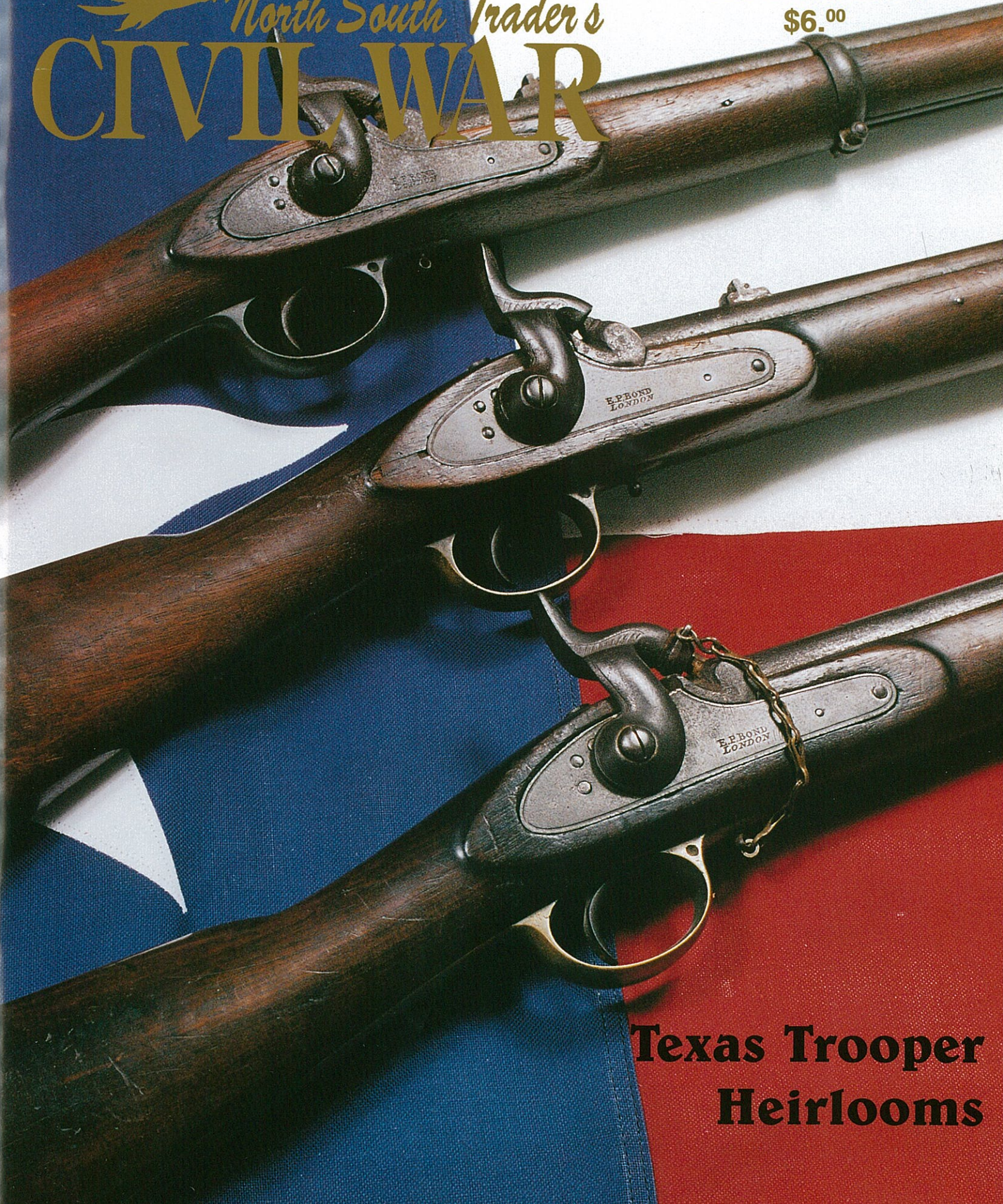




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**Texas Trooper  
Heirlooms**

# The Family Heirloom: A Texas Enfield Carbine

article by Martin L. Callahan  
photographs by Don Beardslee



Above, a postwar carte de visite of Cpl. John T. Holland. Courtesy Mrs. J.R. Wier.

**A**s a young boy I fondly remember visiting my maternal grandparents' house and playing with the old Enfield carbine that my grandfather, Henry R. Martin, a World War I veteran and cattle rancher, kept in the closet of his study. All that I knew of the history of the carbine was that it had belonged to an ancestor who fought in the Civil War. When I enlisted in the US Army in 1977, my grandmother, Gladys Martin, gave me the old gun before I was shipped overseas. Up until then I had been collecting modern militaria, but upon my return home in 1980, the carbine spurred my interest in the War Between the States.

I began to research the ancestor to whom the gun originally belonged. I learned from my uncle, Landon C. Martin (son of Henry R. Martin), a World War II and Korean War veteran, that the gun had been issued to my great-great-uncle, John T. Holland. John Holland was the brother of my maternal great-grandmother, Virginia Katherine (Holland) Martin. My uncle also told me that my great-great-aunt "Maggie" (Margaret E.L.H. Holland), the widow of John T. Holland, gave my grandfather Martin the carbine while he was attending college

in San Marcos, Texas, from 1908 to 1910. In 1948, my grandfather Martin brought the carbine with him when he visited my Uncle Landon, who was attending the University of Arizona at Tucson at the time. My grandfather gave a lecture about the history of the carbine to several hundred of my uncle's fellow students at the university. My grandfather gave the carbine to my Uncle Landon, though my uncle left the gun with my grandparents for safekeeping. After my grandfather passed away, the gun was given to me with my uncle's blessings.

**J**ohn Holland was born on February 17, 1836, in Bedford County, Tennessee, to Green Holland and Mariah Louise Bishop. John had two brothers and four sisters. One brother, Rufus Cannon Holland, would serve in the same company with John during the Civil War. Family tradition has it that Sam Houston visited the Holland family at their home in Shelbyville, Tennessee, and presented such an intriguing picture of Texas that Green Holland eventually moved his family to east Texas on ox-drawn wagons. In 1858, the Holland family moved from east Texas to McMullen County. The Holland

family, along with several others, were the first settlers of the area just north of the present-day town of Tilden, where Leoncita Creek flows into the Frio River. Tilden, originally known as Dogtown because of the large number of dogs used by ranchers to guard their homes from Indian raids, is in McMullen County about 75 miles south of San Antonio. The Holland family took up cattle raising for a living.

