

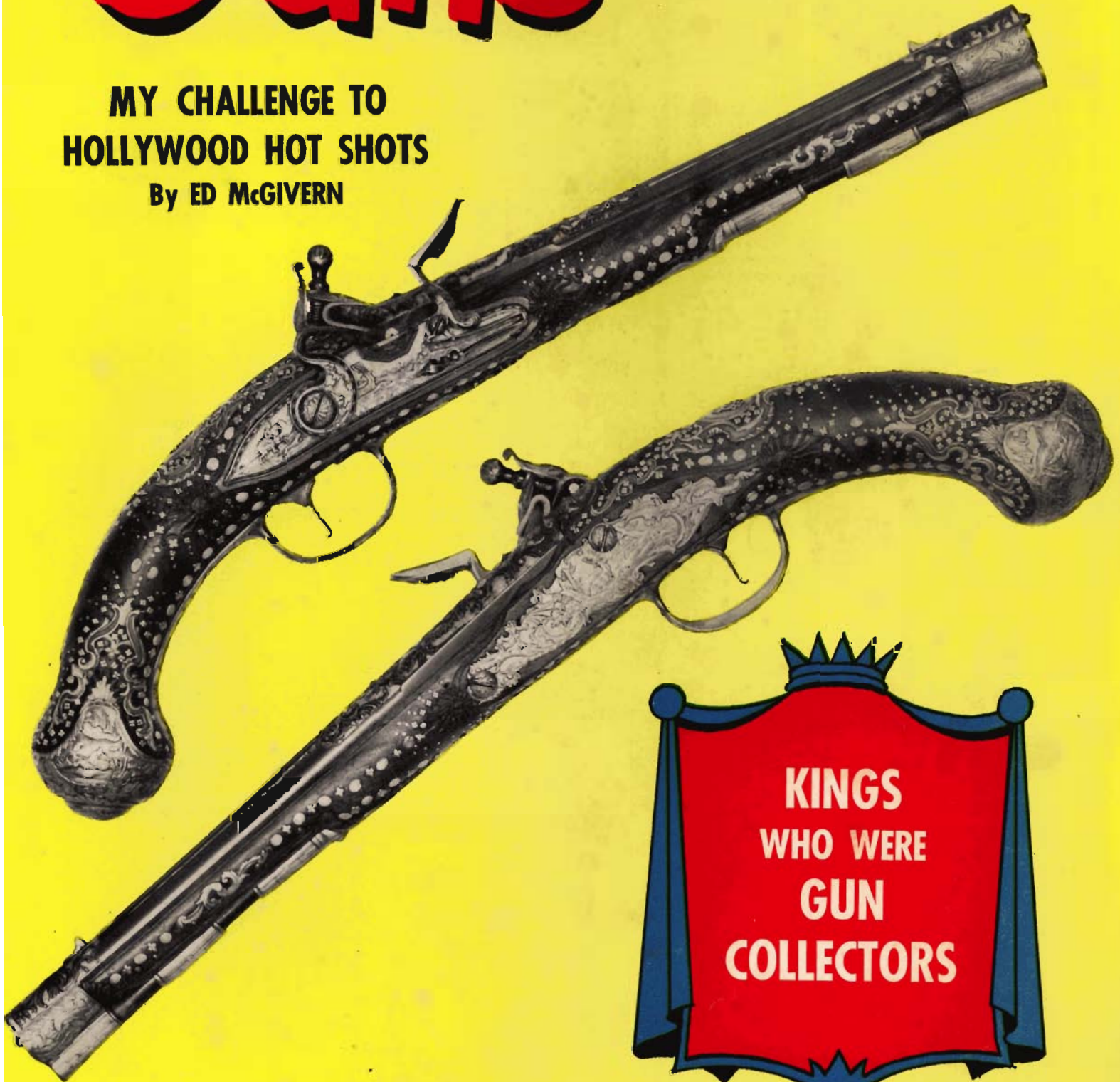
JANUARY 1957 50c

Guns

CONFESSIONS OF A
RIFLE EXPERT

MY CHALLENGE TO
HOLLYWOOD HOT SHOTS

By ED McGIVERN



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MAGAZINE

JANUARY, 1957

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COVER

Flint lock pistols of Augustus II, King of Poland, are literally worth a king's ransom. While selling parts of his native Saxony to finance his wars, Augustus, one of the "Kings Who Were Gun Collectors," paid a big fee to gunmaker J. C. Stockmar for these heavily carved and gold inlaid pistols. The pair was later sold to an English collector in 1870 for 2,300 francs—comparable to as many dollars today.



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SHOOTING NEWS

Peiping, China. From out of the inscrutable East comes an unofficial new world record Olympic-course rapid-fire score, 585 x 600, shot by 22-year-old Red Chinese marksman Chang Hung with a completely inscrutable pistol. Unlike Chang's Soviet counterpart, Evgenii Cherkasov who fires the Russian upside-down automatic, the Chinese pistolman's match automatic is a standard upright type. But with a muzzle brake on the front and a 3-inch muzzle vent extension ahead of that. The front sight has been punched out of the barrel dovetail and is mounted on the foremost extension, giving Chang about 18" of sight radius for maximum scoring. A piece of railroad iron tied to the frame serves as a balance weight. . . . The Chinese shooter's score will not be listed officially as topping the present world record of 584 shot by N. A. Kalinichenko, since the match was not a formal world championship event.

Chicago, Illinois. Despite blustery weather on the first day of the shoot, the three-day Illinois State Skeet Championships started off with some fine scores. Reminiscent of many of the Great Western shoots, the weather improved the following day, and the 20-gauge on Saturday and the all-gauge on Sunday were shot under clear skies but with brisk winds. . . . The shoot really boiled down to a seesaw battle between Al Schuehle of Elmwood Park, Ill., and Jay Swardenski of Peoria, Illinois, with dark horse J. H. Sammis of Peoria making this one of the closest shoots in a number of years. . . . Schuehle won the all-gauge and the 20 gauge by shooting 100 straight with the big gun, along with Swardenski and Ed Mabie, of Evanston, Ill., and John Carver of Peoria. . . . Schuehle emerged as first round shoot-off winner and was victorious in the 20 gauge with a 99, being hotly pursued by Aldo Michelini, Chicago, with a 97, and Charlie Shedd of Chicago, Jay Swardenski, and Ross Major of Glenview, Ill., all with 96's. . . . The small-gauge championship was won by Swardenski with a 99, just enough to nose out Deno Burelli and Ed Mabie, both of the home club, with 98 and 97, respectively. . . . Sammis got off to a strong win in the .410 race on Friday with a fine 94, this being just what he wanted to win the all around title with a 383. Swardenski was right behind him with a 381, and Ross Major was the Class A champion with 372. . . . India Froelich of Chicago won the Ladies' All Around title with a 355, just nosing out Joan Regenstein, of the home club, with a 353. . . . In compiling the score, India was runner-up in the big gun with a 95 to Joan's 98. . . . India then went on to win the 20 gauge with a 94, while Joan and Lee Mabie of the home club tied with 93's, Lee emerging winner in the shoot-off.

Franklin, Tenn. The Dixie muzzle loading matches sponsored by the Tennessee Gun Collectors Association got under way with plenty of smoke, talk, and good scores during the three-day shoot. Shooters and collectors from six states registered and some 62 marksmen of the ilk of Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett posted some very fine scores. . . . Tops in the Rifle Rest Match was Wendell Kennedy of Auburntown, Tennessee, with a 95, followed by Kenneth Bumpas of Milton, Tennessee, 94, and the well known riflemaker, R. Southgate third with 92. . . . In the offhand rifle matches with the long barrels waving in the breeze, C. H. Howell of Huntsville, Alabama, copped the 25-yard title with a 91, while Fleming Williams of Franklin took the 50-yard match with a 76. . . . Mrs. Raymond Robinson came to the shoot all decked out in a striped dress and a forty-pound round-barrel rest rifle with a full-length scope and went home to Auburntown, Tenn., happy, having taken first place in the ladies' 50-yard Rest Rifle match. Second was Mrs. M. H. Parks of Nashville, and third, Mrs. Frank Bisby from Orange Park, Florida. . . . First and second in the 25 yard mus-

ket matches were shared by C. H. Howell and C. B. Haffner. Howell took first in the 25 yard match and Haffner from Franklin took second. Then in the 50 yard musket, "as issue, offhand," they switched, Haffner first, Howell second. . . . These as-issue matches roughly correspond to the big-bore .30 "as issue" military rifle matches but at a little shorter range. Accuracy is affected tremendously by the battering a lead bullet gets in being muzzle loaded. . . . Dixie Rifle Champion is Fleming Williams, with Southgate coming in second and C. T. Keeling third.

Norman, Oklahoma. The University of Oklahoma rifle team championed over Kansas State College by a score of 1881 to 1852 in the first match of the season. . . . Shooting was on Oklahoma U's "home grounds," but one thing about rifle shooting, unlike football, is that playing the game in your own range doesn't give you any advantage over the visitors. Kansas State was last year's winner of the William Randolph Hearst trophy and champion of the Big Seven conference. . . . Top scoring Sooner was Earle S. Florence, drilling the black for 384. . . . Close teammates were Jonathan Hankins, 376, and Robert Lewellen tying Ken Baltes with 374, and Bob Loschke with 373.

Wilmington, California. Sizzling weather and sizzling shooters burned up a ton or two of shotshells at the fall ATA registered match held at the Long Beach-Dominguez gun club. The biggest crowd of the season was on hand to watch the guys and gals powder the clays. . . . Among new faces in the array of shooters were Joseph M. George of Sunderville, Maryland, and Clarence and George Crill, formerly of Indiana and now residents of Pasadena, California. . . . Johnny Silveira and Lyle Corcoran, both Hollywood sharpshooters, divided top honors, with Silveira having a run of 100 in the 16 yard event one day and Corcoran scoring 100 x 100 at the 16 yard rise the next day. . . . The handicap event ended in a 3-way tie with Joe Chilton of San Clemente, Ed Henke of Ventura, and Bill Sprott of Compton deadlocked at 96 x 100. . . . In the Class A doubles during the Saturday shoot Dave Frank of LA took top honors with 97 and Claire Schroeder shot well in Class B with 91. . . . Sunday was no day of rest for Bill Harrison of LA who fired a good 96, to lead a close field of top local talent. . . . George Ross put on his bifocals for long distance to bring down 95 of the flighty clays from 25-27 yards in Sunday's handicap shoot. . . . The club put on a show with colored movies of the Grand American at Vandalia.

New Orleans, La. Earl and Joe Grego made it a two-man duet for first and second at the N. O. Police Revolver & Rifle Club last monthly meet. Earl fired a 288 and Joe 280, both with the .38 revolver. . . . Earl in the .22 Camp Perry course dropped nine points for 491 which is still pretty fair shooting. . . . Only seven club members fired, but the turnout really showed who was interested in shooting.

Middlefield, Conn. Powder-burning on the Blue Trail Range drew 82 senior entries and 13 youngsters for the 19th annual state smallbore championships. Miserable weather, cold and rainy, made shooting conditions tough but the muddy track did not dampen the enthusiasm of the shooters who made the best of it. . . . Match No. 1 at 50 meters with any sights fell to the dead eye of Master G. G. Bassett who scored a possible and 29 X's, followed by J. J. Crowley who dropped one point but drilled closer with 34 X's. . . . First expert was J. W. Murphy with 398-27. . . . Two Stratford, Conn., PAL youngsters shared honors with M. Firrantello scoring 396-23 for high sharpshooter and Barbara Chaffee posting 395-20 for high marksman. . . . Over the Dewar course Frances Lynn won the Ned Moor trophy and a cash award, firing 399-25 for high overall. . . . In the 200-yard any-sight event Fred Spencer earned the winner's spotlight with 198-6. . . . Don Bush scored high expert with 196-9. . . . This was a tough match because it came at the end of the day and the shooters had taken about as much rain as they could stand. . . . The Junior match was shot at the same 200 yard range and 35 young shooters provided keen competition. They scored by "X's" since for one-two-three they all fired a possible 200.

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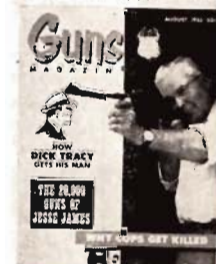
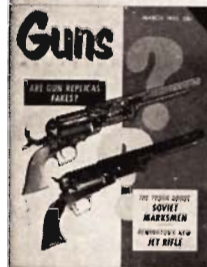
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CROSSFIRE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Askins Vs. Bolt Action Rifles

Have just reread the exceptionally fine article concerning the obsolescence of the bolt action rifle in the current issue of GUNS. You've certainly pinned back a few ears—well done!

I've long felt, as does Colonel Askins, that the bolt action is far from the ultimate in a hunting rifle.

Roger Rotzel
Baldwin Park, Calif.

I have just read Col. Charles Askins' article in the November issue, "Is The Bolt Action Obsolete?" I've never read an article in your magazine that upset me more.

In my opinion, Askins is all wet and it's time he quit being so one-sided in his articles.

Concerning the bolt action being slow, I've got a Remington 721 .270 and I can empty five shots within 20 seconds with accuracy—and I'm left-handed. Sure, the gun manufacturers aren't bringing out any new bolt actions, because there isn't much to improve on them. The average hunter nowadays wants more firepower, but is he getting the accuracy that can be obtained from a bolt action?

Askins listed the ammo sales in his article and the .30-30 is in first place. Naturally, because there are more Model 94's sold than any other gun. But how will it stand up at 300 or 400 yards against a bolt action rifle? Do bench-resters use lever or semiautomatic guns?

As to making the shooting of game illegal over 300 yards, it's out of the question. He sure didn't read "Elk Hunting" in your issue, did he?

Is it right to condemn an old reliable rifle like the bolt action? I don't see what Col. Askins has to gain by an article like that, except enemies.

I read your magazine and usually enjoy the articles.

James A. Benedict
Grand Rapids, Michigan

I received my copy of GUNS a couple of days ago, and have just about read everything in it.

About Charles Askins article on the bolt action. I have been of the same opinion for the past 25 years, but never voiced it, or knew of anyone else of the same mind until I read his piece. The lever and slide actions have it all over the bolt. The autoloader is a freak, and an ammunition waster. A shotgun would do a better job.

H. C. Schuttpek
Renton, Washington

The November issue of GUNS came to hand this morning and I want to compliment you on the excellence of that magazine. I was especially interested in the write-up on bolt action guns by Colonel Charles Askins. That's an extremely informative story and has a lot of "meat" in it, as is usual in writings by Colonel Askins.

I consider him today the outstanding gun writer of the country. He knows what he is talking about; he writes exceptionally well and the shooter who will pay attention, will learn a lot from every one of his articles.

H. C. Russell
Federal Cartridge Corporation
Minneapolis, Minn.

Machine Guns and Legislation

I would like to give GUNS magazine a pat on the back for the articles on gun legislation and the occasional articles on automatic weapons. Others seem to shy away from anything to do with machine guns.

Wm. J. Springer
Las Vegas, Nevada.

Wants More Collector Stories

When I first began to buy GUNS more than a year ago I was purely delighted with the material and the way it was presented. I found a very well-handled balance between articles for the modern gun collector and shooter and the antique gun collector and shooter.

All other purely "guns" magazines had disappointed me simply because most of the articles were written by professorial geezers who seemed to feel that writing a doctor's thesis on their subject was the way to get readers and impress them with all the writer knew (or didn't know). In other words, "they were overcome by the effervescence of their own verbosity."

In your magazine I found the exact opposite: interesting articles by men who knew their guns who also knew basic journalism, English diction, and how to use a well-turned verb. On your writing, my opinions have not changed.

However, your old-gun, new-gun balance has shifted markedly away from the old to the new and believe me I'm truly disappointed. I like to read the stories about new guns so long as I can also peruse a real flavorful story about how some fellow refurbished his old Kaintuck.

My subscription will expire, I suppose, in about another nine months. At that time I'm afraid I'll drop reading your magazine unless there are some changes made. What happened to your old "nose for news?"

Dick House
Olmsted Falls, Ohio

TRIGGER TALK

ED MCGIVERN'S CHALLENGE to the Hollywood gunfighters is a rip-snorting start-off for GUNS Magazine's third year of bringing to readers timely, provocative, factual and fascinating articles about guns and the people who make and use them. McGivern is along into his 30's now but the old sparkle which has made his scholarly book, "Fast and Fancy Revolver Shooting," one of the greatest classics in arms writing flashes forth as he lays it on the line for the top guns of the wild, wild west in Hollywood.

A challenge to cowboy stars is McGivern's theme—to get the men in the entertainment world who very literally live by their guns, to show just how fast they really are. And they don't have to pit their leather slapping skill against somebody else, loser to die, but against the cold and impersonal precision of McGivern's elaborate, modern, and infallible electronic timing devices.

A little on the spectacular side is the lavish spread of photos of "Kings Who Were Gun Collectors." Royalty in years gone by, with no one limiting their expense accounts, spent fabulous amounts on fine firearms. But these noble collectors were also royal sportsmen, and knew the thrills of the chase for hind and hare, as well as the more relaxed enjoyment of the connoisseur with a beautiful gun, a work of art. Ron Spillman turns back to the pages of history to relate the story.

Gun cranks who can't resist the lure of the lathe and the swiftly curling white chips of clean metal will get a bang out of Nils Kvale's short magnum for Mausers. By following Kvale's directions owners of war trophy Mausers will discover they have a highly serviceable gun with excellent bullet weight and power to match the magnums—all at nominal cost. Kvale is chief test engineer at the Swedish Norma ammunition plant.

Colonel Charles Askins offers a sparkling bit of leaven to the loaf with his bare-all "Confessions Of A Rifle Expert." Historically, gun writers are all experts in the field, accomplished at drawing the long-bow, as well as shooting with the rifle. But Askins, who has garnered a bushel basket of assorted gold medals for straight shooting, frankly admits that on more than one occasion he has missed.



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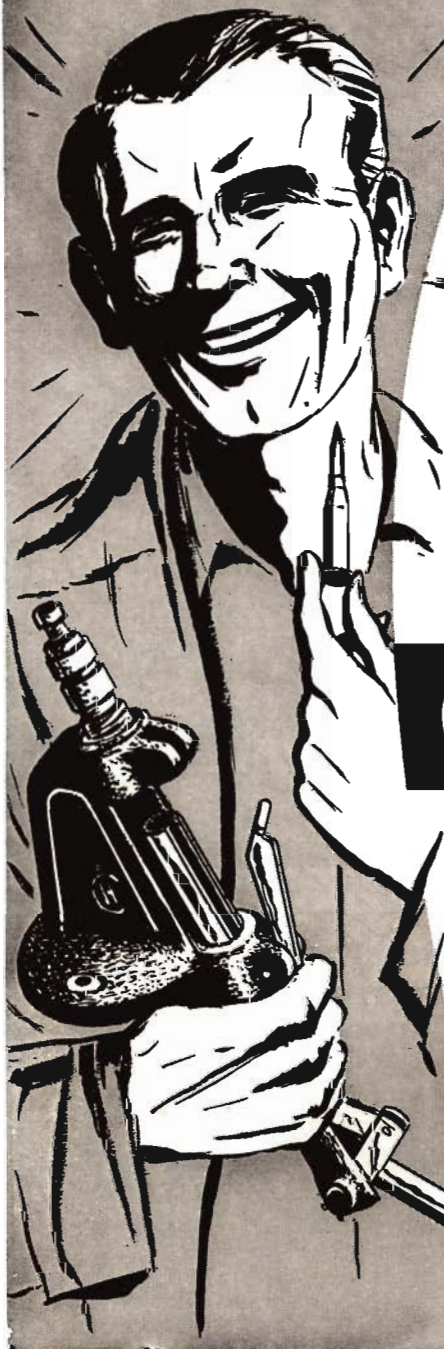
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GUNS in the NEWS

[Special]—

□ Outside his back door one morning, farmer Victor Piecyk of Ashford, Conn., spotted a bull moose, the first seen in the area in over 100 years. Almost immediately the state game department passed a law making moose-hunting illegal in Connecticut. When asked why they had never passed such a law before, the game officials said, "For about the same reason we never had a law against shooting elephant."

✱ ✱ ✱

□ In Michigan a hunter wounded a deer with his last two shells; then the animal turned and charged him. The terrified hunter swung his rifle and broke it over the deer's skull. Before it regained its senses, he tied the deer to a tree and waited until it died.

✱ ✱ ✱

□ A story making the rounds: two sportsmen found themselves against a stone wall, shooting along it at a clump of trees. Suddenly a red face popped up from the other side of the wall. "Hey, watch it!" said the face angrily. "You almost hit my wife."

"I'm terribly sorry," was the reply. "Tell you what, have a shot at mine, over there."

✱ ✱ ✱

□ The hunting feat of a 13-year-old Alabama boy, Chandler Bramlett, of Mobile, is the talk of Fish and Wildlife Service officials. He bagged two banded blue-wing teals on a single excursion into the marshes near Mobile. Frederick C. Lincoln, a Fish and Wildlife official, says he has hunted birds himself with fair success for 35 years, but has never brought down a banded bird.

✱ ✱ ✱

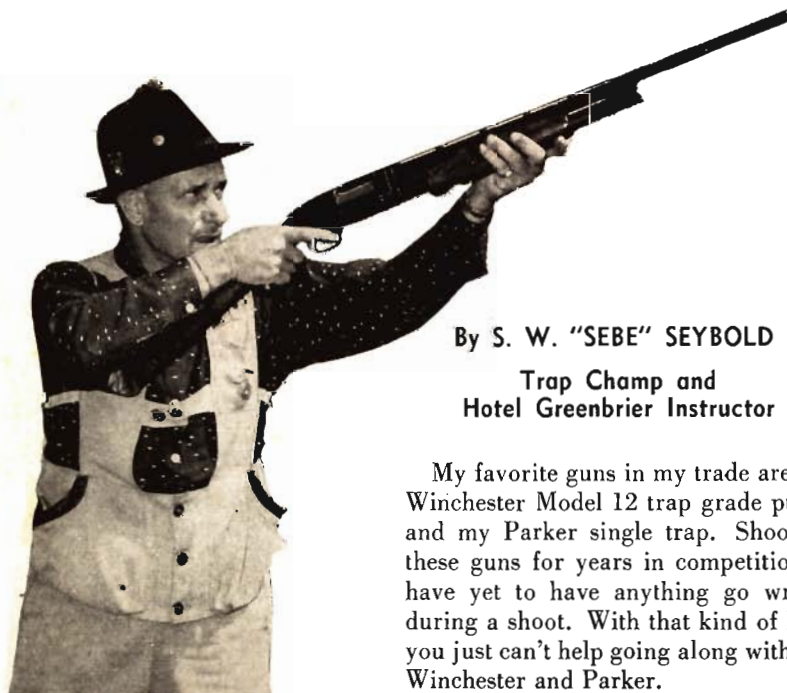
□ Nelda Ruth Snodgrass, Oklahoma A & M freshman, puts to shame most Oklahoma male marksmen. The brunet coed has won seven times in Southwestern rifle meets, recently scoring a 400 possible in a tournament.

