



A HUNTER'S GUIDE TO CLASSIC AMERICAN HAMMERLESS DOUBLES

PART II OF II

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THIS IS PART II OF A TWO-PART ARTICLE on classic American hammerless doubles. In the first part, published in our annual “Guns” issue, Wesbrook covered the Ithaca Flues No. 4, A.H. Fox C Grade and L. C. Smith No. 3. In this part, Wesbrook covers the Parker Brothers DH Grade, Lefever Arms E Grade and Remington Model 1894 D Grade. Each gun, in 12 gauge, was chosen because it was at the fourth-quality level of its manufacturer’s hierarchy of quality and price. Each was in production in 1910. These boundaries create a unique opportunity to contrast and compare items of similar character during the same period in time.

Each of the following sections addresses one manufacturer and its fourth-quality hammerless shotgun. To explore “why” these classic shotguns differ, each section looks at the company’s history and stated vision regarding the type of shotgun it intended to build and for whom. To clarify “how” these shotguns differ, the focus then narrows to that manufacturer’s fourth-quality gun. Each of the four major components of a shotgun are described and

illustrated using one example of a classic hammerless shotgun that is still on active duty as a hunter.

Data on price and availability of classic hammerless doubles are readily available from three reliable sources.

The first is the *Blue Book of Gun Values (BBGV)*, which uses national retail-sales data. It also differentiates based on condition, which is determined by its own methodology. Of course, different criteria can result in different estimates of condition, and hence of value. However, because the *BBGV* has applied its methodology consistently over time, it is the go-to source for comparison of values among different models and for historic trends of a specific model.

The Rock Island Auction Company (RIAC) website lists the results of past auctions. Data from its triannual Premier Firearms Auctions are most useful for graded guns, because these auctions generally will not include guns with condition issues. The Guns International (GI) website is an easily accessed source on current retail availability and asking prices.



THE PARKER BROTHERS DH GRADE

“The Parker quality D.H. gun meets the demand for a popular priced gun. Grade for grade this gun has no equal; a handsome, durable, and sterling gun of exceptional value. Endorsed and recommended by some of the most prominent shots in the world. The best gun value of which we know.”

—THE PARKER GUN, 1906 CATALOG

VISION AND HISTORY

BETWEEN 1888 AND 1942, approximately 180,000 Parker hammerless doubles were manufactured. Over the last eight years, 6,000 guns were made under the ownership of Remington Arms. The company offered ten grades of hammerless guns, with the number and letter designations varying over time. In 1910, the lowest grade listed for \$50. The fourth-quality gun, the DH, listed for \$100. The seventh-level AA gun, which was the highest grade that sold more than 200 guns, listed for \$400.

When Parker Bros. brought its first hammerless shotgun to market in late 1888, the company was in the enviable position of having sold 57,000 hammer shotguns and established itself as the most prestigious of American shotgun manufacturers. A paragraph from an 1896 article cited in Ed Muderlak’s 1997 *Parker Guns* captures a central element of the company’s success in the late 19th century:

“Parker Brothers was...among the first of the American manufacturers to realize that there was in this country a class of wealthy men fond of shooting, and to whom the mere price of a gun was a secondary consideration, so long as the gun itself appealed to them.”

A section entitled “Our Aim” in the 1906 Parker catalog expresses the company’s vision: “From the beginning of our career of over forty years, it has been our aim to produce the best possible production of the gunmaker’s art.”

To prove it had achieved that aim, Parker’s marketing at the time highlighted the performance of its guns in the hands of professional shooters. For example, after the Grand American Handicap of 1900, one Parker advertisement stressed the dominance of its guns in that event: “The ‘OLD RELIABLE’ Parker Once More proves its Right to the Title.” The message to potential buyers was that a Parker shoots well for the best shooters in the country, therefore it will shoot well for you. Sportsmen were urged to “Get a Parker—it shoots right every time. That is why it is called the ‘Old Reliable.’”

The company did not ignore mechanical traits and shooting qualities that mattered to buyers at the time. The largest print on the covers of the 1899 and 1902 catalogs, other than the company name and the words “Shot” and “Gun,” are “SIMPLE, DURABLE AND EFFECTIVE.”

