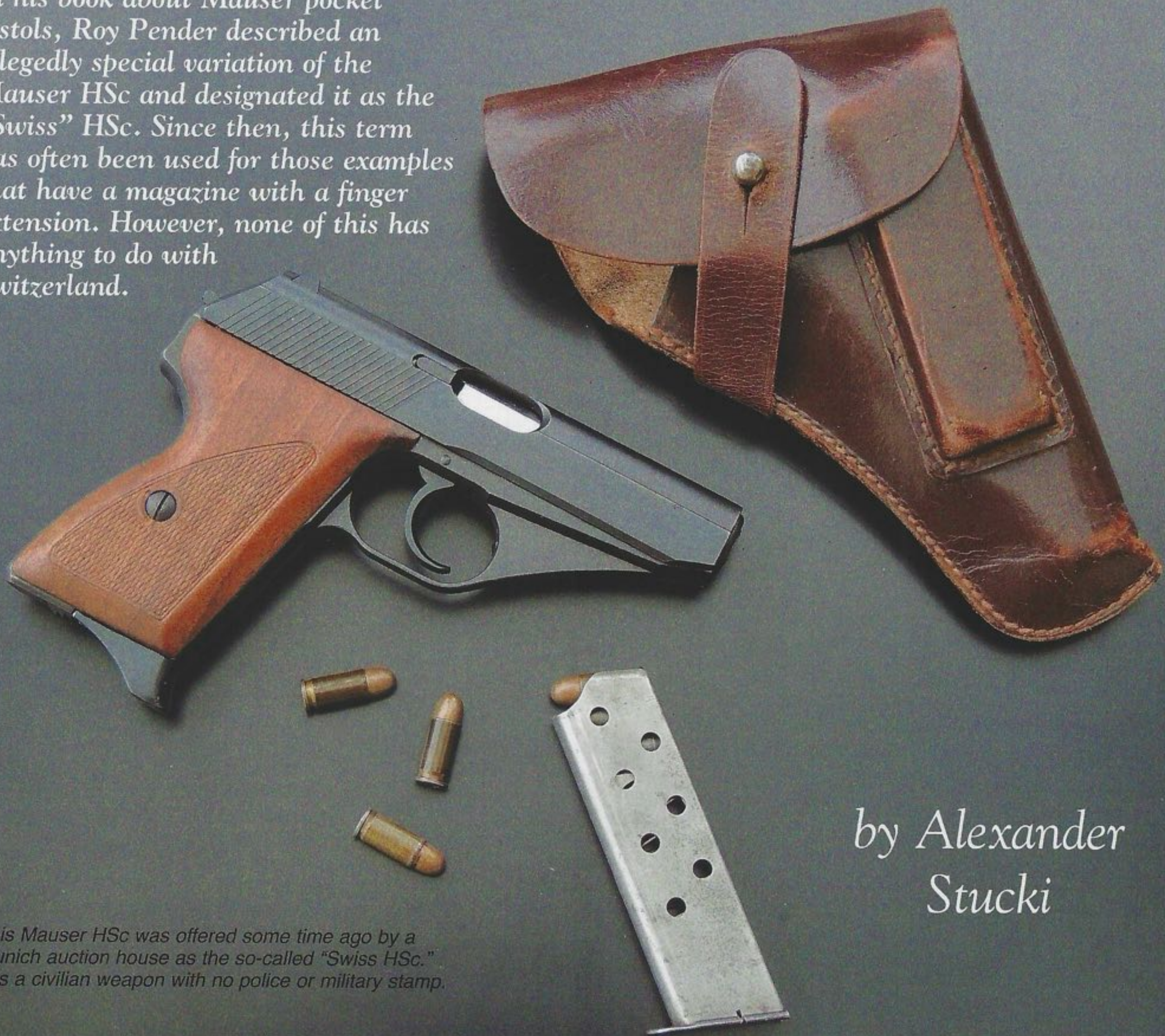


# The "Swiss" Mauser HSc Pistol

## *A Variation That Never Existed*

In his book about Mauser pocket pistols, Roy Pender described an allegedly special variation of the Mauser HSc and designated it as the "Swiss" HSc. Since then, this term has often been used for those examples that have a magazine with a finger extension. However, none of this has anything to do with Switzerland.



by Alexander  
Stucki

*This Mauser HSc was offered some time ago by a Munich auction house as the so-called "Swiss HSc." It is a civilian weapon with no police or military stamp.*

**T**he 1971 book *Mauser Pocket Pistols: 1910–1946* by Roy G. Pender was long considered the "bible" for Mauser pocket pistol collectors. Meanwhile, this book has become a collector's item in and of itself and is not easy to find. In terms of content, the book is certainly no longer up to date. It contains many errors and inaccuracies, but it is still suitable as an introduction to the topic.

