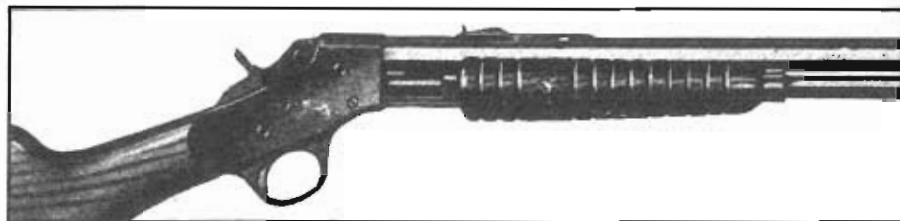
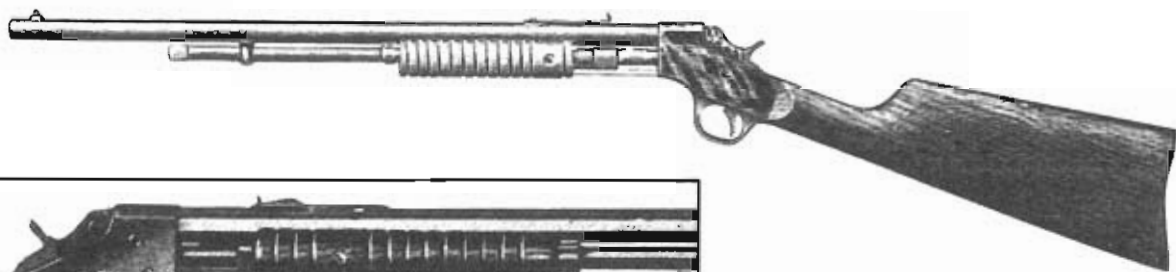


Exploded Views:

# Stevens Visible Loader



BY PETE DICKEY

**I**N 1908, the J. Stevens Arms and Tool Co. of Chicopee Falls, Mass., brought out a novel pump-action .22 rifle that was marked on the barrel, "Visible Loading Repeater." It was cataloged as the "Visible Loading No. 70," and continued in the line in .22 Short/Long/Long Rifle or .22 Short only (Model 70½) versions through the company's name change in 1916 (J. Stevens Arms Co.) and Savage's eventual takeover of the firm that began in 1920.

In the mid-1920s, the rifle's name was slightly changed to "Visible Loader," and so it remained until 1931 when it was replaced with a similar "Visible Loader No. 71" that substituted a pistol-gripped stock for the No. 70's straight stock and a 24" octagonal barrel for the round 20" or 22" barrel of the older rifle. Apparently, no .22 Short variant was made in the later gun. All fired Shorts, Longs and Long Rifles interchangeably, with respective capacities of 15, 13 and 11 shots, in "regular loadings." Thus modern high speed cartridges should not be used in any of these rifles.

In 1934, the last rifle was produced and, despite their long

tenure, the Nos. 70 and 71 cannot be considered very successful compared to their many pump-action competitors.

It has been estimated that, in all, around 100,000 were produced over the 26-year span. Many of the survivors, judging from the number of inquiries the Dope Bag receives on them, are in need of repair and, in fact, Stevens stressed safety, not durability, in its literature.

The peculiar feature of the rifles is that cartridges from the tubular magazine are fed straight up into the twin extractors on the breech face where they are, indeed, readily visible and not half-hidden, as in some other .22 pump mechanisms. There is no "ejector" as such. An extracted round is either pushed up and out of the extractors by the following round being fed upward or, if it is the last round or empty case in the rifle, by manual removal.

Fans of this system claim it works well in a clean rifle in perfect condition with the proper (standard velocity) ammunition, but wear and dirt led to the "Visible Loader" being called "Mis'able" or "Risible Loader" by its many detractors.

