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'Silk and Steel Women at Arms'
Museum Loan Exhibitions
'Son of a Gun' - BBC-TV
'Colt Firearms Legends' - SONY
'The Guns That Tamed the West' - A & E
'The Story of the Gun' - A & E
'The Gun Industry in America' - BBC-TV/Open University
'Annie Oakley' - Riva Productions for PBS American Experience
Chairman, Antique Arms Committee (1990-2005)
U.S. Society of Arms and Armour/America Remembers
Fine Colts The Dr. Joseph A. Murphy Collection
The Arms of Tiffany (with Janet Zapata) (2014)
The Art of the Gun, Mini-Series, 5 Vols. (with RM Lee)
The Art of the Gun, Maxi-Series, 5 Vols. (with RM Lee)
A Life's Tapestry of a Collector - with George F. Gamble
Great Colt Treasures, with William L. Berg
Colt Dates of Manufacture, Blue Book Publications

Samuel Colt Presents
The Arms Collection of Colonel Colt
L.D. Nimschke Firearms Engraver
The Evolution of the Colt
Colt
Commemorative Firearms
Theodore Roosevelt Outdoorsman
The Book of Colt Firearms
The Book of Winchester Engraving
Antique Arms Annual
Colt Pistols (with R.E. Hable)
Paterson Colt Pistol Variations (with P.R. Phillips)
The Colt Heritage
The "Russian" Colts
Colt Engraving
Rare and Historic Firearms (Christie's)
Winchester 1 of 1000
Colt's Dates of Manufacture
The Deringer in America, 2 Volumes (with L.D. Eberhart)
Colt An American Legend
Rare Firearms - A Benefit Auction (Christie's)
Winchester An American Legend
The Peacemakers
Steel Canvas
Ruger & His Guns
The Colt Engraving Book (two volumes)
The Official Price Guide to Gun Collecting
The World of Beretta
The Paterson Colt Book, Dennis LeVett Colln.
The Guns of Manhattan (2014)
American Arms Collectors The Al Cali Collection
Things I Love The William I. Koch Collection
Theodore Roosevelt Hunter-Conservationist,
Boone & Crockett Club Publications

**A WINCHESTER "FIT for a KING"
WINCHESTER MODEL 1866 CARBINE
of SPANISH KING ALPHONSO XIIth
(b. November 28, 1857-d. November 25, 1885)
HISTORIC, RICHLY EMBELLISHED,
and Later in the Collection of His Son
Famed Marksman & Sportsman
KING ALPHONSO XIIIth.**

Serial No. 118292.

**Decorated by Master Engraver L.D. Nimschke,
Deluxe Engraved, Gold-Washed & Nickeled,**

**and with Varnished Select Walnut
Rifle Style Butttock, with
Scarce Crescent Buttplate**

**Chambered for .44 Henry Rimfire Caliber,
20-Inch Round Barrel
Fitted with Blued Open Carbine Sights,
A Folding Leaf at the Rear;
The Front Sight Integral with the Barrel Band.**

**Nimschke's Deluxe Engraving
on the Frame, Sideplates, Lever, Hammer,
Buttplate, Cartridge Elevator and Barrel Bands.
Fitted with Sling Swivels,
and Designed for Both
Sporting and Military Purposes**

**Featuring Highly Refined
and Decorative Embellishments
Revealing of Nimschke's
Artistic and Technical Talents,
Excellence of Execution, and Sense of Design.
An Elegant Dog Head Motif -
Likely an English Pointer -
Featured in the Left Frame Panel Cartouche,
Reflecting a Special Breed of
Sporting Dog Coveted by
King Alphonso XIIth.**

**His Majesty Participated in the Historic
Royal Calpe Hunt Held
At the British Crown Colony, Gibraltar.
In 1906 His Son King Alphonso XIIIth
Became Joint Patron of the Hunt
With King Edward VIIth
of Great Britain**

**His Majesty's Winchester Carbine
Dating from c. 1874, by Which Time
He Was Already a Skilled and
Experienced Outdoorsman.**

**Similar Decorations Documented
in the L.D. Nimschke Record Book,
and
Featured in Numerous Publications
of the Author.**

**The King Alphonso XIIth Winchester
Inherited by His Son King Alphonso XIIIth,
One of the Greatest Sportsmen
and Heralded Shots of Europe,
Many Times Live Pigeon Shooting Champion,
and Recognized by J. Purdey & Sons As:
"The Best Friend Purdey Ever Had."**

**Both Father and Son Written Up in Numerous
Books and Articles and Recognized
As Regal Firearms and Sporting Enthusiasts.**
**

**Their Historic, Deluxe-Nimschke Engraved
Winchester Model 1866 Carbine Symbolic of
The Shooting and Firearms Enthusiasms
of**

**Two Noble and Accomplished Members
of the Spanish Royal Family**
**

**Serial No. 118292 to Be Pictured in Future
Editions of the Writer's**

L.D. Nimschke Firearms Engraver
As Well As in

Winchester An American Legend
and

Winchester Engraving.
**

**A Unique Deluxe Carbine
"Fit for a King," and –
In This Exceptional Example –
*Two Kings***
**

**This Deluxe Royal Spanish Winchester
By the Master L.D. Nimschke
An Important Example of
The Immense Dedication**

to Firearms and the Shooting Sports by the Major Royal Houses of Europe.

