

Circa 1840 Percussion Pennsylvania Longrifle

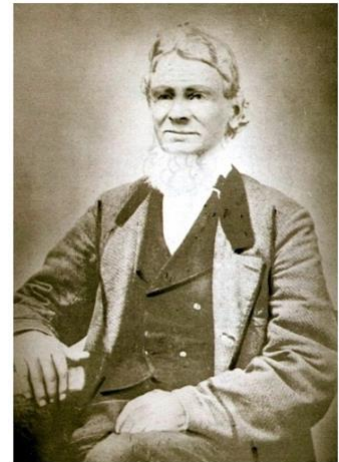
Made by Samuel J. Loudenslager

Written by Rusty Edwards



This .40 caliber Pennsylvania longrifle is signed “S*L” for Samuel Loudenslager, who worked in Penn Township, Union County (now Snyder County), PA during the first half of the 1800s. I believe it was made about 1840.

Gunsmiths in this part of central Pennsylvania created a unique style of longrifle that we now refer to as the “Upper Susquehanna School.” Among the features important to this particular group of guns are the shape of the stock, if a patch box exists, the mechanism by which it is opened, the method by which many gunsmiths made the rear ramrod pipe, and often the use of inlays and carving. It is the totality of these features that forms the “Upper Susquehanna School” of gun making.



Pennsylvania Gunsmith
Samuel J. Loudenslager

Samuel J. Loudenslager was quite repetitive in his work. The brass four-piece patch box has his typical pierced finial and engraving on the lid, while his incised “clam-shell” cheekpiece-covering is the same as he used throughout his career. Also, the brass lock-bolt plate with its “buckhorn” cutouts is one of his classic signatures.



Engraved four-piece brass patch box. The small release button can be seen on the butt plate.



The stock curvature is synonymous with the “Upper Susquehanna School” of gun making. The maple stock sports a simple claim-shaped cheek piece.



The stock has a crescent-shaped butt plate with an extended patchbox release button (shown in the center).



The third-party percussion lock is marked “Dickinson Warranted.” The back of the lock plate has a rolled scene of pheasants and foliage.



The simple lock-bolt plate is made from the small heart-shaped piece of brass cut from the patch box.

The brass trigger guard protects a pair of set triggers.



This photo shows the contour of the underside of the brass trigger guard. You can also see some of the decorative carving that was added to the underside of the stock.



The fixed rear sight is affixed to the octagonal rifle barrel.

There are three similar stock inlays on each side of the stock. I believe they are made of coin silver. They likely depict the rising sun or moon.



Shown here is the brass rear ramrod pipe.



In addition to the rear ramrod pipe, the rifle utilizes two ramrod thimbles.



The rifle has a simple brass nose cap and brass front sight.



Shown here is the section below the muzzle. Here you can see the hickory ramrod and some of the decorative carving mentioned earlier.