

The Cabinet d'Armes of Louis XIII: Some Firearms and Related Problems

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MATRIS MEAE MEMORIAE

IN THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, a new figure emerged among European princes recognized as connoisseurs and devoted collectors of fine arms, armor, and militaria. He was Dauphin Louis, born on September 27, 1601, to Henry IV of France and Navarre. According to contemporary records, the dauphin displayed an interest in firearms even as a small boy and, following his third birthday, received as gifts his first arquebus and a bandolier with cartridge boxes. At the age of ten, having already been proclaimed Louis XIII of France (1610), he possessed no fewer than seven guns, mechanical marvels that gave him great pleasure when hunting and target shooting.

What seems to have started as quite a common boyish attraction had obviously become a steady and serious hobby since, just four years later, by 1614, the young king's collection had increased to some forty firearms.¹ Even more significant is the fact that in addition to acquiring firearms of current use, Louis XIII later showed an interest in collecting arms and armor of historic and artistic value, both European and Oriental, as well as weapons of uncommon or new construction.

Despite his generally poor health (the king had a pulmonary disease that finally led to his premature death on May 14, 1643), Louis XIII was very fond of equitation, hunting, and other gentlemanly sports and in more than one campaign he proved to be a gallant officer of astonishing endurance. His passion for arms collecting never diminished—throughout

his life he acquired fine arms made in France and abroad—and one of his favorite pastimes was examining, taking apart, cleaning, and reassembling firearms in the quiet of his *cabinet*. The king's enchantment with arms was well known and even won him the nickname "Louis l'Arquebusier." Less than four years before his death, on October 24, 1639, in a conversation about firearms with the Venetian ambassador, the king mentioned that he had more than two hundred pieces in his *cabinet d'armes*.² That this remark did not spring from vainglory, but was a very modest evaluation of his treasures, is fully supported by existing inventories of the royal collection.

The *cabinet d'armes* was set up in the private royal quarters in the Louvre and it was apparently there, in 1673, that the collection was first catalogued. Subsequently, more arms and armor joined the collection. The second inventory, started after the accession of Louis XV (1715–74) and completed in 1717, included the later additions as well as the previously

A list of frequently cited sources is given at the end of this article.

1. On the history of the French royal arms collection see J. F. Hayward, "Notes on the Cabinet d'armes of Louis XIII," *Livrustkammaren* 13, no. 1 (1973) pp. 23–31; Hayward, pp. 238–251.

2. M. Morin with R. Held, ". . . And His Majesty Said 'all my guns together are not worth one of these,'" in *Art, Arms and Armour: An International Anthology*, ed. R. Held (Chiasso, 1979) pp. 268, 269, 277.

registered items. The third and last inventory was again drawn up after an accession—that of Louis XVI (1774–92)—and was finished in 1775.

It is unclear where the second and third cataloguing took place; the location and history of the royal collection after 1673 has been the subject of considerable conjecture. According to one theory, after the first cataloguing the collection was transferred to the Bastille, where it was looted, together with the royal arsenal (*magasin royal des armes*), during the takeover of the Bastille in July 1789 and the subsequent pillage and destruction that went on for almost two years. Had the royal arms collection been there at this period, it would presumably have shared the disastrous fate of the Bastille's valuable archives and arsenal, "which was devastated, and its collections . . . almost completely destroyed."³

Another version has it that the arms collection remained in the Louvre until the end of the ancien régime and, like other royal property there, suffered only certain losses during the Revolution. Jean-Pierre Reverseau, who has been engaged in special archival studies on the royal arms collection, substantially amends this story.⁴ According to Reverseau, some objects from the collection were placed, by order of Louis XIV, in the Versailles palace (which became the king's residence in the mid-1670s, that is, after the 1673 inventory had been drawn up). The bulk of the collection was transferred to a repository for royal furniture, the Garde-Meuble, installed near the Louvre in the Hôtel du Petit-Bourbon. Under Louis XV, this repository twice changed location; in 1758 it was moved to the Hôtel de Conti and in 1768 to the Hôtel d'Evreux. After the accession of Louis XVI, who was a connoisseur of applied arts and crafts, the Garde-Meuble was finally arranged in a newly built palace on the Place Louis XV and was opened to visitors as a museum of the royal art collections.

Contemporary accounts show that the Garde-Meuble museum became well known and popular, and this fame may have been a factor in the events that affected its collections in the turbulent year 1789. A memoirist recalls that on July 13, 1789, after having already pillaged the city arsenal and the armorers' shops, the mob, looking for weapons, rushed to the Garde-Meuble but (as far as the memoirist knows) did not take away anything except "des armes qui pouvaient servir."⁵ A sad comment can be added to this information. In 1789 flintlock firearms and

some types of swords, daggers, and pole arms were, or could be, used in much the same way as they had been since the seventeenth century or earlier, and "serviceable weapons" might well have included valuable historical objects whose condition was, or at least appeared, good enough for street fighting.

In 1797 the collection was again transferred, this time to the newly created Muséum des Antiques de la Bibliothèque Nationale. When, a few years later, this was reorganized into the Cabinet des Médailles, the arms and armor were placed with a *dépôt d'artillerie* being set up, as of 1795, at the former Dominican cloister of St.-Thomas-d'Aquin, seat of the Comité d'Artillerie. Here the collection joined those pieces that could be saved from the Bastille arsenal and some unusable arms of historical interest selected from confiscated private property. This vast assemblage was named the Musée d'Artillerie.

Although it was once stated that "the 1815 invasion caused almost no losses to the Musée d'Artillerie,"⁶ there is little doubt that during the occupation of Paris, British and probably Prussian military authorities selected and sent home as war trophies a number of weapons that were later incorporated into the state collections of the respective countries.

Still another blow struck the Musée d'Artillerie during the 1830 revolution, when Parisian insurgents invaded the cloister and the museum. "The pillage was total," notes the historian already quoted, adding, though, that "precious arms kept in closets" were saved and that a large part of the objects taken (except about a hundred pieces) was returned within a

3. O. Penguilly-l'Haridon, *Catalogue des collections composant le Musée d'Artillerie* (Paris, 1862) p. 5 (quotation translated).

4. J.-P. Reverseau, "Les Armures des rois de France au Musée de l'Armée," *VIII Congress of the International Association of Museums of Arms and Military History* [Report] (Warsaw and Krakow, May 21–30, 1978) pp. 153–160; his monograph under the same title (St.-Julien-du-Sault, 1982) pp. 9ff.

5. Reverseau, "Les Armures des rois de France" (1978) pp. 154, 155, 159, n. 6. Louis Blanc, who used numerous documents and memoirs of the period, gives a more disturbing picture of this episode: "Le Garde-Meuble ayant été envahi et les armes qu'il contenait enlevées, casques, lances et boucliers brillèrent portés, comme au temps de la Ligue, par les guerriers en haillons" (L. Blanc, *Histoire de la Révolution française* [Paris, 1847–62] II, p. 360).

6. Penguilly-l'Haridon, *Catalogue des collections composant le Musée d'Artillerie*, p. 10 (quotation translated).

few days.⁷ The losses that occurred at this time, however, may have included some arms from the royal collection, since a few dozen objects of this origin later emerged on the art market as well as in French and foreign private collections and museums.

Fortunately, this episode was the last of the tragic trials and tribulations that befell the *cabinet d'armes* or, rather, its remnants. In 1871, the collections of the Musée d'Artillerie were finally installed in the majestic Hôtel des Invalides, where they were merged in 1905 with the collections of the Musée Historique de l'Armée. The new institution was named the Musée de l'Armée. Its vast collections, when compared with those of other museums, still preserve the largest number of surviving pieces from the French royal collection.

Notwithstanding the disappearance of the *cabinet d'armes* in its complete and original state, its treasures, described in documents and represented by surviving pieces, have continued to excite profound interest in students of arms and armor. This interest has increased since Dr. Torsten Lenk, in his fundamental work on the history of flintlock firearms,⁸ made many significant conclusions based to a great extent on studies of materials related to the *cabinet d'armes*.

The importance of the arms collection assembled by Louis XIII is many faceted and results from several notable circumstances. As the king developed his knowledge and taste, he became a connoisseur of firearms and weapons technology, looking both for masterpieces of decorative art and for new or unusual designs.⁹ Moreover, he took special care to locate and to include in his collection objects of artistic, historical, and memorial value which had been in the possession of his predecessors on the French throne. The supreme social status of the collector, enhanced by his special and well-known interest in firearms, made available to him many of the best pieces produced during his reign by French and some foreign gun makers. The king patronized and encouraged these masters with generous rewards and privileges, among which were the highly coveted positions of royal gun makers and decorators. Some of these positions had, since 1608, entitled their holders to royal pensions and permanent lodging in the Louvre.

The four decades of the king's collecting were the period of inception and early development of the so-called true flintlock, the ultimate spark-producing ig-

niton mechanism that greatly improved the performance of civilian and military firearms and thus significantly affected social life and military tactics in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There are solid grounds for the belief that this mechanism was invented and developed by French masters during the reign of "Louis l'Arquebusier," whose interest in the invention is demonstrated by the presence in the royal collection of a sizable number of the earliest flintlock firearms. Study of these specimens and relevant materials can help clarify still unresolved problems of the chronology and typological evolution of the flintlock, as well as questions related to the role of gun makers responsible for its production.

It was under Louis XIII and Louis XIV that French arms makers and decorators evolved high technical, artistic, and aesthetic standards that eventually influenced the production of fine arms and even military weapons in other countries. Many objects illustrating early stages in this development could be found in the French royal collection. In fact, almost any newly discovered object from the *cabinet d'armes*, datable within the collection's chronological scope, may bring new and important data to the study of the history of European firearms.

The single source of utmost significance for identification of the objects from the *cabinet d'armes* is provided by the three inventories of the collection, drawn up within the framework of general catalogues of the royal furniture. The earliest of these documents was completed on February 20, 1673, as was certified after the catalogue entry for no. 337.¹⁰ Later, it was discovered that a *rondache* and several edged weapons, mostly highly decorative pieces, had been mistakenly registered in the inventory of various pieces of furniture ("meubles divers"), probably because they had been separated from the arms collection and were kept elsewhere in the Louvre at the time the arms catalogue was being compiled. These items, numbered 338–347, were added to the *cabinet's* catalogue on January 30, 1681.¹¹ At some posterior but unspecified date, four pistols and three

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 11–12.

8. For Lenk see the list of frequently cited sources.

9. An episode describing such a search is related in the article referred to in note 2.

10. Guiffrey, p. 83.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

swords were located and added to the register under the numbers 348–351, which conclude the *cabinet's* first catalogue.

As the structure of the 1673 inventory shows, the cataloguers began their work in a very reasonable way by grouping the objects according to type, function, origin, etc. Long firearms (nos. 1–183) include a series of pieces with detachable extension parts (nos. 92–101). Another series comprises guns with various flintlocks (“fusils,” nos. 122–164). Among pistols (nos. 184–264), Scottish pieces (called “à l’irlandaise” by the cataloguers) are grouped together (nos. 186–195). Two cannons, pole arms, edged weapons, and armor form the other groups (nos. 265–337).

Although the 1673 inventory and two small supplements total 351 entries, the actual number of registered items slightly exceeded seven hundred, about five hundred of these being various firearms. The difference results from the fact that many entries record more than one object. For instance, thirty-two entries describe sets of pistols, mostly pairs. Fourteen other entries comprise 207 guns and separate barrels, mostly of ordinary quality and of similar design within each entry—no. 5 lists “Quarente trois arquebuses toutes simples, de 3 pieds ou environ.”¹² Entry no. 267 alone covers ninety-eight pikes.¹³

While it appears that there were some orderly and knowledgeable persons among the cataloguers, at least including those who started and organized the work, the entries themselves sometimes betray a fairly liberal approach to accuracy of description and measurement (as is shown by comparison with the later inventory and, particularly, with the extant objects). One of the most blatant examples of this is no. 186, a pair of pistols dated 1615 with a length of “un pied 5 pouces,” or 46.02 centimeters (18.11 inches), which was described again, but in different terms, under no. 194, this time with a length of “16 pouces,” or 43.31 centimeters (17 inches).¹⁴

The collection was later inspected by officers in charge of the royal furniture, who verified the inventory and added discharge notes to some entries when items had been, for some reason, removed from the collection.¹⁵ One of these general inspections is recorded as having taken place in 1701.¹⁶ Another inspection of the collection and inventory was carried out shortly after the accession of Louis XV (1715), when it was found that in the 1673 inventory “almost all the descriptions and measurements were not cor-

rect or exact, and there were even many unrecorded pieces.”¹⁷ Among the latter were certainly pieces of armor and weapons that belonged to Louis XIV and were added to the collection during his reign (1643–1715) or after his death.

These findings resulted in the drawing up of the new inventory, which was completed on August 31, 1717, and officially replaced the previous document.¹⁸ Not only did it “rectify” mistakes in the old descriptions, but it also added 104 new entries comprising 136 objects, 72 of them being firearms and artillery models. The 1717 inventory was verified on December 31, 1729, and December 31, 1732, when it still contained a total of 455 entries describing some 840 items. Three more objects were finally added to the second inventory, under the numbers 456 to 458, at some time after 1734, the date mentioned in a note to no. 457.¹⁹ It is known that these additions to the Garde-Meuble occurred before the middle of 1738, since each accession was also recorded, with some details, in the “Journal du Garde-Meuble de la Couronne.”²⁰ In the entry for January 10, 1738, this document describes a pistol bought from an armorer and listed in the second inventory under no. 456. Another entry, of July 5, 1738, accessions two suits of armor listed in the inventory under nos. 457 and 458; a note on no. 457 states that it was acquired in 1736.²¹

Despite criticism of the earlier document, compilers of the 1717 inventory seem to have had a similar working routine and certainly were guided and influenced, to some extent, by extant inventory descriptions. It can be surmised that each object was examined and checked against the relevant earlier entry, with mistakes or omissions duly noted, and a new entry was then drafted. The new entries, though understandably similar in content to their precedes-

12. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 77.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 67, 68.

15. *Ibid.*, nos. 56, 196, 205, 325, 332, 338, 340.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 82, n. 1 (“la vérification de l’inventaire en 1701”).

17. *Ibid.*, p. 43, n. 1 (quotation translated).

18. *Ibid.*, p. 43, n. 1.

19. Grancsay 1970, p. 207.

20. A. V. B. Norman, “Arms and Armour in the Journal du Garde-Meuble de la Couronne,” *Journal of the Arms and Armour Society* 9, no. 5 (June 1979) pp. 187–194.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 188.

sors, are more orderly in composition and sometimes contain additional descriptive details important for identification, together with new measurements. Up to the number 351, the last in the old inventory, the cataloguers strictly followed the sequence of entries established by their predecessors. This method was both convenient and necessary since the objects were normally marked with numbers corresponding to the entries of the first inventory. Such inventory numbers, stamped on the wooden stock of a firearm or incised on a metal part, are found on most objects from the *cabinet d'armes*. However, some items whose connection to this collection is reliably established by inventory descriptions have no such markings, which shows that the cataloguers sometimes forgot or omitted, for whatever reason, to carry out the marking procedure.

The last inventory of the collection, drawn up in 1775, appears to copy, almost literally, descriptions given in the previous document, with only a few discrepancies and amendments, as well as occasional omissions of some minor details, either out of neglect or to save time and labor. This inventory contains a further 30 entries describing 37 objects that were added to the collection. The "Journal du Garde-Meuble de la Couronne" shows that these additions, numbered 459 to 488, were accessioned between 1753 and 1765.²² Still another piece was recorded in the "Journal" under no. 489 in March 1774,²³ but the inventory itself does not include it. Thus, at the last official count, the royal arms collection had 489 registered entries comprising 880 objects (nearly 600 of them firearms and combination weapons).

There are two manuscript copies of the 1775 inventory preserved in the Archives Nationales, Paris, and still unpublished. They differ in handwriting, sometimes in spelling and punctuation, but the descriptions themselves are identical, with very few discrepancies.

The measurements, which are so important for

identification purposes, are given in all documents mentioned in *pieds* and *pouces*. A *pied* is equivalent to 32.48 centimeters (12.79 inches). A *pouce*, one-twelfth of a *pied*, is equivalent to 2.707 centimeters (1.066 inches). For firearms, the inventories usually give the total length only, with no more precision than up to a *pouce*, occasionally up to a half *pouce*, that is, 1.353 centimeters (0.533 inch). Besides this approximation and the possible human error in reading and recording the correct figure, there might have been other technicalities that may now affect identification. It is not known, for instance, how accurate the measuring tapes or rulers were—that is, how consistently and correctly they were marked out. Furthermore, a firearm was measured, in all probability, by applying the tape to its opposite extremities, the muzzle and an edge of the butt. An eventual angle between the barrel and the tape would then have resulted in a length somewhat different from that obtained in measuring today.²⁴

When Dr. Torsten Lenk published his major work on the history of French flintlock firearms in 1939, he listed from the French royal collection 77 objects that he knew to have been identified.²⁵ Twenty-five years later, in 1965, Dr. John F. Hayward updated this index by listing 108 items.²⁶ In the two decades since that time a number of other pieces from the *cabinet d'armes* must have been discovered. Some pieces were identified in 1978 by Reverseau,²⁷ thus making up a total of 120 known objects from the royal collection.

The present paper offers the opportunity to publish and discuss, among other topics, ten further objects from the *cabinet d'armes*, whose provenance and whereabouts have become known to the writer in recent times.

In the following survey, the objects discussed are grouped according to their present location and are designated by the numbers assigned to them in original inventories of the French royal property.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 188–192, 194, n. 13. A cased set of two knives was correctly recorded as one unit under no. 488 in the "Journal" but was given two numbers (488, 489) in the inventory.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 193.

24. In accordance with today's practice, the length of firearms described in this paper was obtained by measuring

from the muzzle along the line parallel to the barrel and perpendicular to the tangent at the extremity of the butt.

25. Lenk, appendix 1, pp. 184, 185.

26. Lenk/Hayward, appendix 1, pp. 167–177.

27. Reverseau, *Les Armures des rois de France* (1978) pp. 153ff.

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO,
THE GEORGE F. HARDING COLLECTION

Number 245

One of the most interesting firearms to be found in the Harding collection, a holding of the Art Institute since 1982, is a long wheel-lock pistol (Figures 1, 2). Its form and construction are typical of long Catalonian pistols (*pedrenyales*) presumably made in the town of Ripoll in the late sixteenth to early seventeenth century.²⁸

The two-stage barrel of this pistol is octagonal in the rear two-fifths, with a molding at each end of the round section. On the underside the barrel has two pierced lugs for stock pins, as well as two recesses for lugs that were initially intended or actually used. The tang screw is now replaced by a modern part, since the original screw must have been brazed to the front of the trigger guard, which is missing in this pistol.

The wheel lock is of an early type (Figures 3, 4), with no safety catch. The wheel is completely covered by the housing. The convex, pivoted pan cover that moves around the wheel has a stabilizing arm that slides on the lock plate and a small thumb piece symmetrical with the rear flash fence of the pan. This design is practically identical to the pan-cover construction in some contemporary French wheel locks (see, for instance, the lock in Figure 19). The lower branch of the cock spring is half as long as the upper one, like the cock spring in some of the earliest German wheel locks. Below the cock, in the lock plate, is a small rectangular slot to fit the lug of the pan-cover closing spring that was installed inside the mechanism (it is now missing). When opened by the wheel-spindle cam, the pan cover was held in place by a hooked spring catch inside the plate. This spring was released by a button in front of the pan, and the pan cover then closed. (The button is also missing now, but an aperture for its stem can be seen in the center of the screw head on the pan-cover mount.)

The upper jaw of the cock is forged with a directional prong fitting a slot in the lower jaw. To grasp the pyrite more firmly, the inner surfaces of the jaws are roughly incised with four concentric squares twice crossed diagonally. Some interior parts of the mechanism—the mainspring, its bridle, and the sear—are slightly ornamented with chiseled scrolls and lines. On the frontal base of the bridle, the or-

nament forms a distinctive capital *M*, perhaps the lock maker's initial (the name of one of the Ripoll gun-making dynasties and masters, like Mas, Molas, and others with the same initial,²⁹ is a tempting guess). Compared with good-quality European locks, this mechanism, while it may have functioned passably well, appears somewhat crude in workmanship. Some priming powder must inevitably have fallen inside the lock, given the fairly wide clearance between the wheel ridges and the corresponding indentations in the pan. These indentations were probably simply filed out and not precision milled.

The wooden stock is completely encased in iron sheet incised with linear borders and profusely chiseled with floral scrolls matching the similar decoration on the barrel and lock.

The distinctive and, so far, unique peculiarity of this specimen is the form of its grip, which is not fitted with a conventional pommel but simply terminates in a graceful curl and is very small even by standards favored in Catalonian pistols. The handling of such pistols was considerably helped by a spur for the middle finger on the trigger guard.

An iron ramrod is incised on both ends with diagonal strokes for better handling and has a baluster-shaped tip. On the left side of the stock, a long belt hook is held in place by the central and rear side screws of the lock, the tail of the hook being partly sunk in a cutoff made in the sheath.

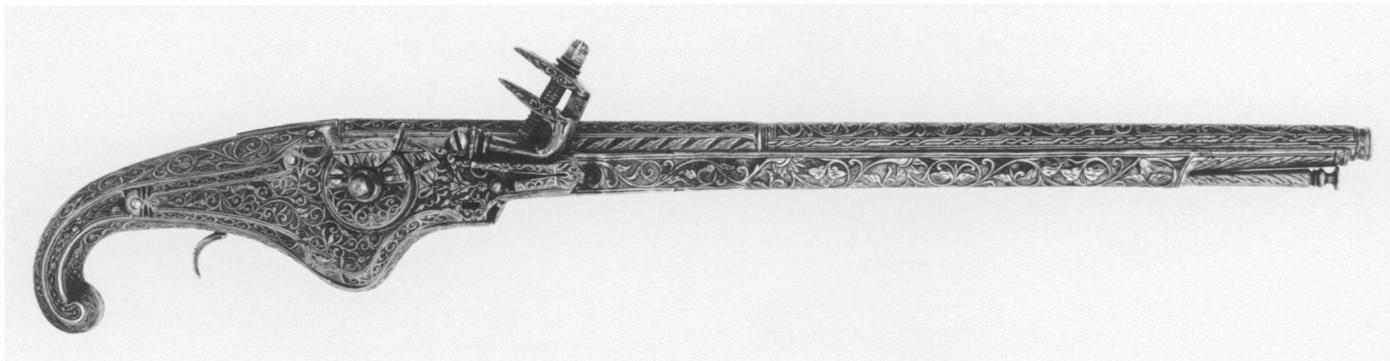
The overall length of the pistol is 55.8 centimeters (22 inches). Its barrel length is 43 centimeters (16.9 inches) and its caliber 11 millimeters (0.43 inch).

Besides the letter *M* inside the lock, there is only one other marking on the pistol. Engraved in front of the pan cover is a number that has for a long time been read as *No. 215* and was thought to refer to an

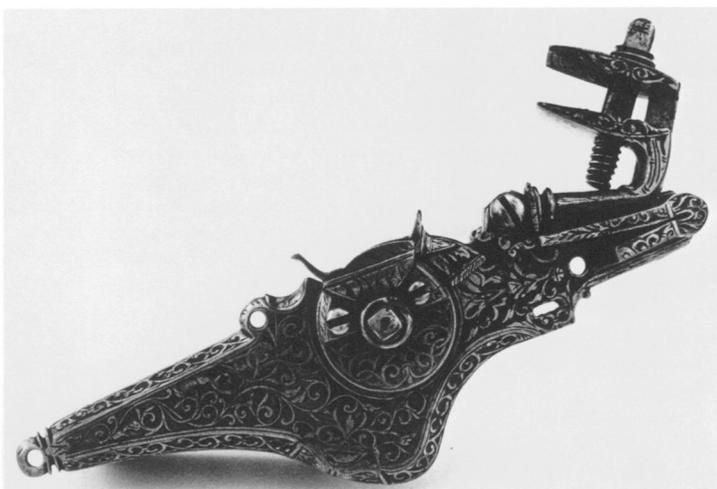
28. Ripoll firearms are discussed in J. D. Lavin, *A History of Spanish Firearms* (London, 1965) pp. 218ff.; idem, "Ripoll Pistols," *American Society of Arms Collectors, Bulletin* 25 (Spring 1972) pp. 2–12; idem, "Spanish Agujeta-Lock Firearms," in *Art, Arms and Armour*, ed. R. Held (Chiasso, 1979) pp. 298–313; E. Graells, *Les Armes de foc de Ripoll* (Ripoll, 1974); idem, "A Primer of Ripoll Gunlocks," *Arms and Armor Annual* I, ed. R. Held (Northfield, Ill., 1973) pp. 129–141; these publications list only nine specimens of Ripoll wheel-lock pistols; to these can be added the Chicago pistol and a pair of pistols at the Hermitage Museum (Tarassuk, nos. 67, 68).

29. Graells, *Les Armes de foc de Ripoll*, p. 164.

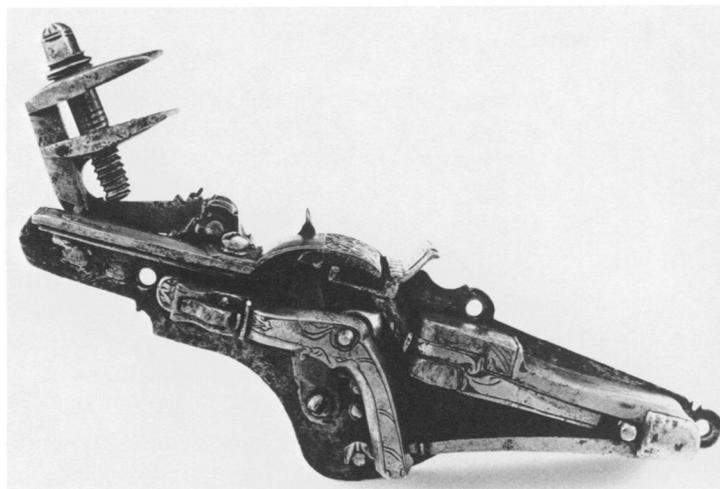
1-4. Wheel-lock pistol, *cabinet d'armes* no. 245, Spanish (Catalonia), early 17th century. The Art Institute of Chicago, George F. Harding Collection, acc. no. 1982.2304 (photos: 1, 3, 4. Art Institute; 2. Luis Medina)



2. Left side, no. 245



3. Lock, no. 245



4. Inside of lock, no. 245

inventory of the Zschille collection of which this pistol had once been part.³⁰ The graphic style of the numerals is, however, strongly reminiscent of that found on the firearms from the *cabinet d'armes* and prompted a perusal of the inventory of that collection. The inventory entry for no. 215 describes a pair of pistols and does not correspond at all to the Harding pistol. Closer study of this firearm revealed that the middle engraved digit had been somewhat effaced by excessive cleaning and that the actual number was 245.

