SHOOTERS' JOURNAL

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Knife Crime and Offensive weapons

Police disregard Home Office Guidance

FAKE NEWS ABOUNDS

US and NZ reactions to shootings

1973 and all that

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EDITORIAL

Climate change protesters set the Metropolitan Police a number of tasks over Easter and what was interesting about it from our perspective were the parallel comments made to the media by both the police and the protesters. Good Friday's Police spokesmen Assistant Commissioner Nick Ephgrave said that the Met was an organisation that would debrief how it all went and learn from it. The police problem was that the climate change protesters brought 1967 attitudes to 2019 London.

The Met are used to violent protesters, disorderly conduct and people who set vehicles alight and the have all the gear for that work. They haven't used borrowed dustbin lids as shields since Lewisham in 1976 – and when was the last time you saw a dustbin with a detachable lid anyway? Nor have they dealt with 'summer of love' attitudes from the mob since the ascendency of the skinhead movement. Nevertheless, they adapted: officers attended in soft hats and hi-viz jackets and moved up in crocodile formation rather than marching. One commented that he'd been taken off violent crime to deal with traffic issues caused by the protest and a federation spokesman said that putting all that police time – the Met also borrowed from surrounding forces to beef up their presence at the protests – would mean a pay-back of a lack of policemen somewhere, sometime; as those officers would need to take leave eventually.

A spokesperson for the protestors told BBC Radio 4 that the police didn't know how to deal with law-abiding people. Since they are trained to deal with crime and disorder, putting them in to 'deal with' a situation in which neither is occurring leaves them at something of a loss as to what to do.

That's what resonated with us: firearm certificate holders and registered dealers are law-abiding people trying to act lawfully, while the whole thrust of the way we are policed is to treat us as target criminals, to seek fault in everything

we do and to stretch simple mistakes – and sometimes perfectly lawful activities – into major crimes. That is because the agenda is to reduce certificate numbers and thus access to firearms by the public to an absolute minimum.

The National Police Chiefs' Council (successor to the Association of Chief Police Officers) hosted a meeting of firearms administrative officers in January. The minutes are clear that policing has no intention of acting lawfully toward certificate holders while ramping up efforts to reduce our numbers by creatively twisting medical information to determine your lack of suitability to hold a certificate. And this all took place in the presence of the Home Office official who tells the minister what to think and in clear violation of the legislative requirement that police must 'have regard' for the Home Office guidance they intend flouting.

It is quite clear that the police are not a fit and proper organisation for the management of law-abiding people trying to go about their lawful occasions as hobby shooters. They aren't trained to deal with law-abiding people, abuse every power they've jacked out of the Home Office – itself not exactly an organisation with clean hands in these matters – and they are currently demanding more fees from certificate holders for the privilege of being screwed over. And the Home Secretary sleepwalks through it all, as have his several predecessors. Ω

GENERAL LICENCE FIASCO

Natural England revoked – at just 36 hours notice – the General Licenses GL04, GL05 and GL06 for controlling sixteen wild bird species, including pigeon, several types of crow and Canada geese. The announcement came on 23rd April (St George's Day) and took effect on 25th April.

The change follows a legal challenge by the BBC's Chris Packham to the validity of the licenses as issued. If you need to shoot any of the species covered by these licenses, you'll have to apply to Natural England for an individual licence – until such time as they have worked out how to issue new general licenses without the risk to user that they might not be valid.

General licences were introduced in the 1980s as the government's solution to the problem they created by signing up to the 1979 EC Birds Directive. Doing so banned all bird shooting in the UK, which wasn't the government's intention at the time: not in one step anyway. They left the ban in place, but created the general licences for all citizens in England and then Wales with permission to shoot pest birds.

The government told shooters that the licences would be renewed automatically every year, but following the regime change in 1997, Tony Blair's administration considered ending them as a way of reducing shot gun certificate numbers. They rowed back on that and quite a few other anti-gun plans

they'd developed in the wake of the handgun bans in 1997. Home Office officials have a bottom drawer full of silly ideas waiting for ministers stupid enough to run with them.

Natural England says it is "undertaking new licensing assessments to support lethal control of certain birds in defined situations, such as to prevent serious damage to livestock from carrion crow and to preserve public health and safety from the impacts of feral pigeons. It intends to start issuing these licences on gov.uk from the week commencing 29 April when more details will be available."

So by the time you read this, it may just be a case of downloading the new licence – or not: depends what happens. Meanwhile, Natural England have made it clear on their website that pest control can still be undertaken without a licence: here's what it says –

"If you need to kill birds before you get a licence"

If you require lethal control to be carried out before the determination of your licence application then you may not commit an offence provided that you do the following.

You must be able to show that your action is necessary for the purpose of:

- *preserving public health or public safety or air safety;*
- *preventing the spread of disease; or*
- *preventing serious damage to livestock, their foodstuffs, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber, fisheries or inland waters. You must also be able to show that there was no other satisfactory solution available for preventing such serious damage.*

In addition you must have submitted the relevant application for a licence for the relevant purpose above and notified Natural England.

If action is taken to prevent serious damage outlined above, Natural England must be notified as soon as reasonably practical after you have taken the action. This can be done by sending an email to birds2019@naturalengland.org.uk."

One can read this as an expedience while waiting in the licensing queue, but it's actually a restatement of your common law rights to defend property. These weren't repealed or superseded by the EC Birds Directive, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 or anything else. What the statute controls – same as the Firearms Acts – is *sport* whereas your common law rights relate to the protection of life, liberty and property.

The wrinkle is that a lot of you do pest control shooting *as a sport* so if you have to do it meantime, you need to be doing it to prevent serious damage to livestock etc. and if it's not your property you're protecting, you need to do it as a servant of the owner – on his behalf.

You are his servant if you do it for a consideration. That doesn't have to be money: you can do it for the carcasses or a few cartridges or a bottle of wine: just to be secure while Natural England sort this mess out.

Two on-line petitions have been set up: one calls for the BBC to sack

Mr Packham and the other is for registering support for his Wild Justice cause. At the time of writing they had attracted similar support – both just shy of 100,000 signatories. Ω

OFFENSIVE WEAPONS ACT

The government's offensive weapons bill started its passage through Parliament in 2017 as a knee-jerk reaction to thugs using corrosive substances as weapons in robberies and punishment assaults. It dragged through this, the longest session of Parliament since the Civil War, masked to a great extent by Brexit overshadowing everything and thus became a convenient pace to deposit all sorts of knee-jerk reactions in hope of pandering to the media's knife crime alarm.

The original purpose of the legislation is articulated as banning the sale of corrosive substances to anyone under 18 and creating the offence of possessing corrosive substances in a public place.

The Home Office added and then withdrew a ban on rifles chambered for certain cartridges – which would have caught 12.7x99mm and .55" Boyes rifles had it been enacted. The spurious ground for wanting to ban these was that owners could outrange police snipers.

Left in the bill, now an Act that received Royal Assent on 16th May, is a ban on MARS rifles – on the spurious grounds that they can fire nearly as fast as the automatic variants prohibited in 1988 – and bump stocks, which have been prohibited in the UK for decades. Adding a specific ban on them was simply a knee-jerk reaction to America banning them – as reported elsewhere in this journal.

Another change is a redefinition of and a ban on the private possession of flick and gravity knives – banned since 1959 in the UK: and a ban on the private possession of certain other weapons including zombie knives, death star knives and knuckledusters.

The 1959 ban on flick knives etc. prohibited everything except private possession.

The knee-jerk reaction to press panic about knife crime now includes a ban on selling bladed products by mail order to a residential address without the customer's age declaration and a power for the courts to issue 'Knife Crime Prevention Orders'.

Another change alters the legal definition of threatening someone with an offensive weapon to make prosecutions easier. As to how, we don't know as at the time of writing the text of the Act has not been published. **Ω**

HOME NEWS - Tail Wags Dog

Twenty-one police and Home Office officials met at your expense as the NPCC-FELWG committee at Devon and Cornwall's police headquarters in January to continue their work on firearms matters started under the now-defunct Association of Chief Police Officers.

FELWG – the Firearms and Explosives Licensing Working Group was convened as a committee of firearms managers from around the country to develop ways of not doing their jobs.

Chief Constables delegate their authority for issuing firearm and shot gun certificates to various lower orders; some to police officers and some to civilians, both via section 55(1) of the Firearms Act 1968. The processing of firearm certificate applications has been somewhat fraught since it was handed to police to deal with in 1920: applicants have to successfully pass two discretionary tests – that of having a good reason for each firearm and not being 'otherwise unfitted to be entrusted' with them.

At the outset in 1920, quite a few chief constables didn't regard target practice as a good reason. Then there was the phase of regarding anyone known to police as untrustworthy and anyone not known to police as untrustworthy *because nothing was known about them.* Case law is scant from the 1920s, because appeals went to the magistrates: also known as 'police courts'. Generally, magistrates seem to have accepted any reason as good, with the qualification of somewhere safe to use the firearm.

The government moved firearms appeals to the safer and more judicial hands of the Quarter Sessions in the 1930s and it would be 1949 (Greenly v Lawrence) before a chief constable challenged a gun owner's possession of a firearm and ammunition for the protection of his property and that case brought out police concerns about the possession of firearms that weren't being used much, if at all.

The safe place to use them was followed by an expectation that they would be used regularly and that would eventually lead to the concept of certificate holders not having a good reason for possessing firearms they didn't use. (Not that this prevented the chief constable of Cumbria objecting to one certificate holder at a 1991 appeal for using his firearms too much – he acquired 39,000 rounds in a three-year period.)

That developed into the McKay Report's recommendation that collecting shouldn't be a good reason and that was drafted (but never published) a few years after the Home Office first had a stab at herding chief constables into consistency of administration. The first Home Office guidance to police came out in 1969, but has never been published. It would be 1989 before the revised guidance was publically available and now it's an on-line document you can download from the Home Office website.

