



Test firing of bullet from .32 caliber Smith and Wesson revolver shows cotton flying from muzzle blast and the kick of gun from recoil.



When the test bullet is taken from the cotton, its surface will show characteristic markings from the harder metal of the gun barrel's bore.



By comparing them, this double microscope can tell if two bullets are from the same barrel or if two shells were fired from the same gun.

# When a Bullet's the Culprit

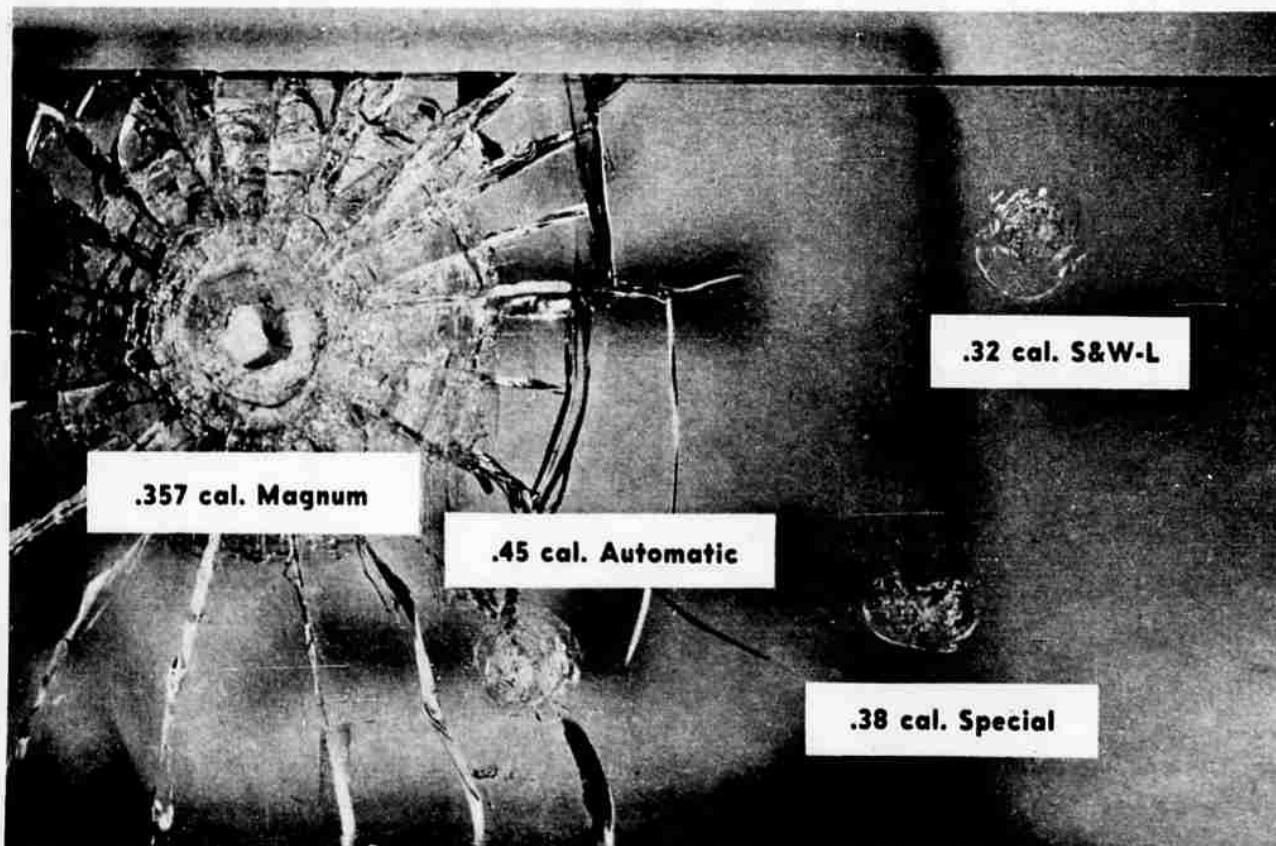
Photos: Orlando from Three Lions

Most detective-story readers know the importance of ballistics in solving crimes committed with a gun. For more than 30 years police experts have built evidence by proving whether or not a bullet found at the scene of the crime was fired from a suspected weapon. This work has become so efficient that evidence developed from it carries a validity comparable to fingerprint identification.

These pictures show how the New York Police Department's ballistics squad scientifically studies weapons and bullets to learn what gun a bullet was fired from. The bore of every gun has its own peculiar markings that become grooved into the softer metal of the bullet when it is fired. Other tests may show the distance a bullet

or a load of shot has traveled, through powder burns or shot patterns on cardboard, glass, clothing, or other materials.

The ballistics unit doesn't start investigations on its own, but its work often finishes them.



◀ These test firings show the effect of the power of bullets that have been shot from four different-caliber guns into a bullet-resistant glass 1½ in. thick.