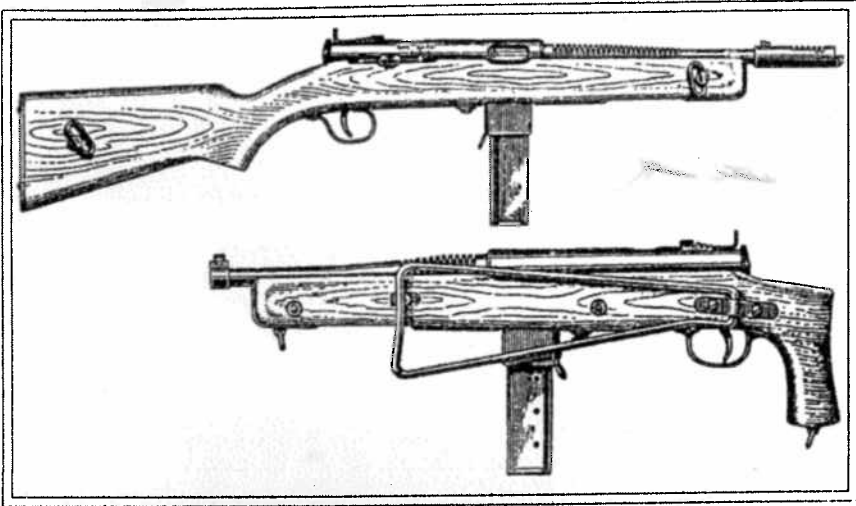


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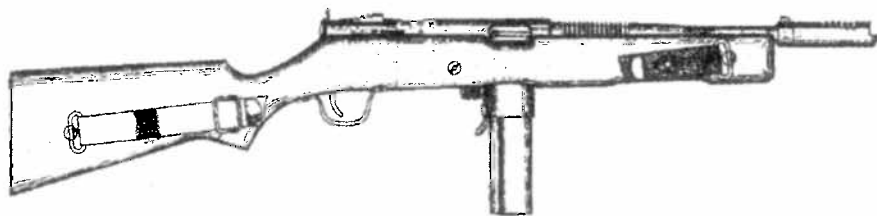
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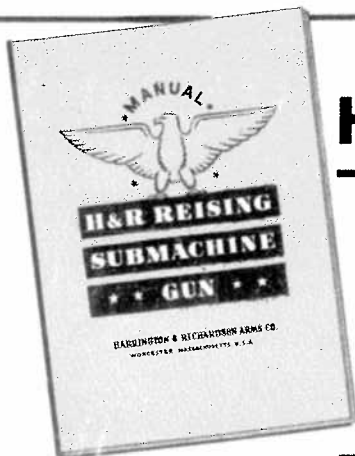
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An Up-Reising!

by FRANK IANNAMICO



Sandy Iannamico gives "thumbs up" to the Reising. Note pile of .45 cases fired with only two failures to feed.

Honest! I was just getting ready to sit down to write an article about the Reising submachine gun, when the mail came. Along with the assorted bills and advertising was the August issue of *Machine Gun News*. Well, reading *MGN* takes precedence over almost any activity. So I sat down to begin reading. The first article I read was the Reising M-50.

Well, I was kind of surprised at the content of that article, because it was so negative towards the Reising. I was writing about the weapon because I liked it, not love it, but I am kind of fond of them. After all I am not going to defend my life with it, just shoot bowling pins.

I do not intend to discredit the author of that article in any way, however, I disagree with a few points he made.

1. Why would anyone completely strip the gun to clean it? If I felt that the trigger mechanism needed cleaning, I would spray it down with Gun Scrubber and relube it.

2. The magazine is easily removed with one hand.

3. If any gun would only fire 60 rounds then jam, I would suspect there would be something else wrong, not the design of the gun. Unless it was some type of untested prototype.

