

The Russian Crown/N Luger

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... much of what has been written about this subject ... merely repeats previous versions whose doubtful and slippery origins are, precisely, doubtful and slippery^o

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I. Introduction

I have had a string of recent acquisitions that were somewhat odd. First were two related Lugers that formed the impetus for my article on the so called "1906 Test Lugers". Then, from the same sainted dealer, I purchased the pistol that is the subject of this piece: the "Russian Commercial", so named by Jones (1959). "It is a rare bird" Mr. Schmitz averred as he sent me an entry from the Jones book which showed an example in all it's glory. An oddity at a reasonable price ... I told him "send it".

As is so often the case with Lugers, particularly with ones that are a bit off beat, the yawning chasm of a Rabbit Hole lurked beneath the somewhat everyday look of the pistol. Herewith is the story.

I want to be clear that I really have no particular axe to grind regarding this pistol. Whether it is "Russian" or something else is, without more data, unknowable. The purpose of this paper is to, hopefully, query the broader collecting fraternity regarding similar examples or for any information. I will attempt to offer some food for thought.

Please also note well that this article in no way concerns or is related to the 1906 "Crossed Rifle / Russian Contract" pistols.

I use the name "Russian Commercial" without endorsing it in any way as an identification. I think that collectors that are familiar with the markings on these pistols know it by that name so it is used as a matter of convenience. I will use the words "Russian Commercial" and "Russian" interchangeably to refer to them.

To begin, a diligent examination of the literature (American/English) turned up a total of ten references that referred to this pistol. The mentions are brief, some no more than a few words, some little more than a representation of the characteristic reversed N mark. They will be summarized here.

A lengthy exploration of the Internet yielded little. There were three topics on the Jan Still Luger boards, one of which was started by me. On the Luger Boards there was one thread back in 2017 that received no replies (these are referenced in Appendix I). So the task that has fallen to me is less to summarize and explicate than to attempt to create something solid out of smoke. And to, hopefully,

encourage any reader with information to publish it or to contact me.

II. Brief Summary and Description of the Object in Question (In other words: What are we talking about?)

For those not familiar with the subject of this paper, the so called "Russian Contract" Luger was first identified by Jones (1959) in his book *Luger Variations*. It is a commercial Luger (1920/1923) whose distinction is a mark, found on frame or barrel or both, that looks like a crowned character which resembles a reversed "N". This character is generally taken to be the Cyrillic "I" which has the aforementioned



appearance. The photograph shows the reversed N compared to the common German Crowned N nitro proof. Note also the difference between the crowns. There are very few examples. They generally have no marks other than the N mark and a low serial on the frame and, sometimes, on the barrel. The serial might appear internally on a few parts. That is, essentially, it. There is disagreement on almost every aspect of these things and I will endeavor to share the thoughts of other collectors with you. As an aside, this is a case where having a comprehensive index of the NAPCA journal would have been very useful. Perhaps they can, as an organization, make that happen rather than have all that precious information vanish, like tears in the rain, to steal a good use of English.

III. The Examples

There are two examples currently in collectors hands that I am aware of. There is also one illustrated by Jones (1959). These three are the totality of the examples which can be visually or physically examined. The images in Jones' book are black and white and grainy and do not show all views of the pistol and so are of limited use. I was informed that James N. Belford (the owner of the pistol) donated/sold some of his collection to R. W. Norton Art Foundation in Shreveport LA. Having contacted them I found that the object of interest was not in the lot sold to them. The fate of that example remains unknown.

All other reported occurrences are not documented with images.

There are two possible examples which appeared in the firearms lists of Ralph Shattuck. These will be discussed in their own section, to follow.

Costanzo (1977) refers, irritatingly obliquely, to examples that might be of virtually any number. More on that and other references later.

These constitute all examples, real and simply cited.

The point here is that I have handled two examples (# 5 & #999), referred to a grainy black and white photo in a 75 year old book of a third (# 9) and have been assured by long dead authors that there are some number of other examples that one cannot examine.



In the discussions to follow, serial number 999 is so called because the middle digit, on the frame, is over stamped and can be read only with difficulty. The intended number might have been 99. Who knows.

So the number of examples of this Luger might be (I stress "might be") seven. Might be more. Might be less. All we know for sure is that two exist as of the writing of this document and that another one existed in 1959.

IV. Detailed discussion of the Russian Crown/M Luger

This firearm is, essentially, a commercial New Model Luger in 7.65mm. It consists of a number of characteristics that might be held in common with a 1914 model too. It has the flat pads on the toggle, a short sear bar, a factory installed hold open (identified by the lack of an associated inspection mark). Any serials present are placed in the commercial (hidden) manner.

