
THE
ASSOCIATION
OF OHIO
LONGRIFLE
COLLECTORS



FOR THE STUDY AND PRESERVATION
OF THE OHIO MUZZLELOADING RIFLE

OFFICERS

Bob Poch
President
Tom Oakes
Vice President
Dan Smith
Secretary
Ron Yerian
Treasurer

DIRECTORS

Mark Bender
Jim Claggett
Jim Clippinger
Larry Cordray
Rod Frazer
Mark Herman
Tom Oakes
Bob Poch
Ron Yerian
Warren Offenberger, *Director Emeritus*

EDITOR

Ronald Yerian
3321 West Point Rd., SE
Lancaster, Ohio 43130

A.O.L.R.C.

23003 St. Rt. 339
Wapiti Lane
Beverly, Ohio 45715
www.aolrc.org

Vol. XXXIV Number 2 October, 2011



**13th Annual
AOLRC**

**ANTIQUÉ GUN
AND ARMS SHOW**

Saturday, October 22

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Grotto Hall

**124 Waterworks Road
Newark, Ohio**



Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| President's Letter | 2 |
| Richard Hicks – A Remembrance . . . | 2 |
| John William Ricketts | 3 |
| 6th Annual August Picnic | 11 |
| Daniel Smith, Jr. | 12 |
| Artistic Elements of a Late Delaware County Rifle Part 3 . . . | 14 |
| Ladies of AOLRC | 16 |



President's Letter



As you well know, the fall season is now in full swing and if you are anything like me, you are probably wondering where the summer went. The worst part about summer coming to an end is that most of the things that I planned to get done once the weather turned nice are still on my "to-do list." Our spring was very wet and when it wasn't raining, it looked like it might rain at any given moment. Then, when the rain finally stopped, the heat moved in. This past summer was such a scorcher that I saw a flamingo heading north.

The only good part about saying goodbye to summer is that the Newark show is right around the corner. I spoke to Jim Clagget the other night and he has been working hard on everything that goes on "behind the scenes" at the show. If you happen to show up at 9:00 A.M. on October 22nd, you will get to see first-hand the payoff of Jim's work. If you are reading this newsletter and still have not been to one of our Newark shows, I must ask, "What are you waiting for?" Last year's show had the largest attendance to date and it is only getting better.

In addition, the Board of Directors is still working on a new book of Ohio Long Rifles. We have about 100 photographs of guns by gunsmiths from Ohio

who have not been pictured in earlier books by Jim Whisker or Donald Hutslar. All of the guns that we photographed at the start of this project will be used in this book. However, the majority of these guns are your typical half stock. This is not really a surprise, however, given that most of the guns made in Ohio were typical half stocks. But, the problem with this is that we are making a book to sell it. In order to create a book that is interesting enough for someone to buy, we need some rifles that are more artistic. Therefore, we are looking for guns by makers who were covered in previous books, but in the 35 years since those books went to press, other more elaborate works have been found. We would like to obtain about 25-35 more of these types of guns to help make the book more interesting. (Editor's Note: A section with fifteen or twenty Ohio flintlocks would be nice!) With that said, we are still welcoming rifles made by any gunsmith who has not yet been a part of any other book, since that was the book's original intent. We will also be taking pictures at the Marietta show in April.

I hope to see all of you in Newark!

Bob Poch



Richard M. Hicks A Remembrance



by Mark Branhill

Richard M. Hicks passed away unexpectedly September 20, 2010. His death was noted in the fall AOLRC Newsletter, but a bit more recognition is due to this gentleman.

Mr. Hicks was born in Orgas, WV, and had been an area resident for 69 years. He was a veteran of the Marines, and was a member of the St. Francis De Sales Catholic Church, NMLRA, AOLRC, Canal Fulton Ramrod Club, Zeppelin Rifle and Pistol Club, and had been Secretary of the National Rifle Club.

I met Rich after he expressed deep interest in an antique slug gun on display at our Marietta show. He invited me to his room where he presented "Old Harrison", a P. A. Reinhard target rifle made in 1879. This gun and owner had set National Record scores and won at Friendship, Canal Fulton, and Shartlesville, PA, since the 1950's.

