



## Model 1892 and 1894 Carbines with Canadian Proof Marks

by Rick Hill #3517LB

For years collectors have been aware of Model 1892 and 1894 carbines marked with the DCP (Dominion of Canada Proof) surcharge. The 1892s dominate and the Model 1894s are relatively difficult to find. I've read a lot of speculation concerning the history of these arms and it is only now that I finally understand how they came to be and where they were used.

The Model 1892s generally fall within the 730,000 to 780,000 serial number range. I encountered and owned a couple of these which were acquired when we lived in Melbourne, Australia during 1996 and 1997. Like most of the lever actions that reside "down-under" they were well used and had little to no original finish remaining. The Canadian surcharge was easy to research and being that Australia is a British Commonwealth Nation it seemed logical that the carbines would be found there. As an 1894 collector, I really didn't think too much about these carbines and I had quickly disposed of them in favor of something more to my collector interests. Now skip ahead to 2011 when I came across a Model 1894 with the Canadian surcharge which was for sale by a collector friend in Idaho. Certainly not a "Safe Queen" by any stretch of the imagination, but my philosophy with these military marked 1894s is to get an example for my collection and then upgrade when the opportunity allows, so I purchased it for a reasonable price and began the quest to find out the story behind the surcharge.

While doing research, I discovered in Harold Williamson's book "Winchester – The Gun That Won the West" that amongst Winchester's WWI contracts to foreign governments, there was a sale of "..... 9 million .44 Winchester centerfire cartridges (for use by the British Home Guard to whom a considerable number

of Model 92 rifles had been sold)"<sup>1</sup>. I next had the opportunity to discuss these carbines with Jim Curlovic who has a terrific "Winchesters Lever Actions In The Service" display which he had set up at the Cody show. Following several phone calls and numerous e-mail exchanges Jim ended up boxing his commodious reference material and sending it to me. This material included 2 books, "Defending The Dominion – Canadian Military Rifles 1855-1955" by David Edgecombe and "British Secondary Small Arms 1914-1919 – Part 4 - Royal Navy Small Arms" by Anthony Edwards. Edgecombe quotes an internal memorandum dated 26 October 1914 from the Master General of the Ordnance, that Canada had a service rifle inventory "..... shortfall of 10,000 which could not apparently be met in the short term by Ross. It was therefore recommended that 10,000 .303 rifles be purchased from Winchester. When the Acting Minister put this requirement to Winchester on 28 October, they replied that they were sold out of the Model 1895 and would not have any more to sell before October 1915." Following that series of communications, "..... the Acting Minister telegraphed Winchester on 2 November asking if they could supply 10,000 .44 calibre rifles with slings for \$12.00

each. Winchester replied the same day to the effect that the rifles were not equipped with slings and to so equip them would take three to four weeks at an added cost of \$1.00 per rifle. A note on this telegram from the Deputy Minister to the Director of Contracts states 'Answer cannot accept offer at all – under such conditions rifles are not suitable.' That ended Canadian interest, but not involvement, in Winchester arms during World War I."<sup>2</sup>

On February 19, 1915 the Admiralty in London cabled the



Febv. 19-15 Government  
London PL 117-  
First 49-

Master General of Ordnance,  
Ottawa.

Following telegram has been sent to Messrs J. Pierpont Morgan Co., 23 Wall St., New York :-

Begins: "Your 1231 accept offer nine thousand Winchester Model 1892 repeating carbines point 44 calibre at ten dollars fifty cents each, subject to satisfactory inspection and proof before shipment. Master General of Ordnance, Ottawa, has been asked (a) to carry out inspection, (b) communicate direct with you, (c) select suitable ammunition. Nine million rounds will be required". Message ends.

Three descriptions of Cartridges offered with carbines, namely, black powder, smokeless, hard lead ball and smokeless full metal patch.

Can you arrange to carry out services indicated, recovering expenses from Admiralty ?

Admiralty O.S.

