

The Luger Journal

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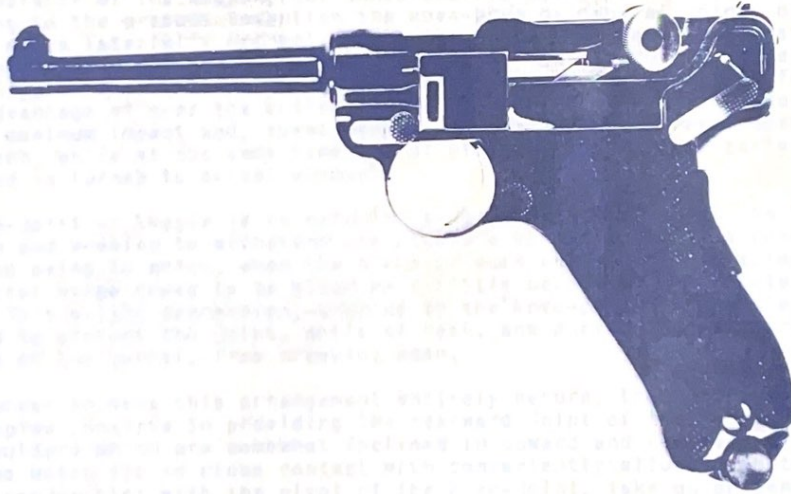
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BELOW IS THE BEAUTIFUL LUGER OF 1900. THE FOLLOWING TEXT IS GEORG LUGERS OWN DESCRIPTION OF HIS AUTOMATIC PISTOL AS IT APPEARED IN HIS PATENT APPLICATION OF MARCH 7, 1900. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT THE FIRST LUGERS ACTUALLY APPEARED IN 1898.



I, Georg Luger, of 34 Weimarer Strasse, Charlottenburg, in the Empire of Germany, Engineer, do hereby declare the nature of this invention and in what manner the same is to be performed to be particularly described and ascertained in and by the following statement thereof, reference being had to the drawings hereunto annexed and to the figures and letters thereon that is to say:

This invention relates to improvements in breech-loading recoil firearms provided with moveable barrels and toggle actuated or knee-jointed breech-blocks, its object being, whilst simplifying the construction of breech-loading recoil firearms of this class, to perfect their operation in such a manner as to enable them fully to meet all reasonable requirements.

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The invention has reference not only to arrangements calculated to improve the mode of operation of the most important parts of the weapon, and more especially of the breech mechanism, and to simplify their structural features; but also to devices by the aid of which, while the weapon is being carried from place to place, the parts are prevented from coming accidentally into operation when they are required to remain out of action and which in firing, render it impossible for the breech to open prematurely under the pressure of the gases; so that the safety of the marksman is under all circumstances guaranteed, and yet the readiness for firing of the weapon is in no way impaired.

As regards, first of all, the breech mechanism, there is provided a highly important new arrangement which enables the toggle or knee-joint at the barrel end, which serves to effect a positive closing, to be extended or closed or cranked folded or opened, as the case may be by manipulating it directly at the central hinge or pivot point, whereas it is a well known fact that formerly special lever mechanism was required to transmit motion thereto for this purpose; or, as in the well known "BORCHARDT" pistol, the joint-lever at the rear was constructed as a double-armed lever, so that, as the barrel receded, it might impinge upon two suitably curved surfaces, and thereby give the knee-joint the initial opening impulse.

This arrangement not only employed the force of the recoil to no advantage, in view of the relative disposition of the levers involved, but an additional drawback of such an arrangement was that the parts of the firearm concerned,—such as the sleeve in "Borchardt's" butt, for example,—formed comparatively bulky rearward projections which not only materially impaired the appearance of the weapon, but unnecessarily added to its weight. Now according to the present invention the knee-eyes or central joint, of the toggle levers laterally project beyond the barrel-tube and co-operate with correspondingly situated curved surfaces of the butt in such a manner that, in opening, or when the barrel recedes after firing the recoil is fully taken advantage of over the entire length of joint-levers the natural result being a maximum impact and, consequently, a more rapid and ready opening of the breech, while at the same time the strain to which several parts are subjected is turned to better account.

