

Clark Firearm Collection



1763-1964



INTRODUCTION

This collection of military shoulder arms includes arms examples of most of the principal types issued to United States troops during and since the American Revolution.

The collection illustrates the important evolution of the arms during this period. Among these changes are the following:

- The transition from smoothbore to rifle.
- The improvement of ignition systems from flint and percussion to metallic, self-contained cartridge.
- The change from black to smokeless powder.
- The improvement in metallurgy from iron to steels able to stand high chamber pressures.
- The development of the fully automatic weapon from the early single shot muzzleloader.

Also illustrated are the types of bayonets and fighting knives used by the combat soldier over the past two hundred years. In the early days of the musket, its short range, inaccuracy and the slow process of reloading made the bayonet a vital close combat weapon. It took some years to adapt the bayonet to the military rifle. Until then, the rifleman was equipped with a knife. He was used as a skirmisher and sharpshooter, but could not be effectively used in the line.

All of the evolutionary changes and improvements illustrated by this collection had marked impact on combat tactics of the American soldier.

Donated by Lt. Gen. Albert P. Clark,
Sixth Superintendent, USAF Academy.

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Front Cover

12 Dec. 1973

Lt. Gen. Albert P. Clark explains the collection of American Military Long Arms he has just given to the USAF Academy Library to Col. Jesse C. Gatlin, Head of Dept. of English; Col. P. J. Dahl, Vice Commandant; Lt. Gen. A. P. Clark, Superintendent; Col. G. H. Wilson, Deputy Commandant; Col. Carl G. Baily, Deputy Commandant; and Col. Malham Wakin, Head of Dept. of Political Science and Philosophy.



FRENCH CHARLEVILLE MUSKET - MODEL 1763

Thousands of this standard French infantry musket Model 1763 were purchased by the American Revolutionary Government to equip our troops during the Revolutionary War. Benjamin Franklin, as our ambassador to France, handled most of these contracts.

This musket, made at the Charleville Arsenal in France, served as a pattern for our early post-war muskets manufactured in the Springfield and Harpers Ferry Arsenals.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .69

Barrel: 44 3/4"

Overall Length: 59 7/8"

Weight: 9 3/4 lbs



COMMITTEE OF SAFETY TYPE MUSKET - CIRCA 1775

Committees of Safety were formed in colonial divisions charged with the procurement of weapons. Congress had resolved that the colonies manufacture their own rifles using the British Brown Bess specifications. The thirteen states contracted for arms to equip their militia during the revolutions. This flintlock musket is constructed of parts from a British Tower musket of about 1758 vintage and restocked with American cherry wood. While its state of issue or maker cannot be identified, it is typical of the nondescript weapons of the revolutionary militia of the several states.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .75

Barrel: 45 1/2"

Overall Length: 57 1/2"

Weight: 10 lbs



BRITISH “BROWN BESS” MUSKET – MODEL 1777

This musket was used by colonists serving in the British army during the years before the Revolution. Technically it was known as the “Long Land Service Musket.” It was the standard in the British Army with little change from about 1720 until after the turn of the century. It was not accurate beyond 60-80 yards and volley fire was largely used in close ranks.

During the War of Independence, captured stocks and battlefield prizes equipped many of our troops. This specimen made at Tower of London, is of Model 1777. The earlier models, more representative of those used in America, were practically identical but had a 42" barrel.

This musket was affectionately called “Brown Bess” by the British soldier because of the brown color of its barrel. The brown barrel resulted from acid treatment to accelerate rust followed by polishing. This “browning” forestalled additional rust. Earlier British musket barrels were painted black.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .75

Barrel: 39"

Overall Length: 54 1/2"

Weight: 9 1/2 lbs



KENTUCKY RIFLE - CIRCA 1790

This is a typical example of the Kentucky rifle that figured prominently as a weapon of the American Revolution. Most of the units recruited from the Western frontiers were so equipped. These skilled woodsmen and Indian fighters were largely used as scouts, flankers, and sharpshooters.

This particular example, the work of an unknown Pennsylvania maker, may have been possessed by an Indian, judging by the brass tack decorations.

The Kentucky rifle was accurate up to four hundred yards whereas the musket was useless except for ranges less than 100 yards. The riflemen, in spite of General Washington's efforts, were normally not equipped with the bayonet and were a liability in close combat. They could not reload as fast as a musketeer and the British learned to accept the first volley and then attack them with the bayonet before they could reload.

