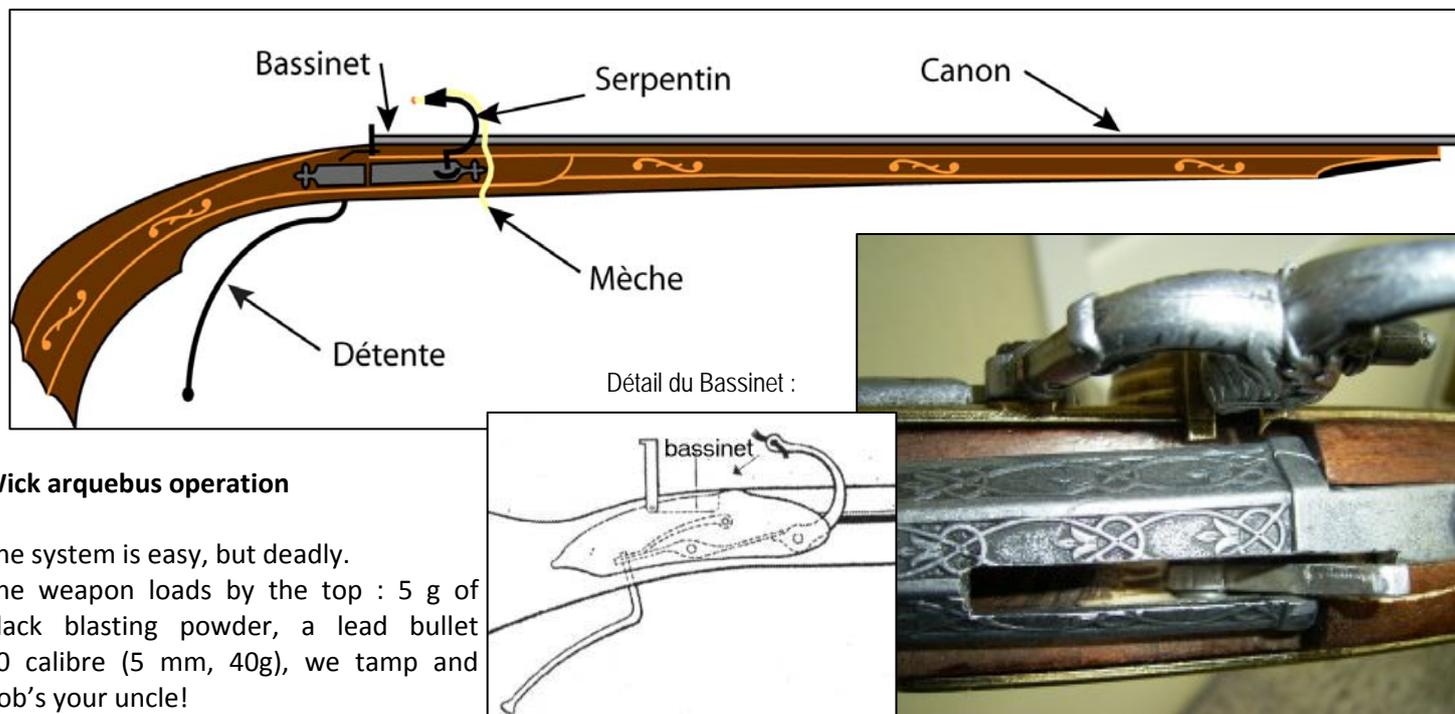


The arquebus and its operation

The word arquebus stems from the German Hachenbusche. The weapon is enough heavy and bulky, the size of 0.8 to 1 meter and weighs 10 pounds (about 7kgs). Some models could be put on the shoulder.

The wick arquebus is the first firearm. Created at the end of the 17th century, contemporary of François 1st, it was a redoubtable weapon, rapidly adopted by the nobility for hunting.



Wick arquebus operation

The system is easy, but deadly. The weapon loads by the top : 5 g of black blasting powder, a lead bullet 50 calibre (5 mm, 40g), we tamp and Bob's your uncle!

For the lighting, we use a big soaked cotton-wool wick in a retarding, and fixed on a coil. Consuming, the wick takes the form of a spear. Pushing the trigger (which is 30 cm long !), the coil holding the lit wick, pivots so that the incandescent spear makes contact with the black blasting powder (powder with baiting) contained in a sort of cup. The flame get will set on fire to the powder into the barrel, thanks to a small hole. The chain reaction powers the bullet outside.



The arquebus has an upper range value higher than 100 meters, but its effective range was not taller than 15-25 meters. A research carried out in Austria in 1988 has shown that the arquebus was inefficient beyond 25-30 meters.



The use of the arquebus was however limited due to its low firing rate (two or three shots per minute) and rapid heating of the barrel..

Imprecise, this type of gun was however widespread, due to its low production cost.

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