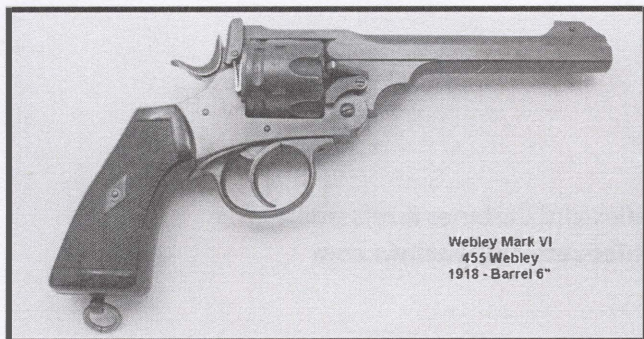


IT'S A HOOT TO SHOOT



A few months ago I quit my employment which was not by planned design. This meant that I had no plans for what some refer to as retirement. One day I took stock of a few Webley revolvers I had accumulated and never fired. On reflection that was a wonderful happening, as I discovered some things that could have proven injurious.

The first Webley was acquired in 2008 from my friend Joe Cooley and was the Webley Mark VI. It was in .455 Webley but had been shaved on the cylinder to accept half or full moon clips to take the 45 ACP ammunition. I never shot it; but, being a "purist," I lusted for a Webley in the Mark VI .455 caliber that took the original ammunition. In 2011 I had my chance with a trade and a set of dies to roll my own ammunition. But it wasn't until 2016, after my independence, that I started to look into shooting these Webleys.

The Webley is a top break revolver which was of WWI vintage. The two I now have are marked 1917 and 1918. Cases and bullets were difficult to find until a friend came to the rescue with an ample supply of both. I also had a cast bullet mold to cast the 250 grain lead bullets and a sizer that sized to .454 for the .455 bore of the Webley. But then a big bell rang that caused me pause. The 45 ACP bullets were .452 diameter which would cause the bullet to hop and skip down the barrel and would presumably shoot like poop. But worse than that was the mark on the side of one of the revolvers that said the gun was rated for six long tons (UK). That equates to 13,440 psi (pounds per square inch) whereas the 45 ACP rounds are rated from 18,000 to 23,000 psi. That means that every shot fired would be a proof load in the Webley using factory 45 ACP ammunition. A tour on the Internet revealed several blown up firearms as a result of this.

The shaving of the cylinders was a selling feature for the cheap importation of surplus firearms, and I am

thinking a scheme to make a fast buck suggesting 45 ACP ammunition would work. It would for the most part, but then there is always that risk. This shaving by the way was done in the early 1950s. Bedside arms protection with typical factory ammo would be stout but beyond that..... Oh Oh.

So a bit of research which suggested loads that were in the 12,000 psi range gave a start to reloading. The English felt that a heavy bullet moving at 600 - 700 fps was adequate for stopping power. I took my hand loads in both .455 and 45 Auto Rim and proceeded to shoot my Webley firearms and test the results. They both shot spectacularly well, very accurate; and the recoil was pleasant and not at all abusive. They were a hoot to shoot.

Just a note: The Webley revolvers started out as model Mark I through Mark VI. Everything prior to the Mark VI are black powder handguns only. This relates to the metallurgy of the firearms themselves. Although tempting to shoot using smokeless powder, it will never happen for the Mark I and Mark II revolvers I have. No need to get a boot from the shoot.

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NON-ALCOHOLIC MARTINIS



Back in my starter days of firearm's accumulations, I was faced with a left handed son but I am a right handed father. Firearms options were scant for a young left hander; so, with a limited budget, we purchased a BSA Cadet Martini rifle which is a single shot with an under handed lever--a right or left handed firearm. The Martini had the small action with the image of the kangaroo on the top of the receiver. Our first guns were in the original .310 cadet cartridge which was a custom hand load since the original cartridge was long obsolete. The 310 cadet round was similar to the 32-20 so 310 cases could be made from these rounds. Shorter and a thinner rim.

The Cadet rifles were a result of Australia wanting a small action training rifle for their cadet program. The rifles were marked with dates and serial numbers as to where they were issued and when. The time period was between 1908 and 1912, with some 80,000 rifles being delivered. In 1955 these rifles hit the surplus market and were very inexpensive. Like cheap. This made this single shot rifle appealing to convert to varmint calibers, since the action itself was extremely strong, being tested at 60,000 psi. So, if the conversion was suited to the length of the receiver action and the cartridge diameter and pressure, then it was a candidate for conversion.

Having a gunsmith friend who liked Martinis (not the drinking kind), we experimented with the calibers that would work these small, accurate and handy actions. To date I have 17 Ackley Bee, 17 Mach IV, 22 Magnum, 218 Mashburn Bee, 219 Zipper, 22 K Hornet, 221 Fireball, 222 Remington, 222 Remington Rim, 256 Winchester Magnum, 30 Herrett, 310 Cadet, 32 Special, 32-20, 327 Magnum, 357 Magnum and 45 Colt. I also had a 223 and a 44 Magnum but converted these to lower pressure calibers as the pressure point was close to the 60,000 psi or there wasn't enough barrel diameter left to give a comfort level. I also wanted to make a 38-55, but the cartridge was too long for the receiver.

In my recent free time life style, I have been firing some of these Martinis to fine tune even more of their inherent accuracy. The 22 K Hornet was one I have had since 1992 and had on again off again issues with accuracy.

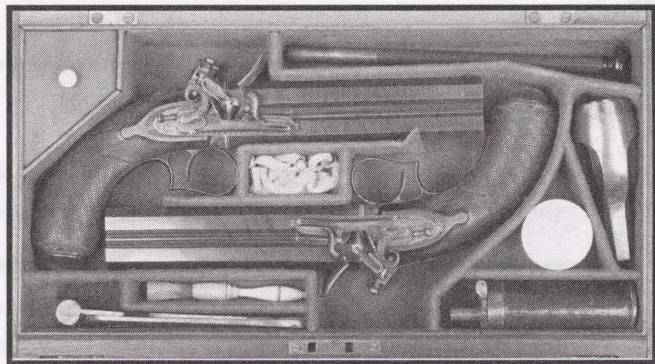
Reinventing loads and the final fix of a quality scope, now makes this a one inch group shooter at 100 yards.

There are still a few that do not meet my kind of accuracy requirements, but then that is the fun of shooting and getting it right. It is not the action but more so the cartridge. The 22 Magnum in any gun is ammunition sensitive and thus be it with the Martini. When the 327 Magnum cartridge came out, I had to have a Martini in this caliber. Still working at fine tuning this little beast.

The Cadet Martini actions or firearms are not a cheap proposition these days. In fact they are a rarity and expensive. I have examples of the original rifles in the collection from each of the five Australian states. The wood is usually dinged and shows the aging and use given these rifles over 100 years ago. I took one of these rifles and decided to see what the wood really looked like underneath all that aging. The walnut stocks on these rifles is better than gorgeous, and the one I did is a showcase work of beauty. Pictured here is this rifle and the other is a group photo of the Australian cadets (circa 1910) with their Martini rifles. Here is a toast to those non alcoholic Martinis.

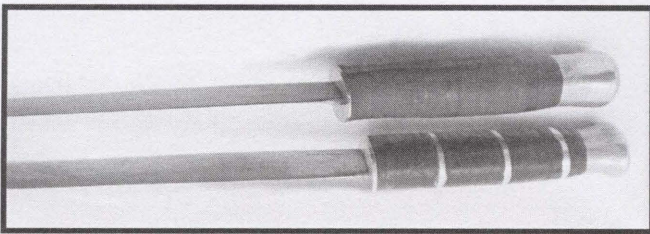


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Cased Pair of Over & Under, Octagon Barrel, Single Trigger, Flintlock Coach .57 Calibre Pistols. Built 1820.

SAVE A LIFE WITH A KNIFE



I collect Barr Brothers cutlery made in Eugene, Oregon. The Barr Brothers Company made cutlery in Eugene from 1891 until 1912, at which time they relocated to Oakland, California. Their real claim to fame was spring eye sack needles for the hops industry that was huge at that time here in the Willamette Valley. Their second most popular item was the kitchen or butcher style knife. However this article is mainly focused on the sheath hunting knives that the Barr Brothers made. I don't have many to show, but those that I do have are characteristic to knives of the period 1891 to 1912.

These knives loosely are styled after the Bowie knife but became associated with the now current Ka-Bar fighting knife. Ebay recently offered a Barr Bros fighting knife which the seller claimed was made in Eugene, Oregon. I knew this to not be the case and so informed the seller with proof of why these were not made in Eugene. The seller was unswayed.

All knives of this style made before 1920 were what is referred to as taper tangs which was a result of the steel being hammer forged. A taper tang is identified as a narrow beaten part of the steel that was tapered to the end of the handle. This method saved on steel and maintained a better balance to the knife.

After 1920 most, if not all knives, were blanked from steel that had the same thickness along the full length of the blade and handle. So the best way to identify a hunting /fighting style knife is whether it is a taper tang or not tapered. I have several fighting style knives that just say Barr Bros on the blade. Because they were handled mostly in leather it was hard to identify whether they had a taper tang or not. Heaven forbid removing the leather or even the handles. I had enough samples of these knives to suspect them to be from the late 1930s to 1940s, made not in Eugene, but in Oakland, California.

But to prove it! I went to my friendly chiropractor who had an x-ray machine and explained my situation. He was amused by this and agreed to x-ray several of the

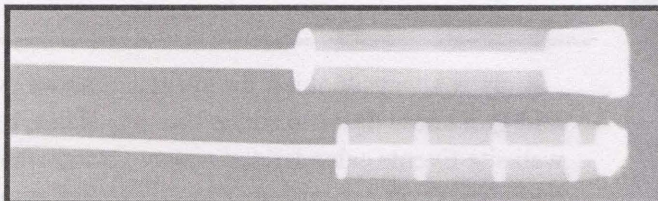
knives I had. Eureka!

Those that were from Eugene had taper tangs, and the fighting knives that just said Barr Bros all had straight tangs. But there was more.

In 1943 there was a movement based out of the bay area of California called "Save a Life with a Knife." The idea was to have companies and individuals donate knives to the cause in WWII for the Pacific Theater. The knives were to be sturdy hunting knives with blades of at least 4", and they were to be dropped in the Southwest Pacific swamps and jungles for the fighting men. The campaign started on January 1, 1943 and within one month 7,500 knives were collected at the headquarters in San Francisco. Oakland, being so close with the Barr factory, must have donated many knives to this cause as the knives are fairly common today. It is the old rule of "see one then there are many more to be seen." I have six of these knives and have seen a dozen more. They are all consistent with blades greater than 4", a simple Barr Bros stamp only, leather handles, aluminum guard and an aluminum end cap (pommel). The sheaths are vintage 1940s, and some have names put on the sheaths that personalize the knife. I feel sure that many of these were donated to the War Effort as there is no set pattern or size that suggests a contract with the government. I have also heard that some of these knives could be purchased directly from the factory in Oakland but I have not found any advertising to this effect on these knives by the Barr company. It was also suggested that the Barr Bros company made machetes too, but I have never seen one.

Barr Brothers started here in Eugene, did business for many years out of Oakland, California, moved to Northern California and then specialized in meat tenderizers and meat hooks but not knives. They have since been purchased by Dexter-Russell on the east coast.

In the picture and the X-ray the Barr Brothers Eugene made knife is on the right. Note the taper tang. The pile of knives is from a Life Magazine 1943 picture showing the mound of donated knives. If you would like to learn more about the Barr Brothers, do a Google search on "Barr Brothers cutlery history."



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22 SINGLE SHOT CAMP GUNS-1950 -60



After WWII there was a rush to make inexpensive 22 caliber long rifle single shot handguns. This went along with the American dream of camping, fishing and hunting. The market seemed ripe for inexpensive offerings of these type firearms; and the use of stampings, castings, rivets and increased production shortcuts made them a firearm for the times. I have four U.S.A made specimens, and one from Mexico, that offer a complete collection. These are low production firearms; one of which is from a count of only 600 made. The pistols I am talking about are the (1) Sheridan Knocabout, (2) Mendoza, (3) Whamo Powermaster, (4) Savage 101 and (5) S-M Sporter. These were firearms that were probably designed to go into a fishing creel, a camp sack, tool box or as a first handgun for a youngster; and were certainly well suited.

The Sheridan (1) had a stamped metal receiver, rivets and a cast barrel. The barrel popped upwards for loading, and the hammer had to be pulled back manually. The Whamo Powermaster (3) had a cast frame and receiver with a steel bolt and steel insert barrel. Loading was via a bolt handle which was pulled back, inserting a single cartridge and pushing the bolt closed. Firing caused the empty casing to auto eject, and the bolt would then stay open ready for reload. The S-M Sporter (5) was mostly steel with a stamped metal frame. The pull knob was the cocking method; and once loaded, the hold-open lever on the left side was depressed to close the bolt.

The two revolver look a likes are the Savage 101 (4) and the Mexican Mendoza (2). The Savage is a unique opening gun since the barrel and the faux cylinder flip out as one piece to the right allowing the loading and unloading of the cartridge. The Mendoza is a breech loading single shot which allows the gate to swing out

of the barrel area when the hammer is full back. The sides that look like cartridges actually hold six rounds of 22 LR for easy accessibility.

My favorite is the Sheridan, and I have an unfired one in the original box. It is a solid little pistol and has a safety and an easy load barrel that pops upwards. It fits well in the hand and carry and storage are easy due to its size. Several of these specimens were actually purchased here in Oregon and a few in Eugene. I have fired all of these firearms; and because of their inexpensive construction, they all have quirks in firing or in some cases not firing. When I first starting accumulating these firearms, they were cost effective. Can't say the same today. Kind of cool historical pieces though.

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Ammo Knives



I was lunching at a restaurant out of town and happened to hear two gentleman discussing an experience one of them had on a recent hunting trip in Texas. After the hunt, the luggage with the hunting gear was checked in at the airport, and he elected to carry a small carry on pack. Unknown to him there was a 300 H&H Magnum round stuck in the webbing of his pack. Oh, did the TSA have a time with that. Strip searched him and called in the local police and made him miss his plane. Once convinced that an honest mishap had occurred, they released him to go on his way. Without his round of ammunition, of course. Recently it was announced that they are considering allowing small pocketknives on flights. These knives have to be under 2-1/2" blade length. Apparently the hassle of non-lethal pocket tools causes undo delays and harassment.

This is a story about one type knife you NEVER EVER want to carry with you on an airplane.

I have always been interested in ammo knives. These can also be called cartridge knives, bullet knives or novelty letter openers if you choose. The older versions of these items featured a rifle cartridge with a removable bullet which had a small knife affixed to the base. By turning the bullet around and inserting it into the cartridge case, a handy dandy knife would be ready for use. Albeit, not your defense knife but a good letter opener or fingernail cleaner or ink eraser (if you are old enough to know what that is).

The history on these knives is not available, but I can make some educated guesses on what and when. The first recorded paper reference to these knives came about right after WWI. Remington made these knives for a counter display sales board which had 12 of these ammo knives on them. The Remington offering seems to have run through the 1920s. The next run of these style knives occurred right after WWII in the early 1950s and were made for and sold through Western Arms

Corporation (WAC) of Los Angeles. The blades were marked AWAC SWEDEN.

The Remington ammo knives were made from the 9mm rifle cartridge (9x57 Mauser) which was chambered in the Remington Model 30 rifle. The reasoning for this could have been advertising for this particular Remington firearm. The WAC ammo knives were made from the 6.5x55 Swedish cartridge, but I have no idea why this cartridge. Someone suggested that there was an abundance of this cartridge as surplus after WWII. I have also seen souvenir knives made that were not Remington or WAC.

This also brings up the issue of rarity and opportunity. The Remington ammo knife from the 1920s is sought after by collectors. There were 12 ammo knives on a counter display card put out by Remington. I recently had someone offer two of these knives for the super low price of \$250.00. There were two problems. One was the pricing which was, well, ludicrous, if not ridiculous. The other was that it was in a Remington 7mm case, and the blade was not marked Remington. The originals were in 9mm and are deep blade marked Remington on the blade.

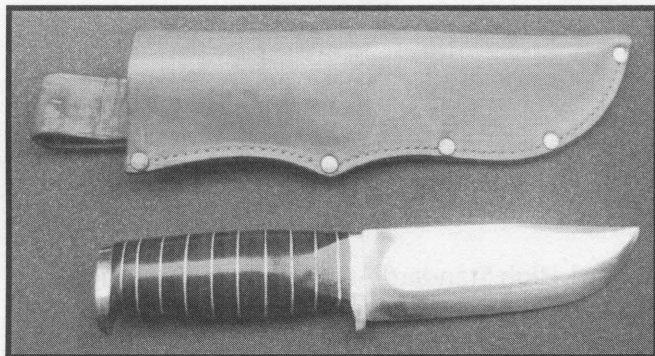
Pens that have two 308 cartridges put together are gaining popularity. This has no knife attached, but these would really cause the TSA to go into a tail spin or if allowed you could write a letter home from your jail cell.

So our own Bob Smith noted that my collection of ammo knives was missing one cartridge that he felt I needed. Well Bob Smith can now hang his shingle out as a knife maker as the 50 caliber cartridge with removable knife is now an addition to our knife cartridge collection.

Recently yet another surge in novelty knives has surfaced. These are very different as they are modeled after the 30-06 and the 44 magnum rounds. These are not real cartridges but made to look like ones. The knife part is a folding affair that swings out and pivots to the rear or base of the cartridge. They are Italy and China made and are indeed a novelty knife in the purest sense. Personally, I think they were designed to drive airport security nuts. Or if you enjoy being strip searched, by all means try to carry one of these items on your next airplane trip.

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ELMER KEITH KNIFE



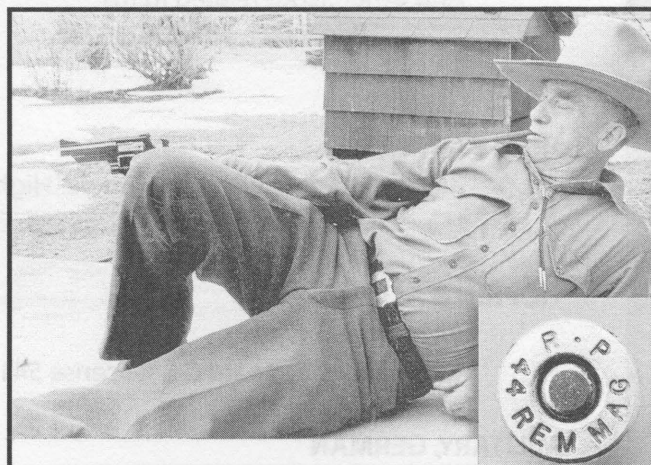
At a Oregon Knife Club dinner meeting, I was shown a rather huge hunting knife about which the owner had no knowledge. I was one of the few who could identify it and figured it should go into my "accumulation" collection. I had seen this knife many times before but never had the urge to own one. It is 9-1/2" overall with a blade width of 1-1/2". This was one husky knife and suited to take care of any field work. And after all Elmer Keith said so, and therefore it must have been true. The knife was free if you subscribed to two years of the Guns and Ammo magazine. My guess is this knife offer appeared in the 1960s, but search as I will I cannot verify that.

So you ask... who was Elmer Keith? Elmer was a gun writer for... you guessed it... Guns and Ammo magazine. But before that he was the guy responsible for the development of the 44 magnum cartridge. You know, the one that Dirty Harry used in his first movie in 1971. The most powerful Smith & Wesson handgun in the world at that time and still today packs a wallop on both ends.

I might mention that the development of the 44 magnum came about from Elmer Keith's love of the 44 S&W cartridge and especially in the S&W triple lock firearm that he used to move on up to what he thought the 44 S&W Special round was capable of doing. Keith liked the triple lock because he felt the firearm with this added locking feature would hold up to the additional pressure of 44 magnum-like loads. Therefore in the 1950s Elmer Keith and Smith & Wesson developed the gun and the cartridge which we know as the 44 magnum.

But if you think about it, there is a wry smile to be had when you examine the Elmer Keith knife closely. It has leather spacer grips mimicking the military WWII type handles and sort of looking like the Cattauragus 225Q quarter master's knife. The irony is that this knife was

made in Japan. It is obvious that the previous owner might have had some military feelings about WWII as there is a definite and intentional grinding attempt to remove the word "Japan" from the blade.



In that first 1971 Dirty Harry movie, Harry used a S&W Model 29 - 44 magnum handgun. Classic lines from this movie are:

--Go ahead, make my day.
--A man's got to know his limitations.
--Well, opinions are like assholes...everybody has one.
--I know what you're thinking punk. You're thinking did he fire six shots or only five. And to tell you the truth I forgot myself in all this excitement. But being this is a 44 Magnum, the most powerful handgun in the world and will blow your head clean off, you've got to ask yourself a question. Do I feel lucky? Well, do you, punk?

For those into trivia: What was the barrel length on his S&W 44 magnum Model 29 firearm in this first 1971 film ... 6" or 8-3/8"? And did Harry fire five or six times in that action scene? The answers, if you do not know, will be revealed at the next WVACA meeting.

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The Type 14 Nambu



Japanese Nambu handguns have always fascinated me. My first acquisition turned the crank to this interest. I acquired the Type 14-8mm firearm in 1977 from a man who had active duty during WWII. Claude had captured a bunker full of Japanese weapons; so, as a souvenir, he took the Nambu with its original holster and some ammunition. In 1977 Claude came daily to pick up his wife at the place I worked; and I asked if his Nambu was for sale. He said he would never get rid of it. Bug that I am I continued to express interest in this firearm until one day he said he could use a single shot 12 gauge shotgun. Maybe with the right gun we could work a deal. I went to my local gun store, and it had one. I took it to Claude the next day; he was thrilled with the gun and the Nambu was then mine. I went back to the store where I borrowed the shotgun and squared up the purchase price of \$35.

After I had studied up on the Type 14 Nambu, I wanted to shoot it. It refused to shoot without jams or hangups. It did shoot to target just fine; but, aside from throwing the brass 20 feet straight up, it was O.K. Well one gun didn't do it; so I purchased a few more with hopes of getting one to shoot reliably. No wonder the Japanese lost the war. None would function reliably. I used old factory ammo, Gun Scrounger reloads, Midway loads, reloaded my own rounds, used cast bullets and copper jacketed bullets to no avail.

And then the light came through. I will group the things I found of interest on this firearm. The Type 14 was actually a well built firearm. Not up to our standards; but to the mind of the Japanese and to a good analytical unbiased mind, it was good. Of all the WWII handguns the Nambu was by far the most accurate. At the time of its use it did not malfunction; but over time the springs would weaken causing a feed issue.

I replaced the two main springs with Wolff Springs, and it was a vast improvement. But not quite. I found out that each of the Nambu guns were magazine sensitive. This was a major reason that magazines were serial numbered to the gun. After playing with many magazines (not clips), I paired the magazines to the guns; all malfunctions went away.

After I revitalized all my Nambu's, they became perfectly fine working firearms. I found them to be surprisingly accurate but was annoyed with the brass flying 20 feet straight up in the air. I finally got so I could shoot and catch the brass at the same time. Brass is a buck a round, so I had to become a bit of a miser.

Some more trivia about this gun. The Type 14 was adopted in 1925, Year 14 of the reign of Emperor Taisho. Hence the model designation Type 14. My first Nambu had a stamp of 18.11 signifying it was made in 1943 (1925 + 18) November (11).

The 8 mm Nambu cartridge was a bottle neck round and was often compared to the 32 acp. Pretty anemic for a military round, but it fit with the Japanese culture. Japanese swords were the weapon of choice for the Japanese with fighting up close and personal. The 8 mm Nambu was thought of as an up close and personal weapon, therefore it was a more than adequate round.

The Type 14 firearm was made from 1925 until August 1945. My earliest Nambu is dated (4.3) March 1929 and the latest I have is (19.8) August 1944. In late 1939 the trigger guard was made larger for gloved hands as many battles were fought in cold climates. There were many minor changes to this firearm, but the big one was the trigger guard.

Ruger made their first 22 semi automatic with a design thought to have been borrowed from the German Luger. There is strong evidence to believe that there is more similarity to the Nambu. Grip angle and design similarities abound.

Prices on the Type 14 Nambu have sky rocketed even though there were many of these guns liberated after WWII. Good specimens on the web hover around the \$800.00 mark.

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THE WHITNEY WOLVERINE



I purchased a Whitney Wolverine in 2004 because it reminded me of my youth when I would watch Flash Gordon movies at the local YMCA. Now that was before television began airing the series in 1954.

The Whitney Wolverine 22 LR semi-automatic handgun began its short life in 1956 and ended in 1958, with only 13,371 blued guns and 900 nickel guns manufactured. It was unique in that it was an aluminum investment cast firearm. The frame was cast as one piece, and the action was housed within this frame. Some say that the Wolverine was manufactured until 1962, but this was actually the date when the court case came to an end.

The Wolverine was engineered by Robert Hillberg, who learned about aluminum investment casting during WWII while working with aircraft guns and later became research engineer for High Standard Manufacturing Company. The Whitney name was used because the factory was located near the old Eli Whitney factory site. The name Wolverine was named after Mr. Hillberg's favorite football team, the University of Michigan Wolverines.

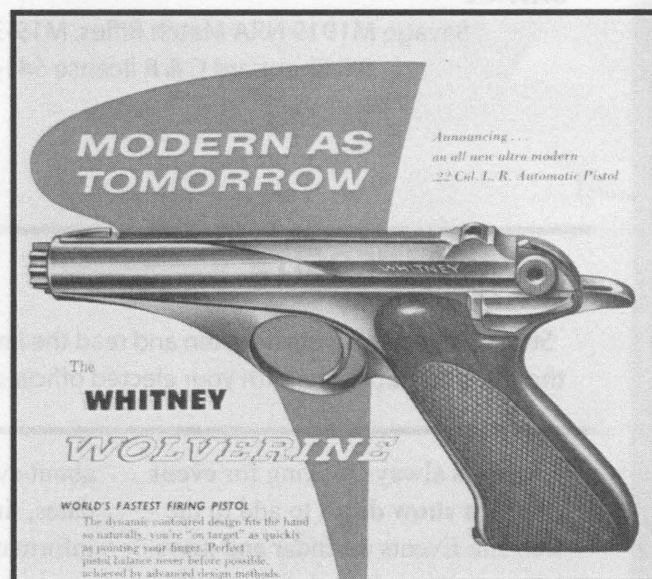
I purchased my Whitney Wolverine after many years of searching. The serial number is below 200, and the gun is in excellent condition. The design is very unique for its time and featured an action which was fully removable from the cast body. The firearm was a little picky about 22 ammo; but after I found the ammo that would work reliably, it was a tack driver. The serial numbers were to be started at 10,000 but by error were started at 100,000. The company hoped to imply that it was a full production established product. Later productions of the cast aluminum frames corrected the serial number range to start at 23,000. The firearm I have is serial number 100,170 suggesting very early production. The demise of the Wolverine wasn't due to

performance but poor marketing, pricing, unrealistic contracts and legal bickering, in addition to competition from Ruger and High Standard.

Enter Olympic Arms which introduced the Whitney Wolverine once again in 2004. It looked like the original from the 1950s but with one very major difference. The frame now was made from a polymer synthetic rather than the original aluminum frame. This material was able to provide lightweight and durability. It still retained the cool "ray gun" look, and it was specified to take high velocity 22 LR ammunition. I requested a match to my original Wolverine serial number but would have to wait until a later date for that request to be honored. Olympic Arms said they had reserved a low block of numbers for just that purpose. I had to have one then and now, so I purchased the Olympic Arms Whitney Wolverine with serial number WW1880. In 2017 I renewed my request for the matching serial number and was told it wasn't gonna happen.

A search on the Olympic Arms website shows the Whitney Wolverine still being offered for sale, but is built to order. Apparently there was consideration for production of a 17 caliber model, but that ain't a gonna happen. The only caliber available is 22 LR. However you now have a choice of colours: Coyote Brown, Desert Tan, Black and my favorite - Whitney Wolverine Pink. I gotta think about getting the pink one.

Either of these guns are a hoot to own and shoot. Aside from the nostalgia of fighting aliens in the fashion of Flash Gordon or just a good pointing handgun that feels good in the hand, this accurate handgun is great. Good luck at finding one.

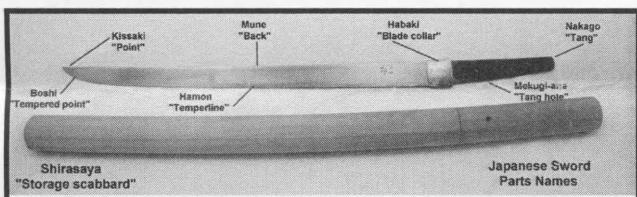


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THE JAPANESE SWORD

The most commonly heard word of description of someone who encounters a sword from Japan is that it is a Samurai sword. "All swords are Japanese swords but not all swords are Samurai swords." So what is the difference? Well, first of all, the sword carried by a Japanese Samurai warrior was a Samurai sword. Emperor Meiji abolished the Samurai's right to be the only armed force in favor of a more modern, western-style, conscripted army in 1873. Therefore a true Samurai sword and Samurai warrior predate 1873. How does one tell the difference? The answer is, you cannot.

A Japanese sword which is over two feet in length is called a Katana. Between one foot and two feet in length, it is called a Wakizashi. And shorter than one foot, it is called a Tanto. The purpose of the Katana was for first use in outdoor combat. When the Samurai went into a building, he left his Katana at the door but carried his Wakizashi, as this sword length could be maneuvered without hitting the ceiling or other objects were the sword to be drawn. The Tanto would be the equivalent of a dagger for use in close quarters.



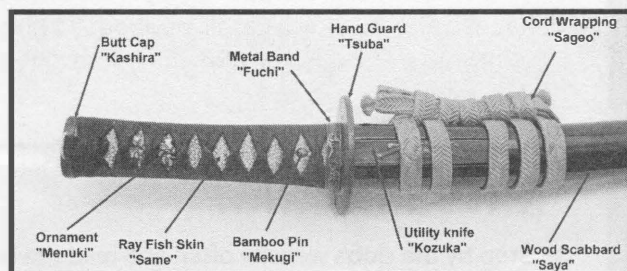
After WWII there were more Japanese swords in this country than in Japan. In the disarmament of Japan, huge amounts of swords were destroyed. This resulted in the Japanese government's search in the United States for what became known as national treasures. So how does one know what the value is of a Japanese sword? Unless you are a student or a sword maker, it is extremely difficult to know good from not so desirable. There are many variations and techniques - age guidelines, tempering lines, blade shapes, craftsmanship and on and on - to what to look for on a sword. It is interesting to note that we go "ooh" and "awe" over the age of a sword, but that is immaterial compared to the quality of the sword and the maker. I have several specimens of swords that go back to the 1200's; and, although nice to behold, they do not command the interest of an 1800s sword that has quality written all over it. And then there is the issue of tang signatures. We again "ooh" and "awe" over signatures, when the quality here again is the governing factor. Actually no signature can be termed as "an honest sword" as it has not been

counterfeited with the name of a famous maker.

The rust on the tang can date the sword. Not knowing this has found many the sword tang fall victim to sandpaper. Values plummet when this happens. Then again there are forgeries of signatures; and when you remember that the average sword maker could not read or write, how could he sign the tang? Tang signing could have been done by the literate, but the sword maker would not have a clue as to the accuracy of the writing. So therefore an unsigned sword can be valuable if identified as to the period made and the maker by style or school. Just like handwriting, sword making is unique.

I have volumes of books on Japanese swords, and it is mind blowing to see all that is available as to the art of the sword. And then there is the judging of the sword on survival quality. Does it show carbon spots, does it show rusting or abuse? If it has been restored, how well was the restoration. Who is purported to have made the sword? And the music goes on and on.

So you think you want to learn more about Japanese swords then hold onto your educational beanie. First off, when you look at a sword be fully aware that they are sharp (I mean really sharp). Then when you take them out of the saya (scabbard/sheath), make sure the blade runs along its back to avoid cutting the saya. Then be very sure you have good control of the sword while you examine it from stem to stern. Let the light play on the blade, and note the handle wrappings and ornaments. Do not breath on the blade; this is moisture that a carbon steel blade does not need. And again when mounting the blade back in the saya, let the back of the blade ride on the saya to avoid damage to the saya.



So you think the value is in the sword, think again. The tsuba which is the guard, also commands respect. I was once shown a beautiful tsuba which the owner had valued at \$20,000.00. That price is what a buyer would have paid were it to be sold. Happy sword hunting.

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JAPANESE MODEL 94 HANDGUN



Nambu
Type 94 - 18.3
8 mm Nambu

I have written about the Japanese WWII Model 14 handgun and a write up on the Japanese Model 94 pistol seemed appropriate. The Model 14 and 94 were the Japanese semi-automatic handgun weapons of WWII and were designed for selective military forces. The Model 94 is smaller and was designed for tank and airplane use; the model 14 for all other military forces. Also pressed into service was the 9mm Model 26 revolver.

In 1934 a design for the smaller pistol was submitted by General Nambu, which on the Japanese calendar was the year 2594; and therefore became the model designation for the Model 94. The first shipments were in 1935 and ended in 1945 making this pistol somewhat of a rarity compared to the Model 14 (1925 - 1945). As with both models the year and month are coded into the markings. Just add 1925 to the code. For example, 15.5 is May, 1940 and 18.6 is June, 1943. To the average firearm collector, the Model 94 is not a very handsome looking firearm. Also we find the 8 mm Nambu cartridge anemic for a military round. This cartridge is often likened to a 32 ACP in energy; however with the Japanese culture of up close and personal, these handguns served the needs nicely.

The idea that this was not a safe firearm is really not true. Granted, the sear could be accessed externally and made to fire, but that was not the design motive. The safety blocked the sear from firing, and the gun saw most of its life in a holster. It was also thought that few were carried with a round in the chamber. The urban legend claimed that surrendering the Model 94 to the enemy gave the operator the option to fire the gun while handing it over for surrender. It is highly unlikely that this ever happened, but it works both ways in this improbable eventuality.

The most curious of the Model 94 handguns resides in my collection. It was a handgun that saw age marks but had been re-blued. I speculate it was a war trophy, and the owner wanted to make the ugly duckling beautiful. It is code 18.3 (March, 1943); and, looking beyond the blue job, there is ever so light pitting. The firearm has been heavily engraved which, although tasteful, is not the finest of engraving. The white grips at first looked to be ivory, but several people who know said it was not. Just white plastic and not even celluloid. The grips also have a right hand thumb rest. When and why this was done will be an unsolved mystery.

As to the handguns used in the WWII conflict, there were only three handguns that were put into action. They were the Model (Type) 14, Model (Type) 94 and the Model (Type) 26 revolver. The revolver was a rimmed 9mm, making it a non standard for ammunition interchange. Well they say beauty is in the eye of the beholder, so the Japanese and I see eye to eye on these handguns.

There are a few more Japanese handguns that were available but did not see actual war time service. They were the "Papa Nambu" and the "Baby Nambu." These are a subject unto themselves and have reached the level of pricing that far exceeds my meager budget.

If you have the urge to shoot one of these pistols it is suggested to do the following: Replace all the springs, clean the firearm completely and then oil the firearm. Magazines can be tricky but the right magazine that works in the firearm make this a super gun.

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THE LIBERATOR PISTOL

.....



Liberator FP-45
Caliber 45 acp
4" Barrel
Serial #None

When you think of World War II and bring up the word Liberator, two subjects come to mind. One is the B-24 bomber airplane, and the other is the handgun that was dropped in the European theater to be used by the resistance. The idea was to drop these firearms behind enemy lines, and the resistance would then have a weapon that they could use to build an arsenal, adding the weapons seized from the enemy. This program created much dissension between its supporters and detractors. The other idea was to produce a firearm that was highly economical and could be built rapidly. And that was what happened. But putting the plan into use was snagged with political opinions and negative reaction.

In 1942 the idea was approved. The factory code for the Liberator was "Flare Projector" or model FP-45. The caliber was 45 acp, and it was thought to have a useful range of 25 feet. This was with consideration that it had a smooth bore barrel. All pieces were stamped from a corrosion resistance metal. A complete pistol kit consisted of a waxed cardboard box, 10 cartridges that were stamped FA-42, an instruction graphic diagram and a wooden shell extractor dowel. About 1,000,000 of these pistols were manufactured, and the design to completion only took six months. The actual factory production time was 11 weeks using 300 workers.

The operation of the firearm was quite simple and simple enough to have a cartoon operation sheet with out words. Pull back on the cocking knob and twist 45 degrees to hold it back, lift up on the back plate, insert 45 acp cartridge, push the back plate back in place, twist the cocking knob to line up with cartridge, pull trigger and bang. It indeed was pretty simple to operate.

Some of the people in power thought the idea of arming the resistance to be a good idea while others in power did not go along with this. As a result there were non issued; and there was no indication that any were dropped behind enemy lines. Many were shipped to Allied forces. It was also thought that significant numbers were destroyed or dropped in the ocean. Which makes this pistol one of the rarest around. Original ones command big dollars if in good shape, and even bigger dollars with the original accessories. If you are a WWII military collector, you just have to have one of these in your collection.

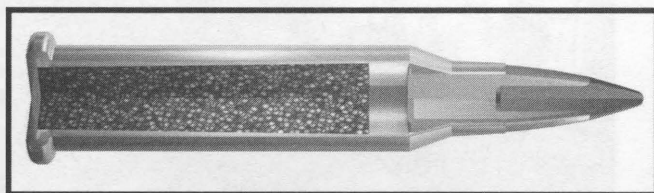


Liberator FP-45
Caliber 45 acp
4" Barrel
Serial #None

There is a company that is producing replicas of these single shot pistols. The construction has been improved to meet the new standards, and they can be fired. Mine is an original; and it has been fired but not by me. I have no desire whatsoever to fire it. Mechanically it is sound, but what if?

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THE 17 HMR CARTRIDGE



It was another shoot in Eastern Oregon where I would try to reduce an over population of ground squirrels. The usual arsenal of rifles was there: 22 LR, 22 magnum and the 17 HMR. It was also another trip that had a mishap with that ever popular 17 HMR.

