THE SMALL ARMS INDUSTRY OF LANCASTER COUNTY, 1710-1840

By Carlton O. Wittlinger

There are several private manufactories in Lancaster... but it is principally noted for its rifles, muskets, and pistols, the first of which are esteemed the best made in the United States.
—Fortescue Cuming, 1807, in Thwaites, Early Western Travels, 1748-1840, IV, 31.

The rifled gun has been an important formative influence in American history. It aided materially in the conquest of the wilderness as the frontier moved westward and, beginning with the late colonial period, played a deadly part in military affairs.

Rifles produced in the vicinity of Lancaster in the eighteenth century were not completely indigenous to these shores. Their progenitors were the hunting rifles developed in Europe in the region of Switzerland and the Upper Rhine. These were heavy, large of bore, badly sighted, and poorly adapted for use in the American environment. Pioneer conditions in this country demanded an accurate long-range weapon which conserved powder and shot, both of which had to be carried for long distances and extended periods. The sound of loading and of the explosion had to be reduced to a minimum so that the gunner would not unduly betray his presence. Weight was an important consideration, for the gun had to be carried on long journeys, and speedy repetition of fire was essential if the rifle were to match the Indian bow.

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1 For the general background and contributions of the American Rifle, see the following works: Charles W. Sawyer, Firearms in American History, 1600-1800 (Boston, c. 1910); Major Townsend Whelen, The American Rifle: a Treatise, a Text Book, and a Book of Practical Instruction in the Use of the Rifle (New York, 1918); J. G. W. Dillin, The Kentucky Rifle: a Study of the Origin and Development of a Purely American Type of Firearm... (Washington, 1924).
The changes implied did not all occur at once, but they were embodied in a new type of weapon which evolved in the course of the eighteenth century and came to be known as the Kentucky Rifle, although some prefer to think of it as the American, or Pennsylvania, or Lancaster Rifle. The origin of the name, Kentucky Rifle, is obscure. This name was used, however, as early as the period of the War of 1812, as is revealed by the following lines from stanza five of a long ballad commemorating Jackson’s victory at New Orleans and entitled, “The Hunters of Kentucky; or The Battle of New Orleans”:

But Jackson he was wide awake,
And wasn’t scared at trifles,
For well he knew what aim we take
With our Kentucky rifles.

It has been pointed out that the American Rifle is an exception to the generalization that the arts and crafts declined in the colonies because of the corrosive effect of the wilderness upon the skilled worker. Instead of representing a recession from Old World standards of quality and beauty, this famous arm was a marked improvement upon them. Designed with a view to practicality, it was at the same time made a work of art by versatile craftsmen skilled in the use of both metal and wood.

As the new arm came into being, it had certain distinguishing characteristics. While not all of these were American innovations, the net result of the skilful blending and proportioning of things new and old was a small arms weapon which signalized a revolution in design and efficiency. One of the most important of these was the fluted or rifled barrel which imparted a spiral motion to the ball. Another was the patch box let into the right

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2 Since the arm in question was designed to meet the requirements of the American environment, and made its contribution throughout the country generally, the writer is inclined to the view that the name, American Rifle, is more in accord with historical perspective than any name which stresses a particular locality where the gun was made or used.

3 This entire ballad is printed in Joe Kindig, Jr., “The Pedigree of the Pennsylvania Rifle,” The Magazine Antiques, XXII (September, 1932), 101-104.


side of the stock. In this box the gunner carried the small bits of greased buckskin or linen rag which made such an essential contribution to the speed and efficiency of the loading operation. The ball, smaller in calibre than the bore of the gun, was placed upon the greased patch at the muzzle and shoved home upon the powder charge with a hickory ramrod. In the barrel the patch engaged the rifling, prevented the powder from escaping around the ball, and served as a cleaning swab. This method of loading eliminated the slow, laborious task of hammering a ball larger than the bore down a barrel which quickly fouled from the powder charges.

The typical early American Rifles were flintlocks about five feet in length, with octagonal barrels of forty to fifty inches and precision sights. Stocks, generally of curly maple, extended the full length of the barrels. Hickory ramrods were socketed below the forestocks, and mountings were of brass. Time brought about departures from this early pattern, such as shorter barrels, half stocks, and percussion locks. Since the arms were generally made by individual smiths, usually from specifications supplied by prospective owners, there tended to be considerable variation in detail, no two rifles being exact duplicates.