The knee-joint or toggle is in existing arrangements secured in the "closed" position and enabled to withstand the pressure of the gases by a construction owing to which, when the links of such knee-joint are extended, its central hinge comes to be situated a little below the end-points of the joint. This slight depression,—adopted on the "knee-press" principle,—is intended to protect the joint, while at rest, and during the rearward traverse of the barrel, from breaking open.

Now in order to make this arrangement entirely secure, the contrivance here adopted consists in providing the rearward joint of the toggle lever, with shoulders which are somewhat inclined in upward and rearward directions and which lie in close contact with conveniently situated abutments and, in conjunction with the pivot of the knee-joint, take up on behalf of the rearward lever the gas pressure transmitted rearward by the breech-block. The result is that the gas-pressure in all cases is first exerted upon the above mentioned bevelled shoulders, or upon the abutments supporting them, so that only part of its weight is brought to bear upon the pivot of the rear lever of the joint, and which pivot is fitted loosely in its socket, whereas in the existing constructions, this pivot had to sustain the full gas pressure and was accordingly liable to injury or destruction by bending or breaking.

Owing to the provision of the free space above alluded to, for the pivot of the rear lever to work in—small as that space is—and further of the bevelled shoulders, the links of the toggle lever or knee-joint, when extended have, as will be more fully explained later on, a tendency to move in such a manner that, in firing, that is under the influence of the pressure of the gases, before the bullet has left the barrel and consequently before the barrel has receded, the premature folding or cranking of the jointed links, or in other words the premature opening of the breech, cannot take place.

Continued:

GEORG LUGER

With reference to the closing spring, which serves to close the breech, or in other words to restore the knee-joint or toggle after it has been opened or cranked to its "closed" or extended position, the improvement which this invention provides is that a flat spring is used for the purpose, which is extended to its full length or approximately so within the neck of the butt, the operative or free upper end of such spring being connected to a swinging arm suspended from the rearward link or lever of the knee-joint or toggle owing to the intermediate agency of which arm, the said spring, though having but a comparatively narrow space to work in, is enabled to control the movements of the knee joint or toggle within given, and relatively wide limits.

In order to facilitate and simplify as far as practicable the operations of taking the firearms to pieces, and afterwards refitting the same, the device here adopted consists in connecting the portion of the weapon, which comprises the breech chamber and the barrel, with the butt or handle piece, which receives that portion by means of a sliding and revoluble bolt, fitted in the butt so as to be laterally removeable and constituting what it is proposed to describe as the "breech holder," a projecting part or stop of which is adapted to rest, directly or indirectly against an extension or projection on the lower side of the barrel.

While the barrel is at rest, that is, in the forward position, the barrel tube, or its extension, is, under the influence of the closing spring which maintains the linked levers or toggle in the extended condition, and the barrel in its forward position, firmly pressed against the bolt, or rather the stop of the bolt, so that consequently the said closing spring itself serves to secure the connection of the barrel, or barrel-tube, and the breech chamber with the butt.

The invention further comprises a novel automatic arresting arrangement for keeping the breech open after the contents of the magazine have been exhausted. It consists of a special arresting lever located within the firearm, on one side of the magazine close to the opening through which the cartridges pass into the breech; such lever being adapted, when, in consequence of the magazine being empty, the cartridge-feeder is raised, after the last cartridge has been fired, to be moved into the operative position by a stop, stud, or the like, connected with the said cartridge-feeder in such a manner that one end of it rests against a shoulder of the breech block, thereby preventing its moving into the closed position.

