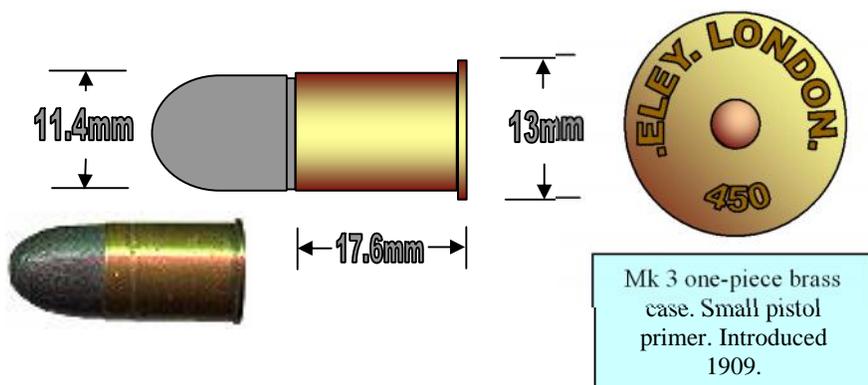
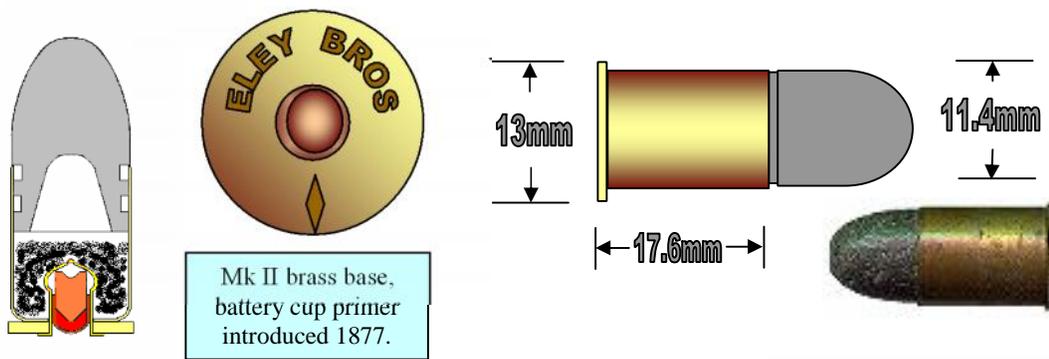
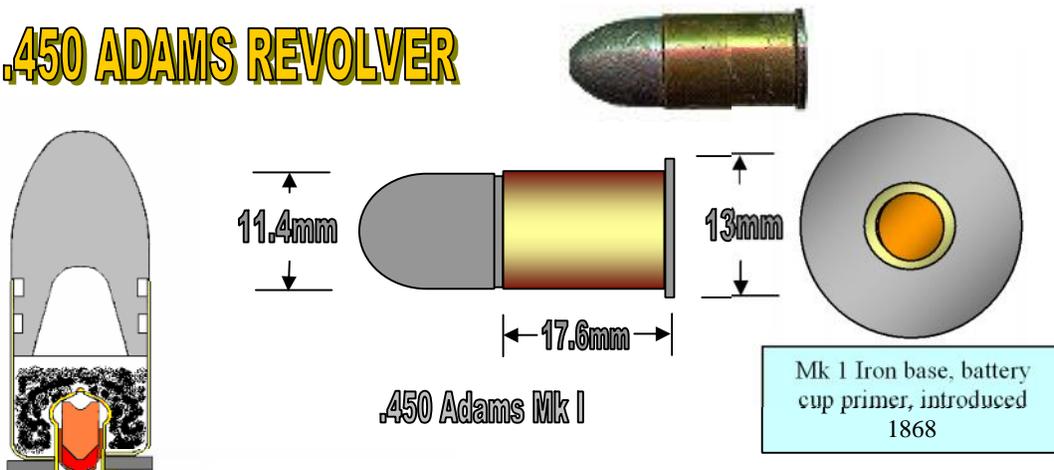


BRITISH .450 REVOLVER CARTRIDGES

The United Kingdom has been one of the leading nations in firearms terms and yet they seem to have considered the pistol to be not quite a serious weapon, especially from a military point of view. The history of British service pistols is one of half-hearted approaches to the subject. On occasions they have put into service weapons known to be unsuitable, to be fair though economics did impinge on a lot of their decisions. The following are the British .450 service cartridges.

