

The Parker Gun: Its History and Evolution

268,000 Plus Guns and Almost 80 Years of Firearms Manufacture

Louis C. Parker, III

CHARLES PARKER, HIS FAMILY, BUSINESS VENTURES, AND ASSOCIATES

Mention the name “Parker,” and most gun enthusiasts think of exemplary quality double-barreled American shotguns. Yet, if you asked Charles Parker, my great-great grandfather (Figure 1), what he expected to be remembered for, he might have given a different answer. Few people today realize that he was a manufacturer of hardware, house wares, heavy machinery, a major financier, Meriden, Connecticut’s largest landowner, its first mayor, and a philanthropist. By 1900, his five factories shown in Figure 2, including the Parker Brothers Gun Works (Figure 2, bottom left), and his Meriden Curtain Fixture Co., which is not illustrated, had 1,500 workers and generated more than \$2,000,000 in annual revenue.¹ During his lifetime, Parker Brothers shotgun sales annual revenue never exceeded ten percent (10%) of that amount, and no more than 200 workers in any one year are reported to have been engaged in the production of the Parker shotgun²—America’s first commercially successful, longest produced, side-by-side, drop-down barrels shotguns.

Charles Parker, born January 1, 1809, was a sixth generation descendent of William Parker, one of Connecticut’s original English colonists. In 1636, William Parker, along with 120 others led by Thomas Hooker, migrated from



Figure 1. Charles Parker, circa 1860.

Cambridge, Massachusetts, through absolute wilderness to settle in the Hartford area. Charles’s father, Stephen Parker, fought in the Revolutionary War serving three militia enlistments between May of 1777 and December of 1780. Twice married, he fathered twelve children. Most died in child-



hood.³ Charles had two brothers. His older brother John, born in 1805, was an ordained Methodist minister, and his younger brother Edmund, was born in 1811. Starting in 1843, both John and Edmund invested in a number of Charles’s businesses and held management positions in several of them.

Charles was hired out to live and work with a neighboring family at age nine. This was a common practice at that time for poor families with more hands than were needed for the family’s labor. At age eighteen, Charles began working in various metal casting operations. In 1831, Charles Parker married Abi Lewis Eddy. Their marriage lasted forty-nine years until Abi’s death in 1880. They had ten children, but only Wilbur Fisk Parker (Wilbur Sr.), born in 1839; Charles Eddy Parker, born in 1842; Dexter Wright Parker, born in 1849, Cornelia Parker, born in 1836; and Annie Dryden Parker, born in 1854, lived to maturity. Wilbur Sr. was the only son to marry and have children.

In 1832, Charles started his first iron foundry making coffee mills and waffle irons. The workforce consisted of Charles and one laborer with a blind horse hitched to a sweep pole as the operations sole power source.⁴ The 1860 United States Industrial Census reported Parker’s Meriden and Yalesville, Connecticut, hardware and house wares operations employed 560 people and produced goods valued at \$543,260 per annum. By late 1864, he had four area factories employing more than 1,100 people, and his distribution network extended worldwide.⁵ By 1870, he had five Meriden area factories producing \$1,000,000 in annual revenues.⁶

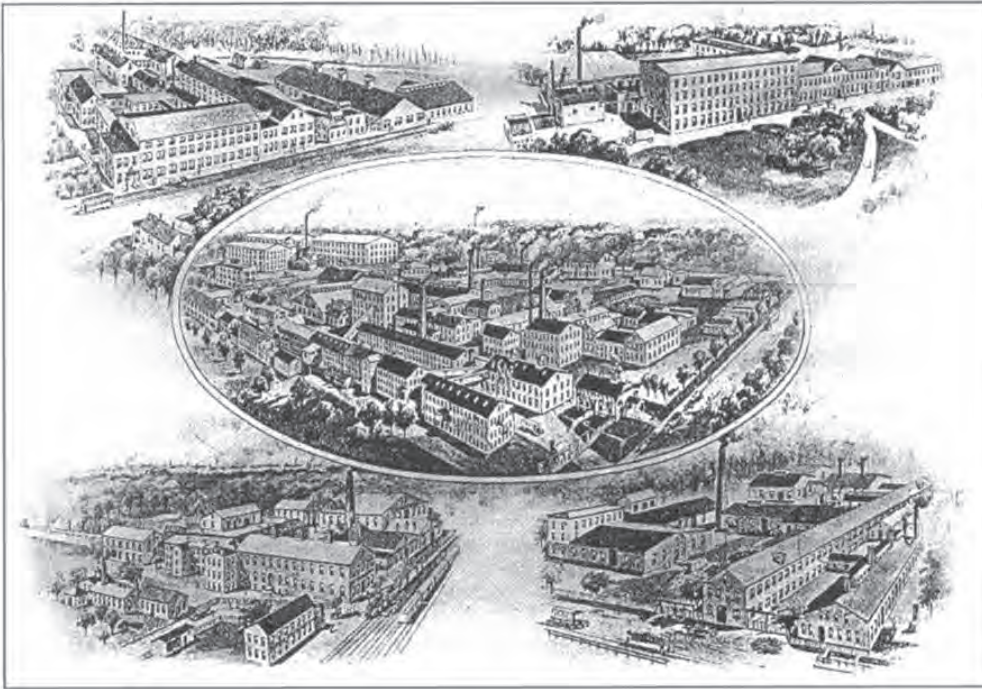


Figure 2. The Charles Parker factories, circa 1919. Top left: Parker Clock Company; top right: Parker Piano Stool Company; center: The Union Works; bottom left: Parker Brothers Gun Works; bottom right: East Meriden Spoon Works.

Even after acquiring considerable wealth, Charles continued to work up to fifteen hours a day, spending most evenings doing correspondence, reviewing performance, and formulating goals and strategies for his manufacturing operations and numerous investments. He slept only four to five hours each evening. The grueling work scheduled must have agreed with Charles Parker as he retained his mental faculties until a few hours before his death at age ninety-three on January 31, 1902.⁷

A Century of Meriden, part 2, at page 314, published in 1906, described Charles Parker as “a man who relied entirely on his own judgment, possessing remarkable foresight and almost bull-dog tenacity, who was never dissuaded from his purpose.” The *Commemorative Biographical Record of New Haven County Connecticut*, J. H. Beers & Co., Chicago, 1902, page 17, said he possessed “an unusual executive ability, keen foresight and judgment, shrewd power of calculation, and knowledge of men not often possessed by a single man.” If Charles could not buy a targeted business in a new area of manufacturing he viewed as synergistic with his existing operations, he simply found the most qualified individual with the needed expertise and made him an incentive based offer to start and run the needed operation that no rational man could refuse. Charles Parker developed enduring relationships with a number of these men, including Russell Perkins, master in foundry products maker beginning in 1851; James Kenworthy, master in metal plating brought from England by Parker in 1854; and Charles Alonzo King, the superintendent of Smith & Wesson (“S&W”) who

joined Parker Brothers in 1874. Significant Meriden manufacturing operations Parker invested in and ultimately acquired included Snow, Brooks & Co., the Parker & Whipple Co., Wilcox Silver Plate Co., and Parker & Casper Co.

The Snow, Brooks & Co.’s machine works and foundry, located on Cherry Street in Meriden next to the railroad tracks, was completed in 1854, but it would be fifteen years before that operation would become known as the “Parker Brothers Gun Works” (Figure 2, bottom left). By the close of 1862, Charles and his brothers had controlling interest in the Cherry Street operation, which at that time was producing steam engines, mill gearing, machinist tools, punching presses, pumps, and other equipment,⁸ and the complex

had been renamed “Parkers’ Snow & Co.” The plural possessive of Parker was used to reflect the Parkers’ control. Charles owned the majority interest, and his brothers, John and Edmond, as well as Oliver Snow, Gamaliel Snow, Herman Snow and several others had minority interests. It was under this name that the first Parker firearms, Model 1861 Springfield rifled muskets (Figure 4, top gun), would be made in 1863 and 1864.

In December 1864, Charles Parker again renamed the Cherry Street operation. The new name was “Meriden Manufacturing Co.” and, on January 9, 1865, the operation was restructured as a joint stock company with all non-Parker interest being conveyed to Charles, John, and Edmund Parker. Charles retained controlling ownership interest. It was under this name, that Parker’s breech-loading conversion system for rifled muskets (the William H. and George W. Miller patented system), the Triplett & Scott repeating rifles and carbines, and the first Parker shotguns would be made in 1865 (Figure 4, bottom four guns).

Reportedly early in the Civil War, Charles Parker’s oldest son, Wilbur Sr., was imprisoned in Richmond at Libby Prison where he is said to have contracted tuberculosis prior to being released as part of a prisoner exchange.⁹ Giving due respect to my ancestors who fought for the South, it should also be noted that it is possible that Wilbur Sr. contacted tuberculosis while working his father’s factories. However, Wilbur’s symptoms had begun when he returned to Meriden, and worsened over the years to the point that tuberculosis was definitely debilitating Wilbur Sr. by midyear 1875, and it



Figure 3. Meriden Manufacturing Co. Workers, December 1864. Top row, second from right: Wilbur Fisk Parker Sr.—Father of the Parker shotgun; top row, far right: Edmond Parker—General Manager of Meriden Manufacturing; second row, far right: William H. Miller—Designer of the first Parker shotgun. Andrew E. Lustyik Collection.

was the cause of his death at age thirty-six on Christmas Day, 1876.¹⁰

By the close of 1862, Wilbur Sr. was serving as secretary of Charles Parker's newly formed United States Screw Co. and also working at Parkers' Snow & Co. with his uncle, Edmond Parker, the general manager, and William H. Miller and George W. Miller, to prepare the Cherry Street operation to produce Model 1861 rifled muskets. When Figure 3 was taken in December 1864, the operation had just been renamed Meriden Manufacturing Co., and its workforce was but a fraction of what it had been months before when three hundred workers had been turning out eighty to one hundred rifled muskets per day.¹¹ With a huge amount of capital invested in its gun making equipment and machinery, the operation could not be allowed to sit idle. Note the thoughtful look on Wilbur Sr.'s face—suffice it to say posing for the picture was not on his mind—and Edmond Parker's exhausted expression. In 1865, Edmond stepped down as general manager due to declining health, and Charles Parker appointed Wilbur Sr. and William H. Miller co-superintendents of Meriden Manufacturing Co.

April 9, 1866, Wilbur Sr. married Elizabeth ("Lizzie") Canfield, the lovely daughter of Jared H. Canfield, who had

built the first vulcanized rubber plant in France in 1853. Before returning to Meriden early 1865, Lizzie and her father had been friends of Emperor Louis Napoleon III and Empresses Eugenie. Lizzie had been especially fond of their young son, the Prince Imperial, Eugene Louis Joseph Napoleon, who had been born in 1856 and was also called "Louis,"¹² and that is how "Louis," the French spelling, rather than "Lewis," the English spelling came to be a Parker family surname. Educated in France and schooled in all the social graces, Lizzie was also both a talented painter and an active outdoorswoman. The January 16, 1875 *Meriden Daily Republican*, in reporting on the favorite winter sport of Meriden's wealthier citizens, racing matched pairs of trotter horse teams on Colony Street, noted that Mrs. Wilbur F. Parker, Sr., "was in the heat of the fray, as usual." So, I refer to my great grandmother as the French speaking Yankee Scarlet O'Hara. Lizzie and Wilbur Sr. had two children, Louis Canfield Parker, Sr., born in 1870 and Wilbur Fisk Parker, Jr., born in 1872.

Charles Parker appointed Wilbur Sr. general manager of Meriden Manufacturing in 1868, prior to the Miller brothers leaving that year to form their own company, Miller Brothers

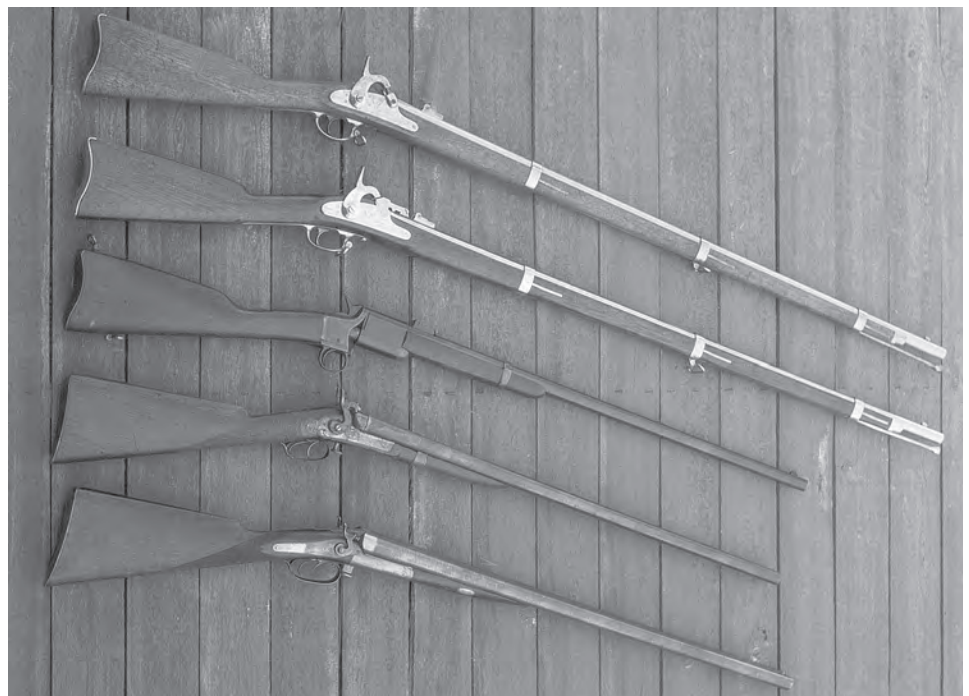


Figure 4. Early Parker guns (Pre-Parker Brothers), 1863–1868.

