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11

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INSIDE THE ARCHIVE

WORKING WINCHESTER 1892 RIFLES

AR-15 PARTS • DISSECTING THE P938 • COLT MODEL 380 • REFURBISHING A STEVENS MODEL 258A

ORIGINAL METHODS. MODERN ACCESS.

ARCHIVE EDITION 155

DIGITAL ARCHIVE EDITION

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METALWORKING

AR-15 Parts

BY AMERICAN GUNSMITH EDITORS NOVEMBER 2016

ORIGINAL PP. 2

The Bravo Company Manufacturing (BravoCompanyUSA.com) BCMGun- Fighter stock is a tough, collapsible, lightweight (seven ounces) polymer unit for mil-spec receivers. The patented design is modular, consisting of five total parts and one screw, and can be adapted in to a number of options and configurations. The latch, made from heat-treated steel, fits standard buffer tubes, dissipates impacts to mitigate damage if struck, and fits flat to block out debris or obstructions.

There are two different types of ambidextrous sling mounting options, including quick-detach swivel sockets. A removable VBOST (Vehicle Borne Operations Sling Tab) interfaces with the a rigger's band or bungee to secure the sling against the stock when not in use, which is often useful inside vehicles. Each stock is capped with an integrated, color-matched rubber butt pad for secure placement in the shoulder pocket—less skin abrasive than typical plastic units—and increased durability.

These are available in black, flat dark earth, green, and gray. AR-15 Parts Meprolight FRBS Optical sights have become increasingly common on service rifles for the past several decades. In fact, most military and police forces now have some sort of optic as standard issue on their long guns. Military-style Service Conditions matches throughout NATO have used optics longer still.

Even American National Match Course competitors of the Civilian Marksmanship Program, true iron sight stalwarts, have instituted optic sights into Service Rifle competition. Of course, as with any technology, a prudent person prefers back up should things fail. Back up iron sights are nothing new, including flip up models. However, many models are rather rudimentary as they are “only” for back up. Few offer night capability.

Meprolight (TheMakoGroup.com) Front & Rear Backup Sights are Picatinny-mounted, flip-up, Tritium-powered back up sights designed for AR-15 rifles, though they can be used on any suitable long gun with a rail. Made in Israel, these are rugged, click-adjustable, full-size AR-15 sights that fold and store flat while being instantly available as needed. Both the front and rear sight contains self-illuminating Tritium that provides clear, visible sights in all lighting conditions.

ORIGINAL SOURCE PAGE

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PISTOLS

Dissecting The P938

BY DICK MAHEU NOVEMBER 2016

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The SIG SAUER P938 is a well made 9mm in a small package, built for ruggedness and concealability. It's a six shot, mechanically locked, short recoil operated, semi-auto, single action only pistol. We'll start with the P938's operating characteristics. The slide lock is pushed up by the magazine follower after the last round is fired from the magazine, locking the slide back. The automatic firing pin safety blocks the firing pin unless the trigger is pulled.

The hammer has a safety intercept notch (quarter cock notch) keeping the hammer off the firing pin if desired. The disconnecter keeps the hammer from falling when the slide is out of battery and not fully closed. The pistol has high contrast drift adjustable sights with a double white dot rear and a single white dot front.

There are six different rear sight heights available from the factory and each increment moves point of impact two inches at 25 yards and five different front sight heights yield one inch of change. The thumb safety up (on) blocks hammer movement either cocked or uncocked. The slide can be cycled when the hammer is cocked and the safety engaged. With the hammer down (uncocked) and the thumb

safety engaged, the slide is blocked and cannot be cycled. The pistol has a three-inch barrel.

The pistol featured in this article has a black, hard anodized aluminum frame and a stainless steel slide weighing 16 ounces unloaded. There are several different configurations of the P938, differing mainly in grips, sights, and regular or stainless steel slides. P938 disassembly also applies to the P238 .380 ACP as well. To field strip, remove the magazine and cycle the slide to unload.

Pull the slide back to the disassembly notch (a half-moon slot in the slide) and push out the slide stop right to left out of the frame. Wrap a hand around the grip and slide to hold back the slide while pushing the slide stop out with the other hand. Get a good grip as the recoil spring is stout! Remove the slide off the front of the frame and hold it in one hand, pull back on the recoil spring and guide slightly, and lift them out of the slide while restraining the guide and recoil spring.

Remove the barrel and the four grip screws right and left. The screws are metric M4.5. The pistol is now field stripped for routine cleaning and lubrication. Don't completely disassemble the slide unless repair is necessary. If so, drift out the extractor roll pin from the bottom through the top of the

slide. Remove the roll pin punch while restraining the extractor and its very stout spring. Remove the extractor and spring.

Push in on the firing pin with a small pin punch and release the firing pin stop down out of its slot while restraining the firing pin and spring. Remove the firing pin and spring. Make note of the position of the rear sight before drifting it to the right with a nylon or other nonmarring drift punch. Drift it only as far as needed to remove the firing pin block spring and firing pin block from the top of the slide. Also make note of the position of the front sight before drifting it out.

Reassembly of the slide unit is in reverse with a few notes. When reassembling the firing pin and spring, the small end of the spring goes on the firing pin first. Install the firing pin block first and orient it so it rests on the slide shelf in its slot, then place the spring on top of it. Be sure to push the spring down as you drift the rear sight back to its original position. Place the barrel in the slide. When placing the recoil spring on its guide, the tighter end of the spring goes on first.

When placing the spring and guide into the slide, I utilize a small rod through the guide hole in the front of the slide to keep the spring from kinking. As you put the guide into

DISSECTING THE P938 CONTINUED

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the spring, remove the rod a little at a time until the guide and spring is in place in the slide. This makes it easier and prevents damage to the spring. Kinked recoil springs lead to malfunctions. Complete disassembly of the frame is also only to be done for repairs. Make sure the hammer is eased forward into the fired position. Remove the thumb safety by rotating it clockwise while restraining the safety plunger and its spring.

Remove plunger and spring, then rotate the safety clockwise and remove right side first (ambidextrous safety) and then left side (with shaft). Remove the mainspring housing pin left to right. Pull down on the housing slightly to remove spring tension on hammer. Remove the hammer, hammer strut, mainspring, and mainspring housing pin lock out the top of the frame. Do not remove the hammer strut pin unless repair is required.

Drift the sear pin out left to right and remove the sear and ejector out the bottom of the frame. The sear spring is attached to the mainspring housing. Do not routinely remove the spring from the housing. If necessary, simply detach it from the stud and slot in the housing. Disengage the top of the spring from the trigger bar and remove the housing and spring down out of its slot in the frame. To remove the magazine catch, push in on the catch and turn the lockscrew counter clockwise until it locks.

