



CHRIS ANDERSON

STATEMENT

CARSON ANTIQUES-GUNS, INC.

P. O. BOX 1448 CARSON CITY, NEVADA 89701

AREA CODE (702) 882-2440

DATE Sept. 26, 1973

Lewis E. Yearout
308 Riverview Drive East
Great Falls
Mont. 59401

| DATE | CREDITS | CHARGES | BALANCE |
|------|--------------------------|----------|----------|
| | Marlin 1881 45-70 #16489 | \$795.00 | |
| | Shipping-Reg. Air Mail | 11.33 | |
| | Total due | | \$806.33 |

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

SHIP
VIA .

DATE OCT 4 1973

CITY Wichita Falls, Texas

William J. Full

SIGNED

Notes on 1881's

In June of this year I was given the opportunity to display some of my 1881 Marlin Rifles. This was something I've wanted to do for some time. Thanks to the Winchester Club of America for hosting the Marlin Collectors at their show and thanks to the Marlin Collectors Assoc. for having the show at Cody which is close enough to home I felt I could do it.

I have had a great passion for the Model 1881 rifle for a long time. There has been a lot of information printed on the 1881 showing the various variations etc. But I felt a display to do that would be interesting and informative to other people. I was very pleased to see how well the display was received by members of the collectors associations as well as the general public.

As a result of that display I was asked to pass on some of my thoughts and findings about the 1881 so will try to do that.

As mentioned the various printed materials from Bill West, Sam Maxwell, Bill Brophy and various articles in the "collector" has covered most areas and technical information quite well. My hunger for information led me to recording the differences in every 1881 I looked at. After starting this some years ago I have compiled a list of about 250 different rifles. While this is a small sample of the total production it has given me a chance to see that virtually every 1881 is a "one of a kind". They may have a standard configuration but there are still subtle differences, stock shape, machining differences, etc. That can be looked for.

The following is a list of observations I have made over the years on 1881's.

- 1- Magazine stud contoured to barrel flats on early guns. (probably less than 100)
- 2- Dust cover was not mortised into the bolt on early guns, possibly as many as 500.
- 3- There was three different size lever pins used in the 1881's.
 - 1st .403" (perhaps 50 or so guns).
 - 2nd .436" used up to around serial no. 7500.
 - 3rd .456" used in rest of production.
- 4- There was two lengths of main springs used.
 - 1st The short one used on approximately 500 guns.
 - 2nd The long one used on the rest of production.
- 5- Upper tangs drilled for sights.

Early guns were not drilled. Highest number I have observed not drilled is serial no. 2495.
Some lower numbers than that were drilled.
- 6- Three different cartridge carriers were used.
 - 1st The solid type used on earlier production. Highest number noted with this carrier is serial no. 14325.
 - 2nd With 2 spring loaded fingers. Some, but not all, have the patent date April 22, 1884 stamped on them. Lowest number noted with this carrier is serial no. 8413.

3rd Used on all the small receiver guns.

7- Receiver styles.

1st The rebated receiver. Highest number noted is serial no. 569 (from "Marlin Collector Volume 14 Number 1").

2nd Transition style. The number made not known but likely less than 100 guns. In the 300-400 serial number range.

3rd Commonly known as second style. Was used intermittently throughout production.

4th Lightweight or 3rd style used intermittently after introduction in 1885 lowest number I have noted is serial no. 9475.

5th Small receiver used on all .32 and .38 cal. Guns.

Lowest no. is 10072. (Courtesy Rick Regnier from Marlin Records).

8- Lightweight barrels in .40 and .45 cal.

Barrels measuring .750" at muzzle seem to be scarce. I have seen only 3.

9- Barrel markings.

1st One line J. M. Marlin markings. Not likely to be on more than 50 guns.

2nd J. M. Marlin markings on two lines. Highest number I have observed with this marking is serial no. 1926.

3rd Marlin Fire-arms Co. markings. The lowest number I have observed with this marking is serial no. 2064.

These observations are certainly not the final word on the differences in 1881 rifles.

I'm sure other collectors will find they have guns that don't fall within the figures I have.

Only by having them report those differences can we be more definite on when changes occurred.

While I have no way of confirming it for sure, it is my belief that a larger number of the 1881 production was engraved or embellished in some way than there was in any other Model of the Marlin lever action rifle.

I hope other 1881 collectors will feel free to pass on any more information they may have about their guns.

Good Collecting,
Leland Clapp

The Marlin Firearms Co.

Makers of Fine Rifles and Shotguns Since 1870

November 15, 1973

Mr. Lewis E. Yearout
Montana Arms Collectors Assoc., Inc.
308 Riverview Drive East
Great Falls, Montana 59404

Dear Mr. Yearout:

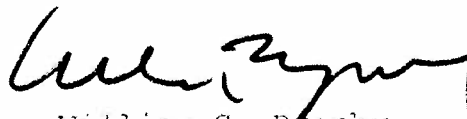
From our records, we find your Marlin Model 1881 , Serial No. 16,489 , was completed at the Marlin factory in New Haven, Connecticut on March 4, 1887 . The caliber was .45/70 and it had a 28 inch, ~~xxxxxxx~~, octagon, ~~xxxxx~~ barrel. We do not know to whom it was shipped. It had a pistol grip.

