



MILITARY HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF MELILLA



BASTION OF THE CONCEPTION.

The Military Historical Museum of Melilla is located in the bastion of the Conception, in the highest area of the First Fortified Enclosure of the city. It was built by the engineer Tadino de Martinengo in 1527. In 1553 it underwent important modifications, rising in height in order to cover the nearby elevations. The tower remained unchanged until 1669 when it underwent important modifications in order to raise the bastion and provide greater artillery capacity. Subsequently it was used as a gunpowder store, prison, meteorology office or housing for humble people, until its adaptation in 1953 as the Municipal Museum. Since 1997 it houses the Military Museum of the city.



Bastion of the Conception. Military Historical Museum of Melilla.



MILITARY HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF MELILLA



Among its most emblematic pieces is the cannon called "Calabrino", manufactured at the same time as its twin "El Caminante", which was the one that fired the shots to delimit the city's border limits in 1862.



"Calabrino" cannon.

Melilla

Historico
Militar

In this guide we invite you to take a walk through the military history of Melilla through the historical collections of the museum.



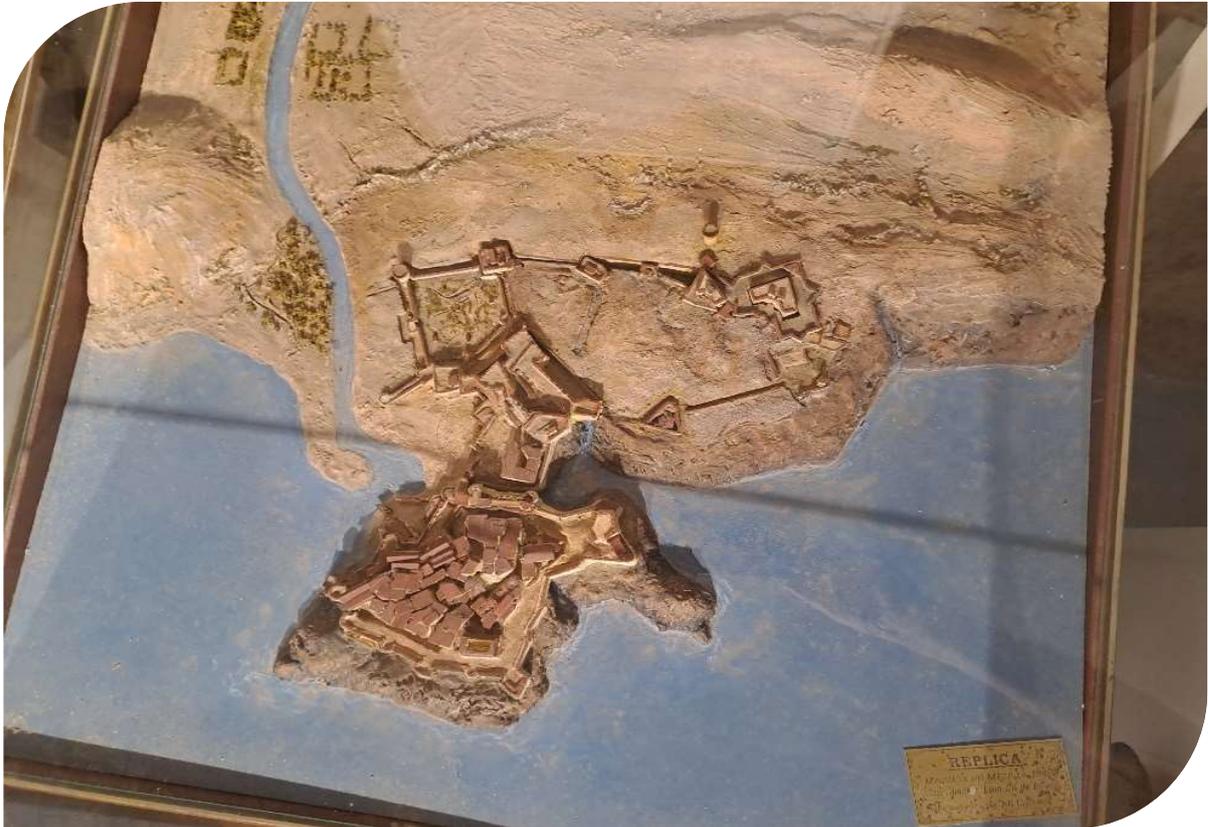
DIORAMA OCCUPATION MELILLA.



