

THE ARTILLERY LUGER

(Lange Pistole 08)

By Dick Herman

The German Army adopted the Pistole Parabellum (Luger) as their standard pistol the P.08 in 1908. Production of the P.08 started in Berlin, Germany at the [Deutsche Waffen und Munitionsfabriken](#) (DWM) in 1909. The Royal Rifle Factory at Erfurt (Erfurt) also began production of the P.08 in 1910.

The German military required a compact weapon for soldiers with duties that could not conveniently carry a rifle. In 1911 the Rifle Proving Commission in cooperation with DWM began development of a specialized weapon that would fill this role (a:48). The P.08 was modified to incorporate a longer barrel in 9mm Parabellum. The sights of the modified P.08 included a fixed front sight and an adjustable rear sight for longer distance accuracy. A hold open device and a rear grip strap stock lug were incorporated into the modified P.08.

In 1913 the armies of Prussia, Saxony, Wurttemberg and Bavaria adopted the modified P.08 configuration as the model Lange Pistole 08 (LP.08) (c:99). The LP.08 was initially intended for arming artillery men, airmen and fortifications. As World War I (WWI) progressed the LP.08 was issued to the Sturmabteilungen (Storm Troopers) for assault purposes (c:99).

The adopted LP.08 features include the 200mm (8 inch) barrel in 9mm Parabellum, fixed front sight and adjustable tangent rear sight, an eight (8) round capacity magazine, a hold open device and a stock lug on the rear grip strap. The front and rear sights incorporated spanner adjusted fine adjustment screws for optimizing the pistol accuracy. The rear grip strap lug was for attaching a shoulder stock.

The LP.08 finish for the pistol large components was a deep blue rust bluing. Many of the pistol small parts were heat colored to straw (dark gold). The grip screws and pins were heat treated to a bright blue color. Checkered walnut wood was utilized for the grips on the early manufactured P.08. With later years of LP.08 production beech wood was used for the grips.

The LP.08 was supplied to the Germany Army from 1914 until 1918. Collectors refer to the LP.08 as the Artillery Model Luger.

To enhance the firepower capability of the LP.08 a large capacity drum magazine was developed and supplied to the German military in approximately 1915. The drum magazine has a 32 round capacity. Because of the magazine shape it became known as the snail drum magazine. The official title for the drum magazine is Trommelmagazine 08 (T.M.08).

A completely assembled German Army LP.08 rig included the pistol, a holster, a board shoulder stock, a two magazine pouch, a shoulder carry sling and a 32 round snail drum magazine. The utilization of the T.M.08 enhanced the assault capability of the LP.08 in service by the Storm Troopers. This weapon combination was truly the forerunner of today's submachine guns.



LP.08 Assault Rig Completely Assembled Right Side.

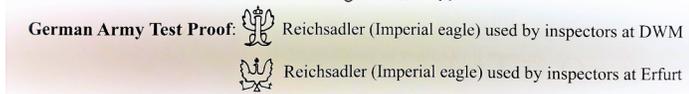


LP.08 Assault Rig Completely Assembled Left Side.

The LP.08 was manufactured for the German military by DWM and Erfurt. Production and supply of the LP.08 to the German Army began in 1914 by Erfurt and DWM. The German military purchased the LP.08 from the year of 1914 until the war end in 1918. The German Army was the primary recipient of the LP.08. However, the German Navy also purchased the LP.08 for their Marine-Infanterie, Sailor-Artillery Infanterie and Coast -Battalion (c:99).

ERFURT

The 1914 Erfurt LP.08s have on the receiver right side three German Army inspection/acceptance Crown over Gothic Letters (C/ Gothic Letters) plus the Reichsadler (Erfurt Imperial Eagle German Army) test proof marks. Erfurt Imperial Eagle German Army test proof marks are also on the right side of barrel and the left side of the breech block.



Comparison Of Reichsadler markings.

The complete serial number is stamped on the left side of the receiver at the barrel breech. On the front end of the frame the complete serial number is stamped with a letter suffix if appropriate. Erfurt stamped and plainly displayed the last two numbers of the serial number and a small inspector's mark on all of the pistol small parts except the pins and springs (c:103).

The 1914 Erfurt LP.08 estimated production is 23,000 pistols (c:104). The 1914 model LP.08 was only year that the Luger Artillery pistol was manufactured by Erfurt.



