

4/30/69

Dear Dick,

I worked until the minute of leaving to take Lil to work this a.m. and forget to mail the letters. Your 4/25 continuation arrived today. Much of it I have gone into in letter that had not yet reached you. If you can come here, then I think much can await that. We can do the testing here, have several NRA masters available, an excellent and equipped photographer, and I suspect that if we need microscopes, can have them available and in the hands of a skilled amateur photographer, too. I can even get more Western ammo.

There doesn't seem to be any help we need from John.

I have the identical scope. It is mounted with the identical bracket. It is not above the bore.

You are not alone in not having heard from Oser (or anyone else) with a word of thanks. Per.

Without checking the evidence, I think Hoover told the Commission that one shell had marks that could not be associated with that particular rifle. Maybe he was wrong, maybe my recollection. Suppose it is so?

In this case it is neither necessary nor best to rap Hoover.

More data on the barrel vibration will interest me for CCUP. I have located several 30.06 Gemmasters here and can get bullets fired into various objects.

I would like that Paris-Match picture very much! How well what you say of it fits.

I knew about Downey from my London Matless Hari. The wretch has owed me money for two years.

Sincerely,

25 April 69

Harold:

This is a continuation of my letter of this afternoon.

I received a clip and a dozen fired cases from Nichols, and did what tests I could with them.

I got case mouth dents the same way he did. My drawing at the bottom of p.8 (Oswald Frame) is wrong. I'll revise and send you a copy. There is only one outstanding problem in getting case mouth dents this way. In Thompson's photo of CE 543, the very rim-- the leading edge-- does not appear to be mashed. The test cases that I got from Nichols and my tests produced a somewhat mashed rim. They are identical to CE 543 (picture) except for this. It is not that important anyway, as long as we can make the dent in the right place.

The real problem is the dents on the shoulders. It is here that we can nab Frazier. When I can get loaded rounds of ammo, I'll do what I can. Laws prohibit you from mailing me live ammo (U.S. laws), so don't bother. I'll work something out. In the mean time, when you get a rifle, work according to the description on p.8. I am pretty sure that it is right; at least it is a good pattern from which to start.

I also checked the difference between microscopic markings on primers used in bulletted and unbulletted cases. There is no comparison. I used two revolvers. It should be done with rifles. Special equipment is necessary, and I will try to locate them: a microscope and a camera that can photograph through a microscope. We may have such in our biology or physics lab. I'll ask.

You can send me fired cases by mail. When you go to the post office pick up a supply of stickers for Customs information. It is Form 2976. This ~~is~~ is for mailing stuff of no monetary value.

This is in accordance with instructions I gave earlier re sending cases that had fired bullets and cases that had not-- at least three of each, fired consecutively, and clearly marked with indellible ink.

You will get a chuckle when you see the clip drop from the bottom of the rifle after the last bullet leaves. Its like a brass turd-- it just lays there. There is absolutely nothing that holds it in the rifle, and I cannot imagine any sort of defect that might cause it to stick in the rifle. You can't even say that it is loose in there after the last cartridge leaves; it is almost free-floating.

Sylvia Meagher wrote a good chapter on the clip, by the way. I think she treated the topic splendidly, except that she allowed the possibility that the clip was defective. After seeing it work, I would hardly allow that. If it is in good enough condition to hold cartridges, there is nothing at all to hold it in the rifle-- nothing.

Sorry about my initial misinformation about the character of the Remington-Peters "Core-Lokt" bullet. I had confused it with Nosler. The effect is the same in both cases, anyway. The rear portion does not mushroom, although it may be deformed in other ways if it strikes bone. Watch the light (110 grain) load of 30/06. It is very fast for its weight, and is considered a varmint load-- i.e., fast expansion, ~~probably~~ probably explosive when it hits bone near the surface of animal. If it hits bone after passage through much muscle, it may not fragment badly, but my guess is that near the surface it will. I consider MILK's wound consistent with the 150 grain slug, and right in line with what I would expect of the 110 grain slug.

Nichols' word on publication is this. He will cite whatever I have published, but will not refer to this work unless it is published. Look wants a short article, and there is no room for all this, especially

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turns out so important that it dominates other analysis. If we negotiate with LOOK, we do it as a separate piece from Nichols; whether he is with us or not. I don't know to what degree he wants to be involved in this. He has expressed willingness to help, but now that you have equipment we can go it together.

By the way, here is a hint on pulling bullets. It is less trouble that extracting with pliers, and causes no alteration, no damage, to bullet or case. Remove them by inertia like this: wrap a small piece of rubber inner tube or the like around the base of the case; grip the base with a pair of pliers (over the rubber) and rap the pliers against something hard until the bullet flies out. It should be fairly easy with the M*C round, for it is heavy and has small diameter. The powder will fly out with the bullet.

