

# BANG! AND THE PRIZES CAME TO OAKLAND BANG! BANG! BANG!

HOW HENRY A. HARRIS AND HIS REVOLVER LANDED THE BIGGEST TROPHIES AT THE CHAMPION SHOOTING TOURNAMENT OF ENGLAND'S ARMY AND NAVY

By Ida L. Brooks

THE crack shots of England gathered at Bisley recently for their annual two weeks' meet found their ranges invaded by a little man from California with an unmistakable gift of perforating bulletseyes. Not only was he there, making very pretty revolver play every day, but at the end of the fortnight a lot of good English trophies went out of the country in his trunk. This somewhat formidable contestant was Henry A. Harris, a resident of Oakland for some years past and a member of the Shell Mound pistol and rifle club.

Harris has just returned from a short trip abroad, which, although undertaken for pleasure solely, most unexpectedly took on a new form and provided him with the opportunity of accumulating spoils. Ordinarily when a man sets out on a pleasure trip his chief experience—the one he remembers longest afterward—is the long drawn out, unceasing depletion of his funds. But the man who makes pleasure a paying investment is favored of the gods. Even so, Henry Harris.

Last spring Harris left home with his wife and baby girl bent on five months of travel and sight seeing. He took the southern route, spending several days in each of the cities that interested him, and finally arrived at Washington, which city filled him with such great admiration that he remained there a week before proceeding to Europe. During his stay he took advantage of the opportunity offered him by Secretary Metcalf to visit the navy yard.

### Entered by Accident

It was pure accident that led to his joining in the contest at Bisley. He had been in London but a few days and was strolling along Haymarket when there appeared before him a man with a target fastened to his back advertising King's shooting gallery, Piccadilly circus, just back of the Prince of Wales theater, a place where six straight bulletseyes would call for a solid silver spoon. Harris says the old instinct was back again at sight of the target and just for the sport of the thing he made his way to the gallery. He did so well that day that he ran in again for a little fun the next day and before he left he had seven of the silver spoons in his pocket, two of which were his for the hitting of 12 straight bulletseyes.

The proprietor was so surprised and impressed at his skill that he asked Harris why he did not enter for the big English meet at Bisley, known also as Brookwood, a beautiful country place, some 15 or 18 miles out of the city of London.

Harris had never heard of Bisley. However, he was not averse to being enlightened. Enlightenment brought with it new enthusiasm and down to Bisley went Harris with his family bag and baggage. It was a deviation from the original itinerary, but it proved worth while.

Apart from the interest of the shoot Bisley is attractive. It extends over several hundred acres of beautiful lawn covered country and has splendid wooded hills for a background. There are between 250 and 400 separate ranges and they are of most varied description. One of the most unique of all is that on which a toy deer is manipulated to appear as if bounding through thickets. A bulletseye is affixed to its heart and the shots are fired while the deer is in motion.

There are ranges exclusively for rifle firing by what are called mounted sports, men riding by at a gallop and firing on the run. Harris says that he saw some very fine marksmanship displayed in that fashion. In fact, he has unbounded admiration for the skill of a great many of the men who competed with him for the trophies of the Bisley meeting.

Although born in England and a resident of that country during the first three tender years of his existence, Harris registered as a Californian, was proud of being able to do so and was looked upon as such by his associates without quibble. He says of himself and family, "We were the proper sort of blooming Yank, all right."

Arriving at Bisley he took possession of one of the tents, of which there were perhaps 1,000, and remained in camp during the entire contest.

His first move was to join the Middlesex rifle association, an adjunct of the National rifle association, the most important association of the kind in England. This was necessary to establish his eligibility as a competitor.

To use Mr. Harris' terminology, he shot in the Eley for two weeks, in the Deliberate the same length of time, and also in the long range, 50 yards, in the Colt's competition and with the All Comers' team. He also had to compete for places on the All Comers' team, which was practically a walkover for him.

However, the team work was most unsuccessful, and he takes no pleasure in dwelling on the remembrance of it. One Mrs. Scanlan from Rhodesia, Africa, for some other reason apparently than her skill as a revolver shot, was allowed to shoot with the team, and she certainly put the team to the bad, her score being so low that it brought the total score of the team to a very low figure. Having managed to shoot a 40 in the Deliberate she was given a silver cup as a sort of consolation prize. She was the only woman shooting on the ranges during the two weeks, and was doubtless allowed in the competition only on account of her husband's connection with the army.

The other teams competing in that contest were the Royal Marines, the Army, the Navy, the Volunteers and Yeomanry.

**First American Winner**

The winning of the National rifle association's bronze medal gives Harris more pleasure than any of the trophies he brought home with him. No one else in the United States has been able to carry away one of these, and among those who have tried for it are some of the most expert of all American marksmen, among them even Walter Winans of New York.



