

Hunter Arms Co.  
FULTON, N.Y.



*The Journal of the* Volume 7 • Issue 4 • Winter 2009

# L.C. SMITH

*Collectors Association*

L.C. SMITH SPEAKS FOR ITSELF







*The Journal of the*  
**L.C. SMITH**  
*Collectors Association*

Winter 2009

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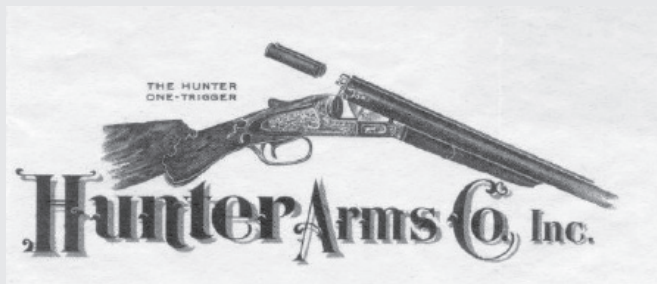
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**Special Points of Interest:**

- Executive Director article.
- Current Events
- Election Results
- Future Events

**Inside this issue:**

<b>Executive Director's Page</b>	3
Smell the Flowers by Frank J. Finch, Jr.	
2009 Board of Directors Election by Len Applegate	4
<b>From the Records</b>	5
The Last Regular Frame L.C. Smith by Jim Stubbendieck	
Smith Distinction by Drew Hause	6
L.C. Smith Love Affair by Max Powell	14
2009 Events	18
Yellow Page	19
Classifieds	19





## Executive Director's Page

# Smell the Flowers

By Frank J. Finch, Jr.

The American golfer, Walter Hagen, once said "Don't hurry, don't worry. You're only here for a short visit. So be sure to stop and smell the flowers". Recently, I found myself visiting historic Chestertown, MD without Josh and Tammy, without my Smiths, without my fishing rods and without my computer. After experiencing the loss of some of my favorite things, I thought it is all too easy to take everything and everyone we have around us each day for granted. This quiet vacation has given me time to think about our great country with it's cornucopia of freedom and plenty that we enjoy daily and the style of life to which we have grown accustomed. At today's hectic pace we often forget to enjoy the small pleasures while we race to keep our busy schedules. Hunting with our favorite dog and Smith gun, attending the Annual Turkey or Spring Shoot, shooting in the Southern Side by Side or the Vintage Cup, visiting a gun show, collecting guns, researching a gun on our website, networking with other Smith enthusiasts... these opportunities, if we stop long enough to "smell" them, are the aromas of a L.C. Smith aficionado's "flower patch"!


The seasons speed along at a rapid pace, summer has ended and fall is here. Hunting season is upon us. This morning I was awakened by the shots of goose hunters on the Chester River. I wonder if they are shooting their "Long range" or "Wild Fowl" Smiths? Take the time to fill your larder for the winter and get your sweet "Elsie's" out of the closet and into the fields!

In 2010 our club will provide you many opportunities to "smell the flowers" with your Smith gun and fellow members. Our Proposed Event Schedule (in this issue) presents a balance of opportunities for enlarging our Smith gun collection and shooting our Smiths. This preliminary schedule contains four gun shows and two shooting events located around the country, as well as, the Southern Side by Side, Northeast Classic and the Vintage Cup which offer venues for both shooting and viewing/purchasing great Smith guns. Our May club exhibit at the NRA Annual Meeting and Exposition in Charlotte, NC will feature the Admiral Perry's Smith gun. Additional club events may be added as we receive suggestions and offers of volunteerism from our membership to host club events.

Nominating Committee Chairman, Tom Archer, presented a slate of three outstanding life members for the two positions on our Board of Directors expiring at year's end. In addition to Dean Rasmussen, who agreed to run again, two highly qualified and active members, Skip Dunlap and Roger Domer were nominated

to the slate. Len Applegate, Recording Secretary, reported that Dean and Skip have been elected for three year term. Congratulations! Their tasks will be to energize the membership renewals and to illicit Journal advertising.

Mark your calendar to attend our Annual Spring Shoot at Carlisle Fish and Game Club in Carlisle, PA on March 22, 2010. This fun and popular event is a great "warm-up" for the Southern Side by Side in April. Contact Rev. Charlie at [Pastorcharlie1949@yahoo.com](mailto:Pastorcharlie1949@yahoo.com), or call (410-756-2095) for information and reservations.

It's the time of the year when we look back and "smell the flowers" of our fond memories of the past LC Smith successes and look forward with anticipation and excitement for accomplishing the plans and goals for 2010! May the New Year bring you many "LCSCA flower patches"! 





# 2009 Board of Directors Election

by: Len Applegate

Members of the board are elected by a vote of the general membership in November of the year for three year terms. To be considered by the membership for election to the board, potential candidates must be life members of the L.C. Smith Collectors Association. Terms are staggered so at least two are up for election each year. This year Bob Trefry and Dean Rasmussen terms expire and Dean decided to stand for reelection. The nominating committee proposed two other life members, Skip Dunlap and Roger Domer, to complete the 2009 ballot. Seventy-eight ballots were returned with 57 votes cast for Skip Dunlap and 55 for Dean Rasmussen and 37 for Roger Domer. Skip Dunlap is the newest member of the LCSCA

Board of Directors and Dean Rasmussen returns for another three year term. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all the candidates.

The 2009 members of the Board of Directors of the L.C. Smith Collectors Association are given below with their contact information.

**Len Applegate**  
7572 Overglen DR  
West Chester, OH 45069  
(513)942-7572

**Chris Baumohl**  
1208 Chesser  
Huntsville, AL 35803  
(256)883-4307

**Skip Dunlap**  
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Gore, VA 22637  
(540)858-9904

**Frank Finch**  
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Mantoloking, NJ 08738  
(732)899-1498

**Mike Lewis**  
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Katy, TX 77450  
(281)543-2971

**Dean Rasmussen**  
2320 Shasta Way, Unit F  
Simi Valley, CA 93065  
(818)991-4827

**Jim Stubbendieck**  
7651 Kennelley DR  
Lincoln, NE 68516  
(402)488-4240

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## Membership Renewals

By Chris Baumohl

For those of you receiving a renewal notice with this issue of the Journal, the cut off for the NEXT mailing list (and your renewal to stay current) will be January 19th. I will need to have RECEIVED your renewal by that time so we can prepare the list and submit it to the printer. Failure to do so will result in the fact that you will not be on our latest membership list and therefore will not receive the next Journal. I process the renewals almost daily so if you get it to me in time, I will get it processed!







