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Winchester has produced some of the most iconic rifles and shotguns of all time. From the Model 1873 lever-action rifle to the Model 12 pump-action shotgun, the company holds a well-deserved place among the household names in the gun world. Theirs are also some of the hottest collectible arms on the market today. After all, it's hard to argue quality with a company that spent two decades producing designs from the mind of John Moses Browning. (It's equally as hard to argue with a man whose middle name is Moses.) The Model 12 shotgun became known as the "Perfect Repeater" not long after its introduction. Available in 12, 16, 20, and 28-gauge, the gun soared in popularity. More than two million were made before production ceased in the 1960s. Still, for all its fame and glory, the model lacked one thing: it was never produced in .410 bore.



Lot 614: Winchester Model 42 Signed by Nick Kusmit Master Engraved Winchester Model 42 Slide Action Shotgun with Box

That distinction went to the Model 12's "mini me" – the Model 42. Introduced in 1933, it looked like a scaled-down version of the Model 12. While that is true of its outward appearance, the gun's internals were different. Winchester's chief design engineer, William Roemer, developed the changes that were necessary in order for the design to properly cycle the .410 shells. Three-inch .410 shotshells were a pet project of John Olin, and

even though the 42 was ready for introduction in 1932, he insisted that the new shotgun and shotshell hit the market at the same time. As a result, both debuted in 1933. Available in Standard, Deluxe, Skeet, Pigeon, and Trap grades, as well as with a variety of barrel lengths, ribs, chokes, wood types, and checkering patterns, the sheer volume of variation in the Model 42 is staggering – despite having a production run of only 164,800 guns.

Despite being launched during the Great Depression, the Model 42 was a success. Many shooters considered it to be a “must-have” companion gun to the Model 12. It eventually earned the moniker, “The Greatest Little Shotgun in the World.” The model was a favorite of shooters young and old, and it even caught the eye of some prominent individuals in its day. High profile owners included actor Robert Taylor and President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

While the number of variations for the Model 42 are seemingly endless, what you don’t see are many factory engraved examples. The Winchester Model 42 in this auction is a rare gun, as it is one of very few factory engraved examples in existence.



The work on this Winchester Model 42 was done by Winchester master engraver Nick Kusmit. A true master of his craft, Kusmit spent 30 years engraving a wide variety of Winchester products. His work was highly prized during his lifetime and is just as special today. Author Ernest Hemingway, artist Norman Rockwell, Winchester company owner John Olin, and President Gerald Ford are just some of the well-known individuals who owned guns engraved by Nick. The last gun he engraved for Winchester was a very special Model 21. Made for John Olin, the 20 gauge two-barrel set features exquisite engraving with gold inlaid portraits of Olin himself and his Grand Champion labrador retriever, King Buck. When the Federal Duck Stamp for 1959 came out, it featured King Buck and was the first time a dog had ever been depicted on a US stamp.

Olin’s Model 21, with its homage to the man and his dog masterfully engraved by Nick Kusmit, holds an honored place in the collection of the NRA National Firearms Museum, and now the tie-in to the Model 42 in this auction comes to light. Both that Model 21 and this Model 42 belonged to publishing juggernaut Robert E. Petersen, whose company produced *Hot Rod*, *Motor Trend*, and *Guns & Ammo* magazines, just to name a few.



Robert & Margie Petersen

At one time, Petersen's collection contained more than 7,000 guns of all different makes and models. When he passed away in 2007, his collection still contained more than 2,000 fine firearms. The Robert E. Petersen Gallery at the NRA's museum contains approximately 20% of his collection, with the rest still in the hands of the estate. That's what makes this gun and the other Petersen pieces in this auction so special. It's a rare opportunity to own a gun from an incredible collection that was deemed worthy of its own permanent gallery in one of the finest firearms museums in the United States.

There are two elaborately engraved Winchester Model 42 shotguns in the Petersen Gallery in Fairfax, Virginia, both produced later than the example being offered here. Manufactured in 1947, this gorgeous shotgun features the classic 42-5 engraving pattern on the sides of the receiver. A single hunting dog and two game birds grace the right side in a grassy, lightly wooded scene. Two dogs and two birds in flight on a similarly grassy wooded background reside on the left side of the receiver.

The engravings are highly detailed, and the signature of Master Engraver Nick Kusmit is located on the underside of the receiver. The vent rib barrel features a single bead sight, 3 inch chamber, modified choke, and 2-inch wedges of floral scroll engraving at the breech. The shotgun is equipped with a jeweled bolt and lifter, and the highly figured walnut forearm and pistol grip stock feature diamond pattern checkering with a metal grip cap and solid recoil pad. The finish is outstanding, with very little wear. The walnut furniture is in equally great shape. The length of pull is 14 1/8 inches. To round out the offering, the gun comes with a Winchester red, white, and blue box featuring a Robert Petersen collection label on the bottom.



President Ford, acclaimed author Hemingway, Hollywood actor Taylor, publishing icon Petersen ... and you. Don't miss the chance to add your name to the list of owners of high end Winchester model 42 shotguns engraved by Nick Kusmit.

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