



Incorporated

NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION

PO BOX 33 710, TAKAPUNA, AUCKLAND 1309

NEWSLETTER No 93

March 1997

A Registered Publication

SUBSCRIPTIONS for 1997 are now due. Honorary, Life, and members over 80 pay no subs. Lady Associates pay \$2-50, all others \$5. By Rule 4F any member over three years in arrears may be struck off unless there are extenuating circumstances, in which case inform Secretary or District Rep. To be financial to 31 Dec 97 you owe us \$. . . If no amount is shown you are financial.

LAST POST:

L34602 R.R. (Rex) Hudson MBE, 5 Dec 96, at Christchurch.
1763 I.A. (Ian) McLean, 7 Dec 96, at Taradale.
1639 H.R. (Hugh) Sigley, 19 Dec 96, at Takapuna.
35244 A.G. (Blackie) Blackwell, 3 Mar 97, at Auckland.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

Brig. G.D. Birch OBE to 20B Bellevue Rd, Tauranga (from April 97).
B.R. Edmonds to Hinchinbrook Island, PO Box 3, Cardwell, QLD 4816, Aust.
Major T.A. Ellen RA to 2/51 (Kabul 1842) Bty RA, Kirkee Barracks,
Colchester, Essex CO2 7UJ, U.K.
I.S. Foster MSM to 341 Koromatua Rd, RD 10, Hamilton.
R.J. Goldsworthy to 6 Pipitea Pl, Royal Heights, Massey, Auckland 8.
J.P. Horn^{SEM} to 228 Spey St, Invercargill.
Lt Col A.N. King to 3 Pigeon Grove, Woodlands, Waikanae 6454.
B.J. Meyer to Box 414, Papakura.
P.L. McInerny to 2 WKSP Coy, Linton Camp.
Captain D.G. Roberts to PO Box 5118, Rotorua West.
M.W. Ruffell to Flat 2, 1 Hall Rd, Glenfield, Auckland 10.
T. Swift to 10 Weld Drive, Fresh Field, Formby, Merseyside L37 1NJ, U.K.

NEW MEMBERS:

568303 D.T. (Danny) Blair, 26 Forster Cres, Snells Beach, Warkworth.
41836 P.M. (Nig) Botica, PO Box 34, Kaiwaka.
T342510 Lt Col C.W. (Chris) Brown, 39A Ellesmere Ave, Wellington 6003.
40992 O.R. (Owen) Dance, 91 Katherine Mansfield Dr, Whitemans Valley,
Upper Hutt.
18462 J.P. (Jim) Ellis, 19 Cedar Rd, Te Awanga, Hawkes Bay.
310427 L.E. (Leon) King, 190 Kiripaka Rd, Whangarei.
211795 B.V. (Noddy) Knott, 268 Johnson Rd, Forestdale, QLD 4118, Aust.
789332 A.R. (Andrew) Lister, 28 Eastern Beach Rd, Bucklands Beach,
Manukau.
41907 R.J. (Robin) McRae, 153A St Johns Rd, Meadowbank, Auckland 5.
776948 L.S.P. (Lawrie) Mitten, 42 Wai-iti Tce, Christchurch 5.
41510 B.M. (Brent) Mortensen, 7 Patricia Rd, Manurewa.
814620 D.S. (David) Ashley, 14 Kauri Drive, Taupo.
39378 B.M. (Bernie) Hatu, 18 Solo Place, Manurewa.
42944 R.W. (Ray) Cousineau, Box 3620, RR No 2, Clearwater, B.C.,
Canada V0E 1N0.

