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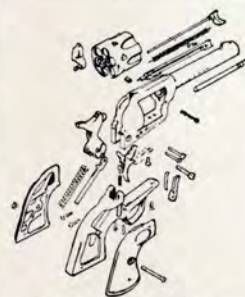
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AUTO MAG



IN RESPONSE to many requests for more of the "Inside Look" exploded views of guns, we are proud to announce that beginning in this issue we are introducing the new, expanded version of one of our most popular columns. We have purchased all of the drawings from "Firearms Encyclopedia," and have added many new drawings. Each month we will present at least two drawings, complete with historical and technical information. These will be full page size, and will be laid out so that they may be removed from the magazine and placed in any standard three-ring binder. Start your collection today. See page 48.

As we begin the new year, I'd like to take the time to thank all of our readers for their continued support. Our success, in a time when guns and shooters are catching hell from all sides and magazines in general are in economic trouble, is reassuring to us, and an incentive to work even harder to give you what you want. However, if we don't know what you want, it is hard to select material that will satisfy the majority of readers. Why not take time to speak your mind, as many have already done?

A great many readers have requested prints of some of our covers and 4-color pages for framing. Next month, the entire 4-color section will be devoted to color prints—without type—of some of our better gun photographs.

The scene on TV was a sporting goods store, and the man was buying a rifle, scope and ammunition. The clerk passed him a form, and when the customer asked if identification was required the clerk said: "Not if you're over 21." The customer then signed the form "George C. Patton." This was on "Hawaii 5-0." (Oct. 19). How many millions of people do you think will now, because of this program, believe that—as many anti-gun legislators have been saying for years—buying a gun is as easy as buying a candy bar? We all know that this is untrue, yet there it was in black and white and "living color." Perhaps we should say "lying color." Letters of protest have gone out to NBC, but we really don't expect an intelligent reply.

THE COVER

One of a pair of really handsome 28 gauge doubles made by Roy Vail. The story of this extraordinary gunsmith is told on page 37. Color photos by George Cassidy.

JANUARY, 1972

Vol. XVII, No. 02-1

George E. von Rosen
Publisher

Guns

FINEST IN THE FIREARMS FIELD

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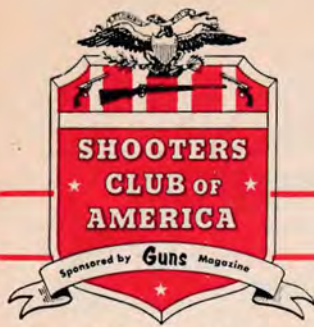
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GUNS • JANUARY 1972



News from the...

SHOOTERS CLUB OF AMERICA

Dedicated to the Constitutional Right of Every Citizen to Keep and Bear Arms

ANTI-FIREARMS LOBBY HAS SNAKE PIT PHILOSOPHY

The anti-firearms lobby is once again busy in Congress with their demands to forbid the sale of handguns and collect all handguns that are now registered. This whole approach reminds me of the great French philosopher Francois Voltaire, and the observation he made about the way a mass public will try to solve a social problem that involves a minority of the public. He observed that when the mass public is faced with a social problem from a minority of the public, the mass has a range of choice. On one hand they can react with a cruel and animalistic solution, or on the other hand they can react in a humanistic manner. Voltaire observed that the mass will try the animalistic approach first. He pointed out several examples from Ancient and Middle Ages history. We might also find many examples in modern American history. The American Indian is one example: The mass public could have shown empathy with the Indian or could have tried to exterminate him. Our first choice was to exterminate. In mental hospitals of the last century there was the choice of trying to understand the mentally sick or torturing them into submission. At first doctors chose the snake pit method for "reforming" the patients. The first reaction to the presence of Negroes in America was in the inhuman category. Only after a hundred years did the mass public begin to realize that the bitter treatment of the Negro was bad for everyone in the nation. And even today, the prison system with Attica type prisons represents the barbaric solution to a social problem.

The present day anti-firearms lobby is right in the same boat as the inquisition people, the snake pit people, the Indian killer people, and the believers in Attica type prisons. They want to cause as much suffering for as many people as possible regardless of guilt or innocence and regardless of past performance and record. The anti-firearms lobby wants to confiscate all the handguns from everyone who has them registered. They want our Federal Government to go to the thousands of honest family men, with respected jobs and solid community reputations, and force them to surrender their property or the FBI or Federal Firearms Division will destroy their reputations through criminal prosecution.

It's a known fact that most problems with firearms are caused by a few small well defined groups who have personal and social-psychological problems. The humanistic and sane approach is to help these people overcome the problems that cause the anti-

social action. This could be done at only $\frac{1}{10}$ the cost of collecting firearms from honest family sportsmen. But the anti-firearms group does not want to help anyone. That is the last thing they want to do. They are only interested in how much useless and senseless suffering they can cause for as many people as possible. In this case, Voltaire's description of human action fits the anti-firearms lobby perfectly.

What would happen if a law to collect firearms was passed by Congress? (1) It would not work because it would not be obeyed. Thousands of firearms owners just would not give up their property. (2) The Federal Government would be forced into prosecuting thousands of people who in every other way were pillars of our Nation. (3) This would alienate a large segment of the middle class sporting public to both the Government and its laws. The local and Federal Government has already alienated a large segment of our youth population with its barbaric treatment of drug addicts. Rather than treat them as sick people they throw them in jail. The Government seems to also be pushing for the destruction of loyalty for the middle age sportsman.

Anyone who fights the anti-firearms lobby can do so with the best of conscience. The anti-firearms lobby represents those elements which are the most evil part of human beings. The manner in which they want to operate is senseless and cruel. It is our duty as Americans, as men who want the best for our Country to do everything we possible can to stop them from their evil course.

Let your State and National representatives know how you feel about the firearms question. It does make a difference if you send a letter. It might seem like only one, but with the many other letters it lets our representatives know that there is a better way to handle the solution. Join good organizations that fight for the rights that were given to us in the Constitution. Groups like the National Rifle Association and SHOOTERS CLUB OF AMERICA can do a lot to see that the real story is presented to the right people. Do not let the anti-firearms lobby commit this crime against our Nation. We owe it to our ancestors and the founders of America to do everything we can to put a stop to their operation. Help today by writing to your Congressman. And by filling out the self addressed and stamped card opposite this page and mailing it today.

Col. Edward Becker

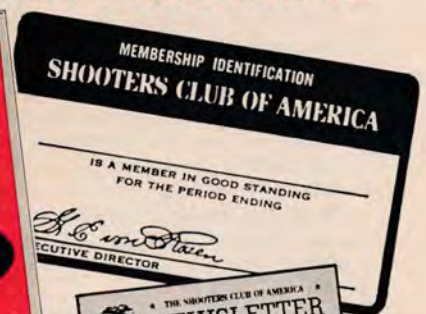
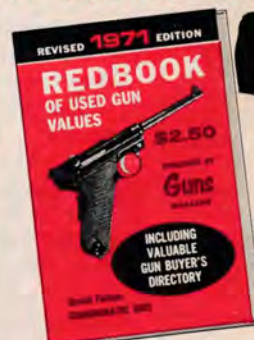
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CROSSFIRE

Hand Grenade Case

A recent Circuit Court case decision directly aimed at the disastrous Kenyon Ballew case has also affected the case involving Ronald Edward Shafer of Granite City, Illinois who was arrested May 28, 1968 for possession of destructive devices in the form of practice hand grenades and their fuses.

Public Law 90-618 (Gun Control Act of 1968), under title II, subchapter B, section 5845, paragraph (f) defines as illegal, "any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into a destructive device . . ." and this includes hand grenades. Mr. Shafer's letter reads in part:

"The practice grenade fuses were bought by me at a gun show. They were used for training and would pop like firecrackers when set off. They were not dangerous!

"The grenades were purchased by me for a friend of mine on his request. This so-called friend turned out to be an undercover agent for the A.T.F.D. I was set up at least five months before the GCA '68 went into effect. On December 17, 1968 the Act went into effect. That day my "friend" came to my shop to pick up ten practice grenades, which he had ordered. On December 18, 1968 he returned for ten more. On the 27th of April, 1969 he purchased nine more practice grenades. It was not until May 28, 1969 that I was arrested, five full months after the first purchase, one month after the last purchase. Why was I not indicted after the first two sales?

"The component part that was to activate the 29 practice grenades into

"Sooper Dooper" weapons was less than one pound of 4831 rifle propellant powder. The federal prosecutor stated, 'as far as he was concerned, there was no difference between propellant powder and flake T.N.T.' My innocence could have been proven either in or outside the courtroom but was flatly denied by the trial judge because he deemed it too dangerous. This demonstration would have been the detonation of one of the grenades. One of my lawyers even offered to hold one of the grenades in his hand while setting it off!

"The agents in charge never analyzed or tested any of the powder, but special agent in charge, Sidney R. Anderson did do something. He couldn't find any place to store the evidence, which had been kept in a wooden closet and in wooden desk drawers for six months, so he had it destroyed. This was after he had gotten an eleven count indictment against me! That way nobody could examine the evidence the government was holding as exhibits.

"I am now on my way to serve ten long years in prison. I could have proven my innocence in the court room by a simple, harmless demonstration but was denied. Probation also was denied because I am considered too dangerous to be left on the streets. After all, this is the first time I have been in trouble in my entire life!

"Kenyon Ballew and many others have suffered considerably because of prejudices and ridiculous laws. Who's next?"

Ronald Shafer
Granite City, Ill.

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HANDLOADING BENCH

By C. GEORGE CHARLES

FOR ME there is nothing quite like the solid boom and billowing white smoke cloud of black powder—followed perhaps seconds later by the solid backward-drifting thud of an ounce or more of lead belting the target or backstop.

Even better is to take one of those old big-bores hunting, preferably a single shot, and kill your winter meat the hard way, the way Great Grandpappy did it west of the Mississippi back in the '80's.

I've always been partial to the old big-bore rifles and have found them a never-ending source of shooting pleasure. Give me an old Sharps or a Remington rolling block with a bore as big as your thumb, a hand full of cases, a can of FFg black powder, and a supply of cast bullets, primers, and a rudimentary tool or two, carry me to the range, and I'm set for the day.

Of course, it goes without saying that shooting those old guns and calibers is a handloading proposition.

Don't get the impression they can't be shot with smokeless powder. If the gun is in good condition and modern cases (no old folded heads, please) are used, smokeless works fine. It must however, be used with great discretion, both as to amount and type. The old guns are generally weak (by today's standards) in both design and materials. After all, they date from a period when wrought iron was considered first-class material for receivers, bolts, and barrels.

All the same, the shooting isn't nearly as much fun nor nearly so challenging with smokeless. There simply isn't as much romance in touching off an ancient .50-70 when it doesn't produce that billowing flame-shot cloud of white smoke and that delightful aroma of charcoal, sulphur, and saltpetre.

Guns are plentiful—M-1871 series 11mm Mausers; .43 caliber Remington rolling blocks; .50 caliber Sharps and

Remingtons; Peabodys; .577-450 Martinis; Trapdoor Springfields in .45 and .50 caliber; and on and on, including God knows how many 1873, 1876, 1886, etc. Winchester repeaters.

To get to the meat of the matter, if you have or can get a rifle, good cartridge cases are next on the menu. If you've garnered a .50-70, by all means squander a few bucks for ten or twenty new cases from Old Reliable Cartridge Company, 3135 S. Taylor Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, or, perhaps from Dixie Gun Works, Union City, Tennessee. If it's some other U.S. caliber, try the latter source—the latest DGW catalog lists cases in quite a few obsolete calibers. If yours is an 11mm Mauser, scare up a box or two of ".43 Mauser" of Canadian CIL make. All these take standard Boxer primers to simplify loading.

If you happen to have one of those wonderful old Martini-Henry rifles in .577-450 caliber, look around a bit and you'll be able to turn up a few ten-round red and blue boxes of paper-patch Kynoch ammunition imported a while back by Century Arms, 3-5 Federal St., St. Albans, Vermont, 05478. The cases require the large-diameter Berdan primer but it is available and really quite easy to use.

Of course, if you are lucky, your black powder rifle may be chambered for the .45-70 or one of its longer variants such as the .45-90, .45-2-4/10 Sharps, etc. Since .45-70 cases are still produced just buy a couple boxes of them. They can be used equally well in the longer chambers for the type of shooting we are discussing.

If other sources fail to produce cases, I hope you'll excuse me for recommending you get a copy of my book *Cartridge Conversions*, (Stackpole, \$8.95) which tells in detail how to make what you need from what is currently available.

You don't really need many cases. I
(Continued on page 45)

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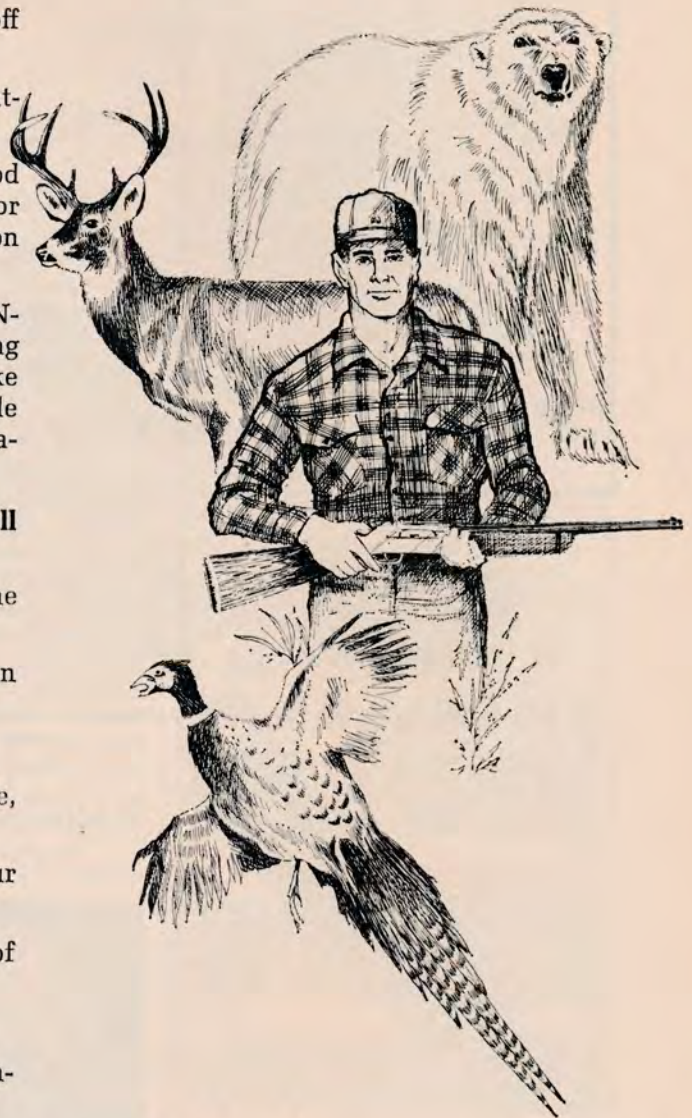
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POINT BLANK

By COL. CHARLES ASKINS



UNQUESTIONABLY there isn't a more interesting family of cartridges than the huge elephant loads. In calibers ranging from .450 to .600, with cases as long as 3½ inches, these "Big Bertha" numbers hold a measure of fascination. Mostly designed around the turn of the century, the lot were fired in double express rifles. Developed by English ammo makers for English rifles, these powerful cartridges were used extensively in Africa and India. Made up on long cylindrical cases, most of them with no bottleneck and indeed very little taper, bullet weights ranged from 400 grains to 900 grains and velocities were invariably quite moderate. Energy hovered around the 5000 ft. lb. level, with the exception of the .600 which was the most powerful sporting rifle with an energy quotient of 7600 ft. lbs. The recoil ranged from 60 ft. lbs. to 100.



H&H .375 Flanged Magnum.

Just how it was decided that 5,000 ft. lbs. was about right for tuskers, buffalo and rhino has never been explained, but this level of knockdown "oomph" was settled upon by British designers and, interestingly, it is just about right. The extra thump of the big .600 has never been indicated to really do any more efficient job than the more moderate loadings.

Because of the extraordinarily long dimensions of most of these big cartridges it was not too practical to con-

sider them for anything save express rifles. The British have long been ardent shotgunners. It was convenient when the demand grew for heavy rifles in Africa and India that the shotgun type action would be converted to the big cartridges. Happily the lengthy shells would function through the express rifle very smoothly. Virtually all of them are rimmed and as everyone knows the rim does not adapt itself to a magazine arm very efficiently.

That only 2 shots might appeal to some sportsman as a trifle short for dangerous work at close range—a commonplace with elephants—did not deter the Britisher. He was supremely confident he could down the toughest old bull tusker in the herd with his two rounds. But just in case he didn't, he carried an extra pair of cartridges between the fingers of the forward hand and practiced hasty reloading! Many is the time when he had to use them, too!

It used to be on African safari, before the advent of our .458 magnum caliber, the .378 magnum and the .460 magnum, that the American sportsman had to use the express rifle. It felt strangely awkward in his hands. The statement has been often repeated that the well built Holland & Holland handles just like a well balanced shotgun. This is pure malarky. The rifle has an atrociously poor balance; all the weight is in the tubes. Built with an excessive amount of metal in the barrels to withstand the pressures, the rifle has about as much aliveness and good feel as an eight-foot scantling. The fact that our early safarists managed to kill their tusker, buffalo and rhino with the strange feeling shooting iron was more because the white hunter got them up in eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation than from the good fit and feel of the gun.

The better made double express had a set of open sights. The rear was a shallow "V" and the front was a tiny bead. The sights could be aligned with

good promptness but they were non-adjustable and sighted, usually, for never more than 100 yards. The two barrels shot within about 5 inches of each other at that distance if the firer was shooting Kynoch ammo. The barrels were adjusted, as were the sights, for the standard Kynoch load and woe be the owner who deviated from the regular fodder. There were—and still are—Americans who swear by the British double rifle. They think it is the greatest thing since sex and many



Center: Lewis .470 Nitro Express.

of them have tinkered with their own reloads, usually to their considerable mystification. It isn't too difficult to work up a handload which will finally shoot to the non-movable sights at 100 yards but strangely the other barrel won't print into the same group with the first. Too, there are owners who believe the hogwash that with a carefully worked up kitchen load you can get both barrels to plop all their shots into a 1.5" group at 100 steps. I well remember one of these stories from an old aficionado of the double rifle who informed Jack O'Connor one day that his Westley Richards .476 would shoot a 5" group from both barrels at 500 yards. Old Jack liked to have dropped his teeth!



Remington .458 Magnum

The truth is now, sad to say, both the double express and its banana-like cartridge are disappearing. This has been due to a number of factors, none because of a shortage of game. What has happened is that the British sportsman on the "Tight Little Isle" has been handicapped since World War II by the edict of his government that he cannot go abroad with enough
(Continued on page 63)

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STEVENSON on Hand Guns

THOSE of you with long memories
may recall that last April we
launched a three-part rehash of the
eternal revolver vs. automatic hassle,
and saw fit in the first installment to
give Bill Jordan a wall-to-wall shel-
lacking for the dismally mistaken
point of view on the subject which he
had expounded in his book, *No Sec-
ond Place Winner*. Some of you
thought this tactic was the height of
poor taste; others thought I was griev-
ously ill-advised to assault a totem
of Mr. Jordan's imposing stature. Still
others thought it was all jolly good
fun, and a few, the silent minority no
doubt, shared my view that such a
display of uncringing temerity was
demonstrative of positive virtue.

But I must confess that my courage
was buttressed by the certainty that I
had nothing to fear from my audacity.
Bill Jordan, for those few of you who
may not have crossed his sign, was for
several decades the U.S. Border Pa-
trol's top pistol shark. Unquestionably
he is one of the finest combat revolver
shooters who ever lived, and is probably
the best still alive. Among his lesser
titles are those of Lifetime Master
with the target pistol, high power
rifle, and smallbore rifle; "AA" classi-
fication in both the smoothbore disci-
plines; and the military Distinguished
Marksman rating. Under no circum-
stances would I goad such an individ-
ual to gunning anger.

But I had a sleeve card, for I knew
that Bill Jordan was a gentleman in
the fine old sense of the term, and
would view my forensic forays in a
kindly light. I had, in my younger
days, shadowed him at half a dozen
NRA conventions, discrete, unobtru-
sive, and unobserved, with a careful
ear cocked to catch whatever pearls
of wisdom he might let fall in his
wake; and I had seen that he always
conducted himself with perfect grace.

So early last spring I was feeling

pretty confident of my personal
safety. But I soon realized that I had
overstepped the bounds of reasonable
etiquette, not by any personal act, but
rather due to the renowned ineptitude
of the U.S. Postal Service. Squaring
off for a solid shot at another man's
viewpoints is perfect cricket as far as
I am concerned, but not when his
back is turned. It was in a mood of
seemly contrition then that I sat down
to write to Bill Jordan:

19, March 1971

Dear Mr. Jordan:

Likely by now someone has
brought to your attention the first
part of a three-part article of
mine on the old revolver vs.
semi-auto rhubarb, which ap-
peared in the April issue of *Guns*,
and wherein I tore after your
views on this question, as ex-
pressed in *No Second Place Win-
ner*, with some fine vigor.

Ordinarily they send me an ad-
vance copy of the magazine, and I
had intended, as a mark of cour-
tesy and respect, to send you my
copy immediately so that you
could read it over before the
magazine reached the public.
However, fate seems to have
foiled my efforts to conduct my-
self as a gentleman, for I've just
received the May issue, but have
never seen April's. I've just got-
ten some letters from readers on
it, so it must be out, and mine
must have been lost in the mail.
In this event, all I can do is apol-
ogize to you.

If you'd care to, I'd like to invite
you to crucify my views on this
issue in a rebuttal article, and
would be pleased to send you a
carbon of the manuscript for the
third installment, so you could
work with the complete series. I
assume that the editor would be

delighted to grant you equal time if you wish to avail yourself of it.

If, however, you prefer the sword to the pen, I'll be down for the NRA show, and while my automatic is jammed up you can just blow the hell out of me with your old wheelgun. I'd hope though that you'd prefer the bottle to the sword, for I'll have some good bourbon along.

Yours sincerely,
Jan A. Stevenson

A few days later, with the Post Office functioning properly for a change, came a reply from the Texas-Louisiana border:

March 26, 1971

Dear Mr. Stevenson:

My old friend "Skeeter" Skelton called me the other day, ostensibly because he had been unable to get a hotel reservation for the NRA convention and demanding that I do something about it. Having delivered himself of that problem he then breathlessly advised me that I had been called to task in the public prints and volunteered to (1) hold my coat; (2) act for me as second or counsel, depending on whether violence or legal action was contemplated. Having ascertained that my name had been spelled correctly and that *No Second Place Winner* had been prominently mentioned I told him that I would call him if needed and that under no circumstances should he call me—collect. Not but that I would be glad for him to act for me, normally, but in this instance he seemed a bit overly eager, which, knowing Skeeter, I could attribute to a number of circumstances: (1) In the event of hostilities he would be in only the nominal, and acceptable, personal peril of wild swings, ricochets, etc; (2) He is well known for being chronically short of funds due to a lifelong weakness for handmade hats and benchmade boots, arousing a suspicion as to the purity of his motives; he would stand to gain by an on-the-scene report, complete with pictures, to *Shooting Times*; and (3) In the event of a draw with *NO First Place Winner*, single action revolvers, which he is known to affect, would be in an enviable position, uncontested.

Actually, although prodded by curiosity into visiting a number of magazine stands without finding a copy of the April *Guns*, I have been until now unable to lay hands on a copy of your article so

I don't know how mad I am. However, it appears probable to me from your letter that we have an area of disagreement more serious than any academic argument over the relative merits of "wheel guns" and automatics, both of which have been known to kill a goodly number of folks very dead indeed. I refer to your choice of potables. Having spent my entire life below the Smith & Wesson Line, with the exception of a few mid-summer excursions to Camp Perry, "Williams on the Range", and Bruce Hodgdon's prairie dog preserves, I have learned the hard way that red liquor is inadvisable as a steady diet. It not only lacks reliability as opposed to pure, clear white beverages such as tequila, vodka, gin, but it does not mix well with quinine water, a necessity in these warm climates. (Note: Here one is constantly subjected to bites by swarming mosquitos, any one of which could turn out to be a female anopholes making it necessary to keep the body well saturated with quinine). Since encounters with poisonous reptiles are also not uncommon, some form of pure alcoholic diluter which will not angry up the blood like red liquor but act as a specific in snake bite cases and also improve the flavor of the tonic, is indicated.

Although I must decline to accept your invitation to write a refutation of your article, since the NRA has repeatedly advised me that I am working for them and not employed as a writer, I will be happy to debate you on the relative merits of pure white beverages as against alcoholic tipples polluted with color at any time. Since this is outside the realm of firearms, the NRA interposes no objection to my indulging in other healthful, relaxing hobbies on NRA time. In this projected debate, I will insist on Skelton (who will also be in Washington) acting as arbiter.

Since I stick up about a foot above normal head level it will be easy for you to spot me in Washington. Please give me a hail. However, I will appreciate a thoughtful approach. Although now six years removed from Border Patrol festivities, my nerves are not yet up to having my name called loudly—from behind.

Yours truly
Bill Jordan

(Continued on page 62)



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Star Model BKS

The latest Star auto pistol is the Model BKS imported by Firearms International, the subsidiary company of the Garcia Corporation. The new BKS, shows a "kissin' kin" resemblance to the .45 M1911. It is in 9 mm Parabellum caliber, with a full capacity of 9 rounds. Made by "Star" Bonifacio Echeverria, S.A. of Eibar, Spain's largest arms maker, the new pistol has a lot going for it. Mostly this is plenty of punch in the 9 mm Luger round plus a size and heft which ideally suits the pistol to undercover carry.