The accuracy of these rifles in the hands of skilled backwoodsmen added a new dimension to warfare.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .50

Barrel: 39 1/4"

Overall Length: 54"

Weight: 9 1/4 lbs



KENTUCKY TYPE CONTRACT RIFLE – CIRCA 1795

This Kentucky rifle, the work of Martin Fry, a well-known Pennsylvania gunsmith, reflects the effort to make the rifle a useful infantry weapon. The barrel is shorter, the arm is equipped to take a bayonet, and it was designed to be equipped with a sling. It was probably a contract arm for Federal or state militia troops in the period immediately following the Revolution.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .50

Barrel: 30"

Overall Length: 45"

Weight: 8 lbs



U.S. HARPERS FERRY RIFLE – MODEL 1804

This is the first rifle produced in a government arsenal. It was used by Lewis and Clark on their expedition to the West Coast in 1804-1806. It was used to equip riflemen, not close ranked infantry troops, and it shows the Kentucky rifle influence.

This particular arm was restocked in tiger maple equipped with non-standard fore-end cap and converted to percussion ignition probably before the Civil War. It has been reconverted to flintlock as originally equipped.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .54

Barrel: 32"

Overall Length: 47"

Weight: 9 lbs

Barrel No. 502



U.S. SPRINGFIELD MUSKET – MODEL 1808

This is one of the first “Springfields.” It was copied from the French Army musket which armed so many of our troops during the War of Independence. It was larger and sturdier. Many thousands were made on contract to equip the militia of the several states. Others were produced at the two existing federal arsenals at Springfield, Massachusetts and Harpers Ferry, Virginia.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .69

Barrel: 44 1/2"

Overall Length: 59"

Weight: 9 1/2 lbs

Dated 1809



U.S. "COMMON" RIFLE – MODEL 1817

This rifle designed at Harpers Ferry Arsenal was made for U.S. troops by a number of contractors. It was called a common rifle to distinguish it from the Model 1804 and the Hall breech-loading flintlock rifle, both of which were being used at the time.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .54

Barrel: 36"

Overall Length: 51 1/4"

Weight: 10 lbs



U.S. (HALL) RIFLE – MODEL 1819

This rifle, designed by Captain John H. Hall, is the first breech-loading military arm manufactured in the United States. As manufactured at the Harpers Ferry Arsenal after 1824, it is the first successful instance of practical standardization of parts to be used in a government armory. Although not popular with troops because of the escape of gases at the breech, this arm was much faster to load and could not be overloaded in combat. There was also considerable resistance to abandon traditional muzzle-loading weapons. It was used extensively in the War with Mexico in 1848.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .52

Barrel: 32 3/4"

Overall Length: 52 3/4"

Weight: 10 lbs

Dated 1836



U.S. SPRINGFIELD MUSKET – MODEL 1821

This arm was one of the last flintlock muskets procured by the U.S. Army. It was manufactured between 1819 and about 1833. During this period the percussion ignition system and rifled barrels were being developed and the U.S. Army Ordnance Department was beginning to adopt them. Many of these arms were converted to the percussion ignition system so specimens of the original are rather rare.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .69

Barrel: 42"

Overall Length: 57.64"

Weight: 10 lbs 1 1/4 oz



U.S. “MISSISSIPPI” RIFLE – MODEL 1841

This handsome rifle was the first general issue percussion long arm manufactured at government armories from 1841 to 1855. It was also made by a number of contractors and was used extensively during the Civil War on both sides. It was called the “Jaeger rifle” and more popularly the “Mississippi Rifle.” It was called the Mississippi Rifle because it was issued in 1847 to the First Mississippi Regiment, commanded by Jefferson Davis.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .54 and .58

Barrel: 33"

Overall Length: 48 3/4"

Weight: 9 3/4 lbs

Dated 1853



U.S. SPRINGFIELD MUSKET – MODEL 1842

This musket occupies a unique position among U.S. military arms. It is the last of the smooth bore arms and along with the model 1841 rifle is the first regulation percussion lock.

