

Pascha's Hunting Staff

A translation of Johann Georg Pascha's "Short instructions how the Hunting staff or Half pike is actually to be used" (1660).

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A translation of Johann Georg Pascha's "Short instructions how the Hunting staff or Half pike is actually to be used" (1660), y Reinier van Noort.

This is a translation of the 1660 edition of Johann George Pascha's treatise on using the Hunting staff (Jägerstock) or half pike to defend oneself. This version of Pascha's treatise has only 21 lessons, and 16 associated figures. A later edition published in 1670 presents 34 lessons and 34 figures. While the plates of the 1660 edition are relatively rough in execution, the lesson descriptions are generally the same (though, of course, the 1670 refers to the additional figures). Lessons missing from the 1660 are lessons 5, 9, 10, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20, 26, 30, 31, 32, 33 (lesson numbers of the 1670 edition). Most of these lessons provide suggestions for different stepping patterns for the same attacks, except lesson 31 which describes a Spanish thrust made with a jump with both feet, followed by a strike behind you and another Spanish thrust back in the original direction.

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Short instructions

How the Hunting staff or

Half pike is actually to be used, and what
for lessons there are on it.

Drafted with diligence and decorated with many
necessary copper plates.

Halle in Saxony /
Printed by Melchior Oelschlegeln.

What fencing on the Cut and on Thrust is, this is sufficiently known. However, as this exercise at the present is not particularly known in Germany, while in France only common, I have deemed it necessary to say something beforehand, before the lessons are set, about what kind of instrument [it is], how long it must be, and what for use it has.

The hunting staff or half pike on itself, now, is a strong staff approximately four fingers thick and four and a half ell¹ long, pointed at both ends, by which one, in case of need, can defend himself against 10, 20 and 30 men, who have unsheathed swords. Indeed, it seems to be almost impossible, but who has this knowledge, will have to confirm this, though this must only be done in an emergency.

When someone is in a house rather surrounded by many with naked (unsheathed) swords, and must worry that the house will be stormed, then he would do better to battle through, and retreat himself in a safe place, than if he waited until they entered the house, and he then cannot use the staff in the narrow space. Or when he is engaged by many with swords on the open street, then he can likewise stay, and defend himself in the wide space as long as people come to it. As there are then such lessons in this exercise, that one can defend himself against 20 or 30 over a quarter of an hour on a place where there is space. However, this must all be done in an emergency, as nobody is to be advised that he brings himself in danger intentionally, as then the other exercises, such as fencing and grappling and similar should also only be used in need and for defense.

¹ The ell was a rather variable length measure, but it was most likely about 60 cm. The German ell is 57,9 cm, the Alte hallische Elle (which might have been the ell meant) was 60,2 cm. George Silver, in his *Paradoxes of Defence* (1599) gives a length of about 8-9 ft for a short staffe or half pike, which is similar to the length given here (pp. 29).

It then is first necessary to know that the staff can be carried in three different manners.

The first manner is, when you grip the staff in the middle with the right hand. Take this under your right arm, so that the one point is high behind, and the other is low in front, as No. 1. demonstrates.

The second manner, you hold the staff under your right arm just as before, except that you turn your right hand in the middle of the staff, so that the fingers lie above as No. 2. shows.

