

Springfield Armory

Springfield Armory
National Historic Site
Massachusetts

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

NATIONAL
PARK
SERVICE

The Precision Corridor: The transfer of technology along the Connecticut River Valley.

Established by President George Washington and renowned for its technological innovations, inventions and inventors, Springfield Armory developed and manufactured shoulder weapons for the U. S. armed forces from 1794 to 1968.

Along the Connecticut River, private industries supporting and supplementing the Armory's production adopted manufacturing and quality control techniques pioneered at Springfield Armory.

This transfer of manufacturing technology from the government to the private sector was further advanced by former Armory craftsmen working for companies that manufactured products in addition to firearms. Together, they created the "Precision Corridor" spreading Springfield Armory's precision manufacturing practices throughout the Valley.

Robbins & Lawrence Company in Windsor, Vermont, established to fill contracts under the guidance of Springfield Armory, manufactured an early repeating rifle that was the forerunner of the Henry Rifle used in the Civil War. The design was later modified into the lever-action repeater that successfully launched the Winchester Repeating Arms Company of New Haven, Connecticut.



A Henry Repeating Rifle made by the New Haven Arms Co.

Thomas Blanchard, inventor of the Blanchard Lathe for shaping gun stocks, also built two steamboats in the 1820's and started the first successful commercial riverboat service between Hartford, Connecticut and Bellows Falls, Vermont. While working at Springfield Armory, Blanchard also built a steam-powered car 69 years before the Duryea automobile.

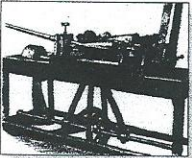


Horace Smith, who co-founded Smith & Wesson with Daniel B. Wesson in 1856, joined his father, William, at Springfield Armory in 1818 and worked there until 1842.



Smith & Wesson

Ames Manufacturing Company (1829 to 1933), which became famous worldwide as inventors and manufacturers of precision machinery, moved to Springfield for production contracts with Springfield Armory. In the 1850s, Ames modernized British military arms production by introducing machinery designed at Springfield Armory.



Second generation Ames-Blanchard Lathe, 1859

William Ruger, who co-founded firearm manufacturer Sturm Ruger & Company in Southport, Connecticut in 1949, began his training at Springfield Armory during World War II.

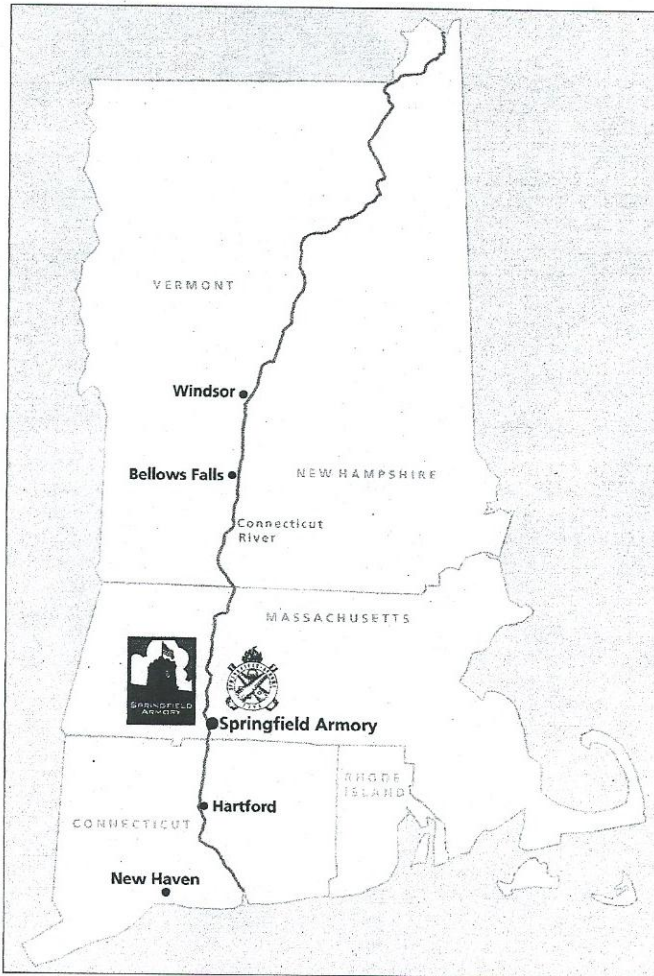


RUGER

Lamson & Goodnow Manufacturing Company (1869 to present), world-famous cutlery company in Buckland Massachusetts, grew from the E. G. Lamson Company that manufactured arms in Windsor, Vermont under the direction of Springfield Armory during the Civil War.



A Primer Carbine made by E. G. Lamson & Co.



Henry Leland, inventor of the Cadillac and Lincoln automobiles, the electric automobile starter, the V-8 engine and the Liberty aircraft engine, was trained as a machinist at Springfield Armory during the Civil War.



Cadillac Model A, 1903



Master Machinist Cyrus Buckland helped form Smith, Hall & Buckland in Springfield and the Wesson Firearms Company of Springfield and Worcester, Massachusetts.



Greenfield Tap and Die (GTD), established north of Springfield in 1912, supported and revolutionized Springfield Armory's rifle production, as well as that of American industrial precision metal-cutting, and became the largest tap and die company in the United States.



Rolls Royce produced many of its finest cars in Springfield in the 1920s and 1930s. Springfield was the only location outside of England where they found a reliable pool of precision metal workers.



A 1928 Phantom I made in Springfield.

Springfield Master Armorer, Thomas Warner helped found the Massachusetts Arms Company in Chicopee, Massachusetts in 1842. He later worked with Eli Whitney Jr. to update arms manufacturing in New Haven, Connecticut.



A Wesson & Leavitt pistol made by the Massachusetts Arms Company.



The Pratt & Whitney Company of East Hartford, Connecticut developed out of the Pratt & Whitney Tool Company founded by Francis Pratt and Amos Whitney, both of whom worked for Colt Manufacturing during the 19th century.



Colt's Patent Fire Arms Manufacturing Company established in New Haven, moved to Hartford in 1848 to be nearer the trained workforce and arms production at Springfield Armory. After the Armory closed in 1968 Colt Manufacturing Company became the primary shoulder arm manufacturer for the U.S. military.