

pistols of the world

A comprehensive illustrated encyclopedia of the world's pistols
and revolvers from 1870 to the present day



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in' all other respects, the revolver was the same as when it first appeared in 1908, and it continued in production until replaced by the J-frame series in 1969. By 1970, more than 400,000 had been made.

The .22RF version was made from 1930 to 1967, and was identical with the .38 series in every way except calibre.

Colt Commando Model 1942. The 'Commando' was a special wartime order, for use by factory guards and similar federal agencies. It was a standard Official Police revolver in .38 calibre with a 4 inch barrel. A few were made in 6 inch barrel length. The only distinguishing feature is the inscription on the barrel which identifies the model as being a 'Commando'. About 50,000 were made.

Marshal Model Revolver 1954. The 'Marshal Model' was another sales idea to market the Official Police under another name. It was offered in 2 inch and 4 inch barrel lengths, and only 2,500 were sold. It is now quite a rarity.

The Officer's Model Revolvers. Colts introduced this model in 1904, and are still selling a revolver with the same name, though there are differences in today's version. The 'Officer's Model' was always

a rather special revolver; it was, and still is, more of a target weapon than a general use pistol. The number of variations and changes is totally confusing, and it is profitless to try to pursue them except in a work specially devoted to the task. In the following descriptions, the general features only are noted, but all were roughly the same type of revolver, i.e. a six-shot solid frame DA of generous proportions and good workmanship.

Officer's Model Target Revolvers. .32 & .38. 1904- This revolver was produced in parallel with the Army Special Model, and was the target version of it. Within the two general calibres there were no less than nine different variants of ammunition that could be chambered, and the barrel lengths varied from 4 inch to 7½ inch, with 6 inch as the favourite. The earliest production had the cylinder rotating anti-clockwise, but after the introduction of the Army Special in 1908, the rotation followed the change and became clockwise.

There were many minor additions to satisfy the shooters' individual needs; the tops of the barrels were, for instance, stippled to reduce glare, the grips were heavily chequered, and in some, the straps

were chequered. In other respects, they were no more than a carefully made version of the current military weapon.

Target Revolver .22 Long Rifle 1930. The .22 version of the .32/.38. This revolver was produced with a 6 inch barrel only.

Officer's Model Special 1949. This revolver was in .22RF and .38 calibres only. Oddly enough, the .22 version weighed more than the .38 because of the extra metal in the cylinder.

Officer's Model Match Revolver 1953. The 'O.M.M.', as it is usually called, carried on from the 'Special' when that was discontinued in 1952, and is still produced. It also is only in .22 and .38, and only a standard barrel of 6 inch length is fitted. There is virtually no change between it and the previous version, except for a change of frame metal and consequent J-frame numbering.

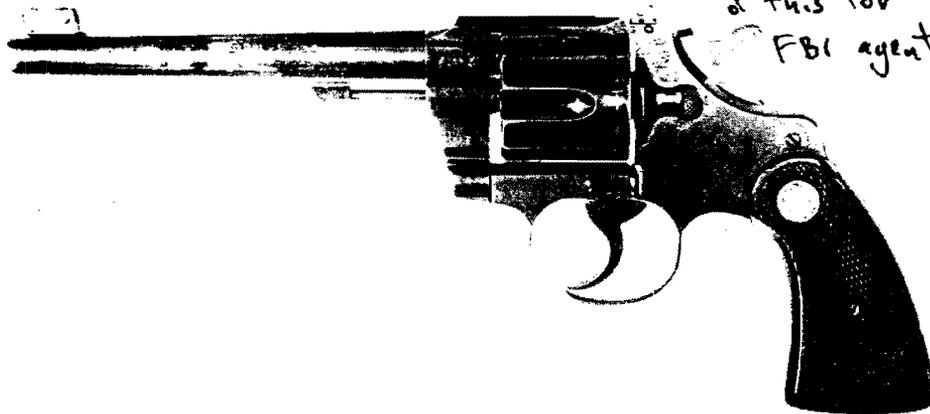
The Officer's Model Revolvers are claimed to have been in continuous production for more than seventy-two years, which must constitute a record for any weapon in any country, but the present revolver is not really the same as the first; in fact, only the name and standards of manufacture have survived.