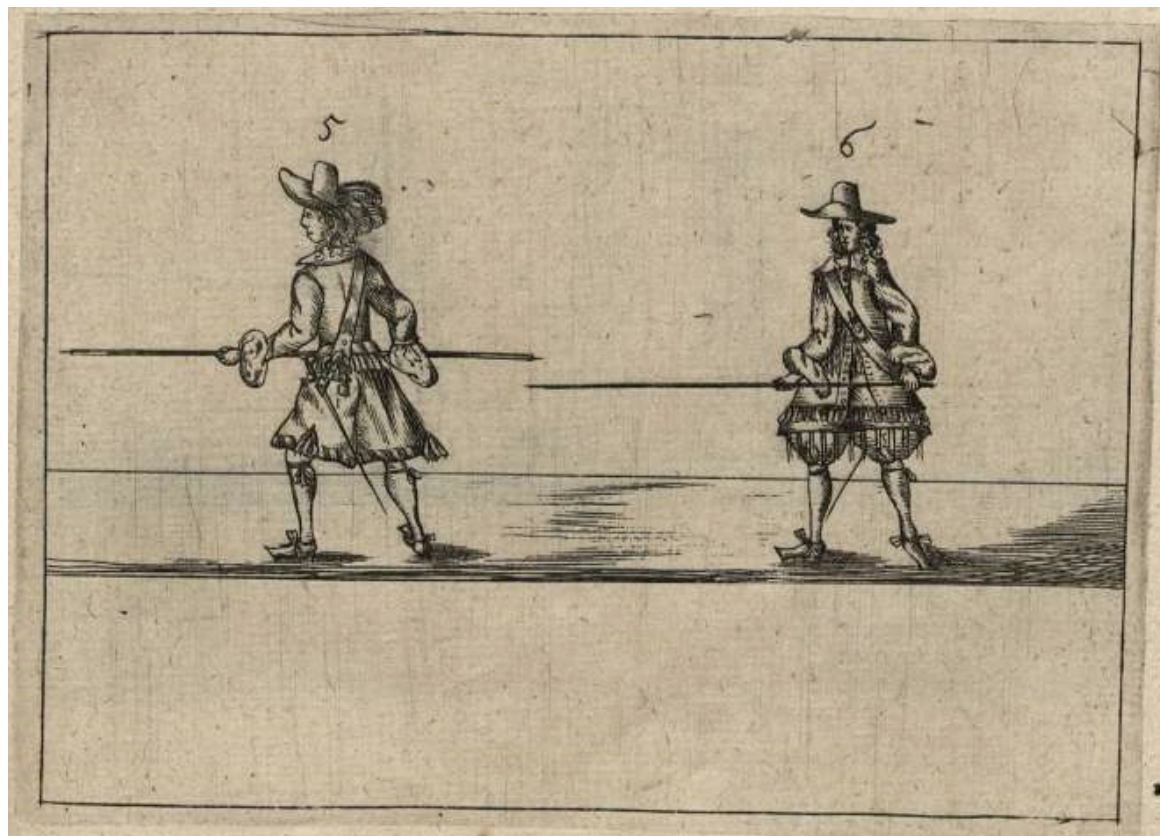
With the third manner, the staff comes likewise under your right arm, except that you place your left hand on the staff and your right hand on your left arm, as No. 3. shows. And in these manners the staff can be carried when walking. If you now play these lessons before people, then make a reverence as No. 4. demonstrates.



Now follow the lessons.

1. Place your left foot in front and the right back. Grip the staff two spans from one point with your left hand and two spans from the other point with your right hand, as No. 5. demonstrates, and when several now want to attack you, then slide forward through both hands, and swiftly back again. When you want to slide forward and back on the left side, then you must step forth with your right foot, though such that your left foot stays in front and your right comes behind, and thus in all four directions², and every time [having] stepped forth with your right foot. But you must always look around, quickly behind yourself, quickly to the sides [to see] where they want to attack you. In that place you must then also defend yourself. When you have now performed this lesson in all four directions, and you thus stand again there where you started, then slide forwards, so that with your right hand you have the staff at one point, and with the left [you have] the staff approximately three span from the same point.
2. The two Spanish thrusts in all four directions. Slide the left [hand] to the right hand, until the thick end, and with the right hand slide out to the place where the left hand was, and step with your right foot in front, as No. 6 demonstrates. Slide the right hand to the left hand until the thick end, and slide out with the left hand to the place where the right hand was, and step with your left foot in front, and makes this so in all four directions, until you come to once more stand where you had started, and indeed around to the left each time.

2 “Ecken” is more literally translated as “corners”.



