



October 17, 1983

The statistical data for Model 1876, Serial Number 44950, as extracted from the original Winchester Records housed in our Museum, are as follows:

carbine

Received in the warehouse on July 30, 1885

Shipped from the warehouse on August 1, 1885 along with 68 other carbines with the same specifications to the same order number

Any other specifications not listed above must be considered as having been standard at the time.

No other information is available for this serial number.

Sincerely,

William L. Porter
Research Associate

JW

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North West Mounted Police - Royal North West Mounted Police
Royal Canadian Mounted Police

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

MAKE	Winchester	SERIAL NO.	44950
MODEL	1876 Carbine	CAL.	.45-75

This carbine was issued to the **North West Mounted Police** {NWMP} and formed part of order #22020 for 200 carbines, shipped on August 1, 1885.


The following information was located:

On charge to "A" Division¹ {Maple Creek} on February 11, 1894.

On charge to "A" Division {Maple Creek} on January 18, 1897.

The **Royal North West Mounted Police**² sold a quantity of carbines to the **Alberta Provincial Police** on January 23, 1919. The **APP** stamp indicated this carbine was among those sold.

No additional documentation was located.


D. J. Klancher - Inspector
RCMP - Retired
September 28, 2006

The historical data provided, or opinions expressed, were for information purposes only. D.J. KLANCHER and/or Mounted Police Research & Consulting will not be liable for the consequences of any action taken on the basis of the information provided in this document. All efforts were made to ensure the information was accurate however, errors may have occurred or may have been present in the original source material.

¹ "A" Division was headquartered at Maple Creek, North West Territories {after September 1, 1905, the Province of Saskatchewan} from 1883 -1919.

² The name of the Force changed from **North West Mounted Police** {NWMP} to **Royal North West Mounted Police** {RNWMP} on June 24, 1904.



THE COMMISSIONER

LE COMMISSAIRE

REF. NO. GH1520-2

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE
GENDARMERIE ROYALE DU CANADA
K1A OR2

OTTAWA 7, CANADA

June 28, 1974

ve,
h, 99204,

This will acknowledge your letter of June 20th requesting information on the model 1876 Winchester carbine. I am enclosing a copy of an article dealing with this weapon from the booklet, Small Arms of the Mounted Police, Historical Arms Series No. 6, Museum Restoration Service, Ottawa, 1965, by R. Philips and S.J. Kirby, which I trust will answer all your questions. The authors of the booklet are currently preparing a new edition which will contain considerably more information which their research has uncovered in the last few years.

Yours truly,

S.W. Horrall,
Historian.



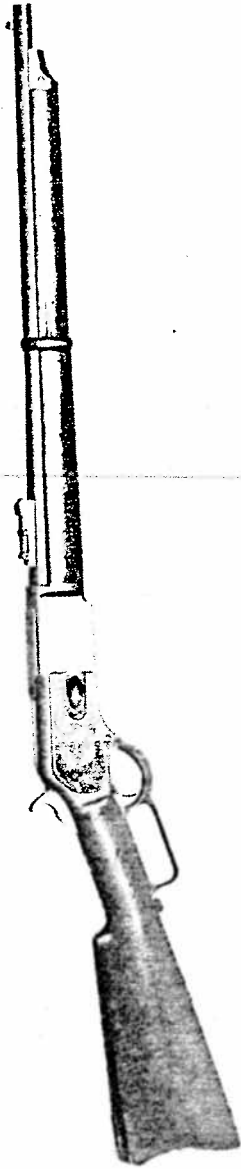
Four members of the N.W.M.P. with their Winchester Model 1876 carbines. It would appear that this picture was taken at the same time as that on page 10.

Although the Snider carbines had been replaced by the Winchesters by late 1885, they were retained in stores until 1887 as reserve arms to be used periodically by Indian scouts and Militia units. During their brief service with the Force, they had proven to be durable weapons. A case is recorded where a constable lost his Snider in a creek during the fall freeze-up. The carbine was recovered the following spring. After a good cleaning and oiling, it was as serviceable as ever.

THE MODEL 1876 WINCHESTER

The superiority of the Indian's repeating weapons over the single-shot Sniders was, in the words of N.W.M.P. Assistant Commissioner A. G. Irvine, "well understood by the Indians." Early in 1878, he got permission from Dominion Government officials in Ottawa to buy a trial lot of 50 Model 1876 Winchester military carbines, calibre .45-75. They were taken from the first year's production by the Winchester Repeating Arms Company. The weapon held eight cartridges in a tubular, fullstocked-protected magazine and had the "commercial" type rear sight which was fitted to the barrel in a dovetail. These carbines were delivered in the summer of 1878 by the I.G. Baker Company of Fort Benton, Montana.

