



# E-GAZETTE MK II\*

The e-Gazette Mk II\* is a monthly news-letter circulated free to members of the NZAHAA and their friends by e-mail only. It may be copied and forwarded to fellow collectors, we ask that any material used by others is acknowledge to this publication.

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**National Secretary: PO Box 694, Rangiora 7440 e-mail:**

[nzahaa.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:nzahaa.secretary@gmail.com)

## EDITORIAL

The amnesty is ended and the government will no doubt proclaim the “buyback” a success. We on the other hand recognise it as a disaster resulting in the destruction of thousands of historically significant and valuable firearms, simply because they were semi automatic, or their magazines held one or two rounds more than 10. Even from the governments perspective of removing black “evil” guns from circulation the buyback has been a failure, when you consider that only 50,000 of an estimated 170,000 prohibited firearms have been collected.

Now in the new year we face even more restrictions on our sport and hobby, when the Arms Legislation Bill returns to parliament. Indications are that these new restrictions will also hit you hard in the pocket, as cost recovery by police will results in raised fees for licences, permits and endorsement. How do you feel about paying \$ 500 for a new licence every 5 years and a similar figure for a permit each time you buy a new gun?

With this government denying us our right to a fair democratic process in round one in April and then introducing the most draconian firearm laws ever this year, likely to spell the end of many shooting sport opportunities and severely restrict firearm ownership, why have so few firearm owners made the effort to oppose these changes? By my estimate less than 10% of LFOs have made a submission to the Select Committee on the Arms Legislation Bill, or joined and donated to [www.fairandreasonable.co.nz](http://www.fairandreasonable.co.nz) , or joined a protest gathering, or talked or written to their MP.

Many of our grandfathers and fathers gave their lives or suffered years of privation in two World Wars to defend our rights to freedom and democracy. Have their sons gone soft in the peace that our forebears created, turning into Ostriches with their heads in the sand?

Thanks to the efforts of our President we should all be well informed about these issues, so don't let apathy be our downfall.

## UP COMING EVENTS

### 2020

11 & 12 January	Northland Branch Invitation Shoot, Oromahoe
15 February	Dargaville Gun Show
23 February	Central Branch Gun Show, Otorohanga
21 March	NZAHAA AGM & Auction, Marlborough
5 April	South Canterbury Branch Auction, Washdyke
18 & 19 April	Ted Rogers Militaria Auction, Paraparaumu
23 May	Ruahine Arms Fair, Palmerston North
17 & 18 July	Mainland Arms Gun Show, Riccarton Raceway, Christchurch
15 & 16 August	Tauranga Militaria Show

## KUMEU MILITARIA SHOW POSTPONED

It is with much regret that we must inform you, that we will not be holding the Kumeu Militaria Show in March 2020. There are two main reasons why, firstly is that it would have been on the weekend of the first anniversary of the Christchurch shootings. We do not want to face what will no doubt be a time of high emotion and political grandstanding.

Secondly and more importantly, I will be deployed overseas for the next 6 months (Building the Royal New Zealand Navy's New Replenishment Tanker "HMNZS AOTEAROA") and Clayton is in the process of relocating his home and business.

We will be back in 2021 with a new date. We will keep you informed.


[Danny Paton](#)  
Kumeu Militaria Show  
021 336 207

### **NORTHLAND BRANCH INVITATION SHOOT 2020**

**11 & 12 JANUARY  
OROMAHOE RANGE**

**Camping at the range, but you must be self sufficient  
Shoot will be followed by usual Spit Roast dinner and  
Mickey Mouse Auction**

**Contact Paul Deeming  
09 435 3232  
gunnerpwd@gmail.com**



NZ Antique Arms and Historical Arms Association Inc. Central Branch Presents Their

## Annual Historical Arms and Militaria Show.

**Sunday 23 February 2020**  
**9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**


At the Otorohanga Workingman's Club  
 South end Maniapoto Street (opposite McDonald's)

ADMISSION: \$5 per Adult, children under 12  
 must be accompanied by an adult.

**Displays of historical and modern arms, equipment, uniforms, vehicles and more**

There will be sales on site. If you intend to make purchases of firearms or ammunition you must produce a current Firearms License.

Come along and view some of the finest items that have contributed to our heritage over the years. Most are original or have been carefully restored to their former glory so that generations to come can admire the technology that has gone into this area of collecting and meet some of the people who make this possible.




