

Featured Carbine

Inland 931 – First Commando Fiji Guerillas

By Glen Collier



—Photo by courtesy "Auckland Star,"
Major C. W. H. Tripp, D.S.O., whose intelligent and courageous leadership was the inspiration of every New Zealander, Fijian, and Tongan in the First Commando Fiji Guerrillas.

After the end of World War II, Inland 931 was reportedly obtained from Charlie Tripp, a New Zealand farmer-rancher who had served in the New Zealand Army. Research shows Charles William Howard Tripp was born in Timaru, New Zealand on February 22, 1902. With the outbreak of World War II, Tripp enlisted in the New Zealand Army for New Zealand's Second Expeditionary Force (2NZEF). The first expeditionary force was in World War I. The Nominal Role for 2NZEF shows two embarkations for Tripp.

On January 14, 1942, NCO Charles William Howard Tripp arrived in Fiji as part of the 36th Battalion of the 2NZEF. The purpose was to train for jungle warfare and to set up the Fiji Defense Force. In April 1942, Lieutenant Tripp was given command of the Southern Independent Commandos. In July 1942, the Americans arrived to take over the defense of Fiji and most of the 36th Battalion returned home. Tripp and his commandos stayed with the Americans. In January 1943, Captain Tripp received

orders to form the First Commando Fiji Guerillas from selected New Zealand and indigenous Fiji personnel. The unit was advised to be prepared to move to the Solomon Islands on short notice. Tripp and his guerillas worked as scouts for the Americans and as Commandos behind the Japanese lines in and around the Solomons, including Guadalcanal. The Fiji guerillas, adept at operating in the jungle, were lethal. It was said that “when the Fiji Commandos raid at night, death wears velvet gloves.”

A rare and obscure book entitled *Pacific Commandos, New Zealanders and Fijian in Action, A history of the Southern Independent Commando and First Commando Fiji Guerillas*, by Colin R. Larsen, details the activities of the Fiji guerillas under Tripp’s leadership. There is mention of Tripp and a carbine, written in a sensationalized manner.

During the main battle a Japanese machine-gun opened up on Captain Tripp at ten yards' range. Captain Tripp happened to be carrying an American Carbine which he was trying out for the first time—it was also the last for it failed to fire and he threw it at the Japanese. He then dived into the fern. The Japanese threw grenades all round him, and he ran back past George Conn who was then under good cover. Then a dozen Japanese came towards Captain Tripp from another direction, so he crouched in some undergrowth. One of the enemy came straight towards him; this one he shot with his automatic pistol. He then got back to his patrol and ordered them to withdraw, and it was at this stage that the patrol split up. Captain Tripp and some Tongans soon ran into more fire whereupon they took cover and awaited for darkness.

At dusk, the Japanese, who had a rough idea of the position of the commandos, started shelling them with mortars. These shells forced them from their hiding places. After travelling half a mile they were about to bivouac for the night when they found that they were still in the middle of strong enemy positions. A Japanese jumped out of a foxhole and grabbed Captain Tripp round the waist, turning him square on to the hole. Another Japanese, in the foxhole, laid his rifle across the first man's shoulder and fired. Captain Tripp was shooting the bottom man with his pistol when the top man was shooting him, and he fell over backwards with the impact of the bullet. The bullet did not penetrate the flesh as it was deflected by a clip of cartridges and a cigarette lighter, and Captain Tripp was able to shoot the other Japanese before he got to his feet again.

Tripp’s family provided this photograph of the items in his pocket that deflected the Japanese bullet.



Because casualties and disease had depleted the unit, Major Tripp's First Commando Fiji Guerillas was disbanded on May 27, 1944. For his service during World War II, Major Charles William Howard Tripp received the following:

Distinguished Service Order 1939-45 Star

Pacific Star

Defence Medal (NZ)

War Medal 1939-45

New Zealand War Service Medal

Silver Star (USA)

It is worth noting that of the six Silver Stars (USA) awarded to New Zealanders in World War II, three were presented to Commandos.