What sets these pistols apart from all other Lugers (and every other pistol too, as

Military (Exposed) Numbering



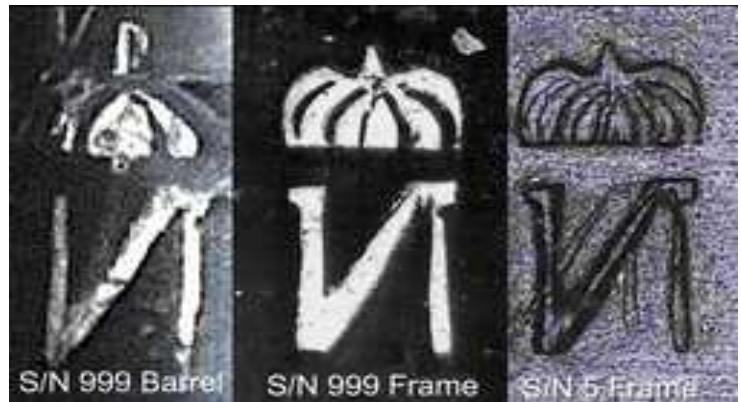
Civilian (Hidden) Numbering



far as I have been able to determine) is the presence of a Proof/acceptance mark that consists of a Crown over a reversed "N" as described above.

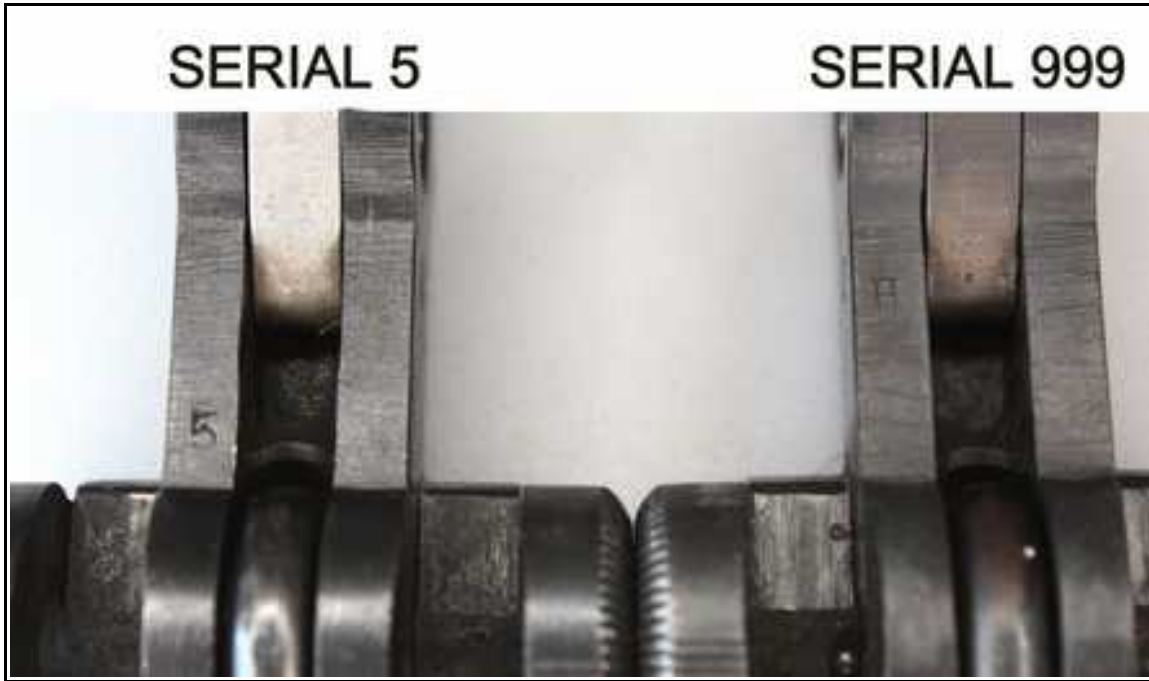
This mark appears on the left frame (all 3 observed cases) and, in two cases (# 9 & # 999), on the barrel.

Note that there is a slight imperfection in the die on the top of the right leg of the "N". This suggests that the same die was used for all three stamps. The lack of a halo around these stamps indicates that they were applied prior to bluing.



