SSAA (MILDURA) ARMS & MILITARIA COLLECTORS GUILD
Established 1994.
Address: P/O Box 1883, Mildura, Vic, 3502,
1. Website address SSAA Mildura Collectors Guild

LICENCE AUTHORITY 435-332-10Y
Registered Entity 435332 (Victoria Police Licensing Services Division)

2010 – December Issue

THE ROLLING VOLLEY

THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE ARMS AND MILITARIA COLLECTORS OF SUNRAYSIA & OTHER PARTS OF AUSTRALIA

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Meeting: First Wednesday of the month except January at Tyrepower, Corner 9th Street & Madden Ave, Mildura at 7.00 pm.

MESSAGE FROM THE PREZZ

Well another year is well under way, the election has been fought and nearly won by some party, not quite sure who!!!!. But forget them we have important things to worry about. Ranks will be very thin at the show this year, many of our members will be tied up at the National Military Rifle and Pistol Titles, so you may be conscripted to lend a hand. Visited the golden City Collectors Guild Annual Show last Saturday, and what an impressive show it was too, it has improved incredibly over the last few years. Jeff Pannon was there and has added to his Bren Gun with a German MP34 sub-machine gun and an MG08, made famous during WW1 when used against the allies. All in good working order, except for the MG08 which I think is down to a single shot. I managed to find and buy a M71 Cavalry Carbine and after some discussion scored it for a reasonable price. Visited Centreway Firearms and had a long talk to the owner. He has had a shipment of Schmidt Rubin K31 rifles along with matching bayonet, reloading dies, cases etc. See flyer in this edition. He also has some very good VZ24 (Czech) Mausers for sale at $550 plus assorted other gear. Well worth a visit when next in Melbourne. Still a couple of events to consider for Collectors: Arms and Militaria Auction early October and Gun Show in Melbourne mid October.

Happy Collecting El Presidento. (TJ)

THE EDITER'S COMMENT.

There some excellent books on the market at the moment.

ANZAC FURY is the story of the debacle that occurred in Greece/Crete and how close we were to winning except that the leaders of the day again snatched defeat from the bosom of victory. **By Peter Thompson**

25 APRIL 1915, THE DAY THE ANZAC LEGEND WAS BORN is a comprehensive account of the first day of the campaign. **By David Cameron.**

Lost Anzacs, the story of two brothers. One was killed on the first day and the other taken prisoner, finished up on a fruit block in Red Cliffs. **By Greg Kerr.**

Keep those articles coming in.

Just a quick one: Heard that the Australian parliament is suffering from " **electile disfunction"**

The Editor

Gun Feature – 1

HISTORIC FIREARM OF THE MONTH, December 2001:

Italian Carbines of the First World War and Interwar Periods

Type: Bolt Action Carbines
System of Operation: Manual
Caliber: 6.5x52mm
Capacity: 6 round en bloc clip
Sights, front: Blade
Sights, rear: Tangent U-notch
Length: 36.25" (average)
Weight (unloaded): 6 lbs 10 ozs (average)
Barrel: 17.75", 4 grooves, gain twist (average)

ITALY IN THE GREAT WAR - A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Italian society in the early twentieth century boasted one of the most politically aware and socially active bodies politic in Europe. The direct participation of the masses in national political life occurred in 1913 with the introduction of universal suffrage, although women were still excluded. Consequently, on the eve of the First World War (1914-18) Italy appeared on the international scene as a country that was more socially uniform, freer in its choices (which then swayed, often with passionate dispute, between interventionism and
pacifism) and altogether more modern in its organization than immediately after its unification in the late nineteenth century. The cooling of relations with Austria and the renewal of Irredentist designs on the Trentino and Venezia Giulia led to a reversal of Italy's traditional European alliances and she fought on the side of the Allies, together with France and England. The outcome of the war, despite the grave crisis of Caporetto (November 1917), was in Italy's favor. At the Conference of Versailles (1919) Italy received the Trentino, Alto Adige, Venezia Giulia and the Dodecanese, while being refused Fiume and Dalmatia. A reaction to this followed with the occupation of Fiume (1919-20) by the legionaries of Gabriele D'Annunzio.
In the context of the grave political crisis following the war, from which Italy

had emerged victorious but economically ruined due to her efforts, the country underwent a series of political and social agitations that the weak government of the period was unable to control. One remnant of the war was resolved with the Treaty of Rapallo (1920) by which Dalmatia, with the exception of Zadar, went to the
new State of Yugoslavia, formed from the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Italy's possession of Istria was confirmed. Fiume was also declared a free town but was annexed by Italy only three years later with a specific agreement between Italy and Yugoslavia. In this period were founded a number of political parties; Partito Popolare (1919), by Luigi Sturzo, as a continuation of the Democrazia Cristiana; Partito Comunista d'Italia (1921, at Leghorn), from a split with the Partito Socialista and led by Antonio Gramsci; and, finally, the Fasci di Combattimento of Benito Mussolini, previously a socialist leader and an ardent interventionist. This latter movement, after having obtained 35 deputies in the 1921 election, transformed itself into the Partito Nazionale Fascista equipped with a revolutionary program that, after the episode of the March on Rome of 28 October 1922, brought Mussolini to the head of a government.
As can be seen, Italian political history of the early part of the last century is at best convoluted and complex. It should come as small surprise that the number of different types of arms supplied to the Italian soldiery during the war and immediately afterward evidence similar levels of permutation and variation. It is not the intent of this article to clarify this fascinating and underemphasized field of collector interest, but to highlight the carbines carried by Italian forces during and in the years immediately following the Great War.