MY FAVORITE GUN

By NORMAN FORGUE
National Skeet Champion



To name my favorite gun poses a problem because skeet is a four-gun sport. In the .410, 28 and 20 gauge events, I use a special grade Browning over and under with interchangeable barrels on a 12 gauge stock, so for three events I have the same stock, the same trigger pull, and equal balance regardless of the barrel gauge. However, in the 12 gauge event I use a Remington Model 870 pump with Cutts compensator, if for no other reason than because I have broken good scores under all shooting conditions.



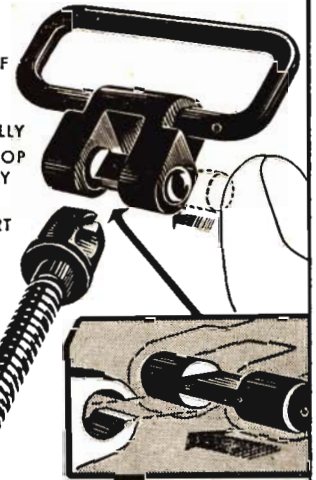
By S. W. "SEBE" SEYBOLD
Trap Champ and
Hotel Greenbrier Instructor

My favorite guns in my trade are my Winchester Model 12 trap grade pump and my Parker single trap. Shooting these guns for years in competition, I have yet to have anything go wrong during a shoot. With that kind of luck you just can't help going along with the Winchester and Parker.

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GUN RACK



By H. Jay Erfurth

New Gevarm .22 Automatic

A LITTLE RIFLE, one of the best-finished pieces of machinery in today's small-bore line, is being offered by Tradewinds of Portland. Branded the "Gevarm," this eight-shot .22 long rifle automatic is a switch on the usual French materiel. Remembering some of the military equipment chopped out in France during World War II, it is no wonder that gun cranks are generally sour on gallic merchandise.

But the Gevarm is nothing like that—it is a top-grade firearm and a pleasure to plink. Bluing is excellent, polishing is nothing less than superb. The stock, a racy sliver totally unlike the clubby American "handles," is of light wood but with a finish that completely fills the pores and which tops off with a soft, dull-sheen surface. The *schnabel* forend is unusual, but not out of keeping with the rest of the gun.

The exotic double-diameter barrel must cost a mint to make, but that isn't all. Fitted to the barrel, forward of the receiver in the position typical of military training rifles, is an adjustable windage-elevation sight of military pattern that shows the random marks of 100% hand filing and finishing. It is probably the most costly thing in the whole gun, but really isn't worth a sou. Tradewinds is slightly apologetic about the sight—they are at this time unable to make any price adjustment with the maker, so whether they leave the sight on or take it off, the rifle costs the same. The front sight is a little rocky, too. While of fundamentally good design, (it resembles the Lyman aperture insert Model 17A),

the French sight apertures need careful hand fitting to align them for correct sighting. I found that the apertures were all on the bias and gave a cock-eyed look to the sight picture. But the tubular receiver is neatly grooved for tip-off mounts, so fitting a scope such as one of the little Weavers or Mossberg outfits is easy and a good solution to the sight problem.

This cap buster is the answer to the ammunition makers' prayer. The clip takes 8 shots but after popping off the string I always was left with the impression that only five had been fired. So there is nothing else to do but load 'er up and try again. The inducement to burn up ammo in this little rifle is strong, and it's fun. We held the gun tightly while a friend tickled the trigger. The burst sounded like a tiny tommy gun, but there was no actual full-auto firing and the disconnecter worked surely each time. This is due to good, solid design of the trigger assembly, for the rifle has no firing pin and fires from an open bolt. Each time the trigger is pulled, the bolt jumps forward, shearing off a round from the clip and busting it square across the behind with a big rib on the bolt front.

I was having trouble with some misfire in a batch of ammo that we were using in my Walther PPK. But when I put the shells, complete with their firing-pin dents from other firing pins, into the Gevarm, the bolt busted them soundly and they fired. The makers, Gevelot Brothers in Paris, claim that the bolt rib which strikes two points on the rim at once, makes the gun shoot "stronger." Dizzy as this may sound, it may be true, (Continued on page 40)



Gevarm .22 in cocked position has bolt open, feeds from clip on closing.

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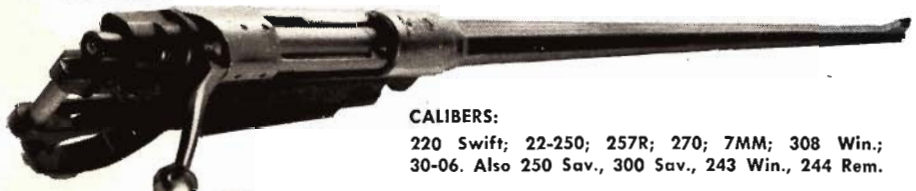


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23" or less in length. Fully chambered & threaded. Caliber 30-06. Only \$15.00.

SPRINGFIELD Issue 30-06 Barrels. Completely chambered and Threaded. 2-Groove. Only \$8.00. (Special Volume Prices on request.)

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Fitted to your Mauser or F.N. Action — \$6.00 more.



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FLAIG'S LODGE

KRIEGHOFF Drillings 22 Sav. H.P. 2-12 ga. 28" barrels, individual ejectors on rifle, indicators 7 1/2" \$480.00.

FRANZ SODIA Drillings 270 Win. 2-12 ga. 24" side safety highly engraved 7# \$420.00. (Can have this made-up any modern combination wanted same price).

MILLVALE, PA.

MY CHALLENGE TO HOLLYWOOD HOT SHOTS

Ed McGivern is now in 80's but still enjoys guns as his hobby, challenges Hollywood stars to try speeds on electric timers for proof of quick-draw claims.



**FASTEST PISTOL WIZARD OF ALL TIMES
SIZES UP CLAIMS OF MOVIE AND TV
STARS ON GUN SPEED AND OFFERS TO
TEST REAL ABILITY OF FILM COWBOY
HEROES WITH ELECTRICAL TIMERS**

By ED MCGIVERN

THERE IS A DELUGE OF AMAZING STATEMENTS coming from Hollywood these days about quick draws and related fast gun-handling performances. These new wonder shooters are men of the entertainment world who use guns in their moving pictures, while impersonating various famous characters of early western history.

Hollywood claims of lightning draws and magical leather-slapping have attracted the attention of a great number of my friends all over the country, and my associates in studying trick shooting. They have ganged up on me, demanding some explanation for these seemingly improbable filmland stories. They have asked for a series of tests and experiments to be conducted with the use of our extensive electric timing equipment and accessories, designed for the express purpose of removing error from timing fast gun-play.

My friends have asked me to clear up some of the very doubtful sounding details set forth in several of the more elaborate descriptions of these near-miraculous accomplishments in Hollywood.

If all the claims from Hollywood are true regarding the gun speed of current Wild West performers, it is highly improbable that Wyatt Earp, Wild Bill Hickok, John Wesley Hardin or any of the old-time gunfighters would have lasted through more than one swift exchange in a shoot-out in *Cirio's* against the actors who portray them in movies and television. The greasepaint boys would mow 'em down.

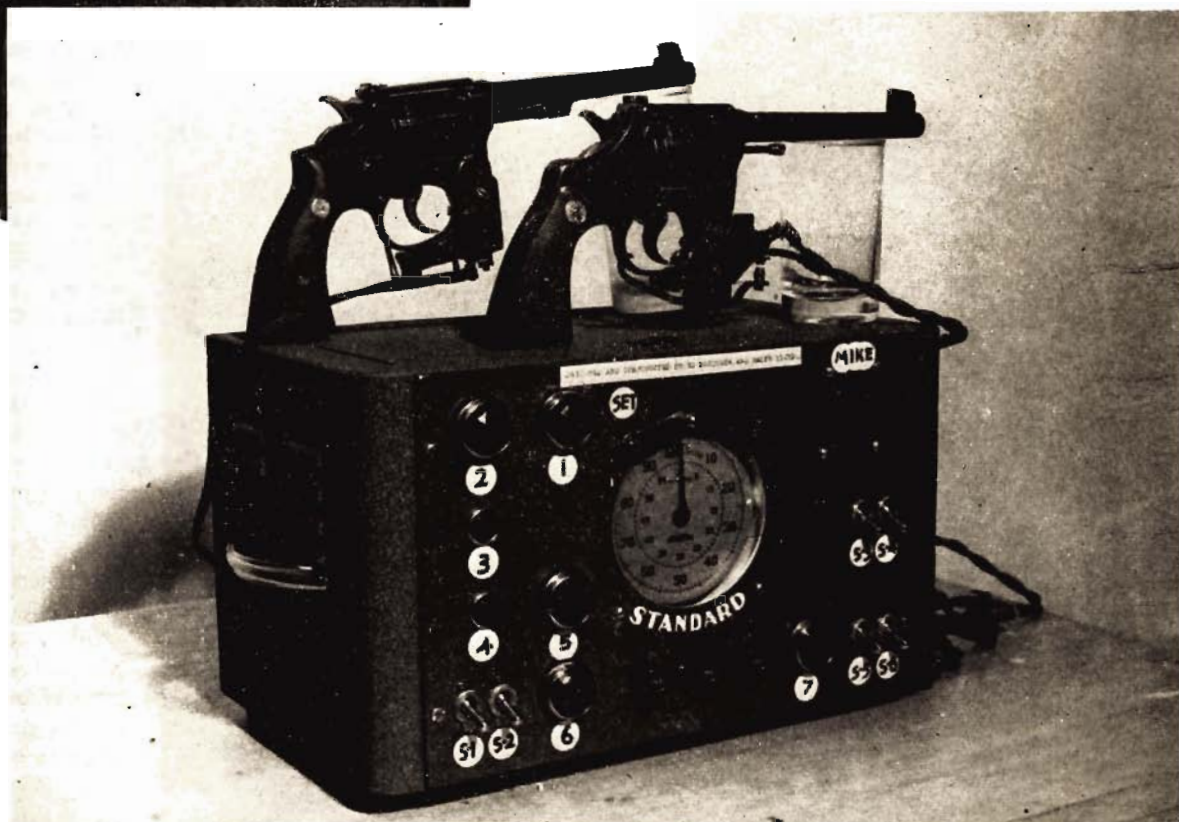
These Hollywood hot shots are seemingly carrying on a long-standing tradition. For many years, gun-smart movie addicts have been startled by Hollywood's disregard for gun facts and gun history. The old wisecrack about the early Henry rifles—that you “load 'em on Sunday, shoot



THE ED MCGIVERN STORY

Anyone seeking any knowledge of the history of fast and fancy shooting in America would have to go to Ed McGivern, the Montana gun wizard who holds all recognized marks for quick draw and speed accuracy. Now living in Great Falls, McGivern is in his 80's now. His own draw-fire-and-hit records, verified with the best electrical timing devices and by qualified witnesses, stand at from $\frac{2}{5}$ ths down to $\frac{1}{4}$ of a second. McGivern has spent the major part of a lifetime at speed-shooting and at timing speed-shooting performances and is well qualified to write about Hollywood claims to new gun speed records.

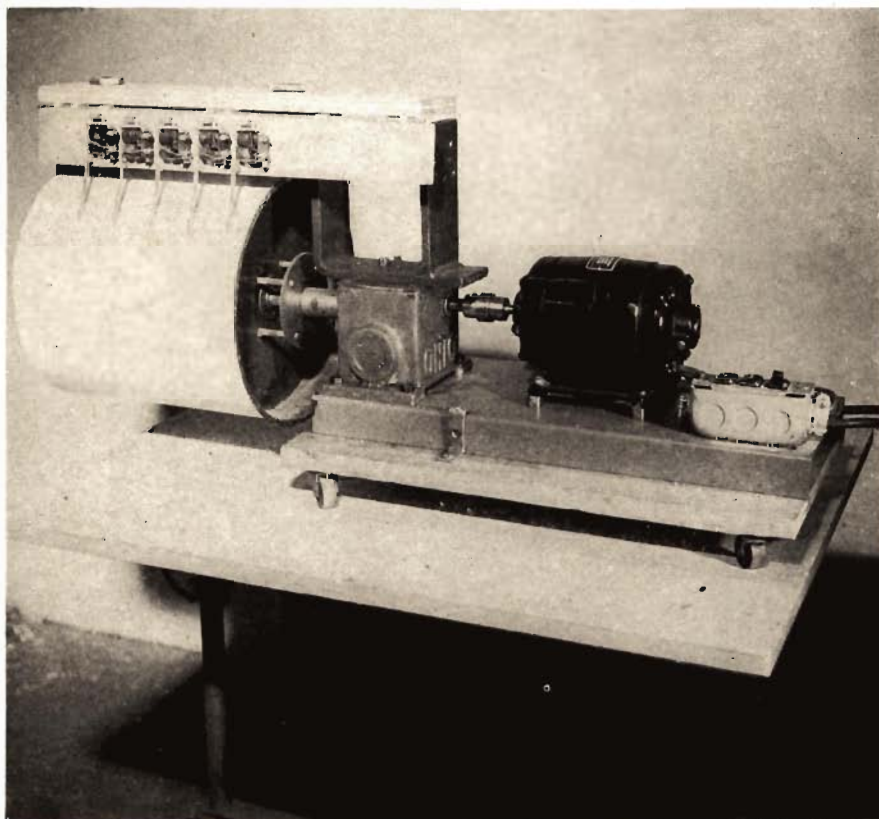
Hugh O'Brian's fast gun-play in TV show "Wyatt Earp" is supposed to be $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ second but some fast-talking movie men claim fast draws of $\frac{1}{10}$ second.



Precise timer incorporating a $\frac{1}{100}$ second clock with series of electrical contacts for attaching to guns and equipment was specially designed by McGivern to give accurate results.



Testing electric timing equipment, Ed McGivern is given hand by two aides, Bernice Peterson and Charles Troy, who are students of fastest shooter.



For timing two-man duels to see which shooter wins with no blood spilled, McGivern built synchronous motor-driven drum with electric recording pencils.

'em all week"—was taken literally by moving picture producers and the number of shots a cinema hero can get out of a Winchester lever action or a Colt six-pistol is amazing. Guns of post-Civil War invention appear frequently in pictures dating many years earlier. Fanning makes such a splendid picture of frantic action that Hollywood has turned every \$30 a month cowpoke into a trick shooter. And when it comes to quick draw—well! The stop watches need tenth-of-a-second calibration. And every shot hits, when the hero is shooting. A dead man for every slug is the motto.

But a comparatively new development has appeared in the claims made by publicity writers of actual timed split-second records set by several of the moving picture performers. Some of these make some of us oldtimers in the shooting business wonder where we were when they were teaching people how to shoot a pistol.

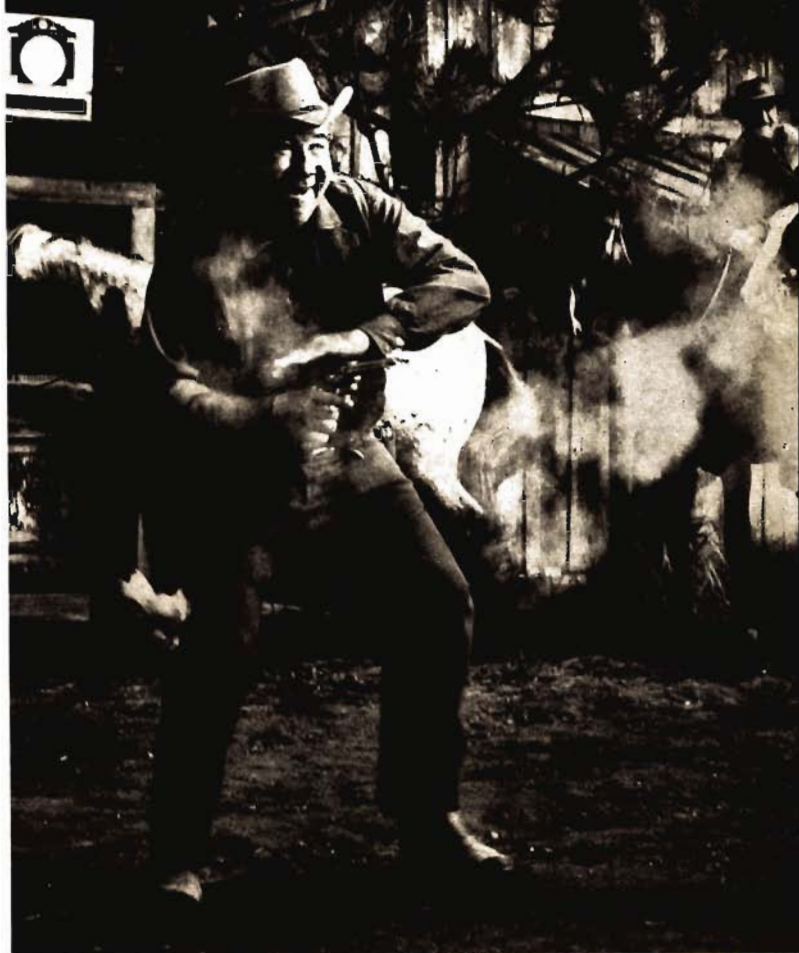
Hollywood shooter Arvo Ojala, who coaches the stars, claims he drops a half-dollar from waist level, draws a hip-holstered revolver; cocks, fires—and hits the half-dollar before it drops four inches. According to laws of physics accepted elsewhere than in Hollywood, a falling body drops 32.16 feet in the first second after its release. Four inches is 1/96th of 32 feet. Taking into consideration the fact that a body accelerates in falling, that it would be moving slowest in its first four inches of fall, the Ojala draw-and-fire would still have to be done in the incredible time of 1/10th of a second *or less!* This is many times faster than Wild Bill Hickok's best claim, and Hickok was not modest.

Ojala is also credited in print with firing a .22 caliber bullet through the hole in a Lifesaver candy mint at a distance of 20 feet, without breaking the candy. The hole in the Lifesaver mint I have before me will barely permit the passage of a .22 bullet, but the margin is so small that the rim of the .22 cartridge will not pass. The hole is not more than .03" larger than the bullet. Passing dead center, the bullet would have a clearance of about .015" around its circumference. This is better accuracy than any manufacturer claims for its best match ammunition—not allowing even a thousandth of an inch for shooter error.

Hugh O'Brian, who has been playing Wyatt Earp so long that he says he has "taken on some of the real Earp's characteristics," claims a draw-



In approved western style Broderick Crawford and Glenn Ford stalk each other in movie, "The Fastest Gun Alive."



Crawford draws and looses a volley by fanning, which is remarkable as he uses un-fannable double action #41.

and-fire time of .36 of a second. This is slow by Ojala standards but it's real good shooting, *amigos*; real good shooting. And O'Brian puts his *dinero* right back of his talk. He offers to bet \$1,000 that no moving picture-TV performer can out-draw him, proceeds to go to the loser's favorite charity.

This challenge by O'Brian brings up a question somewhat bigger than man-to-man shoot-out between two moving picture-TV personalities. Claims about "the fastest gun alive" have been going the rounds for a long time—claims by exhibition shooters, law enforcement officers and others, as well as by the boys from the studios. How about a quick-draw match pitting all of the Hollywood swifties and anybody else who cares to enter, against accurate, unbiased timing devices, to see how fast any living man actually can get a gun out of a holster, fire it, and put a bullet into a fair-sized predetermined target?

The prospect of such an impartial test, not monitored by human beings holding stop watches, and subject to human error, but by the rigid timing discipline of electricity, offers interesting possibilities.



Arvo Ojala (left) who claims draw and fire as fast as 1/10th second trains stars like Tab Hunter. Marilyn Monroe and Rory Calhoun have been students.



Pair of silver plated Peacemaker Colts with long barrels and solid ivory grips will be awarded by Colt's firearms company to winner of fast-gun contest of Hollywood, movie shooters supervised by McGivern's trained experts.

Ed McGivern still enjoys shooting today even though afflicted with arthritis. He is a legal expert on firearms.



Nearly all these "gunmen" of the entertainment field use the regulation drop loop western holster, right, left, or double according to the story of the film. This type of holster hangs low by the knee, and places the butt of the revolver near to the shooter's hand. Such holsters are usually the kind mentioned in western writings or pictured in the movies.

A uniform quick draw, either for exhibition or demonstration purposes, or for combat training, consists of starting with empty or open hands, from any position preferred, but with hands off of and entirely free from the gun. Then, at a signal agreed upon as a danger signal, the shooter reaches for his gun which may be carried in any preferred holster or rig. The gun is drawn in any manner preferred, cocked or used double action. The gun is then fired a sure hit shot at any target designated beforehand. The completed performance should be timed correctly from start of hand movements to finished hit.

Timing this performance requires elaborate and reliable equipment, electric and/or photographic devices. Timing by hand stop-watches is often erratic to a great degree because of the human error involved in the starting movements. Such motions are very difficult for the human eye to detect instantly, so as to make the observer start the watch instantly. And starting the watch at the exact moment the draw starts, is necessary for accurate results in timing records. A slight error at starting and stopping may seriously confuse results.

Certainly this would be true in regards to reports of tenth-second draws by at least one Hollywood hot shot. But our electric timing units in hundreds of tests by very fast performers, support our belief that no one has ever accomplished such a quick draw.

