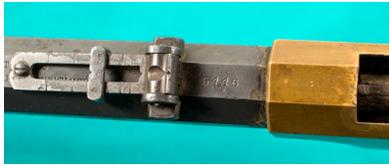


Lot #4308 Henry Rifle model 1860



HWAC#42770

The gun came on the market in 1862, and about 13,000-14,000 were manufactured.

First guns were presented to government officials, but were not as much purchased by the government as by private individuals. However, about 3/4 of the production saw Civil War service, on behalf of western volunteer regiments in the Union Army, and particularly in battles in Carolina and Georgia, including Sherman's march.

It was so unusually effective that it was nicknamed the "Damned Yankee Rifle" that was theoretically loaded on a Sunday and fired all week.

There is a story of a Capt. James Wilson (Union, Co. M, 12th Kentucky Cavalry) private use of a Henry rifle in out-shooting seven guerrillas at his home in Kentucky. Apparently, the Winchester Arms Co. may have used Capt. Wilson's experience for advertising purposes. An engraved Henry rifle #5952 was later presented Capt. Wilson in 1864. Capt. Wilson was described as "an unconditional Union man, living in a strongly disloyal section of Kentucky.

This specific rifle bears serial number #544X, stamped Henry's Patent Oct. 16, 1860, manufactured by the New Haven Arms Co., New Haven, CT.

This gun is apparently the late frame brass model. The receiver and trigger guard lever are brass and butt-plate is steel.

The gun was found in the 1970's by Lucien Ruby (my late husband), in the attic of his aunt, Louise Wilson Ruby Cummings (1888-1990) of Madisonville, KY. It had some coal soot on it, which was wiped off. The magazine spring is apparently gone. We do not believe any modern cleaning, repairs or changes were made to it.

We didn't find any connection of Louise to the famous James Wilson. When the gun was located in her house, Louise was 90 and did not know anything about the gun or remember much about her family. The Wilson family may have supported both the Union and Confederate sides, but we cannot find a record of their

military attachments or service. The family had been in KY since at least the early 1800's.

Louise's first husband was Turner Ruby, a member of a family that had been in KY since at least the early 1800's as well. Her husband's family (also my late husband's family) had actually lived at the property since the 1880's and in the house in which the gun was located since the late 1890's. The original family home owner owned a general store, so probably traded guns.

Brigadier General James Murrell Shakelford, a famous Civil War figure who commanded the 25th and other Kentucky regiments, was in my husband's family. I also located a letter to a George Simons in Madisonville, KY, a member of Camels Company, 25th KY regiments, but I can't attach him to the family. I do not know if their regiments used Henry rifles.

Condition: this Henry rifle has a steel shotgun butt-plate. It looks to be a replacement of the period. It is not known if this is an original butt-plate or replacement but fits the gun extremely well. The bore is extremely good condition with 6 lands and grooves. There is some pitting on the barrel as the gun was found with soot on it. Original bluing is on the barrel. The loading spring is missing however the follower is still with the gun. The action works well. The lever keeper is missing on the butt-stock and rear of the trigger guard. Overall this is a very nice Henry rifle that can use some further research as it is believed this gun was from the same unit as Capt. James Wilson. It is known that after Capt. Wilson's exploits the Governor of Kentucky armed the Kentucky militia with Henry rifles of which this may be one.

This gun comes with a brief history of the Ruby family.

No sales to California, New Jersey, or Hawaii.

Check local ordinances before bidding.

This gun is an antique and no attempt has been made to fire this gun to confirm its mechanical integrity. Nor should this gun be fired without the examination by a qualified gunsmith. Any attempt to fire an antique gun is at the risk of the owner and not consistent with the value of the firearm.

Est. \$18,000 - \$25,000

March 2018 Gold Rush Auction