

NZART ID No: 73, Arm Type: Rifle, Date of Draft 25/4/2013, Compiled by Phil Cregeen.

Pattern: Lee Enfield No 5 Mk (Jungle Carbine) Introduced into NZ Service 1955, Withdrawn

Makers: ROF Fazakerley and BSA Shirley in the UK.

Details of Arm:

Calibre: .303 British, Rifling: 5 grooves 1:10 LH Twist, Barrel Length: 20.5in. Including flash hider.

OA Length: 39.5 in. (1003 mm), Weight 7 Lb 1 oz, (3.2 Kg) Action: Bolt with 10 round detachable box magazine.

Sights, ladder aperture sight graduated 200-800 yds. blade foresight with protector.

Bayonet: (NZAR #138) Knife type- No 5 Mk I

Markings: Fazakerly: ROF(F)
 BSA Shirley: M47C



Based on the No 4 rifle the No5 rifle was developed during the second half of 1943 as a replacement for the service rifle which had been found unsatisfactory for jungle fighting in the Far East. In addition to a shorter barrel, weight reduction was achieved by removing metal from the barrel and receiver and shortening the stock. It was announced in LOC C2125 dated 12 September 1944, although production had commenced early that year at Fazakerley, BSA Shirley production commenced in 1945. Production ceased at both factories in 1947, with 169,807 rifles made at Fazakerley and 81,329 at Shirley.

New Zealand Service

The NZ SAS serving in Malaya from 1955 to 1957 are known to have carried the No 5 rifle as illustrated by the photos below, it is most likely that the No 5s were supplied by British stores.



Left: Men of the New Zealand Special Air Service and a member of the British Parachute Squadron during the Malayan Emergency (1948-1960). Shows them arriving at their troop camp soaked with perspiration after a four day march through the jungle. Photograph taken circa 21 January 1955 by an unidentified New Zealand Army photographer.

Right: NZSAS training in Malaya 1955

So far no examples of No 5 rifles with NZ issue marks have been observed, although one such example has been reported to be in Australia.

Acknowledgements:

Photographs: Phil Cregeen and <http://natlib.govt.nz>

*References: Lee Enfield No 4 and No 5 Rifles by C R Stratton
The Lee Enfield by Ian Skennerton*