Hans Wilsdorf and his brother-in-law, Alfred Davis, founded Wilsdorf and Davis, the company that would eventually become Rolex SA, in London, England in 1905. The Rolex Watch Company would use the finest innovative cutting edge technologies that were available at that time. Rolex was famous for pushing back the boundaries of achievement in watchmaking. Early Rolex models were superior in reliability to other makers. Hans Wilsdorf, the founder of
the Rolex, was constantly trumpeting the accuracy levels to which his Rolex were tuned.

Hans Wilsdorf was keen at associating his products with pioneering figures of the time, including scientists and sports figures —such as land speed record challengers. This idea of selling by association was a brilliant marketing concept in the early 1900’s and indicative of Rolex in general. What made this form of marketing a tremendous success was that Rolex actually engineered watches to meet and match Hans Wilsdorf’s advertising agenda.

**ROLEX WWII**

By the start of WWII Rolex had acquired SO MUCH prestige that Royal Air Force pilots bought them to replace their inferior Gov Issued watches. The result was that Captured officers sent to POW camps had their watches confiscated with intent. When Hans Wilsdorf learned of these facts, he offered to replace each and every Rolex to every individual Officer who could write and explain the circumstances of their loss and inform him what camp they were in. As a result of this program, an estimated 3,000 Rolex watches were ordered by British officers in the Oflag (prison camp for officers) VII B POW camp in Bavaria alone. This had the effect of raising the morale among the allied POWs. American servicemen who heard about this program when stationed in Europe opened the door to America for Rolex after the war.

**THE CORPORAL WHO COULD AND WOULD**

On 10 March 1943, while a prisoner of war, lowly [compared w/officers] Corporal Clive James Nutting, one of the participants of the Great Escape, ordered a stainless steel Rolex Oyster 3525 Chronograph (current equivalent 1,200) by mail directly from Hans Wilsdorf in Geneva. He informed Hans Wilsdorf he intended on paying for it with money he saved working as a shoemaker at the camp. The watch (Rolex watch no. 185983) was delivered to Stalag Luft III on 10 July that year along with a note from Wilsdorf who apologized for any delay in processing the order and explained that an English gentleman such as Corporal Nutting “should not even think” about paying for the watch before the end of the war.
Wilsdorf is reported to have been impressed with Nutting because, although not an officer, he had ordered the expensive **Rolex 3525 Oyster chronograph** while most other prisoners ordered the much cheaper **Rolex Speed King model** which was ***popular because of its small size***.

The **ROLEX 3525** is believed to have been ordered specifically to be used in the **Great Escape** when, as a chronograph, it could have been used to time patrols of prison guards or time the 76 ill-fated escapees through tunnel ‘Harry’ on 24 March 1944.

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The non-fiction book by Australian writer Paul Brickhill tells the story of the initially successful 1944 mass escape from Stalag Luft III by British, American and Commonwealth airmen, whom bribed, cojoled, forged, created, dug, fooled and produced documents, equipment, a camera, clothing and dug several 300 yard tunnels and how it ended with the death of 50 of the escapees by firing squad by the Gestapo on orders from Hitler.

In the end, seventy-six men escaped, 3 made it to freedom, seventy-three were recaptured, fifty of those shot by the Gestapo. Four of the remaining twenty-three later tunnelled out of Sachsenhausen, but were recaptured and chained to the floor of their cells.

One of them, Major **John Dodge**, was released to secure a cease-fire. The book is dedicated "to the fifty"
ACTORS

Steve McQueen
James Garner
Richard Attenborough
James Donald
Charles Bronson
Donald Pleasence
James Coburn

A tense, thrilling, fabulous tale."—Philadelphia Inquirer

They were American and British air force officers in a German prison camp. With only their bare hands and the crudest of homemade tools, they sank shafts, forged passports, faked weapons, and tailored German uniforms and civilian clothes. They developed a fantastic security system to protect themselves from German surveillance. It was a split-second operation as delicate and as deadly as a time bomb. It demanded the concentrated devotion and vigilance of more than six hundred men—every one of them, every minute, every hour, every day and night for more than a year. Made into the classic movie starring Steve McQueen. 16 pages of photographs

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THE CORPORAL MAKES POUNDS

Because of currency export controls in England after the war, Nutting was sent an invoice of only 15 for the watch. The watch and associated correspondence between Wilsdorf and Nutting were sold at auction for 66,000 in May 2007, while at an earlier auction on September 2006 the same watch fetched A$54,000. Nutting served as a consultant for both the 1950 film The Wooden Horse and the 1963 film The Great Escape. Both films were based on actual escapes which took place at Stalag Luft III. It was also reported that in November 2013 the Rolex Speed King owned by Flight Lieutenant Gerald Imeson during the Great Escape was sold for 60,000.

