

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Portage National Monument
PO Box 426, 170 Mile Creek Road
Grand Portage, Minnesota 55605
218-475-0123

Gun Parts



PHOTO TITLE: Flintlock - GRPO 500

DESCRIPTION: Flintlock excavated from the North West Company depot area in 1937. This piece is likely from a North West Trade Gun complete with frizzen, pan, gooseneck hammer, bridle, tumbler, and main, sear, and frizzen springs. The letters "...NDON" are visible on the face of the plate indicating London as the manufacturing site.

PHOTO TITLE: Ramrod Thimble - GRPO 3310

DESCRIPTION: Stamped sheet brass ramrod or wiping stick thimble with embossed lineal design. The open tube shape was designed to accommodate the ramrod as it was secured into the stock of the firearm. The length of the thimble is 3.0 cm and it has a 1.0 cm diameter.

PHOTO TITLE: Musket Barrel Fragment- GRPO 4736

DESCRIPTION: Smoothbore musket barrel fragment with protruding tenon to secure the mount to a wooden stock with a pin. The barrel fragment is 33.2 cm long and the bore diameter measures 0.68 caliber, making it too large to be a standard North West trade gun.

PHOTO TITLE: Gun Barrel Hide Scraper - GRPO 4737

DESCRIPTION: Round section of a smooth bore musket barrel pounded flat on one end to produce an edge for scraping a hide. The hide scraper measures 30.4 cm long with a maximum diameter of 2.0 cm.

PHOTO TITLE: Ferrous Metal Butt Plate - GRPO 4761

DESCRIPTION: Most butt plates affixed to the end of muskets such as the North West trade gun were made of sheet brass. This butt plate is an example of an iron piece with three parallel rows of nails through the end of the sheet with one nail driven through the top. The butt plate is 10.5 cm long and 4.5 cm wide.

PHOTO TITLE: Mainspring - GRPO 7007

DESCRIPTION: Iron metal mainspring from a flintlock musket. This type of spring was positioned on the inner face of the lock plate inside the recesses of the stock. The mainspring measures 8.1 cm long and 1.3 cm wide.

PHOTO TITLE: Gun Barrel Hide Scraper - GRPO 8334

DESCRIPTION: S-shaped iron hide scraper with flattened edges fabricated from a gun barrel fragment. This piece serves as a prime example of adaptive reuse by the Ojibwe in the region. If the structural integrity of a gun barrel became compromised, it was seldom discarded as it could be fashioned into a hide scraper. The scraper is 16.5 long with a maximum diameter of 2.3 cm.

PHOTO TITLE: Hammer Fragment - GRPO 12574

DESCRIPTION: Iron musket hammer fragment encapsulated by accretion. Still visible are the vise jaws, vise screw, and lower portion of the gooseneck hammer.

PHOTO TITLE: French Gunflint - GRPO 13663

DESCRIPTION: Honey colored French gunflint. Flints were used as a component to initiate the ignition system for period muskets. The flint would strike the frizzen resulting in sparks landing in the pan with priming powder, which ultimately ignited and led to the ignition of the powder poured down the barrel, thus propelling the projectile toward the intended target.

PHOTO TITLE: French Gunflint - GRPO 15582

DESCRIPTION: Honey colored French gunflint. Most English gunflints were worked from black or gray flint deposits located in Brandon, England. It is possible that this piece was knapped in the home of the French gunflint industry located in Loir-et-Cher, in north central France.

PHOTO TITLE: Gun Worm - GRPO 17607

DESCRIPTION: Coiled and slightly tapered iron gun worm used for applying to the end of a ramrod or wiping stick to clean out the residue remaining after firing with black powder. The worm could be threaded with natural fibers and then affixed to the end of the wiping stick to swab out the barrel. This piece is 3.7 cm long with a maximum diameter of 1.2 cm.

PHOTO TITLE: Pistol Gun Worm - GRPO 17796

DESCRIPTION: Hollow shaft with coiled gun worm at opposite end. The narrow coil and shaft on this piece indicate that it was likely used to clean out the residue remaining after firing with black powder. The gun worm measures 5.4 cm long with a maximum shaft diameter of 0.5 cm.

PHOTO TITLE: Frizzen - GRPO 17801

DESCRIPTION: The half oval surface of the ferrous metal frizzen is the piece struck by the flint to generate sparks to initiate the ignition process of a flintlock musket. The frizzen is 4.7 cm long, 2.5 cm wide, and 0.6 cm thick.