Anything below quarter-second or three-tenth second draws, complete with reasonably well-placed hits and controlled bullet grouping, (Continued on Page 58)

CONFESSIONS OF A RIFLE EXPERT

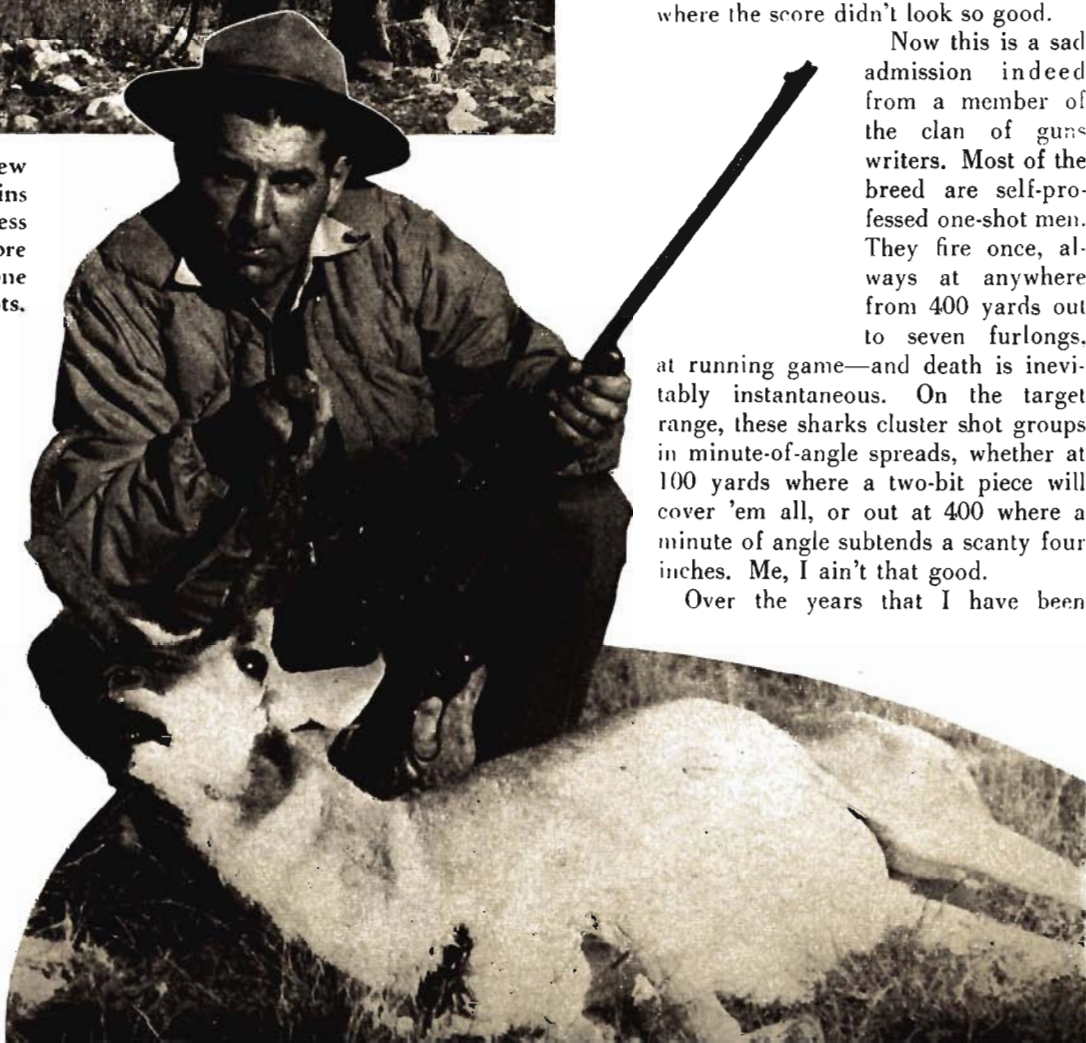
ALTHOUGH HE HAS KILLED MORE GAME THAN MOST MEN EVER SEE, VETERAN SHOOTER AND HUNTER STILL ADMITS THAT HE SOMETIMES MISSES, AND GIVES SOME COLORFUL EXAMPLES IN INDO-CHINA

By COLONEL CHARLES ASKINS



As a forest ranger in New Mexico, author Askins made shooting a business as well as a sport. Score on coyotes was about one killed out of three shots.

Southwestern prong-horn offers difficult, fast-moving target. Author Askins dropped this one with scope-sighted Model 99 Savage lever action rifle.



ONE OF THE THINGS that I like best about hunting in the game-rich Asian peninsula of Cochin China is that the critters grow big and you can work in close. Me, I'm one of these two-bit shooters who don't hit very well. I like lots of target, and the closer it stands the better. If sometimes I have to back up slightly to get the gun to shoulder, that's *bueno, muy bueno*. I've done a lot of missing in my day. Not so much lately in Indo-China where the game may range from a half-ton up to four or five, but I can remember times and places where the score didn't look so good.

Now this is a sad admission indeed from a member of the clan of guns writers. Most of the breed are self-professed one-shot men. They fire once, always at anywhere from 400 yards out to seven furlongs, at running game—and death is inevitably instantaneous. On the target range, these sharks cluster shot groups in minute-of-angle spreads, whether at 100 yards where a two-bit piece will cover 'em all, or out at 400 where a minute of angle subtends a scanty four inches. Me, I ain't that good.

Over the years that I have been



Elk hunts have taken Askins (right) into many of the best western hunting areas. Although he sometimes misses, his hits have earned him many trophies.

Misses must have been few this autumn day in author's earlier years, even though targets for his Remington 30S .257 were smaller than gaur and tigers.



burning nitrocellulose, a shooting stint that has accounted for a modicum of bloodletting on four continents, the Red Gods have seen fit to permit me to scrape down a game head or two. This I have done generally by working up so close the poor critter damn nigh suffered from powder burns. I learned in the Border Patrol a few years back that in shooting smugglers the in-fighting was more productive of a higher tally. It is the same with trophy game. Given my choice, I'll devote a handful of hours to crawling up to where I can deliver a slug from good sixshooter range. There's a man-size charge in being in there where you can thrill to the slug's impact, see the game flung upward and backward from the full power of the gun and cartridge hard off the muzzle. And—you get hits.

Shooting a game animal at 400 yards is about as thrilling as blasting him with an atomic bomb. It is the lazy man's way, the way of a novice who doesn't know how to stalk, doesn't know the skill or the thrill of stalking. Too often, the out-of-range shot results in wounded game that must be tracked down. And since the average hunter can't track, this means that the cripple will be left to suffer agonizingly and finally die. There ought to be a law against 400-yard shots at living game.

In spite of something less than the sensational ability with the rifle proclaimed by some of my contemporaries, I sometimes scratch down a trophy head. Not infrequently, however, this is only after a generous expenditure of gun fodder. I subscribe to the theory that Winchester, Remington, Federal and the others are in the ammunition business to make money, so when hair is in the sights I am loath to spare the horses. While shooting red-leg partridge along the Mediterranean, I found that when I was in peak form I needed four to five shells for every bundle of feathers brought to bag. If all our 16 million shooters were equally generous, the big companies could raise salaries.

All of us remember our good shots and forget the bad ones. This is marvelous for the ego and provides material for tall over-the-highballs hunting fables. I can spin 'em with the best. I well recollect one summer, the last of my three years as a forest ranger, when I killed 53 coyotes. It was up in the Jicarilla Apache country of northwestern New Mexico, a land of mesa and rimrock, of rugged canyons and

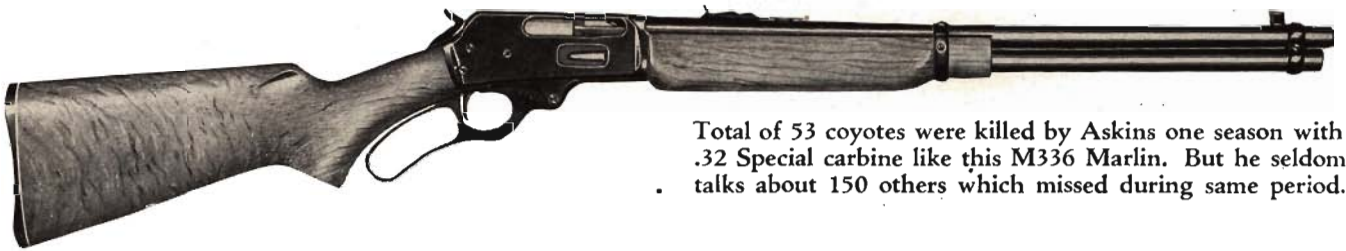
broad prairies, a land filled with lions, coyotes, wild horses, and sheep.

I tagged these 53 little wolves with a .32 Special carbine with open sights. It was good for about 75 yards. Beyond that, it was like three-card monte: sometimes you hit, more often you don't. I always tell this 53-coyote story with gusto, but I omit the rest of the story—which is that I missed two wolves that season for every one I killed.

I did some hit-and-miss shooting in World War II also. Before the Normandy circus, I was up in that funny little water-logged province known as Wales. There were a good many red deer in the forest and I decided the mess needed some relief from ox-tail



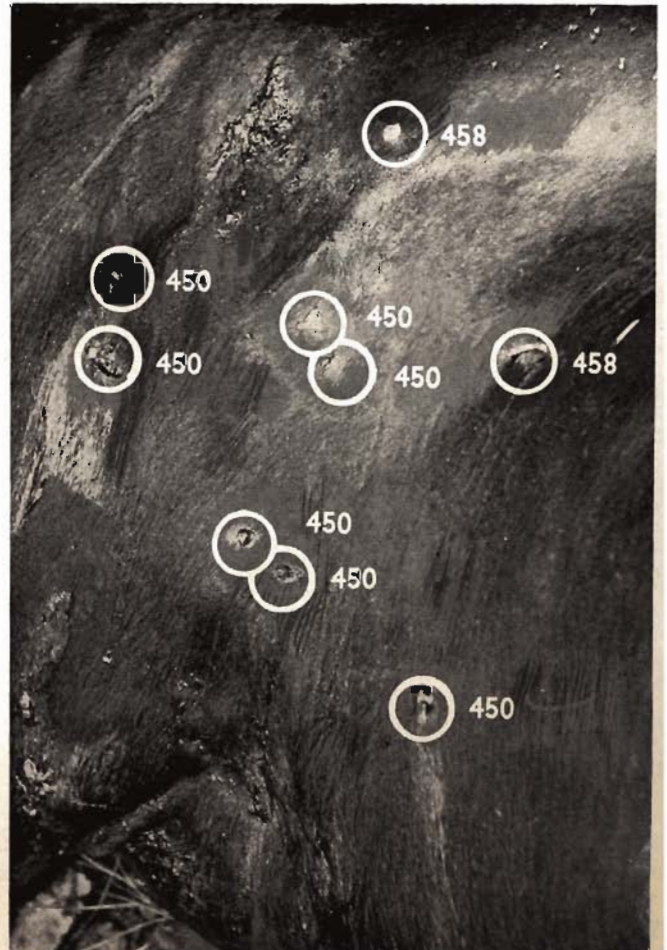
Muntjac or barking deer was killed cleanly by Askins with .44 Magnum revolver. But another was missed at 25 yards, "just good pistol range," with two shots from powerful .450-400 elephant rifle used by him in Asia.

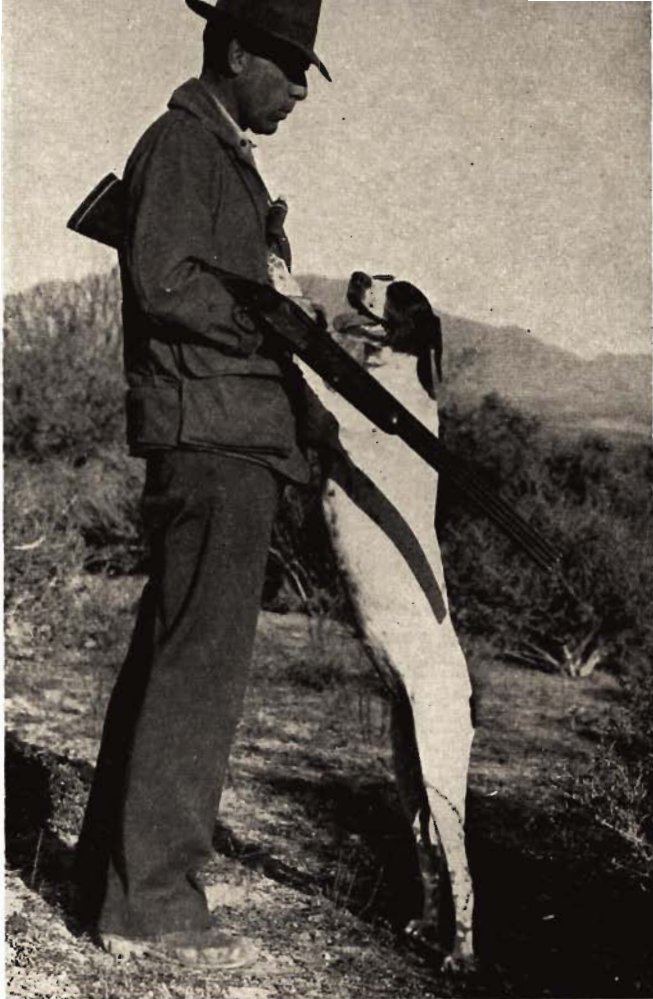


Total of 53 coyotes were killed by Askins one season with .32 Special carbine like this M336 Marlin. But he seldom talks about 150 others which missed during same period.

"Solitaire" gaur bull was found two days after being hit with forehead shot, delivered just too low, from Askin's pet .450-400 lever action Alaskan big-game rifle.

Seven-shot .450 group on gaur proves (1) that Askins can hit as well as miss, (2) he "doesn't spare the horses" when given a target, (3) some game takes a lot of killing.





Favorite dog and gun accompany Askins on bird shoot in Southwest where he learned hunting from his famous father, Major Charles Askins Sr., top shotgun authority.



Misses played small part in winning these handgun trophies, collected during Askins' swift rise to world champion target pistolman before entering army service.

soup and bully beef. I sallied forth one morn in May when day blossomed about 3:30 A.M. I got into a herd of the tiny deer by good light and singled out a handsome buck at a distance of not more than 40 paces. He stared at me with that "there's another of those bloody Yanks" expression on his face, and I aimed to part his hair just above his cowlick. But something went wrong. As the carbine cracked, he swapped ends like a cutting horse and got yonder. I'd missed him, clean as a whistle, at a range just a mite long for a Daisy air rifle.

In Africa, I shot gazalle on the Sahara, Barbary goats (he's called a sheep but the stinker is a goat) in the Atlas Mountains, and pigs in the cork forests near Philipville. I hit some of these targets, missed others. Much later, we crossed the beaches, negotiated the apple orchards and hedgerows of Normandy, sampled calvados (a dainty libation to make vodka, resemble ginger tea), and fetched up in the great Forest of the Ardennes, home of the great Red Stag, and roebuck by the thousands—and boar.

I recollect most vividly my first pig.

I was not exactly a tyro when it came to gunning boar. I'd killed nine among the cork trees of Algeria. But the swine of the Ardennes taught me a thing or two. I was stationed in a fire lane, a channel some 20 meters in width stretching for miles through the black spruce. I had located myself where the lane formed an elbow and, safely tucked away beneath a dripping conifer, I watched the unbroken wall of foliage before me.

Suddenly, without so much as a sound or the rustle of a single branch, a great boar burst into the clearing. He was in seventh forward speed. Mouth open, great tusks bared, he trod the spongy turf as silently as a hunting leopard. He was there and gone. The hasty shot I snapped after him was so wide of the mark that, to my slightly popeyed gaze, no acceleration in the game was visible.

I was pretty indignant at this *schwein*. I somehow had the idea that these continental aristocrats would be more gentlemanly. This hoary old tusker, and certain adventures I had with the *hirsh*, the Red Stag of the Ardennes and later in that gloomy German wood known as the Forest of the Hurtgen, taught me different.

We traversed the Hurtgen (and a bloody passage it was) and finally fetched up on the banks of the Roer. The river had been flooded by the Whermacht in anticipation of our arrival. It was done simply by throwing open a series of dams just above the village of Schmidt. Schmidt had cost the 28th (Pennsylvania) Division 2600 casualties over the Thanksgiving holiday and was unpleasantly remembered by all of us.

The Roer flowed hard by Duren, a town once boasting 25,000 population and said to have contained more millionaires per capita than any burg of similar size in all the fatherland. On our side of the Roer was a village, and from the houses lining the bank to the Duren village square was about 320 yards. This was long range for a sixgunner like me, but I climbed into the third story of a sizeable mansion and studied the Durenstrasse through a 20X spotting scope. Precisely in the middle of the intersection was a heroic monument to that old warrior, Bismarck. The 100-bomber run made on the town the week before had lifted the statue and turned it precisely 180 degrees. Where once the old kraut had looked greedily toward little Belgium and hated France, he was now facing the Rhine. It must have been an omen to shake even the most phlegmatic villagers to dig out after (Continued on page 42)

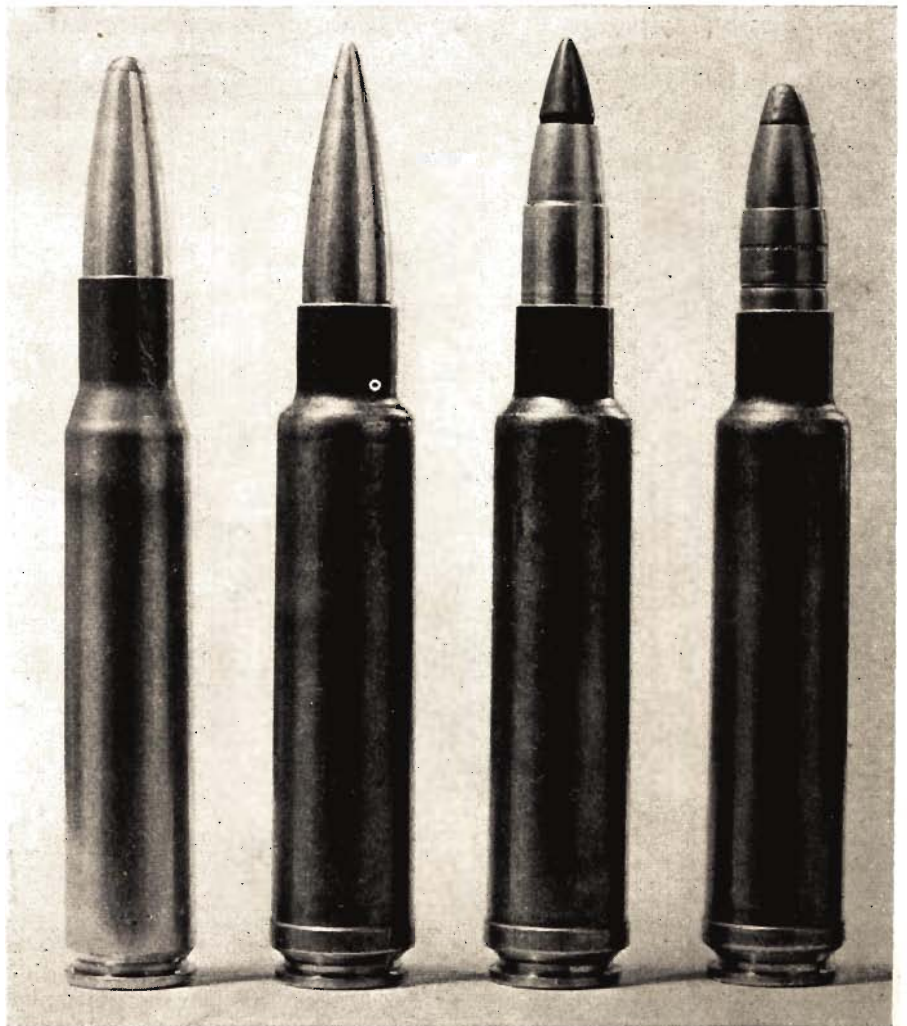
A NEW CARTRIDGE FOR THE POOR MAN'S MAGNUM

NEW SHORT MAGNUM FROM SWEDEN INCREASES
8 MM MAUSER POWER WITH MINIMUM ALTERATION

By NILS KVALE

THE 8 MM MAUSER can be and should be one of the best big game cartridges, yet in the United States it has been deliberately low-rated and shoved to the tag end of ammo development. They talk about the .30-30 as being so widely used, but the truth is that in many parts of the world where hunters have never heard of the .30-30, the 8 mm is the top favorite of the hunting fraternity.

But in the U. S. lack of decent 8 mm ammo is rough on the gun fan. While there are many 8 mm rifles in the U. S., all of them imported and most of them German, there is only one bullet weight and one loading available. For some reason the 7 mm Mauser is used in the States but its bigger 8 mm brother has just never caught on. However, there are lots of 8's around, ranging from the long GI

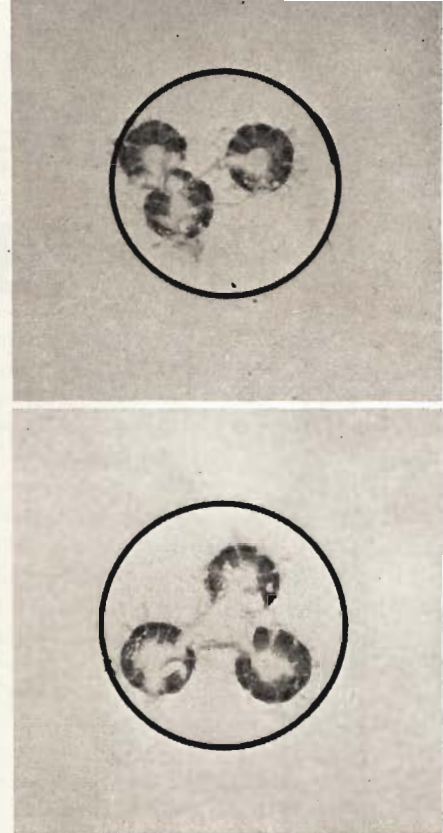


Common Kar 98 Mauser converted to 8 mm Kvale is poor man's magnum.

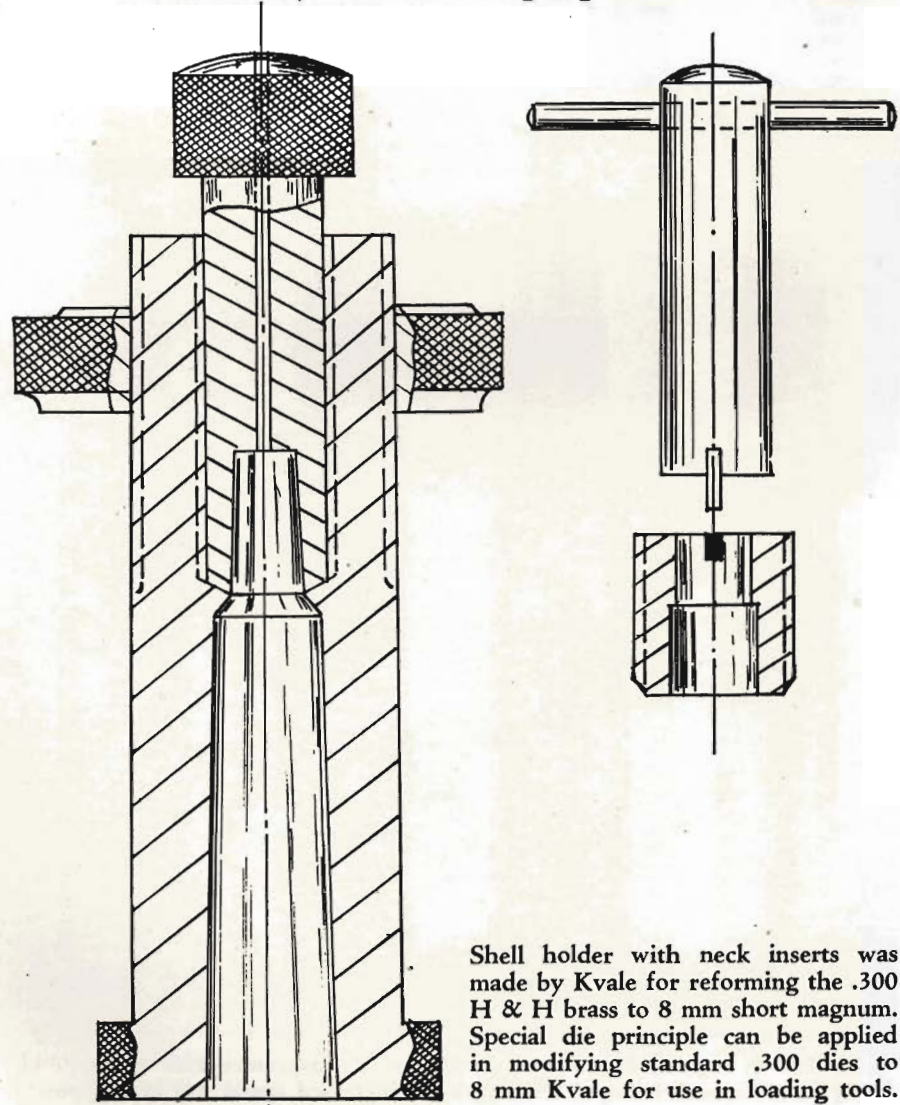
Compared to regular 8 mm load (left) Kvale's magnums with spitzer, "H" mantel, and exposed soft point bullets have increased speed and killing power.



