



## J. Purdey & Sons Pair of 12g Hammerless Ejectors Guns

Serial Number 22219 22220

**\$85000.00**

### DESCRIPTION

Pair of J. Purdey & Sons 12g Hammerless Ejector Guns completed in 1922.

Based on Frederick Beesley's patented self-opening sidelock action that Purdey's made famous. Both actions fitted with disk set strikers, Purdey's hidden third fasteners, auto-safes, raised rib cocking indicators, and spring-loaded front triggers.

Sometimes referred to as "funeral" guns or "black widows," the varied reasons behind these names are more likely myth than reality, but the existence of such guns by Purdey's dates to the 1860's. There is an excellent article by Purdey's Gun Room Manager, Dr. Nicholas Harlow, that can be found on Diggory Hadoke's Vintage Guns on-line publication. In addition to settling the myth about the origins of these guns, he sums up the numbers of guns that left the factory with no engraving. There were two types. Those that were out "in the black" and those ordered with "no engraving". Turns out Purdey's sent out over 1,000 guns "in the black" between 1878 and 1926, as guns that were intended to be returned to the factory to be engraved and finished at a later date. It is reasoned that these guns were made and rushed to their new owner in time for shooting season. In contrast, there are only 102 guns listed in the ledgers during the same time period that were noted as "un-engraved". It is reasoned that these guns were made at the whim of their new owner and intended to be finished with smooth lock plates. This was quite a statement, the new owner bold enough to request a gun without the venerable firm's house engraving in addition to the gold inlays and carved fences. This along with the extra options and upgrades like the third grips and hinged front triggers, it is clear this pair of guns certainly was not made to meet a deadline nor were they made under the limits of any budget. This pair of guns was made with a certain purpose.

The smooth lockplates have the maker's name in *Olde English* letters inlaid in gold on the leg of each lockplate and the bottom of the action. The lockplates, action body, and furniture are finished in a deep black the London trade is famous for during this era.

A gold stylized inlay is on each top lever with the serial numbers and "SAFE" inlaid in gold in the same manner. The fences or "detonation" are carved (the ledgers say "hand chased") in a vine and flower pattern that offers quite a contrast to the smooth lock plates. The carving and inlays done by Harry Kell and the finish done by Dan O'Brien.

The 29 1/2" *Whitworth* fluid steel, chopper lump barrels have raised, smooth concave game ribs that are inlaid in *Olde English* font with their respective number of the pair on the top rib and: " *J. Purdey & Sons, Audley House, South Audley Street, London*" on the top rib and " *Made of Sir "Joseph Whitworth Fluid-Pressed Steel*" engraved on the bottom rib. The barrels remain in their original London proof with 2 1/2" chambers (nitro proofed for 1 1/8 oz.) perfectly bored barrels all measuring precisely .731" and choked: Improved Cylinder (.006") and 5/8 (.024") in gun No. 1 and 5/8 (.025") and Full (.043") in gun No. 2.

The original stocks are highly figured, especially for the time, and have traditional drop points, straight hands, and checkered butts. Their LOP is 14 1/4" and each stock oval is engraved with the initials: "W.B.M." with a "1" or "2" between the stock oval and toe.

The guns are complete in the Maker's two-gun oak & leather flat case, lined with the house's red baize and trade label with a horn handle disk key, a bone striker pot with three (3) spare strikers, and nickel-plated oil pot and snap caps.

The guns remain in remarkably high, original condition showing only the slightest signs of use or handling or patina.

An exceedingly rare pair of guns superbly made and in high original condition.

Barrel Initials: "SS" (Sam Simons) on the number "1" gun

"CA" on the number "2" gun

"JT" (Joe Thompson) – Actioner, on both forend irons

### SPECIFICATION

**Location** US

**Make** J. Purdey & Sons

**Calibre/Gauge** 12g

Action	Beesley Patent Self Opener SLE
Triggers	2
Ejectors	Automatic
Barrel Length	29 1/2"
Rib	Concave
Chamber	2 1/2"
Choke Right	N/A
Choke Left	N/A
Stock	Straight
LOP	14 1/4"
Weight	6lbs 12oz
Case	Oak & Leather

