“Hiram Maxim and His Machinegun: A great force harnessed to a useful purpose”

By Stephen C. Small, Ph.D.
Agenda

• The Early Years
• His Automatic Machinegun
• Marketing the Maxim Machinegun
• Colonial Wars
• Ordnance Department Tests
• 20th Century Warfare
• The Human Cost
• Summary
The Early Years
The Young Inventor at The United States Electric Lighting Co.
Embarks for Europe
His Automatic Machinegun
“Cannot this great force be harnessed to a useful purpose?”
1884: The Initial Attempt
1885: The First Recoil-Operated Machinegun
The principle
Marketing the Maxim Machinegun
1888: The Testing of the Maxim by U.S. Army

Prototype Maxim Machinegun

Gatling Gun
The U.S. Navy Adopts the Maxim “Pom-pom” Gun
1893: Maxim sold his new weapon to the British Army
The Prince of Wales
The Russian Army
Kaiser William II

“This is the gun; there is no other!”
An International Best Seller
knighthood from Queen Victoria
Colonial Wars and Insurgences
1893: The Matabele War
1898 - The Battle of Omdurman
1899 - Philippine Insurrection
The Ordnance Dept. Tests Machineguns
The U.S. Ordnance Dept. Tests the Maxim Gun - Again
U.S. Army Chief of Ordnance, Brigadier General Buffington
John M. Browning
1909: The Benet-Mercie Machine-Rifle
1913: U.S. Army Selects a Maxim “Vickers”
Platform Mounted Maxim Machinegun
Platform Mounted Maxim Machinegun
20th Century Warfare
1904-5: The Russo-Japanese War
World War I
Strengthened Defense
The Engineer’s War
Filling The Water Jacket
Aircraft and Anti-Aircraft Maxims
1917: America Enters World War I
Americans & The Chauchat Machinegun
Hotchkiss 8mm M1914 Machinegun
Browning M1917 Machinegun
1917-18: American Machinegun Production

Diagram 27.—Thousands of American machine guns produced to the end of each month.
The Human Cost
1916 – The Battle of the Somme
Summary
Questions?