



THE AMERICAN RIFLEMAN

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

OCTOBER 1970

This issue—1,095,000
86th Year of Publication

THE COVER

The two highly artistic wheellock rifles shown are identifiable by their extremely short, unusual butts as German tschinkes made in Silesia in the early 1600's for small game hunting. Their lengths of pull or distance from end of butt to trigger are scarcely more than half that of normal modern rifles, 7¼ in. for the top one, 7¾ in. for the lower. In a marksmanship technique derived from crossbow shooting, they were fired while held lightly against the cheek rather than the shoulder.

Highly ornamented with hundreds of mother-of-pearl and bone inlays in intricate patterns, tschinkes were used by royalty and nobility in hunting large birds such as bustard and grouse. The object was to hit them in the head with the first bullet while they were on the ground or in tree limbs. As the range was often considerable, tschinkes were fitted with both front and rear sights and fully rifled. The longer of these two has six-groove rifling in .34 cal., weighs six lbs., and is 47½ in. overall with a 37-in. barrel. The other is .39 cal. with seven-groove rifling in its 35-in. barrel and weighs only 4½ lbs.

Photography by NRA Staff Photographer Rolfe M. Baggett using a 4x5 Super Graphic with an F/4.5 Graflex Optar lens. Exposure on Kodak E-3 Ektachrome Tungsten film was ½ sec. at F/11 using 3200° illumination.

Vol. 118, No. 10

THE AMERICAN RIFLEMAN is published monthly by The National Rifle Association of America, 1600 Rhode Island Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, for the benefit of its members. Domestic rates (U.S. and possessions) \$7.50 a year, \$14 for 2 years, \$20 for 3 years, \$32.50 for 5 years; for foreign postage, add \$1 a year. Copyright 1970, the National Rifle Association of America. All rights reserved except where expressly waived. Second-class postage paid at Washington, D. C., and at additional mailing offices.

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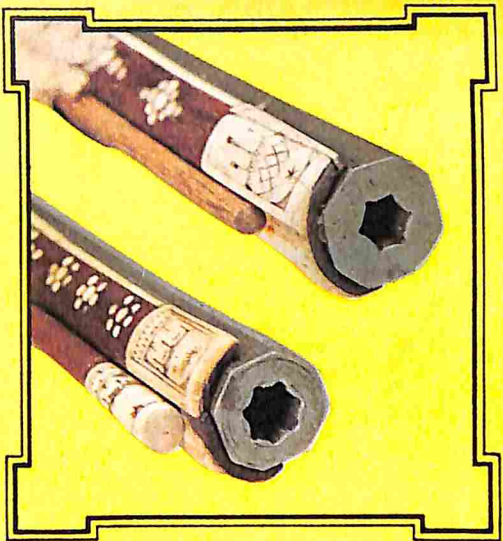
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OCTOBER
1970
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