

VARIATIONS OF THE FRENCH MODEL AnXIII PRODUCED BY OTHER COUNTRIES

by R. E. Brooker

M. Jean Boudroit¹, in his superb set of books on French military firearms and in an article in *Gazette des Armes*, has provided us a wealth of information on the French pistol model year 13 (M. AnXIII or Model of 1802). This pistol was the standard Napoleonic pistol. More than 300,000 were manufactured in total at the major French arsenals - Maubuege, Charlesville, St. Etienne, Tulle, and Versailles. This article does not concern itself with the French pistols. Rather, it focuses on those pistols of other armies where the French pistol Model AnXIII was used, copied, copied with modifications, or was used as a standard design for modification of older pistols.

As France was the major world power during the Empire of Napoleon, and as the Model AnXIII was the standard French pistol, and a very good pistol besides, it is only natural that others would copy part or all of the French design. In this article, these other users of the French Model AnXIII design will be explored. This article should serve only as an initial foray into the question of who else used the French Model AnXIII.

I have broken this exploration down into five principal categories. These categories are:

1. Other contemporary users of French Model AnXIII pistols - this category includes Imperial factories located outside of France, other countries using French-made pistols, and pistols made by French satellite governments.
2. Countries who, after the fall of Napoleon, used old French pistols for their own armies.
3. Countries which may or may not have been allied with the French who used the design during or after the time of Napoleon.
4. Countries which, during the time of Napoleon, used the basic Model AnXIII design to modify their older pistols.
5. Countries which, after the time of Napoleon, incorporated local design traits of the basic Model AnXIII design into their pistols.

Naturally, this breakdown is somewhat arbitrary and, as a consequence, there will be overlap between categories. Secondly, some of the observations are calculated guesswork and may be only partially correct or perhaps completely in error. The author thus would invite any comments, corrections, or additions.

1. Other Contemporary Users of the French M. AnXIII

The Piedmont was incorporated into France by Napoleon along with the rest of the western half of

Italy down just past Rome. At the Piedmontise arsenal in the capital city of Torino (Turin), production of firearms was resumed by the French. Imperial French production started in 1798 with muskets and continued until the expulsion of the French in 1814. In 1813, 667 pistols were made and another 36 in 1814². From an example in the Museo Storico Nazionale d'Artiglieria in Torino (Figure 1), the lock is marked:

*Me^F Imp^e
de Gwin*

The stock near the side plate:



AC - being the inspector Antoine Chantron

B - being the first Controller, Brouilly

At the Fabrica Reale di Napoli, imperial Model AnXIII pistols appear to have been made, probably during the reign of Marshal Joachim Murat. Murat was Napoleon's brother-in-law and reigned from 1808 to 1815. I have seen one pistol thirteen years ago in a Paris antique dealer's shop with a lock marked:

*MRE IMPERIAL
DE NAPLES*

I also once owned a converted Neopolitan Model AnXIII. While the lock was marked:

*Mra Rle
di Napoli*

this was perhaps a later inscription as the inside of the lock was dated 1813.

Also during the Napoleonic hold over the rest of Italy, Model AnXIII pistols were probably produced in local arsenals. The eastern side of Italy down to the Neopolitan territories was under French control first as the Repubblica Cisalpina from 1797 until 1802 when it was absorbed into the Repubblica Italiana which in 1805 was converted to the Regno d'Italia. The Regno d'Italia survived until 1814 at which time it was broken up and returned to the

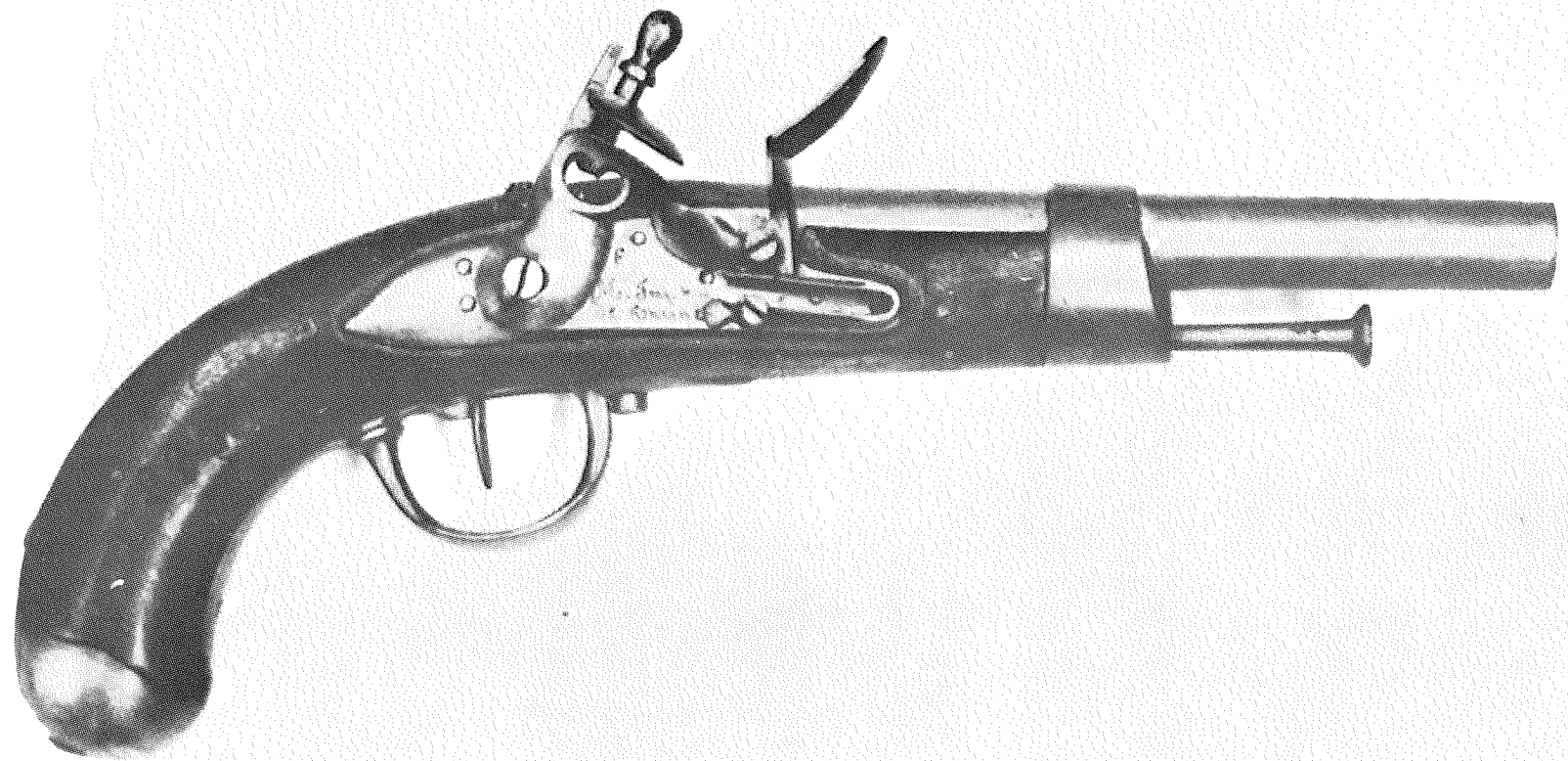
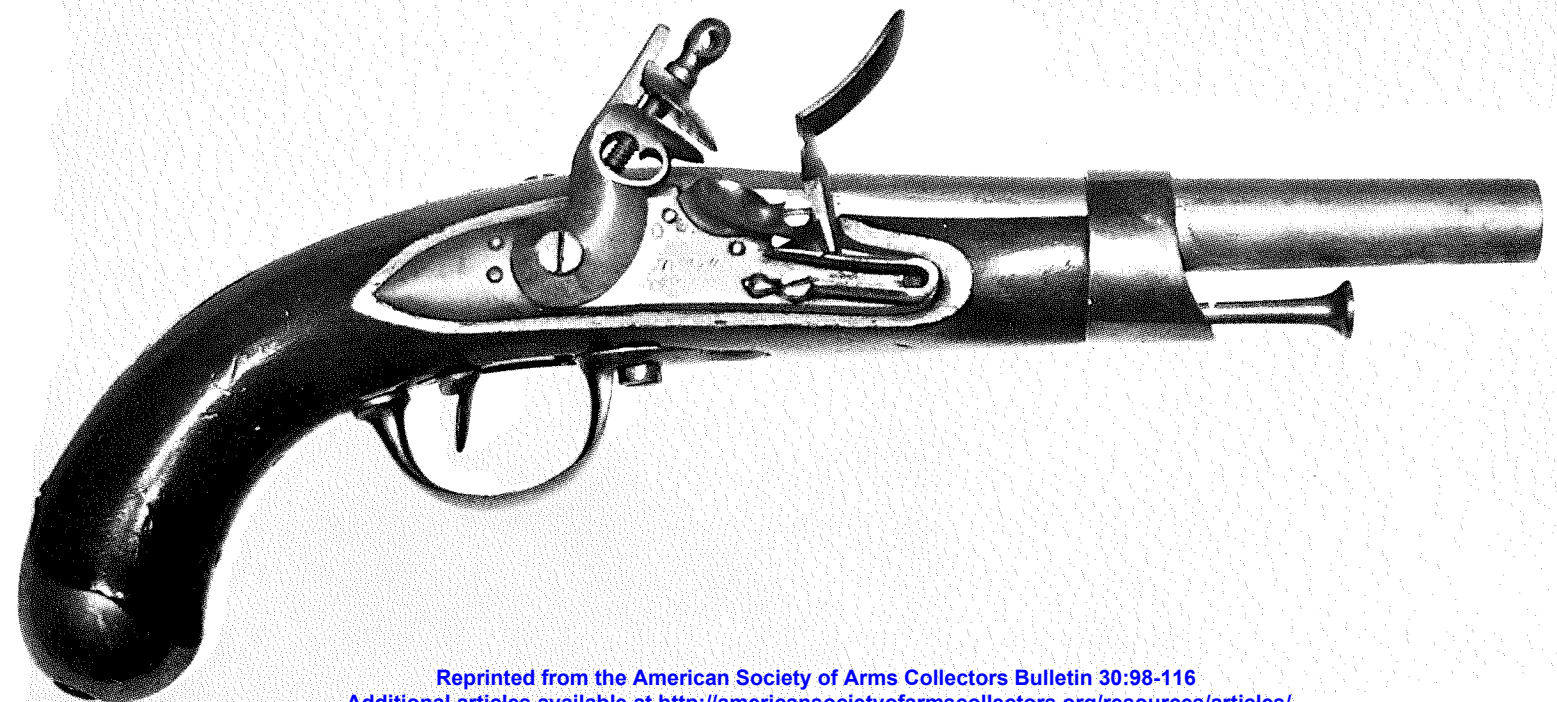


Figure 1. Mra. Imp'le de Turin, dated 1805. Museo Storico Nazionale d'Artiglieria.

