

## **Bronze Signalling or Saluting gun: Second Report (No. 090)**

**Ruth Brown, Yorkshire, UK, July 5, 2007.**

This is the second report on the small bronze cannon, after the item has gone through conservation treatment. The [first report](#) contains comparative examples of bronze cannons with wrought-iron swivels and small calibre bronze guns recovered from wrecks. I shall not repeat that information here.

From the x-rays and photograph we appear to have a small bronze saluting or signalling gun with a wrought-iron swivel. It probably fired a ½ shot and might be classed as a Robinet.

### **Comparative examples**

Now the cannon has been cleaned we can make better comparisons with other examples. These fall into three areas- the general pattern of the gun- two sets of single bands, and the shapes of the button or cascable and the muzzle. For both the general shape and the muzzle, the two closest parallels are the seven small guns from a battery at Temple Newsome, Leeds, acquired in 1699 and the six guns in the battery of bronze saluting guns at Armourers Hall, City of London, c1700. These have a similar shape and muzzles. The mouldings of the muzzles on all three series of guns are very similar indeed and this features is the most decisive in reinforcing a date c1700. However guns in both these batteries have very different shaped cascables-more elaborate, similar to acorns. Neither of these sets are in their original mountings. While the Leeds guns were probably on carriages, the Armourers' Hall guns may have been intended for the Company's barge and be mounted on swivels.

The shape of the cascable cannot be paralleled on any surviving British guns from this period. This plain finial is usually associated cannons from countries such as the Netherlands, Denmark, North Germany and Sweden dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. A comparative gun is bronze model currently on display on the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen dated to c1700 (as so many of these are!). Although the cascable is similar, the muzzle and

the profiles of the bands are quite different. This example is mounted on what is probably a contemporary field carriage, although it was still intended to fire.

## **Conclusions**

The cannon shows characteristics of British and North European small saluting cannons from c1700. On balance it is closer to English cannon and the differences in cascables may merely reflect that this is a cheaper gun than the items purchased for British aristocracy or wealthy London Companies. The re-bushing of the vent shows it certainly had much use over its life and that it was valued enough to be repaired rather than sold off for reuse.

The dating is less secure than I would have liked since only one set of our examples is securely dated, the others are by comparison. However the shape of the muzzle with the simple round band at the front rather than the more normal bell-shape was beginning to pass out of general use at this time.