

the South American countries, Puerto Rica and the Philippines. In the difficult days of 1940, the British Purchasing Commission also bought some. Apart from the quality, the 'Pequano' was outwardly identical with the 'Police Positive'.

Police Positive Target .22 Revolver 1910. Although listed as a .22 revolver, this weapon was also offered in .32 calibre. Barrel length was standard at 6 inches, mounted in a normal 'Police Positive' frame. Special sights were fitted, but otherwise the revolver was as similar as possible to the full bore version. Overall weight was 22oz for the early models, rising to 29oz after 1925. All told, about 28,000 of these strong and serviceable weapons were made.

Police Positive .38 Model 1905. The Colt advertisement for 1905, describing this revolver, said of it that it had been designed to meet the demand for an arm, similar to the 'New Police' .32, but larger in bore, with greater penetration, velocity and range. The design was ingenious; the resulting revolver was only fractionally larger than the .32, but it weighed no more. The barrel tapered slightly towards the muzzle, but apart from tiny differences in the frame, the .38 is indistinguishable from the .32.

It was made in substantial numbers, more than 200,000 being sold before manufacture finished in 1943, and it was used by police forces throughout the United States, as well as in South America. In 1938 and 1939, several thousands were sold to the British, and other Purchasing Commissions who were buying arms for Allied troops.

Banker's Special 1928. The 'Banker's Special' was designed for "easy carrying and quick access . . . primarily for bank employees". It was a .38 'Positive', with a 2 inch barrel, and the advertising made much of the fact that the full-sized grips were retained, thus giving a good hold for snap-shooting. The weight was 19oz, and a few were made without the hammer spurs.

The U.S. Government equipped its railway mail clerks with this revolver, and it was also used by some police forces. About 35,000 were made in all. Production stopped in 1943.

Police Positive Special Model 1908. This was the first of the small frame swing-out cylinder revolvers chambered for a powerful cartridge. It was, and still is a popular weapon with police forces in the United States, and with those who need to carry arms for personal protection or in the course of duty. It is light (22oz), comparatively small, yet fires a series of rounds with ample hitting power. It is, in fact, chambered for no less than nine different cartridges in either .32 or .38, the great majority being in .38. The cylinder is $\frac{1}{4}$ inch longer than the standard 'Police Positive' in order to accommodate the longer cartridges. Barrel lengths are various, ranging from 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, which is rare, to 6 inches, which is equally rare; the most popular sizes being 4 inches. Production has been continuous since 1908, and more than 700,000 have been made.

Detective Special Model 1927. The 'Detective Special' is nothing more than the

'Police Positive Special' with a 2 inch barrel fitted as standard. It closely resembles the 'Banker's Special', the only difference being in the longer cylinder of the 'Detective', and some slight alterations in the frame. The 'Detective' chambers the same ammunition as the 'Police Special' and is such a close twin that one wonders why it was necessary to call it by another name, for it is nothing more than a short barrelled 'Police Special'. However, the naming policy seems sound enough, for more than 400,000 have been sold since 1927, and the design has only changed in that the frame has been slightly shortened, since 1966. As an experiment, a few were produced with a shrouded hammer, to give a 'hammerless' effect.

Border Patrol Model 1952. Only 400 of these special revolvers were made by Colt, and the order has not been repeated. They were an ordinary 'Police Special' with a heavy duty barrel, 4 inches long. They were designed to be exceptionally strong and resistant to rough treatment, and were chambered for the .38 special cartridge.

Diamondback Model 1966. Following the recent Colt policy of naming some revolvers after snakes, this one was introduced in 1966 as a combination of the 'Detective Special' and the 'Cobra'. It used the shortened frame of the 'Detective Special', with the ventilated top rib, shrouded ejector rod, target hammer and sights of the 'Cobra'. It is quite heavy (29oz), and has either a 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch or 4 inch barrel. Chambering is for .22 or .38. The weapon is extremely well made, and has sold well in what must be a highly competitive market.

Cobra Model 1950. The 'Cobra' is really the 'Detective Special' with an alloy frame, thereby reducing the weight from 22oz to 15oz. A government contract for an aircrew-protection pistol, incorporated an alloy cylinder as well, though Colt never used this feature for commercial sales.

Unlike the 'Detective Special', the 'Cobra' is made in .22, though the majority are sold in .32 and .38 calibre.

Courier Model 1955. This revolver was in production for only two years. It is a version of the 'Cobra', with a shorter butt and a 3 inch barrel. It appeared in .22 and .32 calibres only, and production did not exceed 3,000.

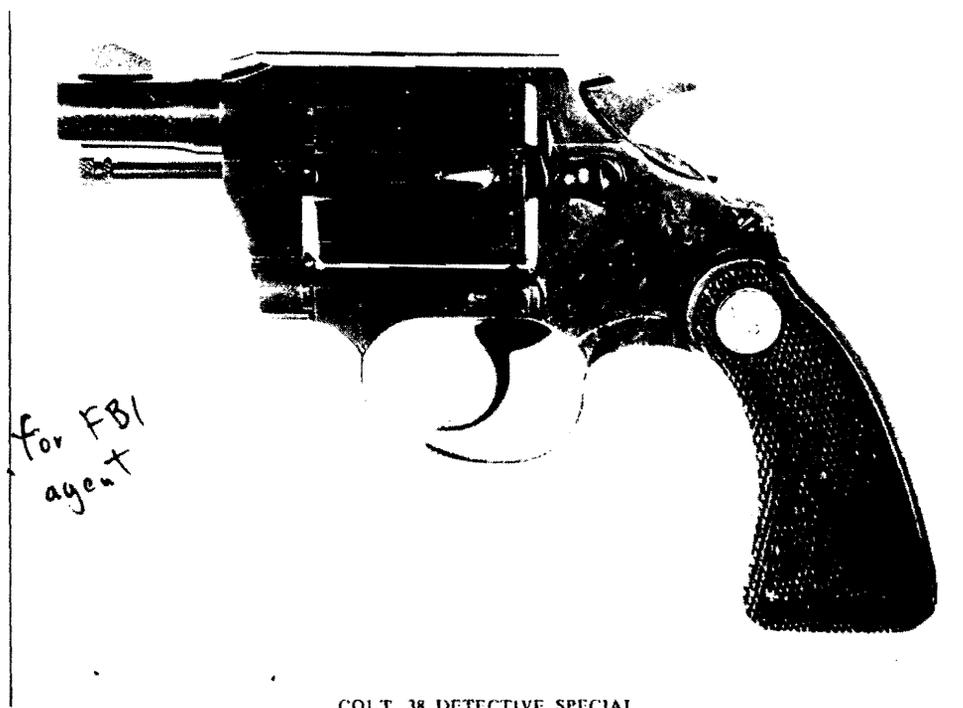
Agent Model 1966. Yet another variation of the 'Cobra', this model differs by having the shorter butt of the 'Courier', combined with the barrel length of the 'Cobra'. The only calibre offered is .38 Special, and a hammer shroud is sold as a normal accessory. It appears to have been a commercial success, with healthy sales.

Trooper Model 1953. The 'Trooper' was introduced as a separate design, rather than a variant, intended to provide a large calibre, hard-hitting holster firearm of good accuracy. It was a sizeable weapon, with a prominent ramp foresight and an adjustable target backsight. Barrel lengths were 4 inches and 6 inches, and the cylinder was chambered for .38 Special, .22 (for the target shooter), and .357 Magnum for those who felt they needed a really heavy bullet of great power.

The frame and general design were almost identical with the 'Police Special', but there were several options in the fittings. Sales were quite good until the model was discontinued in 1969.

.357 Magnum Model 1953. This model was a de luxe version of the 'Trooper', fitted with the target options, and chambered in .38 Special and .357 Magnum. Barrel lengths were 4 inch and 6 inch, and there were large grips, running well up the butt. Production never exceeded 15,000, and in 1961 the 'Magnum' was absorbed into the 'Trooper' production.

Python Model 1955. This modern-looking revolver has become one of the leaders of the Colt range. It was the first revolver to



.35 and .32 Calibre Automatic Pistols

.35 Calibre Automatic Pistol, 1913-1921.

Smith & Wesson were not keen on the automatic pistol concept, but with the considerable popularity of the type eroding some of their traditional revolver market, the firm tried a model of their own in 1913. Instead of developing a new design, the patents of the French Clement were purchased; this was a simple blow-back pistol, of unusual layout. The main points of interest were a long square bolt which worked in a slot in the body, and a barrel which hinged upwards. The heavy recoil spring was housed above the barrel, and there was a grip safety on the front edge of the grip.

The firm decided that it was worth producing a new type of ammunition for this pistol. A defect of the early automatics was that lead bullets jammed in the feed ramp, but jacketed bullets wore the barrel badly. Smith & Wesson produced a bullet with a jacketed nose, but a lead skirt, thus getting the best of both worlds. Unfortunately, it was more expensive than the usual types, and the owners quickly found that .32 ACP would almost fit, at a lower price. The .32 ACP was a little more powerful than the .35, and jams were frequent, which did nothing for sales, and by 1921, when production sensibly ceased, only 8,350 had been sold. There were many variants on the original design, it being possible to identify eight types, all with minor changes, one from the other.

.32 Automatic Pistol, 1924-1936. One might have thought that the experience of the .35 automatic would have been enough for any company, but Smith & Wesson were determined to continue trying, and the .32 seemed to be a more popular calibre. The new model was both smaller and simpler than the .35, but it was still most expensive to make, and despite continual cost cutting exercises, it was about 30 per cent dearer than its rivals. The mechanism was similar to that of the .35, but contained several worthwhile improvements. Nevertheless, the U.S. firearms laws of 1926, together with the Depression, prevented it making any impact, and less than a thousand were sold.

9mm Automatic Pistols

9mm Automatic, Model 39, 1954-

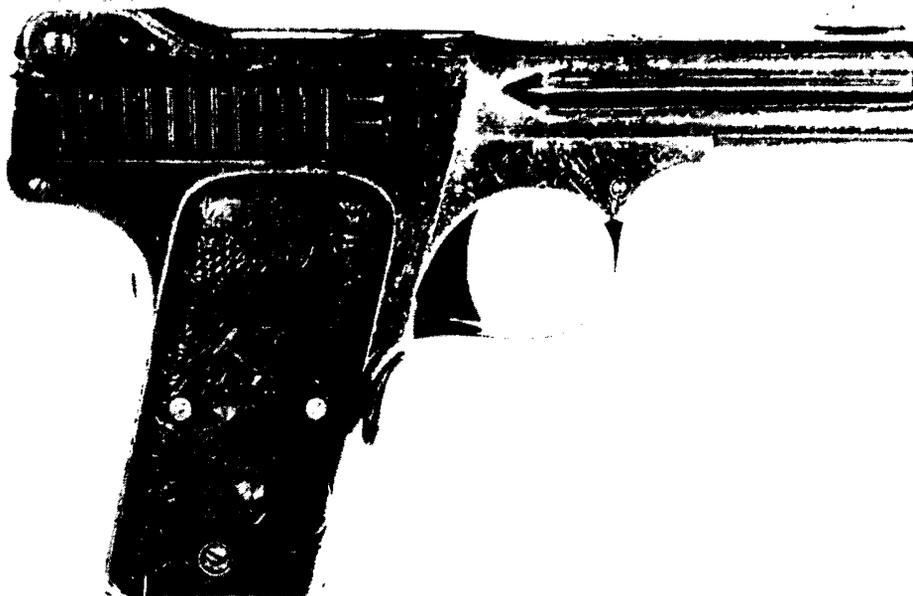
The Model 39 is the latest venture by the firm into the automatic field. It is a modified Browning design, operated by recoil, with a tipping barrel locking by a single rib. It is thoroughly modern in outlook, and is double-action, with aluminium alloy used for the main body. There is a magazine safety and a manual catch on the left side. The magazine holds eight rounds and the butt is distinctively curved on the back strap.