Now even should the empty magazine be removed, the arresting lever, being engaged with the breech, still, owing to the action of the breech closing spring, compels the breech to remain open, so that, for the purpose of inserting a freshly filled magazine and loading the barrel, the necessity of first re-opening the breech is avoided. The button or stud with which the cartridge feeder is provided to enable it to operate the arresting lever, will at the same time render signal service in depressing the feeder-spring while the magazine is being filled.

Certain improvements, to be more fully described hereafter, have also been made in the trigger and in the means for securing the same.

GEORG LUGER

EDITORS NOTE: THE SPECIFICATIONS CONTINUE WITH INDIVIDUAL REFERENCES TO MR. LUGER'S ORIGINAL PATENT DRAWINGS. THE DRAWINGS ARE TOO NUMEROUS TO BE INCLUDED HERE BUT ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE LUGER JOURNAL FOR \$1.50, PER SET. THE DRAWINGS LIKE THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT WERE ABUSED WITH AGE AND AS SUCH ARE SOMEWHAT LACKING IN QUALITY OF APPEARANCE THOUGH THEY ARE QUITE WELL REPRODUCED. THEIR VALUE TO THE COLLECTOR IS CONSIDERABLE NONE-THE-LESS.

DOUBLE DATE LUGERS

The first World War was a gigantic struggle and while officially ending in 1918 conditions existed at the close of "open hostilities" that set the stage for a continuation of the struggle in the latter 1930's.

CONTINUED:

DOUBLE DATE LUGERS (CONTINUED)

The reasons for the war (WW1) itself and the unforgiveable neglect on the part of the allies during the interlude years is a matter of individual conjecture. Statesmen of each involved nation see it differently, all are too anxious to place the blame on the other.

Historians, however, are more willing to accept the realities of the situation and realize that one of the most interesting political and military histories of our time began with the German situation of 1919.

The serious Luger collector is in a real sense a historian. Not primarily interested in setting the blame for the conflict, or the conditions of the 20's and 30's, the Luger enthusiast is interested in the effect of conditions as they apply to the Luger pistol.

The DOUBLE DATE LUGER is a striking example of the effect of Post World War 1 Conditions in Germany.

Though the First World War was lost for Germany, the Country was by no means defeated in the accepted sense as we know of defeat today. The War was over, and true Germany had signed a surrender agreement, but the nation was basically intact and the tools of war production were undamaged. The Treaty of Versailles was designed to change all that and to make Germany suffer for the holocaust it had caused. Unfortunately for the allies, and the rest of the world as well, the conditions were both unreasonable and unenforceable. For with the war reparations came financial disaster and social unrest. The French decision to occupy the Country and force Germany to pay the war debt compounded the problem and allowed the Communists the opportunity they needed to stir a fever within the people that unsettled the Democratic government. Finally as the result of this unrest and Communist advance the Nazi party came to power. The rest is history.

DOUBLE DATE LUGER #1056

The Treaty of Versailles required a complete disbanding of the German Army, Navy and Airforce except for a token force in each service. The only sizable force allowed under the treaty was a 100,000 man "army" intended for police purposes. All heavy arms production was stopped and all new hand guns were required to be in a calibre of 8mm or less and with a barrel length of 3 15/16" or less. New Luger production of the early 1920's supposedly conformed to these requirements though there are sufficient exceptions to the rule to indicate there was only token adherence to the terms of the treaty. Because the German Government has always considered a calibre of less than 9mm inadequate for standard sidearm use World War 1 Lugers were re-issued to the 100,000 man Army and Lugers of 7.65mm were offered for export sales. The re-issued guns, bearing W.W. 1 dates (1914-1918) were re-dated above the existing dates and thus carried two dates on the chamber area. The common re-dated guns bear 1920 or 1921 over 1914 through 1918 dates. There are exceptions however.

Double dated Lugers, manufactured by both DWM and Erfurt, are found with barrel lengths of 3 5/8", 4", 6" and 8" though the 6" and 8" variations are rare. Many of these double dates carry front grip strap markings indicating, in most cases, the police group to which they were re-issued. Some of the marks though are WW 1 military marks, and some markings are struck through where the weapon was issued to another police group or where the WW 1 mark was struck out.