Diorama representing the occupation of Melilla by the Spaniards on September 17, 1497. On that day, Don Pedro de Estopiñán y Virués, accountant of the Ducal House of Medina Sidonia, took possession of the old Muslim medina in the name of the Catholic Monarchs. The expedition was composed of 5,000 men and among the ships in the fleet were those destined for Columbus' third voyage to the Americas, which caused the admiral great discomfort. The city was then uninhabited and its walls demolished, because its inhabitants had decided to abandon it under pressure from the King of Fez, so the city was occupied bloodlessly.



MODEL OF FOUR ENCLOSURES.



Replica of the topographical model of the square of Melilla, built in 1846 by the Artillery Brigadier Leon Gil de Palacio, whose original is preserved in the Army Museum. The four fortified enclosures can be seen. The First corresponds to the beginning of the XVI century, when Carlos I decides to concentrate the defensive perimeter in the high part of the city. The Second Enclosure includes the current Plaza de Armas; at the end of the 17th century it will undergo a deep transformation, with the application of new techniques of bastioned fortification. In the 18th century the Third Enclosure was built, ahead of the previous one. From 1734 the Fourth Enclosure was built, a line of external protection with forts such as those of Victoria Chica, Victoria Grande and Rosario.



MODEL OF THE FIRST FORT OF VICTORIA CHICA.



Model of the first fort of Victoria Chica, built in 1734 in the so called Cerro del Cubo, height from which the city was dominated. On November 19, 1734, being Governor Antonio Villalba y Angulo, the hill is occupied by surprise and that same night a fortification of wood and stakes is constructed, under the direction of the engineer Juan Martin Zermeño. Immediately a masonry fort was built, with stone curtains and a moat, and the first mining galleries with their furnaces were excavated at the forefront. In 1775 its layout was modified, leaving it with the configuration that is preserved today.



ENGINEER JUAN MARTÍN ZERMEÑO.



Corps of Engineers uniform designed by the illustrious military engineer Don Juan Martín Zermeño. Zermeño was stationed in Melilla on several occasions. In 1721 he built the Third Enclosure of the city. He reformed the fort of San Miguel and under his direction the first works of the Fourth Enclosure were carried out in 1734. He was the founder and director of a Mathematics Academy in Melilla, the first educational center that this city had. He reached the highest positions in his career as a military engineer. He married Antonia de Paredes in Melilla and in 1722 his son Pedro was born there, who would follow his father's career.



SADDLE OF ISABEL II.



Horse saddle for horsewoman, which had only one stirrup, the left one. It belonged to Queen Isabel II, who reigned in Spain between 1833 and 1868. During her reign took place the war of Africa from 1859 to 1860 and the treaty with Morocco by which it was established that the new border of Melilla would be delimited by the range of a cannon shot. Under his reign also took place the occupation of the Chafarinas archipelago, in 1848, and in his honor the main island, where the population was established, was named "Isabel II".



“CALABRIAN” CANNON



At the end of the African War of 1859-1860, between Spain and Morocco, the Peace of Wad Ras was signed. Among the conditions of peace was ratified the Agreement signed in 1859 that established new border limits for Melilla, which would be delimited by the firing of a 24-pound cannon, the longest range cannon of the time. The shots were fired on June 14, 1862 from the fort of Victoria Grande with the cannon called "El Caminante", achieving a range of 3 kilometers. All the cannons had their own name chiseled on the upper part of the cannon barrel. The cannon on display is the so-called "Calabrino", manufactured at the same time as its twin "El Caminante".



GENERAL MARGALLO.



Sash, sword and baton of General Juan García-Margallo y García, Governor General of Melilla from 1891 until his death in 1893. Margallo was the first General Commander of Melilla after the creation of the General Command in 1893. He died in the defense of the fort of Cabrerizas Altas, during the "War of Margallo", named after the death of the general. This campaign, which took place between October 1893 and March 1894, was caused by the construction of the Purísima Concepción fort, very close to the Muslim cemetery of Sidi Guariach, which provoked strong opposition from the frontiersmen. General Margallo is buried in the "Panteón de Margallo" of the cemetery of the Purísima Concepción of Melilla.



