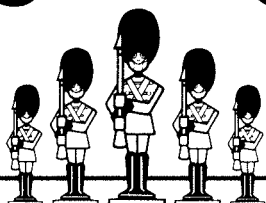


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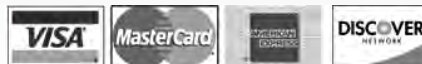
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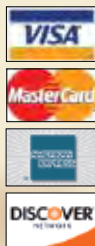
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# A Tribute To K. Warren Mitchell



*In a hobby with a remarkable number of good people, K. Warren Mitchell was a standout.*

*He was a major dealer with an excellent reputation, but he went much further than that. I don't know if he loved toy soldiers or the hobby, but he seemed to. He did everything he could for both, consistently providing new information on the subject of soldiers, and taking slews of new and important photos. In each instance, it was with time and money lost, just for the good of the hobby.*

*I remember my first contact with Mitch. It was by phone. He was new to the hobby and asked where I got the prices my books recorded. I told him that I got them from him, as well as others. That persuaded him to come up with his prices on his own.*

*In time, it wasn't just his sales prices I found valuable. If I needed a photo, Mitch was there, often stopping everything and taking one for me, if he didn't already have it in his files. With my "Collecting Foreign-Made Toy Soldiers", he really went beyond the pale. As I acknowledged in the book, Mitch contributed so much, in the way of histories, listings, prices, photos, and where he didn't have the information himself, contributors, that it was a wonder it wasn't his name on the cover instead of mine.*

*Come to think of it, the book itself was his idea! In any event, if my memory is correct, I did pay him a share of the royalties, and the same memory suggests that was my decision; that Mitch never asked for a dime.*

*Politically, Mitch and I couldn't have been further apart. He was an arch-conservative and he knew I was a hopeless liberal, but unlike the Congress of recent years, we had no trouble remaining friends. In addition to our mutual interest in toy soldiers, we shared a love of jazz, and here again Mitch was his usual generous self; I treasure the two jazz DVDs he gifted me with, and enjoyed a number of jazz videos he emailed me.*

*I'll certainly miss him.  
Richard O'Brien*

*It is with heavy heart I pass this sadness along. Warren was a stalwart of the hobby and mentor to many and all. You will be missed old friend!*

*Joseph Saine*



*Warren was so helpful to me regarding the current article of mine that came out in the May OTS issue. I was so touched by his passing and had featured Warren throughout the text, for after almost two years he rediscovered my E to him re the John Hamister I wrote about and his son was able to send me all the images I used for the article. Without Warren's help and concern the article could never have been written.*

*Lou Steinburg*



*It is with great sadness that I have to inform you all that my father, K. Warren Mitchell, passed away this past Wednesday. We are all still in shock after day 2 of making arrangements. Dad had not been doing well lately, and this past week he took a turn for the worse. What he said was flu to keep me away for 2 days appears to have been complications from his COPD and a heart attack, but we will never know for sure. Dad was a firm believer in "quality of life" versus "quantity", and he did what he loved up until the day he died. We will all miss him terribly.*

*His obituary will be in both the Columbus Dispatch and the Cleveland Plain Dealer on Friday, April 22, with the memorial service Saturday at Kauber-Sammons Funeral Home, 289 E. Main St, Pataskala, Ohio 43062, 740.927.3971. They have a website <http://www.kaubersammons.com> as well, where you can view the obituary and leave thoughts and messages for the family.*

*My sister and I have chosen the collie rescue he loved for contributions/donations in his memory if you are interested. The website is [www.almosthomeobio.org](http://www.almosthomeobio.org).*

*Sincerely,  
-K. Alen Mitchell*





# A Tribute To K. Warren Mitchell

To K. Warren Mitchell

*K. Warren Mitchell is dead. In all the years I have known him; in the years and hours we have talked over the phone; in the letters and notes we have exchanged and in the many times I leaned on his expertise never once did I ever consider that I would write these words: "K. Warren Mitchell is dead." He died within days of sending out what is now his last dimestore list.*

*I trusted Warren; his word; his integrity; his judgment. And, obviously, I was not alone. The list of those in our hobby who held K. Warren Mitchell in the highest regard is legion. His death leaves a major gap in many of our lives.*

*For more than 11 years I leaned on Warren's expertise, his knowledge. He never once refused the multitude of questions. And, I cannot begin to count the times when my eagerness to acquire a certain piece was tempered by his simple comment. "This one really isn't to your standard. Have patience, one will come along."*

*We all learned to trust in his honesty and his extensive expertise.*

*The irony is I never met the man. We never shook hands, never broke bread. Had we passed on the street I would not have known it. But, he was the dear friend I'd never met.*

*I will miss him greatly.*

*Gordon Lattey, Troy, NY*



*I miss Warren very much. He was one of a small group of very fine men who mentored me as I returned to the hobby of my childhood. My only regret, in our friendship, is that it didn't start soon enough. Seeing Warren was one of the highlights of the Chicago show for me, and we spent many a quality hour in the sports bar and in his room.*

*I have one endearing memory of Warren I wish to share. We all remember his "corner room" and how he sat behind his table dispensing wisdom and good cheer. And, there were the "grab bag" boxes on the floor – an annual ritual. Doctor Bill Voelter and I were headed towards Warren's room and were treated to an image which is as bright today as it was then. One of the boxes was on the floor, directly in front of Warren's desk. The collector was down on his knees – with his back to us – perusing the goodies. But, we couldn't see the box, just the kneeling collector with his head down. Warren was in his chair, head tilted back in contemplation. I said "Bill, my gosh, he looks like Brando in The Godfather dispensing favors at his daughter's wedding." We both laughed uncontrollably, and forever more, in my emails and phone calls to Warren, it was "Godfather."*

*I would be quick to add, however, that our nickname was one of reverence, without any sinister connotations derived from the character in the movie. Unlike Don Corelone, all Warren ever sought was your friendship – no strings attached. I miss Warren very much.*

*Colonel (Ret) Sam Floca Jr.  
Temple, TX*

*Warren was one of the pillars of our hobby. I will remember him as a friend, mentor, and colleague who always went the extra mile to share his knowledge and expertise, especially with young collectors. When I was still in high school and first learning about old toy soldiers, Warren spent hours with me on the phone explaining how to identify repaints, repairs, different Dimestore variations, and the like. As my experience grew, he trusted me as a "picker" for his voluminous lists and reinforced the code of ethics that most old figure collectors still abide by today. When on one occasion I made a major error purchasing a collection on his behalf, he kindly allowed me to pay him back over several years, and when I became an independent dealer he made a point of buying from me to support my business. At shows, we enjoyed iced tea together and sat in my room at Chicago and just discussed life, about which he always had a few nuggets of wisdom to impart. Ever gracious to wives and girlfriends, generous to a fault, and always happy to talk, Warren taught me not only about toy soldiers but also about living. Thank you, my friend, for everything, and we will meet again.*

*Chris Keller*

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## Obituary ❀ Toly Kojev



Toly Kojev, military historian, restorer of military accoutrements, painter and collector of toy soldiers passed away on April 8, 2011 at the age of 92.

Toly came from a military family with both his father and grandfather serving as officers in the Russian army. During World War II, Toly continued this tradition by reaching the rank of 2nd Lieutenant in the US Air Corp. He trained new pilots in the Caribbean.

With his family's military history and Toly's artistic talents, it was no surprise that his time outside his job at REI (the nation's 1st outdoor equipment cooperative) was spent bridging his love of history with his artistic talents.

Toly's home in Seattle was filled with original work from Lucien Rousselot, a noted French 20th century military artist, and anyone walking into his home could feel the passion he held for all things militaria. Bookshelves were lined with books on military history and uniforms of world armies, and cabinets were crowded with Mignot, Lucotte, Britains and toy soldiers painted by Toly, himself. Displays of shiny helmets and colorful uniforms and sabers were everywhere.

Toly attended the Chicago, California and Seattle toy soldiers shows, and at each show his table was filled with all things military. Every piece had a story and he loved sharing that story as much as making the sale. Toly brought a wealth of information about his keen interest of anything military and will be missed by those in the hobby.

## UPCOMING NEW GERMAN MAGAZINE

Gisbert Freber has announced a new annual German Toy Soldier magazine is in the works. Contact: [gisbert.freber@gmx.de](mailto:gisbert.freber@gmx.de)

## NEW BOOKS IMPENDING

**Joe Wallis** is publishing a revised hard cover edition of his widely used book *Regiments of All Nations*. It has been out of print since 2002, after selling over 6,450 copies. Joe's new edition will have 300 pages with 500 color photographs. It incorporates what he has learned during the last 30 years since *ROAN* was first published in 1981. He hopes to have it available at the Old Toy Soldier Show in Chicago September 2011.

**Don Pielin** has nearly completed his Jones book - more details at O.T.S. show.

Other new books in the pipeline from **Lou Sandbote** and **Norman Joplin** see O.T.S. November issue.