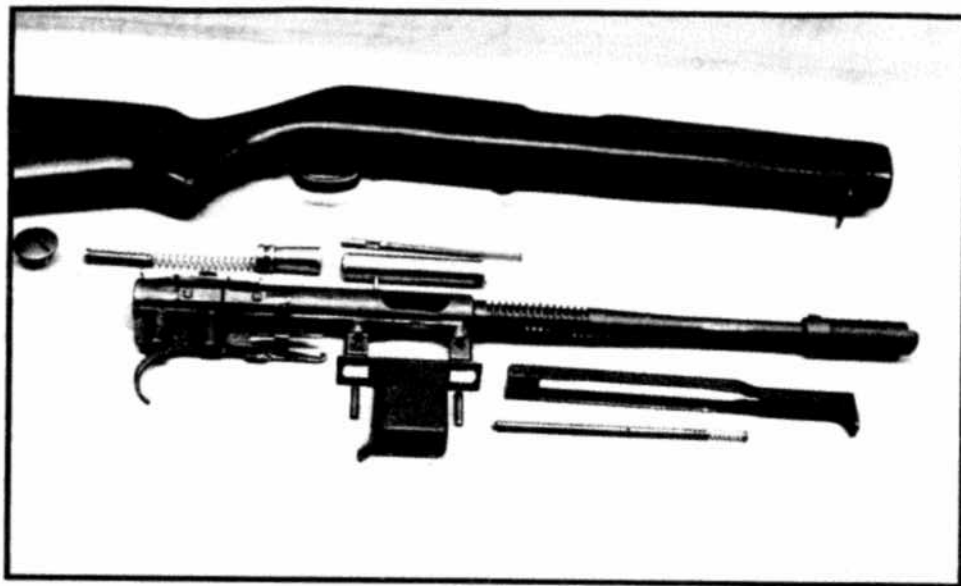
4. I've read and heard so many stories about all types of full auto weapons that were "uncontrollable." I have owned or own many of them and I would say yes, it's probably true for a first time full auto shooter—not for anyone that has some experience with the weapon. I personally know a fellow who while in the army fired an M3 Grease gun for the first time. He described to me how totally uncontrollable it was and how the barrel climbed. I do not claim to be any type of expert shooter, but I know I can fire my Reising at thirty yards into a 16" round target (the paper circle that comes under frozen pizza) on full auto with a twenty-round mag and put every round on that paper.

5. I've never met anyone, (other than collectors, or Class III people) including lots of WWII veterans, who had ever seen or even heard of a Reising, let alone used one in combat.

I think the Reising is one of the best class III deals going. It's a historically original U.S. made item. None are conversions: they fire the .45 ACP round, they are select fire, and fire from a closed bolt. Best of all they are inexpensive, and plentiful. I personally would rather have a Reising

than a MAC 10 or a converted UZI. The only bad thing is original twenty round magazines are expensive. I hesitate to say rare, as I've had the opportunity to buy more of them than I could afford. I currently have three original twenty round, one twelve round, two homemade 23 round (I made them from 30 round Thompson mags.) and two new manufacture KC Enterprises 30 round magazines. Some Reising's may be equipped with the type magazine well that will only accept the twelve round magazines. These are identified by a "corrugated" look to them such as a twelve round magazine appears. These magazine wells are very easily replaced by one capable of accepting the larger mags. I suspect being only able to accept a twelve round magazine on a machine gun would be a good reason they have been unpopular.

There seems to be another variation to the Reising family other than the Model 55 and the semi-auto Model 60. Although both are designated the Model 50, one is the U.S. Model 50 which is the military model. The difference being, the U.S. Model 50 is parkerized rather than blued, the barrel has less cooling fins on it, and they are not tapered. The trigger guard is larger, and the take down screw is larger and knurled so it can be removed by hand rather than a screw



Reising completely field stripped for cleaning.

driver. Of the over 100,000 Reising's produced, only 20,000 were purchased by the United States Government.