From the Records...

# The Last Regular Frame L.C. Smith

Jim Stubbendieck

It is not uncommon for one of the LCSCA members to ask if I would check the records to see if a certain shotgun is the “first” or the “last” with a particular feature. Depending on the feature, it may be relatively easy to check or nearly impossible. Recently, someone on the Forum thought that they may own the last .410 Specialty Grade. It was not difficult to check because of our database of .410s, and the individual was correct. Many requests are impossible to answer because of insufficient information in the records. For example, a member asked if he had the first No. 2 with a straight stock. Information in the records rarely include any information about the stocks.

In the latter years of production, all L.C. Smith shotguns were made with feather-weight frames. When the last shotgun

with a regular frame was manufactured? Searching backwards from 1945, I found Serial Number 202985. It is a 12 gauge Field Grade with 30-inch barrels that was finished on March 3, 1944. I filed the information for future use, but I learned that it was not the last regular frame shotgun.

While searching for data on a shotgun for a research letter, I came to a page with large writing across the top that said: “Begining of L.C. Smith Gun Co. Division of Marlin Arms Co. Inc. Nov. 26 – 1945” Note that “Beginning” was spelled incorrectly. The serial numbers on the page start in the 202900 range which is about 4,000 numbers before the L.C. Smith Gun Company started the FWS prefix with a new set of serial numbers.

Two entries caught my eye because they were for Deluxe Grades completed for

Roger Kenna (ken-ná) c/o Marlin. Roger Kenna was the president of the L.C. Smith Gun Company. The second shotgun listed is Serial Number 202977. It is a Deluxe REOBV. These letters mean that it has a regular frame (R), automatic ejectors (E), Hunter Selective One-Trigger (O), beavertail forend (B), and a ventilated rib (V). It was completed on December 15, 1946. The serial number is lower than the regular frame shotgun completed in 1944, but shotguns were not numbered when they were finished. Instead, the serial number was stamped on the frames when the frames were built. Earlier in 1946, workers pulled a regular weight frame remaining in the inventory to build a very special L.C. Smith for the boss in time for Christmas.

GUN RECORD											
HUNTER ARMS COMPANY, INC.											
GUN NO.	GRADE	TYPE	GA.	LTH.	STARTED	PROOF T.	PATTERN	FINISHED	SHIPPED	ORDER NO.	PURCHASER
<i>Begining of L. C. Smith Gun Co.</i>											
<i>Div. of Marlin Arms Co. Inc.</i>											
<i>Nov. 26 - 1945</i>											
<i>202974</i>	<i>Deluxe</i>	<i>FWS</i>							<i>12/15/46</i>		<i>Roger Kenna c/o Marlin</i>
<i>202977</i>	<i>Deluxe</i>	<i>REOBV</i>							<i>12/15/46</i>		<i>Roger Kenna c/o Marlin</i>
<i>204356</i>	<i>Field</i>	<i>FWS</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>11/45</i>						
<i>07</i>	<i>Field</i>	<i>FWS</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>1/6/45</i>				<i>12/15/45</i>		
<i>204048</i>	<i>Fulton</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>30</i>					<i>1/12/46</i>		



# Smith Distinction

by Drew Hause

## Hunter Arms Co. Fulton Trade Name Guns

When Hunter Arms engraved “Manhattan Arms Co.” on their just developed but not yet introduced Fulton boxlock double, they were joining a long-time gunmaker’s practice of producing a ‘Trade Name’ gun – a low to medium quality utility grade firearm marked with the name of a distributor, sporting goods retailer, or a regional or even neighborhood hardware store. Birmingham gunmakers had long been manufacturing shotguns ‘For the Trade’ which could be found in shops at the farthest reaches of the British Empire.

Winchester Arms imported hammergeuns from several Birmingham makers 1879-1884, including W.C. Scott & Sons and C.G. Bonehill. Just so everyone would know these were ‘real’ Winchesters, the top rib was marked “Winchester Repeating Arms Co., New Haven, Connecticut, USA.”

Many US makers produced Trade Name guns and unfortunately the same trade names may be found on single and double barrel shotguns manufactured by Crescent, Savage, Stevens, Harrington & Richardson, and Iver Johnson. *Side By Sides of the World* by Charles Carder helps translate the names to the makers.

H. & D. Fosom was the undisputed king of Trade Name guns. Fosom had been distributing Birmingham and Belgian made

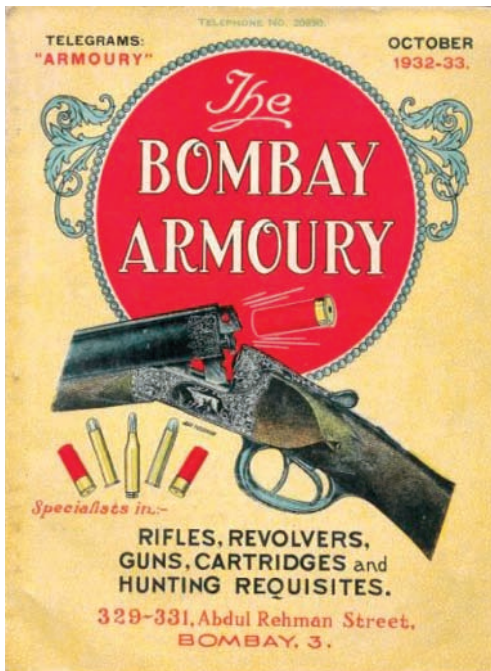


firearms (including some marked W. Richards and T. Barker) since at least 1881.

In 1888, George W. Cilley bought the defunct Bacon Arms Co. of Norwich, CT. He then formed an alliance with Frank A. Foster, and borrowed enough money to form Crescent Fire Arms Co., which was incorporated March 4, 1892. In 1893, the majority of Crescent stock was acquired by H.&D. Folsom located at 314 Broadway in New York City. Henry Titus Folsom (1859-1937) was President of the company, and was succeeded by his son, H. Lloyd (1888-1954), who led the company through the depression and World War II.

