

Larkhill

British Army's Railway Howitzer loaned to Holland



A 200-tonne military gun - the UK's largest - is being dismantled by the Army to be shipped to a Dutch museum.

The 18" Railway Howitzer, housed at the Royal School of Artillery in Larkhill, Wiltshire, is being sent to the National Railway Museum in Utrecht.

The Army said the World War I gun was the largest surviving of all the UK's artillery pieces and one of only 12 surviving in the world. It will spend five months at the museum for a War and Peace exhibition.

'Abnormal load'

Sgt Maj. Nick Shipton said it would take up to five hours to get the gun off the carriageway and onto a truck.

"It's a complex beast. The size, weight and the fact that it has been together for a few years causes it's own issues. But we've done a lot of pre-preparatory work to make sure it can be split," he said. "It's most certainly going to be an abnormal load."

Since 2008 the Railway Howitzer has been displayed in Wiltshire as a monument to the history of the gunners of the Royal Regiment of Artillery.

It is being displayed in the Dutch exhibition to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht, which ended the Spanish War of succession in 1713.

Although the 18-inch barrel was manufactured for WW I, it was completed too late to see any action.

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