

Chapter 13

THING ON A SLING

Properly Installed Swivels Can Mean The Difference Between A Good Hunt And A Dreary Hike!

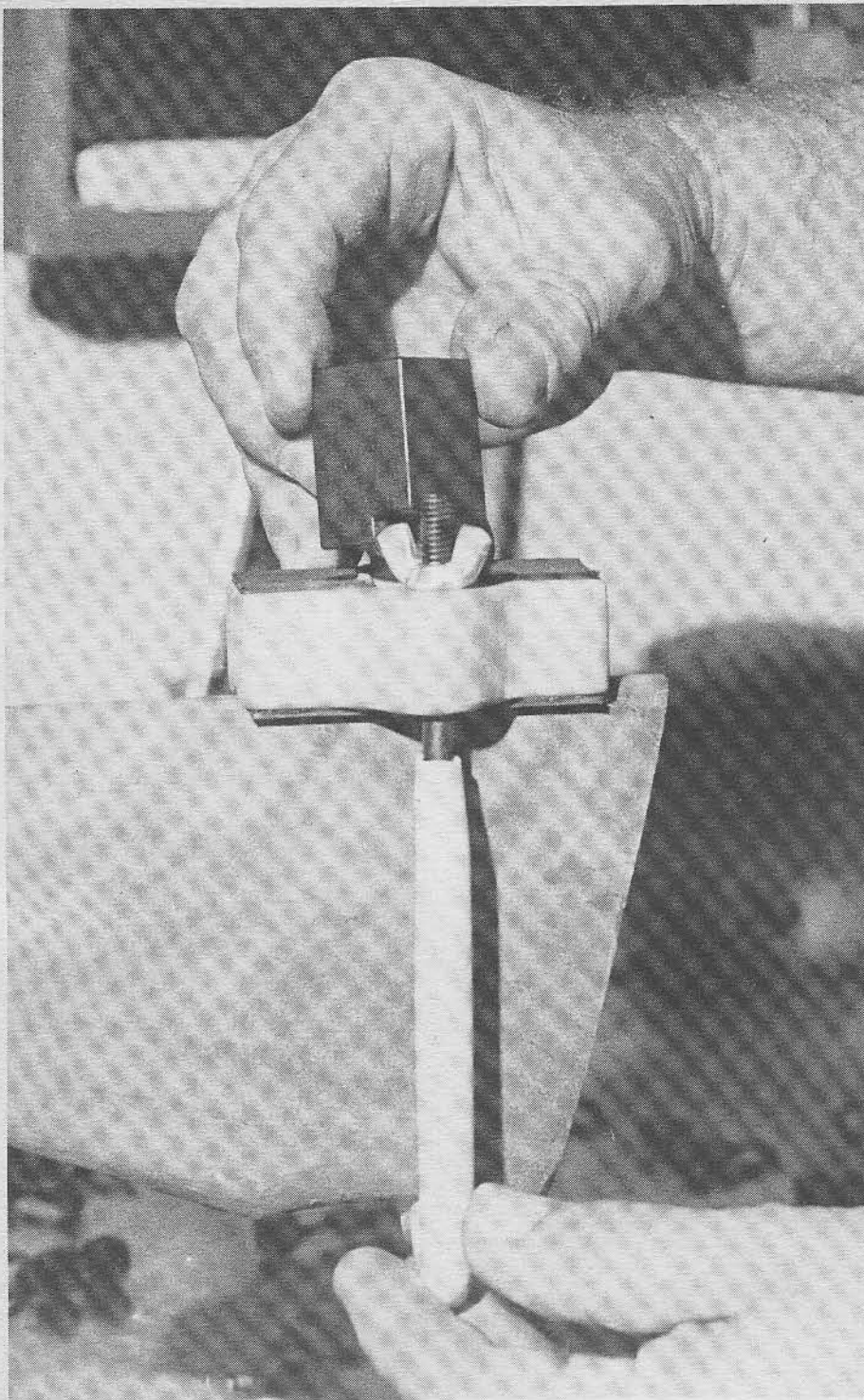
Left: Anything from a length of rope to a torn strip of cloth from an old shirt can be used to carry a hunting arm, but for comfort and pride of ownership, an easily installed sling and swivels can make a difference. (Below) Pachmayr Economy swivel fixture is installed on the butt near the toe of the stock. When it is positioned correctly, the hole to accept swivel can be bored.



ONE CAN spend hours poring over literature concerning almost every phase of what might constitute a well built sporting rifle. However, in my years of gunsmithing, particularly in the field of rifles, I have yet to read one comprehensive narrative on perhaps the most important items that can — and should — be installed on any hunting rifle or shotgun. This seemingly insignificant component is the simple sling swivel!

In most writings concerning rifle descriptions, the sling swivels are sluffed off with mere mention. As a rule, no information is given as to type, size or method of installation, whether it is a detachable European type, push-button detachable, a sweat-on type or one of the sets installed with two screws.

There are numerous types, designs, shapes and sizes of sling swivels available. Some are excellent, while others would be a disgrace to install on even a fairly good rifle or shotgun. Good-to-excellent sling swivels can be purchased today for only a few bucks a pair for the permanent installa-



