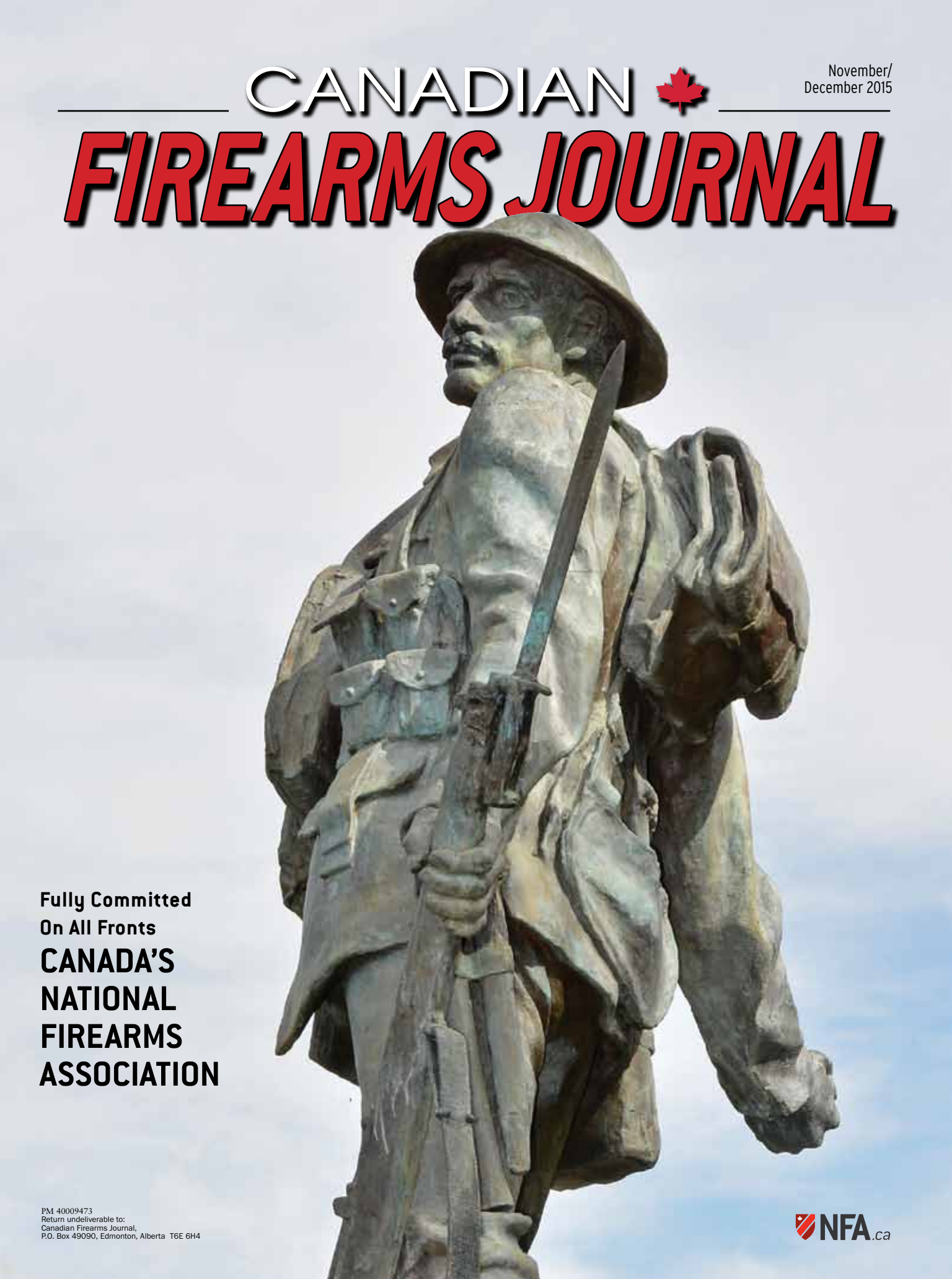
November/
December 2015

CANADIAN FIREARMS JOURNAL



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FIREARMS JOURNAL

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MISSION STATEMENT

Canada's National Firearms Association exists to promote, support and protect all safe firearms activities, including the right of self defense, firearms education for all Canadians, freedom and justice for Canada's firearms community and to advocate for legislative change to ensure the right of all Canadians to own and use firearms is protected.

On the Cover

The Fighting Newfoundlander

Bowring Park, St. John's, NL

This month's cover is courtesy of east coast photographer Paul Seymour. The image is of The Fighting Newfoundlander, a memorial statue in Bowring Park, St. John's, NL. It was unveiled on Sept. 13, 1922, to honour those killed in the Great War. The soldier is gripping a Short Magazine Lee-Enfield rifle and poised to throw a Mills grenade.

Canadian Firearms Journal

The Official Magazine of

CANADA'S NATIONAL FIREARMS ASSOCIATION

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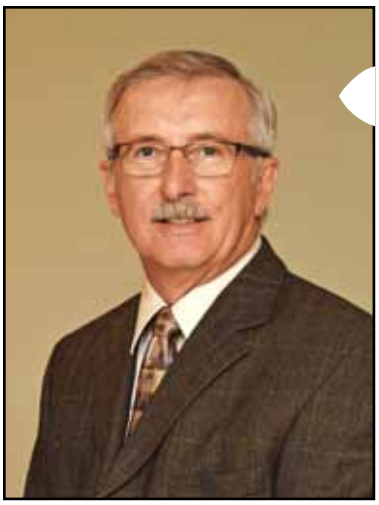


From the Editor's Desk

Al Voth

A Look At What's Coming

Welcome to the November/December issue of the *Canadian Firearms Journal.* As I write, the federal election is still a month away, but you'll be reading this shortly after the results are tabulated. In an age of instant information, that seems like an eternity, but it's the reality of print media. While a paper magazine can no longer pretend to be first with the news, we can claim to be more authoritative than many other sources and that's our goal here at the Canadian Firearms Journal.

You'll also be receiving this magazine shortly before Remembrance Day, so we've made that event and the historical guns that surround it a theme for this issue. To cover that aspect, you'll find Bob Campbell's report on what he calls *The Last Revolver War,* an adventure with the SVT-40 from Ed Osborne and a piece on the unique Bergmann-Bayard pistol from Paul Scarlatta.

Dean Roxby has also authored an article on a specific Swiss K-31 rifle that he managed to trace back to the soldier who carried it. This article is the first of a series I'd like to run, called *One Gun's Story.* We all know every gun has a story to tell, so if you have a gun with an interesting tale attached to it, let me know. We'll help you write the story, or maybe even assign one of our writers to tackle it.

I also want to draw attention to Todd Kristensen's article about how firearms shaped early Canada. Todd hides his credentials well, but he's actually a graduate student in anthropology at the University of Alberta. When he talks about history, you want to be paying attention.

And to keep at least some modern content, Jeff Helsdon has a review of Winchester's new budget rifle, the XPR. And for handgunners, Duane Thomas shows us how to execute a perfect slide-lock reload, a skill I'm still working at.

But since this is a bi-monthly publication, this issue covers Christmas as well, and Lowell Strauss has done some pre-Christmas shopping for us. Don't read his article unless you have a pencil in hand, because you'll want to circle desired items for the attention of your significant other. Lowell has put this Christmas list together so nothing on it requires a PAL to purchase.

And that's a good place to end this, wishing you all a Merry Christmas and the best in the New Year. Enjoy your magazine.

Nathaniel Milljour, *RightWingNation.ca*

President's Message

Sheldon Clare

NFA Gearing Up For The Election

As I write this, we are well into what promises to be a fascinating federal election campaign. Since I am an independent candidate in this election, I won't comment much except to say that NFA members should vote for the best members to represent their interests on issues that concern them. Even though I am a volunteer, to avoid any perception of conflict of interest, I have stepped away from most NFA public statements for the duration of the election campaign and Vice President Blair Hagen will be the main contact to comment on such matters. My NFA efforts will focus on my administrative and legal responsibilities until the election concludes. One thing is certain, this parliament will be different than the last one, and not just because of the 30 extra seats.

Externally, our efforts will need to be redoubled to ensure our key objectives are met. At time of writing, our petitions for the AR-15 and magazine capacity issues are still languishing, without result – ignored, as they don't fit the fiction of the government's long gun registry narrative. New parliamentary rules on petitions will permit online presentation, and we will need to be ready to make use of that feature in further advocacy efforts.

Internally, we have developed changes to our bylaws to make sure there is more clarity around process and procedure in our activities. This is so that unanticipated situations, such as those that arose this past year, can be resolved fairly and expeditiously. There was also a need to ensure our bylaws were better synchronized with federal requirements.

Additionally, it has become necessary to make clear the role of volunteers regarding public comments about NFA and its elected officers and staff. There are limited specific persons authorized to speak on behalf of the NFA. There cannot be anyone claiming to represent the NFA without having been designated to do just that. Internal issues must be resolved internally through due process, not through coup attempts and defamatory public statements that only detract from organizational credibility and hurt the overarching cause of reforming our firearms laws. Revised bylaws will help to make sure that our governance matters are clear and that all directors understand their roles and their fiduciary responsibilities to the NFA.

The next phase of our activities will depend, in large measure, upon the results of the federal election. The complexities of Canadian politics and the many problematic areas of our firearms laws that remain unaffected by token efforts, such as the recent Bill C-42, need our attention. It will be a time requiring all of us to work together to assert our desire for significant change. We have enjoyed a tremendous amount of success in the past year – two Supreme Court of Canada victories are nothing to belittle. There is at least one more such case coming our way, which will again look at mandatory minimum sentencing for another aspect of firearms offences. Such efforts take real commitment and dedication from members and SCC legal action is expensive, with effective representation consuming a lot of resources.

This next year promises to be a great one for the NFA. Our membership continues to grow, and that means our efforts on your behalf will continue to be effective. Our shooting sports ambassadors continue to serve us well by providing positive youth role models in competitive shooting sports. As more people see shooting as a normal and positive activity, our advocacy efforts on all of our issues relating to the ownership and use of firearms will become easier. Have a great fall, take some range time to practice your shooting, and I wish you all the best this hunting season.

As more people see shooting as a **normal and positive activity,** our advocacy efforts on all of our issues relating to the ownership and **use of firearms will become easier.**

Rapport du Président

Sheldon Clare

L'ACAF se prépare pour les élections

Au moment d'écrire ces lignes, nous sommes en pleine période de campagne électorale. Celle-ci promet d'être une des plus fascinante.

Puisque je me présente comme candidat indépendant je vais m'abstenir de faire des commentaires politiques. La seule chose que je peux conseiller aux membres de l'ACAF est de voter pour les candidats qui prennent leurs intérêts à coeur. Malgré que je sois bénévole, je me suis retiré de toutes fonctions publiques et décidé de m'abstenir de faire toutes déclarations publiques au nom de l'ACAF pour éviter quelque perception de conflit d'intérêt. Notre Vice-Président Blair Hagen prendra la relève en tout ce qui a trait à ces fonctions. Les seules tâches que j'accomplirai pour l'ACAF seront de nature administratives, jusqu'à ce que les élections Fédérales soient terminées. Soyez assurés que notre prochain Parlement sera très différent du précédent et pas seulement à cause des trente sièges de plus.

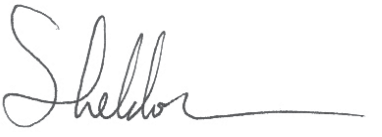
Nous devrons redoubler nos efforts pour nous assurer d'atteindre nos objectifs essentiels. Au moment d'écrire ces lignes nos pétitions sur les AR-15 et les capacités de chargeurs languissent sans résultats - elles ne conviennent pas à la philosophie du Gouvernement qui veut concentrer le discours sur l'abolition du registre des armes longues, le dirigeant ainsi à la base d'électeurs qui possèdent des armes à feu. De nouvelles règles parlementaires régissant les pétitions permettrons leurs soumissions via l'internet. Nous devrons être prêts à utiliser ces nouvelles fonctions technologiques.

À l'interne, nous avons faits les changements nécessaires à nos règlements pour que la conduite de nos activités soit régie par des règles claires et que toute situation non anticipée puisse être résolue de manière juste et expéditive. Il était aussi nécessaire que nos règlements soient mieux synchronisés avec les exigences du Fédéral. Le rôle des bénévoles doit être bien défini lorsqu'ils prennent la parole publiquement pour représenter l'ACAF, ses élus et ses employés. Seulement certaines personnes désignées seront autorisées à représenter l'ACAF publiquement et de parler en son nom. Il n'est plus permis de prétendre représenter l'ACAF à moins d'avoir été choisi pour le faire. Nos problèmes internes doivent être réglés à l'interne via les voies établies. Nous ne devons jamais laver notre linge sale en publique. Les tentatives de mutinerie et les déclarations publiques diffamatoires ne doivent plus jamais se produire. Elles nuisent à notre crédibilité et à notre objectif principal de réformer nos lois sur les armes à feu. Nos règlements révisés assureront la clarté de notre gouvernance et les Directeurs pourront bien comprendre leurs rôles et responsabilités envers l'ACAF.

La nature de nos prochaines activités dépendra du résultat des élections Fédérales. La complexité de la politique Canadienne et tous les aspects problématiques de nos lois sur les armes à feu qui sont demeurés inchangés malgré les gestes minimes du Gouvernement, tel que la récente loi C-42, font qu'il reste encore beaucoup d'enjeux auquel nous devons nous attaquer. Nous devrons nous unir et insister pour l'exécution de changements importants. Les deux causes que nous avons gagnées devant la Cour Suprême du Canada durant l'année sont un succès dont nous devons être fiers. Il en reste une autre à propos des sentences minimales rendues pour les crimes impliquant des armes à feu. Nos membres devront encore être très engagés et dédiés à la cause pour faire valoir nos intérêts devant la CSC. Les actions juridiques de cette ampleur coûtent très cher et beaucoup de ressources seront nécessaires pour y être efficace.

Au fur et à mesure que le tir devient une activité normale et positive, notre travail de lobbying à propos de tous les aspects touchant la possession et l'usage des armes à feu deviendra de plus en plus facile.

L'année prochaine s'annonce bien pour l'ACAF - Nous recrutons de plus en plus de membres et ceci nous aidera a lutter encore plus ardemment pour vous. Nos ambassadeurs des sports de tir réussissent bien à donner une image positive à notre sport. Ils encouragent les jeunes à y participer. Au fur et à mesure que le tir devient une activité normale et positive, notre travail de lobbying à propos de tous les aspects touchant la possession et l'usage des armes à feu deviendra de plus en plus facile. Je vous souhaitent un bon automne, prenez le temps de pratiquer votre tir et bonne chance durant cette saison de tir.



Vice President's Message

Blair Hagen

Reviewing The Past Predicts The Future

The Conservatives seem to be the only party to understand firearms issues in Canada

There's a lot of speculation about what the results of the 2015 federal election will be, and on how gun laws and regulations might evolve, or devolve, given which party forms the next government. As I write this, neither the Liberal party nor the NDP party is strong enough to win a majority government. The Conservatives may form government once again, and they may even achieve another majority government. Only time will tell.

A minority Liberal government would be loathe to re-address the firearms issue with new legislation, having suffered so greatly over the embarrassing failure of the hallmark C-68 legislation of 1995. However, "We won't bring back the gun registry" doesn't represent a shift in their thinking. The Liberal party still carries a strong culture of disarmament within its ranks. Some Liberals are ready to move on from the issue, having learned a hard lesson from voters over C-68 and the gun registry fiasco, but many high-placed Liberals still embrace the gun control ideology and want to punish Canadians for failing to do likewise.

The NDP are no better. They have promised to devolve gun laws down to the provincial, municipal or even local level, so that cities like Toronto and provinces like Ontario and Quebec could unilaterally ban firearms. This would result in a hodgepodge of laws nationwide, which would see some Canadians being treated differently in terms of their rights and property than others.

There were a few rural NDP MPs who supported the Conservative's Bill C-19 and the end of long gun registration. This, only because they had campaigned against a particularly hated law and did not want to suffer the consequences from voters for not keeping their promises. But both the Liberal and NDP parties do not want firearms ownership to be a political issue in Canada, and the fewer Canadians there are in possession of firearms, the less of an issue it will be.

The fact is, a minority Liberal or NDP government wouldn't have to pursue new anti-gun legislation to advance the long-term goal of civil disarmament, and they know it. They still have all of the laws and regulations they need to disarm Canadians, because the 1995 Liberal C-68 *Firearms Act* remains almost intact even after a decade of Conservative governments in Ottawa.

The Conservative party record on firearms is a little different. After achieving their majority government in 2011, the Conservatives passed legislation ending the long gun registration component of the Firearms Act. The long gun registry had become a national embarrassment, failed to prevent crime or tragedy and wasted billions of taxpayer dollars. The Conservatives had consistently campaigned using the symbolism of the registry to promise firearms law reform.

Even Canadians who supported "gun control" in spirit supported the Conservative's ending of long gun registration, or at least understood it. By 2011, there was no defending a program that had so alienated much of Canada and failed so badly. A majority of Canadians wanted the beast put down, and the Conservatives, with their majority government, administered the mercy shot.

Shortly after the CPC government was elected in 2006, the firearms bureaucracy adopted an aggressive firearms reclassification agenda. Registered firearms, albeit in small numbers, were targeted. Registrations were revoked and owners were ordered to hand them over. This culminated in the mass reclassification of largely non-restricted Swiss Arms and CZ 858 semi-automatic rifles, affecting somewhere in the order of 14,000 firearms and their owners in 2014.

This time, the firearms bureaucrats overplayed their hand. The outrage over this act against the property of Canadians was heard loud and clear in the halls of Parliament. The Conservative government was forced to act, first granting amnesty to legally protect firearms licence holders and allowing them to continue to own their property, and finally introducing Bill C-42 to address this and other issues stemming from our confiscatory and misdirected firearms laws.

Bill C-42 was passed before the end of the last Parliament, but it was not comprehensive legislation to replace the 1995 Liberal *Firearms Act*. It merely amended some of the more ridiculous and unnecessary paperwork and red tape.

The Conservatives have not indicated how far they wish to go in reforming firearms laws, or even if they think the *Firearms Act* needs replacing completely. There are no promises in the Conservative 2015 election campaign to do so. Many Conservative candidates and MPs enthusiastically support further firearms law reforms, but there is no official party policy on this.

Most folks will naturally boil this down to the Conservatives being far and away the best of the bunch, with a serious lack of understanding of the firearms issue in the opposition parties. However, when Canadians accept that C-68 is a fait du accompli and will always be the law of Canada, the fight for rights and freedoms will be over. The civil disarmament lobby will have won and firearms and civil rights will assume their traditional slide towards oblivion, regardless of the government of the day, Conservative or otherwise.

BREAKING NEWS

Assessing The Election Results

Sheldon Clare, MA
President & CEO, Canada's National Firearms Association

In the past, the Liberals have not been friendly towards firearms owners. We will need to educate them to help them overcome their prejudices.

