

Worksheet 3 – Equipment.

In the early 19th century Napoleon said that an army marched on its stomach. No, he didn't mean that soldiers slithered along the ground like snakes. What he did mean was that if soldiers were to operate efficiently they needed a constant back-up supply of a bewildering range of stores and equipment.



Early British army uniforms were usually brightly coloured.

- Why was it later decided to change the uniform colour to khaki?



- Food was obviously important, but what else would a Quartermaster need to pack into a wagon supply train like the one above?

Number and identify

- Waist belt
- Shoulder strap
- Ammunition pouches
- Entrenching tool carrier
- Bayonet scabbard
- Mess tin cover



When fully loaded this complete set of soldier's backpack and webbing would weigh 37 kg. Could you lift it?



1914



after June 1915

- One item of the soldier's uniform has changed. What is it and why?
- What do you think is in the soldier's backpack? (answers below, but make your own list before looking).



Poison gas was in use as early as 1915. Primitive earlier versions of the gas mask were superseded by one of these later types by 1917.



Lee Enfield 303 standard issue rifle.

The backpack would hold personal items such as a groundsheet, blanket, change of underwear, socks, hard rations, and a small first aid kit. Some soldiers carried sweets, cigarettes, letters from home, cutlery, foot or lice preventive powder, boot laces, 'housewife' (sewing kit) soap, toothbrush and shaving kit. Did you think of anything else?