



## **U.S. Carbine: CAL .30 M1 Dodging the Bullet!**

by: [Jamie Mangrum](#)

I was twelve and my father had purchased my first firearm. It was a replica of the M1 Carbine, a BB gun. I have never been more proud of a possession in my entire life. We lived on a six acre plot of land with a two acre pond in an area called Irish Hills, located in Southern Michigan. I had a very large world to explore and a never-ending supply of things to shoot at. My father was a great shot and I wanted to be just like him.

I shot everything. Even things I should not have shot. All boys do.

One time my friend Matt came over to stay the weekend and he brought his BB gun. The two of us shot everything we laid eyes upon. It was war!

There was a small bird sitting on the kitchen window sill of my house. Standing with Matt out by an old pump house, I took aim and hit it with the very first shot.

Matt was impressed. So was I.

Adrenaline and testosterone can surely make you do some pretty stupid things. Within moments I would pay for my sin.

Unbeknownst to me my mother cherished the little bird. It would sit by her kitchen window and sing for hours.

She was in the kitchen when I made my spectacular shot and saw everything!

My mother promptly stormed onto the front porch and demanded I hand over my BB gun. I slowly walked towards her and handed over my treasure. I thought sadly that it would be months before I would see it again, if ever. My sadness was rudely interrupted by my mother cocking the BB gun and telling me - **run**.

She had a look in her eyes that told me I had better not second guess or try to negotiate. I took off running as fast as I could.

The first shot hit me square in the buttocks. I screamed like a little girl. I did not know what was more painful: being hit in my rear by a BB or having it done in front of my friend. Turning around and thinking my torment might be over I saw that she was actually cocking the BB gun again. I ran like hell, this time zigzagging across the yard hoping this would throw off her aim.

She fired several more times. She didn't hit me again. She walked into the house and the BB gun went away from me for months.

I learned several things that day:

- My mother really liked birds;
- She was a little off her rocker once angered;
- She did not really have a high regard for firearm safety;
- My father was not the only good shot in the family and my odds of being one as well just went up exponentially;
- Me getting shot in the ass was entertaining to friends.

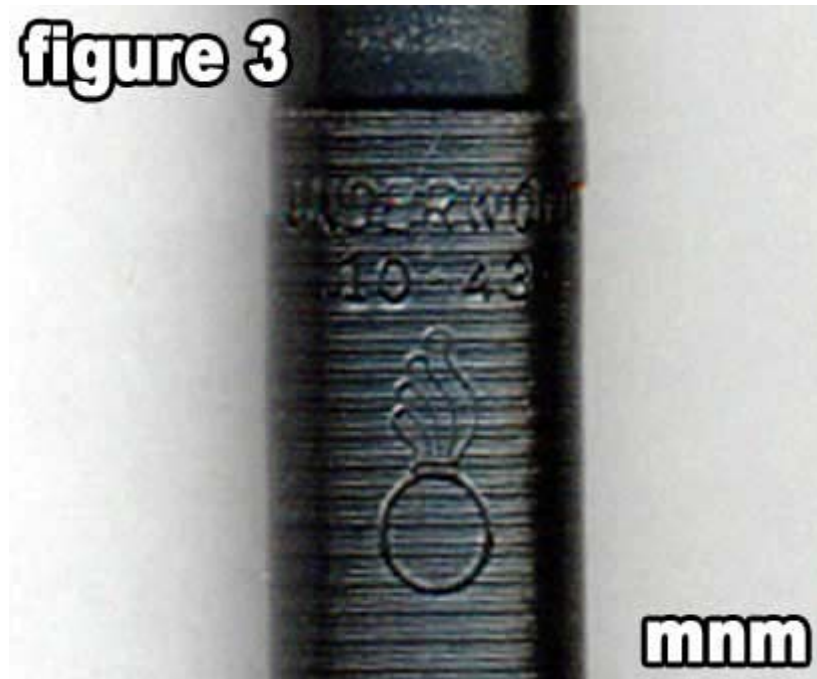
After reading my story you may ask yourself why I would ever want to handle an M1 Carbine again? Because my mother lives on one coast while I live on the other.

Safety can be inspirational.....



Setup at the range shooting my M1 Carbine

**figure 3**



Barrel marking denoting Underwood is the manufacturer and the date of manufacture: October, 1943.

**figure 4**



Stamp found on left side of receiver reads Bavaria Rural Police.



### U.S. Carbine Cal .30 M1

In my youth the M1 Carbine seemed to me a great battle rifle that could mow down divisions of Germans in the Battle of the Bulge. Actually it did. Today it looks like a child's toy in the fleshy meat hooks I sometimes refer to as my hands. If I had a choice to carry either an M1 Garand or an M1 Carbine into harm's way, I would carry the Garand. The little carbine is a lot of fun to shoot and I think it is more formidable than a handgun, but it just does not give me that warm and fuzzy feeling. The feeling that says - "What ever or who ever comes my way and means me harm will stop dead in their tracks when I pull the trigger."

