

THE PATTERN 1908 WEB INFANTRY EQUIPMENT.

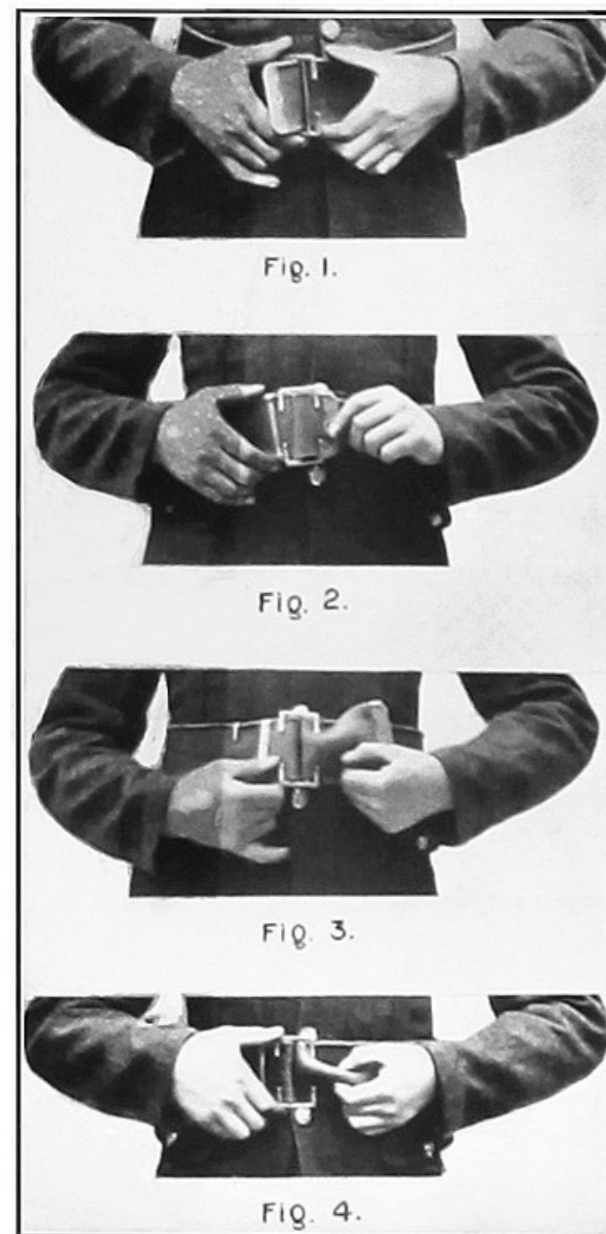


PLATE I.

Description of the Equipment.

All the buckles used with the equipment are of the tongueless or self-locking variety. With this description of buckle the free end of the strap is passed through the slot, over the central bar and under the horns of the other side of the buckle. (Plate I, Figs. 1 and 2.) The strap will then be found to be securely locked, and though it may be tightened up it will not slip back. The strap may either be threaded directly through the horns of the buckle, or one edge of it can be passed sideways in through the gate, the other edge being subsequently inserted by pinching up the web. (Plate I, Fig. 3.)

To unfasten the attachment all that it is necessary to do is to pinch the edges of the strap together at a point just outside the horns of the buckle, when the web will pass freely out between the horns. (Plate I, Fig. 4.) The strap has then only to be pulled out through the slot.

The large buckle on the waistbelt is constructed somewhat differently from the others, being a double one; the principle involved is, however, just the same.

The component parts of the equipment consist of the following:—

- (a) Waistbelt.
- (b) Frog.
- (c) Braces (2).
- (d) Cartridge carriers (1 left, 1 right.)
- (e) Pack.
- (f) Supporting straps (2).
- (g) Haversack.
- (h) Waterbottle carrier.
- (i) Entrenching tool carrier.*

(a) **Waistbelt.**—This is issued in three sizes, large, medium and small, the overall length of the webbing being 48, 44, and 40 inches respectively. The width in each case is the same, viz., 3 inches. It is fitted with a large buckle in front, and with two smaller buckles and two end pieces in the centre of the back. The length of the belt is adjustable about the buckle end.

(b) **Frog.**—This consists of a loop to slip on the waistbelt and a body fitted with two horizontal loops. The scabbard is inserted and pushed through until the stud on the outside comes out between the two loops.