A late eighteenth century traveler has provided an interesting description of these guns as they appeared to a contemporary.
He wrote:

The rifled barrel guns, commonly used in America, are nearly of the length of a musket, and carry leaden balls from the size of thirty to sixty in the pound. Some hunters prefer those of a small bore, because they require but little ammunition; others prefer such as have a wide bore, because the wound which they inflict is more certainly attended with death; the wound, however, made by a ball discharged from one of these guns, is always very dangerous. The inside of the barrel is fluted, and the grooves run in a spiral direction from one end of the barrel to the other, consequently when the ball comes out it has a whirling motion around its own axis, at the same time that it moves forward, and when it enters into the body of an animal, it tears up the flesh in a dreadful manner. The best of powder is chosen for a rifle barrel gun, and after a proper portion of it is put down the barrel, the ball is inclosed in a small bit of linen rag, well greased at the outside, and then forced down with a thick ramrod. The grease and the bits of rag, which are called patches, are carried in a little box at the but-end of the gun. The best rifles are furnished with two triggers, one of which being first pulled sets the other, that is, alters the spring, so that it will yield even to the slight touch of a feather. They are also furnished with double sights along the barrel, as fine as those of a surveying instrument. An experienced marksman, with one of these guns, will hit an object not larger than a crown piece, to a certainty, at the distance of one hundred yards. . . . Were I, however, to tell you all the stories I have heard of the performances of riflemen, you would think the people were most abominably addicted to lying. A rifle gun will not carry shot, nor will it carry a ball much farther than one hundred yards with certainty.  

Except for his error in implying that the tearing power of the ball was due to its spiral motion, our traveler has correctly grasped the implications of the American Rifle.

Many of the early settlers in Lancaster County came from the only part of Europe where rifles were made and used to any ex-

tent in the eighteenth century. It is not surprising, therefore, that the rifle maker's craft was transplanted into the American environment at an early date nor that Lancaster County soon became an important rifle-making center. In the small group of Swiss-Palatine Mennonites who made the first settlement in Lancaster County in 1710 was Martin Mylen, to whom tradition and some other lines of evidence point as the first gunsmith of the county. When he died in 1749, Mylen willed his three tracts of land in Lampeter Township to his son who was also named Martin. In 1751 this second Martin Mylen died intestate, and the inventory of his estate sheds the first clear ray of light into the obscurity of Lancaster County gunsmithing in the early eighteenth century. He definitely owned a gunshop, for the inventory entries include sundry tools, quantities of iron and steel, gunlocks, gunstocks, and boards for making gunstocks. Of special interest are entries for "Riffels Tools" and "a Prass Riffel." This inventory proves conclusively that the gunsmith's craft was practiced in Lancaster County before 1751 and that some of the guns made were rifles. As the earliest authenticated instance of barrel rifling in that part of Pennsylvania where students of rifle history believe the American Rifle was born, it lends some credence to the claim that this particular county was the birthplace of the noted arm.

The picture of the development of the small arms industry in Lancaster County becomes clearer before the close of the 1750's. A manufactory of guns was one of the things which caught Pownall's attention when he came to Lancaster in 1754. Joshua Baker, who styled himself a gunsmith, died in the borough that same year; while Jacob Dickert, who advertised in 1795 that he had forty years of gunsmith experience, took up residence in

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7 H. H. Beck, "Martin Meylin, a Progenitor of the Pennsylvania Rifle," Lancaster County Historical Society Papers, LIII (1949), 33-63. While admitting the weight of some of the evidence presented in Dr. Beck's paper, the present writer is not convinced that the first Martin Mylen has been proved a gunsmith beyond reasonable doubt.

8 Lancaster County Will Book A, vol. 1, p. 185.

9 Martin Mylin [sic] Inventory, filed August 31, 1751, Office of Lancaster County Register of Wills. Lacking further proof, undocumented gunsmith lists including Lancaster County gunmakers before 1750 must be regarded with considerable skepticism. See such lists in Sawyer and Dillin.


Lancaster in 1756. These data show that gunsmithing had reached at least modest proportions in Lancaster County by the 1750's, from which the inference may be drawn that its beginnings there occurred in the earlier years of the eighteenth century.