In the 1673 inventory of the *cabinet d'armes* are the following entries:

244. Un autre pistolet à roüet, à l'espagnol, de 26 pouces, rond sur le devant, à huit pans sur le derrière, gravé en taille d'espargne en trois endroits; le roüet ouvragé de mesme sur un bois gravé et orné de quelques plaques de fer.
245. Un autre plus petit pistolet, de 20 pouces, pareil à peu près au précédent.³¹

The 1717 inventory provides basically the same data:

244. Un pistolet à roüet et à l'espagnol de vingt six pouces de long, monté sur un bois sculpté orné de plaques de fer ciselées; Le canon a huit pans sur la culasse ciselé en trois endroits, le roüet ouvragé de même.
245. Un autre pistolet pareil au précédent, excepté qu'il n'a que vingt pouces de long.³²

Entries in the 1775 inventory repeat this information in a more economic form, omitting reference to national origin:

244. Vn pistolet de Vingt six pouces de Long monté sur un bois sculpté, orné de plaques de fer, cizelées; Le Canon a huit pans sur la Culasse cizelé en trois endroits; Le Rouet ouvragé de même.
245. Vn autre Pistolet pareil au précédent, excepté qu'il n'a que vingt pouces de long.³³

In all inventories, the length of pistol no. 245 was recorded as "20 pouces." Since this is equivalent to 54.14 centimeters (21.32 inches), the difference in length between the Harding pistol and item no. 245 of the *cabinet d'armes* appears to be a mere 1.66 centimeters (0.68 inch). Considering the approximations made by the cataloguers, this difference seems almost negligible, and it can be safely assumed that the old inventories quite accurately describe the pistol shown

in Figures 1 through 4. Identification of this pistol is of some importance to the history of Spanish firearms. Its inclusion in the 1673 inventory and its highly probable origin in Louis XIII's *cabinet d'armes* confirm an early date for pistols of this type. The pistol therefore serves as a reliable basis for comparison and dating of similar firearms.

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK

The Metropolitan Museum's Department of Arms and Armor includes five marked and identified firearms from the *cabinet d'armes* and one more weapon which, though without the royal collection's number, is entitled to claim the same origin.

Number 60

A wheel-lock fowling piece (Figures 5–10) entered the Museum in 1904 as part of the acquired collection of Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, duke of Dino.³⁴

30. R. Forrer, *Die Waffensammlung des Herrn Stadtrath Rich. Zschille* (Berlin, [1894]) p. 28, no. 1047, pls. 215–217, 220. The illustrations show that the trigger guard with tang screw and the pan-cover closing spring and release button had already been lost by the time of publication. Apparently it is this pistol that is described in the following entry of the Zschille auction catalogue: "A Wheel-Lock Pistol, partly octagonal barrel—17 in. long—faceted steel stock and wheel lock, the whole barrel, lock and stock chased in relief with interlaced floral scrolls and arabesques—end of 17th century" (*Catalogue of the Collection of Armour and Arms and Hunting Equipment of Herr Richard Zschille, of Grossenhain*, sale cat., Christie's [London, Jan. 25, Feb. 1, 1897] p. 19, lot 87). The title page states that the collection described in the catalogue had been exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago (1893). In the catalogue published on that occasion there is indeed a direct reference to the pistol in question: "1047 Radschlosspistole (Wheel-lock pistol), mit reichem Eisenschnitt und Eisenschaeftung, um 1600" (*Catalog of the Collections in the Museum of the "Wasserburg" [German Village], Columbian-World-Exposition* [Chicago, 1893] p. 21). According to a MS inventory of the Harding collection by S. V. Grancsay, the pistol (inv. no. 524) was acquired from a London dealer, Hal Furnmage, sometime around 1930.

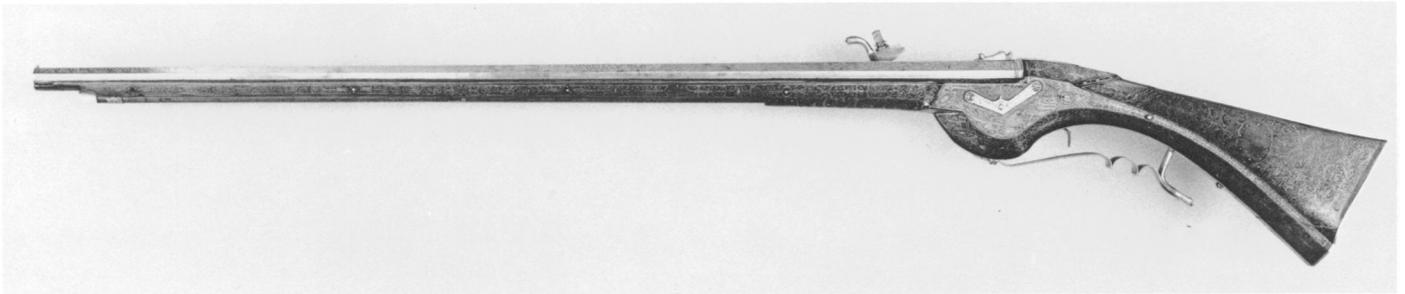
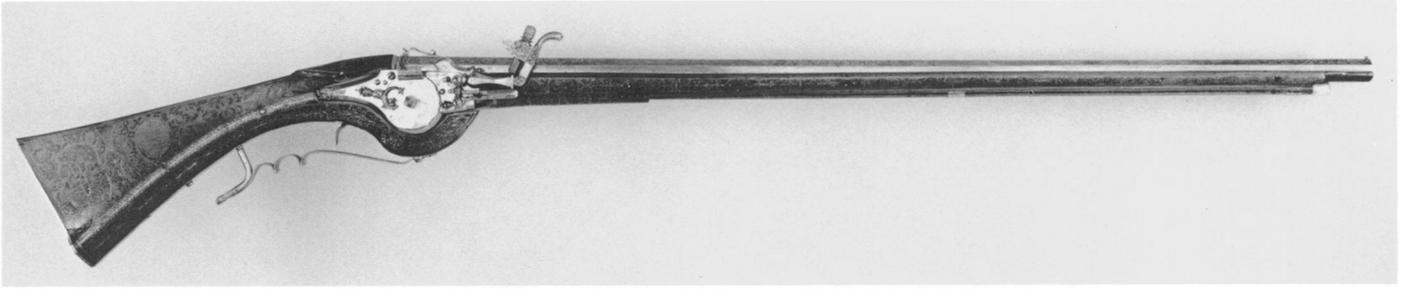
31. Guiffrey, p. 75.

32. Grancsay 1970, p. 198.

33. O¹ 3349, fol. 302; in O¹ 3350, fol. 156, these entries are the same.

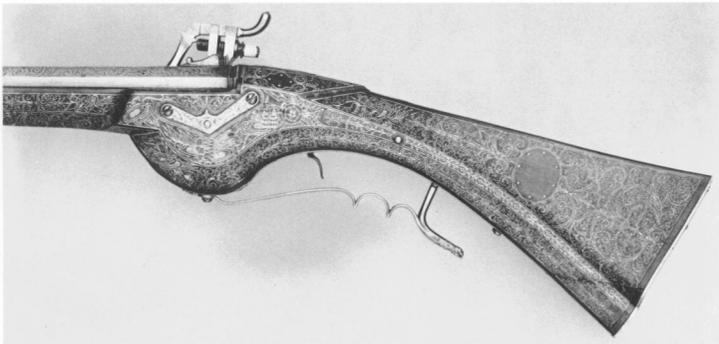
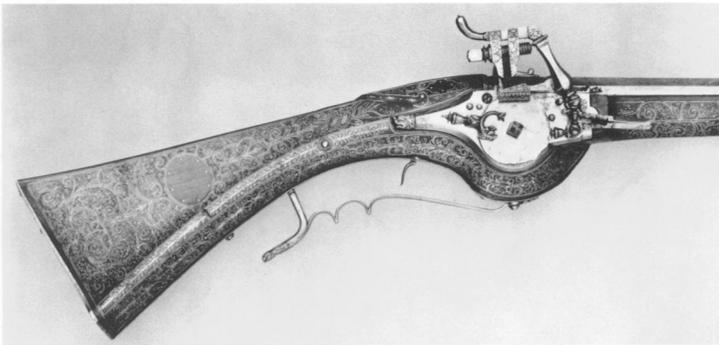
34. Baron C. A. de Cosson, *Le Cabinet d'armes de Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord* (Paris, 1901) p. 98, no. J.8.

5-10. Wheel-lock fowling piece, *cabinet d'armes* no. 60,
French, early 17th century. The Metropolitan Mu-
seum of Art, Rogers Fund, 04.3.164

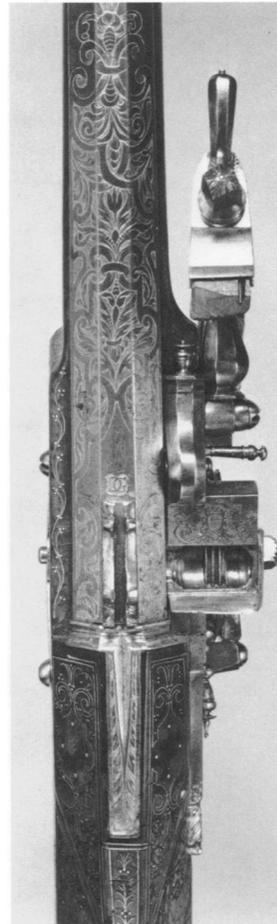


6. Left side, no. 60

7. Lock and butt, no. 60



8. Detail of left side, no. 60



9. Top view of breech section, no. 60

10. Butt plate, no. 60



The gun has an octagonal barrel, with front and rear sights. It is gilt and engraved at the muzzle, center, and breech with foliate scrolls and strapwork. The barrel was initially attached to the fore stock with four stock pins passing through the lugs on the underside (one of the lugs is now broken, another missing). A very compact lock of French construction (Figure 7) is partly chiseled and gilt, its rear end shaped into a grotesque dog's head, while the wheel guide is formed into a crowned dolphin whose tail terminates in a fleur-de-lis.

The stock, seemingly of pear wood, is inlaid all over with fine silver wire and brass studs to form trophies, cartouches, and foliate patterns. On the engraved and gilt iron butt plate (Figure 10) are the adorned coats of arms of France and Navarre, with a closed crown above and the initial *L* below, which are encircled by the collars of the French royal orders of Saint-Michel and Saint-Esprit. Below this are two crossed branches of palm and of laurel.

The overall length of the gun is 110.2 centimeters (43.47 inches). The length of the barrel is 79.4 centimeters (31.25 inches); its caliber is 11.9 millimeters (0.47 inch).

The barrel is stamped on the breech with the monogram *DG* in an intricately shaped shield.³⁵ On the lock plate, below the pan, is the lock maker's mark, a monogram *DM* (or *MD?*).³⁶ On the stock, in front of the trigger guard, is impressed the number 60. The gun has long been associated with Louis XIII, based on the presence of the royal insignia and letter *L* on the butt plate, but there has been no attempt to identify the gun in the French inventories.³⁷

In the 1673 inventory, no. 60 is described as follows:

60. Une arquebuse de 3 pieds 4 pouces de long, le canon a huit pans, doré en trois endroits et gravé, le rouët enrichy de quelques petits ornemens de relief doré; le porte rouë d'un Dauphin couronné, monté sur un bois rouge enrichy de plusieurs ornemens et fleurons d'argent; sur la plaque de la crosse sont les armes de France et de Navarre dorées.³⁸

A similar description is in the 1717 inventory:

60. Une arquebuse de trois pieds quatre pouces de long, montée sur un bois de poirier enrichy d'ornemens et fleurons d'argent et sur la plaque de la crosse sont des armes de France et de Navarre dorées; Le canon a huit pans gravé et doré en trois

endroits, et sur le rouët sont de petits ornemens dorés.³⁹

The 1775 inventory repeats this entry, the main change being the replacement of "et fleurons" by "en fleurons" in the description of the stock:

60. Vne Arquebuse de trois pieds quatre pouces de long, montée sur un Bois de Poirier, enrichi d'ornemens en fleurons d'argent, et sur laplaque de la crosse, sont Les armes de france et de Navarre, dorées; Le Canon a huit pans, gravé et doré en trois endroits; Et, sur Le Rouet, sont de petits ornemens dorés.⁴⁰

The overall length of "3 pieds 4 pouces" given in the inventories corresponds to 108.27 centimeters (42.62 inches), while the actual length of the gun is 110.2 centimeters (43.47 inches), that is, 1.93 centimeters (0.74 inch) longer. This difference of almost three quarters of a *pouce* can be explained by the methods and the lack of accuracy in measuring of the cataloguers some three hundred years ago. Apart from this minor discrepancy, however, the two inventories describe fairly accurately the fowling piece shown in Figures 5 through 10.

Since the origin of this gun is now established beyond doubt, it is tempting to guess when the firearm might have come into Louis XIII's collection—during his reign (1610–43) or even before, when he was still dauphin and already collected firearms. Gun no. 60 appears to be one of Louis's early acquisitions. Apart from the motif of the dolphin found in the decoration of the lock and trigger guard, there is another significant peculiarity in the rendering of the owner's initial on the butt plate (Figure 10). The king's initial was normally surmounted by the royal crown (see, for instance, Figure 38), which in this case was omitted by the decorator. If these details may be taken as indications of the owner's status, they would date the gun to the years immediately preceding Louis's acces-

35. Støckel, II, no. 2366; Heer/Støckel, p. 476, no. 7551, illustrates virtually the same mark, perhaps struck with another die.

36. Heer/Støckel p. 851, no. 7963.

37. De Cosson, *Le Cabinet d'armes de Talleyrand-Périgord*, p. 98, no. J.8.

38. Guiffrey, p. 50.

39. Grancsay 1970, p. 188.

40. O¹ 3349, fol. 275; in O¹ 3350, fol. 131, the wording is the same as in the 1717 inventory.

sion to the throne, when the dauphin was about eight or nine years old and could easily have manipulated a gun of such size.⁴¹

The *DG* mark stamped on the barrel of this fowling piece is also found on the barrel of a French wheel-lock pistol of about 1600, whose stock is inlaid with engraved mother-of-pearl in the manner in vogue at that time.⁴² Johan F. Støckel attributed this mark to a Metz gun maker active between about 1600 and 1630,⁴³ and it would be tempting to associate the *DM* mark on the lock of no. 60 with a Metz gun maker, D. Montaigu, were he known to have been active in the early seventeenth century. At present, there is evidence of his work only in the second quarter of the century.⁴⁴

Number 52

It seems likely that an even shorter wheel-lock gun at the Metropolitan Museum (Figures 11–16) was also made for Louis XIII as an adolescent, probably about 1615. This gun came to the Museum as a gift from William H. Riggs, who had, according to his notes, bought it from a Paris dealer, Monsieur Henri.

This gracefully shaped arquebus has a uniform octagonal barrel with sights, a fairly plain, only slightly chiseled wheel lock of French construction, and quite an unusual stock that is finely painted all over in gold with floral ornament on a black background. A steel bar for a sliding ring is attached on the left side of the stock so that the weapon could be carried with a shoulder sling when transported on horseback. The trigger guard and butt plate are of steel. On the barrel breech is incised *No. 52*, which has been recorded in the departmental files along with a statement that the gun had belonged to Louis XIII.⁴⁵ No maker's mark was found on this gun.

The entry in the 1673 inventory reads:

52. Une carabine de costé, de 2 pieds 11 pouces, le canon à 8 pans, le pam de dessus doré tout de long, le roüet tout uni, montée sur un bois peint et doré de plusieurs ornemens de fleurs d'or.⁴⁶

A similar record is in the 1717 inventory:

52. Une carabine pour porter au côté, longue de deux pieds onze pouces, monté sur un bois peint d'ornemens et fleurs d'or; Le canon a huit pans, dont celui du Milieu est doré, le roüet uni.⁴⁷

The 1775 inventory repeats, word for word, the earlier description:

52. Vne Carabine pour porter au coté, Longue de deux pieds onze pouces, montée sur un Bois peint d'ornemens et fleurs d'or; Le Canon a huit pans dont celui du milieu est doré; Le Rouet uni.⁴⁸

At present, gilding on the barrel is not visible and no ring for the sling is preserved. The only serious alteration, however, occurred in the lock, whose mainspring was at some time replaced by a shorter and stiffer spring with a new stock pin installed for it; the original pin (whose ends can be seen in the stock) had to be cut out in the center to make space for the rear of the new spring.

The overall length of the carbine is 97.4 centimeters (38.37 inches). The length of the barrel is 62 centimeters (24.4 inches); its caliber is 12.7 millimeters (0.5 inch). In this case as well there is a difference between the actual length of the gun and the measurement recorded in the inventories. The latter converts to 94.74 centimeters (37.28 inches); this is 2.66 centimeters, or about 1 *pouce*, less than the length correctly measured now. The carbine no. 52 is 12.8 centimeters (5.1 inches) shorter than the fowling piece no. 60, yet weighs 57 grams (about 2 ounces) more (the two weigh 2,246 grams [4.94 pounds] and 2,189 grams [4.82 pounds] respectively) because of a more massive barrel and slightly larger butt. The weights and measurements of both pieces, as well as the early seventeenth-century forms and style of decoration, favor the suggestion that these guns were intended for the king as a boy.

41. A nine-year-old boy is about 127 cm. (50 in.) tall and could conveniently handle a gun about 110 cm. (43 in.) long.

42. Gusler and Lavin, pp. 8, 9.

43. A very similar mark was separately illustrated by Støckel (no. 2176) and also attributed to a Metz master ca. 1600. In fact, both Støckel 2366 and 2176 seem to be the same mark, but 2176 was poorly struck, leaving the left side of the letter *D* out of impression. Heer/Støckel, p. 476, no. 7551, illustrates the same mark, describing it as being from Metz(?) ca. 1620.

44. Lenk/Hayward, pp. 53 passim, pl. 28:3; A. Hoff, *Feuerwaffen* (Brunswick, 1969) I, p. 260, II, p. 180.

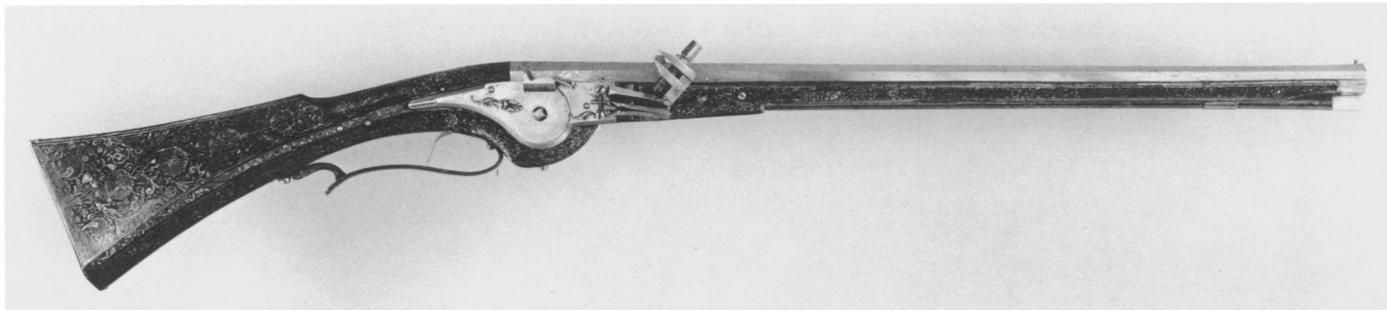
45. Grancsay 1970, however, does not include this piece.

46. Guiffrey, p. 48.

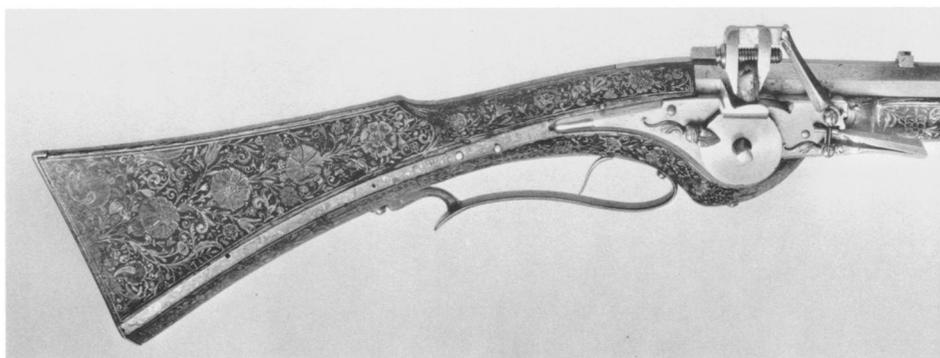
47. Grancsay 1970, p. 188.

48. O¹ 3349, fol. 274; in O¹ 3350, fol. 130, the entry is exactly the same.

11-16. Wheel-lock fowling piece, *cabinet d'armes* no. 52,
French, ca. 1615. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913, 14.25.1380



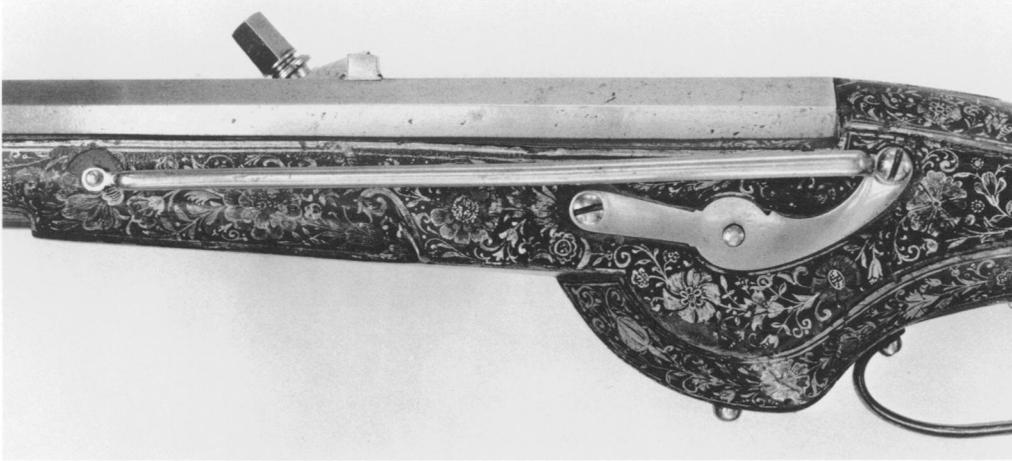
12. Left side, no. 52



13. Lock and butt, no. 52



14. Detail of left side, no. 52



15. Detail of left side, no. 52, showing steel bar for a sliding swivel ring



16. Butt plate, no. 52

Number 99

One of the more unusual firearms from the *cabinet d'armes* is a wheel-lock pistol that is convertible to a fowling piece by means of an extension barrel and a shoulder butt (Figures 17–21). This firearm came to the Museum in 1913 as part of a gift from William H. Riggs; it is recorded as being formerly in the Panciatichi Ximenes collection in Florence, acquired by Mr. Riggs. The number 99 is incised in front of the trigger guard. The firearm is described in the 1673 inventory as:

99. Un autre pistolet qui s'allonge par le canon, à huit pans, gravé sur la culasse et par le bout et sur le bassinet d'une rose; la platine gravée, ayant pour porte rouë un dragon; long en tout de 4 pieds.⁴⁹

The 1717 inventory reads:

99. Un pistolet en fusil qui s'allonge par le canon a huit pans gravé sur le bout et la culasse d'une rose, le bassinet et la platine aussi gravés: monté sur un bois de poirier, long en tout de trois pieds cinq pouces.⁵⁰

The entry in the 1775 inventory seems to have

been compiled from the previous document (save the grammatically wrong “s” in “montés”):

99. Vn pistolet en fusil qui s'allonge par le Canon a huit pans; Gravé sur le bout et la Culasse, d'une rose, Le Bassinet et la platine aussi gravés, montés sur un Bois de poirier; Long, en tout, de trois pieds et cinq pouces.⁵¹

The discrepancies between the earliest and the later descriptions are obvious. In 1673, the firearm was recorded as fitted with a wheel lock (indicated by a “porte rouë,” wheel guide) and being 4 *pieds*, or 129.92 centimeters (51.16 inches), long. At the next cataloguing, it became a pistol “en fusil,” with an overall length of 3 *pieds* 5 *pouces*, or 110.97 centimeters (43.7 inches), that is, 7 *pouces* (18.95 centimeters) shorter. Neither document mentions a stock extension, a part that is noted or implied in entries for

49. Guiffrey, p. 54.

50. Grancsay 1970, p. 190.

51. O¹ 3349, fol. 281; in O¹ 3350, fols. 136–136v, the entry is the same, but “monté” is spelled correctly.

17-21. Wheel-lock pistol with stock and barrel extensions, *cabinet d'armes* no. 99, French, ca. 1610-20. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913, 14.25.1381



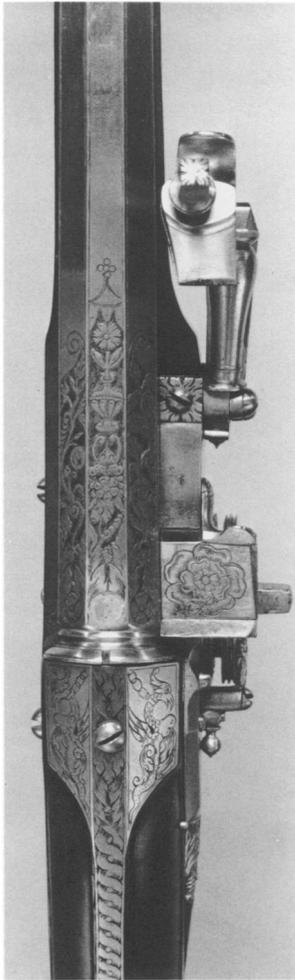
18. No. 99 with extension barrel and butt detached

19. Lock, no. 99



20. Side plate, no. 99





21. Top view of breech section, no. 99

several other items (1673, nos. 96–98, 101; 1717, nos. 92, 95–98, 101). Yet there is little doubt that the inventory entries for no. 99 do refer to the piece in the Metropolitan Museum bearing this number. This firearm does indeed have an octagonal barrel (its extension is also octagonal) with an engraved rosette and foliage on the breech and at the muzzle. The wheel lock, which is of French construction, is chiseled and engraved with foliage and monsters' heads (on the cock jaws and at the rear end of the plate), a rose (on the pan cover), and four quatrefoils alternating with acanthus leaves (on the wheel). The

wheel guide is sculptured as a dragonlike creature, a detail noted in 1673 (Figure 19).

The mounts are of pierced and engraved steel, the decoration on the tang mount representing two symmetrically posed griffins. On the side plate (Figure 20) are engraved three converging, grotesque heads representing a laughing monster, a devil, and a grimacing man wearing the pontifical tiara. This composition, which seems to have been inspired by, or copied from, satirical anti-Catholic prints popular among the Protestants, probably indicates that the gun makers responsible for this firearm, or at least for its decoration, were Huguenots (or perhaps converts formally professing Catholicism). The curious fact that a gun bearing an antipapal caricature was acquired and kept by the Catholic king *très-chrétien* shows Louis XIII as a passionate arms collector with enough tolerance and sense of humor for his interest in this unusual piece to prevail over a detail certainly objectionable from an orthodox point of view. This satirical image may bear some connection to an enigmatic detail observed on the pistol barrel. On the top of the breech, near the molding, a circular recess is cut out, in all probability intended for a metal insert with a stamped armorer's mark. It is now impossible to know whether the mark was actually inserted into the recess. Even if it were, the mark was subsequently removed, thus eliminating the master's identification. The recess itself was filled at some time with lead rubbed flush with the steel surface (Figure 21). During a recent examination lead was extracted, but this revealed only the empty depression.

The barrel extension has a bead foresight and can be joined to the pistol barrel by means of a so-called bayonet lock. The shoulder butt, whose shape closely resembles the butt of a French petronel of about 1600,⁵² is clasped onto the pistol grip with two steel brackets and a spring catch. The length of the ramrod is sufficient only for the loading of the pistol barrel.

A rather archaic feature of the lock (Figure 19) is a convex pan cover that moves around the wheel and is provided with a stabilizing arm sliding on the lock plate. This arrangement, sometimes occurring on

52. H. L. Blackmore, *Guns and Rifles of the World* (London, 1965) no. 95.

French wheel locks, is typical of Catalonian wheel locks (including the lock shown in Figure 3). Possibly it shows the influence of some early German wheel locks with pivoted convex pan covers.