Turn the screw clockwise to disassemble the lock and spring from the catch. Do not remove the trigger assembly unless repair is

necessary. The trigger pin is a press fit and is in tight. If necessary, drift out the trigger pin and remove the trigger assembly down and out of the magazine opening. Trigger assembly can be further disassembled by drifting out the trigger bar pin and removing the trigger bar and trigger bar spring. Remove the disconnecter down out of its slot on the left side of the frame.

Note, it sits on the trigger bar and is powered by the trigger bar spring in operation. Pry the slide stop spring out of its slot in the top left side of the frame. The frame is now completely disassembled. Reassembly is in reverse with a few notes. The trigger assembly can be a tricky maneuver. Slide the assembly up through the left side of the grip opening and into place against the trigger bar spring tension.

Once the trigger pad hole is in line with the trigger pin hole in the frame, drift a small pin punch through the entire assembly and out of the other side of the frame. The trigger pad actually pivots backward and upward as the trigger is pulled. Drift the trigger pin in, removing the pin punch in the process. What makes this extremely difficult is that the trigger pin is a press fit. Evidently, the factory thought this pin would move in firing and was determined not to let that happen.

Make sure the trigger assembly is functioning properly before proceeding. Capturing the ejector/sear is another tricky maneuver. There are two ways to do this procedure and both methods work equally well. Install the

searspring/mainspring housing completely, making sure to clear the back of the trigger bar with the spring fingers. Remember, the spring fingers have to be behind the sear/ejector for proper function.

Using a small pin punch as a slave pin, place the punch through the left side of the frame and capture the ejector against the pressure of its spring finger, the one with the 90 degree bend at the top. In the first approach, place the sear in proper orientation (see schematic diagram) against its spring finger pressure and slide the small pin punch all the way through the other side of the frame. Check for proper operation of both the ejector and sear against their spring tension.

If all is OK, drift the sear pin in, replacing the pin punch and capturing the ejector/sear. Install the mainspring housing pin, securing the housing. The second method is to first install the ejector and sear, securing them with the sear pin and then install the searspring/mainspring housing, making sure to hold the spring fingers back. Then the trigger bar is cleared, allowing the fingers to settle behind the ejector and sear as the housing is pushed all the way in and secured with its pin.

THE EJECTOR FINGER, WITH THE 90 DEGREE BEND, NEEDS

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1 Frame 2 Slide Stop 3 Thumb Safety 3A Ambi Left Thumb Safety 3B Ambi Right Thumb Safety 4 Barrel 5 Slide 6 Hammer 7 Firing Pin Stop 8 Magazine Catch 9 Magazine Catch Lock 10 Trigger Pad 11 Trigger Bar 12 Firing Pin to settle into the cutout at the bottom of the ejector and the sear finger has to bear against the back of the lower tang of the sear. Once again, check for proper spring tension against the ejector/sear.

Place the mainspring into its slot in the housing, making sure the main- 13 Disconnect 14 Hammer Pin 15 Hammer Strut 16 Extractor 16A External Extractor 16B External Extractor Spring 16C External Extractor Pin 17 Firing Pin Block 18 Slide Stop Pin 19 Mainspring Housing 20 Ejector 21 Recoil Spring Guide 22 Front Sight 23 Rear Sight SIG SAUER P938 (Specifications subject to change without notice) 24 Sear spring 25 Mainspring 26 Right Grip Plate 27 Left Grip Plate 28 Grip Plate Screw 29 Safety Detent Plunger 30 Sear Pin 31 Trigger Pin 32 Trigger Bar Pin 33 Mainspring Housing Pin Lock 34 Sear 35 Recoil Spring 36 Firing Pin Block spring 37 Magazine Catch/Trigger Bar Spring 38 Safety Plunger Spring 39 Firing Pin Spring

40 Magazine 41 Mainspring Housing Pin spring housing pin lock is properly oriented on the bottom of the spring.

Place the hammer and strut down into the spring and line the hammer pin hole in the frame with the hammer. Slide the hammer pin in, left to right. If this proves too difficult to install, the hammer against its spring tension. Take out the housing pin and move the housing down slightly. After hammer installation, move the housing back into place, making sure the sear spring fingers are properly positioned against the ejector/sear.

Place the ambidextrous safety in its slot in the frame (both ends of the safety) and rotate it clockwise just above the hole in the hammer pin. Place the safety plunger spring and then safety plunger detent into the hole. At this point, I use a small cup tip punch to depress the plunger/spring down and rotate the safety down, capturing the plunger/spring. Note, this is a powerful spring when depressed and this assembly will go into orbit if it gets away from you.

Use a plastic zip lock bag to prevent this occurrence if you're not comfortable with this maneuver or you will likely be ordering

anew plunger and spring. Reverse the field strip instructions to put the slide unit back on the frame, making sure to depress the ejector when pushing the slide unit back completely. To disassemble the magazine, push the follower down with a blunt non-marring object (an unsharpened pencil works well), placing a pin punch in the fourth hole from the top to restrain the magazine spring.

Shake the follower to the top of the magazine and angle it out of the magazine body. Turn the magazine upside down and place its top against a workbench pad and pull the pin punch out. Remove the spring from the magazine body and clean appropriately. Reassembly is in reverse, making sure the smaller loop of the spring is on top, angled forward. The factory advertises the trigger pull between 7.5 to 8.5 pounds.

This particular pistol had a consistent pull of seven pounds and was very uniform through each round fired. Recoil is not much more than a .380 ACP, making this little, dandy 9mm, a very good choice as a small primary concealed pistol or as a back up. I would feel comfortable using this P938 for my own protection. AG

METALWORKING

Colt Model 380

Working and improving Colt's Government Model 380.

BY MARK R. HOLLENSSEN NOVEMBER 2016

ORIGINAL PP. 6-9

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I recently had a customer deliver me a Colt Government Model 380 for a “stuck hammer.” The customer said he had just purchased it from someone and was interested in getting it ready for concealed carry. He was interested in a full-length recoil rod made of steel, anew trigger, and a trigger clean up job, as he had read an article about these types of modifications being performed on this particular model. The gun was brought in a wooden box.

Inside I found a nearly perfect nickel plated beauty that didn't appear to me to have ever been fired. It was a Series 80 and you could tell that the previous owner took very good care of it. When I began working on this gun I quickly found that the hammer was indeed stuck to the rear and the gun would not fire when the trigger was pulled. Some disassembly of the gun found that the original composite or plastic trigger had broken and apiece of it was missing from the gun.

This allowed the trigger bar to fall below the sear/ ejector engagement. With nothing else appearing to be wrong with it, I contacted the customer to go back over his thoughts of turning this gun into a carry gun. I let him know I had found an original Colt plastic trigger assembly for the gun as well as aftermarket aluminum

units. As we were discussing the prices of the repair, I began trying to fully understand why he planned on carrying such a fine specimen.

