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**THE EIBAR “BULLDOG” AND “PUPPY” REVOLVERS**

**Double action “Bulldog” five shot revolver. LEFT: for 12 mm caliber pin fire cartridges; Barrel length 63 mm; Marked: “BULL-DOG”, unknown maker. RIGHT: for .44 caliber center fire cartridges; Barrel length 63 mm; Marked: “BRITISH / BULLDOG”, unknown maker.**

The manufacturing of “Bulldog” revolvers in Eibar, in 12 mm pin fire and in .38 and .44 center fire variants, began in the 1890s; The center fire variants were based on those offered by the English firm of “P. Webley & Son” around 1878, and had the extractor rod located inside the cylinder axis; The pin fire variants continued to use the extractor rod laterally, as in the Lefauchaux revolvers.

The Eibar production of both models was as abundant as it was mediocre, and none of the shops producing them strived for good quality, probably because an attempt to equal the quality, even of the Belgian made ones, made the cost of manufacture unrewarding.

Most of the samples of this Eibar production lack any markings that allow us to identify the maker or “Montador” that sold them; The important firms, such as “Anitua y Charola”(1880-98) and “Larrañaga, Garate y C<sup>a</sup>” (1884-91) offered “Bulldog” revolvers in their catalogues but they were acquired from other shops.

The “Anitua y Charola” marking is seen on a specimen in the Collection of the Eibar Gunsmithing School Museum and it is as mediocre as any anonymous piece; “Larrañaga, Garate y C<sup>a</sup>” included a “Bulldog” among the samples that it exhibited at the 1888 Barcelona Universal Exposition and was commented upon by the journalist Nicolas Bustinduy as “the worst sample but, being the cheapest, the most frequent one”, apparently unaware of the irony of his comment.



**Belgian made “Bulldog” revolver, six shot, double action, 32 caliber; Barrel length 50 mm, marked: “L. VIVES Y CIA. BARCELONA / ARMEROS DE LA REAL CASA” (Luis Vives, owner of gunshops in Madrid and Barcelona from 1880-1900).**

The so-called “Puppy” revolvers represent the evolution of the “Bulldogs” to more pocketable designs; Their originator in Eibar was Ignacio Ibarzabal Iriondo, who in 1884 obtained a patent for five years for “A revolver-pistol denominated Bulldog with suppression of the trigger guard and with concealed hammer”; In 1887 he obtained another patent, also for five years, already naming the revolver “Puppy”, although misspelled “Puppiy”, a misspelling that was maintained in those marketed by him.



**“Puppy Hammerless” revolver, five shot, 38 caliber, marked: “PUPPIY”, with its chamois purse; Ignacio Ibarzabal was actually the “*montador*” who marketed them, from 1884 -1891.**

Ignacio Ibarzabal, the only son and heir of the oldest Spanish arms “maker”, Gabriel Benito de Ibarzabal, (1820-1852) was educated in England and is considered to be the introducer of the Whitworth filleting system to Eibar; During the 1860s his factory and that of the Orbea Brothers were the only ones in Eibar to be classified as such, and both were contracted by the Government to convert the Army’s muzzle loading M.1857 carbines and M.1859 rifles to the Berdan M.1867 system.

Being a well known “progressive” Ignacio Ibarzabal commanded the “Batallion of Freedom’s Volunteers” levied in Eibar after the September Revolution and had to leave Eibar with his Batallion in 1873, when the city was occupied by the “rebels”; He returned, however, in 1876 receiving a victor’s honors, and then occupied political positions such as Representative to the Cortes; His prestige was considerable and it was he who requested from the Ministry of Development that the Proof Bank be reestablished; This, unwittingly, would cause the end of his own factory.

He had no descendants and from 1880 until his death in 1891 appeared in the Industrial Register as owner of the old factory’s watermill, where several gunsmiths still worked on their own, and also of a work shop with two workers; Nevertheless, he was among the four Eibar firms that attended the 1888 Barcelona Universal Exposition where Bustindui, the journalist, described his exhibit as: “a notable collection of single and double barreled shotguns among which, deserving special mention, are those of the Greener triple lock system and those of J. Webley’s Hammerless system ..../.....as far as revolvers, this maker has presented only those that he markets, which are the so named Puppy and Puppy Hammerless, characterized by a hidden trigger and hammer, facilitating their pocketability; In this exhibit we can also see magnificent, perfectly constructed, wooden canes with pistol and dagger”.

In his “Memoirs”, Julian Echeverria commented: “When I met Don Ignacio de Ibarzabal, shortly before his death, he had declined noticeably and was limited to making small series of shotguns and exporting handguns”; In charge of making the “Puppy” revolvers was Julian’s father, Jose Cruz Echeverria and his brother Bonifacio, 16 years older, in their own shop.



## A “Puppy” revolver from the “F. Arizmendi y Goenaga” firm’s catalogue of 1913-14

The only maker using the “Puppy” designation was Ignacio Ibarzabal, although he did not make them himself; Other shops did continue to make them up into the 1920s.