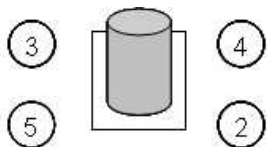


French 6-lb Cohorn Mortar Posts and Duties



Basic Cohorn Mortar Crew

Positions for a Six Man Crew (Ideal):

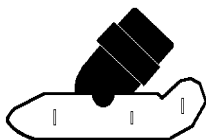
- **Number 1** - NCO-gun captain - gives commands
- **Number 2** - Gunner - maintains lanyard and primers, fires piece
- **Number 3** - Loader - worms piece, loads cartridge and shot
- **Number 4** - Rammer - sponges piece - rams cartridge
- **Number 5** - Vent Tender - stops vent,-pricks, primes with primers
- **Number 6** - Powder Monkey - guards ammo box, advances cartridge

Positions for a Five Man Crew:

- **Number 1** - NCO-gun captain - gives commands
- **Number 2** - Gunner - maintains lanyard and primers, fires piece
- **Number 3** - Loader - worms piece, loads cartridge and shot
- **Number 4** - Rammer - sponges piece, rams cartridge
- **Number 5** - Vent Tender - stops vent, advances cartridge, pricks, primes

Positions for a Four Man Crew:

- **Number 1** - NCO -gives commands, stops vent, primes
- **Number 2** - Gunner - maintains lanyard and primers, fires piece
- **Number 3** - Loader - worms piece, advances & loads cartridge
- **Number 4** - Rammer - sponges piece, rams cartridge



Side View

Positions for a Three Man Crew (only if man from another piece can fire):

- **Number 1** - NCO – commands, stops vent, primes, pricks
- **Number 2** - Gunner - *from another battery fires piece kneeling*
- **Number 3** - Loader – worms, stops vent, advances, loads
- **Number 4** - Rammer - sponges piece, rams cartridge

French 6-lb Cohorn Mortar Definitions

Breach	rear of gun
Bombs	shell - hollow powder filled cannon ball for bursting effect
Bore	the open tube chamber of a gun.
Fire	Fue or Foo (French)
Grenade	a small shell (bomb) thrown by infantry (grenadiers)
Lanfrage	(later called Shrapnel) - metal pieces fired in a burst
Mount Battery	En baah-ter-ray (French) = Stand to the gun
Muzzle	mouth of gun
Piece	gun, cannon, howitzer or mortar - general name for artillery
Reinforce	iron hoops or rings around gun barrels
Shot	cannon ball - solid iron ball fired for battering effect.
Tompion	cylinder shaped wood plug that protects muzzle when idle
Tube	barrel
Vent	small tube leading to breach or powder chamber of a gun
Vent pick	thick brass wire or rod for pricking powder cartridge
Worm	wad hook

Basic French 6-lb Cohorn Mortar Drill

1. **SEARCH PIECE** - Loader worms tube, Tender clears vent
2. **SPONGE PIECE** - Rammer sponges tube, Tender stops vent
3. **ADVANCE CARTRIDGE** – Powder Monkey advances the cartridge to Loader
4. **CHARGE PIECE** - Loader places cartridge in tube - flat side toward breach
5. **RAM CARTRIDGE** - Rammer rams down Cartridge - waits three counts
6. **HOME CHECK** - Tender feels with vent pick - calls “home”
7. **PRICK AND PRIME** - Tender pierces cartridge, places friction primer into the vent, and helps gunner hook the lanyard to the friction primer
8. **MAKE READY** - All positions assume fire position with ears covered, looking away from the muzzle
9. **FIRE** - Feu – All positions must kneel, Gunner pulls the lanyard
10. **RETURN TO NUMBER 1** - repeat SEARCH PIECE and SPONGE PIECE

Mortar Commands

When preparing to take their positions, the mortar crew lines up behind the limber, facing the mortar, in the following formation:

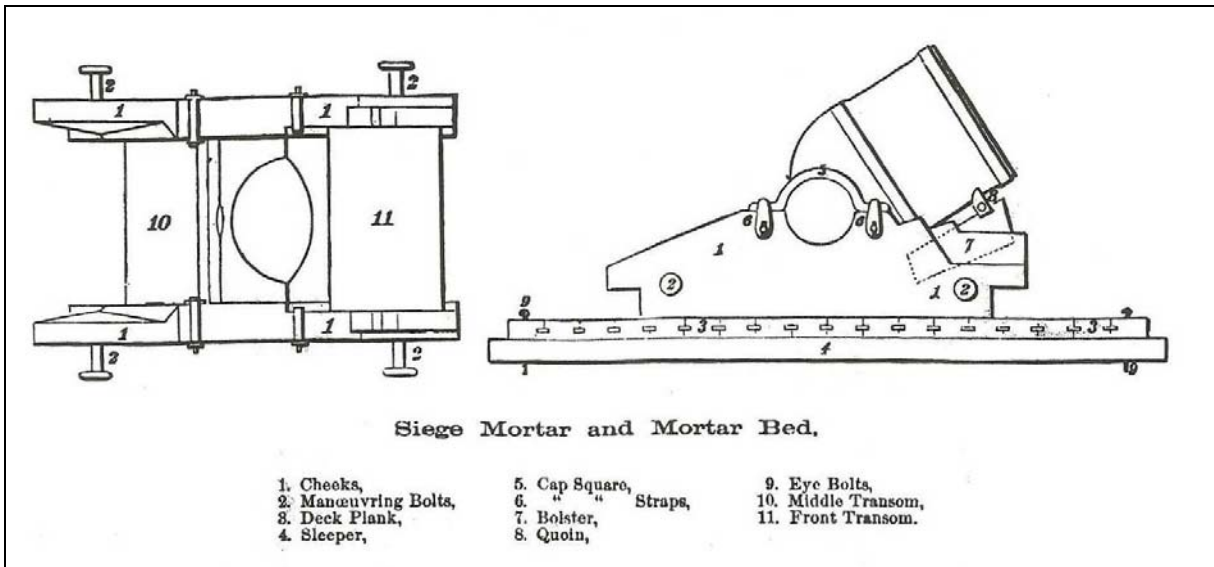
6	4	2
5	3	1

When the Gunner gives the order: POST!, the crew moves forward to the positions in the diagram and stands at attention.

When the Captain gives the order: SOUND OFF!, the crew will callout their position numbers in sequence (e.g. "number 2, number 3, etc.").

When the Gunner gives the order: SECURE THE PIECE!, the handspikes are returned to their positions, and the crew returns their implements to the equipment box. The crew then returns to their previous positions (posts or limber formations). When the Gunner gives the order: FALL BACK ON THE LIMBER!, the crew returns to their formation behind the limber.

10-Inch Siege Mortar Nomenclature



Implements:

- Tompion – sits in the muzzle.
- Handspikes – two on each side of the bed against the cheeks. Each are leaned against the manoeuvring bolts with the small ends towards the epaulments and the front handspikes even with the front of the cheeks.

- Haversack – contains the fuses and a pair of welder’s sleeves. This is attached to the tompon, lying on the mortar.
- Tube Pouch – contains the priming wire, friction primers, and lanyard. This is attached to the tompon, lying on the mortar.
- Gunner’s Pouch – contains the gunner’s level, gimlet, vent punch, and chalk. This is attached to the tompon, lying on the mortar.
- Basket – between the cheeks of the mortar bed, there is a basket containing the following tools: quadrant, plummet, pointing cord, scraper, wipers, and shell hooks. With the basket, there are also a broom, maul, and pointing stakes.

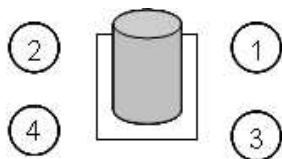
Powder Charges:

- Use only Fg black powder for mortar rounds.
- While some live fire events allow loose powder to be placed into the mortar directly, this is not allowed at events where the mortar will be firing blank charges (re-enactments or ceremonial salutes). In addition Linstock or slow match methods of igniting the powder charges is only allowed at events when this method is correct for the time period. Otherwise, friction primers and lanyards are required.

Reloading and Firing Intervals:

- Mortars shall follow the three-minute rule, meaning that three minutes must elapse between when the piece is fired and when the next round may be introduced into the muzzle.

10-Inch Siege Mortar Posts and Duties



Positions for a Five Man Crew (Ideal):

- **Gunner** – gives commands, scrapes the piece (worm)
- **Number 1** – wipes the piece after firing (sponge)
- **Number 2** – loads cartridge and shot (ram)
- **Number 3** – stops vent,-pricks, primes with primers, fires piece
- **Number 4** – Powder Monkey



For a four man crew, Number 2 and 3 will share Number 4’s responsibilities.