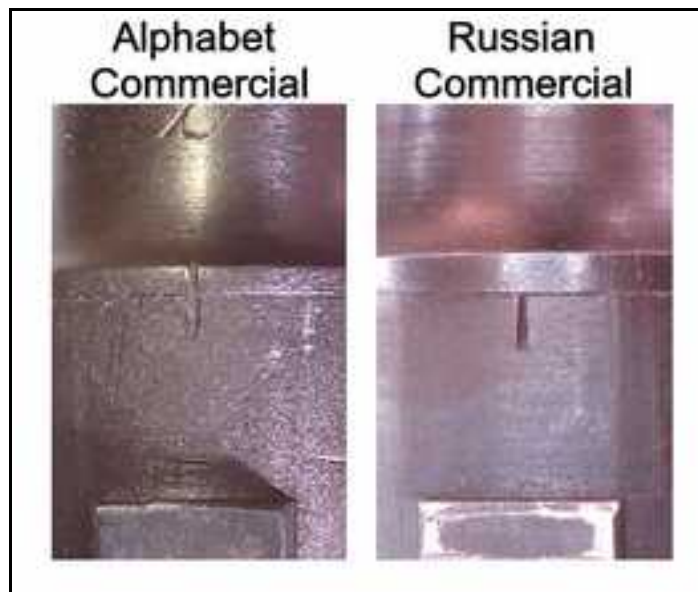
I have had the opportunity to examine serial numbers 5 & 999 in minute detail. How generalizable my findings are to other examples is an open question.

Serial #5 shows a number, which could be an inspector's mark that, perhaps fortuitously, matches the serial, on the bottom the the rear toggle. It has no distinctive markings of any kind internally. No "Flaming Bomb" in the barrel lock recess nor a Catherine Wheel in the barrel ring. No serial on the stop. All one can



find are some obscure letters (and few at that) that are probably inspectors marks. Nothing whatsoever that might serve to provide a date range or anything else.

Serial #999 is essentially the same. However, in the same area on the underside of



the toggle were a "Serial Number" was found on #5, there is a letter. Apparently the same font and the same size as the other marking. This does support the "random occurrence" hypothesis with regard to Serial 5. That is to say that I am of the opinion that the "5" is not a serial but some sort of inspection mark.

Reading Jones' comments on serial #9, it appears that on that pistol the

acceptance mark and the serial appear on the barrel with only the serial on the frame front (presumably). This cannot be confirmed from the pictures and the description is equivocal.

A difference from every other Luger in my collection and a characteristic that I thought, up until now (are you REALLY surprised, Ed?) was present on all Lugers is the Witness Mark, or lack thereof. These are the short lines on the bottom of the barrel shoulder and the receiver 180 degrees from the sight line. These marks were put on before assembly because they were used to ensure both the correct position of the front sight and that the barrel lined up with the receiver in assembly. As the name indicates, they show the point to which the barrel must be "drawn up" (screwed in) to allow the front sight to line up properly.

I found that neither Russian Commercial that I examined had one. Dwight Gruber informs me that "some very late DWM production Lugers sold by Mauser (often police) have a receiver mark but no barrel mark".

Two examples (#5 and #9) have German language stamps on the extractor and under the safety (ie. *Geladen* and *Gesichert*: Loaded and Secured). One, #999, has "ЗАРЯДЪ" (Loaded) on the extractor and no mark under the safety.

All three examples have the DWM logo stamped on the front toggle.

Finally, all three examinable examples have the word "GERMANY" stamped on the chamber in letters about 2mm tall. Two things should be noted. First is that this placement for an export stamp is unusual. I have examined a fair number of Lugers and have come across this placement only once before. Collectors far more knowledgeable than I have also expressed surprise at this. Second is that there is no halo around the stamp. This is a fairly conclusive indicator that



the stamp was applied prior to bluing. Be aware that this second observation is based on the stamps on serials #5 and #999. Number 9 is not clear enough for such a determination. This seems to be a tell and will come into play as we attempt to identify other examples.

V. Notes on Fit and Finish

Some have commented that this is a "parts gun", that is to say cobbled together from odd pieces and made to look like something a factory produced. Given the paucity of examples one wonders how, precisely, this opinion could be reached without an actual examination of the weapons in question. Another imponderable.

Another thought is that these pistols are repurposed scrap parts. It has been suggested that the chamber areas might well be polished/ground to remove any traces of earlier markings (ie. Dates). To examine this hypothesis I measured the distance from the barrel stop to the top of the chamber with a digital caliper.



A total of six non-Russian pistols were measured in this way, four late commercials and two WW I era examples. The results are shown in the table.

An examination of the shape of the chamber area was also undertaken. The thinking was that if any grinding occurred on the top, the profile would be impacted and would be obvious if a comparison were made to pistols that were presumably not altered.