EPAULETTES OF GENERAL PICASSO.



Epaulettes from the dress uniform of Lieutenant General Juan Picasso Gonzalez. General Picasso is famous for having instructed the famous file that bears his name, to purge responsibilities after the events of the defeat of Annual in 1921. As a captain he was with General Margallo in the fort of Cabrerizas Altas, during the Margallo War in 1893. While the fort was under siege, he received the general's order to go to the square (military way to refer to Melilla) to communicate the situation and ask for reinforcements. The undertaking was difficult and risky but the captain achieved his goal and was able to report the situation to Colonel Casellas, who was in command in the square (citadelle of Melilla). For this heroic action, Picasso received the Laureate Cross of San Fernando, the highest decoration that a military man can receive.



HELMETS OF GENERAL CASELLAS.



General Officer's helmets belonging to General Alfredo Casellas y Carrillo de Albornoz. General Casellas, being colonel chief of the Africa Regiment, which was in Melilla during the Margallo War, was in command of the city on October 27, 1893 while the forts were besieged by numerous enemy. Unaware of what was happening in the field, he decided to take the initiative to organize a relief convoy. Before the departure Captain Picasso arrives informing of the situation. The relief column immediately departs with supplies, ammunition and reinforcement troops that, after hard fighting, manages to reach the fort of Cabrerizas Altas, minutes after the death of General Margallo. For his meritorious performance, Colonel Casellas was proposed for a reward and it was resolved that his services would be taken into account.



INSTRUCTION SCARF.



Exemplary of those known as "military instruction handkerchiefs", implemented by most of the armies at the end of the 19th century. Its purpose was to instruct the soldiers, who at that time were mostly illiterate. Their appearance was due to the adoption of new breech-loading rifles and the need to train soldiers in their description and handling. In Spain, the first handkerchiefs appeared after the acquisition of 1871 Remington rifles, purchased from the United States to equip the troops fighting in Cuba. The handkerchief exhibited has an educational and propaganda character. It dates from approximately 1912 and represents an allegory of Spain's action in Morocco, during the reign of Alfonso XIII.



HOT AIR BALLOON.



Scale model of a hot air balloon of those used for the first time in Melilla in 1909. It is a replica of the hot air balloons called Uranus, Jupiter and Queen Victoria. On July 30, 1909 arrived in Melilla the Company of Aerostation and Lighting, with 15 men and two balloons, setting up camp near the bullring in the neighborhood of Triana. This service is a pioneer and precursor of the Spanish Aviation, and therefore the year 1909 was the baptism of fire of military aeronautics in our country. Initially received with suspicion, it soon demonstrated its excellent capabilities in support of ground operations. They will be very valuable in advanced observation missions, artillery fire correction and cartographic works.



RAYADILLO UNIFORM.



The uniform of “rayadillo” is the famous uniform used mainly by the Spanish Army overseas, mainly in Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines between 1868 and 1898. The exposed uniform, known as "rayadillo peninsular", corresponds to a summer uniform of 1913-1914, of colonel of the Regiment of Infantry "Andalusia number 52". This Regiment participated in the African Wars, specifically in the Annual campaign of 1921-1922 and later in 1924-1925. In 1913, the uniforms were fitted with collar pockets and sleeves of different colors depending on the Arm or Corps; on the collar was placed the number of the unit or the corresponding emblem. Immortalized in the 1909 campaign, it was used until 1915, when it was replaced by the khaki uniform.



CAPTAIN RIPOLL'S ALUMINUM HAND.



Infantry Captain Antonio Ripoll Sauvalle, lost a hand fighting in the Philippines in 1898 and was fitted with an aluminum orthopedic. He was granted his incorporation into the ranks and participated in the Melilla Campaign of 1909 with the Figueras Hunters battalion. He died heroically at the head of his men in the Zoco El Jemis of Beni Bu Ifrur on September 30 of that year. His body could not be recovered until a month and a half later, but his aluminum hand was missing, which was returned some time later by the Caid of Beni Urriaguel and is now on display in the Military Museum of Melilla. For his heroic behavior he was awarded the Laureate Cross of San Fernando. He is buried in the Pantheon of Heroes in the cemetery of the Purísima Concepción in Melilla.