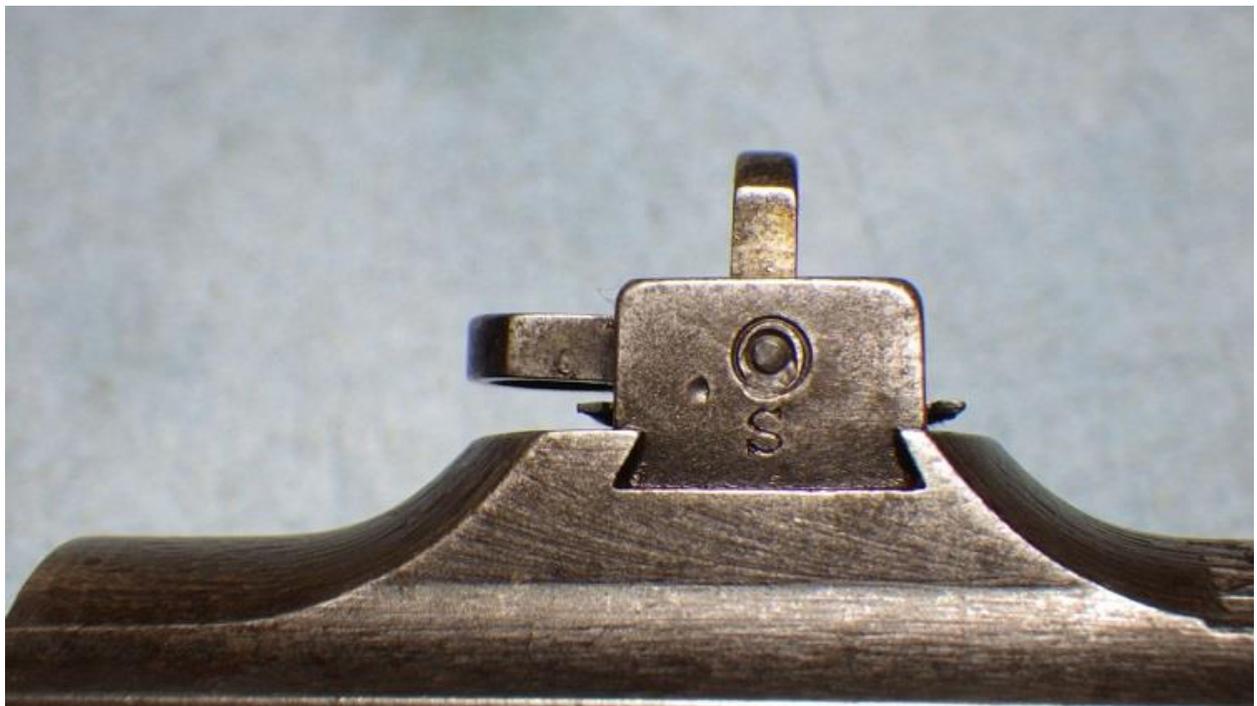
Tripp died in 1991 and is buried in Woodbury Cemetery, Woodbury, Timaru District, Canterbury, New Zealand.



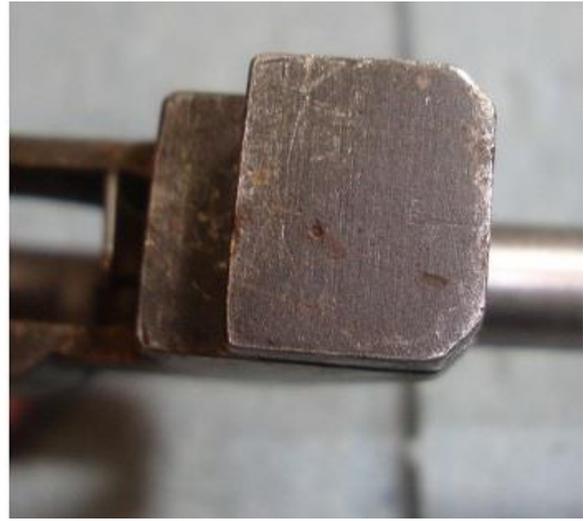
Inland delivery of M1 carbines to fulfill its military contract began in June 1942 with 362 deliveries, according to War Baby!, page 361. Due to subsequent modifications, several features are found only on the earliest Inland carbines, such as Inland 931.



The 6-42 barrel is proofed with a large “P” with serifs. According to CC NL #346, dated March 2008, the highest reported serial number with a serif “P” barrel proof was 3,546 with a 7-42 dated barrel.



