

Weapons of WW1

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Luger Pistol

It's well known for its wide use by Germany during World War I and World War II.

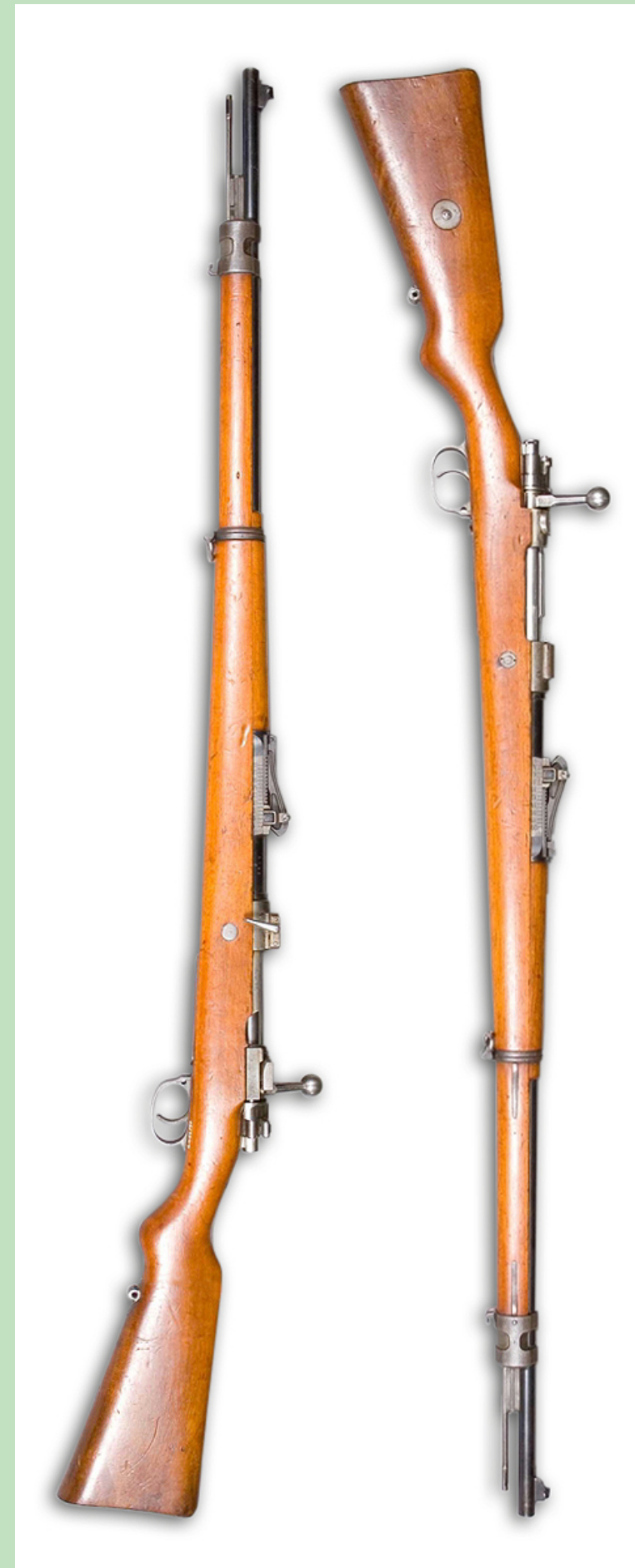
- The Luger was manufactured in 1900 for both military and commercial use
- It was the standard sidearm of the German military during the war and was also used by various other countries, including Switzerland and Bulgaria
- The Luger had an 8-round detachable box magazine and a loaded chamber indicator on the rear of the gun



Gewehr 98

As with all contemporary bolt-action rifles, it was a powerful and accurate rifle with long range that was poorly suited for the close quarter fighting of trench warfare.