Cutlery Co. Wilbur Sr. held the position of general manager at Meriden Manufacturing and its 1869 successor, "Parker Brothers," until his death on December 25, 1876. It was Wilbur Sr. who had George H. Miller develop Parker's first shotgun, and Wilbur Sr. was the key figure responsible for the evolution of that gun into Parker Brothers first shotgun, as will shortly be explained. He was also a prolific writer, excellent shot with rifle and shotgun, hunter, ardent conservationist, inventor, and the founding owner and publisher of *The American Sportsman*, America's first regular publication devoted exclusively to hunting, fishing, shooting, and wildlife conservation.¹³ First published in October 1871 as a twice a month newspaper, the *Sportsman* became a weekly publication averaging more than thirty pages per issue. Smithsonian naturalists, noted marksmen and firearms and munitions experts were regular contributing writers. American and English sporting arms manufacturers advertised in the *Sportsman*.

Prior to Wilbur Sr.'s death, the Charles Parker Company, including Parker Brothers and all other operating units, had been a proprietorship. On March 14, 1877, it was incorporated by act of the Connecticut legislature with Charles Parker as president, Charles Eddy Parker as vice president responsible for day-to-day operations, and Dexter Wright Parker as secretary and treasurer.¹⁴

In addition to the Parker Brothers management referenced in this paper, Chapter 11 of *The Parker Story* includes vignettes of a number of other individuals and six families whose members spent their entire working lives devoted to the making of the Parker shotgun.¹⁵ Some spoke no English when they first entered the Parker Brothers Gun Works. Sons followed their fathers, and grandsons followed their fathers and grandfathers in becoming the master craftsmen and artisans who made the Parker shotgun and other products of the Charles Parker Company. They came to America from Ireland, Germany, Italy, and Russia, and their stories and that of the Parker shotgun are the story of much of New England manufacturing in the third quarter of nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century.

EARLY PARKER GUNS (PRE-PARKER BROTHERS GUNS) 1863-1868

The top gun in Figure 4 is a Parkers' Snow & Co. Model 1861 rifle musket; second from top is a Parkers' Snow & Co. rifle musket with a Miller brothers conversion system; third from top is a Triplett & Scott rifle; fourth from top is a Meriden Manufacturing shotgun; and fifth from top is a "Charles Parker Maker" shotgun.

In January of 1862, James Mulholland, superintendent of the Reading Railroad, received a federal letter order for

58,000 .58 caliber Model 1861 Springfield rifled muskets. In February the order was reduced to 25,000. In June of 1862, he signed a contract with Parkers' Snow & Co. to produce the guns. William H. Miller, with twenty years of gun manufacturing experience, was hired to superintend gun production, and his younger brother, George W., with ten years gun manufacturing experience, was hired to produce the locks. Converting the Cherry Street machine making and foundry operation into a gun works took time, and the first 5,502 rifles with "Parkers' Snow & Co." and "1863" stamped on the locks were not completed until October 31, 1863. The balance of that contract was not made by Parker and may have been assigned to Savage Revolving Firearms Co. An additional contract for 15,000 rifled muskets was signed with Parkers' Snow & Co. on September 28, 1863. All 15,000 guns were completed and are marked identical to the first Parkers' Snow & Co. rifled muskets, except that "1864" is stamped on the locks of these guns (Figure 4, top).¹⁶

As previously noted, Charles Parker renamed the "Parkers' Snow & Co." operation "Meriden Manufacturing Co." in December 1864 structuring it as a joint stock company in early January 1865. On May 23, 1865, William H. and George W. Miller received a patent for their breechblock mechanism to convert rifled muskets into breechloaders.¹⁷ Miller conversion mechanisms were applied to Model 1861 Parkers' Snow & Co. rifled muskets (Figure 4, second from top). The mechanisms are marked on the top of the breechblock, "W.H. & G.W. MILLER PATENT MAY 23, 1865, MERIDEN MFG. CO., MERIDEN, CONN." along with a serial number. The number made is believed to be substantially less than the 5,000 estimated by Harry Palmer in the May 1909 issue of *Field & Stream* at page 30. The extractor was claimed to be a unique feature of the mechanism. The December 7, 1878, *Meriden Daily Republican*, reported a decision was anticipated in a patent infringement case brought by the Miller brothers against Colonel Benton of Springfield Armory. This was really Charles Parker's lawsuit since the Miller brothers' patent had been assigned to his middle son, Charles Eddy Parker, because the Miller brothers had developed the conversion mechanism as part of their employment duties. The *1966 Hundredth Anniversary Bannerman Catalog* states that the government paid \$18,000 for rights to the mechanism's extractor. So, it is presumed that Parker prevailed in the referenced legal action.

December 6, 1864, Lewis Triplett of Columbia, Kentucky, was granted a patent witnessed by William T. Scott for an "improvement in magazine of self-loading arms."¹⁸ The patent was subsequently assigned to Charles Parker. Parkers' Snow & Co. made Triplett & Scott repeaters for the 1864 Government Trials held in November of that year, but the guns jammed when sand was thrown on the action. As a

result, there was no recommendation to purchase the repeaters. However, in January 1865, Scott received a purchase contract from the State of Kentucky. Meriden Manufacturing made 3,000 of the rifles at \$30 each and 2,000 carbines at \$22 each, in .56-50 Spencer cartridges (Figure 4, third from top). All are marked with serial numbers and “TRIPLETT & SCOTT PATENT DEC. 6, 1864” on the breech tangs. The receivers are marked “KENTUCKY” on one side and “MERIDEN MANUFG CO. MERIDEN, CONN.” on the other side. An unknown, but definitely small number, of sporting rifles were made for .44 long Henry cartridges. Three of these sporting rifles are engraved with Gustave Young style scroll and the owner’s name on the side of the receiver.¹⁹ Young’s ledger book confirms he did some work for Charles Parker.²⁰

When the Civil War ended in April 1865, New England was filled with gun factories with owners struggling to avoid defaulting on notes for money borrowed to purchase gun-making equipment. Few succeeded. Meriden Manufacturing survived because it was backed by Charles Parker and because it was able to increase its machinery and equipment production, but a firearm with staying power was needed to put its now idle gun-making equipment to work. Some English and several American side-by-side, breech-loading shotguns appeared on the market, but all were very expensive, weak in design, and basically hand made with the further fatal flaw that they required unique cartridges, as had most breech-loading shoulder arms in the Civil War. Realizing that a reliable, breech-loading shotgun with easily re-loadable metal cartridges was needed, Wilbur Sr. championed William H. Miller’s development of both and urged his father to use Meriden Manufacturing to produce the Miller gun.

The resulting gun was Charles Parker’s first shotgun, which is now called the “T-latch” or “Double T-latch” shotgun (Figure 5, top. Note Double T-latch between hammers). The patent for the gun was issued to William H. Miller on November 13, 1866, and assigned to Meriden Manufacturing.²¹ By pushing up on the lifter located just forward of the trigger guard, the Double T-latch piece that was inset into the frame and locked into the top of frame and the top of the breech of the barrels was forced up allowing the barrels to drop. All were 12-gauge guns with “Best Gun Iron” barrels per Parker’s 1868 and 1869 gun catalog descriptions. Consistent with this description, the barrels for these guns are believed made from Parkers’ Snow surplus rifled musket

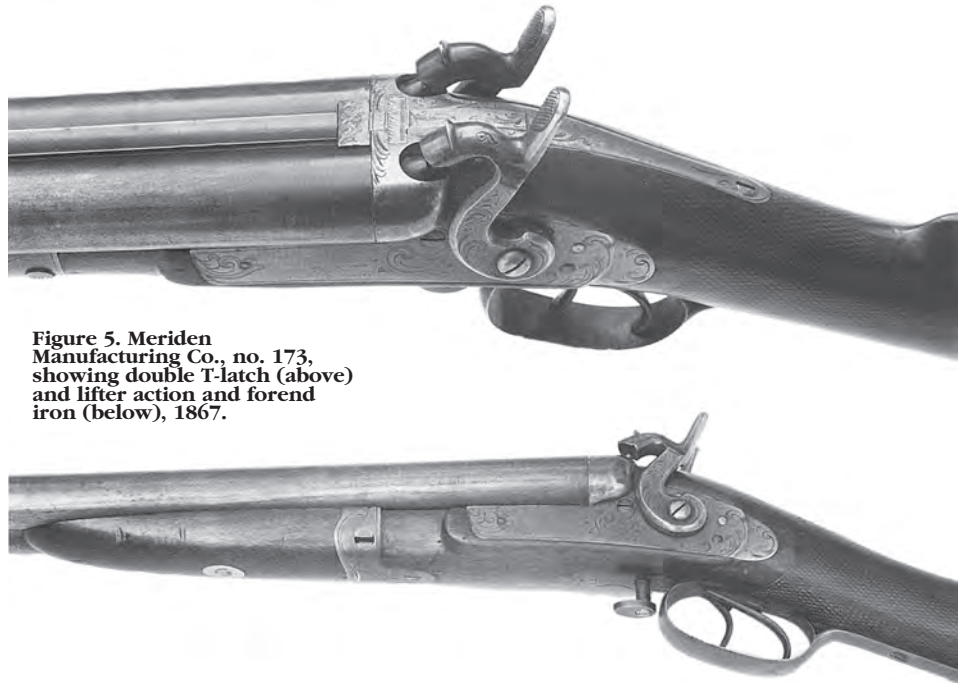


Figure 5. Meriden Manufacturing Co., no. 173, showing double T-latch (above) and lifter action and forend iron (below), 1867.

barrels. T-latch Meriden Manufacturing guns were priced at \$75 and \$50 based on finish. The highest known serial numbered gun is 724. All are marked on each side lock in two lines “MERIDEN MAN’FG CO.” and “MERIDEN, CONN.” Most also have “For” on a third line and “Charles Parker” on a fourth line. All known examples of the T-latch gun, with one exception, used a re-loadable metal cartridge designed by William H. Miller. The brass-cased cartridge had a steel base with a recessed percussion nipple made into the base. The shooter simply applied an ordinary musket percussion cap as a primer. An English patent was issued for the Miller cartridge, but no United States patent was issued.²² Introduction of the United States Cartridge Company’s Berdan cartridge with A. C. Hobbs waterproof primer in 1869 brought about the end of the Miller cartridge.

By early 1868, Wilbur Sr. and the Miller brothers realized the weaknesses of the Meriden Manufacturing T-latch shotgun, including the fact that T-latch locking piece could be cracked or broken if the user forgot to push up the lifter before the barrels were closed on the T-latch, and began to redesign the Parker’s first shotgun. Three variations were made in 1868. All eliminated the T-latch bolting mechanism and are marked “CHARLES PARKER MAKER MERIDEN CONN” on the barrel rib and are called “Charles Parker Maker” guns (Figure 4, bottom & Figure 6, front-action and back-action variations). Meriden Manufacturing Co. does not appear on these guns. All of these guns had laminated steel barrels, and priced at \$100 in the 1868 Parker shotgun catalog were the most expensive guns Parker offered that year. The highest known serial number is 24, and total production is estimated at forty guns. Comparing the guns in Figure 6

with the first two guns from the right in Figure 7), one sees that front-action and back-action Charles Parker Maker guns appear very similar to the first Parker Brothers front-action and back-action guns produced in 1869. There is also another back-action Charles Parker Maker variation that looks like Meriden Manufacturing gun without having the Tlatch.

PARKER BROTHERS HAMMER GUN VARIATIONS 1869-1882

January 29, 1869, all of Meriden Manufacturing Co.'s land, buildings, machinery, and inventory were conveyed to Charles Parker. About that time, he renamed his gun and machine works "Parker Brothers" for his sons Wilbur Sr., who was running the operation, and Charles Eddy, who was heading sales of that operation.²³ The next year, Charles's youngest son, Dexter Wright graduated from West Point and, after serving in the Indian Territory with the Sixth Cavalry, went into other Charles Parker Company operations and management.