With a length of 7.6 inches and a depth of 5 inches, the pistol has been designed with thinness in mind; a lack of width through its cross-section which permits stowing it away in the Safariland M55 thumb-break belt rig or the Hume skeletonized belt-loop holster so that there is neither bulge nor lump beneath the lightest jacket. It rides, I find, especially well with the butt turned to the front and pushed back almost over the hip pocket. Not a fast draw location but ideal for every day carry. The lack of poundage is achieved through the use of alloys. The receiver is an alloyed steel, but the slide and barrel are all-steel. Despite the feathery 26 ounces, the recoil is scarcely noticeable at all. When gripped 2-handed it is trifling. Sights are partridge, the front presenting the well accepted one-eighth inch post outline. The rear is movable for windage. The sights are intended for the standard factory 9 mm ammo, the stuff that is made up of the 124-gr. bullet at 1120 fps MV. I fired the Super Vel 90-gr. loading at 1420 fps MV. It struck low. This is because the much greater velocity of the bullet gets it out of the muzzle quicker. The barrel has not had time to rise into alignment with the target

before the slug is gone. I corrected this by having my local gunsmith attach a custom-made higher rear sight. I intend to fire Super Vel in this baby exclusively. It is now zeroed to hit dead center at 25 yards.



The BKS was test fired with 100 rounds each of Rem.-Peters, Win.-Western and Norma 9 mm ammo. This was followed with 100 rounds of Super Vel. The pistol functioned perfectly. Some of my 9 mm guns will not eject the Super Vel case. The Star handled the hot loading without a bobble. The trigger pull was rough and too heavy. It weighed 5-pounds 3-ounces. I reduced this to 3½-pounds and made it clean-breaking. This is not a target pistol yet, 2-handed at 25 yards on the standard American target it was easy to run scores of 96% average.

Thirty years ago Star won the Spanish army trials with a pistol which was the spitting image of the .45 M1911. The Star submitted for the tests was the 9 mm Bayard. Since that time the pistol has been modified somewhat. Star engineers did away with the grip safety, modified the takedown, adapted a different driving spring, altered the trigger mechanism and made other changes. But the gun

remains essentially the Browning design. It is a good one. I have possessed every model of Star, this to include the .45 ACP, the .38 Super and the 9 mm Luger. And along with these the DK Model which is a .380. The Star .22 auto is a variation of the common pattern. It is a good handgun, a semi-target number, designed after a now obsolete Walther.

Firearms International imports the Models A, B and P, in calibers .38 Super, 9 mm and .45 ACP. Also the DK in .380, the .22 which is Model FR, and now the BKS. This latter, like the others fills a legitimate spot in the handgun firmament. It is a real "walloper" in a handy small-size package. Small, neat, unobtrusive, the 9 mm loading gives it real authority. *Charles Askins.*

Ugartechea Shotguns

In Eibar, Spain, one of the oldest gun-building cities in the world, there are 62 different arms makers. Franco does not permit any rifle manufacture with the exception of a few double express, so the principal arms turned out are pistols and scatterguns, with most of the accent on the smooth-bores. Of the dozens of shotgun builders, there are about six that are really outstanding. Among these is the smallish firm of Ignacio Ugartechea. Ugartechea is a shooter and a hunter himself. He avidly follows the live-bird matches throughout Spain and wins his share. His shotguns are coveted by the pigeon shooters and when he turns out a custom-made job it is a thing of great beauty, and marvelous utility. His scatterguns are patterned after the Purdey, a common practice in Spain. But infinitely less costly.



Not all Ugartechea guns are tailored by hand. He makes a brand for export and this gun, quite naturally, is not so fancy. It must lend itself to quantity production and this produces a sturdy gun but one without all the hand finishing and fancy touches. Such a model is the "Falcon" currently under importation by the American Import Co. of San Francisco. This is a moderately priced (Continued on page 62)

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Panel of Experts

1. Each question should be sent directly to the panel member best suited to solve your problem. Mail questions directly to the expert at the address shown below.
2. Each question—only one question per letter, please—must be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope and \$1.00.
3. You will receive the answer to your question directly from the expert. Our panel will select the most interesting questions for publication in this column, but you don't have to wait for the magazine to get your answer.
4. Letters with questions which do not have \$1.00 will be disregarded; those without a self-addressed envelope will be answered in the magazine, and not directly.

We have enlarged the staff of our Panel of Experts to give you the best possible service on your questions. Remember, write directly to the expert at the address below—do not send questions to GUNS Magazine—and be sure to include the \$1.00 and the self addressed envelope.

Robert Mandel—Antique Arms

P.O. Box 499, Wilmette, Ill. 60091

Shelley Braverman—Modern Arms; Forensic ballistics

Dept. Q, Athens, New York 12015

William Schumaker—Gunsmithing

208 W. Fifth, Dept. Q, Colville, Washington 99114

Les Bowman—Hunting

Box 286, Bountiful, Utah 84010

C. George Charles—Handloading

P.O. Box 3302, Dept. Q, Peoria, Illinois 61614

George E. Virgines—Fast Draw

P.O. Box 2014, Northlake, Illinois 60614

Maj. R. O. Ackerman—Black Powder Shooting

9627 Arvada Ave. NE, Dept. Q, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87112

Dick Miller—Trap & Skeet

Casa Correo Sta., P.O. Box 21276, Dept. Q, Concord, Calif. 95421

Llama Conversion

I would like to know if it is possible to convert the Llama 9mm Largo auto pistol to the Colt .38 Super round. All the parts of my gun interchange with the .45 and .38 super autos that Stoeners sells. Availability of ammo is my reason for wanting to convert.

E. A. Wherly

Los Angeles, Calif.

Little, often none at all, alteration is required to convert the Llama 9mm Largo pistol to handle the .38 Colt Super automatic cartridge. First, the makers of this pistol consider the 9mm Largo and .38 Super cartridge interchangeable, though some of the earlier guns will not accept the slightly larger rim diameter of the Colt case. In addition, the Spanish Government proof house maintains that the proof pressures for the 9mm Largo are identical to those for the .38 Super. Consequently, there is no question of the ability of the gun to handle .38 Super pressures.

Simply charge the magazine of your Largo pistol with .38 Super ammunition

and attempt to cycle it through the action. If the cartridges feed correctly and the slide goes fully into battery, you may use that ammunition without any problem whatever. If the slide fails by a very small amount to go fully into battery, then it is necessary to open up the recess in the breech face inside the slide so that it will freely accept the larger rim of the .38 Super case. No other alteration is necessary unless you have a very early production barrel which does not have the shallow rim recess in the rear face of the upper barrel tang. If the lower edge of the tang contains a shallow recess, you are in business, but if it does not, a clearance cut for the cartridge rim must be ground or filed there. You do not need a new barrel. The internal dimensions and the chamber of the 9mm Largo barrel are suitable for use with the .38 Super cartridge.—G.C.N.

Marlin Revolver

I have a pistol that was made by

Marlin Firearms Co. The patent is in two dates being Aug. 2, 1887 and Aug. 9, 1887. The pistol has a top-break action and has automatic extractors. It is a six shot revolver in approximately .32 caliber centerfire, and is double action. Barrel length is 3¾". The frame is engraved and it has pearl grips. Can you give the value and history of this gun?

John Pratt
Indianapolis, Ind.

Your Marlin-made .32 caliber revolver has a slight interest in the collector's field. One helpful item is the fact that it is engraved and this alone will enhance its value. Made approximately at the turn of the century, its collector's value with engraved frame and pearl grips should be approximately \$35.00.—R.M.

Colt 1863 Musket

My question concerns the Colt 1863 Military Musket. Serven's book states that all artillery models have 35¼" barrels, with barrel band springs, etc. I have one that has a 36½" barrel, with the bands held by screws. The gun has not been altered and seems to be completely original. Can you explain the discrepancy?

David Angeluceri
Vineland, N. J.

As a Civil War contractor, Colt Arms Mfg. Co. made a special model rifled musket patterned after the regular Model 1861, but with some minor differences; principle of which were bands held in place by screws instead of band springs. I am sure that your rifle is one of the above, and if in very fine condition, its collectors value should be around \$250 or so. Don't Worry, it's a winner!—R.M.

Rust?

Why are the chambers on the S&W Model 60 stainless steel revolver coated with a rust-colored substance? One would think stainless steel would withstand nearly everything.

Steve Burns
New York, N. Y.

Steels (including Stainless Steel) are actually porous in nature; during the manufacture, test-firing and cleaning, various lubricants and cleaners are forced into the pores of the metal and eventually exude out.

The cleaning of a Stainless Steel gun is accomplished exactly the same as any other gun; clean it after use, and then again about 72 hours later; it may be then oiled and put away. This "double cleaning" will allow time for the absorbed substances to come out . . . actually, what you refer to is not really a stain, but a deposit, and not a fault of the gun or its material.—S.B.

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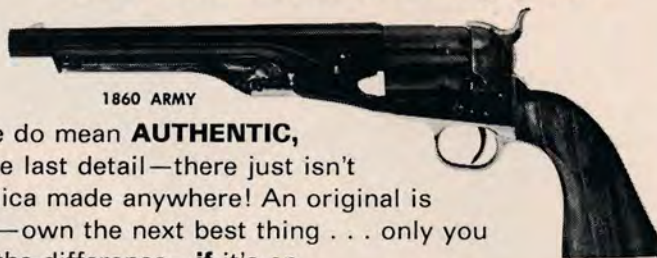
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SAFARI



Vern Swiggett of Midland, Texas bagged this beautiful black buck at the YO Ranch. He used his Remington Model 660 in .308 Winchester with Speer 130-grain hollow point handloads.

THE VISION in both my eyes was slightly impaired as an aftermath of recent major surgery; yet looking into the darkness of the jungle of foliage which cut off most of the light, I could see my quarry. The very absence of sound and motion gave the setting an ominous quality. I knew, however, that cruel tusks jutted from jaws. I knew that cold, evil eyes were observing me in every move that I made. My guide said:

"You'll have to take him from here. Make your first shot count, for if you don't get him he'll move like lightning. We hope he'll go the other way, but he's just as likely to come this way."

I sat down and tried to find a vital spot on the misshapen figure through the aperture of my sights. The ivory bead stood out against the target which was completely black. I aimed for a point which I hoped would prevent my target from running either way and squeezed the trigger. The response was instantaneous. If I had hit him, he didn't show it. I cranked another cartridge into the chamber and fired again. This time, I heard the impact of the bullet and saw him go cartwheeling in a shower of leaves

and loose soil. When this had cleared, we saw him lurch to his feet and come straight for us. I heard my guide's hoarse whisper, "Here he comes!"

I worked the bolt and fired as the rifle settled against my shoulder. This time my quarry hit the ground and came sliding toward me like a toboggan, stopping not more than four rifle lengths away. I remained seated on the ground without moving and very deliberately ejected the spent hull and slid the bolt forward to seat another.

The trophy was the first European or "Russian" Boar I had ever faced. The scene was the Great Smoky Mountains, and the adventure was one which launched me into an exotic game hunting career which has continued over a number of years. It has convinced me that exotic game hunting has far more to offer the American sportsman than is commonly recognized. I am convinced that it may provide an answer, in some cases the only answer, to many of the perplexing problems facing big game hunting in the future.

Some excellent articles have been written about exotic game in this

country, but I have long felt that something more needed to be said in view of the situation faced by big game hunting around the world. I am going to say what I have been afraid to say up to now. Now, it needs to be said. Trophy hunting for big game is in serious trouble. I would suggest that if you must have an outstanding trophy of almost any species you had better get it within the next decade. That isn't a happy thought but it is true. We have read recently that our big bears are in grave danger. This may not actually be true insofar as their facing immediate extinction is concerned. The total kill is holding up remarkably well. However, the size of the average specimen grows smaller each year.

The curtain has fallen, within the past couple of years, on hunting for one of the world's great trophies—the Indian tiger. Lion hunting in India is gone, likely forever. In Africa, the range of the lion is diminishing year by year. Protective measures are being put into effect, but lion hunting will never again be what it once was. I have been unable to learn the status of the jaguar. Of all the big cats the

U.S.A.

By VERNON W. HURST

leopard seems to have the best chance for holding his own. He is a rapid breeder and far more adaptable than his larger cousins. With a little help he may be able to increase his numbers.

Laws recently passed which forbid the bringing into this country of any cat skin without proper documentation that it was legally taken will provide tremendous protection to all the big felines. I think it would be in order for me to point out that hunters were among the chief supporters of this legislation. Hunters have always been in the vanguard of those who sought to preserve wildlife. No species was ever overlooked in these troubled times.

In these days when the popular course seems to be to make the hunter the villain, there has arisen a group of neoenvironmentalists who have never shown any real interest in

wildlife. They know little, or nothing, of the history of wildlife conservation. Almost overnight they have blossomed out as full-blown experts. Last fall while I was on Safari Island, a major network television program aired a piece which presented a complete distortion of the facts. The program pictured the owners of the island as heartless butchers who get their kicks from inflicting cruel suffering on poor dumb creatures. This subjected the owners of the island, at least those known to the public, to almost unbelievable persecution. I understand the matter is now in litigation and trust it may be a step toward teaching television commentators to confine themselves to areas about which they know something. These modern "champions of conservation" are the same ones who, a few years ago, were putting on special programs to support legislation designed to limit your right to own firearms for legitimate purposes.

The Indian Guar has entered the twilight. This is a truly disturbing fact, for, like the tiger, this was one of the world's great trophies. He is the largest remaining remnant of the wild cattle of the world. Thus, two of the top prizes in big game hunting have passed during the past decade. The

same is true of the great Asiatic water buffalo. As a matter of fact, I think it would not be an exaggeration to state that virtually all Indian wildlife faces a very grim future. My good friend, Bert Klineburger, recently wrote: "The great non-hunting people of India have destroyed one of the greatest reservoirs of wildlife in the world."

Even these specific examples tell only a small part of the tragic story. Most of the really desirable species, even in America where game protection under government management has reached its highest level, have their backs to the wall. Last season I hunted in one of the outstanding mule deer areas in Wyoming. I hunted for half a day on new-fallen snow, and I saw less than a dozen tracks—all of them small.

The plain, hard facts are that wild game just cannot compete with man on land which both of them need. Game has been pushed back further and further to areas where it does not have to compete with man. Now, as I have already stated, its back is to the wall. It can retreat no further. We have come to that state in man's evolutionary process where almost any area capable of producing game is capable of producing something else which man needs. Since hunters are,



This young hunter displays his 41" Corsican Ram taken at Safari Island.

This Eagle Ranch Axis deer, native of India and Pakistan, attempts to hide behind the brush and sneak a look at the camera. The Axis are faring extremely well in the Texas hill country, as are other exotics such as Aoudad and Mouflon sheep.





At Camp La Junta, for young hunters and their fathers, the game abounds not only in domestics, but also in the exotic types. The terrain to which the exotics are introduced is very closely matched to that of their native land making it quite adaptable and it also allows them to breed easily.



as many of them as there may be, a minority group, game is going to suffer more and more. It cannot exist forever with such protection as can be provided by politicians who are harried almost beyond measure by competing lobbyists who represent powerful special interests.

I know that what I am saying will not be popular, but that does not prevent it from being true. If someone wants to argue, let them argue with the facts of what is taking place in Alaska. Man needs oil, and oil exists where game abounds. The production of oil does harm (at least it has up to now) to the wildlife population. Therefore, the game must suffer. Take another example from Alaska—that of her great Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge. The natives of the area are claiming that they need the area covered by the refuge, and there is every reason to admit that they may “prove their case.” Population increase will virtually guarantee their doing so. The results are inevitable.

I think there is little reason to drive ourselves out of our minds trying to figure out what the possibilities actually are. Where men go into an area and increase beyond a certain point, wildlife decreases. It is just that simple. Unless we Americans prove ourselves wiser than other peoples who

have taken over the land, the wildlife will continue to decrease.

Big game would have disappeared from Europe long ago, had its perpetuity not been taken over by private management on privately owned lands. Right here is a place where we might draw a most revealing conclusion. Germany has, relatively, the same population density as India and Pakistan. The Indians and Pakistanis have virtually exterminated their wildlife populations. The Germans have, in spite of their crowded conditions, managed to maintain a rather substantial wildlife population—deer, boar, etc.—on privately owned lands. The Germans are a hunting people whereas the Pakistanis and the Indians are not. Draw your own conclusion. Wildlife has little to hope for from the “bleeding hearts” and the neo-conservationists.

That brings us to the focal point of all I am trying to say. The big game population of this country will not survive permanently under public management. In all probability there will be game for the lifetime of most of us who have passed the halfway mark. But what about our children? Well, there is hope but no guarantee. The outstanding possibility is that your grandchildren, if they are ever able to fill a trophy room with desira-

ble trophies, will do it from privately managed preserves. Here, then, is the “punch line.” This does not mean that they will need to feel that they have been “short changed.”

I have, in addition to hunting for exotic species, hunted many of our native big game animals—black bear, whitetail and mule deer, antelope, elk and moose. By and large, I have found hunting the exotics just as rewarding and fulfilling.

Let me give the reader some idea of just what is available on private hunting preserves across this country. One would find the following: In antlered deer—Axis (India), Sika (Japan and Formosa), Red Stag (Europe), Fallow (Southern Europe), Sambar (India); in antelope—Black Buck (India), Greater Kudu (Africa), Gemsbok or Giant Oryx (Africa); in sheep—Corsican or Mouflon (Southern Europe) and Barbary (Sahara Desert of Africa); European or “Russian” Boar (Black Forest in Germany).

By special arrangement, you can take Sitatunga (Africa), Eland (Africa), Four-horned sheep (Asia), Barasanga (India), Himalayan Tahr (Asia) and Zebra (Africa). One preserve has tried to offer African lion, but has been prevented thus far by the State Game Department.

I should point out that native species are also available on some preserves. With these, as with the exotics, you get your game or you do not pay. To that, some may react by concluding that preserve hunting must be like potting hens in a barnyard. In relation to that, let me say that my Black Buck trophy was taken on the Y. O. Ranch in south-central Texas after five days of the hardest hunting I have ever done in my life. During that time we completely wrecked one 4-wheel drive hunting car. I took my Axis deer trophy at the J. M. Cavender Ranch, Leakey, Texas, after four days of extremely difficult hunting. I took him during the last hour of the last day of my hunt. Of course, hunting exotics is like every other kind of hunting in that luck plays a big role. You may walk out and stumble over your trophy the first few minutes of your hunt, but don't count on it.

If you are still of the opinion that hunting exotic game is much like shooting dairy cows in a pasture, let me lay that idea to rest as quickly as possible. I hunt elk in the Gros Ventre Elk Area near Jackson, Wyoming. These elk are the ones which spend their winters on the National Elk Refuge. There they follow the hay wagons around like domestic cows. If you think that makes them a "cinch" to bring down during the hunting season, let me suggest, very kindly, that you are mistaken. If that does not convince you, then go to the man who has driven half way across the nation, and who has laid down his thousand dollars per year to hunt them several years without bagging a real trophy. Tell him that he has been a sucker—that he has been hunting semi-domestic animals. If, after the swelling leaves your eyes, you still need more convincing, come on out and lay down your thousand dollars for a ten day hunt, plus your \$125.00 for a license if you can get one. You will need no further convincing after that, I am sure.

I haven't hunted Black Buck on Safari Island, but I have hunted other game there. I have observed enough Black Buck to know that whitetail hunting would be a "lead pipe cinch" to hunting them on that terrain. I may never hunt on Safari Island again after Bert Klineburger reads this, but I am going to give you a "peek" at a little secret. Not everyone who goes to the island gets a trophy, especially Black Buck or Barbary Rams. There is a bright spot in this however. If you don't get your trophy this year, you won't have to give the management your money. You can save it and go back for another try next year.

Since I am trying to "take the

wraps off" hunting exotics, perhaps I should say something about the atmosphere on various preserves. If you were to be blindfolded and taken either to East Africa or the area north of San Antonio, Texas, the Y. O. Ranch, you would not know in which place you were when the blindfold was removed. On the J. M. Cavender Ranch, you might think you were in some of the forests of Europe. There are enough different kinds of terrain represented by the various hunting preserves around the country that you can take your pick, from the Africa-like, rolling hills of the Y. O. to the almost jungle-like forests of Tennessee.

I haven't been to all the preserves, but I am sure that each has an attraction all its own. I can think of no more satisfying goal than to set out to take a trophy from each of them. For beauty of setting, I have found nothing to quite equal Safari Island. For a land-lubber like myself, the trip to and from the island is a treat to be remembered. Seeing the bobbing heads of hair seals and the great bull sea lion as he splashes into the water at the approach of your boat will never be forgotten.

The one outstanding preserve I have not visited, or hunted, is the famous Patio Game Ranch at Hunt, (Continued on page 70)

SHOOTING PRESERVES

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Priour Ranch
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Ingraham, Texas 78025

Brinks Brangun
Route 1, Box 45
Kerrville, Texas 78028

Indian Creek Ranch
P.O. Box 1466
Kerrville, Texas 78028

Take It Easy Ranch
P.O. Box 351
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Inks Ranch
Llano, Texas 78643

T. D. Hall
Mountain Home, Texas 78058

Y. O. Ranch
P.O. Box 77
Mountain Home, Texas 78058

J. M. Cavender, Jr.
P.O. Box 418
San Antonio, Texas 78206

Patio Ranch
P.O. Box 21100
San Antonio, Texas 78221

Eagle Ranch
2345 W. Mockingbird Lane
Dallas, Texas 75235

Fred W. Shield
1442 Milam Bldg.
San Antonio, Texas 78205

Hemlock Acres Hunting Preserve
239 Iron St.
Bloomsbury, Pa. 17815

Cedarland Shooting Preserve
Box 69
Colon, Michigan

Louie's Big Game Preserve
12780 N. Territorial Rd.
Dexter, Mich. 48130

Gene Seratino Preserve
RD #1
Mohrsville, Pa. 19541

Tioga Hunting Preserve
Toiga, Pa. 19541

Jonas Bros. of Seattle
1507 12th Avenue
Seattle, Washington

North Star Shooting Preserve
Montour, Iowa

Lou Wyman Ranch
P.O. Box 278
Craig, Colorado

Parch Corn Creek Preserve
Box 667
Jamestown, Tenn.

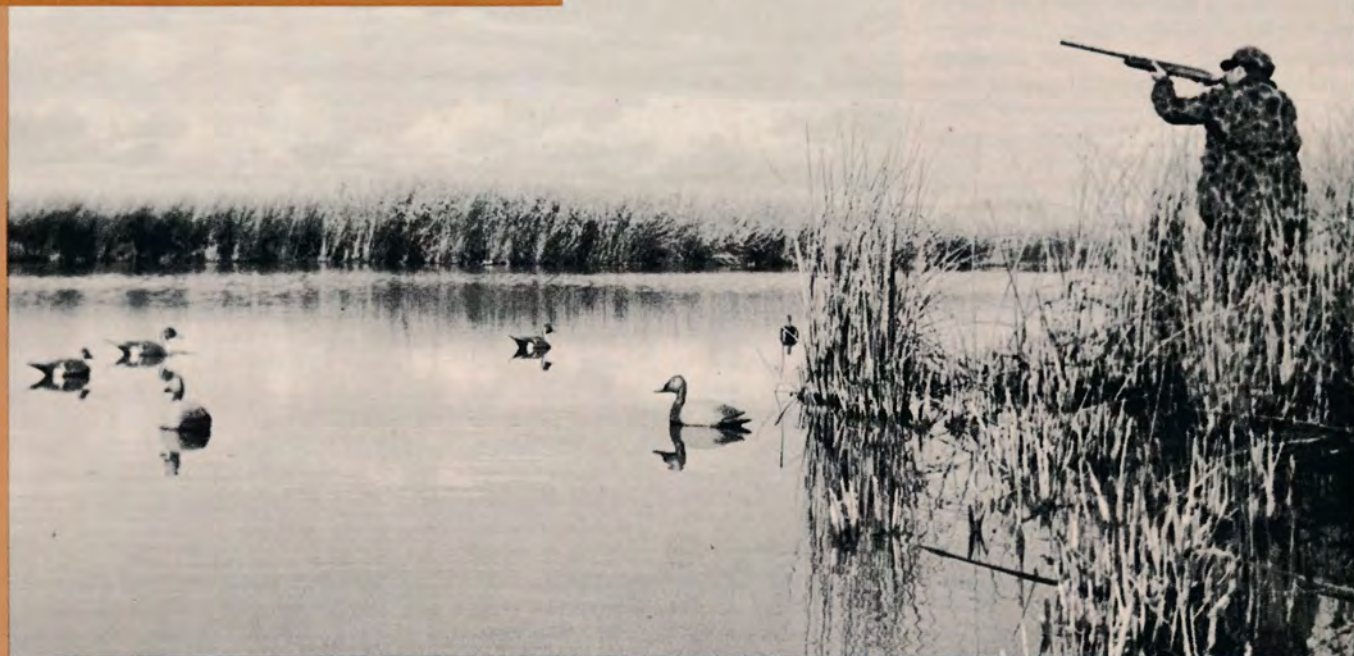
Darrell York
Box 536
Marfa, Texas 79843

FORGET THE FULL CHOKE!

By CLAIR F. REES



For dove shooting, the author feels that his 28 gauge modified-choke gun is ideal.



For duck blind work, Rees prefers modified-choke autoloaders or pump guns. Most of the decoyed birds are shot at 30-yards or less from the gun, minimizing hits if the shooter is using a full-choke gun.

LAST PHEASANT SEASON, I was kicking the brush with a good friend of mine and his younger brother. It was a typical day-after-the-opener hunt, and the birds were holding tighter than just-scratched ticks.

We were hunting without a dog, and as a result practically stepped on the birds that we flushed. This made for some difficult, off-stride shooting, but my friend and I eventually managed to collect our three birds apiece without too much difficulty.

The brother, Don, on the other hand, had been consistently missing his shots and had only a single, badly shot-up cock to show for his efforts at the end of the day.

"I can't figure it out," he said as we unloaded our guns before getting into the pickup. "In the duck blind last weekend, I was doing real well—and some of the mallards I dumped were 'way out there."

"Maybe that's a clue to your problem," I replied. "What kind of choke are you using?"

As it turned out, Don was using the type of gun—and choke—owned by the vast majority of scattergunners on this continent, and in almost universal use in the western United States—a 12-gauge pump, with a 30-inch, full-choked barrel.

