

The Luger Journal

©

NUMBER TWENTY ONE

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EDITOR'S NOTES

IN APPRECIATION TO DR. HOWARD E. MULLER

THE LUGER JOURNAL wishes to thank Dr. Muller for his kind assistance in the production of this issue. Dr. Muller contributed information, and photos of two of his K DATES, covered in the feature article, and was additionally generous with a financial gift. It is always heartwarming to receive such support, especially in view of the problems we experience in publishing THE LUGER JOURNAL, and so Dr. Muller we thank you.

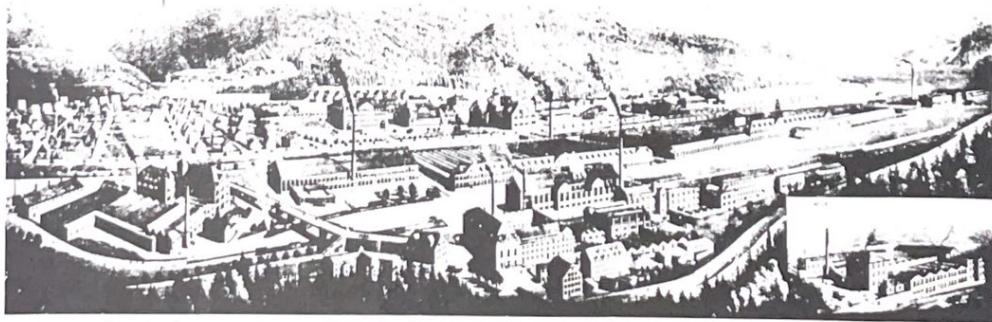
Mauser Lugers

INTRODUCTION

In 1930 the Luger was already an old design (in terms of years of production). It was conceived and born in the previous century and yet its position as Europe's foremost hand-gun was as yet unchallenged.

The late years of the 19th century, and into the early 1900s, saw some of the most startling advances made in the development of modern warfare. Those years witnessed the development of the modern cartridge, of smokeless powder, the principle of automatic ejection and reloading and of armored bullets, the development of the machine-gun, self propelled vehicles, aircraft and even the battleship. The Luger was in production through all this and right up to the jet age and the advent of atomic warfare. In many fields designs were replaced before they reached production. Such notable weapons as the Browning designed pistols were updated and improved with each new series. The Luger, however, designed as it was at the very beginning of the self-loading era, lasted intact all through those dynamic years. No-one changed, altered or improved its basic concepts. In 45 years of continuous production, through a military era more conducive to hand gun development than any before or since, the Luger remained essentially unchanged. And so, in 1930, the Lugers made famous by DWM were entrusted to the giant of German militarism, to a firm whose name was at least as well known as any armament firm that ever existed, MAUSER.

The name Mauser was well known in America for the Mauser designs were the inspiration for our own Springfields, and so the production of the Luger by Mauser was greeted with concern in America's military circles.



THE MAUSER FACTORY

THE K DATE MAUSER : HISTORICAL SETTING

In November 1932 the Nazi Party had lost 34 seats in the Reichstag. German industry had withdrawn its support and the party was on the verge of bankruptcy.

By January 1933 Hitler had gained a toe-hold and was chancellor. Hindenburg still had control, however, and only two other Nazis were ministers in the government (Frick, who was Minister of the Interior for the Reich, and Goring, Minister without Portfolio). Soon, however, the tide of Nazism swept swiftly over Germany. By June, 1933, the Nazis had suppressed every party except their own. Next Germany entered into a policy of co-ordination, called GLEICHSCHALTUNG, designed to create a National unification of the economic, social and political policies and institutions of the Reich. During this time Goring created the GESTAPO, and with the aid of this "police" organization plus the use of fear tactics and his own brand of statesmanship, Hitler was able to completely master all the old Nationalists.



Adolf Hitler 1932

By 1934 the German Labor Front had been organized under the LAW FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF NATIONAL LABOR, and by 1935 the whole life of the German people had been CO-ORDINATED under Nazi control.

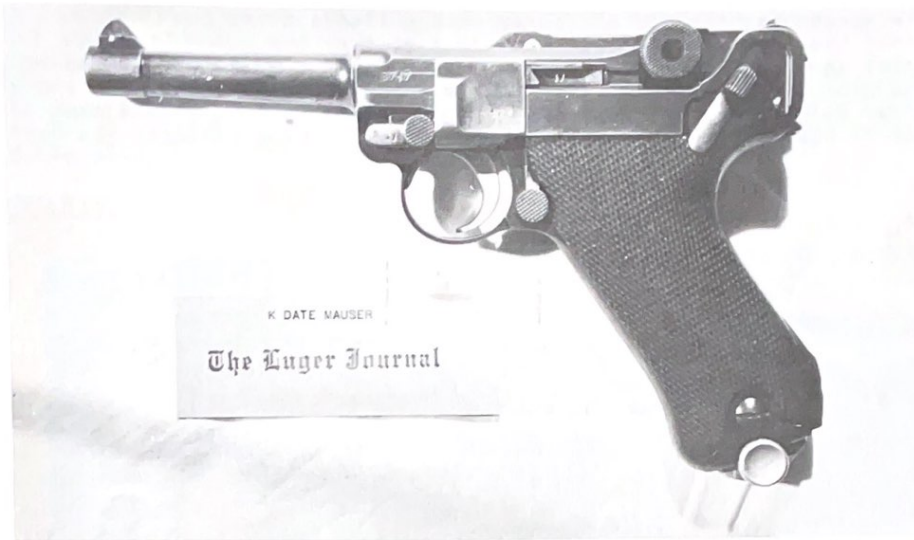
On June 30, 1934, Ernst Rohm and many other high ranking Nazi Party leaders were put to death, ending any threat to Hitler's complete domination of the political forces in Germany.

