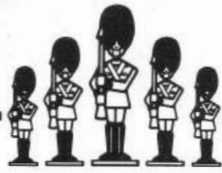


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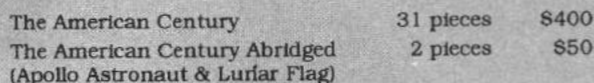
Volume 25 Number 1

OLD TOY SOLDIER



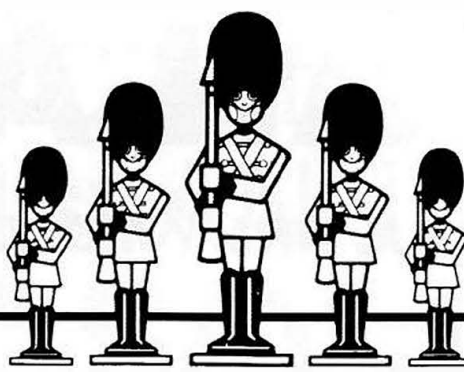
The Britain Family History

a small portrait of a big century
The American Century



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ON THE COVER

Photo of William Britain, Jr. The Britain Family History is the culmination of more than a decade of research by Joe Wallis. Story on page 6.

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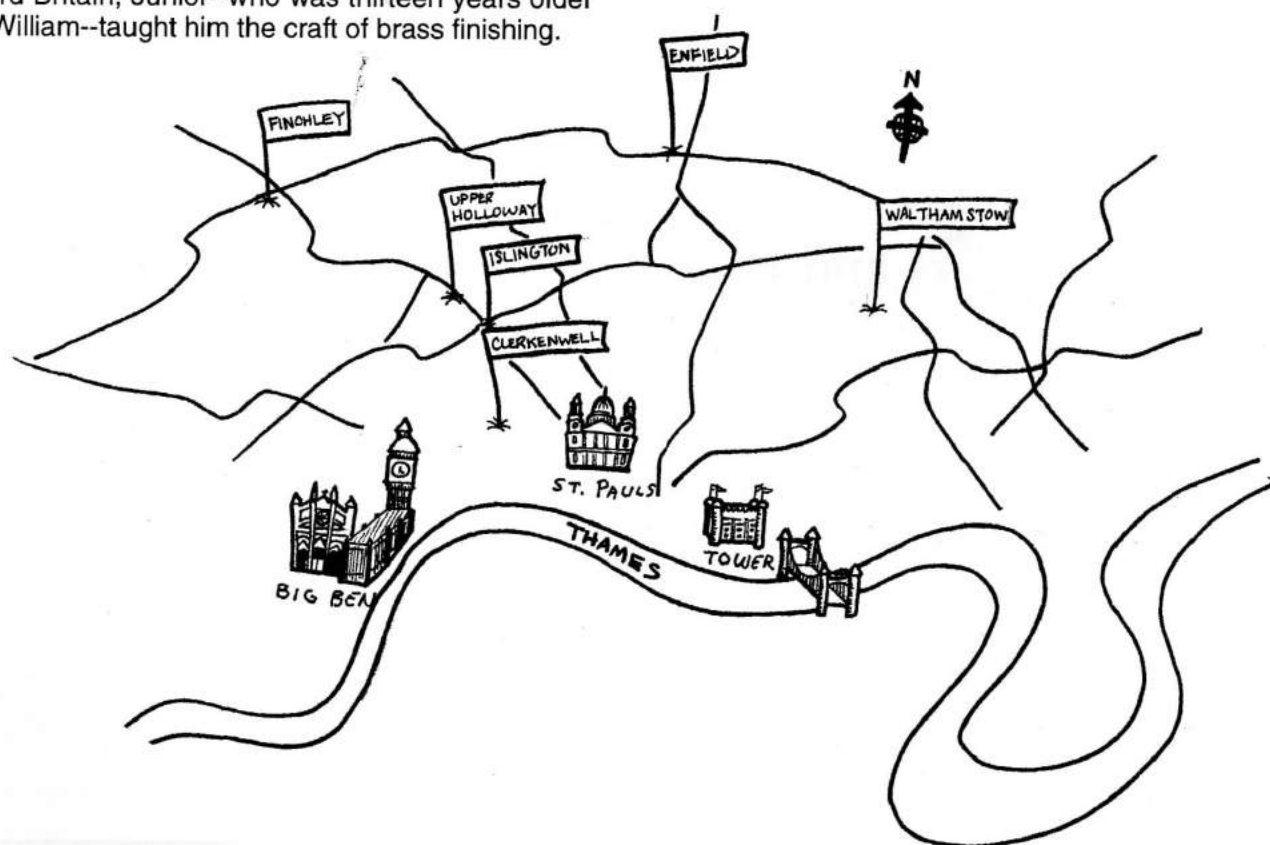
by Joe Wallis

For several years, I have been documenting the family history behind the firm of Britains Limited. Some interesting facts have emerged. These facts sustain the story of the rising fortunes of an upwardly mobile Victorian family in England that resulted in a remarkable legacy of toy-making enduring for over a century. The facts also amend some of the oral history handed down over the years.

The postwar catalogs of Britains Ltd. give the birth of William Britain, Senior as 1828 and his death as occurring in 1906. Both dates are incorrect. William Britain, Senior was born on August 8, 1831 in the city of Birmingham in Warwickshire. His parents were Edward Britain (who lived from 1790 to 1836) and Elishaba Parry. Edward Britain worked in the brass-making industry. Sometime after William Britain's birth in 1831, Edward Britain moved his family of five children to London; Edward Britain died there on April 16, 1836. In 1840 his widow then married a man named James Holland who had worked for the East India Company and who was a pensioner of that commercial enterprise. James Holland was also a brass finisher. While William Britain, Senior could not have learned a trade from his father, who died when he was only four years old, it appears likely that either his step-father, James Holland, or William's brother, Edward Britain, Junior--who was thirteen years older than William--taught him the craft of brass finishing.

Brass finishing is the art of polishing brass goods, not just for a lustrous appearance, but also to ensure that parts fit properly and operate as designed. In the 1851 Census, William Britain, Senior is listed as a 19-year-old apprentice. On August 10, 1852, having just turned 21, he married Anna Maria Messenger, born on July 28, 1830. William and Anna Maria would have nine children over a 20-year period; first four daughters, followed by five sons.