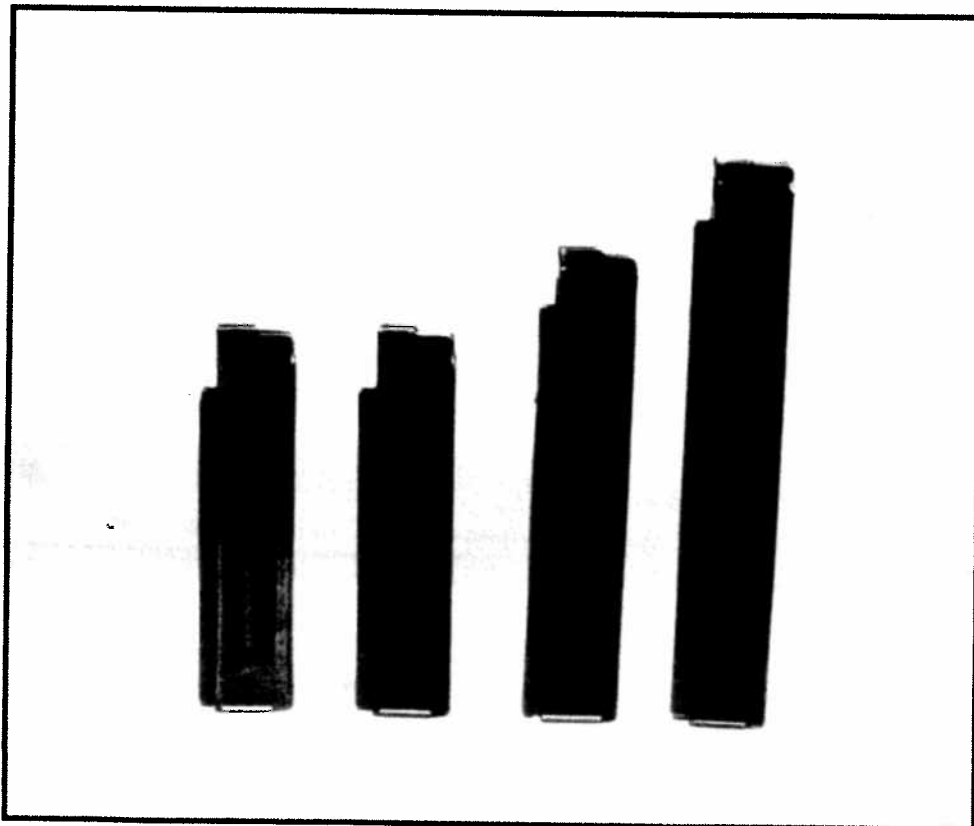
I agree with a lot of the points made in the August Reising article. It was not an ideal military weapon. It is for one, a very complex weapon, although field stripping is not difficult. Another drawback is parts are not readily interchangeable. I have a spare parts kit for my Reising, and few parts will interchange without some Dremel tool

work. My Reising has over the years had quite a few rounds fired through it. The only part that failed was the firing pin.

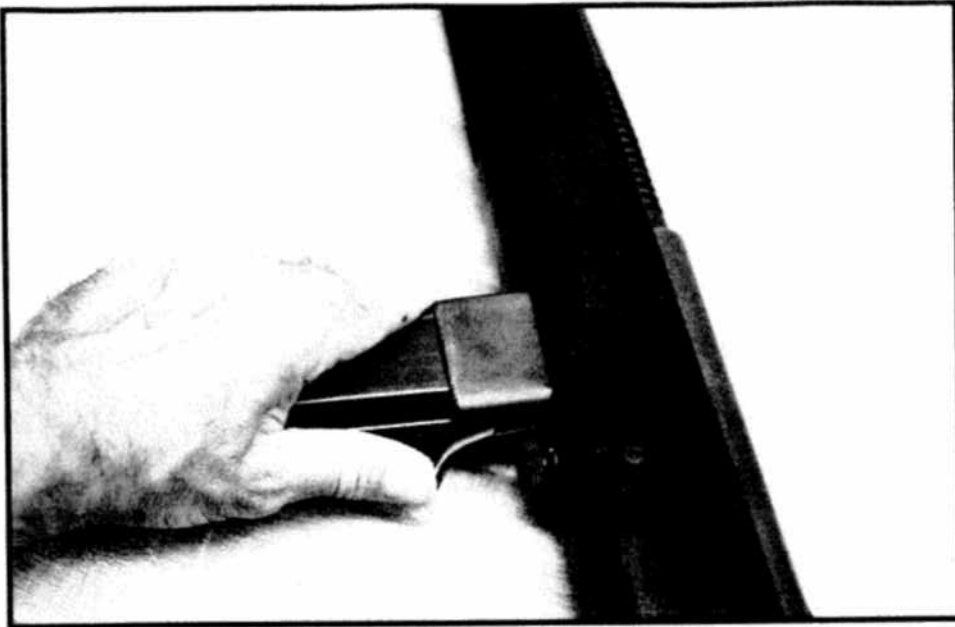
Although I agree it's certainly a less than perfect military arm, I think it is an excellent recreational shooter. I purchased my Reising from Irv Kahn a Ohio dealer a few years back. He advertised it as: "Reising Model 50, rare military model, appears unfired, mint." I paid a premium price for the piece, but it was "as advertised."

Why will some people not pay \$495 for a new in the wrap full auto Reising, but will pay upwards of \$1000 for a Model 60 semi-auto Reising?

