

## PMM BLOG ARCHIVE

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### John Browning's BAR, the M1918

(Pennsylvania Military Museum, T. Gum, Site Admin.)

Few names in American manufacturing history garner attention like John Moses Browning. Father to countless firearm designs and cartridges standing the test of time and countless trials by through combat, hunting expeditions, and competitions. It was perhaps his early work in the industry that continues to draw praise from veterans and historians alike. Next to the M1911, the M1918 is a firearm that was utilized by brave Americans in two World Wars.



Photo of M1918A2 (BAR), MM84.1.1A-C.

Pictured here is an M1918A2 that is part of the permanent collection of the Pennsylvania Military Museum.

The M1918, or rather, the Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR), first chambered for the 30.06 Springfield Cartridge, was designed by Browning in 1917 to meet the needs of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF). When the AEF deployed, they relied heavily on British and French arms, which proved to be ineffective and unreliable for the most part when faced with the realities (weather and tactics) of trench warfare. One such example being the French Chauchat.



Photo of M1918A2 (BAR), MM84.1.1A-C.

The BAR weighs approximately fifteen to twenty pounds, depending on variant and cartridge load. Featuring a detachable box magazine, it was capable of having a twenty or forty-round magazine loaded. This gave the weapon a firing capacity of approximately 600 rounds per minute, and an effective range of 1,500 yards though the 30.06 cartridge could be fired over 4,000 yards. It was just as common for the BAR to be used during assaults, perimeter security, and in machine-gun batteries.



As is the case with many arms after being first introduced, the BAR saw updates and changes. The final BAR in production was the M1918A2, produced in June of 1938. New features included a flash suppressor, skid-style feet on the bipod, and adjustable iron sights.



Photo of M1918A2 (BAR), MM84.1.1A-C.

Manufacture of the M1918A2, much like the first M1918, was soured to private industry. The BAR in the Museum collection was produced by the International Business Machines Corporation.

The AEF in World War One and the Soldiers and Marines of WWII would carry the BAR across much of Europe, and during the Pacific Campaign.

Five years after WWII, troops would once again take the BAR into action during the Korean War. It was even used in the early stages of the Vietnam War when it was supplied by the U.S. to the South Vietnamese forces. Finally, after serving for almost 40 years, in the 1957 the BAR was replaced by the M60.