One story that can be traced back to Pender's book, and is particularly persistent in the collectors' community, concerns the so-called "Swiss" version of the Mauser HSc. According to Pender, characteristic of this variation is the exceptionally good finish for the production time as well as a special magazine with finger extension. Since the publication of Pender's book, Mauser HSc pistols with this special magazine





*This HSc with serial number 859674 was produced in 1943. The finish is in line with the standard that is common for this time period.*



*The finger extension made of metal.*

are often called the "Swiss" HSc. However, this name has little to do with reality. The magazine with finger extension is neither characteristic of a special variation of the Mauser HSc nor does it refer to Switzerland. The aim of this article, which was originally published in 2013 in the Swiss gun magazine *Schweizer Waffen-Magazin*, is to explain this situation.

### The Development of Mauser HSc

When the Walther PP came out in 1929 and two years later the PPK came onto the market, all other 7.65mm pistols

without double action became outdated practically overnight. At Mauser in Oberndorf, the development office for light weapons was therefore commissioned in 1933 to develop a modern weapon as a replacement for the proven Mauser pocket pistols (the Models 1914 and 1934). Responsible was the young engineer Alex Seidel, who would later be the co-founder of Heckler & Koch. After the war, Seidel played a key role in the development of the H&K P4 pistol, which is technically based on the Mauser HSc.

The work of Alex Seidel in Oberndorf began in the mid-1930s and, following various prototypes, finally led to the HSc. From 1937, Mauser would have been ready to start production. For the time being, however, the rearmament of the Third Reich demanded other priorities from the Mauser-Werke. But, because there was an increasing demand for handguns over the course of the first year of World War II, production of the HSc began in December of 1940. By the end of the war, the Mauser-Werke produced about 4,000 to 6,000 pistols of this type each month, totalling about 260,000. Immediately following the war, the Mauser HSc was still being produced for a short time under French supervision. The serial numbers of these weapons follow the numbering of the war production.

### What Does HSc Mean?

The meaning of the term "HSc" is controversial.





In the user manual for the Mauser HSc, the special magazine "for particularly strong hands" was recommended.

Gepackt:	<b>MAUSER-WERKE AG.</b> Oberndorf am Neckar <b>Versand-Anzeige</b>	RBNr. 0/0762/0062		
Kontrolliert:		Auftrag-Nr. 34190		
Verp.-Art:		Best.-Nr.		
La. N° 19837		Best.-Datum 28.9.43		
Datum 30.9.43				
Herrn Dr. Riedl				
im Hause.				
Wir sandten Ihnen auf Ihre Rechnung und Gefahr durch				
Ausgeliefert an die japanische				
Im Auftrag Kommission				
Verpackung und Markierung	Brutto-Gewicht	Netto-Gewicht	Stückzahl	Gegenstand
			6	Pistolen Modell HSc Kal. 7,65 mm
			6	Nr. 859413/-412/-415/-414/-425/-411
			6	Res. Mag. hierzu
			6	Samt Kasten hierzu

MAUSER

Genh. Reichsregierung  
am 30.9.43 emp. Brief  
+ 83. K.

Documents prove that on September 30, 1943, the Mauser-Werke supplied the HSc with serial number 859411 in a luxurious leather case and with a spare magazine to a member of a delegation of Japanese officers in Berlin.

For a long time, collectors and authors interpreted these letters as "Hahn-Selbstspanner Pistole" (which means self-loading pistol with hammer) Type C. It was assumed that there were precursor models or prototypes with the designations HSa and HSb (see, for example, Reinhold Badow, "Pistole HSc," *Schuss und Waffe* Nr. 2, Dietikon-Zurich 1985, page 65).