As documented within his first firearms book in 1961 - *Samuel Colt Presents A Loan Exhibition of Presentation Percussion Colt Firearms* - the writer has long been fascinated by the work of master engraver Louis Daniel Nimschke. That first title accompanied the landmark exhibition, "Samuel Colt Presents," mounted by the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, from November 3rd 1961 to January 14th 1962.

Nimschke was featured in the essay by John S. duMont, "Presentation Colt Firearms" on pages xiii to xvii of that title. Prominently illustrated was a detail from page 41 of Nimschke's own Record Book - with prints pulled from percussion Colt revolvers of the Civil War period.

Later, in 1965, the author's *L.D. Nimschke Firearms Engraver* was published. That title was the first ever in print detailing the work of an individual American arms engraver. Nimschke's accomplishments were of particular importance, since he embellished over 100 different makes of firearms in the course of an extraordinary career spanning over 50 years (1852-1904).

When *L.D. Nimschke Firearms Engraver* was published, the author had already planned future editions, and a time when the original Nimschke Record Book itself could be published in full color.

To that end, chapters have appeared devoted to Nimschke – or featuring his career - in the writer's books as follows:

The Book of Colt Engraving
Colt Engraving
The Colt Engraving Book, Volumes I and II
The Book of Winchester Engraving
Winchester Engraving
Steel Canvas The Art of American Arms
Fine Colts The Dr. Joseph A. Murphy Collection
And in the most recently published (2011),
Magnificent Colts, Selections from The Robert M. Lee Collection.

Louis D. Nimschke's Remarkable Record Book

Magnificent Colts is of particular significance, since the Nimschke Record Book is in the collection of Robert M. Lee, owner of the publishing company, Yellowstone Press (see website: yellowstonepress.com).

In *Magnificent Colts*, pages from the Nimschke Record Book were published in color, and in a dramatic large format. The author's hope is that eventually, the Nimschke Record Book itself will be published – in actual size, and with several selections of firearms known to have been engraved by that master. Much more on this talented artist-engraver has been discovered since that 1965 project

reached the printer, and more has been located since the other chapters and articles noted above appeared in print.

Indicative of the historic and artistic significance of Louis Daniel Nimschke is that the preface to the author's book on that artist was penned by John McKendry, in whose future was the august position as Curator of the Department of Prints, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. At the time the book was published, McKendry's title was Assistant Curator of Prints, at the Metropolitan. To quote from his learned contribution:

Nimschke's workbook provides a particularly interesting record of the way in which a very good gun engraver worked. Important in itself, it is additionally of interest because of what it reveals about the reasons why certain prints were made and what their function was once they had been made. Like most gun-engravers, Nimschke's borrowings are more numerous than his inventions. His workbook, in addition to containing his own pulls, includes many of his sources. [John F.] Hayward [author of *The Art of the Gunmaker*, 1963] has stated that "the ornament on fire-arms has for the most part been drawn from printed pattern-books." Nimschke did not restrict himself to pattern books; Larry Wilson has perceptively identified many of his other sources. The publication of Nimschke's record book is important because by examining the way one man worked, in this case a gun engraver, we can come

to a clearer understanding of the function of prints.

**Text Prepared for the *Magnificent Colts*
Landmark Volume, Focusing on the Illustrious
Career of Louis Daniel Nimschke**

The most up-to-date information on Nimschke in the writer's various publications is in the text, captions and illustrations of Chapter VII, *Magnificent Colts, Selections from The Robert M. Lee Collection*. Co-authored with Lee, the text includes the following:

Chapter VIII

L.D. Nimschke - Firearms Engraver
(b. July 14, 1832, d. April 9, 1904)

Foreword

A gifted artist, designer and craftsman, Louis Daniel Nimschke not only left an extraordinary volume of completed firearms over a career spanning in excess of a half century, but had created a pattern book record made up of gunmakers pulls – prints made directly from engraved surfaces. That striking and historic document has been instrumental in establishing Nimschke as one of history's most influential arms engravers. What collector hasn't heard the terms "Nimschke-engraved" or "Nimschke engraving"? Yet in the annals of arms collecting, this German-born artisan remained virtually unknown for decades – until an antiquarian relative of seasoned collector and dealer Glode Requa discovered Nimschke's record or workbook, of approximately 100

pages. Measuring 12- x 9 3/4-inches, this collection of pulls – primarily of his own work – provides a unique overview of a long and impressive career. . . .

