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THE COVER

Strange as it seems, bullets were not always cylindrical or round. Between 1627 and 1640, experimenters produced the 4 wheellock rifles whose odd-shaped muzzles are shown against a background of modern multi-shot arms. Augustinus Kotter, a German, made the ones with square and triangular bores. Andreas Neidhardt, of Elsinore, concocted the "cooky cutter" guns for invalid King Christian IV of Denmark, supposedly to increase his chance of hits while target shooting from a chair. Guns and molds are now in a Copenhagen museum. A 1720 hand-operated flintlock machinegun by James Puckle, now in the Tower of London Armoury, featured square bullets to kill "heathen" and an interchangeable drum magazine of round bullets to shoot Christians more "mercifully."

The absence of later firearms made for square and triangular bullets speaks eloquently. They evidently didn't work well.

Photographs by Bruce Pendleton from the Merrill Lindsay book *One Hundred Great Guns*, an illustrated history of firearms. (Walker & Co., New York City.)

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