



## Wooden Model of a SHARPS BREECH LOADER

### The Gun That Changed the Habits of American Riflemen

**W**ARS and weapons have changed enormously in the last century, and the Sharps rifle has not only seen most of the change, but has played an important part in the process. Christian Sharps patented his first breech loader in 1848, then waited many years for recognition—which finally came from unexpected quarters.

Although Sharps made constant improvements and refinements on his original design, some influential military men scoffed at the gun as an unreliable toy, and clung to their old muzzle loaders. Civilian fighters, however—and there were many in those days—had no qualms about adopting a new weapon. The Kansas Territory, where many