Editor's note: This issue of the *Canadian Firearms Journal* is going to press the morning after the federal election. We've saved this last-minute page for commentary on the results. The next issue will have more.

The election represents a time in which the firearms community must adapt to the new reality of a Liberal majority government.

The Liberals have not been friendly to the firearms-owning public. The Conservatives were past their best before date, had not served us well on recent legislation and they had become arrogant in power and forgot their base. The electorate has made their choice clear. However, we must reach out and try to build bridges with our new government – we really have no other choice. I listened, with interest, to the new Prime Minister deliver his speech, in which he promised he would be "...a PM who never seeks to divide up, but takes every opportunity to unite us as Canadians." We shall have to challenge him on that commitment, ensure that our message is made clear and that our desires are known. He has made promises that would present significant dangers to firearms enthusiasts; however, many of those election slogans were jingoistic and not based on accurate information. We need to reach out to this government and make sure that any actions taken are based upon accurate information and solid research. The Liberals are the government, as we always knew would eventually happen again – this is a reality we must learn to adapt to and work within, in order to protect and defend our interests.

The NFA is well positioned to reach out to the Liberals. Our support for some liberal initiatives and obvious concern with some activities of the previous government have clearly indicated that we are not tied to a single party, but are able to build bridges and make alliances. Our challenge is great, as the Liberals have never been friendly to us and have made firearms issues an ideological divide for political purposes. If we are to succeed, we must take the time to educate and overcome the prejudice that many in the new government hold against us. It will be a tough fight, but it is one we must win. The NFA is ready, and we will need your support. We will move forward together to make the gains that we know are needed.

Preserving Our Firearms Heritage

Gary K. Kangas

Cowboys Go To War

Lt. Col. Russell Boyle

The First World War, the Great War, the War to End All Wars, began on Aug. 1, 1914. The call to arms across Canada was loud and clear. In the early 20th century, patriotic fervour was at its height. Enthusiasm to participate in the War To End All Wars was whipped up by the press. The motivation to enlist in the military was a matter of honour and duty. The enlistment centres were busy as men and women joined to be part of the great fight to save the world. Men joined for active front line military service, women who were nurses enlisted as combat nurses. Women also joined various branches of the forces to be clerks, drivers and support personnel, a historical first.

The motivation for some young men was to be involved in a great adventure, others enlisted due to patriotism. Then there were those who felt it was their duty to serve king and country. The recruitment posters were filled with glowing images and enthusiastic text. "Here's your chance. It's men we want." The posters portray adventure, heroism and bravery. The theme was, "Enlist now." To delay was not patriotic. "Your chums are fighting, why aren't you?" As the war began to unfold in the latter part of 1914, the brutality of the Germans and their march through Belgium, complete with reported atrocities, was used as a propaganda tool in the recruitment posters.

The Great Britain Volunteer Aid Detachment, known as the VAD, recruited women in Canada. More than 1,800 Canadian women joined to be Nurse's Aides, housekeepers and laundresses. About 500 went overseas with the VAD. During the First World War, 3,100 Canadian nurses joined the Canadian Medical Corp. They were inducted into the military and received commissions; Nursing Sisters as lieutenants and Matrons as captains. They received military training. The first contingent of Canadian nurses

Russell's medals.

arrived in France in November 1914. They served adjacent to the front lines in France and Salonika. Fifty-three Canadian nurses were killed in the conflict.

The First World War was the first time all levels of society were asked to participate, even though racism towards Asians and First Nations was overt. However, First Nations, Chinese and Japanese enlisted to go to war and served with distinction. Their patriotism was no less than any other Canadian. Recruitment also included an estimated 40,000 Americans who joined the Canadian Forces.

Those who went to war had various reasons. Some believed it would be a great adventure, then were astonished to discover it was not. Those who joined out of patriotism would simply endure. Then there were the ones who believed it was their duty and they accepted the reality of war. These were mostly young people; however, others were mature, middle aged and well positioned in life. All were willing to be part of what they believed to be a resistance to oppression. Many small towns and communities lost an entire generation of those who would never return. They are buried in Belgium, France, Gallipoli, Egypt, Palestine and Salonika. Some of the best and brightest never came home. Two brothers, ranchers from southern Alberta, would be among the fallen.

These cowboys who went to war were Russell and Mahlon Boyle. The two were born in Port Colborne, Ont., being the first and second sons of James Henshaw Boyle and Annie Boyle. Russell was born Oct. 29, 1880, and Mahlon was born Feb. 24, 1882. Their family was typical of the era, with father James a conductor for the Grand Trunk Railway. James was also a veteran of the Fenian invasion. As a 29-year-old militiaman, he was in engagements to resist the Fenians when they invaded the Niagara Peninsula in May 1866.

From all indications, the brothers, Russell and Mahlon, were active outdoor types, as they liked to play cowboys and enjoyed hunting and guns. Russell joined the militia at age 14 as a trumpeter and, in his teens, was a champion bicycle racer. In 1900, they enlisted in C Battery, Royal Canadian Field Artillery and were sent overseas to fight in the Boer War, which ended in 1902. Russell was wounded during the artillery battle to clear the road into Mafeking. He received a bullet wound in the shoulder. In 1908, the brothers relocated to Alberta where Boer War veterans were offered land. Russell and Mahlon established ranches near Carstairs, Alta. Russell remained active in the military as a major in the Southern Alberta Light Horse.

Both young men married and became well established members of the southern Alberta community. Russell married Laura Wight and had two children, James and Annie. Mahlon married Mary Maude, but they had no children. Russell remained active in the Light Horse and became interested in politics. He was appointed a Justice of the Peace and envisioned a run for office in the Alberta Legislature.

When the First World War broke out, Russell held the rank of major and soon assumed command of the 10th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force. In doing so, he became the youngest commanding officer in the CEF. Brother Mahlon served with the 49th Battalion Canadian Infantry.

Lieutenant Colonel Russell Boyle died April 25, 1915, due to wounds received during the attack on Kitcheners Wood at the Second Battle of Ypres. He is buried in Flanders. Major Mahlon Boyle, having served with distinction and winning the Military Cross, was killed Aug. 23, 1917.

These two dedicated men had no illusions of great adventure. They knew the reality of war as they were veterans of the war in South Africa. They were prepared to do their duty and paid the ultimate price. They are among the 61,000 Canadians who died and 172,000 wounded in the 1914 to 1918 conflict.

Lest we forget.

Major Mahlon Boyle

Photos: Boyle family archive

Legal Corner

Guy Lavergne, Attorney At Law

Authorizations To Transport: The Rules Have Changed

With the passing of Bill C-42, also known as the *Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act,* the rules applicable to transportation of restricted and prohibited firearms have been significantly modified. There has been and continues to be much confusion as to the scope and effect of the actual changes. This article attempts to explain the key changes and outline certain areas where the state of the law remains somewhat unclear.

What is an Authorization to Transport?

The basic principle applicable to restricted and prohibited firearms is set out at Section 17 of the *Firearms Act.* Restricted and prohibited firearms "may be possessed only at the dwelling-house of the individual, as recorded in the Canadian Firearms Registry, or at a place authorized by a chief firearms officer." Authorization to transport a restricted or prohibited firearm to a place other than the license holder's dwelling house is achieved by way of what is commonly known as an Authorization to Transport (ATT). Applications are made under Section 19 of the *Firearms Act,* which provides that a license holder "may be authorized to transport a particular prohibited firearm or restricted firearm between two or more specified places for any good and sufficient reason..."

Commonly, a distinction is made between long-term ATTs (LTATT), which are issued for a longer period of time, and short-term ATTs, which are issued for ad hoc (i.e. special) circumstances.

Prior to the passing of Bill C-42, the situation was that LTATTs were commonly issued only for the purpose of going to and from an approved range, and everything else required a STATT, which meant a lot of paperwork and no real gain in terms of public safety. After all, criminals do not apply for an ATT to take their (illegally owned) firearms to and from the site of their crimes.

Bill C-42

The best way to describe Bill C-42 is to view it as the legal equivalent of a series of patches. Just like their computer namesake, it is difficult to assess the effect of such patches, without knowing the prior situation and combining the patches with existing legislation – in this case, the *Firearms Act* and the *Criminal Code.* To further compound the issue, an updated version of the *Firearms Act,* incorporating the changes applicable to ATTs, was only published on Sept. 15, 2015, although the changes came into effect on Sept. 2, 2015.

Much was said about the effects of Bill C-42 during the parliamentary debates, most of which was political hyperbole, and thus the debates are of little use to understand its scope and effect.

One of the stated goals of Bill C-42 is to reduce the amount of administrative paperwork confronting law-abiding firearms owners. On Sept. 2, 2015, the RCMP published a Q & A to explain the changes. Upon reading it, I started wondering whether I had read the same statute as the RCMP did, at least in terms of the immediate effects of Bill C-42. Please, let me explain:

Going forward, ATTs may take the form of conditions attached to a license. In essence, it is likely that these conditions will still be stated in a document issued with the license. At-large ATTs, as mentioned below, will mandatorily take the form of conditions attached to a license. In all likelihood, paperwork will still be issued for STATTs.

Upon approval of a transfer, the transferee is automatically authorized to transport the restricted/prohibited firearm to his stated dwelling. No STAAT is required for that purpose.

Bill C-42 clearly states that ATTs for certain common and usual purposes will be automatically granted, for the duration of the license, upon either: (i) license renewal, or (i) approval of a transfer. In both cases, these at-large ATTs apply to all restricted/prohibited firearms registered to the license holder for transportation within the license holder's province of residence. These "common and usual purposes" can be summarized as follows:

PAUL SEYMOUR

With the new *Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act,* handgun owners have seen changes to ATTs.

- To and from approved clubs and ranges
- To and from police stations and CFO offices, for verification, registration or disposal
- To and from a licensed gunsmith or appraiser
- To and from a gun show
- To a port of exit and from a port of entry

Please note the benefit of the first category (to and from clubs and ranges) only applies to restricted firearms and to handguns mentioned at paragraph 12 (6.1) of the *Firearms Act* (i.e. .25 and .32-calibre handguns, as well as short barrel handguns). Guns owned for collection purposes are also excluded.

As to the immediate effect of Bill C-42, it only states that ATTs issued for transportation to and from shooting clubs and ranges shall include all approved clubs and ranges within the license holder's province of residence.

Lo and behold, the RCMP has taken the position that the at-large ATT, for the common and usual purposes mentioned above, applies immediately to all restricted license holders, subject to the same reservations as mentioned above. Please note that this is an administrative interpretation of the legislation on the part of the RCMP. Such interpretation, as far as I am concerned, does not appear to be supported by the applicable legislation. Hence, my surprise!

The RCMP's position is likely meant to address a flaw in the legislation. It was to be expected that the provincial CFOs would be flooded with license renewal applications, etc., in order to get the benefit of the at-large ATT. Further, there was no sound reason or rationale to attach the at-large ATT to renewed licenses, but not to existing licenses.

The flip side is that an administrative interpretation is something that is subject to change, without need for a legislative amendment. Those who rely upon an administrative interpretation, albeit official, may still be prosecuted, although they might have defences available. And let us keep in mind that, at the end of the day, it is the provincial CFOs who have the authority to approve ATTs under Section 57 of the *Firearms Act;* not the RCMP. The latter does not have authority over the CFOs. It would be preferable for provincial CFOs to confirm that, indeed, at-large ATTs are now a feature of every existing restricted firearms license.

Finally, let us keep in mind that all other transportation, such as going to out-of-province ranges, still requires an ATT on an ad hoc basis, as it is not covered by the at-large ATT.

What about Quebec?

In addition to the *Firearms Act,* Quebec's restricted firearm shooters are also subject to what is commonly known as Law 9. Law 9 mandates membership in a shooting club, in order to be authorized to shoot restricted or prohibited firearms. That requirement remains in effect. Law 9 also mandates that shooters attend the designated club and shoot at least once a year. That has not changed either.

Whether clubs will allow members of other clubs to use their shooting facilities remains to be seen. There does not appear to be any legal impediment to such an arrangement, but policy may vary from club to club. One thing is for certain: STATTs are no longer required to transport restricted firearms to other clubs.

Review

Winchester XPR Rifle

By Jeff Helsdon

There's a lot riding on the introduction of the Winchester XPR bolt-action rifle. Because, with the exception of Winchester, all of the major North American gun manufacturers have a value-priced gun in their line up. So, when Winchester trotted out the XPR at the 2015 SHOT Show, it was an interesting development in a complex story.

In 1936, as North American hunters began to switch from lever-action to bolt-action rifles, Winchester captured a large part of the emerging market with the launch of their Model 70. It became known as the "Rifleman's Rifle" and grew a reputation for reliability and accuracy. Over the years, Winchester has tinkered with the Model 70, updating manufacturing processes, stock designs and the trigger. Still, it remains a Model 70 at heart.

Since the launch of the Model 70, Winchester has had some short runs of different bolt-action models that weren't huge commercial successes. The last of those was the Model 770 in 1969. This means the XPR is the first new bolt-action centrefire rifle from Winchester in more than 45 years.

With the prime models from most manufacturers, including Winchester, beginning with a price greater than $800, the economy rifle market has been taking off. And why not? With modern manufacturing methods and a little feature trimming, there are some real tack drivers out there for around the $500 mark, which are perfect for dragging through the bush. So, Winchester had a lot at stake, and a lot of competition, when it entered the value-priced rifle market.

Introducing the XPR

Although I'd read about the XPR on the Internet and checked out some reviews, my first hands-on impression came when I took the gun out of the box. With the marketplace for value-priced, bolt-action rifles getting crowded, the XPR needs to stand apart and I think it does – I was struck by the angular lines and sleek look. In my hands, the gun felt lighter than some of its counterparts, yet still possesses good balance and pointability. The textured panels on the polymer stock are in the right places to provide additional grip.

Initial offerings for the XPR are 270 Win, 30-06 Sprg, 300 Win Mag and 338 Win Mag. While the black stock is standard, a Mossy Oak Break Up Country option is available. Another option is a black stock model outfitted with a Vortex Crossfire II scope with a BDC reticle. The two standard calibres tip the scales at seven pounds, although the gun feels lighter. With its longer barrel, the 300 Win Mag is seven pounds, four ounces, although the 338 Win Mag is only seven pounds.

The button-rifled barrel is chromoly steel, the same as the Model 70, and is free floated to ensure accuracy. A barrel nut connects the barrel to the receiver for accuracy and consistent headspace. On the other end, the barrel is finished with a recessed crown to protect the rifling from damage. Both receiver and barrel are solidly bedded into the stock to resist twisting from recoil or swelling during adverse weather conditions.

The trigger also sets the XPR apart from its competition. When Savage began to grow with its lower-priced offerings and their popular Accu-Trigger, it made the other rifle manufacturers take notice. So when these manufacturers launched guns in a com-

peting price range, they improved their triggers by going to a two-stage trigger. Remington, Marlin, Mossberg and Ruger are examples. Browning, like Winchester, is owned by FN Herstal, and is an exception with their value-priced AB-3.

Now, don't think because Browning and Winchester are sister companies that the XPR and AB-3 are first cousins. About all these guns share is the same Inflex recoil pad, a pad containing internal ribs that direct the recoil down and away from the shooter's face. The two guns are made in different factories, in different countries, and on different continents.

Getting back to the trigger – the XPR shares the MOA trigger of the Model 70. It features zero creep, which is the distance the trigger travels prior to release of the firing pin. As a result, the shooter has a better feel for the trigger. Another part of the MOA system is a wide trigger for good control. The XPR differs in that the actual external trigger and trigger guard are made of polymer. My measurements showed the adjustable trigger breaking close to the 3.5 pounds reportedly set at the factory.

One of the features of the Model 70 I've always liked is the three-position safety, which allows the bolt to be operated while the safety is still on. I always figure more safety is a good thing. Although the XPR has a two-position safety, it does have a release to allow operation of the bolt with the safety still on.

The magazine is completely made of polymer and of single-stack design. Although it feels lightweight in the hand, it loads easily and smoothly, holding three cartridges in both standard and magnum calibres. I found the single-stack magazine easier to load than some offset magazines. Magazine removal and insertion was also easy.

Although the XPR doesn't have the Model 70's three-position safety, it does have a bolt release in front of the safety to allow the bolt to be worked with the safety on.

The bolt isn't typical Winchester in looks, but it is functional. The three-lug design has a 60-degree throw for quick cycling and improved scope clearance. It's not jeweled like the Model 70, but is coated with nickel Teflon for smooth operation. Bolt removal is simple, with a button on the left side of the receiver to accomplish the task.

Not made in America

Despite some great guns being built in Europe, Japan and other locales around the world, I still find myself looking at the stamp on a new gun to see where it is manufactured. I was a little surprised to see the XPR is being built in Portugal. Model 70 aficionados have long bragged that the rifle is manufactured at Winchester's plant in the US. That ended when FN Herstal, the owner of Winchester Repeating Arms Company, moved production from the company's plant in Columbia, SC. Recently, Model 70 assembly was moved to Portugal, although many parts are still American made. The XPR is made in the same factory in Portugal.

