



THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR – ARTILLERY

During the Civil War the armies were broken into three units. The three units were named the cavalry, the infantry and the artillery.

The artillery unit is where all the cannons were. There were all kinds of cannons. Some of the cannons were big and some were small. The artillery that was used most often by both the North and the South was the Napoleon. It weighed 12-pounds, had a smooth bore, and was muzzle-loading. It did the best firing at less than 300 yards.

Ammunition is the kind of bullets that went into the cannons. Bullets were not like the bullets used today. The types of ammunition the artillery used were called solid, shell, case and canister. Solid shot was used to destroy forts. Shell was hollow and filled with gunpowder. It exploded by a fuse. Case shot was hollow and had thinner walls than shell. It contained a bursting charge. It was filled with smaller balls that would scatter when the case burst. A timed fuse was set into the case shot so that it would explode over the heads of infantry. It caused the greatest damage. Canister was a tube filled with smaller balls packed in sawdust. When the gun was fired, the tube broke up. Then, the balls fanned out in a deadly pattern. No matter what type of ammunition was used, the propelling charge was pre-measured in a cloth bag. The bag attached to the projectile using a small frame known as a sabot.