

CHAPTER 4

THE M.1943 “CORUNNA” MUSKETOON FOR THE ARMY, NAVY, AND GUARDIA CIVIL, THE M.1944 MUSKETOON FOR THE AIR FORCE, AND THE FR-8 “CETMETON”:

The **M.1943 musketoon** in 7.92 mm (8 mm Mauser) caliber, was based on the **Mauser Standard Modell**, a rifle that was imported in small quantities prior to the onset of the Civil War in 1936, some of which were actually relined to 7 mm (“entubados a 7 mm”) the regulation Spanish caliber, and was also brought to Spain during the Civil War by the Condor Legion and other German formations.



Standard Modell Mauser rifle, 7.92 mm caliber, SN 81, its Mauser banner, and its M.84/98 bayonet.

The **M.1943** was produced at the **Corunna Factory** during the 1940s and into the mid 50s, in a total number of 500,000 units, for the Army, Navy and Guardia Civil; It's main functional difference from the M.1893 and M.1916 Spanish Mauser rifles, besides the caliber, was the cocking of the firing pin upon lifting the bolt prior to retracting it, as opposed to cocking upon closing the bolt on a chambered cartridge; Its bayonet lug mounts the **M.84/98 bayonet**, both German and Spanish made, directly, but an adapter was necessary in order to mount the newer **M.1941** bolo bladed bayonet or the older **M.1893** and **M.1913** bayonets.





Detail of the M.1943's muzzle with adapter for the (from top to bottom) M.1893, M.1913, and M.1941 bayonets.

An uncertain number of M.1943 musketoons issued to the **Guardia Civil** had the emblem of that Corp (crossed sword and fasces in a rhombus) impressed on the left side of the buttstock (No.Z6305 in my collection); A smaller number bear the same emblem engraved on the chamber.



Emblem of the Guardia Civil impressed on the buttstock of an M.1943 musketoons issued to that Corp.

Some M.1943 musketoons with serial numbers below 6,000 (Ball), usually in like new condition, with curved bolts and no maker's markings, may be found (SN992 in my collection) and are thought to have been a **commercial version**; The possibility of this having been a Spanish Foreign Legion issued rifle has not been documented.



"Commercial" musketoons, SN 992, with curved bolt and no maker's markings.

The **M.1944 musketoons** made for the **Air Force** is similar to the M.1943 but is closer to the **Polish Wz.1929** (SN 867 in my collection, lacking any identifying markings, a "sterilized" specimen sent to the Spanish Civil War); A good

number of this rifle were captured from the Republican (Popular Army) and after the war were refurbished by the Materiel Recovery Services and issued to the Air Force, in the same manner as many 7.62 mm Russian M.91 and M.91/30 Mosin-Nagants were issued to the Civil Guard("Mausines") , and Czech Vz-24s were issued to the Army's cavalry regiments, to be used until they could be replaced with new M.1943 and M.1944s.; The M.1944 was then subsequently manufactured specifically for the Air Force.



Polish Wz.1929 Mauser rifle and its bayonet made at the Radom, Poland arsenal; Detail of the front sight protector.

The M.1944 is easily identified by its front sight protector, typical of the Polish rifle, by the Air Force emblem on its chamber(eagle with spread wings under a crown) and by the prefix "EA" preceding the serial number (EA for "Ejército del Aire" or Army of the Air) (EA-3347 in my collection); The **M.1944 knife bayonet**, very similar to the German M.84/98 except for a muzzle ring, was made at the Toledo Factory specifically for this musketoon, although it can also mount the Polish Radom or Perkun made models, the German M84/98, and other recomposition bayonets.



Air Force M.1944 musketoon, its emblem, its EA-prefixed serial number, and its M.1944 bayonet, made at the Toledo Factory.

I have in my collection a specimen of the M.1944 musketoon, in like new condition, bearing serial number “**EA-Exp.1**” and the Corunna Factory’s emblem on its receiver and chamber, equipped with a special type or rear sight and with a threaded muzzle and under barrel lug of uncertain purpose, perhaps for a grenade launcher or a flash cover or some other accessory; The fact that it bears the Corunna Factory emblem makes me believe that the regular production M.1944s, all of which lack any makers markings, in contrast to the M.1943s, were also made in that factory.



Experimental E.A-EXP.1 musketoon, its special rear sight, its threaded muzzle and, its markings.

The FR-7 and FR-8 rifles were both humoristically dubbed “CETMETONs” because, just as the FR-7, which has been described in the previous chapter, was a recombination of the M.1916 musketoon coupled to a CETME mod.C barrel, the **FR-8** (Fusil Reformado-8) was an M.1943 musketoon, similarly coupled; They both used the **M.1964**, and later **M.1969 CETME bayonets** made in Toledo by the **Industria Nacional Santa Barbara** (Saint Barbara was the patron saint of the Spanish Artillery Corp for centuries; The magazine of the Spanish galleons and the gunpowder depots in Spanish forts were called “the Santa Barbara”).



FR-8 musketoon and its CETME M.1964 (below) and M.1969 (above) bayonets.

*Hector J. Meruelo
Miami, Florida, June, 2014.*

NOTE

The reader is welcome to freely download and print these works for personal use; Any other use requires prior authorization from the author. Thank you.