But Parker Brothers was also selling prestige. Magazine advertisements proclaimed that: “The most discriminating gun users in America shoot guns made by PARKER BROTHERS,” “THE GUN WITH A PEDIGREE!”, “You own the best when you own a Parker” and “The proud possession of shooters everywhere.”

Another advantage over its competitors was that Parker was the only manufacturer to broadly adjust frame size to intended use. All companies varied frame size and weight



to gauge. Some made limited numbers of so-called “long-range” guns on heavier frames. But Parker designed its manufacturing and distribution systems to allow customers to build their own gun, essentially off an à la carte menu.

Its production line commonly made five different frame sizes and seven different weights. For example, a 12-gauge gun could be purchased within a light No.1 frame size, standard No. 1 1/2 or heavy No. 2. It could even be special ordered with a No. 3 frame. A hunter who wanted a 12-gauge Parker primarily for upland game might order his gun with a No. 1 frame and 26- or 28-inch barrels. A person who wanted a gun to shoot trap or hunt ducks might order a No. 2 frame with 30- or 32-inch barrels. Parker also offered more variation in barrel length than any of the other brands.

This competitive sales advantage came with a price, however. Each of the variations in size and weight would have required separate forging dies, measuring gauges and machine tooling. Also, it added complexity to managing the production line, inventory and distribution.

On the other hand, these costs may have been offset by the stability in mechanical design and in sales. Parker made modest improvements in the mechanical design, but the same fundamental gun had a successful run of more than 50 years. And from 1890 to 1930, the sales of the “Old Reliable” were reliably around 4,000 guns a year.

Today, Parkers are well represented at all vintage gun sporting clays competitions. Because original owners were able to build their own gun to meet their particular needs, those Grade D guns intended to hunt waterfowl or to hunt ruffed grouse are still well designed for those purposes. A hunter who owns a two-barrel set has perhaps the most versatile of all classic doubles. In the past half-dozen years, the DH depicted here has taken waterfowl and four species of upland game birds.

THE DH GRADE GUN

PARKER BROTHERS MANUFACTURED 16,398 DH GRADE guns, which was about nine percent of its total production of hammerless shotguns. Seventy-five percent were 12 gauge.

The 12-gauge DH shown here was manufactured in 1895 and listed for \$100. It was originally purchased with 30-inch



fine Damascus-steel barrels, and a few years later returned to the factory for an additional 26-inch set of barrels. This gun has a No. 1 1/2 frame. With the longer barrels, it weighs 7 pounds, 8 ounces. The length of pull is 14 inches, the drop at comb is 1 7/8 inch and the drop at heel is 3 inches. When Parker began offering ejectors in 1902, the DHE gun listed for \$125.

LOCKS. Parker reported in its 1899 catalog that new features designed into its locks made their guns “the easiest to operate, safest, and most durable of any hammerless on the market.” The locks use coil springs to power the hammers. The hammers are an integrated unit that combines the functions of the traditional hammer and firing pin. The adjacent picture of the locks with the sears removed shows this innovative firing mechanism, the principles of which would be used by other American manufactures.

A unique feature is the use of a cocking slide, which cocks both hammers simultaneously when the barrels are opened. The fully assembled receiver weighs 2 pounds. The company made incremental improvements up to 1910 when it apparently decided that the locks either had been thoroughly perfected or were at least good enough.

STOCK. The D Grade was the first level of Parker guns to have English walnut stocks. The authors of the *The Parker Story* comment that the wood chosen “was not often highly figured at this grade.” The wood on this gun is dense and the alignment of the grain is proper. However, because of its monochrome tonality, light grain and absence of figure, this blank likely would have been graded as a one.

BARRELS. The barrels on this gun are, as advertised, “of fine Damascus steel, finely figured.” The D Grade could also be ordered with Belgian-made, “Titanic” fluid-steel barrels, which were characterized as “a very strong serviceable barrel.”



Parker Brothers remained vague on the origins and relative quality of its fluid-steel barrels, but neither did it suggest an equivalency with more expensive German and British fluid-steel barrels.

ENGRAVING. Patterns and coverage on the Grade D were fairly consistent over time, depicting a setter on the left side of the frame, a pointer on the right and gamebirds on the bottom plate. The coverage was extensive and the scrollwork moderately tight. The engraving was delicate, artistic and graceful. However, it was also shallow, which made it vulnerable to wear.