Figure 2. Mra. Rle di Brescia, dated 1813



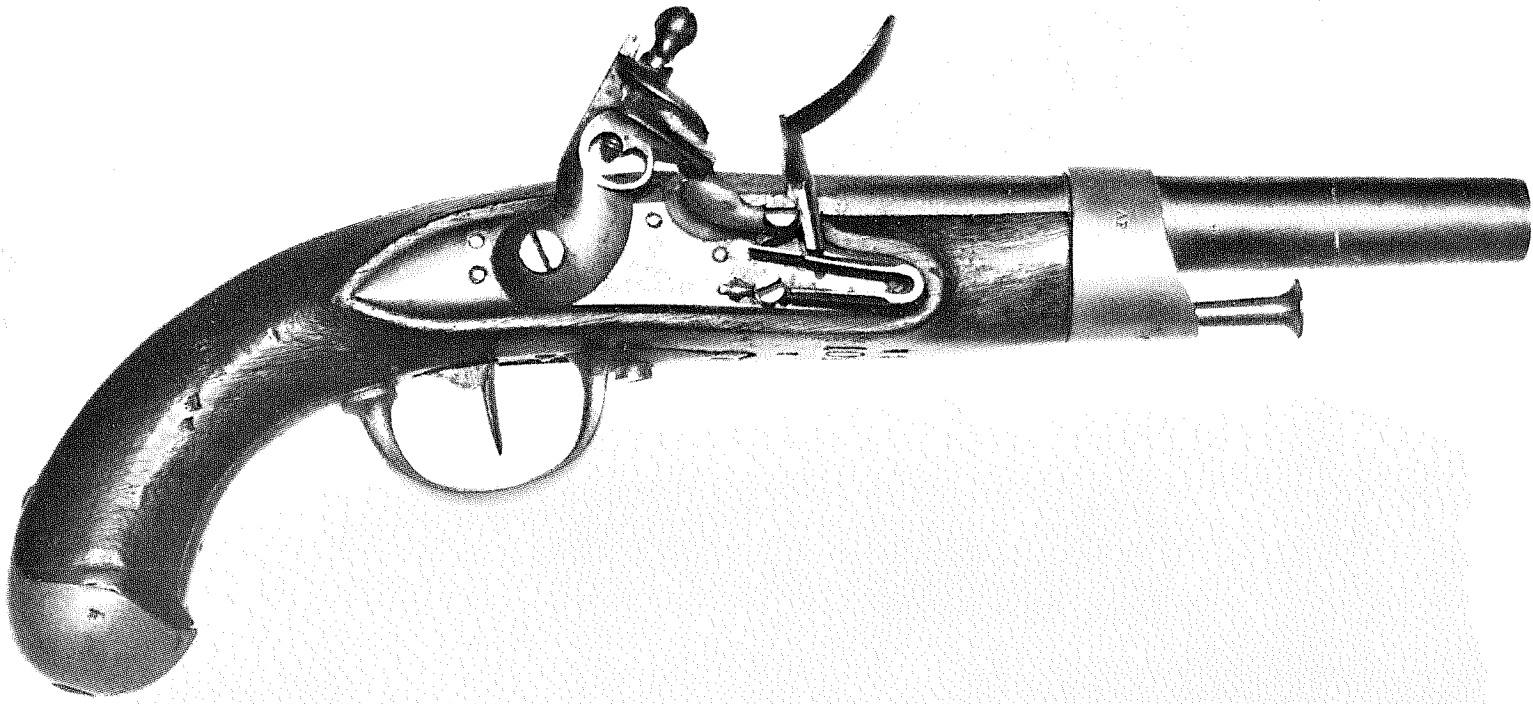
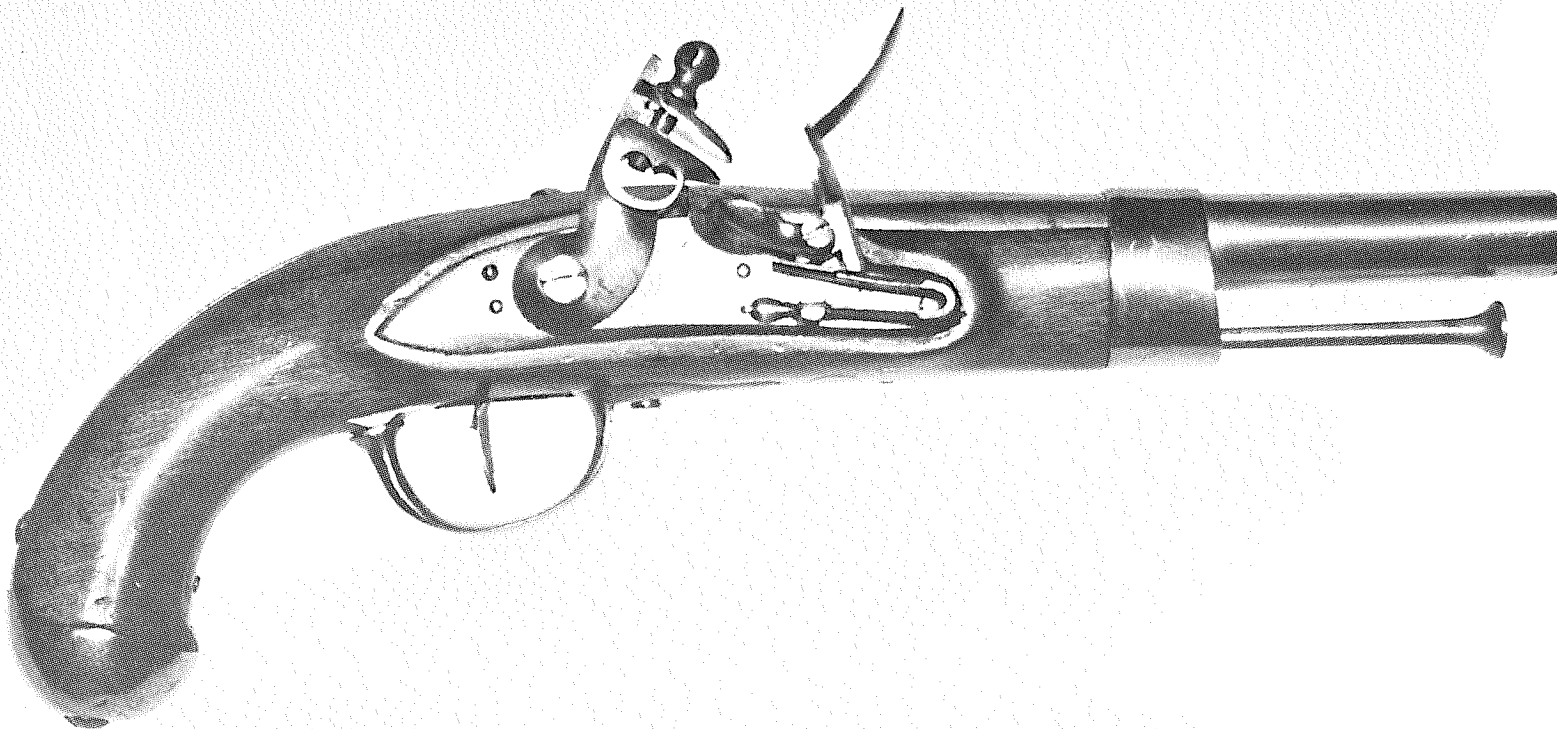


Figure 3. Brescia, Fab'a Paris e Compag

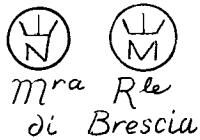
Figure 4. Sperandio Mutti, Gardoni



former rulers of its parts. I have a splendid Model AnIX dated 1808 and marked on the lock:

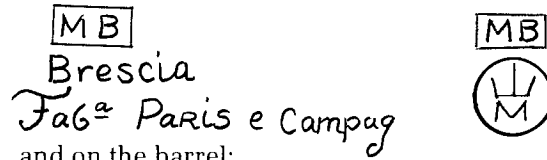


Marked similarly (Figure 2) is a Model AnXIII, the lock markings being:



and dated on the barrel tang, 1813.

Similar (Figure 3) is another which is marked on the lock:



and on the barrel:

With this pistol, it is not possible to know whether it was produced before or after 1814.

Another (Figure 4) was probably intended for Naval use as it once had a belt hook and still retains an anchor: ⚓ stamped in the barrel. The lock is marked:

**SPERANDIO MUTTI
GARDONI**

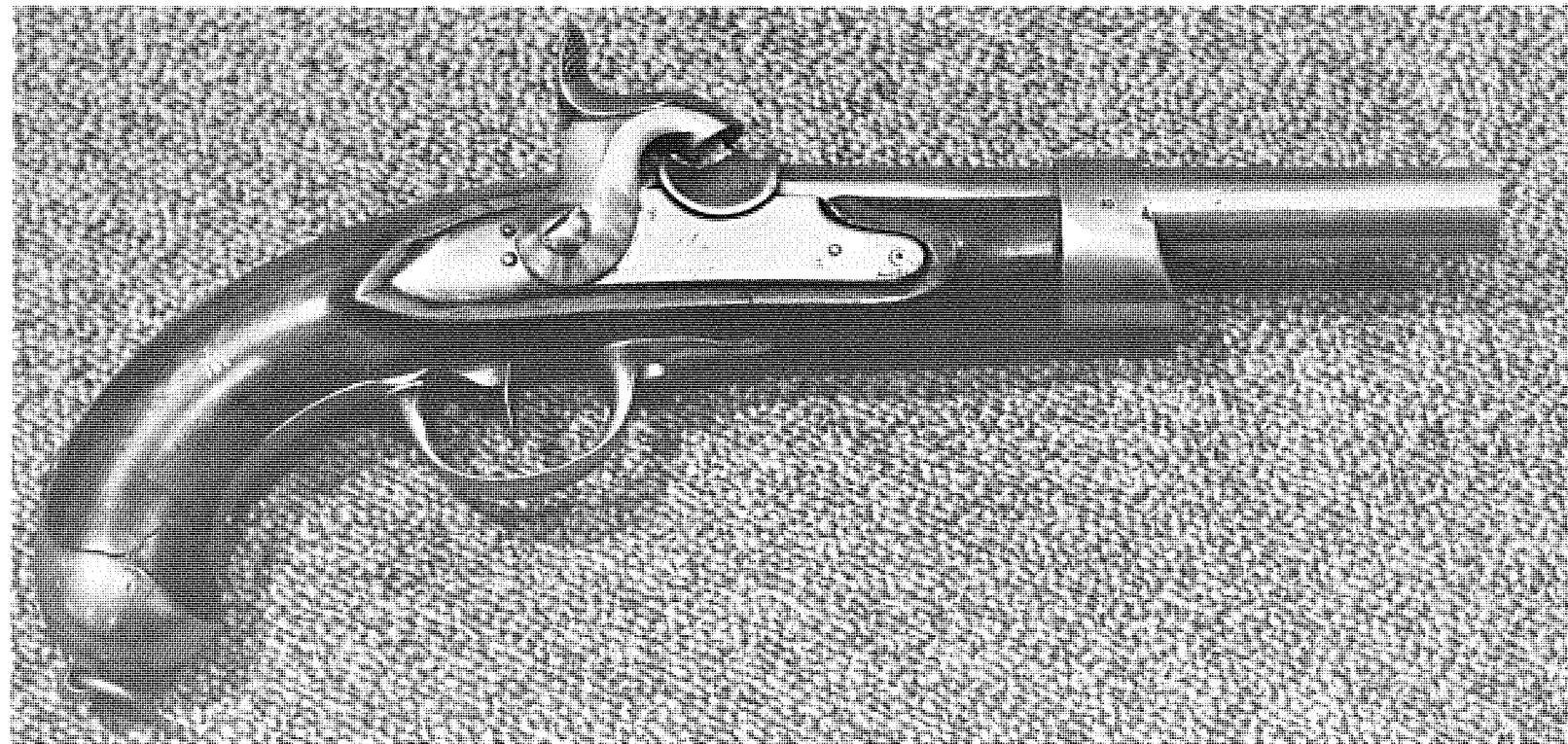


Figure 5. Swiss Pistol made from parts

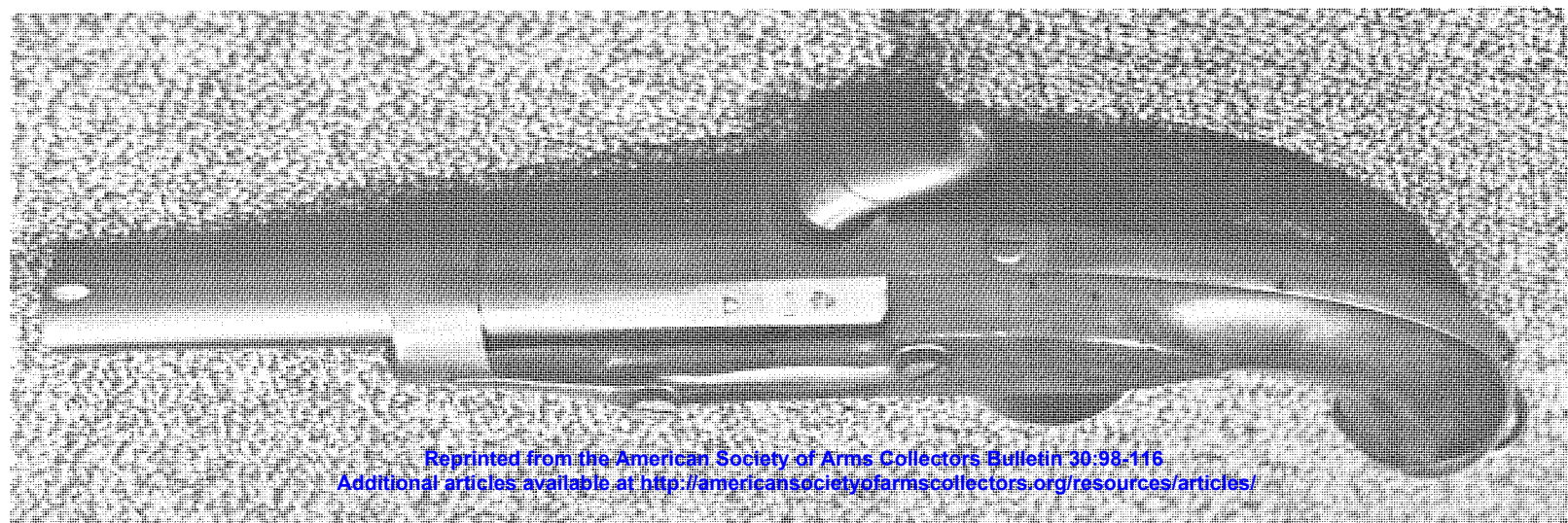
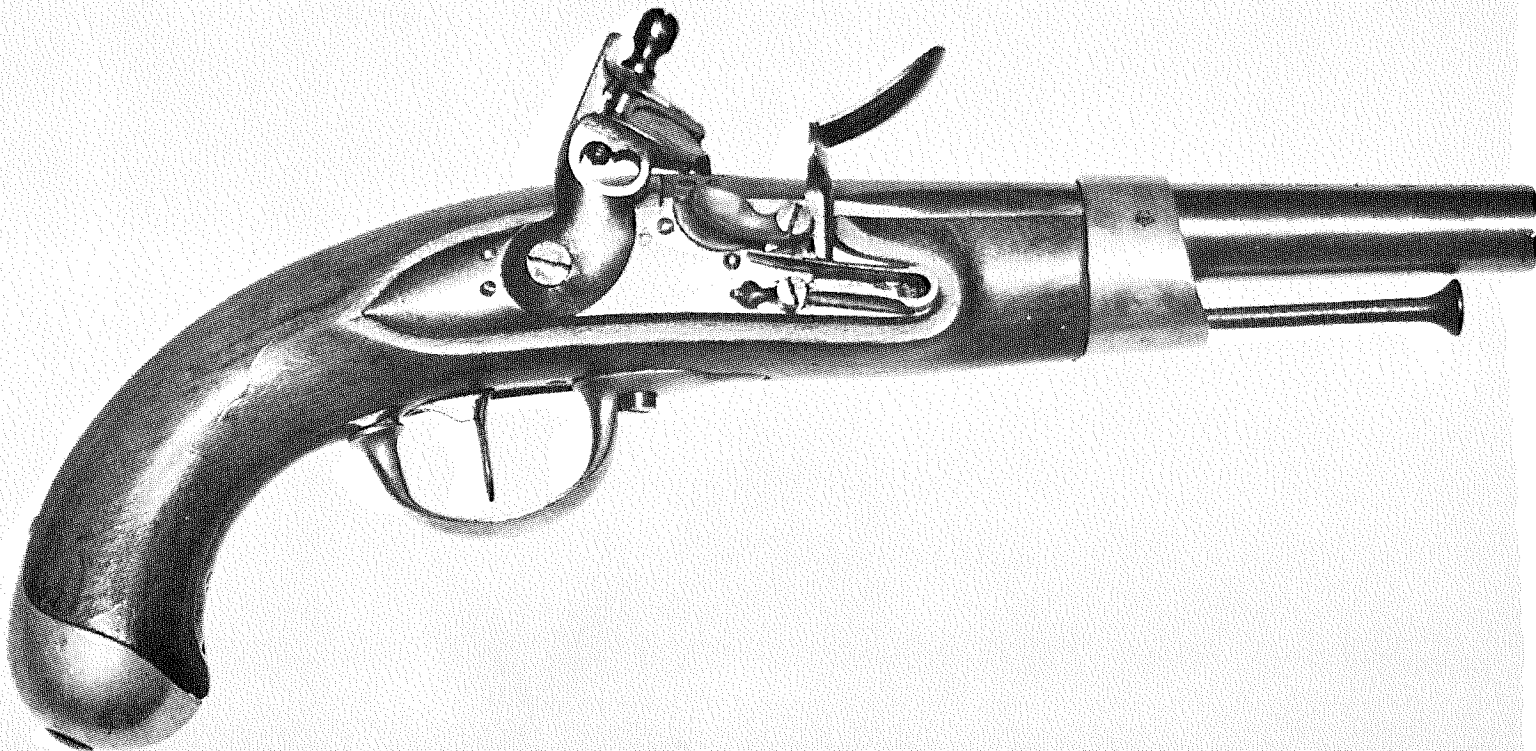




