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# Auctioning rich history in Norfolk

*Specialising in one of the oldest and most famous crafts in the world, **Holts Auctioneers** are a dedicated auction house of fine modern and antique guns*

**H**olts are proud of the rich military history and tradition of field sports here in Norfolk. "This world of history, tradition and craftsmanship fascinated me as a young boy and that fascination continues to this day," explains Founder Nicholas Holt.

Located on the Sandringham Estate in Wolferton, Holts are firmly rooted in the country life heritage of Norfolk, but have also become one of the most famous specialist auction houses in the world.

"The weapons we are handling are beautiful works of art," Nicholas says. "They are valuable and unique parts of our history and every item has a story that shouldn't be forgotten."

Scheduled to appear at Holts' auction in March is Lot 596, is an unusual shotgun made with a crossover stock. The sporting gun was made in 1829

by James Purdey & Sons, a British gunmaker specialising in bespoke shotguns and rifles.

The weapon was designed and manufactured for Charles Eley who, alongside his brother, founded the now famous firm of ammunition specialists. In their early days, the Eley brothers had been experimenting with fulminate when an explosion blinded Charles in the right eye. Charles commissioned the shotgun from Purdey so that he could still shoot right-handed while using his left eye. This unique piece is expected to fetch between £4,000-6,000 at auction.

Also revealing an intriguing provenance is Lot 25, a more modern air rifle set to appear in Holts' March sale. Manufactured in 1989, the Sportsmatch custom air-rifle with John Welham stock was made for a champion.

With this rifle in hand, Terry Doe won both the US Open Field Target

Championship in 1989 and European Championship in 1994. Shooting enthusiasts need no introduction to Terry who was to win over 200 events in his field target career.

Affectionately known as the 'Jon-Jon' after the maker John Ford of Sportsmatch and the stock maker John Welham, the air-rifle was given to Terry by the manufacturer with the instruction 'go win the US open because we need the business!'

"For those wishing to see for themselves the incredible stock of modern and antique weapons that draw an international crowd, come along to our next auction," says Nicholas. "We are sharing unique personal stories and preserving heritage for the generations to come."

**NEXT AUCTIONS**  
**Monday 20th March and**  
**Tuesday 21st March 2023**

**HOLTS**  
 FINE MODERN & ANTIQUE GUNS

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