

Donation of the Month

Lever Action Winchester Model 1892

1975.317.2

Donor: Robert DeLong



Living close to the land and hunting were often closely tied together. People saw it as family tradition, a means to supply food, and as a sport. Deer, turkey, rabbits, squirrels, doves, raccoons, and even possums were staples in the diets of many Ozark families from the early 1800s to well into the 20th century. Hunting equipment, such as shotguns or fishing lures, have become prized family heirlooms over the years.

One gun held onto within the family is this Model 1892 lever action Winchester manufactured in 1910. Made with a walnut stock and metal barrel it was designed by John Browning to be a lighter version of the Model 1886. From 1892 to 1938 Winchester made over a million of these guns in five configurations: Sporting Rifle, Fancy Sporting Rifle, Carbine, Trapper's Carbine and Musket. Our model is the Trapper's Carbine meaning it is slightly shorter overall due to a shorter barrel than the rifle or musket configuration.

The Model 1892 was very popular and famous. It was carried in dozens of films by John Wayne and other famous actors and it was carried to the North Pole by Admiral Robert E. Peary. While Winchester stopped making the Model 1892 in 1938 it is still manufactured by other arms manufacturing companies in other countries. Our gun was never famous, but it has stood the test of time; and is a good reminder of how prevalent and necessary owning a gun was to life in early America.

By the early 1900s, many animal populations had suffered greatly at the hands of overhunting, human population increases, and rampant destruction of natural habitats by the timber industry. While some populations have increased as conservation has become more prevalent, other populations have not. The loss of wildlife and conservation efforts have made hunting more of a sport than a necessity.