

FEDERAL LAW AND ANTIQUE CANNONS

AN IMPORTANT WORD TO OUR SPECIAL CUSTOMER

Congratulations on your purchase of one of our units. As a display piece, or functioning cannon, we hope you will find it a handsome addition to the interior or exterior decor for which it has been chosen.

SPECIAL NOTE: No license is required to purchase or own one of these fine cannons. Signal cannons are classified by the U.S. Department of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms as saluting and signaling devices and not as weapons.

FEDERAL LAW: The Gun Control Act of 1968 exempts all Muzzle/Breech Loading antiques and replicas from the federal definition of "firearm".

LOCAL LAW: Local definitions of "firearms", where they exist, vary. The majority, by omission, exclusion, or exemption, do not include muzzleloading instruments, and exemptions for non-weaponlike instruments are not uncommon. Except for the most superficial examination, we have never met many people who expect a historical replica, in the late 20th century, to be used as "an instrument of offensive or defensive combat; something to fight with; a means of contending against another" (Webster's Third International).

But should questions regarding local ordinances exist, seek qualified advice and comply with whatever local interpretations prevail.

FEDERAL LAW AND ANTIQUE ORDNANCE: Muzzle/Breech Loading cannons are now classified as they always have been, as not "firearms" under federal law. The reason for the classification, however, changed in 1968.

The pre-1968 federal definition of "firearm" was "any weapon, by whatever name known, which is designed to expel a projectile or projectiles by the action of an explosive... or any part or parts of such weapon". Consistent with tradition and current Webster interpretation, the term was regarded applicable to small arms only. Large bore instruments were regarded not "firearms".

(Indeed, the term "weapon" itself is hardly applicable to antiques and antique/replica ordnance in a late 20th century context. Webster says that a weapon is "something to fight with; a means of contending against another". The use of muzzleloading cannons for fighting is generations in the past. Of the thousands of objects available for fighting, or robbing a liquor store, or fending off a burglar, surely one of the last to be chosen would be a muzzleloading cannon. A piece of common gaspipe would be a truer weapon, and more useful as such, and of course would have no historical, decorative, or sporting worth).

In June of 1968, the Omnibus Crime Control Act, with an exemption for "antique firearms" and replicas of them, placed tight federal controls on anti-tank guns, bazookas, and related machines of modern war that could conceivably be of paramilitary value, calling them "firearms", to wit: "destructive devices".

FEDERAL LAW AND ANTIQUE CANNONS

Question then arose (nine Congressional letters of assurance to the contrary notwithstanding) as to whether muzzleloading cannons, regarded not firearms under the old definition, could be antique firearms under the new one. Though plainly intended, no specific exemption for antique ordnance had been spelled out, and classification as "firearms", for reason of being not firearms, was imminent.

Several weeks of research, documentation, letters, and phone calls finally led to a White House opinion supporting earlier Congressional opinions. Soon after, Mr. Harold A. Serr, then Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, wrote an opinion confirming the legislative exemption. The Gun Control Act, passed in October of 1968, further spelled out the exemption. A 1974 amendment to the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970 spelled it out again.

There are no federal restriction on the manufacture, sale, possession, or shipping of antique and antique/replica ordnance. All RBG cannons are exact replicas of antique ordnance.

FEDERAL LAW AND ANTIQUE AMMUNITION COMPONENTS: In 1970, Title XI of the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970 (PL91-452) place heavy restriction on black powder, and exempted only percussion caps for antique ignition. Generous temporary BATF easements prevented complete strangulation of the antique shooting sports.

The Indiana Sportsmen's Council, eventually joined by many state and national organization of related interest, worked for four years to obtain legislative easement for the antique shooting sports and to remove, at the same time, a couple of peculiar exemptions for bombers that had been inadvertently drafted into the law's original 1970 wording. Hearings on Senator Bayh's proposed relief bill, S. 1083, were held before the Senate Judiciary Committee in 1973 and before the House Judiciary Committee in 1974.

