

# A Postscript to Henk Visser's Article in Bulletin 53

In November, 1985, it became clear once more that miracles are still possible. I was approached by an acquaintance from Utrecht, a hunter and retired shotgun dealer, who told me that during a visit to the South of Spain he met some people and discussed hunting and shotguns with them. On remarking that since his retirement he had become more and more interested in antique firearms a lady observed: "Gosh, then you should go to the house of a friend of mine, she has these whitish pistols on the wall." A few days later she introduced him to a Swedish lady married to a Spanish gentleman and on entering the living room he saw THREE pairs of Dutch ivory-stocked pistols hanging from the wall. To his concern, he also saw that they were suspended from thin brass wires fastened to tiny nails over, of all things, a tile floor!

As soon as I could I went to Spain myself to visit the lady. This was not such a problem since I happen to have a second home a two-hour car drive away from Estepona, where she lives.

On entering the lady's living room, although informed beforehand, the actual confrontation was beyond my imagination: there were indeed three pairs of ivory-stocked pistols, in truly magnificent condition.

After telling her about the history of Dutch ivory-stocked pistols, she made the remark "If ever I am going to sell them, you should have them in your collection, they should go back home." With that promise still ringing in my ears, I left the very hospitable family. Soon afterwards the lady sent me a letter in which she offered me the pistols, and they are now in my possession.

All three pairs are Maastricht-made. One pair bears the signature "Louroux," instead of "Louroux," a mistake also made by the engraver on a pair in the former Ilgner collection (Hoff, *Dutch Firearms* p. 206). The other pair is signed "Leonard Cleuter." The third, although with no signature, is, as far as the type and the sculptured relief decoration of the locks and the barrels are concerned, very much akin to a whole group of firearms from the 1640's decorated in the same manner, made in the Maastricht area.

The gilt-mounted Louroux pair comes, as far as the butt-classification is concerned, under the "Heads with a Helmet" variety. The same goes for the Cleuter pair, although the helmets are of a type not hitherto encountered. The entire back of their skull is a grotesque male face resulting, in fact, in a "Janus" type pommel. Other unusual features of the pommels of the Cleuter pistols are a helmeted man's face with mustache on one pistol, and a woman's

face on the other, as well as the raised military trophies at the sides of the skull.

Neither, to my knowledge, has the peculiar butt shape found on the unsigned pair hitherto been encountered. The flat underside of the butt has a domed iron plate with relief decoration and an as-yet unidentified coat of arms. And, very remarkable, the entire stock is devoid of any *carving*, but decorated by *engraving* instead, with laurel leaves, grotesque animals, and military figures.

The Swedish lady inherited the three pairs from her father who, in turn, acquired them from an American collector, a Mr. G. Diderrich, in a business deal in New York in 1946. In the loan exhibition catalogue by Stephen V. Grancsay, *European Arms and Armor*, in the Brooklyn Museum, 1933, two of the pairs, the Cleuters and the unsigned, are described and illustrated under the Nos. 210 and 211 and are stated to have been lent by Mr. Diderrich. The unsigned pair carries metal tags from the Metropolitan Museum on the cocks, and it is known that the F Cleuter pair had also been displayed by the Metropolitan Museum in 1931.

Here are short descriptions of the three newly added pairs:

*Coll. No. HV-728/729*

Pair of flintlock pistols, Maastricht c. 1645. *Engraved* ivory stocks, the locks and barrels chiselled in high relief. Partly gilt, silver mounts, the domed butt caps with the coat of arms of the Kingdom of Saxony, which was established in 1806. The stocks are most probably from that period, but, as stated, locks, barrels and mounts are datable to ca. 1645. We are grateful to Dr. H. Nickel of the Metropolitan Museum for the identification of the coat of arms. 599/426/14.

*HV-730/731*

Pair of flintlock pistols with ivory stocks, c. 1660. The locks are marked LOVROVRX and MAESTRICHT and with some chiselled details. Marked on underside of barrels: ST 3220. Gilt mounts. 510/343/13.

*HV-732/733*

Pair of flintlock pistols with ivory stocks, Maastricht c. 1660. The locks are marked LEONARD/CLEVTE<sup>R</sup> (. . . ER on 732). The pommels have a helmeted male's head on 732 and a ditto female's head on 733, respectively; the rear half of each helmet is carved in the shape of a grotesque mask. Iron mounts. 518/351/12.7.