At the range

I tested the gun with a Leupold Vari-X II 2-7X scope installed, initially finding the rifle's bolt was a little tight to close. However, it always cycled smoothly through loading and unloading. As I continued operating the bolt, it began to close easier. My sample rifle arrived chambered in 30-06 Springfield, and, shooting this rifle in short sleeves, I made the decision to fire only three

The Winchester XPR

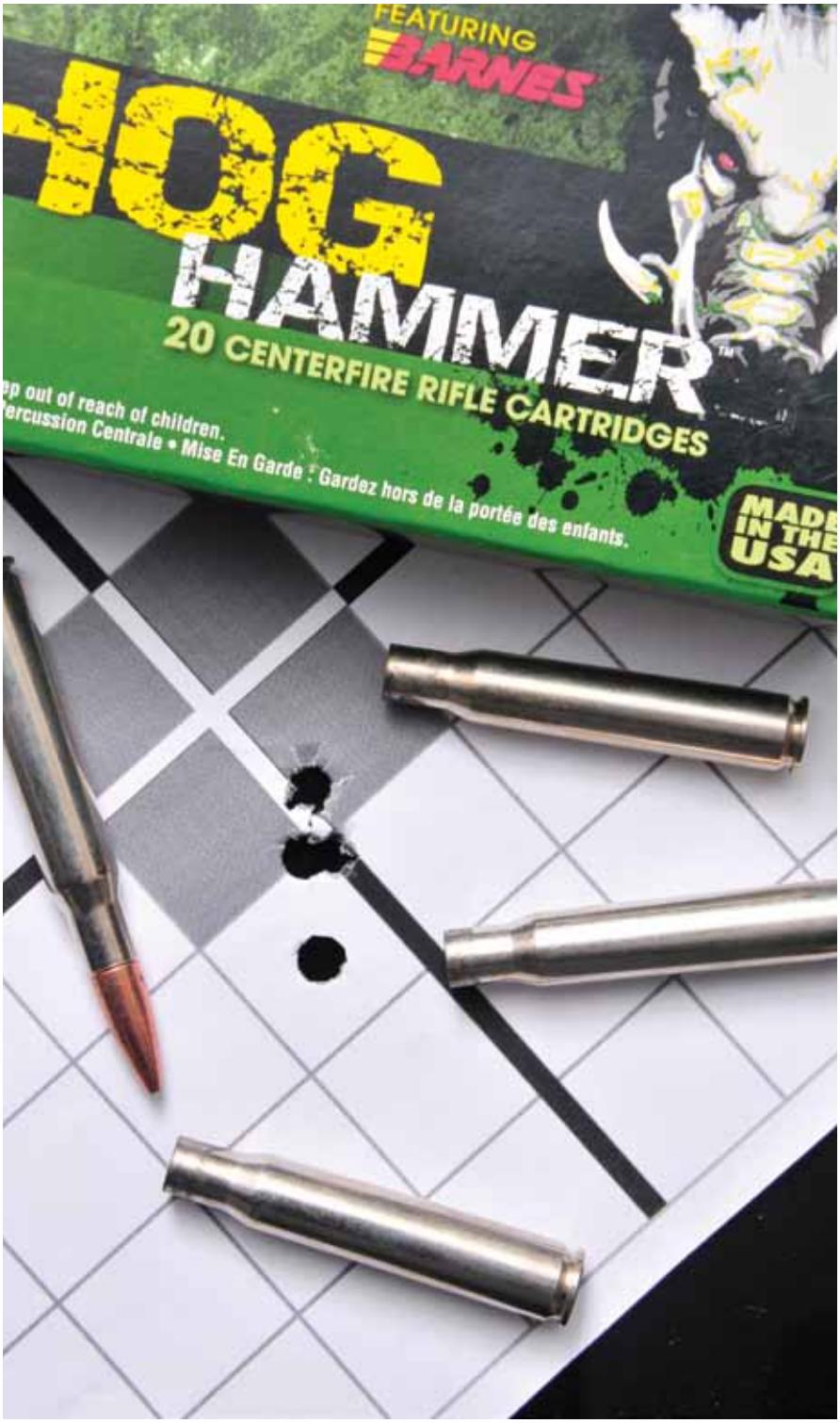
shots of each type of ammunition once the gun was sighted in. My first two shots with 150-grain Hornady American Whitetail were only 0.616 inches apart, but the third shot drifted a little further out for a group of 2.097 inches. Still, that's not bad for factory ammunition, and maybe I could do better but I was sticking to my one group.

Remington Hog Hammer, with 168-grain Barnes TSX bullets, did even better. Firing the three shots and walking up to the target, it looked like only two had hit close together. I was sure I hadn't pulled one shot off the paper, but looking closer I found no evidence two bullets went through the same hole. I figured there must have been a bad cartridge, so I shot one more bullet just to be sure. However, when I pulled the target off the backstop, I could see where two bullets went through the same hole. This brought the three shot group down to an impressive 0.411 inches, with four shots in 0.996 inches. This means the trigger has earned its MOA name and bettered it.

My last test was with Federal's Fusion, which I have always found to be accurate in their 150-grain loading. But this test was with 180-grain bullets and they didn't do as well. The group came out at 2.852 inches for three shots.

The Final word

Winchester fans have waited a long time for a value-priced bolt gun. With a retail of around $575 to $599, the XPR is more money than some of its competitors, but it's a Winchester rifle. The XPR is a worthy choice for a hunting gun and proof of the old adage that good things come to those who wait.



Remington's Hog Hammer produced the best group, an impressive 0.411 inches.

Shooter's Shopping List

Christmas is just around the corner

By Lowell Strauss

1

2


LEATHERMAN MUT

4

3


RON FURLONG'S
MARKSMANSHIP ACADEMY

5


RF
AR400
UTLS

When selecting the perfect gift for a shooter, inevitably you will encounter one of two problems: either you're dealing with a newbie shooter and have no idea where to begin, or your shooter has become so specialized that you don't know what's appropriate. Either way, shooters pay attention! Simply circle the items you want in this list, and hand it over to your loving gift giver who needs ideas. Shoppers (and shooters), you can thank me later.

1. NANUK RIFLE CASE

nanuk.com

These made-in-Canada professional protective cases are loaded with features to keep your firearms safe, no matter what you or those pesky airline baggage handlers do to them! Cases are moulded from a tough-as-nails resin, with a built-in gasket that makes them completely dust and water-proof. On the outside it has easy-roll polyurethane wheels, four metal-reinforced padlock holes, plus tie down eyelets and two spring loaded handles – one on the side and the other at end of the case. The long series is perfect for stowing rifles and shotguns. Choose the Model 990 for firearms up to 44 inches or the 995 for guns that stretch out to 52 inches. Both models are available in black, olive or tan from Amazon.ca or plasticase.com. Prices range from $300 to $600, depending on the model and accessories. Did I mention they are backed with a lifetime guarantee?

2. LEATHERMAN MULTI-TOOLS – SHOOTER SPECIFIC

leatherman.com

There are many multi-tools on the market, but few compare with the shooter-specific multi-tools from Leatherman. The MUT is the workhorse of the line, boasting 16 tools, of which several are firearms specific. A bolt override tool, replaceable bronze carbon scraper, #8-32 cleaning rod adaptor and a firearm takedown punch (to name a few) will keep your AR running from one competition to the next. Retailing at $150 to $200, this multi-tool is built to last and includes lots of cool factor – something important when you are trying to impress your shooting buddies. If MUT is a little above of your price point, Leatherman also makes a shotgun-specific tool (Pump) and an AR-specific tool (Rail), both of which sell for around $40.

3. ROB FURLONG MARKSMANSHIP ACADEMY COURSE

robfurlong.com

Every shooter, from novice to expert, wants to improve their shooting skills. So why not give the experience to train with the best? Rob Furlong, the former Canadian Forces sniper famous for making a world record distance shot in Afghanistan, has created a series of long-range precision shooting courses that teach how to become a consistent marksman. Whether you are serious about competition or just want to be a better shot while hunting, these courses will get you there. I participated in Rob's Basic Marksmanship Course the past summer. It was an excellent experience and something I would highly recommend. Other courses available through the Rob Furlong Marksmanship Academy (RFMA) include pistol and carbine shooting.

The Civilian Precision Rifle Level 1 course costs $849 plus ammunition. For more information or to book a course, visit the RFMA website.

4. 5.11 TACTICAL STRYKE PANTS, SHORTS AND SHIRTS

511tactical.com

Clothes as functional as they are good looking, the Stryke clothing line from 5.11 Tactical will be sure to put a smile on any shooter's face this Christmas. All Stryke garments have a two-way stretch fabric that needs to be experienced to be fully appreciated. Finished with TEFLON for stain resistance, these tops and bottoms will look new even after dozens of washes. Priced around the $80 mark.

5. XMETAL REACTIVE TARGETS

xmetaltargets.com

Shooting steel is a lot of fun. Every hit on target is rewarded with an audible "ping." Blazing away at reactive targets is nothing new, but tin cans don't last very long and pieces of scrap metal, especially when shot at with larger calibres, can be downright dangerous. These targets were designed by shooters, for shooters. They use a tough, modern alloy known as AR (abrasion resistant). This steel provides maximum durability and safety for shooting. Targets are designed with a 20-degree downward angle to safely deflect bullets into the dirt and not back at the shooter. The targets range from to small-game reactive targets, to gongs, to cowboy and action shooting silhouettes. Priced from $13 to $475, there is a target for every budget. If I had to choose only one for Christmas plinking fun, it would be the rimfire reactive hunting target hare. Targets can be ordered through the XMetal website.

6

7


Kestrel
RANGE CARD A
Rng ToF Hmax
100 0.117 0.06
150 0.179 0.13
200 0.243 0.24
4500 NV
HORUS

10

9

11

8

12

6. HOGUE RIFLE STOCK FOR RUGER 10/22

hogueinc.com

Trick out a Ruger 10/22 with this new Tactical Thumbhole stock. It's packed with features to help speed up target acquisition and improve shooting consistency. An integrated cheek pad will ensure consistent, proper head alignment with the sights, while the unique bench stop will ensure that your position and hold of the rifle remains firm for longer-range shots. Designed for the Ruger 10/22 bull barrelled carbines, it can also accommodate standard barrel contours. The stock is constructed using overmoulded rubber that is impervious to moisture and dirt. A version is also available for the Ruger 10/22 Takedown. These stocks are available at local firearms dealers across Canada for $145 to $170, depending on style and colour.

7. FALCON STRIKE RECOIL PAD

falconstrike.ca

Want to shoot your long gun better? Stop flinching at recoil! Falcon Strike incorporates a hydraulic damper inside of a high-performance rubber pad to tame recoil. The company boasts a 35 per cent lower felt recoil than traditional rubber pads. The recoil converters are easily installed at home with no modifications to the firearm. They are the same size as the factory recoil pads, so they won't change length of pull. Each Falcon Strike Recoil Converter is made to a firearm-specific custom fit. Visit their website to select the model that is right for your gun. Sold on the Falcon Strike website or a dealer near you (also listed on website). Priced at $150.

8. ATTACH-A-CAM

attachacam.com

Maybe you've always wanted to be the star in your own YouTube channel, or perhaps you just want to record a hunt in order to relive the moment at a later date. The Attach-A-Cam provides a quick mounting option for any firearm. It can be mounted on a barrel or scope with ease. Milled from aircraft-grade aluminum and made in the US, this is one tough bracket. Camera mounts for a firearm are between $106 and $159 and can mount your camera, phone, camcorder or GoPro (with optional accessory). Purchase direct from Attach-a-Cam.

9. SCORPION OPTICS

scorpionoptics.com

A small Canadian company is building value-priced optics, many of which come with their "sting free" lifetime warranty – if you have problems with an optic, they will replace it with a new one. One of the best buys is the Marksman series of riflescopes. These are a no-frills scope that would do well mounted on your favourite rimfire. Included is the Scorpion TCR (Trajectory Compensating Reticle) with holdover aiming points for calculated distances. The Marksman rimfire 3-9x32 riflescope is $80, including Weaver-style dovetail rings. Other makes and models can be found on the Scorpion Optics website (above). Optics can be purchased online or through outdoor retailers across Canada.

10. KESTREL WEATHER METER

kestrelmeters.com

Measuring environmental variables such as wind, elevation and barometric pressure assist the long-range shooter to calculate and dial in a firing solution. Kestrel has a wide range of weather meters, from a basic wind-speed-only model (1000 series) priced at $90 to the top-of-the-line model (4500 series) with onboard ballistic calculators for the long range shooter, which will set you back $640. The model you choose will depend on your budget and possible uses. A shooter can use a lower-priced model to collect environmental data, and then plug those numbers into a ballistic app or dedicated ballistic software. The weather meter with full ballistic calculator is gear for an advanced shooter, but it is considered essential for getting shots on target at long range under tricky conditions. Order direct from Kestrel or purchase from the many local dealers across Canada.

11. TRIGGERTECH TRIGGER

triggertech.com

A crisp, consistent trigger can make the difference between a good shooter and a great shooter. TriggerTech, a Canadian company, has engineered a frictionless trigger system! This technology uses a free-floating roller to minimize resistance between the trigger and the sear. In layman's terms, they have created a trigger that has no free play or zero creep – when the trigger is squeezed, it fires. A consistent break (firing exactly the same for each shot), allows for precise trigger control and better shooting. Drop-in triggers are available for the Remington 700 ($119) and AR-15 ($198). For more information on this great new trigger technology, check out their website.

12. CAMILLUS KNIVES

camillusknives.ca

Every shooter needs a good pocket knife for mission-specific tasks like cutting targets, opening boxes or skinning a downed animal. At $29, the Les Stroud Signature Series Desert Folding Knife by Camillus is a great utility knife for these tasks. The drop-point blade is made from a titanium-bonded 440 stainless steel and includes an integrated belt clip. It even includes an integrated fire starter to help cook up game or survive that unexpected night in the bush. It is available at Canadian Tire, your local sporting goods store or online at their website

BONUS STOCKING STUFFER IDEAS

Okay, Santa gets the credit, but these still make great gifts no matter who they are from.

13

13. ICE TARGETS $16

ecotargetmold.com

For awesome, exploding fun, uniquely applicable to our land of ice and snow. Plus, it's non-toxic and recycles all on its own.

14. MATCH SAVERZ $33

matchsaverz.com

Score an additional hit or knock down another bird with this innovative gun gadget. The Match Saverz allows a shooter to conveniently store an extra shotshell cartridge on their shotgun for rapid reloading. Check out the videos and order online.

14

BARREL WIZARD BY SHOOTERS CHOICE $64

shooters-choice.com/barrel-wizard

This handy tool will help you clean your shotgun barrel like magic using paper towels! A snap cap, lubricant holder, bore, chamber and choke cleaner, this cleaning rod does it all. Plus it stores neatly inside your shotgun. Order online at Shooters Choice. (not pictured)

**Prices quoted in Canadian dollars in this article. Where possible, prices are an average retail price. Some prices were converted from US dollars. The exchange rate at the time of printing was 1 USD = 1.32 CAD.*

The Bergmann -Bayard

PISTOL

By Paul Scarlatta

DURING THE EARLY YEARS of the 20th century, Denmark's armed forces were equipped with an assortment of obsolete revolvers in several calibres. So, in 1908, the army announced trials to find a new semi-automatic pistol, testing the Luger/Parabellum, Colt M1900 and FN Mle. 1900 and 1903. The Parabellum was chosen and a contract for 1,700 pistols tendered with Deutches Waffen und Munitionfabriken (DWM) who, because of outstanding orders from the German and other armies, declined it. At this point, a Danish businessman, Hans Gildsig, presented the trials board with a pistol manufactured by the Societe Anonyme Anciens Établissements Pieper (AEP) of Herstal, Belgium, and produced by Theodor Bergmann.

With the new breed of semi-auto pistols all the rage in Europe, Bergmann realized the potential profit to be made and in 1893 obtained rights to a pistol designed by Otto Brauswetter and hired Louis Schmeisser to develop it further. In 1895, Bergmann purchased the Aktiengesellschaft Eisenwerke Gaggenau, renaming it the Bergmanns Industriewerke, and began marketing a series of pistols designed by Schmeisser that used straight blowback, retarded blowback and locked breech operating systems. They chambered a bewildering series of proprietary 5mm, 6.5mm, 7.5mm, 7.65mm, 7.8mm and 8mm cartridges.

A common feature, and one many central European pistol designers of the period were enamored with, was a magazine located in front of the trigger guard. Early models were loaded by swiveling down a plate on the right side of the magazine and inserting a clip of cartridges (loose cartridges could also be loaded) and then closing the plate, releasing a spring-loaded follower that pushed the rounds up so they could be chambered by the forward-moving bolt.

Bergmann subcontracted pistol production to the firm V.C. Schilling of Suhl, Germany. And while a series of steadily improved pistols, the Models 1893, 1894, 1896, 1897 and 1899, were released on the civilian market and entered in the military trials of several countries, sales were disappointing. Of note is the M1897 pistol, which

SELVLADEPISTOLE M.1910/21

Specifications

Calibre: 9mm Skarp Patrone til Pistol 1910
Overall length: 10 inches
Barrel length: Four inches (102 millimetres)
Weight: 36 ounces
Magazine: Six-round detachable box
Sights: front, inverted V blade; rear, V notch
Grips: Trolit or wood

MICHAEL HUGHES

was the first to utilize a detachable box magazine that could be loaded in place in the pistol by means of chargers (also known as stripper clips).

In 1897, Heinrich Krighoff, who did not wish to produce Bergmann's pistols, bought out V.C. Schilling and Theodor arranged for the aforementioned AEP to manufacture them.

Beginning in 1900, Fabrique Nationale introduced a series of pistols designed by John Moses Browning. Their quality, simplicity and reliability quickly overshadowed and outsold the competition, leading Bergmann to concentrate his efforts on the development of a large, powerful pistol intended for military service. Schmeisser provided it in 1903.

Released on the market as the Bergmann-Mars M1903, this design adhered to the styling of earlier Bergmann pistols, but utilized a much stronger breech locking system. Schmeisser's locked breech system featured a hollow locking block, which moved up and down in grooves in the barrel extension. The square section bolt, which fit through the locking block, has a bottom lug that mates with a recess in the bottom of the locking block, the lower-forward and upper-rear edges of which are beveled. When the pistol is fired, the barrel and bolt recoil together for about a quarter of an inch, whereupon the beveled upper surface of the block, moving against the upper surface of the square frame section, is forced down one-eighth of an inch into a recess in the rear of the barrel extension. This unlocks the bolt from the recess in the bottom of the block and allows it to continue to the rear, extracting and ejecting the spent case. The recoil spring, located inside the bolt, then pulls the bolt forward, stripping the next round out of the magazine and chambering it as it goes into battery.

Bergmann-Mars pistols were offered chambered for the Bergmann 7.8mm No. 5, 9mm No. 6 and new 10mm and 11.35mm cartridges. The British army tested the 9mm, 10mm and 11.35mm pistols, but felt they offered no real advantages over the issued Webley revolver.

In 1905, the Spanish Army ordered a quantity of 9mm M1903 pistols for extended field trials. In 1906, the US Army tested an 11.35mm Bergmann-Mars, but both pistol and cartridge were found wanting. The Spanish army liked the pistol enough to place an order, but requested several changes. These included a disconnecter so the pistol couldn't go full auto, and the barrel and barrel extension machined as a single unit instead of being screwed together as on the Mars. Other changes included a hammer stop pin, a redesigned magazine catch, a manual safety and a reshaped grip. Because of these changes, deliveries of the 3,500 pistols did not begin until 1908.

The M.1910/21 I test fired proved surprisingly accurate, as these groups fired at 50 feet prove.

But field service showed the resulting Pistola Bergmann de 9 mm. Modelo 1908 was not what the Spanish army wanted and most were transferred to the Guardia Civil. However, the cartridge the Bergmann was chambered for would serve Spain for the next 60 years. This 9mm Bergmann No. 6 cartridge (also known as the 9mm Bergmann-Bayard), known in Spanish service as the 9mm Largo, consisted of a straight-walled, rimless case 23 millimetres long, whose 128-grain FMJ bullet achieved a velocity of 1,146 feet per second.

After the Spanish contract was filled, AEP released the pistol on the market as the Pistolet Automatique Modèle 1908 Bergmann-Bayard.

In 1910, AEP entered their improved pistol in trials being held by the British and Danish armies. The revolver-loving Brits rejected it once again; but the Danish Army expressed interest, requesting additional changes. These included replacing the flat mainspring with an S-shaped unit, a redesigned bolt, disconnecter and extractor, larger grips, a key on the locking block to prevent it from being inserted incorrectly during assembly, half-moon cutouts on the sides of the magazine housing and grooved gripping surfaces on the magazine body.

