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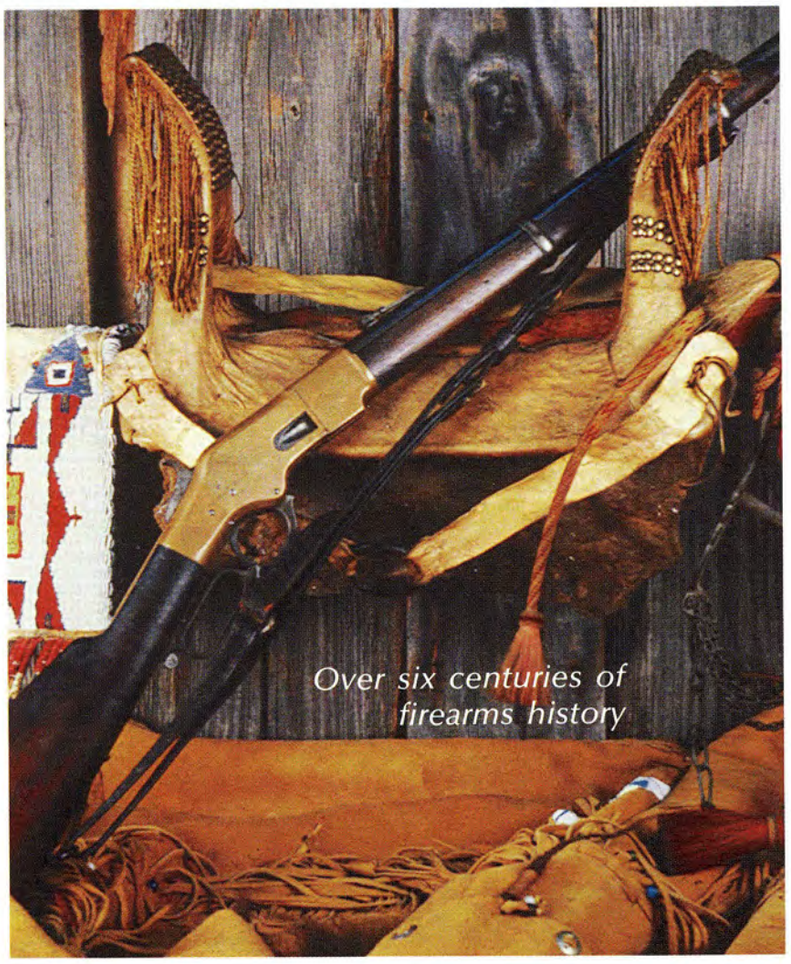
J.M. Davis Gun M

Mary Elizabeth Good

Lee T. Good

Fred H. Miller



J.M. Davis Museum Publications
Volume I
1992

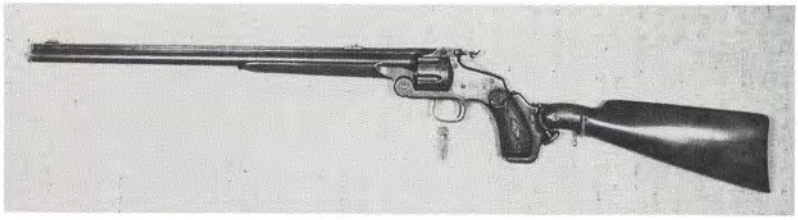
The J.M. Davis Gun Museum is located at 333 N. Lynn Riggs Blvd. in Claremore, Oklahoma. Museum hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. Closed Thanksgiving and Christmas. In addition to the displays, museum facilities include a gift shop. A research library is available which may be used with advance permission.

Cover illustration: The Winchester 1866 lever action repeating rifle was known across the Plains as the "Yellow Boy," because of its brass frame. Folks often said of this early repeating rifle, "You could load it on Sunday and shoot all week." This rifle leans on a southwestern Indian woman's saddle covered with rawhide and decorated with brass tacks.

A Charles Banks Wilson painting

J.M. Davis
1887-1973

For years, this was a typical scene in the Mason Hotel where J.M. Davis often manned the registration desk and talked to visitors who came to see his incredible collection of guns. Davis had begun displaying his firearms in the hotel lobby in 1929, and continued to add to their numbers until his death in 1973. Davis ultimately amassed in excess of 20,000 guns and gun-related items. It seemed there was a constant stream of people who came to buy, sell, trade or ask his opinion and the Davis gun collection became one of the best known in the country. Transfer of the guns from the hotel to the museum building began in 1969. The building housing the Mason Hotel, located two blocks south of the museum, has since been torn down.



A rare, long-barrelled Smith & Wesson .32 caliber pistol with a detachable shoulderstock.

For four decades, beginning in 1929, gun collectors and dealers came to the Mason Hotel to talk to J.M. Davis and see his amazing collection. Many stayed to trade into the night. Countless boys who came with their dads to gawk at the guns grew up to be gun collectors themselves.

In this case at the museum are various ignition systems, beginning with the hand cannon, which required no more than a burning stick applied to the cannon touch hole to set off the charge, and continuing through major ignition-system improvements such as the matchlock, wheellock, flintlock, percussion, breech loading percussion, pinfire, rimfire, and the centerfire cartridge used from 1858 to the present time. Other changes and advancements resulting from man's quest for more effective firearms are evident in the museum collections.

A childhood reward inspired a significant collection that focuses on over six centuries of history. The story began when John Monroe Davis was seven years old. He had taken his medicine like a good boy and, as a reward, his father gave him a muzzle-loading shotgun that cost $1.50, which was not a miserly sum in 1894. This was the beginning of the incredible collection of some 20,000 firearms and associated gun items now housed at the J.M. Davis Gun Museum in Claremore, Oklahoma. The shotgun that started it all is prominently displayed.