DEVELOPMENT OF ITALIAN SMOKELESS POWDER REPEATING RIFLES

In 1886, the French Army introduced the world's first small bore smokeless powder repeating rifle, the Lebel Model 1886. While much of the rifle's design was pure nineteenth century, the combination of the revolutionary cartridge and powder rendered the rest of the world's small arms obsolete overnight. As the dust settled over Europe, it was evident that an arms race in the field of infantry weapons was taking place. Germany quickly introduced the Gewehr 88, Britain the Lee-Enfield, and Russia the Mosin-Nagant. Italy was not immune from this frenzy, and her armament industry began working zealously on a new rifle with which to arm the Italian forces. In general, there were two main trends in developing cartridges for the new smokless propellant; one favoring cartridges roughly 8mm in diameter (Germany, Britain, Denmark, Russia), and the other favoring cartridges in the 6.5mm class. Foremost among those nations favoring the 6.5mm was Italy, introducing a 6.5x52mm cartridge in late 1890 that had been developed by the government arsenal in Bologna. The Italian lead was

followed by Rumania (1893), Norway and Sweden (1894), the Netherlands (1895), Luxembourg (1896), Japan (1897), Greece (1903), and Portugal (1904). While all these cartridges were developed independently, and display differing degrees of dimensional dissimilarity, their performance characteristics were substantially similar, launching bullets of between 140 and 160 grains at velocities between 2,300 and 2,500 feet per second.

In 1888, by order of the Ministry of War, the Italian Army established an infantry weapons commission at the School of Musketry in Parma to determine the best design for a new small bore smokeless powder repeating rifle. Presiding over the commission was General Gustavo Parravicino, and the school's secretary was Major Benedetti, an artillery officer. The good major's presence was to prove something of a "ringer." Major Benedetti had been associated for many years with the Brescia weapons factory and was widely recognized expert in the both small arms and artillery design. Major Benedetti was also an early advocate of small caliber rifles with bore diameters between 5mm and 6mm. Due to his influence, experimental barrels in both 6mm and 6.5mm were eventually ordered from the Brescia weapons factory.

6.5x52mm Ammunition. Note the two styles of clips, brass on the left, steel on the right. Both made and issued by the Italian military. The cartridges on the left are Italian military production while those on the right are modern commercial production made by the Prvi Partizan factory in Yugoslavia and currently imported. The Prvi Partizan ammunition proved to be wildly

inaccurate. When measured, it averaged .2615", while the Italian military ammunition averages .2685". While the Prvi Partizan ammunition may yield excellent cases for reloading, it will not yield acceptable accuracy.

A competition was announced and a number of designs rifles were submitted by both Italian and foreign inventors. Over the course of its existence, the commission was to test more than fifty different rifle designs and variations. Despite many excellent featured, none of these met with the commission's approval. In a stormy meeting of December 16 - 17, 1889 the Commission rejected the Mauser, Lee, Bertoldo and Vitali. Between April and September, ten more designs were rejected. On September 23, 1890, the competition was opened to the entire Italian arms industry. By late 1890, the finalized 6.5x52mm cartridge had been approved, and it was decided that only rifles featuring Mannlicher type magazines would be considered. The commission further stated that the Mannlicher type magazine found on the German Gewehr 88, whose clips could be loaded in either direction, was preferable to that of the Austrian type whose clips could be loaded in one direction only. As a result, only two designs were still in the running by early 1891: The Mauser-Mannlicher Tipo 2 and the Fucile Italiano No. 1.

At approximately the same time, Artillery Lieutenant Colonel Garelli had replaced Major Benedetti as secretary of the Commission. Colonel Garelli's contribution was inclusion of "gain-twist" rifling in the design. Barrels with gain twist rifling have a relatively slow twist rate near the chamber that gradually increases in pitch as it approaches the muzzle. For example, while a conventionally rifled bore might have a pitch of one turn in seven inches for the entire length of the bore, a gain-twist barrel might start out at one in twenty near the chamber, be one in thirteen along the barrel's midpoint, and be one in seven near the muzzle. The advantage gained through the use of gain-twist rifling was a lower pressure and temperature in the throat area, and thus longer barrel life. Four groove gain-twist rifling with a pitch of one in nineteen at the breech and one in eight at the muzzle was used in all Carcano rifles produced between 1892 and 1938. The Commission also adopted a bullet jacketed with "maillechort." Receivers were to be manufactured from very high quality "compressed steel," which had been developed by the Kladno Company of Prague.

A number of bolt designs were considered, and and a competition was held with an entry deadline of December 31, 1891. Despite earlier rejection of their proposed designs, both Mauser and Mannlicher competed, and were supplied with samples of the new 6.5mm cartridge and standard rifled barrels (Gain twist was to be kept a military secret well into the twentieth century.) By this time 45 more rifles designs had been submitted, but only

