

35. Even though the helmets were finished with rugged, matt paints, they sometimes appeared gloss due to wear and the paint was often rubbed off. Of course, under these circumstances there arose the additional risk to the wearer who could more easily be seen by the enemy. A choice of field resources to camouflage the helmet were used by the infantryman, including covering the helmets with mud, chicken wire netting to hold foliage and small branches, etc. as well as all kinds of locally available items and material. Sometimes, even toothpaste was used to hide the helmet's grey colour in the snow. On the other hand -not surprisingly- the Army soon issued a complete regulation, made-for-purpose piece of equipment. The bread bag ('Brotbeutel') strap could be fixed to the helmet in an ingenious manner and was able to hold foliage.



35

37. Manufactured by a whole host of firms, the 'Heer' also supplied nets, double-sided (white and camouflage) or single-sided liners, complete with sewn loops or just plain, in fact anything to avoid the life-threatening gleam. However, these devices were only supplied to frontline or elite troops and then only on a number of particular occasions as they were not standard issue.



37

36. An example of a field painted helmet using vehicle paint mixed with sand. Note the granulated finish.



36



38. Interior of a single-sided camouflage liner.



38

Gas masks

39



39. The inside of the M 38 showing the absence of the leather frame of the previous model.

40



40. M 38 Second Model with helmet.

41. A shorter version of the M 38 Second Model. The intense blue colour does not indicate a civil defence provenance. It is just a special anti-magnetic paint to avoid the metal parts from interfering with radio equipment and radar. This primer was also used on the Model 30.

41



42



43



42. M 38 straps.

43. Here can be clearly seen the difference from the first version: the straps were adjusted by means of metal fasteners and unpainted buckles.

44. Lens' detail. The reddish tone is due to the celluloid oxidizing with the passage of time.

45. A detail of the exhalation valve protector on the M 38. This example is of 1942 manufacture by 'aqd' (Radium Gummiwerke mbH, Cologne.)

46. The 'H' inscribed in a circle stands for 'Heeres' (Army).

47. Valve detail of the M 38 First Model.

48. 'Waffen Amt' (WaA) and control codes on the inner flap of an M 38 First Model.



44



45



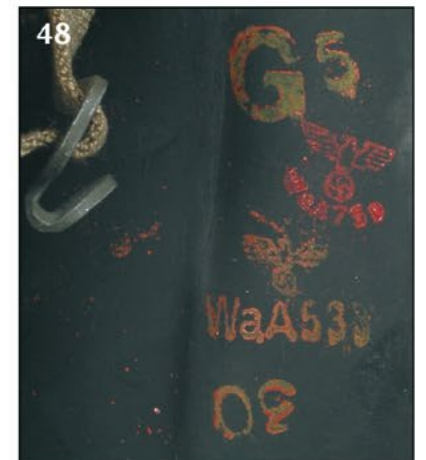
46



47



48





53. Detail of the stock dismantling screw.

54. On this specimen, the manufacturer's name doesn't appear to be specified, as it should be. Rheinmetall-Borsig was -and remains- one of Germany's foremost and more prestigious armament manufacturers. Throughout the war, the company produced a huge range of weapons, including the legendary 8.8 cm Flak 41 and the Pak 36, 38 and 40 antitank guns.

55. Serial number and manufacturer's marks.

56. The MG34 was a selective fire weapon, controlled by a two-position trigger. By squeezing the top of the trigger the gun fired single shots (E). To obtain bursts of fire, the operator squeezed the bottom of the trigger (D).

57. Detail the adjustable sight up to 800 meters.

58. The disassembled flash suppressor.



59. Detail of the recoil spring.

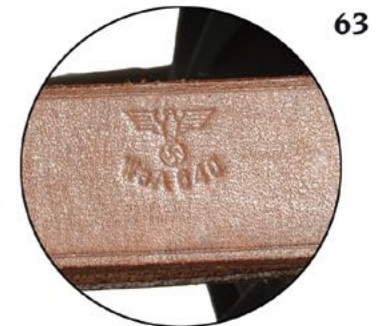
60. Cartridge expulsion gate on the lower side of the gun, immediately in front of the trigger guard.

61. A view of the disassembled bipod.

62. The tripod in position. Note the leather carrying strap attachment.

63. Detail of the Waffenamt on the carrying strap.

64. The MG34 was fed from an ammunition belt that could be stored inside a drum-shaped magazine or loaded directly from the ammunition box. In the photo can be seen two of these magazines together with their carrying case.



65. A view of the magazine carrying case with the serial number and year of manufacture (1943).



66. How to open the case to get the magazines.



Weapons

Pistole 08

The Luger holds a unique place in firearms history in that it is recognised throughout the world as an inimitable icon. Its genesis was at the end of the 19th Century and it has served as the regulation sidearm for the German Army and Navy. Despite its venerable age, many Lugers, manufactured at the Mauser and Krieghoff factories until 1945, served in WWII. By the start of WWI, it had become obvious that the Luger's mechanical complexity hindered mass-production. As early as 1927, the army weapons office stated that 'about 1,180 operations were required to produce the Pistole 08, 156 of which on the grip alone'. In comparison, the much simpler and effective HP 35 required just 55 manufacturing operations. In addition, the P08 tended to jam if not properly cleaned or when firing imperfect rounds. In spite of this, the 1908- pattern Luger was the standard service pistol of the German army until the adoption of the P.38 in 1940. It has been estimated that around 100,000 Lugers were delivered in 1938 with a further 130,000 in 1939, but these quantities were unable to meet the demand of an army that leapt from 2.75 million men in 1939 to over 7 million by 1941.