Figure 6. Westphalia pistol, dated 1813

Figure 7. Pistol with only inspectors marks






Again, as with Fig 2 and 3, it is not possible to know whether this pistol was made during the French occupation or later.

Switzerland, as a French satellite during Napoleon's reign, used a hodge podge of military pistols. Some were older cantonal arms, some revolutionary French, some copies of French pistols, and apparently some Model AnIX and Model AnXIII pistols given by the French to arm their allies. Doubtless, further French weapons were obtained after Napoleon until the earliest Swiss model, the M. 1818, came into existence. Swiss weapons found made out of French parts and converted French weapons (Figure 5) lend credence to this postulation.

Westphalia was another satellite kingdom created by Napoleon out of parts of Hesse-Cassel, Brunswick, Hildesheim, Panderborn, Halterstadt, Osnabruck, Minden, etc. for his brother Jerome. This realm lasted from 1807 to 1813 and then was redistributed to its former secular rulers. Figure 6 is dated 1813 and is, I believe, one used by Jerome's troops. The lock is marked:



presumably for Jerome Napoleon (although contemporary coins are marked HN for Hieronymus Napoleon).

Figure 7 is an apparently contemporary piece. Who made it is not at this time known to the author. The lock is marked: , the barrel: , and the barrel band: .

There are most probably other contemporary users of the French Model AnXIII among the allies or satellites of Napoleonic France. One would wonder what the Polish, some of the German states, or the Illyrian Provinces used. In the third section of this paper, we will cover states that made their own Model AnXIII or variants thereto. However, there were probably smaller states which did not produce their own pistols who may have been using French ones. Hopefully as collectors become more sophisticated, some of these pistols marked with some identifying marks of other states will be recognized.

2. Countries Who, After the Fall of Napoleon I, Used French Model AnXIII Pistols or Parts Thereof for Their Armies

Swiss use of French Model AnXIII parts has been discussed earlier. These parts will also be found on cantonal type pistols as well as on the M. 1818 and M. 1842.

Recently a converted French Model AnXIII turned up in Germany with a German conversion. This conversion (Figure 8) is very similar to contemporary Wurttemberg pistols. So for lack of further evidence let us say, for the time being, it is a Wurttemberg conversion.

Perhaps the most curious use of a French Model

AnXIII is the German transformation into an entirely different pistol. The top pistol in Figure 9 is the German-made model, by Köppe à Cöln. The middle picture in Figure 9 is a French Model AnXIII transformed by adding a forestock and by conversion. The lower part of Figure 9 shows how the forestock was transformed. One can see in the original French stock the hole where the ramrod once went. Whether these pistols were used by the city of Coln (Cologne) or some other state is not known by the author.

3. Countries Which Copied the Design of the Model AnXIII for Their Own Armies

As the Neopolitans had apparently begun production of the Model AnXIII under Murat, they must have seen little reason to discontinue the model after the restoration. Figure 10 shows two types of Neopolitan Model AnXIII pistols, the lower slightly smaller and lighter than the upper. Both are marked:

*Mra R^{le}
di Napoli*

The larger is dated 1835, while the smaller is 1836. These pistols were also converted and made into both cavalry and navy pistols.

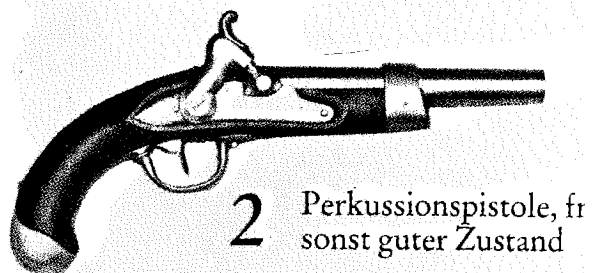
In all probability the Regno d'Italia pistols shown in Figures 2, 3, and 4 were used after the fall of Napoleon.

The Netherlands offers a wide variety of Model AnXIII types. Figure 11 is probably from Holland. While the same in all other respects to the French Model AnXIII, it lacks an iron backstrap. The markings on the lock are almost indecipherable,

*Manufre
P leajeri*

as is the round inspector's date stamp on the stock.

Figure 8. Wurttemberg pistol



2 Perkussionspistole, fr
sonst guter Zustand

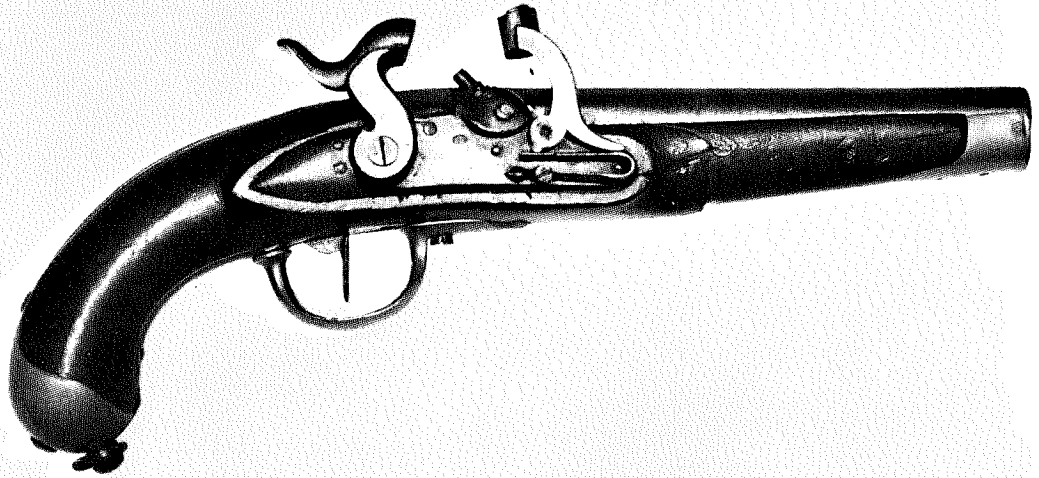
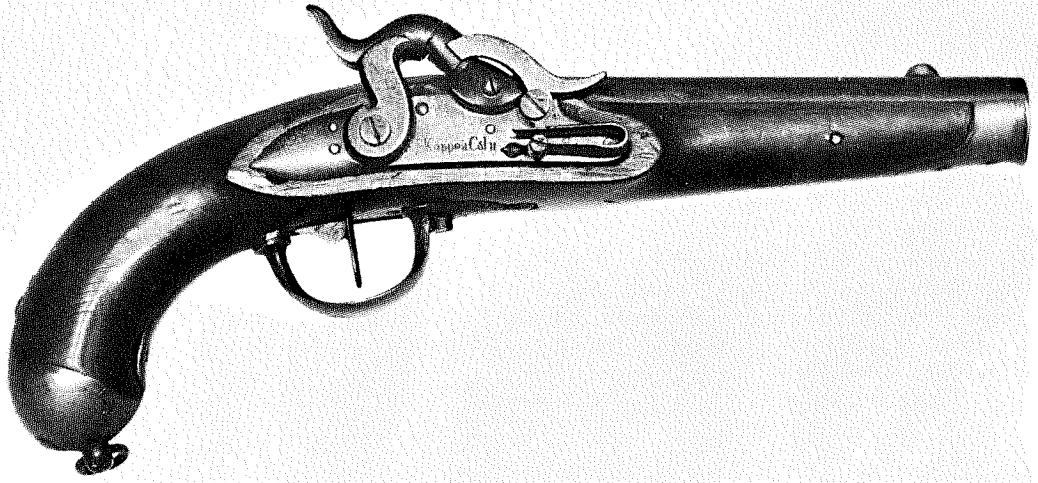
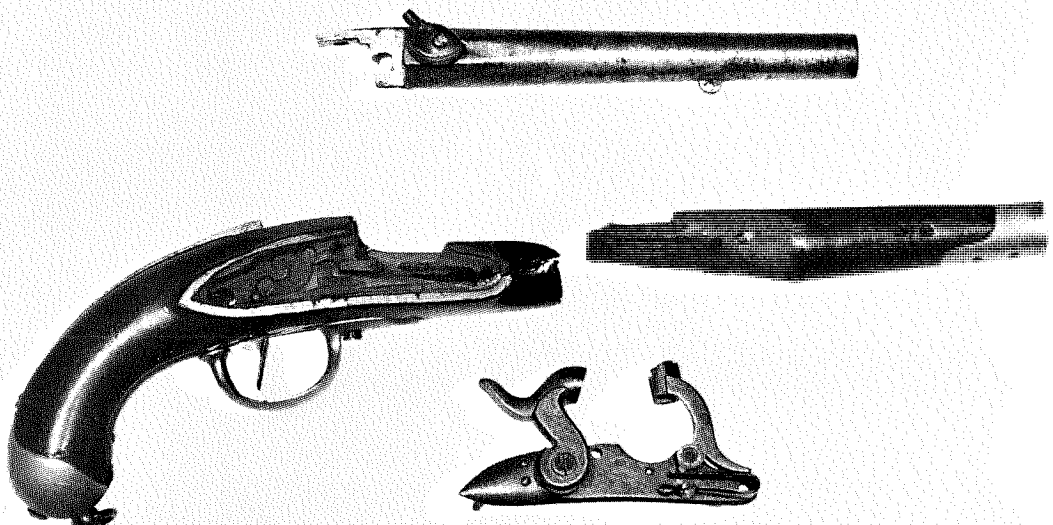


Figure 9. Top, all new percussion pistol. Middle and lower, pistol made out of French Model An XIII pistol.