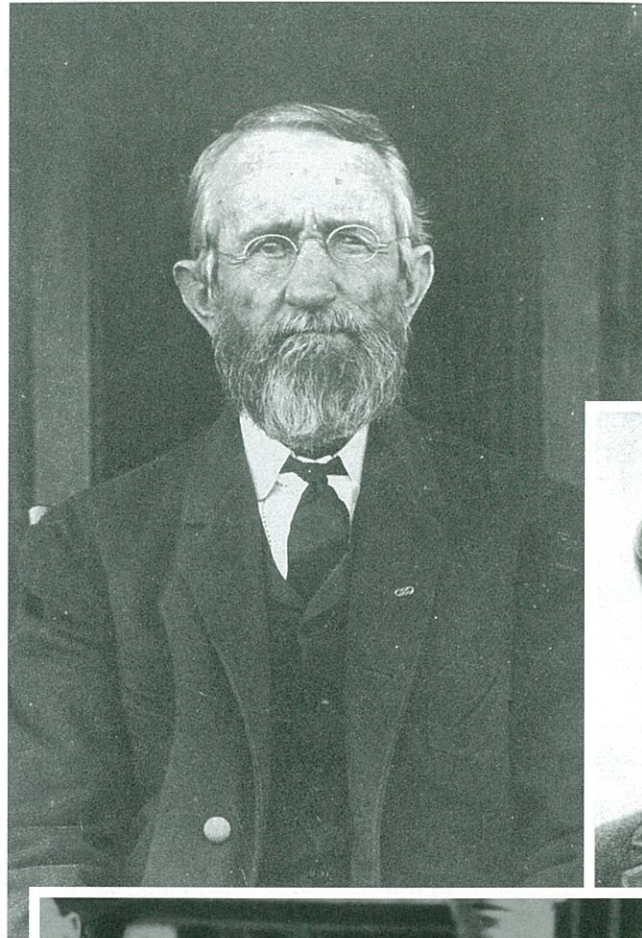
John Holland's great-grandfather, Maj. John Nelson, had served with distinction in the 4th North Carolina Infantry Regiment during the Revolutionary War. When the War Between the States broke out, the Holland brothers continued the family tradition of service to their country by enlisting in Capt. Joel K. Stevens' Company of Mounted Riflemen on March 22, 1862, in San Antonio. No physical characteristics were listed in the military records for either of the Holland brothers, though my Uncle Landon informed me that the Hollands were generally short of stature. My uncle also told me that the Hollands were natural born horsemen, so it was no surprise that they both joined the cavalry. John Holland was elected corporal, while his brother Rufus served as a musician/bugler in the company.

Capt. Stevens' company was made up mostly of men who volunteered from Bexar County, but also included volunteers from Atascosa, Comal, Karnes, McMullen, Medina, and Uvalde counties. This company would later be designated Company C of Col. Peter C. Woods' Regiment, and was additionally known as the 32nd Regiment of Texas Cavalry. The regiment was also designated the 36th Regiment of Texas Cavalry, though this name must not have been popular with the men as I have never observed any wartime or postwar accounts by veterans using the 36th Texas Cavalry Regiment designation.

Fred Adolphus, an authority on Trans-Mississippi Confederate uniforms and accoutrements, provided some fragmentary arms records for the 32nd Texas Cavalry. The records indicate that the regiment used a hodgepodge of weapons, including Enfield rifles, Mississippi rifles, Sharps carbines, shotguns, Colt Navy revolvers and Colt Army revolvers. The Enfield carbine was probably issued to Cpl. Holland late in the war. A letter



Holland's E. P. Bond Pattern 1856 cavalry carbine.



Left, postwar cabinet card photograph of Rufus C. Holland. Courtesy Mrs. Josephine Donaldson.

Below, the author is related to John Holland through his maternal great-grandparents, Matthew Hay and Virginia Catherine (Holland) Martin. This likeness was probably done shortly after their marriage in 1876. Matthew Hay Martin was the first elected sheriff of McMullen County, served in various other public offices, and was a rancher and cattleman. Virginia Catherine (Holland) Martin was John Holland's sister. She was the widow of Thomas Jefferson West, who served as a first lieutenant in the same company as Cpl. John T. Holland. Courtesy McMullen County Museum.



## The legacy



Henry R. Martin, center left, continues the family tradition of service to his country while serving as a private in Office Service Company No. 1 at Camp Joseph E. Johnston in Florida during WW I. This photograph of Pvt. Martin was enlarged from a panoramic photograph taken of his company on November 2, 1918. Henry R. Martin was the first descendant of Cpl. Holland to be entrusted with the family heirloom.

written by Pvt. Joseph B. Thompson, Company A, 32nd Texas Cavalry to his fiancée dated May 7, 1865, would seem to confirm this. In the letter, Pvt. Thompson stated that "Our Reg't is now armed with short Enfields and Sabres. The men with their new shoulder Straps, Sabre belts, large brass buckles do make quite a different appearance to what they did when I left there [illegible]. We are now armed as regular cavalry." Pvt. Thompson's letter suggests that the regiment had finally standardized its weapons.