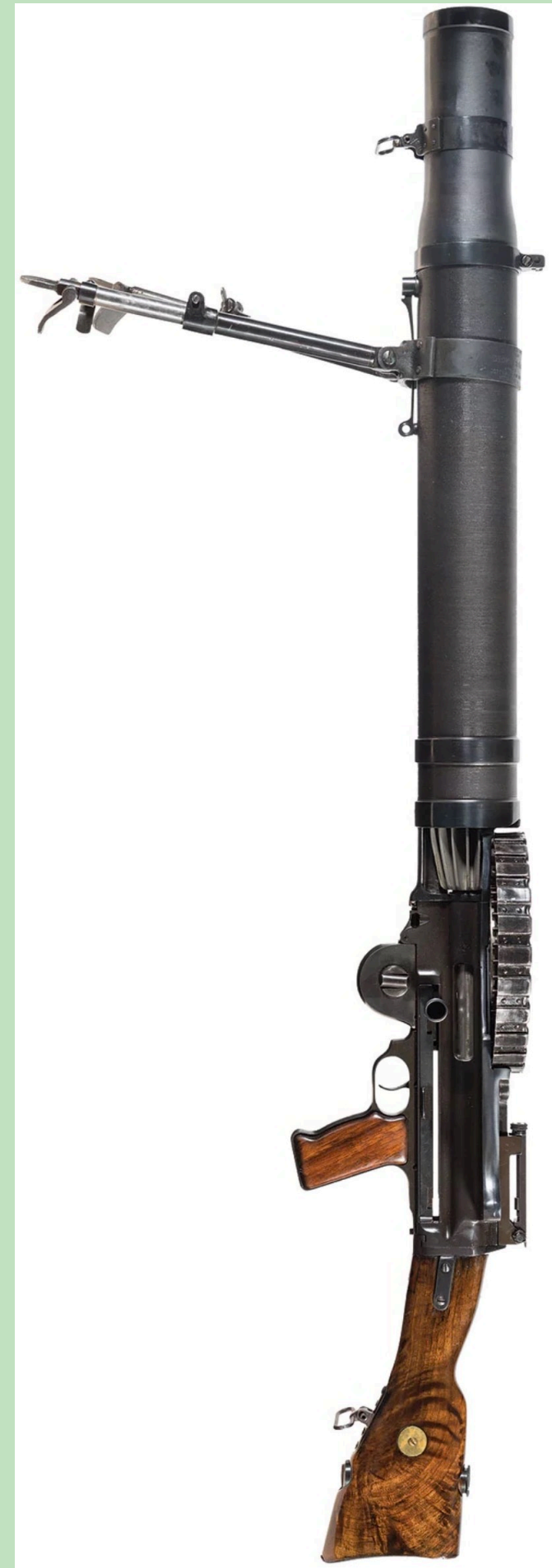
- The Gewehr 98 was known for its robust construction, reliability, and accuracy, making it a highly regarded rifle of its time
- It utilized a bolt-action system, where the shooter manually operated the bolt to load and eject cartridges
- The Gewehr 98 had a significant influence on subsequent rifle designs around the world. Its robust construction and bolt-action system served as the basis for many rifles that followed



The Lewis Gun

This gun saw extensive service with British and Australian forces during the First World War as a ground and aerial machine gun.

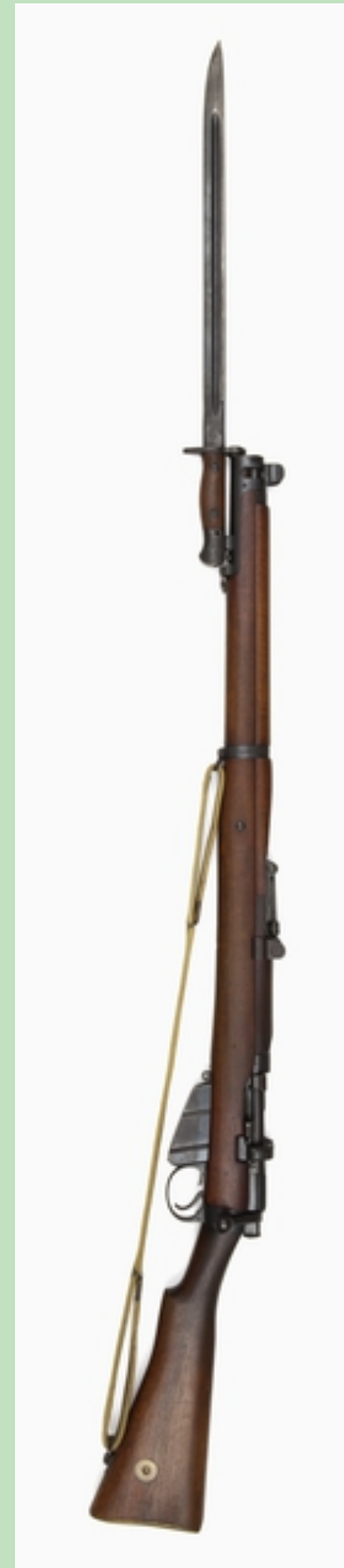
- The Lewis Gun was a lightweight and portable light machine gun that saw significant use during WW1
- The Lewis Gun utilized an innovative air-cooled design, which made it lighter and more portable compared to other machine guns of the time
- The Lewis Gun was highly versatile, capable of being fired from the shoulder or mounted on different platforms like tripods and aircraft. Its quick-change barrel system enabled sustained fire, and its adaptability made it valuable in various combat situations during World War I and beyond.