Years ago I purchased a 17 HMR and quickly put it aside. On a calm day it was impressive; but, with a little wind, the bullet had a mind of its own. However there was also another side to this round that needed attention. From all of the experiences I witnessed first hand, I just want to advise those who have and shoot this cartridge to be careful. I do not want to discourage anyone, but just be careful.

The 17 HMR was developed in 2002, and the HMR stands for Hornady Magnum Rimfire. This is the 17 caliber which is the 22 Magnum necked down to achieve a higher velocity from a rimfire cartridge. It was also the result of an attempt to improve on the 1969 introduction of the 5mm Remington Magnum which is now pretty much obsolete. The bullet weight is usually 17 grain as compared to the 22 Magnum which uses a 30 or 40 grain bullet. I prefer the 22 magnum for its wind bucking, but still it lacks enough to overcome stronger winds.

The first awakening about possible problems with the 17 HMR was when one of our group was frantically looking for a 17 caliber rod to dislodge a bullet stuck down the barrel. Lucky it was recognized as a squib load before another round was fired thus avoiding a disaster. The results of not catching this would often be a bulged barrel or an explosive destruction of the barrel. The best case would be referred to as a ringed barrel. There was only one 17 caliber rod that time but subsequent trips found a 17 caliber rod in everyone's possession. The next concern was firing several hundred rounds and having accuracy fall off because of not paying attention to cleaning the bore due to fouling. The 17 caliber bores are prone to fouling build up; and, to maintain accuracy, one needs to snake or run a patch down the bore periodically.

The most devastating event was when one shooter

decided to take a lunch break and ejected the cartridge but had not fired it. The round went into the grass and was lost, so the shooter did not retrieve it. After the break the shooter chambered a round to resume shooting. The gun blew up, split the stock and damaged the action. It was caused because the throat of the chamber had a build up of fouling which had gripped the bullet and left it in the chamber and was not ejected. The newly loaded round created a compressed chamber between the rounds which exploded. This is much like using a bullet puller to pull a bullet from a center fire case. The next cartridge hits the blocked bullet and blows up the firearm. The stock was totally destroyed and the shooter suffered a sore hand. This was very lucky as it could have been worse. It is to be remembered the 17 HMR is a high pressure load in order to achieve its intended velocity.

This latest trip a shooter experienced two misfires. Each dented the rim but did not fire. Also on this trip a shooter had a rim rupture and what appeared to be deformed heads from fired rounds. The rupture splattered his face with gas and minute particles which is a reason to wear glasses no matter what you are shooting. On another trip I noted two shooters in a pick up bed both shooting 17 HMR with a huge amount of spent brass on the floor. Everyone of these cases were split. They kept on shooting without mishap but certainly something wasn't right.

It is not to be said that the 22 LR and the 22 Magnum could have similar issues, but in my shooting experiences none of these problems have come up. I have also identified some issues with shooting ground squirrels using the 22 caliber. Hollow points are an absolute must for humane reasons. This is where the 17 shines, as their ballistic tips are very humane because of their explosive effect. This also accounts for better velocities due to bullet shape and better accuracies. Of course the main reason for rimfire is that you purchase them at the store without a great expense, then load and shoot.

The point of this article is not to disparage the 17 HMR but to make one aware to be cautious. Whether these problems were due to the ammunition or due to the rifles used would require a case by case study. Certain batches of ammunition that repeat the problem will tell you what is happening. If the problem occurs with different brands of ammunition in the same gun, you can assume that it may be a rifle problem. Do not tempt fate; figure it out.

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COCKED AND LOADED

Many years ago when I carried a Glock handgun without one in the chamber, I had a conversation with Chuck Karwan who was a Glock armorer. He recommended the Glock to be carried with one in the chamber. I expressed concern about the safety of this but was overwhelmed with tale after tale of why this was the best carry. After all, one of the tests of the Glock had been dropping it from a helicopter onto a concrete slab without a misfire. I had heard stories about accidental discharges of a Glock, but those stories generally showed operator errors.

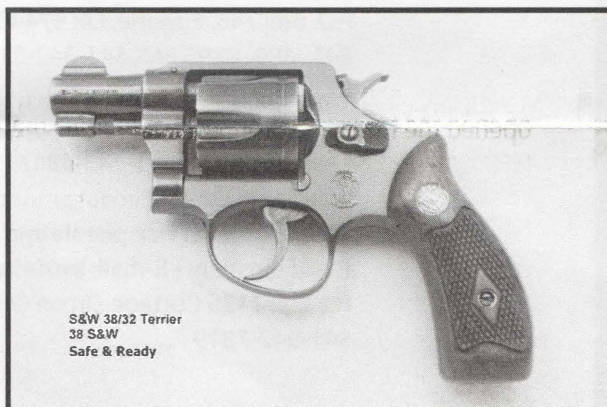
I recently signed up to become a range safety officer and opted to have a carry piece with me. Having a round in the chamber with basically a pull of the trigger caused me to evaluate the Colt 1911 and how it might be carried. I like 1911 type handguns better so I elected to carry my Kimber in 45 acp. I had a comfortable holster for it, and there is a certain pride of ownership about the 1911's. I asked one of my fellow range officers what he was carrying, and it was a 1911. When he flipped back his vest, I could see it was carried with the hammer down, so I asked if he had one in the chamber. He said no and volunteered the comment that if needed he could pull back the slide and get one into the chamber. I nodded my head and opted for no questions or comments.

There are five carry positions for the 1911, and they are referred to as Condition 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4.

- Condition 4 - The chamber is empty, the hammer uncocked and no magazine.
- Condition 3 is magazine in, hammer down on an empty chamber.
- Condition 2 is magazine in, one in the chamber with the hammer down.
- Condition 1 is magazine in, one in the chamber, the hammer back with the safety on.
- Condition 0 is a round in the chamber, the hammer cocked and the safety off.
- Condition 3 would require two hands to operate the slide and to hold the firearm.
- Condition 2 would require thumbing back the hammer which can be done with the one hand.
- Condition 1 would require only releasing the safety.
- Condition 0 is pulling the trigger



Condition 1 would seem to be the most reliable and safest carry. The grip safety needs to be depressed, and the visual hammer back is usually a sign of a firearm ready to fire. The safety on when the hammer is back is yet another safety. Any 1911 firearm in my home that has the hammer back tells me immediately of the status of this firearm. There are always pro and cons, and the one pointed out was the presence of young children in the home. In my home I am the only child so no worries.



In my recommendations of carry firearms, I always suggest a revolver first. The status is always known if it is loaded. It is safe. Pull trigger and bullet goes out. No noise? Then pull trigger again. A semi auto requires having your head about you as to status. One in chamber? Malfunction? What steps to do to make the firearm operable again? Pulling back the slide may be difficult for some and, in a stress situation, is the slide pulled back far enough to chamber a round. So much to think about. Each to their own in this decision, but maybe these words will give you additional information to make a choice. Ponder this if you will.

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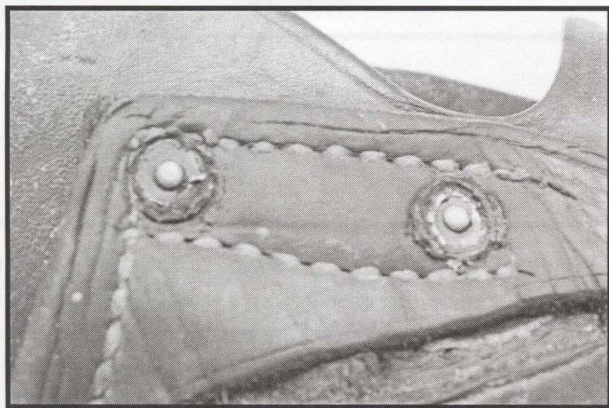
VERDIGRIS

Is a word that is the spirit of America, however it is also a word that can initiate cussing to the knife and firearms community. It goes back to Grecian times and plays a role in the art world. This is a chemical that is poisonous. Verdigris is pronounced "vur-di-gree."

The Statue of Liberty is a copper statue that has turned green over the years. The green patina is verdigris. A definition for verdigris is a green patina that forms on copper or brass or bronze that has been exposed to the air or water for long periods. Or, in the world of bang and cut, it is the interaction between any of these metals and leather with moisture content present.



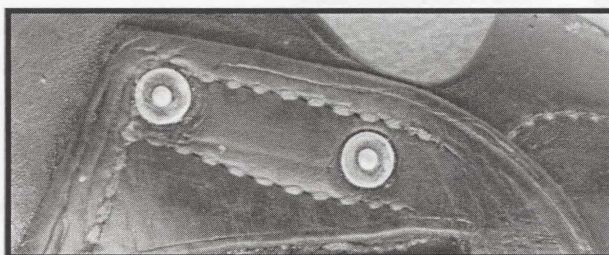
All of us have put a holster away in storage only to find this green substance around the metal parts of the holster. The chemical could be copper carbonate, copper chloride or copper acetate, all dependent on the chemicals in the leather. Verdigris is poisonous, so refrain from licking it clean. In the past I would scrap it off which sometimes left marks and scratches on the metal part or the leather.



I did note that the finer leathers that might be oak tanned and treated properly did not support this chemical degradation or put another way; expensive leather holsters were less prone to verdigris interaction.

Since I also had numerous knife sheaths which had this "green yuk" growing, I began to look for a better way to remove this gorgeous color manifestation. After all the early painters used verdigris in their oils because of its lovely shades of green.

I tried many liquid solutions to attempt and dissolve the green yuk, but no solutions worked until I stumbled onto Hoppe's No. 9 firearms bore cleaner. With minor elbow grease, the verdigris dissolved with this liquid. I did note the leather darkened a bit.



So thus alarmed I went to Oregon Leather and told them my discovery and my concern to the damage to the leather. I was advised that it was unlikely that the Hoppe's would harm the leather (other than discoloration); but a good leather preservative application was essential after the verdigris was removed. A good cleaning with a good leather preservation product would blend the spotted area and restore a leather product. Protect, preserve and remove the yuk all in one. Of course due diligence dictates that one should put leather protection on a sheath or holster and maintain the oils to avoid leather cracking or aging deterioration.

A few notes: After the use of Hoppe's, let the leather dry and then use a leather dressing to preserve the leather. I came on "Pecard" dressing which works well. Not the liquid Pecard, but the wax/soft product called dressing. You apply this with a soft rag, and the results are impressive. You put oil on your guns and knives so why not put a preservative on your leather.

As a disclaimer: you will have to try the Hoppe's at your own risk. It has worked for me, and I have been satisfied with the removal process. I would encourage feedback should you have another preferred method of verdigris removal other than scrape, scratch and cuss.

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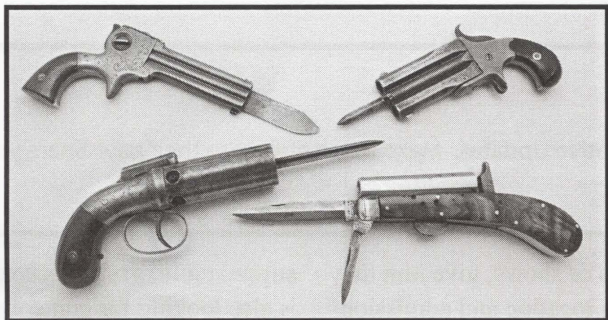
ACCUMULATIONS

As I reach a pinnacle of maturity (old age), I hear my peers in the firearms and knife communities anguish over the accumulation of items that they have acquired over many years. The collection had merit in the earlier days; but now, with maturity, we must now face the dilemma of its disposal. I hear many say that they think they should get rid of their items and not burden their heirs with its disposal. Most say that their children have no interest in the collection and fear that if the kids get the items that they will dispose of them for pennies on the dollar. That can be upsetting, but why should one care when they will be taking a trip to the stars?

This is not words of woe, but more a factual situation that many are faced with. There are no solutions save for the one that is the resolution made by oneself.

There is another factor that presents itself, as much of what we have accumulated is not as popular to the younger generation. That S&W revolver or that old military rifle has little appeal to the polymer handgun group and the black gun circle. Our historical heritage of a firearm is not even noted by those today. If you try to educate the kids on the reason for the item in a historical vein, I would suggest you take that education to your dog for a better appreciation for the talk. The dog will at least wag its tail.

Taking the items to a seller or dealer is discouraging, disappointing and insulting, as the price you will be offered is not close to the price you paid. That is a bit understandable; since the dealer has to turn the item for a profit because a loss would not be good for his business. Also he might have to wait a millennia before the right person comes in to purchase it. Taking a lower price is demoralizing; but you did rid yourself of the item. Isn't that the point?



So as you read this you no doubt are looking for a solution. I do not have one for you other than commis-

erating with you on the dilemma. My accumulation will be with me until I can no longer use it to my advantage. I enjoy shooting each and every firearm that I have. I enjoy reading about each and every item even though I thought I knew everything about it. I enjoy researching each item and educating others by writing or telling people about the product.

So when the day comes where it will not serve me, I will dust off the items and be happy that the collection will go to my son whether he wants it or not. If he gives it away or chooses to enjoy like I have, that is his choice. All I know is that I will enjoy it to the end.



This article was inspired by my friend Paul Wellborn who had a collection of antique firearms and knives that put many museums to shame. I talked to him often about the collection he had; and until the last day, he retained every piece of it. It was sad to watch the parsing of the collection, but it was his wish to enjoy and not worry about the after. He knew, but did not care; and he was good with that until the end.

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POLYMER FIREARMS

When polymer firearms came into the market, there was a hue and cry that such handguns would be easy to sneak onto airplanes as the scanners would not detect them. Well that was not the case, was it? The slides had to be made of metal to withstand the pressures of the cartridges which in turn made them easily detectable on even the poorest of metal detectors. The forerunner of such polymer firearms was Glock with almost all major handgun makers following suit.

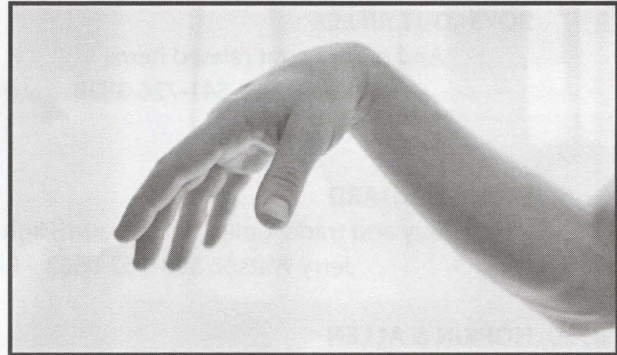
I don't know that plastics lowered manufacturing costs due to materials, but I think there was an increase in production. This is just a guess since the manufacturers don't seem to want to share this information. One thing it did do was make the firearms lighter which saved on shipping cost and meant the companies could increase cartridge capacity. Less firearms' weight equals ability to add weight through larger capacity magazines. There are so many trade-offs that it is difficult to quantify any of this.

Reliability of these polymer framed firearms is quite good for the most part. I have first hand experience watching the use of these firearms in real world shooting. It is true that reduced weight makes a firearm more easily concealed, but a shorter barrel results in a reduction in accuracy. A light weight firearm with a short barrel just isn't meant for high levels of accuracy at long distances. It is capable of making hits on paper at 12 yards but not with a great deal of precision. For close distances it can be very accurate.



The real issue I see is the jam factor. When I see a polymer gun malfunctioning, I can generally advise the shooter of the problem and in most cases correct it. The general description for the malady is called "limp wristing." This has not been a problem for me, but it seems to crop up often with others. Limp wrist means not providing enough resistance to the frame to allow the slide to cycle properly. If the shooter does not

supply enough resistance to counter the slide coming back, the firearm will jam or not feed correctly.



A day at the range saw a young man with his girlfriend testing out a brand new, polymer frame, 9 mm handgun that was given to him. After repeated jams, I just was not quick enough to diagnose a "limp wrist." We blamed the firearm (it was easy because I did not like that manufacturer), and then we blamed the cheap ammunition. At that point the young lady asked to shoot the gun. Without a single problem, she emptied the magazine and did the same with the second magazine. It was then I realized she was gripping the firearm so tightly that her wrist had the rigidity that a polymer grip firearm requires. Once identified the young man went about shooting without a single hitch. Another case of operator error. I just wonder how many firearms like this were returned, given away or sold all because of operator error?



Polymer plastics have found their way into rifles as well as handguns. Anyone for the wave of AR 15 style rifles that sport stocks and forearms made of polymer. So what is this thing called polymer: A polymer is a long or larger molecule consisting of a chain or network of many repeating units, formed by chemically bonding together many identical or similar small molecules called monomers. A polymer is formed by polymerization, the joining of many monomer molecules. Or plainly said and simplified "plastic."

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ASTRA MODEL 300

Astra firearms were made in Spain. They were excellent quality firearms. I have a penchant for the Astra models 300, 400 and 600. From a distance they all look the same, but that is where any similarity stops. I was so taken with the Astra Company that I reached deep into my pockets to purchase the book on the subject. The book by Leonardo M. Antaris is 816 pages and weighs in at eight pounds. The history is quite complete and turning the pages makes me wish for some of the models I have never seen.



The model 300 was a smaller version of the model 400 which I will discuss in another article. The model 300 was introduced in 1923, and production was continued until 1947. The original caliber was 380 acp (9mm kurz), and production of this model was geared toward military sales. It was also offered in 32 acp, but that model has always eluded me. It was a handy light weight pistol for the day, reliable, well made and safe. There are three safeties on this firearm: the grip safety, the thumb safety and the magazine safety. The Model 300 looks to have a tubular like barrel and is a straight blow back handgun. Astra has always date coded their firearms, which in most cases is a single letter under the grips or on the frame.

The take down is easy if you know how. Those who do

not know attempt take down by putting pliers on the knurled protrusion at the end of the barrel. Not good.

The model 300 points exceptionally well and is comfortable in the hand. The 380 magazine holds seven rounds, and the 7.65 (32 acp) holds eight rounds. The rust blue is quite handsome and seems to wear well over the years.



The specimen I have has the German acceptance marks and carries the date code for 1943 and is in 380 acp. The 32 acp firearms did not have German acceptance marks. The grips are typically wood, but some of the commercial grips were in horn. A bit fragile for my liking.

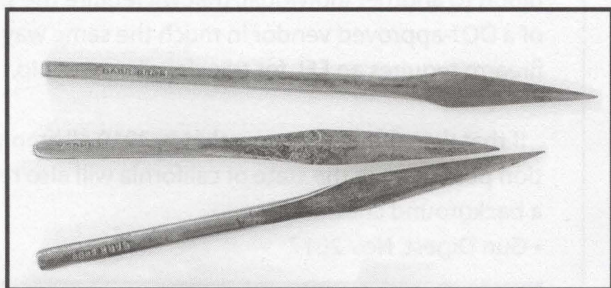
The model 300 was made in Guernica, Spain. Guernica is a city that in 1937 was 75 per cent destroyed by German planes, but the Astra factory was spared. Pablo Picasso painted a world famous mural of this travesty entitled "Guernica." If you are not familiar with this work, you might want to look it up.



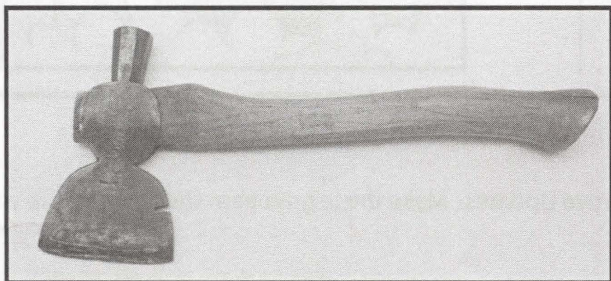
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BARR BROTHERS CUTLERY

The land under the Matthew Knight Arena in Eugene, Oregon, was the location for a cutlery manufacturing plant. Where the basketballs bounce, there once was a trip hammer that formed steel to make cutlery and spring eye sack needles. There were butcher knives, hunting knives, cheese knives and other made to order knives. The company was the Barr Brothers Company and was operated by Will and Hugh Barr from 1891 until 1912. Two other owners made cutlery there after the Barr Brothers left for Oakland, California. And then in 1927, the building became a Harley Davidson motorcycle shop.



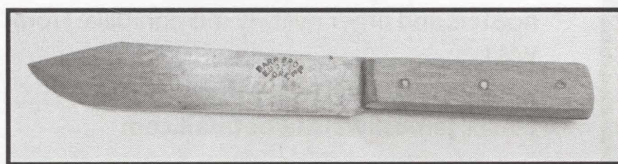
But the Barr Brothers are the heart of this article. Most of the items made in Eugene were stamped Eugene, Oregon. The bulk of their business was the manufacturing of spring eye sack needles. These needles only said Barr Bros on them. The Willamette Valley was hops and seed growing country during this time period. Hops, as most know, is the stuff used in making beer. The seeds were gathered in burlap bags, and the spring eye sack needle was used to sew up the sacks. The pointed little spear slipped between the threads in the burlap bags while carrying the string. The spring eye was designed to snap the string into the eye, and a sharp edge inside the eye of the needle would cut the string. In the day, these needles could be found all around the Valley and often worldwide too.



Finding cutlery from Barr Brothers has been a difficult search. Most kitchen knives were used and discarded or were used and abused to oblivion. I have some respectable specimens of the kitchen knives, commercial specific knives, two hunting knives, a small

hatchet, gobs of needles and a few razors. The creme de la creme of this collection is a U of O razor, a hatchet, an award certificate from the 1909 Alaska - Yukon - Pacific Exposition in Seattle and a hunting knife.

I did a significant amount of research into the Barr Bros in the early 1970s and uncovered personal accounts and stories about the Barr Brothers. Too many to fill these pages. Just to add a tad bit more to the history, it is noted that E.B. Goodchild took over the business until 1921 when he fell from a tree stand while poaching deer. Adin Kimery took over and managed to drink himself silly during prohibition days until 1927. And the Barr Bros were no saints either, as they served jail time in the 1880s for making counterfeit coins.



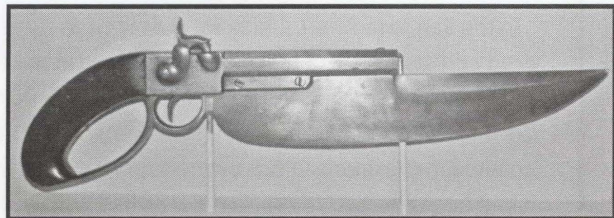
Hammer-forged knives were the result of taking steel that was red hot and pounding it to get the shape of a knife. The handle portion of the steel was made thinner to save on metal. Looking at a handle of a knife, one can easily detect the thinner steel which is referred to as a taper tang. It is a fair guess to assume that most, if not all knives that show a taper tang, are pre 1920 knives. After this time it was easier to blank out knives, so the thickness from blade to tang is the same. I bring this up as the Barr Brothers factory in Oakland, California, made knives which just say Barr Bros on them. None I have seen are taper tangs.



So if you have a Barr Brothers Eugene cutlery item, let me know; as I am still trying to accumulate all that I can.

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BAYONET REVOLVER



Harrington & Richardson made the Model 2 revolver which had a knife attached to the underside of the barrel. They called it the Automatic Bayonet Revolver that was made in 38 S&W. The revolver is somewhat rare since only 2000 were manufactured during 1901-1917. This revolver had a top break action and could be had in blue or nickel finish in a 4" barrel and was a five shot.

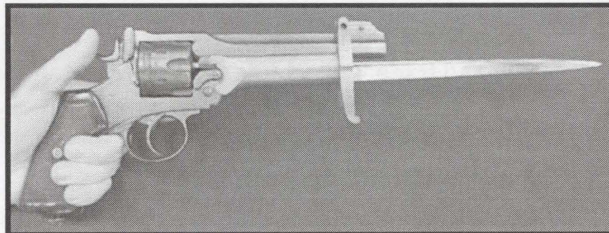
I can only guess at the design purpose. When the breach was open, it was firmly locked and a spring button was moved to retract the blade which was 2-1/2". The double edge knife was not very sharp which suggests its primary role was use as a thrusting weapon. The caliber was a tad wimpy, so maybe the idea of a back up device had been a consideration. There is the story relating to the shooting of Teddy Roosevelt in 1912 while preparing to make a speech. The cartridge was the 38 S&W, and the bullet imbedded itself in his chest before Teddy delivered his 90 minute speech. No, it was not the H&R; but it was a Colt 38. The caveat was that his 50 page speech and eye glass case took the brunt of most of the bullet. But the bullet did lodge itself in his chest and was never removed.

I think the bayonet on a revolver was a carry over idea from the days of black powder flintlock and percussion handguns. Reloading one of these, when all rounds were fired in the heat of battle, was cumbersome. The idea that one still had a defense weapon still after the firearm was discharged would be a good safety. With the advantage of modern day quick reloading, this weapon is superfluous. However if one wanted to defend (assassinate) without noise and then use the firearm as a backup, this could make sense, well sort of.

The H&R Model 2 was offered mainly in 38 S&W with 5 shots, but the real rarity is the 32 caliber which had 6 rounds. The specimen I have has what is called a police hammer. Apparently the non visible hammer is the norm.

Other than the single shot black powder firearms of old, there are slight few smokeless handguns that use

or had adaptors for bayonets. The one that is way cool is the Pritchard bayonet for the Webley revolver. There were very few of these made and were fitted to the Webley that it was to be installed on. The Webley was the large Mark VI style in .455 caliber. During WWI this made sense as much of the fighting was trench warfare.

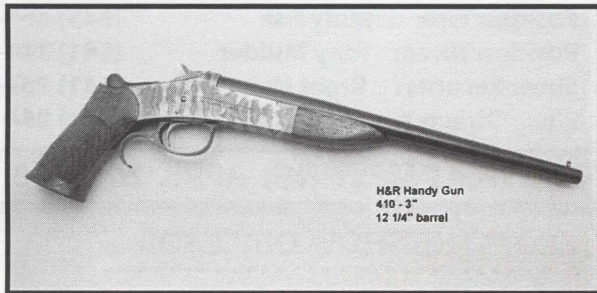


But alas all is not lost to days of yore. If you want a bayonet for your modern day handgun, you can order it on Amazon. Not meant for the revolver but available for a semi auto that has a Weaver or Picatinny rail.

• **ibdennis** • ibdennis@comcast.net

H&R HANDY GUN

I only have only two shotguns. This high number is a result of my raising birds years ago, and the association twixt shotguns and birds was disturbing. As a result I only have these two firearms because they were given to me years ago. The Stevens Model 530 side by side 20 gauge was acquired when the firearm was exposed to oil furnace fumes that destroyed the original tenite (cellulosic plastic) stock. The rest of the shotgun was unscathed. A new wood stock was fitted, and it was made good as new.



The other shotgun is the H&R Handy Gun; a handgun chambered for 410 smooth bore. It has a single shot break top action. When given to me years ago from the estate of my friend's father, I asked if there was paperwork that would have made this firearm legal. None found. This was back before computers, so I donned gloves to disguise my fingerprints and called ATF from a phone booth in Springfield, Oregon. I inquired how to make the Handy gun legal. No amnesty, so the best advice was to throw it in the ocean where the saltwater would destroy it. I cringed. Well, just before the fateful trip to the ocean, I received a call that the legal paperwork was found. Then the ATF got snotty and refused to give ownership/transfer rights to the legal receiver-ship of the estate. I told my friend to try again with a more determined and serious voice, since it was now his and he was only trying to address the legality of the firearm. It worked; and from there, the ownership was legally transferred to me as a firearms curio. As I recall I had to take out a small loan to pay the curio fee.

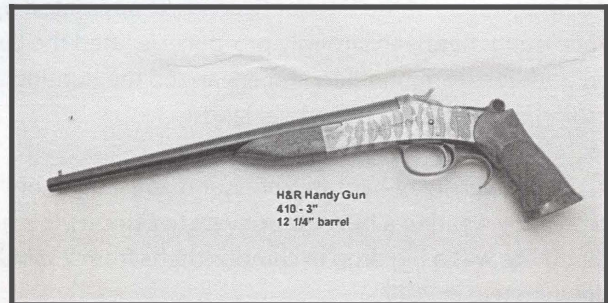
The H&R Handy Gun was made from 1921 until 1934. I received this 28 years ago, and I have the legal paperwork that shows it is mine. The first legal paper required by the National Firearms Act on this firearm was granted in 1938. However the first National Firearms Act was in 1934. An apology letter from the owner in 1938 resulted in amnesty, and the paperwork was started for legality. The Handy Gun had stayed in

that family from 1934 until 1990.

This firearm is in exquisite condition, and the case hardening on the receiver is a sight to behold. The barrel is 12 inches long and is a rarity. In addition to 410 this model was also offered in 28 gauge which is a real rarity.

The variations abound and a book was written on the Handy gun. My one and only became a topic of interest to the author, and our numerous communications through the mail (before computers) resulted in identifying the number "3" being stamped on the barrel. Almost all Handy guns were chambered for 2-1/2 inch shells, whereas mine was chambered for a 3 inch shell. Not common but it was done in the last years of production.

The author identified nine variations of the Handy gun. I cannot imagine starting a collection of these firearms at this day and age. There were about 54,000 made and mine is in the 1933 - 1934 range. I would also imagine that there are many that may be flying around without the necessary legal paper. With that said, make sure if one is offered to you without legal paper, run backward as fast as you can. There is no way to make them legal today. The penalties to make you an example are severe.



I have shot this gun at squirrels in eastern Oregon, and it is a hoot to shoot. A bit stiff on the recoil but manageable. Being a top break, one must open the action, load the shell, snap it closed, pull back the hammer and then release the trigger. This is not the gun of choice if the squirrels decide to rush in mass. There a few firearms in our collection that are special in their own way. This firearm is one that will be handed down in this family. It is neat. I am planning on bringing it to the WVACA Show for a Show-N-Tell and not a Show-N-Sell.

• ibdennis

Astra 400

I only have only two shotguns. I recently wrote about the Astra 300 in 380acp. The Spanish made and designed Astra 400 first appeared in 1920 when, as a result of military testing, it replaced the outmoded revolvers. The original cartridge, when it was introduced, was the 9mm Largo (Bergmann) which was more powerful than the 9mm Luger. When the Astra was accepted by the military, it became known as the Model 400 (or Model 1921). This model was truly unique, a straight blow back firearm. The slide offered resistance so the pressure of the cartridge could be expelled before the slide started its rearward travel. This works quite well except it takes brute strength to chamber a round to load the firearm. The hammer was internal, and there were numerous safeties. The manual safety on the left side, a grip safety and a magazine safety. The magazine held eight (8) rounds, and the magazine release was located on the bottom of the grip.



It was thought that, because of the 9mm Largo chambering, this firearm could be used as a universal firearm for 38acp, 38 super, 9mm Luger, 9mm Browning Long and the 9mm Steyr ammunition. Not so. Don't do it. After that being written, the barrel is marked 9mm and 38 and the bolt face was modified to accept a 38acp round; but..... Not for the 38 Super. Firing 38 acp can develop problems as the 9mm Largo head spaces on the mouth of the cartridge and the 38acp head spaces on the semi rim. The wear points on the bolt area are a path to malfunction. Today, 9mm Largo ammo can be found; so if you have an Astra 400, only use this ammunition. The Astra 400 was discontinued in 1946.



The Astra Model 600 was chambered for the 9mm Luger Parabellum cartridge only. The 600 is shorter in length than the Model 400: 5-1/4" versus 5-7/8". The date of inception of the Model 600/43 was 1943 and production continued until 1945. They were intended for use in Germany, but only a small portion of these firearms made it to Germany due to blockades. Very few made it to the civilian market. As is the case with surplus firearms, a huge amount of Astra firearms were imported into the USA. The 400 and 600 were reasonable in value to start with, but time has made them a bit pricey.

The Astra models 300, 400 and 600 are all quality firearms. The fit and finish are truly magnificent. Aside from looking like a squirt gun or a potato gun, they handle exceptionally well and point quite naturally. I have found all these firearms to be quite accurate. I have often entertained the idea of putting adjustable sights on an Astra, as they do shoot to target accuracy. But then again this is on my bucket list which is quite full.

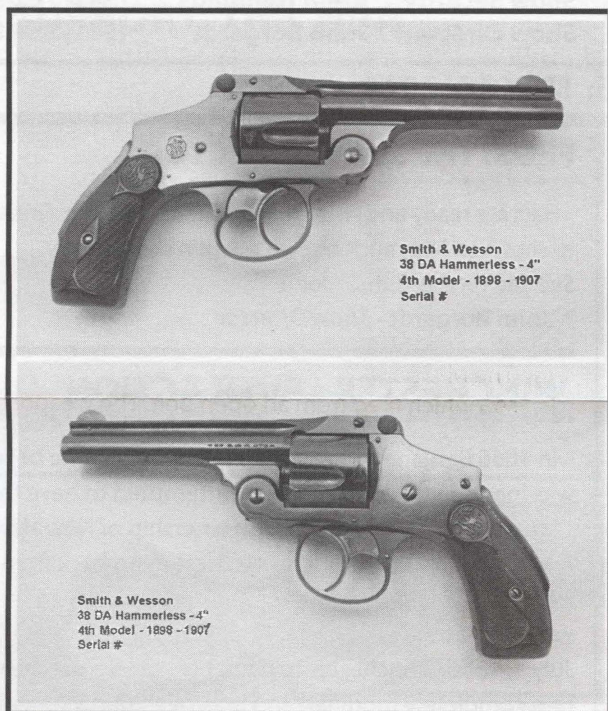


While on the subject of Astra made firearms, I have always wanted an Astra Model 900 series firearm. What is that you ask? Well, Astra made a handgun that closely resembled the popular Mauser Model 1896. The Model 1896 was commonly referred to as the Mauser Broom Handle due to its broom-handle shaped grip. I have only read about these Astra firearms and have never seen, let alone handled one. Of course we all have to have the holy grail of firearms, and this is mine. But then again I am quite aware that my banker, and others around me, would shriek in terror at how much I would have to pay for one.

• ibdennis

MY RECORDS

I have always been a camera person. I have always been highly organized. I have always been a high profile accumulator/collector. To narrow it down for this publication, I will deal with my collections of firearms and knives. For awhile, I could remember what I had and what I needed to fill my collections. And then it got out of hand when I started to purchase duplicates. Back then it was film cameras, I photographed every knife and firearm in black and white since color film was expensive. I carried a card file of black and white photos with me to shows to avoid buying duplicates. This method also provided talking points if a particular object came up in conversation. It was a bulky file box, but it worked at that moment in time.



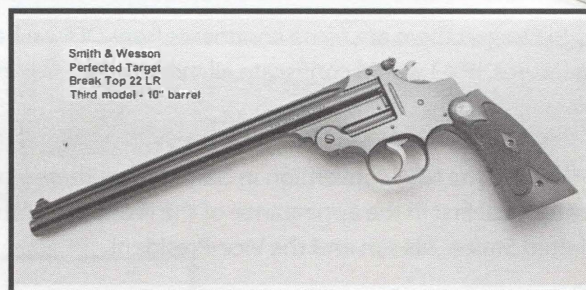
On the back of every photo there was a description and my information of date, time and cost. The cost really didn't matter, as I rarely ever parted with anything I bought. I was the black hole of firearms and knives. The utility/scout knife collection has now gone over the 1,000 mark, so this ole memory does not quite keep up as it did afore. Likewise was the case when I forgot my card file and purchased the neatest S&W 32 hand gun with beautiful original grips. Except when I got home I saw the same identical firearm in the collection.

Some of us are content to bicycle through the jet age, but that was never me. So from film cameras to digital cameras, I kept pace with the latest and greatest. The same was true for computers. And then there was the marriage of computers and digital cameras. I was "best"

man at all these weddings. With a digital camera I could work with color images and could make them lighter or darker for viewing. I could zoom in on all the markings and variances of each piece, be it utility knife or firearm. Best yet I could take this file and put it on my tablet or my smart phone and scroll through and see what it was that I already had. No more duplicates for me.

The learning curve with electronics was severe at times, but I persevered. If you are not a computer, smart cell phone, or camera person, then skip the following.

I take a digital picture of each knife and firearm after purchase. I have a tent at home that has 4800K lamps which simulate daylight color, and a monopod to eliminate reflections by a slight movement of the Canon SLR camera. I download the pictures from the flash card memory onto the computer file. I sort through the images to get the best rendering possible. I then transfer these images (front and back view) into a word processor program and position the pictures on a single page. I can now add descriptions and additional information on that single page. With the knives I make a color print which I put into a notebook, so I have a printed record along with the word processor page saved on my computer.

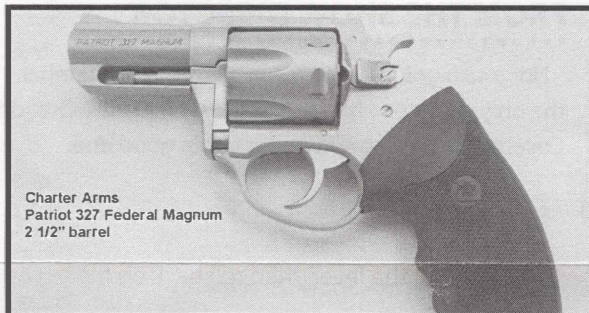


Still being a bit bulky, I then convert these pages into a Portable Document Format (pdf file) and export this file onto my smart phone and Samsung tablet. I can search the pdf files for a specific knife or firearm when I am at a show or having conversation. This method has reduced duplicates to zero. Likewise when I am looking on eBay and spot a knife of interest, I can quickly cross check the file to note any differences. I mentioned organized, I can also go to the drawer where it is located and physically handle and inspect the item. Each of us has our own methods of cataloging, or maybe none; so these are words to give some thought to the way one person does it. That be me.

• ibdennis

THE 327 MAGNUM

In 2008 Ruger introduced the SP101 revolver in 327 magnum. At that same time, Charter Arms introduced the Patriot revolver in that caliber. The same size cylinder could fit six rounds of a 327, rather than the five rounds of a 357. The cartridge was touted as having excellent stopping power in a defense revolver. It was even suggested there would be less recoil compared to the 357. Bah, humbug, sez me. I had to have this then new 327 magnum. I was challenged to find a Ruger SP 101, so I opted for the Charter Arms Patriot when it came out in 2009. The recoil was significant as was the muzzle blast and decibel ringing. There is something about smaller diameter bullets that ring the noise bell more than something like the 357. Both are annoying to say the least. I noted on the Internet the decibel rating for the 357 was 164db; but try as I would, I could not find the decibel ratings for the 327. I surmise that it is higher than the 357.



