to him at Newark, Ohio address. Joseph was associated with Remington for approximately twenty-five years.

Remington manufactured the Rider Rolling Block rifle for seventy years. Variations of the rifle were manufactured by Remington from the Civil War until 1930.

Following are some of Rider's firearm patents....

Patent # 25470 dated September 13, 1859 was for a movable breech pin and a number of internal parts for a single shot derringer.

Patent # 45123 dated November 15, 1864 was for hammerlock to prevent accidental firing while the breech block is open.

Patent # 118152 dated August 15, 1871 was for the Remington Rider Magazine Pistol.

The famous rolling block rifles, carbines and pistols covered numerous patents including the basic one of November 15,

1864 Patent # 45123. This is one of the patent dates that appears on almost all Remington Rolling Block arms.

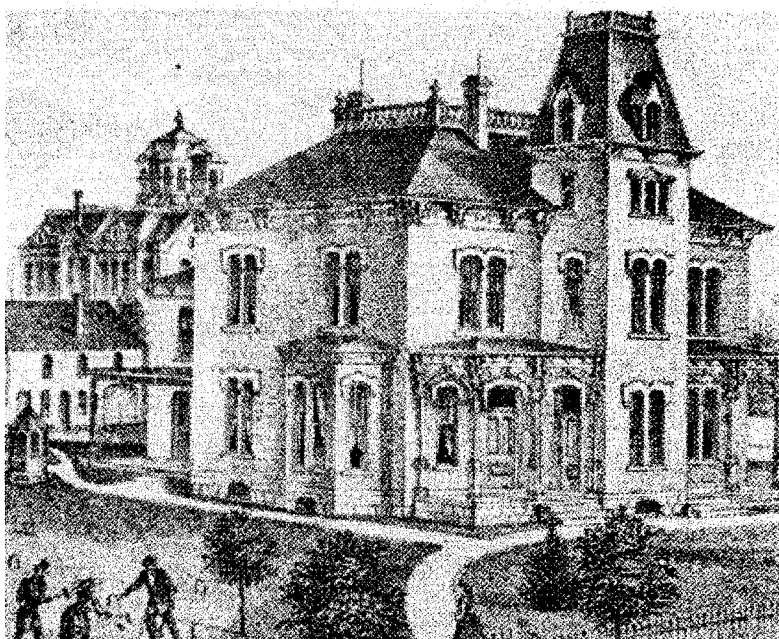
Joseph Rider's will is as follows:

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS: That, I Joseph Rider, of the city of Newark, Ohio being of sound and disposing mind and memory do make and publish this my last will and testament, to-wit:

Item 1. I give and devise to my daughter Fanny Peck the house and lot in the city of Columbus, Ohio, now occupied by her as a homestead, being lot no. 30 in Paracoat 2nd. subdivision of out lot no. 4 in Bryden's addition to the city of Columbus, for and during her natural life, and at her death to the heirs of her body, and if she should die without such heirs living, then I give and devise said premises to my heirs at law then living.

Item 2. I give and devise to my daughter Clementine Roche the house and lot in the city of Columbus, Ohio, now occupied by her as a homestead being inlot No. 43 in Deshler and Sinks' addition to said city of Columbus, for and during her natural life, and at her death to the heirs of her body, and if she should die without such heirs, living, then I give and devise the said premises to my heirs at law then living.

Item 3. I give and devise to my son Charles M. Rider, the south halves (being 43 feet) of inlot nos. 465 and 466 in the city of Newark, Ohio, on the east side of N. Third Street adjoining my dwelling, extending through to Elm Street and also inlot no. 219 on the south side of east Main Street in the city of Newark, Ohio,



