

General Project 4—Black Powder Cannon/Robert Shipley



Bob Shipley of Knoxville, Tennessee has been working on clocks and clock cases for quite some time (see below), but he wanted to make something different. On hand were a scrap piece of 1-7/8" diameter brass and a broken car floor jack. The frame, wheels and brass billet suggested a cannon, so Bob set to work to design his own. The cannon is built to fire a .58 caliber mini-ball with black powder. This is a traditional Civil War musket ball size. Bob has fired it with powder and wadding and says it makes "quite a bang!" The frame was made from the side pieces of the floor jack, which also contributed the wheels. The fasteners were standard bolts modified by Bob. The brass pieces are all custom, including the elevation mechanism. It is not a model of a particular cannon, but rather a design of Bob's based on a traditional style, but influenced by the

size and shape of some of the pieces he had on hand to work with. The finished cannon weighs a hefty 17 pounds. All the parts except for the 11" barrel were machined on Bob's Sherline lathe and mill. The barrel was bored on a larger machine. Bob says, "The one piece of tooling that I have really enjoyed is the Sherline rotary table that I use on my milling machines. I have gotten much joy, and good machining results from using it in my hobby."

