



A Legacy in Arms: American Firearm Manufacture, Design, and Artistry, 1800–1900 (The Western Legacies Series)

Richard C. Rattenbury

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The history of American firearms is inseparable from the history of the United States, for firearms have played crucial roles in the nation's founding, westward expansion, and industrial, economic, and cultural development. This history unfolds in compelling words and images in *A Legacy in Arms*, a volume that draws upon the collections of the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City to trace the business and art of gun making from the early national period to the turn of the twentieth century. With more than 200 images—almost all in full color—*A Legacy in Arms* not only documents the inspiration and innovation of arms makers from individual artisans to mass producers, but also describes the development of decorative expression in the gun maker's art.

In an account both entertaining and enlightening, Richard C. Rattenbury details the development of commercial arms making, from the genesis of the Kentucky rifle to the arms of such iconic manufacturers as Colt, Remington, Smith & Wesson, Sharps, Marlin, and Winchester. Into this narrative he weaves the particulars of design evolution and the impact of mass production via the "American System." The accompanying photographs and illustrations stand as eloquent testimony to the range and richness of the gun maker's craft—and its rightful place in the story of American industry and culture.

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