CHAMBER AREA COMPARISONS INCHES			
GERMAN		RUSSIAN	
89571	0.98	5	0.96
86192	0.97	999	0.96
90520	0.97		
67910	0.98		
1916 DWM	0.96		
1916 DWM	0.96		
AVERAGE	0.97	AVERAGE	0.96



The extent of the chamber metal appears to be virtually identical for the Russian and commercial examples.

Though these examinations were by no means comprehensive, they sufficed, I believe, to refute the contention that the Russian pistols had barrel extensions that were modified by grinding the upper surface in order to obliterate earlier markings.

Finally, a close examination was made of the finish of the two Russian pistols. Here it was obvious that serial #999 was refinished.

The bluing is a bright dip blue and many of the hard edges are softened by vigorous

polishing. No straw finish remains on any part.

Serial #5, on the other hand, has the appearance that any 100 year old gun would have given moderate, gentle use.

The description of the only other example, in Jones, is silent on condition.

One might make the case that serial #999 was "cobbled" together, one might even argue that it is a scrap gun. But then, what of serial #5?



The two examples that I have at hand do not present as "Shooter" guns, objects that are rough and opportunistically assembled. Could some vagabond expert forger have made some number of these guns to deceive? Certainly. But I think not. Their condition and lack of proofs, or other factory markings, is consistent with what are

commonly referred to as "Lunch Box Lugers", Lugers that were removed piecemeal (in a lunchbox) and reassembled off site for illegal sales. Such activities might be informal or, potentially, through the activities (dare I say "collusion") of management.

As with so much else concerning these guns, the results are equivocal. Consider: three examples. One is untouched, authentic. One is "monkeyed" with. One abstains from commenting. No one should be surprised.

VI. The Literature (Full citations in Appendix I)

What follows is the result of a scouring of standard and esoteric references to the Luger as well as volumes devoted to marks without any specific emphasis on Lugers per se. The only detailed discussion of the Russian Commercial occurs in Jones (1959). All other references seem to exist only because Jones included a description in his work. I sincerely doubt that any of the authors (excepting Jones) actually examined one of these weapons. The repeated use of Jones' terminology ("Russian Commercial") and purported dating (1923) in these references supports my contention as to their derivative nature.

As I have delved into the references and received information from collectors (thanks due to Christopher Hess) I have noticed that while there is a paucity of detailed references, the "Russian 1923" appears as a line item in pricing guides and lists of Luger models sporadically but somewhat regularly. As references are found I will note them but recognize that there is not any particular value to them. They were added, I believe, by the various authors for the sake of completeness rather than elucidation.

For copies of the actual references please refer to the "REFERENCES ANNEX to The Russian Crown/И Luger" available elsewhere.

Jones (1959) The earliest reference to this pistol that I could find is from Jones' *Luger Variations*. In that book the author provided an illustration and summary of the example he (presumably) examined. It is also the first use of the name "Russian Commercial" which Jones evidentially coined. His discussion is somewhat confused and suggested that the pistol in question might either be a 1914 "Russian Contract" pistol or a 1923 model. I should note that the example in Jones was from the James N. Belford collection. Belford was a collector of some note and in 1969 wrote the

book (along with Jack Dunlap) "*The Mauser Self Loading Pistol*". I mention this since Mr. Belford had some sophistication when it came to identifying and collecting pistols. A diligent search turned up no mention of the disposal of the Belford Collection after his death in 1979 (see discussion above).

Mittleman (1964) simply reproduced the Crown/N mark and suggested that it is a "Russian Commercial" whilst citing Jones.

Marvin (1965) Marvin, too, reproduced the Crown/N mark and suggested that it is a "Russian Commercial". In his revised work (1972) he omits any mention of the mark. Marvin cites a price for this gun in the Luger Journal Q4 1973.

Ralph Shattuck produced a series of sales mailings. I have been able to, provisionally, "identify" two examples of the Russian Commercial from a series of these from the years 1971-1985. I will discuss these findings in the next section.

Costanzo (1977) implied that he had seen at least two with four digit serials and chambered in 9mm and 7.65mm. No reference/pictures. I interpret this conservatively and assume two more examples, one of each caliber. He also illustrates the Reverse N.

McFarland (1986) simply mentions a "Russian 1923" in his "comprehensive list of all models of Luger". No reference and no illustration.

Walter (1986 & 1995) offers some speculation on a Russian emigre connection but seems rightfully dubious. He is clearly going on other people's information. He illustrates Reverse N in the 1986 reference.

Reese (1992) reproduced a Shattuck price guide that somewhat nebulously described a 1923 Russian as a "rework" with a lazy N (!).

