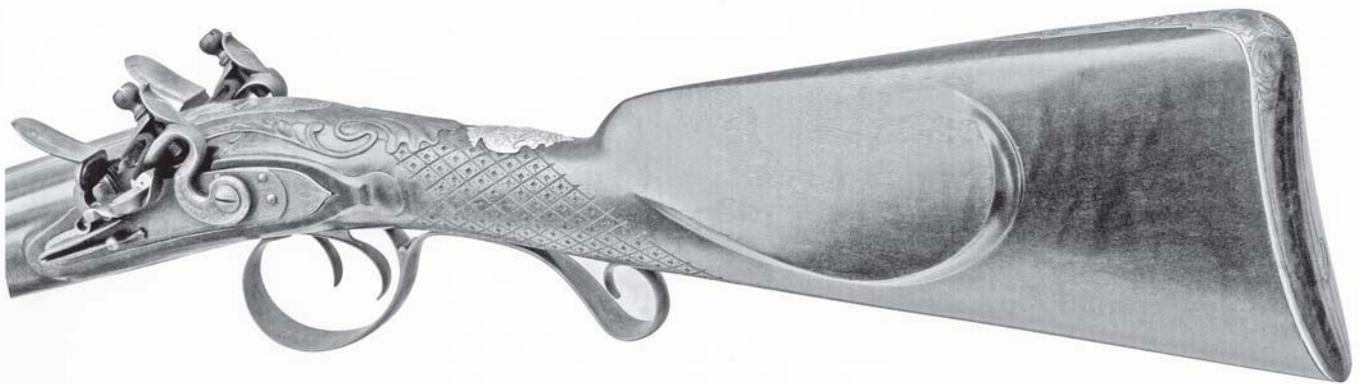


# Double Flint Shotgun

by John Schippers



For many years, I have been having a great time shooting muzzleloading shotguns. My first was a 20 gauge English single barrel shotgun that was just about worn out from heavy use by the time I received it. My uncle gave it to me in 1951, when I was twelve years old. He and my father didn't think that I would ever figure out how to use it. It didn't take me very long to find someone to show me how to load the gun. I used this gun for about 10 years until I could afford to buy a better 12 gauge double barreled percussion shotgun. Since then I have owned many nice shotguns, but I never got as much game as I did with that first shotgun. When I was young I had two things to do, work or go hunting. I think you can guess which one I chose to do. I made my first gun stock in 1954 in my school woodshop. I made it for my father. The stock was made for a Mossberg 20 gauge, and my shop teacher helped me with it. We didn't have a piece of wood big enough to build the stock, so we laminated one together with several layers of 1/4 inch hard maple and black walnut. It turned out to look very nice, but it didn't shoot very good. My father was happy with the gun and showed it to everyone. He was not into hunting like I was and didn't use the gun very often. Many years later I tried using the gun at a trap range and found that it was very difficult to shoot. I hit only 1 out of 12 clay birds. I tried to say something to my father about it and he said back to me, "Stop, that is the best gun I ever owned." It is nice to have a good father.

Over the years I have built several flint fowlers. Most of them were 20 gauge. I enjoy shooting flintlock fowlers much





more than the percussion shotguns. I did have a lot of success with the flintlock, but in the larger shotgun matches I was at a disadvantage shooting against much larger guns with 12, 10, and 8 gauge bores. So I built myself an English 12 gauge single barreled flint shotgun and had much better luck shooting against the bigger guns. Next I decided to build a double, 10 gauge flint shotgun. It was a challenge to build a graceful looking shotgun with large bore barrels. I first stole a pair of Damascus barrels that were in very fine condition from a back action percussion Belgium shotgun that I acquired several years before. I shot this gun several times and had great success with it. The breeches were taken out and replaced with the Nock styled step breech, which made the gun look much slimmer. The wood I used was a piece of curly French Bastion walnut. This walnut is very hard compared to American black walnut. The lock plate, frizzen, hammer, and tumbler are reshaped parts from an L&R John Bailes of London lock kit. I made the rest of the parts to speed up the lock's performance. I made the springs from Swedish spring steel to get a faster working hammer without breaking flints. It took a lot of fussing to get both locks to work together. As you can see from the photos the lock shape was changed a lot before I engraved them. All the parts were cased hardened, polished bright, and then colored gray like the English did with their locks. The rest of the parts, the trigger guard, butt plate, and small parts were color cased. I found the butt plate in a catalog and used it as I received it. The trigger guard that I found didn't satisfy



