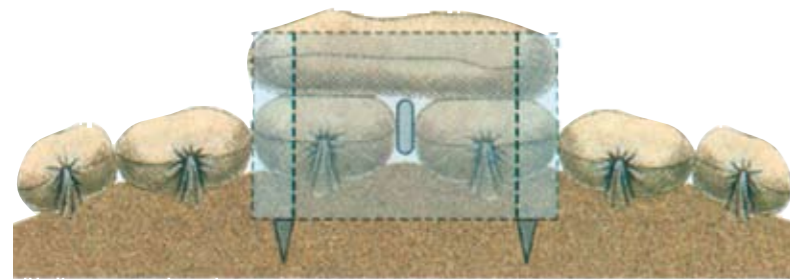


The Illustrated History of
SNIPING

Mark Spicer





ABOVE: An Italian sniper in July 1916 firing at the enemy from behind the double protection of trench bags and sheet iron firing plate. The plate is slung over the sniper's shoulder of the sniper when not in use.

Throughout this and previous periods of military history the art of shooting someone at distance and from a concealed position was considered to be cowardly and just not the done thing. Therefore, the skill was never really accepted, while the cavalry and lancers were considered the ultimate weapons of war.

World War I was to change all that and snipers really came into their own. With all both sides bogged down in trench warfare, anything that would give an advantage was considered. The Germans had within their ranks a wealth of marksmen who had been gamekeepers in their large forests. They not only had the natural hunter's instincts, but also a wide selection of optical sights fitted to hunting rifles, and very quickly used them with devastating effect against the British troops in the opposing trenches.

Within weeks the term "sniper" became the scare word in the trenches; indeed, the British lost

up to a hundred men a day to this "new" threat on some sectors of the front lines. Appalled at the losses being inflicted upon the British, Major Hesketh-Pritchard, who had been a successful big game hunter before the war, became the driving force behind the British response, and was instrumental in the establishment of the first British Army sniper course. In this course he laid down the fundamentals of what he believed went together to make a good sniper, and in doing so can rightly lay claim to being the "father" of British sniping. Hesketh-Pritchard believed that to succeed as a sniper an individual must have the following qualities: (a) a hunter's instinct; (b) enduring patience; and (c) acute powers of observation.

He also stated that any man could be trained as a deadly shot with a telescopic sight, but that it took true dedication to become a sniper. The Hesketh-Pritchard school very quickly produced some very effective snipers and within a very short time the British had turned the tables on the German forces. Hesketh, or "Hex" as friends knew him, became established as an authority on sniping and was constantly referred to by the army high command as the "king of the snipers". The troops, on the other hand, had a different and less complimentary name for him – "The Professional Assassin". While primarily the commandant and chief instructor of the 1st SOS (School of Sniping),

LEE MODEL 1895 (US NAVY) RIFLE



This rifle is probably better known as the Lee straight-pull which indicates both its inventor and its mechanism. James Lee, a Scot by birth but educated in Canada, eventually became a citizen of the United States where all his experimental work was done.

He is probably best known for his box magazine for bolt-action rifles; it was widely adopted and his name appears on a long series of British service rifles. Towards the end of the 19th Century he invented a rifle which in 1895 was adopted by the

United States Navy who placed an order for 10,000 of them. The rifle was unusual in that it incorporated a "straight-pull" breech in which direct backward pressure on the lever caused the breech to rise slightly, opening as it did so.

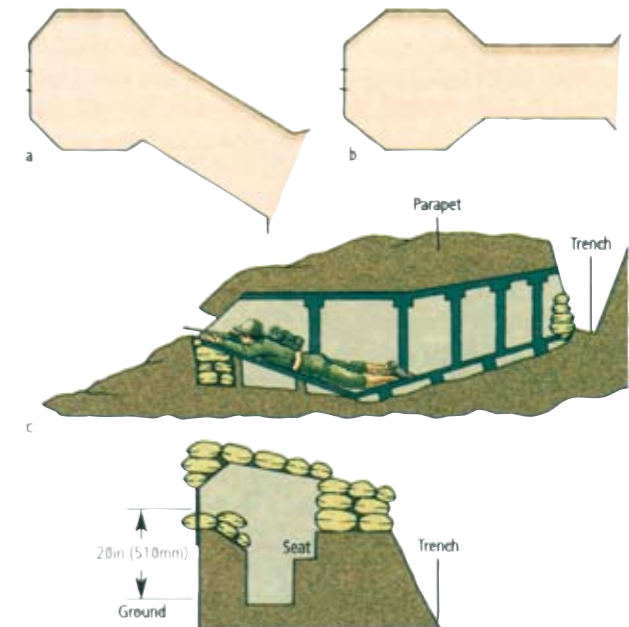
No manual turning was required; locking worked by an arrangement of cams on the bolt. It was of unusually small caliber and had a magazine capacity of five rounds; it was also the first United States service rifle ever to be loaded by means of a charger.

