

Fourth Anniversary Issue!

Contents:

- 1. Reader's comments**
- 2. Stock Wood Identification**
By: Mel (melbb@iquest.net)
- 3. New Magnum Mauser Update**
By: Robert Bastow (teenut@hotmail.com)
- 4. Publishers comments**
By: Ward M. Clark (wclark1046@aol.com)

Reader's comments

Hey Ward,

Just got the new millenium issue and thought I'd write right back with a question. Robert Barstow mentioned that he had picked up an Arg. 1891 rifle in near new condition. I bought one of those sometime back, doesn't look like it has ever even been fired. I mean the rifling is so sharp looks like it would cut you, all matching #'s, even the cleaning rod and good, sharp cartouches. The stock is finished very shiny, and I understand most military Mausers weren't done that way. Any idea why?

Now the main question... mine has had the crest ground, as had Bartsow's. What makes those rifles any less collectable? The Argentine government made a decision to do that during the Chaco War (as I understand it from Bob Ball's book). Seems to me that they would be as "legitimate" to collect as those with crest, from having an example of each. Granted, I'm trying to make my rifle worth more, but I guarantee I would rather have this one without crest than a lesser quality rifle with a crest.

I've walked by "dealers" at gun shows here in Houston with the rifle, and they all want to look, until they see that the crest is ground and then they kinda turn up their noses...I'm just getting a little tired of seeing that, I guess, cause I don't think that most of them know the history or even gave that much thought. What do you think?

Anyway, just wondering. BTW, enjoyed the Swede discussion very much. Keep 'em coming unless you're getting tired of the high pay.
Bob Arthur (BOBA100@aol.com)

Stock Wood Identification

By: Mel (melbb@iquest.net)

Sometime last summer the Dutchman's site got me interested in the identification of stock wood types as a result of a problem I had in identifying maple from birch. Up until a two years ago the only stock woods I had worked with was walnut, maple and beech. The identification of living trees through nuts, bark and leaves came pretty easy as I went through the leaf collection routines in school and Boy Scouts and have cut several trees on my land and taken them to the sawmill to be used for miscellaneous projects over the years. Without these living characteristics though the identification of some types stock wood doesn't come so easy in my opinion. The application of finish and stain, weathering, accumulation of grime, unknown growing location and the orientation of the stock, either quarter sawed or slab sawed or some place in between all play a part in masking the wood type.

You may have seen reference to some list members sending samples to the US Forest Service lab in Wisconsin. I sent off four samples for identification in some attempt to train myself to identify wood using

the method where transverse sections of the wood are compared to known specimens at 10X magnification after preparing the surface by cutting with a razor blade. I bought one of the B&L illuminated 10X hand held magnifiers and Bruce Hoadley's book and started a collection of wood samples of known identity. I still consider myself an amateur but closing in on serious student status. I asked the USFA people if they would teach a course in wood identification and they there are only two people qualified to do that, they both work here, and we don't have time. So much for continuing education.

My father has been involved in the woodworking trades as both a profession and as a hobby so I am fortunate to have a lot of samples to look through. I've been really surprised to find how much wood is misidentified either intentionally to get a better price or just as a result of two kinds looking very much alike.

Well back to the Swedes.....I'm wondering how many of those ash stocks out there are really elm and not ash? My experience so far with five Swede stocks and six handguards shows most of them to be elm. Coincidence? Well maybe and there aren't too many elm stocks on the Dutchman's list. Elm is difficult to work because it doesn't cut cleanly. Sometimes you can spot an elm stock because of grain pull. Was this elm unloaded on the Swedes in place of ash? It does have some unique properties though such as being tough that might have caused it to be attractive to the Swedes. Some farmers around here who still make their own wood gates like to use elm. Have any of you seen an elm stock cracked behind the tang or broken at the wrist like so many beech and walnut stocks are? Have you ever tried to split a piece of elm either green or dried? You may wish you had bought firewood.

Just wondering how many of those stocks identified as ash are really elm.....

