TREASURES FROM THE BACK OF THE VAULT

U.S. Army Field Artillery Museum
238 Randolph Rd
Fort Sill, OK 73503

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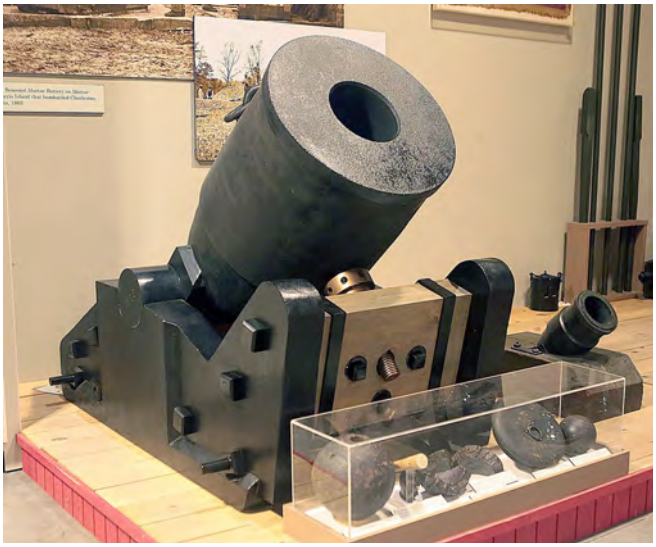
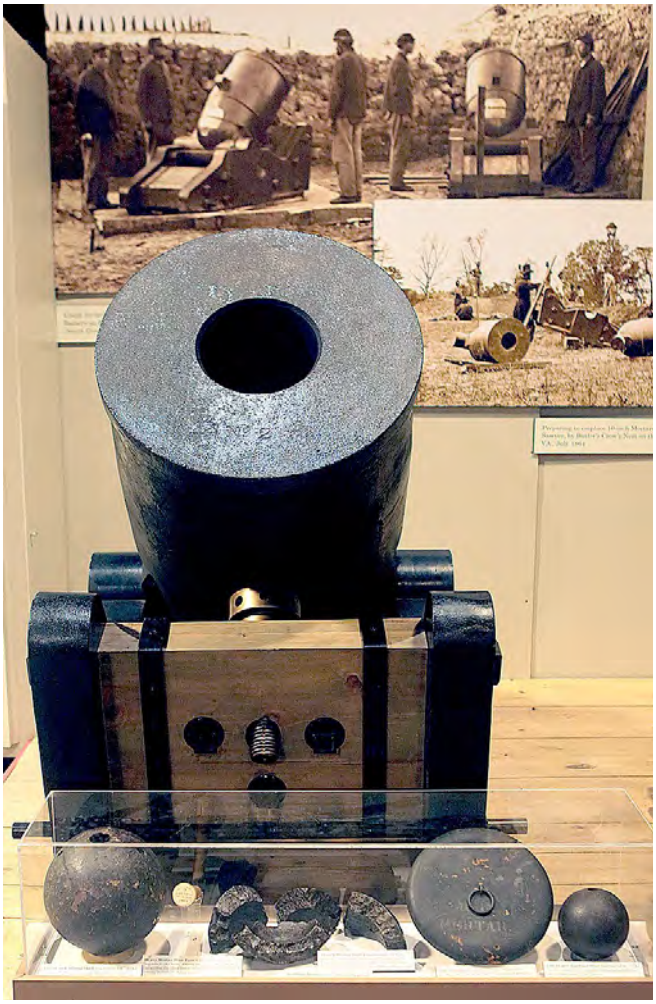
TREASURES FROM THE VAULT FROM THE US ARMY ARTILLERY MUSEUM

By Gordon A. Blaker, Director/Curator





In the first half of the 19th Century, the U.S. Army used two different types of 10-inch mortars. The Siege mortar was smaller, lighter and had half the range of the larger and heavier Seacoast mortar. Seacoast mortars were intended to defend the nation's coastal forts against enemy warships, but saw considerable use as a siege weapon to shell enemy fortifications during the Civil War. Ten pounds of powder was used to launch this mortar's 92-lb. explosive shell a distance of nearly 2-1/2 miles. It was a 10-inch Seacoast mortar that fired the opening shot of the Civil War at Fort Sumter at 4:30 a.m. on 12 April 1861.

This mortar was cast at the West Point Foundry in June 1842 and came to the museum from Watervliet Arsenal, New York in 2014. A total of 33 of these massive mortars were cast, 10 in the early 1840s and the remainder in 1861-62. Five of these mortars survive, four in Binghamton, New York which were cast in 1861, and this one which is the sole survivor of the ten cast before the war. Its marking include No. 2 on the muzzle, 1842 on the left trunnion, W.P.F. for West Point Foundry on the right trunnion and the weight of 5704 on the breech.

