

PROBLEMS with DOUBLE RIFLES

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #215 —

If you're going to Africa, especially for buffalo or elephant, sooner or later you're going to want a double rifle. Our family was no different. We started hunting plains game in Zimbabwe in 1993. Russell got his first taste of buffalo hunting on the second trip, using a 375 H&H, Remington 700. For 1995, we booked a hunt in Tanzania, with three buffalo on our 21-day tags. At the Safari Club Show, that year, we went shopping.

Russell found a Charles Boswell in 500 Nitro Express. This was his idea of a perfect dangerous game gun. At our range, he sat on the bench and fired the first round, but both barrels went off. In an instant, he was on his back with the gun on top of him. Wow! Now, a box action is a simple mechanism, the tip of one sear had worn round

and would no longer hold in the hammer notch; I stoned it flat, got a good trigger pull, then off to Africa.

We found another Charles Boswell double

for Sara; this one in 450/400. No doubling problem; but, while the left barrel shot on target at 50 yards, the right barrel would throw it's bullet to the left about 6". First thought was a regulation problem and I experimented with loads; but ultimately we discovered an almost undetectable dent in the right side of the right barrel. Apparently, the gun had been dropped on a hard surface, with the muzzle of the right barrel making contact first. The muzzles had been freshly struck with a file and re-crowned, but they didn't get quite all of the dent. Filing off another 1/16" removed the dent and brought the right barrel back on target.



Sara and I in the back yard at home, doing some informal shooting with her Charles Boswell double rifle, chambered in 450/400 3-1/4" Nitro Express.

Now, the third rifle was mine, a "bait" rifle – not a dangerous game gun. It was a 303 British, made by George Gibbs. There was one problem; once fired, it was very difficult to open, as the firing pins hung slightly in the primers. There's a mechanical solution, of course, but before trying that, a friend gave me some German RWS primers, as the cups are harder than those made in the states. Perfect, and I've never had to work on the action.

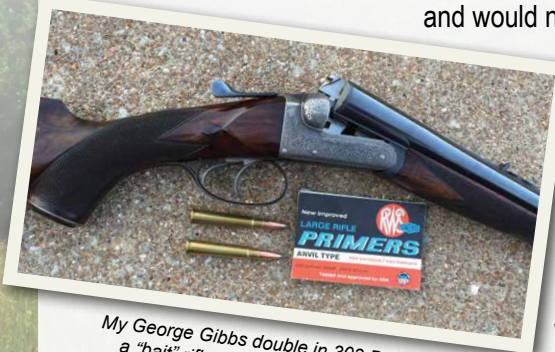
"...a perfect dangerous game gun."

Old guns can't talk, so we have to learn their stories by shooting them, to see how they work or don't; sometimes adding to their stories by bringing them back to shooting condition.

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Back Yard
The Potterfield House
Columbia, MO
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Midway USA



My George Gibbs double in 303 British is what I call a "bait" rifle, because it isn't big enough to use on dangerous game.



Russell's Charles Boswell, chambered in 500 Nitro Express, is a serious dangerous game rifle.