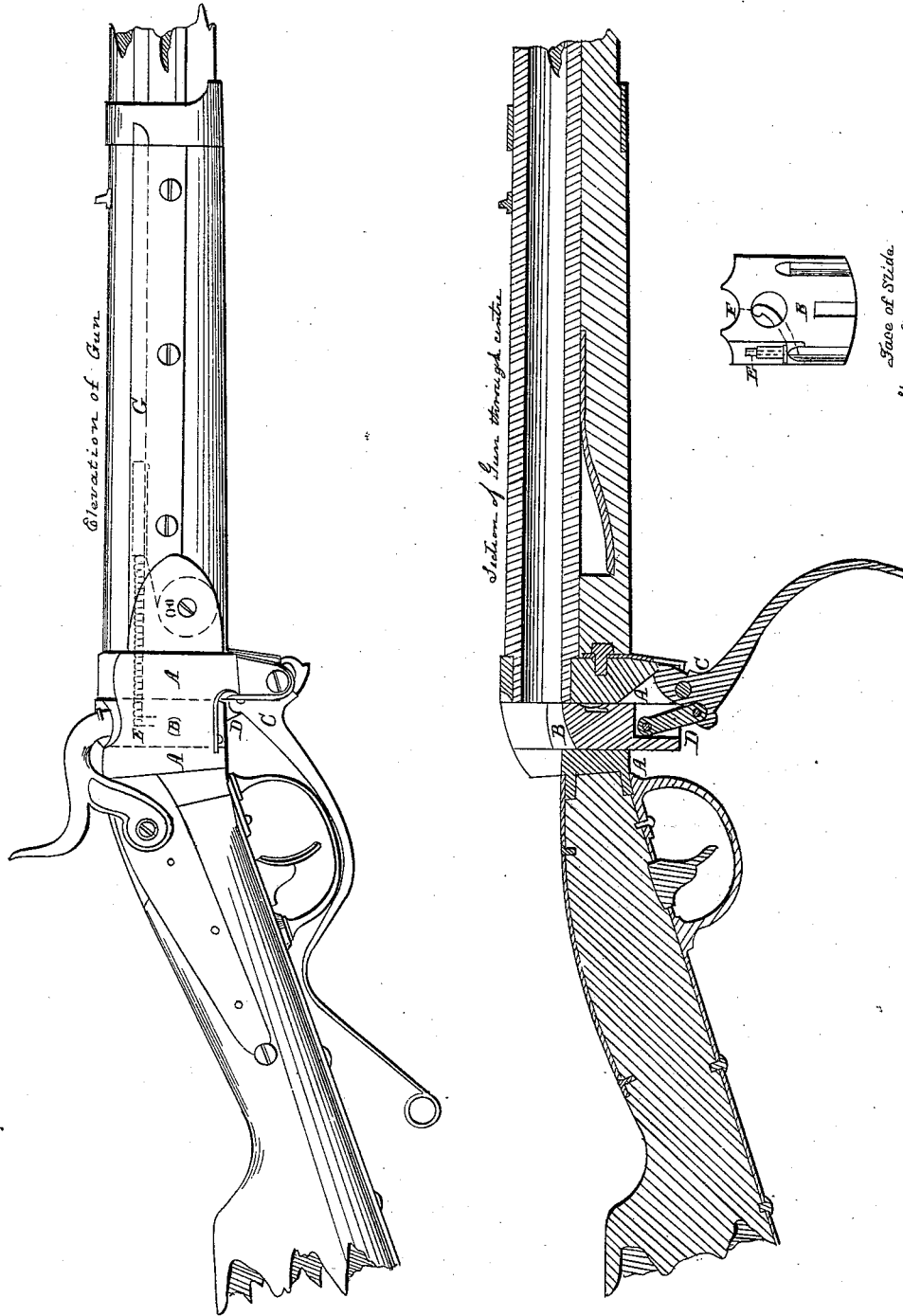


C. SHARPS.
Breech-Loading Fire-Arm.

No. 5,763.

Patented Sept. 12, 1848.



UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CHRISTIAN SHARPS, OF CINCINNATI, OHIO.

SLIDING BREECH-PIN AND SELF-CAPPING GUN.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 5,763, dated September 12, 1848.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CHRISTIAN SHARPS, of Cincinnati, in the county of Hamilton and State of Ohio, have invented a new and Improved Breech-Loading and Self-Capping Rifle-Gun; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full and exact description thereof.

