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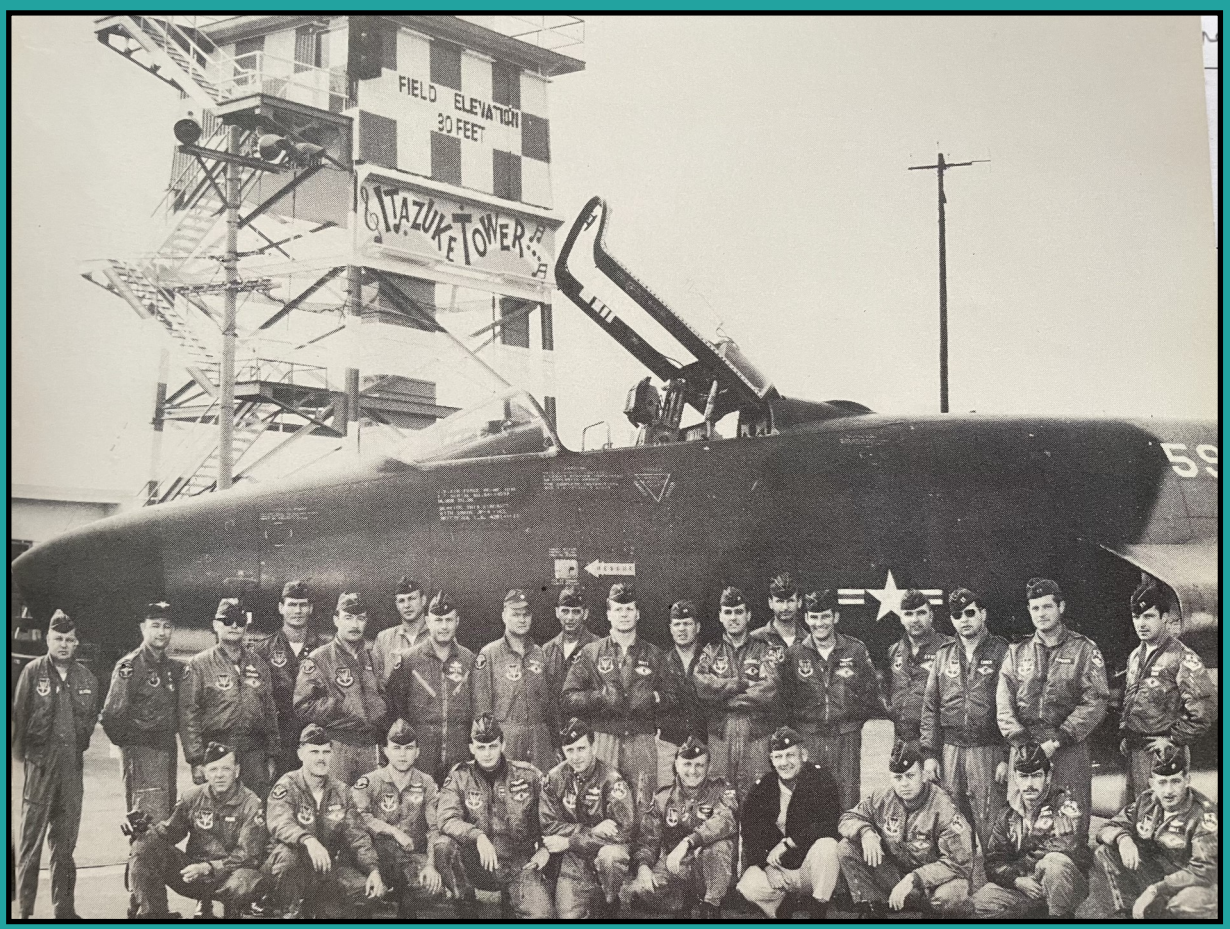

Arkansas Air National Guard
USS Pueblo Activation 1968

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Message from the Editor

Few people know about the *USS Pueblo* incident in 1968, and I am sure fewer realize that the Arkansas Air Guard was sent to Asia because the North Koreans captured the American ship. Chief Master Sergeant (Ret) Richard Green participated as part of the Arkansas National Guard and tells the story from his perspective. Much as it is today, the United States was embroiled in its share of international issues; not the least was Vietnam. Take the journey with Chief Green to 1968, and try to determine if much has changed between North Korea and the United States. In his featured artifact article, LTC Matthew Anderson looks at the US Army 3 inch Model 1905 Field Gun, located in the Arkansas National Guard Museum.

Be Safe.

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CMS (Ret) Richard Green

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Arkansas Air National Guard
USS Pueblo Activation 1968

154th TRS Pilots, Itazuke, 1968

By Chief Master Sergeant (Ret) Richard Green

On January 23, 1968, the *USS Pueblo*, a Navy intelligence vessel operating in international waters off the North Korean coast was intercepted by North Korean patrol boats. An ensuing battle took place which injured the ship's Captain and several other crew members. The ship and its 83-man crew was captured. With high operations in Vietnam no direct retaliation was taken, but the United States began a military buildup in the area.

