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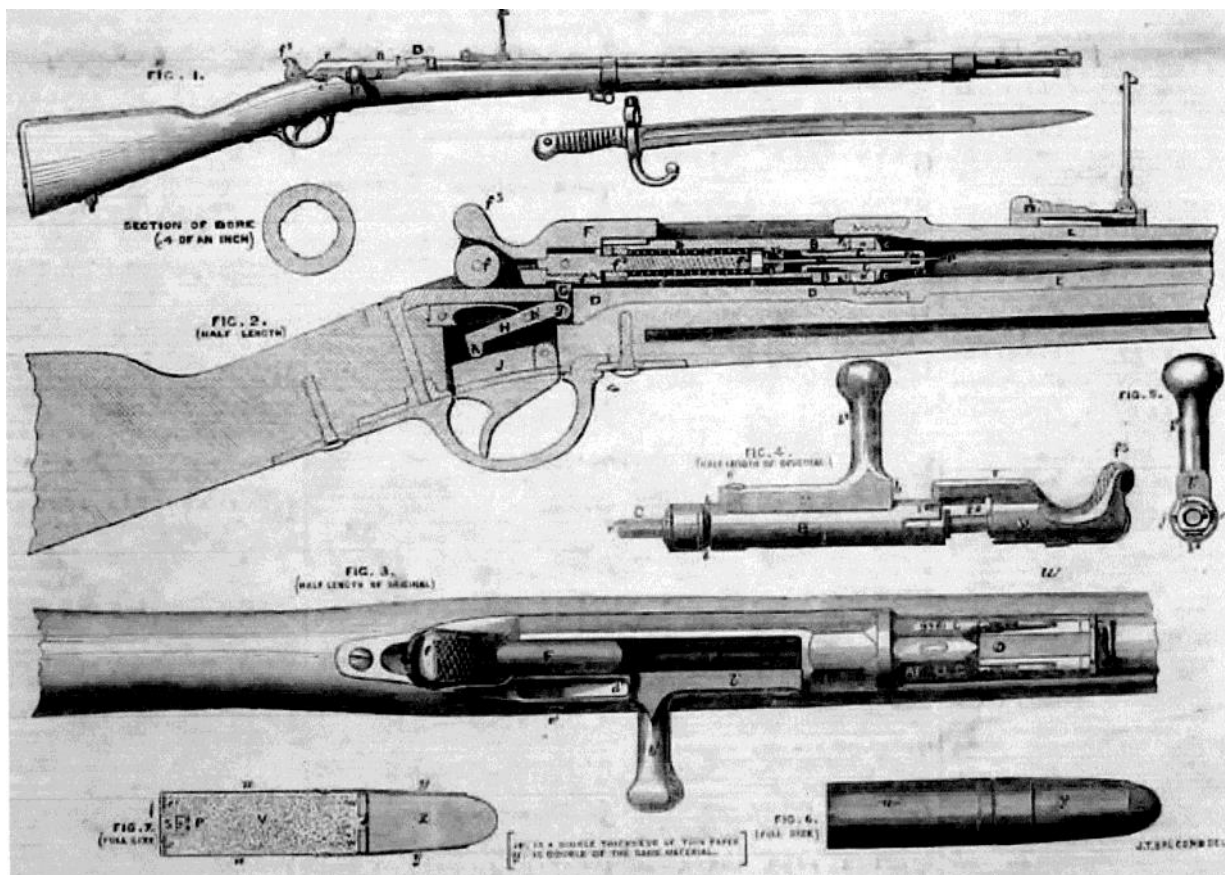
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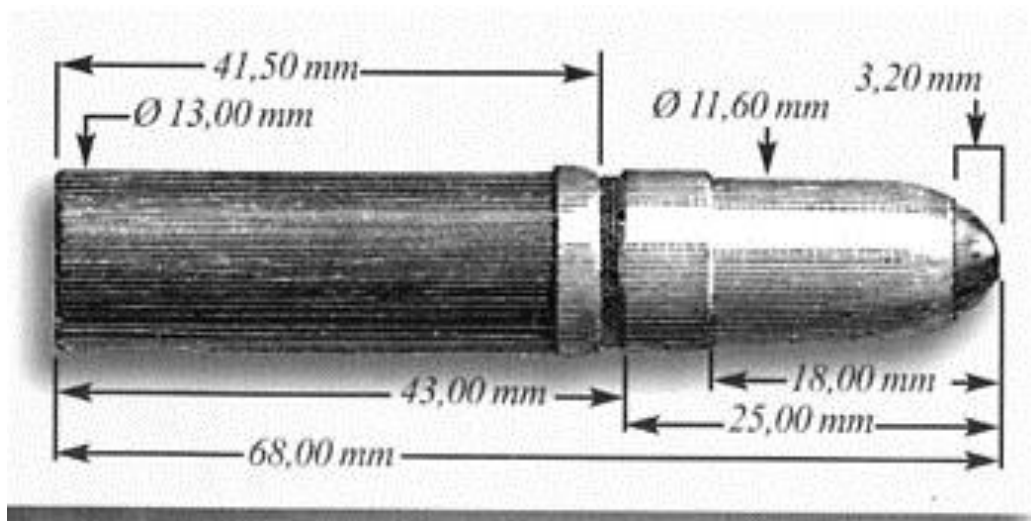












Dreyse & Collenbusch, Sömmerda i. Thür.