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DOUBLE DATE LUGER #1056

The degree of handling or re-manufacture on the double date Lugers varied from pistole to pistole. Some were issued as they were received from the German Armed Forces of World War One, others were re-barreled and repaired to varying degrees. Many carry the small "RC" and Crown marks indicating arsenal repairs. While not particularly rare the double dates are relatively uncommon, and as indicated previously are rare in the 6" and 8" barrel versions.

One particularly interesting variation is the authors #1056. This double date DWM of 8" barrel length is almost as issued originally, is an artillery model and in near mint condition. This particular Luger is especially rare in that it was issued not to the police forces but to the almost non-existent post WW1 German Navy and bears correct Naval Markings on the REAR GRIP STRAP, (M over an anchor over 1473 over N) This Luger is correctly called a "DOUBLE DATE ARTILLERY-NAVAL MARKED". The entire gun is matching including the clip which has an N before the serial number. There is no letter on the guns serial number, the N on the clip signifying the group as it does on the rear grip strap. The grips are excellent, has the unique front and rear fine tune sights and 98% of the ORIGINAL" blue with only some slight blue wear on the side plate.

Few on these artilleries are found as, I have been told by a very reliable German Naval source-WW 2, they were issued to submarines and were lost with the high submarine mortality of the Second World War. It is also known that many of the double dates saw extensive action in the other armed forces of Germany in WW 2.

ADVERTISEMENTS

WANTED NAZI ERA LUGERS, all models the common and the rare ones. Will pay a reasonable price. Please quote price, description (accurately) in first letter. All mail answered. Robert B. Marvin, 19251 Gulfstream Rd, Miami 57, Florida.

WANTED LUGERS FOR PARTS, nothing rare. Cleo John Jr., Rt#2, Box 189A, Cape Girardeau, Mo., 63701

FOR SALE G DATE in very good condition, all matching. \$100. post paid in US. Satisfaction guaranteed or immediate refund. All trades considered. Ray Taylor, 722 E. Grayson St., San Antonio, Texas.

FOR SALE LUGER LIST 20%, Ralph E. Shattuck, 6661 Castle Drive, Birmingham, Michigan. 48010. (EDITORS NOTE: THIS IS AN EXCELLENT LIST OF LUGERS FOR SALE)

WANTED LUGER ADVERTISEMENTS: Every month the Luger Journal goes to a select market of over 400 serious Luger collectors. And every one of these collectors has the privilege of one free ad per month. I do not have any detailed information on the success others have had by advertising in the Journal but I have sold 90% of the items that I have offered for sale. Seems that more Luger collectors would take advantage of the Journals select market? R.B. Marvin.

FOR SALE 1920 COMMERCIAL DWM, cal. 7.65mm, Barrel 3 5/8", all matching and all original except the magazine. Excellent condition, guaranteed perfect inside and out. \$85.00. WANTED Nice American Eagle. C.W. Foote, 1140 Violet Drive, Birmingham, Ala.

WANTED ANY NAZI ERA LUGER in excellent or better condition. Jerome F. Walker 8151 Forestdale Rd., Kirtland, Ohio. 44094.

NOTE ON LUGER PRICES: Recently I sold a 1906 9mm Commercial in very good or better condition, excellent mechanically, for \$160. Today I saw a similar 1906 Commercial, 9mm, in Natl. Gun Traders here in Miami, for sale for \$325. That's quite a bit of variation for the same condition Luger, and Natl. will probably get their price. Interesting isn't it? I believe my 1906 was fair priced, a little low by gun shop standards, but with room for the purchaser to make a little if he wants to sell it. I don't want anybody to have one of my Lugers on his hands and not be able to get his money out if he wanted too. If all collectors would subscribe to this philosophy and advertise freely in the Journal this medium would be one really great trading post. THE LUGER JOURNAL.

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