Italian made rifles were considered. All four state arsenals (Terni, Brescia, Torre Annunziata and Torino) submitted candidate designs, and in early 1892 the Commission rendered a decision. Perhaps compromise is a better description of the Commission's findings than decision, as two rifles were chosen, The Mauser-Mannlicher Tipo 2 and the Fucile Italiano No. 1.
The Tipo 2, developed at the Terni arsenal was little more than a modified Gewehr 88 with quadrant sights, no barrel jacket and chambered for the 6.5mm round. The Fucile No. 1 was designed by a design group headed by Lieutenant Colonel (Chief Technician) Salvatore Carcano from the Torino arms factory (Fabbrica Nazionale d'Armi de Torino). Additional development was undertaken to combine the best features of each rifle; the receiver, bolt, and barrel of the Carcano rifle was to be combined with the magazine of the Mannlicher. Licensing fees amounting to some 300,000 lire were paid for the right to use features found on the Mannlicher rifle. The Mannlicher magazine used an en-bloc clip that held six cartridges (the 6.5mm's smaller bore and case diameter contributed to this "high capacity") and could be inserted from either end.
On March 4 - 5, 1891 Italy adopted the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle as the Fucile di Fanteria Modello 1891 (Infantry Rifle, Model of 1891). Two carbine variants were soon adopted. The Moschetto Modello 1891 (Carbine, Model of 1891, commonly referred to as the "cavalry carbine" owing to its folding bayonet) on June 9th 1893, , and late in 1897 the Moschetto Modello 1891 per Truppe Speciali (Carbine, Model of 1891 for Special Troops).
The Carcano was to serve Italy well, and essentially unmodified, for more than fifty years, and in in auxiliary capacity, for more than seventy. Only very minor changes were made to the basic design, the extractor being one of the most significant. In 1912 the extractor, which had been mounted through a slot in the the center of the lower locking lug on the bolt was changed to a position just above the lug. While both systems served well, replacement of the extractor is simplified on the later bolt, as is manufacture. The early bolts may be found in any Carcano as a replacement and are commonly referred to as "split lug extractor" bolts.

CARCANO ACTION AND MECHANISM

The Carcano is a straight forward bolt action that is both rugged and well suited for military use. The receiver begins as a forging which is milled and machined to final dimensions. The Carcano has a large receiver ring (1.335" in diameter) with a small projection on the underside forming a recoil shoulder. The inside of the receiver ring is threaded to accept the barrel shank and has a thin collar in the center, against which the breech end of the barrel abuts. The barrel breech is flat except for a thin ring which fits inside the receiver collar and around the head of the bolt. The rear of the receiver ring is milled to form locking lug recesses. The left receiver wall is

much higher than that on the right, but lacks a thumb notch. A long opening is milled in the bottom of the receiver for the magazine. The rear end of this opening is wide enough to accept both the cartridges and the en-bloc clip, while the front end is just wide enough to accept the body of the cartridge. The forward edge of the opening is angled toward the chamber to form a feed ramp which ensured both positive and reliable cartridge feeding.

The receiver is of the split bridge type, with a tang extending some 2.5" to the rear. The fire control mechanism is mounted below the receiver bridge and tang. The sear is attached to the receiver by and pivots on a pin mounted transversely through the bottom of the receiver bridge. A projection on the rear of the sear projects upward through a hole in the tang into a groove where the sear can engage the cocking piece on the bolt. Sear tension is maintained by a coil spring that sits between recesses in the front of the sear and the receiver. The trigger is attached to the sear and pivots on a pin through the sear. The trigger's upper arm bears against the bottom of the receiver and has two humps which yield the rifle's two stage pull.

The ejector is a collared pin with a blade shaped head, positioned over and inside the sear pin and extending upward through a hole in the receiver. A long tapering groove is milled into the front half of the bolt body to allow the ejector to gradually rise, as the bolt is opened, to a height where it will contact the head of the case and eject it from the action. It is a very simple and very efficient arrangement. The bolt stop is just as efficient and simple. It is a bar extending upward through a hole in the bottom right side of the receiver which projects into the right locking lug raceway in the receiver bridge. The lower portion of the bolt stop is attached to an arm on the trigger. Pulling the trigger to the rear lowers the bolt stop so that the bolt can be removed.

The bolt handle is located near the center of the bolt, and when the bolt is closed and locked, the heavy rectangular base of the bolt handle sits forward of the receiver bridge and acts as a safety lug. The bolt has dual opposed locking lugs, and the bolt face is recessed for the cartridge rim. The rim of the recess is cut away for a quarter of the circumference to allow clearance for the extractor hook. Another quarter is cut away beyond the bottom of the extractor hook to enable the cartridge to snap under the extractor during feeding, providing a "controlled feed" that avoids double loading. The extractor itself is a single piece of spring steel about two inches long, and fits tightly into a dovetail in the forward portion of the bolt. A projection under the front end of the extractor fits into a slot in the bolt, and prevents the extractor being pulled from the bolt during operation.

Carcano bolt, as seen from top down.

Typical Carcano bolt, as seen from underside. Note that prior to

disassembly the cocking piece has
been rotated to the fired position.
First step in disassembly Carcano bolt. The cocking retaining nut is removed. The loaded locking pin (top, behind must be depressed while removing
piece retaining nut and cocking
piece removed.
To remove the safety/bolt sleeve, it is
rotated counterclockwise as it moves
to the rear under pressure of the
striker spring (make sure to control
these pieces lest they be launched into
orbit!). The stud on the safety will
enter a milled recess in the bolt body,
allowing it to be removed to the rear.
Once it is removed, the striker and
striker spring are pulled out to the
rear.
Fully disassembled bolt
The firing mechanism comprises the firing pin, mainspring, firing pin nut, cocking piece, and bolt sleeve. There is also a spring and plunger in the cocking piece that serves to lock the firing pin nut in position. The mainspring is held compressed between a shoulder on the one piece firing pin and the bolt sleeve, behind which is the cocking piece. All these components are retained by the firing pin nut which is screwed onto the back of the firing pin. A flat on the firing pin mates with a similar shaped portion of the cocking piece so as to prevent either part from turning relative to the other. The Carcano's bolt sleeve serves a dual purpose. Not only does it keep the firing mechanism in the bolt, it also acts as a safety. A small lug on the forward portion of the forward portion of the bolt sleeve slides into a groove and notch milled into the rear of the bolt body. When the action is cocked, the bolt sleeve is held in the forward position by the lug engaging in the notch. The pressure of the mainspring holds the lug within the notch so that it rotates with the bolt. When the bolt is closed and locked, part of the flange on the rear of the bolt sleeve is also engaged in a notch cut into the receiver tang. This makes keeps the bolt sleeve in place and there is little chance of a case or primer rupture blowing it free. A cocking notch is cut into the rear of the bolt body, which the cocking cam on the cocking piece engages. The cocking cam extends into the left locking lug raceway. To place the bolt sleeve in the "safe" position, the tab on the cocking piece is pushed slightly forward and and rotated up. The bolt sleeve is then partly released and allowed to move back against the cocking piece, easing spring tension on the firing pin within the bolt. The firing pin is also held to the rear, away from the primer, and the bolt is locked in the closed position.
The action is held in the stock by two guard screws which pass through holes