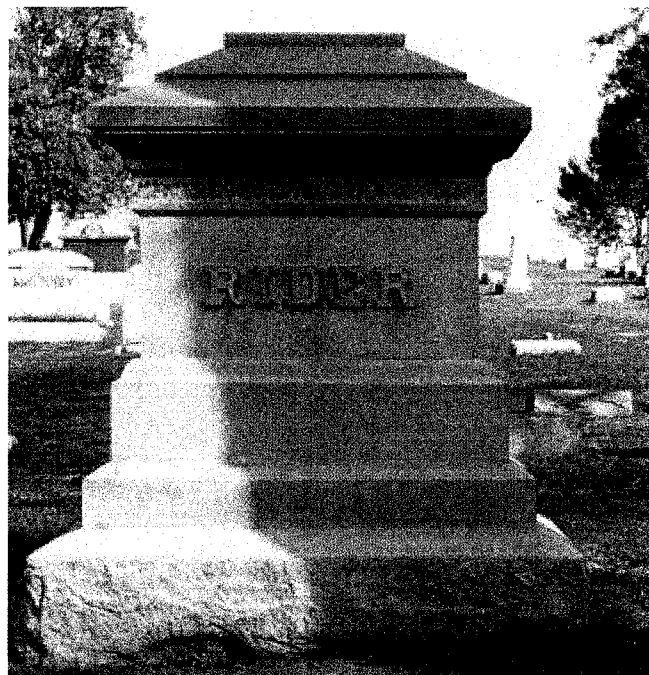
Joseph Rider Residence (1873)

and also a right of way ten feet wide across the north side of inlot 569 Council plot in the city of Newark, Ohio, extending from Third Street to Elm Street for and during his natural life and at his death to the heirs of his body and if he should die without such heirs living then I give and devise the said parcels of real estate to my heirs at law who are then living share and share alike.

Item 4. I give and bequeath the use and income of all the rest and residue of my estate both real and personal after the payment of insurance, taxes, necessary repairs, and expenses necessary to my collection and care, to my wife Jane Rider in lieu of her dower therein and her years support; and I instruct my executors to care for and protect all of my estate so bequeathed to my said wife, to collect the rents, issues and profits thereof, and after paying the taxes, insurance, and other necessary expenses, to pay the residue thereof to my said wife, as the same shall be collected during her natural life.

Item 5. At the death of my said wife, or at my death if I should survive her, I give and devise to my step daughter, Mary E. Zimmerman for her use during her natural life my homestead property, being in lot No. 569 and part of in lot No. 570 on the west side of N. 3rd St. in the city of Newark, Ohio, subject to a right of alley way, ten feet wide, across the north side thereof, for the use of the lot adjoining the same together with all the carpets which may at that time be on the floors of the dwelling house, all the chairs which may then be in the house, (except the parlor suite and chairs) also the large plate looking glass in the sitting room and the hat rack in the hall and also the chamber suite in her room to be taken by her and held to be of the value of \$15000.00 and to be charged to her as so much of her share of my estate. If the said Mary E. Zimmerman should not desire to occupy said property as a home, but should desire to sell the same, then my executors may sell the same with the consent of said Mary at such price as may be agreed upon by and between said executors and Mary E. Zimmerman, the proceeds of such sale to be invested by my said executors in 1st mortgage securities on real estate, at a rate of interest not less than 6% and so keep the same invested during the lifetime of said Mary, paying to her the income thereof, less the expense of keeping the same invested, and the taxes thereon, and at her death said proceeds are to be divided equally between my children or the heirs of their body.

Item 6. All the remainder of my said estate, both real and personal I give and bequeath to my executors hereinafter named in trust for the use and benefit of the persons hereinafter designated, to be by them used controlled and sold and



Joseph Rider, Cedar
Hill Cemetery, Newark, Ohio

distributed as hereinafter set forth, that is to say, it is my will that my said executors take possession and control of all my estate, not hereinbefore devised, immediately upon the death of my said wife, or at my death if I should survive her, and within five years after the death of the survivor they sell the same except the parcel hereinafter named, in such manner and upon such terms of credit as they may deem best, and executed good and sufficient deeds therefore to the purchasers thereof. That during said time they keep in repair all unsold portions of my said real estate, and that they divide the proceeds of said sales as they are made, and the rents, issues, and profits of all unsold portions of my estate equally between my children Fanny Peck, Clementine Roche, Charles M. Rider and Louis Rider for his life or the heirs of their bodies, if any of my said children be dead, until each of the above name children shall received the sum of \$15000.00 being the amount heretofore devised to Mary E. Zimmerman and when said sum of \$15000.00 shall have been so distributed

to each of them, then said executors shall distribute the rest and residue of the proceeds of such sales and the rents, issues and profits equally between my said children or the heirs of their bodies and Mary E. Zimmerman as herein provided.

