

The Two Jacob Resors

By James B. Whisker

There are many instances of two men by the same name working as gunsmiths. To my knowledge, all of these involve close relatives, usually father and son or uncle-nephew. I cannot recall an instance of two men who are documented gunsmiths wherein (1) the gunsmiths worked at the same time and (2) there is no clearly established relationship between the men. I exclude here examples wherein there is intent to deceive, as in Deringer/Derringer.

One Jacob Resor (spelling variations include: Razor, Rasor, Raysor, Reasor, Reaser) is well known to Ohio collectors. He was active 1807-10 in or about Mercersburg, Franklin County, Pennsylvania. William S. Bowers, in GUNSMITHS OF PEN-MAR-VA, pp. 19-21, has information on Resor while he was in Montgomery Township, Pennsylvania. Resor was a single freeman from 1807-09 in Montgomery Township. This man was likely a son of Peter and Catherine Resor of Hagerstown (then Elizabethtown) Maryland, an established gunsmith.

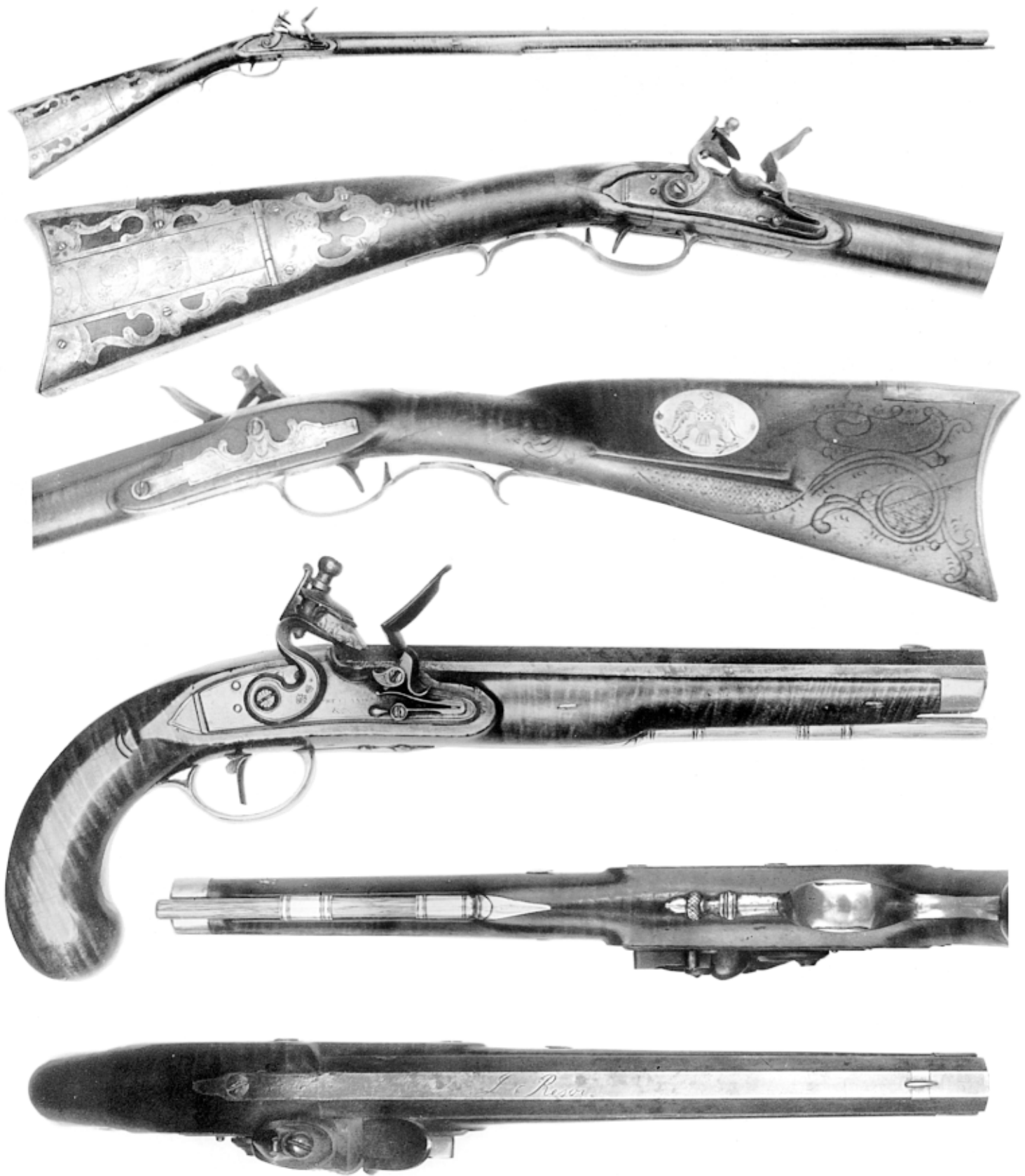
It is highly likely that this is the same man who, in 1811, moved to Cincinnati, Ohio. Mr. Bowers listed him in Cincinnati through 1836. Donald Hutslar, GUNSMITHS OF OHIO (Vol. I) has much the same information, fleshed out with some details on Resor as a tinsmith and coppersmith. (p.185)