Gegründet 1817.



Abteilung:
Zündhütchen und Munition.



Kriegs- und Jagdmunition,
Revolver-, Flobert- und Sharps-Patronen, Zielmunition,
Schlagröhren, Zündhütchen für Artilleriemunition,
Knallsignale für Eisenbahnen, Zündhütchen aller Art.
Anfertigung aller in das Fach schlagenden Artikel nach Muster und Zeichnung.
Exportvertreter: **Moritz Magnus jun., Hamburg.**

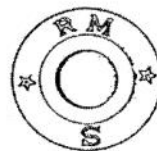
DREYSE / M&W SOEMMERDA / RMS

The company **DREYSE & COLLENBUSCH, SÖMMERDA** was formed in 1824 by **Nickolas Von Dreyse**. From 1834 it only produced primers, shotshells and rimfire cartridges. In 1843 Dreyse sold his part in the firm to Collenbusch. Later this firm was taken over by **Kronbiegel** and incorporated into **SKD** (see below).

In 1842 the totally separate company **DREYSESCHES WAFFENFABRIKEN SÖMMERDA** was also founded by **Nickolas Von Dreyse** and produced CF ball cartridges (with hs on right) but became famous for the production of rifles, MGs and later pistols. After the death of Nicholas c1860, his son **Franz** took over the business.

In 1899 the company changed its name to **MUNITIONS UND WAFFENFABRIKEN, SÖMMERDA (M&W-S)**. It also produced rifle cartridges and the DREYSE hs was still believed to be used after 1899. The "M&W SOEMMERDA" hs was also shown in a later RMM catalog c1905. Note "SÖMMERDA" is the old German spelling prior to "SOEMMERDA".

In 1901 the company was absorbed by **RHEINISCHE METALLWAREN UND MASCHINENFABRIK AG**, Dusseldorf (also called **RHEINMETALL** which was founded in 1889) and renamed "**RHEINISCHE METALLWAREN UND MASCHINENFABRIK AG Dusseldorf ABT SÖMMERDA**" (**RMS**) still retaining its identity until the end of WW1. The "M&W SOEMMERDA" hs was also still used after 1901. **RHEINMETALL** did not appear to have manufactured ammunition after WW1 but continued to produce tanks and pistols.