NEW MEMBERS (Continued)

- 41478 B.W. (Barry) Oldham, PO Box 1123, Papakura.
 539423 A.J. (Alan) Rangī, 32 Bonnie Glen Cres, Upper Hutt.
 372141 Col A.D. (Alistair) Ross, 227 Walker Rd East, Katikati.
 43873 R.H.G. (Rod) Simpson, 4 Onewa Rd Extn, Birkenhead, North Shore.
 44158 G.R. (Gavin) Thrush, 21 Manor Pl, Hamilton.
 C889761 N.J. (Neil) Ward, 4 Weka Rd, Southbay, Kaikoura.
 373360 M.M. (Macka) Wells, 36A Davilak Ave, Hamilton Hill, Fremantle
 WA 6163, Australia.
 E209258 R.V.G. (Dick) Wilson MSM, 66 Rosehill Dr, Papakura (rejoined).
 363763 T.S. (Terry) Young, 8 Tramway Rd, Beachaven, Auckland 10.
 Mrs I. (Rene) McLean, 6/37 Meeanee Rd, Taradale (Associate).
 Mrs I.V. (Ila) Sigley, 17 Lomond St, Takapuna (Associate).
 44312 C.R. (Rangi) Fitzgerald, 17 Gladstone Rd, Woodville.
 Mrs J.M. (Joyce) Blackwell, 201 East Coast Rd, Takapuna (Assoc.)

COMMITTEE MEETING: The next meeting will be held at the Birkenhead RSA at 1000 hrs, 12 April 97 Non-committee members are welcome to attend.

GUNNERS DAY SOCIAL: Will be held at the Birkenhead RSA on 29 May 97 commencing 1100 hrs. Excellent luncheon available at \$5 to \$8. This is not a 'stag' party; ladies are welcome.

REUNIONS: NZ Crete Veterans Assn at Whangarei 19-21 May 97. For further info contact Jack Purchase, NGunguru PDC, Private Bag, Whangarei.

14 LAA Regt Assn September 97 in Wellington. Contact Doug Alexander, 49 Tui Rd, Raumati Beach 6450. Phone: 04/298 4342.

3 NZ Div to be held at Richmond Working Mens Club, Christchurch, 15-16 Oct 97. Contact Alan Dean, Ph 03/332 8116.

Ex-Malayan Forces Assn: Labour weekend 97. Contact Reunion Secretary, PO Box 7116, Taradale, Napier, Ph 06/844 4808.

2NZEF Japan at Papakura, 27 Sep 97. Contact Dave Holmes, PO Box 374, Papakura.

6 Field Regt at Palmerston North, 4-6 Oct 97. Contact L.P. Robert, PO Box 69, Palmerston North.

NZ Korea Veterans Assn at Whangarei 16-19 Oct 98. Contact Reunion Secretary, PO Box 219, Whangarei. Ph Chas Sibun 09/438 1728

NZPFOCA 31 Oct-2 Nov 97 at Taupo. Details will be published in the September newsletter. Mark these dates in your diary NOW!

NEW ZEALAND GENERAL SERVICE MEDAL: Mike Harvey writes: "My reason for writing is to seek some space in our newsletter to promulgate some good news to a few **Gunners**. The Minister of Defence has just announced approval by the Queen of a medal for those who served on border ops in Malaya from 1 Aug 1960 to 16 Aug 64.

In the main this medal gives recognition to those who served in 1 NZ Regt 1961 to 63 under Lt Col LA Pearce. If my memory serves me correctly there were some 40 Gunners who served on a tour of duty with the battalion as infantrymen. We held a reunion of Les Pearce's battalion in 1994 and are in contact with most members. However, after 35 years it is difficult to get hold of everyone and the Old Comrades newsletter will help us reach those who have not heard the news.

The medal is the NZ General Service Medal in silver which signifies the fact that ops conducted on the Malay-Thailand Border were warlike and not peacekeeping duties. Those who already have the GSM (1918-62) with clasp "Malaya" or the GSM (1962) with the clasp "Malay Peninsula" are not eligible for the award.

The qualification is 30 days in the operational area. Anybody who believes they may be eligible for the medal should send full details of their service with their current address to:

Mr WG Walker, The Medal Section, Headquarters, New Zealand Defence Force, Private Bag, WELLINGTON.

