Shoulder Arms of the American Revolution

George C. Neumann Collection,
Valley Forge National Historical Park
The shoulder arms that were used in the colonies varied greatly from one to another. There were different ignition systems, calibers, lengths and weight of the rifles and muskets. During the American Revolution all of these makes and models found their place on the battlefield.
Musket

Although many makes and models of muskets were used during the American Revolution, they all had some similarities. They were all smoothbore, muzzle loading flintlocks fired from the shoulder. Most ranged from .69 caliber to .80 caliber with some exceptions. The ammunition was a paper cartridge preloaded with black powder and a lead ball.
English Dog-Lock Musket, c. 1690-1710
VAFO101

- Weight: 8.9 lbs.
- Length: 61½”
- Caliber: .79
- Barrel: 46½”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
English Dog-Lock Musket, c. 1710-1720
VAFO103

- Weight: 8.0 lbs.
- Length: 57”

- Caliber: .77
- Barrel: 41”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
English Long-Land Service Musket, c. 1728
VAFO105

- Weight: 9.4 lbs.
- Length: 62 1/8"
- Caliber: .77
- Barrel: 46”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
English Long-Land Service Musket, c. 1730-1740
VAFO106

- Weight: 9.8 lbs.
- Length: 62 ⅛"
- Caliber: .75
- Barrel: 46”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
English Long Land Musket, c. 1761
VAFO107

- Weight: 10.8 lbs.
- Length: 62”
- Caliber: .79
- Barrel: 46”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
English Militia Musket, c. 1756
VAFO108

- Weight: 10.0 lbs.
- Length: 57½"
- Caliber: .78
- Barrel: 42”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
English India Pattern Musket, c. 1779

- Weight: 9.2 lbs.
- Length: 54 ¾"
- Caliber: .75
- Barrel: 39”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
English Naval Musket, c. 1759
VAFO111

- Weight: 8.7 lbs.
- Length: 55"
- Caliber: .80
- Barrel: 38 ¾"
English Naval Musket, c. 1756
VAFO112

- Weight: 9.3 lbs.
- Caliber: .78
- Length: 57 ¾”
- Barrel: 42”
Spanish Infantry Musket, c. 1750-1791

VAFO114

- Weight: 8.6 lbs.
- Length: 59 ⅝”
- Caliber: .72
- Barrel: 43 ½”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
French Infantry Musket, c. 1777

VAFO125

- Weight: 8.8 lbs.
- Caliber: .69
- Length: 59 ¾”
- Barrel: 44 ¾”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
German Musket, c. 1770-1786
VAFO128

- Weight: 9.8 lbs.
- Length: 57”
- Caliber: .71
- Barrel: 41 ¼”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
German-Dutch Musket, c. 1770-1786
VAFO135

Weight: 10.8 lbs.
Length: 50 ⅜”

Caliber: .78
Barrel: 42 ⅛”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
German Musket, c. 1750-1770
VAFO136

- Weight: 9.0 lbs.
- Length: 57 ⅜"
- Caliber: .75
- Barrel: 42 ⅛"

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
American Musket, c. 1775-1780

- Weight: 9.8 lbs.
- Length: 58”
- Caliber: .78
- Barrel: 42”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
American Musket, c. 1770-1783

VAFO140

- Weight: 8.9 lbs.
- Length: 62 ¾”
- Caliber: .74
- Barrel: 46 ½”

George C. Neumann Collection
Valley Forge National Historical Park
American Militia Musket, c. 1760-1777
VAFO142

- Weight: 8.6 lbs.
- Length: 63”
- Caliber: .78
- Barrel: 47 ¼”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
American Musket, c. 1760-1776
VAFO143

- Weight: 8.6 lbs.
- Length: 60 ⅛”
- Caliber: .72
- Barrel: 44 ⅜”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
Fowler

Fowling arms were primarily used for hunting waterfowl during the 17th and 18th centuries. These pieces saw use during the American Revolution with militias. The Fowler was operationally similar to the musket but longer and there was no place to attach a bayonet.
American “Hudson Valley” Fowler, c. 1730-1740
VAFO146

- Weight: 10.3 lbs.
- Length: 75”
- Caliber: .75
- Barrel: 59”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
American “Hudson Valley” Fowler, c. 1740

