

NEW MACHINE GUNS ORDERED.

Vickers Recoil Type Will Replace Those That Jammed.

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, March 23.—The jamming of a machine gun at the time of the Villa raid at Columbus has been discussed among army ordnance officers as a confirmation of the decision within the past few months to displace the Benet-Mercier machine gun, which is an aerostatic type, by the Vickers gun, a mechanical-recoil type. The latter is a gun that was not in existence when the Benet-Mercier was adopted, and several army boards, after thorough tests with a number of competing guns, among which was the Vickers-Maxim, the Lewis, and several others, including the Belgian Government gun, decided that the Benet-Mercier was the best machine gun then in existence, and, in fact, the only one that would function surely and that was worth placing in the service.

The Government, therefore, from time to time has acquired these guns. In all either in use or building there are now 1,100 machine guns belonging to the United States Army and the Marine Corps, almost the entire number being the Benet-Mercier type, the few others being some that were bought for trial.

The tests of the Vickers gun had proceeded far enough before the war in Europe to demonstrate its value and it was decided to buy 135 of them as soon as they could be constructed and to add to this number from time to time until gradually they should entirely displace the Benet-Mercier gun.

There would have been several hundred Vickers guns now in use in the army but for the breaking out of the war in Europe. Those that are intended for the American army are to be built at the Colts factory at Hartford.

The New York Times

Published: March 24, 1916

Copyright © The New York Times