*S.H.*  
*See Summary*

ALL COMMUNICATIONS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO J.P.MORGAN & CO. EXPORT DEPARTMENT

**J. P. MORGAN & COMPANY**  
EXPORT DEPARTMENT  
23 WALL STREET

TELEPHONE  
ANDOVER 5180. NEW YORK, Feb. 20, 1915.

The Master General of Ordnance,  
Ottawa,  
Canada.

Dear Sir:

Pursuant to the instructions of Contracts Admiralty we have placed order with the Winchester Repeating Arms Company, New Haven, Connecticut, for nine thousand Winchester, Model 1892, Repeating Carbines, .44 calibre, subject to satisfactory inspection and proof before shipment. We are advised by the Admiralty that you have been asked to (a) carry out inspection; (b) communicate direct with us; and, (c) select suitable ammunition, nine million rounds being required. May we hope to hear from you at an early date in connection with this matter.

Very truly yours,  
EXPORT DEPARTMENT,  
By

Previous page Model 1892 carbine serial no. 759320, author's collection and Model 1894 carbine serial no. 731086, Jim Curlovic collection; This page, above document British Admiralty letter to Canadian Master General of Ordnance dated 2/19/1915 verifying Canada's appointment as factory inspector and authorizing Canadian inspectors to choose appropriate ammunition; Upper right document, J.P Morgan letter dated 2/20/1915 to Master General of Ordnance (Canada) verifying placement of order for 9,000 .44 Caliber Model 1892 carbines With Winchester repeating Arms Co.; Lower right; letter dated 2/24/1915 from Chief Inspector of Arms & Ammunition, Canadian Militia to Master General of Ordnance (Canada) verifying dispatch of inspector personnel to Winchester plant in New Haven, CT.: Below, Final Small Arms Inspection Report dated 3/11/1915 verifying completion of inspection of 9,000 Model 1894 carbines.

M. F. B. 239.  
FORM-11-14  
H. Q. 1773-30-104.

No. 44 of the  
regulations in  
the subject stated  
here printed and  
date of this Com-  
munication.

No. A.&A. 4-15-30.  
H.Q. C/62-1-35.

Quebec P.Q. 24th February 1915.

From The Chief Inspector of Arms & Ammunition,  
Canadian Militia.

To The Master-General of the Ordnance,  
Ottawa, Ont.

Navy Order.

I have sent Mr Whyte and a first class Viewer Mr. Quinn, together with with Mr. Webb, a Viewer that I have borrowed from Major Harvey, to New Haven, to inspect nine thousand Winchesters and to select nine million rounds of Ammunition, for the Admiralty.

I have instructed him to send a copy of his inspection report to Messrs E.P.Morgan & Co, New York.

*Wm. H. Whyte*  
Lt-Col,  
C.I.O.F A.&A.

NAVY ORDER

SMALL ARMS INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

Order dated \_\_\_\_\_  
Contract Demand No. \_\_\_\_\_  
H. Q. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Place Winchester Re. Arms Coy. Date 11th March, 1915.

The undersigned articles have been received from the Winchester Repeating Arms Coy. Contractor, in accordance with Contract No. J.P. Morgan & Co., 23 Wall Street, New York.

The articles shown have been accepted and passed into Ordnance Store, Voucher No. 144

DATE	ARTICLES	DESCRIPTIVE MARKS	A	REMARKS
1-3-15	.44 Calibre Model 1892	Accepted 910.		Rejected = 144. Sticks Butt Spill = 1. Slips Butt Spill Jaws = 26. Defective Actions = 2. Defective Barrels = 96.
		<u>Amplified 9,000</u>		

To the M. G. O.,  
Mil. H. O.,  
Ottawa.

Copy sent to J.P. Morgan & Co.

Sgt/ W.H. Whyte,  
Chief Inspector of Arms and Ammunition

A.S.A. 2-15-20.  
H.Q. C/62-1-35.

Quebec, 25th, March, 5.

The Chief Inspector of Arms & Ammunition,  
Canadian Militia,  
The Winchester Repeating Arms Coy.,  
New Haven, Conn.