**DARGAVILLE FIREARMS & MILITARIA COLLECTORS CLUB PROUDLY PRESENT**  
**THE 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL**  
**DARGAVILLE GUN SHOW**

SALES TABLES, SPORTING & MILITARY FIREARMS, DISPLAYS OF HISTORIC FIREARMS & MILITARIA, AMMUNITION, ACCESSORIES, RELOADING SUPPLIES, ANTIQUE & COLLECTABLE FIREARMS, SPORTING RIFLES, HUNTING EQUIPMENT

**SOMETHING FOR EVERY ENTHUSIAST, COLLECTOR & ALL THE FAMILY**  
**SATURDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> FEB 2020**  
**09:30 – 14:30**

KAIPARA COMMUNITY HALL, HOKIANGA ROAD (OPPOSITE ANZAC THEATRE)

**ADULTS OR FAMILIES \$5.00**  
\* Children must be accompanied by an adult.



For sales or display tables please contact;  
 Kath at [c.k.arnold@xtra.co.nz](mailto:c.k.arnold@xtra.co.nz) or ph. 07 873 8853

**Nelson Branch Will Host**  
**2020 NZAHAA AGM and Auction**  
**21st March 2020 in Marlborough**

**Venue - Clubs of Marlborough**  
 which has excellent facilities

Anyone wishing to put items in the Auction should contact either:  
 Nigel Johnson on  
 03 5476263 - evenings  
 OR  
 Laurie Staig on 03 5423622

We would like to have items to hand by  
 November if possible



NZ Antique & Historical Arms Assn  
 (Wellington Branch) Inc



### Annual Auction – 2020

We are now accepting lots for our next auction on the 10/13<sup>th</sup> July 2020. We would encourage anyone wanting to have items included to advise Steve, our Auction Convener, at the earliest possible time.

**South Island Run:** We are currently planning our annual run to the South Island sometime in February so those South Island people wanting to have items collected please let us know as soon as possible. Dates to be confirmed but it will be early in the New Year.

**North Island Run:** Also, on the planner is a trip to North Island locations. Details will be advised in due course and will include any notified locations so get your details to Steve.

Contact Steve and talk to him about what you wish to do.


**Steve Privett**

He can advise you of our very friendly Vendor commission rate

Tel: (04) 934 2756      Mobile: 0274-411785  
 Email: [info@wellingtonantiquearms.org.nz](mailto:info@wellingtonantiquearms.org.nz)

**SOUTH CANTERBURY BRANCH NZAHAA  
AUCTION / SWAP DAY  
5<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

Venue: Pharlap Raceway in the Greyway Lounge Washdyke  
Off Pleasant Point Highway  
Fly into Richard Pearce Airport - 10 minutes from venue



**FIREARMS – MILITARIA – SHOOTING  
RELATED ANTIQUES - ACCESSORIES**

**“WE ARE ACCEPTING ITEMS NOW”  
“NO COMMISSION FOR VENDORS”**

Cataloguing of your items can be arranged at your  
convenience

A Buyer's Commission of 7.5% on the Hammer Price

\$10.00 Sales Tables  
Graham: 03 688 2705  
Mike: 03 686 0876 or 027 895 6561

Email [scantiqueaha@outlook.com](mailto:scantiqueaha@outlook.com)

**DON'T BE AN OSTRICH  
BE PROACTIVE  
HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE  
JOIN SSANZ TODAY**



[www.sportingshooters.nz](http://www.sportingshooters.nz)

## DIGITAL RECORD OF 60 YEARS OF NZAHAA

NZAHAA Inc (formerly NZAAA Inc) achieved on 19 September 2019, 60 years as the major Antique and Historical Arms Association in NZ.

To mark that occasion the MC, at its October 2019 meeting, commissioned Life Member Graeme Barber to collect and collate artefacts that will be recorded electronically in recognition of '60 Years On'.

Contributions from Branches will be sort to include:

- Establishment dates.
- Lists of office holders.
- Significant events and successes.
- Human interest stories etc etc.

Your help, no matter where you are in NZ or how small, is much needed. Can Branch Secretaries (and anyone else as well ) please send me by email what you have to contribute as soon as possible.

Thanks in advance for any contributions sent through.