Davis (2006) pooh-poohs the whole thing by suggesting that the reversed N is simply a defective die. He repeats this assessment word for word in his 2018 book.

The net of the literature wisdom is really a reflection of what we don't know.

The Shattuck Lists

Ralph Shattuck was a well known arms dealer and expert on Lugers. The lists of his guns for sale are a resource for collectors and researchers to this day. While not all of his lists have been examined, three Lugers that appear in the 60 some odd lists that have been explored are interesting. I reproduce the actual entries in these lists in Appendix II. Note that one of these Lugers didn't sell and was relisted which raised the number of entries (with duplication) to six.

I had thought that the three pistols described are, in fact, Russian Commercials and should be included in the data base. Why? Well they are definitively not the Russian Contract Lugers of 1906 vintage. He specifically identifies them as "1923 Russian" Lugers. A man with Shattuck's experience would not mistake a 1923 Luger for a much earlier one. He also states unequivocally that the word "Germany" is stamped on the chamber of two of them, in one case he specifies "parallel to Barrel". The three examples that we have good information on also have such a mark (as discussed above). Shattuck's three are .30 caliber and two have serials that are low. I assumed that serial "3/47" was a typo for "3147". Further investigation of the lists might clarify this.

The only problem is that serial #1, while interesting, is not what we have termed a "Russian Commercial". It does not have the reverse N mark. We have determined this because we tracked down an auction where it sold (Rock Island April 2015, Lot # 1443) and finally obtained photos. While it has the Germany stamp in the correct place, it lacks the necessary reverse N stamp.

Another interesting little twist: Shattuck, for two of the listings (lists 149 & 150), for Serial #788, states unequivocally that these pistols were:

"Issued to Russian Officers attached to the German General Staff School in the 20's"

This is the first I have come across this assertion.

This episode provides a warning to those that take written descriptions as gospel. The remaining two Shattuck examples will carry a footnote in the data base.

VII. What does the Crown/N signify?

A regular criticism of the hypothesis of a Russian connection of these pistols is that

a circa 1920 Luger would hardly bear a mark including a CROWN inasmuch as the Russian revolution did away with such things. Fine and good but it should be remembered that the revolution only ended in 1923. And it is not clear that these pistols were manufactured in or after 1920. They might well have dated from 1914 or later (though the lack of Witness mark suggests a late date). There are no internal marks to help us date them more finely. There is no compelling argument for these weapons either having or not having a Russian connection.

It also behooves us to remember that the Cyrillic alphabet is used in writing a number of languages: Russian, Ukrainian, Serbian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Belarusian, Kazakh, Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Tajik, Gagauz and Mongolian. I am not implying a Tajikistan connection for this weapon ... but I am not denying it. We simply do not know.

Then we have the statement by Shattuck that they were issued to Russian Officers attached to the German military.

While Soviet-German military cooperation between 1922 and 1933 is often forgotten, it had a decisive impact on the origins and outbreak of World War II. Germany rebuilt its shattered military at four secret bases hidden in Russia. In exchange, the Reichswehr sent men to teach and train the young Soviet officer corps.¹

And anti-communists were also involved with the Germans²:

Unofficial, far-right connections: Some links existed between German right-wing paramilitaries like the Freikorps and exiled Russian monarchists, including those with Nazi sympathies. A joint organization, the Aufbau, was formed by proto-Nazis and Russian monarchists in Bavaria with the goal of overthrowing both the Weimar Republic and the Soviet government.

Individual funding: One exiled Romanov, Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich, moved to Germany in the 1920s and may have helped finance the Aufbau.³

Might these Lugers have been presented/issued/awarded to Russian Officers? This is an area for further study.

Note the the Cyrillic reversed "N" might stand for "Инспектировать" or "Inspect". Thus indicating some level of government involvement in production. Another possibility is "Императорский" or "Imperial". Such speculation is not terribly productive.

We should also recall that hyperinflation was crippling Germany in the early 1920's. It is not difficult to imagine that a company like DWM or, perhaps, some employees in that company might produce pistols to meet demand where they found it. Russian Royalists buying weapons is not beyond the realm of possibility.



The Crown in the mark is interesting.

Compare it to the Crown that is ubiquitous on German firearms.

No cross surmounting it, a shape reminiscent of a cap rather than the imposing presence of a crown. I have been unable to find any image close to it. But I think that it knows more than it is telling. To me, it has something of an Eastern flavor to it. Though, perhaps, there is a cross surmounting the original but it is too small to be represented in the die. The crown in the picture is from a Bulgarian 2 Leva coin from 1925. Food for thought.