Copy Order.

Sir:-

I beg to inform you that Lieut. R.B. Whyte of the Inspection Department completed the inspection and Proof of the 9,000 Winchester Rifles .44 for the Admiralty and stamped them with our proof mark viz:- "The Crown over Crossed Flags"

I herewith enclose the two passes issued by you to Lieut. Whyte.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,  
Sgd/ G.Ogilvie,  
Lt.-Col.  
C.-In- of A.S.A.

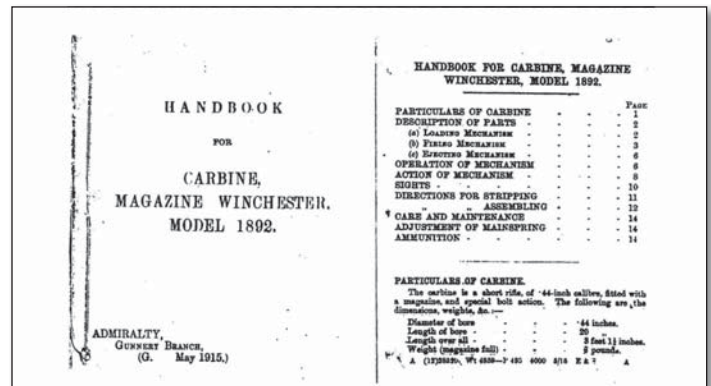


Fig. 36 Cover and contents page of the Admiralty handbook for Winchester Model 1892, dated May 1915. (MoD Pattern Room collection)

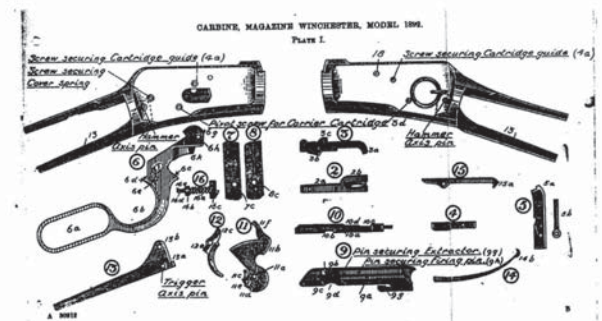


Fig. 37 Plate I from the Admiralty handbook. (MoD Pattern Room collection)

Letter from Lt. Col. G. Ogilvie, Chief Inspector of Arms & Ammunition, Canadian Militia to WRACo. dated 3/25/1915 verifying completion of inspection and stamping carbines with the Canadian Proof-mark.

British Admiralty Handbook for the Model 1892 Carbine

Master General of the Ordnance for assistance in the inspection of 9,000 Winchester Model 1892 .44 caliber carbines for the Royal Navy.<sup>3</sup> On February 24 three inspectors were dispatched to Winchester's New Haven plant<sup>4</sup> where they completed the required inspection by March 11th. "They proofed another 3,000 Model 92 Royal Navy carbines in August 1915. In both cases Canadian proof marks - The Crown over Crossed Flags were used which explains why there are some Winchester Model 92's with Canadian acceptance marks."<sup>5</sup>

In Edwards' British Secondary Small Arms 1914-1919 I found that in addition to the 12,000 or so 1892's there were 5,000 Model 1894s in .30 W.C.F. caliber that were "purchased by Sir Trevor Dawson on behalf of the Admiralty whilst on his tour of the armament manufacturers of the United States". Winchester records obtained from the BBHC/CFM confirm that 2,000 Model 1894 carbines were ordered via telegraph on June 26, 1915 at \$12.00 each through Shapleigh Hardware Co. in St. Louis. Production delivery was promised for 100 carbines per day commencing July 10, 1915. A similar follow-on telegraph order for 3,000 additional Model 1894

