

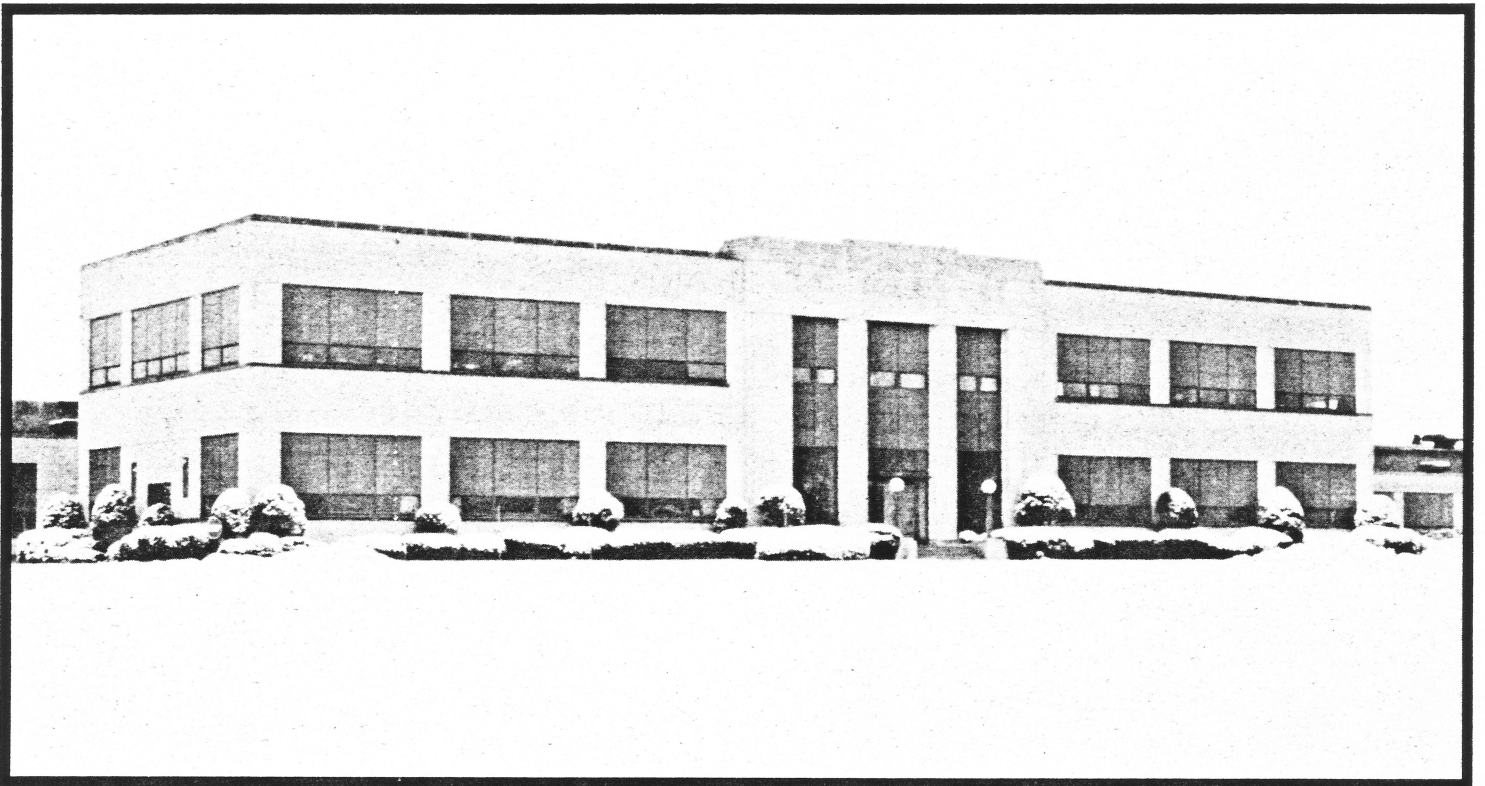


Journal

Smith & Wesson Collectors Association

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Smith & Wesson Collectors Association

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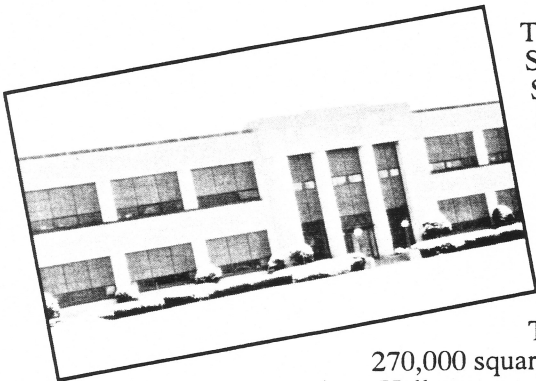
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About the Cover



The cover photo is a winter scene of the office entrance of Smith & Wesson, located on Roosevelt Avenue, Springfield, Massachusetts. The construction of the new Smith & Wesson plant began during World War II, with the completion of the forging operation. This was necessary as the old forge shop in the original factory did not have the capacity for war time production.