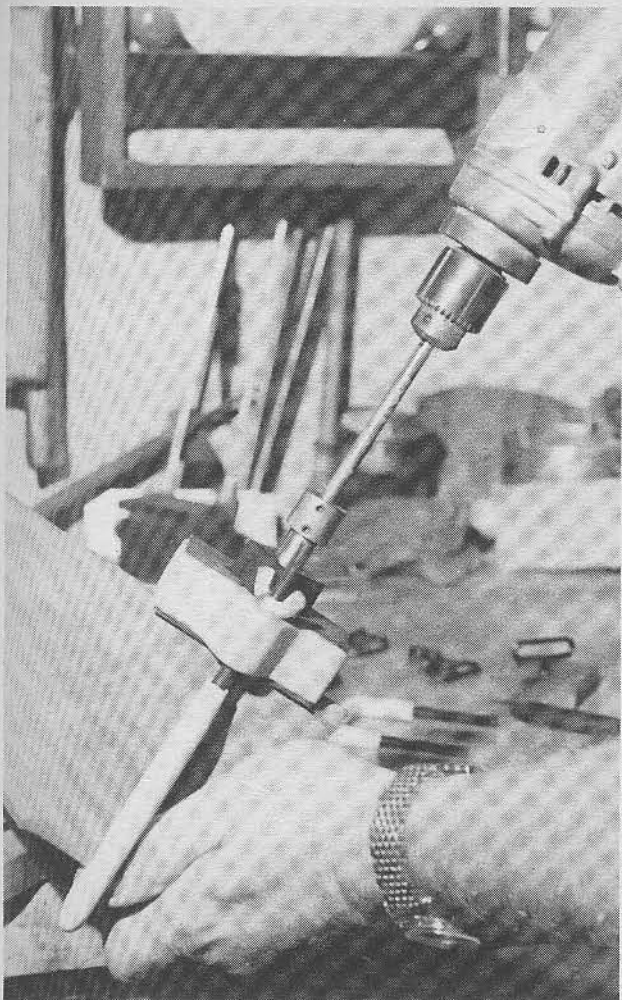
Author determines how the cutter bushing should be inserted in the fixture, taking care that contoured side of fixture is against stock.

tion type. For a few dollars more, one can have a pair of Uncle Mike's Super Swivels. The bases for these Super Swivels vary according to the type of rifle or shotgun they are to grace. The basic reasoning in selecting a set of sling swivels depends upon how dearly you value your pet hunting rifle or shotgun. Personally, I want only the best for my pets.

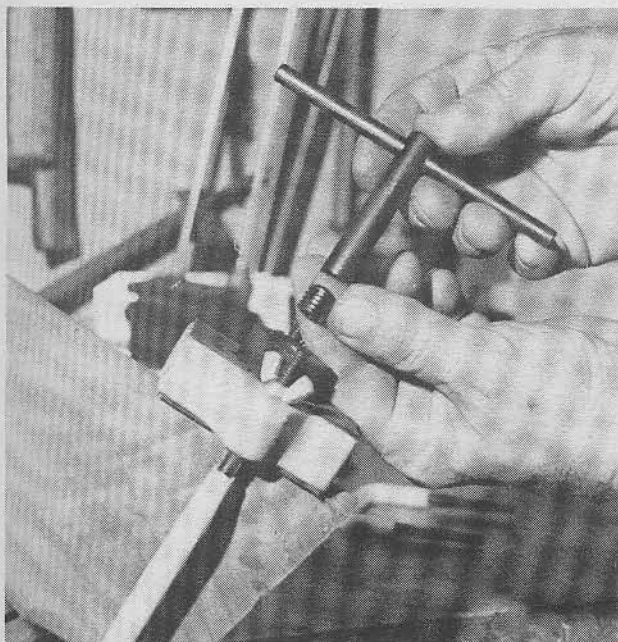
Detachable swivels are available in several distinctly different styles, which include the push-button, the cross-bar type and the European style. An innovation in sling

swivel types has been recently introduced with the Pachmayr flush sling swivel.

This is the first major innovation in swivels in many years. It is entirely self-contained and requires no push buttons, springs or hard-to-get-at levers for dismounting from the gun's stock. This swivel, once installed, can be attached or detached from its base by a mere twist of the wrist. Yet it is fool-proof and will not detach itself from the bases under field use. The basic feature of the Pachmayr flush swivel is what the name implies. With the swivel



The cutter is chucked into a drill motor, then inserted in guide hole of bushing and the hole to accept swivel base drill. Cutter is factory set for the proper depth. (Below) Remove bushing, reverse ends so the notched ends are outward in fixture. Insert swivel receptacle into hole in stock about three full turns, using T wrench.

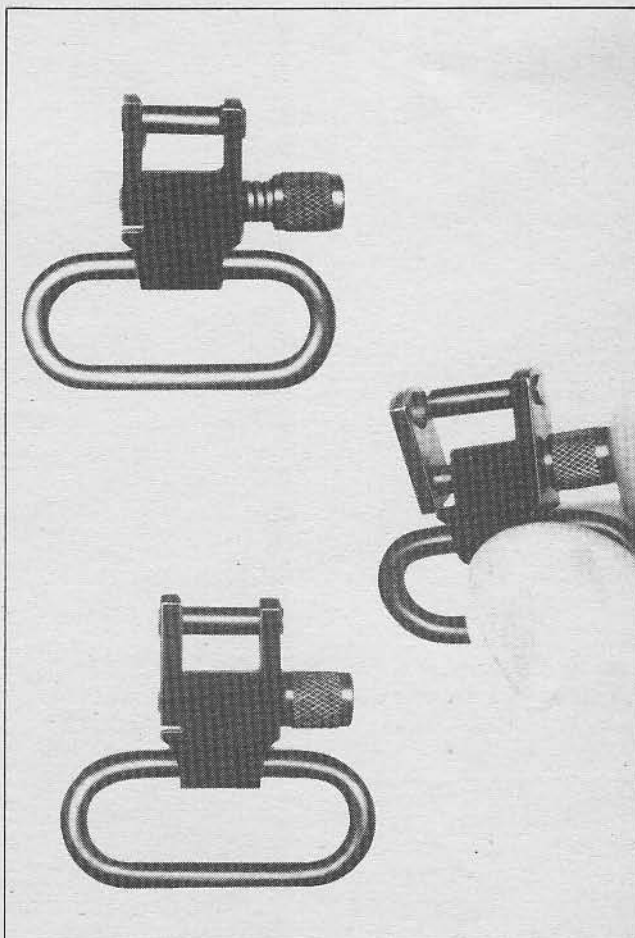


removed, the base sits flush with the surface of the stock, offering no projections or steel lugs that can often prove exasperating for obvious reasons.

For the gunsmith with a number of swivels to be installed, Pachmayr has designed a fool-proof installation drill fixture, which clamps to the stock or forend, providing a perfect guide set-up for drilling the holes to take the swivel receptacle. This drill fixture is complete with everything needed, including the cutter for the swivel sets found in the Pachmayr lineup. These swivels are available for most sporting rifles, including those with a barrel band, such as the '94 Winchester and various pump-action and semi-auto rifles.

