

ARMAMENTS OF THE TROOPS OF THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD, 1788-1931
 (35)
 PISTOL AND SABER OF THE GUARDS OF THE ROYAL PATRIMONY
 DURING THE REIGN OF ISABEL II

(Translated by Hector J. Meruelo)



Police model pistol; 169 mm long, 16.5 mm caliber (“de a 21”) barrel; Marked “YBARZABAL” in an oval surrounding a starburst, inscribed “*Real Patrimonio 1862*”; Percussion lock with inverted swivel mechanism lacking any markings; Articulated ramrod holder, full stock with brass fittings and an iron belt hook; Overall length 320 mm; In a similar specimen the barrel is inscribed “*Real Patrimonio 1850*”; E. Gorostiza collection.

In 1850, the previously often mentioned Don Gabriel Benito de Ibarzabal, produced a model of police (gendarmerie) pistol inscribed “*Real Patrimonio 1850*”, and a cavalry saber; For the pistols he used a different maker’s marking than the one used up to this point bearing only his last name, “Y/BAR/ZA/BAL”; Now it contained a starburst partially surrounded by “YBARZABAL”; Once he passed away in 1852, his son and heir, Don Ignacio de Ibarzabal continued to use the same marking as a maker’s mark in those “commercial” arms that he

initially produced, as also in the late production of the previously mentioned pistol model, as we can conclude from a specimen inscribed “*Real Patrimonio 1862*”.



Cavalry saber; 860x48 mm unmarked blade; Hilt marked “YBARZABAL” and inscribed “*Real Patrimonio 1850*”; The absence of any Toledo markings allows us to consider this specimen as having been completely made at Don Gabriel Benito de Ibarzabal’s manufactory; E.Gorostiza collection.

The contract for these models was no different from previous ones for equipment for troops of the Royal Guard, but in 1850 and 1862 the Royal Household’s only interior Palace Guard force was the Royal Corp of Halberdier Guards; The pistols and cavalry sabers inscribed “*Real Patrimonio*” belonged, then, to a force not considered as of the Royal Household, although it depended on it and was dedicated to guarding the possessions considered to be the “*Real Patrimonio*”.

The concept of “*Real Patrimonio*” was introduced by the Cádiz Constitution of 1812 which in its Article 214, Chapter V stated: “All the Royal Palaces that the King’s ancestors enjoyed, belong to the King, and the Cortes (Parliament) will designate those lands that it feels fit be reserved for his personal enjoyment”; In 1814 the Cortes did define those possessions that constituted “*Real Patrimonio*” and how they should be administered but, all of this was annulled upon the reestablishment of the absolutist regime.

The Royal “Statute” of 1834 , and the 1837 and 1845 Constitutions omitted any dispositions regarding the “*Real Patrimonio*”; The 1856 Constitution , which was never enacted, did establish that a special law would be required in order to confiscate all or part of the “*Real Patrimonio*” but, it was not until the Law of the 12th of May, 1865, that these possessions were definitely inventoried in order to establish which ones would, from that point on, belong to the Crown’s Patrimony, and those not included were sold in favor of the State in order to pay the Tax collector’s dues; Once Isabel II was exiled a Law of December, 16, 1869 declared the Crown’s Patrimony abolished and becoming the property of the State, although reserved for the use and service, of the King.

The origins of the Guards of the “Real Patrimonio” were related to the Company of “Royal Foresters” created during Carlos III’s reign; Its armaments, of models different from the Army’s, were made in 1770 in a factory in Catalonia and included 100 shotguns and 65 pairs of pistols, contracted to the gunmaker Francisco Planas, but, upon their delivery, His Majesty’s secretary, Juan Gregorio de Muniain, found them to be defective and ordered their substitution by other arms contracted to the gunmaker Ignacio Carbonell.

This Company of Royal Foresters, was created in order to accompany the Monarch in his hunting outings in the Royal Sites and, during Carlos IV’s reign, included 120 men plus its Officers ; In 1816 it was dependent of the Royal Stables and included 7 Sergeants,1 Fifer,1 Drummer,12 Corporals and 92 Fusiliers, and in 1818 , 7 Sergeants, 1 Fifer, 1 Drummer,12 Corporals and 72 Fusiliers ; During the Constitutional Period of 1820-24 it was attached to the general Army Corp but, returned under the jurisdiction of the ‘Real Patrimonio’ in 1827.

It was abolished at uncertain date, as is detailed in a document from the Archives of the Royal Palace, reproduced by Gómez Ruiz and Alonso Juanola, which states: “Distasteful occurrences which took place at the Royal Site in Aranjuez against the Guards of the Royal Patrimony, have convinced the consultative Board of the Royal Household of the necessity of reestablishing that Company” and, on the 1st of May of the year 1848 an order was given reestablishing the Foresters in a number of thirty and wearing the same uniforms they wore before their abolition.

Their Chief was the Inspector General of Forestry and the force was organized in five squads, each one with a Corporal and five Guards, but “on the 7th of February, 1850, this last Company of Foresters Fusiliers was definitely dissolved and suppressed as it offered no practical benefit to the Royal Forests due to its lack, among other things, of its original purely military organization”.

From the above we can conclude that the Guards of the “Real Patrimonio” were reinforced , in May of 1848, with a Company of Foresters-Fusiliers which was extinguished in February of 1850 ; The pistols and sabers made by Ibarzabal and inscribed “*Real Patrimonio 1850*”, including an, still unidentified, carbine, may have been made for this Company; The pistol specimen dated 1862 seems to indicate that, at least this particular one, was kept and used by the Guards of the “Real Patrimonio”.

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Bibliography:

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