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Model 1895 Winchester Muesket Serial Number 18689

I have carefully inspected this fine Winchester, inside and out, and have determined it is an original U. S. Muesket.

Twenty-eight inch barrels were stocked for muskets in this model, and this is the length of this barrel.

Barrel markings on muskets consist of a nickel-steel marking, the caliber ~~mark~~ mark and in the case of this gun, the small letters "KSM" on the top rear of the barrel.

Kelly S. Morse was the U. S. inspector for the model 1895 government contracts, and his inspection marks are found on the barrel, trigger link, hammer, lever, top of the buttplate and on the outside rear bottom of the forend.

On the bottom of the barrel are seen "UP", which was Winchester's symbol for "inspected-proved", indicating the barrel and other components had been gauged and visually inspected after proof firing. Other marks under the barrel are "B", "Z" and "S". These letters are the marks of the various assemblers, fitters and inspectors at Winchester.

The letter "P" is seen on the receiver under the forend, "H" is stamped on the bolt and the letter "D" is stamped on the rear of the front barrel band. On

the starts under the receiver is the letter "A".

These letters are also the marks of the various Winchester workmen who worked on this gun.

On the left side of the receiver is the address and patent markings. The additional marking "AUG. 23. 98" is stamped under the address and patent lines. This date is for the patent on a minor mechanical improvement, and is rarely seen since a new address-patent die was made shortly after the additional patent was granted.

Upper tang markings of number 18689 are of standard early style. Contract for on 1895 in this serial series.

On the top front of the receiver is seen the rare "U.S." marking, showing this is one of the U.S. Contract muskets.

While it is known the U.S. Ordnance Department ordered 10,000 muskets, problems were encountered with the U.S. inspectors.

At the time of the contract and manufacture of the 1895 muskets, a large variety of various arms were already in service use. The Ordnance Department favored an additional mode for the service, and Winchester encountered many problems in getting these muskets passed by the government inspectors.

While the total of 10,000 muskets which were ordered were delivered, only 100 of the guns were sent for evaluation to the Philippines. The evaluation was not favorable for Winchester, and these 100 guns were sold to the well-known Boston arms dealer William Reed and Company. Marceline Hortley of New York City purchased the remaining 9900 arms. It is believed the 100 guns purchased by Reed and Company were sold on the commercial market and the 9900 purchased by Hortley were sold in Cuba.

Specifications for the muskets were as seen here; they also called for "good dense straight grain walnut, or on this musket. While the stocks, fore and hindguard of this Winchester show use, they are sound and remain in excellent condition.

Ramp style front sights were standard for the 1895 muskets, and a steel sighting blade is pinned to the ramp. Rear sights are of standard musket style, with graduations of 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 on the left side and graduations from 8 to 18 on the top slide. Rear sights are attached to the barrel with two screws. The small letter "M" is stamped on the rear sight; this was probably the Winchester man who regulated the sights.

The front barrel band has a steel

for a saber bayonet.

The front and rear sling loops as well as the "keeper" eye on the front of the magazine are original and correct.

One of the complaints on the 95 was the location of the front sling loop, which differed from other rifles in the service.

A good degree of the original blued finish is seen on the steel parts of this Winchester, and overall the gun shows use but it is in unusually good condition.

Most of the U. S. mounted arms are in very poor, abused condition.

Original U. S. mounted 1895 Mueslets are among the rarest of Collectors' Winchesters, and number 18689 will be an outstanding gun in any collection of war arms.

Gray Muelie