

# On Her Majesty's Service

WASC 1799.

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MUSEUM PIECE ?

SIR—Your report of the possible preservation of a tithe barn at Faversham as Britain's first gunpowder - making museum prompts me to send you this photograph (above) of a mortar épreuve observed a few years ago lying beside the lonely farm track near Postbridge, Dartmoor.

Surely the museum should have such a piece? It was used to test newly-made gunpowder. The distance that a ball of exact weight was thrown, by a precisely measured charge, indicated the quality of the powder. One authority told me that there were only six in England, but I doubt this because I have since seen one in an Amble-side garden and have been told of one in Birmingham and of two in a Liphook garden. Doubtless your readers will know of others.

Yours faithfully,

D. J. ALDEN.

Guildford, Surrey.

By: T. J. Alden 22/8/63