Four Air National Guard Tactical Fighter units were activated and deployed to Vietnam. Three Air National Guard Tactical Reconnaissance units were activated. One of these was the 189th Tactical Reconnaissance Group, Arkansas Air National Guard. The 189th was part of the 123rd Wing made up of Arkansas at Little Rock, Kentucky at Louisville and Nevada at Reno. All three units flew the RF-101 aircraft converting to that aircraft in 1965. The 189th was activated on January 26, 1968.

I received the announcement as I was registering for my spring semester of my junior year at Little Rock University. I had been in the 189th since July 1965. I was in aircraft maintenance and enjoyed my time with the guard very much. I was on a varsity basketball scholarship at the university and had not experienced any conflicts between school, basketball, where I was a starting forward since my freshmen year, and my National Guard service. That was about to change.

I contacted my section supervisor at the 189th

and reported for duty the afternoon of Friday, 26 January. I also attended basketball practice and informed my coach that I did not know if I would be available for the game the next night. The unit began in processing on Saturday, which went very smooth since the unit practiced that process a couple of times a year. That afternoon we began packing up the equipment required for deployment, which we had also practiced. I asked to see the maintenance commander to request to leave early so to play in the game that evening, received permission and started my final game against Arkansas AM&N at Barton Colosseum that evening.

The next few days at the unit consisted of marshaling the equipment and receiving the upcoming plans. Word was that we would be deploying within the next few weeks. We then heard that it would be to Japan. Unit activities became normal as if a weekend unit training assembly (UTA). Flying activities increased to include air refueling. Air refueling would be critical to the deployment of the aircraft to Japan.

The pilots had some training shortfalls in photo reconnaissance. This was due to the delays of receiving photo equipment for the aircraft as they were modified during the conversion which began less than three years earlier. A six-week deployment to Bergstrom Air Force Base was planned to complete this required training. Bergstrom was the reconnaissance training center for the Air Force. They were equipped with the RF-4C aircraft, and they also had the photo labs for extensive film processing. Eight aircraft were deployed in mid-March to Bergstrom with pilots and maintenance teams. The deployment was scheduled in two-week cycles during which most of the personnel were rotated. A few members (myself included) stayed for the entire period to ensure continuity. The flying schedule was intense, flying 16 plus sorties a day. Bergstrom provided us tremendous support as we used their maintenance shops and other base facilities.

Two activities at Bergstrom were significant. President Johnson's ranch was not far from Bergstrom. Air Force One arrived several times with the President during our deployment. The aircraft would be placed in the large base hanger where many of the maintenance shops were located so activities were adjusted. The other event occurred early on 5 April. This was the morning after Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated. In case of national unrest, a large contingent of the Army's 101st Airborne arrive at the base and used the large hanger for their staging. They were there for several days.

The Bergstrom operation was completed in May and all aircraft and personnel returned to Little Rock. During the next few weeks all activities were focused on the deployment. The seven hundred plus members to be deployed were identified, and all of the unit specialties besides operations and maintenance were designated to deploy. This deployment policy has been modified in recent years. Personal records were checked and medical requirements including immunizations were completed. There were many briefings referencing the deployment and country information about Japan.

Colonel Joe Caple, an outstanding leader, was assigned as the deployment Commander of the 154th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron. Governor Rockefeller visited the unit and addressed deploying members a few days prior to deployment. As the deployment date neared equipment was readied for shipment. Twelve aircraft were prepared with final maintenance and fuel. An advanced team (including myself) departed on 22 July. Our transportation for the total deployment was provided by C-141 aircraft which was first class. The actual deployment date was 24 July, 1968. The C-141's traveled direct to Itazuke with a fuel stop in Alaska. The 101's traveled from Little Rock with stops in California, Hawaii and Guam with air refueling along the way. All the aircraft but one made it to Itazuke Air Base Japan on scheduled. One was delayed at Guam for maintenance.

The 154th replaced an active duty RF-4 unit. Missions began within a few days after arrival. The unit also assumed one line of alert. This consisted of an aircraft, pilot and crew chief, which were located in a facility near the end of the runway. This began as a twenty-four hour a day operation as the F-4's operated but was adjusted to a daylight requirement due to the capability of the RF-101. The alert mission was to cover an immediate response to photo requirements in Korea. The unit also kept a crew chief and an aircraft camera specialist at Osan Air Base Korea. Osan, located just south of the DMZ, was a recovery base for the alert aircraft or other unit aircraft that required recovery at Osan. The film was down loaded and the aircraft serviced. The film was used by the intelligent teams at Osan. The aircraft returned to Itazuke.

Flying operations at Itazuke were intense. During the four months at Itazuke the 154th flew 1219 sorties (missions) for 2,474 flight hours. That equates to over 10 missions a day. Aircraft were kept in flying commission continuously. There were many long days and nights by the maintenance team to accomplish that amazing feat. This provided 240,249 feet of aerial film. During the entire eleven month mobilization the 154th flew 2,932 hours and processed 278,570 feet of aerial film.