NEWS FROM MEMBERS:

Tom Ellen (see changes of address) writes: Thank you for newsletter 92. I was interested to read Matt Beattie's account of his time in the former Yugoslavia, and this has prompted me to write a small note of my own.

Having injured myself on the Commando Course I was fortunate enough to be given the privilege of raising 2nd/51st (Kabul 1842) Battery, which reformed on 1 Apr 95 as the third gun battery in 19th Regiment RA. We are an airmobile battery, equipped with the L118 105mm Light Gun, and we are unique in supporting an armed aviation battle group (3rd Regiment Air Corps) within @4 Airmobile Brigade.

24 Bde is based in Colchester. Its 2 aviation regiments are due to re-equip soon with the AH64D APACHE attack helicopter, while the other 2 battlegroups in the brigade are based on light-scale infantry battalions. We specialise in deep operations, projecting elements of the brigade some 60-120 kms into hostile territory with intimate assistance from RAF offensive air support and support helicopters (CHINOOK and PUMA).

In May 95, 19 Regt deployed with its guns at no notice to Bosnia, as a result of the international condemnation of the Bosnian Serb seizure of UN hostages. In an amazingly smooth deployment we managed to move the whole regiment (some 100 vehicles and 350 personnel) by C130 HERCULES; within 10 days of being activated the regiment was complete and operational in theatre. We eventually formed a major part of the Anglo/French/Dutch Multinational Brigade. Our guns were sited in permanent fire support bases and temporary roving positions on the reverse slopes of Mt Igman. During the NATO air campaign in Sep 95 (mounted in response to the Sarajevo Market massacre) we provided both suppression of hostile air defence and engaged targets in our own right; firing some 500 rounds in the 11 days of Operation DELIBERATE FORCE. This robust and well-planned campaign forced the Bosnian Serbs to the negotiating table and led directly to the Dayton Peace Accord, which itself paved the way for the NATO Implementation Force (IFOR); of which Matt Beattie writes so informatively in Newsletter 92.

We returned to UK in Dec 95 and began the long process of retraining, reorganisation and reassembling our personal LIVES. Since then, 2/51 Bty has exercised 4 times with its affiliated battlegroup, once with 24 Bde and on a Regimental Live Firing Exercise, in addition to the everyday run of commitments. As a battery we have fired some 3000 rds this year, with a further 900 due to go down-range on an overseas exercise early in 1997, in Seattle USA. The highlight of our year has probably been the 3 weeks spent in Brisbane on Ex SUMAN WARRIOR, and I'm only sorry that a shortage of time prevented me from crossing the Tasman at the end of the deployment. Still, I managed to get 2Lt Anton Horne attached to 163 Bty and Sgt "Reg" Perrin attached to 161 Bty on Ex LONGLOOK, and had the great pleasure of hosting Lt Matt Weston and Sgt Terence Hiko in exchange; and embarrassed Matt at every opportunity by reminding all and sundry that his father, David, was my first BC.

You have probably gathered how busy we are; the pace of change is ever-increasing, but we have a challenging and enjoyable time in 19 Regt and quality of life is high. Like BCs everywhere I enjoy cutting-away

from RHQ, so battery tasks (especially overseas exercises) are welcome additions to the programme. If any old chums are over here, please feel free to get in touch.

Tom Swift (see changes of address) writes, "After 44 happy years in New Zealand I have taken a step I never thought I would do; I am now living permanently in England." Tom sends best wishes to all Old Comrades and would like to keep in touch.

We offer our congratulations to our President, Ian Foster, on his being awarded the Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) just before his retirement from the Regiment in December 1996. Ian is now domiciled in Hamilton. See changes of address.

Henry Salt has presented to the Association a copy of "The New Zealand Royal Honours System," Report of the Prime Minister's Honours Advisory Committee. Any member desiring info from the report contact Secretary.

