

The Ultimate WALK-UP GUN

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #169 —

"Walk-up" shooting is a British term. It means walking the fields with a gun, looking for birds. The British also shoot "driven-birds" — where the shooters stand in fixed locations and fire at the birds as they're driven overhead. It's interesting to note that the British typically use the word shooting, rather than hunting. Really, walk-up is what we've pretty much always done in the United States; get your gun and dog and walk the cover looking for quail or pheasants. We just call it hunting.

Obviously, walk-up shooting takes a lot more effort than driven bird shooting, so the British gunmakers developed lightweight guns, such as the one I used today — a 12 gauge gun that weighs about the same as a 20 gauge. One might ask, why not just carry a 20 gauge? The best answer is that the Customers preferred a 12 gauge gun rather than a 20.

Acquiring this particular shotgun is a story in itself. While browsing a firearms website, that hosts many gun dealers,

in the fall of 2015, I found this listing: Pre-war (1930) Purdey Extra Lightweight 12 ga. It was well-pictured and described and included an interesting statement: "This may be the ultimate walk-up gun." Upon calling — sorry, it was already sold. I asked the dealer if he would be kind enough to contact the buyer and inquire if possibly he would sell it to me. Unfortunately, I never got an answer. A year later, I was shooting driven partridge in Spain, with a couple of buddies from Texas. John, J.C. and I were talking



The leather-covered case looks like it's been around for a hundred years; but inside is a well-preserved masterpiece of the gunmaker's art — a pre-war Purdey. The initials R.L. likely were those of the original owner.

about shotguns, when my friend J.C. dropped the words "lightweight Purdey." I asked only one question and knew we were talking about the same gun. Naturally, I got pretty excited. Fortunately, the gentleman that he is, J.C. offered to sell me the gun — and he did — saying that it would obviously mean more to me.

So, I get the gun in January, take it home, inspect it thoroughly and then to the clays range. It shoots great, but

**"...the ultimate
walk-up gun did not
disappoint."**

the chokes were improved cylinder and full — a bit much for the walk-up hunting that I do — .003 (skeet) and .012 (light modified) are more to my liking. Briley did a great job opening the chokes.

Today I carried this gun for the first time for its designed purpose; the ultimate walk-up gun did not disappoint.

**USA
Midway**

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Weighing just 5 pounds and 15 ounces, it carries like a 20 gauge, but shoots like a 12.



The first pheasant I shot with "the ultimate walk-up gun." It was a close flush, as I was walking out of dense cover; but an easy shot with the right barrel.