After we discussed the gun, the fine shape it was in, that carrying it would only serve to ruin the beautiful nickel finish, and that rust would be the next issue (especially in Florida) that never goes well with nickel plating. We both agreed it was best to return this gun back to its original shape using the original plastic trigger and that he would be better served using a more modern, durable, and less collectible gun to use for concealed carry.

After ordering the new trigger, I looked through my collection of gun manuals and did not find an article specific to this make/model of gun and decided that a disassembly guide was in order. This gun, at first glance, looks much like a miniaturized version of the Colt 1911 but closer inspection revealed that it is distinctly different than its bigger sibling. To begin disassembly, first check to make sure the gun is unloaded, remove the magazine, and inspect the chamber to ensure no live round is still in the gun.

ONCE THE GUN IS DETERMINED TO BE CLEAR AND SAFE, BE-

COLT MODEL 380 CONTINUED

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The upper spring tabs are behind the sear, ejector, and trigger arm. The safety, when turned upward, goes over the detent and spring to lock it into place. gin with the slide assembly removal. The slide most closely resembles the 1911, however, this particular slide assembly can be removed by cocking the hammer to the full rearward position, pulling the slide to the rear to align the slide release with the cutout in the slide, then pushing out and removing the slide release.

Once out, pull the slide assembly forward off of the receiver. Alternatively, remove the slide assembly like the 1911 by first removing the magazine, depressing the recoil spring plug, and turning the barrel bushing enough to release tension on the recoil spring and removing the plug fully. Then, pull the slide to the rear to align the slide release with the cutout in the slide, remove the slide release from the frame, and pull the slide assembly forward off of the frame.

During reassembly, make certain to first depress the ejector (inside the frame) down just far enough to clear the rear of the slide when

pulling the slide assembly to the rear. After pulling the slide back, align the barrel lug hole with the hole in the frame where the slide release will then be inserted. Pull back on the slide to align the slide release with the notch in the slide.

If you used the The brass punch served as a slave pin during removal/reinstallation. 1911 method of disassembly, reassemble the recoil spring guide plug over the spring and turn the barrel bushing to capture the recoil spring plunger. With the slide removed, remove the bushing from the slide, then lift the recoil spring and recoil spring guide (made of plastic) out of the slide by pulling it to the rear. Same goes for the barrel. Lift up and remove the barrel from inside the slide.

Note, the barrel does not push out forward of the slide like the 1911. Remove the firing pin, firing pin spring, and extractor by first depressing the back of the firing pin with a small flat pin punch. Push down on the firing pin stop plate and remove it down out of the slide while holding a finger over the firing pin

and spring as they will fly you if you don't. With the plate removed, withdraw the firing pin and spring, and extractor.

To remove the firing pin lock and lock spring, tap the rear sight to the right enough to retrieve the two parts from the top of the slide. Reassemble the slide components in the reverse. Here is where the little Colt differs greatly from the 1911. To disassemble the frame, begin by removing the grip screws and panels.

Use a correctly-sized hollow-ground screwdriver bit as you do not want to bugger up the screw heads on such a fine gun (or any gun for that matter.) Once the grip panels are removed, remove the small slide stop spring located inside of a recess on the left side of the frame. Take note how this spring is in place and how it goes back into place during reassembly. It pops into place with just finger pressure and can be easily lost. Next, lower the hammer to the full forward position.

USING A CURVED TIP SCRIBE, INSERT THE

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Simply lift the hammer up and depress the top of the strut with a brass punch and push into place inside the back of the hammer slot. Above center: The old trigger being maneuvered out of the frame through the top. The new trigger goes back in the same way.

The area where some light filing can improve ejector to trigger arm and disconnecter performance is where the trigger arms meets the bottom of the ejector bar. curved end into the hole at the bottom of the sear/ejector spring, lift the spring up and over the frame grooves. Pull out from the frame and down to extract the spring from the frame fully.

During reassembly, slide the top of the sear/ejector spring up into the frame, making certain that the wider spring pad will be positioned on the left side of the frame directly behind the ejector bottom leg. Slide the top of the spring in behind both the sear and ejector bottom leg when reinstalling.

Once that is in place, insert the curved end of your scribe into the hole at the bottom of the sear/ejector spring, push the spring tabs into the frame slots, then pull down with the scribe to seat the bottom tabs of the spring into place. With the sear/ejector spring removed from the frame fully, rotate the safety downward. Make certain to keep a finger or thumb over the frame area above the safety as there is a small detent and spring that holds the safety in place that can jump out.

With the safety in the full down position, take a small brass pin punch and push the ejector/sear frame pin out from left to right. Once the pin is removed, the sear and ejector fall out of the frame. Hopefully you saw how both parts—especially the sear—were in the gun before removal.

The main concerns during reassembly is to make sure the thin edge of the sear goes up towards the hammer notches, the wide tab of the sear goes downward as the trigger bar rides against this tab, and that the bottom of the ejector leg, when replaced, goes behind the trigger bar. These parts are captured by the sear/ ejector frame pin.

For ease in installation of these two parts, start the frame pin from the right side, insert the sear in proper position as stated above, then push the frame pin across and capture the other side of the sear. Insert the ejector as stated above and finish capturing it with the frame pin. Take your time here as the parts are small, in a tight place, and patience needs to be adhered to on this part of the reassembly.

Once the sear and ejector has been removed, make sure the hammer is pushed all the way forward until you see the hammer strut pop up in the frame behind the hammer. To remove the strut, it is best to use your scribe to lightly compress the hammer strut spring inside the frame base area and pull the spring loose from the frame retaining hole. Once it is out, you can remove the hammer strut and spring together out the bottom of the frame.

Take note on how the hammer strut goes back into the gun as the top curves away from the hammer. When reinstalling, slide the hammer strut with the hammer strut spring attached up inside the frame area and position the top of the hammer strut behind the hammer with the hammer at full forward position. Compress the strut spring lightly and push it into the frame so the spring seats into its hole in the frame.

Then, use a small brass punch to push on the top of the hammer strut downward into the frame behind the hammer until the hook or fork catches on the hammer strut pin. The forked end of the hammer strut hooks over this hammer pin. Remove the hammer by pushing the hammer pin assembly (the frame pin that has the spring and detent that holds the safety in place) out of the frame from right to left, allowing you to remove the pin assembly and hammer from the frame. Re-install in reverse.