The engraving on this gun is relatively well preserved. Nevertheless, it has softened over time and some detail has been lost. It is not unusual to find Grade D guns on which the engraving has substantially worn off.

Pictured nearby is the frame of a 1919 DHE that was protected from wear for many decades by unusual circumstances. From this picture, one can envision how the engraving on the 1895 DH would have originally looked. It also allows for better comparisons of the original Parker engraving with that of other fourth-quality guns.

PRICE AND AVAILABILITY TODAY. The 2022 *BBGV* reports a retail value of \$3,400 for Parker DH 12-gauge guns in 70 percent condition and \$4,300 for DHE guns. The price of Parkers has varied more over the past decade than any of the other fourth-quality guns. In 2012 the DH 12-gauge in 70 percent condition was valued at \$6,500, in 2017 at \$7,000, in 2019 at \$4,200 and in 2020 at \$3,400.

Availability is the best of the fourth-quality guns. From 2018 and the end of 2022, 14 Parker 12-gauge DH or DHE guns were sold at RIAC’s Premier Firearms Auctions; the median realized price was \$2,580. In December 2022, eight DH and ten DHE 12-gauge guns were listed on GI; the median list prices were \$4,000 and \$5,950, respectively.



THE LEFEVER ARMS E GRADE

“E GRADE. A strictly high-grade gun that is ‘All Gun.’ It cannot be matched in any other make for one hundred dollars. Made with the same care as the more expensive grades but not elaborate. Lefever full compensating action.”

—LEFEVER ARMS COMPANY 1913 CATALOG

VISION AND HISTORY

THE LEFEVER ARMS COMPANY was founded in 1884 in Syracuse, New York. It made hammerless shotguns designed by D.M. Lefever until 1916, when the company was acquired by Ithaca. Lefever Arms Company manufactured around 63,000 guns. Unfortunately, all company records were lost or destroyed. Most of what is known about Lefever Arms production has been pieced together retrospectively by the Lefever Arms Collectors Association (LACA) and is available on its website.

Lefever Arms Company was owned by a consortium of Syracuse businessmen, two of whom controlled the company as president and treasurer. D.M. Lefever, who served as its superintendent, was a mechanical genius. His vision seems to have been to create the perfectly constructed shotgun.

The first page of the 1913 Lefever catalog, which is entitled “Qualities: A Talk about Lefever Advantages,” tells the prospective buyer that:

“After reading these pages, you will be able to judge any high-grade gun by examining the gun itself.... You get clearly into your mind the whole idea of gun-action and gun-construction.... In this book you will read of really great things in shotgun-construction—every page devoted to important differences which make the Lefever undeniably better.”

This section closes by directing the reader to a page that lists “nineteen exclusive advantages of a mechanical nature.” The first listed is the immodest claim that Lefever guns have: “The simplest, quickest and strongest action in the world.” The second is: “The only perfect compensated action to take up wear in every direction.” In D.M. Lefever’s vision, a vital aspect of the perfect gun is that its mechanical components be largely self-correcting.

The corporate vision, as proclaimed on the title page of the 1913 catalog, was that the Lefever Arms Company was “MANUFACTURERS OF HIGH-GRADE SHOTGUNS.” The final paragraph of the introductory narrative leaves little doubt about the target market:

“The Lefever Gun is made for the man who looks upon shooting as a luxury, and who realizes that to get all the fun there is in shooting he must have a luxurious gun. By luxurious gun we mean one that gives the user the advantage of every shooting quality in its final perfection.”

When Lefever Arms introduced its “Automatic Hammerless” shotgun in 1884, its lowest priced gun cost \$100 (Grade E); the most expensive cost \$300 (Grade AA). Between 1888 and 1893, it added Grades F, G and H. In 1901, two more less expensive guns were added—Grades I and DS. However, by then Lefever was well established as a maker of luxury shotguns, and the company was unable to penetrate the market for more-affordable quality doubles as effectively as the other gunmakers.



THE EARLY MODEL OF THE AUTOMATIC HAMMERLESS GUN

employed traditional cocking rods to use the force created by opening the barrels to cock the hammers. It is often referred to as the “pivot lever” gun, because its adjustable top lever rotated on bearings. Beginning in 1891, a redesigned Automatic Hammerless began replacing the pivot lever gun. The new gun had a conventional top lever. More significantly, it introduced a unique cocking system. A cocking hook located in the watertable slot engaged with a pin in the barrel lump, which made the gun easier to open. Also, the top of the cocking hook partially extracted the spent shells from the chambers before the ejectors grabbed them.

