

### **Pattern 1853 Rifle Musket, Type II**

The distinctive characteristics of this arm are solid barrel bands retained with band springs, a wide front band and a swell ramrod with a corresponding swell in the ramrod channel in the stock to accept the ramrod.

A small number of used Pattern 1853, Type II rifle muskets appear to have been sold out of service, refurbished and eventually sold to Confederate agents. One example, engraved No. "1551", illustrates this type of arm. The rifle musket was refinished by George Carr, a small London maker. The original lock marks were almost obliterated in the process but the remnants of

the crown behind the hammer are still visible. "CARR" / "LONDON" has been over-stamped in front of the hammer. The swelled rod originally issued with this weapon was replaced with a later Type III, straight type that was engraved with the same number that appears on the butt plate tang of this arm. The belly of the stock has the "JS" / anchor viewer's mark and the comb of the stock bears the letter "K" stamped in front of the butt plate tang, indicating this rifle musket was one of the small number furnished by James Kerr. Less than half a dozen refurbished Type II Pattern 1853 rifle muskets have been seen.

Another example, engraved No. "5812", has a Carr lock and lock bolt washers with rounded wings, probably obtained from the London Armoury Company. The stock bears the "JS" / anchor viewer's mark on the belly of the stock and the letter "K" on the comb, indicating that it was also supplied by James Kerr. Engraved No. "5920" has a lock devoid of all markings. The stock bears the "JS" / anchor viewer's mark on the belly of the stock and the letter "K" on the comb, indicating it too was supplied by Kerr. These "K" marked arms are quite rare.

A most interesting Type II rifle musket infrequently seen is engraved on the lock

*Note the remains of a ground crown / "VR" indicating the original Birmingham lock.*



*A close up view of the lock area of the Pattern 1853 rifle musket, No. 1551 showing "CARR" / "LONDON" mark.*



*The rear band with spring and brass D shaped sling adjustment buckle on the No. 1551 rifle musket.*



*The butt plate tang of the Pattern 1853 rifle musket, engraved No. "1551".*



*Note the wide front band and Type III rammer on the musket.*



*The London Proof House marks on the breech over-stamped on the Belgian proved barrel. Note the remnants of "E" / "LG" within an oval.*

with the date of manufacture, "1858" in this instance, over "WINDSOR" in front of the hammer and a crown behind the hammer. These arms were manufactured by Robbins & Lawrence of Windsor, Vermont under contract with Fox, Henderson & Company of London acting as an intermediary for the British government. The contract called for 25,000 Pattern 1853 rifle muskets, Type II. The abrupt end of the Crimean War in March of 1856 caused Fox, Henderson & Company to rescind the contract after 10,400 arms had been delivered. The loss of the contract caused the failure of Robbins & Lawrence and the company was taken over by the British government. Colonel Henry S. Rowan of the Royal Artillery was sent to Windsor on 1 June 1857 and the factory was re-incorporated as the Vermont Arms Company, conveniently retaining the defunct firm's workforce. A total of 5,600 rifle muskets were assembled before all work ceased on 10 June 1858 when the facility was put up for sale at auction. Colonel Rowan was instructed to dispose of all arms that had not been shipped as surplus on the open arms market in the United States. Total production of this type of arm including those made by Robbins & Lawrence and the Vermont Arms Company totaled 16,000 arms. There is some indication, previously noted, that the central government and at least the states of Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina acquired some of these rifles, most likely those assembled by the Vermont Arms Company bearing "1857" and "1858" dates on the locks at some point.<sup>34</sup> The state arms will be discussed in their respective sections of state purchases.



Pattern 1853 rifle musket lock, Type II made by Robbins & Lawrence of Windsor, Vermont under contract to the British Ordnance.

### Pattern 1853 Rifle Musket, Type III

The Pattern 1853 rifle musket, Type III is the most familiar and commonly encountered long arm run through the blockade. These exceptionally well made rifle muskets were the backbone of armament of Confederate forces throughout the war.