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26a,b,c. The pommel of a gun in Plate 26, opposite. Note a similar dragon on the helmets on page 20, *Bulletin* 53.

26e. Compare this lock with that on page 20, Bulletin 53.



26d. A sideplate from the Louroux guns.



Plate 26. The new pair by Jean Louroux.

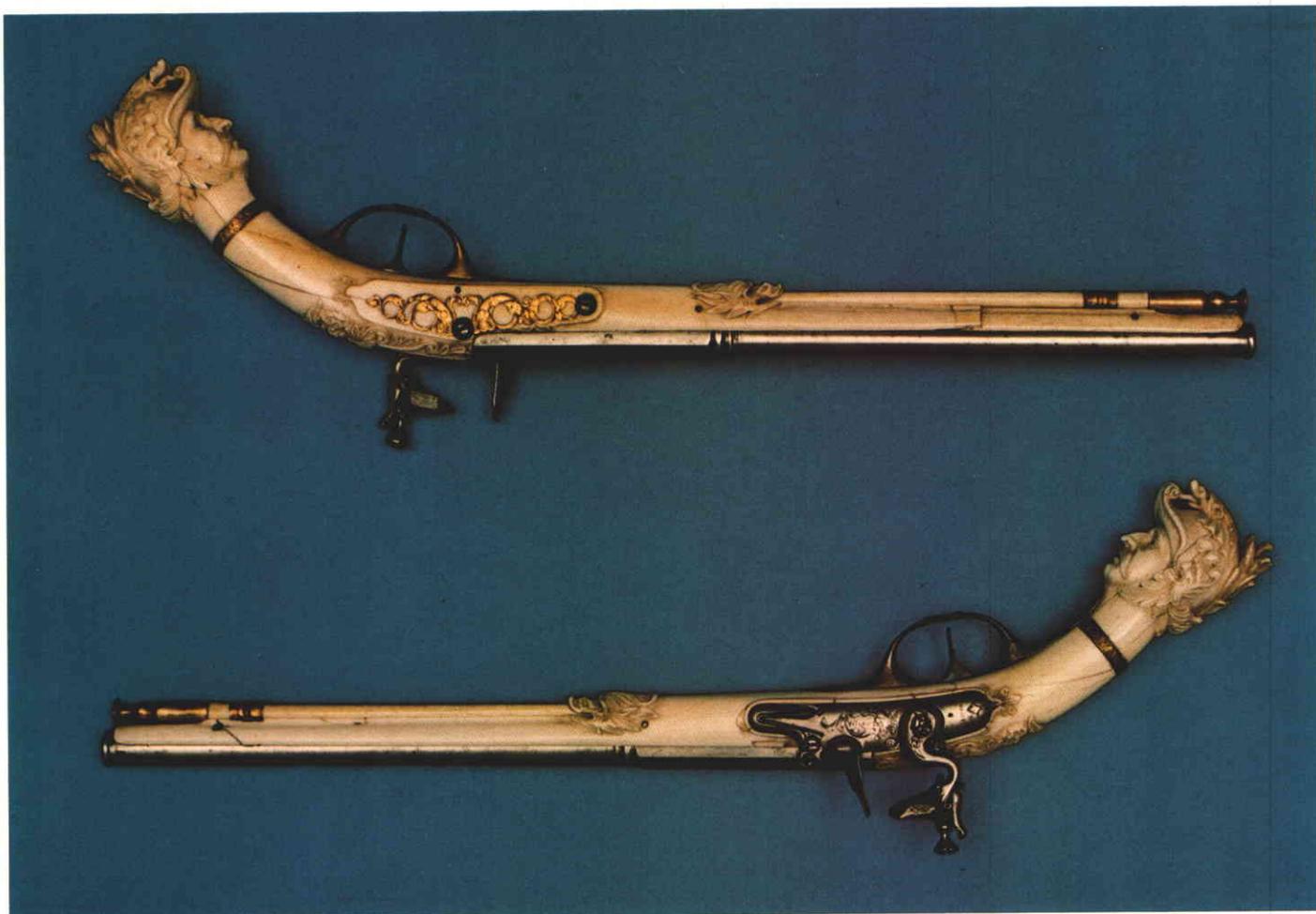




Plate 27. The Cleuter pair with the helmeted man and woman pommels.



