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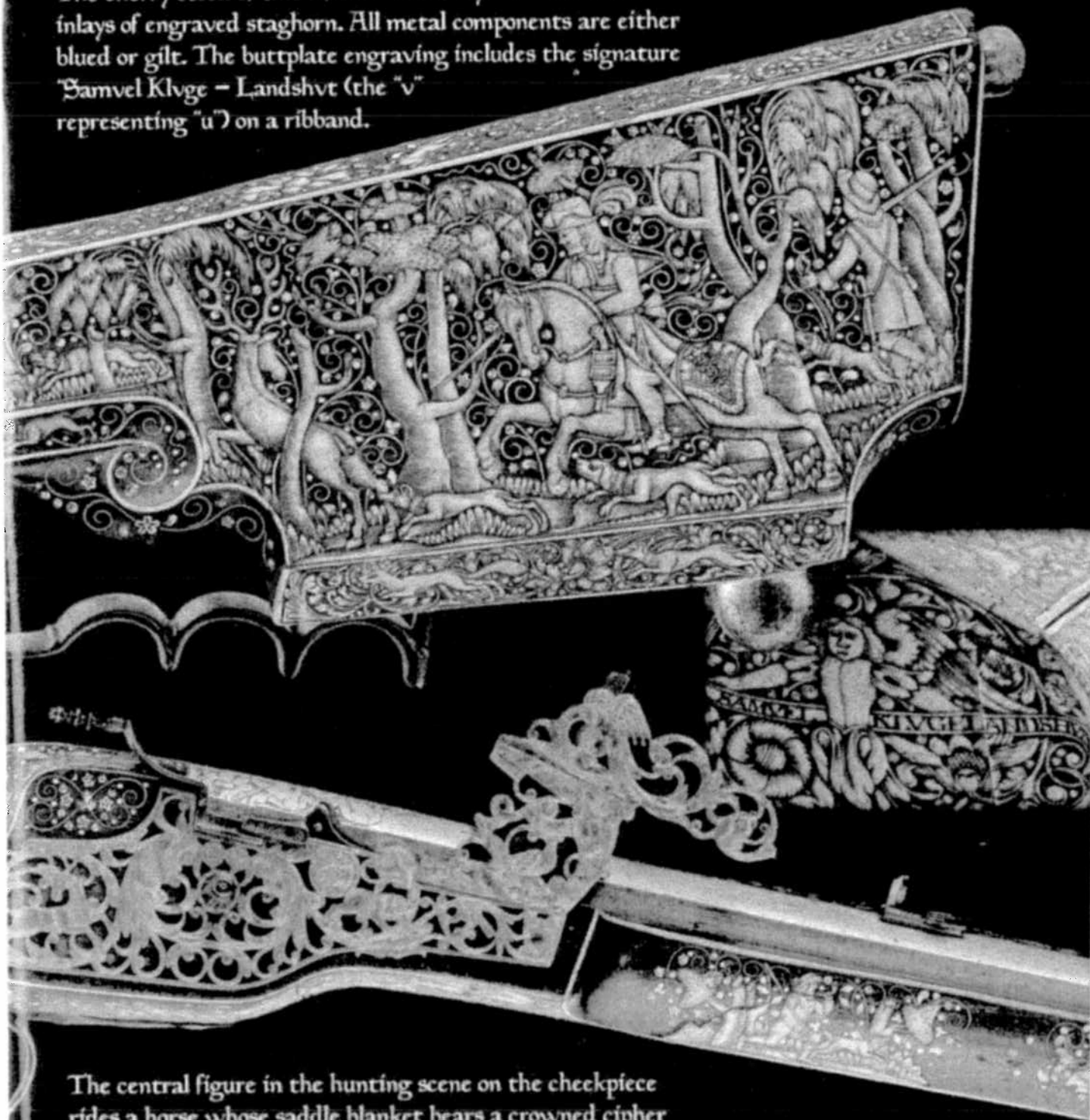
THE **JOURNAL FOR THE AMERICAN ARMS COLLECTOR**

Roll of Honor



A King's Wheellock Rifle

The cherry stock of this rifle is beautifully decorated with inlays of engraved staghorn. All metal components are either blued or gilt. The buttplate engraving includes the signature "Samvel Kluge - Landshvt (the "v" representing "u") on a ribband.



