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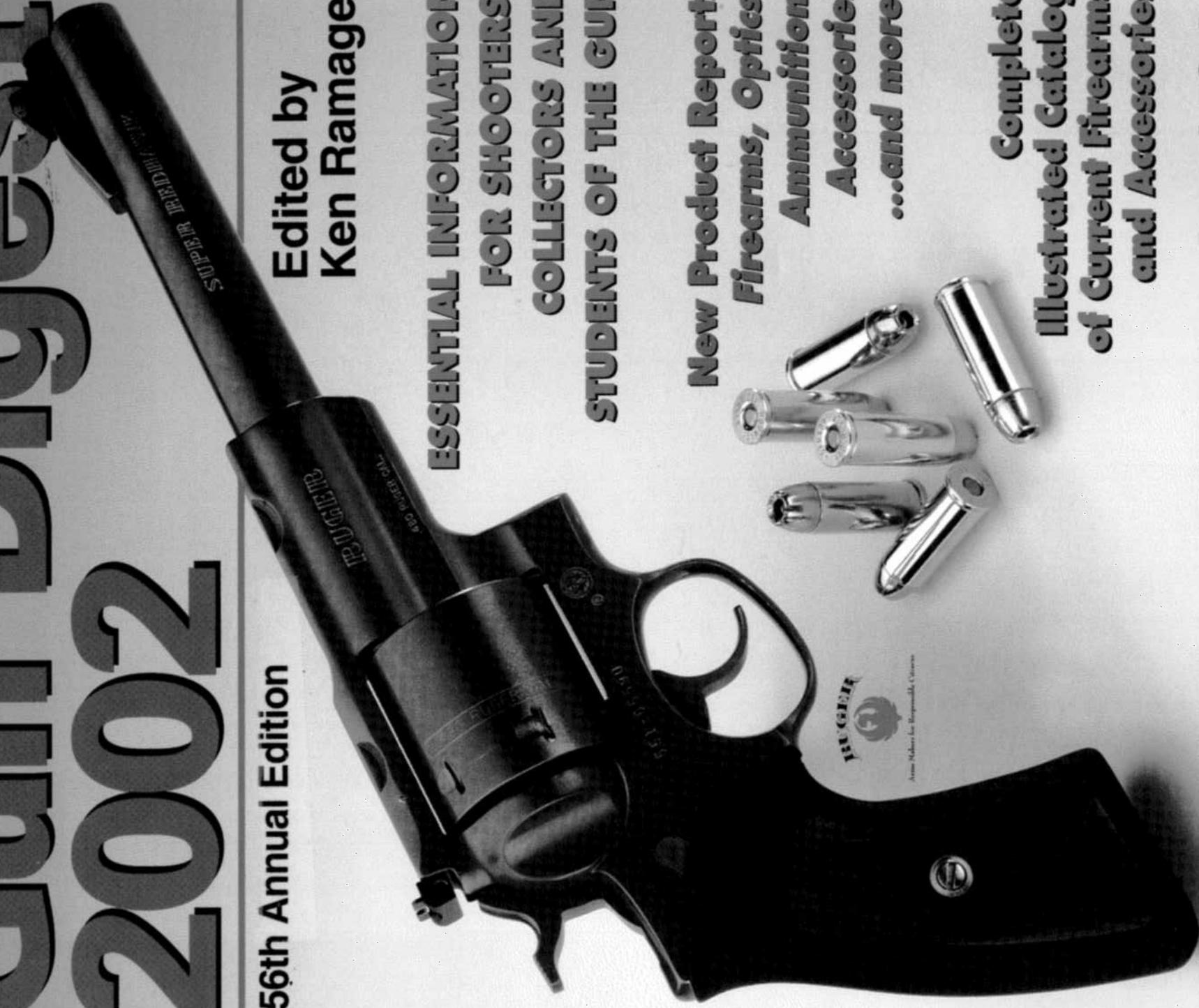
56th Annual Edition

