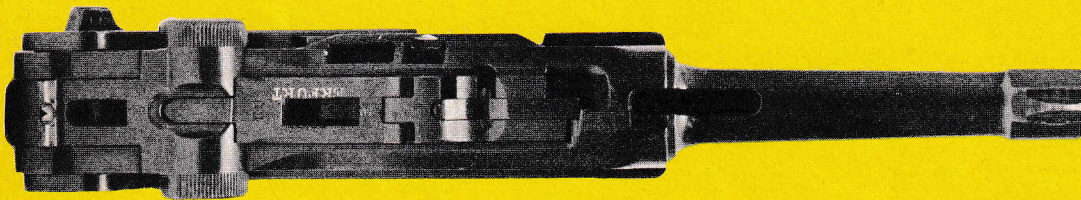


SHOOT THAT LUGER!

Some Lugers are for shootin',
some for collecting. Be sure
you know which yours is.
If it's the former, here's how
to make 'Luger food.'

by Mason Williams

Luger action open, showing toggle locking mechanism — one of many types of breech-locking mechanisms. Toggle was first introduced on the Maxim machine gun in 1884. Designer probably added the lock as an extra safety measure, although it was not necessary to ensure a locked breech design.



Two pictures on left are the same Luger — cutaway, salesman's sample — fully functional. Collectors claim only four are known.

No handgun has ever captured the public purse or the public imagination as completely as the Luger pistol. Its predecessor, the Borchardt, sold well and was popular — but beside the 1900 caliber .30 Luger with its trim, clean, beautiful lines, the Borchardt looked and weighed like a dumpy German house frau. As a mechanical device the Luger draws sighs of admiration from machinists and designers and with few exceptions the Luger of 1940 is as beautiful, as well-made and as eye catching as the Luger of 1900 so that much of its appeal lies in the workmanship and the design. • The Luger will never be manufactured again because every part is machined and fitted to close tolerances — so that manufacturing costs today would run the price up to around \$300. There are only two screws in a Luger and these hold the grips to the frame. When the Luger first saw the light of day, labor and production costs were such that this pistol could be turned out at a highly competitive figure that enabled Georg Luger to sell it on a world-wide basis and to obtain Government contracts. As far as I know there has never been a basic or major change in design or manufacturing between 1900 and 1943 — a tribute to the genius

Model 1900 American Eagle pistols for field testing. They were issued to the Cavalry but were shortly rejected as unsatisfactory for rough frontier duty. These pistols were then sold as surplus by the Government to become one of the most sought after Lugers.

As mentioned above DWM was the original manufacturer of the Luger pistol. In time others produced this handgun:

Erfurt — This was the Royal Arsenal and commencing in 1910 this factory manufactured great quantities of Lugers ceasing production in 1918.

Vickers, Ltd. — This British firm of Vickers-Armstrong turned out around 10,000 Lugers for the Dutch Government some time in 1922 or 1923.

Simson And Company Of Suhl, Germany — After the first World War this company manufactured Lugers for use by the German Army between 1922 and 1934.

Waffenfabrik Bern — This Swiss firm made Lugers for Swiss Military and Commercial sales beginning in 1924.

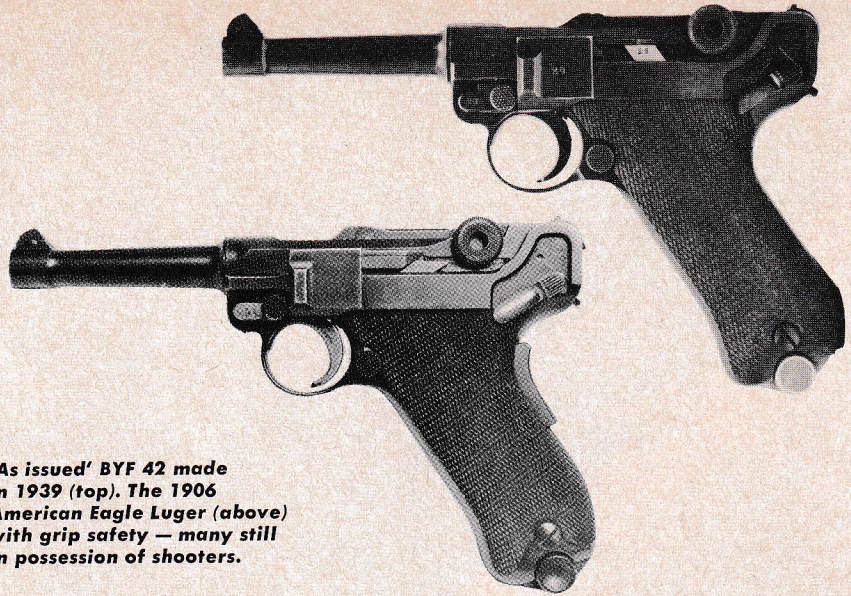
Mauser — The world famous Mauser factory took over DWM in 1930 and turned out Lugers until 1942 for both the Military and civilian sales.

