

U.S. MARTIAL ARMS Collector

and *Springfield Research Newsletter*



Number 171 June 2022

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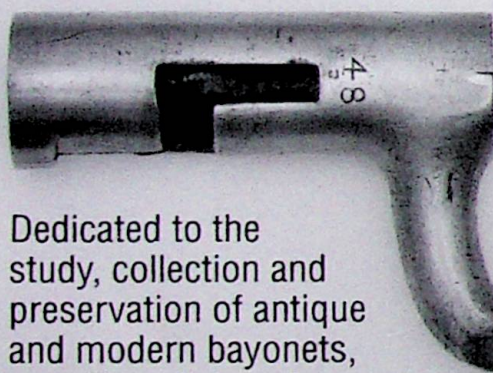
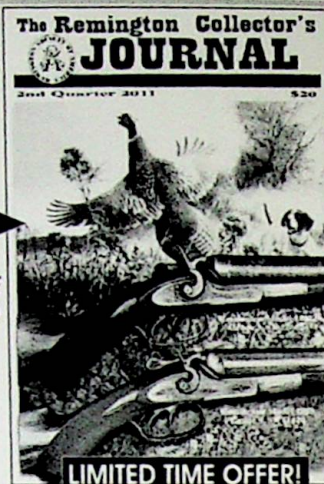
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EDITOR & PUBLISHER
Wayne P. Gagner

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Wayne P. Gagner

U.S. MARTIAL ARMS COLLECTOR

And

Springfield Research Service Newsletter

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**Cover: S. NORTH BERLIN CON
FLINTLOCK**

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Magazine rifle**

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**SPRINGFIELD RESEARCH
SERVICE and U.S. MARTIAL ARMS
COLLECTOR MAGAZINE.**

The US Martial Arms Collector magazine started out as a short pamphlet based on findings and research at the U.S. Archives. It has grown to a major magazine that is our main line of activities at Springfield Research Service. It consumes our time and takes precedence over other activities and products.

Part of our other services include serial number research and the writing of SRS letters based on findings from U. S. military sources, Congressional Records, and most importantly the U. S. Archives at several locations.

Our magazine subscribers receive a no-charge search of serial numbers that may result in basic letters, extended research letters and other letters on sales of weapons and other disposition of U. S. military and other arms.

The serial number looks ups are completed as time is available and accomplished second to magazine requirements and deadlines.

Serial number lookups are made using serial numbers with model and other manufacturing data. They require a subscriber to email the serial number and model to:

editor@usmartialarmscollector.com or to mail the inquiry to SRS, Box 126, Cabin John, MD 20818.

Hand-held cell phones are usually not acceptable as they are not reliable and audible messages are not acceptable,

We answer emails as soon as possible and work with a single email serial number at a time.

Our searching includes an answer back to a subscriber that shows if we have information. A letter can be ordered based on the look-up and paid for if we have the information on that serial number. All subscribers can also mail us at SRS box 126 Cabin John, MD 20818.

Payment can be made by check to SRS Box 126 Cabin John, MD 20818. PAYPAL may also be used.

Please be careful and check only boxes with payment instructions. Subscriber may or may not want automatic paid renewal status. We use only data provided by a subscriber to PAYPAL. Multiple emails only take more time and delays in our answers.

This has been an exceedingly challenging time to produce our magazine. The Covid-19 virus has affected many of our operations, including losses in the U.S. mail of checks and other documents.

Returns of magazines with incorrect addresses or no forwarding addresses are a continuing problem. This includes incoming delays of mail, long lines, longer lines to mail out magazines and deliverables. We try to visit our mailbox each day to check on incoming mail.

We have been able to answer most emails on serial number searches and complete our research letters. SRS has managed to save

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our sales data from Springfield Armory and loose-leaf documents required for detailed letters. These efforts require more hours to complete and may require additional costs. The U.S. Archives is still closed, and there are now missing documents that cannot be recovered. Government personnel are still working on these problems.

AUCTION HOUSES

Auction houses are maintaining high-volume sales and record-breaking high dollar purchases. They all expect this trend to continue.

SPRINGFIELD RESEARCH SERVICE DATA BASE STATUS

Covid-19 has limited the research that can be done at government facilities. SRS cannot visit the United States Archives at this time.

SRS relies on the U.S. Postal Office for all our products. Please email us if you have any problems. We continue our efforts to provide documentation letters but can only provide limited detailed letters. Standard letters and sales letters have a short delay but can be ordered. All letters are based on records that we have in our files, but records are in loose papers and require much more time to produce.

The best way to request a serial number search is by email,
(editor@usmartialarmscollector.com).

ADVERTISING

The magazine will continue publication in March, June, September, and December of

each year. We expect first class U.S. mail to be started on the first of each of the months listed. Deadlines for advertisers are March 2022 issue, February 14, 2022; June 2022 issue, May 14, 2022; September 2022 issue, August 13, 2022; December 2022 issue, November 12, 2022.

We reserve extra copies of each printed issue but cannot keep an unlimited number needed for reserves. Lately, SRS ran out of many contemporary issues. We rely on our current mailing lists for our subscribers.

Please send any changes to SRS Box 126 Cabin John, MD 20818. We always need updated names and addresses. This is a continuing problem.

SRS will continue to show last issue numbers after each subscriber's name. This will be reviewed to use the best way to keep subscriptions up to date.

Direct email to
editor@usmartialarmscollector.com is the only way to make sure that a message or photo is received.

CURRENT ISSUE

Issue 171 dated JUNE 2022 is the current issue and is set to be mailed the 1st of June 2022.

Cover

S. NORTH BERLIN CON EAGLE U.
STATES

U.S. Martial Arms Collector 171-3

SPRINGFIELD RESEARCH LETTER INFORMATION

The basic letters are \$50.00; sales letters with a document are \$65.00; and research letters run from \$175.00 and up.

COMMENTS AND INPUTS

Please send to:

editor@usmartialarmscollector.com.

An inquiry can also be made by U.S. mail to SRS Box 126, Cabin John, MD 20818. This will take an extended time.

LETTERS WRITTEN

U.S. Sharps Rifle, Serial Number 57452.

Shipped to Company B, 2nd Veterans Volunteer Infantry. June 1865.

This data was found in U. S. Archives Record Group 94, U.S. Army records, Washington, D.C. Rifle, U.S. Cal. .30,

Model 1903, Serial Number 1 498 393, U.S.

Cal. .30., Model 1903, NATIONAL MATCH, 1937, NEW, WITH TARGET AND STARGAUGE RECORD CARD.

Sold to Felix F. Pauly, R.F.D. NO. 2

Manitowoc, Wisconsin. June 18, 1937.

This data was found in U. S. Springfield Armory Sales Records, Springfield, Massachusetts. Record enclosed.

Rifle, U.S. Cal. .30, Model 1903, Sporting Model, Serial Number 1 262 355. Sold to W, J. Brewer, Yonkers, NY, May 25, 1924. This data was found in U. S. Springfield Armory Sales Records, Springfield, Massachusetts.

Rifle, U.S. Cal. .30, Model 1903, Sporting

Model, Serial Number 1 345 216. Sold to Bernard M. Snyder, Hudson, N. Y. July 8, 1930. This data was found in U. S. Springfield Armory Sales Records, Springfield, Massachusetts. Copy attached.

Type: Rifle, U.S. Cal. .30, Model 1903, Sporting Model, Serial Number 1 294 539. Sold to Lt. Kameil Maertens, Inf., Ft. Geo. Wright, Wash. April 25, 1929.

Type: Rifle, U.S. Cal. .30, Model 1903, NM, (USED), Serial Number 1 368 541. Sold By: O SO., NM 1737, Camp Perry, Ohio. To, Lt. Hollis O. Frey, 209 S. Vale Street. Bloomington, Illinois. September 15, 1937.

Rifle, U.S. Cal. .30, Model 1903, TYPE T, Serial Number 1 314 439. Sold to James Noonan, Cordova, Alaska, BY: Springfield Armory. February 10, 1930.

GUNSHOWS

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Appalachian Promotions has gun shows in Maryland & Pennsylvania. Free parking
Timonium Fairgrounds – July 9-10
Leesport Farmers Market June 11-12
Frederick Fairgrounds – Jan 22-23
Howard County Fairgrounds – CANCELLED
York Fairgrounds --June 25-26

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VIRGINIA ARMS COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION

The Virginia Gun Collectors Association (VGCA) is a not-for-profit organization that promotes gun collecting and firearms safety. The VGCA sponsors two gun shows at the Prince William County Fairgrounds in Manassas, Virginia. These are well attended shows where I collectors of antique, C&R and modern guns.