The regiment drilled from March to late June 1862 at Camp Woods on the Salado River near San Antonio. From July to August the regiment drilled at Camp Clark near the San Marcos River, close to the little town of Martindale. After months of training, the first assignment for the newly formed 32nd Texas Cavalry was to patrol the area south of the Nueces River to the

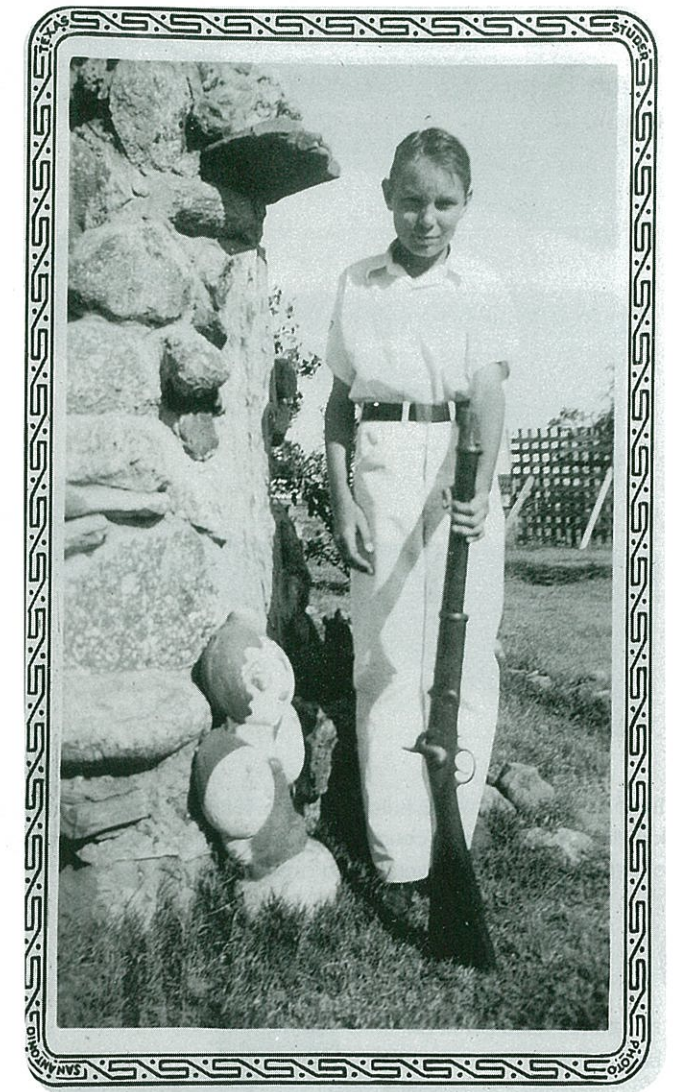
Right, photo of Landon C. Martin taken about 60 years ago posing with his great-uncle John T. Holland's carbine. Landon Martin was the second descendant of Cpl. Holland to be entrusted with the family heirloom.



Above, Landon C. Martin continues the family tradition of service to his country while serving as a Marine Corps All-Weather Night Fighter pilot during the Korean War. In this photo Capt. Martin (right) and his radar operator, Staff Sgt. W.K. Stochel (left), study a map before their next combat mission, while their F7F-3N ("Tigercat") All-Weather Night Fighter Interceptor can be seen in the background. Courtesy Landon Martin.

Rio Grande with the assistance of the 1st Texas Cavalry. From August 1862 to May 1863, their mission was to stop deserters and draft dodgers from escaping to Mexico, and to protect the vital cotton trade and civilian population from Federal raiders, Mexican bandits, hostile Indians, and American outlaws. The next assignment for the 32nd Texas Cavalry began on June 4, 1863, when Col. Woods received orders to participate in the defense of the coast from further depredations by Union raiders.

On March 12, 1864, at the beginning of Union Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Banks' Red River Campaign, the 32nd Texas Cavalry was ordered along with other Texas units to march to Louisiana to join Maj. Gen. Richard Taylor's army. Banks' plan was to advance along the Red River with the final objective of capturing the valuable cotton-producing region of east Texas. Taylor's Confederates routed Banks' army at the Battle of Mansfield on April 8, 1864, and were then repulsed at the Battle of Pleasant Hill on April 9, 1864. The 32nd arrived too late to fight at these battles. Though Banks won the Battle of Pleasant Hill, the condition of his army and the inability of Rear Admiral David D. Porter's fleet to provide support convinced him to order a general retreat. Banks first ordered his army to entrench at Grand Ecore and then, as things worsened, he ordered his army

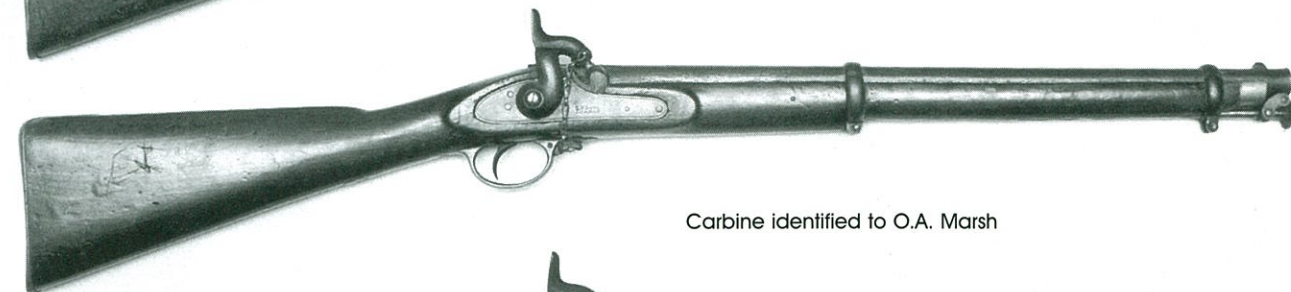


to retreat back to Alexandria, Louisiana. Taylor's forces were considerably weakened when Lt. Gen. Edmond Kirby-Smith ordered the divisions of Gen. Thomas J. Churchill, Maj. Gen. John G. Walker and Gen. Mosby M. Parsons to Arkansas to meet the threat posed by Maj. Gen. Frederick Steele's army, which was attempting to link up with Banks at Shreveport.

