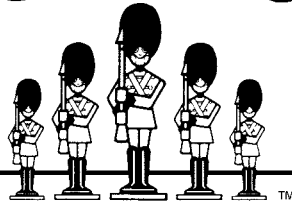


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The Journal for Collectors

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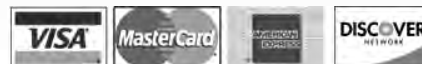
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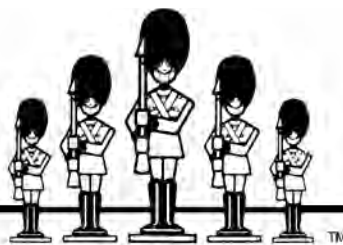
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**ON THE COVER**

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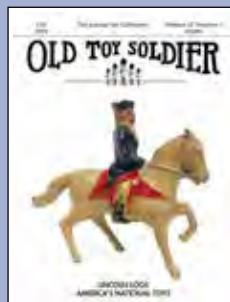
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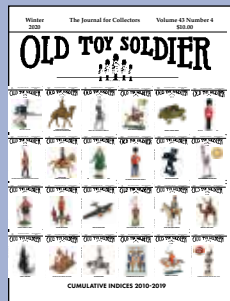
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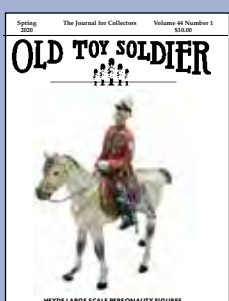


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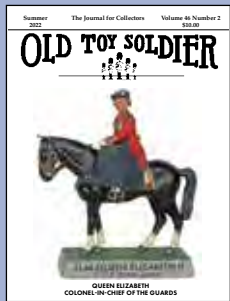


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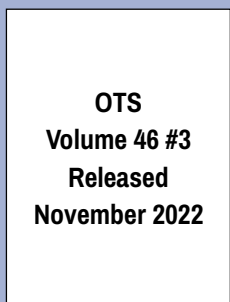
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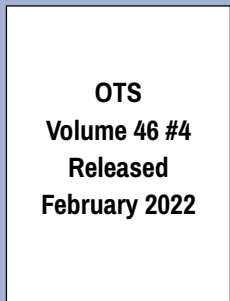
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# EDITORIAL

As 2022 draws to a close, and the nights draw in, it is a good time to reflect on the state of the hobby. Undoubtedly the pandemic has had a big impact and accelerated a number of underlying trends. The internet has become even more important as a means of marketing and finding toy soldiers, while virtual events have become the norm in many aspects of life.

However, it is face to face encounters which remain the life blood of our hobby. There is no real substitute for getting together with lifelong friends and “chewing the fat” over a beer or two. And while high quality images can provide a taste of what it is like to home in on new treasures, there is no substitute to being able to inspect the item “in the flesh”.

This issue contains a number of show reports on events held on both sides of the Atlantic. These suggest that the hobby is in rude health. This is in no small part a result of the Herculean efforts of both show organisers and dealers, not to mention punters, prepared to travel long distances



to catch up with friends and track down that elusive piece needed to complete their collections. Things are on the up!

Thanks are due to our event reviewers, and all those who take the time and effort to contribute to our magazine. This includes our cartoonist Luigi Toiati and regular contributor Russ Bednarek, who has provided a review of the latest issue of Zinnlaube.

Hopefully, readers will enjoy the results of the hard work and meticulous research from these, and all our other, contributors in this issue. Robin Forsey's work on very early U.S. manufacturers, Stan Alekna's continuing efforts to document Dimestore rarities, as well as Richard Forrester's detailed examination of the early history of GW Wood and the Hill company, are all based on detailed research. Others have been beaver away to explore the fascinating world of Britain's Swoppets (see my book review below), while Norman Joplin continues his examination of post WWII hollowcast manufacturers, with his piece on the rebranding of Johillco. Regular contributor Bill Anderson turns his focus to some of Britain's South American troops, focussing on Argentina and Uruguay. Last, but by no means least, Bill Hanlon rounds things off with a whimsical piece on the “March of the Wooden Soldiers”.

Why not give it a go and try putting pen to paper on the topics that “float your boat”!

# HOBBY NEWS

## In memoriam: Ronald Cadieux; 1934-2022 *by Will Beierwaltes*

Long-time toy soldier and antique toy collector Ron Cadieux passed away May 24th, 2022. Ron was a constant fixture at the Chicago Toy Soldier show from its earliest days. He always had tables full of the most unusual and eclectic ephemera, besides his American dimstore soldiers, which were his great passion. His interests ultimately expanded into all types of American antique toys, and he became a constant attendee of the Kane County Toy show outside Chicago. A long-time Twin-Cities resident, he helped resurrect and develop the Northland Toy Antique Toy show in Saint Paul. He was always someone who knew a lot more than he let on and had a vast knowledge of dimstore figures and vintage toys. He contributed articles to OTSN on this and related subjects.

“Ronnie” had a wry and disarming sense of humor, was always flirtatious, and just loved the hobby and those he met in it. He was often accompanied by his daughter Michelle who became quite an accomplished toy dealer in her own right before her untimely passing in 2021. Ronnie served in the US Army from 1955 until 1957. After that he worked in telecommunications with Western Electric, Northwestern Bell and finally retired from AT&T. His work allowed him a variety of travel opportunities around the world which he relished. He was also an accomplished scuba diver. Ronnie had a zest for life, even in his later years when mobility issues limited his travels. He was one of the anchors of the twin-cities collectors, and his presence and unbridled enthusiasm for toys and those who collected them will be sorely missed. Ron will be interred at Fort Snelling National Cemetery on August 9.





# AUCTION PREVIEW

OLD TOY SOLDIER



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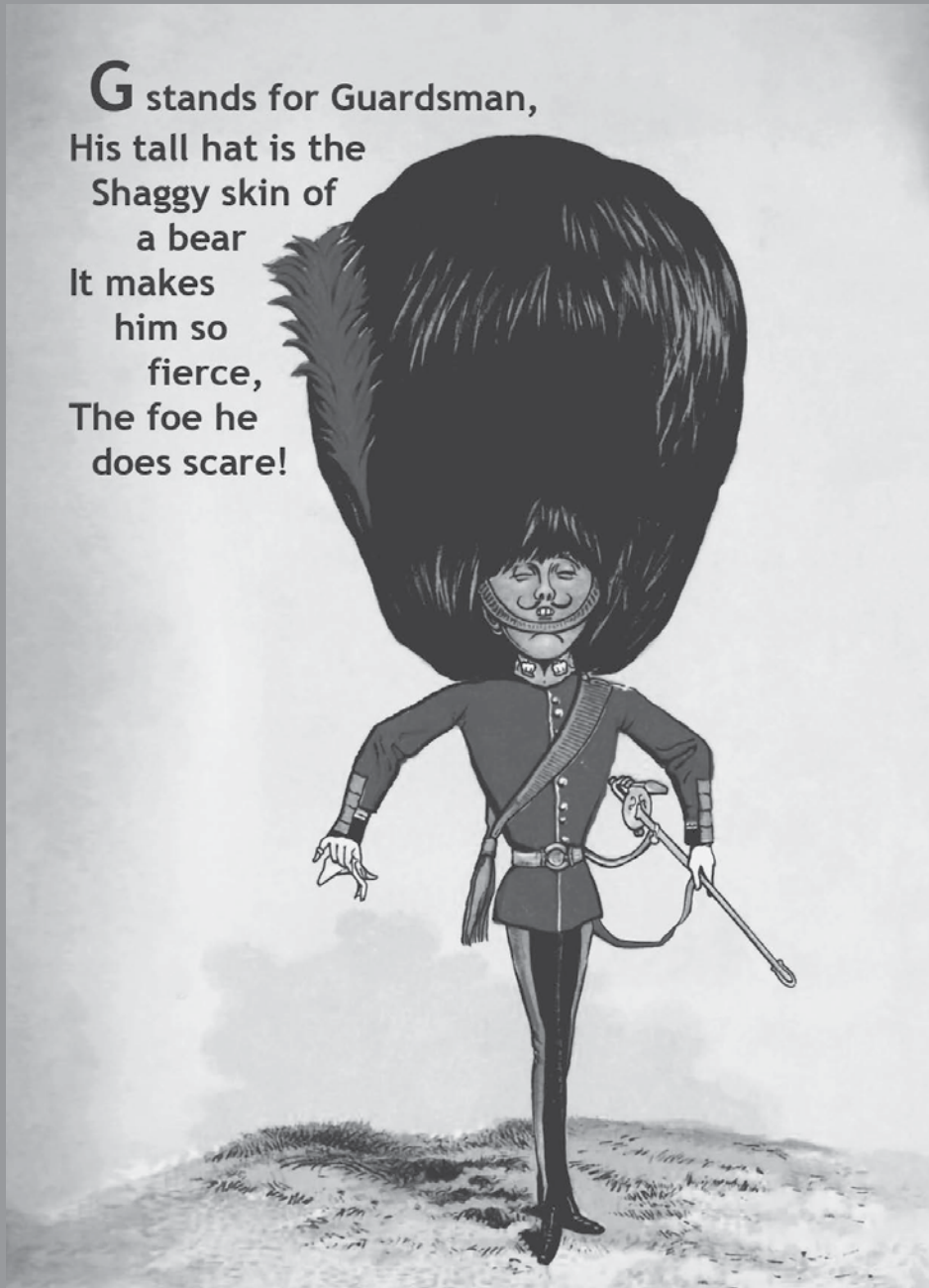
# AUCTION PREVIEW *(Continued)*



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# MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS A RARE BARCLAYS FIND

*By Bill Hanlon*

Every family has their holiday traditions and one of ours is watching the movie "March of the Wooden Soldiers" on TV each year around Christmas. Originally released as "Babes in Toyland" by Hal Roach Studios on November 30, 1934, this holiday classic featured Oliver Hardy as Ollie Dee and Stan Laurel as Stannie Dum. These bumbling idiots worked for Toyland's toymaker and mixed up an order from Santa Claus when they made 100 wooden soldiers at 6 feet tall instead of 600 wooden soldiers at 1 foot tall. This catastrophic mistake cost them their jobs, but by the end of the movie the pair had attained hero status when those same 100 wooden soldiers saved Toyland from the dreaded Bogeymen.

In 1950 the title was officially changed to "March of the Wooden Soldiers" and in 1991 the film was restored and colorized. Of course, there was much more to the storyline than the wooden soldiers, but they were the main attraction for me, as toy soldiers were my favorite toys growing up. I started seriously collecting them in the mid 1960s when I discovered a cigar box full of well-loved Barclay and Manoil soldiers given to me by my uncle in 1951, shortly before he boarded the USS Philippine Sea (CV-47) and headed off to the Korean War as the carrier's chief radio operator.

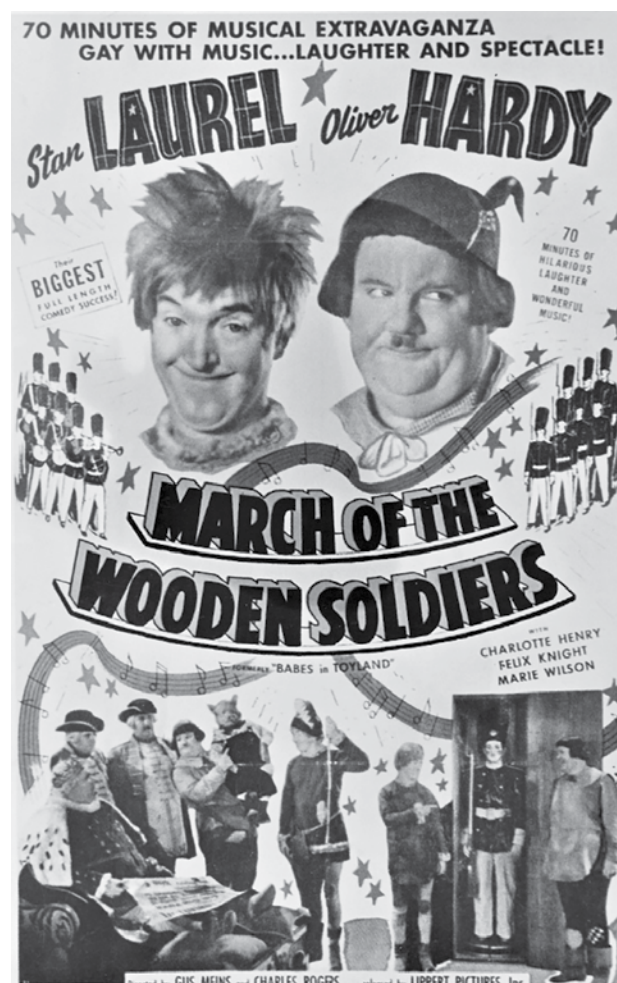
Jump ahead to the late 1970's and thanks to a dedicated group of collectors including Norm Joplin, Don Pielin, and

Richard O'Brien the histories of our beloved Dimestore soldiers and figures began to take shape. In the years that followed the subject was sliced and diced to the point that today there is precious little that we don't know about these uniquely American toy soldiers, figures, and vehicles.

Richard O'Brien and I became good friends over the years and shared a common interest in surfing and the Bergen Toy and Novelty Company, the New Jersey company that made the world's first plastic toy soldiers in 1938. It was on a phone call to Richard around Christmas one year when the subject of our favorite holiday movies came up. When I told him how much I looked forward to watching "March of



Luigi Toini  
2022



Poster advertising "March of the Wooden Soldiers"

Two film stills from "March of the Wooden Soldiers"

# MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS

## A RARE BARCLAYS FIND *(Continued)*



the Wooden Soldiers” he reminded me that Barclay had taken their B36 short-stride Cadet with rifle and created B37, a “wooden soldier” that was obviously inspired by the movie. At that time there were just two known examples and both were in the possession of George Fall, Barclay’s former shipping manager.

As our hobby grew over the years, some Dimestore soldiers and figures that were originally listed as rare began showing up more frequently and were eventually taken off the rare list. Barclay’s wooden soldier wasn’t one of them. The last I heard there were possibly only four known examples whose whereabouts are currently unknown.

I had given up looking for Barclay’s wooden soldier many years ago, then on the morning of May 10th 2022 I was having my morning coffee, watching the news on CNN, and casually searching eBay when something caught my eye. I came across two lots of Dimestore soldiers and figures being offered by a New York antique dealer, who was not a toy soldier collector.

The first lot ended on May 16th and was listed as “8 – All-Nu Products Band Majorette Flag Bearer Lead Figures Good Repaint?” This lot had 18 bids and sold for \$392.99. I was a bidder, but didn’t place the winning bid. My guess is that they were all near mint examples.

The second lot ended on May 17th and was listed as “7 Lead Figures Navy Flag Bearer Cadets Cast Iron Cowboy & Indian”. Even though the auction photos were fuzzy I immediately spotted the elusive wooden soldier, who looked to be in excellent shape. This lot had only 7 bids and sold for \$160.28. As luck would have it at the very last second, I placed the winning bid.

Richard O’Brien once told me Barclay introduced their short-stride soldiers in 1934 and since “Babes in Toyland” debuted in November of that year, it makes perfect sense to me that since Barclay was already making a cadet with rifle (B36), why not see what the same figure would look like painted as a wooden soldier and possibly cash in on the movie’s success.

Now the question is with less than a handful known to exist, where are the rest? My theory is that the extra paint steps required and perhaps the difficulty painting the eyes and cheeks, just made the wooden soldier too labor intense, so it was never actually produced. And, the few examples that have surfaced over the years are the original paint samples keep by the Barclay factory until they closed in 1971 or were taken home by an employee when the project was scrapped in 1934.

If any of you out there in “Dimestore Land” have a Barclay wooden soldier please let me hear from you.

Bill Hanlon

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Castro Valley, CA 94546  
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Website: [www.usdimestore.com](http://www.usdimestore.com)



Barclays B37 - “Wooden Soldier”



# MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS A RARE BARCLAYS FIND *(Continued)*

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Front view



Barclays "Wooden Soldier" –  
compared with the B36 short-stride Cadet



Rear view



Bases compared



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# JOHN HILL & CO - A NEW DISCOVERY AND SOME OLD PHOTOS OF THE HILL FACTORY

By Richard Forrester

In the Summer 2022 edition of *Old Toy Soldier*, a summary of the known John Hill & Co. registered or marked dated toy soldiers was outlined for collectors. A new discovery adds to that list and poses more questions about the early years of the company and suggests that there are still more rare John Hill & Co. toy soldiers to be discovered.

The very nicely sculpted figures pictured below are, at approximately 58mm scale, a rare oddity for John Hill & Co. who, while they did produce a few larger 80mm figures, predominantly kept to 54mm scale as their standard.

This larger scale is one more commonly seen used for B.M.C. figures and suggests the probable sculptor of this figure was George W. Wood, the elder of the Wood brothers who ran John Hill & Co. until the second World War. George Wood is not thought to have worked at John Hill & Co. but perhaps he sculpted this figure for them. Like the John Hill & Co. blue coated Hanoverian Prussians<sup>1</sup>, which were a design registered with the Board of Trade, the depiction of a non-British soldier produced in very small quantity makes these Austro-Hungarians rare and quite curious.

The grey colour of the uniform suggests that the figures may even be Serbian Army. Whether Serbian or Austro-Hungarian, either way the British public interest in the Austro-Hungarian theatre of World War One would have been early in the war (1914-1915 see below) and as such it is likely the figures would have been produced in 1915. This is within the date range for the other known dated John Hill & Co. figures.

If you have one of these Austro-Hungarians in your collection which has a clearer marking, please send us a photo as we would really like to confirm the dating of the figures.

Extract from Wikipedia

*The Serbian campaign was the series*



J. Hill marked Austro-Hungarian or Serbian figure dated 24.X.XX likely produced in 1915  
(Rob Wilson collection)

*of campaigns launched against Serbia at the beginning of the First World War. The first campaign began after Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on 28 July 1914. The campaign to "punish" Serbia, under the command of Austrian Oskar Potiorek, ended after three unsuccessful Austro-Hungarian invasion attempts were repelled by the Serbians and their Montenegrin allies. Serbia's defeat of the Austro-*

*Hungarian invasion of 1914 ranks as one of the great upsets of modern military history.*

*The second campaign was launched, under German command, almost a year later, on 6 October 1915, when Bulgarian, Austrian, and German forces, led by Field Marshall August von Mackensen, successfully invaded Serbia from three sides, pre-empting the Allied advance from Salonica to*



Britannia Row (1950) Side elevation of 22-24 Britannia Row in Angel, Islington, with visible chimney ducts belonging to a smaller building which had been demolished. This area suffered from bombing in 1940. The cobble street and most of the buildings were redeveloped in post war rebuilding in 1950s by the Islington Council. Image © London Metropolitan Archives (City of London)

<sup>1</sup> Forrester, Richard, John Hill & Company: the early years. OTS, Summer 2022, p11-25.



