



CERTIFICATE OF

August 26, 2004

Congratulations:

Weatherby, by the means of this letter, is proud to authenticate the manufacture of the following Weatherby firearm:

Weatherby F N Mauser Deluxe

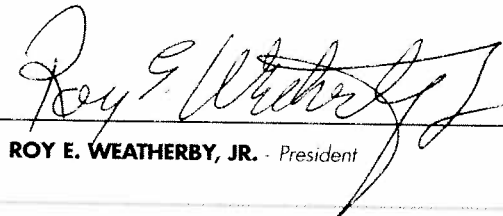
Country of Manufacture:	U.S.A.
Serial Number:	3552
Caliber:	270 Weatherby Magnum
Barrel/Contour:	24" #1 Chrome Bore
Metal Finish:	High Lustre Blue
Stock Type:	Deluxe American Black Walnut Dark Forend Tip, Cap, w/ White Spacer & White Diamond Inlay
Stock Finish:	High Gloss
Checkering:	Pattern #1 Checkering 18 L.P.I.
Recoil Pad:	Ventilated Side Wall

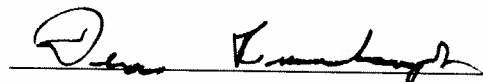
Shipped To:	Sears Roebuck Retail Sales Chicago, Illinois
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Date:	July 2nd, 1955
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We trust the information supplied above will be of interest.