## SEPTEMBER BARGAIN ROOM AND EMPTY BOX SALE - ANNUAL EVENT

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# 1066 AND ALL THAT: A HOMAGE TO FREDERICK PING

*By Rob Wilson*

1066 is one of the most famous dates in British history. Duke William II of Normandy succeeded, where both Napoleon and Hitler signally failed, in carrying out a military invasion of England. His opponent was the Anglo-Saxon Harold Godwinson, head of one of the most powerful families in England. Harold had claimed the English throne, with the general support of his peers, following the death of Edward the Confessor in the January of 1066. Edward had no direct descendants, but there were competing claims from William and others. William's claim to the throne was tenuous, including a sacred oath made (under duress according to Harold) to relinquish his claim in favour of William. When Harold had himself crowned William made the decision to dispute this by force. Despite the fact that his own army was not strong enough to do this alone, he managed to convince enough knights in Normandy, and other parts of present day France, as well as much further afield, to support him in a military expeditionary force to seize the throne for himself.

Unfortunately for Harold, William was not his only competitor for the crown. His own brother Tostig had allied himself to the Norwegian Harold Hardrada, who had also laid claim to the throne. By the early autumn Harold was facing a battle on two fronts: a Viking invasion from the north and William's invasion fleet of over 600 ships in the south.

Undaunted, Harold marched his army to Stamford Bridge near York, where he inflicted a crushing defeat on the Viking army. His own army was composed of a core of well trained knights or Huscarls who fought on foot. They were supported by Thegns (minor aristocrats and landowners) required to serve for a limited number of days each year, and their own supporters and retainers. The Huscarls, were relatively well equipped with chain mail hauberks, conical helmets and kite shaped or circular shields. The weapon of choice for most was the two handed battle axe, although most would have carried broad swords and daggers too. The rest of the army, the so called "Fyrd", comprised Thegns. They were rather less well equipped (being responsible for bringing and maintaining their own arms and armour). They in turn were supported by peasants and others who owed them allegiance. These troops had little in the way of protective clothing and were armed with spears, clubs and stones.

In contrast, William's army comprised a significant cavalry arm, heavily armoured (in similar fashion to the Huscarls), and armed with lances for shock tactics. They were supported by infantry and also archers (using relatively short bows compared to the later "English longbow").

Harold hastened south to meet the Norman threat. By the evening of 14 October 1066 he had confronted the second set of invaders at Senlac Hill, about 6 miles northwest of Hastings, by which name the battle is now known. Despite having already fought off one set of invaders, and a forced march of over 200 miles, Harold's army gave a good account of itself in the opening phases of the battle. The English / Anglo-Saxon army was well organised. It adopted the tactic of the "shield wall", in which all the men on the front ranks locked their shields together to fend off projectiles and other means of attack. Norman tactics involved a barrage by arrows and other projectiles, followed by a cavalry charge. However the shield wall was very successful at frustrating the Norman attacks in the early stages of the battle.

It was only when the Normans retreated down the hill and began to lose formation that many of the English broke ranks, including hundreds of fyrdmen and Harold's own brothers, Leofwine and Gurth. At some point in the confusion, William's horse was killed from underneath him. To avoid a complete collapse of morale William threw off his helmet to show that he still lived, and was thereby able to rally his fleeing troops. The Normans successfully counter-attacked the pursuing English, who were no longer protected by a solid shield wall, and cut down large numbers, including Harold's brothers. The survivors retreated back to the safety of the Huscarls and the shield wall. This pattern was repeated twice more until the shield wall had become so depleted it no longer provide the protection it had first offered. A final assault resulted in Harold being killed, the eventual collapse of the English army, and the death of most of the remaining Huscarls.



Figure 1: "HAROLD REX INTERFECTUS EST" (King Harold is killed) - Scene from the Bayeux Tapestry depicting the closing phase of the Battle of Hastings. A figure, some think is Harold, attempts to pluck an arrow from his eye. But the figure with the two handed battle axe being cut down by a mounted Norman knight could equally well be Harold.



# 1066 AND ALL THAT: A HOMAGE TO FREDERICK PING *(Cont.)*

The Bayeux Tapestry depicts the events before and during the battle. It shows Harold being killed in the battle (see Figure 1). Legend has it that he was shot through the eye with an arrow, but it is not certain the figure illustrated with the arrow wound is Harold. Although there was further English resistance, through legendary “resistance fighters” such as Hereward the Wake, the battle is generally regarded as the point at which William gained control of England, becoming its first Norman ruler. “William the Conqueror” was crowned King William I of England on December 25th, 1066 at Westminster Abbey.

For more details of the battle and its aftermath see:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Hastings](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Hastings)

For the information on the Bayeux tapestry see:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bayeux\\_Tapestry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bayeux_Tapestry)

There have been many representations of the two armies in toy and model soldier form, including some excellent large scale plastic figures by Elastolin. However, this article focuses on the work of Frederick Ping (1902-1977). Ping was one of the pioneers in the field of model soldiers. Garrett (1955) waxes lyrical on the subject of his work, placing him amongst the “Master Makers”. Most Ping Figures are almost entirely scratch built, so each one is unique, making collecting great fun. A contemporary of Richard Courtenay, he inherited the Courtenay moulds and continued to produce medieval knights until his death, when the baton was taken up by Peter Greenhill.

He was most famous for his series of figures from British history. These were produced on commission for many wealthy patrons. (For example he produced a series of all the Kings and Queens of England (plus various retainers) for the Ferrers family, the aristocratic owners of Baddesley Clinton in Warwickshire (now owned by the National Trust)).

Each Ping figure is individually modelled, based around a simple basic torso casting, extended using lead sheet and other materials. The lead sheet is often the Achilles heel for a Ping Figurine as it frequently results in lead disease. However if figures are stored in good condition this can be avoided. Good condition Ping figures are very collectable indeed.

Recently a complete collection of 24 figures depicting William, Harold, and both their supporters came up for auction in England. These are in casual poses, and well illustrate both the skill, as well as the detailed research, that Ping deployed when making his figures. Huscarls, Thengs and the Fyrd are all represented, as are the Norman knights, men at arms and archers. Many personality figures are also in the

group, including William’s half brother, Odo Bishop of Bayeux, subsequently the Earl of Kent, and 2 of Harold’s brothers. The accompanying illustrations show the elaborate details included.

Figure 2 depicts the Anglo-Saxons. From left to right they are as follows:

- 2 Saxon Fyrdmen each armed with spear and shield;
- Leofwine, Harold’s brother; with two handed battle axe;
- Saxon Huscarl with spear and round shield;
- Harold with two handed battle axe and kite shaped shield;
- Saxon Huscarl with broad sword and kite shaped shield;
- Saxon standard bearer with Dragon standard;
- Saxon Huscarl with lance and pennant;
- Saxon Huscarl with spear and round shield;
- Gurth, Harold’s brother with broad sword and kite shaped shield;
- Saxon Huscarl with broad sword;
- Saxon Fyrdman with spear and small round shield.

Figure 3 shows the opposing Normans. From left to right we have:

- D’Avriler, Norman archer armed with short bow;
- Saint Cler, Norman Knight with spear and kite shaped shield;
- Taillefer, Court Minstrel, with pennanted lance, kite shaped shield and a horn slung across his back;
- Robert Fitz Erneis and William Fitz Osbert, Norman Knights, both with lance and kite shaped shield;
- William Duke of Normandy;
- Roger de Mongomeri, Norman Knight, with pennanted lance and kite shaped shield;
- Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, William’s half brother, armed with a crude mace or club;
- The Viscount of Toarz, Norman knight, with pennanted lance and kite shaped shield;
- Tosteins Fitz Rou le Blanc, Standard bearer;
- Hugh de Mortimer, Norman knight, with pennanted lance and kite shaped shield;
- D’Onebac, Norman archer stringing his short bow;

While this large group is absolutely typical of Ping’s style, he also went in for more elaborate commissions. This included a large group entitled “Senlac Hill” which covers many of the same protagonists. This set was formally part of the Herbert Charles (Nod) Faulkner collection (Garrett, 1972, p 158). It is referred to in Garret’s book as “Senlac”, although not illustrated there. This omission is now repaired by the second set of images which show the full set, and some of the individual pieces. The group contains both mounted

## 1066 AND ALL THAT: A HOMAGE TO FREDERICK PING (Cont.)

and foot figures, all in dramatic action poses. They include (a remounted) William removing his helmet, as well as Harold and other key players.

Figure 4 shows Harold and his Huscarls making their last stand on Senlac hill. Harold is in the centre with crimson cloak and two handed battle axe. The dragon standard is again represented, as are various other personalities as well as fallen Anglo-Saxons and Normans.

Figure 5 shows various mounted (in some cases dismounted!) Norman knights, some of who are deploying the lance. Ping has used Britains horses

from the Royal Horse Artillery set as the basis for most of the steeds. Front and rear views are shown of each figure in this case. The group includes: two falling or fallen mounted knights; the Viscount of Toarz (or possibly his standard bearer), carrying his standard and sword; four other mounted knights with spears or lances, and finally William raising his helmet to rally his troops. Figure 6 shows the complete group.

While perhaps not up to the standards of many contemporary makers of connoisseur figures, Ping's work has a real charm and, in the eyes of this collector at least, a secure place in the history of Toy and Model soldiers.



