

# Pedigree Of A Powerhouse

History And Development Of The Ingram Submachine Guns

By Donald G. Thomas



Ingram M11 Submachine Gun (Marietta production) with Sionics Silencer and a Nomex cover.



Early production Ingram M11 with experimental combination silencer-foregrip.



Ingram M10 Long Barrel carbine, caliber 9mm Parabellum

*Normally Gung-Ho does not do heavy duty single subject gun articles, however the Ingram Submachine Guns are weapons of great interest and little is really known about them. This first published history should fill in many holes and win some bets at firing ranges and taverns across the country.*

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Shortly after the formation of Sionics, Inc., a company engaged in the development and manufacture of submachine guns and silencer, the author became the company historian. He continued as historian for the company after Sionics, Inc. became Military Armament Corp.

His published works include, "U.S. Silencer Patents, Vol. I and II," "European Silencer Patents," and "The Complete Book of Thompson Patents." Thomas is a specialist in the area of U.S. and foreign firearms patents.

For reference purposes, Thomas has built up a large library of publications related to small arms and ammunition. He subscribes to every significant firearms publication published in the U.S. as well as in foreign countries. His library includes a significant collection of books, pamphlets, brochures as well as commercial and military manuals related to small arms and ammunition.

He has served as adviser to the Curator of the Ft. Benning Infantry Museum on small arms and ammunition matters.

The first Ingram Submachine Gun was the M6; only one gun, a prototype, was ever built; it was fabricated during 1946. It can be identified by the perforated butt stock and its Reising 12-round magazine. A brochure published by the original Ingram company, Lightning Arms Company, describes it as the Lightning Model 5.

The second Ingram Submachine Gun was the Model 6; this is the submachine gun that elevated Ingram into the ranks of the world's great gun designers. The company that manufactured the Ingram Model 6, Police Ordnance Company, was formed by Gordon Ingram, Jack Percell, John Cook and Thomas Brightly in 1949. Gordon Ingram was the designer and Chief Engineer. There were three versions of the Model 6; a Police Model with a finned barrel and vertical foregrip similar to the Thompson Submachine Gun, a Military Model with a smooth barrel and horizontal forearm and a Guard Model having a short horizontal forearm. The Military Model would accept a spike bayonet and had protective ears for the front sight.

Early Model 6 Submachine Guns have a "King" type commercial rear sight while late production guns have a protected peep sight that is

adjustable for windage.

The Police Ordnance Company was located in El Monte, California and originally offered the Model 6 in Calibers .45 ACP, .38 Super and 9mm Parabellum. The Model 6 was demonstrated publicly for the first time at Sacramento, California, to the California Police Chief's Convention, where it was well received.

A quantity of Ingram Model 6 Submachine Guns were sold to the government of Peru during 1951; these guns were manufactured in the United States by Police Ordnance Company. Eventually, Gordon Ingram went to Peru to set up production and to supervise the manufacture of the Model 6 for that country's armed forces. Subsequently, approximately 8,000 Ingram Military Model 6 Submachine Guns were manufactured in Peru. Ingram stayed in Peru for about one year supervising production of the Model 6; after that he returned to the United States and continued his career as a gun designer.

American production of the Model 6 was approximately 20 guns in caliber 9mm Parabellum, 15,000 guns in caliber .45 ACP and a very limited quantity of guns in .38 Super; probably less than a dozen.

The design of the Model 6 is very noteworthy. The trigger mechanism is of the "progressive type"; a partial squeeze of the trigger gives full automatic fire. The overall profile of the Police Model resembles the Model 1921 Thompson Submachine Gun; this was done in an effort to cash in

on the success and fame of the Thompson. However, the 1950s proved not to be a good time to introduce a new submachine gun to the world's market, either commercially or militarily. Despite this, the Model 6 did enjoy moderately good sales, especially among police departments and prison systems. Substantial quantities were sold to the Cuban navy, the Peruvian army and the U.S. Constabulary in Puerto Rico. The Ingram Model 6 was tested by the U.S. Marine Corps; it was never adopted, however.

In addition to regular company sales, the Model 6 was marketed by Federal Laboratories.

A patent was never granted for the Ingram Model 6. The patent was applied for during 1949; it covered primarily the "progressive" trigger mechanism. However, the Police Ordnance Company went out of business before the filing process was completed.