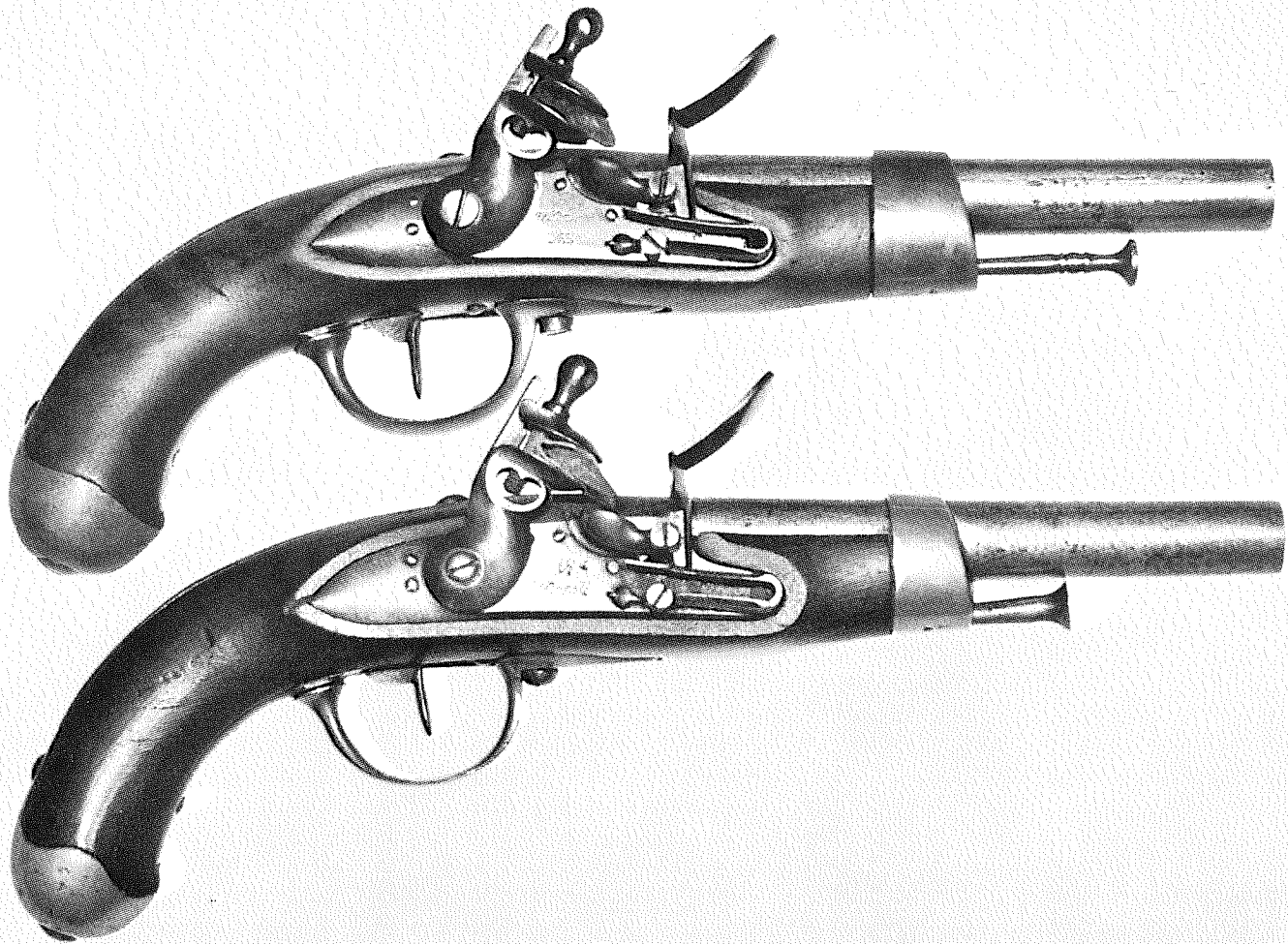
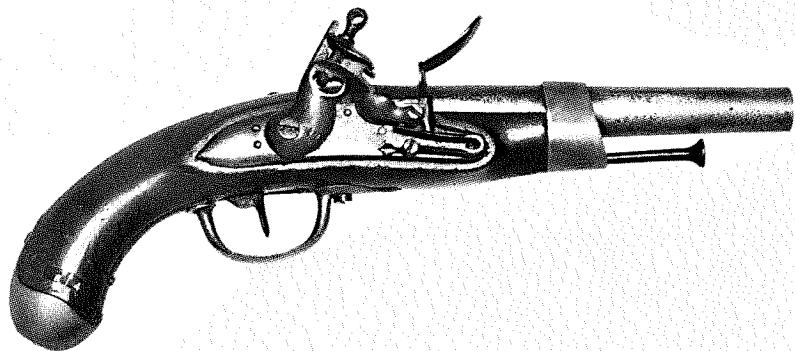
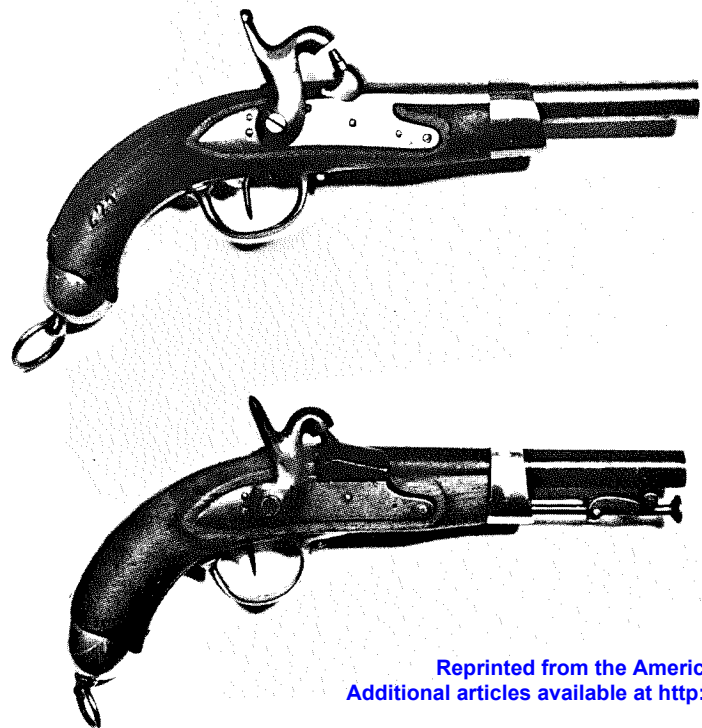


Figure 10A. Mra Rle di Napoli dated 1835 and 1836

Figure 10B. Converted Napoli pistols. Torino-Museo d'Artiglieria

Figure 11. Holland?



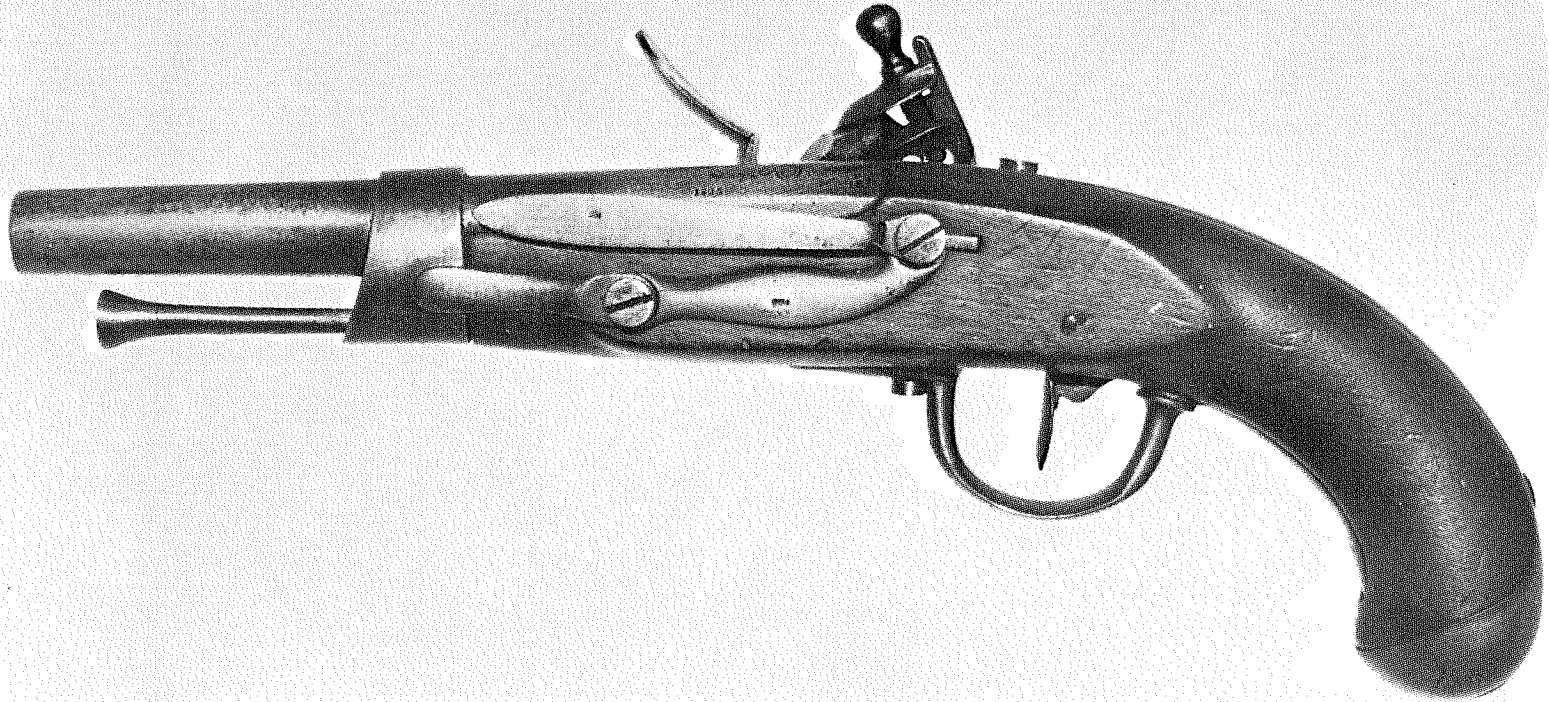
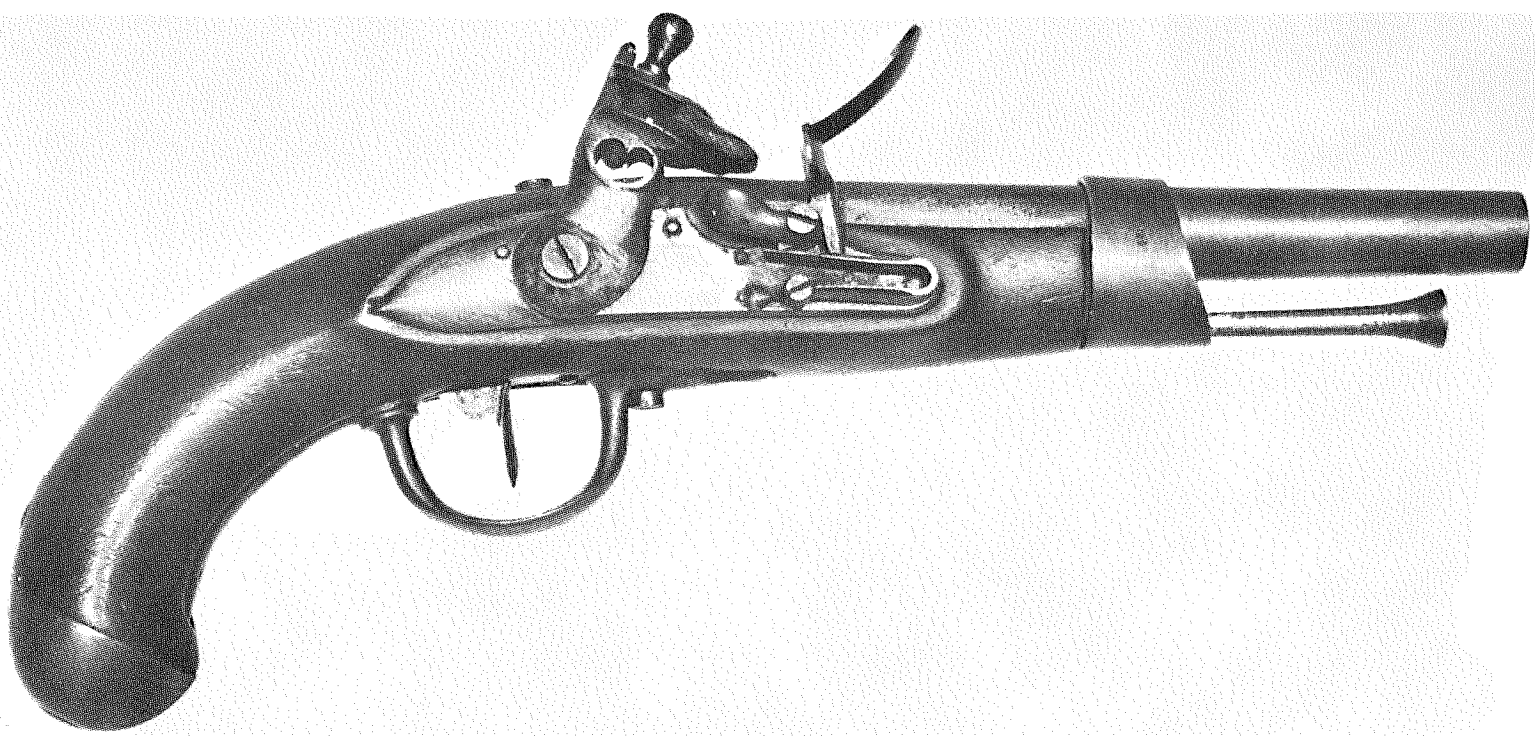
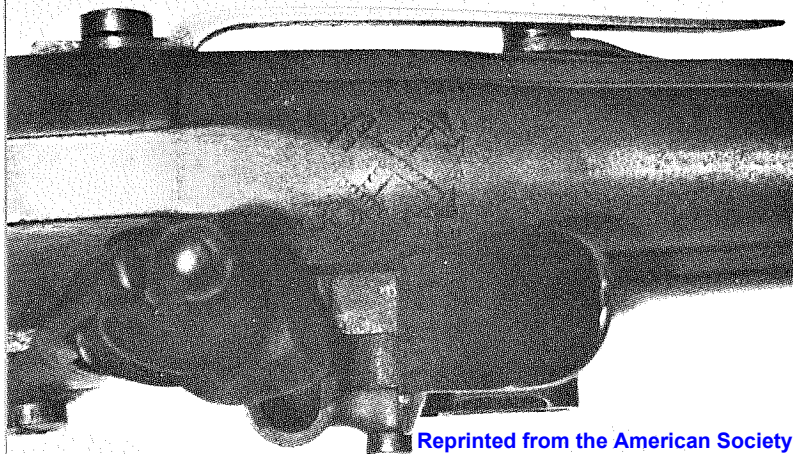