Next, rotate the safety upward and lift it out of the gun. It has to be rotated up to free if from the frame for removal and it is reinstalled in reverse. Now the trigger. We are installing anew trigger assembly, so to remove the trigger from the gun, use a small brass pin punch and drift the trigger frame pin out from right to left. Once out, maneuver the trigger assembly to get it out of the frame. Push the trigger

COLT MODEL 380 CONTINUED

ORIGINAL PAGE 9

arm downward into the frame area. At the same time, remove the disconnecter by pulling it downward out of the slot in the frame. Now, while pressing downward on the trigger arm, push the trigger back. At some point, you will be able to pivot the trigger upward and free from the frame grooves. Once pulled back far enough (do not force it), pull the trigger assembly out the top of the frame. To reinstall or insert the new trigger, make sure the trigger and trigger arm and spring are all assembled onto the trigger.

Push the trigger arm down into the frame from the top and work the trigger down and into the frame slot that captures the trigger. Don't forget to reinstall the disconnecter into the frame slot before seating the trigger into the frame. Go slow here and make small, light movements with the trigger and trigger arm. The key is not to force this into the gun here as you might end up breaking the plastic trigger!

I found that by pushing down on the trigger arm and using my other hand to work the trigger into the trigger frame grooves slowly helped position the trigger properly into the track and all the arm to come up again. The last item to remove is the magazine release assembly and it is removed identical to the 1911. Insert a small screw-

driver bit into the screw slot, push down and make a quarter turn, and the whole assembly will come out. Reinstall in reverse.

These instructions should help anyone that gets one of these guns in for deep cleaning and/or repairs. I have found on other Government 380 pistols that the hammer can become locked to the rear quite easily and it can be due to two things. One, the ejector was pushed too far down when reassembling the slide, thus the trigger arm cannot make contact with the ejector and sear plate.

The other is that the ejector may be in need of better fitting by lightly filing some material off the lower ejector end where it engages the trigger arm. Light filing here will enable the disconnecter to move the trigger bar up enough for the trigger bar to move into place in front of the ejector rod bottom tip area. Polishing this same area along with the back of the ejector rod tip bottom that rides against the sear/ejector spring can also free up these parts to work more efficiently.

The trick to reassembling these guns is slow, dedicated patience in making each part fit correctly without forcing them into place. Take your time and methodically reassemble each piece accordingly. I was glad that the owner decided not to turn this into a carry gun. A gun as clean and new looking as this—especially being a Colt—

should be kept in as new as possible condition since they are not getting any younger.

Since original parts for this gun are drying up and becoming more and more difficult to find, I would personally rather carry a gun that has a more durable finish on it as well as one that you can still find plenty of parts for than messing up this old beauty! Recall Notice Colt issued a safety improvement on all Colt 380 semiautomatic pistols and offer a fix for their Colt 380 semiautomatic pistols free of charge. The sear spring may be bent in some Colt 380 autos.

Where this occurs there is a possibility that the sear spring will become unseated from the base of the receiver which could result in accidental discharge. To hold the sear spring in place, Colt sends out a 380 Auto improvement kit, which includes a spring clip and instructions for attaching the clip to the sear spring. Once the spring clip is installed the sear spring cannot come loose. This is a simple but effective safety modification.

This applies to all Colt 380 autos in the current series first introduced in 1982. If a spring clip has already been installed, it will appear in the magazine well as a yellow piece of metal attached to the sear spring. The spring clip and instructions can be obtained by contacting Colt at G

METALWORKING

Working Winchester 1892 Rifles

John Browning's smaller version of the M1886 and M1873 replacement for pistol-caliber cartridges remains popular today.

BY ROBERT K. CAMPBELL NOVEMBER 2016

ORIGINAL PP. 10-14

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Most of the information about the Winchester Model 1892 rifle in this article also applies to the foreign-produced Puma rifles and a few others. Some of the generalities also apply to the Winchester 1894 lever action rifle. These rifles are often used in cowboy action shooting. Many are found in the hands of people who simply appreciate old steel and like to shoot lever action rifles. Others use the rifles as an important part of their hunting battery.

The Winchester 1892 is accurate, reliable after a few fixes, and fires the .32-20 WCF cartridge. With about the same energy as the .30 Carbine but with a heavier bullet, the .32-20 is still useful for coyote and other small game. The first thing before working on these older guns is to conduct some research and understand their individual qualities. When a customer declares his gun won't shoot we have to understand the basis for complaint. Can he shoot? Was the gun previously accurate?

Modern replicas are accurate with jacketed and hard cast bullets, sometimes, but the older rifles such as the original M1892 chambered in .44-40 have specific parameters that must be met for accuracy. A modern shooter using hard cast bullets may

find the WCF cartridges less accurate than legend suggests. In the early days, firearms sometimes had less consistent bore diameter and this greater disparity makes for poor accuracy.

Rifles were more likely to be off specification than hand- Otherwise, they are very similar. The Rossi illustrated has an octagon barrel. guns, which insured feed reliability even with a dirty chamber and the less-than-perfect ammunition of the period. Bullets then were soft (usually forty parts lead and one part tin) and bumped into the grooves easily on firing. Harder alloys are popular today, producing fine accuracy in most firearms and reducing leading.

Softer alloys may make less accurate bullets but with proper bullets WCF cartridges are accurate. Another potential problem is proper chambering. A popular combination is a revolver and rifle with shared cartridges but differences must be accounted for. A heavy, hard cast semi-wadcutter bullet is designed to be crimped in the groove in the front of the driving band.

This is ideal for revolvers but may not chamber in a rifle, which works better with the bullet seated deeper and the crimp ran over the bullet at a higher point. If the

same powder charge is used this may result in higher pressure. Older rifles will usually take higher pressure loads than older revolvers but this isn't always true. For example, a heavy .44 Magnum load safe in a Ruger Blackhawk may exhibit high pressure signs in a lever action rifle.

So, having a good understanding of proper ammunition for the specific firearm is important. Lever Action Checks A common complaint is cartridges not feeding into the magazine tube. The usual culprit is the lever is slightly open. Close the operating lever and the cartridge should feed. Loose levers are another complaint. They are purposely made that way in some rifles but economy guns can be pretty loose. In one example I found excessive clearance of about 0.030 in the lever.

A 0.015 shim between the trigger and tang kept the trigger from wriggling as much. This wasn't a function problem but a rattle issue. Pre-64 rifles are usually tighter. I have worked with lever action rifles in which the magazine tube is not completely screwed in from the factory, causing feed problems. Another problem is a cartridge that won't feed out of the magazine tube. A simple fix is rapping the magazine tube lightly to straighten the

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feed spring out. I have also had to remove the magazine tube for complete cleaning. It is surprising the amount of foreign material that can get into magazine tubes. Feed problems are sometimes caused by the operator error. I once had a customer bring in a M1892 that failed to eject after firing. The rifle was chambered in .32-20 WCF but the cartridges were .30 Carbine! He said his grandfather gave him the rifle with those cartridges.