HELIOGRAPH.



The heliograph was an optical apparatus for transmitting messages at a distance, in Morse Code, by means of the flashes originated by the reflection of sunlight on a system of mirrors. Invented in 1865, it was widely used in the African Campaigns by the Transmission Units. One of its disadvantages was that it gave away the presence of the transmitting units as they needed to be high and with visibility with the receiving station to transmit the messages. Many positions of the Eastern zone of the Protectorate in 1921, had transmission detachments with these optical elements and it was the most common form of link between the positions.



DECORATIONS OF COLONEL MORALES.



Medals belonging to General Staff Colonel Gabriel de Morales de Mendigutía, head of the Subinspection of Troops and Indigenous Affairs and of the Indigenous Police of Melilla, killed on July 22, 1921 in the Izzumar Gorge, in Annual. Gabriel de Morales was stationed in Melilla on several occasions. He participated in the combats of Barranco del Lobo and was promoted to lieutenant colonel for war merits. In addition to being an outstanding military man, he was an Arabist, Academic and Historian, member of the Royal Academy of History. He died on July 22, 1921, in the evacuation of Annual. He was posthumously promoted to General and is buried in the Pantheon of Heroes in the cemetery of the Purísima Concepción in Melilla.



SADDLE OF THE ALCANTARA REGIMENT.



Complete regulation equipment for campaign saddle used by the Squadrons of the 14th Cavalry of the Alcántara Hunter Regiment in 1921. In July 1921, the Alcántara cavalry wrote pages of glory, allowing with their heroic sacrifice that General Navarro's column could reach Monte Arruit. The Regiment was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Fernando Primo de Rivera y Orbaneja. Thanks to his sacrifice the column was able to break through and continue the march to Monte Arruit. But the price paid by the cavalry was very high; the squadrons were decimated and the regiment had ceased to exist. In 2012 the "Alcántara" Regiment was awarded the Collective Laureate Cross, imposed by King Juan Carlos I at the Royal Palace in Madrid.



DIORAMA SECOND HUT.



Diorama of the "Segunda Caseta", defended by the Tercio during the Reconquista campaign in September 1921. This hut was one of the three that were on the railroad from Melilla to Nador. From it, the position of Dar Hamed could be seen, where a blockhouse called "the bad one" was located, guarded by a section of the Disciplinary Brigade, which was attacked by hundreds of "rifeños" and which would go down in history as "Blocao de la Muerte", where Corporal Suceso Terreros died heroically along with 15 of his legionnaires. In the Reconquest Campaign, and until the end of the war in 1927, both the Tercio de Extranjeros and the Fuerzas Regulares Indígenas covered themselves with glory, always fighting in the extreme vanguard and assuming the most risky missions.



BUST LIEUTENANT COLONEL VALENZUELA.



Lieutenant Colonel Rafael Valenzuela Urzaiz, Chief of the “Tercio de Extranjeros”, died fighting at the head of his men on June 5, 1923 in Tizzi Assa. In November 1922 he was given command of the Tercio, replacing the mythical Millán Astray. In June 1923 he was charged with protecting a supply convoy to the Tizzi Assa position. The enemy resistance was fierce and the fighting fierce. After two charges by the Regulars were repulsed, Lieutenant Colonel Valenzuela ordered his legionnaires to assault the bayonet and there he was killed along with 40 of his men, but his sacrifice allowed Tizzi Assa to be saved. For his merits and services he was posthumously awarded the Individual Military Medal. He is buried in the Basilica del Pilar in Zaragoza, where he was born.



DIORAMA LANDING OF ALHUCEMAS.



Diorama representing the landing of the first wave of Spanish troops in Al Hoceima in 1925. On the occasion of the endless wars to pacify the Protectorate of Morocco, Spain and France planned a landing in the heart of the rebel territory. Spain prepared a powerful army composed of troops from the General Commands of Ceuta and Melilla, reinforced by other units arriving from the peninsula; about 13,000 men, who on September 8, 1925 landed in the bay of Al Hoceima. The landing was a surprise and soon a solid beachhead was established from which to continue the advances. The complicated joint-combined operation was an unprecedented success, a turning point to definitively end the wars in Morocco.