One of the most popular sling swivels for many years has been the so-called European detachable type. These swivels are installed easily, have proved themselves reliable in the field and are plenty rugged. Swivels of this type are available from gunsmith supply houses such as Brownell's,

At top of photo, Michaels Super Swivel has the knurled sleeve unscrewed. (Center) Depressing the plunger will open the swivel gate. (Bottom) Swivel is locked shut.



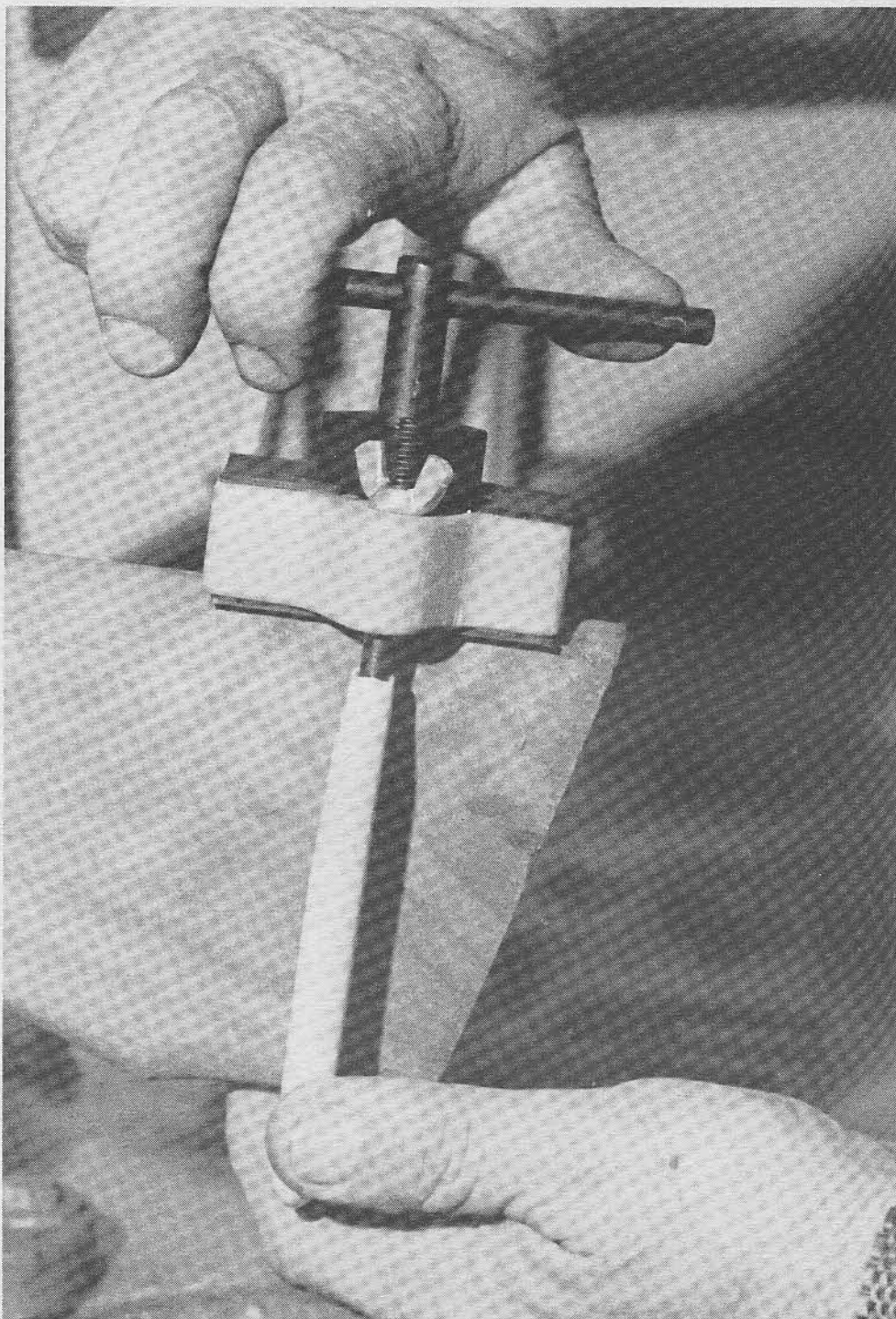
Michaels of Oregon or Williams. Various models of these swivels are adaptable to most American and European rifles and shotguns. Some marketed exclusively by Michaels of Oregon are designed to fit a wide assortment of replica muzzleloading rifles.

At the time of this writing, Michaels of Oregon has unveiled a new revolutionary design. Known as the Super Swivel, this new product has all the features of the finest

European-type swivel, but includes an all-new feature in that the swivel can be locked in place by a threaded mechanism within the swivel itself. This feature eliminates the possibility of the swivel being accidentally opened, thus providing extra security under rugged conditions.

Other detachable sling swivels — which I have used in the past — are those produced under the trade name of Uncle Mike's or McKinzie Michaels. These swivels oper-

After boring hole to accept receptacle, cutter is removed. The sling swivel base — or receptacle — is screwed into place in the stock with care. Special wrench is furnished with Pachmayr kit for this.



