

Trivia – THE BRITISH Gun Case

– LARRY’S SHORT STORIES #223 –

Trivia: Interesting information with little real value.

Since Joseph Manton came on the British gunmaking scene in the late 1700’s, high-quality, handmade guns (bespoke) have been delivered to their Customers in hinged, lockable, wooden boxes (cases), functionally partitioned to protect the individual components – and lined with cloth similar to that used on billiard tables. All the famous gunmakers – Joseph Manton, Westley Richards, James Purdey, Holland and Holland and Thomas Boss used such cases, as did most of the less famous makers of quality guns. The cases were made to order, typically by independent, outside craftsmen. Through the years, these cases have evolved into “Works of Art”.

From the beginning, oak and mahogany were the woods of choice. Typically, the wooden cases had heavy brass corners on the outside, and the

owner’s initials were engraved into a brass plate on the top. Of course, the gunmaker’s label was carefully glued to the inside of the lid; interestingly, early cases had tiny, fold-down handles; they were simply wooden boxes that held the gun(s) and the necessary shooting and cleaning accessories for a shooting trip. These accessories included cleaning rods and tips, powder and shot flasks, oil, extra firing pins, screwdrivers and other repair tools.

As time went on, these cases took on a life of their own and today we call them “British Gun Cases.” They are beautiful, handmade works of art, never needing an apology – regardless of where they are displayed. In some circles, they are almost as highly revered as the bespoke guns they were designed to protect and display.



This is a “Lightweight Leather Motor Case”; meant to protect your expensive side-by-side or over/under shotgun during travel to and from the hunting area. Please note that the corners are reinforced with leather. Weight 7.455 pounds.

There were a great many improvements; somewhere along the line, the handle was enlarged for ease of carrying, the wood was covered with top grain leather (dyed in many colors), and leather straps were added to ensure the case didn’t “pop” open.

Lastly, canvas covers became an option to protect the beautiful leather

“...works of art, never needing an apology...”

on the outside of the case. Today’s offering of British Gun Cases includes a “motor case”, a “lightweight all leather display case” and an “Oak and Leather display case”; the latter being the heaviest, most expensive and attractive.

Anyway, I’m pleased to have a few British Gun Cases in my gunroom, some older and some newer; and hope to add a few more.



Larry Potterfield

My Gunroom
MidwayUSA
Columbia, MO
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For display in your gunroom, this is as good as it gets – the classic “Oak and Leather Display Case with Brass Corners”. Weight 15.65 pounds.



For display, but also “kind” travel to and from the hunting area, this “Lightweight Leather Display Case” is “made-to-order” for a specific gun. Weight 6.57 pounds.