AEP made the changes and began delivering the Selvladepistole M.1910 (Self-loading Pistol Model 1910) the following year. By the time the First World War erupted in 1914, AEP had delivered 4,840 M.1910 pistols to the Danish Army. The Danish version of the 9mm Bergmann-Bayard, the 9mm Skarp Patrone til Pistol 1910, was dimensionally and ballistically identical to the Spanish 9mm Largo. The M.1910 was issued with a large, full-flap holster, which was worn over the shoulder and had three internal pouches holding spare magazines and chargers with loops for a cleaning rod.

Even though Denmark remained neutral during the First World War, the Bergmann-Bayard did see combat in the trenches. When the German army overran Belgium in 1914, the occupation authorities kept AEP's production lines running and the Imperial German Army obtained 2,000 Model 1910 and Model 1912 pistols, which were issued to support, rear echelon and security units.

After the war, AEP declined to accept further orders for M.1910 pistols, leading the Danes to undertake local production. They took the opportunity to correct a few faults that had become evident with field service: the right-hand frame side plate was retained with a screw rather than a spring-loaded catch; the magazine catch was enlarged; the narrow wooden grips were replaced with larger ones made from Trolit (a type of plastic).

In 1922, production of the Selvladepistole M.1910/21 began at Hærens Tøjhus (Army Manufacturing Arsenal) in Copenhagen, and by 1924 approximately 900 pistols were completed, with an additional 1,904 pistols produced between 1924 and 1925. Most of the M.1910 pistols still in service were rebuilt to M.1910/21 specifications and marked accordingly.

In early 1940, the Danish Army placed an order with FN for Hi-Power pistols, but only a few were delivered before the outbreak of the Second World War.

The M.1910/21 pistol saw combat

UFFE PAASKE LARSENS COLLECTION

Two Danish officers firing their M.1910/21 pistols. Note the holster on the bench in front of them.

when Nazi Germany invaded Denmark on April 9, 1940. Collaborationists in the Danish government had seen to it that most Danish forces were unprepared for the Wehrmacht's Blitzkrieg tactics and, despite strong resistance by isolated military and border guard units, the Danish government surrendered after less than one day of fighting. As was their practice in most occupied countries, the Germans issued captured M.1910/21 pistols to their occupation forces in Denmark as the 9mm Pistole 644(d).

In 1943, with attacks by Danish resistance fighters increasing, the Germans disbanded the Danish government and the remaining units of the army and instituted martial law. Many disbanded soldiers and police officers joined the resistance and brought weapons with them, including numbers of M.1910/21 pistols. These saw use by resistance fighters until British forces liberated Denmark in May 1945.

The post-war Danish Army was initially equipped with British-supplied Inglis (Canadian) Hi-Power pistols, although some officers continued to use M.1910/21 pistols.

Field stripping the Bergmann-Bayard

1. Remove the magazine and draw the bolt back to cock the hammer and check to make sure the chamber is empty.
2. Using a drift punch, depress the firing pin and remove the retention pin from the right side of the knurled retraction knob on the bolt.
3. Withdraw the firing pin and firing pin return spring.
4. While restraining the mainspring inside the bolt, press the rear sight forward and pull it up.
5. Withdraw the mainspring from the bolt and then withdraw the bolt from the back of the barrel extension.
6. Push the barrel/barrel extension forward and lift up at the front to free it from the frame. Note the orientation of the cubic locking block in the barrel extension – it must be oriented correctly. The later Danish-made guns have alignment marks on the block and the barrel extension.
7. When reassembling, the broad end of the firing pin can be used (flat side up) to push the recoil spring in far enough to insert the rear sight in front of it. The locking block will only go in one way, so its orientation should be carefully noted.

Test firing the M.1910/22 pistol

My good friend Tim Hawkins provided me with an M.1910/21 pistol from his personal collection to photograph and test fire. It was made at Hærens Tøjhus in 1924 and is in excellent mechanical condition, with the late model wooden grips and about 90 per cent finish. For test firing purposes, I obtained a supply of 9mm Largo ammunition made at the Empresa Nacional Santa Barbara de Industrias Militaries in Toledo, Spain, in 1977.

I test fired the M.1910/21 for accuracy from a rest at 50 feet. I quite honestly surprised myself by producing a series of groups running in size from 1.25 to two inches, all printing to point of aim. I experienced a few failures to extract, which left the spent case half way out of the chamber with the bolt trying to feed the next round out of the magazine. This pointed out a serious design fault with the pistol, as there is no way to lock the bolt to the rear. Three hands are required to clear these double feed jams.

To see how the gammel dansker pige (old Danish girl) handled in offhand shooting, I set up a target at seven yards and proceeded to send 9mm rounds downrange, firing the pistol supported and unsupported (one handed). The pistol's trigger pull, grip-to-frame angle and overall ergonomics left much to be desired. But I took my time and again produced an impressive target with every round in the X and 9 rings. It's a fun gun to shoot, but, unfortunately, its 102-millimetre barrel means it is prohibited in Canada. Therefore, only people with a 12(6) PAL will be able to own this classic handgun.

I found the M.1910/21 a fascinating, if not overly practical, military handgun. As were many of its contemporaries, the gun is overly large, complicated, difficult to load and displays poor ergonomics. These faults are counterbalanced, to some degree, by its excellent accuracy and powerful cartridge. In conclusion, I would have rather had an Inglis Hi-Power any day!

One Gun's Story

Dean Roxby

Jakob's Swiss K31 Rifle

Every gun has a story and military rifles have some of the most interesting tales to tell. However, unearthing that story is often impossible. Not so with the Swiss K31 rifle, which provides a way of tracing a rifle back to the soldier who carried it. Here's the story of one such rifle.

In the early 1880s, Rudolph Schmidt designed the straight-pull bolt system used in the Swiss military rifle that bears his name. Around the same time, Swiss firearms designer Lieutenant Colonel Eduard Alexander Rubin was perfecting the first full-metal jacketed bullet. The two ideas merged, and the rifle and matching cartridge were adopted for Swiss service in 1889. It must be noted that the first version of this new cartridge was slightly shorter than the current version. The GP90 *(Gewehrpatrone,* or Rifle Cartridge 1890) round was 7.5x53.5mm. Later versions were lengthened slightly, with the GP11 designated the 7.5x55mm. Both the K11 and K31 rifles use the GP11 7.5x55mm round.

The K31 Swiss service rifle was submitted for testing in 1931, and final approval was given in 1932. It is an updated and shortened version of the earlier Model 1889 and 1911 Schmidt-Rubin service rifles. While the K31 rifle cannot correctly be called a Schmidt-Rubin, as it had several updates made after the passing of designer Rudolph Schmidt, it is common to do so. The Model 1911, also called the K11, for *Karabiner,* or Carbine, is based upon the Model 1889 Schmidt-Rubin design (carbine, in this case means a shorter rifle, but still firing a full power cartridge). Full production began in 1933 and it served through the Second World War, and beyond, to 1958. A total of 528,230 carbines were produced, until it was superseded by the Sturmgewehr 57 rifle.

Original military chargers (top) and new type from Northridge International.

The most obvious upgrade to the K31 involved moving the bolt locking lugs to the front of the bolt. The M1889 and K11 designs have the locking lugs located roughly halfway along the length of the bolt. The K31 bolt is also noticeably shorter than its predecessors. This allows for a longer barrel, without increasing the overall length of the rifle.

The K31 still employed a straight-pull method of operation like the M1889 and K11. Unlike most bolt actions, a straight-pull rifle does not need an upward or downward motion to unlock or lock the breech. The forward motion of the bolt, by means of a camming action, causes the bolt body to rotate into place. As the bolt rotates, the lugs lock into recesses in the receiver.

The K31 is renowned for its fine trigger. Unlike many military triggers, the K31 breaks cleanly. The Swiss are known as a nation of shooters, and Swiss military doctrine is based on this.

The rear sights are standard open notch, with a sliding wedge for elevation, numbered 100 metres to an optimistic 1,500 metres. The front sight post is a clever idea. Rather than trying to crudely bash the front sight side-to-side for windage, the sight is set in a diagonally angled slot. Moving the sight forward causes it to move to the right, and vice versa. As the angle is fairly shallow, this allows much more precise windage movements.

The K31 is magazine fed, via a remov-

able six-round magazine. Although it is removable, it is far more common to top load rounds into the magazine using special stripper clips, or chargers. These chargers have an unusual appearance, compared to other stripper clips. Rather than all-steel construction, they are made from thin sheet metal and a waxy cardboard/fibreboard material. As well, the chargers hold both the rear and the front of the rounds. At one time they were plentiful and cheap, but not now. This author obtained exactly four from a collector in Europe, after looking in vain to find any in Canada. And they were not cheap! However, a US-based company, Northridge International, is now producing a nylon and fibreglass copy of the charger. The Canadian importer and dealer, Corwin Arms, is carrying these new clips. They work well, although the slightly thicker plastic means the charger does not fall into place in the receiver, but needs to be carefully guided in. I use the Northridge ones, and conserve my originals.

The rifle pictured was from one of the last batches of surplus rifles to be released by the Swiss government. Based upon the serial number, this rifle was built in 1947, one of 20,950 made that year. It was imported into Canada in 2013 and sold by the Calgary Shooting Centre. A very reasonable $250 bought a good condition rifle, including a sling and muzzle protector cap.

The 7.5x55mm round is currently available, both as commercially loaded ammunition and as Swiss surplus by the crate. In the latter instance, a crate is 480 rounds. The good news about Swiss surplus is that it is not corrosive. Unfortunately, it is Berdan primed, rather than Boxer primed, but this is not a complete show stopper. Fortunately, there are ways of removing the spent Berdan primers and replacement primers are now readily available. Murom, of Russia, makes new primers of the correct diameter and depth – look for KV-762N. These are available in Canada, under both TulAmmo and Dominion brand names.

A close-up of the action and tag, with personal information blacked out.

RCBS makes a Berdan de-capping tool that pries the old primer out. I haven't tried it yet, but others like it. I use the hydraulic method. This involves filling the case with water and driving a rod into the case mouth with enough force to pop the primer out. I've had no success hand holding the case, and bonking a dowel or rod into the mouth. However, if the case is held in a shellholder and driven upwards into a sizing die, I achieved perfect success. Naturally, the de-capping pin for Boxer primers must be removed first. And cases must be resized before doing the hydraulic method, as slamming an unlubed, unsized case into a die is a guarantee for a stuck case. Be sure to dry and oil your die and press afterwards.

Resizing the fired cases presents another issue. The chamber dimensions of the original GP90 round and the later GP11 version are slightly different. As noted above, the GP90 round is slightly shorter than the GP11. It is also a bit narrower, primarily in the shoulder area. Most reloading dies are made to the GP90 dimensions, rather than the wider GP11 specs. The reason for this is that resizing the brass to the smaller size allows it to fit both chambers, specifically the narrow GP90 chamber for the Model 1889 rifle and the wider GP11 chamber for both the K11 and K31 rifles. However, when fired in a K31 rifle, the brass is expanded to fit the larger GP11/K31 chamber and then resized down to narrower GP90 dimensions, only to be expanded to GP11 size when fired in a K31 again. The concern is that after several cycles, this may work harden the brass and cause early case failure.

Cleaning kit, including two bottles of oil, chamber scraper, chamber mirror, pull-thru, foldable grease rod and a brass muzzle cap with sales tag in the foreground.


Jakob's rifle

Fortunately, Hornady makes a sizing die that is cut to K31 specs. Projectiles are standard .308 calibre bullets.

For military surplus collectors, the accessories and accoutrements that accompany a rifle are collectable, as well. Besides the sling and brass muzzle cap mentioned earlier, I purchased a period cleaning kit from a US vendor. I also purchased a multi-section "grease rod" on E-bay. This has a cord running through it, sort of like modern tent poles. A bayonet remains on my list of items to get. A book called *Swiss Magazine Loading Rifles 1869 to 1958* is high on my list, also. This book is part of the *For Collectors Only* series of titles from North Cape Publications. I have other books from this series, and they are thoroughly researched, small in size but large in detail, with various tiny manufacturing variants well documented.

One of the most intriguing things about the K31, and earlier Swiss arms also, is the placement of a name tag under the steel buttplate. These small, plasticized paper tags contain the rifle's serial number, as well as the name, rank, usually date of birth and address of the soldier it was issued to. If one knows where to look, a great deal of information can be discovered. A certain amount of sleuthing needs to be done, but the Internet makes this surprisingly simple.

Immediately upon receiving this rifle, I removed the buttplate and located the tag. As will be explained later, I'm withholding some of the personal information, but it told me the following:

Mitr.
(Surname withheld) *Jakob*
Schw. Fus. Kp IV / 109
alle Landstr. (withheld)
Meilen ZH

A quick Internet search for information on how to decipher tags led me to the Swiss Rifles website as well as a page on the Swiss Rifles message board forum. A list of serial numbers, by manufacturing date, told me this rifle was made in 1947.

All of this web-based information led me to believe my tag translated to:

Machinegunner
(Surname), *Jakob*
Heavy Fusiliers Company IV / 109
All Home Defense Company, number XX
Meilen, Zurich

I then posted this to the Canadian GunNutz web forum, mentioning I did not know the significance of the fourth line. I was quickly corrected. The first word of the fourth line is not *Alle,* or *All.* Rather, it was *Alte,* meaning Old. As well, the abbreviation *Landstr* did not mean *Landstrurm,* but meant *Land Strasse. Strasse* means street or road, so it would roughly translate to Old Country Road, followed by the actual street address. This changed everything! With an actual address of the previous owner in hand, a Google maps search became possible. More importantly, a reverse directory look-up at www.search.ch was within reach.

By entering the tag's street address, a name surfaced. However, the name given by the reverse directory did not match the name on the tag. So, I called anyway, just to see if that person knew of Jakob. She did! She explained that, unfortunately, Jakob passed away in August 2013, only a few months prior. I longed to speak with the serviceman who carried this rifle, and let him know his rifle was well cared for in Canada, and not crushed or recycled into a hubcap. However, this was not to be. Fortunately, his son still lives in the same town of Mielen. A name and a phone number was obtained.

I made another phone call and first spoke to the son's wife, then to Jakob's son. He was surprised to get a phone call from Canada enquiring about his father, and explained his father was born in the mid 1930s and died only recently from cancer. He enrolled at age 20, then served three to four weeks every year until age 40, then two weeks every second year until age 50. Jakob was in a machine gun crew, using the heavy machine gun of the time, the MG-11 Maxim. The MG crew members were all issued K31 rifles as well.

Following our phone call, we exchanged e-mail addresses and I sent photos of the rifle and tag, hoping that perhaps a photo of Jakob with his rifle might be sent in return. Unfortunately, that hasn't happened. After this initial contact and e-mail, further e-mails remain unanswered. I don't know why, but perhaps the short time span between Jakob's passing and the unexpected phone call was an unwelcome intrusion. For this reason, his surname and the street number have been eliminated from this article. This is something to consider if you wish to trace a tag found in your Swiss rifle.

Every rifle has a story and because of the tags found under the buttplate of Swiss K31 rifles, it's much easier to unearth that story. These tags are an interesting addition to a superb rifle, and give a military collector a real connection to the soldier who carried it many years ago.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Calgary Shooting Centre
www.theshootingcentre.com

Wholesale Sports
www.wholesalesports.com

Northridge International Inc. (new chargers)
www.northridgeinc.com/store/index.cfm/c146/i1688

Corwin Arms (Can. Importer for new chargers)
www.corwin-arms.com/catalogue/magazines

Hornady (Dies for K11 & K31 chamber)
www.hornady.com/store/7.5-Swiss-K31-.308-2-Die-Set/

CanadaAmmunition (Russian Molot Berdan primers, Dominion branded)
www.canadaammunition.com/product/byCategory/primers/

Budget Shooters Supply (Russian Molot Berdan primers, TulAmmunition branded)
www.budgetshootersupply.ca/catalog/Large_Rifle_Berdan_Primers_97.cfm

North Cape Publications (Swiss Magazine Loading Rifles book)
www.northcapepubs.com/#anchor374982

Research sites and forums
www.swissrifles.com/sr/tags/
theswissriflesdotcommessageboard.yuku.com/topic/3029#.U-8CnGMpdcq
www.search.ch/

EDITOR'S NOTE

This is the first in a series called *One Gun's Story.* As we all know, every gun has a story to tell. If you have a gun with an fascinating story behind it, let us know. The gun can be old or new, and the story can be funny, sad or historical. It doesn't matter, as long as it's a great tale. If need be, we'll help you write the story, or maybe even assign one of our writers to tackle it. Write the editor at editor@nfa.ca.

The Slide-Lock Reload

Mastering this competition technique

By Duane Thomas

Of the two common techniques for releasing the slide when at slide-lock, Thomas prefers thumbing the slide release.

When firing a semi-auto pistol, the first clue you'll have of an empty gun will probably be when the slide locks to the rear. If you compete in one of the many IDPA matches held at Canadian gun clubs, the slide-lock reload is a huge part of the game. So, let's discuss reloading a completely empty gun quickly and efficiently. It's pretty straightforward.

To start with, a lot of things need to happen at once. Simultaneously, (1) bring the gun in slightly toward your body, angled to accept the fresh magazine. I find it works well, when building up your muscle memory of what this position should be, to consciously point the gun's mag well at the mag pouch on your hip, (2) punch the magazine release button, (3) the support hand goes for the spare magazine.

Wrap your support hand around the magazine in the pouch with your index finger down the front of the pouch, the middle through little fingers and thumb wrapped around the magazine. It is immensely helpful here if the pouch is cut down low enough so you can actually get those four fingers around the magazine – many mag pouches aren't. Draw the magazine and move it in a straight line toward the gun butt. By this time, the gun should be immobile and waiting to accept the new magazine.

The magazine in the gun falls free. By this time, the fresh magazine should be coming up toward the gun. The two magazines should actually cross each other in the air, one going down and the other coming up, at the same time.

Use the finger along the front of the mag tube to point the magazine straight into the mag well. It is helpful at this point to build into your technique a slight pause as you verify alignment of magazine to mag well. When I say "slight," I mean that anyone watching you would not even be able to notice you doing it.

Keep the gun high, up in front of your face, and don't drop it down. You're just going to have to bring it back up again to fire, so why drop it down to start? Lowering the gun is an immense amount of wasted movement.

Look the magazine into the mag well. See what's going on in front of your face. See the proper alignment. See the magazine go into the mag well. I know you can do it without looking. I believe you should look in practice. It's a lot easier to do this correctly, time after time, when you use your eyesight. Correct rep after correct rep is what builds technique. Correct repetition is the mother of all skill.

Now, how to get the slide forward? Some people say that at this point you should come up over the top of the gun and slingshot the slide, then come back down and re-acquire the two handed grip, under the theory that thumbing the slide stop is a fine motor skill that is difficult to accomplish under stress. The reality is that curling your thumb downward is not a fine motor skill, it's a gross motor skill that works well with what your body wants to do under stress anyway, which is tense up and close your joints.

An entire article could be written on the virtues and vices of slingshotting the slide. For our purposes here, let's just say that one of its greatest

negatives is how slow it is compared to simply thumbing the slide release. All else being equal, there is no way to perform a technique with more steps and much more movement, as quickly as a simpler technique that takes fewer steps. I thumb the slide stop during a slide-lock reload.