New Service Revolver 1898. From the start, the 'New Service' revolver was intended for the services; to be made mainly for government contracts. It was the largest of the swing-out cylinder models yet produced by Colt, and it had to face considerable opposition from other manufacturers who were competing for the same contracts. Although it took time to become accepted by the military, substantial numbers were bought, particularly during the First World War, and when production ceased in 1944, more than 356,000 had been delivered. The 'New Service' was quite widely sold as a general side-arm for police, government guards and similar armed organizations. Most of these were on the American continent, but some sales were made in the Far East. A very few were sold in Britain.

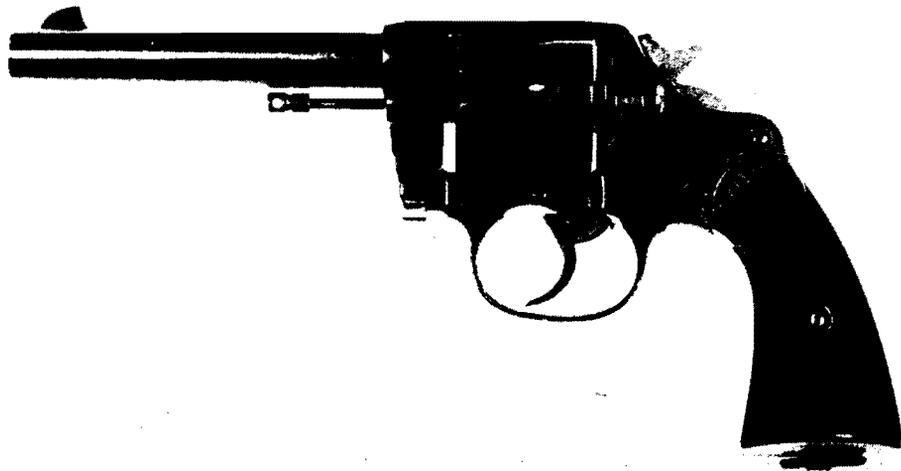
Although intended to be in .45 Colt calibre, the 'New Service' was actually chambered for no less than eighteen different cartridges, from .38 to .476 Eley. Barrel lengths were equally diverse, ranging from 2 inch to 7½ inch. The weight was 40oz with the 4½ inch barrel in .45 calibre.

The general construction and design was little different from the New Army and Navy models of 1892 onwards, but by being introduced six years after the first of these forerunners, the 'New Service' was able to offer substantial improvements over them, particularly in terms of robustness and reliability. The cylinder revolved to the right, i.e. clockwise, and in 1917, when the U.S. Army bought 32,000 of these revolvers, some were chambered for the .45 ACP cartridge, which is rimless. To accommodate these, two semi-circular clips were issued: each holding three cartridges, they were inserted into the cylinder when loading. Thus the six rounds could be loaded with two movements only, and empty cases were ejected in the same way.