Improved Mauser load dubbed "8 mm Kvale" proved inherently very accurate in FN Mauser when tested by the author on firing range near his home in Sweden.



Fired from machine rest, 8 mm Kvale shot 1" groups at 80 yards consistently.



Shell holder with neck inserts was made by Kvale for reforming the .300 H & H brass to 8 mm short magnum. Special die principle can be applied in modifying standard .300 dies to 8 mm Kvale for use in loading tools.

Mausers from 1914-18 to short "karbiners" of the second international hassle to the superlative commercial sporters built by top European craftsmen.

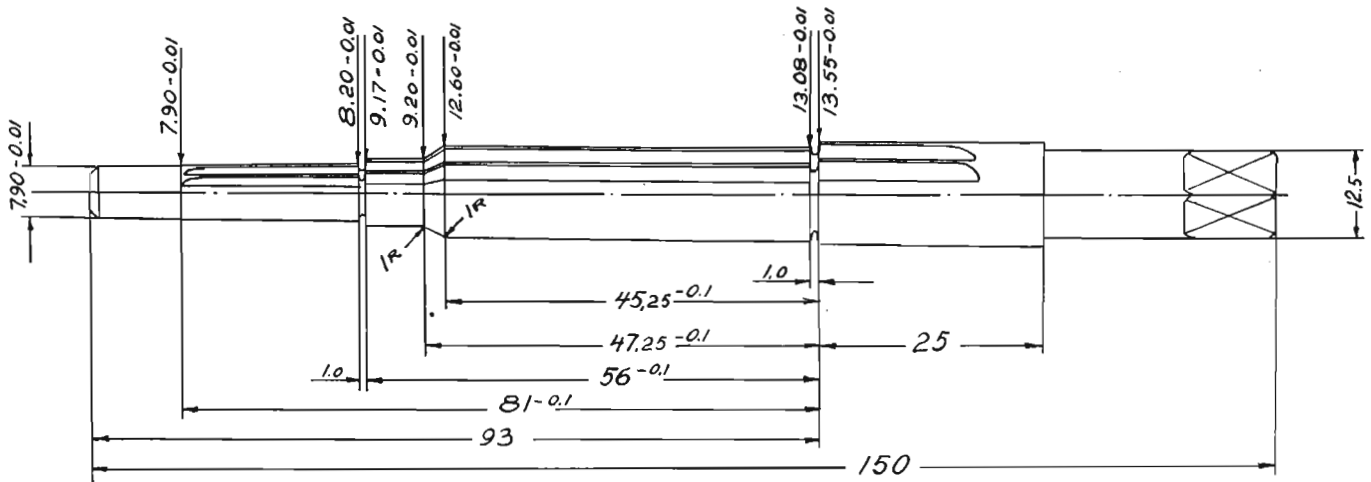
Shooting these rifles, which have been called the poor man's magnum because they are dirt cheap and still very powerful, becomes a problem. The trouble is in the ammo, because barrel diameters vary. The 8 x 57 J and 8 x 60 are .318" bore size, and the bigger "S" barrels for the 8 x 57 JS, 8 x 60 S, and 8 x 60 Magnums measure .323". Unless the shooter wants a helicopter view of his shooting bench without using a helicopter, it is a good idea to slug the bore and check to see what he has.

U. S. ammunition companies agreed to load a cartridge which would be safe in both barrels but the result is a load which is not very good in either. Wildcatting the 8 mm is the answer. And while you're handloading, why not step up the power a bit?

But by standard methods, this is tough. The more-power fellows consider these 8 mm rifles just nuisances, since they are built with standard length actions and making over one of these to a high-powered magnum cartridge is a lot of work. In some cases it may prove dangerous. Yet the basic Magnum Mauser in the U. S. will run



Sporting Mausers can be improved by rechambering to 8 mm Kvale load which was developed for standard actions.



Reamer for cutting 8 mm Kvale chamber is standard fluted type ground to exact dimensions. Measurements given by Kvale are in millimeters to avoid errors but machinist's conversion table can be used for translating to decimal inches.

over \$100 in cost and that is just the beginning of the rifle. This is a sharp contrast with the usual price tag of \$20 to \$40 for a good, sound military Mauser.

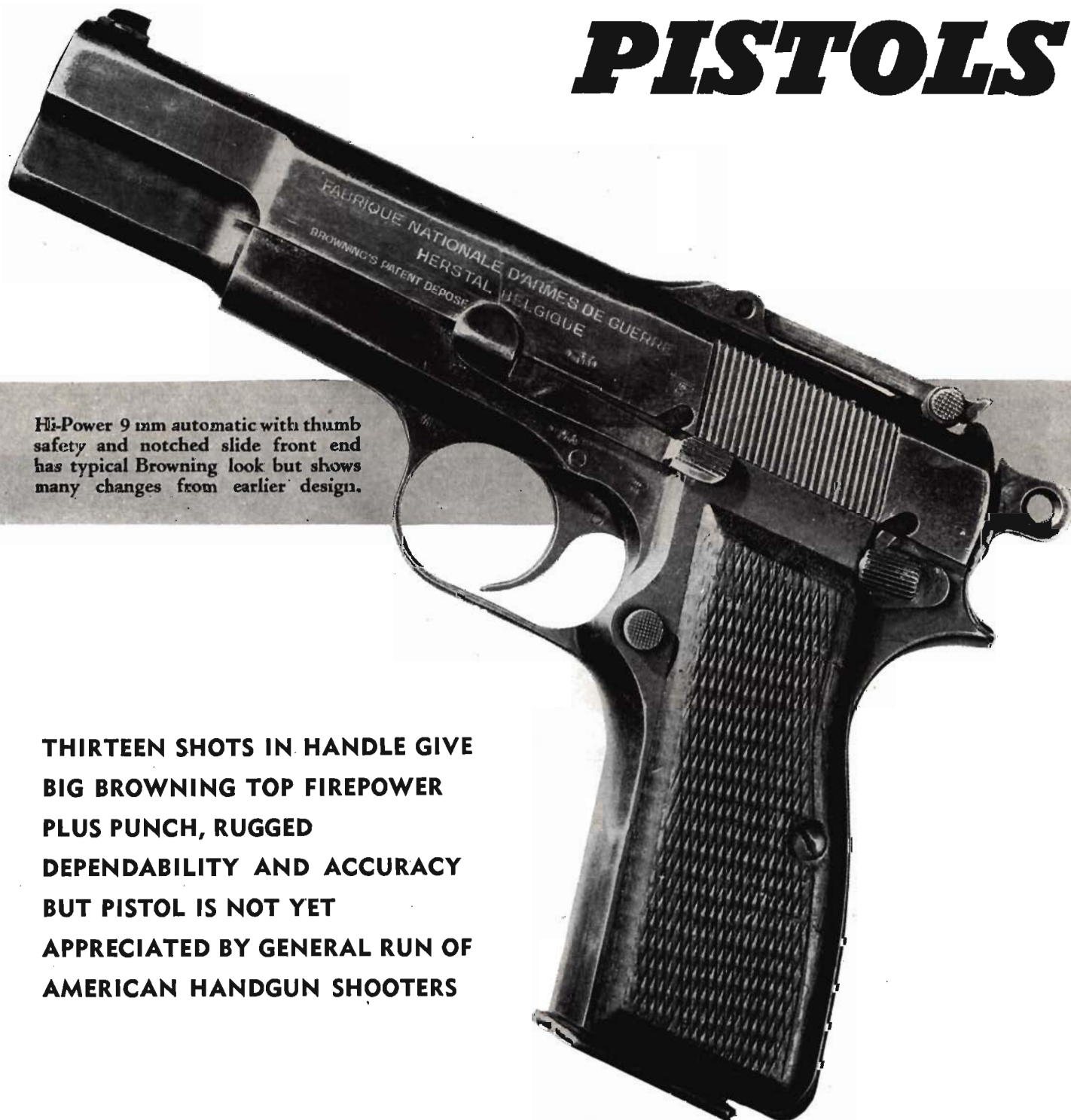
These same problems are common to all shooters—how to get more power with certain positive limitations. An 8 mm wildcat we worked up seemed to solve the problem neatly. Here I was limited by the action length. Because 8 mm ammunition was easily available to me in Sweden, I had built up an 8 mm sporter on the FN Mauser action, and fitted a Weatherby scope. But it seemed lacking in power and range when I stacked it up against some of the other rifles, .300 magnums and the like, used in our shooting club. Even in its own class, the 8 mm Mauser was under powered.

Certainly the 8 x 57 JS, as the 8 mm Mauser is called in Europe, with modern bullets and powders is extremely popular. But it is, even in Europe, pushed aside by the high-velocity numbers. The 7 x 64 mm, forerunner of the .270 Winchester, and its rimmed brother the 7 x 65 have the edge in speed over the 8 mm. And all over Europe lots of hunters are awaiting the re-introduction of the latest RWS designs, the 6.5 x 68 and the 6 x 68 S which came out during 1939 and 1940. Strangely, the (Continued on page 41)



Kvale's converted 8 mm FN Mauser with Weatherby scope, firing 198 grain bullet at 2950 feet per second, is used by him for elk and other large game.

POWERHOUSE OF AUTOMATIC PISTOLS



Hi-Power 9 mm automatic with thumb safety and notched slide front end has typical Browning look but shows many changes from earlier design.

**THIRTEEN SHOTS IN HANDLE GIVE
BIG BROWNING TOP FIREPOWER
PLUS PUNCH, RUGGED
DEPENDABILITY AND ACCURACY
BUT PISTOL IS NOT YET
APPRECIATED BY GENERAL RUN OF
AMERICAN HANDGUN SHOOTERS**

By ALEC S. MACTAVISH

IF THE expression had not been used a century before for the Henry rifle, the Browning Hi-Power handgun would qualify easily as "the gun you load on Sunday and shoot all week." Packed into the handle of the Belgian automatic is a double-tier magazine holding no less than 13 rounds of 9 mm ammunition. With one in the chamber, this makes almost twice the fire power of any other military pistol with a standard clip.

The Belgians named it well when they called it G.P.—*pistolet de Grande Puissance*—high powered pistol. The name fits. The Browning Hi-Power, a prized trophy of the war, chosen by Canadian paratroopers as their service arm, remains today one of the most accurate pistols for civilian shooters. And if the Pentagon ever pensions off the present .45 auto, they could do much worse than pick the Browning, which is already the standard handgun of Belgium, Britain, and Canada.

Why does a handgun, never made in the U.S. and known mainly to the gun bugs and small arms experts, aspire to the laurels worn by Colt and Smith & Wesson for genera-

tions? The answer is simple: the Browning Hi-Power is, to big automatics, what Jayne Mansfield is to uplift. In other words, it's the most! Only the military adherence to the domestic .38 and .45 caliber sidearms has kept the Browning from the high place it deserves in American popularity.

Externally the Browning Hi-Power resembles the army .45 auto-pistol but the Hi-Power is way ahead of the Army .45 in design. Actually back in 1935 the Colt company had a chance to make the new Browning, but turned it down. The Belgian factory, makers of other Browning pistols, produced it instead.

The Hi-Power's most unusual feature is the trigger and sear linkage. The trigger works on the sear through a bar positioned in the slide over the magazine. In the trigger assembly is a hand or pawl which contacts the slide sear lever. This, in turn, operates the sear, which is located in about the same position as in the .45 army pistol. In spite of this roundabout design, lock time is fast. A very creditable trigger pull can be produced with a little working over.



Canadian sports writer Alec Mactavish holds Browning Hi-Power stiff-armed in matches where he has shot winning scores with big reworked pistol.



Peculiar twist of Browning's kick is not objectionable as oversized grip gives shooter a secure hold to combat it.



Easily-stripped Hi-Power shows changes from earlier models in design of fixed cam lug on barrel and fixed bushing in slide. Recoil spring has guide which holds take-down lever in place. Fat clip holds 13 shots, most of any pistol.

The 13-shot staggered magazine provides exceptional firepower. It makes a big man-sized grip which has great natural-pointing qualities.

Two other features contribute to the Browning's fine over-all performance. The first is the added length of contact between slide and receiver. This is produced by having a separate pair of guide grooves on the forward end of the frame. The second feature is the permanent, pinned-in bushing at the barrel muzzle. Provided there is no play between barrel and bushing, loss in accuracy resulting from worn or loose bushings, so critical in the earlier .45 pistols, is impossible in the M1935 Browning.

In most Hi-Powers the slide fits quite tightly. Any looseness can be corrected easily by squeezing together the grooves at the rear of the slide and front of the frame. Done properly, these two tricks are all that are needed to tighten the slide.

In some other automatics it is necessary to remove the bushing from the slide in order to make a liner or sleeve



Bearing surface where trigger rubs on clip should be burnished for match competition.

Long bar in solid rear part of slide rocks when trigger is pulled and pushes down at end to release sear, drop hammer, fire gun.



Targets shot with same ammunition in Hi-Power before (top) and after gunsmithing show improved accuracy.

into which the barrel can fit with a minimum of play. Some Browning accuracy jobs include this re-bushing as standard procedure; others omit it. Resulting accuracy as shown by competition use in Canadian civilian and military pistol matches seems about on a par in both types of worked-over guns. Apparently the new bushing is optional.

Installing a trigger stop is the next operation. This is done by drilling and tapping a small hole in the underside of the receiver ahead of the trigger. An Allen screw can then be fitted to bear on the forward extension on the right side of the trigger. As the trigger is squeezed, this extension pivots down towards the bottom of the receiver. The trigger stop arrests the travel of this pivoting movement at the critical point, immediately after tripping the sear.

When the trigger group is removed for installing the stop, it is advisable to polish all the interior surfaces of the receiver on which the moving parts bear. This should include the channel

in which the trigger bar moves to make contact with the sear lever.

Particular attention should be given to polishing the magazine disconnecter stud which is located at the rear of the trigger. The leading face of the magazine where the disconnecter stud bears should also be polished. As the trigger is squeezed, this stud moves on the face of the magazine. If the surfaces are left rough, poundage is added to the trigger pull.

Trigger pull can be adjusted easily. First, polish all bearing surfaces. Second, ease the piano-wire trigger spring. This is done by trial-and-error. The arms of the spring should be bent so they apply only enough pressure to insure completely reliable functioning and no more.

Working over the sear and hammer assemblies depends to a certain extent upon the individual gun. One simple way to lighten trigger squeeze is to reduce the area of bearing surface between sear and hammer notch. This is done by working the lower edge of the sear on a *(Continued on page 45)*



Canadian service gun used by author was fitted with custom Herrett grips.



Current U.S. import Browning is well finished, same type as pre-war.

Hi-Power made for Chinese Nationalists (top) was same basic model as pre-war pistol but had dull finish and used Mauser-type wooden holster stock. Prewar gun built by FN in Belgium (bottom) had leather holster on board stock.



KINGS WHO WERE GUN COLLECTORS

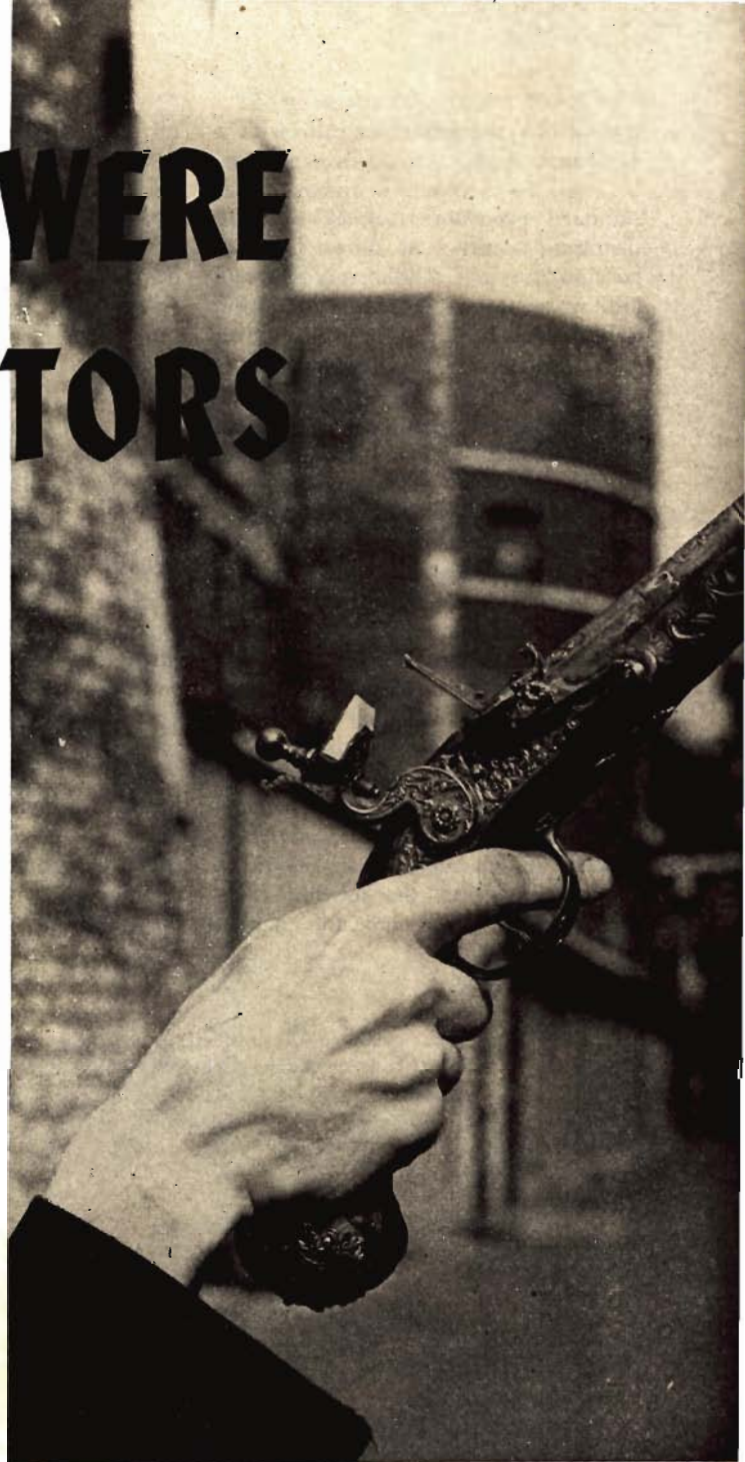
**PATRONAGE OF KINGS AND QUEENS
ENABLED EARLY GUNSMITHS TO
PRODUCE SUPERB ARMS THAT WERE
ALSO MASTERPIECES OF ART**

By **RON SPILLMAN**

IF HORSE RACING is the sport of kings, it can truly be said that collecting firearms is the hobby of kings. Royalty has collected guns since the earliest days of hand weapons. The most fabulous of kingly collectors were probably the haughty monarchs of France and Spain, especially Louis XIII, Philip IV, Charles IV, and the Emperor Charles V. And if you thought gun collecting was a new hobby, note that these monarchs spanned the years from 1516 to 1808.

If it hadn't been for the royal customers, many of Europe's most famous gunmakers would have confined their workmanship strictly to utility weapons. Largely because of the hefty prices kings were able and willing to pay, noted gunsmiths vied with each other in the production of exquisite guns, which remain today among the highest expressions of the creative arts.