BARGE K.



Barge type "K" of those used in the landing of Al Hoceima on September 8, 1925. To carry out the landing, the Spanish government made, in 1924, the purchase of 26 "K" barges that were in Gibraltar from the Allied surplus of the unsuccessful landing operation in Gallipoli in 1915. The "K" barges could hold up to two companies (about 300 men). They were equipped with a ramp at the bow to facilitate the landing. They were motor-driven so that in good sea conditions they could reach eight knots, although their limited autonomy meant that they had to be towed up to about 1,000 meters from the beach, at which time the trailers were released so that the barges reached the beach by their own means.



PENNANT OF THE MELILLA SEA COMPANY.



Medal of Naval Merit awarded to the Melilla Sea Company for its heroic behavior in the Al Hoceima Landing of 1925. In 2023 the Company celebrated 525 years in the service of Spain, making it the oldest unit of the Spanish Army. Its origin dates back to the 1498 Agreement between the Catholic Monarchs and the Duke of Medina Sidonia, which established the number of troops that the square (citadelle of Melilla) would have, establishing that the seafaring force should be of "40 Men of the Sea". The Company of the Sea has been linked to the city since its origins in missions such as the surveillance and security of the coasts; communication with the peninsula and with the rocks of Spanish sovereignty; and the loading and unloading of material, both in the port of Melilla and on the islands.



MODEL OF MELILLA 1921.



Model of the Plaza de Melilla, built by His Excellency Don Fernando Garratala in 1921. In the model the extension of the new territory can be observed, delimited by the shot of a cannon in 1862. It also shows the new exterior forts, located in strategic places, which began to be built in 1883. A new city was born, which soon expanded outside the city walls and began to expand with the construction of new neighborhoods. An urban layout that will have the indisputable stamp of military engineers. Engineers such as Eusebio Redondo, José de la Gándara, Francisco Carcaño or Emilio Alzugaray, have left their mark on the city and today we can admire the beauty and harmony of their legacy.



BATTLESHIP "JAIME I".



The Battleship Jaime I, of the "España" class, was launched in 1914, and sank at Cartagena due to an internal explosion in 1937. During the Spanish Civil War of 1936-1939, Melilla, far from the combat fronts, hardly suffered directly the consequences of the war. It was only the victim of a few isolated attacks. One of them took place on July 26, 1936. That day the Republican squadron, composed of the battleship "Jaime I" and the cruisers "Libertad" and "Miguel de Cervantes", appeared in front of Melilla and bombarded it for two hours, causing ten dead and numerous wounded in the population. This attack caused a panic situation in the population of Melilla.



ENIGMA MACHINE.



"Enigma" cipher machine. Used to send encrypted messages, this machine was part of those sent from Germany as part of the aid in the Spanish Civil War. The rebels needed to exchange information on their situation and forecasts through radiotelegraphy, as their areas of operations were not connected. In November 1936, General Franco requested the sale of ten Enigma machines from Germany, which arrived quickly. These machines were used for the most sensitive communications between Franco and his most important generals. Their operation was so satisfactory (the Republicans were never able to decipher them) that, in January 1937, the government of Burgos acquired ten more units of the same model, among which is the one exhibited in this museum.



