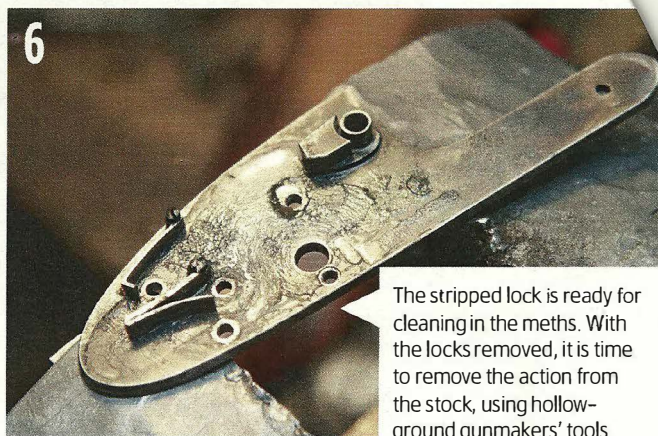
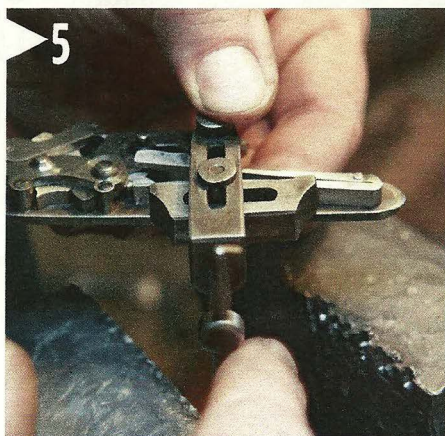
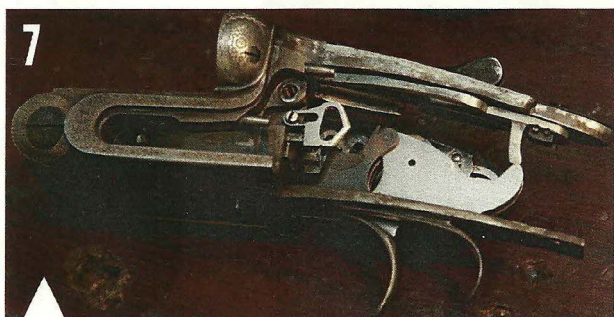


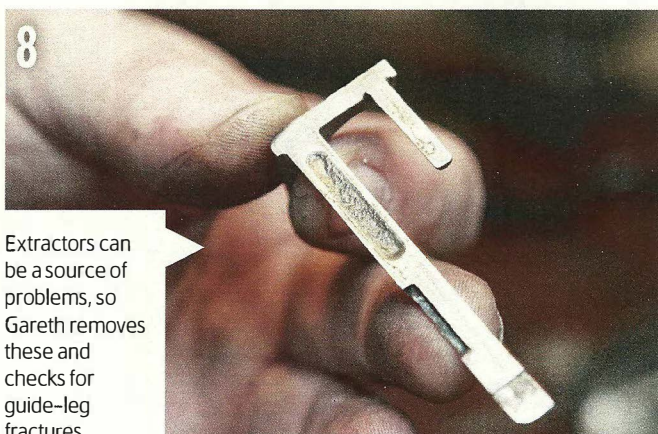
Using a mainspring clamp made by his father, Gareth removes the mainspring to look for any build-up of oil or rust, as powder residue can work its way back into a gun and mix with the oil.



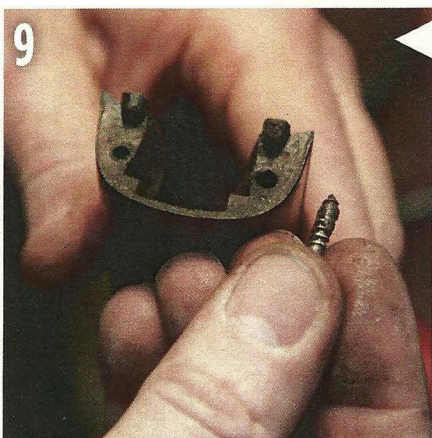
The stripped lock is ready for cleaning in the meths. With the locks removed, it is time to remove the action from the stock, using hollow-ground gunmakers' tools.



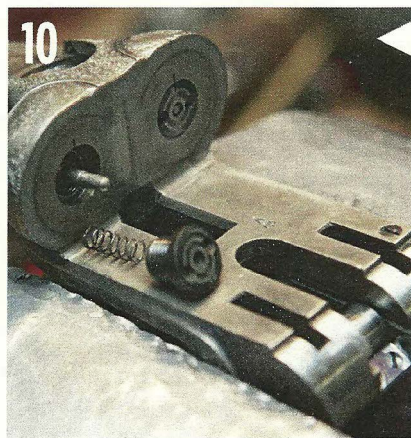
The bolt assembly is removed and cleaned. This Purdey is about 100 years old, but the internal parts don't seem to have aged. It is important that the bolt assembly is kept clean, to ensure that the gun opens and closes correctly.



Extractors can be a source of problems, so Gareth removes these and checks for guide-leg fractures.

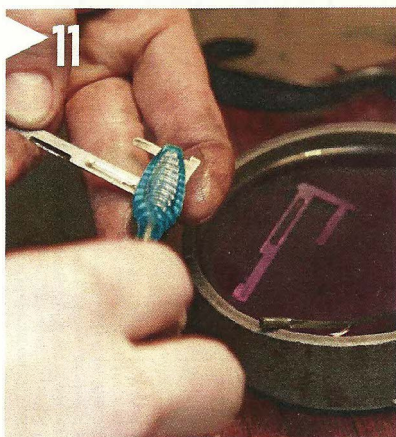


Now it is time to examine the fore-end for cracks or splintering. Gareth finds that, at some point, one of the knuckle pins has been stripped and glued into the wood. The answer is to plug the hole, re-drill it and make a new pin.



He checks the firing pins and the striker return springs for wear. Gareth says: "Sometimes the springs are crushed or broken; I check the striker for bevelling where it has been repeatedly struck by the tumbler. I look for pitting and wear at either end. Broken strikers can still work, so they must be removed fully and inspected. They can be gold-washed at this stage to prevent corrosion."

Though visual inspections are vital, the true nature of the parts is not revealed until they are cleaned in meths, as dirt can conceal flaws. Gareth removes tarnishing with emery paper and re-greases the parts, then re-assembles them. He uses a small file and emery cloth to restore feathering to the extractors and barrel face.



The chequering on the safety catch has worn with age. It is important that the safety catch can be operated with ease in cold or wet weather. Gareth recuts the chequering and, as an added touch, demonstrates how he re-blues the safety catch by heating it. It turns from silver to straw-coloured and finally to a lustrous blue before being quenched in meths. If the safety catch is engraved and the engraving is worn, Gareth can get this recut. All that remains, following an inspection and any repairs or replacements, is to put it all back together; often with more than 100 parts, this requires skill and knowledge. Gareth then test-fires the gun, using the brand of cartridges the customer favours, to check that all is well.