If you do firing tests to check trajectory in accordance with my piece on the scope-sight, remember that the midline of the scope must be $\frac{1}{2}$ inches above the middle of the bore. Distance of the scope above the bore is an important element. Similarly, to check lateral trajectory, have the scope mounted $\frac{1}{4}$ inch to the left of the bore. On that rifle, you must not put the scope directly over the bore; otherwise, you will not be able to insert the clip.

What you do in this regard is not of great concern to me any more. Pictures have impact and are valuable, but I can give you no more of substance on that matter. The matter has been established by test firing; CIL did a magnificent job, and offered to do more-- they do not want to be named, though. If I can, I plan to go to Montreal and talk with my man at CIL.

I have an exact-size Archives copy of Frazier and Cunningham's first target (15 yards). You can have it, or a copy, if you want. I believe that I may already have sent you a copy.

I never got a thank you from Oser for what I sent them. I don't care that much, and would help again if I could, but it is bad practice not even to acknowledge receipt. Don't get me wrong; I am not rankled about it, but others might be, and if they want help they had better learn to show appreciation for it, however small. After all, it was not they who were helping me.

I don't think you will find much difference in the character of the inside of cases-- that is, difference between mere primer burning and powder burning. The eyeball can't tell, for the primer scorches the case. Chemical differences might exist-- I would suspect so, but I don't know.

If you are going to photograph bases and primers for microscopic marks, be sure that the light is the same on all objects to be compared. Let the light come in sharply at an angle, and get good shadows. Negatives can be overlaid to line up similarities, or positives can be cut and striations lined up. Frazier's comparisons at CEs 559-564 are not typical, as far as I know. Cunningham's comparison photos at CE 596-599 are better. Also Nicol's at CE 613-617 are good; CE 618 is excellent. Those pictures by Nicol are important. They show microscopic markings on the base of CE 543-- the only pictures we have of the base of any of the three cases. I plan to get good copies from the archives.

Other Archives pictures will be valuable not for analysis, but for

exposing deliberate obfuscation regarding the rifle cases. For example, compare these for clarity, for the amount of information that the pictures give you:

Pictures CE 543, 544, 545, 557 (rifle cases) (I have not checked CE 141)

vs.

pictures CE 594, 595, and especially 518.

There is no denying that those bastards knew how to photograph cases when they wanted to.

None of this is evidentiary for us, but it illustrates that if you want to understand what a donut is, you must concentrate on what's missing, the hole. It is the most meaningful part, the thing that makes it a donut.

I think you are wrong to suppose that any of those cartridges touched another M-C rifle. That implication comes from Hoover's letter to Rankin (CE 2969) and from the testimony of Joseph Nicol (3H510). I cannot explain the situation here, but will later (I think I already have). I have not gone over all of Nicol's testimony carefully, but my initial impression is that he was deceived-- he was not allowed to examine the weapon, and therefore did not understand how it functioned. It is possible, too, that he saw ~~was~~ and examined only the base of the case (CE 543) and did not examine the whole case. The microscope could have been set up for him, and he saw the case only under the microscope. This is possible, and I think likely. He did not have to be in on the degree of fakery that Frazier is involved in. Cunningham, too, may be innocent, even though he backs up Frazier's analysis (3H471). Frazier was his superior, a man of vastly greater experience, and ~~Frazier~~ Cunningham might have been influenced by Frazier-- badly influenced.

I would like to know from Nicol himself the circumstances under which he did his examination. Right now (I may change) I sincerely believe that Nicol was tricked. I think it possible, too, that Cunningham was tricked. As long as that possibility exists, I am not going to impale them the way I impale Frazier. I must leave them off the hook unless I can prove to the exclusion of all alternatives that they deserve it. Right now I don't think so, so I am going easy on them. Frazier is the bulls-eye; the others may get grazed, but Frazier is IT.

Hoover looms large in the background, a great and unmistakable shadow. Here are the last words of the section on the dents:

Lest the onus of guilt fall on Frazier merely because his work is the focus of attention, the reader should understand now and always that Frazier did not act in his own interest, that he was not his own agent. ¶ We cannot see a breeze. Instead, we are obliged to imply an impelling force when we observe the action of objects that move under its influence. When a feather is borne aloft, we know the wind is up to something.

I can't rap Hoover hard; it's like trying to whip smoke. Besides, he always puts someone in front of himself to receive the blow.