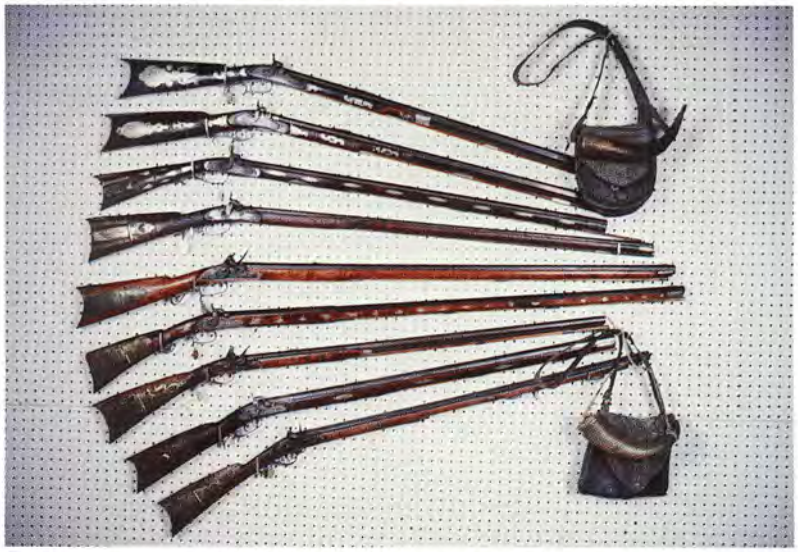
Davis was born on June 27, 1887, of Danish and Irish parents who lived on a plantation near Calion in Union County, Arkansas. As a young man, he made wise investments in timberland and in 1916, traded 2,000 acres of Arkansas property for the Mason Hotel in Claremore. A year later, he moved into the hotel and took over its management.

Davis continued to add to his collection one gun at a time. In 1929, when he had acquired a total of 99 firearms, he decided to display them on the walls of the Mason Hotel lobby. Because he was interested in many things, his acquisitions were not limited to firearms. He began adding a multitude of historic items: knives, swords, steins, saddles, music boxes, political buttons, World War I posters, John Rogers statuary, Indian artifacts — and these were just the start. Lobby walls became crowded; the hotel ballroom was filled to capacity. Upstairs, the long hallways were lined with guns and memorabilia; seven private rooms were also filled with his finds.

In addition to firearms by prominent manufacturers, which are well-represented in his collection, Davis chose to acquire guns he considered unique. Word of his highly diversified and educational collection spread, and it wasn't long before he was internationally known as a gun expert and avid collector. It seemed there was a constant stream of people who came to buy, sell, trade or ask his opinion. Researchers sought to utilize the collection which, along with its owner, was also the subject of numerous magazine articles. The Davis gun collection became one of the best known in the country.

In 1965, looking to the future, Davis transferred ownership of his massive collection to the J.M. Davis Foundation Inc. In turn, the Foundation leased the collection to the State of Oklahoma at the cost of $1.00 for 99 years, with option to renew.

The first section of the museum opened to an enthusiastic public on the 82nd birthday of J.M. Davis, June 27, 1969. Since that time, the

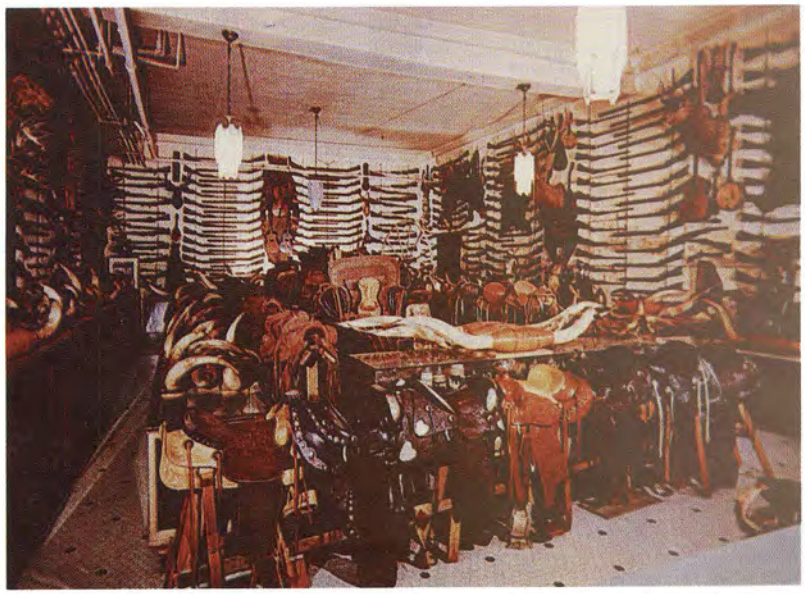


During the course of the 18th century, the American rifle became more and more elaborately decorated and rifle-building entered into what has been termed the "Golden Age." Fine-quality engraving on brass or silver gun furniture was popular, and beautiful examples have survived. A number of fine rifles and two old hunting pouches are exhibited in this case.

entire structure, which comprises almost an acre under roof, has been completed.

There is over a mile of gun displays alone. The firearms span more than six centuries, starting with a Chinese hand cannon dating to 1350, and continuing through representative periods to modern times.

The first true ignition system was the matchlock. In its earliest form, the matchlock was used on the guns of Columbus, DeSoto, Cortez, and others who first explored the North American continent.



J.M. Davis originally displayed his collections at the Mason Hotel in Claremore.

It wasn't long before Davis' many acquisitions filled the hotel ballroom.

An eagle is engraved in the silver inlay on the cheekpiece of this muzzle-loading rifle.

A rare Walker pistol made by Samuel Colt. It's a handful, weighing four pounds, nine ounces.