We regret having to advise that we are unable to refinish or make repairs to your old Marlin. We are also unable to furnish parts, barrels or wood stocks for this gun which was discontinued many years ago. We know of no other source for parts, barrels or wood for these guns, and suggest it be discontinued from service.

We do not give estimates of value on old guns. It would be unfair to you for us to give misleading values, as the condition, scarcity and serviceability dictate values among collectors, and we do not keep abreast of the price trend of today's old gun market.

Enclosed is material reproduced from an old Marlin catalogue which we feel may be of interest to you.

Yours very truly,



William S. Brophy
Senior Technical Manager



Dating a Marlin Lever Action Rifle

by John Kendall

There are many questions about how Marlin has applied serial numbers to their firearms over the years. Also, many stories of how and why they used certain prefixes and numbers to identify what year some of the models were produced. The information below will be what I have gathered from talking to MFCA members, "Marlin Talk" and Bill Brophy's book. If there are any mistakes, please let me know, so I can correct them and eventually make a chart that everyone can benefit from. This is work in progress, with the goal of getting the most accurate account of serial numbering for manufacturing dates.

Serial number Prefix designations for lever action rifles produced:

| | | | | | |
|---|------|----|---------|------|--------------|
| C | 1946 | M | 1955 | Y, Z | 1964 |
| D | 1947 | N | 1956 | AA | 1965 |
| E | 1948 | P | 1957 | AB | 1966 |
| F | 1949 | R | 1957-58 | AC | 1967 |
| G | 1950 | S | 1958-59 | AD | 1968 also 68 |
| H | 1951 | T | 1960 | 69 | 1969 |
| J | 1952 | U* | 1961 | 70 | 1970 |
| K | 1953 | V* | 1962 | 71 | 1971 |
| L | 1954 | W | 1963 | 72 | 1972 |

* The production of these prefixes began in August the prior year designated.

Starting in 1973, the year of manufacturing can be determined from subtracting the first two digits of the serial number from 100.

Example: Serial Number 18634571. $100 - 18 = 1982$

Since the year 2000 has begun, you can now subtract first two digits of the serial number from 2100 and get the year the gun was produced.

Example: Serial Number 99244732 $2100 - 99 = 2001$

You will find that the following prefix letters on rifles have purposely been omitted: I, O, Q, X. This was due to the confusion of the numbers and letters being very close in appearance.

The prefix "A" can be found on some of the earlier Marlin lever action rifles, pump rifles and exposed hammer shotguns. The prefix and serial number was found on the bottom, front of the receiver, just behind the forearm. Since Marlin Arms had a serial number system in place, prior to becoming Marlin-Rockwell in 1915, it is thought that Marlin-Rockwell had the employees producing sporting arms to keep busy while waiting on war contracts. Instead of the usual, larger serial numbers, M-R had the employees serialize the rifles beginning with the prefix "A". Marlin-Rockwell's existence lasted from 1915 to 1920. This coincides with the "A" prefix usage.

The 1936 first variation had no prefix. The "B" prefix was used on the Model 1936 second variation, which was produced in 1941.

The Model '36 carried the capital "C" prefix and had a case colored receiver that was carried over from 1941. There were very few of these produced. The prefix of the lower case "c" was used in 1946 on the introduction of the first blued receiver Model '36. The "D" prefix was used in 1947. Only the last version was within the designating prefix year of manufacture.

There was no prefix on the Model 39, until 1925. The "S" prefix began in 1926 and continued through 1931. In 1932 the "HS" prefix was used as a verification that the bolt could handle high speed ammo and was discontinued in 1939. The "B" prefix was used on the Model 39A (case hardened receiver) in 1941 only.

There are several other models that had prefixes to the serial numbers. The Marlin Model 410, bearing the prefix of "U". Special models like the 336LTS, with the prefix of "LTS" or the commemorative model, Powell Wyoming Diamond Jubilee Rifle with "PW" prefix. These should not to be confused with the serial prefix year made. The bolt action rimfire rifles didn't follow the letter prefix designation. They applied a two lettered prefix, which was for the month and year produced.

Marlin wasn't required until 1968 to serialize all their 22 rim fires or shotguns. The Marlin Model 62 was a particular model that had to be recalled. Marlin had asked the distributors to recall the rifles to have serial numbers placed on them so they would be in compliance with federal law. Not all Model 62's were returned for serialization and there are still some that don't have serial numbers. Present owners of the Model 62 are still offered the opportunity to have a serial number placed on them.

Serial numbers are not only used for identifying what year a gun was made, but the older records that, Marlin Firearms Co. has given to the MFCA, has information on specific firearms and the options that were added at the factory.

As more information is found out on serial numbers and guns, it will improve the accuracy of authenticating a collectable piece. There is more information still to come, so watch for it in upcoming "Collectors".