The Home Office had to add a clause to the Policing and Crime Act 2017 to direct both police and courts to 'have regard' for the guidance – now section 55 A of the Firearms Act 1968. The concept of 'having regard' for statutory guidance wasn't invented for the guidance on

firearms law. In another area it reached the High Court on a judicial review - R (on the application of London Oratory School Governors) v Schools Adjudicator [2015] EWHC 1012 (Admin) in which Cobb J applied what he referred to as the "*conventional approach*", as set out by Laws LJ in R (Khatun) v Newham London Borough Council [2005] QB 37. On that basis, he concluded that the governing body's obligation to have regard to the Diocesan Guidance meant that it needed to take the guidance into account, and to "*have and give clear reasons*" for any departure from it. Furthermore, these clear reasons must "*objectively be proper reasons, or legitimate reasons*". Failing to do so; *"in my judgment been shown to be unlawful and/or unreasonable, and cannot stand."*

What this judgment doesn't run to is what sanction/prosecution process should apply to those officials flouting statutory guidance – so we have asked the Home Secretary what there is to be done about those that don't. ('Unlawful' simply means not lawful, and that's not the same as illegal.) Particularly as there are so many of them – including his official, who is listed as being present at the meeting.

The thrust of the meeting's minutes is that of the firearms managers driving new nails into the coffin of law-abiding sporting shooting while expecting the Home Office guidance to legitimise their approach by catching up.

A legal eagle commented *"the police are not following the Guide to Firearms licensing Law….the police have no intention of following this advice and every police force in Britain is now asking, or shortly will be asking, for the applicant to provide a doctors letter at their expense. The doctors won't cooperate and so the police think they need to force this through.*

The doctors are well aware of thousands of unpaid for appointments and letters and the police think they have spotted a whole new front on which they can reduce certificate numbers. It is particularly bad in Scotland. Note the Police Scotland representative Ronnie Megaughin's ***"very impassioned support of the scheme*** *(in which he****) advocated the*** *(illegal)* ***Scottish model which he believes has saved lives and led to a much more robust*** *(sic)* ***licensing regime – massive areas of risk being uncovered****…" in the FELWG minutes from March this year. The Home Office keep saying that they are going to issue new guidance, but I don't think they know what to do."*

The Home Office position seems to be one of stalling because of Brexit taking up too much of their time. An SRA member who recently wrote to the Home Secretary about the lengthy delay by Devon and Cornwall Police in processing his firearm certificate application was surprised to receive a reply from the 'Serious Violence Unit'.

That doesn't surprise us: the 'problem' in official minds with the

law-abiding public having firearms for sporting and hobby use came about following the murders of three Metropolitan Police Officers in Shepherds Bush in 1966. The Home Secretary of the day Roy Jenkins introduced shot gun certificates to divert the media from demands for the restoration of the death penalty and the resultant 600,000 applications for the poorly-advertised new certificate panicked the Chief Inspector of Constabularies Sir John McKay into forming a committee to 'do something' about the number of guns held by the public.

That the number of applications came as a shock to him is a reflection of the absence of any problem for the police caused by the public ownership of firearms. McKay's unpublished report ranges far and wide into firearms matters that had nothing to do with the police. The key administrative change that his paranoia brought about was the shift in the management of section 5 (prohibited weapons) controls from the Defence Council to the Home Office in 1973.

Back then, only machine guns were in section 5. The prohibited weapons category had been created in the 1930s. Machine gun owners had to get the free authority from the Defence Council whereupon the police had no discretion to refuse the firearm certificate. You need both for a prohibited weapon that is also a firearm, and the object of the exercise was to prevent the police interfering with national security.

The common law requirement for men to be ready (trained and equipped) for the call-out as militia goes through phases of disuse in our history. It pretty much lapsed after the end of the wars against France in 1815 and then came back as the volunteer rifle movement in 1859 – again in reaction to a French threat – and was (sort of) superseded by the formation of the Territorial Army in 1908. The TA 'difference' was that the uniforms and weapons were government-provided, whereas the common law militia obligation included no government funding for weapons and uniforms.

The last militia call out was in 1940 for Operation Dynamo and as Local Defence Volunteers later renamed the Home Guard.

What had been the volunteer rifle regiments were by 1908 rifle and sports clubs with the charitable objective of training in peacetime for warfare when called upon: the peace dividend writ large. Hobby shooting came under police control with firearm certificates in 1920 and once policing had failed to shut the clubs by not recognising target shooting as a good reason, they concentrated on eliminating machine gun ownership until the government removed that from their jurisdiction via section 5 of the Firearms Act 1937.

The 1973 change put a department with no knowledge or expertise in any aspect of machine guns (or indeed firearms) in charge

of who could have them. So management of section 5 went to the department concerned with policing and public order and things went downhill from there. The Home Office reinvented the criteria for having a section 5 authority as 'need' and defined need as commercial purposes. They eliminated the machine gun clubs where many of the specialist .50"BMG cartridges currently in use by the military were developed.

They also attacked the gun trade by the simple expedient of changing the definition of machine gun parts. The actual definition of a machine gun is its capability to fire continuously while pressure is maintained on the trigger and there is ammunition to discharge. So a component part that can't do that by itself would be section 1, as would a complete gun downgraded to single shot, but by moving the goalposts, the gun trade became the Home Office's target criminals of choice and its interesting that every section 5 prosecution to reach the High Court and Court of Appeal since 1973 has been of a registered firearms dealer. None of who had a section 5, but all of whom obviously required one that wouldn't have been granted anyway on the Home Office's nonsensical restrictive issuing practice. Just think; if registration as a firearms dealer covered all firearms, there wouldn't have been any conflict between the gun trade and the Home Office at all. And no need to 'decide' any cases.

The EU's latest stuff that the Home Office are stalling on is mainly to do with deactivated firearms. The 2017 Crime and Policing Act retrospectively declared all deactivated firearms 'defectively deactivated' such that they can't be sold without first being upgraded to new specs that can change without notice. EU policy is that downgrades should be licensed, declared etc. as per the category in which they were originally in each country, while Britain has had the opposite approach 'conversion not to affect classification' since 1988.

Meanwhile, the FELWG look forward to the surrender and disposal of weapons shortly to become prohibited with the vain hope that the compensation scheme won't result in forces having to store newly prohibited firearms for years and years. As if the Home Office is likely to come up with a compensation scheme that actually works! More than 50,000 guns were prohibited by the 1988 Act, yet compensation was paid out against less than 4,000 of them. Most claims remain outstanding to this day, as the Home Office refuses to deal with the backlog. The same happened in 1997 with the handgun ban – most claims are still outstanding or have been refused and the 2004 prohibition on air cartridge revolvers didn't come with a compensation scheme at all.

The storage problem is that destroying firearms handed-in under buy-in schemes can't take place until

the compensation is paid, as that would be criminal damage; and since most claims haven't been settled, the police seem destined to hold onto them until they are antiques and can be returned on that basis.

British retrospective prohibitions violate the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998; continental governments don't go there and it would be interesting to know how much of the more recent EU directives on firearms were developed with British input.

More locally, none of FELWG delegates minded the non-statutory form proposed for section 11(6) (clay pigeon shooting grounds) applications, but they want a declaration that the shooter (!?) is not a prohibited person. That seems irrelevant to us, as prohibition under section 21 of the Act is a prohibition on possession. Under section 11(6) a person may *use* a shotgun at a clay shoot without holding a certificate: they don't take possession of it and thus yet another example of FELWG making up laws that don't work.

As to how that might come in, one has to wait and see. The applicant for an 11(6) can't declare that his customers aren't prohibited persons, as he has no means of knowing who will come until he opens for business. The individual punters could sign declarations, but that means identifying themselves to the venue and giving the venue details they won't be authorised to take without registering under the Data Protection Act. It's all nonsense, same as most of what has come out of FELWG these past few years. **Ω**

SRA PLI INSURANCE 'WIDENED'

Specifically, 'target shooting' now articulates that it incorporates hand-thrown stuff – knives, axes etc. provided they are legal in the jurisdiction you do it in. Throwing stars are prohibited in the UK, for example: twice: once in the Criminal Justice Act 1988 and again in the Offensive Weapons Act 2019. The clarification arose from the fact that knife and axe throwing are curricular activities in certain youth organisations and they wanted to be sure that our members instructing their members had appropriate insurance.

As with 'have a go' archery and rifle shooting, non-members can try hand-thrown targetry under the close supervision of qualified SRA members.

Negotiations continue to see if we can widen the policy to incorporate field sports generally, such as angling. **Ω**

U.S. REACTS TO LAS VEGAS SHOOTING

White House 19 Dec 2018

"The President is once again fulfilling a promise he made to the American people. And this morning, the Acting Attorney General signed the final rule, making clear that bump stocks are illegal because they fall within the definition of machine guns that are banned under federal firearms law. A 90-day period now begins, which persons and possessions of bump-stock-type devices must turn those devices to an ATF field office or destroy them by March 21st. Instructions for proper destruction will be posted on ATF's website today."

Background

On 1 October 2017, Stephen Paddock took ten minutes to fire over 1,100 of .223" ammunition into the Route 91 Harvest Music Festival from 14 bump-stock-fitted AR15 rifles, 8 AR10 rifles and a revolver. He killed 58 people and wounded 422. A further 429 casualties occurred during the evacuation. He also shot himself. The motivation for this 64-year old's attack is not known Ω

NEW ZEALAND SPREE KILLER

The NZ government was in fast with its knee-jerk reaction to their spree killer: initially and impotently raging at the Internet on which he streamed a live video of his actions.

They followed that with the usual announcement of a gun ban, which, as in the UK, was probably a policy waiting in a drawer somewhere for a 'suitable legislative opportunity.'

Reaction to government knee-jerks came from the Firearms United Network who headlined their piece – *"Criminals won't turn in firearms in New Zealand."*

"It has been already established that the gun ban imposed by socialist Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern on innocent New Zealand gun owners for the crimes of one terrorist will cost New Zealand taxpayers up to 200 millions in compensation alone – not mentioning the handling of the firearms and their destruction, as well as the effort to locate them, given how many of the long guns to be banned not only have nothing in common with "assault rifles", but are also owned on Category A licenses, thus not registered, making the ban and buyback/confiscation scheme a massive logistic nightmare."