With adoption of the "Parker Brothers" name, a new serialization of guns began. Arranged from the right (earliest gun) to the left (latest gun) in Figure 7 and listed below are the major variations of the Parker Brothers hammer gun and the period during which each was produced:

1st Variation:	Back-Action Lifter	1869-1882
2nd Variation:	Front-Action Lifter	1869-1874
3rd Variation:	Front-Action Lifter with Wilbur Parker Sr.'s 1875 Lifter & Locking Bolt (Figure 9) and Charles King's 1875 Hinge Pin (Figure 12, bottom gun)	
	Type A: with Keyed Forend	1875-1880
	Type B: with Charles King's 1878 Forend Latch (Figure 15)	1878-1881
4th Variation:	Front-Action Lifter with Dangerfield's 1872 Check-Hook Barrels Stop	1881-1907
5th Variation:	Charles King's 1882 Top-Action	1882-1917

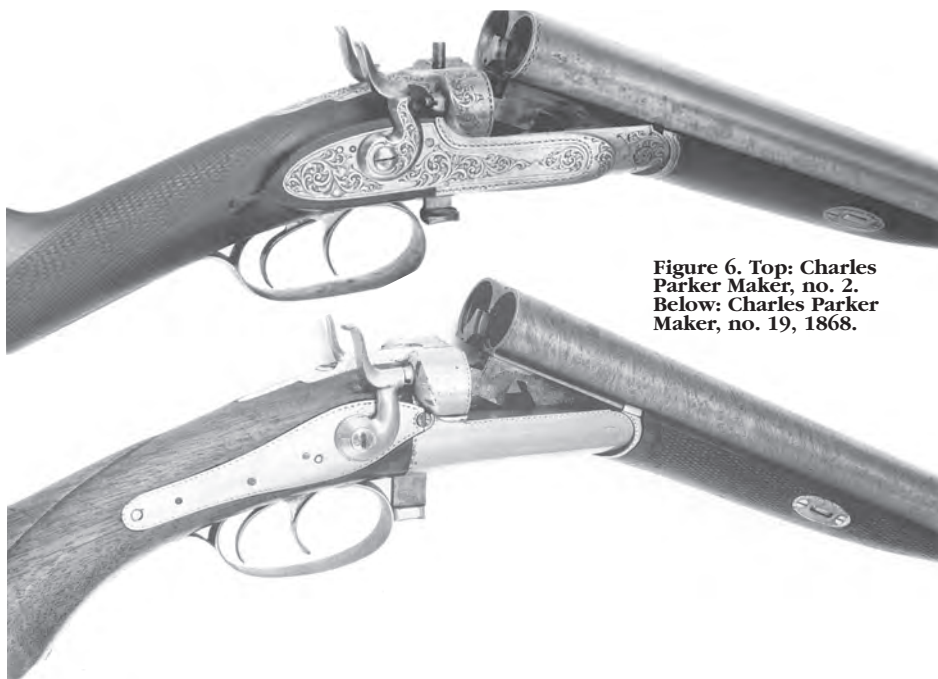


Figure 6. Top: Charles Parker Maker, no. 2. Below: Charles Parker Maker, no. 19, 1868.

All pre-1875 Parker Brothers lifter-action shotguns were made with the lifter and locking bolt illustrated in Figure 8. Beginning in 1875, all Parker lifter-action guns were made with Wilbur Sr.'s 1875 patent improved lifter and tapered locking bolt shown in Figure 9.²⁴ Wilbur Sr.'s tapered locking bolt provided a tighter fit of the barrels to the frame, and his new lifter eliminated the lifter extension protruding through the top of the frame when the gun opened. Wilbur's lifter design called for a one-piece the lifter and finger piece, rather than having separate lifter with the finger pieces attached by a screw as had been used on pre-1875 Parker shotguns. Most pre-1875 Parker Brothers guns seen today have been retrofitted with Wilbur's improved lifter and locking bolt and had the lifter extension hole in the top of the frame sealed. The last Parker lifter-action gun produced was serial number 144937 made in 1907. Wilbur Sr.'s tapered locking bolt was not only used on all 1875 and later Parker lifter-action guns, it was also used on all Parker top-action hammer guns and all Parker hammerless shotguns made up until 1905.

In its 1872 catalog, Parker Brothers first offered as an option rebounding locks, meaning that the hammers rebounded and did not rest on the firing pins once the gun was fired making it safer to carry a loaded gun. The first rebounding locks Parker used were based on Joseph Stokes' 1868 patent, which was owned by Wesson Firearms. A royalty had to be paid for each lock. Presumably, the Parkers were less than thrilled at having to do this. On March 26, 1872, a patent was issued to Joseph C. Dane for an improved rebounding lock, and the patent was assigned to Charles Parker on that same date (Figure 10).²⁵ By 1874, the Dane rebounding lock was standard on all Parker hammer guns.

By 1874, Wilbur Sr. was being spread too thin between the *American Sportsman* and Parker Brothers. That year, Wilbur Sr. acting on behalf of his father, recruited Charles A. King as Parker Brothers superintendent (Figure 11). At the time, King was superintendent of S&W, responsible for its .44 caliber large frame revolvers, and his ejector patent would keep S&W in the forefront of revolver manufacturers for decades. In 1874, Joseph Stokes also left S&W to join Parker Brothers. Stokes headed Parker's barrel making for years. King was the designing genius that created the Parker shotgun, as we know it today. Following Wilbur Sr.'s death in December 1876, Charles Parker totally entrusted Parker Brothers operations and success to King. Thirteen patents were issued to Charles King for the Parker shotgun. About 1906, Wilbur Fisk Parker Jr. was made vice president of the Charles Parker Company and Parker Brothers general manager. When Charles A. King retired as Parker Brothers superintendent in 1908, after twenty-four years of service, his son Walter A. King, who at the time was Parker Brothers superintendent, succeeded his father as Parker Brothers superintendent. Charles A. King continued serv-

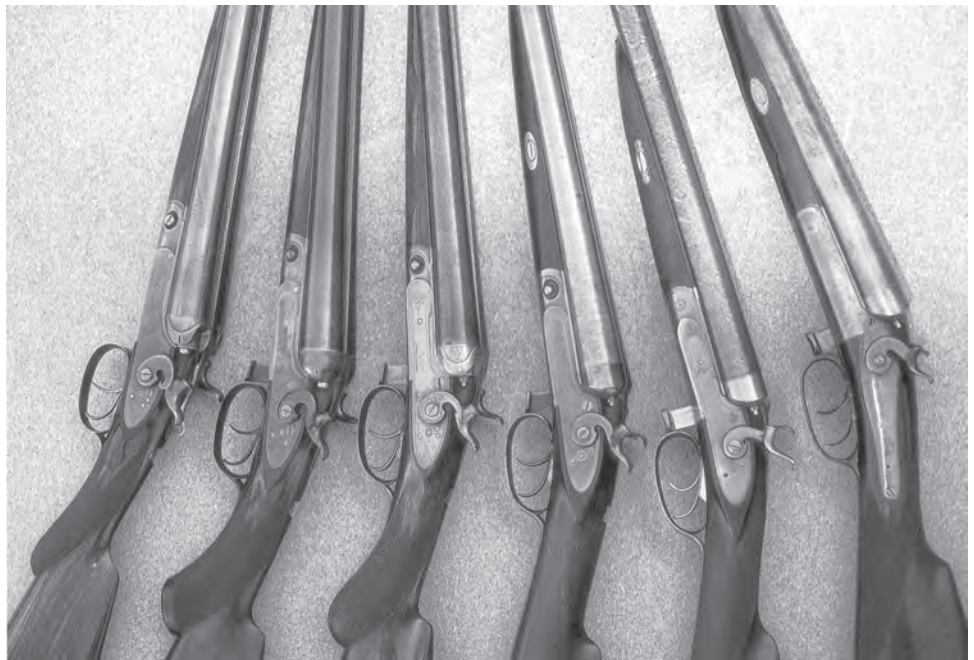


Figure 7. Parker Brothers Hammer Gun Variations, 1869–1882.

ing Parker Brothers as its chief consultant until shortly before his death in 1914.

The most recognizable feature of any Parker Brothers shotgun, whether it is a lifter-action hammer gun, a top-action hammer gun, or a hammerless gun, is the round recess in the front part of the frame with Charles A. King 1875 patent hinge pin with a "joint roll" upon which the barrels pivoted when the gun was opened (Figure 12, Gun 2. See "bull's eye" effect).²⁶ The second most recognizable feature of most Parker shotguns is King's 1878 patent forend latch (Figure 13),²⁷ which replaced the keyed-wedge forend latch that had been used for years on many types of guns.

Another important internal change to the Parker Brothers hammer gun was use of Dangerfield's 1872 patent center "check-hook" barrels stop that was assigned to Parker in 1881. The check-hook, which appears as the center lug under the barrels, engaged a pin inside the frame providing a positive stop to the downward movement of the barrels (Figure 14).²⁸

The last major Parker Brothers hammer gun design change was Charles A. King's 1882 top-action mechanism illustrated in Figure 15 without showing most of the gun's other internal parts or its external hammers. The popularity of Parker top-action guns soon exceeded that of lifter

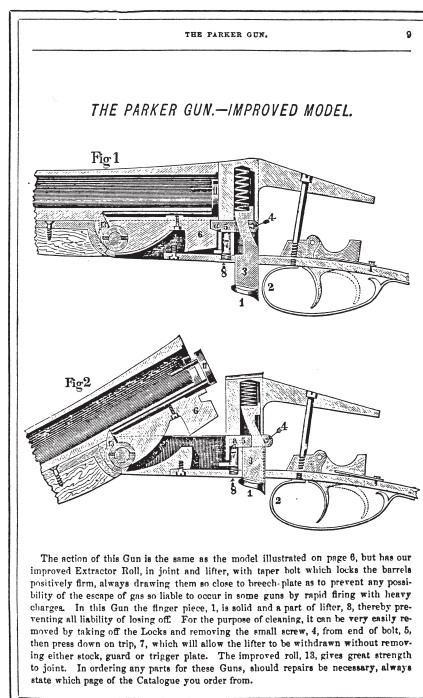
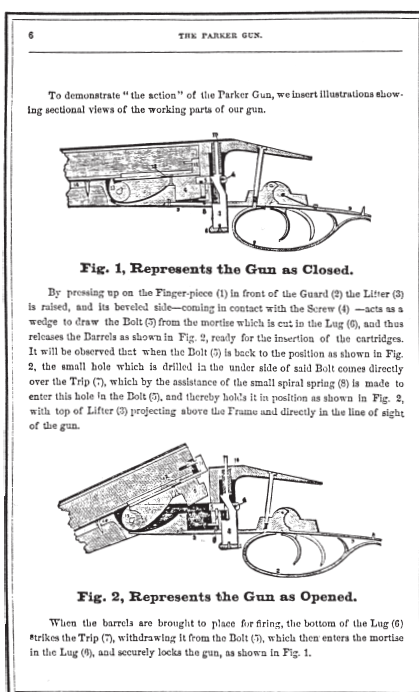


Figure 8 (Left). First Parker Brothers Lifter & Bolt (1872 Parker Bros. catalog).

Figure 9 (Right). Wilbur F. Parker's 1875 patent Lifter & Bolt (1876 Parker Bros. catalog).

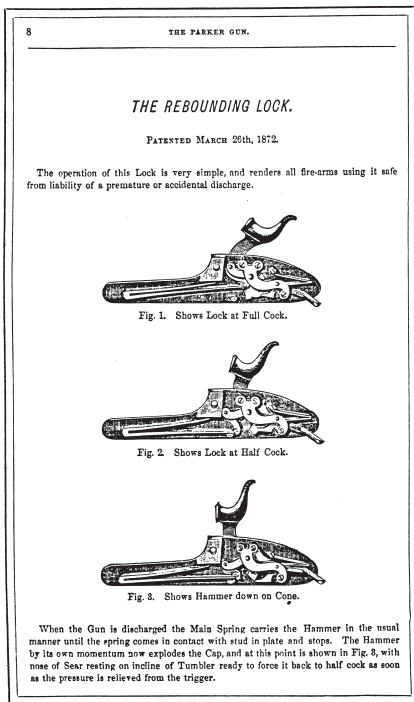


Figure 10 (Left). Dane's Rebounding Hammer patent assigned to Parker (1874 Parker Bros. catalog).

Figure 11 (Right). Charles A. King, Parker Bros. chief designer and superintendent, 1874-1908.

guns. Only twenty-five Parker lifter guns were made between 1890 and 1907, when the last lifter Parker gun was made. It was a 0 grade, 10-gauge, 32-inch plain twist barrels gun, serial number 144939. This top-action mechanism was also used on Parker hammerless guns up until it was redesigned in 1910. Only about 6,000 top-action Parker hammer guns were made after introduction of the Parker Brothers hammerless action gun in the latter part of 1888.

