

Wyoming Armory
553 14th Street
Cody, Wyoming 82414

On Monday, June 10, 2024, I received the 1885 Winchester LoWall (winder musket) rifle that was sent to you for a complete rebuild. As you recall, this rifle was basically in pieces and I provided you with a rough shaped English walnut two piece stock, a Lilja .22 caliber barrel, MVA wide spaced triggers and trigger bar for this project.

I am without a doubt probably the pickiest individual you could deal with when it comes to a rifle build. So, I wanted to critique your work on this rifle.

Metal Work:

1. The 1922 vintage winder musket receiver had four sight holes drilled in the side of the receiver. You welded up these holes and it is impossible for me to find where these holes originally were in the receiver.
2. The two-piece extractor that was machined into the breech of the barrel extracts shells perfectly. The machining is so precise that you have to look closely to detect where the extractor ends and the breech of the barrel begins, yet the extractor removes spent cartridges without applying undo force on the lever.
3. Evidently care was taken in chambering of this rifle because I have shot 100 yard 5 shot groups as small as 0.25" by 0.50" with Eley match ammo. Sub minute of angle groups are easy to achieve with quality match grade ammunition. I know that the Lilja barrel is primarily responsible for the accuracy I am achieving, however, a poor executed chamber can destroy accuracy in the very best of barrels.
4. The original action came with a standard lever and a non-adjustable trigger. I provided you the MVA wide spaced triggers and trigger bar to be fit to the action. I was very concerned when I the trigger bar and triggers because they were far from a drop in fit. The installation job on the trigger bar and triggers is flawless on my rifle. The trigger adjustment is clean crisp and a very light trigger set is achievable without danger of trigger drop when the action is closed. I also noted that the trigger lever has been filed so the fit is aesthetically very nice. There is no variability in the gap between each side of the lever when it is closed completely. Excellent fitting and attention to detail.
5. The action locks up very tight and the firing pin strike on the rim of the cartridge case is perfect. Also, there is no hammer drag on the side of the receiver.
6. Keith advised me to have the half cock notch and sear removed on the hammer. This was an excellent recommendation because I believe it increased lock time.

And, when the action is open, the hammer moves back from the firing pin enough that firing pin breakage should never be a problem.

7. The bluing and case coloring is exceptional. Colors a deep and vivid and the barrel was nicely polished before bluing.
8. The action was hand polished perfectly. All corners or transitions on the action are sharp and crisp. Polishing was done in such a way to preserve the Winchester logo on the tang and proof marks on the action. Expertly done.

Wood:

1. The wood I provided was of English walnut and roughly shaped by Treebone carving. The fitting of the stock to the action exceeded my expectations. There are no gaps between wood and metal at any spot on the upper or lower tangs and where the wood meets the back of the action.
2. The final shaping of the stock with a high comb and an outlined cheek rest are perfect and exactly what I was hoping for. This rifle is stunning in appearance.
3. The sanding and final oil finish of the stock also exceeded my expectations. When I sent in the wood for this project, I expected it to be nice but not necessarily stunning in appearance. The shaping, sanding and finishing of this stock brought out grain that I never saw when the stock was originally sent to you.
4. The checkering on the stock is also perfect. There are no checkering overruns and the diagonals are laid out precisely correct to the geometry of the stock. The checkering points on the fore-end come exactly to the center of the screw that fastens the fore-end to the barrel.

Cost of Work:

The cost of custom gunsmithing work is not cheap, however, I felt like the cost of this project coupled with the exceptional quality of workmanship that was achieved was very reasonable. I cannot think of anyone that could have taken on this project and achieved the quality of work that was provided by Wyoming Armory. I looked at every inch of this rifle and I found zero workmanship flaws.

So, I wanted to write you a letter thanking you for the quality workmanship and the excellent job you did on this project. It was a very extensive and difficult build and I will definitely tell anyone who looks at this rifle who did the work.

Best Regards,

BG

Plainview, Texas