Rich was a brilliant historian, machinist,

craftsman, and shooter. He built and endlessly experimented with his own rifles. His primary interest was maintaining the uniquely American sport of precision bench rest slug gun target shooting. Rich had known some of the folks involved in the resurgence of muzzleloading in the 30's and 40's and was close to some of the "greats", including Walt and Helen Grote and Skunk Pole Cat Porter. Rich put forth great effort in maintaining the historic matches at Canal Fulton, OH.

Rich was one of the most warm, friendly, and honest people I have ever known. He welcomed many people at our shared display table at Marietta. Rich had an endless desire to provide information and assistance to anyone who asked. He was an inspiration to many. Rich cautioned us all that "Integrity is hard earned, too easily lost, and never worth risking." We miss him very much.

John William Rickets

1817 – 1895

First, let me give credit where credit is due. Mr. Robert Corbett (now deceased) of Mansfield, Ohio performed almost all of the research contained in this article. He credits Karen Furlong of the Richland Co. Ohio Public Library and Keith Metcalf of Lucas, Ohio. I would like to thank Mr. Larry VonBlon for loaning me Mr. Corbett's personal notes. I also contacted Mrs. Corbett and received her permission to use her husband's research for publication. There are over 150 pages of notes so, what follows is a condensed mix of Mr. Corbett's writing and mine.

During the spring of 1996 I visited the Log Cabin Shop near Lodi, Ohio. There I noticed two percussion rifles on display marked J. Rickets, Mansfield, O. The staff of the Log Cabin Shop produced a loose-leaf binder with a very brief history of J. Rickets. I live in Mansfield and had never heard of West Diamond St. where Rickets' business had been listed as located. My thoughts were that a gunsmith who was able to craft these rifles certainly deserved more than a brief history. So, I set out to find more information on J. Rickets. The following are the results of my labors, with many unknown facts which will be explained as we go about J. Rickets, what did he do, what did he leave behind for posterity? But, probably the main reason for undertaking this task is because I think the story is interesting and should be made available to the history enthusiasts of Richland County.

One of the first things we need to remember as we go from page to page is that John Rickets was the last in his family to spell his name with one T. Each of his children spelled their names with two T's.

This is the ad I placed in the Mansfield News Journal on Sunday, May 23, 1997.

RICKETS

Writing a book- anyone having information regarding JOHN RICKETS, Mansfield gunsmith (1840-1891) or relatives call
XXX-XXXX

Sometimes research can take a strange turn. People had told me that a certain person was the one to contact concerning J. Rickets. I went to this person's place of business, introduced myself and explained that I was searching for information on J Rickets and asked if I might talk to the owner. At that .the employee shouted at me "He's not available." I said "I beg your pardon?" He again looked at me and shouted at top of his voice" He's



unavailable." Business in the store stopped, you could hear a pin drop and employees came running from all directions. I promptly excused myself and left the store. I went outside to my car, wrote my name and phone number on a piece of paper , went back into the store and handed it to "the shouter". I then said " If you would please give this to the person having information about Mr. Ricketts, I would appreciate his help". He looked at me, took the card and said not a word; I turned and left. To this day I have heard nothing from that source.

John William Ricketts was born on or about January 4th , 1817 in Columbus , Ohio to Jacob and (mother's name unknown) Ricketts. Jacob Ricketts is listed in the Centennial History of Columbus as grocer with business and residence at the same address between 3rd and 4th streets. According to the 1830 Ohio census, Columbus, Franklin Co. Montgomery Township the Ricketts household looked like this;

| Line # | Jacob Ricketts - Head of household | | | |
|--------|------------------------------------|-------------------|---|----------------|
| 1 | male child | under five | 1 | |
| 2 | male | between 5 and 10 | 1 | |
| 3 | male | between 10 and 15 | 1 | John Ricketts |
| 4 | male | between 15 and 20 | 1 | |
| 5 | male | between 20 and 30 | 2 | |
| 6 | male | between 30 and 40 | 1 | Jacob Ricketts |
| 7 | female | between 5 and 10 | 1 | |
| 8 | female | between 15 and 20 | 1 | |
| 9 | female | between 40 and 50 | 1 | John's mother |