Upon arrival we were not very popular with the local area. One reason was shortly before our arrival at Itazuke the unit we replaced had crashed a F-4 aircraft into the local university. This caused some issues. Demonstrations outside the base were common the first few weekends that we were there. These activities subsided and the local city of Fukuoka, Japan was friendly and enjoyable to visit during our time off. Itazuke had all facilities required to include lodging, maintenance shops and dining facilities. The dining facility was operated by our own food service specialist. An enlisted club was also available, which was extremely popular. The main fair was excellent hamburgers and beer that was cheaper than soft drinks!

Another tremendous fact was, despite the intense flying schedule in foreign countries, the 154th experienced only one accident. This occurred during a two-ship orientation mission just days before the end of the tour with a pilot from the 154th, Lieutenant Colonel Bob Byrd, and a Reno pilot in the second aircraft. Lieutenant Colonel Byrd experienced an engine fire shortly after takeoff and successfully ejected with only a minor injury. The aircraft crashed in a rice paddy. The 154th members returned to Little Rock on 20 November, 1968.

Our aircraft remained at Itazuke, and the Unit from Reno replaced the 154th. Aircraft from Reno and Kentucky were transferred to Little Rock and were there on the unit's arrival home. The unit members were de-mobilized on 20 December 1968. The call up was a success. This was the first major activation of the unit since the Korean War, eighteen years earlier.

The 154th, part of the 189th has been a tremendous asset to our nation's defense in its long history to this day regardless of the mission. I have been honored to have served with the 189th for 38 years. I remained full time with the unit after de-mobilization for the following thirty -five years.

Recent photo of Chief Master Sargent (Ret) Richard Green with RF-101 static display at Little Rock AFB.

F-4 crash into University in Fukuoka Japan which was short distance from Itazuke Air Base short time prior to arrival of our unit which caused some unrest.

Equipment ready for loading for Japan deployment.

154th members boarding C-141 July 1968 at Little Rock AFB headed for Japan

Airman First Class Richard Green, Crew Chief, launching Colonel Joe Caple, 154 Squadron Commander, on a mission from Itazuke Air Base, 1968.

Equipment being loaded on C-141 at Little Rock AFB headed to Japan July 1968

Navy Ship *USS Pueblo* docked in North Korea which was captured on 23 January 1968 with 83 man crew. This incident initiated the call up of six Air National Guard Units including the 154th Arkansas ANG.

The crew was released in December 1968. The ship is still in North Korean possession.

Featured Artifact:
Model 1902/1904/1905 Field Gun

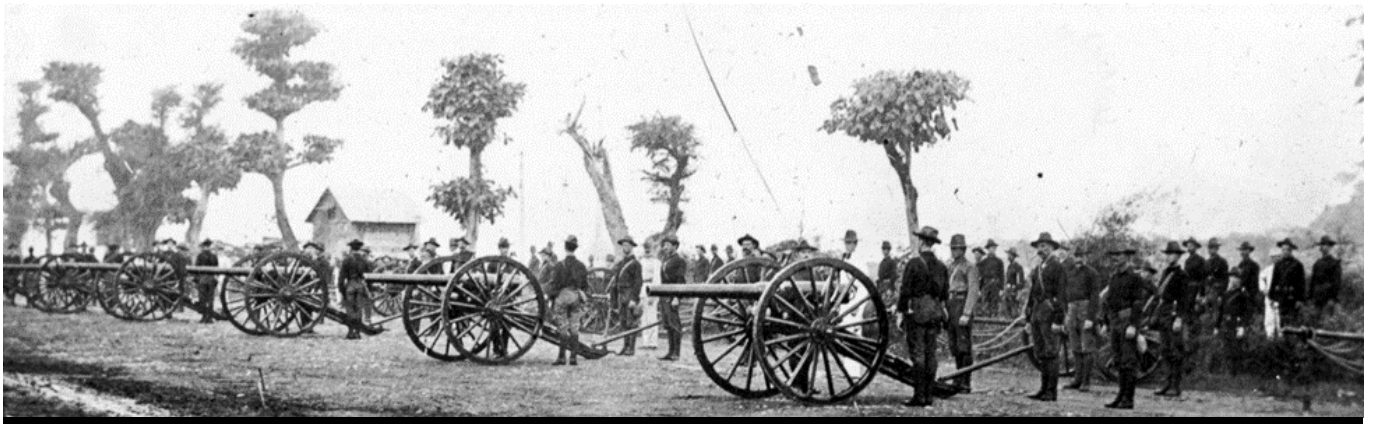
By LTC Matthew W. Anderson

(3 inch Model 1905 Field Gun on display at the museum)

The Model 1902/1904/1905 Field Gun was the field gun that trained American field artillerymen for service in World War I. While comparable to field guns of other modern armies at the time, it never saw service on the battlefield during WWI due to politics, manufacturing limitations and logistics.