BEQUEST: The late Major R.M. (Reg) Nutsford made a very generous bequest to our Association of \$1,000. It came at a most opportune time as we are still 'recovering' from the purchase of the new copier, and more recently 200 new badges. Thank you, Reg.

NEW BADGES: These closely resemble the older badges but have a more efficient method of pinning to the jacket. They are still \$4 each.

DISTRICT REPS.: Over recent months Eric Bickerton, Ian Rowntree, Ian Foster and Tom Chapman have relinquished their offices for Auckland South, Thames/Coromandel, Waiouru, and Wellington respectively, each after years of valuable service, for which all Old Comrades will be grateful. Our new Reps are as follows:

SOUTH AUCKLAND: Mr J.D. (Jeff) Waters, 14A Dittmer Place, Papakura. Phone: 09/296 2457.

THAMES/COROMANDEL: Mr R. (Ron) Agnew, 301 Fergusson Drive, Thames. Phone: 07/868 6888.

WAIOURU: WO1 K.E. (Kevin) Hopkinson RNZA, 8 Andrews Drive, Waiouru. Phone: 06/387 6490.

WELLINGTON: Major R. (Roger) Newth, 176 Waiwhetu Rd, Upper Hutt. Phone: 04/569 9916.

WANGANUI/MANAWATU: Dave Jones, who has been Rep. for more years than any of us can remember, and who is getting 'long in the tooth' would like someone younger to take over the job. Have we any volunteers?

SCARS ON THE HEART is a display at the Auckland Museum covering events in World Wars 1 and 2: Any member wishing to take part in a conducted tour of the display is invited to contact Secretary.

MORE NEW MEMBERS:

368221 G.L. (Gary) Brennan, 16 Frostbite Pl, Ranui, Waitakere.
 821992 A.D. (Allan) Cairns-White, 20 Sunny Park Ave, Papakura.
 42459 D.S. (Des) Harrison, PO Box 55004, Mission Bay, Auckland.
 305676 R. (Ray) Hughes, 64A Matakatia Pde, Whangaparaoa.

MORE NEW MEMBERS (Continued):

350648 J. (Joe) Panoho, 8 Beeche Pl, Birkdale, North Shore.
 41485 F.J.H. (Fred) Russell, 8 Hull Rd, Waiuku.
 345674 B. (Ben), Minhinnick, 17 Watchfield Close, Mangere.

GUNNERS DAY WARNING ORDER: On Gunners Day, 26 May 97, a Ladies Dining-in will be held at the Papakura RSA. Cost: \$37 per head. Further info will be mailed to those interested. Contact Jeff Waters on 09/296 2457 or Denis Dwane on 09/299 8589 (afternoons) before 25 Apr 97.

MILITARY HISTORY: Older members will recall that during the early days of World War 2 the invasion of New Zealand by Japanese forces appeared a distinct possibility. As a result the Government authorised the formation of a Home Guard (as had been done in Britain), but having 'starved' the Defence Department ever since World War 1, had few rifles with which to arm it. They therefore directed the Police to commandeer from private owners all rifles of military calibre for issue to the Guardsmen. Thus in the event of an attack the Home Guard would have provided some assistance to the Home Defence forces.

A similar situation prevailed in Australia - and could quite possibly obtain in the future, in which case New Zealand would be equally involved.

Yet now across the Tasman Mr Howard is destroying thousands of serviceable semi-automatic (self-loading) rifles of all calibres, not only military but also sporting, as well as shotguns, owned by many thousands of law-abiding citizens - because a single criminally-insane person committed murder.

Mr Howard has recently visited New Zealand. With the coming review of the Arms Act in June, and in the light of recent events, will our politicians become mindless copycats?

TO MEMBERS WHO OWN FIREARMS: How about writing to your local MP. Ask him or her, "How will inflicting exorbitant licence fees and other expensive restrictive practices upon law-abiding gun owners prevent criminals perpetrating armed crime?" Criminals do not obey the law.

If you want any advice contact Secretary.