I have obtained copies of nearly all of the birth, wedding, and death certificates of the nine children born to William Britain, Senior and Anna Maria Messenger. They were very conscientious about registering the births of their children, even though failure to register did not become punishable by a fine until 1875. The certificates contain useful data, including the address of the residence where the birth occurred and the occupation of the father. Thus, we find that the nine children were born at seven different addresses, and that as the family grew it continually moved to new quarters, gradually travelled from Clerkenwell north to Islington, then to Finchley and Enfield, and progressed to better residences.





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On September 25, 1852, Anne was born at 174 St. John Street off of Goswell Street in the London district of Clerkenwell (north of St. Paul's Cathedral). William Britain listed his occupation as "Brass Tap Maker." The introduction of plumbing and water lines facilitated the rapid growth and suburbanization of metropolitan London, so manufacture of plumbing parts supplied steady work. On December 20, 1853, the second daughter, Emily, was born at 16 Lower Queen's Row in Clerkenwell, and William again listed his occupation as being a Brass Tap Maker. On August 29, 1855, Minnie was born at 69 Charles Street, off St. John Street in Clerkenwell--with William's occupation now given as Brass Finisher Journeyman (he had completed his apprenticeship). The last daughter, Julia, was born on October 6, 1857 at 36 Caroline Place off Copenhagen Street, east of the King's Cross railroad station. Julia's birth certificate shows William Britain as a Brass Finisher. He was 26 years old.

On December 14, 1859, William Britain, Junior was also born at 36 Caroline Place, with his father's trade listed as a Brass Finisher. The year of his birth has often been erroneously reported as 1860, but his birth certificate (prepared in 1860) verifies the date as 1859. By the February 26, 1862 birth of Alfred, the family was living at 47 Hanover Street (now part of Noel Road) in the eastern part of Islington. William Britain, Senior, again recorded his occupation as Brass Finisher. By 1866, the family had moved to 3 Grove Cottages, Barnsbury Grove in Islington. On April 23, 1866, Julia (only eight years old), died there of measles and pneumonia, according to the death certificate. The November 17, 1866 birth of Frederick took place at 31 Sussex Road in Islington.

Both of the 1866 certificates list William as a Brass Finisher. However, the most exciting moment in my research was when I received a copy of the birth certificate for Edward, born on April 3, 1871. On that certificate, William, Senior listed himself as a "Model Maker" and the 1871 Census also records William as a toy maker! The family was still at 3 Grove Cottages in 1871. Interestingly, on the birth certificate for the last of the nine children, Frank, born on October 19, 1872 at 3 Grove Cottages, William reverts to Brass Finisher as his occupation. One can surmise that he had begun making the mechanical toys he specialized in before 1871, but that it was not easy to support a large family on the fluctuating income it brought in, so he may have halted doing it full time and only done the model making part-time. It is unlikely that William, Senior started making toys as early as the 1845 date sometimes claimed, for he would have been only 14 years old. A more credible date is sometime in the 1860s.

What else have I been able to discover? Kelly's 1878 Directory shows the Britains family residing at 28 Lambton Road off of Hornsey Rise (Road). This was a three-story house located near the Crouch Hill railroad station, and is less than two miles north of the Barnsbury address. The 1881 Census shows all eight children living at home at 28 Lambton Road, ranging in age from Anne at 29 to Frank at nine years old. However, Minnie married George Mills and moved out in 1884. The Electoral Register for Islington in 1887 shows William Britain, Junior and Alfred Britain as lodgers at 28 Lambton Road paying six shillings a week rent to their parents. (There was a means test to qualify to be a registered voter.) By 1889, Alfred Britain was living at 7 Dresden Road--only 500 meters northwest of Lambton Road.

On June 4, 1889, William Britain, Jr., married Lucy Kate Ashton, the daughter of an electrical engineer. The marriage certificate indicates that he was living at 28 Lambton Road, and lists both his and his father's occupation as Model Manufacturer. Lucy Ashton was born in 1867 (eight years after William Britain, Jr.) Patents for several mechanical toys were taken out by William Britain, Jr., in 1884, 1886, and 1888. Sales of such entertaining toys as the Waltzing Couple and the Tea-drinking Mandarin may have enabled the family to move from Lambton Road and for William, Junior to get married. Readers can refer to Arnold Rolak's recently reprinted article on Britain's mechanical toys in the Fall 2000 issue of *The Old Toy Soldier* (Volume 24, Number 3).

(continued on next page)

The 1891 Census is quite interesting, for it reveals that 28 Lambton Road was "unoccupied." By then, the family had split up. William Britain, Sr. (now 60 years old), his wife Anna Maria Britain, the two spinster daughters (Annie and Emily, 39 and 38 years old, respectively), and the two youngest sons, Edward and Frank (20 and 19 years old) still lived together. The Electoral Register for North Islington for the years 1891-1900 records William Britain, Senior's address as "The Firs" on Holden Road in Totteridge North (now in North Finchley). By 1901 he had moved to "St. Kilda" on Ballards Lane in Finchley. His death in 1907 occurred at the Ballards Lane address. Minnie; William, Jr.; Alfred; and Frederick had all left home by 1894. I have not pinpointed when Alfred married Ada Jane Sargent, but I think it was after 1907; he moved from Dresden Road by 1911 to Muswell Hill, and to Highgate in 1912. Fred married Sarah Annie Wood on May 9, 1894, when he was 27 years old. The 1901 Electoral Register reveals that William Britain, Junior lived at "Rochlea" on Colney Hatch Lane in Muswell Hill--which is where Dennis Britain was born in 1903. That same year the growing family of William Britain, Junior moved to the suburb of North Enfield.

What is intriguing is the clever advertising image projected by the family in its bid to overcome the dominance of German-made toy soldiers in the English market. They circulated a story that William Britain, Jr., had designed the first hollowcast toy soldier "underneath the cherry tree in the garden" at Lambton Road. Perhaps he did model the Life Guard figure there, but the family had already moved to more modern and comfortable quarters than the Lambton Road house that had probably been built in the 1850s or 1860s.

There was a significant fire at the Lambton Road factory on March 8, 1901, gutting the second floor according to the local newspaper. This must have disrupted production, but it appears to have been only a momentary setback for the successful toy soldier firm. Anna Maria Britain, the patriarch's wife, died on April 24, 1902, only a few months before her 50th wedding anniversary. The last two sons then married: Edward Britain wed Kate Martha Hawkins in 1904 and Frank married Constance Amy Guylott in 1908.