Contact Graeme at : [g.barber303@gmail.com](mailto:g.barber303@gmail.com)



## THE VICTORY SHOW By Ray Pope

On my recent trip to the UK and EUROPE we had organised to be in Leicestershire around the 6<sup>th</sup> September to coincide with the Cosby Victory show, billed as the largest WW2 Experience in the UK on Foxlands Farm, Cosby, Leicestershire, LE9 1SG.

We arrived just after it opened and with any event in the UK we got into line to pay to enter. There are places to camp out, areas for tents, caravans & camper vans in the carpark opposite the entrance. This event is held over three days with Friday being for Educational Day for school children and their teachers.

Saturday was the day we went and there is a full programme with displays and re-enactments, everywhere you look an array of military vehicles, tanks, halftracks, trucks, jeeps etc. German, American, British, etc. Everyone dressed up in uniforms of all nations, set up in their groups, weapons on display, dug out fox holes, wire, tents and even the guys boiling the billy for a cuppa. As you walk in to your right is the main arena with slit trenches set up in a defensive pattern dug by a digger (the farmer's corn field harvested) is where the main battle event will take place.

The announcer bids you welcome and gives you a heads up on the day's events, telling us about the war planes as they fly in from other parts of the UK. Gun fire can be heard and we are told it's coming from the forest on our left hand side and it's just a re-enactment of the battle of the bulge and we are invited to walk amongst it. When in there, it looks real enough and the only thing missing is air burst shells blowing trees apart.

As you spend your time engrossed in everything around you, you need to be aware of certain times & locations when various short displays are being held like an anti-tank gun that had been rushed into use in WW2 like the 17 pdr mounted on a 25 pdr frame firing a high velocity round, called the Pheasant a 76.2mm x 583mm (3inch) effective range 1.5km, max range 10.5km mv 2900 ft/s HE, 3950 ft./s APDS capable of penetrating all but the thickest armour of German tanks with a rate of fire 10-20 rds per min. used in WW2, Korean war & Bizerte crisis. They were even mounted on Sherman's, we were about 60-100m away and even though they were blanks the blast wave was felt. I was hoping to see the 88mm in use but alas no.



We moved on to look at other displays as there are plenty to see, whilst overhead Spitfires, 2 x P51 mustangs, P47D Thunderbolt, Beechcraft C45, Catalina , Dakota/DC3 are flying overhead with Hispano HA-1112(Spanish made ME109 with Rolls Royce Merlin engine) these fly around at different times. The only Lancaster was supposed to fly over but cross winds exceeding its safety margins meant it was grounded "Nuts" but never mind better to look after it than risk it.

Gun fire and machine gun fire echo in the background as the re-enactment in the forest continues, this spasmodic cracking of gunfire reminds you of how it would have been for the men in a battle. Model aeroplane demonstration's flying around the airfield looked real enough being ¼ scale, some even larger. The sales tents of which there were two full rows of these are full of reproduction and real treasures; there were plenty of people & re-enactors in their checking out the bargains.

The main event at 2pm is a large scale battle held on the main battle field. This being the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day /Arnhem, this set up could have been any field in Europe. Germans dug into a defensive position, K98s, MG42s, and Pak 75 etc. all ready for action. Flying overhead was the Thunderbolt flying OP over the Germans lines guarded by 2 Mustangs flying above it. Earlier in the day the explosive boys had been setting charges for the display, the announcer then tells you how it is to go down to help set the scene. Then it starts with a German armoured withdrawal to this position, this includes a halftrack and artillery piece, mobile tank busters were being chased back to this defensive position, as the Germans arrived they set up ready to fight, next the 25pdrs that were across the road started up and the charges set earlier created the effect of creeping barrages, the Americans appeared and attacked on the left flank with their halftracks and a Sherman with infantry advancing behind the armour while the English attacked on the right flank. The tanks and field guns firing away at each other with the last of their charges made for a very noisy time. The result was of course the Germans were over run and what was left surrendered. I thought it was a good visual display and entertaining to watch. You need to get to a good vantage point to watch as there are hundreds or more people all trying to get a position to see. We went back for a final look at the vehicles and displays, chatting to some of the chaps and looking at things we would not see in our country.

I had been to the Victor Show six years earlier with a mate, finding it by accident as we had not heard of it and so on this trip I managed to schedule it in as I wanted to go back as I enjoyed it last time very much and this time it certainly did not disappoint either.





# SSANZ News December 2019

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## Is There No End To This Nonsense?