27a,b,c,d,e,f. The happy (?) couple and her father?

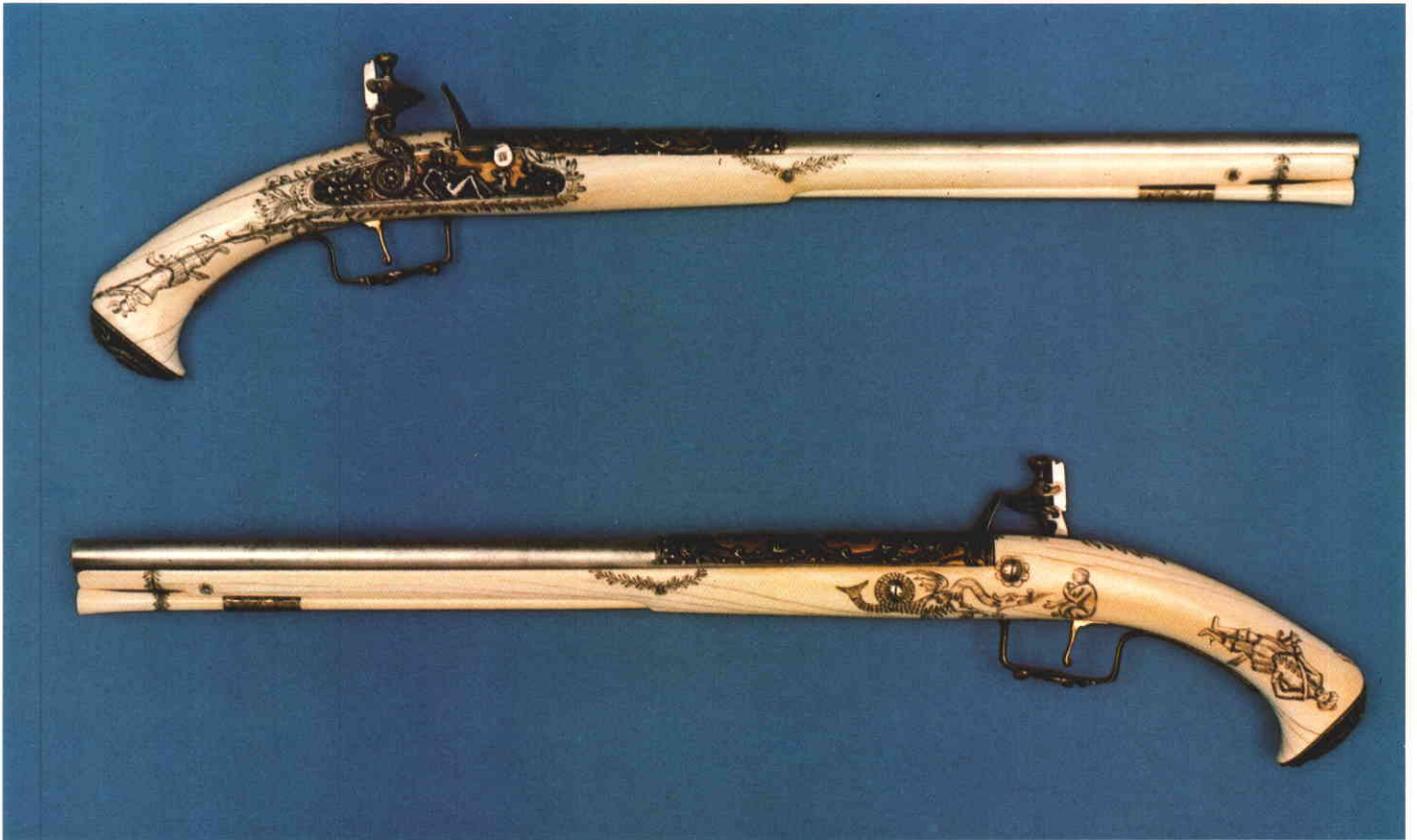
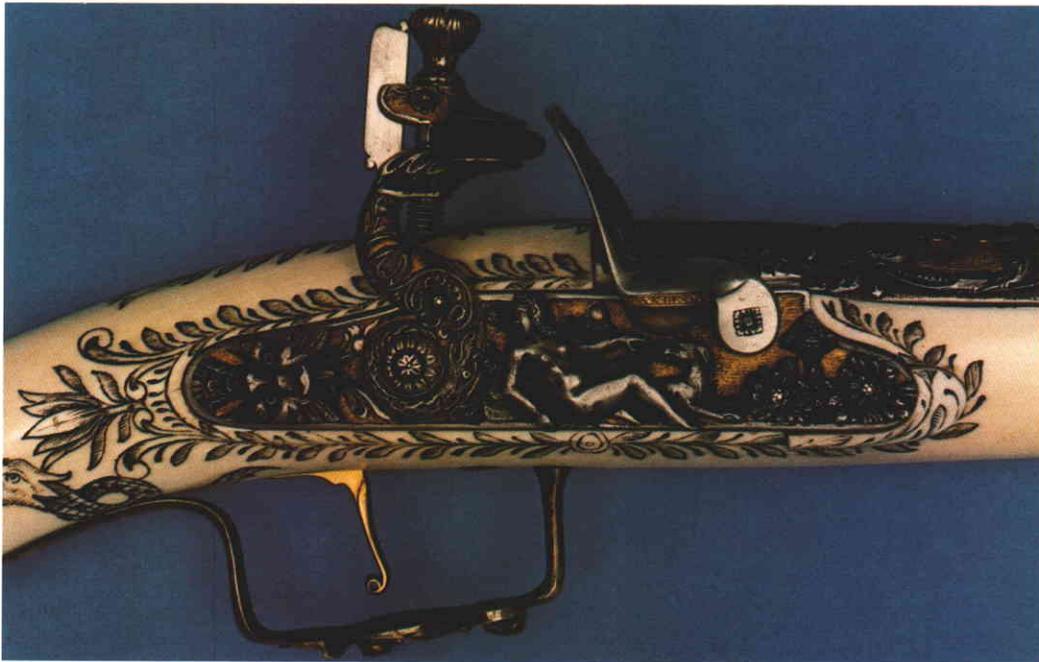