Figure 2: Harold and his supporters



Figure 3: William and his Army



## 1066 AND ALL THAT: A HOMAGE TO FREDERICK PING *(Cont.)*



Figure 4 shows Harold and his Huscarls



Figure 5: The mounted Norman Knights (in some cases dismounted !)

## 1066 AND ALL THAT: A HOMAGE TO FREDERICK PING *(Cont.)*



Figure 5 (continued): The mounted Norman Knights (the Viscount of Toarz's standard; Knight with spear, and Knight with sword)



## 1066 AND ALL THAT: A HOMAGE TO FREDERICK PING (Cont.)



Figure 5 (continued): The mounted Norman Knights (with spear and with lance, plus William removing his helmet)



Figure 6: Senlac - the complete ensemble

### References:

- Garrett, J. G. (1972). *Model Soldiers for the Connoisseur*. Wiedenfeld and Nicolson: London  
Garrett, J. G. (1959). *Model Soldiers: A Collectors Guide* London Seeley Service &Co, Ltd: London



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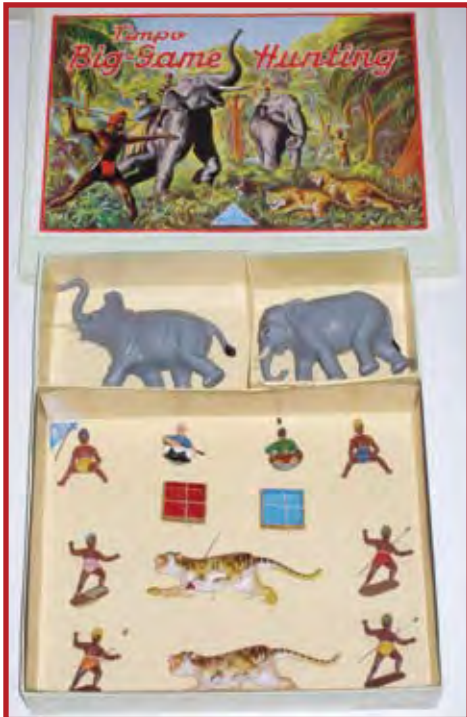
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THE DON DARNIEDER COLLECTION,  
FRED WEHR PART II &  
OTHER IMPORTANT PROPERTIES

Saturday, May 21st, 2011 & Sunday, May 22nd, 2011



Lot 363 Britains VERY RARE Set # 9 Rifle Brigade at slope with Officer. \$950



Lot 140 Timpo VERY RARE Big Game Tiger Hunt Set. \$2200



Lot 1 Britains EXCEPTIONALLY RARE Picture Pack Counter Display Box with Perspex Front and Hinge to Allow the Set to Stand for Display. \$5000



Lot 145 Timpo EXCEPTIONALLY RARE Hopalong Cassidy Set # 2100 with Original Color Illustrated Hopalong Cassidy Official Western Series Box Showing William Boyd and Topper. \$4250



Lot 103 Britains From RARE Set # 1537 Territorials in Blue Uniforms with Officer. \$800



Lot 142 Courtenay. \$500



Lot 100 Britains Rare Set # 1436 Italian Infantry in Foreign Service, Abyssinian War Uniforms. \$650



# AUCTION REVIEW



Lot 297 Britains Set # 2115 Exceptionally RARE Royal Marines Drums and Buglers, Bent Arm Buglers version as opposed to Straight Arm only issued for one year Post War in 1956. Plastic Tenor, Bass and Side Drums. \$1800



Lot 1484 Trophy: French Egyptian War Jannissaries of the 35th Set #NE12. \$650



Lot 177 Britains Plastic RARE Set # 7479 Swopett Knights. \$500



Lot 1435 Soldier Centre Miniatures: Tractor Engine. \$450



Lot 35 Britains Set # 1266. 18 Inch Heavy Howitzer. \$400



Lot 314 Charbens VERY RARE Mobile Donkey pulled Organ on Wheels with Organ Grinder and Monkey holding collecting cup. \$900



Lot 184 King and Country Glossy. World War One Aces. Mannock, McCudden, Von Richtofen and Immelman. \$650



Lot 1304 King & Country: Remember the Alamo Mexican Artillery Set #RTA030. \$300



Lot 1238 King & Country: Stretcher Team Glossy Paint. \$425



Lot 547 Vertunni Louis XII, Kind Louis X and Louis VIII De Lion. \$600



# AUCTION REVIEW



Lot 1311 King & Country: Roman Empire R018, R019, R020, R023. \$450



Lot 1319 King & Country: WWI German Armored Car FW034. \$300



Lot 1323 King & Country: WWII 88mm Gun Base & Crew Set #WSS20. \$475



Lot 1423 Potsdamer: Jungle Hospital Grouping. \$400



Lot 305 American Soldier Co / Eureka. American Infantry with Mounted Officer (Broken From Base) Blue Uniforms from Beiser Knock down Set and complete with tin hinges. \$800



Lot 1498 Trophy: The Staff Car Lord Roberts. \$750



Lot 1352 Mignot: 17th Century French Marching wMuskets & Halabards. \$500



Lot 65 Britains Set # 2036 British Army Display, Royal Scots Greys, Scots Guards and Black Watch. \$500



Lot 1481 Trophy: French Egyptian War Mamelukes Sets #NE14/14b. \$425

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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20TH ~ 10 A.M. E.S.T.

NEW TOY SOLDIERS (DAY TWO)

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# AUCTION PREVIEW (Cont.)



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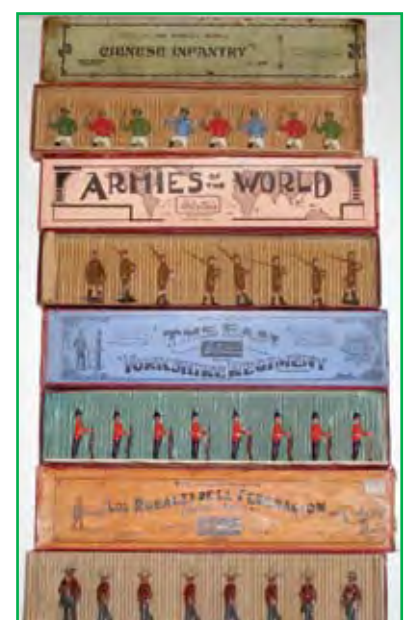
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Spenkuch



Britains Pre War



# AUCTION PREVIEW (Cont.)



Britains Post War



Britains Pre War



Britains Pre War



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Barclay



Beiser



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# AUCTION PREVIEW (Cont.)



Britains Rare Catalog



Britains US Bands



Britains Pre War



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Britains Post War



Schuller



Britains Pre War



Lincoln Log



# AUCTION PREVIEW (Cont.)



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King & Country Greif



Frontline Figures Crimean War



Mulberry Miniatures Hessian Army



Trophy Zulu Wars Rorkes Drift Store House



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Kingcast Ox Wagon



# AUCTION PREVIEW (Cont.)



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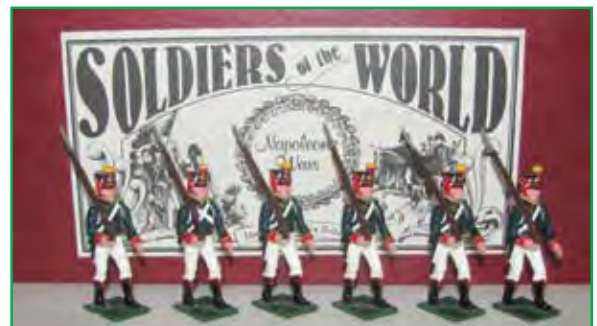
Regal American Civil War



Tradition



March Past, Scots Guards



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King & Country Afrika Korps



Alymer Moors of the Rif



Mignot Napoleonic



King & Country Panzer Tank



Imperial Russian Army



Steadfast Command Wagon

# AUCTION REVIEW

## Part II Nils Fischer Britains Collection - Another Overwhelming Success



The second Vectis Military, Civilian Figures, Equipment and Accessories Sale of 2011 including Part 2 of the Nils Fischer Britains Collection was held on Tuesday 28th June 2011. The sale was another overwhelming success with just short of 95% of the 960 lots on offer being sold and the sale grossing just short of £175K.

For the fourth consecutive sale Vectis has achieved a string of World Record prices for plastic figures with lot 4880 [Britains Swoppet Knight on Foot with an original card plinth and label] achieving £700, Lot 4883 [Britains mounted Swoppet Knight on the rare white galloping horse] £1000 and Lot 4884 [Britains mounted Swoppet Knight on the rare white galloping horse with yellow caparison] a staggering £2600.

As was expected the un-released, prototype and unique pieces [mainly from the late Charles Biggs Collection] achieved consistently high prices, examples included: an extremely rare [unreleased] Herald Ballet Set in Yellow [lot 4878] which achieved £880, Lot's 4160 and 4161 [prototype Deetail WW2 German Vignettes] made £220 and £200 apiece, the Deetail WW2 Desert Battle toy fair diorama [Lot 4162] constructed by Biggs made £750 and a metal test master [Lot 4243] for the plastic garden set dog made £140.

Rarities abounded throughout the catalogue and subsequently attracted heavy bidding, a Hugar Field Hospital [lot 4362], from 1940 made £2200, Two boxed Monoplanes in British/ U.S. markings [ Lot's 4403/4405] from the 1930's finished in Yellow and Green made £7000 and £6100 respectively, whilst a Bi-Plane in standard finish achieved £2600.