Bayonet

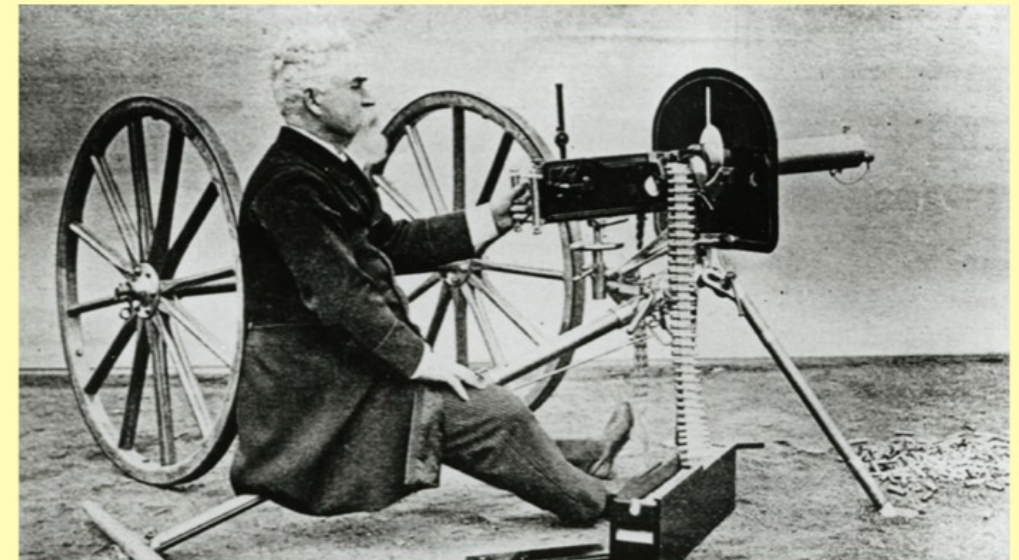
Added to the front of a standard issue rifle, it was to be used in cases of close combat.

- Unfortunately, the trenches rarely allowed for close combat (soldier-to-soldier). Bayonets were used to stoke the fire and pick lice from the seams of a soldier's uniform in the trenches
- Bayonets were primarily used for thrusting and stabbing, but some designs also incorporated cutting edges on the blade, enabling slashing attacks
- The psychological aspect of bayonet warfare often played a crucial role in the outcome of battles, as it could disrupt the enemy's morale and lead to a swift victory