# JOHN HILL & CO - A NEW DISCOVERY AND SOME OLD PHOTOS OF THE HILL FACTORY (*Continued*)

help Serbia. This resulted in the Great Retreat through Montenegro and Albania, the evacuation to Greece and the establishment of the Macedonian front. The defeat of Serbia gave the Central Powers temporary mastery over the Balkans, opening up a land route from Berlin to Istanbul, allowing the Germans to re-supply the Ottoman Empire for the rest of the war. Mackensen declared an end to the campaign on November 24, 1915. Serbia was then occupied and divided between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Bulgaria.

## Old post WWII photos of John Hill & Co's Britannia Row premises

John Hill & Co.'s pre-WWII factory and warehouse was located at 2 to 22 Britannia Row, Islington only a little over half a mile (1kilometre) from The Angel, Islington.

The building, together with others in the immediate vicinity, and John Hill & Co's plant and equipment suffered extensive bomb damage on 15 October 1940 and again on 16 April 1941. This was one contributing factor for why the Wood brothers decided to sell the business to Mr J. M. Standing and Mr. J. Cooper in 1945, who moved production of Johillco figures to Burnley in Lancashire.

No photographs showing the extent of the bomb damage to the Britannia Row building have been located, although the photograph showing the Britannia Row in 1950 gives an indication. Shortly after this scene was taken the larger part of the Britannia Row building was torn down and rebuilt.

Photos of the area from 2012 recently sent in by Stephen Dance, member of and archivist for The British Model Soldier Society, give a very good indication of what section of the original Johillco factory was rebuilt, and therefore what the extent of the bomb damage must have been.

The building, as it is in the present day, has been further altered and identifying the history of the structure is not as clearly obvious as it is from viewing Stephen Dance's photographs.

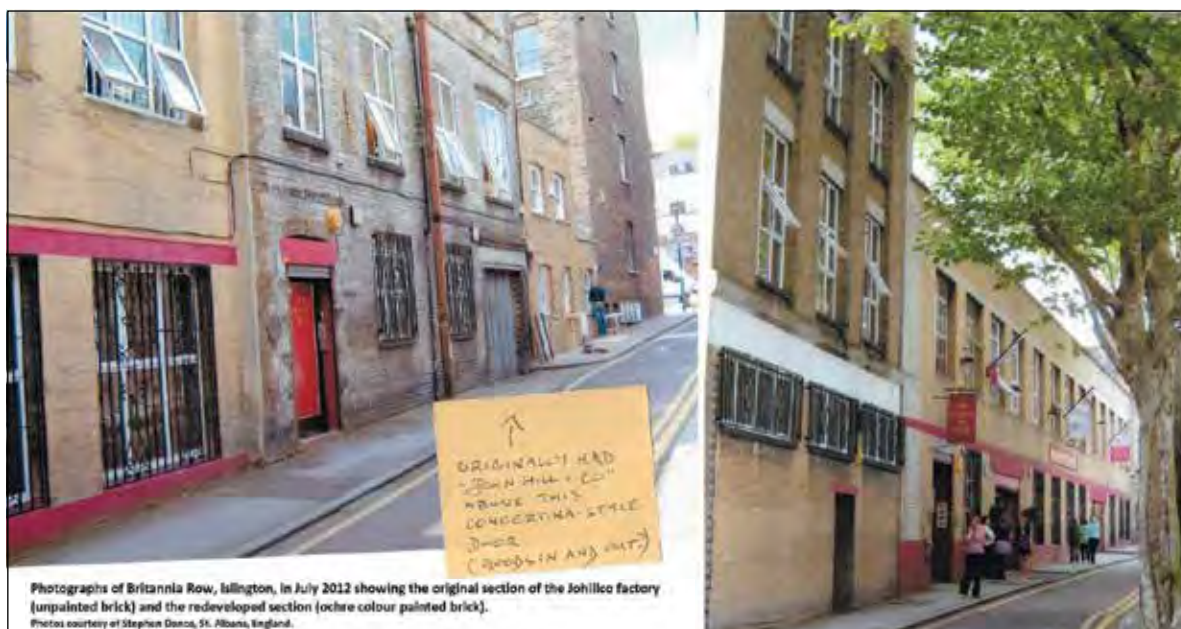
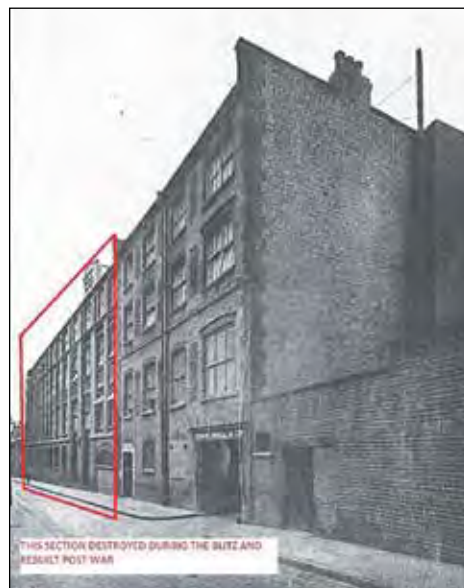
Comparing Stephen's photographs with a picture of the building as it was in 1929, we can now identify how much of the building was rebuilt, and therefore come to understand the significant bomb damage that the Johillco factory sustained during World War II.

The fact that many of the original John Hill & Co. moulds survived the damage and were later used by Standing and Cooper to continue the production of

Johillco figures now seems remarkable.

And, if you're interested to look at Britannia Row on Google Street view, see if you can spot the John Hill & Co. 'ghost' sign on the north-west facing wall of the old section of the building. The sign originally read

Britannia  
Works  
John Hill & Co  
Metal Toys  
Manufacturer





# AUCTION PREVIEW

## OLD TOY SOLDIER



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# THE REBRANDING OF JOHILLCO, CIRCA 1952: BRYTA MODELS

(INCLUDING THE AZCO CARDS, ARBENZ, FYLDE MANUFACTURING COMPANY,  
MONARCH, SOVEREIGN AND METASOL SERIES)

*By Norman Joplin*

The post-World War two firm of John Hill and Company was owned and operated by Burnley Lancashire resident and business owner Alex Standing. Mr. Standing and several partners purchased the pre-war moulds from the Blitz damaged premises of John Hill and Company in London, (trading as John Hill and Company Metal Toy Manufacturers). The company was renamed John Hill & Co (Metal Toys Ltd) in 1945 and production relocated in Burnley. Mr. Standing's previous trade name of Alstan was used from time to time.

Many of the pre-war Hill items were discontinued and other new figures introduced into the catalogue up until 1952. John Hill /Johillco products were exported to the USA extensively after World War two in order to help earn dollars for post war austerity Britain, many of the new products with an American theme.

In 1952 I was treated to a holiday in London. My grandmother had recently died, and my Great Aunt arrived in England from her home in South Africa. Arrangements were made for my mother and I to accompany her on a trip to London (my first visit, I was 6 years old). The highlight of my visit was a trip to Gamages Department store in Holborn, where on display in the toy department were rows of sectionalized wooden trays, each section with a different type of toy soldier.

My memory is vivid and amongst the figures were some of those illustrated in this article. I recall my mother and great aunt Annie buying me 5 figures. At the time, and in the intervening years up to the early 1990s, I could not identify the maker, as none were



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**BRYTA MODELS include . .**

## **Cavalry**

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Irish  
Welsh

## **Highland Brigade**

Black Watch  
Gordons  
Argyll & Sutherland  
Seaforths  
Cameron

**Royal Marines and  
Infantry of the Line**



Pictures 1-3: Bryta Models Brochure, introducing the "Monarch Series". NJ

# THE REBRANDING OF JOHILLCO, CIRCA 1952: BRYTA MODELS (INCLUDING THE AZCO CARDS, ARBENZ, FYLDE MANUFACTURING COMPANY, MONARCH, SOVEREIGN AND METASOL SERIES) *(Continued)*



Pictures 4: Inside page from the Bryta Models Brochure. NJ



Picture 5: Games and Toys Magazine advertisement 1952

The name Bryta Models was prominent in the brochure, but still no clue was apparent about the actual manufacturer. An advertisement from 1952 Games and Toys, see Picture 5, showed some of Bryta toy soldiers, along with items recognized as John Hill and Fylde Manufacturing Company. There was obviously now a connection between Bryta and Hill.

In the early 1950s, the newly re-established John Hill and Company was looking for new branding, and perhaps an advertising firm. They worked in conjunction with two companies in order to redesign, market and advertise some of their existing range, as well as issue new figures. Arbenz was a toy distributor and Azco Cards a Greetings Card manufacturer. Both operated out of Birmingham.

John Hill had employed a new sculptor in the early 1950s called John Groom. His designs were quite distinctive in that the heads of some of his Hill figures were somewhat larger and a little out of proportion to the rest of the Hill range.

New brand names for Bryta models were to appear on some of the newly designed sets, including the Sovereign and Monarch Series, an attempt in my view to capitalize on the issue of ceremonial figures for the upcoming Coronation in 1953.

On page 21 of the Great Book of Hollow Cast Figures I included a picture of another original boxed set which was sold in a Metasol box. The figures included therein are identical to those sold under the Bryta brand name.

The striking resemblance between the figures in the Metasol box and some of those produced by Johillco & Fylde Manufacturing Company is evident in the images that follow. For example, the Guards models at the slope and at attention are very similar to Hill's figures, while the Pipers are the same castings as used by the Fylde

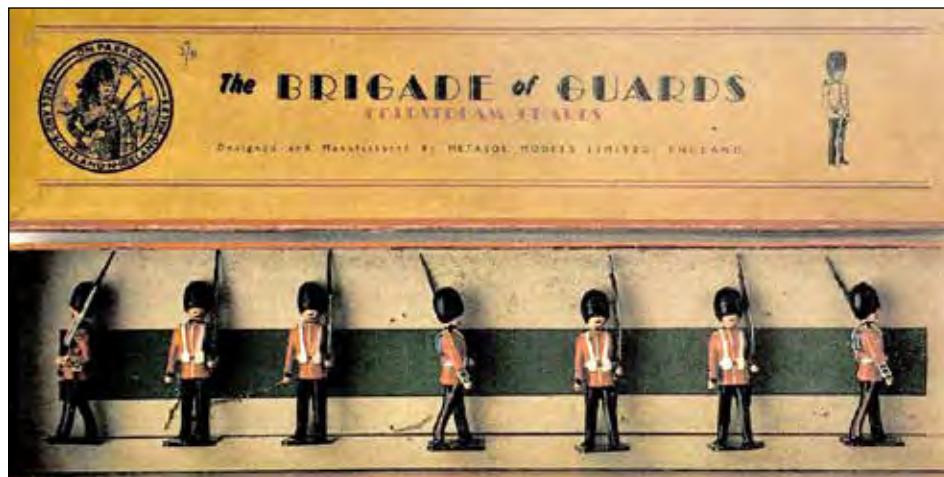
marked with a maker's name. In the Great Book of Hollow-cast Figures (GBHF) I detailed some of the items that I had obtained up until publication in 1993. Subsequently, I have been able to identify definitively these early acquisitions.

On a visit to Texas in 2016 I visited a former employee of Peter Blum's Toy Soldier Shop in NYC who had saved some of the ephemera when the store closed. Among the catalogues and lists was the brochure shown here in Pictures 1-4.



# THE REBRANDING OF JOHILLCO, CIRCA 1952: BRYTA MODELS

(INCLUDING THE AZCO CARDS, ARBENZ, FYLDE MANUFACTURING COMPANY,  
MONARCH, SOVEREIGN AND METASOL SERIES) *(Continued)*



Picture 6: Guards by Metasol. NJ



Picture 7a: Highland Brigade in Monarch box with Fylde pipers. NJ



Picture 7b: Another Monarch series box, Grenadier Guards. RW

Manufacturing Company, but painted with different tartans.

Boxed sets are rare, but a number were purchased at the Chicago Toy Soldier Show some years ago. by British collector and OTS Editor, Rob Wilson. This enables us to pin down the definitive name of the company distributor from what is printed on the boxes (see pictures 8 & 9 below).

These include two set of pipers, painted as Gordon and Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and three sets of foot guards. The latter represent Guards from 1814, 1914 (with box packs) and 1953 in full dress. One box contains all three figures and is labelled "*Guards in history 1814, 1914, 1953. No 114.*" Another is described as "*Welsh Guards 1914. No 109.*" This contains Guards marching at the slope, with box

packs and full equipment. The third foot guards box contains Coldstream Guards marching at the slope without equipment, but with distinctive red plumes. It has been numbered by hand as No. 120, but this may possibly have been in reference to the Britain's set rather than its original number! The two sets of pipers are numbered 126 and 128. The implication is that there may have been many more sets, representing other regiments.

The "Monarch" advertisement shown in Picture 5 contains images of what appear to be a Johillco Field Marshal, as well as a Highland Piper by the Fylde Manufacturing company. The other figures illustrated in the advertisement were all new designs and should be attributed to Bryta *et al.*

The Fylde Manufacturing Company had close ties with Johillco, as did the company of Cherilea, both employing Wilfred Cherrington as designer. Fylde were box manufacturers. They were owned by a Mr. Duckworth who was married to one of the daughters of the owner of John Hill company. It is fairly certain that Fylde figures, as well as all of those designated as Bryta, were manufactured by John Hill. Fylde probably simply supplied boxes, which were then filled by Hill. See the discussion below about the moulds acquired by the West Falls Toy Soldier Company New York for further evidence about the links between Hill and Fylde.



Picture 8: Castings for Hill moulds owned by West Falls Toy Soldier Company (owner Ken Wittenrich) showing the "new" larger head figures introduced in the early 1950s, including the Fylde Waterloo Highlander.



# THE REBRANDING OF JOHILLCO, CIRCA 1952: BRYTA MODELS

(INCLUDING THE AZCO CARDS, ARBENZ, FYLDE MANUFACTURING COMPANY, MONARCH, SOVEREIGN AND METASOL SERIES) *(Continued)*



Picture 9: Fylde Sample box of 6 Pipers with London Backdrop. NJ



Picture 10: Fylde Card with 3 Pipers and London Backdrop. NJ



Picture 12: End labels for the various sets in Picture 11 and 7b, with descriptions of contents. RW



Picture 11: AZCO / Arbenz, cellophane fronted boxes (marked Sovereign series). RW



Picture 13: Label inside the lid of the Bryta Monarch Series Brigade of Guards box shown in 7a. RW



# THE REBRANDING OF JOHILLCO, CIRCA 1952: BRYTA MODELS

(INCLUDING THE AZCO CARDS, ARBENZ, FYLDE MANUFACTURING COMPANY,  
MONARCH, SOVEREIGN AND METASOL SERIES) *(Continued)*



Picture 14: Back of Sovereign Series boxes. RW

Azco Cards, Arbenz, Bryta Models, Fylde Manufacturing Company, Metasol, Monarch, Sovereign, all seem to be associated in some way with Johillco, but the precise connection was unclear until my good friend Ken Wittenrich of the West Falls Toy Soldier Company in New York sent me a comprehensive set of pictures of items made by him from a large collection of original

Johillco moulds purchased in the 1980s.

Recently, to confuse matters further, I located a Halberd Castings boxed set with Fylde Pipers tied in which bear a similar paint finish to the Bryta Models. It also included Phillip Segal figures. We know that Halberd reissued a number of Philip Segal castings in new packaging



Picture 15: Halberd Castings Ltd, boxed set with the same Fylde pipers and side drummer (now painted as Scots Guards). The base drummer and side drummer on the right are Segal castings. NJ



Picture 16: Johillco Field Marshal also shown in the Arbenz/Monarch advertisement (in Picture 5 above). NJ

(for example the Russian Cossack and the mounted Royal Canadian Policeman). Halberd castings were made from moulds acquired at auction in Blackpool, near the Fylde factory during the early 1950s.

Bryta Models advertised in a Hampshire newspaper in October 1952 for representatives to sell the product to high class toy shops. Arbenz Ltd placed advertisements in the toy trade magazines of the time, introducing the "Monarch Series". Azco Cards and Arbenz had the same address at 33 Ludgate Hill, Birmingham 3. Bryta Models was the trade name used by these companies. They were responsible for distributing figures, based on newly designed models by John Groom. Groom was responsible for the Black Watch Pipe Band amongst others. The Bryta figures have a distinctive, slightly larger, head than those marketed by Hill. Fylde figures were also closely linked to the Bryta models series, but these were also made by Hill. As noted earlier, Fylde specialized in boxes only.

Regular Hill figures were also used in the Bryta range, including the mounted Field Marshal for example. Fylde Pipers were also included in Bryta models range.

As noted above, there are many other trade names that were used in advertising, with some of these trademark names being printed on boxed sets, as shown in the accompanying images. These included Sovereign and Monarch, as well as Azco Cards and Arbenz. I had previously identified Monarch as the maker of the Waterloo Grenadier, but it is apparent from the "Guards in History, 1814, 1914 and 1955" boxed set shown here that this was also marketed under the Arbenz label.

Hill Guards at attention and at the slope were slightly adapted to fit the Arbenz series, with a slightly bigger head.

# THE REBRANDING OF JOHILLCO, CIRCA 1952: BRYTA MODELS

(INCLUDING THE AZCO CARDS, ARBENZ, FYLDE MANUFACTURING COMPANY,  
MONARCH, SOVEREIGN AND METASOL SERIES) *(Continued)*



Picture 17: Guards and Fusilier at attention by Bryta (on the left) and Hill NJ



Picture 18: Bryta Guards at attention, with and without greatcoat. NJ

figures issued by Hill. The mould for this was included amongst the batch of Hill moulds that Ken Wittenrich now owns.

Fylde also issued boxed sets containing "Famous" Regiments in History. These included a Waterloo Highlander, Waterloo Foot Guard Grenadier (the 1815 Grenadier and several sets of Guards from later periods, see above, as well as various cavalry regiments (including Household cavalry, Dragoons, Hussars and Lancers). A future article in OTS will cover the cavalry Regiments listed in the Bryta Models/ Monarch brochure.