.450 ADAMS REVOLVER



This was the first centre fire revolver cartridge adopted by the British Army. It was introduced to replace the Beaumont-Adams percussion Revolver. When facing an enraged Zulu or Dervisher armed with this cartridge the officers must have had some anxious moments as it is grossly under powered for military purposes and was considered so by the system at the time. But economics played their part and the cartridge was kept in service until the late 70s early 80s. The cartridge became popular in Europe and England as a commercial proposition. When facing a highwayman or footpad the cartridge is possibly adequate.

This cartridge will be found in the following variants:

RN Lead projectiles from 180 gr. to 230 gr.

RN FMJ projectile 220 gr.

HP "Manstopper" 220 gr.

Blanks with rose crimps and roll crimps.

Shot paper cased and necked.

The cartridge was filled originally with BP and later smokeless powder.

Muzzle velocity was around the 198 mps to 213 mps.

One of the great problems with this cartridge is figuring out to which weapon each particular cartridge is associated with. The cartridges shown above will function in the following weapons:

.450 Long Rev.

.45 Webley

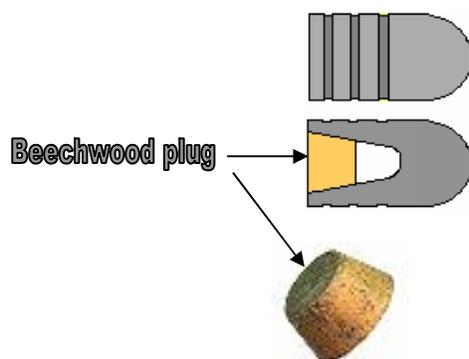
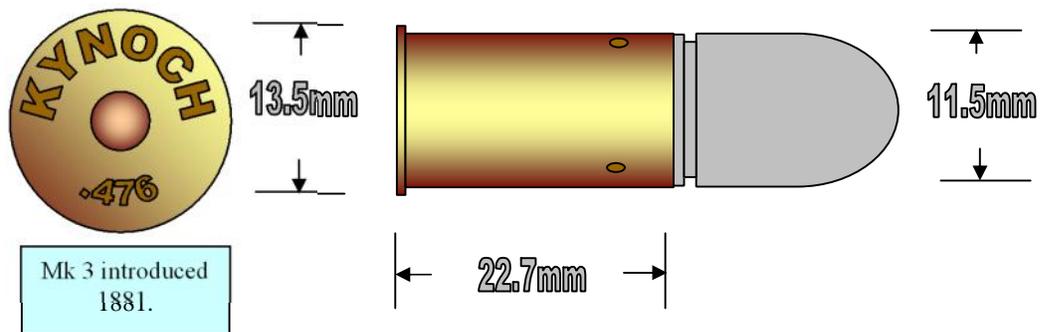
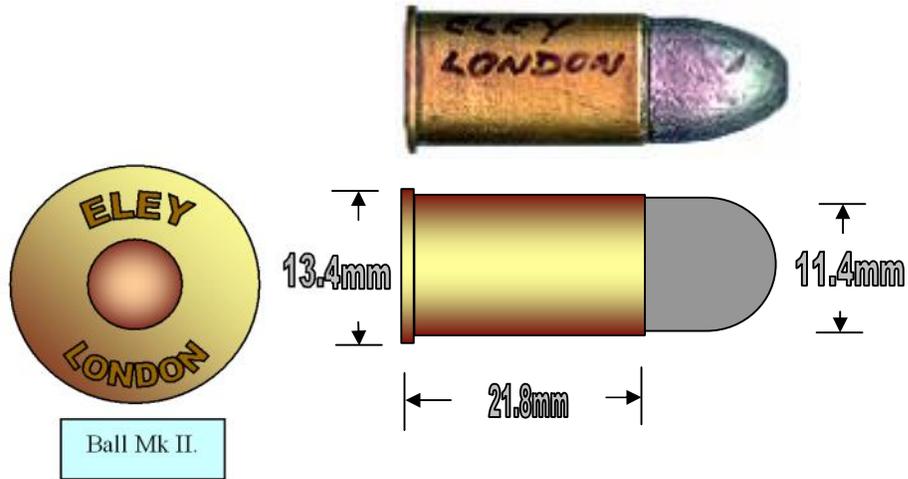
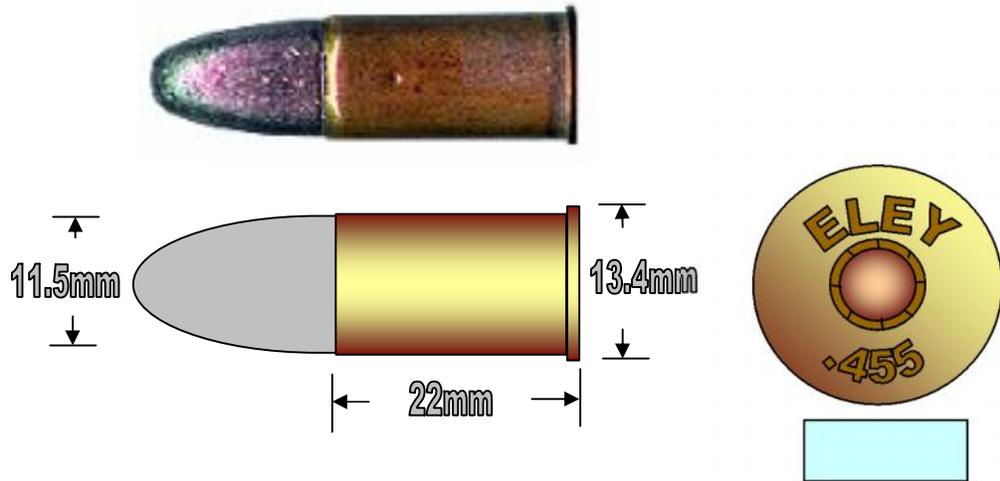
.455 Enfield