S. 1083 was passed unanimously by Congress, and signed by President Ford in January of 1975. That amendment raised the old five pound exemption to a more realistic 50 pounds, subject to reasonable conditions that negated the previous criminal exemptions, and established clear exemptions for antique ignition implements such as fuse, percussion caps, friction primers, quills, slow match, and so on.

Some months later, newly proposed Treasury regulations contended that the amendment actually remove all exemption for powder, and regulated ignition implements whose exemption S. 1083 had sought to clarify. Those proposals were withdrawn, and later replaced with ones conceding the implement exemption but still, according to Congressional sources, contravening the intent of Congress on powder. In the spring of 1978, the Senate passed further wording on the subject, confirming again the legislative intent of S. 1083; more wording has since been favorably introduced in both houses.

In 1982, the Federal Office of Management and Budget undertook a routine review that included BATF form 5400.3, initiated in 1975 to "regulate exempt quantities" of black powder, and invited comments. OMB then received letters from the Indiana Sportsmen's Council and the North-South Skirmish Association, recounting in detail the legislative history of S. 1083, and also received verbal communication from the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association and no doubt other places.

On May 5, 1982 OMB notified BATF that the form was unrequired by law, imposed "an unnecessary burden", and was without "any practical utility". BATF responded that they were in agreement; the form was dropped.

**The
L. Francis
Herreshoff
Saluting
Cannon**

*As Specified by
L. FRANCIS HERRESHOFF
Marblehead, Massachusetts
October 1967*

Builder

L. Francis Herreshoff built ten cannons. Seven of these accompanied boats he designed and built, and three were privately commissioned to be built for:

*#4 for Tony Correa, Jeweler
Edgecomb, ME*

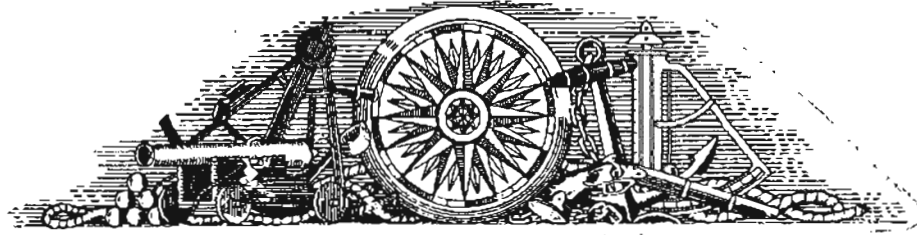
*#10 for Bruce Blackman, Jeweler
Newport Beach, CA*

*#8 for J. Bedford, Naval Architect
East Shore, MD*

*#6 Built for & aboard "Albacore"
Owner, John Carter, President
of Independence Seaport Museum
Philadelphia, PA*

*#3 Built for "Ticonderoga" ("Ti")
Owner Robert F. Johnson, Portland, OR
Also owner of "Windward Passage" The
Original Herreshoff Saluting Cannon was
Stolen off "Ti" in Europe and was replaced
With an RBG Cannon.*

*Robert Berkeley George of Madison,
Connecticut was authorized by
L. Francis Herreshoff to continue
building the cannons, and to date
Berke has built over six hundred cannons*



L. FRANCIS HERRESHOFF SALUTING CANNON

These model ship's cannons are carefully proportioned copies of the British 9 Pound Naval Deck cannons used by the navies of France, England, English colonies, and the United States of America after its independence. This type of cannon was used between 1750 and 1865 with little variation in proportion. For many years the rules for proportioning the parts were as follows:

