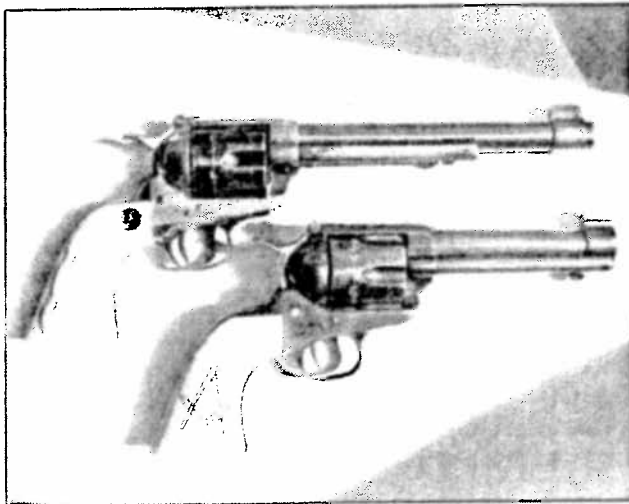


management put the time-honored single-action back into production. The present modern production Colt single-action is the same basic design as the early prewar model that was made from 1873 until World War II. It should have been improved and modernized, and the company should have used their old flat-top target design with further improvements and coil springs wherever possible.

## MARCH

### THE RETURN OF THE SINGLE-ACTION, PART THREE

At one time, Colt used to advertise they would furnish single-actions with barrels longer than standard at a cost of one dollar per inch over the 7½-inch barrel. Legend has it that Ned Buntline, a dime novelist of the 1870s and '80s, ordered four of them with very long barrels and gave them to such celebrities as Earp, Masterson, Tilghman, and Cody. Although this legend is unfounded, Colt collectors have named these long-barreled models the Buntline Specials. Some were fitted with excellent tang carbine rear sights, and they were very accurate for long-range gunfighting. Any fast gun man has only to try one for quick draw work to decide how hopeless such a ten or twelve-inch barrel is for really fast work. The gun must be hung very low where it is in the way both riding or walking, or else one would have to turn



*Keith's collection of single-action revolvers was very extensive. He kept on shooting and hunting with them regardless of the popularity of the automatic pistol.*

a back somersault to get it clear of the way. It was, however, an excellent arm in game shooting or a longer-range gun with both hands, the long-barreled Colt being a very accurate long-range sixgun.

Over the years, the movie industry has done much to keep the old gun alive, especially among the younger generations—more with them than any other group of shooters or collectors. The present showing of a great many twenty-plus-year-old films combined with modern Westerns on television, has created an even greater demand for Colt and other makes of single-action sixguns. The fact that the old gun balances and points better for fast shooting than any other design for the first shot adds to the demand. Combine this with the proven fact that the old single-action grip absorbs recoil with the least punishment to the hand when using heavy loads and you have another argument in favor of the single-action. It is also one of the safest guns made for the horseman.

Great Western guns have been chambered for the .44 Magnum, I understand. I consider both the Colt and the Great Western frames and cylinders too small for safety with this great cartridge. To properly and safely handle the .44 Magnum cartridge—which is fast becoming the most popular of all sixgun calibers among cowpunchers, mountain men, and guides—the frame of the Colt (and the old Great Western) single-action will have to be redesigned and made larger and longer. The cylinder will also have to be increased in both length and diameter. A redesign of the old Colt 1880-vintage flat-top target along the lines of the guns remodeled by Harold Croft and I in the twenties would be just the thing. It should be fitted with the best fully-adjustable target sights. The flat-top frame should also be extended back over the nose of the hammer.

The single-action has been with us and served us well for over a century. It will no doubt be with us for a great many more years to come. Treat it as a gun and a tool, not a plaything—and it will never let you down.

## APRIL

### SIXGUN SAFETY

For years, in my cowpunching and packing days, I wore a Colt Single Action the same as my pants. First I carried a .32-20, then a .38-40, and after finding them wanting in power, I went to

Elmer Keith  
Gun Collection

Hand Guns

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	Make	Calibre	Serial #	Value
P 118	Smith & Wesson 4" Mag.	44 mag	516157	1000
	Signature of EK on side plate			
	Fully engraved by George Madis			
	Cored Ivory grips - american eagle right grip			
	gold presentation shield on left side			
	Presented to EK by Carl Hallstrom			
P 119	Smith & Wesson 4 1/8"	44 mag.	153830	1000
	fully engraved by Don Gowan			
	Platinum plate with EK			
	Oxhead carved ivory on right grip			
	Left grip plain			
P 120	Colt S.A. 5 1/8"	44 sp.	#5	2000
	Designed by Keith & Croft			
	full poinsettia engraved by Sedgley			
	Fully engraved, Flat top frame			
	windage rear sight, Croft designed			
	base pin, Keith designed base pin latch			
	Bisley hammer spur dovetailed to hammer,			
	Special #5 grip,			
	Bisley backstrap shortened and angle changed			
	to fit S.A. army front strap to form #5 grip			
	Keith-Croft main spring, carved ivory stock			
	with eagle on right grip			
P 121	Colt S.A. Army 7 1/8"	44 sp.	335426	300
	wide trigger			
	Bisley hammer			
	Keith front sight			
	EK on right frame			
	Carved ivory grips with oxhead on			
	right side			
	was 45 4 3/4 rebarrelled to 44			
	Sam Russell killed a man in Helena			
	EK cowpunching fun			
P 122	Colt S.A. 7 1/2"	44 sp	130432	1,500
	original Flat Top Target			
	Hard rubber grips - eagle			
P 123	Smith & Wesson 6 1/2"	357 mag	0362	350
	Double Action			
	Presented to EK by Major D.B. Wesson			
	Packmeyer short action hammer & trigger job			
	Ivory grips - eagle on right			