1914 Erfurt LP.08 Left Side.



1914 Erfurt LP.08 Top View.



1914 Erfurt LP.08 C/Gothic Acceptance And Reichsadler Proof Marks.

Note Additional Erfurt Inspector's Mark above the first acceptance mark.



1914 Erfurt LP.08 Right Side.



LP.08 Front Sight Fine Adjustment Screw Head.



1914 year LP.08 Breech Marking With Rear Tangent Sight Fine Adjustment Screw Head.

have replacement 4 inch (100mm) barrels for police service.



1914 DWM LP.08 left side.



1914 DWM LP.08 Top View With Rear Tangent Sight Fine Adjustment Screw Head.

DWM

The 1914 DWM LP.08s have on the receiver right side three German Army inspection/acceptance marks and a proof mark. Unique to the 1914 DWM LP.08 on the receiver right side are the three German Army inspection/acceptance with a Crown over Gothic S (C/S) plus the DWM Reichsadler marks (DWM Imperial Eagle German Army test proof mark).

DWM Imperial Eagle German Army test proof marks are also on right side of barrel and the left side of the breech block (c:100). The complete serial number is stamped on the left side of the receiver at the barrel breech. Also stamped on the front end of the frame is the complete serial number with a letter suffix if appropriate.

The last two numbers of the serial number are stamped and plainly displayed on all of the pistol small parts except the pins and springs. This is the established military practice for many German military weapons.

Production of the model LP.08 by DWM in 1914 was very limited. Jan Still's publication "Central Powers" lists estimated production at 750 to 1,500 pistols. Luger collectors have been sharing 1914 DWM LP.08 serial numbers and pistol conditions for over 25 years. The online "Gun Boards" forum posts a 1914 DWM LP.08 (Artillery Luger) list which has an international following that is updated and maintained by collectors. The collectors that maintain this list believe that less than 750 pistols is more realistic. There are less than 40 recorded known true 1914 DWM LP.08s on this collector list. These listed LP.08s include pistols that



1914 DWM LP.08 C/S Acceptance And Reichsadler Proof Marks On The Receiver And Barrel.



1914 DWM LP.08 Right side.

DWM LP.08 Production 1915 -1918

The functional features of the German Army LP.08 by DWM were essentially the same from the years 1915 for each year of the production until the end of WWI.

The very earliest produced 1915 DWM LP.08 incorporated the C/S German Army inspector's markings. Subsequent 1915 LP.08 production utilize the C/Gothic Letter inspector's markings. From the year 1915 until the end of production in 1918 the combination of German Army inspector/acceptance markings C/Gothic Letter varied with each year.

The DWM LP.08s manufactured from 1915 through 1918 all have on the receiver right side three German Army inspector/acceptance C/ Gothic Letter plus the DWM Imperial Eagle German Army test proof marks. On many of these pistols the Erfurt Imperial Eagle German Army test proof marks are on right side of barrel and the left side of the breech block (c:101). The military established practice of stamping the last two numbers of the serial number was exercised on all of the LP.08 small parts with the exception of the pins and springs.

Sometime in 1916 a relieved sear bar was added to the LP.08. The relieved sear bar would allow the chamber to be loaded with a cocked firing pin and the safety engaged (c:101).



Unrelieved Sear Bar.



Relieved Sear Bar 1916 Modification.

In an effort to simplify manufacturing the spanner adjusted fine adjustment sight screws were phased out of production. The front sight fine adjustment screws were eliminated on 1917 DWM Artillery models. The front and rear sight fine adjustment screws were eliminated on 1918 DWM Artillery models (1:983).

The following table lists the estimates of total supplied LP.08s for each of the years of production.

LP.08 Production		
Year	Manufacturer	Estimated
1914	Erfurt	23,000
1914	DWM	750
1915	DWM	15,000
1916	DWM	20,000
1917	DWM	90,000
1918	DWM	25,000

Total estimated production 173,750 (c:101-104)



LP.08 Assembled Rig With T.M.08.

COMMERCIAL LUGER PRODUCTION

The surrender of German ended WWI in 1918 with the signing of the Versailles Peace Treaty. The Treaty established the "Interalliierte Militar-Kontrollkommission" (IMKK). It was not until mid 1921 that the IMKK imposed restrictions for German military weapon manufacturing and production limits.