- Royal Marine (RW)
- Royal Marine in Tropical Dress - described as the Malta Regiment by Arbenz (RW) (The Malta Regiment was raised for a fourth time in 1931 as the "King's Own Malta Regiment". Initially on the British Establishment, in 1951 it was transferred to the Malta Territorial Force before becoming part of the Malta Land Force on Malta's independence in 1964. A contingent of troops from Malta marched in the 1953 Coronation procession)
- Infantry of the line (RW)
- Royal Army Ordnance Corps (Blue Uniform, white facings) (RW)
- Royal Army Ordnance Corps (Blue Uniform, red facings) (RW)
- Azco / Arbenz / Bryta "Waterloo" Grenadier Guard (NJ)
- Footguard without equipment (RW)

Preparations for the 1953 Coronation were taking place at about the same time as Bryta announced the issue of these sets, which were given a much more detailed paint finish than those sold under the Johillco brand name. They were therefore probably designed and marketed by Bryta in preparation for the upcoming Coronation in 1953.

The Arbenz series included Flag Bearers. These used a modified version of the standard Arbenz Guard figure, with an arm change. The body was re-sculpted to include the cross belt used to support the flag. Examples of all five of the Guards regiments can be found, distinguished (in particular) by the plumes on their busbies. This flag arm was never used on any other



Picture 19a: Individual foot figures issued under the Bryta / Arbenz label or associated trademarks



Picture 19b: Individual Highlanders issued under the Bryta / Arbenz label or associated trademarks: Black Watch Waterloo Highlander, Cameron at the slope and a piper



Picture 19c: Highland Regiments - Gordon, Argyll & Sutherland and Cameron Regiments



# THE REBRANDING OF JOHILLCO, CIRCA 1952: BRYTA MODELS

(INCLUDING THE AZCO CARDS, ARBENZ, FYLDE MANUFACTURING COMPANY,  
MONARCH, SOVEREIGN AND METASOL SERIES) *(Continued)*

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Picture 20: Fylde Waterloo Highlanders in Original Box. RW



Picture 21: Guards at the slope, 1814, 1915 with equipment and 1953



Picture 22: Arbenz Flag Bearers from various Guards Regiments were issued – here are the Grenadier Guards – Other regiments were distinguished by their plumes (or absence thereof in the case of the Scots Guards) and possibly by slightly different painting of the flags. RW



Picture 23: Welsh Guards Colour Party. RW



Picture 24: Scots Guards Colour Party. RW



Picture 25: Coldstream Guards Colour Party, one of the red plumes overpainted by a previous owner! RW

# THE REBRANDING OF JOHILLCO, CIRCA 1952: BRYTA MODELS

(INCLUDING THE AZCO CARDS, ARBENZ, FYLDE MANUFACTURING COMPANY,  
MONARCH, SOVEREIGN AND METASOL SERIES) *(Continued)*

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Picture 26: Royal Marines in castle style packaging  
(John Hazlett)



Picture 27: Sovereign Series trademark on the box (John Hazlett)



Picture 28: Fylde Brigade of Guards with side drummer, boxed set. RW



Picture 29: Bryta Irish Guards with equipment, and two Flag Bearers. NJ

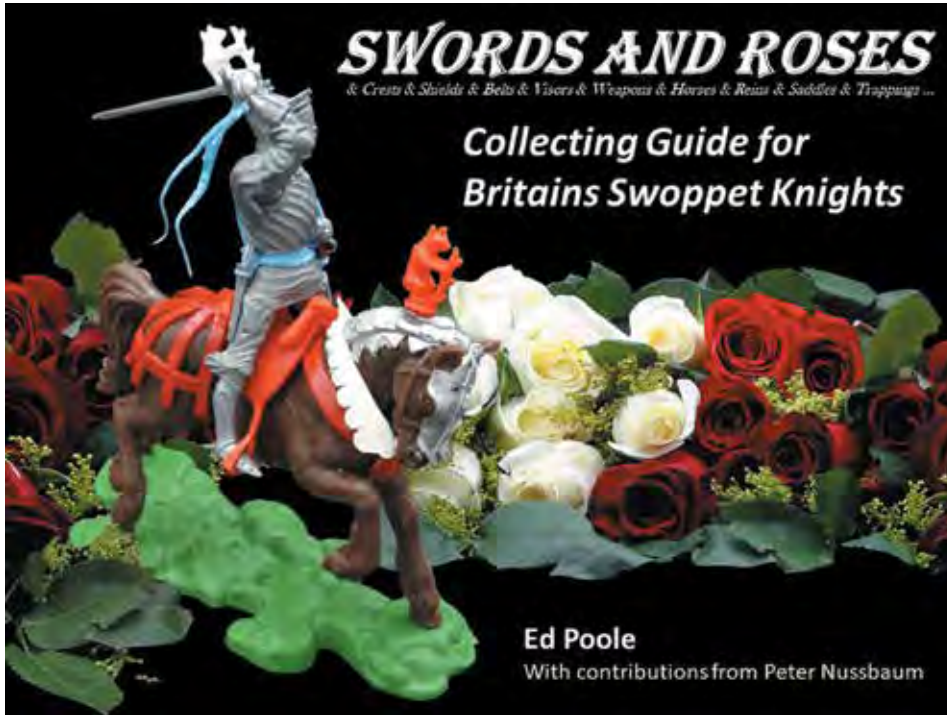


# BOOK REVIEW

## Swords and Roses – Collecting Guide for Britains Swoppet Knights

by Ed Poole (with contributions from Peter Nussbaum)

A review by Rob Wilson



I can vividly recall, as a child, peering through the windows of Hannants toy store in Lowestoft, England, gazing in wonder at Britains latest offerings – “the Wars of the Roses”. In 1959 this was the latest in the novel Swoppet range, offering unbreakable figures but more importantly the ability to modify poses and many other details by swapping parts around from one figure to another.

Brilliantly sculpted, the full range included 4 mounted knights in full armour on their destriers, plus 6 on foot, including men at arms as well as cross and long bowmen. Even the boxes served as medieval tents. Detachable swords, with separate scabbards, daggers and lances – the play value was enormous. They made all the figures produced by Britains’ competitors look very pedestrian by comparison.

The only drawback was price. These miniature masterpieces were well beyond the means of my meagre

weekly pocket money. Steps had to be taken to increase income by taking on odd jobs! Soon enough funds were assembled to allow the purchase of the full range. The Wars of the Roses were then refought many times over on the living room carpet, centred around a

Triang fort (not quite a medieval castle, but beggars can’t be choosers).

All these memories came flooding back as I opened this brilliant new book by Ed Poole and Peter Nussbaum.

Everything you ever wanted to know about Britain’s Swoppet Knights. Not just swords, daggers and lances, but crests and shields, visors and other weapons, horses, reins saddles and trappings. It is all here in meticulous detail, tracing the history of their development, experiments with different materials for the various different components. If you want to know the rarest figures, this is your book.

It comprises some 200 pages, hardbound. Obviously, it is aimed at specialist collectors of Britains Swoppet Knights, but it will appeal to a much wider readership, including everyone who loves toy soldiers (especially knights!).

It covers every major aspect of the subject that I can imagine. The basic



# BOOK REVIEW (Continued)

default factory configurations are of course covered, plus detailed discussion of rarities and their values, including boxed sets. Restoration, repair and counterfeit components are also covered in some detail, with advice to collectors of things to look out for when buying.

A comprehensive set of images are presented covering all of this, with hundreds of high-quality photos. Check lists containing up-to-date information on every known component are included, covering the standard elements most commonly found to rarities (including previously undocumented variants).

If you are hoping to use this book to collect all the possible Swoppet Knights produced, forget it! As the book explains there are millions of possible combinations. Nevertheless, with the help of this book you can have fun trying!

Designed and sculpted by Roy Selwyn-Smith, this series of figures is probably one of the best Britains ever produced. Despite the aim of providing play value with swappable components, these figures are remarkably accurate in terms of armour, clothing and weapons, as well as being brilliantly captured in lifelike and wonderful action poses. Ed Poole and Peter Nussbaum convey all this in a well written volume, based on extensive and meticulous research. Lavishly illustrated with great photographs, this book is a joy to look at as well as read. It is hard to find anything to criticise. An index would have been helpful, but it is not too difficult to navigate ones way around. My only real gripe was that I could not find the 1st version tent packaging that so impressed me as an 8 year old.

The rectangular cellophane fronted monstrosities that replaced them were nowhere near as good!

I cannot recommend it more highly: an essential item for those interested in knights, Swoppets or just toy soldiers generally. Add it to your bookshelf today!



Two images from the book – this one illustrating rarities riding steeds adorned with rare yellow blankets



And this one showing two foot knights with “swopped” components enabling just 2 of the literally billions of different possible combination of parts (see the book).

## Price and publication details

*The book can be purchased for \$74.95 + shipping at the author's website ([www.SwordsAndRosesBook.com](http://www.SwordsAndRosesBook.com)).*

*Also available periodically on eBay.*

*Hardcover, landscape format, 11"x 8.5"*

*ISBN: 978-0-578-35896-3*

*200 pages, containing almost 600 color photos*



# The WEST COAST TOY SOLDIER Show and Sale FEB. 26, 2023



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# EMPIRE IN EL DORADO – BRITAIN'S ARGENTINIAN AND URUGUAYAN TROOPS

*By Bill Anderson*

## *Introduction*

During the 19th century, the newly independent states of Latin America became Great Britain's most profitable export market.

By 1825 virtually the entire Latin American continent had won independence from Spain and Portugal. Besides the expansion of trade and the settlement there of British subjects and the investment of British capital, the foundations of Britain's economic pre-eminence had been firmly established.

Advantageous trade treaties meant that British goods flowed in an uninterrupted stream to Latin America. It was to this vast untapped market that Britain exported, not only goods but her technical expertise. In Argentina the British communities numbered around 30,000 in the 1890s. Buenos Aires boasted a cricket and polo ground. They were served by two English Language newspapers and shopped at the local branch of Harrods.

By 1913 British investors had sunk one thousand million pounds into Latin American railways, harbours, ranches and mines. The new countries built up a thriving export trade to Britain in return. The British had obtained the fruits of Empire without the burdens and at the same time, they helped increase the wealth of the host countries.

## *Harrods in Buenos Aires*



Images from the Harrods store circa 1914.



In 1914 Britain's most prestigious department store Harrods decided to open an overseas branch in Buenos Aires. It opened on the central thoroughfare of Florida Street at a time when Buenos Aires was one of the wealthiest cities in the world. It expanded in 1920 to take up almost an entire block. Wealthy people came to Harrods to buy imported luxury goods and for many years it was the

city's most elegant department store.

The building, along with neighbouring Gath and Chaves, reminds us of splendour and elegance gone. This beautiful Belle Époque building was known for its ornate interiors, which included wrought iron balustrades, marble staircases and cedar flooring. The landmark was crowned by an 8th Story cupola.

Britains began exporting to Argentina in 1924. By then there was a growing middle class who could afford these relatively expensive imported toy soldiers. Department stores such as Harrods and possibly also Gath and Chaves were major outlets for Britains in Argentina and in Montevideo [Uruguay] across the Rio Plata. They would have carried large stocks of Britains and other lines.



# EMPIRE IN EL DORADO – BRITAIN’S ARGENTINIAN AND URUGUAYAN TROOPS *(Continued)*



## *Gath and Chaves*

This store was founded by an Englishman-Alfred Gath and a Chilean- Lorenzo Chaves in 1883.

This department store was a favourite of the city's upper class and was situated on Florida Street, one of Buenos Aires fanciest shopping spots. The building was inaugurated in 1908 and expanded and restored from 1912-1914. This elegant store was comparable with, and in competition with, the local branch of Harrods which was in the same street.

The outside of the building is notable for its ornate glass and iron entrance





# EMPIRE IN EL DORADO – BRITAIN'S ARGENTINIAN AND URUGUAYAN TROOPS *(Continued)*

and cupola on top. Inside it had a huge central skylight atrium, surrounded by a wide marble staircase.

Later owners closed Gath and Chaves in 1977 and Harrods was finally closed in 1998.

## ***Britains catering to the South American market***

Britains produced several sets of Argentine and Uruguayan troops. They originally had dual language “printers typeset” labels for sets 216 through to set 222 and carried on with these and additional sets until 1941. After the war, Regiments of All Nations (ROAN) labels replaced the earlier labels as they ran out. They do not appear to have differentiated the labels for home or export, carrying on with the ROAN label or both. Other nations from Latin America such as Mexico and Venezuela were also portrayed by Britains but these must form the subject of a separate article!



## ***BRITAINS SETS NO. 216 – 222***

From 1924 Britains introduced six basic sets of Argentine and Uruguayan cavalry, infantry and cadets. These were produced for both the home and South American markets. As explained by Joe Wallis in his *Armies of the World*, these sets later gave birth to an astonishing thirty one uncatalogued sets which were made up of different combinations of the original sets and produced circa 1930-40. These were mainly larger displays with combinations of single row sets. They were sold primarily though Harrods in Buenos Aires. The larger display sets are rarely seen in the original boxes. many of these may have been discarded by the staff when the figures were put on display.

Set no. 216. Argentine infantry. Produced from 1924-41. These sets had labels in Spanish and English.





# EMPIRE IN EL DORADO – BRITAIN’S ARGENTINIAN AND URUGUAYAN TROOPS *(Continued)*



Set 216 was continued post war, originally with eight figures until 1948. Then reduced to six. 1945-49. Note different style box label .



Set no. 217. Argentine Cavalry. Produced from 1924- 41. Although the label was entitled “Caballeria Argentina”. The actual regiment portrayed was the “Granaderos a Caballo”-rectified on post war end labels .



Set no. SA.216/5. Argentine cavalry - Special Assortment series. Circa 1935. In this case it was just a reboxing of the standard set of 5 figures, although the set number has changed from 217 to 216?



Insignia—Grenaderos a Caballo – Horse Grenadiers.



Trooper and Officer.

# EMPIRE IN EL DORADO – BRITAIN'S ARGENTINIAN AND URUGUAYAN TROOPS *(Continued)*



Set no. 217. End label from a post war ROAN boxed set, a five piece set in 1946—reduced to four in 1947-59.



Set no. 219. Argentine Military School Cadets, produced from 1924- 41. The set was not continued post war.



Set no. 220. Uruguayan Cavalry, produced from 1924-41.

The box label read -"Cabelleria de la Republica Oriental" prewar and "Blandengues de Artigas" postwar, as well as the familiar ROAN labelling .



Reduced to four pieces post war, 1953-59.



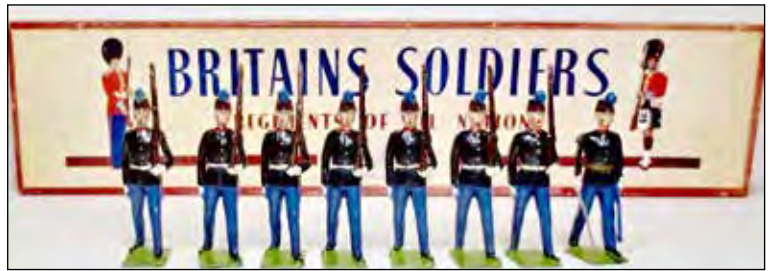
Set no. 221. Uruguayan Military School Cadets, produced from 1924-41.



The set was continued briefly post war (ROAN box).



# EMPIRE IN EL DORADO – BRITAIN'S ARGENTINIAN AND URUGUAYAN TROOPS *(Continued)*



Set no. 2051. Uruguayan Military School Cadets, 1953-59. This set replaced 221 after 1951.

## OTHER SETS



Set no. 222. Uruguayan Infantry, produced from 1924-25.



Set no. 1835. Argentine Naval Cadets. This set was introduced in 1939 and then briefly from 1948-49, produced for one year only postwar.



Set no. 1836. Argentine Military Cadets. Again, introduced in 1939 and then available briefly from 1948-49, produced for one year only postwar.



Set no. 1837. Argentine Infantry (con caso, in steel helmets). Introduced in 1939, this set is rare and was not continued post war. The figures also appeared in several non-catalogued sets.



Set no. 342. Argentine cavalry and infantry display. This was a giant 72 piece display set, Produced 1930-35.



# EMPIRE IN EL DORADO – BRITAIN'S ARGENTINIAN AND URUGUAYAN TROOPS *(Continued)*

This full display set originally consisted of 2 Officers and 22 Cavalry plus an Officer on foot with flag and 24 infantry and 23 cadets (there were no special figures other than the flag bearer). There may have been a Uruguayan equivalent - a similar Uruguayan infantry flag bearer is certainly known to exist.

Based on personal correspondence with James Opie, this set first appeared as part of a large consignment of figures, including a band:

**Saturday, 29 January 2022, 08:46:54 am Subject: Re: Britains Toy Soldiers- made for Harrods-Buenos Aires.**

*"I am sending you with this a high res. photo of the catalogue in question which dates from 5th December 2013.*

*The lot was part of a large consignment from an Argentinian collector whose father had obtained these from Harrods in 1940 - the Naval Cadet Band was painted, he believed, by the window display craftsman at Harrods at the time possibly by repainting a standard set 1290 - see text for lot 1057. Harrods was undoubtedly the major outlet for Britains both in Argentina and for Montevideo across the Rio Plata. They would also have carried a sizeable stock of Britains other lines. I was lucky enough to visit the store in 1956 with my grandmother on a nostalgic trip for her, as she was born there.*

*When Britains started exporting to the Argentine in 1924, they created dual language 'Printers typeset' labels for sets 216 through 222 and carried on with these and additional sets until 1941. After the war, ROAN labels replaced the earlier labels as they ran out, but they would then certainly not have differentiated the labels for home or export - just carried on the ROAN for both. They still felt it would be worth updating the Uruguayan cadets to the new set 2051 in 1953." James Opie.*



Set no. 1847. Argentine Naval Cadets. A 16 piece noncatalogued set, containing Cadet figures and officer from set 1835. This set was made for Harrods Buenos Aires exclusively. Circa 1939 .



The Argentine Naval band with officer based on the Admiral figure and a flag bearer. I have photos of these items. The band is more likely to have been a special order from Britains, which is how it was originally catalogued by James in the Bonhams 5th December 2013 sale.



**Footnote:** An example of a boxed Britains howitzer as sold by Harrods [Buenos Aires] in the late 1960s, with the original price tag and still in the original owners' collection. The image was kindly sent to me by an Argentinian collector who recalls buying it at Harrods in the late 1960s. Note the intact price tag (pesos). He recalls seeing Britains Detail and new metal soldiers on offer at around the same time.