Sincerely,


 ROY E. WEATHERBY, JR. - President


 DEAN RUMBAUGH - Historian

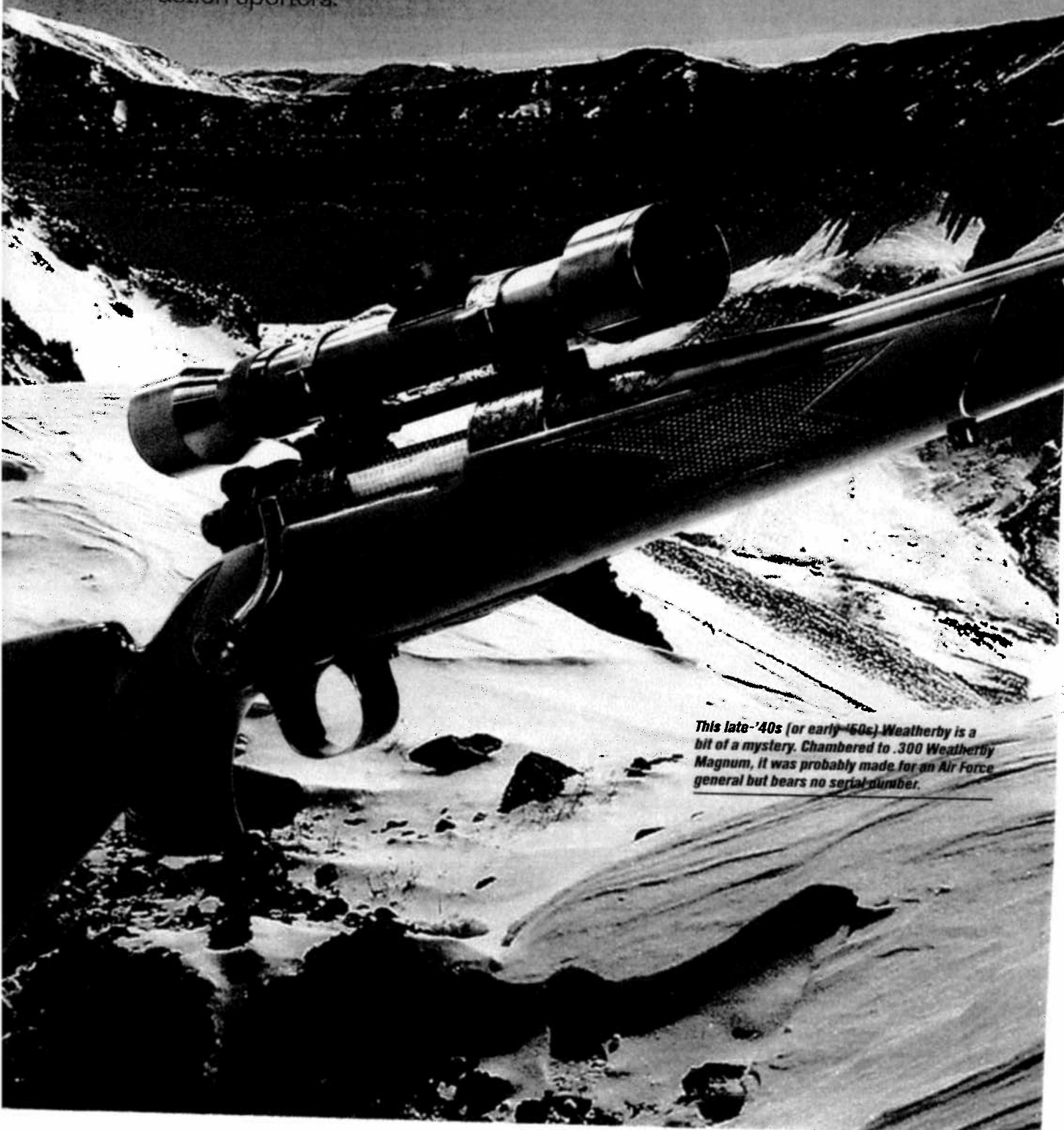
AUTHENTICITY



The "Pre-Mark V" Weatherby

The flashy and distinctive
powerhouse still the stage for
the "California School" of bolt-
action sporters.

This late-'40s (or early-'50s) Weatherby is a bit of a mystery. Chambered to .300 Weatherby Magnum, it was probably made for an Air Force general but bears no serial number.



For nearly 50 years the Weatherby Mark V magnum bolt-action rifle has been the flagship of the Weatherby line. So it is easy to forget that many of the finest examples of Roy Weatherby's rifles were created years before the Mark V saw the light of day.

As early as 1945 Weatherby was rechambering and altering customers' rifles for his fledgling family of cartridges, the .257, .270 and .300 Weatherby Magnums. He had also developed the .220 Rocket—a blown-out .220 Swift

with an altered case taper and shoulder. These cartridges and Weatherby's theory concerning the killing power of high velocity were already becoming well known in the world's gamefields although the cartridges themselves were considered wildcats.

Weatherby was also building new rifles on any suitable bolt action such as the Winchester Model 70, commercial Mauser and even Springfield actions. Weatherby's distinctive "California-style" deluxe model was rapidly evolving, but even the very earliest Weatherbys sported streamlined "pencil"-taper barrels and the brilliant, high-polished Weatherby blue.

California Dreamin'

Weatherby's style sense didn't mesh with conventional sporting rifle stocks of the period. He regarded them as clubby and cumber-

some and envisioned a sleek, streamlined stock that was well balanced, pointed naturally and would be comfortable to shoot when touching off a Weatherby Magnum.


Starting with a blank sheet of paper, Weatherby experimented with various stock shapes and profiles. The earliest Weatherby rifles had the rounded fore-end that was common at the time, but the gunmaker soon developed the familiar flat-bottomed fore-end with the "reverse V" rosewood tip that is distinctively Weatherby.

This was combined with a gracefully flaring pistol grip and a rosewood grip cap bearing the diamond inlay that has become a Weatherby signature. Perhaps the most significant feature to emerge as a component of the Weatherby look is the forward-slanting Monte Carlo comb and cheekpiece. This design contributed heavily to the Weatherby rifle's modernistic (read: radical) appearance when compared to contemporary rifles.

Much more important was how the forward-slanting comb—combined with minimal drop at the heel—made the rifles more comfortable to shoot under heavy recoil. As the rifle is acted on by the recoil impulse, the relatively high butt causes the rifle's motion to be mainly rearward rather than rotating upward as it would if the stock had a pronounced drop at the heel. At the same time, the forward-slanting comb tended to pull away from—rather than slam into—the shooter's cheek. Many earlier stock designs did just the opposite, delivering a sharp uppercut to the cheek that could actually magnify the effect of recoil.

It wasn't long before other rifle-makers and stock designers began to imitate Roy Weatherby's stylish stock design. Thus was born the "California School" of custom rifles. A few carried the motif to extremes, creating flamboyant designs that earned the disdain of those who continued to favor a conservative, "classic" style of rifle stock. However, the California School began to exert a