Figure 12. Dutch naval pistol, dated 1825



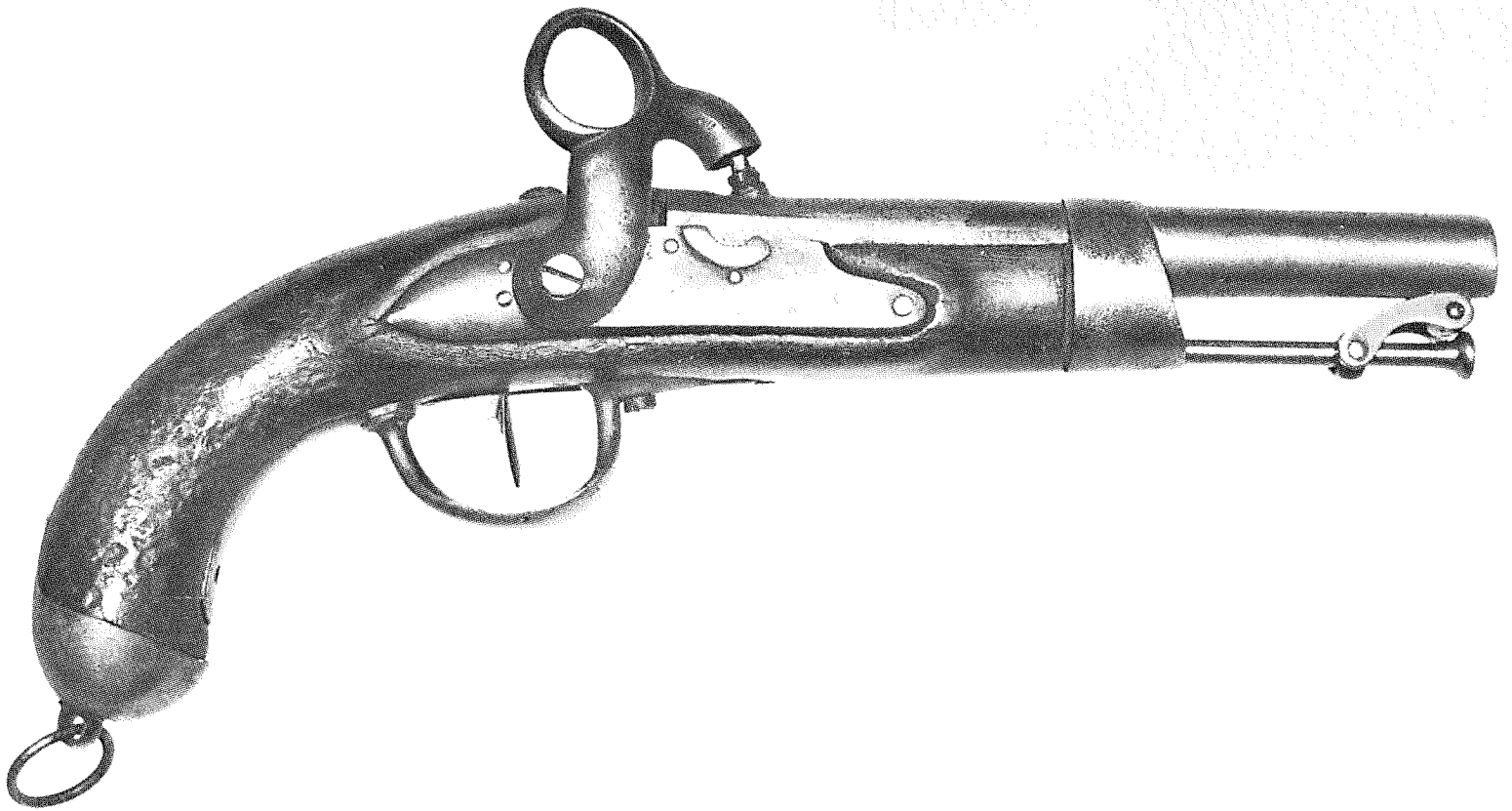


Figure 13. Dutch pistol

Figure 12 is a Dutch navy pistol. The front barrel band is iron. The barrel is dated 1825. Figure 13 is similar but converted to percussion and without a belt hook. This piece was found in Greece along with other contemporary Dutch military pistols. These pistols may have been sold as surplus to Greece to arm her troops after 1828.

Figure 14 is a Saxon Model AnXIII dated 1812. During the reign of Napoleon, Saxony was a French satellite. However, as a good serviceable pistol, it was kept in service probably until the 1860's. The conversion is one found on converted Saxon pistols M. 1834, as well as Leige contract original percussion pistols following the M. 1834 design.

Figure 15 is the same as the original French, except for the inclusion of a swivel ramrod. The lock is marked:

**I.H. SCHMIDT
IN
HANNOVER**

This pistol may have been made while Hannover was a French satellite. As Hannover belonged to the British Kings through William IV (died 1837), and as other Hannover pistols are British or of an entirely German design, it seems likely that the pistol would not have been made after the restoration.

The Spanish army also seems to have approved of the French design, for with their M. 1820 (Figure 16), they copied it. The barrel is slightly longer than the French (by 30mm), as is the forestock. The

barrel is also slightly flared at the muzzle. This model was also produced with a belt hook. The M. 1820 was subsequently modified in the late 1820's (Figure 17). I have seen pistols of this type with dates on the lock from 1828 through 1841. These pistols were then used as percussion models as well.

Figure 18 is a heavy copy of the Model AnXIII. The barrel has the Ⓢ Belgium proof and a large Ⓚ. Beyond these marks, there are no others. The barrel is 27mm longer than the French. The author has no idea who might have used this pistol.

4. Countries Which Modernized Their Older Pistols Using the Basic Model AnXIII Design

Figures 19 and 20 represent someone's efforts to modernize eighteenth century pistols. I assume these two Germanic pistols were modernized at their place of origin. It is not possible, however, to conceive of the hard pressed French during Napoleon's brief return from exile modifying the various guns they had available. Interestingly, the barrels on both guns are 200mm long, the same as the original Model AnXIII.

5. Countries Which Copied the Basic Model AnXIII Design, but with Local Modifications

In Spain, the M. 1826 (Figure 21) is the same as the French original except for the side plate-belt hook and the British type of butt. This model was apparently used by the Royal Guard as the various ones I have seen are all marked on the barrel:

Guardia Real

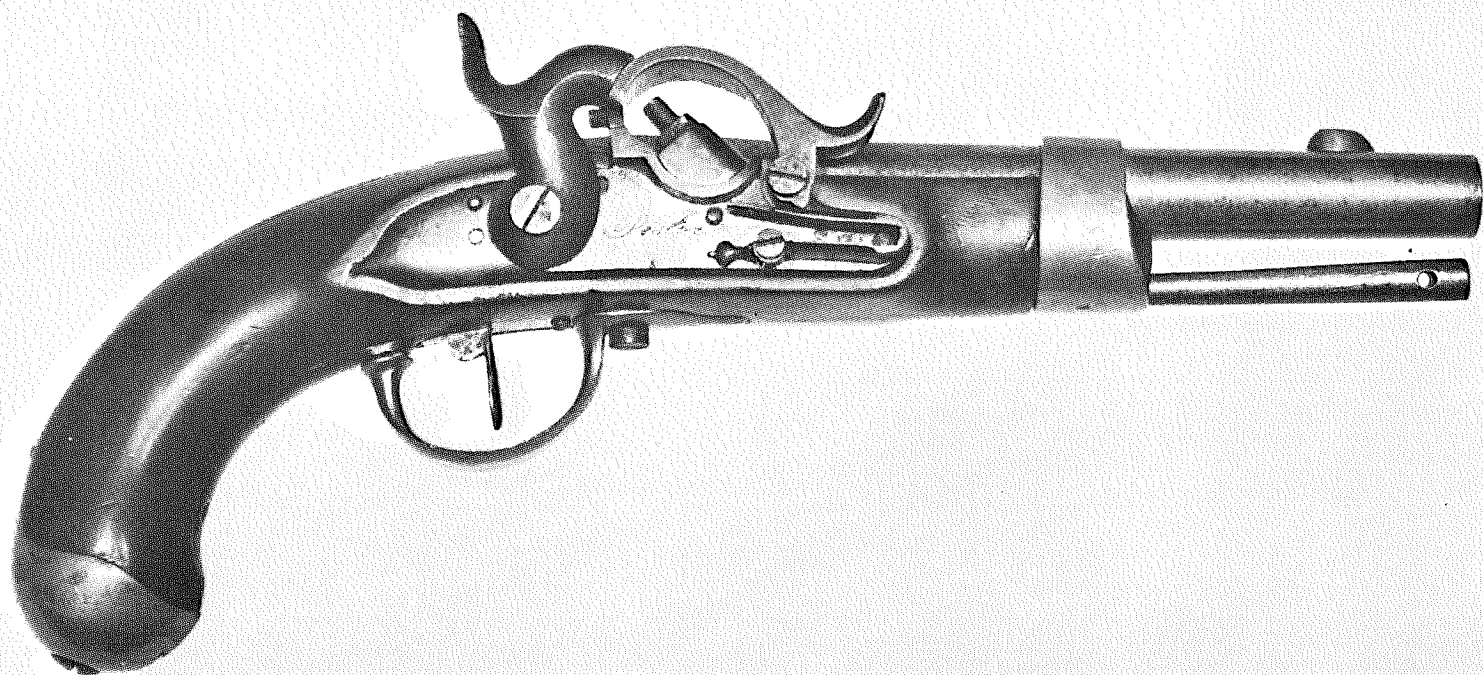
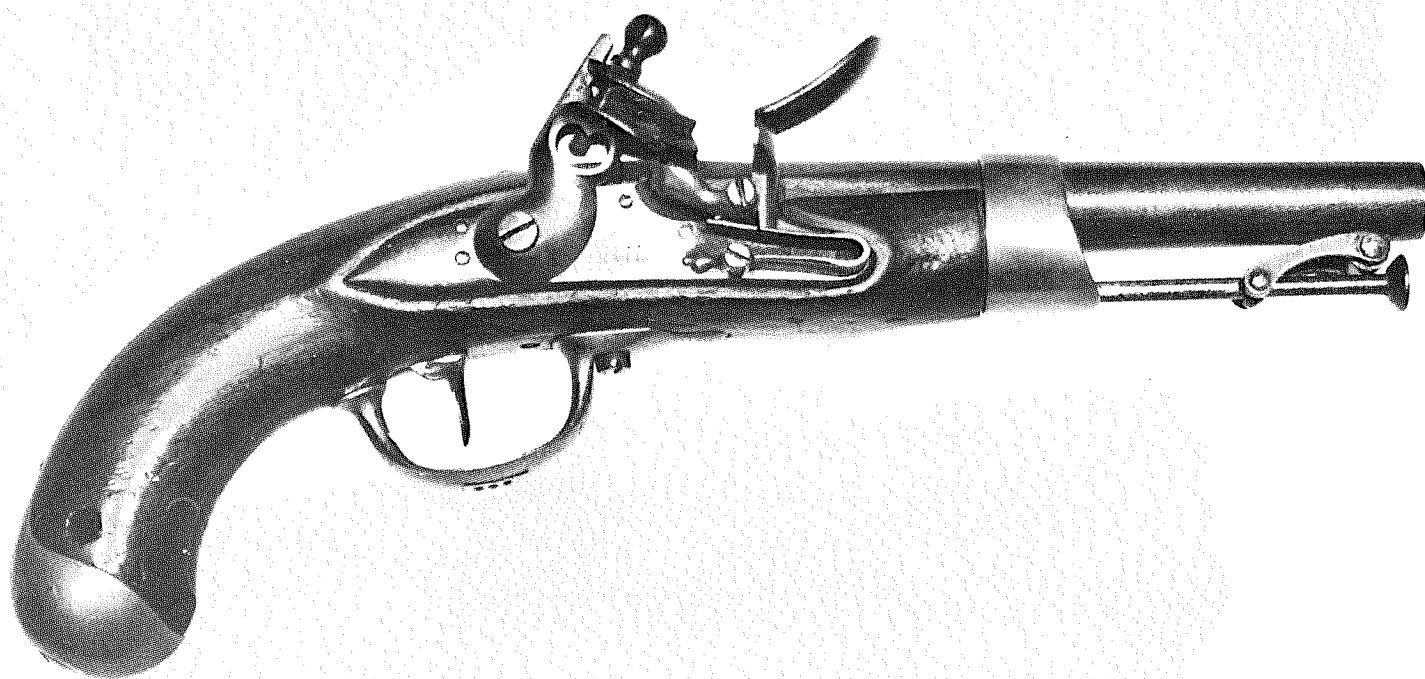


