

MEMENTOS WITH HISTORY, 96

THAT INCURABLE DISEASE CALLED COLLECTIONISM

As I approach my seventy third birthday, after prolonged consideration and many doubts, I took the decision of gradually divesting myself from my Spanish weapons collection. I visualized this painful process similar to peeling the layers of an onion from the outer layers to the inner core, according to the importance and desirability of each piece, starting with the commercial and foreign contract military pieces, with the objective of keeping only a very basic but high quality collection of regulation weapons of all services of the Spanish Armed Forces.

This process, here in the US where I live, is facilitated by the very numerous gun shows which take place in multiple cities and towns in each state every weekend. Here in my state of Florida I have had the luck (so far) of assisting to 30-40 gun shows per year which provides me with ample opportunities for selling and buying interesting pieces. I have already sold several good foreign military contract pieces such as a Chilean Navy Astra 400, Portuguese Navy Astra 600, German WWII Nazi contract Astras M300, M600 and Star-B, plus several commercial pieces.



Among these last ones this past weekend I sold (with great pain but coolly calculated pragmatism) my last **Charola y Anitua** pistol, a 7 mm Charola, removable magazine model, the seventh, last, and scarcest variation, with less than 500 made c.1903-1905. How many are there still in existence in the entire world?. Not many, rest assured. I sold it “for a fistful of dollars” as in the old Clint Eastwood “spaghetti western” (although for a **good** fistful of dollars). It left a sweet and sour taste in my mouth but a

recomforting feeling in my pocket and the intention of depositing my earnings in my piggy-bank (a WWI 75 mm artillery shell) as the responsible savings of a retiree.

But, the warm feeling in my pocket was short-lived as, in one of those of life's coincidences, scarcely five minutes after bidding good-bye to my **Charola y Anitua pistol**, I was offered a piece that I had never expected to find....a magnificent **revolver**, a high quality, faithful copy of the Colt Single Action Army in .44 caliber made in the 1,880s in "Eibar-Guipuzcoa-España" (E.G.E) by none others than **ANITUA Y CHAROLA!**...the same two guys !!... again !!..... in an antique, almost crumbling, western holster and cartridge belt.





And that is as far as my modest retiree's savings intentions went, as in only two seconds I took the impulsive, unavoidable, uncontrollable decision and I bought it, saying good-bye to my senile savings..... As they say in my native Cuba....." a un gustazo, un trancazo" (for each great pleasure, a great blow).... but, for sure, with no remorse.... no regrets.... We'll see what next weekend's gun show brings us because the disease, although with exacerbations and remissions like malaria, appears to be **INCURABLE.**

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