

section: fired its first shot and received its baptism of fire. The fifth shot from Lieutenant Barry's [section] blew up the magazine in that work and silenced their guns. When the magazine exploded dark objects were thrown upward, probably men, but I could not say whether they were troops or the logs of which the magazine doubtless was built. This silenced that work. Lieutenant Barry had thrown a shell through some tents and many in the parapet, tearing it terribly, so that this work was pretty well used up, when suddenly two masked batteries enfiladed us.¹²

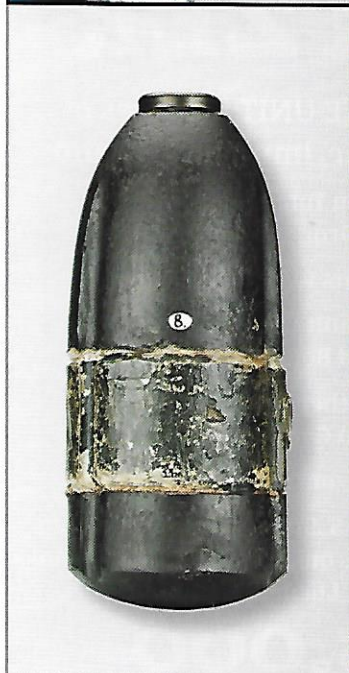
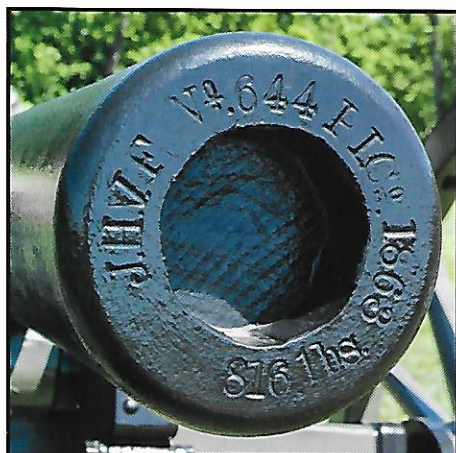
The battery returned to camp with no damage. In May, Battery C was reassigned to Maj. Gen. Irwin P.

McDowell's Department of the Rapahannock, and by June incorporated into McDowell's III Corps in the new Army of Virginia under Maj. Gen. John Pope. Battery C fought its first major battle at Cedar Mountain Aug. 9, 1862. General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson had been detached from the Army of Northern Virginia and had decided to move against Pope's army. When McDowell's III Corps was called forward to meet Jackson, Thompson's battery arrived at the front just as it was getting dark. As they arrived, they came under immediate fire from a Confederate battery. Thompson directed the Napoleon section to open fire directly on the rebel guns, visible in the darkness only by the flashes from their muzzles. He simultaneously directed his Parrott section to open fire further to the rear where he suspected the battery's support elements were located, and kept up firing well into the night. After "close and very destructive fire" the

Confederate battery withdrew.¹³

Battery C was engaged again at Thoroughfare Gap 17 days later, where they supported a brigade attacking a Confederate regiment. The battery suffered its first casualties when two men were wounded and one went missing.¹⁴

At the Battle of Second Manassas on Aug. 30, 1862, Thompson's men went into action multiple times in close support of the infantry. They were engaged on the right during Porter's assault on the unfinished railroad, where they fired on the Confederate position at a distance of about 700 yards. Later that afternoon, when Longstreet Corps attacked the Union left, Thompson's battery and several others were caught between Longstreet's on the left and Jackson on the right. Battery C pounded the Confederates with canister as they came on, cutting down the colors of two regiments. Relying on his Royal Artillery training, and in order to keep up the



U.S. 3-inch Ordnance Rifle, no. 644, located on the Gettysburg Battlefield. The Hotchkiss projectile pictured has a lead band sabot and a brass Hotchkiss time fuse adapter for a paper time fuse. This projectile was the most common type used by the U.S. artillery in the 3-inch Ordnance Rifle. Courtesy The Atlanta History Center, Thomas S. Dickey Sr. Civil War Collection.

(Jack Melton)