

PRESS RELEASE

**RARE LUGER PISTOL TO BE OFFERED IN
AUCTION IN DECEMBER**

**- Sporting Gun auction on 12.12.12 has a
wonderful selection of '12-bores'!-**



Gavin Gardiner Ltd's final auction of 2012, of **Fine Modern and Vintage Sporting Guns and Rifles** will take place on Wednesday, December 12, 2012 at Sotheby's, 34-35 New Bond Street, London.

The sale, as always, will have a selection of interesting pistols (which can be viewed at Gavin Gardiner Ltd's office in West Sussex). Among the pistols in the December sale will be one of the rarest Luger pistols – only 10 are known to have been made and all have been given to high profile recipients such as President Roosevelt, Hiram Maxim, The King of Italy, Diaz of Mexico as well as the Kaiser Wilhelm II.

The example in Gavin Gardiner Ltd's auction was given to Andre Noel, Governor of Konstanz (on the Swiss/German Border) in 1946 and is being sold by a member of his family, who now lives in London. It would have been personally inspected by George Luger and the chamber is inlaid with a gold presentation family crest. It is estimated at £15,000-20,000 and only one other is ever known to have been sold at auction.

This Pistol was built for the Furst Zu Furstenberg in 1902 and personally presented to Andre Noel, Governor of Konstanz in 1946 by the Prince of Furstenberg. Andre Noel was appointed Governor of Konstanz at the
Auctioneers of Modern and Vintage Sporting Guns, Rifles and Accessories

end of the Second World War. Upon his arrival in the region he went to visit Prince zu Furstenberg and was shocked to find that the occupying French soldiers were preparing to hang the Prince. On enquiring it was explained that the Prince was to be hanged because of his lack of respect for hanging the French flag from all of his flagpoles upside down. It did not take Governor Noel long to resolve the matter by explaining to the French troops that the Furstenberg family flag was very similar to the French flag, but with the colours reversed. He had simply been displaying his Family flag as was the tradition to celebrate the fall of the Nazi's. Having saved his life, they became good friends and the Carbine was presented in gratitude. In addition, a street in Kontanz is named *Andre-Noel-Strasse* to commemorate this.

Gavin Gardiner commented: "I am always delighted to include items in the auctions that have a fascinating story and provenance and this is no exception. The 1902 Presentation Luger Carbine is perhaps the rarest of all Luger pistols and it is thought that as few as 10 (numbered between 9105 and 9115) were built for personal presentation by George Luger himself. This example in common with other recorded examples has the entwined *GL* inspection stamp indicating that it was personally built or inspected by George Luger himself. "



The auction of more than 200 lots of vintage sporting guns, rifles and shooting accessories, is the only sale of Sporting Guns to be held in the heart of London's Mayfair and will have a strong section of 12-bore Sporting Guns by England and Scotland's finest makers.

Often known at the gunmakers' gunmaker James Woodward was formed in 1874 and was acquired by James Purdey & Son in 1948. The company produced its first over and under example 99 years ago in 1913. A scarce 12-bore sidelock ejector over and under gun, built in 1922 by James Woodward & Sons is estimated at £24,000-28,000. Also among the 12-bores is a pair of 12-bore Imperial model sidelock ejector guns by E J Churchill, which is estimated at £5,000-7,000.

The sale will include a strong section of accessories and more curious items – which could make wonderful Christmas gifts.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

Gavin Gardiner is the only specialist firearms auctioneer holding his auctions in the heart of London's West End, where he holds two sales each year as well as his prestigious sale at the Gleneagles Hotel, Scotland in August. Gavin has over 20 years experience in this field. Coming from a traditional background, he was brought up with guns and shooting and has been involved with the Gun Trade from an early age. He first worked for Sotheby's in 1982 helping with weekend viewing of a Sporting Gun auction, while still at School. From that moment he was hooked and has been involved in almost every Sotheby's Sporting Gun auction since. His passion became a full time job in 1987 when he joined Sotheby's initially as a porter on a one day a week assignment to the Gun Department, this soon became five days and he never looked back. He has been involved with many memorable auctions over the years, including Sotheby's sales in New York and Geneva as well as the renowned Gleneagles auction that has remained the market leader in this sector for over twenty years. He has also worked for one of the leading London Gunmakers which gives him a unique perspective in this field. Returning to Head Sotheby's Sporting Gun Department Worldwide in 2001 he doubled turnover in his first year, and has continued to develop and refine the auctions since. He left Sotheby's at the beginning of 2006 to establish his own company.