



A selection of British and Maltese army uniforms, accoutrements and optical instruments including some dating back to the Victorian era. Photos: Darrin Zammit Lupi



Three German Luger pistols used in World War I and II and a Finnish Lahti Pistol (right).

# Rifles, cannon, swords and bayonets under the hammer

Cynthia Busuttill

A vast collection of firearms and military uniforms will be going under the hammer on Sunday.

Over 130 weapons and 200 military artefacts were collected over some five decades by Philip deDomenico, well-known among collectors.

Mr deDomenico, who passed away last year, was mainly interested in British army artefacts, especially the Victorian era, Stephen Petroni, director of specialised gun collector's shop Lock, Stock and Barrel, said.

The collection includes almost every model of rifle used by the British forces from Victorian times until the 1960s. There is also a selection of Ottoman Turkish Mauser rifles, captured at Gallipoli, apart from a World War II Spitfire 20-millimetre cannon, swords and bayonets.

"He was very keen on firearms used by the military," Mr Petroni, who has known Mr deDomenico since 1985, said.

However, Mr deDomenico, who served in the British army in

the 1960s, collected anything that came his way and among the items that will be auctioned is an 1820 sextant (a nautical measuring instrument) made by instrument maker George Stebbing, who had accompanied Charles Darwin on his voyages on the HMS Beagle.

There is also the hat used by Rear-Admiral R.C. Huzill, a British engineer who had been put in charge of organising the new arsenal and dockyard in Lisbon in the late 1930s.

Mr Petroni said his friend had helped set up the Arms, Armour and Militia Society in 1985, which has since become the Association of Maltese Arms Collectors & Target Shooters.

"He was active until the very end, attending the association's annual general meeting and even acquiring new items just days before he died," he said.

The collection, being auctioned by Obelisk Auctions, is open for viewing tomorrow and on Saturday between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. and on Sunday between 9 and 10 a.m., just before the auction starts at Lock, Stock and Barrel Gunshop, Santa Venera.



A selection of World War I and World War II aircraft machine guns.