Pieces from the W Britain 1880 Catalogue many with their original boxes sold well with the *The Drinking Chinaman* [lot 4387] achieving £2900, *The Waltzers* [lot 4379]- £1900 and *The Equestrienne* [lot 4383] £680

In the Civilian and Other Makers Sections of the sale notable prices were evident throughout, highlights included: a Manor House [for US Store FAO Schartz] with Britains Hunt figures making £2100, a Britains Set 168 [Pedestrians] - £940, an extremely rare Timpo boxed set - *King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table* from 1954 made £3000 and a superb set of Napoleon and his General Staff [mounted] by Lucotte achieved £2900.

In other areas of the sale a Britains set 72 [Life Guards 1837 - 1897 from 1897] made £6100, a boxed set of Paris Office Zouaves - £1200 and a Gebrüder Bing Torpedo Boat from around 1914 made £100.

All in all a continuation of the fantastic start made by Vectis in the March 2011 sale, with another landmark sale featuring Part 3 of the Fischer Collection due to be held in the Autumn [date to be confirmed] and will contain a further comprehensive selection of rare and desirable items, including: Britains Archive Sale material, Original Britains moulds [Figures/Equipment/Animals - inc' the Edwardian Family], original Hand Casting Tools and Britains Design Department - research and design notes, uniform reference files and production documentation. The sale will be rounded off with a comprehensive selection of civilian and military figures, equipment and accessories from Britains and other makers. (all prices include buyer's premium)

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# SELWYN SMITH PART II AND SAS AUCTION REVIEW

*By Norman Joplin*

*Special paints make special prices at special auction services.*

The Roy Selwyn Smith Archive was auctioned at Special Auction Services in the UK July 1st 2011.

Britains individual special paints and special order figures, as shown, achieved good prices, The Winston Churchill figure seated painting lot # 897 featured in the SAS advertisement in the last O.T.S. magazine reached \$900.

Prototypes and plastics destined for the Herald range also attracted much interest with \$2100 being paid for Lot 936 a sample card containing 12 Plastic farm animals.

Selwyn Knights Lots 862-872 made a combined total of \$4800 with Lots 870 Sir Walter Woodland and Lot 871 Robert Lord Bouchier fetching \$800 each. Lot 1011 a collection of Britains and Herald catalogs sold for \$2100. Other items that created great interest are illustrated in this article.

Full results from the sale can be obtained at [www.specialauctionservices.com](http://www.specialauctionservices.com)



\$150



\$150



\$150



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Britains special paints



## SELWYN SMITH PART II AND SAS AUCTION REVIEW *(Cont.)*



Britains special paints \$780



\$510 Britains Unique Figures

\$360



Egyptian Queen Nefertiti Plasticine Masters for Courtenay \$380



Herald Zouaves & Naval Plasticine Masters \$520



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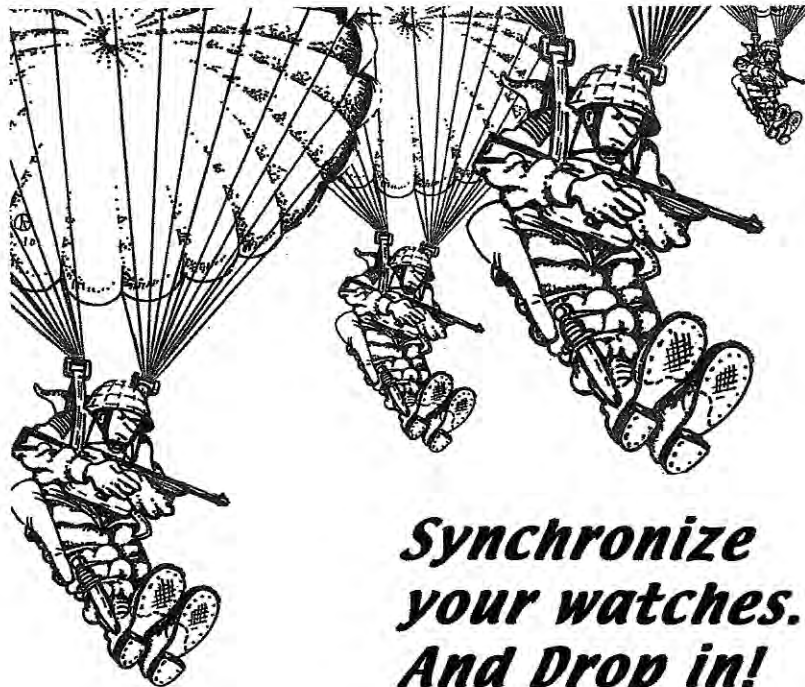


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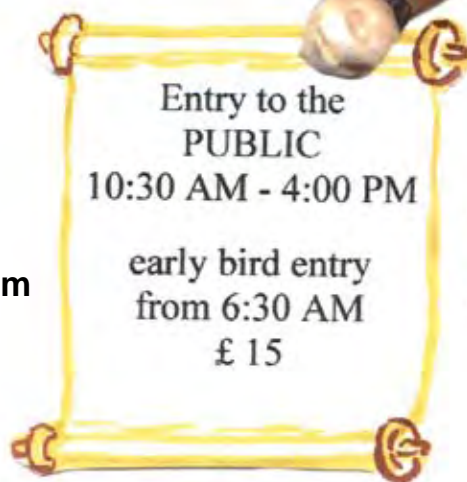
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# Making a German Pickelhaube For Converting Dimestores

*By Roger Dubois*

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Without a doubt my favorite playthings as a lad during the late 1940s and early 50s were my Dimestore soldiers: nothing else came close. They weren't all shiny with new uniforms, but beaten-up after having seen lots of action by the time I got them. They were the Dimestores from the mid-to-late 1930s that were hand-me-downs from older relatives and friends. I preferred these toy soldiers to the new ones portraying World War II GIs because the older ones were dressed and equipped as Doughboys from World War I, the war that appealed to me the most at that time.

My interest in the Great War came from my father who was in his early teens when that war was raging. As he recalled, many boys in his age group became mesmerized by events taking place on the battlefields of Western Europe. Needless-to-say, "the war to end all wars" stimulated much talk among people of all ages. The war came and went, but he, along with some of his pals, never lost interest in that conflict; it stayed with him for the rest of his life.

In due time after I came along, it was only natural for my father to pass on to me his fascination with the First World War. What captivated me the most about that conflict were the tactics of trench warfare on the Western Front as vividly described by him and always in a rather melodramatic voice: "At the shrill sound of officers' whistles blowing, men - wave after wave of them - would climb out of their sheltered trenches and charge fortified enemy lines only to be brutally cut down by dark clouds of shrapnel and a hail of bullets."

I sat awestruck, frozen with my mouth open and yet at the same time perplexed because I couldn't understand where men found the courage to do such a thing, not once, but time after time. The thought of having to fight in that war scared the "bejeebers" out of me, and perhaps that's why I was fond of playing with my Dimestore Doughboys. Here were symbols of courage right in my hands, and who knows, maybe somehow a bit of that "true grit" would rub off on me.

And so during rainy days, as well as many sunny days, the battles of Belleau Wood and St. Mihiel were regularly fought on my bedroom floor. Grey Irons, Manoils, Barclays, and a few Auburns were slowly and meticulously positioned behind fortifications constructed from wooden blocks, Lincoln Logs, a few stones, and assorted twigs. Once all were properly positioned, then at my command, they would come out from behind the ramparts and charge the enemy line.

Sadly, however, my enemy figures were all imaginary, all in my head; none was real. For reasons I have never understood, the four major Dimestore manufacturers never made German figures.

As a boy fascinated with the Western Front of World War I, I can't begin to explain how I felt by not having Dimestores clad as soldiers of the Imperial German Army. The closest I can come is to say that it was like a hollow or empty feeling, a sense that something was missing, and therefore, something was dreadfully wrong in fantasyland. How could I defeat the enemy if there were no combatants?

Using Dimestore Doughboys as stand-ins for the Kaiser's troops was simply unacceptable, if not downright unpatriotic. Only the real thing would do. My mantra was "accept no substitute"; just hang in there, for surely in a week or so, some German Storm Troopers would show up at the local five-and-dime store and make my day. But none ever came.

By the mid 1950s, my toy soldiers along with my disappointments were set aside and forgotten as new interests grabbed my attention.

Several decades passed before that long-ago thrill of handling Dimestores was reawakened.

About twenty years ago, while walking through an antique mall with my wife, I spotted a group of tin helmeted Barclays in good condition. Suddenly, the passion of my youth for Dimestores came rushing back. I was hooked again and simply could not leave without them. (Fortunately for me, I have a very loving and understanding wife.)

The bug had me. In no time there appeared a Dimestore army far larger than the one I had possessed as a child. However, not long after the collection began, that hollow or empty sensation came flowing back. This time, I decided to exorcise that feeling once and for all by converting some of my figures.

At the beginning of World War I, the nationality of a combatant could be easily identified by the headgear he wore. There was no doubt about it; in combat, if you spotted a spike helmet on someone's head, then that someone must be a German. And if I had to pick one item that epitomized "the look" of the Great War, it would be the German Pickelhaube (spike helmet).