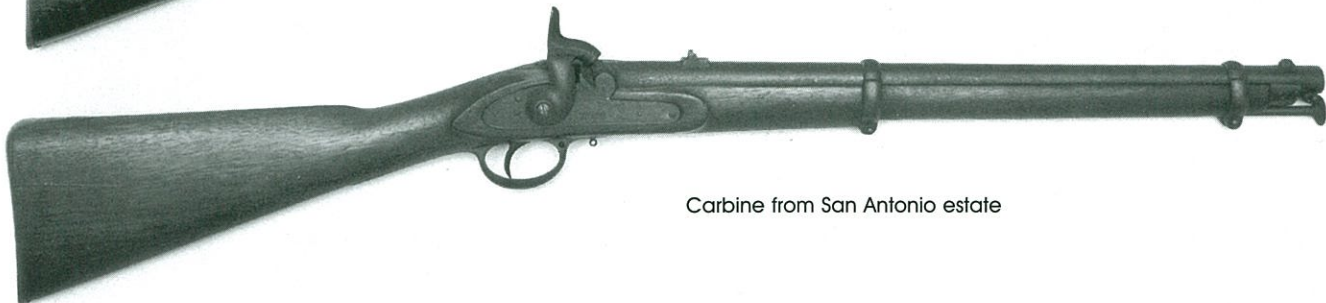
Taylor continued to aggressively press Banks' army until the bitter end. The most notable battles that the 32nd Texas Cavalry Regiment participated in during this phase of the campaign were Blair's Landing, Monett's Ferry, and Yellow Bayou. At Blair's Landing, Maj. Gen. Tom Green was attempting to intercept Admiral Porter's powerful fleet of ironclad and tinclad gunboats and wooden transports before it could link up with Banks' army. Green was tragically killed on April 12th while exhorting the men of the 32nd Texas Cavalry to capture a Union gunboat and transport that were stuck on a sandbar. The same artillery shell that killed Green also severely wounded Lt. Col. Nathaniel Benton of the 32nd Texas Cavalry. The volume of fire put out by the 32nd and the other Texas regiments was described by Union Naval Commander Thomas O. Selfridge as the "heaviest and most concentrated fire of musketry that I



Carbine identified to Holland

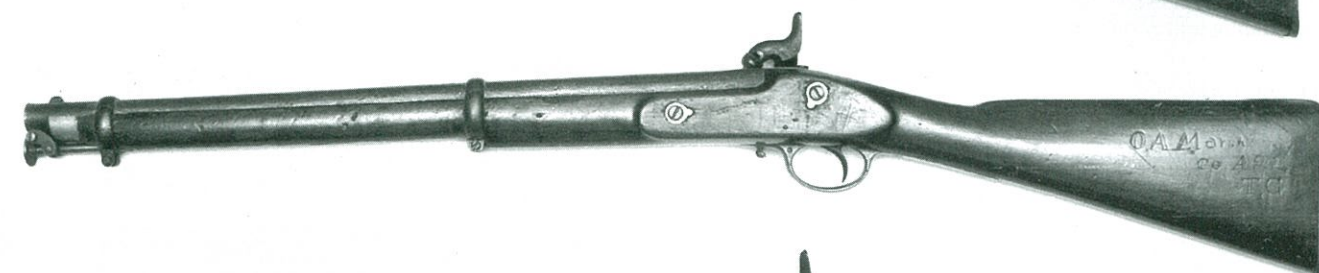
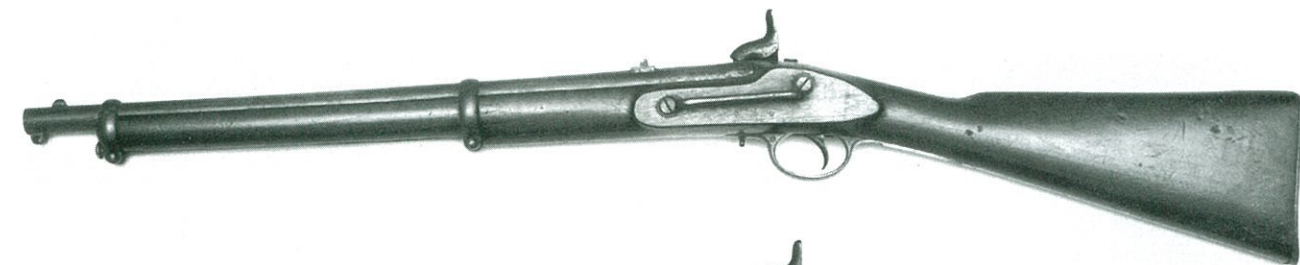


Carbine identified to O.A. Marsh



Carbine from San Antonio estate

Three Texas-associated E.P. Bond Pattern 1856 cavalry carbines. The top carbine belonged to Cpl. John T. Holland, center carbine is identified to O.A. Marsh (courtesy Sam Nesmith collection) and bottom carbine came from a San Antonio estate. Note that the O. A. Marsh carbine still retains its swivel ramrod and nipple protector.



Left side of the Texas-associated E. P. Bond Pattern 1856 cavalry carbines shown opposite. Note that unlike the other two carbines, the O. A. Marsh carbine at center does not have a sling bar on the left side and is missing its rear sight.



Lockplate of Corporal Holland's carbine. Note that the lockplate is stamped "E. P. Bond, London."



Lockplate of the "O. A. Marsh Carbine." Note that the lockplate is stamped "E.P. Bond, London" and that the gun still retains the nipple protector. "J.C." and "Bond" is stamped inside of the lockplate above the mainspring. The "J.C." mark may stand for John Chambers, who had his business at 46 Lambeth Street, Goodman's Fields, London. Courtesy Sam Nesmith.

Lockplate of the "San Antonio Carbine." Note that the lockplate is stamped "E.P. Bond, London."



Carving on the O.A. Marsh carbine, inscribed "O.A. Marsh, Co. A. 21, T.C." Though there is no record of a soldier named O.A. Marsh serving in the 21st Texas Cavalry, there is an O.A. Marsh listed in the 1860 Texas census records for Johnson County, which is near the counties where the regiment was raised. Courtesy Sam Nesmith.



have ever witnessed”— though apparently not heavy enough to stop the fleet, which continued on its way down the river.

At Blair's Landing and the following battles, the 32nd normally fought as dismounted cavalry, with every seventh trooper holding the horses. Pvt. James M. Foster, Company E, 32nd Texas Cavalry, gave a good description of the fighting between Blair's Landing and Monett's Ferry when he wrote:

Our men were all good with a rifle and they would drive in the enemy cavalry, walking from tree to tree, shooting and loading. They would always run the cavalry in, then drive in the enemy skirmishers and when they came up with the main body, would go back the same way, walking from tree to tree, shooting when they got a good target, then falling back at a walk, reloading as they walked. Then it was stop and wait until a Yankee offered a good target. We lost a few men, but not many.