However, records from August Weiss, one of Mauser's leading engineers, indicate that HSc stands for "Hahn-Pistole, Selbstspanner" (which means pistol with hammer, self-loader), Third Model. The first and second models of a Mauser self-loading pistol with an exposed hammer were therefore the C96 and the so-called "Nickel" pistols, named after the well-known Mauser engineer Josef Nickel. These pistols were produced only in small numbers (see Darrin Weaver, Jon Speed and Walter Schmid, *Mauser Pistolen*, Ontario, 2008, pages 245–246). Indirectly, this interpretation is also supported by the contemporary manual of the Mauser HSc. At the beginning, it is pointed out that the HSc is the third "Hahnpistole" (pistol with hammer) produced by Mauser.

### Pender Invents the "Swiss" HSc

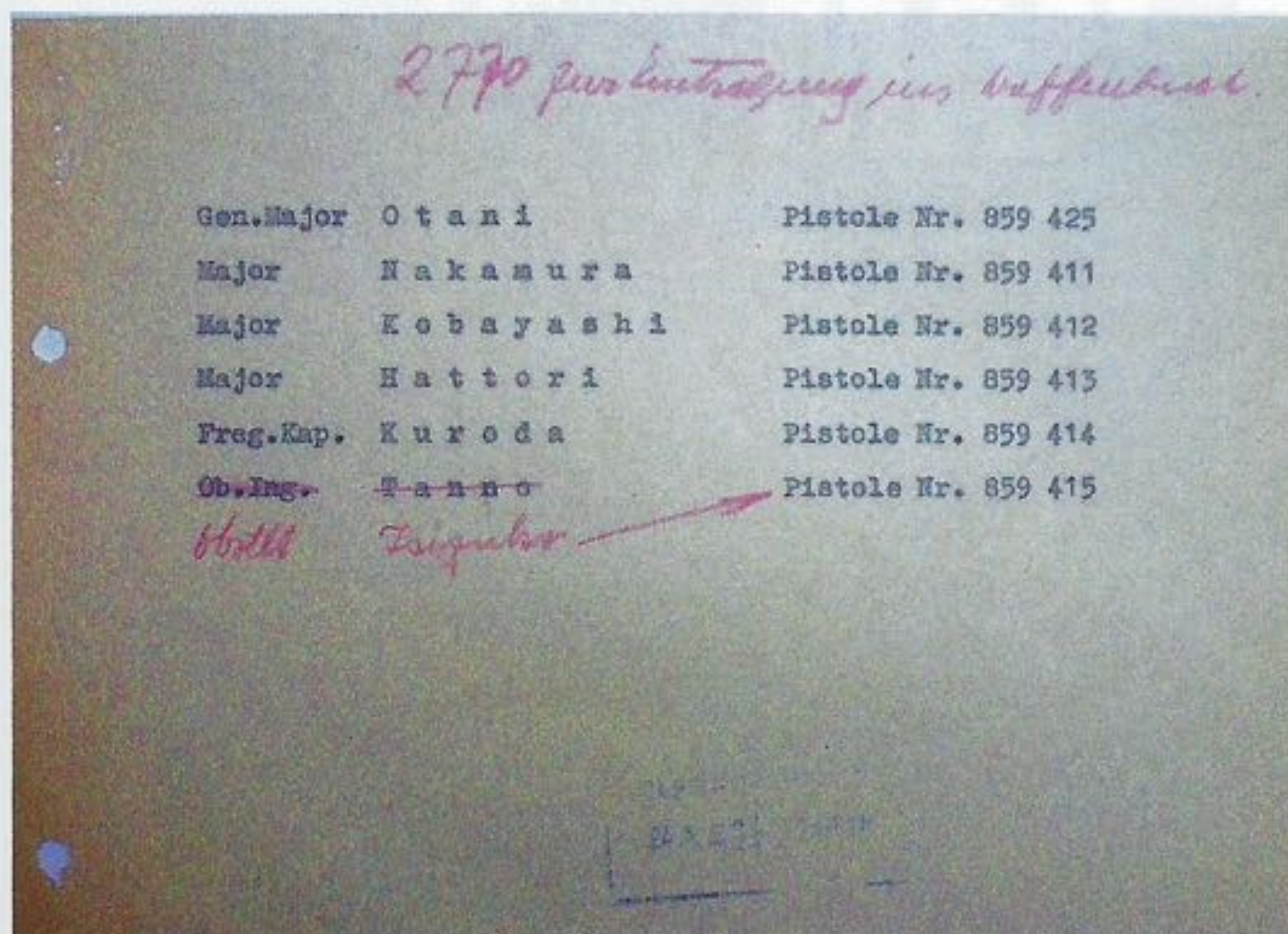
In his research, Mauser collector Roy Pender came across four Mauser HSc pistols with an exceptionally high-quality finish, similar to the finish of pistols from 1941, but produced in 1943 and 1944. In addition, these four pistols had a magazine with finger extension that Pender had not seen on any other HSc so far. One of the four pistols was in a luxurious leather case. Pender concluded that these guns must have served a special purpose and that Mauser had made the magazine with the finger extension only for this particular variation. In his book, he called these four pistols the "Swiss" HSc (for some unknown reason) and thus created a new variation. Since then, any Mauser HSc with a magazine with finger extension is usually referred to as "Swiss" HSc, regardless of their finish. This is true not only in the United States but also in Europe.