# Making a German Pickelhaube For Converting Dimestores (Cont.)

And so when I began converting some of my damaged Dimestores to Germans, the very first thing I focused on was how to make a spike helmet from resources at hand. After giving it some thought and going through a few trials, steps were recorded on how to make one from a Barclay tin helmet.

What follows is a description of the materials, tools, and steps that I use to make a German Pickelhaube.

**Materials:** a Barclay tin helmet; a 1/8-inch brass rod purchased from a hobby or craft store; and some two-part epoxy glue with a drying time of five minutes.

**Tools:** a grinding stone attached to a motor tool; a small pair of pliers; a razor saw; a small flat file; and a small round file.

## Making a German Picklehaube

Essentially, making a spike helmet involves grinding away some of the brim from a tin helmet and filing away scratches. Next comes the process of grinding a point on the end of a brass rod, cutting the point off, and gluing it to the helmet.

Before I begin, I don a dust mask and safety glasses for protection.



Photo 1. Grinding away a side of a Barclay helmet.

1. From a bird's eye view, Barclay tin helmets have an oval shape with the elongated axis extending from the front to the back of a helmet. With motor tool in one hand and grasping the brim at one end of the elongated axis with a pair of small pliers in the other hand (Photo 1), one side of the brim is slowly ground away until the grinding stone reaches a little bit into the crown of the helmet. Grinding further into the crown will increase the arch on the side of the helmet. I prefer a small arch, so I don't grind too far into the crown.



Photo 2. Filing the side where the brim was ground away.

2. The ground side is now filed with a small flat file to remove all nicks and scratches (Photo 2). Sometimes after this work is done, a very thin metal edge is left. In such cases, I simple run my thumbnail along the edge, which in turn, pushes the thin metal inside the helmet and out-of-sight.

3. Steps one and two are repeated on the other side of the tin helmet. Care is taken to make the arch the same size on both sides of the helmet.

4. Now that the two sides are complete, attention is turned to the front visor and the rear neck guard. As they stand, they're too long for my taste. After gripping the rear brim with pliers (Photo 3), the front brim is slowly ground away until only a sliver is left to form the visor.

5. The top and underside of the visor are filed to make smooth surfaces (Photo 4). I pass my finger along the visor edge feeling for a sharp edge. If one is found, then filing resumes until the sharpness is gone.

6. Steps four and five are repeated on the rear brim to form the neck guard.



Photo 3. Grinding the front of brim to form a visor.



Photo 4. Filing the front of brim.

## Making a German Pickelhaube For Converting Dimestores (Cont.)



Photo 5. Shaping of a Barclay helmet to Picklehaube is completed.



Photo 6. Grinding the tip of a brass rod to form a spike.

7. The process of shaping the helmet is complete (Photo 5). Attention now turns to making a spike that sits on top of the helmet.

8. Making a spike starts by grasping a 1/8-inch brass rod in one hand and a motor tool with a grinding stone in the other hand. With the stone aligned to the rod at about a 50-degree angle, grinding begins as the motor tool is held firm and steady while the rod is constantly being rotated with fingers (Photo 6).

9. Eventually, a spike is fashioned at the end of the rod. It is then filed to remove all scratches (Photo 7).

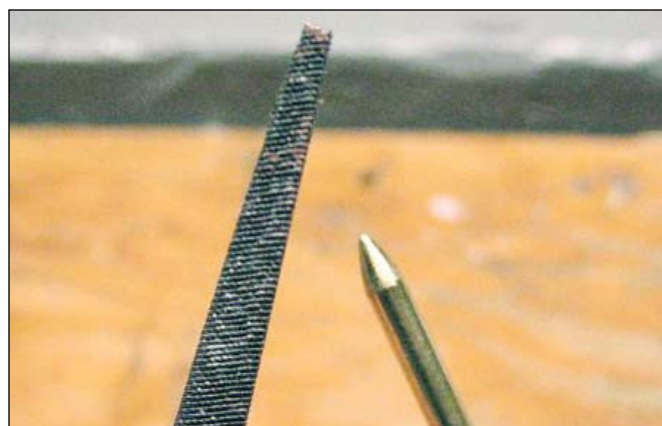


Photo 7. Filing the spike.

10. Now to form a spike neck, which is nothing more than a groove around the base of the spike. This is done by first using the edge of the grinding stone to etch a furrow around the rod at the base of the spike.

11. Filing within the etched furrow with a small round file slowly turns the furrow into a smooth groove on the spike neck (Photo 8).

12. Lastly, the spike is sawed from the rod just below the neck using a razor saw and glued to the top of the helmet with two-part epoxy glue. The job is done (Photo 9).



Photo 8. Filing a groove at base of spike to form the neck.

### Painting the Helmet

The German Pickelhaube is basically a shell with a helmet plate fixed above the front visor, a spike on top, and a rear spine extending from the spike neck downward across the center of the neck guard. I paint the helmet black except for the following that are painted gold: the front edge of the visor; the plate in the shape of a spread eagle; the spike with neck; and the rear spine. In combat, however, the helmet was covered with a khaki cloth. Consequently, the helmet can be painted in either style: with or without a cover.



Photo 9. Completed German Picklehaube.



## Making a German Pickelhaube For Converting Dimestores (Cont.)



Photo 10. Prussians soldiers.



Photo 11. German soldiers at the beginning of World War I.

I've painted them both ways (Photos 10 and 11). Attractive conversions of Prussians can be made when helmets are painted without covers and attached to Barclay short-stride figures painted with dark blue jackets, white summer pants, and black boots after the puttees have been filed away (Photo 10).

For years, I stayed away from converting Barclay short-stride figures for the simple reason that they - from my point of view - had an unattractive stiff, flatfooted posture. Their stances were not dynamic enough for me to spend time converting them. But in recent years after comparing the stances of these figures with those of German soldiers pictured during the late 19th century, I found that with their rigid posture these Barclays made acceptable conversions to Prussian soldiers. As an added touch, mustaches are fashioned on these conversions to give them a more mature look (how this is done is described in OTS, v. 31, n. 1, 2007).

### Concluding Comments

As you can see, making a German Pickelhaube is not such a great challenge. All it takes is a Barclay tin helmet and a 1/8-inch brass rod along with some simple tools. In this article, a grinding stone attached to a motor tool was used, but if such a tool is unavailable, then a grinding stone attached to an electric drill or a bench grinder should work just as good, if not better. No two-part epoxy glue? Use super glue.

In the end, hobbyists don't have to follow the steps or use the same tools as described in this article. In fact, there may be a better way to make this helmet; and if you find it using materials referenced in this article or different materials, please let me know at [dubois@umbc.edu](mailto:dubois@umbc.edu).

In closing, I believe that having the capability of constructing a German Pickelhaube expands the hobby of converting Dimestore toy soldiers beyond the limits of just making American troops; hobbyists can branch out and make a real opposing force. Such a project could take some time, but would no doubt give back a great deal of pleasure along the way.

Nevertheless, with the passage of time and the buildup of Imperial German troops, some hobbyists may start wishing for another major combatant of World War I. Maybe the French? And so next time, how to make a French Army kepi will be explained.

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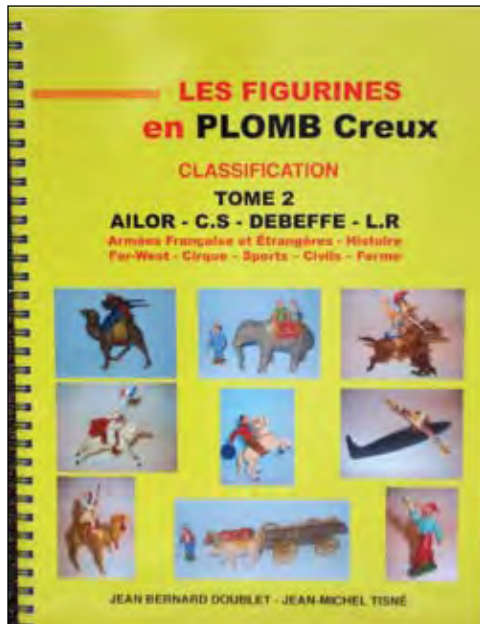


# BOOK REVIEW

## LES FIGURINES EN PLOMB CREUX-TOME 2

By Jean Bernard Doublet and Jean-Michel Tisne

Reviewed By Russ Bednarek



Collectors of “French Dimestore” (plomb creux) figures will be delighted to learn of the availability of *Les Figurines en Plomb Creux Tome 2* by Jean Bernard Doublet and Jean-Michel Tisne. Following the success of *Les Figurines Tome 1*, (see *Old Toy Soldier Vol.34 #1*), authors Doublet and Tisne now explore the history and figures created by the French firms Ailor, C.S., Debeffe and L.R.

The successful format of its predecessor is mirrored in *Tome 2*. Doublet and Tisne not only examine military figures but also those depicting Circus, Farm, Sports, Civilian and Old West themes in their latest offering. Happily for collectors, the physical lay-out is also identical. Large spiral bound pages with five to eleven color pictures per page are the norm. With 157 pages the total number of color photographs is both substantial and necessary to competently explore the realm of French hollow cast figures.

