

PREMIER SECOND MODEL**1905-1941***SMOKELESS POWDER CARTRIDGES**HISTORICAL DATA*

For some unknown reason the small frame Premier model seems to have gotten off to a slow start. Whether it was internal or external is impossible to determine today. There have been less First Model Premiers showing up than Second Models. By the time the Second Model was introduced in 1905 the pace of production picked up quite a bit. The Second Model Premier was kept in production longer than the large frame Auto-Ejecting or the Hammerless Models. The British and the U.S. government quickly purchased whatever Premier Second models H & R had in inventory at the beginning of WWII. H & R even asked permission to buy the steel needed to manufacture new Premiers in 1943. The majority of the Premiers taken into service by the U.S. government were turned over to the OSS (Office of Strategic Services). There are numerous references to their being shipped to all areas of the world. Some are mentioned specifically in Charles Pate's excellent book U.S. Handguns of World War II. I have personally seen pictures of one that is still in Norway. These WWII era Premier revolvers are in the serial number range 507900 to 509300. Patent number dates that appear on the Second Model are the same as the First Model except October 4, 1887 was not used.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Small frame, double action, top break revolver with double top post barrel latch; calibers and cylinder capacity: 22 rimfire - 7 rounds, 32 centerfire - 5 rounds; the 22 S&W long cartridge listing was dropped from the catalogs about 1913 and replaced with the 22 long rifle; standard barrel length - 3 inches, with 2 (Bicycle Model only), 4, 5 and 6 inches available as options; frame, cylinder, barrel and double action mechanism strengthened for use with smokeless powder; automatic cylinder stop; two-piece hard rubber grips with target logo at top, available in small pocket size (standard) and oversize target style, and ivory and mother of pearl grips were also available; weight with standard barrel length: 22 caliber - 13 ounces, and 32 caliber - 12 ounces.

1st Variation 1905

In addition to the changes made to make it safe with smokeless powder, several more changes were also made. The auto-ejecting mechanism covered by patents 536,618 and 557,814 was retained, but the cylinder retainer was completely redesigned. The hook protruding from the bottom of the barrel top latch was done away with and the new retainer was a simple threaded cylinder bushing and cylinder arbor. The male threads were on the cylinder arbor and the female threads were on the cylinder bushing. To remove the cylinder you only needed to apply upward pressure while turning the cylinder counterclockwise. It takes about three complete turns to free the cylinder for removal. For the first time the model name and caliber were marked on the left side of the barrel, i.e. "PREMIER .32 S&W CTGE". These markings on the left side of the barrel are the easiest way to determine the difference between black powder and smokeless powder models.

DIFFERENCES: designed for smokeless powder cartridges and new cylinder retainer.

TOP OF BARREL MARKINGS 1ST VARIATION TYPE TWELVE:

HARRINGTON & RICHARDSON ARMS COMPANY**WORCESTER, MASS. U.S.A. PAT. MAY 14,'89 APR.2,'95 APR.7,'96**

LEFT SIDE OF BARREL: MODEL NAME AND CALIBER

Serial number range: 1905 = A letter code (* estimate); above A40000* continued from 1904 and also found on bottom of butt strap.

2nd Variation 1906-1908

This is a variation in the barrel markings only (the May 14, 1889 was dropped). There may be two versions of this marking also, one where the first "April" is spelled out and one where both "Aprils" are abbreviated. Only time and more information will determine if there are actually one or two markings.

DIFFERENCES: barrel markings only.

TOP OF BARREL MARKING 2ND VARIATION TYPE FOURTEEN:

HARRINGTON & RICHARDSON ARMS COMPANY**WORCESTER, MASS. U.S.A. PAT'D. APR. 2,'95. APR. 7,'96**

LEFT SIDE OF BARREL: MODEL NAME AND CALIBER

Serial number range: 1906 = A letter code above about A75000* (* estimate).

1907 to 1908 = approximately 00001 to 150000* (* estimate); these numbers appear to be a continuation of the series started on the large frame Auto-Ejector Third Model in 1906.

3rd Variation 1909-1913

This featured a new auto-ejecting mechanism patented by Frederick Smith, number 547525, dated October 8, 1895. This auto-ejecting mechanism is more complicated than the previous one and didn't last very long. Barrel markings were changed to show only this patent date. It also appears H & R overproduced barrels with this marking, as it shows up on some very late production serial number ranges.

DIFFERENCES: automatic-ejection mechanism and barrel markings.

TOP OF BARREL MARKINGS 3RD VARIATION TYPE FIFTEEN:

HARRINGTON & RICHARDSON ARMS COMPANY**WORCESTER, MASS. U.S.A. PAT. OCT. 8, 1895**

LEFT SIDE OF BARREL: CALIBER ONLY

Serial number range: approximately 150000* to 289000* (* estimate).

Note: This marking seems to have been used more than the previous one and there may be some overlapping of serial numbers in the higher range, as if some older barrels were used with newer frames and higher serial numbers.

4th Variation 1914-1915

The auto-ejecting mechanism was changed again - this time it was based on a patent issued May 11, 1880 and assigned to S&W. The protection granted under this patent had expired about 1901. This auto-ejector uses a spring-loaded ejector plate and is very simple. An enlarged area was added to the bottom of the top latch that held the cylinder away from the threads on the cylinder arbor unless the revolver was opened.