Next to be developed was the wheellock, about 25 years after Columbus discovered the New World. The wheellock-ignition system works on the same order as a cigarette lighter. Pulling the trigger sets a wheel in motion, sending a shower of sparks into a primed "pan," igniting the main charge of gunpowder.

This is the lock section of a massive gun in the Davis collection which has a dual ignition system — a matchlock paired with a wheellock. The gun was made by the Klug family in Augsburg, Germany, about 1570.

The Klug rifle weighs 21 pounds and requires a forked rest to steady its aim.

One massive gun in the Davis collection has a dual-ignition system — a matchlock paired with a wheellock. A member of the Klug family made this rifle about 1570 in Augsburg, Germany. The matchlock ignition on the Klug gun is a sear-type, an improved version which first came into use about 1475. Rather than employing only a burning fuse held by a S-shaped serpentine to ignite the powder, the sear-type utilized a long, jointed sear which contained match cord in a modified serpentine. When fired, the glowing match cord was lowered into the flashpan to ignite the powder charge. Far too often the fire went out, leaving the gun-bearer vulnerable.

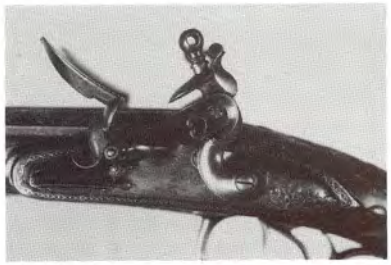
The Klug rifle weighs 21 pounds and requires a forked rest to steady its aim. The barrel has a bore which is twist-rifled with 16 grooves. Ammunition is a lead ball three-quarters of an inch in diameter, plus an appropriate quantity of black gunpowder.

A considerable section of the museum is devoted to Davis' sizeable

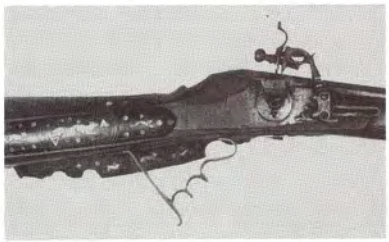
An early crossbow, inlaid with engraved ivory, mother-of-pearl and bone. On the fore-end of the stock, the design includes the signs of the Zodiac.

The engraved brass toe plate on a rifle made by M. Fordney, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, prior to 1846.

A beautifully engraved silver fish is inlaid in the cheekpiece of this half-stock percussion rifle.



Illustrations of sections of a French double-barrelled flintlock shotgun, highly ornamented with silver-wire inlays and beautiful raised carving on the stock.



A .60 caliber Jaeger wheellock rifle of the 16th century is inlaid with birds and animals made of horn and ivory, to create a hunting scene.

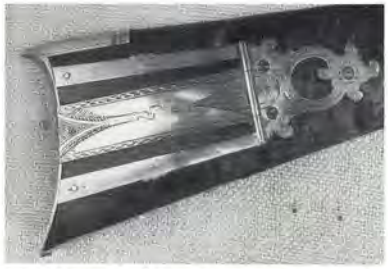
collection of the muzzle-loading firearms that were in use over some 175 years of American history. These are the guns that saw action in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and again in America's long and bitter Civil War. When Americans moved West, it was the muzzle-loading rifle that secured the land for its pioneer citizens and put meat on the table.

The American flintlock rifle was developed in the Pennsylvania hills about 1720 and carried across the Cumberland Gap to the Kentucky frontier to earn its name. It began as a long, lean fullstock rifle and evolved into the percussion fullstock whose style varied regionally.

The 1720-period prototype had a long barrel, to fully burn the inferior powder, and usually a patchbox to hold lubricated pieces of cloth or leather that were wrapped around a slightly undersized lead ball for easy loading. When fired, riflings in the barrel could spin the patched ball with greater accuracy than was usually possible with a smooth-bore gun.

The patchbox itself was made of silver or brass, in many cases ornately engraved. Other metal ornamentation included the butt plate, trigger guard, sideplate and ramrod ferrels. To protect the wood, additional inlays may surround the pins that attach the barrel to the stock.

A fine wire pattern decorates the stock of a mid-18th century French shotgun.

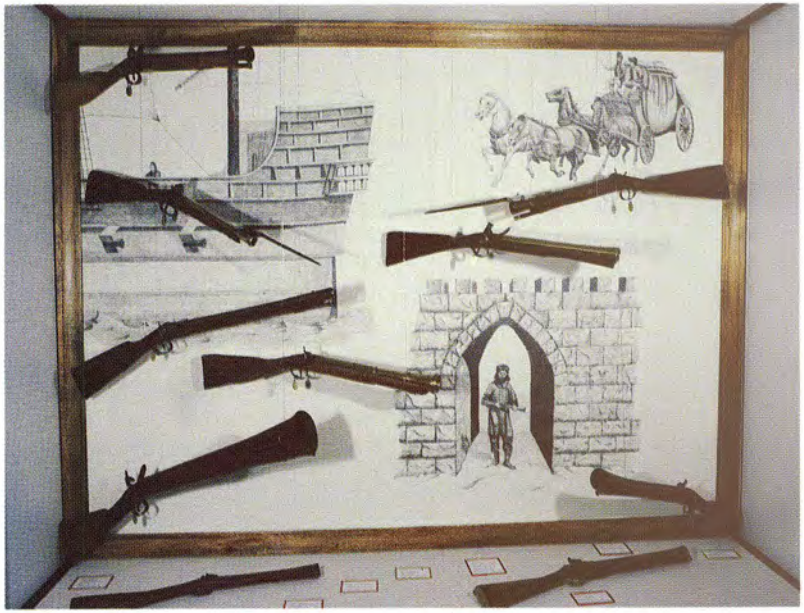


Ornate and decorative metal on the long-barrelled Kentucky rifles was not always just for "show." This long, narrow inlay on the stock is a patchbox that holds pieces of cloth or leather. These were wrapped around the round lead bullet for easy loading and lubrication.