On June 12, 1907 (not 1906 as claimed by the postwar catalogs), William Britain, Sr., died of heart failure, aged 75. There was a large funeral (see accompanying newspaper obituary) and he was buried in St. Marylebone Cemetery in East Finchley. I have visited the grave, which has a substantial monument marking the graves of not only William

Death of Mr. W. Britain

Finchley Press (22 June 1907)

The death took place, on the 12th instance at his residence St. Kilda, North Finchley, at the age of 75, of Mr. William Britain, head of W. Britain and Sons, toy makers of Hornsey Rise. Deceased, formerly resided for many years in Lambton Road, was well known and highly respected throughout the trade and by a host of private friends. His was a very unostentatious though a generous nature, and his genial disposition made him so popular that his death is lamented by all who knew him. He had been ill for some months.

The funeral took place on Tuesday, the interment being made in the family grave in St. Marylebone Cemetery, East Finchley. The service in the chapel and at the grave-side was performed by the Rev. H. N. Collier, M.A., Vicar of Holy Trinity, East Finchley.

The chief mourners were Messrs. William, Alfred, Fred, Edward, and Frank Britain, C.J. Montague and Wilfred Mills, E. Landen, Pryke, and Hatchings. Others present included all of the employees of the firm, Mr. Harry Harding, Mr. and Mrs. E. Speaight, Mrs. T. Beckwith, Mrs. Frank Speaight, etc.

The floral tributes, for which a landau was requisitioned, were very choice, one standing out most prominently being an open book with "At Rest" in violets and with a wide mauve satin ribbon bookmark from the employees, "With deepest sympathy." Other wreaths were from Son Frank, Annie and Emily, Will and Lucy, Connie, Son Alf, Fred and Annie, Minnie and George, grandchildren (basket) Teddie and Kitty, grandchildren Doris and Rita, Mr. E. Landen, Mrs Rabin, Mr. T.L. Williams, Messrs. G. and E. Greiner, Mr. and Mrs. Meek, Mr. and Mrs. Doble, Mr. and Mrs. A.E. Shotter, Mr. E.J. Mantle, Mr. H. Harding, and Mrs. Ellen Harding, Mr. and Mrs. Guylott and family, Mr. W. Larnett, Mr. and Mrs. H. Petch, Mr. W. Brown, Mrs. Crawford, Mr. and Mrs. Hills Davis, and the servants, etc.

Britain, Sr., but also his wife Anna Maria, and their eldest daughter, Anne, who died shortly after her father on August 14, 1907. Anne's estate was probated as being worth £1,936, while William Britain, Senior's will was probated at a value of £17,275. This equalled about \$83,000 in 1907 or almost \$1.5 million in today's dollars.¹ Next to his father's grave marker is a smaller one for Alfred Britain, who died from complications of diabetes on December 30, 1915. Leopold Stokowski, the famous conductor, is buried about 100 feet away. When probated Alfred's estate was valued at £25,074 (equal to over \$2 million today). He managed the business while William Britain, Junior, was the "artist" who designed most of the early molds, and Fred was the master salesman and Secretary of the Board.

¹ To calculate the cost of living increases since 1913 and convert prior years' dollars into today's equivalent go to the website at <http://www.newsengin.com/neFreeTools.nsf/CPIcalc>. Before using it, one must multiply the £ amount by the exchange rate, which was about \$4.80 before the departure from the Gold Standard in 1931, dropped as low as \$3.40 to the Pound in 1932, but rebounded to be fixed at \$4.03 per Pound during World War II.

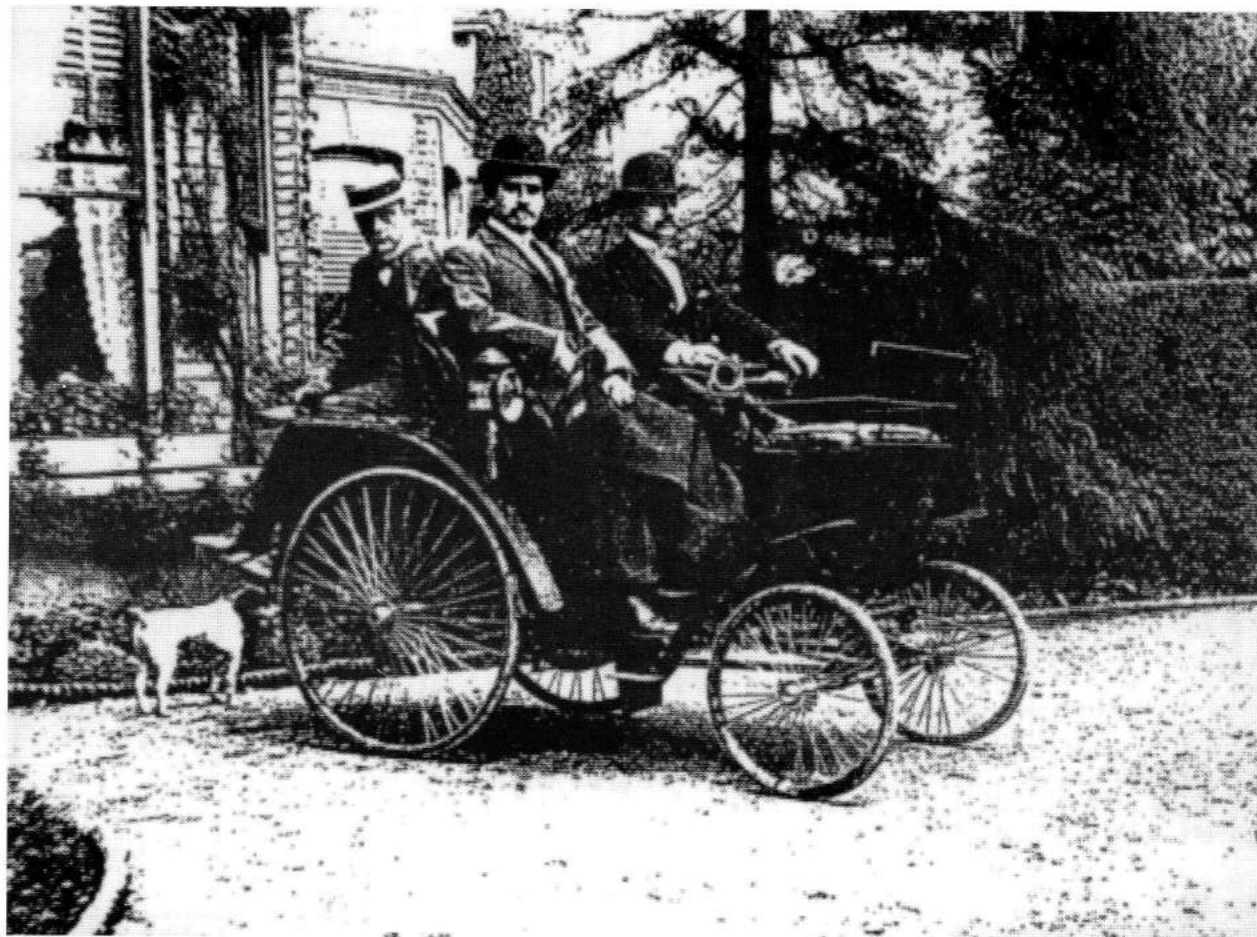


Photo above, from left: Britain brothers Fred, Alfred, and William, Jr. c1899.