Just when we all think we have dealt with a new amendment to the Arms Act (Arms Legislation Bill 2019) by making submissions to the Select Committee and are preparing ourselves to follow up with oral submission, Stuart Nash drops another change in our laps, SOP 408 in mid November. This time he is going after pistol owners, in an attempt to capture a few 100 short MSSAs that became pistols as a result of Police changing their policy on how they should be measured and were thus excluded from the original prohibition and buyback. A clear illustration of how rushed and ill considered the first Arms Amendment was.

SOP 408 is another piece of rushed and ill prepared legislation, with only 2 weeks allowed for preparing submissions. A new definition of a “small semi automatic pistol” overturns the long held simple legal definition of a pistol and has the effect of making many historical and collectable pistols into prohibited firearms, despite these already being held on C or B endorsed licences, requires shoulder stocks for pistols to be held on an endorsed licence and makes virtually any firearm based on the AR 15 platform a prohibited firearm regardless of calibre (i.e .22 or less). It also allows for any pump action rifle to be declared a prohibited firearm by Order in Council. No mention was made of providing compensation for these newly prohibited firearms and no doubt owners who wish to retain them and their shoulder stocks will need to apply and pay for yet another P endorsement. No advice on this yet from Police National Headquarters.

Next at the end of November we had Arms (Prohibited Magazine) Order 2019, which makes any drum magazine that can be fitted to a pistol into a prohibited magazine. Such things as the historic Luger snail drum magazine. Then the Arms (Prohibited Firearms, Magazines, and Parts) Amendment Regulations (No 2) 2019. This set of regulations redefines prohibited parts in relation to upper and lower receivers, provides protection against prosecution for owners whose applications for exemptions or modifications are not complete before 20 December and establishes additional criteria for compensation. Another concern in this additional set of regulations is the power granted to the Commissioner of Police to determine what is a reasonable number of parts for a person to own when compensation is considered, he also has the discretion to require proof of ownership or original cost, something that is very hard to provide when they have been owned for many years.

***Not that this will be the end of the story there is no doubt more grief to come.***



## **Police are Responsible**

Obviously it was all started by our Dear Leader who wanted to make a name for herself by being decisive after the March mosque attacks. However it is quite clear to us that the ongoing process is being driven by the bosses at Police National HQ who have an agenda to divert attention from their own departments failings in providing Tarrant with a licence and at the same time remove as many firearms as possible from public hands while arming the police as a para military organisation.

Why do Police need 2,913 M4 MSSAs when licensed members of the public are not allowed such “evil and dangerous” firearms? Most LFOs are far more safety conscious and better shots than your average cop.

Why are Police drafting legislation, both Bills and Regulations that are then rubber stamped by their Minister Stuart Nash? Bills that are then rushed through the Select Committee process with only 5 minutes allowed for expert witnesses to provide oral testimony. That in itself is a travesty. Regulations that are rubber stamped by the Governor General and become law for 12 months before any parliamentary scrutiny.

Throughout this process police have steadfastly declined to consult with experts in the firearm community in drafting these Bills and Regulations. Yet the legislation they are producing is so complex that when asked questions for a better understanding their own staff are unable to provide answers.

We understand they have even bullied their own employees to hand in their private firearms early, to set an example. Now they are bullying LFOs by threatening raids and retribution to those who have failed to comply with all these changing laws when the amnesty ends on 20 December.

## **Police Are Also Responsible for Firearm Licence Owners Data Breach**

The news released by COLFO Fair and Reasonable Campaign on the 2nd December that the details of licensed firearms owners personal information, including bank accounts and firearms licence numbers and addresses, was exposed to anyone who cared to look at the Police Buyback online notification website came as a shock to us all. The police and government have tried to down play the the seriousness of the breach, by claiming it was only accessed by one dealer and only 35 LFOs were fully exposed.

IT MATTERS NOT if one person accessed the Buyback data or 100 people accessed it. It matters not if 35 people's data was exposed or 38,000 LFOs data was exposed. IT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE. The data was visible to anyone who went looking for 5 days before it was shut down.

**This is clear proof that the police are not to be trusted with a register of our firearms.**

## **Our Mood is Changing**

Most firearm owners in NZ are decent law abiding people, who like to enjoy their sport or hobby alone or in the company of like minded mates, they are not particularly political and certainly not radical. They are not protestors by nature.