Lynn Pedigo photo



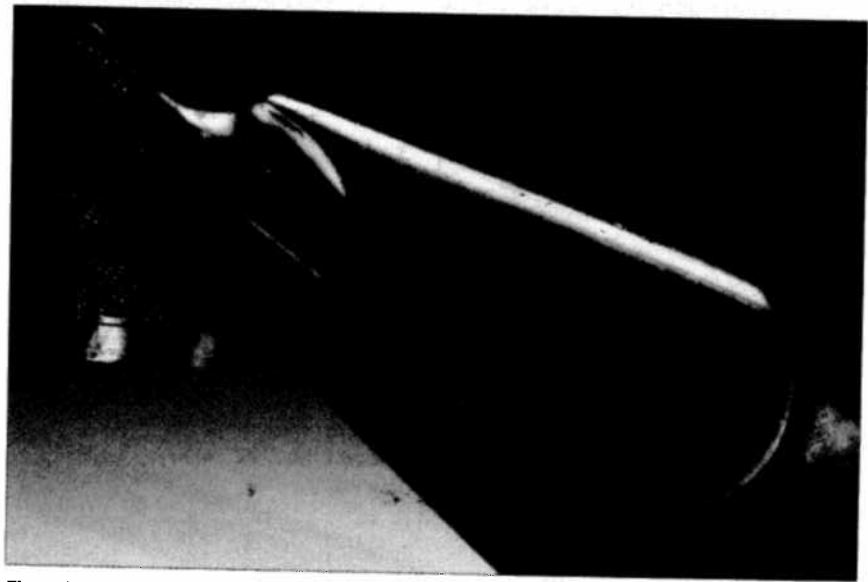
This pre-Mark V Weatherby used a commercial Mauser action with a German Nickel scope. The rifle's appearance was radical in the 1940s, but today it's merely elegant.

subtle influence on even the most conservative stock-makers, and combs began to rise until a "straight" comb with minimal heel drop became the norm.

Most factory rifles produced today use some of the design features that Weatherby pioneered, making a modern magnum rifle a much more user-friendly device than its earlier counterpart. Today a Weatherby rifle is merely distinctive, not radical, although a Crown Grade with its flashy inlays, engraving and exhibition-grade wood is nobody's idea of a "conservative" rifle.

Early Weatherbys influenced modern bolt-actions in yet another way. Scopes had been available for hunting rifles since the days of buffalo hunter Billy Dixon, but they were fragile and dim enough that iron sights were still useful equipment, even if only as a backup. But the appeal of a Weatherby Magnum cartridge depended on flat trajectory and long-range killing power. For this reason a quality scope was essential on a Weatherby rifle, and iron sights were a nonfunctional appendage. Also, iron sights on a light or sporter-weight barrel could adversely affect accuracy, so Weatherby almost always left them off his rifles.

Fortunately, good riflescopes were becoming widely available in the post-WWII period, just in time for the debut of Weatherby rifles without iron sights. Today, hunting rifles without iron sights are commonplace, but in the late 1940s iron sights were considered an essential component. Once again Roy Weatherby had broken new ground.



The author's early Weatherby features a deluxe walnut stock with unexceptional grain. The forward-slanting Monte Carlo comb and cheekpiece were radical design touches for the day.

Weatherby Cartridges

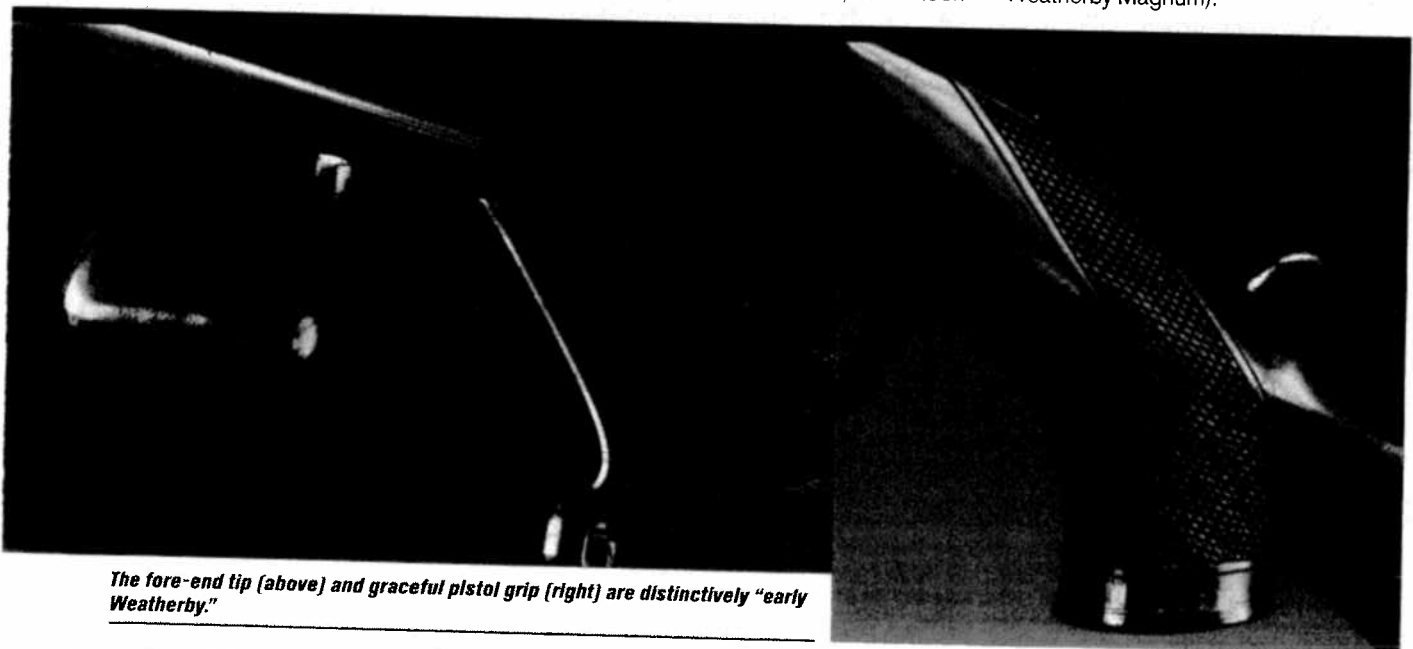
In 1944 Weatherby wildcatted four new cartridges based on the .300 H&H Magnum. Three of these—the .257, .270 and 7mm Weatherby Magnum—had a shortened case as well as a blown-out body and the soon-to-be-famous Weatherby "double venturi" shoulder. The fourth, the .300 Weatherby Magnum, was a true "improved" version of the .300 H&H (meaning it was a wildcat fire-formed from the original case with no other alterations). A fifth cartridge, the .375 Weatherby Magnum, was an improved .375 H&H.