Rapid advances in artillery occurred in the 20 years prior to WWI. The U.S. Ordnance Department worked to keep up with these technological advances and incorporate them. In 1884 smokeless powder was invented. Smokeless powder is three times more powerful than black powder, less corrosive and causes less fowling. Ultimately, smokeless powder allowed for greater ranges and a longer sustained rate of fire if the pressures could be safely contained. Breech loading field guns up to this time were made of wrought iron, while heavy, they could be made faster and cheaper than steel barrels. The heavy barrels provided the added benefit of reducing the distance the gun carriage traveled after firing. The problem is that to continue to use, wrought iron required an even thicker, heavier barrel, which adversely affected speed and mobility. The Ordnance Department moved

forward and developed the U.S. Army's first all steel breech loading field gun to handle the pressures of smokeless powder, which entered service as the 3.2 inch M1897 field gun. Also included for the first time was a primitive recoil brake dampening system, which reduced the distance the carriage traveled backward over the ground out of firing position. With these improvements the gun crews could reposition, re-aim and load faster for an increased rate of fire and at a longer direct fire range of 6,500 yards.



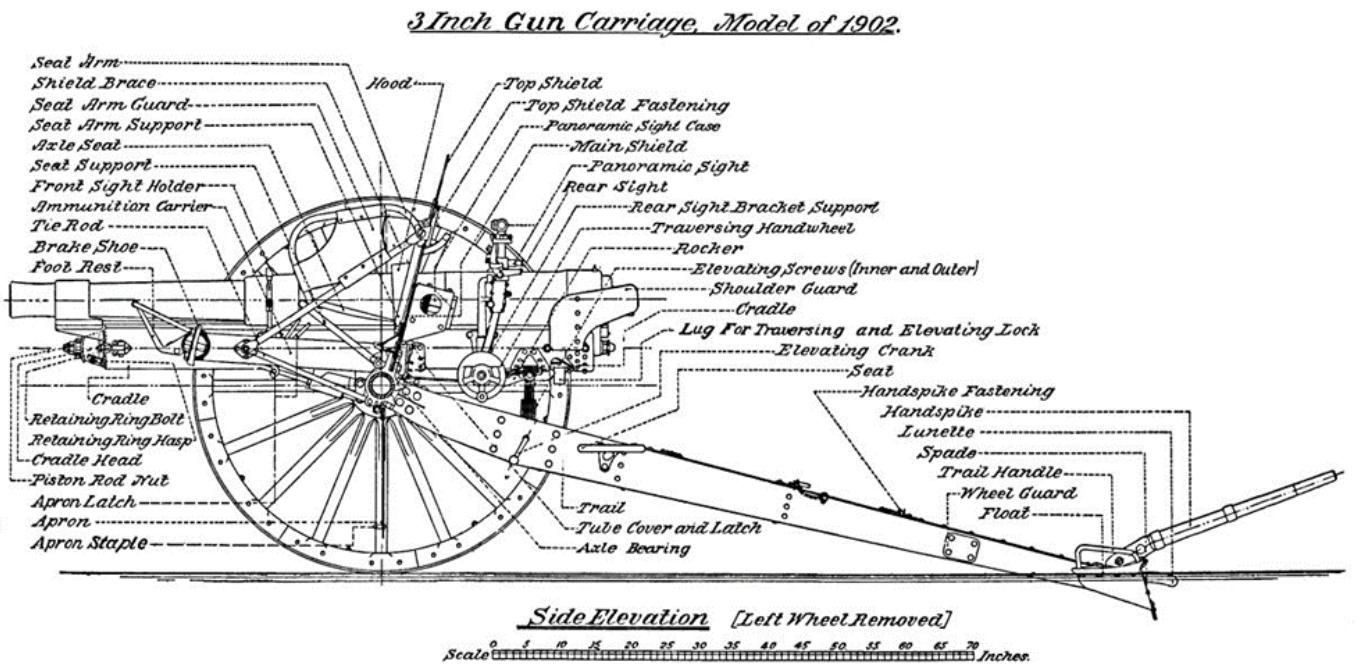
(6th U.S. Artillery with five 3.2 inch M1897 Field Guns in Spanish-American War [Naval History & Heritage Command])

While the American Army was using the 3.2 inch Model 1897 field gun in the Spanish-American War, 1898, the Philippine Insurrection, 1898 - 1902 and the China Relief Expedition, 1900, the French introduced the Canon de 75mm Modele 1897, which incorporated the first long recoil hydro-pneumatic system. The French 75mm, as it was called, revolutionized field artillery in that the field gun once positioned and aimed could be fired multiple times at the same target without repositioning. This was accomplished by utilizing air and oil piston regulating system, which dampened the recoil of the gun as it fired and traveled rearward on rollers then returning the gun to the original position within 2 seconds while the carriage remained in its original sighted in firing position. Another technological change was that powder and shell were now contained in brass shell casings. This allowed gun crews to fire a sustained rate of 15 rounds per minute and briefly up to 30 rounds a minute. The engineering and manufacturing process to achieve this was a closely guarded French secret. The Germans had previously experimented with the hydro-pneumatic recoil concept but was not able to overcome the engineering and manufacturing problems of both air and oil leaking thereby rendering the gun inoperable in a short period of time. By 1919, the French produced 21,600 French 75mm field guns and over 200 million 75mm shells.