3. Perform the two Spanish thrusts half around. Firstly, behind yourself, after that, half around, to the same place again, where you stood at first. Then to your left side, furthermore half around to your right side. Finally once more to the place where you stood at the beginning. In these thrusts you must turn yourself around to the left each time. But you must slide and step to as in the previous second lesson.
4. Perform only one Spanish thrust half around. While you stand as you have begun, then make a thrust behind yourself, half around to the left, and step with your right foot in front, as No. 7 demonstrates. Thereafter a Spanish thrust again to the place where you stood at first, around to the right, and step with your left foot in front. Furthermore around to your left side, and step with your right foot in front, subsequently half around to your right side, and step with your left foot in front, and finally around to the left, to the place where you began, and step with your right foot in front, and make another thrust. With every step a Spanish thrust must be performed. In this Spanish thrust you slide with the right and left hands as was conceived in the previous lessons.
5. Perform the strike over the head and with it the Spanish thrust. To wit, while you stand where you have begun, and [with] your left foot in front, then slide your right hand to your left, grab with your left hand under your right, and slide the left hand to the point of the staff, and step with your right³ foot in front, as No. 8 demonstrates, and thus strike to. Perform a Spanish thrust, and step with your left foot in front, as reported in the second lesson, and perform this

3 The original German text here reads left, but based on the context and the illustration referred to, right is most likely meant.

so in all four directions, until you come to stand where you began, and indeed around to the left each time.

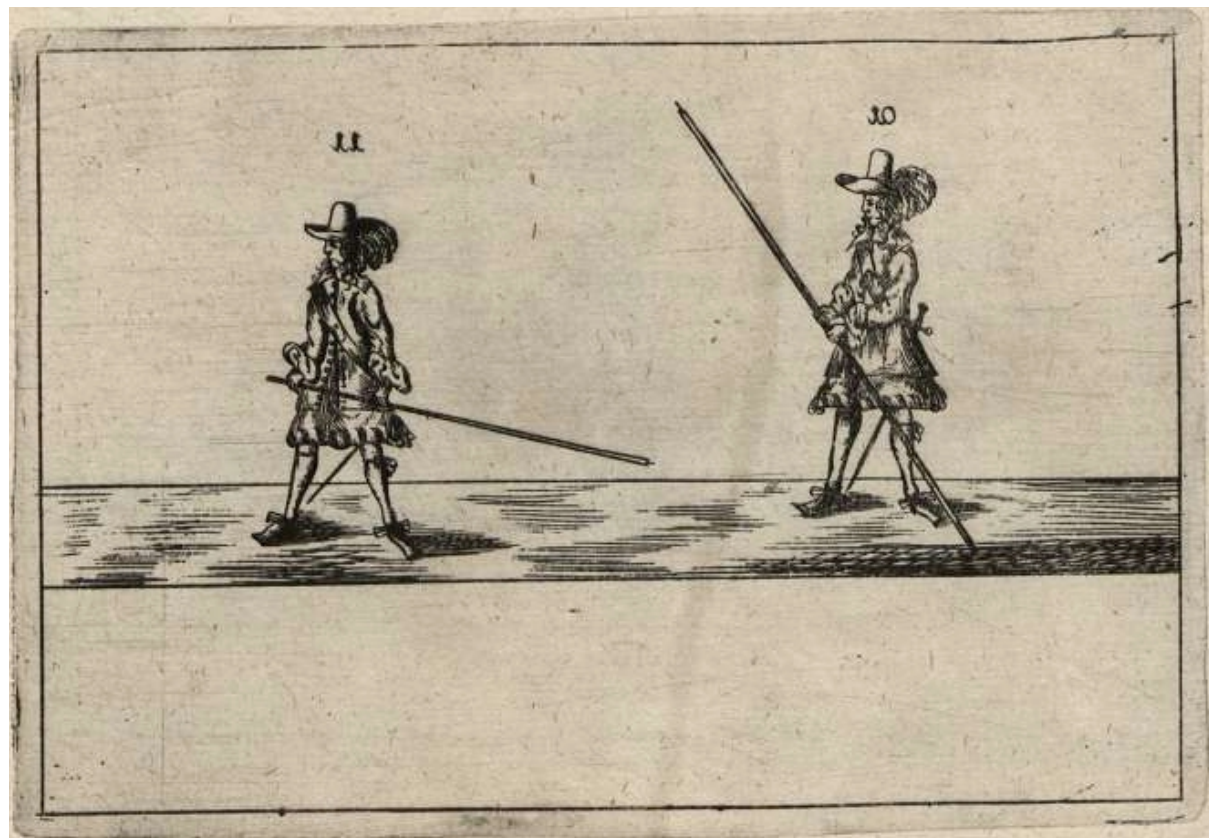
6. Perform the strikes over the head and with it the Spanish thrust, half around, as you have performed them in all four directions. First, behind you half around. Thereafter half around to the same place again where you stood at first. Then to your left side, further half around to your right side. Finally, again to your place where you stood at the beginning. In this lesson, you must turn yourself around to the left each time. But you must slide and step to, as in the previous lesson.
6. Perform the strikes over the head and with it the Spanish thrust, half around, as you have performed them in all four directions. First, behind you half around. Thereafter half around to the same place again where you stood at first. Then to your left side, further half around to your right side. Finally, again to your place where you stood at the beginning. In this lesson, you must turn yourself around to the left side each time. But you must slide and step to as in the previous fifth lesson.