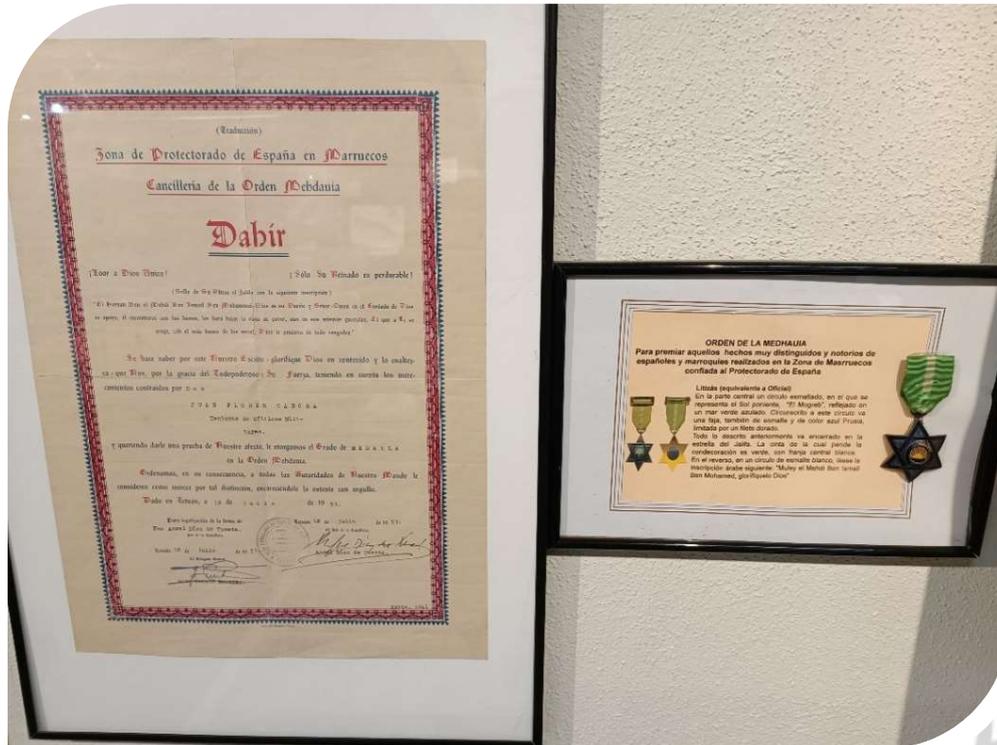
MEHALA JALIFIANA UNIFORM.



Uniform belonging to the indigenous officers of the "Mehala". The Khalifian Mehalas were created in April 1913, to serve as a base for the army of the Majzén (representative authority of the Sultan of Morocco in the Spanish Protectorate, headed by the Khalifa). They were formed by indigenous troops under the command of Spanish officers. After the independence of Morocco in 1956, they will serve as the basis for the future Moroccan army. This officer wears on the sleeves the lace that characterized the indigenous officers and inside the lace they wore the stars of the jobs. These officers were called "Kaides": "Kaid Raha" for Captain, "Kaid Tabor" for Lieutenant and "Kaid Mia" for Second Lieutenant.



MEHDAUIA AND DAHIR.



The Order of the Mehdauia was created to reward those very distinguished and notorious events of Spaniards and Moroccans carried out in the area of Morocco entrusted to the Protectorate of Spain. The awarding of the medal was certified by the issuance of a Dahir. A “dahir” is a decree issued by the King of Morocco; however, in the area of the Spanish Protectorate the “dahir” was issued by the Khalifa (at the proposal of the Spanish High Commissioner), in his capacity as representative of the Sultan in the territory administered by the Spaniards, since the Sultan resided in the French Protectorate.



GOLD MEDAL OF THE CITY.



Gold Medal of the City of Melilla to the Army, awarded in 1962. It includes the Medal and the parchment of the title inside a glass case with a beautiful wooden frame. The text reads:

"The City Council of the Valiant, Humanitarian and very Charitable City of Melilla, in session held on November 7, 1962, agreed to grant the GOLDEN MEDAL of the city to the GLORIOUS LAND ARMY, in attention to the multiple and relevant services it has provided and provides to the Homeland and our city and on the occasion of the visit to Melilla of His Excellency the Minister of the Branch. And to justify his right to the use of such distinction, the present TITLE is issued in Melilla on the thirteenth day of November, nineteen hundred and sixty-two".



QUARTERMASTER STANDARD.



Last insignia of the Quartermaster Group of Melilla, before being disbanded. It includes Standard, Pole, Moharra, Tie and Cordon. But the first insignia received by the Military Quartermaster Corps is also related to the history of Melilla. It was granted to the Command of Quartermaster Troops of Melilla and delivered in 1923, for the merits acquired by the Corps during the campaigns in Morocco. The award ceremony took place in the Plaza de España. Their Majesties King Alfonso XIII and Queen Victoria sponsored the banner, delegating its delivery to the Commander General of Melilla, Don Pedro Vives and his wife. The original banner is preserved in the Honor Room of the Quartermaster Museum of Avila.