So, back to our slide-lock reload, already in progress...

Slap the fresh magazine home. At this point, your support hand thumb should already be close to the slide release. Put your thumb on the slide release and press down. From there, the support hand continues moving up and into the two-handed grip. This all assumes your gun has an external slide stop, naturally. If not, you'll have no choice but to slingshot.

Important: during this process – seat magazine, thumb slide stop, re-acquire grip – the support hand never stops moving upward and then forward. It is one, flowing, continuous movement.

The slide snaps forward. The two-handed grip is re-established. Use the momentum of your support hand, moving back into position in the two-handed grip, to move the gun forward. Don't waste that inertia. Move the gun back toward the target. The slack is taken out of the trigger and the gun stabilizes. Fire the shot.

With practice, this entire process takes considerably less than two seconds, from the last shot before the slide locks to the rear to the next shot out of the reloaded gun.

The speedload is one of the ultimate speed movements in any sport, any martial art. Adding into the mix a slide, which has locked to the rear, doesn't slow down the overall technique nearly as much as a lot of people think it does.

Duane Thomas is a Master class shooter in IDPA Stock Service Pistol with a Glock 9mm. He is the author of two books, The Truth About Handguns and Mastering the IDPA Classifier. You can visit his website at Self-Defense-Handguns.com.

Top: The shot fires, the slide locks back, the support hand moves toward the mag pouch and the gun to the reload position. Note the finger off the trigger.

Bottom: The magazine falls free, the fresh mag comes up and the gun is angled to accept the new magazine.

GLENBOW ARCHIVES NA-2084-61

Power & Powder

How Early Guns Shaped Canada

By Todd Kristensen and Julie Martindale

FIGURE BY TODD KRISTENSEN, PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF JULIE MARTINDALE.

An 1805 Barnett flintlock trade musket that came to be one of the most popular Northwest Trade guns.

GLENBOW ARCHIVES NA-1361-1

A musket ball wound during a battle between Cree and Blackfoot people in southern Alberta in 1870 disfigured the face of Keyaki-kakapew.

When a booming explosion of smoke and fire flashed inches from his nose, Ainsley Rhynold was hooked. Rhynold is the president of one of Canada's biggest black powder revival groups and has become a steady hand at shooting the same flintlock muskets that shaped our nation's history up to the mid-1800s. In addition to burned nostril hairs, a side effect of learning to shoot these early firearms is an appreciation of their power and their shortcomings. But as firearms technology evolved, each innovation changed how guns were used, which in turn determined their impact on Canadian history.

The first firearms appeared in the 1500s, but it wasn't until 1609 that the gun started significantly shaping our nation. In that year, Samuel de Champlain unveiled his arquebus to an awestruck audience during a battle in modern Québec. The arquebus is a muzzle-loading, smoothbore firearm (as opposed to later breech-loading rifles) that relies on a slow-burning match to ignite priming powder on a small pan. This 'flash in the pan' explosion is relayed through a hole to the rear of the barrel, where a larger charge of powder waits behind a death-delivering ball. Despite its general inaccuracy, the arquebus incited great fear and led Champlain to victory.

In the mid-1600s, explorers toted flared-mouth blunderbusses, which had also found their way into the hands of eastern Inuit and the Blackfoot warriors of the west. The former likely traded by fishermen off Newfoundland, while the latter were raided from Spanish missions and mule trains in the southern US. Early blunderbusses used wheel locks to create sparks, the slow-burning match replaced by a rotating wheel that functioned in damp weather and was less liable to cause accidental discharges.

Originally designed for close encounters in open battlefields, the arquebus and blunderbuss proved cumbersome on Canada's frontier. With the advent of more portable flintlock muskets, guns starting spreading like wildfire across the west. The flintlock was much more reliable than the wheel lock and they dominated Canadian history until the mid-1800s.

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE ROYAL ALBERTA MUSEUM

Rock art panels reveal types of guns that were used (a flintlock musket is depicted at right), as well as the nature of early gun warfare (a battle scene is depicted at left).

THE NORTHWEST TRADE GUN

Over 20,000 guns were sold out of Canada's major fur trade depot at Ontario's York Factory from 1600 to the late 1700s. By the 1770s, traders requested a special line of guns for use around the forts and to trade with First Nations. The result was the Northwest Trade gun. It was light, simple and often had a brass serpent side plate that appealed to First Nations, some of whom associated guns with dragon-like thunder spirits. This smoothbore, muzzle-loading musket came in three and four-foot lengths and could fire solid lead balls (or round rocks in a pinch), as well as smaller lead shot for birds. They were commonly called fowling pieces or sporting guns and this versatility launched the musket from a warfare intimidation piece to a common hunting tool.

In many instances, traditional hunters still preferred bows and arrows to the early flintlock, despite its advances. A well-trained, stationary soldier could fire three or four musket balls in a minute, which required loading pre-packaged balls, wad and powder down the muzzle. Put that soldier on a horse to hunt stampeding buffalo or in the middle of the muskeg to track moose, and numbers drop. On the other hand, a seasoned archer could launch three or four arrows before the first one hit the ground. Furthermore, muskets could kill game up to 60 metres away, but it was not a huge advance over the 30 to 40-metre range of traditional bows and arrows. Lastly, for people constantly on the move, it was an endless battle to keep powder dry enough to ignite. Wet powder corroded barrels and led to high rates of muzzle explosions that maimed many hands. In fact, wet powder almost changed the history of North America. Alexander Mackenzie was the first European to cross the continent in 1793, but his trip almost ended short (with a bang) when a crew member with a lit pipe walked across 80 pounds of black powder laid out to dry after a canoe accident.

Given the challenges of muskets and powder, why were firearms still the number one trade item among First Nations? Maurice Doll, an archaeologist who has studied guns throughout his career, believes the reason is not technological superiority over previous weapons, but rather prestige and intimidation in warfare. Death by arrow was often slow and silent, but a musket fatality at close quarters was truly petrifying. A musket wound was messy and could easily be the size of your fist. The noise alone sent well-armed warriors into retreat. Using the intimidation of muskets, some First Nations created military imbalances that saw select groups expand greatly, while gun-less enemies were pushed at musket-point to the margins of former territory.

EARLY PISTOLS

Pistols were common among European explorers and First Nations leaders because they could be concealed during tense trading attempts. David Thompson famously carried two Mortimer 18-inch pistols in the early 1800s. Pistols were generally limited to close combat and were difficult to acquire by trade. Pistols increased in importance with the 1830s invention of the Colt Revolver, which could be fired multiple times without reloading. Surplus revolvers from the Civil War percolated north to Canada by the late 1860s, and they were highly sought after by Blackfoot and Métis who were facing increased conflict on the plains thanks to dwindling buffalo and the social disruption of diseases.

What is the evidence of early gun use in Canada? Most gun owners didn't write accounts of how guns were used or what kinds of guns were popular, so archaeologists rely on unique evidence to reconstruct the story of Canada's firearms. The most common gun-related artifact is ironically made of stone. They are gunflints – angular chunks of rock that strike the frizzen to create a shower of sparks and ignite the powder in the pan. Each gunflint lasted for up to 30 shots, so they were made and traded in bulk. For example, 13 flintmasters made 1.14 million gunflints for the British army in 1813. Most of the early flints in Canada were a honey-coloured variety made in France, but black-brown British flints replaced them when overseas wars severed relationships with the French. Archaeologists have used the discovery of several thousand flints, from military and trading posts from Nova Scotia to British Columbia, to track the spread of guns across the country.

First Nations generally didn't adopt the written word until the 1800s, but a much older method of recording stories cap-

tures glimpses of early guns and their importance. Writing-on-Stone National Historic Site is a rich collection of ancient and more recent rock art etched into the soft sandstone walls of southern Alberta. People used these walls to depict important events for thousands of years, and here we see the first accounts of gun-based warfare. Entire battle scenes are clustered across rock panels, with guns representing both the type of weapon used and the number of gun-toting warriors. Rock art confirms historical accounts of the prestige and honour that many people attained through violent encounters.

University of Winnipeg historian Roland Bohr believes that violence escalated when different First Nations acquired guns, which he attributes to a heightened sense of confidence in battle. The gun was so important in the shifting warfare dynamics of the plains that men became reliant on traders to exchange furs for guns, flints, powder, shot, balls and parts for repair. Anthony Worman, the Acting Curator of Military and Political History at the Royal Alberta Museum, calls it a gun culture of spiraling dependence. By the mid-1800s, 10 balls or a quarter-pound of gunpowder cost one finished beaver pelt. Guns could be purchased for about 20 beavers, but great prestige came from stealing them during coups, as attested to by First Nations names that crop up after the spread of firearms – Many Guns, Daylight Takes A Gun, and Fine Gun Woman.

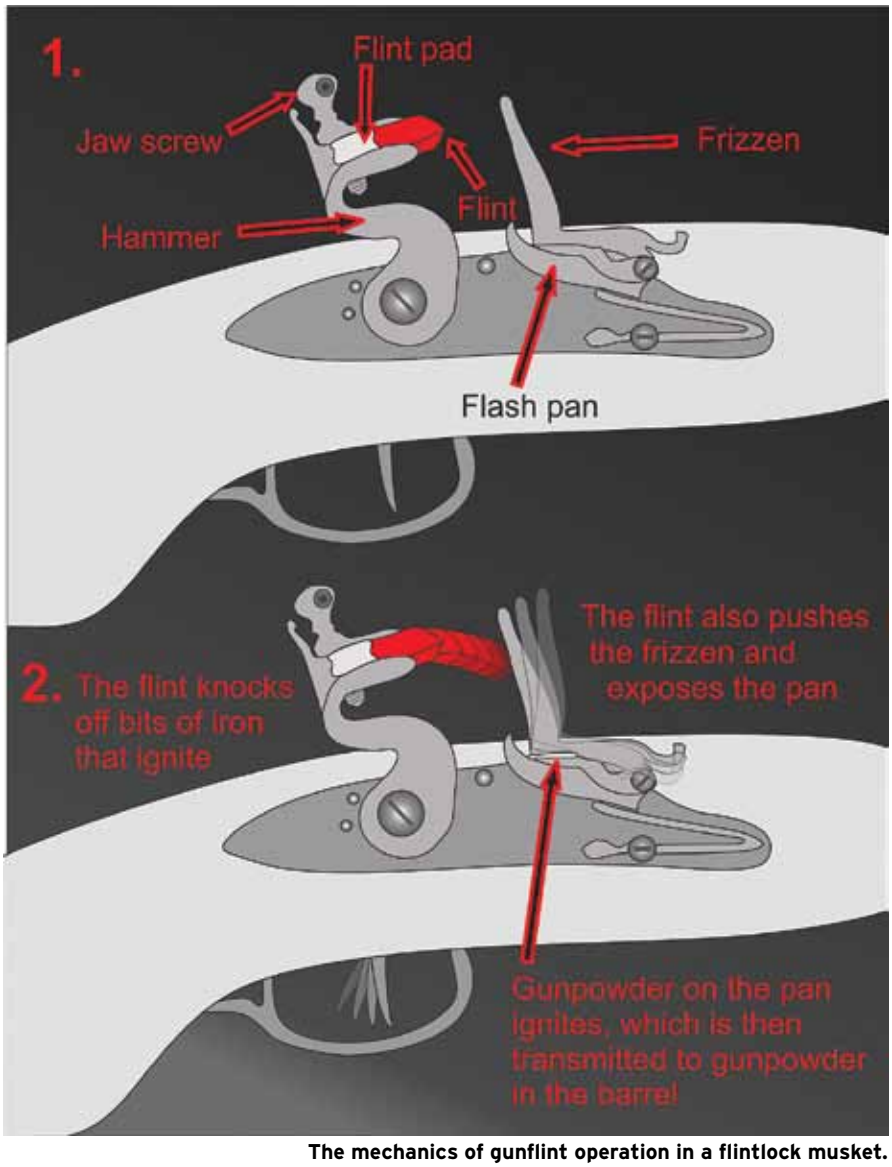


FIGURE BY TODD KRISTENSEN

The mechanics of gunflint operation in a flintlock musket.

Archaeologists also recover gun parts, remains of gunpowder magazines (storage facilities) and musket balls, the most famous being from surveyor David Thompson. In 1810/11, Thompson and his crew carried eight guns, 93 pounds of balls, 416 gunflints and 93 pounds of powder across Athabasca Pass in the Rockies while searching for an easier passage to the west coast. During the multiple snowshoe trips across the pass to ferry cargo, Thompson lost a leather bag of balls that he guessed had been taken by wolverines. In an instance of pure luck, a party surveying the interprovincial boundary in 1921 recovered small pieces of leather and 114 of Thompson's musket balls near the summit of Athabasca Pass.

Powder magazines were small buildings purposely located away from major structures. The reason is made clear by an account of fur trader Henry Moberly, who wrote of a fire that lit in the loft of a small building at Fort McMurray in northern Alberta in the mid-1800s. Moberly stored a keg of gunpowder in the loft, but forgot to tell his companions, one of whom rushed to the roof to douse the fire.

"At that instant, with a stunning roar, the roof beneath the astounded German bulged upward and yawned wide, giving him a fleeting glimpse of the infernal regions... amidst a sea of fire, smoke and hurtling rafters, he was, as it seemed, sailing on and on through unending space."

Modern excavations of powder magazines have yielded keg parts and pieces of copper, which were used in containers of explosive goods because they were less likely to spark.

It wasn't until the spread of the later percussion cap and breech-loading guns in the mid-1800s that flintlocks were abandoned and firearms became the exclusive hunting weapon. The percussion cap didn't require exposed gunpowder (the spark was created within the cap) and it removed the need for gunflints. Bohr notes that the superiority of bows and arrows faded with the advent of revolvers in the 1830s and the introduction of breech loading and repeating firearms in the 1860s.

When the Crow leader, Plenty Coup, first saw a breech-loading gun, he did not rest until he owned one: "Such a gun could be loaded on a running horse, and I laid my bow away forever."

The earliest firearms put food on the table and kept traders, First Nations and explorers safe. The first guns also delivered fear and aggression that ushered big changes in territorial boundaries across the country, while innovations in musket design improved their use in hunting. In one form or another, evolving firearms have played important roles in the early history of Canada.

Which Rifle For Coyotes?

By Al Voth

Across most of Canada, early November marks the time of year when coyote fur turns prime. And for those interested in chasing those grey ghosts, the question on every coyote hunter's lips is, "What rifle am I going to use this winter?"

If you're a seasoned coyote hunter, you probably have the answer in the bag. However, for those gun owners who want to take up the sport, there are decisions to be made. If you've ever thought about taking up coyote hunting, you know there's no better excuse to go shopping for a new rifle. And knowing my passion for chasing coyotes, I'm often asked by someone starting out in the sport, "What rifle should I buy?" I can identify with that, because when the new-gun-bug bites me, I give that decision 10 times the consideration my wife's Christmas present gets. So, if you're a budding coyote hunter, and were to ask me the new gun question over coffee, here's what I'd tell you:

The first thing any new coyote hunter should realize is you don't need to buy a coyote rifle. If you have a deer rifle, you have something that will work on coyotes. It may not be the ideal rifle, but it will work. However, if you're like me and always need just the right tool for the job at hand (whether it's hunting or home repair) maybe I can help you.

No, I'm not going to tell you which specific make, model or calibre to buy. Instead, I prefer you make your own decisions, based on your unique circumstances – and the best way to do that is to ask a series of questions, which will lead into a process of self-discovery. The fascinating thing is that once the process is complete, you'll realize all the big decisions have already been made. Here's the first question:

"Is this new rifle just for coyotes or will it be a double-duty rig, used for smaller varmints, like gophers or woodchucks, as well?" This is important, because some calibres, while being great for coyotes, are just too much for a day of gopher control on the prairies. A single day spent in a target-rich gopher patch can burn out the barrel of a high-intensity cartridge and will also take too large a toll on the shooter. However, not all shooters in Canada have that "problem" and the more moderate pace of thinning out eastern woodchucks doesn't create an issue. After all, a dozen groundhogs is a good day's shooting in the east, while a dozen gophers is five minutes of work in Saskatchewan.

In my mind, there's a dividing line between high and low-volume calibres, and it exists between the 223 Remington and the 22-250 Remington. Anything at, or below, the 223 Remington's general power level will serve as a multi-purpose predator slayer and high volume varmint shooter. Moving up to the 22-250's level, and beyond, will give you a rifle best suited to predators, like coyotes, with a lower volume of other secondary vermin in the crosshairs.

If you look at any major ammunition manufacturer's catalogue, you'll see a list of at least six calibres between the lowest power centrefire and the 223 Remington. With the possible exception of the 17 Remington, all will serve in a high-volume, dual-purpose role. Crossing my imaginary line and going from 22-250 up to 25-06, there are another half-dozen higher-intensity cartridges best reserved for lower volume and slower paced shooting.

"Are you a handloader?" is the second question I ask a new coyote hunter. If you aren't or don't plan to start, ammunition cost and availability are factors to consider. This leans you toward the 223 Remington, as there is no cheaper and broader selection of centrefire ammunition on the market. Saving money on ammunition is always good, but too many shooters of factory ammunition don't consider the need to try different loads in order to find one that shoots well in their rifle. Once that factory load is found, then stock up. If you handload, forget it – you can pick anything you want.

"Is your deer rifle a bolt-action?" This question tells me what kind of action the new coyote hunter should consider. Realistically, any kind of action type will work for coyotes; however, there's a reason over 95 per cent of coyote rifles, like deer rifles, are bolt guns. It's because bolt actions consistently give shooters the most rifle for their money. By that, I mean they

Left: Anything at, or below, the 223 Remington's general power level will serve as a multi-purpose predator slayer and high-volume varmint shooter.

Right: If you're deer gun is a bolt gun, you won't go wrong with a bolt-action coyote rifle.

provide more accuracy, reliability and magazine capacity per dollar than any other action type on the market. If you're deer gun is a bolt gun, you won't go wrong with a bolt-action coyote rifle.

"How much does your big game rifle, complete with scope and sling, weigh?" This is an important question because it's here too many shooters take a disastrous turn. The number one mistake new coyote hunters make in rifle selection is choosing a heavy barrel. If I had $20 for every new shooter I've seen buy a heavy barrel "varmint" gun for coyotes and then a year later trade it in on a light barrel, I could buy another rifle myself. Heavy barrels are just that – heavy. Coyote hunting takes place on your feet, not from a bench rest, and that means you have to carry your rifle. Follow this rule and you won't go wrong: A coyote rifle should weigh the same or less than your favourite deer rifle. Always remember, the snow is deepest during coyote season.

"How many times, in a typical deer-hunting day, do you load and unload your rifle?" This question serves as a launching point to discuss another feature to look for in a coyote rifle: the detachable magazine. Unlike deer hunting, a hunter pursuing coyotes, especially if calling, will be in and out of a vehicle a dozen times a day. This means your rifle has to be loaded and unloaded a dozen times. While not a necessity, if you do any amount of coyote calling, you'll come to love the convenience of detachable magazines.