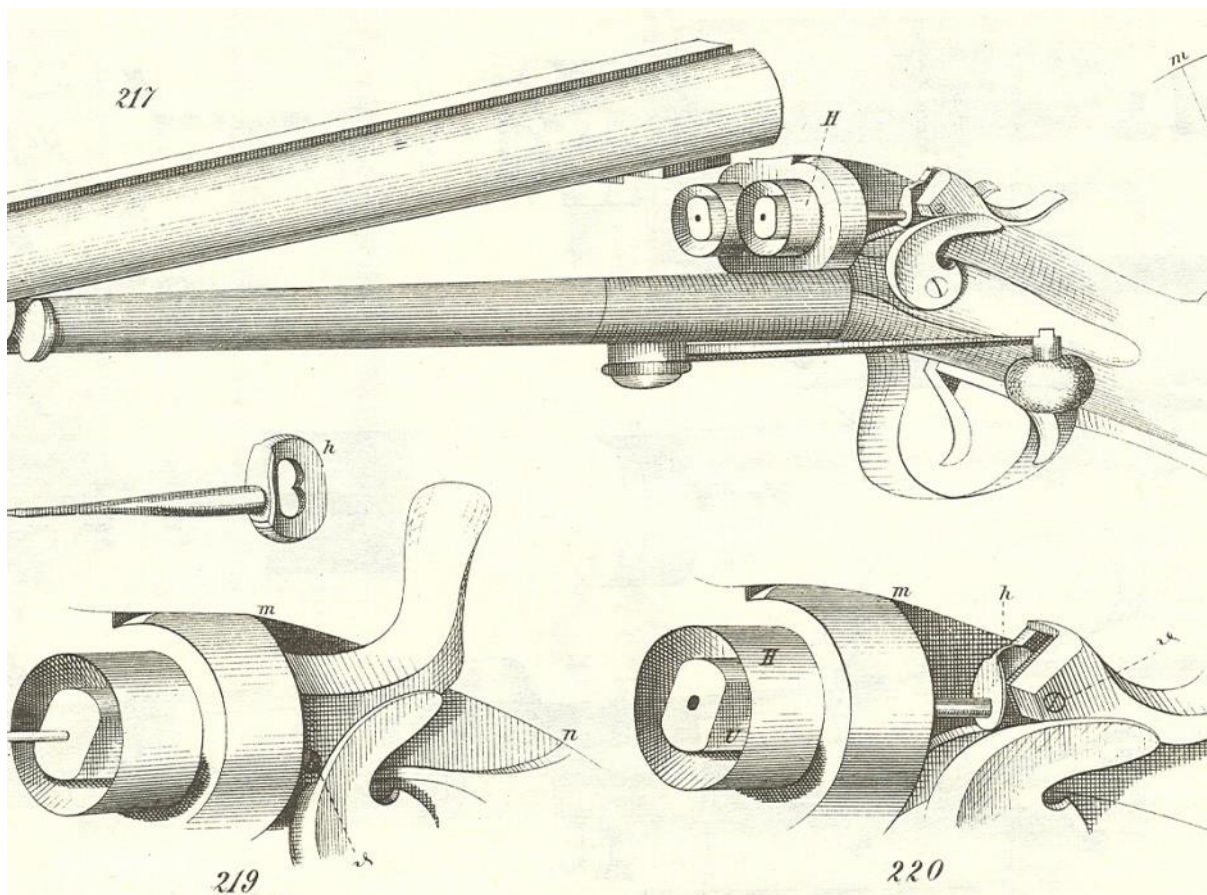
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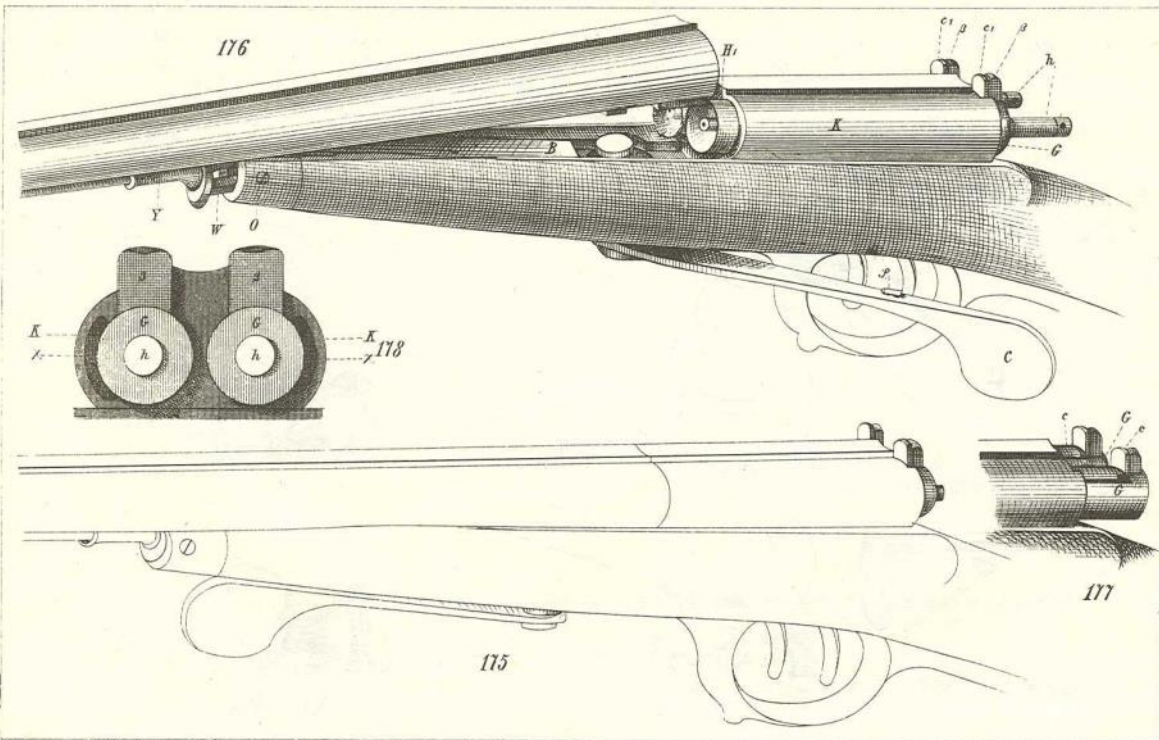
Ad. Zimmer gez.



Fig. 210 $\frac{1}{2}$, *Fig. 211-216* $\frac{1}{1}$.

Ad. Zimmer gez.