However, as shown by the growing number and attendance at protest meetings LFOs are getting more and more upset by the repeated attacks (law changes) on our culture and way of life by those in authority. The December data breach has added fuel to the fire and how this ends will be down to the government.

## **Notice of SSANZ AGM**

To be held at 2.00pm on Saturday 8 February 2020, at the Bounty Room, Forum North, Rust Avenue, Whangarei. Nominations for Officers and Committee should reach the Secretary by 25 January 2020.

All members are invited to attend.

## **Are You a Club Member?**

With all these changes to the Arms Act and Regulations it is apparent that many firearm owners are in the dark as to how they are affected. Even as we approach the end of the amnesty there are some who don't realise that their favourite hunting rifle is now prohibited, or their antique collectable pistol is to be banned.

If you don't belong to a gun club how do you keep informed?

**The answer to this is join SSANZ for only \$ 20 per year and keep yourself informed with regular e-mail updates.**

[www.sportingshooters.nz](http://www.sportingshooters.nz)

**NZGUNZ** (formally NZ Guns & Hunting) has gone digital, view and register here:

<http://www.nzguns.co.nz/>

*A discounted Premium Subscription is available for SSANZ members.*

## Huot Automatic Rifle: The Ross Goes Full Auto

by [Ian McCollum](#)



During World War One, Joseph Alphonse Huot, a Canadian machinist and blacksmith living in Quebec, designed a conversion of the Ross MkIII rifle to become an automatic rifle. The Ross was the standard issue Canadian rifle at the beginning of the war, and Huot wanted to find a way to economically provide Canadian forces with an automatic weapon. His conversion functioned by mounting a gas piston onto the side of the Ross barrel, adding a large action cover and 25-round drum magazine, and a Lewis-style cooling shroud over the barrel.

In initial testing with Canadian forces, the Huot performed well. It was seriously considered for adoption, but had to undergo British testing and approval before that could happen. In British testing (by now near the end of the war), it was found to run well enough and have some positive attributes, but not sufficient to justify replacement of the Lewis Gun. It was rejected, and Canadian forces finished the war with the Lewis instead. Huot had spent several years privately developing the weapon and two more working on salary for the Canadian military, and had gone into considerable personal debt for the project. He had secured a deal to receive royalties on production, but that of course came to naught when the design was rejected. Ultimately, he was compensated \$25,000 in 1936 (of the \$36,000 he claimed to have spent).

Only five of the guns were made in total, with four known to still exist. Two of them are in Ottawa at the Canadian War Museum and one in the Seaforth Highlanders Museum in Vancouver and one in the Army Museum in Halifax.

Thanks to the [Canadian War Museum](#) for providing me access to film this Huot for you! For more on the Huot, see [my previous article](#).

View Ian's Video here:

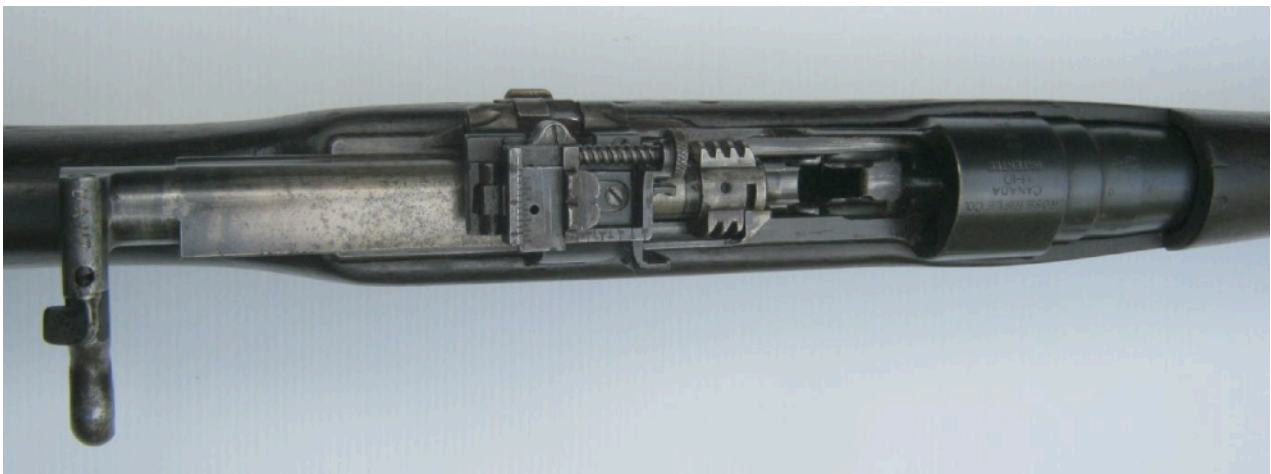
<https://www.forgottenweapons.com/huot-automatic-rifle-the-ross-goes-full-auto/>



