

Ephriam Sonedecker

By William H. Walker



Ephriam Sonedecker was born in 1832 in Ohio or Pennsylvania. The grave registration card lists his birthplace as Ohio, as does his abstract record of death. The 1850 Federal Census of Ohio, Columbiana Co., Perry Township, page 39, lists his birthplace as Pennsylvania.

At age 19 Ephriam was listed as a gunsmith, working with Abraham Baird in Salem, Ohio (1850 census).

On November 23, 1856 he married Elmira Stevenson of Salem. They had three children, Viola, Byron and Ella.

At the age of 28, he was listed as a shoemaker in the 1860 Federal Census of Ohio, Mohoning Co., Canfield Township, page 275.

Ephriam served in the Civil War as a Musician in Co. I - 178th Ohio Vol. Inf., from 8/30/1864 to 6/29/1865. This information is from the Ohio official roster, Volume 9, page 593.

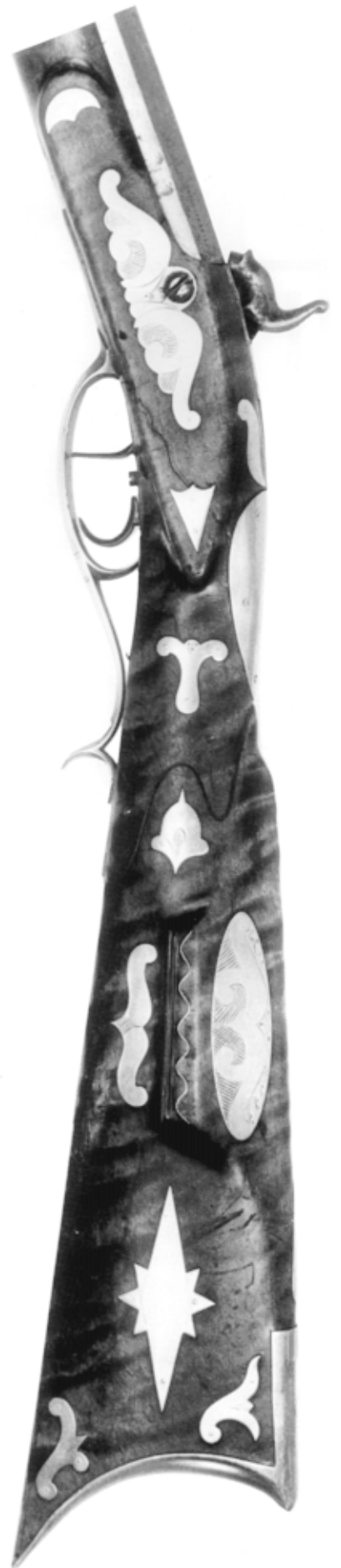
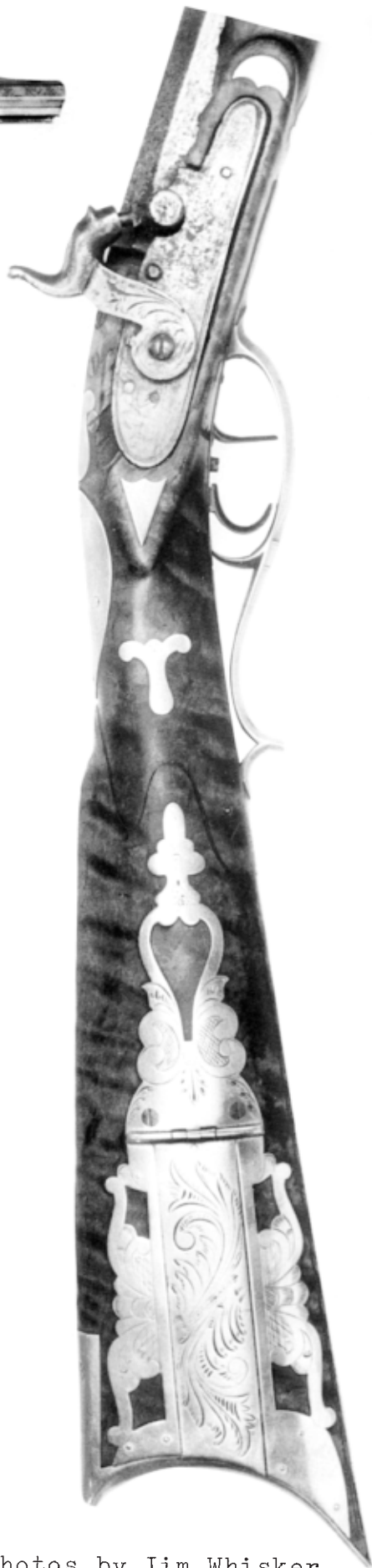
At age 38, he is listed as a machinist in the 1870 Federal Census, Columbiana Co., Perry Township, Salem, Ohio.

