

# FEATURED RIFLE



★ WRA 1289121 ★

Early 1943

*By Scott Duff*



We know a lot about Springfield Armory M1 rifles manufactured during World War II. Enough of them survived in their original configuration that there are few mysteries that remain. However, the same cannot be said of Winchester M1 rifles. This is easily understood if one looks at the quantities of each produced. In eight years of production, Springfield manufactured 3,526,922 rifles. In four and one half years, Winchester manufactured 513,880 rifles. Winchester only produced about 15% as many M1's as Springfield did. If the survival rate of each maker were the same, there would only be 15% as many original Winchester M1's from which to draw data. It therefore stands to reason that we do not have enough data sheets on original rifles from which to state definitively what a specific serial number rifle should look like. Several areas particular to Winchester M1's require more study. One of those areas that has yet to be adequately defined is the beginning and end to the usage of A- and CM-marked parts. Another area is in the color of the finish on individual parts. The additional information gleaned from any original Winchester rifle helps greatly with our understanding of Garand production by the Winchester Repeating Arms Company.

Winchester M1 rifle, serial number 1289121, is of particular interest due to the period in which it was manufactured and its unissued condition. This rifle is in outstanding condition, with original cosmoline remaining in protected areas. Over the past 24 years, I have had the opportunity to examine tens of thousands of M1 rifles. Because my first M1 was a late November 1944 Winchester purchased from the DCM in 1985, I have long had an interest in WRA's and have focused on them. I can state unequivocally that this is the best condition early 1943 production Winchester M1 that I have ever had the opportunity to examine. It is a benchmark example of the maker and period.

The colors of the finish on individual components can be discerned from the accompanying photographs. It is interesting that few of the parts are of the same color or shade. The DuLite blue finish on the gas cylinder and lock (see Dave McClain's article in the Spring 2007 *GCA Journal*) and differences in the finish on the clip latch, the windage knob and elevation cap, rear hand guard clip, lower band, and front hand guard ferrule are particularly noteworthy. The comparison of the colors of the receiver, bolt, barrel, and op rod is also instructional. These photographs are helpful to the collector attempting to identify an original rifle or trying to restore one.



It is also noteworthy that the only parts marked with an A are the clip latch, follower rod, op rod catch, and trigger. Note that the trigger is the early type with extra hole. To my knowledge this is the first original rifle reported with an A marked trigger with extra hole. Many of those triggers have been available loose, but we were never certain of when they were used. The rifle contains no CM-marked parts. When studying the data sheet, attention should be paid to those parts marked with a punch mark. There are a lot of them.



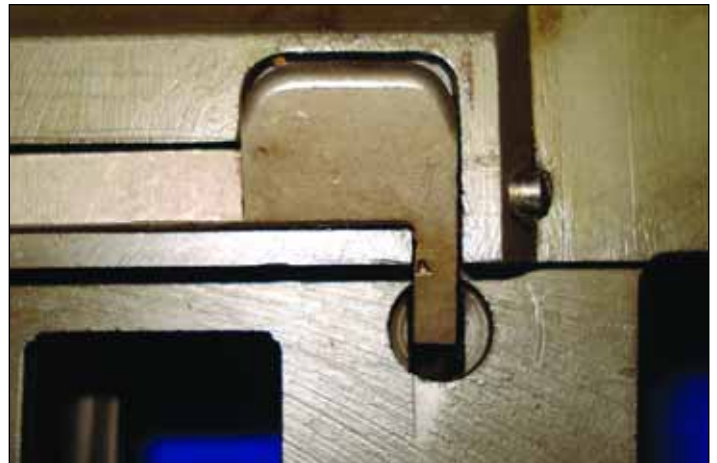
Receiver forging flaw that did not affect acceptability. These minor flaws are also found on Springfield Armory receivers, often in the area of the front receiver ring. Generally, it is the result of a forging that is slightly undersize in a small area, leaving insufficient metal for machining that area.