The Type I rear sight is marked with a round serif “S” on the left side. This mark on flip sights is found on original early Inlands and Winchesters.



The Type I trigger housing, with bevels on the front and back, has some other distinguishing features.



One such feature is the lack of hammer spring recess. Inland 931 trigger housing (on the left) with no hammer spring recess, is compared to later trigger housing with a recess for the hammer spring (on the right). This modification was no doubt a welcome one for anyone re-assembling the carbine.



The ordnance bomb on the left side of the trigger housing is believed to be an inspector stamp. CCNL 346-18, page 18 mentions a small flaming bomb on the left side of early Inland trigger housings.



The extractor and extractor plunger are Type I. The cone of the extractor plunger fits into the V-notch of the extractor. This combination was known for causing the bolt to

come apart when firing. According to War Baby!, page 300, carbine production in February 1943 was held up until this problem was resolved.



The solution was the Type II extractor, which was made by reworking the Type I. Note the larger cut and the change in the lip of the extractor. Also, the plunger was changed from a solid cone to a cone with a flat side.



A later redesign produced the Type III extractor with the flat lip. There was no change in the extractor plunger.



The top of the cam cut on the operating side is straight flat on Inland 931. A review of Inland Carbines of the Month in Carbine Club Newsletters shows that at least by serial number 107316, with a 12-42 barrel date, the cut was heart shaped.



The earliest Inlands did not have the crossed cannons acceptance stamp on the right side of the stock. Instead, they were in the sling well. The I-cut stock for Inland 931 has small crossed cannons with an “O” and ordnance bomb in the sling well. According to CC NL #333-4, this is the earliest Inland sling well marking.



The inside of the handguard is marked with a flaming bomb and only an O” as opposed to an “OI” on the usual side rails of the handguard.



The flat of the 6-42 Inland barrel has only a few “hieroglyphs” compared to later serial numbers.



The flaming bomb seen near the gas port has been reported for barrels dated 5-42 to 9-42 (CC NL #346-6).



High wood stocks were susceptible to breaking, and this was not unique to early Inlands. Note the neat repair with screws to the damaged high wood on the Inland 931 stock.



The ears of the front sight on Inland 931 have been removed. This is said to be of benefit in low light conditions, such as those involved in jungle combat.



After the end of World War II, a New Zealand farmer-rancher turned military weapons collector acquired Inland 931 from Charles Tripp, who was an acquaintance. The carbine was inherited by the collector's son and it remained in the family collection until offered for sale in 2020. The seller described Tripp as having worked behind the enemy lines in Burma and the Pacific Islands. No evidence of Tripp's involvement in Burma was found. However, research shows there is little record of those who participated in those operations.

On March 15, 2019, a mass murder occurred in a New Zealand mosque. The New Zealand government quickly enacted strict gun control measures making most semiautomatic and military-style weapons illegal. A forced buy-back of banned weapons was implemented. The effective date of the new law was April 12, 2019. The owner of Inland 931, a person with dual US-NZ citizenship, received New Zealand permission to export his weapon collection to himself in the US on April 8, 2019. Had it not been exported, Inland 931 would have become wood chips and scrap metal. The export documents are shown below.



Permit Number: MFA00100019418C
Application reference: 19/0221 - JF

Issued: 08 April 2019
File:

[REDACTED]
cc NZ CUSTOMS OFFICE

CONSENT TO EXPORT STRATEGIC GOODS

The Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade consents to the **Single** export to **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA** of **Small Arms** goods listed on page two of this document, and as per the application for the export of strategic goods dated 05 April 2019.

Exporter

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

NEW ZEALAND

to Overseas End User

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Conditions of Export

1. This permit is valid until 08 July 2019.
2. Please provide a copy of this export permit to the New Zealand Customs Service; or if the goods are to be exported by airline as unaccompanied or accompanied airfreight - to the relevant airline officials at time of check-in.
3. When export goods are being returned to the overseas owner following repair or refit in New Zealand, the exporter has undertaken that the work done has not affected the use of the equipment nor provided additional capability above that required for reliability improvement.
4. Please contact this office either by email exportcontrols@mfat.govt.nz, by fax 04 439 8519, or by post, if the actual quantity exported varies from the quantity listed on page two of this document.
5. Permits may be revoked at any time prior to the shipment of the goods. Should an extension be required, re-application must be made.
6. If you have any questions regarding this Export Permit, or are asked to report on details of shipments or re-import into New Zealand as set out on the following page/s, please contact this office. Please quote the Permit Number provided above on all correspondence.