VGCA shows are still pure gun shows - guns and gun-related products only.

VGCA shows have some top vendors. The last show on March 26-27 was excellent quantity and quality of the antique, military surplus, C&R, and modern vendors. Shown was an extremely rare Reilly of London Comblain Patent Rifle.

This past show in March continued the tradition of superb educational and historical displays presented by members who exhibit guns from their collections and run the gamut from Revolutionary and Civil War guns to the modern. A unique feature of the VGCA shows is the evaluation table where people bring in firearms for a free evaluation. Twenty one firearms were examined, including a .44 caliber Richards conversion Colt M1860 Army revolver, a Winchester M1892 Trapper carbine, an Ithaca M1911A1 pistol, and percussion conversions of M1816 and M1835 muskets.

The next VGCA show will be at the Prince William County Fairgrounds in Manassas, VA on November 5-6. www.vgca.net.

MARYLAND ARMS COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION

The Original Baltimore Antique Arms Show was held on March 19-20, 2022. It was the 66th annual show and held at the Maryland State Fairgrounds, 2200 York Road, Timonium, MD 21093.

The 67th show will be held on March 18-19, 2023 at the same location. It is scheduled to have 1000 eight foot tables and will be hosted by the old line Maryland Arms Collectors Association. They can be contacted at Maryland Arms Collectors Association Box 1276 Ranson, WV 25438 (MACA@baltimoreshow.com).

Future shows will include a 16-17 March 2004 show. All shows have the finest collectable and antique long arms and pre-1898 handguns.

MACA members actively participate in volunteering an extensive effort to make sure that this show provides the best that is available.

The editors of Springfield Research and the US Martial Arms Collector Magazine reviewed the show that had extensive dealers and both new and old collectors offering quality arms of all types that were both rare and high quality. Many old-line collectors offered their past collections at very reasonable prices. The number of high-quality arms was throughout the show.

U.S. Martial Arms Collector 171-5

Originality: "A Collector's Dilemma"

By William R. Hansen

Question: I've been referred to you by a friend of mine in the RSA (Remington Society of America). When sharing my Remington '03 collection a few weeks ago, he commented that my prized early edition may have a few incorrect parts. However, he thought the one most questionable was the bolt. I purchased the rifle a few years ago from a reputable person who told me it was all-original. So, I'm attaching 4 digital photos of the bolt for your opinion. If you need other photos, please call me (contact information attached). I look forward to hearing back from you.

Cheers,

W. S., Houston, Texas

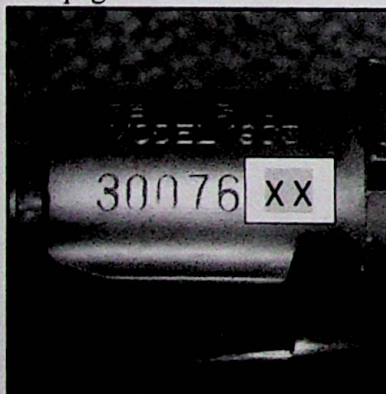
(Note: A response to the above was made directly to the inquirer regarding the bolt only since that's what he was mainly concerned about. While there may have been other issues with sub-components making up the bolt assembly or perhaps other rifle sub-assemblies, neither time nor photo availability permitted a comprehensive examination of the entire rifle. Generally, a more accurate originality assessment is possible for an individual component when viewed in relationship to the entire composition of the rifle. Since that wasn't feasible, what followed was a simple general reference evaluation based on the receiver and bolt only.)

Forward: The rifle to which this inquiry is addressed is SN 30076XX with a 01-42 barrel date. It is an early WWII production "M1903 Modified" that normally would have been assembled in November/December, 1941 consistent with Table No. 1 on the next page.

That also means the Receiver itself was completed even earlier, probably November. However, since it is mated to a 01-42 barrel, the actual rifle assembly appears to have been delayed for unknown reasons to at least January, if not thereafter. Such occurrences were not uncommon...nevertheless telling, as will become evident in the discussion that follows.

Before proceeding with a response to the question, it might be important to preface the discussion with some summary discourse affecting the collector today regarding the circumstances confronting manufacture of these rifles 80 years ago. In other words, if the issues

and problems faced in producing the rifle were complex or troublesome, then the collector can be assured they are passed on to those seeking to accurately restore such a rifle today, i.e. a *manufacturing dilemma becomes a collector's dilemma.*



As detailed in previous writings over the years, the early period of WWII M1903 manufacture was plagued with much turmoil made inevitable by the conflation of period circumstances and war-time urgency. The question usually asked is why? In summary, the simple answer was hasty and poorly thought-out decisions by the War Department during the heat of war

having won the day...no matter how well intentioned. Yes, rushed bureaucratic solutions often result in messy consequences.

As also disclosed via previous articles, the reality of re-deploying the retired, but

World War II: Remington Arms Co. - Model 1903 Rifle

History of Manufacture, Inspection & Shipping

(First 9 months)

Month/Yr. Ending	RA Tested & Approved		Ordnance Final			Remington / Ordnance		
	Pdg. Ord. Inspection		Inspection / Approval			Warehouse Shipping Statistics		
	Warehouse Actual	Inventory Cumulative	RA Payment Request	Final Adjust'd Ord. Apprl.	Inventory per RA Invoice	Shipped per RA invoice	Ord. Apprd. Actual	Shipm'ts Cumulative
10/41	101	101	0	0	0	0	0	0
11/41	1892	1993	0	0	0	0	0	0
12/41	7031	9024	891	1273●-1	891	0	11●-2	11
1/42	11,048	20,072	16,445	16,063	12,826	4510	4510	4521
2/42	15,158	35,230	11,981	11,981	10,806	14,001●-3	14,000	18,521
3/42	19,240	54,470	21,889	21,889	8704	23,991	23,991	42,512
4/42	24,189	78,659	25,982	25,982	3346	31,340	33,341●-4	75,853
5/42	30,479	109,138	28,691	29,470●-5	4244	27,793	25,792	101,645
6/42	30,351	139,489	32,941	32,162	2181	35,004●-6	34,994	136,639

NOTES:

- 1: Ordnance Final Inspection approved 382 additional rifles after close of Remington (RA) December 1941 billing period; therefore, formally included in the RA January 1942 invoice.
- 2: 10 rifles sent to the Springfield Armory (SA) for gauging and drawing update on November 21, 1941 plus 1 rifle gifted to Col. Roy L. Bowlin on December 10, 1941 were counted as shipped by Ordnance, but not yet reconciled in RA payment records. (**Note:** Col. Roy L. Bowlin was Deputy Chief of the Rochester Ordnance District (ROD). As ranking military officer at the time, he was also Chief Inspector. Chief of the District up until July 1942 was Mr. Erwin R. Davenport, a civilian.)
- 3: Remington credited itself in the February 1942 shipment accounting for the December 10, 1941 rifle gift to Col. Roy L. Bowlin,
- 4: 4 additional lots of 500 rifles (plus one rifle) were released for shipping after RA completed its monthly accounting for April 1942. RA credited itself the following month (May 1942).
- 5: Ordnance Final Inspection approved 779 additional rifles after close of the RA May 1942 billing period; therefore, formally included in the June 1942 invoice.
- 6: RA credited itself in the June 1942 shipment accounting for the December 22, 1941 Ordnance request for SA return of 10 rifles sent them November 21, 1941 for gauging and drawing update.

TABLE 1

mandated 20 plus year old '03 machinery and tooling in storage left over from WWI, was simply unqualified to manufacture an updated edition of the *"U.S. Rifle, Caliber .30, Model 1903A1"* in compliance with *"U.S. Specification 52-1-1A"* established and updated as of **November 21, 1938**...even as further updated in 1940. You can't expect 19th Century equipment and methodology to make a 20th Century product in quantity without significant problems. Indeed, these existential circumstances immediately became apparent in April 1941 upon installing the tooling at the Remington Arms Company (RAC) Ilion, NY factory. It didn't take long before the RAC realized this old rifle's machine tooling obsolescence was also discordant with current drawings as well as gauges and operational directives that had not been kept up to date.