I can only guess that the Reising in the MGN article was worn or had some type of problem. Perhaps it had some parts replaced on it that still required some fitting. Mine is 100% reliable, and after I read the article that stated the author's Reising jammed after shooting a couple of mags of ammo. I decided I would see exactly how many rounds I could shoot until mine would malfunction. I had on hand two G.I. ammo cans full of .45 ACP rounds. I guess that to be about 2500 rounds. They were all loaded with 5.0 grains of Winchester 231 powder and topped with a 230 grain lead bullet. I chronographed this load out of a 1911A1 pistol at an average speed of 820 FPS. I use this load for all of my .45 shooting. Well, I shot 1050 rounds with two failures to feed and I would probably blame the magazine or the ammo rather than the gun on these stoppages. I would like to add that the gun was not cleaned at anytime during the test, and that I never let the gun overheat. It was not intended to be a "tor-



Reising magazines, from left: Original 12 round, Original 20 round, Homemade 23 round, Aftermarket 30 round.



The "one hand" Reising magazine removal demonstrated.

ture" type test. I quit after 1050 rounds because I got tired of shooting and loading magazines.

Accuracy is another high point of the Reising, (semi-auto) I've shot 3" groups from a bench rest at 100 yards, and it shot right were the sights were set. A friend of mine, Drew Paskovich, was shooting one

of his three Reisings the day I was sighting mine in, and I remember his being more accurate than mine in either of our hands. (using 230 grain ball ammo.) I've never had a problem using reloads either, although I use Winchester 231 powder in all my .45 ACP loads not 700X powder as used in the August article. I doubt if the powder used

would be much different as to fouling in the few rounds expended.

As stated in the previous Reising article, they are plentiful in police departments. I live in between two small Pennsylvania towns, and both of their police arsenals contain several Reisings, probably never used by them. In fact one of the aforementioned departments do not have any magazines for their Reisings.

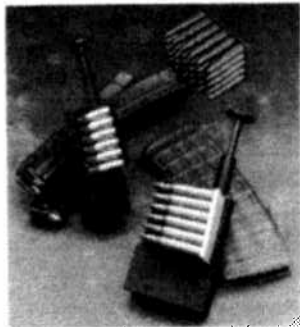
If you would like to get into Class III fun, and are on a budget, the Reising is an excellent choice! My wife Sandy likes the Reising due to its light weight, and has no problems shooting short bursts with it. Even if you have many Class III toys a Reising would be a worthy addition to any collection. I think the guns are cheap, and undesirable only because they have a bad reputation, not because they are bad guns.

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Dr. Shush and Eugene Reising

By Al Paulson

As far as I know, Dr Shush (as Hiram P. Maxim sometimes satirized himself in promotional literature) never met the inventor of the Model 50 and Model 55 Reising submachine guns. That's too bad.

They would have liked each other. What's more, the marriage of their inventions might have rewritten a chapter or two in the history of World War II. Maxim would have realized his dream of providing a

valuable tool to the military. And Reising might have been able to overcome the disastrous performance of his inventions by finding a role where they excelled.

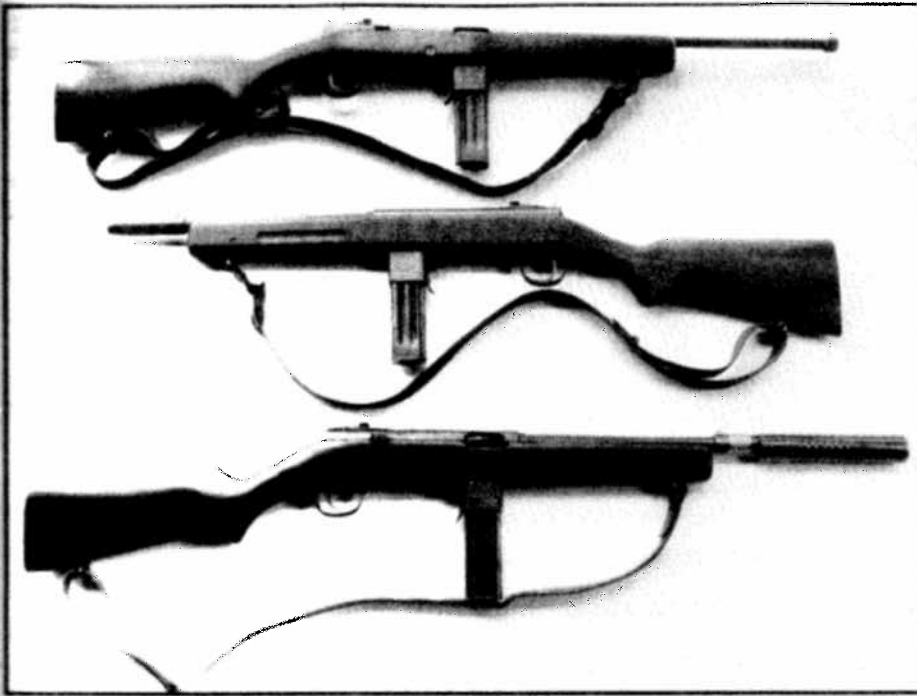
As it turns out, however, the Reising submachine guns probably represent the most spectacular small-arms failure of the Second World War. In fairness to Eugene Reising, much of the blame should go to the manufacturer (Harrington and Richardson) and the armorers of the United States Marine Corps. While the original bid specifications stipulated fully interchangeable parts, each gun required hand fitting at the factory. Somehow this information never made it to the Marine armorers who participated in the invasion of Guadalcanal, where the Reising received its combat debut. It would not be an overstatement to say that the Reising was a complete failure. Marines "lost" or destroyed their Reising as soon as a substitute--any substitute-- came to hand during the fighting.

