

DATING, TERMINOLOGY, AND CONSERVATION.

ACANTHUS: e.g. the Bleiberg pistol's trigger guard finial.



ACORN TO PINEAPPLE TG FINIAL: c. 1785 (DW, BD), but more likely c. 1790 (Bass holster pistol, Redfern pair; Bennett pair Amoskeag 3/25 lot 60 1792).

ALTERATION: US Ordnance Dept. (c. 1840-1850) word for conversion.

BACKWARD CURL TO COCK: from 1785. (+ Redfern pair forward c. 1790).

BARREL SLIDE OR BARREL KEY used with false breech. After 1790, surrounded by the ESCUTCHEON PLATE or SLIDE ESCUTCHEON PLATE (DW 7/23).

BRASS CAP ON RAMROD WORM: 19th century.

BROWNEED BARRELS: post 1770.

CAPTIVE RAMMERS: Military 1770s (JP), civilian post 1800, or 1790s.

CAST FURNITURE FROM COMMON SUPPLIERS: About 1715. (DW)


COCK, BACKWARD CURL: from 1785 (+ Redfern pair c. 1790).

DATING, TERMINOLOGY, AND CONSERVATION PAGE 2.

COCK, FLAT SIDES, WITH BEVELLED EDGES (+FLAT LOCK PLATES): 1715-1720.

VS earlier rounded and chiseled edges. See GBG1 p. 362-365 James Turton.

COCK, FRENCH: (BD)



Note that in a normal gooseneck cock the top jaw screw comes through the lower jaw in front of the neck while, in the French cock, the top jaw screw comes through behind the cock neck. Another distinctive feature of French cocks is that the cock comes to rest with lip of the lower jaw on the pan fence, thereby doing away with the ledge on the inside of the cock which had been standard on goose neck cocks for nearly 200 years.

1800-1815 (DW). C. 1810 (Leslie Martin).

“COCK PIN”: Top jaw screw (Jonathan Grove patent 1795).

CONVERSION: see “alteration”.

FENCE: behind the pan.

FINIAL: “A ‘finial’ is a decorative ‘end bit’ and the term is used in architecture and other areas. Usually, the trigger guard has a ‘decorative end bit’ in front of the bow which is characteristic of the artistic period. Thus we see acanthus leaves give way to flourishes of flowers, etc., during the rococo period, then to a simple acorn, then a pineapple, etc. That said, I would not want to be too dogmatic about such appellations. Some fine pistols and guns have decorative finials at the tail of the trigger guard backstrap. I have a holster pistol by Nathan Gregory, similar to the Kerbey, on which the trigger guard back strap extends to the butt cap and has a decorative end which overlaps the butt cap with a decorative finial. This is a nice feature but is rarely seen on holster pistols of the period. Thus, this trigger guard had a finial at both ends. Sporting gun trigger guards often have this feature.” DW, May 2022.

FINIAL ON FORWARD END OF BARREL TANG (e.g. John Harman) first quarter 18th century. Thereafter, barrel tang flush with the rear of the breech (e.g. Daniel Moore).

FLAMBERGE: wavy blade.

DATING, TERMINOLOGY, AND CONSERVATION PAGE 3.

FRIZZEN TOE ROLLER: 1760s (WKN/DHB).

FRIZZEN SPRING ROLLER: c.1770 (DW).

GOLD TOUCH HOLE: Early (Delany, Dolep; John Cosens c.1680.) Noted in a will 1690—Schwoerer p.110. Replaced by platinum c.1805.

GREEN MEN AND GROTESQUES MOUTH FOLIAGE: emanating, morphing, flowing (DW April 2021).

HALF-STOCKED HOLSTER PISTOLS: Clarkson 1720s, Wilson 1753, Wilson 1770s.

HALF-STOCKED DUELLERS: after 1800.

HALF-STOCKED LONGARMS: Arian Trading John Harman gun 2nd quarter 18th century. Bruneau auction John Cookson gun 1st quarter 18th century. Gun by Richard Wilding, Salop, dated 1715-1720 by Brian Godwin.

“HAMMER” FOR FRIZZEN OR STEEL: Earliest use Sir John Smythe, “Certain Discourses”, 1590, “...upon the hammer or steele...” [Blackmore F or F.] Also 1632, John Cruso, “Militarie Instructions for the Cavall’rie”—“order your hammer”. See BG’s article on the snaphaunce, Part 2, p. 12, Figure 52.

“HAMMER” FOR PERCUSSION COCK: earliest use in Forsyth’s patent. Also Collinson Hall, 1818.

HAMMER=“HEN” (Jonathan Grove patent 1795).

LOCK, SINGLE SCREW: 1776 and after.

LOCK, SIDE NAILS: the screws that attach the lock.

LOCKPLATE, FLAT, WITH BEVELLED EDGES (+FLAT SIDES OF COCK): 1715-1720.