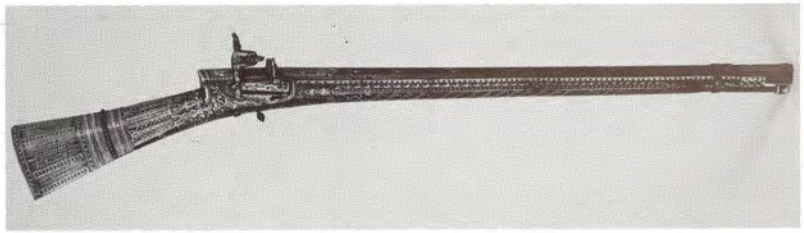
When fired, the flintlock utilizes a hammer mechanism. The flint held in the jaws of the hammer strikes a hardened-metal frizzen, showering sparks into the pan beside the touch-hole. These sparks ignite the powder charge in the barrel.

Definable rifle styles were developed by gunsmiths in different sections of New England and other eastern states. Some styles were even named for the county in which their makers lived.

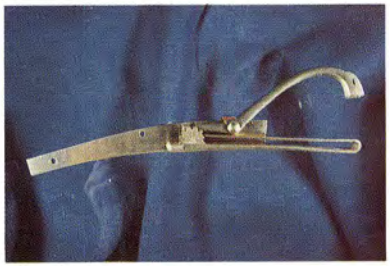
Although frequently called Kentucky rifle, or the Kentucky/Pennsylvania rifle, these guns were used throughout the frontier as men and their families went west to claim new land. The gun was often a



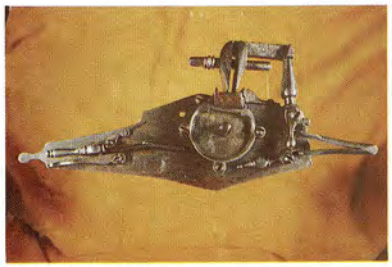
Flintlock and percussion blunderbuss guns of the 18th century are displayed at the museum with drawings depicting how they were actually used. In spite of the familiar tales of the First Thanksgiving, and drawings of pilgrims at Plymouth with such guns, at that time, there was no such thing as a blunderbuss for the pilgrims to take hunting. (Display-case illustrations by Clyde L. Good.)



This miquelet firearm is decorated with small brass pins and 50,000 pieces of natural and stained ivory which were intricately cut and laid into the wooden gunstock to form naturalistic and geometric designs. The most lavishly decorated gun in the J.M. Davis collection, the lock mechanism is a style that originated in Spain about 1600. It is inlaid with gold.



Matchlock ignition.



Wheellock ignition.

An Indian trade gun in the Davis collection has the typical cast brass serpent sideplate. Made by the London firm of Barnett, this trade gun, also called a Northwest Gun, is dated 1858. The barrel and butt have been altered, possibly to make it a handier tool for use in frontier country.

A gunsmith shop of the past has been constructed in the Davis Gun Museum. Contemporary craftsmen often show how early rifle-building tools were used.

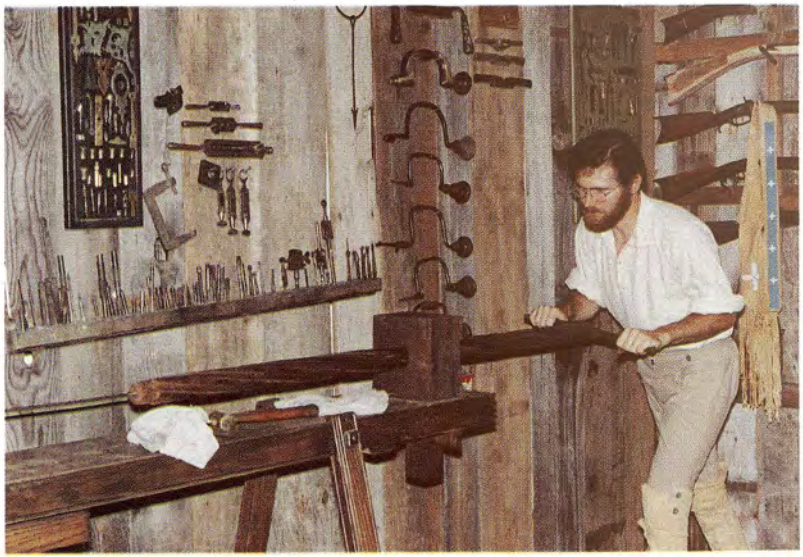
The brass, open-work patchbox of an American-made flintlock rifle. The patchbox door is marked W T M. The gunlock was made by Ketland, Walker and Adams of Birmingham, England, in 1818.

"child of necessity," altered to the needs of the times and place. In the settlements, there were backwoods gunsmith shops where much of this work was done.

The gunsmith shop at the J.M. Davis Gun Museum depicts such a setting and is sometimes used by contemporary craftsmen who demonstrate the use of early rifle-building tools.