Unfortunately, straight-pull rifles have no real advantage over the more orthodox turn-bolt types, but they do have several disadvantages, chief of which are their complex structure and the fact that their operation, perhaps surprisingly, is more tiring than that of normal types. The US Navy disliked it very much and it soon disappeared from the service. A sporting version was also made but this also proved unpopular and the model was soon withdrawn, some 18,300 of the 20,000 produced never seeing daylight.

he was continually assisting armies of other nations in establishing their own schools, which steadily increased in number. Hesketh-Pritchard and other influences, such as McBride, Gay Thorn-Hardy, Langford-Lloyd, Captain Underhill, Major George Gray and Major Neville Armstrong, all played their part in expanding the acceptance and use of sniping within the British military. The snipers were very quickly found to have another and sometimes more important asset as a result of their training, that of observation.

A very important part of the sniper's training is the ability to notice things on a battlefield that the average soldier would miss or just discount. This attention to detail is essential to the sniper if he is to remain alive, since to discount or fail to notice something out of the ordinary could well lead to his death. Armed with this invaluable skill, the newly looked after by the Germans within that area and, since he knew that food was in short supply, he reckoned that the cat had found itself some officers to befriend. This observation was duly passed up the chain where the intelligence officer decided to act upon it and the subsequent artillery barrage was later found to have destroyed the enemy command bunker and all inside.

Such skills would provide all sides with invaluable intelligence during the continuing conflict and snipers became as effective with their eyes as they



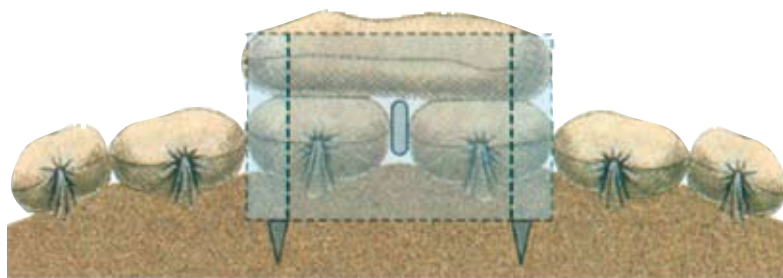
were with their rifles. The advent of the recognised sniper led to all manner of changes to the way that units operated and also to the introduction of new equipment. Troops in the trenches could never predict where the sniper could see and hence shoot, and this meant that to stick their heads above the parapet was a very risky pastime. As continual observation of the enemy was essential, an alternative was needed. The answer was the development of two main options, firstly the introduction of trench periscopes that enabled

ABOVE: The two main types of camouflage suits used by British snipers in WWI were the 'Simian suit' (left) and the 'Boiler Suit'. There were primarily made of old sacking material and painted in disruptive colours to match the surroundings.

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ABOVE: Snipers went to great lengths to conceal themselves from the enemy and their fire. The illustration and photograph above shows how snipers inserted an iron sheet with a firing port cut into it, into the sandbag revetments of their trench. This allowed them to observe and engage targets without compromising their location. The German snipers were particularly skilled in this form of camouflage.

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Appaloosa

Although the ancestors of modern horses used to be present in North America, they died out on this continent about 10,000 years ago. As a result, all horses originating here are actually descended from those brought from Spain and elsewhere by settlers from the late 1400s onwards. The spotted characteristic that helps to define the Appaloosa is one of the earliest coat mutations to have arisen, emerging right at the start of the domestication process. Similar horses have been portrayed in European cave art dating back 20,000 years.



Above: Note the powerfully muscled neck and proud head of the Appaloosa, one of America's foremost breeds.

ORIGINS

The Appaloosa is named after the Palouse River valley, located in the northeast of Oregon. It was there that these spotted horses were originally developed by the Nez Perce tribe of Indians over 300 years ago. Later, during the Indian wars of the late 1800s, both the tribe and their distinctive horses were nearly wiped out as the result of fighting.