In *Samuel Colt Presents*, a smattering of information was published about Nimschke, and his pattern book. But when *L.D. Nimschke Firearms Engraver* appeared in print, in 1965, the dam broke – and collectors and students very quickly became familiar with the master and his prodigious output.

A reproduction of the original record book, augmented by photographs of firearms by Nimschke, and a text by co-author R.L. Wilson, this volume is credited with jump-starting the study of American arms engravers. Thereafter in relatively rapid succession were published volumes like *The Book of Colt Engraving*, *The Book of Winchester Engraving*, *Colt Engraving*, and *Winchester Engraving*, and then *Steel Canvas The Art of American Arms*. Dr. Fredric A. Harris' insightful *Firearms Engraving As Decorative Art* added significantly to the literature available to historians and collectors.

In 2002-2003 the two volume, 1,000-page *The Colt Engraving Book* appeared, with a lengthy chapter (VIII) on Nimschke, including for the first time a large-sized reproduction of page 3 from the record book – and some 37 color images and 26 in black and white.

In all of these volumes, much of the panoply of American arms engraving was being revealed, with listings of hundreds of engravers and specific information on entire schools of firearm embellishments.

Each of these titles elaborated on the body of work on Nimschke, and also identified for the first time in hardcover books, details on schools of engravers – the Youngs, the Ulrichs, the Glahns, and hundreds of names of individual artisans, quite a few dating back to the 19th century. It was in that “Golden Age of American Gun Engraving” that Nimschke excelled. Working for over 100 gunmakers, and executing an estimated 5,000 guns, his output is astounding. Nimschke’s work alone for Schuyler, Hartley and Graham (later Hartley & Graham) was prodigious.

Besides the pattern book impressions, a smattering of documentary sources, and the strong style of his work, students and collectors are aided by Nimschke’s propensity to sign his firearms. Sometimes just with an N, or a LN, or more likely an LDN, and in some instances even with L.D. NIMSCHKE, here was a craftsman not inclined to hide under a bushel basket, as was the norm of the day (exceptions primarily being John and C.F. Ulrich).

A part of Nimschke’s appeal then and today was his not infrequent participation in decorating fine guns for VIPs. Among these distinguished gun owners were such luminaries as Theodore Roosevelt, Queen Maria Cristina of Austria, Napoleon III of France, General Ulysses S. Grant, philanthropist George A. Peabody, “Silver King” Clarence H. Mackay and Civil War hero and frontier Indian fighter George Armstrong Custer.

Among gunmakers whose arms were engraved by Nimschke directly for the factory, or for dealers or private parties, were Allen & Wheelock, Alsop, Ballard, Billinghamurst, Bitterlich & Legler, Colt’s, Evans, Daniel

Fish, Forehand & Wadsworth, F.W. Freund, New Haven Arms Co., A.A. Kellogg, Manhattan, Marlin, W.W. Marston, Merrimack Arms & Mfg. Co., Merwin & Bray, Merwin Hulbert & Co., William Moore & Co., J.P. Moore's Sons, Moore's Patent Firearms Co., National Arms Co., Providence Tool Co., J. Reid, Remington, Sharps, Smith & Wesson, Spencer, Starr, Stevens, Frank Wesson, Rollin White, Eli Whitney, Jr., the New Haven Arms Co. and Winchester.

For the first time, pages from Nimschke's treasured pattern book are published herein on a scale which captures the rich style of his work, the minute detail and perfection of execution, and the sheer beauty and grace lovingly bestowed on each arm. It is hoped that in the near future, the entire pattern book can be published, in color, accompanied by an up-dated text expanding on the 1965 edition (and later printings), and documenting several additional arms by this master, in rich color illustrations.

Distinguished Owners of Fine Firearms

In addition to his fascination with best quality arms and their engraving, the writer has been intrigued by distinguished owners of these arms. As noted in the Nimschke book, and in the 1979 publication *Winchester The Golden Age of American Gunmaking and the Winchester 1 of 1000*, from earliest times, wealthy and titled individuals were captivated by firearms and the shooting sports.

And thus the introductory to the *Winchester 1 of 1000* book noted:

"One loves to possess arms." So wrote Thomas Jefferson to his friend George Washington, both men having a keen delight in fine arms and shooting. An affection for arms has been a common American trait since the beginnings of the New World. Indeed, since man first devised weapons in his quest for sustenance and security, there have been no objects of more consistent personal importance in his survival. An expression of the veneration held for weapons is evident in studying their decoration and craftsmanship. Some of the finest and most exquisite objects of decorative art created by the hand and mind of man since the dawn of civilization were built basically as weapons. At various times and various places, from the swords, daggers, and armor of the Greeks and Romans to the luxurious sporting guns of contemporary moneyed international sportsmen, weaponry has served as an esteemed vehicle for exhibiting the talents of master gold and silver smiths, engravers, and carvers in rare woods, ivory, pearl, and even semiprecious stone. The history of much of the decorative arts can be traced by studying the embellishment of weaponry.