Museum volunteer, Harry Shappell, built the reproduction bed (carriage) with assistance from Exhibits Specialist, Zane Mohler, volunteer Michael Tomany and the Fort Sill Logistics Readiness Center Metal Shop.

Caliber	10 in.	254 mm
Weight (tube)	5,704 lbs.	2,587 kg
Range	4,250 yds.	3,886 m
Shell Weight	92.5 lbs.	42 kg

CCN# 199635

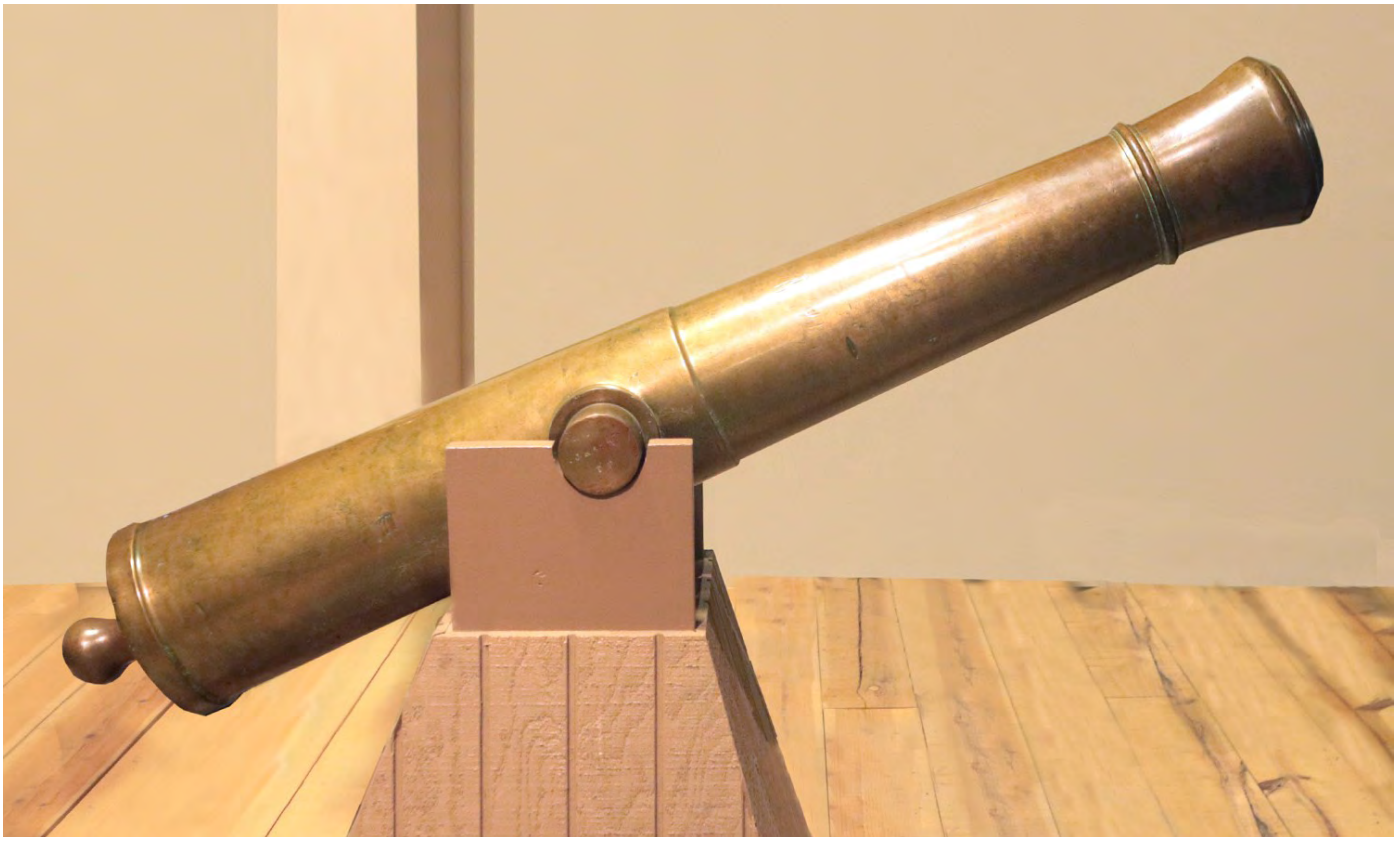
In front of the mortar is an exhibit case containing the following related artifacts:

The 10-inch Mortar Shell weighed 92.5 lb./42 kg. with a 5-lb. bursting charge. The mortar's 10-lb. powder charge launched the shell nearly 2-1/2 miles.