This firearm belonged to a special group of rather uncommon pieces that probably caused a number of problems for the cataloguers of the *cabinet d'armes*, for some detachable extension parts had been misplaced or lost by the 1670s (nos. 92, 95).⁵³ From a comparison of the inventories, it can also be assumed that some extension barrels were wrongly associated within this group of firearms. Such mix-ups may account for those inventory discrepancies that are too significant to be the result of an imprecise measurement. For instance, gun no. 93 with an extension barrel was recorded in the 1673 inventory as 3 *pieds* 8 *pouces*, or 119.1 centimeters (46.88 inches), long, but in the 1717 inventory it became 5 *pieds* 3 *pouces*, or 170.54 centimeters (67.14 inches), long. Since in both cases the length of the gun itself was given as 1 *pied* 10 *pouces*—that is, 59.55 centimeters (23.44 inches)—this striking difference obviously related to the extension barrel only. Gun no. 93, in the collection of Clay P. Bedford,⁵⁴ is actually about 61 centimeters (24 inches) long without the extension barrel and 171.5 centimeters (67.5 inches) long when assembled, which indicates that by 1673 it had a different, and much shorter, barrel extension, probably intended for another gun of similar construction. Such mistakes could well have occurred when a group of assorted objects prepared for cataloguing was spread over a working space and handled by attendants giving information orally to the clerks in charge of the paper work.

While the 1673 entry no. 93 was corrected in the 1717 catalogue, just the opposite occurred with the entry no. 99. In the 1717 document, copied in 1775, two errors appeared in the description of no. 99, probably caused by some mix-up of the objects laid out for cataloguing. Its ignition mechanism was classified as a kind of flintlock (“fusil”) and the overall length of the gun was reduced by 19 centimeters (7.5 inches). The length of 4 *pieds* recorded in the 1673 inventory is almost exactly the modern measurement of 130.9 centimeters (51.5 inches). This comprises the pistol at 56.8 centimeters (22.36 inches), the extension barrel at 57 centimeters (22.44 inches), and the gun butt at 24 centimeters (9.44 inches). The caliber is 15 millimeters (0.58 inch).

Number 217

One of the recently discovered pieces from the *cabinet d'armes* is a rifled wheel-lock pistol (Figures 22–24) whose mate (Figure 25), in the Tower of London,⁵⁵ has already been identified as coming from the *cabinet d'armes*.⁵⁶ The pistol entered the collection of the Metropolitan Museum in 1913 as part of a gift from William H. Riggs, who had purchased it from Frédéric Spitzer in Paris. On the stock of the pistol, in front of the trigger guard, are faint traces of the incised number 217.

The entry for this number in the 1673 inventory reads:

217. Une paire de pistolets de François premier, de 26 pouces $\frac{1}{2}$, le canon rond sur le devant qui est enrichy d'un ornement de branches et fueüilles d'argent de rapport, tortillé à l'entour, à huit pans sur le derrière, aussy enrichy d'un autre ornement et de plusieurs F couronnées; la platine de mesme.⁵⁷

The 1717 entry adds some important details, mentioning decoration of the stock and specifying the type of lock:

217. Une paire de pistolets de François premier, long de vingt six pouces et demi, monté sur un bois de noyer avec ornements d'argent: Les canons a huit pans sur la culasse, enrichie comme les platines de plusiers F couronnées Le bout rond, aussy enrichy de branches et feüilles d'argent, les platines a roüet uny.⁵⁸

The 1775 inventory repeats this description almost literally (in the phrase “comme les platines” the noun is changed to the singular):

53. Guiffrey, p. 54: “le bout du canon qui s'allonge ne se trouve point.”

54. Gusler and Lavin, pp. 10–13.

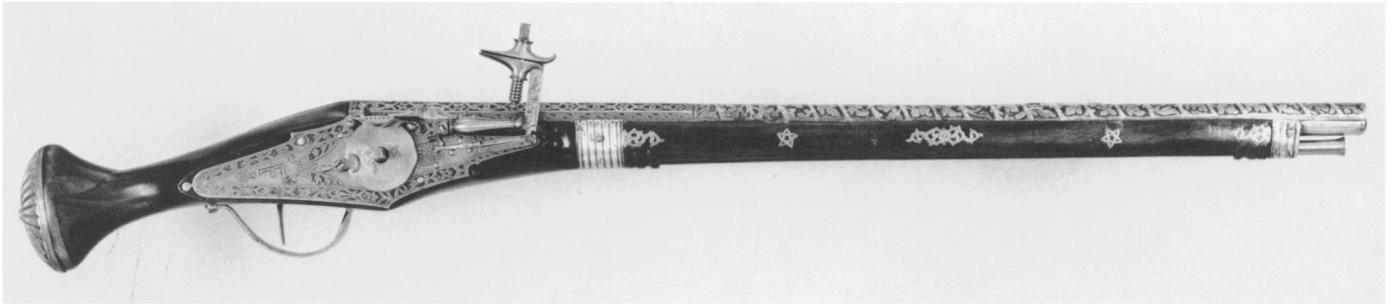
55. Charles J. Foulkes, *Inventory and Survey of the Armouries of the Tower of London* (London, 1916) II, pp. 408, 409, no. 731 (here called “Spanish, Middle of XVIIth Century”). Pistol XII-731, at present catalogued as Italian, ca. 1635, has the same barrel length and caliber as its mate at the Metropolitan Museum and is also marked no. 217 of the French royal collection.

56. Lenk/Hayward, pp. 175, 176, no. 217.

57. Guiffrey, p. 71. In Lenk/Hayward, pp. 167, 175, this description is mistakenly said to appear in the “1729 inventory.”

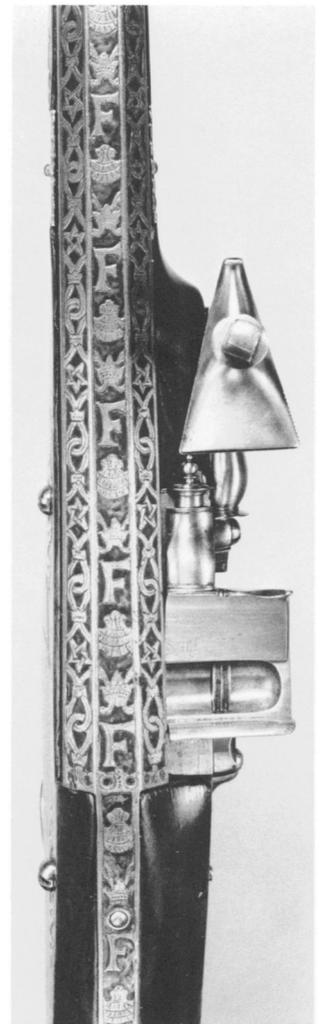
58. Grancsay 1970, p. 196.

22–24. Wheel-lock pistol, one of a pair (see Figure 25), *cabinet d'armes* no. 217, Northern Italian (probably Brescia), ca. 1625–30. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913, 14.25.1426

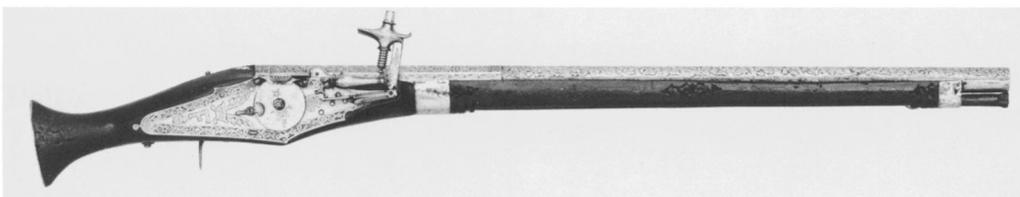


23. Lock, no. 217 (New York)

24. Top view of barrel, no. 217 (New York)



25. Wheel-lock pistol, one of a pair (see Figure 22), *cabinet d'armes* no. 217, Northern Italian (probably Brescia), ca. 1625–30. (The trigger guard and stock inlays are missing.) London, The Royal Armouries, H.M. Tower of London, XII-731 (photo: Ministry of Public Building and Works, crown copyright reserved)



217. Vne paire de Pistolets de François 1^{er}. Longs de Vingt six pouces et demi, montés sur un Bois de Noyer avec ornements d'argent, Les Canons a huit pans sur la Culasse, enrichie, comme la platine, de plusieurs f. couronnées, Le bout rond aussi enrichi de branches et feuilles d'argent, Les platines a rouets unis.⁵⁹

The length $26\frac{1}{2}$ *pouces* is 71.73 centimeters (28.24 inches). The pistol in the Metropolitan Museum measures 73.9 centimeters (29.09 inches), almost a *pouce* more than recorded in all three documents. Its barrel is 55.7 centimeters (21.92 inches) long, with seven-groove rifling and a caliber of 12 millimeters (0.47 inch).

The pistol bears only one armorer's mark. Inside the lock plate, half covered by the mainspring bridle, is a deeply stamped shield with cusped chief and base enclosing the initials *B.P.* under a double-headed eagle displayed with wings inverted. Marks of this type, within shields of similar shape, are recorded on numerous Italian firearms of between 1600 and 1650,⁶⁰ and the form of the pistol itself corresponds to other military-type Italian *terzaruoli* and pistols of this period.⁶¹ The stock mounts and inlays also follow contemporary Italian patterns. The round section of the two-stage barrel is chiseled in low relief with spiraling branches of oak(?). Two side facets of the octagonal rear section display interlinked loops and pentagrams, while the upper facet and the barrel tang show the letter *F*, a cockleshell, and a coronet encircling two palm branches (Figure 23). The designs are enhanced by *pointillé* touches and fine cross-hatching. The same emblems are engraved on the lock; loops with stars are traced on the sear lever inside the lock, and a coronet with branches appears on the bridle. The fore stock is reinforced with two gadrooned silver bands and inlaid with sheet silver chiseled with foliage and stars. The iron trigger guard is a replacement (an old attachment hole for the original guard is filled with a wooden plug). The grip was at some time broken and quite awkwardly repaired, and it seems likely that the radially grooved iron pommel cap is a later addition. The Tower pistol has no such cap and thus preserves the shape much more typical of Italian pistols of this form.

The initial *F* on the pistols probably significantly influenced the seventeenth-century cataloguers in their attribution of ownership to Francis I of France (1515–47), despite stylistic and constructional pecu-

liarities of these weapons incompatible—as is now known—with firearms of the first half of the sixteenth century.

During the nineteenth century the initial *F* and some emblems, as they appear on the pistols, were discovered in the decoration of a suit of armor and a reinforcing breastplate for it (Figure 26). As of 1875 the ownership of this suit had been attributed to Don Felipe de Guzmán, the marquis of Leganés (ca. 1590–1655).⁶² This attribution was generally accepted by modern scholars⁶³ and was extended to another suit of armor with the same initial and emblems, as well as to the pistol no. 217 in the Tower of London.⁶⁴

Recently, José-A. Godoy, Curator in the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire in Geneva, has discovered the initial *F*, the pentagram, and the coronet with palm branches depicted as embroidered decoration on the officer's sash and costume in two 1634 paintings by Vicente Carducho in the Museo del Prado, Madrid. The paintings show the duke of Feria, commander of the Spanish forces in Germany between 1632 and 1634, at the victorious relief of two besieged towns, Konstanz and Rheinfeld. The same initial and emblems are embroidered on the actual seventeenth-

59. O¹ 3349, fol. 298v; the entry in O¹ 3350, fols. 152–152v, is the same as in the 1717 inventory.

60. A. Gaibi, *Armi da fuoco italiane* (Busto Arsizio, 1978) pp. 46–48, nos. 19, 28, 29, 40, 55, 58.

61. L. G. Boccia, F. Rossi, and M. Morin, *Armi e armature lombarde* (Milan, 1980) figs. 293, 294, 297; Gaibi, *Armi da fuoco*, figs. 74, 80–85, 100–107.

62. C. Buttin, "L'Armure du marquis de Leganés," *Armes anciennes* 8 (1957) pp. 3–16, pls. 1–3. The subject of this study is a suit of armor in the Armeria Reale, Turin (B 44), and reinforcing plate for this suit in the Metropolitan Museum (MMA acc. no. 14.25.867).

63. B. Thomas and O. Gamber, "L'arte milanese dell'armatura," *Storia di Milano* II (Milan, 1958) pp. 826, 827; L. G. Boccia and E. T. Coelho, *L'arte dell'armatura in Italia* (Milan, 1967) p. 525, pls. 430–436, 438, 439; F. Mazzini, ed., *L'Armeria Reale di Torino* (Busto Arsizio, 1982) p. 339, pls. 49, 49a.

64. The second suit of armor wrongly attributed to the marquis of Leganés is in the Museo del Ejército Español, Madrid (Armeria Duques de Medinaceli, maniqui no. 8). This attribution was proposed by Thomas and Gamber in "L'arte milanese dell'armatura," p. 826, and reaffirmed in Mazzini, ed., *L'Armeria Reale di Torino*, p. 339, which also associated it with the marquis of Leganés pistol no. 217 in the Tower of London (this attribution would automatically apply to its mate in the Metropolitan Museum).

century sash preserved in the Museo del Ejército Español, Madrid.⁶⁵

With the identification of the true owner of the initial *F* and emblems that decorate the suit of armor, the breastplate, and the pair of pistols no. 217, a reliable and important provenance can be given to all these objects. Don Gómez Suárez de Figueroa y Córdoba, duke of Feria (1587–1634), was a prominent statesman and military commander. In 1610, Philip III of Spain sent him to Paris to convey condolences upon the assassination of Henry IV of France. This occasion served to initiate a rapprochement between the two countries, a rapprochement that was strengthened by successful negotiations between the duke of Feria and Queen Regent Marie de' Medici for the marriage of young King Louis XIII to Anne of Austria, daughter of Philip III. It was agreed, moreover, that Philip III's son and heir, Philip, prince of the Asturias, would marry Princess Elisabeth of France, sister of Louis XIII.

In 1618–25 and 1631–33 the duke of Feria was governor of the duchy of Milan, a Spanish possession since 1540. While expanding Spanish influence in Northern Italy, the duke halted and partly repulsed a French invasion, commanding allied armies of Spain and several Italian states. As Spanish governor, he was included in a high-ranking delegation that in 1628 engaged in peace negotiations with the French. These talks, however, failed to prevent the War of the Mantuan Succession (1628–31), in which the duke played a leading role. In 1633, after the end of this conflict, he received a new appointment, this time as commander of Spanish forces in Germany, to assist Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand III in his

65. Written communication from José-A. Godoy, Mar. 17, 1986 (files of the Department of Arms and Armor, MMA). The new attribution, important in its own right, also disposes of a problem inherent in the earlier: why had the marquis of Leganés used the initial of his Christian name and not that of his family or of his title? The suit of armor under discussion in the Museo del Ejército was traditionally attributed by that museum to the duke of Feria, but this theory was either ignored or rejected without much argument (Thomas and Gamber, "L'arte milanese dell'armatura," p. 826). Biographical data about Don Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, duke of Feria, can be found in: F. F. de Béthencourt, *Historia genealógica y heráldica de la monarquía española* VI (Madrid, 1905) pp. 120, 185, 212; *Enciclopedia universal ilustrada* LVII (1927) p. 1427; *Enciclopedia italiana* XXXII (1936) p. 906 (includes bibliography); and *Storia di Milano* X (Milan, 1957) pp. 76ff., 331, XI (Milan, 1958) pp. 39–54.

struggle against German princes allied with Sweden. After several successful actions (two of which are commemorated in the Prado paintings), the duke of Feria fell ill and died in Munich.

Stylistically, the armor and the pair of pistols no. 217, decorated with the duke's badges, fit into the period when the duke occupied the highest political and military position in Milan. That city was the leading center for the production of armor in Italy, located some sixty miles from Brescia, an industrial area famous primarily for the manufacture of hand firearms. While the origin of the armor and pistols in Milan and Brescia respectively can be inferred on stylistic grounds, it is more difficult to establish how pistols belonging to the Spanish commander came to



26. Reinforcing breastplate for a suit of armor of Don Gómez Suárez de Figueroa y Córdoba, duke of Feria, Northern Italian (probably Milan), ca. 1625–30. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913, 14.25.867

be in the *cabinet d'armes* (prior to the upheaval of the late eighteenth century, the *cabinet* had both pistols).

We can only hazard a guess. The duke of Fera must have learned a great deal about the personality of the nine-year-old Louis XIII when he came to Paris in 1610 to negotiate Louis's marriage to Anne of Austria. The well-known interest of "Louis l'Arquebusier" in arms collecting might have impressed the duke, who, as governor of Milan, had various contacts with French officials. The pistols might have been offered by the duke as a gift to the king—and as a calculated friendly gesture—during a Spanish–French diplomatic meeting such as the ill-fated 1628 conference. By 1673, when the *cabinet* was first catalogued, the origin of the pistols had certainly been forgotten and a fantastic attribution to Francis I was made up on the basis of the initial *F*.

Number 288

Of all the objects in the Metropolitan Museum's collection that have so far been identified as having been part of the *cabinet d'armes*, one piece bears no inventory number of the royal collection. It is a short sword combined with revolver (Figures 27–35). Acquired in 1904 as part of the duke of Dino collection,⁶⁶ this weapon had previously been in the collection of Baron Percy, which was augmented by Durand,⁶⁷ and later in the collection of the duke of Istria.⁶⁸

The blade of this weapon is double-edged, with a flat back in the forte accommodating the barrel. The six-chamber hand-turned cylinder is mounted on the blade tang. Each chamber is aligned with the breech by means of a spring catch screwed to the barrel and engaging the respective notch in the cylinder (Fig-

ures 31, 35). In the rear wall of each chamber is a touchhole that lines up with the ignition channel in the massive disc behind the cylinder every time the latter is aligned with the barrel. The purpose of this disc, fixed on the square section of the tang, is to cover five other touchholes of the cylinder, thus preventing the powder charges from exposure. On the tang is also mounted a hollow iron stock with the lock recesses and a priming channel. The whole assembly is held by a heavy crown-shaped pommel and tightened by a button screwed to the threaded tip of the tang.

The lock of the revolver is a Spanish *agujeta* (Figures 32–34). Since the construction of this type of lock has recently been the subject of a detailed study,⁶⁹ only a summary description of this particular specimen need be given here. The lock had probably been initially intended for an ordinary firearm. This is borne out by two details. First, there is a plugged hole in the lock plate for the central side screw; the lock plate is provided with another threaded hole drilled closer to the upper edge of the plate to bypass the blade tang. Second, the forward end of the plate, with an eyelet for a side screw, was cut off straight to adjust the lock to the cylinder; a new threaded hole for the front side screw was made in the plate.

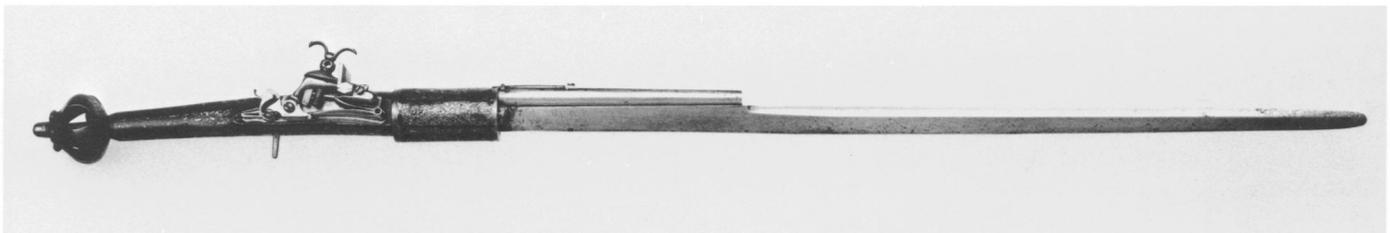
66. De Cosson, *Le Cabinet d'armes de Talleyrand-Périgord*, p. 100, no. K.6 ("Pistolet-revolver, à chenapan et à lame d'épée courte, italien, première moitié du XVII^e siècle").

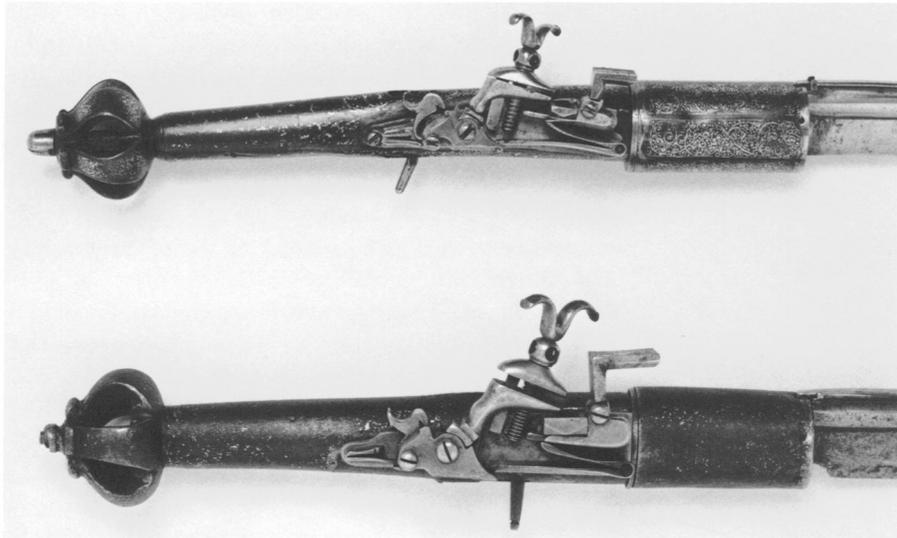
67. *Catalogue des armures et armes diverses composant la collection formée par feu M. le baron Percy, et complétée par M. D[urand]*, sale cat., Salle Lebrun, Jan. 18–23, 1830 (Paris, 1829) p. 19, lot 73.

68. *Catalogue des objets composant le cabinet d'armes de M. le duc d'Istrie*, sale cat., Jan. 23–25, 1839 (Paris, 1838) p. 21, lot 158 (said to have come from "Musée de Vienne, depuis collection Durand").

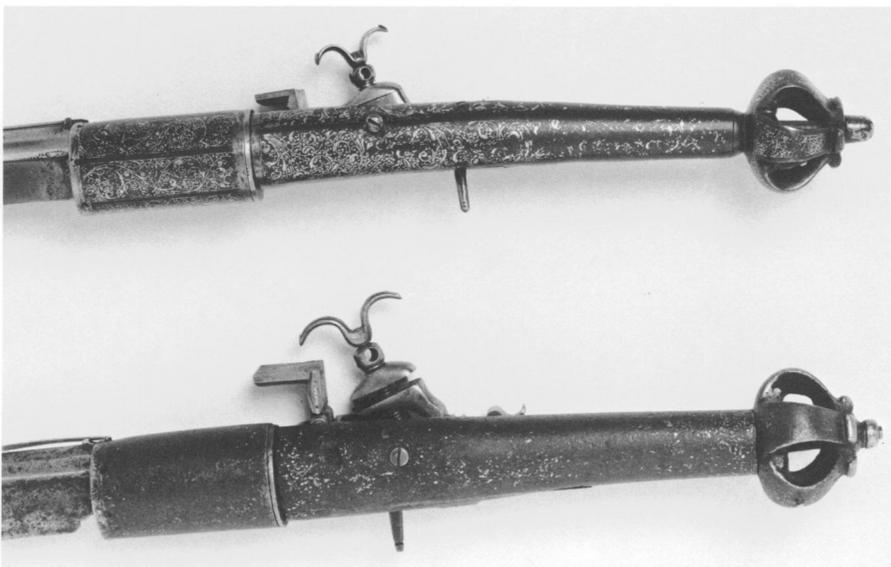
69. Lavin, "Spanish Agujeta-Lock Firearms," pp. 298ff.

27. Combination sword-revolver, *cabinet d'armes* no. 288, Spanish, second quarter of 17th century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 04.3.122

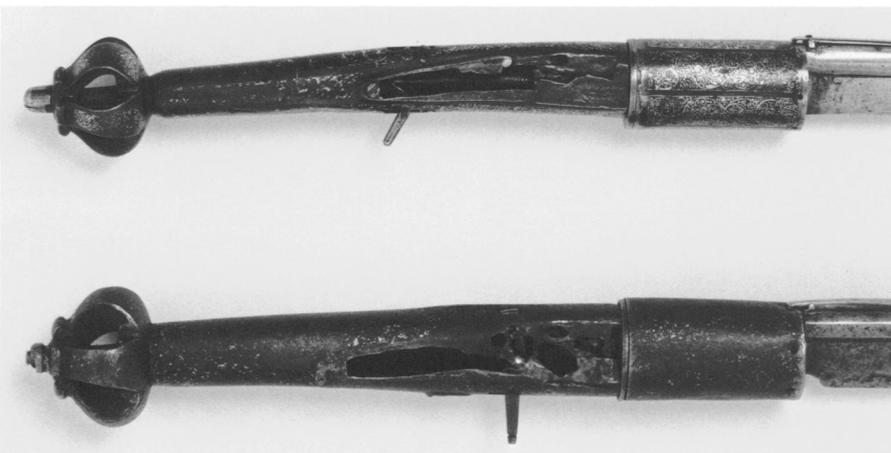




28. Details of no. 288 (above) and a similar sword-revolver (below), ex W. Keith Neal Collection



29. Details of left side, no. 288 (above) and ex W. Keith Neal Collection (below)



30. Details with locks removed, no. 288 (above) and ex W. Keith Neal Collection (below)



31. Cylinder, no. 288

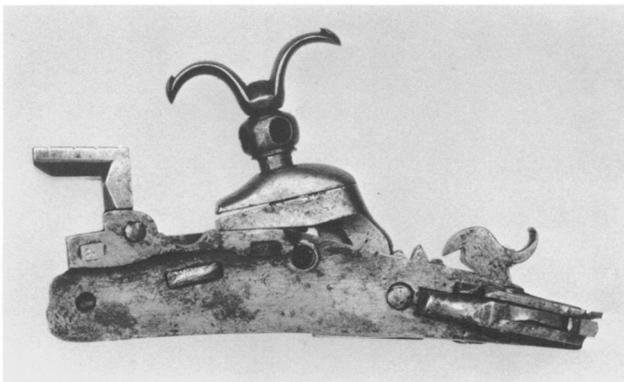
The L-shaped battery has an integral grooved face thrice crossed horizontally by shallow lines to enhance friction. The pan-cover feather spring has a rectangular lug fitting a slot in the lock plate. The mainspring is attached in the same way and is secured inside the plate by a pin hammered into a transversal hole in the lug. The mainspring presses on the toe of the cock, whose heel has a deep notch. This notch is for a back catch that secures the half-cock position. The back-catch spring, attached like the other springs, normally holds the catch removed



32. Lock, no. 288

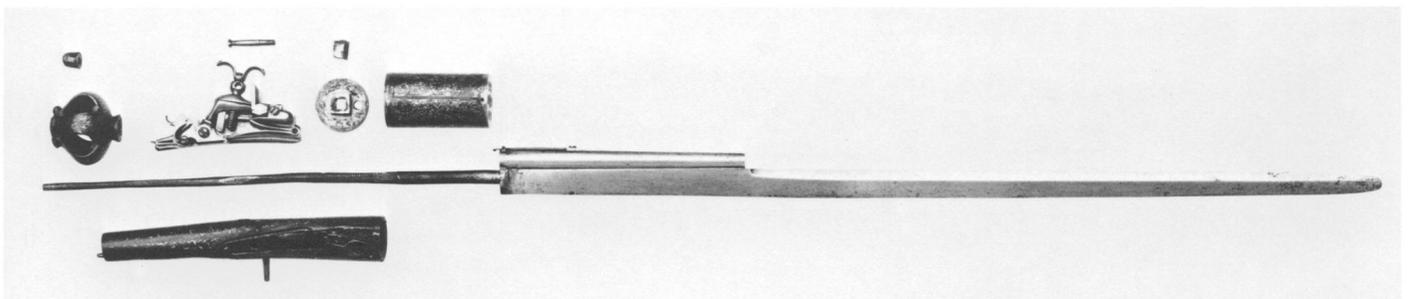


34. Disassembled lock, no. 288



33. Inside of lock, no. 288

35. No. 288 disassembled



from the cock heel; to operate the device, the catch must be pushed by the thumb at the moment the cock is pulled backward. A massive cock bridle is held in place by screwed-in pivots for the cock and the back catch. The bridle serves also as a buffer for the cock in its extreme positions, providing the concave base of the cock neck with a corresponding convex bearing limited by two deep notches. The top edge of the plate also stops the fall of the cock by meeting its lower jaw. The jaw screw has a spherical head pierced at right angles for a turning rod to tighten a piece of stone between the jaws. A wing-shaped finger grip is loosely riveted to the top of the jaw screw to help cocking.

