

THE "MONTSERRAT" CARBINE AND ITS COMPETITORS, EQUIPMENT FOR THE "SOMATEN"
(And 3)

Translation by Hector J. Meruelo



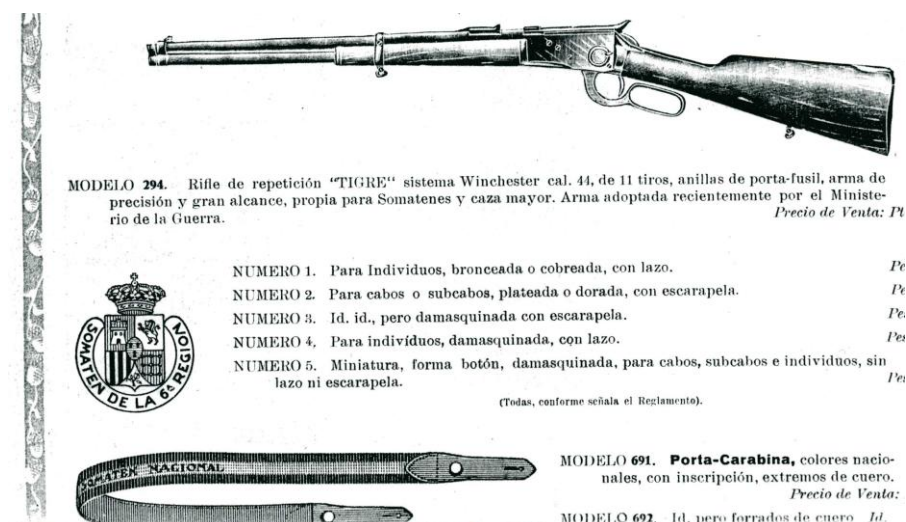
44 WCF TIGRE carbine, manufactured by "Garate, Anitua y Comp^a"

As equipment for the SOMATEN, the 9 mm Mauser type carbines, descendants of the MONTSERRAT, were joined by the lever action TIGRE carbine in 44 WCF, the Eibar made copy of the Winchester M1892; due to the fact that, at least before 1914, the "Winchester Repeating Arms C^o" had not applied for a Spanish patent for its products, there was no legal obstacle for their unlicensed reproduction in Spain; anyone could do it with no previous legal requirements, or, their manufacture could be protected by obtaining the so-called "patent of introduction" lasting five non-extendable years, due to its being an "introduction" of something not of the applicant's own invention.

This is what the firm of "Garate, Anitua y Comp^a" did in 1919 registering the patent for a five year period under the heading of "A repeating carbine" describing the Winchester M.1892 and at the same time registering the trademark TIGRE "to distinguish all sorts of firearms specially a repeating carbine"; this constitutes the birth certificate of the carbine that in the opinion of many, could compete with the original North American product.



N.º 91. Rifle «Tigre», de repetición, calibre 44. Doce disparos en 30 segundos. Alza graduada para precisar el tiro hasta 150 metros. Alcance aproximado: 900 metros. Peso: 2 Kg. 650. Esta arma es también indicadísima para defensa de casas rurales y para caza mayor.



The Winchester and TIGRE carbines caused the development of the esthetically hybrid Mauser/ Winchester carbines with an under barrel tube containing either spare cartridges or cleaning gear, such as those, in 9 mm caliber, marketed under the trademarks, JUPITER, ONENA, and UNION, all with an inexpensive fixed sight and using Browning pistol type magazines.



9 mm Bergmann JUPITER carbine, marked "Suinaga y Aramberri-Eibar-Año 1924"

The firm of "Suinaga y Aramberri", founded by Lucio Suinaga and Crescencio Aramberri obtained a patent in 1924 under the heading "A new repeating carbine", with an addendum in the same year. The trademark JUPITER had been registered in 1922, not by "Suinaga y Aramberri", but by the firm of "Etxezarraga, Abaitua y Comp^a" for the marketing of revolvers, shotguns and specially semiautomatic pistols. So it is possible that it was this second firm the one that used the name JUPITER in the marketing of these carbines.



9 mm Bergmann ONENA carbine

The ONENA carbines are said to have been marketed by "STAR Bonifacio Echeverria", although the ONENA (pretty) brand had been registered in 1911 by "Orbea y Comp^a" and used in their marketing of a single shot shooting gallery carbine.



Single shot carbine marked : "ONENA-Carabina de precision fabricada por Orbea y Comp^a –Eibar-España-calibre 38 largo y corto-Marca registrada"("ONENA-Precision carbine manufactured by Orbea y Comp^a –Eibar-Spain-38 long and short caliber-Registered trademark").