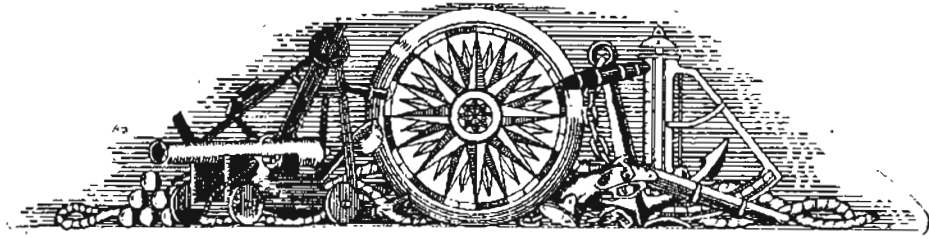
1. The trunnions were the same diameter as the bore.
2. The thickness of the carriage sides is the same as the diameter of the bore.
3. The thickness of the wheels were also the same as the diameter of the bore, and they were three times the diameter of the bore. The axle hole was the same size as the bore.
4. The front axle was the same as the bore in its fore and aft dimension and twice the bore in its depth.
5. The rear axle was twice the bore in its fore and aft dimension as the same as the bore in depth.

These cannons had properly shaped torch holes with the flash pan forward so the blast from the torch hole will not blow the torch out of the gunner's hand as the cannon recoils.

This model ship's cannon is made of gunmetal bronze, which is a composition of bronze that is quite gold in color when polished. While gunmetal was the most popular material for the original cannons, it went out of use when various methods of constructing steel guns were developed. Gunmetal has always remained the proper material for a yacht's saluting cannon because ferrous metals needed too much care in preventing rust and corrosion. On these model cannons the only ferrous metal is the firing pin and return spring.

Although these models are made to look like the muzzleloaders of the period they represent, they are actually breach loaders. They fire the standard 10-gauge black powder saluting shell. This shell is the same shell used by most yacht clubs for the colors and racing starting gun. This breach loading mechanism is arranged as follows:

The largest and aft most reinforcement band on these model cannons used to be called the cascabel or base ring. When this ring is turned one or more times to port, it will unlock the breach. The breach block can then be lifted out by hand.



L. FRANCIS HERRESHOFF SALUTING CANNON

Many of the parts of a ship's cannon and artillery pieces of France, England and the United States of America were given French names because France was the leading developer of cannons during the 16th and 17th centuries.

The knob on the aft end of the canon was called the cascabel knob and was made rather strong because it had the following functions:

1. *When the cannon was fired, this knob supported the breaching which was a large rope that went around the cascabel breach of the cannon to stop it from recoiling more than a few feet when the piece was fired.*
2. *When the cannon barrel was hoisted aboard ship or hoisted out of its carriage, one loop of the sling went around the barrel just forward of the trunnions, and the other loop around the cascabel.*
3. *When the ship's cannons were secured in a seaway, the cascabel knob was the principal place where lashings and tackles were secured.*

In firing these model ships cannons the cascabel knob is struck rather smartly with the wooden mallet furnished with the gun. This form of ignition was selected because it is the safest arrangement. Any cocked hammers, lanyards, etc., are subject to being accidentally tripped. The original cannons had properly shaped torch holes with the flash pan forward so the blast from the torch hole would not blow the torch out of the gunner's hand as the cannon recoiled.

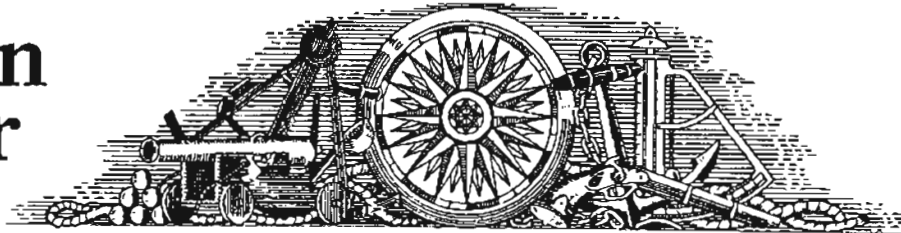
The empty shell is extracted from the barrel by running the handle of the mallet down the bore.