I pointed out the differences between the two types of ammunition and demonstrated how only the rimmed .32-20 WCF would feed properly in his rifle. He wasn't the Lone Ranger on such foolishness. Many shooters do not realize that the lever is pressed forward, not down, during operation and that doing so results in better smoothness. The lever must run completely forward in order to pick up the new cartridge and load it.

I have run across more lever action rifle issues due to cowboy action shooting than from hunting. Cowboy action shooters fire their rifles more in one season than a

hunter will in his lifetime. Due to historical interest, CAS competitors sometimes bring vintage rifles back into play. Never ignore simple fixes such as rust in the chamber. This is common and isn't necessarily from black powder as merely failing to clean often enough will do it.

Some of the work I have done is simple, though this seldom makes the rifle more accurate. Working with different loads is the best rectly-sized O-ring to slip over it. This dampens recoil on the rifle, results in less wear and can offer a slight accuracy increase. Another problem is too-light hammer strikes. Note, pistol cartridges should be loaded with pistol primers, even when fired in a rifle; something to ask your customer.

If it's not ammunition related, adjust the hammer regulating screw to make the strike heavier. We can also experiment with trigger and hammer springs for a lighter let off. I do this by lightening the hammer spring a few coils, then put the rifle back together to test the pull and ignition. Take it slow with this one. You may also install a

thin shim under the spring and between the spring and the tang. Just a small piece of plastic is fine. There must be a hole through the shim for the retaining screw.

One shim in the old 1892 and two shims in the modern Rossi worked fine. accuracy enhancement but we can greatly improve function. A neat trick for limiting wear that also seems to improve accuracy is to remove the barrel band and find a cor- When looking over fit and function, look for burrs on the long bearing surfaces. Newer Winchester 1892s are usually free of these as may be expected of a two thousand dollar rifle. The original 1892 rifles do not have them.

After over 75 years of use they are probably long worn away and the long bearing surfaces and places where parts meet sometimes need a polish on the Rossi rifle. The bolt, the sides of the hammer, and the breech are well worth your attention. I use a stone and take things These old parts diagram still work. Note small parts that sometimes are easily misplaced.

WORKING WINCHESTER 1892 RIFLES CONTINUED

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Top Do not remove this safety. slow and easy. As far as the Rossi rifle, it is great for the money while taking into account that a less expensive firearm may have less factory refinement. The old Winchesters seem to give the most problems, although the problems are age related and not due to the design or quality. Sometimes the cartridge stop will

stick, similar to the M1894. The problem is basically a double feed with two cartridges on the carrier.

Top Bottom Far Sometimes the upper cartridge flies out of the gun, which is ideal to avoid a tie up. To cure this, the carrier and carrier detent are worked and smoothed with a stone. One coil off of the carrier detent spring often aids in proper operation. Next,

move to the ejector and ejector shaft. You can see machine marks on these parts in many rifles. Stone them carefully for better function.

On aside note, for reasons unknown, some CAS competitors will fire the obsolete .38 Colt in their lever action .357 Magnum/.38 Special rifles. This shorter cartridge is seldom feed reliable in the modern lever action rifle. Some modifications are questionable but not a safety issue if the

WORKING WINCHESTER 1892 RIFLES CONTINUED

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com) was fitted to a modern Rossi, a great option for many shooters. It isn't a good idea to leave the rifle loaded for long periods. customer asks. As an example, a young lady had broken a nail on the loading gate of her Winchester copy. These can be pretty stiff in both Rossi and Winchester rifles. You can

disassemble the rifle and bend the gate spring until it loses some of its tension, making it easier to press in.

While I don't think reliability is compromised, this is a game gun and not for hunting dangerous game or personal defense. I also replaced the plastic magazine. Most of the work done on these rifles is the result of normal wear. follower with a Winchester 92 steel

follower. I have seen no issues with the Rossi follower but steel trumps plastic as a no-brainer on a cowboy gun. Winchester M1892 steel followers for the .32-20 WCF fits the Rossi .357 Magnum with some twisting of the spring into the new follower.

I HAVE FOUND NO DIFFERENCES IN DISASSEMBLING THE ROSSI OR WIN-

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The author the action spring of the Rossi Model 92 for easy removal. This isn't much different than a revolver action spring. chesters. The Rossi, being anew gun, is tighter and a tad more difficult to take down the first time. The same should apply to the new model Winchester 92 as it appears quite tight. Remove the tang screw and slip the butt stock off to the rear. Pull the hammer to the rear and locate a small hole in the mainspring rod. This is visible in the "V" of the mainspring rod block.

A small pin or nail may be inserted into this hole to prevent the mainspring from flying off. Remove the bolt pin stop screw. Look to the receiver. At the top near the rear of the receiver is a bolt pin. This pin is driven out carefully with a punch right to left. Open the action by pressing the lever forward. Look closely at the locking bolts exposed on the attachment point of the lever. You will see the screws that attach to the left hand side locking bolt.

Remove the locking bolt pin screw from the left hand side of the lever/locking lug. With the locking bolt pin removed, remove both locking bolts from the bottom of the receiver. As you remove the lever, take care not to lose the ejector, ejector collar, and ejector spring. They are only a light press fit in the breech bolt. Apart that serves a dual purpose is the hammer screw which is also the lower tang screw. Hold the trigger to the rear and remove the lower tang.

The lower tang is removed by pulling straight back out from the receiver. There is a small pin that the trigger pivots on, easily lost and a loose fit. The hammer assembly then pulls away. At this point the bolt may be removed from the receiver. As I have already mentioned, the ejector, ejector spring, and ejector collar area loose fit in the breech bolt and care must be taken that they are not lost. Next, remove two carrier screws and the carrier comes out easily.

The cartridge guides and the loading gate do not need to be removed. Reassemble in the reverse order. Assembling the bolt,

ejector, and lever can be a tough job. To get them back together, insert the assembled breechbolt into the receiver. With the bolt in the open position, insert the lever. Ensure the ejector is aligned properly, then close the bolt. Press forward on the lever to seat it completely into the receiver. Align the holes in the bolt and lever with the pin hole in the receiver and insert the bolt pin.

A small tapered punch can help align the holes if need be. As is often the case, putting the rifle back together can be more difficult than taking it apart. Be certain that the bolt is properly assembled with the small parts. They area press fit and a little loose so be certain that the bolt is moved back into the receiver at the proper angle. Place the bolt into the receiver, then move the operating lever into place. Align the ejector properly and close the bolt.

To properly seat the operating lever, press it forward into the receiver. Carefully align the holes located in the receiver and press the bolt pin into place. A small punch may prove useful. AG

RESTORATION

Refurbishing A Stevens Model 258A

A fireman walked from a burning house with an old Stevens bolt-action shotgun. Here's how I repaired this fire-damaged gun.