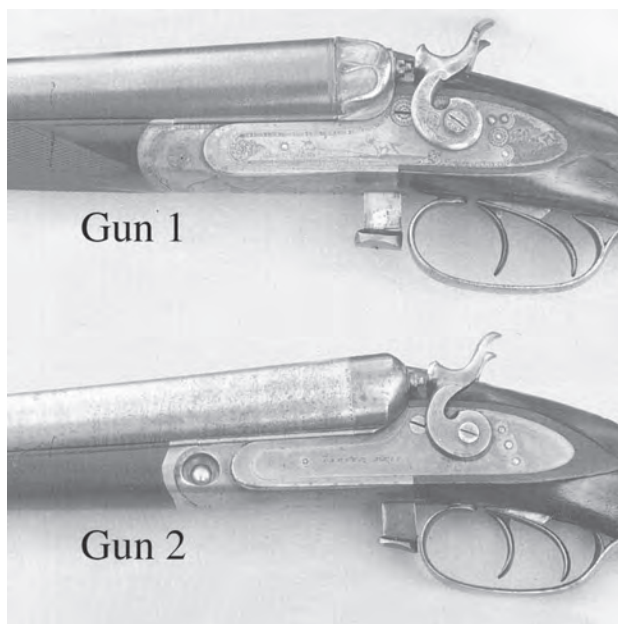
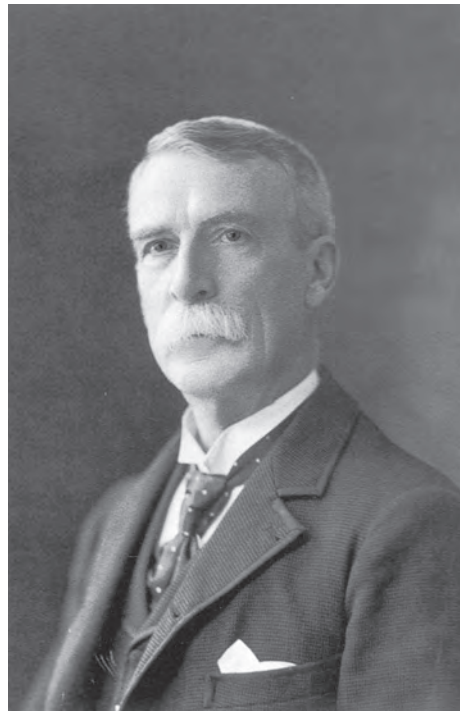


Figure 12. Gun 1 (before) and Gun 2 (after) King's 1875 patent Hinge Pin.



The last top-action Parker hammer gun in surviving Parker records is a 10-gauge, 0 grade or quality gun with 32-inch plain twist barrels. It was assembled in 1917, and the gun's serial number is recorded as 179286, but it was fitted with barrels from an earlier gun. Thus, it appears that both the last Parker lifter gun and the last Parker top-action gun were ordered by seasoned veterans set in their ways, at least as to their gun preferences.

PARKER BROTHERS AND REMINGTON-PARKER HAMMERLESS GUNS 1888-1942

The term "hammerless" is a misnomer and a late nineteenth century marketing term meaning that the firearm has a concealed hammer or hammers. Starting with the gun to the far right in Figure 16 and moving to the left, the corresponding entry below for each gun in Figure 16 notes the exterior appearance differences in Parker hammerless shotguns that evolved from 1888 through 1942:

- One-Piece Hinge Pin, Charles King 1875 patent with no screw slot and Hooked Top Lever;
- Two-Piece Hinge Pin introduced mid 1890s. Note screw slot and Long Top Lever;
- First Automatic Safety Slide (high point about center) and Long Top Lever, which was used until about 1917;
- Trojan Grade Gun introduced 1912 as Parker's lowest cost gun;

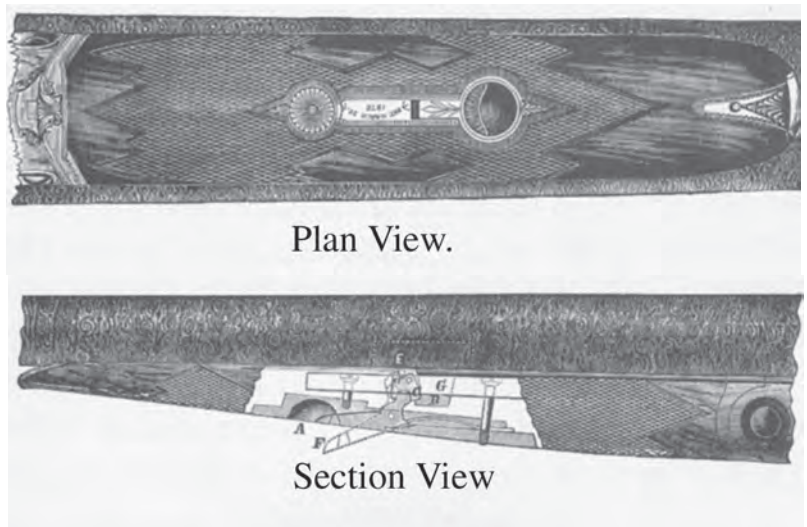


Figure 13. King's 1878 patent Forend Latch (1878 Parker Brothers catalog et seq.).

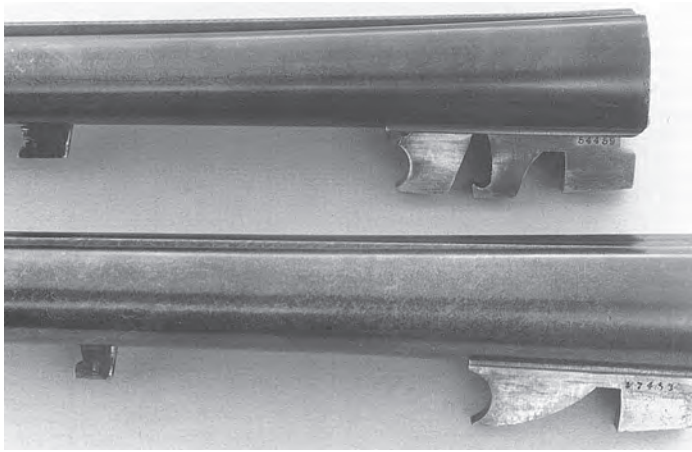


Figure 14. Top: Dangerfield's Check-Hook adopted circa 1881. Bottom: Before use of Check-Hook.

- Second Automatic Safety Slide (high point at end closest to top lever) and Short Top Lever first used about 1917;
- .410 Barrel Steps on Bottom of Barrels above Hinge Pin (only on .410s) beginning with the first production of .410s in 1926.

The above subtle external appearance differences do not account for the mystique and high regard of the Parker Brothers shotgun. It is the flawless functioning, accuracy, feel, balance, and beauty of Parker shotguns compared to other double guns that have earned the Parker shotgun its place in history and have made it a legend among shooting sportsmen.

The earliest Parker Brothers production hammerless gun was completed in the latter part of 1888.²⁹ It was the

Sectional Cut, Showing the Locking Mechanism of Top Action.

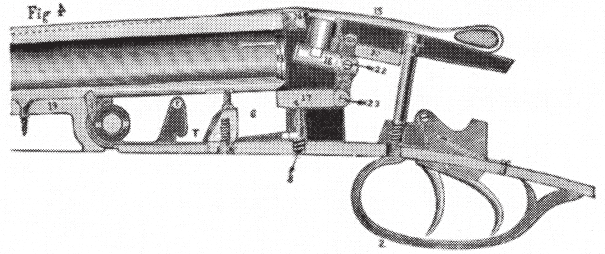


FIG. 4. REPRESENTS THE GUN CLOSED.

Pressing the thumb against the lever 15 throws it to the right, and acting through the piece 16, forces the piece 18 to the rear. This piece being pivoted at the top withdraws the bolt 17 from the mortise which is cut in the lug 6, and releases the barrels, as shown in Fig. 5, ready for the insertion of the cartridges. It will be observed that when the bolt 17 is back to the position as shown in Fig. 5, the small hole which is drilled in the under side of said bolt comes directly over the trip 21, which by the assistance of the small spiral spring 8, is made to enter this hole in the bolt 17, and thereby holds it in position as shown in Fig. 5. This prevents the lug 6 coming in contact with the bolt 17 when the gun is closed. By means of spring 20 the action of the lever 15 is positive, not only to withdraw the bolt from, but to force it forward into the mortise in the lug 6. When gun is closed, as shown in Fig. 4, the sides of the extension rib 24 being upon the arc of a circle, with the hinge joint 13 as a center, have a bearing along their entire surface, and the extension rib fits securely into its seat 24 in frame.

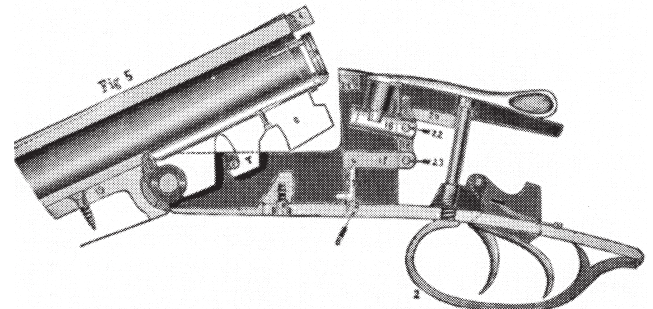


FIG. 5. REPRESENTS THE GUN OPENED.

Figure 15. King's 1882 Top Action (1882–1902 Parker Brothers catalog).



Figure 16 (Right). Parker Brothers Hammerless Gun External Variations, 1888–1934.

product of years of research and refinement by Charles A. King. Figure 17 shows an 1884 dated Parker hammerless prototype. King acquired and studied all English and American hammerless guns then on the market.³⁰ The decision to make a box lock hammerless action gun, rather than a side-lock hammerless gun was based on King's conclusion that the box lock was both stronger and less costly to produce. His patience in refining and perfecting the Parker box lock hammerless gun resulted in two hammerless gun patents being issued to King in 1887.³¹ His approach was that of a practical and conservative gun maker—wait until a trend becomes obvious, study the competition's prod-



Figure 17. Parker Brothers Hammerless Prototype. Engraved on floor plate "Designed October 10, 1884."

ucts, determine the weaknesses of their products, design and build something better, and then promote it. If Parker Brothers was better at anything than knowing how to build and building superb guns, it was the ability to effectively promote and market its guns, but that is another story.

King's innovative hammerless action with a "bell-crank" hammers cocking mechanism is shown in Figure 18. However, this design precluded use of the previously discussed center lug "check-hook" barrels stop used on Parker Brothers hammer guns (Figure 13). So, King designed an entirely new barrels stop to work in conjunction with his 1887 patent "bell-crank" cocking mechanism, receiving a patent for his new barrels stop in 1889.³² Looking at Figure 18, right (Figs. 9, 10, and 11) with a little imagination, one can understand how King's 1889 barrels stop works. The patent describes "ears," or pins, extending from each side of crank "P," located inside the frame barrel lug slot, engaging the sides of the frame when springs and pins "S" on each side force in the movable barrel lug linkage "e" to engage the crank "P" stopping the downward movement of the barrels when the forend is in place and the gun is opened.

Unique features of the Parker Brothers hammerless gun, most of which are found in King's first 1887 hammerless patent, compared to the Anson & Deeley box lock and others that predated the Parker hammerless include:

- "Bell-Crank" Hammers Cocking Mechanism activated by

the falling Barrels when the Gun is opened by pushing the Top Lever to the right (Figure 17, Left and Right);

- Coil Springs to drive Hammers (See Figure 18, Left);
- Rebounding Hammers after Gun was fired (See Figure 18, Left);
- Automatic Safety that moves the Safety Slide to rear "On Safe" position and internally blocks the Triggers when Top-Lever is pushed right opening the Barrels—Gun cannot be fired until the Barrels are closed and the Safety Slide is manually moved forward (See Figure 18, Left);
- Barrel Lug Movable Linkage/Bell-Crank Barrel Stop (Figure 18, Right).

Parker Brothers hammerless gun production and sales rapidly eclipsed that of the Parker hammer gun as shown by the following production analysis:

1889: Hammerless guns 86%	Hammer guns 14%
1895: Hammerless guns 95%	Hammer guns 5%

Only about 6,000 Parker hammer guns were produced after introduction of the Parker's hammerless action gun.