A chapter is devoted to each maker beginning with a succinct history, and if any are necessary, additional manufacturing notes. All text is in French and English. The majority of color photographs that fill each page are of individual figures. To aid collectors, multi-figure photographs are used to depict variations of painting, size and heads when needed. Pictures of boxed sets and box art are tactfully integrated to enhance the collectors knowledge. Additional documentation is provided by reproducing from

actual catalogs pictures of the sets/figures offered. It was not uncommon for companies to offer the same figure in metal, aluminum and plastic and such figures are noted by the authors.

A vital four page French to English language glossary will help collectors better understand the many nuances in collecting French *plomb creux* figures. Two editions of *Tome 2* are available, a traditional softback bound example and a larger softback spiral edition. I would recommend the spiral edition as it lends itself to be easily laid open to compare figures found in *Tome 1*.

The genre of collecting French hollow-cast figures is so large and diverse that Doublet and Tisne are currently completing *Tome 3* that will explore the history and hollowcast offerings of the firms CBG, SR, XR,DC and others.

I highly recommend that active collectors and those who desire to be collectors of French “Dimestore” figures obtain a copy of this book as an informative and accurate resource. Fortunately both *Les Figurines en Plomb Creux Tome 1*, *Tome 2* are available from Monsieur Doublet via Paypal. Service from M.Doublet is excellent and I thank him for providing a copy for this review.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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# UPDATING DIMESTORES - PLUS WILLIAM FEIX AND 1889 PEWTER

*By Richard O'Brien*

As I wrote recently, we dimestore fanciers have been particularly lucky with Auburn Rubber, as far as finding its catalogs goes. Full-color, eight-page issues dated from 1936 to 1941 have emerged- with the exception of 1939. And now we more or less have that missing year in hand.

It's just a single page from a publication I'd never heard of: Merchandiser. However, it seems to give us all the information we need. Certainly it does with the soldiers. 1940 had always seemed too late to me for A20 222 Sniper (crawling soldier) and A21 234 Bomb Thrower, and here they are in 1939. New too are the large racer and the 1548 Atlantic Clipper plane. Although the ball players don't appear in the 1938 catalog, they'd already been located in a 1939 Auburn ad. Now all we have to hope for from Auburn is the emergence of what may have been 1935 and

1942 catalogs, which might show, in 1935, soldiers possibly painted as Italians and Ethiopians, and in 1942 the larger seated machine gunner and my long-sought running "pilot", looking up to the left.

Butler Bros. catalogs appear with some frequency on eBay, but it's been a long time since any of the sellers I contacted could find metal American-made soldiers on their pages. Recently, one from 1920 turned up. I didn't win the bidding, but made a reasonably enticing offer for two copies of what appeared to be William Feix sets.

Of course, any mention of Feix has to be tentative, since all of our basic information comes from a single 1903 ad in Playthings Magazine, an ad that was later offered to toymakers as a generic one. I troll eBay every day for Owens-Kreiser catalogs, on the chance

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that an illustrated one will turn up from that jobber, as for years William Feix was its only listed soldier-maker.

This Feix ad, if Feix it is, is the latest I've found, with the art considerably different from what preceded it. Most striking are the large-sized "U.S. Regulars" that represent the main contents of the box. All of them seem to have been separately drawn. Since the type is small, I'll point out that it mentions the figures are made of pewter, have "tinted faces", that each of the sets has a "large green base", "folding white canvas tents on cardboard, metal tent pole with flag". Some of the sets include one or more "brass finish" cannons, and one of them features a "13 in. pop gun".

If anyone out there has an Owens-Kreiser catalog or would like to get in touch with me about anything else, I can be reached at kokywriter@windstream.net.

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Finally, our first glimpse in this magazine of "Pewter Soldiers" (pewter, in this case, probably just meaning lowly old lead) as shown in the June, 1889 Butler Bros. catalog. Butler advertised to the trade, so as indicated in the accompanying text, the approximately two-and-a-half cents the retailer paid wound up costing the consumer a big five pennies for four cavalry and six infantry "all dressed in paint". Plus a "Glass-covered box"! I assumed this meant cellophane, but a trip to Google revealed it hadn't been invented yet. So perhaps it was isinglass, or, considering this cost a United States-guaranteed whole nickel, maybe even real glass.

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"William Feix" sets, as shown in a 1920 Butler Bros. catalog.



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# THE BIG (BETTER) LITTLE BOOKS OF WWII

*By Jack Matthews*

In 1932, Whitman Publishing Co., began a children's book craze that would last through about six hundred titles until 1950. The first Big Little Book was "The Adventures of Dick Tracey, Detective" now pricey and highly sought after by collectors of Dick Tracey memorabilia. For those of us getting along in years, fond memories exist of these little gems. At 4 ½ inches by 3 ½ inches by 1 inch thick, they were small enough to fit into a boy's shirt or pants pocket and priced at five or ten cents, fit into our weekly allowance, too.

They also made cheap, terrific Christmas stocking stuffers for our parents to use at holiday time. I got some of mine that way. All article photos are from my collections.

Most of the BLBs in the thirties were often funny nature stories featuring comic book heroes and Western stars. Disney characters were particularly popular, and as a "crossover" collectible are somewhat pricey today. Just as a collector of BLBs want a Dick Tracey or Buck Rogers book so do collectors of all types of

memorabilia of those characters. For example, there are eleven Buck Rogers BLBs and they are among the most expensive.

But the ones I collect and relish and the subject of this article are the military, defense and WWII related titles printed just before or during the war. They fit right in with displays of my wartime toys and dimestore figures. Put a Manoil or Barclay up against a wartime, colorful BLB on a shelf and you'll see what I mean (Photos 1-2). They are also pretty much in scale.

By my rough count, there are about forty in this general wartime category and in good condition, used with a few minor tears, etc but complete, they run about ten or twenty dollars on eBay. Last week, I trolled through 632 BLBs available on eBay and purchased via "buy it now" five that I didn't have, in that price range including "G-Men and the Fifth Column" (photo 3) and "Mac of the Marines in China" (photo 4). Really neat cover!



Photo 1



Photo 3



Photo 2

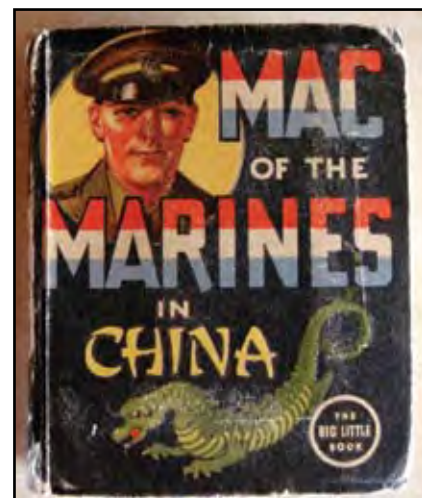


Photo 4



# THE BIG (BETTER) LITTLE BOOKS OF WWII (Cont.)



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7

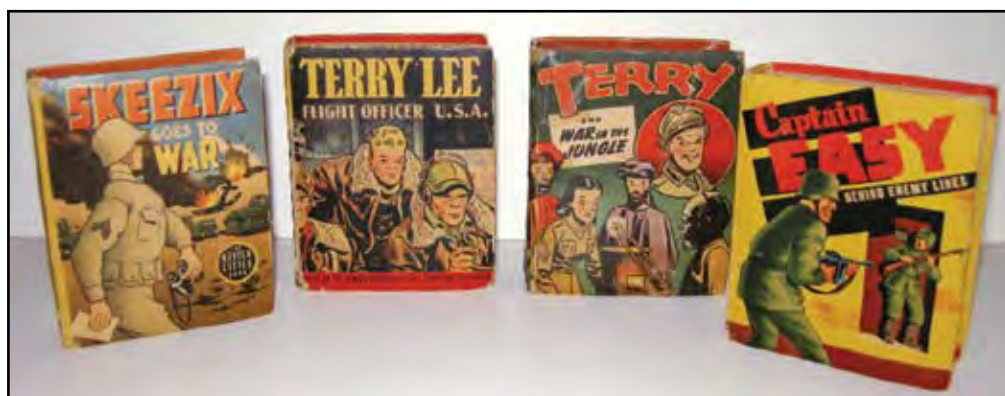


Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11



Photo 12



## THE BIG (BETTER) LITTLE BOOKS OF WWII (Cont.)



Photo 13

One of the things we kids liked about many of these books were small one-inch drawings in the upper right hand corner of each page, which made moving pictures when flipped rapidly (see photos 5 and 6). “See ‘em move: How it’s done. Just flip the pages with your thumb”, said the book cover. For example, the BLB “Ray Land of the Tank Corps” movie showed a tank in action moving up a hill and through the woods (photo 7).

Many of the 1940’s BLBs featured Comic Book and Sunday Newspaper Color comic heroes such as Don Winslow of the Navy, Terry and the Pirates, Smilin’ Jack and the like (photos 8-11). The rest were specially named wartime fighters such as a “Alan Pike of the Parachute Squad” (photos 12-16). My personal favorite is Orphan Annie and her Jr. Commandos, organized to help kids track down spies and saboteurs and help in paper and scrap victory drives of the times (photo 17).

