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**Reader's comments**

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Hi Ward. Here is the rest of the info on the Mauser rifle I talked to you about a while back. The owner brought me the following info.

On the barrel

2069, possible serial number  
245 gG. B.P.  
st.m. G.  
CZ 7.9m/m

On the floor plate

X  
2  
B  
CZ B

A mark that looks like a 7 and small h combined to make one letter(7h) as close as I can come without taking a pencil and drawing it. A small h with the horizontal part of the 7 attached to the vertical part of the h.

On the magazine follower

67

The only thing I can make out of this is a Czechoslovakian 7.9mm chambered Mauser Sporting Rifle serial # 2069. I'm really curious about the strange letter number combo (7h). Could this be an Israeli symbol. I have seen this symbol or a similar symbol on the heads of some Israeli ammo.

Thanks

Joe([RPitt75665@aol.com](mailto:RPitt75665@aol.com))

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This gun (M96 Mauser straight pull) has been poorly received in Germany since it looks cheap, is cheap and shoots and handles like a cheap gun. Not exactly Mauser-like! The main problem appears to be the cocking handle jamming or coming off. The plastic cover for the bolt hole that holds the bolt handle on gets lost in firing. You can't even remove the bolt without tools. This year, the product upgrade includes a removable magazine and a manual cocking safety similar in function to that of the Blaser R93. The bolt handle is way too far forward for quick bolt cycling although southpaws will like it. Saw Craig Boddington working it left-handed at the 96 SHOT show and it seems better for left-handers than right-handers. Boddington is a lefty and he liked it. At every show, Mauser has to bring a few extra samples since they invariably give up their ghost and jam tight after only a couple of days of dry firing.

If you want a straight-pull, get a real gun like the Swiss K31 and get it sporterized - you won't regret it. Avoid the Blaser R93 as well since it is all alloy and plastic and several blowups have occurred in the field.

Get a Rem 700 if you must, but my current fave is the Winchester M70 pre-64 type, preferably in Featherweight.

David J. Moses ([dmoses@paulparey.de](mailto:dmoses@paulparey.de))

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I have a Carl Gustafs M96 Sporter. I was thinking about adding one of the Dayton-Traister Mk II cock-on-opening trigger that I saw in the current Midway catalog. Do you have any experience with these? Thanks.

Carl ([ArvidsonC@aol.com](mailto:ArvidsonC@aol.com))

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Ward,

Found a stock for my 94--pretty good shape. Springfield Sporters has new top grips, so I bought one of those along with some other parts and I need to ask a question or two of you or the group. First question has to do with wood finish--the grip is some kind of a yellow wood(birch?) and stock has a reddish brown finish to it. The grain appears to be about the same for both. I don't think the stock is walnut but I don't know. What I'm wondering about, is using TSP on the stock to remove all finish and start over with linseed oil (I heard that's what was used originally). Do you know anything about the wood, the finishes and colors and what the best way to proceed would be.

Second question has to do with the brass marking disc. I had assumed that the disc when ordered would be a barrel quality disc as on all the other Swedes I've seen, but this one is marked differently. Info on three lines--line 1. Gb K line 2. M Line 3. 2093.

Questions are: What does this indicate and is this actually a Swede 94 disc?

I have order some other parts from Gun Parts but they didn't have the long bayonet lug for the carbine, so I'll probably be looking for that for the next little while (years?) Anybody that you know that may have one?

I picked up the stock from an individual at a gun show and while walking around with it, had several people that immediately recognized what it was and developed a craving for it. One guy said he had acquired a "new" barreled action and needed a stock, but I couldn't get him too interested in selling his stuff to me. I know of another guy that has one, supposedly with military stock, but scope mounted on it. I may be able to do a little trading and get his stock for my, now unnecessary "sporterized" Swede 94 stock. Ah, the thrill of the chase--somebody recently commented to me that he was too old to chase "wimmen", the price was too high for carousing, the kids were gone, so he was just going to chase Mausers.

Got the last issue of MM and could read everything--I appreciate you doing that for me and enjoy each issue.

Bob Arthur ([boba100@aol.com](mailto:boba100@aol.com))

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Ward: have you ever heard of the "Karabiner Collector's Network" and do you have a point of contact for this organization??? I have heard the name from NAPCA, National Automatic Pistol Collector's Association, of which I am a member. Any info would be appreciated.

John([barnacle@napanet.net](mailto:barnacle@napanet.net))

(Ed. - anyone out there have any info on this outfit? -W)

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Ward,

I've got a question for you and the readers of the Mauser Monthly.

A couple of years ago Kimber was selling a bunch of Swede Mauser conversions, some in 6.5x55 and some in other calibers. Does anyone have experience with these in the original Swede caliber? I've thought about picking one up, if I can ever find one. I'd be interested in hearing from anyone who has one for sale.

Thanks,  
Rod ([rhardimn@mindspring.com](mailto:rhardimn@mindspring.com))

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### **How many 98 Mausers? "The Myth of the Hundred Million" Revisited**

By: *Joe Steen*

(Originally appeared in *The Military Rifle Journal* no. 69, Sept. 1996)

A couple of years ago I wrote a piece for the *Military Rifle Journal* in which I sought to show that the claimed production of a hundred million 1898 Mauser rifles was a profound exaggeration. At that time I suggested the manufacture of perhaps 34 to 37 million 98's down to the end of the Second World War. Since that piece was written I have been able, with the help of fellow members of the IMRA, to put together some more specific figures on the production of Paul Mauser's immortal design.

In the following paragraphs I will attempt to reconstruct some production stats for the 98 according to various natural groupings of production eras and/or specific manufacturing facilities.