Fine arms have a distinct role in the history of civilization. They have served variously or collectively as status symbols, as the prerogative of gentlemen of wealth, as traditional possessions of men of quality and position, as instruments of power, and as objects of sheer grace and beauty which a person of taste finds intrinsically marvelous to hold, admire, and possess.

That fine arms are the prerogative of men of power, stature, and wealth is an accepted fact of history. Every aristocratic family of Europe had its private armory, and those which have survived to modern times present ample evidence of the predilection of their owners for exquisite pieces. The Kunsthistorisches Museum of Vienna, with its fabulous riches reflecting the tastes of the Hapsburgs (even including the famed Cellini salt cellar), has an important part of its aesthetic and historical wealth in its arms and armor collection. Custom built armors and special weapons were part of the trappings of each generation of the Holy Roman Emperors and their court. Studying these pieces reveals much about the mentality, enthusiasms, and even the physical makeup and tastes of their original owners.

Graham Hood, Director of Collections, Colonial Williamsburg, wrote in the foreword to the *Colt/Christie's Rare and Historic Firearms* catalogue, 1981:

Weapons were an integral part of the station and culture of emperor, kings, noblemen, and gentry. Swords formed part of the regalia of modern dress for man, while a well-fashioned gun was a proud accoutrement even of those on the frontier. No one who has studied the cultures of previous centuries in Europe and America can avoid this conclusion, nor deny the fact that the finest accomplishments of craftsmen in this genre are worthy of extended scrutiny and admiration.

These words were inspired by the enthusiasms for arms and the shooting sports by aristocrats the likes of His Majesty King Alphonso XIIth of Spain, and his son and successor,

His Majesty Alphonso XIIIth.

Winchester Model 1866 Carbine, Serial No. 118292 – Made for King Alphonso XIIth, 1874, and Inherited by H.M. Alphonso XIIIth, 1885

For over 50 years, the author has been collecting additional photographs and information about Nimschke-engraved firearms. The discovery of Serial No. **118292** presents an opportunity to publish a Winchester which has specific design motifs which are found in the engraver's own Record Book.

Comparisons should also be made between **No. 118292** and illustrations in Chapter II of the writer's, *The Book of Winchester Engraving* and in *Winchester Engraving*. These chapters are entitled "L.D. Nimschke Independent Engraver," and are revealing of this artisan's immense artistic talent and technical skill.

No. 118292 also documents in steel the immense talent of Nimschke. Having been in the engraving business for some 35 years, the author is well aware of the influence of historic craftsmen and artisans from the past on modern-day practitioners.

It is correct to say that Nimschke influenced any engraver who saw his work, and the luckiest of these artisans were those who saw not only pictures of L.D.N.'s

triumphant work, but actual examples.

Serial No. **118292** is an exceptional example of a Winchester with highly stylized details from the Master's hand. And one that has survived to modern times in an overall excellence of condition.

Page numbers with commentary from *L.D. Nimschke Firearms Engraver* - with scrolls and motifs which closely match the embellishments on this classically styled **Spanish Royal Family Model 1866 Carbine** - are as follows:

xxviii, xxix, xxx and xxxi

Similarities in various features of scroll and border work, in photographs of Winchester Model 1866 engraved arms by Nimschke

xxxv:

Kidney style with bat wing motif on either side of curved surface of top of frame

Fanned feather (similar to wheat chaff) motif on top of front of breech of frame (at juncture to barrel breech)

Flower petal central on right side of frame behind loading port

[Not visible on this page, but note dental border motif near top of right side of frame, bordering on main large scroll, and above the central floral motif]

Flower petal motif surrounding as border to the top screw on heel of buttplate

Minute cross-hatching on immediate border to above flower petal motif, on top around screw on heel of buttplate [Note also presence of tiny trefoils emitting from most of the inner curves of the flower petals; a classical touch]

Additional noteworthy identifying motifs are the punched or beaded backgrounds, waved and straight line borders, plus line and dot borders

38, scroll styling on Winchester Model 1866 rifles, particularly on prints from rifle at top (both sides) - plus some of detailing on upper tangs and tops of frames.

39, detailing on various vignettes, including weasel head motif at upper right, dog heads, bordering, etc.

41, similarities in scrollwork on Model 1873 at bottom (both sides); rifle decorated by Nimschke and so identified in his own hand "1883 April"

46, detailing on Model 1866 at page bottom, scroll, trefoils, straight line borders

47, various scroll and border detailing on Model 1866 rifles; buttplate embellishments, trefoils on top of heel of buttplate at lower right corner; kidney motif, wheat chaff, etc.

Also note similarities to scroll and line borders on the barrel bands of the Alphonso XIIth and Alphonso

XIIIth Model 1866 Carbine.

