



Westley Richards .318 Accelerated Express Light Weight Magazine Rifle

Serial Number LT42149
\$15000.00

DESCRIPTION

Westley Richards .318 Accelerated Express "Light Model" Magazine Rifle with a Detachable Stock completed in 1930 for The Earl of Lovelace

Prior to World War II, Westley Richards offered a "Light Model" magazine rifle that was available in all the Throughout the firm's catalogs printed before the Second World War, Westley Richards offered a "*Light Model*" that was a standard offering in the firm's line-up of magazine rifles. By design, and not surprisingly, the "Light Model" was, by design, a rifle that was made as light can compact as possible with a shorter barrel and was standard with no cheekpiece.

The firm's catalogs from 1912 to 1928 read:

In addition to our ordinary Model Magazine .318 rifle, we now make a Lightweight .318 Magazine Rifle weighing only 7 lbs. to 7 ¼ lbs., 5 shot magazine. Total length of rifle, 42 ¾". Extremely handy for snap shots in hill shooting.

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the firm also offered two different methods of taking a rifle down, to make for easier packing. While Westley's did not invent the detachable barrel or detachable stock, both configuration were offered by many English gun makers, Rigby's, Jeffery's and Holland's coming to mind the quickest, both of Westley Richards' versions were unique.

One was was a detachable stock, often referred to as a "Take-apart" and a style done by other English firms such as H&H. With Westley's version, there is a latch mounted on the forend that rotates a horizontal rod 180 degrees. The rod is flat on one side and round on the other and locks to a hook mounted to the bottom of the barrel. There is also a steel lip inletted where the wrist of the stock meets the back of the action. There is a corresponding flange on the rear of the action's tang that dovetails into the lip on the stock.

This particular rifle is one of the "Light Models" and was made for Peter Malcolm King, 4th Earl of Lovelace, in 1930. Earl was a big game hunter in East Africa before the Second World War. He bought estates near Lake Babati in what was then Tanganykia – modern day Tanzania – and friends included the famous Swedish hunter Baron Bror von Blixen-Fineke, husband of Karen Blixen, who later wrote: Out of Africa, about her time on the continent.

The aristocrat built the 'Fig Tree Club' for his friends and neighbors overlooking Lake Babati, which was run at one point by Bror's second wife, Jacqueline 'Cockie' Birkbeck. The club served as the social center of the area and is probably the "little hotel overlooking the lake" that Ernest Hemingway wrote of in Green Hills of Africa.

The rifle is based on a standard length Mauser action with a flag safety, hinged floor plate with a lever release and a WR pattern horn bolt knob with a flat checkered bottom. True to the catalog's description, this rifle has a 22" bbl. and has a 42 ½" OAL and it weighs just 6 lbs. 14.3 oz. As was standard on the base model, the rifle has no cheekpiece, the checkered full pistol grip has a hollow trap covered by a removable screw cap. The forend is checkered to match the pistol grip and has a horn tip. The rifle's original silver stock oval remains blank traditional rear sling eye is mounted on the stock's toe line. The barrel is fitted with WR pattern island rear sight with 1 standing/4 folding spring loaded "platina" lined leaves sighted to 500 yds with a combination bead and night foresight with Westley Richards Registered Hinged Protector, and a barrel mounted sling eye.

The rifle is complete in the Maker's lightweight canvas case with brass corners specially fitted for this rifle with a detachable stock.

The rifle has the standard 14 ½" LOP over the original "*Anti-Recoil Heelplate*" that was available as an option at an extra £1.15 in 1928. The rifle also has double set trigger or "hair trigger" as it was known within the firm; this was an upgrade that costs £2.10.

The base price for the Rifle was £36.00 in 1928 and the detachable stock and detachable barrel option were both options that costs £2.10 extra. The detachable stock being the best option when weight was a concern but is also one of the rarest options we encounter today on vintage Westley magazine rifles.

SPECIFICATION

Location US

Make Westley Richards

Calibre/Gauge .318

Action Mauser

Triggers 2

Ejectors N/A

Barrel Length 22"

Rib Island

Chamber N/A

Choke Right N/A

Choke Left N/A

Stock N/A

LOP 14 1/2"

Weight 6lbs 14oz

Case Lightweight Canvas

