

Ada, Ohio is located in Hardin County, created in 1820 and named after a Revolutionary war hero named John Hardin. The county was created from the northern part of Logan County (created in 1817-1818) (<https://www.co.logan.oh.us/744/Historical-Information>). Both counties are part of former Greenville Treaty lands. The Hardin county seat is Kenton, is named after the frontiersman, Simon Kenton. There were other well-known gunsmiths in the area, such as Mesheck Moxley, some of whose guns share some resemblances (for unknown reasons) with the Gardner gun under discussion, especially the configuration of the fore stocks, brass buttplates and ramrod pipes, and in one instance, an uncommon triggerguard (see February 1996 edition of this newsletter, <https://www.aolrc.com/upload/files/Vol%20XVIII%20No%201%20Feb%201996.pdf>). Little is known of William McKinley Gardner, but according to Hutslar, Vol. II, p. 151, he was active c. 1883—and probably years before that date.

Select Specifications:

- Overall length: 53" (muzzle to lower end of buttplate)
- Barrel length: 38"
- Barrel width: 1"
- Caliber: .32"
- Buttstock piece: 23¼" (including pewter shim)
- Fore stock piece: 30.5" (including brass shim)
- Front of rear ramrod pipe to muzzle is 23½" from front of muzzle cap

Length of muzzle cap: 1¾"

Length of toe plate: 3¼" inches (held by 2 screws)

Sources:

Hanson, Charles E., Jr. (1978). *The Plains Rifle*. Highland Park, New Jersey: Gun Room Press.

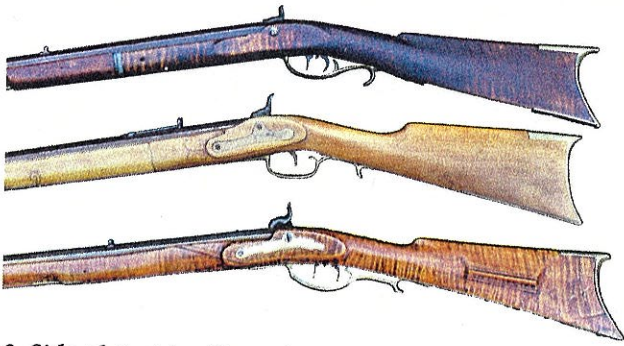
Hutslar, Donald A. (1998). *Ohio Gunsmiths and Allied Tradesmen, Volume 5*. State College, Pennsylvania: Josten's Printing (for the Association of Ohio Longrifle Collectors).

_____. (1996). *Ohio Gunsmiths and Allied Tradesmen, Volume II*. State College, Pennsylvania: Josten's Printing (for the Association of Ohio Longrifle Collectors).

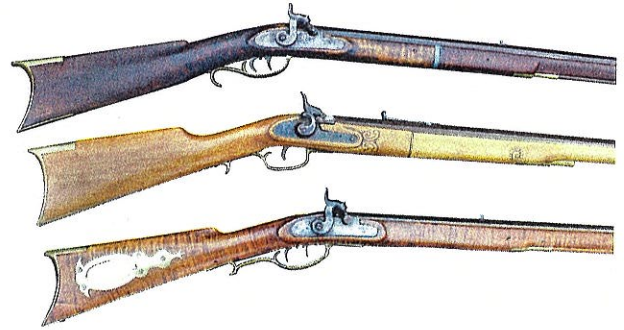
Note: Thanks to Nathan Bender, Cody, Wyoming, for supplying a photo (Fig. 6) of his full-length two-piece rifle mentioned above, and a CVA two-piece rifle he modified into a version of the sort of 19th century trade rifle built by established companies in Lancaster, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh for the Western trade. Some of these trade rifles, especially of smaller calibers, were used (and have been collected) in Ohio. The original 19th century guns, however, were typically made with one piece full-stocks, or half-stocks. Two-piece stock muzzle-loading rifles are still offered by some supplier today at reasonable prices. Also, web searches will result in more info and discussions on two-piece muzzleloaders, including a lively discussion on the American Longrifles site: <https://www.americanlongrifles.com/>



1. Full-length view of two-piece Gardener rifle.



2. Side-plate side of two-piece Gardener (top) and Henning Barbershop middle) rifles, and Truitt Bros. trade rifle (bottom) mentioned in article.



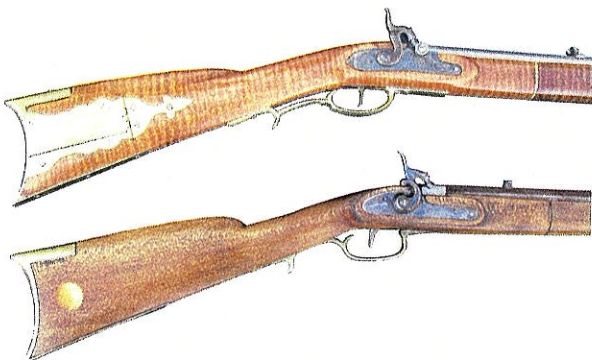
3. Lock side of three rifles pictured in figure 2.



4. The "joint" with cast pewter and sheet brass spacers in the Gardner stock.



5. Close up of two-piece buttstock. Look closely at center of wrist, which is spliced and pegged into the buttstock in a sort of dovetail.



6. A 1970s Henning's Barbershop (Woodsfield, Monroe Co.) two-piece longrifle, with added grease-hole (Bottom), and an artificially striped CVA two-piece rifle (with added triggerguard and patchbox) in 19th century trade rifle style, by Nathan Bender.