The second Jacob Resor was active from 1795-1826 in Meadville, Crawford County, Pennsylvania. In my PENNSYLVANIA

GUNSMITHS: A COLLECTION (with Dr. Roy Chandler, on p.119) I listed this man from tax records, 1804-26. However, in going through a HISTORY OF CRAWFORD COUNTY (1885, pp. 374 and 435), I found the following additional information. He was "a German and kept a gunshop. He came early in 1795 and purchased a lot the same spring. He was a little old man known by all the early residents as Daddy Raysor and lived on Walnut Street (in Meadville) until his death." It is to be presumed that this Jacob Reseor died about 1826, as the history makes it clear that he died in Meadville, and the name disappears after 1826.

It is strange that no signed guns have, as yet, surfaced, in that this Jacob Resor was active 31 or so years. The only other contemporary gunsmith in that general area of extreme northwest Pennsylvania I have as yet located was Isaac Berlin (1753-1830) who did not come there until about 1810. Thus, for about 15 years Resor was the only (as yet) identified gunsmith in that area.

All the guns yet located with the Jacob Resor name have a commonality, and are, of course, attributed to the man from Franklin County, Pennsylvania (and later from Cincinnati), and this is probably quite correct. Should a gun of a different style -- and at present we can only speculate what that style might be -- surface we might consider that it may be the product of this second gunsmith who bears the name of Jacob Resor. □



A fullstock flintlock rifle and a flintlock pistol signed J. Resor.

Photos courtesy James B. Whisker

David Leonard Gunsmith

by Kenneth M. Leonard
and Diane Buchanan Leonard

David Leonard, while relatively unknown to the history of Ohio gunsmiths, bears recognition and a place in today's history. His outstanding workmanship and design capabilities as a gunsmith are evident in his clean stock lines and engraved silver and mother-of-pearl inlays. Elaborate mechanisms and specific characteristics in design identify his work as unique.

David Leonard was born in 1825 to David Leonard and Anna Calhoun Leonard of Ellsworth Township, Ohio. One of ten children, he is believed to have lived his entire 83 years on a small farm in Trumbull County, now Mahoning County. It is for this reason, he is believed to be self-taught and little traveled. At what age he began his gunmaking is unknown. We believe him to have been in his prime from about the time of the Civil War (1861-1865) to shortly before his death. The Ellsworth Cemetery tombstone marking his grave dates his death at February 5, 1908.

David Leonard was reportedly a natural mechanic and bore the ability to repair as well as make most tools and devices of his period. We have personal knowledge of nine guns. A ledger listing his sales and repairs from 1868-1880, an assortment of hand tools and several powder horns are in

private collections. Various patterns for his inlay work are also in existence.

The exact number of guns produced by David Leonard is unknown. He, as so many of the gunsmiths of that period did not have the habit of regularly signing his work. Those pieces bearing his mark are typically engraved script with the name "D. Leonard" followed by the date. A curious note to his mark has all number eights (8) punched with two circles rather than engraved.

The variety of David Leonard guns is in itself rather remarkable. Several characteristics such as two cheek pieces and a handmade snail of unusual design mark his guns as unique. We personally own four very different examples of his work, each expressing his artistic ability in different ways.