carbines was placed on June 28, 1915 through Shapleigh, calling for a production of 100 units per day commencing August 15, 1915<sup>6</sup>. A 3rd order for 2,000 Model 1894 carbines was also placed through Shapleigh Hardware on July 19, 1915. The contract price was the same as the other two orders (\$12.00 each) and delivery was again promised at 100 per day beginning September, 15 1915. Although Winchester records do not indicate who placed these orders, these must be the carbines requisitioned by Sir Trevor Dawson for the British Admiralty during his May 1915 visit. This brings into question the size of the British purchase of the Model 1894 carbines - 5,000 units or 7,000 units? British contract records show that 5,000 Model 1894 carbines were ordered in May 1915 on the same contract number, G.01538, as the second batch of Model 92 carbines. It may be that one of the orders for 2,000 additional carbines was actually for the Model

1894 and that there were actually 7,000 Model 1894s and 2,000 fewer Model 1892s. Winchester records support this conclusion and I can find no corresponding support for the production of 2,000 additional Model '92 carbines. The Model 1894s have been observed within the 730,000

Date	Accepted	Total Rejected	Split Butt Stock	Split Fore End	Badly Fitted Butt Plate	Butt Plate Screws Slip	Rear Sight Loose Slide	Defective Action	Defective Barrel	Other
3/1/1915	610	38	5	1	8	4	-	8	12	-
3/2/1915	1,000	41	11	2	2	-	-	6	20	-
3/3/1915	970	86	3	2	10	-	-	13	58	-
3/4/1915	1,000	106	10	-	6	-	11	9	70	-
3/5/1915	1,000	90	5	-	4	-	10	-	66	5
3/6/1915	700	64	3	-	7	-	2	-	51	1
3/8/1915	930	99	9	-	11	-	23	5	51	-
3/9/1915	1,000	160	2	-	12	-	53	3	90	-
3/10/1915	980	180	-	-	-	-	64	4	112	-
3/11/1915	810	141	1	-	-	-	42	2	96	-
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>9,000</b>	<b>1,005</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>6</b>
%	-	11.2%	0.5%	0.1%	0.7%	0.0%	2.3%	0.6%	7.0%	0.1%

Box #37 S1

MODEL 1894 .30 W.C.F. CARBINES 2,000

Shapleigh Hdw. Co. Telegraph order June 26, 1915.  
PRICE: \$12.00 each.

DELIVERIES PROMISED	Date	SHIPMENTS Quantity	Value	PAYMENTS	
				Date	Amount
	<u>1915</u>			<u>1915</u>	
100 daily beginning July 10, 1915.	July 13	400	\$4,800.	July 26	\$4,800.
	14	100	1,200.	26	1,200.
	19	400	4,800.	Aug. 2	4,800.
	20	100	1,200.	"	1,200.
	21	100	1,200.	"	1,200.
	27	500	6,000.	9	6,000.
	28	400	4,800.	9	4,800.
		2,000	\$24,000.		\$24,000.

Box #37 S1

MODEL 1894 .30 W.C.F. CARBINES 3,000

Shapleigh Hdw. Co. Telegraph Order June 28, 1915.  
PRICE: \$12.00 each

DELIVERIES PROMISED	Date	SHIPMENTS Quantity	Value	PAYMENTS	
				Date	Amount
	<u>1915</u>			<u>1915</u>	
100 daily beginning Aug. 10, 1915.	Aug. 11	500	\$6,000.	Aug. 23	\$6,000.
	17	300	3,600.	30	3,600.
	23	400	4,800.	25	4,800.
	24	200	2,400.	26	2,400.
	28	300	3,600.	31	3,600.
	30	100	1,200.	Sept. 1	1,200.
	31	200	2,400.	2	2,400.
	Oct. 9	500	6,000.	Nov. 4	6,000.
	Nov. 30	500	6,000.	Dec. 18	6,000.
		3,000	\$36,000.		\$36,000.