With the exception of Charles A. King, no other individual was more responsible for the design excellence of the Parker shotgun than James P. Hayes. Hayes started working at Parker Brothers in November 1887. Showing exceptional talent as a machinist, designer, and engineer, Hayes soon became King's protégé and ultimately his successor as chief of design. He was also Parker Brothers master mechanic

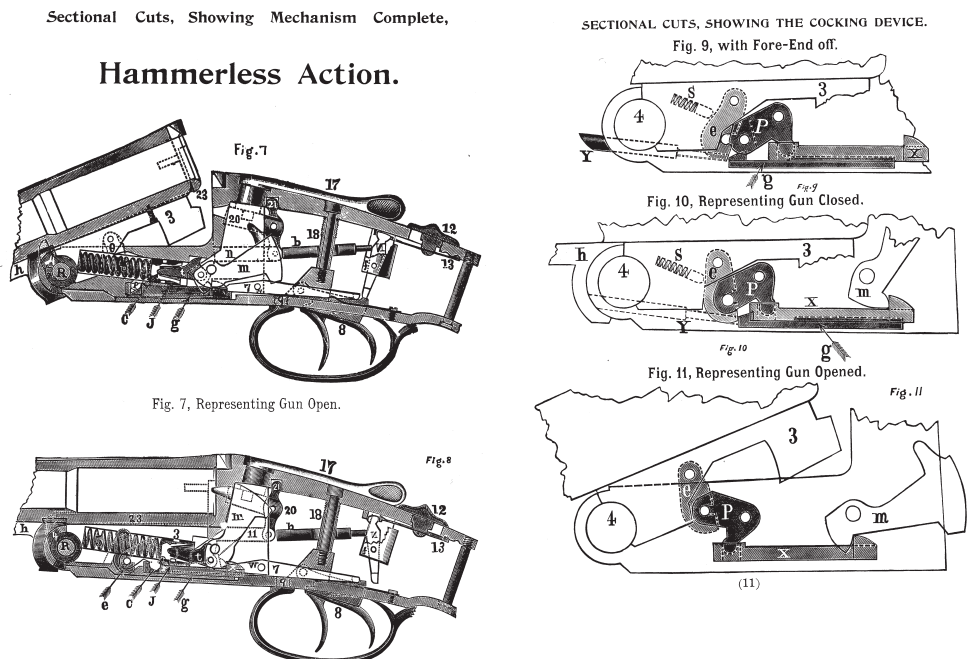


Figure 18. King's patent Hammerless Action and Cocking Device (Parker Brothers catalogs 1889–1902).

responsible for all of the factory's equipment operations and tooling. Hayes devoted fifty years to the making of the Parker shotgun, retiring from Remington Arms in December 1937. In 1901 King and Hayes received a patent for their Selective Automatic Ejectors ("SAE) mechanism (Figure 19).³³ Many SAEs patents preceded the 1901 King and Hayes patent, including an 1891 King patent that was never put into production.³⁴ The 1901 King and Hayes SAE was install on all Parker Brothers guns ordered with automatic ejectors. For a number of years, Parker Brothers would, for a charge, retrofit earlier Parker guns with the King and Hayes SAE.

In 1905, Charles A. King received a patent for a tapered and hardened steel plate that was pinned in place on the barrels locking lug and could be replaced if necessary due to wear (Figure 20, Left).³⁵ King's removable tapered and hardened lug plate interlocked with a new locking bolt that replaced Wilbur Sr.'s 1875 patent one-piece tapered bolt that had been used on all Parker guns since 1875. In 1910, James P. Hayes received a patent for redesign of the top-lever linkage to the Parker shotgun's locking bolt (Figure 20, Right).³⁶

Aside from the Trojan grade gun, which was first made in 1912 and differed in external appearance from other Parker Brothers double-barreled guns and will be described in more detail in the Grades section of this article, the preceding constitute, in this writer's opinion, the major side-by-side double gun design features of the Parker hammerless shotgun that evolved from 1888 through 1942. Parker's single-barreled trap gun, which was first made in 1917, is not covered in this article, but single-barreled and double barreled trap guns, as well as skeet guns, are the subject of Chapter X of *The Parker Story*.

By World War I, few young men were willing to commit to the prolonged low compensation apprenticeship required to develop competency in any area of Parker shotgun fitting and finishing. They could make more money

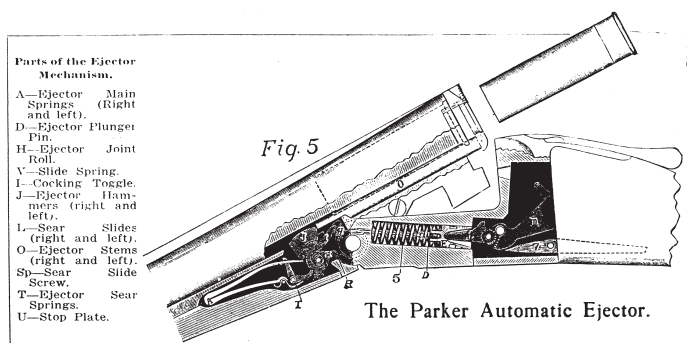


Figure 19. King and James Hayes' 1901 patent Selective Auto Ejector (1901 Parker Brothers catalog et al.).

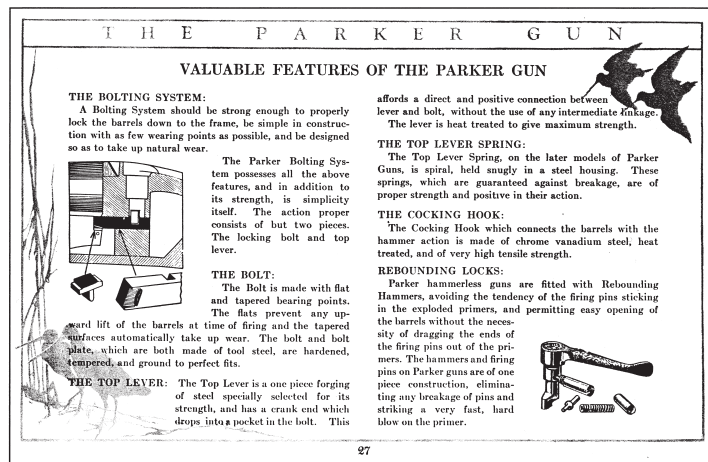


Figure 20. (Left) King's 1905 (Right) Hayes' 1910 patent Top Lever and Bolt Linkage (1926 Parker Brothers catalog et al.).

starting on most assembly lines with little or no experience. As early as 1919, well-known shooting expert and writer Captain E. C. Crossman observed:

The old Parker (Brothers) plant is full of old machines and old men. I don't know if there is any particular virtue in an old machine, but I believe there is in these old men. These chaps, grown grey in the service, were chiefly interested in doing their work well.³⁷ Parenthetical word added.

For the ten-year period 1919 through 1928, Parker Brothers averaged 4,775 guns per year—its second highest average annual production for any ten-year period.³⁸ We now refer most of this period as the "roaring twenties." Following the October 1929 stock market crash, the preceding term was no longer applicable, as America and the rest of the world moved first into economic doldrums and then into the Great Depression.

By 1932, the Great Depression had tightened its grip on all manufacturing, including the Charles Parker Company and especially its Parker Brothers operating unit. Money was needed to try and keep Parker's more profitable operations going and, by 1933, there simply was no demand for \$60.50 double-barreled shotguns (Trojans, Parker's most inexpensive grade), much less \$825.00 double-barreled shotguns (A-1 Special grades with double triggers).³⁹ In 1933, only 415 Parker shotguns were sold and 83 guns assembled.⁴⁰

The sale of the Parker shotgun, finished guns, parts inventory, and machinery to Remington Arms Company closed June 15, 1934 (Figure 21, left). The reputation of the Parker Brothers shotgun was legendary, and Remington saw its ownership as a way to drive repeat ammunition sales of its recently acquired Peters Cartridge Company,⁴¹ but Remington's timing was not good. Only 5,957 Remington-Parker guns were produced during Remington's eight years of Remington-Parker production.⁴² Interestingly, no Remington-Parker made gun

THE PARKER GUN
PARKER BROTHERS
MASTER GUN MAKERS
MERIDEN, CONN.

IN REPLY REFER TO

June 15, 1934.

Thos. N. Wilcox & Son,
Baltimore, Maryland.

*Removed from
list*

Gentlemen:

Our gun business and assets have been sold to the Remington Arms Company, Inc., Bridgeport, Connecticut.

For more than half a century the Parker Gun has been made to the highest standards of quality and workmanship. We are assured that under Remington ownership these standards will be continued and rigidly maintained. We are further assured by the Remington Company that the Parker Gun, with the exception of the Trojan Grade, will be made to the exact specifications of the purchaser by the craftsmen who have long been responsible for the manufacture of the Parker Gun, and that manufacturing operations will be continued at Meriden, Conn. This plant is now known as the Parker Gun Works of the Remington Arms Company, Inc.

The sale of Parker Guns will be under the supervision of the sales organization of the Remington Arms Company, Inc., with headquarters at Bridgeport, Conn.

All inquiries and orders for Parker Guns should be sent direct to that address.

Parker Guns to be repaired and orders for component parts should be sent to the Parker Gun Works of the Remington Arms Company, Inc., at Meriden, Conn.

May we take this opportunity to thank you sincerely for the splendid cooperation that you have given us in the sale of Parker Guns. The Remington Arms Company, Inc., is well known to you and we feel sure that the same pleasant relations as have existed in the past, will continue under their ownership.

Yours very truly,
THE CHARLES PARKER COMPANY,
Charles S. Parker,
PRESIDENT

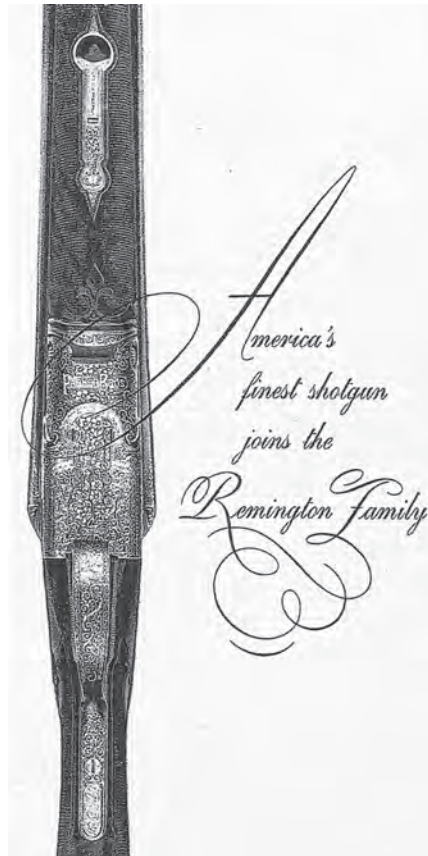


Figure 21. Parker Shotgun sale letter and first Remington-Parker catalog.

examined by this author has “Remington” anywhere on the gun. Remington-Parker shotguns are distinguishable from Parker Brothers guns by knowing that gun 236,630 was the last Parker Brothers-made gun in the factory records prior to the sale and knowing the marking differences on the guns made by each entity. Most Remington-Parker guns have “Parker” on the bottom of the frame behind the forend, but no “Parker Brothers” on the sides of the frame.

A significant inventory of finished parts and, perhaps, guns must have been on hand at the time of acquisition. As late as 1939, Remington sold some Remington-Parker guns with Parker Brothers marked barrels. In December 1937, Remington closed the Parker Brothers Gun Works in Meriden and moved the machinery it needed, all remaining inventory, and less than twenty former Parker Brothers workers, mostly younger men with midlevel Parker skills at that time, to Ilion, New York, the home of Remington firearms. Except for an occasional gun assembled or refurbished for a retiring senior Dupont or Remington official, production and assembly of Remington-Parker shotguns ceased in 1942, when the few workers doing Remington-Parker work were transferred to war related production.

After World War II, Remington decided against resuming production of the Remington-Parker shotgun. A former

Remington official stated that Remington’s cost studies done both before and after the war showed that profit could only be made on the higher-grade guns, D and above, and that the projected sales volume would not sustain the operation. The machining of parts would not have been a problem, but the cost of the hand fitting and finishing would have been. As eighty percent (80%) of the cost of a Parker Brothers gun had been its labor cost,⁴³ the reported reason for Remington not resuming production is logical. Certainly, if Remington had thought that it could have made a profit by continuing production of the Remington-Parker shotgun, it would have done so.

More people always aspired to own a Parker shotgun than could afford it, and Parker shotguns were never cheap. For the price of the lowest grade Parker in the mid-1870s, you could have bought three Colt single actions, or two Winchester

Model 1873s, or fifteen surplus Civil War rifled muskets. Parker shotguns were very popular with professional and competitive shooters, and Parker Brothers advertisements touted the achievements of those that used it. Doc Carver, Captain Bogardus, and Buffalo Bill’s names appear in early Parker advertisements. Some notable owners and shooters of Parker shotguns include Annie Oakley and her husband (they had twenty), General John J. Pershing, General Billy Mitchell, General George S. Patton (he had consecutively numbered .410 and 28-gauge guns), Clark Gable, Robert Stack, Joan Bennett, and Coca-Cola chairman Robert W. Woodruff, just to name a few.⁴⁴

THE GRADES

Beginning in the late 1960s, I began corresponding with and visiting Charles S. (“Charlie”) Parker, who was president of the Charles Parker Company when the Parker shotgun was sold to Remington Arms Company. After graduating from Yale in 1923 as part of the university’s first engineering class, Charlie apprenticed at Parker Brothers from December 1923 through May 1925, doing every job function except engraving and checkering.⁴⁵ In the early 1970s, I obtained one of the most complete collections of Parker



\$125 Grade #295

\$200 Grade #648

\$200 Grade #2344

Figure 22. Dollar grade guns, 1869–1874.

shotgun catalogs. Then, in the early 1990s, Remington enabled the writers of *The Parker Story* to copy the surviving Parker Brothers and Remington-Parker records. A database of all guns in the records was compiled. It is from this database that specific production facts referenced in this article and throughout the two volume, fifteen pound, 1,045 pages, 1,500 color and monochrome illustrated *Parker Story* were derived, including the extensive tables in that work. There are sixty (60) tables in the Grades chapter listing for each grade the number of guns made by action-type, barrels steel, length of barrels, and gauge.