D.M. Lefever continued making incremental improvements in the Automatic Hammerless until he left the company in 1901. Thereafter, Lefever Arms made no substantial design changes. The circumstances of D.M. Lefever’s departure from the Lefever Arms Co. in some ways parallel A.H. Fox’s departure from the Fox Gun Co. a decade later.

In terms of design, Lefever Arms advertising in 1913 proclaimed its guns to be superior to all others “in compensating features, in durability, style, finish, balance, and simplicity.” In terms of performance, it claimed superiority “in general all-around shooting qualities.”

Among the 64 testimonials in the 1899 catalog, nine simply declared Lefever Arms guns to be “perfect,” in a general sense. These include, for example, “I consider it to be a perfect gun,” “I do not see how a more perfect gun can be made” and, “it is perfectly elegant and I am perfectly satisfied with it.” Another 13 declare their Lefever gun to be “the best in the world,” or words to that effect. Of the 11 testimonials describing specific examples of superior performance, six cited the number of blue rock pigeons dropped in live-bird competitions, four cited clay-target trap results and only one hunting result (ducks). Interestingly, the covers of both the 1889 and 1913 catalogs depict duck hunting, which is certainly more picturesque than a trap line. It was also the outdoor sport of choice among those who could afford a higher-grade Lefever.

Lefever Arms knew its original target market very well. The company’s eventual demise was not the result of failing to meet the demands of that market, but rather of that market’s decline in the decade before the First World War.

The men who wrote the testimonials used in the 1889 catalog describing their Lefever as “best in the world” did not decide

this based on traits that can be measured and compared. The characteristics most cited are matters of taste and personal preference, including style, symmetry, balance and general shooting qualities. These same reasons explain why many of today's shooters favor Lefever shotguns. And a gun that excelled at dropping blue rocks 130-years ago is still very effective when hunted over upland fields and duck marshes.



THE E GRADE GUN

THE 12-GAUGE GRADE EE shown in this section was manufactured in 1899. The ejectors added \$15 to the \$100 list price. The length of pull is 14 inches the drop at comb is 1 1/2 inches and the drop at heel is 2 1/2 inches. It has 30-inch barrels and weighs 7 pounds, 14 ounces.

LOCKS. Lefever Arms Company's guns have an external appearance similar to that of a sidelock. But they are mechanically boxlocks. D.M. Lefever's design operates on similar principles to the famous Anson & Deeley boxlock patented in 1875 by Westley Richards and licensed thereafter to doublegun makers worldwide. D.M. Lefever may have intentionally designed his locks around the restrictions of European patents. If so, he succeeded and brought to Lefever Arms all the advantages of a gun that looks and feels like a sidelock, but can be manufactured at the cost of boxlock.

STOCK. The stock on this gun is made of good English walnut. Its biggest plus is the marbled pattern near the butt; its weakest trait is grain alignment. This stock's blank would likely have been rated as a two or three.

BARRELS. The E Grade could be purchased with barrels made of either "Fine Damascus" steel or "Genuine Krupp Fluid" steel. The Damascus-steel barrels on this gun are, in fact, very fine (four-bar) Damascus, a grade typically found on more



expensive guns. One reason buyers upgraded Damascus barrels was the additional strength and safety, especially if anticipating using higher-than-normal loads. These barrels have 2 5/8-inch chambers and are both choked full. They weigh 3 pounds, 8 ounces and they throw a pattern with 80 to 90 percent of the pellets striking above the point of aim.

ENGRAVING. The LACA website depicts three categories of E Grade guns: early-model (circa 1894), mid-range (circa 1901) and late-model (circa 1915). All have a pointer pictured on one sideplate and setter on the other, both being flanked by scrolls. On the mid- and late-models, engraving on the sideplates is somewhat more complex. The frames of all three models are lightly covered with scattered scrolls.

As pictured here, the scrolls on the sideplates of this early model gun are tight, shaded and deeply cut. The first property signals quality, the second imparts elegance, the last gives them permanence. The borders are both line and geometric. The portrait of a pointer that dominates this sideplate is realistic and finely cut.