(French 75mm Model 1897 Field Gun)

The long recoil field guns were commonly referred to as Quick Firing Guns, and the U.S. Ordnance Department began research and development to incorporate this new technology. After German arms manufacturers dismissed the hydro-pneumatic recoil system as too complicated, they moved forward and developed a hydraulic-spring recoil system. The hydraulic-spring recoil system solved the main problems engineers and manufacturers had at the time. Springs alone would either wear out or break quickly from the slamming action that took place with the rapid rearward force of the barrel with no means to buffer this action. The air containment, as found in the French design, under high pressures provided the recoil but was difficult to contain. So by using oil to provide the buffering of the rearward travel of the barrel and the spring to provide the recoil action to return the barrel to its original position, the German arms manufacturers developed a reliable long recoil system (Quick Firing Gun) that was almost as good as the French design. This design was first incorporated into the Ehrhardt 7.5 cm Model 1901 Field Gun that was primarily exported to Norway. Other European arms manufacturers took note and soon developed their own Quick Fire field guns.

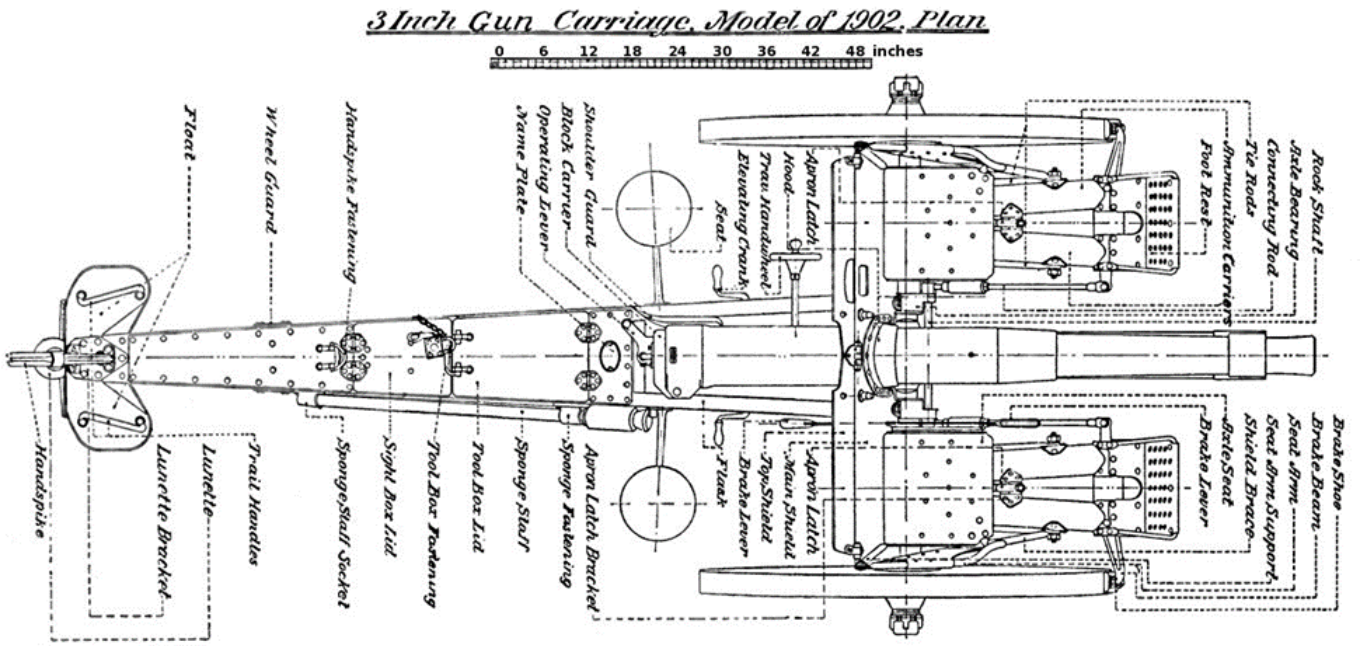
The U.S. Ordnance Department adopted the hydraulic-spring recoil system as well due to the ability to use existing manufacturing processes for its construction at the Watervliet Arsenal, New York. Initially, recoil springs and optics were ordered from overseas, but these were delayed and orders were not filled until 1904. By then both of these items began to be manufactured in the US Arsenal. Ordnance Officers also brought back other design recommendations from Europe and incorporated them into the development of the 3 inch Model 1902 Field Gun.



The barrel was a new construction consisting of the tube, jacket, locking hoop and clip hoop. The jacket was heat shrunk over the rear of the tube then the locking hoop was heat shrunk overlapping the tube and the jacket to lock the jacket in place. Finally, the clip hoop was heat shrunk to the muzzle of the tube. This manufacturing technique combined with the use of nickel steel allowed for higher pressures created by smokeless powder and thereby achieving greater range.