This is a great combination for pass-shooting at high-flying waterfowl, or even for downing wild-flushing ring-necks at the end of the season. But for most other types of hunting, it's the poorest choice imaginable.

Don't get me wrong—there's nothing wrong with pump-guns. I was using one myself that day—but it wore a 25½-inch *skeet*-choked barrel. And my deadeyed friend was carrying his pet double with 26-inch tubes choked improved cylinder and modified. With these short-barreled guns, we were able to get on target fast, and the open chokes we were using allowed some room for aiming error. Too, the thinner patterns (only about 35 percent of the pellets in each load would print within a 30-inch circle at 40 yards) spoiled little meat, even at the short ranges we were shooting over.

Brother Don's gun, however, was slower and more clumsy with its 30-inch barrel, and the tight, 70-percent patterns it was throwing allowed little room for error. As a matter of fact, at 20 yards (probably the average range we were shooting at that day), 90 percent of this gun's pattern would print within a 12-inch circle with 1¼-ounce loads of 6's. This meant that Don had to be right on his bird to connect—and when (if) he did connect, he would be lucky to salvage enough good meat to make pheasant noodle soup.

Actually, most of the bird shooting done in the United States is at targets less than 30 yards away from the gun. This is even true in the duck blind, where decoys are being used effectively. And since the true full choke is at its best only at the more extreme ranges—say, 40 to 50 yards (especially with the current loads with their plastic shot collars)—the average nimrod is only handicapping himself with a gun so choked.

Then why do so many people *buy* full-choked guns to handle their scattergunning chores?

I'm not sure *why* most gunners buy full-choked guns—but I am sure that they *do*. Go into almost any sporting goods or hardware store in the U.S., and you'll find the gun racks filled mostly with "hard-shootin'" full-choked shotguns. I have asked several store managers about this phenomenon, and they replied that it was the old story of supply and demand.

"More than 90 percent of the shotguns we sell are in full choke," one sporting goods store owner told me. "That's what our customers ask for. And if a salesman tries to talk them into buying a modified or improved cylinder-choked gun, the customers almost invariably ask, 'will this gun kill game as far away as a full-choked gun?' And when the answer comes back, 'No,' the customer demands—and gets—the tighter boring."

"When you try to educate customers," another confided, "you risk losing a sale. So every year we continue to do a land-office business with full-choked guns, and sell only an occasional modified or improved-cylinder choke. And since we stock to fill the demand, an enlightened customer who wants a more open choke in a particular model may have to wait until we can order one from the distributor."

"Why do American shooters have this illogical fixation for full-choked shotguns? Perhaps it can be partly blamed on the exaggerated advertising rhetoric used by gunmakers around the turn of the century.

Up until about 100 years ago, the concept of "choking" a gun to get tighter patterns was unknown. All shotguns in use prior to that time were true "cylinder" bores that would keep only perhaps 30 percent of a load of pellets within a 30-inch circle at 40 yards. This made for a gun that was deadly at shorter ranges, but ineffective much beyond 30 yards.

When it was discovered that, by using a small degree of construction at the muzzle, it

(Continued on page 60)



Patterns that are too dense make hitting tough at short ranges and they tend to spoil too much meat.

Dere MR. Acmi,



By FRED THACKER and
JAMES M. TRIGGS

aug 16
Cottonwood, TEXAS

Acme Custom Gun Works
3245 Pershing Street
Los Angeles, California
dere mr Acmi,

Last saturday down at Charleys barber shop i seen a magazine while i was waitin to get my hair cut and i seen wher you all fix guns. i ast Charley hes the barber and has a bunch of guns anyways i ast him if you all was a good outfit for fixin guns. Charley says custom guns is kinda like fancy saddles you pay all kinds of money gettin one and then youre afraid of gettin it all scratched up in the chapparel so you leave it home. i told Charley i dont want no custom gun what i want is to get the one i got from Slick Williams fixed up cause it dont shoot hard enuf atall. how much will it cost? Sure dri here.

sincirly
Jake Smith

August 7, 1970

Mr. Jake Smith
Rural Delivery
Cottonwood, Texas
Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you for your inquiry of the 3rd. Due to a lack of information as to the nature of the trouble you are having with your gun we are unable to quote repair prices. If you will advise us exactly what is wrong with your gun and state the make, model and caliber, we will be most happy to be of service to you. We have a very modern shop and are equipped to do the finest type of gunsmith work.

Yours truly,
Frank S. Miller
President

Acme Gun works
los angelis Calif
dere mr Acmi,

i got yure letter yesturday i got off the tractor and run over to the house when i seen old man Jonas stop at the male box hes the maleman anyways i was pretty hot and feelin like some lemonaid anyways my old lady makes good lemonaid when its hot and dri like its been here the las 7 years on account of the drowt and it dont look like its goin to rane none today either if you ast me its all on account of the ADAM bombs cause it sure enuf usta rane before the governmint went to blowin them things up and i dont reckon its goin to get any better now theyr shootin them things up in space and poisinin the atmosfeare. Anyways whats the matter with the gun is it dont shoot hard enuf and i sure want to kill that cayote thats been gettin my old ladys chickens and is eatin more chicken than we are which aint hardly fair and i got enuf trouble with this farm and when a man wurks hard he shud have chicken on SUNDAY which is the LORDS day anyways that old cayote was standin no further than here to the gate on the pigpen which aint far atall i pulled the trigger and that bullet hit the durt about ten foot in front of me and it was goin rite at that cayote but dont shoot hard enuf to get more than ten foot out which aint near enuf.

you all ast me what this gun is well its a rifel the kind that has a kinda thing like a wing that sits on the bottom and is sorta folded up insideways can you all fix it so its shoots hard enuf like it shud and how much will it cost?

yours truli
Jake Smith

P.S. cayote run off account of the nois.

August 20, 1970

Mr. Jake Smith
Rural Delivery
Cottonwood, Texas
Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you for your letter of the 16th. It will not be possible for us to quote repair costs for your rifle without knowing the exact nature of the trouble and the make, model and caliber. We are enclosing a folder showing our custom guns which lists the prices of some specific alterations. We hope that this folder will give you some idea of the work which we do. Upon receipt of the above information from you, we will be most happy to quote a price and will look forward to serving you.

Yours truly,
Frank S. Miller
President

Cottonwood, TEXAS

dere mr Acmi,

i got yure letter was shur glad to hear from you that cayote got off with another chicken last nite and my old ladys fit to be tide. i looked over the folder you all sent its real nice but i told you i dont want no custom gun i got this gun alreedy. you ast what make this gun is well i looked it all over and the writin is about wore off and it looks like the one i had in the WAR not the last ones i mean the one that dam republican wilson got us in wernt none of our quarrel to start with anyways this gun aint exactly like the one i had but it almost is except for this thing that sticks out sideways and turns when you pull bak on her and then goes bak when you push her forward agin but down. i got this rifel from Slick Williams in a trade and i

am beginnin to think Slick aint just plum fair and square. he give me some 30 30 shells to shoot that cayote but this gun dont shoot hard enuf so please let me know whut it is going to cost to make this gun shoot hard enuf like it shud.

Yr obt servt
Jake Smith

August 30, 1970

Mr. Jake Smith
Rural Delivery
Cottonwood, Texas
Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you for your letter. It is impossible for us to tell you what it will cost to repair your rifle without having full particulars. It is respectfully suggested that you take your rifle to someone who knows about guns so that he may help you to properly identify the arm. Perhaps your friend Charley could be of help to you in this regard.

Yours truly,
Frank S. Miller
President

Cottonwood TEXAS

dere mr Acmi,

i did like you said i showed the gun to Charley hes the barber and knos all about guns and he gets all the magazines he said to tell you this here rifel is a swis wedderly forty 1 so please tell me whut its going to cost to make it shoot hard enuf like it shud.

i seen that old cayote agin and shes looking pretty hevy and befoar long shes having pups and shur as shooting shell teach them pups to steel my old ladys chickens cause them momma cayotes teach their pups everything they kno which is plenty and whuts more them pups lern everything ther momma teaches them or they starf to death which aint hard in this country seein how its so dri on account of them ADAM bombs and radio antenas dont help none shootin all them

radio waves in the air and spookin off the rane clouds with electriciti and shocks and LORD knos whut all else them guvermint people are dreming of i even heard they spent millions of dollars making saddle lites and i ast you Mr acmi just whut earthly use are elektrik lites on a saddle my LORD.

i seen that cayote anuther time up real close and i coulda shot her with that owl head pistol i traded Slick Williams for this rifel that dont shoot hard enuf i kno for a fact that owl head pistol shoots plenty hard enuf its the pistol my uncle HUBERT shot Lucky Elkins with in 1909 when it usta rane proper like it shud anyways the Doc said Lucky lived true to his name and was even lucky the day he was shot seein how the 6 shots uncle HUBERT pumped in him only one was fatel Doc said.

Please tell me what it is going to cost to fix this here rifel to shoot hard enuf like it shud. You all been gettin any rane?

sincirly
Jake Smith

September 14, 1970

Mr. Jake Smith
Rural Delivery
Cottonwood, Texas
Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you for your letter of the 10th. We are not sure, however we think the rifle you have is probably a .41 caliber Swiss Vetterli. Please advise if this is the case so we may quote exact repair costs.

Sincerely,
Frank S. Miller
President

Cottonwood TEXAS

dere mr Acmi,

i got yur letter and i was glad to here from you since i dont get many letters only your letters and the ones from the OIL people sending the check every munth for them wels

they dug on my place they sure enuf messed up my place with them wels and grease and oil all over so no grass will grow anymore and they got them trucks runnin in here every 4 or 5 days trackin up the place with ruts all over mighty near ruin the place wurse than it is and dri on top of everything else i never wud have sined the papers if my old lady hadnt nagged me into it anyways the money aint gone to her head like Jim Swartz and his old lady on the place nex to mine they have gotten so bad they wont eat hog fat without shampane to drink LORD some people just cant stand prosperiti.

i ast Charley hes the barber he says my gun is shur enuf what you all said so please let me kno whut it is going to cost to make it shoot hard enuf like it shud, i got another shot at that old cayote and that 30 30 bullet still dont go more than ten foot which plum aint near enuf.

yours truli
Jake Smith

P.S. no rane yet

September 21, 1970

Mr. Jake Smith
Rural Delivery
Cottonwood, Texas

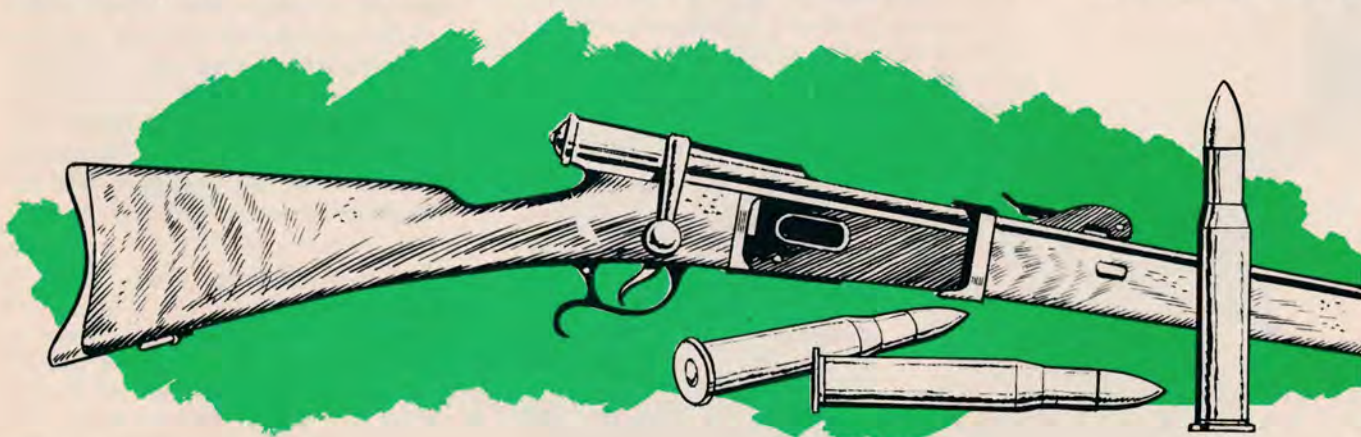
The cost of our custom alteration of your gun is as follows:

Cutsom barrel (Cal. .30-30)	\$30.00
Installation, head spacing and chambering	20.00
Altering magazine to .30-30	22.50
Altering bolt to .30-30	17.50
Postage and handling	7.50
Total	\$97.50

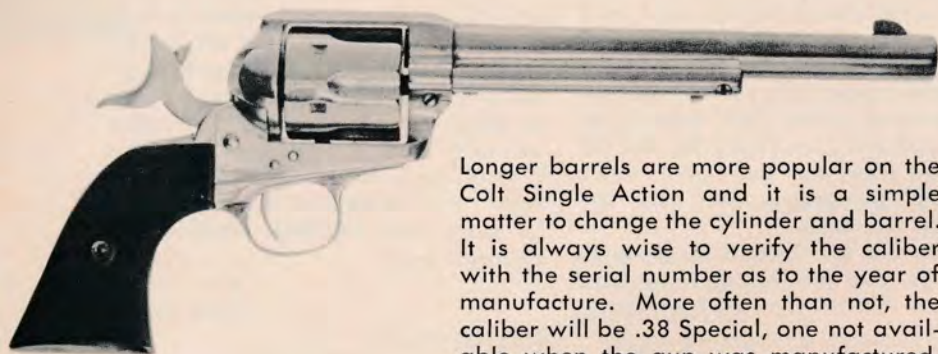
Frankly, it is our opinion that the Vetterli rifle you have is a poor gun to alter to the .30-30 cartridge in view of the attendant cost of the alteration compared to the overall value of the gun. We are quoting the above price only in view of your insistance.

It is beyond our comprehension how you ever fired a .30-30 cartridge in this gun and we do not doubt in the least that it does not shoot "hard

(Continued on page 53)



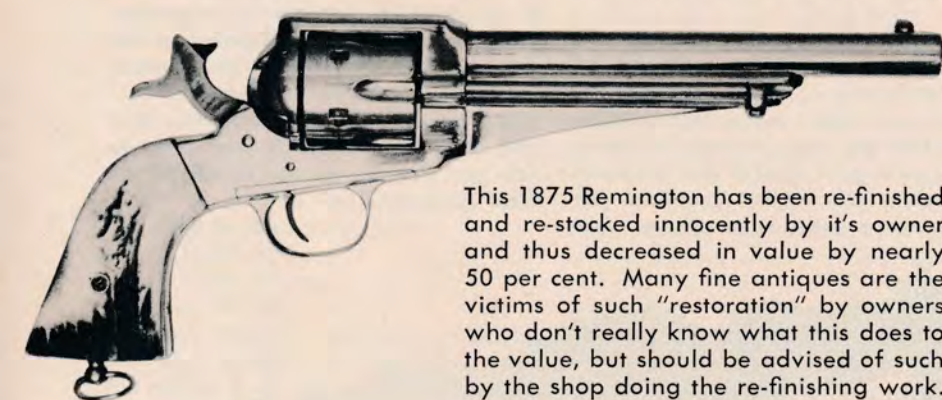
ANTIQUE? REPLICAS?



Longer barrels are more popular on the Colt Single Action and it is a simple matter to change the cylinder and barrel. It is always wise to verify the caliber with the serial number as to the year of manufacture. More often than not, the caliber will be .38 Special, one not available when the gun was manufactured.



A very common act of restoration is the returning of an original barrel to its standard length. This is frequently done on the Colt "Open Top Frontier" Model of 1872. It is advisable to examine any barrel prior to the purchase of any gun as the inside may tell stories the outside cannot. Metal dis-coloration is one of the things to look out for here.



This 1875 Remington has been re-finished and re-stocked innocently by its owner and thus decreased in value by nearly 50 per cent. Many fine antiques are the victims of such "restoration" by owners who don't really know what this does to the value, but should be advised of such by the shop doing the re-finishing work.

THERE IS AN invisible fine line between the antique per se, and in harsh words, "the replica-fake." There are no written standards to abide by when it comes to restoring an antique, but over the years, there are some acceptable limits that have been established by dealers and collectors. Some limits have conflicted with the ideas of others and were finalized in court. As the demand for antique arms has increased the supply has decreased. In fact, expressing it mathematically, the supply has decreased by the square of the demand. Such a condition has prompted dealers and collectors to return to their storage archives and resurrect many parts and pieces whose obituaries were long since written off. Items once considered as "junk" are now looked upon with new appreciation and latent possibilities.

Conversely, there are some enthusiasts who innocently decrease the value of a treasured arm in an attempt at restoration. How far then can one go before an antique ceases to be an antique or its value has been jeopardized?

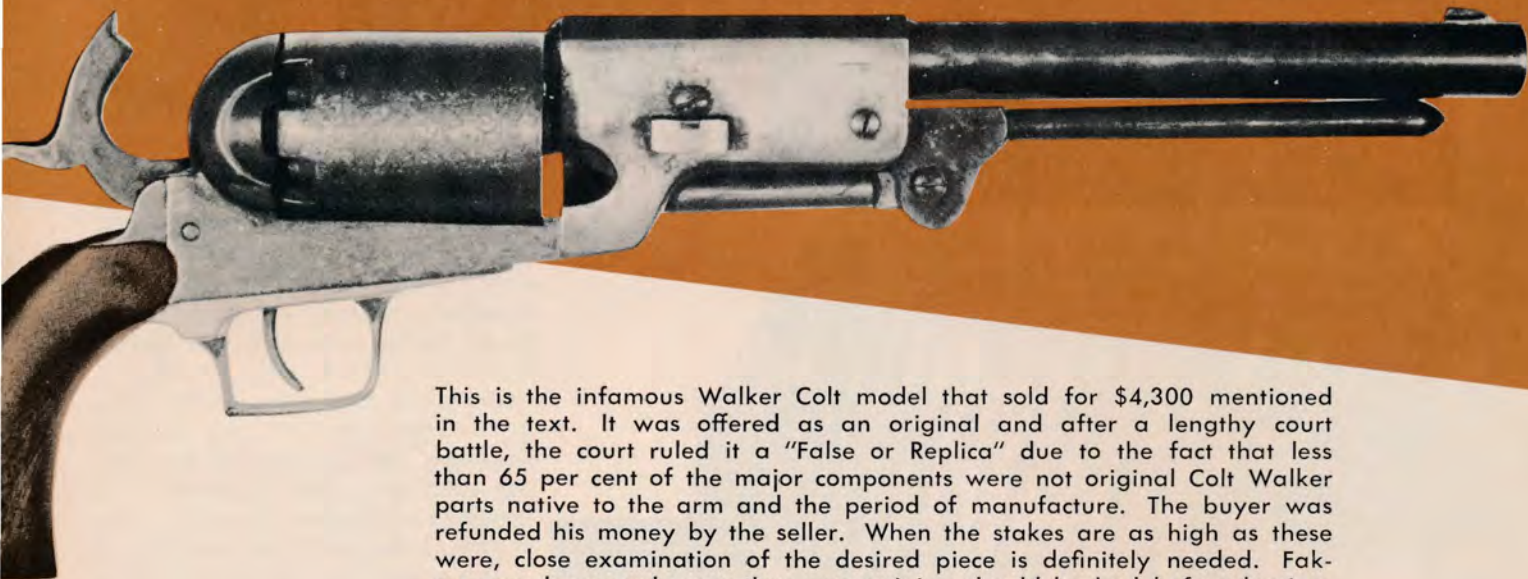
Many arms enthusiasts, whether collector or sportsman, often possess a favorite old weapon that has had some portion of the barrel removed during its tour of duty. Many ponder the question of what to do with amputation, especially if it is a rare model and the fact that it is missing some of its original length definitely lessens its worth. "Barrel Stretching," as it is called, is viewed by some as acceptable, yet inasmuch as it increased the chance



Colt cylinder scenes have also been faked. At far left is an original. Near left shows one that has been re-rolled. The arrow indicates the pressure mounds at the rear of the scene which is apparent on all of the faked cylinders seen by author.

... OR FAKE?

By E. DIXON LARSON



This is the infamous Walker Colt model that sold for \$4,300 mentioned in the text. It was offered as an original and after a lengthy court battle, the court ruled it a "False or Replica" due to the fact that less than 65 per cent of the major components were not original Colt Walker parts native to the arm and the period of manufacture. The buyer was refunded his money by the seller. When the stakes are as high as these were, close examination of the desired piece is definitely needed. Fakers are clever and more than one opinion should be had before buying.

of misrepresentation of an arm to an unsuspecting buyer, it has a bad connotation that overshadows the practice and is frowned upon by this writer/collector.

Many dealers have offered antique firearms with "stretched barrels," *but they have represented them as such.* However, the danger is in purchasing an antique firearm at the market price and then discovering the barrel has been stretched. This is very disappointing and, unfortunately, too common. This then becomes a form of "faking" and "misrepresentation." A word of real WARNING: the most unnoticed method of stretching a barrel is not only to weld back a piece of correct length, but then to bore out the barrel and sleeve it with a correctly rifled insert. This makes a clean job, but certainly one that a collector must be on the alert against. Some try to say this is restoration, along with re-stocking, re-bluing, shrinking, barrel bulges, re-stamping, markings, or replacing mechanical parts. Another common practice, termed as restoration is the removing of ugly front sights and re-welding and replacing with original type sights.

Re-rolled cylinder engravings have become common and quite undetectable if one chances to overlook the pressure mounds on the cylinder that usually are created by this practice. A

few say this too is restoration; however, the danger still exists when the gun changes hands that the operation will go unnoticed, or un-mentioned by a slight intentional oversight on the seller's part.

Barrels that have been cropped on long guns are common. On Winchesters for example the barrel is frequently replaced in its entirety. This is extremely difficult to detect and more often than not forgotten and passed-off as the original. Cylinders and barrels

are frequently replaced in Colt Frontiers, generally readily detected by comparing caliber with serial number and date of manufacture, as in most cases, cylinders and barrels will be of a caliber that was not in production when the gun was made. This is particularly common in the .38 special, and has victimized many single action fanciers. It would be nice to believe that all of these alterations, in effect, are not intended as a means of fooling anyone, but (Continued on page 65)



Replica/fake of the scarce 1861 Colt Navy Model cut for shoulder stock. About 30 per cent of the major parts are original and it has been finely re-finished, re-stamped.



Jim Clark holding the National Pistol Championship trophy won by him in 1958. He is the only civilian to win the event in the past 50 years. He turns out an average of 540 accurized pistols (.22 and .45) yearly.

JIM CLARK

MASTER PISTOLSMITH

Charles Askins

By
CHARLES ASKINS



IF I WAS SEEKING the best in a custom-finished rifle I would hunt out Dale Goens; if it was a rifle barrel second to none on the score of accuracy and dependability my choice would be Ed Shilen. And if I was having hard-to-resolve shotgun troubles I would put all my trust in Frank Pachmayr. These three are tops in their specialties and I question if there are any better technicians anywhere. For handguns, I'd beat a path to the door of Jim Clark, master pistolsmith.

This remarkable technician provides the proof of his pudding; he first builds the pistol and then takes it out and wins championships with it. Sort of like Al Unser, the race driver putting together his own machine and then annexing the Indy 500; or Lee Trevino whittling out his own set of clubs and then cleaning up the U.S. Open. Clark is the only civilian in the last 50 years to win the pistol championship of the United States. He was the fifth marksman to break 2600 and the 4th to hit the lofty plateau of 2650 points. We have a little coterie of pistolsmiths in this country, all of them good, but none who have demonstrated, quite as strikingly as our Shreveport artisan, that both he and his shooting irons can really produce the goods.

Clark, built like a Brangus bull, with a 16½-inch neck, 16-inch biceps and a size 44 chest, is a natural as a pistolman. It is my contention that the short powerful man has a built-in advantage. He isn't blown around by the wind and his foreshortened arm is closer to his body where he can maintain better control over it and the gun clutched at its extremity. Clark and Joe Benner are built a great deal alike. The shooting records of both serve to bolster my contention.

Our Boy commenced to shoot pistol matches in '47. He immediately won most of them. He was a tool and die maker by trade, an ex-Marine with a superb war record from WW-II—he was seriously wounded on Saipan. He

was irresistibly drawn to pistol work in '49 and went into a local shop with a partner. In '52, after a second hitch in the Marines and another war, this time in Korea, he started his own shop. He has been at it ever since, with no partner but with three gifted technicians to bear a part of the load. Despite the fact that Clark is a Texan, born and raised in Waco, he has maintained his gun shop in Shreveport, Louisiana since its inception. He is not, properly speaking in the city at all but is in a suburb, at Keithville, La., with an address of Route 2, Box 22A. The shop turns out a yearly average (1970 figures) of 540 of the superbly turned Clark custom pistols. These in .38 and .45 calibers. There is no work at all on target revolvers. "Not even as much as 1%," Clark explains. There is a great deal of accuracy work on .22 target pistols and these jobs will more than double the number of centerfire units completed. "These are the S&W Model 41 and the High Standards," Clark commented. He has designed two heavy barrel units for the High Standard Military model, one of 5" length and the other of 6" length. High Standard has a similar heavy barrel attachment on their new "Victor" target gun, obviously a copy of the Clark design.

This unit is unique in design. The barrel is bored and rifled by Douglas, to Clark specifications which are .225-

.2235 bore diameter, .2135-.2195 land diameter, with a land depth of .040 and a twist of 1 turn in 15 inches. Clark guarantees 1½-inches or better at 50 yards from these tubes. The barrel is not round at all but is flat sided with a Bo-Mar rib sight on top. This

sight is actually a full length rib with both ⅛" undercut front sight and a micrometered adjustable rear. The rib is securely bolted to the barrel with Allen screws and extends over the breechblock but is not attached to it. Total weight (Continued on page 66)



Colt's Commander in 9mm as accurized for Askins by Clark. Note the Clark signature on the left side of slide.



Barrels and slides in various stages of completion. Some have barrel positioners and sights installed.



Clark points to the kind of groups he expects from his accuracy jobs before the gun is sent to its owner. The gun must group from 1½" to 2½" at 50 yards or it goes back for more work.