Understandably, this opened the door to easing many standard requirements, leading to an incredible number of *"changes, revisions, exceptions and omissions"*. Bottomline: Before the first completed rifles were to see the light of day in October 1941 for formal U. S. Army acceptance, over *"600 changes in drawings were necessary in order to make the machine tools and gages conform to the drawings and specifications of the rifle"*. Remington's Vice President of manufacturing, Donald F. Carpenter in his post-retirement memoirs described the situation this way. The job we faced was *"one which any production engineer would have called impossible unless it were completely reprocessed and retooled from the bottom up"*. Indeed, in the course of producing these rifles the first 9 months, the U.S. Army formal plans, specifications and procedures handed Remington were foundationally useless except as a proximate guideline. It essentially became a trial and error campaign to produce enough components satisfying *"functioning and interchangeability"* requirements to pass final inspection and approval.

Frequent changes breed havoc and cause delays. Hence, the emergence of new plans and specifications for a hybrid variant edition identified as the *"M1903 Modified"* became the end product along with a new replacement Specification entitled **AXS-619**. Moreover, it would inevitably be subject to much iteration, particularly the Appendix I section dealing with component *Heat Treatment and Final Finish*. The war-time steel shortage had frequently necessitated use of alternative material sources, which affected critical metallurgical properties and standards, including heat range, temper, machinability, strength, hardness, etc. Remington's 1st draft introduced March 29, 1941, Appendix I would subsequently be revised many times resulting in a mix of substitute materials, heat treatment and final finish variations. For example, as related to the Bolt-Extractor assembly... which this article is concerned, Remington was approved at different times to the use of Browning (aka *"bluing"*), Black Oxide and Parkerization and/or a mix thereof.



Donald F. Carpenter

Needless to say, the Office of the Chief of Ordnance (CO) wasn't pleased with what was happening, but had little choice except to face this reality *"on-the-run"*. In due course, they approved the new Specification conditionally on September 2, 1941 saying: *"The practice of including such requirements and information as those contained in Appendix I is not considered desirable in Ordnance specifications, generally. However, in view of the special and temporary use in connection with this one contract for the British, retention of this appendix is approved"*. But, that turned out to only be the beginning.

Once entering the War upon the Pearl Harbor debacle and U.S. usurping the British contract for its own domestic reasons, thus upping the production demand from 1000 to 3000 rifles per day, the volume of revisions multiplied well into the multi-thousand level through the subsequent M1903A3 upgrade... an essentially new rifle that lead to yet another new Specification.

Discussion: From the foregoing, it shouldn't be any surprise to the reader why the collector today faces confounding challenges in restoring a *M1903 Modified* rifle without the availability of certifiable original reference standards upon which to rely. That's one of the reasons why the so-called "*Red Star*" treasure trove has become so valued. Moreover, the absence of accurate as-built historical records dealing with rifle changes plus a chaotic installation timetable frequently presents a stumbling block for historians as well as collectors. As previously discussed elsewhere in past writings, most of the RAC WWII official records were destroyed after the 10 year holding period elapsing circa 1955, leaving only a fortuitous access to desk-file remnants left over by supervisorial/managerial retirees as today's stop gap source.

Even so, most credible historian/authorities have come to realize that even in possession of both a certified *reference standard* backed up by a meager sum of preserved original document copies still in existence; one can still make wrongful assertions of originality. Things such as gun serial numbers not being assembled in order; component manufacture changes subject to inverse assembly-line practice ("*first in, last out*"); confusion of untimely oral approvals preempting formal paperwork authorization; delays caused by change in approvals subject to pre-

trial design/development before acceptance for use; cancelled and/or reversals of approvals; etc. can greatly muddle the waters. So, it goes without saying that anyone asserting an opinion with finite exactitude often leads to treading on thin ice without the big picture to help define and frame reliability.

The Author's Findings: After viewing the bolt photographs augmented by further homework and follow-up telephone conversations, the owner was advised as noted previously "*the bolt may or may NOT be original to the rifle*" as more detailed below.

One of the key principles this author has practiced over the years in validating as-built component correctness is time-chronology related. In other words, a component part already manufactured in quantity can always be available for future use if not cancelled, but not the other way around. It simply is **not** possible or permissible for a component **not** yet manufactured to be wrongly retrofitted to an earlier assembled rifle and be *asserted* as original to that rifle. Even then, a qualified assertion of rifle originality is still ill-advised without exhaustive "*red-flag*" viewing of the remainder of a rifle's sub-assemblies for composite integrity assurances. Again, overall credibility of originality must address an overall pattern relatedness of all parts making up the rifle to satisfy credible rationality.

Essentially, the foregoing rationale presented the basis for the conclusions reached for this inquiry. While a cursory glance of the Bolt may conclude the Bolt was original to the rifle, it fails to definitively pass the test without more thoughtful examination. The conclusions reached were predicated on original documentation that included: (See next page).

- (1) U.S Ordnance Department Specification **AXS-619**, including **Appendix I** regarding **Material Details** related to "*Heat Treatment & Final Finish*" as initially presented by the Remington Arms Co. February 10, 1941; and subsequent revisions and updates reviewed and approved by Ordnance through March. 5, 1942. (**Note:** While a few isolated amendments were made thereafter, most everything was held in place until advent of a completely new Specification **AXS 782** for the **M1903A3**).
- (2) Documents from the Remington Archives, including various Forms RD 5165, "*Change in Manufacture*" (C.M.) approved authorizations by Ordnance for manufacturing alterations to the **M1903 "Modified"**.
- (3) A selected *reference standard*. In this case **SN 3008004** believed to be a certifiable original from the "*Red Star*" collection whose serial number is in the proximity of the rifle being examined. Moreover, this rifle's bolt composition appears to satisfy all criteria known for its period of assembly.

First of all, it is not surprising that the inquirer along with his predecessor might have concluded the Bolt was original to the rifle. As previously observed, the Bolt body *only appears* to have a full fine machined circumference with a small gas hole, Bolt Stop detents, along with an Extractor claw containing a gas hole... all typical and expected for a rifle assembled in

November/December 1941. However, that alone can be inconclusive if unfamiliar with other less obvious configuration attributes. Upon employing the 3 step guidelines noted above, a summary of findings are shown in Table 2 hereon. The specific areas where the two rifles failed equivalency with **SN 3008004** are noted in the Table and will be discussed further below.

Table 2				
Bolt Originality of Remington M1903 "Modified" - SN 30076XX				
Item No.	Feature Description	Column A	Column B	Commentary
		SN 3008004	SN 30076XX	
1	Barrel Date	Nov-41	Jan.-42	
2	Bolt body diameter, Nominal	0.698/9"	0.697/8"	Within design tolerances allowed
3	Bolt body diameter after reduction @ locking & safety lugs	0.698/9"	0.694/5"	Column B: Mill cut bolt diam. to minimize filing per CM 126 (12/20/41)
4	Bolt body gas hole diameter	0.093"	0.093"	Per CM #28
5	Bolt under body "R" + punch mark	Yes	Yes	
6	Bolt stop detents & proof punches	Yes	Yes	
7	Bolt body finish - smooth surface	Browned	Black Oxide	Col. B: auth. by AXS 619 (Rev. 1) - 8/22/41
8	Extractor face - surface polished	Yes	Yes	
9	Extractor gas hole in claw	Yes	Yes	
10	Extractor "R" stamp location	Rear side-edge per CM #64	Interior flat underside	Col. B: relocate away a from friction surface@rear edge; CM unnumbered
11	Polished Extractor finish	Browned	Black Oxide	Col. B: Per AXS 619 (Rev. 1) - 8/22/41
12	Extractor collar finish	Browned	Browned	Col. B: Per AXS 619 (Rev. 1) - 8/22/41

There were 4 areas where the **SN 30076XX** Bolt visibly differed from the so-called *reference standard*, as follows:

- (1) The barrel date indicates the Receiver-Barrel assembly process was likely delayed.
- (2) It appears that a bolt body circumference reduction (...as measured) occurred around the locking and safety lugs per **CM #126** (Copy enclosed – next page).
- (3) The "**R**" stamp ID for the Extractor was placed on the interior flat underside (...as verified).
- (4) The final finish for the Bolt & Extractor appears to be Black Oxide.

CHECK TYPE OF CHANGE

REMINGTON ARMS CO., INC.

ARMS DIVISION

-000-

C. M. No.

RS-03-126

Change in Design

Change in Tolerances

Change in Equipment

Change in Material

Change in Process Methods & Quality

NOTICE OF CHANGE IN MANUFACTURE DATE

3-21-42

DWG. No.

MODEL NO. RS-03

PART NO. AND NAME BOLT #22

MCI NO.

R. I. NO.

SUGGESTION NO.