Whether you photograph CE 558 (bolt face) as I described, depends on whether you think the matter important. I do not. I think it can be solved, and that I can solve it, but it will not tie in with what I am doing. It would require fancy photographic work, but not impossible. The enclosed sheet of paper with window cut out will show the area of the ~~mark~~ extractor that I think caused the marks. If you want to go ahead with it, then do this: Get a close-up photo,

CLIPPED
TO
REVERSE

[LAY THIS OVER THE
PHOTO - CE558 (BOLT FACE)]

UPPER
RIGHT
CORNER ↗



AREA OF EXTRACTOR
THAT MIGHT HAVE
CAUSED THE THREE SETS
OF UNEXPLAINED MARKS
DEPICTED IN { CE619
622
624 }

↙ LOWER LEFT
CORNER

[CE558] OVERLAY

focusing on that area of the extractor-- make this a transparent slide that can be cast on a screen. Get transparencies of any or all of the three sets of marks (depicted in CE 619, 622, and 624). Cast both pictures on the same screen. Cast one of the ~~pictures~~ pictures from side to side and back and forth until you get a set of marks that overlay. I forgot to mention that you will have to use the reverse picture of the ~~xxxxf~~ extractor marks, since the marks on the case are impressions.

It takes patience and care, but if the extractor made those sets of marks, they can be matched in this way.

I don't think it is worth the trouble at this point. We can spend our time in better ways. It would be interesting to solve this puzzle, but even the solution would tell us nothing important.

Removing the bolt is a cinch. Draw the bolt all the way back. Depress the trigger and remove the bolt. Presto! To replace it, just insert the head of the bolt in the place where you took it out, and drive the bolt home. No sweat.

I have already made drawings of the bolt face assembly for explanation of how things work. When you get them, you can make corresponding pictures if you think that best. But I like drawings, for it allows me to eliminate insignificant and distracting details. These are for illustration, not part of the evidence.

The head-on picture of the bolt face (CE 558) explains nothing about how it works

I will search for pictures and printed accounts that explain barrel vibration and the effect of disrupting it. I cannot do physical tests with other rifles; they would be no good to you. I don't know anyone who has a Rem. Gamemaster, but will ask around. There are many variables when you deal with vibrations of this sort. If you set up a test with 150 gr. bullets, they will not be valid for 110 gr bullets, nor will Nosler or other manufacture be valid for Rem.-Peters.

Test for dispersion should run like this; Zero-in at 100-yards. Fire tight 100-yard groups (5 shots to a group in each target). Do not use machine rest or other mechanical aids. Rest the wood of the rifle on a soft object for steadiness, or on no object if the marksman is good. Shoot a couple of tight 5-shot groups like that. Using the same rifle, same ammo, same everything, rest the barrel of the gun on a wooden object and fire a couple of 5-shot groups. (use a different target for each group). Try the same with the wooden fore-end of the rifle resting on a wooden object.

Measure the dispersion of shots in all targets. Targets fired from soft rest or no rest should have groups on the bulls-eye; more than likely you will be able to enclose them in a 2-inch circle. You may not even get groups in targets fired from a hard rest; you may have to measure the distance and location of each shot from the bulls-eye. Really, I don't know what will happen, for I have never done this.

All this is common knowledge. I don't know how many know the "why", but I am sure that most know the "that".

There was an amusing picture that Paris-Match printed in connection with this. I'll dig it up for you. They went to the scene and had someone stand in the bathtub and aim a broomstick out the window. The man's position is ludicrous, but it was the only one available to him. You will want to see it and perhaps even use it. When I saw it, I just shook my head.

The specification on Rem.-Peters 30/06 are all in the catalogue, p.36, with exact size picture of the cartridge.(#24). I won't write to Peters untill you tell me what you want that is not indicated there. That is all they make, and all the useful info they have. If you want more, tell me.

I did not consider press conference except in connection with publication, and would not go it alone in any case. But those crumbs are too goddamned lazy (if it is just laziness) to read the stuff that they revile. They have to be spoon fed, and even then they pretend that they are just citing allegations, not fact. I want recognized firearms authorities backing what I say; Braverman or anybody who has balls enough to do it. We have to have authorities, and I am not. Whatever you may think about my expertize, all of the stuff, the technical stuff, is elementary-- that's what makes it so beautiful, really. I am more lucid in explaining it than most gun buffs, but the stuff is simple, fundamental.

We'll talk more about this face to face.

I'll stop now. I am busy as hell marking term papers and exams, and it has slowed down my work on the cases. Just as well, for it helps me to restrain myself.

I hope like hell this works out.

Dick

Bernabei

P.S. I may not have mentioned this before.

Downey is going out of business. I don't know what he will be doing, but he is liquidating.