Emily, the second oldest daughter, was 54 when her father died. She lived to witness Frank Britain's marriage ceremony on August 17, 1908, but I have not confirmed when Emily died. In December 1907, Britains Ltd. replaced William Britain and Sons, and was inaugurated with a capitalization of 18,000 shares worth £1 each, held by family members in the following proportions: William Britain, Jr. 5,000 shares; Alfred Britain 5,000 shares; Frederick Britain 3,994 shares; Edward Britain 1,333 shares; Frank Britain 1,333 shares; Minnie Britain Mills 1,333 shares.

This only totalled 17,993 shares, but six shares were given to Fred Britain, and one share to Kate Martha Britain (Edward's wife) on February 14, 1908. When Britains Ltd. was established in 1907, William, Jr. was 48, Alfred was 45, and Fred was 41. Edward, Frank, and Minnie were not particularly active in the enterprise by then, so they received a lesser number of shares. Because I purchased at auction the Britains Ltd. stock certificates issued before 1940, I can confirm that there would be no other transfers of stock for 20 years, although Alfred's stock was inherited by his widow Ada Jane in 1916, and Minnie's stock was held by the administrators of her estate after her death on February 26, 1925. Minnie's estate totalled £4,969 at probate.

William Britain, Junior's first wife, Lucy Kate Ashton, died of a stroke on February 5, 1913 at age 45. On December 14, 1915 (only two weeks before his brother Alfred died from diabetes), William married his nurse, Mary Helen Victoria Kemp. He was 55; she was born in 1892 and was only 23 years old. William's youngest child (Dennis) was almost 13 years old, but William's declining health, and perhaps loneliness, undoubtedly motivated the marriage. William Britain, Jr., then fathered two more sons and a daughter with his young second wife. The children of this marriage were: Rossiter Frank Britain (born in 1918), Delia Helen Britain Ramsay (born in 1921), and Bayard John Britain (born in 1922).

On February 5, 1928, an additional 1,000 shares of stock were issued, split between Frederick Charles Pryke (Office Manager) and Edward Landen (Works Manager). Both had been with the firm for many years, had witnessed the signatures of some of the Britain brothers to the Incorporation Agreement in 1907, and were now made Directors of the company. They were the first stockholders who were not members of the Britains family. Given that William Britain, Jr., was 68 years old in 1928, it is likely that he had stopped designing new models as far back as 1915 due to his age and to his diabetes (which restricted him to a wheelchair he had designed

(continued on next page)



himself). The need to reinforce the Board by adding these two loyal long-time employees was obvious. Not long after, William Britain, Jr., distributed 2,000 shares of his 5,000 shares, giving 1,000 shares to his second wife, Mary Helen Victoria Kemp Britain, and 250 shares each to the children from his first marriage, who were all over 21 years old in 1928. These four were Dorothy Kate Britain Kingwill (a copy of this stock certificate accompanies this article), William Edwin Britain, Frank Eric Britain, and Leslie Dennis Britain. Dorothy was born in 1892 and Dennis was born on January 13, 1903; I have not found the birth dates of William Edwin and Frank Eric, but they were born between Dorothy and Dennis. Another daughter, Kathleen, married William Kennedy, but for some reason was not given stock.

By now, Fred was the Managing Director running the company's daily operations, and he conducted the Factory Tour chronicled in the September 1929 issue of *The Toy Trader and Exporter*. Dennis Britain married Freda Hallam on June 26, 1930. Edward Britain, who had become a Director of the English branch of the Nestle's Milk Company, died on September 5, 1932; his estate was probated at £3,197. On November 24, 1933, William Britain,

Junior died at the age of 73 in the town of Birchington-on-Sea in Kent, northeast of Canterbury, where he had retired (see the accompanying obituary from *The Palmer's Green and Southgate Gazette* of December 1, 1933). When his will was probated, his estate was valued at £14,505 (but he had given away 2,000 shares of his Britains Ltd. stock in 1928). The estate is equal to \$671,000 today.

At the end of 1933, Fred and Frank were the only living members of the original family. During 1933, Ada Jane Britain (Alfred's widow) transferred 67% of her 5,000 shares to her son Alfred Edward Britain--probably when he reached 21 years of age. When William Britain, Junior's will was probated in 1934, each of the four adult children (from his first marriage) received an additional 240 shares (giving them a total of 490 shares each), while his widow Helen Kemp Britain, Dorothy Kate Britain Kingwill, and Stanley Hugh Taten administered 2,040 shares as executors of William's estate on behalf of his minor children from his second marriage. Rossiter Frank, Delia Helen, and Bayard John Britain were given their shares of stock when each attained the age of 21.

The next major event in the family history was the death of Fred Britain from hepatitis on January 1, 1935 at age 68. His daughters, Doris Britain King and Rita Britain Underwood, inherited his 4,000 shares because his wife was not competent to manage her affairs and had been institutionalized. Fred's estate at probate totalled £12,688 (about \$587,000 in today's dollars). When his wife, Annie Sarah, died in 1938, her estate was valued at £6,044. On January 30, 1935, George Edward Smallwood was provided 200 newly issued shares, and on November 24, 1936 he was given 300 more shares. Dennis Britain and George Smallwood were appointed to the Board of Directors in January 1935, joining Frank Britain, Frederick Charles Pryke, Alfred Edward Britain, and Edward Landen. George Smallwood ran the Toolroom and the Design Shop between 1932 and 1945. He sang at an employee Christmas Dinner and Concert on December 23, 1912, while T.J. Scrine (see below) played the piccolo on that occasion. On January 6, 1936, Fred Pryke, the long-time Office Manager died. His widow, Florence Kate Pryke, inherited his 500 shares. His estate was probated at £5,523. Frank Eric Britain, an older brother of Dennis Britain, took Pryke's seat on the Board of Directors, while Thomas Joseph Scrine was promoted to Office Manager. Scrine began working at Britains in May 1911; he designed catalogs, the artwork for the box label of Set #1392, the civilian Autogiro, and, according to Dennis Britain, originated the idea of the Picture Packs after World War II. He was born in 1894, retired from the firm in 1962, and died on October 2, 1965.