Copies of three separate WRACO orders for 7,000 Model 1894 carbines at a price of \$12.00 each with delivery promised at 100 units per day, courtesy of Cody Firearms Museum archives.

to 750,000 serial number range. I guess we will never know for sure but in any event, a lot of Winchester carbines were produced for the British Royal Navy and inspected by the Canadians in 1915. These are the only references that have been found pertaining to the acquisition of these carbines, but the evidence suggests they were checked by Canadian inspectors at the Winchester factory in the same way as the Model 1892s, as surviving examples examined also carry the "DCP" and crossed pennant proof mark.<sup>7</sup>

"During the war the rifles were issued to Torpedo Boat destroyers and miscellaneous craft. The latter included 'Q' ships intended to act as decoys for armed raiders and U-boats. One such encounter between the decoy fishing smack H.M.A.S. Inverlyon and UB-4 on 15th August 1915 resulted in the sinking of the German submarine. The U-boat surfaced alongside the decoy smack and ordered the crew into the boats. At that point the smack opened fire with their 3 pounder gun and the small arms and sank the submarine. The captain of the Inverlyon in his report stated 'Greatest distance of the Submarine was 30 yards and closest range was 10 yards. 8 rifles were emptied and I fired 4 revolvers and emptied a Winchester rifle.'

Winchester carbines were also carried on the Zeebrugge raid in 1918 by the assault ship H.M.S. Vindictive. There was apparently a rack of them on the bridge and Lt. Cdr. Edward Hilton Young, who lost his right arm in the raid, recalled that "in the distribution of arms my share had been a Winchester Rifle, a service revolver, a gas mask, a weighted cudgel, anti-searchlight glasses, and field glasses."

It is known that some were issued to cadet or officer training units in the 1920s and there is an unconfirmed report that some were also sent to Australia for cadet use. Rifles that were used drill purposes often have a saw cut forward of the receiver that breeches the barrel.

It is unclear what the final disposition of the Winchester was, but Department of Disposal records indicate that 3,700 Winchester Model 92s were sold in one transaction in 1919.<sup>8</sup>

Box #37 S1

MODEL 1894 .30 W.C.F. CARBINES 2,000

Shapleigh Hdw. Co. Order July 19, 1915.  
PRICE: \$12.00 each net.

DELIVERIES PROMISED	Date	INVOICED Quantity	Value	PAYMENTS	
				Date	Amount
	<u>1915</u>			<u>1915</u>	
	Dec. 11	200	\$2,400.	Dec. 27	\$2,400.
	<u>1916</u>			<u>1916</u>	
100 per day beginning 9-15-15	June 29	1600	21,600.	July 12	19,800.
				Aug. 5	1,800.
		2000	24,000		24,000

*A great debt of gratitude goes to Jim Curlovic who entrusted me with his original research documents and books. He did the heavy lifting and secured the reference documents of the inspection transaction from the Library and Archives Canada and made contact with Tony Edwards to secure relevant data and detail otherwise unavailable.*

<sup>1</sup> Harold F. Williamson – "Winchester, The Gun That Won The West", A.S. Barnes and Co., Inc. South Brunswick and New York, pp. 220

<sup>2</sup> David W. Edgecombe – "Defending The Dominion – Canadian Military Rifles 1855-1955". Service Publications, Box33071 Ottawa, Canada K2C 3Y9, pp. 84

<sup>3</sup> London Admiralty cable to Master General of Ordnance, Ottawa

<sup>4</sup> The Chief Inspector of Arms & Ammunition, Canadian Militia (Deville Harston) cable to Master General of Ordnance, Ottawa

<sup>5</sup> David W. Edgecombe – "Defending The Dominion – Canadian Military Rifles 1855-1955". Service Publications, Box33071 Ottawa, Canada K2C 3Y9, pp. 84

<sup>6</sup> Cody Firearms Museum WWI records of the Winchester Repeating Arms Co. - Box 5 #37 S1

<sup>7</sup> A.O. Edwards – "British Secondary Small Arms 1914-1919, Part 4 – Royal Navy Small Arms" Solo Publications, 26 St. Martins Hill, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1PP pp. 37

<sup>8</sup> ibid – pp. 33-34