Many of these arms were later rifled and equipped with a rear sight. They were used for non-front line duty through the Civil War and some spare parts for them can still be found.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .69

Barrel: 42"

Overall Length: 57.8"

Weight: 9 lbs

Dated: 1847



SHARPS FIRST MILITARY CARBINE OF 1851

This early breech-loading rifle carbine was first purchased by the U.S. Government in 1854. It is equipped with a Maynard priming device and represented a great step forward in the development of military arms. The weapon accepted a paper-wrapped pre-loaded charge which after insertion into the breech was cut open by the closing of the breech block. This Sharps arm went through a long series of improvements and was used by the military and by sportsmen for many years.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .52

Barrel: 21 1/2"

Overall Length: 37 1/2"

Weight: 8 lbs

Number: 1781



COLT REPEATING RIFLE – MODEL 1855

Colonel Colt's revolving cylinder rifles and pistols were the first practical and working firearms equipped with a mechanically operating cylinder. His pistols were used during the Civil War by the hundreds of thousands but his rifles saw only limited use by Government forces as the flash and escaping gases at the breech made them unpopular with the troops. This model 1855 with the spurs in front of and behind the trigger guard is quite rare. Because this particular specimen had been "sportorized", General Clark had to replace the wood, the forward band, and the ramrod. Exact dimensions were obtained from the models at the West Point Museum.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .44

Barrel: 31 5/16"

Overall Length: 49 1/2"

Weight: 9 lbs 15 oz

Serial No. 411



U.S. SPRINGFIELD RIFLE MUSKET – MODEL 1855

This rifle was authorized by the then Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis, and incorporates a mechanical primer feeding device. It was manufactured at Harpers Ferry but many were equipped with Springfield armory locks. This arm fairly well standardized the appearance of the infantry rifle until after the Civil War, although the Maynard type primer was later abandoned. It fired the Minié ball and was effective out to 600 yards.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .58

Barrel: 33"

Overall Length: 49 3/8"

Weight: 10 lbs

Dated 1859



HENRY REPEATING RIFLE – PATENTED 1860

The Henry rifle was the first magazine rifle which the Union Army used in any quantity during the Civil War. Two regiments of Sherman's Army in the March to the Sea were so armed. The Confederates called the Henry "that damned Yankee rifle that can be loaded on Sunday and be fired all week." About 1,731 were purchased by the government, largely for cavalry use, and several state militia companies were also so equipped. In all about 10,000 were manufactured. It is the predecessor of the weapon manufactured by the Winchester Arms Company and is quite rare today.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .44 (rim fire)

Barrel: 24"

Overall Length: 43 1/2"

Weight: 9 1/4 lbs

Serial No. 1348



SPENCER REPEATING CARBINE – PATENTED 1860

The Spencer repeating carbine was the most popular carbine in the Civil War. Over 94,000 of them were purchased by the Federal Government and were used by the famous “Iron Brigade” and by General George Custer’s Michigan Cavalry. It is said that the personal intervention of President Lincoln was required to convince the U.S. Army Ordnance Department to use this arm. It remained popular in a caliber .50 version for many years after the war in the West.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .52

Barrel: 22"

Overall Length: 47"

Weight: 8 1/4 lbs

Serial No. 52126



U.S. SPRINGFIELD RIFLE MUSKET – MODEL 1861

This model and the model of 1863, which was almost identical, were the standard U.S. Army rifles of the Civil War. They were produced by the hundreds of thousands at government armories and by private contractors. The term “rifle musket” was used by the Ordnance Department to designate these new arms of musket size and long slim rifled barrels of reduced caliber. This arm used a charge of 60 grains of musket powder with a 500 grain hollow base, conical thru-cannelured bullet. This was the last government muzzle-loading, standard, infantry shoulder arm. In 1958 General Clark observed Bedouins in the Saudi Arabia desert still carrying them. Others still had flintlocks.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .58

Barrel: 40"

Overall Length: 56"

Weight: 9 lbs 2 oz

Dated 1862



U.S. REMINGTON “ZOUAVE” RIFLE – MODEL 1862

This Civil War contract arm was not only one of the handsomest rifles of the time, but incorporated the best features of three earlier martial arms. It was called the Zouave because it was often issued to troops with colorful uniforms patterned after the elite French troops known as Zouaves. It was shorter and lighter than other U.S. Civil War arms and yet was as accurate and durable. It was equipped with a long brass-handled sword-type bayonet.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .58

Barrel: 33"

Overall Length: 49"

Weight: 9.38 lbs



U.S. SHARPS – MODEL 1863 CARBINE

This Sharps Carbine uses the fifth and last of the series of Sharps military actions (the vertical breechblock) and was extensively used during the Civil War by Cavalry units and later in the West. It was equipped with the Lawrence priming device. Some 80,000 Sharps carbines were purchased for use by the Federal forces during the war.