Description of Change (Give Present & Future Practice & Reason for Change)

Reduce dia. to .695-.005 between locking lugs, around safety lug and at rear.

REASON: To eliminate excess filing - Approved letter 12-20-41

Approved: R. J. Seiler
A. Singleton
C. C. Loomis
T. A. Haldeman
N. A. Chase
W. H. Davis
N. C. Peck
A. L. Lowe
G. O. Clifford

CHECK TYPE OF CHANGE REMINGTON ARMS CO., INC., ARMS DIVISION

Change in Design

Change in Tolerance

Change in Equipment

Change in Material

Change in Process Methods & Quality

NOTICE OF CHANGE IN MANUFACTURE

DATE 10-15-41

DWG. NO. C-45028

MODEL NO. RS-03

CM. NO. RS-03-64

PART NO. & NAME EXTRACTOR #21

M. C. I. NO.

R. I. NO.

SUGGESTION NO.

Description of Change (Give present & Future Practice & reason for change)

Add note to M/Dwg. "Mark 'R' 1/16" high" on bottom near rear end.

Add operation after Oper. 97 "file"

REASON: All parts to be marked "R" where possible.

Give Disposition of Inventories affected by this change and state if parts cannot be used in product already on market.

R.J.Seiler
A.Singleton
C.C.Loomis
L.E.Fake
W.A.Chase
W.H.Davis
N.C.Peck
C.L.Jones
A.L.Lowe
G.O.Clifford

Approved:

Conclusions: As informed previously, the rifle's owner was advised "the bolt may or may NOT be original to the rifle". The question is why? First, while the two rifle Receivers (...8004 & ...76XX) may have been manufactured during a comparable time frame, there is a strong likelihood the earlier SN receiving a later barrel was caused by delays in the Receiver's final inspection approval. The problem today is that no one can definitively explain why it was rejected or pulled off the line (delayed). It could have been for any number reasons... a serialization flaw; a gauge related tolerance problem; a machining flaw; a trial bolt operation malfunction such as Extractor Collar fit and tightness or Bolt Sleeve assembly malfunction ; etc. And finally, how long was it delayed ...1 month, 2 months, 3 months?

If delayed into either January or possibly February, 1942, the rifle automatically becomes subject to all the changes and revisions made in the 3 part Bolt assembly (Bolt body, Extractor & Extractor collar) since the previous November. In other words, such a delay would have embraced the change to reducing the bolt body circumference around the locking and safety lugs (CM #126) along with both the "R" ownership stamp relocation and later final finish options given the Extractor and Bolt body.

Enclosed on the previous pages are two Change of Manufacture (C.M.) documents for reader interest CM #126 and CM #64. CM #126 was typical of paperwork follow-up accounting actions formally approved on March 21, 1942 pursuant to the AXS-619 (Revision 2) update of March 5, 1942. It reduced the Bolt circumference around the locking and safety



lugs to 0.695-.005 "to eliminate excess filing". However, as noted thereon, this was also one of a package of many oral approvals authorized by Major W. H. Moore, Ordnance Assistant upon his December 19-20, 1941 inspection tour to Ilion, NY facility.

CM #64 was one of 29 adopted in October 15-16, 1941 pursuant to the decision to place a Remington identification mark "where possible" on all components. As related to its location on the Extractor, the 1/16 inch high 'R' stamp was to be placed "on the bottom rear end" edge. That's where it was stamped on SN 3008004. But, the problem soon discovered with that location was subject to friction surface wear during the cyclic operation of the bolt. Therefore, it was relocated to the interior (underside) flat surface as one of the package of decisions authorized by Major W.H Moore's December 19 -20, 1941 inspection trip to Ilion.

Bottomline: Since the barrel date of SN 30076XX is 01-42, the window of opportunity for actual rifle assembly for both the foregoing changes to the Bolt and Extractor had to await at least until January and could easily have been pushed into February 1942, wherein there is numerous evidence of other extant rifles with serial numbers containing 01-42 dated barrels having Bolts finished with Black Oxide and/or a Parkerization mix. Thus, without any certainty for why the receiver was delayed, Bolt originality can't be legitimately confirmed or denied, i.e. a *manufacturing dilemma becomes a collector's dilemma*. (Note: Serial numbers with a 01-42 barrel have been observed on these early guns assembled well beyond May 1942). The question more to the point is such a rifle generally challenged these days? Seldom, if at all...

EPILOGUE

In closing, this historian has come to appreciate not having the last word regarding this particular war-time contract. The nuances assaulting the journey of Remington's WWII experience manufacturing the last Springfield rifle before its well-earned official burial in 1947 has been a real eye-opener. Indeed, the experience was just as frustrating for the U.S. War-Department...especially the U.S. Ordnance Department and its many subdivisions. Driven by unwelcomed urgency demands defined by unforgiving expediency, a major breakdown of longtime standard practices and procedures resulted. Ordnance was simply not accustomed to losing all oversight control and direction of M1903 rifle manufacturing, or faced with getting out of the way almost entirely in deference to a private entity getting the job done...even though becoming eternally thankful they were able to.

As this article has attempted to expose ... getting the job done resulted in the departure of a well-developed and practiced normalcy far more structured, orderly and predictable than what really happened in this case. Those of us who are collectors of the rifle have literally been handed off the downside of such an outcome in many respects, particularly predictability. Hundreds of differing examples can be regularly cited for which space availability of this article is insufficient. It's not unusual to regularly find a mix of Barrels, Stocks, Bolts and other component part alterations 3 to 4 months older than the theoretical date of rifle assembly...and beyond. Needless to say, such paradigm confusion adds malcontent to affirming originality by folks not intimately familiar with the RAC experience during WWII. Moreover, it's led some of us who thought we knew ... to offer the following admonition to the collector of an early Remington made '03.

As an old saying goes: "*don't fix something that ain't broke*". Prudence through guarded caution is the best answer when doubt prevails. But, know what the risks are. The other thing that should also be remembered is what specific alteration attributes constitute a sufficient measure of originality, i.e. how far does one take their pursuit? In other words, if you're looking for absolute originality, you'll never get there without entering a domain that depends on counting *grains of sand*...meaning the normal collector generally cannot fathom how much truth is buried beyond visibility. Innumerable examples exist. Following are a few to make the point.

For instance, how many collectors of the RAC edition are aware that effective November 19, 1941, no less than twenty eight (28) changes were made to the Receiver (Drawing D 28371) alone... each directed to near imperceptible machining, radius, dimension and tolerance changes? Here is another dated 12/5/41 regarding redesign of the Stock guard screw bushing that changed the inside and outside diameter for a tighter stock fit and function compatible with the Receiver recoil shoulder set back. Or this one ...on 12/20/41, it was permitted to increase the diameter of the milled section of the Cocking Piece to eliminate blending cuts between the milled and turned sections. And the beat goes on...

Hundreds of these type of alterations were made during 1941 and 42, but have never become a primary criteria objective to satisfy collector validation of rifle originality. Why? Because most folks aren't even aware of them since they involve near invisible minutiae requiring micrometers, calipers and/or super magnification to even be able to discern ... let alone any documentation providing evidence backing them up. More rationally at this

juncture, who should really care except for some obsessive perfectionist? Bottomline: If your rifle fits the major change criteria pretty well having captured majority attention already... leave the rifle alone! It is likely close enough to satisfy most collectors of the future not looking for more debate fodder and headaches.

One last thing before signing off. The author is still occasionally asked about when/where/how the terminology of the "M1903 Modified" actually originated. It's been said many times in the past, but here it is again. The

nomenclature was actually decreed by official Ordnance memos and other collaborating documents in September 1941 BEFORE final production assembly was actually begun because no one knew what to call a rifle that had clearly departed from the **M1903A1** standard. It was subsequently used to describe the rifle throughout the early months of production, including the official **AXS-619** Specification formally adopted March 5, 1942 forthcoming from a final draft approved on August 22, 1941. (See partial 1st page below).

ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT
U. S. ARMY
TENTATIVE
SPECIFICATION

March 5, 1942
AXS-619 (Rev. 2)

RIFLE, U. S., CALIBER .30, M1903 MODIFIED.

A. APPLICABLE SPECIFICATIONS.

A-1. Ordnance Department Drawing, 42-2-93A, entitled "List of Drawings and Specifications, U. S. Rifle, Caliber .30, M1903A1" lists drawings and specifications necessary to manufacture this rifle.

A-2. All drawings and all specifications listed on the above mentioned drawing, of the revision date indicated thereon, form a part of this specification.