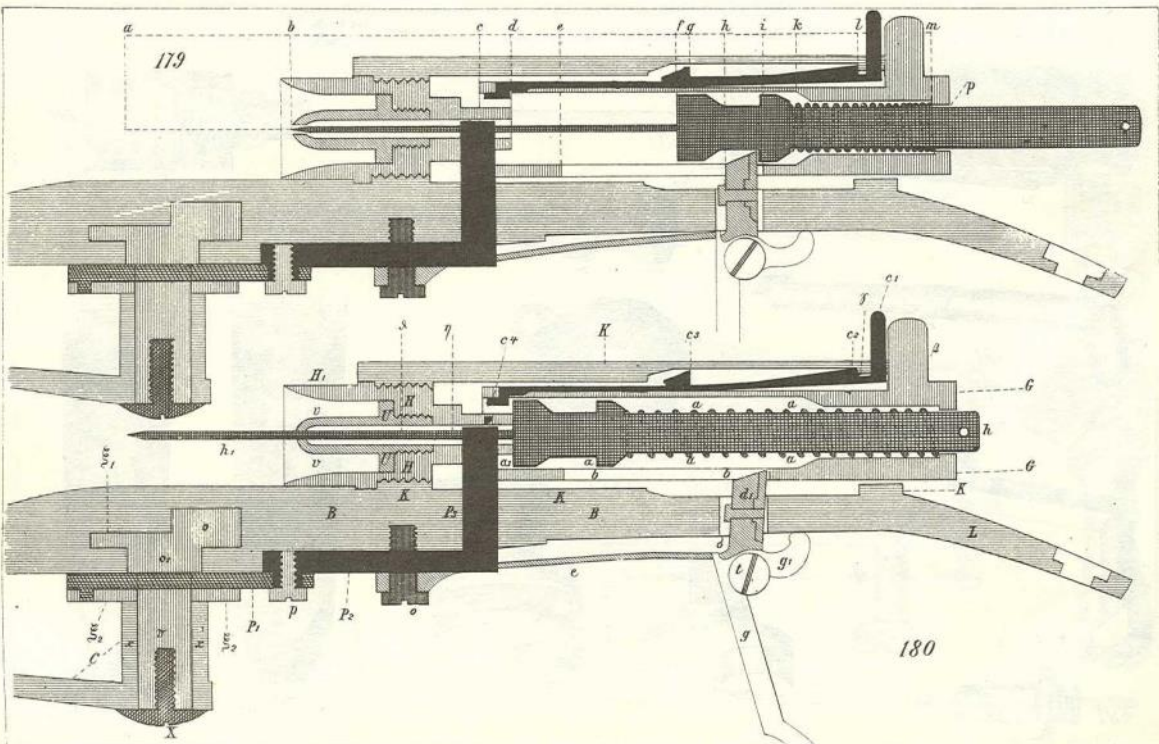


Lith. Anst. v. C. Wetzlar, Darmstadt.

Fig. 175-177 u. Fig. 178 v.

Ad. Zimmer gez.

Taf. XVII.



Lith. Anst. v. C. Wetzlar, Darmstadt.

h.

Ad. Zimmer gez.

Taf. XVIII.

Dreyse SxS 16 Ga. Needle Fire Shotgun
Converted to Center Fire
Inventor: Johann Nikolaus von Dreyse
(1787-1867)

Needle fire guns and pin fire guns were the first really practical hunting guns because they could be loaded from the breech with a cartridge that combined the priming compound, the powder and the projectile or shot in a cartridge.

Dreyse worked in the gunshop of Pauly in Paris, the inventor of a self contained brass cartridge (1812) as a young man, returned in 1814 to Germany and founded his own business in Sömmerda. Besides producing hunting guns, he developed a needle fire bolt action military rifle that became the official rifle of the Prussian army in 1840. When Prussia won an important battle due to the fire power with this rifle, many countries began the development of breach loading guns.

Both the pin fire and the needle fire guns were soon superseded by center fire guns and ammunition with primers as we still have them today. This shotgun was made as or converted to center fire in the Dreyse factory.

When the underlever is turned to the side, the barrel first moves straight forward before the barrel swings sideways for extraction and reloading of cartridges. On Pinfire Guns this was necessary to retract the needle that penetrates the powder bag in order to ignite the priming compound that was placed inside of the powder load.



Franz von Dreyse 20 ga. side-by-side shotgun

Winner of the Franz Jäger Award 2006

Our research on Franz von Dreyse did not turn up much information, and even Ulrich von Dreyse, a remaining member of the Dreyse family, told us that very little is known about him. We would like to hear from you if you have any information about him. We know that he was born in 1822, son of the famous father who had invented the needle-fire bolt action rifle that made history. He improved on his father's invention early on, but being an introvert, his efforts never became very well known.

He had few friends and could not accept criticism of his ideas. He did, however, have a loyal clientele that appreciated the high quality of his hunting and sporting rifles. The rifle that won the

award has the serial number 16153, has 20 Ga. barrels and was most likely made for center fire shot shells that were developed by the Dreyse Company.