Gordon Ingram left Police Ordnance Company during 1952; shortly thereafter, the company ceased to exist. During the months preceding the break up of Police Ordnance Company, Ingram designed and introduced another submachine gun; this gun was designated, "Model 7". This submachine gun used a unique two-piece bolt with a separate firing pin to achieve semi-automatic fire and full automatic fire from the closed bolt position. Incorporated in this system was a spring-loaded firing pin. On full automatic, the cyclic rate of the

Model 7 was increased from the 600 rounds per minute of the Model 6 to 700 rounds per minute. The Model 7 was offered for sale in three calibers, .45 ACP, 9mm Parabellum, and .38 Super.

The Ingram Model 7 was manufactured in very limited quantities; it was intended primarily for the law enforcement market. Only one Model 7 Submachine Gun was ever manufactured in .38 Super. The Ingram Model 7 was intended to fulfill the role of accurate semiautomatic fire. Both the Ingram Model 6 and Model 7 Submachine Guns use a "two position feed" magazine that can be easily loaded without the use of a magazine loader.

Gordon Ingram continued his series of submachine gun designs, the next of which was the Ingram Model 8. As he was unable to interest any of the domestic gun makers in his new design, he turned to foreign sources. He found Thailand interested in having submachine gun production set up within its borders. During 1954, Gordon Ingram went to Thailand to set up production and to supervise the manufacture of his Model 8 Submachine Gun. Since the Model 8 was an improved version of his Model 6, there were, correspondingly, two versions of the Model 8, a Police Model and a Military Model. Again, the Military Model was fitted for a bayonet. The Model 8 differed from the Model 6 in that a sliding cover was added to cover the cocking handle slot and the ejection port. Improvements were made in the

safety arrangement; the bolt could be locked in either the forward position or the cocked position. Despite having spent considerable time in Thailand and having labored substantially over the project, things did not go well; only one gun of each, the Police Model and the Military Model, were ever produced.

After returning to the United States from Thailand, Gordon Ingram developed the Model 9 Submachine Gun. The mechanism of the Model 9 is practically identical to that of the Model 8. The major difference is that the Model 9 was built with a collapsible butt stock. Only one specimen of the Model 9 was ever made.

Gordon B. Ingram was granted patent number 3,651,736 on March 28, 1972; it was entitled, "Bolt Handle and Pistol Grip Magazine for an Automatic Firearm". This patent covers the popular Ingram M10 and M11 Submachine Guns. The Ingram Model 10 was manufactured in calibers .45 ACP and 9mm Parabellum; the Ingram Model 11 was manufactured in caliber .380 ACP. Eventually, experimental versions of the M11 were manufactured in caliber .22 Long Rifle and 9mm Parabellum; neither of which ever reached the production stage.

Early development of the Model 10 began in California. After studying early production models of Juan Erquijaga's MR-64 Submachine Gun, Gordon Ingram decided that submachine gun customers and users might be more receptive to a submachine gun design that was a





Ingram model 5 cal. 45 ACP. This is the first Ingram Submachine Gun. This is the only known photo of the gun. Only one gun was ever manufactured.

radical departure from "old line" conventional submachine gun design. Ingram believed that this new submachine gun should be light weight, compact, low cost and capable of functioning with or without a silencer. These criteria seemed to meet the requirements of the modern day user; especially with the continuing trend toward clandestine operations throughout the world to counter the threat of terrorism and subversive activities. A low-cost submachine gun would help to meet the modest budget of under-developed countries and fledgling patriot groups in Latin America and elsewhere.

Gordon Ingram's guns of the '40s and '50s conformed to the thinking of the day; likewise his designs of the '60s and '70s conform to the high technology techniques available to the gun makers of today. The end results of this approach was the M10 and M11 as manufactured by Military Armament Corporation.

The Ingram Model 11, barely larger than a .45 Automatic, represents current state of the art development

of modern submachine gun design. It is lightweight — 3½ pounds — and can be used with or without a silencer. The M11 is extremely compact; it has an overall length of 8.75 inches. With the stock extended, it is capable of accurate fire when used in the submachine gun role. With the stock folded, it can be used as a pistol. The M11 can be carried in a holster with almost the same ease as a .45 automatic pistol.