Edited by
Ken Ramage

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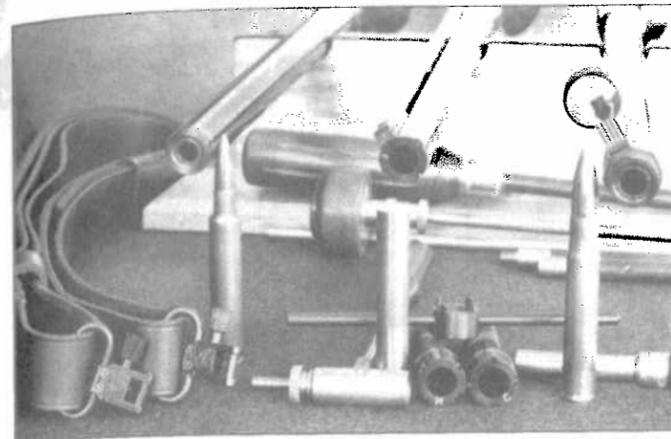
**Complete
Illustrated Catalog
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NEW! Art of the Engraver & Custom Guns in Color



The entire Jenkins/Farquharson set: 280 Ackley Improved, 35 Whelen, .410-bore shotgun, scope, choke tubes, takedown spanner, cleaning rods & sling...



The business end of the three-barreled set, with respective cartridge cases: 280 Ackley Improved, .410 "Forager" and 35 Whelen.



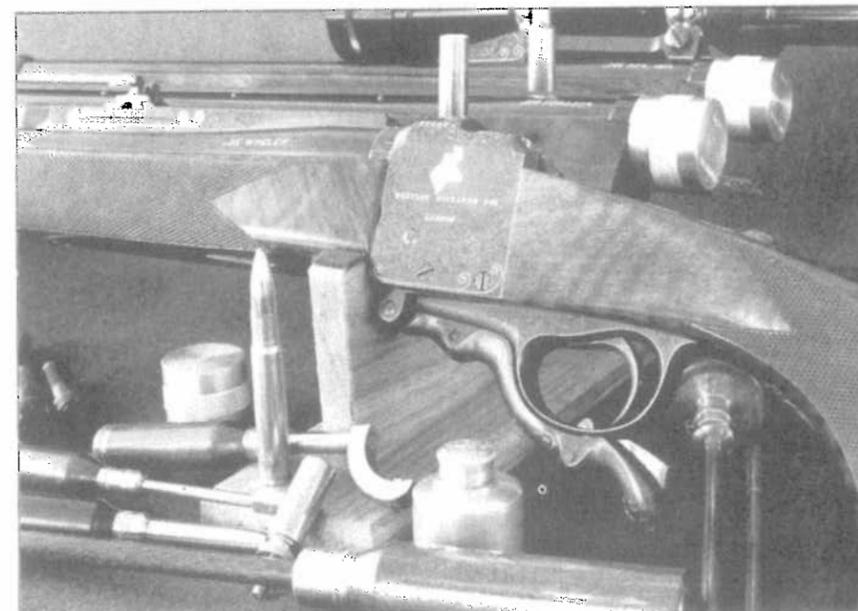
Takedown mechanism, showing tensioning locknut and spanner wrench. Choke tubes, powder measure and custom jag tips in background.

The craftsmanship exercised in the fit and finish of all the pieces and parts is truly amazing. Not obvious in the photos are details like the barrel band/swivel stud assembly on the .410 barrel. It looks like one or two pieces, but is actually six, and can be removed without disturbing the vent rib. The quarter-rib on the 35 Whelen looks like it was milled out of the barrel blank, the fit is so good. Red has a trade secret here that he wishes not divulged; the fine fit is the kind of thing that could drive a good gunsmith a few days worth of crazy.

The story of the .410 barrel alone could fill pages. How do you get an extractor designed for centerfire rimless cartridges to remove a .410 shotshell? You make .410 shotshells out of rifle brass, that's how. Red started by blowing out 240 Weatherby brass, but lost too many cases trying to produce a straight, rimless, belted (it's got to headspace on something, right?) case .430-inch in diameter by 2.5 inches. So he made a set of dies to form a belted case out of 30-06 brass, dies that would swage a belt, and form a near-perfect brass .410 shotgun shell for use in this rifle.

