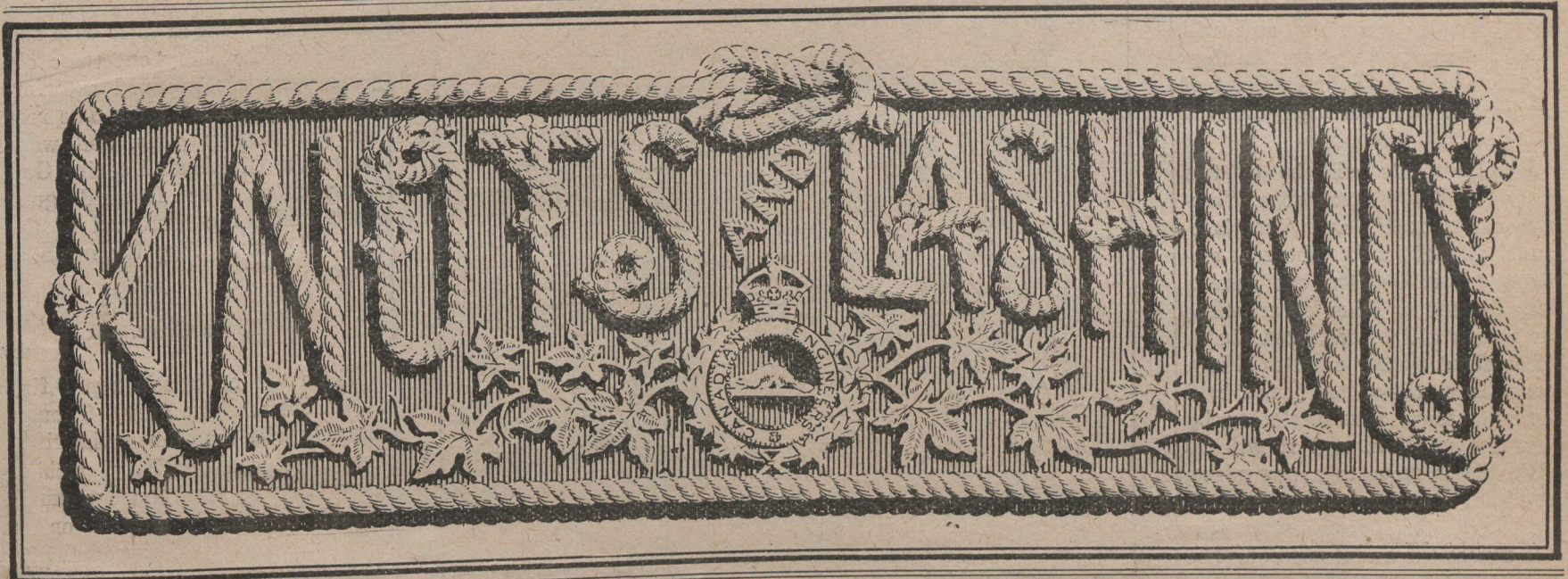


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# The Use of Machine Guns in Modern Warfare.

By Lieut. E. T. Adney, C.E.

## Machine and Automatic Guns.

The Engineers have a direct interest in the manner in which machine and automatic guns are used, since the construction of emplacements for these weapons is a part of their work.

There is a distinction between the two. Machine guns are less mobile, and their best work is done from fixed positions. The gun can be held steady on either a tripod, or by preparing a recess for a pivot which may be used by dismounting the tripod, and definite fields of fire can thus be provided for them when used defensively. Against such weapons, well arranged and concealed, sweeping with pre-arranged fire every avenue of enemy approach, and with such reinforcement as rifles may be able to give, it is practically impossible for an assault to succeed. Trenches and obstacles are sited whenever possible to check the enemy, and to divert him along lines of approach covered by flanking and enfilade fire. To offset this advantage, the attackers will seek to demoralize the defenders by overwhelming artillery fire, trench mortars, gas, etc.; by tanks and by surprise

attacks, consisting of a short bombardment followed quickly by the use of massed troops regardless of losses. To withstand these, the defenders will provide carefully organized counter battery work, successive lines of defense, concealed wire, cover against shell fire, protection against gas, and guns so placed that the element of surprise becomes an important factor. The whole is supplemented by air craft information, vigilant patrol work, and general alertness. Machine guns being the chief weapon, provision is made for their effective use at all stages, from the advanced front to the far rear.

The amount of protection that can be given machine guns and men, is governed by the enemy ability to destroy. The advanced guns may be in shell craters or sap heads in No Man's Land; others will be ready to fire from the parapet of the firing line, or over it from positions immediately rearward. The support line will have similar arrangements. There will also be strong points, concealed, along communication trenches, and at every position in which they may be concealed and at the same time connected with the main trench system.

The British use the Vickers-

Maxim, and the Colt, which can deliver 600 to 1,000 and more shots per minute. Some solid form of table must be provided. In soft ground the incessant recoil jams the tripod legs into the ground, and the gun is thrown off its line of fire. Board platforms, six feet square, or timber T's may be provided or, when these are lacking, ordinary sandbags are folded and placed underneath. By using the "adaptor", the M. G. pivot will

drop into a hole in either an upright log or a swinging arm.

The most advantageous fields of fire having been determined by means of the map and inspection of the ground, great numbers of positions are laid out, the guns working in pairs from emplacements which are within signalling distance of each other. The field of fire from each position, is so carefully worked out, that (by using the compass), they may fire

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".....And the old men shall see visions."

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