Figure 14. Saxon pistol, dated 1812

Figure 15. Hannover pistol by I. H. Schmidt



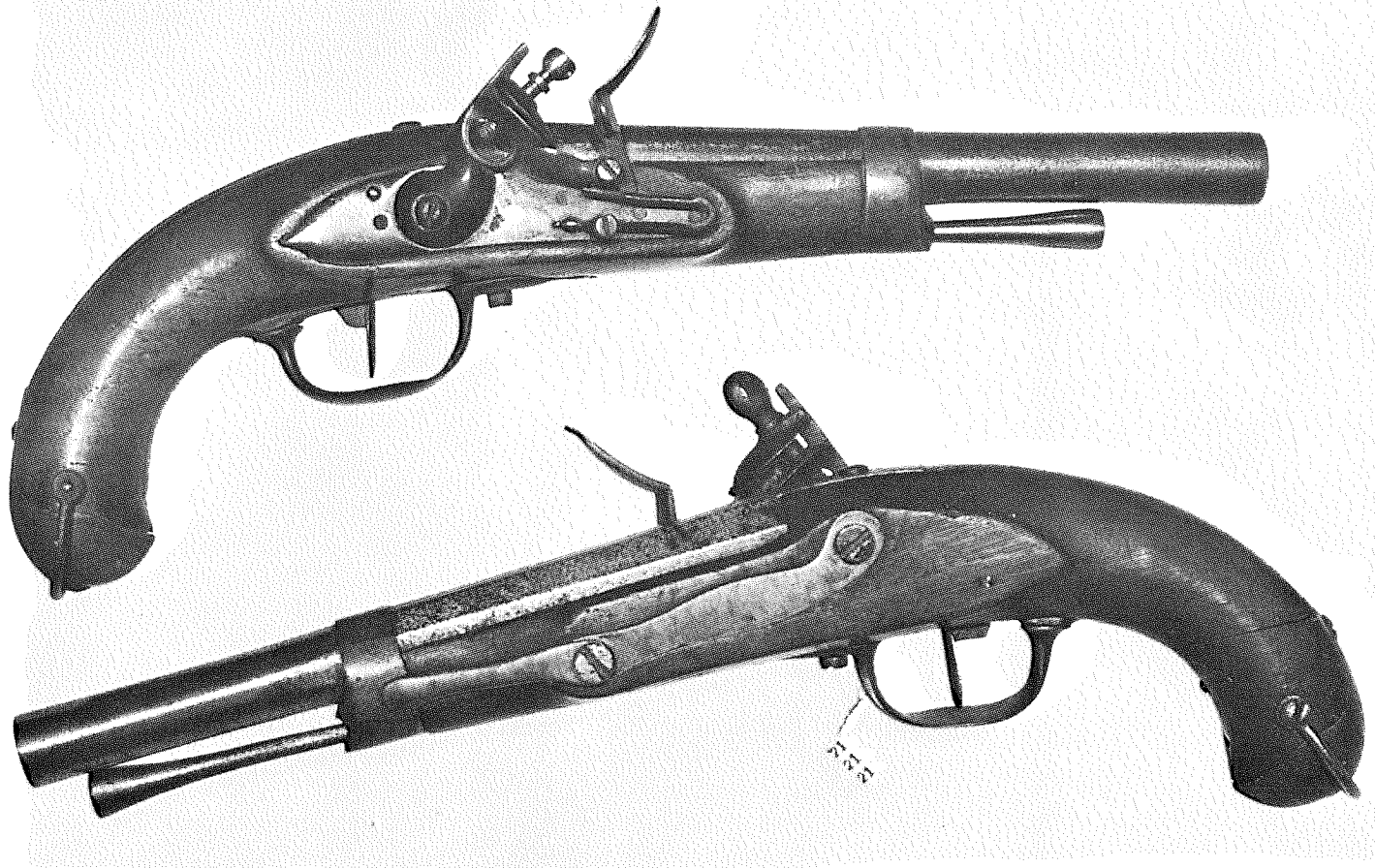


Figure 16. Spanish M1820

Figure 17. Spanish Model 1828? and subsequent conversions



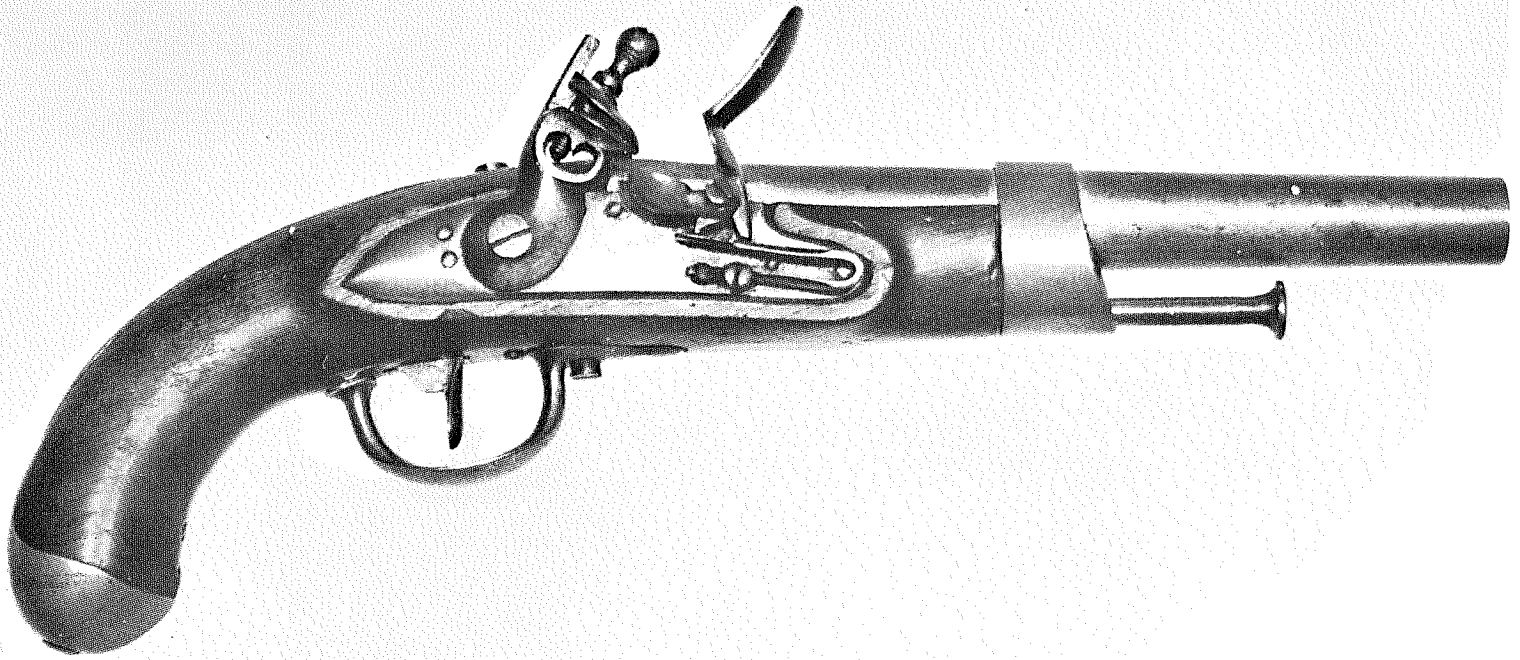


Figure 18. Unknown origin

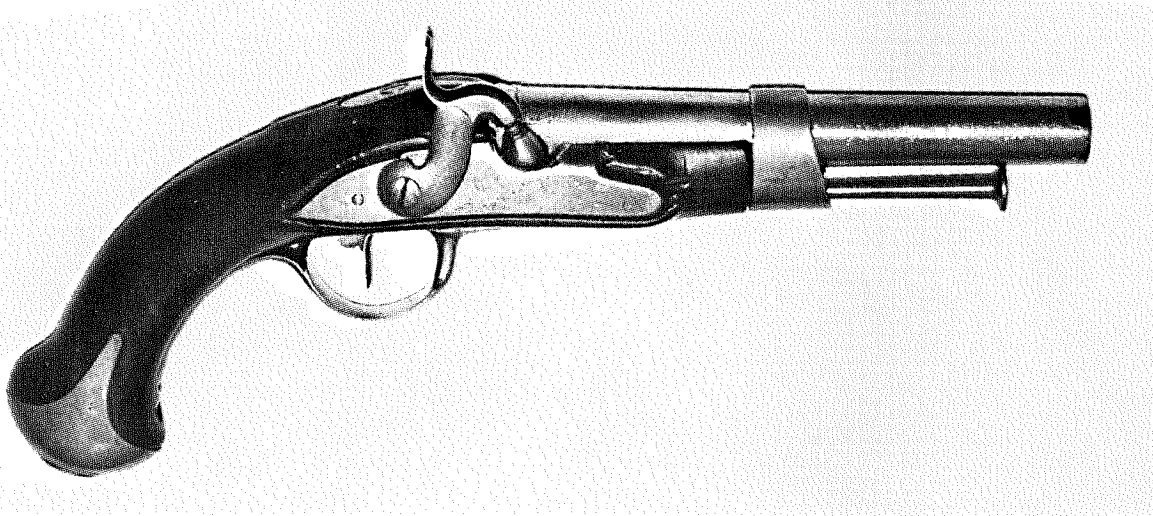
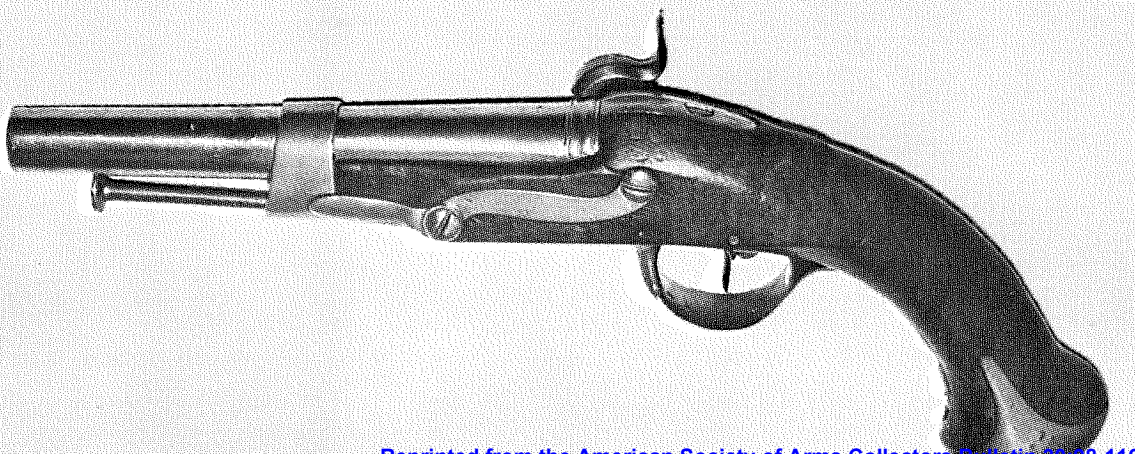