The barrel was obtained before it was rifled for a 416 chambering. The bore was .408-inch, ideal for the .410 smoothbore. The choke tubes are completely custom: cylinder, modified and full. Red made all the reamers and threading tools to produce this choke set just for this one barrel, as well as the special wrench for interchanging them.

The takedown mechanism is also deserving of special note. Westley Richard's takedown design on the Farquharson included no mechanism for adjusting the tension between barrel and action. One of the big problems with any takedown assembly is its tendency to "shoot



A thing of beauty is a joy...to shoot! Shadows around the quarter-rib conceal the amazing fit. Every item pictured was made from "scratch," except for the action, scope and cartridge brass.

loose" over a period of time. Red added a threaded tensioning collar that tightens and loosens with a spanner wrench (itself a work of art). All three barrels – by Shilen, and each one exactly 27 1/2 inches long – share this feature, a Red Jenkins improvement to the original design.

Even the aluminum dust caps were specially milled for each barrel breech, marked with the chambering/gauge and the serial number "36633," the original action's serial number. Red made special cleaning rods, powder measure (.410), appropriate wrenches, and has only to finish by crafting a case fitted to all these lovely accessories, as well as the gun and barrels.

Stocking of this rifle was by R. M. Johnson of Cheyenne, Wyoming. The

walnut is California Claro with a tung oil finish; checkering 18 lpi. Superb.

The engraving and 18k gold inlay is by Jim White, of Anchorage, Alaska and is as perfect as can be imagined – both in coverage and execution. Again, the brilliance of it showing in not only what was done, but also in what was not. Tasteful, elegant, and not excessive.

Rarely, if ever, does one come upon an assemblage of parts and pieces that constitute such a gratifying whole. A rifle like this is rare indeed, but what is really impressive is evidence of the pride the maker had in its creation. Ultimately, it is not the technical expertise alone that impresses, but the great heart it shows. A creation on this order reminds us greatness is not only possible, but intensely important. ●

R. E. Jenkins

Super-Fine Farquharson

Text and Photos by Scott Key

FOR THIRTY-FIVE YEARS, John Bione had something his friend Red Jenkins wanted. To a gunsmith and rifleman it was a pretty interesting and rare something: an original Westley Richards Farquharson action – a take-down action, no less – no barrel, no stock... just the (arguably) neatest, classiest single-shot action ever designed.

Red offered to buy it. Not for sale. Build a rifle on it for his friend John. Nope. I'll leave it to you, John said. Hell, replied Red, you'll probably outlive me, and it still won't be a rifle!

January 1990, Red gets a phone call. It's John's wife Elaine: "Well, Red, it looks like you got yourself that action..."

So what do you do with it, when you finally get your hands on an original Westley Richards Farquharson? If you're the caliber of craftsman that Red Jenkins is, and can do pretty much anything you want in metal, the question is more what not to do. With an action designed to be a take-down rifle, why not build a multiple-barreled set? Five, three ... what?

Red settled on the 280 Ackley Improved, 35 Whelen, and .410 shotgun, a novel but practical combination. There is very little that cannot be successfully hunted with this gun, excepting probably waterfowl and the largest African game. The 280 AI will do for medium game, and the 35 Whelen for any North American big game.

The intention, of course, was not only to produce a practical, eminently shootable longarm, but the finest and hand-somest gun possible. And if these photos successfully convey even the slightest indication of it, you can see Mr. "Red" Jenkins most definitely succeeded.

Superfine engraving and gold inlay by Jim White, of Anchorage, Alaska – even on the powder measure.

Who was it that wrote "God is in the details."? Everywhere you look on this set, there is something perfectly lovely. There is an obvious sense this gun was built without compromise, by someone who took the time to do it right. Indeed, it looks like whoever built it had all the time in the world, and all the mastery of craft required.