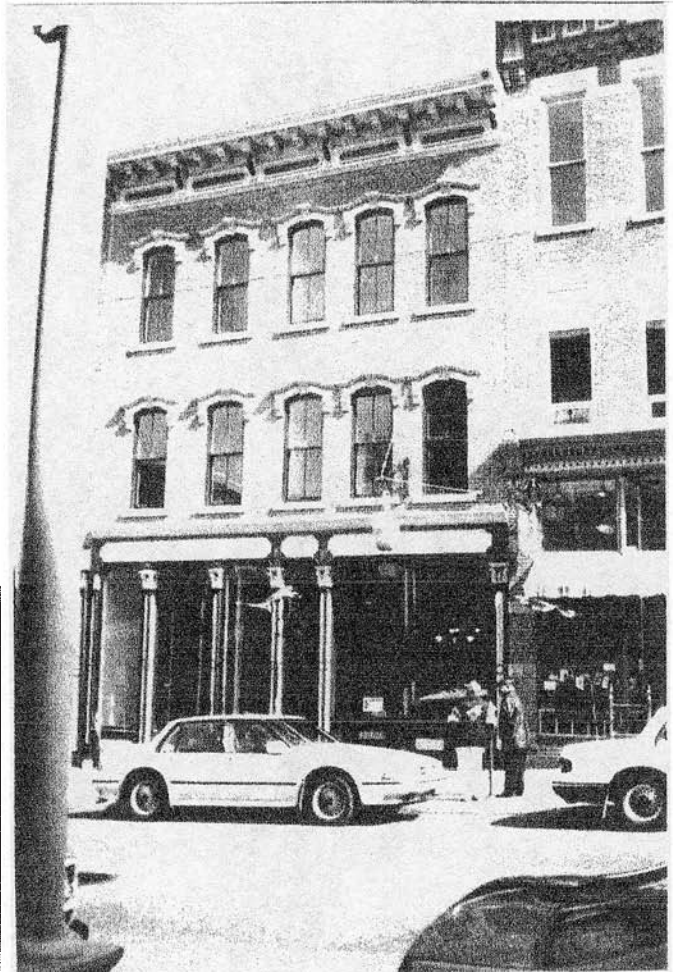
This makes John 13 years old at the time.

According to John Ricketts Jr., his father walked from Columbus to Mansfield sometime in 1840. On November 26, 1840 , John Sr. married Catherine J. Cairns (Vol. 004,p 021, common pleas court records).

From this union, according to what records I can find , there were born four children.

George W. (1846), John Jr.(1857), Emma C. (1852) and Jennie(?). An interesting story I think; John Ricketts , in a communication to A.A. Graham states that the first train came into town(Mansfield) the 19th day of June, 1846. His son George, was born about 4 o' clock on the afternoon of that day and Mr. Ricketts states that he well remembers the coincidence of the two events. Dr. Teegarden was his family physician at the time, and was so excited over the arrival of the train, hourly expected, as to forget his patient for the time and rush to the window to get a glimpse of the cars as they came up to the foot of Walnut Street. Also ,Mr. Ricketts remembers the engine was called the "Vigilant" Perhaps the doctor was not the only one distracted.

On February 24th 1848, Mansfield city council authorized the formation of the Mansfield Fire Company. John Ricketts was one of sixteen men responsible for this. The fire engine, including the costs of hose, couplings and transportation was to cost \$1510. On July 2nd city council approved \$ 26.60 to John Ricketts for lime to be distributed on Mansfield streets as he sees fit.



John Ricketts' business location from 1858 to 1870

We first find John Rickets listed as a gunsmith in the 1850 Industrial Census. With \$600 invested and two hands at \$40 dollars per month. Year ending June 1, 1850 he purchased locks, stocks and barrels totaling \$300 and produced 50 rifles valued at \$1000. In the 1850 U.S. Census, we find John, 35, Catherine, 29, Mary(?), 8, and George, 5. Also in the household, Mary Carnes, 50, (Possibly Catharine's mother); Reed Dutton, 25, gunsmith (Second hand in shop?)

In 1858 John Rickets' gunsmith business was located on the east side of Main St., between 4th and Bloom Streets. His residence was listed as northeast corner of Short and Main.

In 1867 Rickets' business is listed at West Diamond and residence on the north side of 4th Street between Mulberry and Bowman. Also noted at this time is that son George is now working with his father.