The 32 caliber cartridges have a certain fascination for me. The most interesting part was the development of this round. The start was the 32 S&W (1878) back in the black powder days. The improvement to this was the 32 S&W long (1896) which had a great following in the early days. Both these rounds were meant for conceal carry firearms. Small in size and able to handle the pressures. Then in 1984 the 32 H&R Magnum cartridge was developed. As mentioned, the 327 appeared in 2008. Add the unlikely 32 acp to this stack. There are now five different cartridges that can be fired in the 327 magnum, but not conversely from the newest to the oldest.. As a test I took the Ruger SP101 and loaded one each of these rounds to note recoil and noise. Up to the 32 H&R magnum, these rounds were enjoyed by most that shot it. But not the 327 magnum.

I have on my bucket wish list to have a S&W K32 revolver which was made for the 32 S&W long cartridge. I hear my banker's heels screech in the dirt when I suggest I want one. Not cheap. One of the rare ones. The original intent of this firearm was for target shooting, as the cartridge is inherently accurate. The post war model was made from 1946 - 1974. In 1989 S&W

introduced the Model 16 in 32 H&R magnum. Good enough for me but still bit the wallet a hard one.



I am thinking the 327 magnum may be making a resurrection as I just acquired a Ruger SA single seven revolver in a 327 magnum Bisley model. The grip on the Bisley makes the recoil much more tolerable and is actually a fun to shoot firearm. The firearm also holds seven rounds and is accurate to boot.

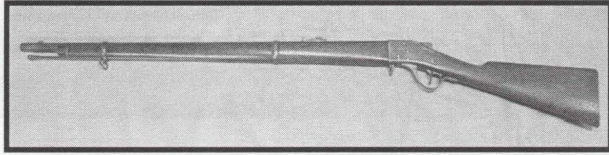
So here we have five rounds that can be used in the 327. When you think about it, there are many other step-up cartridges that started out as one and then were beefed up as metallurgy got better and case design improved. Just a few that can be used from older to newer: 38 Special in a 357 magnum - 44 Special in a 44 Magnum - 45 Colt in a 454 Casull. There are a few more but best shoot the round in the firearm it is for which it rated and specified. The best example today is the Taurus Judge and the S&W Governor which interchange between the 45 colt and the 410 shot shell. Both these firearms are legal as they have rifled barrels. In a handgun that has a short barrel, that is a smooth bore..... No no no unless you have the legal paper work that accompanies it.



All the cartridges on this page have one thing in common which relates to interchanging from old cartridge to new. They all head space on the rim; and if the chamber is long enough, then interchanging can take place. However there are some really old firearms that work with the 32 S&W in which you might be able to put a newer round into the cylinder. If you try that, give me your hospital room number so I can visit you.

• ibdennis

MODEL 1878 SHARPS-BORCHARDT



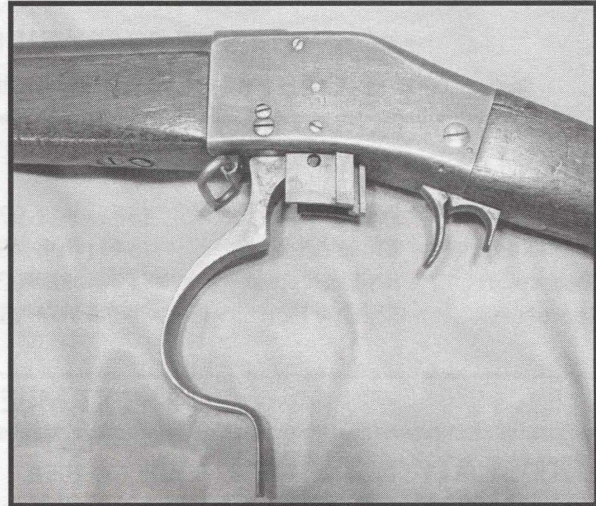
The first rifle I ever had was a Trapdoor Springfield in 45-70. This was the firearm that launched my interest in firearms. I always liked the 45-70 cartridge and loaded bullets of all weights and sizes in the cast lead profiles, including the 500 grain beater. Then about a year ago a friend showed me a rifle in 45-70 that I had never seen before. It was the Model 1878 Sharps-Borchardt. I had to have one. The search went out in earnest; and, in February, 2017 the search ended and my banker smiled at the loan. This was a nice military model with a 32 1/4" barrel. There were other Borchardt variations offered at the time like the Carbine, the Sporting rifle, the rare production of the Express rifle, the officers rifle and several others in super rare variations and in extreme limited quantities.

There is a certain rarity to this firearm, since it was only made from 1878 to 1881. The hammer is internal and its falling block action is strong beyond strong. This design was the last offering of a single shot rifle by the Sharps Rifle Company when it closed down in 1881. Hammerless designs in that period were commonly not desirable as everything to this point had a visible hammer. The design had many features such as the under lever which served as a trigger guard when dropping the falling block action, extracting the empty cartridge, cocking the internal hammer and on closing the lever engaged the rifle in a safe mode. The safety, which was under the lever, could be easily moved rearward so the firearm would be ready to shoot. The marking on the barrel of my model is "Old Reliable."



I was pleased to get this rifle. It has a very easy, crisp trigger release which is not always the case. It also

came with the correct cleaning rod which slides under the barrel. The downside to the Borchardt is one does not want to take one of these apart. Putting it back together is a road to mental breakdown and possible excessive drinking. It can be done by a gunsmith who is familiar with this firearm.



Haas in his Single Shot book speaks highly of this rifle and mentions it as a very strong action which is capable of conversion to modern day loads that are good for varmint hunting. I know of one Borchardt that was chambered for the 219 Zipper. The zipper was a conversion from the 30-30 cartridge and, as the name implies, zips along at 2900 fps with a 55 grain bullet. Other conversions known are the 219 Wasp, 225 Winchester, 25 Krag and any of the popular 17 caliber center fires. The Borchardt can handle 42,000 psi pressure quite easily.

• ibdennis

THE J.P. SAUER & SOHN MODEL 38 H

This firearm was the best gun to come out of 1938 Germany. A few years later the next best thing that happened in the U.S.A. was my birth. Yep. Made in U.S.A.

The Sauer 38 H was an innovative, first of its kind, small handgun. It was developed in Germany in 1938, and production ceased in 1945 at the end of the War. The firearm was a 7.65 (32 acp) caliber and, as in all development, some other rare calibers. Because the firearm production was terminated at wars end, there never was production for the civilian market. Most of the firearms went to military and police. A total of 250,000 were made. A number of variations were created when some of the firearm features were removed as the War was coming to an end; and typical methods were implemented to speed up production to satisfy the War needs. This was in addition to rough finishes and poor bluing.



The Sauer 38 H was a well made and reliable pistol, and it is one of my favorites. The most notable claim to fame is the non-visible hammer and the de-cocking lever. The de-cocking/cocking lever allowed the shooter to control the position of the hammer without the hammer being seen. The firearm worked in double action mode but single action if the cocking lever was pushed down. This encouraged the owner to keep a round chambered. On the trigger there was a small circle; if the circle was fully visible, the mode was double action. Not visible, meant the firearm was staged in single action. Lowering the lever made the hammer rest in the down position. This was a unique feature, and I am not aware of any other firearm with this feature. Wrong, you say, as the Sig Sauer has the de-cocking feature. But not the cocking device, because the firearms today have visible hammers.

The Sauer 38H has many more features which make

it truly unique. A fixed barrel makes it accurate; and a magazine safety, along with a slide manual safety, allow safe operation. As the War escalated, one shortcut was to remove the slide safety. There is also a chamber indicator pin on the rear of the slide and an easy magazine release. The magazine holds eight rounds. Another feature was an extremely easy takedown procedure for cleaning.

The finish and the quality were quite good, and its only downfall was the Bakelite grips which almost never survived. The intertwined logo on the grips are SUS, Sauer und Sohn. Replica grips can be purchased which are hard to tell from the originals. The pistol was used by many police units as well as the Luftwaffe. The various stamping from the different services enhance the collectable nature of the 38H. There are three basic variations, two relate to the slide stamping and the third to the elimination of the slide safety.

My latest acquisition of a Sauer Model 38H was the third variation which does not have the slide safety lever. The grips were wood, and I suspected when I bought it on Gun Broker that the grips were not correct as a factory option. The grips were well made and perfect in fit and finish. Definitely a last owner enhancement. My first task with any firearm is to remove the grips. I always expect to find a treasure of some sort and hopefully find a secret stash of money. Never has happened, but I hope. But in this case what I discovered caused my jaw to drop. The previous owner probably had the original grips fall apart, so he made replacement grips out of a hardware yard stick ruler. It was just the proper thickness, and the wood was hard enough to serve as grips. Of course the giveaway was the inch/meter markings on the ruler. It is so cool that I think I will leave them be and not order the reproduction grips.



The "H" in the 38H is the German word hahn which relates to the internal hammer of the firing mechanism. Welcome to my world of one neat firearm.

• ibdennis

WHAT ABOUT KNIVES?

I recently showed some collectable sheath knives to a group of firearms people. It reminded me of why I carry bandages with me every day. The first thing noted was that each of them tested the sharpness of the blade, and all did so with their thumb. I cringed since almost all my knives and swords have been sharpened to a fine edge. Why anyone would want to examine a knife for sharpness, endangering their fingers and hands, leaves me with wonder. Of course the next point of examination was to touch the blade, running a finger up and down which will leave salty, oily fingerprints on a shiny surface. Again, why?

When viewing an item of cutlery, touching the blade is a no no. If I am contemplating the purchase of a knife, I leave my fingers off the steel until the knife is mine. After purchase I can paw all over it; and I can sharpen it to my satisfaction.

I learned about proper cutlery handling when I started to collect Japanese swords. All Japanese swords are sharp beyond sharp. I usually demonstrate that by holding a sheet of paper loosely and shred it with multiple cuts with ease. Testing one of these blades with a thumb is dangerous. Besides that it is an unwritten rule: only the owner of the Japanese sword touches the blade.



It struck me that maybe many have never been told about knife and cutlery etiquette. So herein I will share a little handling and viewing etiquette to those not familiar with the world of cut. With a fixed blade (non folding) knife or sword, one should pay attention

to the fittings and the nature of the blade. When removing the cutlery item from a sheath, or Japanese sword saya, allow it to be withdrawn with the back of the blade riding along the interior bottom edge of the sheath or scabbard. When the blade edge is withdrawn against the leather, it is possible to cut the interior of the sheath or scabbard which would cause damage.

Using the Japanese sword as an example, one takes the blade out with the edge skyward. This is a good rule with anything that goes cut. Once withdrawn the blade can be examined. Points would include geometry, blade style, shape, construction, symmetry, workmanship, design and other features. One should not be so close to the blade that breathing will expel moisture onto the blade.

Do not clean, or wipe down, the blade. Don't do it. It is the duty of the owner to clean the blade as they see fit. I cringe when I see someone try to clean a blade after examining it. Most often they will use their shirt to wipe off the blade. Not good in so many ways. One could cut the shirt, cut themselves, drop the item or scratch the blade. How so you ask? Well, a garment that is close to the skin attracts salt from the body. Aside from salt being corrosive, it is abrasive. Clothing is an abrasive material; and, additionally, it absorbs dirt, sweat and particulate matter. Look at the blade, enjoy and let the owner clean as they see fit.

Never test the sharpness of the blade; there are so many reasons not to do that. The big one is drawing blood. The other of course, as discussed, is not to touch the blade at all. When handling a folding pocketknife, never open more than one blade at a time. One could break the spring because there is too much pressure on the spring with the added tension to the backspring. Don't risk it. Aside from the loss of control when multiple blades are open, you leave yourself vulnerable to cuts or dropping the knife. A good analogy to this would be someone allowing you to shoot their gun, and it could break while you are shooting it. Why risk it? I know we all have done this with firearms; but there is the chance that something could go wrong. Think hard and long before doing this.

Appreciate the knife and be cautious.

• ibdennis

EVER HAD A SQUIB LOAD?

Or better yet have you ever heard of a squib load? The term "squib load" is only related to firearms and a unique phenomena that you really do not want to happen to you. "Squib load," (also known as a squib round, pop and no kick, or just a squib) is a firearm malfunction in which a fired projectile (bullet) does not have enough force to exit the barrel, and thus becomes stuck in the barrel. This type of malfunction can be extremely dangerous since the failure to note that the projectile has become stuck in the barrel could result in another round being fired directly into the obstructed barrel, resulting in a catastrophic failure of the weapon's structural integrity, ie ruptured barrel.

Squib loads are often attributed to the hand loader, and the many mistakes that can occur while reloading ammunition. This is not always the case, as it can also happen with factory-made ammunition. Albeit rare, you can develop a false sense of security thinking it never happens with a factory load.

I have had my fair share of squib loads because of my avid shooting addiction and my avid reloading. All mine have been in handguns, however I have a 22 caliber rifle that came out of the shooting clubs of England that has an obvious bulge in the barrel. This can be seen while looking down the barrel or feeling with the fingers on the outside of the barrel. In the beginning of my firearms' interest, I would always look down the barrel prior to buying a used firearm. Back then I just was interested to see light at the end and also to note any corrosion of the barrel due to neglect. I still do that but now I am more discerning about a telltale ring or circular shadow down the barrel. This is then followed up by running my fingers around the outside barrel to detect a bulge.

This discovery tells me that a bullet got stuck in the barrel and was followed up by another live round. The shooter did not pay attention to the reaction or sound of the squib load and merrily kept on shooting. The bulged barrel tells me the shooter was lucky; as, in some cases, a catastrophic explosion can totally damage the firearm and in some cases the shooter. A bulged barrel doesn't always signify that the firearm will not shoot accurately again. Sometimes it does not affect the firearm's ability to shoot accurately, but in other cases it can throw bullets like a shot gun pattern. A friend asked me to test fire his Ruger 357 magnum for accuracy, as it was not printing as expected. I could

do no better. An inspection down the barrel revealed the ringing and bulge. The owner did confess at one time fanning the gun for cowboy quick draw. A bullet stuck in the barrel unbeknownst to him, and he kept on shooting.



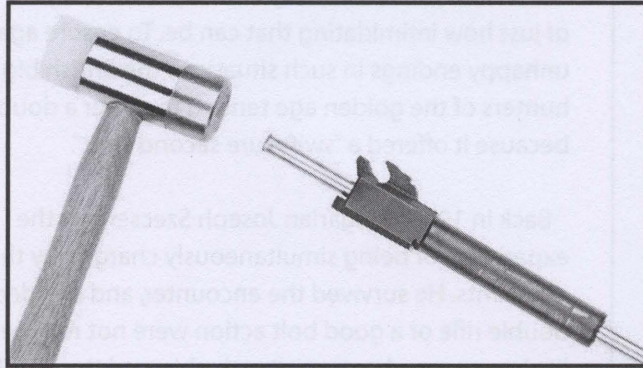
I had a situation where I ringed one barrel and then turned around and did it to a second barrel. The load was 2.8 grains of Bullseye; and while loading powder though a bushing drop, the powder bridged and dropped a reduced load. Because this was a light load, and I was shooting in a noisy indoor range I never felt or heard the difference. The barrels still shot exceptionally well, but the psychological aspect bothered me for years knowing I had damaged the barrels. Recently a gun shop made a run of these barrels with an improved twist, so now I have newer and better barrels in these two firearms. And now I weigh each and every load electronically to avoid this from ever happening again. (I hope.)

So what can make a squib load? The most obvious is no powder in the case. The primers have enough energy to start the bullet down the barrel but often not completely out. If in the case of a revolver it pushes it down the barrel far enough, it can result in a squib that will ring the barrel. If the round only clears the cylinder but barely goes down the barrel; then it can get ugly, damaging the shooter and the firearm.

Other malfunctions can be caused from old powder that has gathered moisture or has not been stored in a controlled environment. Smelling powder can sometimes reveal powder that is old and rancid. A gunsmith told me that the majority of squib loads he encountered were mostly in 32-20 firearms. He did not know why. I also had 32-20 squibs when I would test new powders or work up a different load. I do not know why this has happened and it was two different powders and recommended book loads. In Squibs -

Continued from Page 2)

my shooting bag I always carry a brass rod and a fairly heavy hammer to dislodge a stuck bullet. It has been used a lot.



Recently at the firearms range a person was attempting to sight in his 270 rifle. It was first thought this was the result of a squib factory load. The split barrel could have been a squib but was rather that the shooter forgot to remove the laser bore site from the end of the barrel. No one was hurt, but the firearm suffered badly.



The lesson to be learned: when shooting, if something doesn't seem right..... STOP. Check it out and look down the barrel to make certain it is clear.

• **ibdennis**

INGLIS BROWNING HI-POWER



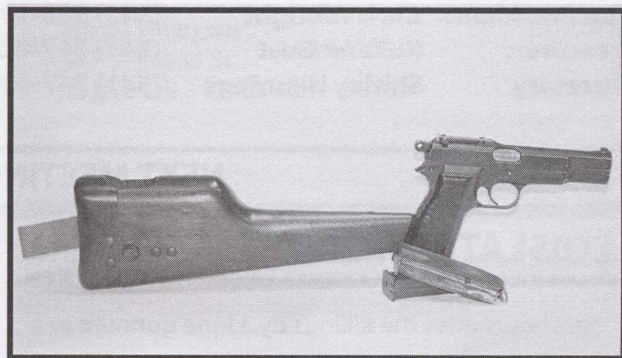
The first and only mass produced handgun made in Canada was the Browning Hi-Power 9 mm Luger handgun. It was made from 1943 until 1945. This firearm has the distinction of being used by all forces during WWII. The Browning Hi-Power is, without argument, one of the most famous handguns ever designed. It had ammunition capacity, reliability and simplicity and was chambered for the 9 mm luger cartridge. The Hi-Power was the last of the inventions of John Browning, and after his death the firearm evolved into a finished product. That was in 1935.



Germany had taken over the factory in Belgium that was producing the Hi- Power, so the blueprints were never released. To counter this a few specimens were smuggled out to England. From there they were sent to Canada where the John Inglis Company back engineered the firearm and started manufacturing them. There is a book which goes into details about the trials and tribulations and evolution of the Inglis Hi- Power. The short version is that about 150,000 were made, and contracts to supply them worldwide were a sale's nightmare. The largest amount were ordered by the Chinese who requested a stock groove to accommodate the combination holster and walnut shoulder

stock. The Chinese were big fans of wooden shoulder stock/holsters. The clues to identification are the shoulder-stock groove and the "CH" incorporated in the serial number.

The finish on these guns was typical war finish but not at the sacrifice to construction of fit and finish of internal parts. The only caliber made was the 9 mm Luger cartridge. Because of the shoulder stock, they were fitted with adjustable sights and the external hammer. The magazine held 13 rounds, and the Inglis finish was parkerized for those firearms made for export.



In addition to the shoulder stock version, there was a non-slotted variation that was designated for the Canadian military and security personnel. Another note was the red oxide finish. I do not believe any manufacturer, other than Inglis, used this finish. These firearms, without the provision for a shoulder/holster stock, were made for the Canadian and British services. These handguns served Canada for many years after the War. The inventory of recent years for these Hi-Powers has dwindled, causing the Canadian government to look for another firearm. Here we are in 2018, and the Inglis Hi-Power is still in service.

Is it High Power or Hi-Power: If the gun is marked "Fabrique Nationale," it is a "High Power." If the gun is marked "Browning Arms Company," then it is a "Hi-Power." The Hi-Power nomenclature was introduced by Browning in the 1950s, to avoid confusion with the Browning High-Power Rifle. The original pistol, as introduced in 1935, and all subsequent variants marked and sold by FN, were labeled High Power.

Another bit of trivia about the Browning Model 1935. The Inglis was only made for 9mm Luger, but other manufacturers offered 9 mm Luger, 30 Luger and 40 S&W. But the 9 mm was the most common.

THE S&W MODEL 52



It took many years to track down a S&W Model 52 handgun that was for sale. When one popped up, there was no hesitation. Shortly thereafter another came by. So I now have a collection of two Model 52s (52-1 and 52-2). As far as a premium semiautomatic center fire target firearm, this is the best. The king of target shooting had always been the revolver in 38 special. Now there was a semiautomatic chambered for the 38 special ammunition. However the 148 grain bullet is a true cylindrical shaped lead wad cutter and requires the bullet to be seated flush with the case mouth for use in this semiautomatic single action handgun. The other interesting fact is the magazine only held five rounds. These same rounds can be fired in a revolver; but a regular 38 special cartridge cannot be fired in a Model 52, as the round is too long to fit in the magazine.

The Model 52 was the firearm that followed the S&W Model 39. The Model 39 was manufactured about 1955 and was the first ever American made, double action, semi-auto 9 mm handgun. The function, mechanics and feel of the model 39 were the inspiration for the model 52. The life of the model 52 happened circa 1961 and ended in 1993.

In the window of offering, the model 39 was a double action with an eight round magazine, 9mm, double action handgun. The model 59 which followed was a 14 round magazine, double action, 9 mm handgun. The alloy frame for lightness and the comfortable design were winners with the military and police. So with this winning design, the model 52 emerged for the competitive match shooting public along with military and police competition.

The Model 52 is very specific with its appetite for ammunition. The bullet is all lead and has a flat front and usually a hollow base. The ideal weight is 148 grains. And, as stated, the bullet must be seated flush with the case mouth. This load is quite accurate; and it makes a perfectly round hole in the paper, making no doubt for scoring. Hand loading is the preferred ammunition, and the Hornady 148 grain hollow base wad cutter is the bullet of choice. The load is also quite specific with 2.8 grains of Bullseye powder. I weigh each round separately with a Charge Master electronic scale and dispenser. Slow loading, but worth the effort.



One other specific item to watch would be 38 special wad cutter brass. Factories make wad cutter brass, and also some loaded ammunition wad cutter brass for their regular ammunition. There is a cannelure on the brass about a 1/2 inch below the mouth of the case which identifies this brass. This distance has a very, ever so slightly, thinner interior diameter which allows the bullet to easily slide into the case with only a little thumb pressure. With the use of a loading press, the bullet is seated to a 1/4 inch below the cannelure where it creates a seal and a crimp holds the bullet in place. The purpose is to not deform the bullet on seating. The hollow base then expands on firing, allowing for a perfect case to bore contact. Yes, better accuracy.

Then again the true aficionado will go beyond standard cases and use wad cutter brass only, weigh each round of brass, weigh each and every bullet, isolate as to manufacture of cases, trim the cases each time fired, use match grade primers and store new powder in a controlled environment. And, of course, each round gets a special slobber free kiss to make sure it goes to the bull's eye. Not for me for sure, but hitting the paper sorta close each time makes my day.

• ibdennis

TEDDY ROOSEVELT



It started out as a simple email to a group of historical firearms collectors. I included a picture of Teddy Roosevelt with a rifle in hand and a knife. The purpose was to just inject a visual in the reminder for a meeting date. I asked the simple question: who was the person in the picture and what was the rifle he was holding? I gave them the date of 1885 and noted it was not a Winchester Model 94. That picture expanded in interest beyond my wildest expectations.

I enjoy identifying firearms in old pictures, so I blew the picture up and started the process of elimination to identify the firearm. From the side plate, I knew it to be a Winchester. I suspected a Winchester Model 1873; on closer inspection it was determined to be a Winchester Model 1876. I based this on the cartridge belt that Teddy was wearing and also the fact that this picture predated his trip to the West where he did some big game hunting.

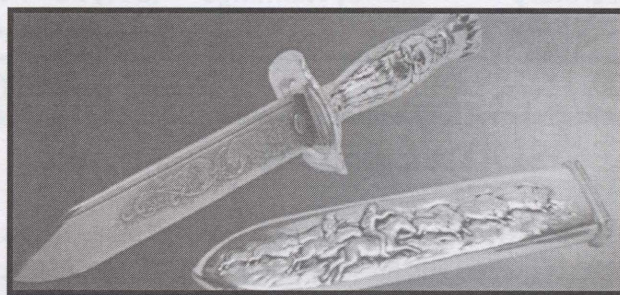
Of course this then evolved into a search on the Internet for additional information. I discovered numerous pictures of Teddy in this famous studio picture shoot. I also discovered numerous accounts of his trip out West. The biggest find was that the documentation identified the rifle as a Winchester Model 1876 and the caliber to be a Winchester 45-75. So now this thread of information was beginning to grow. The 45-75 Winchester was the original chambering for the 1876 Centennial Rifle. Since the 1876 action could only handle cases no longer than 2-1/4 inches, the 45-75 case evolved which gave performance results similar to the 45-70. Further reading found that this rifle and cartridge were favored by Theodore Roosevelt for grizzly bears.

I suspect that because the 45-75 was a bottle neck cartridge it might indeed hold 75 grains of black powder. I know from my personal trials I could never get 70 grains of modern black powder into a 45-70

case. Supposedly, with the extra powder capacity of the day and a 350-grain bullet, this was indeed a powerful round.

Looking at prices today for an original Model 1876 gave me sticker shock, so this rifle will remain on my wish and want lists. However, Uberti is making a replica of this Winchester; it is available in 45-60, 45-75 and 50-95. All of which strikes me as difficult to find ammo and a reloading adventure.

The next step was to magnify the picture of Teddy and focus on the knife. It was a knife that still exists today. There are two knives that are credited to Theodore Roosevelt that were passed on down to the Roosevelt family.



The one knife that recently sold at auction was a presentation knife given by James W. Gerard to Teddy in 1909 before he left for his African hunting trip. The knife was quite ornate and made by Russell out of Massachusetts. The handle is in the shape of an eagle's head made of gold with garnets for the eyes. The guard has two wolves' heads sculpted in gold. The knife has an inscription stating it was presented to Theodore Roosevelt. The 1909 cost was \$1,250.00 (today's dollars would be \$33,266.00). In 2016 it sold at auction for \$440,000.00 which is the highest recorded price for any knife ever sold.

The knife that is shown in the 1885 photo of Teddy, before he went to the West, was made by Tiffany; it still resides with the Roosevelt family. I suspect, were it to be put to auction, it also would hover in around the price level of the Russell knife.

This is where a simple photo turned into a fascinating historical search. The person, the firearm, the knife, the trip out to the West and some reading about this wonderful man. Did you know that Theodore Roosevelt did a whistle stop train tour to Eugene in 1911? Postcards showing him at the rear of the train while he delivered a speech can sometimes be found. I had an original one which I gave to my son who is a huge fan of Teddy.

• ibdennis

SALES OR LACK THEREOF



I am reminded of a person I knew who would always comment when someone said they "sold" something. His reply was, "Did you sell that item or did you take an order for it?" I see the majority of gun show table-holders sit back and take orders for the items on their tables. How many actually are engaged in "selling" items they have? Slight few.

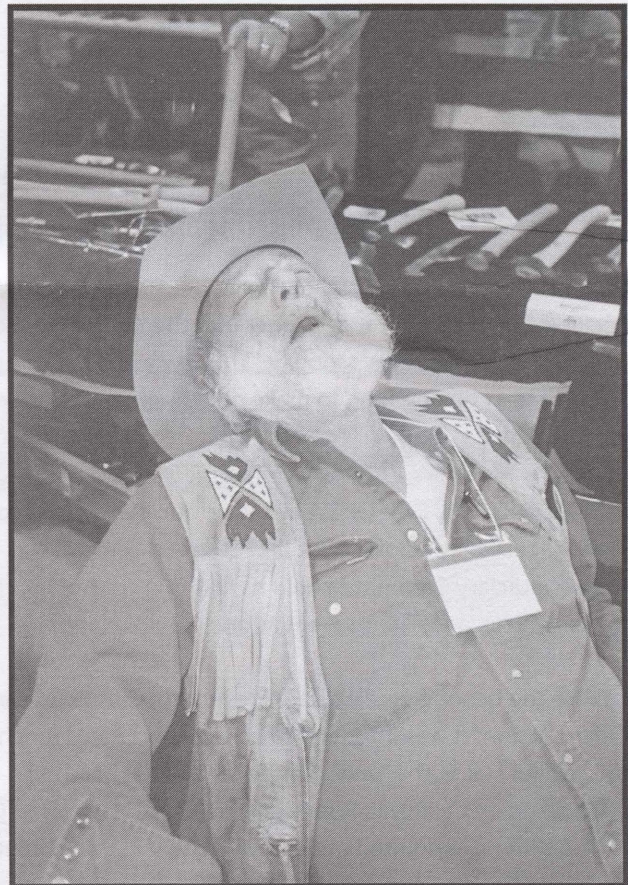
"Order taking" is sitting behind your table, conversing with your table mates, ignoring perspective customers, not having any knowledge of the items on the table, not being responsive to customers wanting to ask questions and wandering away from your table and leaving the table to do the selling. Of course the majority of table-holders are not involved in sales in their real life jobs. They are hobbyists, flea market scroungers, collectors and opportunist "order takers."

So what is my definition of a sales person as relates to a gun show or for any special interest show? First is your presentation. Are you dressed for the job? Do you look presentable? Are you standing in readiness for a potential customer and sale? Is your table laid out in a manner that makes it is easy to identify items as to groupings? Is your knowledge level good on the items you are selling? If a customer lingers while looking at the table items, are you ready to offer assistance and answer questions?

At a recent gun show I found a firearm's ammo magazine on a table. I stood there patiently waiting to be acknowledged. The seller was on his cell phone oblivious to my presence. I was fascinated by this blatant ignoring. After too long a wait I was faced with the decision to leave or remain to see what would get him off the phone and attend to me. I then took \$40.00 from my wallet and held it in my hand. The money

did not cause him to disconnect his cell phone call. My resolute presence finally caused him to abort his phone and take my money. He flunked "Sales 101."

I have offered tips on sales at the Oregon Knife Show and often feel no one is listening. At closing time after one Show a vendor came to me and told me he did everything that I had suggested just to prove me wrong. He paid close attention to people in front of his table, acknowledged a person who was waiting while he attended to another, eliminated side bar conversations with his table mates, wore his Sunday's best clothing and greeted his potential customers at eye level at all times. He even went to the trouble to get an elevated chair so, while sitting in it, he was eye level. He admitted that following these guidelines, he had the best Show financially that he had ever experienced, even twice in revenue over any show he had ever done.



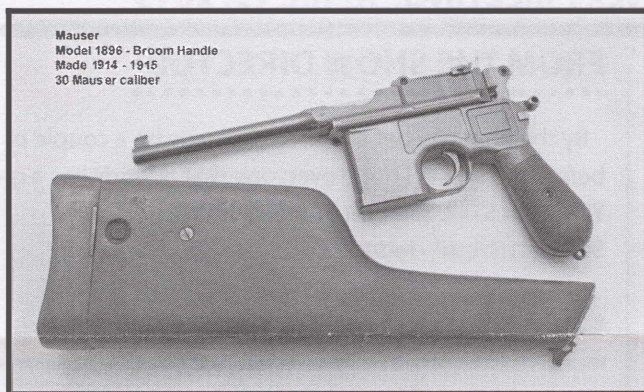
There is no harm in going to shows for the comradery if that is your goal. Having fun and being educated is a good reason to attend shows. But if you want to sell items, you better be wearing your selling hat and not your taking orders cap. Also, going to sleep during a show is really bad form.

• ibdennis

THE BROOMHANDLE MAUSER

I really like this firearm. I guess I am among the elite as Winston Churchill also favored this firearm. As did Han Solo with his DL-44 blaster. The Mauser Model 1896, also known as the C96, was never adopted by the military; however I think many were used in military conflicts.

The name "broomhandle" came from the broom-handle shape of the grip. The cartridge was called the 30 Mauser or the 7.63x25mm round. This was a bottle neck rimless cartridge head spacing on the shoulder. At the time of its introduction it was considered the fastest bullet for any and all handguns. This made it flat shooting and was a candidate for a shoulder stock to take advantage of long range shooting.



The wooden case holster for the C96 also served as a shoulder stock and was installed in the groove at the rear of the grip. The Mauser was loaded via a stripper clip which held 10 rounds. The action was quite reliable, as the cartridge made a straight beeline into the chamber from the forward loading magazine. The sights are very good and the rear sight is adjustable out to 1000 meters.

The first C96 we had was purchased on the 100th anniversary of the invention of the model 1896. At the time I was first offered this firearm, I passed due to the four digit price tag on it. At a gun show a few weeks later, the seller approached Elayne and suggested that I was cheap because I did not purchase this really cool firearm from him. Albeit I might have been cheap, however Elayne was not. After looking it over, she offered to purchase it. Elayne's gun now. As she walked down the aisle, a person tapped her on the shoulder and said he witnessed the transaction and offered her \$300.00 more for it. She declined and, for the record, she still has it. She lets me shoot it from time to time.

About a year ago I was offered another C96 at a reasonable price, so I purchased it along with its original wood holster. It was in great shape and would now become my every day shooter. I was also offered about 600 rounds of 7.62x25mm military factory ammo that was 1948-1951 surplus. Oh boy. And then the education came to bear. The factory ammo listed the C96 as a firearm in which it could be shot, but they lied. Actually the ammunition was specified for the Tokarev and the CZ Model 52. Talk about a hot load that belched fire and noise. It will shoot in the Mauser, but it would not be good for this gun because the action is not strong enough. So I purchased a CZ 52 to shoot up the bargain ammo I purchased.

The ammunition was Berdan primed and about 50% of the rounds fired. Big disappointment. So trying to recover my loss, I pulled all the bullets and threw the brass away; since it was not reloadable. As I neared the end of the pulling (I highly recommend the collet method for pulling this many bullets), I dropped one bullet and could not find it on the floor. Eventually I discovered it stuck to a magnet on the bench. Soft steel bullets with a lead core and a light copper coat to ward off corrosion. A European thing. Not fodder for my beloved broomhandle, but this would be alright for my CZ 52.



I was able to find some Sierra copper jacket bullets just right for the C96 and finally found a reliable powder load for the broomhandle. The broomhandle is picky on its cartridge loading for proper cycling. But once found it is perfection. So now we have his and her Model 1896 broomhandle Mausers that were both made in the 1914-1915 era. Both a little bit older than us, but not by much.

• ibdennis

THE ORTGIES POCKET PISTOL

The Orgies is a well made German pocket pistol that was designed in 1916 but major production did not begin until 1919. Heinrich Orgies's company could not keep up with the manufacturing of this firearm, so in 1921 Deutsche Werken AG in Erfurt bought the patents and machinery for the pocket pistol. This was not a long term manufacturing endeavor, as production stopped in 1924. But during that time nearly 450,000 firearms were produced.



The Orgies pistol was a hammerless firearm made originally in 32 acp. It had a grip safety that, when squeezed, took the firearm off safety. A button push, when cocked, would put the handgun into a safe state until the grip safety was again squeezed. There are no screws at all in this pistol.



The 380 acp variation was merely a barrel replacement, since the early magazines could take either cartridge. I suspect that this happened as the Versailles treaty restricted Germany to make handguns in 380 acp. Eventually at a later date the 380 was probably made available for security and guard personnel. In addition the 25 acp model was also offered.

This pistol, in all calibers, was of a straight blow back design. It was the spring and firearm slide weight that caused the pressures to be safe as the firearm cycled.

For the true collector of these pistols, there were numerous slide inscription variations and other not noteworthy changes; as the basic design stayed the same. The Orgies was a true pocket pistol, since there were no sharp edges to snag on clothing when drawn. The other feature was it was very thin which made it ideal for carry.

The grips were retained internally in place, and a release in the magazine well was required to remove them. Remember, no screws. For a long time I could not figure out the grip medallion design on the shields imbedded in the grips. When looked at closely, it was a picture of a stylized cat often referred to as the lion couchant. It was the later trademark on the pistols. The significance is a mystery to me, although lions and heraldry could provide an answer.

One other shield variation on the grips is the stylized trademark of Heinrich Orgies which is an intertwined "H&O" in a circular medallion. This only appeared on early production firearms.



The handgun is quite reliable and fun to shoot. It was even used in the 1921 competition shoots in Europe. It was not selected as a military firearm due to one little problem at which I also cuss at. The striker spring rests on a lip in the upper part of the frame. When dismantling the gun, the spring can suddenly release; and if not captured by a covering hand, it will launch itself with considerable force to places unbeknownst to me. Likewise when assembling it, that spring tends to slip away and again launch itself to parts unknown. I was able to find replacement springs, but the originals are lost to time. As a result, I dismantle the gun in a clear plastic sack and wear eye protection.

A bother. Not the eye protection, just the sack.

• ibdennis

RUGER BEARCAT

I came to Oregon in 1964 and had two firearms that had been given to me to help if I encountered bears in the outback of the wild state of Oregon. One was a shot gun, of no concern; and the other was a trapdoor Springfield in 45-70. The shotgun went away early, but the trapdoor is still with me. After discovering that bears were not a problem in downtown Eugene, I decided a nice little revolver in 22 caliber would serve the purpose as a camp gun. So I wandered down to the Surplus store at 735 Willamette Street in Eugene on April 13, 1967 and met with Archie Weinstein who showed me a Ruger Bearcat. I paid \$39.95 for this firearm. I also purchased a Lawrence holster for this Bearcat. Still have both of them.



The Bearcat was based on the classic Remington percussion revolvers of the mid-19th century but on a much smaller platform. There were three issuances of the Ruger Bearcat. The first (1958 - 1971) was the alloy frame lightweight version. Next (1971) came the steel frame version known as the Super Bearcat. The third (1993) version had a transfer bar for safety and was offered, in addition to blued, as a stainless steel variant (2003). Of course I have all three.



I never really asked myself where the "Bearcat" name came from. With the easy access to the Internet, where all questions are answered truthfully, I found that the

real animal was named a "Binturong." The Binturong, called bearcat, is an omnivorous mammal not related to either bears or cats but to the palm civets of Asia. It is a monotypic genus. Its genus name Arctictis means "bear-weasel," from Greek arkt- bear + iktis - weasel.