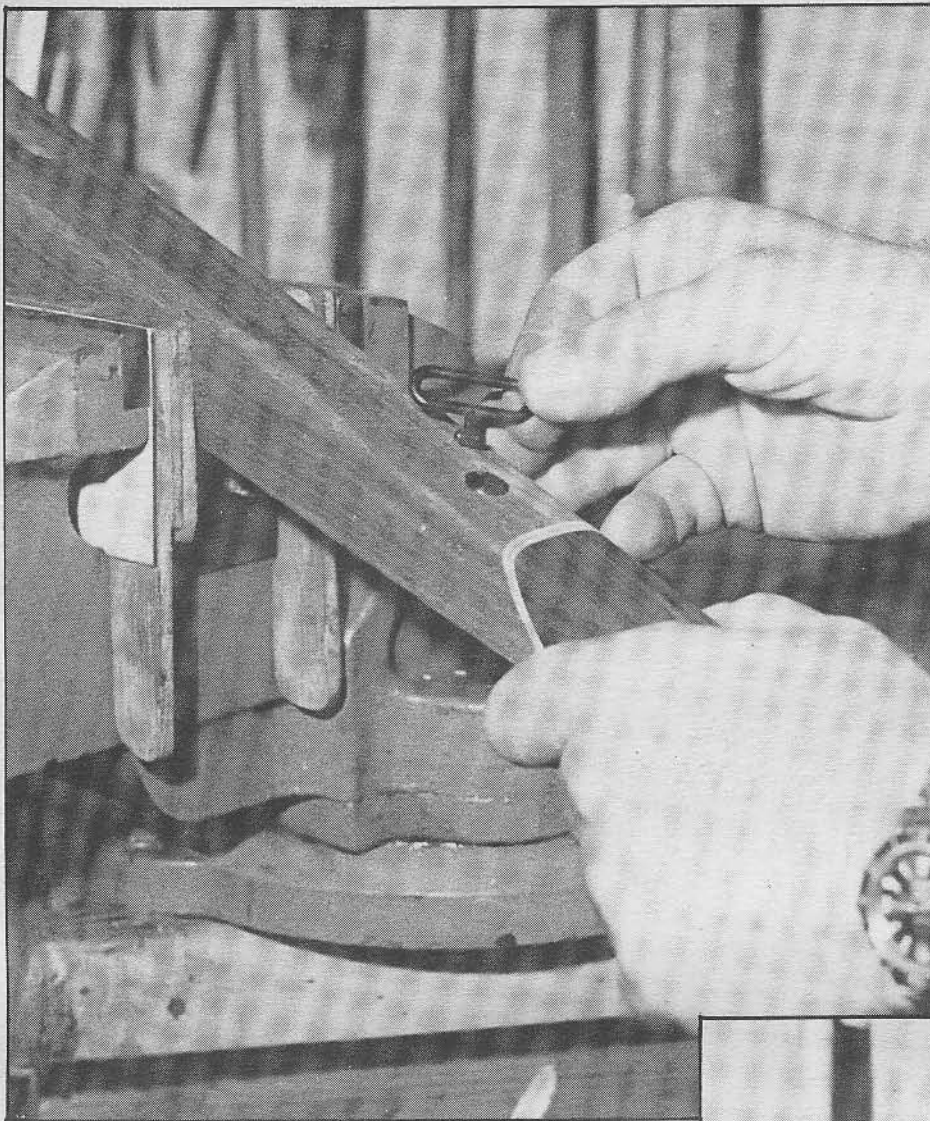
ate on a ball bearing principle, the bases installed absolutely flush with the stock's surface. This eliminates that protruding stud. The Michaels' swivel is detached from its base by pressing the circular button located in the center of the swivel base proper. This allows the steel ball bearing to retract, freeing the swivel from the base. On the order of the Pachmayr flush sling swivel in appearance, installation of the ball bearing mount differs slightly in that a screw holds

the base in place in the stock. The bases of the Pachmayr versions are equipped with their own threads, eliminating screws.

The Philips detachable swivels are good, rugged items. While the mode of detaching is not as refined as for some more expensive models, it is a simple operation to turn the threaded shank of the swivel proper a few turns to free it from its base. However, with this type of swivel it would be



With previous steps completed, the swivel then is inserted, turned to the lock position.



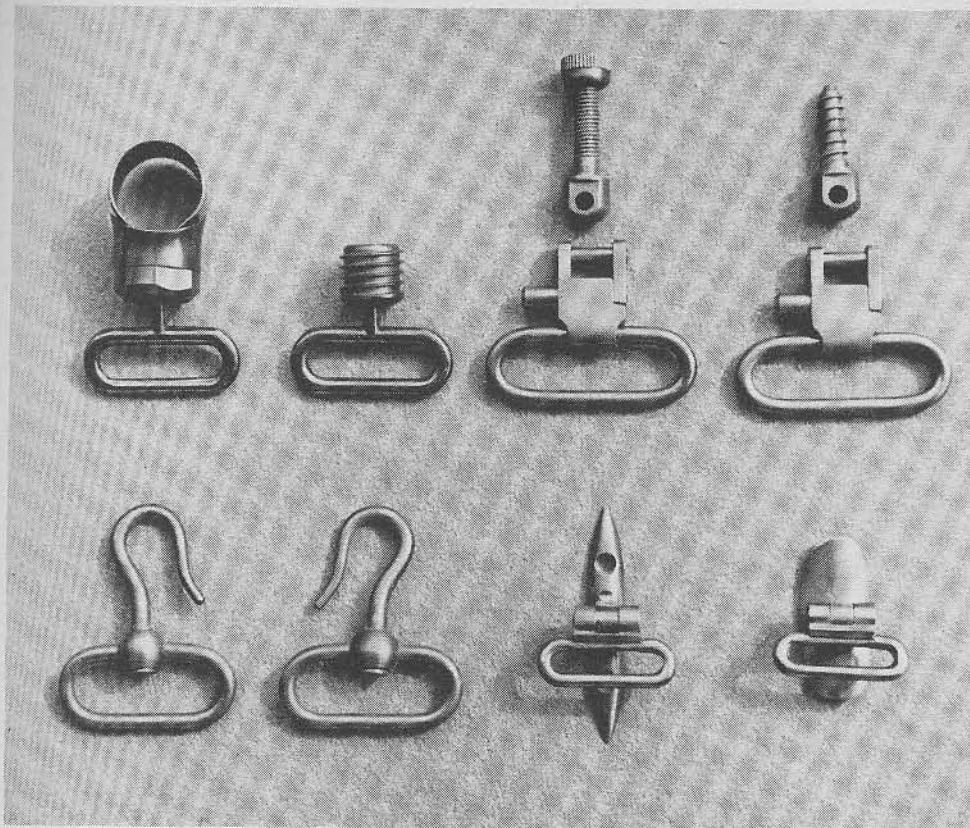
Completed installation of flush swivel and receptacle presents a neat appearance, yet is rugged. (Below) Forend swivel should be installed in same basic manner, but the smaller U-bolt should be used during the initial drilling.

well to have handy a small screwdriver, or even a ten-cent piece to fit the slot cut into the swivel screw.