By May 1936, Dennis Britain, was appointed Managing Director based upon his 14 years of working at the firm, his modelling skills, and his managerial ability. He was 33 years old. The largest shareholder in May 1936 was Alfred Edward Britain (Alfred's son) with 3,334 of the 19,200 shares then issued. T.J. Scrine was issued 200 shares of new stock on November 24, 1936. The firm was doing an increasing business now, for on March 31, 1938 a bonus of one new share for each existing share of stock was declared to capitalize £19,700 of undivided profits that had accumulated in the Company's Reserve Fund. There were 22 shareholders whose stock holdings doubled (five of these were either widows or the executors of the estates of the original partners; four more held 500 or less shares, including Landen, Smallwood, and Scrine).

Opposite is a reduction of an original Britains Limited stock certificate, #20. It is approximately 8-1/2 x 12 inches, printed in red, signed and dated 8 August 1928 in black ink. The Britains Limited embossing stamp is impressed at the lower right.

Death of Mr. William Britain, Jr. *Palmer's Green and Southgate Gazette* **(1 December 1933)**

The funeral took place at Birchington Parish Church, Kent on Tuesday of Mr. William Britain, a former resident of Enfield and Southgate, who died on Friday [November 24th], after a long illness.

Mr. Britain, who was chairman of Britain and Co., toy makers, Hornsey Rise, lived in Enfield for 18 years and came to Southgate in 1921, residing there until he moved to Birchington two years ago [Editor's note: in 1931].

He was a man of quiet disposition, and although he did not take a prominent part in local affairs in either Southgate or Enfield, his passing will be mourned by a large number of friends.

Mr. William Britain was one of the first men in this country to fly, and conducted experiments with heavier-than-air craft on the Lee marshes near Ponders End before the War.

Then on August 21, 1938, Frank Britain, the last of the original founding family members, died. (His passing marked the end of an era.) Constance, his widow, inherited his 3,200 shares. The estate when probated was worth £8,748. Dennis Britain, 35 years old and backed up by the long experience of Edward Landen, T.J. Scrine, and George Smallwood, managed the company without mishap.

When Dennis Britain enlisted in the Royal Air Force at the age of 37 in 1940, his older brother Frank Eric became Managing Director during the War. Landen, Scrine, and Smallwood, all middle-aged men, helped keep the factory running—including the conversion to munitions production in July 1941. William Arnold Stables became the Works Manager. Upon Dennis' return in 1945, he detected that Smallwood had been misappropriating supplies and equipment to run his own business on the side, and he sacked Smallwood accordingly (as Dennis told me during an interview in 1984), which is confirmed by Smallwood's removal from the Board on February 28, 1946. T. J. Scrine was appointed to the Board of Directors in his place. On January 3, 1946, Edward Landen resigned from the Board. He had served the company for over 40 years as the Manufacturing Foreman and Works Manager, and as a Board member since 1928. Harold Edgar King (husband of Fred Britain's daughter Doris) was appointed as a Director on October 29, 1946. Joseph H. Thake was appointed to replace Stanley Hugh Taten on January 1, 1949, while Bayard John Britain (one of Dennis' step-brothers) became one of the Directors even though he was only 26 years old. He was also a modeler and designer, and attended some British Model Soldier Society (B.M.S.S.) meetings as a

(continued on next page)

Britain Family Tree



William Britain, Sr. was born on August 8, 1831 in Birmingham to Edward Britain, Sr. and Elishaba Parry. He married Anna Maria Messenger on August 10, 1852. She was born on July 28, 1830. Anna Maria died on April 24, 1902, while William Britain, Sr. died on June 12, 1907. They had nine children, shown in the following chart.

Children	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Date of Marriage
Anne	September 25, 1852	August 14, 1907	Never married
Emily	December 20, 1853	After 1907	Never married
Minnie	August 29, 1855	February 26, 1925	Married George Mills in 1884
Julia	October 6, 1857	April 23, 1866	Never married
William, Jr.	December 14, 1859	November 24, 1933	Married Lucy Kate Ashton in 1889; married Helen Kemp in 1915
Alfred	February 26, 1862	December 30, 1915	Married Ada Jane Sargent after 1907
Frederick	November 17, 1866	January 1, 1935	Married Sarah Anne Wood in 1894
Edward	April 3, 1871	May 9, 1932	Married Kate Martha Hawkins in 1904
Frank	October 19, 1872	August 21, 1938	Married Constance Guylott in 1908

William Britain, Jr. was born on December 14, 1859 in London as the fifth child and first son of William Britain, Sr. and Anna Maria Messenger. He married Lucy Kate Ashton on June 4, 1889. She was born in 1867. They had five children between 1892 and 1903. She died on February 5, 1913; William Britain, Jr. then married Mary Victoria Helen Kemp on December 14, 1915. She was born in 1892. Three children were produced by this second marriage. The children of William Britain, Jr. were Dorothy Kate Britain Kingwill (born in 1892), William Edwin Britain, Kathleen Britain Kennedy, Frank Eric Britain, Leslie Dennis Britain (born in 1903), Rossiter Frank Britain (born in 1918), Delia Helen Britain Ramsay (born in 1921), and Bayard John Britain (born in 1922).



Photo above is Dennis Britain; he is examining a Bikanir Camel Corps figure about to go under the hammer at Phillips.

liaison, just as Dennis had done when the B.M.S.S. began in 1935. On September 23, 1949, Frank Eric Britain resigned from the Board after 13 years; Dennis related to me that he was perturbed to find when he returned from the R.A.F. that Eric had allowed an employees' union to organize, which Dennis stopped at that time.

By 1950, Britains Ltd stock was held by 32 stockholders. Alfred Edward Britain (Alfred's son) died by 1944; his estate was still the largest stockholder in 1950 with 6,877 of the 39,401 shares. By 1958, Miss Betty Patricia Carvell, a daughter of Alfred Edward Britain and a granddaughter of Alfred Britain, was the largest shareholder with 4,445 shares. Helen Britain still owned 2,000 shares. Roy Selwyn-Smith, the creator of the Knights of Agincourt and many plastic models, had become a member of the Board of Directors and held 130 shares, Joe Thake had 140 shares, T.J. Scrine and his wife held 1,000 shares, while Dennis Britain and his wife Freda had accumulated 1,675 shares. Descendants of Minnie Britain Mills, who died in 1925, held 1,488 shares; Edward Britain's widow, Constance, owned 2,668 shares; while George Smallwood (who died in 1962), Fred Pryke's widow, and Edward Landen's widow were all still shareholders.