I remember well a happening that occurred while on a camping trip a few miles up from Oakridge. I came upon a snake that reared its head in my direction. Pulling out my faithful Bearcat, I fired at the head of the snake hitting it squarely in the head. I was so proud of my ability to hit the target until someone told me that a snake could and would line up with a firearm and attempt to capture the threatening bullet in its mouth. Well, so much for my dead eye shooting if that is true.

The Bearcat today has, in addition to the safety transfer bar, adjustable sights. I have not had a desire to have adjustable sites on this small camp gun, but apparently some do which directed the market in that direction. Another variation was the storekeeper's model which has a shortened curved grip which reduces the size. It almost looks like a Colt Bisley grip.



In the arena of oddities, the Bearcat was briefly offered with an additional .22 WMR cylinder. This was recalled by Ruger due to a safety concern. Those which were not returned to Ruger now command higher prices from collectors.

I enjoy pulling the proverbial leg, as you can tell from this story about the Binturong "Bearcat." Truth be told the answer to the naming of the Bearcat handgun lies in the engraving that adorns the cylinder. It is a rolled engraved picture of a Bear and a Cougar. Get it? Bearcat.

• ibdennis

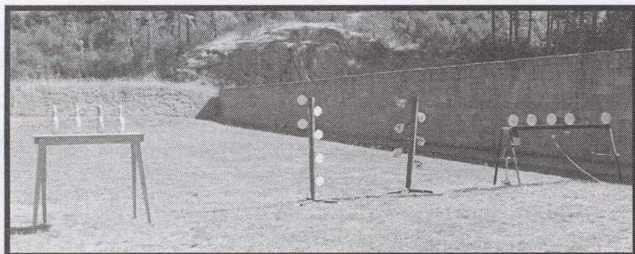
BOWLING PINS

In the last few years I have become addicted to the bowling pin shoots at the "Emerald Empire Gun Club" just outside of Marcola. The matches are held once a month except in the burrr chilly, rainy winter months. The rewards for the event are bragging rights only and the determination to best ones personal shooting skills.



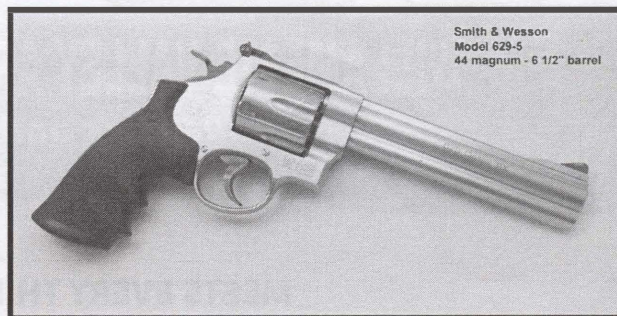
The event is for handguns only, and the actual bowling pins are salvaged bowling pins from local bowling alleys. These pins are plastic coated, maple hardwood pins that are 15" X 4.75". Four of these are placed on a table 15 yards away. The object is to hit the pins in such a way that they fall completely off the table. Sound easy? Not so.

With six rounds in the handgun, each pin that clears the table counts for two points. When one just lays on the table, it is worth one point for the knock down and one point each for the left over loaded rounds in the firearm. Therefore all four pins knocked off the table without misses gives a score of eight plus the two rounds left in the firearm gives a score of ten points. Three pins off and one down gives a score of nine and so forth.



Hitting the pin square on stands a good chance of knocking the pin off the table whereas an off center hit makes the pin spin and fall over but not off. Caliber does not make a difference. If shooting 22 LR, the pins are placed near the rear edge of the table as opposed to placing the pins in the center of the table for center fire calibers. Bowling pins are really tough and seem to last match after match. Hollow point rounds are forbidden, since they tend to do more damage to the bowling pins shortening their usable life.

I enjoy shooting a plethora of firearms from revolvers to semi-autos. I have always had a passion for target quality firearms and in the 22 LR category shoot a Walther PP Sport, S&W Model 41, High Standard Victor or a Model 17 S&W revolver.



In center fire I shoot a S&W revolver Model 25 in 45 acp, a S&W Model 624 in 44 Special, S&W Model 52 in 38 Special or a S&W Model 14 in 38 Special. I try to practice a lot and compete against myself each time. I was doing pretty good shooting the revolvers in single action mode but stepped up my game one match day by shooting the revolvers in double action. I was pretty proud of myself and prouder yet as high shooter for the day. Them be bragging rights.



Although my passion is the bowling pins, there are two other challenges at this event. One is shooting and knocking down six metal plates at 12.5 yards for time, but one must hit all six plates to earn a score.

The other event is the dueling tree where there are three to five metal plates on a side of the stand that, when hit, swing to the other side of the tree.

Your opponent attempts to hit all their side plates to the other side before you do the same to him/her. (Yep, she beat me).

• ibdennis



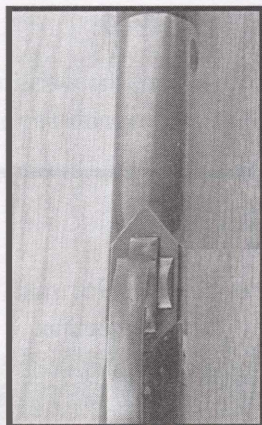
ACID HANDS

I was recently trying to find a Tokarev M57 handgun on Gunbroker. One vendor had several of these for sale, indicating that a large order of these were again available from import. As I looked through the several offered, I searched for one in pristine cosmetic condition. While viewing the pictures, I paid attention to wear along the back strap and other conditions of the firearm. The one I picked proved to be cosmetically perfect and looked never to have been fired.

The firearms I rejected had wear marks, or thinning blue, on the back strap indicating they had been fired or, as nice as they appeared overall, had been handled by a person whose hand had what I call "acid hand".

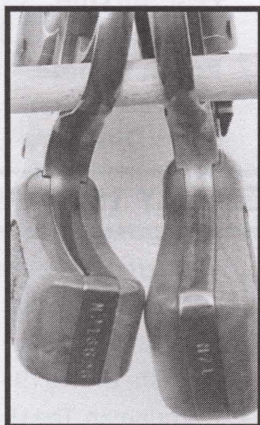
Many people have a situation in which their hands sweat. This sweat is mostly water but contains lactate, urea, sodium, potassium or salt. The chemical created can attack metal if left unattended. I have seen situations where someone touched a barrel of a rifle and noted the fingerprints have appeared in less than a day. These are acid etched into the metal defying the bluing which protects this from happening.

Handguns today have polymer frames or stainless frames which lessens the attack of moisture that results from sweaty palms. When you exam a metal handgun that has been used in extensive shooting, look to the back strap to see if it has seen the ravages of sweaty palms. Some I have witnessed have bare metal here while the bluing on the rest of the gun is quite good. Does this hurt the function of the handgun? No.



Next time note a hunting rifle that has been carried in the field and has exposed metal in the balance point where the rifle has been carried. Sweaty palms and constant friction from the hand has caused this.

As a knife collector we see corrosion on knife blades



from handling caused from finger imprints on the blade. This is the reason that most knife vendors wipe down their blades after anyone handles them. For this reason I am fairly strict when I hand a knife to someone asking them not to touch the blade.

Stainless steel firearms are somewhat impervious to etching and rusting, but it can still happen. When I go to the range or a meeting where my firearms are handled by others, cleaning and a wipe down is ritualistically followed immediately. Any type of soft absorbent cloth will do until I can wipe down the firearm with a lightly oiled cloth.



This leads us to firearm storage. Rising and falling temperatures, especially in a confined space, promote rusting. Storing firearms in a leather holster is another rust invite. Leather by nature draws moisture; and, if there are copper rivets, verdigris happens.

Verdigris is that green chemical that builds up around the copper which is not good when it comes in contact with a firearm. Storing firearms in a cloth lined rug is another thing to avoid. This confined enclosure can attract moisture, and who is to say the chemicals in the liner material are acid free?

Firearms stored in safes also lock in moisture especially in a cold environment. Every time the safe door is opened, in rushes moisture laden air. That is why desiccants and dehumidifiers are often found in gun collection rooms, vaults and safes. If using such devices, make certain to follow the instructions explicitly. My hands are acid free..... are yours?

• ibdennis

COLT LIGHTNING

In 1877 Colt introduced their first double action revolver. When you pull the trigger of a double action revolver, the cylinder rotates which pulls the hammer back and fires the cartridge. In single action (SA) mode, one pulls the hammer back to full cock; and then the trigger is lightly pressed to fire the cartridge. The double action (DA) innovation set the stage for revolvers forever.

The first production 1877 Colt allowed the revolver to be fired rapidly but did come with a problem. The mechanism was so complex, intricate and delicate that only an experienced gunsmith/clockmaker could repair anything that was broken inside. Later adaptations in revolvers overcame this issue.

The 1877 Colt was first manufactured in 38 Long Colt followed by a slightly more powerful 41 Long Colt cartridge. Production was 1877 to 1909. The 38 caliber revolver was called the Lightning, and the 41 caliber was called the Thunderer. Colt did not call the revolvers by these names; they were coined by a distributor for marketing. In any event the names stuck.



In my beginning days of firearm's collecting, I picked up a Colt Lightning handgun. It was the early days when I could trade one firearm for two and two for four. Money was tight for me, so trading was the order of the day. That was 50 years ago and about that time, I had need to hire an attorney to handle a sticky legal issue with which I had been confronted. I was successful in the case, but then the time came to pay for the attorney. He was a gun collector, so I offered several firearms to help offset the attorney fees.

One was the Colt Lightning. I always longed to have this Colt back, but I had trouble finding one. I went to the attorney many years later and asked if he still had the firearm. Well, sort of. He gave it to his father-in-law. I asked if there was any way I could purchase that gun back. Not a chance I was told. Father-in-law was

absolutely convinced that this was the gun that William Bonney (aka Billy the Kid) had on him when Sheriff Pat Garrett killed him in 1881.



Fast forward: a few years ago I was at a gun show and spotted a Colt 1877 for sale. Only \$450.00. Al Perry was there, and I asked him about it before purchasing. Simple answer was that it was broken. A slightly decent working Colt would bring double that price. So Al offered to help me out and end my many years search for a decent Colt. Well, it was the Thunderer that he offered and desperate as I was (collectors are like that) I purchased it. It relieved the pressure of trying to find a Colt Lightning.



Mister Morton seizes that when it rains, it pours. And it did. I found a nice Lightning a short time

after and of course had to have it. And then there was the long barrel variation and the shop keeper's model. Funny how things happen like that. So now I have four, and this is where the collection ends. Thus saith Elayne.

There was one other firearm I had to liquidate at this same time as the Colt. It was a Winchester Model 1886 in

45-70. I found a beauty of one many years ago which is now mine. The legal issue was to gain legal custody of my son when his mother walked out on us. Gun trade for a kid... no regrets. But today, if you would like to trade firearms for my kid, we can talk.



FN 1910 TO BROWNING 1955

In the beginning there was the Browning FN Model 1910 handgun, and in the end there was the Browning Model 1955/1971. Quite an expanse of a well designed handgun. 1910 until 1975.

Life for the Browning Model 1955 started as the John Browning designed Fabrique Nationale (FN) Model 1910. It was available in either 380 acp (9 x 17mm) or 32 acp (7.65 x 17mm). The firearm featured a unique spring design that encircled the barrel, a grip safety and a bottom magazine release. Then the firearm underwent a reiteration known as the Model 1922. It had a longer barrel and a longer grip frame to hold two more rounds of ammunition. This came about at the request of the military. FN manufactured this firearm for numerous countries to supply their military and law enforcement needs.



It should also be noted that this family of firearms was a straight blowback design. It was made up as the Model 1922 for military purchase until 1954; and after that was known as the Browning Model 1955 which was like the original Model 1910. These firearms maintained all the original features, like the three safeties and the bottom or floor magazine release. The three safeties were the slide lock safety, the grip safety and the magazine safety.

The Model 1922 was very popular in the European countries and numerous countries ordered them. Not so much for military, but for law enforcement agencies. As a collector these can provide an endless accumulation of marks and icons for each country order they were made for.

My first ever pocket pistol was the Browning Model 1955 chambered in 380 acp. This firearm was a direct design from the FN Model 1910, but now it carried the

Browning name on it. It is a beautiful firearm with a high luster blue finish, and a true carry pistol that slid in and out of the pocket without a snag. At the time the big controversy was whether this cartridge was considered sufficient for self defense. The answer today is yes; it isn't the cartridge, but the type ammunition you carry. I just witnessed gallon jugs of water hit with a .380 round nose load and the new fangled defensive

loads for the .380. The round nose hit the water jug and changed course in the liquid whereas

the hollow point made the water jug explode. Such rounds were not available back when I had my Model 1955, so the need for a well placed shot was the order of the day.



I own a Browning Model 1955 with the distinction of having two barrels. One is the more common .380 caliber, and the other is a 32 acp barrel. The same magazine works for either caliber.

The Browning Model 1955 took a toll with the regulations in 1968 by the US government regarding imported firearms. These rules included barrel length, grip length, weight and several other requirements. Therefore the Model 1955 was discontinued in 1968. The Model 1971 came out which had an extended barrel, one piece slide, reduced magazine capacity, thumb rest grips and fully adjustable sights. I believe this was to pass it as a target firearm and not a weapon in order to circumvent the gun control act. Where the Model 1955 was a great carry firearm, the Model 1971

did not even come close in this respect. And that is why the Model 1971 was discontinued in 1975. All of the firearms

that followed in the family of the original John Browning FN Model 1910 were outstanding firearms.



• ibdennis

THE LUGER LONG BARREL HANDGUN

I am fascinated by the German Luger pistol. The mechanical ingenuity is amazing to me. That toggle that pops up each time is so fast that I do not even notice or see the cycle. But it is hard to miss the last shot fired where the toggle stays up. The original designs made a provision for a slab side, wooden-board, shoulder stock to handle and control the rate of fire which was 400 rpm. The Luger firearm has a natural point-ability feature, and once in the hand and especially with a shoulder stock, it settles right in on the target.

The long barreled Luger carbine was a favorite of Kaiser Wilhelm II. The model 1902 Luger was chambered in the 7.65 mm (30 Luger) cartridge. The Kaiser had a withered left arm, unable to support the weight of a full size hunting rifle; and the Luger carbine was a light-weight, versatile and effective alternative. I was



told that the Kaiser also had a shooting team which used the long barrel Luger for competitive events. The detachable stock was a full sized shoulder stock with a matching wood forearm for this handgun. Many years ago I had the distinction of holding a wooden boxed Kaiser Luger that was purported to be one that was used in the Kaiser's shooting team. This was a joy to behold and an absolute beauty.

The 1902 Kaiser carbine had special ammunition for use in competitive matches, and the ammunition was distinctive in that it was painted black. The owner of the carbine I saw was offered a box of this ammunition. The problem was that it was a good faith offering, since the box was sealed and there was no indication that it was the black coated ammunition. The sale was consummated (a financial gulp), and the question as to

it being original and correct was an annoying question. Eventually a razor slit in the carton, and a strong flashlight, revealed it was correct.

The long barrel P08 Luger (8 inch) came about in 1913 and was chambered for the 9mm Luger (9 x 19mm) cartridge. This model had a fully adjustable rear sight and a slot in the grip for a paddle board stock. While the Luger carbine could be classified as a sporting firearm, the artillery model was classified as



a military item. Its compact size was good for carry while the conversion to a near rifle was a great asset.

I am pretty sure I will never own a 1902 Luger carbine, but I have managed to collect a few Lugers. The variations of Lugers can be daunting, so a few representative examples suit the bill. Yes, I have an artillery Model 1914 in 9mm made in 1917. My standard 1915 Luger is also 9mm and a nice example. I also have a mismatched parts Luger for just fun shooting along with a Luger that was made the year I was born. Vanity is a killer when making emotional purchases. My meager collection would not be complete without a commercial Luger chambered in 30 Luger. Yes, I have shot each and every one of these and enjoy them very much.

Of course a collection like this deserves a few examples of accessories. I have a military holster that shows the ravages of war, and many years ago I ordered a reproduction artillery holster rig with all the goodies. As a collector this satisfies my historical collecting in the world of Lugers. I would really like to own a 1902 Luger Carbine or the original Mona Lisa painting; one has one's dreams.



• ibdennis

CHARTER ARMS HANDGUNS

Charter Arms was the first to introduce a small, light-weight double action snub nose revolver in 44 Special. They called it the "Bulldog" and it was introduced in 1973. It held five rounds of 44 Special ammunition and defied gravity with its light-weight carry. It justified itself when a 240 grain round was touched off. They say the recoil is not felt in a critical situation, but damn that hurts when practicing with it. I keep telling myself I am a man and can take anything, but....

I am a range safety officer at the Marcola Shooting Range and arrive early in the morning to set up targets out to 100 yards. I am usually alone at this early hour. With the talk of cougars in the area, I became aware that such an encounter might require an adequate firearm be carried in this early morning foray into an open field. Anything for hunting would be heavy and



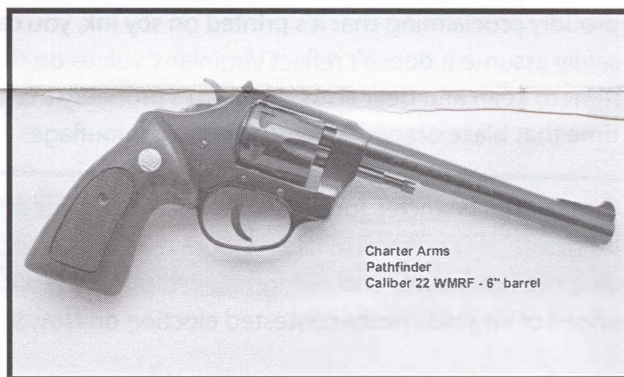
bulky. Since I would be wearing this most of the day, the 45's and the 44 Magnums were out. Therefore the decision to pack the Bull Dog. I had a special leather paddle holster made for this purpose and by day's end I would forget I had it on.

Charter Arms, in all its four owner reiterations as a company, has maintained the 44 Special hand cannon and has introduced names like Bulldog, Bulldog Pug, Boomer, Police Bulldog and Target Bulldog. When first introduced in 1973, the nay sayers predicted it would not hold up and would be short lived. Not so.

If you need to do the complete history of the Charter firearms and the evolving companies, the Internet can fill in all the histories of all the companies. The beginning history is of interest to me as it paved the way for the types of firearms that carry a Charter name.

Douglas McClenahan, a young gun designer who had previously worked for Colt, High Standard, and Sturm, Ruger, founded Charter Arms in 1964 to produce handguns. His first pistol was a five-shot revolver called "The Undercover" chambered for 38 Special. McClenahan's innovation avoided the side plate design manufactured by other revolver makers for a one-piece frame, giving the new revolver a strength that allowed it to safely shoot high pressure loads. McClenahan also reduced the number of moving parts used in the gun and created a safety device for the firing pin.

I first purchased the Charter handguns because they were cost effective for my limited budget. These were light-weight firearms in all the popular at the time calibers, like 22 LR, 22 Magnum, 32 S&W Long, 38 Special and of course 44 Special. These all carried well and shot well. The other companies or this company have evolved now to revolver firearms in short barrel carry pieces in 327 Magnum, 357 Magnum, 9mm Luger, 40 S&W, 45 acp, 45 Colt and 41 Magnum. I think I will stick with the 44 Special.



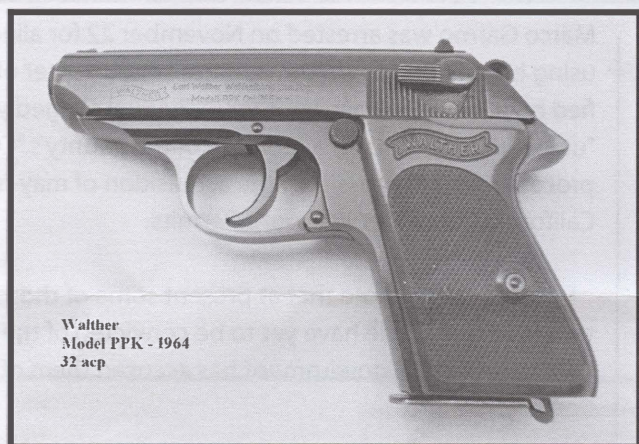
I do have a few Charter models that I like more than my 44 Special Bulldog with its 3" barrel. I always thought the 3" six shot 22 Magnum would be lighter to carry but not so. It is easier on the hand to shoot but not much easier on the ears. I also favor the 22 Magnum with the 6" barrel and the 44 Special target in the 4" barrel. All in all my favorites are the first years production Charter Arms handguns.

• ibdennis

A WALTHER HANDGUN

In the beginning there was the Walther Model PP. Then came the favorite "James Bond" Model PPK. And then came the Walther PPK/S in 1968, the result of the wisdom of the people who love to put restrictions on firearms. The Gun Control Act of 1968.

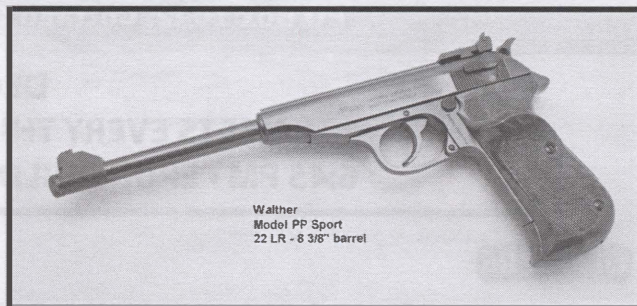
This PP Walther series has a long running history, beginning in 1929. In that first year the PPK was also introduced. The English translation of the PP designation would be Police Pistol, and the PPK adds the word criminal (German K) for that compact model. All these firearms are blow back design and were made in 22 LR, 32 acp (7.65) and 380 acp. Of course the seed that started the craze of popularity was James Bond who used the 7.65 PPK.



The Walther PP series is known for several features. It is a double action/single action handgun. The first shot can be initiated like a revolver, pull the trigger and the hammer falls back and strikes the cartridge primer. Single action is the default mode of the handgun; the slide moves backward after the shot and cocks the hammer. A quick first shot, if desired, uses the double action feature. Another distinctive idea was that if the hammer needs to be dropped to "safe" a safety block prevents the hammer from hitting the cartridge primer. This happens when the safety on the slide is moved to a safe position. These handguns also have a loaded round indicator with a pin that protrudes out the back near the hammer if a round is in the chamber.

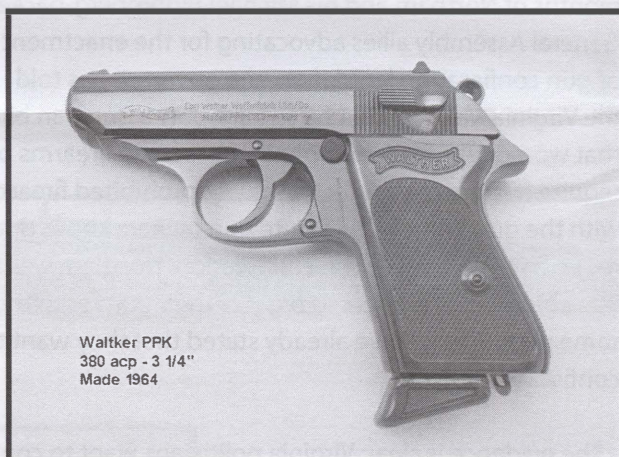
My first Walther PP was in 22 LR caliber. I was grossly displeased with this handgun due to failure to feed and jamming. I was using 22 LR high velocity ammunition.

I changed the springs to no avail. Then it dawned on me that this pre 1940 firearm was designed for, what is now known, standard velocity 22 LR ammunition. It performs flawlessly now. I also have a PP sport



model with an 8" barrel which, although functioning fine with high velocity ammunition, has proved to be more accurate with the standard velocity ammunition.

The holy grail for me was finding a PPK that was pre 1968 in 380 acp. I had finally found a PPK in 32 acp which was kind of cool, but the 380 was the goal. And then one came my way. Like all PPK's it had a wrap



around plastic grip to reduce its carry weight. Off to the range I went, but I was not prepared for the recoil of this caliber in this firearm. The PP model in 380, with added weight, was tolerable; but this little light weight hurt. Needless to say this firearm has low mileage as a practice piece; but in a situation, I know recoil will not be felt. When I want to exercise a Walther PPK I go with the 32 acp. Why not the 22 LR PPK? Because, I do not have one, nor has one been offered to me. The search goes on.

• ibdennis

S&W PERFECTED

By ibdennis

I always wondered why Smith & Wesson called their 38 DA revolver firearm "The Perfected."

In the beginning, there was the 38 S&W cartridge; and in 1880 the top break 38 S&W double action revolver was manufactured. This top break was a popular revolver, just pull up on the top latch and the cylinder and barrel would tip for easy loading of cartridges and extracting of spent cases. The 38 S&W round was adequate for defense, and this particular revolver could handle the pressure. The 38 special cartridge, which came later, was too much for this top break model of that era.



You might say there were five models of the S&W 38 DA before the Perfected model came about. It started with a top break model in 1880s; and all variations, including the Perfected, ended in 1920. Many were shipped off shore, and others went to policing agencies. This is a long run for a very popular handgun.

Today, since 1899, the double action revolvers have a thumb release on the left hand side of the firearm which swings the cylinder out to the left to load and unload spent rounds. The 38 S&WDA handgun had its cylinder release on the top rear of the firearm which, when pulled up, released the cylinder. But if you pick up the Perfected (6th variation), a pull up on the top break latch will not release the cylinder. You will note that on this Perfected model, there is a thumb release on the left hand side. You must push the thumb release and then lift up on the top break tabs. Kinda like a secret handshake.

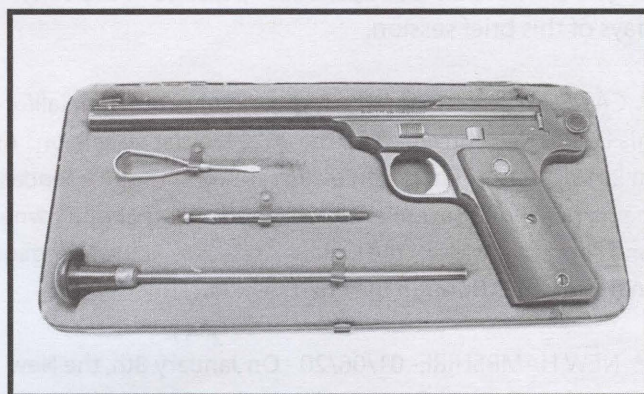
The story is told that a law officer had a bad guy in hand; the smart bad guy flipped the latch up of the law officer's 38 DA, making the revolver inoperable and made it an easy get away for the bad guy. I

suspect that putting this little trick move on the revolver would also make it a tad bit harder for a small child to load this revolver if they didn't know this opening procedure.

So now I am looking at a third model Perfected Target in 22 long rifle caliber (1909 - 1923), and it does not have the side thumb release. Well, actually, this 10" target model top break is the same frame and double action trigger as the 38 S&WDA; and since it was the third model, the Perfected name carried on. All the early target models in this series had a single action trigger.



In the pre 1925 era of 22 Long Rifle target handguns, there is what can be referred to as the holy grail of these guns. It is dubbed the fourth model Straight Line Target (1925 - 1936). It is not a top break but instead has a side swing barrel. The hammer is a straight pull back to cock, and the idea is that the striker time to ignition is quicker. This target model came in a green felt-lined blued metal case and had a cleaning rod and screwdriver included. There were only 1,870 of these special firearms made. Well, in my list of "un-obtainium" things, like the original Mona Lisa painting, this ranks high in the must have list. I have one now, so now for the original "Mona Lisa."



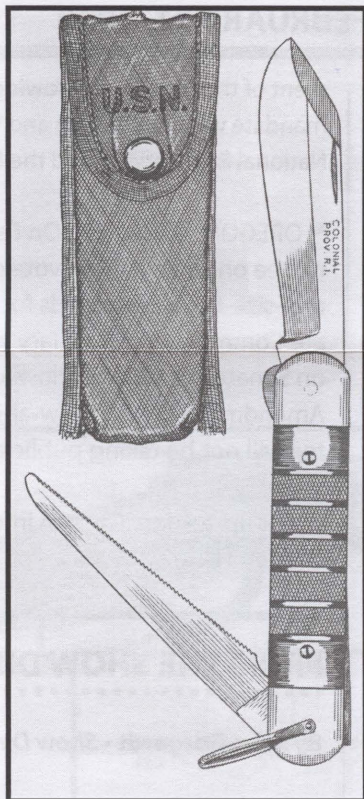
NOTE: WVACA members can gain free entry to the Knife Show on the 18th & 19th by showing their membership card.

THE COLONIAL SURVIVAL KNIFE

By ibdennis

In 1944 during WWII, the request went out for a survival knife for the Army Air Corps and also for the Navy. Sheath knives were bulky, big and long; so there was a need for a folding, compact survival knife. Colonial Knife Company produced what is sometimes referred to as a folding pilot's knife. This knife was selected and was named the Survival knife, Jiant Jack Knife or Jumbo Jack Knife. Because of the size and weight of this knife, it could fit into a vest type emergency kit, be used as a machete, cut through wood, plexiglass and metal, and be used for personal defense. It was then classified as a survival knife.

This Jiant (Giant) weighed 14 ounces, was 6" closed, 7/8" wide and measured 15-3/4" with both blades open. There was also a liner lock for the main cutting blade. The blades were black parkerized (black oxide), and the handle was made of black Tenite, a durable form of plastic. These were made by the Colonial Knife Company of Rhode Island and United Machine Tool of Michigan. The Army knife did not have a bail (lanyard or sometimes referred to as a staple), whereas the Navy issue had a bail. The Navy knife also came in a canvas web sheath that fit on a belt.



A sheath knife was difficult to carry in an airplane and often got caught on things. Prior to the Jiant knife, each of the services left the knife of choice to the individual. There was the need to be consistent, which is the military way. This made the folding Jiant knife a perfect solution.

I think they made a hundred bazillion of these knives for the military up through the 1960s. They were also sold in the commercial market place for \$2.95. In the commercial market, a pocketknife of this size was not all that popular. Bear in mind that all these knives came with a main blade and a high speed steel saw. It is common to see these knives with the saw blade broken. This resulted in the removal of the blade, and the knife reassembled with just one blade. Sometimes the saw was replaced by another handmade blade. Often the blades and bolsters will show a high polish, but again not the military way. The military required that the finish be dull black to avoid sun or moon reflections. And then there is the seller who has one and will swear on a stack of bibles that this was the way they were created for the military in the war years. Not so.



I believe the saw blade was made incorrectly. Yes, it would cut metals and wood; but the cutting stroke was on the push. If the saw blade bound up, it would snap. Western/Coleman made a reproduction of the Jiant Jumbo knife in the 1980s but corrected the saw blade to cut on the back stroke. These knives are not often seen; as, again, it is a big knife and the market is really small. Basically, as the Aussie said, "That is not a knife. This is a knife."



H&R SELF LOADING HANDGUN

By ibdennis

Back in the day (pre 1920), many firearms companies wanted to stay current with the latest trend of small self defense handguns. Since Colt tied up the market with certain semi automatic patents, it behooved companies to be clever with what they could make and present to market. Thus was the situation for Harrington and Richardson (H&R) an American firearms manufacturer. All their designs for a small 25 caliber handgun ran amuck with already established patents. A little side stepping with firearms maker Webley and Scott in England made it possible to have a unique offering in the small firearm market in the USA.

Webley & Scott, an English firearms company, produced a 6.35 (25 caliber) hammerless semi automatic pistol. With some internal changes to this design, H&R produced this firearm by agreement with Webley. This also allowed them to get American patents in 1907 and 1909 for this handgun. The 25 caliber was made circa 1912 - 1916, and the 7.65 mm (32 acp) was made circa 1916 - 1924. This might be a fair indication that 25 caliber handguns were more popular early on. In any case the firearms were poorly received going up against the Colt pattern guns.



The H&R handgun had many pluses, including a sleek design which made it pocket friendly. The 32 acp self-loading gun had a grip safety, a self explained lever safety and a bottom release push to release the magazine. The finish was a high polished blue and taking it apart was pretty easy if you remembered that to dismantle the firearm one model required the firearm to be cocked and the other did not.

It is always interesting to speculate why a firearm did or did not gain popularity in its market time. The Harrington & Richardson company had a long and reliable history of making revolvers. They also were known for their cost effective pricing. When H&R threw a self loading pistol at the consumer, it really didn't gain acceptance. You also have to remember that during this period of time the semi automatic handguns were in their infancy. The really crucial thing was that they were not cosmetically beautiful like the Colt pistols. Fact is they were just plain ugly. Now who wants an ugly gun?



Just for the sake of popularity at the time: The Colt produced 572,000 M1903 pistols and Savage produced 280,000 M1907 pistols. Harrington & Richardson produced less than 32,000 of the self-loading pistol in 32 acp. In the three year period that the 25 caliber pistol was produced, less than 17,000 pistols were made.

The English have a fondness for anything British obviously. Although the Webley was not a pretty firearm, functionality won out over cosmetics. The English embraced the Webley and Scott self loading pistols. And all the way past WWII they embraced the top break Webley revolver with their view of the 38 S&W (not 38 Special) as being the cartridge of choice. I will have to admit the 38 S&W, although adequate for self defense, really rocks with the 200 grain bullet loaded to the English specs. Normal loading for the 38 S&W over here was the 145 grain bullet. If you don't think that 145 grains to a 200 grain bullet is nothing, try it sometime.

THE 38 SUPER

By ibdennis

In the beginning (1897) there was the 38 acp (38 Auto) cartridge. In 1929 the 38 Super was introduced. The cartridges were physically identical, but more powder made the Super a bit huskier. With a 130 grain bullet the 38 Auto did 1070 fps while the 38 Super did 1300 fps. Law enforcement wanted a round that would pierce body armor or go through the door of a car, and they got it with the 38 Super. The 38 Super preceded the 357 magnum by five years. These were the lawless years; and with the evolution of things, the 357 magnum won out.

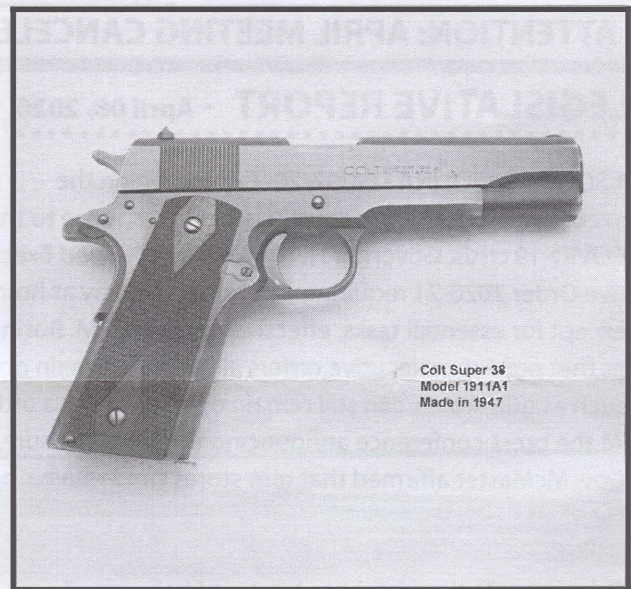
When the 38 Super emerged, there had to be a differentiation to identify the 38 Super or the 38 acp. Both cartridges were visually and physically the same, and the head spacing on the semi-rim was identical. The head stamp told the story since the marking read 38 Super. The other differentiation was that the 38 Super was made with nickel cases as opposed to brass cases. One could shoot the 38 acp in the firearm of the 38 Super but not the other way around. Too much pressure for the firearms of old.

Colt Model 1903 .38 ACP



The first successful chambering for the 38 Auto was in the Colt Model 1900 followed by the Model 1902 and 1903. But after the introduction of the 38 Super, it was possible to load a Super round into these older firearms. Big mistake. These Colts had a take down wedge up forward by the muzzle, and the heavier loads could weaken the wedge and cause it to crack. Which would cause the slide to go rearward off the frame. Rearward was the shooter.

The Colt Model 1911 was the ideal cartridge for the 38 Super. It could easily take this powerful loading. However it lacked accuracy. I had a 1947 made Colt M1911 in 38 Super; and although defense adequate, it was not target accurate. Then a very strange thing happened. I was visiting a friend, and he was downsizing a few handguns and parts. One part was a 38 Super barrel marked MK IV Series 70. I took the barrel, and it dropped into the frame with no adjustments. Big surprise. Shooting the 38 Super now was a target accurate firearm. The difference was the barrel chambering. The new barrel head spaced on the mouth and not on the rim. Just like the 45 acp and 9mm cartridges. What a difference a head space makes.



I like shooting the 38 Super, as well as the 45 acp in the Colt M1911. Whenever a 38 Super firearm crossed my path, I was a sucker to have it. Thus came the Citadel and the Kimber. All the 38 Super firearms are fun to shoot and are accurate.

So why did John Browning design the 38 Auto to be a sem-rimmed case? History leaves no record of this, so we must do a best guess answer.

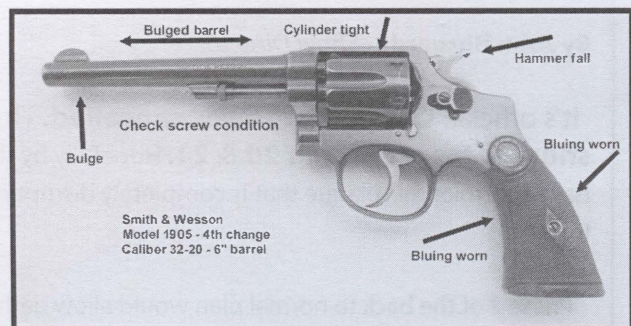
Back before 1900 in the design of auto handguns, it might have been prudent to cover the bet of ammunition to fit as many different firearms as possible, like the revolver. The revolver head spaces on the rim, therefore this round could easily be adapted to a revolver. Except it never happened. That is what you call....end of story.

LOOKING AT REVOLVERS

By ibdennis

I have always had a fascination for revolvers. I like the ergonomics, the mechanical function, the versatility of cartridges; and they are just fun to shoot. When I am looking at a revolver to purchase, there are certain things I check to better ensure I do not wind up with a defective firearm. One of the first things would be to run my forefinger and thumb up and down the length of the barrel. Fingers can detect a human hair so are a good tool to determine whether the barrel has had a bullet stuck in the barrel, followed with another round, which would cause a bulge. To double check I look down the bore to note whether there is a shadow in the bore. This is another indication of a bulge. It is referred to as a ring. A neglected barrel that has roughness can also be seen. Rough bores are a judgement call.