(c) **Braces.**—These are interchangeable, and each consists of a strip of webbing 50 inches long and 2 inches wide. This width is increased to 3½ inches for a short distance about the middle of the brace, in order that the weight of the equipment may be evenly distributed on the shoulders. Each brace is provided with a sliding buckle for the attachment of the pack.

* According to the type of entrenching tool which may eventually be adopted.



PLATE V.—FIG. 2.



PLATE VI.—FIG. 1.

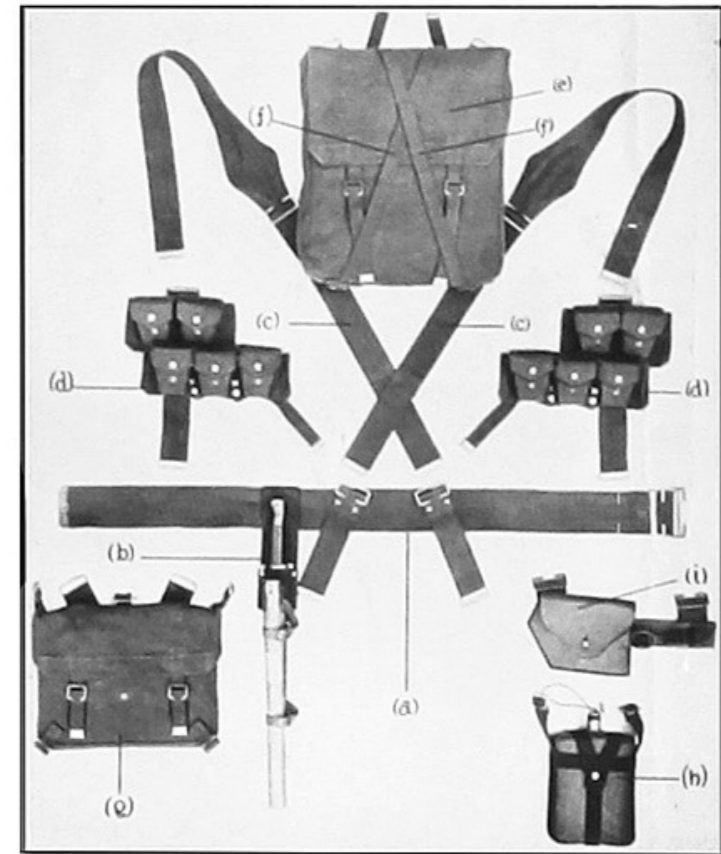


PLATE II.

(d) **Cartridge Carriers.**—These are not interchangeable, one being reserved for the right and one for the left hand side; in all other respects they are identical.

Each consists of an assemblage of five 15-round pockets in two tiers with separate covers secured by means of snap fasteners. An upper and a lower stud are provided for each fastener to be employed respectively when the pocket is filled and empty. The interior of each pocket is divided by means of partitions into three receptacles, each holding one clip of five rounds.

The carrier is fitted with a double hook at each end for attaching it to the waistbelt, to which it is further secured by two narrow bands passing round the belt and snapped on to studs on the lower front edge of the carrier. A buckle and end piece are fitted to the back, as also a narrower end piece set obliquely and protruding to the rear of the carrier.

(e) **Pack.**—This consists of a rectangular shaped sack, the dimensions of which are approximately 15 x 13 x 4 inches. It is open at the top and is closed by a folding cover secured by two narrow straps. Weather flaps are provided which fold down under the cover. Two web loops are attached to the bottom of the pack, through which the supporting straps (f) are passed. A short suspension tab is fixed to each of the upper corners on the side nearest to the wearer's back, also small buckles to which are attached the upper ends of the supporting straps (f).

(f) **Supporting Straps.**—These are interchangeable, and each consists of a strip of 1 inch webbing 32 inches long, fitted with a buckle at one end.

(g) **Haversack.**—This consists of a rectangular bag of dimensions (approximate) 11 x 9 x 2 inches, and has a cover secured by two small straps and buckles. The interior is longitudinally divided by means of a partition. The haversack is fitted on the back with two suspending tabs, at the ends with large buckles, and on the front with smaller buckles at the bottom corners.

Another small buckle is fitted to the top of the cover, and a stud is provided lower down on the haversack itself. These two last named attachments allow of the waterbottle being carried on the haversack under certain conditions.