THE GUN

Continued from Newsletter No 91

By Wally Ruffell

SHRAPNEL:

The term 'shrapnel' was often wrongly used during and after World War 2 to describe shell splinters or fragments. In all shrapnel projectiles lead balls were the killers.

Case shot was very effective against troops in the open, but only up to about 300 metres. A weapon to produce a similar effect at greater ranges was therefore highly desirable. To this end in 1784 Lieutenant Henry Shrapnel RA (1761-1842) invented what he called 'spherical case,' the original version of which was a common shell with a filling of musket balls and powder. See Fig. 70A.

Note that the bursting charge was sufficient merely to break open the shell; the musket balls relied for their killing power solely on the velocity imparted to them by the remaining velocity of the shell at the point of burst.

Time fuze.

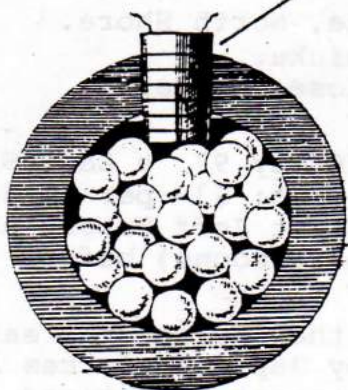


Fig. 70A: Spherical case

Shrapnel's original projectile, showing common musket balls mixed with powder burster. Friction between balls and powder often caused prematures in early versions. Invented by Shrapnel in 1784 but not finally approved for service until 1803!

Probably because he was only a Lieutenant when he invented spherical case the authorities did not deem it worthy of development. However, in 1803, by which time he had risen to the rank of Major, they were prepared to put it into production.

Shrapnel proved quite successful during the Napoleonic Wars; the French had no answer to it. In 1814 Shrapnel was given a pension of 1200 pounds (\$2400) a year for life for his service to the Crown.

Despite its success the original projectile suffered prematures caused by ignition of the burster brought about by friction with the balls. In 1849 Colonel E.M. Boxer RA put the burster in a separate metal container as shown in Fig. 70B, while at the same time fitting a wooden bottom to the shell to protect the fuze. In a second modification in 1853 he separated balls and bursting charge by a diaphragm, a principle employed in later cylindrical projectiles. See Fig. 70C.

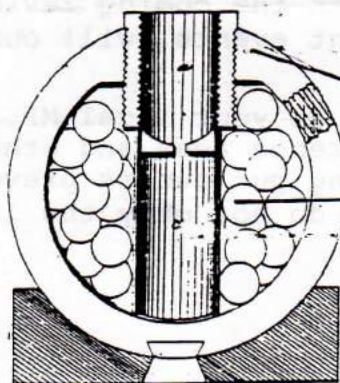


Fig. 70B:

Later projectile with Boxer's first modification, i.e. with powder burster in separate metal container, and with wooden bottom designed to keep fuze facing muzzle while shell was in bore.

Socket for fuze

Powder

Wooden bottom

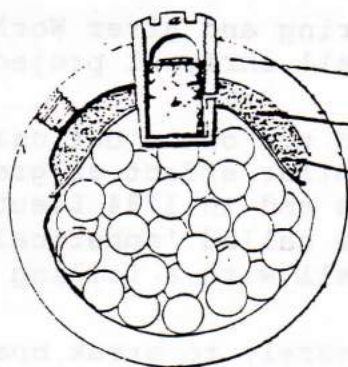


Fig. 70C

Showing Boxer's second modification, a diaphragm separating balls and bursting charge.

Fuze

Powder

Diaphragm

In 1852, ten years after Shrapnel's death, his family petitioned the Government to have spherical case re-designated 'shrapnel,' and were successful.

The field guns in use during the decade preceding World War 1 fired only shrapnel. However, its failure to deal effectively with barbed wire entanglements, its high cost of production, plus the time taken to train Officers how to employ it, led in 1915 to the introduction of high explosive (HE) for QF 13 and 18-prs.