Into this setting came THE MAUSER K-DATE LUGER (1934).

THE K-DATE, FIRST PRODUCTION MAUSER

The K-Date was the first full production Mauser, though it was made only in very limited numbers, and was preceded only by the Mauser Reworks. (FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE FIRST MAUSER LUGERS, THE MAUSER REWORKS, SEE THE LUGER JOURNAL NUMBERS ONE, NINE AND SEVENTEEN.)

The K-Dates were the first Lugers, in production series, to bear the Mauser code "S/42", and a date of manufacture "K" for 1934. As far as is known they were all produced in 9mm and with a 4" barrel, with walnut grips, a fine Mauser finish, and with the typical Mauser quality.

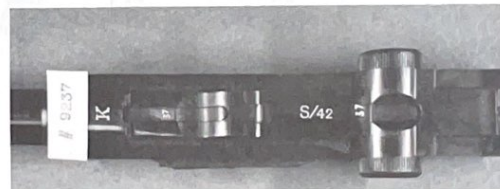
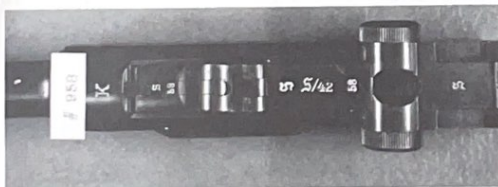


K Date

K-DATE NUMBER 3747 (SECOND SERIES K-DATE)

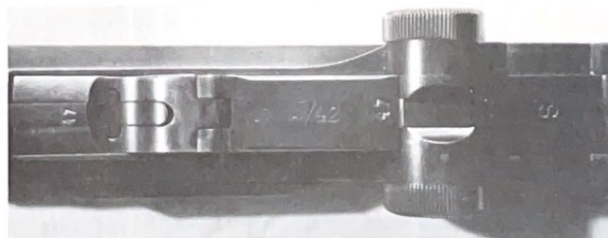
This Luger is the 3,747th K Date made. It has no letter after the serial number and is proofed, everywhere, with a mixture of scriptic and gothic "S" proofs. We have been advised, by a German authority, that no K-Date Lugers made during the K-Date era of 1934 had any letter after the serial number, and that less than 9,999 were made. Any K-Dates with a small letter are supposedly late issue pieces made during the G-Date series of 1935. These are few and far between.

The K Dates made up to number 2000 are marked with the scriptic "S" (SEE NUMBER 958 BELOW), those numbered up to 5200 have both scriptic and gothic "S" marks (SEE NUMBER 3737 AS AN EXAMPLE) and those numbered above 5200 have only the gothic "S" (SEE NUMBER 9237 BELOW).



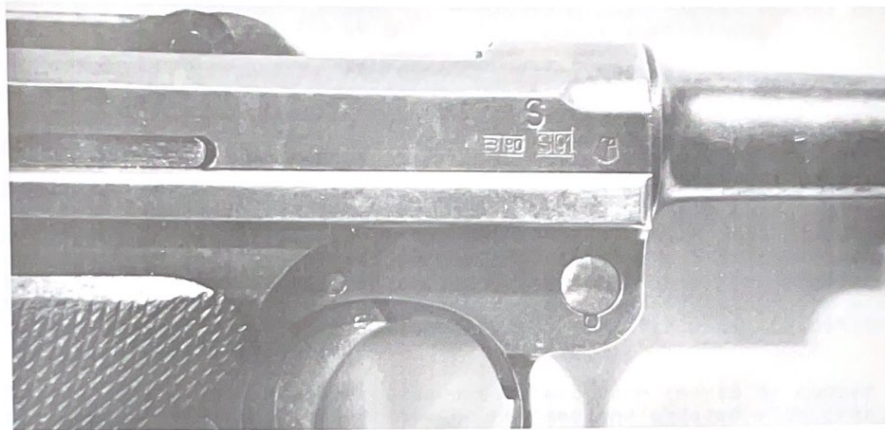
The front sight block on number 3747, unlike the other two K-Dates illustrated, is set back approximately 1/4" from the end of the bbl. muzzle. I don't recall having seen this on other K-Dates and it is an interesting variation. If other readers have knowledge of this difference please advise us. (SEE TOP PHOTOGRAPH FOR ILLUSTRATION)

The photograph to the right is of the toggle area of #3747. Note that this Luger has both the scriptic and gothic marks as explained above. Also note the variance in the scribing on the toggle knobs.



