

**ARMAMENTS OF THE TROOPS OF THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD, 1788-1931
(4)
CARBINE OF THE BRIGADE OF ROYAL "CARABINEROS"
DURING THE REIGN OF CARLOS IV**

(Translation by Hector J. Meruelo)



Rifled carbine made around 1793 with a 665 mm long octagonal barrel, rifled bore with seven helicoidal grooves, 17 mm caliber ("de a 19") , with brass sights; Jointed ramrod with primitive gunstock system; Spanish lock, Catalonian variant, Model of 1789; Hidden ramrod channel.

The Brigade of Royal "Carabineros" was created in 1730; Its soldiers were equipped with, a rifled carbine, a pair of pistols, and a long, double edged, riding sword; Felipe V (1700-1746) organized his army according to the French model, where the regiment of "Royal Carabiniers" was also armed with rifled carbines.

During the reigns of Fernando VI (1746-1759) and of Carlos III (1759-1788) the use of rifled carbines was abandoned and the "Carabineros" were armed with smoothbore carbines.

When the French Army fought the Austrian Army in 1792, they were armed with smoothbores while the Austrians had units of marksmen armed with rifled carbines; This fact decided the Convention in France to order their construction at the Versailles factory under the direction of the Master Armourer Nicolas-Noel Boutet who produced them in two models, one for the infantry and one for the cavalry; Due to their high cost, however, production of the cavalry model stopped in 1799 and that of the infantry model one year later.

The carbine shown above is the oldest one made in Spain with a rifled bore that I am aware of; Due to its "model of 1789" Catalonian variant Spanish lock and

its hidden ramrod channel I believe it to be one of those contracted to the Catalonian factory around 1793 in order to arm the troops levied there to help Carlos IV face the imminent attack by the French; Its barrel, lacking any national markings was probably imported from Holland as at the time I do not believe that either the Catalonian nor the Royal Placencia factories were in a condition capable of producing them.

In my opinion the carbine model that equipped the Brigade of Royal "Carabineros" during the reign of Carlos IV (1788-1808) was a smoothbore and was similar to those produced in the Royal Placencia Factory around 1790 for the Officers of the Cavalry Regiments and they bore on their barrels the inscriptions of the Royal Arms and "CARABINEROS REALES".



Cavalry carbine with a 925 mm long barrel, 18 mm caliber ("de a 17") and marked "SEB/SAR/RIA" under Crown (Sebastian de Sarria, Placencia) bearing also the Royal Arms and the inscription "REGIMTO. DE CABALLA. DEL PRINCIPE", with silver front sight, "model of 1789" Spanish lock and external ramrod channel. (Photos Lluc Sala).

**Juan L. Calvó
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