

**Record Group 18**  
**Markham Air Rifle Company**  
**King Manufacturing Company**

1887-1986

1 and ½ manuscript boxes

Plymouth Historical Museum, Plymouth, MI

Finding Aid Written by *Christine Race*, 12 January 2005

Updated by Jennifer Meekhof 21, Sept 2011

- Creator:** Markham Air Rifle Company
- Acquisition:** The King Manufacturing Company / Markham Air Rifle Company records were deposited in the archives at various dates including the 2002 and 2003.
- Language:** Materials in English
- Access:** Records are open for research
- Use:** Refer to Archives Reading Room Guidelines
- Notes:** Citation Style: "Markham Air Rifle, King Manufacturing Company,"  
Record Group 18, Archives, Plymouth Historical Museum

**Abstract**

The Markham Air Rifle Company began as a company called Markham Manufacturing Company, which produced wooden tanks and cisterns. In 1886, the company began to make wooden air rifles, called the "Challenger" and changed names to reflect the new product. In order to compete with the Daisy bb gun, Markham created the "King" metal bb gun in 1980. The name was changed to King Air Rifle Company in 1928. King continued to make air guns until 1940.

**Scope and Content**

The Markham Air Rifle, King Manufacturing Company record group contains records regarding the

**Entries**

- [Entry 1:](#) Company Articles
- [Entry 2:](#) Product Information
- [Entry 3:](#) Newspaper Articles
- [Entry 4:](#) Advertisements
- [Entry 5:](#) Markham Letters
- [Entry 6:](#) Envelopes
- [Entry 7:](#) Photos
- [Entry 8:](#) Correspondence about King or Markham

**Important Subjects**

Air Rifles -- 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Local Companies – Plymouth, MI

**Box 1, Shelf 54*****Entry 1: Company Articles***

The American BB Gun, Markham King air rifles

“BB Guns of Plymouth, Michigan” by Jim Perkins

“Captain Markham’s Dream” by Jim Perkins

“The Demise of Markham” It’s a Daisy

Markham family history “The McCarthy’s and the Markham’s” by Dorr N. Wiltse, Sr.

***Entry 2: Product Information***

Cardboard cut-out of the King air rifle

Price list of repairs for Markham air rifles (2 copies)

Price list of King air rifles and repair parts, 1940

Markham air rifles gun catalog (2 copies)

King Price catalog 1914

King Price catalog 1929

King Price catalog 1930

Markham catalog “A Brief History of the Air Rifle”

“How Air Rifles are made of Plymouth”

“The Story of the Air Rifle”

Patent information on Air Gun, January 29, 1907

***Entry 3: Newspaper Articles***

“Plymouth the Home of the Air Gun Industry” November 18, 1911

Markham name change “An Old Concern with a New Name” January 1928

“Markham fails in Los Angeles” November 13, 1936

“Society Snub Sent him to Hollywood” December 9, 1974

“Markham House: Intriguing tale of Social Life in Old Plymouth” Plymouth Observer  
October 13, 1975

“Dream Shapes Up for Old Main Street Air Rifle Factory” The Community Crier,  
December 22, 1976

“The Landing to Open Soon” March 15, 1979

“Plymouth 100 Years Ago: The First BB gun” August 11, 1986

***Entry 4: Advertisements***

Markham Christmas ad. December 1887

King Air Rifles, “Every Boys Choice” October 1912 (2003.027.05)

“Your Boy’s Aim” King ad. 1908

The King Rifle, October 1894

The King and Chicago air rifles (2 copies)

King pump gun announcement

King air rifle ad

Photocopy of a King air rifle sign (2 copies)  
King pump-gun announcement  
King air rifle ad  
Photocopy of a King air rifle sign (2 copies)  
King air rifle postcards, photocopied (2 copies)  
Ad for the King air rifle (postcard)  
King air rifle postcards, photocopied  
Ad for the King air rifle at Simmons Hardware Co.  
The Youth Companion, ad. For the new King repeating air rifle  
King ad in "Everybody's Magazine"  
King Christmas ad, Evening Post, 1915  
King air rifle ads in American Boy, November 1922  
"You can win a King prize" ad, November 1915  
"The Reward of today's Play is Tomorrow's Success" King ad  
King ad for Scholefield, Goodman and Sons

***Entry 5: Markham Letters***

Receipt 1889  
Resignation letter, May 6, 1893  
Resignation letter, February 21, 1899  
Letter to Village Council, July 31, 1903  
Letter to The Soo Hardware Co., October 22, 1913

***Entry 6: Envelopes***

Markham Manufacturing Co.  
Envelope from Albert Rakovsky (Acc #94.121.4a)  
Envelope from Fredrick Neuburger and Co.  
King envelope (Acc #1031 B)  
King envelope (Acc #94.121.4c)  
Envelope from Drogueria Charpentier (Acc #94.121.4d)  
Envelope from Casa Limon (Acc #94.121.4b)

***Entry 7: Photos***

Photocopy of 1933 #102 Gun  
Box photo of King Building  
Photocopy of the Markham Air Rifle Co. building  
Markham employees (2 photocopies)  
Markham employee pictures (Acc #2002.157.02)  
Markham employees (2 originals) (Acc #1107, 1108)  
Markham employees, 1900 (3 originals, 2 copies) (Acc #L779a, L779b, 1156)  
King/Markham employees (Acc #L784)  
Markham employees, 1900 (2 copies) (Acc #1106)  
Second floor woodworking shop, yr. 1900 (Acc #1157)

Markham family photo

View of the King plant, July 1938 (Acc #2002.116.002)

Outside view of Markham Building, 1977-81 (2 photos)

Photos of Markham, Markham's home, his yacht, and rifles

***Entry 8: Correspondence about King or Markham***

Information from Richard Usenia about King rifles