

Buried Treasure

by Pinkney Gage

Airguns Have Long History As Items for Collectors

As Nick tested the air rifle I asked him how come he had turned to air rifles. An amateur gunsmith, Nick removed the weapon and handed it over.

"It's a V.A. 35, one which the old Czech government ordered for pre-military training back in the 30s when they were planning to resist Hitler," he said.

The weapon looked almost exactly like a regulation bayonet on it. The only way on could tell the difference was a quick look was by the size of a barrel—about that of a .22—and a small device in the bolt mechanism which prevented sighting except when the piece was cocked.

Most of the metal work was blued. On the cylinder was the traditional Czech lion and the words "Ceska Zbrojovka, A. S. v Praze V.S. 35."

"But why tinker with a toy like this," I asked. "You're not going to use it, and no one would buy it except to give to a kid."

"That just goes to show you don't know much about airguns," he replied. "Why people have been collecting them for years.

Airguns, it appeared, have been used since the sixteenth century at least, and during the late 1800s they were considered so deadly in effect they were finally outlawed as military weapons for civilized nations.

"I managed to get this one for \$2," he said, returning to the matter at hand. "It takes a slightly smaller pellet than a BB, and that's probably why it wound up in a junk shop. Just the same, there are plenty of people who will be glad to own it when it's fixed up."

Rather disbelievingly I asked him what he thought it worth. "A friend," he said, "doesn't have one like this in his collection of airguns, and he's already willing to swap me a Smith & Wesson that I once offered him \$40 for; so you can figure it out for yourself."

OLD REVENUE STAMP FOUND VALUABLE

"Well," said Jim, pulling a small envelope out of his vest pocket, "I expected to have only \$30 left after paying my tax, and just as a gag—to sort of dramatize my position—I took along this old Internal Revenue stamp I found in the office the other day."

He shook the stamp out of the envelope. It was of \$200 denomination. Brownish red and green in color, the stamp was in excellent shape. The pen and ink cancellation marks on the face of the picture of Washington had been light to begin with but were faded now. The edges were imperforate with generous margins, indicating that unlike many of them it had not been trimmed in an attempt to raise its value.

"You ought to have seen the agent's face when I tossed this stamp on the table and reached for my checkbook," continued Jim.

ANGLER CATCHES RARE SEWING BIRD

A funny looking gargoyle almost rammed his iron beak into my chest.

Sticking out from the mantle piece was a fierce looking bird's head about three inches long. The neck curved gracefully, but with a look of malevolent power, down to the mantle piece where it divided, the lower part curling down and under, the upper part rose a short candlestick that reached about six inches above the mantle's surface.

While I bent over to see what held it on—it was a screw clamp—Tim whipped out a match and lit the candle. The light flickered on the wrought iron of the piece.

I said something to the effect it was the strangest looking candlestick I had ever seen.

"Well," said Tim, "primarily it isn't a candlestick at all. It's what was known as a sewing bird." And he went on to explain that in the days before the sewing machine, women used them to hold the fabric they

were working on. He turned a small screw at the corner of the bird's mouth and the beak closed down.

"They would put the thing on the table," he said, "put the fabric in the mouth, and at night the candle would give them plenty of light to work by."

I asked him where he got it. "We were fishing one day in the Connecticut river and I got caught on the bottom. At least, that's the way it felt. Anyway, when I pulled in, this thing was on the hook."

"I was about to heave it over the side, but Martha recognized it right off as a sewing bird and we've had it ever since."

His wife's quick eye paid off. Sewing birds are found in many different designs and materials, and while some of them are worth only a few dollars, others can and do bring into the hundreds. Because of the unusual workmanship in Martha's wrought iron piece she has twice been offered \$75 for it.

(Released by McClure Newspaper Syndicate)

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Sunday, November 7, 1954

MEDFORD (OREGON) MAIL TRIBUNE—THIRTEEN

Grange

Eagle Point Grange
Plans for improvement of the Grange Park adjacent to the hall were discussed at the November 2 meeting of Eagle Point Grange. The area was planted to trees a number of years ago. It is now hoped that a sprinkling system may be installed and proper leveling and seeding done. Jake Brown and Bob Bitterling have volunteered to work on improvements and seed for the lawn has been offered by Lester Wertz.

Appreciation of the cooperation of members during the recent dinner and festival was expressed by ways and means chairman, Grant Hubbell.

Mrs. Paul Olsen expressed a desire for more rigid flag observances at polling places.

A communication from the Teen-Age Club thanked the Grange for use of the hall for the recent style show.

A turkey dinner will be observed by Griffin Creek Grange from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, November 7, it was announced.

Central Point is serving a turkey dinner on November 13.

Eagle Point Booster night will be held November 13, with a wild game potluck dinner at 7:30 p.m.

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Physician Joins Staff Of Medford Clinic

The addition of John T. Brandenburg, M.D., to the Medford clinic's department of diagnosis and internal medicine was announced Saturday from the clinic offices.

Dr. and Mrs. Brandenburg and their two small sons arrived in Medford last week from Rochester, Minn., where the physician recently completed three years of advanced training in his specialty at the Mayo clinic.

A native of Bismark, N. D., Dr. Brandenburg is a graduate of the University of North Dakota and the medical school of Northwestern University at Chicago. His internship was at Chicago's Cook County hospital. The Brandenbergs have leased the

home of Dr. and Mrs. Ralph O'Dell on Brookdale rd.

7:30 p.m. A program is planned for later in the evening. All interested persons are invited to attend. A rehearsal for the program will be held November 11 at 8 p.m. and all officers and others participating in the program are to attend.

Lecturer, Mrs. John Huffman, told of a sneak preview to be shown at the December 7 meeting.

Ted Hoffman who was injured in an accident several months ago is able to be about on crutches.

Mrs. Louise Robinson is about the same and is in a Medford nursing home.

Cards of appreciation were received from the Otto Caster and Tom Stanley families.

Mr. and Mrs. Otis Jones, Mr. and Mrs. Glen Waddell and Mr. and Mrs. Jake Brown, served refreshments following the meeting.

NEW HEALTH CENTER
Albany, N.Y. — (U.P.) — New York will spend \$3,000,000 to build a new health center here. The two-story building will house the state's health department, an X-ray room, an auditorium and a library.

Honolulu has built 23,000 new houses since 1946.

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