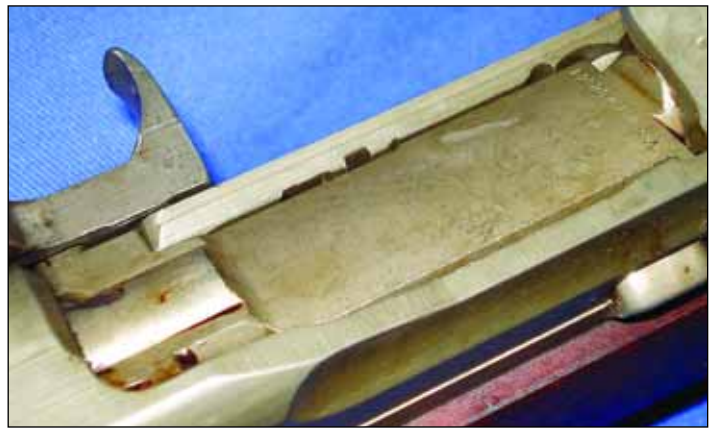
Despite modifications, Winchester did not change the -2 drawing number until the WIN-13 in 1945.



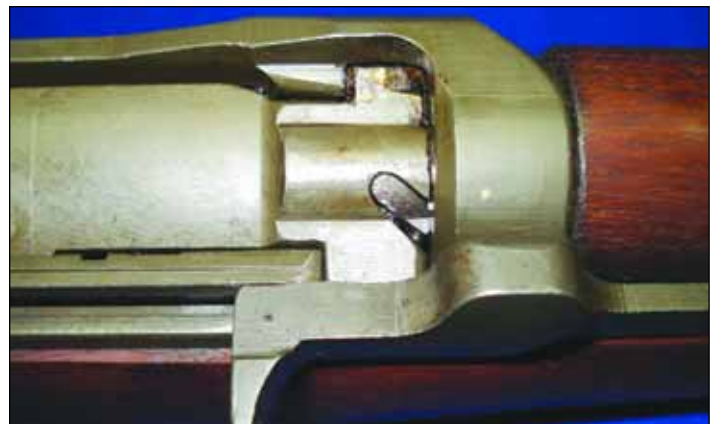
It is not often that Garand collectors have the opportunity to examine in detail a truly unissued Winchester, or for that matter a Springfield, manufactured in early 1943. Short of physically examining the rifle, nothing is better than the examination of detailed color photos of such a rifle, hence this major photo study of 1289121.



Letter "A" marked on finger.



Note prick punch on the base and aperture, and partial symbol stamped on the edge of the cover.



Extractor is blue or DuLite. Note prick punch on the op rod handle.

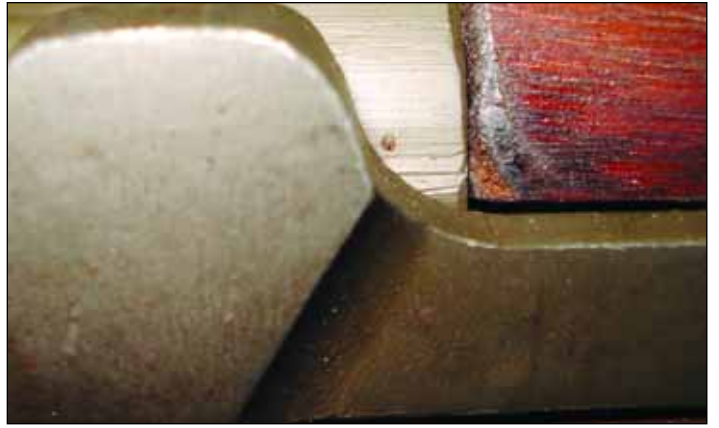


The bluish original DuLite finish is plain.  
The sight seal is the WRA flat face type and protrudes quite far.



The solid lock screw is not DuLite as in earlier production, and was originally produced "in the white" with no finish. Notice, however, the pristine condition of the single slot, a good indication of little use.

Both ends of the pin appear to have dark finish.

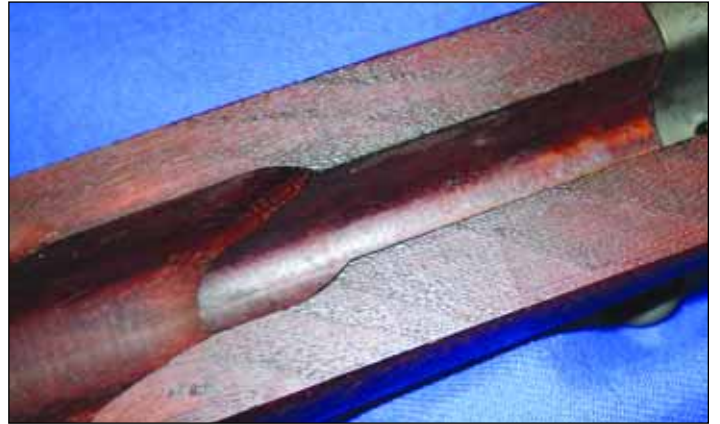


Prick punch on the side of the slide near the back.