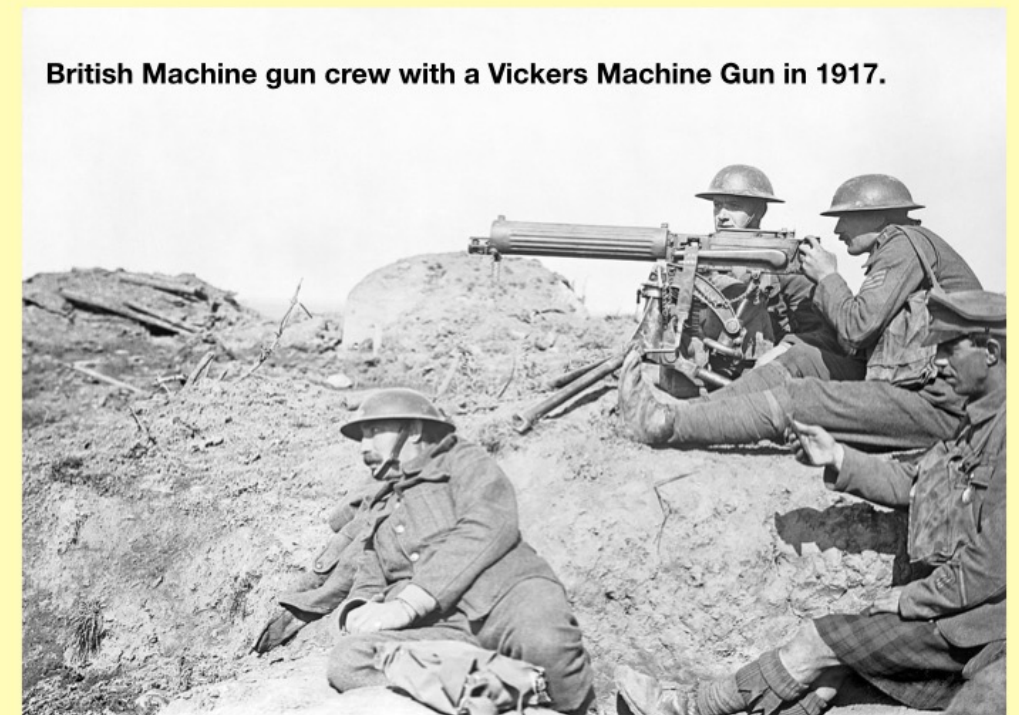


Machine Gun

- One of the most iconic weapons of world war 1.
- Revolutionized combat during war. Use of machine guns led to decline of cavalry force units, changed the art of war as we know it.
- The innovation of the Machine gun invented by Hiram S. Maxim, in the U.S, in 1884 led to the wider development of automatic firearms.
- Firing several hundred bullets per minute (450-600)— devastating, dominant weapons, especially when used against enemy troops on open ground.
- We're in widespread use by 1914. Early war machine guns were heavy and immobile, requiring multiple soldiers to use.
- At first only the Germans appreciated the power of the machine guns when used “on the defence from prepared positions with overlapping fields of fire.” Eventually most armies learned the lesson, that the machine gun, and the use of firepower, drove soldiers into the trenches.



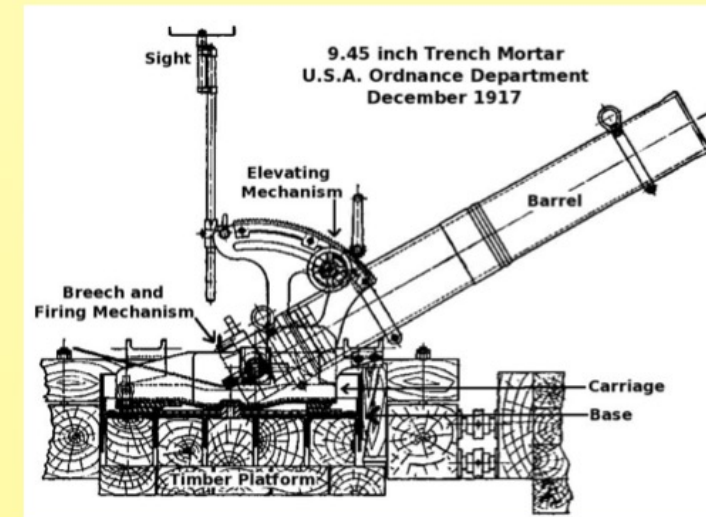
Hiram Maxim with his early version of the Maxim/ Machine gun.



British Machine gun crew with a Vickers Machine Gun in 1917.

Mortar

- Portable short barrelled, muzzle loading artillery piece that fires explosive projectiles at low velocities, short ranges and high arcing trajectories. The weapon is contracted with larger artillery pieces which fire at high velocities, long ranges, and low direct trajectories. Gunpowder weapons.
- Mortars are light enough to be carried so they can accompany infantry units through rugged terrain a vehicle could not. Disadvantages being the ammunition -- gets heavy and someone has to carry it.
- In world War 1, the Stokes mortar could fire as many as 25 bombs per minute, and had a minimum range of 732m, firing the original cylindrical un-stabilized projectile.
- British Empire units had 1,636 mortars in service on the Western Front at the Armistice.