The first prototype Ingram M10 was chambered for the 9mm Parabellum cartridge; it used a Sten magazine. Additional prototype M10s were fabricated; some in caliber 9mm Parabellum, others in caliber .45 ACP. A typical prototype specimen is marked, "Model 10, Cal. 9mm, Mfg by Gordon Ingram, Los Angeles, Calif. Serial No. 2". At least one submachine gun was fabricated to accept a silencer. No actual production of the M10 or M11 Submachine Guns ever took place in California; only the prototypes were fabricated there. The original prototypes were full automatic only. The M10 Submachine Gun in 9mm

Parabellum was tested at Frankford Arsenal. Feedback resulting from the Frankford test caused Ingram to make a number of improvements in the M10, especially the addition of a web handstrap.

During this period, Ingram began the development of the M11 Submachine Gun in Caliber .380 ACP. The M11 was destined to capture the imagination of the gun world; it was to become the most widely used mini-submachine gun in the free world. The Communist Bloc counterparts to the Ingram M11 are the Czech Skorpion in Caliber .32 ACP and the Polish PM 63 in Caliber 9 x 18mm Makarov. Two additional versions of the Czech Skorpion exist; one in Caliber .380 ACP, the other in Caliber 9mm Parabellum. Both the Skorpion and the Ingram M11 can be used with or without a silencer; both are ideally suited to clandestine operations. The light weight and compactness of the M11 appeals immediately to the user.

A number of countries quickly purchased quantities of the M10 and M11 for military and police use. These countries include Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Columbia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Israel, Jordan, Korea, Mexico, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States, Venezuela, and Yugoslavia.

The Ingram Model 10 was tested extensively in Viet Nam. Mitchell L. WerBell, III, an official of Sionics; went to Viet Nam to demonstrate the company's Sionics Silencer. While en route to Viet Nam, WerBell stopped over in Los Angeles, California, for a meeting with Gordon Ingram. It was decided that WerBell would take Ingram's M10 Submachine Gun in caliber 9mm Parabellum, with silencer, to Viet Nam for demonstration purposes.

After entering into contractual arrangements with Sionics, Inc. during 1969, Gordon Ingram moved from California to Marietta, Georgia, to continue development of the Model 10 Submachine Gun under the auspices of Sionics, Inc. The acronym "Sionics" stands for "Studies in Operational Negation of Insurgency and Counter Subversion". Sionics was headquartered at 1655 Peachtree Street in Atlanta, Georgia, with manufacturing, research and development facilities at the Mitchell L. WerBell, III Estate in Powder Springs, Georgia. Until Ingram's arrival at Sionics, their business consisted primarily of manufacturing the famed Sionics Silencer for the U.S. Armed Forces as the United States was at that time heavily engaged in the Viet Nam War.

The Sionics Silencer was invented by Mitchell L. WerBell, III; his designs are covered by U.S. patents 3,500,955 and 3,667, 570. WerBell's silencer



Assembled and disassembled views of Ingram M6 Submachine Gun. Note simplicity of construction and minimum number of parts.





Ingram M10 Submachine Gun,  
Caliber .45 ACP with experimental  
barrel extension.



Ingram Model 10, Caliber 9mm,  
prototype Submachine Gun.

designs are regarded as the most significant developments in the industry since Hiram P. Maxim's well-known Maxim silencers were introduced just after the turn of the century.

The Ingram Model 10 aroused substantial interest and was well received by combat personnel, especially Special Operations Groups such as Special Forces and the Navy SEALs. Some individuals of the SEAL Teams requested that the cocking handle be increased in size to prevent slippage from the hand of the cocking handle while cocking the submachine gun thereby causing an accidental discharge. This request was made after an accidental discharge of this type occurred on a Navy Landing Craft. An investigation determined that the incident had occurred on a cold, rainy night. Additional studies of the design of the bolt handle determined that a redesign

would not improve the safety factor. Despite the warm reception that the Ingram Submachine Gun received in Viet Nam, no large quantities were ever purchased for use there or elsewhere within the U.S. Armed Forces; however, Special Forces, Navy SEALs, and others did arrange to acquire sufficient quantities of Ingram Submachine Guns for their own use through special purchasing arrangements.

To Mitch WerBell and Gordon Ingram, it quickly became obvious that the Ingram Submachine Gun and the Sionics Silencer were a "natural" for each other. The barrels of the Ingram Submachine Guns were immediately threaded to accept the Sionics Silencer. Company officials soon decided it was not acceptable that the Ingram M10 was capable of full automatic fire only. Ingram started working on a selective fire system for the M10. The first

selector switch was located on the bottom of the receiver inside of the trigger guard. The selective fire system was eventually redesigned with the selector switch being mounted on the left side.