1869 was a busy year for both Rickets and Mansfield. This year, all city streets, both business and residential had address numbers assigned. West Diamond was changed to North Diamond and Rickets' business was assigned the number 110 N. Diamond St. Also in 1869, Rickets was elected councilman to the 2nd ward. He was installed Friday, April 6, 1869 and was promptly assigned to the printing, claims and fire department committees. Over the next two years, council held 80 meetings and John Rickets attended all of them!

By the time his council term had ended, 1871, Rickets had moved his business to 115 North Main St. and was sharing the building with a grocery run by his son, John.

In an October 5th ad Rickets states; Having recently erected a POWDER HOUSE outside of the city limits, I am now prepared to fill all orders with the very best quality of Gun Powder at wholesale or retail.

By 1878 John Jr. had gained a reputation as one of the town's "most desperate roughs". There are several references to his "drunkenness and disorderly conduct". This must have taken a toll, as by 1890 he was dead at the age of 33.

Meanwhile, John Sr. continued to soldier on as a pillar of the community. All references to him in the papers are in the highest of praise.

In 1881 the street numbers were revised again and the business is now listed at 75 N. main St. It remained there until 1890 when John Rickets sold the business to Charles L. Gibbons who promptly moved it to 101 N. Main St. At the time of John's

JOHN RICKETS,



THE GUNSMITH, CONTINUES TO MANUFACTURE RIFLE GUNS,

Repair old Guns on short notice, and dealer in
Breech & Muzzle-Loading Double Shot Guns

Of different styles and prices.

He also keeps constantly on hand,

Revolving and Single Barrel Pistols,
Of different makes.

Having recently erected a POWDER-HOUSE outside of the city limits, I am now prepared to fill all orders, with the very best quality of Gun Powder, at Wholesale or Retail.

The very best Sporting Shot-Gun Powder and Blasting Fuse.

A general assortment of

Fixed Ammunition,

Such as Shells for Breech-Loading Shot Guns. Also, a fine assortment of Cartridges for Breech-Loading Rifles and Pistols.

English and American Gun Wads. English and American Gun Caps.

Gun Barrels, Gun Locks, Gun Mountings, and all kinds of Gun material.

Powder Horns, Powder Flasks, Shot Pouches, Game Bags, Drinking Cups, Dog Whips,

Dog Calls, Drop and Buck Shot. And everything usually kept in a First-Class

Gun & Ammunition Store.

Also an assortment of

Pocket Outlery.

No. 115 North Main Street,

MANSFIELD, OHIO.

Oct. 5th, 1873-ly

retirement his residence is listed as 99 W. 4th St.

In 1894 John Ricketts' address is listed as 140 W. 4th St. It was in this home that he died. The Sunday Shield of March 17, 1895 states; John Ricketts of West Fourth Street has been ill for several weeks and is failing rapidly. The Saturday, March 23, 1895 Richland County Shield and Banner carried this obituary; An Old Citizen Dead; John Ricketts died at 5:40 this morning at his home, 140 West Fourth Street after a lingering illness of about six months. Mr. Ricketts has been in failing health since last September and six weeks ago this morning, he failed to rise at his usual time and has been bedridden since that time.

John Ricketts was born at Columbus, January 4, 1817, making his age 78 years. He came to this city when 18 years of age and was apprenticed to a gunsmith, and followed that occupation for about 50 years.

He married Miss Catherine Carns in June, 1840 and four children were the result of that union. George W. resides in this city. John who died four years ago, Emma Cobean who resides in Richmond, Va. And Jane Redrup of Van Wert.

Mr. Ricketts was a well known citizen, was a member of the City Council for several years and was a Deacon in the Baptist Church.

The funeral will be held from his late residence Wednesday, at 2PM and will be conducted by Rev. H.A. Sumrell. (end of obituary)

Please note; The Richland County Probate Court Records of death list John Ricketts Sr.' date of death as March 18, 1895.

This is where enough research can sometimes pay off. Remember earlier John Jr. said his Dad arrived in Mansfield in 1840? John Sr.' obituary states he arrived in 1835. This earlier date would have given him five years to complete an apprenticeship, start a business and be able to support a wife. Also in Mansfield at that time, were three other gunsmiths that he could have apprenticed to; John Fogolsong, Rolin Weldon and Andrew Craig. Just because John Ricketts wasn't listed as a gunsmith until 1850, doesn't mean he wasn't plying the trade before then.