Once established in Lancaster County and elsewhere on the frontier, the rifle industry experienced rapid growth. Prior to the Revolution, the rifle makers already supplied this weapon in sufficient quantities to bring it into general use among the inhabitants of Pennsylvania, and the adjoining states of Maryland and Virginia. It was to this region that the Continental Congress turned for riflemen when armed conflict began in 1775. The following resolution was passed:

Resolved, That six companies of expert riflemen [sic], be immediately raised in Pennsylvania, two in Maryland, and two in Virginia; that each company consist of a captain, three lieutenants, four sergeants, four corporals, a drummer or trumpeter, and sixty-eight privates.

That each company, as soon as compleated [sic], shall march and join the army near Boston, to be there employed as light infantry, under the command of the chief Officer in that army.

A short time later Congress called for two more rifle companies from Pennsylvania, making eight Pennsylvania companies in all with a total of nearly 650 men. Lancaster exceeded its quota and raised two companies instead of one, to which Congress responded by voting to take both into the Continental service.

The existence of arms industries in Lancaster County at the time of the Revolution made that place a patriot arsenal, and a flood of orders poured into the gunshops. In the spring of 1776, the Committee of Safety in Philadelphia requested three hundred

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12 *Lancaster Journal*, July 1, 1795; Burial Records, Moravian Church of Lancaster.
13 One Lancaster County historian, writing in 1844, asserts that the first Martin Mylen erected a gun barrel boring mill in the county as early as 1719, but no authority is cited. I. D. Rupp, *History of Lancaster County* (Lancaster, Pa., 1844), pp. 74-75.
rifles from the county gunsmiths. Later the Committee authorized various officers to purchase rifles in Lancaster County in lots ranging from 40 to 160. William Henry was an important rifle maker at this time, and employees of his gun works were excused from military service by the Supreme Executive Council on condition that they would continue making arms in his employ. Henry's correspondence during the years from 1777 to 1779 reveals the constant demands made upon him for the manufacture and repair of Continental arms.

As a result of the sharp increase in the demand for weapons at the time of the Revolution, the Lancaster County gunsmiths expanded productive facilities. Thus in 1775 when the Committee of Safety in Philadelphia asked Joel Ferree of Leacock Township for patterns and an estimate of the number of guns he could supply, he at first thought in terms of fifteen or twenty per week.

Upon further consideration he decided to expand his works, and wrote as follows:

I was of opinion then to have been able to provide 15 or perhaps 20 pr. week, but as I am determined to use my endeavors to promote the Business and serve my Country in the common Cause, I am about to enlarge my works in so extensive a Manner as to turn out between 30 & 40 weekly. My Diligence in the Affair shall be as quick as possible.

The output of the Lancaster County gunshops during the Revolution was not confined to rifles, but included muskets, bayonets, steel rammer, and firelocks. From time to time Provincial funds in amounts such as £300 and £1000 were appropriated for the payment of these items. The gunsmiths were sometimes unwilling or reluctant to work on the terms offered to them. Thus

18 Ibid., X, 598, 651, 668.
19 Ibid., X, 523, XI, 380, 422-423.
20 Printed in Francis Jordan, Jr., The Life of William Henry of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1720-1786... (Lancaster, Pa., 1910), chap. 12.
22 Pennsylvania Archives, 2nd Series, I, 543.
23 Ibid., 1st Series, IV, 717-718; Colonial Records, X, 606.
24 Colonial Records, X, 520, 606.
in 1775 any who refused to make muskets and bayonets for the Continental cause were threatened with penalties such as confiscation of their tools or prohibition of their trade until they completed the arms. Then as now, contracts might give rise to controversy. In 1776 the Lancaster gunsmiths complained that their contract to supply 600 muskets, bayonets, and steel rammers did not allow them a sufficient price. They insisted that the sacrifice involved in quitting their rifle business was greater than they could well bear without some reasonable equivalent. Tangible evidence of this dissatisfaction is seen in the fact that only two hundred of the six hundred muskets were completed at the end of the contract period. While the attitude of the gunsmiths may reflect some tendency to profiteer, or at least to sell their arms to good advantage, it should be remembered that they were facing the problem of the depreciating Continental currency with its inflationary effect upon the cost of living. This, coupled with the reluctance of the authorities to advance the price of arms, and the difficulties of collecting for work completed, dampened enthusiasm for work on the government contracts.