- Weight: 10.7 lbs.
- Length: 75 ¾”
- Caliber: .65
- Barrel: 60”
American Club Butt Fowler, c. 1740-1750
VAFO148

- Weight: 8.3 lbs.
- Length: 66 ¾”
- Caliber: .72
- Barrel: 50 ¾”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
Fusils and carbines are smaller caliber and lighter weapons than a musket having a .65 or smaller caliber. These two types of shoulder arms were primarily used by soldiers on horseback and light infantry who needed to move quickly. Officers and non-commissioned officers in regular infantry units would often carry these light weight firearms into battle.
French Fusil, c. 1758-1763

- Weight: 8.3 lbs.
- Length: 55”
- Caliber: .72
- Barrel: 39 ½”
French Officers Fusil, c. 1760
VAFO152

- Weight: 7.6 lbs.
- Length: 54 ¾”
- Caliber: .71
- Barrel: 40 ¾”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
Dutch Fusil, c. 1775-1780
VAFO153

- Weight: 6.9 lbs.
- Length: 53 ¾”
- Caliber: .67
- Barrel: 39”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
German Fusil, c. 1765-1780
VAFO154

- Weight: 7.5 lbs.
- Caliber: .73
- Length: 53”
- Barrel: 39”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
English Light Dragoon Carbine, c. 1750-1765

VAFO157

- Weight: 6.0 lbs.
- Length: 47 ⅛
- Caliber: .68
- Barrel: 31 ⅜”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
English Light Dragoon Carbine, c. 1756-1760
VAFO158

- Weight: 7.0 lbs.
- Length: 51 ¾”
- Caliber: .67
- Barrel: 36 ¾”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
English Light Infantry Carbine, c. 1757
VAFO159

- Weight: 7.1 lbs.
- Length: 57 ½”
- Caliber: .65
- Barrel: 42”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
Rifle

Rifling dates back to the mid 16th century but was not used by battlefield commanders due to its slow rate of fire and lack of a bayonet. However, it saw heavy use with frontiersmen and sharpshooters in rifle companies. One of the most famous rifle companies was Morgan's Rifles who helped stopped General John Burgoyne’s army in the Second Battle of Saratoga.
German Wheel Lock Rifle, c. 1590
VAFO164

- Weight: 5.6 lbs.
- Length: 33 ⅞"
- Caliber: .75
- Barrel: 22 ¾”
German Jaeger Hunting Rifle, c. 1730-1740

VAFO167

- Weight: 7.8 lbs.
- Length: 44”
- Caliber: .51
- Barrel: 29”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
German Jaeger, c. 1740-1760
VAFO168

- Weight: 8.0 lbs.
- Length: 38”
- Caliber: .60
- Barrel: 23 ½”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
German Dutch Flintlock Rifle, c. 1760-1780

VAFO170

- Weight: 8.0 lbs.
- Length: 44 ¼ “
- Caliber: .64
- Barrel: 28 ¾”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
European Jaeger Rifle, c. 1740

- Weight: 8.9 lbs.
- Length: 55 ¼”
- Caliber: .70
- Barrel: 40 ⅜”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
Blunderbuss

The blunderbuss was a large bore weapon that saw limited use during the American Revolution. With its short range it was not practical on the battlefield. It was highly regarded during naval engagements, at close quarters, or employed as a defensive weapon.
American Blunderbuss, c. 1750-1780

- Weight: 10.0 lbs.
- Length: 39 ¼”
- Caliber: 1½” bore
- Barrel: 23 ¼”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
English Blunderbuss, c. 1740

- Weight: 6.0 lbs.
- Length: 30 ⅜”
- Caliber: 1 ⅜” bore
- Barrel: 15 ½”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
Wall Gun

The wall gun or “amusette” was an oversized musket that was emplaced on a fortification. The bore diameter was too small to be considered an artillery piece but also too large to be a shoulder fired weapon. These firearms would weigh between thirty and fifty pounds.
English Wall Gun, c. 1735-1750
VAFO181

- Weight: 32.0 lbs.
- Length: 72”
- Caliber: 1.05”
- Barrel: 54”

George C. Neumann Collection Valley Forge National Historical Park
For More Information

If you are interested in learning more about these weapons or the George C. Neumann Collection contact:

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