The S. Isaac, Campbell & Company invoice illustrated on the next page indicates these arms were packed twenty to the case with one bullet mould and two nipple keys in each case. The cost of these Pattern 1853 rifle muskets with bayonets was 65 shillings each with bullet moulds at 8 shillings each and nipple keys at 2 shillings, 3 pence. J. E. Barnett & Sons were the source of these arms.

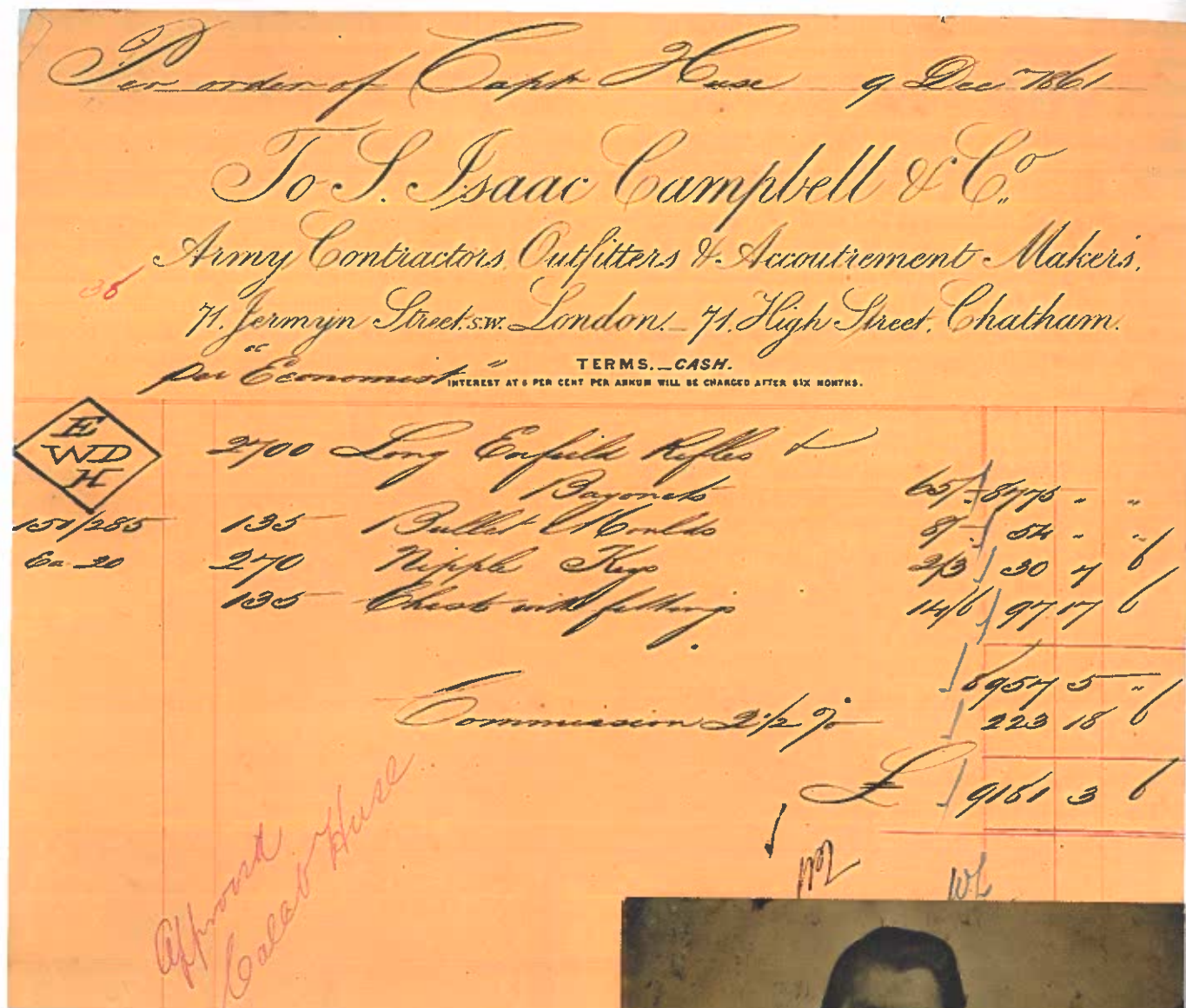
This surviving Birmingham proved Pattern 1853 rifle musket provides evidence that even a furnisher as large as Barnett was unable to meet the demands of their contracts. Several examples exist of Birmingham arms stamped "BARNETT" / "LONDON" on the wood flat opposite of the lock are indicative of this company buying arms on the open market in order to fulfill time sensitive contracts.