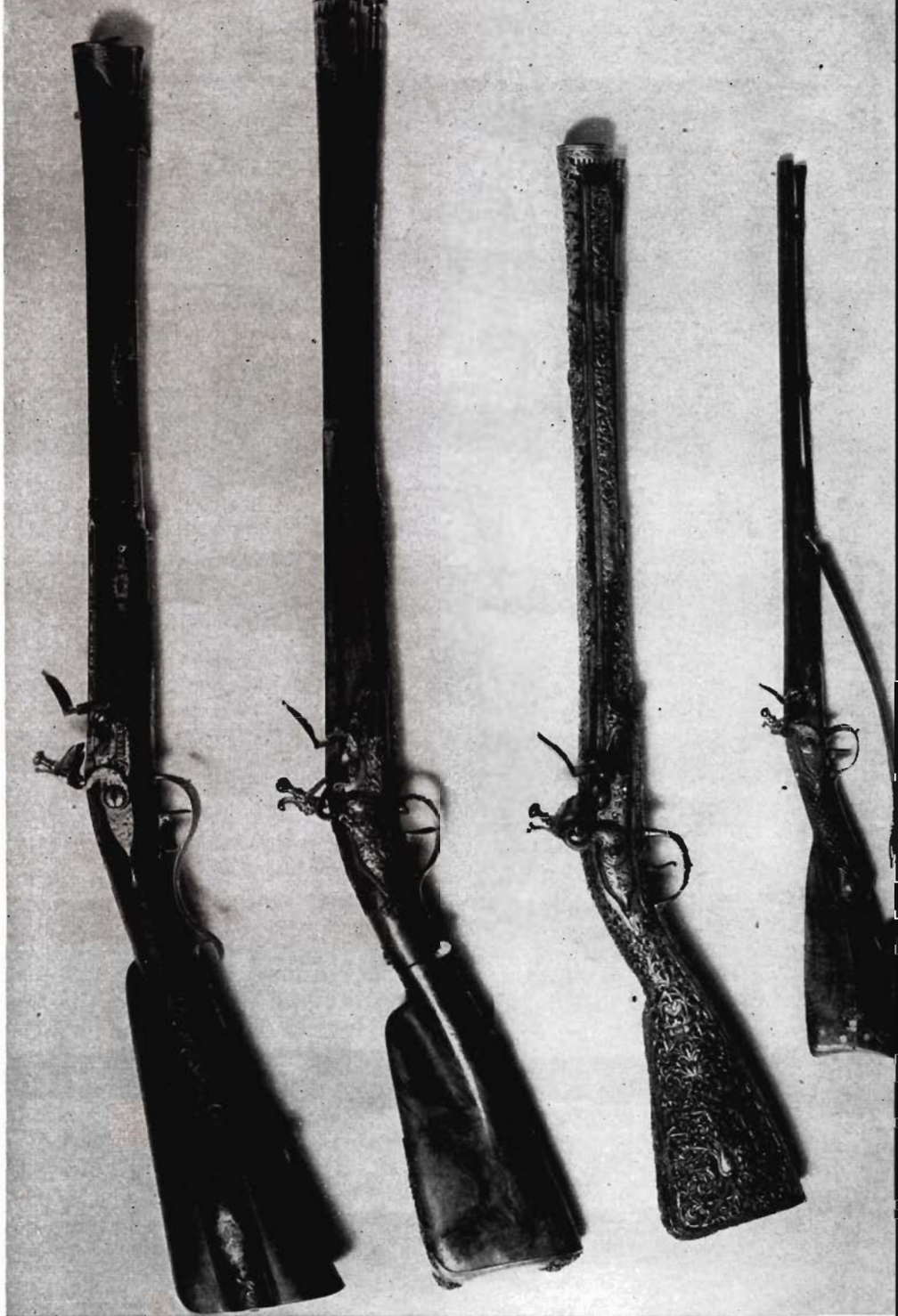
The most famous royal name in the history of superb firearms is undoubtedly that of Louis XIII of France. He divided his enthusiasms between love-making and shooting, but could always be tempted from a pretty woman's boudoir by the mention of a fine new gun. According to the diary of his medical attendant, Jehan Heroard, Louis had already collected seven arquebuses at the age of ten, in 1611. Three years later the number had grown to 50,



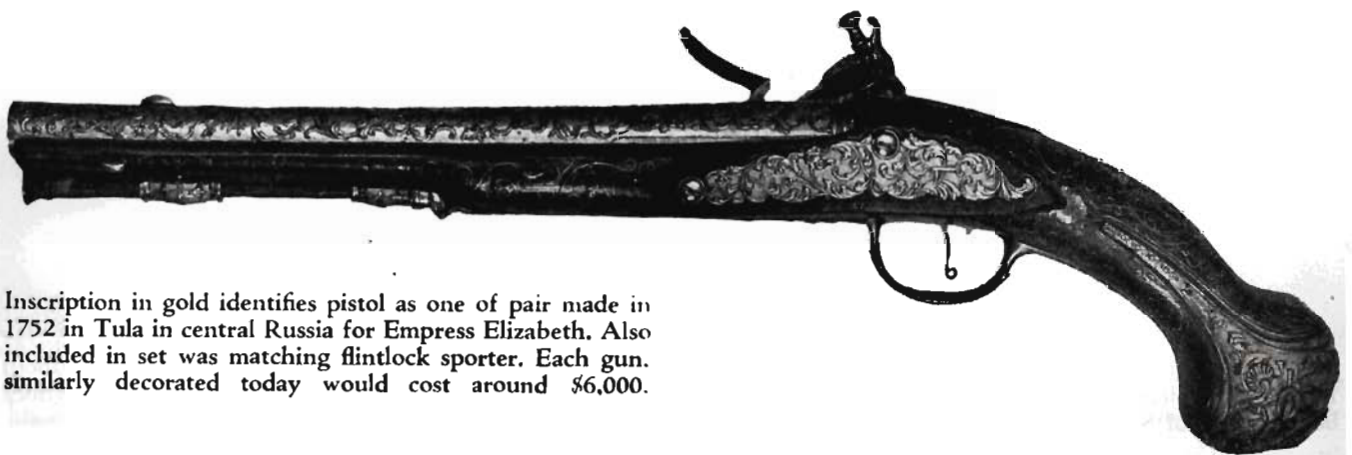
Modern-day shooter assumes duellist's position at Tower of London with flintlock made by gunmaker Nicholas Bis.



Pistol made by Jean Baptiste La Roche for Louis XV of France is one of the most ornate guns in existence. Lock is of bright steel on gold ground, barrel is partly encrusted with gold and stock is of walnut with gold wire inlay.



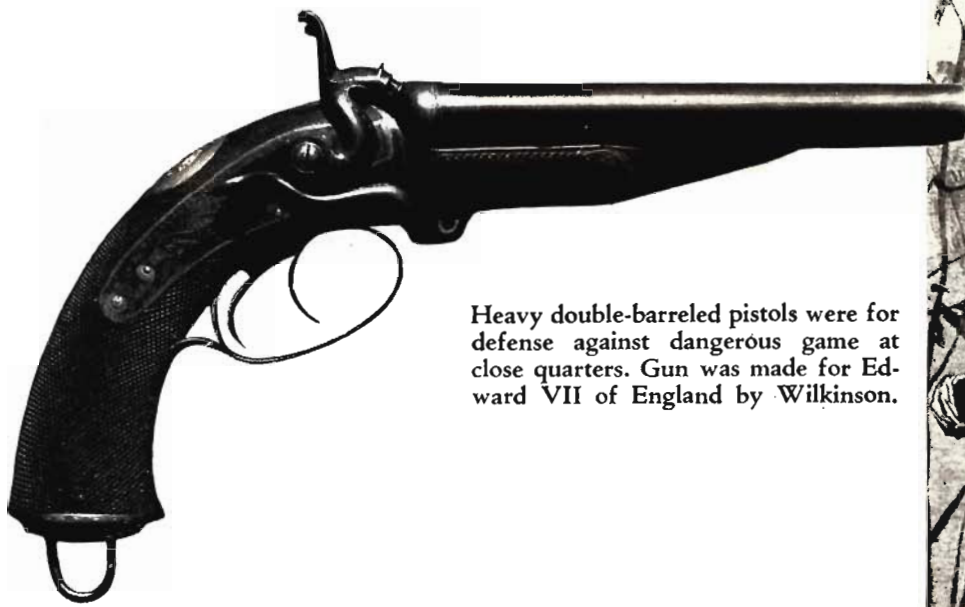
From exquisite August Grecke fusil made for Russian royalty (left) to tiny boy's shotgun royalty paid for top quality. Stock folds on blunderbuss (2nd from left).



Inscription in gold identifies pistol as one of pair made in 1752 in Tula in central Russia for Empress Elizabeth. Also included in set was matching flintlock sporter. Each gun, similarly decorated today would cost around \$6,000.



Among royal guns in famous Wallace collection in London are (2nd from top) a double-barreled flint-lock made about 1805 for Napoleon I; (4th from top) Soupriant flintlock made in 1776 for Charles X of France; (5th from top) flintlock bearing arms of Spain, monogram of Joseph Bonaparte. Almost identical is gun (7th from top) of Charles IV of Spain.



Heavy double-barreled pistols were for defense against dangerous game at close quarters. Gun was made for Edward VII of England by Wilkinson.



Contemporary drawing shows the Duc d'Orleans attacked by tiger on hunt.

and he was constantly using up his "pocket money" to buy more.

Louis didn't use his collection just to pretty the walls of his gunroom. He spent several hours a day shooting like mad in his private shooting gallery in the Louvre palace. After he became king, he never allowed affairs of state to interfere with his recreation. His ministers often had to take documents to the shooting gallery to get his signature.

After hunting, Louis always disassembled and cleaned his firearms himself. This greatly annoyed the bootlicking courtiers who were thus deprived of what was regarded as a great honor and privilege.

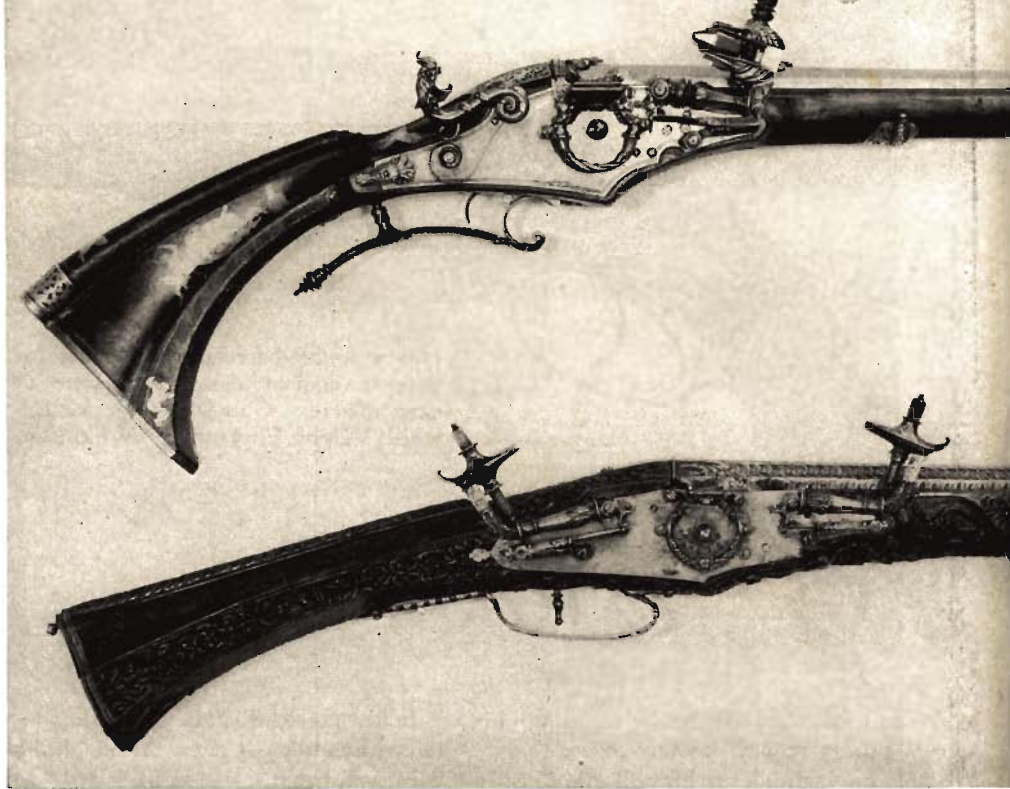
Louis' personal *cabinet d'armes* contained hundreds of guns. Although the royal sportsman reigned from 1610 to 1643, his collection survived intact until the French Revolution. Louis XIV had the collection catalogued in 1673 and inventory numbers were stamped on the stocks. By these marks it is still possible to identify each gun exactly. It is not clear what befell the magnificent collection after the Revolution. Many of the superbly ornamented weapons were separated from the plain military guns, and the latter were moved to the Paris Arsenal where they stayed until Paris was occupied after the Battle of Waterloo. Then the guns became war souvenirs.



Breech-loading gun made for Henry VIII is shown at left with action open and at right with action closed ready for firing. Lock is not one with which gun was originally fitted, is a match-lock added early in 19th century replacing wheel lock.



Detail of flintlock made by Boutet for Charles IV of Spain shows decoration.



Silver figure of Cleopatra forms back sight on match-lock—wheel-lock gun (top) owned by Louis XIII. Duelling scene adorns double wheel-lock (below).



Wheel-lock pistol with rifled barrel, made about 1610-20, bears badges and monogram of Felipe, Governor of Milan. It is one of pair owned by Louis XIII.

Painting of Louis XIII on pile of guns was intended to decorate one of French royal palaces, but Louis' father felt that semi-nude nymph was not suitable.



Fowling piece made for Empress Elizabeth of Russia is decorated with hunting scenes in gold, interlaced with gold wire inlay. Scene of boar hunting on stock suggests that gun was also used with ball loads for heavier game as well as fowl.

Modern collectors shudder with horror to think of these priceless examples of the gunmaker's art in the hands of yelling revolutionaries who grabbed them to shoot down those hated aristocrats not important enough to mount the steps of Madame Guillotine. Lugged through the blood-drenched streets of Paris and used as clubs by the rioting *citoyens*, many of the finest guns were so badly damaged that they ended on the junk heap.

The Louis XIII firearms captured by the Prussians and the British after Waterloo suffered a happier fate. Most of them found their way into public and private collections on both sides of the Atlantic. Some are still preserved in France at the great government Museum of the Army in Paris.

Louis was only six years old when he organized his first hunt. "Get my coach, I'm going to hunt," he commanded, and sent the Captain of the Guard to prepare the hawks. For a six-year-old he turned in a fair bag:

one hare, six quail, and two partridges. As a boy he also went after wolves in the Bois de Boulogne, and potted both sparrows and crows from the windows of the Louvre.

A gamekeeper at Fontainebleau had plenty of reason to bless Louis' spectacular marksmanship. Out shooting one day, the royal youngster thought he saw a rising pheasant behind some bushes. His shot brought down a flurry of feathers—and brought up a trembling gamekeeper who had used the feathers to decorate his hat. When Louis' father ordered him to apologize to the gamekeeper, the man dropped on one knee before the boy and said, "Sire, I owe my life to your marksmanship. As it is, I have lost only a hat."

Like many men who appreciate fine guns, Louis also appreciated the ladies. But as a lad, his father managed to keep the prince in check. A portrait of Louis XIII was painted of him as a boy, sitting atop a pile of guns. Beside him, holding a wreath of (Continued on page 48)



Scottish snaphaunce pistol with left-hand lock is an exceptionally fine and rare specimen. Dated 1619, it was made in Scotland for Charles I, was later included in the collection of Louis XIV. Ornamentation extends even to jaw-like cock.

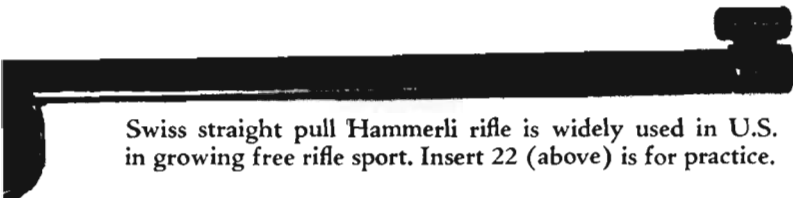


TOUGHEST

TINY TARGETS AT 300 METERS, THREE POSITION MATCHES WITH OLYMPIC-TYPE FREE RIFLES TAKES HIGHEST SKILL AS WELL AS TOP QUALITY EQUIPMENT



Unusual free rifle stocks with thumb holes can be made to identical dimensions, such as on pair of Schultz & Larsen rifles, giving marksman big-bore rifle for 300 meter competition (top) and .22 with same balance for 50 meters.



Swiss straight pull Hammerli rifle is widely used in U.S. in growing free rifle sport. Insert 22 (above) is for practice.

Barrel of Hammerli free rifle is free floating in bedding, does not touch stock at sides.

SHOOTING SPORT OF ALL

By LARRY F. MOORE

A FEW YEARS AGO Larry Nuesslein, a former U. S. international rifle team member, placed the following ad in one of the most widely-circulated shooting publications:

FOR SALE: Two caliber .30-06 free rifles, fitted with Swiss butt plate, set triggers and palm rest.

Nuesslein got no takers but he got several inquiries to his ad from people who thought that the rifles were free of price. They indicated that they could use a rifle that didn't cost anything. In fact, one individual wrote such a pathetic letter that the advertiser agreed to give the individual a rifle (not one of those advertised). This ad demonstrated two things; that free rifles were not common and that there was little demand for them. While free rifles may be somewhat more common now in the U.S. than they were a few years ago, there are not very many of them.

Free rifles are free (or nearly free) of restrictions as to caliber, length, weight, sights, and other equipment—restrictions placed by rule on rifles used in other kinds of target shooting. The rifle is designed for use in competitions held under the rules of the International Shooting Union, which sponsors world championship events using rifles built to suit the shooter, not to fit a set of rigid rules limiting rifle specifications.

Free rifles and international free rifle competition are understood by only a few American shooters. Championship American free rifle teams have competed as recently as 1930, but their rifles were of foreign make, finished at Springfield Armory. Because U.S. shooters have been guided along

other channels of competition, there has been little demand for free rifles and none has been factory made in this country. Riflemen who know free rifle shooting term it the toughest shooting sport of all, demanding the highest possible skill in the shooter as well as top quality equipment.

In the last three years or so, American shooters and American shooting groups have begun to recognize free rifle competition. International and Olympic-type matches are gradually being included in shooting programs. More and more Americans are "discovering" these interesting rifles—rifles on which practically everything is "free" except the price tag.

Free rifles are not *entirely* free of restrictions. They must weigh not more than 9 kilos (19.8 pounds); they must not exceed 9mm (.354") in caliber; and the sights used must not contain optical glass. But a competitor is not restricted to the use of only one rifle in a match, although all rifles used by him in a single match must be of the same caliber. The same restrictions and lack of restrictions apply to the small bore (.22 caliber) as to the big free rifles. As regards shape of stock, type of butt plate, pull-weight of the trigger, and other specifications—the sky's the limit.

Matches are of the three-position variety, and tough: 40 shots from each position—prone, kneeling, standing—with ten sighting shots allowed for each position if needed. Sighting shots may be taken before firing for record, or between each ten-shot string for record, as the shooter wishes.

Competitors fire from shelters to cut wind and disturbance. Token of the increasing free rifle





Free rifle made by Walter Lienhard for M/Sgt. Thomas Girkout is 7.5 mm caliber on straight-pull bolt action.



Finnish Lion smallbore rifle has bolt handle which locks down into rear of receiver machined from solid steel.



Anschutz free rifle receiver is round like smallbore Mausers. Trigger adjusting screw hole is by bolt cut.

interest was the Olympic finals at Camp Perry. Looking like a shantytown of squatters, a hastily-improvised free-rifle firing point was thrown together from 200 yard target frames and old canvas tarps. At the pits, each target was pulled and scored for each shot. That 300-meter target seemed very small to the men in the wind breaks. And they were so right! The target has smaller scoring rings in proportion to range than any target commonly used in the U.S. The ten ring is 10 centimeters (3.937") in diameter, and it encloses an "X" ring five centimeters across. Each scoring ring increases the target diameter by 10 centimeters. The bullseye aiming point includes the five ring. Two hours each are allowed for firing the prone and kneeling stages, and 2½ hours for standing.

Smallbore free rifle matches are similar, but are fired at 50 meters. The scoring rings are the same as those of the NRA 50-meter tournament target, but there are two more rings in the black on the international target, giving a larger and better aiming mark. The ten ring is two centimeters (0.787") and the X-ring has a diameter of one centimeter. Each additional ring adds two centimeters to the target diameter. Prone takes 1¾ hours, two hours for kneeling, and up to 2¼ hours for the standing stage. A palm rest may be used for standing shooting, and a roll pad is allowed to support the instep for kneeling. Because no American free rifles have been

made on a production basis, the would-be free-rifle shooter must have a rifle custom-built or import one from Europe.

Free rifles, which have been developed almost entirely in continental Europe, are built on rugged single-shot actions. This is generally an action designed especially for the purpose, not a converted military or sporting rifle. The barrel is completely free of the stock. Therefore, the point of impact of the shots at the target is less likely to shift because of changes in position, sling pressure, or stock warpage.

A free rifle stock is made to fit the shooter, without counting the cost or considering the size of blank from which it is shaped. This is the most obvious difference between American production target rifles and free rifles. The grip is shaped close for good trigger control. Most stocks have a hole for the thumb, and some are shaped with a thumb rest. Stocks have high combs with a cheek-piece, giving maximum comfort in all positions. The bottom of the stock is generally full to give additional support by contact with the chest when firing from the standing position.

Butt plates are adjustable, with a curved lower prong that passes under the arm in firing. This keeps the rifle in the proper position on the shoulder and acts as a lever for supporting the rifle in the standing position. The forearm on all of the European made rifles is of a



J. G. Anschutz match rifle was used by top German marksman Walter N. Gehmann who fired an almost perfect score in one phase of the Caracas, Venezuela, international shoot in 1954. Businessman Gehmann holds 23 titles for his skill.

moderate size, and is much to be preferred to the oversize timbers installed on some U.S. match rifles.

Palm rests designed to fit the hand are located near the center of gravity of the rifle. In standing or off-hand shooting, the left arm (shooting right handed) rests against the body at or near the hip, with the hand holding the palm rest. A heavy free rifle is surprisingly easy to hold in spite of its weight. Under the rules, the palm rest may be adjustable for height and shaped to suit the individual.

Double set triggers are standard for free rifles. The set trigger has a series of levers to release the sear. Set triggers offer a touch so light that a human hair knocked against the trigger after it is set, will fire the gun. But a serious disadvantage to the set trigger is the actual time required for the trigger to function. If the shooter is not a steady holder, the shot is likely to impact several rings farther out on the target than the point of aim when the trigger was touched. The steadiest shooters have some movement, especially in the kneeling and standing positions. Proper use of the set trigger requires considerable training, especially if one is accustomed to the heavier pull required for most U.S. competition rifles.

Several recently designed rifles employ a trigger which permits a light, double-stage pull with a shorter operating time than that for the set trigger.

Free rifle receiver sights are *(Continued on page 53)*

Leading Soviet shooter Anatoly Bogdanov fires typical solid Russian free rifle made with detachable stock piece.



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D & G SALES

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GUN RACK

(Continued from Page 12)

though I wouldn't want to have to measure the increase in "strength": it's probably pretty small. But the double ignition would speed up the rate of burning and insure positive firing, while a single firing pin might hit a dead spot and miss-fire.

The Gevarm chatters merrily with low-speed and high speed, waxed or Lubaloy loads. Accuracy is good for a plinker, although there is definitely a pre-shot jump caused by the bolt release before it fires. This makes groups at 50-feet not quite as tight as a match rifle, but adequate for tin cans and rabbits. The light weight of this French fusil, only 5½ pounds, makes it a friendly thing to carry in the field.

In stuffing the clip it is possible to cut your fingers on the sharp edges, but a few minutes with a file will cut the burrs nicely. I understand the factory is paying a little more attention to this detail now.

The real defect of this gun is the eight-shot clip. Even pistols usually have 10 shots in .22. There is such an inducement to fire this gun that a clip holding more rounds is a necessity. Tradewinds did not think that the 50-shot drum magazine which Gevarm makes for this pop-gun would appeal to the American market, but since every dealer visited by their field salesman seems to want one "just for the hell of it," I think a good many buyers of the Gevarm rifle will want one, too. The gun is of course a semi-automatic and cannot be converted to full auto. There would be no point in trying to convert it, not to speak of the illegality. But a larger capacity magazine is a must, and the 50-shot drum will solve that problem. Sufficient to say that, at \$69.50, the Gevarm .22 rifle sold through Tradewinds is an intriguing item.