The nature of my invention consists in the following particulars, namely: its construction to admit a cartridge being inserted in the breech of the barrel on a line with the bore; the breech-slide cutting off the cartridge; its having a stationary tube with many caps, and the caps being put upon the nipple by the moving of the sliding breech.

To enable others skilled in the art to make and use my invention, I will proceed to describe its construction and operation.

I construct my gun by screwing, brazing, or welding a piece of steel or iron to the end of a rifle-barrel. It should be at least two inches square, with a projection on the under front part. This piece of steel or iron being for a supporter and receiver of the sliding breech, will be the breech-supporter A. It has a mortise through it which will admit of a slide, B, one inch and three-quarters wide and three-quarters of an inch thick, to move in a perpendicular position, and is at right angles with the bore. The slide B is connected with the lever C by a stirrup, D. The lever then being secured by a pin passing through it and the projection on the under front part of the breech-supporter A, will cause the slide to open and close the breech-bore of the barrel when the lever C is moved back and forth. The barrel is made fast to the supporter A within one-eighth of an inch of its upper surface. The supporter A and connecting parts back of the slide B must have a half-round groove cut in the top of them, as shown in the section on a line with the under surface of the bore, and at the same time leaving a sufficient bearing for the slide to withstand the resistance when the gun is discharged. The slide B contains the cap-nipple E and fire-communication F, and has a shearing-edge to cut off the cartridge when the slide is moved across the bore. The bore of the barrel is counterbored to receive the length of the cartridge, leaving a small portion thereof projecting for the slide to cut off and expose the powder to the communication.

There is a tube, G, attached to the side of the barrel some eight or ten inches long, with one end passing through a portion of the supporter A and half across the mortise parallel with the barrel. This tube has a cross-hole at the end, which will admit the cap-nipple to pass up sufficiently to carry a cap above the surface of the tube G when the gun is breeched. There is a small cord attached to a follower, I, which passes through the stationary tube G, the cord winding round a cylinder, H, inclosing a watch-spring. This cylinder runs on a stud made fast to a metallic plate, which is placed under the tube G against the supporter A, and which plate is made fast to the front part of the stock. The gun-stock is made in two pieces, the one joining the front part of the supporter A, the other the back. The back part of the stock may be secured by break-off iron plates secured to the supporter A in such a manner as to come on the upper and lower surfaces of the stock and be made fast in the ordinary way, the lock being the common back-action. The lever C, that moves the slide B, will be on the guard when the gun is breeched, and has a small spring that will hold it against the guard, and also retain it in its proper position when open, operating as the spring of a pocket-knife. The remainder of the gun may be finished in the ordinary manner.

To charge the stationary tube G with caps, the follower I must be drawn to the mouth of the tube G, which is done with the rod of the gun; then insert the caps and replace the follower in the tube. This will always exert a pressure on the caps, which will cause one to occupy the cross-hole in the tube G when the nipple is withdrawn, and as the nipple is returned it takes on the cap.

To use this gun, prepare a cartridge by making a paper tube nearly the size of the counterbore of the barrel. Into one end of the tube put a ball with a patch drawn over it. The paper tube may pass over the folds of the patch and be tied with a thread. This paper tube, being then charged with powder, may be closed by tying. Now, by moving the lever forward the breech of the barrel will be opened to receive the cartridge. In the meantime a cap will be standing in the cross-hole of the tube G. The whole operation then consists in

simply inserting the cartridge and returning the lever to its place, the gun being now loaded and capped.

The advantages this gun has over all breech-loading guns is that it loads at the breech and leaves the whole charge in the main barrel; also, the moving part of the breech being but little exposed to the fire, it does not expand so as to become tight by the heat of discharging; and, again, the moving part of the breech being performed by a lever with high power, is made to close the barrel perfectly tight, and no accident can occur by loading, as the cap does not reach the hammer of the lock until the breech is perfectly secure. At the same time the gun is not liable to become choked with dirt, in consequence of the balls being patched, which performs a wiping operation each time the gun is discharged.

What I claim as my invention, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. The combination of the sliding breech with the barrel, the breech-supporter, and the stock in such a manner that when the sliding breech is forced down the breech-bore will be so exposed as to enable it to receive a cartridge on a line with the bore, and when the sliding breech is forced up it will shear off the rear end of the cartridge, so as to expose the powder to the fire-communication, and will firmly and securely close the breech-bore, substantially as herein set forth.

2. The combination of the cap-nipple with the sliding breech, substantially in the manner and for the purpose herein set forth.

CHRISTIAN SHARPS.

Witnesses:

Z. C. ROBBINS,
L. WILLIAMS.