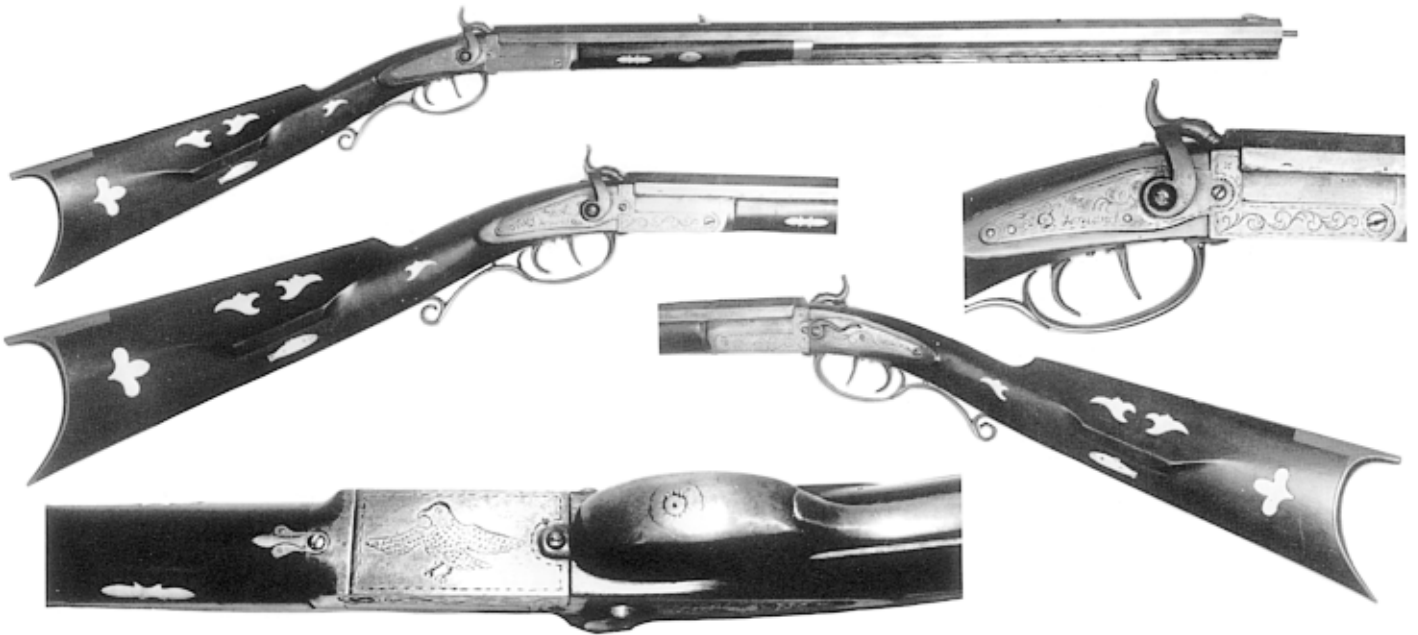
The guns we own are each signed with dates ranging from 1855 to 1900. They are all elaborate, with multiple silver and mother-of-pearl inlays. The single shot breech loading rimfire tip up rifle was probably a child's or ladies' gun with an overall length of 39½". The .40 calibre full stock rifle has a cap box as does the .32 calibre half stock rifle. Our .40 calibre half stock



.40 CALIBRE HALF STOCK

SIGNED "D. LEONARD 1855" IN SCRIPT
ON TOP OF BARREL
D.S.T.
25 SILVER INLAYS, 2 PIERCED
FULL PATCH BOX (PIERCED)

BRASS BUTT PLATE, TRIGGER GUARD,
LOCK, RAM ROD HOLDERS & PATCH
BOX
JAS GOLCHER LOCK, LOCK PLATE IS
BRASS



.25 CALIBRE RIMFIRE TIP UP

SIGNED "D. LEONARD 1899" IN SCRIPT
ON TOP OF BARREL
ALSO SIGNED "D. LEONARD" ON LOCK
PLATE
D.S.T.
O.A. LENGTH: 39½"

19 MOTHER-OF-PEARL INLAYS
2 SILVER INLAYS
BRASS BUTT PLATE, TOE PLATE,
TRIGGER GUARD, RAM-ROD HOLDERS
PEWTER FORE END CAP
HANDMADE BACKACTION LOCK (ENGRAVED)
ENGRAVED EAGLE ON BOTTOM OF RECEIVER
CHEEK PIECE ON BOTH SIDES



.40 CALIBRE FULL STOCK

SIGNED "D. LEONARD 1863" IN SCRIPT
ON TOP OF BARREL
D.S.T.
O.A. LENGTH: 49"
18 SILVER INLAYS
13 MOTHER-OF-PEARL INLAYS, 3 IN
FLOWER PATTERNS

SILVER TRIGGER GUARD, TOE PLATE,
SIDE PLATE, FORE END CAP & RAM
ROD HOLDERS
BRASS BUTT PLATE
ATKINSON LOCK
CHEEK PIECE ON BOTH SIDES



has a pierced and engraved
patch box.