B. TYPES.

B-1. This specification covers one type of rifle known as:

Rifle, U. S., Caliber .30, M1903 Modified.

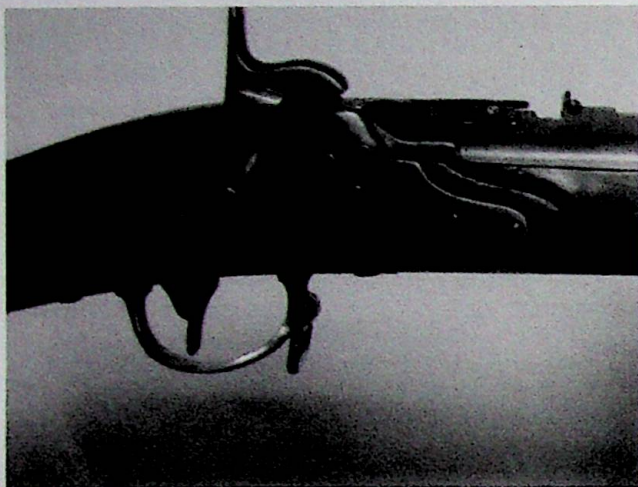
C. MATERIAL AND WORKMANSHIP.

C-1. Material. Material shall be in accordance with applicable drawings and specifications. Material specified as "Commercial" shall be in accordance with the requirements of Specification 52-0-1.

§ § § § § § §

The Merrill Breech Loading Rifle

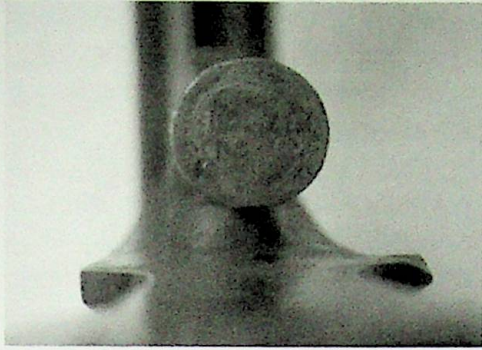
The Merrill rifle is a single shot, .54 caliber, percussion breech loader. These rifles were made by Merrill, Thomas & Company 239 Baltimore Street, Baltimore, Maryland. "They are ranked among the more rare and sought-after percussion breech-loading rifles."



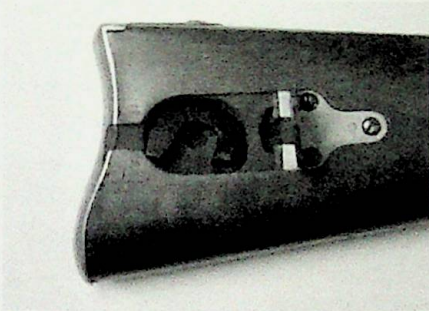
This example, serial number 8625, has a 33-inch browned barrel with three lands and grooves. The fore end cap, barrel bands, side plate, trigger guard, and patch box lid are brass. The other metal parts are finished bright except for the case hardened lock plate.



The rifle uses a combustible paper cartridge. To load, the knurled lever is lifted up and back. The attached link holds the copper-faced plunger. Once the cartridge is inserted into the breech, the lever is brought down pushing the plunger into the rear of the breech forming a seal. A percussion cap is inserted onto the nipple. Once fired, the process is repeated. A small "ear" on the lever acts as a cap lifter.



The government had orders for Merrill to produce 14,255 carbines and 770 rifles. It is not certain if the number of rifles contracted for includes 192 rifles that were purchased privately. The price was \$45 for the rifle, sword bayonet and scabbard, belt, cartridge box and cap box. The serial numbers for the rifle share a range with those of the carbines.



MARKINGS:

Lock plate; J. H. Merrill BALTO/PAT. JULY 1858/APL. 9 MAY 21-28-61 forward of the hammer and 8626 vertically behind the hammer

Breech lever: J. H. Merrill BALTO/PAT. JULY 1858 lightly struck and 8625 to the rear

Stock: None. Rear sight: Two leaves marked 3 and 5. Other: Assembly number 8/22 is found on 13 separate parts: patch box, trigger guard, trigger, lock plate, hammer, lever, link, plunger, barrel, receiver, rear sights, fore end cap, and lower band. The upper band has a mismatched partial number 7/0. The side plate and butt plate were not observed.

The 21st Indiana Volunteer Infantry Regiment was mustered into Federal service on July 24th 1861. They moved by train to Baltimore and were encamped in and around the city. Two companies, although organized as infantry, were stationed at Fort McHenry where they received training in artillery. In late September the regiment moved to Camp Murray near Druid Hill Park outside of Baltimore. While they were encamped at Camp Murray, in early October, the regiment were issued new Federal-blue overcoats and Belgian and Austrian rifles to replace their smooth-bore muskets. These were much inferior to other rifles. Merrill, Thomas & Company was all too happy to demonstrate their breech-loading rifles which could be loaded and fired much faster than muzzle-loaders. Company K was so impressed that the men decided to privately buy the Merrills.

When Company K received their rifles in December, Company H decided to buy them also. The cost, \$45, was a lot of money for soldiers making \$13 a month. The companies arranged for the government to take \$15 out of their pay, which included enlistment bonuses, over three months. Many of the soldiers received money from home to help tide them over.

The demand for these rifles in the regiment was so great, that on January 22nd the Regimental Commander, Colonel James H. McMillan, wrote to his congressman W. McKee Dunn to intercede with the Secretary of War to have the War Department order Merrills for the regiment. Two months latter the War Department ordered 566 rifles of which the regiment received about 400. The 21st was the only regiment to be equipped primarily with Merrill rifles. Other regiments received a few Merrills, primarily for use by sharpshooters.

In February 1862 the regiment was ordered south to Major General Benjamin Butler's Department of the Gulf. The department's area of operations included Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. The main objective was the capture of New Orleans which fell to Flag Officer David Farragut. Two days after Farragut received the surrender of the city, portions of the 21st were the first army troops to be landed in that city.

The 21st moved into quarters across the river in Algiers. They made forays to the west, south and north of Louisiana. Using captured trains and steamboats they could operate over large areas of the southern part of the state and they surprised the Confederates with the speed of their operations. This lead to the capture of large quantities of military goods as well as sugar, cotton, livestock, and a blockade runner taken as a prize. Several pieces of artillery fell into the hands of the 21st and he regiment decided to keep three pieces and used captured rebel mules to tow the cannon and caissons. This ad hoc battery got the appellation "Jackass Battery". Latter, the name "Jackass" would be applied to the whole regiment.

On 30 May 1862 the regiment moved north to Baton Rouge. The regiment continued operations against Confederate forces and to confiscate cotton, produce, livestock and, military equipment and supplies. On 28 July 1962 Confederate Major General John C. Breckenridge was ordered to Camp Moore, about 50 miles northwest of Baton Rouge, with the mission to retake the city.

The Battle of Baton Rouge commenced on 5 August. The 21st was in the thick of the fighting from the start. Most of the action involving the 21st took place in an area bounded by North Street on the north and just south of North Boulevard, and from 15th Street in the west to 22nd Street in the east. Some of the fiercest fighting occurred in the vicinity of the Magnolia Cemetery. Initially the 21st was pushed back by determined rebel attacks to the vicinity of 16th Street. From there, along with units from Maine, Michigan and Massachusetts, they mounted an attack that finally drove the Confederates from the city. After the battle, Company H's captain, John Campbell, bragged that his men "did wonderful execution with their new guns". Colonel McMillan later wrote to the Indiana governor: "My Merrill rifles went over 45 rounds and the others averaged over 30." Confederate prisoners asked how many Indiana regiments were present at the battle and were surprised to hear that there was only one. They had encountered Indianans on three area of the battlefield.

One rebel officer said: "If it weren't for those damned Indianians, Baton Rouge would have been captured."

In a letter to Merrill, Thomas & Company Colonel McMillan praised the rifles stating: "his boys armed with the Merrill rifle fired at least 50% more shots than those armed with the Enfield or Austrian rifles during the battle of August 5, 1862 at Baton Rouge."

On 7 August Breckenridge moved his forces 25 miles north to Port Hudson to fortify the bluff above the Mississippi. The fortifications between Port Hudson and Vicksburg would keep the river open for goods and men for almost another year. Port Hudson was a significant chapter in history of the 21st.

In February 1863 the regiment was redesignated the First Indiana Heavy Artillery. Now they are the Jackass Regiment. Although an artillery regiment, the companies were referred to as companies. They were originally equipped with 30-pounder Parrott rifles and would eventually use 20-pounder Parrotts, siege mortars, siege guns and brass rifles. However, the Merrill rifles continue to prove their worth during the siege of Port Hudson.