VIII. The Reversed N Alone

The image on the right shows the reversed N surmounted by an anchor. It is a proof or manufacturer's mark on a 1905 Russian torpedo fuse⁴.



I also came across the N mark associated with the Winchester rifles that were part of the 1895 Russian Contract. The figures in the box ("XиЗ") in the photo on the left denote Russian acceptance. The reversed N, standing on it's own, is an unknown. No crown but a reversed N nonetheless⁵.



It appears that this mark appears somewhat randomly on these firearms that were actually imported into Russia pre-1916 or so.

IX. Criticisms

Over the years a number of criticisms have been leveled at these pistols. I will mention a few and address them.

- **IT'S A FAKE!**

Perhaps. The question is: "A fake of what, exactly?". I think that the correct word would be "fabrication" rather than "fake". A fantasy piece if you will.



The pantograph knife, above, is a fantasy piece: no such thing was ever part of the official equipment of the SS. It was created to deceive. Is this Luger such an animal? On balance I think not. It is a pointless as a fantasy piece. It has no romantic or evil associations, it is not more attractive than any other Luger. If a faker wanted to make money, the iconography is simply bad because it raises questions. The ever popular Death's Head would have been a far better choice.

- **There were "rare" Lugers with supposedly Eastern European provenance that surfaced in the US in the 70-80s. Could it be one of those?**

Not a criticism, rather an solution, possibly. The problem with this line of reasoning is that the first mention of these critters was in 1959.

- **This is not a Russian proof mark**

OK. So? It might be from a myriad of other countries. And, frankly, it takes a bold man to assert a negative and then attempt to prove it.

- **The Crown/M mark is a defective die**

A die missing a serif on a letter or number is one thing, cutting a die with a letter reversed is quite another. It beggars the imagination to suggest that DWM would produce such a thing inadvertently. The stamp itself is clear and sharp. Professional in every way.

- **Russian Crown mark post revolution is impossible**

I dealt with this one above. Suffice it to say that such a mark could have been used in many places and that the Revolution went on long enough to see such a marked pistol.

- **It is a Bubba job**

Meaning that it was simply knocked off casually, in a basement or something like that. Well, there might be at least seven of them which suggests a more formal production process, for one thing. Further, the markings and fit and finish of the two I was able to examine refute any contention of less than highly professional and competent manufacturing.

X. So what is it?

In my humble opinion, this Luger and it's mates, are what they purport to be: Production pistols diverted from the inspection and proofing process and custom numbered and marked.

That is a minimalist assumption and begs the questions: "Why? For whom? When?"

My minimalist assumption is fairly supportable upon examination of the objects in question. More than that is guesswork.

One gentleman has suggested that some European Princely house contracted for these Lugers to arm a personal army. Another thought that it was possible that

emigre groups were staging an insurgency after the revolution in Russia. Both are possible. But to my mind are unlikely.

At least one of the extant pistols is in excellent condition. It does not seem to have been tested, or even shot. I think that this provides at least some support for the notion that these pistols were diverted to the US, or at least there was hope that they would be shipped here. The GERMANY stamp makes no sense for a product destined for Russia. Of course, one might also point out that a Cyrillic stamp makes no sense for a product destined for the USA. Ahhh ... Lugers.

The lack of halos around the export and reverse N stamps indicate that they were both applied prior to bluing. It does not speak to the possibility, nor the likelihood, that they were applied contemporaneously. Which raises the question of what was being accomplished with the application of these stamps in the order in which they were applied. Allow me to point out that Walter (1995, p. 199) observes that Stoeger, as a result of curtailed sales during the depression, evidentially canceled an order that was in progress. Any pistols left on the dock, so to speak, would have had an export stamp already applied. And they had to go somewhere, right? The same would go for other pistols that were part of a canceled, or otherwise unfulfilled, order. It has been suggested that a shipment to Russia or other country was halted and the the pistols involved were then shipped (after being appropriately stamped "GERMANY") to the US. I think that it is equally likely that the reverse was true, the a US shipment, being canceled, went to some European country.

We are now firmly in the area of speculation.

I suspect that these are "Lunch Box Lugers", that is to say pistols that were removed from the factory in parts via the lunch box (metaphorically) route. With or without the knowledge and participation of management is unknown.