The majority of Pattern 1853 long arms were hand made by a number of makers in Birmingham and London. The exceptions were those made at RSAF Enfield and the London Armoury Company that were machine made and interchangeable. Those made at the government facility at Enfield were made for British military forces only and none were sold commercially.



Unknown Confederate soldier wearing a black brimmed hat, seven-button shell jacket with a small revolver in his waist belt. He is holding his Pattern 1853 rifle musket with the snap cap in place.





S. Isaac, Campbell & Company invoice dated 9 December 1861 for "2,700 Long Enfield Rifles & Bayonets" shipped aboard Economist. Note the rhomboid on the left margin. Courtesy of the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum



The stamp of "BARNETT" / "LONDON" on the wood flat opposite of the lock of a Birmingham proved Pattern 1853 rifle musket.



Private H. S. Buckner, Company E, 45th Georgia Infantry. Note the Pattern 1853 rifle musket, snake hook belt, 50 round pouch and wide shoulder belt for the pouch.



Those of the London Armoury Company were initially made under contract for the British military but a small number were available for commercial sale.

London Armoury Company rifles have several interesting characteristics worthy of mention. The brass lock bolt washers have rounded wings rather than the squared off wings found on other commercial Pattern 1853 arms, the screws all have round domed heads rather than flat head screws found on

Birmingham and London commercial rifles, and the general workmanship and finish is visibly superior. Those examined with unquestionable Confederate association have engraved numbers on the butt plate tang and the locks are dated "1861" or "1862". Most of these rifles have standard London proofs at the breech.

On 27 June 1861 Huse wrote to Sinclair, Hamilton & Company ordering all the London Armoury Company first class weapons they can spare, about

2,400 rifles complete with bayonet, muzzle stopper, snap cap and spare nipple at 75 shillings each.<sup>35</sup> Commencing 10 July 1861 and running until 5 July 1862, Sinclair, Hamilton & Company paid the London Armoury Company on behalf of Caleb Huse for fourteen lots of rifles.<sup>36</sup> Unfortunately, the actual invoices have not been found and the ledger page only lists the amounts paid and not the number of arms, but McRae, during his investigation, compiled notes evidently using these invoices and determined that at least 3,360 London Armoury Company rifles had been purchased by Huse from Sinclair, Hamilton & Company.<sup>37</sup> As already mentioned in Chapters One and Two, these early LAC arms bear engraved numbers at the suggestion of James Kerr:

...that you should mark LAC guns on three parts same as the others—so each man will know his own—even though interchangeable.<sup>38</sup>

Only thirteen central government London Armoury Company rifles with engraved numbers have been recorded at this time and only two of those, 911 and 2256, still have their matching numbered ramrods.

An intriguing variation of proof marks appears on two LAC rifles, 1050 and 5816. These rifles have four small "LAC" stamps in an irregular line on the left side of the barrel, in lieu of London proofs at the breech. They are the same size stamp found on the barrels of Kerr revolvers made by this company. These stamps have been over-stamped on partial British government proofs on No. 5816.

London 27. June 1861

Mr Sinclair Hamilton & Co  
Dear Sir

Please order on my account from the London Armoury Company all of their first class rifles that they can spare up to 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec next, which I expect will amount to about 2400 rifles — at the price of twenty five Shillings each for the Rifle & Bayonet, together with Muzzle stopper, Snap Cap, & Spare Nipple — packing Cases at Cost price, and extras as formerly proposed —

Payment to be made on delivery in the meanwhile from the sum of £20,000 already deposited. Such payments to be hereafter replaced so as to leave said deposit intact. The balance of this order is to be concerned with subsequent payments to be made weekly on delivery.

This order not to be subject to any Commission, but all charges & expenses to be paid by me.

Yours truly  
Caleb Huse.