PRICE AND AVAILABILITY TODAY. The 2022 *BBGV* places a value of \$4,000 for 12-gauge Grade-EE guns in 70 percent condition. From 2018 through 2020, they were valued at \$4,700. Availability is moderate to good. During the five years ending in 2022, three Lefever EE 12-gauge guns were sold at RIAC's Premier Firearms Auctions; the median realized price was \$2,350. In December 2022, nine were listed on GI; the median asking price was \$4,500.



THE REMINGTON MODEL 1894 D GRADE

“Grade D. Very fine Damascus steel...or ‘Ordnance’ Steel barrels, fine scroll engraving, fine English walnut stock and checkering...case-hardened frame and mountings, automatic safety, Purdey fore-end snap, triple bolt, top snap, extension rib with bite, flat matted rib...”

—REMINGTON ARMS COMPANY 1899 CATALOG

VISION AND HISTORY

WHEN E. REMINGTON & SONS went bankrupt in 1888, it was acquired by the New York firm of Hartley & Graham. Marcellus Hartley took the renamed Remington Arms Company into the industrial age of mass production and marketing. The new company’s first shotgun, the Remington Model 1889 hammer gun, was a rugged, unadorned and attractive gun that shot well. It became the most successful hammer side-by-side ever produced by one of the six premier manufacturers. It was offered in six grades. Grades 1, 2 and 3 were production-line models. The higher grades were made only by special order.

When Remington Arms introduced its first hammerless double in 1894, the five-year-old company used the same game plan. Grades A, B and C were production-line guns. Grades D and E were made only by special order and are today rare. A total of 41,194 guns were made through 1910 when Remington stopped making double-barrel shotguns. Production of Model 1894 guns peaked at 5,244 in 1899.

The Remington “Hammerless Double Barrel Shotgun” was introduced in the company’s October 1894 catalog:

“This perfectly modelled gun in itself would be sufficient to warrant our claim for special attention, but the moderate price at which it is marketed attracts the attention of sportsmen of all classes, and demonstrates the fact that a high-grade hammerless gun, if built by a well-equipped factory in large quantities, can be sold at a price within the reach of all.”

Except for calling “special attention to the beautiful line, simple mechanism and perfect finish,” Remington Arms apparently did not feel the need to tout any specific unique aspect of the Model 1894. Rather, it seems to have relied on the components to tell the story:

“REMINGTON HAMMERLESS DOUBLE BARREL SHOTGUN: Damascus barrels, choke bored, English walnut stock, half pistol grip, rubber butt-plate, checkered fore-end, case-hardened frame and mountings, automatic safety, Purdey fore-end snap, triple bolt, top snap, extension rib with bite, flat matted rib...”

Grades A, B and C listed in 1899 for \$45, \$60 and \$90, respectively. Remington’s vision, advertising and pricing all indicate that it was targeting the emerging upper-middle class



market and leaving the \$100-plus luxury market to others. The company took another step in this direction when it introduced a second model hammerless gun, the Model 1900, that listed for \$35. Remington sold 98,500 in the following 10 years.

In the decade before Remington left the double-barrel shotgun market, it had been selling an average of more than 14,000 double shotguns a year. The title page of the 1899 catalog, however, gives a hint that Remington Arms was going in a different direction. Underneath the company name, and in only slightly smaller type, were the words: “GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS.”

THE GRADE DE GUN

THE 12-GAUGE GRADE DE shown here was manufactured in 1899. With ejectors, it listed for \$155. The length of pull is 13 1/2 inches, the drop at comb is 1 5/8 inches and the drop at heel is 2 5/8 inches. With its 32-inch barrels, it weighs 7 pounds, 10 ounces. Charles Semmer in his definitive book *Remington Double Shotguns*, estimates that between 75 and 100 Grade D guns were produced.

LOCKS. The locks of the Model 94 are distinguished by the care that went into their construction. Regardless of grade, all major metal parts were hand-fitted to each individual gun and thereafter stamped with its serial number. Also, the safety mechanism is the most robust, reliable and smoothly operated of all the premier doubles.

STOCK. If one is looking at a fine shotgun from more than a dozen feet away, the wood defines its class, which in this case is understated elegance. The English walnut stock is darkly streaked against a multi-tonal background. It is unusual in that both sides are of similar appearance and



quality. The center is partially hollowed out in the manner of some high-quality English doubles. It is the only one of the six stocks depicted for which the blank was quarter-sawn, rather than slab-sawn, probably to take best advantage of the exceptional grain. The blank selected for this gun likely would have rated as a solid four.