SPECIFICATIONS:

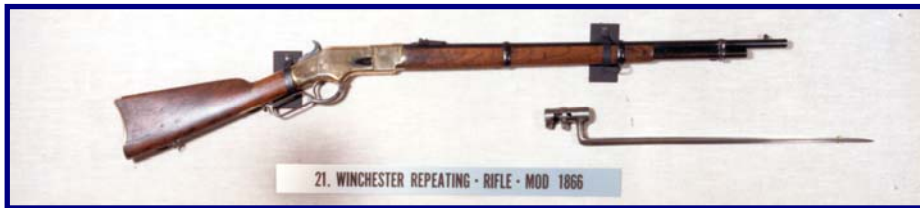
Caliber: .52

Barrel: 22"

Overall Length: 39"

Weight: 8 lbs

Serial No. C1997



WINCHESTER REPEATING RIFLE – MODEL 1866

This arm is essentially the Henry repeating rifle with improvements made by the Winchester Arms Company. It was formed out of the defunct New Haven Arms Company which bought the Henry patents.

Among the improvements were an enclosed magazine tube, an improved loading device, and a cartridge with improved ballistics. This cartridge used 28 grains of powder and a 200 grain bullet of .44 caliber having 1,125 feet per second velocity.

This was a very popular arm in the West after the Civil War and was purchased abroad in large quantities. This particular arm was among the thousands purchased by the Turkish government in 1871. It was used in Arabia, captured by Abdul Azizi's forces and was still in a Saudi Ordnance Depot in 1963. It was presented to former Chief of the Military Training Mission to Saudi Arabia, Lt. General A. P. Clark, by the Saudi Minister of Defense in 1964.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .44

Barrel: 31 1/2"

Overall Length: 53"

Weight: 8 1/2 lbs

Serial No. 86327 LS



U.S. SPRINGFIELD “CADET” RIFLE – MODEL 1869

This rifle represents an early breech-loading infantry arm adopted by the U.S. Army Ordnance Department. It was invented by E.S. Allen, Master Armor at Springfield Armory. This particular model was shorter and designed for use by cadets at West Point. It was manufactured by introducing a new breech mechanism onto Civil War stocks of the Model 1863 rifles. This single shot rifle without important modification except for caliber change, remained standard for the next 30 years.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .50-70

Barrel: 29 1/2"

Overall Length: 49"

Weight: 8.3 lbs

Serial No. 41184



U.S. SPRINGFIELD CARBINE – MODEL 1873

This is the cavalry carbine used to equip U.S. Cavalry troops during the Indian campaigns in the West. It is equipped with the Allen type breech block. The Ordnance Department clung stubbornly to this single shot arm for economy and to avoid reckless unaimed expenditure of ammunition by troops in combat. As a result, troops often faced Indians equipped with more modern repeating rifles such as Spencers, Henrys, and Winchester 66s. This arm fired a 405 grain bullet with a muzzle velocity of 1,150 feet per second.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .45-70

Barrel: 21 3/4"

Overall Length: 41 3/8"

Weight: 7.9 lbs

Serial No. 182733



U.S. SPRINGFIELD RIFLE – MODEL 1884

This is the last of the single shot, large caliber, black powder arms issued to U.S. troops. Due to the difficulty of manufacturing smokeless powders in the U.S. this arm was retained in service until the war with Spain in 1898. It fired a 500 grain bullet a maximum of 2,000 yards. This gun was purchased by General Clark when he was in High School for one dollar.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .45-70

Barrel: 36"

Overall Length: 51 3/4"

Weight: 8 1/4 lbs

Serial No. 408866



U.S. SPRINGFIELD (KRAG-JORGENSEN) RIFLE – MODEL 1898

After years of study and experimentation, the first smokeless powder, high velocity, magazine rifle was adopted in 1892 from the Danish service arm. It went through several minor modifications and was standardized with the Model of 1898, which continued to be manufactured until 1904. The “Krag” hand-loaded 5 flanged cartridges with a 220 grain bullet into a box-like magazine. The high chamber pressures produced muzzle velocities of 2,000 feet per second. The Krag was the standard arm for Regulars and some of the better equipped volunteers in the Spanish-American War.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .30/40 KRAG

Barrel: 30"

Overall Length: 48 7/8"