This firm had contracted with the Government of Canada to provide supplies to the Force and construct many of its outposts and forts. In general it acted as a sort of commissariat. The carbines and 10,000 rounds of ammunition cost Canada \$2,089.10. The arrival of these Winchesters marked the beginning of an association with the N.W.M.P. that was to last for 36 years, the longest enjoyed by any shoulder arm issued to the Force.



WINCHESTER MODEL 1876

Calibre: .45-75 W.C.F.
Magazine capacity: 8 Rounds.
Barrel length: 22 inches.
Overall length: 42 inches.
Weight: 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ pounds.
Number issued: 1,346. To the NWMP 846,
with 500 retained for the Militia.
Period of Service: 1878 to 1914.

Markings: NWMP in a boxed crescent on the right, rear of the stock. Some in the 3,000 serial number range, have an MP in half-inch letters on the right side of the stock, near the butt plate. The markings APP and LOF which may appear behind the lower tang, refer to the *Alberta Provincial Police* or the *Legion of Frontiersmen*, organizations which purchased some of the carbines when they were sold by the police.

Comments: Despite the hard usage of being jolted around on a saddle, and exposure to all types of weather, this weapon stood up remarkably well and had the longest service of any shoulder arm issued to the Force.

In 1880, a second lot of 100 Winchesters was received and issued to "A" and "F" Divisions. To these two divisions, totalling 102 officers and men, had fallen the burden of keeping order in the southern border country, newly inhabited by the formidable Sitting Bull and his Sioux. The new carbines commanded the immediate respect of the Indians and the warm admiration of the Force. These first Police Winchesters were not, however, without their shortcomings.

Hard use in the field began to reveal weaknesses in the carbine, particularly where the barrel screwed into the receiver and at the small of the stock. The rear sight had a habit of working loose in its dovetailed slot and it was easily lost. In letters written to the Winchester Repeating Arms Company in 1880 and 1881, Commissioner Irvine (he was promoted from Assistant Commissioner in October 1880) had detailed these weaknesses.