Barrel markings were changed again.

DIFFERENCES: automatic-ejection mechanism and barrel markings.

TOP OF BARREL MARKINGS 4TH VARIATION TYPE SIXTEEN:

**HARRINGTON & RICHARDSON ARMS CO.
WORCESTER, MASS. U. S. A.**

LEFT SIDE OF BARREL: **CALIBER ONLY**

Serial number range: 288300* to 300000* (* estimate); there appears to be some overlapping with the 3rd Variation.

5th Variation 1914-1915

This variation is a change in barrel markings only.

DIFFERENCES: barrel markings.

TOP OF BARREL MARKINGS 5TH VARIATION TYPE EIGHTEEN:

**HARRINGTON & RICHARDSON ARMS CO.
WORCESTER, MASS. U. S. A.**

LEFT SIDE OF BARREL: **CALIBER ONLY**

Serial number range: 300000* to 357000* (* estimate) with some overlapping of other variations.

6th Variation 1916-1924

This variation is also a change in barrel markings only.

DIFFERENCES: barrel markings.

TOP OF BARREL MARKINGS 6TH VARIATION TYPE NINETEEN:

**HARRINGTON & RICHARDSON ARMS CO.
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS. U.S.A.**

LEFT SIDE OF BARREL: **CALIBER ONLY**

Serial number range: 224000* to 460900* (* estimate) with some overlapping of other variations.

7th Variation 1925-1942 (NEW FRAME)

In this variation a change was made to the grip frame area. It was now the same width as the rest of the frame and no longer had the step down area for the grips. This required a slight modification of the grips themselves and the grips are not interchangeable with earlier versions. The same change was made across the board on all H & R revolvers, which made it easier to fit oversized checkered walnut grips to all revolvers. All patent dates were dropped from the top of the barrel markings. In 1924 H & R introduced their Gold Front Sight series of top break and solid frame revolvers. These revolvers had the model name on the left side of the barrel in large letters and the caliber on the right side of the barrel in smaller letters. This type of barrel marking has also been observed on the Premier model and it is believed to have been used until the end of production. The model name was on the left side of the barrel, while the caliber is on the right side.

DIFFERENCES: new frame design and side of barrel markings.

TOP OF BARREL MARKINGS 7TH VARIATION TYPE NINETEEN:

**HARRINGTON & RICHARDSON ARMS CO.
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS. U.S.A.**

LEFT SIDE OF BARREL: **MODEL NAME**

RIGHT SIDE OF BARREL: **CALIBER**

Serial number range: 469000* to 570000* (* estimate) with some overlapping of other variations.

8th Variation - AFTER 1932

This variation is informational as there are no real changes in the actual revolvers. For the first time H & R assigned model numbers to all its revolvers, so now the catalogs gave reference to a model number as well as model name. The Premier Model was given two model numbers, one for each caliber. The 32 caliber was now the Premier No. 35 and the 22 caliber was called Premier No. 30. These model numbers were not marked on the revolvers themselves but were marked on the boxes. Barrel markings, both top and side, are the same as the 7th Variation in most cases. The barrel markings and serial number range will not be listed, as they are the same as the 7th Variation.

9th Variation - no dates, all years

This variation may or may not have caliber and model markings on the left side of the barrel and seems to have been used on all short barrel models regardless of frame size. Its first appearance may have been about 1898, but most likely earlier. All serial numbers with this marking appear out of series. It appears only on short barrel models. Side of the barrel markings will vary depending on year of manufacture (short barrel models only, various serial numbers and variations).

DIFFERENCES: barrel markings.

TOP OF BARREL MARKINGS 9TH VARIATION TYPE TWENTY:

**H & R ARMS CO.
WORCESTER, MASS. U. S. A.**

(So far only seen on Small Frame Premiers and Hammerless Models)

Serial number range: all serial number ranges.

10th Variation - no dates, all years

This variation may or may not have caliber and model markings on the left side of the barrel and seems to have been used on all short barrel models regardless of frame size. Its first appearance may have been about 1898 but most likely earlier. All serial numbers with this marking appear out of series. It appears only on short barrel models. Side of the barrel markings will vary depending on year of manufacture (short barrel models only, various serial numbers and variations).

DIFFERENCES: barrel markings only.

TOP OF BARREL MARKINGS 10TH VARIATION TYPE TWENTY-ONE:


**H. & R. ARMS COMPANY
WORCESTER, MASS. U S A**

(This marking will sometimes be seen on the very front part of the top strap instead of on the barrel rib)

Serial number range: all serial number ranges.

H & R Premier Second Model
 from catalog #16 (1925/1926),
 Authors collection

Harrington & Richardson Arms Co.
 WORCESTER, MASS., U. S. A.



This revolver with hammer as shown above is our "Police Premier." Specifications otherwise same as for the "Premier."

H. & R. "Premier"

Caliber	22	32
Shots	7	5
Barrels	2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 inch	
Weight	13 ozs.	12 ozs.
Finish	Nickel or Blue	

Ammunition	22 Short	32 S. & W.
	22 Long	
	22 Long Rifle	

A gentleman's small frame revolver with automatic shell ejector, an accurate shooter and can be carried in the pocket without inconvenience.

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H & R Premier Second
 model with wide grip frame
 actual revolver, from an
 anonymous collector in
 Norway