7. Perform the strikes over the head, without Spanish thrusts, half around. While you stand where you started, then slide your right hand to your left, grab with your left hand under your right, and slide the left to the point of the staff. Step with your right foot half around to the left, and thus strike to, as No. 9 shows. Slide your left hand to your right, grab with your right hand under your left hand, and slide the right hand to the point of the staff. Step with your left foot half around to the right, so that you come to the place where you began, and thus strike to. Again slide your right hand to your left, and grab with your left hand under your right, and slide the left hand to the point of the staff. Step with your right foot around to the left to your left side, and thus strike to. Further, slide your left hand to your right, grab with your right hand under your left, and slide the right hand to the point of the staff. Step with your left foot half around to the right, and thus strike to. Finally, slide your right hand to your left, and grab with your left hand under your right hand, and slide the left hand to the point of the staff. Step with your right foot around to your left side, so that you come to stand at the place where you began, and thus strike to.
8. Perform the parries from above forwards and backwards. Set the feet even, and take the staff with the right and left hands in the middle, though such that your fingers of the right hand are above and of the left hand are below. Hold the staff in front of you, so that one point is with your left hand and the other with your right hand, as No. 10 demonstrates. Let the point that is with your left hand go from above and away from you, past by your left foot, and after that the same point past by your right foot, and so on, and go several steps forwards and backwards.



9. Perform the parries from below forwards and backwards. To wit, while you stand with your feet even, and hold the staff in your hands as in the previous parries, then let the point which is with your left hand go from below and towards you, past by your left foot, and after that the same point past by your right foot, and so on, and go several steps forwards and backwards, as before.
10. Step back with your left foot, and turn your right hand. Slide one point behind yourself past by your left side, as No. 11 shows, and perform the blows on both sides forwards and backwards. While you stand so, then hew a full circle with your right hand around to the right, and step with your left foot in front. Take the staff with your left hand, so that the fingers come below, and again slide a point behind yourself past by your right side, and hew a full circle with your left hand around to the left, step with your right foot in front and take the staff with your right hand, so the the fingers come below, and once more slide a point behind yourself past by your left side, and perform four more such blows. When now, finally, your right foot comes in front, and you have again slid the point of the staff past by your left side, then hew a full circle with your right hand around to your right, and step back with your right foot. Take the staff with your left hand, so that the fingers come below, and slide a point behind yourself past by your right side. Hew a full circle with the left hand around to the left, and step back with your left foot. Take the staff with your right hand so that the fingers come below, and slide one point behind yourself past by your left side, and perform four more such blows.



11. When now finally your left foot stands behind, then take the staff with the right hand one span from the left hand, so that the fingers come above, while the staff goes around to the left, and you have your left hand at the point, so that the fingers come below, as No. 12 demonstrates. And perform the blows with both hands forwards and backwards. While your left foot stands behind, then throw your left foot to your left side, around behind your right foot, so that you turn your face to the other side and stand with your feet even, and with both hands hew a full circle to the left around the head. Throw your right foot around over your left, so that your feet come to stand even, and you come to stand how you first stood, and with both hands hew a full circle to the left around the head. Perform four more such blows, and with each step to as was reported. When now your right foot stands in front, then perform these blows backwards. Throw your right foot over your left foot back to your left side, so that you turn your face to the other side, and with both hands hew a full circle to the left around the head. Further, throw your left foot around to your left side behind your right foot, and with both hands hew a full circle to the left around the head. Perform four more such blows until you come to the place where you began, and step to back with each blow as has already been reported. With these blows you always turn yourself to your right or left side, and stand with your feet even.