The German Gun Exhibit judges at the Vintagers had to make some hard choices, and choose this gun for the following reasons:

- It is a further improvement of the original Dreyse invention.
- The quality of the work is outstanding and attractive
- Coil springs instead of leaf springs were used.
- The rifle has a cocking/uncocking device instead of a safety, in Germany also called a hand cocker. By pushing two collars forward, the coil springs are compressed and made ready for firing, features that were way ahead of



their time.

We thank Jim Muck, the owner of the gun, for allowing Larry Schuknecht to display the gun at the Vintagers, and Larry for bringing it and supplying the known information about the maker of the gun. He had found the information and the photo in *Deutsches Waffen Journal*.





3395. EXTREMELY RARE DREYSE FAUCET BREECH NEEDLE FIRE CARBINE.

SN 8354. 19" octagonal bbl. Blade front sight, adjustable rear sight, rectangular sling swivel, underneath bbl. Left side of bbl has two Gothic "M's" at breech below SN 8354. All parts have matching numbers. Crank spindle at breech opens to receive a cartridge loaded through port on top of bbl. It has a checkered walnut stock with sling stud on bottom. Fire blue trigger. Steel trigger guard. **PROVENANCE:** Journal article entitled "The Dreyse Faucet Breech Rifle" By Larry B. Schuknecht outlining the development of this rare gun. **CONDITION:**



Good condition, retaining about 15% original blue with light surface pitting that is fading to brown, fire blue on trigger is still visible, wood on stock. Stock is well worn with nicks and dings and a crack from the wrist up to the breech on the right side. It retains original color, and nice wood grain. There is flattening on the checkering. Bore is dull and lightly pitted. Trigger guard has been professionally repaired. Mechanics are very good.
4-51022 BWS158 (2,500-4,500)

Frage zu Zündnadelgewehr

D.K.: Ich bitte um Einordnung eines Zündnadelgewehres: Gesamtlänge 890 mm, 570 mm langer Achtkantlauf, Kaliber 9 mm. Am Lauf ist rechts die Nummer 11XXX und kursiv „Stahl“ eingeschlagen. Der Händler, bei dem ich die Waffe gekauft habe, meinte dies beziehe sich auf das Material. Meiner Meinung nach könnte es sich dabei auch um die Signatur von Reinhard Stahl handeln, der zwischen 1865 und 1873 in Suhl tätig war. Können Sie das bestätigen und mir weitere Auskünfte geben?

DWJ-U.L.: Bei der fraglichen Waffe handelt es sich um ein von Franz von Dreyse in Sömmerda konstruiertes und auch dort gefertigtes „Damen-Zündnadelgewehr“ zum Scheibenschießen. Die Bezeichnung „Stahl“ bezieht sich keinesfalls auf einen Suhler Hersteller, sondern

auf das Material des vierzügigen Laufes im Kaliber 0.34", was ungefähr 9 mm entspricht. Die Ladung der kleinen Papierpatronen betrug 6 Gran Pulver, so steht es im Übrigen auf einem mir hier vorliegenden Vergleichsstück mit der Seriennummer 14956 an der rechten Kammerseite.

