



## The Empty Chamber

From the earliest frontier days of the old west, the mechanical characteristics and limitations of the single-action revolver have been well understood, as the writings of the day amply demonstrate. The safety precaution of loading the "six-shooter" with only five cartridges and resting the hammer on the empty chamber was universally practiced. According to folklore, some cowboys habitually carried "burying money" or their last bank note rolled up in the empty chamber. These old-timers understood that the notches in the hammer provided only limited protection, and that an accidental discharge could result if a fully loaded revolver were to be dropped, or if the hammer were to receive a sharp blow.

Despite the lessons of history, there are still

people who get themselves in trouble by ignoring the following common sense rules of gun handling:

1. The shooter should thoroughly understand the mechanical characteristics and rules for handling the particular type of firearm he is using.
2. The safest way to carry any old style\* single-action revolver is with five chambers loaded and the hammer resting on the empty chamber.

*\*The Ruger "New Model" single-action revolvers are not subject to this limitation and can be carried safely with all six chambers loaded. Some other manufacturers have added various manual safety devices to old style single-action revolvers, but no manual safety can ensure against accidents if the shooter fails to use it properly. Remember: There is no such thing as a foolproof gun!*

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