All of these cartridges offered substantial performance increases compared to other similar-caliber cartridges available. By 1948 Weatherby was offering loaded ammunition, which took

Weatherby magnums out of the wildcat category and legitimized them as proprietary cartridges.

Besides rechambering customers' rifles, Weatherby offered complete bolt-action rifles. For 12 years before the introduction of the incredibly strong Weatherby Mark V, Weatherby rifles were made with a variety of bolt actions and equipped with either an Ackley or Buhmiller barrel.

Aside from the Winchester and Springfield actions mentioned earlier, many Weatherby rifles were made using actions from Schultz & Larson (.378 Weatherby Magnum) and Mathieu (left-hand only). Mauser actions were provided at various times by Fabrique Nationale, Sako and Brevox (.460 Weatherby Magnum).



The fore-end tip (above) and graceful pistol grip (right) are distinctively "early Weatherby."



The author's Weatherby features well-executed engraving on the action, bolt and first three inches of barrel and floorplate (inset).



One Of A Kind

By 1949 most Weatherby rifles were made with FN Mauser actions. My example is a Mauser chambered for .300 Weatherby Magnum, probably dating from the late 1940s. It is believed to have been made for an Air Force general stationed in Germany at the time, but this raises an interesting question. Weatherby records show a range of serial numbers from 1,400 to 10,962 for rifles made with FN actions. Only a few Sako Mausers were made with serial numbers from 6,000A to 6,275A.

This rifle bears no serial number at all but is clearly a commercial Mauser. Is it a prototype from either FN or Sako? Or is it an action obtained somewhere in Europe by its original owner and subsequently sent to Weatherby to be made into a rifle?

Its early-design Redfield rings, one-piece base and 4X German Nickel scope with windage knob on the left side of the scope saddle suggest it is a 1940s or early-1950s specimen. Whatever its origin, it has a Weatherby deluxe walnut stock with unexceptional grain but very well-executed, full-coverage engraving on the action, bolt and floorplate as well as the rings and base. The engraving carries on to the first three



After more than 50 years this pre-Mark V .300 Weatherby fired a three-shot group only slightly larger than an inch at 100 yards.

inches of the breech end of the barrel. Fifty years of service (more or less) have not detracted from the rifle's usefulness as a hunting tool. Three rounds through an Oehler 35P's chronograph screens averaged 3,176 fps with factory Weatherby 180-grain Nosler Partitions—a bit less than the published figure of 3,240 fps.

The three rounds produced a group that was only slightly greater than one inch at 100 yards.

This pre-Mark V .300 Weatherby Magnum is an excellent instrument for hunting on this or any other continent. With its elegant lines, tasteful embellishment and just a touch of mystery, it is a possession both to savor and to ponder.

gunsandammomag.com Log on and look up "Classics" to read more about vintage rifles.