At Monett's Ferry, Gen. Taylor was hoping to trap and destroy Banks' retreating army, which outnumbered his own army almost four to one. His plans went awry when Gen. Hamilton P. Bee was deceived by a Union feint on his center and right

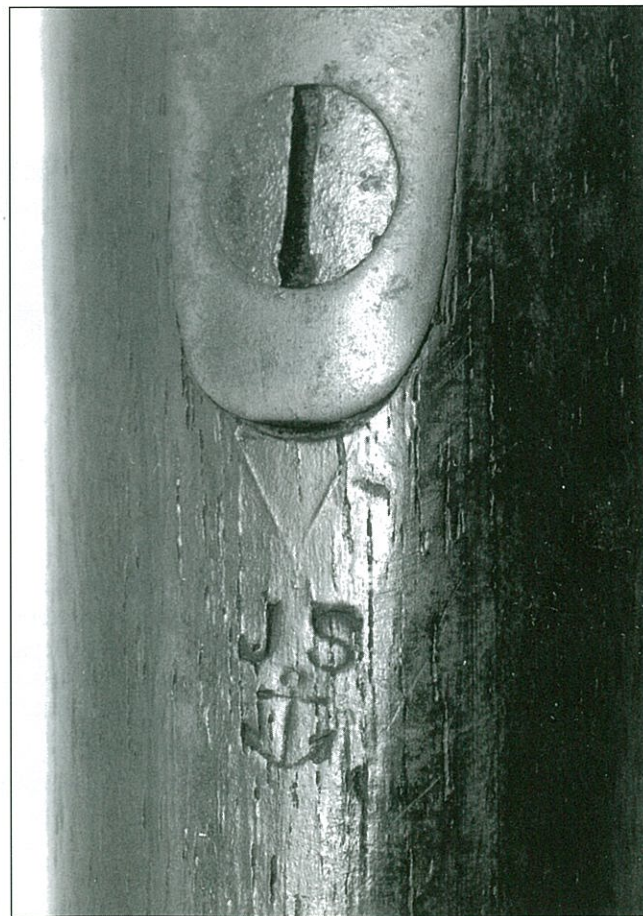
flank that caused him to withdraw his small force from the crossing at Monett's Ferry on April 23rd. This allowed Banks' army to escape across the Cane River. Bee cited the 32nd Texas Cavalry's part in the engagement at Monett's Ferry in his after-action report when he stated:

... the splendid thirty-second Regiment [which reinforced Lt. Col. George T. Madison's 3rd Texas Cavalry supported by three batteries of artillery], with its brave Colonel [Woods] at its head, met the furious attack of not less than 10,000 of the enemy on the extreme left, and for two hours steadily held their ground, during all of which time the fire of the musketry was incessant and terrible, yet slowly but steadily our men were driven until the hill [above the ferry] . . . was lost.

Before Gen. Banks' army could finally reach safety across the Atchafalaya Bayou, it had to first cross Yellow Bayou. Yellow Bayou was the final engagement in Bank's Red River Campaign. It began in response to the cavalry of Maj. Gen. John A. Wharton and Col. Xavier D. Debray attacking the rear guard of Banks' army while the cavalry of Col. W.O. Yager assaulted Banks' wagon train on May 17th. On May 18th, Union Gen.

Below left, closeup of proof mark on barrel on the Holland carbine. The "Crown CP" is the definitive proof, the "25" indicates 25 bore (.577 inch), the "Crown V" is a view mark indicating that no visual flaws had been detected, and the bottom mark is a lion over a letter "G," the provisional proof mark. These same markings are also stamped on the San Antonio carbine and the O.A. Marsh carbine.

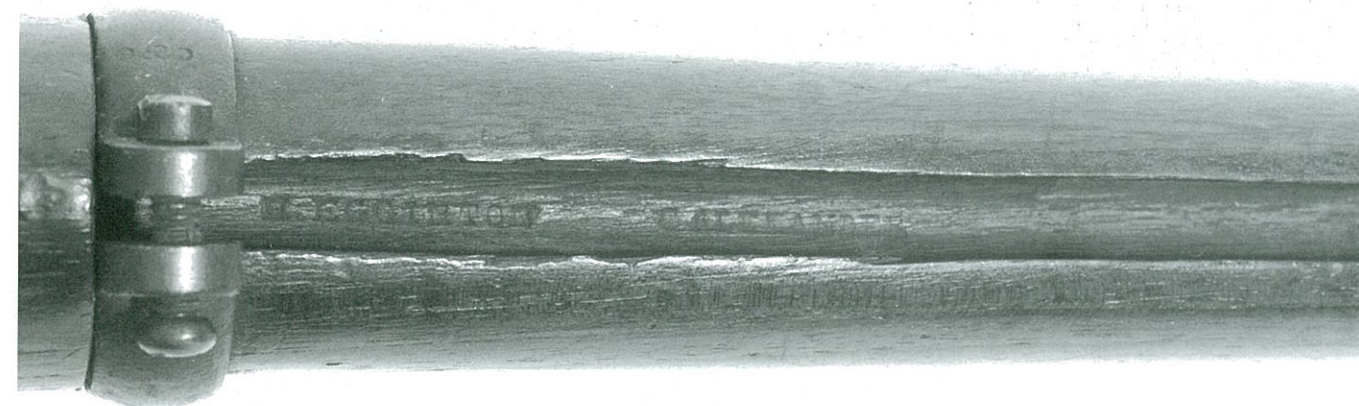
Below right, closeup of the JS-over-anchor mark on the comb of the stock near the toe of the brass buttplate on Cpl. Holland's carbine.



Closeup of "John D. Wick" stamped on stock near the sling bar on the Holland carbine. Location of this mark most likely indicates that this contractor was involved in the final assembly and possibly finishing of the component parts. This same marking is also stamped on the O. A. Marsh carbine.



Closeup view of "Groom" stamping on stock near the sling bar on the San Antonio carbine. This probably stands for Richard Groom, Jr., who was listed as a gunmaker at 10 Wellington Passage, Stepney (East End, London) in 1858 and '59. As with the example at left, the location of this mark most likely indicates that this contractor was involved in the final assembly and possibly finishing of the component parts.



