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**SPANISH HANDGUNS
1875s-1950s**

PART THREE



SEMIAUTOMATICS AND AUTOMATIC MACHINE PISTOLS

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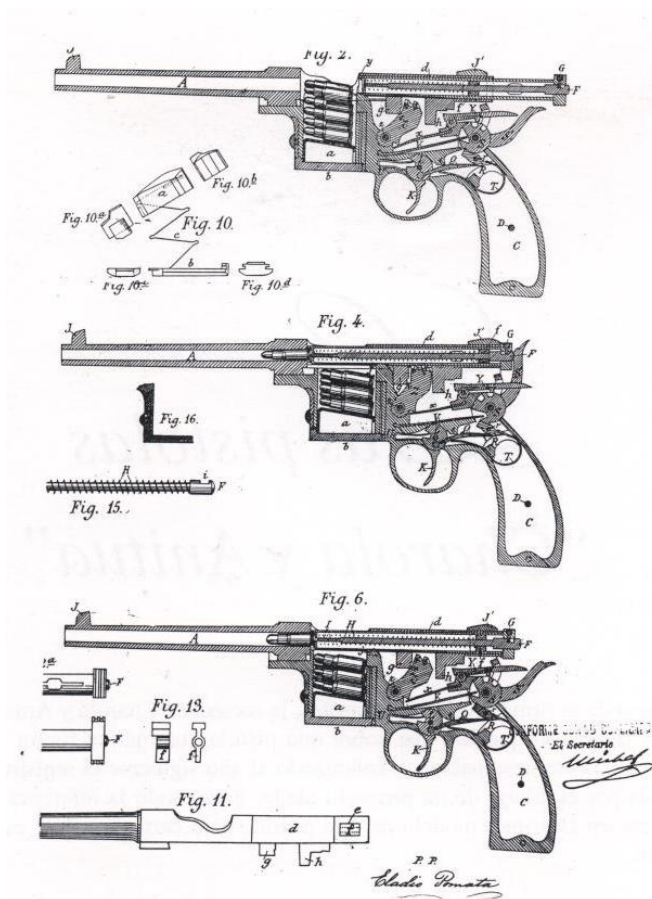
2013

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THE "CHAROLA Y ANITUA" PISTOLS



Designs blueprints included in the patent granted to the firm “Charola y Anitua”, dated October, 13, 1898

On October, 13, 1898, a patent for a period of 20 years was granted to the firm “Charola y Anitua” for: “A special devise or mechanism, for repeating, portable, firearms”, where the pistol known as the “Charola y Anitua” was described; Seven months later the same firm registered a trademark “to distinguish arms and ammunition”, consisting of a winged bullet containing the initials: **Ch. y A.** above the inscription: **TRADE MARK.**

The firm “Charola y Anitua” was formed by Ignacio Charola Achucarro and Miguel Anitua Echeverria, both of the old firm “Anitua y Charola”, which used to manufacture “Merwin” type revolvers; This firm disappeared from the Eibar Industrial Register in 1898 coinciding with the appearance of “Charola y Anitua” as owner of the previous firm’s shop located at Estación Street and employing 16 workers; It’s existence was brief, disappearing in 1900, but, in 1901 it reappears again, this time reduced to only five employees and, under the name of Ignacio Charola only.

The “Charola y Anitua” pistol is a semiautomatic, locked breech pistol for a 5mm bottlenecked cartridge which was later on also used by the Clement pistol; It was the second “automatic” of domestic design patented in Spain having been preceded by the pistol designed by the artillery officer Enrique Losada of which only experimental prototypes were made; The paternity of the “Charola y Anitua” pistol is attributed to Ignacio Charola, who is mentioned as the one who presented it to the artillery examiners of the Proofing Commission; Upon its rejection for military use, due to its very small caliber, Mr. Charola decided to manufacture another model of a larger caliber.

In effect, the 5mm model was followed by another one in 7mm, without modifying or enlarging the original patent at all; Neither have I been able to find any registered trademarks for those pistols manufactured by Ignacio Charola after the disappearance of the firm “Charola y Anitua”.



Frontispiece and first illustration shown in the user’s manual edited by Ignacio Charola for the 7mm pistol; It does not mention the magazine fed model.

In the initial Catalogue of the Eibar Armoury School’s Museum, published in 1914, the “Charola y Anitua” pistols are described as having been manufactured in Eibar from 1897 to 1905 with a total of 8400 units made; Steven.B.Fox¹, however, based on original serial number observations, does not believe they reached that number, estimating that 3000 were made in 5mm, with four types differing in small details, and 2000 in 7mm, in two models, one stripper clip fed and the other with a detachable magazine.