We have seen another half stock
with numerous inlays and the
words "30 dollars" inlaid on the
top of the barrel. We also know
of and have seen pictures of a
swivel breech rifle, a double
barrel shotgun and a clean-lined
plain rifle with no patch box.
Each is different, all bearing
the unique characteristics of
David Leonard's fine workmanship.



.32 CALIBRE HALF STOCK

SIGNED " D. LEONARD 1900 " IN SCRIPT
ON TOP OF BARREL
D.S.T.
O.A. LENGTH: 45½"
6 SILVER INLAYS
BRASS CAP BOX, TRIGGER GUARD, BUTT
PLATE, LOCK PLATE
PEWTER FORE END CAP
HAND MADE LOCK
CHEEK PIECE ON BOTH SIDES

As the great-great grandson
of David Leonard, we were pleased
to recently learn that my wife
is also a first cousin, five
times removed, to the gunsmith.
We hope to continue our re-
search of David's place in Ohio
history and will furnish any
additional details as we find
them. We, of course, welcome
any information concerning our
ancestor, David Leonard, the
gunsmith. □

Joseph Clippinger Maker of Guns In Pennsylvania and Ohio

By Amanda Clippinger

In the census of 1880 is a listing for Joseph Clippinger 82, and his wife Elizabeth, age 80. He is listed as a retired gunsmith residing in New Carlisle, Clark Co., Ohio. It is an intricate and fascinating story of how a Penn. gunsmith came to be in New Carlisle, Ohio, for the census of 1880.

Clippinger history has been traced back to the year 1210 in Europe. The Clippinger name is spelled a number of ways. A history of our family begins with "Johan Georg Klippinger" in Pfunstadt, Hisse in Germany on the 25th of January 1707. Humrick Kloppinger, who still resides in the family home in Pfunstadt, has the Kloppinger family bible that records Johan Georgs' birth. In speaking with Humrick at the 1976 Klippinger family reunion, we were told that Johan Georg was the second son and therefore not eligible to inherit any of his families estate. We are fairly sure that this was the reason for his immigration.

"On the 23rd of February, 1734, Johann Georg Kloppinger, honorable son of Christoph Kloppinger, a member of the congregation, and Anna Margretha, Georg Phillip Schreiner's surviving daughter, were married in the church after three proclamations". The above is a direct quote from the Church records in Pfunstadt Germany.

Three years later, he and his wife sailed from Rottendam on the ship "St. Andrew" and arrived in Philadelphia on Sept. 26, 1737. Three days later on Sept. 29, 1737 the first daughter was born.

Juliana the first child (unmarried) died Aug. 8, 1792, age 55 yrs. Johan Georg and Ann Margretha had six sons and two daughters. The father and all the sons fought in the Revolution. It was from the sons that the different spellings of the Kloppinger name originated. Two sons spelled it Klippinger, two spelled it Klipinger and two others Clippinger.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is broken up into 67 Counties. To help in following the line of the Clippinger history we will give you the county and the date it was formed.

The family settled in the vicinity of Trappe Lutheran Church, Montgomery County Pa., Montgomery Co. No. 15 was formed in 1784 from the northern part of Philadelphia Co. No. 3 - 1682. Georg Klepinger of Phila. County was naturalized in Philadelphia on April 7, 1751. Georg moved his family to Allen Township, Northampton Co. Pa. purchasing land around 30 November 1762. He was considered a pioneer settler in Northampton Co. Northampton Co. was the No. 8 County formed in 1752, an extension of Bucks Co. No. 1 in 1682.

The sixth son of Georg Klippinger and Anna Margretha was Anthony Kleppinger, born 1753-4 in Montgomery Co. Pa. Anthony served in the 8th Company, 3rd Battalion from Northampton Co. Pa. He is reputed to have died in 1806, but we cannot find any record of his death or where he is buried. Anthony married Anna Margareta Heckman (born Jan. 1, 1758 and died Sept 15, 1812) in late 1776 or early 1777. Of this union there were nine sons and five daughters.