# BOOK REVIEW

## ZINNLAUBE

*Reviewed by Russ Bednarek*

Zinnlaube in July, what a welcomed surprise. The current Zinnlaube is sure to entertain readers with a variety of outstanding articles; how a German World War I veteran created and exhibited his collection, the exemplary figures of Sonneburg, contemporary folk art figures and how the collaboration of German engravers with Swedish makers led to some outstanding Thirty Years War figures. The use of vintage catalogue pages, period postcards, and numerous photographs of figures, boxes and dioramas adds to the readers knowledge and enjoyment. Below is my brief synopsis of the articles appearing in Zinnlaube Volume 12.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's, "Sherlock Holmes" thrilled readers around the world from 1887 to 1927. The German firm Heinrichsen produced several sets of Holmes figures with a supporting cast of appropriate characters. Florian Wilke explores the production history of the Heinrichsen sets and figures. The Heinrichsen sets may be broken down into three distinct periods and Florian does an excellent job of showing and explaining the distinctive differences of each period. Excellent photographs of the figures aid the reader in understanding the differences of each period of production.

Author Martin Schabensiel shares some very unique figures of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848-1849 created by Gerhard Sohlke. The 40mm mounted figures portray the "csikos" or horse herdsman in their traditional dress and armed with a variety of weapons including a "throwing rope!

The reader now returns to famous literary figures, this time the theme is the figures of Robinson Crusoe. This twenty page article by Dr. Schraudolph is loaded with pictures



of figures, box lids, illustrated pricelists and design drawings of Robinson Crusoe and related figures. Although several manufacturers are included in the article, the focus is the items of Gerhard Sohlke and Georg Spenkuch. Other companies represented are Heyde, the Swedish firm C. C. Ohlsson, Krause, and Rieche. It is interesting to note in figure comparison photographs how similar the figures are regardless of the manufacturer. Great photographs

of wonderful vintage figures and box lids made this my favorite article.

Henrik Moberg explores the unusual partnership between the Swedish company of Santesson and several German engravers. The result was the creation of several outstanding sets of figures representing the Thirty Years' War. The Santesson line consisting of 39 different types of figures including eight dynamic personality pieces. The Santesson

# BOOK REVIEW (Continued)

range was in direct competition with the Heinrichsen Thirty Years' War offerings. The Heinrichsen range proved to be less popular due to its high cost. Similarities between the two companies continued well past the figures offered, even to the point of each firm offering a booklet and showcase packaging. Readers are treated to a number of Santesson/Heinrichsen figure comparison color photo-graphs, examples of the showcase packaging, and more.

On December 29, 1855 a victory parade was held in Paris honoring the return of the "Armée de l'Orient" from the Crimean War. Napoleon III used his victory over the Tsar to increase his waning popularity among his subjects. The Emperor placed himself at the head of the troops as they paraded past the crowds to the Place Vendôme. Contemporary artists show the regiments parading in their worn and tattered campaign uniforms and battle worn colors. The wounded marched at the head of their regiment many of them missing an arm or leg. This unusual event became a popular theme with toy soldier manufacturers who were hopeful of cashing in on the public's sympathy for their soldiers. The article delves into the composition of the sets made by Langenbach, Roth & Rau and Heinrichsen. Numerous color photographs of individual pieces and partial or complete sets are shown in addition to several outstanding box lids. As an added bonus, readers are treated to a grouping of twelve outstanding Sonneberg figures, representing several of the most important of Napoleon III's generals. Produced in the Sonneberg area, (Thuringia), this was a cottage industry, better known for their exceptional dolls as opposed to soldiers. These magnificent papier-mache figures are twelve to fourteen centimeters tall and are more of a work of art as opposed to a toy soldier. The figures were sold in several prestigious shops including the Maison Giroux in Paris.

Perhaps the most impressive figure is the Spahi wearing his turban and voluminous burnoose.

The next article features the work of David Johnstone. Produced from the 1970s to 1990s, his caricature-like figures are of three sizes; 130mm, 110mm and 90mm. Plaster of Paris is used for the oversized heads, balsa wood bodies and cardboard for cap peaks etc. The caricature faces go well with the bodies, each figure dressed in the appropriate uniform. The figures do have their own charm and definitely would be described as true folk art. To date there are eighty known examples of Johnstone's work.

Wilhelm Wolf was a German World War I veteran who served with distinction and was wounded several times during his service. After the war he became a chef by trade. It was in the early 1920s that he became interested in casting and painting his own figures using the molds of Schnieder, HDG and Ideal. With a better economy and steady employment in the 1930s Wolf's passion for his self-cast figures knew no limits. He began to create dioramas of "the old army uniforms" and of World War I. Wolf had a keen business sense to create and sell postcards showing his dioramas and parade scenes to help support his hobby. In the early 1930s he held exhibitions of his figures throughout Germany. It is an amazing story of an amazing man and I'll stop here and let you enjoy the remainder of the article.

Italian author and collector Francesco Marchiandi takes us on his chronological journey of collecting toy soldiers. Beginning with his first figures, Italian composition figures of the American Civil War, the author shares his ever changing diversified interests in both subject matter and material of construction as he pursues his interests. His story sounds familiar as many of us have traveled down the same paths as the author. It is always interesting to learn how fellow collectors' tastes and interests

have influenced their collections. Francesco includes numerous interesting photos of his collection to accompany his entertaining text.

The final article is a book review of *Magic World of Pewter Doll Accessories of the Company F.W. Gerlach from Naumburg*. This is a history of the F.W. Gerlach company which spanned 125 years. The company produced high quality pewter toys. Well known for being on the cutting edge of technology the company produced over 2500 different items such as vacuum cleaners, sewing machines, gramophones, telephones and more. Almost 400 pages in German/English text with color photographs of individual pieces and catalog photos make this a must have if this is your collecting niche.

Readers will notice that there was a slight increase of five Euros for this issue (27E), of Zinnlaube with the majority of the increase being postage. It should be noted that this issue contained more pages than any other previous volume. Highly recommend for all collectors and if your interest is German made toy soldiers, Zinnlaube is a must have. Subscriptions are simple as PayPal is accepted.

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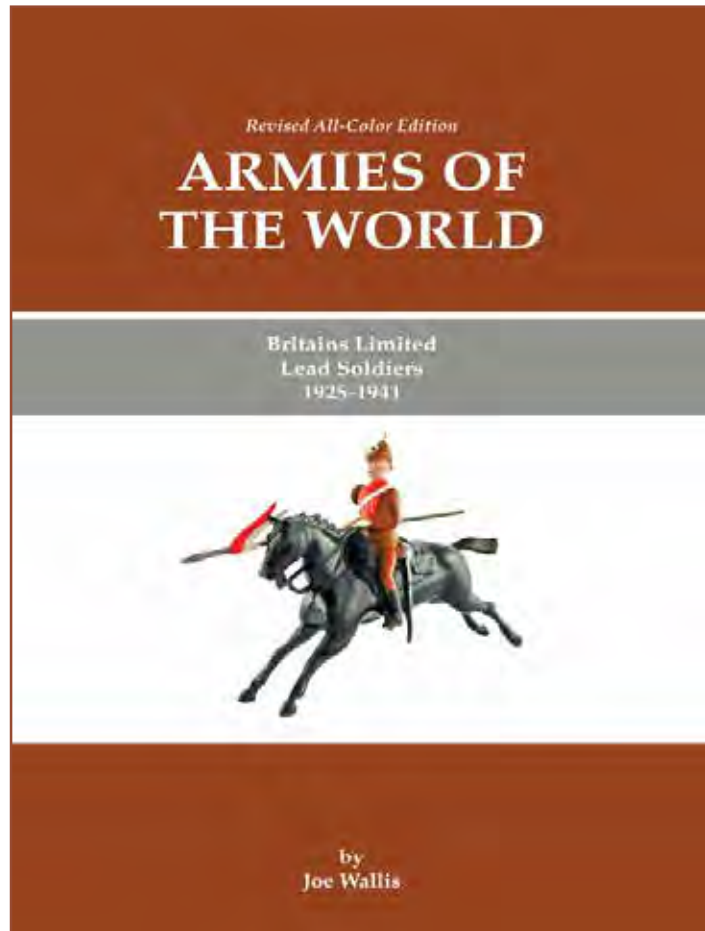


# THE NEW EDITION OF

## *Armies of the World,*

### *Britains Limited Lead Soldiers 1925-1941:*

- 1 Contains 852 outstanding color close-up photographs instead of the 500 black-and-white photographs of the earlier edition;
- 2 Has been expanded from 420 pages to 780 (it now includes the contents of all of the noncatalogued sets from the Factory Records and reflects my research since 1993);
- 3 Is hard cover instead of paperback.



For delivery of an autographed copy, fill out the information below and send a check or money order payable to Joe Wallis (\$89 U.S., \$130 Canada; and \$150 overseas). These amounts include postage. No credit or debit cards. You can pay with PayPal to joewallis@comcast.net (but add \$5 for PayPal fees).

I also published the acclaimed *Regiments of All Nations*, which examines Britains Ltd. production between 1946 and 1966, and *Soldiers of Greater Britain, Britains Limited 1893-1924*. All my books employ the same easy-to-use format. My website is leadsoldierbooks.com. I list my books on Amazon.com (search on Joe Wallis and the titles of my books), but Amazon orders involve added postage cost and sales tax. Forward payment in U.S. dollars using checks drawn on a U.S. bank branch or a postal money order to: Joe Wallis, P.O. Box 3407, Arlington, Virginia 22203-3407.

If you have any questions, my email address is:  
**joewallis@comcast.net**

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip or Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

# AMERICAN DIMESTORE FINN SOLDIERS

*By Stan Alekna*

Several American Dimestore toy makers issued toy soldiers painted in white, winter uniforms, that were meant to represent Finnish soldiers.

Barclay made a B135 ski trooper that Richard O'Brien described as "meant to be Finn" in his **COLLECTING AMERICAN MADE TOY SOLDIERS Edition No. 3**. Manoil's M125 on skis and M126 prone machine gunner in white winter uniforms were both described by O'Brien as "Finns".



B135



M125



M126

These Barclay and Manoil Finn soldiers are not considered rare and are readily available to collectors even today.

Recently, I came across a group of American Metal Toys (AMT) soldiers that included an AM1 kneeling, firing rifle figure in light blue paint. Most Dimestore dealers and advanced collectors have agreed that this figure was also intended to represent a Finnish soldier and that it is quite rare. I did not have this figure in my personal Dimestore collection, and I have never seen one before, in my forty-plus years in the hobby.



AM1 Finn soldier

Photos courtesy of *auctionitforme*



# AMERICAN DIMESTORE FINN SOLDIERS (Continued)

Richard O'Brien never listed this variant in his **COLLECTING AMERICAN MADE TOY SOLDIERS**, but Don Pielin included the following listing in the JONES section of the first edition of **THE AMERICAN DIMESTORE SOLDIER BOOK**:

## #34 Kneeling Firing, blue uniform, Finnish

My curiosity was piqued by this AMT Finn soldier, and as I began my investigation into American Dimestore Finn soldiers, several questions arose:

What motivated Barclay, Manoil and AMT management to include Finn soldiers in their product line? Barclay made foreign soldiers from several other countries, but Manoil's only foreign soldiers were the two Finns.

Why are the Barclay and Manoil Finn soldiers so common in contrast with the AMT Finn soldier that is so rare?

What was Finland's role in WW2?

I decided to do some research into the history of what was happening in Finland and across Europe in the period leading up to WW2.

In the late 1930's, Russia feared that Nazi Germany might use Finland as a staging base to attack them, so they decided that they needed a defensive, military, buffer zone between Russia and Germany. In 1939, Russia invaded Finland and occupied 11% of that country as their military buffer zone, in what was termed the "Winter War". While Russia was the victor, the Finn soldiers acquitted themselves well, suffering only 67,000 casualties against the Russian losses of 392,000.

The unoccupied part of Finland then allied itself with Nazi Germany against Russia to regain the territory it lost in the "Winter War". The Germans trained the Finnish soldiers, and their uniforms and insignia of this period were nearly identical to the Germans'.



German Soldiers

Germany attacked Russia in 1941, supported by Finland. Great Britain even declared war on Finland for their military alliance with the Nazis. When Germany's attack on Russia failed, Finland signed a peace treaty with Moscow, which in part required that the Finns evict the German soldiers who were still occupying sections of their country. That ended Finland's role in WW2. So much for the historical military background of this era.

Most American Dimestore collectors who include AMT figures in their collection, may not be aware that AMT was the only American toy soldier maker that made German soldiers. AMT's earliest production in 1939 featured three German figures: AM1 kneeling firing; AM2 charging with rifle; and AM3 prone machine gunner, all of which were sculptured with German uniforms and helmets and painted "German" Gray.



AM1



AM2

## AMERICAN DIMESTORE FINN SOLDIERS (Continued)



AM3

Photos courtesy of Don Sherman

AMT's other soldiers had an American uniform and WWI-style helmet, although an estimated one-third of these other soldiers were also painted gray to represent German soldiers.

Considering the historical information previously presented, it is understandable why the uniform and helmet of AMT's AM1 Finn soldier, were identical to that of their AM1 German soldier, except for the light blue colored uniform. They were comrades-in-arms in the early days of WW2.

That does not, however explain the vast difference in the rarity of the Barclay and Manoil Finn soldiers versus the AMT Finn soldier.

Here are my thoughts on the matter: the Barclay and Manoil Finn soldiers were probably thought to be American soldiers in winter attire when they were being sold in the early 1940's. If they had been identified as Finn soldiers, I doubt that many would have been purchased, based on many Americans' sentiments about Finland's alliance with Nazi Germany.

And there was good reason to believe that the Barclay and Manoil winter, white-clad troops were American soldiers.

Based on Finland's performance in the Winter War against Russia, our military leaders saw that a properly equipped, well-trained army could more than compete with a larger enemy force in a bitter, winter conflict. Early in WW2, the U.S. Army formed an entire division, the 10th Mountain Division, that was trained and equipped for winter warfare. At the time, it seemed inevitable that we would be fighting the Axis powers in Europe, in winter. Life magazine and other news media of the day featured photos and stories of our 10th Mountain Division soldiers in winter uniforms.

So, it was reasonable to believe that those toy soldiers in white, winter uniforms, in the five-and-dime stores, were American soldiers and rightfully belonged in every American boy's Dimestore army!

AMT's AM1 Finn soldiers, on the other hand, could not be thought to be American soldiers based on the styling of their helmet and their German-like uniforms. I believe that very few AM1 Finns were purchased, either because their nationality was unrecognizable or because they were thought to be allies of Nazi Germany. This could account for their rarity and could also account for the rarity of AMT's AM1, AM2 and AM3 German soldiers.

I don't believe that foreign Dimestore soldiers were very popular during WW2 and are rare, simply because few were bought.

The rarity and value of most collectibles are subjective and are the result of their desirability and availability, as determined by the total number of items made and purchased, and their survival rate. When an item does not sell, only a foolish manufacturer would continue to make more of them.

We will never know the true reason why so few AMT Finn soldiers have surfaced, but based on the information I have found in researching this article, I regard the AM1 Finn soldier to be one of the rarest, if not the rarest, of American Metal Toys' soldiers.



NEWLY DISCOVERED  
FINN SOLDIER



# SHOW REPORT

## 2022 CHICAGO TOY SOLDIER SHOW REPORT: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**WE'RE STILL HAVING FUN,  
AND WE'RE STILL THE ONE!**  
*(... apologies to the 1970s group Orleans for tweaking their lyrics)*



Vendors and attendees continued to flock back to the nation's biggest and oldest toy soldier show reported Show owner/managers Jan and Roger Garfield.

One of the most gratifying aspects of this year's Show was bringing back those "extras" that make our Show distinctive, shared Jan.

We saw a return by many of our international vendors. Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, France and the UK were represented during room display/trading and at Sunday tables.

We brought back live demonstrations with on-site repairs by husband-and-wife team Helen Bouch and Benjamin Zerbib. Pete MacMillan of Michigan Toy Soldier Company invited all to watch him create a fantastic Rev War Diorama.

Ed Poole and collaborator Peter Nussbaum held a book signing of their new book on Britains Swopet knights, **Swords and Roses**.

An ongoing 28mm wargame was held between our friends from Historical Miniature Gaming Society-Midwest and the CTSS Wargaming All-Stars (featuring novice gamer Roger, and experienced players Matt Murphy and Joe Denoncour from Hobby Bunker). The game was a draw with CTSS failing to achieve its goal due to a valiant but costly defense by HMGS.

Our Saturday breakfast seminar returned with Will Beierwaltes's great talk on pre-World War One U.S. toy

soldier manufacturers. Attendees enjoyed a buffet breakfast and Will's informative research.

Roger said that the Show itself heightened back to pre-pandemic numbers with steady room display/trading Thursday through Saturday. We also saw increasing numbers of attendees that come from all over the United States and overseas to stay at the hotel just to buy. These folks ask to stay on the selling floors to be close to the action! Vendors and attendees booked 800 nights at the host hotel during show week.

One hundred and twenty vendors and their helpers manned over 300 tables at the Sunday Show. Over 500 paid admissions came through the gate including "early bird" admis-

sions. But it is hard to tell exact numbers with kids 12 and under allowed free admission, noted business manager Gillian Garfield.

By our reckoning that meant that there were between 800 to 1,000 toy soldier aficionados, comprising attendees, vendors, and helpers together during Show week. That still must be a record, said Jan.

Vendors reported that the Sunday Show was vigorous with an early morning surge that settled to a steady stream of late morning attendees. Sunday's crowd included lots of Veterans and families with kids. That's just what we wish for. Our vets and kids always liven up the Show, shared Roger.



