

B. GILES CROMWELL

Southern Militaria

1775 - 1865

Appraisers Consultants

July 3, 2002

Mr. Fred Donaldson



14

Dear Fred:

Thank you for your kind and interesting letter of last week. Carolyn and I enjoyed seeing you and meeting Judy. I have just sent Fred a letter in your behalf re membership in the American Society. He will direct it to our secretary, George Weatherly, when everything else has been received and is in order. You and Judy would be an asset to the organization, and Carolyn and I look forward to spending some good times with you at the meetings.

A few random comments on your 1814 Second Model musket-Your description with the 36 inch barrel would seem to place it also as an Artillery Model if there are no indications that the barrel has, in fact, been shortened and the two barrel bands replaced from the muzzle. The Artillery Models, of course, are scarce and desirable. The "12" digit on the bayonet lug is correct for the number on the various parts so it doesn't seem to me that the piece has been shortened. I did not explain the barrel lug marking procedure in my book as it was not confirmed until after the publication. Briefly, when the various parts are externally marked with a double digit such as "22", "44", "77", etc., the lug will always be marked with a "1" and the last digit, viz. "12"(your example), "14", "17", etc. Only if the parts are stamped with a single digit, viz. "5", "8" etc will the lug number be the same. I can't explain why the armory followed this procedure. There seems to be enough iron surface area on the lug to stamp two identical numbers, viz. "22" but it was not done that way. Your other comments appear to be consistent with what I would expect on the model.

An acquaintance of mine has a First Model Virginia Manufactory Confederate/Virginia alteration(I believe by the Union Manufacturing Company, Richmond) dated 1803 or 06(I don't remember) for sale. The barrel markings are practically gone, the lock requires a more suitable percussion hammer, and the stock has considerable nicks, some splinters, minor cracking, gouges, etc. While my description doesn't sound too promising, nevertheless, the old musket should be conserved with some tender loving care. The First Model Virginia muskets in C.S. altered condition are very difficult to locate in today's collecting market. Condition-wise, I rate the piece on a scale of 1 to 10 at around a 6.5 to 7 scale. The up-side to the piece is that a good conservator can really bring the piece back into satisfactory appearance(it may also require a front double barrel band-I can't remember). I don't know if the piece is still available or not and I don't know the price of it. If you are interested contact: Tom Bacher, P. O. Box 2251, Winchester, VA 22604. I only have

his work number(540)664-1706. Fred, don't be mistaken, this piece requires some definite repairs and attention. Anyway, you might want to call Tom and generally discuss the matter with him. You may mention my name as I have know him for years and he is completely honest and a good man.

My own collecting of Virginia longrifles and military relating to Virginia and the American Revolution continues strong since Wilmington.

Good luck for the remaining hot days of this summer. We need rain badly.

My best regards,

B. Giles
B. Giles Cromwell

