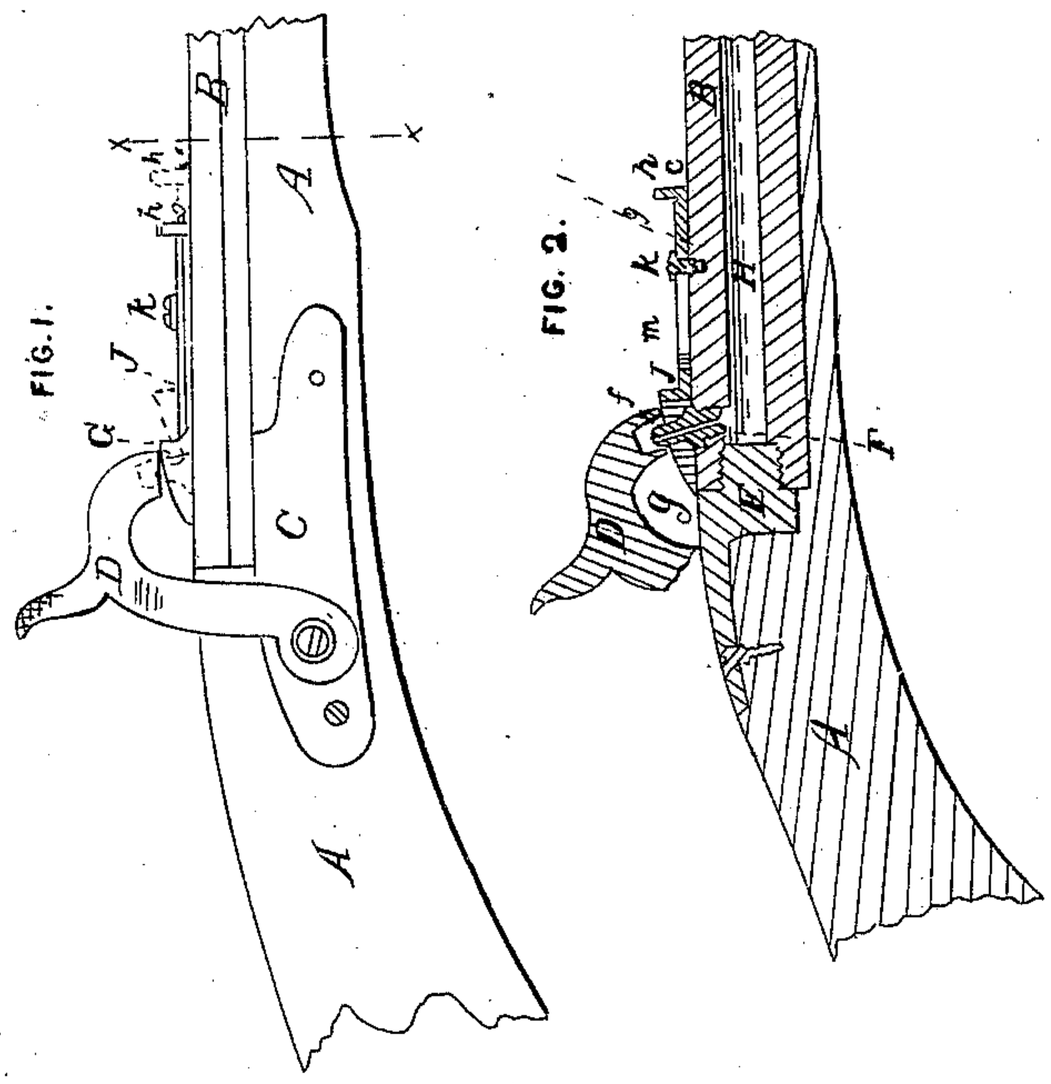
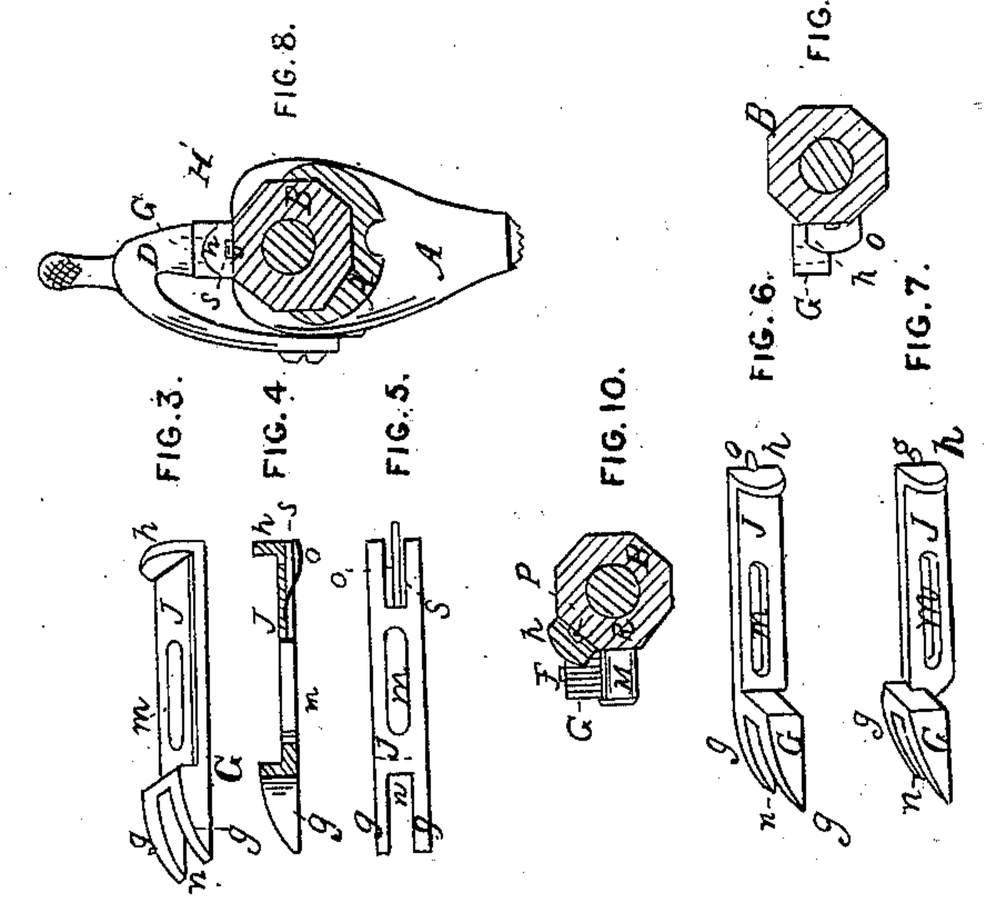
J. OLIPHANT.

