

## 13

## THE EIBAR “COLT’S” REVOLVERS (2)



**Eibar “1873 Colt” revolver, six shot, 44 caliber, barrel length 120 mm, marked “COLT’S CARTRIDGES ARE THOSE THAT / FIT BEST / THE EUSKARO REVOLVER”, and, “44 CALIBRE 1973”, on the frame and “HQ” logo (Hermanos Quintana, 1895-1900) on the grips.**

During the 1880s the brothers Felipe and Jose Quintana Arias, established in Mexico, were the main customers of the Eibar arms makers; Pedro Celaya in his work, “Eibar, a Historical Monograph” (1908), tells us that, in 1892, the value of the arms purchased by them surpassed the amount of 16’000,000 *Reales* and that early in that year they had already placed an order for “5,000 shotguns of all types from a single Eibar factory” and that they were purchasing 2,000 revolvers per month from just four factories, which included “Orbea Hermanos”, “Anitua y Charola” (1881-98), Vicente Arizmendi (1881-94) and “Larrañaga, Garate y C<sup>a</sup>” (1884-91) which was superseded in 1892 by “Garate, Anitua y C<sup>a</sup>”

They concluded that they could obtain larger profits by installing their own factory in Eibar and, under the name of “Hermanos Quintana” it first appears in the Eibar Industrial Register in 1895, classified as a “factory” from the start, on an equal tax basis to “Orbea Hermanos” (2,425 pesetas); That year the largest workshop was “Garate, Anitua y C<sup>a</sup>” with 25 workers and paying 1,440 pesetas in taxes.

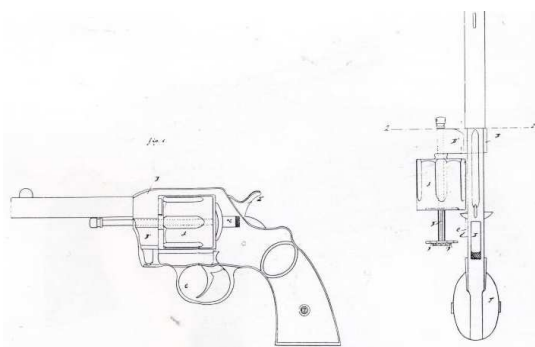
Celaya tells us that the arrival of the Quintana brothers created great satisfaction among the Eibarrese workers who “expected their worth and demand to increase” because of it; In this optimistic climate twenty workers decided to marry in a joint

ceremony “with music and revelries in which the entire town participated”; José Cruz Echeverria and his son Bonifacio even closed their shop and were hired as foremen by the Quintana brothers.

But, happy times did not last for long, and the Quintana brothers implanted new continuous work methods, divided in two shifts; Production rate increased by increasing specialization but also by increasing mass production of parts which also allowed hiring less skilled personnel earning lower salaries; And so, they suffered the first strike to take place in Eibar on August, 6, 1897; They reacted by firing the striking employees and bringing in workers from other places.

The “Hermanos Quintana” factory then disappears from the Eibar Industrial Register in 1901; Between 1896 and 1898 they obtained six patents among them one for “aluminum revolver grips”, another one for “one piece steel cartridges” and another one for “shotguns”; In 1897 they registered a trademark for cartridges; However they appear as “manufacturers of fine revolvers” in that era’s yearbooks.

Before establishing themselves in Spain Felipe Quintana obtained a patent, among others, which was granted in 1891, for “A Colt system revolver” based on the Colt 1889 Navy D.A but I doubt their factory in Eibar could produce it; After their closure Jose Quintana also obtained patents in Spain for “refinements” in shotguns.



**Drawing included in the patent obtained by Felipe Quintana in 1891 for “A Colt system revolver”.**



**Eibar “Colt 1873”, six shot, 45 caliber, barrel length 191 mm, marked: “COLT’S SYSTEM MANUFACTURERS ANIT. & CHAR. E.G.E. CAL 45” (Anitua y Charola, Eibar, Guipuzcoa, España); Specimen number 24715 of the Army Museum Collection.**



**Drawing of the “Colts reformado sistema Martin” with folding trigger, patented in 1887 by Martin Antonio Bascaran.**

The model 1878 Colt was the inspiration for the “Colts reformado Sistema Martin”, patented by Martin Antonio Bascaran; It featured a folding trigger evocative of the primitive Colt Patterson models made between 1837-1840; I do not know if he actually made his “Martin system” revolver, nor do I know who made the very few Eibar copies of the Md.1878 Colt that I have been able to examine.



**Six shot, 44 caliber, double action, Eibar “Colt 1878”; Barrel length 191 mm, marked “COLT’S CARTRIDGES ARE THOSE THAT” / “FIT BEST THE EUSKARO REVOLVER”, serial number 21, unknown maker.**



**Eibar “Colt 1877 Lightning” revolver, six shot, 38 caliber, double action, barrel length 114 mm, marked “COLTS SISTEME – REVOLVER EUSKALDUNA T. U. y C<sup>a</sup>” (Tomas Urizar y C<sup>a</sup>).**

I have seen only two Eibar “Colt 1877 Lightning” revolvers, both marked; “T. U. y C<sup>a</sup>”, made by Tomas Urizar Azaldegui’s workshop; This shop appears in the Eibar Industrial Register in 1889, declaring only one worker, does not appear in the Register in 1890 and reappears with two workers in 1892; In 1893 he starts to appear with the legal name of “Tomas Urizar y C<sup>a</sup>” with only one worker until 1898-1901 when he declared 15; From 1902 to 1912 he had 19 and payed 812 *pesetas* in taxes, while in 1913-14 he rated only 570 *pesetas*.

The crisis created by the start of the Great War affected him as it did everyone else; From 1915-16 he declared 4 workers and in 1917 he disappeared, reappearing in 1918 with between 10-20 employees.

Between 1901 and 1903 he was, as far as number of workers, the first arms workshop in Eibar but in 1903 was overtaken by “Trocaola, Aranzabal y C<sup>a</sup>”, staying in the second position until 1907 when this last company started to be ranked as a “factory” on the same level as “Orbea y C<sup>a</sup>” and “Garate, Anitua y C<sup>a</sup>”; In 1908 it again became the most important shop in Eibar but it did not apparently participate in the Arts and Industries Exposition of that year; Gregorio de Mugica mentions them as manufacturers of Bull-Dog and Velo-Dog revolvers.



The first patent I have located in Tomas Urizar’s name is dated 1919 and it refers to automatic pistols, which he was then making; Nevertheless, in his 1920’s catalogues he continued to offer, Puppy and Velo-Dog revolvers, a 7.62 mm “Nagant”, and a Colt 1873-1877 hybrid which he presented as the “Colt Ranger”, in 38 long caliber.