## Ross M 10 Mk III Service Rifle by Phil Cregeen © 2012 e-gazette July 2012



The Ross Mk III is a straight- pull, bolt action rifle, with a charger loaded 5 round magazine, made in Quebec by the Ross Rifle Co. for the Canadian armed forces. It has a 30.5 in barrel in .303 British calibre, with four groove RH twist 1 turn in 10 in. The stock is one piece with a top hand-guard to the lower band. The rear sight incorporates an aperture with windage adjustment, a 400 yd open battle sight and a long range sight, the blade fore-sight is fitted with a hooped protector. The safety catch is a flip over type on the bolt and to the left of the receiver is a combined cut-off and bolt release change lever. The rifle weighs 9 lb 14 oz and has an overall length of 50.5 in.



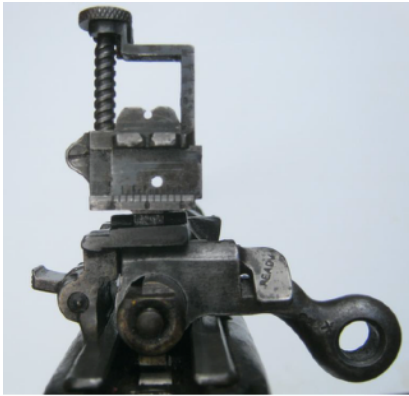
### **Straight pull bolt withdrawn to the rear, note screw thread locking lugs**

The Ross came about as a result of a desire by the Canadian Government to manufacture their own arms following the Boer War. Britain refused to allow the Lee Enfield to be made in Canada and so they turned to Sir Charles Ross, who offered his newly designed straight pull rifle as a suitable alternative and set up a factory in Quebec in 1902. The first military rifle Mk I commenced production in 1903 and then went through a number of improvements resulting in the Mk III in 1910.

Whenever I buy a new firearm I am keen to find out its history, in the case of this Ross M 10 it proved to be an interesting one. Armed with *The Ross Rifle Story* by R Phillips and studying the various marks on the rifle I have put together the following account.

Manufactured in 1915 by the Ross Rifle Company of Quebec (serial number and year stamped on the butt), it was completed sometime after August that year (from the letter E stamped on the barrel denoting chamber enlarged to accommodate the British manufactured Mk VII 303 cartridge). It was sent to the western front with the Canadian Expeditionary Force (butt stamped CEF over 18).

On the western front the Canadian troops experienced problems with the Ross, its complex bolt mechanism suffered in the mud of the trenches and it was prone to jamming, to such an extent that the soldiers lost confidence in their rifle and picked up SMLEs at any opportunity. Much of the



**Rear Sight**

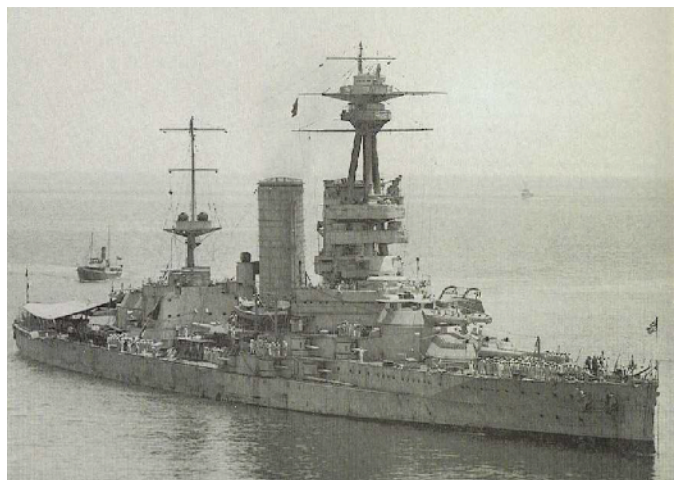
**Cut off**

**Safety**

jamming was later attributed to differences in head space between Canadian and British manufactured ammunition and also poor manufacturing tolerance of the chambers, which lead to the enlarged chambers mentioned above. Another problem of the Ross was that if the bolt was assembled incorrectly it would not lock and would blow back on firing, causing injury to the shooter. After three months of Canadian combat experience the C in C, Field Marshal Sir John French ordered the Canadians to exchange their Ross Rifles for SMLEs. However it was retained as a sniper rifle, as it was found to be more accurate than the Lee Enfield out to 600 yds.