9mm Automatic, Model 59, 1970-

The Model 59 is an enlarged version of the Model 39, differing mainly in the larger magazine capacity of fourteen rounds. The butt, naturally, is longer, and is also straight along the back strap. Otherwise, the details are the same as for the Model 39.

.38 Revolvers and Automatic Pistols

.38 SA First Model, 1876-1880. The Colt Corporation had gained an advantage from



SMITH & WESSON .35 MODEL 1913.



SMITH & WESSON 9mm MODEL 39.

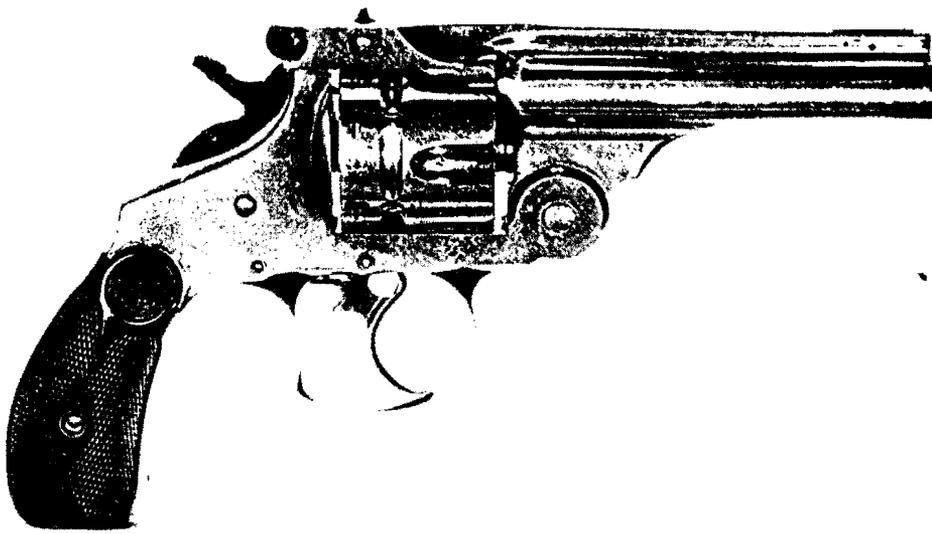
the Smith & Wesson preoccupation with foreign orders. They largely captured the market for pocket and house-protection revolvers, and made great progress with their choice of a .38 Short centre fire cartridge. Smith & Wesson went one better with a .38 cartridge based on the Russian .44, and by using the same techniques, a powerful and accurate round was designed. It fired a bullet of 150 grains and a muzzle energy of 108ft/lb, which was far superior to the Colt in accuracy.

The revolver which fired this ammunition was also to some extent a scaled down Russian .44, the outlines of the butt, frame and hammer being quite recognizable. A difference was in the use of a spur trigger, one of the fads of the day for small

weapons. The cylinder held five cartridges, so that it was as slim as possible, and the standard barrel length was 3½ inches, with the option of 4 or 5 inches if needed.

The .38 was a success, and by 1880, 24,633 had been delivered. The cartridge was also a success, and was copied or licensed by numerous arms manufacturers, often for weapons of dubious reliability and even more dubious uses.

.38 SA Second Model, 1880-1891. The extractor gear on the First Model was a replica of that employed on the Russian .44, and was both heavy and complicated. The Second Model .38 had a simpler ejector, and the lug under the barrel was dropped. The cylinder on this model can be taken out with a straight pull, and later versions



SMITH & WESSON .38 DA SECOND MODEL.

included other detailed improvements. There was a safety device on the later models which released the cylinder at half cock and allowed it to revolve freely.

By 1891, 83,622 of these revolvers had been made and sold.

.38 SA Third Model, 1891-1911. The Third Model was introduced shortly after the firm had failed to get an army order for their New Departure revolver, and it may have been influenced by the type of tests that the New Departure was called upon to overcome. In any case, the trigger-guard was introduced, and the thumb piece of the hammer was enlarged. The hammer was also given a rebounding lock for greater safety, and no longer needed to be carried resting on an empty chamber.

With a 6 inch barrel, this revolver was a delightful shooting arm and became fairly popular with the target clubs. Altogether, 28,107 were turned out between 1891 and 1911, by which time it was clearly becoming out of date and so was quietly dropped from the firm's range.

.38 DA First Model, 1880. The First Double Action revolver from the firm was very much like its Single Action counterpart, and the only immediately apparent difference lay in the shape of the trigger guard, which was bow-shaped. Another less obvious change was the cylinder stop which was a rocking type with two rows of notches in the cylinder. The hammer could be held at half and full cock, so that the gun could be used for SA shooting as well.

The design of the trigger was ingenious, if a little complicated, and had a front sear which was joined to the trigger for a longer lever action when firing DA. In later models, this was gradually modified to give a simpler action.

The distinguishing mark of the First Model, and it is regularly quoted by collectors, is the side plate. In this plate, the cuts run across the frame, a departure from the normal design. The gun was well received, particularly by those who wanted to carry an inconspicuous weapon, capable of rapid fire, and the five-chambered cylinder made only a small bulge in the pocket. Barrel

length was standard at $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches, and the sights were meant more for show than for actual use.

.38 DA Second Model, 1880-1884. Although designated as a separate Model, the Second was identical with the First, except that the shape of the side plate was designed to strengthen the side walls, and the outline became irregular. This model was most successful, and 94,000 were manufactured during the four years of its life.

.38 DA Third Model, 1884-1889. For this model, the location of the latch notch of the rear sear was changed, to give a lighter pull on single-action. This brought about a corresponding change in the hammer notch, but these differences are hard to identify. The changes came about without any perceptible halt in production, and 203,700 were made during the short time it was in manufacture.

.38 DA Fourth Model, 1889-1909. The Fourth Model did away with the rocking cylinder stop, and the second cylinder stop notch, and copied the design of the .32 model. Altogether, 216,600 of these revolvers were manufactured before the

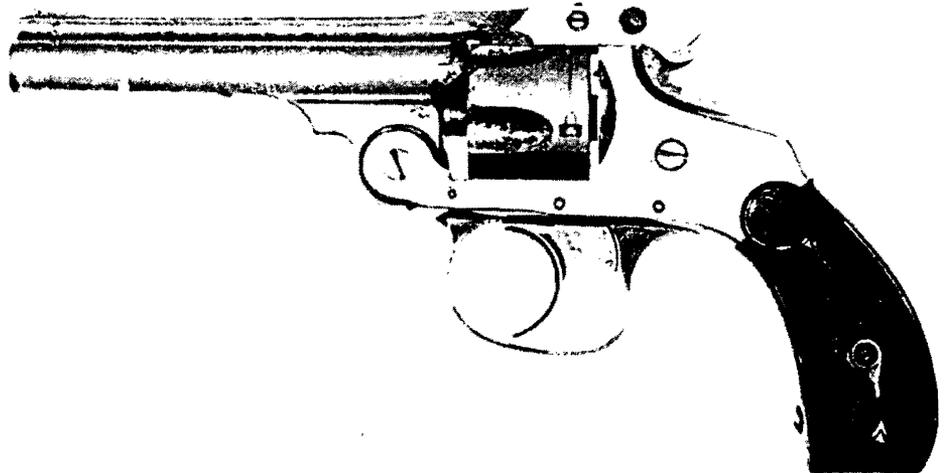
design was changed to that of the Fifth Model.

.38 DA Fifth Model, 1909-1911. The Fifth Model incorporated some very minor improvements to the fore sight and the ejector mechanism, and only 14,000 were made before it too was replaced by another version, this time the Perfected Model, which was started in the same year.

.38 DA Perfected Model, 1909-1920. The Perfected Model differed markedly from the preceding models. It was re-designed so that there was an extra lock for the hinged frame. This lock was released by a thumb catch on the left of the frame, in much the same way as the catch on a swing-out cylinder weapon. The lockwork was also changed to include the improvements which had appeared in the .32 models. In addition, a new numbering was started for the Perfected series; 59,400 were made.

.38 Calibre Safety Revolver. First Model, 1887-1888. Still highly regarded as being one of the safest guns of its type, the Safety was also known to the firm as the Safety Hammerless, the New Departure – and to the public, as the Lemon Squeezer. Although the hammerless principle was not new, (it had been employed on a few cap and ball revolvers), the Smith & Wesson version was the first successful one to be made in more than experimental quantities, and it also had an entirely new safety feature.

Daniel B. Wesson introduced the grip safety lever which projected through the back tang of the butt. It ran for most of the length of the tang, and fitted into the palm of the shooter's hand. The lever was directly linked to a safety latch, which prevented any cocking action by the hammer until the lever was squeezed. The latch then moved out of the way and the hammer could be cocked by pulling the trigger. The hammer was a small internal one, and it fired the cartridge by striking a small firing pin. An ingenious arrangement of the sear angles allowed a short hesitation just before the hammer fell, so that the hammer could be practically fully cocked



SMITH & WESSON .38 DA FOURTH MODEL.

by a strong pull on the trigger, and when the dwell point was reached, the firer could correct his aim and complete the pull. This last part of the motion required a markedly lower pull, and allowed a reasonably accurate shot to be made.

The barrel, cylinder and ejector were all but identical with the .38 DA models, and the same ammunition was used. The barrel lengths were the usual 3½, 4 and 5 inches, although nobody can possibly have imagined that he needed anything more than the shortest possible barrel for what was intended as nothing more than a pocket protection weapon, or short-range household-defence gun. But long barrels were the vogue at that time, and it paid to have them in the catalogue.

The U.S. Cavalry carried out tests to see if the New Departure was suitable for them, but concluded that it was too fragile and complicated, and chose the Colt instead. Certainly there were a few failings in the design, which were corrected in later models. After manufacturing about 5,000, the firm changed to the Second Model.

.38 Calibre Safety Revolver. Second Model, 1888-1890. For the Second Model, the barrel catch was changed to one more convenient to the thumb, and the safety lever spring was strengthened. The model was in production for only two years, but altogether, 37,500 were made.

.38 Calibre Safety Revolver. Third Model, 1890-1898. Another change was made to the barrel catch to give a better surface for the thumb to push against, and an interlock between the catch and the hammer prevented the latter falling until the barrel was locked in place. By now, the New Departure was selling well, and more than 75,000 of the Third Model had been sold when it was thought necessary to introduce yet one more version.

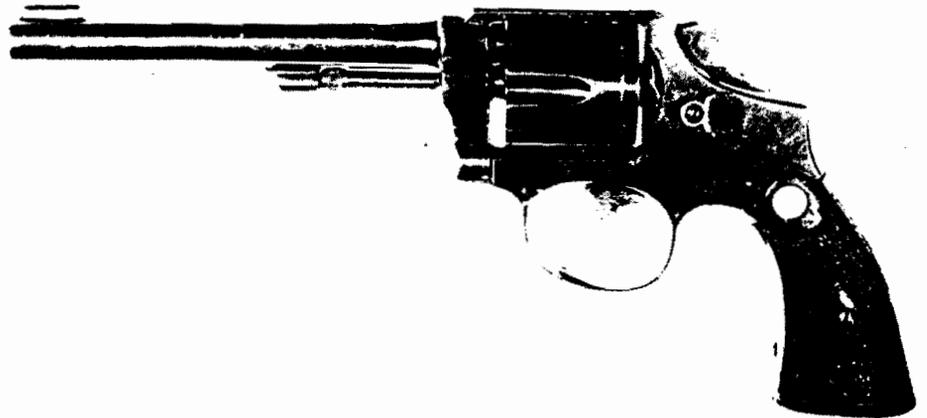
.38 Calibre Safety Revolver. Fourth Model, 1898-1907. For the Fourth Model, the changes were very minor indeed and, outwardly, can only be recognized as a small difference in the barrel catch, once more the object of study in the Design Department. Quite why it was thought so necessary to change the barrel catch every few years is no longer clear, since the one incorporated in the Second Model was quite adequate, and the buyers of these civilian weapons were hardly likely to become involved in prolonged fire fights where they would need to reload in a hurry. However, the barrel catch on the Fourth Model at last seemed to satisfy everyone, for it remained unchanged until the end of the production run in 1940.