in the guard/magazine and thread into holes in the receiver. There is a very small recoil lug on the receiver, which alone would be wholly inadequate to absorb and distribute recoil if it was inlet directly into the stock. The Carcano uses a a t-shaped bushing and spacer through which the forward guard screw passes. The top of the T is a heavy metal bar about 1.2" long and .4" deep, with the top grooved to take the small lug on the receiver. With the t-bushing bedded into the stock, and anchored between the triggerguard tang and the receiver by the guard screw, the action is firmly anchored into the stock. The triggerguard/magazine is formed from a single piece of steel, with a wide, large trigger opening. The follower arm pivots on a pin through the lower front of the magazine, and is given upward tension by a flat spring dovetailed into the magazine housing. The bottom front half of the magazine housing is closed, the rear being open for ejection of empty six-round en-bloc clips. The clip is held in place by the clip latch, and can be released by pressing the clip latch located in the front of the triggerguard bow.

CARCANO CARBINES

Model 1891 Cavalry Carbine (Moschetto Modello 91 da Cavalleria)

Caliber Sights Weight
Barrel
Length
OAL

On June 9, 1893 the Italian Army adopted the M91 cavalry carbine, a shortened M91 rifle with a permanently attached folding bayonet. Production was to continue, with the design virtually unaltered, until 1938. Early examples had a reinforcing lug through the stock just forward of the front guard screw. These initial versions were not equipped with a hand guard and featured a split lug extractor. The adjustable rear sight was graduated from 600 meters to 1500 meters, and when the sight leaf was rotated fully forward and into a recess in the handguard, a 300 meter battle sight was exposed.

Cavalry carbine rear sight

Early Cavalry carbine bolts featured a split lug extractor, where the extractor was positioned in a cut out in the lower front locking lug. In 1912 this was changed, and the extractor was mounted

slightly above and curving down past the front of the lug. Both systems were quite functional, and many Carcanos are still found with split lug extractor bolts. A handguard was added sometime after 1912, and most M91 Cavalry carbines appear to have been retrofitted with a hand guard. (Examples without a hand guard are quite rare.) As with the M91 rifle, the Cavalry carbines were chambered for the 6.5x52mm and manufactured with gain twist barrels. Initial production was undertaken by Brescia Arsenal and earliest observed serial number is
C259, dated 1894. Production continued through the end of the First World War. Production resumed in the 1930's with the latest Brescia built gun dated 1936. Other manufacturers included Terni Arsenal, which produced the M91 Cavalry carbine from sometime in the early 1920's up through 1937, and Gardone Val Trompia from 1935 through 1937. In the mid 1930's Terni and Gardone Cavalry carbines appeared with the barrel at the receiver being round and lacking the traditional flats on the chamber area found on all other Carcanos up to that point. There are at least nine different variations on the locking mechanism for the folding bayonet.

Model 1891 for Special Troops (Moschetto Modello 91 per Truppe Speciali)

Caliber Sights Weight
Barrel
Length
OAL

The Model 91 Carbine for Special Troops (M91 TS) was adopted in late 1897 to arm those troops for whom the standard long infantry rifle would be an encumbrance, such as engineers, signalmen, artillery troops and couriers. The oldest serial number noted is A7611 which dates from 1898. Initially, the first M91 TS carbines were made from cut down M91 rifles altered with the addition of a cavalry carbine rear sight, a straight bolt handle, a standard bayonet lug and a recoil lug in the stock at the front magazine bolt. The

design that was eventually standardized, and produced between 1897 and 1919 had a bent bolt, and was equipped with either dual sling swivels, side only swivels or bottom only sling swivels, a standard carbine rear sight, adjustable 600 to 1500 meters with a battle sight set at 300 meters. The M91 TS has a cleaning rod that screws into the forend, as with the infantry rifle, and fires the standard 6.5x52mm cartridge and six shot Carcano clip.

Model 91 TS Bayonet

Close up of 91 TS bayonet showing transverse locking slot and pushbutton release at rear of pommel

Top down view of 91TS bayonet locking mechanism

One of the most unusual features of the M91 TS is the bayonet, or rather its mounting system. The blade and general layout are the same as that of the M91 rifle bayonet. However the M91 TS bayonet's mounting slot is perpendicular to the bore, as opposed to conventional mounting slots that are parallel to the bore. Known as a side mount bayonet, installation is accomplished by rotating the bayonet one quarter turn clockwise around the axis of the barrel. The release button is located to the rear of the pommel; the bayonet is removed by pressing the button inward and rotating the bayonet counter clockwise. Ostensibly, the design was implemented to prevent an enemy soldier from snatching it off the rifle in hand to hand combat. Of course, if the enemy soldier is close enough to grab your bayonet's release mechanism, you've got other worries. Later production M91 TS carbines used a modified bayonet lug that took the standard M91 rifle bayonet.