The Mansfield Daily Shield of Dec. 9, 1902 carried this obituary; 60 YEARS, She had been a resident of Mansfield; The Daily Shield of Tuesday.

Mrs. Catherine J. Ricketts, wife of John Ricketts, deceased, died at 3:30 o'clock this morning at the home of her son George Ricketts, on East Fourth Street.

Mrs. Ricketts was 82 years old, a Pennsylvanian

The Ohio Liberal

January 9, 1878, page 3

JOHN RICKETS, Jr., one of the most desperate roughts in the city, when under the influence of whiskey last Monday afternoon had his household goods carted to the west side of the park to be disposed of at public auction. His parents soon arrived and expostulated with him in regard to the disposal of the goods, stating that they had been purchased by them for his use, but not to be given away for a mere song. This greatly irritated the drunken brute, and when his father and mother were having the furniture loaded up to be sent home, this wicked hero called his father a liar, and used still viler language to his mother. Policeman Aungat came along about this time and led the young man off to the cooler. Only a few weeks ago he was sentenced to jail for thirty days, but on the promise of doing better the sentence was suspended, and he was put on good behavior. No doubt but what he will now be remanded to jail for thirty, if not sixty days, which he so justly merits.

Richland Shield and Banner
May 4, 1878, page 3

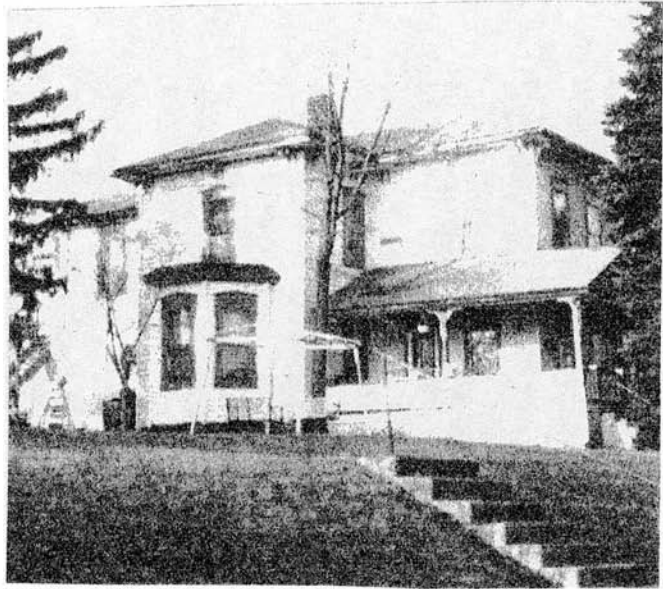
Mayor's Court.
Since our last report the following have paid their respects and some as well their cash to the Mayor:
Louis Mathea, cigar maker, drunk and disorderly, \$1.00.
Thomas Fox and Ed. Harris, suspicious persons, discharged.
John Ricketts, Jr., habitual disturber of the peace, drunk and resisting an officer—fine and costs \$25.75 and 90 days in jail, 10 days of which he shall be locked in a cell and fed on bread and water.
Frank Goss, hotel runner, jumping on and riding in railroad trains—reprimanded and discharged.

by birth, but for the last 60 years a resident of this city, coming here from Ashland where she had lived a short time.

Mrs. Ricketts leaves two children, George W. of this city, and Mrs. Emma C. Cobean of Richmond Virginia. One daughter, Mary Jane, died two years ago and a son John Jr., died in 1890.

The time and place of the funeral services have not yet been decided upon. (end of obituary).