.38 Calibre Safety Revolver. Fifth Model, 1907-1940. The last model of the New Departure was also the one with the longest run. The design had now stabilized completely and there were very few alterations introduced during its life. Indeed, the differences between the Fourth and Fifth Models mainly concern methods of manufacture, and attempts to simplify the machining processes within the factory.

One main difference was that a 2 inch barrel was offered as one option, recogni-



SMITH & WESSON HAND EJECTOR, MILITARY & POLICE, 1905.



SMITH & WESSON .38 MILITARY & POLICE, CANADIAN ISSUE.



SMITH & WESSON .38 REGULATION POLICE LATE MODEL.

tion perhaps that the main use of the revolver was as a pocket weapon, where size and speed of reaction counted more than precision shooting using the sights. It was a pistol which was undoubtedly used by lawless men as well as sober citizens, and its place in criminal activities has never been denied by anyone, but this was no fault of the firm who sold it. Nowadays, the same type of person tends to use a self-loading pistol, and for the same reasons, namely that it offers him a small, easily carried and reasonably powerful weapon. In its day, the New Departure was a leader in that field, and it is interesting to see that a modern version of it is still selling steadily.

.38 Hand Ejector Military & Police, 1899-

The Military & Police Model was another of the firm's long production runs. In one form or another, it was made until 1945, but it forms the basis of the standard swing-cylinder models still made by the firm to-day. The First Model closely resembled the First Model .32, which had pre-dated it by nearly three years. The main difference immediately apparent, is that the .38 has a thumb piece to release the cylinder; less visible is the cylinder stop in the bottom strap.

The U.S. Army and Navy ordered one thousand each of these revolvers in 1900, stipulating that they be chambered for the .38 Long Colt cartridge and with a 6½ inch barrel and left-hand twist rifling. The order was not repeated because the Philippines Insurrection brought about the temporary eclipse of small- and medium-calibre revolvers and pistols in U.S. service, but the two thousand that were made are always referred to as the Army-Navy Revolvers.

About 20,000 Military & Police (M&P) revolvers were made to the first pattern, but by 1902, it was obvious that some improvements were needed. The Second Model was brought out in 1902, and incorporated a front lock on the cylinder, and improved internal mechanism. It now looked exactly like a bigger brother of the .32, and it duly followed the same path of improvement, although in 1905, the Model was changed. The 1905 Model went through four changes, the last being brought out in 1915 and continuing until 1942, by which time, roughly 700,000 had been made in all.

Throughout all models and changes there had been a variety of barrel lengths available, the only one common to all varieties being 4 inches. Others were 5, 6 and 6½ inches, which could be bought with most models, and the last version offered a 2 inch barrel for pocket carriage. As with the .32 family, the standard grips were of hard black rubber on a slightly rounded butt, and the target versions had checkered walnut on a squared butt, which gave a better hold. The ammunition for all versions was .38 Smith & Wesson Special.

The current version is the Model 10, which is virtually identical with those made up to the Second World War. The main differences lie in a ramped foresight and a wider hammer spur. There is an airweight version, which is generally sold with a



SMITH & WESSON .38/200 BRITISH SERVICE.

2 inch barrel and an alloy frame. The Model 10 can also be had with a heavy barrel, but only in 4 inch length.

Finally, this versatile gun is offered as the Model 58 in .41 Magnum calibre. This version closely resembles the Heavy Barreled Model 10, though it is slightly heavier.

.38/44 Hand Ejector, 1930-1941. This model followed the design of the production 44 Hand Ejectors, except that it was chambered for .38 Smith & Wesson Special. Barrel length was 5 inches only, and a special round called the Hi-speed was developed for the revolver. The muzzle velocity of this cartridge was 1115ft/sec. against 870 for the standard one, and it was intended mainly for police use.

This was a strong, heavy revolver which would fire any cartridge of its calibre then in use. The general idea led to the introduction of the magnum ammunition, but the .38/44 was so successful that it was revived in 1950 as the Model 20, but did not stay in production for long. The target version of this revolver was always listed separately by the firm and known as the Outdoorsman. It was made throughout the same period as the .38/44, with a 6½ inch barrel and an adjustable rear sight. After

the Second World War, it too, was revived, fitted with a 6 inch barrel only, but sales were not encouraging.

These powerful revolvers are a real handful to shoot, and the Hi-speed ammunition gives the weapon a considerable jolting.

.38/32 Terrier, Model 32, 1936-1970. This revolver is a 2 inch barreled version of the .38 Regulation Police, with minor changes. In fact, the frame is the same as with the 1903 Model .32 Hand Ejector, and the cylinder has five chambers. Post-war production carried small changes such as ramp foresight, but the basic design remained unchanged throughout its life. It was a tough, reliable, inexpensive weapon.

.38/200 British Service Revolver, 1940-1945. Well known to British servicemen as the Smith & Wesson Pistol Number 2, this British Service Revolver is no more than an M & P, chambered for the low velocity .38/200 cartridge, which is the same as the old British .380. The 200 grain bullet has a muzzle velocity of only 630ft/sec, and a muzzle energy of 166ft/lb. This was well within the capabilities of the M & P, in fact, it was within the scope of the .32 Regulation Police, but that was only a light-weight five-chambered revolver, and



SMITH & WESSON .38 MILITARY & POLICE MODEL 10 (SQUARE BUTT).

was refused by the British Purchasing Commission who were intent on six-shooters.

About 1,125,000 were made for British and Commonwealth service, with a variety of finishes and grips. A new type of safety hammer block was introduced in 1944, otherwise, the changes were minimal. With British ammunition, the revolver got a reputation for misfires. The British caps were less sensitive than the American, in deference to the safety requirements of the Ordnance Board, and the hammer blow was marginal. However, the weapon was generally popular with anyone who enjoyed shooting, as it handled so much better than the issue Enfield.

.38 Special Victory Model, 1942-1945. The Victory was simply a wartime version of the M & P, with none of the frills. It was made with either a 4 or a 2 inch barrel, the latter being used by the Department of Justice, one presumes for carrying in a pocket or shoulder holster. Various quantities were issued to the U.S. Navy, Army Ordnance and Defense Supplies Corporation. In all, about 300,000 were made, all with a very plain finish and minimal markings. The revolver was chambered for the standard .38 Smith & Wesson Special.

.38 Special K-38 Masterpiece, 1946-

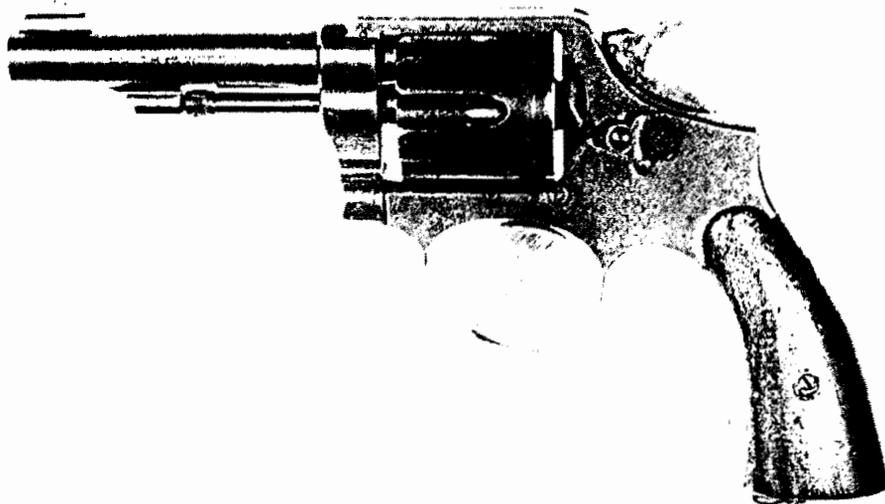
The K-38 is the .38 version of the K22 and K-32, an excellent target revolver with a proven record to support it. The Model 14 is the original version, and in 1959 alternative barrel lengths were offered. In 1961, a single-action version was produced, with a much faster lock time. Another version is the Model 15, which has a short barrel of either 2 or 4 inches, for pocket use, and a quick draw foresight. Unusually for a pocket gun, it is still fitted with the target backsight.

.38 Special Chiefs Special (Model 36), 1950- This is the first snub-nosed gun to be re-introduced after the Second World War. It has a 2 or 3 inch barrel, and is made of steel throughout. The Model 37 is an aluminium airweight version; the Model 60 is in stainless steel and is virtually rust-proof.

.38 Bodyguard, 1955- There are two versions of the Bodyguard, one, the Model 38 in aluminium, and the Model 49, in steel. Both are five-chambered hammerless revolvers, with a small stud which can be pulled, to cock the action for SA shooting. They are true pocket revolvers, in that they can be fired while inside a pocket.

.38 Centennial Model 40, 1957- The Centennial as its name suggests, commemorated the 100th anniversary of the firm. It is reminiscent of the New Departure, last made in 1940, but this version has a swing-out cylinder of five chambers. There was an aluminium Model 42, but this is no longer catalogued.

.38 Automatic, Model 52, 1954- This automatic is very similar to the 9mm Model 39. It is a modified Browning action, recoil-operated pistol, chambered for the Smith & Wesson Special Midrange target cartridge. It can also be used for firing single-action, much like the Colt M1911A1. It has micro-



SMITH & WESSON .38 VICTORY.



SMITH & WESSON K-38 MASTERPIECE.



SMITH & WESSON CHIEFS SPECIAL MODEL 36.



SMITH & WESSON BODYGUARD AIRWEIGHT MODEL 38.



SMITH & WESSON .38 MASTER MODEL 52.



SMITH & WESSON .44 SA MODEL 1870.

adjustable target sights, and an adjustable trigger stop. There is a very special method of bushing the barrel to avoid uneven wear, and much care is taken in the fitting of the parts.

.44 Calibre Revolvers

.44 American Model, 1870-1879. The American Model, as later it came to be called, was the first revolver to take advantage of the patents of W. C. Dodge and C. A. King, and in so doing, kept the firm ahead of its rivals, who in 1869, were able to use the expired Rollin White patent. The Dodge and King patents involved opening the frame at the rear of the cylinder, and pivoting the barrel assembly at the front of the lower strap, at the same time providing a system for the simultaneous ejection of the empty cases. The actual mechanism of the ejector was both bulky and clumsy, but it was continuously refined over the years, and is now common to any top-break revolver.

The American Model resembled the 1860 Colt in outline, but it was very different. In that it was the first large-calibre revolver to be designed, from the outset, to shoot metallic cartridges. Its barrel was perhaps a shade too long at eight inches, and this made it less easy to handle in situations requiring speed rather than precision. The barrel had a rib along the entire length, and a low rounded foresight; the back-sight was a notch in the barrel catch. The cylinder took six cartridges, and was deeply fluted, which added to its handsome appearance. The finish was generally in blue, but there were nickel-plated versions also.

The whole success of the weapon lay in the cartridge. The case was of brass, with a centre primer and Berdan system of ignition. The bullet weighed 218 grains, the powder charge was 25 grains, the muzzle velocity 650ft/sec and the muzzle energy 200ft/lb. The bullet was of slightly less diameter than the case, in order to get it into the mouth, and as a result, it was a poor fit in the bore. However, it shot well enough at up to 50 yards, and soon made a respectable name for itself.

The other reason for the popularity of the American was the fact that it ejected all the empty cases at once, rather than having the shooter punch them out one at a time. Although this feature, and the cartridge, did not impress the U.S. Army sufficiently to cause them to buy, it caught the eye of others, as will be related.