In conclusion, through years of research I located most of the vital statistics for the original family except for the date of Emily's death (probably between 1910 and 1920) and the date of Alfred's marriage (probably after 1907). We now have documentation from Edward's 1871 birth certificate and the 1871 Census that William Britain, Sr., had begun to be a serious maker of mechanical toys by 1871, but probably not before 1860. We have narrowed down when the Britains family bought the Lambton Road house to between 1873 and 1878. We can trace the stock sales and bequests through the stock certificates I possess, and can verify through the wills that the family became well off financially through the success of Britains Ltd--all of this documented from a study of family history.

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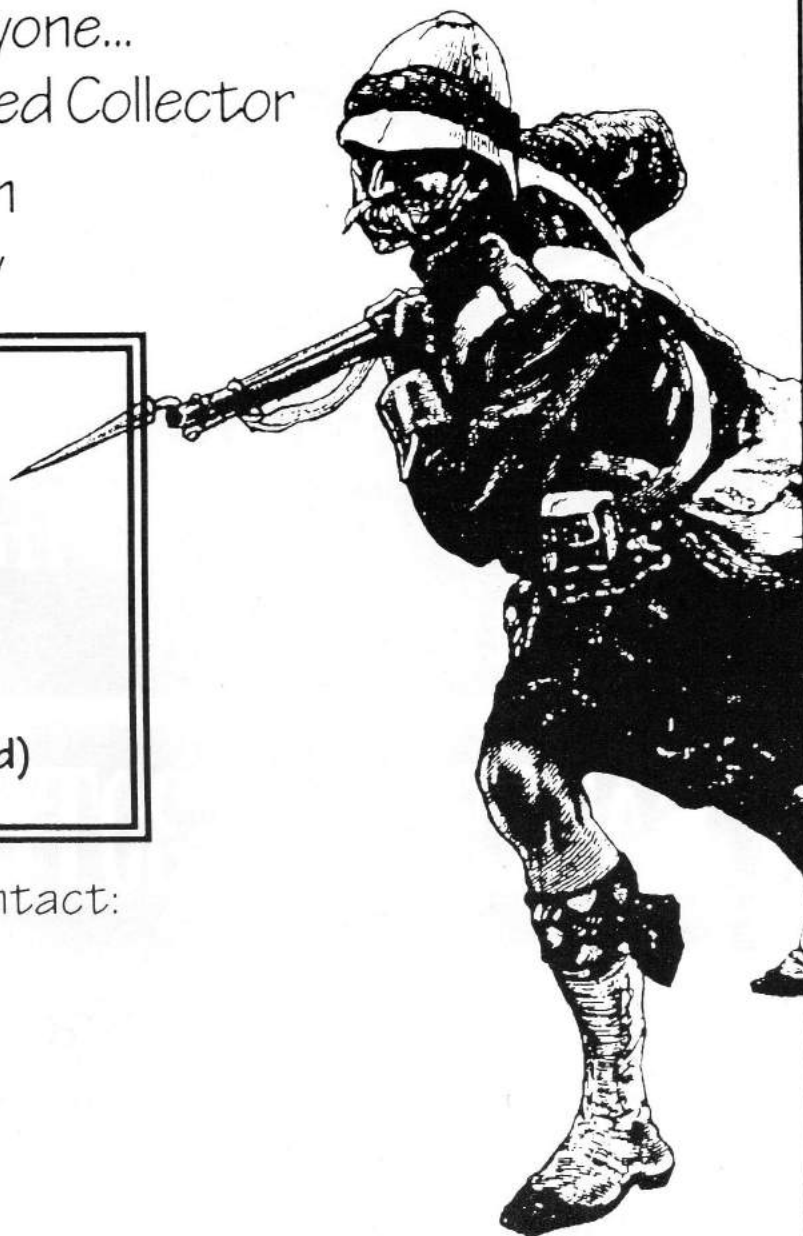
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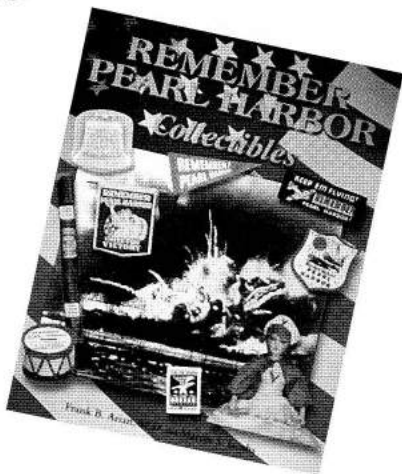
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Book Review



For WWII nostalgia fans and collectors, two large, neat "picture" books are now available, both from Collector's Press of Portland, Oregon. While not cheap, they both contain several hundred brilliant color photos of comic book ad pin-up items, which if purchased in the original form would run you a few million bucks in today's collector market. This is particularly true of **Ron Goulart's** outstanding *Comic Book Culture: An Illustrated History*.

Since I love WWII era super-hero, super-patriotic comic-book characters and covers but don't really like to lay out upwards of \$10,000 each for some of the rare items, I buy books about comic books. Many of the over 300 color illustrations in Ron Goulart's book are almost full-sized and suitable for framing. It's \$49.95 in hardbound, coffee-table size but worth every penny.

For the Boys, The Racy Pin-Ups of WWII is another visual treat. There must be over 500 color pictures of pin-ups, actual bomber "nose art" and related WWII patriotic ephemera in this big volume by Max Allen Collins. It cleverly juxtaposes the pin-up with a color photo of the plane(s) whose airbase artists copied these gals in large artwork (usually right under the cockpit) with names like Memphis Belle, Supine Sue and Love 'Em All. By today's standards these "unclad" girls are somewhat tame.

Both of these books are easy on the text and very heavy on the color illustrations. I think Collector's Press is probably the best in the business of publishing this kind of unusually attractive nostalgia book. Great layouts and the dust jackets and covers are marvelous. You might also wish to get their *Pulp Culture: The Art of Fiction Magazines*, which has oodles of pics of those great war and aviation ten-cent "pulp" like "G-8" and the "Battle Aces".