BY NORMAN E. JOHNSON NOVEMBER 2016

ORIGINAL PP. 15-17

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The old, fire-damaged shotgun was brought in with a plea from the owner. "Do what you can with it. I like the old gun and would like to hunt with it some more." Despite everything, the gun appeared quite sound with a huge chunk out of the plastic buttplate and the stock varnish mottled with smoke and water marks. The metal showed the ravages of years of hunting and was stained by water and smoke, but otherwise appeared quite sound. I assured the man I would do what I could with the gun.

The Stevens Model 258A was made from 1937 to 1965 in 20 gauge with a 26-inch barrel and detachable two-shot magazine.

Suggested retail price was \$95 but the gun retailed for much less. On closer examination, the gun chambered The screws were rusted solidly in place. This was a perfect place for the use of Brownells Steel-Bed as it was a perfect color match. and extracted shotshells well and left a nice, deep firing pin mark on a primed, uncharged shotshell.

I had adjusted the trigger for him more than thirty years ago because he felt it pulled too hard when he had a deer in his sights. He never used more than the front bead and the narrow-ribbed markings over the receiver for a sight and nearly always got his deer. In repairing the old 258A, the old hunter asked if

I could also repair the broken buttplate. He had broken out apiece years ago and it seemed to bother him, so I did this first. Replacing it with anew one wasn't even a thought.

I was unable to remove the muchrusted buttplate screws and decided to make a form using masking tape and filling it in with Brownells Steel-Bed. It hardens like steel and the black finish was a natural. Performing the work was quite easy. I applied three layers of masking tape flush with the top of the buttplate's outside border. The void

REFURBISHING A STEVENS MODEL 258A CONTINUED

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was filled flush with the hole using Steel-Bed. I made sure the mixture was flush with the buttplate and set the stock upright as the material slowly set. When the Steel-Bed was firm, I formed it to the shape of the existing buttplate and carefully scribed lines in it as a

continuation of each existing line by using the point of a jackknife blade. The stock was stripped and sanded in preparation for applying Birchwood Casey Tru-Oil finish. Three coats were applied to the old walnut stock.

I knew the refinished stock would more than satisfy the old hunter. In fact, it looked better than he had ever known it. Next was getting the metalwork back in shape. The barrel had no dents or dings and the light rust on

REFURBISHING A STEVENS MODEL 258A CONTINUED

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Nothing fancy but a reliable, old shotgun well worth repairing. the receiver and barrel buffed off nicely. The magazine received the same treatment. I then pressure cleaned and oiled the bolt. Using Brownells Formula 44/40 cold blue on the barrel and receiver brought out a suitable, dark finish. A light coat of oil was then applied to halt the oxidation process. The old shotgun was reassembled and looked pretty darned good.

The next day I called the owner, who was at my door in less than two hours.

He asked, "How did it turn out?" As I handed him the old gun he gazed upon it end-to-end for a full two minutes. "Sure turned out nice, huh? It'll hunt right well again." Bringing an old gun from the depth of ruin back to a functional arm doesn't always require the expensive repairs often applied to them. As

gunsmiths, we can often keep costs down by applying common sense repair. How much better would this damaged old shotgun have looked with a total rebluing, expensive stock finish, and replaced buttplate?

How would the old hunter have felt paying several times the price he originally paid for it, just to feel the old gun in his hands again?
AG

MAINTENANCE & REPAIR

Cosmetic Metal Repair

Rusted, pitted, dented, and gouged steel is the ruin of many firearms. Here are some ways of hiding or removing them.

BY PAUL MAZAN NOVEMBER 2016

ORIGINAL PP. 18-20

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Ve I heard it said that the two biggest dangers a firearm faces are rust and politicians. Positive results of a given election shows how the latter works. Rust, on the other hand, is sneaky and may strike when you least expect it. I've worked on many rusted and pitted firearms over the years and the traditional method of removing pits in the metal has been to draw file the piece until you cut below the pitting, then rebluing or refinishing. That is still the recommended method when such action is possible.

I have come across a few gun parts that could not be saved by the draw file method because they were very thin and removing enough metal would have left little more than steel foil. For example, I did an article for Brownells Web Bench about restoring a pitted Remington Nylon 66 receiver cover. After using rust and blue remover to get it down to bare metal, I used three coats of black Brownells Aluma-Hyde II to fill and finish the piece.

That worked out extremely well as the self-leveling properties of the Aluma-Hyde allowed the first two coats to fill the pits and the third coat left a smooth clean surface. I was very pleased with the result. I've been experimenting with using auto body repair methods to fill pits, scratches, and the like in noncritical areas to cosmetically repair the surface of the metal. Recently, I purchased a pre-64 Winchester 94 that had been put down on something wet and left.

The result was a receiver, tang, barrel, and barrel bands heavily pitted on one side. Parts like the barrel band can be simply replaced. The barrel can be draw filed or turned but that would also remove the factory markings. I elected to replace the barrel on this gun because it had been rechambered to .30-30 Ackley Improved and I wanted to return it to the original .30-30 chambering and to draw file the receiver to restore the surface finish.

Draw filing is the process of using a single cut file on a secured workpiece at the far end of the worked area and pulling (drawing) the file toward you. This is repeated over and over until all pits are removed and the surface has been brought to a flat state. While filing you may be surprised how irregular the surface of the firearm is. Very few are truly flat but they will be when you are finished.

I also filled all the screw and pin holes with modeling clay to keep the filings out of the interior of the gun as much as possible. Once all the pits and high spots have been reduced, the surface is polished and blued. The magazine tube presented a different problem as it was too thin to file. Taking a page from the auto body folks, I wondered if the magazine tube pits could be filled much like dents are filled in an auto body shop.

Based on the rough handling firearms are subjected to and having had some experience with

COSMETIC METAL REPAIR CONTINUED

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This is about the time you are ready to give up. Don't. plastic body fillers in my youth, I ruled them out. Going way back in history, there was a time body work was done by filling the rusted-out metal with lead. That might work if I had the skill of those old bodyand-fender guys but soldering is not one of my strong suits. Stick with the file and avoid making the job harder. The method I used was application of Brownells Acraglas Gel as my filler.

This is the bedding material gunsmiths have used for decades to bed actions into rifle stocks. It doesn't shrink and stands up to the punishment of even the heaviest recoiling hunting rifles. The procedure I used was to remove all the rust and finish remaining on the magazine tube with rust and blue remover. Any of the commercial rust removers will do a great job.

The idea is to remove the rust all the way to the bottom of the deepest pit so when epoxy is on, there is no rust underneath continuing

to attack the metal. I scrubbed the rust remover in with a stiff brush and heated the area afterward with a hot air gun to remove any lingering moisture. The Acraglas Gel was then mixed, dyed black, and spread on the tube like butter on bread. Once the epoxy was cured (I gave it 24 hours) I then sanded it down to leave a smooth surface.

After that, a cold blue was used to reblue the tube.