Admittedly, the Reising was an unusually complex gun with small springs and no cutouts for self cleaning. And the 20-round magazines managed to combine the worst features of both single-feed and double-feed magazines into a single design. But it was how the armorers cleaned weapons that guaranteed the Reising's failure. They would disassemble a number of guns and dump all the parts into a solvent tank, virtually guaranteeing that not one hand-fitted gun got back many of its original parts. Know wonder the guns failed so miserably on Guadalcanal.

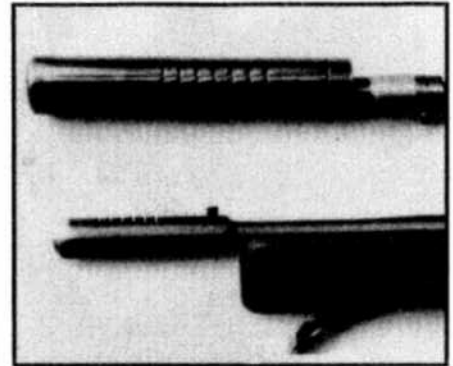
The Model 50 Reising has, however, provided long admirable service to many U.S. police depart-



Class 3 Dealer Noel Napolilli found that the Reising Model 50 submachine gun with Maxim Model 1910 silencer was an excellent gun for clearing a table of bowling pins.



From top to bottom are a Reising Model 60 semi-automatic carbine, a Reising Model 50 submachine gun with Cutts compensator, and a Reising Model 50 with Model 1910 Maxim silencer.



While the Maxim silencer isn't much bigger than the Cutts Compensator, it reduces the Reising's sound signature by 22 decibels.

ments, where the Reising's susceptibility to dirt has not been a liability, and its handiness and closed-bolt accuracy have been an asset. Of the approximately 100,000 Reisings manufactured from 1941 to 1945, some were made with feeble folding stocks (the Model 55), but they were not successful in either the civilian or military environment. A semi-automatic version of the Model 50, called the Model 60, was sold commercially with an 18 inch barrel. They were popular with civilian railroad employees who guarded important railroad bridges during the Second World War.

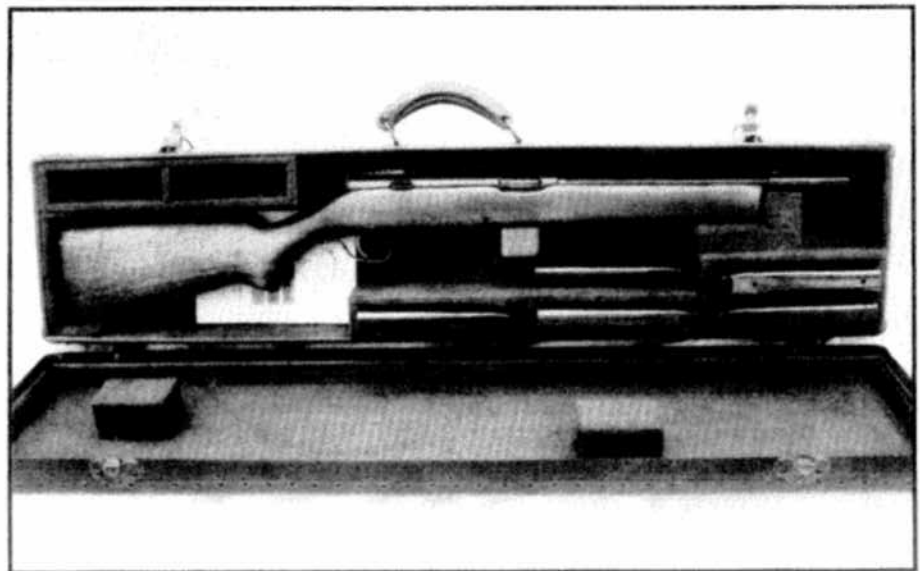
While historians scoff at the Reising submachine guns, they seem to universally admire Maxim silencers. Maxim silencers have a reputation for working very well, indeed. Unfortunately, not many Maxim silencers have survived for the modern collector, even though they were once relatively common, especially in the northeastern United States. Over the years, I have seen photographs of people quietly target practicing in the front yards of beautiful Victorian neighborhoods. Silencers provided