The question naturally arises why so many muskets were made for the Revolutionary forces, in view of the marked superiority of the rifle in accuracy and destructiveness of fire. One simple answer is that muskets could be made more cheaply and quickly. Another is that the effective use of the rifle as a precision instrument required much more extensive training and experience and, on the whole, a higher mentality, than were required for the use of the musket. Furthermore, military tradition, like many other types, changes slowly. Except for the riflemen of the frontier, the colonials were not familiar with the rifle nor were they emancipated from the military thought of the European continent. There the typical foot soldier carried a bayoneted musket which he leveled and discharged in volley with his comrades with little or no attention to aim. He then proceeded to the main business of combat which was the wielding of the bayonet. For this purpose

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26 Pennsylvania Archives, 1st Series, IV, 717-718.

27 Ibid., 2nd Series, XIII, 510, 511, 519, 521, 523.
the cheap and sturdy American musket served as well as the more expensive and ornate American rifle.

The record of the American Rifle and its Lancaster County makers during the Revolution did not pass unnoticed by those later responsible for the military establishment of the United States. Toward the close of the eighteenth century, the Lancaster gunsmiths were busily at work on rifle contracts for the National Government. A visitor to the town in 1794 wrote: “The only manufactory in Lancaster is one of rifles; they have contracted to supply the continental army with these ‘mortal engines.’” But of course there were relatively few riflemen among the Federal forces at this time. Muskets remained the mainstay of Federal small arms ordnance prior to the Civil War. During the 1790’s, however, and the early nineteenth century, the Lancaster County gunsmiths made large quantities of rifles for the United States, many of which were distributed through the Indian Department to friendly Indian tribes. This picture emerges clearly from the correspondence between the gunsmiths and the Purveyor’s Office, of which the following is an example:

Purveyor’s Office
Phila., Sept. 6, 1803

Mr. Peter Gonter
Rifle Maker, Lancaster
Sir:

I want for the public use of the U. S. six rifles with Silver Star and Thumbpieces and 42 common rifles to be delivered here as quick as possible. A vessel sails for Georgia on Saturday or Sunday in which I wish to send them. . . . There is another order for 50 rifles which I wish to procure from our Penna. makers. Will you speak to Mr. Dickert, Mr. Getz and others and let me know what terms you and they will supply them on, and if you

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28 William Priest, *Travels in the United States of America Commencing in the Year 1793 and Ending in 1797* (London, 1802), p. 59. This writer either defined manufacturing in a very arbitrary way, or else he erred seriously in stating that the only manufactory in Lancaster at that time was one of rifles.


can send the 50 immediately. They are of the common kind, not silvered.

I am, Sir,
Tench Coxe

A few weeks later Coxe again wrote to Gonter about this or another order: "I will thank you to deliver to the order of Genl. William Irvine the cases of rifles for the Chicasau Indian Factory." Thus many American Indians became the happy and proud possessors of American Rifles which originated in Lancaster County.

Some of the rifle contracts were much larger than any so far mentioned. On December 9, 1807, Henry DeHuff, Peter Gonter, and Jacob Dickert contracted jointly to supply 600 rifles at ten dollars each within six months. Large government contracts like this were not made with the thought that all of the rifles would be manufactured in the shops of the contractors themselves. It was expected that notice of the contract would be given to the other gunsmiths of the locality who would thus have an opportunity to help supply the arms. Failure on the part of the contractors to give sufficient notice to their fellow craftsmen was regarded by the latter as an unethical procedure and grounds for complaint to the Purveyor's Office. This method of contracting relieved the Government from the necessity of tedious contract negotiations with many individual craftsmen. In 1811 there were two combinations of Lancaster County gunsmiths which did most of the contracting. One was made up of Abraham Henry, John Guest, and Peter Brong, and the other of Jacob Dickert, Henry DeHuff, and Peter Gonter. In addition to rifles, the Lancaster gunsmiths manufactured many hundreds of pistols for the United States in this period, most, if not all, of which were intended as cavalry ordnance. Thus on December 9, 1807, Abraham Henry contracted to supply two hundred rifles at ten dollars each and two hundred pairs of pistols at ten dollars a pair.