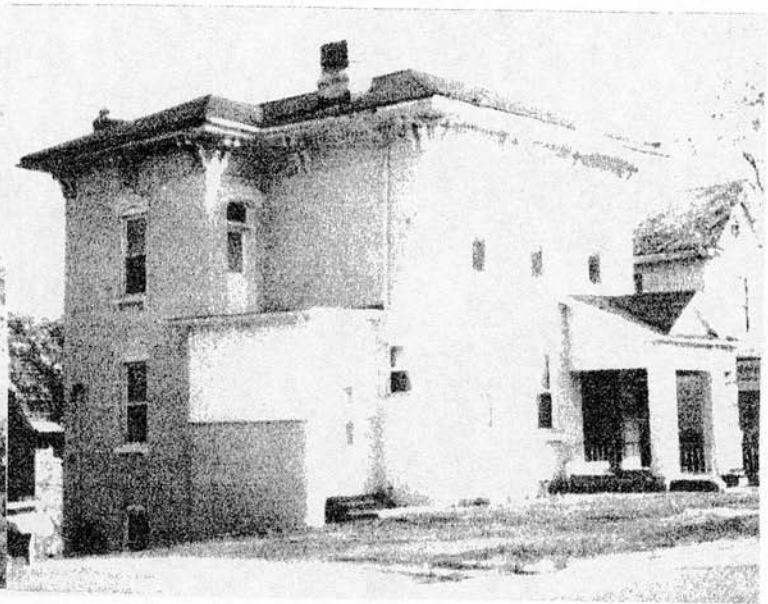
I sincerely hope that I have not done a disservice Mr. Corbett's research or this portion of the Ricketts' family history. I have had these notes for a while and never "got a round to it". Please don't be like me. Our newsletter editor is always grateful for any factual information on Ohio gunsmiths. Thank you for your time. Respectfully, Tom



Ricketts' residence at 99 W. 4th. St.