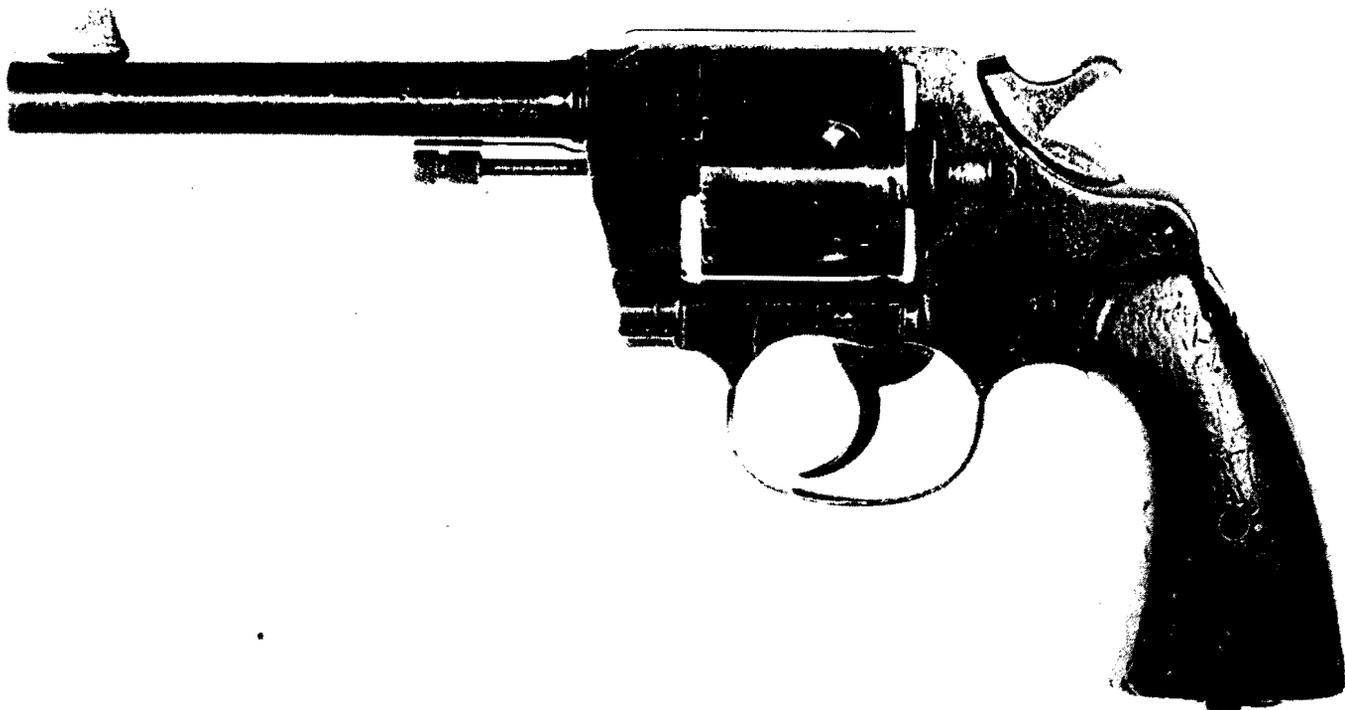
A target model known as the 'Master



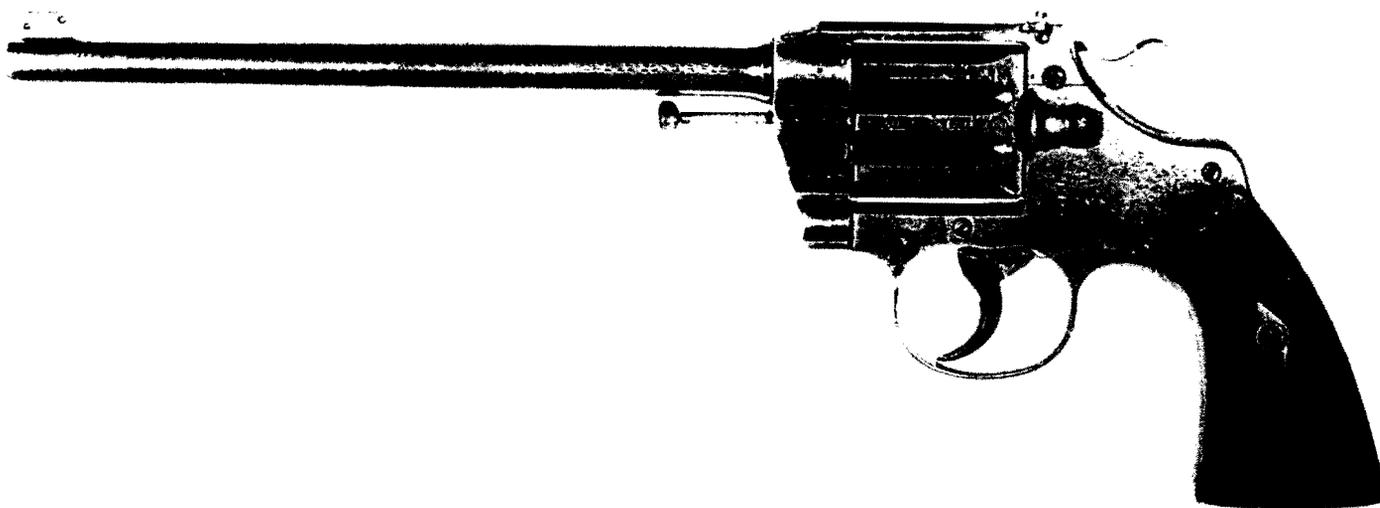
COLT .38 SPECIAL OFFICER'S MODEL, HEAVY BARREL.