Commencing on May 23rd 1863, the siege of Port Hudson was the longest siege of the Civil War. It ended 48 days later on July 9th, five days after the surrender of the Confederates at Vicksburg. The Indianan regiment as a whole provided vital artillery support, but found time for individual contributions. Company A was challenged to take out a rebel artillery piece, 4.62 inch rifle named Lady Whitfield. Taking up a position 200 yards ahead of their lines the Indianans began firing at the Lady Whitfield. Sharpshooters from the company kept the rebel artillerists away from the piece and they could not move it into a position to return fire and it was finally damaged and dismounted. The commander of the 6th Michigan borrowed Merrills from a company of the regiment, giving the company a receipt.

References: For a complete history of the 21st/1st see Phillip E Faller's "The Indiana Jackass Regiment in the Civil War, A History of the 21st Infantry/1st Heavy Artillery Regiment, with a Roster", McFarland and Company from which all the above quotes are taken. This is an excellent history of the regiment with an extensive examination of the use of artillery, both Union and Confederate, at Port Hudson. Faller also wrote two extensive articles on the Merrill rifles and carbines in the July and August 2001 issues of "The Gun Report". John D. McAulay's "Civil War Breechloading Rifles", Andrew Mowbray Inc, has information on other units receiving Merrill rifles and their effectiveness.

Photos of Merrill Loading Tools.



The model 1882 Chaffee Reece magazine rifle

These rifles are based on designs by General J. N. Reece (commonly misspelled Reese) and Reuben Chaffee and approved for production and field use by the Ordnance Department in 1882 for testing alongside the Lee and Hotchkiss rifles. Only 753 were manufactured at Springfield Armory in 1884, making it one of the rarest manufactured by the armory. Colt had manufactured the original test rifle, but their quoted price per gun and production time were too high. The rifles were sold off as surplus after trials. Many were damaged and simply sold as scrap.

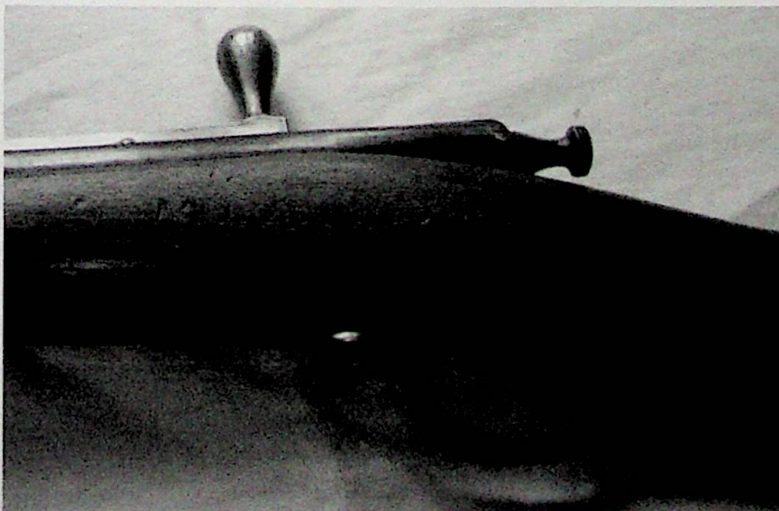
In 1882 a Board of Ordnance committee was formed to evaluate potential candidates for a magazine fed that should be acquired in sufficient numbers to see field trials. Over fifty arms were submitted and saw initial testing, and the board found that the submitted designs from Lee, Chaffee-Reece and Hotchkiss were the most promising. The result was the acquisition and field-testing of the US M-1882 Lee Magazine Rifle, the US M-1882 Chaffee-Reece Magazine Rifle and the 3rd Model Hotchkiss Rifle. 750 each of the Lee and the Hotchkiss rifles were obtained for field trials, and 753 of Chaffee-Reece Rifles manufactured by Springfield Arsenal for field trials. The Colt Patent Firearms Manufacturing Company had produced the original Chaffee-Reece test rifle, but when Colt was approached to manufacture the arms for field trials, the Ordnance Board was quoted the astronomical price of \$150.00 per rifle (about \$3,400.00 per rifle at 2013 prices)! Additionally, Colt would only produce two hundred of the rifles, not the required 750. As a result, the Ordnance Board approached the Springfield Arsenal to produce the Chaffee-Reece design. Springfield modified equipment on hand, left over from the manufacture of the experimental M-1871 Ward Burton Rifle, and produced 753 US M-1871 Chaffee-Reece Rifles at a price of \$56.28 each (about \$1,280.00 in today's money), about one-third of what Colt had bid to produce them!

The Chaffee-Reece (often misspelled "Reese" by even the most dependable and well known of authors and researchers) was a bolt-action, magazine fed rifle, chambered for the 45-70 Government cartridge. The rifle held six cartridges in the magazine tube in the buttstock and one in the chamber. The magazine was loaded through a trap in the butt, and the bolt had to be open to release the pressure on the feed device to allow it to open. Rather than a spring feed magazine, the Chaffee-Reece design used a ratcheting cartridge feeder that pushed a new cartridge forward each time the bolt was worked. A small lever, mounted on the forward right side of the receiver activated a magazine cut-off, which allowed the rifle to be fired as a single shot rifle. This held the contents of the magazine in reserve for rapid fire when necessary. The 9-pound, 9-ounce rifle (empty weight) had a 27 7/8" long blued barrel, secured by two springs retained, solid barrel bands. The upper band held a sling swivel and a stacking swivel, with the lower swivel being mounted on the trigger guard bow. The adjustable, long-range rear sight was of the US M-1879 pattern (as used on the M-1879 Trapdoor) but was graduated for the ballistics of the Chaffee-Reece and was marked **C-R** on the left side. All the metal was blued, with a case-hardened receiver that had a smoky blackish-gray color and a bright bolt. The front sight doubled as a bayonet lug for an angular socket bayonet. The guns were not serial numbered. The stock was marked with an inspectors' cartouche at the upper right corner of the reverse buttstock, with the inspectors' initials over the date 1884. A **P (within a circle)** firing proof was struck behind the trigger guard in the stock.

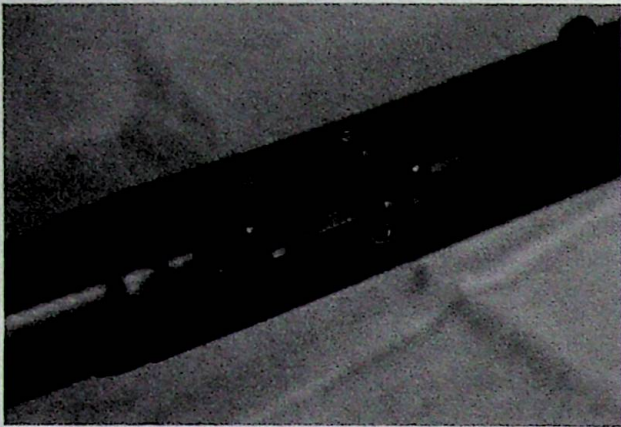
U.S. Martial Arms Collector 171-20

The **Chaffee-Reece** rifles entered field service for testing in late 1884 and was met with negative reviews. Ninety-five reports on the rifles from the field during the trials, with only fourteen of the reports reflecting that the Chaffee-Reece was superior to the current Trapdoor system, or the other two magazine rifles then being evaluated. The rifles saw service with elements of US 8th, 9th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 23rd & 25th Infantry, as well as the 1st US Artillery. Although some of the reports lauded the magazine system of the rifle and some commended its accuracy, most reports were not positive. The primary complaint was that the butt magazine system weakened the stock significantly and made it susceptible to breakage. Other complaints revolved around the difficulty to keep the gun clean (making the bolt difficult to open and close), the heavy trigger pull (making accurate shooting difficult), the difficulty in performing the manual of arms with the rifle, and the deficient performance with reloaded ammunition in the guns. By the end of the first quarter of 1886, the Chaffee-Reece rifles were returned to the Ordnance Department stores and were replaced by US M-1884 Trapdoor rifles. Over the next couple of decades, the stocks of Chaffee-Reece rifles were sold off, with functional rifles being sold for less than 10% of what the guns had originally cost. Many of the guns had damaged stocks or were not functional, and these guns were sold at scrap metal prices.