Krieghoff — There is some question whether this firm actually manufactured all of its Lugers or whether it took forgings and machined these forgings into Luger parts. Some collectors state that they believe many of the Krieghoff Lugers were merely assembled by Krieghoff out of parts supplied by other firms. In any event, Krieghoff Lugers were sold to the German Air Force and a few went into civilian sales. This company commenced working with Lugers in 1935 and continued until late in the war — as far as I can determine.

Spandau — If you would like to start an argument among Luger collectors simply say that you have seen a Spandau Luger — a real, genuine one. A few have been examined but they did not appear to be factory original. Some collectors believe that the great Spandau works did turn out large numbers of Lugers near the end of the first World War but that they were lost or discarded on the battlefields and are there today, buried, rusted.

Lugers have been made in various styles and types running from the common 4" barrel Lugers through Naval Lugers with 6" barrels, Artillery Lugers with 8" barrel and adjustable sights mounted on the rear of the barrel itself. Some Lugers will be found bearing two dates on the front of the receiver. These Lugers were manufactured by DWM and by Erfurt. The first date designates the date of original manufacture — say 1918. The second date 1920 shows the

continued on page 77

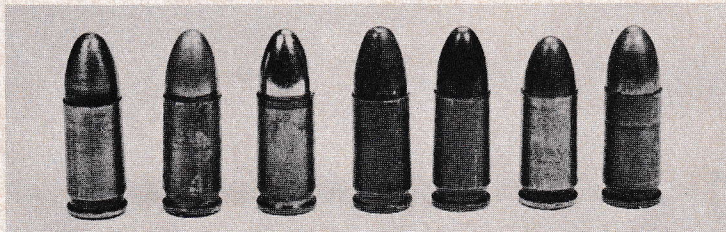


'As issued' BYF 42 made in 1939 (top). The 1906 American Eagle Luger (above) with grip safety — many still in possession of shooters.

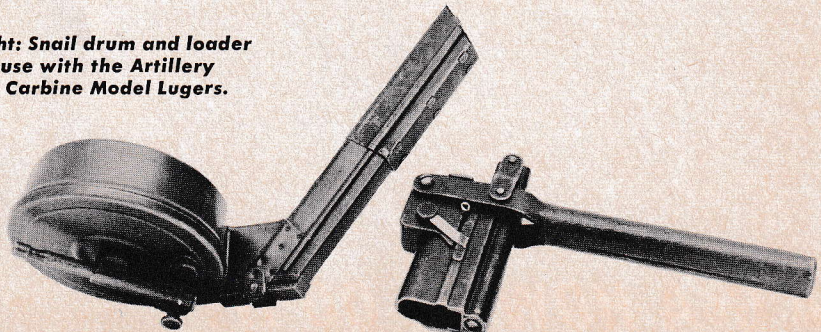


DWM Dutch Royal Air Force Luger (right). Holster carries pistol, oiler/cleaner tool; pouch carries two spare magazines — front compartments provide for loading/stripping tool, pouch.

Types of service 9mm ammunition (below) showing bullet color, length and case variations.



Right: Snail drum and loader for use with the Artillery and Carbine Model Lugers.



SHOOT THAT LUGER!

continued from page 45

year in which this same Luger was re-issued to either the Military or the Police. Most Police Lugers carry the unit number on the front or rear of the grip.

The Luger carbine may be compared to the Rolls Royce. The survival ratio of the carbines has been high because they are too large to be readily lost and their beauty keeps people from throwing them away. In my opinion the workmanship is better than that on regular Lugers and the ones I have seen have had superb wood and checkering on the fore end. Barrel lengths generally run around 12" although some have barrels as long as 16".

From time to time I run into nickel-plated Lugers. I do not believe that the Luger was ever manufactured and finished in nickel by the factory. From what I can find out, the plating has been done outside the factory. A few Lugers may be found that have been factory engraved. Many have been engraved or worked on by outside engravers.

As a matter of fact Luger variations can run on indefinitely, so it is obviously impossible to attempt to review more than a few in this article. Rather let me state that today any Luger in mint condition is well worth turning over to a collector. Let him decide whether or not this is a shooting Luger or a collector's Luger. If you are interested in shooting a Luger — fine — but please shoot just an ordinary Luger. The fine rare Lugers are becoming more and more difficult to find and should never be used for hunting or target shooting. The most common Military Model is the Erfurt 1908 pistol. Millions were made and this provides a good, sturdy well-made Luger for the hunter or target shooter.

Now how about the 9mm Luger cartridge that brought the Luger pistol to its ultimate potential. The world-wide acceptance of the 9mm Parabellum cartridge dates back to 1902 when the cartridge was first introduced along with the Model 1902 Luger pistol. The 1902 Luger pistol turned out to be a failure and less than one thousand were produced. But the cartridge gained almost instant acceptance to become probably the most popular and widely used military cartridge in the world — so far ahead of its time that right now it is enjoying a resurgence that is unparalleled in ammunition history. This is not an imposing cartridge, rather it is a small, high-intensity cartridge created around a strong, long-lasting case. Maximum bullet diameter runs from 0.350 to 0.356. The case length is 0.740 to 0.760. As I sit here, I can look up at over two hundred different makes and types of 9mm Luger ammunition — some of it so exotic that it is not even