

THE LUCKY BOYS
Will Get Them
This
CHRISTMAS



Remington Model 22 Repeating Air Rifle. . . . Price \$25.00

HOW'D you like to have an air rifle that looks and feels like a real Remington .22 caliber repeater? Wouldn't any boy be crazy for one? Can you imagine a better Christmas present?

Remington has made just such an air rifle for you. It's a fifty-shot repeater built on the lines of a Remington .22 rifle. There are no levers to spoil the looks and pinch your fingers. The stock and fore-end are made of fine American walnut and it has a pistol grip.

And, oh boy! how it shoots! You'd never believe you could shoot so far and so straight with an air rifle. It's safer, too, because it has some special safety features to keep it from going off accidentally—just like a rifle that shoots cartridges.

We can't describe half the improvements in this short space, but you can see them for yourself at your hardware or sporting goods store. When you get your hands on this air rifle and throw it up to your shoulder, you'll know what you want this Christmas. We'll send you a circular telling all about it if you'll write us for one.

REMINGTON ARMS COMPANY, INC.
 25 Broadway Originators of *Klondike Ammunition* New York City

Remington-Air Rifles

I bought a few good books over the year, all very informative and worth the collector's attention. Some are now out of print, but you can still find old copies on the internet:

- **Images of America - Smith and Wesson.** This is a collection of pictures from the S&W company archives dating from the 1850's to the 1960's. Excellent book. Interesting pictures of the shop floors, the various production methods from the early days to the 60's. Some famous people receiving special S&W gifts, too.
- **Civil War Pistols.** Excellent information on all sorts of handguns, the amounts bought by the armies, facts and dates, and lots of unique pictures.
- **Smith and Wesson Handguns.** Good technical information, but more of a reference work. Wouldn't read it cover-to-cover...
- **A Short, Illustrated History of The Harrington & Richardson Arms Company.** A reprint from Cornell Publishing. Good reference material. Cornell reprints and publishes old gun manuals and catalogues. Very useful for the collector www.cornellpubs.com.
- **History of Smith and Wesson.** My favorite this year. It was originally published in 1977 and is no longer in print but still available used. Roy Jinks was S&W's factory historian and the book is full of great stories and pictures. Excellent references to all models, how they were made, changed over the years, and finally dropped from the catalogue.

More about Smith and Wesson

I have written about the exploits of Horace Smith and Dan Wesson before, and anyone interested in their history can find plenty of information on line. I have rediscovered a love for these guns – in my opinion superior to anything Colt or Remington produced. My very first gun was a S&W Model 65. A .357 magnum with a 4 inch barrel, all stainless

steel. Great shooter, nice looking and of excellent quality. Sold it, unfortunately, about 30 years ago. Never saw one again... Now I own a few antique ones, a 3rd Model Russian and a couple of fine 1st Model Double Actions. RCMP considers them restricted, though, because of the high serial numbers. This brings me to a unique challenge I have encountered this year – it was bound to happen eventually: the RCMP technical division is very “conservative” when it comes to approving guns for antique status. If you can't prove it beyond doubt, they will not grant it. I had a couple of European flintlocks which did not have a maker's name and although there is no way that these are replicas, the RCMP denied my application. Some guns are easy to verify – the maker may have gone out of business before 1898, the serial numbers can be traced, or there are special markings which establish a year – police or military unit markings, rack numbers, etc. In the case of S&W it's hard to prove that any of them in the higher serial number ranges were made before 1898. The Double Action First Models were all made before 1899, but how many were made before 1898? Nobody seems to know. I have joined the S&W Historical Foundation and hope to do some research on these in order to get some clarity. Colt was much better at keeping records, and Colts can be dated quite easily.

The Smith & Wesson Double Action is known by three names: the DA First Model, the 3rd Model and the New Model Navy. The 44-40 is known as the “Frontier” and there were also about 1000 “Wesson Favorites” – a special variant which had some material removed from the frame to make it lighter. These are extremely rare and worth a bundle. The “regular” model names originated thus: .44 Double Action First Model – this was actually the first of the top-break double actions S&W developed, but the last to be released for sale, after the .32 and .38. The name 3rd Model stems from the fact that the .44 DA is based on the frame of the 3rd Model Russian. The name “New Model Navy” was Dan Wesson's idea – they had hoped to sell these to the Russian navy, a contract which never materialized. Dan insisted on continuing to use the “New Model Navy” designation in order to differentiate this model from the .44 single action 3rd model. I have seen them with fancy engraving, nickel plated, and with MOP grips – obviously a “deluxe edition”, and plain, blued ones, meant for military or police service, and one as a target model. Some have lanyard swivels, most have black hard rubber grips, but all have the distinct trigger guard and the double row of cylinder stops which make this design unique. When you “work” one, you feel the solid, exact mechanism, the fine machining and closely fitted parts. The Colt

M1877, on the other hand, feels like a toy gun. The mechanism seems weak and sloppy, the action sounds hollow, like it's made of sheet metal. I don't mean to criticize Colt, but the two side-by-side just don't compare. Colt brought their first DA on the market in 1877, S&W not until 1880. Of course, the double action mechanism was by no means a new invention in the 1870's and 80's; Cooper and Remington had excellent DA revolvers on the market as early as 1863. Why Remington did not venture further into the DA cartridge revolver market is a mystery. They converted a lot of their DA percussion revolvers to cartridge use in the 1870's but failed to produce anything new at that time. The S&W DA First model was manufactured from 1881 to 1899, and carried in inventory until 1913. It did not sell as well as the smaller caliber top-breaks, and when the “New Century” model came out, the competition was too great, and the gun disappeared from S&W's catalogue.

Today, the S&W DA First Model is one of my most popular antiques. .44 Russian ammo is fairly easy to get, and its antique status makes it a much sought-after commodity. I can't seem to find enough of them...

On The Horizon

Depending on when customs releases them, I have a good number of fine antiques waiting for me at the border – more military percussion revolvers, a few early flint locks, and your usual array of fine “Suicide Specials”, pocket guns, derringers and Bull Dogs. Notifications will go out to subscribers as the new stuff arrives. Please keep checking my website – major updates happen on or near the week ends (Fridays or Saturdays).

Now I hope you all have a very peaceful and enjoyable Holiday Season. Thank you all for your continued support throughout the year, and I am looking forward to bringing you more fine antiques in the new year.

Chris

