

# The LARRY GUN

## Part One

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #274 —



*Here's the Purdey, unpackaged and assembled, on the day it came in.*

Likely, it was love at first sight; how many chances in a lifetime does a man get to consider buying a like-new Purdey shotgun, with his first name boldly inlaid into the toe line – in gold? Well, technically not my first name, but that of the original “Larry,” for whom it was made, back in 1987. Interestingly, this happened to me!

The “web” has created opportunities that frankly were almost impossible in the old days. A website that I occasionally view, Gunsinternational.com, has a category called Purdey Shotguns for Sale. Now, Purdey has made just over 30,000 guns since starting up in 1816 and typically there are about 170 of them for sale on this website, which is where I found it listed by a dealer in Texas. It was just

another Purdey, but the condition was high on the lead picture and the price was low; so, I looked at the rest of the pictures.

At first, I thought “no way!” What

kind of a person would want their name boldly inlaid in gold into the toe line of the stock? But, it was a nice gun - very attractive, reportedly fired less than 100 times, engraved by the master engraver Ken Hunt. “Larry” had requested a flying quail on the bottom of the receiver and the maker’s name J. Purdey & Sons., in old English script, inlaid in gold on the lock plates? Oh, and the price was right!

It was choked a bit tight for my quail hunting, improved cylinder and ½ (which is modified); but, chokes can be opened. And, it was a bit heavy for a quail gun —

at 7 pounds, 2-1/2 ounces; more difficult to change, but possible. The only thing I knew about the stock dimensions was 15” length of pull, which is at the far end of my comfort zone; but, stock dimensions are relatively easy to change. Double triggers, front one hinged, beaded guard and leather covered recoil pad, for me at least, were all pluses. A pistol grip stock, rather than straight grip, is a bit unusual on a Purdey, but not unacceptable.

“Interestingly, this happened to me!”

I finally convinced myself to inquire further and possibly negotiate with the dealer who was selling the gun. There wasn’t much negotiating on the price, but we had a pleasant discussion and ultimately made the deal. Now the “Larry Gun” belonged to a different “Larry”!

Larry Potterfield

My Office  
The MidwayUSA Campus  
Columbia, MO  
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*I certainly would never have my name inlaid in the stock; the stock oval is provided for such purpose—or your initials. Nonetheless, its interesting to own a gun bearing one's name.*



*My guns are for shooting, not just looking at; so the very next day I tried it on sporting clays.*