

### THE “SMITH” REVOLVERS FROM OTHER EIBAR FIRMS



**Six shot, double action, 44 caliber, “Smith” revolver, barrel length 126 mm, marked “SMITH & WESSON AMERICAN METALLIC CARTRIDGES CAL 44 JAN 24.83 PATd. / ARE TO BE USED FOR OUR MODEL PROD 1895. 83070 REVOLVERS”, logo “G.A.C” (Garate, Anitua y C<sup>a</sup>), serial number 368/041.**

The confusing inscription on the above shown revolver makes a reference to a patent obtained on January, 24, 1883, which, I have not been able to locate, but, could not possibly have been obtained by “Garate, Anitua y C<sup>a</sup>”.

After the dissolution of “Larrañaga, Garate y C<sup>a</sup>”, Crispin Garate’s heirs joined Jose Francisco Anitua in the firm of “Garate y Anitua”, which first appears in the Eibar Industrial Register in 1893 declaring a shop with 35 workers, exactly the same number as “Anitua y Charola”.

José Francisco Anitua declared a shop with three workers in 1883 which disappeared between 1884-1891; He was the third partner in “Larrañaga, Garate y C<sup>a</sup>”; Before his association to the Garates he reappears, in 1892, declaring a shop with 12 workers, and Juan José Larrañaga another one with 6, then with 27 in 1893 and 17 in 1894; Juan José Larrañaga, however, did not join the association between José Francisco Anitua and Garate’s heirs; Instead it was Nemesio Astaburuaga, which caused the firm to change its name in 1894 to “Garate, Anitua y C<sup>a</sup>”; There were several arms makers with the last name Anitua around this time and I have not been able to elucidate the relationship that may have existed between Miguel Anitua of “Anitua y Charola” and José Francisco Anitua, but it must have been a distant one.

In 1894 “Garate, Anitua y C<sup>a</sup>.” became the most important shop in Eibar and, from 1897 on, was classified as an arms “factory” with similar taxes as those of “Orbea, Hermanos

y C<sup>a</sup>” (2,425 pesetas); One year before he had registered his logo: the initials “GAC” surrounded by a snake.



**Six shot, double action, 44 caliber, “Smith” revolver, barrel length 122 mm, marked “SMITH & WESSON CARTRIDGES ARE THE BEST FOR THE EUSKARO REVOLVER”, serial number 37,162; Unknown manufacturer.**

I have not been able to find any patents under the name of “GAC” dating before 1904; In their 1903 catalogue they offered, different single and double action “Smith” revolvers, Colt 1872 copies in different calibers, Bull-Dog, Puppy and Velo-Dog revolvers, plus a copy of the Gasser revolver “adapted to the Montenegrin cartridge”, and, percussion shotguns, pin fire or center fire breech loading shotguns, and Remington carbines, although probably not all were made in their factory but just marketed by them.



No doubt due to the fact that the Orbea Hermanos “No.7 ONA” revolver had been recommended for use by the Chiefs and Officers of the Army, “Garate, Anitua y C<sup>a</sup>”

offered in 1903 its "Regulation" revolver as the "Model No.7"; This revolver initially differed from the "ONA" only in having a detachable side plate that allowed access to its internal mechanism, although this feature was eliminated in its late production.

Their only single action "Smith" offering was their "Model No.8", a 38 caliber revolver with shrouded trigger based on the Smith & Wesson 38 S.A Mexican Model; Copies of this revolver made by "Orbea Hermanos" can also be found.



**Five shot, single action, 38 caliber, "Smith" revolver, barrel length 128 mm, marked in gold "ORBEA HERMANOS"**

"GAC" showed much more interest for the, then, very new "automatic" pistols than "Orbea y C<sup>ª</sup>" and in 1904 obtained their first patent for a Mannlicher 1901 based pistol which they marketed under the "LA LIRA" trade mark; That same year they obtained a patent for revolver "improvements" which described a swing out cylinder, hammerless, revolver that they marketed as the "L'ÉCLAIR", although this, just as their 1919 patented copy of the 1892 Winchester bearing the trademark "TIGRE", is outside the scope of this discussion.

"GAC" initially, just as all the other Eibar makers, inscribed their "Smiths" with lettering intended to have them confused with the authentic S&Ws; It may have worked, but to their discredit; However their "Smiths" are considered to be among the best made in

Eibar, next to those from “Orbea Hermanos y C<sup>a</sup>” and from “Trocaola Aranzabal y C<sup>a</sup>” (TAC); This last firm was founded in 1899 and by 1908 was classified as a factory, just as “Orbea y C<sup>a</sup>” and “Garate, Anitua y C<sup>a</sup>”.

I will not expand on “Trocaola, Aranzabal y C<sup>a</sup>” at this time but they also made the “regulation Smith”, offered from 1907 on as the “Md.1884” (see Chapter 7, “The ONA revolver from Orbea Hermanos”).



**“Regulation Smith” revolver, double action, six shot, 44 caliber, barrel, length 129 mm, marked “SMITH & WESSON AMERICAN METALLIC CARTRIDGES / ARE TO BE USED FOR OUR MODEL OF REVOLVER”, “TAC” logo (Trocaola, Aranzabal y C<sup>a</sup>. 1899-1926)**

Going back to the subject of the many attempts to “improve” the “Smith” revolvers, I’ll refer to a patent obtained in 1890 by José Crucelegui for: “a double trigger revolver named *bota-cilindro* (cylinder ejector), which was a simple modification where the second “trigger” is just a piece next to the trigger that, upon being pressed, releases the cylinder and allows its rapid removal or ejection; “Larrañaga, Garate y C<sup>a</sup>” had obtained similar results by another system of their own patent (see Chapter 8).



**“Bota-Cilindro”, double action, five shot, 38 caliber revolver, barrel length 95 mm, marked: “FABRICA DE CRUCELEGUI / EIBAR (ESPAÑA) PRIVILEGIADO”.**

From 1880-86 José Crucelegui had a shop with one worker, two workers in 1881-82, and then disappears in 1887 and reappears in 1894, with an average of one worker until 1899; In 1888 a patent was granted to “Crucelegui y Hermano” for a breech loading system for long guns; In 1887 Luis Crucelegui appears in the Eibar Industrial Register with a shop employing one or two workers until 1902 when his staff increases to a maximum of ten workers, over the next ten years.

José and Luis Crucelegui must have been brothers but they did not always worked together; The firm of “Crucelegui Hermanos” was formed by Luis’s sons around 1920.



**“Bota-Cilindro”, hammerless, five shot, 38 caliber revolver, barrel length 95 mm, marked “FABRICA DE CRUCELEGUI / EIBAR (ESPAÑA) PRIVILEGIADO”.**

In 1884, before Luis Crucelegui declared his own shop in 1887, the “Revista Bascongada” (Basque Review magazine) included him among the twelve who had made more weapons during the first eight months of that year, including 577 single barrel percussion shotguns, 36 double barreled, 196 single barrel Lefauchaux shotguns, 11 double barreled, 103 Remington shotguns, 1,058 Lefauchaux pistols, 4 Remington pistols, and 743 revolvers; Obviously he was simply marketing the products of several shops; Gregorio de Mújica in his book “Eibar- Monografía Histórica” (Eibar Historical Monograph) (1908) also mentions him as “one of the makers that has sent the largest number of weapons to the Peninsula. He makes revolvers and fine shotguns”; But, in reality, he continued to be a “*montador*” (an assembler) and, therefore, the actual maker of the “Bota-Cilindro” revolver from Crucelegui Hermanos is anybody’s guess.