



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PAUL MAUSER AND GEORG LUGER AND IT'S IMPACT ON THE MAUSER C96 PISTOL

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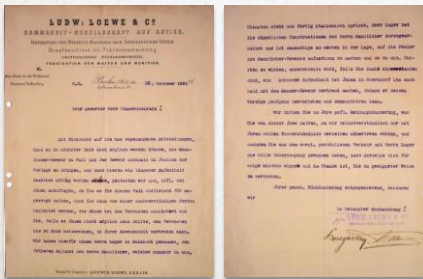
INTRODUCTION

- Paul Mauser and Georg Luger are probably the most famous German firearms designers of the Twentieth Century.
- They introduced essential firearms innovations crucial to future development.
- This presentation points out how the relationship between the two inventors deteriorated over time due to litigation over a minor technical innovation.
- The collateral effects of the Mauser vs Luger court case were important
 - This influenced the development of both the Mauser C96 and Parabellum pistols.

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LUGER IS INTRODUCED TO PAUL MAUSER

- In a letter, dated the 22nd of October 1891, from Ludwig Loewe's commercial manager Max Kosegarten and Isidor Loewe's son in law Oskar Oliven, Georg Luger is introduced to Paul Mauser.
- Lowes' primary goal was to have Luger support Paul Mauser in sale efforts introducing Mauser Rifles to the Italian Army.
- Luger had previously worked as Mannlicher's assistant.

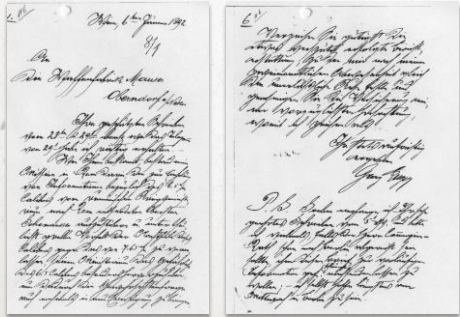


Letter from Loewe to Paul Mauser introducing Georg Luger. Courtesy Jon Speed.

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AN EXAMPLE OF LUGER'S UNIQUE APPROACH: SELLING THE MAUSER RIFLE TO THE ITALIAN ARMY

- In 1892 Georg Luger travelled to Italy on several occasions. In the same period a Romanian commission was also in Italy to observe the Italian rifle tests.
- Luger tried, without success, to influence the decision makers, even by offering bribes to the wife of Romanian Officer, Col. Schomanesco.



First and last page of the 20-page letter from Georg Luger to Paul Mauser dated 6th of January 1892.

In this letter Georg Luger provided a complete report about the Mannlicher business in Italy and his suggestion to bribe the Italian and Romanian commissions.

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAUSER AND LOEWE

- While the Mauser Company was financially controlled by Ludwig Loewe & Cie., Paul Mauser retained technical leadership.
- Loewe gained control by purchasing Mauser stock shares from the Württembergische Vereinsbank after the successful Turkish Rifle Contract (1887).
- Paul Mauser was never happy with Loewe group management board members, specifically clashing with Mr. Gronki and Mr. Gontard.
- The DWM office was located in Dorotheenstrasse 43/44. Both Mauser and Luger met each other in this office.
- The office in the Dorotheenstrasse would play an important role in the dispute between Luger and Mauser.
- During rifle tests conducted by the Prussian rifle testing commission, Mauser rifles were sent back and forth between the proving grounds, Oberndorf and this office.

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THE ISSUE OF THE “THIRD SAFETY LUG”

- In February 1894, Mauser sent Loewe’s main office a batch of rifles to Berlin intended for demonstrations.
 - Six rifles in total, three for the U.S. and three for Sir Joseph Jonas in the U.K.
 - It’s important to note for the court case that these rifles were not intended for the German market
- These rifles had a minor, almost imperceptible addition to the bolt action locking mechanism in the shape of a third locking lug at the rear. This feature in itself was not new or an innovation.
- Georg Luger noticed this small change and decided to patent the third safety lug himself using a ‘Gebrauchsmuster’ (a variation on the patent, also called a utility model).
- Shortly after this, Paul Mauser received a letter from Luger’s lawyers requesting compensation for the use of the third safety lug.

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MAUSER – LUGER CASE

- Paul Mauser was outraged when he received the letter from Luger's patent lawyers, seeking compensation for the use of Georg Luger's Gebrauchsmuster.
- It was a feature taken from Mauser's own design and that was well known and used by other engineers before him.
- This probably painfully reminded Mauser of the arguments he had with his deceased brother Wilhelm about focusing on patent rights.
- Paul Mauser chose not to give up easily and an extensive court case was launched.
- Mauser argued that the preliminary patent by Georg Luger had to be invalidated because the idea he proposed was nothing new and had already been used by other manufacturers, including Mauser.
- Court case was held in Berlin in April 1898.