Figure 19. Germanic pistol transformed to French style



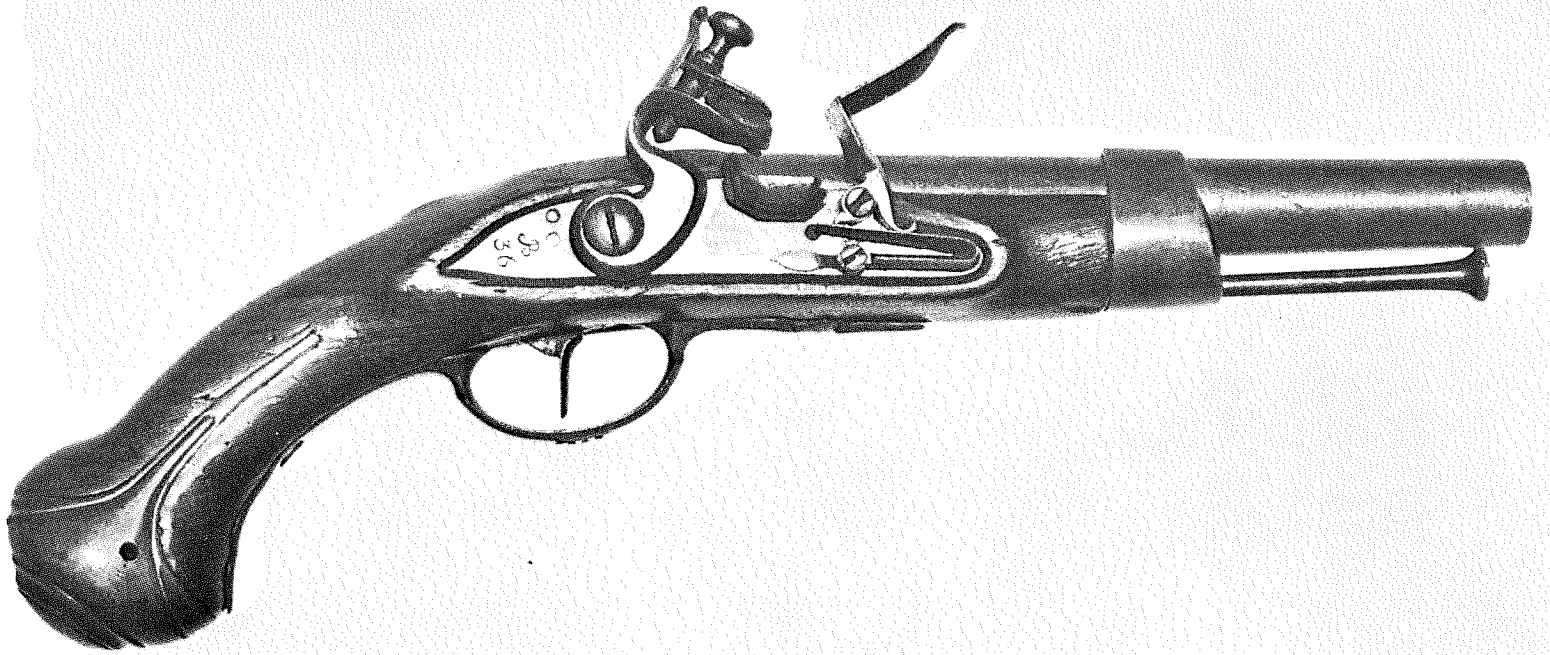
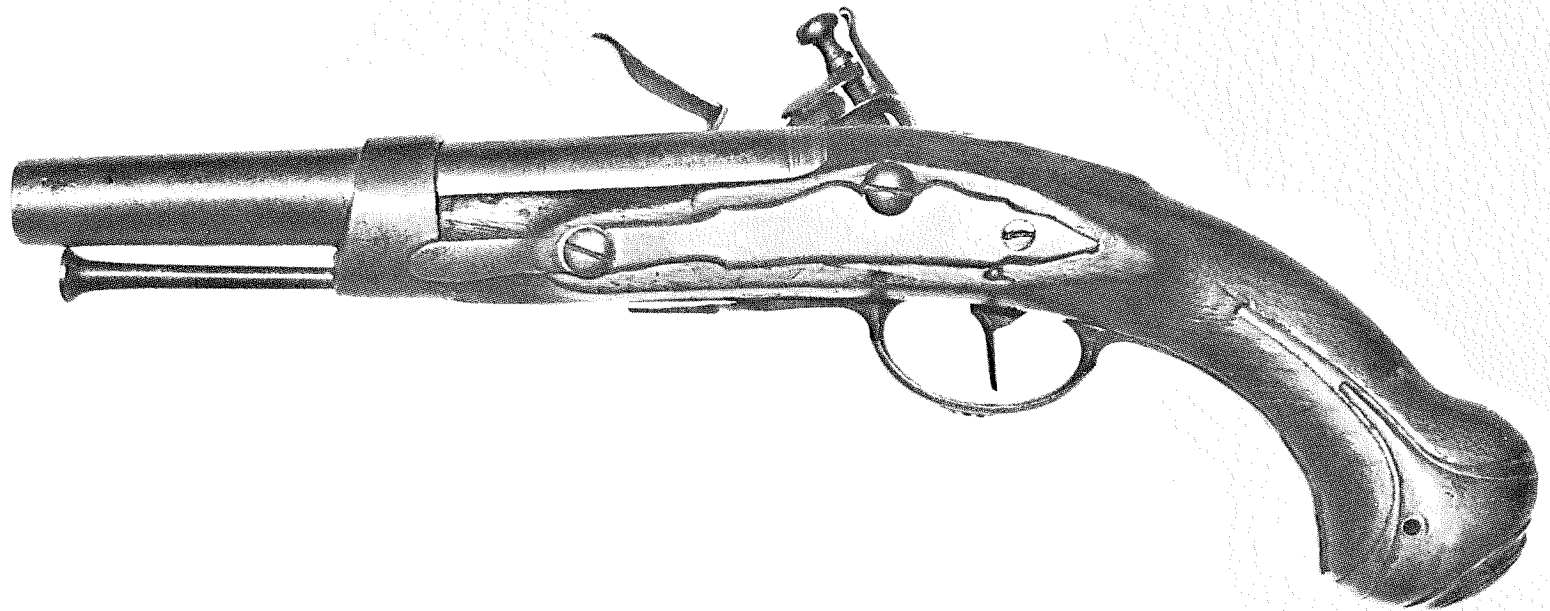


Figure 20. Germanic pistol converted to French style



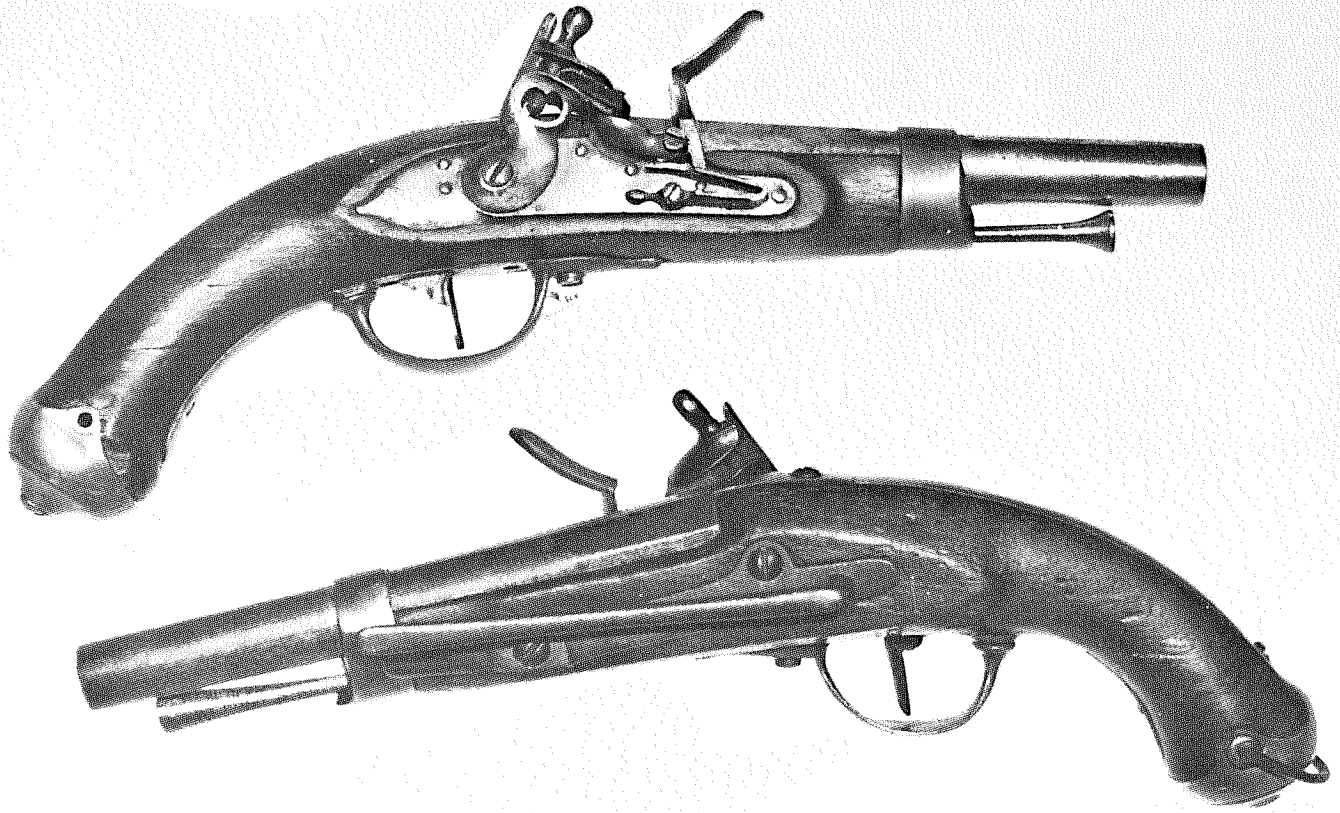


Figure 21. Spanish Royal Guard pistols

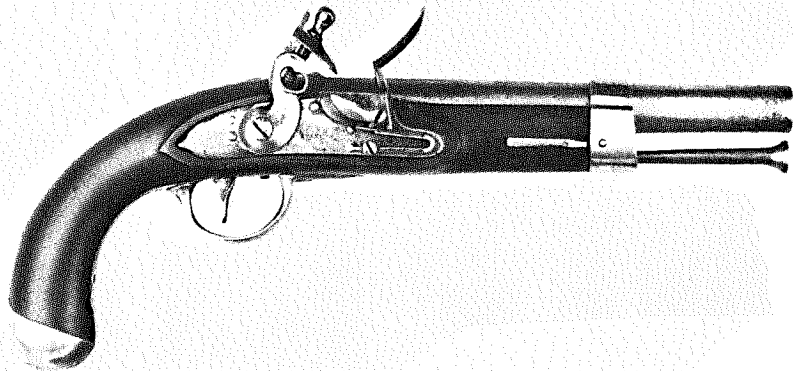


Figure 22. Evans pistol, United States

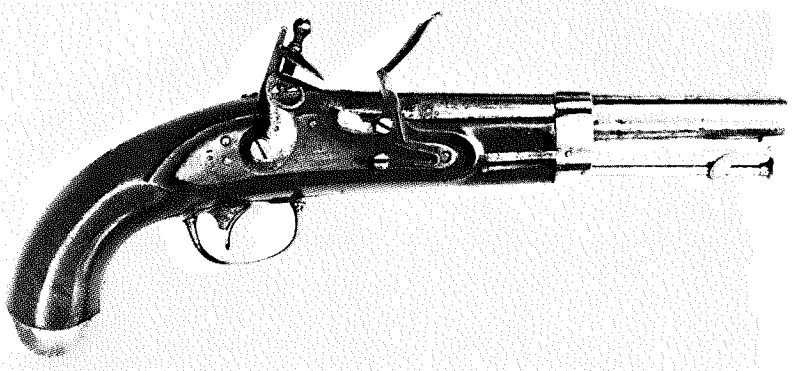


Figure 23. Derringer pistol, United States

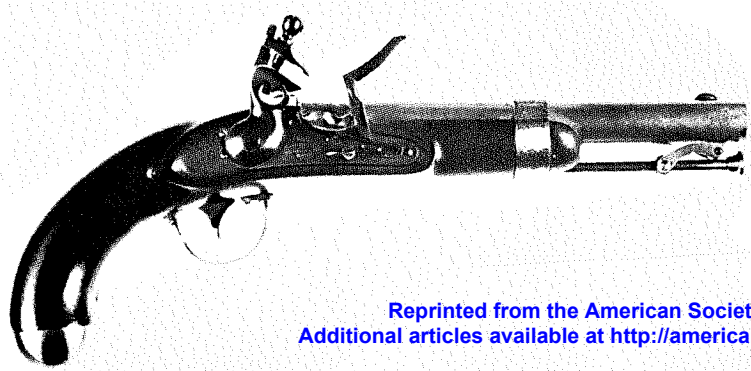


Figure 24. U.S. model 1842

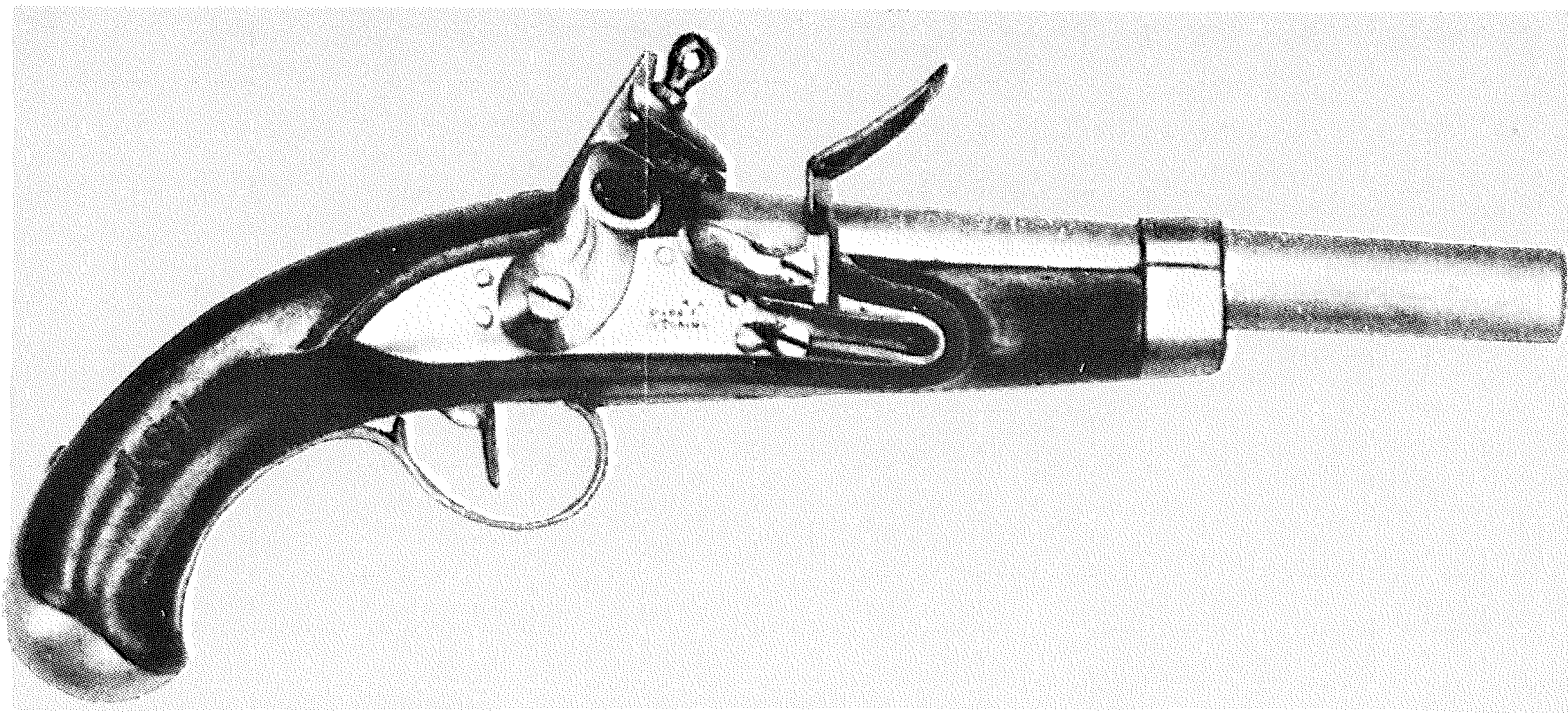


Figure 25. Piedmont M 1829. Museo Nazionale d'Artiglieria, Torino

Figure 26. Piedmont M 1829 converted. Lower is original percussion.