### Only a Rare Magazine

Nevertheless, skeptical collectors in Europe and America had doubts about a special Swiss variation of HSc and undertook their own research. It was discovered that magazines with the finger extension can be observed on pistols of different finishing quality and from the entire production period (1941 to 1946). It appears that these magazines are more commonly found on civil HSc pistols without military or police stampings, but not exclusively.

A glance at a Mauser HSc user manual also shows that magazines with finger extensions were available as an





The document specifying that serial number 859411 went to the Japanese Major Nakamura.

accessory. Anyone who purchased a Mauser HSc could buy such a magazine. Since these magazines have not belonged to the usual military delivery, they are particularly rare in Wehrmacht pistols. By contrast, they are more likely to have been part of the standard accessories for gift weapons having high-quality finishes, and on such a weapon, Pender saw this kind of magazine and pulled the wrong conclusions from it.

The "Swiss" HSc in a luxurious gift box (serial number 859411) shown in Pender's book on page 267 belongs to a delivery of six such gift weapons, which were handed over to a Japanese delegation in September of 1943 in Berlin. The recipient of the aforementioned HSc with serial number 859411 was a Major Nakamura. This can be proven by an original document from the Mauser-Werke that survived the war. The "Swiss" HSc finally turns out to be a normal gift weapon with a special and rare magazine.