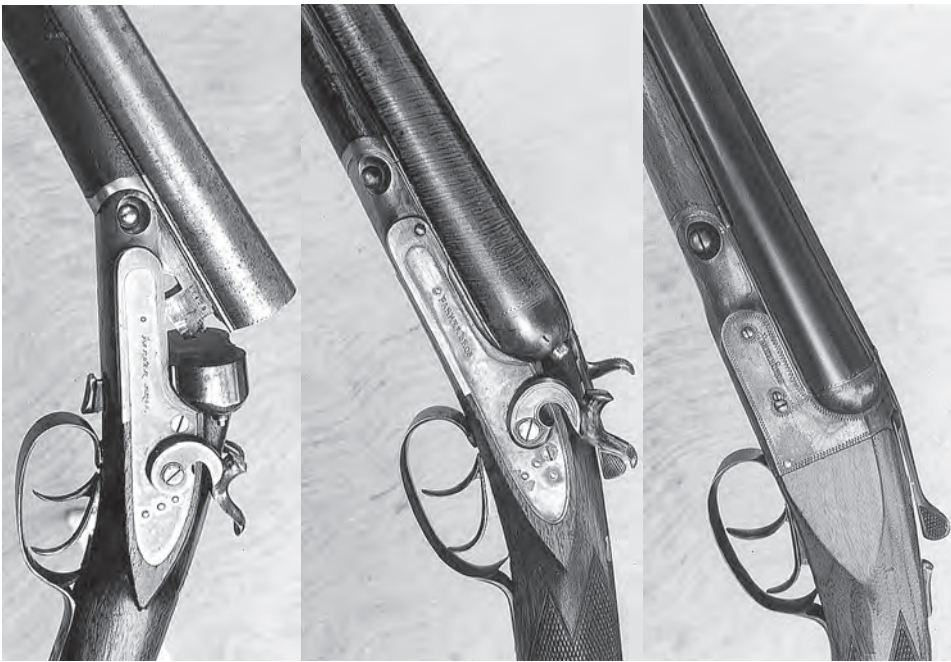
The term “Grade” was not used in Parker Brothers catalogs before 1923 to classify and rank the quality of Parker shotguns. Instead, Parker Brothers used the term “Quality” beginning with the 1882 Parker Brothers catalog. Prior to that catalog, Parker shotgun catalogs simply classified guns by the price listing the barrels steel utilized, action type (front-action or back-action), and a subjective finish description. No illustrations of available qualities or grades appeared in Parker Brothers consumer catalogs until after 1900. In fact, there was no succinct classification or identification system in the Parker Brothers records or catalogs before 1875. So, pre-1875 Parker Brothers shotguns are now referred to as the “Dollar Grades” (Figure 22), and these were priced at \$250, \$200, \$150, \$135, \$125, \$80 and \$75, \$65 and \$60, \$55 and \$50 in 1874 Parker Brothers catalogs and price lists, representing eight quality classifications. A 10-gauge gun cost \$5 more than 12-gauge gun if the price of that particular quality

was less than \$100. The less expensive guns were the older no frills models with lesser expensive barrels.

By 1875, Parker Brothers had adopted a numbering system of “0” through “6” to designate the quality of each gun in the factory’s records. A 0 represented the lowest quality and priced gun, and a 6 was the highest quality and priced gun. The quality number for each gun was determined its barrels composite steel type—generally referred to as “Damascus” or “twist” steel, meaning that barrel steel had been made of alternating bands of iron and steel that had been twisted together giving a figured appearance to barrels. The greater the number of alternating bands and the tighter or finer the pattern of the twisted bands, the higher the quality of that particular composite steel and the barrels made from it. The first composite steel Parker utilized its barrels was called

laminated steel, but by 1874, Damascus steel had become Parker’s highest quality barrels steel. Parker had several qualities of both Damascus and twist barrels available through World War I, giving the customer the choice of composite or fluid steel barrels for most Parker gun qualities, even though the popularity of its fluid steel barrels surpassed that of composite steel barrels prior to the war. Damascus barrels were used on gun Parker qualities 6 down through 2. Twist barrels were used on 1 and 0 quality guns. Damascus, laminated, and twist steel are different terms for composite steel made by the similar processes, each with a distinctive appearance. Parker Brothers Damascus steel came from Belgium and its twist and laminated steel came from England. Bernard steel, a Damascus like composite steel, was imported from France and used only for number 4 quality guns. Parker imported composite steel in billets to minimize the tariff expense and made its barrels at the Gun Works. The quality number of each gun also determined the hand fitting, finishing, and engraving the gun received. Although the numbering system for gun quality was not used in any Parker Brothers catalog, it was the earliest classification or ranking system for Parker shotguns, other than the gun price.

The concept of different barrel steels for the different quality or grade gun was carried forward with Parker’s use of fluid steel—steel made in a molten state, that is then molded under pressure, and then formed into rods or billets—for barrels beginning in 1894 with imported English Whitworth steel for Parker Brothers newest top quality or grade gun, the



#10429 12-GA 1877

#68907 16-GA 1876

1st VH 1898
#235161 20-GA 1933

Figure 23. Grade 0 (R, S, T, U, and VH) guns, 1875–1942.

number 7 gun, which was first listed in Parker's 1895 catalog as the AAH Pigeon gun. As Parker adopted new fluid steels for barrels, a name was assigned to each and the specific qualities or grades for which it could be used were designated. By 1912, Parker was also using Whitworth barrels on its newest and highest quality hammerless gun, the number 8 gun (A-1 Special in Parker's catalogs); Acme steel barrels were available on both hammerless and hammer 6, 5, and 4 guns (A, B, and C quality guns in Parker's catalogs); Titanic barrels were available on number 3 hammerless and hammer guns (D quality in catalogs); Parker Special steel barrels were available for the number 2 hammerless gun (G quality in the catalogs); Parker steel barrels were available on the 1 or PH quality gun; Vulcan steel barrels were used on the VH gun; and Trojan steel barrels on its lowest priced gun, the Trojan gun. Parker began offering Peerless steel barrels for A-1 Special and AAH gun barrels after World War I ceasing use of Whitworth steel soon thereafter. The composite steel type or fluid steel name is stamped on the rib between the barrels of each Parker Brothers gun, along with the Parker

Brothers name, and Meriden, Conn., and other markings depending on when the gun was made.

Please excuse my jumping ahead in time in the preceding paragraph to reference qualities or grades of Parker Brothers shotguns that did not exist prior to its first use of fluid steel barrels and my referring to different Parker Brothers gun qualities or grades by letters without providing the background.

Beginning with the 1882 Parker Brothers catalog, twenty alpha letters were used by Parker to designate the qualities of hammer guns in its catalogs. The four highest quality and, of course, priced guns in descending order were "A" "B," "C," and "D" (6, 5, 4, and 3 under the factory records numbering system) were available in 10 or 12-gauge with straight or pistol grip stocks at no additional charge

beyond the price applicable to that letter or number. The lower number guns under the factory records system (2, 1, and 0, respectively) were each identified in Parker catalogs by four different letters based on gauge and grip type. For example, a number 1 gun under the factory records system was designated an "N" in catalog if it was 12-gauge and had a pistol grip; an "O"



#74305 16-GA 1892

#1556484 8-GA 1911

1st PH 1890
#217651 10-GA 1926

Figure 24. Grade 1 (I, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, NH, and PH) guns, 1875–1942.

if it was 12-gauge and had a straight grip; a “P” if it was 10-gauge and had a pistol grip; or a “Q” if it was 10-gauge and had a straight grip. Number 1 hammer guns had “Fine English Twist” barrels, a broad checkering pattern, and were sparsely engraved. Similarly, a 0 hammer gun was designated in Parker’s catalog as “R,” “S,” “T,” or “U” and had “Twist” barrels, rather than fine English twist barrels, and was even plainer than a 1 quality or grade gun.

Starting in 1889, an “H” was added in Parker Brothers catalogs after the applicable alpha letter and an “H” was added after a gun’s serial number in the factory records to distinguish a hammerless gun from a lifter or top-action hammer guns, both of which Parker continued offering long after introducing its hammerless gun. Initially, hammerless guns were only available AH down through GH (6, 5, 4, 3, and 2 under the factory records numbering system), but soon hammerless guns were also available in 1 and 0 grades, as below explained.

In the 1890, the PH grade gun was added to the low end of the Parker hammerless line in Parker Brothers catalogs and as the newest number 1 gun under the factory records system (Figure 24, center and right); however, the PH grade was dropped from the line in 1927. The VH grade gun (Figure 23, VH right) was added to Parker’s line in 1898 as its newest and lowest priced fluid steel barreled hammerless gun.

In the factory records, Parker entered “Vulcan,” rather than a 0. With the introduction of Parker’s selective automatic ejectors, SAEs, as an option in 1901, an “E” was added after the letter designation and the applicable price in Parker catalogs for each gun with the automatic ejectors. In the factory records, the word “ejectors” was entered with the serial number and other information for each gun having SAEs.

A PH or 1 grade gun has a simple line engraving pattern in front of the trigger guard on the floor plate, simple engraving around screw heads on the frame side, and a single line tiny diamond cut border just inside the flat sides of its frame. The VH has none of these, but it does have a simple single line zigzag border just inside the flat sides of its fame. The pre-1875 0 grade guns had no checkering. Until about 1885, 1 and 0 grade guns had solid steel buttplates. Thereafter, a hard black rubber buttplate with a dog’s



#231453 20-GA 1929

head image in the center was used on all 1 and 0 grade guns, including VH and PH guns. Both have plain American walnut stocks with checkering patterns of about 14 lines per inch. See Figure 24, right, for the PH gun and Figure 23, right, for the VH gun.


In 1912, the Trojan quality, or grade, (Figure 25), which has no number equivalent in the Parker Brothers factory records, was added to Parker’s line. The word “Trojan” was entered in the records for each such gun. It was less expensive to produce than any other grade and, therefore, sold for a lower price than any other Parker gun because it required less hand fitting and hand finishing was minimal. The Trojan’s external appearance characteristics differences compared to VH and PH guns include:

- Uniquely sculptured frame shape,
- No metal latch or other metal showing on the forend,
- No hard rubber butt cap,
- No dog’s head on the hard rubber buttplate.

No options or special measurements could be ordered or options could be ordered on a Parker Brothers Trojan, other than having a single trigger which was not offered until shortly before sale of the rights to the Parker shotgun to Remington in 1934. Trojan buyers could specify only barrel lengths of 26, 28, or 30 inches in 20, 16, or 12-gauge and how the gun was to be choked. Remington ceased production of the Trojan grade in 1939, believing it was detracting from sales of the more expensive VH grade gun. Most Trojans have seen considerable use.

The aggregate of all Trojan grade guns (Figure 25), VH and 0 grade guns (Figure 23), PH and 1 grade guns (Figure 24), and GH or 2 grade guns (Figure 26) produced represents eighty-five percent (85%) of all Parker shotgun production (See Figure 34).

PARKER BROS.
TROJAN GUN
A NEW GUN AT \$27.50



THIS is without doubt the acme of perfection in a low priced gun. It is the result of experience gained in nearly 50 years of gun manufacture. A most excellent, well proportioned gun of good appearance, thoroughly well fitted, carrying the name of “PARKER BROS.,” which is a guarantee of quality. A gun without a competitor at the price.

Barrels: Imported Trojan Steel, manufactured expressly for Parker Bros. Matted top rib.

Stock: American Black Walnut of good color and finish. Made only with full pistol grip. No cap. Hard rubber butt plate. Fore end and grip neatly checkered.

Locks and Action. Of the same construction as our guns of higher grade. All parts drop forged from the same class of steel as used in our more expensive guns.

Made in 12 gauge 28 in. barrels, 7½ to 8 lbs., modified and full choke.
 Made in 12 gauge 30 in. barrels, 7½ to 8 lbs., both barrels full choke.
 Made in 16 gauge 28 in. barrels, 6½ to 7 lbs., modified and full choke.
 Made in 20 gauge 28 in. barrels, 6½ to 6½ lbs., modified and full choke.

Stock Dimensions: Drop about 2¼ in.; length about 14 in.

We will accept no orders with exact specifications, nor will we deviate from the above outlined dimensions in any particular.

PARKER BROS.,
32 WARREN ST.,
NEW YORK CITY.

Factories, MERIDEN, CONN.

Figure 25. Trojan grade guns, 1912–1939.

Characteristics

- Lowest grade with any significant engraving
- Two “Dr. Seuss ducks” on frame and single line pattern forward of trigger guard
- Figured American walnut
- 18 lines per inch Hard rubber buttplate with dogs head c. 1880
- White metal wrist shield usually “2” and “G” on Water Table (“WT”)



#43488 12-GA 1884



1st EH & GH 1888
#174013 8-GA 1916

Figure 26. Grade 2 (E, F, G, H, EH, and GH) guns, 1875–1942.

Characteristics

- Raised bolsters hammer guns
- First grade with Circassian walnut
- 20 lines per inch
- Silver wrist shield
- Skelton buttplate
- Usually “3” and/or “D or DH” on WT
- Single Dog
- R: Setter
- L: Pointer



#6865 12-GA 1876 for
Centennial Expo



1st DH 1888
#241300 28-GA all options 1938

Figure 27. Grade 3 (D and DH) guns 1875–1942.