"That is the price we must pay to ensure the safety of our communities," said Jacinda Ardern. But will this ban really "ensure the safety of our communities"? We at the Firearms United Network – out of our years-long experience as a worldwide gun owner rights advocacy group – have been answering "NO" ever since the shooting, citing the scientifically proven examples of Britain and Australia to point out what happens where legal firearms are banned. And once again, news proves us right.

The leader of the Mongrel Mob – New Zealand's most notorious criminal gang, whose members own vast quantities of illegal firearms and have been involved in some of the highest-profile gun crimes in New

*Zealand – already announced that neither his gang, nor others will turn in their guns to the Government following the blanket ban and buyback scheme launched after the Christchurch shootin*g.

On the other hand, no mass murder will be stopped by Ardern's own gun grab. Australia has had seven episodes classified as mass shootings since the gun ban following the 1996 Port Arthur shooting and six after the further tightening of gun laws sparked by the 2002 Monash University shooting…excluding mass murders that saw the use of instruments other than firearms, such as arson, knifes, or motor vehicles….Not to mention, other very easily attainable means can be used for mass murder: while it took over one hour and a half for Anders Behring Breivik to kill 69 and wound over 300 on the Utøya island in July 2011 using a Ruger Mini-14 semi-automatic rifle, a Benelli Nova pump-action shotgun and a Glock 34 semi-automatic pistol, five years later it took merely five minutes to Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel to kill 86 and wound 434 in Nice using a 19-tonne truck….Gun bans never made any Country safer. New Zealand will just add to a long list of failures, and Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern will have blood on her hands, not unlike the Christchurch terrorist."

The Firearms United Network's comment is merely a restatement of all the logic that goes out the window when politicians panic. And that panic took hold in NZ so completely that the semiautomatic rifle ban was voted into law by 119 votes to 1. We know from bitter experience that politicians can't hear any argument besides the one their officials feed them and nobody can stop government policy: it's like trying to stop a meteorite hitting Earth – best option is to try deflecting it 'cos the only way to stop it is to put Earth in the way and that has – consequences.

So the facts don't stop politicians, but when there isn't a crisis to have a knee-jerk reaction to, the sillier policies dreamed up by officials don't gain legs. That proved to be the case in the UK until Theresa May went to the Home Office in 2010 and just nodded everything through. And Sajid Javid seems to be of the same ilk. Within his department, the 'Serious Violence Unit' is answering complaints to him about the police administration of firearms. What expertise they might have in administering sports and leisure activities – or indeed the police - is currently unknown. Ω

IN THE COURTS

Two appeals in Thames Valley this year had a lot in common, although the appellants are quite different people.

Adam Pamment worked for the Prison Service until 2015 when he was essentially pressured out of a stressful working environment by a new line manager adding to his stress. In her quest to get rid of him she found that he'd advertised old uniform badges on line and had

made inappropriate comments about the travelling community on a social media platform. He told her how stressed he was before resigning the service and she reported his mental illness, theft and racism to Thames Valley Police, knowing that he was a certificate holder. And they revoked his certificates. Separately, he also had to step down as a magistrate when an undisclosed link to a registered sex offender became apparent to that service.

SRA advice at the time was not to appeal the revocations: sort himself and his work out and then reapply, after an appropriate period of time-out, as a new man. It sort of worked out like that, except he did appeal in 2015 and the appeals sat in the pending tray until abandoned in 2017. He reapplied in 2017 and the resultant refusal took the best part of two years to come to court.

When considering the 2017 application, his Firearms Enquiry Officer was shown GP reports of panic attacks dating back to 1999 and a psychological referral. The weakness in Mr Pamment's 2017 application was that he had not disclosed any 'relevant medical condition' on either his last renewal form prior to the 2015 revocation (in 2011, which was for both firearm and shot gun certificates), or on the 2017 re-application for a shot gun certificate. The police interpreted these omissions as 'making a false statement'.

The 'problem' with this is that what is regarded as relevant by Home Office guidance changes periodically and continues to evolve. It's gone from asking about 'current conditions' to 'have you ever', for example and the variety of medical conditions now of interest to the police has widened. The 2018 form lists them as:

- Acute Stress Reaction or an acute reaction to the stress caused by a trauma.
- Suicidal thoughts or self harm.
- Depression or anxiety.
- Dementia.
- Mania, bipolar disorder or a psychotic illness.
- A personality disorder.
- A neurological condition: for example, Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's or Huntington's diseases, or epilepsy.
- Alcohol or drug abuse.
- Any other mental or physical condition which might affect your safe possession of a firearm or shotgun.

(And it's not over yet – see the report on FELWG elsewhere in this journal.) Note the catchall last line: nothing is now regarded as irrelevant.

Mr Pamment's 2017 application was solely for a shot gun certificate. The 2002 case of Shepherd v chief constable of Devon and Cornwall makes for a clear legal difference between a shot gun certificate and a firearm certificate. The sole ground for refusing a shot gun certificate is 'danger to public safety or the peace', whereas adverse medical issues relating to one's suitability to hold a

firearm certificate are not relevant to shot gun certificates: except that policing has deliberately conflated these separate issues to say that one means the other.

Mr Pamment said of the hearing in Reading Crown Court that the judge seemed unprepared for the case; she said she hadn't read the bundle and made it clear several ways that she expected the case to fit into half a day and be over by lunchtime.

A judge is not sitting as a fair and impartial tribunal in a section 44 appeal: she sits in the shoes of the chief constable substituting her decision for his – according to the 1974 'Kavanagh' decision. So appeals under section 44 of the Firearms Act don't comply with either Human Rights legislation or natural justice.

The other problem in this appeal was that the police had refused to consider the application before them and instead relied on the 2015 grounds for revocation on the basis that these had not been tested in court. So they gave no consideration to time and circumstances having moved on. The judge noted Mr Pamment's excellent references and his GP having given him a current clean bill of health, but regarded past non-disclosure of medical conditions – despite the several changes in wording on the application forms over the years – as demonstrating a lack of candour. Not to mention it plays into the hands of Home Office guidance paragraph 12.14, which says *'deliberate failure to declare relevant convictions, medical issues or medical history would tend to suggest unfitness to hold a certificate'*.

So what we have in this judgment is the judge agreeing that the 2015 grounds for revocation of the certificates were justified because he didn't declare any medical conditions as required to by the (later) 2016 Home Office guidance and like the police, the court did not consider the current application other than to recognise his current medical suitability to hold a certificate and his supporting references. The court offered Mr Pamment no clue as to what he should do about that, although the inference seems to be that re-writing the application form with the correct box ticked should solve the problem.

No case law actually offers any guidance about time out. The inference is that an appeal will be dismissed if the police made the right decision in the first place, so the Appellant has to solve the problem and apply again. That may mean getting better if it was a medical issue, or waiting until a conviction is spent if that was the problem.

In Essex v Germain (1991) Peter Germain was revoked for two drink-drives in a ten-year period and that revocation was upheld by the High Court following a Scottish case (Luke v Little) in which the Appellant's irresponsible use of a car was such that the police thought it only a matter of time before he abused his shotgun. Preventative justice is a Scottish concept. The handgun ban after the Dunblane murders is

another example. Everyone is prevented from having a handgun to prevent anybody misusing one.

In Germain's case and by the time the high court upheld the police decision he'd got his driving licence back. So he applied for a shot gun certificate again and was refused. At the court door prior to the new appeal the police accepted that preventing him shooting because of a driving ban that had ended conflicted with natural justice, but were too arrogant to allow that appeal. Instead, they permitted him to abandon his appeal without costs either way and re-apply: which he did successfully; adding a firearm certificate application to boot, as he'd joined a pistol club in the interim.

A few weeks after Adam Pamment, Thames Valley Police were in Oxford Crown Court responding to Michael Little's appeal. Like Mr Pamment, he'd been revoked in 2015; but he'd taken a two-year time out and re-applied. And like Mr Pamment, his new application was refused on the basis that the grounds for the 2015 revocation hadn't been tested in court.

Thames Valley Police decided to terminate Mr Little's shot gun certificate in 2015 following a report from a neighbour that he intended to shoot one of his dogs after it had got out and attacked one of her chickens: a threat that he never carried out. His renewal application was in at the time; so two officers attended his home without an appointment, claiming to need to 'check' his guns against the application, while actually being there to seize them.

Mr Little was very suspicious about them, as they weren't the usual FEOs he dealt with; they had no appointment (Home Office guidance says that all such visits should be by appointment) and he was one foot out of the door for a hospital appointment. Having been threatened with arrest if he didn't admit them, he secured his dogs and allowed them access.

He got the guns out and then they wanted to see his cartridges, but wouldn't let him put the guns away first. He resisted when they started seizing his cartridges because his separate cartridge store also contained his cash savings. His trying to prevent them seizing his money got him restrained and cuffed while the police seized all the ammunition and his guns. Then he was de-arrested and left to make his own way to the hospital to seek treatment for the injuries he sustained to his eye during the restraint.

The police account of the event agrees that the officers didn't know Mr Little and that they lied to gain access to the property. They assumed the lengthy delay in admitting him was for him to put the guns away. They did not believe that he had a hospital appointment on the day (without checking with the hospital) and, as Mr Little's barrister explained later, the case was essentially over when the judge told him to sit down and told Mr Little to

stand up for a dressing down because of his behaviour in court.

We haven't had a formal note of the judgment, but we know that judges sit in the shoes of the chief constable, substituting their decision for his. So making an enemy of the judge by way of improper behaviour in court is a sure-fire way of losing an appeal.

The two sides in this case were – on Mr Little's side – whether he's entitled to be an old grouch and a shot gun certificate holder at the same time. He didn't shoot the dog, and would have been entitled to if he had. Policemen laughing at him and calling him a liar about his hospital appointment on the day is where he lost his cool. Many years ago, we went to court with a used car salesman who'd been revoked during divorce proceedings. The essential weakness of his case was that his ex was still living in the house and it took but one flash of irritation from him in the witness box to set the judge against him.