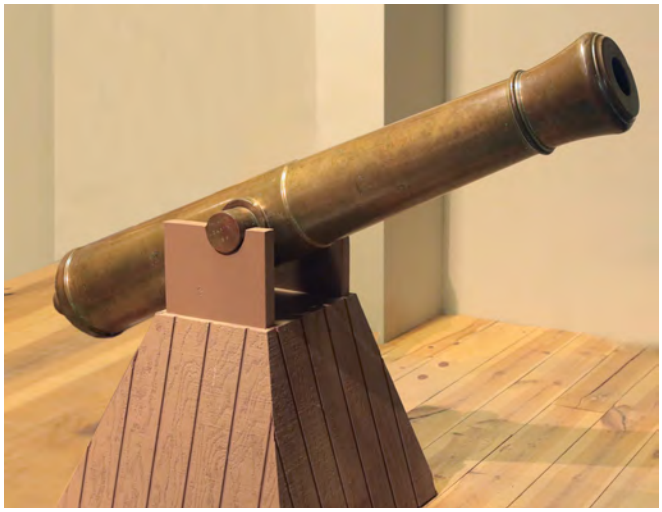
10-inch Mortar Shell Fragments from Fort Blakely, Mobile Bay, Alabama. The shell's 5-lb. bursting charge shattered the 1-1/2 inches thick shell wall raining the target with these fragments.

Heavy Mortar Time Fuze with a burn rate of 5 seconds to the inch. Ideally, the gunner had the fuze cut so that the shell burst 30-50 feet above the target raining it with shell fragments.

Tompion was a muzzle plug to keep the mortar's bore dry and clean. It is marked with the 10-inch caliber.



Tredegar 3-Inch Bronze Rifle



Cast shortly before the beginning of the Civil War, this rare bronze rifle was made by J.R. Anderson Company at Tredegar Foundry in Richmond, Virginia. The Tredegar Foundry was the largest producer of cannon in the Confederate States. The exterior appearance is identical to the U.S. Model 1841 6-pdr. cannon while the barrel is rifled for 3-inch projectiles. A very small number of these guns were produced before the Foundry discontinued them due to the shortage of copper in May 1861. Both sides in the Civil War unsuccessfully tried to make bronze rifled guns in the first year of the war and soon discovered bronze was too soft and the rifling quickly wore out.

It is believed that 30 of these bronze rifles were produced of which seven have survived. This cannon's provenance extends only back to it coming from 1st Army Headquarters, Fort Jay, Governor's Island, Brooklyn, New York in the early 1960s. The markings on this gun include - 1153 and the weight 884 on the muzzle. On the left trunnion is the date 1861 and on the right trunnion is J.R.A. /T.F. for Joseph R. Anderson/Tredegar Foundry. This gun is marked MISS on the top of the tube for the State of Mississippi and probably served with the Pettus Flying Artillery Battery in the Western Theater of the Civil War.

Caliber	3-inch	76.2 mm
Weight	884 lbs	401kg
Range	1,700 yds	1,554 m
Shell Weight	8 lbs	3.6 kg

CCN# 105326

Guidon of F Battery, 5th Artillery Regiment ca. 1865

This faded and tattered flag served as the guidon of F Battery, 5th Artillery Regiment, immediately following the end of the Civil War. At the beginning of the war in 1861, President Lincoln authorized a new regiment of 12 batteries to be added to the Artillery. Designated the 5th Artillery Regiment, it differed in organization from the older regiments in that it was composed only of light artillery batteries. In a light battery, every soldier was mounted allowing for rapid movement on the battlefield.

Three kinds of field pieces composed the armament of the 5th Artillery: 12-pdr. smoothbore Napoleons, 10-pdr. Parrott Rifles and 3-inch Ordnance Rifles. Battery F was originally equipped with six 10-pdr. Parrott Rifles and after September, 1862 with a mix of four 10-pdr Parrott Rifles and two 12-pdr Napoleons.

After the war, all of the batteries of the 5th Artillery, with the exception of Batteries F and G, turned in their horses and guns, and became foot artillery batteries. Battery "F" continued to serve as a light battery through the turn of the 20th Century.

The battle honors listed are:

- Warwich, Va., ...April 5th 1862
- Lee's Mills, Va., ...April 16th 1862
- Gaines' Mill, Va., ...June 27th 1862
- White Oak Swamp, Va., ...June 30th 1862
- Malvern Hill, Va., ...July 28, 1862
- Crampton's Pass, Md., ...September 14th 1862
- Antietam, Md., ...September 17th 1862
- Fredricksburg, Va., ...December 12th & 13th 1862
- Chancellorsville, Va., ...May 3rd &4th 1863
- Gettysburg, Pa., ...July 3rd & 4th 1863
- Rappahannock Station, Va., ...November 7th 1863
- Locust Grove, Va., ...November 27th 1863
- Mine Run, Va., ...November 30th 1863
- Siege of Petersburg, Va., ...July-September 1864
- Springhill, Va., ...July 11th 1864
- Chapin's Farm, Va., ...September 30th 1864
- Siege & Capture of Richmond, Va., ...October 1864-April 1865

CCN# 122092