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SUBJECT: THE PHROBIS MADE M9-A1 "TRIALS" BAYONET PRODUCED FOR THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS AND THE U.S. ARMY.

The least known of the M9-A1 bayonets is the original "trials" model produced for and tested by the U.S. Army at Fort Benning, Ga. A small group of these bayonets was also submitted to the U.S. Marine Corps for testing and was instrumental in the Commandant's consideration of the design for the Marines.

Only a very small number of these "trials" M9-A1 bayonets were produced and most were used up in the testing process.

After the molding of the original black prototype M9-A1 scabbards in three numbered lots (3, 9, & 23) of twenty five pieces per lot they were tested to destruction and the material composition #9 was selected for production.

The "TRIALS" production bayonets were totally unique both in bayonet and scabbard and were never produced again after the initial group. This is the specific bayonet pictured on the front of the issue M9-A1 manual.

The scabbards (and bayonet grips) were made in both black and green zytel. They were then bead blasted to a dull non-reflective finish. A specially designed rubber "O" ring was fitted to the scabbard throat to act as a secondary retainer for the bayonet. The cutter plate was a standard stainless steel U.S Army M9 model.

The bayonet is also unique in design and manufacture. The blades were standard stainless steel U.S. Army contract M9 blades with all the standard Army M9 markings. The grips were beadblasted and the crossguard and latch plate were specially manufactured from stainless steel rather than being the standard steel Army ones. The crossguard is most distinct as it is made from 300 stainless which is NON-MAGNETIC and has a heavy dark phosphated finish with no Phrobis logo. All other M9 and M9-A1 guards, whether steel or stainless steel are MAGNETIC.

The latch plate is also stainless steel, but like the later production Marto plates (with a dimple on the back side) they are MAGNETIC. These "trials" bayonets were quite successful in testing, but the Army chose to stay with the M9 pattern already in mass production. The Marine Corps, however, continued with the idea of further testing this new design, but funding and Desert Shield and Desert Storm put the project on hold to date. Thus the "trials" M9-A1 was a limited production special model manufactured in one lot for the U.S. Army and the U.S. Marine Corps. All subsequent production of the M9-A1 design by Phrobis was distinctly different in scabbard, blade and hilt parts.

Submitted by,