

# The Luger Journal

NUMBER TWENTY THREE

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## IDENTIFICATION AND PRICING OF LUGER PISTOLES

Don't give up hope on this new work. We have already paid for most of the printing and photographic work but late revisions and changes have delayed the actual production. We want this to be as nearly right the first time as possible so please be patient.

## **Mauser Lugers**

### THE 42 CODE MAUSER LUGERS

This issue of THE LUGER JOURNAL continues with the MAUSER story and that of the 42 CODED MAUSERS. Many secret codes were used by the Nazi's to conceal manufacturers, dates of production etc. (A LIST OF THESE IS AVAILABLE FROM THE LUGER JOURNAL UNDER THE TITLE "SECRET NAZI MUNITIONS CODES" @ \$1.50) and for Mauser 42 was the most popular. While the earlier Mausers used S/42 the later ones used only the 42 portion of the code, and of course the byf when Germany switched from numbered to lettered codes.

Germany's reason for using these codes is supposed to have been for security control. A German U-Boat Commander, KAPITAN LEUTNANT MOHR, who frequently gives us technical advice, states that as far as he knows no-one in the German Service paid much attention to the code designation, that it was common knowledge that Mauser made all the P-08s except those made for the Luftwaffe. As such the code designation was more a part of the military usage of the piece, so he states, than as a security measure. The Kapitän confesses that he may be all wrong in this regard, however.

It is our conviction, however, that the codes as used were part of security control. In the early 1930's, during her time of rearmament, Germany was not sure what steps the allies might take to enforce the TREATY OF VERSAILLES-if the allied nations became aware of Germany's mass rearmament. It was the German General Staff's concept, therefore, to confuse the issue by producing weapons without any tell-tale dates or manufacturers names. The effort was generally successful, for as long as Germany intended it to be so, for the name MAUSER did not appear on any standard production military pieces until the latter half of the 1930's, and Germany's armament program was in full swing by the time the world was ready to acknowledge what was happening.

By 1936 it no longer seemed necessary to conceal the dates of manufacture and so the letter codes for dates (K for 1934 and G for 1935) were dropped and the year "1936" was stamped in full view upon the chamber of each military Luger produced by Mauser in that year. The S/42 portion was continued, however, and in time was replaced by the plain "42" and by "byf".

Some historians reason that Germany used as many codes as it did, including several for the same manufacture, to confuse the enemy and to make it appear that several manufacturers were making the same item.

LUGER NUMBER 5481n

DESCRIPTION : 2 1/2" BBL. (approximately); 9mm; 42 code; dated 41; typical Mauser finish; no straw coloring; note unusual barrel.

This Luger is illustrated in photos nine and ten and photos fifteen and sixteen, and with the exception of the unusual bbl., which we have no explanation for, it is a most ordinary two digit dated 42 code Luger.

Actually these two digit/42 code pieces are not all that common and are a bit hard to find in anything near decent condition. Rumour has it that these pieces were "EASTERN AIRFORCE LUGERS" and while we are not in a position to collaborate this idea we are not in a position to deny it either. They are fairly uncommon, as military Lugers go, however.

Both of these Mausers have the "MAUSER BULGE" as shown in photos number nine and eleven. This bulge is a slight hump in the very rear of the frame area, by the top of the safety well area, and is a characteristic of some Mauser machining-though far from all Mausers have it. We have been unable to discover any mechanical or functional reason for it and suppose that it is a characteristic of one of the Mauser machine tools that produced these frames.

LUGER NUMBER 3238s

DESCRIPTION : 4" BBL.; 9mm; 42 code; dated 1939; finish identical with number 5481n; no straw coloring.

This Luger is illustrated in photos number eleven and twelve.

If all the photos are examined closely the reader can see the close similarity between these two pieces. Tool marks are very much the same as well as finishes, blue color etc. The major distinction, in addition to the form of the dates, is the proofing which is different. The earlier, 1939 date, bears the Nazi Eagle over 63 proof while the 41 date bears the Nazi Eagle over 655 proof. Both have the same final proof on the receiver side and on the bbl. (see photo. number 13 for a picture of these proofs).

Both of these pieces are excellent shooters and as they were not obtained in mint-undefired condition I have fired both of them on occasion. By the way firing Lugers is one way for a Luger collector to keep up his interest-for nothing, just nothing, fires the same as a Luger. We don't recommend firing those rare and mint pieces in your collection-though it probably won't hurt them any if they are in good shape to begin with, and are well cleaned after being fired- but we do think every Luger collector needs at least one piece he can shoot well.

This Luger does have a few parts that are brownish in color from too short a stay in the bluing tank. The finish of these brown pieces does not appear to be any less durable than the usual blue pieces, however.

If any of the readers have any thoughts on the short barrel job please let me know. I have not seen another like it and would like to know the purpose of this short a barrel.

NEXT MONTH

Even though the past few issues have been devoted to the Mauser Lugers only a small part of the story has been told. Future issues of THE LUGER JOURNAL will contain articles on other Mauser made Lugers but next months issue on the PROTOTYPE MAUSER will end this current series.



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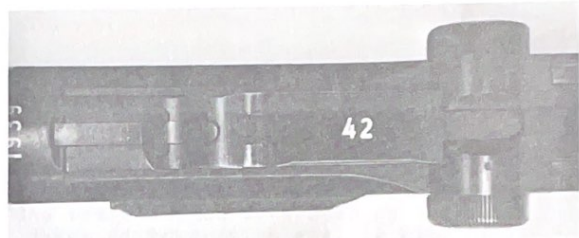
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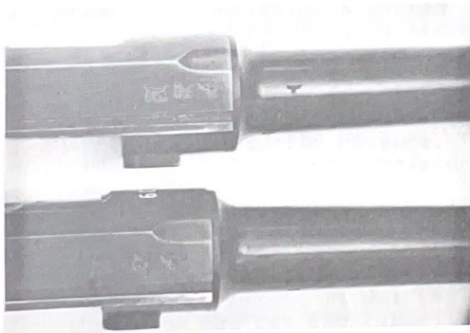
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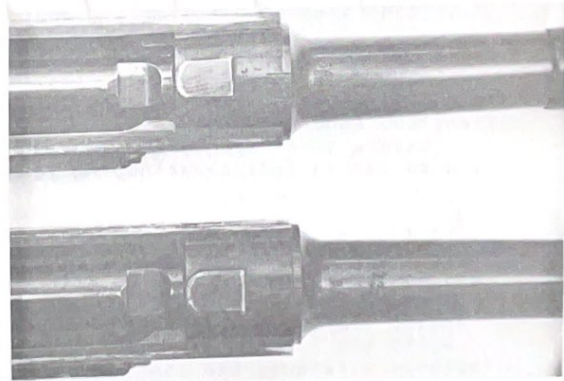
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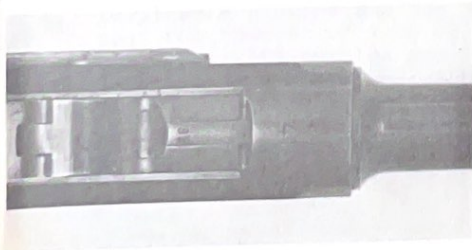
No. 12



No. 13



No. 14



No. 15

Mauser Lugers



No. 16