91 TS upper band. Note transverse bayonet lug.

Model 1891/24 (Moschetto Modello 91/24)

Caliber Sights Weight
Barrel
Length
OAL

By the time Mussolini came to power in 1922, the Italian arms industry had fallen into stagnation (as had the rest of the Italian economy), and consequently there were few new small arms developments. In 1924 the Model 91/24 was produced from existing stocks of Model 91 rifles left over from the First World War veterans. It is likely that muzzle wear was the impetus for the conversion. Gain twist rifling yields very long barrel life at the chamber area, so shortening the barrels to approximately 17 13/16" was a way to cheaply produce usable rifles. Some M91/24's are found with barrels that have been down in diameter. 4.75" in front of the receiver the barrels are turned down from .765" to .600". The stocks are inlet to the same shape, indicating that which mean new stocks were used on these rifles. M91/24's were rebuilt between 1924 and 1928, and the rebuild dates will appear on the barrel flat near the original date, in a circle.
Some M91/24's will be found with a barrel extension added to the muzzle to make the overall barrel length exceed eighteen inches. In 1945, the law required rifle barrels had to be at least eighteen inches long. Consequently, to make Carcano carbines legal the extension had to be added. Later the law was changed to sixteen inch minimum for rifles. The muzzle extension will identify a rifle as a World War Two bring back or a very early import. In Bavaria after the war, some M91/24's were used as police carbines. These are marked on the left side of the receiver in large letters, BAVARIA POLICE, BAVARIA RURAL POLICE, and are not very common.

24 barrel bands. Note rifle type foresight and
standard bayonet lug

91/24 rebuild
stamp indicating
remanufacture
at Terni in 1927

91/24 rear sight, a modified rifle type.
Note 300m battle sigh at rear of sight
leaf.

The front sight is the standard M91 rifle type, the rear is a modified M91 rifle sight that is adjustable from 600 meters to 1500 meters. (The original design called for a sight graduated from 600 to 2000 meters.) The leaf is altered for use on the carbine. the battle sight is 300 meters, when the sight is folded forward into the handguard. The 91/24's saw a great deal of service use, and will rarely be found in excellent shape. In North Africa, in order to permit more rapid cooling, some M91/24's had the handguard cut off the rifle just below the upper band. This was done when it became hard

to close the bolt on a round when the rifle was hot.
The M91/24 uses the standard M91 bayonet. Sling swivel variations include, dual, side only and bottom only. Side swivels use a narrow sling, 7/8" wide. Bottom swivels use a wide sling, 1 1/4" wide. (Original wide slings are very rare.)

Model 1891/28 (Moschetto Modello 91/28)
(follows 91/24 pattern)

Caliber Sights Weight
Barrel
Length
OAL

The M91/28 was the first entirely new Carcano rifle to be produced after the First World War. It would be ten more years before the next batch would arrive, the M38's. The 91/28 is a conventional T.S. carbine and like the M91/24, it uses the M91 rifle bayonet. It was also designed with sling attachments in three positions, dual (both side and bottom), side only and bottom only. The side using the narrow sling, and the bottom using the wide sling. The rear sight is like that of the M91 T.S. as is the front blade. The 91/28 was delivered in 6.5X52mm only, and used the same six round clip and gain twist rifling as all earlier Carcanos.
91/28 barrels are dated between 1928 and 1938 (markings are 28 to 38). The 91/28's were produced by Terni, Gardone, Beretta, FNA-Brescia, Lorenzotti Brescia and MBT (Metallurgica Bresciana). There is a variation of the M91/28 which has a grenade launcher attached to it, it is called "Tromboni Launchi Bombe" or "Tromboncino Lanciabombe Modello '28". 1929 saw the start of stamping the Fascist date on some Carcano barrels, anno VII, seventh year of Mussolini's government, and 91/28's produced after this date are so marked. Many M91 TS carbines were upgraded to M91/28 specifications. These can be identified by being made by Brescia between 1897 and 1919 and the barrel stops for the earlier side mount TS bayonets. The conversions use the M91 type bayonet.

CONCLUSION

The Carcano is one of the most underrated and under-collected military rifles available today. Part of this is due to rumors about the Carcano's poor accuracy or the poor quality of the steel used, and part due to the relative lack of interest in Italian military history. These rumors are universally false. Carcanos were made from materials of extremely high quality, and

can boast a history of technical innovation that is unmatched by any other design. These innovations include controlled feed (not adopted by Mauser until 1896), an action that cocks on opening (not adopted by Mauser until 1898) and the use of gain twist rifling. Indeed, the Carcano can boast the longest unaltered service life of any bolt action rifle; the Model 91 rifle soldiered from 1891 to 1943, an astounding fifty two years, and in certain parts of the world, continues to serve!

The strength and workmanship of the Carcano action is beyond doubt. We checked headspace on four different carbines and two long rifles, all of which had seen long and arduous service. Despite their age, number of rounds fired, and the adverse conditions of their service lives (they were First AND Second World War veterans!), none of the bolts closed on a NO-GO gauge. As an aside, checking the headspace dimension on a Carcano can be challenging, as neither of the major gauge manufacturers (Clymer and Forster) offers gauges for the 6.5x52mm as a standard item. However, Clymer Manufacturing will manufacture a set of specialty gauges in any desired caliber at a cost of $45.00 per gauge. We ordered a set of 6.5x52mm headspace gauges from Clymer Manufacturing in the GO (1.6821") and NO-GO (1.6881") sizes. Neither 6.5x52mm ammunition nor the headspace gauges are made to specifications laid down by the US based Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturer's Institute (SAAMI). Rather, the specifications are those set by the Commission Internationale Permanente (CIP). In Europe proof houses, or testing facilities for firearms and ammunition, have set European standards since the 1800s. The CIP is an international association of proof houses. That being said, it is also worth noting that the CIP and SAAMI are working towards the development of international standards with the goal of interchangeable SAAMI and CIP standards.

