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THE EIBAR “COLT’S” REVOLVERS (1)



Eibar ,“modified Colt 1873” revolver, six shot, single action, 44 caliber, barrel length 185 mm, marked “COLT’S PT F.A MFG C° HARTFORD CT U.S.A”; Anonymous manufacture (Larrañaga, Garate y C^a)

The firm of “Larrañaga, Garate y C^a” was the first one to produce copies of the Colt 1873 in Eibar; In Don Julian Echeverria’s memoirs in the 1964 catalogue of the (Eibar) Gun Smith’s School Museum, this firm is mentioned as makers of “the single action, center fire, Colt revolver, also of American origin”:

“This work shop also made the single action Colt revolver and had, among its machines, two lathes of triangular section for turning barrels, one or two milling machines from the Jaspas House in Liege, a flat mechanical lathe of English origin and several horizontal drills of national manufacture; They also had a polishing section, etc; Energy was produced by a five horsepower English steam engine”.

He then adds: “So that the reader may get an idea of our industry’s technological knowledge at the time, I will mention two anecdotes that happened in this shop” (I will limit myself to re-telling here only one):

“The Colt revolver had a rod with a helicoidal spring under the barrel for extraction of the empty shell casings; This spring was made from piano wire - just as it is made today - which was then tempered following the spring tempering tradition that was in use since times immemorial; But, all the springs would break at the first try; Then, it so happened that one day a spring was tried that resisted



Eibar “Colt 1873”, single action, six shot, 44 caliber, revolver; Barrel length 195 mm, marked “COLT’S CAL. 44 TERE THOSE THAT FIT BEST EUSKARO REVOLVER”, serial number 33; Anonymous maker.



Five shot, 38 caliber, “Hammerless” revolver; Barrel length 134 mm, marked “COLT’S PT. F. A. MFG. C° / HARTFORD CT. U.S.A”, serial number 53845; Logo “LGC” on grips (Larrañaga, Garate y C^a)



Single action, six shot, 44 caliber, Eibar “Colt 1873” revolver; Barrel length 183 mm, unmarked; Unknown maker.



Single action, six shot, 44 caliber, Eibar “Colt 1873” revolver; Barrel length 150 mm, marked “SYSTEM REVOLVER V. ARIZM. MANUFACTURER OF FIREARMS” (Vicente Arizmendi, 1880-1894)

Another workshop that also produced copies of the Colt 1873, contemporary to that of “Larrañaga, Garate y C^a”, was that of Vicente Arizmendi; This shop appears in the Eibar Industrial Register for 1881-82 as number one in number of workers (5); In 1883 he slips into second place after “Anitua y Charola”, where he continues in 1884 with 20 workers, and in 1885 drops back to only 4 employees; In 1886 he recovers the first place with 31 workers and in 1887 drops behind “Anitua y Charola” and “Larrañaga, Garate y Ca” to the third place, with 12; He maintained that position during 1888-91 with an average of 17 workers but in 1892 declared only 5, disappears in 1893 and reappears in 1894 with only 2, and finally disappears after this date.

Vicente Arizmendi's workshop was said to be the only one in Eibar with a steam engine; In 1884 the "Basque Review" magazine included him among the 12 most productive makers for that year's first eight months and listed: 4 single barrel percussion shotguns, 5 double barreled ones, 27 single barrel Lefauchaux shotguns, 21 double barreled ones, 61 Remington shotguns, 31 Lefauchaux pistols and 3,332 revolvers.