The cylinder can also reveal problems if it is out of time. This can be felt by the wobble in the cylinder when checking the lock-up. One wants the wiggle to be at a minimum. A little does not hurt. This same drill can be tested when the hammer is drawn back. It is called lock-up. Releasing the hammer, while holding the trigger back, should make the cylinder feel the same. The next check to me is the most significant and crucial. With the hammer all the way back, I apply pressure to the hammer trying to force it to fall off the set point. I have had hammers fall with very little pressure, indicating a serious problem. All those I have encountered were the result of amateur gunsmiths who are attempting to lighten the trigger to make it smoother and with less finger pressure to fire a round. This is just plumb dangerous and really serves no purpose.



I had a revolver one time that was rare but discovered a gunsmith had tried to make it better. I sent it back to Smith & Wesson, and they commented they

had never seen such tinkering. I think six parts, including hammer and trigger, had to be replaced. Backing off the tension screw would have done the job just as well and would have been safer. My days of hearing about light and smooth triggers are long gone.

I look hard at the screws on a revolver. The use of the wrong size screwdriver bungs the screw and leaves telltale marks that suggest the firearm has been taken apart. If the previous owner knew what they were doing the screws would not tell that story.

My final observation is the cosmetic look. Holster carry makes bluing disappear. Bluing on the frame grip that is worn is a sign of fingers nervously resting on the firearm while carried. This can easily be caused by acid hands, it may look ugly but does not hurt the function of the firearm.

I practice a lot shooting double action. I have noticed that shooting this way, with total finger control and cadence, makes my shooting more accurate. After all a double action made revolver was originally designed for rapid shots and accuracy. Back in the 1930s, sharp shooters were shooting and hitting Necco wafers tossed in the air. This had to be done with a double action revolver.

COLT NEW SERVICE DOUBLE ACTION TARGET REVOLVER.



For following cartridges: 44 Russian, 45 Colt, 455 Ely. Guard, straps and trigger finely checked. Front and rear sight adjustable for elevation and windage, respectively. Six shots. 7 1/2-inch barrel only. Full blued finish only. Checked walnut stocks. Weight, 42 ounces. Price\$27.00

As to proof: Jerry Miculek can empty a five-shot revolver in 0.57 seconds, in a group the size of a playing card. Bill Jordan always favored a double-action revolver for law enforcement duties. Using a double-action revolver, Bill Jordan was recorded as drawing, firing and hitting his target in .27 of a second. Ed McGivern emptied two revolvers in less than two seconds. He set another record on September 13, 1932, shooting five rounds from a double-action revolver at 15 feet in 2/5th of a second and covering the group with his hand.

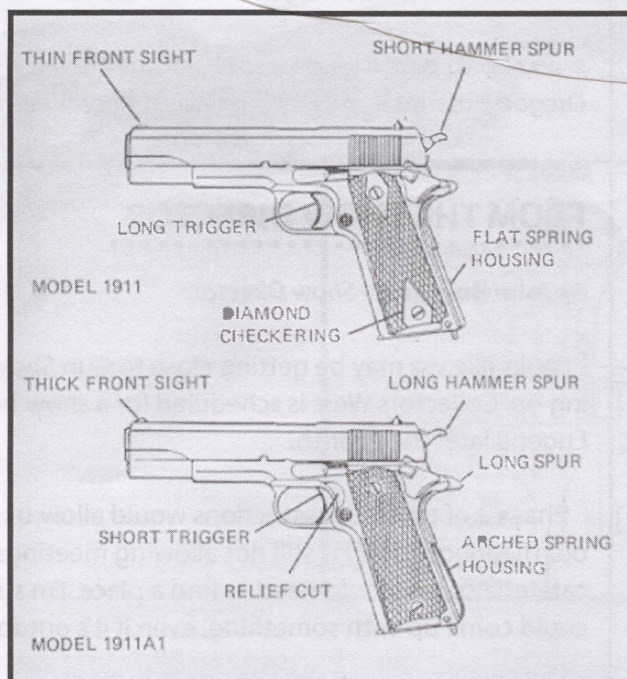
The point being that accuracy and speed can be done with a revolver. It is totally up to the shooter.

THE JOHN BROWNING/COLT 1911

By ibdennis

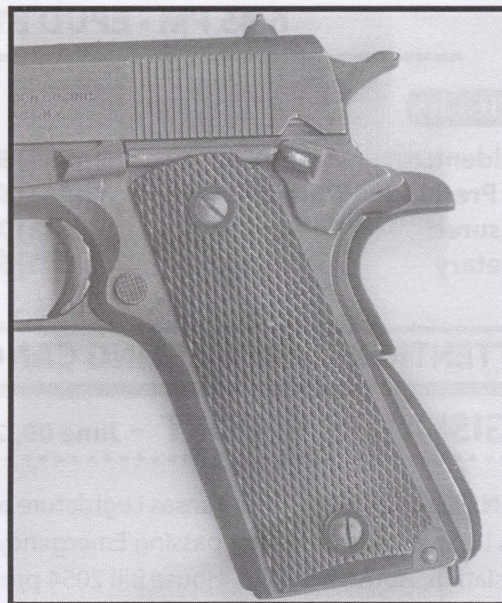
The Browning designed M1911, also known as the Colt Government or "Government," is a single-action, semi-automatic, magazine-fed, recoil-operated pistol chambered for the .45 acp cartridge. A hundred bazillion firearms in this configuration have been made since its inception in 1911. Very little has changed from this basic model. There are high speed, low drag modifications, but nothing major. John Browning done did good.

After WWI there was an evaluation of this firearm to see what could be improved. The year was 1924. One change was to make the spur (beaver tail) longer. This would prevent injury to the web of the hand by a shooter with large hands. It had been possible for the web of the hand to be caught between the hammer and the spur. Big ouch! Another change was the shortening of the trigger in order to provide a better reach for the shooter with a small hand. The front site was made more visible. The area beside the trigger was cut on both sides with semi-circular cuts to make the trigger more accessible. The spring housing was changed from a flat housing to an arched mainspring housing. There were no internal part changes made. These improvements created the Model 1911A1 and are still present today.



All the improvements made to make the M1911A1

are fairly obvious, however the reason for the arched mainspring housing seems to have been lost to time. Today it has become the shooter's choice to favor either the flat or arched housing. The change in the 1920s made the gun "point" higher in a day and age when there was more unaimed shooting taught. This meant that hip and pointing from the shoulder shooting would be directed at vital spot hits.



The M1911A1 was used by United States Armed Forces from 1911 to 1986. It was widely used in World War I, World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. The U.S. procured around 2.7 million M1911 and M1911A1 pistols in military contracts during its service life. In October 1986, the M1911 was replaced by the 9 mm Beretta M9 pistol as the standard U.S. sidearm; but due to its popularity among users, it has not been completely phased out.

Some modernized modifications to this side arm are an ambidextrous safety, extended beaver tails, handles, grip stippling, open magazine wells, bushing changes and matting of the surface along the sight plane. It is interesting to note all the calibers in which the M1911 has been made: 45 acp, 38 Super, 9mm luger, 455 Webley Automatic, 40 S&W, 10 mm, 22 LR and a host of other never to be seen again cartridges. Experimental cartridges in this firearm attest to the strength and versatility of this firearm.

The original design has also given way to the compact versions with alloy frames for easier carry. But, basically, it all comes back to the John Browning design that started it all.

PRINCE ALBERT IN THE CAN

By ibdennis

When I was a kid, back in the days where a high tech phone was a rotary dial, we would call the local apothecary store and ask if they had Prince Albert in the can. When they answered yes, we would quickly yell, "Well, let him out before he suffocates." It was a childish prank, but so much fun.

I suspect I didn't even know what Prince Albert was at the time, but it was a fun game. And for those who do not know... Prince Albert is the name of a crimp cut pipe and cigarette tobacco that could be purchased in bulk. The cans were brilliant red in color, and I guess the gentleman pictured on the front of the can was Prince Albert. This product was made by the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company out of Winston Salem N.C.; and the product was first introduced in 1906. Many style tins and cans evolved through the years, and there are many nostalgic memories associated with these tins.

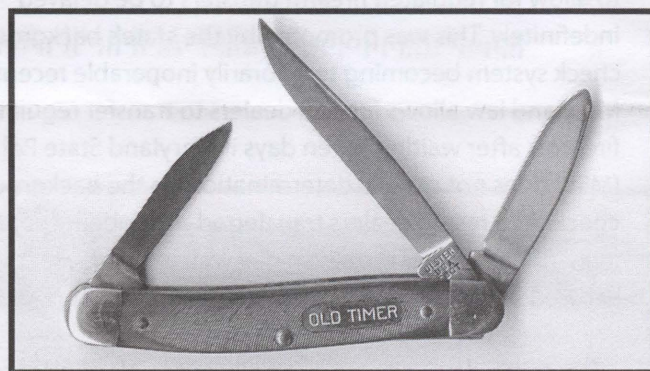


Recently I became interested in Prince Albert, but certainly not for the product. After all these years I have become terribly allergic to tobacco smoke. My interest in the Prince was triggered by good ole eBay. While touring this vast empire of "got it all," I stumbled onto a

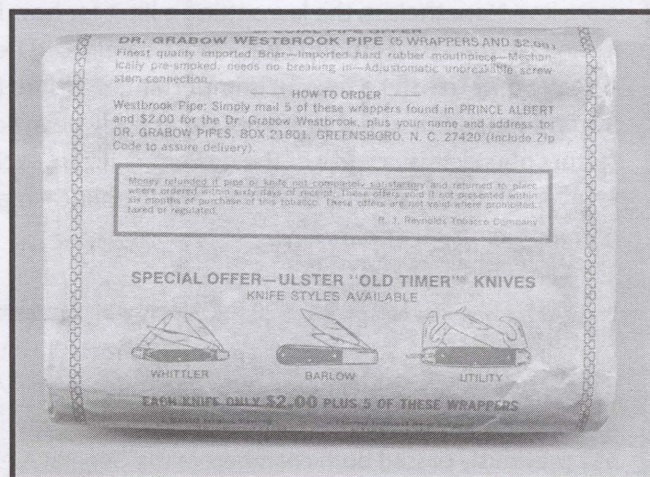
knife that caused me to think about Prince Albert. It was an Ulster utility knife. The seller said that it was a knife that was offered as a special offer through Prince Albert Tobacco, or more correctly, Dr. Grabow Westbrook Pipe.



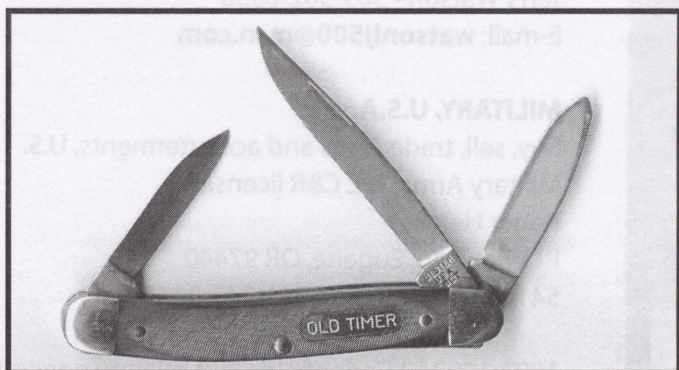
As is the case with eBay, I paid too much for the knife; but the mystery about the knife was on. The most curious part about the knife was that it was an Ulster "Old Timer" knife. When I stopped to think about it, I always recalled that the name "Old Timer" was associated with Schrade. Even though Ulster and Schrade are under the same ownership, there are still names that are synonymous with certain factories. Schrade's is "Old Timer."



The next step was to find out about this special knife offer. So back to eBay I went to look for a Prince Albert



Tobacco can, and there were a bunch of them. I was looking for the one which had the knife offer on it. I went on a Prince Albert tin buying spree. The important tins were the ones that advertised the knife offer on the outside with the real treasure, the coupon wrapper paper, still in the can. That was the key to get these knives. All you needed would be the wrapper and \$2.00, and you could get your choice of one of three "Old Timer" knives by Ulster.



There were three knives offered on this special offer. It started with a two blade Barlow pattern (10 OT), a three blade whittler pattern (58 OT) and a four blade utility knife (50 OT). There was a two, three, or four blade offering. Well, after many months I had purchased a set of three Ulster Old Timer knives to complete my mini collection. The next question was the time period that this offer was valid. My first attempt at dating was based on the clues of the material at hand. The Prince Albert tins I have that offer the knives all have a zip code on them. (Did you know that ZIP stands for Zoning Improvement Plan?) This numbering system was implemented in 1962.



A call to the factory found that the 10 OT was made between 1964 and 1967. The 50 OT and the 58 OT were made from 1961 to 1966. By a little deduction we can say that this knife offer by Prince Albert was between 1964 and 1966. Treasure hunts are fun.

TWO REVOLVERS IN WWII

By ibdennis

There are two iconic revolvers that emerged during WWII. They were the Smith & Wesson Victory model and the Colt Commando. Both were chambered in 38 Special, and both were double action. These two firearms evolved for one main reason. This was because the production of the Colt model 1911 in 45 ACP could not keep up to the demands of the war effort. Colt patterned the Commando on their Official Police line of revolvers. Smith & Wesson used their M&P, or pre-model 10, revolver to meet the specifications for the military.

Both Colt and Smith & Wesson were called on to make war-time versions of their standard service type revolvers. There were numerous other revolvers pressed into service, but this article only refers to these two iconic revolvers.

Before the war, both the Colt and the Smith & Wesson firearms had great reputations for use by law enforcement and home protection. These were high quality (pre- WWII) firearms, top of the line revolvers. The polish and finish on parts was first class. This spit and polish commanded a higher than usual price tag. To make them more attractive to the military from a cost point, the finish would be changed to a dark quick chemical finish; and the trigger and hammer would not be polished. It is not wise to use high polish firearms in a war situation. Sunlight and moonlight reflect off such surfaces and are visible from any distance. There were other subtle modifications that also lowered cost.



The Colt Commando (the regular Official Police model) was made with a 4" barrel but a limited num-

ber had the 2" barrel (Junior Commando), and those have become a rarity. The 4" was introduced in 1942, and a production of about 50,000 was reached in the 1942-1945 window. The finish was parkerized, and the grips were plastic stamped with the rampant colt. Most of the Commando revolvers went to police officers, factory guards, non military personnel and some went to the military.



The Smith & Wesson M&P model, or model "K," was the military choice. It was made in 38 Special and also 38 S&W (38-200). The firearm was sold to several countries, notably England which favored the 38 S&W caliber with the 200 grain bullet. In 1942 America started the Lend Lease program with England, and S&W started manufacturing the "Victory" model. This was the same military type firearm, but the serial numbers started with the letter "V." Most were marked "U.S. Property" on the top strap, and all had wooden grips.

The 38 S&W cartridge will not fit into the chamber of the 38 special. Conversely, the 38 Special cartridge will not fit in the 38 S&W chamber. The British had a thing for heavy bullets as can be seen with their Webley firearms. I experimented with the S&W Victory handguns to note differences in the two cartridges. The 38 Special 158 grain and the 38 S&W with a 146 grain bullet have close to the same recoil, whereas the 38/200 lets you know you have touched off a significantly more powerful load.

If one wants to know detailed history and facts, get a copy of U.S. Handguns of World War II by Charles W. Pate. This is an outstanding book that really researches the subject.

WEAPONRY

By ibdennis

It always grinds me that when a discussion of firearms arises, the word "weapon" is used and becomes the focus of terminology. Weapon is a hostile term, and has a negative connotation which creates a negative reaction. Anything that denotes a harmful occurrence to another human being can be a weapon. The popular "baseball bat" is a go to analogy of a weapon. Next time when it is your turn up to bat, choose a weapon. Also our kitchen is loaded with weapons with our array of kitchen knives. Lizzy Borden took an axe and gave her Mother 40 whacks. She did not take a weapon but instead used an axe.

Definition of the word weapon:



1. An instrument of attack or defense in combat.
2. The club that is now mostly used for golf was once a common weapon.
3. An instrument or other means of harming or exerting control over another.
4. Money is the main weapon of modern oligarchs.



5. A means of persuading or arguing.

A weapon, arm or armament is any implement or device that can be used with intent to inflict damage or harm.

Weapons are used to increase the efficacy and efficiency of activities.

At a knife show you almost never hear the word weapon used in conversations about knives. There are knives which can be used solely as weapons, but the more informed refer to them as knives not weapons. Not so much at a gun show or at a shooting range. I hear the term weapon used frequently and can imagine one of our anti-gunner observers tactlessly making an ugly face and accusing those interested in this subject as killers. So my intent is to sanitize our interests in things that go bang and call them firearms. Even the term gun is a sanitizing word. We who enjoy the recreational use and aspects of firearms should be careful of our language.



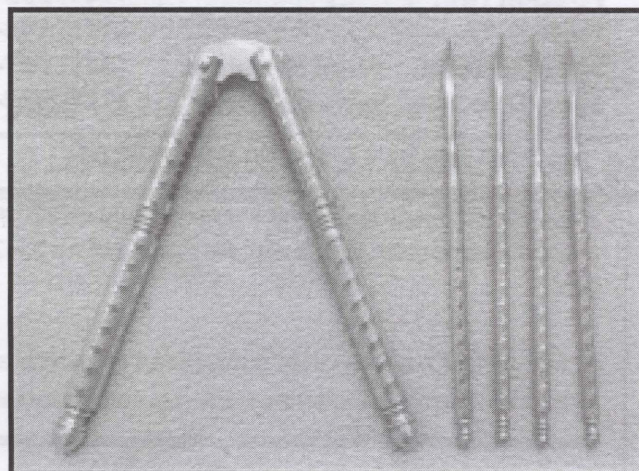
Since I am on a rant about words and actions, let me talk about greeting. In my role as a salesman I shook a bazillion hands on a daily basis. After all, that is what salesmen do. After recovering from yet another cold or flu, I decided that the handshake was transferring bad bugs to me and infecting me as well, as I was the transfer station to infect others. It was with this realization that I gave up the hand of friendship and substituted greeting with a fist bump. It was rough going at first with the quizzical faces of my customers and the questions. After an explanation, almost all agreed with my reasoning. Humorously I was called a germ-a-phobe, and many would bump and retreat like an exploding hand grenade. It was six years ago that I adopted this and stuck to it during knife and gun shows in addition to at work. Going from multiple sickness days six years ago to nothing now does prove a point. During this 2020 pandemic I have graduated to namaste, elbow bumps, oriental bows and hand gestures to the heart. All of which are germ free.

Use of the right terminology and the use of the right greeting does work.

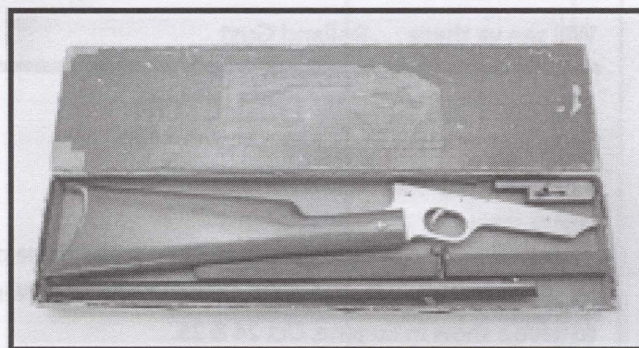
THE QUACKENBUSH RIFLE

By ibdennis

When I was but a youngster raised in a Norwegian home, nuts were a staple food all year long but especially during the holidays. Many a nut was cracked by my hands, but I had no knowledge of who was the maker of this handy dandy nutcracker tool. In fact I had no idea until I came across my Quackenbush Safety Cartridge Rifle. The nutcracker and the rifle came about as a result of the inventive mind of Henry Marcus Quackenbush.



In 1913 Quackenbush invented the spring-jointed nutcracker and a nut pick, designs which are still in wide use today. Over the years, the Quackenbush Company produced over 200 million nutcrackers. Nutcrackers seen today may be stamped with the hallmark "HMQ." The Quackenbush history started in 1871 and continued until 2005. Over the years, extension ladders and airguns were part of the huge factory offerings.



The nutcrackers can still be had today but alas not so much the rifle. This cleverly designed single shot 22 caliber boy's rifle first appears in 1876. Before 1920 there were 50,000 of these rifles made. They were simple to make and very cost effective. It was simple to

operate and had decent sights which had a good degree of accuracy. They were only made in 22 caliber and in the time window were made for the 22 short and the 22 long cartridge.

They were not made for the 22 Long Rifle, although I think they would do well with this cartridge as the action appears to be strong enough. The barrel on the rifle I have indicates the use of black powder 22 cartridges, and the cleaning was not done as it should have been. After all, it was a boy's rifle to be used and abused at will. The barrel on the one I have is rough but quite shootable which is in stark difference to the walnut stock which is pristine.

The frame is nickel plated and the barrel is blue. The best part of this particular rifle is that it came in the original box. Box and rifle amaze me that they have survived this long.

SAFETY CARTRIDGE RIFLE.

Price, \$7.

THE BEST ACCURATE RIFLE YET OFFERED FOR THE MONEY.



Length of Rifle 23 in.; Weight, about 4½ lbs.; Cal. 22-100 for the regular BB or long and short cartridges.

These Rifles are safe to handle, quick to operate, and reliable in every respect. The barrels are steel, accurately rifled, and can be instantly detached for packing or carrying in a small space. The workmanship and finish throughout are the best, and each rifle is thoroughly tested before leaving our works.

Send for our Illustrated Catalogue "S," which also shows our Air Guns, Stair Carpet Rods, Foot Lathes, Nut Picks and Cracks, Book and Desk Racks, etc. Nearly all of these goods are well-known in the markets of the world. Address the manufacturer, **H. M. QUACKENBUSH, Herkimer, N. Y.**

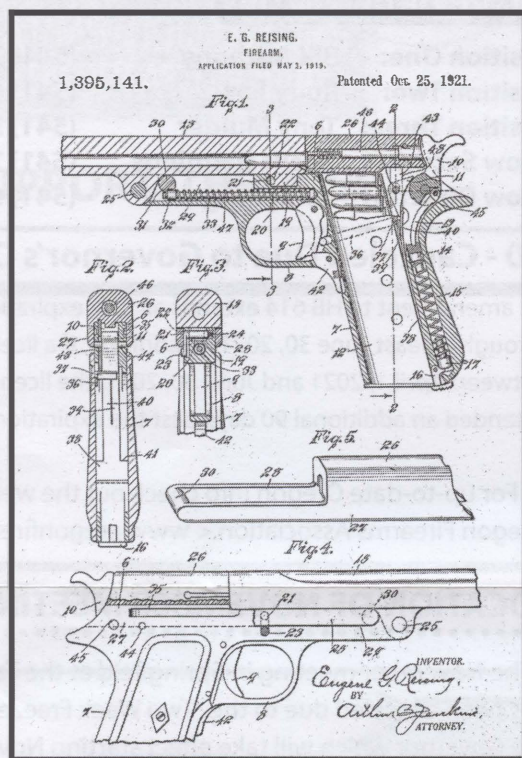
The loading of the rifle is accomplished by swinging the breech block to the side, loading the round, closing the breech and pulling back on the side pin on the right side to cock the hammer.

The trigger was decent, and the schuetzen-style butt plate curved nicely into a youngster's shoulder. Even though there were many made, I can understand they might not survive the rigors of time. Discarded for better rifles, and being a take-down model, I can see the loss of and abuse of the parts. These rifles were without serial numbers and are rarely seen for sale. Would you believe me if I told you that this was an early picture of me with my Quackenbush rifle?

22 CALIBER REISING

By ibdennis

The window in which the Reising 22 caliber semi-auto hand gun was manufactured was 1921 to 1924. It was a time when competitive target shooting was very popular. S&W had introduced the straight line, single shot revolver; but the times were changing to the semi-automatics. Eugene Reising worked in the Colt factory and was also a target shooter.



His ideas for improvement of his 22 handgun can be seen in this one and only model. There are no external physical safeties which would get in the way and could be uncomfortable. The safeties were subtle, like the magazine disconnect and the positive visible hammer which had a prominent spur and a half cock feature. The other safety relevant to a shooting match was the tip up barrel which rendered the firearm safe but allowed on-the-spot cleaning and was a visible sign the firearm was not loaded. The magazine also was unusual as it held 12 rounds (not 10 like others). There was no feed ramp, since the feed was lined up to go straight into the chamber.

E.G. Reising was an imaginative inventor and is attributed to 60 firearm patents. This firearm was a real winner; however the market was not ready for this type firearm, so the production was limited in this three year period to less than 5,000. Financial difficul-

ties might also have played a part. First production was in East Hartford, Conn., and then New York City, with less than 1,000 produced there. The serial number 3200 firearm I have is very collectable with its wooden custom box. The plastic grip has the words, "IT'S A BEAR". Why this phrase, is a mystery. During this same, new design period of 22 caliber target firearms, the S&W straight line produced less than 2,000 pieces of their model.



I have seen many pre early 22 caliber firearms that refuse to shoot or function accurately when using high velocity ammunition. These firearms always come back to life when standard velocity ammunition is used. In fact I have several firearms that are prime examples of this. The Reising is no exception to this and the firearm has been known to be damaged with the use of high velocity ammunition. My first awareness of ammunition was many years ago with a Walther PP in 22 caliber. It would jam and fail and was not what I call accurate. A switch to 22 standard velocity cured the problem with 100% reliability.

Standard velocity ammunition is typically sub sonic at 1,070 fps whereas high velocity is in excess of 1,255 fps with a 40 grain bullet. Higher velocity means more pressure, and thus damage to those firearms which are not rated for high velocity. As this information was common to pre 1940 firearms, it should be noted that manuals for the High Standard 22 caliber handguns mention that High Standard firearms are rated for high velocity ammunition.

Those who have interest in WWII armament are no strangers to the Reising Model 50 and Model 55 sub machine guns in 45 ACP. They were introduced in 1941 and were adopted by the Marine Corp, but they failed to have combat reliability. The story goes that many were thrown in the ocean, so a soldier could get a more reliable firearm. Not every firearm created is a winner. But some are winners in their own right.

THE BALLESTER-MOLINA

By ibdennis

As I peruse the firearms I have had for years, I always discover several unknown mysteries surrounding these items. I purchased the Ballester-Molina because it appeared to be another interesting spin off of the famous Colt Model 1911A1 using the 45 ACP cartridge. It certainly had inspiration from the Colt, as the Argentina Company HAFDASA was licensed in the late 1920s to make the Colt 1911A1. They called it the Pistola Colt Modelo 1927, and it was made under Colt's engineer supervisors and licensing. HAFDASA was a company that made automotive products in addition to firearms.

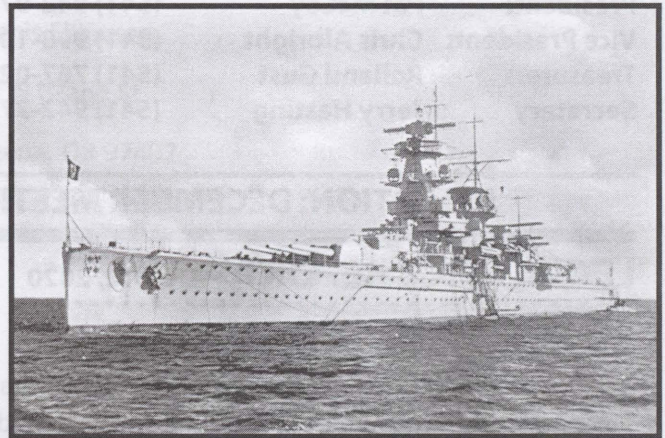


The Ballester-Molina, named after the inventors, had interchangeable parts only with the Colt barrel, spring, link and magazine. However, the trigger guard, the serrated oak grips, the slide pull back slots, no grip safety and the thumb activated safety are all individual to this firearm. Takedown is similar to the Colt, other than no slide, hold-open latch.

The thumb safety on the Ballester-Molina looks physically like the Colt, but that is where it stops. If the hammer is down on the slide and the safety is engaged, the slide and the hammer are locked. I recognize this as very safe, even if a round is in the chamber. To bring the firearm into action, the safety lever is lowered, and the hammer is thumb activated to the rear to be ready to fire. If the hammer slips loose and falls, the firearm will not fire, because the trigger must be pulled to fire. I was having difficulty engaging the safety on the cocked hammer until I discovered I had to manually pull the hammer a tad bit more rearward to make the safety engage. Once learned, this is really a unique and well thought out safety.

At one time there was the concern that the bad guy would seize a firearm from the officer and use it against the owner. Many firearms were made with some concoction to make a firearm extra safe. This would be so the firearm in the wrong hands would be difficult to use unless the safety system is known. This subject could be an article in itself especially in dealing with safeties on revolvers.

The Ballester-Molina is a quality made firearm and is known for its reliability and dependability. There are very few documented complaints on this firearm.



One of the most enduring stories is the use of the steel taken from the WWII German battleship Admiral Graf Spee to manufacture the Ballester-Molina. The Graf Spee was scuttled off the Argentina coast in shallow water. It was fascinating to look up the history and the debunking of this story. Metal analysis bears the truth that the steel was not the same as the steel that was made in the Admiral Graf Spee battleship. One firearm was sacrificed in the debunk analysis.



HAFDASA exported pistols to Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, U.K. and Venezuela. Surplus firearms eventually were exported to America. It can be fun collecting all the variations made for the Argentina Military, Military Police, Army and Navy. The firearm I have was made in 1942 for the Argentina Navy.

REMINGTON BOLT LUG RIFLES

By ibdennis



The Remington model 580 is one in the series of three 22 caliber rimfire rifles. The 580 is the single shot version. The 581 is the magazine fed model, and the 582 is tubular feed. All three of the 22 LR firearms are very accurate. Other than the method of feed, all the models are the same. Remington created the 580 series to replace the model 511 and called it the budget tack driver. The bolt is the unique part of this rifle as it uses six rear locking bolts/lugs in three rows. This makes this series rifle accurate and strong. The factory built Remington series is able to shoot .22 short, .22 long and .22 long rifle cartridges. This rifle had a factory production run from 1967 to 1983.



It is easy to pick out a Remington rimfire model in a rack of firearms because of the longer bolt and absolutely straight bolt handle. The longer bolt and the lugs make it a candidate for wild cat and center fire conversions. The gunsmith I use specializes in these conversions. My conversion was made in 221 Fireball, and it shoots extremely well. Once converted, these rifles are single shot only. Although all Remington models can be converted, the 580 is the easiest to modify. I contacted my gunsmith and asked for a list of all the conversions he made or is familiar with. The 221 Fireball leads the list followed by 22 Hornet, 218 Bee, 17 Mach IV, 17 Fireball, 5.7 Johnson, 357 magnum, 256 Winchester Magnum and 300 Blackout. All are accurate in these conversions which is owed to the lock up lug system and the fast lock time.

So what is the motivation to take a rimfire rifle and convert it to a center fire? We all tend to push the envelope of what can be done given a simple project. We all want to claim that ours is the fastest and bestest on the block and a one of a kind item.

The more expensive Sako, Kimber or CZ can be converted, but it is more wise to use the budget priced 580 rifle. The 580 conversions are simple and straight forward. The action is super strong with the array of locking lugs, and the rifles are light weight once converted. The minimal bolt throw for scope clearance and the fast lock time make this an ideal rifle for consideration for center fire.

The 580 series was never factory offered other than with rim fire cartridges. They did offer left hand models, smooth bore rifles and boy's rifles.



A bigger brother to the Remington 580 was the Remington model 788. It had a window of manufacture of 1979 through 1987. This again was a budget priced offering. It was offered in many factory cartridge offerings. The 308 caliber was the most popular followed by the 243, 6 mm Remington, 223, 222 Remington, 30-30 and 44 magnum.

The Remington 788 center fire bolt action rifle has two distinguishing design features. The first is the rear-lugged bolt. The bolt has nine lugs in three rows of three lugs each. They lock into the receiver behind the magazine well. This feature allows more steel and structural support which increases accuracy and also provides a stronger receiver. To allow for more scope clearance, the bolt handle rises 60 degrees rather than the 90 degrees. The 788 was also noted for its fast lock time.

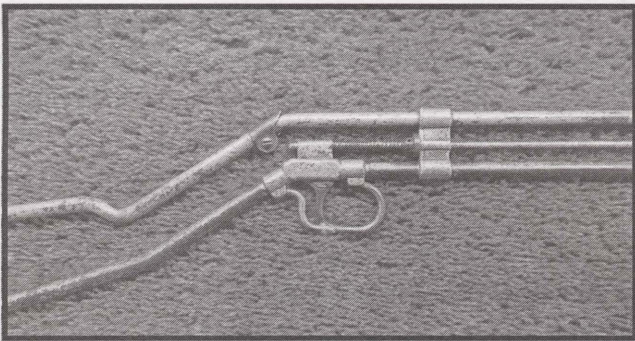
THE SINGLE SHOT WILDCAT RIFLE

By ibdennis



There have been a raft of what are called survival/trail rifles. These are sometimes called boysâ€™ rifles or training rifles. The majority are bolt action, break top, falling block single shot 22 caliber firearms. And then there are the twist barrel, single shot rifles. Several years ago I came across a Mountain Arms (Ozark Mo.) rifle in the box (if allowed to call Styrofoam a box). I knew nothing about it so the challenge was on.

It is a skeletonized, wire frame rifle that requires a twist of the barrel to the side to expose the chamber for loading. The caliber is 22 long rifle. The rifle itself was clearly of an inexpensive manufacture and incorporated a mechanically unusual construction.



The history of this style rifle goes back to 1899-1902 with the Hamilton Model 7 rifle. A large quantity of these Hamilton rifles were made, but few survive to-day. It was made for the black powder 22 caliber short cartridge. Any use of smokeless 22 caliber rounds are bad news for the rifle and the shooter. Therefore its usefulness fell away, and the lack of good specimens has made this a rarity in the collector market.

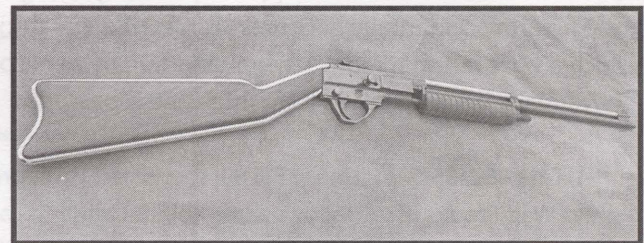
Fast forward to 1968 when the Garcia Bronco was introduced. This was a wire frame, 22 long rifle. It mimicked the Hamilton rifle with the twist to the side to load the barrel. This rifle was only made for 10 years and at a quantity of 6,243. It could be had in 22

magnum, 410 shot shell and 22 LR over 410.

Then we have the Wildcat 22 which was only offered in 22 LR in 1969. This was called the Rau rifle and was so marked after the CEO of the company. About 2,500 rifles were made from 1969- 1970. A shaky history goes from here when it was purchased from Rau by Precision Industries. They then assumed the name Mountain Arms from 1971-1978. Later years 1975-1979 had the name Precision Industries name on the frame, but this was basically the same rifle.



The Mountain Arms (Rau and Precision) had a market calling as a survival gun. In addition, it was marketed as a light target rifle for women and children. The model I have is a takedown version with a plastic inserted stock which looks like wood. Loading is accomplished by pulling back the operating handle, put the firearm on safe and twist the barrel so the chamber is at the top of the rifle. Load a 22 caliber cartridge and twist back to a closed position. Disengage the safety, and you are ready to shoot. To remove the spent brass, open the action and pull back on the forearm which acts as an extractor.



It is always interesting to find out where a name comes from. Kansas State University, home of the Wildcats, is only about 100 miles from El Dorado, Kansas, where the first Wildcat rifles were made.

- Garcia Bronco (1968-1978) 6,243 made
- Rau (1969-1970) 2,500 - 3,000 made
- Mountain Arms (Ozark MO) (1971-1978) 6,243 made
- Precision Industries (1975-1979)
- More information can be found at (<https://milesfortis.us/church/akc14.htm>)

BROWNING CASED SETS

By ibdennis

I enjoy Browning handguns. The reliability, the fit and finish and the accuracy tick every square in my boxes. There are three firearms, special to me, that I just flat enjoy. The Model 1935 was John Browning's last creation for the 9mm Luger cartridge. The Model 1955 was a powerful pocket gun which was available in 32 acp and 380 acp. And for a tiny vest pocket firearm, the baby Browning in 25 acp is tops.



These three firearms capture my favorite list, and I shoot them often. They are reliable and have never had a malfunction. There are but a slight few variations for these everyday Browning favorites. There was a Browning collector here in Eugene, Oregon, who had numerous variations of the Model 1935, including calibers like the 40 S&W and 30 Luger in addition to the ever popular 9 mm cartridge.

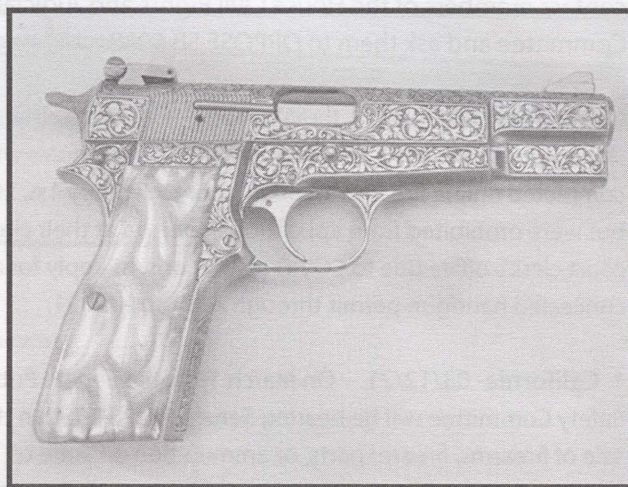
The Browning collector passed on, and the collection was parted. One day I heard there was a presentation carry case that was used to display three Browning handguns. The case did not have the firearms, but I did have firearms that would fill the spaces; however they were not the same variations as the two most popular sets from the factory. The one factory set was called the presentation Renaissance set with three firearms heavily and beautifully engraved. These were made from 1955 to 1969, but not many were offered. Asking price for a set today is between \$8k and \$15k. They also offered the same set of three in the presentation red felt box as blued but not engraved firearms. These typically go for \$2.5k to \$5k as a set depending on the day of the week.