Peter Noble
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Permit Number: MFA00100019418C
Application reference: 19/0221 - JF

Issued: 08 April 2019
File:

Consent is given for the **Single** export of the following goods to **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**. Exporter and destination details are set out on page one of this permit.

Qty	Unit	Description	Serial No
1	pc	Rifle Inland M1Carbine 30-Calibre	931
1	pc	Rifle [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
1	pc	Rifle [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
1	pc	Rifle S [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]



Peter Noble
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Page 2 of 2

New Zealand Export Controls Contact Details:

Tel: 64 4 439 8227 Fax: 64 4 439 8519
Email: exportcontrols@mfat.govt.nz

The following picture is from “Fiji Patrol on Bougainville” in the January 1945 edition of The National Geographic Magazine. The commandos shown are not from Tripp’s First Commando Fiji Guerillas but are from the First Battalion, Fiji Infantry Regiment, which was also led by New Zealanders.



Sprouting Ferns Like a Dead Stump, a New Zealand Lieutenant Reports Back

His platoon has held off several hundred Japs in Tokuo village for 24 hours. Hand grenades and carbine clips fill his bulging pockets. New Zealand and Fiji officers commanded the Fiji Battalion.

DATA SHEET	CARBINE CLUB <input type="checkbox"/>	REV 01-01-11	REPORTER Glen Collier	ADDITIONAL DATA ON BACK	MANUFACTURER Inland
BOLT BLUE <input type="checkbox"/> PARK <input type="checkbox"/> LEFT LUG <input type="checkbox"/> RIGHT LUG <input type="checkbox"/> OI in circle <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> BELOW LEFT LUG <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER <input type="checkbox"/>					NAME ON RECEIVER <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">INLAND DIV.</div>
FLAT <input type="checkbox"/> ROUND <input type="checkbox"/> GAS PORT IN BOTTOM (1/16" HOLE) <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> EJECTOR TIP <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/>					SERIAL NUMBER <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">9 3 1</div>
RT. LUG SHAPE <input type="checkbox"/> ROUNDED <input type="checkbox"/> POINTED <input type="checkbox"/> EXTRACTOR MARKING TOP none <input type="checkbox"/> PLUNGER <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> MOD <input type="checkbox"/> FLAT <input type="checkbox"/> INSIDE none <input type="checkbox"/>					CODE OR MARKING BELOW SERIAL NUMBER _____
SLIDE TYPE = BOXES CHECKED E168A <input type="checkbox"/> E279A <input type="checkbox"/> CAM EARLY <input type="checkbox"/> LATE <input type="checkbox"/> OP SPRING GUIDE TIP <input type="checkbox"/>					BARREL DATE: 6-42 NAME INLAND MFG. DIV. GENERAL MOTORS
ARM JOINT <input type="checkbox"/> 3/8" BEVEL <input type="checkbox"/> 3/16" STEP <input type="checkbox"/> 9/16" STEP <input type="checkbox"/> M2 STEP <input type="checkbox"/>					MARKS <input type="checkbox"/> P HEIGHT 4.5/64 <input type="checkbox"/> P P (TWO) <input type="checkbox"/> PUNCH MARK <input type="checkbox"/> W
SLIDE BOX REAR FULL ROUND <input type="checkbox"/> PART ROUND <input type="checkbox"/> FLAT <input type="checkbox"/> INTERNAL CAM CUT FLAT TOP <input type="checkbox"/> V-TOP <input type="checkbox"/>					FRONT SIGHT KEYWAY <input type="checkbox"/> CHAMBER SKIRT <input type="checkbox"/>
APPROX. HOLE TO CAM CUT 3/32" 2/32" <input type="checkbox"/> B M: INSIDE BOTTOM P1 in cir. <input type="checkbox"/> LEFT SIDE none <input type="checkbox"/> SLIDE STOP <input type="checkbox"/> R: OUTSIDE BOTTOM none <input type="checkbox"/> ARM none <input type="checkbox"/> K: TOP OF BOX WALL none <input type="checkbox"/> SLIDE COLOR Dark gray					SIGHT KEY RETENTION NONE <input type="checkbox"/> CHISEL <input type="checkbox"/> NOTCH <input type="checkbox"/> STAKING OF KEY NONE <input type="checkbox"/>
TRIGGER HOUSING BEVELS ON MILLED HOUSING TOP REAR CORNERS YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> FRONT YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>					MARK - GAS CYL. none MARK - PISTON none BBL. COLOR Dark gray OTHER MARKS bomb, hieroglyphics