Gun Lock.

No. 37,406. Patented Jan. 13, 1863.





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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN OLIPHANT, OF UNIONTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA.

IMPROVEMENT IN SAFETY NIPPLE-GUARDS FOR FIRE-ARMS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **37,406**, dated January 13, 1863.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOHN OLIPHANT, of Uniontown, Fayette county, and State of Pennsylvania, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Gun-Nipple Guards, of which the following is a full and exact description.

The nature of my invention is to provide fire-arms already constructed and in use, as well as those to be hereafter manufactured, with a sure, cheap, and convenient safety-guard, by which the greater part of the casualties resulting in injury and loss of life by accidental discharges, now so numerous in our army and among sportsmen and others, may be avoided. It is the custom in the army, for the purpose of preventing accidents of this nature, to require the soldiers to march with empty guns, they not being permitted to load until they are in the immediate presence or neighborhood of the enemy, thus constantly running the risk of being suddenly surprised by an ambuscade with empty guns in their hands. In sporting, hunting, target-firing, &c., of course even this mode of safety is impossible. The object of my invention is, by an exceedingly simple, inexpensive, and convenient device, applicable to all varieties of guns, (or other fire-arms,) to render a loaded gun as safe from accidental discharge as an unloaded one, and thus avoid the delay and often positive danger attending the carrying of unloaded arms, which is often as great as has heretofore been experienced by keeping them loaded, thus uniting the greatest efficacy in all emergencies with perfect safety.