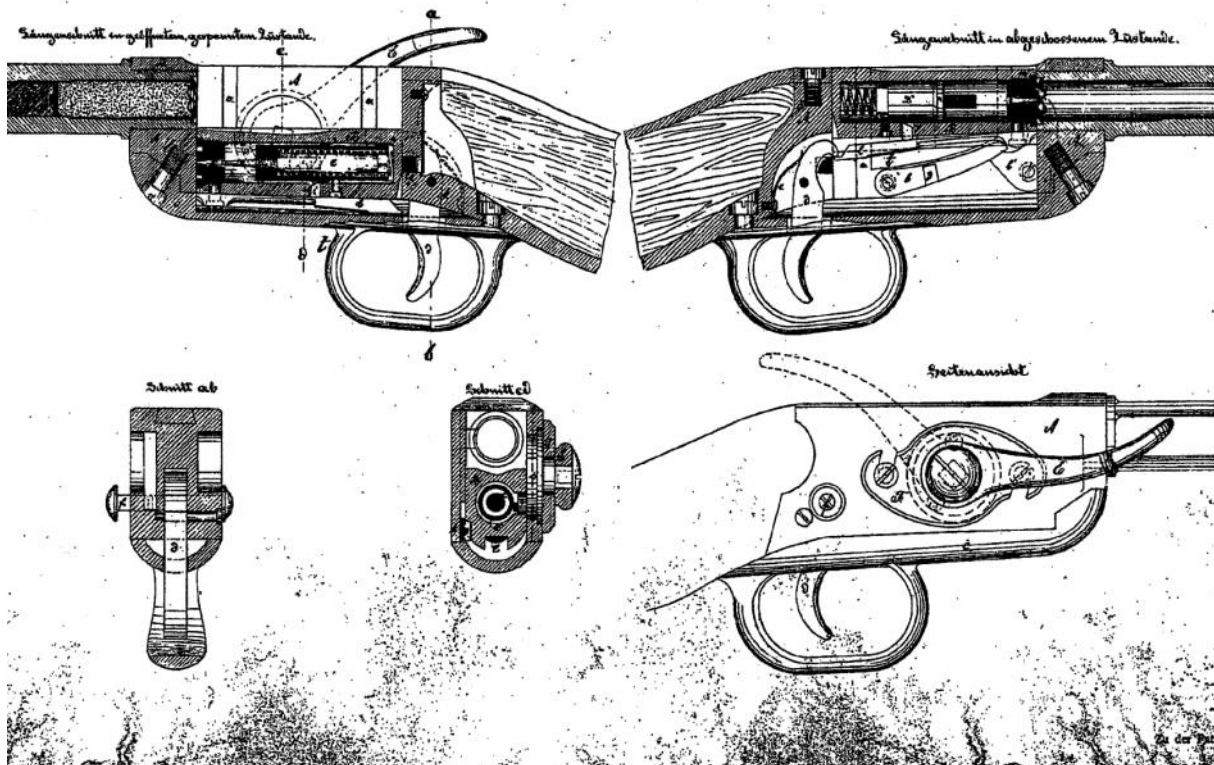
Die hohe Seriennummer bedeutet nun aber nicht, dass derartig viele Waffen dieses Typs gefertigt wurden. Ihre Produktion lief mit vielen anderen Waffen sozusagen nebeneinander her und sie erhielten einfach aus praktischen Gründen die fortlaufende Nummer dieser Serien, sodass man heute ohne die Fabrikationsunterlagen leider nicht mehr feststellen kann, wie viele Stücke dieses „Damen-Gewehrchens“ tatsächlich gefertigt wurden.





v. DREYSE IN SOMMERDA.

Selbstthätige Schloßconstruction für Hinterladungsfeuerwaffen mit senkrechter
Kammerbewegung.



A Dreyse Flinten Drilling 12 gauge

Photos of this unusual Dreyse Shotgun Drilling were sent to us by Pablo Lapine of Argentina. He would like to know more about this gun, and so would we. The gun seems to be quite rare, most likely because very few were ever made. Please let us know what you know about this gun. Although we have seen guns with three triggers, we would be happy if Pablo took off the stock and took a photo of the firing mechanism.



