



## Blue Steel and Walnut Grips



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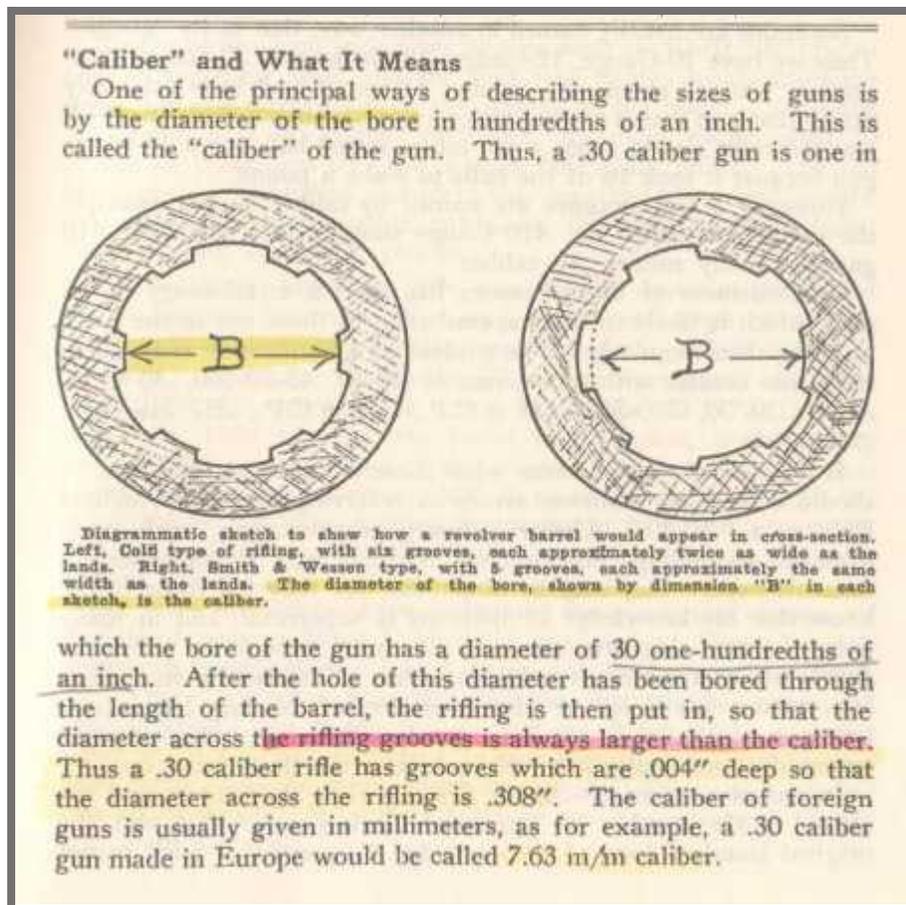
Heartsill – 28. Januar 2020

Let me tell you a little story.

Kinda wished I had gotten some TDY with the Army and gone to school and studied the “Manual of the Automatic Pistol Caliber .45 – Model of 1911” as Jeff Cooper says “Twenty-eight hours of instruction, plus the expenditure of about 500 rounds of ammunition, brings the same type of student body to complete command of its immediate environment...(*To ride, shoot straight, and speak the truth*, p. 89). Well, maybe I should have attended his school when I was out to his Gunsight Academy in Arizona. But getting some instruction from John has admirably forced me to back into the books.

Well, I was reading about shooting the other day with all these books I have here and with my big Colt out of service for over a week I came up with some questions – and found out there are different but similar answers. Therefore, mostly for me and you other guys that carry something with a “4” (or bigger like Wayne) on your belt, let me list some questions, some answers, AND a few pages – for a good reference(s). There will be no test.

From Hatcher in 1935 and as a review of **lands/groves** and **caliber/rifling** (p. 55).