83

83. Side views and close detail of an excellent Krieghoff P 08. Note the acceptance marks typical of the Krieghoff guns manufactured in the 30's.



84

84. The manufacturer's seal on the receiver. Compared to Mauser, Krieghoff Suhl specimens were manufactured in relatively short runs and are regarded as the finest renditions of this famous gun and much sought after by collectors.



85

85. Safety lever locked (the pistol cannot fire).



86

86. The pistol with the original aluminium magazine. Note the matching numbers.



87

87. Different views of the P08.



88

88. A typical box of cartridges for the Luger.



89

89. Luger holsters are works of leather art in their own right. They were carefully designed to keep the pistol protected from dirt and weather. In the photo can be seen a superlative specimen manufactured in 1941. Note the usual marks on the leather and the slanted belt strap to make the pistol -that was carried on the left side- more accessible.



Pistole 38

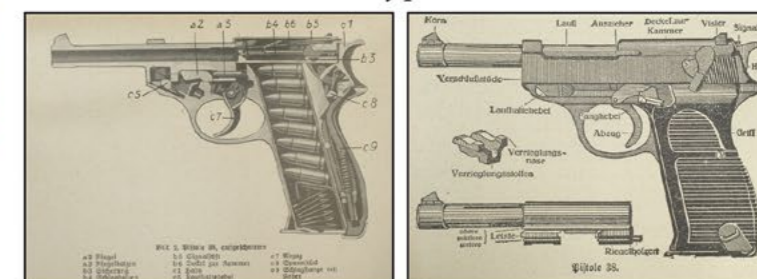
The German army high command (OKW) had requested the weapons office to find a suitable replacement for the Luger shortly after the Third Reich was founded. Quite a few pistols were tested before just the Walther Armee-Pistole remained. After some modifications to the original model, the new sidearm was adopted in 1940 as the '9mm Pistole 38' though a number of significant deliveries had already been made in 1939 - 40. Fritz Walther and Fritz Barthelmes designed a pistol that proved more robust than the Luger, with better performance in mud or snow and easier to mass-produce. The double-action trigger was surely a great advantage and the ammunition feed quite a lot better than the P-08. Notwithstanding, production engineering of the P-38 was still as complicated as the Walther, though undeniably more efficient than the Luger that contained so many more parts. Consequently, a number of manufacturers were engaged in P-38 production. By the close of 1942, the Walther was commonly encountered at the front and was much prized by Allied soldiers who greatly valued its double trigger action, although the Luger still remained the war souvenir of choice...



90



90. Side views and marking details on a Walther P 38



91

91. Pages from the P-38 handbook.

Every soldier, of any nationality, is obliged to carry with him a credential proving his identity as well as details of his military service. The German soldier of the Second World War, and of course Anton Imgrund, was no exception.

From 1935 onward, when military service became obligatory, through the 1939 declaration of war and until the end of the conflict, military personnel were identified through three forms, depending on the moment: Wehrpass, Soldbuch and Erkennungsmarken.

Every young German male of eligible age to undertake military service was required to present himself to the local military authorities for registration. On doing so, he was given a Wehrpass, a little book measuring 10.5 x 14.5 cm with a 'Wehrmachtadler' (Army Eagle) on the cover, made of strong polished paper, containing 52 pages, and manufactured exclusively by Metten & Co of Berlin. Contained in it were the new recruit's data, including whether or not he was a volunteer or conscript. A photo of him in civilian clothes was attached to the first page.

Following his call up, he submitted his Wehrpass in exchange for a Soldbuch, the former document was then kept in the regimental headquarters to which he had been posted. It was subse-

quently kept up to date with all the soldier's medical and military history, including payments, transfers, courses, etc. The Wehrpass was returned to the soldier only upon the termination of his army service.

The Soldbuch was the same size as the Wehrpass, with the same 'Wehrmachtadler' on the cover, but was the colour of chick-peas, and bore the inscription 'Soldbuch zugleich Personalausweis' (Pay book and personal identification). It included his full personal and physical details, as well as (though not always) a photograph of the soldier. Its owner had to carry it in the upper pocket of his tunic, except when in combat because of the risk of capture.

By an order issued in 1939, at the same time as he was given the Soldbuch, the soldier also received a zinc or aluminium badge ('dog tag'), divisible in half, containing the soldier's details, generally his serial number, regiment and the unit to which he belonged. From 1941, some of these also included the soldier's blood type.

The upper part had two holes drilled in it to accommodate a cord that hung around the neck. In case of death, this half remained with the corpse. The other half, bearing one of the two holes, was given to, and retained by the company commander.



A privately acquired satchel from the period in which, typically, a soldier carried his Soldbuch and other documents, as well as photographs, letters and other personal effects.