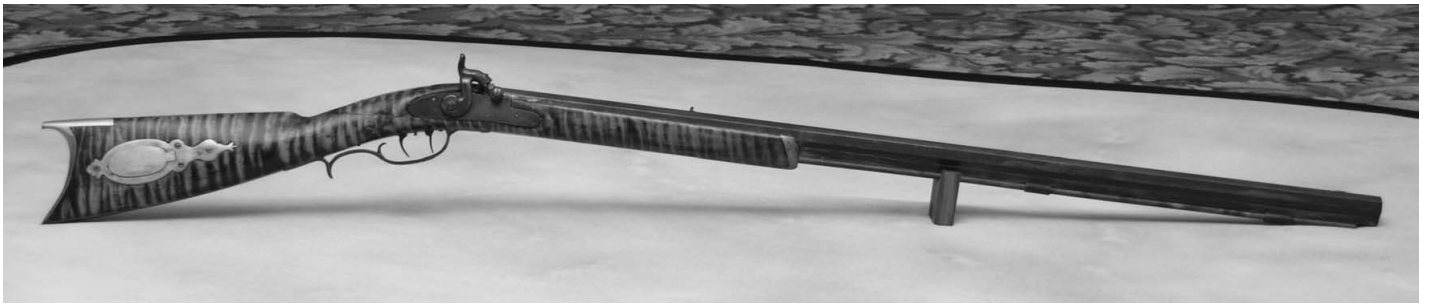


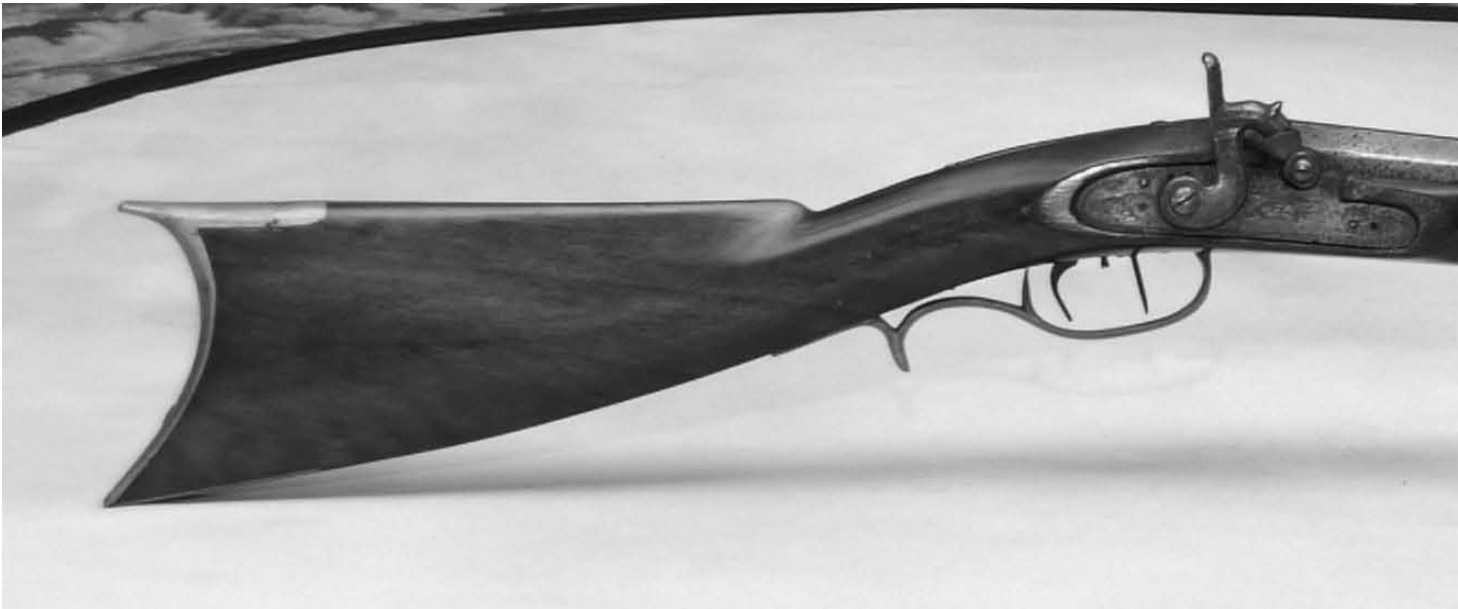
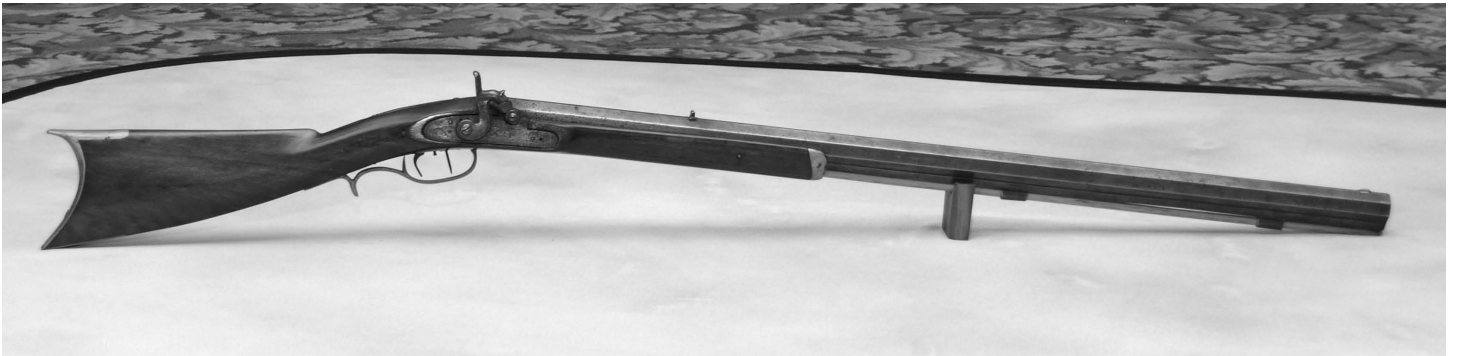
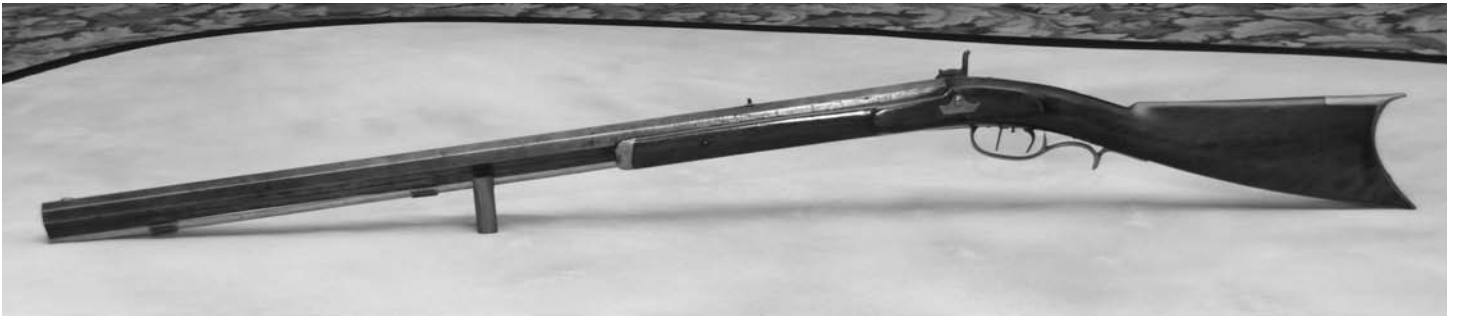
Mansfield Cemetary
Lot#80- Block 4



Ricketts' residence at 140 W. 4th. St.







