



## THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR – ARTILLERY

The Civil War was the first war in which the armies were broken into three sections. Cavalry had been part of the army for a long time. The Civil War added infantry and artillery sections.

In the Civil War there was Heavy Artillery and Light or Field Artillery. Heavy artillery was used to defend harbors and permanent forts. Field artillery was used by infantry units on the battlefield.

The North had more artillery than the South. It was also better made artillery. This was because the North had more factories. It also had more raw materials that were easy to get to. The South tried to close the gap by buying materials from foreign sources. Northern blockades prevented the materials from reaching Southern ports.

The name of 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.

Smooth bore and rifled guns could fire the same type of ammunition. The types of ammunition were 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.