ing Model 1935 High Power Pistol

During the war, the John Inglis Company of Ontario, Canada, reverse-engineered several FN pistols from China and produced the High Power for the Allies. British, Canadian and Chinese military forces all used Inglis-produced pistols. Some were issued with wood shoulder stocks that doubled as holsters. Today, these rigs are in great demand by collectors. The British issued their pistols primarily to airborne and commando outfits. Following the war, the British Army made the High Power its official pistol, replacing the Webley, Enfield and Smith & Wesson .38 caliber revolvers. At that time, Denmark, Holland and Rhodesia adopted the High Power as well. In Argentina, the pistol was made under official license. Civilian sales continued at a high level. The Browning company in Utah distributed the High Power (and other FN-manufactured firearms) in the United States. Following the expiration of patents, a number of clones have appeared on the market, most notably by FEG of Hungary, which has produced a very high quality pistol selling for less than the FN product.

Very few modifications have been made to the pistol since 1935. The earlier in-the-slide extractor occasionally broke, and FN replaced it in post-war years with a shorter, coil spring-powered external extractor. The first High Powers were made with both fixed and tangent-type rear sights. Post-war models will sometimes be found with a fully adjustable target-type rear sight. The original thumb safety was quite small, and recent production features an elongated thumb safety that's more easily manipulated. Early pistols featured a rounded "Commander type" hammer, while more recent production models have a spur hammer. The rounded hammers had a tendency to "bite" the web of the user's hand, but custom modifications to the hammer and/or the frame can correct this. My personal FEG-made pistol has been customized with a beavertail frame by Cylinder and Slide – no problem now.

Finishes on the FN-produced pistols have varied from a high-polish blue to a matte finish for the military models. German-produced pistols typically have very rough exteriors. Allied wartime Inglis pistols may have a Parkerized finish or a black paint-type coating. Grip panels can be either checkered wood or black plastic. Some of the Inglis pistols were produced with a lanyard ring.

Field stripping the High Power is extremely simple. Retract the slide, and engage the thumb safety into the foremost of the two notches in the slide. With the slide locked in this position, the slide stop is removed to the left of the pistol. Then the slide is retracted slightly to release the safety from the takedown notch, and it's slid under spring power forward and off the frame. Remove the recoil spring and its guide from under the barrel. Then remove the barrel from the slide. Reassemble in reverse order. This process really takes longer to describe than to execute. Disassembly of the sear and safety mechanism is not recommended without proper tools and know-how. *Trust me on this, I speak from personal experience!*

FN and other manufacturers continue to make the High Power today, and it remains in service with armies around the world. Compact, reliable, and with a high magazine capacity, the High Power was the first of the "wondernines" and still is a fascinating, classic handgun. As a service or defense pistol, it's hard to beat – even after more than 70 years on the market.