Toward the close of the decade of the 1790's another lucrative line of business opened for the Lancaster County gunsmiths. In

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31 Ibid., II, 88.
32 Ibid., II, 89.
33 Ibid., I, 14.
34 Ibid., II, chap. 6.
35 Ibid., I, 30.
the atmosphere of tension created by the bitter French reaction to the Jay Treaty, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania embarked upon a feverish preparedness program which called for twenty thousand muskets, of which ten thousand were to be of domestic manufacture. Acting on behalf of the Commonwealth, the governor entered into contracts with various gunsmiths, including John Fondersmith, Jacob Dickert, Matthew Llewellyn, Henry DeHuff, Peter Brong, and other Lancaster County craftsmen. Manufacturing specifications were written into the contracts which stated that the arms were to be:

... of the fashion or pattern of the French Charleville Musquet, and of the dimensions following, to wit:—the length of each barrel to be three feet eight inches, and to receive a ball of the size of eighteen to the pound; each barrel to undergo the same degree of proof as is now in use for the proof on those made for the service of the United States, and be stamped or marked near the breech with the letters C P. the locks to be upon the best construction, double bridled on a flat plate and marked with the letters aforesaid; the mounting Iron with bands and swivels, and spring to each band; the ramrods to be of well tempered steel; the bayonets to be fifteen inches in the blade made of steel well tempered and polished; the stock to be of well seasoned walnut; the length of the butt of the Musquet to be fifteen and a half inches from the breech end of the barrel to the heel plate; the side pins, the breech pins and trigger to be case hardened; the weight of the Musquet and Bayonet thus completed not to exceed eleven pounds...

The 1797 decision to arm the Pennsylvania militia with muskets indicates that the factors militating against the general introduction of the rifle as a military weapon were operating strongly even in the state where rifles were in general use in the inland districts. These musket contracts were of various sizes, ranging from a...
hundred to two thousand stands. Considering the amount of hand labor required to manufacture a gun in those days, these were large orders which tremendously stimulated the arms industry. Abraham Henry and Henry Graeff jointly had one of the largest contracts. They agreed to supply two thousand stands of arms at $13.33 per stand, the total price thus exceeding $26,000. Their contract is of special interest because, agreeable to the order of the governor, sixty rifles at $16.00 each were included as part of the two thousand stands. This provides an idea of the relative cost of muskets and rifles at the time, and shows that at least a few of the more efficient weapons found their way into the state arsenals.

As was the case with the orders for Federal arms, the profits of these state contracts flowed out beyond the actual circle of the contractors to stimulate the gun industry generally. Sub-contracts were let for parts such as locks and barrels. How the profit sharing process worked is also illustrated in the case of Peter Brong who in April, 1801, contracted with Governor McKean to supply five hundred muskets at $11.00 per stand. Later he advertised that he would pay twenty shillings cash for every musket-barrel which was proven and of the size directed by law, nineteen shillings cash for each good musket-lock, and the highest price for walnut plank stockwood. He also offered good encouragement to lock-filers. Thus it is clear that shops like Brong's not only manufactured parts, but also assembled arms from parts manufactured by other gunsmiths. The $11.00 per stand paid for Brong's muskets represents a sharp price decline from the $13.33 per stand paid under the earlier contracts and presumably reflects the passing of the French crisis.

During the early decades of the nineteenth century, the gun industry continued to play a prominent part in the economic life of Lancaster County. Sixteen gunshops manufactured about a thousand stands in 1810. Rifle making was the chief branch of the industry at the time, accounting for about eighty per cent of the

*Ibid., XII.*  
*Governor Thomas McKean Papers, 1799-1808, XIII, Public Records, Harrisburg, Pa.*  
*Lancaster Intelligencer, and Weekly Advertiser*, September 23, 1801.
arms produced.\textsuperscript{43} While an occasional gunshop was located outside of Lancaster, the craft was concentrated in the town where gunsmiths and gunlocksmiths numbered twenty-four in 1814.\textsuperscript{44} The period from 1810 to 1840 was one of vast expansion for the gun industry with annual production figures leaping from about a thousand to more than 4,500 stands.\textsuperscript{45} Among the factors which stimulated the market for weapons during these decades were the War of 1812 and its nationalistic aftermath, the Westward Movement, the Indian trade, and the continuation of the United States policy of distributing arms to friendly Indians.