Folsom added guns made by Crescent in Norwich to their line and continued the manufacture and distribution of Trade Name guns until about 1932. The list of names confirmed or likely associated with Folsom/Crescent continues to grow and numbers just under 400! For more information regarding Folsom/Crescent please see [www.picturetrail.com/sfx/album/view/20091267](http://www.picturetrail.com/sfx/album/view/20091267)

The largest supplier of **Belgian** Trade Name guns may have been **Henri Pieper/Anciens Etablissements Pieper**. Trade Marks registered in Belgium included: Bayard (June 9, 1892), Eagle Gun Works, E. Leroy, Modified Diana, H. Pieper, Diane, The Leader, Bayard Arms Co, Pieper Arms Co, Premier Arms Co, National Arms Co. (used by for **William Read & Sons**, Boston),





Henry Arms Co, Royal Gun Works, Le Rationnel, Schutz Marke, E-K, Metropole, and Monarch Arms Co.

Pieper 'Henry Arms Co.'



Eclipse, Eclipse Beaver, and Eclipse Meteor were made by Pieper for **E.C. Meacham Co.** St. Louis. Russell Arms Co. guns were made by Joseph Cap and Pieper for **Wiebusch & Hiller Ltd.** New York, NY.

The first **Baker** hammerless boxlock, referred to as the C Grade, was made by Baker for **Montgomery Ward** in 1895, with Ward's name on the rib. It was offered by Baker about two years later with the Baker name. Baker later produced Trade Name guns under "New Era Gun Works," "Manhattan Arms Co." (a Batavia Special), and "Clark's Imperial, Omaha, Neb."

## The Panic of 1907

A credit crisis remarkably similar to that of 2008-2009 occurred in 1907. Strains in the financial system started to appear in 1906 when American industry and railroads found it increasingly difficult to obtain credit from Europe, previously a large source of capital flow into the US. Liquidity became increasingly tight through 1907 and on October 23 panic occurred when New York's third largest trust, the Knickerbocker Trust Company, collapsed related to an attempt by then-president Charles T. Barney and Otto Heinze to corner the copper market. Banks began to fail when depositors at other trusts sought to withdraw their money and other banks in New York were forced to retract loans. Like the current crisis, lending ceased and the credit crisis spread world wide. Were it not for the intervention of J.P. Morgan, and President Theodore Roosevelt's agreement to set aside the Sherman Antitrust Act to enable his plan, the entire US banking system may have imploded.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 48% of its value from January 1906 to November 1907. Industrial production dropped by 11%, imports by 26%, while unemployment rose from less than 3% to 8%. The stock market, and the economy, did not recover until the summer of 1908.

Page 544 of John Houchins' *L.C. Smith "The Legend Lives"* shows a price comparison between Smith and Parker guns. Prices for both, and in every grade, fell from 1908 to 1913. The \$105 2E in 1898 went for \$95 in 1908, and became the \$75 AE Specialty grade in 1913. Clearly something very bad was happening in Fulton and Meriden.

## Competition for an "Utility Grade" Gun

The ruggedly reliable but unadorned "Keeper's Gun" Birmingham BLNE (Boxlock Non-ejector) had long been a staple of the British trade. In order to maintain market share in a contracting economy, the US makers started introducing lower priced variants of existing models, and newly designed (as in cheaper to produce) guns.

By 1909, there were already several variations of the lower priced **Baker** Batavia line including the Batavia Special with steel barrels at \$21.75. To reduce costs the Batavia line did not have the "firing pin block safety" or the "draw block" which passes transversely through the barrel lug and mates into recesses in the frame.

**Remington** got out of the double gun business in February 1910 when they sold their entire inventory of breech loading shotguns to Norvell-Shapleigh Hardware Co. in St. Louis. That same year, the **Fox Gun Co.** introduced "The Sterlingworth Company" boxlock with a Parker type hinge-pin. By 1911 the marking was changed to Sterlingworth and by 1913 the Parker hinge-pin recess was gone. The Sterlingworth was priced at \$25 in 1915. The **Parker Gun Co.** Trojan was introduced in 1912 at a price of \$27.50.

It appears the makers were producing to two price points: about \$25 and about \$15.

In 1908, the hammerless No. 00 LC Smith with fluid steel barrels was sold by Sears for \$25.00, compared to the \$13.85 for hammerless Meriden gun.

Other doubleguns listed in the **Sears** catalogue:

Remington K Grade - \$23.50

Ithaca Field Grade - \$18.00

Baker Batavia Leader - \$22.50

For comparison the Winchester 97 was \$20.00

Net prices for non-ejector hammerless double guns in the 1912 Schoverling, Daly & Gales, New York catalogue courtesy of David Noreen:

**L.C. Smith No. 00 - \$25**

Fox Sterlingworth - \$25

DS Grade Lefever - \$25

Field Grade Ithaca - \$19

Baker Batavia Special - \$19.

**Manhattan Arms Co./ Fulton - \$15**

Stevens No. 335 - \$15.85

Folsom/Crescent/American Gun Co. Knickerbocker - \$13.50



N.R. Davis B.S. grade - \$14  
 Hopkins & Allen - \$15  
 Ejectors, if available, added \$10 - \$12.50 to the prices.

The 1915 **Iver Johnson Sporting Goods** catalogue (successors to John. P. Lovell, Boston and not to be confused with Iver Johnson Arms) courtesy of Daryl Hallquist:

Parker Trojan - \$27.50  
 Fox Sterlingworth - \$25.00  
 Ithaca Field - \$19.00  
 Torkelson B Grade - \$25.00  
 Stevens 335 - \$16.50  
 Fulton - \$17.50  
 Baker Black Beauty - \$18.00  
 Lefever Durston Special - \$25.00  
 Knox-All Hammerless (American Gun Co/Crescent) - \$15.00  
 Iver Johnson - \$18.00  
 Riverside Arms Co. (J. Stevens trade name) - \$15.00

The Ithaca Gun Co. purchased Lefever Arms Co. in 1916, introduced the inexpensive Lefever Nitro Special 1921, and the even less expensive Western Arms Long Range in 1929.