"What scope does your deer rifle wear?" The answer to this question tells me what kind of optics the budding coyote hunter should consider. The second biggest mistake new coyote hunters make in rifle selection is equipping their new pet with a varmint scope. That rule I just mentioned for deer rifles, holds for scopes as well. Put the same scope on your coyote rifle that you have on your deer gun, increasing magnification only if it doesn't break the previously mentioned weight rule. And since most people choose a variable power model, understand that if you will be calling coyotes, you'll be using the low end of your scope's range far more than the high end. I know many serious and successful coyote hunters who have nothing more powerful than a 2-7X or 3-9X on their favourite rifles.

"What is your deer rifle sighted in at, and what's the holdover at 450 yards?" Most hunters can tell me the former, but guess at the latter. So, I use this as a springboard to discuss the advantages of having a coyote rifle as similar as possible to their deer rifle, not only in operation and sighting equipment, but also in

If you shoot more than one rifle, keeping firearm and scope controls the same will prevent confusion when things happen fast.

trajectory. We've all heard the old adage about the man who owns only one rifle. He knows it and the cartridge's trajectory intimately, and thus can shoot it far better than the man who owns a dozen different designs and calibres but can't shoot any of them well. I believe there's a lot of truth in that and we ignore it at the risk of becoming worse shots. It's a plague I suffer from.

Because I shoot a lot different guns over the course of a year, something as simple as manipulating a safety can mess me up. The perfect example occurred last winter when I took a gun equipped with an external hammer on a coyote hunt. A beautiful 'yote came charging in shortly after I started to call, and I lost precious seconds trying to push off the safety. However, the gun doesn't have a safety. My thumb was resting on the lowered hammer and habit dictated I push off the safety to shoot. I had to stop, rethink, then pull back on the hammer (not push a safety) to make the shot. Call it what you want – habit, instinct, conditioning – but when you don't have time for deliberate thought, you'll revert to it.

You see, your ideal coyote rifle looks a lot like that big game rifle already in your safe; it's just a different calibre. It's the same action type and has a similarly located safety, so you won't be fumbling to find it when a coyote comes charging in. The scope's power range is about the same and it has the same crosshair configuration so you only have to learn and remember one extended range system, if it has one. Even the magnification adjustment ring rotates in the same direction, to prevent confusion when things are happening fast. And it's sighted in for the same distance as your deer rifle, with a trajectory that matches your big-boomer out to as far as you're comfortable shooting.

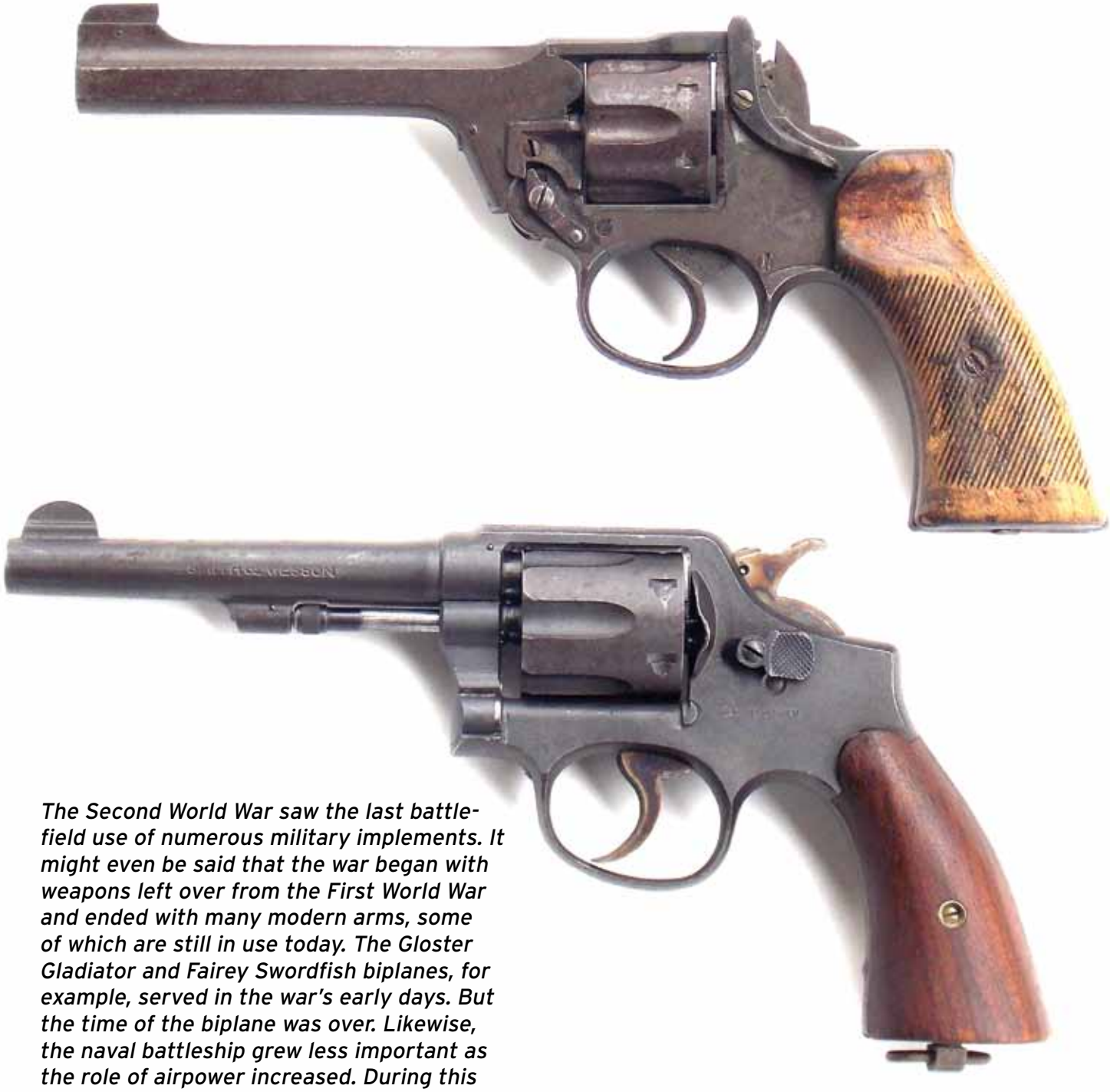
Imagine this: every time you hunt with one rifle, you're training with the other, as well. And since that coyote rifle has a lot less recoil and muzzle blast and is cheaper to shoot, you'll be using it much more than your deer rifle. It's actually fun to shoot and you enjoy taking it to the range to practice or taking it into a nearby field to pop a few burrowing rodents. It's not just a coyote and varmint gun; it's a practice rifle, too. That's triple duty.

But maybe you're not a big-game hunter, and all those references I just made to deer rifles don't mean a thing to you. What then? If coyote hunting is the only kind of hunting you're looking to do, then consider applying the principles I've listed above to whatever kind of other rifle shooting you partake in. Shoot 3-Gun? Then think about using a rifle with controls and sighting similar to your match gun. Unfortunately, you can't use an AR-15 design because of its restricted status, but there are other non-restricted rifles with similar controls. The principles about trajectory, sighting equipment and weight still apply.

Of course, you don't have to follow any of these principles to kill coyotes. After all, I've deliberately gone after coyotes with a muzzleloader. Why? Because it's different. And that's the only reason you need. But if you're shopping for the ideal coyote rifle for yourself, you're now armed with a little extra knowledge. And that knowledge should help put more of that prime Canadian coyote fur on the ground.

THE LAST REVOLVER WAR

By Bob Campbell



The Second World War saw the last battlefield use of numerous military implements. It might even be said that the war began with weapons left over from the First World War and ended with many modern arms, some of which are still in use today. The Gloster Gladiator and Fairey Swordfish biplanes, for example, served in the war's early days. But the time of the biplane was over. Likewise, the naval battleship grew less important as the role of airpower increased. During this period, the revolver also saw its last use as a first-line, general-issue handgun.

Webley, Enfield, Smith & Wesson and Colt revolvers all served in the front lines during this war, even though their basic designs were perfected well before the First World War. A historical journey takes us back to the First World War, when Smith & Wesson supplied the allies with big frame revolvers chambered for the 455 Webley cartridge. When the US entered the war, there weren't enough Colt 1911 semi-auto pistols to go around, so Smith & Wesson offered a conversion of their N frame revolver in 45 ACP. This revolver used ingenious moon clips, which allowed the rimless pistol cartridge to headspace. The idea was accepted and the Smith & Wesson 1917 revolver (as well as the Colt 1917) became the fastest of all American produced revolvers to load and unload. The ejector star kicked out the spent cases in the clips whether or not the muzzle was pointed upwards, as was necessary with revolvers using conventional cartridges. After the war, most 1917 revolvers were sold as surplus. Some went to battle again in the Second World War, largely in the pacific and famously with the Military Police.

The top-break Webley double-action revolver was, in the opinion of some, the finest combat revolver ever made. But it was the .38, not the .455, that served in the Second World War. The earlier .455 was a formidable revolver by any standard. Throwing a heavy bullet at moderate velocity, the Webley also featured simultaneous ejection of fired cartridge cases, putting the Webley in a class by itself. Between the wars, the British Army decided the 455 Webley was too large and heavy and kicked too much. As many modern shooters realize, the 455 Webley is a mild big bore cartridge and offers a pleasant shooting experience. But the decision was made and a replacement sought.

In response, Webley introduced the MK IV revolver. This revolver was chambered for a .38 calibre cartridge, known as the 38 Smith & Wesson in North America, a cartridge originally designed for use in lightweight pocket guns. A longer cartridge was not considered, because a top break auto-ejecting revolver does not have sufficient leverage to eject a longer cartridge case. The new cartridge was designated .38/200 and loaded with a 200-grain bullet. The heavy bullet, over 50 grains heavier than standard for the 38 Smith & Wesson, was designed to give the cartridge improved stopping power. While the new load, with a 200-grain bullet at 650 feet per second, succeeded in some reports, a correspondent familiar with the cartridge's use in South Africa reported very poor results. The cartridge was also loaded with a 176-grain bullet to conform to Hague rules, although both loads were issued during the war.

The revolver adopted by the British was actually an Enfield design, or rather an Enfield arsenal adaptation of the Webley. The Royal Firearms Factory, Enfield MK 1 was so similar it prompted a lawsuit and subsequent payout to Webley. The spurless hammer, double-action only Enfield was used from its adoption in 1931 until its final withdrawal from service in 1969, although officially replaced by the Browning High Power some years earlier. Enfield was unable to produce enough of the revolvers for wartime use, so the Webley was also adopted.

I have fired both extensively. There is no question the Webley is better fitted and finished. The Enfield grip frame, however, differs and offers the better platform for rapidly handling a revolver in combat. There is no single-action hammer spur on the Enfield, as the revolver is designed for short-range combat. In a test of the two on the range, firing modern Winchester 146-grain RNL ammunition, the Enfield proved the more capable revolver in close-range combat drills. The Webley is a good revolver, but the Enfield does what it was designed to do. Interestingly, many police departments worldwide

This is a Smith & Wesson 38 Special Victory Model. Note the 200-grain bullet handloads.

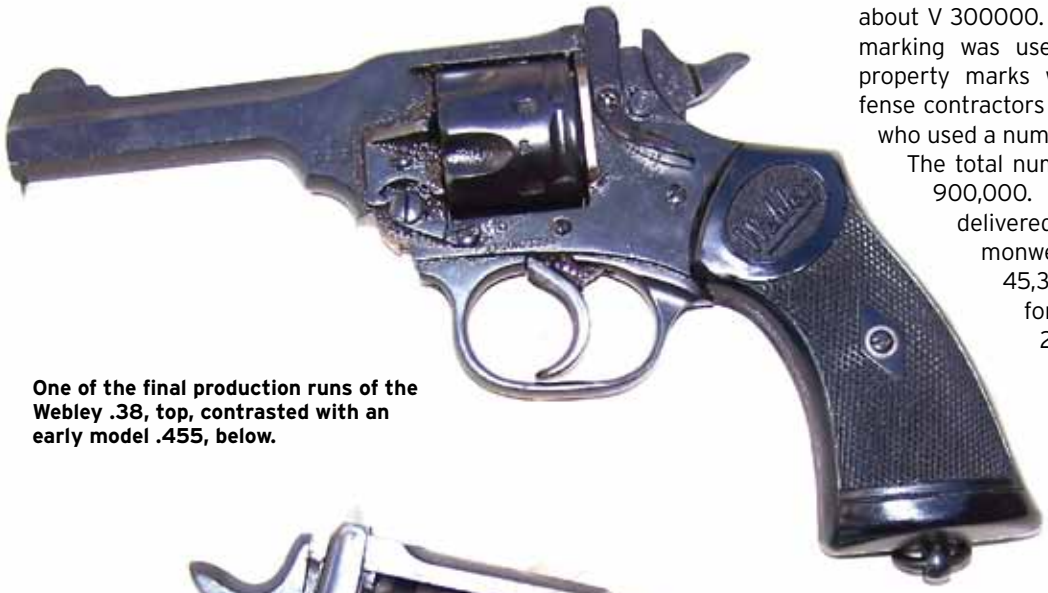
adopted the Webley. The example I fired was an odd version with a manual safety, which locks the action. However, it also locks the frame shut – an interesting variation.

The Smith & Wesson Victory Model was also widely used. Smith & Wesson was strapped for cash after the Great Depression and took a large advance to develop a 9mm rifle for Great Britain. The design was unsuccessful and Smith & Wesson faced bankruptcy. A deal was made in which Smith & Wesson supplied revolvers to the Allies. These were military and police revolvers chambered in the .38/200 cartridge. This revolver served in every campaign fought by the Commonwealth forces during the Second World War. Once the US entered the war, Smith & Wesson also supplied these revolvers to the US Armed Services. Many went to the US Navy, and others served as aircrew revolvers. Numerous guns were also provided to stateside plants for use by guards in critical applications. An identifying feature of the revolvers is the V prefix in the serial number, where V stands for *Victory* against the Axis. Commonwealth revolvers were chambered for the .38/200 cartridge, also known as the .380 Revolver. Most featured a five-inch barrel, with the majority of American revolvers having a four-inch barrel and chambered for the 38 Special cartridge.

Production of the Victory Model began in early 1942, although the military and police orders from the British began four months earlier. The final serial number, according to Smith & Wesson, was VS811119 produced on the final production date in August 1945. Serial numbers are stamped at the base of the grip and also inside the right hand stock. Some also feature the serial number stamped on the cylinder, inside of the extractor star and the flat on the bottom of the barrel. The first examples were finished in what is referred to today as matte blue. Later, the finish became grayer and finally the revolvers were Parkerized. A lanyard ring was supplied in every production example.

The top strap may be marked *United States Property, US Property* or *US Navy.* The *United States Property* mark ran to

This Enfield .38 is still in good mechanical condition.



One of the final production runs of the Webley .38, top, contrasted with an early model .455, below.

The original 455 Webley is a formidable revolver.

about V 300000. After this, the shorter marking was used. Revolvers without property marks were supplied to defense contractors and perhaps the OSS, who used a number of these revolvers.

The total number produced is over 900,000. Some 571,629 were delivered to the British Commonwealth. This includes 45,328 for Canada, 8,000 for Australia and over 20,000 for South Africa. Others may have been shipped to allies from Britain. The US took delivery of 352,000 revolvers.

After the war, many of the Victory Models chambered for .38/200 were refinished and had their chambers bored out to allow chambering the 38 Special cartridge, thus making them more popular when sold as surplus. Some had shortened barrels, most commonly to two-and-seven-eighths inches. This conversion is a real problem in that the 38 Special cartridge case is of slightly smaller diameter than the 38 Smith & Wesson. As a result, when standard 38 Special loads are fired in a converted cylinder, the cartridge case will swell. It could be disastrous to fire a 38 Special +P in this chamber. While this butchery is a potentially dangerous conversion, the original 38 Smith & Wesson cartridge still loads and fires normally in modified guns. Most such conversions are marked on the revolver's sideplate, but this is not always the case. I am certain such a conversion makes an individual piece less desirable, although some are interesting on a historical basis if done shortly after the war. All the Victory Models I've handled feature a smooth action, and the ones I've shot are accurate and pleasant to fire, particularly those chambered for the .38/200 cartridge.

There are few handguns as important as the revolvers used during the Second World War. They are interesting historically and a piece of history, which is worth a hard look. They are certainly "soldiers" that served with distinction during the Second World War, the last revolver war.

MY GUN

By Larry W. Oakley

When I went to his wake at the funeral home, I wasn't surprised by what I saw. His ashes were in a pine box on a table at the far end of the room. His hunting photos were spread out across the same table. His hunting vest and boots and his orange hat were also there. His most important possession lay on the table in front of his ashes – a scoped, bolt-action, centrefire rifle.

I immediately remembered that gun and how he handed it to me so many times when he stopped in the woods to tie his boots or before he got in and out of a canoe or when he helped lift an animal into the back of a truck. He used that rifle during the 25 years we hunted together. After the wake, it was given to one of his hunting buddies, the most honourable thing you can do with a gun after you no longer need it. But while it was his, he loved his gun.

I hunted for years with another man who called his gun "my baby," the way an old woman affectionately refers to her pet cat or dog. But he never took his gun out of its case or cabinet just to show it to me. He never offered to let me hold it and look down the barrel. He never spoke to me about his gun or said why he chose it over all others. And he never once told me that he loved his gun or why. I only know two people who say and do things like that. I hunt with one and I'm the other.

I hunted for years with another man who called his gun "my baby," the way an old woman affectionately refers to her pet cat or dog. But he never took his gun out of its case or cabinet just to show it to me. He never offered to let me hold it and look down the barrel. He never spoke to me about his gun or said why he chose it over all others. And he never once told me that he loved his gun or why. I only know two people who say and do things like that. I hunt with one and I'm the other.

We also have special names for our guns. My friend calls his the .243, and I call mine the Ruger. They are two different types of rifles that have shaped two distinct styles of hunting. The owner of the .243 hunts like a sniper, and I ambush deer with the Ruger.

The sniper has a scope on his rifle and kills from distances measured in hundreds of yards. Deer never see him or sense his presence even when he pulls the trigger. I take aim down a steel barrel with my naked eye and kill up close, often from only a few yards away. Many of the deer I kill see me. But by then, it's too late. I've shot deer that I can hear breathing and others that have looked me in the eye a split second before I pulled the trigger.

The sniper's bullet is long and tapered like a missile, and travels fast and far. I fire a bullet that is short and stubby and clips off small twigs and leaves without deflecting in flight. But it doesn't travel far because of its weight and blunt shape, which are designed to maximize trauma.

The sniper's rifle is a bolt action and mine is a semi-automatic. The bolt action is more accurate. The sniper shoots deer in the head and neck. I once knew a hunter-sniper nicknamed Neck Shot because that's how he killed all his deer. I aim at a large target just behind the front shoulder called the boiler room, where the heart and lungs and other vital organs are located.