Part of the main ballroom. One of the three Sunday Show venues.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 24,  
THE 2023 CHICAGO TOY SOLDIER SHOW.**

*For more information contact:*

*Roger Garfield: (phone) 847-567-5355 or (email) [roger@chicagotoysoldiershow.com](mailto:roger@chicagotoysoldiershow.com)*

*Visit our website: [www.CHICAGOTOYSOLDIERSHOW.com](http://www.CHICAGOTOYSOLDIERSHOW.com)*

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# SHOW REPORT *(Continued)*



Eager attendees waiting in the Sunday line, which extended down the hall and wrapped around the corner and down the adjacent hallway



HMGs-Midwest vs. CTSS Wargame All-Stars Joe Denoncour and Roger Garfield (right and second from right)



Ed Poole with his new book, *Swords and Roses*



Toy Soldier Doctor Helen Bouch demonstrates her repair techniques



Breakfast with the Experts Seminar speaker Will Beierwaltes



Pete MacMillan of Michigan Toy Soldier Company creates a stunning Rev War diorama





# SHOW REPORT

## CHICAGO TOY SOLDIER SHOW, SEPTEMBER 2022

*By Rob Wilson*

As I started to write this report, I realised that this was for me an important anniversary. I first attended the Chicago show back in 1995, and I have attended religiously ever since. I've missed just two. Once when our best friend's daughter decided most inconveniently (for me at least to get married on the same weekend, and the second after the events of 9/11 when my wife refused to allow me to get on an airplane. Taking those two years out makes 2022 my 25th show. It did not disappoint.

Since my first visit, I've advised everyone who has never been that they must attend at least once. It's the Mecca of events for anyone interested in Toy Soldiers. You see things there that you will never find anywhere else. From the most common Marx Plastic figure to the most expensive connoisseur item, they can all be found here as the attached images prove.



Giant Heyde Set - Alexander the Great

Although not unique to this event, "room trading" is a main feature. The days before the show are a great opportunity to see the huge range of figures and other items on offer.

Of course, for most people it is as much a social event as a chance to buy or sell figures and associated items. If you've never been, note the dates for next year in your diary now and join the club. You won't be disappointed.

The accompanying images provide just a taste of the people and toys to be found at the biggest and best toy soldier show in the world.



Britains Paris Office Dragons in an original box



Another fine German set, possibly also by Heyde

**Mark your calendars for *Sunday, September 24, 2023* Chicago Toy Soldier Show**



# SHOW REPORT *(Continued)*



Greg Kempton celebrates an unusual purchase from Ray Haradin



Tables in the lobby advertising what is on offer



Demonstrations of repair and restoration work



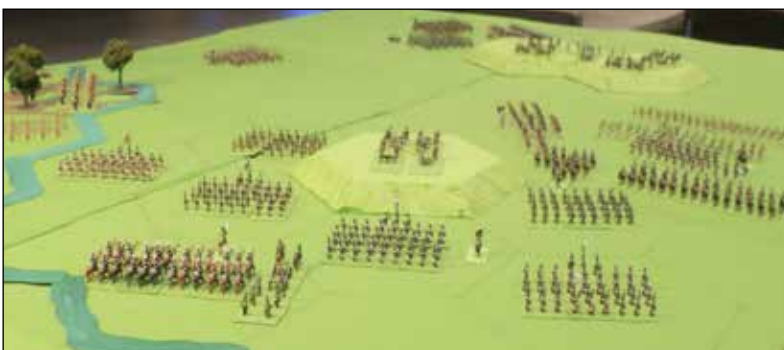
Britains boxed sets on offer during room trading



Other makers too....



Courtenay and Ping connoisseur figures



Wargaming table in operation in the days running up to the show



Joe Saine looking very pleased with himself, not so sure about Frank Leo?



# SHOW REPORT (Continued)



Hectic trading on Sunday



Back to long lines for the Sunday show, first in line was there at 8.00 am and by 10.00am it snaked all though the main hotel lobby



Foreign dealers back after the pandemic



Plastic too - Swoppet knights "Once more into the breach ...."



Roman Bireme



Including Francois Beaumont (right) pictured here with Mark Young



Joe Grandolpho all set up on Sunday

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bearskin  
patrol  
helmet  
balmoral  
busby  
kepi  
tricorn  
pickelhaube  
glengarry  
campaign  
bicorn  
hardee  
peaked  
pith  
slouch  
shako





# SHOW REPORT

## EUROMA 2022

*By Francesco Marchiandi*



The ALFA MODEL Club has since 1998 organised a competitive event reserved for model makers, and is well known both in Italy and abroad. Starting this year, with the full acceptance and collaboration of the club, to which my heartfelt thanks go, we have now added officially a branch relating to collectors of all sorts of toy soldiers. This is a great boon to all those who love old toy soldiers in lead, composition, paper, etc.

The aim is to fill a void that is clearly evident in Italy, believing that Rome, both for its location, and that fact that it houses a strong concentration of collectors, can play an important role. And who is not attracted and fascinated by a holiday, even if short, in the Eternal City?

The presence of Paul Newman and John Regan, respectively Treasurer and Vice President and Editor of the influential British Model Soldier Society gave me great pleasure.

The widespread promotion of the event that began this year will therefore continue and has already borne fruit, thanks also to the generous help of organisations such as OTS.

As Giulio Centanni, Alfa Model Treasurer rightly said, are old Toy Soldiers not perhaps the forerunners of current figures and models? and therefore ...

The location was at the Hotel Villa EUR Parco dei Pini which is located in the EUR district (acronym for Universal Exposition Rome).

The plans for this district of Rome, for a new urban and architectural complex, date back to the 1930s, enlarged and completed only after the war. The Hotel has large halls, five of these on the first floor entirely dedicated to the modelling competition (figures, planes, ships, AFVs, civil scenes, etc.).

There are displays of all the competing models, but also some showcases of work already awarded laurels, also including one dedicated to toy soldiers. The theme for the latter was: the Red Coats of Canada (the Mounties).

You can see figures of many different makers, old and new. The name of the Fort, (an Italian production), has been Italianized by removing an "h", or perhaps it is a simple mistake in good faith of the manufacturer.

The large room dedicated to "trade" was on the ground floor, where there were all accessories, tools, glues, colors one could wish for; and... toy soldiers!

The omnipresence of SAIMEX (Stefano Allorini), whose tables were practically at the entrance to the hall, immediately delighted hearts with a

wide range of figures of all kinds. "Old" and new Italian toy soldiers; they made a fine show.

An avalanche of affordable models was also on offer for painting by the collector.

The organizers made us the pleasant surprise of setting up a special poster for myself and for my friend Andrea.

Our table, in a central position in the hall, has allowed us to offer a representative range of toy soldiers, in addition to our book which tells the story of the ANTONINI family, in business since 1910.

To satisfy fans of paper toy soldiers, Vittorio Gorini presented a range of his drawings and his beautiful sheets, divided into historical series. His website <http://www.goriniart.com/Italiano/italiano.htm>, always updated, speaks better than a thousand photographs.

Massimo Perencin - <http://www.perencimodels.it/wp/> - proposed unique flat tin figurines to be painted that reproduced figures taken from paintings by famous Italian Renaissance painters but in the hall, as always in these events, you had to pay close attention to surprises!

For me one of these pleasant surprises was finding a board game designed by the late Guido Crepax in the 60s: The Battle of Waterloo. The inventor of the comic "Valentina" had a passion for history and games, he designed the maps and toy soldiers of some famous battles that he re-enacted with his friends. They were published and became rare, one of them being Waterloo.

Other surprises or discoveries were two CBG 54mm groups: Russian infantry with peak cap, on the assault, and French cuirassiers on foot as dressed in the First World War, still with the cuirass not painted in silver but nickel plated (until about 1920/25). The toy soldier was immersed totally in the molten nickel metal, the paint





# SHOW REPORT *(Continued)*

of the rest of the toy soldier was subsequently applied to the other parts of the figure while the cuirass remained nickel bright.

Another nice group of Heyde size2: WWI Germans in combat, reseda green colored uniform (or feld-grau if you prefer), in practically new condition.

Among the Italian toy soldiers here was a rare musical band of the Italian infantry of 1900 with the Umbertina uniform. These are figures that have many details similar to the Antonini figures, but the author/manufacturer remains unknown to this day.

There was also no lack of Britains figures, always appreciated. A good example was this Britains 110 Devonshire Regiment in original box.

And to conclude, this is just one of the exhibitors that we hope to see again soon!

Numerous visitors, enthusiasts and collectors came. Thanks to all of these for their participation and I hope to see you at the next event which will be the 25th (a quarter of a century, not bad!), It will be held on 2 and 3 September 2023, so see you soon.



One of the beautiful dioramas in competition



Red Coats of Canada and Fort Saskatchewan



Italian new toy soldiers, 1980s



Overview of part of the commercial hall



# SHOW REPORT (Continued)



A mixed group of old Antonini toy soldiers on offer



An extensive group of model soldiers of any sort to paint at a cheap price



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Heyde size 2, German group from IWW, fighting, in many poses, practically mint



Music band of the Italian infantry of 1900 with the Umbertina uniform. Many similarities with Antonini but actually an unknown maker, very rare



Portrait at our table, a kind of selfie, with the mirror



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Masterpieces of Italian Renaissance art transported in flat figures to paint



# SHOW REPORT *(Continued)*



The things you are looking for are easily found



A more than kind presence



1920 CBG 54mm, Russian infantry with peak caps, assault, and French nickel plated Cuirassiers on foot(WWI)



Britains 110 Devon Regiment



More hidden treasures?



The Battle of Waterloo, a wargame created by Guido Crepax, a famous cartoonist



The book of ANTONINI history which has been and is enjoying appreciable success, bilingual, with English translation



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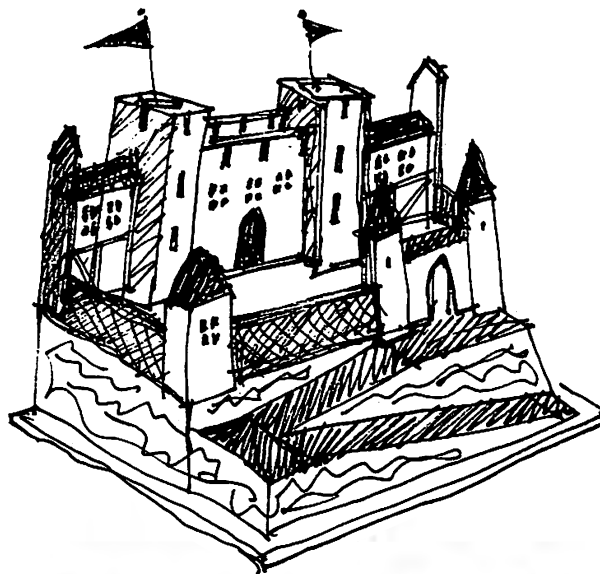


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# SHOW REPORT

## KULMBACH 2022 – STORYTELLING

*By Francesco Marchiandi*

In this restless world, here to cheer us up, is an event that has not been repeated since 2019, the Kulmbach bazaar returned. Due to the difficulties of previous years, it took place for the first time in an even year, 2022.

As always, the event attracted a large number of participants and collectors, but the impression of this reporter was that it did not quite reach the full number of visitors of previous years. The bustling crowds, that were once a feature, did not materialize this time. However, this did not prevent us from renewing relationships and meeting old and new friends, in a decidedly positive atmosphere. On the contrary, exhibitors were certainly not lacking, all the tables were occupied with all sorts of interesting articles.

As always, the event was hosted on two sites: under a huge marquee containing the tables of the exhibitors (producers, traders and collectors);

The Clubs and the room reserved for the Modelling Competition were located in the Stadthalle in front of the marquee.

Among the exhibitors was the large stand of Hans-Gunter Scholtz (Berliner Zinnfiguren), with his talented collaborators, who offered practically everything that our hobby needs, and even more.

In fact, in this “Ali Babà’s cave” was the most interesting sector for old expert collectors like myself, with piles of cartons filled with toy soldiers, horses, carriages, cannons, of many ancient German brands, both flat, semi-flat and solid, from which to pick suitable pieces to complete groups in their collections... a real boon.

Certainly, there was no shortage of producers of new flat tin soldiers nor producers and traders of new and old toy soldiers. My interest was old lead soldiers and there was plenty to search

through, with a lot of patience, because haste does not help!

For example, the tables of a Dutch collector offered interesting complete groups and odd figures from Britains, “B series”. He also offered many other pieces by Britains.

The table of a German collector offered a real treat. A wonderful Spenkuch box, whose label declared “Stanley’s Expedition Through Africa”, specifying that they were “massive” (solid) pieces. Unfortunately in the time to take the picture of the box, peek at the contents and ask for the price (high but perhaps appropriate) it was already sold! The maxim to keep in mind therefore is: never hesitate!

Swedish collector friends displayed beautiful pieces from the ancient Santesson production, in different sizes, as well as other Nordic delights, including pieces by Holger Eriksson, some also to be painted. My friend and collector Enrik Moberg graciously gave me a small group of Italian ISA figures. They are pieces from the 1960s, copied from Spenkuch or Haffner. There were not just pirates of Britains figures!

I met and chatted amiably with friends of the beautiful Zinnlaube magazine, Dr. Erhard Schraudolph, but in particular with Martin Schabenstiel who also helped my friend Andrea to identify some old flat figures. Markus Grein’s table also had a good choice of attractive groups: North African CBG Mignot 40mm semi-flat; some Wollner artillery sets; as well as classic Heyde and much more.

The table opposite, by Werner Klotzsche, offered, as we know, replicas of Heyde size 2 pieces, as well as groups and series never manufactured by Heyde, but also a few groups of old figures.

As always, the offer of old figures by Walter Badusche was also rich and varied. His treasures included some series deriving from the abandoned Potsdamer Zinnfiguren Museum.



Kulmbach Stadthalle



Marquee being set up



# SHOW REPORT (Continued)



Marquee being set up



Kulmbach Stadthalle

Among the other exhibitors, my friend Adrian Little, owner of the Mercator Trading Company, is always present, helped by the precious Jane; not only a trader but a great connoisseur and enthusiast. This time, to our surprise, his tables were literally covered with flat tin figurines of various sizes, brands and eras. The condition was very good, there were also several groups cast with a single mold, some quite rare.

Among the Italians present we should mention the tables by Alessandro Caretti with a choice of interesting pieces and books.

We must not forget that historically in Kulmbach they were originally exclusively dealing with flat tin soldiers and, as mentioned, still today it is a privileged meeting place for fans of these figurines. As such, there are numerous contacts, exchanges - including photographs - and orders

that demanding collectors entrust to specialized painters. The latter are always very busy, agreeing on orders and the return of the painted figures, often for months ahead. It is worth remembering that the current practice is to paint only one face of the figure, which I personally do not like, but it is above all a question of costs!

I also want to mention Dr. Gianpaolo Bistulfi from Milan, known all over the world, who offered a nice selection of flat, *peinture fine*, as the French collectors say.

I recommend taking a look at his website: <http://www.zinnfiguren-bistulfi.com/>

On the tables of Dr. Grobe, heir of the Heinrichsen signature, the old series were generously displayed, reproduced with the original molds. These figures can be purchased both

painted and unpainted. In the former case, in my opinion, the painting of this "house" is the best and most luxurious; in the period style, refined but without shading.

As mentioned, the various clubs had their exhibition and commercial spaces in the Stadthalle, which is easily accessible as it is very close to the marquee. Numerous German clubs were also present, with the tables of some well-known collectors and experts. For example, who does not know Alfred Humay, never satiated collector, director of the War and Peace Museum (in the Ardennes), a scholar of military history and himself a historian and writer?

Also noteworthy was the stand of the AFCFEF French Club (acronym for *Association des Figurinistes et Collectionneurs de Figurines de l'Est de la France*), a regular attender in



Mr. Stefano Allorini from Italy, manager of SAIMEX



The well loaded table of a Dutch collector



# SHOW REPORT (Continued)

Kulmbach. I would reserve a place of honor for their many initiatives, ranging from the issue of fine flat figures to notable themed exhibitions that they organize, especially at the request of historical sites and the like, both in France and in Germany. Long time friends, they represent a positive example of what a lively, dynamic and organized association can be, welcoming fans of every branch of our hobby.

I recommend visiting their website: <http://afcfef.fr/> in addition to their facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Afcfef/>

I will not dwell on the competitions for model makers, as it is out of the field of interest for many of the readers of this magazine. The models and dioramas in competition were very impressive. They reflect the valuable treasures held in the Plassenburg Museum. This is the fortress overlooking Kulmbach. It is well worth a visit since it contains

important dioramas and collections of toy soldiers from every era.

Among the photos taken during my own visit, I present one that romantically brings us back to the origin of our passion: *Der standhafte Zinnsoldat* (The classic tale of the tin soldier-swept away in his folded paper boat.

Among the many interesting things scattered here and there, was a beautiful box containing six Prussian Lancers with the right arm movable, the pivot crosses the whole body. Manufacturer still to be identified; could it be Krause? Research begins!

A nice group of Rupprecht 42mm Chinese cavalry and infantry.

A stunning box of farm figures and related items by CBG Mignot, in 54mm, solid.

All these delights were enlivened by some good refreshing beer, as well as dinners in total relaxation, and always

in the company of friends who were the protagonists of the many daily raids into the Marquee.

This time the trip was worth it!

Finally, I would like to draw attention to an image that is as delicate as it is lovable, it is the child of a dear friend, *Chloé*, who lays her rapt and sweet gaze on a group of toy soldiers. Will she be a future collector, following in her father's footsteps? Or maybe a passionate painter of flat toy soldiers?

Who knows...



Britains B series



Very nice Grenadiers volley firing, Britains 2nd grade



Italian ISA Copies of the from Spenkuch or Haffner figures



Spenkuch's Stanley's Expedition Through Africa



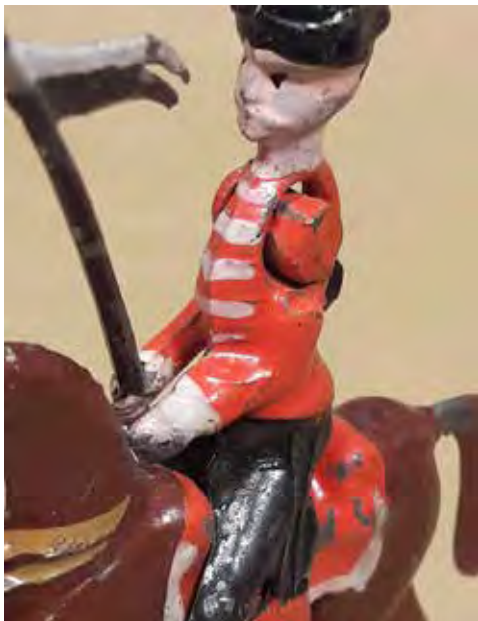
# SHOW REPORT *(Continued)*



Walter at his fighting post



Table by Alessandro Caretti



Boxed Prussian Lancers with movable arm,  
to be identified



The AFCFEF stand



The variety of Walter's offerings



A little rest and fuel to continue the research



# SHOW REPORT *(Continued)*



Rupprecht Chinese box



Box of the farm CBG Mignot, in 54mm



Jane Little guarding the Mercator Trading stall in case a buyer should suddenly appear!



