



A "ROUGH RIDER'S" COLT

For the first time in NRA's proud history, a licensed and certified reproduction of a firearm from the National Firearms Museum collection is being offered. The gun is based on a 5½" Colt Artillery Model carried by "Rough Rider" Louis G. Bishop that went up San Juan Hill alongside Theodore Roosevelt. **BY PHILIP SCHREIER**

JULY 1 marks the centennial of the Spanish-American War battle of San Juan Hill, a battle that propelled the United States into the arena of world politics and Theodore Roosevelt into the White House. One of the Colt Single Action revolvers that saw service in that action is a highlight of the NRA's new National Firearms Museum exhibit on "That Splendid Little War With Spain." Though it may not be possible for you to make your way to NRA Headquarters in Fairfax, Virginia, to view the revolver, it is now possible for you to have an *exact* copy of it in your personal collection.

Cherry's Fine Guns of Greensboro, North Carolina, is the first firm in the history of the National Rifle Association to produce a licensed and certified reproduction of a firearm from the collection of the National Firearms Museum. The curatorial staff of the NFM has worked with the staff of Cherry's Fine Guns to select historically significant firearms from the collection and produce a limited number for firearms collectors to enjoy as additions to their private collections. The 5½"-barreled Colt Artillery model was selected as the first due to the significant role that its initial owner, Trooper Louis G. Bishop of the 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry, played in the Battle of San Juan Hill a century ago.

There is an old saying that goes "If only this old gun could talk ... what tales it might tell." Well, there is a way of coaxing some firearms into giving up their secrets, and the research done by Andrew Mowbray and Michael Zomber, previous owners of the revolver before it was donated to the museum, tells a fascinating story of a young retail clerk from Richmond, Virginia, who journeyed to San Antonio, Texas, to enlist in the famous cavalry regiment known nationwide as "Roosevelt's Rough Riders." The rest is, as they say, history.

Painstaking attention to detail and hours of background research were undertaken to ensure that each example of Trooper Bishop's revolver is not only an accurate copy but also a worthy addition to private collections as well as a representative article of NRA's National Firearms Museum. From the finish and case colors to the barrel length and inspectors' cartouches that were added after the famous battle, the reproduction of trooper Bishop's gun is correct in every detail and deserving of being the first gun to be selected as a National Firearms Museum commemorative piece.

For more information on the commemorative firearms program or on the activities and collection of the new National Firearms Museum, please write to: Director, NFM (Dept. AR), 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030-9400, or call (703) 267-1600.



Trooper Bishop's revolver, as it is now, does not have matching numbers. It was returned to Colt in 1901 and was disassembled and refurbished. On reassembly, little attention was paid to matching the parts. Sub-Inspector David F. Clark's initials—"D.F.C."—are visible on the front of the frame (I).

Photos by Michael E. Nischalke

Library of Congress



The Charge of the Rough Riders at San Juan Hill by Frederic Remington was painted in 1899.