During the immediate years after WWI ended there were many military variations of the Luger manufactured and assembled for commercial sales from 1918 until 1921 before Versailles Treaty was enforced. These commercial variations were produced utilizing the vast stores of surplus Luger components. Many variations were assembled with improper and mixed surplus parts for specific models. Luger collectors have created the name for the Luger pistols manufactured after 1918 as the 1920 Commercials.

1920 DWM Commercial Artillery

Between 1918 and 1921 the commercial variation of the Artillery Luger became known as the 1920 DWM Commercial Artillery. The 1920 DWM commercial proof marking is a Crown over N (C/N). There appeared to be large quantities of new and surplus components available for Luger production. Between 1918 and 1921 DWM produced commercial variations of Lugers that were identical to the military configurations.

The 1920 DWM Commercial Artillery had all the features of the prior LP.08 military models. The features include a 200mm (8 inch) barrel in 9mm Parabellum, fixed front sight and adjustable tangent rear sight, an eight (8) round capacity magazine, a hold open device and a stock lug on the rear grip strap. The stock lug was for attaching a shoulder stock which could be commercially provided from surplus components. These pistols were not manufactured with the sight fine adjustment screw features.

The DWM commercial practice of stamping the serial number and small part numbers was utilized. The serial number and small part numbers were located in locations that were not openly apparent, somewhat concealed or internal places. The practice did involve stamping the last two numbers of the serial number of the pistol on small parts with the exception of the pins and springs. However, the commercial practice of stamping the serial number last two digits was not always followed on all the Lugers fabricated in the 1920s. Many pistols assembled in the 1920s are found with the small parts numbered plainly displayed following the established military practice.

While the 1920 DWM Commercial Artillery was made from new and surplus Luger parts, the quality and finish was not as high as the prewar commercial Lugers. Many of the pistols did not have completely matching numbered components. The primary emphasis of DWM was to sell as many Lugers as possible to stay in business.

There were no receiver markings over the breech. Many of the Luger pistol components were different or mixed numbers from surplus parts inventories. Many of the pistols assembled for export were stamped with "Germany" the country of origin for sale in the United States.

In 1921 the IMKK imposed many far reaching restrictions on the German military and the types of weapons manufactured. The IMKK established limits and restrictions for German military weapon production. Manufacture of military weapons was severely restricted. Barrel length and caliber of commercial weapons was reduced to not be compliant with the military weapon configuration.



1920 DWM Commercial Artillery Left Side With Period Holster And Cleaning Rod.



1920 DWM Commercial Artillery Right Side.

The imposed 1921 IMKK rules restricted the manufacture of military weapons in Germany. For commercial weapons the barrel length and caliber of the Luger pistols were reduced to 97mm (3-7/8 inch) and 7.65mm Parabellum caliber. Manufacture of military weapons was strictly limited and enforced. The IMKK limited quantity of military Luger pistols that could be manufactured in Germany prevented DWM from exporting military pistols. No pistols with barrel lengths of 100mm (4 inch) or longer and 9mm caliber could be manufactured and exported.

Since DWM was the original manufacturer and assembler of the Luger pistol, there were enormous quantities of Luger components both new and surplus. Apparently there were no IMKK restrictions upon exporting Luger components.

In the early 1920s one war surplus dealer located in San Francisco, California imported large shipments of military firearms and components. Pacific Arms Corporation (PAC) of San Francisco imported war surplus components prior to the mid-1921 IMKK enforcement (a:755). PAC assembled and marketed many variations of the Luger pistol in the United States. PAC fitted the 8 inch long barrels in 9mm Parabellum in the United States to assemble the Artillery Luger.



Pacific Arms Corporation Artillery Luger Right Side.



Pacific Arms Corporation Medallion.



Pacific Arms Corporation Artillery Luger Top View.

Another United States firearms dealer that sold 1920 commercial Artillery Lugers was Stoeger Arms in New York City (a:758). Prior to mid-1921 IMKK military weapon restriction enforcement Stoeger imported war surplus and completed Luger pistols. After the enforcement of the 1921 IMKK restrictions Lugers with barrels longer than 97mm (3-7/8 in.) and 9mm Parabellum caliber were not exported. After 1921 Stoeger imported completed pistols that were compliant with the IMKK rules. However, Stoeger

also imported 9mm Parabellum barrels in assorted lengths to be fitted at their New York facilities to accommodate their customer requirements (e:437).



