

Incidentally

Sooner or later, in any column devoted to the business of getting a magazine on the presses, there has to be an installment on editor-printer relations—a sort of *apologia* in which the editor attempts to clear himself of all blame for sins perpetrated by the #1!?!@/?-ed printer. Obviously, the harassed printer is forced to print any such libellous statement the editor cares to dictate without so much as a whimper of protest. Well, here goes:



If you'll dig out the old tea kettle and carefully steam the address sticker off of this copy, you'll see what we mean about printers. It's that bone to get the best cover we could lay hands on, and watched it every step of the way through the engraver's plant, and then stood back and admired the finished product (after we'd tacked it up on the wall to see it in a really good light), and finally congratulated ourselves on how pretty it looked. Well, who understands printers?

As a matter of fact, it had to be done. But you can still blame it on the printer. Seems he was going all-out on the covers. A matter of pride, probably. Every month he'd call and swear that this one was the best yet. 'Way better than last month's. Before long he had us believing it. Finally, after about a year of this kind of thing, those of us who were a little more than those who were a little less, we'll know have a fine engraver we chapter in editor relations. (That's another chapter in what the secret was. Varnish! printer would squeeze a little more of the stuff into his inks, and that slick, shiny look was doing wonders for cover quality. But then the whole thing back-fired. The covers got

so doggone slick that the address labels wouldn't stick any more.

That was when we had to agree to the hole in our cover plates. If we didn't said our printer, we could either go back to those old dull covers we had been worrying along with, or run the risk of having a few thousand copies of the RIFLEMAN wandering around in the US mails without an address to go to.

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To tell the truth, we might not have agreed to it then if the RIFLEMAN circulation manager hadn't called our printer in to see what was happening to us because those labels wouldn't stay put. He had dumped four big mailbags full of magazines that had lost their stickers out on the floor. And, naturally, there were almost that many letters on his desk asking about missing labels or reporting receipt of the mag without knowing because the local carrier happened to know the subscribers on his route. We wandered in to see the fun. Down on his hands and knees in the middle of the floor, checking those undressed magazines one at a time, was the vice president of our printing firm. The first vice president, as a matter of fact. Well, you can go just so far. Asking the VP of a respectable printing firm to crawl all over the floor covers we wanted shiny covers (with labels) was going too far. We broke down, and let him cut that hole in our cover plates so the address labels would have a firm place to land. So, our covers are still nice and shiny, the way we've concerned vice-president McKenney with his office floor as far as we're concerned. More importantly, there's no chance of magazines going astray in the future. When the labels hit the patch on the bottom of the cover, they So if your copy doesn't show up one of these months, check on the hired hand before you write us that letter pleading for one. Maybe he's a gun nut too.—J. S.



COVER

Eastern pistol shooters . . . and a lot of Westerners who made the trip . . . will recognize instantly the range scene on this month's cover. The palmettos in the background are a give-away. It's the familiar Tampa Pistol Tournament, many seasons of the Florida Mid-Winter March by Kodachrome was taken last March by Navy photographer Leonard Rizzolla, who is an enthusiastic handgunner in his spare time. Exposure date: 1/10 second at f/16. Kodachrome in a 4x5 Speed Graphic, a haze filter.

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1948

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| Random Shots | 8 |
| AN EDITORIAL | |
| The Club Came Back! | 9 |
| BY COLONEL W. D. FRAZER | |
| School for Juniors | 12 |
| A PICTURE STORY | |
| I Walked Alone | 16 |
| BY LEWIS V. CUMMINGS | |
| How Accurate Are They? | 20 |
| BY FRED M. SEGUIN | |
| Olympic Squad Sails | 23 |
| Miser's Magnum | 24 |
| BY BILL CORSON | |
| We Bow to the Inevitable | 27 |
| DCM Treasure, Part II | 28 |
| BY T. B. GRESHAM | |
| Amazing Old Lady | 32 |
| BY H. V. STENT | |
| Telescope Modifications | 35 |
| BY GEORGE R. PARIZEK | |
| Championships at Convention | 38 |
| So You Don't Improve, Eh? | 40 |
| BY WILLIAM E. PETERSON | |
| 'Ain't a God's Turkey' | 43 |
| BY ARCHIBALD RUTLEDGE | |
| Old Coach | 51 |

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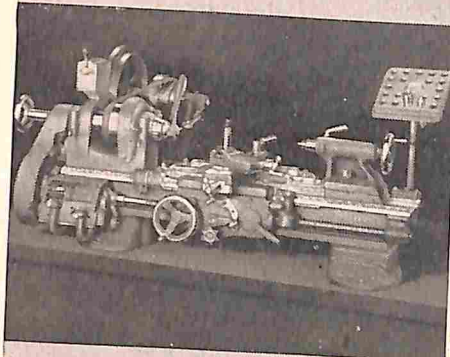
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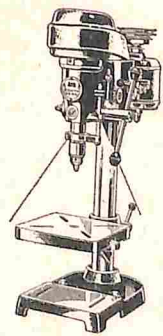
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