On the police side, the issues concerning us remain untested. Is it OK not to process the application and to rely on a previous decision? Is it OK to ignore Home Office guidance to police, by sending strange officers to the house without an appointment and is it OK to lie to the citizen as to their reasons for being there.

Mr Little kicked off when the officers were seizing shotgun cartridges. Doing that is not sanctioned or authorised by the seizure policy, so is it OK to provoke the citizen by acting unlawfully? The answer seems to be yes. Which leaves us wondering what the judge's position will be, having failed to 'have regard' for the guidance. **Ω**

THE RED PILL

The Usual Suspect reviews the veracity of politicians

Most of us have at least one official history that we do not believe entirely or indeed at all. JFK, the Moon Landings, Vaccinations, the list is endless.

These days an increasing number of people regard the allegedly impartial information brought to us by the mainstream media as 'fake news.'

Often, the twisting of reality is down to judicious (?) editing, leaving a casual reader/viewer with a version of events that help push public opinion in a way beneficial to the authorities.

Editing is by far the preferred option in that a lie of omission is harder to identify for anyone not particularly knowledgeable or interested in the subject. In addition, if discovered, the excuses of constraints of time, space, 'human error', etc. can cover a multitude of sins.

Sometimes, such as finding the cause of a disaster, so little is known that there is nothing to omit in the first place. When such a situation arises its time for plan B: the creation and dissemination of deliberately inaccurate data.

Case in point, an examination of statistics on the number and percentages of legally held firearms used in homicides, and suggested amendments to legislation to alleviate the problem.

This is part of an EU drive to curtail civilian access to firearms. The loss of individual freedom, resultant harm to businesses, or the actual severity of the issue is irrelevant to those seeking more control over the population.

This link is the statement on these statistics given by Frau Katja Triebel from Germany, whose family business is firearms and has been for four generations.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DryeMuvXtAc

She begins by explaining that despite assurances of a detailed breakdown of the effect of the proposed changes by the authorities, none has yet appeared. She then goes on to quote the numbers of homicides involving legally held firearms, both as a total figure and as a percentage of the total number of these firearms.

Frau Triebel explains that every figure quoted is wrong and often by a substantial amount. For example, the number of homicides by legally held firearms was, in fact, the total number of homicides, regardless of the method the perpetrator used. Every other statistic in the report was equally inaccurate.

This time, shooters throughout Europe may have 'dodged a bullet', but the implications of such 'errors' cannot be overestimated. Most politicians have little interest in the topics on which they cast their votes. When they do vote, they tend to rely entirely on the advice of their staff or their party leaders or the whips office. If their staff or indeed leaders receive bad data, where does that leave us?

It is clear that the authorities do not like the great unwashed having access to unfiltered information. I remember one of the fronts from a news network informing his viewers that it was against the law for them to look at the 'Wikileaks' website. According to him, only 'accredited journalists' had the authority to do so. The rest of us would have to accept whatever information this race of Übermensch saw fit to impart. The answer to that is plural and bounces.

A recent perfect example of these double standards is the actions of the New Zealand government after the recent Mosque shootings. The social media giant that the gunman used to transmit his actions to the world received no censure from the government. However, that same government used the mainstream media to announce that any individual citizen caught attempting to forward footage of the incident would face gaol.

The UK government used exactly the same approach when it set up an enquiry on the subject of tackling 'fake news'. From the outset, it was clear that only 'lone wolf' journalists of the type for which the Internet is

best suited were the ones at fault. As far as those in the Westminster bubble were concerned, the mainstream media were all beyond reproach. The answer to that is plural and bounces as well.

This is truly tragic since we are living in the most connected point in Humanity's history. At a time when being informed has never been easier, we the people have to spend more effort to get to the truth than ever before.

If we simply trust what the authorities tell us is true, we will have no one to blame but ourselves when the world goes all dark and horrible. **Ω**

UNBIASED AMERICA

(BORROWED FROM THE INTERNET)

THE COUNTRY WITH 40% OF THE WORLD'S FIREARMS COMMITS LESS THAN 4% OF THE WORLD'S HOMICIDES

by Kevin Ryan

When a new study came out finding that America is home to 40% of the world's firearms, the media had a field day. "America has 40% of the world's guns, despite having just 4% of the world's population!" blared headlines across to country.

What the media left out, however, is that, despite having so many firearms, Americans commit just 3.7% of the world's homicides. The data (2014):

World Population: 7,298,453,033
U.S. Population: 318,857,056 (4.4% of world total)
World Homicides: 384,553
U.S. Homicides: 14,249 (3.7% of world total)

In other words, Americans commit just 3.7% of the world's murders, despite having 4.4% of the world's population and 40% of the world's firearms — further evidence that other factors, NOT gun ownership, are responsible for homicide rates.

But that headline doesn't play into the media's gun control narrative, which is why you didn't see it.

SOURCES: https://www.newsweek.com/americans-have-40-percent-worlds-g…
http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/…/SAS-BP-Civilian-held-firea…
https://ourworldindata.org/homicides
https://ucr.fbi.gov/…/2014/crime-in-the-u.s.…/tables/table-1 **Ω**

MORE FAKE NEWS

This article in the Portsmouth News caught Jim Campbell's eye. You can view it unexpurgated via this access:
https://www.portsmouth.co.uk/news/crime/concerns-raised-by-police-after-rise-in-gun-licence-applications-in-hampshire-1-8889248?fbclid=IwAR39zWhBOUN2xWlEbaHN63VcO6OfnA0IAXLlL4CT7yJIu0GQbFRZDp-d-xU

CONCERNS RAISED BY POLICE AFTER RISE IN GUN LICENCE APPLICATIONS IN HAMPSHIRE

By David George
Friday 12 April 2019

MORE people are applying for gun licences in Hampshire, with police across the country warning that background checks are draining their resources.

The latest Home Office figures show that 1,398 people applied for a new firearms licence or renewed an old permit in the 12 months to March 2018 in Hampshire – compared to 804 applications three years earlier.

Of those, Hampshire Constabulary passed 345 new gun licences and renewed 1,035. A further 18 applications were refused, with five of those renewals.

Research carried out by West Midlands Police estimates England and Wales police forces will lose £10m this year, because the cost of administering licences is not covered by fees.

A new firearms certificate costs £88, and holders have to pay £62 every five years to renew their licences.

That means Hampshire Constabulary received £94,500 in fees in 2017-18, up from £56,400 in 2014-15.

In March 2018, there were 5,461 firearms permits in Hampshire, covering 19,365 guns. Holders only need one licence for multiple weapons.

The National Police Chief's Council said current fees 'may not cover the cost of checking backgrounds before issuing gun licences'.

Assistant Chief Constable Dave Orford said: 'We have raised concern that the current fees may not reflect the full cost to administer firearms licensing when taking into consideration additional costs such as home visits and inspections, administering changes and renewals.
'Regardless of fee level, we are committed to ensuring that we deliver firearms licensing in the best way possible.'

So first a bit of background: Hampshire has 'form' as an anti-gun force exercising carborundum tactics to reduce the numbers of people enjoying the legitimate and lawful use of firearms and shotguns for sport and leisure. Andy Marsh, now chief constable of Avon & Somerset was their Assistant Chief Constable and ACPO's firearms lead back in 2013 when a coroner reported on the murders committed in Durham by Mike Atherton. The Chief Constable of Durham told those inquests that there was no training programme for those of his staff responsible for issuing certificates. We thought that odd at the time, as

the police have had responsibility for issuing certificates since 1920 and you'd have thought that they could have figured out a training course for the people they hire to act as chief constables under section 55(1) of the Firearms Act 1968 long ago.

The Home Office circulated a memorandum of guidance to chief police officers in 1969. They revised and updated it for publication in 1989 and subsequently and it can be downloaded free from the Home Office website. So telling staff engaged in firearms administration to read it might have been a good start.

But instead of fixing that glaring hole in the police training programme, Andy Marsh went to Prime Minister David Cameron and got the nod for a head by head re-evaluation of the suitability of certificate holders to keep their certificates: nothing about the suitability of the staff engaged in this work; just a double-check on the people to whom certificates had been issued.

The Home Office further updated the guidance and realized in 2016 that the police still weren't reading it so they put a clause in the 2017 Policing and Crime Act requiring both the police and the courts to 'take account' of the guidance. What the sanction process is for those who still don't remains to be seen: we've asked the Home Office the question, as we have had two cases in one force area where the guidance has been ignored altogether and two in another where false evidence is being used to discredit the applicants.

But back to the article and from the top: the newspaper identified this piece as a 'crime' story, although what crime they think law-abiding people legitimately applying for statutory certification relates to is not articulated.

The article is illustrated with a photo of a handgun, prohibited to the sporting public since 1997.

'Gun licences' don't exist: they were abolished by a clause in the Local Government Act 1966.

As to 'more' people applying: their numbers include renewals and therein another fake element of this piece. A Firearms Act in 1994 extended certificate life from three years to five, so there followed two years when no renewals came up at all. Police chiefs promptly cut firearms branch staff to save money and to this day these departments have three fat years and two lean – in renewal figures: so comparing a lean year with a fat year fakes up an 'increase'.

The Metropolitan Police faked a shot gun certificate increase in the 1980s by manipulating the figures. People whose certificates expired before the renewal process was completed simply dropped off the total 'on issue' and then re-appeared as 'new' certificates (and thus an 'increase' in numbers when eventually issued. This 'increase' in applications was said to be following the Brixton riots.

As to what resources issuing firearm certificates is draining: it takes six minutes to process an application, once such information as is checkable has been checked.

Where police resources are being drained is the obsession with making home visits to double-check security (provision of which is the applicant's responsibility) and to double or triple check identification numbers on firearms held. The law does not require the police to carry out either check or indeed to make any home visit at all.

West Midlands is quite correct in their claim that the cost of administering 'licences' (which don't exist) is not covered by the fees. The clue is in the Firearms Act itself, which states that the fee is 'payable on grant': the fee is only intended to defray those additional costs the chief constable incurs by making the decision to grant. That would be the cost of the certificate itself; the processing time for someone printing it and sticking the photo on, applying various rubber stamps and putting it in an envelope. Oh, and the postage. If the fee actually paid for the process, unsuccessful applicants would not receive a refund, a la Scottish air weapon certificates.