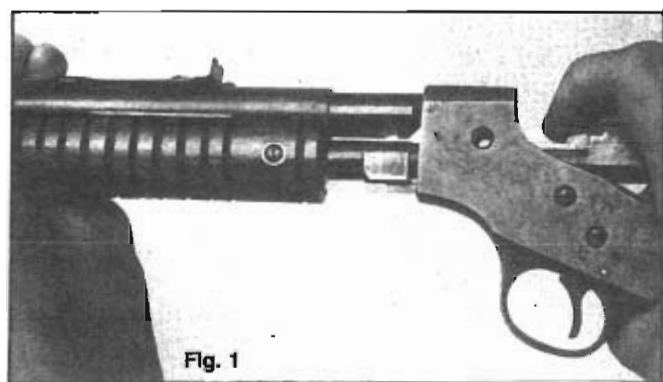


Fig. 1

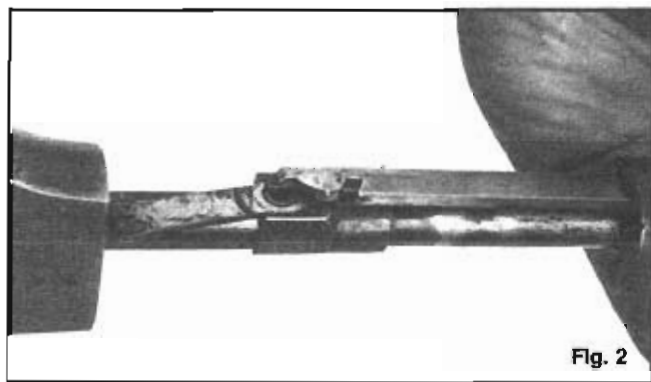


Fig. 2

## Disassembly Instructions

Retract the forearm (8) and inspect the open breechblock (3) and inner action area to assure no cartridge is present.

Turn and withdraw the inner magazine tube assembly (11).

Remove upper and lower stock screws (4 & 5) from receiver tangs and pull stock to rear.

Remove the barrel pin screw (13), the highest one on the right side of the receiver, and in its cavity place a small punch to drift out the tapered barrel pin (14). Note that the flat of this pin faces down.

Firmly hold together the retracted breech-

block and receiver in one hand and, with the other, work the barrel forward out of the receiver and off the outer magazine tube (15). (Fig. 1)

With the trigger guard facing up, slowly move the forearm forward to close the breechblock. Note the position and function of the forearm's action bar (16), the action lock (17) under it and the action lock seat (18) that is a sleeve, fine-threaded over the outer magazine tube. (Fig. 2)