Stoeger Arms Artillery Luger Right Side.



Stoeger Arms Artillery Luger Markings Close-Up.



Stoeger Arms Artillery Luger With American Eagle Breech Marking.

MAUSER COMMERCIAL ARTILLERY

DWM in Berlin and Mauser in Oberndorf became subsidiary companies of BKIw. The business decision was made to move all of the small arms manufacturing to Mauser (a:733). In 1930 all of the Luger machine tooling and spare components were transferred to Mauserwerke in Oberndorf on the Neckar River (a:657). Mauser produced Luger pistols from the DWM parts inventory in the early 1930s. In 1934 Mauser started to manufacture and sell Luger pistols with components completely produced in Oberndorf. The Mauser

Banner replaced the DWM toggle production code for commercial sales of the Luger pistols. The Mauser Banner production code or logo has a horizontal barrel shape with vertical lines simulating barrel staves with Mauser embossed over the staves.

Mauser manufactured commercial Artillery Lugers for use in Siam and Persia. The Mauser Artillery Lugers were direct copies of the WWI German Army weapons. In fact the 200mm Artillery barrels, the adjustable tangent rear sight and the stock fittings were taken from old WWI DWM stock transferred from Berlin in 1930 (a:1029). As with previously manufactured commercial Artillery Lugers the sight fine adjustment screws were not used.

PERSIAN ARTILLERY LUGER

In 1934 the King of Persia, the Shah, ordered 1,000 Artillery Lugers from Mauser to arm his body guards (a:1028). In 1936 Mauser produced and supplied the Persian Artillery Luger. These pistols are also chambered for the 9mm Parabellum cartridge. These 1936 Persian Artillery Lugers are classified as Mauser Banner commercial contract pistols. However, the center toggle link Mauser Banner is replaced with Farsi script.

The military authorities in Persia (Iran) required that all the pistol markings be in Farsi writing. The Persian Artillery Luger was assembled with WWI DWM parts that came to Mauser Oberndorf in 1930 (e:509).

All of the markings and numbers are in Farsi. The Mauser commercial proof mark is the only recognizable Mauser mark. The center toggle link marking in Farsi translates into "Arms Factory Mauser." The receiver right side property mark translates into "Persian Pistol Model 1314." The 1314th is the year of the Moslem lunar calendar (a:1029). The receiver breech mark is the Pavlavi Persian Royal Lion coat of arms. All of the serial numbers and the rear sight numbers are in Farsi.

The rig components include a shoulder board stock, cleaning rod and take down tool all appear to be Mauser supplied. The source of the leather components, holster, magazine pouch and sling is unknown.

The Persian Luger was used by Iran Armed Forces from 1936 until 1971 (e:512).



Persian Artillery Luger Left Side With Officers Belt.



*Persian Artillery Luger Right Side Farsi Property Mark
"Persian Pistol Model 1314."*



Persian Artillery Luger Top View Displaying Farsi Manufacturer Reference "Arms Factory Mauser" And The Royal Lion Coat Of Arms.



Pavlavi Persian Royal Lion Coat Of Arms.



*Persian Artillery Luger Farsi Serial Numbers
Note the horizontal Mauser Crown/Crown/U proof receiver marking.*



Mauser Banner Siamese Artillery Luger Left Side Dated 1936.



*Persian Artillery Luger Right Side With Holster
And Shoulder Board Stock.*



Mauser Banner 1936 Siamese Artillery Luger Angled Top View.



Mauser Banner 1936 Siamese Artillery Luger Top View.

SIAMESE ARTILLERY LUGER

In 1936 Mauser manufactured Artillery Lugers for the Bangkok Police. Bangkok was in Siam, today the country is known as Thailand.

The existence of the Siamese Lugers was unknown until 1981. Odin International started importing and advertising the sale of the surplus Siamese Lugers in 1981. Odin informed collectors that these pistols were well worn due to extensive field usage for 16 to 18 years (e:499). The Mauser manufactured Siamese Artillery Lugers were built with barrels and tangent rear sights from surplus the WWI DWM inventory.

The 1936 dated Siamese Artillery Luger has the Mauser Banner commercial production code roll mark on the center toggle. There were 100 Artillery Models manufactured for the Bangkok Police in 9mm Parabellum. These pistols were supplied with matching numbered magazines and board shoulder stocks.

