

3.6

PREMIER FIRST MODEL

1895-1904

BLACK POWDER CARTRIDGES ONLY
HISTORICAL DATA

The Premier Model follows the Auto-Ejecting closely in the different automatic-ejection systems and cylinder retainers. For some unknown reason the patent date for the double action mechanism used (August 6, 1889) does not appear in any of the First Model Premier barrel markings. No patent dates at all appear on the 2 inch barrel Bicycle Model. The Premier and Bicycle Models are the same except for the barrel length. Catalogs from about 1900 until about 1912 list the 22 rimfire model as being chambered for 22 short, 22 long and 22 Smith & Wesson long, and after that date just 22 short, 22 long and 22 long rifle. Catalogs until Number 12 (1912/1913) list the parts of the large frame Auto-Ejecting and the small frame Premier together.

Patent numbers and subject matter that are used in the barrel markings of the Premier First Model are:

ISSUE DATE	NUMBER	FEATURES
OCTOBER 4, 1887	370926	Cylinder retainer
MAY 14, 1889	D19090	Design of "Target Grip" logo
FEBRUARY 23, 1892	469387	Rebounding hammer
APRIL 2, 1895	536,618	Ejector mechanism
APRIL 7, 1896	557,814	Ejector mechanism

SPECIFICATIONS:

Small frame, double action, top break revolver with double top post barrel latch; calibers and cylinder capacity - 22 rimfire, 7 rounds and 32 centerfire, 5 rounds; free wheeling cylinder (no automatic cylinder stop); standard finish nickel, blue optional, with case hardened hammer and barrel latch; standard barrel length - 3 inches, with 2 (Bicycle Model only), 4, 5 and 6 inches available as optional; weight with standard barrel length: 22 rimfire - 13 ounces; 32 centerfire - 12 ounces; features a scaled down version of the new frame and double action mechanism introduced in 1890 on the Auto-Ejecting Second Model; a Police version (spurless hammer) was also available; all variations of the Premier First Model were manufactured for black powder cartridge pressures.

1st Variation 1895-until April 1896

Features the new double action mechanism as covered under patent number 408,457, dated August 6, 1889, issued to Homer Caldwell and assigned to H & R (this patent is not included in any of the Premier barrel markings). Design patent number D19090, issued May 14, 1889, covers the target logo at the top of the grips; this logo will be found on all H & R revolvers featuring hard rubber grips. The auto-ejecting mechanism is the same as used on the Second Model, 2nd Variation Auto-Ejecting (large frame). So far no Premier has yet turned up that has the push button on the frame of the ejector mechanism that disengages it. The cylinder retainer is also the same as used on the large frame Auto-Ejecting Second Model, 1st Variation and is covered by patent number 370296 (dated October 4, 1887), which is a hook that protrudes from the bottom of the barrel top latch, preventing the cylinder from being removed from the cylinder

arbor. When the locking pin that protrudes from the left side of the barrel top strap is depressed, the hook rises slightly when opening the revolver allowing the cylinder to be removed. After the issue of this patent, the cylinder star and its pentagonal shaped guide rod were permanently attached together and would not be changed. The patent date February 23, 1892 is for patent number 469387, issued to Andrew Fyrberg. It is unknown for now if the features of this patent were actually used by H & R on this or any other revolver. Barrel markings are two lines with three patent dates.

TOP OF BARREL MARKINGS 1ST VARIATION 1895 TYPE SEVEN:

**HARRINGTON & RICHARDSON ARMS COMPANY
WORCESTER, MASS. U.S.A. PAT'S. OCT 4, 1887, MAY 14 .89, FEB. 23. 92**

Serial number range: 01 to 15000* (* estimate); lowest number studied 36; highest number studied 7731.

2nd Variation after April 1896

In this variation, the barrel markings were altered to conform to the new automatic-ejector used by combining two different patents. The February 23, 1892 date was dropped and two new dates were added and actually reflect the actual patents used. The new auto-ejecting mechanism is covered by patent number 536,618, dated April 2, 1895, issued to Andrew Fyrberg and patent number 557,814, dated April 7, 1896, issued to Gilbert Harrington and William Richardson, both assigned to H & R. Combining these two patents produced an ejector mechanism that was simpler and cheaper to manufacture. The actual revolver marked this way appears to have barrels that had 1st Variation markings and were altered. It appears to have been used for a short time until a new roll stamp die could be made.

DIFFERENCES: barrel markings only.

TOP OF BARREL MARKINGS 2ND VARIATION TYPE EIGHT:

HARRINGTON & RICHARDSON ARMS COMPANY PAT. APRIL 2. 95
(these dates are on WORCESTER, MASS. U.S.A. PAT'S. OCT 4, 1887, MAY 14 .89, APRIL 7. 1896 top strap)

Serial number range: 15000* to 20000* (* estimate); only one revolver has been studied with this marking, serial number 19095.