Prices rose sharply during WW I and by 1919 both the Parker Trojan and the Fox Sterlingworth were listed at \$55. The L.C. Smith Field was \$54. In 1922 Fox dropped the price of the Sterlingworth to \$48, then in 1926 down to \$36.50. The L.C. Smith Field was \$50 and the Trojan \$51 in 1926.

## The Underwood Tariff Act of 1913

The United States Revenue Act of 1913, also known as the Underwood Tariff or Underwood-Simmons Act re-imposed the federal income tax and lowered the basic tariff rates from 40% to 25%, well below that of the Payne-Aldrich Tariff Act of 1909. The 1913 Act established the lowest rates since the Walker Tariff of 1857. Most schedules were put on an ad valorem basis (a % of the dollar value of the item.) The duty on woolens went from 56% to 18.5%. Steel rails, raw wool, iron ore, and agricultural implements had zero rates.

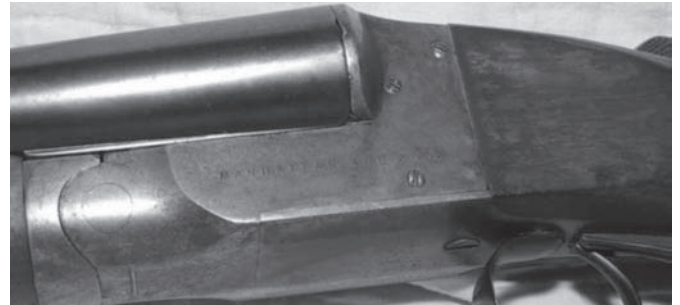
Since 1894 "Sporting, breech-loading double-barrel shotguns" had a 35% ad valorem PLUS an import duty of \$1.50 if priced less than \$6, \$4 if \$6-\$12, and \$6 if priced greater than \$12. "Single-barrel breech-loading shot-guns" had the same 35% ad valorem PLUS an import duty of \$1. The Tariff Act of 1913 changed the duty to 15% ad valorem.

Suddenly, foreign shotguns began to flood the American market. The US firearms industry, and the international economy, was profoundly altered however in 1914 by the outbreak of World War I in Europe. American products, including arms and ammunition,

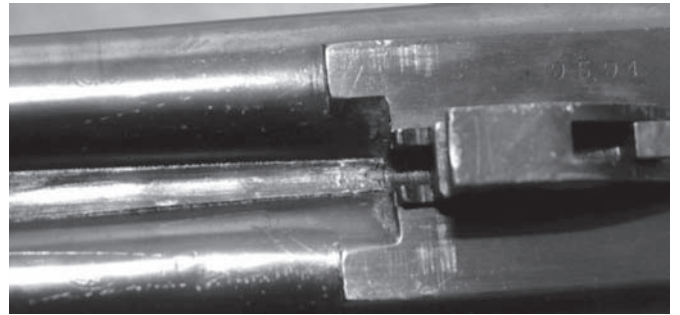
were suddenly in great demand throughout the world, while imports from much of Europe dropped markedly.

## The first hunter arms trade name gun

Hunter Arms Co. received a patent for the Fulton Boxlock on Feb. 7, 1911 and the 1912 **Schoverling, Daly & Gales** catalogue shows a Fulton named **Manhattan Arms Co.** priced at \$15. Seth Powers provided the picture of this gun serial number 9594 which dates to 1919. The barrels are marked "For Nitro Powder" and "Superior Quality."



Unknown barrel mark – letters within an oval on both barrels



**The Hunter Arms Co. Fulton** was not introduced until 1915 at a price of \$18, and the **Fulton Special** in 1916 for \$25.

First style 3 Pin receiver

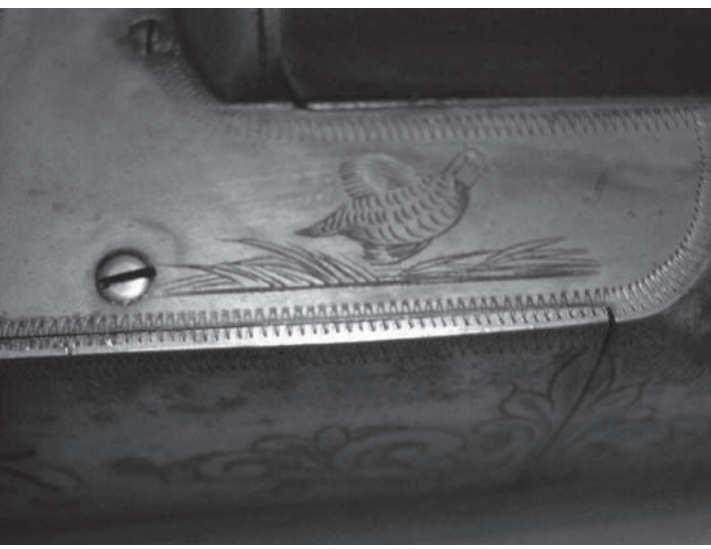






Second style 2 Pin receiver

The **Fulton Special** had the additions of border engraving and a quail on the receiver, a full pistol grip stock with checkered stock cheeks, and "THE FULTON SPECIAL" on the barrels.



shop of Harry Comstock. The Hunter and Comstock Arms Co. probably never produced a shotgun before the Hunter Brothers agreed to purchase L.C. Smith Maker, Syracuse, N.Y. in 1888, establishing the Hunter Arms Co. January 30, 1890 and moving production to Fulton.

John N. Davis shares several excerpts from *The American Field* regarding Mr. Comstock and his relationship with both Lyman Cornelius Smith and the Hunter Brothers in the *LCSCA Newsletter* Volume 3, Issue 3, September 2005.

Solomon G. Comstock, of Moorhead, Minnesota was a railroad builder, financier, and political force in Minnesota and North Dakota. He could have been distant kin to Harry, but the Comstock/Fulton was not. His daughter, Ada Comstock, became the first dean of women at the University of Minnesota and first female president of Radcliffe college. Comstock Lumber Co. was in West Duluth c. 1914.



Images courtesy of W. Bruce Jones.

