

Army Museum of Tasmania

Anglesea Barracks
HOBART

Information Sheet No 21

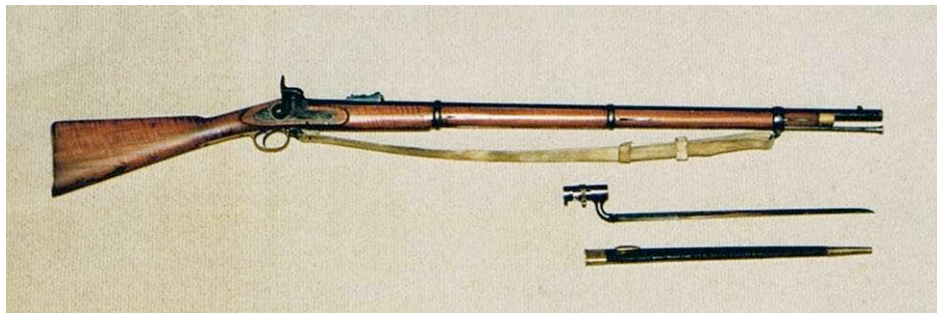
TASMANIAN VOLUNTEER ARMS 1860 - 1870

In December 1859 Tasmanian citizens formed the first of many volunteer units with the view to providing defence to would be aggressors.

To arm them the British Government in 1860 provided 1000 2nd model Pattern 1853 Rifles and bayonets. Initially they were to be a gift but they reverted to being a loan. In 1863 the War Office directed they be marked with the letters TV (Tasmanian Volunteers).

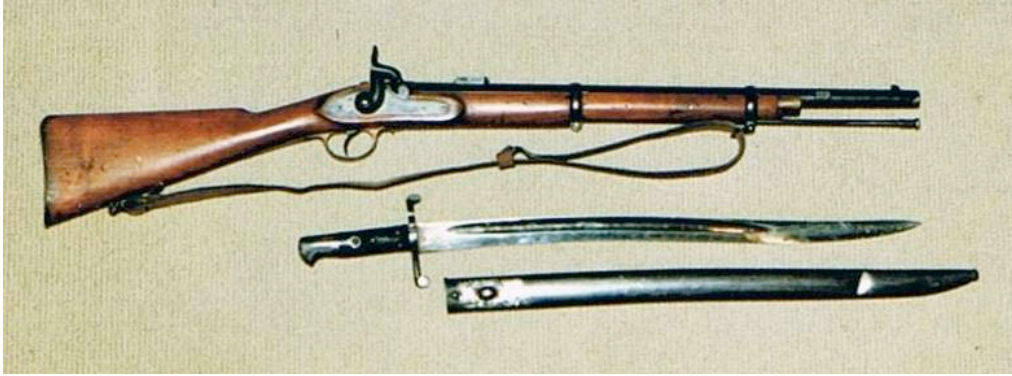
However, examination of surviving arms shows that large numbers were marked with unit markings (presumably prior to the official direction arriving), some marked TV and unit markings (northern Tasmanian units only and some not at all).

In 1863 a further 500 rifles were sent but these were subsequently forwarded to New Zealand in response to their urgent need to arm Militia fighting the Maori.

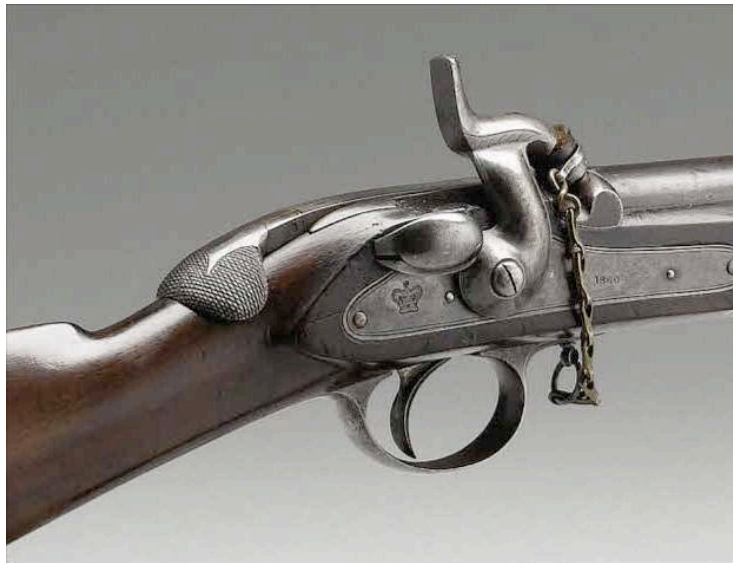


Pattern 1853 Rifle and socket bayonet
Calibre .577inch, 3 groove Enfield rifling, length 1.397m,
70 grains black powder, 530 grain Pritchett bullet

The Tasmanian Government sought to obtain carbines for the Artillery and Cavalry. Through their agent Hebbert and Co. of 8 Pall Mall, East London they purchased 150 Hollis Artillery Carbines with bayonets and 50 Wilsons breech loading capping carbines. Mr. J Aston, and Armourer at Hythe was engaged by the agent to independently inspect and pass as serviceable each arm.



Hollis and Sons Artillery Carbine and Yataghan sword bayonet
Calibre .577inch, 3 groove Enfield rifling, length 1.022m



Detail of Breech of a Wilsons Breech

The oval head of the wedge lock (behind the hammer) is pulled out. The knurled grip of the bolt is then pulled to the rear to expose the breech. The paper cartridge is inserted and the bolt closed and the wedge pushed in to lock the bolt. The hammer is then cocked and a percussion cap applied to the nipple.

The contracted arms are all marked with cartouches on the stock, The manufacturer and armourers marks are on the left side of the stock and the Tasmanian Government agents on the right.



On arrival in Hobart in 1866 they were all marked TV in accordance with the earlier War Office directive. This later caused some confusion as the War Office believed they owned them when in fact the Tasmanian Government paid £5 each for them.

The Volunteer units and their observed markings are shown on the below table. Most surviving Pattern 1853 rifles are marked TV only and would have been issued to those units with out specific unit markings.

Unit	Stock	Butt plate
Hobart Town Artillery (Hollis Carbines)		TV and a number
Masonic Rifles		MR and a number
Manchester Unity Rifles		MU and a number
Buckingham Rifles		BV and a number
City Guards		CG and a number
Launceston Volunteer Artillery Corps	LVAC and a number	Some also TV and a number
Launceston Volunteer Rifle Corps	LVRC and a number	Some also TV and a number
Derwent Rifles		
Odd Fellows Rifles		
Kingborough Rifles		
Huon Rifle Corps		
Mounted Rifles(Light Cavalry)	LC	Some also TV and a number and LC
Longford Rifle Corps		
Westbury Rifle Corps		
Armoury and others		