

# Incidentally . . .

We've never before published an annual report of the NRA . . . that "summary of progress" prepared, primarily, for the yearly get-together of the Association's 60-odd directors. This year, however, we are making an exception. When Executive-Director Lister began to think about that report of his, months ago, he dug up some interesting figures . . . interesting, and a little startling. About 225,000 of our members, he found, were unacquainted with the NRA at the start of the war. The same is true of most of our club officers. On the face of it, that may not seem important. But the Association is an old one . . . an "institution,"

founded in 1871 . . . and that figure means that the majority of our members know little or nothing of the background of the NRA . . . exactly what it was supposed to accomplish. So, headlining this issue, we're taking the report, and bringing you a condensation of the first part . . . that section which brings us up to date on a lot of things we may have forgotten about the background of organized shooting in America.

To the old timers this is going to be a repetition of events they know at first hand . . . events that some of them took part in. But to the majority of the shooters of America . . . the "new generation," it provides answers to many things they may have wondered about. "Creedmoor," for instance, How did the word get into shooting lingo? How did our targets originate? Who started the organization of shooting in the first place? These are all pertinent questions, and the Lister report gives the answers.

We're going even further in this issue in trying to bring NRA members closer to the tradition and history of shooting. We've mentioned before in this column the International Matches of 1874-5-6 . . . the almost-forgotten beginnings of competitive sport

among English-speaking nations. The matches are interesting to the old-gunners of course, and to the antiquarian . . . but the importance to shooting as a whole has been lost in the 20th Century scramble for progress. That progress would not have been possible had it not been for the nationals of three-quarters of a century ago. They gave organized shooting its first impetus in this country . . . an impetus which is just now bearing fruit in an Association which has outgrown the wildest dreams of the men who started planning for "a Nation of Riflemen" so many decades ago. It is pleasant fancy . . . a nation of riflemen is still not a reality, but we are far closer to it than ever before. Our indebtedness to the almost-forgotten group of men is symbolized by today's NRA. So we're publishing the story of those first International Matches . . . by Ned Roberts, revered author of *Muzzle-Loading Cap Lock Rifle*.



Next month, to complete the story, there will be the final installment of Executive-Director Lister's report . . . the present, and some hints of the foreseeable future.

We're at an enviable point now, with shooting's major U. S. sport . . . daily gaining converts . . . strengthening its position almost every respect. But that very growth imposes new difficulties . . . new pitfalls, dreamed of by the founders. Knowing the background, we feel, may help in solving the new and bigger problems brought on by shooting's Coming of Age.

And incidentally, if you'd like a copy of the complete Annual Report . . . with its detailed history of the NRA . . . drop us a card. We'll be glad to send you one. It makes good reading . . . twenty-four pages of NRA facts, in far greater detail than you could print them in this issue of the RIFLEMAN. Also, the history could be handy next time you're called on for a talk at the club dinner, or need some material on shooting for the local press.—J.S.

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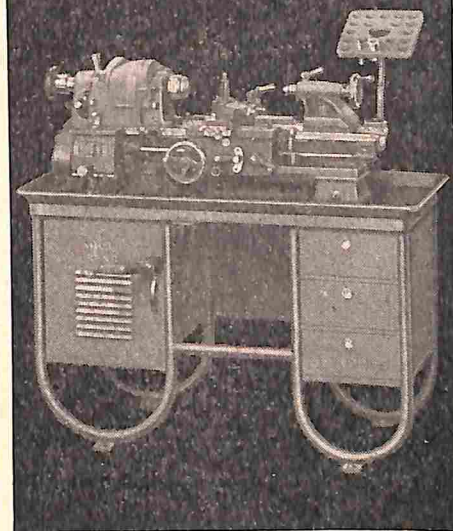
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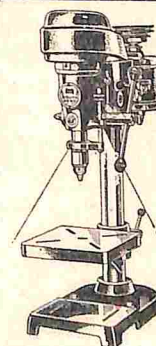
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### COVER

Drenched in the weird glow of a lens-coating machine, owner C. W. Galbreath of the Optical Coating Laboratory, Clinton, Md., watches as magnesium fluoride is deposited on a rackful of scope-sight lenses. When the bits of polished glass show the correct color, as revealed by the light of the fluorescent lamp he holds, the process will be stopped. For the details of this newest of optical magic, see "Those Coated Lenses," this issue. The Kodachrome was developed by the photographer Richard Reish with



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