



The Gatling Gun Patent Drawing

By Richard Jordan Gatling, 1865

Ink and watercolor on paper

14 1/4" x 18 1/2"

National Archives and Records Administration, Records of the Patent and Trademark Office

The Gatling Gun

The Gatling gun was the first successful rapid-fire machine gun. Invented by Dr. Richard Jordan Gatling, a physician, the first model had six barrels revolving around a central axis. Gen. Benjamin F. Butler of the Union Army first used the gun at the siege of Petersburg, Virginia, in 1864-65. Shown here are two drawings of the improved 10-barrel, .30-caliber model which fired 400 rounds a minute. The gun was patented on May 9, 1865, and was officially adopted by the U.S. Army on August 21, 1866. It proved superior to other rapid-fire guns of the time and, for more than 40 years, the Gatling gun was used by almost every world power.

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