

## Winchester Lever-Action Rifles (Weapon)

*Martin Pegler*

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**Martin Pegler : Winchester Lever-Action Rifles (Weapon)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Winchester Lever-Action Rifles (Weapon):

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. The Winchester: from Henry to Browning and in war and peace. By Stone Dog Is there a more iconic American firearm than the lever-action Winchester? Both the author and I would say "No!" This is the story of the Winchester rifle from Henry to Browning with all the stops in between. Author Martin Pegler gives us a very good chronicle of the lever-action rifles we all call "Winchesters" even if they are actually Henrys, Ubertis, Marlins etc. It's a very good short work on a rifle and an action that is uniquely American. The story begins with various attempts to make a breech-loading, repeating firearms including the Jennings, the Spencer and the Smith Wesson "Volcanic" weapons. The story moves on to B. Tyler Henry who worked on the Volcanic and was wisely kept on by Winchester when the latter bought out the Volcanic Arms Co. Henry was able to

make it work by working simultaneously on the rifle and self-contained ammunition that it would fire. From there, the author takes the reader through the decades after, from model to model and from technological change to technological change. I felt the author does a good job of tracing the path of lever-action development with the figures that would significantly contribute to the weapon. The author then moves on to the lever-action in battle between pioneers and Indians (both would use it) and the US Army often found on the receiving end! I always thought it interesting that although the US Army rejected the weapon, other "warriors" embraced it. The author tracks its use in the hands of Indians, law enforcement, various banditti. He looks at the use by hunters and Hollywood. The author points out that the Winchester lever-action and the .30-30 Win. caliber are probably responsible for taking more game than any other firearm in US history. Westerns have always been a staple of the movie industry in America and the Winchester often found itself pride of place in them. From "Winchester '73" to "True Grit" wherein "Duke" Wayne would spincock his Winchester as "Rooster Cogburn", these movies celebrated the Winchester more than any other weapon...with the exception of the Colt S&W. The author even gives the reader accounts of various incarnations of the Winchester lever-action in "musket" form used in foreign militaries. This is an excellent work with the usual, excellent Osprey period photos and color plates. I was impressed by the author's comprehensive coverage of this weapon family. I am the proud owner of a Winchester model 94AE "Trapper" in .357 magnum and can attest to the good handling qualities as well as the excellent shootability of the carbine. This is a very good volume which gives the reader an excellent history of the firearm in a very readable and accessible package. I recommend it with five stars. 8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Comprehensive yet concise. Well written and insightful. A great read for both firearms and history enthusiasts. By octagon Perhaps the best historical analysis ever, of both the Winchester rifle specifically, and the earliest repeating rifles in general. Not just about the Henry; the Winchester's direct ancestor; but also the Jennings, Volcanic, Colt, and Spencer. I have read extensively about firearms history for years, yet learned quite a bit from this book. The author deftly weaves the history, technical details, and even the ethos of The Winchester Rifle as it has been represented in film and in popular culture, into an informative and entertaining package. One that even readers with no specific interest in guns will enjoy. And, as I've already noted about myself, those who are knowledgeable about this subject will be impressed with the technical drawings, wealth of information, and deep analysis of the topic. The rare photographs and excellent "in action" illustrations are the icing on the cake. Highly recommended. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Legendary rifle... By HMS Warspite The repeating rifle was one of the game-changing innovations of warfare in the second half of the 19th Century. The increase in firepower over the single shot, muzzle-loading musket was obvious, but the technical challenges were significant, and solved only gradually. At the forefront of this technological bow wave was the Winchester lever-action rifle, the weapon that "won the West" along with the Colt 45 single action revolver. "Winchester Lever-Action Rifles" is an Osprey Weapon Series book, authored by Martin Pegler, with illustrations by Mark Stacey and Alan Gilliland. The book considers the repeating rifle from 1840's experimental models, through the Henry rifle that saw service in the Civil War, to the famed Winchester lever-action rifle that has become iconic through portrayal in films and television shows about the Old West. The rather detailed technical discussion of the development of a reliable lever-action rifle takes up a third of the book. The section of the use of Winchesters in the Civil War and the winning of the West may be of more interest to the general reader. The closing segment, on the impact of the Winchester rifle, underlines how the facts and mythology of the American West may be equally responsible for the fact that Winchester rifles are still in production in the 21st Century. This book is well-written. This reviewer appreciated the author's willingness to print the facts and the legends. The section on the combat use of Winchesters in the First World War was surprising and informative. The accompanying photographs, diagrams, and illustrations do a nice job explaining the technical development and actual use of the Winchester. Highly recommended.

Winchester Lever-Action repeating rifles are an integral part of the folklore of the American West. Introduced shortly after the American Civil War, the very first Winchester, the M1866, would go on to see military service as far afield as Bulgaria, but it was in the hands of civilians that it would become known as 'The gun that won the west.' Offering a lethal combination of portability, ruggedness and ammunition interchangeability with pistol sidearms, the Winchesters and their innovative and elegant breech-loading system represented a revolutionary design. They were used by a staggering variety of military and civilian groups - gold-miners, trappers, hunters, farmers, lawmen, professional gunmen and Native Americans. It equipped a whole generation of settlers and as such left an imprint on American culture that continues to resonate today. This book explores the Winchesters' unique place in the history of firearms, revealing the technical secrets of their success with a full array of color artwork, period illustrations and close-up photographs.

About the Author Martin Pegler has a BA Hons in Medieval and Modern History and an MA in Museum Studies, both from University College, London, and was for many years the Senior Curator of Firearms at the Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds. Martin has established The Somme Historical Centre ([www.martinpegler.com](http://www.martinpegler.com)), where visitors can see the technology used in the 1914-18 trench warfare. He is currently an author and firearms consultant and he also

lectures at local Great War museums. He is the author of a number of books including *The Military Sniper since 1914* (Osprey, 2001), *Firearms in the American West 1700-1900* (The Crowood Press, 2002), and the highly acclaimed *Out of Nowhere: A History of the Military Sniper* (Osprey, 2004), and he has also contributed to a number of magazines. In the 1980s he had the privilege of interviewing many World War I veterans about their wartime experiences, and the recordings are now part of the sound archives of the Imperial War Museum, London. The author lives in France.