I was debating what firearms I had that would fill this presentation case and suddenly I had an epiphany. I wanted this case to be unique and to house mint firearms that I had. One Model 1935 I have was in 30 luger (7.65x21mm Parabellum) which is considered

a difficult caliber to find in this model. The model 1955 pocket pistol was available in 32 acp and 380 acp. Many longs ago I had picked up a Model 1955 which had an extra barrel included. A simple change of the barrel converted it from 32 acp to 380 acp. The magazine worked for either caliber. The Baby Browning in 25 acp (6.35 mm) was the last spot to fill the case. The blue model is fairly easy to find, but my aluminum framed version (the "Featherweight") begged to complete this set. I can really sit back and smile at what I had created.



I do not know if others share my excitement for this creation. But it gives me joy to look upon this boxed set. I would really like to get the presentation Renaissance engraved set, but that ain't gonna happen according to my banker.



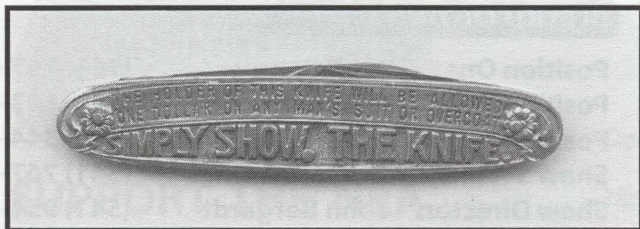
Trivia: The Browning name is used in the territory of the America's while the FN (Fabrique Nationale) is Belgium and is used in the European theater. The reminder then is that the FN model 1935 is called the "High Power" while the Browning model 1935 is called the "Hi-Power." Same firearm. The "Power" came about because of the early 13 round capacity of the magazine.

SIMPLY SHOW THE KNIFE

By ibdennis

Every once in a while there is a knife that captures my attention which I study for many years. A description of such a knife follows:

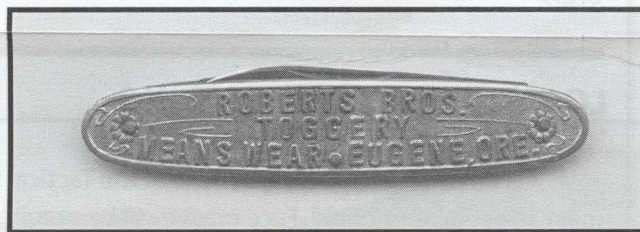
The handles are metal (probably nickel silver), and the words are clearly readable.



THE HOLDER OF THIS KNIFE WILL BE ALLOWED ONE DOLLAR ON ANY MAN'S SUIT OR OVERCOAT. SIMPLY SHOW THE KNIFE.

The back side of the knife reads:

ROBERTS BROS TOGGERY MEANS WEAR EUGENE ORE.



The knife is marked - A.W. WILLIAMS & CO.- NEW YORK on the front tang and H. KESCHNER GERMANY ON THE BACK TANG on this two bladed knife. Because it appeared so nice I first thought it was a reproduction knife of recent manufacture. It was not.

When I first purchased this knife back in the 1980s, I was puzzled over the word "togger." A trip to my Funk & Wagnall didn't help as this word was not even listed. Several dictionaries later I found the word, and the information that the word was first used in 1811. It also suggested that it came from the word "togs" and was a reference to clothing. In any event it was one of those words that comes into fashion for a period of time and then phases out. It gave me the clue that Roberts Bros was a clothing store. Pretty smart, hey, considering that the discount with the knife was for a man's suit or overcoat. Momma didn't raise no dummy.

Over the years I have pondered about this knife. I have seen several other advertising knives similar to this from across the country but little information was available. Before the internet the University library in Eugene was the best historical research place. Those were the days when searches were done on microfilm readers and I still recall them going so fast that nausea and dizziness took hold. Looking for ads for Roberts Bros. resulted in finding the operation date of pre-1917.

By luck I came across a postcard which was the view looking south on Willamette street. There on the street corner was a picture of the Roberts Bros. store. It was an exciting discovery and caused me to dig deeper into the history of this company. Even with the internet it still was a challenge. The postcard was without a date, but there was a clue in the date if the street itself was viewed closely. I had another postcard of Willamette Street which dated the paving of the street as 1908, and this postcard pictured the street with hard packed dirt. Better for horses. Also this card is what is referred to as a divided back postcard. This means the message and the address were split on the one side. That dated to 1907.



The internet search today has newspapers available from 1846 onward, and a search provided by the University of Oregon web search site pins the first ad for Roberts Brothers as 1907. The last ad was May 10, 1917. From the knife markings, A.W. Williams was the distributor and sales agency for Keschner of Germany. WW1 started in 1914; and, from popular guesses, Germany wasn't making advertising knives from 1914 to 1918.

It also seems that all the locations "For Simply Show the Knife" were companies on the train routes. A Williams Company salesman would ride the train and take orders for advertising items from companies when it stopped in major cities along the route. So the next search was to determine the date the train came to Eugene, Oregon. And that date was 1908 when South-

SIMPLY SHOW THE KNIFE (Cont.)

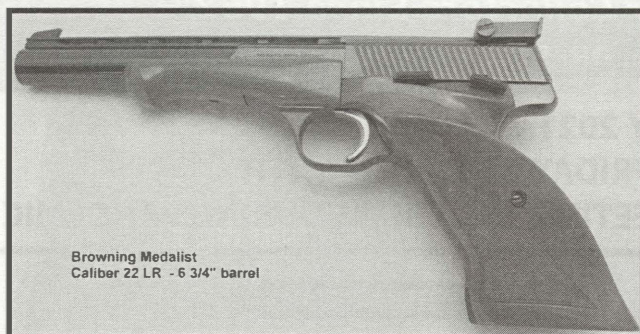
ern Pacific opened the train station.

There are many variations of this knife from different stores stating different clothing apparel and amounts of the discount. Over the years I have seen knives like this from the following Oregon cities: Albany, Ashland, Grants Pass, Medford, Salem, Portland and The Dalles. This does not take into account other states from Maine to California. I suppose maybe these could be mail order purchases, but I like the idea of a salesman drummer like the "Music Man."

In an attempt to narrow down the date for this knife, I feel comfortable about the window of 1909 to 1914. This story is a result of conjecture which seems pretty solid to me, like throwing a dart that far back and having it land at the corner of Fifth and Willamette.

BROWNING MEDALIST

By ibdennis



The Browning "Medalist" 22 caliber pistol first became available in 1962; production ended by 1975. The design was a high end, deluxe target pistol. The first models were highly polished, dark blue finished models. Shortly thereafter the Medalist Gold Line came out. It had straight line engraving with minimal swirls that were gold filled and a gold trigger. Between 1970-1975, the Renaissance Medalist was made in small quantities. This model had elaborate engraving that covered the firearm completely. It was beautiful and expensive. Even more expensive now if you can find one.

BROWNING AUTOMATIC PISTOLS

"MEDALIST" AUTOMATIC PISTOL
.22 LONG RIFLE WITH 6 3/4" BARREL
\$224.50

"RENAISSANCE MEDALIST"
.22 LONG RIFLE WITH 6 3/4" BARREL
\$444.50

Illustrated at left is the luxuriously engraved Renaissance Medalist with 6 3/4" barrel. Surfaces are chrome plated in a soft satin finish, and the designs, deeply hand-engraved into the metal surfaces, are executed in Renaissance style. Intricate scroll work adorns the grips. Hand fired and polished actions \$444.50

"RENAISSANCE CHALLENGER"
.22 LONG RIFLE AUTOMATIC PISTOL
IN 4 1/2" & 6 3/4" BARREL
\$134.50

Illustrated is the luxuriously engraved Renaissance Challenger pistol in .22 Long Rifle caliber. The designs, deeply hand-engraved into the metal surfaces, are executed in Renaissance style. Surfaces are chrome plated in a soft satin finish. Intricate scroll work adorns the grips. Hand fired and polished actions. Renaissance Challenger, with 4 1/2" or 6 3/4" barrel \$334.50

The Challenger is also offered in a striking gold inlaid model, differently engraved in keeping with the character of a .22 caliber. The slender, straight line style of engraving produces a sturdier beauty against the rich blue-black body of the pistol. (Not shown.) Gold Challenger, with 4 1/2" or 6 3/4" barrel \$399.50

The Medalist 22 caliber pistol spawned two other pistols with the same mechanism and design and filled a market niche. The Nomad was designed for the "plinker" or recreational shooter. It was price competi-

tive, much like an introductory pistol for this series. The Challenger was the affordable target shooter.

There are some interesting features of the Medalist firearm. The firearm comes in a leatherette hard case which includes a cartridge block, barrel weights and a cartridge deflector pin. The deflector pin directs the spent brass away from the shooter who might be next to you. This pin is often missing on used Medalists. Mine was missing on the one I purchased in 1992, but I was lucky enough to purchase one. My Medalist was made in 1969 and is like pristine new.

The Medalist was designed strictly as a deluxe target firearm. It best performs with standard velocity ammunition but will take on the high velocity 22 long rifle ammunition also. There is no external hammer. There is a pronounced vent rib on the barrel. The grips are checkered walnut and have a pronounced thumb rest for the right hand shooter. I understand that there were a few left hand models manufactured.



Dry firing a pistol is a way to work on your shooting skills when not at the range. There is a pro and con argument concerning dry firing. I believe it is acceptable on center fire hand guns; however rim fire guns, like the 22 LR, should never be dry fired. Never ever because the firing pin strikes the steel chamber edge and peens the chamber so the chamber becomes obstructed. Normally when the 22 rim fire cartridge is in the chamber ready for firing, the firing pin strikes the soft brass so no hard metal on metal takes place. I once purchased a 22 target firearm that had been heavily dry fired. A new round would not even chamber. Out with a delicate file, and the peened chamber was opened and deburred to accept the cartridge.

The Browning Medalist has a dry-fire mechanism which is not normally found on other firearms in this caliber. By pushing down and forward on the safety, one can dry fire. The firing pin falls harmlessly, as if the firearm is cocked. A slight push down again resets the trigger and dry firing is okay. (Cont. on P. 3)

BROWNING MEDALIST (Cont.)

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The Browning Medalist target firearm was targeted specifically for the target competition market. There were several grip configurations offered but the pictured grips are the most popular. To my hand these grips are like putting on a glove that was made just for me. I searched high and low to find the firearm I have and consider it among the top five firearms I am proud to own.

GET THE LEAD OUT

By ibdennis

The meaning of this phrase is clear even if the origin is not as evident. Some believe it's based upon simple common sense. Lead is a common metal that is known to be heavy. Someone may think you're moving too slowly, as if you are weighted down with lead. This would be the hint to hurry up, get going and move faster.

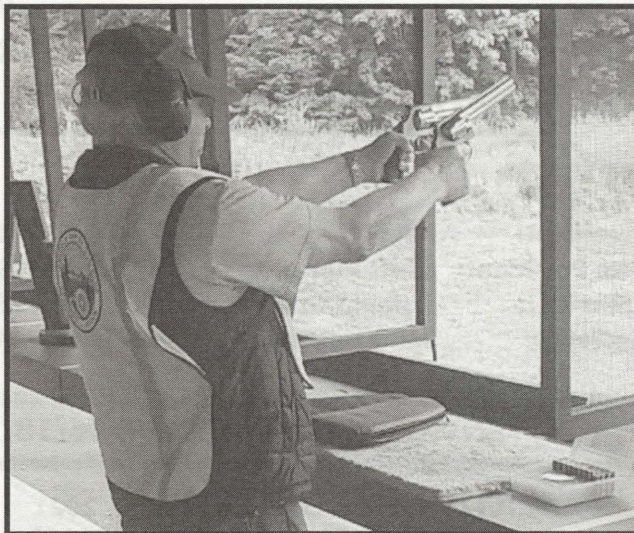
There is the also the case of lead build up in your body because you shoot too much. I have been aware of the presence of lead in my blood for many years. Many years ago, just as a thought, I requested my doctor to test for lead when he drew blood for a blood test. The doctor was surprised by the request, since he had never previously been requested to do the test in an adult male. Lead is measured at micrograms per deciliter (mcg/dL). In children the number is highly significant as it can interfere with a child's development. Other than children and pregnant women, the amount of lead that can create harm is debatable and subject to the individual. My scale has varied from 5 mcg/dL to 20 mcg/dL.

You can imagine my surprise after that first test when I received a call from OSHA asking if I had an explanation for the high lead levels. I said I was a sport shooter and that having lead in my system came from that exposure to lead. It was not a result of my occupation as a salesman. Apparently OSHA was looking for exposure to lead due to occupational environments.



The number that sparked a call was 20 mcg/dL. I had been shooting a lot in an indoor environment, but I continued to shoot since there seemed to be no dis-

cernable problem. Every six months or so I would have blood tests. When I reduced my shooting, the number dropped to around 17 mcg/dL. I stopped indoor shooting completely and went to 100% outdoor shooting. Over a period of time my lead level hovered around 12 mcg/dL. I shoot a lot.



The issue of contamination by lead was a constant debate in my case. Bare in mind that lead does not permeate the skin and can only gain access through the mouth, nose and eyes. There were many comments made that my reloading was the source of contamination, but I vigorously argued this was not the cause in my case. I exercised rigorous hand cleaning, and reloading has no fumes which could enter my body. Eating while reloading or shooting was a no-no. I contended that the lead was airborne in my situations, and that the lead fumes leaving the barrel of the firearm from lead bullets hung in the air and were breathed in by me. The other source from all firearm ammunition is the primers which contain lead styphnate. Lead styphnate is the chemical in the primer mixture that makes the spark when struck by the firing pin. A copper jacketed bullet may not leave a lead trail, but the primer sure does. In the case of copper plated bullets, the rifling of the firearm strips the copper, exposing lead as it leaves the barrel.

Recently I took a respite from shooting for five months. Like zero. I requested a lead level test. The new number is 5 mcg/dL. I am back to shooting now and delighted to know conclusively the cause for the lead build up in my case. It also told me that lead will dissipate out of the body once the source is eliminated. All our chemistry is different so results vary. All our exposures to firearms is also variable so each to their own. So if you are not a child, but are child-like, not to worry.

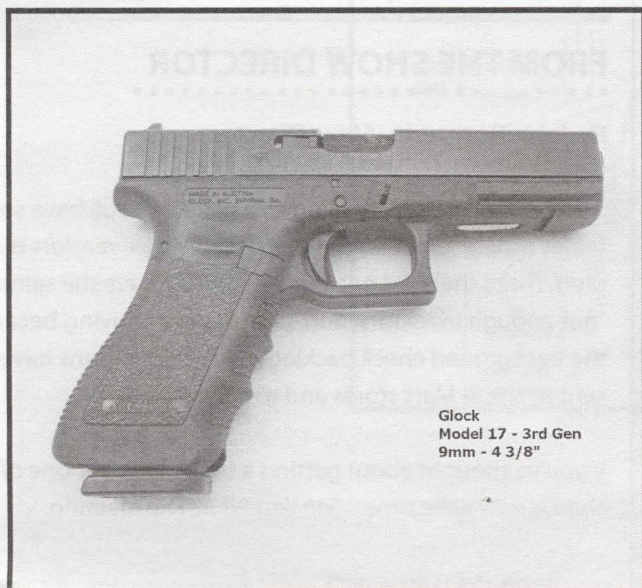
ME AND MY GLOCKS

By ibdennis

Many the words have been written about the Glock handguns. Some praising them and others scoffing at them. I am in the praise line. My first Glock came to be in 1992. It was a Model 21 in 45 ACP made in 1991. It was purchased initially by a law officer; but after it went off in a police locker room, it was declared a defective firearm. Many claimed it was a defective detective, however the firearm soon became available for sale. I didn't think it to be a defective firearm and had no hesitancy to purchase it. I immediately sent it to Glock, and they stated the firearm was not defective.

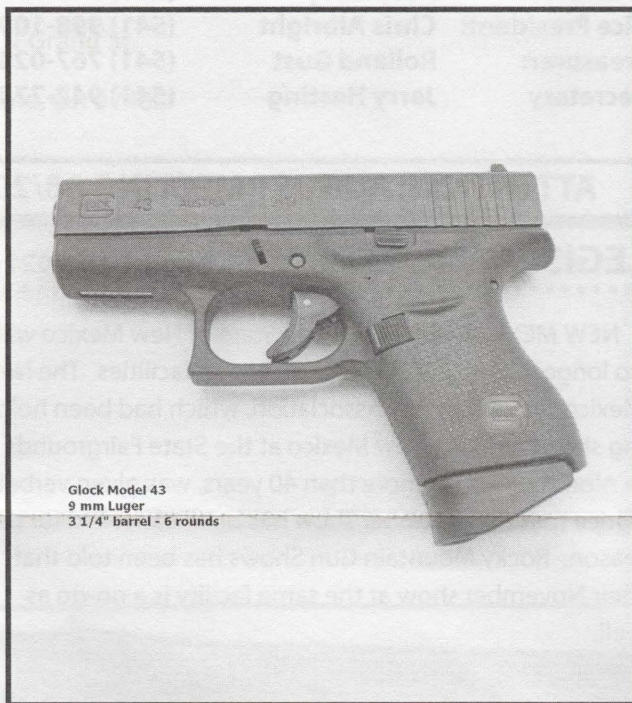
Glocks do not and cannot fire accidentally. ... Every Glock firearm comes with three independent safeties: trigger safety, firing pin safety and drop safety. The only way one can fire a Glock is by pulling the trigger.

Glock firearms have been proven to be a safe firearm. The test to drop it out of a helicopter onto cement gave proof the firearm does not go berserk when dropped. There is no external safety so to make the firearm speak, one must have a finger firmly on the trigger. The Glock firearm is mostly made up of a synthetic composite construction save for the slide and barrel which are steel. All the Glock pistols have the same basic style design and can be had in 45 ACP - 45 G.A.P. - 10mm - 40 S&W - 357 Sig - 9mm Luger - 380 ACP and 22 LR with a few varying frame sizes. This is due to the magazines which have various capacities in several calibers.



The first Glock was named after the patent number the inventor applied for. It was his Patent #17, and the gun became the Glock 17. After that each firearm carried a consecutive model number.

When I started to carry a Glock model 19 (compact in 9mm luger), I did not have a round in the chamber. I was the one who said I could jack one in the chamber if need dictated. It was pointed out that one in the chamber was the proper way to carry a Glock. Aside from it being a totally safe carry, it eliminated the two hand approach to load a cartridge when needed.



Among my most interesting Glock happenings was the opportunity to shoot a Glock Model 18 in fully automatic. It was an I did it moment, but it was easy to see the lack of control one had when it was fully automatic. After the first round it tended to rise up, trying to gain access to the ceiling. Besides that, the quick use of ammunition seemed wasteful. Quick is 20 rounds per second. One shot at a time is the way I savor shooting.

For conceal carry my favorite is the model 43 in 9mm luger. Prior to that I jumped at the chance to purchase a Glock model 42 in 380 ACP. I should have waited, as the model 43 was physically identical and only varied in horse power. And recoil of course. I understand that the Glock is now being offered in 22 LR. It is the model 44. I guess I might need one of those someday.

FRENCH MAS 1892 REVOLVER

By ibdennis

Here again is a firearm that spoke to me while at a gun show. It must have had a come-hither, female French accent, because I bought into it. "What was I thinking?" This revolver has just been sitting there in my collection for years without being disturbed until I started my research writing projects. But maybe I was smarter than I realized, and my smarts have just caught up to me.

The Manufacture d'Armes de Saint-Étienne, often abbreviated to MAS, ("Saint-Étienne Weapons Factory" in English) was a French state-owned firearms manufacturer in the town of Saint-Étienne, Loire, France.

This firearm was made from 1892 until the mid 1920s and is a totally surprise of a firearm. The more one looks at this piece, the more surprises are uncovered. First to be recognized is the early developments of a double action revolver. It also functions in single action mode. The barrel is round with three flat sides starting an inch and a half from the cylinder. On the right flat side is the manufacturing date of this firearm which is 1894, and the top flat has a decorative script that reads "Mle 1892." This is a well made, beautifully finished and classy firearm. It was mainly used for officers in the military and was known as the "French Army Lebel." Lebel had little to do with this firearm save for the ammunition which was the 8 mm Lebel (8 x 27R) cartridge. This was often compared to the power of the 32 acp.



The most striking oddity was the swing out cylinder that will swing out to the right. This is apparently the only firearm or one of the few to do this. The reasons are lost to this day but guesses can be found regarding the French mentality of calvary, horses, swords and

rein holding while reloading. This oddity does not impair the functionality of its use. Along with this is the loading gate on the right hand side of the firearm. Pulling the gate latch back and down exposes the cylinder for individual loading. The cylinder can also be indexed with each pull of the trigger. The short description is that when the gate is open, the hammer is disengaged which makes the cylinder rotate with each pull of the trigger thus allowing the loading of the fresh round. Why this was incorporated is strange, as the swing out cylinder is far easier for loading.



On the right side just above the grip is a screw. Backing off this screw allows the side plate on the left side to swing forward and expose the internal parts of the firearm. It was suggested that one could clean the action and oil it if need be. Looking at the pieces and how they fit together is surprising. It is well worth pointing out that the walnut grips are beautifully checked.



Four hundred thousand of these firearms were created, and they were specifically earmarked as the military Ordnance revolver. They were retired in 1945 when they were replaced with a semi-auto pistol. The Model 1892 was well respected during its service to France. Ammunition for the French MAS 1892 revolver is still available, but in my opinion a bit pricey at well over a buck a round.

THE COLT BISLEY

By ibdennis

Twenty five miles southwest of London, England, there is a village called Bisley in the borough of Surrey. The National Shooting Centre is located near the village of Bisley in Surrey and gets its colloquial name "Bisley ranges". It is wholly owned by the National Rifle Association of the United Kingdom (NRA). This came about in 1890.

Colt wanted one of its firearms to participate in these Bisley shooting events, and the Model 1873 Single Action Army (SAA) seemed to be the firearm that (with modifications) could be a contender. In 1894 Colt, the U.S. firearms manufacturer, introduced and sold the Bisley Model of its famous Single Action Army revolver specifically designed for target shooting. This revolver featured a longer grip, a wider and lower hammer spur, a wider trigger and adjustable sights. The Bisley model was offered in 17 calibers which ranged from the rare to the ultra rare. The most common were 32-20, .38-40, 45 Colt and 44-40.

The original 1873 SAA plow handle was designed to pivot in the hand during firing which created a problem for target shooting. Recoil dynamics changed with a heavy load like the 180 and 240 grain bullet. It was needed for the recoil to occur straight back which would result in a faster recovery time shot after shot. This is what the Bisley model achieved.



The discernable feature of this modified Colt SAA was the grip shape which allowed a firmer and larger handle and did not roll in the hand like the Model 1873. The hammer was lower for faster cocking. The trigger was also wider, as was the trigger opening. Colt introduced this model in 1894 and continued production until 1912.

First generation Colt Single Action Army revolvers in good condition are hard to come by. Finding one also



requires a banker or loan institution to help finance the purchase. In 1953 Ruger introduced the single action revolver designed to follow in the foot steps of the Colt SAA. To continue in this direction, Ruger also introduced the Bisley models in 1986 to make the handling of the bigger revolvers easier and less painful in recoil. During recoil, many heavy magnum revolvers rotate in the hand. The Bisley grip frames are superior in that they move recoil back to the shoulder.



So can you name the person from the early 1920's history that favored the Colt Model 1873 Bisley? With pearl grips no less. This firearm can be seen today at the Autry Museum in Los Angeles. This Bisley model was used by none other than Pancho Villa. And you ask, why the Bisley? The reason was that Pancho had arthritis and the Bisley design was easier on the hand when fired.

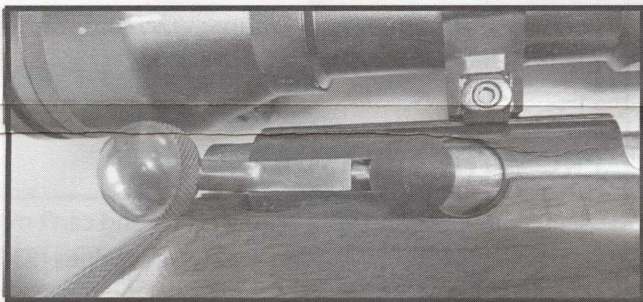
Today's offering of Bisley style firearms can be found with Italian reproductions and Ruger firearms. These can be easily identified by the straight portion on the forward part of the grip. It can also easily be identified by the straight down grip angle, rather than the plow handle look. I think the hammer on the Ruger Bisley (as was on the original Colt) is an elegant cosmetic design aside from its practicality. It hangs low, thus making it easier to reach on the straight back recoil. A wider trigger also makes for easy access and better control in shooting. I am a big fan of the Colt Bisley firearms and shooting them is always a joy.

BROWNING .22 CALIBER T-BOLT

By ibdennis

I attended a 50 yard bowling pin rimfire shooting event recently. I decided that my 22 rim fire magnum Browning T-Bolt would be the one to be a better choice to dispatch a four pound heavy bowling pin. The standard weight of a new bowling pin is 3 lbs 8 oz ;but when lead bullets wedge in them, they are all at least 4 lbs. The object of the shoot is to hit the bowling pin so it falls off the table. This requires a direct hit center mass to force it backwards rather than a glancing shot which can spin the pin and leave it prone on the table. Of course, a miss is a miss.

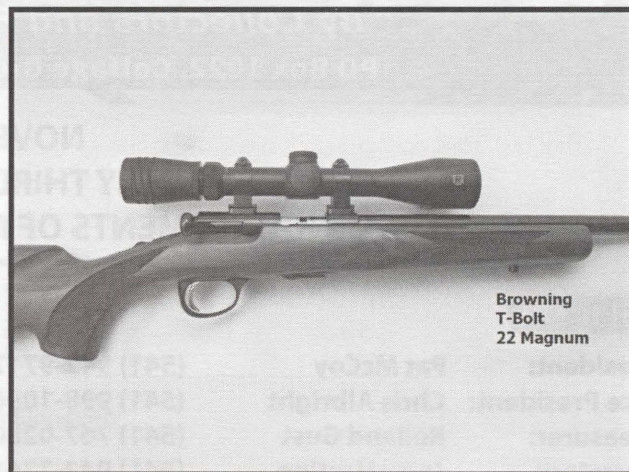
The Browning T-Bolt was an attention getter, as all the other rifles were the typical bolt action variety in 22 rimfire long rifle. The other feature was that I never missed. These rifles feature a very tight lock up and a easy extraction due to the cam action of the T-Bolt. The barrel is also a target grade heavy weight. This tends to make the rifle very accurate.



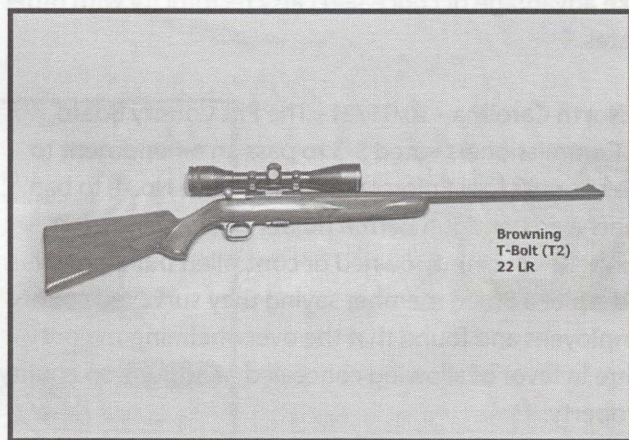
The usual bolt action rifle opens when the bolt handle is pulled upward and back and on closing is a push forward and the bolt is pushed down. The T-Bolt handle is a pull back on the bolt to open and a push forward on the bolt handle to close. This equates to four separate actions for a standard bolt action rifle, as opposed to the T-Bolt which utilizes only two motions. Simple and fast and its lockup is secure. This part is achieved by the cross-bolt locking system.

The Browning T-Bolt was made originally from 1965-1974 in 22 LR only. It was a well made firearm but had one little problem that was vexing. During 1966-1971, the wood stocks on some of these rifles were treated with salt. Apparently over time the salt leached out and attacked the steel. A warning that if you are purchasing a Browning shotgun or rifle, check

the underside where the wood is in contact with the metal. Usually you can see if there is any rusting.



In 2006 Browning re-introduced the T-Bolt rifle in 22 WMR, 17 HMR and 22 LR. I was eager to purchase one in 22 magnum. My passion was the eastern Oregon desert rat shoots. These little rodents decimate a crop rather quickly, and they propagate rapidly. The 22 Long rifle round reaches out to 100 yards, but the 22 magnum can be counted on to shoot 150 yards or greater. It does this with the 30 grain or 40 grain bullets. I was never enamored with the 17 HMR, as this light weight 29 grain bullet was easily buffeted by wind. Wind is a natural happening on the Oregon desert. When especially windy, I switched to my center fire 17 caliber wildcat cartridges which would buck the wind nicely as they trotted out there at near 4000 fps.



The Browning T-Bolt is easier to fire and reload with minimal hand movement. The rotary magazine which was unique to these later rifles proved to be reliable and easy to load. I sure like my Browning T-Bolt rifles.

NAGANT M 1887

By ibdennis

Over the years I have purchased firearms that have made me wonder, "What was I thinking?" These mystery purchases may have been super affordable, unbroken, in good shape cosmetically, a curiosity as to what it was; and I could/would do research on the subject. Thus is the story of the Model 1887 Husqvarna 7.65 Swedish Nagant revolver made from 1897 to 1905. Many relate the name Nagant to the M1895 with its funky gas seal cylinder, but the M1887 was totally different.

The firearm was designed by Leon and Emile Nagant and was originally made in Liege, Belgium, in 1887. In 1898 Sweden licensed Husqvarna to produce this revolver which was believed would be a quantity of 14,000 firearms. These were produced for individuals and private industry security guards. The M1887 was never sanctioned for use by the military.

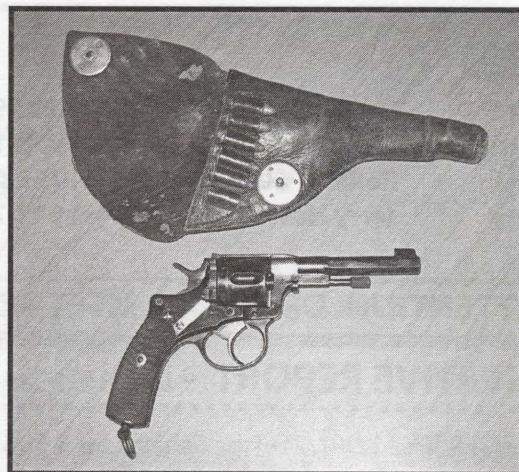


The revolver was a double action design but could be fired single action. The ammunition was 7.65 x 22 mm Swedish Nagant. This equates to about a 30 caliber bullet. The cartridge can be equated in power to that of a 32 S&W Long. Ammunition is long gone.

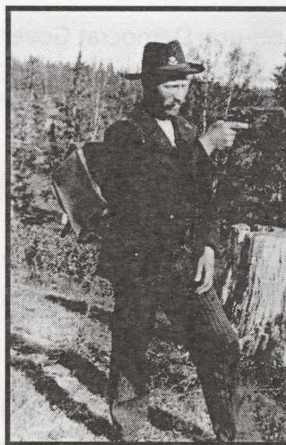
With my reintroduction to the M1887, I was intrigued by what I thought I knew (but did not know) about this firearm. The 4-1/2" barrel is partially round and octagon. This is a double action revolver which retracts the hammer and firing pin to back off when the firearm is at rest. The right side has a loading gate similar to the Colt single action handguns.

Getting the fired cases out was perplexing at first; but after knowing the secret handshake, I have to admit to it being clever. The knurled rod under the

barrel needs a half turn twist to release the rod. One then pulls on the rod to the full length of the barrel which allows the rod assembly to flop over to the right side. This then aligns the rod to the cylinder, and a rearward motion of the rod ejects the spent case from the cylinder. Removal of the cylinder can be done when the rod assembly is to the right, allowing the silver cylinder pin to move forward, releasing the cylinder to be removed to the right.



The most annoying thing about this revolver from my point of view was that the cylinder drum could be turned when the hammer remained down. The cylinder rotated around just fine when firing; and when fully loaded, it made no difference which cylinder position lined up. A fix was instituted to correct this free spinning cylinder, but apparently did not find widespread acceptance.



The firearm is exceptionally well made and cosmetically attractive. The grip panels are checkered wood, and the back and front strap are stippled for a non-slip grip.

The M1887 is sometimes referred to as the Swedish Officers Model; however at that time the government did not supply handguns to the officers. The firearms were purchased by the individuals.

Ammunition cannot be found these days, so it requires creative reloading. It is suggested that 32-20 brass can be used to make the 7.65 Swiss

(Cont. from P. 2)

Nagant ammunition; however the rim is too thick. On a tight firearm (most of them), it is required to thin the rim on the inside. While thinking about thin rims, I recalled my supply of 310 cadet Martini brass had a thin rim. The cylinder in the Nagant was a straight bore through. I could have cut the brass back to the dimensional length of the 7.65 Swiss Nagant, but it just so happened that 310 brass plus bullet was a perfect fit. I loaded this with 2.5 grains Bullseye, and it was a pleasant load to shoot. The brass did not deform so numerous reloading could be had. This is a fun gun which let me step back 100 years ago in time.

PRIMERS 101

By ibdennis

This is being written during the pandemic years as reloading components have become scarce. Powder, bullets and primers are difficult to find, unless of course you want to deal with the scroungers who have hoarded these items for the sake of massive profits per item.

My thoughts about this subject were started when a friend commented on primers and stated that magnum primers were to be used on magnum cartridges like the 44 Magnum, 300 Magnum, Weatherby magnums and the 357 Magnum. I challenged that. The other comment that was made was he did not like a certain brand of primer as they caused too many misfires. I challenged that, also.

Since comments about primers, bullets and powder are subjective, I will treat these as individual reloading sport preferences. In this writing, I will dwell on primers. Primers are the spark plug of the cartridge. The primer detonates causing the powder to "burn," which builds pressure to make the bullet go down the firearm barrel. There are basically two styles of primers. Berdan and Boxer primers are two different brands of center fire primers used in modern metallic cartridge ammunition.

The main difference between the two is that Boxer primers have a self-contained anvil within the primer, whereas Berdan primers have to have an anvil that is integral to the primer pocket in the cartridge case. Berdan primers are just like the percussion cap used on percussion firearms. Boxer primers can be used for reloading but the Berdan, not so much. A good way to identify Boxer cartridges is by the one hole versus the Berdan which uses two small holes which surround the built in anvil. Of interest is the story that the Boxer primer was invented in England and the Berdan in America. Their uses have flip flopped as to country popularity and the demands of the military of each country.

There is a physical difference in size between a pistol primer and a rifle primer. The rifle primer is just a smidgen larger. On the subject of magnum primers, magnum primers are for igniting harder to ignite

powders, for whatever reasons. The reasons may be because the powder used has a slower burning rate or the capacity of powder (like 60 plus grains) by weight is large. More important to me is the use of a firearm in extreme cold environs. The magnum primers will ignite powder better in sub-low, real cold temperatures. This could be because of the hotter burn of a magnum primer.



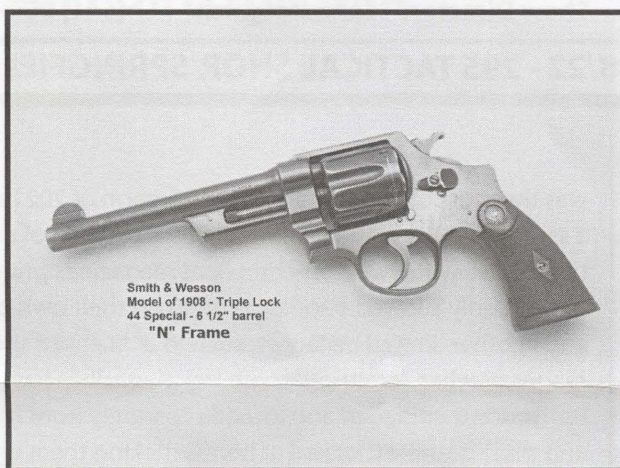
And then there are the reloading sportsters who extol one brand of primer over another. Like me. I will only use Federal standard (or magnum) primers in my center fire revolvers. Federal primers are softer; and when the hammer strike is light, Federal primers tend to fire more reliably than all the harder primers. In semi automatics the firing pin strike is consistent and hard, so I find almost any brand of primer works well. As to notice of pressure or accuracy in a standard versus a magnum primer, it makes little or no difference that I have found.

And then the issue of "bad" brand primers. As a safety range officer, I noted many times when a re-loader was shooting and had misfires. Sometimes it was a light strike on a revolver. Increasing the tension on the hammer spring makes the hammer hit the primer harder. That conversation always makes me ask the re-loader whether they cleaned the primer pockets on reusable cases. Without exception the answer was no. Carbonization builds up in the primer pocket and in some cases provides a cushioning effect or a gap to the primer pocket bottom. The second strike usually pushes the primer deeper into the pocket, and then it goes bang. I hope you find my personal observations on this subject to be helpful and thoughtful.

S&W TRIPLE LOCK

By ibdennis

As a Smith & Wesson fan, I am always on the look out for those early revolvers. None could be earlier than the New Century Triple Lock. The revolver was made between 1907 and 1915 and earmarked for the then new powerful 44 Special cartridge. It was called the Smith & Wesson .44 Hand Ejector 1st Model "Triple Lock" Double Action Revolver and was in the then new large "N" frame. This firearm was also the first swing out cylinder for the 44 special. The "N-Frame" is still in use today and was the stepping stone for the 357 Magnum and the 44 Magnum cartridges.

