Catalogue Number: EOF-US-CW-MUSKETBALL-001

ECHOES OF FREEDOM
WITH SMITH McNEILL

Echoes of Freedom
Certificate of Authenticity

Artifact: Civil War–Era Smoothbore Musket Ball

This Certificate of Authenticity verifies that the accompanying artifact is an original Civil War–era smoothbore musket ball, dating to the period of 1861–1865. Round lead musket balls were commonly used in smoothbore muskets still in service during the early years of the American Civil War.

Condition Assessment

This musket ball exhibits characteristics consistent with smoothbore ammunition, including a spherical form and surface patina typical of aged lead. Any minor surface marks or deformation are consistent with period manufacture, handling, or impact, depending on the individual artifact.

Historical Significance

Although rifled muskets and Minie balls dominated Civil War combat, smoothbore muskets remained in widespread use, particularly among early-war units, militia forces, and troops equipped with older or imported weapons. These muskets often fired simple round lead balls, a technology dating back centuries.

The continued use of smoothbore musket balls during the Civil War illustrates the uneven transition from traditional warfare to modern industrialized combat. Such artifacts highlight shortages, rapid mobilization, and the reality that many soldiers entered battle with outdated equipment.

As a battlefield artifact, the smoothbore musket ball serves as a tangible reminder of the soldiers who fought with whatever arms were available, and of the technological crossroads at which the Civil War was fought.

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Photographic Documentation

Photograph of the Smoothbore Musket Ball:



Authentication & Provenance

This artifact has been documented and preserved as part of the Echoes of Freedom Public History Project. Echoes of Freedom is committed to the ethical preservation, interpretation, and educational use of authentic American historical artifacts.

Certified by: Thomas Smith McNeill

Certifier Signature: _____

Certified Date: January 8, 2026

Location: Wilkes County, North Carolina