



## The Widow Blakely



**The Only One of Her Kind**

This 7.5-inch rifle was called the Widow Blakely because it was the only specimen of British Captain Theophilus Alexander Blakely's design in the works at Vicksburg.

**Thought to be 'Whistling Dick'**

While firing on Federal gunboats during the siege of Vicksburg, a shell exploded prematurely in the tube. The broken end was trimmed off, and the Widow was used as a mortar for the remainder of its service.

Taken to West Point as a trophy, the Widow was misidentified as '*Whistling Dick*,' another famous

Confederate cannon, which Warren Ripley, author of '*Artillery and Ammunition of the Civil War*,' has identified as an 18-pounder rifle. When her true identity was recognized, the Widow was sent back to Vicksburg, and placed on the bluffs about a mile south of her original position.