Shrapnel was officially declared obsolete in the British service in 1935, but continued to be used in obsolete ordnance, e.g. 18-prs Mk 1 and 2 still in use in New Zealand until 1941.

Further reference to shrapnel will be made in this paper when dealing with rifled ordnance.

FUZES:

See also reference to common shell, i.e. shell filled with gunpowder, and early methods of fuzeing in Newsletter 91.

About 1750 a fuze made of beech wood was introduced for common shell (Fig. 71). Later a shorter version (see Fig. 70A) was adopted for shrapnel which in those days had an effective range of only 1100 yards (1006 m), needing a shorter burning time.

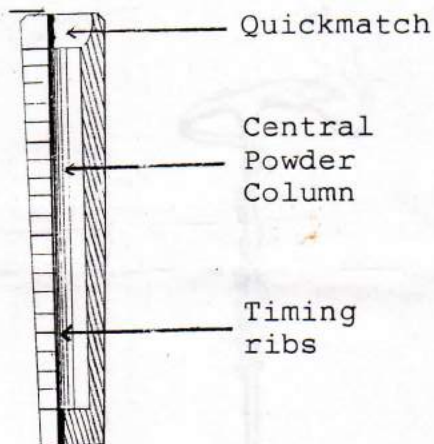


Fig. 71: Beech wood fuze.

In the beech wood time fuze the outer surface was ribbed, each rib indicating a burning time of half a second for the column of powder in the centre.

To 'set' the fuze the Gunner sawed off the lower end at the appropriate rib and discarded it. He then inserted the upper end in the shell and tightened it with a few blows from a mallet!

Flash from the propellant charge via the quickmatch at the top initiated burning of the central powder column, which then exploded the bursting charge.

This crude arrangement was in use throughout the Napoleonic Wars until 1849 in Europe and 1858 in India.

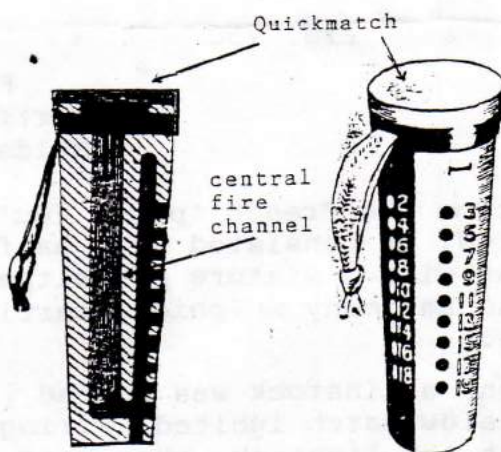


Fig. 72: Boxer's improved time fuze.

Boxer's improved fuze, introduced in 1849, was of wood, usually beech. To 'set' it the Gunner bored a hole with a gimlet at the appropriate setting, then hammered it into the shell with a mallet as with the earlier type.

Flash from the propellant charge ignited the quickmatch at the top of the fuze, which in turn ignited the central filling, which burned down to the hole previously bored.

The flash then went through the hole to ignite bursting charge or main filling.

FIRING THE GUN:

Guns were first fired by a red-hot iron thrust down the vent. This method worked well but required a fire on the gun position, rather dangerous with loose serpentine powder the dust from which could be ignited by the smallest spark or even by friction.

Next came the 'slow match,' a cord soaked in spirits or some mixture which enabled it to burn very slowly. It was held by a 'linstock' type of which are shown in Figs 73A to C. At first the slow match was taken to the gun on the linstock and applied to the vent, the latter having been primed with loose powder. Flame from the priming in turn ignited the propellant charge in the chamber.

The methods described caused progressive erosion of the vent, leading to a reduction in propellant gas pressure with a consequent loss in muzzle velocity. To repair the damage vents had to be bored out and re-bushed, a time-consuming process in the smooth-bore era.