Weight: 9 lbs 5 oz



U.S. SPRINGFIELD RIFLE – MODEL 1903A1

By 1900 the armies of Europe were being equipped with high velocity, rimless, clip loaded magazine rifles of which the German Mauser was an outstanding example. Further U.S. Army study and tests produced the model 1903 patterned after the Mauser. This rifle, after 1906, fired a cartridge with 150 grain bullet at 2,700 feet per second muzzle velocity. For 32 years this rifle had no peer for accuracy up to 1,000 yards and survived World War I with little change. This particular specimen was one of the last ones selected and refined for National Match competition. When such competition was suspended in WWII it was returned to stock and shipped to India on a vessel torpedoed and sunk in the Indian Ocean. It was salvaged after the war in its sealed container.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .30/06

Barrel: 23 3/4"

Overall Length: 43 1/8"

Weight: 9lbs 8 oz

Serial No. 1402644



U.S. RIFLE – MODEL 1917, (ENFIELD)

World War I caught the U.S. Army Ordnance Department with inadequate production capacity to equip our mobilizing forces with the model 1903 rifle. The standard British Enfield rifle was being mass produced in the U.S. for Britain at the time and was readily adapted to our .30 caliber ammunition. Over 2 million were manufactured on contract for our forces. It possessed similar ballistics and was used extensively in training the American Expeditionary Forces for Europe.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .30/06

Barrel: 26"

Overall Length: 45 3/8"

Weight: 9 lbs 3 oz

Serial No. 1075297



U.S. SPRINGFIELD (GARAND) RIFLE – MODEL M-1

Shortly after World War I the U.S. Army Ordnance Department commenced experiments to produce a semi-automatic arm to replace the manually operated Model 1903. Increased volume of fire and less fatigue for the operator were the objectives. Mr. Garand of Springfield Armory produced a system which was ultimately adopted in 1936. This arm served our forces well in World War II and thereafter until the model M-14 was adopted in 1957. This rifle was manufactured only at Springfield Armory and by Winchester Repeating Arms Company of New Haven, Connecticut on contract. Its ballistics and accuracy were essentially the same as the Model 1903 except, of course, for the important increase in its potential rate of fire. This was the customized personal weapon of a long time member of the Air Force Rifle Team and is the equivalent of a National Match weapon.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .30/06

Barrel: 24"

Overall Length: 43 1/2"

Serial No. 5306737



U.S. CARBINE – CALIBER .30 M-1

The production of carbines for U.S. forces was discontinued with the adoption of the model 1903 rifle as it was deemed suitable for mounted services as well. World War II, however, demonstrated the need for a longer range, light, easily handled weapon for personal combat use of officers and other personnel normally armed with a pistol.

To meet this need, the M-1 carbine was developed. It was gas operated, self-loading, air cooled and capable of semi-automatic fire. It used a special cartridge and later models could mount a bayonet. It fired a 111 grain bullet at 2,000 feet per second muzzle velocity and was effective to 300 yards. It was manufactured by a number of contractors.

This rifle was purchased by General Clark at a Colorado Springs hock shop.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: .30

Barrel: 18"

Overall Length: 35 5/8"

Weight: 5 lbs 3 oz

Serial No. 5350095



U.S. RIFLE – MODEL 14

This weapon is a light weight, air-cooled, gas operated, magazine-fed shoulder weapon. It was used primarily for semi-automatic or full automatic fire.

This rifle was developed around the standard NATO cartridge caliber 7.62mm, and was adopted by the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps in 1957. It saw extensive service in combat in Southeast Asia until it was replaced by the M-16 rifle.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: 7.62mm (.308)

Barrel: 22"

Overall Length: 44.3"

Weight: 9.1 lbs

Rate of fire: 1-750 rounds per minute



U.S. RIFLE – MODEL 16

This is a light weight, air-cooled, gas operated, magazine fed, shoulder weapon. It is capable of either automatic or semi-automatic fire. It is equipped with a bayonet and a flash suppressor. It may also serve as a grenade launcher.

Developed commercially in 1960, this weapon was adopted by the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force in 1964. It proved to be extremely effective in the close-in type fighting experienced in Southeast Asia and its lightness made it very popular with our Asian allies. Its effectiveness is a function of its simplicity, accuracy out to 500 meters and its high rate of fire. Its muzzle velocity is 3,250 feet per second and muzzle energy with only a 5.56mm caliber bullet is 1,300 foot pounds.

This rifle has replaced the standard M-14 rifle.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Caliber: 5.56mm

Barrel: 20"

Overall Length: 44.25"

Weight: 6.3 lbs

Rate of Fire: 700/800 rounds per minute in automatic mode

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