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John Evelyn Scoular DFC

“We’re selling invaluable personal stories, and we’re helping preserve that heritage for future generations...”

- Nick Holt, founder of Holts Auctioneers



Date	Time	Machine	Captain	Rank	Station	Altitude	Distance to Station or Flight	Remarks
19 1920	17:20-17:30	VICTA	G. GIBBS	SELF	Pi	BIGON HILL		
16 27	16:47	CONAR	G. GIBBS	J. BRAW	Pd	DENHAM LOOSE		
20			G. GIBBS	SELF	Pi			Clash on Cape
22 19 47			G. GIBBS	SELF	Pi			via Stables - burst.
24 27			G. GIBBS	SELF	Pi	BIGON HILL		100 400.
3 24 29			G. GIBBS	SELF	Pi	BIGON HILL		50 300-400-450 SOVERE.



ABOVE: An extraordinary record of the career of John Evelyn Scouler DFC is just one of the historically-important lots featured in this month's sale at Holts Auctioneers.

Selling our history & preserving our heritage

*Important episodes in British history, unique survivors from the First World War, European royalty – it's no surprise that **Holts Auctioneers** is one of the most famous specialist auction houses in the world*

What could possibly connect a beautiful part of the Sandringham estate with three different James

Bonds, a number of D-Day heroes, the crowned heads of Europe, various recipients of the Victoria Cross, internationally-famous rock stars, Oscar-winning actors, and a host of historical figures from explorer Henry Stanley to the 18th century bare-knuckle boxer who gave his name to Big Ben?

The answer can be found in a former dairy farm in Wolferton, which has been home to Holts Auctioneers for over 20 years and is now one of the country's only auction houses specialising in antique guns and weaponry. It's also one of the most famous in the world.

"Although most of the items we sell

are generally described as weapons there's actually a lot more to them than that," says Nick Holt, who founded Holts Auctioneers after spells at the Royal Armouries at the Tower of London and the famous auction house of Bonhams. "They're very rare examples of one of our oldest and most famous crafts, they're a tangible part of our shared history, and they're often works of art in their own right."

They've played a central part in Nick's life ever since he accompanied his father on visits to the highly-regarded (and self-taught) gunsmith John Wilson as a youngster, and it's rather fitting that among his team of researchers, photographers, media specialists and ballistics experts is Scott Wilson, who's followed in his father's footsteps.

Holts Auctioneers is now preparing for its next sale of fine antique guns,

taxidermy, edged weapons and militaria towards the end of the month

"One of the most exciting parts of our work is that we never know what's about to come through the door," says Nick. "One day we might receive a sword that belonged to a 19th century European king, the next day we'll be looking at a rifle that was used in the American War of Independence, and the day after that we'll be examining a German Iron Cross from the First World War."

And therein lies a large part of the work at Holts Auctioneers. Research and proven provenance is key. You'll never see words such as 'allegedly' and 'possibly' in the latest catalogue, because a demonstrable record of ownership and history is invariably as valuable as the item itself.

"Last year Bonhams sold a pretty



ABOVE: The collection of John Evelyn Scoular DFC includes his father's dog-tag and compass from the time when the latter served in the First World War - a perfect example of the historically-important items sold by Holts Auctioneers, which is now one of the most famous auction houses in the world

unremarkable Colt single-action revolver that wasn't engraved, wasn't in particularly great condition and had simple wooden grips," says Nick. "The reason it sold for over £40 million was that documents from 1906 proved it belonged to Pat Garrett and was the gun he used to kill Billy the Kid."

That's the real magic of Holts Auctioneers. Every lot has a story to tell.

Particularly significant and expected to fetch up to £20,000 at the next auction is a pair of 50-bore percussion target pistols (together with accessories) in a beautiful and original walnut case that were made in 1832 by the world-famous British gunmaker James Purdey & Sons - who currently hold no less than three Royal Warrants. Given their exquisite finish and attention to detail it's hardly surprising that six years after they were made, even Queen Victoria was buying a pair of Purdey pistols.

Perhaps the most fascinating lot of all (and one with plenty of local interest) is the trunk of written documents, photographs and other ephemera relating to Wing Commander John Evelyn Scoular DFC.

Following his initial training in Leicestershire, Scoular had joined the RAF in 1936 and was posted to Peterborough and Duxford before being transferred to the 73 Squadron at Mildenhall in Suffolk in 1937. On the day

the Second World War broke out he was stationed at Digby in Lincolnshire, but within a week his squadron was in France.

He shot down his first plane (a Dornier 17) before the end of 1939, and by the end of the war had downed almost 20 enemy aircraft in addition to two V1 flying bombs and even part of a train.

He served in Egypt, the Middle East and Malta and returned to England at the end of 1943, eventually becoming the Commanding Officer of HQ10 at the base in Box in Wiltshire. Retaining the rank of Wing Commander when he relinquished his commission at the end of March 1954, Scoular joined Rolls Royce and died in August 1986.

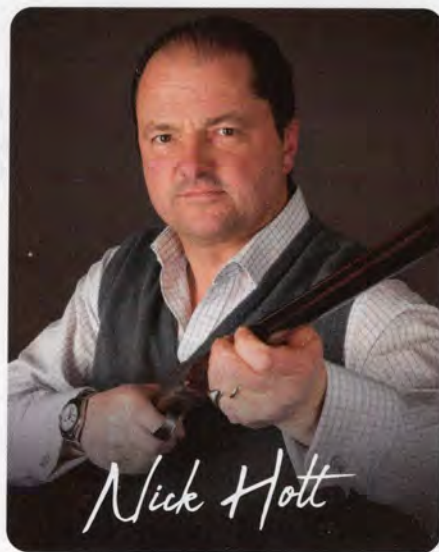
The lot offers a unique glimpse into an extraordinary life, thanks largely to a large photograph album covering Scoular's service years focusing on aerial photographs, war damage and crashes, and a smaller album containing more personal photographs including Scoular training at RAF Sutton Bridge and playing golf in Hunstanton.

In addition to Scoular's personal flying log and service record books, the trunk includes various newspaper cuttings, a diary written with the help of other members of 73 Squadron, his black leather parade baton, the official telegram referring to the award of his Distinguished Flying Cross, and a

vintage leather attache case marked 'J. Scoular' containing various squadron photographs, framed crests and letters.

It even rather poignantly contains the dog-tag and compass belonging to Scoular's father who served in the First World War - carefully stored in a souvenir Queen Elizabeth II coronation tin.

"This is a perfect example of what makes our auctions so special," says Nick Holt. "We never think we're simply selling guns and swords. We're selling important parts of our history, we're selling invaluable personal stories, and we're helping preserve that heritage for future generations."



NEXT SALES

Monday 21st March

Antique and vintage guns, accessories, taxidermy, edged weapons and militaria

Tuesday 22nd March

Modern and sporting guns and accessories

Thursday 31st March (10.30am)

Final date for written or online bids to the Sealed Bid Auction

VALUATIONS

To maintain owners' privacy, valuations take place on an appointment-only system, and you should call Holts on 01485 542822 to book. Please bring any documents or information relating to provenance, as that can have a huge impact on the value of your item(s).

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