

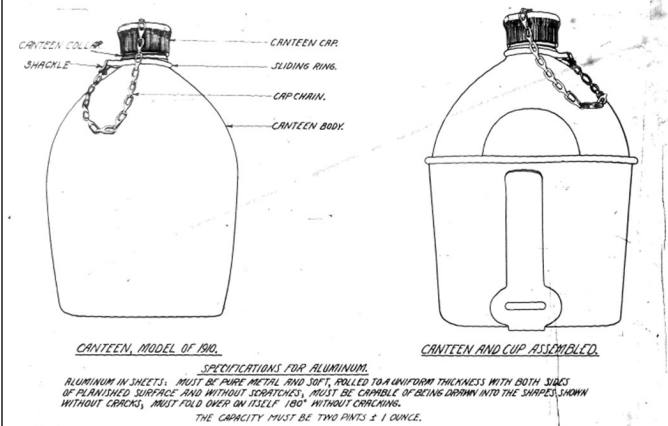


FROM THE ARCHIVES



M1910 Equipment Set

Continuing from last month. The 1909 equipment board designed a new set of infantry equipment that would become known as the Model 1910 equipment. While this revolutionized U.S. Army equipment only one really lasts to this day in (roughly) its original design. The modern canteen design in plastic was also attempted during World War Two. While we may not see the plastic canteen very often anymore the modern design for both are relatively unchanged since they were adopted in 1910. We at ASC manage the RIA archives and still have copies of the original board minutes and technical drawings as seen immediately above from 1916.



MONTHLY TRIVIA

- 1 Who coined the phrase no plan survives first contact with the enemy?
- 2 What was one commodity that overburdened the Grand Armee on their retreat?
- 3 Who was blamed for setting Moscow on fire as the Grand Armee marched into the city?

ANSWERS FOR MARCH 2023 QUESTIONS

- 1 After the Marian Reforms, on average, how much did the gear and equipment weigh that a legionnaire would carry? > 70 lbs.
- 2 The famous Roman Gladius was adopted from what modern day country in the Third Century BCE? > Spain
- 3 On what date was Julius Caesar assassinated? > 15 MAR 44 BCE

If I were to say logistics is a matter of life and death, in this crowd, I would be preaching to the choir. However, I would also be joined by at least 300,000 French soldiers who died as a direct result of poor logistics planning and over confidence. By the time Napoleon Bonaparte turned his eyes to Russia in 1812, his grande armée consisted of nearly half a million men. It was the largest military force ever assembled in the history of Europe. Most of the continent was within the domain of the French Empire, with the notable exceptions of Britain, who had the worlds largest navy to protect them and Russia, which lay many hundreds of miles east across barren, inhospitable lands. Foreseeing a change in allegiance, Russia, due to their increased cooperation with Britain to form an economic alliance and time being of the essence, Napoleon invaded Russia with his army.

On 24 June 1812, the first wave of the multinational Grande Armée crossed the Niemen river into Russia. Through a series of long forced marches, Napoleon pushed his army of almost half a million rapidly through Western Russia, now Belarus, in an attempt to destroy the separated Russian armies. After an 83 days of forced marches, typhus outbreaks, water shortages and a bloody battle at Borodino, Napoleons army marched into Moscow, which had been set on fire by the Russian military governor. The city was culturally and logistically important however was not yet the Russian capital, St. Petersburg was the existing capital. Victorious, Napoleon awaited the terms of surrender from the Tsar Alexander which were certain to come. After five weeks of waiting with his narrow supply lines being threatened and the Russian winter approaching Napoleon decided to make winter quarters further west. During five weeks the march changed into an all out retreat. After fighting the Russians and the weather only 49,000 of the almost half million men marched into France.

Napoleon had made extensive preparations for provisioning his army prior to the start of the campaign. The French supply effort was far greater than in any of the previous campaigns. Twenty train battalions, comprising 7,848 vehicles, were to provide a 40-day supply for the Grande Armée and its operations, and a large system of magazines were established in towns and cities in Poland and East Prussia. However, nothing was to go as planned, because Napoleon had failed to take into account conditions that were totally different from what he had experienced so far. The Soldiers of the Grande Armée were used to living off the land while on campaign to reduce the logistics need, which had worked well in the densely populated and agriculturally rich central Europe with its dense network of roads. Forced marches in Russia made troops do without supplies as the supply wagons struggled to keep up. Additionally horse drawn wagons and artillery were stalled by lack of roads which often turned to mud due to rainstorms.



Inadequate supplies played a key role in the losses suffered by the army and demonstrated the reliance that the army had placed upon foraging. The Russian opponents recorded wholesale surrenders of starving members of the Grande Armée even before the onset of the frosts. Men on campaign were described as swarming over and cutting up horses that slipped and fell, even before the horse had been killed. The French simply were unable to feed their army and their starvation led to a general loss of cohesion that led to poor performance on the battlefield. In addition the constant harassment of the already over stretched French Army supply lines by Cossacks added to the losses and confusion during the retreat. This lesson would be remembered throughout history as a defeat of planning and logistics.

Holocaust Remembrance



Each year, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum leads the nation in commemorating Days of Remembrance. The week of remembrance is set aside to honor and remember the victims of the Holocaust and their liberators.

Approximately 6 million Jews and some 5 million others, targeted for racial, political, ideological, and behavioral reasons, died in the Holocaust. More than one million children were killed. Days of Remembrance raises awareness that democracy's institutions and values are not sustained passively. They must be actively appreciated, nurtured, and protected. This observance illustrates the catastrophic results of allowing xenophobia and racism to take root in any society.