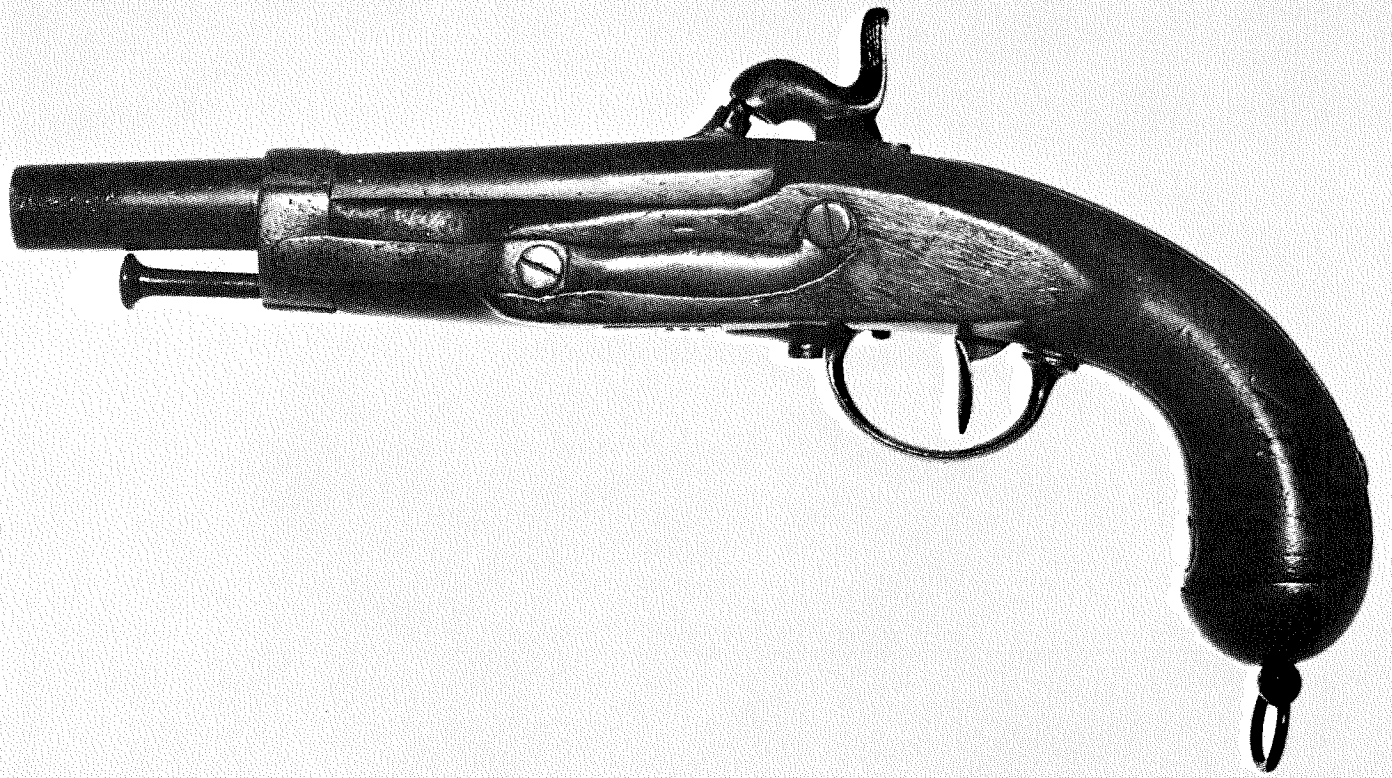
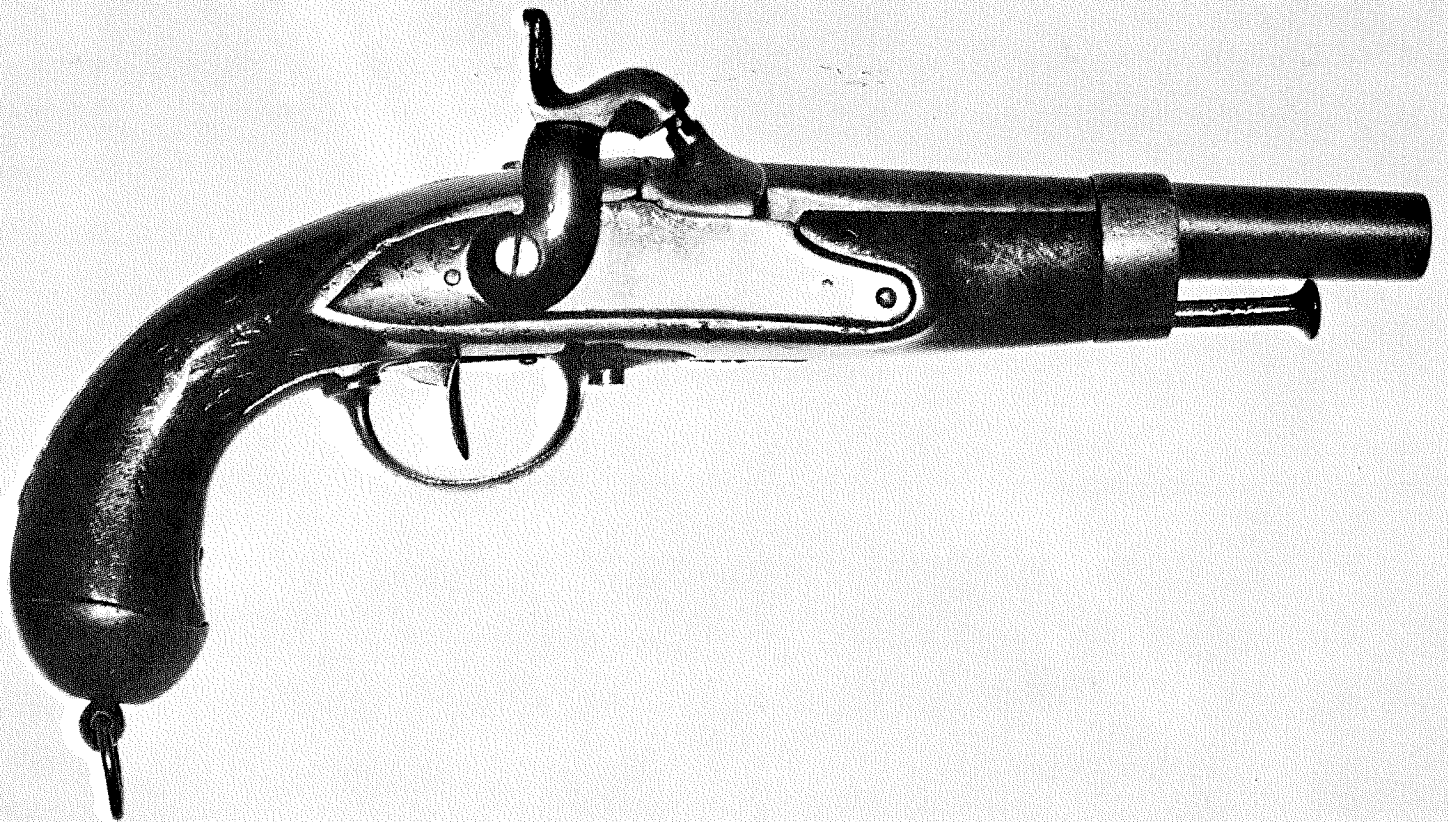


Figure 27. Belgian or Dutch pistol



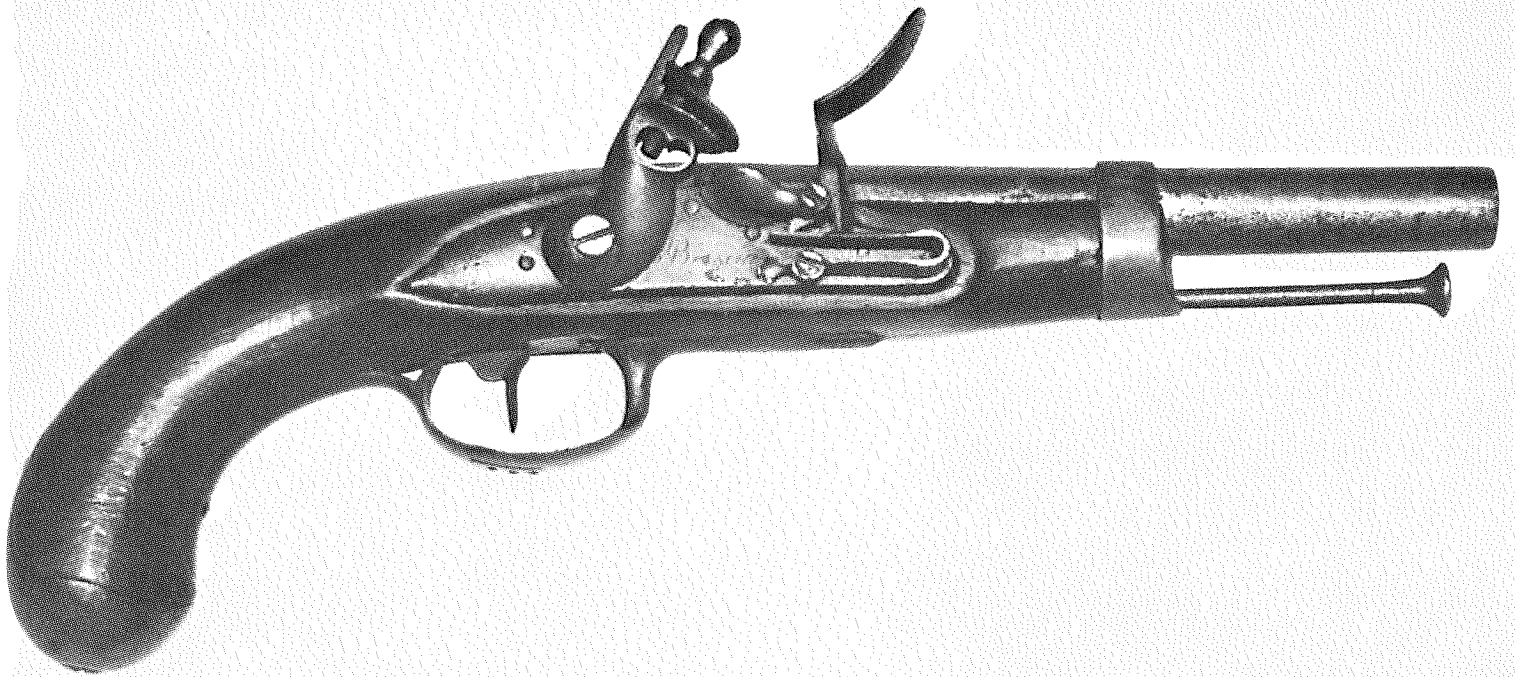


Figure 28. Brescia, 1806



and one is even marked in the stock:



for Isabela II (reigned 1833 - 1868).

In America, a copy of the Model AnXIII was produced by Evans (Figure 22) in 1814. It was calibre 19mm. These pistols are extremely rare. The furniture was brass. H. Derringer of Philadelphia, in 1826, produced a similar pistol (Figure 23) for experimental purposes. It had an iron furniture. Other American pistols were substantially affected by the French Model AnXIII design. These included models 1813, 1819, 1826, 1836 (Figure 24).

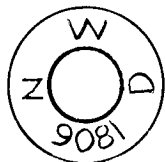
In the Piedmont, the cavalry pistol (Figure 25) M. 1829 was very similar to the French original. The iron furniture and one-piece triggerguard differed. The pistol was converted and then even made new in original percussion. Most were made without ramrod.

Figure 26 is a Belgian or possibly Dutch pistol converted to percussion. It was made in 1838. The barrel is 184mm, calibre 17mm. All furniture is iron.

Figure 27 was made in Brescia for the Regno d'Italia (Kingdom of Italy) set up by Napoleon from 1805 to 1814. This pistol has a 193mm barrel, in calibre 17. It has no backstrap and a one-piece brass triggerguard/front strap. The lock is marked:

BRESCIA

and the stock:



In summary, it is clear from the examples discussed above that the French Model AnXIII was not only widely used, but influenced other states in the design of their own issue pistols. While this brief study shows some of the examples, the author has come across of Model AnXIII type pistols, there are doubtless many he has not seen. I would appreciate the kindness of any readers to not only point out errors in the text, but to send additional information they may come across. Please write in care of the editor of this magazine.

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