The two-piece sear for the full-cock position is assembled in a frame and is constructed like the wheel-lock sear (its small V-spring acting on the sear lever and on the trigger lever is now missing). The sear works through the lock plate to engage the cock heel.

The cylinder and the stock are damascened in gold with fine arabesques against a background that is now russet colored. The decoration is well preserved on the cylinder (Figure 31) but is quite worn on the stock, particularly on the grip.

The overall length of the weapon is 81.6 centimeters (32.12 inches); the length of the blade is 53.5 centimeters (21.06 inches), of the revolver 41.2 centimeters (16.25 inches), of the barrel 14.9 centimeters (5.87 inches). The caliber is 6.35 millimeters (0.25 inch).

Stephen V. Grancsay recognized this weapon as no. 288 of the *cabinet d'armes*,⁷⁰ but did not make comparisons, as he might have done, between the object and entries in the French inventories.

In the 1673 catalogue, no. 288 reads:

288. Une petite espée à l'espagnolle sur laquelle il y a un petit canon monté sur un tambour damasquiné d'or et une batterie de pistolet qui tire cinq coups, longue de 2 pieds 7 pouces, avec son fourreau.⁷¹

The 1717 inventory reads as follows:

288. Une petite Epée a l'Espagnolle, de deux pieds sept pouces de long, sur laquelle il y a un canon, monté sur un tambour damasquiné d'or, et une batterie de pistolet qui tire cinq coups.⁷²

The 1775 inventory repeats this description (only dropping the "et" near the end):

288. Vne petite Epée a l'Espagnole de 2.p.^{ds} 7.p.^{ces} de Long; Sur laquelle il y a un Canon monté sur un Tambour damasquiné d'or, une batterie de Pistolet qui tire cinq coups.⁷³

The old French measurement converts to 83.91 centimeters (33 inches), a difference of only 2.31 centimeters (0.9 inch) from the length of the weapon as recorded now. This discrepancy is perfectly admissible, especially since, in the earliest description, the weapon seems to have been measured with its scabbard. The latter is not mentioned in later inventories, which may indicate that it had already been lost by this time (the length recorded in the 1673 document might simply have been copied in the inventories drawn up in 1717 and 1775).

Thus, national origin, construction, decoration, and measurement indicated in the inventories fully support Grancsay's identification of this object. However, one detail in the inventory entries needs an explanation. The revolver was said to be able to fire five shots, while the weapon under scrutiny is designed for six shots. In all probability this difference can be explained simply as a mistake made in the first description, a mistake that was not corrected by the 1717 and 1775 inspections because the cataloguers had the earlier description before them. Looking at this rather odd object, a cataloguer could see, at any one time, when the cylinder was locked in a position behind the breech, only five apertures of the chambers, the sixth being always concealed and therefore easily overlooked by an uninformed person.

Besides this piece there appears to be a second combination weapon of virtually identical technical design, workmanship, and decoration (Figures 28–30, lower). It was formerly in the collection of W. Keith Neal and was more recently on the art market in New York. A comparison of the two pieces shows that they were certainly produced in the same Spanish workshop in the second quarter of the seventeenth century.

70. Grancsay 1970, p. 152 (brief description and illustration).

71. Guiffrey, p. 79.

72. Grancsay 1970, p. 200.

73. O¹ 3349, fol. 307; in O¹ 3350, fol. 161, the description is exactly the same.

Number 134

Another gun from the *cabinet d'armes*, indeed one of the world's most famous firearms, was acquired by the Metropolitan Museum in 1972 at the sale of the William G. Renwick collection.⁷⁴ This flintlock fowling piece (Figures 36–40) had been in the Renwick collection since the 1920s and first became available for research in 1927 when on loan at the Metropolitan Museum.⁷⁵ Since that time the gun has been the subject of many studies and much scholarly speculation, including one allegation that the piece came to the Renwick collection from the Hermitage Museum.⁷⁶ Without excluding the possibility that this gun was in Russia in a private collection before the 1917 Bolshevik revolution, was then expropriated by the new regime, and was later sold to a foreign collector or dealer from the so-called State Museum Fund established in 1918 (as, indeed, were many works of art), it should nevertheless be noted that this outstanding object was never discussed, or even referred to, in an exhibition guide or a catalogue of any Russian museum or private collection. At the Imperial Hermitage, a large, permanent arms exhibition displayed some twenty-five hundred objects, certainly the best and most interesting of the entire holdings, and it would be hard to explain the absence of such a masterpiece from the display, were it then in the imperial collection. At least some reference to it could have been expected when Eduard von Lenz, a well-informed scholar and curator at the Hermitage, described a similar weapon, no. 152 of the *cabinet d'armes*, which was given the utmost prominence at the museum's arms exhibition.⁷⁷ As far as this writer knows, there is also no record of the firearm in manuscript catalogues and related papers still preserved in the Hermitage Museum's archives. On these grounds, and until some proof to the contrary is presented, the alleged Russian provenance of the fowling piece can safely be discarded.

The description of gun no. 134 in the 1673 inventory reads:

134. Un beau fusil de 4 pieds 4 pouces, fait à Lizieux, le canon rond, couleur d'eau, ayant une arreste sur le devant et à pans sur le derrière, doré de rinceaux en trois endroits, la platine unie ornée de quelques petites pièces dorées sur un beau bois de poirier noir, enrichy de plusieurs petits orne-

ments d'argent et de nacre de perle, la crosse terminée en consolle par le dessous, sur laquelle il y a une longue fueuille de cuivre doré de rapport, et sur le poulcier un mascaron d'argent et une L couronnée vis à vis la lumière.⁷⁸

A slightly different description is found in the 1717 inventory:

134. Un beau fusil de quatre pieds cinq pouces de long, fait à Lizieux, monté sur un bois de poirier noir, enrichy d'ornemens d'argent et de nacre de perle, la crosse terminée en Consolle, ayant dessous une feuille de cuivre doré: Le canon a huit pans sur la culasse et rond par le bout, orné de rinceaux dorés en trois endroits, la platine aussy ornée de petites pièces dorées.⁷⁹

Apart from orthography and punctuation, the same description is found in the 1775 inventory:

134. Vn Beau fuzil de quatre pieds cinq pouces de Long, fait à Lisieux, monté sur un Bois de Poirier noir, enrichi d'ornemens d'argent et de nacre de perle; La Crosse terminée en Console, ayant dessous une feuille de Cuivre doré; Le Canon a huit pans sur la Culasse et rond par le bout, orné de Rainceaux dorés en trois endroits, La Platine aussi ornée de petites pieces dorées.⁸⁰

74. *Catalogue of Highly Important Firearms from the Collection of the Late William Goodwin Renwick* (European, pt. II), sale cat., Sotheby's (London, Nov. 21, 1972) pp. 28–31, lot 21; [H. Nickel], "Louis XIII Flintlock," *MMAB* 31, no. 4 (1973); H. Nickel, "Arms and Armor," *MMA Notable Acquisitions 1965–1975* (New York, 1975) p. 44; idem, "The Long Wait and the Quick Draw," in *The Chase, The Capture: Collecting at the Metropolitan* (New York, 1975) pp. 171–179.

75. T. T. H[oopes], "Changes in the Armor Study Room," *MMAB* 22, no. 7 (1927) p. 198.

76. Sotheby's, *Renwick Catalogue*, pt. II, p. 28. This conjecture is occasionally mentioned elsewhere.

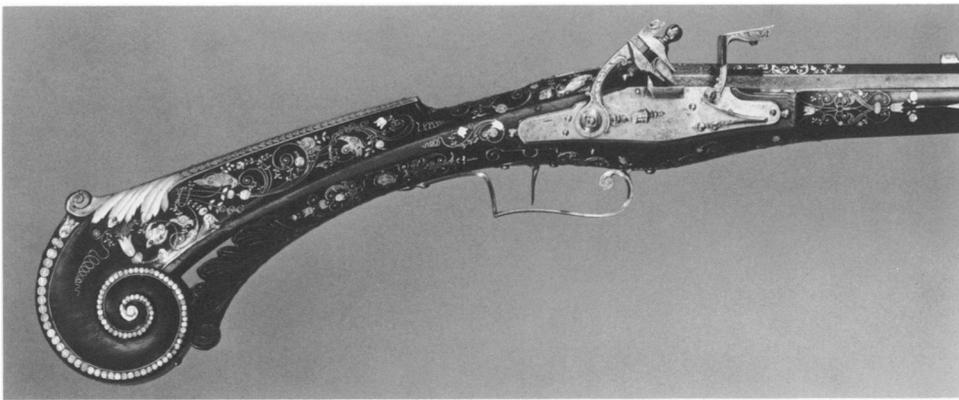
77. E. Lenz, *Imperatorskii Ermitazh, ukazatel' otdelenia Srednikh Vekov i Epokhi Vozrozhdenia: I. Sobranie oruzhia* [The Imperial Hermitage, Guide to the Department of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: I. Arms Collection] (St. Petersburg, 1908) p. 262, no. F.281; Album, pl. xxix.

78. Guiffrey, pp. 59, 60. It is this description that was quoted in Lenk, p. 34, n. 4 (Lenk/Hayward, p. 38, n. 17), with correct reference to Guiffrey. It was again quoted in full in Lenk/Hayward, appendix 1, p. 171, with a mistaken reference to the "1729 inventory."

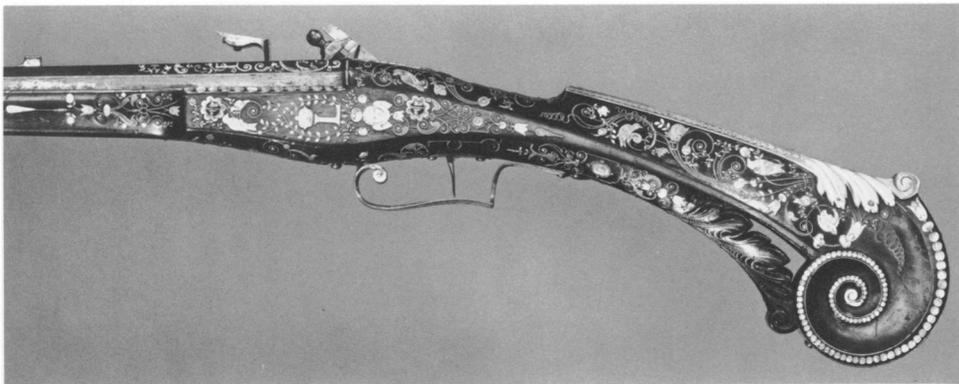
79. Grancsay 1970, p. 192.

80. O¹ 3349, fol. 286; in O¹ 3350, fols. 141–141v, the description is the same.

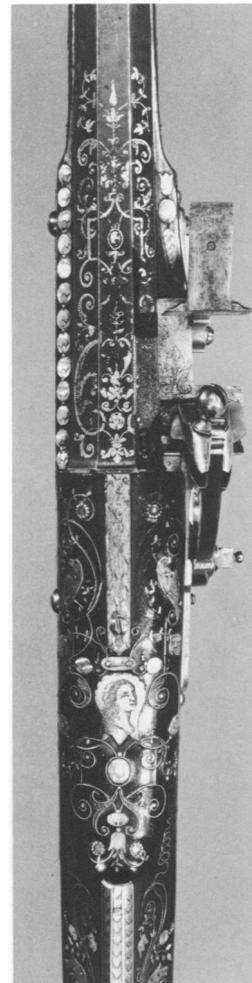
36–40. Flintlock fowling piece, *cabinet d'armes* no. 134, probably by Pierre Le Bourgeois, French (Lisieux), ca. 1620. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers and Harris Brisbane Dick Funds, 1972.223



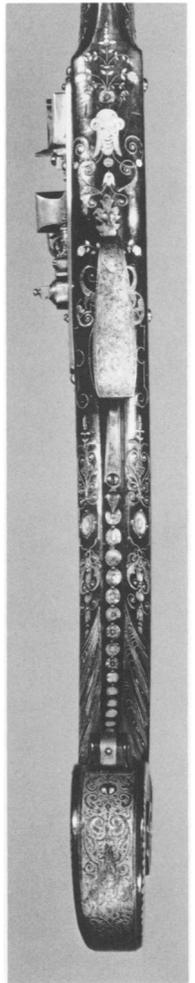
37. Lock and butt, no. 134



38. Detail of left side, no. 134



39

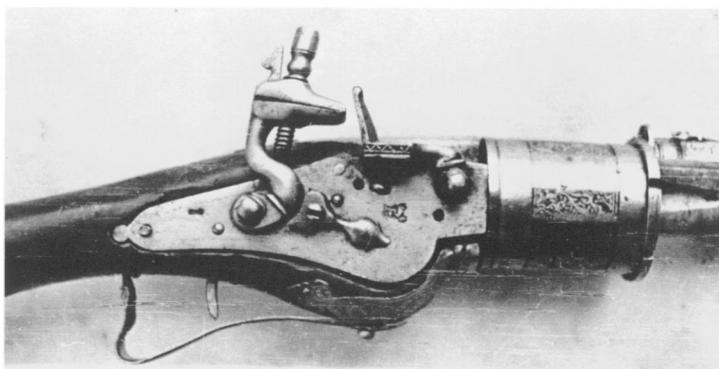
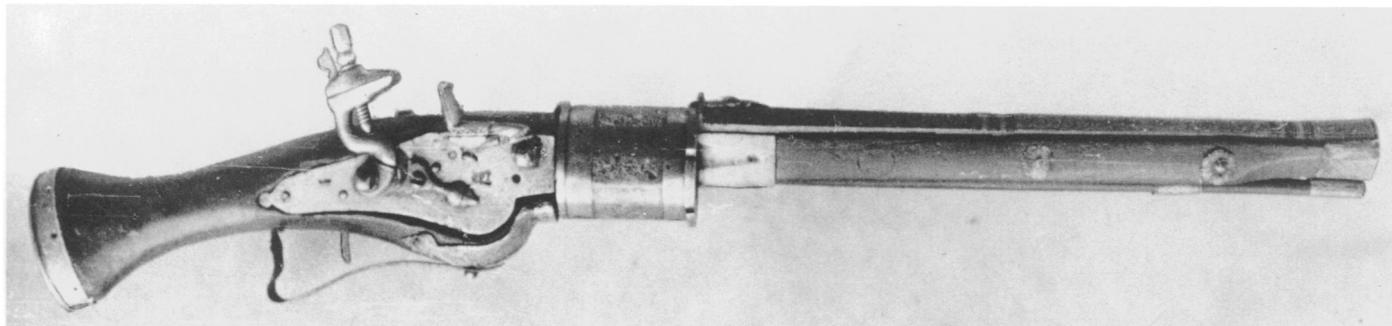


40

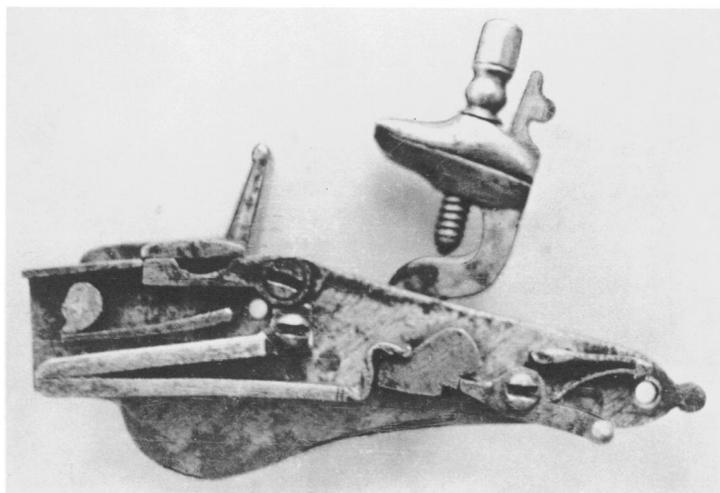
39. Top view of breech section, no. 134

40. Detail of underside, no. 134

41–43. Flintlock revolver by Pervusha Issayev, master of the Kremlin Armory Workshops, Russian (Moscow), ca. 1625. Moscow, Kremlin Armory, inv. no. 8251 (photos: author)



42. Lock and cylinder



43. Inside of lock

While all entries give a generally correct description of the gun, it is the earliest entry that is not only more detailed but also highly accurate in measurement; 4 *pieds 4 pouces* converts to 140.76 centimeters (55.41 inches), practically the same as the overall length of 140.4 centimeters (55.27 inches) recorded in the Museum's files. The length of the barrel is 104.1 centimeters (40.98 inches); the caliber is 55 millimeters (0.59 inch). As for the measurement given in the 1717 inventory that was intended to correct mistakes in the previous document, it is shorter than the actual length by 1 *pouce* (2.707 centimeters).

Attention was focused on gun no. 134 of the *cabinet d'armes* when it was displayed at the Metropolitan Museum. It was then stated that, as verified in a contemporary document, this fowling piece, dating from about 1630, had originated in the French royal collection.⁸¹ The gun was later shown at the City Art Museum of St. Louis as Louis XIII's personal possession.⁸² In his great work on the flintlock, Lenk studied the gun,⁸³ which he apparently knew only from

81. S. V. Grancsay, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Loan Exhibition of European Arms and Armor* (New York, 1931) p. 66, no. 252 ill.

82. T. T. H[oopers], "Loan Exhibition: Firearms of Princes," *Bulletin of the City Art Museum of St. Louis* 25, no. 1 (1940) p. 10, pl. 1(c). The reference here to a "royal inventory of 1615" is probably a mistaken substitution for the period when the gun might have been made.

83. Lenk, pp. 34 passim, 162, 184, pls. 9, 10:2; Lenk/Hayward, pp. 30 passim, 134. Lenk first discussed this gun and its attribution to Marin Le Bourgeois in "De äldsta flintlåsen, deras dekoration och dekoratörer," *Konsthistorisk tidskrift* 3 (1934) pp. 121ff., fig. 5.

photographs, and found that it was marked with a figure of a crossbow between the initials *IB*, attributed by both Lenk and Støckel⁸⁴ to Jean Le Bourgeois of Lisieux. This craftsman's death in 1615 was necessarily accepted as a *terminus ad quem*.⁸⁵ However, in 1972, upon direct examination of the firearm, Hayward found that the mark actually contained the initials *PB*, which in all probability are those of Pierre Le Bourgeois, who is recorded as having died in 1627.⁸⁶ This significant discovery led to even more important revisions of the chronology both of the earliest flintlocks and of their introduction into general use.⁸⁷

In 1977, Dr. James D. Lavin briefly reviewed the problem of dating the earliest flintlock firearms and suggested that mechanisms of this construction had appeared in France not earlier than the third decade of the seventeenth century.⁸⁸ According to Lavin, fowling piece no. 134 is the earliest of the Lisieux flintlocks, datable to the 1620s and chronologically preceding fowling piece no. 152 by Marin Le Bourgeois at the Hermitage Museum (Figure 49), which should be dated to the late 1620s. Lavin also believes that the flintlock gun at Windsor Castle, dated 1630,⁸⁹ represents an earlier stage in the history of the flintlock than the Lisieux group. The grounds for this assertion are the "somewhat more archaic" lock of the Windsor gun and a similarity between this piece and the one depicted in a portrait dated between about 1635 and 1641 tentatively attributed to Anthony van Dyck and representing Sir William Feilding, earl of Denbigh.⁹⁰

Hayward, unconvinced by these controversial arguments, stated that there was no reason to question the claim that fowling piece no. 152 was the earliest or among the earliest flintlocks. He readily recognized, however, the attribution of the closely related piece no. 134 to Pierre Le Bourgeois as sufficient grounds for moving the date of the invention of the flintlock forward by ten or twenty years and for dating both no. 152 and no. 134 in the 1620s.⁹¹

The most recent position in this discussion has been taken by Reverseau, who does not believe that the reattribution of fowling piece no. 134 must in principle change the chronology of the early development of the flintlock as established by Lenk.⁹²

While the change in *terminus ad quem* from 1615 to 1627 for fowling piece no. 134 certainly warrants, in this writer's opinion, a revision of the dates suggested

by Lenk for the invention of the flintlock and the chronology of its earliest specimens, one can still assume that this early developmental phase took place in France before, and not after, the 1620s.

A basis for this assumption is provided by a flintlock revolver in the Kremlin Armory (Figures 41–43).⁹³ Its lock plate is stamped with a figure of a swan—the same mark that is found on the snaphance pistol dated 1621 or 1622 at the Hermitage Museum (Figure 44).⁹⁴ The swan marks were identified as those of Pervusha Issayev, a gun maker in the Kremlin Armory workshops whose work deserves special consideration at this point.

This craftsman is named in the 1687 inventory of the Kremlin Armory in the following entry:

Gun [*pishchal'*] rifled, rapid-firing, for five loads, made by Pervusha Issayev. From breech to molding, a serpent's head gilt and silvered, and on [the rest of] the

84. Støckel, I, p. 47, no. 93; II, p. 656, no. 3216 = 93.

85. J. F. Hayward, *The Art of the Gunmaker* (London, 1962–63) I, pp. 142ff.; 2nd ed. (London, 1965) I, pp. 153ff.; Hoff, *Feuerwaffen*, I, pp. 246ff.

86. Gusler and Lavin, p. 12; Sotheby's, *Renwick Catalogue*, pt. II, p. 28; Hayward, "Notes on the Cabinet d'armes," pp. 24ff., figs. 1, 2; Heer/Støckel, p. 132, no. 7135.

87. Gusler and Lavin, pp. 3–6; Hayward, pp. 239ff.

88. Gusler and Lavin, pp. 3–6.

89. Lenk, pl. 14:1–3; H. L. Blackmore, *Royal Sporting Guns at Windsor* (London, 1968) pl. 22.

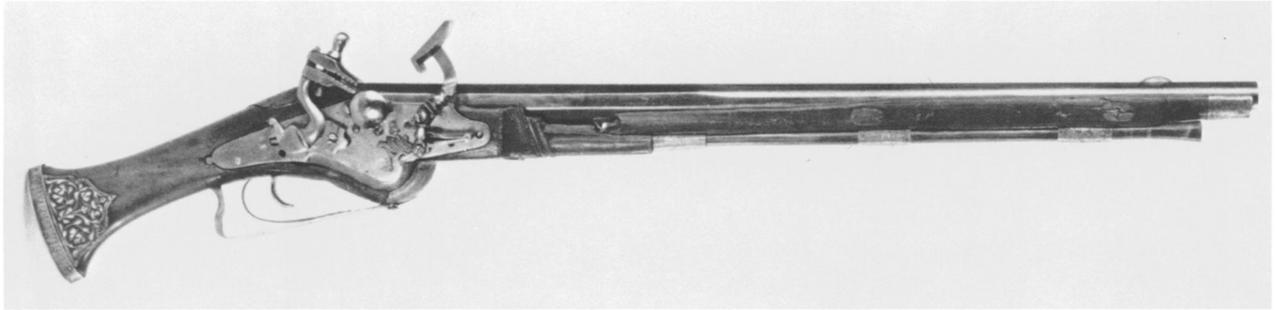
90. Gusler and Lavin, p. 5. In this writer's opinion, if the dating ca. 1635–41 of the portrait is correct, it proves only that the flintlock of the type fitted to the Windsor gun and depicted in the painting was in use by 1630 and during the next decade.

91. Hayward, p. 241.

92. J.-P. Reverseau, *Musée de l'Armée, Paris: Les Armes et la vie* (Paris, 1982) pp. 103ff.

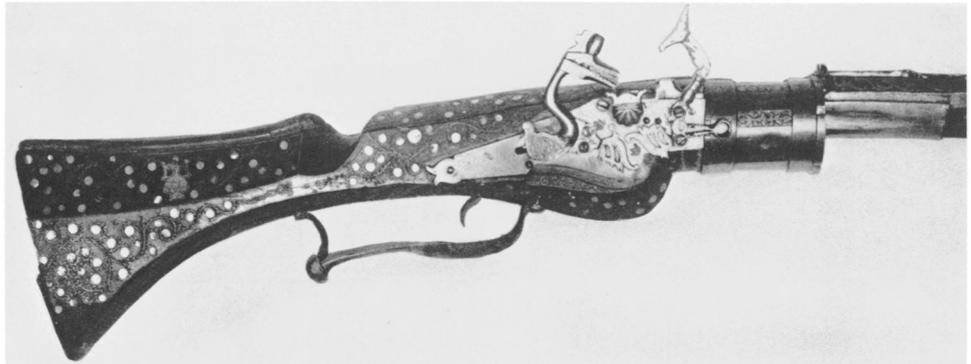
93. This firearm was earlier discussed in L. Tarassuk, "Introduction de la platine à silex à la française dans les armes à feu russes," *Armi antiche* (1954) pp. 3–18, figs. 3–5. This pistol, but not the inside of its lock, was subsequently illustrated in Blackmore, *Guns and Rifles*, no. 573 (here erroneously captioned "Six-chambered gun by Isay Pervuskin. Russian, c. 1630"); L. Tarassuk, "Russian Pistols in the Seventeenth Century," *Burlington Magazine* 109, nos. 776, 777 (1967; repr. London: Arms & Armour Press, 1968) figs. 6, 7; Blair, p. 128, figs. 544, 545.

94. Previously illustrated in Tarassuk, "Russian Pistols" (1967) pp. 633ff.; Tarassuk, nos. 118, 119; Blair, p. 94, fig. 105. The engraved inscription on the pommel ring states that the pistol was made in the year 7130. The date is from the Russian church (Julian) calendar, the only one in use before 1700. In the Julian calendar, which dates from the Creation, the new year started in September. Thus, unless the day and month are known, conversion to the Gregorian calendar results in two possible consecutive years.



44. Snaphance pistol by Pervusha Issayev, Russian (Moscow), 1621/22. Leningrad, The Hermitage Museum, inv. Z.O. no. 5768 (photo: author)

45. Detail of snaphance rifle with revolving cylinder by Pervusha Issayev and Ivan Romanov (stock maker), Russian (Moscow), 1625. Moscow, Kremlin Armory, inv. no. 7595 (photo: after Blackmore, *Guns and Rifles of the World*, fig. 564)



barrel foliage chiseled in three places; the lock gilded; the stock of apple tree, with mother-of-pearl [and] copper scrolls. And at this revision of the year [7]195 and upon examination, this gun corresponded [to the item] in older inventories. And in the previous inventory [it was] described [under the number] eleven.⁹⁵

The firearm that exactly matches this description is a five-shot snaphance rifle with revolving cylinder in the Kremlin Armory (Figure 45).⁹⁶ It is no doubt this revolving firearm, an extreme rarity for this period in Russian arms production, that was recorded in the expenditures book of the so-called Silver and Gold Chamber:

On June 26, 7133 [1625]—six Hungarian ducats to Pervusha Issayev to gild the five-load gun [*pishchal*] . . . for whose stock the wood was given to Ivan Romanov to work on and was recorded in the notebooks on January 9. . . .⁹⁷

The gilding of this rifle-revolver was applied to the very large lock, cylinder, barrel, and trigger guard, which explains the quantity of gold used—four times larger than that usually issued to Pervusha Issayev for the gilding of an ordinary-size lock (1½ Hungarian ducats).⁹⁸

95. “Perepisnaya kniga . . .” [Inventory of the Armory and Other State Property . . .], MS 936 (1687), Central State Archives of Ancient Documents, Moscow, fol. 226v. Still unpublished, this is the oldest extant inventory of the Kremlin Armory. This and further quotations have been translated into English by the writer.