Item 7. The portions herein given to Mary E. Zimmerman and my son Louis are for their respective lives only, and my said executors are hereby directed to invest all of the portion bequested to each of them in 1st mortgage securities or United States bonds, as shall be most profitable and pay the income thereof after deducting taxes and necessary expenses to the said Louis and Mary respectively and if the income of their respective shares is not sufficient to keep either of them respectably then I authorize my said executors to pay to them such portion of the principal as in addition to such income may be necessary for their comfortable support, and at their deaths respectively I give the residue of such shares to my heirs at law share and share alike.

Item 8: It is my will that my farm in Franklin County, Ohio, being 108 acres in lot 19, section 13, township 5, of range 22, on the south side of the National Road shall not be sold by my executors within five year after my death and death of my said wife, unless within that time they are able to sell the same for not less than one thousand dollars per acre, and if said farm remains unsold for want of such price at the expiration of five years after my death and the death of my said wife, then it is my will, and I hereby authorize my said executors, to plat subdivide and lay out the same into city lots and sell the same in parcels and lots to such prices as the market will demand and in such manner and upon such terms as they deem best

and distribute the net proceeds of such sales as herein directed.

Item 9. It is my will that my said executors in making sales of any portion of my estate give to each of my heirs herein named an opportunity to purchase such portion at the price named by my said executors and if any one is willing to pay such price then said portion shall be by them conveyed to said heir and if two or more desire to take any such portion at such price then the same shall be sold and conveyed to the one who will pay the highest sum, therefore.

Item 10. It is my will that my said executors shall have charge of my patents and contracts for the manufacture of fire arms with full power to collect the royalties and license fees arising therefrom and when any of such contracts in force at my death are afterwards terminated, the title to the patents returning to me shall be in my said executors with full power to sell, assign and convey the same and all the income, royalties and license fees and the proceeds of any sales of patent rights are to be paid to my wife if she survive me during her life and after her death to be distributed in the manner directed as to rest of my estate.

Item 11. It is my will that all my household furniture, books, book cases, piano, tools, not hereinbefore specified shall be appraised as required by law, and at the death of my said wife if she survive me, my legal heirs shall be permitted to divide the same among themselves as they shall agree, taking such portions thereof at the appraised value thereof as so such of their equal share thereof, and if my said heirs cannot agree upon such division among themselves, then I authorize my executors to sell the same or any portion

thereof not so taken by any of them and divide the proceeds if such sale equally between my said heirs.

Item 12. Reposing special confidence in my friend Benjamin Franklin and in my attorney John M. Swartz, I hereby nominate and appoint them as the executors of this my will, authorizing and empowering them to settle and pay my debts to sell such of my real estate at my death as may be necessary for that purpose and to distribute my estate in accordance with the foregoing items of this my will, and to execute deeds therefore to the purchasers thereof, and with full power to effectuate all and singular the provisions herein made for the collection, distribution and settlement of my estate, and if either of my said

executors should die before the administration of my said estate is completed, I direct that the survivor shall select and nominate the successor to be appointed by the Probate court. It is my will that my said executors shall not be required to give bond as such executors, in a greater sum than \$100,000.00 and I direct the said court accordingly. In testimony whereof I have hereto set my hand this 10th day of March A.D. 1894.

Joseph Rider

Signed and acknowledged by the said Joseph Rider as his last will and testament in our presence and signed by us in his presence and at his request.

C. C. Winegarner
J. M. Maylone