3rd Variation 1897-1898

This variation features a blue trigger guard and the new auto-ejecting mechanism that is covered by patent number 536,618, dated April 2, 1895, issued to Andrew Fyrberg, and patent number 557,814, dated April 7, 1896, issued to Gilbert Harrington and William Richardson, both assigned to H & R. Combining these two patents produced an ejector mechanism that was simpler and cheaper to manufacture, but it lacked the thumb-piece that allowed you to disconnect the auto-ejecting mechanism. It was during this variation that serial numbers started to appear on the bottom of the butt as well as the left side of the grip frame. The cylinder retainer remained unchanged. The only other change was the barrel markings. There are two versions of these markings, but one may not be a real marking. The top of the barrel markings for the 3rd and 4th Variations are the same. It is my belief at this time that the letter code O (or zero) found on the bottom of the top strap below about O20000 is the dividing line between antique status (pre-1899 manufacture) and non-antique status (post-1898 manufacture). There could be some barrel markings similar to the one found on the large frame Auto-Ejecting that just haven't showed up yet that could change this. There have been far more Second Model Premiers showing up than First Models, which is just the reverse of the large frame Auto-Ejecting.

DIFFERENCES: barrel markings, blue trigger guard and automatic-ejecting mechanism.

TOP OF BARREL MARKINGS 3RD VARIATION TYPE NINE:

**HARRINGTON & RICHARDSON ARMS COMPANY
WORCESTER, MASS. U.S.A. PAT. OCT. 4, '87, APR. 2, '95. APR. 7, '96**

Serial number range: 1897=20001* to 100000* approximately (* estimate).
1898=0001 to O20000* (* estimate).

4th Variation 1899-1903

This variation is the same as the 3rd Variation except the internal mechanism was changed to include the new automatic cylinder stop that was introduced with the new Hammerless Models introduced in 1899.

DIFFERENCES: automatic cylinder stop.

TOP OF BARREL MARKINGS 4TH VARIATION TYPE NINE:

**HARRINGTON & RICHARDSON ARMS COMPANY
WORCESTER, MASS. U.S.A. PAT. OCT. 4, '87, APR. 2, '95. APR. 7, '96**

Serial number range: 1899 to 1902 = letter code O (or zero) above O20000* (* estimate).
1903 = letter code A below A15000* (* estimate).

5th Variation 1904

This is a variation in barrel markings only. This barrel marking was carried over to the Second Model, 1st Variation as well. The October 4, 1887 date was dropped and May 14, 1889 added. May 14, 1889 is the date of the design patent for the target logo used at the top of the hard rubber grip panels. Very few First Model, 5th Variations have been observed; in fact only one revolver has been studied.

DIFFERENCES: barrel markings (see below).

TOP OF BARREL MARKINGS 5TH VARIATION TYPE TWELVE:

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

Serial number range: 1904 = A letter code above A15000* to about A40000* (* estimate); serial number A34917 has these features.

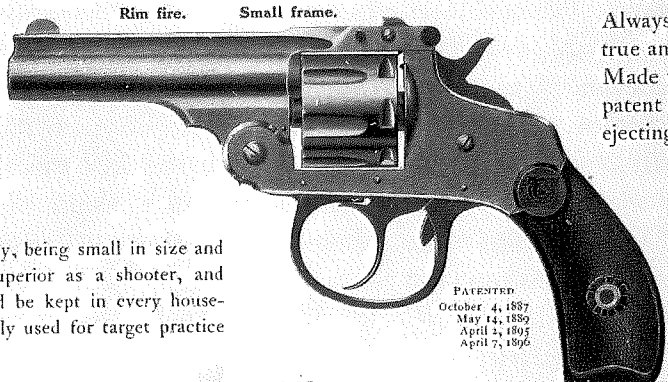
Right: H & R Premier First Model from catalog #7 (1902/1903) showing 22 rimfire caliber, Jeff French collection

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

H. & R. "Premier" Automatic Double Action Revolver. 22 Caliber.

A splendid weapon for a lady, being small in size and light in weight. It has no superior as a shooter, and is just such a revolver as should be kept in every household for emergency use. Largely used for target practice with excellent results.

PATENTED
October 4, 1887
May 14, 1889
April 2, 1895
April 7, 1896



Always reliable, true and safe. Made with our patent shell ejecting device.

SPECIFICATIONS.

22 Caliber; 7 shot; 3-inch barrel; weight, 13 ounces; rim fire, long or short and S. & W. long cartridges. Made also with 4, 5 and 6-inch barrels; finish, nickel or blue.