Closeup of the ramrod channel of the Holland carbine, which is stamped "H. Egginton and C. Alexander." Egginton is a name associated with the Birmingham gun trade.

Joseph A. Mower recrossed Yellow Bayou and counterattacked with three brigades. A fierce battle ensued between two roughly equivalent opponents and concluded in a bloody stalemate, ending any further attempts to prevent the retreat of the remainder of Banks' army across the Atchafalaya.

At Yellow Bayou, Col. Woods was wounded in the arm, rendering it nearly useless for the rest of his life. The Holland brothers' Company C suffered a tragic loss with the mortal wounding of its popular commander, Capt. Stevens. Some of Steven's men were so distraught over his condition that they

threatened to take no prisoners. Stevens responded by saying, "Boys, most of those Yanks didn't want this war any more than you did...In this thing, some of us must die. Now it's my turn..." Stevens ordered his men to leave him and continue pressing the Federals.

When his men returned to the spot where he lay, they discovered that the Federals had moved him under a shade tree, placed a blue coat under his head, and put a canteen in his good hand. After seeing this gesture of kindness, his men then understood what he had told them earlier. He passed away a few

weeks later on June 7, 1864. The men of Company C formed a committee to express their grief and published an obituary in the July 9, 1864, issue of *The San Antonio News*. In an excerpt from the obituary, the men of Company C stated:

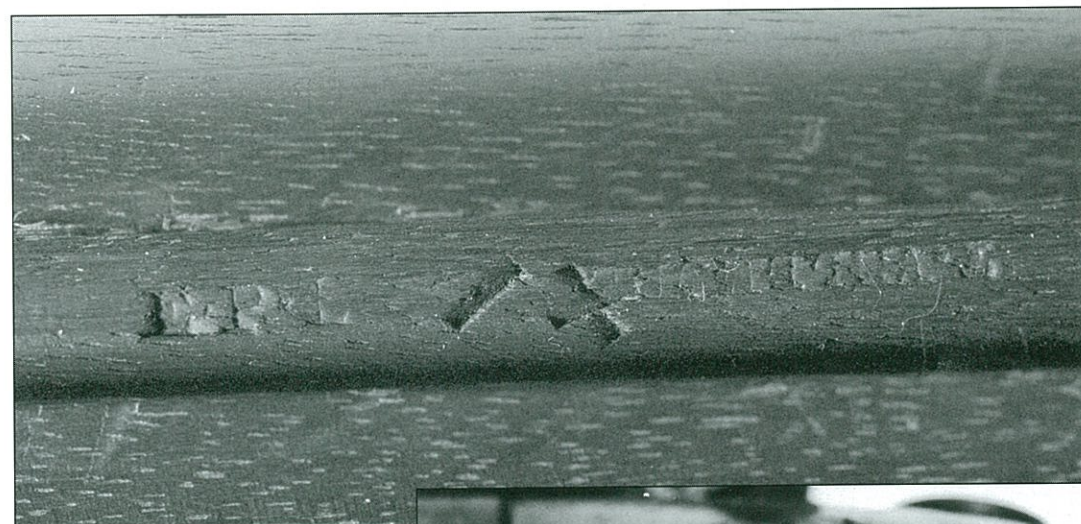
That we deplore the death of this gallant officer, and believe that our country's cause has lost a zealous supporter, the army an efficient officer, the community an eminent physician, society a polished member, and his family a devoted husband and father. He was a true patriot, faithful officer, zealous to the execution of orders and untiring in providing for the wants of his company.

On May 24, 1864, Maj. Gen. John A. Wharton, who had replaced Gen. Green, commended Col. Woods' 32nd Texas Cavalry Regiment and the other regiments under his command. He related:

For forty-six days you have engaged the enemy, always superior to you in numbers. When the beaten foe, with four

army corps of infantry and upwards of 5,000 cavalry, began his retreat, you were found in battle on his front, and hung on his flanks and rear only to destroy. In his retreat from Grand Ecore to the Atchafalaya you killed, wounded and captured upward of 4,000, destroying five transports and three gunboats, all of which was accomplished with loss to you of but 400 men, two thirds of whom will report for duty within forty days. The history of no other campaign will present the spectacle of a cavalry force capturing and killing more of the enemy than their own numbers. This you have done, and in so doing have immortalized yourselves and added new luster to Texas, the gallantry of whose sons has been illustrated on every battlefield from Gettysburg to Glorietta.

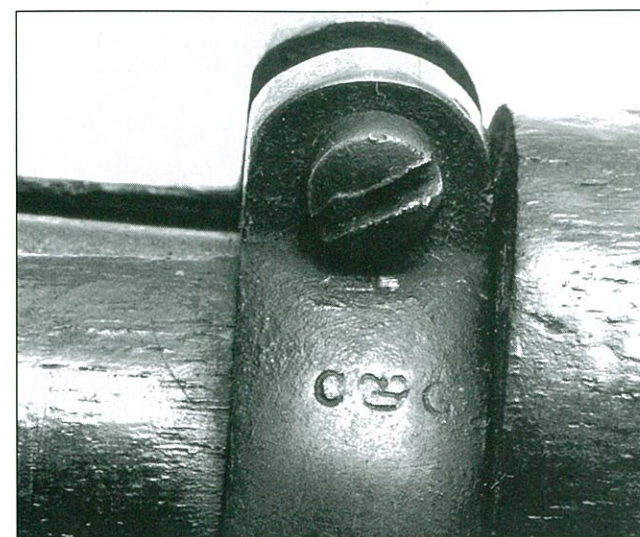
After the end of the Red River Campaign, the 32nd Texas Cavalry continued to serve in Louisiana and was probably the last Texas regiment to leave. The regiment was back in Texas in March 1865 and was ordered to demobilize that May 21st. Holland signed a Federal "Parole of Honor" in San Antonio on



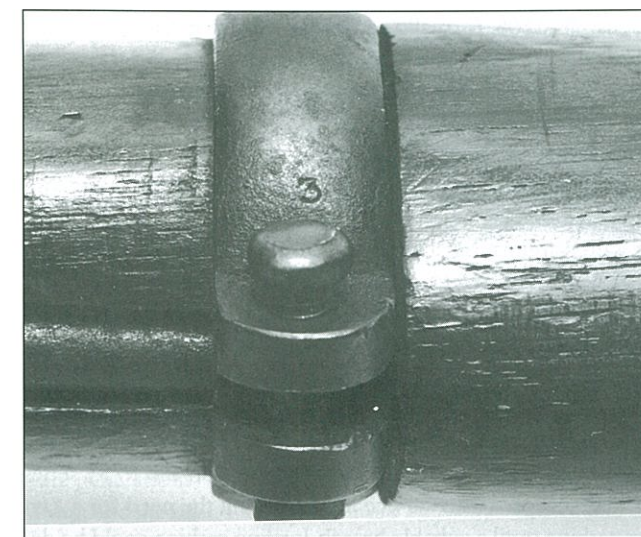
Above, closeup of the ramrod channel of the San Antonio carbine, with "EPL" stamped in the channel. Also stamped in the ramrod channel to the right of the "EPL" stamping is "T. Wildmore" and "Alexander."