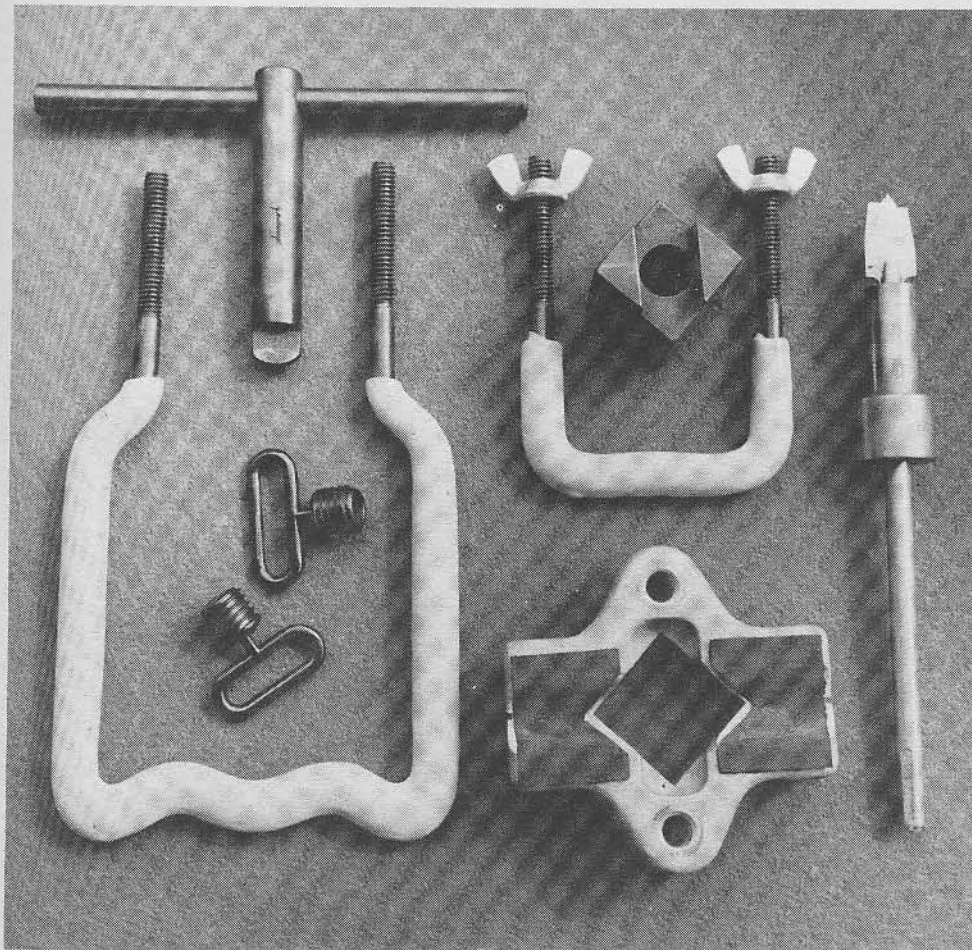
A great number of gun owners have the misconception that sling swivels are available only for those rifles having a solid forend, such as Mauser and Springfield sporters and the various sporting models by Winchester, Remington and infinitum. Sling swivels by all of the makers mentioned are available for such rifles as the various lever actions by both Marlin and Winchester having tubular magazines, the Model 740 Remington, with barrel stabilizer; the 760 Remington; 742 Remington; the Models 64 and 95 Winchester; Models 36, 36-A, 336 and 336-A Marlin with either long or short magazine; most popular shotguns such as the Ithaca Model 37 and 37-DS; Remington nylon models, 725, 1100; and others. The Savage Model 24 over/under and the Winchester Series of 200 and Model 100 may be fitted with swivels especially designed.