COLT .45 NEW SERVICE WITH A 5½ inch BARREL.



COLT .45 US M1917.



COLT .22 CAMP PERRY.

'Shooter' was introduced soon after the first production, and could be bought until the end of the series. It was a standard pistol, but had extra-careful finishing and special sights, usually to the customer's order. Otherwise, there were few changes throughout the entire time of production. Some minor changes were made to the frame, and a positive hammer lock, and a pivoted firing pin were fitted. The great majority of these improvements was incorporated from 1920 onwards.

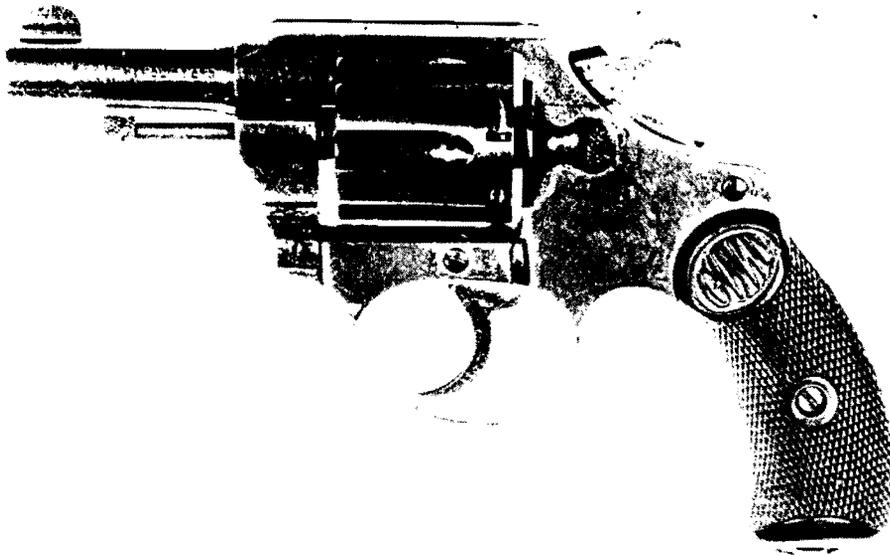
Although the military versions had simple grips - no more than smooth wood in the early models; later, the standard moulded rubber grips were fitted, and there was the usual range of fancy and exotic materials for special orders. Lanyard rings were not standard, but were fitted to some.

Camp Perry Model Pistol 1926. Named after the N.R.A. shooting range in Ohio, the 'Camp Perry' was an attempt by Colt to break into the specialized small-bore pistol market with a target weapon. The approach was unusual in that it used the frame of the 'Officer's Model' target revolver, and in it, fitted a special cylinder, which was not a cylinder at all, but a flattened block, no wider than the frame itself. The barrel ran back into this block, and swung out to the left with it for loading. The overall weight was 35oz, which is heavy for a .22, but Colt claimed that by using the 'Camp Perry' the shooter was accustoming himself to the feel and weight of the 'Officer's Model', and so the change to full-bore shooting was easier. Whatever the merits of the system, only 2,525 of

the 'Camp Perry' were sold from 1926 to 1941, when it was discontinued.

Barrel lengths were standardized at 8 inches and 10 inches. Walnut grips were fitted at the factory, and trigger pulls were adjusted to order.