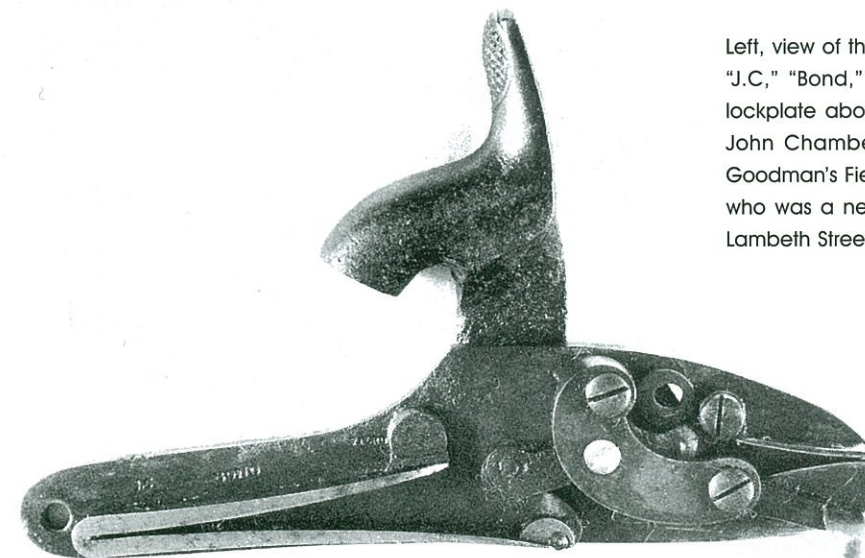
Right, closeup of sling bar on the Holland carbine. Note the "C [crown] G" mark on the sling bar. This mark also appears on the barrel bands. It may stand for Cooper and Goodman, a fairly large and innovative Birmingham firm best known for its pepperbox revolvers. This mark is also stamped in the same locations on the San Antonio carbine and its ramrod.



Closeup of barrel band on the Holland carbine with "C [crown] G" mark stamp. This mark may stand for Cooper and Goodman (for more on them, please see the caption at bottom on the facing page). This marking also appears on the San Antonio carbine. A variation of this mark, "G.C.," appears on one of the barrel bands of the O.A. Marsh carbine. "G.C." may stand for George Carr, who had his business located at 9 Chamber Street, Goodman's Fields, East London in 1864-'65.

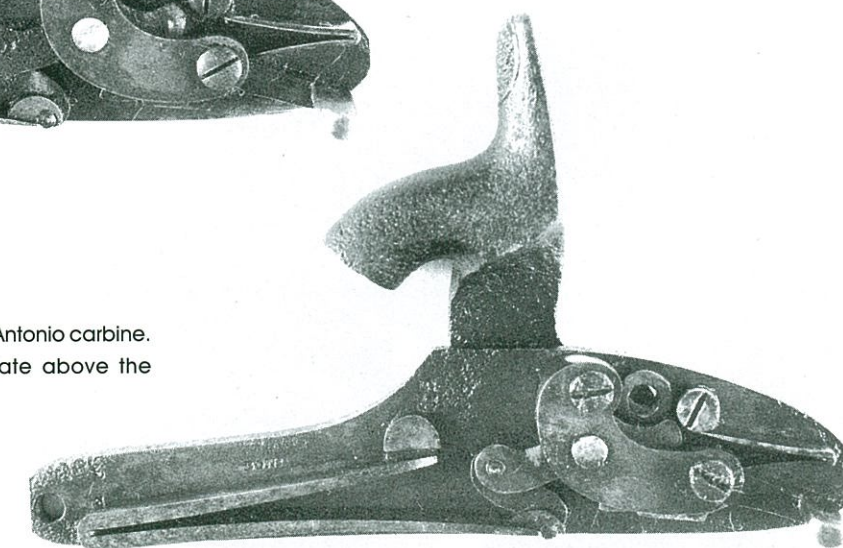


Closeup of barrel band on the Holland Carbine, with the numeral "3" stamped on the band.



Left, view of the inside of the lockplate on Cpl. Holland's carbine. "J.C.," "Bond," and "R. Ford" are stamped on the inside of the lockplate above the mainspring. The "J.C." mark may stand for John Chambers, who had his business at 46 Lambeth Street, Goodman's Fields, London. "R. Ford" may stand for Richard Ford, who was a neighbor of E. P. Bond, with his address located at 2 Lambeth Street, Hooper Square.

Right, view of the inside of the lockplate on the San Antonio carbine. "Bond" is stamped on the inside of the lockplate above the mainspring.



August 28, 1865, formally ending his service in the 32nd Texas Cavalry.

After the war, John Holland and his wife Maggie adopted two children and took up farming in San Marcos, Texas. John Holland passed away on December 11, 1900, and his family erected a granite tombstone in his memory that commemorated his service in the 32nd Texas Cavalry. Rufus Holland and his wife, Virginia, ran a stage and freight line from San Antonio to Tilden, Frio Town, and Oakville. His grandchildren fondly recalled his reminiscing about the war and that he would always end by saying "and I was the best-looking man in the regiment [sic]." Rufus passed away on February 2, 1918, in Pearsall, Texas.

John Holland's carbine is the Pattern 1856 or "East India Pattern" cavalry carbine. It was based on the P/53 series and accepted into service in 1856 to fill the need for a cavalry carbine until a suitable breech-loading carbine could be developed for the British Army.