9 mm Bergmann UNION carbine

The Monjuïc Military Museum also had in its collection two 9 mm Bergmann caliber carbines trademarked UNION, one of them inscribed "UNION Mod. 435 EIBAR", with H* proof indicating manufacture in 1935.

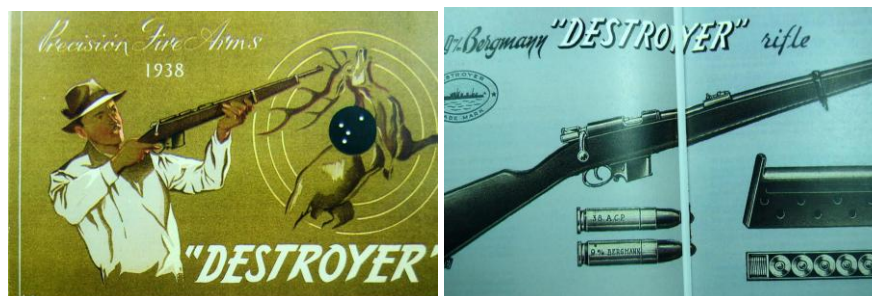
The trademark UNION had been registered in 1927 by "Unceta y Comp^a" and was used to market this model carbine, although its actual manufacture was subcontracted to other makers. The UNION trademark was also used in the naming of the ASTRA-UNION automatic machine rifle which was manufactured by a consortium formed by "Unceta y Comp^a", "Garate, Anitua y Comp^a", and "Aguirre Hnos. Y Aranzabal".

The great similarity between the ONENA and UNION carbines make us suspect that they are the same carbine manufactured by a third party and marketed by "STAR Bonifacio Echeverria" under the ONENA brand and by "Unceta y Comp^a" under the UNION banner.

At the same time as the instauration of the Somaten in Barcelona, firearms controlling regulations, requirements for obtaining firearm permits, and the "Ley de Fugas" ("Escape Laws") were introduced, and it was really these factors, more than the extension of the Somaten to the entire country, which succeeded in pacifying the country during General Primo de Rivera's Dictatorship; this Somaten was composed of well to do, peaceful, and somewhat aged middle class and it showed itself in parades, religious processions and other public acts, but did little more, and disbanded with little protest when its dissolution was ordained in 1931. Then, during the Republic and the Franco period the Somaten regressed to its original conception as a purely Catalan rural institution; It was definitely abolished in 1978, although I am told it still exists, but in a disarmed condition.



Once the SOMATEN was disbanded its carbines were offered as "suitable for park rangers and for big game".



Cover and center-page of a 1938 brochure offering the DESTROYER carbine in 38 ACP and 9 mm Bergmann calibers.

The disbanding of the SOMATEN in 1931 did not mean the end of the manufacturing of these carbines, which were then offered as “suitable for forest rangers” and even for “big game”; The Civil War ended the manufacture of the TIGRE, PAZ, JUPITER, ONENA, and UNION, but the DESTROYER continued to be produced by the firm AYRA-DUREX, successor to Isidro Gaztañaga; My friend Hector J. Meruelo has in his collection several specimens of DESTROYER carbines, including one of the 2nd Model proofed in 1958 (D*1) in 9 mm Bergmann, another one proofed in 1970 (O*1) in 38 SUPER caliber, and another one proofed in 1976 (U*1) in 9 mm Parabellum.

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NOTE: My appreciation to my friends Hector J. Meruelo and Manuel Roca for the information offered on this subject.

GENERAL DATA ON THE REPEATING CARBINES IN THE MONJUIC MILITARY MUSEUM COLLECTION

BRAND	OAL	BARREL LENGTH	REAR SIGHT	CALIBER
Montserrat	1,35 m	540 mm	adjustable	9 mm Bergmann (Campo-Giro)
Destroyer 1 st .Mod.	1,003 m	518 mm	adjustable	9 mm Bergmann (Largo)
Destroyer 2 nd Mod.	1,005 m	518 mm	adjustable	9 mm Bergmann (Largo)
Paz	0,985 m	513 mm	adjustable	9 mm Bergmann (Largo)
Tigre	0,960 m	493 mm	adjustable	44 WCF
Jupiter	0,985 m	474 mm	fixed	9 mm Bergmann (Largo)
Onena	0,980 m	477 mm	fixed	9 mm Bergmann (Largo)
Union	0,983 m	479 mm	fixed	9 mm Bergmann (Largo)

(9 mm Bergmann(-Bayard)= 9 mm Campo-Giro= 9 mm Largo)

The bayonet attachment lug was not exclusive to the Montserrat as I have seen it on a TIGRE; it was sold as an accessory usable with any of these carbines, at extra price.