

George Madis
P. O. Box 545
Brownsboro, Texas 75756

Model 1886 Special Order Rifle Number 53238

A very careful inspection has been made of this rare Winchester, inside and out, and I find it is all original or made by Winchester.

According to the original Winchester warehouse records, this was a rifle in caliber .40-82 with an octagon barrel twenty-one inches in length. The trigger is listed as "plain", and the stock is noted as a plain pistol-grip with a shotgun butt. It was received in the Winchester warehouse on April 4, 1891 and was shipped out the same day.

All of the markings are correct and original; these include the barrel markings and those of the upper and lower lugs.

Because of the special short barrel, the caliber marking was placed on one of the side flats of the octagon barrel, since the rear sight is so close to the receiver that there is not sufficient space for the caliber marking in the usual place on the top rim of the barrel.

Full magazines as on this rifle were considered standard. The front sight is of sporting style with the integral

nickel-silver blade and the rear sight is of semi-bushhorn sporting style with the original elevator.

Assembly numbers were used on earlier Winchester to insure the correct components would be re-assembled on the correct gun.

On the inside left lower tang is seen assembly number "471" and "CFS".

This assembly number is also found on the stock under the upper tang and on the inside toe of the steel buttplate as well as on the back of the stock under the buttplate.

All of these assembly numbers metal and are original. The marking "CFS" on the lower tang would indicate the receiver was to be "color-finished". When Winchester used this term it meant the receiver was to be color case-hardened. The marking "S" would mean a shotgun buttplate, and the letter "S" is seen on the inside toe of the buttplate as well as on the inside lower tang.

Color case-hardening is seen on the forward tip, receiver, hammer and lever, and most of this original finish remains, with very little wear on these parts.

Winchester blued finish was given to the barrel, magazine tube, buttplate and many other parts, and a high degree of this

original bluing remains.

As noted in the records, this rifle has a pistol grip with plain wood; this wood is of quarter-sawn walnut. It is very unusual to find a pistol grip Winchester with straight grain walnut, since most pistol grips were checked. The "ebony" inlay in the base of the pistol grip is original and correct for a gun in this serial range.

Number 53238 is in outstanding condition, and shows no use. It is hard to explain why anyone would order a rifle exactly to their specifications and not use the gun; with the exception of storage and handling marks, this rifle is in new condition, even with the age of over one hundred years.

With the rare combination of features such as plain uncheckered walnut with a pistol grip, very rare twenty-one inch barrel and outstanding condition, this rare Winchester will be a star in any fine collection or museum.

George W. Jones