VS earlier rounded and chiseled edges. See GBG1 p. 362-365 James Turton.

LOCKPLATE, SQUARED-OFF END: from 1805.

PANS, RAIN-PROOF: 1780s (DW).

PINEAPPLE TRIGGERGUARD FINIAL (CHANGED FROM ACORN): c. 1785 (DW, BD).

(+ c. 1790 Bass and Redfern holster pistols acorns, and Bennett silver 1792).

DATING, TERMINOLOGY, AND CONSERVATION PAGE 4.

PLATINUM TOUCH HOLES/VENT PLUGS (REPLACED GOLD): c.1805.

POMMEL SPURS: last quarter 17th century to mid 1780s (DW).

PROOF AND VIEW (LONDON GP AND V):

Pre 1680-1690: flat.

Post 1680-1690: in cartouche, round or oval.

1813 and after: stamped on barrel without an oval.

RAMROD: REAR RAMROD PIPE; RAMROD THIMBLE OR FERRULE (DW says not ferrule 12/22).

RAMROD: BRASS CAP ON RAMROD WORM: 19th century.

RAMMERS, CAPTIVE: Military 1770s (JP), civilian post 1800, or 1790s.

REBATED: a stepped lock plate.



SIDE NAILS: The screws that attach the lock.

SIDE PLATE NONE: 1763 Twigg, 1770s others.

SIDE PLATE SILVER WIRE ONLY: John Harman 1720s.

SIDE PLATE SOLID: 1750s [DW] or 1740s [BG] through 1780s. But note my former carbine by Peter Gandon Sr. [1730s]. See GBG1 page p.440: a solid side plate seen in a French pattern book from 1730. Also note a silver-mounted gun and a small pistol by Richard Wilding, Salop, dated 1715-1720 by BG.

SIDE PLATE PANEL (space for initials, the space common, initials rare): after 1730 (DW 12/22).

DATING, TERMINOLOGY, AND CONSERVATION PAGE 5.

SIGHTS: Dovetailed; blade; bead; V; notched; standing back; spider.

SILVER HALLMARKS: Birmingham city mark from 1773. Duty (tax) mark (sovereign's head) used December 1, 1784 until 1890. London hallmarks after 1738 (Assay Act—JB).

SILVER WIRE INLAY: A pistol by Sanderson c.1670. [DW & BG article 2010, figure 8, page 75.] See also several pistols in JB's book, c. 1700.

SKELETON STOCK: (Berenger system carbine by Conway, Manchester.)



SLAB-SIDED BUTTS: gone by late 1790s.

SLIDE SAFETY: 1680s (de Seret, N. Paris).

SQUARED-OFF END OF LOCKPLATE: from 1805.

TANG: “A ‘tang’ is usually a simple strap so John’s use of the term ‘backstrap’ is entirely appropriate. We have a similar name for the simple strap at the barrel breech, which we call the ‘barrel tang’. So backstrap and tang are equally correct for the bit of the trigger guard behind the bow.” DW, May 2022.

TOP JAW SCREW= “cock pin” (Jonathan Grove patent 1795).

TOWER PRIVATE PROOF: First use 1751 (RBJr). Last use November 1804 (DW, via JP, DWB, and RBJr).

TRIGGER GUARD: Finial, bow, backstrap or tang; trigger plate. See “Finial” and “Tang”.

TRIGGER GUARD SAFETY: 1720-1780 (CR 5/25).

DATING, TERMINOLOGY, AND CONSERVATION PAGE 6.

VIGNETTE: A small ornamental design filling a space in a book or carving, typically based on foliage. MS March 2023.



WATERPROOF PAN: from 1790s.

WEDDING BAND OR RING: metal ring, iron or brass, separating sections of a barrel.

A TAXONOMY OF RARITY.

Based on IAA Journal May/June 2022 (#545), page 17. [] added by me.

One of a kind.

[Profoundly rare—used by RIA in its online catalogues.]

Extremely rare.

Very rare.

Rare.

Scarce.

[Less common.]

Common.

[More common.]

Very common.

A RARITY SCALE FOR DISGUISED GUNS, by David Fink in his ASAC Bulletin article.

1. 10 or [fewer] examples known.
2. Very rare—seldom seen.
3. Rare—difficult to obtain.
4. Scarce—difficult to obtain good examples.
5. Common—good examples often available.

DATING, TERMINOLOGY, AND CONSERVATION PAGE 7.

GLOVES: cotton or nitrile, not rubber.

RENAISSANCE MICRO-CRYSTALINE WAX POLISH.

ETHAFOAM or PLASTAZOTE PADS—BRAND NAMES OF POLYETHYLENE.
DON'T USE POLYURETHANE.

NO TOWELS FOR STORAGE (CAN GET DAMP).

Matthew Schneiderman August 2025.
schneiderman615@gmail.com

JOHN HARMAN

C. 1720