In 1917, the Hunter Brothers declared bankruptcy. The financial setbacks were primarily related to the failure of their Battle Island Paper & Pulp Co. in 1914, rather than the gun and electric fan business. A group of Fulton businessmen, anxious to protect the jobs of the more than 400 Hunter employees, purchased Hunter Arms Co. that year. The management group apparently aggressively entered the Trade Name gun market, as EVERY one of the Fultons shown in Part 2 date to 1919. Unfortunately, Fulton Book Number 16 (1915-1918) lists only the serial numbers of guns produced. There is no record of to whom the guns were shipped.

### Comstock Arms CO, Duluth

The Hunter brothers and their father John Sr. first considered buying the rights to a gun made in the Fulton, New York backyard

### "Missabe Fluid Steel"

In a not very accurate bit of marketing, the barrel steel was implied to have originated in the Mesabi Iron Ore Range, the largest iron deposit in Northeast Minnesota.







## Marks

The distributor of "Marks" has not been identified.



No other markings are found except the serial number and 'LLH,' the mark of *Laurent Lochet-Habran*, a Belgian barrel maker, which supplied barrels to Crucible Steel Co. 'LLH' is frequently found on London Steel barrels used on post-1913 Ideal and Skeet Special LC Smith and Hunter Arms Fulton guns. The mark has also been found on Fox, Baker, Lefever, and Ithaca guns.

## Delphia Arms

**Delphian Arms Co.** and **Delphian Manufacturing Co.** were trade names used by **Supplee Biddle Hardware Co.** of Philadelphia on Crescent shotguns supplied by the H. & D. Folsom. Supplee Biddle also sold a "Buckeye Gun Co., Lynchburg, Va." labeled Iver Johnson single barrel shotgun and a "Red Chieftain."

George Blair has a **Delphia Arms** Serial Number 8980, again 1919.

### From Richard Carl Hageman:

This **Delphia Arms** shotgun (SN 8906) was passed down to me and was originally owned by my grandfather, Carl Daniel Hageman (July 1893 - Jan 1989) of Easton, PA and was possibly purchased around 1912. This information comes from the memory of my 91 year old uncle, C. Vance Hageman (1917 - ). C. Vance has a Fulton shotgun, 12 gauge double, which he purchased new for \$12.00 from Keifer's Hardware, Easton, PA about 1930.

In the early 1940's, my father Richard Harry Hageman, used the Delphia for small game hunting after he "borrowed" the shotgun from his father and continued using it until 1963. It was during the summer of 1963 that the stock cracked and was replaced by a local gunsmith, Horace Reagan (1906 - 1987), of Belfast, PA. There was some difficulty in locating a used stock, so Mr. Reagan was forced to



Delphia Arms Co.  
early 3 screw receiver.



R.H. Hageman

hand fit a new one. It saw one season of deer hunting in the late 1960's, but never had a rifled slug fired from it. Richard Harry Hageman, stopped hunting in the late 1970's and passed down the Delphia to me in the early 1980's. I have since used it frequently during the PA small game season.

The photograph is of my father holding the Delphia shotgun, taken by his brother, C. Vance. The scrub oak setting is near Hawley, Wayne County, Pennsylvania and according to my father, was likely taken during late October or early November's small game season. My dad recalls the day, likely refreshed by the photograph, but little more. Looking at his high school senior yearbook (circa 1941), the facial features are quite similar, so it's a good guess it's late 30's, early 40's.







"Peerless Steel" and "Made by Experts" (Now that is reassuring!)

### 'LLH'



Supplee Biddle also had their own line of fishing tackle under the "Congress" trade name and used a 'Speared Fish' logo, at least in the 30s.



Shakespeare made Congress reel

Hunter Arms is also reported to have made a Fulton gun named "Enders Oak Leaf" or "Enders Royal Service" for **Shapleigh Hardware Co.**, St. Louis, although the "Enders" trade name is usually associated with Folsom/Crescent guns.

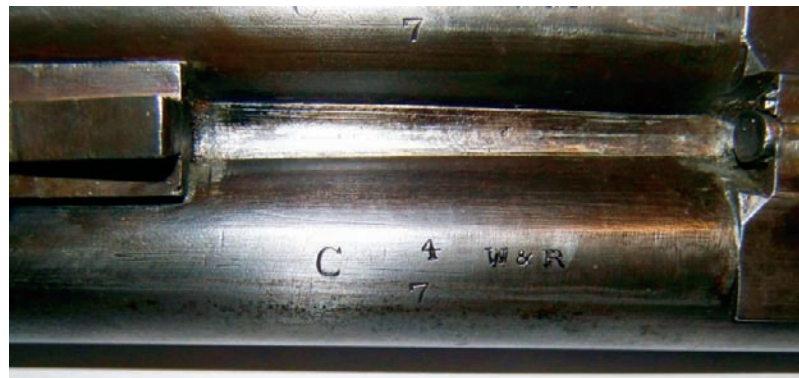


### Folsom/Crescent Enders Royal American

The **E.K. Tryon Co.**, Philadelphia may have had a Fulton "Keystone" shotgun, along with Folsom guns by that name. Both Tryon and **Great Western Gun Works** of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania also used the "New Haven Fire Arms Co." Trade Name.

Mac Cashin recently identified a 1919 Fulton, SN 17677, marked **Hudson Arms**, possibly for **Hudson Sporting Goods Co.**, New York. The barrels have the as yet unidentified 'W&R' stamp, without 'LLH.'

L.C. Smith barrels with 'C' for Crucible Steel, a '4 over 7' which is likely the pre-fit & finish barrel weight, and 'W&R' which was probably a barrel supplier or sporting goods distributor.



### Gladiator and Ranger

The Fall, 1918 **Sears, Roebuck and Co.** catalog listed the Gladiator Field (Fulton), Gladiator Tournament (Engraved Fulton), Gladiator Diamond (Engraved Fulton), Gladiator Field Hammer (Smith), and Gladiator Ideal Hammer (Smith). The





L.C. Smith Field was offered intermittently 1917-1920. The Hunter Arms records indicate only ONE Gladiator Ideal.