The carbine was first put into production in June 1857, with a large quantity of them being used in India. The carbine is 37" long and has a 21" long barrel. The .577 calibre barrel is rifled with three broad, angular grooves.

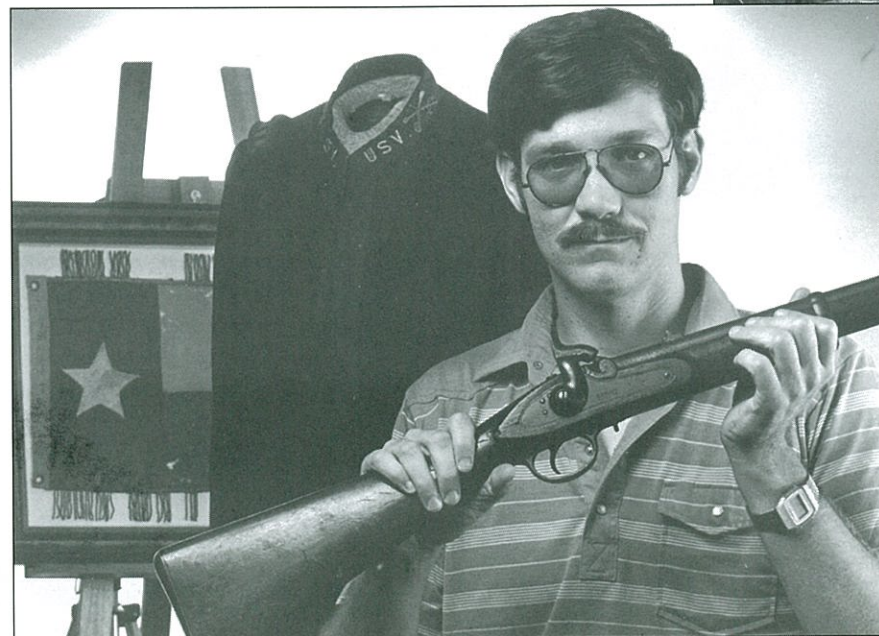
The lockplate on Cpl. Holland's carbine is marked "E. P. Bond, London." This indicates that the gun was made by a major gunmaker and contractor, Edward Phillip Bond. He was the son of another gunmaker, Edward James Bond. In 1835, E. P. Bond apprenticed under his uncle, William Bond, and in 1836 under E. Barnett, a well-known gun manufacturer. In 1842, he was made a freeman of the Worshipful Company of Gunmakers and in 1847 was elected master. He was reelected to that post in 1859, 1864, 1875, and 1883.

Bond did business under the names of Edward and William Bond from 1845 until 1861. In 1862, he changed the name of his company to E. P. Bond, with his address listed as Hooper Square. This would indicate that the "John T. Holland Carbine" was made in 1862 or later.



Cpl. Holland's tombstone is inscribed "J. T. Holland, Born In Bedford Co. Tenn, Feb. 17, 1836, Member of 32 Regt. Tex Cavy, Died Dec 11, 1900. Erected by Wife, Son & Daughter." Photo by author.

The author holding his great-great-uncle's carbine with other Texas artifacts in the background. The author is the third descendant of Cpl. Holland to be entrusted with this family heirloom. This photograph was used to illustrate an article in the *San Antonio Light* newspaper on the Texas Sesquicentennial Arms Exposition at Dallas, Texas, in September 1986. Photo by Bobby Sanchez.



Hooper Square no longer exists, but is believed to have been near the Commercial Road and London Proof House, which was run by the Worshipful Company of Gunmakers. E. P. Bond was listed as "Contractor to the Ordnance" once in 1856, probably for the Pattern 1856 cavalry carbine, and was a contractor for the East India Company from 1844 to 1853. Bond also supplied guns for the Hudson's Bay Company.

This particular carbine has the mysterious JS-over-anchor mark stamped on the comb of the stock near the toe of the brass butt plate. There have been many explanations for this mark, though the most logical one is that it is a Confederate viewer's mark indicating that the arms had been inspected and accepted by agents of the Confederate government. The design of the viewer's mark was cryptic enough to give blockade runners a plausible denial if their ship was boarded.

Two other E. P. Bond Pattern 1856 cavalry carbines with a Texas association are known to exist. One that turned up in a San Antonio estate also has the JS-over-anchor mark. Another E. P. Bond carbine exists that has its stock personalized by a Texas cavalryman. This particular carbine doesn't have the JS-over-anchor mark, but still retains the nipple protector and ramrod swivel. All three carbines have numerous marks (other than the JS-over-anchor) stamped in similar locations, and they may indicate the parts were subcontracted, as was common practice in the European gun trade at that time.

While most major European powers were willing to provide on-site inspection teams to monitor quality of the production, the Confederacy would normally just examine a sample and hope that the standards of quality would continue throughout the production cycle. Arms made for commercial sales, such as the E. P. Bond carbines, did not require the strict "quality assurance" inspections demanded by government purchasers. The subcontractor markings were helpful in identifying problems and provided an audit trail to make payment easier. The John T. Holland carbine has six possible subcontractors' marks, the San Antonio carbine has five possible subcontractors' marks, and the O. A. Marsh carbine has three possible subcontractors' marks.

Although I have many nice Texas military relics in my collection, my great-great-uncle's gun is the most precious. When I hold it in my hands, I feel a direct and tangible link to my ancestor's service in the war and to those family members who have preserved this heirloom through the years. The history of a family heirloom doesn't end with the soldier who carried it in the war: It is enhanced every time it passes through another descendant's hands. Most collectors of military artifacts feel that they have a duty to preserve and pass on their collections to future generations to enjoy and study. As a descendant of the soldier, I feel even more duty bound to preserve this family heirloom for future generations as a concrete symbol of his selfless service. ■

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The author is a museum specialist at the Fort Sam Houston Museum in San Antonio, a captain and historian in the US Army Reserve, and the 1st lieutenant commander of the Alamo Camp #1325, Sons of Confederate Veterans. He has been collecting and studying Texas military artifacts for more than 16 years. He is a frequent contributor to NSTCW.

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