The various steps in the production of a Clark target barrel. The bored and rifled blank from Douglas measures 1⅞" in diameter. It is then milled and turned to final dimensions by Clark.



FRONTIER

With the kind permission of the editor, we have re-printed this article from the May, 1930 issue of The Colorado Magazine. The style of gun writing has changed considerably, as you will see.

By CHAUNCEY THOMAS

CONTRARY to the general impression today, nursed by the movies and the so-called "Western" stories, there was but little need of firearms on the frontier by the emigrants during the California, the Mormon, and the Pikes Peak movements across the plains and over the mountains. The "Mountain Men" or early trappers and fur traders, of course, had daily need of firearms, but this was not the case with the early emigrants to the West, who had little trouble with the Indians and needed guns only as food getters.

But during the Civil War period conditions changed. The increase of whites on the plains, the destruction of the buffalo, and the civil strife among the whites altered matters. The Indian, seeing his land and his food supply rapidly vanishing under white invasion, took to war to save what was his own. Then, from about 1862 on, the whites did need firearms for protection and also for offense. Also by this time the criminal element among the whites was flocking to the frontier to escape punishment in civilization and to avoid army service. But even during these times not all men by any means carried firearms.

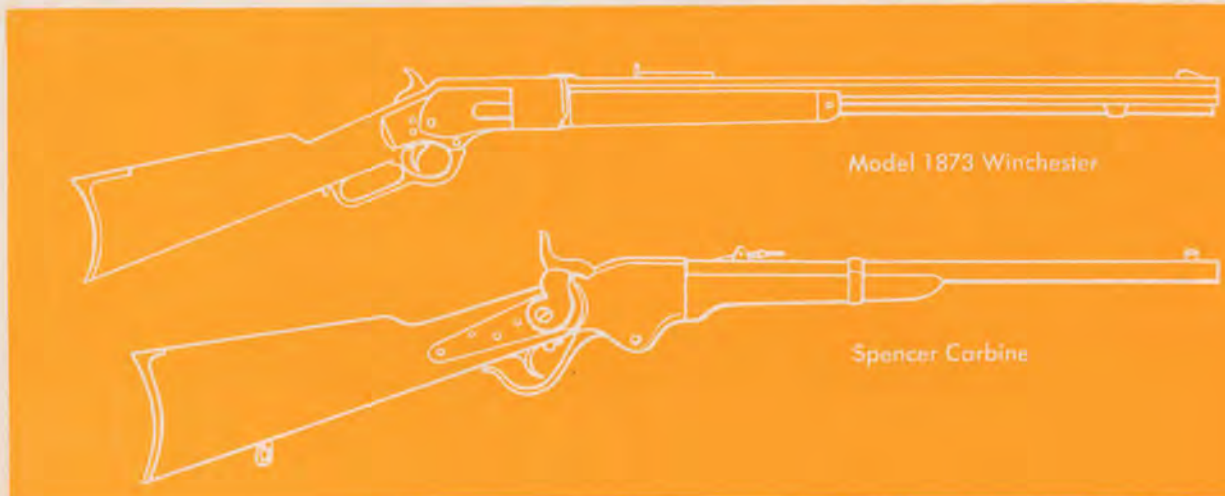
In this article I shall deal with firearms on the western frontier, by which I mean the region west of the Missouri. When a gun was invented, when placed on the market, and when widely used upon the frontier are, of course, successive dates. Here we are concerned primarily with the outstanding firearms generally used on the frontier.

The "Plains Rifle" was one of the unique weapons of the West. To better understand it let us look at its antecedents. In the forests of the East the rifle was of small bore, about .32 caliber, and with a very long, four to five foot, barrel, and shot a round ball with a light powder load. It was fired, like all other firearms in America, first with flint, then with percussion cap. It was almost universally single-barreled. The reason for this odd and apparently unreasonable combination was to give a very light "whip-like" report, a sound that might easily be mistaken for the breaking of a dry branch. This was much less likely to bring down a nearby foe upon the shooter, especially before he could slowly reload his rifle. And the game was small, and all at short range, usually about sixty yards or less. Thus,

too, the lead could easily be recovered in the body of the game and remoulded for lead was heavy to carry and very hard to get in the non-mineral regions where the forests stretched for hundreds of miles.

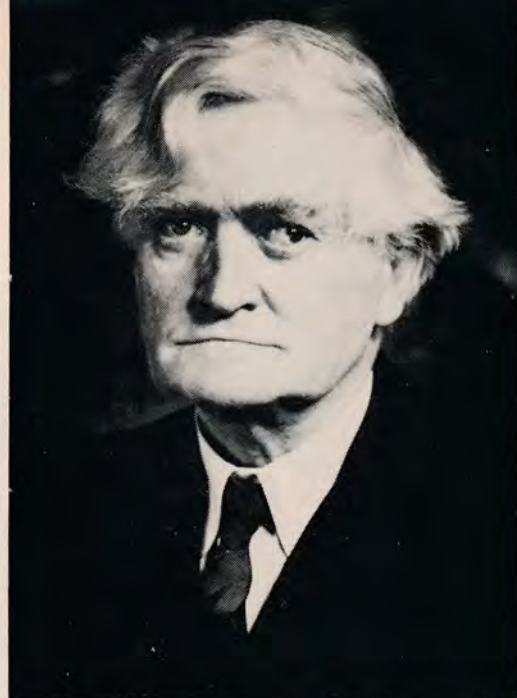
Although the forestman used pack horses, he himself usually traveled on foot, hence he could readily carry this long and comparatively silent rifle. It was known mostly as the "Kentucky squirrel rifle," although of course by other names earlier.

But when this rifle came west of the "Big Muddy," out onto the open plains, with the buffalo and the horseman hard to kill, not to mention the elk and the grizzly bear—then a plains animal along the timbered river bottoms across the plains—this rifle was nearly worthless. Concealment was no longer possible, and all travel was on horseback. So the barrel of the rifle was cut off to about thirty inches, almost never longer than thirty-six inches, and was bored out to a much larger caliber. The smallest caliber was about .40 and it ranged up to .45 and .50, sometimes even to .60. The round ball was discarded as of too short range, and a long, heavy lead projectile was rammed down the bar-



FIREARMS

Chauncey Thomas, although he was a firearms expert of his time, was best known as a short story writer. His "Snow Story" was, when this article was written, a classic in the field. Mr. Thomas was a man of the West as well as a student and champion of the frontier. Those that knew the West as he did are now mostly gone, and first-hand accounts of what life was really like are now nearly non-existent, as is the frontier, in the true sense of the word.



Chauncey Thomas

rel on top of from two to four times as much powder as was used in the former squirrel rifle. Now the rifle, transformed into the "Plains Rifle" of the collectors today, could and did kill buffalo, and kept the mounted hair-hunters and their 200-yard bows at a fighting distance, or else dropped the running war ponies as readily as it put an elk to grass.

The first and most famous revolver on the western frontier was the Colt. Though invented in the early '30s, it did not come into prominent use in the West for a decade or so. It was a cap-and-ball weapon, this being before the invention of the metallic cartridge. After the Mexican War this revolver was of three sizes, one very large, weighing about four pounds, too heavy for anything but horseback use, and known as the "Dragoon" then one of about the same caliber, technically a ".44," but of lighter load and weight, about three pounds, with no special name; and one of still lighter weight and load and less caliber, a .36 caliber, called the "Navy"—not because it was used in the navy, but because it has a scene of a naval bat-

tle engraved around its cylinder as an ornament, as also had the ".44." This "Navy revolver" or "Colt Navy" was the favorite revolver for many years, as it was light enough so that two could be carried, or "packed" as the frontier term was.

Two of the two-pound revolvers were often worn, because of the uncertainty of fire and slowness to reload. But when the cartridge remover came, about 1870, the habit of wearing two guns rapidly vanished, and only one was worn, as the cartridge revolver was very sure of fire, as sure then as now, and was easy and fast to reload. When my father first met Jas. Hickok ("Wild Bill") he was carrying two .44 caliber ivory-handled, cap-and-ball Colts; my father (W. R. Thomas, a newspaper man in Denver then) did not even own a gun.

Men sometimes carried a beltful of these cap-and-ball revolvers to the exclusion of the rifle, musket, or carbine, this especially in warfare on the frontier. Some altered this rather heavy system in carrying two such revolvers on the side of the saddle

(Continued on page 72)



Colt Navy Model



Colt Single Action Army



S & W Schofield



"Trap Door" Springfield



Sharps "Buffalo" Rifle



COLT'S

NEW COMBAT COMMANDER

TEST REPORT

By MASON WILLIAMS

COLT RECENTLY phased-out the virtually unchanged, time honored and combat proven Model 1911 .45 ACP pistol when it replaced it with the Mark 4 version fitted with their new barrel bushing with mated barrel that not only increased basic production accuracy but also kept the pistol shooting accurately for a longer time. This big pistol has been, and remains, the unchallenged combat weapon for the professional soldier, officer and outdoorsman who need complete reliability plus maximum stopping power combined with the ability to instantly reload the pistol.

For a good many years there has been a moderate but persistent demand for a smaller version of the big Model 1911 pistol. Colt tried to fill this need with their Commander with its all steel slide and aluminum receiver but it never did quite fill the requirements that called for solid weight, moderate handling and ruggedness. Few people could nail down the specific facts in the case because personal likes and dislikes enter the picture. But, after watching custom gunsmiths cut down the Model 1911's, shorten, and modify them and then charge \$300 to \$500 for the work, Colt decided that the solution for the average person was to finally, at long last, design an all-steel Commander. Colt has now brought out their Combat Commander and, before I get into a discussion of the new gun, let me com-

pare it with both the Model 1911 and with the conventional Commander.

The comparative specifications are as follows:

	<i>Model 1911</i>	<i>Commander</i>	<i>Combat Commander</i>
Bbl. Length	5"	4 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	4 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
Length	8 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	8"	8"
Weight	39 oz.	26 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.	33 oz.
Stocks	Plastic	Plastic	Wood

As may be seen, the basic differences are in the length and the weight. These differences may not appear to amount to much on paper, but in reality they make all the difference in the world in handling and recoil control. The half-inch off the Model 1911 does things that are far out of proportion to the fact that one half inch has been removed from the over-all length. Similarly, six ounces less in weight also makes quite a difference. The combination, in my opinion, is unbeatable. The result is a shorter, lighter weight Model 1911 pistol that handles—if this is the right word—better than the big pistol and considerably better than the Commander. If so, what is wrong with the Commander?

One of the problems with the Commander with its alu-

The satin-nickel finish adds considerably to the appearance of the new Combat Commander. The gun is available in .38 Super, .45 ACP and 9mm Luger, a spread that should please almost everyone. The all steel version has less recoil and handles better. Also available in the deep blue finish.

minum receiver is the excessive recoil during firing. This is lacking in the Combat Commander. The shorter, all steel Combat Commander is so fast handling and so easy to control during firing that it cannot be compared to either of the other two. The Combat Commander must be handled and fired to be appreciated!

The Combat Commander did not spring full blown from the drawing board overnight. If rumor is true and scuttlebutt accurate, just about everyone who ever worked for Colt in the engineering department took home an all steel Commander over the years and studied and handled it. Remember, these men were and are professionals. The Combat Commander is the ultimate result of a great many years of study, thought and development. It certainly has been worth waiting for!

Colt has, for many years, been sandblasting the Model 1911 and turning it out with a soft, dull Parkerized finish for the military. It's an extremely attractive finish. Then, rumor has it, years ago some engineer figured out that if a sandblasted finish were coated with copper and then

nickled the resulting finish might just end up being eye catching plus non-reflecting. And so the new Colt Satin finish came into being. This is possibly the toughest, most durable finish Colt has ever put on a handgun. They tell me it must be ground off because the sandblasting so locks-on the copper and the nickel that it is difficult to wear it off or to rust this finish. The finish becomes part of the metal. It is not a coating on a smooth flat surface.

Having gone this far, Colt decided not to stop so they went ahead and produced a new type of grips for the Combat Commander. At first glance they appear to be unchecked wood. Upon closer examination they turn out to be wood alright, but with a special plastic finish which imparts a rough feel to the hand accomplishing the same thing as checkering.

This combination of a special finish on the grips and the satin finish on the metal combine to produce an unusually attractive pistol. All component parts are finished with this satin finish with the exception of the sear and the disconnector, thus giving (Continued on page 70)

Compared to the standard Model 1911, the new Combat Commander is more trim and has cleaner lines. Weight has been reduced considerably to give better handling. All of the ammunition shown functioned perfectly through the new gun without a flaw. Author feels his "pet" handloads will also perform well in the gun without altering it. New finish concept for grips eliminates need for checkering.



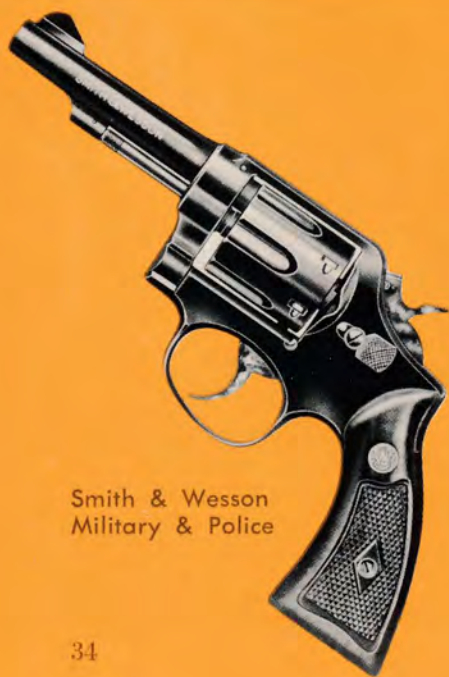
SIDEARMS

Time was when police holsters were filled with either a Colt or S&W revolver; but new guns are appearing, and the officer's choice has widened.

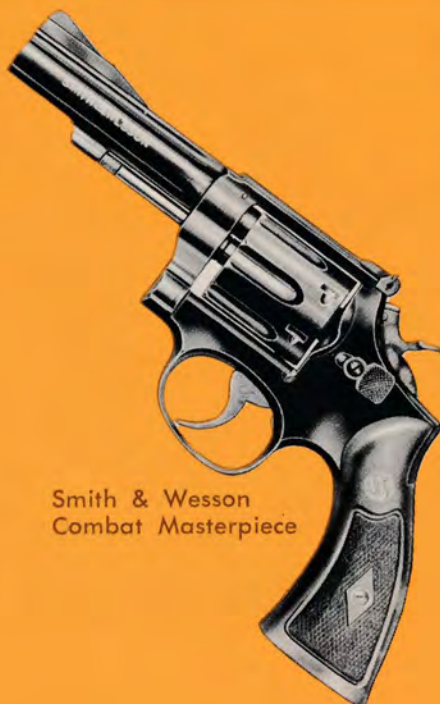
By C. GEORGE CHARLES

NOT so very long ago, there wasn't much for a new police officer to do when picking out his first service revolver—and revolver it must be, even yet, except in very few instances. He went down to the local gun shop or police supply house (if fortunate enough to be near one of the latter) and looked at a selection of two makes; Colt's and Smith & Wesson. Each offered a single basic model from which he might make his choice—the 1902-vintage S&W Military & Police Model (M-10 in today's catalogs) and the Colt's equally-venerable Official Police Model. In four- and six-inch barrel lengths those two guns constituted the armament of the majority of the uniformed police officers of this Nation.

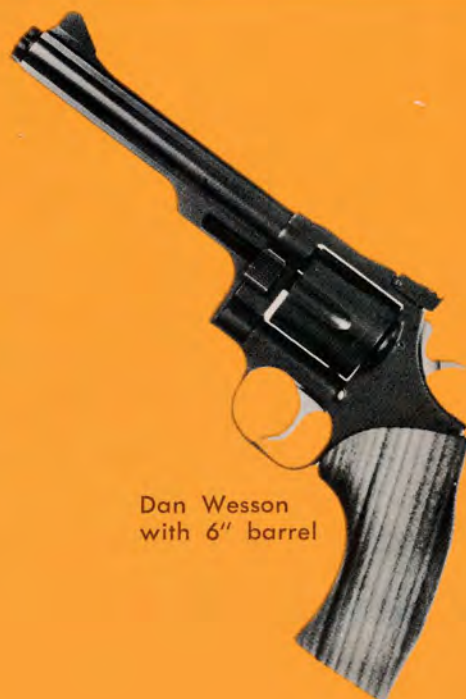
To be sure, a number of minor variations could be had in both guns: fixed or target sights; round or square butts; service or target stocks; wide or standard hammers and triggers; blue or nickel finish; heavy or standard barrels and ribbed or plain barrels; calibers .38 Special or .357 Magnum; etc. None of those variations alter the fact that there were only those two basic designs being offered—in fact, within each make, many parts were the same, even though different names and model designations were ap-



Smith & Wesson
Military & Police



Smith & Wesson
Combat Masterpiece



Dan Wesson
with 6" barrel

FOR POLICE

plied for cataloging and advertising purposes. And both of those designs dated from the turn of the century!

The officer who wanted (and was permitted) to obtain and use a larger or more powerful gun could get it in .44 or .45 caliber, but it was those same designs simply scaled up to larger dimensions. After about 1946 only big-bore SW's were available. For Colt's had discontinued its venerable New Service Model.

At the other end of the scale there were the small guns for concealment and off-duty wear. Discounting the short .38 and .32 calibers which never have been by any means suitable for serious police use, the story was the same. Both Colt's and SW offered scaled-down versions of the standard models with smaller frames and cylinders and shorter barrels.

Over the years the basic designs had undergone some evolutionary improvement. Positive safety locks had been added so a dropped or fumbled gun couldn't fire accidentally. Fragile leaf springs had been replaced to some extent by longer-lived and cheaper coil springs. Cost-reducing changes had been made and proclaimed as improvements. Guns originally made for the .38 Special had been adapted to the more powerful .357 Magnum cartridge by improved heat treatment and materials. Some models had been revised with so-called "short actions" in the interests of the paper-punching competitive pistoleros, but this meant nothing to a working patrolman.

But through all this, it took a trained engineer to see any difference between the guns of the '20's and those of the '50's. The two basic models dominated police weaponry and were considered primarily single-action (thumb-cocking) guns with double-action (trigger-cocking) function-

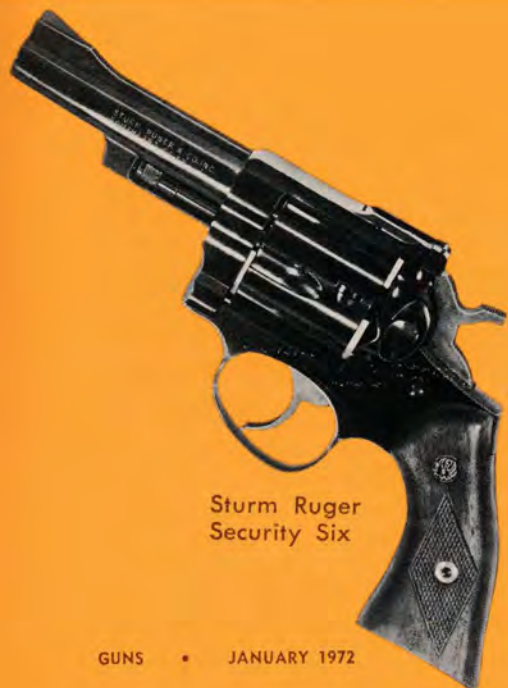
ing built in as sort of an emergency measure to be employed as a last resort.

So firmly entrenched were the two companies involved that hardly anyone would have considered for even a moment competing with them. *Hardly* anyone, that is, except Doug McClanahan who formed Charter Arms Corp. in 1964 to produce his new, unique, and extremely compact, all-steel, pocket-size revolver for undercover use. In fact, he designated it the "UNDERCOVER" model, which name it bears yet today.

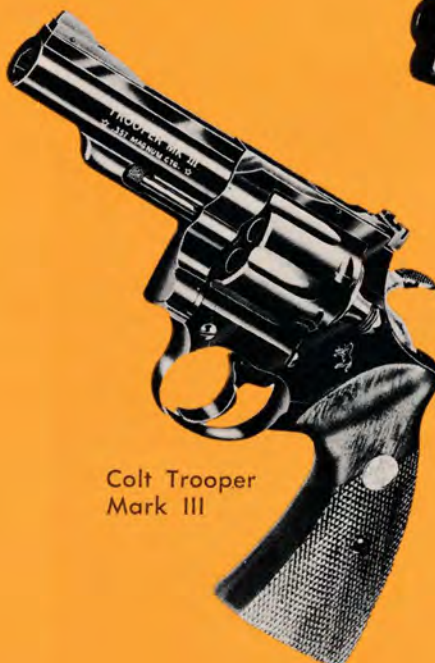
Though beset by all manner of delays, Charter Arms guns finally reached production status in early 1967. That its new design features were appreciated by many is established by the fact that even today, more than four years later, production has still not caught up with demand. People who wouldn't have given a plugged nickel for the chances of any new handgun manufacturer began to scratch their heads and take a second look at the market.



Colt Official
Police Mark III



Sturm Ruger
Security Six



Colt Trooper
Mark III



Colt Diamondback
in .38 Special



Colt Detective Special



S&W Combat Mag., 2" bbl.



S&W Bodyguard



S&W Chief, Stainless



Charter Arms Undercover

Possibly, but not necessarily, spurred by Charter Arms reception, other arms designers and producers—specifically Bill Ruger (of Sturm-Ruger auto-pistol and single-action revolver fame) and Dan Wesson (great-grandson of D. B. Wesson of S&W)—got into the act. Both men, sharp designers in their own right, had become dissatisfied with the then-current crop of double-action service revolvers. And, double-action shooting was coming to the fore as being the dominant form of law-enforcement gun work. They elected for a piece of the action.

Both set about, with their associates, to develop newer, simpler, and in their view better double-action revolvers around the .357 Magnum cartridge. Both strove for maximum simplification of design and reduction in number of parts, and for the use of modern, low-cost fabrication methods. Both wanted a gun that would be ideally suited to police use, yet appeal just as strongly to the civilian handgun fancier.

Both succeeded, with different designs, different approaches, and different ideas. Both guns were designed primarily for double-action, combat-style shooting, with single-action capability built in as a secondary feature for deliberate slow-fire—exactly opposite the traditional approach. Both firms are delivering guns to the trade in quantity as this is written, so the new guns are readily available to both individual officers and departments by now.

So, within the past few months, the police officer's choice has been expanded to a marked degree. No longer is he restricted to a choice of two basic competitive models made by companies who've had the market all to themselves for over three-quarters of a century. Not only does this give him immediately a wider flock from which to choose the gun upon which his life will depend; the spirited competition that is certain to develop will undoubtedly produce even better arms in the relatively near future. So, let's take a look at just what your the law enforcement officer can choose from today.

Service Guns:

COLT'S: The new Mark III series containing a newly-designed action, introduced in early 1970 and built around a restyled frame and heavy barrel. Basic model (first introduced) is the "Trooper MK III" in .357 Magnum, offered in 4" and 6" barrels with target sights. Augmented (Continued on page 58)

Roy Vail

CRAFTSMAN IN WOOD AND METAL

By GEORGE MARS CASSIDY



WHEN the town, Warwick, New York, is mentioned, one name comes to the mind of people who know and appreciate fine gunsmithing—Roy Vail. Many know his shop as a prime source for fine French walnut stock blanks, but a select few know Roy personally, or are privileged to own one of his products.

Roy Vail began working with guns some 46 years ago, refurbishing Kentucky rifles as a hobby. His collection grew to more than 200 finely crafted and carefully refinished rifles, and then came the depression. To support his family during those lean years, Roy eventually sold all of his collection. Soon, shooters were bringing their guns into Vail's workshop, and as their numbers grew, Roy was forced into full-time gunsmithing. At first his customers were from the lower New York State area, then they began coming from surrounding states, and soon his clientele numbered gun fanciers from around the country. The quality of his workmanship and his many satisfied customers were all the advertising he needed.

Roy Vail is an all-around gunmaker; he excels at stock work, preferring to style his rifle and shotgun stocks in the classic patterns. His metal engraving is alive, and reflects his thought that with any first class job you don't watch the clock. He does all of this well, but he prefers not to do them on an individual basis; he will not accept a separate engraving or stocking job. What he does prefer is to take the basic components, whether they be for a rifle or shotgun, and make up a complete gun, which he offers for sale. Because time spent on a job is unimportant, he has made fewer than 200 rifles and 150 shotguns during his career.

Roy imports all of his wood, and prefers French and Circassian walnut. Out of a good shipment, he will choose 30 to 40 blanks of "Exhibition" quality for his

own work, selling the others to custom stockmakers throughout the country. Vail likes to work with the French and Circassian walnuts because of their strength and durability, in addition to their handsome figure.

He chooses Mauser actions for his rifles, and prefers actions and barrels from Webley & Scott for his shotguns, although he occasionally will use barreled actions from Belgium and Germany.

His rifles are chambered to minimum dimensions, and he advises the buyer to stay away from hot loads to assure the accuracy he builds into every rifle.

Roy Vail's custom guns have not only been sent to every part of the country, they have been associated with some pretty fancy names, too. Clark Gable had Vail make up a custom rifle that he used on hunts in the U.S. and Canada. A special presentation shotgun was made up by Roy Vail for then General Dwight D. Eisenhower. A short time later Eisenhower was so



ROY VAIL...



pleased with it, he asked Vail to make him a 28 gauge field gun for hunting rather than showing. But the gun that Roy Vail remembers best, and the one that gave him the most pleasure, was made, not for a celebrity, but for a GI stationed in Korea. Through correspondence, the GI told Vail the type of gun he wanted, the specifications, and placed his order for delivery when he returned from duty. When he came to pick up the gun, the GI told Roy that the idea that his custom gun was waiting for him gave him the desire needed to stay alive in tough situations.

One might imagine, looking at a Roy Vail gun with its clean lines and organized artistry, that the Vail gun shop would reflect this picture of tasteful harmony. The barn-like workshop, even from the outside, gives the appearance of complete disarray. Once inside, it looks even worse; heads of game animals line the wall, and stacks of guns and gun parts cover the floor. By following a course somewhat like a maze, you can make your way to the work area, where Roy Vail spends some of his most pleasurable, and most productive hours.