.455 Rev. Mk I

.455 Rev Mk II

.476 Enfield Mk III

.455 & .476 ENFIELD



The projectile for the .476 has very heavy grooves filled with beeswax.



The Adams Revolver, when finally recognized by the system to be inadequate, was replaced by the .455 Enfield so named because it was designed there (as were so many British weapons). This is one of those infuriating cartridges as the first two models for this weapon were nominated .455 but the third model was called .476. Only the British could do this to themselves. This is why these two cartridges are grouped together as they are designed for the same weapon. The .476 would appear to be an improvement on the earlier models because the diameter of the projectile was changed and an expansion plug fitted to the base of the projectile to further aid expansion. It is believed that the form of rifling was also changed to improve internal ballistics.

.455 Mk I was made in small numbers in India in 1880 and is quite scarce.

.455 Enfield Mk II would appear to be the first model adopted and used in England and was introduced in November 1880.

.476 Enfield Mk III has three lubrication grooves one visible and quite deep and normally filled with beeswax. This was adopted in December 1881 and is one of the expanding plug minie type projectiles.

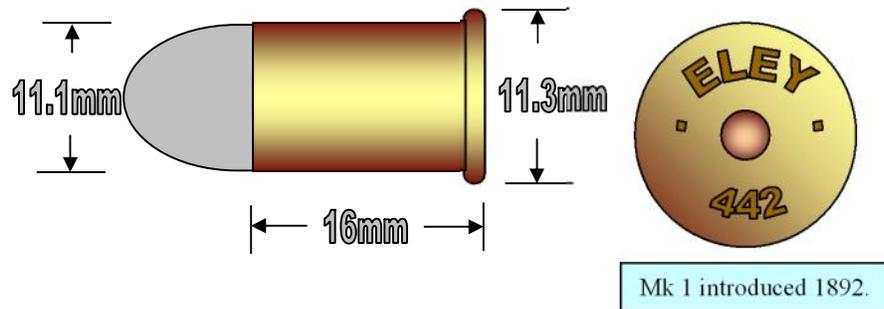
All these models were declared obsolete in September 1892.

There exists a short version of this cartridge for use in .455 Revolvers.

Early cases were boxer primed and made from brass and iron.

The calibre designation for this cartridge comes from the old British "Bore" system whereby the bore was expressed as having a lead ball just sufficient to fill the bore and then specifying how many of these to the pound. The pound was an old quantity equating to .453 kg. In this particular case the "bore" was 54. The term is used by almost everyone today without realizing it when they say the shotgun was a 12 gauge I.E. 12 bore.

.442 ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY



The Royal Irish Constabulary was established in January 1868 and they adopted the .442 Webley RIC model as their standard sidearm. It is believed that the cartridge for this weapon was derived from the Tranter model 1865 rimfire cartridge.

Variations to this cartridge may be encountered as follows:

182 gr. to 210 gr. lead RN heel type projectile.

200 gr. lead RN heel type. This was the standard ball load issued to the RIC.

250 gr. Lead RN.

