

## *Monthly Showcase - January 2010*

### *A very early Bergen*

Large rucksacks, typically Bergens, were introduced for Royal Marines Commandos in the middle of the Second World War. Prior to the issue of Bergens, Royal Marines, like British Infantry, would have had a small pack attached to their 1937 Pattern Web Equipment (as pictured). Bergens were more useful in combat than webbing packs due to their detachability, and the ease of access they provided to objects contained within. The metal 'A' frame also meant it supported the back better when carrying large loads.

This featured rucksack would have been one of the first used by Royal Marines when it was issued in 1942 to a member of 'A' Royal Marine Commando. 'A' RM Commando was the first Royal Marines Commando raised and later became 40 (RM) Commando. This rucksack was used by a member of the demolition platoon, which meant, in addition to carrying his own kit in the Bergen, he had to carry explosives as well. Packs of this type were likely to have been issued to demolition platoons of 'A' RM Commando involved in the Dieppe raid of August 19th 1942.