New Nickel Supra Scopes

According to Herb McNama of International Ammunition Inc., who imports the Nickel scopes, they are used by many notable. These include H.R.H. the Prince of Bavaria, the Prince of Luxembourg, Socrates Aristotle Onassis (the richest man in the world), world champion shooter Walter Gehmann, George Michael among other African hunters—plus, to judge by the serial number on the 4 x 81 scope sent to me, exactly 152,744 shooters throughout the world who also know a good scope when they see one.

The Nickel scopes do not offer any of the radar, built-in, homing-pigeon devices which positively guarantee that you hit the bullseye on a dark night in the St. Gottard tunnel, but they do combine good, solid workmanship with carefully ground coated lenses for maximum light transmission and a minimum of aberration and rainbow at the edges. Steel or dural scopes are made, including a model with a special inverted dovetail block for some of the European mounts. Tubes are 1.024" in the several models, which include scopes from the Supralyt 2½ x 52 at \$59.50, up to the big-objective Supra-varipower "Favorite" with a lens diameter of 2.047" and a power range of 6, 7, 8, and 9X at \$125.

My 4 x 81 No. 11 scope (\$69.50) weighed less than nine ounces. I slapped it on the old 30S Remington in .30-06 and hied me

out to the range. Mount was a borrowed Buehler that kept me from strip-clip loading but left room for me to stuff the rounds in separately. The scope was easily zeroed, has windage and elevation dials of conventional pattern on the tube, and kept its zero through about 300 shots of Ball M2. As the light grew dim in the late afternoon, I noticed the virtue of a scope for light gathering. The target continued to be visible through the scope long after iron sights had failed. The crosswire reticule, Supra's #3 style, was adequate. After shooting, I later removed the scope and placed it inside the storm window in my kitchen.

For three weeks the scope has been subjected to cold of night and heat of the stove, humidity, rain and sun. There is not a trace of fogging or deficiency of the optical qualities of the Nickel Scope from these accelerated climate changes. Short of being smashed with a sledge-hammer, the Nickel 4 x 81 seems to be suitably rugged, proof against climate, and capable of taking the stress of firing.

Mitchell Shooting Glasses

Yellow lens glasses may be the solution to your eyestrain, and I say it, not "says the manufacturer." I used a pair of \$15 sun glasses made by one of the leading optical manufacturers for some time, but suffered constantly from tired eyes. Eyestrain at the end of the day lessened my interest in shooting at the range in the evenings.

At Camp Perry last summer, Doc Mitchell stuck a pair of horn-rimmed specs with yellow plano lenses on my face and I've been wearing them daily ever since. I had arrived at Perry with tired eyes. But on the trip back, even flying into the sun in a Cessna 140, Mitchell's glasses seemed to soothe and ease my eyes. The scene was brightened, but the seeming increase in visibility was pleasant. By the time we set down, my eyes were actually rested. Since then I've used these glasses constantly, for night driving (visibility in the dark is enhanced) and for shooting. I like plenty of light on my sights as well as at the target, but have to go along with the majority on the matter of no light at the shooting point. Under these conditions, Mitchell's glasses make poor light bearable. I don't claim that anybody's specs will make me a contender for the national pistol title, but I can safely say they have improved my shooting significantly, and eased eye strain into the bargain.

I checked Mitchell's ground lenses against ordinary sunglasses. My optometrist friend turned on a small machine which threw an image of a letter chart on the wall. Putting cheap glasses over the light lens dulled and blurred the letter chart. Putting Mitchell's glasses over the projector merely tinted the image a soft yellow, but with 100% clarity and no distortion or reduction of image. Mitchell glasses serve me for writing, shooting, flying, and night driving, by changing a glare to a glow. They are certainly among the best of the kind available.

For shooters needing corrections, Doc Mitchell can supply whatever is needed. He is a lens and eye specialist, and a shooting man as well. ⊕

A NEW CARTRIDGE FOR THE POOR MAN'S MAGNUM

(Continued from Page 25)

powerful 8 x 60, 8 x 60 S, and 8 x 60 Magnums are placed on the "bury and forget" list.

These three super-power versions of the 8 mm family were developed in Germany but the Germans never seemed to like them. Their leading ammunition experts considered them "damned compromise cartridges," as one said. The big 8's came into being after 1919 when the manufacture of German military cartridges was forbidden. Lengthening the 8 x 57 military case three millimeters to 60 mm was enough to allow production under the terms of the Versailles treaty. But, perhaps because it was a reminder that the Germans lost the war, the 8 x 60's never achieved the popularity they deserved.

After the war there were plenty of 8 mm's and the longer 8 x 60's scattered in hunting areas over the world, but they remained behind in the race for more speed. There is just not much more energy to be gotten out of those cases, and the actions did not permit lengthening for bigger loads. But I worked out one solution that may appeal to a lot of Mauser rifle owners. It is not an "invention," just a plain, useable wildcat that might aid you in souping up your 8 mm rifle.

There are many wildcat cartridges—far too many for practical use. Most of them are worked up by people who like to experiment, and the fun of it is the reason for such work. But if the wildcat is planned to achieve a

purpose, such as adding new pep to the 8 mm Mauser, it must be carefully figured out.

The 8 mm wildcat had to serve a purpose, had to have advantages over existing loads. To enter the "official market" and become a factory-loaded cartridge, a wildcat design has to have something new. It must amount to an invention. Such cartridges are born now and then; the .222 Remington is an example. I wasn't interested in factory loadings, but only in making a good, powerful 8 mm wildcat. Surprisingly, it wasn't much work.

In figuring out my wildcat, several things had to be considered. The cartridge should work in any 8 x 57 JS or 8 x 60 S rifle without rebarreling. Neither bolt face nor magazine should require alteration to use the new round. And, just in case the whole project was a fizzle, it should be possible to bring the rifle back to its original state. Ammo had to be formed from standard, easily available brass. All this might seem like a tall order, but the answer practically was written in the specifications.

The caliber was settled of course: 8 mm. The case length had to be 61 millimeters, to clean up the 8 x 60 and the shorter standard 57 mm G. I. Mauser chambers. To step up velocity materially I had to get in more powder. This meant a bigger case was needed. The most easily available big case in my country, Norway, is the belted .375 H & H. With the neck expanded and the shoulder set back, we were almost in business.

Keeping the bolt face unaltered was easy.

The .375 case head is bigger than the 8 mm, but by turning the .375 brass in a lathe to 8 mm head and extractor-groove dimensions, I got big case capacity and a standard sized head. For necking down the cases, only two dies were needed, since the intermediate die has the same shoulder angle but a larger neck diameter. Contrary to popular belief, the brass flows as easily around a sharp corner as it does along a sloping shoulder like the .300 H & H, so I found no advantage in making an intermediate die to ease the shoulder into shape.

Trying to form the belted 8 mm wildcat case in one operation in the full-length sizing die will not work well. Soft brass might fold at the shoulder and the cases will increase in wall thickness as the brass is pushed downwards by the die.

The case die was made in two pieces, with the neck section removable. The body die could be cut with the chamber reamer. The removable neck sections were screw-type. Most handloaders want the case necks sized to a slight taper, so that when the bullets are seated the metal will expand to nearly a cylinder. The first die insert did this. After trimming to size, the cases are neck sized with a different die screwed into the body die. This is a shorter die adapted for finishing. The inside edges of both neck sections where they bottom in the case die are turned to a bevel. You can compensate die wear by grinding off a trifle of metal here. With the dies drawn up, all I needed to make a "new" rifle was a chambering reamer. My theory for making a new rifle was as follows: take out the bolt, run in the reamer far enough to clean up the chamber, thus correcting head-

WALTHER



1 & 2

3

4

1. MODEL KKJ-H

Small bore Vermin Rifle with 5-shot detachable clip magazine. Caliber .22 Hornet. Special high grade gun barrel steel; length 22". Bead front sight, tangent rear sight, adjustable from 50 to 200 yds., sight protector. Bolt action with double locking lugs. With pistol grip stock, cheek piece, fine chequering, sling swivels. Overall length 40" or 41.6". Wt. 7 lbs. Price \$144.50.

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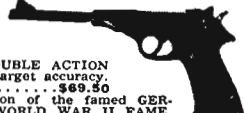
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space; then put the bolt back and go shooting.

The job is a little easier said than done, but not much. Grinding the reamer took most of the time. You may find it necessary to take the rifle out of the stock, depending on your reaming set-up. And you may find it necessary to grind out a little metal on each side inside the receiver to permit the fatter wildcat cartridge to wander from magazine to chamber. Be careful not to grind out so much metal that the magazine won't hold back regular 8 mm cartridges. You may want to rebarrel the gun to its original state some day. Remember, minimum work for maximum results was the whole purpose of tailoring a new cartridge.

This was born my 8 mm wildcat. All it lacked was a suitable name. Shooting friends put my own to it, and several rifles were chambered for the "8 mm Kvale" by a gunsmith in our club.

My FN Mauser proved highly accurate when chopped out to the fat-bodied 8 mm wildcat. In a machine rest at 80 yards, three-shot hunting groups consistently shot into less than a one inch circle. The 197 grain hollow-point hunting bullets chronographed an average velocity of 2950 feet per second loaded with 65 grains of 4064. We didn't end up by using 4064 powder for scientific reasons—it was just about all we had on hand. We tried everything, mostly different makes of European and American canister powders dug out of the garden where they had been hidden during the German occupation of Norway. But at last one of the gang received a "gift packet" containing 4064 from his aunt in the United States, and 65 grains of this stuff seemed the best load we could find. The chronograph velocity of over 2900 feet per second with the 197 grain pointed bullet was enough. We were satisfied, and we had produced a pretty hot 8 mm load that could be used in ordinary cheap 8 mm rifles with a minimum of altering.

By comparison with regular 8 mm loads the "8 mm Kvale" stands up well. Closest thing to the nearly 200-grain bullets we were using is a 180 grain load using 47 grains of 4320. This pushes the slug along at a little over 2500 feet per second. When bullet weight is stepped up to 236 grains, 41 grains of 4064 gets slightly over 2100 f.p.s. out of the old 8 mm Mauser. With the Kvale we got sustained high velocity with the almost 200-grain bullets. The blown-out 8 mm topped the big .300 Magnum load by nearly 20 per cent, and gave an energy increase of more than 50 per cent over the standard 8 mm Mauser load.

Playing with such power demands care and a sense of safety. Hundreds of wildcats are "born" almost every week. Most hand-loaders seem to think that when they can burn more powder in a case without blowing the rifle apart, they get more bullet velocity and hence more striking power. But velocity measurements don't bear this out.

One thing is clear; the more powder you burn behind a bullet, the sooner you will wear out the barrel by erosion. Velocity can be increased by increasing the powder charge, but it is at the expense of barrel life. In shooting, you don't get something for nothing. You will pay for added velocity in shortened barrel life.

The typical wildcat cartridge design proves this. Let's take a load that gives 2700 f.p.s. with a certain bullet weight. Now let's improve the case by lengthening its body and

altering the shoulder angle, correspondingly shortening the neck. So far, the change has given us added case volume. But this reduces the gas pressure of our old load, which cuts bullet velocity. After the change, we have space for more powder, which can be added safely because of the lowered pressure. More powder builds up the pressure again. After increasing the old load by a number of grains—how much depends on how big we have made the case—we can sit back complacent that we have now achieved the same velocity with the big case that we had with the short case before improving. The only difference is more powder has been used to obtain it.

The improvement has gained nothing. Barrel erosion has been increased, due to the increase in powder. And here is the "perfected" state of many a wildcat. Its designer is satisfied, because he thinks he gets more velocity with more powder.

Here also is the start of some wildcats—such as those whose loads may be profitably increased yet more. With some cases more powder will produce more velocity, but you will have to buy every 50 feet of speed with more powder and fight the battle against barrel erosion. And with more powder, the pressure will rise. Pressure rises faster than velocity. The experimenter will punch his nose against the "pressure barrier" of maxi-

mum safe pressure for the particular action. The 65 grain load in the 8 mm Kvale seemed the safe limit, and we worked up to it gradually, watching for signs of too much pressure.

The trend to increase velocity goes on. No doubt about it, the game is worth the candle. Actual tests have shown that ultra-high-velocity bullets will instantly kill game which is considered much too big for the bullet weight. There is a Weatherby in America, a Vom Hofe and the late Herr Gerlich in Germany, who have proved out high velocities under field conditions.

Gerlich was among the early experimenters to achieve high velocity. During tests performed in Scotland in the early 1930's he is said to have fired special bullets at velocities above 12,000 feet per second from taper-bore barrels. Full-jacketed bullets fired at sheep at 300 meters tore the animals into "thousands of pieces," according to reports. Gerlich did not have any success with his theories among European hunters. Perhaps he started in on the high velocity kick a little too early.

Shooters are more "high velocity" conscious these days. Take the 8 mm Kvale, for example. Now, if I were to free-bore the barrel, give the bullet a good start before it hits the rifling, give it a duplex load and a little more powder. . . . Wow! ⊕

CONFESSIONS OF A RIFLE EXPERT

(Continued from Page 22)

that 100-bomber shellacking and find the old Marshal looking back over his shoulder.

Be all that as it may, there isn't anything more peaceful right after a scrap or directly before one than the front lines. Combat soldiers after a few months of campaigning don't want anything save peace. The first joker who touches off a mortar or unwinds a machine gun is heartily cursed by all parties. In the area around Duren it was as tranquil as Sunday afternoon on Frijole Flats.

That is, until I arrived.

I wasn't any sniper. We had no such Fancy Dans. I was a battlefield recovery officer, with recovery units scattered throughout all First Army. I worked all night and slept all day and had little fun. This looked like a golden opportunity.

I watched the Duren main stem and noted that every so often some Wehrmachter sauntered through the 75 feet of street intersection. At first they ran, later scurried, finally shuffled. Occasionally a group of two or three would amble past. I dropped back to my camp, laid out a careful 320 yards of range, and warmed up an old M-1 I had salvaged from the battlefield near Kommer-scheidt, pegging her down at a very definite 320-yard zero. I was ready.

Next day I crept back into my three-story *casa*. I took up a stand in the attic, dragged up a divan and laid the rifle over the upholstered back. Then I carried up an overstuffed chair from two flights down and settled back very comfortably, my B&L 20X glass covering the Duren business square.

I shot at three of the enemy that afternoon. The first two were clean misses. The third was a pinwheel. I hit him and he never moved. I could have shot the two who dragged him to cover, but as I was just plinking I didn't think that would be cricket.

The next day I returned. This time I moved over two houses for I figured my first site might not be too healthy. The krauts caught on fast. When a man crossed now, he broke into a trot. I missed the first two and then twiddled my thumbs until almost dusk before I got another whack at the game. Then I hit two. I dumped the first one and, much to my surprise, found he was walking shoulder to shoulder with a buddy. The buddy broke into a run and I snapped a shot at him which turned him over like a rabbit.

The next day I had scarcely gotten settled and was watching through the 20X scope when a Volkswagon drove directly into the intersection and stopped! I could see a man under the wheel and another beside him. I slammed a full clip into the car as fast as I could fire.

The German version of the jeep never moved, and neither did the figures. I pondered this and concluded I had been lucky enough to pink both the Nazis through their square heads on my first salvo. Then a faint suspicion commenced to grow in me. Gathering up my rifle, spotting scope, ammunition and other odds and ends, I beat an unseemly retreat from that ivory tower. And it was a damned good thing I did!

I had barely reached the second floor when all hell broke loose upstairs. Machine guns rattled into that attic from seven directions and at least two mortars opened up on the house. I dived for the basement and remained down there for a good quarter hour. When I ventured forth, our troops as far as I could hear both up and down the Roer were cursing me heartily. I had broken the peace. War had commenced again.

The Volkswagon, I concluded, had either been given a healthy shove calculated to make it stop in the middle of the street, or

else had been pulled into position on a long line. The figures were either corpses or dummies. My long burst had been observed when the bait was in position and that was all the enemy needed to smoke me out. That 320-yard shooting was one of the longest I've ever attempted.

A dozen years have intervened since the sniping and I have done my share of missing and a little hitting. It has remained for Indo-China to brim my cup.

We were in a rain-beaten camp on the Da-Dung River, a good 150 miles north of Saigon. We were there for gaur, the huge, fierce, 2500-pound Asian cross between buffalo and bison, with a disposition that makes the African Cape cougars a mild second-rater. The country contained the game; I was sure of that because I had killed a pair in the same general area two months before.

The party was a big one. Too large really. I had fetched with me a lieutenant from the Vietnamese army. And there was Ngo Van Chi, the best huntsman this side of the Great Chinese Wall; and John E. Oswalt and Al Pope and Pope's beautiful *begum*, Yvonne. These together with a platoon or two of Moi, the g-string savages of the Indo-Chinese plateau, composed our party.

I had broken off from the main group and,

taking Kim the tracker and Hoi, the disconsolate army shavetail, had pushed a dug-out across the Da-Dung and plunged into the jungle. It was raining. It had been raining since May and this was August. The grass under the gentle nudging of seven inches of water every 24 hours was crotch high on a giant. What with the water underfoot, water on the grass, and water pouring from the heavens, we were wet.

The far banks of the Da-Dung rose precipitously and, once clear of the canoe, we climbed for a pair of hours and finally topped out on a broken plateau. Here the trees were dense, and the grass, the inevitable coo, if anything, even more rank—stank abominably. Kim, his evil old brass-bound pipe gurgling asthmatically, threw himself down beneath a flame tree, rolled his plug of betel nut from port to starboard, and clacked at the disconsolate Hoi.

"He say no good hunt gaur, this rain. No track. Gaur no move. Think best we go back camp". The lieutenant, translating, looked as mournful as only a city-bred Vietnamese can look when he is unhappy, tired, footsore, and wet as a practicing skin diver.

I motioned Kim to his feet. "Tell him if we cannot hunt gaur, we'll shoot deer." We

had been springing sambar up the side of the mountain, and innumerable muntjac, the barking deer, as well as hog deer, and we had seen some sign of boar. I had not the faintest intention of swinging back because of a little moisture. It had been raining only since May. It might stop.

So we set off again, with my *compañeros* exuding a cheery enthusiasm about on a par with Death Row, Sing Sing. We plowed through vine and tangle and finally emerged at the lower end of a meadow. A stream worked its way through the middle and along the bank was tiger spoor so fresh the drizzle had not yet obliterated it. We had missed Old Stripes by minutes. On the far side of this 40-acre hay field, we plunged into the semi-gloom of the forest.

Here the trees were not so dense, a sort of open scrub with an occasional clump of another species which grew in tight little islands. For the better part of an hour we moved unhurriedly. We had just skirted an especially dense clump of second growth when the tracker clacked at me, pointing. There in the deepest shadow of the oak wood stood a fine sambar stag. He looked wraithlike in the eerie half-light but not so ghostly that I did not instantly appreciate the fine rack he was toting. He wasn't a



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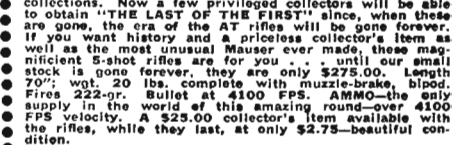
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foot over 25 yards distant and, as I brought up the .450-400, I determined to break his neck. But, just a millisecond before the gun spoke, he took himself, complete with neck, from the vicinity. Despite his seemingly Jato-propelled start, I was sure I'd lashed him to the mast. I circled the tree-clump ready to gut him. But there were no guts, no deer. Not even a drop of blood.

I was considerably shook. The critter should have fallen dead easy. He was within sixshooter range. I'd have bet and given you odds that I could have potted him with a revolver.

Within the hour I picked out a hog deer, a doe, peering at me from behind a Dao tree, a tree that forked very near the ground. The range was maybe 65 yards. If I shot through the fork, I'd take her in the shoulder a bit too high. If I shot past the tree I'd smash a lot of gut. She resolved my quandary by loping out with a nice, easy, rocking-chair gallop. Four shots I pooped off—and she kept going.

Before the day dragged to its dismal close, I got still a third chance, this time at a muntjac, the 35-pound barking deer. He is camp fare like unto quail on toast. This bouncy youngster popped up on an ant hill so close the bow-and-arrow boys couldn't possibly have missed—but I did. I did it easy; no effort at all.

Three misses, and all in the period of a single *shikar*. It set an all time high. If ever a man needed an alibi, I did. And the first place a shooter looks for an alibi, of course, is in the gun. I sat down and selected a knot on a tree at 65 yards. When I ambled forward for a look, the bullet could not have been more precisely in the center of that mark had I driven it into place with a ball-peen hammer. The sights were very obviously in zero, and they're good sights. One of the best of the micrometered-adjusting aperture rears and an easy-to-see, gold-surfaced, partridge front. The rifle didn't offer much in the way of excuse either. It was new, brand new. The cartridges, al-

though reloads, were no more than four months off the loading bench . . . No alibi.

Sure, the light was something right out of a Frankenstein horror movie, but I'd been wearing these excellent Mitchell "yellow lense" shooting specs, a type of glasses that sharpen any target almost regardless of the poor quality of the light . . . No alibi there, either. The fault lay entirely with a dub name of Askins.

Next morning without breakfast, bullied and herded by Chi, who disdains morning chow, we were two kilometers free of camp before daylight was strong enough to distinguish an ordinary garden variety cobra from the 18-foot king size. By 11, mid-day, we had gotten into gaur country. The rain had let up temporarily, and the smoking sign of a solitary bull beckoned us. At 2 P.M. he had taken us into the bamboo and we were treading like Mau Mau, sure that a shot would be forthcoming any minute.

Bruu, in the lead, closely pressed by Kim, held up his hand, signaling. I swung off to the right flank, as Oswald made ready to fire at a great black bulk looming through the bamboo. I rounded a dense clump and found myself looking right down the throat of a critter that for sheer ugliness and a poisonous expression is well nigh tops. The old stud had arranged himself so that his body from my angle was completely concealed in the bamboo. Only his head was showing to me. It was swung at right angles to the body.

I laid the front bead right between his eyes. This was a fair-to-middlin' sizeable target, as a gaur has a head you couldn't get in a No. 3 washtub and eyes at least 16 inches apart. I remember as the rifle came up that I cautioned myself not to put the slug into the boss of his massive horns. I dropped the bead an inch or so down his nose. On the shot, my blast having proceeded that of Oswald by a fractional part of a second, the great bull reared straight up in the air and fell back on his hip pockets. He's dead, thinks I.

That critter fell, but even in the act he was gathering his wits and his muscles together and he had no sooner taken that pratfall than he bounced up and went hence, moving down acres of bamboo, small saplings and a tree or two in his going. We tracked him until dark and started him twice without getting a shot at him. Two days later, we found him dead. The bullet had entered two or three inches too low to pierce the brain. Not finicky about a little "high" meat, the Moi proceeded to butcher and eat the bull down to the last nut and bolt.

