

The rifle that LHO used to assassinate President Kennedy left Italy on September 30, 1960, aboard the Italian steamer Elettra Faccio. It arrived in Jersey City 17 days later and was consigned to a bonded warehouse, Harborside Terminal, near Lockside. It remained there for 28 months and then, along with a batch of Mannlicher-Carcanos, was shipped by Crescent Firearms to Klein's Sporting Goods, Inc., of Chicago. Klein's is a large ...regular advertiser in...organ of the National Rifle Association.

In the February 1963 issue of the Rifleman, Klein's ran a full page illustrated ad in which they offered a "6.5 Italian Carbine. Only 36" overall, weighs only 5½ lbs. Shows only slight use...specially priced ...\$12.88. Carbine with brand new good quality 4 x scope - 3/4" diam. as illus...19.95."

On March 13, 1963 Klein's received...One week later rifle No. C2766 was shipped to the customer without demur. The name A. Hidell, of course, was later determined to be an alias used by LHO.

While the ad offered for sale a Mannlicher- Carcano carbine, the actual weapon illustrated in the ad was what is known as a "short rifle," which is not the same thing. Mannlicher-Carcanos underwent many modifications during Mussolini's dictatorship and to the ~~minimum~~ uninitiated the results may seem confusing. But any standard weapons manual will show that the ordinary Mannlicher-Carcano rifle, in its various modifications, has an overall length of 47 inches or 50.7 inches; that the carbine has an overall length of approximately 36 inches; and that the short rifle, model 91/38 (in both 7.35 mm. and 6.5 mm.) has an overall length of 40.2 inches. Oswald received the third-named weapon in 6.5 mm. Klein's, which should have known better, did not notice the difference. Nor did LHO, who, in all probability, was primarily interested in the price and not the make or model. The "carbine" as advertised was the cheapest item Klein's was offering that month in rifles.*

*The Klein's ads in the American Rifleman, as a rule, make interesting reading. For instance, Mannlicher-Carcanos were first advertised in the March 1962 issue...and continued to appear in subsequent issues until October 1963. Klein's has never since run an ad for Mannlicher-Carcanos.

The specific manner in which Klein's advertised these rifles is also noteworthy. For instance, in the April 1963 issue of Rifleman, Klein's advertised its "carbine" as 40 inches overall and weighing 7 pounds, thus adding 4 inches to its length and 1½ pounds to its weight. The price, photograph, and stock number remained unchanged. Three months later, in the July 1963 issue, the "carbine" price was reduced by ten cents. In the August issue, everything --stock number, weight, length and new price--remained the same except that the photographic illustration of the Mannlicher-Carcano now showed, for some reason, an Enfield .303 Jungle Carbine. Finally, in the September 1963 issue, the previous illustration--of a short rifle--was reinserted; the stock number, price and description (a "carbine") remained unchanged.