96. Blackmore, *Guns and Rifles*, no. 564 (here erroneously captioned “Gun with six-chambered cylinder by Isay Pervushkin”).

97. “Raskhodnaya kniga” [Expenditures Book of the Silver and Golden Chamber], MS 1024, Central State Archives of Ancient Documents, Fund 396, fol. 220v.

98. *Ibid.*, fols. 34, 68v, 69, 88v, 89, 106, 130v, 196v (six entries for 1623–25).

There are eleven known documents on Pervusha Issayev, dating from 1616 to 1625, and eight of them record him as a lock maker. The earliest reference, dated October 5, 1616, records the awards granted by Tsar Mikhail Romanov (1613–45) to four gun makers of the Armory workshops, probably for a firearm they made together for the monarch. This group includes a gunsmith, a lock maker, and two stock makers. The lock maker was Pervusha Issayev, whose position in the Armory, followed by his name, is twice spelled out in this document.⁹⁹ The last three documents bearing his name date from the first half of 1625, the last document being the quoted record of gold allocated for decoration of the five-shot gun. In two documents from the year 1623, Pervusha Issayev is titled, respectively, “gun shooter [and] lock maker” and “lock maker and shooter.”¹⁰⁰ Swan marks are found exclusively on locks of firearms made at the Armory, thus confirming this master’s main occupation. That he was also entrusted with testing the completed firearms seems a very reasonable arrangement, since it was their mechanisms that could require final adjustment by an expert lock maker. The documents record that this master also decorated locks (six entries), all metal parts of a gun (the entry previously quoted), and, probably occasionally, other objects made of iron or steel (two entries).¹⁰¹

Such is the background that permits us to consider the two swan-marked firearms in the Kremlin Armory (Figures 41 and 45) as closely associated weapons whose mechanisms were designed, made, and decorated by Pervusha Issayev. Both firearms have identical general construction and very similar patterns of decoration on the cylinders. They differ, in fact, only in the type of ignition mechanism. Outwardly, even the locks of these firearms are similar, with the same archaic form of lock plates with the semicircular lower edge that was taken from the

wheel lock and, technically, served no purpose in snaphances and flintlocks. Like the earliest French flintlocks, the lock of the revolver in Figure 41 has square screw heads, here used on both the cock and the battery. The battery works with an inside spring, an arrangement already used in some wheel locks from the mid-sixteenth century.¹⁰² The cock of the revolver looks more advanced in form than the cocks of early French flintlocks, but it is actually identical in all details (except for the heel, functional in snaphances) to the form of the cock of the rifle-revolver (Figure 45) made in 1625.

The very close technical and stylistic similarity of the two revolving weapons produced by Pervusha Issayev strongly suggests that the flintlock revolver was made around the same time as the snaphance rifle-revolver. To understand, produce, and try out a new ignition mechanism was probably a tempting professional challenge for a specialist lock maker whose work shows his interest in arms novelties and uncommon designs. In any event, such a mechanism was made by a Moscow gun maker active between 1616 and 1625, which demonstrates beyond doubt that the French flintlock had already been conceived by the 1620s and had reached Russia—directly, or via other European firearms—before 1625. *Ipso facto*, fowling piece no. 134 of the *cabinet d’armes*, now in the Metropolitan Museum, and a group of closely related French firearms with the flintlock of archaic form should be dated not later than the second decade of the seventeenth century.

As for the relationship between Louis XIII’s age and the size of gun no. 134 (it is 140 centimeters long), a question recently raised by Hayward,¹⁰³ it is worth noting that toward the end of the second decade of the seventeenth century the king, born in 1601, was grown up enough to wish for a normal-size fowling piece.

99. Yu. V. Arsenyev, *Oruzheinyi prikaz pri tsare Mikhaile Fiodoroviche* [The Armory’s Office Under Tsar Mikhail] (St. Petersburg, 1903) pp. 10ff., no. 6. In this document Pervusha Issayev is actually called *zamochnik* (“lock maker”) and *samopalnykh zamkov master* (“maker of the locks for self-shooting firearms”). In the 16th and 17th centuries the term *samopal* (“self shooter”) was applied only to firearms with spark-producing ignition mechanisms; firearms with a match holder were designated by

different terms (see Tarassuk, “Russian Pistols” [1967] pp. 634, 637).

100. “Raskhodnaya kniga,” fols. 68v, 69, 88v, 89.

101. *Ibid.*, fol. 17v (Sept. 6, 1622, on the gilding of buckle tongs), fol. 194v (Feb. 4, 1625, on the gilding of a saber).

102. Illustrated, e.g., by Hayward, *The Art of the Gunmaker* (1962) I, pls. 6b–d, 8a, 10a.

103. Hayward, pp. 241ff.

Number 94

A wheel-lock gun (Figures 46–48) with the number 94 incised on the stock in front of the trigger guard recently appeared in New York, where it could be examined. The provenance of this gun is unknown, at least to this writer, and cannot, therefore, help elucidate some questions posed by identification.

Under no. 94, the 1673 inventory states:

94. Une petite arquebuse de 2 pieds, le canon à huit pans tout uny; le roüet tout uny monté sur un bois de cormier tout uny; ladite arquebuse, avec son allonge, de 3 pieds 2 pouces.¹⁰⁴

The 1717 inventory is somewhat different:

94. Une arquebuse de deux pieds de long, qui s'allonge par le canon jusqu'à quatre pieds 4 pouces, le canon a huit pans uny, à roüet de même, montée sur un bois de cormier, enrichy d'ornemens d'yvoir et de nacre de perle, et sur la crosse sont deux têtes d'Empereurs.¹⁰⁵

In the 1775 inventory the description is the same, with minor differences in orthography:

94. Vne Arquebuse de deux pieds de long, qui s'allonge, par le Canon, Jusqu'à quatre pouces, Le Canon a huit pans unis, Le Rouet de même, monté sur un Bois de Cormier, enrichi d'ornemens d'yvoire, de nacredeperle; Et sur la Crosse, Sont deux têtes d'Empereur.¹⁰⁶

All three entries agree that no. 94 was a wheel-lock gun 2 *pieds* long, with a plain octagonal barrel provided with an extension. Like the barrel, the lock was plain (undecorated) and was mounted on a stock made of sorb wood.

There are two discrepancies between the earliest and the later descriptions. While it was first stated that the gun stock was plain, the later entries describe it as ornamented with ivory and mother-of-pearl and embellished on the butt with “two heads of emperors.” The gun itself is thrice recorded as measuring 2 *pieds*, or 64.96 centimeters (25.57 inches), in length. Measured with the extension barrel, however,

it was found at first to be 3 *pieds* 9 *pouces*, or 121.81 centimeters (47.95 inches), and later to be 4 *pieds* 4 *pouces*, or 140.76 centimeters (55.41 inches)—that is, 18.95 centimeters (7.46 inches) longer. Clearly, the difference was related only to the length of the extension barrel.

As was noted earlier in this paper, the cataloguing of the firearms with detachable extensions caused particular trouble and errors which can be detected in all three inventories. In the case of no. 94 it looks as though the officials in charge of the inventory found that their predecessors had associated an incorrect extension barrel with the gun. The part was probably replaced by a similar but longer piece and a new description was written for no. 94. It is hard to say whether this substitution was correct, since the turn-off extension barrel is not now preserved with the gun.

There are also discrepancies between the inventory entries and the actual gun. The gun bearing the number 94 dates from around 1600. It is 80.3 centimeters (31.6 inches) long, which is 15.34 centimeters (6.03 inches) longer than the length recorded for no. 94 in all French documents. This difference corresponds to 5.66 *pouces*, a big mistake even for the cataloguers' liberal working style. The length of the barrel is 44.8 centimeters (17.63 inches), including a barrel-locking section 4 centimeters (1.57 inches) long with threads for the turn-off extension. The caliber is 12 millimeters (0.47 inch).

Except in length, the actual gun matches quite closely the description of no. 94 in the revised inventory of 1717, repeated in 1775. Its octagonal barrel, with a backsight, is marked on the breech with a crescent (or the letter *C*?). The wheel lock, which is of French construction, is only slightly chiseled and engraved, the end of the lock plate and the cock jaws representing monsters' heads, and the wheel guide a sphinx. The stock, carved of a fruit wood,¹⁰⁷ is decorated with inlaid and engraved mother-of-pearl and

104. Guiffrey, p. 54.

105. Grancsay 1970, p. 190.

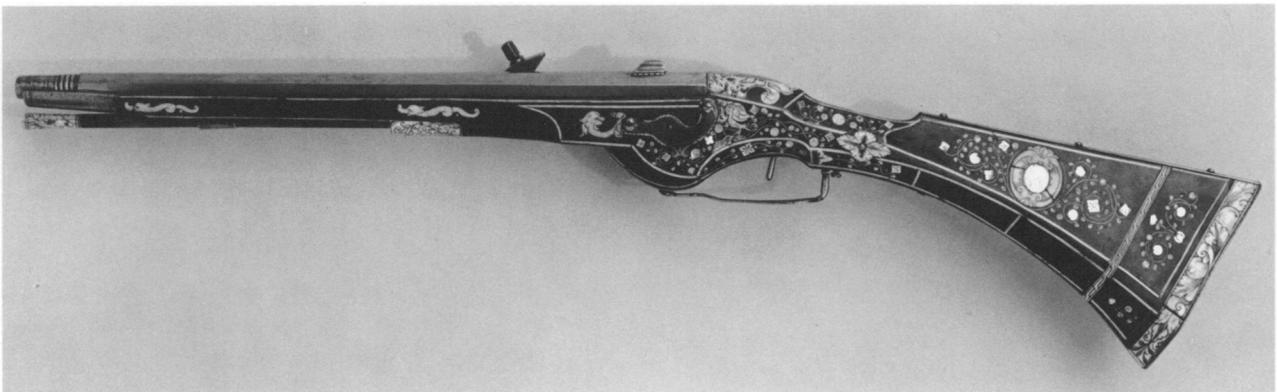
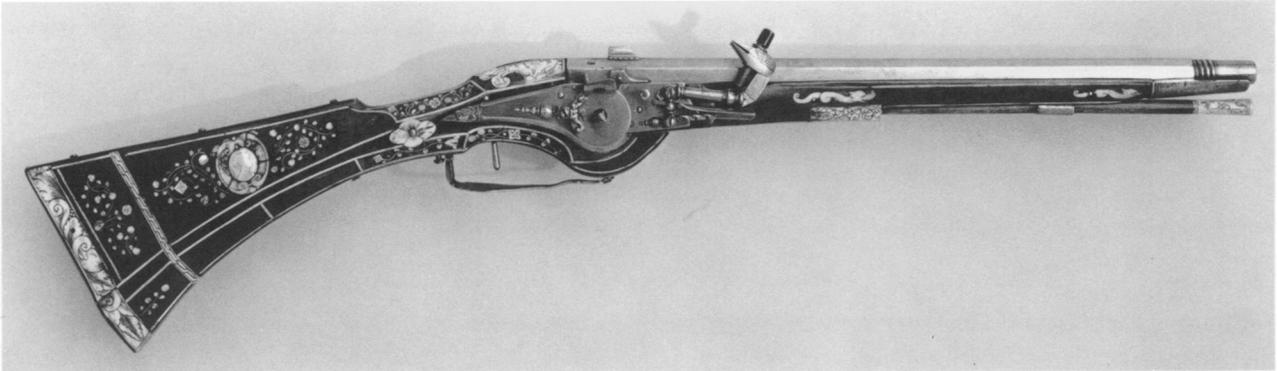
106. O¹ 3349, fol. 280; O¹ 3350, fol. 135v, gives the same description, with minor orthographic differences.

107. A small sample of wood from the stock of this gun was analyzed by the Center for Wood Anatomy Research, U.S. Forest Product Laboratory (Madison, Wis.). The sample was identified as “a hardwood, possibly one of the fruitwoods such as apple, pear, etc.” in a letter from the Center, Aug. 2, 1983.

staghorn (not with ivory, as described in the 1717 and 1775 inventories). The ornament consists of grotesque animals, masks, and foliage with partly green-stained leaves. On each side of the butt is a cartouche of staghorn enclosing a mother-of-pearl medallion engraved with a male head in profile reminiscent of

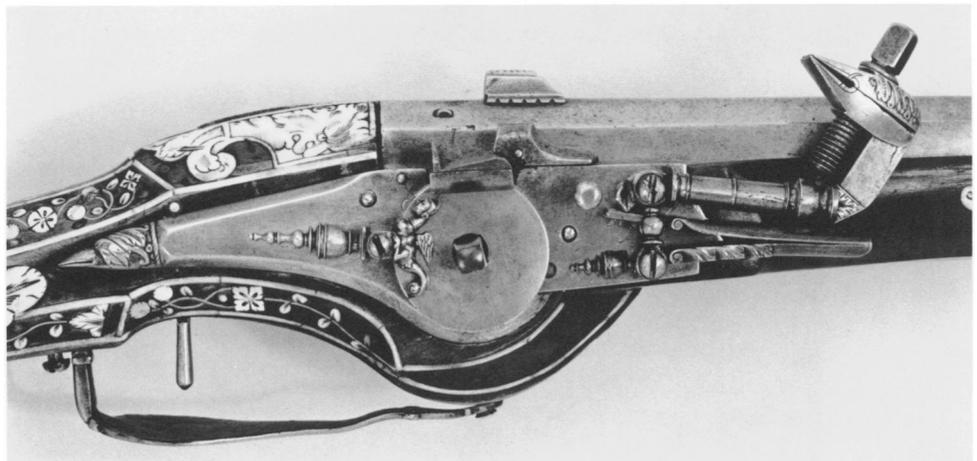
Roman portraiture. The rear ramrod pipe is made of staghorn; the other furniture—frontal ramrod pipe, fore-stock mount, trigger guard, lower stock strap, butt plate, and comb strap—is of steel. The pan-cover release-button, ramrod, and some inlays are modern restorations.

46–48. Wheel-lock gun bearing *cabinet d'armes* no. 94, designed with a barrel extension (now missing), French, ca. 1615–25. The Netherlands, Henk L. Visser Collection



47. Left side, no. 94

48. Lock, no. 94



Number 152

The flintlock fowling piece stamped with the number 152 and signed M. LE. BOVRGEOYS. A. LISIEVL. (Figure 49) is among the world's best-known firearms and has been described and illustrated many times. However, the descriptions of it in the inventories of the *cabinet d'armes* have never been juxtaposed, and this paper presents an appropriate place to do so.

The 1673 entry reads:

152. Un beau fuzil, de 4 pieds 3 pouces, le canon rond avec un petit pan doré en couleur d'eau sur le bout, et sur la cullasse de rinseaux; la platine couleur d'eau, gravée en blanc, ayant un rond doré uny sur le milieu, sur un bois de poirier qui forme un pied de biche dans la crosse, fait par Bourgeois à Lizieux.¹⁰⁸

In the 1717 inventory the entry runs as follows:

152. Un fuzil de quatre pieds quatre pouces de long, fait par BOURGEOIS à Lizieux, monté sur un bois de poirier, dont la crosse est en forme de pied de Biche, au haut de laquelle est une plaque de cuivre ciselée et gravé de rainceaux dorés, avec les armes de France et de Navarre; Le canon couleur d'Eau ayant sur le bout et la culasse, des rainceaux dorés.¹⁰⁹

Apart from some orthographic differences and punctuation, the 1775 description is the same:

152. Vn fusil de quatre pieds quatre pouces de Long, fait par Bourgeois à Lizieux, monté sur un bois de poirier, dont la Crosse est en forme de pied de Biche; au Haut de Laquelle est une plaque de Cuivre cizelée et gravée de rainceaux dorés, avec les armes de France et de Navarre; Le Canon couleur d'eau, ayant, sur le bout et la Culasse, des rainceaux dorés.¹¹⁰

Together, the entries give quite an accurate and detailed description of the gun, but they differ regarding its length. The earliest measurement converts to 138.04 centimeters (54.36 inches), the two later ones to 140.75 centimeters (55.42 inches), which is practically the same as the modern measurement of 141 centimeters (55.51 inches).¹¹¹

Fowling piece no. 152 is recorded at the auction sale of the arms collection of the duke of Istria, where it was bought on behalf of the Russian emperor Nicholas I for his Tsarskoselskii Arsenal. The sale catalogue shrewdly ascribed this gun to "the first period of the flintlock firearms" and stated that it had come from the arsenal of the prince of Condé at Chantilly; it was said to have belonged to Louis XIII.¹¹²

The château of Chantilly was abandoned by its owner, Louis-Joseph de Bourbon, prince of Condé, who fled abroad in July 1789 after the fall of the Bastille. Subsequently the castle, and especially its arsenal, was subject to pillages and confiscations until, in April 1793, the remnants of the collections were transferred to Paris and placed under state custody. By this time, according to archival documents, most of the Chantilly firearms that were or at least appeared to be usable had been removed from the castle.¹¹³

It is not known by what means the authors of the Istria sale catalogue learned about the provenance of gun no. 152, but their sources appear to have been very knowledgeable, since the reference they gave to the period and ownership of the gun has finally proved to be absolutely correct. In view of the close ties between the princes of Condé and the kings of France, both from the house of Bourbon, we can assume that this fowling piece was among the royal gifts that enriched the princely collections at the château of Chantilly. Presentation of the gift could have occurred after 1775, when the gun was still recorded in the royal inventory, but before the Revolution in 1789. Presumably removed from Chantilly before the state took control of the remaining property in 1793, this spectacular piece somehow found its way onto the antiquarian market and ended up, in 1839, in the Russian imperial arms collection.¹¹⁴

108. Guiffrey, pp. 61, 62.

109. Grancsay 1970, p. 193.

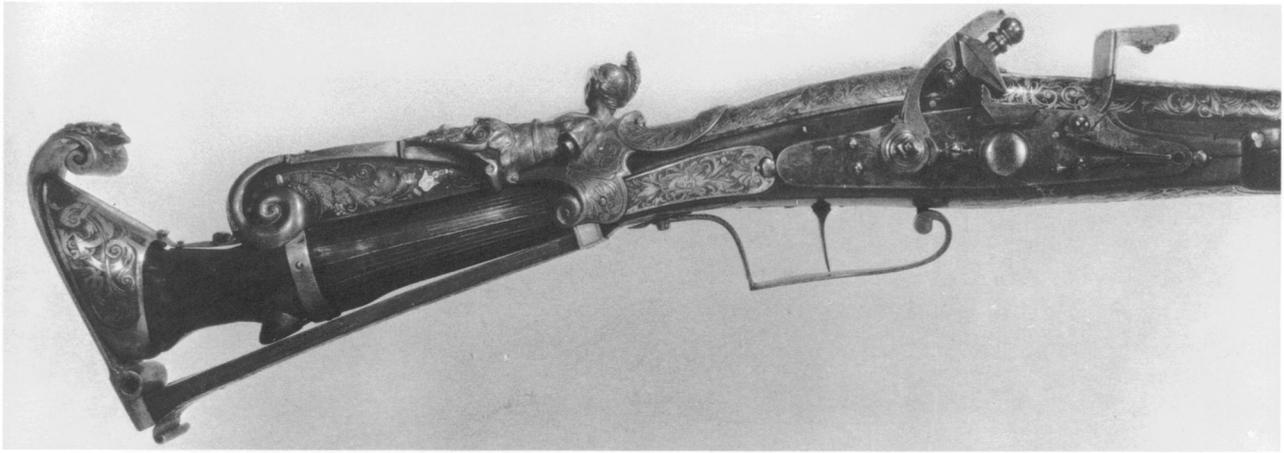
110. O¹ 3349, fol. 289; O¹ 3350, fol. 143v, contains the same description.

111. Tarassuk, p. 160, no. 58.

112. *Le Cabinet d'armes de M. le duc d'Istrie*, sale cat. (cited in note 68), p. 17, lot 126.

113. I am indebted to Stuart Pyhrr for permission to use his copies of the archival documents on this subject.

114. Fowling piece no. 152 was not, at any rate, seized by the Russians in Paris in 1814, as can be inferred from a recent excursus into the history of the *cabinet d'armes* (Hayward, pp.



49. Detail of flintlock fowling piece, *cabinet d'armes* no. 152, by Marin Le Bourgeois, French (Lisieux), ca. 1610–20. Leningrad, The Hermitage Museum, inv. Z.O. no. 94 (photo: author)

Whether or not Russian authors got independent information about the provenance of no. 152 or simply relied on the reference in the 1839 sale catalogue, they uniformly stated that this firearm had originated in Chantilly and belonged to Louis XIII. This statement is found in the first Russian publication of the gun; at that time the gun was in Tsarskoye Selo, near St. Petersburg, where it was kept for almost fifty years.¹¹⁵ The information was repeated in a guide published after the transfer of the imperial arms collection to the Hermitage in 1886; in the Hermitage the gun was given the inventory number F.281.¹¹⁶ Lenz, curator of that museum's arms collection, appears to have been more cautious: he attributes the ownership of this piece to Louis XIII "according to a tradition."¹¹⁷

It was Lenk who, in 1939, first advanced the theory that fowling piece no. 152 might have been made for and presented to Henry IV in 1605 by Marin Le Bourgeois,¹¹⁸ although in his earlier work Lenk assumed that the flintlock construction had been devised during the second or possibly the first decade of the seventeenth century.¹¹⁹ The period between 1600 and 1610 was generally considered to be a plausible time for the invention of the flintlock, until Hayward introduced the new reading of the mark stamped on fowling piece no. 134, now in the Metropolitan Museum (Figures 36–40).

While the question of whether the flintlock was

manufactured in the early years of the seventeenth century remains open to further research, the second decade of the seventeenth century can be considered with confidence in this respect, due to the already noted fact that in the 1620s the lock of this construction was known and made in faraway Moscow by a lock maker who appears in records between 1616 and 1625. Consequently, French firearms with flintlocks of the earliest form—nos. 152 and 134, for example—are to be related to the period between 1610 and 1620, when at least two other extant guns were also made.¹²⁰

Lavin puts forward an objection to fowling piece no. 152 being dated earlier than the late 1620s. He argues that the helmeted classical figure of gilt bronze on the stock of no. 152, by Marin Le Bourgeois, and the figure decorating the stock of the gun

240ff.). It is interesting to note that a total of 1,903 francs was paid by the Russian government for this and several other items acquired at the Paris sale of Jan. 23–25, 1839 (Lenz, *Sobranie oruzhia*, p. 7).

115. F. Gille, *Musée de Tsarskoé-Sélo* (St. Petersburg/Karlsruhe, 1835–53) pt. 25, pl. CXLVII, no. 1; cf. idem, *Notice sur le Musée de Tsarskoé Sélo* (St. Petersburg, 1860) p. 48, no. 281 ("Fusil de chasse de Louis XIII").

116. N. Kondakov, *Imperatorskii Ermitazh, ukazatel otdelenia Srednikh Vekov i Epokhi Vozrozhdenia* [Imperial Hermitage, Guide to the Department of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance] (St. Petersburg, 1891) p. 320, no. F.281.

117. Lenz, *Sobranie oruzhia*, p. 262, F.281; album, pl. XXIX.

118. Lenk, pp. 33 passim, 161ff., 184, pls. 8, 10:1 (Lenk/Hayward, pp. 29 passim, 37).

119. Lenk, "De äldsta flintlåsen," p. 139.

120. Musée de l'Armée, M.543, M.529 (Reverseau, *Les Armes et la vie*, pp. 103ff., figs. 21, 23).

dated 1636, by François Duclos (no. 151 of the *cabinet d'armes*, Musée de l'Armée, M.410),¹²¹ were cast from the same mold. It seems unbelievable to Lavin that two high-quality guns made for the same person—Louis XIII—could be separated by a time gap of more than twenty-five years and yet still incorporate in their decoration almost identical figures.¹²²

The fact is that these two firearms do include the same very conspicuous decorative element, which for some reason was reused by the gun maker and the decorator who designed and produced gun no. 151 in 1636. These masters were, respectively, François Duclos, “arquebusier,” and Thomas Picquot, “peintre.” They shared the same lodgings in the Louvre galleries, which were granted to them on January 2, 1636 (there is an indication that Picquot still held his position as a court master well into the 1670s).¹²³ It seems highly probable that gun no. 151 was their first joint accomplishment in the royal quarters and thus had a special significance both for them and for the recipient of their work. Thomas Picquot, as a native of Lisieux and pupil of Marin Le Bourgeois, may have deliberately chosen to use the same decorative piece that had been created by his predecessor in the Louvre galleries, in this way paying tribute to his recently deceased teacher (Marin Le Bourgeois died in 1634). Perhaps Thomas Picquot even inherited from Marin Le Bourgeois some tools and materials, including the mold or a casting of the helmeted bronze figure. Also, Louis XIII was known to have great respect for his late veteran master, Marin Le Bourgeois, and a new gun made by this craftsman's successors may have been intended—and interpreted—as an expression of the continuity of Marin Le Bourgeois's art and workmanship.

In this writer's opinion, the reuse of the same ornamental figure seems more justifiable if it occurred not after a brief gap in time, as Lavin suggests, but some fifteen or more years after the decoration was first used by Marin Le Bourgeois in fowling piece no. 152.

Marin Le Bourgeois's personal role in arms making has been discussed recently by Lavin and by Hayward,¹²⁴ with the former expressing the opinion that this master participated in the making of firearms probably only as a decorator. The nature of Marin Le Bourgeois's participation in arms making is elucidated to a considerable degree by contemporary testimonies,¹²⁵ which depict him as a master of many

arts, including pyrography, sculpture, and painting in various media and genres. The most extensive of these testimonies are found in the book *Eléments de l'artillerie* by David Rivault de Fleurance (1571–1616). The first edition of this work refers to the air gun designed by Marin Le Bourgeois, and the second describes it. In the preface to the first edition, published in 1605, the author says that the typesetting of his book was being completed when he learned of a newly invented, powerful air gun. It was made of wood and was loaded by means of a syringe. The author was also informed that this weapon was destined to be presented to the king.¹²⁶

The second edition of this book, published in 1608, announces in its title that it has been augmented by “an invention, description, and demonstration of the new artillery, which is loaded only with air or pure water and has, nevertheless, an unbelievable force.”¹²⁷ The contents of this edition that concern Marin Le Bourgeois's invention of the pump-up air gun—the first of its kind—have been analyzed by Dr. Arne Hoff.¹²⁸ It will, therefore, be sufficient to sum up here just the information that pertains to the master's life and work.

121. Lenk, pl. 17:1; Reverseau, *Les Armes et la vie*, pp. 106ff., fig. 24.

122. Gusler and Lavin, p. 6. In speaking of more than a twenty-five-year gap, Lavin was probably referring to the dating of gun no. 152 as sometime between 1605 and 1610, as proposed by Lenk.

