

March 13, 1967

Mr. Les Bowman  
P.O. Box 410  
Cody, Wyoming 82414

Dear Les:

You certainly had a time with the 221 in the XP-100, and I think without a doubt you have had more experience with this number than any other individual in the world. After all, I believe you do hold the world's record for pistol accuracy, don't you? How come you never really made a claim along this line? It would make a nice article, I think.

I understand there is some bench rest activity out on the West Coast, up around Seattle, and with the XP-100. The boys say that after they get through bench rest shooting with the rifle, out comes the XP. Some years ago during development of this cartridge and gun experiments were made with various lengths of barrel. The first XP pistol was made up on the 222. It had very low velocity and was of course exceptionally noisy. Naturally this was true because the cartridge was designed to perform in a longer barrel. The XP-221 Fireball cartridge was the result of development to produce a high velocity, flat trajectory, long range pistol cartridge that performed well in a 10 1/2" barrel. We found the break over point in velocity was reached just beyond 10", which developed the 2700 fps which was desired. Longer barreled mechanisms were made up to test the performance of the 221, and although it performed admirably well in the longer barrel, velocities did fall off. And I believe this would be true because of the faster burning powders used in this cartridge.

I think I can best say it this way; that for any barrel length beyond 16", the 222 will outperform the 221. And for anything under that length, I'll take the 221. Now this would make a fine combination for a very small package packer's rifle or military rifle; light weight, low cost ammunition, short and convenient.

In your particular situation, the combination you are suggesting would not come up to the 222 performance, and therefore I cannot see how it can be justified.

On your comments concerning the 350 and the problems involved by Mr. Park Munsey at Kodiak Island, as far as stock warpage is concerned we all know that the laminated stock is much better in this respect than any other type.

Mr. Les Bowman

-2-

March 13, 1967

To adequately seal a stock, however, the end grain where moisture enters and exits, must be sealed. This is almost impossible to do when a good fit between the butt plate and the stock must be maintained. In the laminated Model 600 this is the only area that is not adequately sealed. As you can see, this would have to be done before the fitting and sanding of a butt plate, and carrying the two items together through production would be nigh onto impossible. Secondly, because of the thickness of the sealing material, which we call RK-W, located on the end grain if it was placed there, would be prior to assembly of the butt plate, a gap would exist which would be rather unsightly. In the rifles that I sent to your friends of the game commission in Alaska I was able, by hand, to accomplish this feat without much difficulty and as far as I know they have had satisfactory results.

I am going to conduct further tests along this line and during this interim period will write to Mr. Munsey and advise him of our interest in his work and comments as well as what we are doing here. I will also make further investigation into the said combinations that are available with any recommendation that we might be able to make.

I agree with your comments concerning the Mannlicher stock. It makes a mighty fine looking rifle in the Model 600; however, in my opinion its practical value leaves a lot to be desired. Mannlicher stocks on longer barreled rifles really present a very poor appearance, I think.

I just noted your February 9th letter that I haven't answered because it got buried under some others, I guess. The Chicago Show was moderately successful; the greatest difficulty of course was in getting to the area, either at the airport or around Chicago, during the heavy snowstorm. Later on, I am told, the snow was cleared pretty well and people were allowed to travel and attendance then was pretty good. The site, which was the Navy Pier, was an emergency one to say the least and was not very comfortable and of course had a great deal to do with nullifying the success of the show. There were a few new items shown in the gun line, but nothing outstanding beyond those that we showed at Remington, of course. In talking with a few of the gun writers who were present, I felt we were by far in the lead over anyone else.

I understand because of weather conditions during that time of year, that consideration is being given to have the show in some southern areas. If this comes to pass I would recommend that you try to make the visit, if possible. Perhaps could be tied in with visitation down in Oklahoma. This is just a suggestion.

Guess that's all for now, Les. Hope you and Martie are in the best of health, and are enjoying your stay in Cody. I'll let you know how I come out on the investigation of the stock and sights.

Best regards,

W. E. Leek, Manager - Firearms Research & Design  
Illion Research Division