The action of recoil during firing, the gun moves to the rear 45 inches compressing the cylinder and recoil springs. As the cylinder moves to the rear, oil is pressed through small openings past the piston providing resistance. Further resistance is provided as the counter recoil springs are compressed. The counter recoil springs now compressed return the gun to its firing position with a buffer easing it into final position. Oil returns to its original position. In the rest position, the recoil springs are under a load of 750 lbs of pressure. It was required to have an officer inspect the oil level prior to firing to ensure that it was completely full based on specific steps outlined in the field manual. Properly maintained, the 3 inch M1902 field gun effectively fired and returned to its original sighted in position as designed. Without oil in the cylinder to dampen the recoil, the carriage could be displaced many feet from its sighted in firing position and the recoil spring would be damaged in short order.

Other features that were new to the field gun was the armor plating to protect gun crews from direct fire. Seats were placed on the front face of the armor plate for two gunners to ride during transport. This was not for their convenience as it would have been a rough ride with no shocks on the axles. Rather they were positioned there to operate the hand brakes when going downhill to keep the carriage from running into the horses. On the inside of the armor plate the left box is for panoramic sight, the right box is for range quadrant case. Brass shell casing became standard to improve rapid fire. There were three types of shells developed, steel, shrapnel and high explosive. Mounted optics for sighting was also new to artillery and was included for the first time on the 3 inch M1902 field gun.



The 3 inch M1902 Field Gun received further minor refinements in 1904 and in 1905 most notably a thinner barrel to further lighten the gun and quick access lubrication points. Revisions were thus designated M1904 and M1905.

The 3 inch Model 1905 gun and carriage with four rounds in storage weighed 2,473 lbs. The barrel is caliber 3 inch, barrel rifling 24 grooves, right hand twist 1 turn in 25 calibers, barrel total length is 28

calibers (7 feet). One round weighed 18.75 lbs. Muzzle velocity 1,700 fps. Maximum psi 33,000 lbs. Maximum elevation 15 degrees. Maximum angle of depression 5 degrees. Range at 15 degrees elevation 6,000 yards. Maximum range with trail dug in and gun at 40 degree angle 8,500 yards. Amount of traverse of gun on carriage 140 mils. Maximum sustained rate of fire was 15 rounds a minute.

Prior to the First World War, Congressional appropriations were very specific. The Ordnance Department presented their requests and justifications before committees and Congress appropriated an amount earmarked for a specific number of each class of armaments – heavy artillery, field guns, machine guns, rifles, pistols, etc. along with the authorized personnel strength for the Army. From 1902 to 1917 the total number of 3 inch field guns manufactured as a result of appropriations was M1902 – 182, M1904 – 40, M1905 – 441.

An example of the many presentations made before Congress, Brigadier General William Crozier, Chief of Ordnance briefed on January 25, 1906, "Let me explain to you what this appropriation will do, if you decide to make it. I am hoping to supply for use in war 250 batteries of guns of this class . . . That will be at the rate of two guns per 1,000 men for an army of 500,000, which is a very moderate estimate... Thus far there has been appropriations . . . sixty-nine of these batteries . . . That will leave such a number to be provided that at the rate at which they are estimated for in this item, a supply will be completed in the year 1919 . . . I would like to say, in connection with this item, that it is very important one, because this material is of a class that cannot be procured on short notice. It takes a great while to build these guns and to build the carriages and to get the ammunition for them."

According to his briefing, the U.S. Army had 276 – 3 inch field guns based on four field guns per battery and was already unable to meet the needs that would be required for a war they could not yet foresee. It is evident that neither the request to increase the size of the force, nor the ordnance to support this increase was approved to any significant degree.

Upon viewing the bill, H.R. 14171 in February 1906, Brigadier General William Crozier wrote to the Secretary of War ". . . At this rate the procurement of the supply needed will be delayed until the year 1923, seventy batteries having been previously provided for. Ammunition and mobile artillery are the items of material in which military preparation of the United States is now most behind." Brigadier General Crozier continued to bring his requests and justifications before Congress each year with no significant increase in appropriations for field guns or any other ordnance required.

In 1916, the Regular Army found itself understrength, incapable of securing the U.S. Sothern Border and pursuing Pancho Villa during the Mexican Punitive Expedition. Of note, several 3 inch M1905 field guns were with General John (Black Jack) Pershing during the Mexican Punitive Expedition but they were not utilized. In May, the National Defense Act of 1916 was passed, increasing the authorized strength of the Regular Army over the next five years to 175,000 and the National Guard to 400,000. 3 inch field guns would also receive a proportional increase. The United States was concerned with maintaining an Army to defend the Continental U.S. and its territorial interests, not an Army to fight in

a European war that had been ongoing for two years. Congress, the State Department and others did not want to appear to be preparing for war in that it might be seen as our intention enter the European war.

When America entered the First World War in April 6, 1917, it was entirely unprepared for warfare on the magnitude seen in Europe from 1914 to 1917. The total strength of the U.S. Army was 127,500 men. In the field artillery there was only 544 - 3 inch M1902/1904/1905 field guns, 60 - 4.7 inch guns and 300 other various guns. It needed to rapidly expand the force to initially 1,000,000 men and eventually to 4,000,000 men.