COSMETIC METAL REPAIR CONTINUED

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The result was not all that I hoped for as the pits could still be seen as dark spots. Of course, epoxy won't hold up in a bluing tank so hot bluing is out. However, the tube could be replaced or painted with the black semi-gloss Aluma-Hyde II, an air-cured epoxy coating. This can render the gun very presentable, certainly more so than the pitted remains of a once-proud Winchester.

Successful as this procedure can be, heavier and deeper pitting will require more coats of finish and you're left with a painted finish on the gun, something a number of people object to. Again, even high temperature epoxies will not stand up to the high temperature and corrosiveness of a bluing tank. The body

filler method will only work with high temperature epoxies if used on barrels subjected to heating via long strings of fire.

If bluing is the only acceptable finish, you're left with the traditional, labor intensive method of draw filing, polishing, and rebluing. Draw filing is not difficult, it just takes a lot of time, work, and patience. When it seems you aren't making any progress, don't give up. Just persist in your filing and you will get there. I tend to be impatient and have tried to hurry the process by using a belt sander.

Unless you are very good with one, it's easy to cut a groove in the metal with the edger of the abrasive and that will double the work you have as you now must remove the new groove along with the pitting. I know from

experience. Stick with the file. The gun was fully disassembled before work started. This offers the opportunity to detail clean and inspect all the parts as well as replace any that are worn or broken. One part I will almost always replace on any old tube-fed firearm is the magazine tube spring.

Over the years, many tube springs will have lost much of their original power and many feeding problems can be cured by simply replacing the spring with a new one. After the finish work and reassembly the gun is much more presentable. I no longer get any, "Oh, what happened to your '94?" questions when I take it to the range or hunting. That alone has made the whole job worth while. AG Top Bottom Not an invisible repair but a much improved look.

METALWORKING

Knight Ignition Improvement

Erratic primer ignition can sometimes be improved by simply reworking the firing pin nose tip. Here's how to improve ignition on Knight DISC Extreme muzzleloaders.

BY NORMAN E. JOHNSON NOVEMBER 2016

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Original caption: Bottom: Disassembled view of the Knight muzzleloader bolt shows nose of firing pin. Firing pin travel is very short on this type of rifle. sure. This can stem from too short a spring or a spring that is weak. There also may be a hysteresis factor where spring bind or cocking piece friction is present.

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Original caption: Bottom: The rifle bolt with a loaded Full Plastic Jacket as used in Knight DISC muzzleloader rifles. take a close look at the firing pin tip for both shape or depth. A customer presented me with a .52 caliber Knight DISC Extreme muzzleloader that had erratic ignition, particularly in cold weather.

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Faulty primer ignition can originate from a number of causes. Chief among these are impeded firing pin thrust, which may come from sluggish spring pres-

Where correction of these factors is obviated, it may be time to The primer is contained in this jacket.

By design, the bolt on this rifle is equipped to utilize a standard 209 shotgun primer encircled by a Full Plastic Jacket that seals the primer. The firing pin is also designed to use a Number 11 percussion cap with the same firing pin nose radius of 0.168". While a nose radius of this diameter may be suitable for musket cap ignition, it appears poorly suited for shotgun primer ignition as it often fails to crush the primer mixture against the anvil with full effectiveness.

This is particularly true in cold temperatures as are routinely encountered during many hunting seasons in the north. On closer examination of the firing pin nose tip compared with that of a standard shotgun firing pin, a major difference in diameter was noted. The Knight's firing pin measures a full 0.168" across the extreme borders of the primary firing pin protrusion. By comparison, a standard shotgun firing pin radius is much smaller, measuring at 0.110".

KNIGHT IGNITION IMPROVEMENT CONTINUED

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Primer is shown loaded in the Full Plastic Jacket with the tip of original firing pin taped to side. Above center: Knight DISC Extreme firing pin set up in a lathe in preparation for tip modifications. The solution was a firing pin nose tip conversion. A plan was presented to the customer whereby the firing pin nose tip would be reduced from 0.168 to 0.110 and properly radiused. This would result in 0.060 radius tip protrusion beyond the bolt face.

The work was performed in a lathe, conveniently accomplished with the back portion of the bolt centered and held in the lathe chuck and the rounded end of the firing pin shoulder centered in the roller bearing lathe center rest. A properly sharpened tool bit was

used to reduce the diameter of the firing pin nose tip from 0.168 to 0.110. Following the lathe, a fine machinist file. Below center: These two Knight DISC Extreme rifle bolts show the work performed on the firing pin.

On left, the original configuration of firing pin. On right, the re-shaped firing pin tip with 0.168" radiused diameter and 0.060" length. was used in forming the radius on the new tip and finally polished with 600 grit paper. On firing, the nose tip imparted a precise 0.060" indentation flush with the surface of the primer. Testing In testing the reworked firing pin there was no question about the improved functionality of the newlyformed nose tip.

It was tested on a cold day at a temperature near zero Fahrenheit with Remington 209 and CCI 209-M Magnum primers, Blackhorn 209 powder, and 325 grain Hornady bullets. Primer ignition was vastly improved, along with much better grouping on target. There was no longer any sign of hangfires or misfires even in the frigid temperatures. As a means of improving ignition reliability on the Knight DISC Extreme muzzleloader, I can strongly recommend this firing pin nose tip modification.

For best performance, the tolerances should be held as closely as possible to those described herein. Sometimes a small change can make a big difference in performance, as was the case here. AG

READER FORUM

Reader Forum

BY AMERICAN GUNSMITH EDITORS NOVEMBER 2016

ORIGINAL PP. 23-24

ITAR Lawsuit I am sure American Gunsmith readers are concerned about the new ITAR guidance and its effect on small gunsmiths. Last October, I sued the State Department over this very issue, seeking to have ITAR overturned, or at least have its application limited to actual exporters. Unfortunately, my lawsuit was tossed on a technicality.

The judge found that my company doesn't have standing to sue, despite being a type 07 FFL with gun designs ready, as there isn't a "real" case because the government isn't actually prosecuting me. My intention is to register and pay their exorbitant fee, and then sue for a refund. Unfortunately, my basement startup can't afford that (which is why I sued, as small business and startups are cash-strapped), but I did throw up a Go Fund Me page hoping that gun owners and gunsmiths might chip in to help me do it.

If successful, this could set a precedent that would benefit other gunsmiths. Read about the lawsuit and the critical documents at leocombat.com/lawsuit. Contact me at 720/441-GUNS (4867) for additional information. The Go Fund Me page to fund this lawsuit is at gofund.me/2m9hx4hn. Please consider contributing to my Go Fund Me to support this effort. I really want to take these regs down! Rob Lyman LEO Combat, LLC LEOCombat.com 720/441-GUNS (4867) Ballistic Soap I'm looking to buy or make ballistic soap.

