

manufactured in the United States. For that reason I would be inclined to doubt that statement, but in any event about the time the rifle was adopted, or shortly afterwards, Lord Middleton, then secretary for war, in a despatch to Lord Minto, then Governor-General, regretted that "while the Ross rifle would take the same ammunition as the Lee-Enfield, the different parts of the two rifles were not interchangeable, which would be a great drawback."

Mr. SAM HUGHES. Whose report is that?

Mr. WORTHINGTON. Lord Middleton, then Mr. Broderick, secretary for war.

Mr. SAM HUGHES. Is the hon. gentleman aware that no two parts of the Lee-Enfield are interchangeable, and there are eighteen different sections?

Mr. WORTHINGTON. The hon. gentleman will have ample opportunity to speak his little piece when I am through. This despatch also says that two Ross rifles had been tested by the officers of the Musketry School at Hythe in connection with two Lee-Enfield rifles, and the test showed the marked inferiority of the Ross rifle. This of course, has been denied by the Minister of Militia. There is, therefore, good reason to suppose that the Ross rifle must have been adopted for some other good and sufficient cause.

We are told that the Ross rifle was tested at Springfield and New Haven, and other places, and passed very creditable examinations. The earliest date of the test of which we have cognizance is to be found in the report No. 5 of the Public Accounts Committee on the Ross rifle. I take the following from the report of the hon. member for Victoria and Haliburton (Mr. Sam Hughes), page 197, after stating that he had visited the United States' arsenal and factories at Springfield, Massachusetts, and the Pratt & Whitney and other works in Hartford, Connecticut, and expressing his appreciation of the courtesy extended to him, he reported as follows to General Otter:

"It may be noted that on active service in South Africa I chanced to take several straight pull actioned rifles from the Boers. Though the action was weak, the resistance lug or

block being at the rear of the bolt, yet the ease in loading and firing, the steadiness of the rifle, its magazine, its steadiness impressed me. It was of the Mannlicher type straight pull. The Sir Charles Ross rifle has all the advantages of the other with none of its drawbacks. The Sir Charles Ross rifle locks its resistance lugs at the forward end of the bolt; is the strongest rifle I have seen; is least likely to get out of order, and is the simplest to dismount and put together."

He also speaks about the tests of the Ross rifle made at Hartford in comparison with the Lee-Enfield. He says:

"The first defective in the Lee-Enfield blew off and smashed the magazine."

That is the defective cartridge which is used in testing the Lee-Enfield.

"The second Lee-Enfield was disabled by the next defective, the extractor spring being broken. Thus far nothing had happened the Sir Charles Ross action. It may be noted the first defective from each was fired with the rifles firing screwed in a vice at the muzzle, both rifles slightly opened the action from the recoil."

I quote this report because it differs very materially from the report I have here, which comes from the Springfield armoury, dated 31st of August, 1903, and which is signed by the members of the board. Charles H. Clark, manager of the ordnance department, president; John P. Thompson, captain, ordnance department member; W. S. Pierce, captain ordnance department, recorder. A number of tests were made. The first one or two I shall not read as they are not important, as they deal with rapidity and carrying, and also the single shot tests. But when they got to testing the rifle as a repeater, the report is as follows:

As repeater—time 1 minute—number of shots, 29.

In this and other tests in which the piece was used as a repeater, the magazine was charged from pasteboard boxes holding five cartridges each. The cartridges were intended to be poured from these boxes, using the latter as chargers. The boxes, however, were not of exactly the right shape and frequently failed to work satisfactorily.