

IN THE GUNROOM

HOLLAND & HOLLAND .375 MAGNUM

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Lot 1208 in this sale offers a magnificent .375 Magnum sidelock ejector double rifle by Holland & Holland no. 30421 built in 1924. When the .375 Magnum was introduced in 1912, it rapidly became one of the most acclaimed and legendary calibres of all time, employed by many other makers and still built today. The noted professional hunter John Taylor in his book *Big Game and Big Game Rifles* published in 1948 stated "I am giving this rifle a chapter all to itself because I honestly think it deserves it, it is so far ahead of its contemporaries".

The .375 Magnum did not appear overnight; it had a lengthy development history beginning in the year 1899. In this year Holland & Holland introduced the .375 Cordite with a short 2 ½" case. All this cartridge had in common with the .375 Magnum was the bore size but it did introduce Holland & Holland to the .375 calibre.

The real beginnings of the .375 Magnum date to 1904 when Henry Holland took out his patent for the first belted rimless case. Traditional flanged cartridges were not suited to the new magazine rifles, yet rimless cases were difficult to seat in double rifles. The belted rimless case was the solution for magazine rifles. Henry Holland put a small "belt" around the base of the cartridge just in front of where the flange had been. A corresponding groove was cut in the chamber to accommodate this belt. In this way the cartridge would have a positive stop to prevent it from entering too far in the chamber.

In 1905 Henry Holland created a new cartridge based upon the design, the .400/.375 Belted Rimless Express, 2 ½" long. This cartridge was used in many Mannlicher-Schoenauer rifles of the period. However there were doubts about the penetration of this round.

Henry Holland continued to develop new cartridges and in 1910 introduced a new breed of cartridge, the .275 Magnum available both in flanged for double rifles and belted rimless for magazine rifles. The very high muzzle velocity of 2675 f.p.s. was achieved in the belted rimless version. This was a massive increase in velocity over the .400/.375. Such was the extra power of this round that Hollands had to strengthen their double rifles and side bolsters were introduced to add metal to the action.

The importance of the .275 Magnum was that it showed Holland & Holland what could be done in terms of velocity, trajectory and stopping power. Just as cordite had provided a leap forward a few years ago, the .275 Magnum created the parameters for the .375 Magnum.

In 1910 Henry Holland continued a series of experiments to create a .375 Magnum based upon the same principles. The cartridge case was lengthened with both flanged and belted rimless available. The new cartridge was introduced to the public in 1912 with an outstanding performance.

From the outset three bullet weights were offered, 235, 270 and 300 grns. In a double rifle with a 270 grn. bullet the muzzle velocity was 2600 f.p.s. and in a magazine rifle 2650 f.p.s. The cartridge proved to be a winner with its high velocity, high stopping energy and flat

trajectory, a true magnum. With the introduction of the .375 Magnum in 1912 in flanged and rimless, Holland & Holland had created one of the most famous pairs of cartridges in the world.

Virtually every manufacturer in the world has made rifles in this calibre and it has been used as the basis for many other cartridges. The first .375 Magnum made by Holland & Holland was a magazine rifle no. 28018 built in 1912 and sold to Hollands agents in Paris, Guinard & Co.

As part of their policy to celebrating milestones in their history, Holland & Holland built twenty five .375 Magnum bolt action rifles in 2012 to commemorate the introduction of the calibre one hundred years ago in 1912.

The .375 Magnum double rifle on offer in lot 1208 is a best Royal hammerless ejector double rifle no. 30421 built in 1924 and sold to Hollands agents in Paris, Guinard & Co. It is estimated at £20,000 - £25,000.

PHOTO

Henry Holland's belted rimless case to his 1904 patent. C is the belt.

PHOTO

Holland & Hollands newly introduced .375 Magnum double rifle as illustrated in *The Field* of 1912. Side bolsters were introduced a few years after this.