.44 Russian Model, 1870-1878. In 1870, Imperial Russia decided to equip her cavalry and artillery troops with a modern revolver, and chose the .44 American Model - with modifications. The first of these was a pawl, or knuckle on the hand grip, and another was a small change to the shape of the butt, and a finger-piece on the trigger-guard. This was followed by a reduction in the barrel length to 6½ inches. These were really only minor changes, and whether they improved the weapon is a matter of individual opinion.

However, there was one marked improvement which the Russians insisted upon. This was a new cartridge, designed by

themselves. The case was enlarged in diameter to accept a bullet of the same diameter as the bore, and crimped to hold the bullet. The chamber was then bored out to take the larger case, the bullet weight increased to 246 grains and the charge reduced to 23 grains. These changes put the muzzle velocity up to 750ft/sec and the energy to 316ft/lb, while accuracy was improved by the better fitting bullet. It was a revelation to an industry in which most ballisticians worked by guess and experience.

The contract called for 215,704 revolvers, and these were delivered on schedule in 1875, at a rate of 175 a day. The irony was, that in concentrating on this lucrative and impressive contract, Smith & Wesson virtually handed over the entire Western market to Colts, who were not slow to take advantage of it. When the Russian contract came to an end, Smith & Wesson turned their attention to the home market and found that sales were very difficult, despite the attractions of a revolver which simultaneously ejected all cases, and could be quickly and easily loaded.

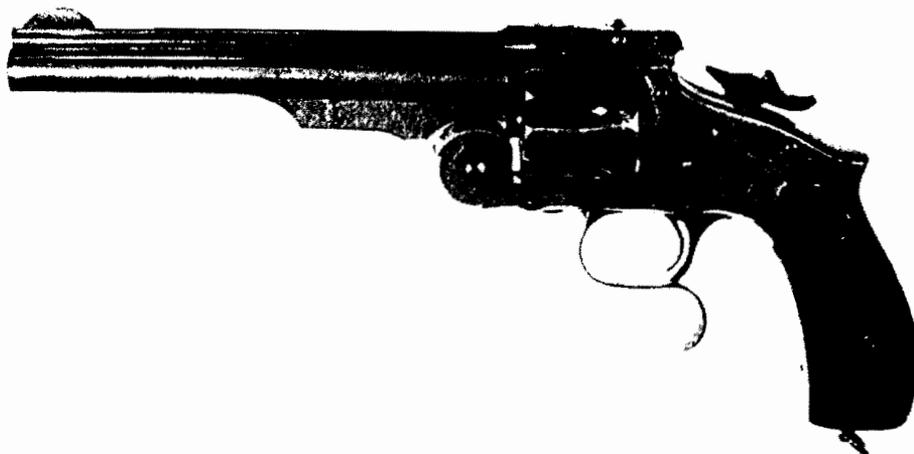
.44 Second American Model, 1872-1874. This is something of a mystery revolver, for few have survived, and there are now no factory records to indicate how many were made. It is a variation on the original American Model, differing only in the design of the hammer, and an interconnecting lock with the barrel catch, which prevented the barrel being opened except at half, or full cock. This had been a feature of the first model, but was dropped because it was inconvenient. These revolvers were made during the time that the factory was in full production of the Russian contract.

.44 RF Turkish Model, 1873-1883. This revolver was an adapted First Model American, which accepted rimfire cartridges. The only changes were a flat nose to the hammer, and a barrel length reduced to 6½ inches. A total of 5,461 were made, and all were sold to Turkey.

.44 SA New Model, 1879-1908. For four years after the end of the Russian order, Smith & Wesson experimented with improvements to the design. In 1879, they announced their New Model, which soon established itself as a precision shooting weapon. The main changes to the outline were in the region of the butt, which had been copied from English practice, and had never been popular with American shooters. The pawl was abandoned, and the grip widened. The curve of the butt was lessened a little, and the finger-piece on the trigger guard abandoned. Finally the extractor gear of the .38 was fitted, and the long lug under the barrel shortened, thus improving the balance.

The Russian cartridge was retained, but in 1887, it was improved by putting the lubrication for the bullet in grooves which were concealed in the neck of the case, and so the outside of the bullet was kept clean. In fact, this was less of an invention than it might seem, as the Colt had done it for years.

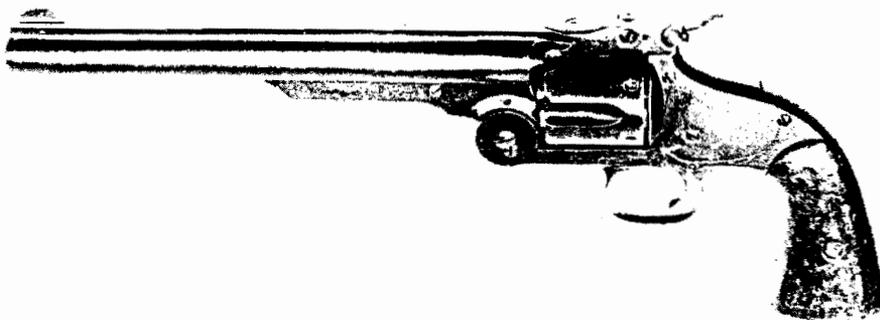
The reputation of the Smith & Wesson New Model was made by a professional



SMITH & WESSON .44 RUSSIAN SA MODEL 1874.



SMITH & WESSON .44 SA CARBINE.



SMITH & WESSON .44 No. 3 AMERICAN.



SMITH & WESSON .44 HAND EJECTOR, TRIPLE LOCK MODEL, CHAMBERED FOR .455 FOR BRITISH ARMY.

target shooter called Ira Paine. He defeated all comers in the United States and Europe, with his Smith & Wesson revolver, and his example was followed by others who took to precision shooting with a pistol. Altogether, 38,796 of these single-action revolvers were made before the line was discontinued in 1908. Since then, individual specimens continued to be used for target shooting for many years, and to-day, one in good condition fetches a very high price from collectors. Many have special target sights fitted.

.44 SA Frontier Model, 1885-1908. The Frontier model was one of Smith & Wesson's failures. It was an adaptation of the Russian frame, to compete with the Colt Frontier Model, but the latter was too strongly entrenched, and the sales never exceeded 2,072.

For the Frontier, Smith & Wesson took the Russian revolver and fitted a longer cylinder bored for the .44-40 Winchester rifle cartridge. The top strap and receiver had to be lengthened also, and the whole balance of the gun was altered. So few sold, that many of the later ones were taken back into stock and re-chambered for the .44 Smith & Wesson cartridge, again.

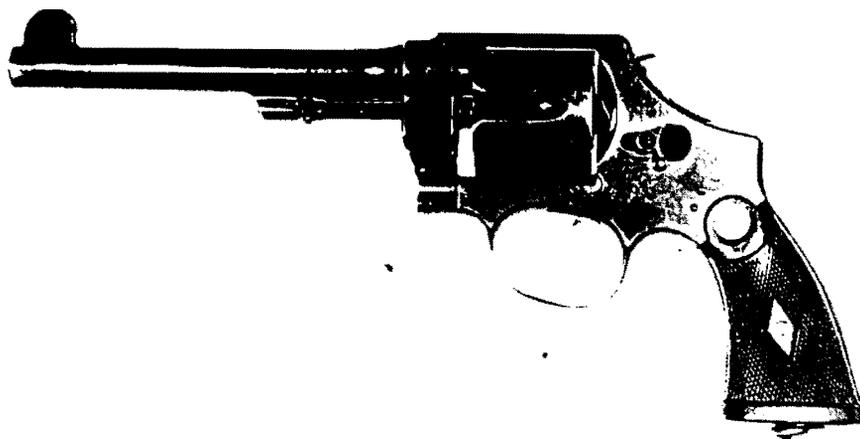
.32-44 SA Target Revolver, 1886-1910. This revolver was designed by the target shooter Ira Paine, for his own use, but Smith & Wesson soon found it good enough to put on the market. It was a .44 frame, with a .32 barrel and chambers. The ammunition was also a special design, in which the bullet was wholly encased within a long cartridge case, which was crimped over the nose. It had 10 grains of powder and an 83 grain bullet, a combination which gave a low recoil and a consistent pattern.

Sales were to special order, and never rose to more than a very modest figure, probably not exceeding 3,000.

.38-44 SA Target Revolver, 1887-1910. The .38 was another Ira Paine special shooting revolver, this time chambered for a second long-cased cartridge with a totally enclosed bullet. The bullet weight was the same as for the .32, 83 grains, and only one more grain of powder was in the case. It shot every bit as well as the .32, but the factory records show that only a few over one thousand were actually made and sold, although the design was held on the catalogue, along with the .32, for thirty-three years.

.44 Double-Action Revolver, 1881-1913. Closely resembling the Russian Frame Models, the Double-Action revolver was an attempt to encroach on the Colt market. It failed, despite the fact that it was a sturdy dependable gun with a good reputation for reliability. It never achieved the popularity of the target Single-Action revolvers, and it could make no dent in the Western states of America.

The internal mechanism was modelled on the successful .38, and the trigger pull was considered attractively light for such a large weapon. The frame was slightly shorter from the top latch to the butt, because the hammer movement was slightly



SMITH & WESSON .44 MILITARY.

less than that of the Single-Action. In all other respects, it was the same as the Single-Action.

It was chambered for the .44 Russian cartridge, but some were also bored for the .44-40 Winchester rifle round. A very few hundred were designed as a light-weight version, called the 'Western Favourite', distinguished by their rebated cylinder and sighting groove along the top rib. It was not a success.

All told, 54,668 of the Russian cartridge version were sold, and 15,340 of the .44-40 model. It is a mystery why the company carried the model right up to 1913.

In 1900, a version was offered in the .38-40 Winchester calibre, though only small numbers were actually sold. This model was discontinued in 1910.

.44 Hand Ejector. First Model, 1908-1915. This was the first of the well known 'Triple Lock' Smith & Wesson revolvers. In all general respects, it was a normal hand ejector revolver, with the cylinder swinging out to the left and locking at both front and rear. An additional lock was provided on the front of the yoke and locked it to the extractor rod casing, a device requiring some delicacy of manufacture, and one which was not always thought to be essential. However, it was a beautifully made weapon, and many survive. About 20,000 were made in all, and a small number was supplied to the British Army in 1915, chambered for the .455 cartridge.

The revolver was chambered for several different calibres, and was offered with the usual variety of barrel lengths. The triple lock was discontinued during the First World War, because the military buyers were concerned that the heavy barrel lug would collect dirt, and jam the action. In any case, the extra complication was not suited to wartime mass-production.

.44 Hand Ejector. Second Model, 1915-1937. This revolver was the wartime version of the Triple Lock, and contained some noticeable changes. The heavy barrel lug and the triple lock were discontinued, and the hammer throw was increased, as well as some other more minor internal changes.

.44 Hand Ejector. Third Model, 1926-1950. This revolver was first made to the special

order of a Fort Worth firearms firm. It had the same internal mechanism as the Second Model, but reverted to the heavy barrel lug of the First Model, though the triple lock was not re-introduced. Production continued until 1940, and was re-started in 1946, continuing until 1950, when the magnum calibres really outshone it.

.45 SA Schofield Model, 1875-1877. This revolver was practically identical with the American Models of the same period, except that it was a little more robust and had a special barrel catch invented by General Schofield, as well as a neater and simpler extractor mechanism, which eliminated the cogwheel arrangement of the American Models. The barrel was also reduced to seven inches.

Smith & Wesson were not impressed with the Colt .45 cartridge, which they considered too powerful for a revolver, so they designed their own. In so doing, they carried the Russian influence a little too far, for the .45 Smith & Wesson was well down on the muzzle velocity and energy of the Colt, but it shot well in the Schofield, and gained some popularity with those whose daily duty required them to carry a gun. However, despite these sales, the total production in two years reached only 9,000.