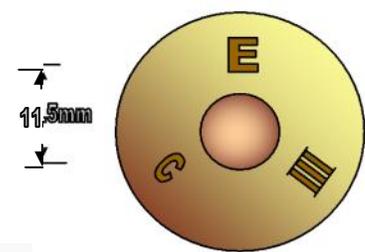
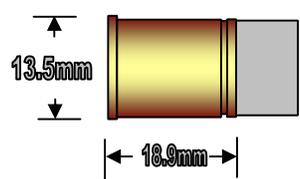
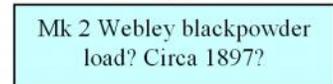
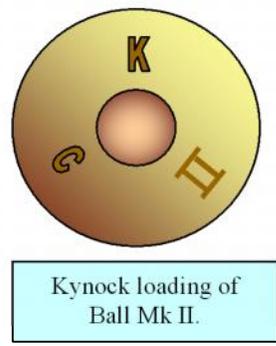
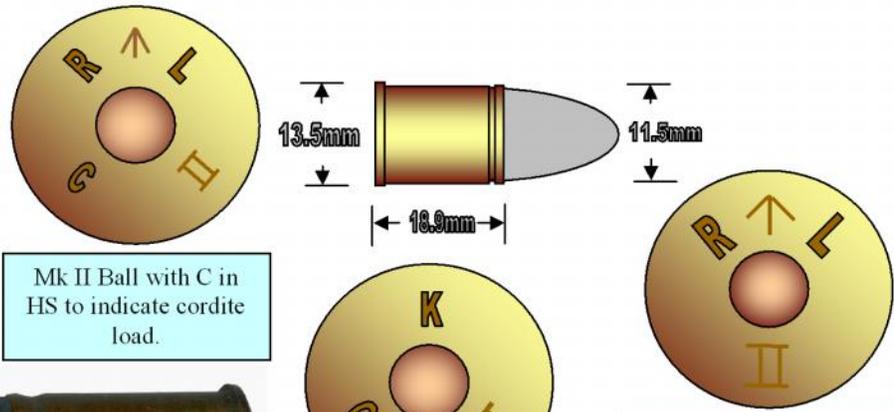
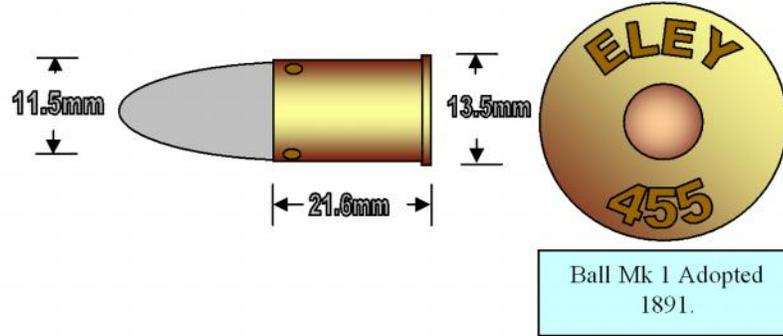
Blank of boxer construction

Blank with rose crimp.

Shot of cylindrical construction.

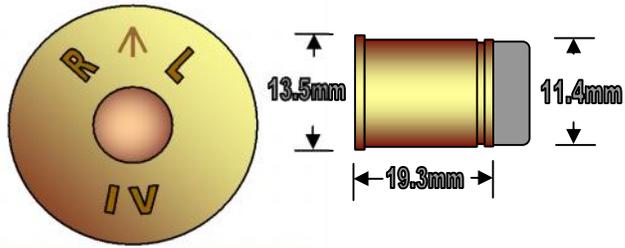
Early cases were boxer primed and made from brass and iron.

.455 WEBLEY

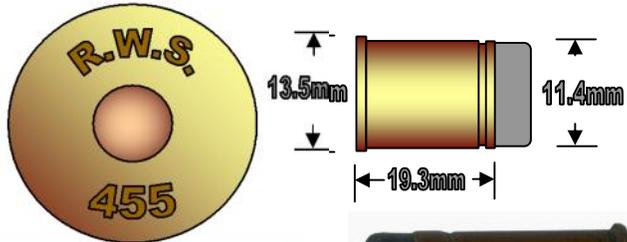


Ball Mk III. Adopted 1898 and fitted with the "Manstopper" hollow point.