Grenade

- Also known as hand bombs.
- Grenades could kill the enemy underground or behind cover. If not kill, they could also force the enemy out into the open making great rifle and machine gun targets.
- Start of war, Germans only trained special infantry troops/pioneers to use hand grenades.
- In 1915, the French were not prepared for the use and production of grenades. They didn't lack ingenuity though, and created their own projectiles out of canned beef, sardine and tuna cans. After eating the contents of the can, they loaded them with stones, shrapnel balls and explosive materials, and then inserted wick fuses.
- The British and Canadians used egg shaped hand grenades which can be thrown about 30 metres (10m less than German stick bomb) but carried a larger explosive charge.
- Whether factory produced or made in the field, hand and mechanically launched grenades had established their place in modern technological warfare. By 1917, all infantry carried grenades



Artillery

“Rolling barrages destroyed the earth of France and Belgium and the lives of many. Millions of shells were fired in single battles, with one million shells alone fired by the Germans at the French Army in the first day at the 1916 battle of Verdun, France.”

- Mortars had a short barrel, a higher curved trajectory and were mainly placed in trenches.
- Soldiers under fire could identify artillery by specific noises they made.
- Used to stop enemy troops from invading an area, or to bombard trenches and buildings with the enemy in it.



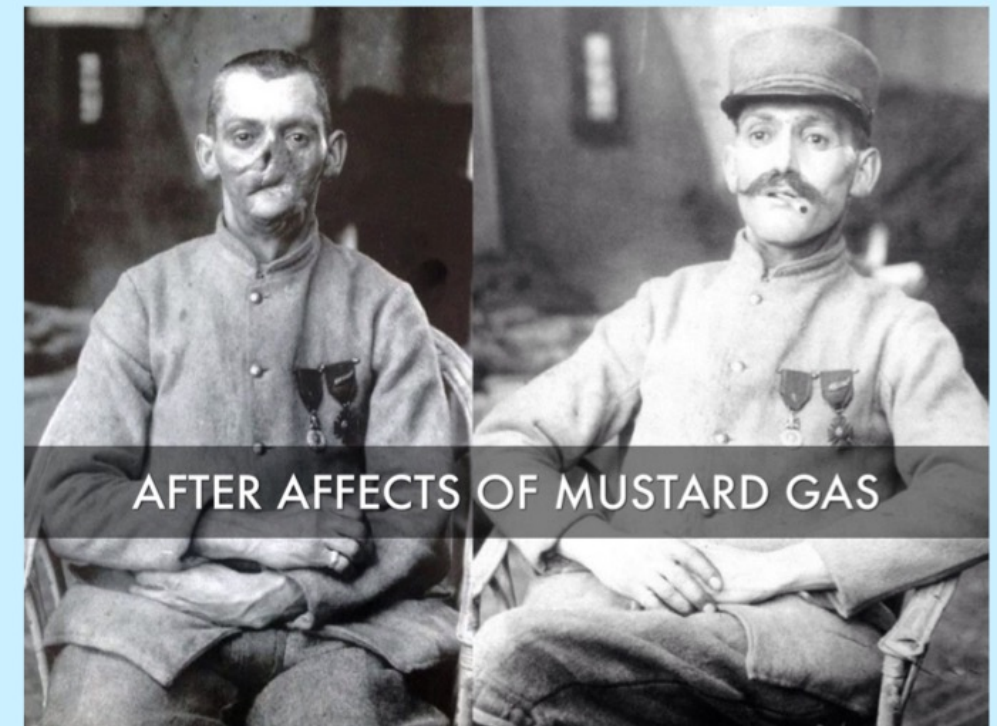
Chemical Weapons

Chlorine, phosgene, and mustard gas were used the most and approximately killed 90,000 people and 1.3 million casualties.

When chlorine gas entered their lungs it irritated the tissue and created a choking feeling that mostly resulted in death.

Phosgene gas is colourless and catches you by surprise, when soldiers were exposed they didn't know at first that they inhaled a fatal dose.

Mustard gas created abdominal pain, blistering yellow skin, bloody noses in the moment. Some long term effects from inhaling mustard gas chronic asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis.



Flame thrower

In 1915 was when the flame thrower was first used in combat. The Germans used them in an attack against French trenches near Verdun.

The flamethrower was used to flush out enemies and worked extremely well in the trenches.

Out of all the weapons that were introduced in this war the flamethrower was the most feared.

Even though it was effective the biggest disadvantage was that the soldier had to wear a heavy tank on their back that would also restrict their movement.

Even though it seemed like a super weapon it was not, it had short range and soldiers could only carry so much fuel.



Depth charge

Depth charges are cylinders full of explosives that were dropped into the sea or thrown at other ships.

