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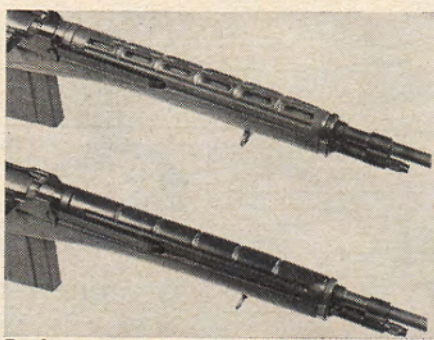
M14 Handguards

In a large group of M14 rifles I saw a few with the handguards perforated with rows of slots. Is this a special development?

Answer: Slotted handguards were at one time manufactured for the M14 rifle.

As developed and standardized, the M14 rifle had a wooden handguard of conventional type. For strength and heat resistance it was decided to adopt a special plastic developed for the purpose. At that time some user representatives desired perforations for barrel cooling, and while Springfield Armory did not recommend it, that style was made standard.

In use, however, heat waves from the heated barrel interfered excessively with sighting; also, the slots weakened the handguard so there were occasional breakages. For these reasons the slotting was dropped and the handguard left solid. Most manufacture was of this type.—E.H.H.



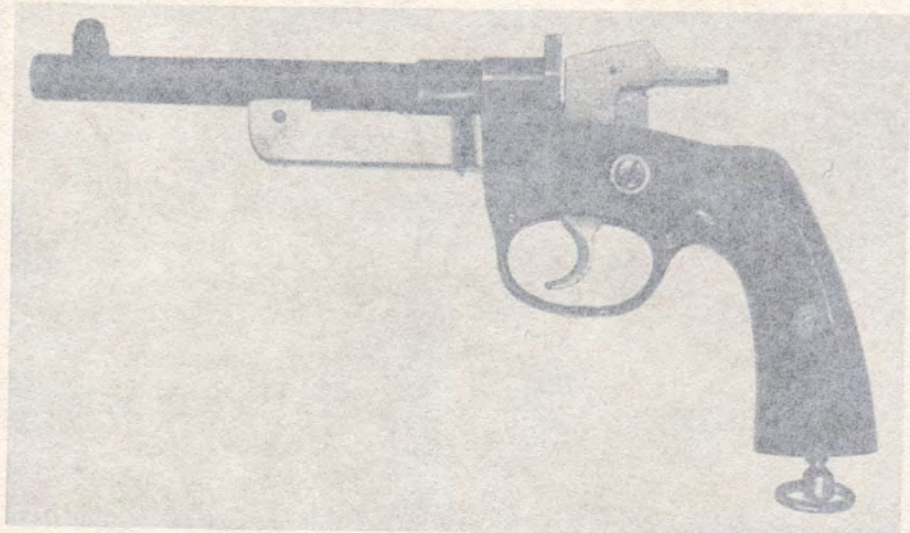
Perforated (upper) and solid plastic handguards of M14 rifle. The solid handguard (lower) is present standard.

Mauser Single-Shot Pistol

I have been told that one of the early guns the Mauser brothers developed was a single-shot pistol. Is this correct?

Answer: In the mid 1870's, Paul Mauser developed a single-shot pistol which was patented in Germany in 1877.

Designed to fire rimmed blackpowder cartridges (a specimen examined fires a 9 mm. bottleneck cartridge but the patent drawing shows a straight-case cartridge),



Mausers 9 mm. single-shot pistol.

this pistol has a breechblock pivoted to the bottom of the barrel. The hammer is concealed in the breechblock, and a safety lock is pivoted to the left of the frame.

During loading, the cartridge rim pushes the extractor forward. This releases the breechblock which springs upward to closed position. A similar system was used in a U. S. Lee cal. .45 experimental single-shot rifle of the early 1870's.

A long pull of the trigger is required for firing. The hammer is pushed back to cocked position as the trigger is pulled, and is released when the trigger is all the way to the rear.

Although well designed, it was produced in small quantity because revolvers were in widespread use by the 1870's.—L.O.

Loads For .45-70

Is it safe to fire factory-loaded .45-70 smokeless-powder ammunition in a Model 1873 Springfield single-shot rifle?

Answer: Factory blackpowder and smokeless-powder .45-70 Government ammunition is safe to fire in .45-70 Springfield rifles in good condition. It is unsafe, however, to fire the .45-70 Winchester High Velocity cartridge in such rifles. This cartridge has a 300-gr. soft-point or full-metal-jacketed bullet driven at 1885 feet per second (f.p.s.) muzzle velocity, and it is intended for use only in strong-locking rifles such as the Winchester Single Shot and Model 1886. It can be identified by the marking ".45-70 H.V." or ".45-70 W.H.V." on the case head.

Blackpowder and smokeless-powder handloads can also be used in the .45-70 Springfield. However, only low-pressure loads should be selected. Loading data are given in the *NRA Illustrated Reloading Handbook* available for \$3.50 to NRA members from the NRA Book Service.

A very good blackpowder load is a 405-gr. lead bullet and 50 grs. Fg powder. This gives much less recoil than the standard military rifle load with a 500-gr. lead bullet and 70 grs. blackpowder.

One suitable smokeless-powder handload for the .45-70 Springfield is the 405-gr. factory soft-point bullet driven by 36 grs. DuPont 4198 powder.—G.C.N.