M1 <input type="checkbox"/> M2 <input type="checkbox"/> MILLED STAMPED/ BRAZED <input type="checkbox"/> MARKING RIGHT Inland logo LEFT bomb MAG WELL REAR WALL NARROW <input type="checkbox"/> WIDE <input type="checkbox"/> WIDE LEFT M2 <input type="checkbox"/> COLOR Dark gray MAG CATCH 1. <input type="checkbox"/> 1a. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. <input type="checkbox"/> 4a. <input type="checkbox"/> 5. <input type="checkbox"/> 5a. <input type="checkbox"/> MK. W-I SAFETY 1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. <input type="checkbox"/> MK. none					REAR SIGHT SHAPES 1. RIDGE <input type="checkbox"/> 2. GROOVES BY RIDGE <input type="checkbox"/> 3. VALLEY <input type="checkbox"/> 4. THUMBNAIL <input type="checkbox"/> 5. SLOPE ONLY <input type="checkbox"/> 6. NO SLOPE <input type="checkbox"/>
HAMMER PARK <input type="checkbox"/> BLUED <input type="checkbox"/> NO FINISH <input type="checkbox"/> MARKS: LEFT <input type="checkbox"/> RIGHT <input type="checkbox"/> FRONT <input type="checkbox"/> H in Shield <input type="checkbox"/> SEAR M1 <input type="checkbox"/> M2 <input type="checkbox"/> NO HOLE <input type="checkbox"/> HOLE <input type="checkbox"/> MARK RI SEAR SPRING STRAIGHT <input type="checkbox"/> TAPER END <input type="checkbox"/> TRIGGER MARKING RI					HAMMER SPRING RECESS YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> HAMMER SPRING COILS 22 <input type="checkbox"/> 26 1/2 <input type="checkbox"/> HAMMER PLUNGER BLUE <input type="checkbox"/> WHITE <input type="checkbox"/>
BARREL BAND 1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/> MARKING BAND SWIVEL <input type="checkbox"/> LUG <input type="checkbox"/>					FRONT SIGHT MARKS TOP FRONT <input type="checkbox"/> RIGHT <input type="checkbox"/> LEFT <input type="checkbox"/> RIGHT <input type="checkbox"/> LEFT <input type="checkbox"/> RIGHT <input type="checkbox"/> LEFT <input type="checkbox"/> RIGHT <input type="checkbox"/>
FOR TYPE 1 BANDS - SLING WINDOW WIDTH 1/4" <input type="checkbox"/> 5/16" <input type="checkbox"/> BAND RETAINER LINE <input type="checkbox"/> NO LINE <input type="checkbox"/> TIP <input type="checkbox"/>					SIGHTS FRONT MILLED <input type="checkbox"/> STAMPED <input type="checkbox"/> CASTING <input type="checkbox"/> REAR LEAF <input type="checkbox"/> ADJUST. MILLED <input type="checkbox"/> ADJUST. STAMPED <input type="checkbox"/> SIGHT PIN STAKING 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/>
STOCK M1 <input type="checkbox"/> M1A1 <input type="checkbox"/> M2 <input type="checkbox"/> M2 POTBELLY <input type="checkbox"/> RIGHT SIDE <input type="checkbox"/> LEFT SIDE <input type="checkbox"/> GRIP <input type="checkbox"/> P in Circle <input type="checkbox"/> OILER SLOT <input type="checkbox"/> DEEPER CROSS CUTS <input type="checkbox"/> WOOD AT SLIDE HIGH <input type="checkbox"/> LOW <input type="checkbox"/> HANDGUARD GROOVE <input type="checkbox"/> DEEP <input type="checkbox"/> SHALLOW <input type="checkbox"/> RIVETS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> HANDGUARD MARK bomb, O <input type="checkbox"/> LINER MARK					REAR TANG NARROW <input type="checkbox"/> WIDE <input type="checkbox"/> REAR HOLE NONE <input type="checkbox"/> 3/16" <input type="checkbox"/> FULL W. BUSH. <input type="checkbox"/> MILL CUT SQ. <input type="checkbox"/> RD. <input type="checkbox"/> NOTCHES FRONT ONLY <input type="checkbox"/> REAR ONLY <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH <input type="checkbox"/> HANDGUARD LIP LONG <input type="checkbox"/> SHORT <input type="checkbox"/>
MARKING none IN SLING CUT <input type="checkbox"/> O, bomb, CC <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER <input type="checkbox"/>					HANDGUARD MARK bomb, O <input type="checkbox"/> LINER MARK
BUTTPLATE PATTERN SQUARE <input type="checkbox"/> DIAG. <input type="checkbox"/> MARKING B257614 <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER <input type="checkbox"/>					OP. SPRING HOUSING INTEGRAL <input type="checkbox"/> DETACHABLE TUBE <input type="checkbox"/> TUBE MARKS SIDE LUG YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> SIDE END <input type="checkbox"/>
RECOIL PLATE MARKING none MARK LOCATION TOP FRONT <input type="checkbox"/> BOTTOM <input type="checkbox"/> TANG SIDE <input type="checkbox"/> TANG BOTTOM <input type="checkbox"/> RECOIL PL. SCREW THREADED AREA <input type="checkbox"/> HEAD MARK <input type="checkbox"/>					REAR HOLE NONE <input type="checkbox"/> 3/16" <input type="checkbox"/> FULL W. BUSH. <input type="checkbox"/> HANDGUARD LIP LONG <input type="checkbox"/> SHORT <input type="checkbox"/> REC. COLOR Dark gray BUTTPLATE PATTERN SQUARE <input type="checkbox"/> DIAG. <input type="checkbox"/> MARKING B257614 <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> M1A1 RIVETS BRASS <input type="checkbox"/> TUBULAR <input type="checkbox"/> STEEL <input type="checkbox"/> SOLID <input type="checkbox"/> RIVET MARK