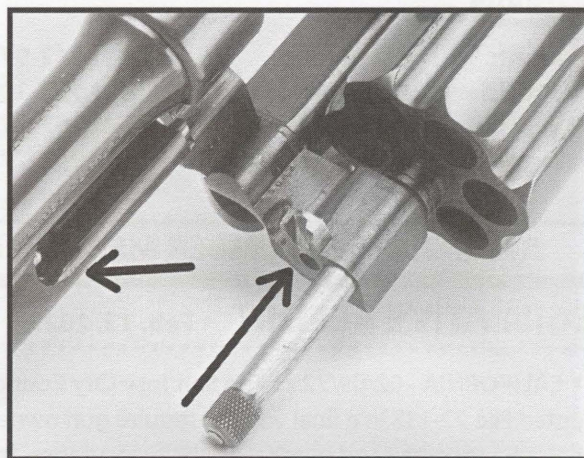


The triple lock, like the name implies, had three lock-up points. The third point underneath the barrel lug required extra factory fitting, was tedious to build and required extra attention in manufacturing, which made it a feature that was soon abandoned. The production numbers were low, making it difficult these days for collectors to find. Especially in good condition.

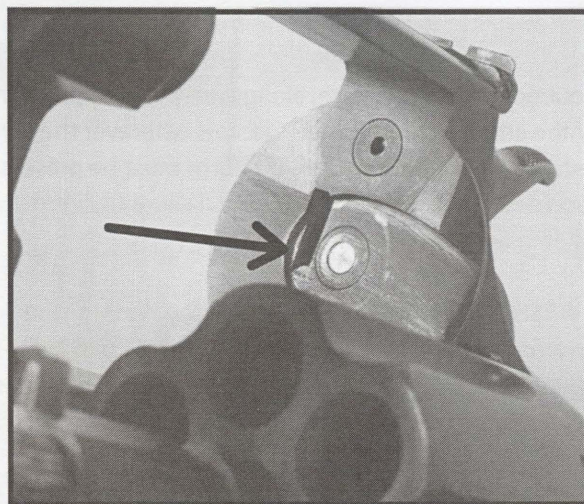
The strength of the triple lock impressed Elmer Keith, since he was able to use loads that approached the magnitude of the soon to come 44 Magnum. There was no problem with the frame and lock-up, but rather with the heat treating process of the cylinder available at that time. These loads could make the cylinder susceptible to cracks or cylinder blowups. There was talk that Elmer had a few firearms that couldn't make the grade with his loads.

Some interesting tidbits about the Triple Lock. The sights were fixed mostly, and a few had target rear

sights. The barrel was tapered with an under lug that protected the extractor rod. The firearm was fitted with diamond checkered pattern grips featuring the S&W medallion at the top part of the grip. The hammer and trigger were case hardened. The polishing was perfect and resulted in the rich deep blue. The caliber was mainly 44 special; but rare specimens can be found in 38-40 Win., .44-40 Win. and .45 Colt, as well as a rather large batch of .455's that were supplied to England for their military. Nickel plated firearms are a rarity.



Barrel lengths could be had in 4", 5", 6", 6-1/2" and 7-1/2". 15,376 were made. The modifications to the S&W 2nd model which followed the triple lock, eliminated the extractor shroud and the yoke locking mechanism.



There are those who say this was the finest revolver that Smith & Wesson ever produced. I am one of those. The debate goes on as to whether the third lock was beneficial or whether it was a cosmetic example of S&W engineering. My opinion was that it was not needed, which bears out historically.

THE REMINGTON DERINGER

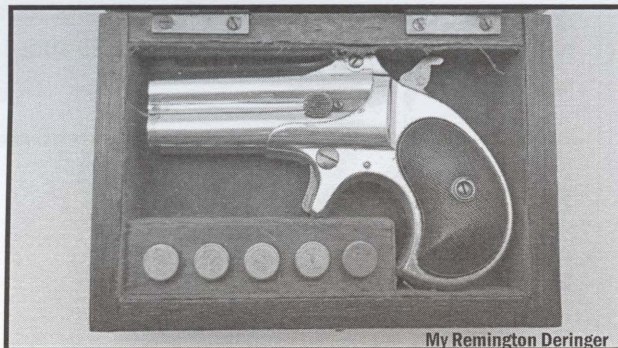
By ibdennis

Sometimes my writing subjects lead me down a rabbit hole like Alice in Wonderland. This article started out as a study of the Remington over-under 41 rimfire double Deringer. But then evolved into why this was called a Deringer, then how did these firearms get the name Deringer and finally evolved into the correct spelling "Deringer" or "Derringer." It ended with the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. "I'm late, I'm late for a very important date," sez the white rabbit.



Deringer used to assassinate Lincoln

It all started in 1825 when Henry Deringer invented a muzzle loading, caplock, single-shot pistol. On April 14, 1865, John Wilkes Booth used a small firearm to change American history when he fired a 44-caliber pistol made by Henry Deringer of Philadelphia. From thence onward, any small, concealable firearm was referred to as a Deringer whether made by this maker or not. A typo, somewhere along the line, changed the spelling to a double "R" which results that either spelling is now considered correct.



My Remington Deringer

I always wanted a Remington over/under Deringer. No real reason other than it is cool. Many years ago, one came my way and included an original wooden box. It had five rounds of original ammunition with it--41 Rimfire. I could actually imagine the underside of a poker table through the eyes of the beholder of

this firearm. Like I said, this is cool.



This style firearm was called the Model 95 and was manufactured for 69 years from 1866 to 1935. There were four basic variation types, and most differed only in the name stamp. The one I have is a Model 3 - Type II made from 1888 to 1911. Forty-one rimfire, which had a 130 grain lead bullet, is the only caliber made for this firearm. From the three digit serial number, I was able to determine it dated from 1888. But there was an anomaly in assigning serial numbers which means that it more accurately dates as pre-1911 sometime.



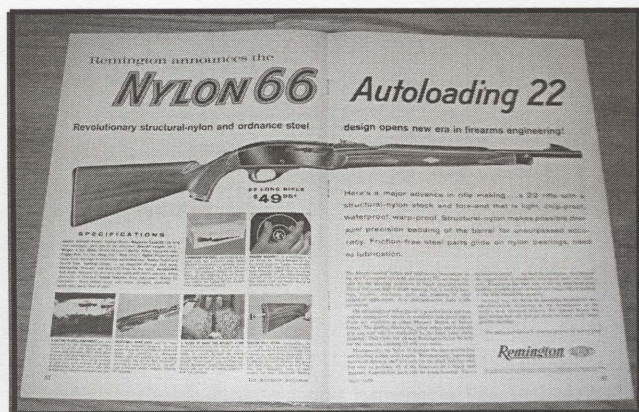
HIGH STANDARD MODERN DERINGER

This is a single action firearm. Each pull of the hammer alternates to each chamber. Loading is accomplished by swinging the latch on the right side to a forwards position, allowing the barrels to swing upward. There is a manual ejector for ejecting spent casings. The most problematic issue is that the hinge portion could easily be cracked or broken. My bird's eye grips are checkered hard rubber. Walnut, rosewood and pearl can also be found. The finishes could be nickel or blue. What does it feel like to shoot this Remington Deringer? I have no idea. It remains on my shelf as an admired collectable.

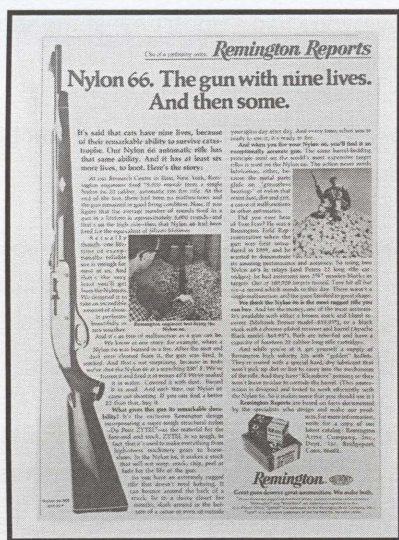
THE REMINGTON NYLON 66

By ibdennis

If I wander through the labyrinth of memories concerning my involvement with firearms, the Remington Model Nylon 66 stands out and leads all. It was 1959 when Remington introduced this semi-automatic 22 caliber rifle. It was something of a shocker that Remington would produce a firearm stock made of nylon. Supposedly indestructible, accurate and reliable. From my point of view it was all of that.



I purchased one early on and enjoyed it. Those were the days where I bought one and traded for two. Then many years later I had one rise again and had to have it. My second rifle did not disappoint, and I still have it to this day. It is accurate enough for me and never ever misfires or jams. That is to say if one uses quality ammunition. The cheap stuff can be dirty which could lead to troubles, so I do not use bargain basement ammunition. Especially in a firearm that really is not meant to come apart.



I never forgot the publication about Tom Frye and his amazing shooting with the Nylon 66. He was in Las Vegas for this event in 1959 and shot with two rifles to shoot hand-tossed 2-3/4" cube wood blocks. He shot at 100,010 blocks and missed six.

I remember the picture of him sitting on this pile of wood blocks and the picture of the Remington Nylon 66. The memory never faded, so I did a diligent search to find the article and refresh my memories. Search as I might I could not find the article that my brain had remembered.

Then one day in my Google search I realized that memory wasn't completely accurate. It wasn't an article but was instead an advertisement in 1959 promoting this rifle. A sigh came out as I reread those words that had so impacted me. So as not to keep a secret, this ad can be found on the internet at: <https://www.thefirearmblog.com/blog/2021/08/30/remington-nylon-66/>



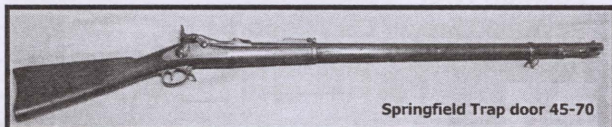
The spark that ignited these words came from a friend whom I had befriended for many years. He had a Nylon 66 semi-automatic; and unfortunately, he had broken all the rules. The use of cheap 22 ammunition created a jamming problem. With good intentions he decided to break the second rule. He took it apart for cleaning and while attempting to reassemble, discovered the reason he should not have taken it apart. Several years later he advised me of his many-in-pieces rifle. He asked if I could reassemble it. Not a chance but I could take it to a gunsmith. Two gunsmiths later, they admitted defeat. A gunsmith friend from far away made the comment he had created a tool to aid in reassembly. Off it went and true to his word he returned the Remington Nylon 66 repaired. It shot like new and was returned to my friend.

My friend had a fall and driving was not recommended until he healed. I was his wheels and drove him to doctors and medicine. Friends do that for friends. As he recovered, he expressed his appreciation by gifting me his Nylon 66. I was ecstatic. The generosity was not expected or needed, but I found I could not refuse. From 1959 up to today I really have had a love affair with this rifle.

WINCHESTER 1886 & 45-70

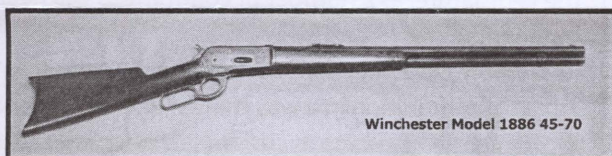
By ibdennis

In 1964 I was in Los Angeles getting pretty fed up with traffic, congestion, people and smog. I decided a move to the outback of our country, Oregon, might remedy my displeasure with LA. Knowing about the move, a friend gave me a rifle for hunting that would be handy for bear attacks. It was a Springfield Trapdoor caliber 45-70. It was my first rifle, and I still have it to this day. The fascination with the firearms bug bit me very hard.



Springfield Trap door 45-70

In 1965 I was in Monroe, Oregon, at a gun store and saw a Winchester 1886 rifle in 45-70. I had to have it and scraped together \$150.00 to purchase it. A few months later I had to make an emergency trip to LA and did not have the money for airfare. I went back to Monroe and was given \$100.00 for the Winchester which made the airplane trip possible. I regretted getting rid of that firearm and vowed to find another.



Winchester Model 1886 45-70

Finding another was difficult until 1982 when I found one for \$450.00. I winced at the price back then but smile brightly today. This Winchester was in good condition and had a case hardened receiver. The serial number determined it was manufactured in 1888. Neither the Trapdoor nor the Winchester were introduced to game, although I tried. It wasn't the fault of the firearms.

The Springfield Trapdoor presented several problems shooting to the point of aim. Every load I tried shot high. I even tried black powder but discovered that the 45-70 cartridge would not accept 70 grains of black powder. In 1886 black powder must have been different. Since the front sight was pin removable, I built up a sight to shoot point of aim to 100 yards. I always wondered about the Springfield shooting high, and then one day I read that this had been intentional in that day. It appears that the military wanted to shoot

the soldier and not the horse, therefore the impact point was made for the rider. The horse was obviously more valuable to our side if the rider were gone. Could be true.

The Winchester model 1886 is a fantastic rifle, and its action is smooth and reliable. I decided at the time to get as many varied bullet molds for this cartridge as possible. I have molds from 300 grains to 500 grains. The action is solid and strong. I worked up a heavy load for the Winchester but made absolutely sure these rounds never went in, or even near, the Springfield Trapdoor. Historically the Winchester is a wonderful firearm. But my quest for like rifles was not over.



Winchester Model 71 - 348 Winchester

I spent years looking for a Winchester Model 71 in 348 Winchester. The Model 71 is basically the same action as the Model 1886. Success. The firearm that I have was manufactured in 1940. Kicks like a mule. Mine is not a collectable but is an honest shooter.

LWS SEECAMP

By ibdennis

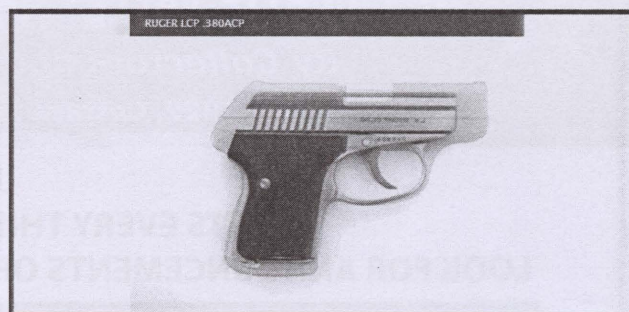
At one point in my life I was focused on small carryable semiautomatic firearms. This interest covered 22 caliber to 380 ACP, and, but small in size was most critical criteria. The little Browning 25 automatic was my favorite. Then my head was turned to the LWS Seecamp. I was still a fan of the 25 caliber as it was far better than a sharp stick. So I had and carried this little stainless steel double action semi, which could be easily concealed. It was safe to carry, as the double action only trigger required a definite mind set to fire a round. Hence, no safety to be bothered by. Wanna shoot? Pull trigger when a round was in the chamber. When the magazine was removed, the action did not function. This meant you could have one in the chamber with the loaded magazine removed, and the only way it can be fired is by placing the magazine in the handgun. Safe to leave exposed around the house this way.

One day I could not find my Seecamp, and I looked frantically for months. Finally I reported it stolen. I missed my Lilliput 25 and went on search for another. What I found was the 32 acp Seecamp. Had to have it. Same size physically with a tad more poop ammunition wise. Then suddenly I had a flash back memory at where the 25 ACP might be. I had thrown it under the seat of my car while picking someone up at the airport.



The Seecamp LWS-32 is still being made today. The LWS-25 was manufactured from 1981-1985. The LWS-32 was first made in 1985 and the LWS-380 in 1999. There are no sights for this point-and-shoot, double action only, firearm. All calibers are double action only, and all have identical frame sizes. Magazine capacity

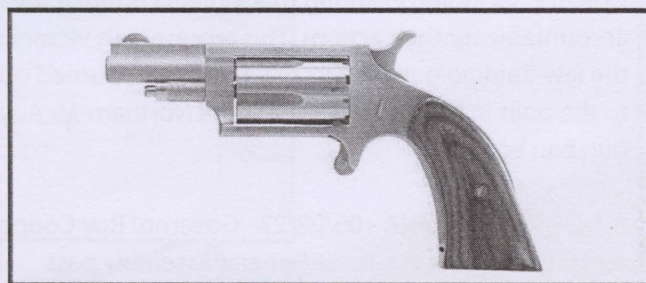
is six rounds for the LWS-32 and LWS-380 and seven for the LWS-25.



Now I had two Seecamps. Best to look into the third in 380 acp. Or not. I was warned by two individuals that the 25 and 32 ACP were a handful in recoil, but the 380 was double that in shooting. To this day no third Seecamp. The Seecamp ammunition was a bit too specific for reliability. My testing proved that, so I made sure of the fodder it would digest. The 32 ACP highly recommended Winchester Silvertip HP as most reliable. It was true. It did feed correctly and with no malfunctions.

My friend was a detective with the police department and was doing a drug bust. A pit bull was in attack mode, so he fired one shot. The bullet went smack dab in the center of the nose. The dog stopped, jumped on the bed and shook its head while copious amounts of blood were shaken off by the dog. The bullet was a Winchester Silvertip HP, and it landed on the bridge of the dogs nose. That apparently was tough bone, and the bullet just slid along the nose without any penetration. The dog survived. The detective changed his choice in ammunition after this episode. I do not know the caliber, but I suspect 9 mm.

<http://seecamp.com/> - The Seecamp website has a plethora of fabulous information. Very complete if you are interested in digging deeper. You can still get a factory new Seecamp, as they are basically handmade. LWS is named after the founder Ludwig (Louis) Wilhelm Seecamp.



My choice of a small firearm has changed over the years, and today my first choice is a North American Arms in 22 magnum. But that could change next week.

THE JAPANESE TYPE 26

By ibdennis

Japan awoke to world industrialization and invented and produced their own designs for firearms. This all started shortly after Commodore Perry arrived in Uraga Harbor in 1853. First to be produced were the rifles, followed by a revolver in 1893. The revolver is named Type 26 to honor the 26th year of the Meiji emperor's reign. The design was inspired by the S&W top breaks, the Webley Mark 1 and the Austrian Rast & Gasser handguns.



It was unique since it was double action only, with a rounded hammer (not a spur), and would not function as a single action. The ammunition was all Japanese, a 9×22mmR Type 26 rimmed case cartridge with a bullet weight of 150 grains. This round can be compared to the 38 S&W.

Production of any large quantity of these revolvers ceased in 1923 due to the earthquake destruction of the Tokyo Arsenal. A total of 59,227 were serial numbered. There are five collector variations, but none are jump-out-at-you visual or mechanical changes.

I always wondered why the handguns of Japan had

such anemic ammunition. The Type 26 revolver and the semi-auto Nambu Type 14 used the 8mm Nambu cartridge. Not powerful rounds. At close range they would serve the job, but any distance would cut the impact damage way down. The answer escaped me for many years until by chance I was looking through a book on Japanese swords. The sword has been the main Japanese weapon for over a thousand years. This view supports the following that with the sword it is up close and personal defense or offence. Why wouldn't this be the same philosophy for the hand guns of Japan? So why design bigger or better when what you got is what you like.

As suggested, the Japanese Type 26 revolver was a blend of several world handguns, none being direct copies. There were a few anomalies that should be noted. The cylinder was free rotating when at rest. This meant that if a round was fired there was no assurance once holstered that the cylinder would free rotate and not be under a fresh round. Firing six times in succession would not be a problem.



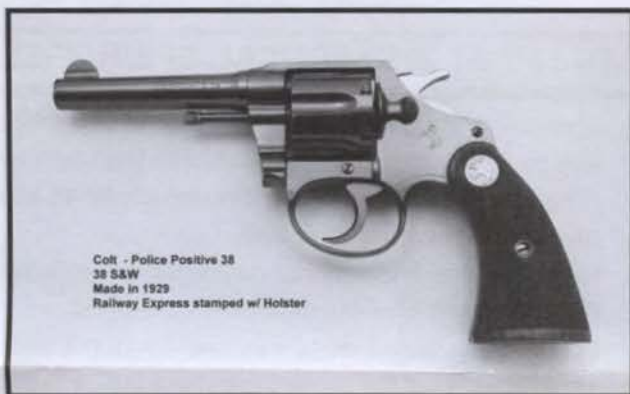
The top break was not considered a strong action so cartridge variations do not exist. I do not note a reason that the action interior is exposed by a few simple moves. It is nice to view the mechanics of the internal parts but? My firearm still has the factory grease which was generously used in all parts of the interior, in the barrel and in all cylinders. Many years ago a gathering of collectors of Japanese firearms deemed this to be an arsenal rework. It is just so perfect that I cannot be convinced that it was not made, shipped out, never fired and came fluttering into my firearms accumulation.

Of course there was a replica holster made for this firearm, and I had to have it. A few rounds of factory fresh ammunition were also needed. Will I ever clean it and test fire this beauty? I think not.

COLT POLICE POSITIVE

By ibdennis

Prior to 1907, Colt's double action revolvers were subject to accidental discharge if the hammer was hit or the firearm was dropped. In 1907 Colt introduced the "Police Positive" revolver which had an internal hammer block mechanism that would stop a strike on the primer unless the trigger was pulled deliberately. These small frame revolvers were aimed to provide the needs of police, detectives, security personnel, guards and those civilians looking for a pocket size firearm. The Police Positive was offered from 1907 to 1947, however the design mechanisms was carried on in other revolvers offered well past the 1970s.



The Police Positive was offered in 22 LR, 32 long colt (32S&W), 38 S&W, 32-20 and 38 Special. The increase in cylinder length and a tad bit bigger frame size became the "Police Positive Special" for the 32-20 and 38 special cartridges. Barrel lengths were offered in 2 1/2" up to 6". These handguns were known for their smooth actions, and the claim to positive cylinder lock up based on their unique rotation of the cylinder in a clockwise direction.

Over the years I randomly collected these Colt revolvers when I would find one in good shape. I hardly paid attention to what I was accumulating until I had a REA marked revolver offered. It was pristine mint and boldly stamped on the back strap was "RY. EX.AGY". It came with a holster in excellent condition that actually spelled out "Railway Express Agency" in the leather. The real find to add to this was the original badge which stated Railway Express - Special Agent. The Colt factory serial number traced back to a factory ship date of January 1930. In 1929 all existing railway companies came together to form one company which became known as the Railway Express Agency.

Back in those days the packages traveled by train rail. Prior to 1929 there were several rail services which merged into one. REA for you youngsters was the UPS and FedEx that we know today. The end of REA was in the 1970s



Being a history sleuth, I decided to review REA history and the Colt revolver. I went to my favorite drainage money pot "Gun Broker" and did a search on the Police Positive revolvers. I hit the historical jackpot on this search. There were a few firearms offered of this type, and one that caught my eye was the one offered with the REA stamp just like the one I have. Condition not so good, but it still showed a four digit price. That was not what caught my eye. The seller had a 1971 authenticity letter from Colt describing the ship date of early January to the REA Company in Chicago. A little mathematical guess and by golly means this firearm and my firearm were manufactured in 1929 which is the same year that REA started. The serial numbers of these two specimen are only 300 numbers off.



I luv historical sleuthing when things like this fall into place.

COLT MODEL HAMMERLESS FIREARMS

By ibdennis

- Colt Model 1903 Pocket Hammerless 32 ACP
- Colt Model 1908 Vest Pocket Hammerless 25 ACP
- Colt Model 1908 Pocket Hammerless 380 ACP



In the beginning there was the Colt Model 1903. This is the Hammerless Pocket model in 32 ACP. Five years later the Model 1908 Pocket Hammerless was introduced in 380 ACP. It was also 1908 when the similar looking model 1908 Vest Pocket firearm came out in 25 ACP. All three models have similar features like the thumb safety, the grip safety, hammerless and use similar take-down methods.

All were John Browning inspired firearms, in addition to the cartridges Browning developed. The main attractions of this group were the features that made it a perfect defense firearm. The biggest feature was its extreme reliability. Being hammerless, there was no visible hammer that could get snagged on clothing. The smooth lines also made it easy to slip in and out of a pocket. Above all, they were compact in size with great safety features.

The Model 1903 Pocket Hammerless in 32 ACP - There were numerous variations of minor importance. This model also had great acceptance by the military and the general public. It is a blowback-operated, single-action semi-automatic that, despite the name, is not actually "hammerless" at all, but rather a pistol utilizing an internal hammer. Approximately 570,000 Colt Model 1903 Pocket Hammerless pistols were produced from 1903 to 1945.

The Model 1908 Pocket Hammerless 380 ACP - This was the same frame size as the model 1903. It was only made in 380 ACP. In fact, the only differences

were the barrel and the magazines. Total production up until 1945 was fewer than 150,000.

The Model 1908 Vest Pocket Hammerless - This model was offered in 25 ACP. It was highly concealable and had a grip safety and a thumb safety. During the early 1900s gentlemen wore vests. The best carry place for one of the firearms was in the vest pocket inside the vest. No snagging and really small made this an ideal concealable firearm. In 40 years of production, a total of approximately 420,705 Model 1908 25 ACP caliber Vest Pocket pistols were manufactured.

I test fired the 32 ACP against the 380 ACP hammerless firearms (1903 & 1908). It is easy to understand, after this test, why the 32 ACP out sold the 380 ACP by a factor of four. The kick of the 1908 was substantially greater. Back in the early days, Teddy Roosevelt extolled the 32 caliber and military officers liked this as their firearm of choice when they armed themselves. Those were the days when placement of shot far outweighed more bang for the buck. Today not so much. It is all about power.



I have several specimens of these hammerless pistols; and while knowing basically what they were, I never did an analysis of their history. My favorite is the Model 1908 in 380 ACP. It popped up many years ago, and I did not hesitate a second to purchase it. Made in 1926, it was a nickel finish with original factory pearl grips. It was in great shape and almost like new. It was with this model I learned that pearl grips had a factory red board strengthening support behind the pearl in addition to the rampant Colt medallion in the pearl. I also purchased a Model 1908 Vest Pocket 25 ACP caliber made in 1911 with pearl grips that did not have the medallion in the grips. I wondered whether these were factory and noted the factory red board support was present. Original factory type firearms are my favorites.

THE POLISH RADOM PISTOL

By ibdennis

In the world of semi-auto handguns, my favorites are the Colt Model 1911, the Browning High Power and the Polish Radom VIS 35. These are at the top of my list.

John Browning invented the 1911 Colt pistol. Many of the design ideas from this firearm were incorporated into the Polish Radom VIS 35. The frames are similar. The grip safety and the external hammer design were copied, but the Radom firearm also had several improvements. These improvements were also found in the 1935 Browning High Power. Both the Browning and the Radom used a short recoil lock system, unlike the toggle link lock used on the 1911. This would keep the barrel and slide locked until the bullet left the barrel. The only caliber was 9mm Luger.



The "VIS" is Latin for power. The name for this handgun is called a "Radom," the name of the town in which it was originally manufactured. The FB stands for Fabryka Broni (Weapons Factory). The Radom had some interesting features including no manual safety. There were two types of safety: the grip safety and the decocker. The decocker lever allowed the hammer to fall without striking the firing pin. To put this firearm in ready requires the hammer to be pulled back in the cocked position. One story I recall said this firearm was designed with the calvary in mind, because the hammer could be pulled back by running the firearm on one's leg in a downward motion. Handy if you only had the one hand free while the other held the reins for the horse. Bad news if you had your finger on the trigger while doing this leg load method.

The Radom pistol was manufactured in Poland for the Polish military from 1935 until the 1939 when the

Nazis captured the factory and continued manufacturing until 1945. Those made under Nazis control display the Nazis proof and acceptance stamps and incorporated four minor variations. These changes reduced the manufacturing costs and streamlined production. Some parts were eliminated and a rough phosphate finish was used. These modifications did not affect the reliability of this firearm.



Before occupation (1939), the pistols had a high luster finish; and there was exceptional quality control. After 1939 the final finish changed, and there was the adoption of an alpha letter prefix added to the serial number. Additional changes were a notch in the hammer when engaged and the elimination of the take down lever. The machine marks were quite evident in the frame and slide in later production pistols.



After the War, production ceased on this firearm. The production under the Germans was until 1945. I would have thought another company would have taken on the manufacturing after the war of this excellent firearm, but alas no. A search on the internet was a shocker, as most found for sale were in the four digit price range. The VIS 35 is one of the best semi-automatic pistols of WWII in terms of handling, reliability and quality. There is a book available entitled VIS Radom which delves into the full details of this pistol. It includes a museum catalog of pictures of the variations.

J.P. SAUER MODEL 1913

By ibdennis

The J.P. Sauer & Sohn Model 1913 was a highly successful pocket pistol. It was a German innovation in caliber 7.65 (32 auto) and rivaled the other popular pocket pistols of the day. It was totally unique. It was a quality firearm with tight tolerances which were essential to provide excellent accuracy and reliability. The Model 1913 also was ergonomically designed to fit in the hand as they say. The design was smoothed, so there were no rough spots to catch on your pocket when removed and ready for use. The blue finish overall was spectacular.



There are several unique features to this handgun. To dismantle you need to push down on the rear site and, while holding it down, unscrew the end cap. Next step is a slight holding-your-tongue-straight while the slide goes forward and off the firearm. While most slides are squarish, this slide is rounded. The return spring also encircles the barrel which is stationary to the frame. The grips are held on by a screw that allows a 90 degree turn which assists in the removal of the panels. There is no magazine-slide-holdback on the last shot. However there is an easy, unique way to get the slide to hold open. The trigger can be moved upward and forward which will cause the slide to remain open.



The magazines hold seven rounds and has cutouts to view the ammunition from both sides. And get this. The magazines are marked with the S&S cal 7.65 on the magazine bottom.

There were four variations of the basic 1913 design. They were the model 1919 (caliber 6.35) and the model 1926. The most conspicuous changes were the improvements in the Model 1930. It had more ergonomic grips, better balance and a few other different features than its predecessor. But basically it looks like the 1913 design. The quality and design again is splendiferous. The safety lever is operated down for the 1913 and up for the Model 1930. On the Model 1930, the safety protrudes into the slide. Either way it disables the trigger movement.



Since it had been a long time ago that I had fired the 1913 or the 1930, they begged for a workout. I fired a couple dozen rounds through each without fail. The 1913 shot a group at 12 yards that was in the 11 o'clock off-center position. Fixed-sights-compensation-aiming for offset, put all rounds center in a respectable group. The Sauer Model 1930 had a slightly improved rear sight, and all shots were spot-on-center hold. It is what I call bowling pin accuracy, but it is lacking in power against the mighty four pound bowling pin.

Among the most famous of these guns made at the time were the Mauser Model 1914, the Browning Model 1910 and the Walther Model 4. The firm of J.P. Sauer & Sohn, with their model 1913, produced what may be the best small pistol of this type ever made in that time frame.

Walther Match Target 1925

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By ibdennis

It was the 1936 Olympics held in Berlin Germany. It was the year that Jessie Owens took home four gold medals. It was the year that the 22 caliber competition matches took home five medals using the Walther Model 1936 Olympia pistols.

The world of 22 caliber target pistols were all single shot handguns for many years. Colt made the first semi-automatic 22 caliber target pistol in 1915. Walther made their first semi-automatic pistol in 1925. It was called the Walther Hammerless Target 22 Sport Pistol Model 1925. Since this was a target model, there were numerous variations to meet the requirements of the shooting competition market. A modification of the Model 1925 was shot in the 1932 Olympics held in Los Angeles CA. and was the result by receiving a medal.



The Walther Olympia Model of 1936 was a modification of the Model 1925. Of keynote is the method of slide take down. The 1925 had a release for the slide which was a push protrusion in front of the trigger guard, while the Model 1936 had the trigger guard that swung down to release the slide. The magazine release was behind the trigger, which was also different from the 1925 which had a bottom magazine release. A quick glance suggests that the two models are the same. But they ain't.

I have the Stoeger Sport Pistol Model 1925. This model, as ordered and sold by Stoeger USA, differed only in the barrel which was 7-1/2 inch. Typical target Walther handguns for competition were normally 6

inch or 10 inch. I purchased my Walther in 1996 with full disclosure that the firearm was prone to jams, not accurate and had unreliable feeding. I decided to take my chances and was quick to learn all these warnings were true. In 1979 I purchased my first Walther Model PP in 22 caliber. It was a pre 1940 firearm, and it did all those nasty things just mentioned. I tried many different brands of 22 LR ammo to no avail. I even ordered a new spring... nothing.

Then one day I had an epiphany. High velocity 22 LR ammunition was not introduced until 1930, therefore firearms created in and around this time were made for the standard velocity loads. Or more specifically, standard velocity ammo emulated the original 22 loadings of five grains of black powder. This translated to this load when smokeless powder was used in the making of the 22 LR loading. So off I went to get standard velocity or match grade 22 long rifle cartridges (also standard velocity). My Walther PP worked flawlessly using this ammunition. Likewise my Walther Model 1925 worked flawlessly and was exceptionally accurate.



I use 22 LR standard velocity ammunition in all my competitive handgun shooting. The results are noticeable and spot on. There were the questions as to why use standard velocity ammo in a firearm that might be construed as a defense firearm.

The Walther Model PP in 22 LR is a sport gun, and a fun gun with minimal recoil and good accuracy. The Walther PP in 32 acp and 380 acp are indeed defense firearms and known as self defense rounds.

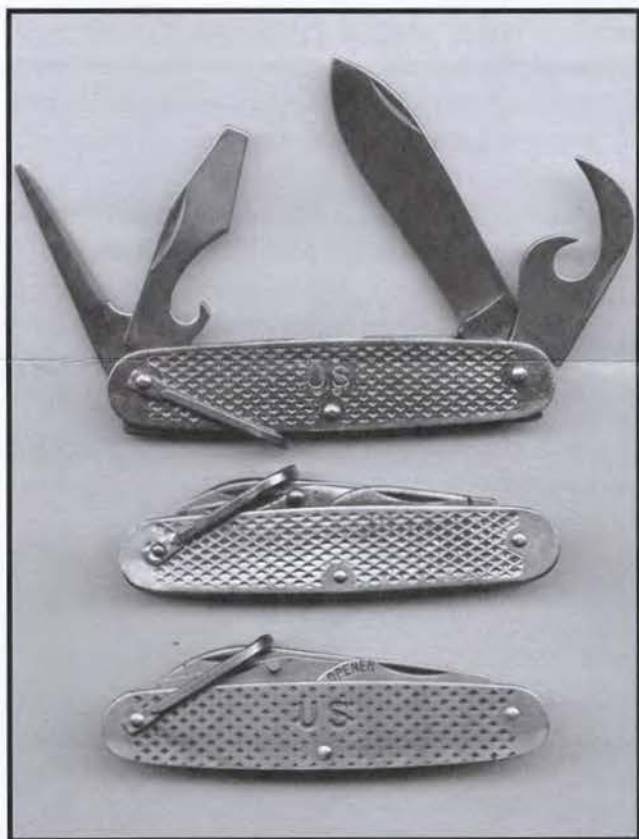
The Walther handguns in 22 caliber are hard to find for sale. New ones have been introduced, but the oldy goodies are not found so much.

MIL-K KNIVES

By ibdennis

I am sure everyone has seen, owned or contemplated purchasing one of these knives.

Many years ago I started collecting military utility knives that were specified as Mil-K knives. These are described as all metal utility knives with a main blade, can opener, screwdriver, crown cap lifter blade and a leather punch blade. This pattern knife was manufactured during WWII and was classified by the military as a survival tool. The scope of learning about these knives is endless. Hopefully this top over will be of interest.



The MIL-K 818 (the military designation) stands for Military (MIL) - Knife (K) - and a specification number (818). They were manufactured about 1944 during WWII. The first knives had a stainless handle with brass liners and carbon steel blades. At this time, there was development of the new safety can opener. This patented blade was stamped "Can Opener."

Camillus and Imperial were the makers with the most numerous of product, although a host of other makers also manufactured the knives. As a designated

survival knife, they were placed in inflatable life rafts, water float assist jackets, Mae West vests, emergency survivor kits and medical kits. In 1958 Camillus made the first of the all stainless steel Mil-K knives. The all stainless knives are still offered today by an unlikely maker, Marbles. If a knife blade shows staining and brass liners, it is definitely pre 1958.

From 1958 onward, the makers name and the year date are stamped on the tang of the main blade. Of course I had to have every year and variation. Just because that is the way I am and what I do. There were some years that the military did not order the Mil-K, and other years the orders were cut back. The knives with the common years aren't expensive on the collector's market, but there are a few rare years which usually hit three digit prices on the Internet.

The original pattern rarely changed in blades offered. I always wondered why the clevis (bail/staple) was so strongly made and of a non-standard shape. Of course it would or could be attached to the belt for carry, but more importantly the knife could be sterilized in boiling water with an attached string or hook to the clevis.

Another anomaly that was dropped in 1972 was the pin that was located on the screwdriver blade. For years I tried to figure out the purpose of this pin. It was suggested it was a key to blade configuration if it were opened in the dark. It was also suggested that it provided an easy lift-a-bility to this blade. Another suggestion was that this could serve as a drift pin. But a drift pin for what? The answer was discovered years ago on my trip to the Camillus factory in New York State. The pins were used to dismantle firearms. In 1958 the pin was made in a smaller diameter. This was done to fit the pins in a M1 Garand trigger group when it was dismantled. Garand collectors need one of these as an accessory to their collection.

The handles were sometimes stamped. The most common stamp was "US." There were other stamps which were typically done by third parties not affiliated with the US military. There were also the stamps on the clevis which indicated military WWII use.

The Mil-K rides in my car for emergency. Nothing to rust on this all stainless knife. They are even cost effective today and can be purchased for a reasonable sum on eBay where there is one posted for sale almost every day. The picture shows the knife open and the two style drift pins.

LAHTI/HUSQVARNA FIREARM

By ibdennis

Production started on the Finnish Lahti handgun in 1935. It was designated as the L35 and production was ceased in 1940. The almost identical firearm was then made in Sweden and was called the Husqvarna Model 40. In 1940 Sweden was looking for a handgun, since they could not get the Walther P38. Wonder why?

The Lahti was named after its inventor, Aimo Lahti, and was designed for the 9 mm luger cartridge. The grip angle was like the German Luger and pointed naturally. This was an especially heavy firearm weighing in at 44 oz. The German Luger of the same barrel length was a lightweight at 31 oz.

The strongest point of the Lahti was the ability to work reliably in cold (really, really cold) weather, as it does get cold in Scandinavian countries. The reason for the reliability lies in a mechanical part that was called the accelerator. In simplistic terms this was a mechanical assist to the rearward motion of the barrel and receiver which was a positive action to the slide cycle.