How can I obtain this? Ballistic testing mediums are intended to simulate the effects bullets have on flesh. Ballistics gelatin tends to be more popular in the United States while ballistic soap is popular in Europe and China. For terminal ballistics testing, properly prepared and calibrated 10% ballistic gelatin has proven to

be a reliable test medium based on years of comparisons with human shooting victims and wounds in live pig tissue.

Given the huge number of variables in a given real-world shooting, no test medium can be perfect, but properly-prepared ballistic gelatin and soap comes close. Brownells sells 10% Ballistic Gelatin as used by the FBI (#100- 015-077WB), a 16x6x6 block from Clear Ballistics (Clear-Ballistics.com), as well as a mold of this size to make them yourself. For ballistics gel, mix Knox gelatin with water in a 1:8 ratio until there are no lumps, then refrigerate.

Once chilled and dehydrated, melt down over a double boiler while stirring, then set into a mold coated with nonstick spray and refrigerate. For ballistics soap, melt clear glycerin soap for about one minute in a microwave-safe container. Slowly mix Knox gelatin with water (two packets with about 3/4 cup water) to avoid creating bubbles, then mix in melted soap. Mixing in ground cinnamon helps reduce bubbles while stirring. Refrigerate for two hours, then melt over a low heat.

Remove any bubbles, then refrigerate in a mold overnight. Refurbishing The H&R 422 I am trying to bring a Harrington & Richardson Model 422 .22LR pump action back to life. This rifle is nearly the same as the Nobel Model 235. I believe a previous owner took this one apart and lost some of the parts because there are some missing components needed for proper operation. Numrich's catalog #22 has an exploded view of the Nobel M235 on page 495 but the parts displayed only show their general location in the rifle.

The catalog also lists the parts by name but doesn't show how they fit with each other. Richard Tryon Afton, NY Have you published any articles on the H&R M422

or Nobel M235? Failing that, can you point me to an appropriate reference? The Model 422 was manufactured by Noble Firearms Company from 1956- 1958, calling it the M235. Therein lies but one of your restoration problems. A larger one is presented by the current entity of H&R.

Said entity has a rigid policy of not providing service for firearms that haven't been produced by them. This policy includes any descendant of H&R, such as H&R 1871! Of no further help at all is the fact that we have never published an article on either the 422 or the 235. We can offer this advice: If there remains a living expert on the rifle, Brownells might be able to lead you to him. Outside of the BATE, the folks in Montezuma Iowa have the best and largest list of licensed gunsmiths in America.

AR-15 Drill and Tap I tried to drill and tap a bolt carrier for an AR-15 project. The steel is so hard I could not scratch it! I tried to spot heat but had no success. Do I need to put the carrier in a furnace to anneal it? Should I consider using carbide bits? What size button heads do you use? BSRacer85 Author Joe Carlos responds. You're right about carrier hardness. Yes, carbide bits area must. I use a 5-40 button head cap screws and countersink the heads a little, about 1/4" diameter on that hole.

Alkanet Oil I enjoyed reading "Herbal Root, London Guns, And Hue" by Shawn Mc- Williams in the August 2016 issue as I'm interested in stock finishing. Is his formula for Alkanet Oil going to remain a trade secret or would he let us amateurs know what is a good starting combination for us to experiment with? Robert Tingler Author Shawn Mc Williams responds. I have to keep it a trade secret since I worked hard to create it, but clearly was very generous in the info that was provided. Charles Lane Homewood, AL

READER FORUM CONTINUED

ORIGINAL PAGE 24

Hi-Power Magazine Safety From “Easy Hi-Power Modifications” in the August 2016 issue concerning deactivating a magazine safety. I think it’s rather presumptuous to think that you know better than John Moses Browning. You should never remove or disable a safety on a gun. Jonathan Herring Author Ray Ordorica responds.

While I applaud your concern, I made it clear in my report that one needs to know how to handle firearms and needs to know something about personal defense training in order to understand what I did to the gun. I also made it clear this is a personal gun, never to be sold, and anyone who handles it must be told of its alteration. What you don’t know is I have over 50 years of working with all kinds of guns behind me, including training with the best in the world.

My old friend Jeff Cooper would applaud what I did to this gun, as would anyone who understands gunfighting. Rather than “defeating” the safety, I actually made it a better gun for the knowledgeable gunfighter. [Editor’s Note: American Gunsmith does not dictate policy or advise readers on what work or modifications are Submit a question or letter to the Reader Forum column by addressing an email or posting a letter to American Gunsmith, Alexandria, VA 22310. Send subscription questions to appropriate.

We publish the experiences, procedures, and opinions from a variety of gunsmiths. Sometimes these experiences, procedures, and opinions differ. It is up to individual gunsmiths, readers, and subscribers to choose what work and modifications are best for them, their clients, and their business.] Kalashnikov Modifications Does the ATF allow Kalashnikov-type rifles manufactured during the 1990s (those that used single stack magazines) to be converted to take double stack magazines?

I tried contacting the ATF but they require a written letter and have a two month delay. Not very practical for a gun shop to do business that way. Wallace We agree. And we’re flattered you believe us to have some influence over or on BATF regulations. However, we do not. If the response received was generated by a regional BATF office you might try relating your intent to the main office in Washington DC.

They’ll at least provide a non-answer but will direct you to an office better suited and staffed to provide one. We suspect any objection arising from your intention will be based on a need to modify the receiver to accept the double stack magazine. Such a modification, in their opinion, could be classified as remanufacture, which you would not be allowed to undertake unless you hold a manufacturer FFL. Springfield Model 67H A customer brought me a Savage Springfield model 67H.

I can’t find a serial number on the receiver and there’s no evidence of any tampering or removal of one. Was this possibly manufactured before it was required to have serial numbers? I thought most better manufacturers always stamped a serial number on their guns. Samuel Garrison Circle G From what we’ve been able to discover so far, registration of and stricter controls on the sale and/or transfer of certain firearms were mandated when Congress enacted The National Firearms Act of 1934 (NFA) on June 6, 1933.

The NFA came down hardest on machine guns, short barrel rifles, sound suppressor (silencers), short barrel shotguns, and destructive devices. This was the response to Prohibition-era gang violence, which reached its apex with the St. Valentine’s Day massacre in Chicago in 1929. The NFA was superseded by the Gun Control Act of 1968, referred to presently as Title II of the Federal Firearm laws. The GCA is Title I.

We know of no other means of tracking a gun other than by assigning it a serial number it carries from manufacture or import through all its sales and transfers for its serviceable lifetime. Hence, the birth of serial numbers likely dates to 1933-34. The Model 67 was in production from 1958-1989. We can offer no explanation of why no such number appears on the receiver of the 67H in your shop but suggest you broaden the scope of your search. AG

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