.45 Hand Ejector. U.S. Service Model, 1917-1946. When the United States entered the war in 1917, the services were desperately short of handguns, but a difficulty for the manufacturers of revolvers was that the standard pistol round was the .45 ACP rimless. Smith & Wesson took the .44 Second Model, bored it for the larger bullet, and chambered the cylinder to accept the .45 ACP held in three small half-moon clips. These clips ejected the empty cases and could be used again. Without the clips, the cartridges seated on the shoulder at the front of the chamber, but would not eject, and had to be punched out.

The model was successful and was made in quantity until 1919; thereafter, the commercial sales were slight until Brazil ordered 25,000 in 1938. All told, 210,320 were produced by the factory.

A modified version (Model 25) for target use was introduced in 1955, though the basis for this model was, in fact, the .44 Magnum, and the .45 cylinder is shorter

than the one for the magnum cartridge, so leaving a gap between yoke and front of cylinder. The barrel has a top rib, and target sights are fitted as standard.

The Magnum Models

The original Magnum loads were developed by Smith & Wesson's engineers, in conjunction with the Winchester Repeating Arms Company, and an expert on hand loading. The first Magnum revolvers were produced to special order only, but demand became so great after a few years that general production was ordered, and the original idea of numbering and registering each individual weapon had to be abandoned. Magnums now form a substantial part of the total sales of the company.

.357 Magnum Hand Ejector, 1935-1941.

This revolver was little more than a .38-44 Outdoorsman, with changes to the steel, and a full-length top rib to the barrel. The cylinder was recessed, and this was the first time that this had been done with large cartridges. There was the usual variety of barrel lengths, ranging from 3½ to 8½ inches, and in later models, the Baughman quick-draw foresight was fitted. About 5,500 were produced during the short time of manufacture. The model remains in production in a slightly modified form as the Model 27, still being offered with the same barrel lengths. It is now a somewhat smarter product than its forebear, with a micro rear sight, chequered grips and bright blue or nickel finish. It is usually found in the shorter barrelled lengths for easier carriage.

A less highly polished version is the Model 28 Highway Patrolman, which is the Model 27, with two barrel options, 4 or 6 inch. Introduced in 1954 it still sells well.

The Model 19 Combat Magnum is a light-weight version of the Model 27 and uses the 'K' frame. It has the same barrel options as the Model 28, but there is also a special 2½ inch snub barrelled version with rounded grips and quick-draw sight, at the same price as the regular model. Despite the miniscule barrel, this model still has the micro rear sight fitted.

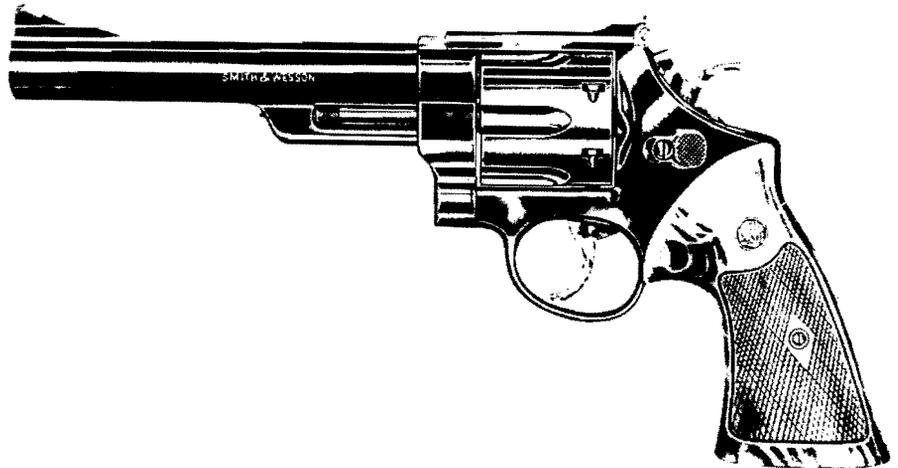
.44 Magnum Model 29, 1955- Remington developed the .44 Magnum load in November 1955, and the Model 29 was produced to fire it. Easily the most powerful hand-gun in the world, the Model 29 is also very close to being the heaviest, a fact for which, one is thankful when firing it, for the recoil is considerable. The Model 29 must also be one of the best finished and best made hand-guns available to-day. The frame is a special heavy model, with wide grips, a heavy barrel and a general air of being 'pocket artillery'. There is a version chambered for the slightly smaller .41 Magnum, and this is known as the Model 57; it was introduced in 1964. All its details are similar to the Model 29.

.41 Military and Police Magnum, Model 58. Described as an economy big-bore service revolver, this model was apparently developed for police work, and is built on the 'N' frame. It is a larger version of the Model 10 .38 revolver, and closely resembles it in all but actual dimensions.

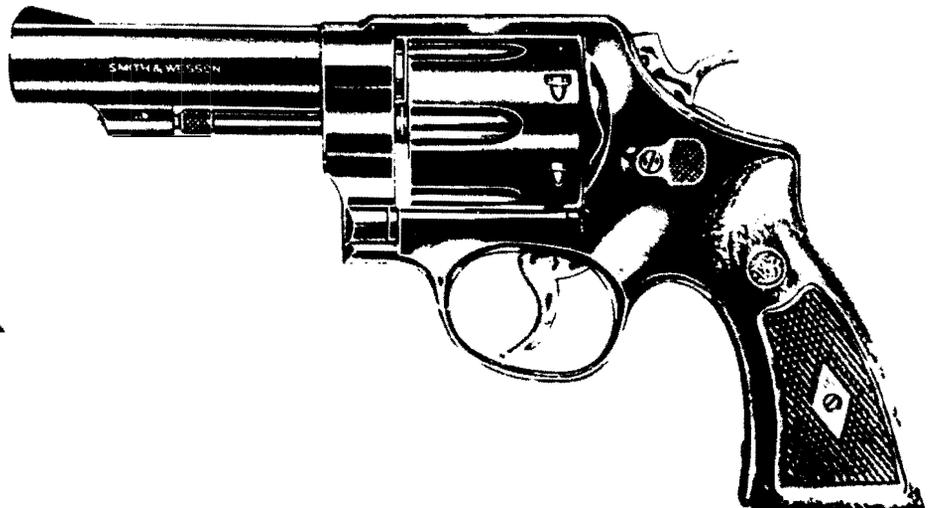


to FBI agent

SMITH & WESSON .357 MAGNUM MODEL 27 WITH 3½-inch BARREL.



SMITH & WESSON .44 MAGNUM MODEL 29.



SMITH & WESSON .41 MILITARY & POLICE, MODEL 58.

same, but the receiver was shaped at the front so as to be fitted to the frame, by drawing it back over the muzzle and pressing down until a recess at the rear end engaged with a hook-like abutment on the frame, whereupon, depressing a catch on the left side of the receiver locked it into place. This model, also in 6.35mm, was marked 'L & J Warnant Btes Pist Auto Cal 6,35', with the same monogram on the butt grips.

Finally, in about 1912, the Warnant Brothers produced a 7.65mm pistol. This was an entirely different design, based on the well-tried Browning 1903, but having a separate breech block. The slide had a wide slot cut vertically through the rear half, and into this, the block was inserted, retained by a heavy cross-bolt running through a raised section of slide and block. The construction avoided patent infringement problems, and also made for an unusual method of stripping; by removing the cross-bolt, the breech block could be taken out to the rear, thus allowing the rest of the slide to be run forward and removed over the fixed barrel. A 7-shot magazine was in the butt. This model was marked 'L&J Warnant Brevetes Pist Auto 7,65mm', though we have been unable to trace any relevant British or U.S. patents.

Once more, the Warnants were out of luck; before this pistol - which, in our view, stood a good chance of commercial success - could become established, the war broke out and production stopped.

WEBLEY

Webley & Scott Limited,
Birmingham,

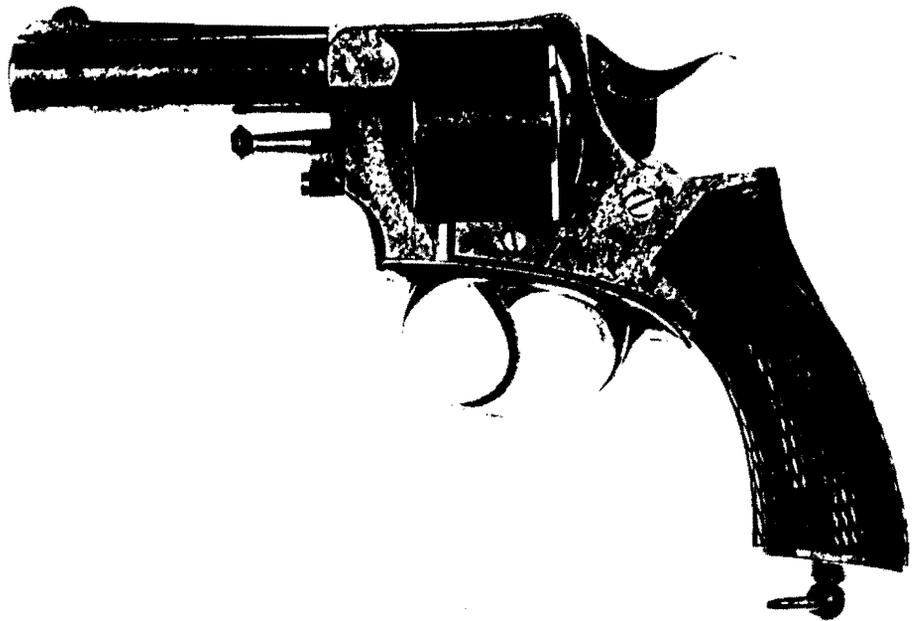
(Formerly P. Webley & Son (1860-1897);

Webley & Scott Revolver & Arms
Company Limited (1897-1906);

Webley & Scott Limited (1906-)).

Philip Webley bought the business of William Davis, a Birmingham gun implement maker, in 1845, and started manufacturing percussion cap and ball revolvers in 1853. When Colt shut down his London factory in 1857, the field was opened to British gunmakers. He removed the main competition in the field of mass-produced hand-guns, and Webley was not slow to take advantage of the opening. For some years, Webley had been striving to produce interchangeable components, and to get away from the individual hand-produced weapons which were still the standard production of the British gun trade. The American Civil War gave a needed fillip to the business, and small government contracts followed it.

The firm always concentrated on revolvers, with only one brief essay into automatic pistols, and were never afraid to seek new ideas or to employ talented designers. In fact, the history of the firm is enormously complicated by the number of different designs and variants that were brought out. Having settled upon a satisfactory design, the tendency was to stay with it, introducing modifications as experience dictated, but striving to retain as much of the original as possible. Thus, in one series



WEBLEY .442 No. 2 R.I.C.



WEBLEY .455 METROPOLITAN POLICE OLD TYPE.

of a revolver, say, the R.I.C. models, there was a steady improvement on the original from 1870 through to 1883, with alterations to the action or the calibre on different occasions.

In general, it must be said that the Webley revolvers were, and still are, among the best that have been made for the mass market. They all combined good workmanship with extreme reliability and robustness. They were carried by soldiers, police and civilians all over the British Empire, in innumerable colonial wars, and in two world wars. The record of the Webley is as good as any other revolver the world has so far seen, but the glamour of the cowboy and his legendary exploits in the American West has robbed it of its rightful place, and concentrated the popular mind upon the Colt.

The first Webley revolver to be dealt with in this book is one which carried the reputation and fortunes of the firm for several years, the Royal Irish Constabulary solid-frame models.