Huse's first order to Sinclair, Hamilton & Company to purchase London Armoury Company rifle muskets at 75 shillings each. Courtesy of the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum

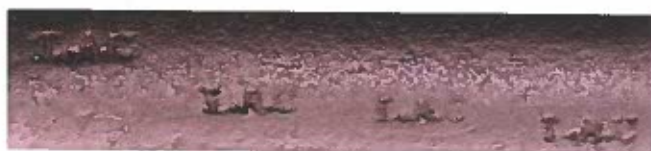


Rifles —		Cases		Moulds		Keys		Chaps	
500 Value.	1250	£46.5.	—	25	£8.2.6	1.5	—	£219.15.3	
1700 —	4250	157.5.	—	85	21.8.6	4.5	—		
640 —	1600	25	40. —	32	8.0.	1.12.	—		
160 —	4400	72	4.4.	8	2.2.	1.14.	—		
			13.12.						
2000 —	5500	185.	—	100	25.	5.	—	£159.12.6	
								10.15.	
								18. —	
								2. —	
5000	—	£13.000	+ 446.6.	250	64.9.6	12.16.	—	410.2.9	
London Army Rifles		Bryl. Headbands.		Cases		Moulds.		Keys	
640 Rifles	2325	200	£15.	71.5.6	86.24.1.	86.6.9.	—		
1720 —	6480	—	—	—	—	—	—		
800 —	2400	—	—	40.68.	40.17.	40.3.	—		
200 —	600	—	—	10.17.	10.4.5.	10. —	15.		
3360	—	£11775	200	£15.	50	156.5.6	136/57.6.	136	10.4.

Data compiled by General McRae indicating a purchase of 3,360 London Armoury rifles for 11,775 pounds. Note the charges for viewers in the top right corner of the document does not apply to LAC arms, probably because they were interchangeable. Courtesy of the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum



A typical, plain LAC lock without threads with a crown / "V.R" behind the hammer and "1861" / "L.A.Co." in front of the hammer.



Typical proofs found on only two LAC arms to date. Standard London proofs are normally present. These proofs were in violation of the rules and regulations of the London Proof House and may indicate an illegal sale of arms.



Neat, precise engraved numbers found on all LAC arms. Note the domed head screw, typical of LAC.

This illegal proofing would have resulted in severe fines, loss of contract and possible imprisonment for LAC officials had it been discovered by proof house authorities. The rationale behind this contravention of strict proof laws is unknown. It may be speculated that James Kerr managed to spirit a few such rifle muskets out of the factory in order to fulfill his contract as one of the five primary furnishers. Engraved No. 1050 and other low numbers probably were part of the cargo of *Bermuda*, the first blockade runner to reach a Confederate port in mid-September 1861 with 1,700 government owned Pattern 1853 rifle muskets.

### Thirteen Recorded LAC Numbers to Date:

60, 665, 850, 911, 1050,  
1115, 1189, 2256, 4431,  
5816, 6089, 7349, 8450

Another rifle with a lock marked "CARR" / "LONDON" is engraved No. "5937" and has an LAC proof on the bottom of the barrel and a "K" stamped on the comb of the stock indicating a rifle supplied by James Kerr, further evidence of his use of London Armoury components to fulfill his contract. Today, the London Armoury rifle musket is one of the most sought after examples of the Pattern 1853 family of arms.

An unusual variation of Pattern 1853 rifle musket has been observed over the years. This arm is 56 inches in overall length and a 40-inch barrel with a two-inch octagonal section at the breech rather than the standard 39-inch barrel. The Birmingham proof marks on the left flat of the breech of the barrel include an initial proof of 25, a diamond surrounding a "C" and definitive proof of 24 confirming the piece is indeed 24 bore or .58 calibre. The leaf on the backsight of some, but not all of the 40-inch barrel rifles is slightly different from those normally encountered. The stock is correspondingly slightly longer which is noticeable with the middle and front band placement when laid alongside a standard Pattern 1853 rifle musket. No. "9004" / "A" is the finest known example of this variation with the matching numbered ramrod and bayonet.