In addition to these technical factors, the Carcano is an excellent field for both novice and veteran collector. There are two long rifle variants, more than half a dozen carbine variants, several bayonet types, three chamberings (6.5mm, 7.35mm, and 7.92mm), and a plethora of subvariants. The rifles are all well marked with proof and inspection stamps, and relatively inexpensive. Currently they are widely available from both wholesalers and retail channels. Indeed, there is little more to say than Avante amici!

. GUN ARTICLE TWO

The “Enfield” Revolvers

Enfield Revolver is the name applied to two totally separate models of self-extracting British handgun designed and manufactured at the government-owned Royal Small Arms Factory in Enfield; initially the .476 calibre (actually 11.6 mm) Revolver Enfield Mk I/Mk II revolvers (from 1880ï 1889), and later the .38/200 calibre Enfield No. 2 Mk I (from 1923ï 1957).

The .476 calibre **Enfield Mk I** and **Mk II** revolvers were the official sidearm of both the British Army and the Northwest Mounted Policeð as well as being issued to many other Colonial units throughout the British Empireð and the later model .38/200 **Enfield No. 2 Mk I** revolver was the standard British/Commonwealth sidearm in the Second World War, alongside the Webley Mk IV and Smith & Wesson Victory Model revolvers chambered in the same calibre. The term "Enfield Revolver" is not applied to Webley Mk VI revolvers built by RSAF Enfield between 1923 and 1926.

Enfield Mk I & Mk II Revolvers

The first models of Enfield revolverð the Mark I and Mark IIð were official British military sidearms from 1880 through 1887, and issue sidearms of the Northwest Mounted Police in Canada from 1883 until 1911

NWMP Commissioner Acheson G. Irvine ordered 200 Mark 2s in 1882, priced at C$15.75 each, which were shipped by London's Montgomery and Workman in November that year, arriving in December They replaced the Adams.]Irvine liked them so much, in one of his final acts as Commissioner, he ordered another 600, which were delivered in September 1885 his replacement, Lawrence W. Herchmer, reported the force was entirely outfitted with Enfields (in all 1,079 were provided) and was pleased with them, but concerned about the .476 round being too potent. The first batch was stamped *NWMP-CANADA* (issue number between) after delivery; later purchases were not. They were top-break single- or double-action, and fitted with lanyard rings.]

Worn spindle arms would fail to hold empty cases on ejection, and worn pivot pins could cause barrels to become loose, resulting in inaccuracy. Its deep rifling would allow firing of slugs of between .449 and .476 in (11.4 and 12.1 mm) diameter. Complaints began arising as early as 1887, influenced in part by the British switching to Webleys and by 1896, hinge wear and barrel loosening were a real issue. Beginning in late 1904, the Mark II began to loose in favor of the .45 calibre Colt New Service revolver, but the Enfield remained in service until 1911.

The .476 Enfield cartridge the Enfield Mk I/Mk II were chambered for fired a 265 gr (17.2 g) lead bullet, loaded with 18 gr (1.2 g) of black powder. The cartridge was, however, found to be somewhat underpowered during the Afghan War and other contemporary Colonial conflicts, lacking the stopping power believed necessary for military use at the time.

Unlike most other self-extracting revolvers (such as the Webley service revolvers or the Smith & Wesson No. 3 Revolver), the Enfield Mk I/Mk II was somewhat complicated to unload, having an Owen Jones selective extraction/ejection system which was supposed to allow the firer to eject spent cartridges, whilst retaining live rounds in the cylinder. The Enfield Mk I/Mk II had a hinged frame, and when the barrel was unlatched, the cylinder would move forward, operating the extraction system and allowing the spent cartridges to simply fall out. The idea was that the cylinder moved forward far enough to permit fired cases to be completely extracted (and ejected by gravity), but not far enough to permit live cartridges (ie, those with projectiles still present, and thus longer in overall length) from being removed in the same manner.

The system was obsolete as soon as the Enfield Mk I was introduced, especially as it required reloading one round at a time via a gate in the side (much like the Colt Single Action Army or the Nagant M1895 revolvers). Combined with the somewhat cumbersome nature of the revolver, and a tendency for the action to foul or jam when extracting cartridges, the Enfield Mk I/Mk II revolvers were never popular and eventually replaced in 1889 by the .455 calibre Webley Mk I revolver.

Enfield No 2 Mk I Revolver

After the First World War, it was decided by the British Government that a smaller and lighter .38 calibre (9.65 mm) sidearm firing a long, heavy 200 grain (13 g) soft lead bullet would be preferable to the large Webley service revolvers using the .455 calibre (11.6 mm) round. While the .455 had proven to be an effective weapon for stopping enemy soldiers, the recoil of the .455 cartridge complicated marksmanship training. The authorities began a search for a double-action revolver with less weight and recoil that could be quickly mastered by a minimally-trained soldier, with a good probability of hitting an enemy with the first shot at extremely close ranges By using such a long, heavy, round-nose lead bullet in a .38 calibre cartridge, it was found that the bullet, being minimally stabilised for its weight and calibre, tended to 'keyhole' or tumble longitudinally when striking an object, theoretically increasing wounding and stopping ability of human targets at short ranges At the time, the .38 calibre Smith & Wesson cartridge with 200-grain (13 g) lead bullet, known as the .38/200, was also a

popular cartridge in civilian and police use (in the USA, the .38/200 or 380/200 was known as the *.38 Super Police* load).