The sniper likes to sit in the woods near the edge of a swamp where he can see a long way. I like to surprise deer at beaver dams and places where the woods narrow to a bottleneck.

One day the sniper and I were sitting within 40 yards of each other, and through a strange circumstance of hunting neither of us knew the other was there. We approached our watches from opposite directions. I arrived first and sat a few feet from a beaver dam, hoping that a deer would try to cross it. I heard the sniper walking in my direction, slowly and quietly like an animal, before stopping nearby. I could not see him through the dense woods and thought he was a deer. I sat looking his way for what seemed like half an hour, never once glancing over at the dam.

When the buck emerged from the woods on the other side of the swamp, I could see his antlers swaying and his body rocking, a white tail waving as he came down a ridge and along the swamp towards the dam. I raised my rifle and pointed it towards the far end of the dam, waiting for the buck to arrive. That's when the sniper shot him through the neck.

Eventually, I gave up looking and concentrated on the dam again, while he watched the other side of the swamp unseen and unknown to me. We sat perfectly still like that for almost two hours. When the buck emerged from the woods on the other side of the swamp, I could see his antlers swaying and his body rocking, a white tail waving as he came down a ridge and along the swamp towards the dam. I raised my rifle and pointed it towards the far end of the dam, waiting for the buck to arrive. That's when the sniper shot him through the neck.

I saw him stumble and make a splash, dropping dead in the shallow water on the shore of the swamp just before he reached the dam and just before I pulled the trigger.

I saw him stumble and make a splash, dropping dead in the shallow water on the shore of the swamp just before he reached the dam and just before I pulled the trigger. Rushing out from behind a tree, I called out, "Who fired that shot?" When my friend, the sniper, responded, I realized he had wandered over to that spot in the woods because he was lost.

Anger boiled up. I was going to kill that buck. But I kept it inside and never said a negative word or complained. I didn't want to ruin his big moment. I ambushed a deer the next day and always felt that deer was my reward for keeping calm and being quiet the day before.

My deer was walking down a game trail where it narrowed between two ridges. When it stopped suddenly, I could tell the deer sensed something was wrong. Perhaps it was the dark, shapeless shadow beside the tree on the ridge, where light from a ray of sunshine should have been. It turned and lifted its head towards me. But it didn't matter whether the deer saw me or not. A bullet was on the way.

It made me think that we all have a bullet of sorts on the way. It's just a matter of time. And like this deer, it won't matter if you see it coming. You won't be able to get out of the way, either.

As for the sniper's buck, we had to drag it a long way to camp that day and it was late in the afternoon. To save time, the sniper put a rope around the buck's neck and pulled it across the swamp while walking in water up to his waist. I walked along the shoreline watching him with his deer. I offered to carry his .243.

But the sniper said, "No." He carried his rifle over his shoulder the whole time. He said, "The .243 goes with me."

Larry Oakley lives in Kingston, Ont., and is the author of two books, Inside The Wild and Inside The Wild 2 – collections of true life short stories about hunting, wild animals and the wilderness.

RUSSIAN SURPLUS FOR CANADIANS:
The SVT-40 Rifle

By Edward Osborne

During the Second World War, Russia mobilized 34 million men to form the Red Army. Overwhelmingly, these conscripted soldiers were issued the same rifle their fathers carried in the First World War – the Mosin-Nagant. But the era of bolt guns and trench warfare was coming to a close. A rifle left over from the time of the Tsar wouldn't cut it on the modern battlefields of the Second World War. The Mosin was a poor solution for urban warfare, combined arms tactics with tanks and troop carriers, and airborne operations, all of which came into their own during the conflict.

The proposed solution was the SVT family of rifles designed by Fedor Tokarev, a career gunsmith who was behind the famous TT33 pistol. Tokarev's entire life revolved around firearms. When he started apprenticing he was working on the percussion rifle, Model 1860, Russia's last officially adopted muzzleloader. Before he died, he would author an article discussing the merits of adopting the illustrious Avtomat Kalashnikov 47.

Tokarev had been developing and testing prototypes of a semi-automatic rifle since the last Great War. His SVT 38, or Samozaryadnaya Vintovka Tokareva, was first tested in the Finnish Winter War. It was chambered in the same 7.62x54R cartridge as the Mosin, but offered the increased firepower and maneuverability of a self-loading battle rifle.

There were some issues, though. During the cold winters in Finland, the rifle experienced several failures related to its complexity, and it was considered too cumbersome for light infantry and skirmisher units. Plus, the detachable magazine had a habit of occasionally detaching unexpectedly. A serious issue in a war zone!

The next generation would feature a reduced stock, redesigned magazine catch and lightweight components. This would be the SVT-40. Tokarev was almost 70 years old by the time the SVT entered production, and it would be another triumph in his distinguished career. The original goal was to replace the Mosin-Nagant and equip the entire army with these semi-automatic rifles, but no production facility could match the vast demand. Much of the SVT was fit by hand and labour intensive. Only 1.6 million SVT rifles were produced, which were issued to squad leaders, snipers and officers.

The SVT turned back the Wehrmacht at Stalingrad, served alongside armoured units at Kursk and was carried into Berlin by the victorious army. Over the years, there were fully automatic variants, sniper variants and a limited run of short-barreled carbines.

But its triumph was short lived. The Cold War gave birth to the assault rifle's intermediate cartridge, and the SKS and Kalashnikov pattern firearms soon eclipsed the SVT. However, thousands of these Second World War guns remained in storage and were eventually refurbished and resold to the civilian shooting market.

To produce an intricate rifle like the SVT today would likely require a price tag well over $1,000, but this refurbished military surplus rifle can be had in Canada for $300 to $500. They are a little more expensive than other Russian surplus, like the Mosin-Nagant and SKS, but in terms of firearm quality and detail they are a cut above.

I picked one up last summer for $300 and was immediately pleased with it. Mine is a 1941 model with the six-port muzzle brake. Not a collector item, but eminently shootable. They are a non-restricted semi-automatic battle rifle, and generally ship with a single 10-round magazine that's been limited to five to comply with Canadian law. Unlike other surplus rifles, which can have heavy or mushy triggers, my SVT had some light

uptake and measured a consistent five-pound pull on the Timney trigger scale.

Like all military surplus rifles, there is a clandestine cabal of collectors who know the codes and symbols that differentiate certain rifles in history and value. For example, in 1945 the Tula plant only ran for a few days. So a 1945-dated SVT is a valuable rarity. Similarly, a rifle made in the Korov plant, rather than the standard armament factories, is a prize with increased value. And original sniper models with cut notches and rails can fetch a high price.

Weighing in at eight pounds, 10 ounces, the SVT sports a 24-inch barrel and is almost 50 inches long. Its ladder sights are rather optimistically incremented out to 1,500 metres, and it uses a short stroke gas system, meaning that the piston is not attached to the bolt carrier group. The SVT deals with gas a little differently than other semi-automatic rifles from the time. For one thing, it has a fluted chamber. Fluted chambers are most commonly associated with Cold-War-era rifles from H&K, which aid in ejection and extraction by allowing a thin layer of gas to pass around the cartridge case. You can see the marks left by the fluting on ejected brass, which is usually not reloadable.

The gas system on the SVT is adjustable, with settings from 1.1 to 1.7 to allow for different ammunition and field conditions. I picked up an aftermarket gas and disassembly tool from Corwin Arms to make this adjustment easier, and found that my rifle wouldn't eject at the lowest 1.1 setting, but was reliable at all stages above that. The lower the gas setting, the softer the recoil and the less wear and stress on moving parts. One thing any Mosin-Nagant shooter will notice about the SVT is the vastly reduced recoil. Between an adjustable gas system, the motion of the semi-automatic parts and the surprisingly modern muzzle brake design, the SVT does a lot to tame the 7.62x54R cartridge.

The rifle's intricacy of design and all those little moving parts can lead to problems, though. And it did for me. The disassembly and reassembly process requires you to compress the recoil spring and re-insert it into a notch on the dust cover. After wrestling with this to find the notch, I had the bright idea of using needle nose pliers to hold the spring in the compressed position. One unfortunate slip and suddenly I had a nasty scratch on the side of my rifle.

I'm not a collector by any means. But the fact that I'd just cosmetically damaged a piece of history bothered me. It was a stupid mistake, and I set out to fix it. Refinishing a wood stock requires patience, but relatively few tools. With three grits of sandpaper, an old t-shirt and a bottle of boiled linseed oil, I was able to dramatically change the appearance of my rifle. Here are the steps I went through:

1. Fully disassemble the rifle. There are lots of good guides for this online. The disassembly for cleaning can be quite straightforward, but when refinishing the stock you want to go further and remove every metal component you can.
2. Sand all the old finish off. Using 80-grit paper, I hand sanded the original coating off, emphasizing the area around my unsightly scratch, and always working with the grain. This part of the process took the longest, but also revealed some interesting marks and numbers on the rifle that had previously been hidden.
3. Sand the stock smooth. Using first 120 grit, then 220-grit sandpaper, I worked the wood until it was smooth to the touch. Particular attention during this process went to the areas of skin contact: the forestock, grip and cheek rest.

The SVT-40 rifle in action.

4. Wash the wood clean and let it sit for a day. I didn't want to be embedding sawdust and lint back into the stock, so a good wipe with a wet cloth helped clear it up. From what I understand, all the SVT stocks are made from Arctic Birch, a particularly "hairy" wood. So, after it has dried, some areas may become rough again and need another pass with the 220-grit paper.
5. Apply the linseed oil. Once again, working with the grain. I used an old t-shirt to avoid brush marks or other applicator marks. It's key to use boiled or double boiled linseed oil, as the raw oil can take much longer to dry.
6. Repeat step five, allowing 24 hours between coats. I gave my stock four coats over the course of five days before I decided I was happy with it. I'm sure if I wanted a darker appearance, I could have done more.

That's it! With a little time and work, I felt like I'd turned a negative into a positive with a nice, new stock.

Most of the 7.62x54R ammunition in Canada is military surplus and is several decades old. Some of it is corrosive, meaning that salts in the primer can promote rust inside the firearm. It's the trade off for ammunition that only costs a few cents. There are various cleaning methods to counter this, but another good idea is to replace corrosion-prone parts with stainless alternatives. Corwin Arms imports various red rifle components from Europe, and secured a supply of stainless steel pistons and piston cups. As one of the major parts at risk from corrosion, the stainless components give some peace of mind and allowed my rifle to function properly at a lower gas setting.

I opted to take the modern parts one step further, adding an optics mount, cheek riser and Vortex Razor 1-6X scope. I'm spoiled by magnification and love getting a little closer view of the target whenever possible. The interesting thing about the Corwin optics mount I used is that it requires no permanent modification to the rifle. All it needs is to be fit to the rear receiver rails, which are already on almost all SVT rifles. I can restore my gun to its natural Second world War set up in about three minutes.

For a rifle that's about to turn 75, I think the SVT is enjoyable to shoot. But don't confuse it for a precision plinker. Everyone I've spoken to about the rifle, online and in person, feels that SVTs vary dramatically, and perform differently with varying ammunition. I bought my rifle to shoot it. So I've acquired boxes and boxes of spam-can cased military surplus ammunition.

In testing my rifle, I didn't want to produce a false group by taking a selection of cold bore shots. Instead, I warmed the rifle with a dozen or so shots before putting the next 10 on target. My hold point was the bottom edge of the black circle, and my group is over eight MOA! Not ideal to say the least. Other SVT shooters have had similar results, but lots can also coax their rifles to produce three and four MOA groups. My next step with this rifle is to try and emulate others who have improved their groups by sanding down the barrel channel, specifically around where the stock has been repaired, and tightening the barrel band to reduce flex. If some better quality ammunition can be found, that would be an interesting experiment.

But on a good day I can still ring the 300-yard gong with my rifle, and it's currently one of my favourite guns. Owning an SVT isn't just owning a piece of history, it's owning a capable firearm for a remarkably affordable price.

On the range, testing the new optics mount and gas system components. The Vortex Razor 1-6X may not fit the Second World War origins of the rifle, but its magnification is a welcome addition.

Politics & Guns

Gary Mauser

The Connecticut Study

Did licensing gun owners in Connecticut actually reduce the firearm homicide rate?

As most Canadians know, licensing gun owners had no effect on the homicide rate in Canada. Caillin Langmann's brilliant article demonstrated that quite convincingly. But a recent paper by public health researchers Kara Rudolph and a few of her colleagues got a lot of attention in June this year, by claiming that a 1995 Connecticut law requiring a licence in order to purchase a handgun was associated with a 40 per cent reduction in the state's firearm-related homicide rate.

A 40 per cent drop may sound good, but distinguished researcher John Lott has carefully analyzed the methodology of this study and has posted its weaknesses on his website. I urge you to read his entire report. Lott's work shows why no one should naively believe media stories. Anyone who wants to know what's really going on must do his or her homework.

Rudolph and her colleagues at the Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research compared Connecticut's homicide rates during the 10 years following the law's implementation to the rates that would have been expected had the law not been implemented. They report a large drop in homicides only in firearm-related killings, not in homicides by other means; which is what would be expected if a gun law drove the reduction.

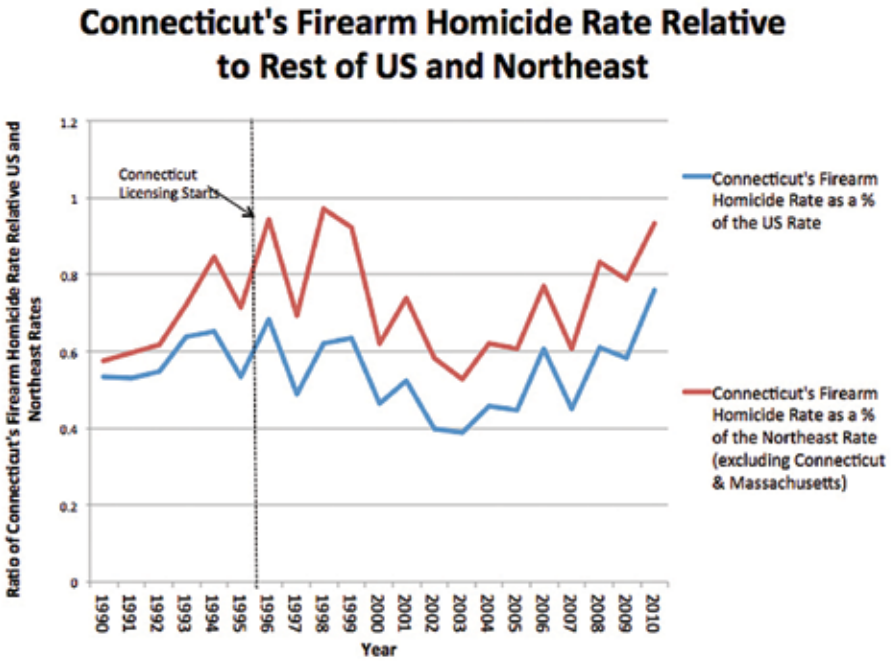
As Lott observes, "Earlier research from Webster found that Missouri's 2007 repeal of its handgun license law was associated with a 25 per cent increase in its firearm homicide rates..."

The first problem Lott identifies is that, "It makes little sense to examine one state when 10 states have had laws at least at some time requiring licensing (Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina and the District of Columbia) and others have expanded background checks. Missouri and now Connecticut involves cherry picking. The Missouri study is discussed here (link on CPRC website). And Massachusetts serves as a strong example of why not all states are examined. Connecticut serves as the strongest evidence that gun control advocates can point to but, as we will see, this evidence is very weak."

Lott presents a graph showing how homicide rates increased drastically in Massachusetts when that state passed a similar law in 1998. (The Massachusetts law only required more extensive background checks to purchase a handgun, but did not require a licence.) Lott suggests this may explain "...why they picked Connecticut with all the arbitrary years that they examined."

The second problem Lott points out: "However, unexplained is that the firearms homicide rate was falling even faster immediately prior to the licensing law. From 1993 to 1995, the Connecticut firearms homicide rate fell from 4.5 to 3.13 per 100,000 residents, which means more than a 30 per cent drop in just two years. This represented a greater decline than the 17 per cent national decline over those two years. Of course, Rudolph and his co-authors do not address this inconvenient fact (though if one looks at their Figure 1 on page three, this preceding drop is clearly visible)."

Lott's third point: Their results are also extremely sensitive to the last year that they pick. While it is true that Connecticut's firearm homicide rate fell by 40 per cent from 1995 to 2005, it only fell by 16 per cent between 1995 and 2006 and 12.5 per cent between 1995 and 2010. Meanwhile, the drops for the US and the rest of the northeast are much greater. From 1995 and 2006, the firearm homicide rates for the US and the rest of the northeast fell respectively by 27 per cent and 22



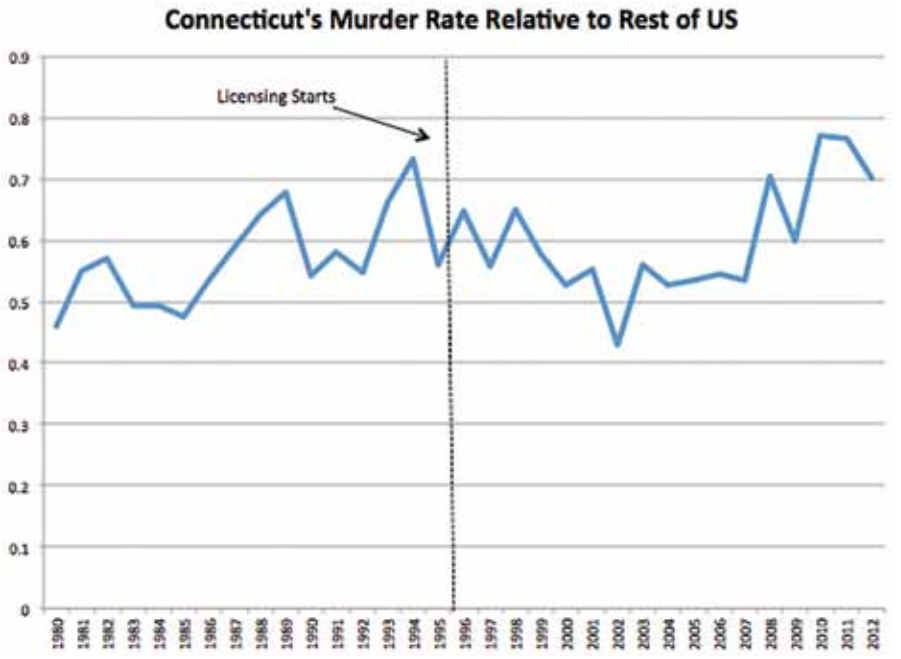
per cent. From 1995 and 2010, the drops were 39 per cent and 31 per cent. The longer samples show a relative increase in Connecticut's firearm homicide rate, whether Rudolph et al. had looked at one additional year or five additional years.

The original claims about the 40 per cent drop aren't looking so great now, are they?

