

**The Thompson Submachine Gun
of
The Federal German Armed Forces Study Collection of Military Equipment
in
Koblenz, Germany**

By Bill Troy

Photographs by Bill Troy and Dan Sproull

German translation by Stuart Stopkey, Lt Col, USAF

I had just finished reading Dr. Lawrence Heiskell's excellent article on the German Military's Collection of Equipment in the November 2002 edition of *Small Arms Review* when I got word that I would be traveling to Germany on business in February. Although Dr. Heiskell didn't say that their collection contained a Thompson, I thought it was very likely that they would have one. So I decided that I would make time while I was in Germany to see the collection and see if they had a Thompson.

We arrived in Germany on a Saturday and since our meetings didn't begin until Monday, we went straight from checking in at the hotel in Ramstein village to Koblenz. After a great drive up the Rhine to Koblenz (lots of castles and vineyards to look at on the way), we found our way to the museum. It is across the Mosel River, on the north side of town. The collection itself is every bit as fascinating as Dr. Heiskell's article suggests and half a day wasn't enough to go it justice.

On the 4th floor of the collection I found the target of my search. They have a Savage made Thompson Model 28 serial number S-72338. Consulting Frank Iannamico's excellent book *The Military Thompson Submachine Guns* indicates that this gun was made in March, 1941 (page 130). It has a 50 round drum magazine, adjustable Lyman sight, a finned barrel, a vertical fore grip with the front swivel attached on the left hand side (in the British style). The Cutts compensator is a Type 2 with the Cutts logo and patent information on top and no other markings (page 215). The gun has the GEG acceptance and the ordinance bomb stamps on the left hand side of the receiver. It also has the Thompson bullet logo on the top of the receiver just in front of the Lyman sight. I was not able to see any other markings on the gun.

Some pictures follow:



A picture taken by my friend Dan Sproull of the Collection's TSMG and yours truly. They suspend the gun from the top of the display cabinet with by a wire thru the Cutts compensator.



A close up of the TSMG. The placard below the gun is translated later in this article. It is interesting to read the "Official German Military" version of TSMG's development & History".



Close up of the collection's Model 28 TSMG NO. S-72338. The GEG and the Ordinance bomb are visible just below the actuator knob.



Close up of the bolt and wire suspending the TSMG from the ceiling of the display cabinet.

Maschinenpistole M 1928 AC

10.13

Hersteller Auto Ordnance Corporation, New York, USA
Herstellungsjahr nicht bekannt

Eigenantrieb durch direkten Gasdruck, gehäusefestes Rohr, halbstarre Verriegelung mittels verzögertem Masseverschluss

Kaliber	11,43 mm, 6 Züge, Rechtsdrall
Rohrlänge	267 mm
v_0	282 m/s
Kadenz	700 Schuss/min
Magazinkapazität	50 Patronen
Masse	6090 g

Die ersten Versuchsmuster der Thompson-MP entstehen 1919. Eine erste Serienfertigung erfolgt mit dem Modell 1921, das aber wie auch das Modell 1923 und die halbautomatische Version M 1927 zunächst kein kommerzieller Erfolg ist. Das Modell 1928 wird während der Prohibition als „Gangster-Waffe“ bekannt. Zu Beginn des 2. Weltkrieges wird aus Gründen der Fertigungsvereinfachung der verzögerte Masseverschluss durch einen einfacheren unverriegelten mit größerem Gewicht ersetzt. Bis zum Ende der Produktion während des 2. Weltkrieges werden 1,4 Millionen Exemplare aller Modelle hergestellt.

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Close up of the descriptive placard (translation below)

I asked friend and former co-worker (Lt Col Stuart Stopkey) to help with the German translation. Please understand that some words used in the collection do not easily translate to English and some of the more technical terms are not widely used and even those fluent in German may have difficulty putting these complex terms back into English. Any inaccuracies in the translation are 100% my fault. At any rate here is the best possible translation of the placard:

Manufacturer: Auto Ordnance Co. New York, USA

Date of Manufacture: Unknown

This section describes the operation of the TSMG and the technical terms do not translate easily.

Caliber	11.43 mm
Barrel length	267 mm
Muzzle velocity	282 m/s
Rate of fire	700 RPM
Magazine capacity	50 rounds
Weight	6090 g

The first trial patterns of the Thompson Machine Pistol emerged in 1919. The first series manufactured is the Model 1921. It is similar to the Model 1923 and the semiautomatic Model 1927. It was not a commercial success. The Model 1928 was known as a “Gangster weapon” during the prohibition. At the beginning of WW II, the mass bolt assembly was replaced with a simpler, unlocked, but heavier bolt assembly to simplify the production process. A total of 1.4 million weapons were produced up until the end of production during WW II.