These rifles are based on designs by General J. N. Reece (commonly misspelled Reese) and Reuben Chaffee and approved for production and field use by the Ordnance Department in 1882 for testing alongside the Lee and Hotchkiss rifles. Only 753 were manufactured at Springfield Armory in 1884, making it one of the rarest manufactured by the armory. Colt had manufactured the original test rifle, but their quoted price per gun and production time were too high. The rifles were sold off as surplus after trials. Many were damaged and simply sold as scrap. This example has standard markings and features including the crisp "SWP/1884" cartouche on the left side of the butt and circled script "P" on the underside of the wrist.



Above: Left side of rifle with sling swivel and trigger guard.



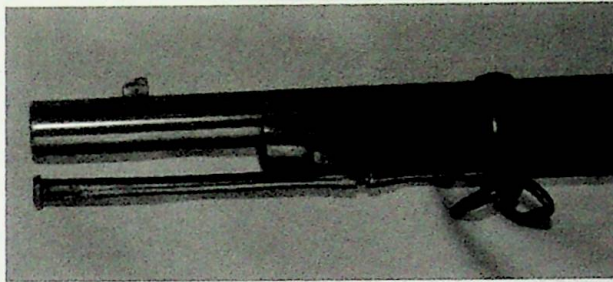
Left: Rear sight.



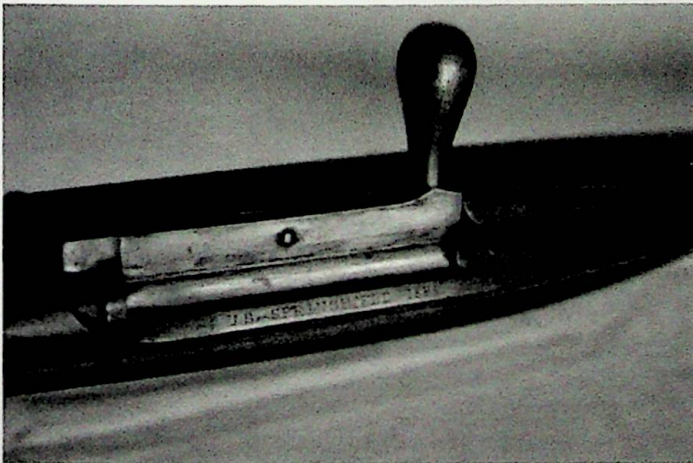
Left: Butt stock trap assembly



Left: Bolt open and sling swivel



Above: 45/70 caliber muzzle with ram rod and upper band.



Left: U.S. Springfield 1884 markings.



Left: Barrel markings. *U.S. Martial Arms Collector 171-23*

COLLECTORS NOTE 171-1

MERRILL

5/16/2022

SERIAL	MODEL	MMDDYY	USAGE
11794		121964	CO A 14TH KANS VOL CAV
11796		110264	CO A 14TH KANS VOL CAV
11828		110264	CO A 14TH KANS VOL CAV
11971		63	CO M 7TH IND VOL CAV
11974		63	CO M 7TH IND VOL CAV
11975		63	CO M 7TH IND VOL CAV
11978		63	CO M 7TH IND VOL CAV
11984		63	CO H 7TH IND VOL CAV
11984		63	CO M 7TH IND VOL CAV
11988		63	CO M 7TH IND VOL CAV
11990		63	CO M 7TH IND VOL CAV
11996		63	CO H 7TH IND VOL CAV
11997		63	CO H 7TH IND VOL CAV
11998		63	CO G 7TH IND VOL CAV
11999		63	CO M 7TH IND VOL CAV
12004		63	CO M 7TH IND VOL CAV

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR BASE ALAMOGORDO, NEW MEXICO

450th Bomb Group Defective M1 Carbines SAGANAW S G Manufacture

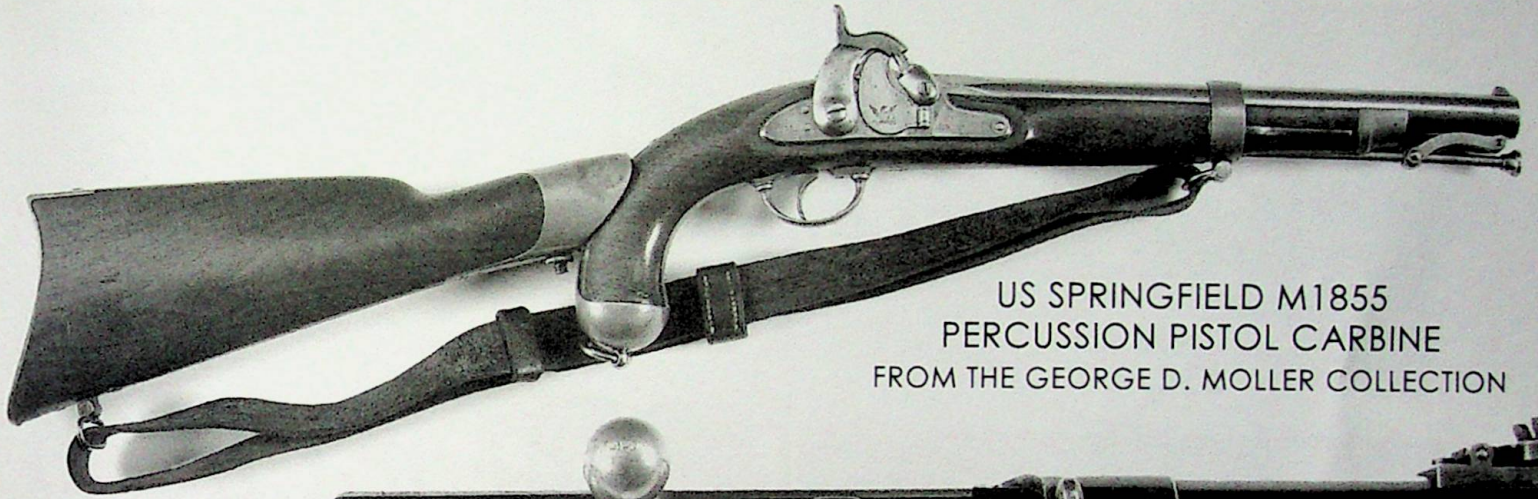
1849116	1847695	1848866	1847088	1847335
1840527	1846194	1840248	1845894	1844198
1848524	1848564	1845968	1848894	1848230
1848038	1843876	1848070	1847345	1837773
1848823	1847482	1837312	1848418	1844789
1836710	1846806	1844023	1844935	1844076
1847654	1848931	1829619	1847397	1812659
1819340	1848539	1848372	1848770	1843394
1844949	1829456	1849273	1844876	1846438
1848280	1848561	1846708	1848247	1831570
1844468	1851391	1844205	1846048	1847866
1843463	1848243	1848550	1847712	1848486
1796485	1848206	1846939	1847308	1848788
1849229	1837099	1819131	1848647	1848559
1848407	1847778	1848565	1847360	1844774
1848321	1846764	1848534	1848328	1848575