When not at work, Roy relaxes in his home, which others might call a museum. He is an inveterate collector, picking up relics, antiques and artifacts during most of his life. He has several "hobby" rooms, and each is filled with his "collectables." Carefully displayed are arrowheads and other Indian artifacts,



Gun on our cover is one of this pair of fine 28 gauge side-by-sides made by Vail. Stocks of Cicassian walnut match perfectly, as does the handsome engraving on the Belgium side locks.

CRAFTSMAN IN WOOD AND METAL

trophy heads and important documents. Each has a special meaning to Roy, but he is particularly proud of his collection of mementos of Thomas Fitzpatrick, plainsman, hunter, Indian fighter and guide to Captain Fremont during the 1840's. Roy has one of his rifles, chaps and a jacket, and his hand-made Bowie knife.

As you walk through the room, Roy will point with pride to the skin of an 8' 8" leopard bagged on an African safari a few years ago. Being the collector that he is, the rooms show many African artifacts, including ivory, picked up during his visit.

Another of Roy Vail's hobbies is the collecting of bronzes, and he owns, among others, some by Carl Kauba, an Austrian who went West, lived with the Indians, and brought his sketches back to his father's foundry in Austria to make his renowned bronzes.

Roy Vail is one of those rare men who lives life the way he wants it. His home and shop are nestled among the trees, and he spends what spare time he has enjoying the outdoors. As a craftsman, he appreciates the beauty and craftsmanship of nature. His hunting seldom interferes with his work, he just makes the most of the time spent at either occupation.

A gunmaker to many famous people, he would rather be known as a gunmaker to those who appreciate traditional artistry, in design and function.



The hands of an artist as they chisel the intricate designs in metal. These hands produced the beautiful 28 gauge shotgun for Dwight D. Eisenhower shown below. Gun is now in the Eisenhower Museum, Abilene, Kansas.



Those Collectable .25 Auto Pistols

WHEN IT COMES TO VARIETY AND
UNIQUENESS OF DESIGN, IT'S
HARD TO BEAT "POCKET" PISTOLS.

By JAMES B. STEWART

AMONG arms collectors one area that has received far too little emphasis is the automatic pistol. Aside from the Colt, the Luger, and perhaps the Walther and the Mauser, very little collector interest has traditionally been accorded these arms. In the last several years, particularly since the 1968 gun law drastically curtailed importation of most foreign handguns, interest has been rising, particularly in military weapons.

Several very fine collections have been built around arms designed to chamber the 9 mm Luger cartridge or around the military automatics of a single country such as Japan or Germany. This has caused an economic pressure which has priced rare or unusually fine examples out of the reach of the average collector. For example, ten years ago a Japanese Nambu, almost any variation, could be had for between \$10 and \$20. Nowadays a standard issue in decent condition ranges from \$40 to \$45 and the so-called Grandpa Nambu will bring in excess of \$400.

There is one area in the collection of automatic pistols that has so far received much less attention than its potential interest warrants; this is the pocket automatic, particularly those chambered for

A selection of .25 ACP pistols, center, then clockwise from top. Model 1905 FN Browning; Mann Model 1921; Jo Lo Ar Model 1924; Model 1921 "Praga;" Clement Model 1906; Cheylewski Model 1914, Swiss; "Boltun Patent" 1912, from Spain; "Le Francais" D.A. only; Steyr Model 1920; Mauser Model 1910; Webley & Scott with hammer, similar to the H&R hammerless model.



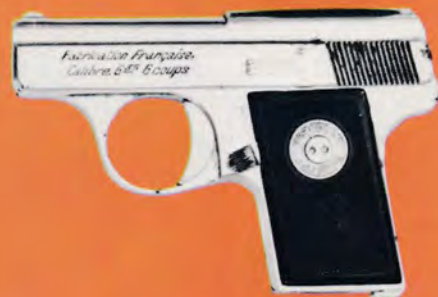




Top row (L-R): Forerunner of German Kommer, no serial No.; FAR, serial No. 9, pilot for Belgian "Dictator;" inventor's model by M. Santos Fernandez, pilot for Spanish "Teuf-Teuf."



Right row (top to bottom): The first true vest pocket auto, a Walther Model 9, and two of its contemporaries, the Mikros from France and German "Liliput."



Left row (top to bottom): Three variations of Belgian 1908 Robar and DeKerkhove pistol; early type with Melior tradename; later type with name "Jieffeco," and last, sold in U.S. with Phoenix name.



the 6.35 mm Browning, or 25 ACP cartridge. This cartridge and the first gun to fire it were the brain-children of the renowned arms designer John Moses Browning. Emboldened by the success of their Model 1900 automatic in 7.65 mm which Browning had designed for them, the Fabrique Nationale d'Armes de Guerre of Liege, Belgium, was highly receptive when he proposed a small, pocketable automatic to use a scaled-down version of the 7.65 mm cartridge.

The development of such an arm was a shrewd marketing maneuver. The need for a very small or "vest pocket" personal protection weapon was indicated by the large sales of small, inexpensive velo-dog deringers and revolvers and the reasonable success of the pioneering German Bergmann and Belgian Clement pocketable 5 mm. automatics. The Browning vest pocket, or "Baby" as it was known, and

its cartridge reached the market early in 1906 and were such a success that they were almost instantly followed by a 6.35 mm. version of the 5 mm. Clement and by a new design from the firm of Nicholas Pieper of Liege. The popularity of the cartridge spread more rapidly than any other in history and before the First World War literally millions of guns chambered for it had been made and their manufacture spread over at least a dozen countries.

As several key features of the Browning design were covered by patents and since the cartridge itself was of rather low power, much weird and wonderful experimentation was done, either to circumvent patents or to introduce alleged improvements, or merely as a matter of economic expediency. Despite the patents many virtually exact copies of the Browning design were produced.

This bewildering variety of design and manufacture is

both a boon and a discouragement to the collector. For one thing, the absolute number of trade names and designs is so vast that it is doubtful if anyone could collect them all. Indeed, even today there is no one source available with information on more than a handful of these interesting pistols.

One of the first decisions which must be made is how the collection should be structured so that an interesting and meaningful grouping will result. As with the collecting of other arms, there are several generally accepted categories. Added to this are several which suggest themselves due to the proliferation of designs and tradenames. This results in ten distinct categories. These of course are not all of the possible divisions and indeed some could easily be broken into sub-categories to further reduce the number of pieces necessary for a "complete" collection.

The first category, and the one which most often attracts people to the 25 automatic initially, is that of odd-appearing or unusually functioning designs. Into this category fall such well-known oddities as the Czech "Praga" folding-trigger or "beer can-opener" pistol, the German Lignose with its cocking-action trigger guard, and the Austrian "Little Tom" with its pioneering double-action trigger system. There are, however, many lesser known designs in this category such as the "Securitas" which has no trigger and is fired by means of its grip safety, and the "Radium" which has no detachable magazine but has an ingenious system involving a sliding grip which is pulled down for loading. While this category of odd appearance or function is one of the first to attract the neophyte collector it is also, because of the general oddity interest of these weapons, one of the most expensive.

The second most common way to collect is by manufacturer or tradename. The most common collections in this category are of Walthers or Mausers, but equally extensive and interesting groupings can be found under the Clement, Star, J. P. Sauer and Sohn, Melior, Bayard, Menz, and Bergmann names. Complete collections in this category can be as simple as the five basic models of the Sauer or as complex as the approximately twenty models and variations of the Walther.

The third most common category is by countries, which may be collected by many examples from one country or by one example from each of as many countries as possible. For the 25 ACP, the countries where the greatest variety and quantities were manufactured were Spain, Belgium, Germany, and France, in approximately that order, although examples may be found from such unexpected places as Chile, South Africa, and Switzerland. A careful study of proof marks of the various countries is necessary to this type of collection. Surprisingly enough, the world's premier powers, that is, the United States, Soviet Russia, England, and more recently Japan, are noticeably absent from the ranks of major designers and manufacturers. In England, Russia, and Japan this condition can be attributed to the sad state of the commercial arms industry due to their stringent anti-firearms ownership laws. The lack of native automatic design in the United States is more difficult to ex-

plain but is probably due to our long history of reliance for personal protection of the revolver and distrust of the dependability of the autopistol.

A fourth category for collecting would be that of the copy. The most numerous example of this is, of course, the legion of Spanish- and French-manufactured replicas, under an enormous variety of tradenames, of the Model 1905 Belgian Browning. Not as well known is that several copies exist of other arms that achieved wide popularity such as the German Walther Model 9, the Spanish "Star," and the Belgian Pieper.

A category which is of its nature restricted to the 25 automatic is the collection of true vest pocket pistols, that is, pistols of around four inches or less overall length. These diminutive arms were pioneered by the Walther Model 9 in 1921 and over the next twenty years nearly a dozen other manufacturers including FN brought competing miniscule arms to the market place. The first of these competitors was the famous Liliput, produced by August Menz in Suhl, Germany. Later Belgium, Spain, France, and Italy made contributions to this category.

The sixth category is that of interesting names. Like the "Suicide Special" or "Saturday Night Special" American 22 caliber revolvers the Spanish and French copies of the Model 1905 Browning automatic were marketed under a bewildering array of hopefully attractive tradenames. A list of the more picturesque would include Action, Apache, Asiatic, Atlas, Bronco, Bufalo (sic), Cow Boy, Demon, Destroyer, Dictator, Dragon, Express, Fox, Frontier, Liberty, Looking Glass, Marine, Pathfinder, Peugeot, Precision, Protector, Sharp-S(h)ooter, Singer, Sprinter, Terrible, Thunder, Titanic, Trust, Victory, and humorously anomolous, Unique.

A seventh category made possible by the great variety of pistols chambered for this cartridge is that of type of action or construction. Among these would be the many quick-removable barrel systems, the guns capable of being loaded and cocked with one hand, double-action lockwork pistols, pistols with metal grips, actions with tip-up barrels, and so forth. Within each one of these categories at least a half-dozen different examples may be found. This type of collection could consist of varieties of a feature rather than similarities. There are, for example, several different types and locations of magazine catches. These range from the one on the "Le Rapide" which pulls forward from underneath the trigger guard to

(Continued on page 64)



Left: Far Eastern hand-made copy of .32 M1900 Browning in .25 ACP; extremely rare. Right: The Spanish "Radium," made by Gabilondo y Cia about 1914. This design has integral magazine, loaded by pulling left grip downward, as shown in photo.



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GM JAN. GUNS Magazine

HANDLOADING BENCH

(Continued from page 8)

remember many pleasant range and hunting sessions when I had no more than five or ten cases. I still have the five cases made up for a fine old 1886 Bullard .50-115 Express rifle I once used. Five rounds were plenty for hunting, and for range work they were simply reloaded on the spot.

Loading in the field requires nothing but components, a decapping awl, as they were once called, a square stick of hardwood, and a two-inch square or larger piece of smooth steel plate. You can get fancier if you want, but it isn't at all necessary.

A piece of $\frac{3}{4}$ " diameter music wire protruding $\frac{3}{8}$ " from the largest dowel that will enter the case mouth does the decapping. Slip it into the flash hole, and bump the fired primer out with the heel of your hand.

To reprime, lay a primer anvil-up on the steel plate and tap the case down over it with the stick. Take care to not damage the case mouth. To be sure of this you can carry an extra mouth-fitting dowel $\frac{1}{2}$ " longer than the case to use as a driver. When the case head contacts the plate, the primer is seated flush.

Powder charge is simple. Check the throat and chamber of your gun and determine how deep bullets must be seated to lack about $\frac{1}{32}$ " - $\frac{1}{16}$ " of contacting the rifling. Then cut off one case $\frac{1}{16}$ " above where the bullet base falls. Solder or epoxy a wire handle to the charge cup thus formed, then pour or dip it full of FFg powder, strike off the excess, and pour the charge into the primed case.

The actual weight of the powder charge isn't important. It should be large enough in bulk so that it is lightly compressed when the bullet is seated (the reason for that extra $\frac{1}{16}$ " of case) to produce best and most uniform results.

Let's get one point made very clear. It is impossible to get enough black powder into any of those cartridge cases to generate pressures unsafe in the old guns—assuming, of course, the gun is in good mechanical condition. Any charge you can put in the case is safe.

Bullets are no problem. Since the cases do not need resizing (except, perhaps, after many firings makes them difficult to chamber), lubricated lead bullets are simply pressed into the case mouth by hand. If the fit is a bit tight, use the stick to tap bullets solidly down on the powder, with the

case resting on that steel plate.

Even if bullets are loose in the case, shooting isn't impaired. Just squeeze the case mouth somewhat oval with thumb and finger so that the bullet won't fall out during chambering.

Neither is selection and availability of bullets any problem. The Lyman catalog lists dozens of moulds for the old-time calibers in .38, .40, .44, 11mm, .50 calibers, and others as well. I much prefer the heaviest bullets for this type of shooting, and usually select a flat-point design as well. The more lubricating grooves, the better.

Cast like any other bullet, but from the softest lead you have. Get the bases as perfect as possible. If the proper bullet is chosen, sizing is seldom necessary. Just lubricate by the old cake method—stand bullets on bases in a tray; pour melted lubricant in to cover grooves; then cut bullets out of hardened cake with a fired case or piece of tubing. The Alox-base lubricants seem best, both for accuracy and prevention of leading.

When leading persists in spite of normal lubrication, melt some lubricant and let it solidify in a sheet about $\frac{1}{16}$ " thick.

Reduce powder charge height in case by $\frac{1}{16}$ ", then press the lube sheet over case mouths, leaving a grease wad in the neck. Seat the bullet over this wad. This will often cure leading problems, but occasionally a tight-fitting cardboard wad soaked in melted lubricant or beeswax, then drained, will do better.

There isn't much left to this simplest and most enjoyable type of shooting, except to care properly for the cases after shooting. Black powder residue will combine with atmospheric moisture (sulphuric acid is one of the by-products of combustion) to corrode the brass badly if not removed immediately. Under some conditions, only a few days are required to ruin the case.

Simply decap all cases immediately after firing, then wash them well inside in hot water and detergent. I boil them twenty minutes first, then use a small bottle-brush to loosen any stubborn fouling, and finish by boiling in clear water. Shake off excess and let them air-dry.

Of course, it goes without saying that after each use you'll clean the gun thoroughly. That acid fouling will ruin the bore in short order if you don't.



FLOORPLATE

By JIM CARMICHEL

WHEN IT COMES TO drawing admiring glances from lovers of fine sporting rifles, few gadgets are as successful as a simple but well made floorplate release lever. This distinctive accessory is synonymous with the fine sporting arms built on the European Continent before WW II. Thus the release lever is associated with a brand of gunsmithing requiring ultra-meticulous, even mystical, craftsmanship. Home gunsmithing hobbyists are thus more or less "brain-washed" into overestimating the skills of the old world craftsmen and underestimating their own abilities.

Actually, as we shall presently see, a very amateur craftsman with no more sophisticated tools than a hacksaw, two or three files, a drill, a tap and a bit of sandpaper can fashion a very handsome lever release assembly from a hunk of steel and have it installed and working in an evening's time.

What might have been the only difficult part of installing a lever release assembly, undercutting the trigger guard for the lever catch, has, in fact, already been done for us on Mausers, Springfields and 1914-17 Enfields. We simply make use of the milled undercut just forward of the trigger guard bow originally intended for the floorplate catch lip.

Though any sort of mild steel will do, a piece of $\frac{3}{8}$ " or $\frac{1}{2}$ " cold rolled key stock about four inches long will do fine. Actually the finished lever will only be some two inches long but the additional length makes a nice "handle" for holding the lever in a vise during the shaping process.

Begin work by tracing the profile of the lever on the key stock. Arrange the pattern so that both the lever arm and the pivot shank will be a single piece. It takes a bit more filing this way but the added strength and simplicity is worth the effort. Also by doing it this way we get "one up" on the old-world gunsmithing wizards who made the lever arm separate from the shank and then had to hold the two parts together with a screw that showed from the out-



side. Our way keeps the outside parts free of screws and is thus much better looking.

File the profile to shape but make no attempt at contouring the lever for the time being. By establishing both side and top profiles first it will be much easier to get smoothly flowing, symmetrical contours later. Also be sure to leave the "handle" attached.

Filing the pivot shank to a near perfect cylinder may seem a formidable task but is, in fact, quite simple. The square form is first cut to an eight-sided shape, which in turn is rounded off. The proper diameter of the shank is determined by the size of the hole which already exists at the rear of the floorplate. A little cut-and-fit technique here will get you a perfect fit. Also, this is as good a time as any to cut the lug off the inside of the floorplate. These are always of mild steel and easy to cut with a hacksaw. Use a file to dress the inner surface smooth and flush.

After the pivot shank and the side and top profiles have been filed to shape, you are ready to move on to working the lever down to final shape.

Frankly, it is difficult, if not impossible, to describe how to shape a form by words alone. Therefore your best guide will be the illustrations shown on these pages. Note how the contours flow gracefully with no sharp edges or slab-sided surfaces.

Most of the shaping can be done with a simple six-inch three sided file or even a round chain saw file. A set of needle files, if you have one, is very helpful but not really necessary.

During this final shaping is where



you really begin to appreciate that "handle" fastened to the rear end of the lever. If it were not for this you'd really have a job trying to hold on to the small lever and file on it too. You'd file as much skin as steel.

For final finishing wrap a strip of 220- or 320-grit finishing paper around the file and work out the tool marks and scratches made by the filing operation. When the lever is smooth you can cut off that handy little handle and then smooth up that last little scar. Now you're ready to install the lever.

The floorplate is locked in place by a small latch arm which pivots laterally, entering into that milled recess in the trigger guard we discussed earlier.

Since the latch must fit rather snugly and be in positive alignment with the lever it is necessary to attach the two parts in such a way that any slipping will be impossible. This is accomplished easily enough by a simple tongue and groove union with the two parts held together by a small screw running down through the latch piece and threading into the lever shank. A 6-48 screw is fine for this job and just about everyone who tinkers with guns has a 6-48 tap. (Continued on page 66)

RELEASE LEVER



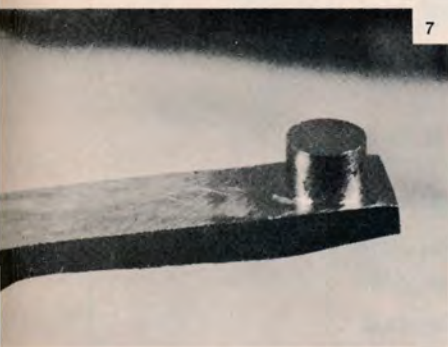
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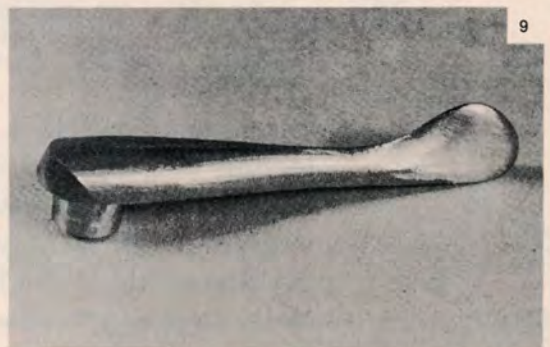
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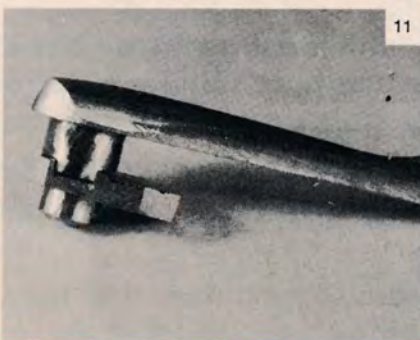
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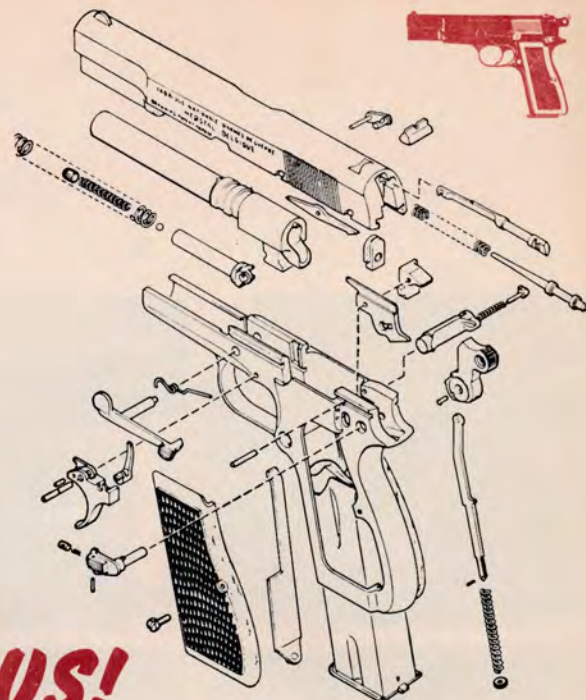
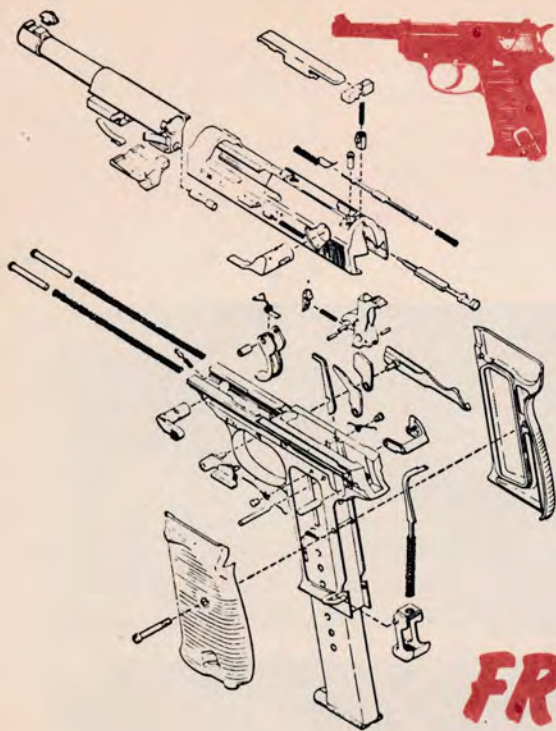


11



12

1. Detail of the release lever in the open position. 2. Detail of the lever in the closed position. Note the general contours of the lever are smooth and flowing. Also, no screw is used to attach the lever to the pivot shank, further enhancing the looks of the completed job. 3. Shown on the opened floorplate, the lever gives the rifle a European "flair". This is the same floorplate conversion used in the last article. 4. Cutting the lug off the floorplate is an easy task that may be done with a hacksaw. After cutting, the entire area should be dressed with a file and emery cloth for smoothness. 5. The lever after the side and top profiles have been filed to the finished outline. Note the "handle" left on the stock to make the unit easier to hold in a vise. This will be cut off later. 6. Filing the pivot shank to an eight-sided form makes it easier to file it to a near-perfect round cylinder shape. 7. The pivot shank after it has been filed round. Keeping the corners square is necessary for a better appearance. 8. Filing the lever to the final contour takes a bit of time and patience. Work slowly and use sharp tools. 9. This is how the lever looks just after filing it to shape. The file marks will disappear upon final sanding with emery cloth. 10. Detail of the latch and method of attaching it to the lever with a 6-48 screw. 11. Side view gives added details to the shaping chore. 12. Detail of the latch as it fits in the well. Latch is in the closed position. This view is from the inside of the guard looking down and to the rear. Finished product will draw admiring glances from shooters on the firing line, to be sure!



