

The Morris Collection

Catalog no.

Description

C100

U.S. Bronze 24 pounder Coehorn Mortar

Markings: Muzzle: "208"(registry) Rimbase no: "272"  
"162" (weight)  
"1865"  
"AM CO" (Ames Manufacturing Co.)

Measurements: Bore dia: 5.82 in. Length (barrel): 16 in.

This type mortar fired 18-pound explosive shells only. It was a seige weapon for anti-personnel work, such as against entrenched troops. Its carriage was a wood block with four handles. The weapon was light enough to be moved by four men, or two if necessary. It had a maximum range of 1200 yards with a powder charge of eight ounces. Many of these pieces were used at the seige of Petersburg, Va.

This particular mortar is listed in reference D, page 301. It is mounted on a reproduction bedplate. It appears to be unfired, and contains a wooden tompon with a steel ring bolted to the center which has been there since shipment from the foundry in 1865.

The mortar has the usual cylindrical powder chamber. These weapons were fired at a fixed elevation of 45 degrees. Range was varied by varying the powder charge. See references C, D.

C101

Falkirk Cast-Iron Naval Cannon barrel, ca. 1810

Markings: on breech: FALKIRK  
PROVD  
2PR

Measurements: Barrel length: 38 3/4 in.

This type of ship's cannon, which resembles the famous carronnade, was used aboard merchantmen during the 19th century. It is known that Lloyd's of London required certain armament to be carried aboard in order for a merchantman to receive a favorable insurance rating. Admiralty claims of the period contain numerous references to "carriage guns" in the context of establishing risks and compliance.

The Morris Collection

Catalog no.

Description

C101  
(cont'd) Such cannon are relatively common today, leading to the conclusion that their use was very widespread. The exterior pattern of these pieces varies little (cat. no. 119 is an exception) but markings vary widely if present at all. Other calibers observed include 1 pr., 4 pr., 6 pr., and 12 pounder.

This piece was originally found on Hutchinson's Island, S.C. in the 1930's. It was subsequently displayed at Fort Pulaski, Ga., after being donated to the National Park Service. It later left the Park Service through exchange, and was subsequently acquired by the Collection in 1977. Official Government property release forms are on file.

Regarding the name "Falkirk": I wrote to the Tower of London to request information on a foundry by this name. In his reply, Mr. Guy Wilson, Deputy Master of the Armouries wrote that he thought it might indicate that the piece was actually made by the famous Carron Company itself, which was located on the banks of the river Carron near Falkirk. His letter was dated 29 June 1983.