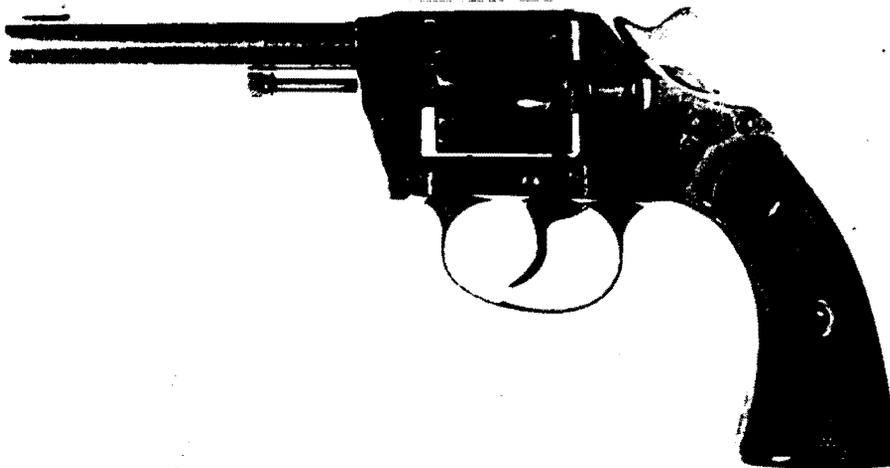
New Pocket Revolver 1893. The 'New Pocket' was introduced in 1893 as a small domestic swing cylinder revolver. It was in .32 calibre, a smaller version of the then current military weapons, and had barrel lengths of 2½ inches and 3½ inches only. It was an instant success, and started a whole line of similar weapons in the Colt range, which will be described briefly in the following paragraphs. The 'New Pocket' itself, only ran for a production of 30,000 and was stopped in 1905, since it had been overtaken by its successors.



COLT .32 POCKET POSITIVE 1893.



COLT .38 POLICE POSITIVE.



COLT .32 POLICE POSITIVE.

The 'New Pocket', though smaller in size, used the same mechanism as the 'New Army and Navy', and had the same characteristics of operation. The weight was 16oz and the weapon was intended to be carried in the pocket or clothing without being obvious. There was a half-round foresight, and a long notch in the frame for a back-sight, but the utility of these is doubtful.

Pocket Positive Model 1905. The introduction of the 'Positive Model' was brought about by the adoption of the Positive Lock mechanism which ensured that the hammer could not strike a cartridge unless it had first been drawn back to full cock; but in most other features, there was little change from the 'New Pocket' throughout the long production run from 1905 to 1940. The calibre was standard at .32, though alternatives were offered for no less than five cartridges, with gallery loads in addition. This revolver was a stubby, aggressive looking weapon, entirely practical and highly reliable. A few were made with flat-backed hammers for easier carriage.

New Police .32-1896. This revolver had a lucky start as it was immediately adopted by the New York Police, and 4,500 were bought straight from the factory. It was also used by some of the Canadian police forces, and elsewhere in the United States.

In outline shape, the frame was a throw-back to the 1889 Navy revolver, with the straight underside which distinguishes that type, but the cylinder and locking mechanism were slightly different and more practical. There was no Positive Lock until the 'Police Positive' which followed, but the two were produced in parallel for a short time in 1907.

The 'New Police' was a useful, hard-hitting weapon, reasonably small, yet firing a large enough bullet to be effective. Total production was almost 50,000. Overall weight was just over 16oz, calibre was .32 for the entire production, and barrel lengths were 2½, 4, and 6 inches.

New Police Target Revolver 1897. This was the target version of the 'New Police', and just over 5,000 were sold to police forces between 1897 and 1905. It hardly differed from the 'Police' model, except that the barrel length was standard at 6 inches.

Police Positive .32-1907. The 'Police Positive' was the direct successor to the 'New Police' and followed straight on in the factory early in 1907. It remained in production until 1939, by which time almost 200,000 had been made. A target version with a heavy frame was made at the same time, though less than 3,500 of these weapons were completed.

This revolver was very popular throughout the U.S. police forces, and was widely used. It was offered with four barrel lengths, 2½, 4, 5, and 6 inches, and the weight with the 4 inch barrel was 20oz.

Pequano Model Police Positive 1933. No more than 11,000 of these pistols were produced, and few remain. Despite its striking name, the 'Pequano' was really a second-grade revolver, made with left-over parts and some lower quality stocks on hand in the factory. It was sold mainly to