Characteristics

- Raised bolsters with start of “teardrop” on hammer guns
- Better Circassian 24 lines per inch
- Similar to 3 or D grade except: more & tighter scroll
- Usually single dog scenes like on 3 grade
- Only grade to use Bernard composite steel barrels
- Usually “4” and/or “C” or “CH” on WT



Figure 28. Grade 4 (C and CH) guns, 1875–1942.



#132430 20-GA 1905

1st CH 1889 #123524 12-GA 1904

Characteristics

- Full teardrop on hammer guns
- More & tighter scroll than C grade
- Two dogs or game birds on frame and elk or other scene on floorplate
- Single raised bead on bolsters
- 1st with base relief engraving
- Fine Circassian
- 1st w fleur-de-lis Gold oval toe plate
- Usually “5” and/or “B” or “BH” on WT



#7988 10-GA 1894

1st BH 1888
#230103 16 GA 1929

Figure 29. Grade 5 (B and BH) guns, 1875–1942.

Characteristics

- More detailing than B grade
- Encircled teardrop on hammer guns
- Raised bolster bead like on B grade
- More and tighter scroll than B grade with custom game, bird, or dog scenes on frame & floorplate
- Top quality figured Circassian walnut
- Gold oval toe plate
- Usually “6” and/or “A” or “AH” on WT



#46346 10-GA 1885

1st AH 1888
#172763 20-GA 1915

Figure 30. Grade 6 (A and AH) guns, 1875–1942.

In 1904, the first number 8 gun is recorded in Parker Brothers records. All number 8 guns are hammerless guns. The first Parker catalogs to show and describe this gun identified it as the “No. 1 Special” quality gun making it the highest quality and priced Parker shotgun as of that date. In later Parker catalogs, it was identified as the “A-1 Special” gun (Figure 32). The highest quality and priced Parker shotgun ever made, the number 9 gun under the Parker Brothers factory records system (designated the “Invincible” grade in Parker Brothers catalogs 1926–1932) was first made in 1926 (Figure 33).

Before studying the examples and characteristics of the seven highest Parker grades shown in Figures 27 through 33—grades 3 (D and DH), 4 (C and CH), 5 (B and BH), 6 (A and AH), 7 (AA and AAH), 8 (A-1 Special), and 9 (Invincible), an overview of Parker engraving may be helpful. Most late Parker Brothers and Remington-Parker

engraving is English style, meaning it is not as deep or dimensional as Germanic engraving found on 5 (B and BH) or higher grade Parkers. Popularity of these styles varied over the years. Also, a number of high-grade Parker shotguns have beautiful engraving that seems to be a hybrid of the two styles. Earlier guns tend to have lesser engraving coverage than later period counterparts. When animals and/or birds were engraved on each side of the frame and on the floor plate, the background was usually a scroll pattern. Tightness of the scroll and the percentage of scroll coverage increased as the grades increased. On a number of 6 (AAH) grades and higher, a complete scroll coverage engraving pattern that looks more like vines with leaves and some flowers, but no animals or birds, is frequently encountered.

The quality or grade of a Parker shotgun can usually be found stamped on its “water table,” the flat polished top



#152815 20-GA 1910

5 Hammer Guns Made #207980 16-GA 1923

Figure 31. Grade 7 (AA) guns, 1895–1942.

Characteristics

- All frame, trigger guard & floorplate metal is engraved
- Early guns deep relief leaf & flower designs
- Most later guns fine scroll with bird or game scenes on frame and floorplate
- Only grade with barrel breech engraving except A-1 and invincible grades
- 2 or 3 raised bolster beads based on frame size, but 1 on 00 frame 28-GA
- Finest Circassian walnut 28 - 30 lines per inch with total forend coverage
- Gold grip cap Damascening on WT & Forend Iron ("FI")
- Usually "7" and/or "AA" or "AH" on WT



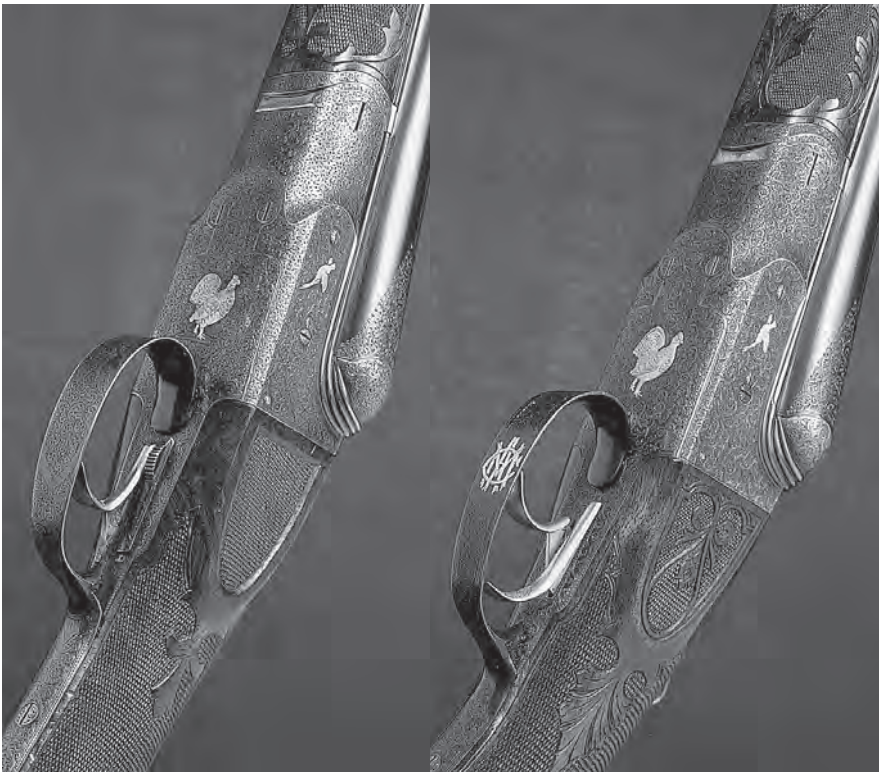
#172205 12-GA 1915

#191049 28-GA 1920

Figure 32. Grade 8 (A-1 Special) guns, 1904–1942.

Characteristics

- All frame, trigger guard & floorplate metal engraved
- Breech of barrels engraved
- Usual Gold mountings: Serial # behind trigger guard, "S" forward of safety button, grip cap or name plate, and gold-plated triggers
- 3 or 4 raised bolster beads based on frame
- Raised frame bead or "pig tail"
- Engraved barrel breeches
- Finest Circassian walnut
- 28 - 32 lines per inch checkering
- Damascened WT & FI
- "8" and/or "A1S" on WT



Characteristics

- Highest Parker grade made
- Extremely intricate scroll with single gold inlaid pheasant on each side of frame and grouse on floorplate—same on all invincibles
- Only grade with breech side clips
- Recess or grove in frame for seating buttstock
- No recessed or “bull’s-eye” for hinge-pin
- WT #230329, “9” but not on #200000 because no grade number established when it was made.

#200000 12-GA 1926

(#233565 12-GA 1933 Not Shown)

Only 3 Made
#230329 16-GA 1929

Figure 33. Grade 9 (Invincible) guns, 1926–1933.

PRODUCTION OF PARKER SHOTGUNS FROM 1869 TO 1942				
GRADE	QUANTITY MADE			TOTAL
	HAMMER GUNS		HAMMER-LESS	
	Lifter	Top-Action		
Dollar ^a	1,983			1,983
Trojan			33,053	33,053
0 ^b	15,499	23,443	78,670	117,612
1 (N, P, etc.)	586	3,804	15,588	19,978
2 (E, G, etc.)	4,555	7,582	31,778	43,915
3 (D)	702	1,352	16,396	18,450
4 (C)	100	101	1,673	1,874
5 (B)	65	79	1,034	1,178
6 (A)	60	34	264	358
7 (AA)		5	237	242
8 (A-1 Special)			79	79
9 (Invincible)			3	3
Single Barrels ^c			1,912	1,912
SUBTOTALS	23,550	36,400	180,687	240,637
Unrecorded guns ^d	1,850			1,850
TOTAL PRODUCTION	25,400	36,400	180,687	242,487

Notes:
a. “Dollar Grade” is a term applied to early guns (generally pre-1875) which are recorded in the stock books, but for which no grade number can be determined, as explained in the text.
b. All grade 0 hammerless guns are Vulcans (VH grade).
c. See Chapter IX for a detailed breakdown of single-barrel trap guns, by grade and barrel length.
d. Stock book recording started with serial 1851. All unrecorded early guns are lifter-actions and most are probably lower grades.

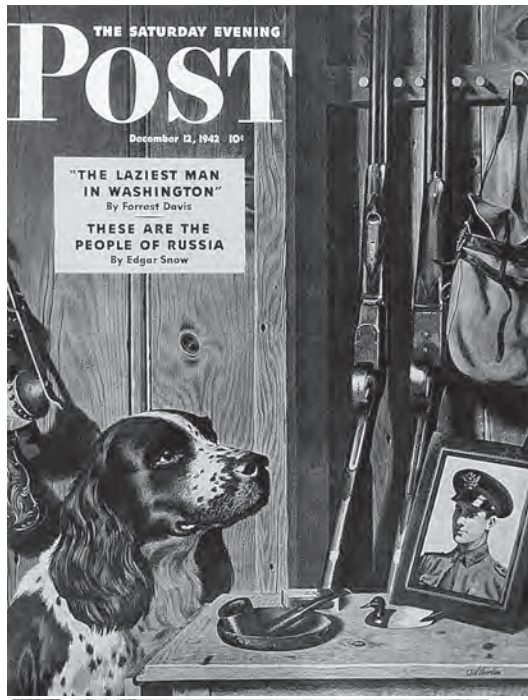
Figure 34. Production of Parker Gun Grades.

surface of the gun’s frame just in front of the barrels bolsters upon which the barrels rest when the gun is closed. There the gun’s grade number and/or its letter grade with an “H,” if it is a hammerless gun, is usually die stamped into the surface of the water table along with the serial number and other markings. Far more factual information about each grade, including how the Invincible grade got its name, detailed characteristics descriptions by grade, and superb quality photographs of many more examples of each grade are found in *The Parker Story*, Chapter VIII, The Grades, at pages 212 through 387.

Figure 34 shows the number of Parker shotguns by grade and action type from 1869 through 1942. Figure 35 is the December 12, 1942, *Saturday Evening Post* cover with what is definitely a Parker shotgun to the far left in the gun rack. The cover was great acknowledgement and recognition of the Parker shotgun, but it came too late as by then Remington had ceased production of the Remington-Parker shotgun.

PARKER SHOTGUNS TODAY

Any Parker shotgun in true factory original condition with a high percentage of original case hardening color and bluing is desired by Parker collectors (myself included), and thousands of Parker shotguns are still used for hunting and



Acknowledgement and recognition no money could buy, but too late for the Parker Gun. *Patient Dog* by George Atherton

Figure 35. The Curtis Publishing Company.

on trap and skeet fields. For the latter uses, soundness of the gun and condition of its bores matter, not the percentage of original finish. Many Parker shotguns represented as having “factory original finish” have been subjected to one or more of the following—new case coloring, barrels and other metal parts re-blued, and stocks refinished. Also, quite a few VHE grade Parker shotguns have been “upgraded” to A-1 Specials, and a number of small bore Parkers have been upgraded, but not necessarily to A-1 Specials. This being said, it is my belief that there is merit to most surviving Parker guns. I have way too few. Please call if you can help me with this personal problem, or have questions about a Parker gun, or *The Parker Story*.⁴⁶

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I extend my most sincere thanks to each of *The Parker Story* authors, especially Charles E. Price, and the many others who helped make that work and this article possible. The breath and varied perspectives reflected in our work could not have done by any one person. Also, I thank the members of the ASAC for extending to me the privilege of membership and hope that you find this article of some interests. Most of all, I would like to thank my wife, Kathy, for having put up with me for the last thirty years and my obsession for Parker guns of any period and kind, my inter-

ests in those that made these guns, and the other products of The Charles Parker Company.

