



## Winchester Quality

Contributed by THCKK member, Tim Melcher.  
From the *Winchester Products Booklet No. 2766*,  
Notes from talks delivered to salesmen, July 1923, by H.G. Knox

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Great men are born and not made. So are great products. We all believe in heredity. Some persons attribute to it the responsibility for most of the traits that shape our human destinies. is it not only reasonable to suppose, but has been proved many times that certain products of quality can be produced only by the artisans to whom form previous generations the art has been passed on. )

Our country is yet young, but even America has institutions of this kind. Founded in 1867 WINCHESTER has established such a character. Sons and grandsons of the original New England organization still put their hearts into their daily work and their spirit and honesty have been transmitted to the newer members of the growing family. )

We've mentioned heredity and its influence. There is another school of thought which believes that environment-the surroundings in which we live-is the circumstance which molds our character. Suppose we admit that this is true, and again take a look at WINCHESTER. I wish you could take an actual look at the factory now as I hope you will later on. After that visit, I can guarantee you'll be selling WINCHESTER environment. It is made up principally of two kinds-people and Plant. Stand and watch some of the eight thousand men and women at the noon hour. See if they're not the right kind of people with the smile that is necessary to make quality products. If you

take a two day trip through the factory (you can't cover eighty acres in less time) you'll find buildings and machines suitable for the high type people who use them. The point is that while an unworthy WINCHESTER product may occasionally get through, everything that humanly can be done is done to prevent it. The employees themselves don't want their products to be that kind. )

It takes time to change over an organization. Take our own factory, for example. There is no essential difference between a WINCHESTER plier-side and many gun components. Yet, with all the WINCHESTER talent and experience, it took nearly a year to perfect a slip joint plier of WINCHESTER quality. It seems unbelievable, but it is so. The same is true of the pipe wrench. It is forged from steel of a grade we know well. It is machined just as many gun parts are, it is ground, polished and finished in no new way. In spite of this knowledge, it takes months to get the new line right. I'm telling you this so you can better appreciate some of the time and trials involved in getting out new lines when the quality standard has to be kept up to the world known mark set by the WINCHESTER Gun and Cartridge)

When you go to the factory this winter, don't fail to take in what they tell you about inspection. The Superintendent of Inspection is one of the Factory Managers most important assistants. No material can be ordered for a product until the engineers and laboratory have specified its characteristics. The Receiving Department can't release a pound for use until it has been tested and checked. No piece of material can be moved from one set of operations to another without an inspector's O.K. The best men we've got are saved to the last-the final inspection. Every pair of scissors must cut the lightest of fabrics-a skilled thumb passes along every cutting edge. To a trained ear every reel must run like a watch, every rod to an expert fisherman must demonstrate its feel, every single flashlight cell must give the current and voltage it is built for or else go back as scrap. )

As a hardware Salesman, you've probably never spent much time considering a little thing we use at WINCHESTER every day, and then subdivide it still smaller. That "thing", if I may so call it, is the thousandth part of an inch. Some day when you push two sections of a WINCHESTER fishing rod together notice the fact that it requires a smooth increasing pressure from start to finish. That's because the ferrules fit not "pretty good" but to one-thousandth of an inch. )

The old timers made scissors blades in pairs by hand-a right and a left stayed together from start to finish. Take one hundred WINCHESTER left blades and one hundred right blades and assemble them into one hundred pairs of perfect scissors. Why can you? Because each blade is like every other blade, not approximately alike, but alike to one-thousandth of part of an inch. In

many gun and cartridge parts that thousandth part of an inch must be subdivided into ten parts, and many WINCHESTER products must be correct, not to a thousandth, but even to a ten-thousandth part of an inch. )

In the following paragraphs are a few of the points you should know about your products. ( Mr. Knox goes on in the booklet to give fascinating and detailed descriptions regarding WINCHESTER quality points in their guns, ammunition, tools: auger bits, cold chisels and punches, wood chisels, hammers, screwdrivers, pliers, pipe wrenches, hatchets , axes, open end wrenches, saws, planes, ,scissors, cutlery, carving sets, pocket knives, ice skates, roller skates, stainless steel, flashlights, flashlight and radio batteries, fishing reels, rods, bait and lines, athletic goods, paint and finally The Winchester Plan. We will include these in upcoming issues. Rjs)

For Further Reading: "Winchester---The Way It Really Was", by P. Muerrle, Featuring rare and unusual photos, employee interviews. In-depth look at Winchester itself through detailed descriptions of its many departments and their functions, from engravers to engineers, from rifles to roller skates. Available from for \$25.00 plus \$4.00 postage from:

Winchester Arms Collectors Association

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 30047 • Lumberton, TX 77657-0047

Shipping Address: 1029 South Main Street • Lumberton, TX 77657

Phone: (409) 755-4488 • Fax: (409) 755-2704

An Interesting Link

[www.thewinchesterstore.com](http://www.thewinchesterstore.com)

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• THCKK is a not-for-profit organization formed in March of 1996. It serves to distribute information and provide an interactive forum about vintage hardware companies such as E.C. Simmons, (Keen Kutter), A.F. Shapleigh (Diamond Edge)and The Winchester Store (and the popular collectibles bearing their logos and associated house brands)as well as other historically interesting hardware companies such as "Our Very Best" (Hibbard, Spencer & Bartlett), Blue Grass (Belknap Hardware), Stanley, etc. are included as interest dictates (Witte, Wyeth, Lee, Sargent, etc)

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