Dr. Muller made an interesting observation in his correspondence with THE LUGER JOURNAL, and that is that both his K-Dates and every other one he has seen have a hump on the back of the frame about one inch above the lanyard loop. K-Date number 3747 is without this hump and is just like any other Mauser Luger. This must be a machining variation and probably does not have any major significance though it is interesting.

PROOFING



3747

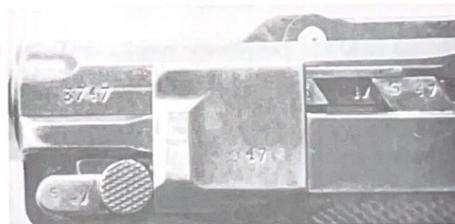
The large illustration above is of the proofing area on number 3747 on the right hand side of the receiver. Note that the proofs include a "B 90" and a "S 91" proof plus a MAUSER EAGLE final proof to the far right. Luger number 9237 has identical proofs though it does not have the gothic "S" that appears on 3747. K-Date number 958 has the "37" proofs illustrated below plus a scriptic "S" over the proofs.

#958 RECEIVER PROOFS



It would almost be a difficult task to describe the many areas where K-Dates are proofed. The large and small "S" mark is all over, much like an ERFURT.

The photograph to the right shows the left side of #3747. Note the blue wear in the picture. The author is pleased to have this Luger in his collection in spite of the blue wear as these pieces are just too difficult to find. The picture shows the mixture of gothic and scriptic "S" markings. The barrel has only the final proof plus an "S" on the sight block.



MAUSER VS DWM

In comparing a K-Date with a late DWM (1923 COMMERCIAL) it was noted that generally the Mauser appeared better finished though the DWM had the better RUST blue. The K-Date had fewer tool marks externally and also internally and appeared better fitted. Dr. Muller reports, on the other hand, that #958 is not up to par with later G Dates and other S/42 Mausers. The grips of the DWM were closer checkered but both were of equal quality and both well fitted. The trigger pull on the DWM was by far the easier and much shorter than the K, and was what one would expect to find when comparing a commercial Luger with a military version. The K-Date had the aluminum bottomed clip, the DWM was wood, both were otherwise of pressed steel. In firing tests both fired well and were equally accurate. The DWM trigger, however, was the more pleasant.

RE : "THE BOOKLET OF LUGER VALUES"

This booklet, now in its 7th edition, will soon be replaced by a far more complete and EXPANDED manual entitled "THE IDENTIFICATION AND PRICING OF LUGER PISTOLES". This work, the first of new series, will describe the identifying characteristics of each major and most of the minor variations of Lugers.

This new work will more adequately serve the needs of both the advanced and novice collector by clearly identifying Luger types and by describing a far greater number of the various Luger variations.

Included in the work are PHOTOGRAPHS, illustrations, background info. and comments.

PERMANENT NUMBERING SYSTEM

Each Luger described in the manual will be permanently numbered. Later issues of THE LUGER JOURNAL; THE BOOKLET OF LUGER PROOFMARKS etc. will be keyed to these numbers. We hope that other Luger collectors will choose to refer to these numbers in communications with one-another, eliminating much of the problem and effort in identifying Lugers—especially in letters, advertisements etc. Unassigned numbers are included, in the various sections of the book, for adding additional variations at later dates.

The pricing list portion will be a separate form (keyed by number to the manual) in order that it may be revised and updated with greater frequency. Purchasers of the manual will be able to buy subsequent, revised pricing lists at a nominal cost without having to buy the whole manual every time a pricing change is made.

PUBLISHING DATE

The production of the manual is ahead of schedule and should be available sometime in October. Therefore if any readers have ANY information on Luger types, identification, proof-marks, or prices please send them in right away.

COLLECTORS SECTION

The manual will include a minor amount of collectors space. All funds received from this source will be used to help defray the cost of production—especially for the high cost of photographs. The following is a list of the type space available—all strictly limited to Luger collectors. Please note that the basic manual will not be reprinted with a degree of frequency so advertising as such is available only now—before printing is started.

1. SUPPORTERS : Benevolent supporters of THE LUGER JOURNAL'S effort are invited to have their names listed in this section as collectors or supporters. The listing includes name and address (if desired the address can be deleted) and one or two major fields of interest in Luger collecting. For a contribution of \$10. the supporter will receive the above listing and a copy of the manual. The regular price of the manual will be at least \$5.00. The listing will appear in this and every reprinting of the manual thereafter.
2. ADVERTISERS: Space in this section is 50¢ per word (including names, addresses, numbers etc.) and may be used to describe any interest in the areas of collecting Lugers, buying, selling etc. No specific item may advertised for sale however due to the permanency of the volume. The ad will not include a copy of the manual.

Copy for the collectors section must be received no later than October 10th 1967.

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