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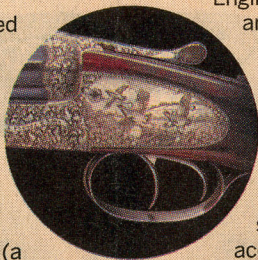
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Firearms sales going great guns

It is not just wines that collectors pushed to record prices in 2010, **writes Bob Sherwood.** Holt's Auctioneers, the specialist seller of modern and antique guns, says classic English shotguns have never been in greater demand.

Holt's completed a record-breaking one-day sale in December that attracted total sales of £1.7m.

Among the top lots was a pair of shotguns (a detail of which is pictured) by the famous London maker Purdey, which sold for £82,000, and a pair of smaller 20-bore over-and-under shotguns by Holland and Holland, which fetched £80,000.



Roland Elworthy, valuer at Holt's, said demand grew in 2010 from investors who wanted to put some money into areas other than the stock market.

He added: "Since Lehman went belly-up the market for good quality, especially English, shotguns and rifles has just been so strong.

"There are few things that you can take out and use and that are still going to accrue in value."

Mr Elworthy said original guns made by classic English makers were a sound midterm investment, likely to increase in value by 15 to 20 per cent over about five years.

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