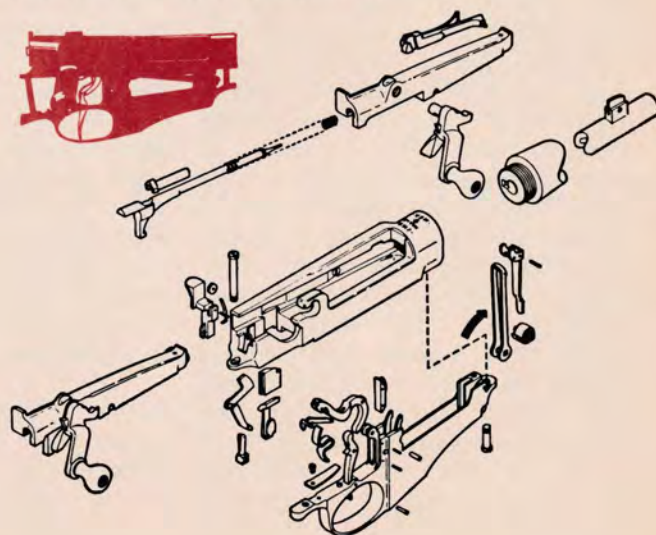
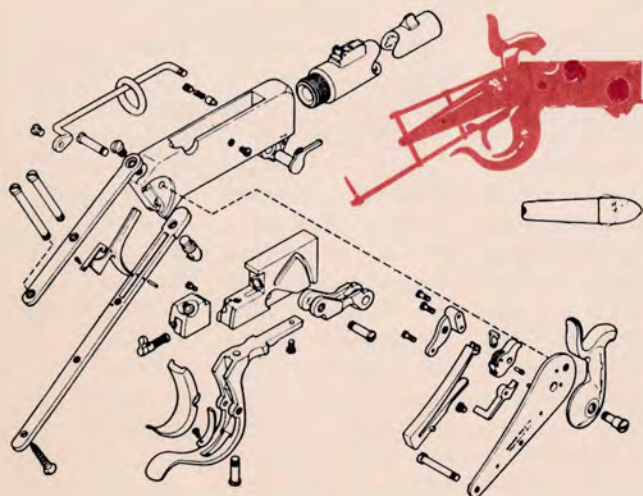
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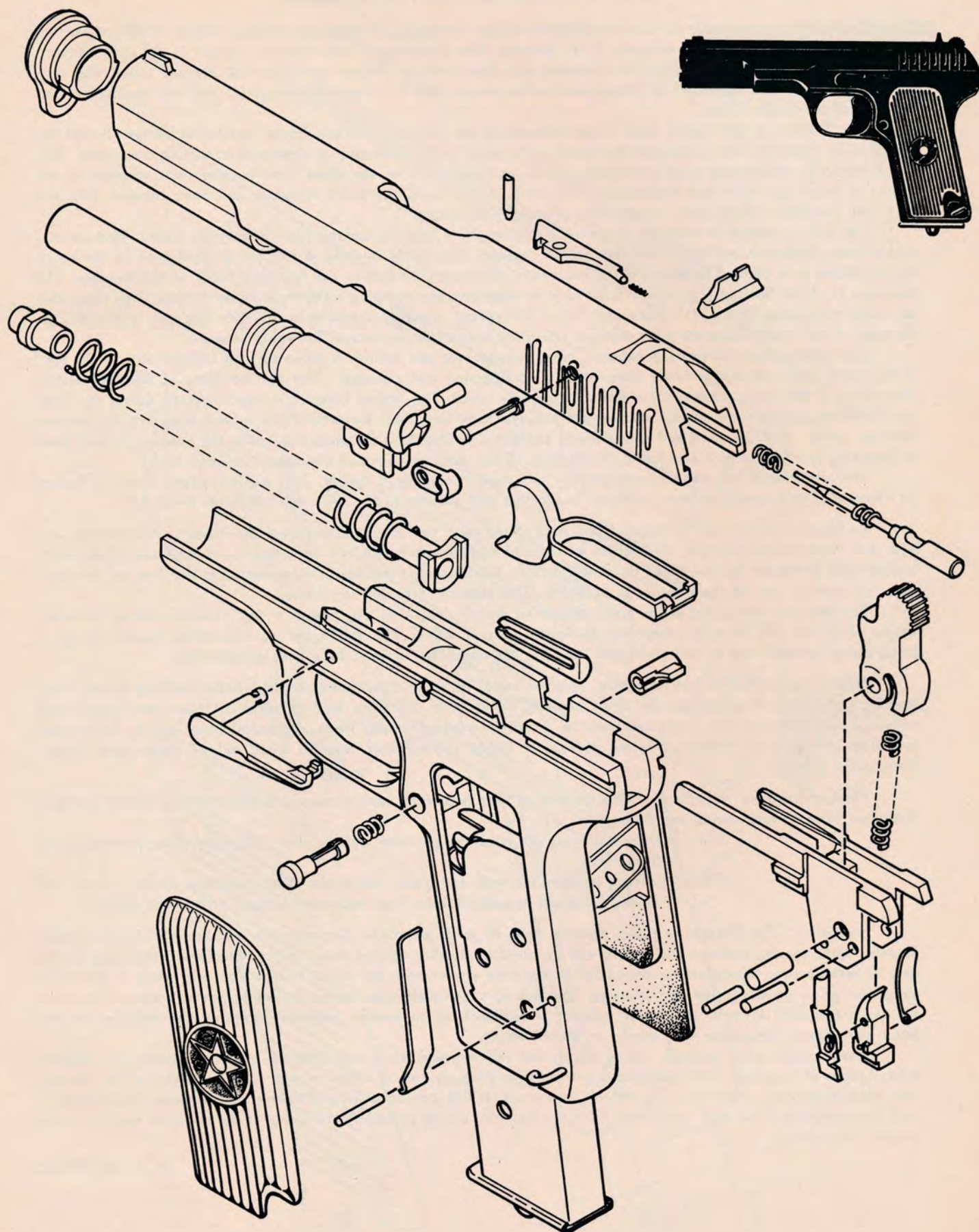
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TOKAREV MODEL 30 — Cal. 7.62 mm Russian

This pistol is an adaptation and simplification of the Browning parallel-ruler locking system developed by the well known Russian small-arms designer, F. V. Tokarev. The cartridge is the Russian version of the 7.63 Mauser, (DWM No. 403), loaded to slightly less intensity and fitted with a thinner rim. The old Mauser round was very popular in Russia, and especially in Siberia, and in its present form it is the standard pistol and sub-machinegun ammunition of the Soviet Union.

The Tokarev is well worth study as an example of the course of modern Soviet small-arms design. It was designed to be manufactured as cheaply and easily as possible with a minimum of expensive machining operations. This was achieved by eliminating many refinements of the prototype, but at the same time notable improvements in the facility of stripping, repair and maintenance were made. As a result, the pistol is lighter and more compact than the 1911 and functions reliably with much more powerful ammunition.

The locking system is identical to the 1911 pattern. Note that the locking ribs encircle the barrel. This permits simple lathe production and eliminates milling and shaping. The barrel bushing is simpler, a small stud on the recoil spring locking it in place. The pistol has no manual or grip safety outside of the half-cock notch of the hammer. The firing pin is of the floating type and is retained by a transverse pin engaging a slot on its upper surface. This eliminates the costly machining of the 1911 firing pin stop. A flat spring engaging a groove in the slide stop pin is provided on the right of the frame, since the slide does not retain the stop as in the normal Browning assembly.

The firing system comprising hammer, sear, disconnector and springs is mounted as a sub-assembly in the rear of the frame from which it is easily removed for field stripping and cleaning. (The pin mounting of the 1911 makes disassembly of the same components a difficult armorer's task.) The helical hammer spring is housed within the hammer, obtaining compression against a transverse pin. The most important features of the sub-assembly are the integral cartridge guides at its forward end which insure straight line feed from the magazine lips to the chamber. (Most jams in Browning type automatics are due to deformation of the magazine lips and consequent crooked feed.)

The magazine is the standard straight line box type, containing 8 rounds. It is easily stripped from the bottom for cleaning. The magazine release is similar in function and position to the 1911, but comprises fewer parts.

To Operate: Draw slide of empty pistol back. Slide stop (on left of frame over the trigger) will engage and lock slide open. Press magazine release (to left rear of trigger) and withdraw magazine. Load magazine in standard fashion with 8 rounds. Re-insert and depress slide stop to chamber a round. The hammer may be lowered by hand from full cock to rest on the slide, or to half-cock. This requires *care* and two hands.

The standard dimensions of the pistol include an overall length of $7\frac{3}{4}$ " , with a $4\frac{1}{2}$ " barrel, and an unloaded weight of 52 ozs. The finish is generally a phosphate gray or black. The stocks are an identifying feature, being of black plastic marked with a Soviet star and "СССР". No significant variants have been encountered.

Field Stripping: Withdraw magazine. Depress recoil spring stud protruding through barrel bushing. Rotate freed bushing to the right to disengage, and draw forward. Draw back slide stop lock on right of frame over trigger and withdraw stop from the left. Slide may now be drawn forward off frame. Disengage barrel from locking engagement and draw out forwards with recoil spring and guide. Firing sub-assembly may be lifted out of frame with fingers. Reverse for assembly.

Further Stripping: Magazine — Depress stud of false bottom on base of magazine and slide true bottom forward. Withdraw false bottom, spring and follower.

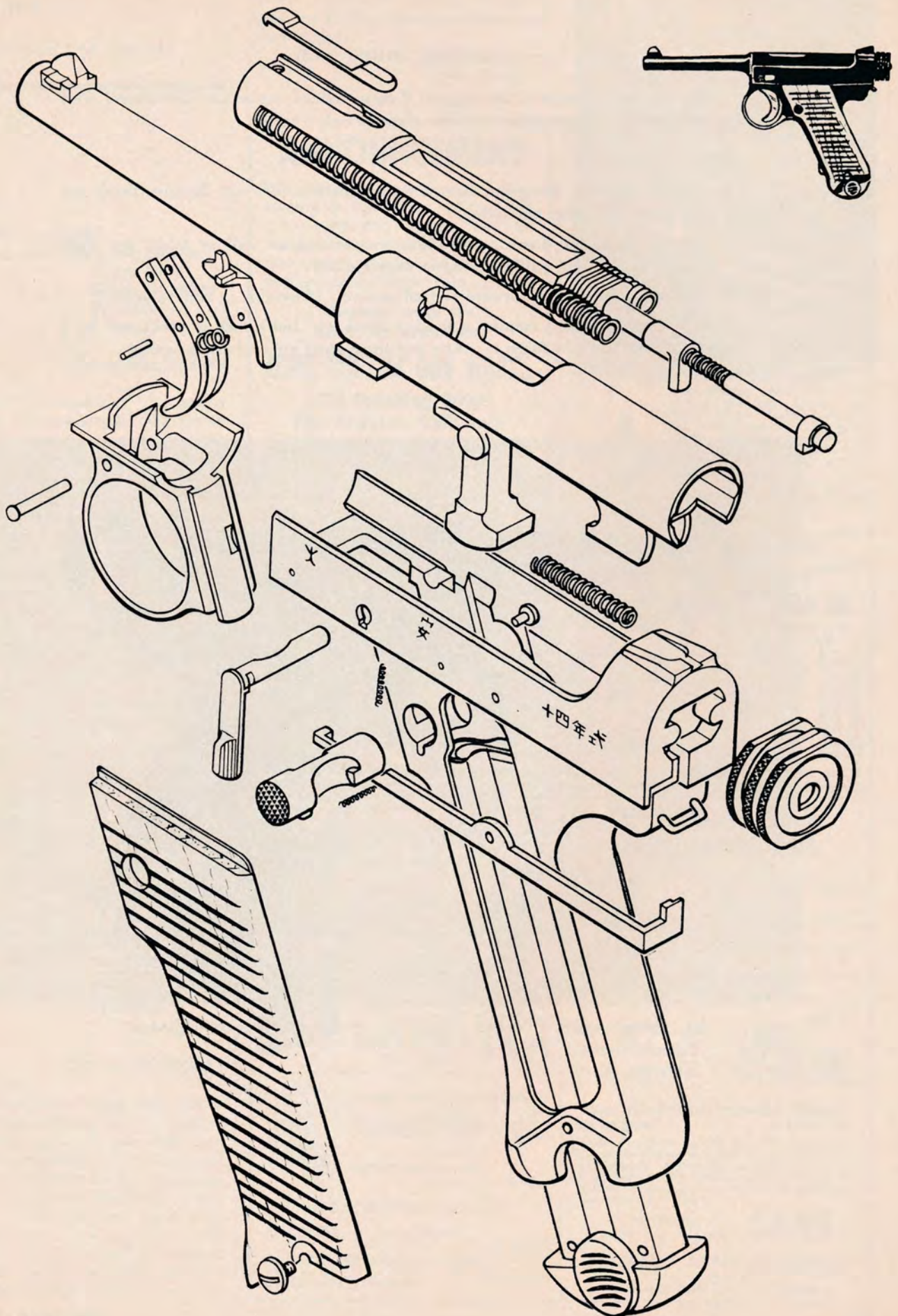
Slide — Drive out firing pin retaining pin from right of slide. Withdraw firing pin and spring from rear.

Frame — Reach in magazine well and draw rearwards stock retaining springs. Shake off stocks. Drive out magazine release from right and withdraw trigger and spring.

Evaluation: The Tokarev is rather roughly made of good materials. Non-essential surfaces are always poorly finished, while mating surfaces and guides will be found in finishes varying from fair to excellent, depending on the date of manufacture. Specimens produced during war-time stress show the worst fitting. The grip slope is not quite steep enough to provide instinctive pointing. The lack of a comprehensive safety system makes it necessary to carry the arm either fully lowered or with the hammer at half-cock or in cocked position. Lowering the hammer for the latter positions is dangerous with sweaty or gloved hands.

However, the pistol is amply strong, sturdy and reliable, and when used with the proper ammunition is reliable. Some brands of American 7.63 ammunition will function properly, while others which adhere closely to the German case dimensions may cause frequent failures to extract. DWM ammunition is, of course, the worst in this respect. If this ammunition is to be used constantly, a few thousandths can be ground off the inside of the extractor hook to insure proper functioning.

P. A. MIRANDA



JAPANESE MODEL 1925

This is a modification of the original 8 m/m Nambu (some are encountered with an enlarged trigger guard for use with gloves). Cal. 8 m/m.

TO DISMOUNT:

1. Press in head of firing pin extension and unscrew bolt nut. Remove firing pin extension and firing pin spring.
2. Remove magazine, force muzzle back by pressing on wall or table, and push magazine catch in, pulling down on trigger guard.
3. Slide barrel assembly forward and off receiver. (Assemble in reverse order.)

NOTE: These weapons employ a locking block (or link) that is positioned by a spring. Care should be taken to insure that these parts are replaced properly.



Nambu with enlarged trigger guard for shooting with gloves.

**DERE
MR. ACMI . . .**

(Continued from page 25)

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dere mr Acmi

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dere mr Acmi

i got youre letter today and i got to say i was beginning to look forward to hearing from you all now and then like weve been doing and i had to reed youre letter twice to see if i was reed-ying rite now it hurts me plenty to say this but i think you and Slick Williams is the same kind of people and i kno Slick is so crooked he cudnt sleep in a roundhouse. anybudy that wud charge 97.50 to make a gun shoot

hard like it shud aint all the ways honest and frankli i just dont care to have eny further correspondence with you anymore.

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PULL!

By **DICK MILLER**

1971 was a record year for the clay target sports in the United States. Some of the boom may have gone from the economy, but the boom in shooting (no pun intended) just keeps rolling along. Nearly seventeen thousand entries competed in trap's national tournament, the Grand American, at Vandalia, Ohio, eclipsing the 1968 record of 16,799 entries. San Antonio, Texas hosted 2,571 hopefuls in the 1971 NSSA World Championships, skeet's supreme tournament test in the United States. Every gauge showed increased entries at San Antonio.

Last month's "Pull" column led off with the statement "Next year can be your big year in clay target competition!" Confirmation for this statement comes just one month later, when I report that Ralph C. Davis of Lorton, Virginia won the biggest prize in trapshooting during the 1971 Grand American, the Grand American Handicap, just about one year after he started shooting trap! Davis, an engineer with Safeway stores, began his trapshooting career in July of 1970. His previous high score before the Grand was a 97 in the Maryland state event. He had to win his trophy in the Grand the hard way, when nine shooters were deadlocked at 98 for the big prize after regulation shooting. Davis must have had butterflies, Grand American variety, when he missed his first target in the shoot-off, but he steadied for a 24, and eliminated the rest of a nine-man hungry pack with another 24 in the second stanza of the shootoff.

Don Brown of Macon, Illinois will remember the 1971 Grand for a long time. He missed his one hundredth and last target to fall back in the shootoff pack. He would have been the uncontested champion if he could have only broken that last target. He recovered a share of the glory by taking runner-up to Davis, via two extra rounds in the mass shootoff.

There was a lot of congestion at the top in the 1971 Grand American Han-

dicap. Because nine shooters posted scores of 98, these shooters accounted for nine of the ten trophy places. This situation set up another battle royal, when nineteen shooters with scores of 97 had to shoot off for the one remaining trophy place.

Tenth place was quickly decided when a mother of eight children, Mrs. Bonnie Byrne, of Flint, Michigan, broke 25 straight and ended the agony.

Next to Don Brown, the role of hard luck shooter in the 1971 Grand probably goes to the great Dan Orlich, and this is a new role for him. Orlich broke 699 of 700 regulation event 16-yard targets and did not win a trophy for his labors. He did win the "Champion of Champions" trophy, a special event for state winners, but this was not a part of his seven hundred targets with just one miss.

The usual pack of shooters broke the initial two hundred straight in the North American Clay Target Championship, which is to 16-yard gunners what the Grand American Handicap is to distance shooters. Eleven shooters broke the perfect 200, including some of trap's biggest names, but when the smoke had cleared, a first-timer put his name in the record book. Richard Smith, a school supervisor from Newcomerstown, Ohio, had been in the shootoff on two previous occasions, but he was not to be denied in 1971. Another newcomer, who came to the Grand a Class A shooter, Elgin Gates of Riviera, Arizona, previously better known for his big game hunting records, took runner-up. Gene Sears from El Reno, Oklahoma repeated the 1970 victory in the All-Around, with 391x400. Bueford Bailey of Big Springs, Nebraska last won the back-to-back all-around trophies in 1964-65. Steady Britt Robinson keeps rolling along with the High-Over-All score of 964x1000 and the trophy. Another big-namer, Larry Gravestock, took the Doubles Championship of North America back to Wichita Falls, Texas. Two shooters broke 99 in the

Preliminary Handicap, dress rehearsal for the Grand American. Robert Huffman of London, Ohio bested Harold Beckman of Springfield, Illinois for the trophy, in a one-round shoot-off.

The youth movement took over in the Vandalia Handicap, final handicap event, and sort of a consolation event for those who were denied glory on Wednesday and Thursday. 13-year old David Keefe broke 99 and took the trophy back to Tiptonville, Tennessee. The next two places also went to youngsters, Rick Jenner from Wau-paca, Wis., followed by little Randy Voss of LeSeur, Minnesota.

Youth also came on strong in the 1971 NSSA World Skeet Championships at San Antonio. Scores were high despite some spill-over from a hurricane in the form of drenching rains. Robert Paxton, who turned eighteen during the shoot, and Richard "Red" Hill tied the world's all-around of 548x550, set in 1964 by William Sesnon III. Paxton dropped one target in the .410 race and one in 20 gauge. Hill lost one 20 gauge bird, and one of the 250 flyers in 12 gauge. Paxton and Hill broke the all-around trophy tie with a sudden-death .410 round with Paxton winning the title when Hill missed high 4. Hill regained part of this loss by winning a shootoff for the .410 championship after a shoot-off with William Davis of Houston who had also broken the century with the pee-wee gun. It used to be that if you were straight in the .410 race, you could sit back and watch the rest of the shoot-offs. Even that has changed, and we now have a man breaking 100 of the .410 targets and still losing.

Kenny Barnes showed no ill effects from his sabbatical from skeet, and quickly established that he is back on the scene, grabbing the 20 gauge trophy by outlasting twenty-one other perfect shooters. Raymond C. Craemer, Jr. from California, Maryland turned back fifteen more aspirants who were straight over the regulation century in 28 gauge. Dick Bienapfl, of Minneapolis, Minn. broke 561 consecutive targets to win the always grueling 12 gauge championships. Dick had won the Eastern Open twice before and this year is still a youngster who, at 23, could do some rewriting of the record book in his own time.

Some other trophy winners from San Antonio were Karla Roberts in the Ladies All-Around, Tito Killian in the Junior division, and J. R. Hiland in the Senior classification. R. B. Ross was the All-Around veteran champ, and the sub-senior trophy went to John Golla. Barney Hartman grabbed the honors in the industry division.

(Continued on page 57)

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OUR MAN IN WASHINGTON



By CARL WOLFF

Behind Senator Birch Bayh's anti-gun drive is a classic game of "upmanship." Bayh, out to get the democratic nomination in the run for the White House, is upstaging the Administration.

This GUNS contributor has been told by people in a position to know, that the Treasury Department has told foreign countries (which must now meet federal standards on the importation of pistols and revolvers) that an Administration bill to put them on a more equal footing will be presented to Congress by October. Bayh, by moving before the Administration gets its bill ready, takes the steam out of its efforts.

Regular readers will recall the Treasury Department has the H. P. White Laboratories doing some research work on handgun standards. Then selected members of the shooting fraternity were to sit down with the boys in the Tobacco Tax and Firearms Division to try and come up with a recommendation for legislation.

That meeting has not taken place at this writing. However, already there is some basic agreement. The idea is to set standards whereby unsafe, cheaply manufactured handguns can be eliminated from the American Market. The new standards would apply to both domestic and foreign manufacture.

The problems are many, both technical and legislative. There is general agreement that a proofing act is not the answer. There is also general agreement that size should not be the key factor.

Under the Bayh measure, domestic manufacturers would have to meet the standards now met by importers. That is, three pre-requisites must be met in order to sell a revolver: (1) a safety

test must be passed by the weapon, (2) overall length of the frame must be $4\frac{1}{2}$ ", and, (3) the barrel length must be a minimum of 3".

These criteria are weighed and a total value on a point basis of 45 must be accumulated if the gun is permitted to be sold. In addition to a safety prerequisite, the pistol must be six inches in length, and the combined length and height must be 10".

These standards are not acceptable to the domestic market as there are now in circulation many revolvers with 2" barrels. If the Bayh bill were enacted, Federally licensed dealers would not be permitted to sell such guns.

For some time now the democrats and the anti-gun groups have been trying to force the President into favoring more restrictive firearm legislation. The cry has been get rid of the "Saturday Night Specials."

Some of us "old timers" can remember back when the late ex-senator, Thomas Dodd started his crusade in the Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency. The charge, with some justification, was that young hoodlums were using .22 caliber and .25 caliber pistols and revolvers.

The final result was the Gun Control Act of 1968. We have gone full circle. Senator Bayh now heads the same Subcommittee. Most observers here say that Bayh will not make the same mistake Dodd made.

The best he can hope for is making a political issue out of, "Before my congressional investigation the present Administration opposed my legislation to ban "Saturday Night Specials." He can, at the same time, charge that he has a forward looking measure to cover one of the (Continued on next page)

loop-holes in the 1968 Act.

The key to the Bayh drive is not the Senate but the House. He does not chair a legislative committee so he does not have the real power to push a measure through congress. Representative Emanuel Celler (D., N.Y.), Chairman of the House Committee on the Judiciary, will have to supply that political force.

Barring the unexpected, any measure Bayh moves out of the Senate will be referred to the Celler Committee for review. Mr. Celler, however, has his own bill for additional gun control.

The Celler bill provides for national firearms registration, establishes minimum standards for licensing firearms possession, and imposes restrictions on the availability of all handguns so strongly that only the police could have them in their private possession.

The question at this juncture: Is Bayh, like Dodd, opening the starting rounds in a major effort to curtail firearms ownership? We will see in the coming months.

PULL!

(Continued from page 55)

All-around is the total score in one hundred each 20, 28, and .410 birds plus 250 targets in 12 gauge.

Jack Johnson kept the International Skeet trophy at home in San Antonio, by breaking 197 of the 200 difficult International style targets, an event added in recent years to the NSSA Championships. Also on the international scene during 1971, Yank clay target gunners took team gold medals in skeet at Cali, Columbia during the Pan-American Games. Ever-tough Bob Schuehle from Elmwood Park, Illinois garnered a gold medal in the Pan-Am Games for his 195x200 in skeet. Personable young Anthony Rosetti from Biloxi, Mississippi brought home a silver medal from Cali for the same score over the demanding international skeet range.

For more on the youth movement in clay target shooting, even the sub-juniors can get punched back to the 27-yard line! 14 year old Robert Mieczkowski of Wintersville, Ohio recently became the fourth sub-junior (under fifteen) to win his way back to the present maximum 27-yard handicap stripe. Bob is now fifteen, so he can start a new career in the junior ranks, but he can't get any farther from the trap house unless the ATA changes the rules.

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For equal time to the senior set, Mr. Skeet himself, Alex Kerr of Beverly Hills, Calif. who is to skeet something akin to what George Blanda is to pro football, was honored during the NSSA tournament with the prestigious Ray Boller Memorial Award. The Ray Boller award, in memory of the late Ray Boller, past NSSA president, is presented to an individual who has

"made an outstanding contribution to the NSSA and skeet shooting." Like George Blanda, Alex Kerr wrote the record book over the last quarter century in skeet, and is still a tough competitor when the chips are down. And, he gives and gives of himself to skeet and the NSSA.

Yes, 1971 was a great year. 1972 will be still better, I predict.

POLICE HANDGUNS

(Continued from page 36)

by the fixed-sight "Official Police," "Lawman" and "Metropolitan" variations in .38, .357 and .38 respectively, with the same barrel options. All are rather heavy and bulky and are offered with optional target-type triggers, hammer, and stocks. Actions are simplified and make maximum use of formed and sintered metal parts. Basic layout is typically Colt's, with side plate on the left, left-opening cylinder, and pull-back cylinder latch on the left side. The "Mark III" series design appears to be destined to replace the older basic Colt's lockwork in all heavy-frame guns. At present, the expensive, top-of-the-line, target-sight "Python" .357 Magnum is still available with the older lockwork and frame in 4" and 6" barrel lengths. All Colt service revolvers are six-shot.

SMITH & WESSON: The basic "Military & Police" model with square butt, six-shot cylinder, with 4" or 6" barrel contains the traditional lock-

work design as modified in 1950 and comes in .38 Special as the M-10 with fixed sights; the M-15 (Combat Masterpiece) with target sights; and may be had with target-type trigger, hammer, and stocks. It is also offered in .357 Magnum as M-19 with target sights only. Beyond this are the large-frame guns (based on the original .44 Special frame) in .357 Magnum, .41 Magnum, .44 Magnum, and, formerly, in .45 caliber. All are identical to the M-10 design except for size and caliber, and are offered only with target sights except for the 4" M-58 .41 Magnum M&P model. Actually, this is the most powerful series of police-type revolvers in the world when using full-charge factory ammunition. **STRUM-RUGER:** Ruger offers one basic model, the "Security Six" (6 shots) D-A revolver in .357 Magnum/.38 Special caliber. It contains two features highly unusual in a police gun. First, there is no detachable sideplate to permit access to the lockwork. This permits much greater rigidity of the frame and further avoids loosening of assembly screws by recoil. Second, the entire revolver may be completely disassembled without tools—other than a coin to turn out the stock screw and a disassembly pin concealed beneath the stocks. This is made possible by a new and simplified lockwork mechanism which may be drawn out the bottom of the frame after removal of the stocks and trigger guard. The "Security-Six" makes maximum practical use of modern 4140 steel investment castings for the frame and other major components, as well as other advanced fabrication and assembly techniques.

Designed primarily with double-action shooting in mind, it has shorter hammer and trigger travel than is found in older designs; spring rates and camming actions are balanced for maximum ease of double-action pull. The cylinder latch is unusual, though located in the traditional place on the left side of the frame. Pressing inward

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on a serrated thumb lever unlocks the cylinder to allow it to be swung out leftward in the traditional manner. Of particular interest is the aesthetically-pleasing style of the Ruger design. In this writer's opinion, it has more grace of line and eye appeal than any other revolver ever made. While by no means skimpy of metal, it gives a visual impression of lightness and strength that belies its actual heft. It is currently offered in both fixed and target-sighted versions and with 4" and 6" barrels.