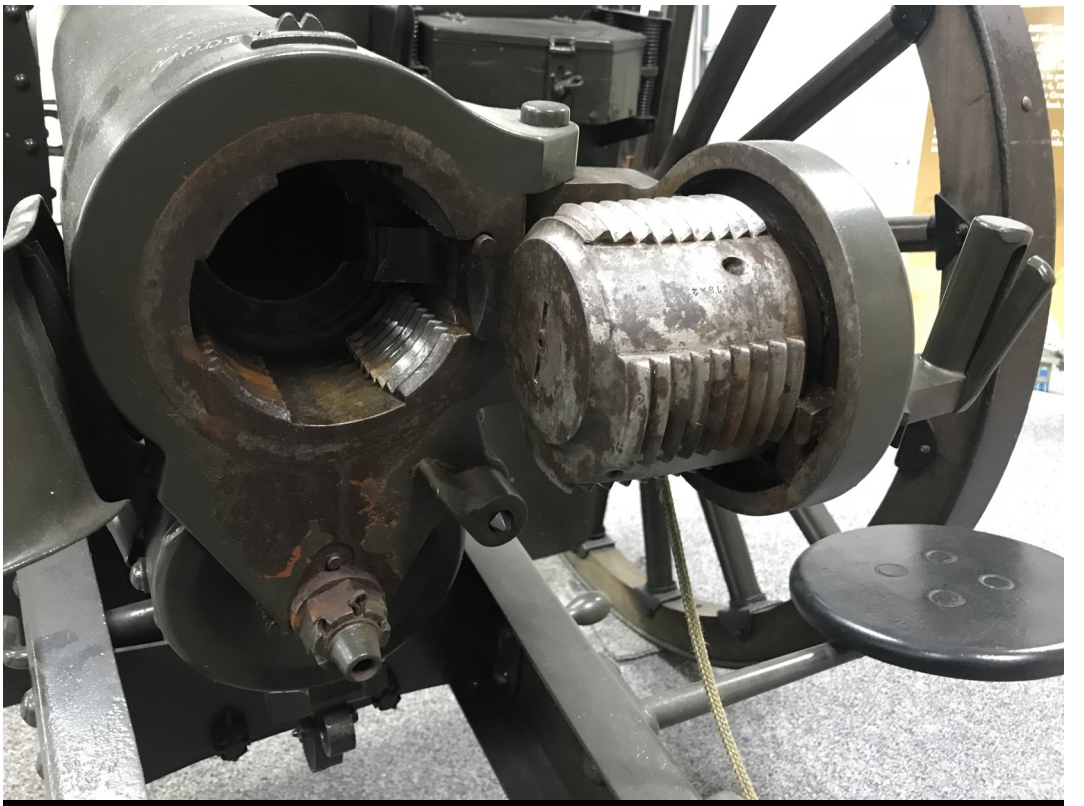
In the three months following, attitudes and perceptions changed dramatically with many questioning why the Army was not already prepared since the War had already been raging in Europe for three years and that it was inevitable America would be drawn in. Some of the criticism came from Congress and was directed at the Ordnance Department. Congress moved to appropriate funding to arm a 1 million man Army. While the funding was desperately needed to move forward, there were many other problems that had to be addressed. Up to this time, Congress only authorized U.S. Arsenals to produce arms and ordnance for the Army and only the Watervliet Arsenal, New York had been authorized to produce field guns. Congress had previously denied contracting with private businesses for the manufacture of arms citing concerns with security and conflict of interests. Now with the need to seek private industry to aid in the production of war material, very few had the experience necessary. The few that did were either already engaged in making arms for allied nations or needed time to acquire facilities, tools, gauges, jigs, dies, employees and training before production could begin.

Recognizing the time it would take to get American production going, Mr. Baker, Secretary of War and Brig. Gen. Crozier, Chief of Ordnance, entered into an agreement in July 1917, on behalf of the U.S. Government with the French High Commissioner, Monsieur Andre' Tardieu for France to produce the 75mm M1897 Field Gun for use by the American Expeditionary Force (AEF). There were many benefits to this arrangement. France, having built the infrastructure to produce the French 75 had already met the demand for it's own Army. It now was available to continue large scale production so that American Divisions could be fully equipped upon arrival in France. The French Artillery School of Samour was made available to train AEF Artillery units. The AEF was equipped with what was still considered the best field gun in service with proven reliability under battlefield conditions. The AEF was able to move into the front lines faster having a greater physical and psychological effect. Having French 75s provided saved on shipping space allowing for greater numbers of AEF troops to arrive in a shorter time. Logistically, by adopting the French 75mm field gun, the supply of 75mm shells was common along the entire front avoiding situations of having the wrong size shells delivered to field gun positions on the line. This last justification sealed the fate of the 3 inch M1905 field gun relegating it to initial training of American artillerymen before deploying overseas.