an innocent and inexpensive source of family fun. An early Maxim catalog listed the .22 rimfire silencer for \$5 and centerfire model for \$7. It's not only the cheap prices of Maxim silencers that are gone forever. It's the innocence of that Golden Age of Silencers that I particularly envy.

Silencers were rarely used by villains of the period, but the few ex-

ceptions during Prohibition tended to be conspicuous. So silencers were subjected to the same controls as machineguns in 1934. People were forced to destroy their silencers or register them and pay a \$200 tax per item. That was an incredible amount of money in the depths of the Great Depression, so few Maxim silencers survive to this day.

The success of the Maxim silencer with sport shooters contrasts with their failure in the military marketplace. This is ironic, since Hiram Maxim always believed that his only significant market would be the military. The American Expeditionary Force took some sniper rifles with Maxim silencers to Europe during World War I, but the static nature of cont. on next page



H&R Reising Submachine gun Model 50 in original police issue case. Photo Dick Morin

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trench warfare did not provide a significant advantage to the sniper with a silenced weapon. The tactical environment of World War II, however, provided many opportunities to successfully use silencers for commando raids, resistance fighting, and special operations.

The photos accompanying this article show a Model 50 Reising sub-machine gun that apparently was equipped long ago with a Model 1910 Maxim silencer in .44 caliber by state police. The silencer tube measures 7-1/8 by 1-1/4 inches and weighs .94 pound.

This silenced Reising would have made a wonderful weapon for special operations during the Second World War. The Reising is light and fires from a closed bolt, making it accurate and a pleasure to shoot on semiautomatic. Even though it was issued with a Cutts Compensator, the light weapon was somewhat of a handful on full auto. The Maxim silencer, which isn't much bigger than the Cutts Compensator, not only makes the gun quiet, it also makes the weapon easy to control--even with long bursts.

This is especially remarkable when you consider that the silencer was made years before the advent of sub-machine guns. This silencer was



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never intended to cope with the tremendous volume of gas produced by automatic fire. In fact, the only reason this .44 caliber suppressor can be used on the .45 Cal Reising is that the holes in the baffles were designed to be 1/16 inch larger than their nominal caliber.

It is quite a tribute to Hiram Maxim that his silencer is noticeably quieter than a Vietnam-era SIONICS suppressor. Even more remarkable is that the Maxim performs better with a third of the volume and three-quarters of the weight. The Maxim reduces the weapon's sound signature by 22 decibels, while a new SIONICS suppressor with virgin wipes reduces the sound by 19 decibels.

Sound was measured by a Bruel and Kjaer Type 2209 Impulse Precision Sound Pressure Meter (set on A weighting) with a B&K Type 4136 1/4 inch condenser microphone. Ambient temperature was 62 degrees Fahrenheit. The microphone was placed 1.00 meters away from the front of the suppressor or muzzle, and at a 90 degree angle from the bullet flight path. The sound meter was calibrated just before and just after the testing.

This unlikely marriage of the Maxim Model 1919 silencer and the Model 50 Reising submachine gun make a weapons systems that performs well even by modern standards. The system is lighter, quieter and handier than the Ingram M10 .45 submachine gun with SIONICS suppressor, and it has four times the effective range in my hands.

While U.S. Army Special Forces still use the silenced M10 for special operations, I can't help wondering what might have been if Eugene Reising had tried his invention with a silencer designed by Dr. Shush.



The Reising submachine gun with Maxim silencer is lighter, quieter and handier than the Ingram M10 .45 cal submachine gun with SIONICS suppressor, and it has four times the effective range.

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