CLAIMS

1. A split lift howitzer, comprising:

i) an elevating mass including:

a) an ordnance for firing a projectile, the ordnance including a barrel defining a barrel axis and having a muzzle towards a front end of the howitzer and a breech assembly at a rear end of the barrel; and

b) a cradle for holding the ordnance at a traverse and an elevation, wherein the cradle includes a front bridge portion which engages with a piston rod of a recoil brake and a piston rod of a recuperator, and the recoil brake is mounted on top of the barrel and the recuperator is mounted below the barrel; and

c) two trunnion pins of a trunnion located on said cradle, which co-locate with receiving trunnion bearings on a saddle;

ii) wherein in a first position said breech assembly is located forward of said trunnion;

iii) in a second position said breech assembly is retracted substantially behind said trunnion; and

iv) wherein a recoil stroke is variable depending on a selection of elevation.

2. A howitzer according to claim 1, wherein a pair of combined elevation and balance actuators are located between the saddle and the cradle.

3. A howitzer according to claim 1, wherein the saddle comprises:

at least one co-operative engagement unit that links said saddle to a towable lower carriage assembly, a fixed forward operating base, a track mounted base within a containerised system or self-propelled arrangement.

4. A howitzer according to claim 3 wherein the towable lower carriage assembly comprises;

a body unit, comprising a pintle for engaging with said saddle,
a pair of front stabilisers, pivotally connected to said body;
a pair of rear trails pivotally connected to said body;
a pair of wheels substantially co-axially aligned with the barrel axis.

5. A howitzer according to claim 4 wherein said rear trails comprise:

a trail leg, a trail arm which is pivotally connected to said trail leg, a spade and a damper, wherein said damper is located between the trail leg and trail arm.

6. A howitzer according to claim 1, wherein the barrel is of sub-optimal length.