

## IN THE GUNROOM

### UNIQUE MCKAY BROWN

By Donald Dallas



Have a look at lot 1600 in this auction, a 12 bore over and under sidelock ejector gun no. 7502 by David McKay Brown completed in 1992. Have a good look at it because you will never see another one again - it is unique.

David McKay Brown is respected the world over for his round action guns and rifles based upon the Dickson round action and his own design of round action over and under gun.

After apprenticeship with Alex Martin and John Dickson & Son, he set up on his own in 1967 initially repairing guns. He was very impressed with the merits of the Dickson round action and decided when he began manufacturing guns under his own name in 1974 to build guns to the Dickson design. His round actions achieved universal acclaim and they have always been in great demand all over the world.

Realising that the market was changing from side-by-sides to over and under guns, David designed in the 1980s a round action over and under gun. The first such gun was completed in 1992 and since then they have been much admired for their design and elegance.

For a small firm McKay Brown's output has been prodigious and since that first gun built in 1974, over 600 round action guns and rifles both in side-by-side and O/U configuration have been built.

However before the days of universal CNC machinery, it was difficult to increase the production of round action guns and to maintain output David began to build conventional sidelock guns. The parts were easily available, even complete barrelled actions could be supplied that just required stocking and finishing. Various actions were built such as the Purdey/Beesley self-opener, the Holland & Holland self-opener and the Atkin spring opener.

Another reason behind the diversification into these sidelocks was to increase the expertise of the firm to broaden their talents. In addition some customers demanded conventional sidelocks just as John Dickson & Son had found with their London Pattern sidelocks built in the period before World War Two.

Sidelock guns built by McKay Brown are very rare indeed and only nine in total have been manufactured as the firm increasingly produced round action guns both in side-by-side and O/U configuration.

However out of these nine sidelock guns built, only one was ever manufactured as an over and under gun and this is no. 7502 that is offered in this auction as lot 1600. It is unique and is the only McKay Brown over and under sidelock ever built.

The gun was completed at David's premises at 32 Hamilton Road, Bothwell in 1992 with 28" barrels and single trigger based upon the Purdey O/U action. It weighs 7lbs. 4oz. and is contained in its original leather case.

The McKay Brown records state that no. 7502 was a "12 Bore, O/U S/L Purdey, 28" Barrels, Full Cover, Medium Scroll engraved by Charles Lee". It is interesting to note that the date 1992 when the gun was completed was also the date of the introduction of David's own design of round action over and under gun. In fact the gun in this auction is no. 7502 of 1992 and the first O/U gun built to McKay Brown's round action O/U design was no. 7503 also built in 1992.

Very rarely can the word unique be used with accuracy and erudition but there can be no doubt with lot 1600, McKay Brown sidelock O/U no. 7502.