My personal opinion is that this pistol, and it's brothers, were destined for some country whose delivery was never fulfilled and that they then were diverted to some other country. The USA figures into this scenario in some arcane way. Whether they were samples against a larger potential contract or simply under the table as illegal arms is simply unknowable. I think that the answer is as mundane as that. They never quite made it to the original destination and then got diverted to ... somewhere. This might make sense inasmuch as the "GERMANY" stamp is only

relevant if the object in question was intended for shipment to the US at some point during it's travels. The US required an indelible indication, in English, of the country of origin. Perhaps they were sitting there awaiting bluing when the Russian (or whatever) contract was canceled so they were summarily stamped "GERMANY" and shipped off to the USA. Who knows?

XI. Conclusion

There you have it. Another Russian (presumed) riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma. I suspect that more of these pistols are out there and it is my hope that this article will "shake the tree", so to speak, and produce more examples that will help us understand what these fascinating pistols are.

The final point I would like to make is that we often see Lugers (and other weapons) that have had a storied life. I own a Luger that served with an identified Regiment during WW 1, was pressed into service by the police during the Weimer era, served in WW 2, was used by the VOPO and then, finally, shipped to Florida where I obtained it. A life worth telling I say.

Who is to say that these "Russian Commercials" do not have a similar long and varied history? I value them for that reason if no other.

Appendix I
References For the "Russian Commercial" Luger

1. Jones, H. E. (1959). **Luger Variations**. Self Published. pp. 178-179, 235.
2. Mittleman, M. B. (1964). **An Identification Key to the Principle Variations of the Luger pistol**. First Edition. Self Published. pp.15, Inside front cover.
3. Marvin, R. B. (1965). **Luger Proof Marks**. Self Published. p. 7.
4. Shattuck, R. (1971-1981). **Various Sales Lists**. Self Published. Birmingham, Michigan
5. Costanzo, S. (1977). **World of Lugers Proof Marks: Complete Listing of Different Variations of Proof Marks on the Luger**. N.P. p. 184.
6. McFarland, D. J. (1986). **The P-08 Parabellum Luger Automatic Pistol**. Desert Publications. El Dorado, Arizona. p. 45.
7. Walter, J. (1986). **Luger Book: The Encyclopedia of the Borchardt and Borchardt-Luger Handguns, 1885-1985**. Arms and Armour Press. p. 138.
8. Reese II, M. (1976 rev. 1992). **Luger Tips Revised Edition**. Pioneer Press. p. 118.
9. Walter, J. (1995). **The Luger Story, The Standard History of the World's Most Famous Handgun**. Greenhill Books. pp. 196-197
10. Davis, A. (2006). **Standard Catalog of Luger**. Gun Digest Books. p. 133.
11. Davis, A. (2018). **Handbook to the Catalog of Lugers**. Duckett Publishing Company. p.132.

Appendix II

Notes

⁰ *The Difficult Ghost: Searching for Truman Capote* by Leila Guerriero

¹ <https://warontherocks.com/2016/06/sowing-the-wind-the-first-soviet-german-military-pact-and-the-origins-of-world-war-ii/#:~:text=While%20Soviet%20German%20military%20cooperation%20between%201922%20and, and%20train%20the%20young%20Soviet%20officer%20corps.>

² <https://bpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/blogs.gwu.edu/dist/8/1076/files/2020/12/IERES-papers-no.-7-October-2020.pdf>

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-Bolshevist_League#:~:text=The%20organization%20was%20financed%20by, the%20magazine%20the%20Das%20Gewissen.

⁴ https://www.reddit.com/r/russian/comments/1akyy4z/understanding_this_imperial_russian_factory/

⁵ <https://www.gunboards.com/threads/picking-this-up-in-a-trade-1916-russian-contract-winchester-1895-in-7-62x54r.657146/page-2>

Appendix III Forum References

For the sake of completeness and for the convenience of anyone who wishes to follow me down this Rabbit Hole, I have added the links to the few threads on this topic that I have been able to find. Note that I did not specifically search more general "Gun" forums.

1/8/2025

https://www.lugerforums.com/threads/what-does-anyone-know-about-russian-commercials.134872/page-2?post_id=1094945#post-1094945

8/12/2024

https://www.lugerforums.com/threads/revisiting-the-30-luger-cyrillic.133591/?post_id=1072077#post-1072077

9/24/2021

<https://www.lugerforums.com/threads/an-oddy-30-luger-cyrillic.123406/#replies>

9/25/2017

<https://forum.lugerforum.com/showthread.php?t=37716&referrerid=17839>

12/13/2016

<https://www.gunboards.com/threads/picking-this-up-in-a-trade-1916-russian-contract-winchester-1895-in-7-62x54r.657146/page-2>
1916 Russian Contract Winchester 1895