NOTES

1. C. B. Gillespie and George M. Curtis, compilers, *A Century of Meriden*, part 3 (Meriden, CT: Journal Publishing Co., 1906), p. 53.
2. *Commemorative Biographical Record of New Haven County, Connecticut* (Chicago, IL: J. H. Beers & Co., 1902), p. 681. See also C. K. Westbrook, “A Model American Gun Factory,” *The American Field* (October 21, 1893), p. 386.
3. Mary R. Root, *Chapter Sketches—Connecticut Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR 1904)*, pp. 239–247.
4. Charles H. S. Davis, *History of Wallingford, Meriden, and Cheshire* (Meriden, CT: Privately published, 1870), p. 598. See also Gillespie and Curtis, vol. 2, p. 311; J. L. Rockey, *History of New Haven County, Connecticut*, vol. 1 (New York: W. W. Preston, 1892), p. 611; J. D. Van Slyck, *Representative New England Manufacturers*, vol. 2 (Massachusetts Publishing Co., 1879), pp. 369–370.
5. J. L. Bishop, *A History of American Manufactures, 1609–1860*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia, PA: Edward Young & Co., 1866), pp. 254–255.
6. Charles H. S. Davis, p. 599.
7. *Meriden Daily Journal*, January 31, 1902, p. 2.
8. Snow, Brooks, & Co., broadside, circa 1860, with illustration of Cherry Street machine and foundry works and products listing.
9. February 8, 1967, letter from Elizabeth Hicks to Louis C. Parker, Jr. Elizabeth Hicks’s mother, Elizabeth (“Lizzie”) Canfield Parker had married Radcliff Hicks, a prominent attorney, December 17, 1879, following Wilbur Sr.’s death on Christmas Day 1876. Author’s collection.
10. See *Meriden Daily Republican*, Meriden, Connecticut, December 26, 1876, p. 3.
11. *Riggs Literary Recorder*, Meriden, Connecticut, September 26, 1863.
12. February 8, 1967, letter from Elizabeth Hicks to Louis C. Parker, Jr. Lizzie’s friend, American dentist Dr. Thomas A. Evans, smuggled Empress Eugenie and the Prince Imperial out of Paris through German lines to England in September 1870. The Prince Imperial, while serving as a lieutenant in the British Army, was killed in action June 1, 1879 during the Zulu War, bringing to an end the Napoleonic dynasty.
13. *Meriden Daily Republican*, Meriden, Connecticut, December 26, 1876, p. 3; U.S Patent 77910, Screw

Threading Machine, May 12, 1868; U.S. Patent 88202, Cartridge, March 8, 1869; U.S. Patent 14532, Pigeon Trap, July 1, 1873; U.S. Patent 161267, Breech-Loading Gun Bolt and Locking Mechanism, March 23, 1875.

14. Meriden Daily Republican, Meriden, Connecticut, March 15, 1877, and Dexter Wright Parker, January 18, 1879, letter to West Point.

15. Louis C. Parker, III, Charles E. Price, Roy W. Gunther, William B. Mullins, Daniel P. Cote, *The Parker Story*, vol. II (Knoxville, TN: Parker Story Joint Venture Group, 2000), pp. 447-497.

16. William H. Edwards, *Civil War Guns* (Secaucus, NJ: Castle, 1982), p. 54; Norman Flayderman, *Flayderman's Guide To Antique American Firearms and Their Values*, 5th edition (Northbrook, IL: DBI Books, 1990), p.452.

17. W. H. and G. W. Miller U.S. Patent 47902, May 23, 1865, Breech-Loading Conversion Mechanism, assigned to Charles Eddy Parker.

18. Lewis Triplet, U.S. Patent 45361, December 6, 1864, Magazine Carbine, assigned to Charles Parker.

19. Andrew F. Lustyik, "Triplet and Scott Carbine," parts 1 and 2, *The Gun Report* (June, July 1979), pp. 12-18 and pp. 12-20.

20. R. L. Wilson, *The Book of Colt Engraving* (Los Angeles, CA: Wallace Bienfield Publications, 1974), p. 293.

21. W. H. Miller, U.S. Patent 59723, November 13, 1866, Breech-Loading Shotgun, assigned to Meriden Manufacturing Co.

22. C. Churchill, agent for W. H. Miller, English Patent 3173, October 16, 1868, Cartridge for small arms.

23. Charles S. Parker, president of the Charles Parker Company when the Parker shotgun was sold to Remington Arms Company in 1934 and son of Wilbur Fisk Parker, Jr., general manager of Parker Brothers beginning in 1906 and chairman of the Parker Company board of directors at the time of the sale to Remington, stated in recorded conversation with the author that Parker Brothers had been named by Charles Parker for his sons, rather than for himself and his then only surviving brother, John; Walter A. King, superintendent of Parker Brothers and son of C. A. King, drafted a promotional document in 1923 entitled "A Visit to Parker Brothers," which states Parker Brothers was named for Charles's sons. Author's collection. Also, 1875 Meriden City Directory lists Charles Parker, Wilbur Fisk Parker, and Charles Eddy Parker as Parker Brothers principals, and Dexter Wright Parker as secretary and treasurer of the Parker Company.

24. W. F. Parker, U.S. Patent 161267, March 23, 1875, Bolt and Locking Mechanism.

25. J. Dane, U.S. Patent 124939, March 26, 1872, Improved Gun Lock.

26. C. A. King, U.S. Patent 160915, March 16, 1875, Hinge Pin.

27. C. A. King, U.S. Patent 201618, March 26, 1878, Forend Latch.

28. S. Dangerfield, U.S. Patent 130984, September 3, 1872, Check-Hook.

29. The lowest serial number hammerless Parker Brothers shotgun in the Parker order books is number 55295, used to fill a December 12, 1888 order. The corresponding production stock book for this period is missing, but since the last gun produced in 1888 was serial number 56104 and 3,360 guns were produced that year, 55295 must have been completed in latter part of that year. Hammerless gun orders appear in the order books as early as September 1888, but higher serial numbers are entered for those orders.

30. Charles A. King's methodology in developing Parker's hammerless gun is described in a February 1952 article in the Meriden Record about Dr. G.H. Craig days at Parker Brothers. In the article, Craig states that he was hired in January 1884 as Charles A. King's gofer, and that he was constantly retrieving hammerless drawings, mechanisms, and parts of existing hammerless guns for King, as well as King's modifications and enhancements, until he left Parker in April 1889. English hammerless guns predating Parker included the Murcott's 1871 sidelock gun, Anson and Deeley ("A&D") 1875 box lock by Wesley & Richards. Gibbs & Pitt, W. C. Scott, and other English makers also made hammerless guns before Parker. American hammerless guns predating Parker include Daniel M. Lefever, who had an 1880 side-cocking hammerless gun design U.S. design patent and an 1885 hammerless gun design U.S. patent. Only a few Lefever guns were based on his 1880 patent. Harrison and Richardson made a boxlock gun in 1882 under A&D patent license. Colt's first hammerless gun was made in 1883, and L. C. Smith's hammerless gun was made in 1886.

31. C. A. King, U.S. Patent 356321, January 18, 1887, and Patent 368401, August 16, 1887, are both Hammerless Action Mechanisms. Most features utilized in the Parker shotgun are in King's first 1887 patent.

32. C. A. King, U.S. Patent 402675, May 7, 1889, Barrel Stop Mechanism.

33. J. P. Hayes and C.A. King, U.S. Patent 673641, May 7, 1901 Automatic Ejectors.

34. C. A. King, U.S. Patent 470157, March 1, 1892, Automatic Ejectors.

35. C. A. King, U.S. Patent 797123, August 15, 1905, Hardened Bolt Plate.

36. J. P. Hayes, U.S. Patent 973655, October 19, 1910, Redesigned Top-Lever Mechanism.

37. Captain E. C. Crossman, "The Parker Gun Factory," *The Sporting Goods Dealer*, July 1919, p. 37.

38. Parker Brothers Shotgun Production Table, First and Last Serial Number Each Year, *The Parker Story*, vol. II (Knoxville, TN: Parker Story Joint Venture Group, 2000), pp. 1000-1001.

39. January 1, 1932 stamped price list in Parker Brothers Catalog, 9" x 6", 32 pages. Author's collection.

40. February 8, 1935, letter from H.A. Stockburger, Charles Parker Company treasurer, to Remington Arms Company, specifying Parker Brothers sales revenue and guns sold from 1922 through first five months of 1934. Author's collection. Guns assembled in 1933 per recorded conversation with Charles S. Parker. Author's collection.

41. Charles S. Parker recorded statements about negotiation and sale of the Parker shotgun to Remington Arms Company. Author's collection.

42. Remington-Parker Shotgun Production Table, First and Last Serial Number Each Year, *The Parker Story*, vol. II, p. 1001.

43. Charles S. Parker recorded statements about Parker Brothers shotgun production costs. Author's collection.

44. Chapter XVI, *The Parker Story*, vol. II (Knoxville, TN: Parker Story Joint Venture Group, 2000), pp. 623-724 includes brief vignettes and photographs of these and other luminaries and their Parker shotguns.

45. Twenty-seven detailed "report cards" written and signed by the Parker Brothers contractors were each also signed by Walter A. King, Parker Brothers superintendent, and forwarded to Charles S. Parker's father, Wilbur F. Parker Jr., then Parker Brothers general manager and vice president of the Parker Company. Author's collection. Only Wilbur Fisk Parker Sr. and Wilbur F. Parker, Jr. shared a similar experience to that of Charles S. Parker.

46. Louis C. Parker, III, Charles E. Price, Roy W. Gunther, William B. Mullins, *The Parker Story*, vol. I, II (Knoxville, TN: Parker Story Joint Venture Group, 1998, 2000):

<u>Volume I</u>	<u>Page</u>
Chapter I	Charles Parker, Family, Business Ventures, and Associates 1
Chapter II	Early Parker Guns 67
Chapter III	Parker Brothers Hammer Doubles 85
Chapter IV	Parker Brothers

	Hammerless Doubles 119
Chapter V	Remington Parkers 151
Chapter VI	Parker Revivals 171
Chapter VII	Restored and Upgraded Parker Guns 195
Chapter VIII	The Grades 213
Chapter IX	Trap and Skeet Guns 389
Chapter X	Making the Parker Gun 417
<u>Volume II</u>	
Chapter XI	Parker Brothers Management and Workers 447
Chapter XII	Barrels, Bores, Chambers, and Frames 449
Chapter XIII	Parker Shotshells and Shooting Accessories 537
Chapter XIV	Gun Patents and Markings 567
Chapter XV	Show Guns 595
Chapter XVI	Special Parker Guns 623
Chapter XVII	Parker Gun Catalogs, Folders and Price Lists 725
Chapter XVIII	Parker Ephemera 781
Chapter XIX	Gun Records and Statistics 857
Chapter XX	Primary Products of the Charles Parker Company 885
Appendix	1035

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, Year of Jubilee Has Come, Meriden Lodge 77 (Meriden CT: Journal Publishing Co., 1901).

C. B. Gillespie and George M. Curtis, compilers, *A Century of Meriden*, parts 1, 2, and 3 (Meriden, CT: Journal Publishing Co., 1906).

Charles H. S. Davis, *History of Wallingford, Meriden, and Cheshire* (Meriden, CT: Privately published, 1870).

Commemorative Biographical Record of New Haven County, Connecticut (Chicago, IL: J.H. Beers & Co., 1902).

Connecticut History Makers, vol. 1 (Waterbury, CT: American Republican, Inc., 1929).

J. D. Van Slyck, *Representative New England Manufacturers*, vol. 2 (Massachusetts Publishing Co., 1879).

J. L. Bishop, *A History of American Manufactures, 1609-1860*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia, PA: Edward Young & Co., 1866).

J. L. Rockey, *History of New Haven County, Connecticut*, vol. 1 (New York: W.W. Preston, 1892).

PERIODICALS

J. O. Austin, compiler, *One Line of the Hicks Family* (Providence, RI: E. L. Freeman & Sons, 1894).

Louis C. Parker III, Charles E. Price, Roy W. Gunther, William B. Mullins, *The Parker Story*, vol. I, II (Knoxville, TN: Parker Story Joint Venture Group, 1998, 2000).

Mary R. Root, *Chapter Sketches—Connecticut Daughters of the American Revolution* (DAR 1904).

Norman Flayderman, *Flayderman's Guide To Antique American Firearms and Their Values*, 5th edition (Northbrook, IL: DBI Books, 1990) p. 452.

Peter H. Johnson, Parker, America's Finest Shotgun (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Co., 1961).

R. L. Wilson, *The Book of Colt Engraving* (Los Angeles, CA: Wallace Bienfield Publications, 1974), p. 293.

Stanford H. Wendover, et al., editors, *One Hundred Years of Meriden* (Meriden, CT: City of Meriden, 1956).

Webb's New England Railway and Manufacturer's Statistical Gazetteer (Providence, RI: Webb Brothers & Co., 1869).

William H. Edwards, *Civil War Guns* (Secaucus, NJ: Castle, 1982).

William R. Cutter, *Genealogical and Family History of the State of Connecticut* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1911).

William T. Davis, *The New England States*, vol. 2 (Boston: D.H. Hund, 1897).

Andrew F. Lustyik, "Triplett & Scott Carbine," parts 1 & 2, *The Gun Report*, June, July 1979.

C. K. Westbrook, "A Model American Gun Factory," *The American Field*, October 21, 1893.

Captain E. C. Crossman, "The Parker Gun Factory," *The Sporting Goods Dealer*, July 1919.

Harry Palmer, "The Parker Gun," *Field and Stream*, May 1909.

Meriden Daily Journal, Meriden, Connecticut, January 31, 1902.

Meriden Daily Republican, Meriden, Connecticut, December 26, 1876.

Meriden Daily Republican, Meriden, Connecticut, December 26, 1876.

Meriden Daily Republican, Meriden, Connecticut, March 15, 1877.

Meriden Record and Journal, Sesquicentennial Edition, Meriden, Connecticut, June 19, 1956.

Riggs Literary Recorder, Meriden, Connecticut, September 26, 1863.

Meriden Daily Journal, 50th Anniversary Edition, Meriden, Connecticut, "The Charles Parker Company," April 17, 1936.