

# DAD'S GUNS

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #76 —

Gilbert was his given name, but everyone called him Bert; and he was a pretty good hunter and trapper. For dad, a gun was simply a tool he needed to hunt for food or fur and to run his trap line. In my early years, he only had three guns -- a shotgun and two .22 rifles.

His shotgun was an old 12 gauge Belgian-made side by side, with outside hammers and twist steel barrels; the metal and wood finish were well-worn and the action was loose -- the kind of gun you aren't supposed to shoot. But shoot it he did; and he brought home lots of quail, ducks and geese. When I got older and 'smart

enough' to know

that his old shotgun was dangerous, I sold it for him (a hundred bucks) and he put the money toward a modern Remington 870 pump -- that he never could remember to shuck.

The first of his .22 rifles was a Stevens Crackshot that he used for killing hogs when they were butchering. It was pretty much worn out and dad kept it in an

old brooder house that he was using for his beekeeping supplies. One summer day, when Cousin Charlie was visiting from St. Louis and dad was at work, I or my younger brother snuck in through one of the lower house doors and got the gun. We shot frogs in a pond behind the house and of course mom heard the shots and told dad.



Dad's favorite rifle was a Remington Model 12, made in October, 1935. I inherited it upon his death. (Note the Fajen stock I installed has a pistol grip.)

I don't remember anyone getting a whipping, but when dad heard the story, he broke the gun in half and threw it in the pond.

He had owned the other .22 for many years -- a Remington Model 12 pump action repeater. Dad was born in 1910 and this rifle was made in 1935; likely he bought it from a local hardware

store, as that was where you bought guns in those days.

Growing up in the country,

I shot thousands of rounds through that rifle at rabbits, squirrels, raccoons, opossums, frogs, birds, snakes and tin cans. Dad had dropped it out of a tree once and broke the stock, which he had taped up with electricians tape. During high school shop class, in my freshman year, I made a new stock for it; but a so-so job, so I replaced it with one made by Fajen a few years later.

Mom passed the gun on to me after dad's death, in 1989.

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"...I shot thousands of rounds through that rifle..."

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**USA**  
**Midway**

Larry Potterfield

Ely, Missouri  
4 April 1989



The Remington Rocket .22 short ammunition was introduced in 1956. There were 28 cartridges to the pack and they cost about a penny each. I shot lots of this ammo.