A sweet little budding enthusiast



Boxed Prussian Lancers with movable arm, to be identified



Plassenburg - Der standhafte Zinnsoldat



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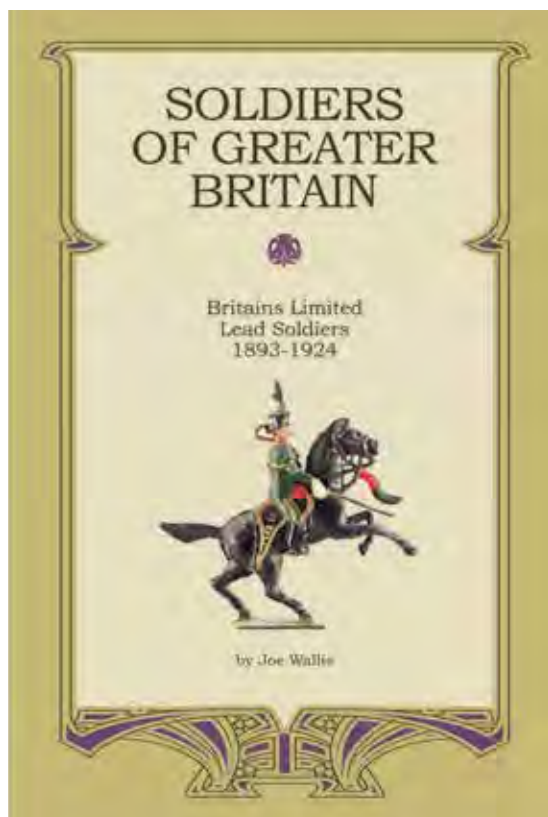


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## SOLDIERS OF GREATER BRITAIN - JOE WALLIS



*Soldiers of Greater Britain* by Joe Wallis deals with the years between 1893 and 1924 when the distinctive style and quality that made Britains toy soldiers the most popular in the world was developed. This well researched 453-page book answers questions about "ancient" Britains figures, mechanical toys, the accuracy of their models, the sources of their designs, the smaller scale B Series, the Paris Office, and Whisstock's wonderful box labels. See [www.leadsoldierbooks.com](http://www.leadsoldierbooks.com).

- Features 782 close-up color photographs placed throughout the text by the corresponding set descriptions;
- Provides color schemes, changes in sets, cross references to other sets with the same figures, and the years during which each item appeared prior to 1925; and
- Includes a Company History, a chapter of Identification Hints, a Glossary, Appendices listing sets made after 1924, and a Topic Index/Finding Aid.

To get your autographed copy, send a check or money order in U.S. dollars. Credit cards are not accepted, but PayPal (to [joewallis@comcast.net](mailto:joewallis@comcast.net)) is. Send \$75 for U.S., \$110 for Canada, or \$125 to Overseas addresses (includes postage) to: Joe Wallis, P.O. Box 3407, Arlington, Virginia 22203-3407.

# SHOW REPORT

## SANDOWN TOY FAIR, SEPTEMBER 17TH 2022

*By Harry Kemp*

Sandown Park remains one of the premier Toy Fairs in Europe. Held 3 times a year at the Sandown Park Race Course, close to Hampton Palace, details can be found on the following Website: <https://www.bpfairs.com/sandown-park>.

The show covers the full range of toys, including trains, cars and much more. However, there are always plenty of dealers offering toy soldiers and related items. Our regular correspondent from England, Harry Kemp sent in this report on the most recent show.

The fair was held on the weekend of the Queen's funeral, and was relatively low in attendees, probably for that reason. It was marked with a perfectly kept one minute of silence at 11am in honour of Her Majesty. The planned train strike was cancelled, which did help on the day of the show.

It was the first crisp morning of Autumn, and on the racecourse stands outside there are always a few things to look at before the doors open. I purchased a Britain's boxed pontoon set 1254, in service dress. The provenance was that it came from Bonhams in the 1980s. The steel helmeted heads were, to me, obviously replaced. However, it was bought at a very modest price that reflected this. I dread to think how much was paid on the hammer back in the day. But lovely, and original in all other respects, including pontoon sections and pontoon, it is a nice model - it was a good buy. Buyers of all these 'steel helmeted' sets from 1939/40 really do need to take extreme care. It's not certain that this version was ever made, being an easy set to fake.

I managed a quick tour of the hall before setting up my own stall. All the regular lead dealers were there plus a few new ones, which is great to see. However, I kept my hands firmly in my pocket for a change, bar three Courtenay figures in need of a bit of restoration, I resisted temptation!

I sold the usual random selection of figures from my table, takings being about half of the same show last year, but still ok.

The day ended with a purchase of a mint boxed set 2037 ski trooper c.1950 for a knock down price, proving once again that this is still one of the top shows and bargains can invariably

be found (and it's hard to resist temptation for long!).

Unfortunately, the Chicago show was not for me this year, with the dire exchange rate between the pound and dollar. However, the Euro Figurines show in Paris next month is a must for me, whatever the Euros cost!

Harry Kemp



Harry's Pontoon Set and Ski Trooper



# SHOW REPORT *(Continued)*



Modern Britains



Civilian items also, including this Mint in Box Zoo set



More hollowcast from the 1950s



More civilian items



Harry's own stand



Plastic specialist, John Begg's stall



Mexicans Harry did not buy (albeit tempted!)



Cowboys galore, and many more, on Joanne Christensen's stall



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## ELASTOLIN DIORAMAS 1913-1960

This book is already the 2nd photo guide on Hausser/Elastolin show-room dioramas. Represented are many of never before published original photographs of dioramas built for Hausser/Elastolin in the period between 1913 and 1960. The documentation's themes are ranging from military scenes and political events via zoological highlights and Wild West topics to certain examples of the early post-war period. The editors were able to share their treasure of high quality old original black-and-white photographs with the readers community on quite a high-quality standard and added also some more recent photographic documentations. 112 pages, hardcover, 21 x 30 cm. Price 39.00 Euro plus postage: within Germany 3.00 Euro; 5.00 Euro within the EU; Non-EU and World the real shipping costs.

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# PETER F. PIA INCORPORATED: THE FORMATIVE YEARS

## PART ONE: 1850-1866

*By Robin Forsey*

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During the American Revolution, the children of New York City fared better than most for quality toys due to the metropolis being under British occupation through to late 1783. Indeed, with the British flag flying, the importation of foreign goods continued, and for those who could afford them, even pewter soldiers were available. This is indicated by an advertisement which appeared in the *Royal Gazette* of December 27, 1777. It listed beautifully uniformed horse, foot, and dragoon figures cast in metal. They were rather expensive, costing eighteen shillings a dozen.<sup>1</sup> However, whether they were made in the United Kingdom is debatable. Possibly they were of Germanic origin. In fact, to a large degree German imported figures were to dominate the United States toy soldier market through to the early twentieth century, if not later. Nevertheless, there were some American based craftsmen involved in the making of metal playthings and even before 1800, it has been said that there were at least three “pewterers” in New York City “listed as makers of pewter toys.”<sup>2</sup> However, what was actually meant by “toys” during this period is open to question, because quite often all small decorative objects and novelties were referred to as “toys.” It is rather difficult to give an exact date as to when the first metal soldiers were made on American soil and it would be rather presumptuous to assume that none of the early New York pewterers did not dabble, or at least experiment, with the casting of toy figures. Nevertheless, evidence tends to indicate that American production probably did not really get underway until the 1850s. Although the nation was engulfed by Civil War between the years 1861-1865, it seems that even hostilities did not curtail this fledgling activity, because in 1867 it was said: “Pewter toys, comprising soldiers, landscapes, etc., are now largely made in this country, and though many are yet imported from Germany, their manufacture continues to be a profitable branch of business. New York

monopolizes much of this industry. An Italian firm during the war realized a considerable sum by the manufacture of toy tea-cups and saucers, the chief material of which was lead.”<sup>3</sup>

Regarding the above mentioned “Italian firm”, in 1905 while touching upon the growth of the American toy industry, it was reported: “The making of pewter toys was begun in this country fifty-five years ago by an Italian named Pia, who learned the trade in Switzerland.”<sup>4</sup> No doubt, this was the Peter Pia who had been born in the Kingdom of Sardinia around 1821, but was it the same Peter Pia who in later years was to be referred to as “Peter F. Pia” in New York City business records? Undoubtedly it was a Peter Pia who was instrumental in establishing the first toy-manufacturing venture under his family’s name in the United States, but all evidence tends to indicate that this firm ceased trading around 1866. A decade would pass before the Pia name would reappear in a New York City Directory, but this time the person behind the family’s new endeavors into toy production was to be referred to as “Peter F. Pia.” Was this the same man or another family member? Without doubt, there was a clean break of roughly ten years between the old and new businesses. Indeed, from about 1866 through to around 1877-1878, other toy manufacturers occupied the Lower Manhattan premises once used by Peter Pia and his brothers. One of these was O. Tensi & Company, which in 1875 was wrongly referred to as being the “successor of P. Pia...”<sup>5</sup> To further complicate matters, plainly the Pia kin was a rather large family and over the decades a number were involved in the toy trade and several had the same Christian names – including that of Peter! For instance, during the 1880s there was a Peter Pia who described himself as a “jeweler.” It has often been assumed that the Peter Pia of early pewter toy making fame and the Peter F. Pia of the post-Civil War years was the same person, but undoubtedly not. Certainly, the firms, which were

to later operate under the names of P. Pia & Company and Peter F. Pia were instigated by a much younger Peter Pia: the Peter Pia who had been born in the Kingdom of Sardinia in 1850. In fact, he was the only Peter Pia to be listed in the 1880 U.S. Federal Census and was described as coming from “Italy”, thirty years old, and a pewter toy manufacturer. Yet to add further weight to this credence, he was probably the older brother of Ernest and Albert P. Pia who in later years were to play prominent roles in Peter F. Pia Incorporated.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, in Part One of this article we are chiefly concerned with the activities and products of the early Pia companies; those that operated from 1850 through to around 1866 under the names of Pia, Brother & Schnueriger and Pia Brothers. But what do we know about the Pia family in general?

While the 1850 and 1860 U.S. Federal Census referred to the various members of the Pia kin as coming from “Italy”, in reality it seems that they originated from the Piedmont region of the Kingdom of Sardinia, which, together with all the annexed Apennine states, plus Sicily, did not officially become the Kingdom of Italy until March 17, 1861. The actual village from where they came may have been Forno di Rivara, although this is by no means certain. It is difficult to say when they actually arrived in America, but once in New York City, like many other immigrants, they settled in Lower Manhattan. The 1850 Census listed them as Andrew aged thirty-four, John aged thirty-one, Peter aged eighteen, and Catharine aged thirty. It seems that they were all probably living at 127 Hester Street along with Francis A. Schnueriger who was also from the Kingdom of Sardinia. However, Mr. Schnueriger’s wife, Catharine, whose maiden name was Moeller, was from the Germanic states. All the men in the household were described as toy makers and so the property most likely consisted of a workshop with apartments above.<sup>7</sup>



# PETER F. PIA INCORPORATED: THE FORMATIVE YEARS

## PART ONE: 1850-1866 (*Continued*)

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Peter Pia was granted United States nationality on May 4, 1853, Andrew on November 29, 1853, and John on May 23, 1856. As to when Catharine Pia was naturalized, it is not clear, but undoubtedly she was Peter Pia's wife and not his sister.<sup>8</sup>

By the time the 1860 United States Census was held, the Pia family had moved the business to 123 White Street. This property too probably consisted of a workshop, or similar commercial premises, with residential quarters above. Peter Pia was listed as being the proprietor and the building had a real estate value of nine thousand dollars. He also had personal assets totaling two thousand dollars. This tends to indicate that he was far from being a penniless immigrant. Undoubtedly there was a discrepancy regarding his age. While the 1850 Census stated that he was eighteen years old, just ten years later the 1860 numeration recorded him as being thirty-nine, which was probably more likely. Over the past decade Peter and Catharine had had four children who were all born in New York City. They were Maria, aged seven, Peter aged six, Andrew aged two, and five months old Catrina (?). Whether any of these siblings would later become involved with the toy trade has not been determined. Where the family were actually living in 1860 is not entirely clear. Indeed, while the census stated that they were dwelling at 130 White Street, the city directories tended to indicate that they were already residing above the workshop at number 123. Nevertheless, whatever the property, also living under the same roof, and besides other tenants, were Peter Pia's brother John aged forty-two, a ten year old Peter Pia who most likely was John's son and the later Peter F. Pia, and Joseph Pia who was nineteen years of age. However, one inhabitant who was overlooked in the 1860 Census was Peter Pia's eldest brother Andrew who had been born in the Kingdom of Sardinia in 1814.<sup>9</sup> Although listed in 1850, it seems that he was omitted from the 1860 survey, but he most certainly

was still active in New York City, and playing his part in the Pia business.

Once established in the "New World" the Pia family was to be joined by yet more relatives from the "Old Country," a number of which were to become involved with the different Peter Pia and Peter F. Pia toy manufacturing enterprises. Joseph Pia was a fine example. Although probably not a brother, but undoubtedly a relation, he was born in the Kingdom of Sardinia around 1841 and had arrived in the United States possibly via Texas. He became a resident of New York City in about 1860 and was recorded in the census. Initially he seems to have lived at 123 White Street and, no doubt, worked for Peter Pia and his brothers. Nevertheless, by 1870 he was listed as dwelling at 137½ Sullivan Street. However, when the Pia business was rekindled during the late 1870s, Joseph was to return.<sup>10</sup> Another two noted individuals were Ernest and Albert P. Pia previously mentioned. The 1880 Census tends to suggest that they were probably the younger brothers of the "later" Peter Pia (Peter F. Pia) and had been born in the Kingdom of Italy in 1864 and 1867 respectively. They arrived in the United States in October 1878 aboard the S.S. *Amerique* and were accompanied on the voyage by a sixty-year-old gentleman called Jean Pia. During the early twentieth century, Ernest and Albert were to take over the running of the Pia company.<sup>11</sup> No doubt over the years there were several other members of the Pia kin who worked for the various Pia firms, but it is the family's activities that began at 127 Hester Street which are of primary concern because these were the ones that would eventually evolve into the successful toy making business called Peter F. Pia Incorporated.

It has often been said that the "original" Peter Pia began operations in 1848, but the earliest record the writer has found regarding his origins is in 1850, when a partner in the firm of Pia, Brother & Schnueriger at 127 Hester Street. The three Pia family members involved in

this toy making enterprise were Andrew, Peter and John.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, the venture was short lived because by early April 1851, Francis Schnueriger had "retired from their business..." It appears that he probably left the partnership to set up his own toy-manufacturing project at 33 Forsyth Street. On April 5, 1851, and following Schnueriger's departure, the company officially became known as Pia Brothers and in 1852 was listed as "manufacturers & wholesale dealers in all kinds of pewter toys, & tea & coffee sets of different sizes..."<sup>13</sup> During 1853 they moved to 123 White Street where again they probably lived and worked.<sup>14</sup> However, on the morning of December 10, 1858, their business suffered a catastrophe when a fire was discovered on the second floor of the "New-Haven & Harlem Railroad Freight Depot in Centre street, between Franklin and White streets..." Apparently the blaze began in the premises of John J. Murdtar (or Murdtor), a wood turner and manufacturer of packing-boxes. Although press reports were rather conflicting, it seems that the flames soon spread and extended along several floors of the building on White Street. The situation was made somewhat worse when boxes of fireworks exploded in the Freight Depot. Like many of their neighbors Pia Brothers were not insured and lost "\$100 worth of their toys reduced to unsalable (sic) pewter..."<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, they not only survived and continued to operate from 123 White Street, but also branched out into other activities. Around 1856 it seems that Peter had become involved in a liquor business called Pia & Tonoli, at 19 North William Street, and from about 1861 to 1863 he was recorded as running a saloon at 616 Broadway. Also listed at this address in 1862 was a billiards hall under the auspices of brother John. However, by 1864 none of these other enterprises were listed and the only activity given against the Pia name was that of "toys."<sup>16</sup> One possible explanation why the family withdrew from these other occupations was due to the New York City draft riots of July 1863, which centered on

# PETER F. PIA INCORPORATED: THE FORMATIVE YEARS

## PART ONE: 1850-1866 (Continued)

Lower Manhattan. Many bar rooms and liquor stores were mobbed. Indeed, anywhere which sold alcohol became a prime target for looters. Was the Pia establishment on Broadway ransacked and destroyed during these violent disturbances? By 1865 Andrew was no longer being recorded as being with the firm, by which time, John and Peter, still operating under the name of Pia Brothers, were referred to as makers of "lead ornaments."<sup>17</sup> The last time the city directories listed them as a company was about 1866, which indicates that they ceased trading around that date.<sup>18</sup> So besides miniature tea and coffee sets, what were the other probable playthings which the Brothers had been turning out during the Antebellum and Civil War periods? There are several clues!

Whilst delving into the history of early American toy soldier manufacturers, John G. Garratt wrote in *Model Soldiers: A Collector's Guide*, that there was "at least one native maker of flats in existence before 1862, for Mr. Michael V. Hitrovo has in his collection a number of specimens of U.S. cavalry, 6.75 cm. high and engraved on one

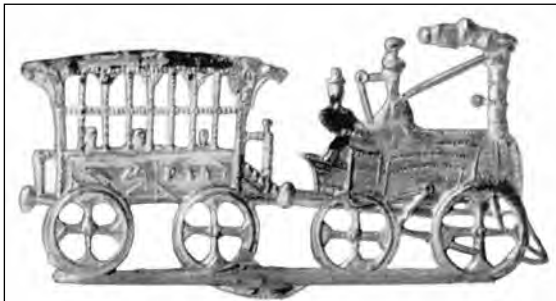
side only..." Mr. Garratt went on to say that: "From their crudeness and lack of finish or accomplishment, it is reasonable to suppose that they were by an inexperienced hand copying the imported German models."<sup>19</sup> The bases of these playthings bore the wording "U.S. CAVELRY" (sic) and Michael V. Hitrovo had purchased them in the 1950s off "an elderly lady who had kept them as her own father's toys."<sup>20</sup>

Items of a similar nature were pictured in Erwin Ortmann's book *The Collector's Guide to Model Tin Figures*. The toys concerned belonged to Jan Balet, a Munich collector, and included examples of a balloon, the "U.S. CAVELRY" (sic) figure, a road vehicle, a ship displaying the name "IOWA", and a train with the passenger car marked "PIA" – Illus. 1.<sup>21</sup> As for the actual engraving of the name "PIA," the letter "A" somewhat resembled an inverted "V" – Illus. 2.