Dozens of WWII cardboard and wooden rifles, pistols, games and sets were Junior Commando this-and-that. I’ve got dozens. They came in handy after the Saturday afternoon war film like “Commandos Strike at Dawn.”

Try getting a few of these neat, colorful BLBs to set up your collection. They are reasonable and show up often at memorabilia shows and antique malls.

Thanks to “Big Little Books, A Collector’s Reference and Value Guide”, Jacobs, Schroeder Publishing Co (1996).



Photo 14



Photo 15



Photo 16



Photo 17



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# WILLIAM ROBERT LANGO.... A DIMESTORE DEVOTEE FOR ALL REASONS

By Louis S. Steinberg

*For the past few years I have been researching and writing about our Dimestore entrepreneurs that arose to fill the voids left when the big three retailing majors, individually in different time periods, departed toy soldier manufacturing and distribution marketing.*



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*Once I get passed the ever and always universal disclosure of, "I played with them as a kid," not very much else comes forth of earlier childhood, except more traditional bedroom and backyard soldier battles with neighborhood friends ... and, that's OK. Although, a few articles did offer various interesting memories.*

*Today's environment sees the majority of us so involved with our busy family and work lives that little spare time often creates a scarcity of reminisces.*

*Not so for William Robert Lango. His are rather piquant in exemplifying photographic remembrances that paint a wonderful series of mental prose pictures.*

*Seldom did I ever come across, in documenting a Dimestore aficionado, the likes of "Bill" that so specifically percolated such a wealth of synoptic childhood memories from his earliest toy soldiering adventures. I thought you would like this.*

*Bill recalls, "I still have the vivid vision from the late 1940s when, as a young boy, my father recalled one time when we lived on Audubon Avenue in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan."*

*He would say, "You know, Billy, I remember when we'd take a short walk on Saturday evenings to the Woolworths 5 & 10 where Aunt Josie worked. You sure loved shuffling through those neat tray displays of soldiers, cowboys and Indians, and cars till they were rearranged to your liking."*

*Then Bill would flash forward to the 70s and remember speaking to his father about the difficulty he had to find a good source for ½" white rubber wheels for the small range of Barclay vehicles he now was producing.*

*He recounts his father looking at him with a twinkle in his eyes and saying, "When we would come home, years ago, from those walks to Woolworths in upper Manhattan, the first thing you'd do, Billy, was to pull the wheels off of every small car I bought you. Now you're manufacturing the same damn things!"*

This, therefore, is Part I. It quotes an engaging story as we go along with more episodes of Bill's youthful Dimestoring development.

Part II will focus on Bill's adult life: His Dimestore soldier conversions and manufacturing; his catalogs; his magazine Toy Soldier Review; and, his East Coast Toy Soldier Show & Sale presented each November in Hackensack, NJ.

Bill continues with, "Most of my early lead figures were used and well played with toy soldiers my grandfather gave me. They were well far from those nesting in the trays of Woolworth.

"Grandpa Mike was the superintendent of two large apartment buildings in the Bronx. Not only was he in charge of the maintenance of the complex but also for the tenant's trash disposed down the buildings dumbwaiters. In reaching the basement everything was thoroughly inspected and sorted into various

large steel cans. The rag man and paper man had their bundles and all metal was put aside for the junk man."

"Here's where I entered into the big circle of previous recycling," adds Bill.

"Grandpa would put aside, in a pile for me, any good and clean stuff, like comic books, baseball cards and other kid paper things.

"Knowing just how much I liked lead figures and especially toy soldiers, he always looked out for any good condition unbroken pieces and put them in a spent Kraft Cheese box." How many of us reading this relished those old wooden Kraft boxes? I had my share for saving a conglomerate of whatevers.

"The highlight of my week during those times was always the day I visited Grandpa Mike," Bill states, in thinking back. "He would always signal me to

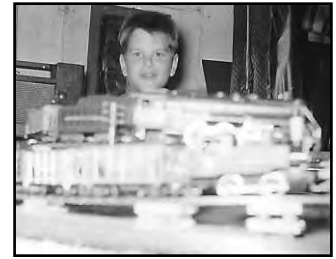
## WILLIAM ROBERT LANGO.... (Cont.)



**Grandpa Mike Enlisted....  
in U.S. Army, WW I**



**Figuring it Out with Bill Sullivan**



**Brother Bob with Our 1958 Lionel Set**



**Bill with Retired Barclay Designer  
Employee, Bill Rucci**

join him in his workshop and then show what he accumulated for me over the week. His nearby superintendent friends would also bring him things for me.

"I loved hanging out in his basement workshop. It was like a never ending education on all things mechanical. He had grinders, drill presses, drills, power saws, big heavy soldering irons, and even a steel, gas fired, melting pot for metals.

"Winters were the most fun. That's when Grandpa would ask me to join him to tend to the apartment's big steam boilers that were on for heat. At about eight years old I could toss a shovel full of nut coal onto the fire bed just like a grown up boiler tender.

"Actually, our family spent most Sundays with Grandpa and Grandma, enjoying a large dinner and then relaxing around the big radio console. I played on the floor with the cars and soldiers that I kept there. At eight o'clock it was time to listen to The Jack Benny Show.

"It was a little boy's dream. I loved every moment being there with my Grandpa Mike and Grandma Julia!"

While absorbing from Bill all the aforementioned, my own mind saw Norman Rockwell over in a corner

typically working on his next cover for *Saturday Evening Post* magazine.

In speaking with Bill he told me of his family's move to the Borough of Queens in 1949, which was like living in the suburbs dotted with many wooded areas and plenty of vacant lots. There, adventurous boys had no problem in finding the perfect areas for play.

I closed my eyes, and immediately, an out-of-body experience placed me in a similar location near my home back in Tennessee. Just like Bill, I also do remember my friends and I spending most of our weekly allowance at the 5 and 10 on toy soldiers, slush-cast cars and accessories.

Bill mentioned another observation that had never occurred to me, or I just took for granted it was always like that. That is, young boys define the seasons of the year by the usage of specific entertaining toys and playthings.

He states, "Yo-yos and baseball cards were the choices mostly played with in the Spring; bikes and orange crate scooters in Summer; and, water pistols and other toy guns in Fall, around back-to-school time.



## WILLIAM ROBERT LANGO.... (Cont.)

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**Bill on Far Right with 1962 USS Mullinnix Crew  
Who Remembers Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer?**

“From Thanksgiving through New Years it was indoor play time for kids with their electric trains and various construction sets. Toy soldiers and cars, not withstanding, seemed to be a year round hobby enjoyment.

“When boredom set in all I had to do, like many other kids, was dig under my bed for cigar boxes and used Borden Cheese boxes where my toy soldiers and slush-cast cars were unceremoniously stored. Though most of my soldiers were surely off-condition, I had such a huge army of Dimestore that it surpassed that of all the kids in my neighborhood.”

Bill was so wound up in his reminiscing by no means was I going to make any effort to pacify the intensity of his thoughts. Bill continued, “There was one point when my fascination with my military toy soldiers took second place to my civilian figures. 1954 was the year I received my first Lionel Train Set.

“All my soldiers were put in a large wooden milk crate for safe keeping. With the help of my younger brother, Bob, we set up in the basement of our Queens’ home a permanent Lionel layout. A farm and some city scenes were built on that layout and

then populated by Barclay, Manoil and some French Dimestore size figures.”

In a later conversation with Bill, I asked him if he had any kid recollections of any figure painting he did. He mentioned, “I do remember, around Christmas of maybe ’49, my parents gave me a plaster molding kit to make Disney figures. You would mix the plaster. Pour it into the rubber figure molds. Remove the figure when it dried, and then paint them up.”

Our rambling back and forth, howsoever, got us involved with discussing WWI. This, thereupon, became a natural smooth slide into the characteristic look of the earlier style of Dimestore toy soldiers.

Bill recounted his liking, “My affection for the American Dimestore soldier was simply because they felt substantial. They felt great in a boy’s hand. They had the entire uniform look of the War we just won Over There....The War Grandpa fought in. Back in those years, boys were real boys! They were hardened to manly things.

“I would listen intently to my Grandpa who told me of the horrors of the Great War to End All Wars. I guess it was only natural for me to be attracted

## WILLIAM ROBERT LANGO.... (Cont.)

---

to the larger size and appearance of Barclay and Manoil toy soldiers.

“One of my Grandfather’s favorite expression was *You bet your boots*. As a young boy, I listened and asked about this curious expression. Grandpa explained the importance of a soldier wearing a sturdy pair of boots, and even how a good pair of boots would be taken from a dead comrade and reused.

“It wasn’t until much later in life when I read the book, *All Quite on the Western Front* that I would understand its meaning....which is as an American idiom, You Bet Your Life.”

What I, the writer, and you, the reader, have just gone through was a vanished age.

I have trepidations that its possible return is forever stomped out by the heavy footsteps and pace of today’s global, high technological, generation and by the hurried gaits perceived by those that are sure to follow.

With that said, this Part I now concludes in mentioning that Bill graduated Butler High School of Butler, New Jersey in 1961.