WESSON ARMS: August of 1970 marked the shipment of the first Wesson M-12 .357 Magnum revolvers to the trade. The M-12 departs from tradition in several areas, especially that of the barrel. Barrels may be interchanged with only a spanner wrench and alignment shim for tools. This is accomplished by a slim barrel proper screwed lightly into the frame and surrounded by a slip-on housing held in place by a nut on the barrel muzzle. Four-inch and six-inch barrels may be interchanged in less than a minute without affecting performance in any way. In addition, the M-12 enjoys almost 100% parts interchangeability. Every part, including the lockwork, is made to be assembled or interchanged without gauges or tools other than those furnished with the gun in the spanner-wrench/combination tool. All tolerance accumulation is focussed into the length of the hand and this is the only item which needs hand-fitting in either original factory assembly or repair. Even side plates are generally interchangeable.

The serrated cylinder latch or release is unusual in that it is located on the upper left portion of the crane and is pulled down to release the six-shot cylinder to swing out leftward in normal fashion. Another M-12 feature unique among service-type revolvers is the absence of a stock-supporting frame extension. Instead, only the mainspring housing extends downward from the frame proper, and a one-piece stock slides up over it. Thus, stock shape and size are not limited by frame profile.

The Wesson M-12 is unusually robust and massive in appearance, though not abnormally heavy as a consequence. Maximum use is made of sintered and investment-cast and formed parts throughout and all springs are of the coil type. At present, the M-12 is offered in all barrel lengths and with extra interchangeable barrels; with fixed or target type sights; and with target or service-type stocks.

The M-12, too, is designed primarily for double-action work. D-A pull and travel are shorter and lighter than in

older comparable models.

Undercover Guns:

COLT'S: All of Colt's above-mentioned service guns are offered with 2½" barrels for undercover and off-duty use. Generally, though, their bulk and weight make them difficult to conceal. A complete series of smaller models is offered on the small, light, six-shot "Detective Special" frame in .38 Special caliber. All are offered with 2" barrels, some with 3" and 4" and are highly concealable with the shorter length. All except the ribbed-barrel "Diamondback" carry fixed sights and are not offered with target accessories. Both round and square butts are available and the "Cobra" and "Agent" variations utilize aluminum alloy frames to achieve minimum weight. All the guns in this group use the old-style Colt's lockwork which is not especially noted for double-action efficiency.

CHARTER ARMS: Only a single basic six-shot .38 Special model, the "UNDERCOVER," is offered, built entirely of steel and weighing only 16 ounces with 2" barrel. It is of advanced design without a detachable sideplate. Disassembly is through the bottom of the frame after removal of the trigger guard and separate stock frame. Lockwork is simplified and uses substantially fewer parts than S&W and Colt's guns. The cylinder latch is of typical push-forward design on the left of the frame—however, pulling forward on the ejector rod will also free the cylinder to swing out leftward.

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target sights and a .32 caliber variation called "UNDERCOVERETTE," which is intended for use by female officers who find the .38 Special cartridge difficult to handle.

SMITH & WESSON: All S&W service guns based on the M-10 described earlier are offered with round butts and/or 2" or 2½" barrels to adapt them for undercover use. Due to their slightly less bulk and weight than comparable Colt's models, they are more adaptable to undercover use. The M-10 is also offered as "Air-weight" with a light-weight aluminum alloy frame.

Like Colt's, S&W offers a line of smaller five-shot guns based on a scaled-down version of the M-10 frame and lockwork, and the basic model is the "Chiefs Special" in, 2" and 3" barrel, .38 Special only. It is available with either steel or alloy frame, round-butt only, also with all major parts made from stainless steel (M-60) for service under severe climatic conditions. Unusual undercover variations on the basic model are the "Bodyguard" with its shrouded hammer (which may still be thumbcocked when desired), and the "Centennial" with completely enclosed hammer, double-action-only lockwork, and grip safety. Both are offered with either steel or light alloy frames.

STRUM-RUGER: At the present time, Ruger offers only a 2½" barrel, fixed-sight version of the "Security-Six" .357 Magnum revolver for undercover use.

WESSON ARMS: No special under-

cover models exist yet. The basic M-12 may be ordered with 2½" barrel and smaller stocks, or those items may be readily installed by the user to adapt it to undercover use. It may also be ordered with the short barrel permanently installed if desired.

After all this, someone is bound to ask which of the lot I would choose if I were out there in a blue suit walking a beat. First let me say that among all of these guns there isn't a bad one in the bunch. The choice is one of personal preference, and not everyone likes my brand of booze, my taste in female companionship, or my choice of an automobile. With that, let me say that if I were in a position to make a choice I probably wouldn't pick a revolver for everyday wear. If I had to, it would be a toss-up between the Ruger Security Six and the S&W Combat Magnum, both in .357 Magnum, with 4" barrel and target sights. As for an undercover gun, I've still to find anything I like better than the very compact S&W Airweight Bodyguard loaded with Super Vel 110 grain JHP .38 Specials. I'd throw the standard stocks in the trash can, then have Steve Herrett fit his Shooting Ace to the little gun, the Shooting Star to the big one, to improve double action handling. My very small hands rule out the bigger and heavier guns for fast double-action shooting.

I don't doubt that many readers will disagree with these choices, and that is as it should be. The point is, however, that now you do have a much wider choice.



FORGET THE FULL CHOKE!

(Continued from page 23)

was possible to make a gun shoot tighter patterns and therefore increase its effective range, the gun manufacturers quickly adopted the discovery and began ballyhooing the "advantages" of their new, "long-range" guns. Shotguns were manufactured by the thousands with the tightest chokes possible, and advertisements claimed game-getting effectiveness over impossible ranges.

The United States has traditionally been a nation of riflemen used to shooting over longer, rather than shorter ranges. And when shotguns became available that would "kill game out to 100 yards" (according to some early advertising claims), American shooters flocked to buy them.

Although advertising claims are down some (even with the development of "magnum" loads), Americans

are still flocking to buy "hard shootin'" full-choked guns.

I know the first two shotguns I owned wore 30-inch full-choked tubes. My first scattergun was a Model 37 Winchester 12-gauge single shot, and my second was an Ithaca pump (also a Model 37, coincidentally). It was a foregone conclusion that these guns would be full choked. That was the choke marking on the barrel of my father's gun, and the shotguns owned by my uncles, cousins, friends—in fact, by everyone I knew—were all "full" choked. Full chokes "shot the hardest" and would kill game the farthest, and that's all anyone wanted to know. Why buy a gun with less choke that would only limit your bird-kill ability?

The fact is that, with the full-choked guns, we couldn't have limited our bird-getting ability more. Contrary to

our beliefs, long-barreled full-choked guns didn't shoot appreciably "harder" than their shorter-tubed, open-choked counterparts. And while these tight-patterning guns gave us the potential to kill birds cleanly at 40 to 50 yards (maximum), very few of us had the ability to make full use of this long-range potential.

And at normal ranges, the extremely tight, dense patterns were unforgiving of anything but the most expert marksmanship. And the occasional birds that were downed at typical upland distances were usually unfit for the table.

I sold those first shotguns to help finance my freshman year at college. When I later began shopping for a replacement, a knowledgeable salesman talked me into trying a modified-choked repeater.

Up until that time, I had been only an indifferent marksman with a scattergun. And while I didn't become a deadly shot overnight (a claim I still can't make some 15 years later), I did begin dropping considerably more ducks on the marsh. And when the pheasant season got underway that year, my self esteem improved by a couple of more notches when I collected my first day's limit several hours (and shells) earlier than usual.

Since that time, I have experimented with many different choke/gauge combinations, and have settled on lively handling small-bore (20 and 28-gauge) guns for most of my upland bird-shooting chores. These guns, choked "skeet" or "improved cylinder," carry light, get on target fast, and kill enough birds to keep my ego in at least fair shape every season (something my full-choked guns wouldn't do).

And in the duck blind, where I once thought "full" chokes were *de rigueur*, I now favor a modified-choked 12-gauge pump, or a similarly choked 20-gauge autoloader digesting short magnum shells. You would be surprised at the percentage of duck blind shots that are actually taken short of the 30-yard mark, and even 40-yard mallards are anything but safe from the 60-percent patterns thrown by my pet 12 gauge.

Full-choke devotees who can be talked into trying more open-choked guns are almost invariably surprised at how quickly their scores improve. My photographer, Ken Turner, was so enthusiastic over the results he obtained with a borrowed improved cylinder gun that he had two inches lopped from the barrels of a full-choked 12-gauge double he owned—thereby removing all choke. He now swears by this foreshortened arm for hunting over dogs, and is deadly on

pheasants with it out to about 30 yards (the "normal" upland gunning range—remember?)

Owners of full-choked shotguns who would like to have these guns converted to a wider degree of choke (without removing all choke, as Ken Turner did) can have this operation performed by most competent gunsmiths. This is not a job for the home workshop, and should only be attempted by someone who has had considerable choke-reaming experience.

Although I favor wide-patterning scatterguns for most hunting conditions, I do own a 12-gauge magnum with a long, full-choked barrel. Armed with this gun, 3-inch shells, and usually groundless confidence, I make annual pilgrimages to several pass-shooting Meccas in my home state of Utah to test my skill on high-flying geese. Since even with this gun honkers above 60 yards are safely out of range, I spend a considerable amount of time on these hunts in frustrated agony, watching birds tantalizingly just beyond reach glide safely by. And birds that do pass within ideal range (40-55 yards) of my magnum-powered artillery often emerge unscathed, as it takes considerably better than average shotgunning skill to connect consistently at these distances.

There is a need for full-choked guns. The dedicated pass shooter should have one, the turkey hunter needs one, and the upland hunter might find occasional use for one late in the season when the birds are flushing wild. And of course, most trap shooting enthusiasts choose full-choked guns for their unique sport.

But except for these few specialized uses, the full choke is probably the worst possible selection the average sportsman could make. For almost any feathered game, a more open choke will usually do the job better, and spoil less meat in the process.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

(Act of October 23, 1962: Section 4369, Title 39, United States Code)

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HANDGUNNING

(Continued from page 13)

It might be noted that, in becoming deference, I eschewed bourbon in favor of transparent libations for the duration of the convention. I did, however, take the liberty of showing these letters to my friend Ted Busch, of the Caswell Equipment Corporation, whose taste in things elegant I admire, feeling that they fell well within that jurisdiction. Ted immediately urged me to publish them, and on due reflection it seemed a crime for anything Bill Jordan wrote not to be shared around as widely as possible. I asked, and got, his permission the following day to print them.

Those of you for whom this letter is a first taste of Jordanesque prose are truly fortunate, for one of life's finer pleasures is still yours to savor. I speak of course of his book, *No Second Place Winner*, which in my opinion establishes Jordan as one of the finest raconteurs the English language

has produced. It is not at all a book I agree with, on the technical or "craft" level, from end to end, but it is one I turn to frequently on a long evening, with pipe, easy chair, and (pardon me) bourbon at hand, for the sheer delight of rereading it. My very candid opinion is that any shooter whose bookshelf lacks this volume has done himself a grave disservice, and should promptly rectify the situation. It is available for \$5 directly from Bill Jordan, P.O. Box 4072, Shreveport, La., 71104.

Then there was that chap Skeeter Skelton, with the laudable passion for benchmade boots and hand-blocked bonnets. He hosts the handgun column at *Shooting Times*, and any pistolero who doesn't mosey over that way about once a month is, I must confess, missing some mighty fine writing. But don't forget to mosey on back.

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GUN RACK

(Continued from page 15)

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side-by-side, made in 12 and 20 gauges, with 28-inch barrels, chambered for the standard length 2 3/4" twelve and 3-inch for the 20. The gun has 2 triggers, is a non-ejector and sports a box lock. The stock is of good, yet plain, Pyrennes walnut. The forestock is faintly beavertail and the barrels have a semi-rib. The field gun sent for test was bored full choke and modified. Patterned with Federal loads of 1 ounce #7 1/2, the FC barrel shot 71% and the modified shot 68%.

The triggers are a bit too heavy for me to be effective on either live game or clay targets. The stock is an excellent fit as it runs 14 1/4" length of pull with 1 1/2" drop at comb. The gun weighs 6-pounds, 5-ounces, which is an excellent weight for a 20 gauge field gun. It is chambered for 3-inch shells but at this weight should not be shot with anything heavier than 1-ounce loads.

For a piddling few dollars over one hundred this is a shotgun to be recommended to the budget-conscious sportsman.—Charles Askins

"Plainsman" MA22 Pistol

The name Healthways has been associated for a long time with sporting

equipment such as swimming gear, exercise apparatus and other general recreational types of paraphernalia. Lately Healthways, Inc., 5340 West 102nd Street, Los Angeles, California, has gotten into the shooting end of the sporting field with their MC22 rifle and MA22 pistol. There is a fine array of BB-type guns around, but what makes these guns rather unique in their field is that they fire spherical steel balls coated with what is apparently pure lead. While the use of round balls greatly simplifies the design of the feed system, it also makes construction easier.

With a list price of \$25.00, the MA22 pistol has a major feature of attraction in that it is semi-automatic, having a magazine capacity of approximately 50 rounds. Advertised features such as leak-proof seals, adjustable sights, positive safety and accuracy of 50 shots within one-half inch at 25 feet are quite attractive.

Constructed primarily of die-cast zinc, the MA22 weighs in at about 1 3/4 pounds. Machined parts are at a minimum and plastic grips are used. Actually the mechanism of the gun is that of a double action revolver without the exposed hammer. When the hammer drops it actuates a CO₂ valve rather than a firing pin.

Another nice feature of the MA22 is that of the variable power settings of which there are three. With the test pistol we got considerably more shots per setting than was advertised.


At 25 feet the accuracy of the pistol proved to be surprisingly good. There was no difficulty in attaining groups of 1½" to 1¼" consistently. This was shooting off-hand position.

The MA22 uses standard 8.5 gram CO₂ cylinders housed in the grip. Unscrewing a plug in the butt allows the cylinder to be inserted or removed. The plug is turned up tight to pierce the gas seal.

The positive safety on the pistol is on the left side of the grip and is

moved up for "safe" and down for "fire." Engaging the safety disconnects the trigger from the hammer.


Loading the pistol is quite convenient and easy in that the lead covered balls are simply poured into the magazine housed in the "slide" portion of the gun. To open the magazine, a sliding gate is merely pushed up. This gate also carries the rear sight. Filling is quick and simple.

All in all, the Healthways MA22 pistol is well worth the money for indoor shooting, plinking and all around family fun target practice. It is by no means in the "target" class, but it is well suited for shooting small birds and pests at close range. 

POINT BLANK COL. CHARLES ASKINS

(Continued from page 11)

coin of the realm to finance an African holiday. Along with this the British colonist in such places as Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda is being forced off his farm, compelled to sell out to the government which in turn settles the local black natives on the land. This has relegated the colonial sportsman to virtually a non-hunting status. You may go into the leading gun store in Nairobi today, it is called the "Bunduki"—formerly Shaw & Hunter's—and you will find one of the finest collections of double express rifles anywhere in the world. These are all used rifles sold by the British farmer.

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COLLECTING THE .25 AUTOMATIC

(Continued from page 43)

those of the "Le Français" which utilizes the entire bottom of the magazine or the "Little Tom" whose visible magazine catch does not function as such; the magazine is inserted and removed through the top of the action with the slide locked back.

A category which is available to the person of average means only in such an area as the .25 auto is that of prototype, pre-production, or low serial-numbered pistols. Surprisingly enough, .25 autos in these categories often change hands at little or no premium over standard production items. This is due mostly to the lack of general knowledge of the relative scarcity or even the make or country of origin of many .25 autos. A little concentrated study by the collector in these areas can net enormous dividends in terms of the personal satisfaction of discovering a "sleeper" and in eventual monetary value.

One pitfall in the collecting of low serial numbers is that almost all European-manufactured pocket pistols stamped on most parts. This is not a serial number; it is an assembly number which was placed on all parts of a given pistol so that after final finishing and bluing the same parts could be assembled together again. This was necessary as many of the lower cost foreign automatics required considerable hand fitting in order to function reliably. The only safe assumption is that if a two-digit number appears on more than the frame, slide, and barrel it is probably an assembly number. An additional problem with collecting "low" serial numbers is that manufacturers often did not start a model with serial number one but at some higher number such as 1000 to suggest that there were already a number in use, or the numbering of a new model might be continued in the same series as a previous model. Only diligent research can uncover this type of situation.

One of the nice features of collecting .25's versus Lugers or other military autos is that your investment in a rarity is not likely to become depreciated by the opening of some military surplus warehouse as happened with the Brazilian and Portuguese Lugers. Although one or two minor excep-

tions do exist, the .25 ACP was not generally contracted as a military arm so that a rarity today is likely to be a rarity tomorrow. One of the interesting exceptions to this rule is the Model 1905 Browning which was supplied to the Czarist Russian government in a special nickel-plated model with the Russian crossed-rifle insignia and military issue serial number carried on the right side of the slide. Only a half-dozen or so of this arm are known to exist at the present time. There are also a few known Swiss martially-marked Model 1936 "Baby" FN Brownings and a small quantity of parkerized Colt vest pocket automatics marked "U.S. PROPERTY." The last were ostensibly for use by the OSS during the Second World War.

Although these are the only known military contracts there are other contracts or special markings or modifications, which constitute the ninth collection category. The most interesting of this group are those which were intended for sale in the Austro-Hungarian Empire prior to the First World War, or in the Czechoslovakian republic which was formed at its conclusion. The law, in effect until the late 1920's, was that no arm might be sold that was less than 18 cm. (7.09 inches) overall length. As can be imagined, this led to some weird-looking .25 autos. The resulting long-barreled modifications are often erroneously referred to as "target models" when in fact the extended barrel was merely the simplest and cheapest method for complying with the 18 cm. regulation. This is very clearly demonstrated by the Model 1 Walthers which were made for sale in Austria-Hungary. The barrel itself is no longer than normal but the barrel sleeve, which was merely a part of the takedown system, is absurdly extended to make up the total length of 18 cm.

Commercial contracts are a fruitful area for collection as dealers often purchased guns marked with their trade names for resale. Probably the most extensive such operation was carried on by Robar and De Kerkhove of Liege, Belgium. This firm marketed a line of variously designed pistols from 1908 through the 1950's

under their trade names of Melior and Mercury. Before World War II the same models were marked Jieffeco to be sold by the Belgian firm of Jannsen Fils et Cie, and ML to be sold by the Manufacture Liegeoise d'Armes a Feu. Some also were sold by Adolph Frank (Alfa) and Albricht Kind (Akah) of Germany and the Phoenix Arms Company of Lowell, Massachusetts, marked with their respective trade names. Indeed, Jannsen remarked and resold some of their 1922 contract through the Davis Warner Arms Company in New York City making a triple transfer of these particular pieces.

The final general category is that of the complete outfit. This typically would consist of a mint condition pistol in its original box or case with instruction book or sheet and any other original accessories such as hang tags, cleaning brush, etc. In some instances specially packaged or marked boxes of ammunition will be found for a particular make of pistol. Because of their domestic manufacture the Colt and the Harrington & Richardson .25's are most commonly found in this

complete condition. During the 1920's and early 1930's importers both large and small marketed large quantities of foreign .25's in this country and many of these too can be found in near perfect condition. Among the most popular were the Mausers, Walthers, and Brownings, closely followed by the Ortgies and the Schmeisser Model I. Some of the smaller houses imported numbers of the low-cost Spanish automatics as well, although bad publicity somewhat limited their sale as compared to the Belgian- and German-manufactured items.

You can see that a collection of the interesting, relatively inexpensive .25 auto can be structured in almost any manner desired. With the virtual embargo on importation imposed by the 1968 gun law there is little doubt that the value of such a collection will increase as relative availability decreases. For the past twelve years I have found collecting the .25 auto to be a great source of both challenge and satisfaction; I recommend it heartily and wish you "Good hunting."

REPLICA, ANTIQUE, OR FAKE?

(Continued from page 27)

as a means of restoring a gun to its original condition or modifying it to the owner's desires, such as barrel replacements, etc. However, it can become a form of up-grading a piece in an effort to seek a higher purchase price. This is where the "Sticky Wicket" begins. Where does restoration end and faking begin? This is the question so frequently asked. When does the real article become a "fake" or "replica?" If one cannot accept his own intuition and principles as a guide marker, then to specifically answer this question, a legal case must ensue before past precedence can be established and a technical definition offered.

A recent glaring case was that of a reputable dealer selling a purported Walker Colt on consignment to a prominent arms enthusiast. The arm was a rehabilitated model using some original Walker parts. Because of some "grey" areas in the opinion of the dealer and seller, a court case followed which was prompted by the buyer in an attempt to recover his investment. The court examined the arm piece by piece and heard the testimony of experts. Finally the original pieces from a Walker Colt were isolated from other new and old parts of

unknown origin. The Judge ruled the gun a "REPLICA" or "FAKE" based on the fact that less than 65% of the major components were not originally Colt Walker parts indigenous to the arm. The buyer promptly received the return of his money. This points out the delicate balance between the "real" thing and replica-fake. Further, a replica doesn't necessarily mean just a newly made copy of an existing antique firearm. Obviously, there are many replicas currently masquerading as the real article.

Most seasoned collectors and dealers are even reluctant to accept re-finished arms. Some consider this a minor modification to an antique arm, yet even nickel or a re-blue can hide many things that can result in disappointment to a prospective collector. It would seem that an antique should be as the term implies and not re-worked, excluding minor broken internal parts perhaps, or re-finished in its entirety.

Through the years as an enthusiast or collector progresses, he will mentally computerize his experiences and establish a code of ethics and acceptable principles. Hopefully, the unscrupulous dealer or collector will be in the vast minority.

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PROJECT: FLOORPLATE RELEASE LEVER

(Continued from page 47)

The latch piece should be about a half-inch square and about 1/4" or so thick. Don't worry too much about the shape at the beginning because it will undergo a good bit of reshaping before the job is done. For openers cut it down just enough so that it will fit in the lug well (the hole in front of the trigger guard bow) when the lever is in the full open position. (At right angles to the floorplate.)

The next step is cutting down the edge of the latch so that it will slip into the locking slot when the lever is moved to the "closed" position. Since this is a "blind" operation there is no other way to go about it except to cut a little, give it a try and cut some more.

A handy hint here is to cut a bevel on the leading edge of the latch arm so it can slip into the slot easily. Once the edge catches in the slot it is an easy matter to file the rest of the latch to the correct shape. It is a good idea to bevel the entire surface of the latch slightly so that it wedges tight as the lever is moved to the closed position. This gives the floorplate an extra tight closure.

Repeated use over a period of time will probably result in some wearing of the locking surfaces which could conceivably result on looseness. This can be avoided by heat treating the latch. Holding the latch piece by a piece of wire through the screw hole, heat it to a cherry red and quench in oil. Test the surface with a file to see if the proper degree of hardening occurred. If not, it may be necessary to heat again and quench in water. It all depends on the type steel you're using.

All that remains is to blue the lever. Cold blue will do fine if the lever is polished clean and is free of oil and fingerprints. Repeated applications of the cold blueing solution will darken the blue until it matches the rest of the guard assembly.

The trouble with these little do-it-yourself projects is that all your shooting pals want you to do the same on their guns. So if you don't want more work than you can handle, just do as I do and tell them that the work was done by your little old master gunsmith deep in the Black Forest.



JIM CLARK: PISTOLSMITH

(Continued from page 29)

of the pistol with 5-inch barrel is 46-ounces. The High Standard variation has a ventilated rib and a barrel weight beneath the tube, otherwise the two are the same.

Clark buys all his barrels from the very well known and highly regarded Douglas Barrels Inc., Charleston, West Va., taking them in 32-inch lengths, bored and rifled. He then cuts these longer tubes to his lengths and chambers to caliber. The stock as it comes from Douglas runs 1 7/8" in diameter, this as requested by Clark who then proceeds to mill the individual barrels to provide his own integral barrel link. He secures all his chambering reamers from Keith Francis, Talent, Oregon, a technician with a reputation for producing the best in tools. When I asked Clark if he had ever tried Shilen barrels he replied, "Yep, and they are good. But

they cost me three times as much as the Douglas".

Clark insists that his .45 caliber tubes must run .450 to .4505 bore diameter, .443 to .4435 land diameter with a twist of 1 turn in 16 inches. For the .38 the bore diameter must go .355 to .356, land diameter .348 to .349, with a groove depth of .0035 and a twist of 1 turn in 10 inches. This is quite a deviation from the old standard of 1 turn in 16 inches. It accounts for the fact that you never see any tipping from the wadcutter bullets fired from a Clark/Douglas barrel.

All Clark-turned pistols are machine-rest tested before they are shipped off to the buyer. The pistols must group into 2 to 2 1/2" 10-shot groups at 50 yards before they are released. When you consider that the Standard American 10-ring measures

(Continued on page 68)

THE MAN OF THE WEST

THE MAN OF THE YEAR

In our last issue, JOHN WAYNE was chosen as the GUNS Magazine *Man Of The Year*. And because he exemplifies, more than any other public figure, the time-honored American virtues of action and courage, we are proud to offer this beautiful, *four-color* poster of "Big John" and the prized Colt "Peacemaker" that was presented to him by GUNS Magazine. Perfectly suitable for framing, this handsome memento stands as a token of the freedom and personal honor on which this country was founded, and as a lasting tribute to the type of men who helped found her.



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3 1/3" this gives the shooter a nice margin to play on.

Clark has probably fired more shots from a pistol machine rest than any man. The other day he entered into an agreement with a lead merchant to mine his backstop. The merchant to get half the lead and Clark the remainder. His share ran 1800 pounds, the results of testing over the past 20-24 months.

In '53, Clark who had been shooting the .22 Match Target Woodsman, the .38 OM Colt and the .45 S&W Model 50 revolver, got fed up with the poor performance of the revolver and sent to Colt for a .38 Super automatic. He looked at this pistol a long time and then he set to work to alter it to shoot the .38 wadcutter cartridge. At about the same time Howard Peters, a better than average pistolsmith of El Paso, Tex., was doing the same thing. "I didn't know about him and I reckon he didn't know about me," Clark commented, "but both of us came up with the conversion about the same time." The Clark modified .38 Super today is guaranteed to shoot into 2 1/2 inches or better at 50 yards. Many rifles will not do as good. Bill Blankenship, the greatest pistol marksman this country has ever seen, set a new world record in the centerfire aggregate with a Clark converted .38 wadcutter. His score was 891-41X.