In December 1917, the French Government advised that it would be able to continue to supply the AEF through 1918 and to such time that American industry could meet demand. By the time of the Armistice on November 11, 1918, American industry had produced over 2,000 complete artillery pieces of various types, and had 14,000 artillery barrel forgings and various other components ready for assembly. Only about 800 American made artillery made it to France before the War ended. In all France provided 3,128 field guns of which 1,862 were French 75mm.

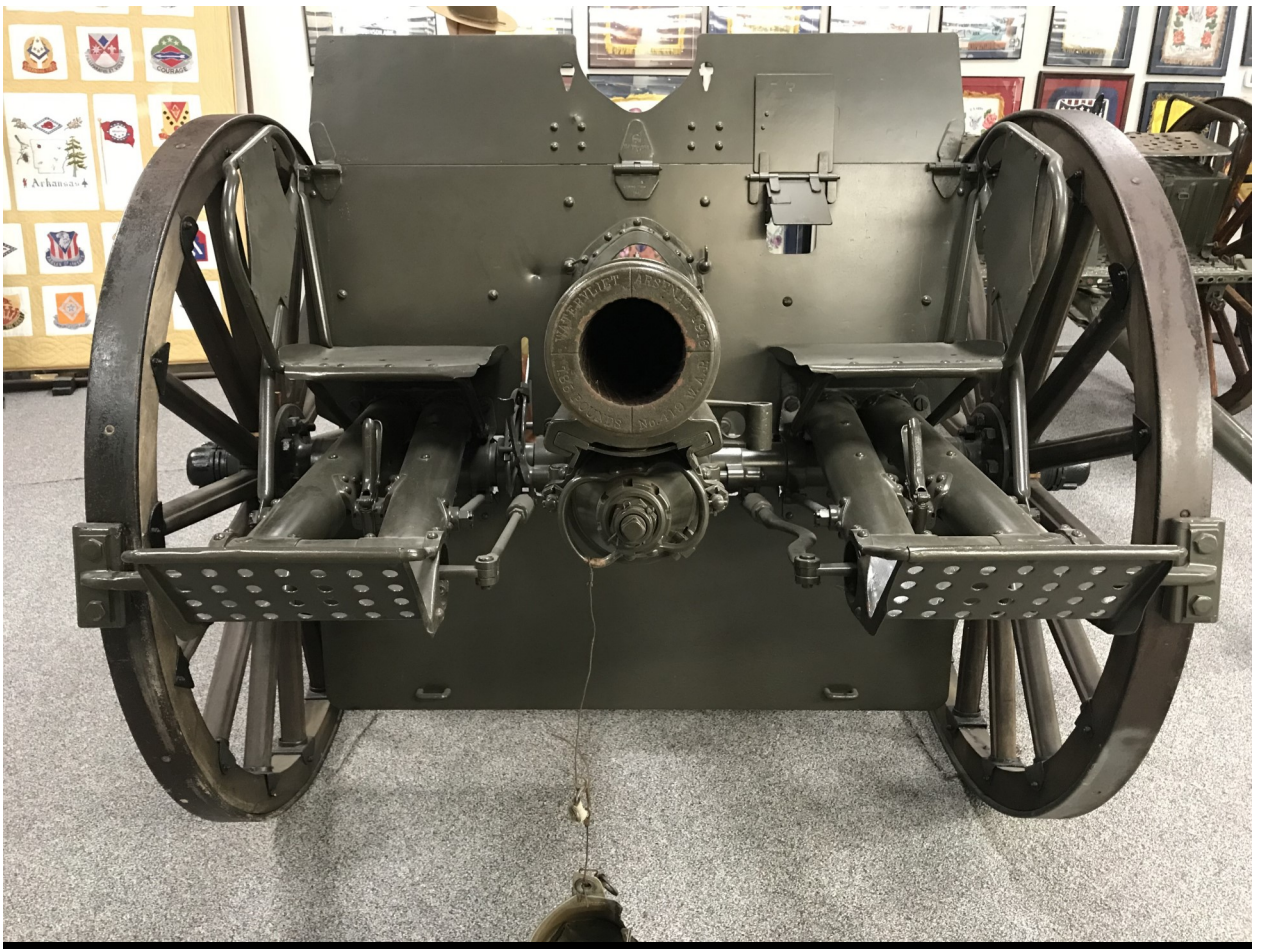
Officers Training School, Camp Wadsworth firing the 3 inch M1902 on March 14, 1918 [NARA])

Battery F, 10th Field Artillery, Conn. National Guard re-designated 103rd Field Artillery training at Bridgeport, CT in 1917. They would later serve in France. Note the Caisson and Limber as well as the Soldier sitting on the ground setting the fuses. [NARA]



Close up of the breech lock showing the complex design of the interrupting screw and firing mechanism.

Barrel shows that it was manufactured at the Watervliet Arsenal in 1916 .



Note the two seats and hand brakes to control the travel speed downhill.

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Photo from the Archives

Five decades before the Arkansas Air National Guard was sent to Asia because of the *USS Pueblo* incident, Arkansas had a military air presence when the Army built Eberts Field outside Lonoke. This photo was taken during WWI.

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