#### A Rare Magazine with Finger Extension For the Mauser Model 1934

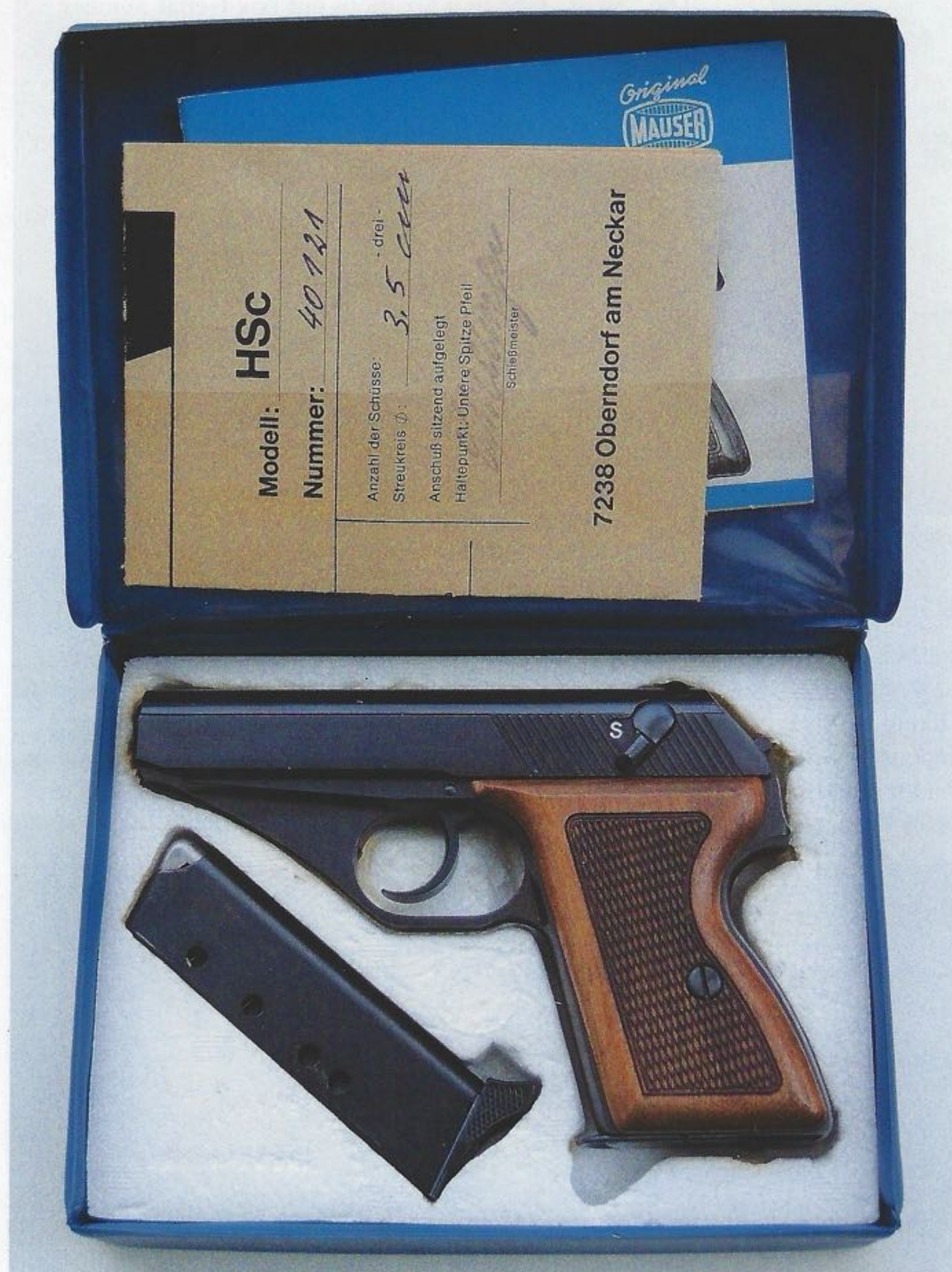
Mauser also produced magazines with finger extensions for other pistols. There is at least one Model 1934 (caliber 6.35mm Browning) known that has such a magazine. This nickel-plated pistol was produced during the war. The finger extension of the magazine is very similar to that of the HSc magazines, and possibly the same components were used.

Nothing is known about the background of this extremely rare magazine for a Model 1934. It is possible that the Mauser-Werke produced a small number of these magazines for a specific purpose, for example, for gift weapons. Larger quantities are unlikely to have been produced. In any case, no other magazine with finger extension for Models 1910/14/34 is known to the author, neither in 6.35mm nor in 7.65mm caliber.



The only known Mauser Model 1934 that has a magazine with finger extension.  
(Mauro Baudino Collection)





A Mauser HSc in 9mm short from the postwar production. The standard models included a magazine with finger extension.



The magazine from wartime production is not blued and has a finger extension made of metal, while for the blued magazine of the postwar production the finger extension is made of plastic.



## Standard Accessory for the Postwar HSc

It is not known why Mauser did not supply the magazines with finger extensions as standard accessories for the HSc, just as Walther did for the PPK. Maybe this is due to the fact that the metal finger extension was much more complex to produce than the plastic piece from Walther. When Mauser resumed production of the HSc for a relatively short time in 1968, Walther's approach seems to have been taken in Oberndorf. For this postwar HSc, a magazine with a finger extension made of plastic was part of the standard scope of delivery. That did not make the weapon much more popular compared to the PPK. By the end of 1977, after only 10 years, the production of HSc was stopped by Mauser.

## Conclusion

Magazines with finger extensions were not included in the standard delivery of the Mauser HSc but were offered by the company as a special accessory. At the resumption of HSc production in the 1960s, Mauser changed this practice and offered such magazines as standard accessories. However, the finger extensions were made of plastic and were no longer of metal.

Magazines with metal finger extensions produced during the war or immediately after the war (under French supervision) are relatively rare and therefore very much sought after by collectors. A connection with Switzerland does not exist in any way for pistols with such magazines.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank collectors, especially Alan D. Burnham, Peter H. Theodore and Friedrich Müller, who shared information concerning their research with me, Mauro Baudino for the pictures of the Mauser Model 1934 and Jon Speed for documents on HSc deliveries to the Japanese delegation. □

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