



May 02, 2014

James D Julia Inc.

Dear Sir:

The original manufacturer's data for Model 1873, serial number 18387, as extracted from the original Winchester records housed in this museum, are as follows:

Serial number application date not available

Type: Rifle

Barrel Type: Octagon

Trigger: Set

Varnish stock

Casehardened

1 of 1000

Received in warehouse on May 22, 1876

Shipped from warehouse on August 02, 1876, Order number 6528

No other information is available for this serial number.

Sincerely yours,

Jessica A. Bennett  
Records Specialist  
Cody Firearms Museum

*Letter for Model 1873 serial number 18387, page 1 of 1*

*This Factory Letter is a staff interpretation of handwritten, abbreviated records. Some errors may occur in transcription.*

*This letter makes no representations concerning the authenticity, value, or ownership history of the firearm to which it pertains. It should be noted that some replicas and reproductions bear serial numbers identical to the original firearms.*

# man at ARMS

volume four, number two  
march/april 1982  
\$3.50



# THE WINCHESTER



## 1 OF 1000

by R. L. Wilson

RESEARCH ON THE *WINCHESTER 1 of 1000* BOOK, funded by the James H. Woods Foundation and the Kunnican Chair of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, is now nearly completed. The results to date:

Total of rifles located:

46 1 of 1000 Model 1873

13 1 of 1000 Model 1876

4 1 of 100 Model 1873

2 1 of 100 Model 1876

Over 170 black and white photographs of most of these arms have been collected, as well as a few other pictures which are relevant to the subject. Among the latter are stills from the James Stewart film "Winchester 73", the Wanted posted printed up by Winchester in their search for 1 of 1000s, and pictures covering arms documented in the factory ledgers as "like 1 of 1000".

# B. HOMER

## *Revisited*

by Anthony D. Darling

Since the appearance of my "guest editorial" in *Man at Arms*<sup>1</sup> dealing with American flintlock firearms having B. Homer-signed locks, some new information has come to light. That these locks are of English origin seems to have been fairly well established through research carried on by Dr. George Shumway of York, Pennsylvania, authority on the American Rifle. His findings have been published recently in *Muzzle Blasts*.<sup>2</sup> Several locks illustrated in Dr. Shumway's articles are identical to those encountered signed "B. Homer". He has suggested that this style of lock be called the "rococo lock" as the foliate engraving is compatible with the rococo decoration of the period.

In respect to dating of these English trade locks, my attention has been called to an American militia musket<sup>3</sup> having a convex lock plate engraved in the manner above and signed *Farmer*. This is probably the well-known James Farmer, gunmaker of Birmingham,<sup>4</sup> who died in 1773, thus giving us a *terminus a quo* for manufacture of gun locks of this pattern prior to that date.

Of interest is a pair of flintlock holster pistols,<sup>5</sup> the work of Medad Hills, gunmaker of Goshen, Connecticut, having escutcheon plates dated 1771. Their convex locks, of English origin, are undecorated but one is stamped "R. Homer" on the inside.

In the collection of F. Allen Thompson of Amherst, Massachusetts, are two nearly-identical flintlock muskets<sup>6</sup> ostensibly manufactured in Providence, Rhode Island, during 1775-1776 under the supervision of Benjamin Thurber for the local

Committee of Safety. The muskets have matching English-made convex locks of the "trade" variety and are engraved on the exterior surface in the usual foliate manner; on the underside of each lockplate is the stamp "E. Homer".<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately, the Directories of Birmingham and the neighboring "Black Country" towns do not record any Homers whose Christian names begin with the Initial "R" or "E". Mr. D. A. Nie of Birmingham kindly suggested that I contact the Public Libraries Department, Metropolitan Borough of Wolverhampton, West Midlands, and from the staff's archivist, Miss E. A. Rees who worked with Bilston parish records, I was able to compile the following data.

Living on the outskirts of Bilston, in the Ettingshall area, was the gunlocksmith, *Richard Homer*, who married a Mary Kemsey in 1743. He died in 1778, leaving the bulk of his estate to his wife but bequeathing £60 to his eldest son, Kemsey, and £40 to another son, Harry, both of whom are recorded as gunlockmakers in the 1792 directories.<sup>8</sup>

It is difficult to sort out the various Homers in the Parish Register as those with the same Christian name recur. However, there were two *Edward Homers* working in Bilston as gunlockmakers during the 18th century. By coincidence, both died in 1778. Baker Homer, whom I discussed in my "guest editorial", was the son of one of these Edwards and his wife Elizabeth. Baker Homer, born in 1744, would no doubt have learned the gunlock-making trade from his father. In an effort to bind this association even further, I have

contacted a record searcher in the West Midlands so that hopefully a genealogy of the Homer families, the gunlockmakers of Bilston, can be prepared.

Leslie B. Lipshutz of Homewood, Illinois and James M. Wertenberger of Huntington, Indiana, working independently, have graciously made me aware of the existence of two *Benjamin Homers*, father and son, working in Boston, Massachusetts during the 18th century and early 19th as "merchants and shipowners". Unfortunately, any attribution to the gun trade, American or British, cannot be supported by documentation.

### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Volume three, number three, May/June, 1981, p. 17.
- <sup>2</sup> Vol. XLII, #11, July 1981, pp. 12-14; Vol. XLII, #12, August 1981, pp. 8-9; Vol. XLII, #13, September 1981, pp. 9-11, Friendship, Ind.
- <sup>3</sup> Illustrated in George C. Neumann, *The History of Weapons of the American Revolution*, N.Y., 1967, p. 96 (m.66).
- <sup>4</sup> DeWitt Bailey and Douglas A. Nie, *English Gunmakers*, London, 1978, p. 36. The authors have also recorded Jeremiah Farmer of Brecknock and Benjamin Farmer of Hereford with dates of 1792 and 1797, respectively.
- <sup>5</sup> Illustrated in George A. Stickels, "The William Smith Pistols Made by Medad Hills," *The Gun Report*, September 1979, pp. 10-13, Aledo, Ill.
- <sup>6</sup> Illustrated in William O. Achtermeier, *Rhode Island Arms Makers & Gunsmiths 1643-1883*, Providence, R.I., 1980, pp. 52-54.
- <sup>7</sup> The two E. Homer-signed locks are identical in configuration and decoration to several B. Homer locks I have encountered. The "E" is quite well defined and not the result of a broken die.
- <sup>8</sup> Bailey and Nie, *op cit.*, p. 67. □