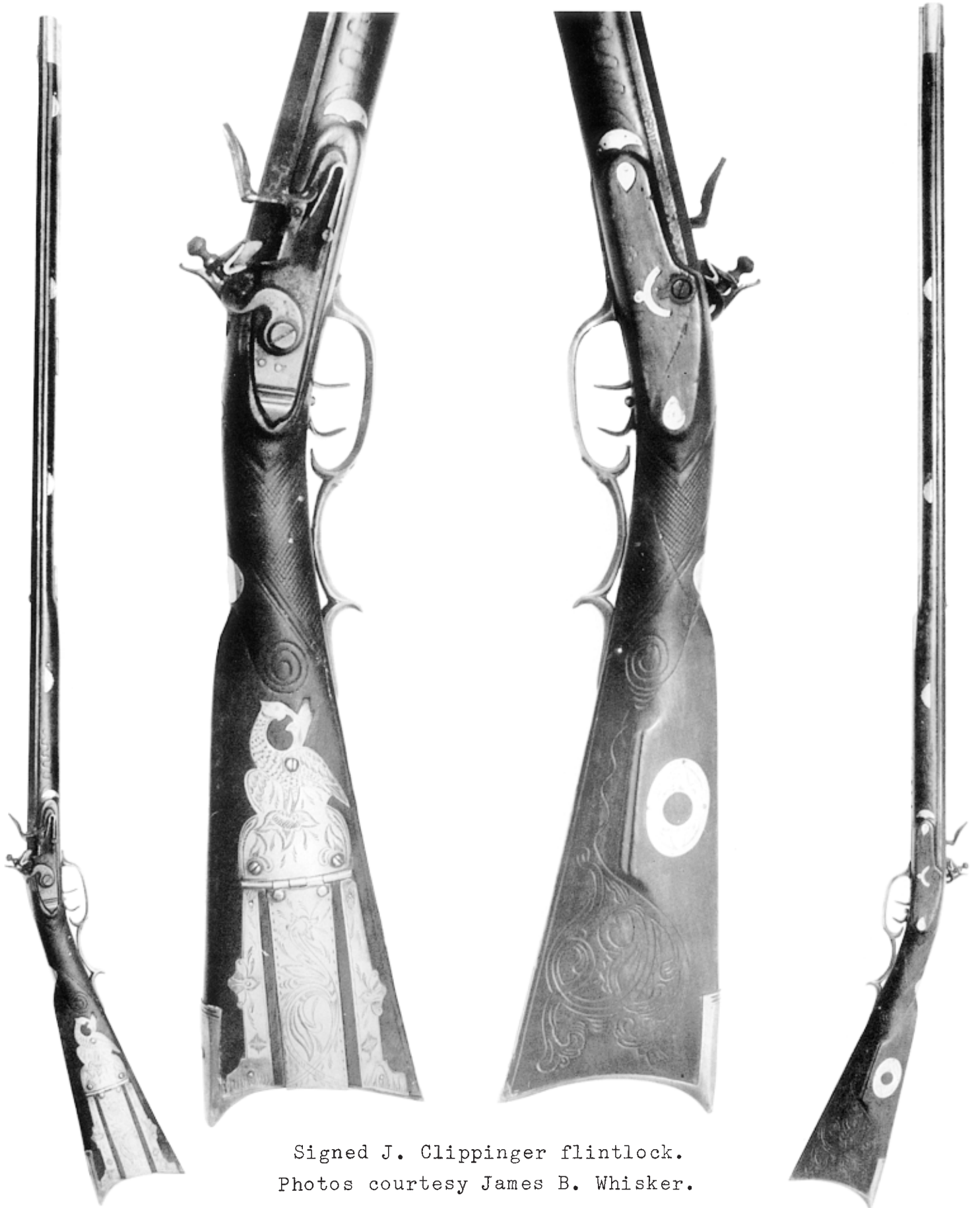
In 1775 Anthony owned 100 acres in Allen township Northampton Co. Pa. No. 8 formed in 1752. Later he moved his family to Southampton Township, Cumberland Co. Pa. Cumberland Co. No. 6 was formed 1750. It covered all land west over to the Ohio and Virginia border and north to the middle of Pa. You must remember that Virginia claimed the southwest corner of Pa. A strip of Pa. on its southern

edge was also claimed by Maryland. Anthony and his brother Frederick purchased 843 acres of land for \$15,200, May 4, 1796, Southampton Township, Cumberland Co. Pa. No. 6, formed 1750.