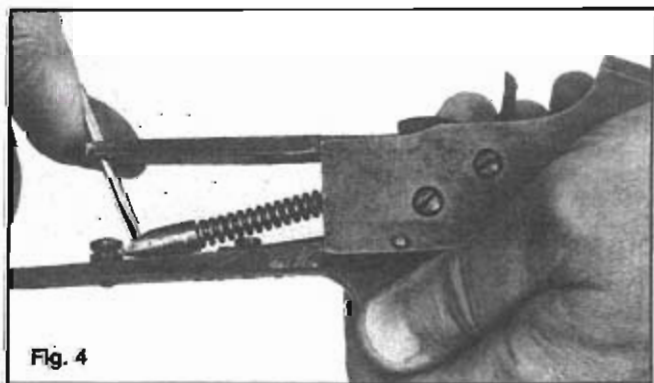
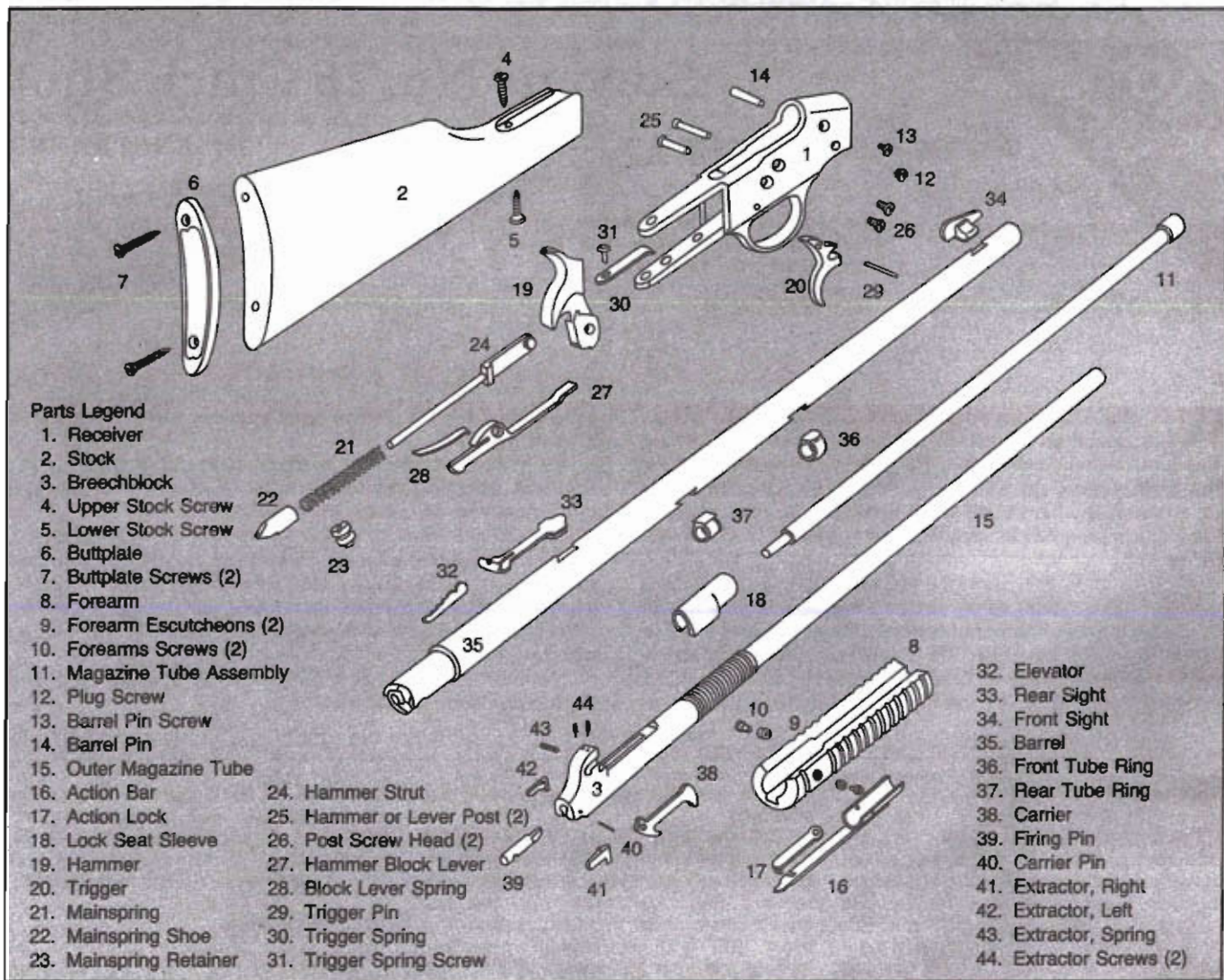
The forearm assembly may now be fully removed. The action lock will drop from its seat.

To remove the outer magazine tube/breech-block assembly, it is necessary to unscrew the action lock seat; around 30 complete turns are required for removal.

After pushing the hammer (19) back fully past the normal cocked position, the breechblock/tube assembly can be angled and slightly rotated back past the hammer and out of the receiver. (Fig. 3)

Restrain the cocked hammer with the thumb, pull the trigger (20) and allow the hammer to go fully forward.

Now, with care because of the stored energy



of the mainspring (21), insert a thin-bladed screwdriver through the action's upper tang screw hole and pry the mainspring shoe (22) away from the mainspring retainer (23). (Fig. 4) Note the position of the mainspring guide rod assembly, the forward end of which keys into the left rear of the hammer forming the hammer strut (24).

A post screw (25) with separate threaded-head (26) serves as the hammer pivot and removing it frees the hammer. An identical post screw and head, when removed, frees the hammer block lever (27) and its spring (28).

The trigger pin (29) can now be drifted out

and the trigger will fall free. Removal of the trigger spring (30) and its screw (31) are obvious, but will require an offset screwdriver.

If the barrel is to be stripped of its parts, a brass mallet and/or punch is required. With the barrel upright, and muzzle facing forward, remove the rear sight elevator (32) and drive the rear sight (33) and also the front sight (34) from left to right.

With the barrel inverted and muzzle forward, the front (36) and rear (37) magazine tube rings are drifted out from right to left. Note that the beveled edge of the rear ring faces forward.

The breechblock (3) is easily stripped of its

parts, but no attempt should be made to remove the thin walled outer magazine tube.

With the carrier (38) hanging down, the firing pin (39) may be withdrawn from the block. A punch will remove the carrier pin (40) and the carrier itself.

The right (41) and left (42) extractors are powered by a single coil spring (43) and held in the block by twin screws (44).

Another set of twin screws (10) holds the riveted action bar assembly in the forearm. Their removal completes disassembly; reassembly is accomplished, with some irritation, in reverse order. ■