(h) **Waterbottle Carrier.**—This consists of a skeleton framework in which the waterbottle is inserted and secured by a snapped-on retaining strap. The carrier is fitted with two buckles for attachment to the end pieces of the equipment, and has a short extension piece and snap fastener for use when the waterbottle is carried on the front of the haversack (when the haversack is carried on the back in place of the pack, see Sect. III, 16).

Plate II. shows the component parts of the equipment, and Plate III. an assembled set.



PLATE IV.—FIG. 2.



PLATE IV.—FIG. 3.



PLATE IV.—FIG. 4.

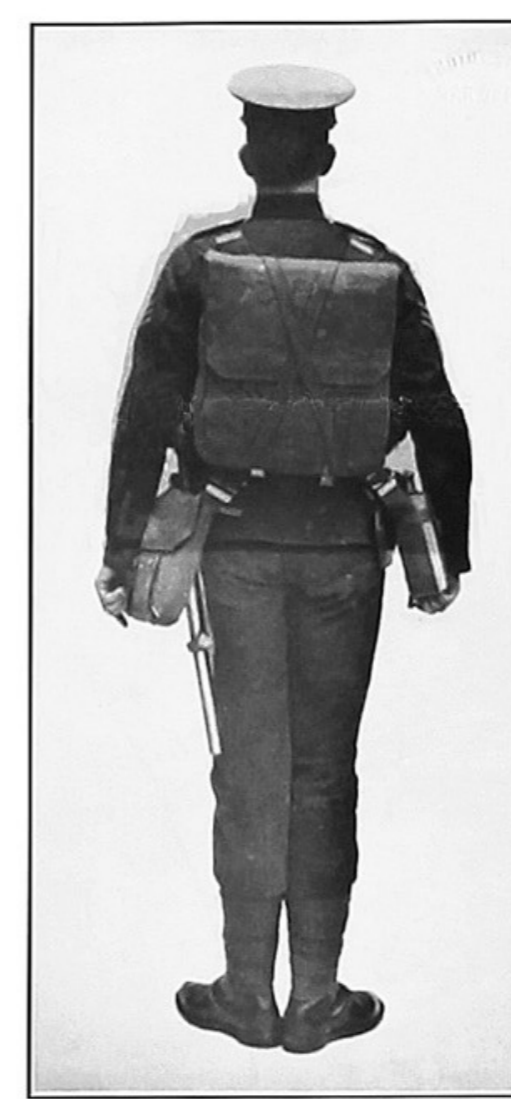


PLATE V.—FIG. 1.

To Assemble the Equipment.

As has been previously stated the design of the equipment admits of variations in the relative positions of certain portions of it, but the normal arrangement will be as now described.

(1) Adjust the waistbelt until it is comfortably tight, taking care that when fastened the large buckle comes in the centre of the body in front, and that the two smaller buckles are in a perfectly central position at the back. When the belt is fastened there should be about three inches of the running end clear of the buckle. The "outside" of the belt is the side on which the rear buckles are fixed.

(2) When the belt has been satisfactorily adjusted, lay it out on the ground, inside downwards and the large buckle to the right. Slip the bayonet frog over the tongue of the belt and bring it round to a position on the left hand side so that it will hang, when the belt is put on, upon the left hip. The exact position will vary with the physique of the wearer and can only be determined by experience.

(3) Attach the cartridge carriers on the outside of the belt by passing the double hooks over and under the edges of the belt. Their position on the belt may, as in the case of the frog, vary with each man, but speaking generally, the rear double hooks should be set close up to the rear buckles on the belt. When the position has been determined, pass the small securing straps round the inside of the belt and snap them on to their studs.

(4) Take one of the braces and secure one of its ends to one of the rear buckles on the belt, pulling it through the buckle until, in the case of an averagely tall man, it coincides with the fixed end piece on the belt. Pass the other end of the brace (taking care not to twist it) through the cartridge carrier buckle on the opposite side, and pull it through until it coincides likewise with the fixed end piece. Repeat this operation with the other brace.

Although each of the braces is symmetrical, that is to say, is reversible fore and aft, it is essential that their sliding buckles should be on the rear part of the braces, and so disposed that the open sides are next to the widening of the braces.

