



Winchester 1895 Saddle Ring Carbine s/n 63145

I have carefully examined this rare model 1895 carbine and have outlined my findings herein.

Winchester 1895 SRC .405 WCF s/n 63145 mfg 1910 - 21" round barrel; 3-leaf express rear sight fastened with two screws; factory threaded hole (for Lyman 21 receiver sight) and plug screw is provided in top left rear side of receiver; forged front sight base with Marble's Sheard "Gold" pinned front sight, marked Marbles on right side and Sheard on left side; transitional-style patent date marked on left side of receiver to rear of address lines; "405 WCF" is marked on top forward center of receiver along with the WP inside oval proof mark; oil finish walnut stock, forend & handguard w/factory screw eyes; "405" is stamped in left rear side of forend; trap door in steel carbine buttplate with government wiping brush cleaner. Condition: Receiver mostly grey with only traces of blue turned plum remaining in the protected areas; lower tang is patina; mag retains 80% thinning blue; lever retains 60% blue; barrel has thinning blue; stocks are proud to the metal with no signs of sanding or refinish but with the usual handling marks dents and mars; there is mysterious 1/16" diameter hole through the stock toward lower rear of buttstock and appears to have been done back when the gun was in use; mechanical action is sound and repetitively chambers 405 rounds from the magazine; bore is brilliant with sharp rifling.

Markings Observed:

On the upper surface of the lever loop:

- Triangle mark with an I inside (general inspection mark)
- 14 (fitter or assemblers mark)

On the right side of the trigger link:

- Triangle mark with an I inside (general inspection mark)
- 23 (fitter or assemblers mark)

Under the forend, on the front surface of the receiver:

- Triangle mark with and I inside and a superimposed P (general inspection mark)
- 33 (fitter or assemblers mark)

On the top of barrel, under handguard, are the following factory markings (from receiver toward muzzle):

- 405 W.C.F.
- WP in oval proof mark
- -----NICKEL STEEL BARREL-----
ESPECIALLY FOR SMOKELESS POWDER

Under barrel, the following factory markings are seen (from receiver to muzzle):

- 405 (caliber)
- Triangle mark with and I inside and a superimposed P (general inspection mark)
- 4 (assembler or fitters mark)
- VP inside oval (Viewed-Proved mark)
- BNS (Bessemer Nickel Steel)
- B (sideways)
- Unknown markings

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- 405 WCF (caliber)
- WP in oval proof mark
- 307 (work order number, stamped inside original forend retaining lug dovetail)
- WP in oval proof mark
- “307 WK. NO.”

Under the wrist, at the forward surface of the stock:

- Triangle mark with and I inside and a superimposed P (general inspection mark)
- 31 (assembler or fitters mark)

There are no markings under the buttplate.

Close inspection (under the handguard) of the top surface of the barrel reveals the original location for the threaded rear sight mounting holes which have since been plugged. On the lower barrel surface, there is a second dovetail slot in which the forend retaining lug has been installed, and is located exactly 1” forward of the original dovetail slot.

Based on a thorough examination of this carbine, both inside and out, it is the opinion of this writer that this gun was originally configured in one of Winchester’s standard carbine caliber offerings (as of 1910) which was either .30 Army (30-40 Krag) or .303 British caliber, and fitted with a Lyman 21 receiver sight. The carbine was then returned to Winchester to be rechambered, with the barrel set-back by 1” in length, re-bored, re-rifled, re-crowned and rechambered in .405 WCF. The face of the bolt was professionally modified to properly accept the .405 cartridge rim. A second forend retaining dovetail slot was machined into the bottom of the barrel exactly 1” forward of the original slot and the Lyman 21 receiver sight was removed and replaced with a three leaf express sight fitted with mounting holes relocated by a corresponding 1” forward in order to maintain the original and proper sight radius. Neither the forend nor the handguard was modified nor did they require modification thanks to the work done to the barrel. The original caliber markings were polished off the barrel surface and after the re-chamber work was complete, the gun was proof-fired by Winchester and appropriately marked in the various locations outlined above. It is interesting to note that “405” was stamped on the side of the forend to obviously serve as a “caution flag” alerting any shooter who may have intended to chamber any round other than the 405. Because of the authenticity of the markings as well as the quality of conversion workmanship, it is this writer’s opinion that all work was performed by the Winchester factory sometime back when the gun was in use and on work order number 307. Had existing factory records included this serial number (factory warehouse ledger records for the model 1895 ended at s/n 59,999), I suspect we would see an “R&R” on the record, and probably accompanied by a notation such as “Changed to 405 on work order number 307.

This gun is further proof of the popular belief of today’s collectors that Winchester was an extremely customer-oriented firm who would practically do anything the customer was willing to pay for. With the age and extreme rarity of a 405 in this configuration, this carbine is a prize for an advanced ’95 collection.

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