

Remington.



REMINGTON ARMS COMPANY, INC.

SPORTING ARMS-AMMUNITION-TARGETS-TRAPS

ILION, NEW YORK 13357

TELEPHONE (315) 894-9961

May 6, 1992

Mr. Dennis E. Bernhardt
5110 Creasy Springs Rd., Rte. 11
Columbia, MO 65202

Dear Mr. Bernhardt:

Your first letter of December 12, 1991 and your follow-up letter of April 20, 1992 regarding your Model 700 BDL rifle, serial number 6522201, have been forwarded to this office, Product Service, from Arms Service for response.

First, I'd like to apologize for the delay in responding to your letters. Your first letter, with the rifle, arrived just prior to the Christmas and New Year holidays, and during the peak time of the year for firearms being returned to Arms Service.

Your rifle, which was built in February 1972, has been thoroughly examined by myself and our engineering personnel, and was found to have our high-pressure proof test, gallery test, and final inspection stamps, which indicate that it had successfully passed all necessary tests and inspections before being shipped from our factory.

The general condition of the rifle was fair. In our examination of the individual parts, we found the headspace, bolt recoil shoulders, and chamber all to be normal. However, the stock had been modified by the addition of a recoil pad and inlays, and significantly, has been shaped and sanded on the exterior. The width of the stock at the location of the barrel recoil bracket was so narrowed, that is, the walnut so thin, that the stock was cracked on both sides. This modification renders the stock unusable and not repairable in our opinion. Further, and perhaps because of the rain you mentioned, the magazine box, magazine box spring, firing pin and bolt plug threads all were rusted. The effort required to lift and cock the bolt was higher than normal because of the rust on the bolt plug threads.

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Examination of the rifle and trigger assembly could not duplicate the malfunction you reported, specifically "...I was preparing to leave the house for further hunting. Intending to check the rifle for cartridges, I pointed it in a safe direction, and pressed the safety forward. The rifle discharged...". Numerous attempts were made by myself and our engineers to cause the rifle to fire as you described but it did not malfunction. The trigger and the safety operation was normal.

Disassembly of the rifle revealed that the trigger assembly was fairly clean, with some lint on the exterior. Significantly, it had been tampered with since it left the factory: The original sealant on all three adjusting screws had been removed, and the sealant on the trigger pull and overtravel adjustment screws had been replaced with a bright red lacquer, probably fingernail polish. The trigger engagement screw has not had any sealant added since the after-factory adjustment was made.

The trigger pull was measured to be 4.3 pounds average, which although changed since the original setting at the factory, was still within our specifications. Both the trigger engagement and overtravel adjustments were beyond our factory settings, measured to be .025" and .020" respectively. The changes in the trigger adjustments observed by us are the type of thing done by someone attempting to "improve" the trigger performance after manufacture. Even though two of the three trigger adjustment settings were beyond our specifications, they would not have caused the accidental discharge you reported.

Based on the results of our extensive examination and testing of your rifle, Remington Arms Company, Inc. cannot accept any liability or responsibility for the reported incident. Assuming that the condition of the trigger assembly as received by us is unchanged since the incident, the only explanation for the accidental discharge is that the trigger was inadvertently pulled either during or after the safety was moved to the "fire" position.

As you are aware, the design of the safety on your Model 700 rifle is such that when the safety is in the "safe" position, the bolt is locked down. And, the safety must be moved to the "fire" position to unlock the bolt so that it can be rotated to open the action. This

"bolt lock" feature assures that the rifle will be ready to fire when needed in the field, and is a very common feature on quality bolt action rifles. Model 700 rifles are currently made without the bolt lock feature, but with the provision for the bolt lock to be added, if the customer prefers.

You do not state in your letter whether you bought your Model 700 new or used. I assume that you bought your rifle used, and that the alteration of the trigger assembly and stock was done either by or at the direction of the prior owner.

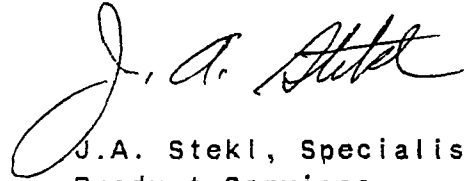
It is understandable that when an accidental discharge with a firearm occurs, the gun handler's confidence in his firearm is shaken, and particularly so in your incident with a loaded rifle firing inside the house with adults close by and children in adjoining rooms. We want to be as helpful to you as possible, and to return your Model 700 to service with your confidence in it restored.

Therefore, as a gesture of our goodwill, we will replace the trigger assembly at no charge. The replacement trigger assembly can have the same features as your present gun, that is, with the bolt lock feature. Or, we can provide the replacement trigger assembly with one which allows opening the bolt with the safety in the "safe" position. Whichever you prefer, we hope that your confidence in this rifle will be restored.

With regard to the cracked stock, continued use of the stock in its present condition will cause it to break completely, with the possibility of injury to the shooter, and the certainty of an unusable rifle. We do not consider that an adequate repair of the stock is possible, but we will return it as-is if you choose to attempt a repair. Or, we will replace it with a standard ADL stock, with a recoil pad installed at a cost to you of \$175.00 (normal retail cost would be \$285.00). In addition, we will clean and lubricate the rusted areas of the rifle, and, of course, test fire it before returning it to you. Please advise me of your preference regarding the trigger assembly and your decision regarding the stock.

Thank you for affording us the opportunity to examine your rifle and report our findings. Once again, I apologize for the delay and I realize that you are planning for the 1992 deer season so I am expediting my reply to you on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. A. Stekl".

J.A. Stekl, Specialist
Product Services

JAS: tpp