To enable others skilled in the art to construct and use my invention, I will proceed to describe it, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, forming part of this specification, in which—

Figure 1 is a side view of a gun having applied to it the simplest form of my invention, such as is applicable to United States carbines and other arms having the nipple located immediately on the upper surface of the barrel. Fig. 2 is a vertical longitudinal section of Fig. 1. Fig. 3 is perspective view of the nipple-guard detached from the gun. Fig. 4 is a longitudinal section of Figs. 3 and 5. Fig. 5 is a bottom view of the same, Fig. 3. Fig. 8 is a section of Fig. 1 taken at the line *x x*, looking toward the breech, and showing a rear view of the guard as attached to the barrel. Figs. 6 and 7 are modifications of form of the nipple-guard to adapt it to the ordinary guns having the nipple inserted in a cylinder screwed into the side of the barrel. Fig. 9 is a cross-section of a barrel provided with the guard shown at Fig. 7. Fig. 10 is a cross-section of a barrel provided with another form of guard in which the sliding portion J is attached to one of the oblique sides, P, of the ordinary octagonal rifle-barrel.

Similar letters refer to like parts in all the drawings.

A represents the stock, B the barrel, C the lock, D the hammer, and E the breech-pin, of a gun constructed in any known method.

To the barrel B is attached my invention, which consists of a metallic slide, J, having at the rear end the two parallel inclined planes, *g g*, one of which works on each side of the nipple F, it fitting between the two inclined planes in the slit or opening *n*. These parallel planes thus form guides, which, in connection with the slot *m*, prevent the slide J from casual side working in its reciprocating movements. In the slide J of the nipple-guard a slot, *m*, is made, through which the screw *k* passes, and is securely screwed into the barrel, as shown in Fig. 2, leaving the slide J to work freely back and forth to the full extent of the length of the slot *m*. On the under side of the front end of the slide a groove, *s*, is cut, (see Fig. 5,) in which the spring *o* is fastened. This spring presses upon the surface of the barrel and prevents the guard from casually slipping back and forth. At the front end of the slide J the thumb-catch *h* is placed, by which the guard is moved back and forth when sufficient pressure is applied thereto to overcome the friction of the spring *o* on the gun-barrel.

In Figs. 6 and 7 a modification of my invention is shown by which it is adapted to an arm having a side hammer, the arrangement of which is sufficiently obvious by inspecting the section shown in Fig. 9 without further explanation.

In Fig. 10 a section is given showing the manner of applying this invention to an ordinary rifle-gun in which the upper portion of the cylinder supporting the nipple, and on which the under horizontal portions of the inclined planes *g g* slide, is so much elevated above the vertical slide R of the barrel as to

require the sliding shank J to be attached to one of the oblique sides P. This of course requires the shank J to be connected with the part G at an angle with the under side thereof of about forty-five degrees. In applying the guard to round barrels, the shank J can be made concave on the under side to fit the form of the barrel, and may be connected to the part G at any angle found most suitable to the peculiar construction of the gun. In these modifications the under sides of the inclined planes *g g* slide upon and are supported by the cylinder M, instead of being directly supported by the barrel itself, as in Figs. 1 and 2.

The operation of my invention is as follows: The gun being loaded and primed, the nipple-guard is drawn toward the breech by the application of the thumb to the projection *h* until the inclined planes *g g* pass under the hammer and raise it entirely off the nipple, so as to prevent an accidental discharge by any of the ordinary casualties—such as catching the hammer, dropping the gun, slipping of hammer in handling, &c. When it is desired to fire the gun, the nipple-guard is to be pushed forward either before or after cocking the piece, when the inclined planes *g g* being drawn from under the hammer, as indicated in red lines in Fig. 1, the hammer is permitted to strike the percussion-cap, used in the ordinary manner, as though there were no guard attached to the gun.

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

The gun-nipple guard J, provided with the inclined planes *g g*, and slit *n*, the slot *m*, screw *k*, and spring *o*, arranged and constructed as shown and described, for the purpose set forth.

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Witnesses:

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