6th ANNUAL AUGUST PICNIC

The Annual August Picnic was successful again this year, although attendance was down a bit. It is hard to tell whether the prospect of competing with original (and modern traditional) muzzleloaders is the attraction, or just an excuse to belly up to the lunch and dessert tables.

Mark Herman once again arranged for the use of Centerburg Conservation Club's range and clubhouse, and the Ladies of the AOLRC arranged the "picnic." Dan Kindig of the Log Cabin Shop provided "old fashioned" toys for the youth. As always, this is a family event, and the atmosphere is relaxed and friendly, with emphasis on safety.

The scores at the "blanket shoot" are getting better, and some very nice prizes were exchanged this year. The junior X-card honors were shared by Maya and Meredith Yerian. New this year was an "open" X-card event – one shot, closest to the center, with either rifle or shotgun. Twenty-six shooters competed. The men – in what can only be described as misplaced confidence – elected to stick with their trusty rifles, while the ladies and the juniors chose the shotguns. When the smoke cleared, the ladies and juniors took all the prize money! Renita Oakes took first with a virtually perfect shot, and juniors Devon Herman and Maya Yerian went to a shoot-off to decide second and third place. Devon won, but Maya thought the fact that she used a sixteen gauge against a twelve gauge deserved mention.

Fourteen shooters competed in the Second Annual Schuetzenfest. Donna Barnhill took home the coveted Schuetzen Ehrenscheiben target this year. As is the tradition, all the competitors signed the target, and Donna has the honor of providing the target for next year.



Daniel Smith, Jr.



Daniel Smith, Jr. was born in Pennsylvania on 11 July, 1814. He was an early pioneer of Sandusky County. By family tradition “Old Dan’s” gunshop was located near Gibsonburg around 1860. His shop was actually located in Rollersville, about 4 miles southwest of Gibsonburg, or somewhere between the two villages. (Hutslar - Ohio Gunsmiths and Allied Tradesmen, Volume IV, page 179)





Artistic Elements of a Late Delaware County Rifle

Mark Bender (Part 3) *Continued from previous issue.*

Editor: The rifle that is the subject of Mark Bender's article "Artistic Elements of a Late Delaware County Rifle" is presented here. It is certainly worthwhile to study any late Ohio halfstock rifle with the principles of artistic and aesthetic values suggested by Mr. Bender.







Ladies of AOLRC News



Wow! Was it almost 6 months ago that we were together in Marietta? Time travels so quickly. Our Marietta show was a great success and there were even a few practical jokes on the opening day, April Fool's. The pictures below are from the April show. David Taner was the winner of the pistol made by Joe Swearengin. We missed Willard and Anna Shulaw. At 99 years old he was not able to make the journey this year because of some health issues. He passed away just a short time later. He was our oldest member and will certainly be missed. Our Friday night birthday celebration will always bring back fond memories of his presence. Our condolences go to Anna, his wife of many, many years, William, his son, and his wife, Anna, and their families.

We ladies continue to enjoy our Saturday luncheon at DaVinci's and even voted to return there again next year. We also enjoyed an afternoon at Campus Martius Museum and thank Bill Reynolds for making the arrangement of the

tour. Next April we hope to be able to tour the Henderson House. Mark your calendars for the date next year. It is a little later in April next year because of Good Friday and Easter. Our show is April 13, 14, and 15 in 2012.

As you have seen on the previous pages the August picnic and shoot was a good time for all who attended. Most of us ladies put our dollars in and joined the men in the X-card shoot. Our own Renita won the X-card shoot and our Donna won the Schuetzen! Good shooting ladies!!

We are still looking for ideas for our next project. Anyone have any ideas on ways to educate the public on the history of the Ohio long rifle? Let me know.

We look forward to seeing you at the Newark show on October 22. Don't forget Friday night's time together as we set up the tables and enjoy pizza together.

Judy Yerian