BARRELS. This Grade-D has ejectors and “Ordnance” steel barrels, and hence is a Grade D.E.O. Grade D guns also were offered with “very fine” (four-bar) Damascus-steel barrels. The 1899 catalog describes Ordnance steel:

“Ordnance steel is of the highest grade, and is especially recommended for heavy charges of nitro powder. The tensile strength of the steel is 110,000 lbs., and the elastic limit is 60,000 lbs., this being greatly in excess of any strain to which shotgun barrels are subjected with reasonable loads of nitro powders.”

Its 32-inch barrels weigh 3 pounds, 14 ounces and have 2 3/4-inch chambers. The right barrel is choked extra full (.040) and the left extra-extra full (.045). The gun throws a pattern with 80 to 90 percent of the pellets striking above the point of aim. The original owner’s choice of 32 inch, tightly-choked, Ordnance steel barrels strongly suggests he intended to use it for trap.



ENGRAVING. None of the Model 1894 D Grade guns are engraved exactly alike. Although there are similarities in the basic pattern, they were individually done to the buyer’s choice. The engraver of this gun was Joseph Loy, one of the great names in shotgun engraving during its classical period. The engraving speaks for itself.

PRICE AND AVAILABILITY TODAY. The *BBGV* puts the value of a 12-gauge Grade DE in 70 percent condition at \$8,000, which has been stable over the past decade. The rarity factor is a significant component of price. There were no Model 1894 12-gauge guns sold by RIAC in the five years from the beginning of 2018 through 2022. At the end of 2022, none were listed for sale on GI. However, the availability and price of the Model 1894 Grade C is comparable to the Ithaca No. 4E and Lefever Grade EE. The *BBGV* places the average value of a Grade CE in 70 percent condition at \$3,800. Five Grade CE guns were listed on GI at the end of December 2022; the median asking price was \$4,000.

FINDING YOUR BEST HAMMERLESS DOUBLE

THE DECISION TO FOCUS ON GUNS at the fourth-quality level was made because of the analytical advantages described at the beginning of this article. However, this decision was not intended to suggest that it takes high-grade hammerless shotguns to enhance the hunting experience. It can be just as rewarding with one of the lower-grade counterparts.

All of the premier manufacturers used the same mechanical components on all grades. While the quality of barrels, stocks and engraving vary with each rung on the ladder, the relative differences among the six brands remain generally consistent with each step, down or up. For these reasons, the prospective buyer of a classic hammerless double of any grade will hopefully find the information and analysis of fourth-quality guns also useful when considering other options.



Condition is always a major consideration when buying a vintage or antique gun. A good visual inspection can identify most problems that are fixable at predictable and affordable prices. It is the undisclosed or otherwise unknown problems that can be most expensive.

For stocks, the most common problem are headstocks that are rotted and cracked as the result of accumulated petroleum-based oils. If detected soon enough, this illness can be treated at a moderate expense. If it has progressed far enough to cause structural damage, both of the principal repair options are expensive: either remove the damaged wood and graft in new walnut or restock the gun. Visually detectable indicators of potentially serious damage behind the locks are oil-darkened wood where it comes in contact with metal, and chips off the prongs of a sidelock or the side-panels of a boxlock.

Case-hardened receivers and those mechanical parts made of high-carbon tool steel rarely result in surprise expenses. Costly issues are barrels that have been refinished using modern hot-bluing techniques, barrel walls that have been thinned in spots as a result of improper removal of dents and pits, and small gaps in the solder binding the ribs to the barrels, which are often precursors to loose ribs.

If there is any doubt about the condition of either the stocks or barrels, thousands of dollars can potentially be saved by negotiating with the seller for the right to have a professional gunsmith do a technical inspection, including taking a look “under the hood” before a transaction is considered complete.

Our double guns are many things to us, but at their core they are fine machines made of steel and wood. All fine machines, if they are to function properly over long periods of time, need preventive maintenance at reasonable intervals. Periodic preventive maintenance can extend the useful life of many vintage shotguns. It is also a common-sense safety measure, especially if bringing a father’s or grandfather’s shotgun out of retirement. ■