**Data Sheet Supplement/Back
(Optional)**

Inland 931

Part	Blued	Park.	White	Notes
Safety	X			
Mag catch	X			
Trigger	X			
Sear	X			
Sear Spring	X			
Hammer Spring	X			
Trigger Spring	X			
Trigger Pin	X			
Trigger Housing Pin	X			
Hammer Pin	X			
Barrel band	X			
Swivel		X		
Front Sight				as on barrel and receiver - Dulite
Rear Sight				as on barrel and receiver - Dulite
Recoil Plate Screw	X			
Recoil Plate	X			difficult to tell
Slide Stop				difficult to tell
Butt Plate	X			
Butt Plate Screw	X			
Bbl Band Retainer	X			
Slide Spring Guide	X			
Extractor	X			

Receiver firing pin cut, 33 or 45 degrees? 33
 Is the extra cut on the bottom of the receiver? Yes No
 Type 1 barrel band: # of spot welds 3
 Type 1 barrel band: Round Face Flat Face
 Is the bullet feed ramp polished? Yes No
 Is there any staking of the rear sight to the receiver? Where and how? Chisel Punch left right front back
 Staking details: none
 Is the Barrel Breech Unfinished/In-The-White? Yes No
 Shape of barrel crown: _____
 Location and number of gas cylinder piston nut staking maybe unstaked
 Slide stop spring: Short Long
 Is the oiler washer leather? Yes No

Email completed data sheets to: DataSheet@USCarbineCal30.com

For more information, visit The Carbine Collectors Club on the web: www.USCarbineCal30.com

The Carbine Collectors Club Copyright© 2020 www.USCarbineCal30.com

This article and/or its images are the property of the author and/or the Carbine Collectors Club. They are not to be distributed or for commercial use without prior written permission (Title 17, Chapter 5, Section 501(a) U.S. Code)