Remember Pearl Harbor Collectibles is another neat book by Martin Jacobs about WWII collectibles. While not quite up to his larger recent book on WWII Homefront collectibles (reviewed in OTS, V24, #2, page 19), this small book is more than worth the low price of \$14.95. This is a photo book with the captions telling the story of the infamous sneak attack which heralded America's entry into WWII. "Remember Pearl Harbor" was the greatest American WWII rallying point; it appeared in hundreds of items including panties, stickers, toys, trading cards, salt and pepper shakers, jewelry (a **big** collectible) and ties. Coming up on the 60th anniversary of the attack, Pearl Harbor collectibles, souvenirs, relics, keepsakes and artifacts, once very cheap, are now rising in price. (eBay has an extensive search category for them.) This book contains a lengthy price guide.

All of these titles are available from Amazon.com at their usual discounts.

Jack Matthews

Les Figurines Durso is a 60-page soft cover identification and price guide. It has seven black and white pages of representative photos. Although the book is all in French, Durso collectors will not find that insurmountable as most of the book is simply figure lists, preceded by a brief company history. This 2001 edition is reasonably priced at \$15 U.S. dollars (including postage) from Argue; 15 rue E. Vandervelde, B-6040; Jumet, Belgium.

Request for Images

Jack Matthews is in the final stages of work on a sequel to his 1995 book on WWII military non-metal toys, *Toys Go To War*. The sequel will include a section of photos of kids of that era holding or playing with such toys or toy soldiers. Jack only has a dozen or so photos of this type and needs many more. He would be most appreciative of receiving copies (or originals) for inclusion in the book. Full photo credit will be given. He could even juxtapose such a photo with a picture of, or advertisement for, the actual toy.

Photos showing WWII kids engaging in "Homefront" activities such as collecting paper and scrap, working in "victory gardens", etc. would also be appreciated. Jack can be reached at jmath@mindspring.com; 13 Bufflehead Drive; Kiawah Island SC 29455; 843-768-1341; or 13 Toxaway Trace, Lake Toxaway, NC 28747; 828-884-6080.

Barclay's Trains

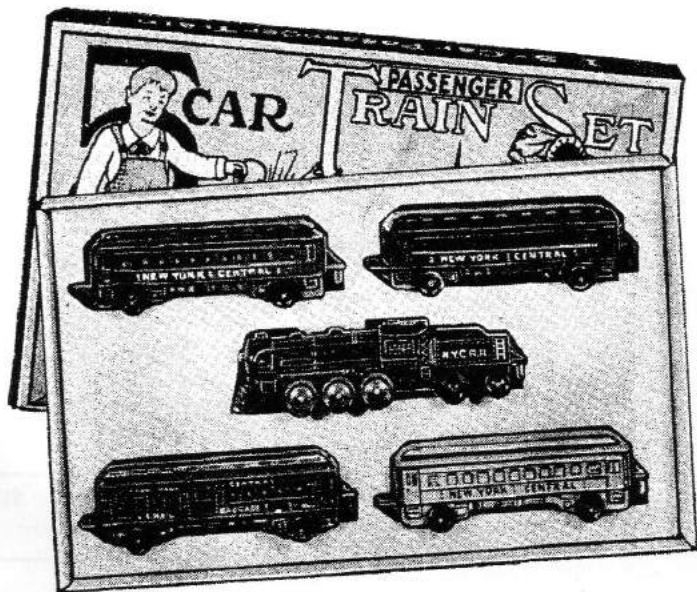
by Stan Alekna



Very little has been written or documented about the various trains that were made by Barclay except for the photos in Richard O'Brien's *The Barclay Catalog Book* and *Collecting Toy Soldiers*. This article is an attempt to pull together all of the information available on the subject, including data on the Barclay train sets that are in our collection.

It is difficult to be precise on the dates of issue of each train, but it appears that Barclay made their first train set (No. 566) in the late 20's or early 30's, and their last one (the neon colors version of No. 355) in the early 1970's. The rest of the trains listed in the table and shown in the photographs on the following two pages are sequenced from early to late; features such as slush versus diecasting, wire versus peg hitches, type of wheels and paint assist in determining relative age. I hope the table is self-explanatory, but a few comments on some of the trains and their variants may be helpful.

The No. 566 passenger train came in two sets; both had one baggage/mail car and either one or three passenger (Pullman) cars as shown in Richard's *Barclay Catalog Book*, pages 14 and 15.



No. 566 5-Car Passenger Train Set

The variant set of No. 577 shown in the table and photographs has the same four freight cars as the standard No. 577 but the locomotive has fewer wheels and the coal tender is not cast as part of the locomotive. I have seen the separate coal car described in the table, but it is not in our collection and thus not available to photograph.

The medium size No. 550 came in three versions as shown, the earliest one having a battery powered headlight on the locomotive. It seems reasonable to assume that the separate coal car (not shown) for the second version of No. 550 was the same as that pictured in the 1934 Butler Bros. Catalog graphic of the earlier version. The third version of No. 550 reverted back to casting the coal tender as part of the locomotive.

The 9th listed and pictured train, No. 365, is one I have never seen. It is the one-piece streamlined locomotive and passenger car with rubber tires shown on page 19 of *The Barclay Catalog Book*.

The small, 3-piece No. 355 version seems to have had the longest run of Barclay's trains with the 3-wheeled slush cast locomotive with wire hitches version dating in the 1930's and the latest one being dated by paint and tires along with last production of the Barclay factory in 1971. Several examples of these neon paint colors and tires can be found on the smaller (1-7/8" long) Barclay vehicles which were also produced during Barclay's twilight years. Hopefully, this article will create a few additions to the Want list of those, like me, who are bound to collect one of everything that Barclay made.

Train illustrations and chart appear on the following pages.

If anyone has additional information on Barclay trains, I would like them to contact me so I can add to this niche of Barclayana. Stan Alekna; 732 Aspen Lane; Lebanon, PA 17042-9073; 717-228-2361.

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2



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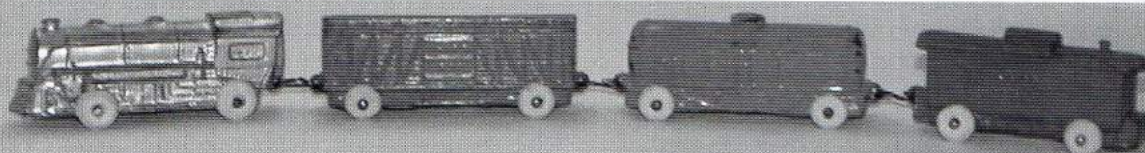


4



Electric Lighted Freight Train—Overall length 15 1/4 in., 5 pcs., aver. 3 1/4 in. long, all with steel axles and couplings, white rubber wheels, modern designed locomotive and coal car in black enameled finish, large electric headlight with battery, freight car, oil car and caboose in bright contrasting colors. Each set in fancy 2 1/4 x 1 1/4 in. illustrated box.