MORPHY

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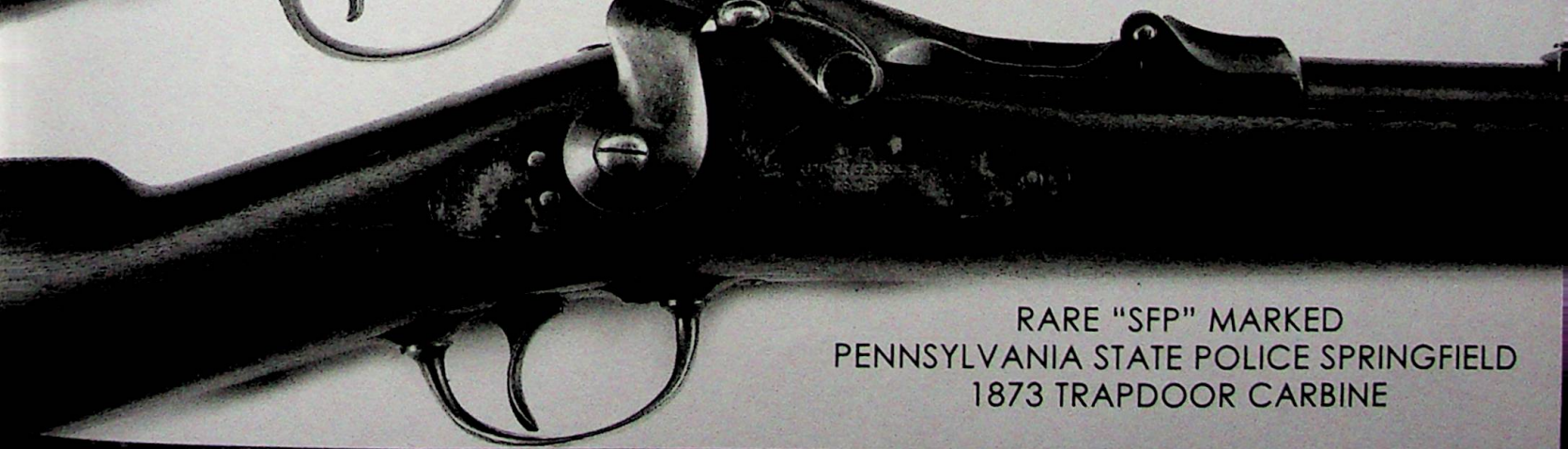
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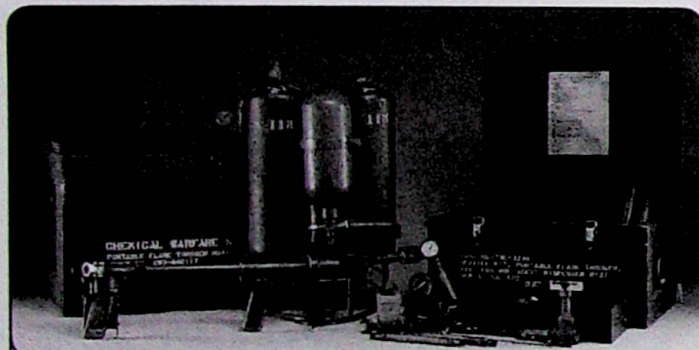
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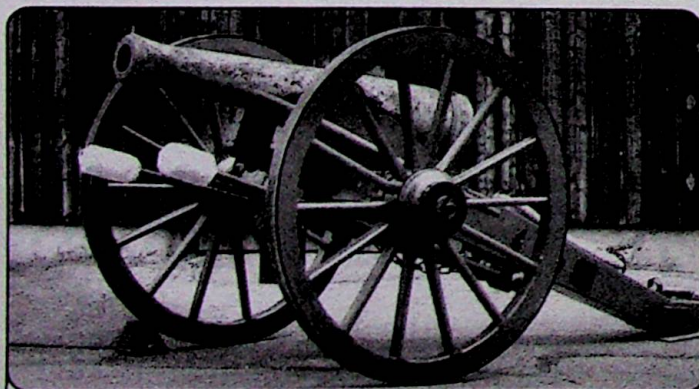
Savage Model
1907 US Test Trials
Semi Auto Pistol.
(Est. \$12,500-17,500)

SOLD
\$18,800



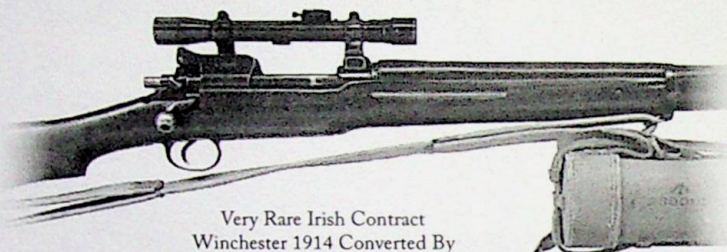
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Civil War W.H. Horstmann & Sons Model 1840 Foot Officer's Sword with Scabbard Inscribed to Union General and First National Rifle Association President Ambrose E. Burnside

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

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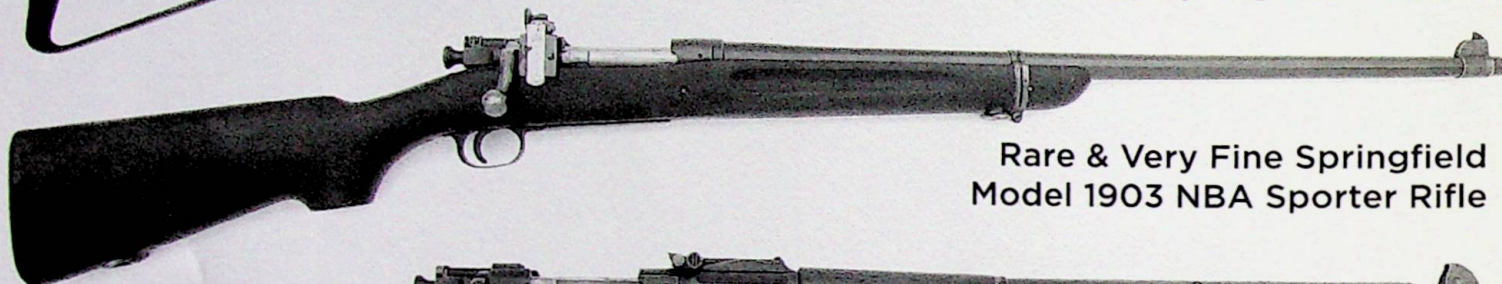
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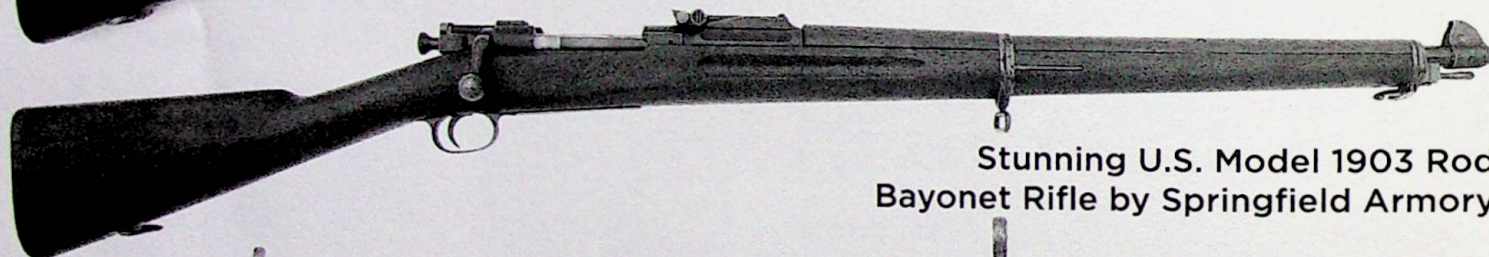
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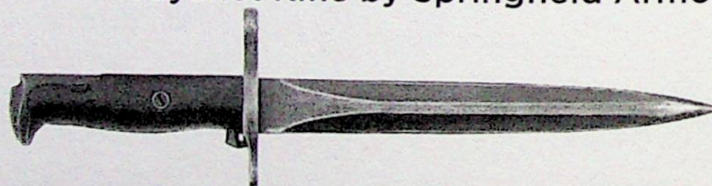
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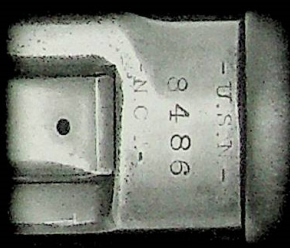
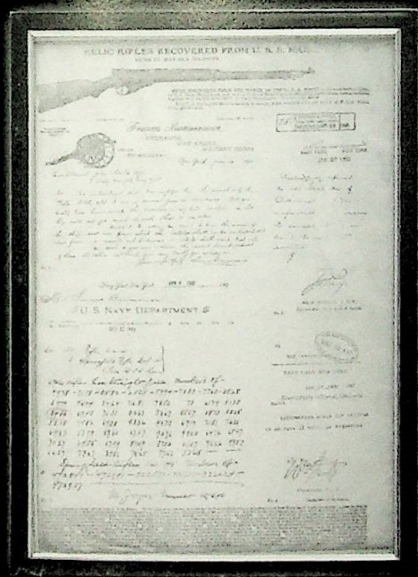
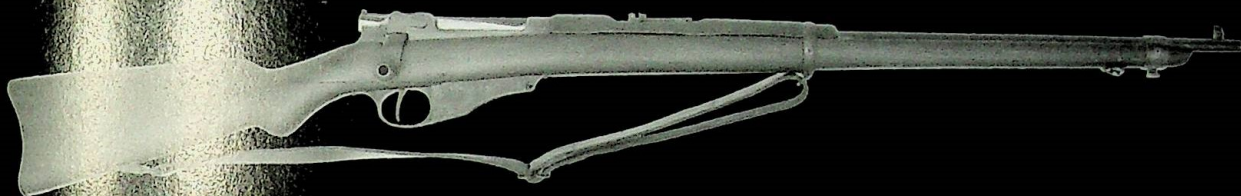
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