



THE JOHNSON MODEL 1941 SEMI-AUTOMATIC RIFLE

was designed by Melvin M. Johnson, a graduate of Harvard University and Harvard Law School, and an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps. Chambered for the standard .30-'06 cartridge and featuring a strong action and eight-lug locking bolt, these rifles competed in four different U.S. military trials, but failed to ever gain acceptance by American armed services.

After U.S. entry into WW II, the short supply of M1 Garands, as well as Johnson's easily removable barrel, made it attractive to the Marine Corps. The Marines subsequently adopted the Johnson rifle for issue to Marine Raiders and to newly-formed "Para-Marine" troops. These rifles saw action in the Solomons campaign of 1942, but as sufficient Garands became available to Marine units, the Johnsons were withdrawn from combat use.

Of the several features that make the Johnson rifle readily identifiable, the most notable is the 10-round rotary "fish belly" magazine that, unlike the M1 Garand, could be topped off at any time with the bolt closed, either singly or from conventional M1903 five-round stripper clips. To meet military requirements for reliable performance with a fixed bayonet, Johnson designed a lightweight 8-inch triangular model, nicknamed the "tent peg" by Marines, which did not interfere with the rifle's recoil operation. ☐