X. V. DREYSE & SONS, KARLSRUHE, GERMANY

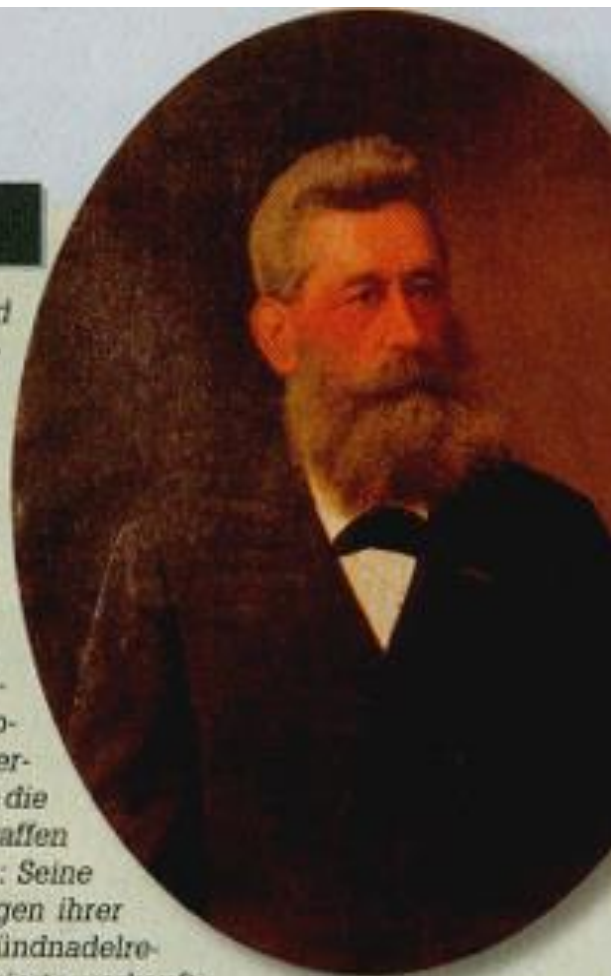


Franz von Dreyse

Zeit seines Lebens (1822-1894) stand Franz im Schatten seines berühmten Vaters, der mit der bahnbrechenden Erfindung des Zylinderverschlusses die Infanteriebewaffnung des 19. Jahrhundert revolutionierte. Schon früh verbesserte Dreyse junior das Zündnadelgewehr und entwarf eine ganze Reihe technisch ausgeklügelter Systeme. Dem genialen Erfinder stand jedoch sein Charakter im Weg: Er galt als verschlossener Eigenbrödlerr ohne Freunde. Kritik an seinen Projekten vertrug er nicht, und letztendlich verscherzte er sich mit seinem Starrsinn auch die Gunst der preußischen Militärs. Bei Zivilwaffen konnte er noch einige Erfolge verbuchen: Seine Jagdgewehre schätzten die Kunden wegen ihrer Präzision und Verarbeitung. Auch den Zündnadelrevolver nach Kuhfahl, an dem er mitkonstruierte, verkaufte er mehrfach. Der Ruhm seines Vaters aber blieb ihm versagt — zu

Unrecht, wie seine Entwürfe zeigen. Nach dem Tod des Nikolaus von Dreyse bemühte sich das preußische Kriegsministerium, die Firma in eine staatliche Gewehrfabrik umzuwandeln. Franz jedoch lehnte ab. Und obwohl sich der Sohn an den Ausschreibungen mit Versuchswaffen für Metallpatronen beteiligte und alles daran setzte, mit dem rasanten technischen Entwicklungstempo Schritt zu halten, spielte der Sömmerdaer Betrieb bei der militärischen Strukturbewaffnung bald keine Rolle mehr. So entwarf der Dreyse-Erbe im Jahr 1881 ein Repetiergewehr mit Röhrenmagazin, um sich gegen die Gebrüder Mauser durchzusetzen — ohne Erfolg: Der Staatsauftrag blieb aus. Und schon 1876 löste man die seit langem im Dreyse-Werk ansässige Gewehr-Revisionskommission auf. In dieser Situation wich der Stammhalter auf reine Zivilprodukte wie

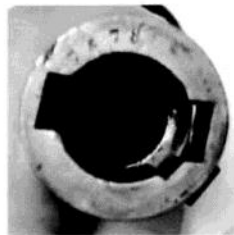
Land- und Werkzeugmaschinen aus. Nach Franz von Dreyse's Tod endete die Geschichte der Fabrik, die der Vater unter großen Entbehrungen aufbaute. Nur der Name Dreyse blieb 1901 nach der Übernahme durch Rheinmetall als Marke auf Selbstladepistolen und Maschinengewehren erhalten.





A needle-fire bolt action sporting rifle

by Dörsch of Suhl



In October of 2005 I received an e-mail inquiry with so-so photos that nevertheless immediately captured my interest. I had never heard the name Dörsch, although the information that came with the photos mentioned Suhl. One photo is shown on this page and is hardly much to rave about. But, I realized that it showed the breech face of the barrel and also clearly showed that the bolt head of this bolt-action rifle must lock directly into the barrel. This would not have raised my special interest if it were a more modern rifle. But this was a needle-fire rifle!

I next moved straight to *Der Neue Stoeckel*, the register of gunmakers up to 1900, and found an entry for Doersch, with more information than on many other makers. Here is what it had to say:

“Doersch (Dörsch) Joseph, Suhl/Germany, mentioned since 1834, died 1891. Originally came from Aachen as a journeyman to Sömmerda and went on to Suhl. He opened his own shop and gun factory in 1857.

“Shortly thereafter the company was renamed to Dörsch & von Baumgarten. Cramer von Baumgarten was a major in the Prussian Army and was mostly a promoter who might have also financed the company. The company made needle-fire guns for several German states, and exported needle-fire wall guns to Austria. In the notice of his death Doersch was called *Koeniglicher Oberbüchsenmacher* (Head Gunmaker to the King). His son, Carl Dörsch took over the business, since he most likely had already run it since 1865 under the name J.C. Dörsch. In 1901 he moved to Wiesbaden and opened a new business in 1902.”

Since I did not have the gun for inspection, only photos that unfortunately do not show the initials before the name, this gun could have been made as

early as 1857, or after 1865 if it is marked with the letters J. C. before the last name. Why was this gun so interesting to me? Because of the bolt-action rifles that were developed by Schlegelmilch at the Arsenal in Spandau in competition with the Mauser 98. (See *Journal* #17, Spring 2003) On these rifles the bolt locked directly into the barrel, followed by other designs with the same feature, like the Mauser 66, and the more recent Blaser, Sauer, Merkel and Mauser rifles.

At the time, I was reasonably sure that the Schlegelmilch design was the first one to use this very good idea, but here was a rifle that used it up to 40 years earlier. You might not find this very exciting, but for me who has discovered the full story of the Schlegelmilch rifles that ended up in Kaiser Wilhelm II's personal collection, it added one more piece to the puzzle and confirms that most new ideas have been used before. Nobody can reinvent the wheel, but many can invent new applications.

