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FIRE CONTROL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

- BOLT ACTION RIFLES -

Tolerances

Fire Controls have many interacting parts. And their function requires minimum part movement. Because of this, tolerance buildup is the key problem in designing Fire Controls for mass production. This tolerance buildup problem can be solved in a variety of ways:

- Adjust tolerance buildup out by screw adjustment, bending, swaging, or filing.
- Have several parts sizes in inventory for a selective fit.
- Eliminate the tolerance buildup by performing a manufacturing operation during final assembly. For instance, a critical hole could be drilled during assembly using the assembly up to that point as a fixture.
- Design parts which can move a lot, to move even more to take up tolerance buildups.
- Parts whose function is not critical to safety can be toleranced statistically.

Safeties

Block Trigger Safety

This Safety blocks the movement of the Trigger. The Trigger, in turn, blocks the movement of the Sear which blocks the Firing Pin. When the Safety is disengaged the Trigger may be pulled to fire the rifle. In my opinion this is the ultimate Safety because it blocks all of the functions required to fire the rifle.

This type of Safety will not work on a target type Trigger because the Sear engagement might be adjusted too fine for the tolerances in the Safety. Then the rifle could be shot with the Safety on.

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Safeties - Contd.

Lift Sear Safety

This Safety lifts the Sear clear of the Trigger and blocks it so that, when the Trigger is pulled, it can not release the Sear. This Safety is used on rifles where the Trigger movement is too small to effectively block. It is especially useful on target rifles.

Problems can occur with this Safety if the Trigger binds. Foreign material in the Fire Control, or a bad trigger fit, can cause the Trigger to stick in the "pulled" position. When the Safety is released, there is nothing to support the Sear, so the rifle fires off safe.

This Safety requires more throw than a block trigger safety. This is because it has to do considerable work to lift the Sear against the mainspring force.

A Lift Sear Safety must have constant force camming between the Safety and the Sear. So that the Safety "on" force will be consistent in all tolerance situations.

Bolt Safety or Block Firing Pin Safety

This Safety lifts the Firing Pin from the Sear and blocks it. A binding Trigger will also cause a rifle with this type of Safety to fire "off" safe.

Safety Detents

Safety detents provide the following functions:

- Controls Safety "on" and "off" forces
- Provides positive position stops for Safety "on" and "off"
- Insures no "dead" positions between "on" and "off" where the Safety might otherwise hang up.

The force required to initiate movement of the Safety depends upon the detent spring thrust and the "contact" angle of the detent head. These work together