Howard Madaus referred to these rifle muskets fifteen years ago as "Spanish Contract" arms that were manufactured for the Spanish government under a contract by several Birmingham makers. This information is believed to have come from a Spanish arms book, title unknown, but we have been unable to locate any reference to this contract to confirm its existence at this time. It was Madaus' belief that these rifle muskets were diverted to the American market purely for financial gain. Of particular interest is the distinctive breech configuration that is very much like the breech of the Spanish Pattern 1857 rifle, obviously a copy of the

English arm and that lends some credence to this theory.

It is certain that Confederate agents acquired a small number and examples exist with engraved numbers on the butt plate tang and the "JS" / anchor viewer's mark and others with only the "JS" / anchor viewer's mark. One of those with only the "JS" / anchor mark has provenance to a soldier who served in the 13<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry early in the war, carved in the wood flat of the stock opposite the lock. Another example has an attribution to a soldier in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kentucky Cavalry. The state of South Carolina bought a number of these rifle muskets and these will be discussed in the section dealing with that state's long arms. Examples have been



*The lock area of a diverted Spanish Contract rifle musket with a distinctive part hexagonal section at the breech and unusual backsight.*



*A typical engraved crown and "1862" over "TOWER" found on the locks of these arms.*

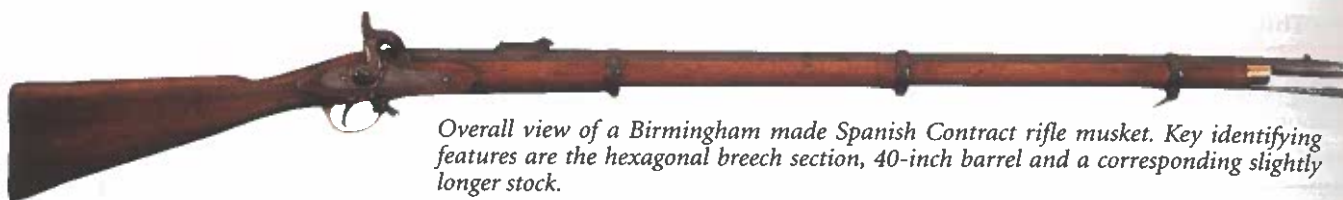


*The butt plate tang of this rifle, engraved No. "9004" / "A", the "A" indicating the second numbered set of 10,000 arms.*



*The matching rammer, engraved No. "9004" / "A" for this arm.*





Overall view of a Birmingham made Spanish Contract rifle musket. Key identifying features are the hexagonal breech section, 40-inch barrel and a corresponding slightly longer stock.



A vertical view of the unusual backsight found on most of the 40-inch barrel rifle muskets. Note the numerals are on the left side of the ladder rather than the right side as normally found.



An angled view of the right side of the same backsight.



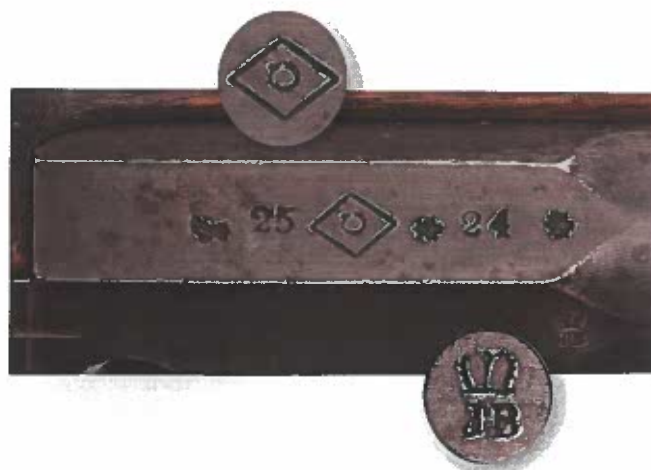
The socket of the matching bayonet No. "9004" / "A" of this arm.



"JS" / anchor viewer's mark and Birmingham Small Arms Trademark stamped in the belly of the stock of No. 9004 / A.



The mark of Joseph Bourne found stamped in the belly of the stock of rifle No. 9004 / A.