The first type pistols of which Fox estimates 950 units were made (SN 950), were the only ones actually produced by the firm “Charola y Anitua”; With a barrel length of 105 mm inscribed: **PISTOLA AUTOMATICA PATENTE CHAROLA Y ANITUA**, and the caliber: Cal.5m/m, and the winged bullet trademark including **Ch. y A** registered in 1899; Its details, modified in the subsequent production, included the front sight attached directly to the barrel, the type of fixed rear sight, and the long safety lever, which was shortened in the next type.

¹ Steven .B. Fox “The Charola y Anitua”, article in Gun Collector’s Digest, 4th Edition, 1984



“Charola y Anitua” pistol, first type; Grips are not original

The second type pistols, about 900 in number (SN 951-1800), were produced by Ignacio Charola and they had a 95mm long barrel inscribed: **I. CHAROLA, EIBAR, CAL 5 m/m** and continued to bear the registered trademark **Ch. y A.**; The rear sight is simplified and the tip of the barrel is reinforced with a muzzle band bearing a beaded blade front sight.



“Charola y Anitua” pistol, second type. Barrel inscribed: PISTOLA AUTOMATICA PATENTE CHAROLA Y ANITUA - EIBAR and bearing the first type’s trademark.

In the third type pistols, of which about 800 units were made, (SN 1801-2600) the barrel is only 85mm long and bears the legend **THE BEST SHOOTING PISTOL**; Their hammer spur is also shorter; The fourth type, about 400 units, (SN 2601-3000) complete the 3000 that Fox estimates were produced; They bear only Liege proofs, indicating that they were made or assembled in Belgium for Ignacio Charola and have a bolt catch in addition to and next to the safety lever.



“Charola y Anitua” pistol, second type; Barrel inscribed: I. CHAROLA-EIBAR CAL.5 m/m, bearing the winged bullet emblem and the initials “Ch y A”

The 7mm pistols, which Fox states were numbered separately from 10001 to 12000 had an 85 mm long barrel inscribed: **THE BEST SHOOTING PISTOL** and bear a modified 1899 trademark without the initials **Ch. y A.** inside the bullet; This model was made in two variants, one with a six round stripper clip fed magazine, same as the 5mm models, and another one with a six round detachable magazine.

The ammunition was sold in boxes of 30 rounds in five stripper clips of six rounds each; For the marketing of the 7 mm model Ignacio Charola published an instruction booklet where he stated that the ammunition, made by the Austrian firm "Keller&Cie", could be purchased from the "Union Española de Explosivos", which had them in stock.



7 mm "Charola y Anitua" pistol with detachable magazine



7 mm "Charola y Anitua" pistol with a six round stripper clip fed magazine

As was the case in most of the Eibar production of those years, the “Charola y Anitua” pistols were not completely made at the Estacion Street shop, and, it is said that the “Garate, Anitua & Cia” factory had an important role in their manufacture; Also it appears that they achieved a higher degree of sales in Russia as compared to other countries.

From 1901-08 the Ignacio Charola shop declared an average of six employees; In 1907 a patent is issued in his name for “a system of double movements of the locking mechanism, to be applied to revolvers of modern and perfected construction”, which was used in the manufacture of a pocket revolver of the swing out cylinder type of 6,35 mm Browning caliber (.25 ACP), of which I have seen one specimen devoid of any markings indicating I. Charola manufacture; Mr. Charola died in 1908, which explains why his firm was not represented at the Eibar Arts and Industries Exposition of that year.



Revolver patented by Ignacio Charola in 1907; Five shots, 42 mm long barrel, inscribed: CAL 6,35 with an ill defined logo on its frame (I have not been able to find the logo that Ignacio Charola may have registered)

In this 1908 Exposition the “Charola y Anitua” pistol was presented by his ex-partner Miguel Anitua: There are copies of the Colt Third Model Deringer marked marked M. ANITUA and, in 1901a patent is granted in his name defining a “URY system”, but it is not until 1904 that a shop in the name of “Miguel Anitua and Sons”, dedicated to the manufacture of electrical devices and firearms, is registered in the Eibar Industrial Matrix; In 1910 this shop, which up to that date declared an average of four employees, appeared under the name of Ignacio Anitua who shortly thereafter became associated to one of Ignacio Charola’s sons in a new firm, “Anitua and Charola”, dedicated to the representation and sale of industrial machinery in general, an activity which continued until the 1930s



Trademark registered by Mrs. Anitua and Charola both residents of Eibar, in October, 14, 1920, for mechanical lathes.

NOTE: All information regarding serial numbers, production numbers, and details differentiating the four 5mm and two 7mm types, are taken from Steven. B. Fox's original observations and article in the 1984 Gun Collector's Digest, 4th Edition, and corroborated, in 1992, with new additional information, by Paolo Conti in his 1992 article "Charola y Anitua" in the magazine Diana Armi.