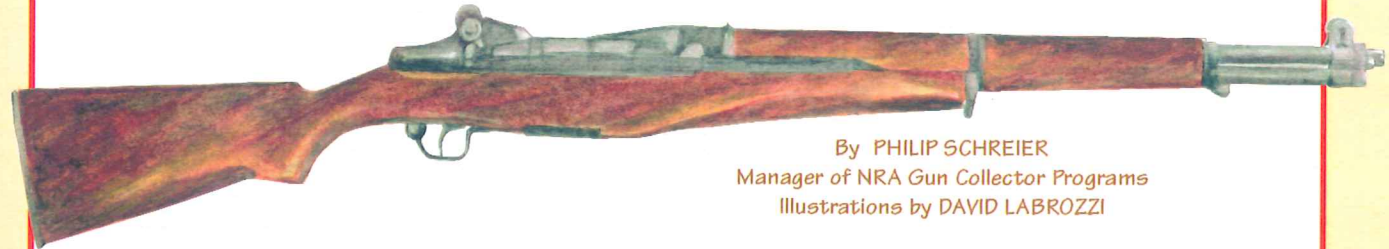


GREAT GUNS

The M1 Garand Rifle



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Some historians would argue that World War II was won by the United States, solely because our infantry soldiers were armed with the M1 Garand rifle. The feature that made the Garand unique and a war winning firearm was its semi-automatic operation. Most other Allied and Axis infantrymen of World War II were armed with improved versions of the same bolt-action rifles used to fight World War I some twenty years earlier. The American soldier had as his main battle rifle the first modern semi-auto combat arm, capable of firing eight rounds as fast as the trigger could be pulled.

The rifle is commonly referred to as the Garand after its inventor, John C. Garand, who was born in Canada on New Years Day in 1888. He moved to Connecticut at an early age and developed an interest in firearms while helping his older brother operate a shooting gallery. He eventually obtained a position at the Springfield Armory and in 1919 began work on developing a semi-automatic operating system for a rifle action.

His design was ready for testing by 1930. Officially adopted by the U.S. Army in 1936 as the U.S. Rifle, Caliber .30, M1, the Garand is a gas-operated rifle with an eight-round en-bloc clip inserted from the top. Ejecting each spent cartridge, the gun automatically loaded a new round with each trigger pull. General George S. Patton, Jr. dubbed the M1 "...the finest battle implement ever devised." The United States was the only nation in World War II to equip its