Costs incurred by police processing applications drain other budgets. Double-checking everything on the application form in hope of finding a false statement would come under criminal investigations and visitations to check security come from the crime prevention budget. The latter is an optional cost that police chiefs don't have to incur and the former is the reason why they got the job in the first place.

The National Police (sic) Chief's Council is quite correct that the fees "may not cover the costs of checking backgrounds…" because the law is clear that the fees can't be used for that purpose.

Colin Greenwood, a former police officer and in retirement from the Job editor of 'Guns Review' magazine 1980-96 repeatedly warned us that ramping up fees was a weapon to discourage certificate holders from maintaining their certificates. Outrageous renewal fees and peripheral costs of courses certainly keep the number of Security Industry Authority badges down to the active users and that's the model policing has sought to emulate with respect to certificate numbers: such as the new fees for section 5 and for club Home Office approval.

The Police Federation adopted a policy of 'full section 1 controls of all shotguns' in 1974, which for the uninitiated means obtaining permission for each purchase prior to doing so. This mechanism is used in firearm certificate controls to keep numbers down. In simple terms it would mean that if you have one shotgun, you have no good reason to buy a second one unless you come up with a different reason for a different gun by configuration, barrel length or something.

The PF's downer on shotguns seems to be based on a single

incident in which an illegally owned and sawn-off gun was fired at a PF representative intervening in a domestic dispute. The whole of the 20th century saw ten policemen killed by shotguns. Half the shooters probably owned the guns legally in the sense that the incidents predate the requirement to hold a certificate. One such was the murder of a police sergeant by one of the constables under his command.

The five that post-date the requirement to hold a certificate include one murder in a gunshop the murderer was burgling at the time. The others – we don't know if they were legally owned prior to the murder or not.

The requirement to hold a shot gun certificate was introduced in 1968, at which time some 600,000 people applied.

The number of certificates increased steadily from 1968 to 1988 and is ascribed to owners finding out 'late' about the requirement. But also, Britain was getting wealthier and every sport was on the increase. While there was always some tension between landowners worrying about where townie gun owners were using their guns and said townies complaining that the countryside was sewn up, the gap between demand and supply was filled by clay pigeon and practical shotgun clubs.

Since 1968, the population has increased by some 50% and that figure includes half a million Soviet trained troops who Tony Blair's Labour Government allowed to settle here. Yet certificate numbers have flat lined. There should be over 2 million shotgun certificate holders by now. And there aren't because of police policies.

If the police can't afford the rod they made for their own backs, it's time to pass the baton to a national agency of properly trained staff, trained to act lawfully and to issue certificates appropriately. That way, future Olympic hopefuls will find their way to the top, unimpeded by red tape, bureaucracy and paranoia.

Stories like this get planted as part of the campaign to jack fees up – again. Ω

KNIFE CRIME AND ON BEING OFFENSIVE

Among the BBC's I-Player output, we spotted 'Jack the Ripper – the Case Reopened.' The show was presented by Emilia Fox, who played Jeannie Hopkirk in the atrocity that was Reeves' and Mortimer's version of Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased) and David Wilson: professor of criminology at Birmingham City University and a specialist in serial killers.

The duo trawled through the case files of this first 'modern' serial killer. Anyone familiar with the subject will know their problem: the papers are incomplete and there is no absolute agreement among those who have investigated the case as to which of the murders in the late 1880s belong to Jack the Ripper's knife.

Frederick Abberline of Scotland Yard led the enquiry team and if he ever wrote anything about the case, it has long since been looted. Or destroyed: Assistant Commissioner Melville Macnaghten wrote (after his retirement in 1913) that he knew who the killer was and that he'd destroyed some papers to protect his identity. It later came out that he suspected Montague John Druitt, a barrister who drowned in the River Thames in December 1888.

But all the great crime-writers agree: from Sir Arthur Conan-Doyle to Agatha Christie to John Grisham, the consensus is that any theory has to be at peace with all the facts. Druitt lived nowhere near Whitechapel. He taught at a school in Blackheath and was a barrister in Kings Bench Walk. He seemed a convenient hook to hang the case on because he died a month or so after the Mary Jane Kelly murder.

Some theories depend on ignoring a fact, or changing the line-up of victims, but the nearest there is to a consensus is five murders in 1888: Mary Ann Nichols, Annie Chapman, 'Long' Elizabeth Stride, Catherine Eddowes and Mary Jane Kelly. Writing as one who studied this crime spree and who was present at each of the murder scenes on their 100th anniversaries, I've never been convinced that Liz Stride belongs in the canon, but let's defer to the real experts.

Sequentially, Mary Nichol's throat was cut from behind on 31 August 1888. Her torso was slashed about. Annie Chapman's body was likewise mutilated on 8 September. Liz Stride and Catherine Eddowes are known as the 'double event', dying within about an hour of each other on 30 September 1888. Ms Stride's throat was cut, while Catherine had a slashed throat, mutilated face and multiple wounds to the abdomen including partial evisceration.

Last to die in the canonical sequence was Mary Jane Kelly, who was savagely mutilated in her bed-sit on 9 November 1888: the only one to die indoors. On 23 February 1894, Assistant Police Commissioner Macnaghten wrote a summary – with the benefit of access to documents that no longer exist – in which he nominated three suspects: Montague John Druitt, Michael Ostrog and Aaron Kosminski.

The approach in the TV show was firstly crime scene reconstructions, the better to understand what the various witnesses saw, or couldn't see. Step aside a moment and think back to the 1970s movie 'The Texas Chainsaw Massacre". What did you see that was so horrible as to get the movie banned? Not a lot: the low-budget production couldn't afford the Kensington gore. So if you see it again, you'll see a nasty 'B' movie and all the horror you 'remember' was your imagination working overtime while on screen actresses scream and a chainsaw gets waved about.

Real crime scenes are the same. Witnesses may attach visuals to a sound heard and thus believe they saw more than they actually did; so

the point of the reconstructions was to identify who the better witnesses were and who had the clearer view of events.

On the 'double event' night, Liz Stride was seen talking to a man of whom there is a good description: likewise Catherine Eddowes an hour later. The problem is that the descriptions are of different men: a three-inch height difference, similar small but differently coloured moustaches: different hats and coats.

The traditional way of resolving this discrepancy is that the killer was disturbed at the Liz Stride scene, so he went home and changed his clothes, went out again and murdered/mutilated Catherine Eddowes in the space of an hour.

It's do-able in the sense that the two crime scenes are a mile apart, but the killer wouldn't have gone straight from one scene to another like I did in 1988 looking for ghosts. No: he would have to go home, or to his 'lair': local enough to include it in the night's itinerary. Then he has to change his outfit and height – hat, coat, trousers and footwear anyway – which could be done in a minute or two. So he only loses two minutes or so out of that hour changing his outer garments.

He didn't have an appointment with Catherine Eddowes, so some of that hour must have gone on finding her. If it takes ten minutes to find and accost a prostitute in Whitechapel, he still had the thick end of three quarters of an hour to go home from Dutfield's Yard and then on to Mitre Square, which establishes a search area. And supports the notion that the killer lived near the crime scenes.

Sherlock Holmes fools Watson by losing a foot of his height when hiding out in an opium den, but that's not a street environment, where it's harder to appear smaller. We've seen Terry O'Neill do it: an active karate competitor until 1982 and publisher of 'Fighting Arts International' until 1997, Terry isn't small. In a pistol disarming and retention technique class my first attempt to relieve him of his sidearm resulted in me having a firm grip on the barrel and my feet off the ground. I got it the second time, but he said he wanted it back and the chance to return it was an offer I couldn't refuse.

Waiting in a Liverpool hotel with a petite journalist who wanted to interview him, I didn't recognise Terry as he wandered up: bent forwards, shoulders rounded, hands together and a foolish grin on his face, he'd taken a good nine inches of his height, so it can be done. Except he was playing to an audience, while the Ripper would hope not to be noticed or memorable.

Emilia Fox's programme (she probably got the gig on the strength of her role as a forensic pathologist in 'Silent Witness') used HOLMES – the Home Office Large Major Enquiry System computer program. Before putting data into the program, they eliminated some of the suspects linked to this crime the old-fashioned way. Some of them were first named

decades after the crimes took place. They didn't bother mentioning Sir William Gull, who was too old anyway. Nor the Duke of Clarence who got into the frame because a police officer's path crossed a man whom he said looked like the Duke of Clarence just before he came upon the body of Catherine Eddowes.

I've not seen it articulated, but the officer could also have seen the Duke close up in the course of his duties. The Duke also had a passing resemblance to Montague John Druitt.

Other 'suspects' include the American quack Francis Tumblety (who was sought for questioning at the time) and the artist Walter Sickert (who wasn't). Tumblety has an alibi for some of the murders, as do the Duke of Clarence and Sir William Gull. Walter Sickert is interesting because he clearly had an interest in the case that feeds through into his paintings. Patricia Cornwell fingered him as the Ripper in her 2003 book (not to mention her 2014 and 2017 books) although what she may actually have got him for is as the author of at least one of the Ripper hoax messages sent to the police at the time.

The HOLMES software could only be fed agreed facts, so there would be no point including suspects eliminated by alibis. The computer didn't reject Liz Stride, so I may be alone in not liking her in the canon, but it did pull in Martha Tabram who was murdered on 8 August 1888. Her throat was cut, but from in front, so she ought to have bled onto the murderer's clothes. That could be taken as part of his learning curve: later victims were strangled first and cut from behind, apart from Liz Stride.

When she was spotted in Dutfield's Yard, she was still bleeding from the throat, suggesting it had just happened. According to the post-mortem report she'd been floored and then her throat cut while she was held down on the ground: so she should have bled onto the killer's clothes. She had no money when found, which lends weight to a robbery/murder and it's not the Ripper's style, but if this was a botched Ripper attack and he was disturbed, he would have had to change his bloodstained clothes before meeting Ms Eddowes.