Royal Irish Constabulary Double-Action Models

.450 Model 1872. In 1867, P. Webley & Son manufactured the first of a series of a pattern of revolver which was to remain in production until the early years of the twentieth century. This revolver was adopted by the Royal Irish Constabulary when that force came into being in 1868, and the weapon immediately took the name from them. There were many variations in different calibres and barrel lengths, but all were a solid-framed type of considerable durability and reliability. The first model which comes within the scope of

series, though the firm did make a similar weapon in the 1870s in a variety of calibres. There is little evidence to show that it is successful, and its revival twenty years later is interesting. The pistol was made in .450 calibre with a pair of 3 inch barrels, machined from the solid and rotating in a clockwise direction on a central pin. The barrels were turned by hand and locked by a small spring-loaded lug. The model is a great rarity, and it must be assumed that it was not a commercial success.

British Government Models, Marks I-VI

Despite the variety of models which Webley's produced throughout the last decades of the nineteenth century, Henry Webley realised that the best basis for the business was to have long-term government contracts. For this reason, he spent some effort in designing carefully-made weapons whose parts were completely interchangeable. This was an obvious requirement for military revolvers, for which, spare parts were held centrally and whose repair had to be undertaken quickly and in distant parts of the world. The civilian owner not only treated his weapon with rather more consideration than the average soldier, but he could also usually return it to the factory for overhaul or repair; it could therefore incorporate frequent modifications, and if necessary, could be individually assembled and fitted. Not so the military weapons, which had to be even more alike than peas in a pod.

In 1880, the British government accepted the Enfield revolver, in both Marks I and II, but this was not a satisfactory weapon and the search was continued for a better one. By 1886, the choice had narrowed to either the break-action Smith & Wesson or a new Webley. After detailed trials, the Webley was accepted in July 1887. The pattern of this revolver has differed in only minor respects from the day of its acceptance until now, for it is still to be found in service in small numbers, in British forces to-day.

One cannot say that the Service Webley revolvers have not had their share of criticism throughout this long period of use, and it has to be agreed that many of them have been heavy, difficult to hold, and relatively clumsy in use, the more so when compared to modern side-arms. But they have rarely, if ever, been beaten for reliability, robustness, and resistance to neglect. Much of the latter-day criticism refers to the comparative ineffectiveness of the .38 calibre round, which is not by any means a fault of the weapon.

The principal features of the government revolvers can best be summarized as:

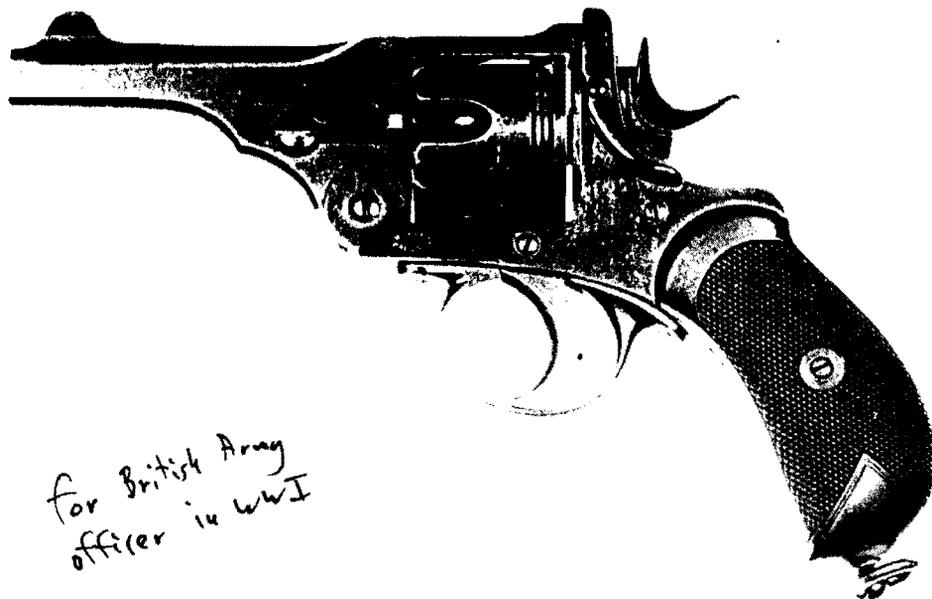
A strong and completely reliable breech fastening.

A good trigger and cocking action.

A cylinder capable of being freed or locked as required.

Good resistance to dirt and fouling

Webley Mark I, 1887. The weapon which won acceptance in 1887 was a six-chambered revolver of .442 calibre, fitted with a 4inch barrel, and weighing 34oz. In



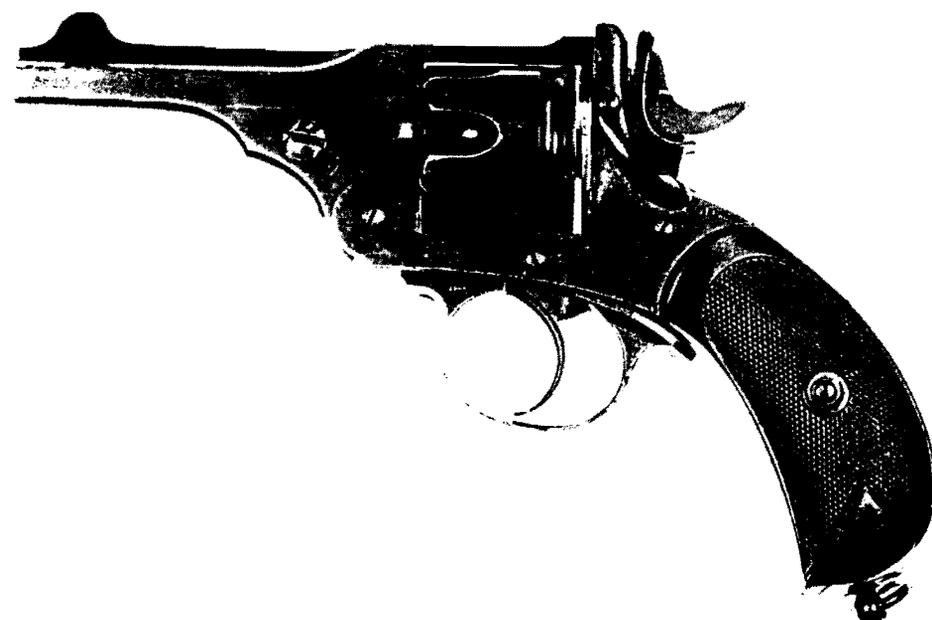
WEBLEY .455 Mk. 1.

shape, it was not markedly different from other army models made by the firm. The frame was much like the solid-frame Army Express models and so was the bird's head butt and the tail of the hammer. But the mechanism of the lock was reduced to five main parts: the hammer, the lifter, the trigger, the mainspring auxiliary and the mainspring. The mainspring functioned the entire lock action, a notable introduction, since this dispensed with at least five separate parts, all small, and complicated to machine and fit.

The cylinder could revolve freely if required, and its easy rotation was carefully checked on manufacture. The trigger pull on single-action was 6-8lb, and on double-action, 12-15lb. Sights were fixed, the backsight being an open 'Buckhorn' notch.

The entire barrel and lug was machined from the solid, and the rifling was the then-fashionable Metford form.

The butt grips were a departure from tradition, and were made from artificial materials instead of wood. The specification called for black Vulcanite, and the two grips were secured by a single screw. Another feature of the Mark I, was the shield on the standing breech. After some experience, it was discovered that there was erosion of the firing hole, and the shield was made detachable so that it could be renewed when worn. This was done by locating the shield with horizontal dovetails and locking it with a screw, and the change was deemed sufficient to designate the model Mark I.* The addition of stars to a Model number has been a peculiarly British habit, adopted also among the Dominion countries, to indicate a minor change in the design, which was not such as to warrant a completely new Model number. In other words, a half change. However, there have been several cases where a model ended up with an accumu-



WEBLEY .455 Mk. 2.

lation of stars, and this makes for subsequent difficulty in identification.

Within the Mark I designation, there were alternative calibres, and the revolver was produced in .476 and .455 as well as .442.

The Mark I was a great success and attracted a good deal of favourable comment both from the military users and from the civilian press.

Webley Mark II, 1894. By 1894, there had been an accumulation of minor changes to the Mark I, to warrant the issue of another Mark. The changes had been the shield which was incorporated in the Mark I*, a new hammer with a larger spur to permit cocking while wearing gloves, and a small change to the barrel catch. The resulting revolver is quite attractive in appearance with a smooth curve running down from the barrel catch, around the back of the butt and finishing at the toe.

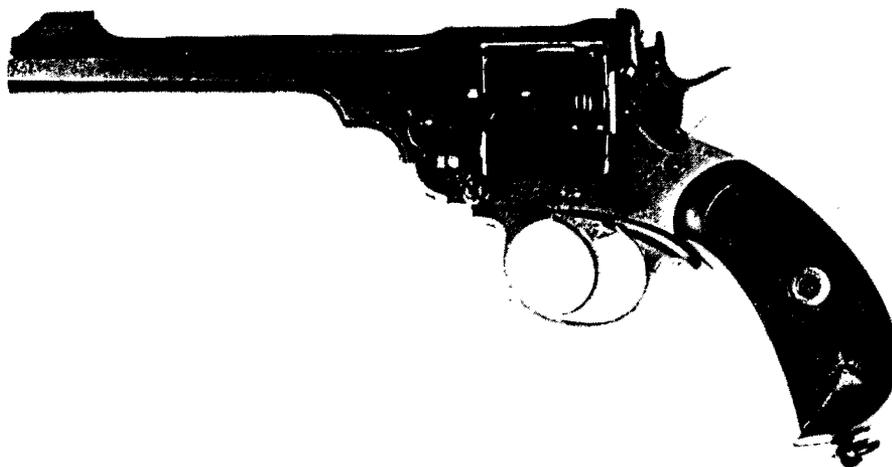
Production dates for these early government revolvers are not easy to determine exactly, and there is some evidence to show that the introduction of a new Mark did not necessarily halt the production of the earlier one. It may be that specific contracts were allowed to run out, in which case, there must have been occasions when two different Marks were in manufacture at the same time. In the case of the Mark II, there are some revolvers remaining today which were made in 1900, three or four years after the Mark III has been introduced.

Webley Mark III, 1897. The Enfield Mark II revolver was declared obsolete in 1894, and production ceased in that year. Webley therefore had the complete production of service revolvers and the Mark III was accepted in October 1897. It was identical with the Mark II in all general respects, including the frame, calibre and barrel length, the change was in the cylinder and extractor mechanism which was adopted from the W.G. 1892 Model. This gave a more satisfactory cylinder release and less friction when the cylinder was rotating, and a good deal of design effort went into this aspect of friction reduction in the various models and marks of early Webley revolvers.

Lest it should be thought that the Mark III closely resembled the 1892 Army Model, it may be appropriate to bring out the major differences. The first is the length of the barrel; on the 1892 Model it is 6 inches, whereas on the Mark III it is 4 inches, and has a distinctive stubby look. The butt of the Army Model curves much more sharply, and finally, the foresights are quite different. The Mark III has the rounded version which was fitted to all the government Marks, whereas the Army Model has the earlier angular blade set on a flat hump.

Production of the Mark III continued for some years after the Mark IV appeared, and certainly throughout the Boer War.

Webley Mark IV, 1899. The Mark IV was the first government model to be chambered for .455 only. The previous alternatives were now dropped completely, and



WEBLEY .455 Mk. 3**.

until 1932 there was only one military revolver calibre. The choice of such a large bore was due to the army's experience in colonial wars throughout the Empire, and a resulting belief that a soldier needed a 'man-stopping' bullet when faced with a determined enemy. The American Army had come to the same conclusion in the Spanish War of 1898, and had opted for the same large type of bullet.

