



The Antique Arms Gazette

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Gun Show Retrospective

March and April have been busy months, with a different show just about every week end: Chilliwack, Calgary, Kamloops and Cloverdale. In retrospect I have to say that although they were all very enjoyable and much good conversation was had, it was all in all slow, and sales were “lacking”. All the vendors I spoke with, from Chilliwack to Calgary and in Kamloops, too, were concerned with the lack of cash customers were willing to part with. Even the crowds were down from previous years – Alberta still has not recovered from the oil sands crisis, and people in BC are reluctant to spend their money, too. One vendor in Cloverdale thought she did only half of the business from last year. I did fairly well in Calgary, and although Kamloops and Cloverdale looked at first to be a total bust, late sales toward the end of the show made it all worth while...I managed to pick up a few goodies, too!

Old Guns Canada Now Accepts Credit Cards

One thing I learned in a hurry in Calgary is that when someone is willing to spend a couple of thousand dollars on a choice gun, he (or she) has to be able to charge it to a credit card. Not many people walk around with that kind of cash in their pockets. My table neighbour was using one of those “square” card readers which hooks up to your cell phone, and presto, you have made the sale. I am happy to say that the whole set-up process took mere minutes and now I can also process credit cards, both in person as well as over the internet. It’s a bit costly though, and I do have to charge a bit extra to those who wish to pay by credit. Money orders, checks and e-transfers are still the preferred mode of payment...

National Arms, Brooklyn, New York

The National Arms Company was founded out of the “ashes” of the Moore’s Patent Firearms Co. in 1865. It is best known for its single-shot, large caliber Deringers, the

design already started under Moore’s guidance. These little gems proved so popular that the Colt Firearms Co. which purchased National in 1870, continued producing them for another ten years. Therefore, we find practically identical deringers with a possible three addresses and makers. The Model No. 1 in all-steel construction and the Model No. 2 with iron frame and rosewood grips. National was in business for only five years, and only about 3,000 were made with the National name. The deringers are solid, with a side-pivoting barrel and an extractor attached to the left side of the breech which hooks under the rim of the .41 short rim fire cartridge and pulls it clear of the barrel when it is opened. A spring-loaded button on the right side unlocks the barrel and allows it to pivot to the left. The sides of the frame are factory engraved, and the barrels blued. National also made a large-frame teat-fire revolver based on Moore’s famous Williamson’s patent front-loading revolvers, this one in a specially designed .45 caliber teat fire cartridge.



National Arms Model No. 2

The Charles Francois Galand Self-Extracting Revolver of 1872

Charles F. Galand is perhaps best known as the inventor of the Velo-Dog cartridge and gun. In the days of stray dogs and cyclists of the late 19th century Galand saw a need to provide cyclists (velocipede) a small, reliable handgun to defend themselves against aggressive stray dogs in the streets and fields of France. The velo-dog proved

to become one of the most widely copied handguns in Europe, partly because he was not granted a patent until four years after his death in 1904, but also because the guns proved to be reliable, effective and very popular. The velo-dog cartridge was a long, 7.2mm center-fire cartridge which packed a serious punch. Galand’s other achievements include the Galand-Perrin (Galand-Sommerville) revolver, which was widely used by military and police in Europe. Galand had shops in both Paris as well as Liege, and identical specimens of his guns may be found with either address. One of his most unusual inventions was the “self-extracting” revolver of 1872 which utilizes an ingenious lever mechanism to slide the barrel and cylinder assembly forward to extract the spent cartridges. Galand died in 1900, at the age of 68. He was succeeded by his son Rene who continued the family business until 1942.