43 C102 Bailey and Pegg Cast Iron 2-pounder naval cannon barrel ca. 1812

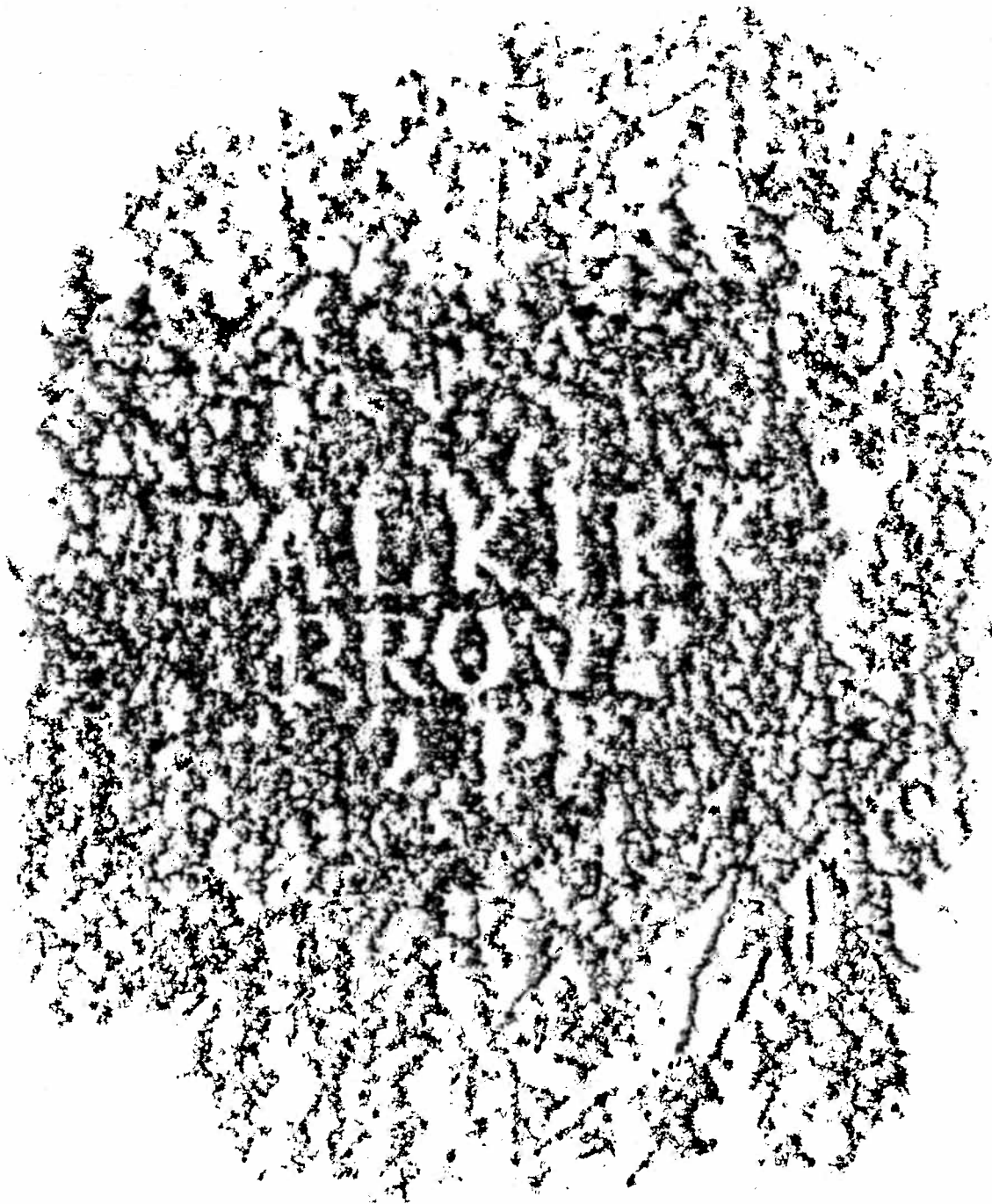
Markings: "B ' P" surmounted by crown.

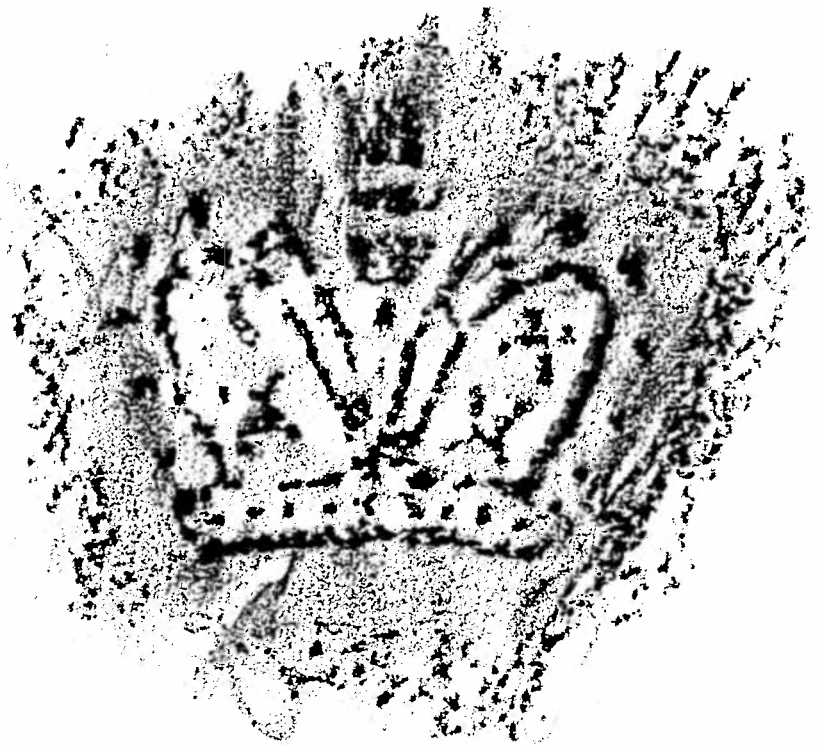
Measurements: Barrel length: 37 in.

This piece is the same type as no. C101-namely a small, inexpensive "carriage gun" to deter pirates. It is speculated that due to their widespread use, they would have been available as an "off the shelf" item from ship chandleries in various ports.

This particular piece was retrieved from a beach in South Vietnam in about 1969 by a U.S. helicopter pilot, who spotted it from the air. There is some evidence of salt water corrosion of the iron, but the markings and details remain sharply defined. The piece was acquired by the Collection from an antique arms dealer in 1978.

C/01





C102

1001