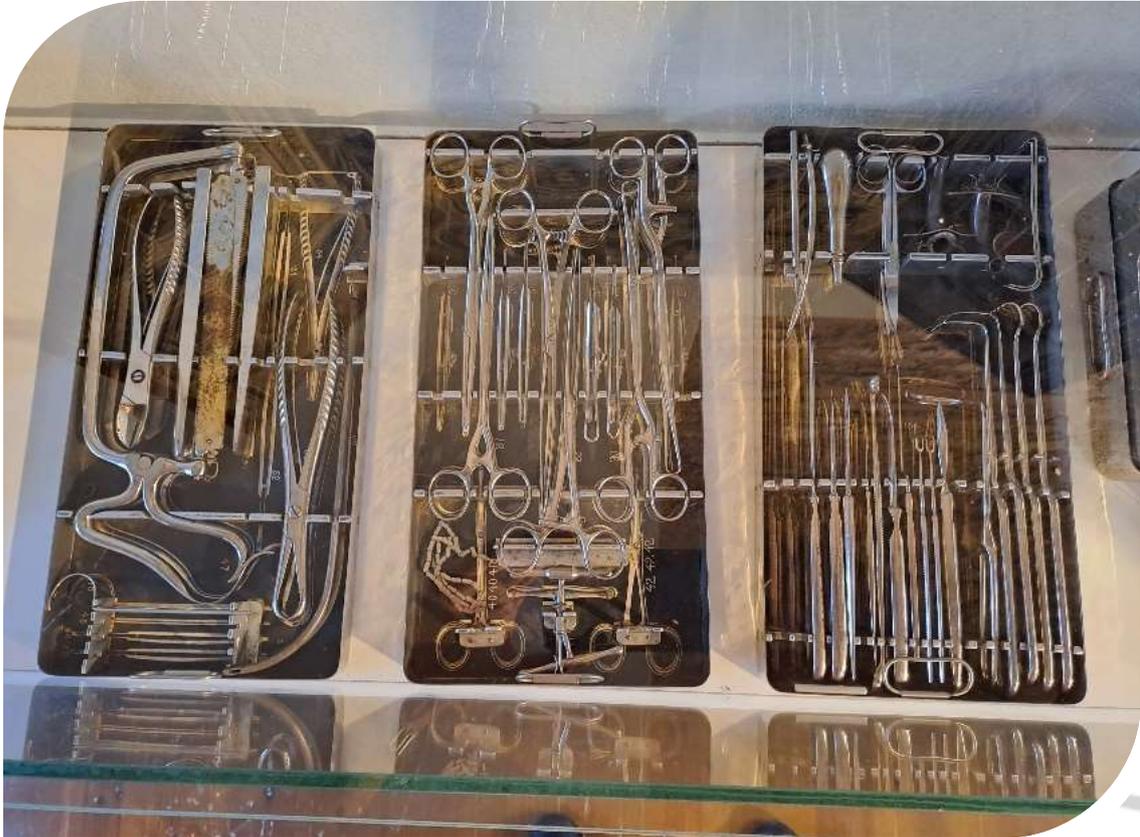
AUTOCLAVE.



An “autoclave” is a sterilization device that uses steam at very high pressure to eliminate microorganisms by the effect of heat. The basic operation is similar to that of a pressure cooker. It is a hermetically sealed thick-walled metal container, which allows it to withstand high pressures and very high temperatures. It is used to sterilize all types of medical or laboratory material. The first autoclaves acquired for the Spanish Army in 1902 were those designed by the French physician Charles Chamberland. The Spanish military pharmacist Saturnino Cambronero perfected the autoclave, correcting defects in the existing devices, and it was incorporated into military hospitals in 1916. The vertical autoclave "Cambronero" exhibited in the Military Museum comes from the old Military Hospital of Melilla "Capitán Pagés".



GERMAN MILITARY HEALTH KIT.