Basic Siege Mortar Crew

10-Inch Siege Mortar By-Detail Drill

PLANT THE POINTING STAKES

Gunner – Plants the stakes.

Number 1 – Helps the gunner plant the stakes. Takes the maul and hammers in the stakes.

Number 2 – Helps the gunner plant the stakes.

Number 2 – Remains at POST position.

Number 3 – Remains at POST position.

Number 4 – Remains at POST position.

Two

Number 1 – Plants a stake one yard behind his POST position for holding the wipers. Returns the maul to the basket.

Gunner – Lays the slack of the pointing cord at the foot of the epaulment, leaving the plummet at the stake at the rear of the piece.

Three

Gunner – Returns to POST position.

Number 1 – Returns to POST position.

TAKE IMPLEMENTS

Gunner – Takes the equipment from the equipment box and bring them to the front of the piece.

Number 4 – Advances to stand behind Number 2..

Two

Gunner – Gives Number 1 the welding sleeves/gloves and the wipers; gives Number 2 the maul and basket and welding sleeves/gloves; gives Number 3 the tube pouch and broom, and gives Number 4 the haversack. The Gunner puts on the gunner's pouch and welding gloves/sleeves.

Number 1 – Places the wipers on the stake behind him and puts on the sleeves.

Number 2 – Removes the tompon and places it with the basked and maul one yard behind him.

Number 3 – Lays the broom behind him on the ground and puts on the tube pouch.

Number 4 – Places the haversack on the left side and over the right shoulder.

Three

Gunner – Uses the level to determine the line of metal and marks it with the chalk. He then returns to the POST position.

Number 1 – Takes handspike.

Number 2 – Takes handspike.

Number 3 – Takes handspike.

Number 4 – Takes handspike.

IN BATTERY

This is the first command to service the piece.

Gunner – Makes a half-face to the right, steps off with the left foot first, and places himself two paces to the rear of the platform, facing the piece.

Number 1 – Turns toward the epaulment.

Number 2 – Turns toward the epaulment.

Number 3 – Turns toward the epaulment.

Number 4 – Turns toward the epaulment.

Two

Number 1 – Places the butt of the handspike under the front manoeuvring bolts.

Number 2 – Places the butt of the handspike under the front manoeuvring bolts.

Number 3 – Places the butt of the handspike about three inches under the rear manoeuvring bolts.

Number 4 – Places the butt of the handspike about three inches under the rear manoeuvring bolts.

Three

Gunner – Gives the command HEAVE.

Number 1 – Lifts the handspike to move the mortar toward the centre of the platform.

Number 2 – Lifts the handspike to move the mortar toward the centre of the platform.

Number 3 – Lifts the handspike to move the mortar toward the centre of the platform.

Number 4 – Lifts the handspike to move the mortar toward the centre of the platform.

This command is repeated as many times as needed to move the mortar to the centre of the platform. Once in position, the Gunner give the command HALT.

Four

Gunner – Returns to POST position.

Number 1 – Removes the handspike and returns to POST position.

Number 2 – Removes the handspike and returns to POST position.

Number 3 – Removes the handspike and returns to POST position.

Number 4 – Removes the handspike and returns to POST position.

LOAD BY DETAIL - LOAD

Gunner – Takes the scraper and spoon from the basket and places himself in front of the muzzle.

Number 1 – Lays down the handspike.

Number 2 – Lays down the handspike.

Number 3 – Lays down the handspike.

Number 4 – Lays down the handspike.

Two

Gunner – Scrapes the bore and the chamber, draws out the scrapings with the spoon, returns the scraper to the basket, and places himself one yard in front of the muzzle.

Three

Number 1 – Turns to the right and takes the wipers in his right hand. Then, faces the left, placing the left foot near the manoeuvring bolt and the right foot in front of the muzzle. With the left hand on the face of the piece, thoroughly wipes out the chamber and the bore (wet and dry). Once finished, Number 1 returns to POST position.

Number 4 – Moves back to the limber to retrieve the round, placing it in the haversack.

Four

Number 3 – Clears the vent with the priming wire, sweeps the platform if necessary, and returns to POST position.

Number 4 – Advances the round to the front of the piece.

Five

Gunner – Steps forward with the left foot, takes the round from Number 4, and places it just inside the muzzle. Then, returns to the rear of the piece.

Number 2 – Rams or seats the round into the breach of the piece and returns to POST position.