My specimen is in great condition and has mostly original parts. The barrel and receiver were made by Underwood (*Underwood-Elliott-Fisher, Hartford, Connecticut a famous maker of typewriters and other office equipment*) in October of 1943. The receiver is stamped with *Bavaria Rural Police* on the left side of the carbine's receiver (*figure 4*).

#### Bavaria Rural Police Carbine

"Bavaria is one of the largest German states and included extensive forested and mountainous regions. The U.S. Army made M1 Carbines available to these local police units, many of which remained in service for more than ten years."

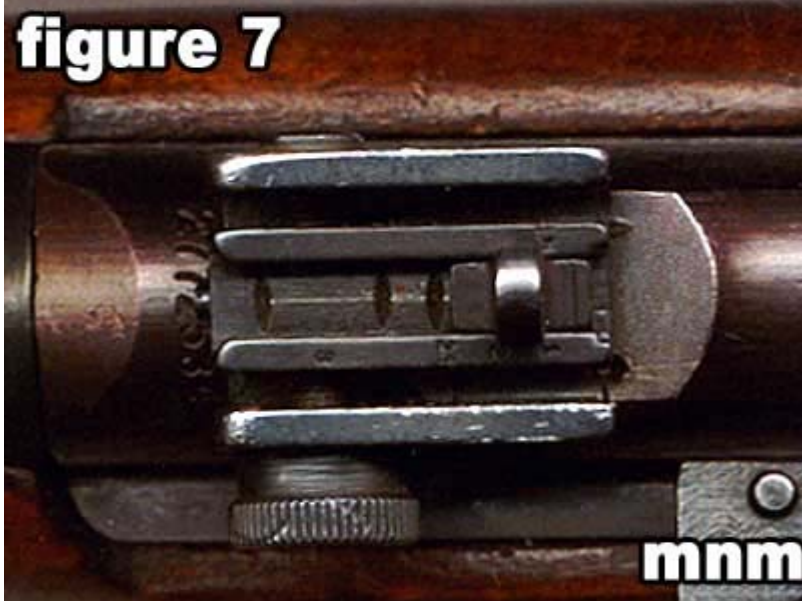
"Many can be identified by the stampings, "BAVARIAN RURAL POLICE", "BAVARIAN FORESTRY SERVICE", "BAVARIAN BORDER POLICE" and "BAVARIAN STATE POLICE" on the receiver. Other carbines were furnished to the federal border guard service, the "BUNDESGRENZSHUTZ".

From "For Collectors Only" edition of "U.S. M1 CARBINES" by Craig Riesch, published by North Cape Publications (revised, 3rd edition)

## figure 6



Milled front site surrounded by wings.



To adjust elevation aperture slides up and down while knob controls windage.

The front sights of the M1 Carbine are protected by ears or wings and so is the rear sight. The rear sight pictured in **figure 7** is an adjustable sight that was installed later. From what I have read, Underwood never made carbines with windage and elevation adjustable rear sights. Their carbines only had the "L-type" flip style aperture sight that was preset for 100 or 300 yards. The sight installed functions similarly to the rear sight of the 1903A3.



M1 Carbine sight picture. Note my target at 50 yards



First 10 shots @ 50 yards



**Best 20 shots @ 50 yards**

I shot high no matter what I tried as shown in both of my targets. After I dialed in the windage the little carbine was a joy to shoot. The trigger pull was a little high in the pounds for my taste. It is nothing that would win competitions, but in the heat of battle I could see how it would get the job done.

The M1 Carbine is a very collectible firearm these days bringing a premium for just about any USGI specimen that is a shooter. Yes, they are C&R eligible. No, you will not find them listed on any web site for \$150 + \$10 for hand pick like a Yugo SKS. The days of supplies in great quantity are probably behind us. If you want one you will have to keep an eye out at local firearm stores, gun shows, or online gun auctions such as <http://www.gunbroker.com> and expect to pay \$400 and up.

The story I have told occurred almost 30 years ago. Even today, as a full grown man, while holding the little carbine in my hands I looked up from the desk in my home office to see a small sparrow sitting on my window sill singing and I shuddered and had the sudden urge to run.

jlm;)

**Sources:**

[From "For Collectors Only" edition of "U.S. M1 CARBINES" by](#)

[Craig Riesch, published by North Cape Publications \(revised, 3rd edition\)](#)

[Complete Guide to the M1 Garand and the M1 Carbine by Bruce Canfield](#)

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