Type	Service pistol
Place of origin	United Kingdom
Service history	
In service	1932ï 1963
Used by	United Kingdom & Colonies, British Commonwealth,
Wars	World War II, Korean War, British colonial conflicts, numerous others
Production history	
Designer	RSAF Enfield, Webley & Scott
Designed	1928
Manufacturer	RSAF Enfield
Produced	1932ï 1957
Number built	approx 270,000
Variants	Enfield No 2 Mk I*, Enfield No 2 Mk I**
Specifications	
Weight	1.7 lb (765 g), unloaded
Length	10.25 in (260 mm)
Cartridge	.380" Revolver Mk I or Mk IIz

Calibre	.38/200 (9.65 mm)
Action	Double Action revolver (Mk I* and Mk I** Double Action Only)
Rate of fire	20ï 30 rounds/minute
Muzzle velocity	620 ft/s (189 m/s)
Effective range	15 yards (13 m)
Maximum range	200 yd
Feed system	6-round cylinder
Sights	fixed front post and rear notch

Webley Mk IV .38/200 revolver.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Webley_Military_Mark_IV_1793.jpg

Webley Mk IV .38/200 revolver. The similarities between the Webley and Enfield designs are rather obvious.

Consequently, the British firm of Webley & Scott tendered their Webley Mk IV revolver in .38/200 calibre.[28] Rather than adopting it, the British authorities took the design to the Government-run Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield, and the Enfield factory came up with a revolver that was very similar to the Webley Mk IV .38, but internally slightly different. The Enfield-designed pistol was quickly accepted under the designation *Revolver, No 2 Mk I*, and was adopted in 1931,[29] followed in 1938 by the Mk I* (spurless hammer, double action only),[30] and finally the Mk I** (simplified for wartime production) in 1942

Webley sued the British Government for £2,250, being "costs involved in the research and design" of the revolver. Their action was contested by Enfield, who stated that the Enfield No 2 Mk I was actually designed by Captain Boys (the Assistant Superintendent of Design, famous for the Boys Rifle) with assistance from Webley & Scott, and not the other way

aroundð accordingly, their claim was denied. By way of compensation, however, the Royal Commission on Awards to Inventors awarded Webley & Scott £1,250

Variants

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Enfield-No2.jpg
Enfield No.2 Mk I* revolver, used by the Tank Corps, Commandos & Marines. The No. 2 Mk I* configuration was double-action only and is therefore missing the hammer spur that would enable it to be manually cocked by the firer.

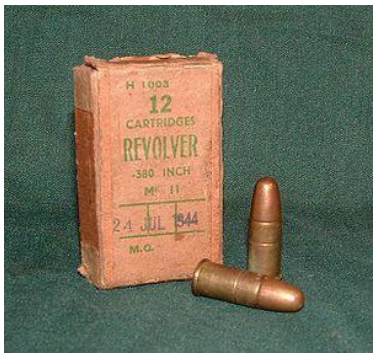
There were two main variants of the Enfield No 2 Mk I revolver. The first was the **Mk I***, which had a spurless hammer and was double action only, meaning that the hammer could not be thumb-cocked by the shooter for each shot. Additionally, in keeping with the revolver's purpose as a close-range weapon, the handgrips, now made of plastic, were redesigned to improve grip when used in rapid double-action fire; the new handgrip design was given the designation Mk II. The majority of Enfields produced were either Mk I* or modified to that standard The second variant was the **Mk I****, which was a 1942 variant of the Mk I* simplified in order to increase production, but was discontinued shortly thereafter as a result of safety concerns over some of the introduced modifications.

The vast majority of Enfield No 2 Mk I revolvers were modified to Mk I* during WWII, generally as they came in for repair or general maintenance the official explanation of the change to the Mk I* version was that the Tank Corps had complained the spur on the hammer was catching on protrusions inside tanks, but most historians nowadays believe that the real reason was that the Mk I* version was cheaper and faster to manufacture.http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enfield_revolver_-cite_note-35#cite_note-35 When used in the manner in which British forces trained (rapid double-action fire at very close ranges), the No 2 Mk I* is at least as accurate as any other service pistol of its time, because of the relatively light double action trigger pull. It is not, however, the best choice for deliberately-aimed, long-distance shooting ð the double action pull will throw the most competent shooter's aim off enough to noticeably affect accuracy at ranges of more than 15 yards (14 m) or so Some unit Armourers are known to have retrofitted the Enfield No 2 Mk I* back to the Mk I variant, but this was never an official policy and appears to have been done on an individual basis. Despite officially being declared obsolete at the end of WWII, the Enfield (and Webley revolvers) were not completely phased out in favour of the Browning Hi-Power until April 1969.

The Enfield No 2 is very fast to reloadð as are all British top-break revolversð because of its automatic ejector, which simultaneously removes all six cases from the cylinder.

British combat experience during WWII with the .38/200 Enfield revolvers seemed to confirm that, *for the average soldier*, the Enfield No. 2 Mk I could be used far more effectively than the bulkier and heavier .455 calibre Webley revolvers that had been issued during WWI. **http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enfield_revolver-cite_note-38#cite_note-38** Perhaps because of the relatively long double-action trigger pull compared to other pistols capable of single-action fire, the double-action-only Mk I* revolvers were not popular with troops, many of whom took the first available opportunity to exchange them in favour of Smith & Wesson, Colt, or Webley revolvers.

Ammunition



The Enfield No.2 Mk I was designed for use with the .38 S&W cartridge, now officially termed the 380/200, Revolver Mk I, but also known as the .38/200. It had a 200 gr (13 g). unjacketed round-nose, lead bullet of .359" diameter that developed a muzzle velocity of 620 - 650 ft/s (200 m/s).

