

Worksheet 6. Equipment



Ted Simper on his 21st birthday. He was an agricultural worker since leaving school at the age of 14.

When World War I broke out in 1914, Ted Simper from Fovant, like thousands of other men, left his civilian job to join the army.

Ted was just one of the thousands of young men, volunteers or conscripts, who were in military camps training to become an efficient fighting force prepared to fight for King and Country. Most of them were very young.

- Which King?
- How old was Ted in 1915?

(photographs courtesy of Roy Simper)



Ted Simper, 7th Battalion The Wiltshire Regiment 12.1.1915



World War 1 infantryman in full uniform. No front pack.

The civilian* recruits* needed to look like soldiers, and that meant uniforms. 19th century British army uniforms were impractical* and brightly coloured. In the early 20th century uniform styles were simplified and dyed a less conspicuous colour. A WW I soldier's basic* uniform consisted of a soft-topped peaked cap, a tunic with many pockets, trousers gathered into puttees*, and hob-nailed* steel capped boots.

- Camouflage* What is it? Write your answer, or paint a picture to show that you understand why it could be so useful in wartime.



Lee Enfield .303 rifle, standard issue to New Zealand infantry.



The steel helmet only came into service in 1915. The soft cap was still worn but the 'tin hat' became necessary. Why?



Poison gas was first in use in 1915.

Early types of gas mask were rushed into production.

This is a later type of mask dated about 1917.

All soldiers carried some items of basic military equipment while they were on active service. Their packs could also contain personal* 'creature comforts'. What do you think they could be?

Number and identify on the webbing picture

- Waist belt
- Shoulder straps
- Ammunition pouches
- Entrenching* tool cover
- Bayonet scabbard
- Mess tin cover
- Water bottle



Complete set of soldier's pack and webbing

The full set weighed 32 kg. Could you lift it?



* use a dictionary