That same year the U. S. Navy gained an enlistee at Paterson, N.J. Then, off to Boot Camp at Great Lakes where Bill attended Machinery Repair School and Machinist Mate Training.

After Boot, Bill served as a Machinist Mate on the U.S.S. Mullinnix DD-944 and the U.S.S. Springfield CLG-7 and was honorable discharged as a MM3 in 1964.

Bill said, “On both of these ships I worked as ‘Water King’ and operated and maintained the evaporators which converted sea water to potable drinking water. While on a cruise and when docking at any pier, the men in my gang were always the first off and last aboard our ship, taking care to hook-up and disconnect all water hoses from each of the pier facilities.

“Fortunately, my Navy background in Water Treatment and Water Conditioning greatly aided my civilian career.”

The best is always saved for the last. It was Bill’s buddy, Don, that made it all happen. He set it up! What? You’re wondering...What?

Well....It was the blind date on which Bill met Janice DeFina!

They were married in 1965, and began their lives together, in of all places on earth, Union City, New Jersey....The final home of Barclay Manufacturing Company. That’s it.

Now I have to get busy on Part II for the November issue, as the saga then continues and deepens for William Robert Lango.



Bill with His Wife Janice at Their Show



Janice and Bill Enjoying a Mother's Day Brunch





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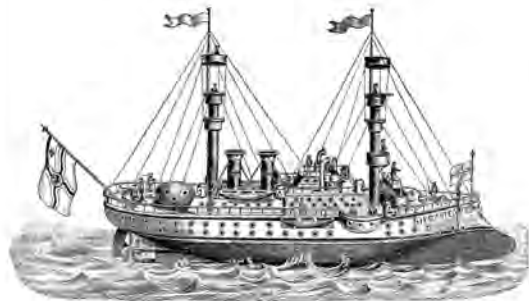


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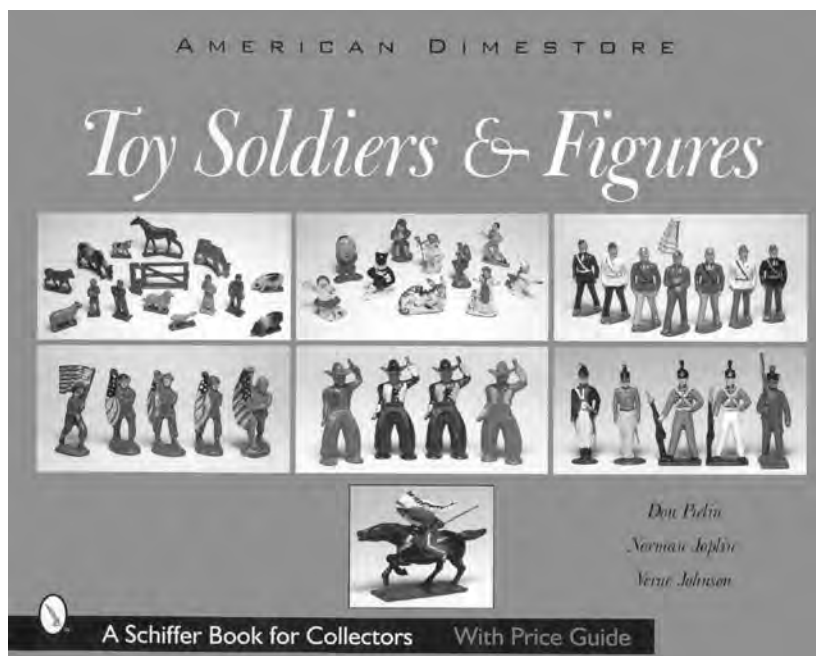
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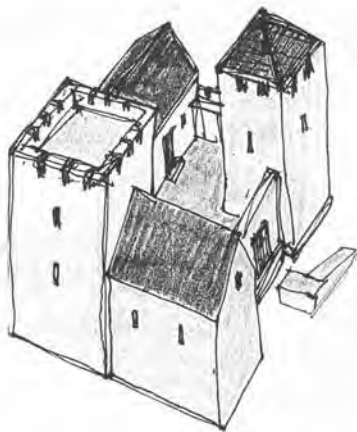
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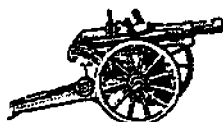
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# TOY SOLDIER SHOW & AUCTION CALENDAR 2011-2012

## 2011

**August 11th & 12th Thursday and Friday** Kulmbach, Germany [www.stadt-kulmbach.de](http://www.stadt-kulmbach.de)

**August 13th- Saturday.** The 19th South Carolina Military Miniatures Society Toy Soldier Show 10am -5pm,  
SC State Museum Gervais Street Columbia SC Contact Dennis Fontana [fontaa@sentry-box.com](mailto:fontaa@sentry-box.com) Tel 803 419 6747.

**September 10th - Saturday.** Norman Joplin's Old Toy Soldier Show Holiday Inn Bloomsbury London.  
Email [info@normanjoplin.com](mailto:info@normanjoplin.com)

**September 11th- Sunday.** New Jersey Historical Society Historical Miniatures Associates EXPO and Toy Soldier Show.  
10am-5pm PAL Wayne NJ. Contact 973 627 4961.

**September 24th.** Old Toy Soldier Auctions Bargain Room and Britains Empty Box Sale

**September 25th - Sunday.** 31st Annual Old Toy Soldier Show Chicago. Contact Don Pielin 630-497-1239  
Email [dimestores@aol.com](mailto:dimestores@aol.com)

**September 27th-Tuesday.** Bonhams Knowle Toy Soldier and Figures Auction Contact Leigh Gotch 44(0) 208 963 2836  
[www.bonhams.com](http://www.bonhams.com)

**October 9th - Sunday.** Sunday Grande Bourse Internationale. Espace Chevreul.97/109 Avenue de la Liberte. 92000 Natterre  
Paris, Contact [albaretphillippe@orange.fr](mailto:albaretphillippe@orange.fr)

**October 15th Saturday.** Figure Show and Fair. 22nd International Collector's Convention. 61231 Bad Nauheim, Germany.  
10 am to 3 pm at the Landesarztekammer. Tel: +49 30 392 94 90 Email: [redaktion@figuren-magazin.de](mailto:redaktion@figuren-magazin.de)

**October 15th Saturday 10am-5pm & 16- Sunday 11am-3pm.** Williamsburg Military History Weekend. Sponsored by W. Britain,  
Osprey and Casemate Publishing. Contact Richard Walker 563-690-1259 Email [ricjardwalker@1st-gear.com](mailto:ricjardwalker@1st-gear.com)

**October 16th- Sunday** 46th North East Toy Soldier Society Toy Soldier Show. NEW LOCATION. Holiday Inn Select.  
15 Middlesex Canal Park Woburn MA Contact Matt Murphy 781 321 8855 [www.hobbybunker.com](http://www.hobbybunker.com)

**October 16th - Sunday** Columbus Ohio Toy Soldier Show. Fort Rapids Indoor Water Park Columbus Ohio  
Contact Rod Chapman [chappy1@columbus.rr.com](mailto:chappy1@columbus.rr.com) Tel 740 924 2531.

**November 5th - Saturday.** The Toy Soldier Museum Open House and Cellar Sale. 10am -4pm 5459 Paradise Valley Road .  
Cresco PA Contact Jim Hillestad 570 629 7227 Email [jimhill@ptd.net](mailto:jimhill@ptd.net) [www.the-toy-soldier.com](http://www.the-toy-soldier.com)

**November 6th - Sunday.** 12th Annual Toy Soldier Show. 9am-4pm Cantigny Park and Museum, Winfield Road. Wheaton. IL-  
linois. Contact Nick Albanese 920 261 1323 Email [camprandall@charter.net](mailto:camprandall@charter.net)

**November 6th - Sunday** 29th Annual East Coast Toy Soldier Show Rothman Center Fairleigh Dickinson University  
Hackensack Contact Bill Lango [bill@vintagecastings.com](mailto:bill@vintagecastings.com) Tel 973 831 8900.

**November 16th-Wednesday** Bonhams Toy Soldier Auction, Montpelier Street. Knightsbridge London UK.  
Contact Leigh Gotch 44(0) 208 963 2836 [www.bonhams.com](http://www.bonhams.com)

**November 19th and 20th - Saturday and Sunday.** Old Toy Soldier Auctions USA.Contact Ray Haradin 1 800 349 8009  
[raytoys@aol.com](mailto:raytoys@aol.com) or Norman Joplin 262 692 3913 [info@normanjoplin.com](mailto:info@normanjoplin.com) [www.oldsoldierauctions.com](http://www.oldsoldierauctions.com)

**December 21st- Wednesday.** Bonhams Knowle Toy Soldier and Figures Auction Leigh Gotch 44(0) 208 963 2836 [www.bonhams.com](http://www.bonhams.com)

## 2012

**January 29th.** 18th Annual Florida Toy Soldier, Action Figure and Collectables Show 9am- 4pm Scottish Rites Masonic Hall.  
Lake Worth, Florida Contact Email [mskurda@inbox.com](mailto:mskurda@inbox.com) Telephone 954-699-6040 or 561-968-5571

*Dates and times are correct at the time of printing; however, it is strongly advised that before traveling,  
contact is made with show organizers to confirm date(s).*



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