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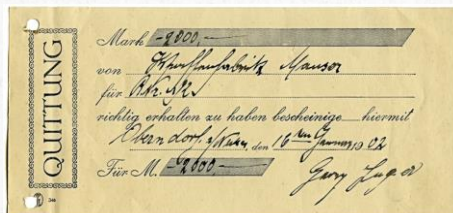
MAUSER LOST THE CASE

- It was not possible to prove in court that Georg Luger had applied for his preliminary patent after he had studied Mauser's rifles.
 - It was evident that this technical solution was already in use beforehand.
- Based upon a technicality, Luger won the case. The reason provided by the Court was seen particularly insulting to Paul Mauser.
- The court ruled that, although there was evidence that the construction of the 3rd lug was not a new idea, the patent law of 1891 stated that an idea cannot be registered if the idea or construction was already in use in Germany before the application date.
- All the rifles that Mauser made, which had the 3rd lug, went to countries abroad. So the court ruled that although the 3rd lug was present, it was not in use in Germany.
- Furthermore the court ruled that Georg Luger was the first person to associate the third lug with the safety of the shooter.

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MAUSER LOST THE CASE

- One of the receipts for a payment from the Mauser Company to Georg Luger, most probably as compensation for royalties associated with use of the third lug patent.



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MAUSER PREPARED HIS REVENGE

- Eventually Loewe's general manager, Isidor Loewe stepped in, went to Oberndorf am Neckar and had a long, difficult conversation with Mauser.
- Paul Mauser would not give in that easily and he had his revenge ready.
- In 1895, the C96 pistol design had matured to such an extent that it was ready for patenting.
- Mauser patented the C96 pistol design personally in his own name rather than that of the Mauser company.

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MAUSER JUSTIFIED HIS PATENT CHOICE

- In a document, Paul Mauser himself summarized his reasons for deciding to patent the C96 pistol in his own name and at his own cost.
- In this interesting document, Paul Mauser described his frustration with Loewe management and about Luger personally. He wrote:

The second motive was the observation that an employee of the company Ludw. Loewe & Co., Mr. Georg Luger, made it his life's work to intervene in my patents. I will not mention the other movements of this man against me, which were not hidden to me. About the character of the man, I will not mention a word here. I only remember in which way his transfer to Ludw. Loewe & Co. went. That this man, whose vast number of patents on different 'inventions' were not paid for from his own pocket, was used to diminish the value of my inventions, is without doubt to me, since I have not forgotten that I am 'too Expensive' according to certain members of our Advisory Board. Here I get to the crux of my explanation required by the events...

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LUGER'S ROLE IN THE LOEWE GROUP

- It is interesting to note Luger's somewhat special status within the Loewe group.
- As an employed engineer and consultant he was able to design and present his own rifle, while competing directly with his former employers, not necessarily to the benefit of his current employer.
- The best explanation for this situation is that Isidor Loewe was betting on two horses at the same time, seeing which one would be victorious and securing production rights for whoever won: Luger or Mauser.
- Loewe knew that Luger was much more likely to accept Loewe's licensing schemes.

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C96 AND LUGER PISTOLS IMPLICATIONS

- In a report dated the 9th of March 1897, Mauser claimed:

The self-loading pistol, invented and patented in Germany by Mr. Kommerzienrat Paul Mauser will only be manufactured at the weapons factory in Oberndorf. Without permission of Mr. Mauser, licenses in Germany will not be granted. Additionally Mr. Mauser is to decide on the price and manner of sales of the pistol. The price will be calculated on a basis that a profit of 25% is secured. Mr. Mauser obliges himself to transfer the patent for the pistol to the Commandit-Aktiengesellschaft "Waffenfabrik Mauser" immediately.

- From this statement it is quite evident that Mauser's inflexibility opened the door to the success of the Parabellum in internal German Forces contract competitions.

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C96 AND LUGER PISTOLS IMPLICATIONS

- If we analyse the sequence of tests performed by the German Army, it is evident that in the beginning the Luger was not yet ready, with the advantage of the C96 being quite obvious.
- Lack of a decent safety device on the C96 influenced the tests.
- Unfortunately for Mauser, the lack of support for the C96 by Loewe prevented a combined Mauser and Loewe / DWM effort in promoting the C96.
- Ludw. Loewe & Cie. were not allowed to produce the C96 pistol, or license it to others.
- The consequence was that Loewe was totally free to motivate and support Luger's changes to the C93 Borchardt pistol
- This eventually led to development of the "Parabellum" Luger pistol and it's acceptance by the German army.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Who is interested in the complete history about Paul Mauser and Georg Luger can refer to the book: *Paul Mauser - His Life, Company, and Handgun Development 1838 – 1914*.
- Additional information on the book is available on the web site:

www.paul-mauser-archive.com

- Authors can be contacted at: mauser.archive@gmail.com

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