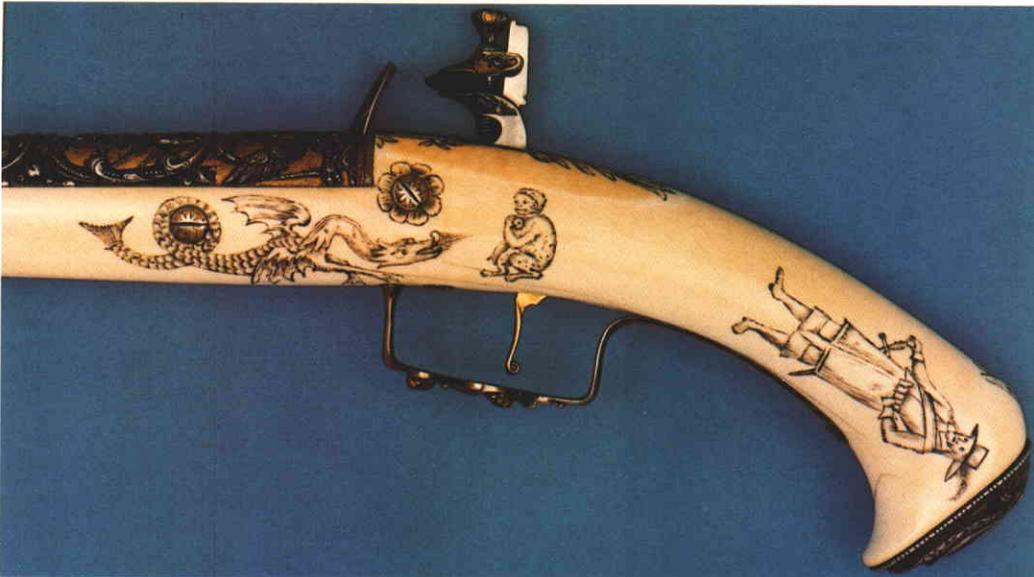
Plate 28. The unsigned pair with "scrimshaw" engraving.



28a,b,c. Right hand sides of the grips and the engraving on one barrel.



28d. The lock of the lower gun in Plate 28.



28e. The left side of the butt of the upper gun in Plate 28. Compare the apes.



27f. Cleuter pistol lock; compare with plate 18d, p. 30, *Bulletin* 53.



28f. Coat of arms on the butts of the unmarked pistols.