The first prototype Ingram Model 10s had a safety that was located forward of the trigger guard. The U.S. military advised company officials that they favored separate fire controls. The safety and selector system was redesigned with the safety being located on the right side forward of the trigger guard with the fire selector remaining in its original position on the bottom of the receiver ahead of the trigger guard. Company officials were not entirely satisfied with the new fire control system, so it was redesigned again with the selector lever being located on the left side of the receiver.

There exist several variations of the M10 and M11 submachine guns;

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among them, guns with experimental wooden shoulder stocks, wooden forearms, barrel extensions and adjustable sights. Also, there were a number of accessories developed for the Ingram Submachine Guns; some were experimental only, others became standard for the Ingram. Among the most unique accessories developed for the Ingram M10, Caliber .45 ACP, was a grenade launcher. The grenade launcher was a hollow tube-like structure, open at the muzzle end, that greatly resembled a silencer. The grenade launcher mounted on the threaded portion of the barrel in exactly the same fashion as the silencer. Special grenade launching cartridges were developed from cut down 7.62mm NATO cartridge cases. Moderately good results were obtained from the grenade launcher before the program was terminated. There were no significant demands from customers

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for a grenade launcher for the Ingram Model 10.

By 1970, Military Armament Corporation had approximately 12 employees, including four machinists, who worked under Gordon Ingram, the Vice President of Engineering. As Military Armament continued to grow, it became obvious that much larger quarters would be necessary; the Powder Springs facility had already become overcrowded. The company rented a large facility at 440 Glover Street in Marietta, Georgia. Ingram Submachine Guns and Sionics Silencers continued to be manufactured at this location until the company went bankrupt.

This writer, while working as a Historian for Military Armament Corporation, arranged, with the permission and blessing of company officials, for two Ingram M10 Submachine Guns to be given to

Stembridge Gun Rentals at Paramount Studios in Hollywood, California. Dummy silencers were furnished with these guns at the request of Stembridge as "live" silencers presented a problem under California laws. These guns have appeared in a number of television shows and movies, "McQ", "Three Days of the Condor", "Cannon", etc.

While working at Military Armament Corporation, Gordon Ingram developed highly advanced versions of the M10 and M11 Submachine Guns, referred to as the M10A1 and M11A1 respectively. The bolts were very unique in construction; they were constructed from heavy gauge-sheet metal stampings, spot welded together and filled with lead to give them the necessary weight for proper functioning. Even the bolt face and the firing pin protrusion were sheet

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metal stampings. The barrel and some pins were the only parts that were not sheet metal stampings. The M10A1 and M11A1 Submachine Guns never went into production since the company was preoccupied with other problems at the time.

An interesting production item was the "Operational Brief Case Submachine Gun". An M11 submachine Gun complete with silencer, was mounted inside a modified case; an external trigger arrangement was added to the brief case to permit the submachine gun to be fired with the case fully closed. The Operational Brief Case has proved to be quite popular among governmental agencies.