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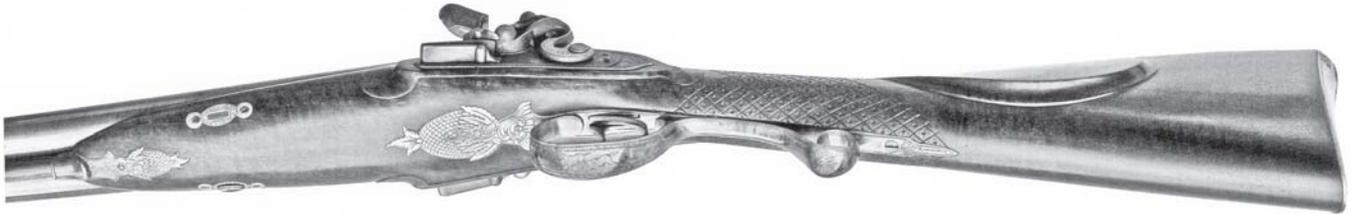
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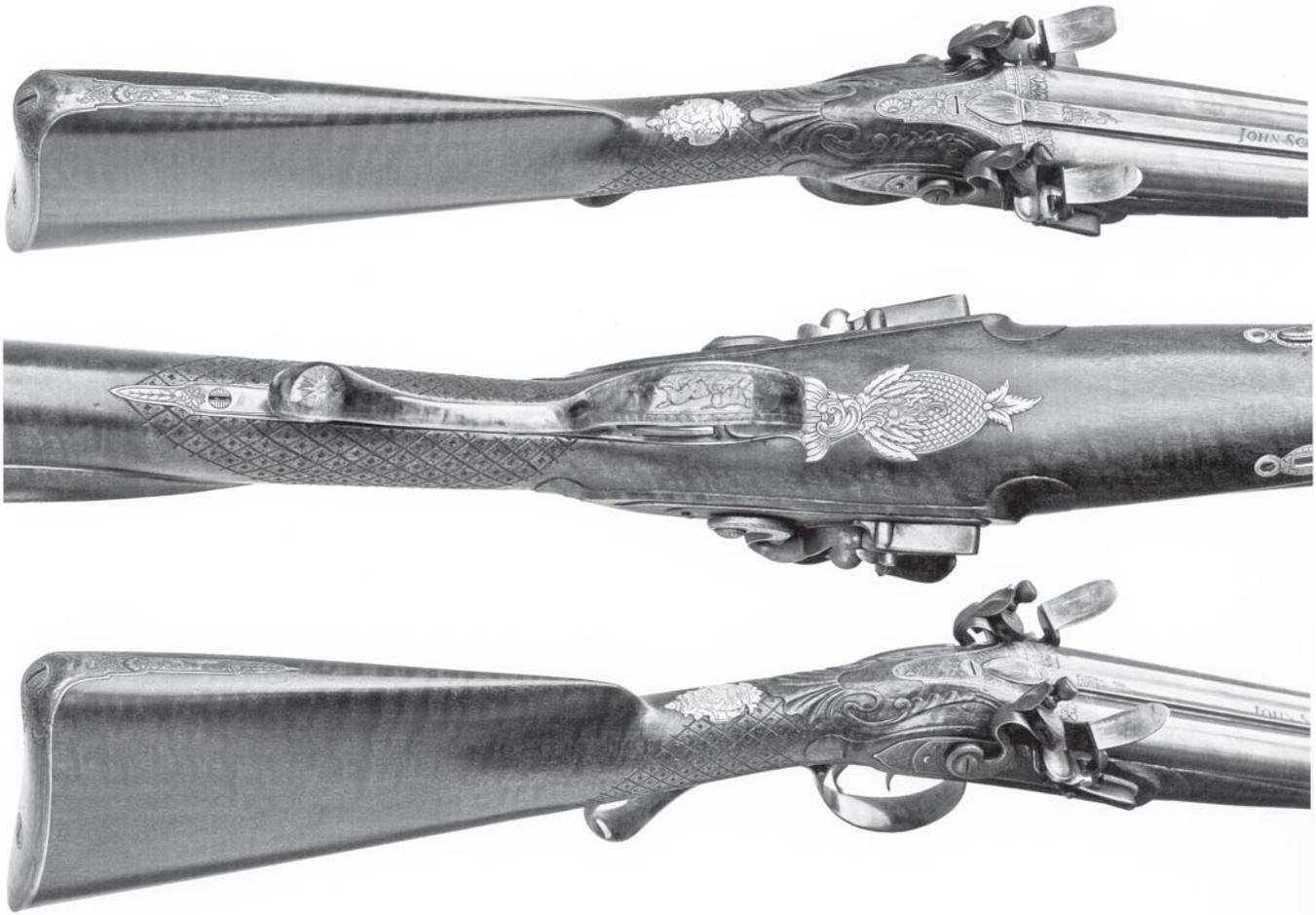
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me, so I cut off the finial from the front part of the guard and welded on a more classic English style shape. The rest of the small parts were hand made to match a high style English gun. The thumb plate was hand chiseled from a piece of brass and then gold plated. I copied a thumb plate that was on a pair of French pistols that I owned. I also lined the pans of the locks with gold as it was done on many high style English guns.

The carving on the stock is of the earlier pre-1800 style. This piece of wood was very tough to carve. The rosettes that are in the center of the checkering were burned in by using a wood burner that you can purchase at a craft store.

They have a screw-in insert that I re-shaped into the shape shown in the photos. I have several different shapes that I use for different guns. I engraved the gun in a high English style to complete the gun.

The color casing was done by Doug Turnbull, and the barrel etching and browning was done by Mike Richey. Mike Brooks helped to rough out the stock.

I thought you all might like to see this gun.

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Mr. Schippers is the author of the book,  
*Engraving Historic Firearms*

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