An ad in the Salem paper, Aug. 30, 1877 gives his shop address as "Second floor Hises Block, Main St., Salem, Ohio, Gun-Smithing, Sewing Machines, Repaired and Pictures Framed".

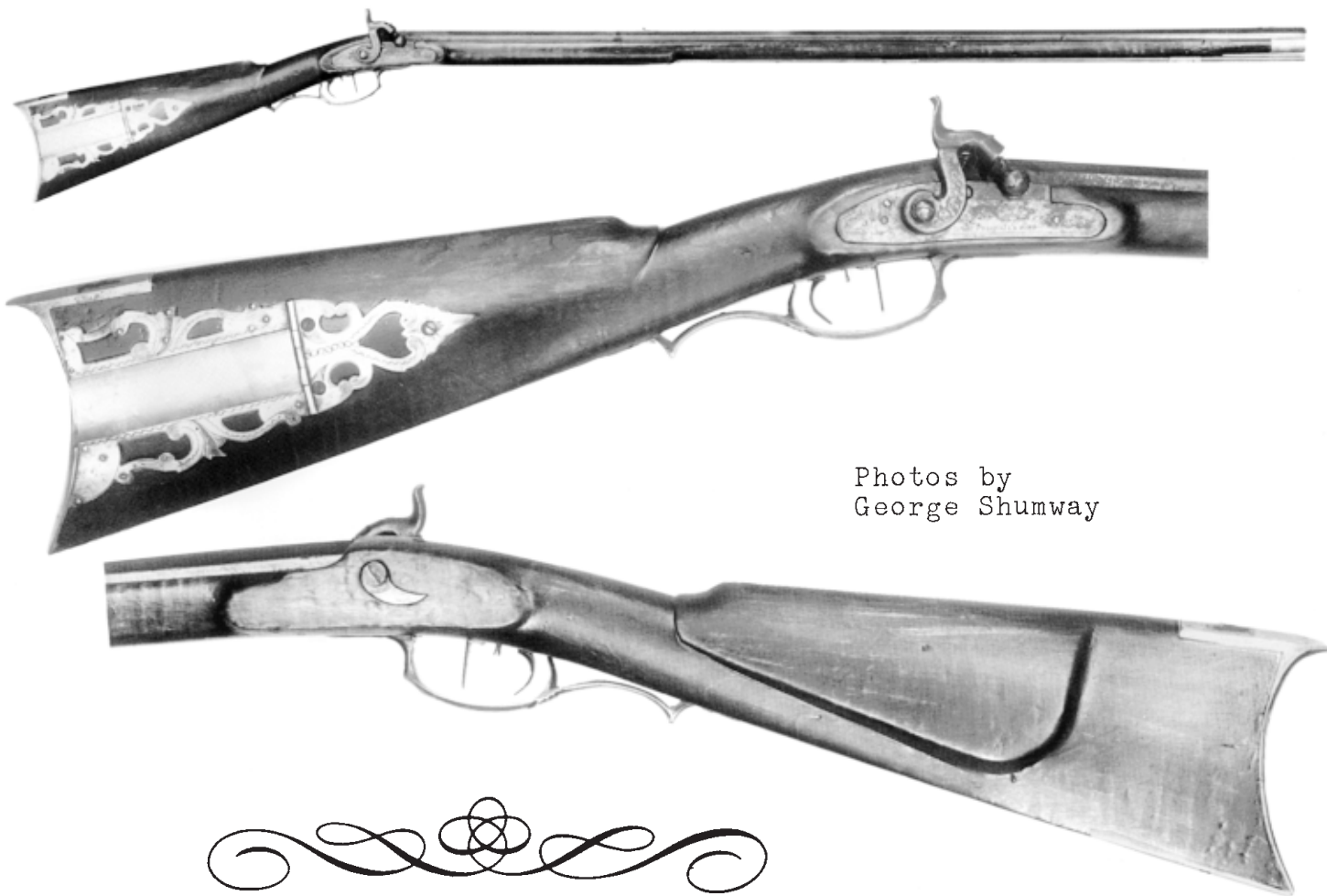
His wife Elmira, a dress maker, died in 1880 at the age of 46, of heart paralysis. At the time of her death, Ephriam was working in Norwalk, Ohio at a sewing machine factory. There is no record of a Sonedecker in Norwalk. The sewing machine Co. (W.A.Mack), moved to Cleveland about that time to manufacture the "Standard Sewing Machine". I feel that Sonedecker followed the company to Cleveland.