The central figure in the hunting scene on the cheekpiece rides a horse whose saddle blanket bears a crowned cipher "C", which may be that of King Charles XI of Sweden (1655-1697), an avid gun collector, or King Christian V of Denmark (?-1699), a hunter. (Mike D'Ambra collection)

FOREWORD

FINE FIREARMS, particularly the sporting kind, have traditionally been among the prized possessions of men, including kings, nobles, and provincial gentry. The desire to own a beautifully made gun characterized colonial Virginia gentlemen as much as it did the French and English kings and those in their courts. Of course, the quality of a sporting gun found in Williamsburg in the eighteenth century might differ markedly from that encountered in Paris or London, where the very highest levels of manual skill were employed in shaping and embellishing steel, silver, ivory, and wood to create a harmonious ensemble of graceful form and exquisite decoration that quite belied its ostensible purpose.

Fine firearms have traditionally been very collectible. The *cachet* now attached to a gun that can be proved to have been part of the extraordinary collection (*Cabinet d'Armes*) of Louis XIII proves the point, as much as does the sentiment engendered by "Kentucky" rifles, individually made and decorated in Pennsylvania and Virginia, among other colonies and states, which have often been tenaciously kept by descendants of the original owners.

This exhibition of ninety-four guns (with some additional accessories) from the renowned collection of Clay P. Bedford has been organized by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation for several reasons. First, guns can be superb examples of the decorative arts of a period—although too often omitted from any discussion of the subject—and we have been accumulating and exhibiting remarkable collections of decorative arts for fifty years. Indeed, our future plans call for an expansion of our offerings in the decorative arts. Most of the

firearms exhibited and catalogued here were made in the period spanned by colonial Williamsburg.

Second, the craftsmanship involved in the making of virtually all these guns directly relates to an aspect of our educational activities that is outstanding—one of the most ambitious crafts programs in existence today. Here we have men casting and forging iron and steel, silver and brass, engraving metal, and carving wood in the manner of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century craftsmen who made the memorable objects in this exhibition.

Third, these firearms bear directly on an important aspect of our historical mission—to reveal how society in this part of the New World modeled itself upon and departed from its parental stock in the Old World, and how civilized and civilizing ideas spread through Europe and into America in the years between settlement and revolution. Fine guns reveal more clearly than many areas of the decorative arts the radiation outward from Paris of style and motif as well as technology, the continuing changes of fashion (sometimes almost feverish in their pace), and the absorption into the English fabric of French innovations which then became interwoven, however distantly, into the American.

Without the perceptiveness, enthusiasm, and generosity of Clay P. Bedford it would have been impossible to have had this exhibition or its catalogue. Colonial Williamsburg and its many friends owe him a great debt of gratitude. Mr. Bedford undertook the difficult task of choosing the guns to exhibit—less than one-tenth of an encyclopedic collection, assembled in the amazingly short period of a decade. Any

PREFACE

THE NINETY-FOUR FIREARMS selected for this publication were chosen primarily because of their artistic qualities. They are the products of various European nations and the United States and represent three centuries of artistic development. Consequently, this book, dependent upon the materials in the collection, is not intended to be a history of firearms. However, certain arms included here shed new light on previously accepted concepts. In regard to them, we have carefully studied the examples at hand, related arms, and documentation in order to arrive at our conclusions. In the majority of cases, we have explained the reasons for the dates we have assigned; in these explanations, usually only major dating factors are cited, since more detailed explanations were deemed impractical when the major details were sufficient.

In the majority of entries we have adhered to the following format: the description of the arm—stock, barrel, lock, mounts; discussion of the maker; an analysis of the arm in the context of its period and region; its provenance and dimensions.

France was chosen as the first national group since French design had the greatest international influence, and is often referred to in regard to many arms in the succeeding categories. In some cases, we have formed national groupings not according to modern political boundaries, but rather according to cultural affinity. An introduction to these groupings is given where there are sufficient arms to warrant it.

We have also introduced a new terminology for stock-woods. An illustrated discussion is included as an appendix.

