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Antique Longguns

Spandau Sporting Rifle No. 1 Made for Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany

## Spandau Sporting Rifle No. 1 Made for Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany



Item #: 36880

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### Description

Serial #1, 8x57j, 26 3/8" barrel with an excellent, bright bore. This is a simply exquisite rifle, and one of three manufactured by the German state armory at Spandau for Kaiser Wilhelm II, Emperor of Germany and King of Prussia, in 1898 (ten years into his reign). The rifle features a Mauser type action with double front locking lugs, but held within a rounded bolt carrier/dust cover that travels along milled side rails for maximum smoothness of operation. Additionally, the carrier has platinum inlays along the top: "(Crown) / GEWEHRFABRIK / SPANDAU / 1898", and a separate receiver bridge with clip guide is present. The rear of the bolt has a knurled, contoured "spoon" type handle, and a Mauser style, three-position safety. All of the bolt components, as well as the barrel breech, are serial numbered "1". The barrel utilizes the one-piece Schlegelmilch patent design (the brainchild of the King's Chief Gunmaker, Louis Schlegelmilch at Spandau) which dispenses with separate barrel and receiver ring; the breech end of a Schlegelmilch barrel is enlarged and extended to make a solid, one-piece unit, with locking surfaces machined to a true 90 degrees with respect to the bore, thus aiding accuracy. Aside from the serial number, the barrel is unmarked, and fitted with the original V-notch rear sight (which is missing the folding leaf), the original simple, sporting bead front sight, and a narrow sling swivel along the underside. The rifle has a blind magazine and double-set triggers which can be removed via the short lever on the left side rear of the trigger guard. The stock is made from attractive, but fairly plain walnut and has a schnabel tip, oblong side panels, and rounded pistol grip with fine checkering. A green baize-lined metal trap along the belly of the butt will accept a fully loaded 5 round stripper clip, and the smooth steel buttplate is finished in-the-white. The metal retains 97-98% of the original blue finish, although there is a surface blemish on the left of the carrier top at the beginning of the word "GEWEHRFABRIK". The wood is in fine-excellent condition, but does have small handling marks and blemishes scattered about the surface, most noticeably at the heel of the butt. This is one of three sporting guns made by Spandau specifically for the Kaiser in 1898; the only sporting rifles ever manufactured there so far as we can determine at the time of this writing. The rifle is accompanied by the well-worn original leather sling, quite possibly the same sling Wilhelm is wearing on the rifle in the well known painting of him in his hunting attire. The rifle was liberated by a US soldier who brought it back from Europe after World War II, and sold it to an unknown person in New York City. The rifle was acquired by John Miller, noted autogyro test pilot, gunsmith, and older brother of famed photographer Lee Miller shortly thereafter. The rifle was purchased by the current owner from Mr. Miller, who sadly passed away in 2008 at the age of 102. The rifle has been featured prominently in several articles published in "Der Waffenschmied" - The Journal of the German Gun Collectors Association, and has been prominently displayed many times, most notably at the NRA Firearms Museum, and at the 2003 Gold Medal Concourse d'Elegance of Fine Guns at the Vintage Cup where the rifle won the NRA Cup for "The Gun or Rifle of Greatest Historical Significance to the Development of Sporting Firearms". This is a rare opportunity to acquire one of the most desirable, and well made sporting rifles in existence, with ties to one of the most famous (and infamous) historical figures of the 20th century. Antique

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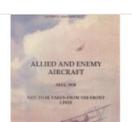
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