Proper installation of a swivel on a sporting rifle can

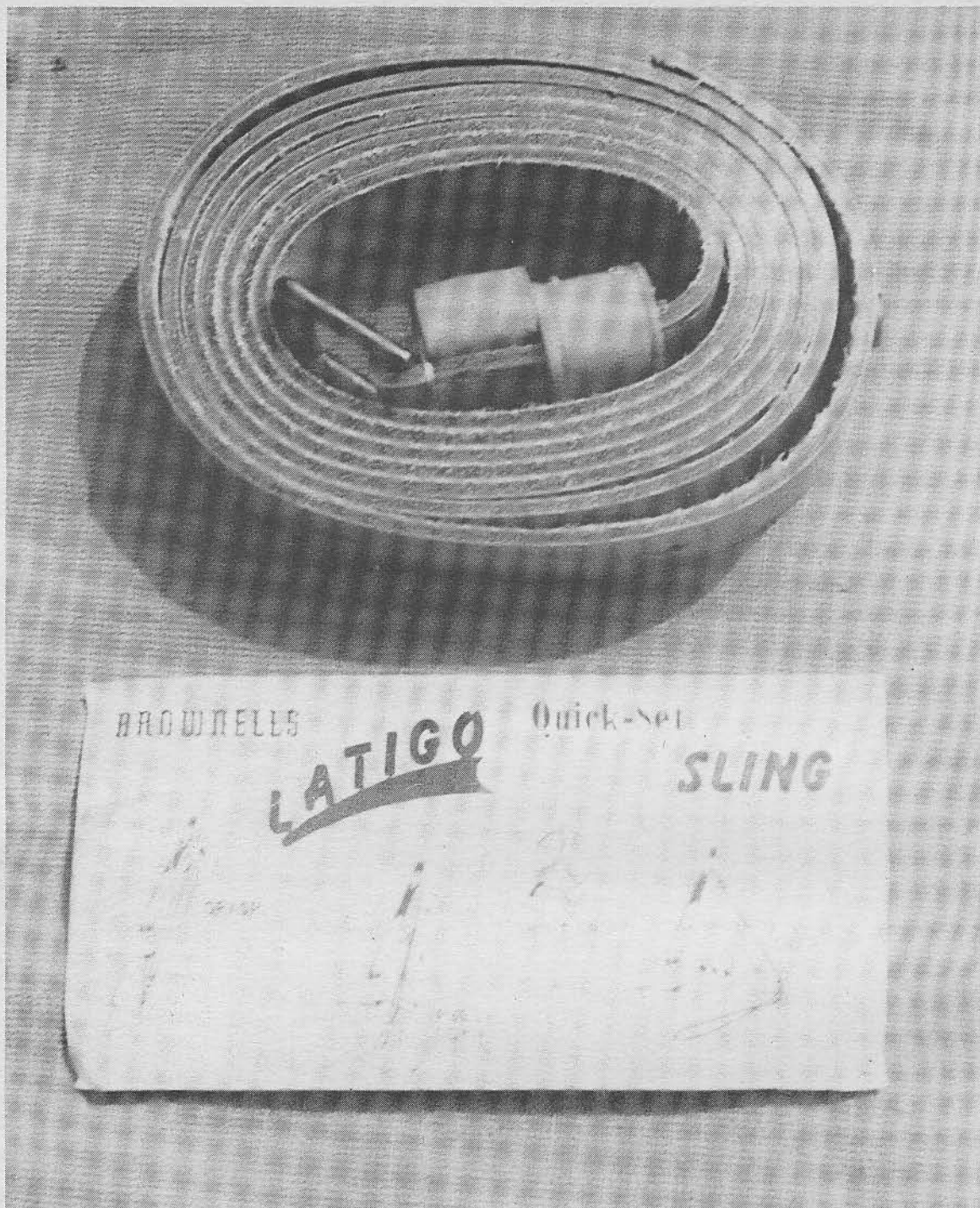




Of the many types of sling swivels available, this is a popular representation. (Top, from left) Pachmayr flush system for tubular magazine rifles; European detachable types. Beneath: Hook-type detachable type once made by Savage Arms and detachable European versions made for use on shotguns, double rifles.



Pachmayr installation kit includes all components to install both butt, forend swivels. Six components include butt and forend U-bolts, drill, a drill bushing, drill guide and T wrench. This unit can be valuable if working with several different types of modern swivels.

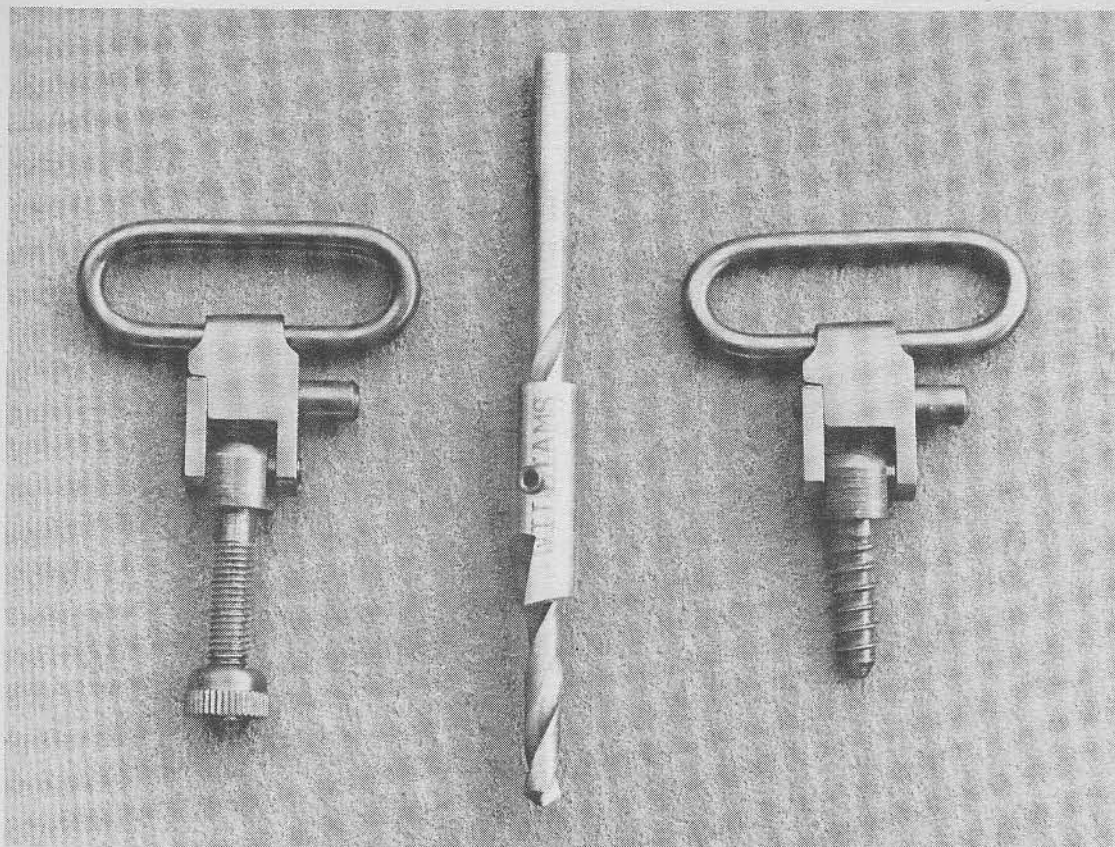


Author contends that good swivels deserve a good sling. This Latigo Quick-Set sling is from Brownell's. This is a good, rugged sling that should afford user years of hard service.

make the difference in whether that rifle is carried with ease or merely lugged around by a leather strap. To place the swivel too near the toe of the stock could weaken this portion of the stock. Installing it too far up the stock could result in poor carrying qualities and possible interference with the operation of the rifle's action. Placement for the butt swivel usually is $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches up from the extreme toe of