Some time ago, we received this wonderful letter from LCSCA member Al Gingrich of Liverpool, PA

I have this old hammer gun that I read about in Col. Brophy's book but never thought I would own one of my own. My gun is a Gladiator Field Grade which is a true L.C. Smith but does not have L.C. Smith or Hunter Arms on it anywhere, not even the hard rubber butt plate. The barrels are steel but not marked "Royal Steel" anywhere. On the top of the left barrel toward the breech it is marked "Gladiator Field Grade". Serial number 179683 (1918) and "F" is found on the forend iron, the barrel flats, and on the receiver. Only the left lockplate is marked in stylized letters inside a design with the word "Gladiator".

I purchased a Cody Letter but it doesn't tell much except that the gun is a Field Grade, 12 Ga., 32 inch barrels of Royal Steel, choked Full and Full. It was finished of 5-7-1918 and inspected by "P".



I wonder how many "Gladiators" are still around. This is a true Smith but only 170 or so were marked this way according to Col. Brophy. I looked through my book by John Houchins but there is no mention of them (Gladiators.) Col. Brophy also states one Ideal Grade Hammer gun was made; I sure would like to find that or maybe one of those "C" frame hammerless guns. I guess they are still out there somewhere.

Anyway, I thought you guys would like to know about my "Gladiator". I'm looking forward to your article in the next Newsletter.

Thanks for your time.

Al

I would be most interested in information and especially pictures of other "Gladiator" Fulton and Smith guns owned by LCSCA members!

## Ranger

Sears sold many "Ranger" marked shotguns and rifles between about 1926 and 1950. SxSs included the Model 101.2- Savage 238,



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*For the Bird Hunting Enthusiast*

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Precision Grade 104.3

Model 101.3- Fulton Special, and 101.8- Stevens 83. Model 103.7 was offered in 1936 and was the O/U Marlin 90.



Ranger pad

## Conclusion

It appears that the Hunter Brothers, and the post-1917 Hunter Arms Co. managing partners, responded to a contracting economy and increasing competition from both domestic and foreign import shotguns by producing a lower priced 'utility grade' double of new design (The Hunter Arms Fulton boxlock), and then used that platform for sales of Trade Name guns. One would expect Trade Name guns to surface made after 1920, however, if the effort had been of significant financial return. The short life of the Sears Gladiator suggests that the brief partnership was not a great success for at least one of the parties involved.

In May of 1920, Hunter Arms was sold to Alvan T., Gifford K. and Harlan K. Simonds, owners of Simonds Saw and Steel Co. Stephen J. Gilles was named General Manager of the operation and it may be that Gilles decided the Trade Name market was not worth pursuing.

The Fulton was discontinued in 1945 after 44,389 guns had been manufactured. The number of Trade Name guns within that total is uncertain.

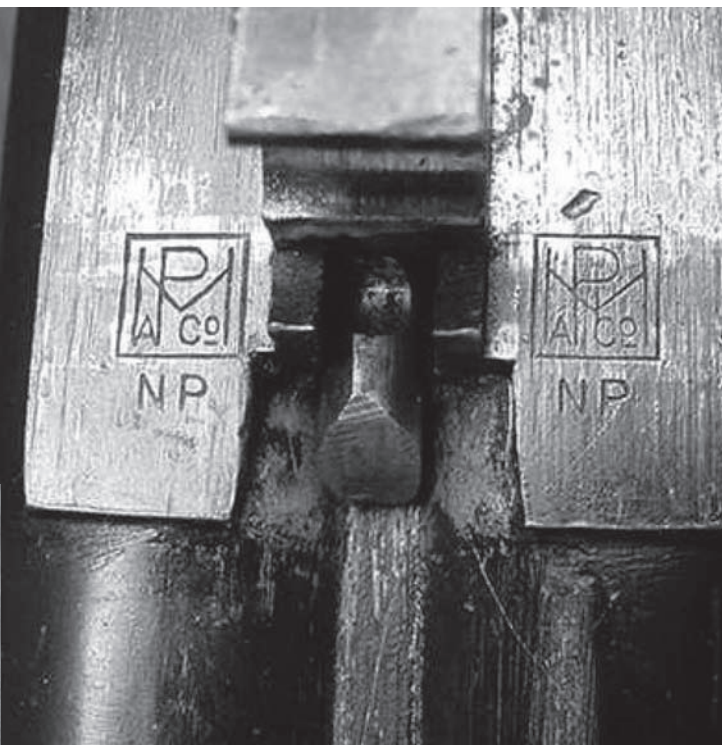
It is likely more Trade Name Fultons are to be found, and I would very much like to hear from any LCSCA member who might own or run across an example! Please e-mail me at [revdoc2@cox.net](mailto:revdoc2@cox.net)

Known Fulton Trade Name guns and serial numbers:

- Comstock 8869
- Delphia 8906 and 8980
- Manhattan 9594
- Hudson 17677
- Marks 17817

Many thanks to the following contributors:

Dr Jim Stubbendieck for serial number research, David Noreen, Daryl Hallquist, Seth Powers, George Blair, Rick Hageman, Mark Yeakel, Bruce Jones, Mac Cashin, and Al Gingrich.



Hunter Arms proofmarks and 'LLH'

Hunter Arms made 104.3 Rangers were usually marked "Precision" or "Precision Grade" and had twin beads, a capped pistol grip, and a Ranger marked recoil pad.

Hunter Arms also made about 9,000 bolt action shotguns for Sears in .410 (Ranger 104.5) and 20g (Ranger 104.7) in the 1940s.



# L.C. Smith Love

by Max Powell Originally printed in the Double Gun Journal

The affair began as puppy love. At a very early age, my father introduced me to Elsie. She stood in a corner of our dining room and I knew she was a precious thing to my father, never to be touched by anyone but my dad! As a pheasant hunter, from his early youth, I believe he had shot a fair number of shotguns, and had now come to the conclusion that nothing but a 20 gauge Smith would forever keep him happy!

I believe watching our little cocker spaniel dance around the house when Dad slipped on his hunting coat and reached for the Smith, that those moments had to be one of the happiest times in their lives!

I recall Dad was not true to any one L.C. Smith It seems as though he would sell or trade them often only to satisfy his curiosity as to the advantage of

26 inch barrels vs 28 inch, improved cylinder and modified vs modified and full. Much to my mother's disdain, there seemed to be a desire to move between different grades, Field, Ideal, Specialty and back to one or the other; as Dad worked in the Post Office these moves meant he could only possess one Elsie at any one time. The late nineteen thirties were very lean years and even one Smith in the house was a step beyond his wage scale. Gosh, I'm glad he took that step!