Note the finish color of the spring in this and the previous photo.





No small Ordnance wheel.



Proof P up high near the trigger guard in typical WRA fashion.



A nice, clear WRA border.



Double stamped drawing number.



One with dash and one without.

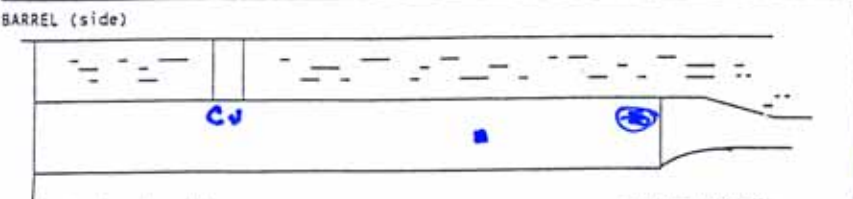
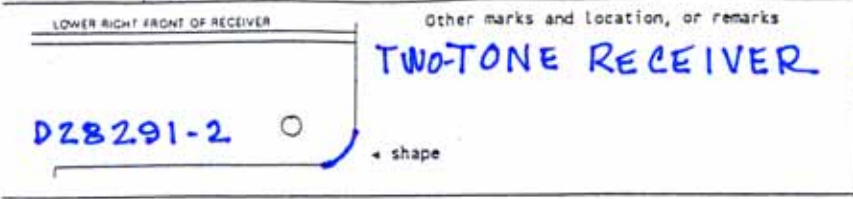


DATA SHEET GARAND RIFLES

SERIAL NUMBER 1289121  
 MANUFACTURER WRA

RIFLE TYPE M1 FEB. 1943 YES-100%  
original?

photo or remarks  
 - UNISSUED  
 CONDITION  
 - COSMOLINE IN  
 PROTECTED  
 AREAS



remarks: TE=1.0 MW=0.0 DBL. (P) ON BARREL

BOLT D28287-1W.R.A. Firing pin LATE  
 Extractor BLUED

GAS CYLINDER NARROW BASE DU-LITE  
 LOCK ~~on-PLUG~~ RD TOP-W/CHAMP DU-LITE  
 LOCK SCREW SOLID-SINGLE BARE SLOT

REAR SIGHT  
 Aperture WRA W/O TRACKS  
 Cover WRA TYPE  
 Base WRA TYPE  
 Pinion LONG  
 Windage Knob WRA-KNURLED  
 Elev Knob WRA-KNURLED TYPE 2 LOCK BAR

FRONT SIGHT  
 • ON RT. SIDE  
 width of ears 13/16 +  
 cup over screw? YES  
 Screw

FOLLOWER EARLY  
 slide  
 BULLET GUIDE  
 OP ROD CATCH EARLY A  
 FOLLOWER ARM SINGLE BEVEL  
 FOLLOWER ROD WRA TYPE A  
 OP ROD SPRING BLUE TYPE FIN.  
 LOWER BAND ARCHED- EARLY  
 CLIP LATCH A

TRIGGER HOUSG D28290-W.R.A. pad: LG. hole: SINGLE HOLE  
 TRIGGER GUARD D28290 W.R.A. SPRING HOUSING  
 TRIGGER C46025 W.R.A. GUIDE W/WINGS  
 HAMMER A W/EXTRA HOLES  
 SAFETY C46008-1W.R.A. REMARKS:  
C46015-4W.R.A.

OP ROD D353B2-W.R.A. NO  
 • TOP HANDLE relief cut?

STOCK WRA GHD LONG CHL.  
 remarks STAMPED SLING SWIVEL

REAR HAND GUARD  
 Clip: ARCHED  
 op rod clearance cut: NO  
 FRONT HAND GUARD  
 Ferrule:  
 Spacer:

BUTT PLATE 2S ON INSIDE  
 Long Screw BLUED  
 Short Screw BLUED

OTHER DATA or SNIPER EQUIPMENT

PURCHASE DATE	PRICE
PURCHASE FROM	
VALUE	DATE
VALUE	DATE
VALUE	DATE

Instructions on reverse