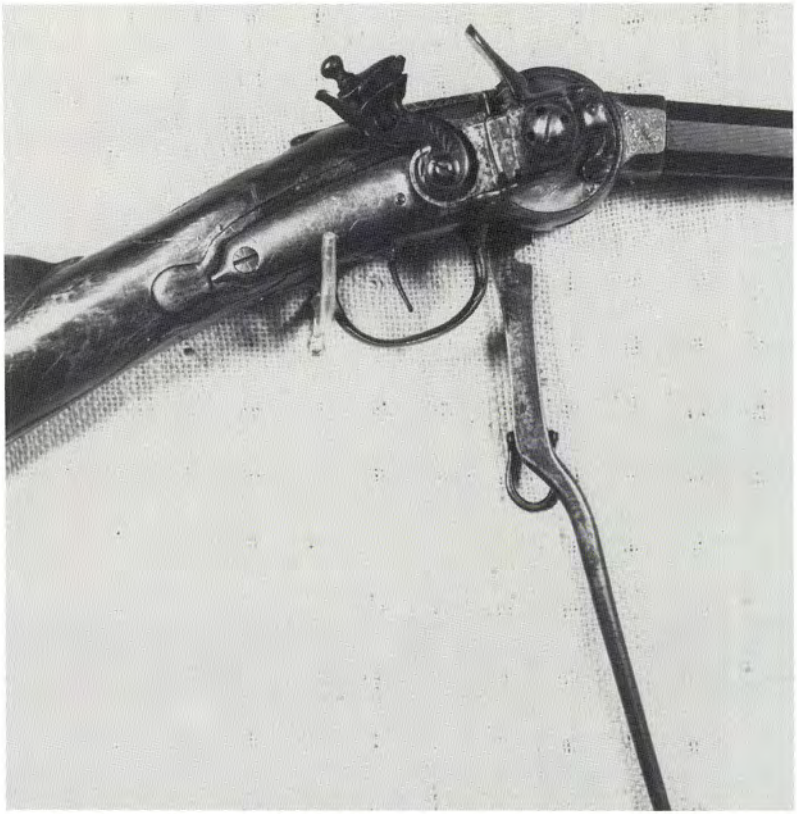
In the 1830s, the percussion-ignition system began to replace the flintlock. When the trigger is pulled, the cocked hammer falls forward and strikes the nipple, which is covered by a percussion cap containing a fulminate much like that used to fire a toy cap pistol. This ignites the powder charge in the barrel.

The southern mountain rifle was easily recognized — a plain gun with forged iron rather than brass furniture and a grease hole in the stock rather than a patchbox — unless it was made with the distinctive cigar-shaped iron patchbox.



This recreated backwoods gunsmith shop provides a place where today's riflebuilders who are skilled in the techniques of the past, can use old tools to demonstrate how the early muzzle-loading firearms were constructed. Russell Wooley of Okmulgee, Oklahoma, is rifling a barrel.

Southern mountain rifles are unique for their period in history. In style, this was a plain gun with forged iron rather than brass furniture and a grease hole in the stock rather than a patchbox — unless it was made with the distinctive cigar-shaped iron patchbox. Made in the



Another design known as the Cookson rifle was made about 1680 and is quite rare.

This latecomer to the Civil War battlefields is the .50 caliber Gallagher. Five thousand of these carbines were purchased by the U.S. Government between May 4 and June 3, 1865.

southern mountains of the United States during the 19th century, most of these guns came from backwoods shops in Tennessee, with similar rifles handcrafted in North Carolina, Virginia and Kentucky. Each of these guns exhibits the skill of the individual blacksmith or gunsmith who was its maker. Some have flowing, artistic lines; others are simply sturdy, to withstand hard use.

This 19th century southern mountain rifle in the J.M. Davis collection is typical of those handcrafted in the backwoods gunsmith shops of Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia and Kentucky. A relatively plain gun, the distinctive cigar-shaped patch box and other hardware on this rifle are of hand-forged iron.

By the 1840s, the half-stock rifle, so called because its stock did not extend to the muzzle, began to appear as a hunting rifle for squirrels and other small game in the now-settled eastern states.

During exploration of areas west of the Mississippi River, the Plains rifle came into use, a relatively plain gun with a shorter, heavier barrel of larger caliber. Out West, game was large, and the wind was a deciding factor on the plains. The Plains rifle was devoid of much of the decoration of its eastern forerunners because brass ornamentation could reflect the bright sunlight in the open prairies and make a lone hunter obvious to the game he sought. Rather than an elaborate brass patch box, if anything, this gun would have a small, round capbox to hold percussion caps.

Relatively few Northwest guns, the Indian trade gun with the traditional dragon sideplate of cast brass and Hudson's Bay Co.'s crest stamped in relief, have survived their hard use on the frontier. One Northwest gun in the Davis collection was made by the London firm of Barnett and is dated 1858. The barrel and butt stock have been shortened, possibly to make it a handier tool for use in frontier country.

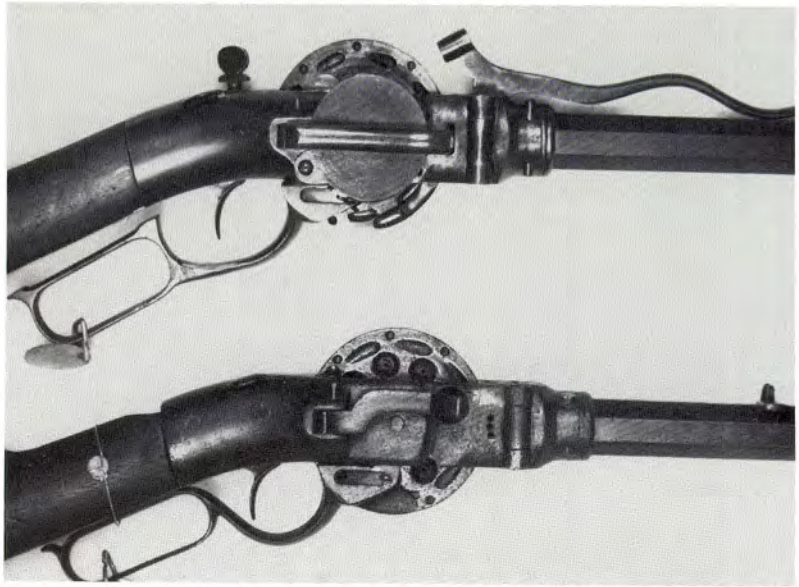
Sidearms, particularly percussion revolvers, were popular for officers and cavalry, and a number of different makes of revolvers were supplied. The two most popular were the .44 Colt and Remington revolvers.