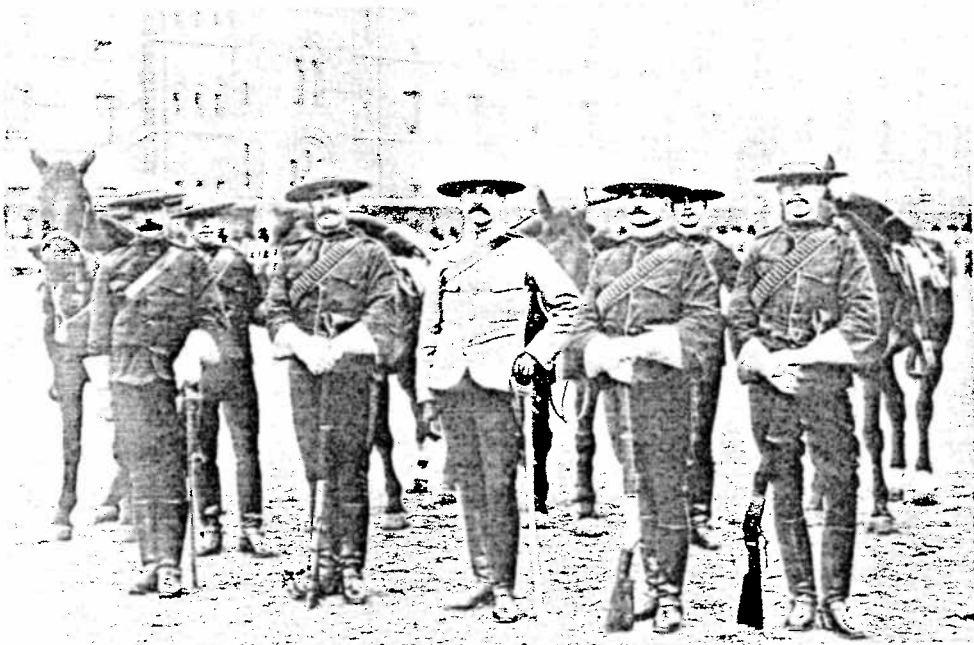


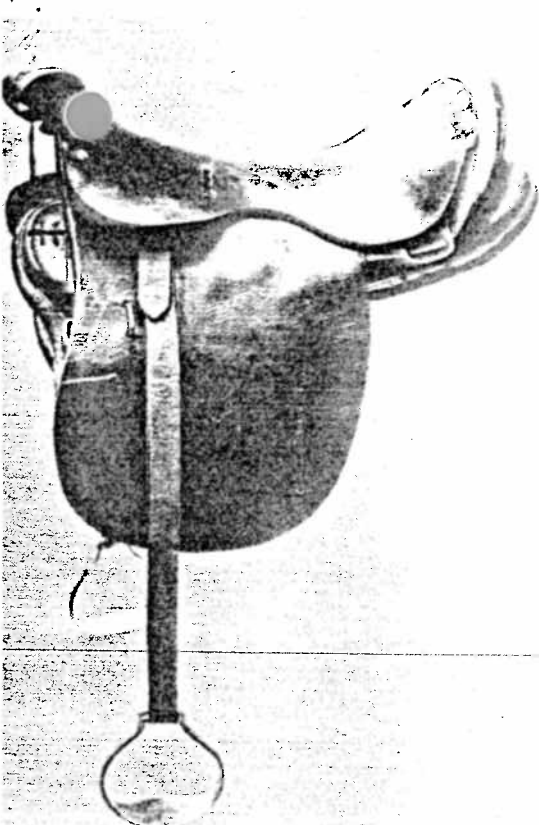
Photo of an officer and six members of the Force with their Winchester carbines taken in 1897 at Chelsea Barracks.

Early in 1882, the firm brought out an improved weapon "made expressly for the Force." The prototype of this carbine, serial number 23,244, is on display in the Winchester Museum. The improved carbine differed from the original issue in that it had a larger receiver ring. The small of the stock had been strengthened and the new "Spanish Meter" pattern rear sight of the adjustable leaf type, was securely attached to the barrel by two-screws.

Commissioner Irvine so liked the improved carbine that he recommended the rearming of the entire Force with it. He supported this recommendation with the argument that having the Force thus armed "will not be without a good moral effect upon the Indian mind." An order was approved and delivery of the improved carbines commenced in May, 1882.

It is thought that carbines received during the 1878-80 period bore serial numbers in the 2,500-3,100 and 8,000-9,000 ranges. The 300 carbines delivered in 1882 bore serial numbers ranging from 23,801 to 24,100. Another 100 carbines shipped during April, 1883, were in the 33,200-33,300 range. Serial numbers of carbines delivered between early March and early August of 1885 ranged from about 43,900 to upwards of 46,200. The last carbines are believed to have left the Winchester factory on August 1, 1885. The annual reports of the N.W.M.P. Commissioners state that 846 Winchesters were actually issued to Force members. The balance purchased—in excess of 500 carbines—was placed at the disposal of the Canadian Militia.

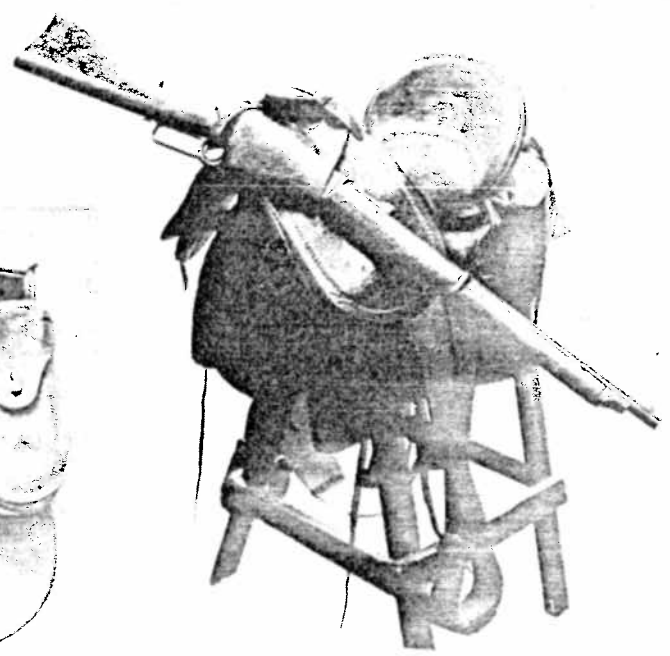
From 1882 on, N.W.M.P. Winchester carbines were stamped NWMP in the form of a boxed crescent on the right side of the stock near the butt. Winchesters issued to Militamen bore either Militia markings or were unmarked. When the Winchester was officially "retired" from the Force in 1914, an estimated 200