ONE OF THE REVOLVER TARGETS AT BISLEY

In regular competition Harris took three other National rifle association prizes, solid silver spoons, ornamented with the device of the bronze medal, the old archer and the modern rifleman side by side.

He won a prize each week of the big shoot in the Eley revolver match, first prize the first week and second prize the second week. In the event there were 127 competitors. The shooting was done at a distance of 20 yards with a time limit of three minutes for six shots. The diameter of the bulletseye in England at that distance is only two inches. The possible score in the event was 42. Harris scored 41. The contest was so keen that all the 40s, of which there were many, were counted out. The first prize was a solid silver plate beautifully engraved, and £2 6s 6d. The second prize was a heavy silver cup and £2.

This shooting meet is an event of great importance to Englishmen. The contests are arranged and managed by the government. The total value of prizes offered by the king in the contest for the king's challenge cup is £2,320, the first prize being £250 in money, a gold medal and a gold badge.

The shooting on the ranges is managed by rangers who are colonels in the army. Privates attend to clearing the ranges and fixing targets. In all there are 150 events, to many of which marksmen from all parts of the world are eligible, and every year some foreigners compete. This year Mr. Harris was the only American on the range.

Among the celebrated shots participating were: Lord Chylesmore, major general in the army; Walter A. J. Raven, champion royal navy; S. R. Newing and F. W. Hawker, also of the royal navy; Sergeant J. A. Wallingford, champion in the English army; Quartermaster Braybrook, royal marine; Lieutenant Lefevre, Middlesex rifles; Major Bunbury, Captain Manoe, household artillery; Gunner Price, royal navy, and Sir William Major. Of these Walter A. J. Raven is the champion revolver shot of the world. Getting the first prize away from him, to say nothing of the other competitors, is somewhat of a feat. Mr. Harris took first, second and third prizes in each event in which he entered individually.

He took quite as much interest in the competitions for which he was not eligible. For instance, there was the contest for the Whitehead challenge cup, a team event, 12 shots at 25 yards and the same number at 50 yards. He still indulges in unrestrained glee when he tells of the defeat of the navy team and the uncontrollable rage of Lieutenant H. C. Halahan, the captain.

THE WINNERS AT BISLEY. MR. HARRIS AT RIGHT NEXT TO HIS WIFE



AS THE TARGET SEES MR. HARRIS

HENRY A. HARRIS OF OAKLAND AND HIS MEDALS WON AT BISLEY



TROPHIES WON BY HARRIS AT THE ENGLISH SHOOT

The bullet could not be found. It was then discovered that his gun had missed fire and he was allowed an extra shot. However, at the final scoring, on account of his having had 11 shots as against the 10 of his opponents, the prize was not awarded to him but to Addison, who had scored next best and had won by two points only over Hope. Harris says that the shooting in that event was the best that was done while he was there.

the Eley on Friday night, but that prize gave me a place among the favored ones.

"Unfortunately the king was sick and unable to be there, but the Princess Christian was there to represent him and was accompanied by the duke of Connaught and Major General Lord Roberts. The last mentioned of these it was my pleasure to meet and I must say that that was one of the happiest introductions of my life. I was so engrossed in my admiration for the man that I hardly remember what he said except that he spoke of shooting generally and put himself out to be very pleasant to me.

"That morning there were about 12,000 people assembled to witness the distribution of prizes. A large tent was pitched which accommodated 3,000 people. The rest were seated or occupied standing room outside, all separated carefully according to class, very fine distinctions being made in that regard which are difficult for an American to understand. However, I suppose it is all extremely satisfactory to an Englishman. It seems to be a raised platform covered with red velvet carpet was arranged for the royal party. On it was a stand on which the prizes were displayed; in all there must have been 150 cups, not to mention the medals, spoons, goblets and other trophies. As the princess and her escort approached, the band of the Coldstream guards, stationed just outside the tent, struck up 'God Save the King.'

Presented by a Princess

"The victors had been notified and were all there waiting for the presentation. When Colonel Cross, secretary of the National rifle association, saw me among them, he slapped me on the back and said, 'Why, Harris, I'm bloomin' glad of this.' It was he who announced the names of the winners to the princess and I tell you my head began to swim a little bit when he called out in a loud voice, 'Winner of first prize in the Eley, Mr. H. A. Harris of the United States.' You should have heard the crowd holler. Then the princess handed me the splendid silver plate with the blue and gold silk purse and the prize money in it and said, 'It gives me great pleasure to present you with these elegant trophies.' Then they cheered again, and after it was all quiet again, my little 3 year old daughter piped out, 'And he's my papa.' That just tickled them. I tell you, and they cheered again.

"The presentation of the king's personal prizes came last of all and then the meet was over.

"On the last Friday night," says Mr. Harris, "everything was over, as one might say, but the shooting. And the shooting was the most important thing. That is to say the prizes were all distributed except those given by the king. The presentation by his majesty was the great event of the meet and took place on the following morning. 'I had received all my prizes and prize money except the first prize in