48, scrollwork on Henry and Winchester rifles and carbines; wheat chaff and batwing motifs, cross-hatching, straight line bordering, etc.

49, scrollwork on Winchester Model 1866 and 1873; plus batwing

50, scroll and border similarities, Model 1866 Winchesters; note also detailing on top and bottom of frames. Also note cartouches on sideplates for inscriptions, or for motif, such as the English Pointer on left side of the frame of **118292**. Kidney and batwing motifs. Note also the trefoil finials, such as off of the floral petal motif surrounding the screw on top of the heel of the buttplate as on **No. 118292**

51, Model 1866 Winchesters; scroll and border similarities; also note cartouches for inscriptions. Note trefoil finials off scrolls as on right side of forward section of frame on **No. 118292**

54, Model 1866 Winchesters; scroll and border similarities; compare to **No. 118292**. Trefoils off screw on top of heel of sideplate, from floral petals. Plus batwing, kidney, floral petal and border motifs

55, Model 1866 Winchesters; scroll and border similarities

56, Model 1866 Winchesters; scroll and border frame similarities; trefoil off scroll similar to **No. 118292** heel of buttplate; wheat chaff, batwing and kidney styling motifs as well

[Not represented but the scroll and border decoration on the cartridge lifter block matches Nimschke motifs on other parts]

57, Model 1866 Winchesters; scroll and border frame similarities; trefoil off scroll as on **No. 118292**. And kidney, batwing, wheat chaff and floral motifs as well

61, motifs similar to the English Pointer head on left side of the frame of **No. 118292**

68, Model 1873 Winchester; scroll and border frame similarities; trefoil off scroll as on **No. 118292**; plus kidney, batwing, floral motifs as well.

Noteworthy is the fact that **No. 118292** boasts refined Nimschke embellishments on parts which are usually not embellished – and if so – not so profusely. This applies particularly to the hammer, the lever, and the barrel bands. The buttplate – a rifle crescent style rather than the customer carbine configuraton – is decorated as fine as one would expect on a deluxe Model 1866 rifle.

Furthermore, rarely are engraved hammers and levers from any model of Winchester found engraved in the Nimschke record book.

Yet another rarity seldom noted on deluxe Model 1866 carbines is the lack of a saddle ring and its mount. Also extremely rare: the presence of sling swivels – in this case on the rear barrel band and on the swivel and mount inlaid on the lower profile of the buttstock.

Further Study of the Nimschke Record Book

The best source for studying the Nimschke Record, at its most perfect reproduction, is in the new *Magnificent Colts* book. Because Colt and Winchester were operating in the Connecticut River Valley, and Hartford and New Haven were not that far away from each other, nor was New York City a far stretch (even in the 19th century), gun engravers knew each other, or at the least often knew of each other.

The influence of the Nimschke style is revealed in numerous examples in the writer's various books and articles. As noted above, Nimschke's decorative approach and execution found on **Winchester Model 1873 Carbine No. 118292** is boldly and distinctively his style, so pronounced, and done to give the embellishments a feeling of three dimensions.

The relative scarcity of certain models of Winchester arms to come from Nimschke's shop is important to note. As revealed in *L.D. Nimschke Firearms Engraver*, and in

known examples of this artisans output – the Model 1866 and the Henry Rifle are more often found, as compared to the Model 1873 or the 1876.

And any firearm to have been graced with Nimschke's talented and stylish engraving, boasts work from the hand of one of America's foremost engraving talents from the "Golden Age of American Gunmaking."

The Breed of Dog within the Escutcheon on Left Side of the Frame

Studying the Nimschke Record Book, the artist-engraver made a point of taking print impressions from motifs on many of his engravings, not only on firearms, but other artifacts. Page 61 shows a dog head motif, similar to that of an English Pointer on King Alphonso XIIth's Winchester Model 1866 Carbine.

The English Pointer ranks among the most select and talented of shooting dogs. His Majesty King Alphonso XIIth was a keen participant in the historic Royal Calpe Hunt, held in Gibraltar, a British Crown Colony, and with an origin dating back to 1812. A pair of English foxhounds had been imported to Gibraltar prior to that date, and were a popular and successful breed.

Further research is in progress to establish the history as it pertains to King Alphonso XIIth, but among the facts

determined to date is that King Alphonso XIIIth became the joint patron of this famed hunt with King Edward VIIth, in 1906. The hunt continued through 1939, coinciding with commencement of World War II.

The Royal Calpe Hunt had begun as a civilian sporting event, but gradually became one dominated by the military. In 1814 the hunt switched from civilian to military, and the name morphed to the Civil Calpe Hunt. In 1817 the name became the Calpe Hunt. And following the joint selection of Alphonso XIIIth and Edward VIIth as Joint Patrons, the name arrived at the Royal Calpe Hunt.

Quoting Pablo Larios: "In 1906 I was instrumental in obtaining the honor of the Royal Patronage of Their Majesties King Edward the Seventh and King Alfonso the Thirteenth, which was a source of great satisfaction to me." In that year Alphonso XIIIth married Princess Ena of England, who was a granddaughter of Queen Victoria. The Princess was also the niece of King Edward VIIth.

From as early as 1814, kennels were kept at San Roque, Cadiz, Spain. A club had been established related to the hunt, and its management gradually shifted from civilians to garrison officers posted at Gibraltar. Later a kennel was built at a site known as North Front, and the sporting dogs were moved there. The preferred source of dogs was England, selected and brought from packs.

Equally important - as a keen sportsman, His Majesty recognized the English Pointer as a breed considered to be

the epitomy of sporting dogs.

Pedigreed Ownership of No. 118292 by Spanish Royalty – King Alphonso XIIth (Reigned 1874-1885) and His Heir King Alphonso XIIIth (Reigned 1886-1931)

Winchester Model 1873 Carbine Serial No. 118292, with its many rich and elegantly designed features, and the quality of engraved execution, offers a fine example of the artistry of L.D. Nimschke. Furthermore, the history of ownership, by Alphonso XIIth from c. 1874 to his death in 1885, then by his son Alphonso XIIIth, from 1886 to his death on February 28th 1931 – and subsequently by his heirs until finally leaving family possession in 2014 – establishes a solid provenance of 140 years.

The enclosed biographies and selective references from numerous books provide substantial background material on father and son.

The Royal Spanish Winchester Serial No 118292 is an excellent example of L.D. Nimschke's beautifully executed embellishments, as well as being representative of the excellence of stock work, and metal finishing. Historically the distinguished level of ownership is revealing of the pride Their Majesties no doubt enjoyed in possessing such a beautiful firearm. The Model 1866 being The First Winchester also offered the appeal of having the

latest in firearms technology.

A review of the Nimschke book and of subsequent publications related to this distinguished artisan bears out the fact that Spanish-speaking royalty and political leaders were keen owners of Nimschke-decorated arms. Most distinguished of this list were not only King Alphonso XIIth and Alphonso XIIIth, but also Maria Christina of Austria (2nd wife of Alphonso XIIth and mother of Alphonso XIIIth), Mexican Emperor Maximilian and later President Porfirio Diaz (ivory-stocked Model 1866 Winchester carbine), and Bolivian President Mariano Melgarejo (the solid silver Winchester Model 1866 rifle, gift from Peruvian President Jose Balta).

Quoting from *L.D. Nimschke Firearms Engraver* (page xxii):

In his international clientele, Nimschke could boast Maria Christina of Austria, who, as widow of King Alphonso, controlled the Spanish monarchy for many years after her husband's death. Prints of the Frank Wesson rifle engraved for her are on page two. The fanciest Winchester in the record was done for a customer in Peru. In Nimschke's words, the frame for this gun was of "solid silver" (pages 20 and 22). It is worthwhile to note that a quick survey of the index of owners (page 101) show setter than 20% to be of Mexican, South American, or Spanish blood. Engraved, plated, and pearl or ivory gripped guns were highly prized by the Spanish-

speaking people. This type of gun, as will be pointed out later. Was a Nimschke speciality.

Both Alphonso XIIth and his son and heir Alphonso XIIIth played key roles in the history of firearms. Patronage of gunmakers was vital for the success of these companies. And that fact was particularly true with major makers the likes of Winchester, Colt and Remington. Xerox copies from various sources confirm the interests and experiences with firearms of both Alphonso XIIth and Alphonso XIIIth.

Evidence of King Alphonso XIIIth's remarkable skill and intense devotion to the shooting sports is revealed in the Hon. Richard Beaumont's classic, *Purdey's The Guns and the Family* (particularly page 124), in which the a nearly full-page photograph of His Majesty is captioned:

King Alphonso XIII – “the best friend Purdey’s ever had”

Further documenting that statement are the many pages in Beaumont's book, detailing the King's dedication to his favorite gunmaker:

101-102, 109-111, 123-124, 137-138, 163-165

Among additional publications referencing, and recognizing, both Alphonso XIIth and Alphonso XIIIth as keen sporting men and arms enthusiasts are Jonathan Ruffer's *The Big Shots*, Brian P. Martin's *The Great Shots*, and Terry Weiland's *Spanish Best The Fine Shotguns of*

Spain.

The author's books *Steel Canvas* and *Winchester . . . 1 of 1000* picture and identify the exceptional cased set of Remington Rolling Block pistols, made for presentation to His Majesty King Alphonso XIIth. The set is also pictured in the *Antique Arms Annual 1971* (page 151; in the William M. Locke Collection), and again on pages 53 (Bill Florence Collection) and 104 (part of the multi-page advertisement by Herb Glass, who had bought and sold the cased pair).

Remarkable Condition and Other Details of the Royal Spanish Winchester Model 1866 Carbine

Indicative of the respect that their Royal Highnesses had toward fine firearms, **Serial No. 118292** has survived in a remarkable state. The majority of the finish remains, *en suite* with two historic inventory labels, which were on the right side of the buttstock at the time the Carbine left the Royal Family's possession, and are part of the accompanying archival record. A minor crack in the stock's wrist has been skillfully mended by a master artisan. The engraving and finishes are in an excellent state. Their majesties, with the tender care of staff in the Royal Armoury, had the best of attention for their treasured firearms.

The barrel breech marking reads:

WINCHESTER'S REPEATING ARMS. NEW HAVEN. CT.

KING'S-IMPROVEMENT-PATENTED-MARCH 29, 1866. OCTOBER 18, 1860.

The serial number marking is visible on the lower tang,

118292

The frame was specifically manufactured without a saddle ring and saddle ring mount. Instead, sling swivels were employed. Sling swivel mounts on the buttstock and on the rear barrel band are seldom observed on Model 1866 Winchesters. Photographs showing Spanish sportsmen in the period of King Alphonso XIIth reveal that carrying longarms employing slings was a common practice (though Kings normally had someone else carrying their guns, and reloading them as well). The use of slings was also a practice with succeeding generation Spanish sportsmen, such as King Alphonso XIIIth. The Spanish Royal Winchester Model 1866 proves their preference of sling swivels over a saddle ring. Lack of the ring also presented a perfectly clean frame surface for Nimschke to decorate in the best manner.

The blued, folding leaf rear sight pivots and is designed with apertures set at three distances. The medium sight is by peering through a center aperture, similar to a peep sight. Graduation is for 100, 200 and 300 yards.

The crescent configuration buttplate is standard on rifles, but not on the Model 1866 Carbine. This style buttplate is more likely to be found on a Model 1866 Carbine with extra quality features, such as engraving, and

special quality finishes of metal and stock. Within the trapdoor is a cleaning rod, of which one section was with **No. 118292** at the time possession left the family of their Majesty's heirs.

The above features, and the intriguing combination of finishes suggest that His Majesty Alphonso XIIth had expressed details that were favorites – since he (and his son) were accomplished sportsmen-hunters.

Being aficionados of fine guns made by the best in Europe and Great Britain, their Majesties were also accustomed to seeing workmanship of exceptional quality. On first viewing the stockwork, the engraving, the deluxe finishes, and the overall magnificent elegance - all would have struck their royal attention.

Another feature of special interest is the finish: A rare combination of gold-washed frame, buttplate, barrel bands, with blued screws, bolt, rear sight and lever lock, and the balance plated in nickel, including the trigger, hammer and cocking lever, and the sling swivels.

Particularly unusual - and not observed by the author on other Winchesters – are the screwheads precisely lined up. Every screw is in a proper alignment for its placement. . . an expression of no less than a remarkable attention to detail by all involved in creating this masterpiece.

The **Alphonso XIIth and Alphonso XIIIth Winchester Carbine** is unquestionably a firearm fit for a

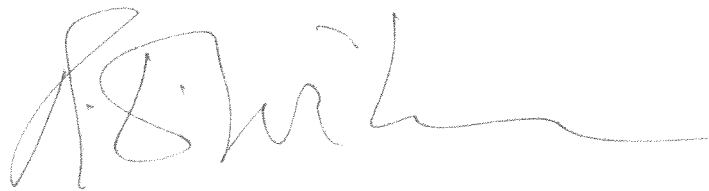
king – and in this case – two kings.

Conclusion

The writer looks forward to publishing **The Royal Spanish Winchester Model 1866 Carbine No. 118292** in future editions of the Nimschke saga – both in a new volume showing the Record Book in all its colorful glory, and in an updated and fresh printing of *Winchester Engraving*. The author is grateful for the opportunity to study the **Regal Alphonso XIIth and Alphonso XIIIth Winchester No. 118292**, and to have a set of detailed color photographs, allowing for preparation of these future publishing opportunities.

With a uniquely distinguished career spanning more than 50 years, the creative body of work from the hand of the Master L.D. Nimschke stands among the most significant and colorful chapters in the magical world of fine guns and engraving in American history.

The Royal Spanish Winchester Model 1866 Carbine Serial No. 118292 stands as a beautiful and historic example of artistry and craftsmanship from the hand of the gifted, creative and widely known artisan, Louis Daniel Nimschke. It will be this writer's privilege to add to the Carbine's legacy in future publication opportunities.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'L.D. Nimschke', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

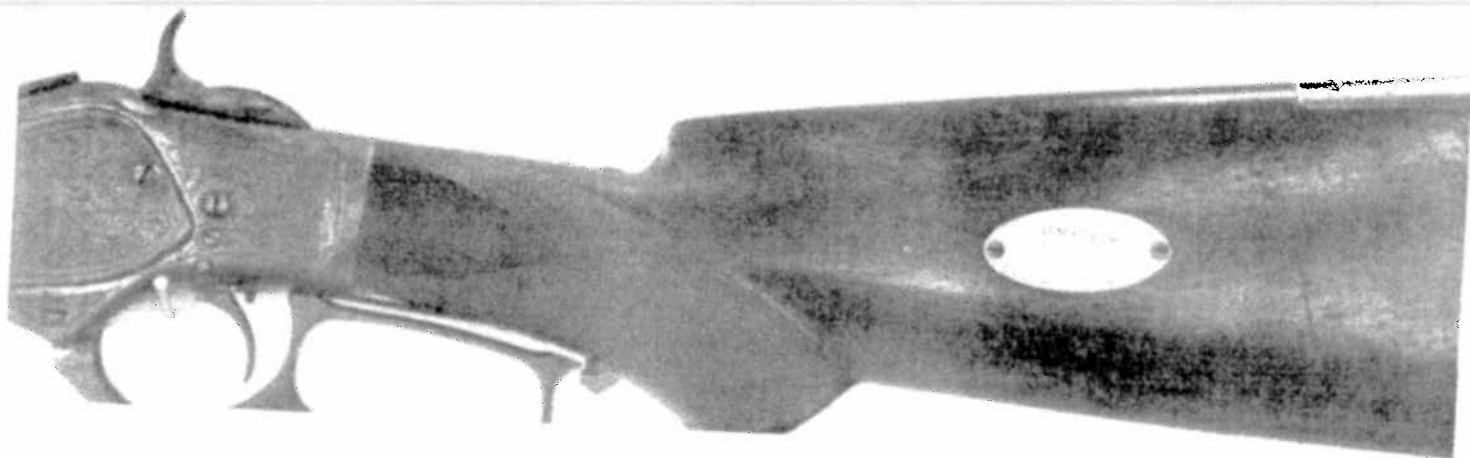
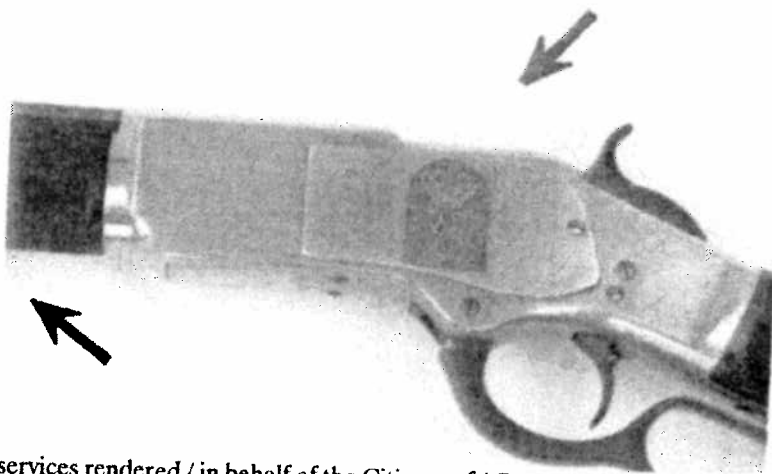


(Above) Serial number 31580. Left Winchester March 25, 1879. The ledger notes: Rifle, octagon barrel, inlaid, case hardened, checked stock, set trigger, peep and Beach sights, shotgun butt, engraved. Examination shows the barrel bands of gold and what appears to be platinum. Running deer panel scene on left sideplate. (*Leon E. Wandler Collection*)

(Right) Serial number 19005, 1 of 1000 was made for an aristocrat, King Alphonso XII of Spain. Documented in the Winchester factory ledgers as: Rifle, octagon barrel, nickel-plated, set trigger, "King of Spain", received in the warehouse, May 19, 1876 and shipped the next day. (*Real Armeria, Photographs Courtesy, James D. Lavin, by Pedro Ameller*)

(Bottom) Serial number 33669: One of the most historic of Winchester rifles was presented to City Marshal Henry Brown, honoring his excellence as a lawman. Within about a year, Brown and three henchmen attempted to rob a bank in a neighboring town and were caught. Brown had this Winchester with him, the stock bearing the oval plaque inlay, inscribed: "Presented to City Marshall (sic.) / H.N. Brown / for valuable

services rendered / in behalf of the Citizens of / CALDWELL KAS / A.N. Colson Mayor Dec 1882". For further information see *WINCHESTER The Golden Age of American Gunmaking and the Winchester 1 of 1000*, 1984. (*Kansas State Historical Society Collection; Gift of the James H. Woods Foundation*)



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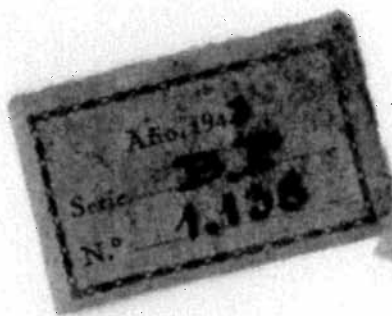
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