Depth charges weren't as successful in the beginning of the war around 3% rising, 30% sunk and 30% damaged by the end of the war.

In 1915 the British made an attack on the Germans and ended up being unsuccessful.

A year later the British created another attack with a depth charge and successfully sank the UC-7.



Sub Machine Gun

The Sub Machine Gun was issued in the last year of WW1 (1918) by what the Germans called it the MP18 or the Bergmann Musquete.

This gun was mainly used for trench raiding because it fired so fast.

The fire rate for the gun went as high as 450-600+ rounds per minute.



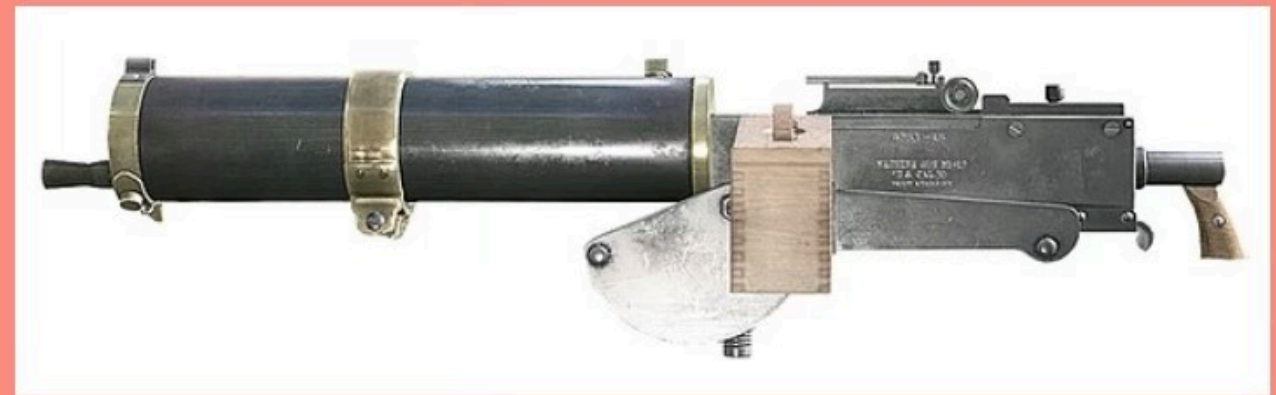
M1917 Browning machine gun

Fun facts

- It had a cyclic rate of 450 to 600 rounds per minute
- It wasn't around for very long in WW1 due to slow production rates. There were about 1200 in service total.
- It was used again in WW2, but this time they used armour piercing ammunition

What was it used for?

- It was used by the United States in order to gun down enemies quick and easy with high precision and fire rate
- It was often mounted on vehicles and it was used at a battalion level.



Rifle

Fun facts

- It was the most common weapon on the western front
- It had a max range of 2,280 metres, but its lethal range is 550 metres
- In august 1914, German soldiers mistook British rifle fire for machine guns because of the speed and precision.

How were they used?

- Rifles were a very standard weapon in WW1 and most soldiers in trench warfare possessed them
- They were used by every country in the war



Torpedoes

Fun facts

- It is an underwater missile designed to shoot at military submarines
- It can be fired from ships and submarines, or it can be dropped from aircrafts
- The first time a torpedo ship sunk their rivals without also sinking themselves was on May 26, 1877 during the Romanian war of independence.

How were these weapons used in WW1?

- They were used mostly by Germany, and they are largely the reason for the supply chain being disrupted in Britain.
- Britain also used torpedoes during the war, along with its allies.



Anti-tank rifle

Fun facts

- The Mauser 13 mm anti-tank rifle was the first and only anti-tank rifle to see service in WW1
- this gun was made specifically for WW1 and is no longer in service today
- This gun came around mostly due to the popularization of trench warfare

How was it used?

- this gun was used by the Germans to combat armoured war vehicles (tanks) during trench warfare
- It was also used against armoured soldiers because of its metal piercing ammunition



Sources + Who researched and made what?

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Sofia: Chemical Weapons, Depth Charges, Flamethrowers, Submachine Guns

Jasper: Anti-Tank Rifles, M1917 Browning Machine Guns, Rifles, Torpedos

Gwenyth: Artillery, Grenades, Machine Guns, Mortar

Cameron: Bayonets, Gewehr 98s, Pistols, The Lewis Gun