The original Lahti's are rarely seen in the USA. This was due to the Finnish military taking them in and using them front line for years. The Husqvarna M40 on the other hand, in addition to European military, did find export to this country. I think the clue to these are the after stamp which states the country of origin. Made in Sweden.

The Lahti and the Husqvarna are identical in operation and features, but the stamping and other marks show the differences to the collector. Minor subtle changes do exist, for example the chamber indicator was dropped. The Husqvarna was adapted to have a large trigger guard which would allow a gloved hand

to access the trigger easily. The order for the Danish military had serial numbers that started with the letter "D" in front of the serial number. It is thought that at wars end, Denmark exported a large quantity of these firearms as surplus to other countries. The Husqvarna I have is from this batch and to comply with imports to some countries the country of origin had to be stamped on these items "Made in Sweden." My M40 came with the leather holster which had two extra magazines, a cleaning rod and magazine loader tool. The holster also bears the "Made in Sweden" import requirement stamp.



There is a slot for a shoulder stock, but stocks are hard to find. Disassembly is a snap with the take down lever. Push it down and around and the receiver and all parts slide off for easy cleaning. There is one part (the slide lock) that can be replaced incorrectly; but if one pays attention to which way the arrow on the piece is facing, there is no problem. The magazine release is on the bottom of the grip, typical of European firearms. The magazine holds eight rounds.



Husqvarna
M40 (1940)
9mm Luger

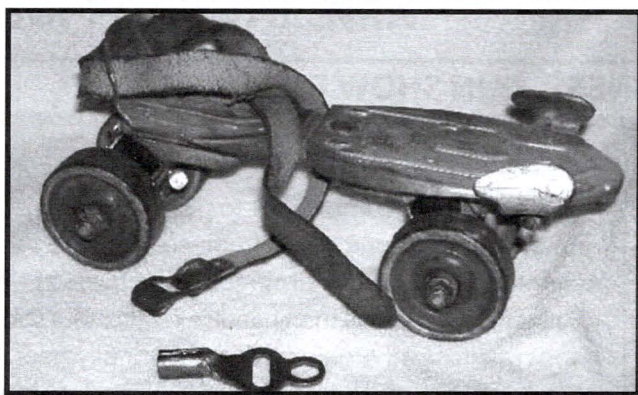
The Internet has a tremendous amount of information on the Lahti L35 and the Husqvarna M40. The following is from one persons real time account of the Husqvarna M40 firearm.

"The pistol m/1940 was never very popular among the soldiers. It was too big and too heavy. However it was working well in cold climate and shoots rather good. In 1993, pistol m/1940 was officially declared obsolete." The soldiers let out a cheer!

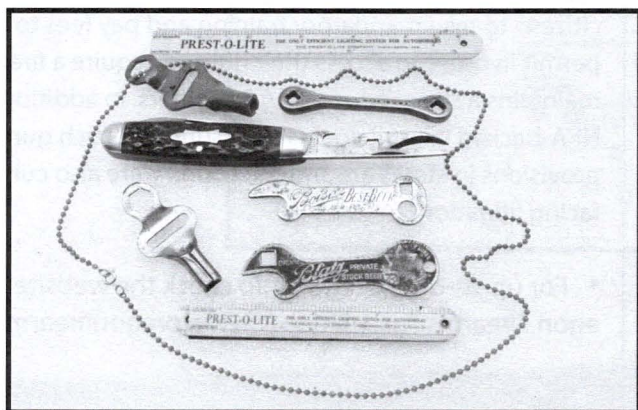
THE SKATE KEY

By ibdennis

In my youth I just had to have a pair of roller skates. Other than the boot with skates attached, the other choice was clamp on skates that fit on your everyday saddle shoes. You remember the black and white 1950s trendy shoes, don't you? Once you step into these skates, you must tighten the leather strap around your ankle and then with the use of a skate key, tighten the clamps that held the front part of your skate onto the shoe. The skate key was always with you, without it you could not put the skates back on your shoes if they come loose or fall off.

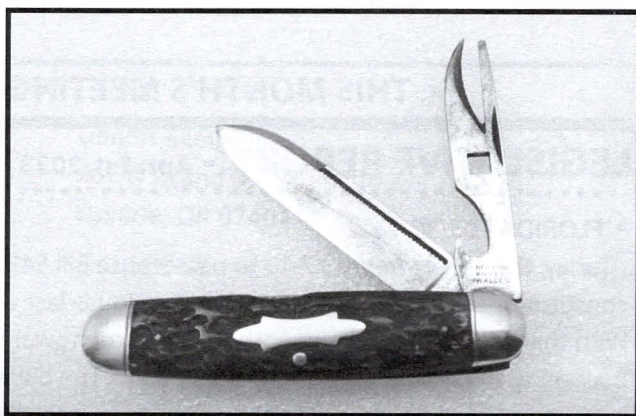


I collect utility scout knives, and every once in a while you can find a screwdriver blade that has a square hole in it. I struggled with the purpose of this hole for a long time. Then one day while at a knife show in the deep South, I heard a voice yell out, "A Rufus, ya wanna buy this here knife with a roller skate key on it?" I bristled since I knew that was not what it was. The skate key was truncated to allow it to go under the skate and allow one to turn 360 degrees in order to tighten the clamp. At best the flat hole could only turn maybe 90 degrees, if indeed it had the space to engage the square rod at all.



I managed to find an old hardware catalog that

labeled the square hole as a Prest-O-Lite tank key. More mystery. What was a Prest-O-Lite? While visiting a car museum in Michigan, I read the sign that directed me to take note of the Prest-O-Lite tank on the running board of this old car. "Eureka," sez I. Now I know. Prior to the use of electric lights on cars, automobiles used acetylene to light the road ahead in the dark of night. If you were on the road at night and had misplaced the tank key, you could use the pocketknife with the hole in it to open or close this valve on the tank. Acetylene head lights were still in use going into the 1920s, so pocket-knife manufacturers continued to produce the tank key hole in knives. If you find a pocketknife with a tank key insert in the screwdriver blade, you can pretty much date the knife as 1910 to 1925 vintage.



The 1910 date is the beginning date of the production of the utility pocket tool knife that was sold to scouting organizations. The 1920s saw the beginning of shipping by truck, but electric head-lights did not have the brightness of the acetylene lights.



In its day it would be common knowledge what the square hole was all about, but time seems to erase much of this period knowledge. But there are clues which will lead to discovery, which will lead to the world of more questions but sometimes answers

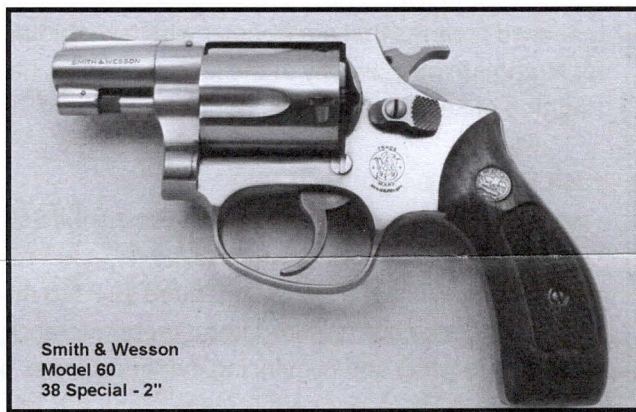
You know that of course I had to purchase an old Prest-O-Lite automobile tank. Just because.

SNUB-NOSE REVOLVERS

By ibdennis

I wanted to write about revolvers that have 2 inch barrels. I then hit a brick wall as to what to call them. Are they Snubbies, Snubbys or snub-nose revolvers? Or just plain short barrel firearms.

I have always had a fascination with these double action revolver firearms. My first ever was the Chiefs Special Smith & Wesson Model 60 in 38 Special, all stainless with a five round cylinder. That was in 1973. This first ever all stainless Model 60 handgun was introduced in 1965 and was targeted for use by the CIA. The waiting list for consumer sales was extensive. I was working in a sporting goods store; and when one came in, it was mine. The pay was poor at the store, but opportunities like this were priceless.

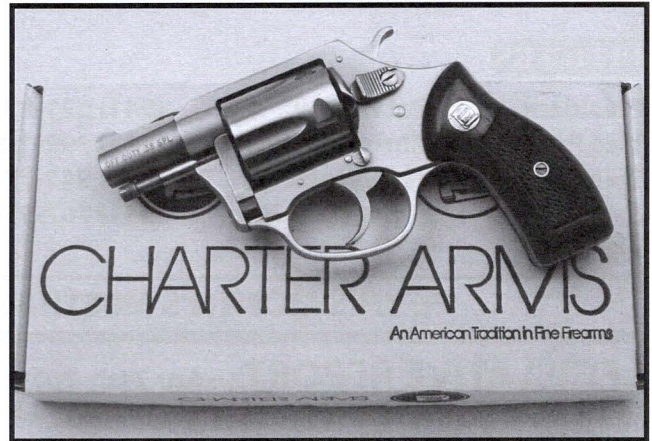


This firearm is still with me after 50 years and has traveled a bazillion miles over the years. It was compact, so it was a constant trail defense firearm. The paddle holster still houses this model 60 and stays close to me in the house. It was never drawn in fear and was a comfort to me wherever I went.

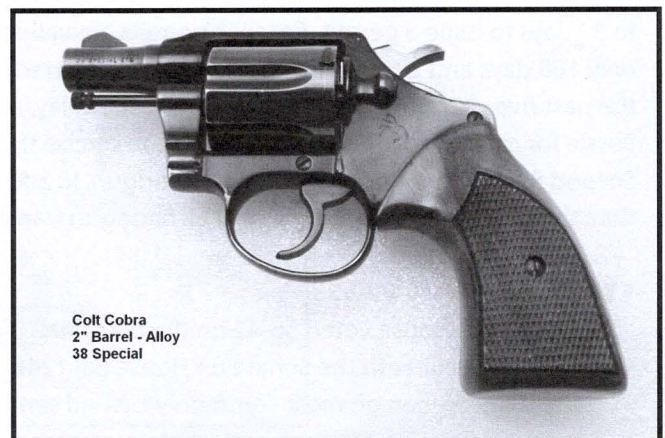
Since I favored this snub nose model 60, I tended to pick up a few other snub-nose revolvers. The Charter Arms was cost effective, and one cannot have enough of a certain type firearm. And then a couple of Colt snubbies came to me when they spoke in loud voices. The Colt Police Positive Special soon evolved into the Colt Detective Special which was targeted for law enforcement. The Detective Special was a larger frame than the S&W Model 60, and this allowed me to carry six rounds. Although a touch larger, it was still easy to carry.

The next firearm for me was the Colt Cobra. This was

a six round 2 inch that was made of aluminum alloy in non-critical parts. It was light weight and was made from 1950 until 1981. The frame was blue black anodized aluminum. The claim to distinction was that this was the first ever Colt model to be named after a snake. Then after that was the Python, Anaconda, Diamond Back, Boa, King Cobra and Viper. Seven in all. The calibers offered in the Colt short barrels were 32 New Police (32 S&W) and 38 New Police (S&W 38 Special.)



I always enjoyed my Charter Arms firearms. The attraction of a true 2 inch are the Undercover and Off Duty 38 special models. Charter Arms made a plethora of other calibers that seemed to favor the 2.5 inch barrels. Without a careful study, I think all these firearms were offered with a short barrel: 22 Long Rifle, .22 Winchester Magnum, .32 Long, .32 H&R Magnum, .327 Federal Magnum, .38 Special, .357 Magnum, 9×19mm Parabellum, .40 Smith & Wesson, .41 Remington Magnum, .44 Special, .45 ACP and .45 Colt.



My favorite is the Bull Dog which was not made in a 2 inch model. However I will succumb to this 44 special hand full with its 2.5 inch barrel. This model was introduced in 1973.

THE HK4

By ibdennis

The Heckler & Koch company was founded in 1949. The Mauser factory in Germany was no more, but three of the former employees got together and started a firearms business to serve the military and security needs of the day. There was Mr. Heckler, Mr. Koch and Mr. Alex Seidel. Seidel was the design engineer, and his inventive mind led them down the path to innovative firearms. The first handgun from this company was the HK4. It was a design copy of the Mauser HSC pistol but had several features that set it apart from the Mauser. After all, Alex Seidel had been part of the team who developed the Mauser HSC.



The Mauser HSC was an all steel firearm, whereas the HK4 sported a polymer frame with light weight functionality. All plastics are polymers, but not all polymers are plastics. The most unique thing about the HK4 was the ease of changing to the four different calibers using the same basic frame. The calibers were 22 LR, 25 acp, 32 acp and 380 acp. A barrel change and the appropriate magazine was all that was necessary. The firing pin has a different strike zone for a rim fire. There was a simple change to the breech face to reverse it. One reason for multiple calibers was that some laws only allowed one firearm per household, but this would provide one firearm and four calibers.

Then again there is the novelty factor. The HK4 (now you know why fore the "4" in the model name) was presented to the market in 1967 and last made in 1984.

The firearm fits perfectly in my hand, and the testing with 32 acp factory rounds produced stunning accuracy at 15 yards. The loading of a cartridge is unique but similar to the Mauser HSC. After opening the slide and inserting a loaded magazine, the round instantly enters the chamber. At this point it has a single action trigger pull. Putting the safety lever on safe, the hammer drops and puts the firearm in double action mode. The design of this firearm encourages pocket carry, as it has no sharp corners to catch on clothing.

The HK4 was offered for sale in all different boxed configurations. It could be purchased as a basic caliber of the ones to choose or one center fire barrel and a 22 LR barrel or all four barrels boxed as one. The magazines (and the barrels) are clearly marked with the appropriate caliber.

I rarely see these, used or new, for sale. Then one day an HK4 flashed before my eyes, and I had to have one. It was missing the 25 acp barrel, but I didn't care at the time. Someday, one will cross my path. My reading sources mentioned 22 ammo was fussy in the HK4 and I understood why. Had to do with snappy ammo working the slide.

Years ago I got intrigued with polymer recoil buffers in the 1911 handguns. They were used to soften the slide battering the frame. Sounded right, so I started using them in my Colt 1911 45 acp firearms. The many problems with these buffers bothered me, so I stopped using them. The buffers seemed to harden with age and worked well in the standard 1911 but not so well in 1911 combat size frames. Instructions alluded these to be a regular maintenance consideration.

One day I was testing my HK4 in 32 acp, and the firearm jammed; and I could not un-jam while at the range. When it did come apart, little pieces of plastic filled the frame interior. With age, the recoil buffer shattered. It had become hard and brittle. I searched for a new recoil buffer with instant success (surprise, surprise.) I suggest that if have any firearm which uses a polymer buffer, you might want to check it out. I have a serious romance with my HK4.

S&W MODEL 25

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One of my favorite revolvers to shoot is the Smith & Wesson Model 25. I might even include the 625 which is the stainless flavor. All of which are built on the "N" frame. This large "N" frame firearm also supports the 357 Magnum, 41 Magnum, 44-40, 45 Colt and 44 Magnum.



What makes the Model 25 endearing is that it shoots the 45 APC ammunition. In semi-automatics (like the 1911's), the 45 APC is your tack-driver target round. It is also your decidedly best-of-all-defense rounds. In fact this combination goes back to WW I when the pace of the War could not keep up with the making of the Colt 1911 semi-auto firearms. Colt and S&W came up with a 1/2 moon clip (holding three rounds for reload) to allow the 45 APC (rimless) round to load/unload and of course reliably fire six rounds from this revolver sidearm. This firearm is commonly referred to as the Model of 1917.

The semi-autos use a rimless cartridge, and the revolvers use a rimmed version of the round. Unless of course you use the 45 auto rim round to load in this revolver. This is the same round save for the rim. With the advent of model numbers by S&W being assigned, the model of 1950 became the Model 25 of 1955. It was also during this time that the six round clip came about. One could take the loaded clip and just pop it into the cylinder. In super fast fashion this is the fastest load and unload for speed competition. (Cont. P3)

Jerry Meculek is the American speed and competition shooter who shoots the 45 APC revolver using the full moon clips for fast reloading. I tried to emulate this fast shoot and fast reload with my 25 and 625 S&W revolvers. I be the world's champion fumble fingers. So just how did Meculek make this happen? His firearm had a 4" barrel which would reduce muzzle flip compared to the 6-1/2" that I have. I used 200 grain flat point wad cutters which sometimes made the reloading a bit tricky. These bullets exhibit great accuracy over round nose bullets. Reload speed was not high on my list other than as a curiosity. The 230 grain round nose slipped right into the cylinders. That was only after I gave them a hard crimp to reduce a hang up point for the cartridge. Semi-autos don't like it when you have a minimum reduced head space available.



The real trick to fast reloading is to have the cylinder mouths opened up and polished to better accept the cartridge. I don't do speed shooting, so I just lived without the non-chamfer, counter sunk opening. The choice of grips is wide open to get the best fit for the individual. I am a Hogue grip fan, as they work on all my Smith & Wesson revolvers. Many S&W models come from the factory with these grips.

My 45 APC model firearms are accurate, with minimum recoil and are a joy to handle and shoot.

The 44-40

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By IB Dennis

The 44-40 (40 WCF) cartridge was the first cartridge to be used in a repeating rifle. It was the standard chambering in the Winchester Model 1873. I was introduced to this cartridge when I traded for a Colt New Service handgun in caliber 44 WCF (Winchester Center Fire). I purchased some 200 grain hard, cast lead bullets, reloading dies and large pistol primers and reloaded these to be used in this handgun and for the rifle I dreamed of getting someday. The rifle I dreamed of was the Winchester Model 92. It took awhile but the dream became reality.



Winchester Model 1892

At that early time, the cartridge name was based on black powder loading. The first number was the bore diameter (caliber), and the second was the amount of black powder (FFG) used to propel the 200 grain bullet. Other so named cartridges were the 45-70, 32-20, 38-55, 30-30, 30-40, just to name a few. Then there was the (why did they do that) 38-40. This was a 40 caliber bullet caliber which used 38 grains of black powder.

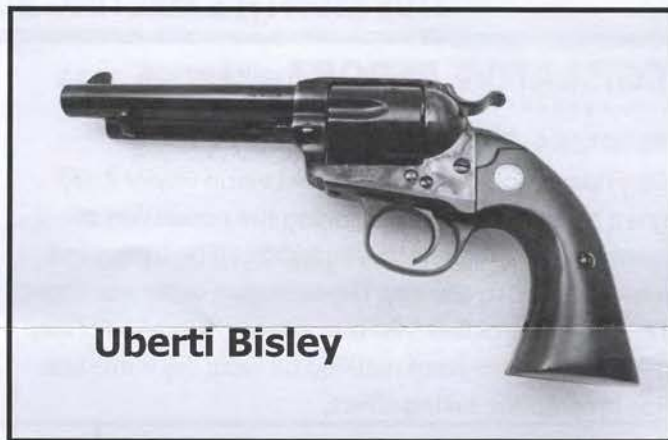
The 44-40 is a bottleneck brass case which has a rather thin case mouth and requires extra attention when reloading. The recommended bullet diameter is .427". I mic'd the barrel which read .429; however the .429 bullets would not chamber. I also found the 44-40 brass was brand selective. Starline and Winchester worked for me, but other brands were too thick in the neck.



Colt New Service
Made in 1906

Finding a load was a bit tricky. Unique seemed to be the powder of choice. Earlier reloading manuals suggested six grains behind that 200 grain lead bullet. Years later the recommendation for a starting load was raised along with the max loads. I worked up to 8.3 grains which showed no traces of pressure and was pretty accurate. Except this load proved pretty healthy on recoil in the handguns I shot. Fine for the Model 92 Winchester rifle. The leather shooting glove tamed the recoil, but even that ceased to be fun after awhile. So Unique with eight grains is rifle fodder, and Unique with 6.6 grains is handgun ammo for me.

Of historical interest it should be noted that Colt barrels marked the 44-40 as just 44 Cal. It is said that Colt did not want to advertise for Winchester on their firearms.



Uberti Bisley

I must say that shooting this caliber is accurate, fun and entertaining; and the choice of firearms that I have fills the bill for variations on a theme. That is a Colt New Service, a S&W Texas Centennial 1836 - 1986, a Uberti Bisley and of course my Winchester Model 1892. May the "Force" be with me.

THE M1 CARBINE

By IB Dennis

A few years back, a number of WWII M1 30 carbines rifles became available for sale. Apparently they were in a warehouse in Europe just being warehoused. An American company purchased all that were in the warehouse and put them up for sale. The prices were in a range dependant upon the manufacturer and the quantity. They started at \$1,200.00 and stretched into above and beyond \$2,000.00 each. A bit of a stretch for my budget.



They were available for sale at 8:00 AM on a Tuesday in 2021. At day end they were all spoken for as individual sales. Woof! I do not have any idea of the number that were offered, but I suspect many. Many being maybe a couple hundred. As with any offer, buyer beware. Being sold "as is," it was no surprise to learn that the ones I have heard about, lacked a firing pin. Which, with a twist, reminds one to read Stephen Hunter's book Point of Impact. Another twist was that this firing pin part was not standard to all carbines. There was also no defining identification just looking at the firing pin.



The 30 carbine was the WWII answer to supplement to the officer's who were carrying firearms. The Colt 1911 45 ACP could not keep up with the

production demand, so the M1 would be an answer for sidearms carry. Many books have been written about this firearm The 30 M1 carbine was easy to shoot for the inexperienced as compared to the 45 ACP. After all, a rifle is easier to handle and can be more accurate than a handgun in inexperienced hands. But there is an intrigue to this carbine that has captured the collectors' market. And capture it did, if one looks at the prices being asked today for this firearm.

The 30 M1 carbine cartridge cases appear to be straight walled but actually have a taper. So the re-loader must consider special dies or use a steel die (not carbide) to account for the taper. I have found these firearms to be fairly accurate as a rule, however its stopping power was always a questionable issue. The noise produced was exceptionable. It was a crack that in battle might be overlooked but, on the range, hearing protection is a must.



The following are the manufacturers' names that can be found on these rifles.

- Inland Manufacturing Division
- Winchester Repeating Arms Co
- Underwood-Elliott-Fisher Co
- Saginaw Steering Gear Div
- National Postal Meter Co
- Quality Hardware & Machine Co
- International Business Machines Corp (IBM)
- Standard Products Co
- Rock-Ola Co

There are more names to be added to the list, but those are after market offerings. Some good and some not so good. And for those who got into the special purchase of the surplus...If you don't shoot them, you will never realize they don't go bang.

The 44 Mag Carbine

By IB Dennis

First there was the 30 M1 carbine (1940s). Then there was the Ruger 44 magnum carbine semi automatic (1961). Then there was the Ruger 10/22 (1964). A quick glance makes it hard to tell one from the other. They all have the same distinctive style and profile.



30 M1 Carbine

The Ruger 44 carbine was last produced in 1985. The Ruger 10/22 is still in production with the title of the best and most popular 22 caliber rifle in the world. The 30 carbine can still be found as WWII surplus or some later, after market models.

The Ruger 44 carbine was your 100 yard hunters' deer rifle. The 44 Magnum cartridge was not wimp ammunition, as is demonstrated in the Ruger Blackhawk or the S&W Model 29. Hang on for a hefty recoil ride. In the rifle, it also can be felt as respectable but is highly manageable. This rifle can also claim accuracy results. I had one of the carbines many years ago and foolishly sold it to a customer. Got the order for the products I was selling but later decided it was the wrong move. So the search was on to find another. The first one was about \$400.00, while the one I have today was better than double that price. The investment was good as the demand is exceeding that last price.

The current 44 Carbine shoots and cycles well



*Ruger
44 Magnum*

with factory jacket loads or reloads that emulate Elmer Keith loads. These loads use H4227/ H110 with a 240 jacket bullet. My personal favorite is Ramshot Enforcer; it meters well, in addition to burning clean. It is an Elmer Keith acceptable comparable load. The biggest bang for the buck. Mind you that lead bullets work well but consider-

ation must be given that the lead, if not tended to, can plug the gas port with lead.

My 44 Carbine has been comfortable in the gun rack until something created a "what if?" That was the gifted Hornady 180 grain jacket bullets. Never had much write ups about this weight bullet, as almost all articles centered around the 240 grain bullet. Ramshot gave some good load information so off to the range I went.



*Ruger
10/22*

Which reminds me to point out that the Ruger 44 Carbine is tubular feed. This means the bullets are stacked so the bullet front end is resting on the base primer end of the . If these bullets are pointed, it could mean there is a possibility of recoil having enough force to detonate the primer which is in the tube. So when reloading, bare in mind that flat point (FP) bullets are needed for tubular fed firearms. There are a bunch of Marlin lever action firearms that are susceptible to this consideration.

I have a penchant for the 44 magnum round. This is not because I want to demonstrate that I am a macho man. I think it is to prove to myself that my shooting should be flinch free. After all it is difficult to remain flinch free with 44 magnum ammunition in a handgun.

THE WEIGH IN

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By Dennis Ellingsen - ibdennis to his friends

Reloading firearm cartridges is an individual sport. Like any sport, there are many ways to achieve the end goals. Reloading powder is usually by weight and in some cases by volume. Weight is better. It is usually in grains of powder. When I first started reloading I lived in a small apartment where space was a luxury. I used Lee dippers to be the measuring device for the proper grain load. This was a by volume equals weight concept. Eventually my piggy bank had enough to allow me to get a good balance reloading scale and a powder trickler.



This was good, as much better was not affordable. In the evening after dinner I pulled out the breadboard and inserted my make do reloading bench. I did not have a plethora of calibers to reload for in those times. Dip out the powder.... put the charge in the scale pan and trickle in more powder to get the proper weight.

Today with the electronic world and reloading, one can speed up the reloading process, in addition to an hundredth of a grain powder accurate dispensing.



For pistol reloads, I opted for the Pacific Tool bush-

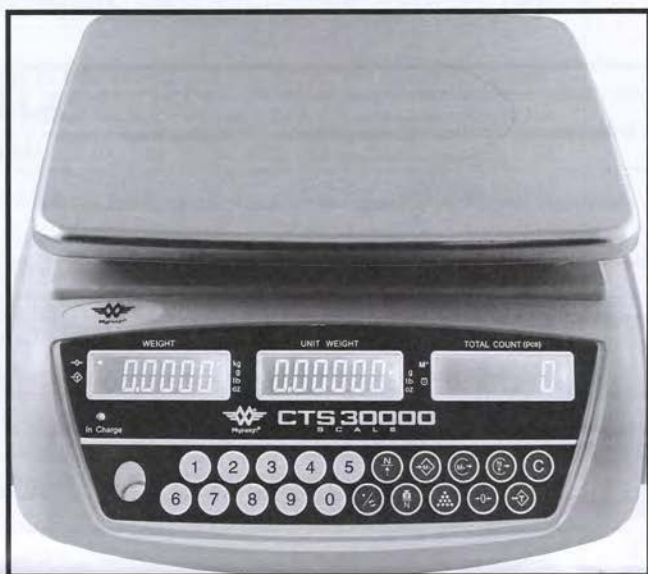
ing selection for dispensing. The bushing insert was great with some powders but not so great with others. Inconsistent mainly. I had to rethink this when I had a squib load ruin a target barrel. Two point eight grains of Bullseye did not meter well by bushing. Balance scale weighing was tedious. My purchase of an Acculab electronic scale verified weight but was still slow. But a little less slow than the balance beam method.



The end of the road for the powder dispensing was the RCBS - Charge Master 1500. Fill the tube with powder, key in the weight desired, push the start button. Every time you charge the brass cartridge with that load, it automatically weighs out the next load via a trickler tube. It counts, too.



(Cont. from P2) The boy with the most toys is the winner, and I am a top candidate for that award. I was tired of counting brass or bullets by hand, so I got me a CTS 30000 Electronic precision scale. It is pretty easy if you can count up to ten. Zero out your container and throw in like five objects. Key in that number and push the count button. Load the scale with the unknown number you want counted, and that correct number appears on the digital display.



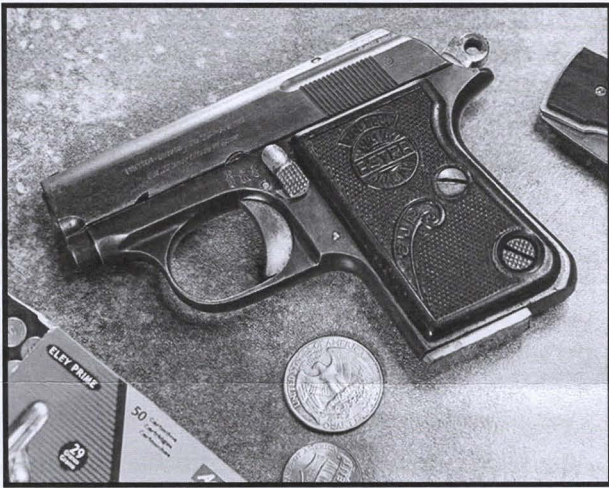
The CTS 30000 is really accurate. I was given a 1899 silver dollar and told it was a fake. I could not, nor could anyone to whom I showed it, point out and verify that it was a counterfeit. Because some other metals are used, there is a chance that a magnet might tell, as silver is not magnetic. But mine did not react to a powerful magnet. The internet said that a real silver dollar weighs in at .94 oz, and anything lighter than that is fake. My fake silver dollar weighed in at .82 oz. All proven by my CTS Scale. I love my toys!!

ASTRA VEST POCKET FIREARMS

By Dennis Ellingsen - ibdennis to his friends

Far, far away in my own little Galaxy, I started picking up Astra firearms but with no collectors' frenzy as to order. I generally purchased, if priced right and/or I was curious about the item.

The Astra factory was located in Guernica Spain; and during the Spanish Civil War of 1937, German airplanes decimated the city with the exception of the Astra factory. (An aside note is the Pablo Picasso art work called Guernica was completed shortly thereafter. This art work ranks as being well known, right along with the Mona Lisa.)



Astra made a huge number of firearms; and when I started out, I needed literature to educate myself on the firearms I had collected. I located a book that was very complete, but it was not an evening read. Astra Firearms and Selected Competitors has 815 pages, weighs eight pounds and has slick paper. Today prices on the book are from \$150.00 to \$250.00. The graphics are spectacular. Astra made some neat items and all were quality and the book spares no details..



The vest pocket firearms I refer to are semi-auto handguns. The Astra model 200 and 2000 were offered in 22 Short (rimfire) and 6.35 mm (25 auto) center fire. The 22 long rifle ammunition never worked reliably in any of the itty bitty firearms of any make. As a result it took many years for a reliable small firearm to reach moderate dependability using the 22 long rifle ammunition. Then again, even now, there becomes the issue of which 22 LR ammunition works best or at all. No recommendations. You just have to try them.



The M200 appeared in 1920, and the hype then was the triple safety. The name for this model was the "Fire Cat." The safeties were the slide lock, magazine disconnect and the grip safety. These again were offered in 22 short and 25 acp. The distinctive part was the internal hammer which made this "hammerless." This was nothing new, as the Colt Model 1908 had these safety features and was hammerless. It is also well known that the M2000 was a close clone of the FN Model 1906.)

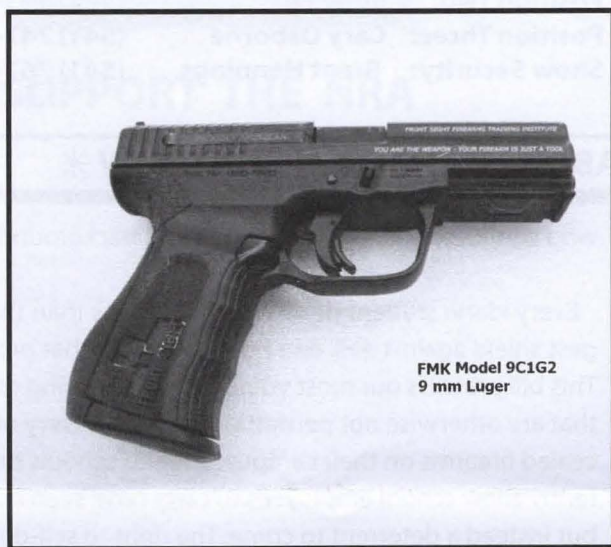
In 1954 Astra came out with the Model 2000, which they called the Cub & Camper models. The most distinctive feature of these was the visible external hammer. These were in the same calibers, 22 short and 25 acp. Engraving has always been a big deal for the Models 200 and 2000. I would think that these would appeal to the more selective collector. Since 1927 all Spanish firearms are tested on the official test bench of Eibar. These are marked or engraved with letters that indicate the year of manufacture. Charts with this information are easily found on line.

Some trivia: Astra was founded in 1908 in Eibar Spain. They moved to Guernica Spain in 1913. Manufacturing ended production of the M200 & M2000 in 1968, mainly due to new customs rules in the United States. The end of Astra was 1997.

The FMK

By Dennis Ellingsen - ibdennis to his friends

I had never heard of the FMK firearm until my neighbor showed me his. After his car window was smashed, he got the signal that keeping this firearm in the car was not a good idea. He was not fond of the firearm, so he had decided to sell it. Of course I had to have it, and it was cost effective. It was the FMK Model 9C1G2. It is a polymer firearm in 9 mm Luger and was casually called a Glock clone. It is almost identical in size to the Glock.



It was made in California, of all places. The Glock sells for \$500 but the FMK could be had for around \$300. The magazine holds 14 rounds, comes apart like a Glock, has a trigger safety and can be purchased with a magazine safety or not.

The company started business in 2006 and swings to a patriotic identity. The origin of the company name alluded me for quite a while until I read the "About the Company" statement on their web page. It advises that FMK translates to "For My Kountry."

My neighbor complained that the firearm misfired and jammed on him which was reason for his disdain. I have seen enough shooters that have what is called "limp" wrist shooting, so I attributed his problems with that issue. I cleaned the FMK with minimal oil lubrication and then was range bound. Three hundred rounds of factory ammo came with the firearm, and 50 rounds were flawless operation and accurate. So then the test was for reloads. Hollow points gave problems

as did 124 grain round nose 9 mm luger ammo. One hundred rounds of 115 grain round nose reloads were flawless.



The lesson learned, again, was test the ammo you are planning to use. Some firearms digest many varieties of ammo while others are finicky. I have wondered for years why there were three offerings of 9 mm factory round nose ammo--115 grain - 124 grain - 147 grain. I knew the 147 was favored for silencers, as the velocity is below the speed of sound (1100 fps). This might also work for 124 grain bullets, depending on maker and the firearm. The 115 generally is the weight favored because of bullet speed, and it usually functions better in all firearms.

The firearm is loaded with patriotic slogans which are interesting: "Freedom Liberty" - "Proudly American" - "Thank You Armed Forces" - "You are the Weapon - Your Firearm is Just a Tool." All very patriotic, bumper-less bumper sticker graffiti.

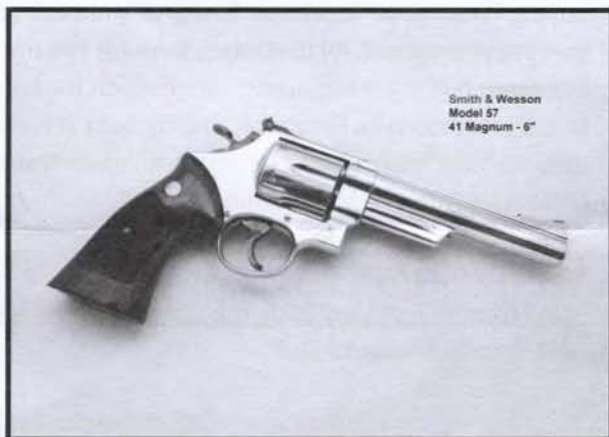
I have my Glocks which I have always favored, but the FMK has proved itself to be a good friend. It has a few more bells and whistles, like the contoured slide and the loaded round indicator which is quite unique. A red pin protrudes from the rear of the frame when there is a round in the chamber. Not only is this pin highly visible, but it is tactile too.

Final word: It is always a good idea to test fire the preformance of the ammunition that you will carry.

THE 41 MAGNUM

By Dennis Ellingsen - ibdennis to his friends

In and around 1964, several of the big names in firearm circles decided on a new cartridge that would be targeted for sale to the military and police (M&P) users. The 357 Magnum begged for more power, and the 44 magnum begged for a little less power. Thus the 41 Magnum slid in nicely for the wants of many. The best of all worlds was short lived. Well, not really. The 357 could use lighter loads if one used the 38 Special and; conversely, the 44 Special could be used in the firearm for the 44 Magnum. That would be for practice and training. But there were no factory made 41 Special to have available for practice and a lighter recoil load. Well, there were; but they were very short lived. Thus began the re-loader movement to get a lighter load.



My penchant for Smith & Wesson led me into the 41 Magnum. I had to have one just cause. The 44 Magnum was easy for me to shoot even though it had a tremendous recoil; but I sought something a bit less. The first round of the 41 Magnum changed that. It was a 210 grain bullet versus the 44 Magnum 240 grain bullet, but the recoil was about the same and included an audible crack that got attention. The power was there for the 41 Magnum, but the military and law enforcement resisted acceptance of the cartridge. On the other hand, the shooting public loved it.

My focus was on the S&W, and there were two models offered. The model 57 on their N frame was the top of the line. It had all the bells and whistles of S&W quality with fit and finish. It was available in 4", 6" and 8" barrels and could be had in blue or nickel finish. It was introduced in 1964

and trundled on until it was discontinued in 1993. The model 58 was a no frills version with bull barrel and fixed sites. It was heavy and bulky but was serious when called upon to work. The market sought had been law enforcement but was not supported by them. The guns were only manufactured from 1964 to 1977.

Discontinued dates can be disputed sometimes, as the "Classic" series pops upon some oldies but good-ies. Then again some of these older firearms pop up as stainless variants and continue marching on.



The sportsman's market accepted the cartridge at the start. The companies which manufactured firearms for the 41 magnum were Colt, Dan Wesson, Freedom Arms, Ruger, Thompson Center and a few rifle configurations. The 41 Magnum was a flat shooting round with energy levels to meet most USA game requirements for hunting.

I am a collector/shooter and I had to have a Model 58 M&P. None of the gun shows I attended produced one for show or sale. Then in 2012 one popped up in its original blue box and appeared to have never been fired. I fixed that issue promptly, and a pleasant "ouch" and "uff-da" could be heard far and wide. I still have the gun and take it out from time to time just to admire it.

