




★ **WHELEN** FOR  
**WILLIAM**  
★ **HOLDEN**

**W**hen noted actor and hunter William Holden died in 1981, one special project rifle remained partially completed at a master gunsmith's shop. This .35 Whelen, built on a classic Mauser action, would remain unfinished for six more years, when it was sold to an American television network executive. The new owner immediately located the finest craftsmen who could complete the rifle as it was originally intended and also honor Colonel Townsend Whelen, creator of the .35 Whelen cartridge.

The lengthy process of completion, following the traditional lines of fine sporting rifles crafted by Griffin & Howe, was to take an additional 3 1/2 years, during which time the metalwork was polished and reblued four times to reach the desired final finish. Cased and equipped with accessories, the bolt-action masterpiece was finally delivered.

After viewing the Robert E. Petersen Gallery at the National Firearms Museum in 2011, owner Sheldon Gilbert elected to donate this rifle and other firearms to the museum collection to recognize NRA as the organization whose magazine, *American Rifleman*, debuted the .35 Whelen concept and in memory of conservation-minded hunters like William Holden and Robert E. Petersen, who provided inspiration for this magnificent safari rifle. 

*The National Firearms Museum at NRA Headquarters in Fairfax, Va., is open seven days a week (closed selected holidays), and its galleries are filled with thousands of arms that captivate the imagination as visitors travel through centuries of guns and history. Admission is free (donations are appreciated), and you can find out more by calling the staff at (703) 267-1600, checking out our website at [www.nramuseum.com](http://www.nramuseum.com) or e-mailing [nfmstaff@nrahq.org](mailto:nfmstaff@nrahq.org).*