

Pair of French Naval Guns Captured by the British

By John Morris

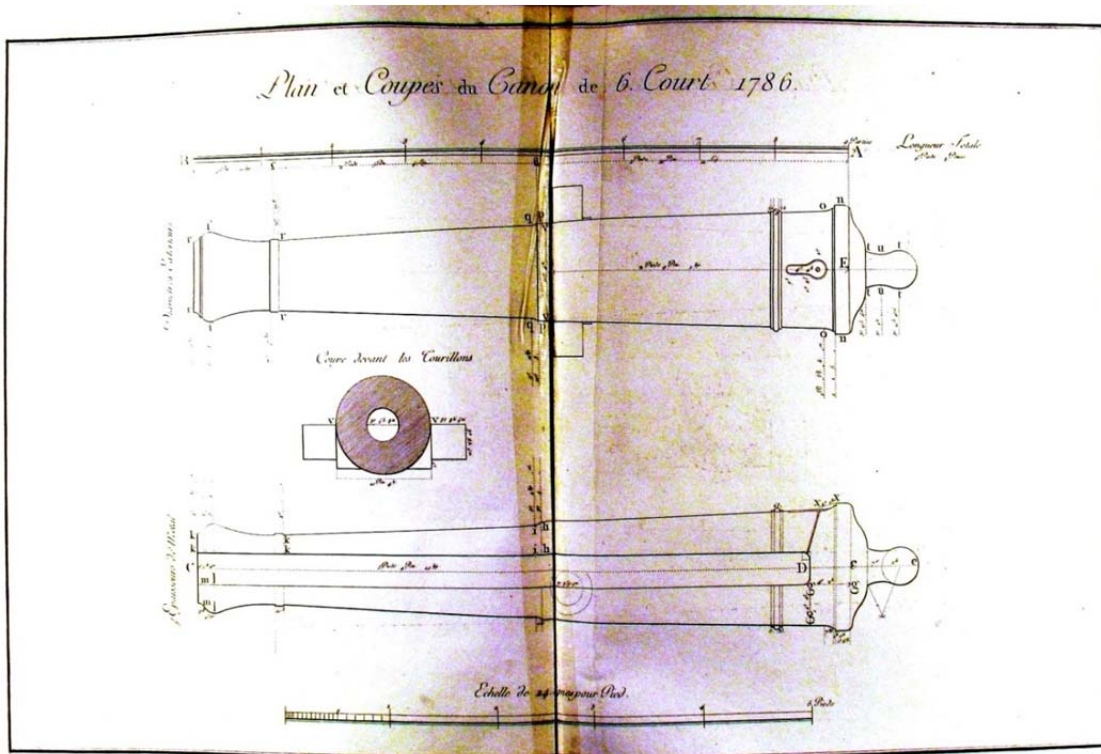
Pictured are two French cast-iron Naval Guns we identified as Short 6-Pounders, Model 1786. They came from Fort Ticonderoga, NY recently. The date 1786 can still be seen (faintly) on the basering of one of them. French trunnion marks remained as follows: Gun 2: Left "DL" and right "FN." Gun 1: Left "BA" and right, none. Those marks enabled us to identify the foundries where they were cast. Gun 2 was cast at the Royal Cannon Foundry at Nevers, France, and Gun 1 was cast at the Ruelle, France Royal Cannon Foundry. The cannons are each a total of 86 inches long and weigh about 1700 lbs. Their French 6-pounder bores are about 3.9 inches in diameter. Short 6-pounder guns were normally mounted in the quarterdeck area of 18th century French frigates, and were also used on some other types of French warships.

When they were cleaned up by removing old paint and rust, we noticed a British Broad Arrow on the top of each, as well as British Hundredweight-system weight marks, and British-style quarter sights engraved on the baserings and muzzles. The fact that the British put a lot of work into these two captured guns meant they intended use them instead of just mounting them as trophies or scrapping them. The breech ends of both cannons appears to have spent about a century underground, while the front halves have never been buried. We have no idea where they were apparently buried vertically as posts. This is just the beginning of a research project to determine the complete provenance of the pair.

This short video contains some additional information and more views of the cannons. (*Click on link to video*). - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1zTvigwE9A>



French Short 6-pounder Naval Guns Model 1786



National Archives Document, Original French Drawing of Short 6-Pounder Gun



View from Rear, Note Notch in Basing to support French Flintlock Firing Mechanism (missing)



Shiny spots identify British Broad Arrow mark (top) and British Hundredweight Weight Marking Engravings (bottom)



Hashmarks on left of Basing are part of the British-added "Quarter Scale Sights"