Annie Chapman, Mary Nichols and Catherine Eddowes were strangled prior to the knife being deployed. That would both stop them screaming and spare the killer their arterial blood spatter. Liz Stride comes between Nichols and Eddowes, so if you sequence them: 1. Tabram attacked while facing killer and stabbed 39 times. 2. Chapman attacked from behind and mutilated. 3. Nichols attacked from behind and mutilated. 4. Stride knocked down and throat cut by an attacker kneeling on her. 5. Eddowes attacked from behind and mutilated. 6. Mary Jane Kelly murdered on her bed and mutilated more than the others.

I still see Ms Stride as not fitting the Modus Operandi. Martha Tabram

is generally excluded from the canon because her last known punter was a guardsman in uniform. Grenadier Guards were a minimum of 6' 2" tall in 1888, so noticeably huge compared to other Ripper suspects as described by eyewitnesses.

HOLMES liked Aaron Kosminski for the murders, because if you join the dots of the murder scenes, he lived inside the ring at the time. Sir Melville Macnaghten named Kosminski as a suspect and said he was in a lunatic asylum, which he was from 1891 until he died there in 1919. The other suspects in Macnaghten's papers are Montague Druitt and Michael Ostrog. The latter was a Russian, who had spells in lunatic asylums and was in a French prison in 1888. Montague Druitt was playing cricket in Dorset the day after Mary Nichols' murder.

Macnaghten would have preferred Druitt, if only because fingering an English barrister (he refers to him as a doctor) for the murders was less likely to cause a riot than identifying a Polish Jew or a Russian émigré as the key suspect. I think the answer's still out there. Whoever did it should be on an 1881 census form and probably not more than half an hour's walk from the crime scenes. So who else in the area had form?

Winding forwards for a moment, consider the murder of Roy Tutill on 23 April 1968. He was last seen alive hitching a lift home from school. The man who stopped for him was Brian Field, who raped and strangled him within an hour of picking him up. He kept the body in his car for a few days before dumping him in woodland.

Field wasn't a suspect at the time and wasn't a serial killer: but he was a sexual predator who had form for other attacks on boys. He came into focus as the suspect several decades later through two converging enquiries: a cold case review that spotted his pattern of geographically widely spread out sex crimes and DNA he left on Roy's clothing matching a sample taken from him after a 1999 arrest for drink-driving. The investigation then found that he'd been living in Surrey in 1968.

Using HOLMES on the Ripper enquiry would have been more interesting if they'd taken a fresh look for likely suspects in the search area. Professor Wilson brought in a profiler who was sure that the killer would be local. That analysis makes Kosminski favourite, but were any other identified sexual perverts living in the area at the time? The HOLMES system did link Martha Tabram's murder on 7 August 1888 to the sequence and while (if you leave Liz Stride out) there's an escalation of violence leading up to the Mary Kelly mutilation, were there any unsolved (or indeed solved) non-fatal attacks before the Martha Tabram murder, or did the Ripper start with a homicide?

The limitation of the television programme was that it confined itself to what's left of the original investigation: so they didn't look for any new suspects, nor did they

eliminate all those who have been put forwards more recently.

Calling the Ripper's murders 'knife crimes' and then presumably calling for a ban on knives would have done nothing whatever to prevent them. Our Victorian forebears were at least that wise. They would prevent the person committing the crimes by stopping him: not his knife ownership, nor his knife retailer's lawful trade nor his knife grinder's service trade.

A hundred and thirty years later, we are stuck with this bureaucratic fixation on inanimate objects, as though the evil wrought on our streets is wrought by the weapons in isolation from the people perpetrating them. Like Macnaghten in the 1890s, modern police chiefs don't want to stir things up by stereotyping the people who are committing crimes: their age, ethnicity, gang affiliations, self-medication et al: hence the repeated reference to the objects – guns, knives, etc.

A decade after the Ripper murders, Emile Durkheim established empirically – in a study of suicides – that if you eliminate a method, you cause a temporary dip in suicide numbers until another method gains traction through publicity. Sticking one's head in a gas oven was a recognised suicide method until the transition from coal gas to natural gas made it ineffective. That caused a slight dip in the numbers in the 1960s.

Banning something inanimate doesn't work retrospectively: banning lead shot didn't remove lead from the environment – as can be seen merely by glancing at the dome of St Paul's Cathedral in London. A complete ban on knives would merely divert thuggery to something else: fatal stabbings have occurred where the murder weapon was a screwdriver, a knitting needle and a six-inch nail. Dracula got it via a wooden stake through the heart and Sisera died when Jael hammered a wooden tent peg into his temple (Judges 5.26).

'Knife crime' is colourless, or so it seems from the media, although photographs of the victims suggest otherwise and point toward the territorial tribal functioning of young people on the streets. Stephen Lawrence was a tragic case of a variant sort of tribalism: a young black man in a strange area where the tribe were all white. A couple of years later, headmaster Philip Lawrence was fatally stabbed outside his school, when he intervened in a teenage gang fight. He became a threat to the balance of power in a teenage ruck because he was a grown-up outsider. His killer had form for an earlier non-lethal knife attack and the judicial consequences for him were obviously insufficient to prevent his doing it again.

These events came some years after the 1980's knife debate led to provisions in the Criminal Justice Act 1988. Greville Janner MP raised the

matter in an adjournment debate on the 30th June 1987. He started off mentioning *"…the presence of Mr. Dennison, who lost his son in a stabbing incident and who has launched a courageous campaign in an attempt to have the law changed."*

Roy Dennison attended a public meeting called to oppose SRA founder member Bahadir Niazi opening a gunshop in a former Turkish Cypriot community centre in Stoke Newington: using the meeting as a platform for his anti-knife campaign. We never did learn what sort of knife killed his son, nor indeed any other details of the homicide. His approach was that everyone else should have to pay for his loss.

Mr Janner had family form in the knife debate, as he explained: "*I would wish to pay a tribute, with which I know that you, Mr. Speaker, would wish to be associated, to my late father Barnett Janner, Lord Janner of the city of Leicester, who introduced the restriction of Offensive Weapons Bill which subsequently became an Act in 1959 and which resulted in the effective banning of flick knives and gravity knives, which have become rarely used.*"

So picking on knives by type was nothing new in 1987 and their rarity in being used after the ban proves Emile Durkheim's point. He continued:

"*Unfortunately, the Act does not extend to other knives which rejoice in such names as survival knives, Rambo knives, butterfly knives and other dangerous weapons, still less to knives which may be used entirely properly by anglers, hunters, carpenters, butchers or carpet layers; knives such as Stanley knives, especially those with retractable blades, and large penknives, which can, if used, be extremely dangerous."*

Rambo knives didn't exist in the 1950s and Stanley Tools got mightily fed up with their name being used generically for the wide variety of craft knives on the market. Clive Soley (a Labour MP from 1979-2005 and now in the Lords) wanted to ban knives with emotive sounding names – like the Swiss army knife (which is a pocket pen knife), but how he figured a butterfly knife sounded emotive escapes our recollection.

The 1987 issue, according to Mr Janner was "…*that the police are faced with hooligans, with young villains and sometimes with perfectly ordinary youngsters coming together in gangs and carrying knives. Some of them, according to the Metropolitan police, are carrying them in London as a means for self-protection. As Chief Superintendent Mike Farbrother said: We are seeing early evidence of a generation which carries knives almost as part of their clothing. It is becoming almost a fetish, a vogue, a fashion, and it is hideously dangerous and must be stopped…. We know that about one third of all murders are committed with sharp instruments, the vast majority of which are knives….Shops that sell such knives ought to be licensed. Knives should not be available for sale to anyone,*

particularly when they are obviously being sold to those who are villainous in intent. I should like all such shops to be licensed and as few licences as possible to be granted."

Answering for the government, Douglas Hogg MP said: "*there is an alarming increase in the numbers of people who are carrying knives, and I agree with his suggestion that in certain parts of our cities it is becoming part of the subculture to go around with a knife. That is a profoundly worrying and distressing fact that the Government must address….but that is not where the problem lies. It lies with any weapon—I use that word broadly—because it can be any instrument that a person carries for an unlawful purpose—for the purpose of causing an injury. It might be a milk bottle, a high-heeled shoe with a sharp stiletto or a knife….It is here that we come to the core of the problem because there are a range of legitimate purposes that justify the carrying of a knife. The hon. and learned Member for Leicester, West referred to the fisherman coming back from the stream with an angler's knife. Other examples are the housewife returning from the ironmonger having purchased a bread knife, the boy scout returning from camp with a sheath knife or the decorator who has been hanging wallpaper and has put a Stanley knife in his pocket. All those instances would be a proper possession of something that is capable of being a weapon….In schools, youth clubs and other appropriate places we must ram home the message that the possession of a knife is, or can be, a criminal offence. It can be dangerous to the possessor and very dangerous to other people….the problem does not concern the Rambo-type knife, unpleasant though it may be, but with the potato knife or the bread knife, which is just as dangerous as the Rambo knife, but which could not be made the subject of licensing__regulations….We must remind ourselves that flick knives and gravity knives have been made the subject of a prohibition. It is unlawful to sell a flick knife or a gravity knife. That is a precedent on which we could build….we have somehow to try to mark the statutory distinction between the fisherman, the boy scout, the decorator and the housewife and make it unlawful for someone without a lawful cause to have a knife tucked away in the back pocket either for offence or defence…"*

The eventual Criminal Justice Act 1988 prohibited specific items, including butterfly knives and some oriental martial arts equipment such as throwing stars.

Section 139(4) of that 1988 Act says: (4) *It shall be a defence for a person charged with an offence under this section to prove that he had good reason or lawful authority for having the article with him in a public place'.*

It didn't amend the common law right each of us has for defence, so that just leaves 'going equipped' for an unlawful purpose as a crime. What's interesting about the 1987 adjournment debate is that they

knew full well the importance of education through youth media and all the government has done since then is progressively restrict the provision of youth services by cutting funding.