German Military Health Kit of 1914. It is an operative surgical field box, made of stainless steel, consisting of four tiers. Each tray contains various material for general, cranial, thoracic and abdominal surgery, as well as traumatological material, with a total of 54 pieces. Previously, wooden boxes or leather or canvas cases were used, but these were replaced by metal boxes for easy sterilization. The manufacture of surgical material was carried out in Spain since 1898, in the Artillery Factory of Toledo, although it was not manufactured regularly until 1918. Possibly this material was acquired in an exhibition of German sanitary material in 1921. At present, very few specimens of field kits are preserved, being this a collection of great museum value.



VICKERS MACHINE GUN.



Machine gun "Vickers-Maxim", model 1905, mounted with cheek support and protective shield of Russian origin. Caliber 7 millimeters. Water-cooled. Sir Hiram Steven Maxim (1840-1916) was an American engineer, inventor of the first fully automatic machine gun. Manufactured in England, the 1895 model was an improvement of the "Maxim Nordenfelt" of which the Spanish government acquired twelve in 1897 and were sent to Cuba. The "Vickers-Maxim" was mounted on tripod and wheels, weighing 132 kilograms. In 1905 four were assigned to Melilla after a modification that avoided a defect in the recoil. They took part in the Rif Campaign of 1909 together with the Hotchkiss model 1907.



HOTCHKISS MACHINE GUN.



Machine gun "Hotchkiss", 7 millimeters, model 1914, of French manufacture. It had a maximum range of 2,000 meters. It was in service in Spain since 1907. It was declared regulation for Infantry in 1914 and for Cavalry in 1929. It was in service until the end of the Spanish Civil War in 1939. At the beginning of 1910, the Spanish Army had 48 machine guns grouped in 24 sections. Of these 48, 12 were "Vicker-Maxim" and 36 "Hotchkiss". Except for the four experimental ones, 40 were used in the Rif Campaign and 4 in Ceuta, assigned to fortifications. It was a weapon highly appreciated by the combatants for its reliability, precision and efficiency. The machine gun exhibited is of the 1914 model, of the third Spanish series manufactured at the Oviedo Arms Factory in 1935.



SIGNAL PISTOL.



Signal and illuminating pistol, of English manufacture. Year 1918. For long distances, ground illumination was entrusted to large searchlights, but these guns gave excellent results for the illumination of nearby trenches. The flare produced a white light that illuminated a distance of 200 meters for about 10 seconds. By firing several flares at suitable intervals, it was possible to illuminate the terrain for several minutes. They were also equipped with flares of various colors for different signals, and even incendiary flares. During the Great War of 1914-1918 they were widely used in night combat; later, their use declined to give way to signal rockets and artillery illuminating shells.



MAUSER RIFLE.



Spanish MAUSER repeating rifle Model 1893. Caliber 7 millimeters, manufactured in the Oviedo factory. It was in service between 1893 and 1940. At the end of the 19th century the bulk of the Spanish army was armed with the obsolete 11 mm Remington rifle, but in 1888 a commission was created to study the adoption of a smaller caliber repeating rifle. For this purpose, the different models offered by Mauser at that time were analyzed. Finally, the one that would end up being known as the Mauser Spanish Rifle Model 1893, the first bolt-action rifle of the Spanish Army, was selected. The first model that left the German factories for Spain was the 1892 model that later, after undergoing several modifications, was declared regulation in 1893.



SABER "SAFE HARBOR".



Panoply that presided over the Hall of Arms of the Regiment of Artillery of Plaza, when it was in the Warehouse of San Juan, current headquarters of the Association of Melillenses Studies. It consists of five Spanish sabers of straight blade for Cavalry troop, model "Safe Harbor", of 105 millimeters of length, mounted in wood panoply. Built at the Toledo Artillery Factory. They were declared statutory between 1908-1943.



21ST CENTURY ROOM.



In this corner, reserved for the "Army of the 21st Century", visitors are informed about the main changes that have taken place in the Spanish Army in recent years. These changes have led to a profound transformation of our Armed Forces in terms of structure, organization and missions. The most transcendental have been: the end of the obligatory Military Service and the professionalization of the troops; the participation of our armies in International Missions; and the full incorporation of women in the Armed Forces. For this purpose, the Military Museum of Melilla exhibits three mannequins that aim to illustrate these three important events.