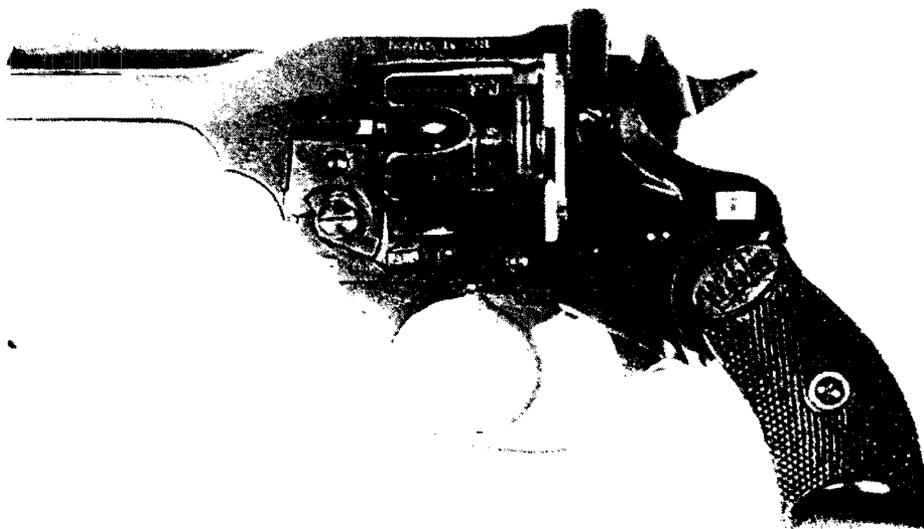
The Mark IV is usually known as the 'Boer War Model', because its introduction coincided with the start of that war, and many of the volunteer troops were armed with it. Apart from the calibre change, there are few differences from the Mark III, though the hammer spur was reduced in thickness, for what reason is not known. There were several barrel lengths, 6 inch, 5 inch, 4 inch and 3 inch, but the great majority were produced in the standard 4 inch.

This excellent revolver continued in production without any modification until

1913, fair proof that the design was right at the beginning.

Webley Mark V, 1913. This was a short-lived model, accepted in late 1913, and scarcely differing in any feature from the Mark IV. The barrel was standardized at 4 inches, though there are records of some being made in 6 inches. Production was terminated in 1915, when the Mark VI was adopted.

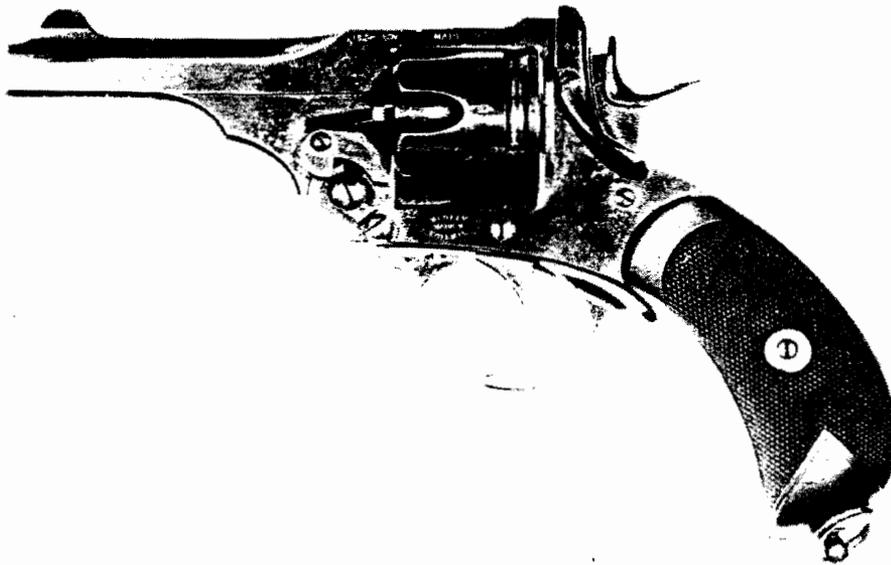
Webley Mark VI, 1915. The Mark VI was approved for British service in May 1915, and orders were placed immediately for maximum production from the Webley factory. It is likely that this production quickly became of the order of 2,500 a week for the next three years, and many of these revolvers survived the war. The differences from the Marks V and IV were not great. The shape of the butt was changed once again, for the last time as it was to turn out, to a broad slightly-flared pattern, very much like that on the Wilkinson-Webleys of 1905 and 1911.



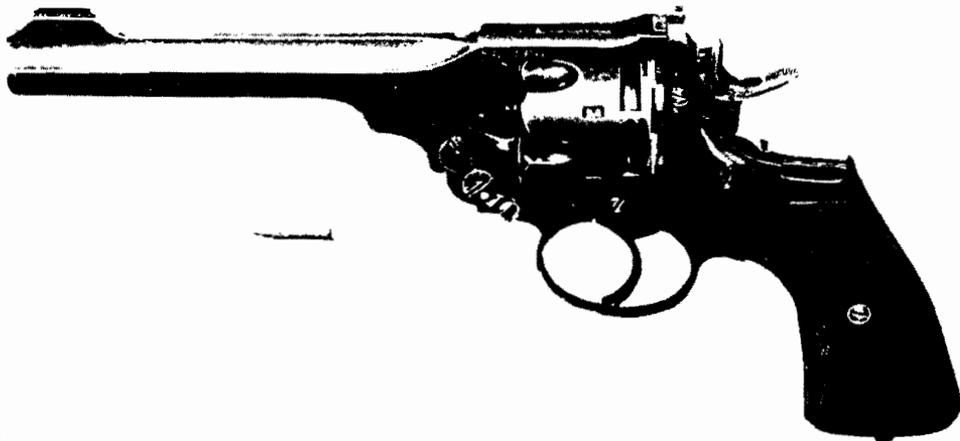
WEBLEY .38 Mk. 4 WITH SAFETY CATCH AND 3-inch BARREL.



WEBLEY .32 Mk. 4.



WEBLEY .455 Mk. 5.



WEBLEY .455 Mk. 6.

Another change was that the foresight once more became a blade, pinned into a flattened hump on the muzzle.

The barrel length was standardized at 6 inches, though once again, some alternatives in 4 inches were made. In the opinion of the authors, six inches is a little long for a really handy military revolver, and since the Mark IV had been such a success with its 4 inch barrel, it is hard to see why the change was made.

The need for rapid reloading of the six chambers led to the invention of a device for inserting six cartridges at once. This was the Prédiaux Cylinder Loader, a round spring clip which held six cartridges and allowed them to be pushed into the cylinder in one movement. It was invaluable in the flurry of an attack, or at night. Another device was the Pritchard-Greener Bayonet, made by the Birmingham firm of William Greener. This was a 7 inch bayonet which fitted onto the Webley Mark VI, by locating on the barrel lug, holster guides and foresight ramp. It allowed the revolver to be handled and loaded without interference to the firer, and obviously gave an extra capability in close-quarter fighting.

The Mark VI was also given a shoulder stock, a well-known method of improving the effective range of a hand-gun, and one which has been used at different times since the eighteenth century. The shoulder stock could also be used with the Webley Flare Pistol when it was desired to shoot flares with some precision, however, it was not used in any quantity, and examples of the shoulder stock and the other additional equipment are now scarce and not often seen.

The Mark VI continued in service after the war and in 1921 its manufacture was transferred to the Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield, where small numbers continued to be made. These Enfield revolvers are identical with the Webley manufacture except for the marking, and they carry the stamp of the crown and the word 'Enfield'. In 1932, the Mark VI was replaced by the .38 Enfield, and the long line of large-calibre revolvers was finally ended.

.22 RF Mark VI, 1918. In order to reduce expenditure of expensive .455 ammunition, and also to encourage shooting on simple indoor ranges, a .22 version of the Mark VI was made for training only. The cylinder and barrel were changed, but the remainder of the revolver was a standard Mark VI, thereby giving a realistic feel to the shooter. The cylinder was much shorter than the standard one, and the barrel was brought back into the frame to meet it; this leaves a large gap in front of the cylinder, which immediately identifies the model. A round .22 barrel was fitted, and a raised foresight was needed to bring the blade into line with the backsight.

Police and Civilian Models of the Government Revolver

Throughout the manufacture of the government models, there was a parallel production of civilian and police versions, although in .38 calibre, and occasionally in .32. All

the cylinder to the front. A few were produced with the Pryse flat-top barrel, and some target shooters preferred to remove the safety. Otherwise there is little to differentiate these from those of the previous year.

.38 Model, 1902. Small changes were made to the .38 models, on much the same lines as on the .455 versions. For the most part, these were alterations to simplify manufacture and made little difference to the use or performance of the revolver.

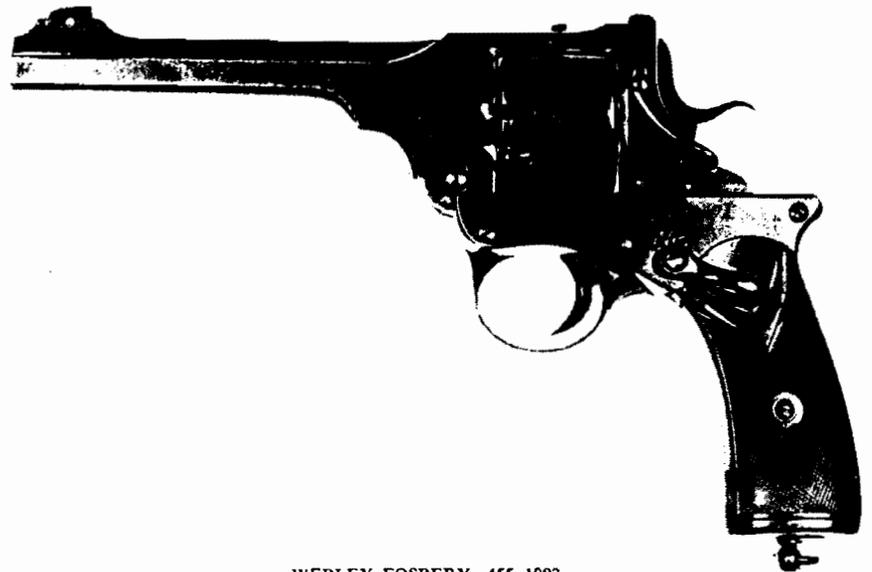
.455 Model, 1914. The 1914 models were simply a refinement of the 1902 design, and offered nothing that was markedly different. The Target version was made with a 7½ inch barrel as before, and on some, minor machining changes can be identified. A very few were made in 4 inch barrel length, but this may have been to special order. Many Fosberys were issued as service pistols during the First World War, and they were apparently popular with their users.

Webley & Scott Automatic Pistols

During their brief and unsuccessful flirtation with the heavy and over-powerful 'Mars' automatic pistol in 1899, Webleys set about designing their own, and the first experimental model appeared in 1903. This was for .455 calibre, and progressive refinement continued for the next six years. Sadly, the purity of line and balance of the revolver appearance deserted the designers of the automatics, whose outline was always angular, square, and almost ugly. They have never been very successful, although they shoot well. One trouble which is often quoted, is their liability to jam when dirty or dusty, and it is true that the action is a little complicated and finely made.

.32 Automatic Pistol Model, 1906 (Patent 15,982. 4 August 1905). This blow-back operated pistol was first offered on the market in 1906, and was still being sold in 1940. It was first adopted by the Metropolitan Police in 1911, after having been in use with them for the previous five years. Legend has it that the famous Siege of Sidney Street inspired the police to discard their revolvers and take to automatics, although revolvers continued in police service until the present day. Throughout the existence of this pistol, it underwent several changes, none of them fundamental, and all intended to simplify manufacture or assist in use. The most obvious change concerns the safety, which on the first models was a catch on the left side of the external hammer. By pressing the catch down when the hammer was at half-cock, it was locked and the pistol could be carried without danger. On later versions, the catch was positioned on the left of the frame above the grip, where it could be worked with the right thumb. This later safety also locked the breech slide.

Barrel length was 3¼ inches, the magazine held eight rounds and it was chambered for .32, 7.65mm and .38, all rimless cartridges. A feature of all these small Webley automatic pistols was that the



WEBLEY-FOSBERY .455 1902.