123. *Nouvelles Archives de l'art français* (Paris, 1873) pp. 65, 66, nos. 12, 13. The brevet calls Thomas Picquot “peintre, ayant charge du globe ou sphère de S. M.” and takes into account “l'expérience qu'il a acquise en ouvrages de cette nature.” In his quatrains describing Paris of the 1670s, Michel de Marolles lists some artists and craftsmen in the Louvre galleries, where “Picot faiseur de sphere y fait le monde entier” (M. de Marolles, *Paris, ou la description . . . de cette grande ville*, 1677, quoted in *Archives de l'art français* [Paris, 1851–52] I, pp. 198–200). There can be little doubt that “Picot” is a simplified form of “Picquot,” the spellings having no phonetic difference in French.

124. Gusler and Lavin, pp. 3ff.; Hayward, pp. 241ff.

125. “Liste des documents concernant Marin Bourgeois,” annexed to Huard 1913, pp. 5–37; Huard 1926, pp. 174–182.

126. “. . . une harquebuze faite de bois qui avoit une faussée incroyable pour n'estre chargée que de vent avec une ciringue comme un ballon. Elle estoit destinée pour être présenté au roy” (Huard 1913, pp. 11, 33).

127. Translated from the title listed by M. J. D. Cockle, *A Bibliography of English Military Books up to 1642 and of Contemporary Foreign Works* (London, 1900) p. 174, no. 676.

128. A. Hoff, *Airguns and Other Pneumatic Arms* (London, 1972) pp. 18–22, fig. 21; cf. Huard 1913, pp. 9–13.

In 1605 Rivault de Fleurance had to travel abroad, just after rumors of the invention of the air gun had reached him. Upon his return to France he found out the name and location of the inventor and visited him in Lisieux. The master, however, refused to disclose the construction of the air gun because of “the king’s express forbiddance to communicate this invention.”¹²⁹ At a later time, after having written to the master, Rivault de Fleurance met him again, this time in Paris, where the author finally obtained from the inventor a model and a drawing of the air gun, as well as explanations of its functioning. Marin Le Bourgeois withheld, however, vital information about the construction of the valves, which would have been necessary to copy the gun.¹³⁰ The air-gun diagram and explanations were thus included in the 1608 edition of Rivault de Fleurance’s book.

In his narrative, the author notes that the opportunity to meet the inventor presented itself when, after his return to France, he happened to be in Lisieux; this occurred “in the previous year.” Even if we assume that he wrote this in 1608, the date of publication of the second edition, and not somewhat earlier, this visit must have taken place in 1607 at the latest (and possibly as early as 1606). It is known, meanwhile, that in 1605, when rumors about an air gun being made for the king reached the author, Marin Le Bourgeois, “harquebuzier” to the king, “made a voyage from Lisieux to Paris by order of His Majesty for matters important to his [the king’s] service, as well as for bringing him [the king] an arquebus, a hunting horn, and a crossbow, all of his making.”¹³¹

According to Rivault de Fleurance, Marin Le Bourgeois told him at their Paris meeting that the king and his secretary of state had witnessed several tests of the air gun, which flung its specially designed missiles (*les garrots*) at very high speed.¹³²

If we compare the dates and events cited, it is tempting to suppose that it was not fowling piece no. 152 (as has been suggested by Lenk) but the newly made air gun that Marin Le Bourgeois brought, along with two other objects, to Henry IV in 1605. Impressed with the gun trials—and, perhaps, with the weapon’s potential military applications—the king ordered the master to keep the construction secret, which resulted in Rivault de Fleurance’s failure to obtain information about it during his Lisieux visit. This royal order could still have been in force later, when the inventor, who may have been flat-

tered to see his name in print, did not disclose to the author the design of valves essential for the gun’s operation.

It also seems that during his stay in Paris in 1605 Marin Le Bourgeois impressed the king with another idea, namely, to use compressed water as the propelling force in cannon. That he was working on this project we know in some detail from Rivault de Fleurance,¹³³ and it is worth noting, in this context, that following the master’s trip to Paris in March 1605, Henry IV issued him with an authorization, dated September 4, 1605, to use water from a fountain in the town of Lisieux “for accommodation of the works that he performs for the king’s service.”¹³⁴

In the 1608 edition of Rivault’s book, the section devoted to Marin Le Bourgeois reads as a veritable eulogy. Besides an account of his skills in the visual arts and his successful work on pneumatic and hydraulic guns, the master is praised as “a man of the rarest judgment in inventions of all kinds, who has the most ingenious imagination and the most subtle hand in using a tool of whatever kind extant in today’s Europe; and his great and fine genius is accompanied by such good fortune in his designs that he has never tried some device that he considered possible without being eminently met by success at the first attempt. . . . He is an excellent painter, rare sculptor, musician, and astronomer, [and he] handles iron and copper more delicately than any known

129. Translated from a quotation in Huard 1913, p. 12.

130. Hoff, *Airguns*, pp. 20–21.

131. Translated from the original text in Huard 1926, p. 179 (document dated Mar. 9, 1605). It should be noted that the translation of the passage “le tout de sa façon” as “all of his own invention” (Gusler and Lavin, p. 4) has been justly objected to (Hayward, pp. 243, 251). “Façon”—derived from the Latin *factio* (act of making), *facere* (to make)—preserved its original meaning well into the period under consideration. This can be best illustrated by a document of Nov. 24, 1639, which records gifts presented to the confraternity of St. Cecilia at Lisieux Cathedral by Antoinette Le Bourgeois, Marin’s daughter, a painter. Among the gifts was “un grand tableau qui représente l’image de madite Dame s^{ie} Cécille, de la façon dudit feu son père”; another gift was a painting “de l’image de la Vierge, de la façon d’elle [the donor]” (Huard 1913, pp. 20–21, 36–37). In the 1605 document, this expression does not preclude, of course, the idea that Marin Le Bourgeois could have invented some of the items he brought to the king, but it definitely meant to say that these objects were made by him.

132. Huard 1913, p. 12.

133. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

134. *Ibid.*, pp. 20, 34; Huard 1926, p. 176, n. 3.

craftsman. The king has a table made by him of polished steel, on which His Majesty is faithfully portrayed . . . only by means of fire. . . . He [the king] has from him a globe representing movements of the sun, moon, and fixed stars in the same speed, measures, and periods as they are seen moving in the sky. He [the king] has from him other excellent things. For himself, he invented a musical instrument, by which he transposes all tunes and songs into tablatures known to him only and then plays them on the viola. . . . I will never finish listing all that has been marvelously accomplished by this worthy master, as well as what he would dare to undertake and would be well able to perfect.”¹³⁵

The question may be asked as to what extent this panegyric, written by the master’s apparent admirer, reflects reality. Fortunately, there is documented evidence that can help verify at least some of the writer’s statements.

The subject of the air gun designed and made by Marin Le Bourgeois is so thoroughly treated in the book itself that this account looks trustworthy enough. It is further known that in 1598 the master made an analemma, an instrument with a graduated scale showing the declination of the sun and the daily equation of time for various geographical locations. He presented the instrument to Martin Ruzé, sieur de Beaulieu, secretary of state and the king’s influential adviser, along with a manuscript of instructions for its use, dated January 1, 1599.¹³⁶ The already quoted document on the master’s trip to Paris in 1605 plainly states that Marin Le Bourgeois, “harquebuzier” to the king, made a gun, a horn, and a crossbow, which he personally delivered to Henry IV. The royal decree of December 22, 1608, granting selected masters privileges and lodging in the Louvre galleries, calls the craftsman “our painter and *valet de chambre* and artificer in moving globes, sculptor, and [master of] other mechanical inventions.”¹³⁷ At a later time, when such a globe (made, according to Rivault de Fleurance, by the master for the king) had developed some mechanical problems, it was the Lisieux inventor who was summoned to Paris and reimbursed, on January 12, 1611, “for having come . . . to repair the globe of the Louvre’s Gallery, in which there were several broken parts, as well as for various pieces of work he would deliver to the late king. . . .”¹³⁸ Thus, the known official documents confirm Marin Le Bourgeois’s qualifications as a me-

chanic, inventor, and gun maker, qualifications ascribed to him by the admiring Rivault de Fleurance.

It could be expected that a person with such versatile vocational interests would be well acquainted with the practical use and functioning of the weapons he dealt with professionally. There is even an indirect testimony to this effect, a royal permit issued to Marin Le Bourgeois on May 4, 1605, to shoot various birds with the arquebus and the crossbow (in order to procure models for a painting ordered by the king).¹³⁹

In view of the leading role of the French gun makers—particularly the Le Bourgeois of Lisieux—in the early development of the so-called true flintlock, and on the basis of all the available documentation, it can only be reasserted that Marin Le Bourgeois was the most likely master to have designed the flintlock mechanism.

Advancing his theory that the flintlock made its appearance in France no earlier than the third decade of the seventeenth century,¹⁴⁰ Lavin sees evidence for this in the poem written by the gun maker François Pomerol which was presented, along with a gun made by him, to Louis XIII in 1631.¹⁴¹ In his verses Pomerol compares two flintlock constructions, calling the “fuzils à l’antique” the mechanisms with the sliding pan cover (i.e., snaphance) and the

135. Translated from the original text quoted in Huard 1913, p. 10.

136. Huard 1926, p. 178.

137. “. . . nostre peintre et vallet de chambre et ouvrier en globes mouvans, sculpteur, et aultres inventions mécaniques” (A. Berty and H. Legrand, *Topographie historique du vieux Paris, région du Louvre et des Tuileries* [Paris, 1868] II, p. 101). I thought it necessary to quote from the original, integral publication of this important document, since there are minor differences of wording in quotations from and references to it by modern writers.

138. Translated from the original text quoted in Huard 1913, pp. 34–35, no. XIII.

139. “. . . le roy . . . ayant commandé au sr Le Bourgeois, l’un de ses peintres et Vallets de Chambre, de luy faire . . . ung tableau au naturel de toutes sortes d’oiseaux, Sa Majesté a pour cest effect permis et permet au dit sieur Le Bourgeois de tirer avec l’harquebuzé et arbaleste à toutes espèces d’oiseaux” (B. Fillon, “Marin Le Bourgeois, peintre du roi,” *Nouvelles Archives de l’art français* [1876] pp. 144–145).

140. Gusler and Lavin, p. 6.

141. This poem, “Quatrains au roy,” is discussed and partly reprinted in Lenk/Hayward, pp. 28–29, from which quotations in the present article have been taken.

“fuzils nouveaux” those with the pan cover raised by the striking cock; the older design was preferred by the poet and gun maker, at least for civilian firearms.¹⁴² Pomerol began his career in gun making around 1590, dealing for some forty years of his professional life with wheel locks and snaphances. It thus seems more correct not to take his “fuzils nouveaux” too literally—as a construction that had just appeared—but rather to interpret this as a lock design of more recent introduction than the familiar and widely used “fuzils à l’antique,” the snaphance.

During the initial phase of its development, the flintlock was mostly applied to firearms custom-made for connoisseurs and mighty patrons such as Louis XIII (as was also the case with early wheel-lock firearms). Were the flintlock introduced into France only in the 1620s, one would expect its military application at a much later date, after experiments with and improvements in the new mechanism in civilian firearms had established confidence in its reliability. We find, however, an indication that the flintlock had already been fitted to some pistols in military use before 1631. On this subject, Pomerol himself voices criticism: “Speaking of pistols, I must say that I am astonished that in these unsettled times the use of flintlocks in pistols is sometimes seen, for as long as there is war I cannot bring myself to make flintlocks other than for the collector’s cabinet. . . . When peace is firmly established, flintlocks are convenient and durable for hunting on level, rugged terrain, but in the service of Mars their function is somewhat doubtful.”¹⁴³

The development of firearms soon proved that Pomerol’s skepticism about the use of the flintlock

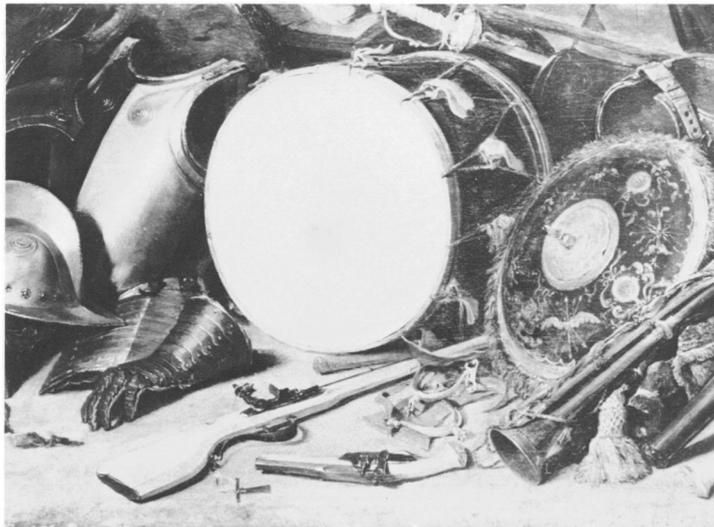
142. Respective descriptions read: “Les fuzils à l’antique, estant de bonne force, / Le bassinet s’ouvrant à temps et par ressort, / Semblent estre meilleurs . . . / . . . le bassinet est libre au coup de feu, / Et que ce coup bas n’hausse, ains pousse l’avant-piece.” As for “ces fuzils nouveaux,” two defects are peculiar to them: “Le feu s’y fait trop haut au dessus de la poudre, / Et s’escarte en tombant autour du bassinet. / En outre ce deffaut, un autre est au couvercle / Qui ne s’ouvre en haussant qu’après le coup du chien. . . .”

143. “Parlant des pistolets, je dirai nettement / Que je suis estonné qu’en ce temps plein d’alarmes / L’usage des fuzils s’y voit aucunement. / Car, tant que la guerre est, je ne puis me resoudre, / A faire des fuzils que pour le cabinet. / . . . au temps d’une paix asseuré, / Pour la chasse, en tous lieux unis rabeux, / Les fuzils sont aisez et de longue durée; / Mais au besoin de Mars ils sont un peu douteux.”

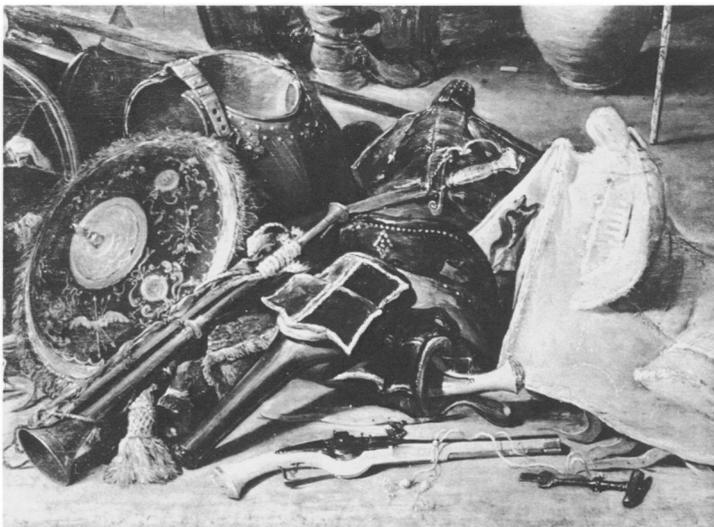


50. David Teniers the Younger (1610–90), *The Guard Room*, 1642. Leningrad, The Hermitage Museum, inv. G.E. no. 583 (photo: author)

51. Detail of Figure 50



52. Detail of Figure 50



in military pistols and guns was not shared by all professionals concerned, and there is evidence that a favorable view of the flintlock must indeed have been fairly widespread among Poumerol's contemporaries. A painting entitled *The Guard Room*, dated 1642 (Figures 50–52), by the Flemish artist David Teniers the Younger (1610–90),¹⁴⁴ depicts, among other weapons, a gun and a pistol with flintlocks whose basic forms correspond to flintlocks on deluxe civilian firearms datable to the 1630s and 1640s.¹⁴⁵ In this instance, however, both flintlock firearms have plain, undecorated stocks, barrels, and locks, their overall, purely utilitarian finish being in no way different from that of ordinary wheel-lock holster pistols of military type seen nearby (Figures 51, 52).¹⁴⁶ The painting thus documents the fact that by the early 1640s flintlock firearms had already been introduced into military panoply in the Spanish Netherlands, France's neighbor, and it is only logical to assume that the flintlock's native land did not lag behind but in all probability led the way in this development.

Number 230

The origin of the wheel-lock pistol bearing the *cabinet d'armes* number 230 (Figures 53–68) was established only in 1965, when the firearm was studied for a special exhibition to be held at the Hermitage for the 1966 Congress of the International Association of Museums of Arms and Military History. Before and after this event, the pistol was displayed in the French section of the museum's permanent arms exhibition, opened in 1952.¹⁴⁷

The pistol is so densely decorated all over that its first cataloguers wisely chose to engrave the inventory number on the lower leaf of the cock V-spring, the only exposed undecorated surface (Figure 64).

The 1673 description of this piece reads:

230. Un autre pistolet a roüet, de 27 pouces, le canon doré tout couvert d'ornemens gravez en taille d'espargne sur lequel est escrit en lettres gotiques: *Domine Dominus noster quam admirabile est nomen tuum in universa terra*, et d'autres ornemens de relief; le roüet de mesme, monté sur un bois enrichy d'ornemens d'ivoire.¹⁴⁸

The 1717 entry is slightly different and more detailed:

230. Un pistolet de vingt huit pouces de long, monté sur un bois enrichy d'ornemens d'ivoire, le pommeau est de cuivre doré cisélé, Le canon aussy doré, cisélé sur la culasse d'une figure de Mars, et sur le reste de rainceaux, fleurs et oyseaux, avec inscription en Lettres gottiques *DOMINE DOMINUS NOSTER, QUAM ADMIRABILE EST NOMEN TUUM IN UNIVERSA TERRAR*, la platine a roüet cisélé.¹⁴⁹

Although the 1775 inventory entries appear to copy those in the preceding document, in this particular entry the clerk deviated from the norm, omitting “en Lettres gottiques *DOMINE*” and trying to reproduce, with moderate success, the Gothic characters:

230. Vn pistolet de Vingt huit pouces de long, monté sur un Bois enrichi d'ornemens d'ivoire; Le pommeau est de Cuivre dorée cizelé; Le Canon aussi cizelé, sur la Culasse, d'une figure de Mars, et sur le reste de rainceaux, fleurs et oiseaux avec Inscription, *Dominus noster quam admirabile est nomen tuum in universa Terra*; La platine a rouet cizelé.¹⁵⁰

While all the documents provide a correct description of the pistol, the two later records give its length in an astonishingly precise way: 28 *pouces* converts to 75.79 centimeters (29.84 inches), while the modern measurement is 75.7 centimeters (29.8 inches). The length of the barrel is 57.6 centimeters (22.67 inches); the caliber is 9 millimeters (0.35 inch). All entries quote the inscription, which actually appears on the barrel as: *DOMINE DOMINUS NOSTER Q[UAM] A[D]MIRABILE E[S]T NOM[EN] TU[UM] IN UNI[VER]SA TERRA* (Figure 58). The cataloguers seem not to have

144. Hermitage Museum, inv. G.E. no. 583.

145. E.g., Lenk/Hayward, pls. 20:1,2; 21:6; 22:1.

146. Analyzing an almost identical but undated painting by the same artist, S. V. Grancsay interpreted all four firearms in the foreground as ivory-stocked pieces (“Arms and Armor in Paintings by David Teniers the Younger,” *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 9 [1946] p. 26). Another important detail to be noted in this picture is an *agujeta* lock on the musket hung on the wall racks in the background.

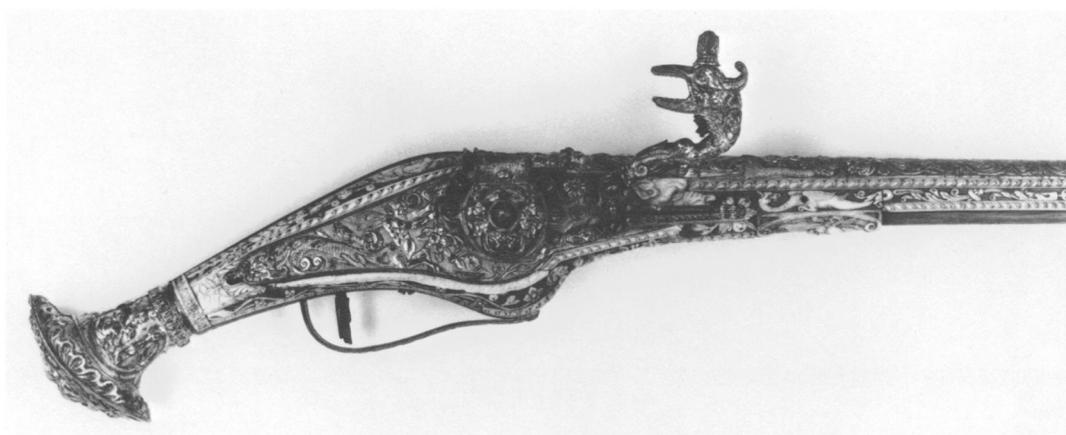
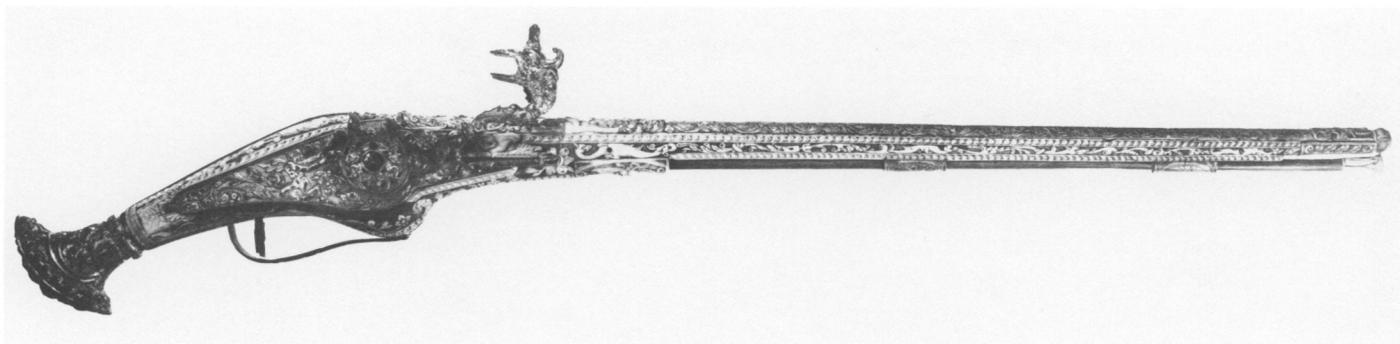
147. M. N. Larchenko, *Zapadnoevropeiskoye oruzhie XV–XVIII vekov* [The Hermitage Museum, Western European Arms and Armor of the 15th–18th Centuries] (Leningrad, 1963) p. 49, fig. 38. This piece was later briefly described by Blair, p. 90, fig. 56, and Tarassuk, p. 159, nos. 47–49.

148. Guiffrey, p. 72.

149. Grancsay 1970, p. 197.

150. O¹ 3349, fol. 300v. In O¹ 3350, fol. 154, this entry is exactly the same as in the 1717 inventory, save for differences in punctuation and orthography; “tuum” is mistakenly spelled “tuom,” while “terror” is corrected to “terra.”

53–68. Wheel-lock pistol, *cabinet d'armes* no. 230, Lorraine(?), last quarter of 16th century. Leningrad, The Hermitage Museum, inv. Z.O. no. 6304 (photos: author)



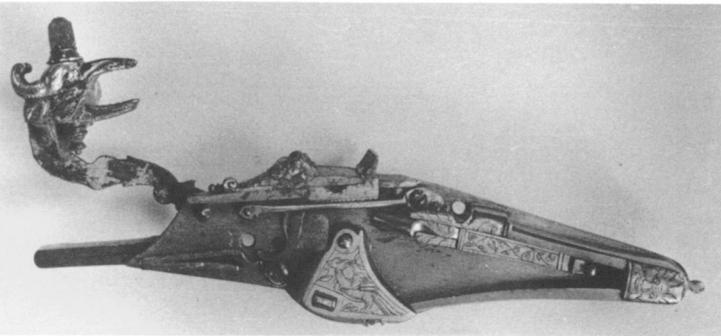
54. Detail, no. 230



55. Detail of left side, no. 230



56. Detail of lock, grip, and pommel, no. 230



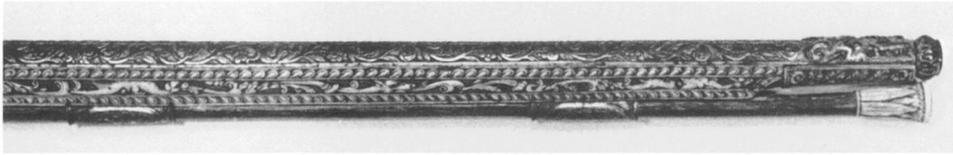
57. Inside of lock, no. 230



58. Inscription on barrel, no. 230 (plaster cast from a latex mold)



59. Fore end, no. 230



60. Frontal part, no. 230



61. Top view of breech section, no. 230



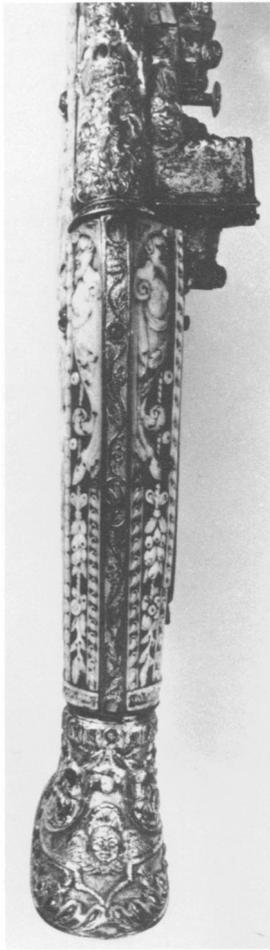
62. Rear part of stock and barrel, no. 230

64. Detail of underside, no. 230, showing N° 230 on cock spring



63. Chiseler's mark (enlarged) on breech, no. 230





65. Top view of grip, no. 230

66. Left side of pommel, no. 230



67. Top view of pommel, no. 230



68. Pommel cap, no. 230

been bothered by the abbreviations in it, certainly because they easily recognized the verse from Psalm 8 (Vulgate, Ps. 8:1, also 13).

The provenance of pistol no. 230 can be traced only to the 1850s and 1860s, when it appeared in at least three public sales. A detailed description of it, including the full (and correct) quotation of the Bible verse on the barrel, is found in the sale catalogue of the E. Laborie collection offered in Paris in 1867. The catalogue calls this firearm a “Magnifique pistolet à rouet du temps de Henri II” and states that this remarkable piece, already well known to amateurs, came from the Humann and the Norzy collections.¹⁵¹ The latter, sold in 1860, included indeed a “Très beau pistolet à rouet du temps de Henri II” whose description corresponds to no. 230, with a reference to Humann as its previous owner.¹⁵² The sale of the Humann collection occurred in 1858 and included eighty-five arms.¹⁵³

The Laborie auction did not, in fact, take place, because the whole collection was sold privately to a Russian nobleman, Vassilii L'vovich Naryshkin.¹⁵⁴ That same year he resold, also in Paris, part of his acquisition, including some (mostly Oriental) weapons and armor.¹⁵⁵ In 1869 Naryshkin presented several pieces from his art collection to Emperor Alexander II of Russia, and in 1870 the imperial Tsarskoselskii Arsenal acquired a number of other objects from this collector. When the major part of the Arsenal was moved to the Imperial Hermitage in 1886, this pistol almost certainly was not among the items transferred, since it is not mentioned in any of the guides to the arms exhibition opened at the Hermitage in 1888. This large display was later reorganized, but the comprehensive 1908 catalogue by Lenz, which includes over a dozen pieces from the Naryshkin collection, likewise does not list pistol no. 230. It is not likely that this pistol, by far the best and most spectacular of its kind the Hermitage has ever had, would have been overlooked had it been in the museum's collection.

