

NZART ID: 67, Arm Type: Rifle, Date of Draft: 14 September 2011, Compiled by: Phil Cregeen

Pattern: Lee Enfield No 8 , Introduced in to NZ Service 1952, Withdrawn 2009

Maker: BSA Shirley, ROF Fazakerley.

Calibre: .22 Long Rifle, Bore: 6 groove RH twist, Barrel length: 23.9 in.

OA Length: 41.7 in. Type of Action: Bolt, single shot Weight: 8 lb 4 oz.

Magazine: None, Sights: similar to No 4 Singer sight graduated 25, 50, 100 yds.

On 7 March 2009 the New Zealand Army disposed of, what is believed to be the last, 285 No 8 and 100 No 9 Lee Enfield .22 training Rifles at auction. These rifles had previously been issued to the New Zealand Cadet Force and saved from destruction by a campaign led by New Zealand firearms collectors. However many No 8 rifles had been sold by the NZ Defence Force at a much earlier date.

In the post WW II period the BSA Shirley factory developed a .22 trainer based on the No 5 Jungle Carbine. However this was dropped when the No 5 was withdrawn from service in 1947. Instead a trainer based on the No 4 was required. Since the No 5 trainer had been well received some of its features, such as new trigger and bolt, were incorporated into the new design.

The No 8 was produced to meet the needs of a training rifle and also to be used in small bore competition. Although the site picture resembles that of a No 4 and it is built on a No 4 or No 5 action body it bears little resemblance to its .303 parent. The butt has a composite butt plate and more pronounced pistol grip, it is half stocked with a wide fore-end and it has a heavy target barrel. The bolt and trigger are a new design and while the rear sight is the Mk I singer type it is graduated to 25, 50 and 100 yds.



Fazakerley No 8 Mk I

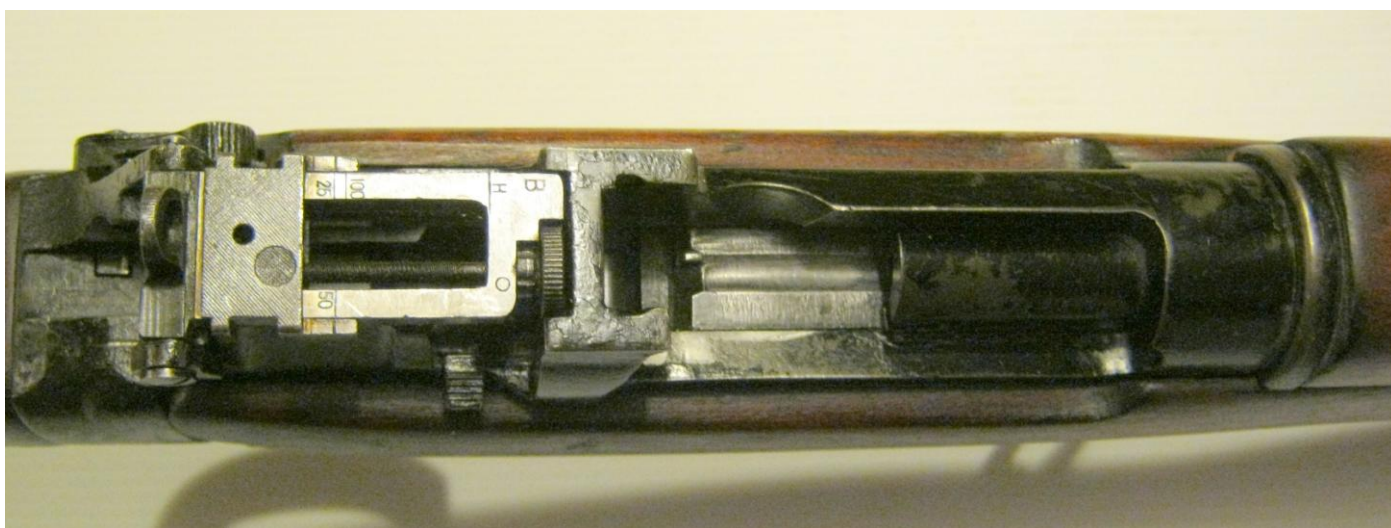
Initially the No 8 was for Land Service only and the first batch of 76,000 was produced at ROF Fazakerley, early rifles were produced on No 5 action bodies while later ones used the No 4 body. Fazakerley rifles have an A prefix to the serial number, however, they have been noted with components marked M/47C the code for BSA Shirley. The No 8 Mk I was introduced in September 1948 and later issued to the RAF and Royal Navy.

In the early 1950s BSA manufactured 3,000 No 8 rifles for New Zealand using both No 4 and No 5 action bodies. These have a DA prefix serial number and are stamped on the left butt socket with date, N^Z and rack number, components are marked M/47C. At a later period New Zealand imported Fazakerly manufactured No 8s, and these made up 13% of those disposed of in 2009

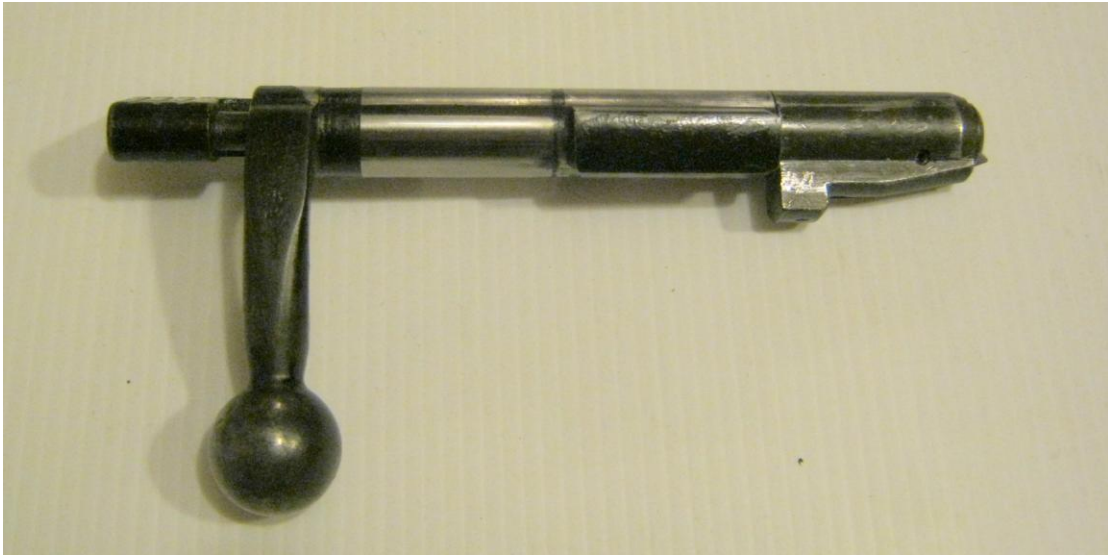


BSA No 8 using No5 Action body, LHS of body marked: **No 8 Mk I**
DA 174

Butt socket marked: **CR 324** (Action body part No)
M/47C (BSA Shirley Factory Code)
1952 (date of manufacture)
N^Z (NZ Ownership)
443 (NZ issue/rack No)



BSA No 8 Showing rear sight graduations, short bolt way, note barrel protrudes through receiver ring.



No 8 Bolt

Acknowledgements:

Photographs: Phil Cregeen

Reference: The Lee Enfield By Ian Skennertion.

NZAHA Gazette June 2009 Article by Phil Cregeen