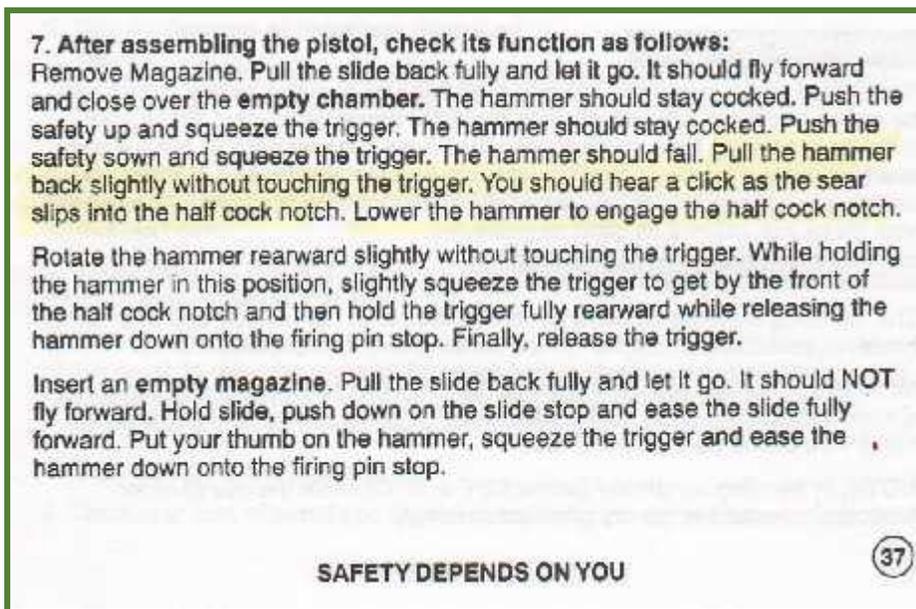


Of interest, Hatcher goes on to say "...almost everyone who is at all interested in guns knows that all modern American made pistols or revolvers except those made by the Colt's Patent Firearms Manufacturing Company have a right-hand twist to the rifling, and the Colt guns are left-handed; that Colt uses six lands and grooves, while Smith & Wesson use five in most of their models; also that Colt guns have wide grooves and narrow lands, while the Smith & Wesson guns usually have lands and grooves of equal width" (p. 51). Course, this is packed with some great test questions...For instance "Groove depth .0035 inch. The pitch is 1 turn in 16 inches..." (p. 53). Look in the barrel of your gun and you can surely see the lands and they are not very thick!

Ok, big deal. Few will give a rats bit over this but this pushed me through the manufacturing appreciation and into looking at my Colt "Safety and Instruction Manual" – it was an eye opener...

**First**, was a comment on page 5 saying when a round is in the chamber this pistol may discharge accidentally if dropped regardless of the position of the hammer (**UPPER CASE BOLD, with RED highlight**). John doesn't say this and has some good words on the inertial firing pin (see my References).

**Second**, **the functional checks** are not as clear as some other publications. See Colt on page 37.



**Third**, will agree **the gun should not be stripped any farther** than the normal field strip; however, learning to clean the extractor/firing pin is a splendid idea as the extractor really, really, gets dirty. One should learn to get the Q-tips out and spend the time to keep this area clean. John is correct saying getting into the sear spring, hammer strut, and grip safety should be cleaned/checked every 10,000 rounds.

**Fourth**, was reading about **how to hold the gun and pull the slide back** by keeping the barrel pointed down range. I can't do that. I have to turn 90 degrees to the right as my left hand will cross thumbs to put the slide in a locked position. Do you have the same problem? Try it and let me know.

**Fifth**, and this is the heart of this paper - **going past the Colt Manual on functional safety checks**. I have three additional and similar checks/ways/techniques/examples in the attached Reference list.



Matched .45 by **Daniel Norwood**: Caspian slide, Foster frame, Bo-mar sights, Cart barrel, and USAF grips.

Let me tell you another story with this question: *Did my gun perform the way it should?*

Was sitting here working on this paper and wanted to look at the grooves and lands in the barrel of my just fixed (yesterday) big Colt. I am at my carrel with three 45s all cocked and locked. I get my Colt, release the slide, thumb safety off, open the slide, engage the slide stop, and let the charged round from the barrel drop on my shop towel.