The piece first appeared in the inventory begun at the museum in the 1930s. At that time new inventory numbers were assigned to the whole collection, both to the objects already kept there at the time of the 1917 revolutions and to the items received thereafter. The latter group included more than six thousand arms from the State Museum Fund, a temporary custodian of art objects from private collections

confiscated by virtue of a 1918 edict that proclaimed the Soviet state sole owner of historic relics and works of art.¹⁵⁶ This seems the most likely source from which pistol no. 230 came to the Hermitage, and the piece can be assumed to have remained the property of the Naryshkins or another family until the time when private collections were expropriated.

It may be appropriate now to describe the pistol in more detail than could be done in publications devoted to a broad range of firearms.¹⁵⁷ All the exposed steel surfaces of the barrel, lock, and mounts are chiseled and gilded. The barrel muzzle (Figure 59) has a bulbous molding with ovoli and a monstrous dog's head. The psalm verse in Gothic letters (Figure 58) is bordered by running floral scrolls inhabited, near the breech, by two owls. On the breech section (Figure 61), a molding with foliage is followed by a figure of Mars standing among trophies and holding a falchion, and then by a term supporting a grotesque female within a strapwork cartouche and a foliate canopy with a lion's head on each side.

On the lock plate (Figures 54, 56), chiseled in relief, is a fabulous creature with a winged centaur's torso, a faun's head, and a dragon's tail ending in a monster's head; in the remaining space are sculptured a snail and a bird among foliage. On the wheel cover are a grotesque mask, a cherub's head, and two symmetrically seated human figures; above, on the pan fence, is an angel's head. The cock is shaped like a monster's head supported by a mermaid. On the pan-cover release button is chiseled a

151. *Catalogue des objets d'art . . . composant la précieuse collection de M. E. Laborie*, sale cat., Hôtel Drouot (Paris, Feb. 11–15, 1867) lot 1.

152. *Catalogue des objets d'art . . . composant la précieuse collection de M. . . . [M. de Norzy]*, sale cat., Hôtel Drouot (Paris, Mar. 12–17, 1860) lot 275.

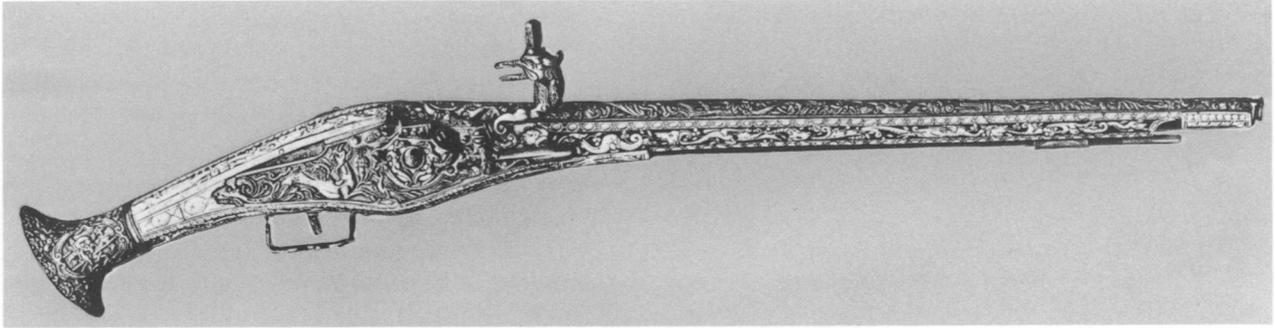
153. F. Lugt, *Répertoire des catalogues de ventes publiques: II. 1826–1860* (The Hague, 1956) no. 23977. I could not find a copy of the Humann sale catalogue to verify that reference or to trace the earlier provenance of the lot in question.

154. F. H. Cripps-Day, “A Record of Armour Sales, Supplemental List,” typescript in the Victoria and Albert Museum (London, 1963) p. A.26. The buyer, called here “Prince Narishkin,” belonged, in fact, to untitled nobility.

155. *Objets d'art et de curiosité . . . provenant en partie de la collection de M. E. Laborie et appartenant à M. Narishkin*, sale cat., Me V. Pillet, C. Mannheim (Paris, May 20–21, 1867) pp. 22ff., lots 100–136.

156. *Musée de l'Ermitage* (Leningrad, 1925) pp. 33, 34.

157. Blair, p. 90, fig. 56; Tarassuk, p. 159, figs. 47–49.



69. Wheel-lock pistol, Lorraine(?), last quarter of 16th century. Formerly Paris, Spitzer Collection (photo: after *La Collection Spitzer*, VI, no. 344, pl. LIV)

five-petal flower. The cock-spring edges are incised with a palmette and leaves, the spring tail being shaped like a dog's head. Interior parts of the lock (Figure 57) are engraved with a grotesque mustached face, foliage, and a dragon. The trigger takes the form of an elongated dog's head.

The central decoration on the top of the pommel (Figures 54–56, 66–68) is a cherub's head in a cartouche surmounted by a canopy. On the sides are two grotesque human figures within large scrolls formed by lateral offshoots of the cartouche. The borders are chiseled with acanthus leaves and a loop pattern. On the convex pommel cap (Figure 68) is a horned lion's mask in a strapwork cartouche.

The trigger guard and the lower and upper grip straps (the latter formed by an extended breech-plug tang) are chiseled with delicate running foliage (Figures 64, 65).

The stock, inlaid with carved ivory figures and ornaments standing out in relief, is of exceptional quality. The sides of the fore stock (Figures 54, 55) are bordered by strips of petals with space between them filled by running scrolls and monstrous animals. In front of the lock are a large monster's head, a flower, and a chimera (Figure 62). The lock recess and grip (Figures 54, 56) are contoured by petal strips of the same pattern (small parts of which were broken off and replaced). On the opposite side (Figure 55) the composition comprises grotesque masks, birds, and animals around a central figure of a trumpeting angel on a chariot pulled by centaurlike monsters. On the underside of the stock (Figure 64) are running floral stems and a vase with flowers. The ramrod half

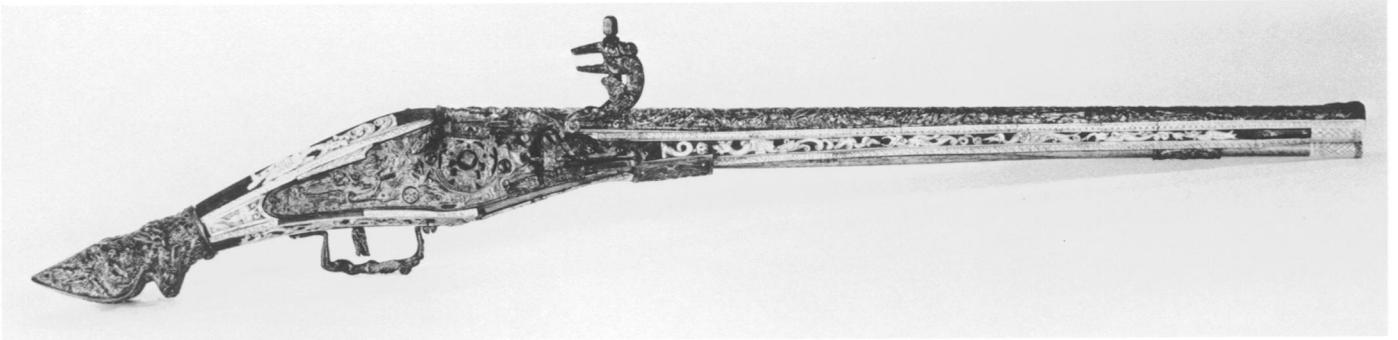
pipe of ivory is carved with a veiled woman's head within a scrolled cartouche. The grip, divided by the breech tang, is symmetrically inlaid with two faun terms and garlands of fruits and flowers (Figure 65).

Examination of the pistol revealed minuscule marks stamped with cutting tools on the blade of the falchion held by Mars (Figure 63). The marks were obviously struck by the artist when he was chiseling the barrel, most likely before the gilding. The purely decorative value of these tiny signs is negligible and it is unclear whether they were intended as the master's marks, as an astrological (or astronomical) symbol related to Mars, or as an imitation of swordsmiths' marks placed (as on real sword blades) on the forte. If these marks represent an astrological symbol, they could be interpreted as the sign of the sun ☉ surmounted by a cross, or as an incorrectly rendered symbol of Venus ♀ or of Earth ♂. In the latter case, the marking might even be seen as an imitation of the *Reichsapfel* mark on some sixteenth-century German blades.

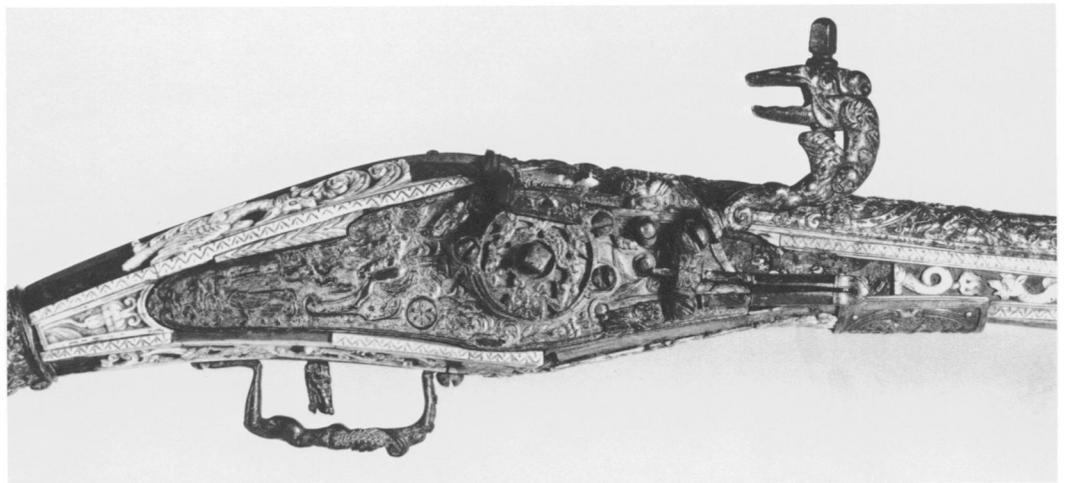
Several other firearms are related to the Hermitage pistol. The closest similar example is the wheel-lock pistol that was formerly in the Spitzer collection (Figure 69).¹⁵⁸ Its general form, the shape of most of its parts, and its length—76 centimeters (29.9 inches)—are the same as those of pistol no. 230. The decoration on corresponding parts was executed in the same style and with the same technique and materials in both pieces. The similarity between them is not so complete, however, as to make them a pair:

158. [E. Müntz, J.-B. Giraud, E. Molinier], *La Collection Spitzer VI* (Paris, 1892) p. 76, no. 344, pl. LIV; *La Collection Spitzer: Armes et armures*, sale cat., Galerie Georges Petit (Paris, June 10–14, 1895) p. 72, lot 349. It was sold for 5,100 francs, according to F. H. Cripps-Day, *A Record of Armour Sales 1881–1924* (London, 1925) p. 96. Its present whereabouts are unknown to this writer.

70-76. Wheel-lock pistol, Lorraine(?), last quarter of 16th century. Berlin, Museum für Deutsche Geschichte, W 1148 (photos: Museum für Deutsche Geschichte, R. Boemke)

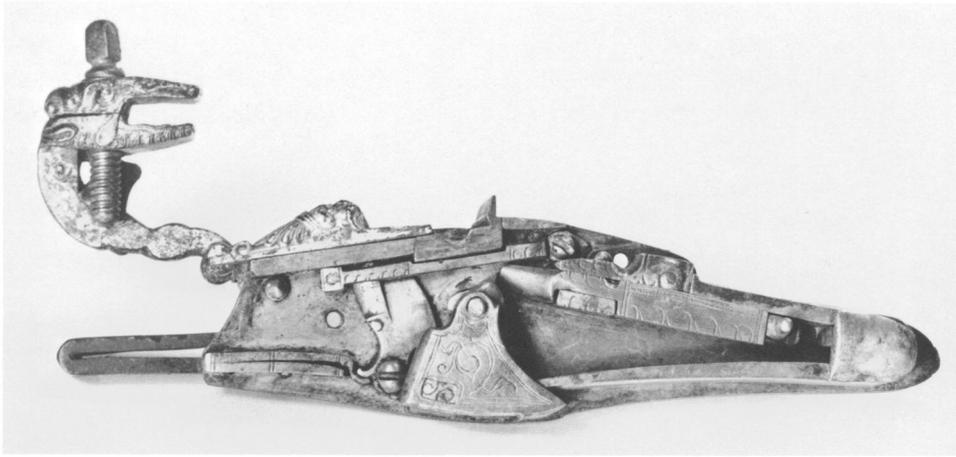


71. Lock section



72. Detail of left side of stock





73. Inside of lock

74. Top view of barrel (frontal section)



75. Top view of breech section



76. Top view of pommel



there are visible differences in details of ornament and in the contour of the stocks (that of no. 230 protruding downward much beyond the space necessary for its lock and more befitting a wheel-lock mechanism of French construction). As for the workmanship, there is little doubt that the metal parts and stocks of both pistols were decorated in the same workshops, with ornamental motifs derived from common sources.

The wheel-lock pistol in the Museum für Deutsche Geschichte, Berlin (Figures 70–76),¹⁵⁹ seems to have originated in the workshops of the same steel chiseler and stock maker responsible for the decoration of the two pistols just described. The stylistic and technical affinity of all three pieces is best observed in chiseled and gilt barrels, locks, and mounts displaying, amid foliage, grotesque creatures, masks, animals, and classical figures. The last occur more often on the Berlin pistol. Its barrel shows female figures symbolizing the five senses and labeled accordingly in Latin: TACTVS, GVSTVS, OLFACIVS, AVDITVS, VISVS. On the lock plate (Figure 71) are Amor and Venus in a chariot pulled by birds; these two deities are shown also on the fore-stock tip. The hoof-shaped pommel (Figure 76) displays two Roman personifications marked PAX and BELLUM and some other classical subjects among ornamental motifs.

The locks of no. 230 and the Berlin pistol (Figures 57, 73) show close similarity in design, various details, and ornamentation on the inside, which betrays the hand of the same lock maker.

On the Berlin pistol, decoration of the stock with carved bone inlays is somewhat different in technical execution from the ivory decoration on the other two pistols, but stylistically all three stocks show the same workmanship and treatment of ornamental patterns.

The chiseled and gilt barrel and lock of the wheel-lock pistol-carbine in the Tower of London (Figures 77–84)¹⁶⁰ were also apparently decorated in the workshop that produced the steel parts of the three pieces just described. Moreover, interior details and finish of the lock of the Tower pistol-carbine (Figure 82) point to the same lock maker who worked on the aforementioned pieces, or at least on two of them (Figures 57, 73), the lock interior of the Spitzer pistol being impossible to examine.

The stock of the Tower pistol-carbine is quite different in style and workmanship from the stocks of

the three other pistols. It is inlaid with engraved mother-of-pearl and staghorn, displaying foliage with green-stained leaves, human figures, grotesque masks, animals, and fabulous creatures. A unique feature of the stock decoration is four glass-covered miniature painted medallions, which are very likely optional ornaments incorporated at the special request of the customer or owner of the firearm. This is borne out by the German inscription VER GIS MEIN NIT (forget me not) on two of these medallions, probably reflecting the status of the object as a presentation piece. Another unusual feature in the decoration of the stock is six inset silver disks stamped in relief with grotesque faces and masks. Though uncommon, this kind of embellishment is also found on the wheel-lock petronel in the Musée de l'Armée (Figures 85, 86),¹⁶¹ whose stock is inset with forty-two very similar silver disks with masks and lions' heads. Besides these miniature medallions, both stocks have other affinities in the style and workmanship of the inlaid decoration, and this has led Hayward to suggest that the two stocks may have been produced in the same workshop.¹⁶²

While the Paris petronel is thus linked to the group of pistols with steel parts chiseled and gilt all over, its own lock and barrel are completely different in form and decorative finish. The barrel and lock plate of the petronel have an even surface finely crosshatched, gilt, and engraved with foliage, fauns, and fabulous animals. Unlike other locks in this group, which in shape somewhat resemble French wheel locks but are, in fact, of German type in construction and dimensions, the petronel lock is purely French in all respects.

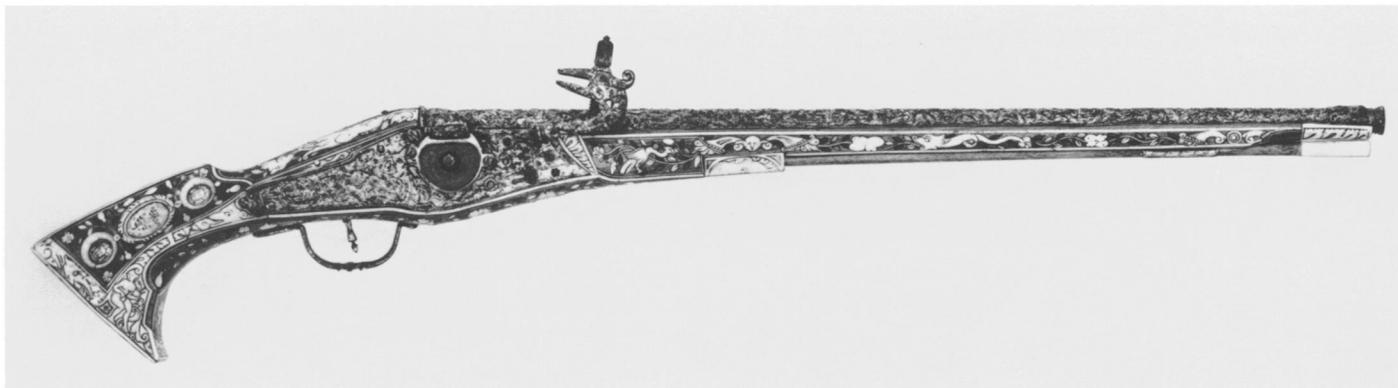
159. The pistol W 1148 was recently illustrated in color by H. Müller, *Guns, Pistols, Revolvers* (New York, 1980) pp. 66, 67, figs. 43, 44.

160. Pistol-carbine XII-1764 is described by A. V. B. Norman and G. M. Wilson, *Treasures from the Tower of London: An Exhibition of Arms and Armour* (London, 1982) pp. 74, 75, no. 61, pl. xvii. It is also discussed by Hayward, *The Art of the Gunmaker* (1962) I, pp. 100, 101, pl. 25b.

161. The cock seen in Figures 85 and 86 is an 18th-century German lock part used as a replacement of the original cock, which was still present in the 1920s (Gén. E. Mariaux, *Le Musée de l'Armée: Armes et armures anciennes et souvenirs historiques* [Paris, 1927] II, pl. xxxix).

162. Hayward, *The Art of the Gunmaker* (1962) I, pp. 100ff.

77-84. Wheel-lock pistol-carbine, Lorraine(?), 1581.
London, The Royal Armouries, H.M. Tower of
London, XII-1764 (photos: Ministry of Public
Building and Works, crown copyright reserved)



78. Left side

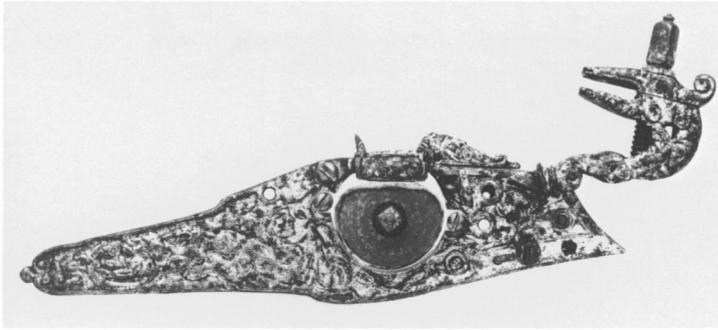


79. Rear part

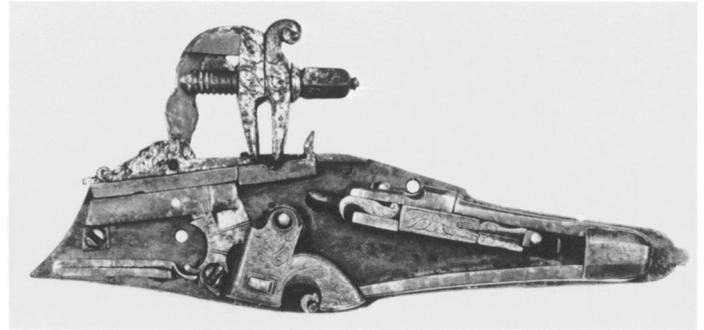
80. Detail of left side



81. Lock



82. Inside of lock

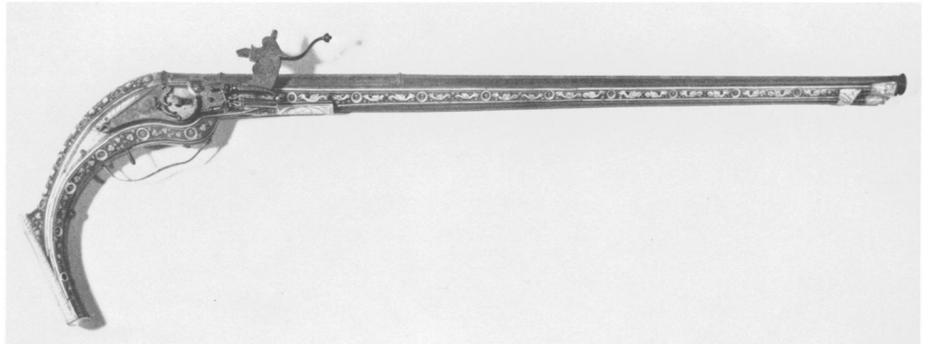


83. Top view of barrel

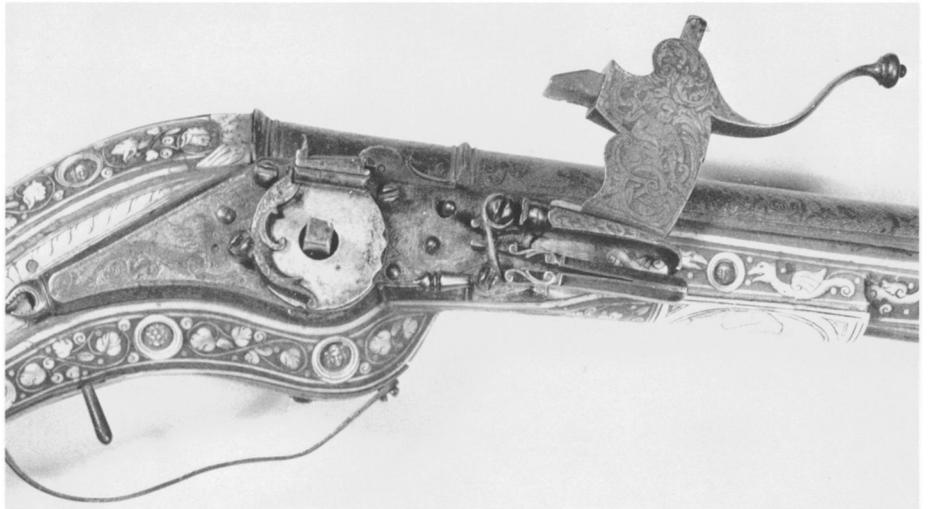
84. Detail of barrel



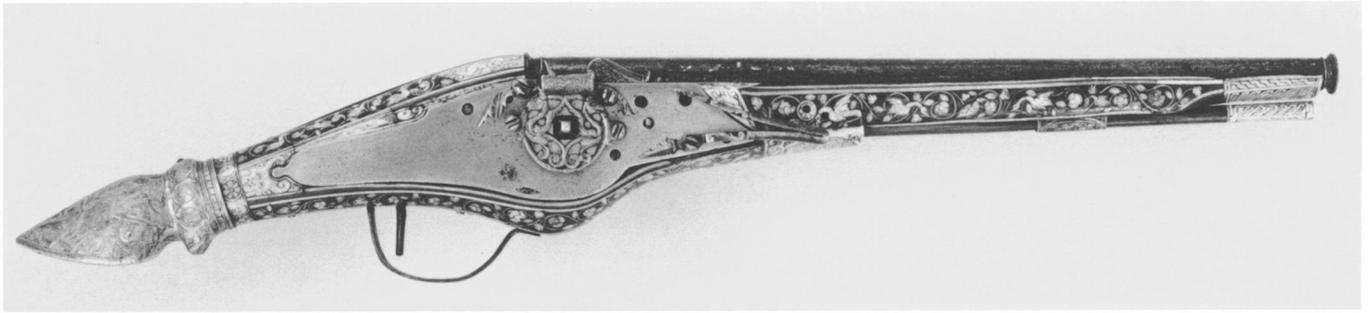
85, 86. Wheel-lock petronel, Eastern France or Lorraine(?), last quarter of 16th century. Paris, Musée de l'Armée, M. 98-876 (photos: Musée de l'Armée)



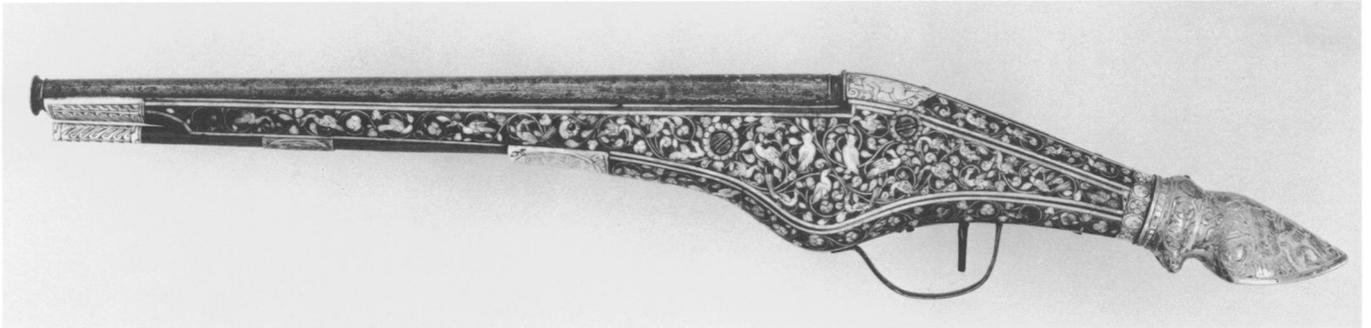
86. Lock



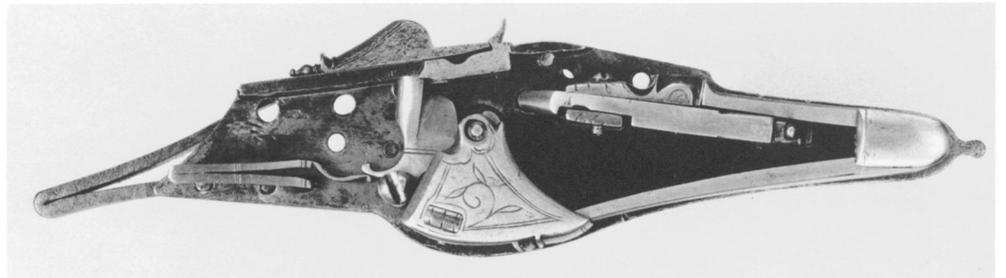
87-92. Wheel-lock pistol, Lorraine(?), last quarter of 16th century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913, 14.25.1431



88. Left side



89. Top view of breech section



90. Inside of lock

91. Top view of pommel



92. Underside of pommel



There is still another firearm that seems to be related to the same group. It is a wheel-lock pistol in The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Figures 87–92).¹⁶³ Transversal multiridge moldings on both ends of its barrel are of the same type seen on the Paris petronel, and a further similarity can be observed in the decoration of the barrel, which preserves traces of incised and damascened ornament on fine crosshatching. The lower grip strap and the long tang forming the upper grip strap are decorated in this technique, too. On the breech is an oval gold-overlaid mark with the initials *IG* over a running animal (a deer or a dog). The lock form, interior design, and finish (Fig-

163. The barrel and lock are damaged by corrosion. The lock, pan-cover retaining spring, and button release are missing. The overall length is 55.2 cm. (21.75 in.); the caliber is 10 mm. (0.39 in.). On the trigger guard is incised the numeral 4. The wheel cover, formerly gilt, is chiseled with two addorsed dragons.

ure 90) are similar to those of other pieces in this group, except for the French-type wheel lock of the Paris petronel. The stock form, with a curved bulge under the lock, is also common to all firearms in this group. The stock itself is densely inlaid with engraved bone displaying foliage with green-stained leaves inhabited by owls, ducks, and doves. Stock-mount plaques are engraved with masks, gadroons, nude figures in cartouches, and Amor and Venus. Although different in graphic pattern, the stock decoration is similar in manner and in treatment of some subjects to the decoration on the Tower pistol-carbine (Figures 77–80). Finally, there is a resemblance in the conception of the hoof-shaped pommels of the Berlin pistol (Figures 70, 76) and the one at the Metropolitan Museum, despite differences in ornament and execution. The pommel of the New York pistol (Figures 91, 92) is made of cast, chiseled, and gilt bronze; the ornament stands out in low relief against a granulated background and consists mostly of Roman armor, banners, falchions, and a close-helmet.