57 Wheel-lock Rifle

GERMAN (LANDSHUT), dated(?) 1695

The full cherry cheekstock is heavily inlaid with engraved staghorn in both naturalistic and fanciful designs. The central figure in the hunting scene on the cheekpiece rides a horse on whose saddle blanket appears the crowned cipher C. The buttplate engraving includes the signature SAMVEL KLUGE • LANDSHUT on a ribbon. The release for the spring-activated butt-trap cover is concealed in the ornament under the stock. Engraved in the bottom of the butt-trap cavity is the inscription W.S.95; the inner face of the cover has the carved number 13. The tapered and flared full octagonal barrel is engraved at the breech and has its original bright finish. The blued iron leaf rear sight has decorative balustrade finials at its front and rear; the brass blade foresight is slightly ogee in profile. The circular brass-lined maker's mark, HF over a bird, is stamped in the upper breech flat; a stamped X is at the rear of the left flat. The barrel is rifled with nine grooves. The lock with internal wheel is blued overall and its outer surface is overlaid with a heavy gilt-brass plaque pierced and engraved en suite with the stock, including the same mounted figure. The plaque is retained by gilt-brass screws from within. The pancake release button is recessed in the same manner as the butt-trap release; it is also brass-covered and engraved with a mask. Double-set triggers have a central adjustment screw; the blued plate terminates at the rear in a bulbous balustrade finial. The blued iron triggerguard has three finger rests on the grip rail and terminates at both ends in similar finials, the rear one of which is engraved with the number 13. The stock ends in a plain iron ground ball.

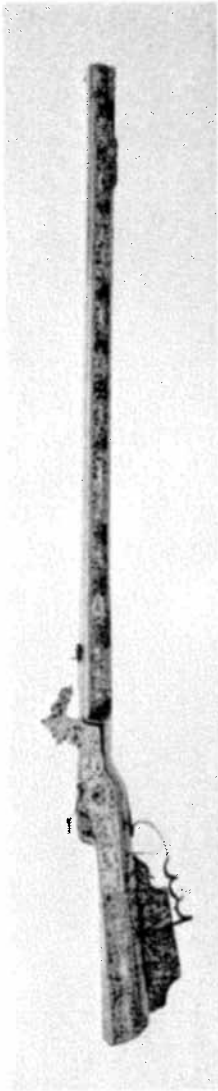
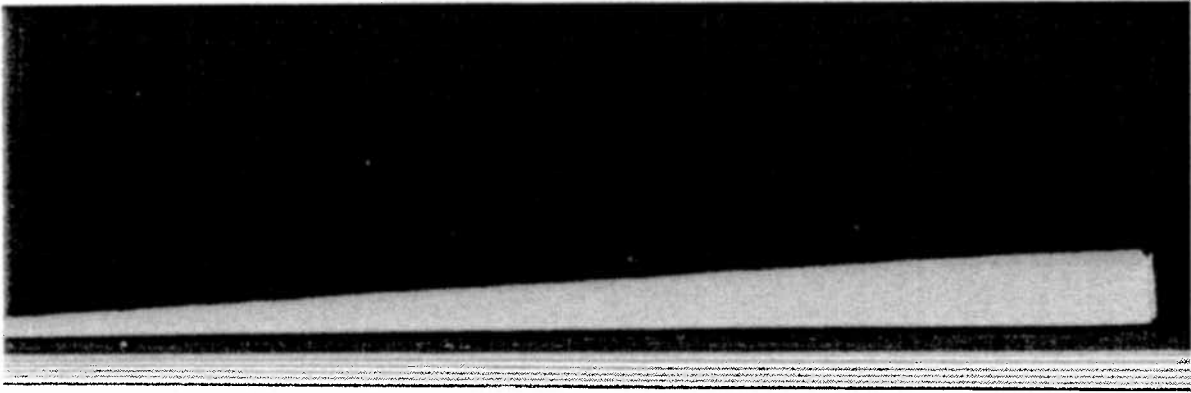
On this firearm are the signature and initials of what ap-

pear to be three craftsmen, none of whom is documented. The full signature of the probable engraver of the stock inlay, Samuel Kluge, also provides us with the place of manufacture. The incised initials W.S. in the butt-trap in conjunction with the numerals 95 may indicate the stocker and the date. Such a date would be consistent with the style of the gun. The crowned opposed C initials appearing on the saddle blanket may indicate that the mounted figure represents the owner of the arm. A most likely candidate is King Charles XI of Sweden (1655-1697), an avid gun collector and recipient of many gifts of arms, or possibly his contemporary, King Christian V of Denmark, who died in a hunting accident in 1699.

The superb quality of this arm is testimony to the entrenched wheel-lock tradition in Germany at a time when various versions of the snap flintlock had completely replaced it elsewhere in Europe. This form of cheekstock with its engraved horn decoration had persisted for well over a century and one-half by the time the arm illustrated was made. An early example is No. 41 in this collection. One hundred and fifty years later, the only concession to the flintlock influence on this Landshut rifle is the design of the trigger-guard finials, which derive from French and Dutch arms of the 1600s.

Provenance: Rothschild Collection; Fischer Gallery, Locerme, June 24, 1974, lot 91; Frank E. Bivens, Los Angeles, California, 1976.

Overall length, 50 1/4 in. (127.3 cm.); barrel, 38 in. (96.6 cm.); caliber, .51



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