

# A Barrel of Royal Pedigree

By Jay DIY

When I went to buy my Model of 1928A1C Thompson Sub Machinegun (TSMG), I had some mental images of what my dream gun should look like. These images were formed from years of watching the gangster and WWII movies throughout my youth and adult life. I had formed a sort of composite image based mostly on movies, and not much real information about the TSMG. I knew I really liked the look of the drum magazine, Cutts Compensator (although I did not even know that was what it was called) and vertical fore grip! Another key aspect of my perfect gun was a ribbed barrel. When I went to look at a couple of TSMGs, it hit me that I was at the bottom of a mountain high learning curve. It appeared that my ideal gun might just be a Model of 1921 and out of my price range. I learned that the 1928 was possible to find in my dream version too. I located a 1928 that was for sale and went to look at it. What a beauty! It would take a drum, and had that all important vertical fore grip. It even had the bulbous Cutts Compensator. To my great dismay, however, the barrel was smooth! No problem, I was told, I could always get a finned barrel to put on it. Well then, SOLD!



After the paperwork and BATF time delay, I had my gun, but the mission for the barrel of my dreams was still unfulfilled. Hence the search began, and it led me to an Ebay online auction.

There I saw the barrel that would complete my gun! After anxious moments in the heat of the auction process, I won it. I could finally see the light at the end of the proverbial "finned" tunnel. The barrel was still in the wrapper from the Rock Island Arsenal (RIA), where the barrel had apparently undergone some refurbishment activity in June of 1952. I took the barrel out of the paper wrapper and dutifully cleaned the cosmoline from the outer surface. The threaded ends for the compensator and receiver were in perfect shape. By this time I had climbed up a bit of the learning curve and began looking for the markings that should be on the barrel. I found the "P" firing proof mark, the



"S" for Savage Arms, and the "o-" barrel-receiver alignment mark. I also found another unexpected mark. It was unfamiliar to me and I hit the books to

see if I could identify it. I looked through references by both Tracie Hill and Frank Iannamico and found one instance where a mark resembled the one on my new barrel.

During WWII shipments of TSMGs that were destined for the Netherlands would be inscribed with the W-Crown proof mark of Queen Wilhelmina. **Her full name was Queen Wilhelmina Helena Pauline Orange-Nassau and she was** Queen of the Netherlands from 1890 to 1948. She was the daughter of King William III and his second wife Queen Emma. King William III died on November 23, 1890 and a special law had to be passed to allow a female to ascend to the throne.

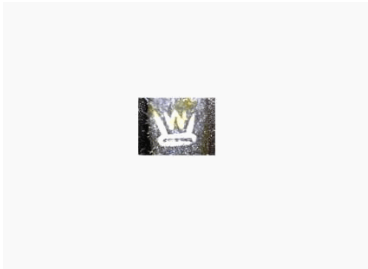


As a nineteen-year-old Queen, she offered the world one of her Royal Palaces at The Hague as a place where countries could come to settle their differences through peaceful arbitration, rather than war. This idea was the foundation of the International Court of the Hague.

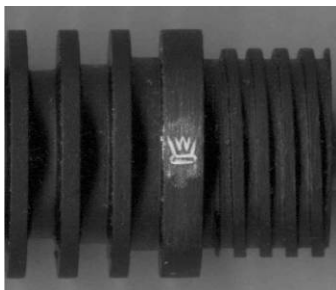
*The Queen near the end of her reign. Wilhelmina was the only Dutch monarch to ever appear on the country's banknotes.*



On May 10, 1940, Germany invaded the Netherlands and Queen Wilhelmina and her family had to flee to England. With no real army or the weapons to even attempt a defense against the powerful German onslaught, the country surrendered on May 14, 1940. In England, Queen Wilhelmina took charge of the Dutch government, setting up a chain of command and immediately communicating with her people.



When Hitler was defeated, Queen Wilhelmina was the inspiration for rebuilding a devastated country. Queen Wilhelmina died at the age of 82 on November 28, 1962 and is buried in the vault of the Dutch Royal Family at Nieuwe Kerk (New Church), Delft, Netherlands. (Note: Queen Wilhelmina information from internet source Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.)



The consensus among the experts I have consulted is that this is the mark of Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands. In the case of my barrel, the top portion of the stamp may not have contacted the barrel, as there does not appear to be a visible top portion of the crown. The accompanying close-up views show the stamping and its relative location on the

barrel. This marking is also remarkable in that barrels were not typically marked for their country of use. Perhaps it was stamped as part of a spares order or some maintenance activity. We will probably never know. As is the case for much of TSMG history, the full story is probably lost for all time.

After all of this, it now seems that I have a barrel that I would rather keep as a separate part of my collection; uninstalled from the gun. The location of the W-Crown proof mark is such that it would be hidden from sight under the fore-grip mounting bracket. Well, I guess this means I will be back in the market for a finned barrel, or maybe, just maybe, I can be satisfied with the way my gun looks now.

NAAAAAAAAAH!