



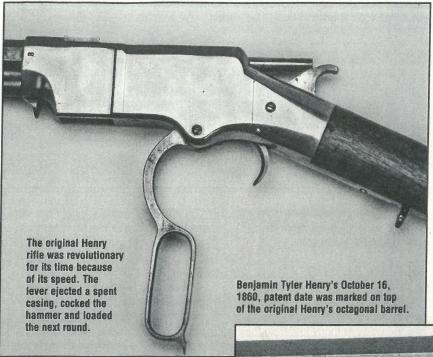
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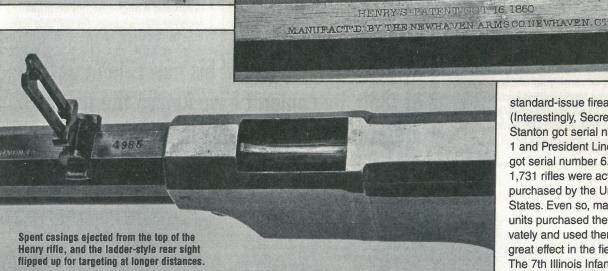
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"Henry Repeating Arms, headed up by **Anthony Imperato,** has carried on the tradition of making guns with the Henry name right here in the **United States..."** 



however. Not only were Henry rifles more expensive to purchase than their muzzleloading counterparts (\$42 each compared to \$20 for a Model 1861), but their rapid firepower caused some officials to fear that soldiers would waste ammo if they could fire it faster. A soldier was more likely to make a well-aimed shot if he could only fire the gun three times per minute, they reasoned.

Despite the fact that Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles and President Abraham Lincoln all owned Henry rifles, they were never adopted as a

standard-issue firearm. (Interestingly, Secretary Stanton got serial number 1 and President Lincoln got serial number 6.) Only 1,731 rifles were actually purchased by the United States. Even so, many units purchased them privately and used them with great effect in the field. The 7th Illinois Infantry is known to have carried Henry rifles, and they even

posed for a group photo complete with their flag and Henry rifles.

Henry rifles were also made with iron frames, but in much smaller numbers. Believed to have been made in hopes of securing a contract with the U.S. Navy, production stopped when no such contract materialized. As such, the total production of iron-framed Henry rifles

The brass frame of a Henry rifle is unmistakable. Also note the long, tubular magazine, which held 16 rimfire rounds of the .44 Henry.

## **HENRY'S LEGACY**

sits at around 300 units, making them highly collectible models today.

Henry's rifle was only in production for a brief period of time. Despite its ingenuity, the gun had some drawbacks. Chief among them was the loading mechanism, which had an external sleeve that rotated out at the muzzle to allow rounds to enter the magazine tube located directly

under the barrel. The brass follower worked its way from the muzzle toward the receiver with each round fired, which meant that a poorly placed hand could prevent the gun from cycling. A lack of a handguard—because of the follower—also meant that the shooter could burn their hand on the barrel when the gun was fired rapidly.

By 1866, Henry rifle production came to an end with only 14,000 having been produced. The gun didn't disappear entirely, though. A similar rifle featuring a handguard and loading gate designed by Nelson King entered the market that same year under a new name—the Winchester Model 1866.

It would be Winchester's Model 1866 that paved the way for the most iconic lever-action rifles of all time.

Here you can see the top of the Winchester Model 1866's barrel.
The markings included Nelson King's March 1866 patent date.

WINCHESTER'S REPEATING ARMS. NEW HAVEN. COUN. U.S.A.

— KING'S IMPROVEMENT PATENTED MARCH 29.1866 OCTOBER 16.1860.—

The Winchester Model 1873 is probably one of the most recognizable long guns around the world.

## MODERN BUILDS

One hundred and thirty years would pass before the Henry name was resurrected. Henry Repeating Arms, headed up by Anthony Imperato, has carried on the tradition of making guns with the Henry name right here in the United States, with factories in New Jersey and Wisconsin.

Almost 150 years after the last original Henry rifle was made, Imperato's company reintroduced the iconic rifle, calling its model the Original Henry. The gun is a true piece of craftsmanship, featuring an octagonal barrel, a 13-round magazine, a fancy-grade American walnut stock, a blade front sight, a classic folding ladder rear sight, a traditional half-cock safety hammer notch and a bright, hardened brass receiver that features the same tensile strength as steel, designed for decades

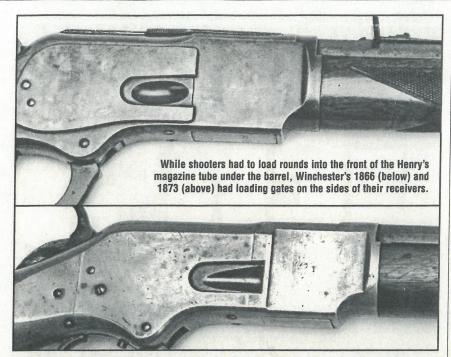
"When Henry patented his new rifle in October of 1860, he couldn't have known the ripple effect that his gun would have."

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of shooting enjoyment. The rifle does not feature any modernized manual safeties.

The only real difference between the original guns and today's production is that the originals are chambered in .44 Henry, a long-since obsolete rimfire cartridge, and the new guns are chambered for the centerfire .44-40 Winchester. The frame is slightly longer to accommodate this chambering.

Original Henry rifles from the 1860s have become highly collectible. Reasons for this include their limited production run, their historic influence on Winchester's rifles and design, and the romantic aura surrounding the gun thanks to Hollywood. For these reasons and more, collectors clamor to get their hands on originals, but not everyone can afford the five- to-six-figure

price tags they can command, making Henry Repeating Arms' Original Henry a great cost-effective alternative. The company also offers Deluxe Engraved models as well. The design featured on the modern version is styled after the extensive scroll engraving found on an original Henry rifle, serial number 18, made in 1862.

For those who want an affordable alternative to the ultra-rare iron-framed rifles, Henry Repeating Arms also offers its own version made of beautiful color-casehardened steel for added durability and the same high-quality craftsmanship and attention to detail that accompanies the brass version.

The finishing touch on the new Henry rifles pays homage to Benjamin Tyler Henry. His initials, BTH, appear at the beginning of each serial number on every Original Henry made by Henry Repeating Arms.

In the end, it's easy to see why people collect original Henry rifles. However, after handling one of the new Original Henry rifles, it's also easy to see why people have begun collecting those as well. The motto for Henry Repeating Arms is "Made in America, or Not Made at All" and I'm sure Benjamin Tyler Henry would be proud of that, too. For more information, visit henryrifles. com or call 201-858-4400. ●

