

WILLIAM BATTERMAN RUGER

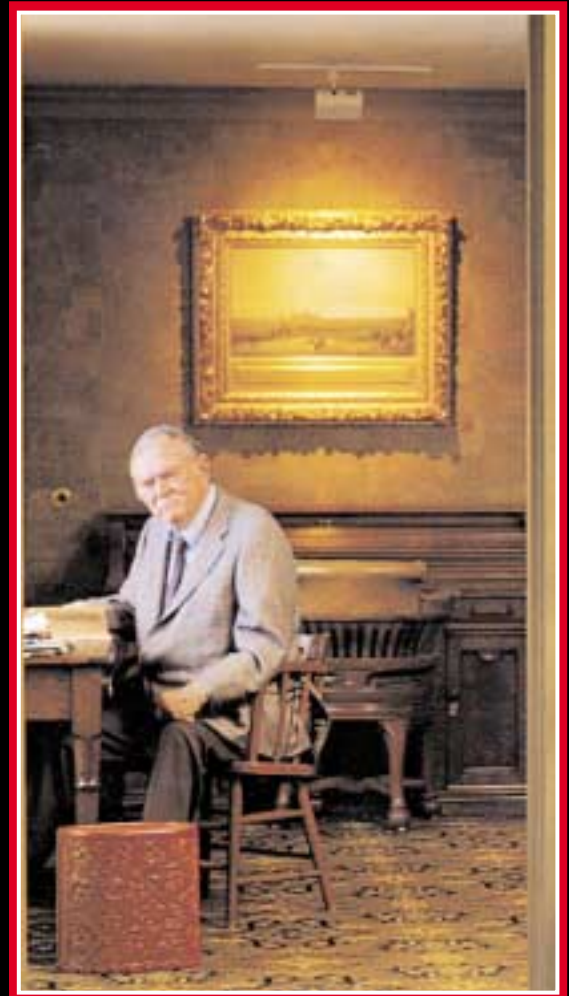
1916 – 2002

William Batterman Ruger, founder and Chairman Emeritus of Sturm, Ruger & Company, Inc., the largest firearms manufacturer in the United States, and widely recognized as one of America's greatest gun designers, died peacefully at home on Saturday, July 6, 2002 at age 86, after a period of failing health. A legend in American industry, Bill Ruger had a hand in the original design and time-honored styling of every firearm the Company has produced, and continued to work on new creations up until his death. Ruger steered the business from "it can't be done" remarks to a New York Stock Exchange corporation which has produced more than 20 million high-quality firearms for hunting, target shooting, collecting, and law enforcement.

Bill Ruger teamed with Alexander McCormick Sturm and established Sturm, Ruger & Company, Inc. in 1949. Subsequent to Sturm's death in 1951, under Ruger's leadership, the Company produced more types of sporting firearms than any commercial firearms manufacturer in the world. His first firearm introduction in 1949, a .22 caliber target pistol, is still one of the most popular target pistols in widespread use. Ruger pioneered the use of precision investment castings in the firearms industry in the 1950's, and later in the popular lines of high-tech titanium golf club heads for Callaway Golf and others.

Born June 21, 1916 in Brooklyn, New York, Ruger first developed his passion for guns when he received his own rifle from his father at age 12. As a student at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill in 1938, he came up with initial designs for a light machine gun for the Army. Ordnance officials launched Ruger into becoming a full-time gun designer. He helped invent and patent dozens of models of Ruger sporting firearms during the ensuing 53 years, which have been instant and enduring successes. His creative advertising talents stressed mechanical innovation and safety, and he coined the Company's motto, "Arms Makers for Responsible Citizens," in the 1950's. He retired as Chairman of the Board in October, 2000, at age 84.

Ruger's deep voice commanded respect in its tone and a deliberate sense of thought behind every word spoken. His philanthropy was especially evident through charities in communities where his factories were located, as well as the Naval War College and the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming, where he served as a member of the Board of Trustees for over 15 years. He was a strong supporter of the right of law-abiding citizens to keep and bear arms. His inspirational leadership and guidance will be sincerely missed by all who were privileged to work for him, and by generations of American sportsmen who are profoundly grateful for his genius in designing and manufacturing the quality firearms they value so highly, as a treasured part of our American way of life.



Photograph by Thomas Ames, Jr.