

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

Model 1886 Rifle Serial Number 8801

I have carefully examined this rare rifle, both inside and outside, and find it is all original as made by Winchester.

Records show this serial number was assigned to the 1886 model in 1887. Winchester warehouse records state this rifle was received in the warehouse on October 26, 1887 and it was shipped out the same day with 17 other guns on order number 22597.

One of the rarest special features to be seen on old Winchester are the extra-heavy barrels. Usually called "Buffalo Barrels" by collectors, in a recent mode at Winchester it was found that only one of each 350 guns in the 1886 had barrels heavier than standard.

Because of the excessive weight, these barrels are very rare.

Worked under the barrel is "40-82", "M", "M" and "3". Calibers are usually worked on barrels both on top and on the bottom. The letters "M" and numeral "3" are the marks of assemblers and fitters who worked on the gun.

On the receiver under the forward is the letter "X", also the mark of one of Winchester's workers. The groove for the magazine tube under the barrel is much deeper on these guns with heavy barrels, due to the size of the

large barrel.

Another special on this gun is the set trigger; in the Winchester count mentioned above, it was found that only one of each 31 guns had set triggers.

Twenty six mil round barrels were offered as standard for the 1886 rifles; cast iron barrels were much more popular in the early days.

All markings on this gun are correct and original. On the front of the stock, inside of the receiver, is the number "5", the stamp of the stock fitter.

A sporting style front sight was provided, and it has been slightly altered when the gun was in use. The rear sight is the "Sporting Leaf" style, with the semi-buckhorn profile and cheeked sides, correct on this gun.

A Lyman tang peep sight has been added since this rifle left the factory, and appears to have been on the gun when it was in use. Under this sight, on the base, is the code letter "N", showing this is the correct sight for an 1886.

This is an early 1886, and has the correct early markings as well as early variations. The lever latch of first models has a spring-loaded latch on the lever, as seen here.

Number 8801 is in caliber .40-82 W.C.F., and while it was an excellent cartridge, it sold in relatively limited numbers.

1886 Number 8801

(3)

Full magazines were standard for 1886 rifles, as were crescent buttplates as seen on this rifle. Under the buttplate is a shallow hole, bored to lighten the gun and to improve the balance.

Magazine caps are secured to the magazine with a screw, and the cap has a small extension into the barrel for added strength.

Straight grain oiled finish walnut was used for the stock and forend here, and it remains in good condition.

Overall this rifle shows use, and now has the grey-brown patina of age.

With the rare features, now well over a century old, this is a fine collector's Winitala and it merits a place in any collection of rare arms.

Henry Madis