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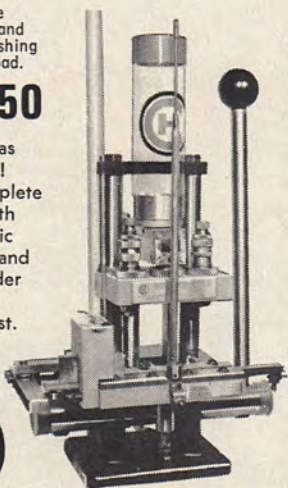
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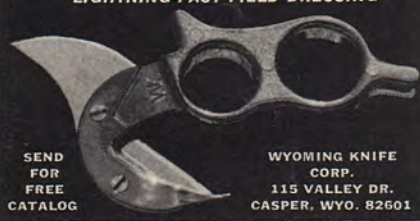
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#### DOPE BAG continued

slowly and inhibits rusting. In a closed box it will last for several months. Wash out the mold with very hot water just before using it again, and allow it to dry a few minutes. It will then cast good bullets practically at once.

Short, large diameter pistol bullets are easy to cast well. Long rifle bullets are less easy; they fill out best after the mold cavity has been smoked in a candle flame or preferably the flame of a paper match. Then wipe out the cavity with a clean, soft cloth before storing the mold with VPI.

All the above is for the usual iron molds. Aluminum molds cast excellently but even they do better with the cavity smoked as above. They need no preservative treatment except to keep the steel cut-off plate from rusting. But they do require special care against damage in use. In particular, they must be protected against galling under the steel cut-off plate. Do this by applying graphite (readily done by rubbing the blocks on top with a soft pencil) before first use of the mold, and often thereafter. —E.H.H.



#### M15 Rifle

The last two rifles adopted and used by the U.S. Army were the M14 and M16 models. Was there ever an M15 rifle. If so, what can you tell me about it?

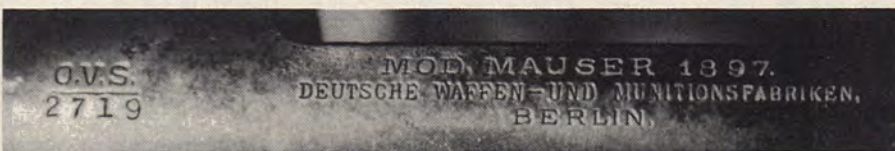
Answer: Yes, there was an M15 rifle officially designated "Automatic Rifle, Caliber 7.62 mm., M15." During the developmental stages it was referred to as the T44E5. This rifle was basically the M14, but had a heavier barrel, heavier stock, a bipod, a hinged buttplate, and a selector for full automatic fire. (The issue M14 also had the stud for automatic fire but no selector.) Both M14 and M15 rifles were adopted on May 1, 1957.

The original purpose of the M15 was for use in place of the M1918A2 BAR (Browning Automatic Rifle) as the infantry squad automatic weapon. The BAR weighed 20.8 lbs. while the M15 weighed only 14.1 lbs. Another advantage was that all members of the squad would be using

M15 automatic rifle.

the same rifle cartridge. However, the M15 was never mass-produced. Soon after adoption of the M14 and M15 rifles, it was decided that other changes could be made to the M14, leaving barrel and action the same, so that it could handle the squad automatic weapons job.

The M14E2 was the finalized automatic rifle version of the M14. Developed by the U.S. Army Infantry Board at Fort Benning, Ga., with the help of Springfield Armory, it was produced for use as the squad automatic weapon. Not widely used in service, this arm was soon supplanted by the M60 machine gun.—K.C.R.



Marking on Orange Free State Model 1897 7 mm. Mauser rifle. Photo courtesy of NRA member A. E. Chapman.

#### Boer Mausers

Books and articles state that the Boers used Model 1895 7 mm. Mauser rifles in their war with the British, but a collector told me that there is a Model 1897 Boer Mauser. If this is true, can you describe the Model 1897 rifle?

Answer: There was a Model 1897 7 mm. Mauser rifle used in the Boer War. It was produced in Berlin, Germany, by the DWM firm for the Orange Free State, and was marked "MOD. MAUSER 1897" above the maker's name on the left side of the receiver. Also on the left side of the receiver was the marking "O.V.S." (Dutch abbreviation for Orange Free State). The DWM initials in script were stamped on the receiver ring.

The Orange Free State also used the Model 1895 7 mm. Mauser rifle produced by DWM. This rifle was marked to indicate the manufacturer and also bore the "O.V.S." marking, but the model designation was omitted. Some Model 1895 rifles were marked with the Chilean coat of arms as well as "O.V.S." There is unconfirmed information that these were produced for the Orange Free State, but were completed too late for use in the Boer War and were then stamped with the Chilean crest and sold to Chile.

Model 1895 Boer Mausers are closely similar to the Model 1897 except for markings. Both models have cock-on-closing actions almost the same as that of the Spanish Model 1893 rifle. The Model 1897 is very seldom encountered.—L.O.