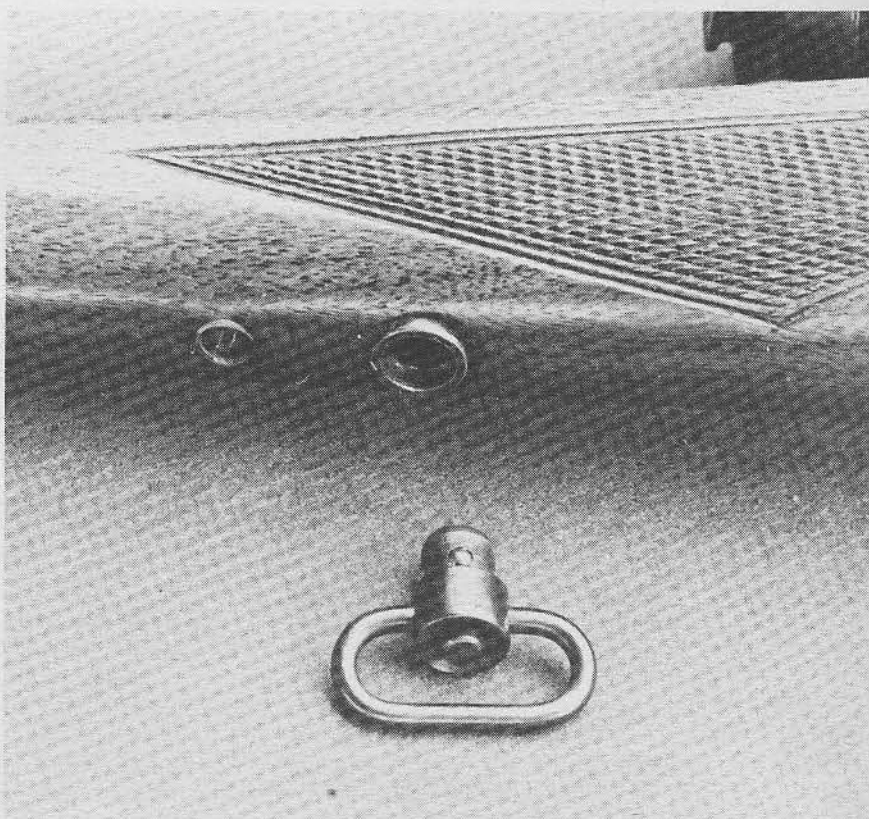
the stock or recoil pad. Exact center of the curvature is determined and marked with a sharp scribe. The drilling is done here to accept the swivel screw or, in the case of the Pachmayr flush sling swivel, the swivel receptacle.

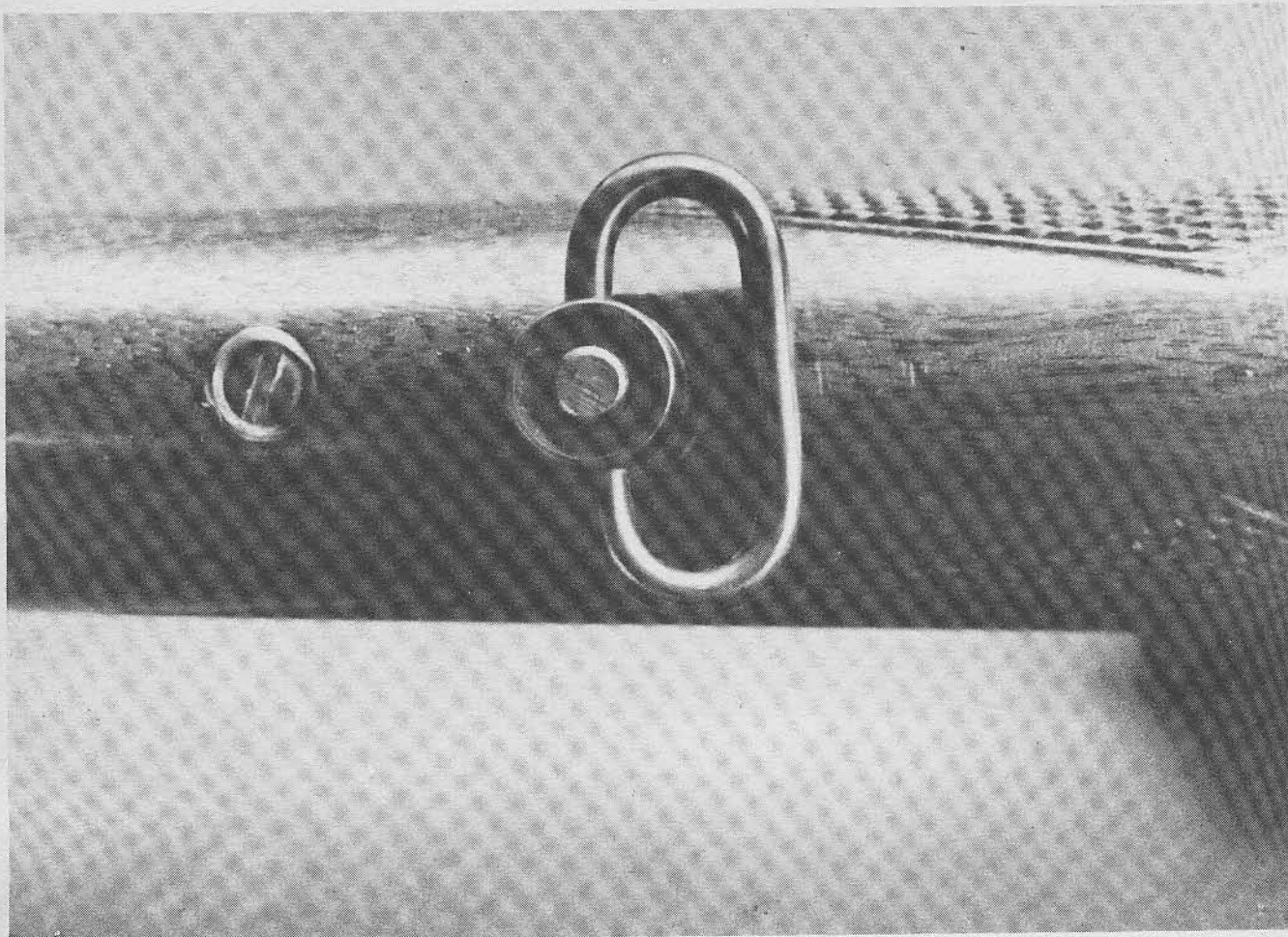
Using a steel drill of the correct size, a hole is drilled to accept the full length of the swivel screw. This hole then is counter-bored to a depth of about one-quarter-inch to



Installation of European-type detachable swivels is a minor chore with the right equipment. Step-drill shown is used to install forend swivels, as explained here. The swivels on this page are from Michaels of Oregon.