The first dragoon, called the Walker model, was the largest

Dating in the 1861-1865 period, this is a nine-shot, .42 caliber percussion pistol which has a .16 gauge shotgun barrel below the pistol barrel. Designed by LeMat, a physician in New Orleans, these guns were actually manufactured in Paris and then shipped from France to England and into the southern states by blockade runners because LeMat had been unsuccessful in persuading the Confederacy to undertake their production. C. Girard, who had established a factory in Paris, produced the LeMat revolvers. They were also made in Belgium. Although this was not an official arm of the Confederate states, a number of southern officers purchased LeMat revolvers for their personal use. This gun acquired the nickname "grapeshot revolver."

Flintlock Kentucky pistol. The lock was made by A. Konigmacher, a lock maker in Philadelphia, 1807-1814. In comparison with the number of rifles made during the frontier period, Kentucky pistols are relatively rare.

Combination patchbox/cap box on a southern mountain rifle.



Porter repeating rifles, first patented in the U.S. by Patrick W. Porter in 1851. Both are .50 caliber revolving, nine-shot turret rifles with side-hammers. The serpentine-shaped piece on the upper rifle is the loading lever and this rifle is fired by pill ignition. The other Porter rifle is percussion. These guns were made by G.P. Foster.

handgun Colt ever made and weighed four pounds, seven and one-half ounces. The initial order, placed on January 4, 1849, was for 1,000 Walker pistols at $28.00 each. Colt was aided in the design of this pistol by a veteran Texas ranger, Captain Sam Walker.

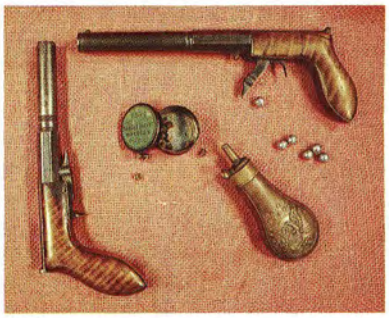
The Henry rifle (named after the man who designed its cartridge and action) was developed during the Civil War. The Henry was a lever-action repeating rifle and a competitor of the Spencer. After the war, it evolved into the Model 1866 Winchester. The steel-framed Winchester 1873 is perhaps the most popular rifle of all time, with some 720,000 being produced over a period of 50 years. This lever-action repeater in .44-40 caliber became the standard gun in the American West.

These are typically considered "Guns of the Old West." The Colt single-action .45 Army, the Colt Navy, both well-liked pistols, plus the 1866 Winchester rifle were stalwarts on the American frontier. (Only the receiver of the Winchester appears in this photograph).

Colt Patented Firearms Co. designed a simple and rugged single-action revolver which was adopted as standard military issue in 1873. In civilian form, the Colt revolver became the "Peacemaker" and, using the same cartridge as the Winchester 1873, went on to become the most popular revolver ever manufactured. When production ended at the beginning of World War II, almost 358,000 Colt Single Action Army revolvers had been produced from 1872-1940. The demand necessitated resuming production after the war and today, the Colt Single Action still is going strong.

On a larger scale, both in size and power, the Colt .45 Automatic was designed by John Browning with the intention that it be used as a military service weapon; it has been for almost a century. The version of this gun known as the Model 1911 was the principal U.S. military

Engraved revolver made by Massachusetts Arms Co., Chicopee, Massachusetts. The firing mechanism utilizes a Maynard percussion tape primer, which was patented September 22, 1845. The cylinder is rotated by hand. Grips are ivory. In the illustration, the hammer is cocked.



Bootleg Pistols. These percussion underhammer pistols are stocked in curly maple. The barrel-maker was A. Ruggles, Stamford, Connecticut, whose work can be dated 1830-1845. The pistols were sold by F. Hutchings & Co., agents in Baltimore, Maryland. Also in this illustration is a pistol powder flask, as well as percussion caps and round lead pistol balls.

The Webley Fosbery automatic revolver was standard issue to the British Royal Navy from 1912 until the end of World War II.

Among the unusual guns in the Davis collection is this knife/pistol.

This double-action, Belgian pinfire revolver has a 20-chambered cylinder. The single hammer has two spurs (firing pins). When fired, it alternates between the top and bottom barrels. Grips are ivory. This gun was manufactured after 1836. In this illustration, the hammer is cocked.

A music box from the J.M. Davis collection is pictured with two steins and a pipe.

small arm during World War I and the modified Model 1911 A1 served this purpose during World War II. The .45 caliber automatic pistol was manufactured by Colt, Remington-Rand, Union Switch and Signal, Singer, and Ithaca Gun Co. During World War II, some 2,400,000 were used by the U.S. Armed Forces.

The Colt .45 automatic pistol, 1911 model, was the principal military side-arm during World War I. Likewise, a modified Model 1911 A1 served this purpose during World War II.

The Kolibri is the smallest semi-automatic ever commercially produced; it weighs a mere two and one-half ounces. It is one of the rarer guns on display at the J.M. Davis Gun Museum.