ROLEX HISTORICAL NATURE

The first waterproof wristwatch “Oyster”, 1926
The first 360 full turning self-winding Rolex wristwatch 1931 (the “BUBBLE BACK” due to large case back),
The first wristwatch with an automatically changing date on the dial (Rolex Datejust 1945)
The first wristwatch case waterproof to 100 m (330 ft) (Rolex Oyster Perpetual Submariner ref.6204, 1953)[13]
The first wristwatch to show two time zones at once (Rolex GMT Master 1954)
The first wristwatch with an automatically changing day and date on the dial (Rolex Day-Date, 1956)
The first watchmaker to earn chronometer certification for a wristwatch
Tudor Submariners were used by the French Navy for its divers in the late 1960’s. The same model was used by the US Navy for its UDT and Navy Seals.

ROLEX PEARL MASTER MASTERPIECE RESTORED BY ROCK 2010

GOLDSMITHWORKS.COM

http://lsyf.com/rolex_marconi_tudor_history.htm
ROLEX WHITE GOLD PRESIDENTIAL RESTORED BY ROCK 2013

ROLEX VINTAGE SERVICE RESTORE AS IS BY ROCK 2010
Hans Wilsdorf’s vision to register the Marconi name in January 1911—before he officially patented the Rolex name on the 15 November 1915—was a gem of Rolex marketing brilliance. In 1901 Gugliemo Marconi successfully demonstrated the first use of radio waves as a means of communication. In 1909, Marconi was awarded the Nobel prize for physics and his business had become a great commercial success. Radio communication was "state of art technology" and this was very exciting to the general public. Hans Wilsdorf believed that by registering the name MARCONI for Rolex watches he would immediately associate his ground breaking watch technology and engineering with the groundbreaking innovation and progress of the MARCONI radio waves. The Rolex Marconi was thus born and production took off in the 1920’s.

MARCONI LINE
1920

Only the very best movements that Rolex could manufacture were utilized for the Marconi line. Rolex did not place the Marconi name on standard Rolex models but actually on the most expensive lines; lines that were limited production models for customers whom price mattered little and quite literally wanted the best of the best.

The expense necessary to acquire a MARCONI reflected the enormous amount of work and detail that went into each one. The majority of these Marconi watches were sold through a very small group of Fine London Jewelers whose customers could afford the high prices. In addition, Rolex made signature Marconi models for other unique World Renown Fine Jewelry and Watch Dealers such as Quervo Y Sobrinos Habana in Cuba.

Ultimately it was the MARCONI with its hand crafted and assembled movements and the fine attention to detail that forged a legendary reputation for accuracy and reliability and established Rolex as the finest wristwatch maker in the world.
TUDOR
1946

To pay tribute to his country and the rich historical Tudor period of England, Hans Wilsdorf first offered the first Tudor watches in 1946. The most important difference between Rolex and Tudor was apparent in the Tudor Oyster’s movement; supplied by Ebauches SA, ETA and not Rolex. Yet Rolex still places high value today due to the fact ETA specially modified the automatic calibers and they were noted as “especially made for Tudor.”

Though long regarded as Rolex Tudor, a company was formed specifically called Montres Tudor SA. Montres Tudor has designed, manufactured and marketed the Tudor brand since March 6, 1946. Tudor Watch Company created a product for authorized Rolex dealers to sell that offered Rolex reliability and dependability but at a lower price point. Tudor brand watches are currently manufactured by Montres Tudor SA using movements supplied by ETA SA. From Australia, Canada, India, Mexico, South Africa, most countries in Europe and South Asia, to the Middle East, South America — particularly Brazil, Argentina and Venezuela — Tudor built a solid brand with out losing the full flavor of Rolex due to the fact they were manufactured with similar precision.

NOTE: Montres Tudor SA is returned to the United States in the summer of 2013.
TUDOR RESTORED BY ROCK JAN 2014

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JULY 2014

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