Number 4 – Hands the round to the Gunner. Then, moves to the rear of the piece, takes the slack out of the pointing cord and lays it over the left manoeuvring bolts, leaving its end at the rear pointing stake. Number 4 then returns to POST position.

POINT

Gunner – Takes the quadrant from the basket, applies it to the left side of the piece with the left hand, and adjusts the elevation with the right hand, giving the commands RAISE or LOWER until the piece is at the correct elevation. Then returns the quadrant to the basket.

Number 1 – Takes handspike, turns toward the epaulment, and places the butt of the handspike under the front manoeuvring bolts.

Number 2 – Takes handspike, turns toward the epaulment, and places the butt of the handspike under the front manoeuvring bolts.

Number 3 – Takes handspike, turns toward the epaulment, and places the butt of the handspike about three inches under the rear manoeuvring bolts.

Number 4 – Takes handspike, turns toward the epaulment, and places the butt of the handspike about three inches under the rear manoeuvring bolts.

Two

Gunner – Moves to the rear of the pointing stake, picks up the pointing cord in the left hand and the plummet in the right hand, and gives the directional commands: MORTAR LEFT; MORTAR RIGHT; TRAIL LEFT; TRAIL RIGHT as may be required. Once the mortar is positioned, the Gunner gives the command: HEAVE STEADY.

Number 1 – Adjust the position of the mortar as needed.

Number 2 – Adjust the position of the mortar as needed.

Number 3 – Adjust the position of the mortar as needed.

Number 4 – Adjust the position of the mortar as needed.

READY

Gunner – Leaves the plummet at the stake, returns the pointing cord to the foot of the epaulment, and moves to the windward of the piece to observe the effects of the fire.

Number 1 – Removes the handspike, moves four yards to the rear of the platform, and turns to face forward with the handspike held erect on the right side.

Number 2 – Removes the handspike, moves four yards to the rear of the platform, and turns to face forward with the handspike held erect on the right side.

Number 3 – Lays down the handspike six inches to his front, parallel to the edge of the platform. Attaches a friction primer to the end of the lanyard. He advances his right foot, and with the pricking wire breaks open the round in the mortar. He removes the pricking wire and inserts the friction primer into the vent. The lanyard must be passed under a rope attached to and tightly drawn between the rear manoeuvring bolts or through a loop of rope attached to the rear right manoeuvring bolt.

Number 4 – Removes the handspike, moves four yards to the rear of the platform between Numbers 1 and 2, and turns to face forward with the handspike held erect on the right side.

Two

Number 3 – Stands and moves three paces to the rear, facing the front with the lanyard in the left hand against the left thigh. Number 3 then moves his right left one pace to the right while leaving the left leg in place and leans to the right, raking the slack from the lanyard.

FIRE

Gunner – Observes the effect of the fire. If the mortar fired, he then returns to POST position.

Number 1 – If the mortar fired, he then returns to POST position.

Number 2 – If the mortar fired, he then returns to POST position.

Number 3 – Pulls the lanyard. If the mortar fired, he then returns to POST position.

Number 4 – If the mortar fired, he then returns to POST position.

SERVICE THE PIECE

Gunner – Takes the scraper and spoon from the basket and places himself in front of the muzzle.

Number 1 – Lays down the handspike.

Number 2 – Lays down the handspike.

Number 3 – Lays down the handspike.

Number 4 – Lays down the handspike.

Two

Gunner – Scrapes the bore and the chamber, draws out the scrapings with the spoon, returns the scraper to the basket, and places himself one yard in front of the muzzle.

Three

Number 1 – Turns to the right and takes the wipers in his right hand. Then, faces the left, placing the left foot near the manoeuvring bolt and the right foot in front of the muzzle. With the left hand on the face of the piece, thoroughly wipes out the chamber and the bore (wet and dry). Once finished, Number 1 returns to POST position.

Four

Number 3 – Clears the vent with the priming wire, sweeps the platform if necessary, and returns to POST position.

REPLACE IMPLEMENTS

Gunner – Places himself in front of the muzzle.

Number 1 – Lays down the handspike.

Number 2 – Lays down the handspike.

Number 3 – Lays down the handspike.

Number 4 – Lays down the handspike.

Two

Gunner – Takes the implements from the crew and places them between the cheeks.

Number 1 – Pulls the pointing stakes.

Number 2 – Inserts the tompon into the muzzle and then helps Number 1 pull the pointing stakes..