I can find no further information on Sonedecker from the time of his wife's death in 1880 and his death in 1897.

Ephriam Sonedecker died March 19, 1897 of neuralgia, at the age of 65. His occupation was listed as a pattern maker. His address was 124 Dunham, Cleveland, Ohio. Ephriam is buried at Woodland Cemetery, Cleveland Ohio, lot 30, section 19. □



Photos by Jim Whisker



Photos by
George Shumway

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George Hahn

Muskingum County Ohio

By William Reynolds

Information on George Hahn is as scarce as his rifles. Several significant facts have come to light. Hahn placed the following ad in the Zanesville Express and Republican Standard on July 15, 1818;

"General Rifle Factory. The subscriber returns thanks to the public for their liberal patronage and informs them that he is now carrying on the business of Gun-Smithing in all its branches and neatest manner in the cross street leading to Dugan's Hotel next door to Michael Stockman's. He wishes them to call and judge

for themselves. Country produce received in payment, George Hahn."

This indicates that Hahn had acquired some gunsmithing training prior to the 1818 date, and was probably making rifles earlier.

About 1823 we find George Hahn as an apprentice to the famous Zanesville gunsmith Elijah Ross. This position was more likely that of partnership or as a hired hand.

It is believed that Hahn was producing rifles until 1864. □



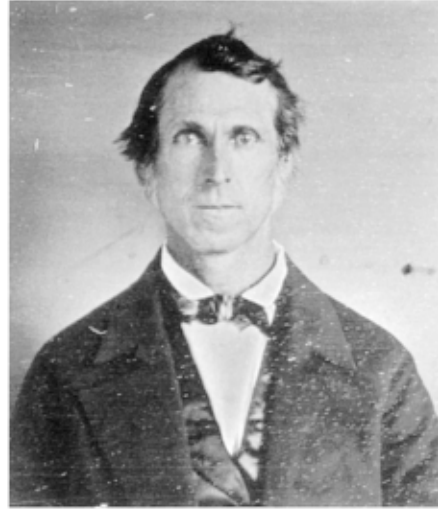
Fullstock flintlock rifle
by Nathan Kile □

Photos courtesy of The
Smithsonian Institute.
Submitted by Marvin Adams.

A. C. McGirr



John Vincent



A Call To Duty

By William Reynolds

In studying gunsmithing in Ohio we tend to look from one maker to another for similarities in workmanship, architecture, or other influences that may have occurred that would indicate an apprenticeship or a close working association between these men. But what about other similarities?

During the American Civil War, many of Ohio's finest gunsmiths answered the call to service. Those in Washington County, Ohio were no exception.

Included in these ranks were two of Southeastern Ohio's best gunsmiths, A.C. McGirr of Marietta and John Vincent of Vincent. Both men joined the ranks of the 148th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, O.N.G. which was called for 100 days service on 2 May, 1864. An interesting fact is that both men served as Sergeants in their respective company. McGirr was a Sergeant in A Company and Vincent a 1st Sergeant in F. Company.

The history of the 148th is very typical of the O.N.G. units called for 100 days service, that of support troops in guarding supplies, roads and providing provost duty.

After a few weeks of training the unit left Marietta for Hapers Ferry on the Union Railroad, but had traveled only a few miles from town when it met with an accident. Several men were killed and after remaining in Harpers Ferry for 10 days the unit moved to Washington, then to the White House and finally to Bermuda Hundred where they went into the trenches commanded by General Butler at the front. From there several companies including Co. A and F moved to City Point, probably to do guard duty at that supply depot. At this spot several men were killed by an explosion of an ordinance boat. On the 29th of August the regiment left City Point and returned to Marietta where it was mustered out of the service on the 14th of September.

Undoubtly, not a very glorious war record was recorded, but one that would return all but a few safely home. The only casualties being those lost by accident.

A. C. McGirr and John Vincent, two Ohio gunsmiths serving together for a common cause in American History. □