I was invited to join Dad and Uncle Menlo on a few of those hunting excursions to see for myself the excitement of Darkie, our Cocker, and themselves when a big cock pheasant rose in the air to escape impending disaster, I don't recall that was a wise decision on the bird's part!

My first real gun, other then a BB gun, was a used 22 caliber Winchester pump, the most beautiful thing I could imagine! A dilemma I had to deal with was that the pump was chambered for 22 Longs only, consequently 22 Long Rifle cartridges would not function in the loading mechanism. The year was nineteen-forty-three, the middle of World War II. If and







# Affair



when you could find a hardware store that had any 22 bullets, they were only available in Long Rifle. Dilemma resolved: cut off about one eighth inch of lead from the bullet! Lost a little accuracy, but could still kill cans at fifty feet!

The time had now arrived when I was ready for my own shotgun, after all, I was fourteen! The choice of gun was firmly entrenched in my Dad's mind and I agreed of course. It had to be a L.C. Smith double, but where to find one in nineteen-forty-five, a problem not easily solved. Solution: classified ads and second hand stores. Finally, a Smith was located still in good condition, but a twelve gauge. It was not a time when you could hesitate, buy that gun now! I had no regrets, I carried that Elsie all through high school and it was waiting for me at home after I completed four years in the Navy.

While attending Michigan State University one of my 'self-assignments' was to keep a eye out for that elusive Smith twenty. That magic day arrived at Link's Sport Shop. Looking over the used doubles for sale I spotted the gun I was looking for, but was hesitant to ask the price, remember I was a student and it was a beauty! The clerk handed me the double, low and behold, it was a sixteen gauge Ideal, ninety five percent and in original condition. My First Love Affair was in my hands! Before asking the price I was mentally thinking of things to trade or sell, Dad taught me well! I asked the price, the clerk said the gun had been brought in by a student to see if they could sell it for him and he wanted \$120.00! I gave the clerk ten dollars and said I had to go to the bank and would be back in a half hour. Returning to pick up my Smith, Mr Link, the owner, came in and asked where I found that gun and I replied, I just bought it here! Next question, Mr Link to clerk, how did that gun come up

for sale in our store?

Clerk's answer, a student brought in for resale. After I told him what I paid, the poor man shook his head and walked away!

The year 1956 was good to me: I found my first L.C. Smith collectable and I met the girl I would marry in 1960, thereby giving her enough time to realize she was about to enter into a life time with a gun collector.

Time spent in the field and looking for Elsie were at what I call a minimum, but in 1964 I found the source for the elusive 20 gauge Smith!! My periodic trips to gun stores led me to a shop owner who asked if I had tried Ernest Kennedy, a Lansing gun dealer working from his home. This was an unknown source to me, but checking the phone book soon put me in contact with a man after my own heart! Mr. Kennedy invited me to inspect his collection of available guns, of course he was soon to learn I would only be satisfied with a Smith twenty. Mr. Kennedy, being a good salesman, told me he had a possible source for a twenty gauge Smith. Some-time later I received a call and was told the gun was now available for me to see. The Smith was in good shape, but not a life long keeper and Kennedy would take my old original twelve gauge Smith in on trade. I went home with my first twenty!

As time went by Mr. Kennedy revealed his so called source to me. It was the Shotgun News. This new knowledge opened a door to a world of guns that I had not known existed. Mr. Kennedy lost a customer, but gained a friend.

The next thirty some years were taken up with raising a family and everything that entails, of course, I was forever true to Elsie. My Elsie group was enlarged, but ever so slowly, trading and selling only to obtain guns in collector quality condition and always twenty gauge.



The affair with Elsie may have ended or slowed but for an event that must be considered a tragedy for any collector who has spent a life time putting together his dream. In my case, the event was a home fire. The house was able to be saved, but nearly all the contents were smoke and water damaged beyond repair, my collection of L.C. Smiths and other handguns and rifles were covered with a rusty substance, running the length of their barrels, soaking into the walnut stocks and forearms. With all of our personal belongings gone or badly damaged, it was hard to dream of any good coming out of this situation.

The first meeting with our insurance adjuster from Michigan Millers occurred the next afternoon. I must say, throughout the next six months of restoration we were treated like family. Following the preliminary inspection our questions were answered and we had a time frame regarding the restoration of our home.

One of my early concerns was whether my gun collection was a total loss? I believed, without an insurance rider specifically covering guns, I had not only lost my L.C. Smiths, but also their monetary value. To my great relief I was told, A not so Max@. If the guns were lost due to fire, my home owner's policy would reimburse me for the loss. My wife and I had maintained a video and written inventory of items we thought our children should be aware of in case of any emergency. In this case it provided a valuable tool for insurance purposes.

Following some discussion it was agreed that many of my rifles and a couple handguns could be restored by Williams Gun Sight Company. The Smiths, even with quality restoration, would never be original collector quality. An agreement was made with Michigan Millers Insurance Co. I would be reimbursed for the Smiths at the Blue Book price prior to the fire, and they would take the damaged shotguns to do with as they saw fit.

I had a decision to make, look for Smith twenties in like condition and number or take my insurance money and go for fewer

but rarer Elsie's. I made the decision and put the following ad in the Gun List: AWanted: L.C. Smith .410 gauge Field or Ideal. Must be as original. No restoration. 95-100% condition, Private buyer. Will travel. Max Ph.-----@ The wait began, in time I received two responses. The first call was a gentleman from Ohio and the other from a dealer in New Jersey. Strange as it seems both men were members of 'The Ohio Gun Collectors Association.' In both instances I was impressed with the descriptions they gave me of the Smiths they had for sale. Each seller told me they would be attending the next meeting of the OGCA and would bring the Smiths to the show for my inspection. The OGCA is a private collectors club and I was furnished a guest badge so that I could be given a tour. Believe me, whether I bought a .410 or not the Club experience was one I'll never forget. Needless to say I applied for membership and I am now a dues paying member! Did I forget, the N.J. gun was an Ideal and the Ohio L.C. was a Field grade.