To sum up the interconnections within this group: the metal parts of four pistols (no. 230, ex-Spitzer, Berlin, London) seem to have originated in the same workshop; the stocks of three of these pistols were probably also decorated in one workshop; the stock of the fourth pistol (London) appears to have been made in another workshop that also produced the stock of the French petronel (Paris). It is probable that the barrel of the French petronel was made by a master from the circle responsible for the barrel of the New York pistol, this barrel marked by the gunsmith *IG*. The lock and stock of the New York pistol show certain affinities with the other pistols in the group.

The obvious inference to be drawn from the presence in this group of the French wheel-lock petronel—that all the firearms are of French origin or at least French-inspired—is enhanced by some specific features in common. The pistols have long barrels of very small calibers ranging from 9 to 11 millimeters (about 0.35 to 0.42 inch), which is fairly typical of French pistols. The barrel tang is extended to the pommel to reinforce the grip, which for the same purpose is also provided with a matching strap on the underside. In French wheel-lock firearms, this pair of straps strengthened the grip hollowed out to house the mainspring attached to the lock plate. The

shape of the pistol stocks, which closely follows the lock-plate contour, in two instances (Figures 53, 87) noticeably deviates from this practice by forming a larger projection under the lock. While in French wheel-lock firearms such a semicircular bulge accommodated the mainspring lower branch, in these two pistols it did not serve any practical purpose but simply reflected the French fashion.

Ornamental designs used in decoration of the firearms in this group are of little help in attempts to locate the workshops that produced these pieces. The style and subjects of their decoration were largely inspired by, or derived from, ornamental compositions by Netherlandish and French masters, particularly Cornelis II and Jacob Floris, Cornelis Bos, Jacques Androuet (Ducerceau), Etienne Delaune, and Adrian Collaert. In vogue from the mid-sixteenth century, such ornamental patterns were applied to the decoration of metal and wood in France, Germany, the Low Countries, and Italy. Italy, however, does not seem to be of importance in determining the origin of the firearms in question, since they clearly reflect strong German and French influence. This circumstance points to the region west of the Rhine, comprising the southern Netherlands, adjoining German districts, and Lorraine, as the area most likely to have produced firearms combining the group's technical and stylistic features. The Latin verse in Gothic letters on pistol no. 230 and the German inscriptions on the Tower pistol-carbine are understandable in the context of this cultural region. Pistols in the group probably represent an early stage in the development of the form that likewise merged the French stock and the German lock design, becoming widely popular in the seventeenth century in the Netherlands and the Rhineland, as well as in southern Germany and Switzerland.

Among several specialist craftsmen involved in production of these firearms, the most proficient appear to be the artists responsible for chiseled metal decoration and for the three stocks with carved inlays. While more precise data to determine the location of these workshops are not yet available, a clue may be perceived in certain affinities between the firearms discussed and the well-known wheel-lock gun, dated 1621, whose lock and barrel were decorated by Jean Henequin in Metz (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich).¹⁶⁴ This gun, too, has a lock and stock strongly reminiscent of the French style, but its

lock mechanism is actually of German construction, as is the case with all the pistols in this group. A resemblance to other guns in the group can also be seen in the bold artistic treatment of the barrel and lock, which are partly chiseled in relief and gilt. Certainly, ornamental sources and the style of the gun's decoration are different, but this may be accounted for by the fact that the six firearms previously described were made some twenty to forty years earlier than the Henequin gun and were decorated by different artists belonging to the same cultural circle.

Number 100

Though apparently lacking a royal inventory marking (like some other items from Louis XIII's collection), another firearm in the Hermitage Museum (Figures 93, 94) appears to have come from the *cabinet d'armes*. It corresponds to no. 100, which is described in the 1673 inventory thus:

100. Un autre pistolet en fuzil qui s'allonge par le canon en manière de baston de canne, tout uny, long de 3 pieds 9 pouces.¹⁶⁵

Additional information is found in the 1717 inventory:

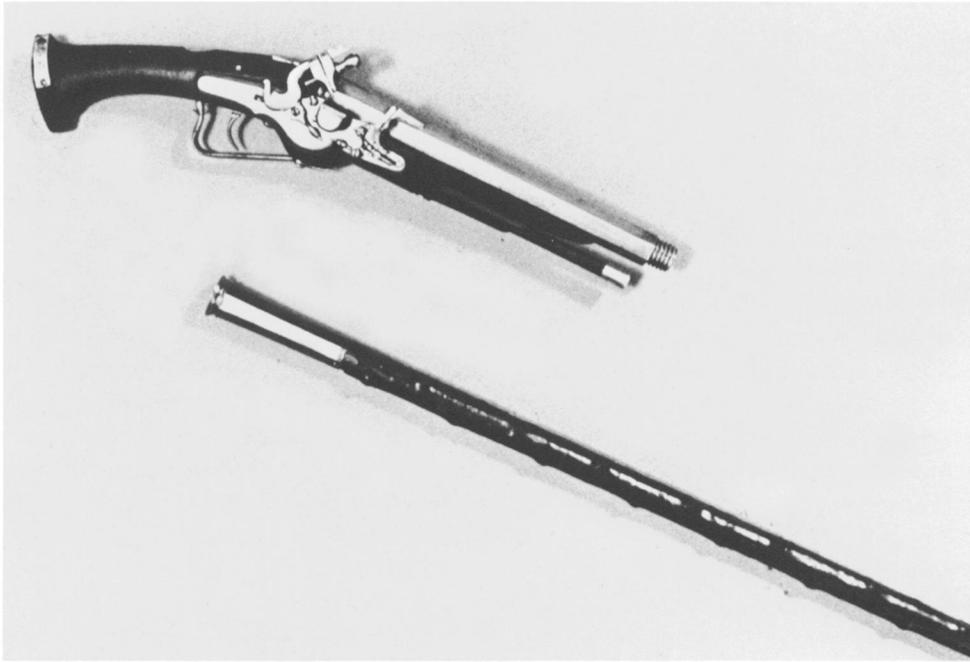
100. Un pistolet en fusil qui s'allonge par le canon a vis, manière de baton de canne uny, long de trois pieds neuf pouces, monté sur un bois de noyer.¹⁶⁶

At the time the 1775 entry for this item was to be written, or rather copied, a part of this firearm was

164. E. Schalkhauser, "Die Handfeuerwaffen des Bayerischen Nationalmuseums," *Waffen- und Kostümkunde* (1967) pt. 1, pp. 15ff., no. 20, figs. 61–63. This gun is also discussed by Hayward, *The Art of the Gunmaker* (1962) I, pp. 104, 254 passim, pls. 53b, 36a, 36b; idem, "The Wheel-lock by Jean Henequin in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum," *Waffen- und Kostümkunde* (1977) pt. 2, pp. 151–156. So little is known about this master that it may be of some use to point out the Flemish origin of the name Henequin. It is a matter of conjecture as to whether he was a recent migrant from the Low Countries who might have been working in the manner of his native artistic circle. There were several Flemish artists of that name working in France (U. Thieme and F. Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler* [Leipzig, 1907–50] s.v. "Hennequin; Henequin").

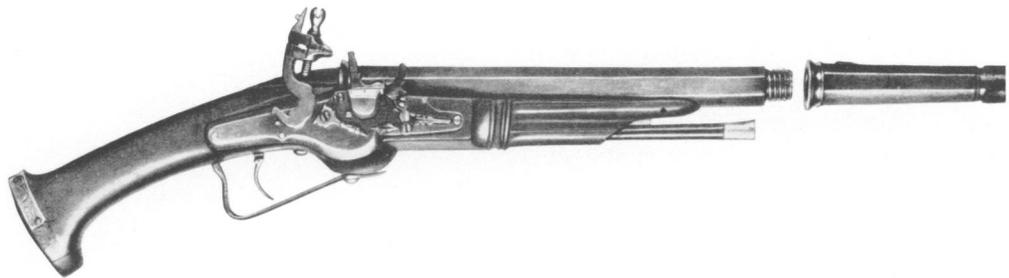
165. Guiffrey, p. 55.

166. Grancsay 1970, p. 190.



93. Snaphance pistol with extension barrel, *cabinet d'armes* no. 100, Netherlandish, ca. 1630–40. Leningrad, The Hermitage Museum, inv. Z.O. nos. 7063/7710 (photo: author)

94. *Cabinet d'armes* no. 100, pistol with rear part of extension barrel (photo: after Tarassuk, no. 527)



probably misplaced or, at least, not present, which resulted in the following record:

100. Vn pistolet enfusil qui s'allonge par Le Canon a visse, maniere de baton de canne uni; Long de trois pieds neuf pouces, monté sur un bois de Noyer.

Nota, manque le Canon.¹⁶⁷

However, while inventory-making was still in progress the barrel was found and united with the pistol, since another copy of this inventory registers no loss.¹⁶⁸

All the entries put together thus describe a walnut-stocked pistol with a kind of flintlock, provided with an attachable screw-on or turn-off extension barrel that looks like a walking stick. The recorded overall length of the assembled piece converts to 121.8 centimeters (47.96 inches). Among ten firearms with extension parts registered in the inventories (nos. 92–101), this was the only item termed “en fuzil,” the

¹⁶⁷. O' 3349, fol. 281.

¹⁶⁸. O' 3350, fol. 136v, gives the same description but has no note on the missing barrel.

others being described as wheel locks (it has been shown earlier in this paper that the references in 1717 and 1775 to no. 99 as “en fusil,” a pistol, were mistaken).

There is, in fact, only one difference between the descriptions in the inventories and the Hermitage firearm, namely that the stock of the extant pistol is carved of ebony and not of walnut (“bois de noyer,” first mentioned in the 1717 entry). The length of the firearm with its extension barrel screwed on is 121.3 centimeters (47.75 inches),¹⁶⁹ which is a difference of only 0.5 centimeter (0.21 inch) from the old measurements.

This piece had been part of the Count Sheremetev collection of arms and armor, which in 1930 was transferred to the Hermitage. When information about the gun was first published, the pistol stock was still intact, its fore end reaching up to the threaded locking section of the barrel.¹⁷⁰ During numerous relocations of the arms collection in the 1930s, the fore stock was broken off and the extension barrel altogether lost.¹⁷¹ In 1969, the stock was partly, and poorly, repaired, and the turn-off barrel found and catalogued under a separate number (inv. Z.O. no. 7710).

The barrel of the pistol is octagonal, with a ridged molding at the breech end. Its caliber is 11.7 millimeters (0.46 inch). On the left side of the elegantly shaped stock is a belt hook. The pommel is decorated with a silver band (now partly broken off), engraved with running foliage. In the center of the pommel bottom is inserted a threaded flange, probably for the attachment of a light shoulder butt that also might have served as a handle when screwed to the walking stick, that is, the extension barrel of the pistol. This barrel is covered with dark brown leather and has the appearance of a knotty cane; the muzzle molding and 8-centimeter-long rear section are octagonal and are left uncovered.

The lock has an L-shaped steel pan cover with an unusually long curved spur and pivot lug that cause the steel to rise high when struck by the flint, as in more usual types of snaphance. Contrary to Dr. Hoff's suggestion,¹⁷² this part is not a replacement of an earlier, separate steel and sliding pan cover, since there are no traces of such construction or of any re-making of the lock. To work with the L-shaped steel, the cock is provided with two positions secured by a horizontal two-nose sear that engages the cock heel

for the full-cock stop and catches a notch in the tumbler to keep the lock primed and half cocked (Figure 94).¹⁷³ These modifications of the snaphance design and form certainly reflect the influence of the flintlock of French construction.

The pistol barrel is stamped with the gun maker's mark: *WP* under a crown, within an angular shield.¹⁷⁴ The same mark was found on the barrel of a pistol combined with a war hammer in the Hermitage Museum.¹⁷⁵ The lock of this latter weapon looks outwardly like a French flintlock of the 1630s, resembling, for instance, the locks shown in Thomas Picquot's engravings.¹⁷⁶ However, the tumbler and sear construction of the lock, if compared with the lock of no. 100, actually represents a further modification of the snaphance, since both noses of the horizontal sear act directly on the corresponding lugs of the tumbler to secure half- and full-cock positions.¹⁷⁷

The *WP* mark occurs again on the barrels of a pair of cock-spanned wheel-lock pistols also in the Hermitage.¹⁷⁸ One of these barrels is also stamped with the initials *AG* in a rectangle, probably the barrel smith's mark. It is noteworthy that the ebony stocks of this pair are so close in form and carved finish to the stock of no. 100 that all three stocks must have been made by the same workshop in the 1630s, probably slightly before the pistol with war hammer mentioned earlier.

169. In a previous publication (Tarassuk, p. 211, no. 527) the length of the pistol and that of the extension barrel were given separately (37.3 cm. and 85.4 cm.). If added, these would give an overall length of 122.7 cm., of which 1.4 cm. is taken up by the threaded section of the pistol barrel screwed into the extension.

170. E. von Lenz, *Die Waffensammlung des Grafen S. D. Scheremetev in St. Petersburg* (Leipzig, 1897) pp. 208–209, no. 1128, pls. xi, xxvi; Russian ed. (1896) p. 176.

171. This condition was illustrated by Blair, p. 93, fig. 99.

172. A. Hoff, *Dutch Firearms* (London, 1978) p. 72.

173. For a diagram of this construction see Blair, p. 164, ill. v.

174. Stöckel, II, no. 4802.

175. Hermitage Museum, inv. Z.O. no. 5398. Tarassuk, p. 210, no. 522; formerly in the Sheremetev collection (Lenz, *Die Waffensammlung*, p. 112; no. 397, pl. x).

176. Lenk/Hayward, pl. 110:1,2.

177. Comparable construction is illustrated by Blair, p. 165, ill. vi.

178. Hermitage Museum, inv. Z.O. nos. 5538/5647. Tarassuk, p. 165, no. 113; formerly in the Sheremetev collection (Lenz, *Die Waffensammlung*, p. 198, nos. 1052, 1053, pls. xv, xxiv, xxvi).

While in his 1971 publication this writer attributed a Netherlandish origin to the firearms bearing the master's mark *WP*, a suspicion was also expressed that an English origin could not be excluded. Since then these pieces have been studied by Hoff, who is inclined to believe that they were all produced in the Low Countries.¹⁷⁹

THE KREMLIN ARMORY, MOSCOW

Number 163

The splendid flintlock fowling piece no. 163 of the *cabinet d'armes* (Figures 95–98) was in the Berlin Zeughaus before the Second World War.¹⁸⁰ It was discussed and illustrated by Lenk, who suggested that it had been presented to Louis XIII on the occasion of the long-awaited birth of his son.¹⁸¹ The dolphin motif extensively used in the decoration of this piece, along with the fleurs-de-lis and the royal monogram, seems to justify this theory, which means that the presentation must have taken place soon after September 5, 1638, when Dauphin Louis was born.

This gun is described as follows in the 1673 inventory:

162. Un grand fuzil très riche, de 5 pieds ½, le canon couleur d'eau, rond par devant et à pans sur la culasse enrichie de fleurs de lis, dauphins et d'L couronnées, ayant un dragon de cuivre doré de relief qui sert de visière; la platine gravée d'une chasse de cerf en taille douce sur un bois d'ébène; la crosse persée dans laquelle est enchassé un dauphin de cuivre doré; sur la queue de la culasse est écrit: *Derogez m'a donné au Roy*.¹⁸²

The 1717 inventory gives a similar description:

163. Un grand et beau fusil de cinq pieds et demy de long, monté sur un bois d'Ebène, la crosse a jour dans laquelle est un Dauphin de cuivre doré, Le canon couleur d'Eau, rond par le bout et a pans sur la culasse, enrichie de fleurs de lis, Dauphins, et L couronnées, Le tout d'or et sur la queue de la culasse est écrit *DESROGEZ m'a donné au ROY*, la platine gravée d'une chasse de cerf.¹⁸³

Compilers of the 1775 inventory repeated, with minor differences, the previous description:

163. Vn grand et beau fusil de cinq pieds et demi de Long, monté sur un bois d'Ebene La Crosse a jour, dans laquelle est un Dauphin de Cuivre doré; LeCanon, coul[eur] d'Eau, rond, par Les bout, et apans sur [la] Culasse, enrichie de fleurs de Lys, Dauph[ins] et L. Couronnées, Letout d'or; et sur laqu[eu]e de la Culasse, est écrit, Desroges m'a donné au [Roy] Laplatine gravée d'une Chasse de cerf.¹⁸⁴

From a comparison of these entries, it appears that by 1717 a prominent copper-gilt rear sight shaped like a dragon, which was described in 1673, had been replaced by a much simpler standing sight that the compilers of the second inventory did not care to mention (a normal omission in their descriptions of firearms). More difficult to explain is the absence of the inscription on the barrel tang, an inscription quoted in all three inventories. It could be, of course, that the first cataloguers were simply wrong about the inscription, which in actual fact was to be found on another object nearby when the inventory was made; their error could then have been repeated in later inventories without the gun itself having been checked. However, such a mistake does not seem likely in the case of this outstanding, luxurious firearm, the subject of a lengthy and detailed description in the 1673 inventory. The gun had apparently also been examined before the relevant entry for the 1717 inventory was drawn up; an amendment appeared concerning the back sight, although the record of the inscription was left intact.

These facts lead to the suggestion that at some time after the 1717 inspection the breech plug with the tang bearing the inscription may have been replaced by the extant part. The fowling piece could

179. Hoff, *Dutch Firearms*, pp. 51, 72. Attribution of the mark *WP* (Støckel, II, no. 4802) to Walter Benge of London (Heer/Støckel, p. 81) is not substantiated, since this gun maker's known marks are different (*ibid.*, p. 81, nos. 7089–7091).

180. P. Post, *Das Zeughaus: Die Waffensammlung* (Berlin, 1929) p. 138.

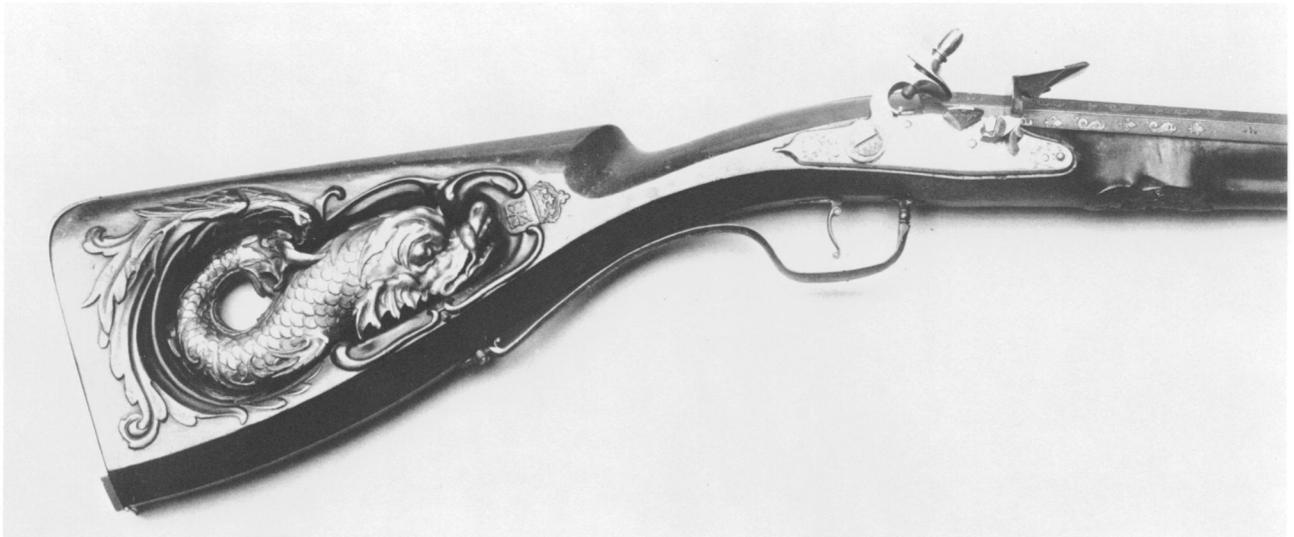
181. Lenk, pp. 44, 45, 48, 163, 184 (Lenk/Hayward, pp. 42ff.), pls. 17:2; 18:2,3; 19:3–5.

182. Guiffrey, p. 63.

183. Grancsay 1970, p. 194.

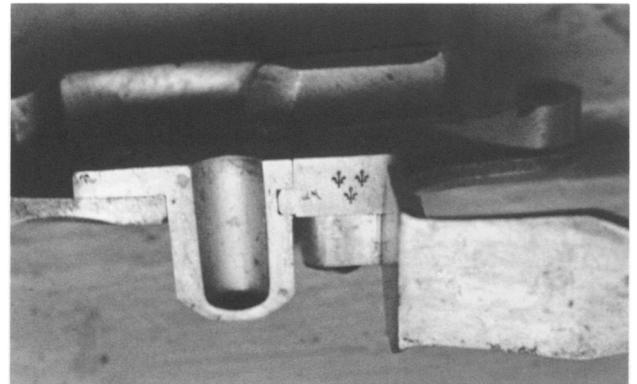
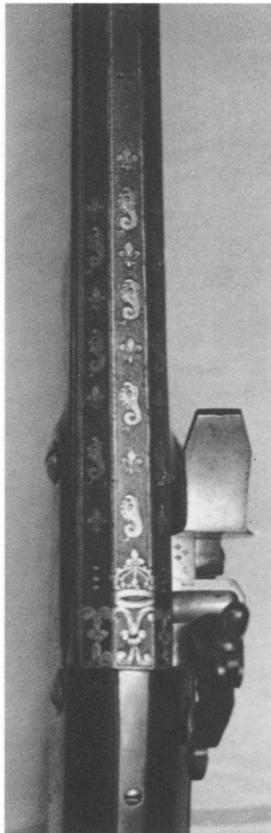
184. O¹ 3349, fol. 290v; in O¹ 3350, fol. 145, this entry is exactly the same. Both copies differ from the 1717 inventory in saying that the barrel is "rond par les bouts" and in clearly spelling the donor's name as "Desroges" (not "Desrogez").

95–98. Flintlock fowling piece, *cabinet d'armes* no. 163, French, ca. 1638. Moscow, Kremlin Armory, acc. reg. no. 126; formerly Berlin Zeughaus, AD 9404 (photos: 95. Berlin Zeughaus; 96–98. author)

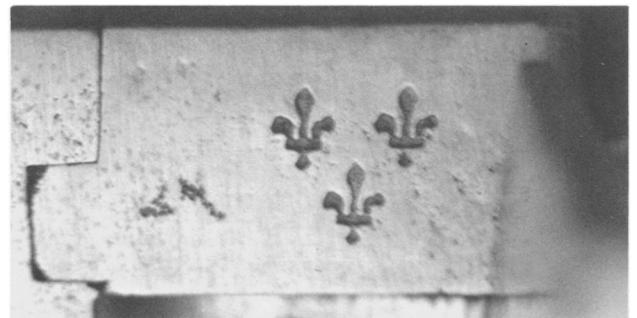


95. Rear part, no. 163

96. Top view of barrel breech and lock, no. 163



97. Top view of lock, no. 163



98. Gun maker's mark (enlarged) on lock, no. 163

have been in generally good, serviceable condition for a long period, the replacement in question being brought about for so technical a reason as unsatisfactory obturation at the breech-plug joint due to a defect in the metal or to excessive oxidation.

This hypothesis seems to be corroborated by the appearance of the extant tang (Figure 95), whose plain, although highly visible surface contrasts with the colorfully decorated barrel and contradicts the finish and ornamental treatment of other parts of the gun such as the chiseled and gilt trigger guard or the ramrod pipes, both located under the stock and thus less prominent than the barrel tang. The replacement of the original breech plug could have occurred even before the 1775 inventory, since at that time the clerks in charge seem simply to have copied most descriptions from the previous document as long as the objects inspected were physically present.

A few other observations can be added here from notes and snapshots made by this writer during a brief examination of the gun in 1958. It seems that the lock maker initially intended an external pan-cover spring, for the combined steel and pan cover was made with a massive spur that serves no purpose with the internal spring actually installed (Figure 97). This minor change in technical design allowed more unobstructed space for a hunting scene engraved on the whole surface of the lock plate. The lock is marked, in front of the pan (Figures 97, 98), with three fleurs-de-lis forming the royal coat of arms, which probably denotes a royal gun maker.

The overall length of the gun is 179 centimeters (70.47 inches). The length of the barrel is 138 centimeters (54.33 inches); the caliber is 16 millimeters (0.63 inch). The length of the lock plate is 14 centimeters (5.5 inches); the gun weighs 4,220 grams (9.3 pounds). The inventories indicate the gun's overall length to be 5.5 *pieds*, which converts to 178.66 centimeters (70.34 inches), practically the same as the modern measurement.

Fowling piece no. 163 was probably among certain holdings of German museums that were seized in 1945 by the Polish authorities. In 1949, the gun was brought from Poland to Moscow and presented to Joseph Stalin as a gift for his seventieth birthday. For several years this fowling piece was kept in the so-called Museum of Gifts to Comrade Stalin, located in the building of the Museum of Contemporary Art. (That museum was abolished because Comrade Sta-

lin disliked modern art.) After Stalin's death in 1953, works of art from among such gifts were distributed to various Soviet museums and no. 163 passed into the Kremlin Armory. The gun was entered there as no. 126 in the museum's accessions register.

The second and last opportunity this writer had to see fowling piece no. 163 occurred in 1966. By that time the gun had undergone a sad change: its barrel was quite unrecognizable; it no longer had a beautiful bright-blue cast ("couleur d'eau") contrasted with gilded dolphins, fleurs-de-lis, and royal monograms, but looked uniformly dull white, with traces of abrasion all over. This transformation was the indirect result of a small incident. During a repainting of the storeroom where the gun was kept uncovered, some drops of paint fell onto the barrel. Although these could easily have been removed with some harmless solvent, the entire barrel was instead passed through an electric wire wheel, thus brushing away the bluing and gilding along with the paint.

This masterpiece, or rather what remains of it, is probably condemned to be indefinitely in storage, since it would be hard to fit it into any exhibition in the context of the Kremlin Armory.

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