In 1982 another example of the "U.S. CAVELRY" (sic), along with a militiaman and a Zouave, appeared in a military miniatures exhibition at the West Point Museum. While it was assumed all three were of early American

manufacture, unfortunately their origins were unknown, except that they "were originally purchased by a militaria dealer at a flea market" who had lost all provenance.<sup>22</sup>

Yet further material to throw light onto these antiquated American made playthings appeared in an article entitled *The Earliest-Known American-Made Toys?* Written by Richard O'Brien and published in the winter 2010 issue of *Old Toy Soldier Journal*, it centered on a box of toys, which the collector Bill Hanlon had purchased from Bonham's auction house in San Francisco. Apparently, many of the playthings dated from around 1900 and earlier and were the childhood toys of a very prominent East Coast family. However, found at the bottom of this box of toys was a small rectangular box bottom that contained some much older pieces. They consisted of religious items, military insignia, and several playthings, including an example of the "U.S. CAVELRY" (sic), the ship "IOWA", and a couple of toy fire engines bearing the name "PIA", all of which are pictured in Illus. 3.<sup>23</sup>



Illus. 1. The locomotive and passenger car once in the collection of Jan Balet as depicted in Erwin Ortmann's book *The Collector's Guide to Model Tin Figures*.



Illus. 2. Close-up of the name "PIA" on the passenger car. Note that the "A" somewhat resembles an inverted "V".



Illus. 3. The collection of objects purchased by Bill Hanlon from Bonham's auction house in San Francisco. They were discovered in a small rectangular box bottom with its sides held together by paper tape, which Bill thought may have been part of their original packaging.

Photo by Bill Hanlon

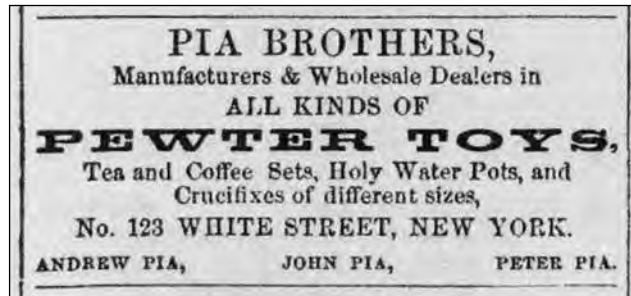


# PETER F. PIA INCORPORATED: THE FORMATIVE YEARS

## PART ONE: 1850-1866 (Continued)



Illus. 4. Toy balloon bearing the words "SPENCER" and "N.YORK" as shown in Ortmann's *The Collector's Guide to Model Tin Figures*.



Illus. 5. Pia Brothers advertisement referring to religious items, which appeared on page 49, in *Wilson's New York Commercial Register* section of *Trow's New York City Directory...for the year ending May 1, 1862*.



Illus. 6. In 1821 the United States Army adopted an eagle pattern cap insignia for its artillery and infantry arms-of-service. With a wingspan of three inches, it remained regulation through to 1851 and in 1864 was revived, but only for the Light Artillery Dress Cap. Once introduced by the regular establishment the device soon became popular with state troops and continued to be worn by some through to the late nineteenth century. However, unlike the regulation type, the commercial stock patterns as sold by military goods dealers could vary considerably in design, wingspan, finish and quality. The non-regulation die-struck example illustrated above, which was turned out in both gilt and silver finishes, measures about five inches across. Two variants of the design and cast with bases were included in Bill Hanlon's purchase from Bonham's auction house. Such items possibly indicate that Pia Brothers may have turned out some military insignia.

"SPENCER" and "N.YORK", it tends to indicate that it was of the type being flown in the United States during the period. Of course, such playthings also bring into question John Garratt's assumption that they were copied from "imported German models". It is most likely that Pia Brothers used American illustrated periodicals and other pictured sources for reference and, if so, their toys were probably entirely original.

Regarding the group of items purchased by Bill Hanlon from Bonham's auction house - Illus. 3., all were cast in the "flat," of rather crude manufacture and engraved on the obverse only. Several non-toys in the lot included some religious items, of the Catholic faith in nature. No doubt these were made by Pia Brothers because they did advertise such things - Illus. 5.<sup>25</sup> Yet a couple of other objects and possibly of significance, were two pieces of military insignia. They were copies of an eagle device, which had originally been adopted by the United States Army in 1821 as cap insignia for its artillery and infantry arms-of-service and remained regulation through to 1851. In 1864 the pattern was officially revived, but solely for the Light Artillery Dress Cap. However, once introduced by the United States Army in 1821, the design soon became popular with military schools, independent companies, and volunteer militia commands and continued to be used by some throughout the Civil War and Postbellum periods. Unlike those prescribed for the regular service, some of the stock patterns produced for non-regular troops differed considerably in design, finish and quality. Indeed, besides die stamped gilt-brass and silvered copper versions, simpler cast white metal renderings were also made. Also, while the regulation type measured three inches across, those made on a commercial basis and sold by military outfitters had wing spans which could vary from two and a half to five inches, and the device was not only used to decorate headgear, but also some non-regulation cartridge boxes - Illus. 6.<sup>26</sup> If Pia Brothers were turning out

While touching upon the possibilities of early United States made playthings, Luigi Toiati wrote in *The History of Toy Soldiers* that; "both Garratt and the collector Michael V. Hitrovo" thought, "that the naive balloon, vehicles and railway engine depicted in Ortmann's book" were "not among those types used in America." Mr. Toiati came to the conclusion that: "These figures were probably imported by an L. C. Bauersach, also advertising his 'Penny Toys' in the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*

of 1850."<sup>24</sup> However, such a theory does not explain the reason why the name "PIA" should have appeared on some of these toys, including the passenger car that accompanied the railroad locomotive. As for the engine not resembling those used in the United States, in fact it was not vastly different from some of the early machines that were built in America during the 1830s and '40s. Similar could be said about the so-called "naive balloon" - Illus. 4. Because this little toy bore the words

# PETER F. PIA INCORPORATED: THE FORMATIVE YEARS

## PART ONE: 1850-1866 (*Continued*)



Illus. 7. Probably the most common type of “U.S. CAVELRY” (sic) figure to be encountered. *Writer’s Collection*



Illus. 8. A variant pattern of the cavalryman holding his saber in a downward position. Note the spelling of “U.S. CAVALRY” is correct. *Writer’s Collection*



Illus. 9. The version of the cavalryman holding a bugle in the left hand. By courtesy of *Old Toy Soldier Auctions*

copies of this motif, it is quite feasible that they also produced facsimiles of other insignia. Nevertheless, to date there is no record of the Pia family being directly, or indirectly, involved in the military goods trade.<sup>27</sup> Of course, it is still quite possible that the Brothers did strike up a deal to cast insignia for one of the military supply houses, which were situated in New York City. However, because those in Bill Hanlon’s lot appear to have been made with bases, and thus self-standing, this tends to indicate that they were made as ornaments or toys. Indeed, war fever did not only sweep through the adult population, but also infected many children who were eager and willing to buy such things. There was a ready-made market!

As for the “U.S. CAVELRY” (sic) figure, the misspelling of the word “cavalry” tends to indicate that it was made by someone not particularly familiar with the English language, such as an Italian immigrant. While this toy has been pictured in several publications, it still merits further consideration because a number of variants, but all based on the same basic design, were turned out. Measuring about two and a half inches high, if the survival rate can be taken as evidence, probably the most numerous

“type”, which was made is that pictured in Illus. 7. Another often-encountered survivor has the rider holding his saber in a downward position. By the time the artisan had sculptured this toy he must have realized the error of his ways because the stand on this piece bears the correct spelling “U.S. CAVALRY” – Illus. 8. A version was also made holding a bugle in his left hand – Illus. 9. Yet another couple of variants, once owned by the Canadian toy collector

Percy Band, were pictured in Philip O. Stearns’ book *How to Make Model Soldiers* – Illus. 10. Three out of the group of four had hats with no plumes, simplified reins and different shaped saddlecloths. Most interesting, however, is that one of these figures had the name “HANCOCK” on its base rather than the customary “U.S. CAVELRY” (sic) or “U.S. CAVALRY”.<sup>28</sup> Winfield Scott Hancock during the Civil War not only attained the rank of major general of

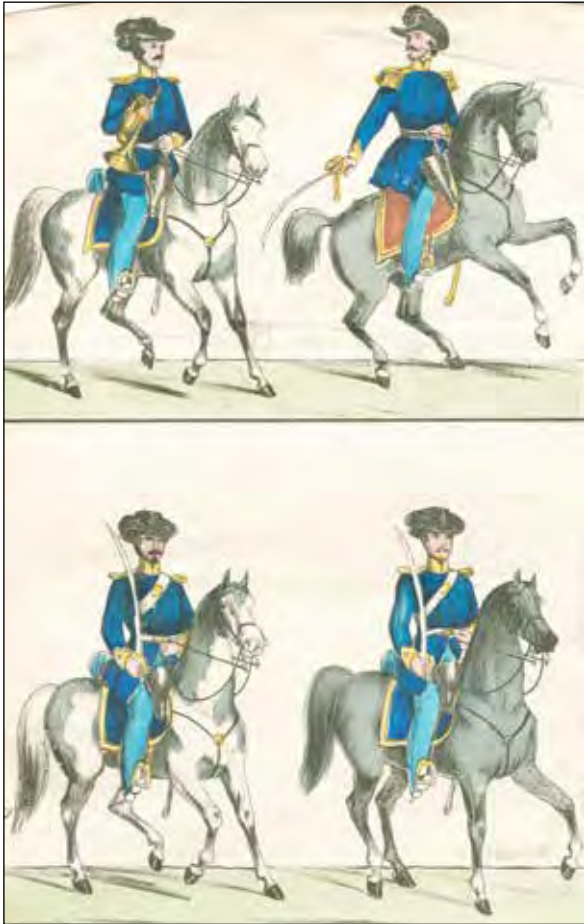


Illus. 10. A group of four cavalrymen as pictured in Philip O. Stearns’ book *How to Make Model Soldiers*. Note three of the riders have hats with no plumes, modified reins, and different shaped saddle cloths. Most notable, however, is that the figure on the right bears the name “HANCOCK” on its base.



# PETER F. PIA INCORPORATED: THE FORMATIVE YEARS

## PART ONE: 1850-1866 *(Continued)*



Illus. 11. "Picture Sheet" of U.S. Cavalrymen, which may have been the inspiration behind Pia's U.S. Cavalry figures. Although not bearing an address, Gustave Heerbrandt may have published these. By courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia



Illus.12. Mounted officer wearing chapeau de bras, tailed coat, and breeches as pictured in Erwin Ortmann's *The Collector's Guide to Model Tin Figures*. Because the horse is somewhat similar to those of the U.S. Cavalry toys, this tends to indicate that the same hand probably engraved it.



Illus. 13. The headless militiaman, which was included in Bill Hanlon's lot from Bonham's auction house. Photograph by Bill Hanlon



Illus. 14. An intact militiaman measuring about three inches high. This particular figure formed part of the military miniatures exhibition at the West Point Museum in 1982. By courtesy of Michael J. McAfee



Illus. 15. Fireman, which was included in Bill Hanlon's purchase from Bonham's Auction House. When intact the figure would have been holding a trumpet similar to that pictured in Illus. 16. Photograph by Bill Hanlon

# PETER F. PIA INCORPORATED: THE FORMATIVE YEARS

## PART ONE: 1850-1866 (*Continued*)



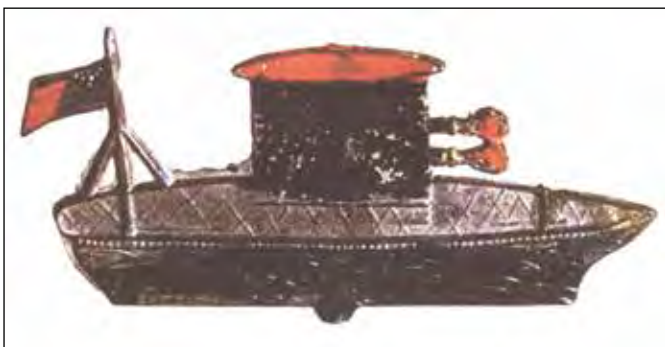
Illus. 16. James Gulick holding a trumpet as depicted on page 23 of George W. Sheldon's *The Story of the Volunteer Fire Department of the City of New York*, Harper & Brothers, 1882. Gulick was Chief Engineer of the Volunteer Fire Department of the City of New York from 1831 to 1836.



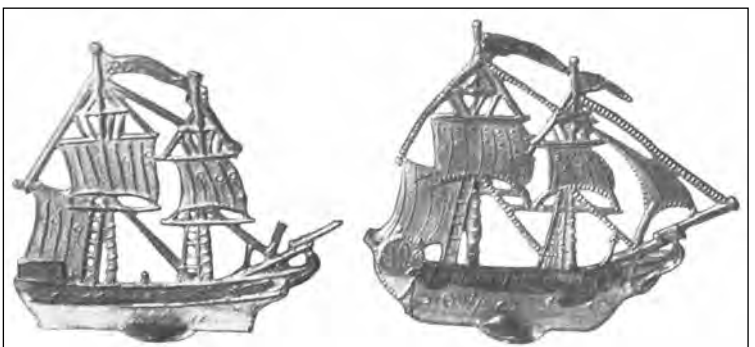
Illus. 17. Another toy and possibly made by Pia Brothers is this running Zouave. In 1982 this figure was on display in the military miniatures exhibition at the West Point Museum. The writer has also seen a near identical figure, but holding a bugle. Undoubtedly the same hand made it.



Illus. 18. Running Zouaves as depicted on a "Picture Sheet" of the Duryee Zouaves, which may have been the inspiration behind the toy shown in Illus. 17. This sheet bears the inscription "Published by G. Heerbrandt, 201 William Street." By courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia



Illus. 19. The U.S.S. *Monitor* in Bill Hanlon's collection. No doubt this toy was based on a woodcut. Photograph by Bill Hanlon



Illus. 20. The two toy sailing ships depicted in Erwin Ortmann's *The Collector's Guide to Model Tin Figures*. Although the craft on the right bears the name "IOWA", it was nothing like the U.S.S. *Iowa*, formerly the *Ammonoosuc* – See Illus. 21.

volunteers, but also received a brigadier general's commission in the Regular Army. After the ending of hostilities he was further promoted in the regular service to major general.<sup>29</sup> Regarding the overall appearance of these U.S. Cavalry toys, they were modeled as wearing black felt hats and frock coats. Also worthy of note is that the horse equipment included saddle holsters. All this possibly indicates that the person who engraved these playthings may have used the "American Picture Sheet" shown in Illus. 11, as a source of reference and inspiration.

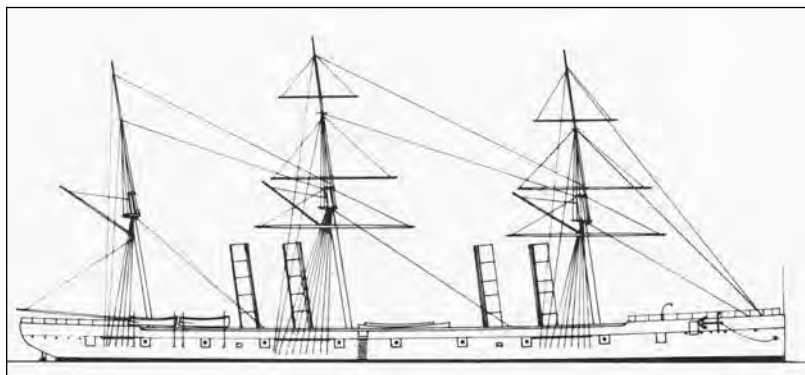
Although not of the same type as the cavalry figures mentioned above, but most likely sculptured by the same hand due to the rider being mounted on a similar horse, was that of a soldier wearing a chapeau de bras, tailed coat, and breeches – Illus. 12. The details for this toy were probably based upon an illustration of an officer from a bygone age. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that during the 1850s and slightly later, some states were still prescribing rather archaic looking uniforms for their high-ranking militia officers.

Regarding the headless infantryman and fireman acquired by Bill Hanlon from Bonham's auction house, both measured about three inches high – Illus. 13 and 15. When intact the foot soldier was sculptured as wearing a dress cap as shown in Illus. 14, and at first glance, somewhat resembled figures being produced by such companies as Blondel of Paris during



# PETER F. PIA INCORPORATED: THE FORMATIVE YEARS

## PART ONE: 1850-1866 (*Continued*)



Illus. 21. Line drawing of the wooden screw frigate U.S.S. *Wampanoag*, which was the sister ship and identical to the *Ammonoosuc*. Laid down in 1863 and launched the following year, they were intended as commerce destroyers for war against Great Britain, which was a distinct possibility at the time. Originally the class was to consist of five ships, but only three actually saw sea trials. The *Neshaminy* was never completed and the *Pompanoosuc* was never launched. On May 15, 1869, the class was renamed and the *Ammonoosuc* became the *Iowa*. By this date evidence suggests that Pia Brothers were no longer even trading and, therefore, their little pewter "IOWA" could not have been intended to represent the United States Navy's *Iowa*. By courtesy of Conway Maritime Press



Illus. 22. Toy fire engine bearing the name "PIA". Photograph by Bill Hanlon



Illus. 23. Advertisement for Joseph Pine, a manufacturer and dealer in fire apparatus, which appeared on page 18 of the *Commercial Register* section of *Trow's New York City Directory...for the year ending May 1, 1861*. Note the similarity between the machine illustrated and the toy produced by Pia Brothers.

the first half of the nineteenth century. Of course, we must not forget that from 1851 onward American military dress was greatly influence by French martial fashion, a style of garb that had been developed by that nation's army during its conquest of Algeria, a campaign that began in 1830. Although the dress cap was replaced by a black felt hat for most commands and departments of the United States Army in 1858, variants of the shako still continued to remain popular with many volunteer militia outfits. In fact, New York officially prescribed such headgear for its State Forces in its 1858 *General Regulations*. Thus, the toy figure concerned most certainly represented a militiaman rather than a regular foot soldier.<sup>30</sup> As for the fireman, while it may seem a rather strange choice of figurine to produce in a line of toy soldiers, during the mid-nineteenth century there was very little difference between the two. Members of fire companies, no matter what city, were volunteers. They wore uniforms, were competitive, high-spirited, reckless, closely involved in ward politics and were linked with military companies. In New York City, for instance, the fire companies operated more like a standing army. When war broke, they were ideal organizations from which to obtain recruits for the newly forming volunteer regiments.<sup>31</sup> The exploits of firemen were avidly reported in the press and appeared in numerous illustrated periodicals. Undoubtedly, the fireman toy depicted in Illus. 15 was based upon such a woodcut. Originally the figure would have been holding a trumpet similar to that shown in Illus. 16.