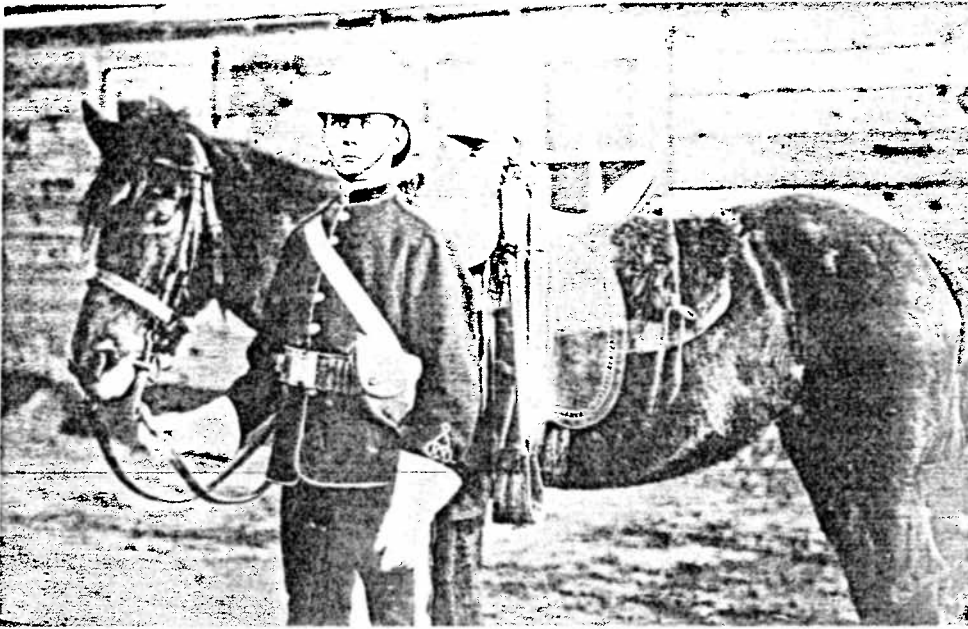


The first saddles issued to the Force were British Army issue. The one on the left is marked with the WAD of the War Department.

The California saddle was introduced in 1878. On this, the Winchester was carried in a belt fastened to the pommel.

The Universal saddle now used by the Force carries the carbine in a scabbard. The one illustrated is also fitted with a lance bucket.





A Constable of the 1880's. Note the California saddle with a Winchester carbine strapped to the pommel.

were disposed of to the Alberta Provincial Police and Legion of Frontiersmen, which explains the APP and LOF markings sometimes seen on these arms.

There is reason to believe that not all N.W.M.P. Winchesters were so stamped. Just prior to and during the Riel Rebellion (March-July, 1885), the need for great haste in getting newly-arrived weapons into service left no time, in many instances, for the formality of stamping.

In the hands of the Mounted Police and Militiamen, Winchester carbines saw considerable service in the Rebellion. Major Charles Boulton's Scouts was one of several outfits to use them with telling effect in several skirmishes. In writing of them later, the Major could find only such minor faults as the lack of a magazine cutoff "to discourage excessive and wasteful firing," and a lug to accommodate a sword-bayonet "for close quarters combat."

The years of hard field use to which the Winchester carbines were subjected following the Riel Rebellion took their toll. Barrels became badly pitted and had to be replaced. Stocks continued to break at the grip. As time wore on, the N.W.M.P. armourers were often hard pressed to keep sufficient Winchesters in serviceable order.

Nevertheless, the Winchester was able to achieve a record of long service not enjoyed by any other shoulder arm of the Force. On the plains it saw the police through the turbulent 1880's and served with N.W.M.P. detachments in the Yukon during the Klondike gold rush. And in a more glamorous vein it was carried by the red-coated troop making up the N.W.M.P. contingent to the 1902 coronation of King Edward VII, in London.

Although quantities of other shoulder arms were acquired by the Force in 1895, 1905 and 1909, the Winchester remained the Mounted Police stand-by until 1914.

Northwest Mounted Police

Winchester model 1876 SRC Cal.

45-75 serial no. 44950 - made 1884.

Winchester Letter and NWM

Police Documented. Later issued
to the Alberta Police and so marked.