The construction of the office and other manufacturing buildings began in 1946 and was built around the forge shop, incorporating it into the new structure.

The plant was completed in 1950 and was comprised of 270,000 square feet of manufacturing space. In designing the new plant, Hellstrom constructed it with large underground passages and rooms. He was convinced the United States would fight a Third World War and this design allowed for the removal of equipment from the main floors to the underground areas.

However, by 1960, the plant had grown so fast this underground operation could not have ever been practiced.

The S&W plant on Roosevelt Avenue was considered the most modern revolver plant in the world when it was completed in 1950. Mr Ed Shultz continued in this tradition and made this operation the world's most modern arms plant.

The Smith & Wesson Model 64 and the New York City Police Dept.

R. M. VIVAS

This is a brief description of the purchase and distribution of Smith & Wesson Model 64 revolvers by the New York City Police Department.

All handguns, aside from those used in pilot/test programs or falling under the 1934 NFA, are the personal property of the police officer. The NYCPD does not "issue" handguns in the traditional sense. An officer purchases his weapon at a reduced rate through the Equipment Bureau (like Sears, but with more guns) or purchases it from a private source. If purchased from a private source, the gun must be inspected and certified by the police armorers as being up to snuff.

Because of the heavily discounted prices almost all police officers purchase their guns through the Equipment Bureau. The EB maintains 2 sets of books. One details the receipt of the guns from the maker or dealer, and the other lists the name, rank and command of the officer who buys a particular weapon. Only the records for the past 2 years are on computer, the rest are kept in large, old fashioned ledgers. I have seen ledgers from the 1920's and they make a fascinating read.

Recently, the police switched over to 9mm automatics for on duty use. I have gathered some information on what has become the last revolver authorized by the police department before this conversion. Officers who were armed with revolvers before the conversion to automatics may continue to use their revolvers until they need to be replaced. They will then have to replace them with automatics.

Smith & Wesson revolvers were not authorized for police officers until 1913 or so. The standard Smith for on duty use has been the Model 10 in all its variations (Hand Ejector, M&P, Victory Model, Model 10, etc.).

In 1956, all new revolvers were required to have heavy barrels. In 1957, the Heavy Barrel Model 10 was introduced. Coincidence? Possibly. Then again, the NYCPD was arguably the second largest domestic purchaser of revolvers, after the

US government. It would be only good business to cater to this cash cow. Sound far fetched? The heavy barrel 3" Model 36 was a special contract production for the NYPD and eventually made it in to regular production (but that's another story).

Effective July 1987, new directives stated that all new revolvers had to be stainless steel and fire ONLY in the double action (DAO) mode.

The requirement for stainless steel sprang from the poor care that some officers visited (infrequently) upon their revolvers. The DAO requirement, of course, sprang from the accidents that are bound to occur when cocking the revolver and then grappling with a suspect or dropping one's gun.

The Model 64, essentially a stainless steel Model 10 Heavy Barrel Fixed Sight .38 Special, fit the bill adequately. The hammer and sear were redesigned, and the contracts were let out.

The Model 64 was purchased in a few variations. Barrel lengths were 2, 3, and 4 inches, available in either a square or round butt.

Traditionally, the 4 inch barrel was the on duty gun and the 2 inch was for off duty. Because of a regulation conundrum, officers are required to be armed off duty, but are not required to buy an off duty gun. The rationale was that officers not disposed towards buying a second gun, could just carry their on duty gun. Carrying a concealed 4 inch revolver every day can be a challenge though. The 3 inch was a compromise. It was allowable for on duty use and could be used off duty; thus the officer need only buy one gun.

Model 64's were marked on the frame as being either Mod. 64-4 (indicating 2 inch barrel) or Mod. 64-5 (indicating a 3 or 4 inch barrel). Additionally, NY-1 is usually marked below the Model number. The serial number appears in 3 places: on the frame under the cylinder yoke, on the butt and on the left side of the frame above the trigger guard. Early markings are machine stamped while on later guns the left frame serial number is "etched" or "decal-ed" in place. The additional serial number stampings were so that

inspecting officers could insure that each officer had his registered weapon without removing the weapon from the holster.

