



**Above and detail right:** the J. Purdey & Sons gun paying tribute to Margaret Thatcher.



## Shooting fan? Thatcher admirer? Try this...

IT will be highly sought-after by some, probably a bit frightening to others...

If you are an admirer of the late Margaret Thatcher then a lot on sale in **Holt's** June 20 auction of fine modern and antiques guns in West London is well worth a look. Lot 1600 is surely a desirable item anyway: a J. Purdey & Sons engraved 20-bore single-trigger over and under sidelock ejector gun estimated at £30,000-50,000. But a significant part of the engraving is a portrait of The Rt.

Hon. The Baroness Thatcher in a circular cartouche, inscribed 'Margaret Thatcher Prime Minister 1990'.

Holt's says the vendor, a "long-time shooting man", came to commission this shotgun in 1988 because he so admired her efforts to encourage small/medium businesses.

He built up a highly successful company with two, quite different, arms. The first was a commercial cleaning firm based in the City, and the second acting

as the first importer for Great Britain of Le Chameau footwear.

One of the major stockists for Le Chameau was James Purdey & Sons, and as the relationship between them and the vendor developed, the aspiration to own one of their shotguns grew. It was delivered in 1990 and, somewhat ironically, "the day the gun passed into his hands was the day that Lady Thatcher resigned as leader of the party following intense pressure from her peers".