(5) Try the equipment on in its present state, getting into it as if it were a waistcoat. If it has been properly fitted the belt should rest in its natural position all round the waist, while the braces should show no slack in them. The latter will be crossed behind and come down vertically in front, while four end pieces will hang below the belt on each side, two being to the front and two to the rear, and one of each pair on top of the other. Make any necessary adjustments, then remove the equipment and lay it on the ground as before.

(6) Attach the haversack by its large buckles to the two outer end pieces on the left-hand side. Adjust it so that it hangs in a convenient position on the left hip without interfering with the drawing or returning of the bayonet.

(7) In a similar way attach the entrenching tool carrier to the inner end pieces on the right-hand side, adjusting it until it rests comfortably on the hip.

(8) Then similarly attach the waterbottle carrier (with the waterbottle in it) to the outer end pieces on the same side, and adjust both carriers until they ride comfortably.

The equipment as it now stands represents the "fighting" portion and will usually suffice for drills and manoeuvres (Plate IV). For marching order parades or on other occasions on which the pack has to be carried proceed as follows:—

(9) Paragraph 9a details the articles which are carried in the pack, and they call for careful packing if a neat and compact result is to be obtained. The mess tin should be the last article placed in the pack.

(9a) Articles carried in pack:—Greatcoat, socks, comforter cap, mess tin and cover, tooth brush, boot laces, housewife (fitted), towel and soap, razor and case, shaving brush, comb, pay book.

(10) Lay the assembled equipment face downwards on the ground and place the pack with the opening upwards upon it. Attach the buckle of one of the supporting straps to the narrow end pieces coming out from the back lower corners of one of the cartridge carriers, taking care that the buckle is as close up to the corner of the carrier as possible. Pass the end of the supporting strap through the web loop on the bottom of the pack and lead it diagonally across the front of the pack up to the small buckle on the opposite suspension tab. Pass it through the buckle, pull it as tight as it will go, and secure it. Repeat the operation with the other strap (Plate V).

As the correct balance of the equipment depends almost entirely upon these supporting straps, it is very important that they should be as taut as possible, as they then bind the pack tightly to the main body of the equipment and prevent it shifting.



PLATE III.



PLATE IV.—FIG. 1.

TO CARRY THE HAVERSACK AND WATERBOTTLE ON THE BACK.

(16) Lay the equipment on the ground and remove the pack, waterbottle carrier and haversack. Secure the cartridge carrier end pieces to the small buckles at the lower corners of the haversack. Draw the sliding buckles down the braces until they come into a convenient position opposite the fixed ends of the tabs with brass tips at the top of the haversack. Secure these tabs to the sliding buckles. The weight of the haversack should not be taken by these tabs, but by the lower corner buckles above mentioned. Lay the water-bottle carrier on the front of the haversack. If the water-bottle carrier is provided with the snap fastener and the haversack with the corresponding stud, snap the fastener on the stud and secure the extension piece on the carrier to the small buckle on the top of the haversack, pulling it well through.

If there be no snap fastener on the water-bottle carrier, a horizontal loop is provided on the flap of the haversack. This latter arrangement is provided in the latest makes of carrier and haversack (see paragraph (4)). Withdraw the extension piece of the carrier from the loop in the web piece running round the upper portion of the water-bottle, pass it through the loop on the flap of the haversack, then through the carrier loop and secure it to the buckle on the centre of the top of the haversack as before.

TO CARRY THE WATER-BOTTLE, HAVERSACK, OR ENTRENCHING TOOL SEPARATE FROM THE REST OF THE EQUIPMENT.

(17) Separate one (or both if required) of the braces from the rest of the equipment, and attach it (or them) by the ends to the article (or articles) which it is desired to carry. The ordinary method of slinging across the shoulder can be resorted to. (Plate VII.)

Care and Preservation.

When the equipment has once been properly fitted to each man it should be kept assembled as far as possible, although the pack need not always remain attached. It will be found convenient if, when a correct fit has been obtained, a light mark is made to show where each adjustment should always come. This saves trouble in case the equipment has to be taken apart and re-assembled.

The webbing should not be washed or treated with any description of dressing or preparation. Dust and mud (when dry) should be removed with an ordinary clothes brush. The metal work should not be polished but allowed to get dull, so as to avoid catching the rays of the sun.

Marking.

The component parts of the equipment will be marked in black, as was the case with the buff accoutrements.



PLATE VI.—FIG. 2.



PLATE VII.