

Mendenhall, Jones & Gardner

RIFLED MUSKET TYPE II

S/N 926

My rifle was produced by the firm of Mendenhall, Jones & Gardner at Jamestown, North Carolina. This is what is known as a TYPE II rifle which largely conforms to June 9, 1862 instructions from the Confederate Chief of Ordnance, Josiah Gorgas. The firm received this requirement on September 22, 1862. The Type II rifles were produced in late 1862 and into 1863. Calibers varied from .577 to .64. This rifle has the straight rear buttplate. The bayonet lug is of the US Model 1855 style. The lockplate is stamped "M. J. & G." over "NC" with "CS" over "1863" traced of the hammer. In his book Confederate Rifles & Muskets, Dr. Murphy states on page 464 that "Serial numbers of Type II rifles known to the authors range from 33 to 951." Thus my rifle falls within the known range for Type II rifles. The brass sideplate opposite the lock is of the Mississippi pattern. The flat, spring-retained brass barrel bands are of heavy construction. The top of each band is stamped with a "U" however on my rifle the top of the barrel bands have been filed down to make a flat appearance. The bottom of the front barrel band is grooved to accommodate the ramrod. The brass noscap is fixed by a rivet. The brass triggerguard assembly is of two piece construction.

The trigger is iron. The SN 926 is stamped on an internal part.

Only one Type I rifle is known to exist. The Type II rifles have 1862 or 1863 dates and range from 33 to 951. The firm delivered a total of 1,961 rifles in 1863 and 1864 before the state contract was cancelled on October 31, 1864. The firm introduced Type III and Type IV rifles later in production.

The front sight on my rifle is a small brass blade inset into the barrel. The rear sight is a high iron fixed sight that is notched. Barrel markings rear of the front fix sight are obscured by pitting. The ramrod has a button tip like that illustrated in Murphy's book in Plates 11 + 12 on Pg 470. Faint but discernible cantouche present in wood on area opposite the lockplate. The word "WAR" is scratched into this area opposite the lockplate. A large "B" is carved into the buttstock opposite the lockplate.

The survival rate of this rifle in all types is minimal. It is a rare rifle. Those surviving specimens with Mississippi type side plates are worth a premium. Accepted by NC about May 29, 1863.

I purchased this rifle from Don Bryan in 1998. In a letter dated 11/20/1998 Don advised me " Regarding the MJ+G, the only replacement on it is the rear sight, however, it is contemporary with the guns use. Again a nice gun." I am not convinced the rear sight is a replacement after seeing examples of Type II rifles in Murphy's Book. Don also told me in the letter, " I've never been able to upgrade these guns - they are the best I've been able to buy, regardless of cost." The other rifle he refers to was a Florence example which I did not buy.

Mark D
12/8/16

PS: Also read Don's thoughts on my M.J+G in his 12/13/1998 letter about the C+B.

COPY ONLY

DONALD E. BRYAN
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TROUTVILLE, VA 24176

11-20-98

Dear Mark,

A short, fast note since I'm leaving for Richmond later this AM.

Jim Whisher missed photographing the Cook + Bro. with bagout but it is very nice condition and I believe at \$3,000-5000 below retail. It looks just like the ones in Murphy's book on Confed. Longarms. I'll send it off to you on Monday, for your inspection. It does have mixed serial nos., as three out of the four I know of, have. This is normal and I can explain why when I have more time.

Regarding the MJ+G, the only replacement on it is the rear sight; however, it is contemporary with the gun's use. Again, a nice gun.

The Florence is probably the rarest of the three and it is a great appearing piece. It has a replaced forestock and you can see a slight line on the underside, 2 1/2" ahead of trig grd where a splice was made, however, it's not noticeable from the side and most persons wouldn't notice it, period. It could be made even less noticeable but it wasn't that important to me - I never worried about it.

I've never been able to upgrade these guns - they are the best I've been able to buy, regardless of cost.

On the MJ+G + ~~the~~ ^{Florence}, we can do this over a period of six months if you want to. I would really like to see them in the collection of a good friend.

I'll try calling you before I leave this AM, which I expect will be 11:15 - or, probably better, to give you a chance to think - I'll call you Monday.

Best regards,
Don