The left flat of hexagonal breech section showing Birmingham proofs and the distinctive <C> proof thought to be associated with a Spanish viewer. The crown over "JB" is the mark of the maker, Joseph Bourne.

seen of this rare variation built by Joseph Bourne, King & Phillips, Isaac Hollis & Sons, Pryse & Redman and C. P. Swinburn & Son. It is possible some were made by other makers. During his research, Madaus also found that examples exist with provenance to Federal soldiers that served in the 25<sup>th</sup> Connecticut, 150<sup>th</sup> New York and 27<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry.<sup>39</sup>

There are seven recorded Spanish Contract rifle muskets with engraved numbers including "9004" / "A", the lowest, "9947" / "A", the highest, and five numbers in between. All of them have "1862" / "TOWER" marked locks that suggests probably one thousand of these arms were acquired by Confederate ordnance agents.

An exceptionally fine Pattern 1853 Volunteer rifle musket by William Weston (see Chapter One) is known with Sinclair, Hamilton & Company, Type 2 viewer's mark double struck in the belly of the stock. The rifle musket is completely iron mounted and every component exhibits superior finish and extra attention to detail. The original backsight is graduated to 1,100

yards while all external screws have well executed flower-head engraving and the barrel bands have double-border line engraving. The lock is fully engraved which in itself is a rarity even on high quality Volunteer arms. The trigger guard and butt plate tang have well done scroll engraving and the lock and nocksform are engraved with the private retailer's name "WILLIAM WESTON". The deluxe wood stock is nicely checkered at the wrist and forearm.

A rifle musket of this quality was expensive, much more so than the 65 shillings paid for the average Birmingham or London rifle musket or 75 shillings paid for the superior interchangeable products of the London Armoury Company. One can only speculate concerning the purchase of such a weapon. It is possible that Sinclair, Hamilton & Company acquired a small lot of them for some special occasion or they were a bargain offered by a maker that needed cash. This Weston rifle musket is the only one with SHC viewer's marks known at this time.

*An engraved Pattern 1853 rifle musket with extra fine stock checkered at the wrist and forearm.*



*The Sinclair, Hamilton & Company, Type II marking found on the belly of the stock of this rifle. This is the only noted rifle musket of this quality with the mark of SHC.*



*The lock of a high quality Pattern 1853 Volunteer rifle musket made by William Weston. Note the flower head engraving on the hammer screw that is found on all screws of the rifle.*



*Component parts for the Pattern 1853, Types II and III were also imported in bulk. Everything from stocks and barrels to barrel bands and lock plates were purchased from S. Isaac, Campbell & Company. The invoice illustrated here notes barrel bands and band springs which clearly identifies spare parts for the Type II along with almost every conceivable part needed for an ordnance shop to keep Pattern 1853 arms repaired and in service in the field.*

156

<sup>34</sup> St. Forward		1	56	1	3	100	12	74
100	Rammers	1/4	5					
100	Bayonet hoop	7/2	3	2	6			
100	" " Pins	1/4			10	5		
50	New Bands	10	2	1	5			
30	Middle "	5 1/2	1	1	10			
30	Bottom "	5 1/2	1	1	10			
125	Main Spring	2 1/2	13		5			
125	Hammer "	16	9	7	6			
15	Heel plates	6 1/2			8	12		
10	Guards	5			4	2		
10	Box Triggers	1 1/2			12	6		
45	Guard Screws	2 1/2			15	7 1/2		
100	Lock pins	5			4	2		
45	Coats field	1 1/2	3		15			
75	Band Screws	3			18	9		
100	Pins	1 1/4			10	5		
100	Bands				5	3		
25	Heel plate Screws							
75	Guard "				5			
10	Triggers							
60	Caps				3	9		
25	Box Triggers							
25	Pins				1	10		
5	Lock plates	1 1/2			10			
10	New Caps							
10	" " Screws				3	3		
75	Nipples	2 1/2			15	7 1/2		
125	Brick Screws	4			2	15		
125	Screws do	4			2	15		
125	" Spring do	4			2	15		
Forward		107	3	4	3	100	12	74

Continuation of the list enumerating rammers, heel plates, lock plates, nipples, bands and all manner of internal parts. Courtesy of the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum