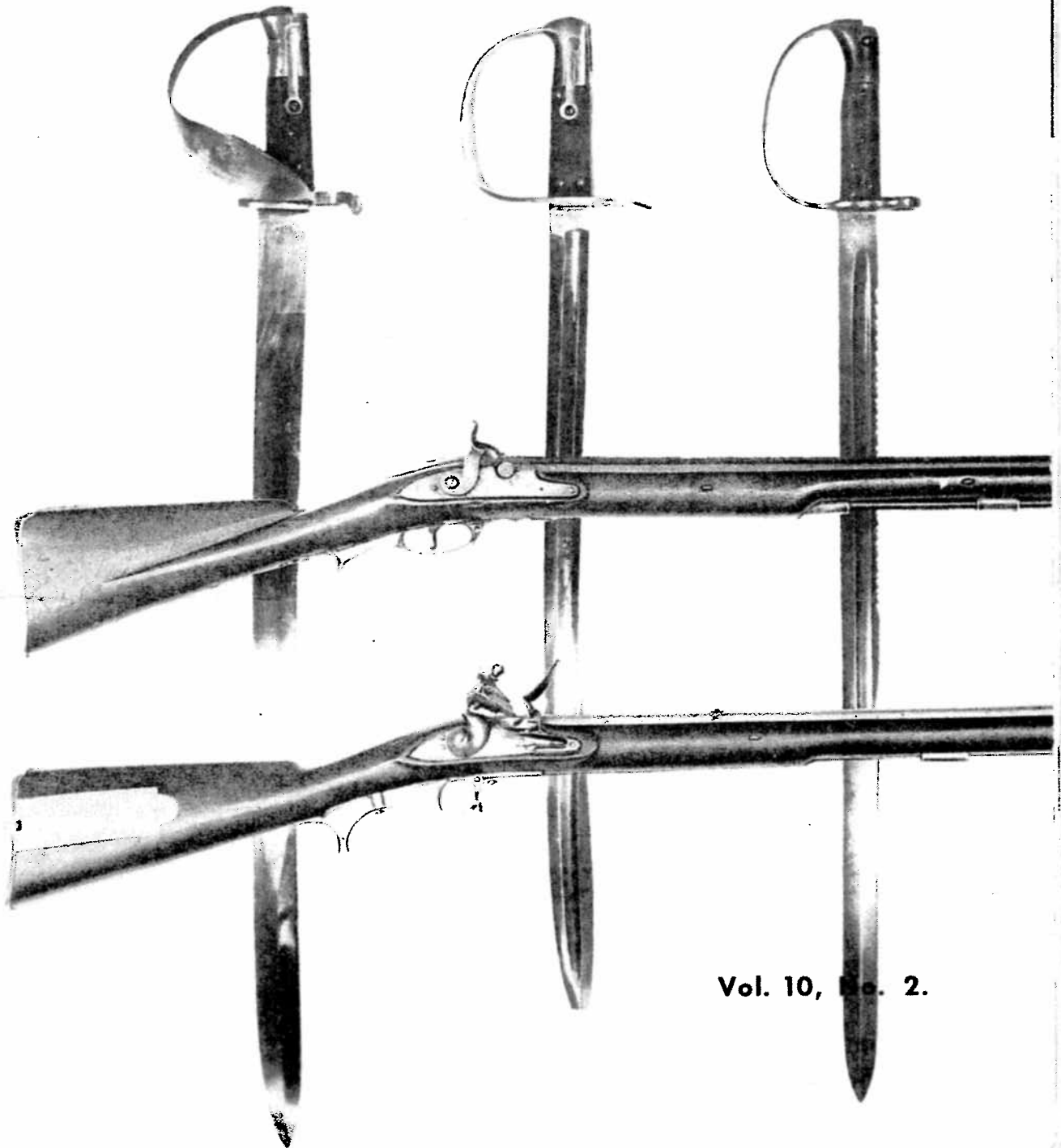


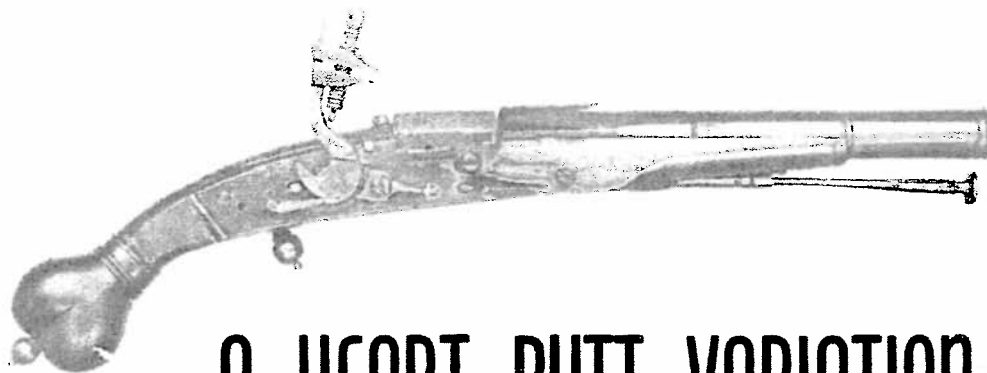
BRIEF DESCRIPTION	
ACCESSION #	9000
DATE ACQUIRED	
ACQUIRED BY	
CHECK #	
TRADE #	
OBJECT TYPE	Pistol
HAND/ LONG	Hand
MILITARY/CIVILIAN	Military
SINGLE/PAIR	1
IGNITION	Flint
DATED	
DECADE	6th 18th C
OLD WORLD/AMER	OLD WORLD
COUNTRY/STATE	England
CITY/COUNTY	Birmingham
MAKER	Bissell
SIGNED/ATTRIB	Signature - lock
MODEL	
SERIAL #	
LOA (in)	12 7/8"
BARREL (in)	7 7/8"
# BARRELS	1
ARRANGEMENT	
BARREL SHAPE	round
BORE	Smooth
CALIBER	.55
WOOD	none
RAMROD	steel
FURNITURE	steel
CONDITION	Excellent
CONDITION NOTE	often 3 pr + converted
REPAIR/RESTOR	—
HIST.SIGNIF.?	French-Indian + Rev. War use.
HIST.SIGNIF.NOTE	
HIST.SIGNIF.SCORE	10
ART.SIGNIF.?	Plain/military
ART.SIGNIF.NOTE	English made for Scottish regiments
ARTISTIC.SCORE	7
RARITY.SIGNIF.?	Very, Very, Very Rare Survival
RARITY.NOTE	far rarer than a walker Colt!!!
RARITY.SCORE	10
SOURCE	D'Ambra
PROVENIENCE?	
PUBLISHED?	no
EXHIBITED?	72
ACCESSORIES?	1
TOP X%	50%
RETENTION SCORE	10+
DISPOSITION STATUS	
COST	0
PROCEEDS RCVD	0
NOTES	See enclosed

\$1.25

# *The Canadian Journal of Arms Collecting*

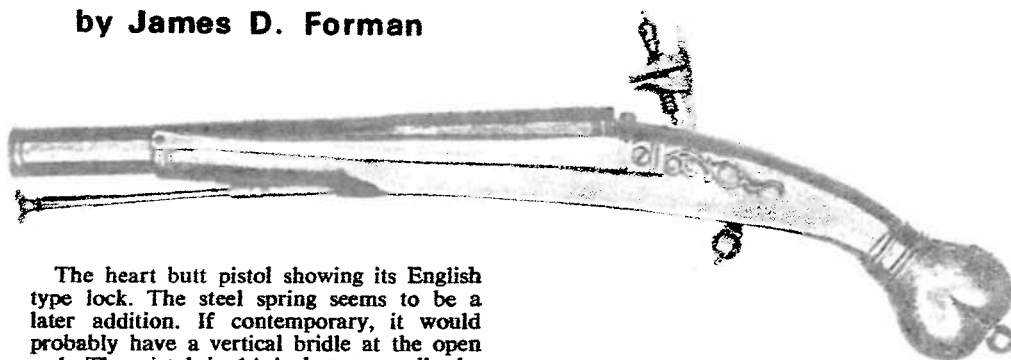


Vol. 10, No. 2.



# A HEART BUTT VARIATION

by James D. Forman

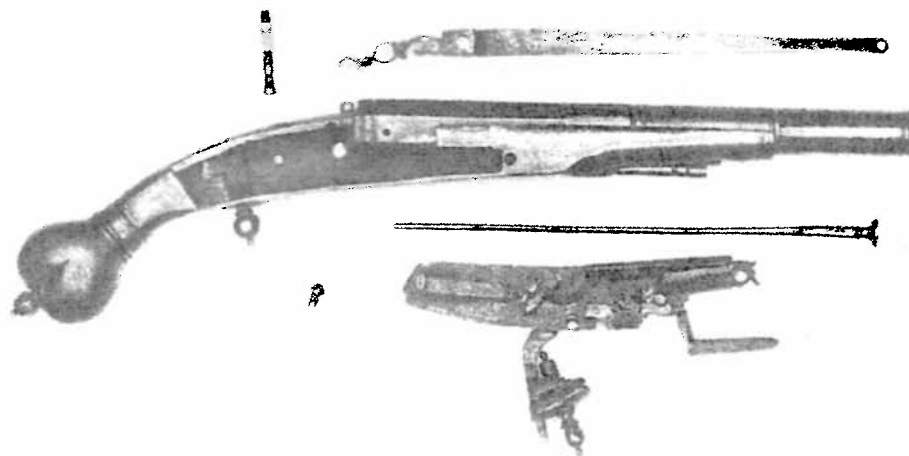


The heart butt pistol showing its English type lock. The steel spring seems to be a later addition. If contemporary, it would probably have a vertical bridle at the open end. The pistol is 14 inches over all, the barrel  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches, the caliber .58.

Around the third quarter of the 17th Century, the heart butt pistol began to appear in east Scotland; from Inverness in the north through Old Meldrum, Aberdeen and Brechin to Dundee near the English border. This uniquely Scottish arm came in a variety of sizes, from small enough to fit a pocket to near blunderbuss in dimensions, over two feet in length. Most had deeply turned barrels. A very few were stocked in wood and some in brass with brass barrels, but the majority were steel throughout. The maker's name or initials, if marked at all, were set upon the lock plate. What distinguished them from other all-metal Scottish pistols was the butt, shaped like a human heart. Some have sought a symbolic reason for this unique feature. Could it be religious, representing the heart of Christ? Or patriotic? The heart of Bruce occurs regularly in Scottish heraldry. More practically, the heart gave a grip which helped balance the pistol, and in the not uncommon case of a misfire furnished the owner with a very effective mace.

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This paragraph from the letter which accompanied "A Heart Butt Variation" is significant. "This article has to do with an odd item. . . . It baffled me and I've sought out a good many opinions since; Steve Granscay (Curator Emeritus, Metropolitan Museum of Art), Lewis and Sandy Gordon, Chuck Darling, Richard Claydon etc. Granscay and Don Baird (Princeton University Museum) who suggested an article be done up for you, think it's purely Scottish with English influence. Richard Claydon suspects Dutch or Flemish. Lewis Gordon likes the Hans Ruhr idea and Don Baird the Highland Regiment. All of which left me no better informed than when I began, but with the distillation of controversy in the enclosed." *Letter, J.F. to S.J.G.*

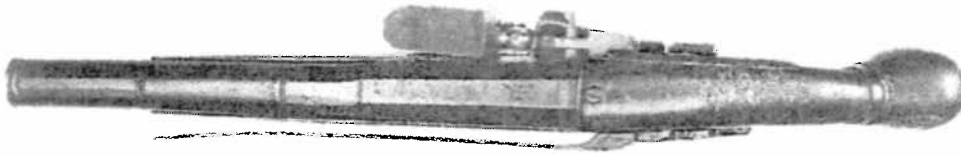


The pistol opened up: showing particularly the early snaphaunce type mechanism of the lock.

The pistol illustrated deviates little from the above standards. What makes it peculiar is the lock. The early heart butt pistol typically bore the Scottish snaphaunce lock. Superficially, the snaphaunce could be identified because the steel was attached to a pivoted arm which was set apart from the pan cover. More technically, according to a definition furnished by Torsten Lenk, a snaphaunce was distinguished by the fact that the sear operated through the lockplate to engage the cock. So defined, the term snaphaunce would include not only the Scottish variation, but also the English lock, with the principal mechanical distinction being the fact that while on the Scottish snaphaunce the sear engaged the breast of the cock, on the typical English version, the sear engages over the heel of the cock. Such is the case here. Externally, the distinction is even more pronounced. In almost every respect, the lock resembles the English lock; e.g. the shape of the cock, the cock buffer, the square flash pan. Deviation from the English lock is restricted to the "dog catch" which engages the cock from below in Scottish fashion, and the decorative design at the front of the lock plate.

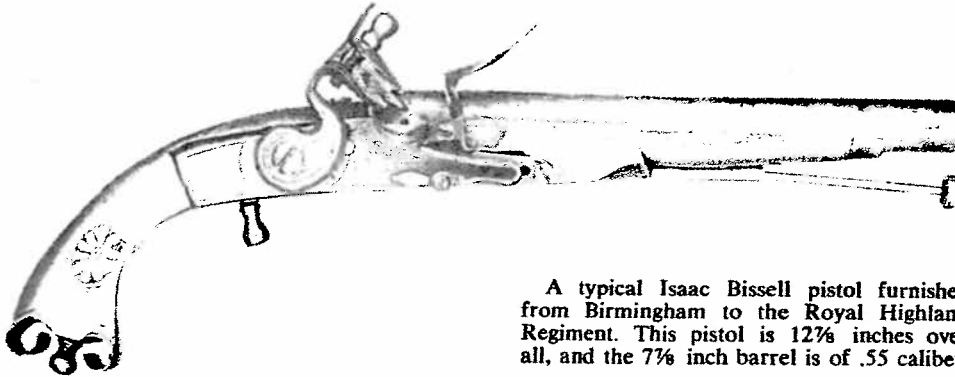
An English style lock on a Scottish style gun? The combination may not seem so remarkable on a gun possibly produced in the Lowland Border area between the two cultures. But there are other peculiarities. Looked at superficially, the pistol resembles the early belt-hooked English lemon butted pistols (a version of which is displayed at Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth, Massachusetts. See Peterson, *The Treasury of the Gun*, page 88). Could a Scottish gunsmith have had this in mind when he went to work?

Might the gun even be foreign made? On the top of the barrel near the breech is the gun's only mark, "HR," resembling very closely the mark of Hans Ruhr, a German gunsmith who worked in Coburg during the middle years of the 17th Century (active c. 1620-1654). Perhaps on request he furnished a pistol to a Scottish mercenary, as there were many in Europe at the time. Perhaps he merely replaced the barrel. Possibly, but very unlikely. Hans Ruhr is remembered only for his wheel locks. Still, the European possibility exists and is encouraged by a

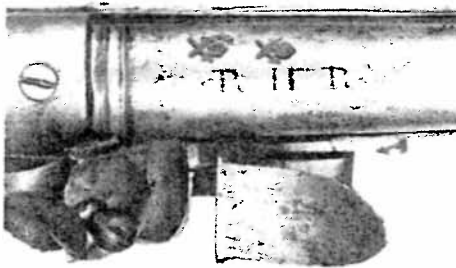


The pistol, top view: showing the HR mark on the barrel, also the way the heart butt was formed from two shell sections. In this case the butt is cast off to the side to

counteract the tendency to fire towards the left which was caused by the release of the tumbler on pressing the trigger.



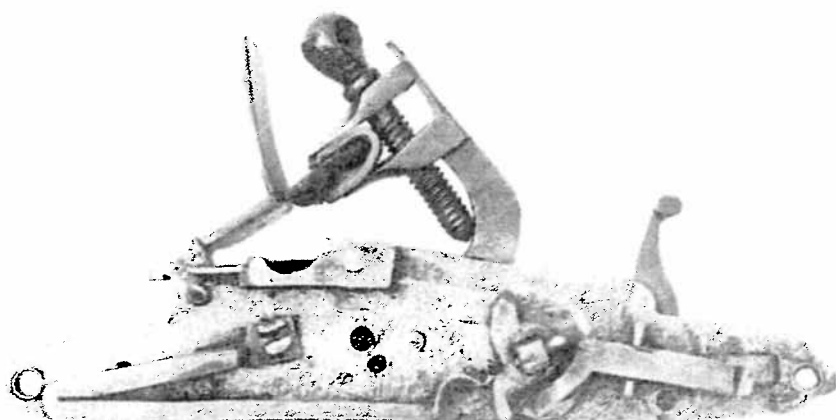
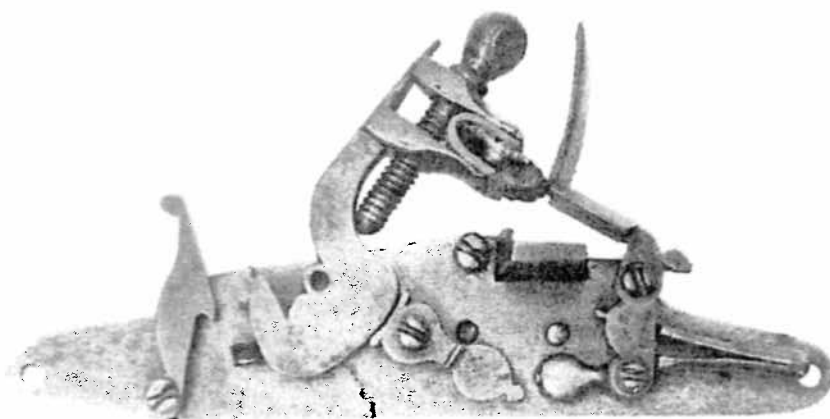
A typical Isaac Bissell pistol furnished from Birmingham to the Royal Highland Regiment. This pistol is 12 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches over all, and the 7 $\frac{1}{2}$  inch barrel is of .55 caliber.



Top view of the Bissell pistol showing the typical Royal Highland Regiment marking which, though they do vary from one pistol to another, are seldom if ever joined as in the case of the heart butt.

very un-Scottish belt hook curiously decorated with rococco scrolls. The front of the lock plate seems shaped into a dragon's face; un-Scottish, too. Perhaps then, a Flemish or Dutch gunsmith. There exists the possibility, if we are theorizing, that an English gunsmith made a pistol in the "Scottish style."

Apart from the "HR" on top of the barrel, the only other mark on the pistol seems to be a Roman numeral assembly mark inside the frame. The "HR" is tantalizing, raising more questions than it answers. If not Hans Ruhr, could it be the mark of some Scottish armorer? Again the possibility seems remote, as lemon butt pistols were usually marked on the lock plate. It could be an owner's initials or a military designation. In support of the "Scottish mercenary on the continent" theory, *Hess Rupert* (Horse Regiment) has been suggested. Nor can the possibility of it standing for "Highland Regiment" be dismissed out of hand. "RHR" for *Royal Highland Regiment* is commonly encountered on pistols made in Birmingham by Issac Bissell, after that regiment received its royal designation in 1758. Pre-



Exterior and interior view of a typical English lock.

viously, for nineteen years, it had been known as the *Highland Regiment*, (for a pistol evidently so marked see *The C.J.A.C.*, Vol. 8, No. 3, page 79), but it seems unlikely that a volunteer would appear with his grandfather's gun and insist upon it being so marked or that a weapon already antique would be issued. There is no answer, only speculation and debate, which after all is one of this pistol's chief charms and probably one of the main attractions in arms collecting all together.

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## Highland Regiments in North America 1756-1784

*I should imagine that two or three independent Highland companies might be of use; they are hardy, intrepid, accustomed to a rough country, and no great mischief if they fall. How can you better employ a secret enemy than by making his end conducive to the common good.*

— Col. James Wolfe, from Banff, 9 June 1751

The admiration and respect accorded to the Highland regiments of the British army during the late 20th century is by no means a reflection of the attitude held towards them during the early decades of their existence, which is accurately expressed by the quotation from Wolfe of Quebec. The Highland regiments were formed to control, contain and capitalize on the pool of aggressive, tough and warlike manpower available north of "the Line." They were generally employed by the British army as shock troops for the most difficult and potentially dangerous assignments or positions on the battlefield; not as an honour to their nation and prowess, but to prevent casualties in the non-Highland regiments. Highlanders were seen as particularly suitable for colonial campaigns (in the 18th century, this meant America and India) where the characteristics described by Wolfe were entirely fulfilled: suitable yet expendable. The analogy may be brought into the 20th century in Field-Marshal Montgomery's attitude towards American soldiers in 1944: cannon-fodder to spare English casualties.

In April 1725, the first Highland troops were raised by the British Government. These consisted of six companies each comprised of a captain, two lieutenants, three serjeants, 3 corporals, two drummers and sixty privates, for a total of 285 muskets & bayonets; by January 1727 this number had been increased by an additional 336 muskets & bayonets.<sup>1</sup>

The first Highlanders to be distinguished as such in an organized body of troops in America were the frontier scout and patrol units, on both land and sea, which were raised by the colony of Georgia from 1737 to guard against attacks from the Spaniards in Florida and unfriendly Indian tribes. Their arms were of private-purchase commercial origin acquired by the colonial government.

In November 1739, Lord Crawford was warranted

to raise a Highland regiment to consist of ten companies, each comprised of 1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 1 ensign, 3 serjeants, 3 corporals, 2 drummers and 70 privates of which 1 Sergeant, 1 corporal and 50 men were to be from the three earlier companies commanded by captains, and 10 privates only from each of the three companies commanded by captain-lieutenants. This gave a total of 180 privates who were to be distributed equally amongst the four newly raised companies. In addition, 3 serjeants and 3 corporals were to be drafted from the earlier companies and distributed amongst the four new companies. Readers are referred to John Prebble's excellent book *Mutiny* for the early history of the Highland regiments.

With regard to service in North America during the period 1755 to 1783, the following Highland regiments played important roles as shock troops, light infantry and scouts for the British army.

### *The 42nd Royal Highland Regiment (The Black Watch)*

The first of the Highland regiments to arrive in America was the 42nd, originally formed in 1739 as the 43d, renumbered the 42nd in 1749, and widely known as "The Black Watch." The first contingent of the 42nd disembarked at New York 16 June 1756, as part of the first wave of British regulars to arrive in America after the Braddock expedition. The regiment had been stationed in Ireland since 1749, and had last been rearmed in 1755; an augmentation to the regiment of 29 Jan. 1756 specified an additional 490 muskets with steel rammers and bayonets, but a return of the regiment's arms taken at Albany 3 Aug. 1756 clearly shows only wooden rammered muskets in their hands, noting 549 muskets pres-

ent and 490 (also with wooden rammers) lacking. On 25 July 1757, a further augmentation was ordered of three companies, each amounting to 312 muskets & bayonets with wooden rammers and 324 side pistols and straps. A year later on 24 July 1758, another augmentation occurred of seven companies, totaling 728 muskets & bayonets with wooden rammers and 756 side pistols and straps. On 1 May 1759, the regiment was ordered an entire new set of arms: 2,080 carbines with wooden rammers and bayonets and 2,160 side pistols and straps. On 29 May, the Ordnance said they could not supply carbines and indicated that muskets had been sent. They also stated that all previous augmentations had been supplied with muskets. However, by August 1760, the regiment had apparently been reequipped with carbines (see next page, under Montgomery's).



Part of wilderness training involved marksmanship: on 9 June 1759, at Fort Edward "the Light Infantry of the RH [Royal Highland — a distinction granted by the King on 22 July 1758, before the news of Ticonderoga reached London] Regt is to practice firing balls tomorrow morning at six of the o'clock near the Royal Block House on the other side of the river"<sup>2</sup> and on 28 Aug. 1759, at Oswego, the 42nd were ordered "to fire off 3 rounds per man tomorrow Morning."<sup>3</sup> On 27 July 1759, the regiment wanted 498 muskets & bayonets and 1,080 side pistols to complete the 1st Battalion. An Ordnance official noted in March 1763, that "all the Firelocks of Lord John Murray's Regiment are left in North America."<sup>4</sup>

Muskets supplied to the Royal Highland Regiment in North America would have been either of Pattern 1730, 1730/40 or Pattern 1742, for, while wooden rammers are always specified, there is no mention of other structural details. It is not clear whether they, like some other regiments, chose to have their muskets locally altered to take steel rammers in place of wooden ones.

After the return from America in 1767, while the regiment was stationed in Ireland in widely dispersed locations, they received at least four issues of arms, any or all of which could have been made at Dublin Castle, all of which were Long Land Pattern muskets with steel rammers (almost certainly of the Pattern 1756). The issues occurred in 1767, July 1770 (126), July 1773 (351 for nine companies) and 1775, and all reflected the lower Irish Establishment of men per company. The last inspection of the regiment prior to its embarking for America occurred on 30 May 1775, at which time it was stated that their arms had been received in 1773 from Dublin.<sup>5</sup>

The augmentation of 14 Aug. 1775, called for 620 muskets & bayonets with wood rammers, including 62 for the light infantry company, 6 Serjeant's Fusils and 650 side pistols. A second augmentation of 27 Nov. 1775, required 822 muskets & bayonets, 6 Serjeant's Fusils and 862 side pistols. Col. Murray wrote to Secretary at War Lord Barrington that the arms which the 42nd had received in Ireland in 1773 were "agreeable to the last pattern approved by the King [i.e. the Short Land Pattern of 1769, received in Ireland 23 Mar. 1770 and first put into production there by contracts of 7 April and by 13 July 1770 totalling 5,772 muskets], and he wanted the same for the men of the augmentation. The Board replied rather huffily that they were preparing arms according

PLATE 9-1 — One of Capt. Peebles' grenadiers of the 42nd (Royal Highland) Regiment in 1780. Experience in the field has brought modifications to lighten, but not simplify the distinguishing embellishments to the uniform. The blue facings denoted a Royal regiment. The 42nd left Cork in 1776 carrying new Short Land muskets. Note the use of both the 18-hole "belly box" as supplied by the Ordnance and the tin-lined Rawle pattern cartridge pouch supplied by the regiment. — Courtesy Don Troiani



to the augmentation warrant, and didn't know what arms Murray's had received in Ireland but that they could not supply any arms different from those specified in the warrant. Barrington succeeded in getting a new warrant specifying that the 42nd were to receive arms of the same type as those furnished in Ireland in 1773, i.e., Short Land Pattern 1769 muskets but, presumably, this time from the Tower rather than Dublin Castle.<sup>6</sup> With these arms, the regiment arrived in New York in July 1776, where it served until September 1783, when it went north to Halifax. On 13 June 1777, 442 side pistols, replacements for those of the old companies (i.e. not the augmentation), were authorized. By 16 Mar. 1780, there were 142 muskets & bayonets worn out and unfit. A final war-time augmentation of one company was ordered on 14 Mar. 1782, requiring 75 muskets and bayonets and 75 side pistols. (9-1)

The 42nd put these arms to use, and the following eyewitness account sheds some light on their prowess:

"From the moment of their landing [with Howe on Long Island, August 1776], Colonel Thomas Stirling [commanding the regiment] was indefatigable in drilling the men to the manner of fighting practised in the former war with the Indians and French bushmen, which is so well calculated for a close woody country. Colonel Stirling was well versed in this mode of warfare, and imparted it to the troops, by first training the non-commissioned officers himself, and then superintending their instruction of the soldiers.

The Highlanders made rapid progress in this discipline, being, in General, excellent marksmen..."<sup>7</sup>

## Montgomery's (1st Highland, 62nd Foot, later 77th Foot)

On 14 Jan. 1757, warrants were issued for the raising of two Highland Battalions, the 1st (Montgomery's, by Loudoun's orders of 12 July 1757 announcing the renumbering of regiments due to the breaking of the 50th and 51st after their capture at Oswego, to become the 62nd) and 2nd (Fraser's, by the order of 12 July 1757 to become the 63rd). Each regiment was to receive 1,040 muskets & bayonets with wooden rammers and 1,080 side pistols with straps. The raising warrant was altered ("some alterations being to be made in the Two Warrants for Arms for the Two Highland Battalions"<sup>8</sup> and the muskets ordered for Montgomery's were replaced by 37-inch barreled carbines; accoutrement-maker Esdaile's warrant of 4 Feb. 1757 for 2,000 18-hole carbine cartridge boxes for the use of the two Highland regiments<sup>9</sup> and the Board's order of 28 Mar. 1757 for 200 rounds of carbine ammunition and flints per man

to be sent on board the transports "which took on board the said carbines" for the Highland regiments (each of 1,020 privates) "tonight without fail."<sup>10</sup> confirms their initial armament.<sup>11</sup> Regarding the side pistols, "Col. Montgomery is to be paid the Office Price in money for the Pistols and Drums which he supplied at his own expense, by his letter of 22 April,"<sup>12</sup> and Col. Fraser received the same in August.<sup>13</sup> Carbines were again issued in June 1759 (see below). An undated 1757 return of stores for the two Highland Battalions specifies both carbine ball and carbine flints, 14 in quantity.

On 25 July 1757, both Montgomery's and Fraser's battalions were augmented by three companies totalling 312 muskets & bayonets with wooden rammers and 324 side pistols and straps. The two regiments were augmented again 18 Sept. 1758, with one company each, 104 muskets & bayonets with wooden rammers and 108 side pistols and straps. Each of these augmentation warrants was presumably altered to indicate carbines rather than muskets.

Montgomery's received, in addition to the basic arms of the regiment, according to a Board of Ordnance minute of 7 Apr. 1757, "two chests of officers fuzees...for Col. Montgomery's Highland Battalion sent on board the *William and Ann* transport."<sup>15</sup> The regiment arrived in Charles Town, South Carolina, straight from Britain, on 3 Sept. 1757, with 1,000 men and 113 supernumeraries. Col. Montgomery wrote to Gen. Forbes from Charleston in April 1758:

"...as our Arms are not of the same Calibre [i.e. .66" not .76"] with the rest of the army I have ordered a hundred rounds of powder and Ball to be made up for each man, the cartridges will be carefully put up in Barrels [the standard method]... If you have no objections I intend to leave our Broad Swords at Philadelphia, our men are young and the less they are loaded the better."<sup>16</sup>

A return of 24 Dec. 1757, shows total effective rank & file as 1,010, and Fraser's at 1,000. They were, and remained, the largest effective regiments in America.

On 1 June 1759, at Albany, Oliver Spaulding of the 3rd Connecticut Regiment recorded in his *Orderly Book* that "ye Controlers of ye Ordnance to deliver 1,000 carbines to Coll montgomery." A General Order from the Commander-in-Chief of 4 Aug. 1760 confirmed the armament of Montgomery's and indicated a change in that of the 42nd:

"The Royal Highland Bn & Montgomery's will new make all their Cartridges & will apply to Col. Williamson for a Carbine Measure, which they will exactly follow in the making them."<sup>17</sup>

This clearly indicates that by this time both the 42nd as well as Montgomery's were armed with carbines.

## Fraser's (2nd Highland, 63rd Foot, later 78th Foot)

A shipping list of the "Cloathing, Arms and Camp Necessaries" for Fraser's Highland Battalion dated 24 Mar. 1757, specifies 1,000 carbines & bayonets, as well as 40 officer's fuzees & bayonets.<sup>18</sup> Fraser's battalion embarked at Cork for America in June 1757, and a return of 26 Nov. 1757 shows the battalion in New York harbour with a strength of 984 total effective rank and file. The 312 additional men sailed on 20 December and arrived at New York 11 Mar. 1758, and then sailed for Halifax where they arrived 28 April 1758.<sup>19</sup> These additional men had carbines described by Gen. Fraser as:

"...Our arms are the Carabines the horse had before they were reduced to Dragoons, and are excellent Arms in every respect, but that they are rather slight for hard use."<sup>20</sup> (1-63)

Almost immediately after their arrival at Halifax, they gave up their 37-inch barreled carbines to the light infantry companies then forming for the Louisbourg campaign.

During 1758, both Montgomery and Fraser were paid the Office price in lieu for 324 side pistols each for their respective battalions, Montgomery in June and Fraser (as well as Murray for the 2/42nd) in August.<sup>21</sup> In February 1759, Col. Fraser had provided his fourth additional company with 233 side pistols, for which the Board ordered him paid.<sup>22</sup>

On 1 Feb. 1759, Fraser's (as well as the 42nd) were ordered to supply a light infantry company of 100 men for the coming campaign.<sup>23</sup> At Oswego 23 Aug. 1759, Fraser's were ordered to provide a company of light infantry.<sup>24</sup>

## Fraser's Highlanders (71st Foot)

On 8 Dec. 1775, Fraser's Highlanders were new raised: 2 Battalions with a total armament of 2,000 muskets & bayonets, 16 Serjeant's Fusils and 2,080 side pistols with straps. On 29 Feb. 1776, a further 64 Serjeant's Fusils were ordered to replace all halberts. On 28 Dec. 1776, an augmentation of 4 companies required 400 muskets & bayonets, 16 Serjeant's Fusils and 416 side pistols. Each of the two light infantry companies contained 100 men.<sup>25</sup> (9-2)

The 71st unquestionably saw more action than any other British regiment which served in North America during the American War. Most often employed at company level as light infantry, the two battalions were sometimes combined (as at Brandywine) and used as shock troops. From the time of his recovery after Brandywine until a few months before King's

Mountain, Patrick Ferguson commanded various temporary units composed largely or entirely of men from the 71st. Appendix XIV gives further evidence of the regiment's training and abilities.



PLATE 9-2 — Line infantryman of the 71st (Fraser's) Highlanders, 1780. Shown with the later war modifications to the uniform. Note the tartan trews and special regimental badge on the "belly box." A blanket roll over the shoulder has replaced the confining knapsack. The 71st saw more action in most theatres of the war than any other British regiment, usually serving in detachments (or "penny-packets") as light infantry. — Courtesy Don Troiani

## *The Argyll Highlanders, 74th Foot*

Arrived August 1778 at Halifax, the battalion companies on garrison duty in Canada and the flank companies to the south. No specific references to their arms have been found.

## *Mac Donald's Highlanders, 76th Foot*

The raising warrant dated 12 Jan. 1778, called for 1,010 muskets & bayonets and ten Serjeant's Fusils, as well as 1,060 side pistols and straps. The regiment arrived at New York in 1779 and was taken at Yorktown.

## *Seaforth's 78th Foot*

The raising warrant of 13 Jan. 1778 called for 1,010 muskets & bayonets, 10 Serjeant's Fusils, and 1,060 side pistols & straps. The regimental clothing bill from the firm of Bray & Fraser specifies, amongst the regiment's elaborate outfit:

"40 Very neat Officer's Pistols Complete	58/6,
40 Pistol Belts for Officers wt Plated Buckles	1/2½
40 Officers Fusee Slings	1/3
40 Officers Cartouch Boxes and Belts Complete	6/1
4 Officers Powder Horns wt Slings & Plated Buckles	11/0 [40?]
4 Ball Bags for do.	1/3 [40?]
1,061 Gun Slings	11¼
909 Strong Ammunition Bags wt Buttons	2/6
949 Belts for do. 4½ feet long, Inch & 5/8 wide	1/1
1,081 Pistol Belts	5½
1,000 Turn Screws	3½
1,000 Weirs & Brushes	3
1,081 neat Pistols for Private	13/6
101 Powder Horns wt Leather Slings to do.	3/3
101 Ball Bags for do.	1/3
101 Hand Hatchets	1/1 1/2
101 Slings & Cases for do.	2/8
5 [Pipers Light Infantry] Powder Horns & Slings wt Spring Charges and Brass Bottoms	9/0
5 Do. Ball Bags for do.	1/3"

There is no reason to believe that the above accoutrements were significantly different in other Highland

regiments going on service in North America, and the references to the 101 light infantry accoutrements which agree with those issued to line regiments is of particular interest.<sup>26</sup> By the Board's order of 16 Mar. 1778, their side pistols were to be paid for in lieu.<sup>27</sup> On 9 Aug. 1780, 50 muskets & bayonets, which had been lost on service by the 78th were ordered to be replaced.

## *Royal Edinburgh Volunteers, 80th Foot*

The raising warrant of 26 Jan. 1778 called for 1,010 muskets & bayonets, 10 Serjeant's Fusils and 1,060 side pistols with straps.

## *Duke of Hamilton's, 82d Foot*

The raising warrant of 24 Dec. 1777 called for 1,010 muskets & bayonets, most unusually 50 Serjeant's Fusils and the usual 1,060 side pistols with straps. Only four companies served in America, in the South.

## *Maclean's (Royal Highland Emigrants), 84th Foot*

By General Gage's warrant at Boston dated 12 June 1775, and the King's Warrant of 7 Mar. 1776, Maclean's were to be raised: 2 Battalions or 20 companies, each battalion with 1,000 muskets & bayonets, 60 Serjeant's Fusils and 1,060 side pistols. These pistols do not appear either in the clothing and equipment warrant, or in the invoice of goods packed for shipment to the regiment in Halifax of 9 Aug. 1776. The latter does include 64 pistols *for officers* as well as their 64 fuzils, and swords for all.<sup>28</sup> The regimental quartermaster wrote on 3 Jan. 1776 that:

"It was the General's [Gage's] Intention that the light firearms (viz Carbines and Pistols) which had been bore by the 77th and 78th Regts Last War and delivered into different Stores at Quebec, Halifax &c. should on completion of the RHE be issued to that Corps from the arsenals they had been deposited in. It is necessary however to mention that almost the whole of such arms left at Halifax have been given out before Capt. McDonald (who now commands the RHE at that place) made his first requisition in July last. And it is apprehended that the arms of the late 78th (Col. Frasers) staid at Quebec on the reduction of that Regt have probably also undergone the same dispersion..." He also states that the broad swords of the late 77th have been given out to some of the current grenadier companies, e.g. the 52nd Foot's.<sup>29</sup>

A letter of 8 March specifies that "Maclean's Corps of Highlanders at Quebec to have same design and quality of arms as Fraser's Highlanders."<sup>30</sup> Five hundred and thirty arms each for the two battalions were shipped to Halifax on board the *Elizabeth* victualler 13 Apr. 1776.<sup>31</sup> A second raising warrant dated 6 Jan. 1778 called for 1,010 muskets & bayonets and 10 Serjeant's Fusils for the Second Battalion.

## HIGHLAND PISTOLS

The most unusual component of the Highland regiment's armament was their single "side pistol with strap." (9-3) Although part of the official established equipment of the regiments, without exception all of these pistols were obtained by the colonels or agents of each regiment, and paid for by them with the established cost being reimbursed to each colonel "in lieu" of the pistols. The colonels pocketed the difference between the actual and the established cost. On 3 Aug. 1758, the Board of Ordnance noted that Col. Murray [42nd] had been paid for 756 side pistols, and that they were not issued out of Stores, and that Cols. Montgomery and Fraser had each been paid for 324 side pistols to that time.<sup>32</sup> On 23 Feb. 1759, they noted that 108 side pistols for Fraser's additional men had not been issued from Stores and were to be paid for in money.<sup>33</sup> On 11 June 1759, Murray was paid for 324 side pistols<sup>34</sup> and a further 1,080 on 10 August.<sup>35</sup> Similar references account for all of the side pistols carried by the several Highland regiments serving in Germany during the Seven Years' War.

The only indications that Highland pistols actually went to America during this period were a letter from Col. Simon Fraser to the Commander-in-Chief General Abercromby, of 23 Apr. 1758, in which he noted that he had with him "...but 300 Pistols, the rest I expect in every Ship."<sup>36</sup> and a Customs License granted in August 1760 for the shipment to New York of 1,515 pistols for the Royal Highland Regiment.

After the major fighting ended in North America in 1760, the accounting began. In reply to an enquiry from the agent of the Highland companies, Henry Davidson, the Board replied that:

"...he be acquainted in return to his letter of the 13th [Jan. 1761] that it is expected the Captains of the Highland Companies should apply themselves to the Board for the price of the Pistols, and give some proof that they have been provided."<sup>37</sup>

In January 1762, the Birmingham gunmaker and Ordnance contractor William Grice informed the Board:

"...that a great many Pistols have been made at Birmingham for use of some Scotch, and there are Orders now for a large Quantity both in Iron and Walnuttree Stocks which are of a very bad sort, and for which there is no more paid than 18 shillings pr pair.

And Mr Hartwell having signified that a pair of Pistols cost the Office £1.15.7. [= 35 shillings and 7 pence] Ordered that the Pistols in the Warrant above mentioned [a raising warrant for 624 carbines with wooden rammers and 648 side pistols, of 10 Nov. 1761] be issued from the Tower for Major Mclean's Regiment and not paid for in Money (as formerly practiced) for the reasons above set forth."<sup>38</sup>

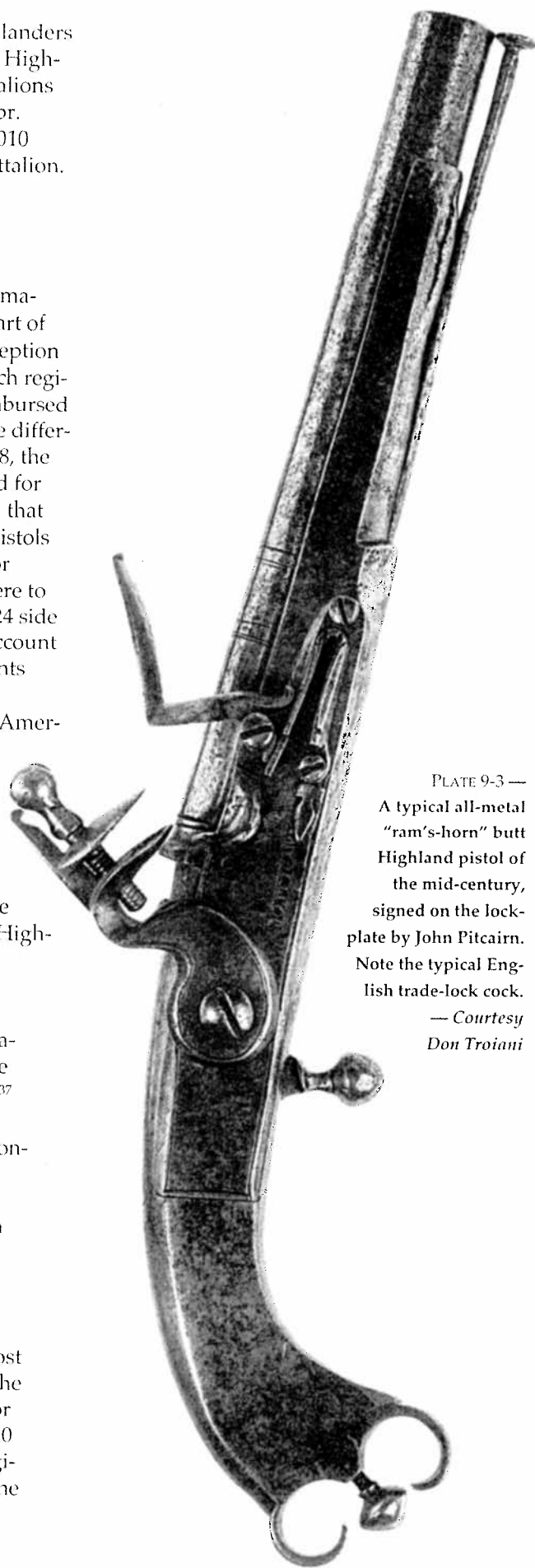


PLATE 9-3 —  
A typical all-metal  
"ram's-horn" butt  
Highland pistol of  
the mid-century,  
signed on the lock-  
plate by John Pitcairn.  
Note the typical Eng-  
lish trade-lock cock.

— Courtesy  
Don Troiani

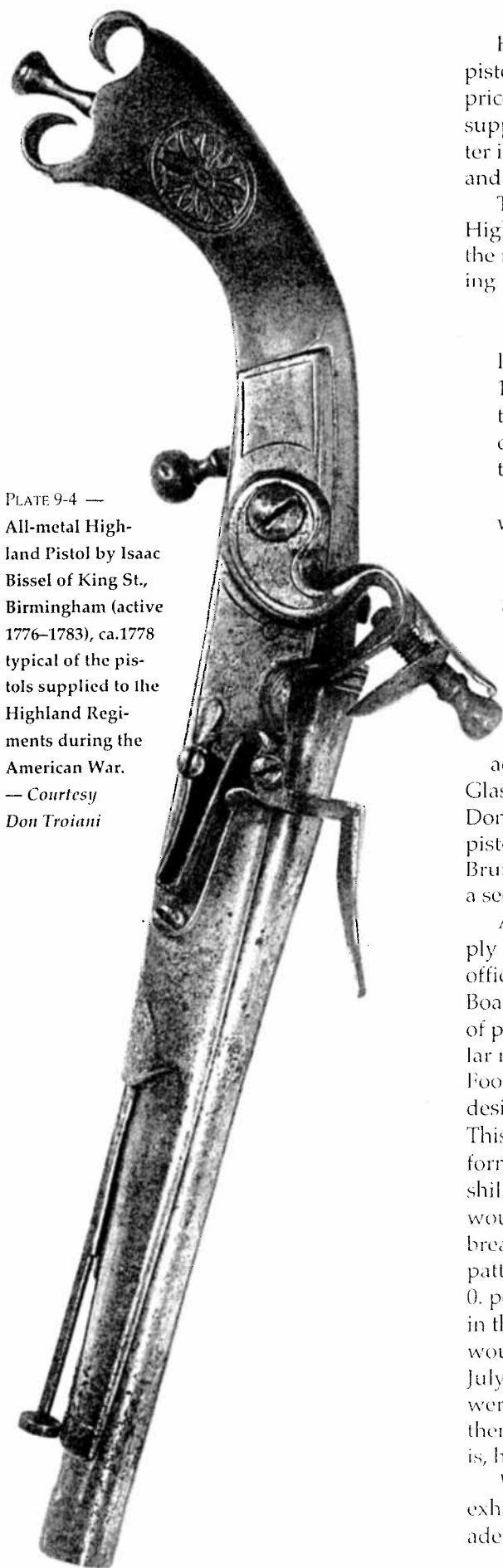


PLATE 9-4 —  
All-metal High-  
land Pistol by Isaac  
Bissel of King St.,  
Birmingham (active  
1776–1783), ca.1778  
typical of the pis-  
tols supplied to the  
Highland Regi-  
ments during the  
American War.  
— Courtesy  
Don Troiani

However, on 23 July, Major Maclean was in fact paid for 648 side pistols at the rate of 15/6 each, indicating a decrease in the allowed price and a continuance of the usual practice of paying for rather than supplying the pistols.<sup>39</sup> What is particularly interesting in Grice's letter is that Highland pistols were then being made with both all-metal and conventional wood stocks.

The practice of paying for, rather than supplying, side pistols to Highland regiments continued during the American War. The role of the regimental agent, acting for the colonel, is indicated in the following reference:

"Messrs Anderson & Richardson agents to the 42nd or Royal Highland Regiment having represented in their Letter of 18 instant that the Pistols and Cartouch Boxes therein mentioned are wanted for the said Regiment, they therefore requested leave to provide the same and to be paid in money for them.

Ordered to be paid in money for the same, as was done when the Highland Regiment was raised."<sup>40</sup> (9-3, 9-4, 9-5)

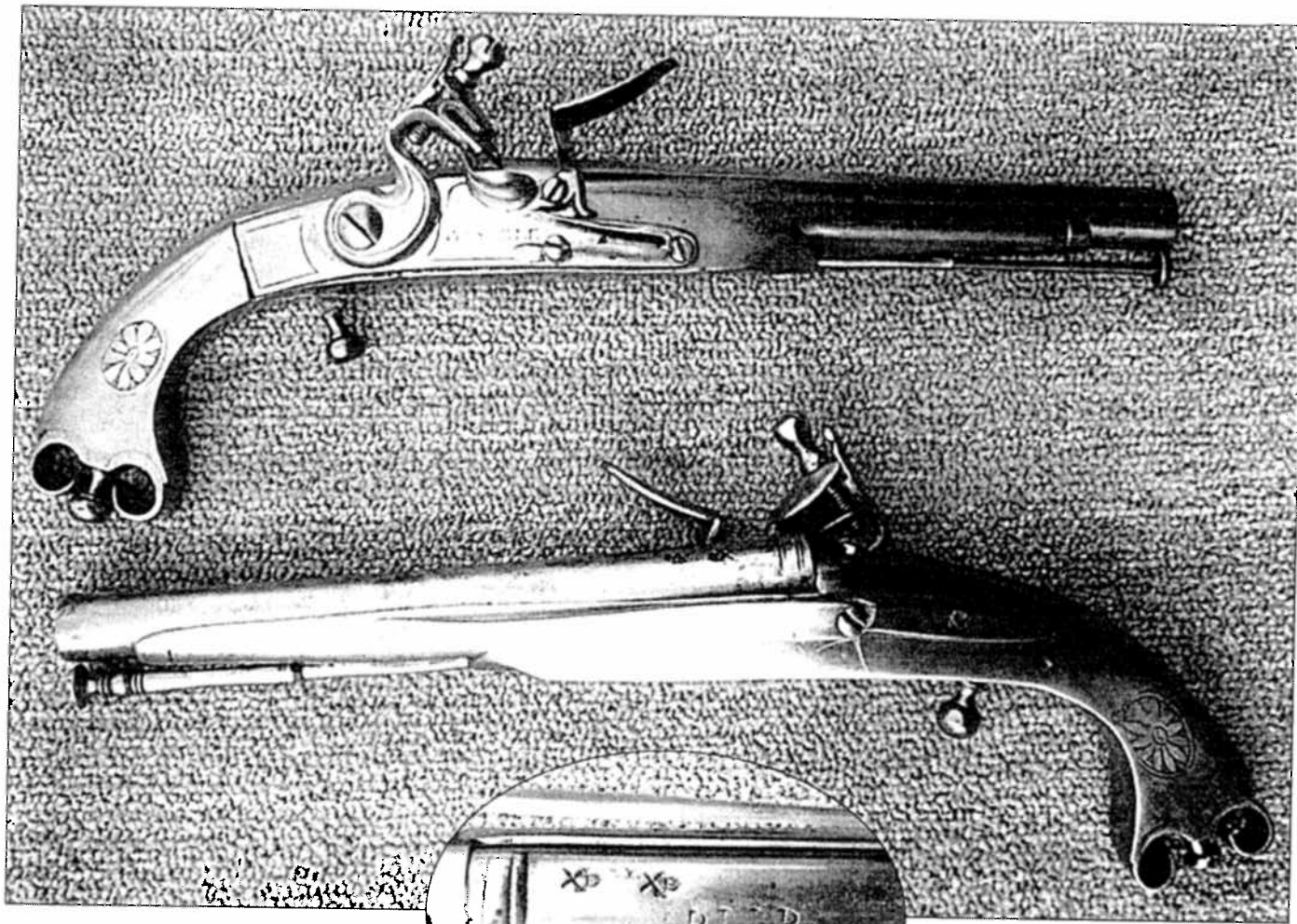
This request for payment for 862 side pistols covering two augmentations was confirmed by the Board on 15 Dec.<sup>41</sup>

From 1778, after France's entry into the war, several additional regiments were raised from the Lowland areas of Scotland, including the Royal Edinburgh Volunteers (80th Foot), and the Glasgow Volunteers. These regiments were allowed to acquire side pistols at Government expense: the Edinburgh (80th), Glasgow, Campbell's, Gordon's, Col. McKenzie's and Lieut. Col. McDonnell's (76th). By an order of 15 May 78, the Atholl Highlanders' pistols were to be paid for in money. On 24 Dec. 1778, Bishop & Brummell, agents for McLeod's 73d Foot, were paid for pistols<sup>42</sup> with a second payment being made in August 1786.<sup>43</sup>

A suggestion that the Ordnance may have been planning to supply Highland pistols occurs in December 1787 when the commanding officer of the 74th asks for payment in lieu for 826 side pistols. The Board replied in the negative and told the colonel to send the pattern of pistol he wants and they will be delivered when completed; a similar reply was made to the 75th Foot.<sup>44</sup> Agents for the 74th and 75th Foot sent in their patterns, the commanding officer of the 75th "was desirous that the Stock be made of Wood instead of Copper." (9-6) This was referred to the Master Furbisher, Ambrose Pardoe, who informed the Board that wood stocks would cost a shilling or one shilling and sixpence more than metal and because of their shape it would be very unsuitable, so crooked that they would be liable to break.<sup>45</sup> The following month, Pardoe informed the Board that the pattern, stocked in metal, sent in by Col. Forbes of the 74th cost £1. 2. 0. per pair, in wood £1.5.7. per pair, but that Mr. Drury, a silversmith in the Strand had 68 pairs of pistols of the same pattern which he would sell Pardoe for 10/6 a pair, which he purchased at this price in July 1788. This suggests, in this instance, that although the Ordnance were not manufacturing Highland pistols, they were prepared to buy them in and issue them under favourable financial conditions.<sup>46</sup> This is, however, the only recorded instance of this practice.

War with France erupted once again after a decade of uneasy and exhausted peace, and once again the Ordnance was caught without adequate preparation, thanks (once again) to the parsimony of Parlia-

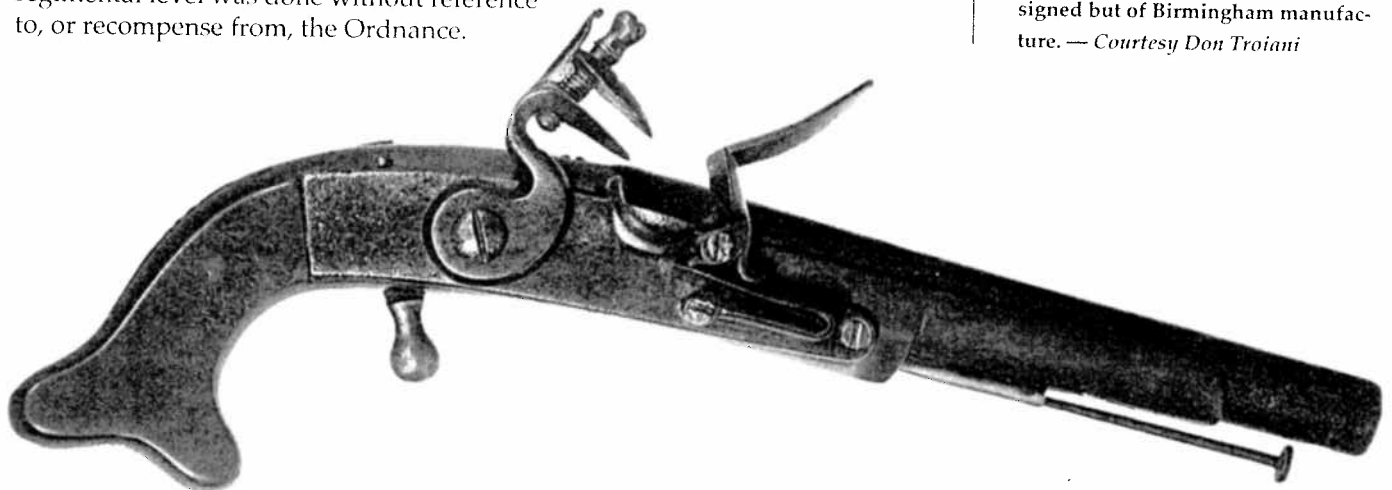




ment. Given all of its other problems and demands, in January 1795, the Board finally washed its hands of all the problems connected with the supply of Highland pistols. The Commander-in-Chief, Gen. Lord Amherst, having informed the Board "...that Pistols have for some time been wholly disused by the Highland Regiments, the Board ordered no further payments in lieu."<sup>47</sup> From this date, whatever pistols were obtained at regimental level was done without reference to, or recompense from, the Ordnance.

PLATE 9-5 — Two Bissel pistols marked to the Royal Highland Regiment. Note also Private Tower proof marks. — *Courtesy Grafton H. Cook II*

PLATE 9-6 — *Below* • Highland Pistol with kidney-shaped wooden butt, unsigned but of Birmingham manufacture. — *Courtesy Don Troiani*



# BLACK WATCH OR ROYAL HIGHLAND REGIMENT

9449

1.

A SCOTTISH REGIMENT OF INFANTRY WHOSE NAME COMES FROM THEIR DARK PLAID KILTS. THE FIRST COMPANIES WERE RAISED IN 1725 AND THE REGIMENT WAS FORMED IN 1739 TO WATCH THE REBELLIOUS HIGHLANDS AND KEEP THE PEACE. IT WAS FOR A TIME THE 43<sup>RD</sup> BUT IN 1749 BECAME THE 42<sup>ND</sup> REGIMENT, A DISTINGUISHED ONE IN SCOTTISH HISTORY.

2. A HIGHLAND REGIMENT OF THE BRITISH ARMY, THE MEN OF WHICH WEAR UNIFORMS OF A DARK-BLUE OR DARK-GREEN TARTAN