



# DAILEY'S GANGSTER GUN

*By Scot Dahms*

If you read through any number of E.J.'s articles, you will notice that the type and size of firearm he was using changed frequently. Of the many firearms noted, three are mentioned numerous times while others are only noted once and not referenced in another article. The three that he mentioned several times included his .22 Colt Woodsman, .32 Winchester Special rifle and Marble's Game Getter.

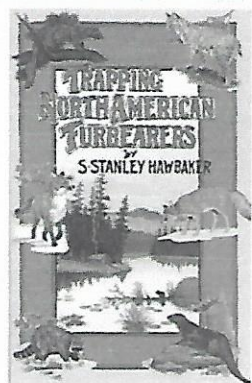
E.J. thought that the best trapline gun was a good revolver or pistol of smaller caliber, preferably a .22 for shooting

trapped animals and bait. He thought the .22 was best because of the lightness, less expensive ammunition and smaller hole in the pelt. He preferred a revolver to a pistol because of reliability. The pistols that he tried clogged when the temperature got around sixty below zero and the mechanism was too delicately constructed to withstand rough trapline duty. E.J. carried a .22 Stevens pistol with a six-inch barrel during his earlier trapping escapades. Later in life, he carried a .22 Colt Woodsman. Towards the end of his life, he used an Iver-Johnson .22 revolver. In the fall of 1915,

he said he was carrying a 44 Colt revolver which was out of line with his comments on the .22.

When E.J. and Dick Wood made the first trapping venture into the Cold River area of the Adirondacks in 1919, they carried a .303 Savage, 30-30 Winchester and their two Colt Woodsman's along. To shoot a winter's supply of meat, E.J. said the 30-30 carbine was the standard in wooded country. E.J. wrote at least thirty different articles about their first trapping trip into Cold River. In variations of the article printed on later dates, the rifles were replaced with a .250-3000

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Savage, .35 and an Ithaca double barreled shotgun.

They later noted that they should have never brought the rifles along because of the weight and they were able to shoot everything they needed with the Colt Woodsmans. At one time, E.J. had both of the Colt Woodsmans in a box in his house. It is unknown whether he bought it from Dick Wood, or if Dick had just borrowed his for their trapping adventures. Maybe one was not even Dick's at all and E.J. had gotten it from someone else.

In one of his earliest articles in the November 1916 issue of Hunter Trader Trapper, E.J. discussed the cost of hunting outfits. When he first started to put his outfit together, he sent for a catalog of obsolete army rifles

from a company in New York. After studying it for a while, he decided on a Spencer carbine and 100 rounds of ammunition. The price was \$3.50 and \$1.50 respectively which was mailed in the form of a money order. He said the gun was a .56-50 caliber and in new condition.

In August of 1910 while prospecting around Hudson Bay in Ontario, E.J. shot a deer with a 45-70. In October of 1917, he said he had a 12 gauge, pump shotgun and a 50 caliber rifle. During the 1920-1921 trapping season, E.J. had a .44-40 Winchester that had been a companion to him for so long that he hated to part with it. He said that in a couple of instances it saved his life.

In 1922, E.J. told the story of when he was leaving camp one

night. He was carrying a .38-40 Winchester, or as he called it, the "deer-slayer." He was walking briskly down a narrow trail as he saw a fat doe gazing directly at him. He thought that if he stopped, she would instantly bound into the brush. So he kept walking while raising the rifle to his shoulder and got her with the first shot.

In the fall of 1925, E.J. used a .32 Winchester Special Carbine on a deer hunting trip into the Cold River area. In 1939, he said the same .32 was hanging on the deer antlers over the door of his cabin.

In May of 1930, E.J. mentioned his Marble's Game Getter, a combination shotgun, rifle and pistol, in an article for the first time. In the fall of 1930 while in the Adirondacks, E.J. had loaded the .44 barrel of his Game Getter for deer because lots of hunter activity had pushed them into his Sand Hill trapline. He had thought about carrying his .32 Winchester Special instead, but an eight-point buck changed his mind. He aimed slightly below the ear and harvested the deer. In September of 1932, E.J. stated that he was seldom without his Game Getter.

E.J. kept red fox in wooden and wire mesh pens after capture. He would keep them alive for his fox farm at home where he collected fox urine. He had two foxes in a pen one day. That evening, he heard a porcupine chewing on something outside, but thought nothing of it as it was a routine sound to hear. In the morning, he found his two foxes gone. The hole chewed in

the pen was not chewed from the inside out, but from the outside in. The next night, he heard the same sound. He quietly slid the window open and turned his flashlight on. He used his Game Getter to make sure that porcupine did not help any other fox to escape. This article was published in October of 1934 and was the last time he mentioned his Game Getter in an article.

In June of 1934, the National Firearms Act was passed and placed restrictions on two types of guns: machine guns and short-barrel firearms. It did not attempt to ban either weapon, but merely imposed a tax on any transfers of such weapons.

In the 1930s, the United States faced a run of much publicized gangster violence led by such well-known criminals as John Dillinger, Al Capone, Baby Face Nelson, and Bonnie and Clyde. The sensationalistic aspect of their crimes convinced the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt that something needed to be done to control the spread of weapons into the general population. U.S. Attorney General Homer Cummings and his staff began the process of drafting recommended legislation that would achieve this goal. Cummings and his staff quickly determined that, rather than ban weapons and run afoul of the Second Amendment, they would try to tax such weapons out of circulation. As passed by Congress, it covered "a shotgun or rifle having a barrel of less than eighteen inches in length, or any other weapon, except a pistol

or revolver, from which a shot is discharged by an explosive if such a weapon is capable of being concealed on the person, or a machine gun."

The statute levied a \$200 tax on each firearm, meeting the above definition, when transferred. The tax was to be paid by the transferor, and to be represented by appropriate stamps to be provided by the commissioner. It was unlawful for anyone to sell or receive a firearm in violation of this section, and they could be fined \$2,000 and imprisoned for up to five years for violating it.

The Act required dealers of the listed firearms to register with the Secretary of the Treasury and required persons who owned them before the effective date of the Act to register, with the collector of the district in which he resides, the number or other mark identifying of each firearm, along with the owner's name, address, place where the firearm was stored, and place of business or employment.

The Act classified the Marble's Game Getter as a gangster gun. It was a compact folding double barreled rifle with

one barrel on top of the other. The basic one had a .22 caliber and a .44 caliber barrel manufactured in 12, 15 and 18 inch barrels. The .22 caliber was suited for killing trapped furbearers and bait for the trapline, while the other barrel was intended to supply meat for the camp.

E.J said that he was not a hunter and a new modern steel trap interested him much more than the most elaborate rifle or gun. He also said that a trapper should not mix hunting and trapping as his catch would surely suffer. He did seem to have more of a passing interest in his firearms though. One frequent visitor to E.J.'s trapping supply house commented about the continually changing variety in size and brand of firearms on a gun rack. In his business, he could frequently buy, sell and trade firearms, so he easily gained access to any firearm he needed for his outdoor activities. Too bad there is not a record of all the different firearms that E.J. had owned. I bet it would be long, varied and eventful just like his life.

-Scot

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