

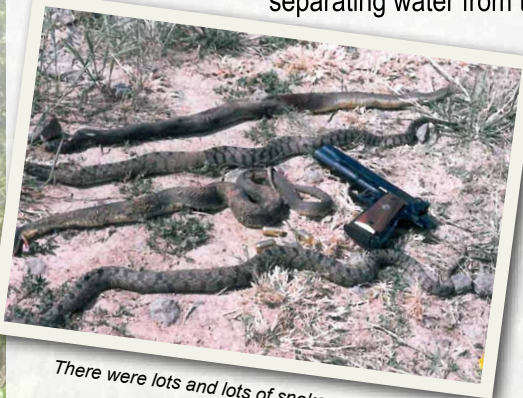
# SNAKE SHOOTING

with a 1911

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #31 —

A lot of things had to line up perfectly to make this story possible -- #1, Lonoke County, just east of Little Rock, Arkansas, was the home of the Remington ammunition plant. #2, Remington was producing a new 45 acp shot cartridge. #3, the engineer who led the design team for the new cartridge, was also a shooter. #4, I was visiting the ammunition plant, to see some of our orders in production. #5, Lonoke County, Arkansas was said to be the largest producer of fishing minnows in the country. #6, where there are minnows there are snakes – wow, lots of snakes. So, when asked that afternoon if I wanted to go over to the minnow farms and shoot some snakes, of course I said yes. (Note: it was legal to shoot snakes at that time.)

The area we visited was hundreds of acres in a river bottom -- a maze of levees, each holding back and separating water from the other ponds.



*There were lots and lots of snakes, and it was legal to shoot them back then.*

We loaded up our 1911s, cocked and locked them and began walking the levees, in search of targets of opportunity.

Since this was 'high-volume' shooting, we strapped on shell bags like trap and skeet shooters use and dumped in a few handfuls of ammo. We didn't need holsters and I walked with my trigger finger in the guard and my thumb on the safety. Six hundred and fifty #12 pellets is a pretty light load and our guns needed to be well-oiled to function well, but function well they did.

It was late spring; the grass was knee high and the snake mating season was in full swing. There were snakes

swimming in the water, laying quietly at the water's edge and hiding in the grass. We walked, they flushed, we shot; and shot and shot.

My host was most comfortable walking the gravel roads on top of the levees but I preferred to walk

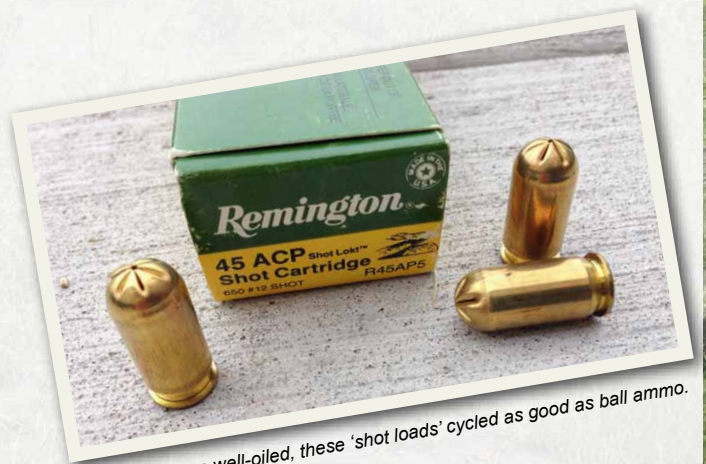
along the narrow pathways, through the grass near the water's edge. There was more shooting activity there!

The most exciting moment was when a snake flushed from the backside of the levy, on my right, and raced for the water right over the tops of my boots. I was dancing and shooting at the same time and got him before he reached the water – on the fourth shot. Through some miracle, I never shot my boots!

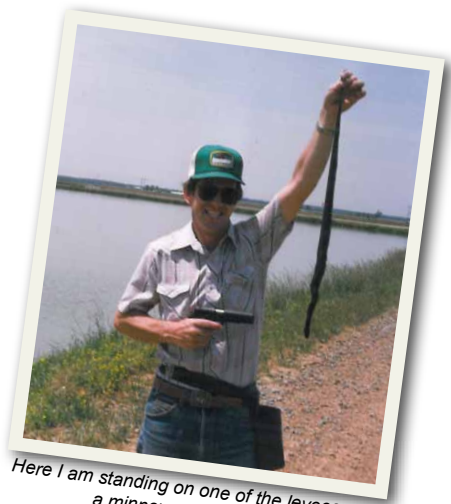
“...this was 'high volume' shooting...”



Larry Potterfield  
The Minnow Farms  
Lonoke County, Arkansas  
12 May 1988



*With the gun well-oiled, these 'shot loads' cycled as good as ball ammo.*



*Here I am standing on one of the levees with a minnow pond in the background.*