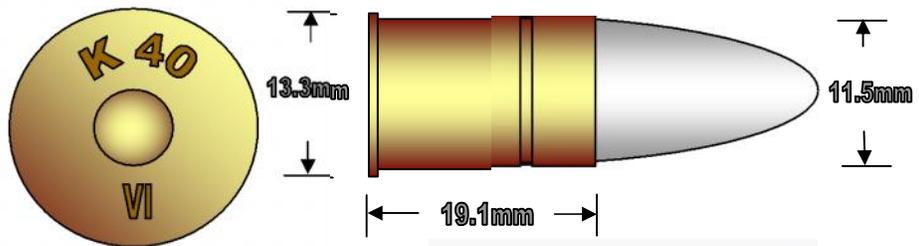
This is a somewhat battered Mk III.



Ball Mk IV Has a large flat tipped lead projectile.



Ball Mk V Has a large flat tipped lead projectile and is a commercial cartridge I believe.

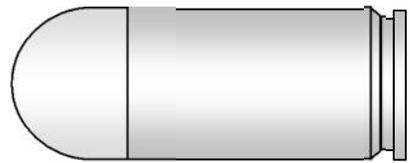
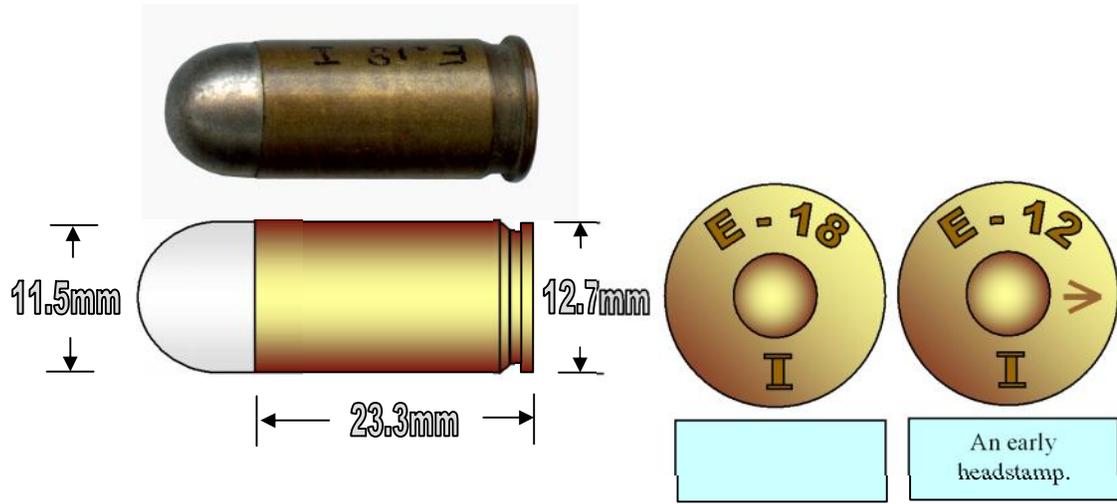


Ball Mk VI. Fitted with Ni FMJ projectile.



This cartridge is a Canadian version of the Mk VI with a CuNi jacket.