Before cartridges were invented, repeating firearms were difficult to design. There were some very unusual types before Samuel Colt perfected the first workable revolver in 1836. For example, in the 1700s, Henry Nock, a famous London gunmaker, was called upon to make 665 seven-barrel flintlock volley guns exclusively for the British Navy. All seven barrels fired at once! The gun required two and one-half drams of black gunpowder and when fired, produced a recoil too dangerous for snipers in the crow's nest of a sailing ship. Consequently, the British Navy discontinued its use and Nock turned to the sportsman as a market. The Nock seven-barrel percussion gun in the Davis collection was designed for the goose hunter. It is beautifully stocked with tiger-striped English walnut.

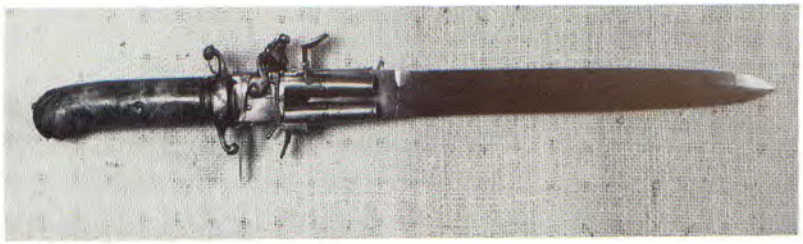
This style of seven-barrel, percussion volley gun was developed for goosehunters by Henry Nock, a London gunmaker. When the trigger is pulled, all seven barrels fire at once.

Sometimes more than firepower was sought. One unusual arm is a sword pistol — a four-barreled, flintlock gun with a sword attached — and it exhibits the near-ultimate in handcrafted steel. When the two top barrels are discharged, a latch is pulled so that the barrels swivel a

Several machine guns are exhibited at the museum.

There is over a mile of gun displays, representative of over six centuries of history.

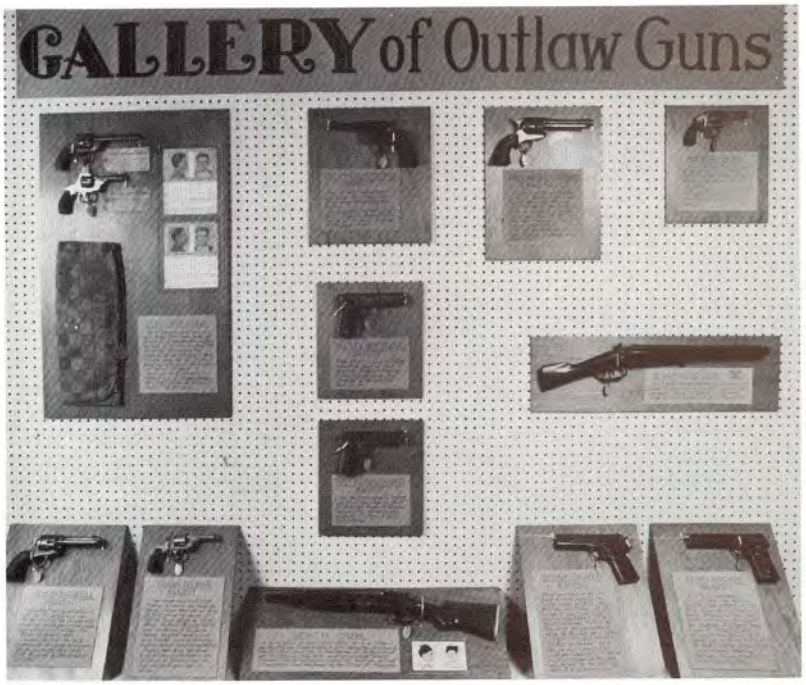
half turn, permitting the two remaining barrels to be ready for firing. Burl walnut forms the handle and gold decorates the steel.



This sword pistol in the J.M. Davis collection is a four-barrelled gun with a sword attached. The firing mechanism is flintlock.

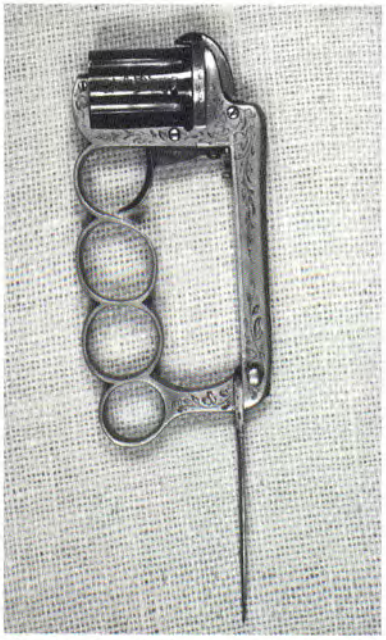
Turning to more modern firearms, the Kolibri is the smallest semi-automatic pistol ever commercially produced. It is only two and five-eights inches in overall length. Shortly after World War I, Frederich Pfanni of Austria designed and produced this tiny gun which weighs a mere two and one-half ounces. The pistol's magazine holds seven tiny centerfire cartridges.

The museum's gallery of outlaw guns fascinates many people. Starting in the 1920s, Merle Gill, a ballistics expert with the Kansas



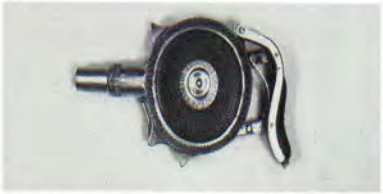
The Gallery of Outlaw Guns proves fasinating to the public. These guns and artifacts were collected, starting in the 1920s, by Merle Gill, a ballistics expert with the Kansas City police department. He displayed them in the back of his truck at state and county fairs until J.M. Davis acquired them in the early 1940s.