To overcome the problem, in 1697 metal tubes were introduced. At first they contained quickmatch but this was later replaced by powder. The tube was inserted in the vent and the contents ignited in the same way as loose priming. The use of tubes also enabled the rate of fire to be increased.

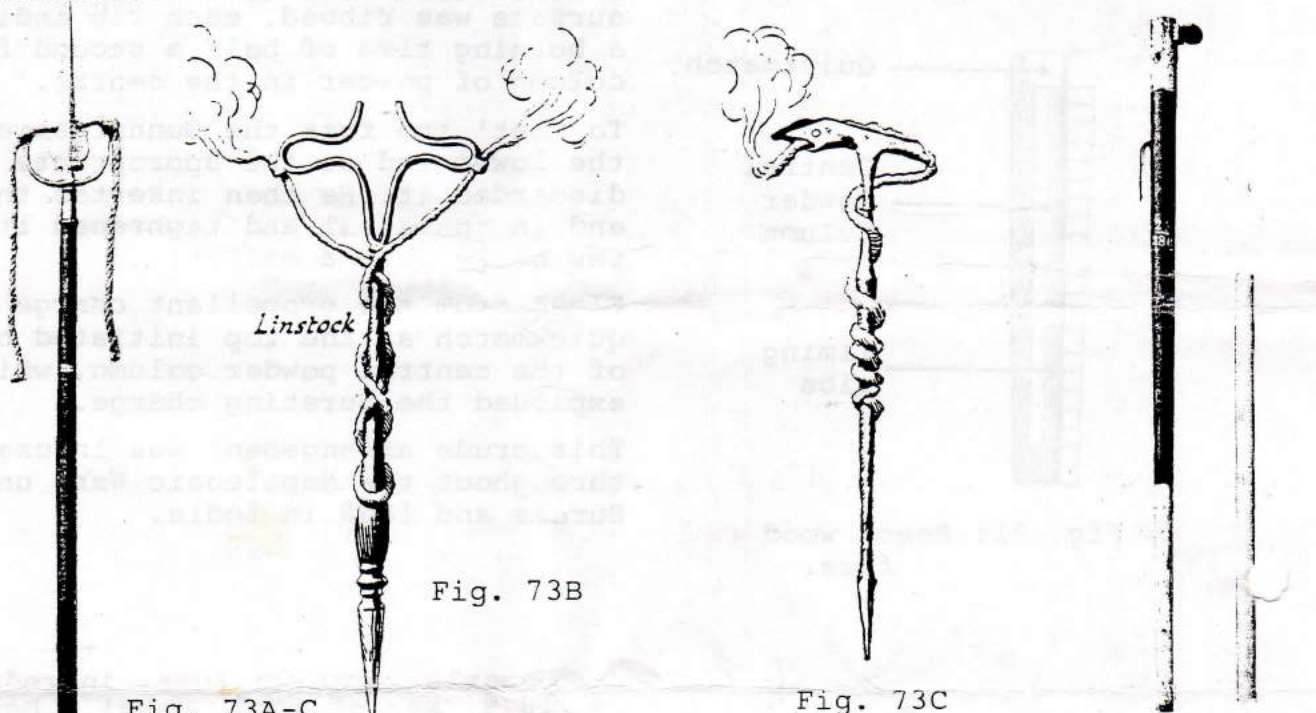


Fig. 73A-C
Linstocks.
The long one
doubled as a spear.

Fig. 73C

Fig. 74
Portfire (rt)
Holder (left)

In 1700 the 'portfire' (from the French 'porte feu' = carry fire), was introduced. It consisted of a half-inch (12.7mm) paper tube filled with a mixture of saltpetre, sulphur, mealed powder and antimony sulphide, carried in a portfire holder (Fig. 74).

At 'Preparation for Action' a linstock was placed in rear of each section, and its slow match ignited. Firing numbers ignited their portfires at the linstock, then used them to fire their guns.

At 'Cease Firing' they cut off the burning ends of the portfires with the cutters on each trail, and extinguished them.

To be continued.