I would like to relate the history I was given concerning the Ohio Field grade .410. It seems a young man, a neighbor of my Ohio gentleman, bought the shotgun early 1942 and left shortly thereafter for the military. The parents of the soldier asked my friend, a gun enthusiast, to care for the gun. The sad ending was the young man lost his life while in the service. With the passing of years the gun was given, by the parents, to the man who had cared for it all those years, with the understanding he was to do with it as he pleased. Time passed and the gun was still in it's box, only taken out to be inspected and occasionally wiped down. With the influence of my ad in the Gun List, a phone call was made to me, someone he thought would appreciate the Elsie as much as a young man did long ago. Believe me the shotgun and it's history hold a special spot in my gun safe.

Shortly after arriving home from Ohio I was contacted by a seller located in Wisconsin that had a .410 Ideal, although I had



just acquired a fine Ideal I thought I should at least take a look, besides the wife and I had a trip planned to Chicago to visit our daughter and her husband, this would be just a few extra miles! The gun was nice enough, the price right, and this acquisition should fulfill my desire to replace my 20's with Smith .410's.

I would like to relate the following experience that somewhat cooled my motivation to acquire guns that would replace the Smiths I had lost. I still had the habit of diligently reading the L.C. Smith for sale ads in The Double Gun Journal and of course the Gun List. I saw an ad for a Fulton Special .410, a lower grade Fulton Arms product, but still a very nice gun with which to shoot squirrels! I made a phone








pride and joy, I knew I just had to make that call! The Mrs. answered the phone and said her husband was out but would be back soon. She asked if I cared to leave a message and I replied that I was inquiring about a Specialty .410 that was listed for sale in the Gun List. The lady said she thought the gun had been sold, but said she would have her husband return my call. The next couple hours I dealt with mixed feelings, did I want the gun to be available or would I be satisfied knowing I was just a little too late making that call. The phone rang, YES the gun was still on the market!

Many questions were asked and answered, each to his or my satisfaction. Now the question which would determine if I would be able to afford the Specialty. Would a retired Winchester employee consider taking in a Ideal .410 as partial payment? Remember, I had bought a second Ideal in Wisconsin. His answer, yes, if it was in the condition I had described. I packed the car and the following day my wife and I were headed to Maine. After our arrival we enjoyed a friendly getting to know you conversation topped off with a glass of wine and shrimp. Now the moment for which I had driven a thousand miles had arrived, but first, I was treated to a display of Winchester 21's, the likes of which few gun enthusiasts such as myself have seldom seen, except in pictures! The Speciality was finally placed in my hands, an absolute joy to behold! My Smith Ideal passed inspection, a check was written and I became the owner of one of thirty-three .410 Specialty Grade L.C. Smiths.

That evening my wife and I were treated to a Maine lobster dinner. The lobster was great, but not as fine as the folks we had met and become friends with, all made possible by my affair with Elsie! The trip back to Michigan was uneventful, of course my wife had to share our motel room a couple nights with Elsie.

I am one fortunate man to have someone who has understood my forty five year Elsie Affair. We have now reached an understanding, Ano more Elsie's@! What about that Elsie with a crown? Don't even think of it! 

call and was given a description of a gun that sounded like it was possibly in 80% condition and original. I asked if he would give me the serial number so I could determine the date of manufacture. I failed to mention earlier in this narrative that I had previously owned one Fulton Special .410 that was turned over to the Insurance Company along with my Smith twenties. I'm sure it's pretty obvious where this is going. That evening I checked the serial number I was given and just for curiosity sake compared them against the numbers that I had supplied to the insurance company when my Smiths were turned over to them. You guessed it, somehow that gun had found it's way to a fixer upper and was now back on the market. Buyer Beware!

With my insurance settlement for the shotguns pretty well exhausted, but well invested, I was ready to sit back and enjoy my resurrected Smith collection. As a confirmed collector I never failed to try to keep abreast of the ups and downs of the double gun market. Like everything else, if the interest is there, something will come along that you must follow through on.

The Gun List arrived one fine day in May 1999 containing the following ad: Specialty Grade .410 ga. NIB w/ all papers, including a Cody letter, Spectacular. Phone-----. I knew this purchase would require a trip to Maine. After a twenty-four hour self examination of all the reasons I shouldn't make the call, but figuring the Specialty would by then be someone else's



# 2009 Events

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	ARRIVAL	POINT PERSON
2/20-2/21/10	Louisville Gun Show	KY Fair and Expo Center Louisville, KY	2/20/10	Cliff White, Len Applegate
3/22/10	8th Annual Spring Shoot	Carlisle Fish and Game Club, Carlisle, PA	3/22/10	Charlie Brooks
4/23-4/25/10	Southern Side by Side	Deep River Sht School 284 Cletus Hall Rd. Sanford, NC 27330	4/22/10	Steve Arnett (Shooting) Skip Dunlap (Display)
4/23/10	Annual Meeting	Deep River Club House, Sanford, NC	4/23/10 at 5 PM	Frank Finch
5/14-5/16/10	NRA National Convention	Charlotte Convention Ctr, Charlotte, NC	5/13/10 Set up	Skip & Chris Dunlap
6/4-6/6/10	Great Northeast Side x Side Classic	Hausmann's Hidden Hollow, Friendsville, PA	6/4/10	Check <a href="http://www.lcsmith.org">www.lcsmith.org</a> , then the Events page for updates
7/16-7/18/10	Ohio Gun Collectors Show	Robert's Center, 123 Gano Road Wilmington, OH 45177	7/16/10	Len Applegate, Frank Finch
9/23-9/26/10	Vintage Cup	Pintail Point, Queenstown, MD	9/23/10	Skip & Chris Dunlap
10/30/10	7th Annual Turkey Shoot	Prince Georges Trap and Skeet Glen Dale, MD	10/30/10	Roger Domer
11/13-11/14/10	Tulsa Gun Show	Tulsa, OK	11/13/10	Jim Stubbendieck

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The L.C. Smith Collectors Association accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of the seller's description. All negotiations are strictly between the buyer and seller. The buyer and seller are responsible for complying with all applicable state and federal laws.

NOTE: Ads are only run for one issue unless the advertiser contacts the publisher (Jason G. Harrison) to continue to run the ad by the cut-off for the next issue.

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