It was altogether the most catastrophic two days I've ever experienced. If you will ask, I can draw for you a neat diagram of where I placed the sights on every one of those misses. The sight picture in each case is just that clearly etched. The test shot on the tree knot proved that the rifle was perfectly sighted. I don't flinch. I've shot rifle, pistol and shotgun more than a million rounds, and I know that I am not a trigger snatcher nor a gent who shuts his eyes and fights the recoil.

I've lost many a match, missed many a shot and heretofore have always been able to drum up some fairly watertight alibi. But this time—

No alibi. I just missed.



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POWERHOUSE OF AUTOMATICS

(Continued from Page 29)

piece of very fine emery paper until the lower edge is slightly undercut. In doing this, make sure that the relieved surface is uniform. An absolute minimum of metal removed will make a noticeable difference in trigger pull. Do not make the mistake of touching the upper leading edge of the sear; this is what bears upon the face of the hammer notch.

When the trigger notch depth and sear thickness are compared, there may be a temptation to stone down the rounded face of the hammer until the bearing surface of the notch is reduced to a more reasonable depth. At the same time the shooter may want to grind off part of the underside of the sear in order to reduce the contact still further and get rid of some of the creep. Both these operations will cause trouble. Don't try either, because the correct location of the safety catch depends on the hammer being in a specific position at full cock. Any tampering with the angle at which the hammer beds down when cocked will throw out the positioning of the thumb safety.

There is a way to overcome creep, by pinning the hammer. A small hole is drilled into the face of the hammer immediately below the notch. A drill rod or tool steel pin is then inserted into the hole and stoned down until the depth of the notch has been reduced to allow the correct engagement without creep. This, since it blocks up the notch instead of cutting the hammer, does not interfere with the safety when cocked.

A further refinement could be attained by making a recoil cushion out of the recoil spring guide. This type of kick inhibitor has worked very successfully in .45 pistols and there is no reason why a similar idea wouldn't work in the Hi-Power.

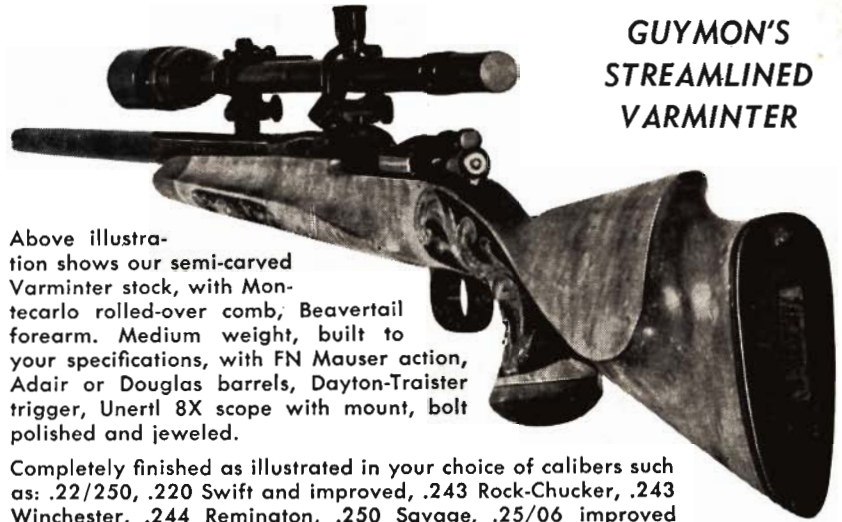
All that remains to convert old *Grande Puissance* into a target pistol is to hang on a pair of custom stocks, possibly a trigger shoe, and some adjustable sights. And what do we have when done? As sweet-shooting a handgun as ever came out of a shop. The gun is inherently accurate, and can be made more accurate by the do-it-yourself pistol enthusiast. Groups already tight are closed in still more by these simple gunsmithing changes. It is pleasant to shoot, having neither heavy recoil nor muzzle blast. It packs 13 lethal doses in one loading and is unbelievably reliable even under the most adverse conditions.

Recently I had a chance to check out the Browning's reliability. Canadian Industries, Ltd., maker of "Dominion" ammunition, asked me to test-fire a batch of 9 mm ammunition. A cart-load of assorted pistols was begged and borrowed, including a half-dozen Brownings. It seemed impossible to make these guns hang up, short of deliberate abuse. On every single shot the Brownings did their stuff.

Among the tests the Canadian Brownings passed was one given them before the model was adopted by the Canadian army. Two pistols were completely stripped down, the parts scrambled in a box, and the lot dumped into a sand pit. A box of ammunition followed. Next, men were marched and counter-marched over the sand pit. Then two instructors were told to assemble and load the pistols. After the pistols were assembled

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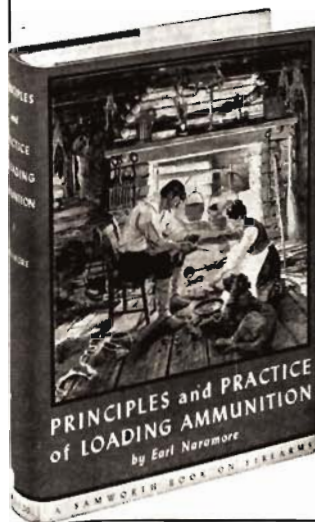
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with clips filled and inserted, they were ordered to look the slides back so that the actions might be subjected to an additional baptism of sand. One not-too-energetic shake was all that they were allowed to clear the guns before the slides were set in battery and firing commenced. The order was for rapid fire until the ammunition was exhausted.

The guns stood up magnificently. Although a certain amount of gritting and gnashing of moving parts could be heard, there were no stoppages or malfunctions. But this was not surprising; the reputation of the Brownings for reliability had stood for many years.

Reliability, accuracy, and large magazine capacity were all demanded by the French government back in the early 20's when the Browning Hi-Power was born. Original models for this gun are hammerless, with a spring-loader striker. A rumored "short" version of the basic GP model, supposedly made for the French Indo-Chinese troops, is described as having a 10-shot magazine and shorter slide. No such model has ever been found, although there is a rare variation of the Hi-Power that appears to have been made for French test in 1936. It has a standard clip, and is chambered for the French .32 Long caliber. But this rare model pistol, which resembles a scaled-down Hi-Power is not related to the design of the bigger pistol. By 1927 the gun was fairly well standardized in design. Then the death of inventor John Browning at the factory in Belgium postponed its manufacture nearly a decade. Finally, in 1935, the Fabrique Nationale d'Armes de Guerre issued the G.P., last of Browning's inventions and one of the most famous pistols of the age.

Production models of the Hi-Power are fundamentally similar, but variations exist. Pre-war Belgian commercial guns are of two basic types. The civilian model has a fixed rear sight and rounded slide top. This is a fairly scarce gun. Another, fitted with a tangent military leaf sight and with the frame slotted for a shoulder stock, was made for military and police use. Lastly, in Belgium, the fixed-sight model was produced in great quantity for the German Army as a substitute standard pistol. Since the war, only the fixed-sight model has been made. It is imported in the U.S. by the Browning Arms Company.

A variation of the Belgian gun is the sub-caliber training pistol, of which a small lot of several hundred were turned out in 1939 for the Belgian army. They are fitted with a detachable muzzle bushing somewhat like that on the Tokarev Russian pistol or the S & W 9 mm automatic. They were designed for a 4mm practice barrel, and did not function semiautomatically.

The rest of the Browning pistol family has its branches first in China, and then Canada. The Chinese army before World War II was equipped with Belgian-made Hi-Powers. When the Germans overran Belgium, the Canadian boiler-making firm of John Inglis & Co., Ltd., of Toronto, contracted to manufacture Browning pistols for the Chinese national government. Four or five Belgian shoulder-stock guns were shipped to Inglis by China and it was from these that Inglis draughtsmen made their working drawings.

These Chinese Brownings were identical to the military Belgian gun except in finish. Canadian Brownings had a dull, sand-blasted finish and black plastic grips, while the

Belgian guns were finished in a fine, glossy blue with checkered walnut stocks. The Inglis name of course replaced the Fabrique Nationale markings. Inglis started making Brownings in 1943. In all, they turned out approximately 152,000 pistols. Not all were the same model, however.

After their Chinese contract, Inglis began to manufacture Brownings for the Canadian armed forces, for the Greek government, and for the British. The majority of these arms had fixed sights and no stock cut. A visible change from the pre-war fixed-sight Browning was the sight base, a heavy lump at the rear of the slide on the Inglis guns. This was an improvement, and was the only purely Canadian feature in their design. The big lump allows these Canadian pistols to be fitted easily with Micro adjustable target sights, since all that is needed is to cut a dovetail on the slide. Basic Canadian-British guns are designated "Mark I," but in late pistols the shape of the ejector and relocation of the hammer strut to speed up lock-time created a model stamped "Mark I*" or "Mark one star."

Two types of stocks are fitted to Brownings. The first model, Belgian commercial or military, is a flat wood board with a leather flap holster rivetted to it. The flap either buttons over a brass stud or is held by a wire loop on the body of the holster, with a leather strap passing through the loop. The second type of holster was made for Chinese use. It is completely of wood and carries the pistol inside, like the military Mauser. Original Browning holsters are very rare, but the all-wood Chinese version made in Canada is common.

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for Brownings, there might be some question about quality. Let it be said that, like whiskey, there are no bad Browning Hi-Powers. Some are just better than others. Pre-war Brownings, civilian and military, are superb. Quality of materials was above reproach and their workmanship and finish is invariably of the highest possible order.

Some of the postwar Brownings are not as smooth as their pre-war counterparts. In some the slides permit too much lateral play, even for military-type pistols. In others, the trigger pull breaks at a nice, clean 25 pounds. On the credit side it must be admitted that, if due care is taken in selecting the individual gun, a couple of hours of tinkering will give mighty smooth shooting.

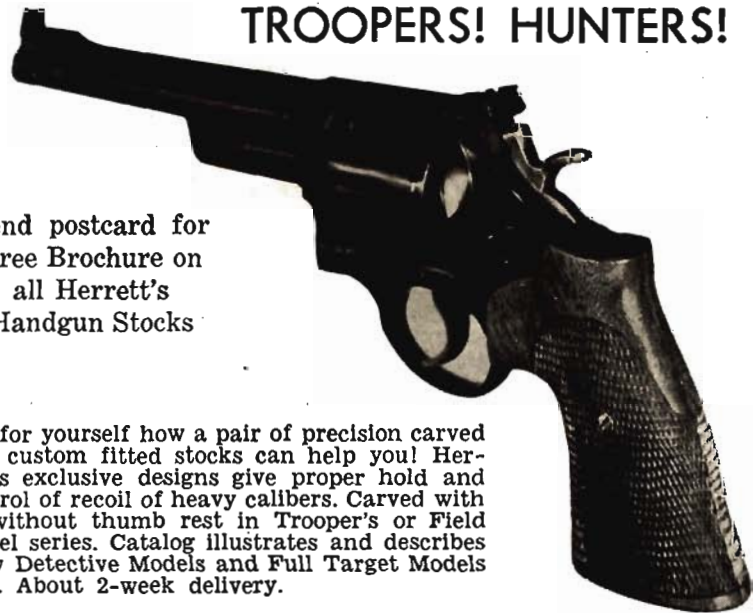
The Canadian pistols are tops in quality, too. But Inglis guns were never made commercially, and it is no use writing to them in hopes of obtaining a leftover—they just aren't to be had. But myths are already circulating about the Canadian guns. The first myth is that the Canadian Browning is tougher than its Belgian brother. This arose from the fact that Canadian pistols use the same ammunition as the Sten gun—the implication being that if a handgun could digest submachine gun ammunition, it automatically became possessed of almost "magnum" qualities.

This is not true. The Belgian gun will handle Sten ammunition with exactly the same degree of safety as the Canadian pistol.

The second myth is that the Canadian pistol has some secrets of design; that it was built specifically around the Sten load. Again, false. The gun was adopted in the first place because of its inherently safe handling of the Sten load. As put up in Canada these 9 mm's generate a muzzle velocity from 1340 feet per second up to as high as 1478 f.p.s., depending on the run of ammo. Pressures with the Sten vary, from an average of 35,820 pounds per square inch to a recorded high of nearly 40,000. There are no hard and fast rules about the wisdom of using machine gun ammunition in a Browning. Even the slave labor guns have handled the stiff Canadian and German service loads satisfactorily. But for plinking or target practice the constant use of Sten ammunition would give the pistol an unnecessary pounding.

Probably the wisest course would be to use the light commercial Winchester or Remington ammo for plinking and target shooting—it is ample in power. But for any heavy-duty chore you have in mind, by all means use a Sten load. You'll find the Browning is a true friend, with thirteen good hearts in his body. ⊕

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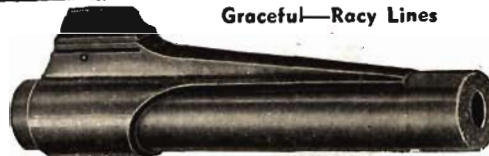
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KINGS WHO WERE GUN COLLECTORS

(Continued from Page 35)

laurel above the noble brow, sat a semi-nude girl sporting a pair of wings and little else. This painting was originally intended to decorate one of the French royal palaces, but was not used. Louis' father was of the opinion, that the semi-nude nymph was an unsuitable companion for his son.

Louis made up for lost time as he matured. Although not especially noted as a collector of erotica, at least one gun in his

cabinet d'armes was unusually decorated. The rear sight was modeled in the shape of a reclining figure, "Cleopatra," and the stock has some decorative but frankly anatomical silver inlays. Now in the famous Wallace Collection in London, the museum's catalog describes the weapon as being "covered with inlaid silver wire and with engraved insertions of the same metal in the form of recumbent female figures, *amorini*, and erotic subjects." In fact, the subjects are so erotic that this gun is the only one in the Wallace collection which is not on view to the public.

Mechanically, the gun is unusual in that it has both wheellock and matchlock firing systems. Many students of arms have supposed that the extra matchlock serpentine, which held a slow-match, was for "sure fire" in case the wheellock failed or had been used a number of times. Firing a wheellock unwinds the spring that works the wheel. With the wheel unwound, it is impossible to fire an ordinary wheellock. Some weapons of this type, therefore, have extra serpentine fitted to the lock plate.

The "sure fire" idea may be partly true. But it is a curious fact that the wheellock mechanism gives exceedingly fast lock-time. The delay from touching the trigger to firing the gun is hardly more than in a modern cartridge firearm. On the other hand, ignition by matchlock serpentine would be much slower. A match could be used on sitting ducks, for example, with success. But if His Majesty was expecting a boar to charge, the instantaneous fire of a wheellock would prove far safer than the hesitating fire from a slow match. No contemporary instructions on the use of sporting wheellocks seem to exist. But it is probable that the slow-match was used for a long time as the standard method of firing, and the expensive, cumbersome wheellock, with its exceedingly fast, sure fire used as a reserve in case of emergencies. Only a sportsman of great wealth could afford such an elaborate firearm as Louis' erotic arquebuse.

Unlike modern monarchs who purchase the same guns as you and I from gunsmiths as well-heeled as themselves, royalty in the 16th and 17th Centuries maintained one or more gunsmiths among the artists and craftsmen attached to their courts. Large financial resources enabled kings and princes to import foreign craftsmen who sometimes produced styles which were quite exotic, even erotic. In the Louvre palace a small-arms

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factory was in operation. At Versailles, the royal gunmaker, Nicholas Boutet, supervised an arsenal. In Bohemia, the Prague workshop of Emperor Rudolph II turned out some remarkable firearms. Magnificent workmanship is to be found in the arms created by German craftsmen brought from Augsburg by Charles V of Spain to work in the *Armeria Real* (Royal Armory) in Madrid.

The beautiful collection made by this Spanish monarch during the years from 1519 to 1556 provides an interesting and fairly reliable source of evidence for the beginnings of the wheellock. The wheellock seems to have originated in South Germany, in Augsburg or Nuremberg, at the commencement of

the 16th Century. Although a few wheellock guns exist which have tentatively been dated even earlier, experts are of the opinion that those made for Charles V show the mechanism in the earliest stages of its invention.

There are sketches of many early wheellocks in the *Inventario Iluminado* (Illustrated Inventory) of Charles' armory. Some are dated and bear the mark of two Augsburg gunsmiths, Peter and Simon Markwart.

The Charles V wheellock guns consist of short carbines intended to be carried in saddle holsters, and single and double barreled pistols. The butts of the carbines are straight-sided as they are not intended to be fired from the shoulder. Surprisingly, most

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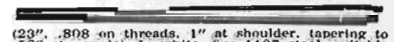
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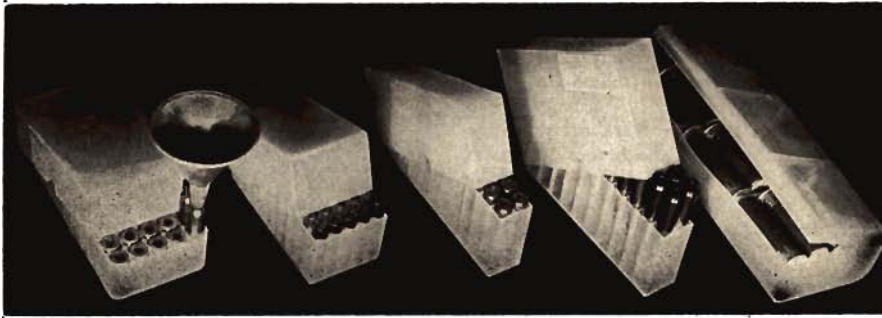
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of the pistols have little ornamentation. This is unusual since even during the first half of the 16th Century it had become customary to encrust firearms with the elaborate gold, silver, and ivory decorations loved by rich patrons.

England was among the last nations of Europe to adopt hand firearms, mainly because of the British archers' superior skill with the longbow. For many years during the transition period, the bow could kill more accurately, more swiftly, and over a greater range than the crude firearms then in use on the Continent. One captain of Yeoman Archers, observing a cumbersome matchlock which blew up in the enemy ranks and disabled the two French soldiers who manned it, cried, "Hurrah for ye hande-gonne! Our enemies slay themselves!"

Henry VIII is about the earliest English monarch who can be described as a collector of guns. A few of his pieces, including a couple of breech-loading matchlock guns, are preserved in the Tower of London. By the time we had lugged one of these log-like wall guns downstairs for inspection, we understood perfectly why the English favored the longbow for so long. The lightest of Henry's "hand"-guns weighed a muscle-cracking 20 pounds.

The Venetian ambassador to England reported to the Doge of Venice that Henry "was a capital horseman and a first-class shot, very fond of hunting and never takes his diversion without tiring eight or ten horses, which he causes to be stationed beforehand along the line of country he means to take, and when one is tired he mounts another, and before he gets home they are all exhausted."

The Merry Monarch was particularly fond of a design of breech loader which was

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adopted in an almost unchanged form three centuries later as the standard British breech-loader. This was the Snider system, invented by Jacob Snider who used it to convert muzzle-loading muskets to cartridge breechloaders in the 1860's.

Gunsmith Snider received a patent on his idea. But like any gun fan of that period in London, he must have been familiar with the treasures of the Tower—such as King Henry's breechloading fowling piece. At least, it is a remarkable coincidence that both the royal musket and the Snider system use a hinged breech block which swings to one side, parallel to the line of bore, to unload and load. Henry VIII's gun was fired by steel cartridges which had small channels filled with powder that fitted so they were opposite the priming pan of the matchlock.

Henry's collection was added to by Queen Elizabeth I. Elizabeth, the "Virgin Queen," hunted at Windsor where she kept sixty parks full of game. When the Duke of Wurttemberg was invited to one of Elizabeth's hunts, the Duke's secretary recorded that His Highness "had a capital day's sport. He shot off the leg of a deer with an arquebus, and the dog soon after caught the animal."

A contemporary chronicler of James I of England (1603-1625), wrote that "the King of England is merciful excepting at hunting, where he appears cruel when he finds himself unable to shoot the beast. He frets and storms and cries: 'God is angry with me, but I will have him for all that!' When he shoots him he thrusts his whole arm into the belly and the entrails of the creature up to the shoulder."

James was hated by many of his subjects, but as a hunter he was usually admired. His love of hunting amounted to a mania, and perhaps even surpassed that of Henry VIII. James was in Scotland when he acceded to the throne. At that time the best route down to London was by sea from Leith. But James insisted on making the far more uncomfortable land journey so that he could hunt on the way south to the capital.

The king was frequently criticized by parliament for putting the pleasures of the hunt before his duties to the state. He was also unpopular with gunmakers because he often had guns made and welched on the bills. His reputation as a slow payer almost caused the death of one of the finest gunmakers of the day. When James visited the gunmaker to order a new piece, the craftsman politely declined to accept the commission



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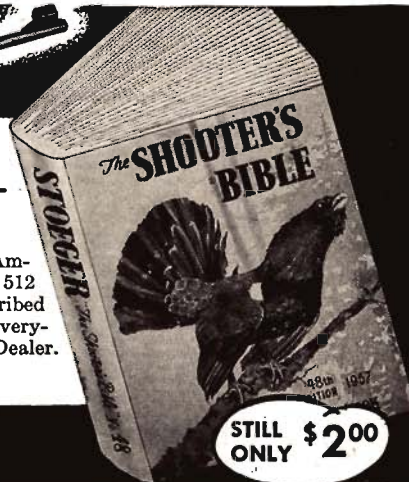
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until the king had paid for those already delivered. In a fury James snatched up a loaded gun and fired point-blank, shredding the gunsmith's ear.

The king added to his unpopularity by ordering the Book of Sports to be read in the churches on Sundays. It was actually not a book, but a pamphlet written by James himself to encourage the people to hunt on the Sabbath.

Few firearms from royal collections have had such a fascinating story, or been so closely connected with international intrigue, as a pair of pistols and a gun which were once owned by Empress Elizabeth of Russia. Although these weapons have probably never been fired in anger at a human being, they were directly responsible for the deaths of a score or more of people. The story begins in Paris, where the Chevalier de Bruslart was a secret agent of the French royal house of Bourbon, which sided with the bluebloods of Russia against Napoleon.

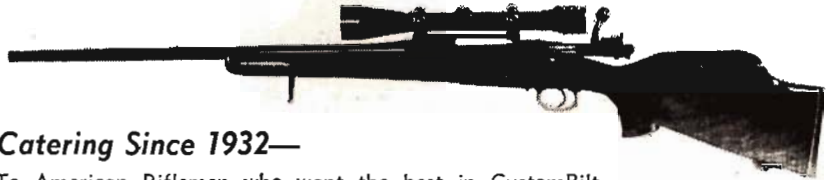
Secret agent de Bruslart attached himself to Napoleon's army. He was with it for the ill-fated 1812 campaign, which ended in the Little Corporal's disastrous retreat from Moscow, during which three-quarters of his men and guns fell and froze in the Russian snows. De Bruslart was not only a secret agent but a born adventurer as well. He managed to reach St. Petersburg. There, by virtue of his royal connections, he gained entrance to the fabulous armory of Emperor Alexander I. When he left, his capacious cloak concealed a gold-encrusted treasure. This was a flint-

lock sporting gun, a pair of flint-lock pistols, a powder flask, and a pair of stirrups, all matching, made for the Empress Elizabeth in 1752 at Tula, in central Russia, center of the Russian firearms industry.