How was the 10-year time period chosen? Lott explains: The authors say that they limit the data to 2005 because one paper that they cite looked at only 10 years after a law that they were investigating (page four: "We conclude the post-law period in 2005 to limit extrapolation in our predictions of the counterfactual to 10 years, as has been done previously.")

But just because a study on cigarette smoking looks at 12 years (not 10 as claimed [Proposition 99 went into effect on Jan. 1, 1989, and their sample went until 2000]) after the law was in effect, doesn't explain why a study on crime would do the same thing. Indeed, the reason given by the authors that Rudolph et al. cite isn't applicable to the current paper (page 16: "It ends in 2000 because at about this time anti-tobacco measures were implemented across many states, invalidating them as potential control units.") There was no similar adoption across the states of handgun licensing laws; yet, if Rudolph et al. had gone for this 12th year as the study that they cite does, it would have dramatically altered their results. In three of the four years immediately after the law was passed in 1995, Connecticut's firearm homicide rate rose relative to the firearm homicides in northeastern states. But there is no theory offered for why Connecticut's firearm homicide rate would first rise relative to other northeastern states, then fall relative to them for six years, and then rise relative to them for four of the next five years.

Note that Lott compares Connecticut with other northeastern states, as well as with the American national average. These are natural comparison sets that can easily be replicated by any researcher who might be skeptical about Lott's analysis. In contrast, the public health researchers invent a hypothetical "counterfactual" Connecticut for comparison purposes. Lott points out that it is a sign of poor methodology that a counterfactual is used, nor is it described adequately for replication purposes. It should come as no surprise that this "synthetic control" is found to support the authors' claims that the licensing law was effective.



The key to any such study is presenting evidence that the gun law was responsible for the subsequent changes in firearms homicide rates. The researchers ignore this question. They do not make a serious effort to explore alternative hypotheses or to examine possible mechanisms for implementing the gun law. Were there changes in police enforcement patterns that matched the changes in the firearm homicide rate? Or perhaps there were changes in drug gang activity – two important correlates of homicide rates. The authors leave us to imagine that merely passing a law is sufficient in itself.

So, the next time the media trumpets a "scientific" study claiming to prove a causal link of some kind that is based on a simple before-and-after comparison, think again. It is impossible to support a general claim by cherry picking examples. Attempting to reduce criminal violence by imposing restrictions on law-abiding gun owners has failed in almost every place its been tried: for example, Australia, Canada, Jamaica, the Irish Republic, South Africa, the United Kingdom, as well as in many cities and states in the US. In any case, I urge readers to go to Lott's website and see the whole thing. He has great graphs that vividly make his points.

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Point Blank

Chris McGarry

Bridging The Urban/Rural Divide

Since ancient times, politicians have earned a notorious reputation for being shifty and oftentimes unethical creatures. In Canada's political system, like many governmental ruling structures the world over, the foremost priorities of representatives are 1) to get elected and 2) to get re-elected.

In their quest for power and prestige, many politicians believe they can gain leverage by pitting one group in society against another. This age-old divide-and-conquer scheme has been utilized by anti-gun politicians in Canada and other western nations by driving a wedge between the country's urban and rural landscapes.

Traditionally, firearms use in Canada, with regards to hunting, sport shooting and predator control, has been done primarily in rural settings. But since the end of the Second World War, a shift from an agricultural society to an industrial one has resulted in larger urban populations. Though not inherently anti-gun, many residents of large Canadian cities have little knowledge of the benefits associated with firearms ownership, and some have even bought into the social engineering message that views gun owners in a less-than-positive light. Politicians, pro-gun control mainstream media outlets, as well as leftist academics have often used the public's lack of understanding or outright irrational fear of firearms to advance their agendas.

To curry favour among their big-city bases of support, politicians eager to restrict lawful firearms ownership or ban it outright have made the issue one of urban versus rural. Some of these politicians have stated that only hunters and farmers should be permitted to own guns. Therefore, according to their reasoning, there is no practical rationale for any urban dweller to possess firearms. As is often the case, politicians sitting snugly in their ivory towers are out of touch with the people they are supposed to represent. There is a large group of firearms owners living in major cities who protect their natural rights as fervently as their fellow gunnies in rural Canada.

Last summer, while doing a book signing in Toronto, I had a conversation with a city resident who is an avid pistol shooter. Like other firearm owners in Canada's largest metropolis, the man was upset when then Toronto mayor David Miller, a politician known for his statist anti-gun leanings, closed down one of the city's oldest gun ranges a decade ago. After all, if you don't need guns, you don't need shooting ranges either.

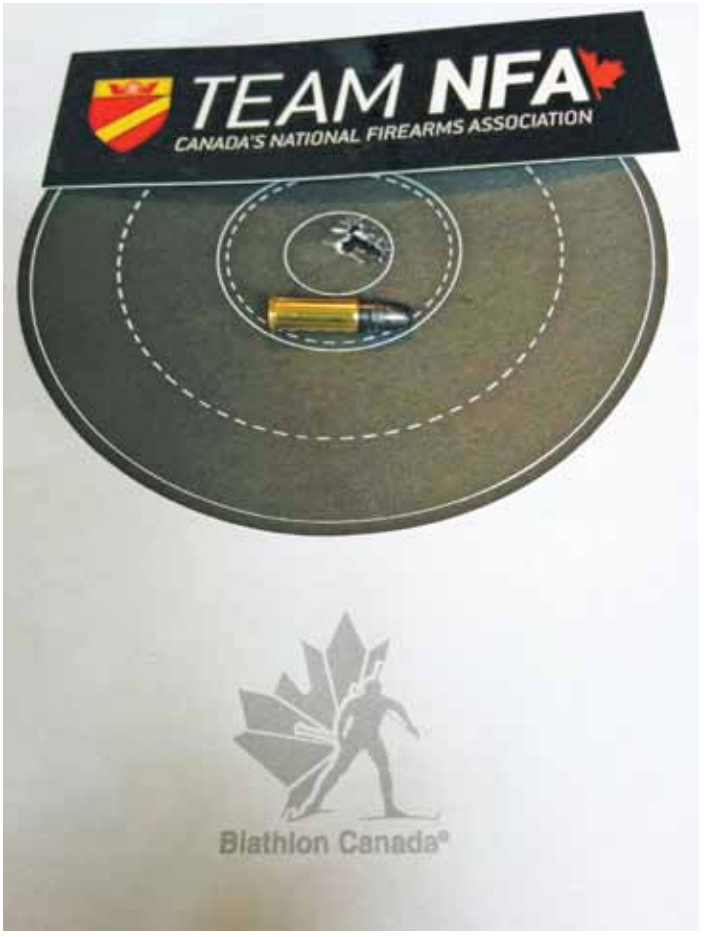
Often, those desperate to sell their civilian disarmament agenda to naïve urbanites will paint rural gun owners as bigoted, knuckle-dragging rednecks who just aren't as sophisticated as their urban counterparts in major hubs such as Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. But if gun owners in Canada are to come together as a unified force to reclaim our rights, it is imperative we bridge the urban/rural divide being driven between us. This wedge is nothing more than a manufactured red herring designed to cause disunity. It makes no difference whether a firearms owner lives in downtown Vancouver, Flin Flon, Man. or Montague, PEI. We must all unite and fight for our rights together.

Gun owners need to ban together and bridge the gap between urban and rural citizens.

Team NFA

Matt Neumann

Beginner's Luck



Eventually, beginner's luck runs out and you need to rely on yourself to get the job done.

Have you ever experienced the lucky side of the common idiom "beginner's luck?" That feeling you get the first time you golf in the spring and you're unexplainably better than your expectations? Those first few strokes end up magically going exactly where you want them to. You think, "Why can't I hit like this all the time?"

You're in the zone, or at least that's what we credit for our unanticipated good fortune. For me, by the end of 18 holes, that sensation is wearing off and my falsely acquired sense of confidence is dissipating. I use golf as an example because I find significant similarities to how we should mentally approach a shot both on the course and on the range. Let me explain my interpretation of this mental game we play with ourselves before I relate it to shooting.

I played my share of golf as a kid, but priorities change and now I only swing my clubs a few times a year. I know the basics, but prefer to play when nobody is watching (honestly, nobody needs to witness it). When I select a club, approach my shot, take a few practice swings and smack that ball, I'm not consciously thinking about the movements. I'm relying on my instinct, muscle memory and, basically, beginners luck. There is no way I have the capability to consciously work through all the complicated, required movements in the time it takes to swing a golf club. But as I warm up through the course and build confidence, I have a chance to analyze. Remember the word "analyze" as it's the concept this entire column is written around.

We all do it. As we focus on details and greedily try to improve our game past what beginner's luck has already brought us, our game usually deteriorates. We begin placing expectations on ourselves and start to suffer from an ill timed over-analysis. The fact we are beginners catches up to us, due to our vulnerable minds. Improvement is an interesting compromise of analyzing, studying and doing your homework, but turning around and letting it all go at pinnacle moments. Sound familiar to that moment where everything around you goes quiet as you squeeze the trigger?

As a gun enthusiast, you've probably already jumped ahead to relating this with shooting. I've been shooting for the past 16 years and for six of those years I was on the range almost every day. I certainly haven't mastered shooting, even though I've shot about 100,000 rounds looking through a .22's peep sight. But I can say for certain, my results are determined by how I mentally prepare and execute a shot. If there was a textbook formula for perfect mental shooting, we would have nothing to discuss. However, each person needs to find what works for them in order to get into that focused state.

While shooting, I've had to face every mood, attitude, external pressure or internal state relevant to my sport. In my experience, the optimal state of accuracy is putting all this aside and confidently saying, "Shhh" to my brain. In that beginner's luck scenario on the golf course, innocence has basically done this for me. However, as avid shooters, we have practiced the physical movements required to shoot perfectly thousands of times. I have analyzed, analyzed and re-analyzed ways to shoot quicker and more accurately. These numbers, strategies and position points are essential to improving.

In competition, however, I've found simplicity to be my best friend. Timing is key, and you must put in the thinking work at home rather than while you're looking through the sights. I strongly suggest using a keyword to summarize a particular aspect of shooting skill that you're working on. Pick something simple and direct that works for you. Just like a rookie golfer steps up to the tee and doesn't over-analyze, work out a complicated strategy or put pressure on themselves, neither should you.

If you are still working on the physical basics, get out there and practice. Try different things, and learn. For the avid shooter who already knows their gun like an extension to their body, practicing your mental game is the next step to improvement. Rely on your body being subconsciously aware of everything you practiced. Tame your nerves or racing head with keywords and let the results take care of themselves.

NFA Book Shelf

Bill Rantz

Forty Years with the .45-70

Revised Edition 2001

Forty Years with the .45-70
Revised Edition 2001
Author: **Paul A. Matthews**
Publisher: **Wolfe Publishing Company, Prescott, Arizona**
Soft cover, nine inches by six inches, 184 pages, black and white photographs
ISBN: 978-0-935632-84-2

Paul Matthews' introduction clearly establishes that *Forty Years with the .45-70* is not about the history of the legendary 45-70 Government cartridge or any particular rifle chambered in that cartridge. He refers readers seeking such information to books previously published by several knowledgeable authors that have covered these topics in extensive detail. Should you wish to read strictly about handloading the 45-70 Government, Matthews refers enthusiasts to the legendary works of Ken Waters, including *Handloader's Digest.*

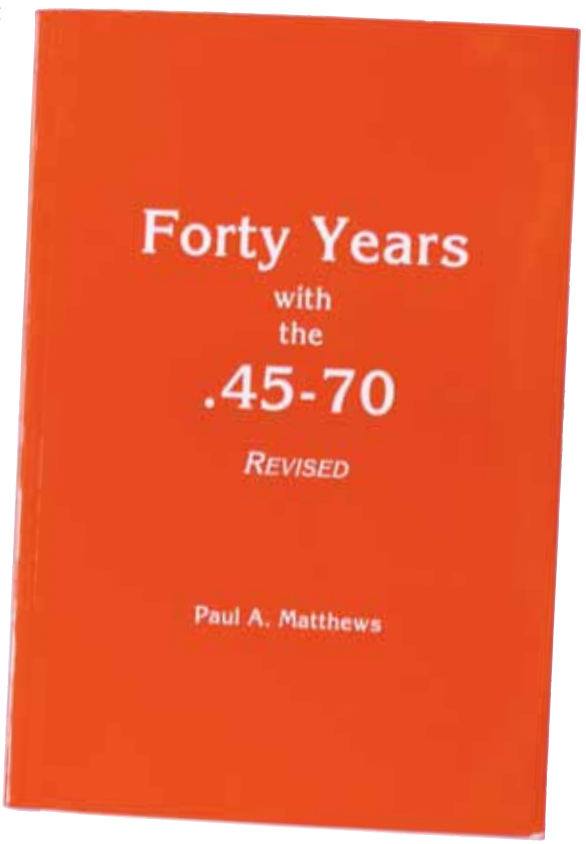
Forty Years with the .45-70 was written by Matthews to share his personal experiences with a variety of 45-70 Government rifles over a period of more than 40 years. The author specifically refers to the content being shared as "lore of the .45-70."

Matthews' passion for this cartridge began when a family friend brought a pair of old 45-70 Government rifles to his Dad's cow pasture and encouraged him to shoot a belt full of government surplus 500-grain ammunition. Fascination with both the accuracy and hitting power of these cartridges made Matthews realize that someday he must own a 45-70 Government.

That goal was finally realized in 1950 with the purchase of an 1886 Winchester rifle in that magical calibre and that wore a brand new barrel installed by P. O. Ackley. The economy of the post- Second World War days was challenging and shooters sought to find the most economical way of enjoying their sport. Matthews was no exception and he was soon casting a variety of lead bullets and handloading his own cartridges.

Matthews shares his adventures as he experimented to develop favourite loads using a variety of bullets and powders. As these specific loads were intended for his own rifles, having been worked up slowly to monitor pressure, the author advises the reader to exercise similar caution.

Forty Years with the .45-70 is divided into 24 chapters ,which are listed in the table of contents. This allows the reader to quickly find a chosen topic such as, *A Question of Pressure, Paper Patched Bullets* or *Looking for a Single Shot.* However, this is a book that I would recommend reading from cover to cover first, as it is a fascinating summary of a lifelong adventure and not a reference book.



Reading the many pages of detailed information presented by Matthews left me with the feeling that I was listening to the voice of an experienced old timer. The knowledge accumulated over a lifetime of shooting the famous 45-70 Government was being shared freely for all to hear.

Matthews has enclosed many letters he received over the years from firearm legends such as Elmer Keith, Jack O'Connor and P.O. Ackley. Several were replies to inquiries that the author made concerning articles that he had read and questioned.

The latest revised edition of *Forty Years with the .45-70* updates the reader on the return of the 45-70 Government in the 1895SS Marlin and Navy Arms Buffalo Rifle. Matthews concludes by describing his newest 45-70 Government rifle, custom built on an old Remington rolling block action, which he began using in steel silhouette competitions at 71 years of age.

Forty Years with the .45-70 retails in the $25 range, which is less than a box of factory loads for most rifles. Paul Matthews enjoyed many years of shooting his favourite cartridge and we are fortunate that he chose to share his experiences and knowledge.

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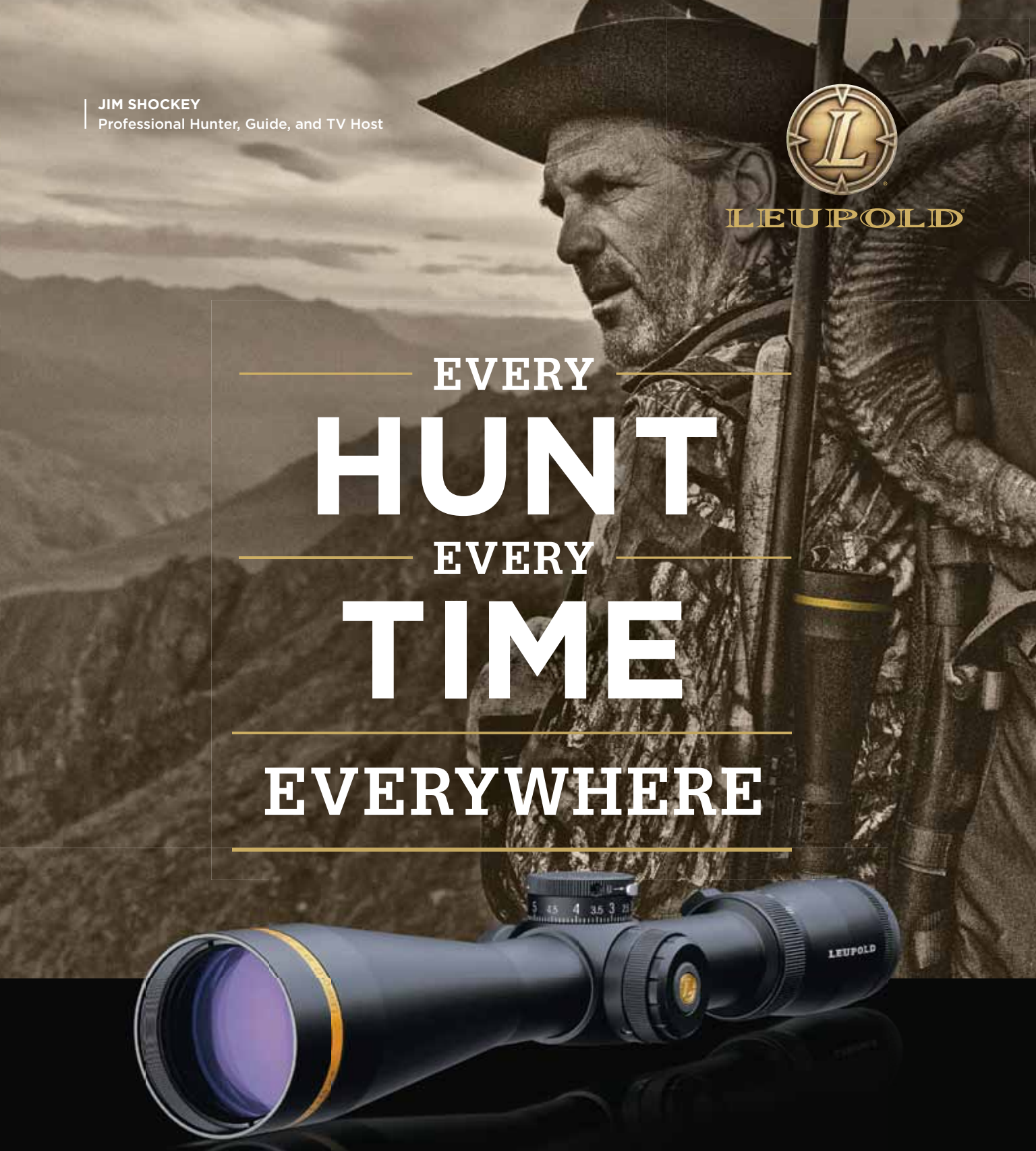

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