Then there's the various bans on firearms used legitimately by law-abiding people for hobby and leisure sporting activities. Self-loading rifles and a lot of re-enactment kit went that way in 1989: followed by walking stick shotguns, firearms disguised as other objects, full-bore handguns, .22" handguns and then air cartridge revolvers and pistols.

The latest Offensive Weapons Act bans MARS rifles – a type only possessed by firearm certificate holders and which have never featured in crime. It's the same tired old diversionary tactic the Home Office has been using for decades: ever since it worked in 1967 when they introduced new controls on shotguns to divert the media from calling for the death penalty to be restored.

They clearly prefer banning law-abiding taxpayers from using firearms for sporting purposes to doing something about feral youth carving out territorial hoods on our streets.

We didn't have time to mark a territory back in the 1960s. The relentless round of council and church youth groups, choir practice, homework, Scouts, school and being chased by Girl Guides left no time for such behaviour – and meant that we were under adult supervision nearly all the time we weren't at home.

What has changed is the government's conscious reduction in their investment in youth services. To be on the streets at all hours with a knife with which to support the local tribal territorial function, kids today have to be free to do so. Carrying a knife is *de rigeur*; part of the outfit. Douglas Hogg knew that more than thirty years ago but chose to leave Parliament in 2010 with a clean moat without doing anything to reduce the risk that people arm themselves to deal with.

He spent his Parliamentary time squeezing service rifles and militaria out of the rifle clubs, the gun trade and re-enactment societies: before he squeezed the rifle clubs out of charitable status and then left the Home Office to run amok under a Labour administration that wanted a centralized police state.

And still it goes on; back in office after eleven years of watching Labour doing its utmost to vilify and criminalize British sporting interests, the Conservatives firstly put the sleep-walking Theresa May in the Home Office, where she let them do as they pleased, and naturally they pursued their usual failed policies into yet another 'Offensive Weapons Bill'.

Offensive it certainly is. They tried banning lawfully held firearm certificated rifles chambered for the centenarian 12.7x99mm cartridge and succeeded in prohibiting the nearest equivalent of a service rifle

currently (but not for much longer) held on firearm certificates. Here's the 'rationale' for this attack on a group of law-abiding citizens who possess these rifles: a type that has never featured in crime, as presented in a letter by Lord Duncan of Springbank.

"The Government was concerned that these rifles can discharge rounds at a rate which brings them much closer to self-loading rifles which are already prohibited for civilian ownership under section 5 of the Firearms Act 1968 and Article 45 of the Firearms (Northern Ireland) Order 2004. This appears to be one of the selling points for such rifles. When the Bill becomes an Act such weapons will need to be surrendered for which compensation will be paid to owners. Compensation arrangements regarding the Offensive Weapons Bill are required to be set out in secondary legislation, following Royal Assent of the Bill and, prior to this, the Government plans to carry out a public consultation on specific elements of the compensation arrangements. Further details on this will be provided in due course, following Royal Assent.

As our Scottish Rep's enquiry also questioned the legality of the government preventing our members' peaceful enjoyment of their private property under article 1, protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights, Lord Duncan continued:

"… the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and its European Court of Human Rights are part of a different legal system to the EU, and are both part of the Council of Europe. For EU matters, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) is the body which has responsibility for overseeing compliance with EU law. Therefore whilst the UK will depart from the European Union, and consequently from the jurisdiction of the CJEU, there will be no departure from the protections which we enjoy under the ECHR as our membership of the Council of Europe will remain unaffected."

There is nothing in his letter to suggest that the government has any intention of recognizing the rights of firearm certificate holders to peacefully enjoy their possessions.

Of course, the Offensive Weapons Bill started out as a knee-jerk reaction to acid attacks on the streets. Thugs started using corrosive substances to disable victims in reaction to the judicial difficulties placed in their way for using other weapons. Classic Durkheim: remove one method and another will take its place – but if you deal with the problem, the symptoms will go away. So the government continued tackling the symptoms in their usual way – that has been failing to achieve anything relevant for decades.

On the knife front, which, like attacking firearm certificate holders, is another 'do something initiative': *"The Government's policy on tackling knife crime is based on "four key strands": working with the police; working on*

the legislative framework; working with retailers on responsible sales; and looking at early intervention and prevention." (So nothing to do with thugs on the streets: an attack on retailers and policemen hiding behind desks: Ed)

"In April 2018 the Home Office published the Seri HYPERLINK "https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-strategy"o HYPERLINK "https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-strategy"us Violence Strategy, which it has described as looking at "the root causes of the problem and how to support young people to lead productive lives away from violence" as well as at law enforcement. (Douglas Hogg knew what the problem was in 1987 – see above – and William Shakespeare also knew what the problem was in the 1590s: *"I would there were no age between sixteen and three-and-twenty, or that youth would sleep out the rest; for there is nothing in the between but getting wenches with child, wronging the ancientry, stealing, fighting"* Ed) *The Home Secretary has also announced plans for a new statutory duty for all agencies – including health, education and social care – to work together to tackle serious violence.* (But he only announced funds for the police: Ed)

The 'serious violence strategy' is a 111-page document published in April 2018 when Amber Rudd was briefly Home Secretary – until she trod on Home Office toes and had to go. The executive summary says, in part: "*The strategy is framed on four key themes: tackling county lines and misuse of drugs, early intervention and prevention, supporting communities and partnerships, and an effective law enforcement and criminal justice response."*

Nothing whatever in that about knives or the menace caused by firearm certificate holders going about their lawful occasions; so the Home Office crack down on the law-abiding would seem to be their usual smoke and mirrors. By the by, you may notice elsewhere in this journal that the Serious Violence Unit receives letters addressed to the Home Secretary about firearm certificate issues: crossed wires all over.

The Home Office is seeking a solution to a problem caused by unintended consequences of the way the Education department measures school performance by banning more firearms and cracking down on retailers who sell quality knives drugs' dealers can't afford.

During exam periods, pupils taking 'O' levels (or whatever they're called now) are informally excluded from school unless they're taking the exam scheduled for that day. That removes adult control from what they are doing with their time and those who haven't been put in for any exams are on the loose for much longer, making them available for recruitment to extra-curricular activities: such as county lines drugs dealing.

Not putting them in for exams and thus informally excluding them from adult control for weeks on end reduces the school's exam failure percentage and makes the school look better in league tables.

So the government's 'county lines' problem is fed by informally excluded pupils being at a loose end and their solution is to ban MARS rifles and make knife orders. You couldn't make it up. **Ω**

WHAT DEFINES A PISTOL?

There hasn't been one in British firearms legislation for nearly a hundred years. The Pistols Act 1903 defined a pistol as having a barrel of nine inches or less and if you're old enough to have trained on pistols at a rifle and pistol club (1859-1997) you may remember the .22" Webley single shot break-action 'pistols' they started beginners on. These had ten-inch barrels to spare clubs having to buy pistols licences. And that also dates them, as the 1903 Act was repealed in 1920 when everything with a rifled barrel became a 'firearm' and subject to the Firearms Act 1920.

One of the subsequent 'decided' cases mentions the 1903 Pistols Act. Judges refused to use its definition of a pistol as the act had been repealed. In Guy Savage's case in 1995, the judge made much in his summing up of the fact that the prosecution were trying to make the Firearms Act state a legislative difference between 'pistol' 'carbine' and 'rifle' while all were collectively defined as firearms in the Act. The 1968 Act refers to firearms and treats them all the same in section 1. The 1988 Act imported the words 'rifle' and 'carbine' into primary legislation without definitions. Pistols rated no mention in 1988, or in 1997.

When a jargon word is used in a Parliamentary Act without being ascribed a definition, what a dictionary says pertains. In the Collins dictionary, a rifle has a rifled barrel, and, er, that's it. The term 'handgun' (which isn't in the legislation either) generally means small enough not to need mounting on a wheeled carriage, or as Handgunner Editor Emeritus Jan A Stevenson would have it; "*we fade out around 20mm".*

The dictionary was of no help with 'carbine': we came up with four distinct firearms types using the 'C' word and the curator of weapons at the Imperial War Museum gave evidence to the court that they only used the 'C' word where it was part of the original manufacturer's nomenclature.

The first 'carbines' in history had a tighter bore than their contemporaneous muskets. We also noted a shorter version of a rifle, as in the 'cavalry carbine': a shoulder-stocked firearm chambered for pistol ammunition and firearms those manufacturers *called* carbines, such as the .30"M1 Carbine, the Sterling Police Carbine etc.

Guy was a victim of the Forensic Science Service (FSS) attitude of 'it is what we say it is' and that followed

on from the Home Office taking over section 5 in 1973 and redefining section 5 without telling anyone. It gradually came out in court cases and all the 'decided' section 5 cases after 1973 were prosecutions of RFDs. The first that wasn't was in 2011. What was happening was that section 5 of the Firearms Act took control of a weapon based on its capability and back in 1973, the only section 5 firearms were full chat.

So if it wasn't *capable* of fully automatic fire, it was classed in section 1 as a firearm. That gave the Defence Council, which used to manage section 5 firearms dealers, considerable scope not to issue authorities *when they weren't necessary.* Such as when one dealer had the barrels and another had the actions.

The change wrought by the Home Office taking over section 5 in 1973 was that they regarded *parts* as section 5, although *parts* are capable of nothing. When assembled into something, the parts are then classified as parts of the whole and thus belong to whatever category the whole is (R. v. Hucklebridge, 1980)

Various cases ensued after 1973, since everyone in the trade had some military parts and looking back at the magazine adverts in the 1970s, quite a few were reworking military kit for the civilian market.

That was nothing new: early single shot breechloading rifles got re-barrelled (or bored out) as shotguns or deactivated as wall-hangers. In the 1970s, the trade were making military surplus kit available to shooters and collectors and that got up the paranoid Home Office nose, new as they were to being the governing body of a trade.

Robin Pannell was prosecuted for converting Bren guns to shotguns, while Hucklebridge was prosecuted for possessing two Lee Enfield smoothbores on a shot gun certificate. In 1986, Fred Clarke was prosecuted for possessing a submachine gun, on which the Forensic Scientist had to replace the missing trigger and borrow a magazine from the Imperial War Museum to make it work: only then was it 'capable' of firing at all.