From Axel Eichendorff, our technical editor in Germany comes this additional information about Doersch:

“Needle fire rifles by Doersch were an improvement over the Dreyse design in that they were self-cocking and locked into the barrel. They were used as Jaeger Rifles by the *Kleinstaat Schaumburg* by the famous *Bückeburger Jäger*. A rifle made by Doersch for hunting is indeed quite rare, but not necessarily more valuable because military rifle collectors far exceed the collectors of hunting and sporting guns. Supply and demand!”

Now the story how this rifle came to America as told by the owner, Patrick O'Leary, who was kind enough to honor my request for good photos:

“Dear Mr. Dietrich Apel, Thank you for the information on the Doersch rifle. I have been trying to find out informa-

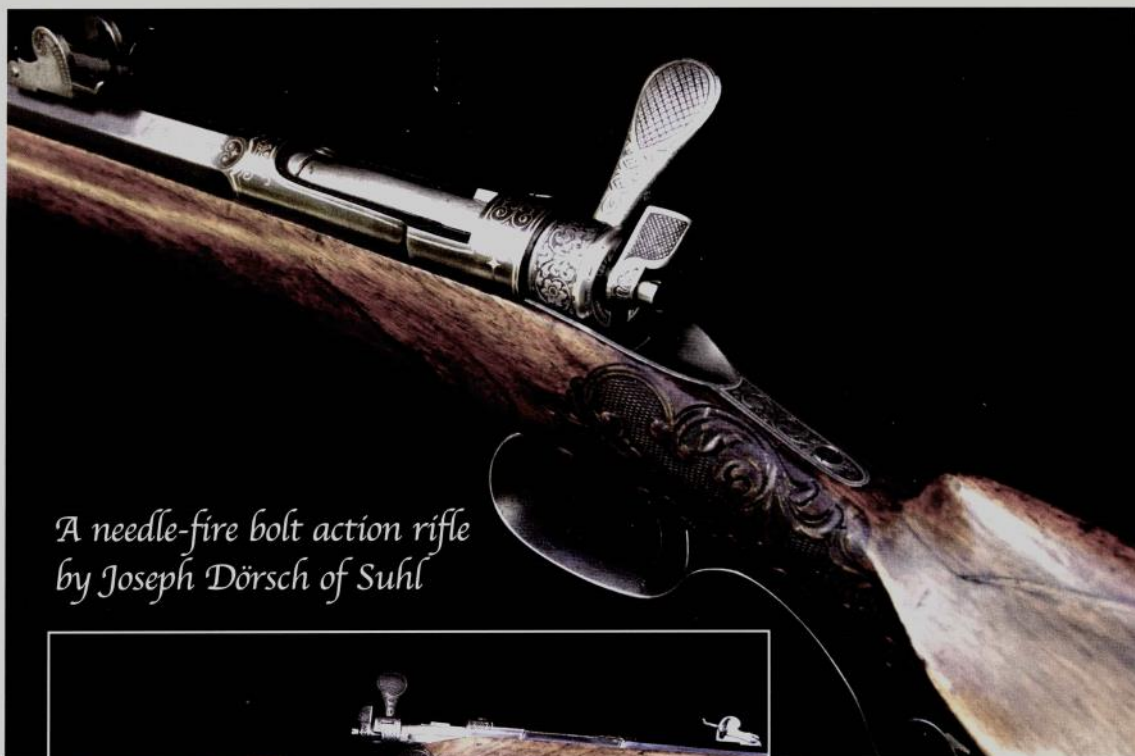
tion on the rifle for a very long time with no success until now! I will send some more photos of the rifle in a few days and try to get the best possible ones.

“I assume that you may want more information about the rifle, and here is what I can tell you: My father brought it back from World War II. He was stationed in France during the war, flying for the 367th–392nd fighter division. While there, he and his squad buddies took in a young boy who had worked for the Nazi troops during their occupation. When the German troops retreated and the Americans took over, they left behind many things, including this young boy who, as my father put it, washed their clothes and shined their shoes. My father and his squad took in the boy and the young lad worked for them.

“He took my father and some of his buddies to a building where the Nazis had a stash of weapons and other things they had acquired during their occupation. That's how the rifle came to be in my father's possession. He then brought it back after the war, as many other soldiers brought things back as souvenirs.

“The rifle is in the exact same condition now as when my father acquired it. Three pieces of the rifle, the cleaning rod, the bayonet and the tension set screw for the hair trigger, are missing. It is otherwise in completely original condition. I would like to see the rifle in your *Journal* and will take some more photos of the rifle and get them to you a.s.a.p. I look forward to corresponding with you about this matter. Thank you, Patrick O'Leary.”

More than two years went by since I received this letter, but he did not forget, had to move to a different state, put the rifle in storage and finally took it to a photographer who did the good photos on the next page. Thank you!



*A needle-fire bolt action rifle
by Joseph Dörsch of Suhl*