Carrying his priceless loot, de Bruslart headed west. He did not go to France, where the story of his exploits would have earned him a Republican firing squad instead of a royal slap on the back. England was his goal; but during his perilous journey he was attacked several times by bandits. Twice the marauders made off with his treasure, but they failed to kill the tough adventurer. Finally, de Bruslart gathered about him a group of desperadoes, ambushed and slaughtered the bandits, recovered his trophies and reached the English Channel.

Once in England, de Bruslart left the weapons for safe-keeping with some friends named Vardon. Then he returned to France on a dangerous secret mission. Neither the Vardons nor anyone else ever heard from him again, and the gun, pistols, powder flask, and stirrups stayed in the Vardon family until 1950. Since then they have been in the Tower of London collection.

However wealthy, the modern sportsman may be excused if he does not order his guns encrusted like the rich pieces of by-gone days. The chief designer of a London firm of gunmakers recently estimated that the gold, the artistry, and the time required to decorate a rifle in a manner comparable to that of the Empress Elizabeth's gun, would set the customer back a cool \$6,000. ⊕



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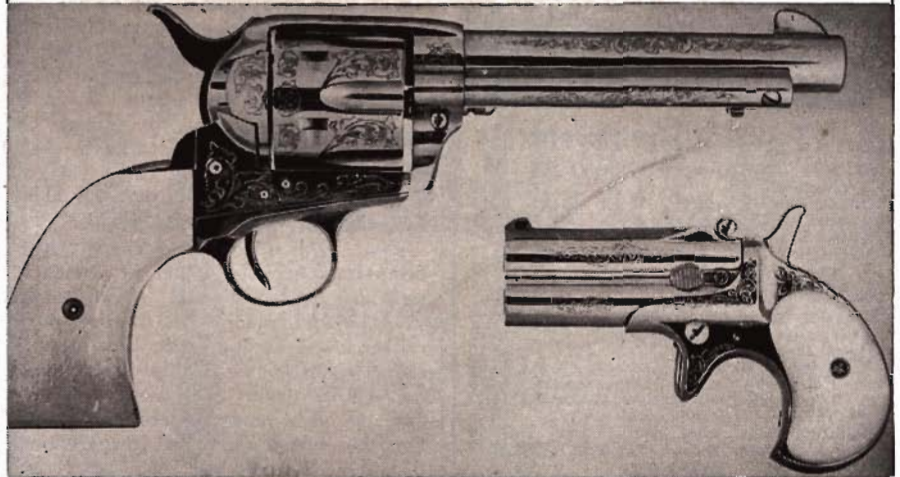
(Continued from Page 39)

generally rugged, click adjustable for both windage and elevation. Big-bore sights are made with clicks representing about 1/3 minute of angle to move the shot on the 300-meter target one-half the width of a ring (2.5 centimeters). On some of these sights no scale is provided to indicate the zero points. A direct reading of elevation and windage on the sights is therefore impossible. The front sights, simple and rugged, are generally non-detachable with a hood that permits using various inserts, post and aperture types. Free rifles weigh between fourteen and eighteen pounds with palm rest. Barrels range between 27.5 and 29.5 inches in length.

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Two S & L rifles were extensively tested, firing from bench rest and with telescopic sight and machine rest, at 100 yards. Both were in the Scandinavian 6.5 mm service caliber. The accuracy obtained from any rifle depends on the quality of ammunition used. That quality will vary considerably over the wide range of free rifle calibers. For this reason, accuracy comparisons of the various big-bore free rifles are not practicable. The S & L rifles were fired more to "see what they would do," than for purposes of making decimal-inch comparisons with other rifles.

Ammunition factory-loaded in Norway, Sweden and Denmark (using Norma components) as well as hand-loaded ammunition using Norma and U.S. components was fired. Average extreme spread varied between 1.2" and 1.5". There was little difference in accuracy between factory-loads and handloads. While groups left much to be desired in the way of accuracy, the 6.5 mm cartridge is a pleasant one to fire because of the mild recoil. The long lock time of

the rifle was objectionable, especially when firing from the standing position. Failures to extract occurred with cases that had been reloaded several times.

Shultz & Larsen's .22 action is extremely simple in design. The receiver has a length of only 5.6", with barrel length 28.4". The bolt handle is the locking lug. Three .22 S & L's were tested for accuracy at 100 yards in the machine rest, using several lots of ammunition. One rifle gave best accuracy with Remington Match ammunition, showing an extreme spread average of 0.98" for four 10-shot groups. Another rifle tested gave its best accuracy with Western Super Match cartridges, averaging 1.15". Still another rifle, with a barrel lighter than standard, gave an extreme spread average of 1.24" with Super Match after adjusting the bedding. This accuracy compares with that of the best target rifles mass-produced in the U.S.

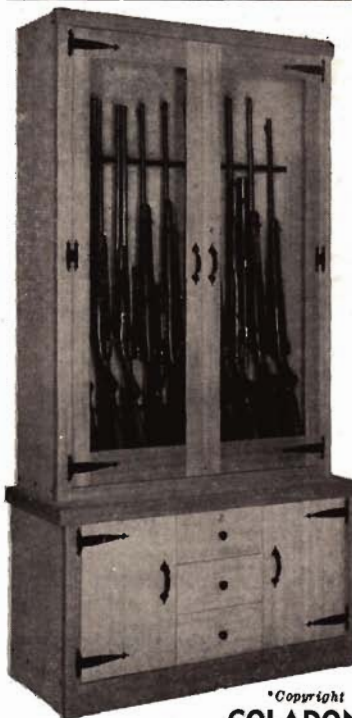
Finnish "Lion" rifles used here have been imported by Firearms International Corp. A caliber .22 rifle, the Lion is based on a heavy receiver machined from a rectangular block of steel. Action length is 6.6", barrel length is 29.1". Weight complete with palm rest is 14.2 pounds. The bolt is uncomplicated. Its handle is the single locking lug. The trigger is designed to give a light double-stage pull with fast operation. The well-proportioned stock is of birch wood. One of these rifles was tested for 100-yard accuracy in the machine rest, using several lots of ammunition. Best accuracy was obtained with Super Match, an extreme spread average of 0.94" with four 10-shot groups. The

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largest group with this lot was 1.00" and the smallest was 0.80". This is exceptionally good accuracy.

Many Swiss free rifles are used by American shooters. Most have been manufactured by Hammerli, one of the largest arms producers in Switzerland. Hammerli's agent in the U.S. is Heinrich Grieder.

Swiss center-fire rifles generally use a modified military straight-pull bolt action, but the receiver is single shot type, 8.3" long. The bolt locks at the front of the receiver. The part which positions the cartridge in the chamber is held by another part carrying the locking lugs. Lock time on this action is comparatively long, since the firing pin falls about 1/2" and five-lever set triggers are used. Barrel length of the big-bore Hammerli is 29.5"; weight about 17.6 pounds.

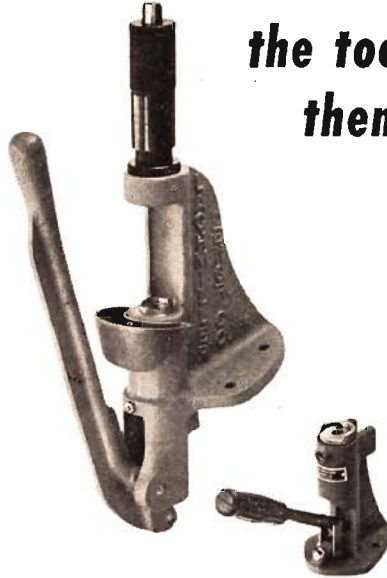
Swiss custom gunsmiths build Hammerli-type free rifles. Two Swiss craftsmen who built free rifles for U.S. shooters are Robert Burchler, Zurich, and Walter Lienhard of Kriens, both internationally-known free rifle shots. These rifles have the same general characteristics as those produced by Hammerli.

One Lienhard rifle in .30-06 was inspected and tested. The rifle was complete with a .22 "trainer" barrel insert. To convert the rifle for firing .22 it is only necessary to remove the bolt, insert the rifled tube, replace several parts in the .30-caliber bolt, and reassemble the bolt in the rifle.

The rifle gave surprisingly good sub-caliber accuracy, although the tube weighs only 0.28 pound and is not supported rigidly inside the caliber .30 barrel. Average extreme spread for four 10-shot groups fired at 100 yards with each of six lots of match ammunition, rifle in the machine rest, was only 1.45". The best average, 1.24", was fired with Super Match. Hammerli also produces a complete free rifle in .22 caliber. The design is similar to the German Walther rifle, and the stock and sight characteristics

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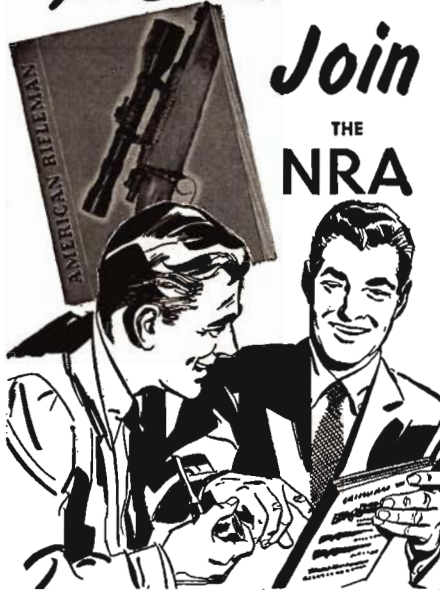
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parallel the center-fire free rifles.

One of the most recent smallbore free rifles is the Anschutz, made in Germany. Anschutz rifles are imported by Stoeger Arms Corp. Bolt and receiver design is similar to the Walther and Hammerli, a small-sized "Mauser." The light, double-stage trigger pull is fast-acting. Two locking lugs hold the bolt in the receiver—the bolt handle is one lug. The cylindrical 7.7" receiver is fitted with a 28.3" barrel. With palm rest, the rifle weighs 15.8 pounds.

One Anschutz rifle was fired for test, machine rest, 100 yard enclosed range, four lots of ammunition. The best accuracy, in this German-made rifle, an average extreme spread of 1.00" for four 10-shot groups, was obtained with Super Match. The largest group was 1.10"; the smallest, 0.86".

There are two American free rifles on the scene, though neither is a factory-made gun. Roy Dunlap of Tucson, Arizona, converts various standard rifles into free rifles by rebarreling and restocking. He also produces a limited number of actions designed for free rifle use, including a left-handed model

similar to the M52 Winchester. Since the receiver is not cut for magazine, it is more rugged than the M52. Dunlap uses Canjar triggers. His stocks are made by himself with a thumbhole design similar to the European pattern.

One Dunlap left-hand smallbore rifle with an Eric Johnson barrel was tested in the machine rest at 100 yards. Best accuracy was shown by Super Match, an average for four targets being 0.94". The largest group was 1.08", the smallest, 0.70".

The other American free rifle was unveiled at Camp Perry this past season. It was shown by Winchester, but they pointed out that the rifle was for display only and none had been made on a production basis. Foundation of the gun was the Model 70 action without the bottom cut for a magazine. The single shot receiver is somewhat stiffer than the standard M70, but the receiver is considerably lighter than that on most European free rifles. A bull-gun barrel was used, with a Dunlap stock. The trigger was a light, double-stage type similar to those on recently-designed European rifles.

Free rifles are in use on many ranges today, with scaled-down targets to adjust for the distance differences. There are no genuine free rifle ranges in the U.S. today, and the brief exposure to Olympic-type shooting at Camp Perry was under hastily improvised conditions. But many of the best position shooters in the U.S. have developed their skill with standard factory models of target rifles. Because of this, free rifle stocks and European free rifles are not the only arms shot according to ISU rules. Because a different technique must be used in shooting with a free rifle stock, some shooters prefer to develop a special technique for using the conventional stocks found on hunting and military rifles. Once it was unusual to see a shooter with a factory-made target rifle

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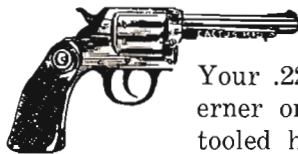
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decked out with assorted free-rifle gadgets such as special Swiss butt plate, special trigger, and palm rest, but such combinations are becoming more common. They are a middle ground for solving the big question, "How free is a free rifle?"

In Europe the free rifle sells for about the same price as a centerfire hunting rifle made in this country. However, after the rifle passes through many hands between manufacturer and shooter, and the Treasury Department takes its cut, the price would never be recognized by the maker. Prices range from \$188.50 for the strong and simply constructed Schultz & Larsen rifles to about \$350 for the slick but complex Hammerlis when purchased over the counter in the U.S. Custom-made American free rifles are hardly any cheaper because the large arms companies refuse to sell actions separately. For example, in order to make up a free rifle on the Model 70 action, it is first necessary to buy the complete rifle. The barrel, sights, trigger and stock must then be discarded. New custom barrels, stocks, and triggers run to money because of the high cost for skilled labor.

It's certain free rifles aren't "free" by a good many dollars. But they return rewards to the rifleman which outweigh mere first cost. Free rifle shooting is tough, and when you "stand on your hind legs and shoot like a man," the 300-meter target dwindles to miles away. Then when you do hold well and shoot a good score, you have the satisfaction of knowing that it isn't just your gang or club you're shooting against. Free rifle shooting is international. Your records are measured by the world. ☉

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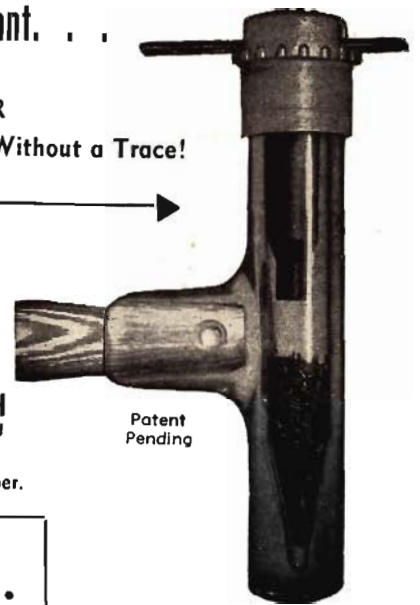
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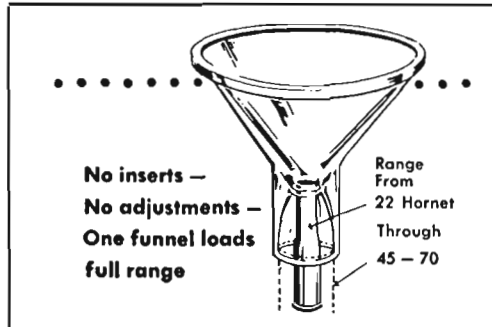
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MY CHALLENGE TO HOLLYWOOD HOT SHOTS

(Continued from Page 18)

borders on the miraculous, and certainly would require persistent study and endless practice.

After spending years in the developing of speed with revolvers and pistols, I am very careful about criticising any reports along these lines, but the reports of tenth-second complete quick-draws just do not fit with the hundreds of tests we have conducted with electric timing equipment. The quarter-second draw—which allows 2½ times 1/10 of a second—squeezes the time down to what I believe to be very close to the limit of human reaction time and hand speed. It is my firm belief based on prolonged and very extensive experience with this sort of quick-draw experiments that no person ever has or ever will perform a complete quick draw in one tenth of a second. This is regardless of all the statements I have seen in print, or who issued them.

The other amazing performance called to my attention concerned dropping of a half-dollar, drawing a single action revolver,

cocking it, firing a shot and hitting the half-dollar before it dropped four inches.

Gravity is on the job every instant and does not favor anyone. We actually built a special timing device to time this particular performance. The longest period of time our timer allowed us for this half-dollar to drop the four inches was fifteen one hundredths of a second. Mathematicians figuring the speed of a falling body cut the time even shorter, to 1/10 of a second or less. Allowing for hand-travel from the point at which the coin was dropped, just what would the actual drawing time have to be? It would be very interesting to know just what timing methods were employed to arrive at the tenth second claimed. Has any reliable evidence (such as the records of electrically controlled timing equipment) ever been furnished to verify such statements—or are they just chatter?

We have often heard of persons who could do things in "less than no time," but to date we have never been permitted to observe any such performances.

A fairly satisfactory test of your own speed on this coin-drop stunt without the use of very expensive timing equipment, can be set up as follows: on any upright object more than four inches high, measure off and mark the four inch elevation. Then hold the half-dollar with the right hand in position for releasing, and hold the left hand close to the releasing point, with thumb extended close to the coin hand. As the coin is released by the right hand, grab for the thumb of the left hand as if it was a gun grip. See if you can grasp your thumb before the coin hits the table. You'll find this experiment interesting and somewhat surprising. Yet, as the original performance was described, you would still have to draw

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that gun (represented by the thumb), cock it, point it correctly, fire the shot, and hit the dropping half-dollar. Very simple in telling; not so easy in the doing!

Personally, I am greatly interested in the TV demonstrations of Hugh O'Brian while impersonating Wyatt Earp. I am greatly interested in his timing methods and equipment; also in his announcement of the quarter-second draw. This is very close to being the ultimate speed if we allow a little latitude on the safety-margin side.

Before I wrote my book, "Fast and Fancy Revolver Shooting," in 1938, I set the super-speed draw at approximately one-quarter second when all conditions were just right and favorable. Close observation since then of many very fast quick-draw performers has not changed my conclusion.

Certainly it would be a very worthwhile undertaking to get all the television and moving picture stars, men and women, together and have a thorough workout with accurate timing equipment under the supervision of persons who know the game thoroughly, to determine definitely each one's relative skill and ability. Such a get-together session would give everybody a square deal and establish everyone's relative standing.

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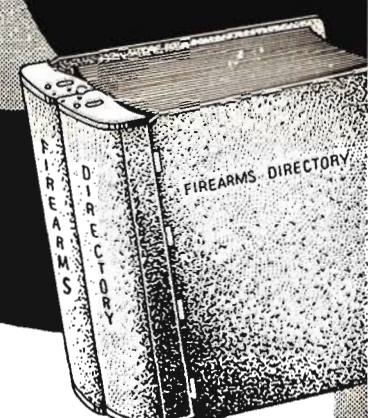
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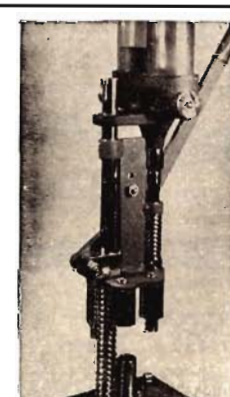
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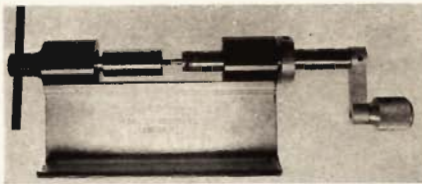
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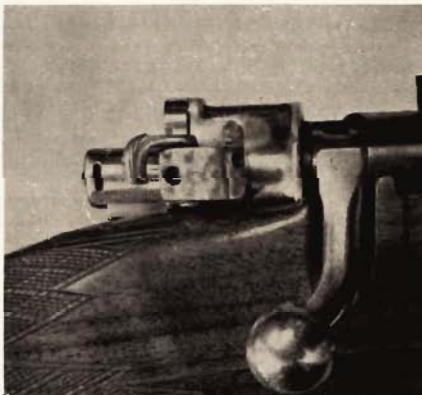


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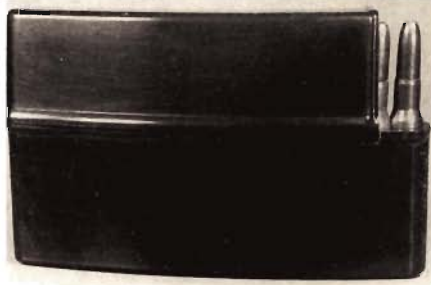
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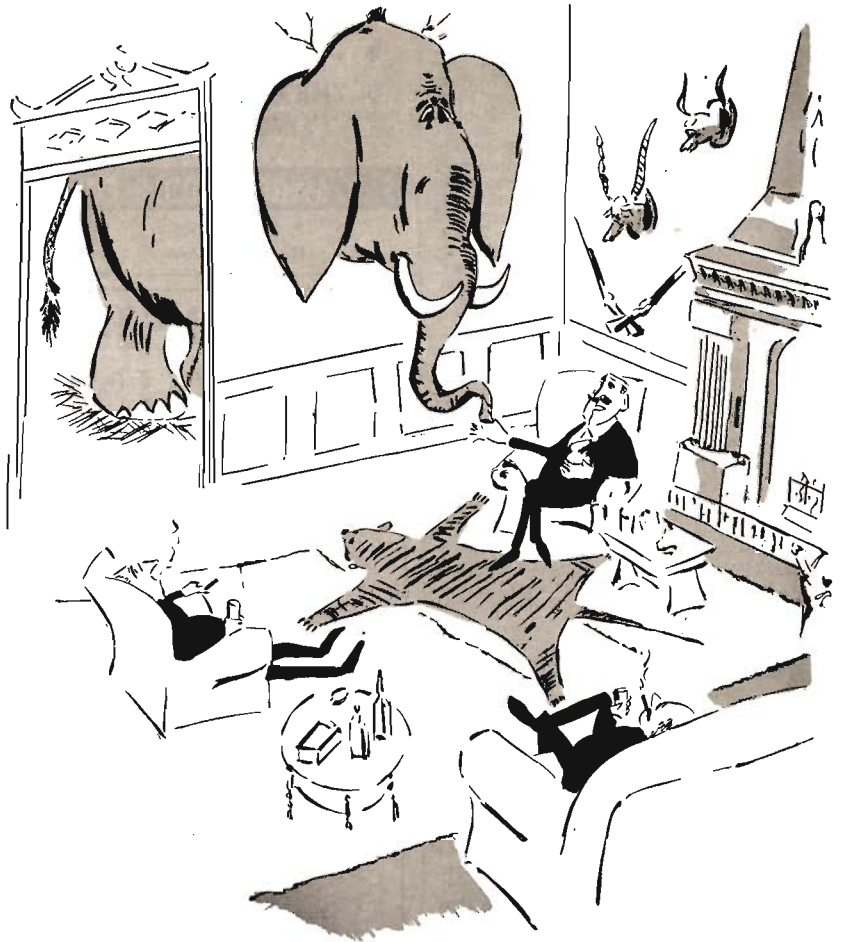
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