12. When your left foot now comes behind, then let the staff run against your left arm, so that you stand as No. 13 demonstrates, and hew on both sides forward and backward. To wit, hew from you with both hands to your right side, so that the staff comes to lie against your right arm and step with your left foot in front. Again hew from you with both hands to your left side, so that the staff comes to lie against your left arm, and step with your right foot in front. Perform four more such blows, and step to with each, as reported. When now finally your right foot comes in front and the staff lies against your left arm, then perform this lesson backwards again. Hew from you with both hands to your right side, so that the staff runs against your right arm, and step back with your right foot. Further, hew from you with both hands to your left side, so that the staff runs against your left arm, and step back with your left foot. Thus perform four more such blows, until you come to the place, where you began. And step back with each blow, as reported in this lesson.
13. Now follow the blows around to the right. While your right foot stands in front, then step with your left foot to your right side in an angle and hew a full circle to the right around the head, as was done in the previous lesson. Further step with your left foot in the other angle, and hew a full circle to the right around the head. In this way, in the third and fourth angle, and with each blow which you do to the right around your head, step forth with your left foot, until your left comes to stand in front, and you stand in the place where you began.

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14. Perform these blows around to the left to all sides or directions, as you have performed them to the right, except that this happens left, and you also hew around to the left, and always step forth with your right foot. When you now finally turn your face to, and stand where you began, and your right foot also stands in front, then set your right foot back, and slide the staff past by your right side, so that your left hand is at the point, and your right hand is two span from that.
15. When your right foot now stands back, and you have slid the staff past by your right, then perform the strikes down from above in all four directions. While your left foot stands in front, then strike down from above, and step with your right foot in front, as No. 14 demonstrates. Slide past by your left side, so that your right hand [comes] at the point, and the left hand comes two span from the point, and again strike down from above, and step with your left foot in front. And thus in all four directions, until you again come to the place where you began. And indeed each time around to the left. When you now stand so, how you began this lesson, and have slid past by your right side, so that your left hand [is] at the point of the staff and your right hand two span from that.
16. Then perform these strikes down from above half around in all four directions. Firstly behind yourself, thereafter again in the same place where you stood at first. Then on your left side, after that half around on your right side. Finally, again to the place where you stood at the beginning. With these strikes you must each time turn yourself around to the left, but you must slide and step to as in the previous lesson, when now your left foot stands in front, and you have slid past by your right side.



17. Thus perform only one strike down from above in all four directions. Firstly, behind yourself half around to the left, and step with your right foot in front. Thereafter again to the place where you began at first around to the right, and step with your right foot in front.⁴ Next on your right side half around to the right, and step with your left foot in front, and finally around to the left to the place where you began, and step with your right foot in front. In this lesson slide as in the previous lesson.
18. Perform the strikes up from below in all four directions, as No. 15 demonstrates. In this lesson you slide and step to as in the fifteenth lesson, except that you strike up from below to the adversary's elbow.
19. Perform the strikes up from below half around in all four directions. In this lesson you slide and step to as in the sixteenth lesson, except that you strike up from below to the adversary's elbow as in the previous lesson.
20. Perform only one strike up from below in all four directions. In this lesson you slide and step to as in the seventeenth lesson, except that you strike up from below to the adversary's elbow.

⁴ A strike to your left side (relative to the starting orientation) is usually made before a strike to the right side, and appears to be missing here. (Cf. Lesson 3).



21. Place the staff on the right shoulder, so that you have one point in your right hand, as No. 16 shows, and let the staff run over your left shoulder, so that you catch the staff in the middle with your right hand. Let the staff run around your right hand, so that you catch this again on the inside in your right hand. Take the staff under your right arm, so that the forward point is low, and the backward high, and make, when you have performed these lessons in front of distinguished people, a reverence, as done in No. 4. But otherwise, when you are dealing with your adversary, then understand that no reverence is needed.

And so much about the hunting staff or half pike.