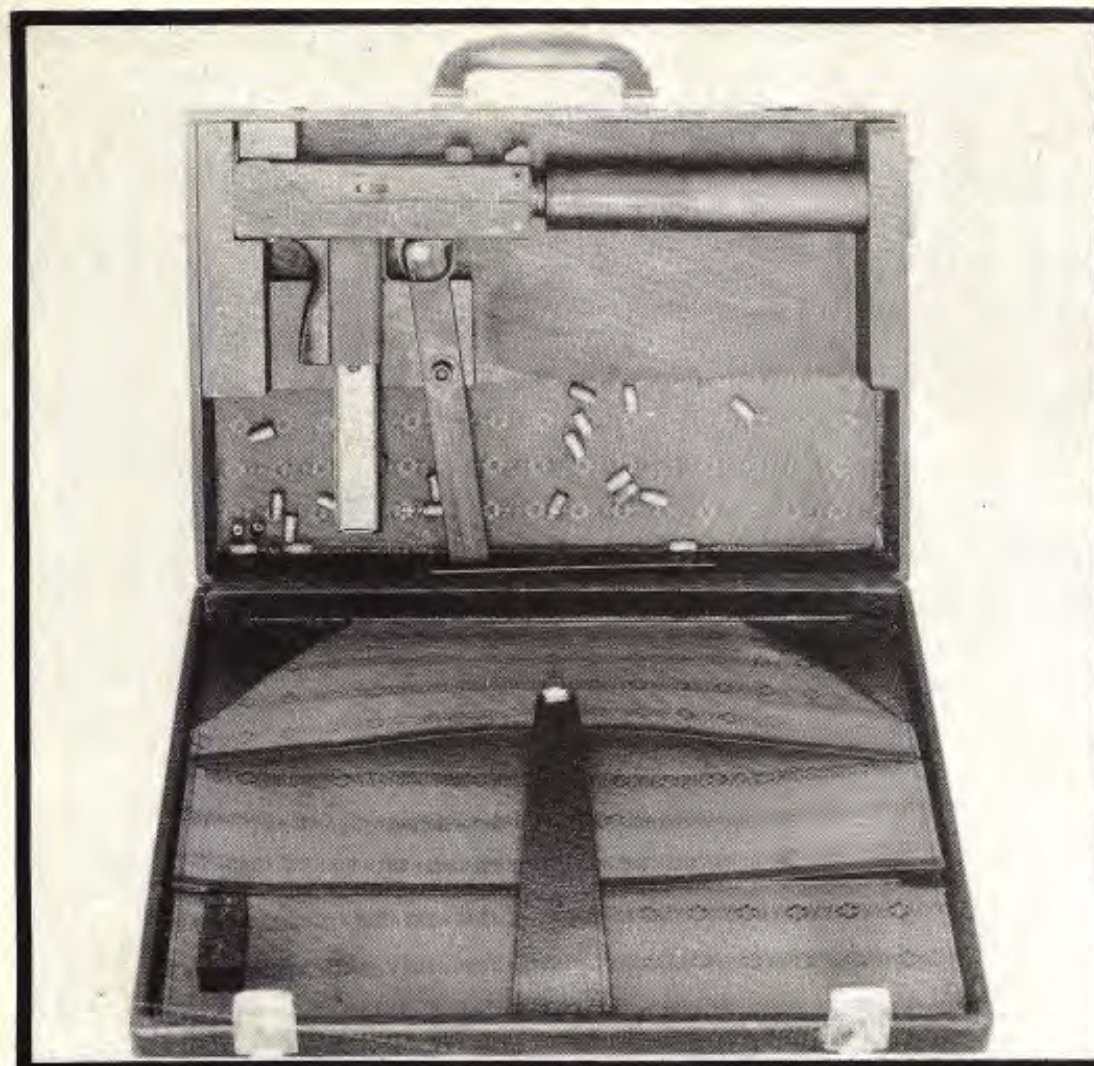
Unlike many other silenced submachine guns, the Ingram's silencer can be quickly mounted or dismounted without the aid of tools. The submachine gun's other features include ease of assembly and disassembly without tools, reliable functioning, optimum cyclic rate for maximum effectiveness, minimum weight while retaining adequate controllability and the use of a telescoping bolt to attain maximum compactness and still retain a reasonable barrel length of 7.16 inches



Police Officers firing Ingram Submachine Guns.



Ingram Submachine Guns in storage racks. These guns have been test fired and are now ready for cleaning and packaging.



Operational Brief Case opened to show details of the M11 Submachine Gun with silencer and the special trigger mechanism.



Ingram M10 Submachine Gun, Caliber 9mm Parabellum, with experimental barrel extension and foregrip.

for the M10 and 5.06 inches for the M11.

Magazine loaders are normally supplied with the Ingram M10, Caliber .45 ACP and the Ingram M11, Caliber .380 ACP, since these single position feed magazines are difficult to load without a loader. In an effort to circumvent the magazine loading problems of the Ingram M11, Max Atchisson, while working at Military Armament Corporation, designed and built a prototype double column, two position feed magazine for the M11. However, Atchisson's design never went into production. Slightly modified M3 "Grease Gun" magazines were originally used for the M10, Caliber .45 ACP. With the eventual scarcity and uncertainty of future supplies of these magazines, company officials decided to design and manufacture their own magazine for the M10. This newly designed magazine did go into production; exact production quantities are unknown to this writer.

Various capacity magazines are available for the M11 Submachine Gun. A 32-round magazine is available for use in the submachine gun mode while the smaller capacity 16-round magazine is generally favored by shooters using the M11 in the pistol mode thirty and forty round magazines are available for the M10 Submachine Gun in caliber .45 ACP.





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