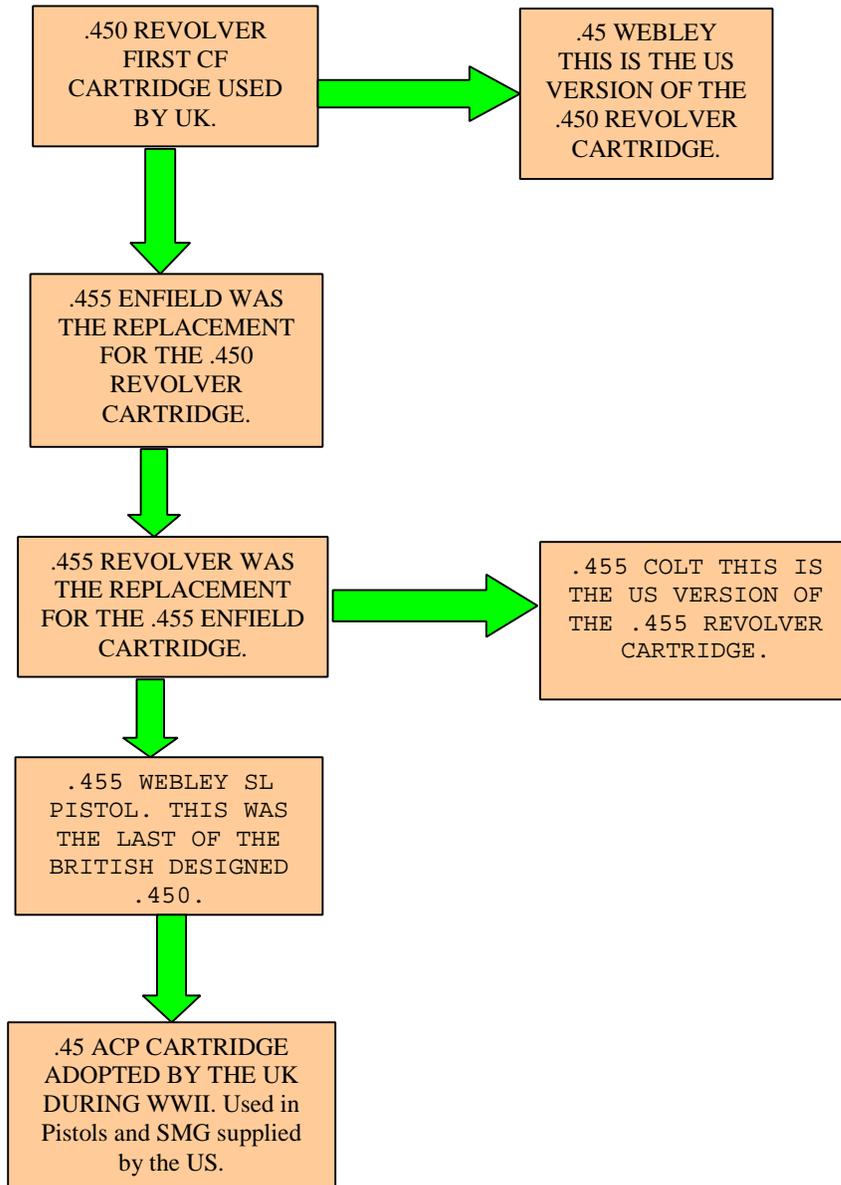
.455 WEBLEY AUTOMATIC



A one piece steel inspection cartridge.

This cartridge belongs in a series of Automatic Pistol cartridges commencing with the Webley & Scott 1904 model then going on to the .455 Webley Auto 1910 model and culminating with the cartridge shown above. Judging from the chopping and changing that occurred with auto pistols it would appear that the British were never very interested in Auto weapons. This judgement it to some extent backed up by the fact that once the cartridge was declared obsolete in 1935 it was never replaced until 1941 when the 9mm Browning high power came along. This particular cartridge was adopted by the British navy in 1912 and the Royal flying corps in 1915 and it was applied to Colt weapons in the same year. The official title was only bestowed in 1927.

BRITISH .450 FAMILY TREE



BRITISH .450 TIMELINE

BRITISH DEAN AND ADAMS .450 CARTRIDGES

MARK	YEARS IN SERVICE			
Mk I	1868		1894	
Mk II		1877	1894	
Mk III RIC model				1909 1921

BRITISH .442 ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY CARTRIDGES

MARK	YEARS IN SERVICE	
Ball Mk I	1892	1926
Blank Mk I	1892	1926

BRITISH ENFIELD .455 OR .476

MARK	YEARS IN SERVICE	
Mk I India pat.	1880	1882
Mk II	1880	1882
Mk III		1881 1892

BRITISH .455 WEBLEY CARTRIDGES

MARK	YEARS IN SERVICE			
Mk I	1891		1912	
Mk I C	1894		1912	1912 C dropped from h/s 1921
Mk II C	1897	1898	1900	1912 C dropped from headstamp 1917
Mk II				1917 name changed to Mk 2 1946
Mk III	1898	1900		
Mk IV			1912	1946
Mk V			1914	1946
Mk VI				1939 1946
Mk VIZ				1941 1946

Notes for Webley: First ball Mk I was gunpowder filled. Second Mk I was Cordite filled and reflected this in the headstamp with the letter "C". When first Mk I was declared obsolete the C in the headstamp on the second Mk I was dropped

SOME REPRESENTATIVE HEADSTAMPS



On roll crimp blank with brown card seal



Found on 8 petal rose crimp with Large primer.



Found on a .476



Found on Martini style crimped blank.



On 8 petal rose crimped blank.



On .450 Mk III ball.



Found on .450 Mk III ball.



Found on .450 Mk III ball.



On .455 Auto Mk 1 Ball



Found on Mk III .450 revolver cartridge.



Found on US version of the .455 revolver cartridge.



On Mk VIZ Ball.