WEBLEY .32 1906. LATE MODEL WITH FRAME MOUNTED SAFETY.



WEBLEY 7.65mm 1906 FIRST MODEL.

were not a commercial success, but are included in this catalogue because they represent a step in the Webley design progression. They were intended for military use in Britain and abroad, and the calibre was chosen in deference to a specification which called for a lighter cartridge than the .455 round. The 1910 model can be described as a smaller version of the .455 automatic, having a 5 inch barrel, an eight-round magazine and a lower overall weight. The ammunition it was designed to take, was the .38 Colt A.C.P., which incidentally, was also used in the .38 Webley-Fosbery which was in production at the same time.

The mechanism was exactly the same in design as for the .455 model and the only obvious external difference is in the fact that the .38 has a concealed hammer. The 1913 model was very similar, and both models were fitted with long wooden grips running from the slide down to the bottom of the butt. On a few pistols, these grips are chequered, but the majority are smooth.

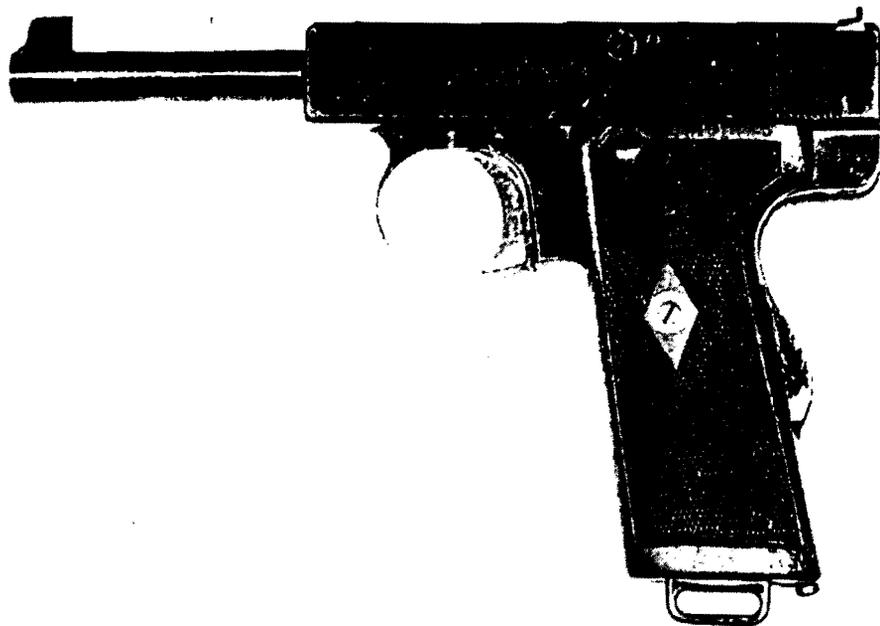
.455 Pistol, Self Loading Mark I, 1912 (Patent 13,570. 13 June 1906: et seq). Steady progress in designing had resulted in a satisfactory large-calibre automatic pistol by 1906. This was a heavy and substantial weapon, generously proportioned in all directions, and weighing forty ounces. In 1909, it was being described as the Navy Model, although the Royal Navy did not officially adopt it until May 1913, and it was issued on a wide scale to Naval and Royal Marine units throughout the First World War. The operation was by recoil, the barrel being locked to the slide by a lug on the barrel engaging with a recess in the top of the slide, the barrel being forced upwards by two cam-ways. Unlocking was accomplished by a reversal of this process assisted by a spring.

A grip safety was fitted, similar in its action to that on the 9mm model of 1909, and the hammer was external. The long butt held a 7-shot magazine and was covered by wooden grips checkered all over. The foresight was a substantial blade brazed to the muzzle, and a backsight was slotted on the rear of the slide. A round lanyard ring was fitted to heel of the butt.

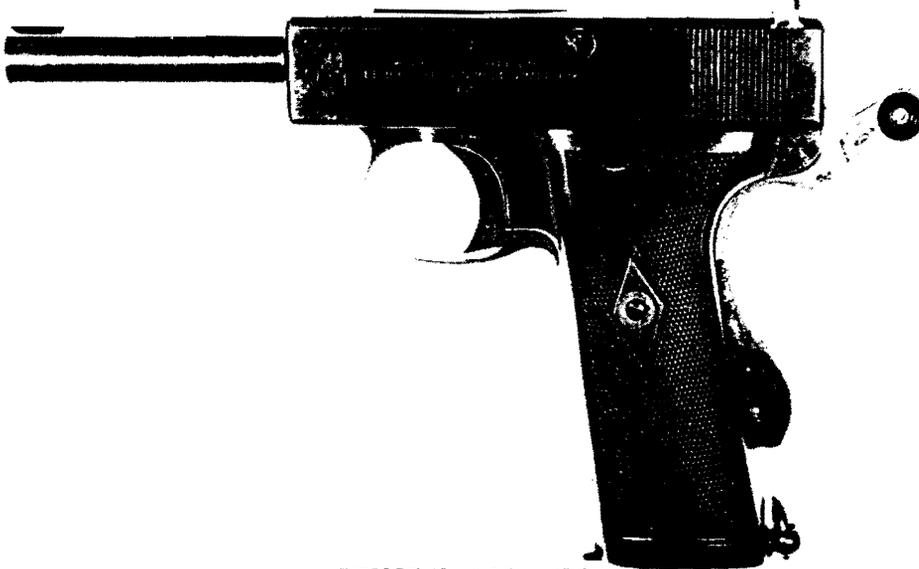
The whole effect is of a solid, dependable and rugged weapon of considerable strength. It is all the more surprising therefore, to hear the complaints of the users that it jammed easily when dirty.

.455 Pistol, Self Loading Mark I, No. 2, 1915. The Mark I No. 2. was approved in April 1915 for issue to the Royal Flying Corps, who at that time had no proper means of defending their aeroplanes when in contact with the enemy. The need was for a light automatic or semi-automatic weapon capable of being easily held and aimed. The Naval Webley was modified to take a shoulder stock, and an additional safety which held the hammer at full-cock. A special backsight was fitted, which was supposed to allow for deflection between a moving firer and a moving target, with range graduations up to two hundred yards.

These R.F.C. Webleys were issued in small numbers for about a year; by 1916,



WEBLEY & SCOTT .38 HIGH VELOCITY HAMMERLESS MODEL 1910.



WEBLEY No. 1 Mk. 1 1913.



WEBLEY & SCOTT .455 Mk. I No. 2.



WEBLEY .297/.230 MORRIS TUBE No. 6.

the use of machine-guns was becoming more usual on aircraft, and the pistols and rifles were taken out of service. The unusual curved shoulder-stock of the R.F.C. Webley was intended to give the firer an easier hold with the left hand, and to-day it is a very rare collector's item.

.22 Single-Shot Target Pistols, 1911. Two target versions of the Model 1906 .32 automatic were offered to their users with the intention that they should be used for training and target practice. This was a common idea with Webleys, and the cost of the additional pistols was quickly regained by the savings in ammunition from the use of .22 calibre. The 1911 versions were weighted to the same as the .32, and used many of their components. There was no recoil system, each shot having to be loaded by hand, and the top of the slide was cut away to allow this to be done.

The pistol was offered with two lengths of barrel, 4½ inch and 9 inch. The Metropolitan Police adopted the 4½ inch barrel as a standard, and retained the weapon for as long as they used the .32.

Morris Tube Adaptations (Patents 1,773. 25 April 1881; 2,161. 28 April 1883). The well-known Morris Tube training aids were adapted to fit many of the Webley revolvers, beginning soon after Richard Morris set up his Company in the mid 1880s. At first these adaptors were chambered for Morris's own ammunition in .297/.230 calibre, but the Morris patents also covered the long .22 cartridge, and this calibre quickly became the standard. The early adaptors were all for single-shot, and were a sub-calibre barrel sleeve inserted inside the bore, with the breech coming up to the standing breech of the revolver. On some, the cylinder had to be removed, and was usually replaced by an adaptor which used the extractor cam to work an extractor for the sub-calibre round; other Morris designs retained the full-bore cylinder and adapted the extractor to fit the small case.

Later types fitted a special sub-calibre cylinder so that the revolver would operate in a realistic way and fire six shots. These cylinders were always much shorter than the full-bore ones, and there was a gap

between the front face and the barrel lug. This was sometimes taken up by a sleeve; on other models, by a backsight mounting block which was located by a pin running through the gap.

In the 1920s, Parker-Hale of Birmingham sold an adaptor outfit which consisted of a specially bored cylinder, in which the chambers were bored at a slight angle to the centre line of the cylinder to allow the hammer to strike a rimfire round. The soft lead bullet went round the angle without trouble.

So many Webleys were fitted with sub-calibre devices, that it would be impossible to describe them all, and in any case, the descriptions would be entirely repetitive. The following list mentions those Webley weapons for which patents were taken out in special reference to sub-calibre training devices of one kind or another, or those weapons which have survived and have been identified.

Webley-Pryse Model, 1883. Originally in .476 calibre, this revolver was fitted with a .297/.230 Morris Tube with a barrel 3 inches longer than the full bore one. The reason for this is now unknown.

W.G. Target Model, 1892. Both single-shot and six-shot Morris Adaptors were made for this revolver, in the Morris calibre of .297/.230.

W.G. Target Model, 1896. Fitted with a single-shot adaptor. The following revolvers were fitted with six-shot adaptors:

Mark IV 1899. Morris Tube No. 3. 4 inch barrel .297/.230 calibre.

Mark IV 1899. Morris Tube .22 calibre.

Mark IV 1899. Parker-Hale Tube .22 calibre.

Mark VI 1916. Parker-Hale Tube .22 calibre.

Single-Shot Target Pistols

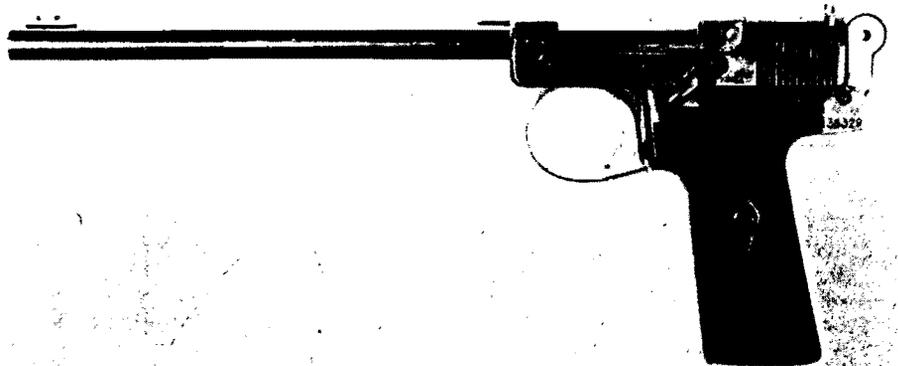
Since 1909, Webleys have produced a series of .22 single-shot target pistols intended for the expert shot. The original design has not greatly altered since the beginning, and the most recent models differ mainly in the use of plastic grips and manufacturing methods. It has been a remarkably successful pistol in its day, though it is now outclassed by the highly specialized weapons made for international competitions. One feature which has helped its reputation, is the smooth trigger pull, achieved by using only three component parts and two springs.

There have been three distinct models, the 1909, the 1938 and the 1952. All have a barrel 9½ inches long, and are chambered for the .22 long rifle cartridge.

WEIRAUCH

Herman Weirauch Waffenfabrik, Melrichstadt, W. Germany.

Weirauch was in business in pre-war days as the 'H. Weirauch Gewehr und Fahrrad-fabrik' of Zella Mehliis, and during the war years, was concerned with contract manufacture of military arms, using the code group 'eca'. At the end of the war, the factory went into Soviet hands, and the company ceased to exist. It was revived in the 1950s at Mellrichstadt in Bavaria



WEBLEY .22 SINGLE SHOT.