

NZART ID: 125 Arm Type: Carbine, Date of Draft: (V1) 17 October 2013, Compiled by: Phil Cregeen

Pattern: 1869 Snider Enfield Cavalry Carbine Mk III, Introduced into NZ Service: 1870s, Withdrawn 1907(?)

Makers: Enfield; BSA & M Co, LSA, Birmingham Trade

Calibre: .577 in, 25 bore, Bore: 5 groove progressive rifling RH twist 1 turn in 48in, Furniture: Brass. 2 piece rod in butt trap. Saddle bar & ring. Barrel length: 19.25 in. OA Length: 37.4 in. Weight: 6 lb 9.5 oz.

Type of Action: Snider breech loading, single shot.

Magazine: None, Sights: rear sight bed to 300, leaf to 600 yds., foresight barleycorn on fixed block.

Bayonet: None



Trade Pattern 1869 Snider Mk III Cavalry Carbine

The Mk III Carbine was approved by LOC 1759 dated 13 Jan 1869 to govern new manufacture of the Snider Rifles and Carbines with steel barrels and locking bolt to secure the breech block, it has a flat faced hammer.(1) The 2 part cleaning rod is contained in the butt trap. A Yeomanry Cavalry Carbine was introduced in July 1880 (LOC 3774); this was a conversion of 3 band long rifle with 3 groove rifling and without saddle bar, however the 1880 BSA contract for NZ were new made with 5 groove rifling (NZAR 86).



Lock: "Crown VR, Enfield 1870"

Saddle bar & ring

Birmingham proof marks

"NZ 13"

New Zealand Service

NZ Cavalry were still armed with Enfield & Terry carbines and some Constabulary with Westley Richards Monkey Tail breech loading carbines until 1872, when a special contract from W H Tisdall supplied a special short Snider carbine with saddle bar(NZAR 126). Contemporary records do not differentiate between this and other cavalry type snider carbines. No Snider cavalry carbines were available from WD stores at this time all stocks having been issued to Imperial troops. It should be noted that snider carbines Cavalry/Yeomanry and Artillery were used by the Volunteer Force, Permanent Force, Constabulary and Cadets.

Arms inspected by RSAF Birmingham for New Zealand in 1874/75 included 300 Snider Cavalry carbines (several Mk III Tower 1874 Locks have been observed by the author). By mid 1879 there were 648 Snider Cavalry carbines on issue to NZ Cavalry Units, increasing to 1,880 Snider Cavalry carbines held in the Dominion by 1893(3). In 1880 500 Snider Yeomanry Carbines Mk III were obtained under a contract filled by BSA, these are marked N80Z with rack number and have WD proof marks (2). The NZ Volunteer Force remained armed with Snider rifles and carbines until they were gradually replaced by the Martini Henry from 1895. In the early 1900s a number of Snider Long and Short Rifles were locally converted to Cavalry Carbine Pattern with 19.25 in barrel for Constabulary use. In 1902 Snider carbines were reported still on issued to school cadet forces. In 1907 3,000 snider carbines were sold to an English firm and shipped to England (4.)

Surviving examples in NZ are predominantly Mk III BSA 1880 contract, with a few of Mk III Tower 1874 and Enfield of various 1860 & 70s dates.

Acknowledgements:

John Osborne, Blue Thomas

References:

(1).577 Pattern 1853 Rifle Musket & Snider-Enfield by I D Skennerton

(2).577 Snider Enfield Rifles & Carbines by I D Skennerton.

(3) AJHR

(4) <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz> (Evening Post 19 may 1909 "Obsolete Arms")