Having ordered 100,000 Ross rifles from Canada to augment the British rifle production, but only actually receiving 66,590 before cancelling the order, Britain retained a further 95,000 of these rifles in exchange for the SMLEs supplied to the CEF. The Ross rifles were used by the British to arm second line forces and some were supplied to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, (this one marked RM on butt plate).

This particular rifle is marked with a number on the left receiver wall and on the bolt with a prefix DA, this stands for "Direccion de Armamentos" (Directory of Armouries) of the Chilean Navy. These rifles formed part of the ships equipment of the Battleship HMS Canada when she was sold to Chile in 1920. One of two battleships under construction for the Chilean Government in Britain, she was purchased by the Admiralty at the outbreak of war serving in the Grand Fleet and seeing action at the Battle of Jutland. From 1920 she served in the Chilean navy as the "*Almirante Latorre*" and was scrapped in 1959 in Japan. The Chilean sailors also experienced problems with the Ross jamming and they were replaced later with Chilean Models -'95 and '98 Mausers, to standardize equipment.



**HMS Canada**

Having languished in Chilean Naval Stores for a number of years these Ross rifles were sold on the surplus market in 1972, some locally and others purchase by Arms International of Montreal found their way into the hands of Canadian collectors.

The observed range of ex-Chilean Naval Ross rifles/bayonets is DA 5 to DA415, considerably more than the 200 attributed to HMS Canada in the Ross Rifle Story, however additional RN ships returned to Chile in 1920 may have been equipped with them. These included Faulknor class destroyers, as the former HMS Faulknor, HMS Botha and HMS Broke.

*Acknowledgements and thanks to: The late John Osborne, Eduardo Rivera and Terry Wilson  
Reference: The Ross Rifle Story by R Phillips, F Dupuis & J Chadwick*

### **Ross Rifles from Terry Wilson's Collection**



**Ross Mk II**



**Top: Ross Mk III, bottom: Ross MK III B (British Contract)**



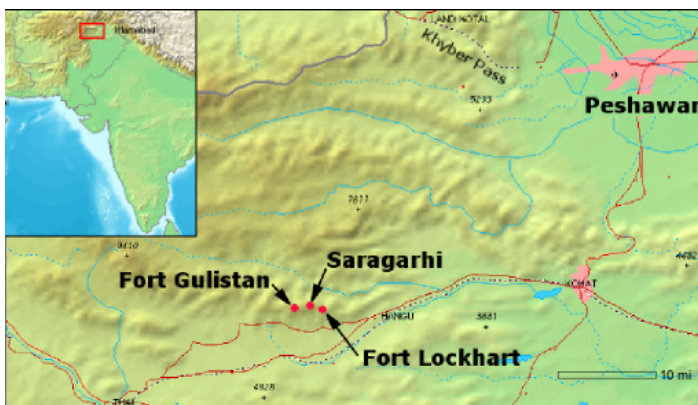
**Ross M 10 Sporting Rifle in 280 Calibre**



## THE BATTLE OF SARAGARHI

The **Battle of Saragarhi** was fought before the Tirah Campaign on 12 September 1897 between the British Indian Empire and the Afghan tribesmen. It occurred in the North-West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan).

In August 1897, several Pashtun tribes in the Tirah region rebelled against the British, and within a month, around 10,000 of them surrounded the various forts on the Samana Ridge, which were held by the 36th Sikhs infantry regiment of the British Indian Army. Around 1,000-1,500 Orakzai tribesmen attacked the Saragarhi post, which was held by 21 soldiers of the 36th Sikhs (now the 4th battalion of the Sikh Regiment) and one civilian employee. The Sikhs, led by Havildar Ishar Singh, chose to fight to the death, in what



is considered by some military historians as one of history's greatest last stands. The post was recaptured two days later by another British Indian contingent.