A breed club for the Appaloosa was established in 1938, and led to a rapid revival in popularity for these versatile horses. The breed's attractive patterning has subsequently helped the Appaloosa to establish an international following.

Key Facts

- Country of origin: USA.
- Height: 14-15.2hh.
- Used for: Riding purposes. Popular for endurance riding, as well as jumping and as a stock horse.
- Temperament: Energetic, with good stamina, but docile by nature.

Right: A young and frisky Appaloosa with typical "snowflake" markings. No two animals have the same markings.

BREED CHARACTERISTICS

General appearance: Straight profile, with the head being relatively small. Long, muscular neck, with the back being short and compact. The chest is deep, and the shoulders are sloping. Both the mane and tail are usually sparse and short. Crossings with Quarter Horses, carried out to safeguard the breed's future, have resulted in Appaloosas with more muscular quarters than was originally the case.

Coloration: There are six distinctive patterns recognized in the Appaloosa. These are called the leopard (white over the hips and loins, with dark spots, which may be rounded or egg-shaped); snowflake (white body with dark spotting, especially over the hips); marble (mottled appearance overall); frost (dark color predominates, with lighter spots); white blanket (white area over the hips with no spotting); and spotted blanket (white area again over the hips, but distinguishable by the dark spotting). The Appaloosa's



hooves are typically a combination of white and black stripes that run vertically, emphasizing the uniqueness of an individual's markings. The sclera encircling the pupil in each eye is white.

Body: The Appaloosa is powerfully muscled with broad body and thick bones. Its build is meant more for short bursts of speed and rapid stops and starts, so it is therefore ideally suited to western sports: working cattle, reining,

Goldfish

The goldfish is not just one of the more easily recognizable aquarium fish. It also ranks as the most popular of all pets worldwide in numerical terms, with a population measured in billions. It is the goldfish's adaptability and ease of care that have helped to ensure its massive following, although the surprisingly wide range of colors and varieties in which these fish now occur has also enhanced their appeal.



During the breeding season, the body of the mature female will take on a full rounded appearance, especially when viewed from above. The mature male develops pale “tubercles”—small bumps or pimples—on its head, gill covers, and pectoral fins.

SPECIES PROFILE

All today's goldfish are descended from a dull, greenish species of wild carp that lives in the waterways of southern China, where such fish are still caught for food. From about 800 AD onwards, some of these carp that had unusual orange markings started to be kept and bred selectively for their coloration. Before long, other characteristics such as different fin shapes and scale patterns also became established. Goldfish were first brought to Europe around the 1700s but, amazingly, they remained unknown in the United States up until 1874. They soon established a massive following here, though, with special goldfish farms being set up to meet the huge demand for these popular pets.

KEY FACTS

Water temperature: Best suited to 50-70 degrees F (10-25 degrees C).

pH: Relatively unfussy, but around neutral (pH 7.0) preferable.

Diet: Special goldfish flake food, pellets, and livefoods.

Area of the tank: Instinctively frequent the lower level.

Compatibility: Tolerant towards other goldfish.



This goldfish is clearly suffering from a common parasitic ailment, white spot, as evident on the caudal fin. Many aquarists believe this lies dormant in every aquarium or pond, ready to afflict weak fishes. This disease can be treated using a proprietary remedy, malachite green, or malachite green and formalin.

CARE NEEDS

Within the home, goldfish do not need a heated aquarium, but even when small they should be housed in a rectangular tank that provides plenty of space for swimming, rather than a goldfish bowl. They will grow rapidly and it will be false economy to purchase a tank less than 36 inches in length. When designing the aquarium, do not clutter the available area with rockwork, curbing the swimming space for the fish. Also, avoid any sharp-edged pieces, especially for varieties such as bubble-eyed goldfish, which may injure themselves on such projections. Goldfish are relatively destructive in the confines of an aquarium, digging in the substrate and uprooting plants here, so these will need to be weighed down. A power filter will help to keep the water clean.

BREEDING

Goldfish can only be sexed reliably when in breeding condition. The male fish develops white spots on the gill plates, extending along the pectoral fins on each side of the body, while the female swells with eggs. As the time for spawning approaches, he will chase her relentlessly. Unfortunately, unless the goldfish are removed from the aquarium immediately after spawning, their eggs and any fry that do hatch are likely to be eaten by the adult fish. Hatching of the eggs depends on the water temperature,