When we first met the Home Office official (1985/6) responsible for firearms matters (and public order – he conflated the briefs even then) he said he didn't understand the guts of guns.

Interesting then that the FSS concentrated on the minutiae of what their ultimate boss didn't understand and wasn't trained on and every bit of legislation since then has been a technical attack on firearms by type, function, cosmetics – or owner.

Years ago, we received an extremely dodgy definition of a rifle from the Home Office viz. *'a firearm held in both hands and fired from the shoulder,'* [and let's not forget that since a shotgun fits that description, you could say the Home Office just took the rifling out of 'rifle'.] So, perhaps it is time to ask what their current definition of a pistol is? It

used to be: 'any firearm with a barrel less than 9 inches long', a la 1903 Pistols Act, but it might be fun to ask what it is now. If they maintain the old definition, that brings us back to why did they ban Uzi and Mac 10 pistols in 1988?

The Uzi came in two flavours, known by the manufacturer as a large frame and a small frame pistol. The small frame came with a folding wire stock and the large frame might be folding metal or a detachable wooden stock. Both were closed-bolt 9mm pistols.

The MAC10 fired from an open bolt, so mechanically it didn't meet the description of 'self-loading' in the 1988 Act. It could be argued on the Collins definition that it was a rifle, but in practice both were pistol-carbines. Section 21 of the 1988 Act said '*rifle includes carbine*' (without saying what it meant) but didn't mention pistols and that spawned a real witch-hunt by the FSS through firearm certificate holders as they looked for people to prosecute.

Among the first were Peter and Harry Pullenger, stopped on their way to their club and charged with possessing firearms and ammunition in a public place contrary to section 19 of the Firearms Act 1968. The arresting officer had been to their home earlier in the week on an FAC security inspection and enquired when they'd be going shooting again. Then he lay in wait. A few weeks later, he re-wrote his statement to claim not just that they had firearms and ammunition in the car but that some firearms were loaded.

It makes no difference to the Act. For a section 19 conviction the suspect must either be sans lawful authority or lacking a reasonable excuse. 'Lawful authority' refers to what he is doing at the time, and at the time they were driving to their club for its monthly meeting. Harry had an Uzi pistol-carbine and this took place after the 1988 firearms bill had been announced but before it took effect. It meant that they didn't get to use those firearms caught by the bill again. And there's no compensation following acquittal in the UK.

John Douglas, a disabled London bus driver, was prosecuted for possessing two of his pistols. With his disability he needed the shoulder stock to support the pistol, to which end his dealer had fitted shoulder stocks to his Wilkinson Lynda pistol and his Auto-Ordnance M1927A1 Thompson pistol.

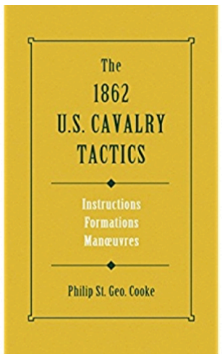
The supplier was Dolphin Arms, who'd also produced a shot pistol – a 12-bore Mossberg with a 12-inch barrel, a pistol grip, a forend pistol grip and no shoulder stock at all. Naturally, they threw a net over him too. Guy Savage had imported Australian Arms pistols from Tasmania. These were rifle-calibre clones of the Sterling Ar18 rifle. The manufacturer made a rifle, a carbine and a pistol on that chassis: The rifle had a long barrel, the carbine had a shorter barrel and the pistol had the short barrel and no shoulder stock.

Guy imported the pistol and that was the centrepiece of his prosecution.

His case didn't get us a definition of a pistol and given the powers that be have a preference for prosecuting people who are trying to comply with the legislation over those who keep under the radar, now is a good time to ask. **Ω**

BOOK REVIEW

The 1862 US Cavalry tactics: Instructions, formations and manoeuvres by Philip St George Cooke.



Published as an eBook by Stackpole Military Classics

This is a fascinating training manual, derived from the best practices of European cavalry and published during the American Civil War for federal cavalry training purposes. It covers:

- School of the trooper, platoon and squadron.
- Evolutions of the regiment and the line
- Over 200 manoeuvres with 46 illustrations
- All commands
- Manuals of arms for sword and pistol
- Definitions of cavalry terms
- Special section for cavalry at the frontier
- Musical scores for all 38 cavalry bugle calls.

Nearly all of the 600-odd orders are about getting units of cavalry into formations of varying size - and then how to manoeuvre them together. It's not said, but the deployment of cavalry is really limited to ground where there's enough space - and light: all that dressage wouldn't work in a forest or in the dark.

As a manual, it's telling officers how to train up the troops - and their horses: the latter can't read. There is very little about engaging the enemy tied in with all this training. A brief mention of native Americans using lances and how to parry their thrust with the sabre and advice that irregular forces tend to lie down to avoid sabre-thrusts is about it.

There's a practice with pistols paragraph, which includes firing over the horse's head (2 shots), then 2 to the sides and rear: that's about getting the body language for firing in those directions, but doesn't mention what the horse might think of it: or do about it. Oh, and if there's a pistol on the saddle, use that first.

Paragraph 498 advises that cavalry should never surrender and should be able to cut their way out of any encirclement. Custer would doubtless have been very familiar with this manual and while cavalry mobility saw him through the civil war, it didn't help him much in the Indian wars.

Cavalry service in the west rates a mention. Since the plains were vast, special care has to be taken to maintain the horses by choosing camping grounds where they have grass. If it's necessary to camp without a water source, horses should be watered within an hour of the halt and provision made for the men via canteens and kegs.

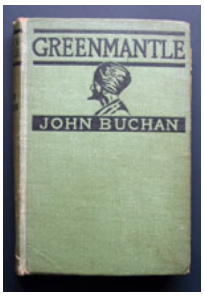
At watering stops on the march, officers superintend watering horses. The first stages of the march are training for the horses – fifteen miles a day, rising to twenty-five. The difficulties of escorting wagons are alluded to, but no specific formations are prescribed. Custer's book (reviewed in Journal 62) includes a diagram of his wagon train in two columns; his cavalry mounts between the columns and his dismounted troopers in columns outside the lines of wagons.

Readers are reminded that the cavalry arm is both costly and delicate. Cavalry defend themselves by attacking and are weak in defence, as Custer found out at the Little Big Horn. He also pushed his men much harder than twenty-five miles a day when not encumbered by wagons, causing a mass desertion.

Later paragraphs prescribe how formations are amalgamated: two regiments instead of one and then two brigades, each of two regiments. This formation would take up a lot of real estate and the management of these ever-larger formations is about conveying clear and precise orders so that everyone knows what is expected of them.

There's very little in the book about the sabre and pistol and nothing about shoulder arms. That may be covered separately somewhere, but not in this work or other Stackpole Classics we looked through. We'll keep looking. Ω

GREENMANTLE by John Buchan



First published in 1916, this is Richard Hannay's second adventure: his first being 'the 39 steps' in which he outed a spy network shortly before the outbreak of the Great War.

Greenmantle opens with Mr Hannay receiving a summons to the Foreign Office while recovering from shrapnel wounds sustained in the Battle of Loos. It's written, as is the 39 steps, as a first-person narrative;

Buchan is very topical and must have been writing quickly to get published so fast. Loos was 25 September to 8 October 1915; the first British offensive of the Great War in which Rudyard Kiplings' son Jack was but one of many casualties.

After a spell in hospital, Hannay returns to London where he gets summonsed to the Foreign Office by Sir Walter Bullivant, who has a brief note from his late son: he believes the note alludes to Germany stirring tensions in the Middle East;

"*there's a skunk been let loose in the world, and the odour of it is going to make life none too sweet till it is*

cleared away. It wasn't us that stirred up that skunk, but we've got to take a hand in disinfecting the planet."

The worry is that of stirring up Islam to support Germany against British interests. In 1916, British and Empire forces were in action against the Ottoman Empire on the Gallipoli peninsular and in Arabia. Germany had interests (German East Africa) south of British Egypt and that region had been a hotbed of rebellion less than twenty years before. As Bullivant puts it; *"Your Mahdis and Mullahs and Imams were nobodies, but they had only a local prestige. To capture all Islam—and I gather that is what we fear—the man must be of the Koreish, the tribe of the Prophet himself.'*

Hannay teams up, loosely speaking, with others and the plan is to go their separate ways to Constantinople gathering what intelligence they can.

The story rattles along nicely – that's Buchan's style – across Europe and to the climax battle in Turkey. It's hard to tell at this distance, but if one were reading it when first published, it would seem to straddle recent events to the now and on to a climax which would occur the after publication.

This passage intrigued us: *'In Germany only the Jew can get outside himself, and that is why, if you look into the matter, you will find that the Jew is at the back of most German enterprises.'*

Hmm. Written in 1916 and it's not anti-Semitic: rather an indication of the advantage to Germany of having a Jewish population.

Throughout the novel Buchan maintains an even-handed respect for Hannay's various adversaries and only strays into stereotyping occasionally. And when he does, it's giving us a snapshot of his thinking of a century ago. Scottish-born John Buchan (1875-1940) was a president of the Oxford Union in the 1890s, served as private secretary to the High Commissioner for South Africa (and wrote Prester John) in the 1900s.

By 1911 he was back in the UK where he was prospective parliamentary candidate for Selkirk & Peebles. In 1914-15, he wrote for the War Propaganda Bureau and was in France reporting for the London Times. He knocked off 'The 39 Steps' and 'Greenmantle' before going to the Western Front to a field commission as 2nd Lt in the Intelligence Corps. That may have been an honorary commission, as he didn't qualify for the Great War medals and went back to writing straight after.

He was the Conservative MP for the combined Scottish Universities 1927-35 and was elevated to the peerage as Lord Tweedsmuir for his appointment as Governor-General of Canada in 1935.

His untimely death aged 64 in 1940 was the result of head injuries sustained when he collapsed of a stroke. And his legacy is a lot of good reading. **Ω**