*All production through 1914:* According to Paul Mauser's entry in the 1914 issue of *Wer Ist's* (Germany's *Who's Who*) total production of all Mauser-designed firearms to 1914 amounted to eight million units. Considering that 1871, 71/84, and pre-1898 smokeless powder Mauser rifle manufacture totals better than three million (to say nothing of revolver and pistol production approaching a half-million,) it is reasonable to figure pre-Great War 98 rifle production (In Germany, Austria, and Japan) at about four million pieces. Of this total about half represents manufacture for the German armed forces and the rest for commercial export military sales. There was, of course, manufacture of sporting rifles on the 98 action before 1914, but it is inconsequential for our purposes.

*German Military Procurement, 1915-1919:* Manufacture in Germany at the state armories and at commercial factories in the years of the First World War totaled about seven million. This production was of the *GEW.98* and the *Kar.98a*, being split in about a four to one ratio between the two types.

*German Military Procurement, 1920-1945:* Production within Germany proper and (after 1938) in nations subject to German military occupation represented about 12 to 13 million 98-type firearms in this period. The vast majority of these rifles were of the *Kar.98k* type (about 11 million total from 1934 through 1945) but was supplemented by over a hundred thousand each of the *Kar.98b* and *G.33/40* designs. A complicating factor in assessing German production totals is the production in Hungary of the *G.98/40*, a non-Mauser design whose production totals may well have been silently included in the 1941-1944 *Kar.98k* production numbers. Further, while most of the modified *Gew.98* arms in use after 1919 were clearly of pre-1919 manufacture, there is some evidence that a few of these rifles were assembled from new components of wartime manufacture.

*German Commercial Production 1920-1945:* Dependable figures for the manufacture of military 98's for commercial sales are hard to come by. Inasmuch as the bulk of this production was undertaken in the years 1934 through 1941 when Oberndorf's primary effort was on production for the German armed forces, I think it is unlikely that as many as one million 98's were so fabricated.

*Czech Production To the End of 1937:* Manufacture for the Czech armed forces and for export sales down to the eve of Germany's occupation of Czechoslovakia totaled about 1.7 million units. Production undertaken after March 1938 should properly speaking (statistically speaking, that is) be counted as German.

*Belgian Between-the-Wars Manufacture:* The official history of the firm of *Fabrique nationale* suggests that the Herstal-based firm supplied about one million 98-type rifles during the years 1919-1940. The state-owned *Manufacture de l'etat* also produced the Belgian 1935 service rifle in this period, but I don't feel its efforts add substantially to the *F.N.* total.

*Polish 1898 Mauser Production to September 1339:* Surviving documents indicate that the state-owned facilities at Warsaw and Radom manufactured about 700,000 rifles of the 98 type during the period of Poland's independent existence between the world wars.

*The Great Imponderables: China and the 98:* In my original essay on worldwide 98 Mauser production, I suggested that of the various facilities in China none was "capable of really significant production." Since Stan Zielinski's article on Hanyang Arsenal indicates Hanyang likely produced 450,000 rifles I'll have to modify my stand on this point. I still feel that to credit China with the manufacture of more than two (or at the very most) three million Mausers is questionable.

*98 Mausers from Everywhere Else:* In the Western Hemisphere rifles were made in Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, and (probably) the Dominican Republic. Quantities were, however, small: Mexico perhaps 100,000, Brazil and Argentina fewer, the Dominican Republic far fewer still.

In Europe, Yugoslavia made substantial quantities of the 98, but modified so many rifles from elsewhere it's difficult to figure out just how many were in fact made from scratch there. Spain likewise produced its M1943 rifle in significant numbers.

For this entire group of countries total production likely amounted to a million units or perhaps slightly more. And then there's the question of Turkey: My view is that in all likelihood they never made a single Mauser 98 receiver but merely re-marked and otherwise cobbled up somebody else's stuff.

***Production Summary of the 1898 Mauser***

Germany, Austria and Japan through 1914:	4 million
German Military Procurement, 1915-1919:	7 million
German Military Procurement, 1920-1945:	12 million
German Commercial Production, 1920-1945:	1 million
Czech Domestic and Export Manufacture to 1938:	1.7 million
Belgian Domestic and Export Manufacture to 1940:	1 million
Polish Production to September 1939:	.7 million
Chinese Local Manufacture:	3 million(?)
All the Rest:	1 million(?)
Total Worldwide Production of the 98 Mauser to 1945:	31.4 million

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**Publisher's Comments**

By: *Ward M. Clark* ([wclark1046@aol.com](mailto:wclark1046@aol.com))

Can you believe I got one out on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month? Well, by about two hours anyway.

My thanks to Joe Steen for the use of his excellent article in this month's issue! "How Many Mausers" is a wonderfully researched and presented piece. ("How many Mausers" is a question I get from my wife pretty regularly.)

I haven't had time yet for a range session with my newest addition, the 98az, but I promise you all a shooting review shortly. I have 40 rounds of Sellior & Bellot 7.9mmJS ammo in hand and ready to go, all I need is an hour with a bench rest. (BTW, if anyone has a good source of original or original style leather slings for one of these...)

A couple of quick notes – Summer is coming on us fast and contributions to the Monthly usually taper off some, as everybody is out doing things instead of writing about them – including me. Don't forget to take a few moments, though, and send me a few notes on a good range session, a great gun show find, or whatever, for the summer Monthlies. Also, if anyone finds a good Mauser or shooting sports Web site, or an interesting newsgroup discussion, send me the link and I'll include that, too.

Until next month -

Good Shooting!

- Ward