Appendix IV

Shattuck List Entries (1971-1981). Various Sales Lists

n.b. Serial # 1 is not a Russian Commercial. The entry was left here so the reader can compare it to his other entries and draw their own conclusions. This is by no means the result of examining all of the lists. It represents "hits" found on 60 out of 300+ lists

Serial # 788

294 LUGER, D&N, 30, 3 7/8", 788. One of the RAREST of all CONTRACTS. 1923 RUSSIAN. SERIAL 788. Germany Stamped on the Chamber parallel to Barrel. RUSSIAN EXTRACTOR with NEAR MINT COND.. It is felt that these weapons were Issued to Russian Officers attached to the German GENERAL STAFF school in the Late 1920's. ONLY Four pieces Known. A RARE OPPORTUNITY at.....\$750.00
List 147, Item 4, Stock #244
1971

Serial # 788

PAGE 4 LIST 148
ITEM STOCK
38 294 LUGER, D&N, 30, 3 7/8", 788. One of the RAREST OF ALL CONTRACTS. The 1923 RUSSIAN. Germany Stamped on the Chamber parallel to Barrel. RUSSIAN EXTRACTOR with NEAR MINT COND. It is Felt that these weapons were Issued to Russian Officers attached to the GERMAN GENERAL STAFF SCHOOL in the Late 1920's. ONLY FOUR PIECES KNOWN. A VERY RARE OPPORTUNITY at.....\$750.00
List 148, Item 38,
Stock #244
1971

Serial # 788

27 294 LUGER, D&N, 30, 3 7/8", 788..THE 1923 RUSSIAN. One of the Rarest Early Contracts. Germany Stamped on the Chamber parallel to Barrel, RUSSIAN EXTRACTOR with near MINT CONDITION. These weapons were Issued to Russian Officers attached to the GERMAN GENERAL STAFF SCHOOL in the 1920's..ONLY 4 Pieces Known..VERY RARE.....\$750.00
List 149, Item 27,
Stock # 244
1971

Serial # 788

15 294 LUGER, D&N, 30, 3 7/8, 788..THE 1923 RUSSIAN.. The Famous Russian. One of the Rarest of the Contracts..Germany stamped parallel to the Barrel on the Chamber. Russian Extractor, RUSSIAN E proof with Crown on the receiver. Near Mint Cond. Issued to Russian Officers attached to the German General Staff school in the 20's..ONLY Four pieces Known..SEE Jones..Rare Opportunity at.....\$750.00
List 150, Item 15,
Stock # 244
1971

Serial # 1

19 W304 LUGER, D&N, 30, #1, .THE SUPER RARE 1923 RUSSIAN..NOTE SERIAL.. This RARE is Shown in KENYON..This is One of the Rarest 1923's..Few are KNOWN or SEEN..RUSSIAN PROOFED..MINT GRIPS, EXC Finish and Straw..MATCHED....SUPER BUY.....\$750.00
List 166, Item 19,
Stock #W304
1975

Serial # 3147

6 9217 LUGER, D&N, 4", 30, #3/47, VERY RARE 1923 RUSSIAN. EXC Orig FINISH, MAG, BORE, GRIPS. RUSSIAN SERIAL ON FRAME, RUSSIAN EXTRACTOR, BLANK TOGGLE, GERMANY ON CHAMBER, TOP INVESTMENT AND COLLECTION GRADE..FROM KNOWN TOP COLLECTION(ASK) \$1250.00
List 189, Item 6,
Stock #9217
1981

Appendix V Data

2	9	1923	C/M	Y	GERMANY	DWM	Hidden	7.65	3.625	Y	?	?	Y	GELADEN	?	03/04/25	Jones
3	999	1923	C/M	Y	GERMANY	DWM	Hidden	7.65	3.85	Y	N		Y	LAPRIL	Gesicht	03/04/25	Personal Observation
4	Note 1	?	?	?	?	?	?	7.65	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	08/24/2025	Costanzo
5	Note 1	?	?	?	?	?	?	9mm	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	08/24/2025	Costanzo
6	788	1923	C/M	Y	GERMANY	?	?	7.65	3.875	?	?	?	?	LAPRIL	?	08/24/2025	Shattuck?
7	3147	1923	?	Y	GERMANY	Blank	?	7.65	4	?	?	?	?	LAPRIL	?	08/24/2025	Shattuck?

Colored background entries are filled out based on written descriptions. They were NOT examined either physically or via photographs.
 Any entry in the table is there because either 1) I was observed by me or 2) It was specifically mentioned in the written description.

Note 1: Costanzo states that the serials were "four digits".

Note 2: Shattuck misidentified another pistol with a description similar to that employed for these two. Identification is doubtful.

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