City, Missouri, police department, collected these guns and artifacts. He displayed them in the back of his truck at state and county fairs until J.M. Davis acquired them in the early 1940s. The collection includes Emmett Dalton's .45 Colt, Pretty Boy Floyd's .41 Colt, and Cole Younger's Schofield Smith & Wesson revolver which he gave to a man who once carried messages for members of the James and Younger gangs. In addition to outlaw guns, the exhibit includes arms of frontier marshal Bill Tilghman and Wild Bill Hickcock.



The Apache pistol comes complete with a six-shot cylinder, brass knuckles, and a folding knife. It is a pinfire revolver made in Belgium.

William (Bill) Tilghman, U.S. marshal in the Indian Territory and a famous western peace officer for 50 years, carried this .38-40 Colt revolver. Tilghman was known as "a bad man to fool with" by various outlaws, including members of the Doolin, Dalton and Jennings gangs.



"The Protector," made by the Chicago Firearms Co., is a seven-shot revolver patented August 29, 1893. It can be catagorized as a "palm pistol." The .32 caliber barrel is one-and-three-quarters-inches long. This pistol's overall length is five and one-quarter inches.

"My Friend" knuckleduster is a .25 caliber pistol produced by James Reed in Catskill, New York. The patent date is December 16, 1865.

Used during World Wars I and II, the Thompson sub-machine gun is an automatic weapon with a round drum magazine holding 50 cartridges of .45 caliber. The maker's mark reads "Colt's Patent Fire Arms Mfg. Co., Hartford, Conn."

In addition to firearms, Davis also liked statuary, collecting the work of John Rogers. Called "the Norman Rockwell of the 19th century," Rogers was an artist who sought to portray in his statuary the feelings and interests of the every-day person. In the humble medium of plaster, he was a master at capturing the customs, habits, and emotions that make up the comedies and dramas of everyday life.

He produced the first of his statuary figures in 1859, and between 1860 and 1893, he created 80 different patented groups. In his New York studio, some 25 workman turned out hundreds of plaster reproductions and by the 1870s and through the 1880s, it seemed that the families who did not have one of these homey pieces of sculpture on display simply were not conforming to the times. Even Abraham Lincoln had one — although it came as a gift to the president. The sculpture was moderately priced, averaging $14.00 a piece. Rogers' statuary became a nationwide vogue, and was seen in virtually every art and book-store window. The appearance of a new group was a major event covered by reporters from the nation's newspapers.

Of some subjects, a hundred copies were cast and sold; of others, thousands were sold. In the 30 years of Rogers' fame, the self-taught artist sold over a million dollars worth of sculpture, which was a lot of money for art work in those days.

There are some 1,200 steins in the J.M. Davis Gun Museum collection; some are rare examples. Davis collected steins of glass, pewter, porcelain and ceramic, dating from 1761.

"Checkers at the Farm," was patented by John Rogers in 1875 and 5,000 were sold — the second-best seller of his ceramic groups.

Indian Artifacts

Antique Steins

Four tall porcelain steins and three miniature ones are among the fine examples in the J. M. Davis Museum collection.

John Rogers Statuary

In this John Rogers' scene, *"Tap at the Window,"* a gentleman's marriage proposal is unexpectedly interrupted by a tap on the windowpane. In the young lady's expression it is evident the intruder is more to her liking.

"Wounded Scout – A Friend in the Swamp" is a poignant Civil War scene by John Rogers. A Union scout has been shot in the arm and is weak from loss of blood, but an escaped slave is taking him to his home in the swamp.

"Courtship in Sleepy Hollow," patented by John Rogers in 1868, depicts a scene from Washington Irving's *"Legend of Sleepy Hollow."*

A closer look at Ichabod Crane as he trys to gain the affection of Katrina Van Tassel.

"Weighing the Baby," takes place in a country store in the 1870s, where the mother has brought her baby to be weighed on the grocer's scale. Neither see the little boy tugging at the blanket, which accounts for the baby's phenomenal weight gain.

Symbols of the West — Winchesters, Colts, and the hat that was favored by all westerners — the John B. Stetson 3X beaver. Working tools of the cowboy — saddles, bridles, spurs and lariats — are on display.

Since Claremore is typical Oklahoma ranching country, the Davis collection includes a wide range of old saddles, some manufactured in the area. Displayed with the saddles are pioneer cattle brands. On record are Winthrop Rockefeller's Rolling WR brand, U.S. Senator Clem McSpadden's Tub Handle, and some which date from Indian Territory days, prior to Oklahoma Statehood. Seven-Up takes its name from a frontier card game and became a brand in 1893. IXL was the brand of an early-day rancher in the Cherokee Nation at Pryor Creek, Indian Territory. Modified letters of the alphabet were frequently used — Rolling A, Circle J, Slant JF, S Bar, Cross S, Lazy F, Rocking H, Flying M, Half Circle D, and Open A Bar are branded into wood framing the saddle collection.

The D2 brand dates from 1866, when Dave Faulker returned to the Cherokee Nation from the Civil War. A Confederate officer, he had served with the only Indian to become a general, Stand Watie. The JM Bar L dates from the time of Cherokee settlement in Indian Territory. You'll also see Hot Pepper, Mitten, Lazy Crutch, Turtle, Hat, and Running Hook. The SOS brand was derived from John McClelland's Cherokee name, Wah-Sah-See, which had been abbreviated to Sos. This later was adopted for use as the distress signal we know today.

Today, the J.M. Davis Gun Museum in Claremore remains an important stop on Old Route 66, just as the Mason Hotel was, in the days when this much-traveled highway linked the nation from Chicago, Illinois, to San Monica, California. □

A section of the Mason Hotel's registration desk and marble countertop, the keybox, and the cash register are now utilized in the reception area of the J.M. Davis Gun Museum. Complete with panels of firearms displayed above the desk, this setting brings back memories of the years when J.M. Davis' collection was still housed in the old hotel.

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