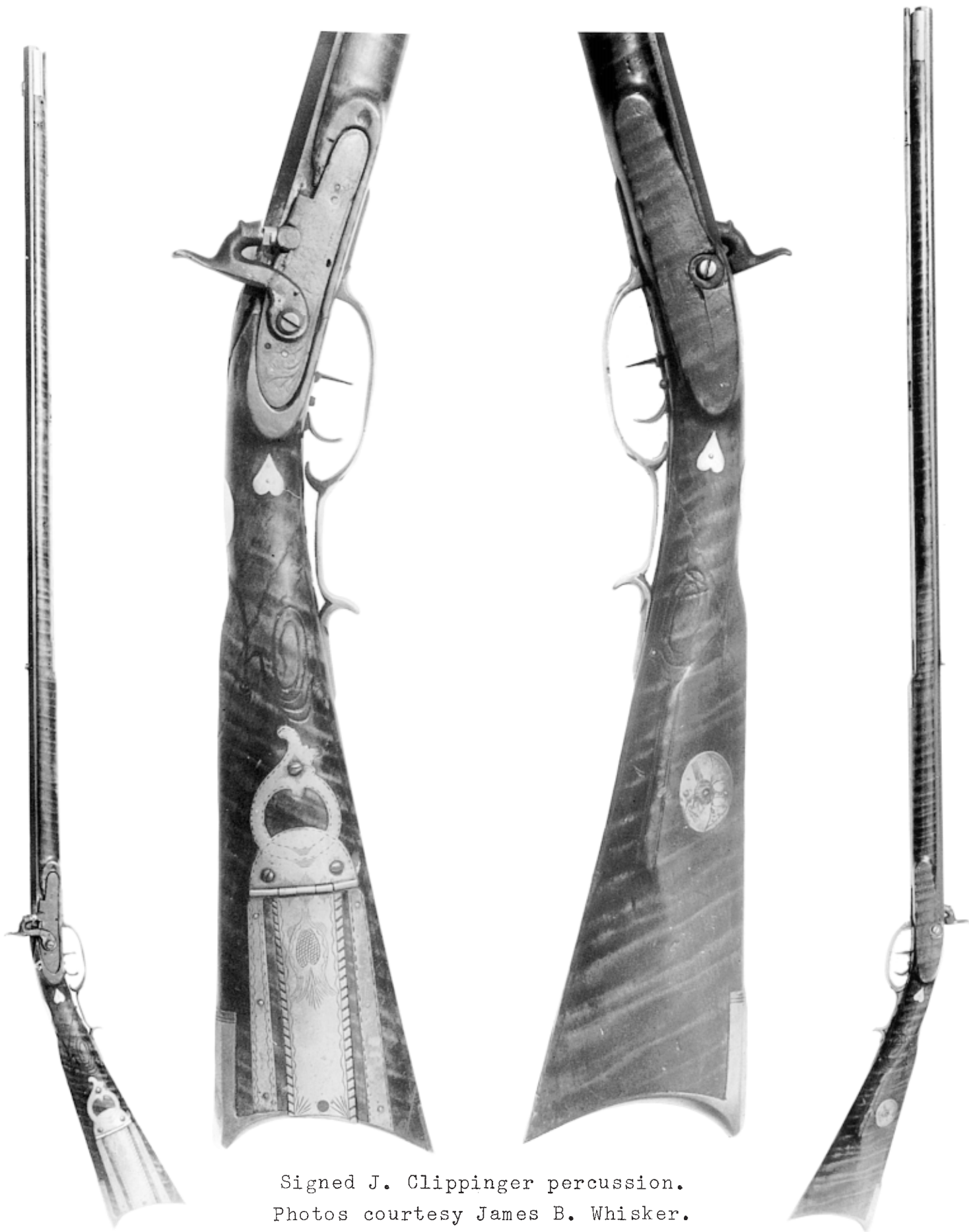
Of the fifteen children born to Anthony and Anna Margaretha, records indicate that eight of the children were baptised in the Kreidersvill Church. It still stands northwest of Allentown, Pa. The other seven children were born around the Shippenburg area, Cumberland Co. No. 6 and formed 1750.