The guns were packed in the regular lift top 1 piece blue and white Smith & Wesson box.

Officers were allowed a choice of revolvers. The choice for on-duty guns were between the Model 64 and the Ruger GPNY (contract production GP-100). The choice of off duty guns was the Model 64, S&W Model 60 or 640 and the Ruger SPNY (contract production SP-100).

Through the end of 1993, the total amount of revolvers purchased by the Equipment Bureau was 5,479.

The breakdown is as follows:

1987 - Total 2218

| <u>Invoice #</u> | | |
|------------------|---------|---------------------|
| 300 | 5730801 | Square Butt |
| 300 | 5730802 | Square Butt, 4 inch |
| 100 | 5730803 | Round Butt, 4 inch |
| 256 | 5730803 | Square Butt, 4 inch |
| 150 | 5730804 | Round Butt, 4 inch |
| 166 | 5730804 | Square Butt, 4 inch |
| 100 | 5730701 | Round Butt, 3 inch |
| 114 | 5730806 | Round Butt, 4 inch |
| 96 | 5730806 | Square Butt, 3 inch |
| 102 | 5730503 | Round Butt, 3 inch |
| 101 | 5730808 | Round Butt, 4 inch |
| 69 | 5730808 | Square Butt, 4 inch |
| 100 | 5730807 | Round Butt, 4 inch |
| 50 | 5730807 | Square Butt, 4 inch |
| 150 | 5730802 | Round Butt, 3 inch |
| 64 | 5730706 | Round Butt, 3 inch |

1988 - Total 900

| <u>Invoice #</u> | | |
|------------------|---------|----------------------------|
| 300 | 6979301 | PO# 87 Square Butt, 4 inch |
| 300 | 6979302 | PO# 87 Square Butt, 4 inch |
| 159 | 6979303 | PO# 87 Square Butt, 4 inch |
| 141 | 6979304 | PO# 87 Square Butt, 4 inch |

1989 - total 600

| <u>Invoice #</u> | | |
|------------------|---------|---------------------|
| 300 | 6979305 | Square Butt, 4 inch |
| 200 | 7003501 | Round Butt, 2 inch |
| 100 | 6979306 | Square Butt, 4 inch |

1990 - Total 7

| <u>Invoice #</u> | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------|---------------------|
| 28 | 9190106 | PO# 9-203 | Square Butt, 4 inch |
| 200 | 9190104 | PO# 9-203 | Round Butt, 4 inch |
| 167 | 9190106 | PO# 9-203 | Round Butt, 4 inch |
| 100 | 9190103 | PO# 9-203 | Round Butt, 3 inch |
| 170 | 96179901 | PO# 9-203-1 | Round Butt, 2 inch |
| 83 | 96209101 | PO# 9-203-1 | Round Butt, 2 inch |

1992 - Total 535

| <u>Invoice #</u> | | |
|------------------|----------|------------|
| 50 | 14601304 | PO# 91-51 |
| 51 | 12469710 | PO# 90-188 |
| 200 | 14601305 | PO# 91-51 |
| 75 | 14601306 | PO# 91-51 |
| 71 | 19973601 | PO# 90-187 |
| 88 | 96912901 | PO# 90-181 |

1993 - total 478

| <u>Invoice #</u> | | |
|------------------|----------|------------|
| 278 | 22501501 | PO# 93-131 |
| 200 | 22693401 | PO# 93-132 |

Unit Cost

1987 - \$184.34
 1988 - \$184.34
 1990 - \$207.70
 \$197.84 (Inv. # 96179901, 96209101)
 1992 - \$234.30
 \$229.84 (Inv. # 19973601)
 1993 - \$238.99

Naturally there were the usual contract overruns, and these guns were placed on the open market. Including contract overruns, the entire amount of these contract Model 64's can not be very high. Most likely, only a few more than the total number shipped to the NYCPD were produced. While not a small enough group to be considered rare, the NYCPD variation of the Model 64 certainly will become a challenging acquisition.

The significance of this gun in NYCPD history is that it was one of the last regulation on duty revolvers to be purchased and distributed. It was

also the only stainless steel Smith & Wesson revolver to be allowed for on duty use.

The sanctioned load for these guns was a 158 gr Nyclud LSWC .38 Special +p.

The preceding is a short summary from a book RM Vivas is working on that details the history and development of the small arms of the New York City Police Department. If anyone has any information on any NYCPD related firearms, please contact RM Vivas, 1673 E 16 St. #108, Brooklyn, NY 11229-2901 or at CompuServe, acct: RM Vivas 73352,2254.