As a result of the successes of the Clark .38 wadcutter both S&W and Colt built automatics to handle the cartridge. The S&W Model 52 is one of the finest target pistols extant. When I asked Clark about the Colt .38 Gold Cup he said it was impossible. "There is no lockup, it is a straight blowback, you can't get accuracy out of a gun like that."

It was also about this time when someone conceived the idea of putting an extension on the front sight on the Model 1911 automatic. This stretched out the sighting radius and as the .45 has always been a tough one because of the closeness of the sights, the innovation was hailed as a good one. This extension is milled from bar stock and welded into a grooved recess cut into the front end of the slide. It comes in various lengths and may extend the sighting radius as much as 8 1/2 inches (this with the Bo-Mar rear sight) or may be only 7 inches. Clark made these from the first and he still offers them. It has been my observation that they are not as popular as they were in the beginning. The extension is sturdy enough but it looks fragile and I am sure that whenever the gunner found his pistol a mite out of zero he promptly decided that extended front post had been knocked out of plumb. Clark also made 6-inch

barrels for the .45 and these were the going thing for a time. The barrel extended through the barrel bushing and no doubt did improve accuracy at least to some extent. These have now all but disappeared.

Early in his business Clark settled on the Bo-Mar sight as the standard for his custom-turned pistols. The Bo-Mar, first manufactured at New Haven, Mich., moved to Carthage, Texas, which is just a couple of long pistol shots from the Clark establishment at Shreveport. Undoubtedly the close relationship between, Korzeniewski, the head of Bo-Mar and Clark had a great deal to do with the change of scenery. The Bo-Mar series of sights are micrometered adjustable target jobs, capable of changes as small as 3/8" at 50 yards, fully locking and designed to stay in zero under the hammering of service-loaded .45 hardball.

The company not only makes a set of front and rear sights, but also spe-



cializes in full length heavy ribs. These ribs provide as integral parts both the micrometered rear sight and the undercut partridge-type front post. The weight in the rib dampens recoil and improves the balance. Just how much of the design work which went into these advanced type sighting accessories was done by Clark and how much by Korzeniewski we'll never know, but the facts are that shooters profited tremendously by the new offerings.

A device which I do know was a joint effort is the Bo-Mar lockup barrel positioner. This unit is pinned to the forward end of the Bo-Mar rear sight and it extends to the ejection port. Here it bears on the top of the barrel shroud (or hood) and it aligns the tube and holds it in an exactly similar position for each shot. This means the firing pin strikes the primer in precisely the same place shot after shot. This is one of the devices that accounts for the tack-driving accuracy of the Clark-turned pistols. The barrel positioner is a standard item of attachment in all the .45 and .38 wadcutter pistols unless the shooter specifically asks that it not be installed.

As Jim Clark shot in match competition around the country and did

more accuracy jobs on the big automatics, it became increasingly clear to him that both the .45 and the .38 wadcutter pistols would be improved if the slide was made longer. To lengthen the slide would necessarily make the barrel longer and it would also stretch out the sighting radius, all advantages which he reasoned would improve shooter performance and scores. Satisfied a longer slide was a sound design change he neatly sawed off the forward end of the .45 slide and then with a second did the same thing. Only on the second he was careful to leave more length to it. He welded the two pieces together and had a new unit which was a full 1" longer than standard. The next step was to cut a length of Douglas barrel to a 6-inch dimension instead of the standard 5 inches. The Air Force school of marksmanship had tried the same strategy. Only they welded two slides together and got an overall length of 1 1/2" more than standard. "This was too much," Clark comments, "you were too slow to recover after recoil with this much length. The 1" extension was more nearly ideal".

The Clark "long slide," as he identifies it, gives the .45 a weight of 44 ounces; the .38 wadcutter is the same. The sighting radius with the Bo-Mar sight is 8 1/2 inches on both guns. It has always been my contention that a handgun to balance properly for target shooting has got to weigh 40 ounces or more. The weight of these two pistols is very close to ideal. Not only does the pistol have a muzzle heavy balance, which is essential for a steady hold, but the preponderance out in front very materially dampens the up-flip of the muzzle. With this result recoil is negligible and the gunner recovers a good deal more promptly to fire the next shot in the rapid-fire stages of the match.

Where in the beginning Clark needed two slides to come out with the one in its lengthened configuration he has now gotten around the loss by mutilation of the second slide. He now mills his own slide extension from solid stock and welds the newly milled forward end to the original slide and does such a neat job of the welding operation that it takes a magnifying glass to see the thread-like joint. There is no strain or force on the forward end of the slide as it serves to hold the barrel bushing and the front sight and that is all.

Once the pistol has been pronounced finished by Clark and his trio of technicians it must prove its accuracy from the machine rest. The gun with the standard length slide is fired 20 shots and those with the long slide

get 30 rounds through them. Ten-shot groups cannot exceed 3 inches and most of them run 1½ to 2½ inches. Clark guarantees the accuracy of his finished pistols and provides the groups shot when the arm is shipped.

I asked our master 'smith what ammo he uses for his machine rest testing and he said, "All of it. Sometimes Remington, other times Winchester, and very often Federal". I then wanted to know, "which is the best?"

"It depends on the particular lot and not so much on the make," Clark stated to me. "One brand will beat the others and then with a switch in lot numbers it will be the poorest. I never know until I crank up the machine rest".

The best .45 ACP bullet for reloading that Jim has ever fired is cast by Richard Carpenter of Dallas, Texas, who uses linotype metal and moulds the No. 68 Hensley & Gibbs .45 cal. 185-grain semi-wadcutter bullet. "That slug is absolutely tops," our man offers. He shoots reloaded .45's in all his match gunning and depends on A. R. Bloxom, Shreveport, La., to load them for him. The load for the .45 is 3.9 grains No. 700X powder for 50 yards; and 3.6 grains of the same propellant for 25 yards. Despite the goodness of the Carpenter linotype bullet, Bloxom casts and loads the Hensley & Gibbs No. 130 bullet, a 185-grain slug. Clark shoots nothing save factory .38 wadcutters in all his match competition and sticks with Eley pistol match for the twenty-two.

Ranking champions all over the country swear by the pistols finished by this superb artisan. Usually the shooting box will contain a Clark .45 with long slide or heavy slide depending on the preference of the gunner, a Colt Super converted to handle the .38 wadcutters by Clark and with either the standard slide or with the special stretched-out job which is a trademark of our master. Finally there will be a .22 automatic, either the High Standard Military model with the Clark heavy barrel, or the S&W Model 41 with Clark refinements. Such a battery gives the owner a decided advantage before a single shot is fired shoulder-to-shoulder. It is often conjectured who has the most Clark-turned pistols. When I asked him he did not know but he speculated it was Henry Chen, a civil engineer of Los Angeles, who now possesses the somewhat astounding total of twenty-one!

It is often asked just what does Clark & Co. do to either one of his pistols or one of yours when you go to him to get the ultimate in target refinements. One of the first things that

is done is to meticulously fit the slide to the receiver. The slide is first tightened to remove all play, both laterally and vertically, and then lapped to the frame with grinding compound to get the necessary fit. After the Douglas barrel has been turned down almost to final outside dimensions the barrel shroud (or hood as Clark likes to call it) is painstakingly fitted to the face of the breechblock. The barrel bushing selected to be used is carefully expanded to make an extremely tight friction fit with the slide. It is then fitted with an insert bushing and this bushing and the barrel are then lapped by hand to provide an extremely close tolerance between the pair. The locking lugs are cut to proper depth for a positive and uniform lock-up. The link is then fitted and it is made by Clark so that the depth of the lock-up is rigidly controlled.

The trigger is custom fitted to the gun frame by adding metal to the bearing surfaces and hand-filing trigger and frame for a perfect match. The trigger sear is honed and fitted to the hammer for proper engagement. This is an exceedingly critical operation and when properly done results in that crisp, clean let-off sought by all shooters. The slide is milled to a depth of .170" for the installation of the Bo-Mar rear sight and the barrel positioner. The slide is tapped and drilled for four Allen screws and these hold the sight and the barrel positioner very securely. The forearm on all Clark-turned pistols is stippled by hand. A painstaking operation which produces a rasp-like surface ideal to hold the pistol from twisting in the hand under recoil. When the .45 fires it tends to turn away from the supporting hand. The Clark stippling is a deterrent that is very much worthwhile. Clark does not advocate the old style flat mainspring housing. He attaches the new mainspring housing which is arched and fatter than its older counterpart. He also attaches the new trigger which is shorter than the original. He does not use any custom-made stocks on his target guns and puts out all his finished pistols with the standard factory stocks.

The finished Clark pistol is built for only one purpose and that is to shoot just as accurately and as consistently as possible. This is achieved by meticulously handfitting the highest quality components to each other and all under the skilled and critical eye of one of America's finest craftsmen. The final result is a supremely accurate handgun impossible of duplication by any known production line manufacture.



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COMBAT COMMANDER

(Continued from page 33)

the entire handgun far more rust protection than a conventional blue finish would give.

As the old mountaineer once said "this is great, but does it shoot?" It does! I put hundreds of rounds of my wadcutter handloads through it followed by GI ball ammunition, Norma, Super Vel, Remington, Federal and Winchester. No problems of any kind. I have not yet had a chance to load some of my special handloads using Hornady and Sierra bullets but I

know of no reason why these bullet designs should not function through this pistol. Everything else has. In addition to being smaller than the Model 1911 and a lot better looking it certainly incorporates the big pistol's rugged reliability.

The nicest part of the Combat Commander is that it sells for only \$125.00 retail. And, if you don't like the satin finish, buy one with the conventional Colt deep blue finish. Your dealer has them in stock now!



SAFARI: 1972

(Continued from page 21)

Texas. That is a deficiency in my education which I hope to correct this year. It is one of the oldest preserves in the country, having been started about 40 years ago by a man who, at the time, was president of the San Antonio Zoological Society. It was later sold to the famous World War I flying ace, Eddie Rickenbacker. It is now owned and operated by world hunters H. E. Stumberg, Jr. and Louis H. Stumberg. I am told by those who have been there that a trip to the Patio Ranch is like a trip to Africa during the days of "Teddy" Roosevelt.

One thing I am sure everyone would like to ask is, "What does it cost?" That is not an easy question to answer. Prices across the country are not very well standardized. I think I am safe in saying, however, that in almost every case, the per-trophy cost is far less than it would be to make a trip to the animal's native land and bring them back, even if they were available, which many of them are not. Perhaps I could best answer by giving you an example. If you lived in the Midwest and wanted a trophy bull elk, your license in Wyoming, if you could get one, would cost you \$125.00. Most reputable outfitters would charge you a minimum of \$1,000.00 for a ten day hunt. That comes to \$1,125.00, not counting the cost of getting from home to the hunting area and back. You could be sure of nothing but some beautiful scenery and a lot of hard work.

Now, if you want to be sure of a trophy, you could drive north and visit my friend Arlo Hinegardner on the North Star Shooting Preserve at Montour, Iowa, and he would guaran-

tee you a trophy for just \$800.00. No trophy—no pay! If you want the high mountains as a backdrop for your hunt, you could drive to the Lou Wyman Ranch (10,000 acres) at Craig, Colorado. This hunt would cost you \$1,200.00, but you would have the satisfaction of knowing that no one has failed to get a trophy since 1965. By and large, I think that this will give you a fair picture of what you can expect to pay. Figure to pay a minimum of \$300.00 for a trophy ram, and from that up to the price of a new automobile for some of the larger, rarer exotics.

A few years ago, Bert Klineburger and I worked together to produce a book entitled *Big Game Hunting Around The World*. While acting as anchor man for this production, I had a chance to "pick the brains" of some of the world's greatest authorities on big game. After six years it was my conclusion that no living man has a greater knowledge of world hunting conditions than Bert. Some men may have a wider knowledge of some areas, but no man has a wider understanding of general conditions the world over. On my way to visit Safari Island last October I stopped over in Seattle to visit with this master of world trails from the jungles of the Amazon to the High Himalayas.

We sat together in a water-front cafe and discussed what had happened since last we met. The tiger is gone, as already stated. Bert said, "I doubt that the big cats will ever be practical for hunting preserves. They are too difficult and expensive to obtain, and they do not breed well in captivity."

I was not completely convinced by

"Well, we bought the island which had been a sheep and cattle ranch. The thought of raising these dull animals, with but six to eighteen months to live before ending up in a slaughter house, just did not appeal to us much. So, we decided to stock it with beautiful, interesting animals which had

However, the sheep did a little experimenting on their own and crossed with just about every type of domestic sheep they came to know. The result was some of the most spectacular trophies you can imagine. Some have horns that are exact miniatures of the famed Ovis Poli rams. These are not easy to come by, but they can be had if you want one badly enough to keep hunting long enough. Some reach fantastic sizes. The largest horns I have seen were taken on Safari Island. This



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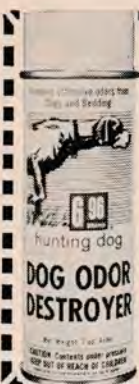
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old bruiser had massive horns which
compete favorably in size with the
average top Stone ram. They meas-
ured an unbelievable 41 inches. The
variety of trophy rams is virtually
endless. I took a ram on Safari Island
with a mane of about the same irides-
cence as the ruff on a cock pheasant.
The true Mouflon has no wool at all.
The only place I know where one can
be sure of getting a pure Mouflon is
at the Patio-Stumberg Game Ranch
at Hunt, Texas. There may be others.

I would like to say one last thing. I
am sure that there are many hunters
who are interested in game that is ca-
pable of "shooting back." In other
words, game that may resent being
hunted and decide to do something
about it; game that has the capability
for doing so. There is such an animal
among the exotics. I refer to the Eu-
ropean Boar, the animal about which
I wrote when I opened this article. I
have never been sure that that one
actually charged me. I recognize the
possibility that he may have been out
on his feet and just running blindly.

My guide, however, who claimed to
have been run up half the trees on
the preserve, was sure that he was
charging. Of one thing you may be
sure; the "Russian" has the mean and
fearless disposition to come for you,
with provocation or without. He has
the brute-strength to drive home a
charge. Some have called him the
most dangerous animal in North
America. I doubt this, but I am will-
ing to concede that he is one of the
meanest.

Well, that about says it. You can
have a rich, rewarding life of big
game hunting even though we are
forced to admit that the future of
many native species looks very un-
certain. With exotics, you may hunt
without the uneasy feeling that you
are contributing to the extermination
of a species. You may hunt without a
twinge of conscience, for you are no
more contributing to the extinction of
Black Buck when you take a trophy
than you are to the extinction of
steers when you buy a T-Bone. 
Good Hunting!

CHAUNCEY THOMAS: FRONTIER FIREARMS

(Continued from page 31)

horn. But these men usually had ex-
tra cylinders and had them loaded.
Then instead of attempting to re-
charge their weapons from powder
horn and bullet pouch while in a fight,
they merely substituted these loaded
extra cylinders for the emptied ones.
These extra cylinders, though loaded
with loose powder and a cap, both
very absorbent of dampness, could
easily be made almost waterproof by
dipping them when loaded into melted
beeswax and wiping off the surplus
while yet warm. This made the whole
extra cylinder one metallic cartridge
with six loads in it, which could be
inserted into the empty revolver
frame as one unit, where later each
metallic cartridge has to be loaded
into the cartridge revolver one at a
time. The time of reloading the two
was practically equal.

These guns used both round bullets
and projectiles. The user himself
usually had a bullet mould, often
small enough to go readily into his
pocket or pouch, and ran his own
bullets from what lead he could get.
Incidentally, lead was much harder
to get on the frontier than was gun-
powder or caps. It had to come the
same distance and was much heavier.
Today lead is so common that we

never think of this, but it was an im-
portant matter on the frontier from
the time of the Revolution till the
days of factory-made metallic car-
tridges. A sort of paper prepared car-
tridge was often used for the cap-
and-ball revolvers, especially for army
issue, but loose powder loading was
much preferred by individuals.

These revolvers were not equal in
range or deadliness to the Indian bow
and arrow, so old plainsmen have
often assured me, nor were they so
reliable under all weather conditions.
But when farther ranged and more
reliable metallic cartridge revolvers
came, about 1870, they equaled the
Indian bow. However, to stop a horse
or a buffalo the revolver appears
never to have equalled the Indian
arrow.

So far I have spoken of the fire-
arms of the white man only. The
Indians sometimes carried revolvers,
but usually preferred the bow. The
white man was a revolver man; the
Indian was not. The favorite Indian
gun was the Winchester 1873 model
carbine—not rifle. He usually drove
its woodwork full of brass-headed
tacks and otherwise decorated it with
bits of red cloth, feathers, and sundry
trinkets. The Indian, by the way was

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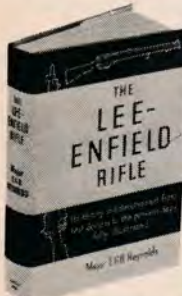


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usually a poor rifle shot. Also, what greatly contributed to the usual Indian inaccuracy with all firearms, was the absence of the constant care and cleaning of them which was so necessary. So between his lack of sighting and the deplorable condition of his firearms, and often the wrong ammunition in them, the Indian bullet was not so deadly in general as his arrow. The arrow was a silent weapon and could be used over and over again. There were additional reasons for his holding on to it.

Besides the three holster revolvers I have mentioned as made by Colt, there were others of the same general shape and design, but much smaller and lighter, for pocket use. Colt often made revolvers to individual order, and thus any number of slightly different designs exist. That was before the days of factory standard. Later Colt introduced the new almighty system of standardization and interchange of parts without hand fitting. Great as was the contribution of the Colt revolver to the world in aiding in settling the frontier, this was almost as nothing in comparison to its influence on civilization through the creation of the modern system of manufacture with interchangeable parts. The Colt revolver was the first machine in the world so manufactured, and this more than anything else made it such a favorite on the frontier. All other guns, if broken, had to be repaired by hand. But two broken Colt revolvers could in a few minutes be made into one good revolver by interchange of parts.

There were, of course, revolvers other than the Colt on the frontier in the cap-and-ball days, such as the Remington, the Starr, and the Kennedy, but there were more Colts than all others combined. The celebrated Smith & Wesson revolver was from 1860 on to be had in a small .32 caliber "Officer's Revolver," shooting one of the first rimfire metallic cartridges, but this never was used much on the frontier. They are a good gun even yet. I was shooting one of them recently.

Incidentally, I have shot and in many cases owned, all the guns mentioned in this paper, sometimes from curiosity, sometimes for ballistical information, and in the older days, as an actual weapon, such as the cap-and-ball Colt revolver, and the muzzle-loading shotgun. I have killed much game with the latter gun, but that was now nearly fifty years ago.

Now the derringer, and our review of the muzzle-loading era comes to an end, and that of the metallic cartridge begins. The derringer left no counterpart in the gun world of to-

day. It was of very large caliber, from the size of the little finger to that of the thumb, with a barrel two to three inches long. Some were so made that the barrel screwed off, and the bullet was put into the barrel, then the powder, and the barrel was then screwed back into the frame. The whole load of powder and bullet often filled the barrel to the muzzle. The derringer was fired like any shotgun or rifle, by a cap. If there were flintlock derringers, they do not concern us here, for they were not used on the frontier, but the cap ones were, and they were a special favorite with the gamblers, as they were quicker to use than a revolver. But they were good for only one shot and that at a range of only five or six feet. They gave not only a deadly wound themselves, but also created a diversion so that the knife could be brought into the fight right after the derringer. They were often carried in pairs, could be concealed in the palm of a large hand, or in the vest pocket, and weighed about half a pound each.

We now turn from the muzzle-loading firearms to the metallic cartridge guns. The change was swift on the frontier and the metallic cartridge made "the ramrod good for nothing but to whip your wife with," and that proceeding was so highly dangerous that the ramrod fell at once into disuse.

There have been many changes but no improvement in the revolver since its invention by Colt except the use in it of the metallic cartridge instead of loose powder and round ball. The revolver, the machine itself, is now being superseded by the automatic pistol, and this makes the revolver perhaps the one famous machine in the world that was not capable of material improvement from its invention to its disuse, over a period of now nearly a century, and over all countries around the world. Incidentally, the revolver was a purely American invention, and during its now rapidly ending life no other nation or people ever learned how to make one as good, or how to use one so well, as the American. The revolver is the typical American weapon, although the once famous "Bowie knife" was also uniquely American. But the Bowie knife has vanished like its companion, the derringer. Both were Mississippi River boat weapons, useful mostly to gamblers; and the river steamer, the Bowie and the derringer sank into the frontier together.

The metallic cartridge came onto the frontier after the Civil War, although used in that war, first in the Henry repeating rifle, the forerunner

of the later famous Winchester rifle, and in the cavalryman's Spencer carbine. This Spencer carbine at once became the favorite horseback and stagecoach rifle, or carbine, rather, for a carbine is, of course, only a short rifle. My father carried a Spencer carbine and two Navy Colts from Fort Laramie, Wyoming, back and forth along the Rockies to Santa Fe in 1866 to 1868 as traveling correspondent for the *Rocky Mountain News*, the first newspaper of the region.

When the center fire brass cartridge guns arrived on the frontier, about 1870, all other guns were soon laid aside.

In revolvers, the Colt still held the lead; the Smith & Wesson, in many ways a better made gun than the Colt, came too late to win the place its excellent workmanship deserved, as was the case with the Remington and the Merwin and Hulbert, now changed to center fire metallic cartridge revolvers. A number of makes in cap-and-ball revolvers simply died and were promptly forgotten. The most popular pocket revolver, as it still is, was the .38 double-action Smith & Wesson; the most popular holster revolver was the Colt .45 in army circles, the .44 in cowboy camps, because it shot the same cartridge as did the cowboy's .44-40 Winchester rifle, and the .41 in the gambler's waistband, concealed by his right vest pocket. The gambler had a special pocket made in his trousers, merely a gun-sized watch pocket. My personal favorite of all revolvers has always been the Colt .45 army revolver of the old days, with its greatest load and full length barrel, and at one time I had something in the world known solely by a number, a ".45."

It is worthy of note that the whites needed and used revolvers more against each other than against the Indians. The revolver had but little to do toward winning the West from the Indian; that was practically all rifle work. When the cattle came onto the plains, after buffalo and the Indian had gone forever, then was when the revolver rose to its chief use and fame, and its place in history. When the cattle finally gave way to the nester and his wire fence, then backed farther off for the sheep herds, the revolver lost its use and in due time became even an object of obnoxious legislation, even on the once frontier. The old-timer's rifle, revolver, saddle, and hipflask have now about disappeared, like the Indian bonnet which they once faced in flashing battle for the frontier. The day of the revolver is done. The automatic pistol has taken its place,

just as the repeating rifle has displaced the single shots and the metallic cartridge banished all the stick-loaders.

We are now done with the belt and pocket weapons. The center fire rifles alone remain to be looked at briefly. The main one was the Winchester in the models of 1873, 1876, and 1886. During the period of these guns things changed rapidly on the frontier. There came the railroad, the police, the sewing machine agent; and the gunman stared and gave up in sheer disgust, dead hopeless. Only three other rifles are worthy of note during this time beside the Winchester. These were the Sharps—in two models, hammer and hammerless—the Ballard, and the Remington. The army was using the "tip-up" Springfield, first in .50 caliber, then soon in .45 caliber, which was also fairly popular in civil circles. But no others equalled the Winchester in the lighter repeating lines or the Sharps for sheer accuracy and reliability at long range. The Ballard was like the Smith & Wesson revolver, a finely-made rifle, but better for the target than for the frontier. The Marlin, the attempt of the Ballard to get into the repeater field, was well liked, but it never seriously rivaled the Winchester.

We cannot here describe all these guns; they can be found in any good collection. Out of them all arose but two rifles that will live in history, as will their companion belt gun, the Colt .45 revolver. These two were the 1863 Model .44-40 Winchester and the "Buffalo Sharps."

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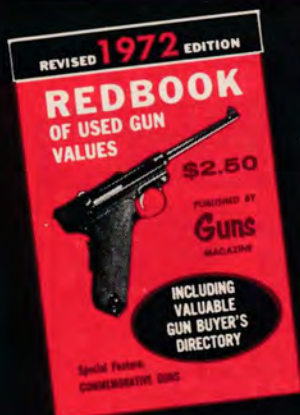
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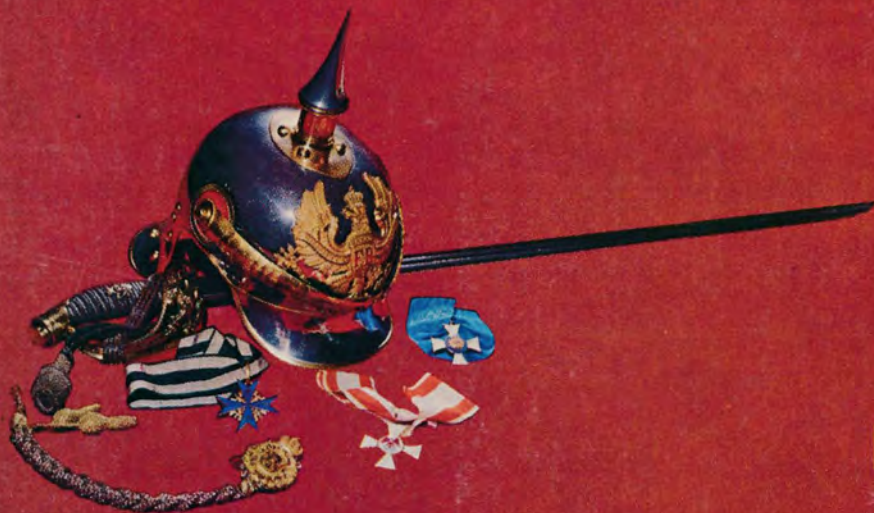
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