The 4th battalion of the Sikh Regiment of Indian Army commemorates the battle every year on 12 September, as *Saragarhi Day*.

The Saragarhi post was a block house built to relay communications by heliograph between Fort Gulistan and Fort Lockhart, which while only a few kilometres apart were out of sight of each other.

On the morning of 12 September, a part of the Pashtun rebels invaded the vulnerable small fort at Saragarhi. The battle began at 9 am and ended a little after 3:30 pm with the entire garrison

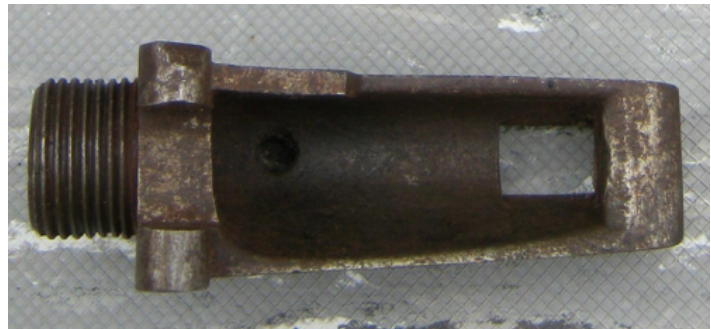
killed in action. Since there was no survivor, little is known of what actually happened at Saragarhi. It was a literal 'last man, last round' battle, which lasted six-and-a-half hours.

Saragarhi had a cliff facing towards the south and a narrow spur linking it to the ridge. It was not practical for more than 80-100 men to attack at one time, but adequate reserves were available for repeated attacks. The Pashtuns initially tried to rush the post but were unsuccessful. They retreated and took cover behind the boulders and continued firing at the post.

As observed from the Gulistan Fort, two Pashtuns had stayed behind to dig under the fort wall to make it collapse to create a breach. Being at a dead angle, they could not be seen by the defenders at Saragarhi. Gulistan tried to warn the post, but the message never reached. Shortly after 3 pm the wall collapsed allowing the Pashtuns to enter the post and finish the action.

**21 Sarfarosh - Saragarhi 1897** is a TV serial currently available on NETFLIX, it is some 65 episodes of 20 minutes each, so quite a saga. While it has historical significance and is quite entertaining it is sadly not a well made film. For example the Sepoys are armed with what look like toy Martini Henrys of musket bore, British troops with a rifle that looks a bit like an SMLE and the Pashtuns with self loading flintlocks that fire with no flint in the cock. I also doubt whether any of the actors have ever fired a real rifle by the way they hold them. Other props also lack realism.

**MYSTERY OBJECT** (below right), answer please to [oilyrag@xtra.co.nz](mailto:oilyrag@xtra.co.nz)  
Last months (below left ), first correct answer was provided by John Collins, who said it is the overside toilet on *Endeavour*. Known to sailors as the Head.



**BUY SELL OR SWAP** *List items free for two issues (\* indicates final listing)*

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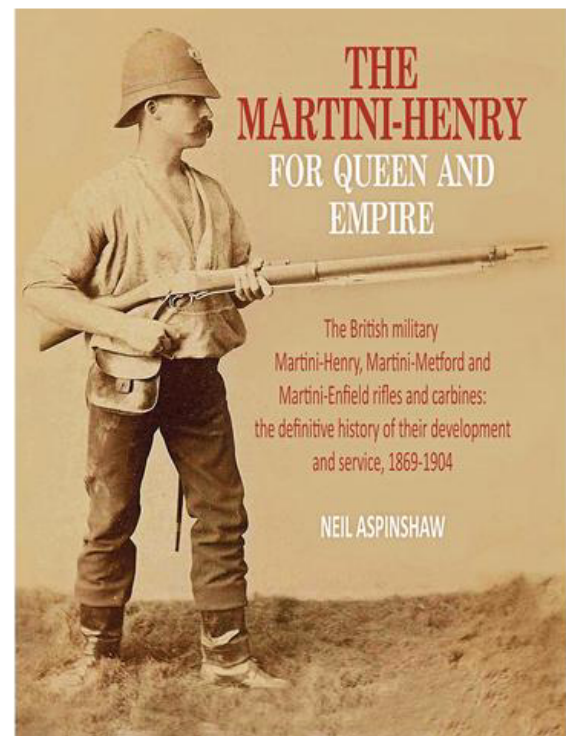
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