McKinzie quick-detachable swivels are equipped with ball bearings and are both neat looking and rugged; a push-button facilitates removal. Proper installation, though, needs careful workmanship. This one has been mounted on Savage 99 forend.





To activate the McKinzie swivel, it is necessary only to push the round button located at swivel's center, then pull out the base. These swivels are available from both Michaels of Oregon or Brownell's, Montezuma, Iowa.

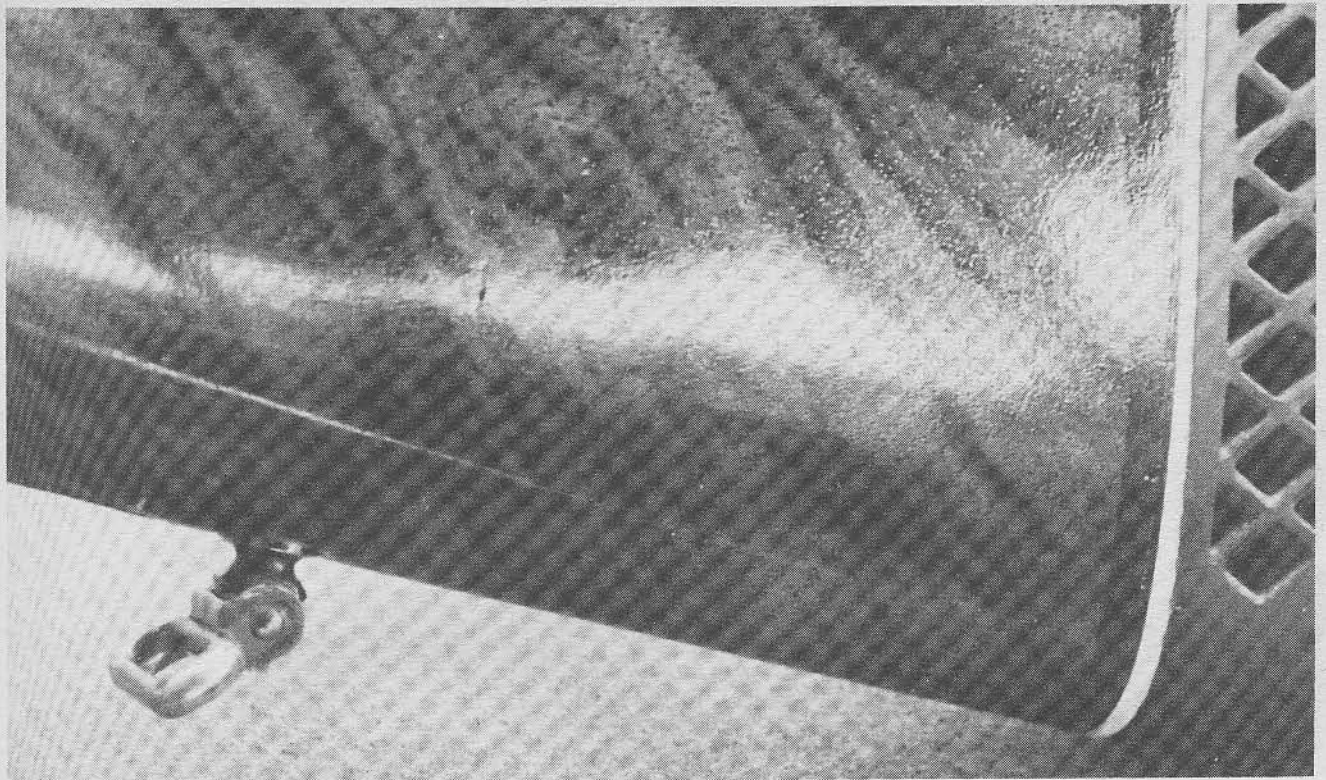
accept the full, unthreaded size of the screw's shank; therefore the drill used in counter-boring must be the same size as the screw shank to prevent chipping of the wood around the hole, when the swivel screw is tightened in place. Initial boring of the swivel screw hole should be sufficient to accept the threaded section of the screw in a tight fit, assuring that the screw will not pull out under strain.

Correct placement of the forend swivel on a conventional half-stock or Mannlicher-type sporting rifle will vary with barrel length, stock design and other factors. However, about eight to nine inches forward of the front edge of the receiver ring should prove to be about right for most rifles. This will place the balance of the rifle at the right position for carrying ease once a leather sling is installed. Installation of the front swivel is basically the same as that of the butt swivel insofar as drilling is concerned. However, in most cases it is necessary to counter-

bore the barrel channel of the stock to accept a lug nut which will hold the swivel in place. Counter-bores for this purpose are available from Williams Gun Sight Company.

Most sling swivels are available in two sizes, 1- and 1¼-inch to accept the two standard widths of sling straps. With such sling straps as the Cobra manufactured by Bianchi, I have found that the smaller swivels are about ideal. The strap tapers from one inch at the top into a comfortable width just right to fit the shoulder correctly; then it gradually tapers to the butt swivel. This type of sling strap is most comfortable and, when securely attached to a good pair of sling swivels, it can make the carrying of an otherwise heavy hunting rifle almost a pleasure.

The lowly sling swivel is one of the most important features of any good rifle. Without them, even a good hunt could be a dreary affair indeed!



The European non-detachable swivels are found on many rifles, shotguns and double rifles. Most are made to take a three-quarter-inch strap. (Below) Barrel swivels are available through importers to fit most shotguns and double rifles. Some of these are installed by means of screws, while others are sweat soldered in position.