Another model and possibly made by Pia Brothers was that of a running Zouave. The specimen pictured in Illus. 17, formed part of the display at the military miniatures exhibition at the West Point Museum in 1982. Although not illustrated, the writer has also seen a near identical figure, but holding a bugle to his mouth with his right hand. Undoubtedly the same person engraved both. No doubt the details for these toys were gleaned from an "American

# PETER F. PIA INCORPORATED: THE FORMATIVE YEARS

## PART ONE: 1850-1866 (Continued)

Picture Sheet” entitled “ADVANCE GUARD. COL. DURYEE.”, which was published by Gustav Heerbrandt of New York - Illus. 18. During the war the Duryee Zouaves were designated 5th Regiment, New York Volunteer Infantry.

Likewise, with its guns blazing, the U.S.S. *Monitor* in Bill Hanlon's purchase seems to have been based on a contemporary illustration – Illus. 19. Over the years the writer has also seen a “tin-flat” version of the *Monitor's* adversary, the C.S.S. *Virginia*, but, not being maker marked, it was impossible to tell who the manufacturer actually was. While it is highly likely that Pia did turn out a toy representing the Confederate ship, it most certainly was not the only company to produce models of these two iconic Civil War ironclads. Indeed, it would seem that following the famous engagement at Hampton Roads on March 9, 1862, both Allegeyer of Fürth and Heinrichsen of Nuremberg put representative toys on the market.<sup>32</sup>

While delving into the maritime aspects of Pia Brothers toy production, it seems that they made at least two sailing vessels, both of which were depicted in Ortmann's *The Collector's Guide to Model Tin Figures*. They were very similar and the most distinguishing feature between the two was that one bore the name “IOWA” – Illus. 20. When carrying out research into a craft of this name, Bill Hanlon discovered that the U.S.S. *Iowa* had originally begun life in 1864 as the U.S.S. *Ammonoosuc* and was not re-christened the *Iowa* until 1869. Although this suggested that the toy concerned must have been of post-Civil War manufacture, apparently the only material Bill used for reference was that found on Google. While the information he obtained was correct, it is doubtful that Pia's little pewter “IOWA” was intended to represent the U.S. Navy's steam vessel. The reason why, is that all of the other playthings purported to have been made by Pia Brothers seemed to have been fairly good representations of the real thing,

whereas this little pewter ship was nothing like the actual U.S.S. *Iowa*, which had a very distinctive appearance. It had four tall funnels that were divided into two groups – Illus. 21.<sup>33</sup> However, there were at least three vessels called *Iowa* that did figure in the Civil War and two were sailing ships. One was a sloop whose duties included the conveying of five hundred barrels of gunpowder to Fortress Monroe in May 1861, and the other was a schooner, said to be a blockade runner, which was captured at Mount Pleasant, North Carolina, on June 16, 1864.<sup>34</sup> No doubt there were others, but as to which vessel Pia's little craft was meant to represent, we will probably never know.

As for Pia's toys being passably accurate interpretations of the real thing, evidence of this is clearly indicated by the firm's toy fire engine. Two examples were included in Bill Hanlon's lot, one of which is depicted in Illus. 22. Yet another specimen, but belonging to Jan Balet, was pictured in Ortmann's book. Unquestionably they were made by Pia because all three bore the company's name. Without doubt this little toy closely resembled some of the appliances that were being used by the various New York City fire companies during the period.<sup>35</sup> A fine woodcut of such a machine was used to illustrate a Joseph Pine firefighting equipment advertisement in 1861 - Illus. 23. Note the similarities!

Referring back to the “flat” railroad locomotive and passenger car as shown in Illus. 1, Louis H. Hertz said in *The Toy Collector* that it was not “possible to say when Pia first made this toy” or was it “possible to say how long the toy may have been in current production. It may date from the 1860s; a good, safe conservative guess would place it around the 1880s...”<sup>36</sup> However, maybe not. Probably this little train, like all of Pia's “flat” toys, was most likely engraved and made during the 1850s through to about 1866. Indeed, during the later years when the next generation of Pia companies was to be formed, it

seems that their playthings were to be far more detailed and refined. Why Pia Brothers ceased production during the mid-1860s is not clear, but evidently the Pia family never relinquished ownership of the workshop at 123 White Street. During the interim years evidence suggests that the premises were rented out, or some other form of business arrangements made, with three other toy makers, two of whom were probably former Pia employees. The activities of these artisans, together with the return of the Pia family into toy manufacturing and the events leading up to the formation of Peter F. Pia Incorporated, will be dealt with in Part Two.

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1. Marshall and Inez McClintock, *Toys in America*, Public Affairs Press, Washington, D.C., 1961, p. 75.
2. *The Kingston Daily Freeman*, Kingston, New York, Monday, July 31, 1933, p. 12.
3. *The Buffalo Express*, Buffalo, New York, Saturday, December 28, 1867, p. 1.
4. *The Standard Union*, Brooklyn, New York, Sunday, December 17, 1905, p. 13.
5. *The New York Herald*, New York, New York, Monday, July 26, 1875, p. 1.
6. Peter Pia, *Naturalization Index - NYC Courts*, Record Group 21, Roll 206, Bundle No. 327, Record No. 279. 1880 US Federal Census – Population, New York City, p. 39. *The New York Times*, New York, New York, Friday, December 20, 1907, p. 11.
7. *1850 US Federal Census – Population*, 10th Ward, New York City, p. 525 (?). Francis A. Schnueriger, *Naturalization Index - NYC Courts*, Record Group 21, Roll 263, Bundle No. 43, Record No. 119. Catherine Moeller, see *1850 New York Roman Catholic Parish Marriages*, St. Vincent de Paul, Manhattan, New York. *Doggett's New York City Directory, for 1850-1851*, 59 Liberty Street, New York, p.399.
8. Peter Pia, *Naturalization Index - NYC Courts*, Record Group 21, Roll 206, Bundle No. 42, Record No. 340. Andrew Pia, *Naturalization Index - NYC Courts*, Record



# PETER F. PIA INCORPORATED: THE FORMATIVE YEARS

## PART ONE: 1850-1866 (Continued)

Group 21, Roll 206, Bundle No. 46, Record No. 115. John Pia, **Naturalization Index - NYC Courts**, Record Group 21, Roll 206, Bundle No. 69, Record No. 234.

9. **1860 US Federal Census – Population**, 4th District Sixth Ward, New York City, p. 74. Andrew Pia, **Passport Applications, 1795-1905**, Record Group 59, Roll 0045. The document referring to Andrew Pia is dated November 29, 1853.

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13. **The New York Herald**, New York, New York, Monday, April 7, 1851, p. 3. **The New York City Directory, for 1851-1852**, Doggett & Rode, 59, Liberty Street, New York, p. 474. **The Directory of the City of New-York, for 1852-1853**, John F. Trow, Publisher, 49 Ann-Street, New York, p. 487.

14. **Trow's New-York City Directory, for 1853-1854**, 51 Ann Street, New York, p. 551.

15. **The Brooklyn Daily Times**, Brooklyn, New York, Saturday, December 11, 1858, p. 2. **The New York Herald**, New York, New York, Saturday, December 11, 1858, p. 4. **The New-York Times**, New York, New York, Saturday, December 11, 1858, p. 1.

\* While reporting on this fire some newspapers referred to Pia Brothers as "Messrs. A. Pia & Co." No doubt, this was an error on the part of the press because all other sources, including advertisements and New York City trade directories, always referred to the firm as Pia Brothers.

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19. John G. Garratt, **Model Soldiers: A Collector's Guide**, Seeley Service & Co., Ltd., London, 1959, p. 132 and Plate 73.

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32. Ignacio Czeguhn, Martin Schabenstiel, Erhard Schraudolph, Alfred R. Sulzer, Robert Lonsing, **Zinnfiguren der Offizin J. C. Allgeyer**, CH 8700 Kusunacht, 2017, pp. 213-215.

33. **Conway's All the World's Fighting Ships 1860-1905**, Conway Maritime Press, Greenwich, London, 1979, p. 124.

34. **Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion**, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1897, Series I, Vol. 5, pp. 686-687. Ibid, Series I, Vol. 23, p. 563. Ibid, Series I, Vol. 25, p. 492. Ibid, Series 1, Vol. 10, pp. 154, 155, 213, 239.

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# AUCTION REVIEW

## OLD TOY SOLDIER



### AUCTIONS USA

## AUCTION #74

## BRITAIN SOLDIER BRIGADE

AUGUST 26TH, 2022



Lot 3 King & Country #IDF002 M51  
"Super Sherman" \$300



Lot 631 Mignot Special The Internment Napoleons Return \$2,800



Lot 335 Britains #16 The Buffs \$4,400



Lot 613 Britains Mounted Knights Of Agincourt \$550



Lot 509 Britains #94 Empress Of India's 21st Lancers \$3,900



Lot 598 Ballada Eugene De Beauharnais  
Prince Colonel \$375

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## AUCTION REVIEW (Continued)



**Lot 441 Britains #140 French Dragons \$900**



**Lot 433 Britains Set # 218 SCARCE Spanish Cavalry \$500**



**Lot 490 Wm. Hocker #49 Bengal Horse Artillery \$550**



**Lot 387 Britains #222 Uruguayan Infantry \$600**



**Lot 338 Britains #1632 Royal Canadian Regiment \$550**



**Lot 518 Britains RARE #83 Middlesex Yeomanry \$2,600**



**Lot 281 Britains #1264 4.7 Naval Gun \$475**



**Lot 332 Britains #26 Boer Infantry \$700**



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# LETTERS & READER'S MESSAGES

Norman Joplin wrote in with a follow-up to Will Beierwaltes article on HM Queen Elizabeth:



Queen Elizabeth II mounted on *Doctor*, Trooping of the Colour, 1963

"The Queen rode a white police horse in the Trooping the Colour in 1963 as shown in the accompanying image. The horse was called *Doctor*. There is no connection with this horse and the RCMP as suggested in Will's article.

There was however a RCMP connection. The Queen was presented with Burmese by the RCMP. This was a "black". When Britains re issued the hollow cast range in 2001 an example was produced, only for Britains to get the name wrong in the 2001 catalogue, they called the horse Bermuda! The error is shown in the copy of the Catalogue also shown here."



A rare example of Britains not getting it right. Her horse was called Burmese NOT Bermuda as in the caption from their 2001 catalogue!



# AUCTION REVIEW

OLD TOY SOLDIER



TRAUCTIONS USA

AUCTION #75

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MEDIEVAL KNIGHTS

SEPTEMBER 8TH, 2022



Lot 41 Selwyn Miniatures Sir Miles Stapleton \$2,900



Lot 84 Courtenay-Greenhill Jean de  
Blondy Mounted \$950



Lot 85 Courtenay-Greenhill Barthelemi  
de Bruce Mounted \$1,200



Lot 39 Selwyn Miniatures Rafe Lord Basset  
of Drayton \$2,200



Lot 36 Selwyn Courtenay Count of Nevers  
\$3,700



Lot 112 Courtenay-Greenhill Neville, Erle of  
Warwick \$1,100



Lot 178 Courtenay Rare Erle  
of Stafford \$1,100



Lot 77 Courtenay-Greenhill  
Jean Sieur de Thil \$700



Lot 198 Ping Knight  
Richard I \$600



Lot 80 Courtenay-Greenhill The  
MacLennan \$750



Lot 165 Courtenay Sir William  
d'Eyncourt \$750

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# AUCTION REVIEW (Continued)



Lot 116 Courtenay-Greenhill King Edward III Mounted  
\$2,000



Lot 91 Courtenay-Greenhill Duke of Brittany  
Mounted \$900



Lot 37 Selwyn Courtenay Sir Thomas Erpinsham  
\$2,600



Lot 85 Courtenay-Greenhill Barthelemi de Bruce  
Mounted \$1,200



Lot 45 Selwyn Miniatures Earl of Oxford  
\$2,800



Lot 114 Courtenay-Greenhill Duplex Audley / de  
Audrehem \$1,600



Lot 73 Josaine Des Fontaines General  
Fournier-Sarloveze \$3,700



Lot 109 Courtenay-Greenhill Sir  
Roger Cheyne w/ Banner \$500



Lot 86 Courtenay-Greenhill Jean de  
Clermont \$600



Lot 191 Courtenay  
Large-Scale King  
Edward III \$1,700





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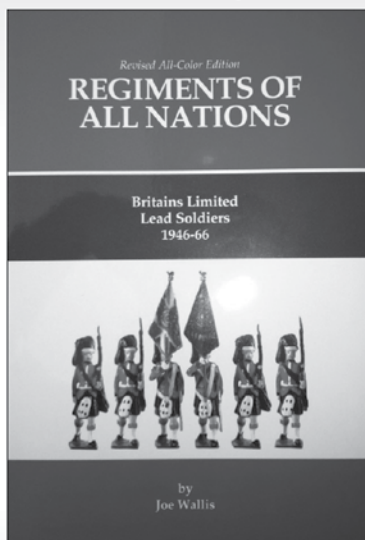
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# TOY SOLDIER SHOW & AUCTION CALENDAR 2022-2023

**November 12th, 2022 - Saturday** - 9am – 4pm  
First Annual Newport News / American Legion Post #25  
Toy Soldier Show. American Legion Braxton Perkins  
Post #25. 7609 Marshall Ave., Newport News, VA 23605  
Chris Garcia, 757-298-3770, criostalmiceal@aol.com  
Tom Armentrout, 804-514-5063, armentrouttom@gmail.com  
Norm Rodriguez, Colin Romanick, 901-218-7046

**November 18th, 2022 - Friday** - Old Toy Soldier  
Auction 78. The Lifetime Collection of Peter Greenhill.  
oldtoysoldierauctions.com

**December 3rd, 2022 - Saturday** - "Heart of the South"  
Toy Soldier Show. The Annandale, Virginia Volunteer Fire  
Department at 7128 Columbia Pike. Contact for more  
information Ed Greis at 201-257-2687.

**December 10th, 2022 - Saturday** - Old Toy Soldier  
Auction 79. Heyde for the Holidays.  
oldtoysoldierauctions.com

**January 23rd and 24th, 2023 - Monday and Tuesday-**  
Vectis Military Civilian Figures, Equipment & Accessories  
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*Due to Covid-19 it is strongly advised you  
check with show promoters before traveling to  
any of the listed shows*



**February 4th, 2023 - Saturday** - 28th Annual Florida Toy  
Soldier Action Figure, Toy & Collectibles Show.  
9am-1pm. Finland House, 301 W. Central Blvd.,  
Lantana, FL 33462. For more information call  
754-263-7392.

**February 26th, 2023 - Sunday** - The West Coast  
Toy Soldier Show and Sale. Admission: \$8.00 or  
2 for \$15.00

**March 26th, 2023 - Sunday** - The Midwest Toy Soldier  
Show, Lafayette, IN., For info contact; Rick Keller  
765-430-6289; Steve Connell 734-455-0724;  
or Rod Chapman 740-924-2531.

**April 23rd, 2023 - Sunday** - The Gettysburg Toy Soldier  
Show, Gettysburg, PA., Eisenhower Inn/ Aspire Ball Room.  
For info. contact; Steve Connell 734-455-0724; Rod  
Chapman 740-924-2531; or Rick Keller 765-430-6289.

**May 21st, 2023 - Sunday** - The Ohio Toy Soldier Show,  
Wadsworth, OH., For info. contact Steve Connell  
734-455-0724; Rod Chapman 740-924-2531;  
or Rick Keller 765-430-6289.

**September 24, 2023 - Sunday** - Chicago Toy Soldier  
Show. Hyatt Regency Schaumburg, Illinois. Jan and  
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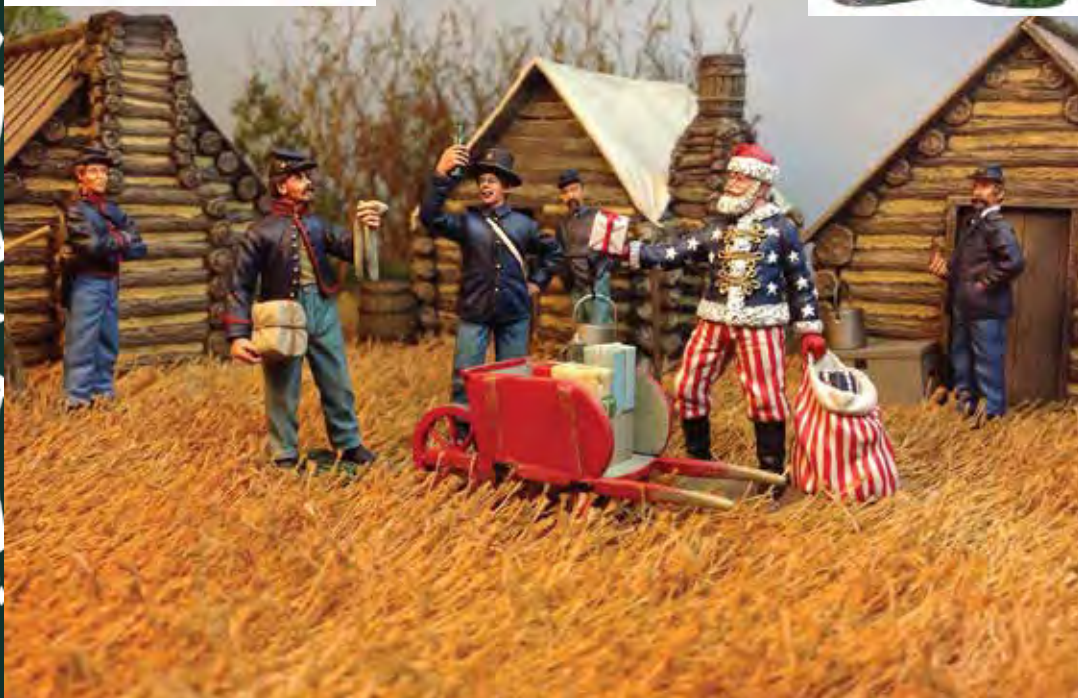
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