Very fine Galand 1872 self-extracting revolver in 12mm center fire, with Liege proof marks

Joseph Rider

Joseph Rider was born in 1817 in Newark, Licking County, Ohio. A trained gunsmith and inventor, he moved to New York at age 42 to work for Eliphalet Remington & Sons where he remained for most of his career. Rider had received a patent for a revolver already a year before his relationship with Remington began, however this gun was produced at Remington and would become known as the Remington-Rider pocket revolver, one of the first double-action revolvers in American history made in volume, and the factory converted version to a metallic cartridge made this the first American double-action cartridge revolver. Rider went on to develop other innovations important in the history of the American gun, one being the magazine pistol. This small handgun, known as the Remington-Rider magazine pistol, was produced in the tiny .32 rim fire extra short caliber, from 1871 to 1888. It has an ingenious cocking and feeding mechanism: the gun seems to have two hammers, a large one and a smaller one behind it. The larger one is actually the extractor and feeding lever, which also cocks the smaller, real hammer when it is pulled back. The spent cartridge is extracted and a new cartridge fed from the tube magazine below the barrel into the breech as the lever is released, closing the breech. The magazine holds five cartridges and is loaded from the muzzle end of the gun. This invention was an important step in American hand gun development and the first magazine-fed cartridge pistol to be commercially produced. It is also one of the most unusual handgun inventions of the 19th century...



Remington – Rider Magazine Pistol



The larger cocking lever acts as an extractor, loader and hammer cocking device

Smith and Wesson .44 Russian

To write about such iconic gun makers as S&W or Colt is an exercise in futility. So much has been written and said, that the casual collector could not possibly add anything new. I am only going to write a few lines about the Russian who is – more or less – responsible for the .44 “Russian”. The name of the gun, and the special cartridge made for it was all American, not made in Russia as the name may suggest. It was Czar Nicholas’ envoy to the US (and later Britain), one General Alexander Gorloff who approached S&W to produce the impressive .44 American revolver for the Imperial Army, however he added the condition that S&W develop an internally lubricated cartridge. The general pointed out that the commonly used, external lubricant was prone to picking up “contaminants” (ie – dirt and sand) which, when fired through the barrel would over time scratch and erode the interior of the barrel. S&W reduced the diameter of the bullet slightly, added “lubrication grooves” below the cartridge mouth and thus was able to provide bullet lubrication without any sticky material on the surface. This design also produced significantly higher barrel pressure and with it a much higher muzzle velocity. It was one of these “watershed” inventions which would propel (pardon the pun) cartridge design forward by leaps. S&W produced some 130,000 Model 3’s (as they are officially called) for the Russians. The .44 Russian became so popular, S&W also sold them commercially in the US and Europe, and they were used as military and police side arms until the 1920’s, not just in Russia. Since it has been proved that all of these S&W .44 DA revolver frames were made prior to 1899, they are considered antique, even though many were not assembled until early in the 20th century. The calibre is also a bit of an anomaly – although considered obsolete, it is still readily available for purchase from at least four manufacturers...



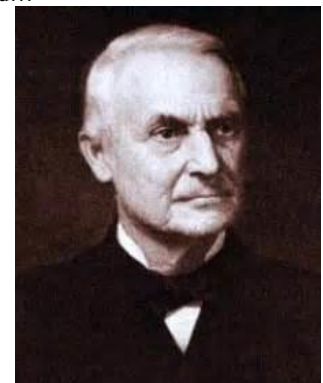
S&W .44 DA “Russian” Revolver

New on the Website

The gun shows of this spring have brought in a few new items, which I have listed for sale on the website: Look for the National Arms Deringers, a fabulous Belgian made Galand Revolver, a S&W .44 Russian, and more... check it out!

Did you know...

Horace Smith and Dan Wesson got their start in business together manufacturing what is known today as the “iron frame” volcanic magazine pistol in 1852. They only ever made about 1,000 of them before selling their interest to the newly formed Volcanic Repeating Arms Co in 1855. Both Smith and Wesson stayed on as employees for a short while but left their positions to return to Springfield in 1856 from Norwich, CT where they formed a new partnership to produce a revolutionary new revolver utilizing a self-contained metal cartridge. Volcanic changed the iron frame to a more easily and cheaper to make brass frame, and subsequently went into bankruptcy in 1857. Oliver Winchester bought the remains of Volcanic and, in 1866, formed the Winchester Repeating Arms Company, which is an entirely different story by itself. Smith and Wesson made the monumental decision to purchase Rollin White’s patent for the bored-through cylinder which launched their legendary reputation in the revolver market. Even more so than Colt, S&W is the most famous revolver in the world...



Horace Smith



Dan Wesson