Just prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, British authorities became concerned that the soft unjacketed lead bullet used in the 380/200 might be considered as violating the laws of land warfare governing deforming or 'explosive bullets'. A new .38 loading was introduced for use in combat utilizing a 178-grain (11.5 g), gilding-metal jacketed lead bullet; new foresights were issued to compensate for the new cartridge's ballistics and change to the point of aim.[33] The new cartridge was accepted into Commonwealth Service as "Cartridge, Pistol, .380 Mk IIz", firing a 178 - 180 grain (11.7 g) full metal jacket round-nose bullet. The 380/200 Mk I lead bullet cartridge was continued in service, originally restricted to training and marksmanship practice However, after the outbreak of war, supply exigencies forced British authorities to use both the 380/200 Mk I and the .380 Mk IIz loadings interchangeably in combat. U.S. ammunition manufacturers such as Winchester-Western supplied 380/200 Mk I cartridges to British forces throughout the war.

Other manufacturers

The vast majority of Enfield No 2 revolvers were made by RSAF (Royal Small Arms Factory) Enfield, but wartime necessities meant that numbers were produced elsewhere. Albion Motors in Scotland made the Enfield No 2 Mk I* from 1941ï 1943, whereupon the contract for production was passed onto Coventry Gauge & Tool Co. By 1945, 24,000 Enfield No 2 Mk I*

and Mk I** revolvers had been produced by Albion/CG&T. The Howard Auto Cultivator Company (HAC) in New South Wales, Australia tooled up and began manufacturing the Enfield No 2 Mk I* and I** revolvers in 1941, but the production run was very limited (estimated at around 350 or so revolvers in total), and the revolvers produced were criticized for being non-interchangeable, even with other HAC-produced revolvers. Very few HAC revolvers are known to exist, and it is thought by many collectors that most of the HAC revolvers may have been destroyed in the various Australian Gun Amnesties and "Buy-Backs".

BULLS EYE RUN - 2011.

In 2011 the Guild will be making an effort to travel North into the Colony of NSW and attend Lithgow, a Gun Show or two around Sydney, some museums and as many Gun Dealers as we can fit in on an extended weekend-week. Already local members are depositing cash into the Bulls Eye account as a form of budgeting so they will have plenty to spend on goodies located during the trip.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Membership renewals are due. By the 31st of December each year. You are required to be a current member of the SSAA and we certainly would like to see a current photocopy of that membership along with your renewal.

Application forms can be obtained from our website.
SSAA Mildura Collectors Guild (Google) or
http://www.ssaamildura.org/cg/index.htm

.
Tim (Membership Secretary.)

OUR LOCAL WEBSITE.

The local Branch of SSAA, Mildura VO-8. Has a website that has been up and running for 2 years now. The address to save is:-

Sporting Shooters Association of Australia - Mildura Branch

From there have a look around at our sister sub clubs, If you're a shooter then have a look at the Range programs and you'll see that there's plenty on in Mildura, if you

decide to holiday here. Anyway the site is worth the value for the links, renewal forms and newsletters.

The Last Post.

The Song & The Story behind the Music.

Did you know that ñThe Last Postò is a Song?

And, do you know the story behind the song? If not, I think you will be interested to find out about its humble beginnings.

During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moans of a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention.

Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment.

When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead.

The Captain lit a lantern and suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier. It was his own son. The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, the boy enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial, despite his enemy status. His request was only partially granted.

The Captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral.

The request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate.

The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform.

This wish was granted.

The haunting melody, we now know as 'The Last Post' used at military funerals was born.

The words are:

Day is done.
Gone the sun.
From the lakes
From the hills.
From the sky.
All is well.
Safely rest.
God is nigh.

Fading light.
Dims the sight.
And a star.
Gems the sky.
Gleaming bright.
From afar.
Drawing nigh.
Falls the night.

Thanks and praise.
For our days.
Neath the sun
Neath the stars.
Neath the sky
As we go.
This we know.

It certainly kindles a deeper respect for the song than before.

JOKES, 1. Cheating wife

A man returns home a day early from a business trip. Itôs after midnight. While en route home he asks the cabby if he would be a witness. The man suspects his wife is

having an affair and he wants to catch her in the act. For $100, the cabby agrees. Quietly arriving home, the husband and cabby tip toe into the Bedroom. The husband switches on the lights, yanks the blanket back and there is his wife in bed with another man! As the husband puts a gun to the naked manôs head, the wife shouts, 'Donôt do it! I lied when I told you I inherited money. HE paid for the Corvette I gave you. HE paid for our new cabin cruiser. HE paid for your season Pittsburgh Steelers tickets. HE paid for our house at the lake. HE paid for our country club membership, And HE even pays the monthly dues!' Shaking his head from side-to-side, the Husband lowers the gun. He looks over at the cabby and says, 'What would you do?'

The cabby replies, 'Iôd cover him with that blanket before he catches a cold

JOKES, 2. Taliban

A fleeing Taliban, desperate for water, was plodding through the Afghanistan desert when he saw something far off in the distance. Hoping to find water, he hurried toward the object, only to find a little old Jewish man at a small stand selling ties. The Taliban asked, 'Do you have water?' The Jewish man replied, 'I have no water. Would you like to buy a tie? They are only $5.' The Taliban shouted, 'Idiot! I do not need an over-priced tie. I need water! I should kill you, but I must find water first!' 'OK,' said the old Jewish man, 'it does not matter that you do not want to buy a tie and that you hate me. I will show you that I am bigger than that. If you continue over that hill to the east for about two miles, you will find a lovely restaurant. It has all the ice cold water you need. Shalom.' Muttering, the Taliban staggered away over the hill. Several hours later he staggered back, almost dead. 'Your bloody brother won't let me in without a tie!'