Mel

The Reply, from the "Dutchman":

From: "Greg Topp (NW Wisconsin)" <thorsrig@win.bright.net>

Hi Mel!

The sample of elm on the Dutchman's site came from one of my Swede 96's. It was a sample identified by the USDA Forest Products Lab. I would hesitate to try to separate the types unless a positive I.D. is made by the lab. Elm has a very distinctive grain and does not seem to me to be at all like ash...but then I'm no expert and that's why I send samples to Madison, Wisconsin. When they return the samples, they always receive a one pound bag of specialty coffee from me in return. Never hurts to drop a bribe on them...!!! Did you know that Model 1903 Siamese Mauser stocks are made of Teak? I didn't until the lab identified a sample off one of my rifles. Well worth sending the samples in....

New Magnum Mauser Update

By: Robert Bastow (teenut@hotmail.com)

Hi Ward,

Thanks for featuring my recent announcement in your news letter.

The response I have received has been incredible... People all over the world tell me that my plans are an answer to a prayer!!

There is no doubt that this is going forward to the extent that I am seriously considering the purchase of a spanking new 5 axis machining center to dedicate to production of the actions.

Design has been pretty well finalized, thanks to a LOT of input from interested parties:

Material: 8620 Or EN30B case hardened (tensile strength up to 195,000 psi with a glass hard skin)

Pure, Double Square Bridge, Classic Magnum Mauser above the wood line, solid left wall, extra bolt support behind the bolt handle a' la later Magnum Mausers. Round top receiver, thumb slot and clip slot available as extras.

Full Mauser "inner ring" breeching, third safety lug, straight drop teardrop shape, classic Mauser. bolt handle. The extra guide behind the bolt handle will act as a FOURTH safety lug.

Below the wood it will more closely follow the pre-64 model 70 with a massive "girder" section to add stiffness, forward recoil lug, and an over-ride trigger.

Bottom metal will be to Original Magnum Mauser drawings.

Color case hardened finish will be an option.

First batch will be "Super" magnum sized. Bolt diameter 0.750 Box length 4.000" This will handle 505 Gibbs with the ease that the original 98 handles the 8 x 57. Up to 3 1/4" rimless .577 cases or variations thereon, will fit comfortably.

Next will come "kurtz" actions of the same general design, followed by (Madness??) standard length and standard magnum length actions.

Left hand versions will be available for all production variations.

Target price for basic "in the White" actions is less than \$800.00

Eventually, Barreled actions will be available, using cut rifled and hand lapped barrel blanks.

Every action will be proof tested!!

I have applied for a Manufacturers License from BATF and will start taking firm orders with nominal deposits as soon as that is issued.

Lead time on delivery, after that point, will be two months.

Meanwhile, I am collecting names for my mailing list for further announcements, and would welcome any comments or constructive suggestions from interested parties.

Best wishes

Robert Bastow
President
The Express Rifle Company
Express Tool and Die
5380 Oakdale Road
Atlanta GA 30082
email<teenut@hotmail.com>

Publisher's Comments

By: *Ward M. Clark* (wclark1046@aol.com)

A short issue this month, but some great news on the new Mauser action front as well as some

interesting lessons on Swede Mauser stock woods! Thanks to Robert and Mel for the contributions to this month's issue. I'm hoping to be able to obtain one of the Magnum actions myself – I've always wanted a .375 H&H, and this seems the ideal base for just such a piece.

Plans are going forward for this year's Mauser project, a heavy-barreled 6mm Remington on a 1909 Argentine action, probably stocked (as most of my hunting rifles are) in Bell & Carlson Kevlar. I'm not sure yet who will do the barrel and action work, but I'll report results here in these pages as the project is completed.

Spring is breaking out all over, and like myself, many of you will be heading to your local ranges to unlimber your favorite Mausers – when you do, be sure to jot down a few notes to produce a shooting report for the Monthly! We've been a bit short on range stories lately. Keep those tech tips and trivia coming, too!

Until next month, then;

Good shooting!

Ward