



Sir Hiram Maxim and the Prince of Wales Firing a Maxim Gun

Date

1888

Primary Maker

Sir Hiram Maxim

Medium

Paper

Description

Framed photograph depicting Sir Hiram Maxim and the Prince of Wales firing a Maxim Gun at the termination of the Wimbledon Meeting 1888. Sir Hiram Stevens Maxim,

inventor of the Maxim Gun, the first portable, fully automatic machine gun, cannily marketed his new invention by demonstrating it to members of the Royal Family and other celebrities. In 1888 Edward the Prince of Wales was given the opportunity to play with the gun, as seen in the photograph. His wife, Princess Alexandra, was presented with a silver gilt Maxim gun bullet pencil case, which was engraved to commemorate the event. This object was eventually donated to the Cuming Museum. The Maxim gun was quickly adopted by the British army and was used in campaigns in East and South Africa against native opponents armed with spears and rifles. The Maxim gun was later used in the First World War, contributing to the mechanisation of warfare that resulted in the mass slaughter of millions of combatants.