Joseph Clippinger, born 1798, was the eleventh child of this marriage. His father died in 1806. We do not know his grave site. Six years later his mother died. She is buried in the "Old German Cemetery" in Shippenburg, Pa.

As was the custom in those days that the older sons looked after the mother and younger children. We do not know the hardships, if any that the family may have had, but I think that Joseph Clippinger at a young age, was close to a Gunsmith Shop. We have a letter from Joe Kindig Jr. stating, that because of Joseph Clippinger's early type of gunmaking and his style, he must have learned his trade from a John Noll (1800-1820) of Washington Township, Franklin Co. Franklin Co. No. 14 was formed out of the southern part of Cumberland Co. No. 6 in 1784. The boro of Waynesboro was located in Washington Township. Joseph Clippinger's brother Elias Clippinger lived and married in the area of the town of Waynesboro, Franklin Co. Pa. It is possible that Joseph met John Noll through his brother living in the vicinity of Noll's shop.



Signed J. Clippinger flintlock.
Photos courtesy James B. Whisker.



Signed J. Clippinger percussion.
Photos courtesy James B. Whisker.

I am grateful to Mr. Wm. S. Bowers, who sent me the following information on Joseph Clippinger. Franklin Co. records show Joseph Clippinger, gunsmith taking title to the house and $\frac{1}{2}$ lot No. 45 in boro of Waynesboro from John Griffith and wife for \$300 dollars, April 5, 1822.

The lot he owned which contained a house and grounds was located a few blocks from the center of town, being on West Main Street. The land is now covered by stores and office buildings.

J. Clippinger and wife sold this lot in 1826 to a Charles Smith for \$600. In 1827 J. Clippinger was assessed only on his occupation and a cow, this listing continues as so, till 1830. After this date he is no longer listed. I believe if we look to the Hagerstown Maryland area, his wife and children will be listed living there at that time.

We know that Joseph married an Elizabeth --- sometime after 1820. The following is information on Joseph and Elizabeth's children.

1. Valentine B. 1823 Waynesboro, Pa.
D. Oct. 19, 1910
Springfield, Ohio
age 87.
2. Joseph A. B. July 22, 1826
Hagerstown Md.
D. March 19, 1910
Springfield, Ohio
Buried New Carlisle,
Ohio.
3. Mary B. 1834 Maryland.
D.
M. Jacob Osborn.
4. Samuel B. 1840 New Carlisle,
Ohio.
D. 15 Mo. old, New
Carlisle, Ohio.

The odd thing about Samuals tombstone is that the Clippinger is spelled in script, which is unusual.

John Noll according to Joe Kindig Jr.'s book, "Thoughts Of The Kentucky Rifle In Its Golden Age" was an early gunmaker. His father "John Noll of Bart Township, Lancaster Co. No. 4, formed 1729, was probably also a gunsmith. In later years No. 5 York Co. No. 6 Cumberland and No. 14 Franklin Co. was formed from No. 4 Lancaster Co. Even though the boundries shifted with the forming of different counties and townships, the people remained neighbors. The Noll's and the Clippinger's being of the same trade were sure to have had contact. Joe Kindig, Jr. thought John Noll's work was of high quality and saw the same type of workmanship in Joseph's work.

One of my reasons for believing Joseph learned his trade young is a picture of a pistol with his initials J*C on the barrel and the lock. It is flint and has two small silver inlays on the far side of the piece. It has no plate, just screws, with small inlay at each screw. We know of no other pistol he made. That is not saying he did not make more. The pistol would be easy for a young person to learn to make and not a lot of material would be wasted.

Joseph Clippinger was raised in one of the most highly endowed areas of men, who made what we call the Kentucky rifle. He had a choice of the best of gunsmiths to learn from. The Waynesboro Pa. tax records list Joseph Clippinger from 1821-1830. Joseph Kindig, Jr. lists him as a smith of the Chambersburg school. This is due to the patchbox that he used. One



can also see an influence from the Emmitsburg school.

An older brother, John Clippinger, 7th son of Anthony and Margaretha Clippinger moved from the Shippenburg area to Hagerstown, Md. and in 1834 bought government land near Lima, Allen Co. Ohio. A man I know has a J. Clippinger barrel that he tells me came out of a barn in the Lima Ohio area. □

Signed J. Clippinger
flintlock pistol.
Photos courtesy
George Shumway.

Continued next issue
with more documentation
and rifle illustrations.