On the back of the pistol frame is the Lions Head and inventory number property mark of the Bangkok Police in Siamese script.



*Bangkok Police Property Mark With Lions Head And Siamese
Script Inventory Number.*



Mauser Banner Siamese Artillery Luger Right Side Dated 1936.



1936 Mauser Banner Siamese Artillery Luger With Original Shoulder Board Stock.

FRENCH ARTILLERY LUGER

Mauserwerke in Oberndorf on the Neckar River at the end of World War II was in the French Sector of Occupied Germany. Mauserwerke was virtually free of damage from Allied bombing. The French occupied the factory and kept producing weapons for their Army and Colonial Forces. The Mauser workers kept manufacturing and assembling a variety of weapons for the French Army. These weapons included the P.08, P.38 and HSc pistols (a:617).

As with all the P.08s produced by the French the components for the French Artillery Luger came from existing Mauser inventory. The Mauser Banner commercial production code roll mark is on the center toggle. The frames have P.08 stamped on the left side of the frame. The Artillery Lugers produced during French Occupation do not have a date mark on the receiver breech. The 200mm (8 inch) barrels and the rear adjustable tangent sights were from WWI DWM inventory (d:100). The pistols were finished with the hot blue dipping process of the period. The last two numbers of the serial number are stamped on all of the LP.08 small parts except the pins and springs following the established military practice.

Initial French production of the P.08 and the LP.08 utilized a five pointed star as a proof mark for the first

500 pistols. Pistols with serial numbers above 500 utilize the Oberndorf proof house commercial mark of an eagle/N (a:619). Mauser records indicate that 2,680 P.08s were produced from June 1945 until the end of April 1946 (a:617).

Subsequent studies and research indicate that the French produced Artillery Luger was very limited. Only 12 Artillery Lugers made during the French Occupation have been reported by collectors. One French produced Artillery Luger that has surfaced has been associated with General Eisenhower's traveling entourage (d:100).

During the early Occupation of Germany it is recorded that US Army personnel purchased French made Lugers for personal souvenirs. In one report a dozen new Luger pistols, half short barrel and half long barrel were purchased from the French occupied Mauser plant. The Lugers were purchased by US Army personnel for \$6 each (a:320).



French Artillery Luger Left Side (d:116).



French Artillery Luger Early STAR Proof Mark (d:118).



French Artillery Luger Commercial Mauser Banner Top View (d:134).



French Artillery Luger And Holster With Wire Belt Hanger For Use With US Web Belt (d:135, 148).

The two DWM Double Date Artillery Lugers with the breech dates 1920/1917 and 1920/1918 were WWI weapons that were utilized for military service by the German Weimar Republic. The added 1920 mark was a method that the IMKK used to count the weapons in the Weimar Republic military.

IN CLOSING

The Artillery Luger is an iconic weapon that was developed in a time when craftsmanship and quality were hallmarks of a changing world. The Artillery Luger became the badge of a formidable warrior skilled with multiple battle field tasks. The Artillery Luger established the future for the flexibility and utilization of the sub machine gun. The Artillery Luger was supplied as an effective WWI weapon between 1914 and 1918 then became the choice of Kings and Commoners into 1946.

The Artillery Lugers Top View



Artillery Luger Top Views Demonstrate Variations (d:101).

The above photograph is the work of Mauro Braudino. Starting on the left side of the photograph are depicted the following Artillery Lugers; 1914 Erfurt LP.08, 1914 DWM LP.08, 1915 DWM LP.08, 1916 DWM LP.08, 1917 DWM LP.08, 1918 DWM LP.08, DWM Double Date 1920/1917, DWM Double Date 1920/1918, DWM 1920 Commercial, Mauser Persian Model, Mauser Siamese Model, French Control Mauser Made, French Control Mauser Made

Reference Key

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Letter = Source Reference

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- a: "Borchardt & Luger Automatic Pistols" by Joachim Gortz & Dr. Geoffrey Sturgess
- b: "Imperial Lugers" by Jan C. Still
- c: "Central Powers Pistols" by Jan C. Still
- d: "The Parabellum is back! 1945 - 2000" by Mauro Braudino & Gerben van Vimmeren
- e: "The Mauser Parabellum 1930-1946" by Don Hallock & Joop van de Kant