One of the most famous of the later Lancaster County gunmakers was Henry E. Leman, who began his career near the close of the period of this study. His operations were conducted on a large scale and represent the factory stage of production in the local arms industry. The extent and variety of these operations are revealed in his 1839 advertisement that he had several hundred rifles in stock, also double and single barrel shotguns, Armstrong duelling pistols, and rifle barrels.\textsuperscript{46} A few years later he advertised Northwest Indian guns which were flintlock smoothbores, walnut or maple stocked, with relatively short barrels.\textsuperscript{47} Another indication of the large production of Leman's gun works is his purchase of walnut gunstock plank in lots of from one to two thousand feet.\textsuperscript{48} Leman rifles were sold far and wide. Unique testimony to the esteem in which they were held by the plains Indians is given by Frank R. Diffenderfer in the following passage:

Between 1857 and 1870 I was engaged in trade . . . making trips across the plains from Missouri to Mexico and also from the Gulf of Mexico into Arizona. During that time it was my fortune to meet many tribes of Indians, Apaches, Navajos, Comanches, Cheyennes, Kaws

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  \item \textsuperscript{43}Tench Coxe, \textit{A Statement of the Arts and Manufactures of the United States for the Year 1810} (Philadelphia, 1814), p. 51.
  \item \textsuperscript{44}Lancaster Borough, Return of Assessment, 1814, Lancaster County Archives.
  \item \textsuperscript{45}Compendium of the Enumeration of the Inhabitants and Statistics of the United States, As Obtained at the Department of State, from the Returns of the Sixth Census (Washington, 1841), p. 135.
  \item \textsuperscript{46}Lancaster Intelligencer, June 11, 1839.
  \item \textsuperscript{48}Lancaster, \textit{Intelligencer and Journal}, March 1, 1842.
\end{itemize}
HENRY E. LEMAN OF LANCASTER
Prominent nineteenth century gunsmith and manufacturer of the celebrated Leman rifles.
and Arapahoes, and most of them carried guns, as well as bows and arrows. When occasion offered, I took pains to look at the names of the makers, stamped on the weapons. By far the largest number were Leman rifles, and inquiry always revealed the preference of these Indians for the Lancaster made guns over all others. It was possible to barter with the Indians for almost any of their possessions, but never for a Leman rifle.

Henry E. Leman's rifles were not the first Lancaster-made weapons to attain fame and wide distribution. By the close of the eighteenth century the armorers of the locality already had a long and distinguished record of fine rifle craftsmanship second to none in the United States. Their arms were highly esteemed on the frontier and were sent to every part of the country. Lancaster County rifle makers of the early nineteenth century, therefore, fell heir to a famous tradition, and they did it justice.

The early gunsmiths manufactured and assembled all parts of the arms in their own shops, but a measure of specialization is apparent with the passage of time. Some craftsmen concentrated upon gunlocks or firing mechanisms. Thus Daniel Sweitzer and Company announced the beginning of a gunlock manufactory in Lancaster in 1808, where they made and repaired: "Musket locks, Rifle do. with single and double rollers, also plain Gun and Pistol locks, in the best and neatest manner, and on reasonable terms." Other gunsmiths operated boring mills and specialized on barrel work. Nearby York County provides an interesting example of barrel specialization dating from the latter part of the eighteenth century. The boring mill in question served a dozen gunsmiths in the town of York. It was housed in a small rectangular building with water power facilities, which was located about a mile outside of the town on the turnpike leading to Baltimore.

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42 Lancaster Journal, September 2, 1808.
43 Lewis Miller, Chronicles of York, 1790-1870, 2 vols., York County Historical Society.
ional boring mill was also found in Lancaster County by the time of the Revolution. One such establishment bored 1,670 barrels in 1810. Craftsmen who made gun barrels did not necessarily confine themselves to this one line of production. Henry E. Leman, who made all kinds of arms on a large scale, also manufactured rifle barrels for the use of other craftsmen.

The small arms industry of Lancaster County grew from humble beginnings in the early eighteenth century to national importance by the time of the Revolution and thereafter supplied large quantities of weapons for public and private use. These weapons included the superb American Rifles which, distributed far and wide, made the Lancaster community famous as a center of fine gun craftsmanship. In support of the claim that the American Rifle was born in this locality, the county can offer the earliest authenticated instance of barrel rifling in southeastern Pennsylvania, evidence of an important rifle industry at the time of the Revolution, and an eighteenth century reputation as the source of the finest specimens of these guns. During the period of this study, other Lancaster County manufactures employed more men and required larger investments, but few, if any, influenced the course of American history more profoundly than did the manufacture of firearms, especially rifles.

55Lancaster Intelligencer, June 11, 1839.