I then turn to my middle desk with the gun to see the bright desk light shining thru the breech, and as I turn to get a piece of white paper to put in the breech for better clarity, I set the gun butt down on the desk and the slide went to battery!

1. Did that upset me? Yes.
2. Was the slide stop fully engaged? Dang sure doesn't look like it!
3. Did the hammer fall? No. Should it have? Why/why not?
4. What/which functional check did this fall under?

*Now I have a good reason to finish this paper for more than just jacking with you guys and your Glocks...*

## References for Blue Steel and Walnut Grips

1. 1911 Pattern Pistol Parts Diagram	1
2. <a href="#">M-1911 Operation Description</a>	2
3. <a href="#">Well, this is the Tilting Barrel.</a> **	3
4. <a href="#">Army Manual pages 14, 15, and 17.</a>	5
5. Safety Checks for the 1911	8
6. <a href="#">Function Checking an M-1911</a>	9
7. <a href="#">Inertial Discharge of the M1911 Pistol</a>	12
8. <a href="#">The Conditions of Readiness</a>	14
9. <a href="#">Is "Cocked and Locked" Dangerous?</a>	15
10. <a href="#">THEORY OF OPERATION COLT .45 ACP GOVERNMENT MODEL PISTOL</a>	18
11. <a href="#">DISCONNECTOR, SEAR, SEAR SPRING AND SAFETY LOCK OPERATION</a>	19
12. <a href="#">Favorite Quotes from Jeff Cooper</a>	21

Before you look at the second paper with all these references, let me tell you the punch line story. Wanted to show Kelly how well my Colt was working after John put it all back together and after we both went through the functional checks. I was so proud of my big Colt.

So, I explained and showed Kelly how I had unloaded the gun, stuck it under the light, and had the slide surprise me by going forward into battery. The hammer stayed cocked as it should have. I must have just had a piece of the slide stop in the notch and it just popped/slipped out.

So, I then demonstrated the exact functional check for the sear engagement: Empty gun, no magazine, slide back, hammer cocked. I released the slide by moving the slide stop (slide stop safety) and the slide slams forward...and the f'ing hammer fell. I did it again. Same hammer fall.

Now, I am really upset. However, the wisdom in all this is to make sure you can accomplish the checks and feel secure that your gun is safe to carry. The luck is all this is having a cousin to call.

Note these checks in the references paper: (Note page numbers added over some old numbers)

Page 7 – top right hand picture

Page 8 – see check number 1

Page 11 – Sear engagement test (in middle of the page).

**PUNCH LINE:**

This one has Johnny all over it.

Just this minute I got my Colt out (one more time...) and redid the same check that failed last night. The hammer, did not fall. And I said “Whiskey Tango Foxtrot!” So comma I did it again. The hammer fell.

Here is where it gets goofy.

Have always placed the hammer manually down with my thumb and then moved the slide back – easier than pushing through the hammer locking it down with the slide. The gun has, for what few times I have tested it, passed this check – they say this check is hard on the pieces and parts in the frame.

Today, it is sometimes falling after the manual reset or falling after the slide going back cocking the hammer. I thought I had it figured out but it is failing (sometimes) with either method.

Will take it to John and let him fix it.

Will let you know how this works out!

(The only thing better than having a big .45 Colt is having a backup .45 Colt...)

**JOHN’S ANSWER:**

When I called John to set up a time for him to look at my Colt he asked “How does the gun shoot?” What he said was go to my range and heat the barrel up on my Colt’s MK/IV pistol.

So, an hour later, 106 total rounds: 74 rounds with my 4.0 grains Bullseye, 16 rounds of 230 hardball, and 16 rounds of 200 grain JHPs – shooting at 12, 21, and 42 feet - even fast fired 8!

One time the slide went to battery when reloading a magazine – and the hammer stayed back.

One time I had a stove pipe and Johnny asked something about load or limp (or something).

(Thanks to CUZ for guiding my shooting from the Boxcar!)

So, what does this tell me?

**“There ain’t nothing wrong with that gun!”**