These model cannons should not be left outdoors overnight – the chassis and wheels are only treated with linseed oil, and some parts of the breach lock and firing pins are too closely fitted to stand corrosion. These parts should be occasionally lubricated with a thin oil.

Each day after the cannon is fired, the bore and cartridge chamber should be swabbed out. If this is not done, clearance of the cartridge chamber may become too small for easy loading and unloading.

To polish the barrel, it is best to remove the barrel from the chassis by turning the trunnion cap bolts by hand. We recommend cleaning with brass polish and a soft cloth.

**Ye
Olde
Cannon
Maker**
Est. 1958



CRBDCANNONS

R. Berkeley George
proprietor

SALES POLICY

We reserve the right to question or refuse to make any sale. We will not knowingly sell to minors or to any person indicating intent to transfer ownership to a minor.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Care consists of cleaning and painting as needed. Muzzles of cannons placed outside should be lowered or covered to protect bores. Ordinary cleaning principles apply for both black powder and muzzle loading cannons – clean and oil. Brass parts can be cleaned with a commercial brass cleaner such as Brasso.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The following is made in lieu of all warranties, express or implied. Seller and manufacturer's only obligation shall be to replace, at the manufacturer's option, such parts as are found by manufacturer's inspection to have been defective at time of shipment. Neither seller nor manufacturer shall be liable for any injury, loss of damage, direct or consequential, arising out of any use or misuse of the product. Before using the product, user shall determine the suitability of the product for his intended use, the suitability of materials and methods employed in use, methods employed in use, and the suitability of circumstances under which the product is used. **User assumes all risk and liability whatsoever in connection therewith.** The foregoing may not be changed except by a signed agreement between the officers of sell and manufacturer

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Federal Law and Antique Cannons

The Gun Control Act of 1968 and Amendment S-1083, signed by President Ford in January 1975, exempts all Muzzle/Breech Loading antiques and replicas from the federal definition of "firearm".

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RBG Cannons

OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS for HERRESHOFF SALUTING CANNON.



Loading & Firing:

1. Turn the base ring, largest and foremost band, to the left (counter clockwise) one revolution – this will unlock the breech block. Remove the entire block by lifting straight up.
2. Insert 10 Ga. Black Powder shell into the chamber.
3. Place the breech block back on the barrel and hand tighten (clockwise) the base ring.
4. Secure the cannon by loosely tying it down using the shoulder eye bolts or the rings on the side of the carriage. You need only use a light line since we are firing blank shells. You **DO NOT** get the same recoil that you get when firing a regular shotgun shell. The easiest and most convenient way to fire the cannon is to place your foot on the back corner of the carriage over the wheel and the edge of the carriage. You do not have to push down hard – just enough to keep it from rolling backwards. Plug your "down" ear or use sound deadening earplugs (**STRONGLY RECOMMENDED**).
5. In firing the cannon the cascabel knob is struck smartly with the wooden mallet supplied with the gun (please do not use winch handles as this could damage your cannon).
6. To extract the shell remove the breech and run the handle of the mallet down the bore.

BE SAFE and HAVE FUN!



ROBERT B GEORGE
 RBG CANNONS dba
 50 Mungertown Road A-6
 MADISON, CT 06443

Serial No. 1143

INVOICE

4356

DATE: 17 OCT 08
 ORDER NO: S HOW SPECIAL

(203) 245-1216

TO: BARRY KENNEDY
 48 OLD FIELD ROAD
 IRVINGTON, VA, 22480

DESCRIPTION	QTY	UNIT	PRICE	TOTAL
RBG 10/17/08 UPS FACTORY CC				
1 EA, BROODER 10 GA. HEPRESHOFF				
SALTING GANWOD OD WHITE				
ONKTROPHY BASE w/ MALLET.				
Andrew Young 10/17/08 EIF. 1 CARTON				
			\$ 1495 00	
			\$ 1495 00	
			\$ 24 00	
			\$ 1519 00	

THANK YOU