5



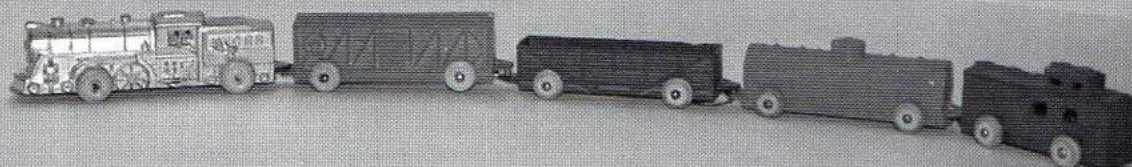
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No. 365 Streamline Train

10



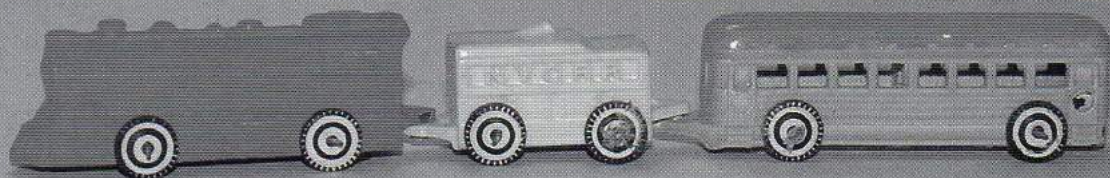
11



12



13



	BARCLAY NUMBER	CASTING TYPE	HITCH TYPE	WHEEL TYPE	LOCOMOTIVE	COAL TENDER	PASSENGER CAR	BAGGAGE/ MAIL CAR	CATTLE CAR	GONDOLA CAR	OIL CAR	CABOOSE
1	566	slush	peg	metal	black - 4 1/2" 5 pr. of wheels	cast as part of locomotive	red or light green-4 1/4"	red or light green-4 3/8"				
2	577	slush	peg	metal	black - 4 1/2" 5 pr. of wheels	cast as part of locomotive			green- 3 3/4"	dark red with coal- 3 3/4"	orange- 3 3/4"	red- 3 1/4"
3	577 Variant	slush	peg	metal	black- 4" 3 pr. of wheels	orange 2 1/4" (not pictured)			green- 3 3/4"	dark red with coal- 3 3/4"	orange- 3 3/4"	red- 3 1/4"
4	550-light see note (1)	slush	peg	white rubber on wood hubs	black- 2 pr. of wheels; battery powered light	See graphic #4			See graphic #4		See graphic #4	See graphic #4
5	550-slush	slush	wire	white rubber	silver- 3 1/4"	(not pictured)			green- 3 3/8"		orange- 3 1/4"	red- 2 3/4"
6	335	slush	wire	metal	black 2 1/4" 3 pr. of wheels	black 1 3/4"	dark red 2 5/8"					
7	335	slush	wire	metal	black 2 1/4" 2 pr. of wheels	black 1 3/4"	red 2 5/8"					
8	550-die	die	peg	white rubber	silver - 3 3/4" 2 pr. of wheels	cast as part of locomotive			green- 3 3/8"	blue (open)- 3 3/8"	orange- 3 3/8"	red- 2 1/2"
9	365 see note (2)	die	N/A	white rubber	silver 2 pr. of wheels	N/A (Diesel?)	Cast as part of engine					
10	335	die	peg	metal	silver 2 1/2" 2 pr. of wheels	black or green 1 3/4"	red 2 3/4"					
11	335	die	peg	metal	metallic blue 2 1/2" 2 pr. of wheels	see note (3)	see note (3)					
12	335	die	peg	black plastic	silver 2 1/2" 2 pr. of wheels	black or green 1 3/4"	red 2 3/4"					
13	335 a	die	peg	black & white plastic	neon pink 2 1/2" 2 pr. of wheels	neon yellow 1 1 3/4"	neon orange 2 3/4"					

* NOTES:

1. Graphic from September 1934 BUTLER BROS. Catalog, courtesy of Richard O'Brien.
2. Graphic from Richard O'Brien's, THE BARCLAY CATALOG BOOK, page 19.
3. Not pictured; assume it was part of the set and metallic blue color.

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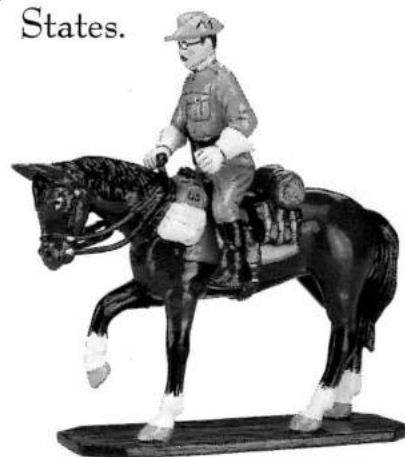
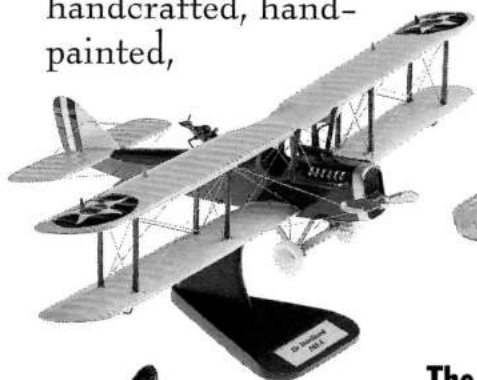
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South Carolina Military Miniatures Society

DATE: SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 2001
TIME: 10 AM - 5 PM
PLACE: SOUTH CAROLINA STATE MUSEUM
301 GERVAIS STREET
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

The South Carolina Military Miniature Society (SCMMS) will hold the ninth Annual Southeastern Toy Soldier Show at the South Carolina State History Museum in the state capitol, Columbia. Columbia is located about one hour west of Interstate I-95 and at the intersection of Interstate Routes I-26, I-20 and I-77.

SHOW DETAILS:

- Table cost will again be only \$35, with about 65 tables available.
- A special show room rate has been arranged at the Columbia Holiday Inn-Coliseum, about one mile away.
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A modest museum admission fee is charged but no additional show admission fee will be charged.

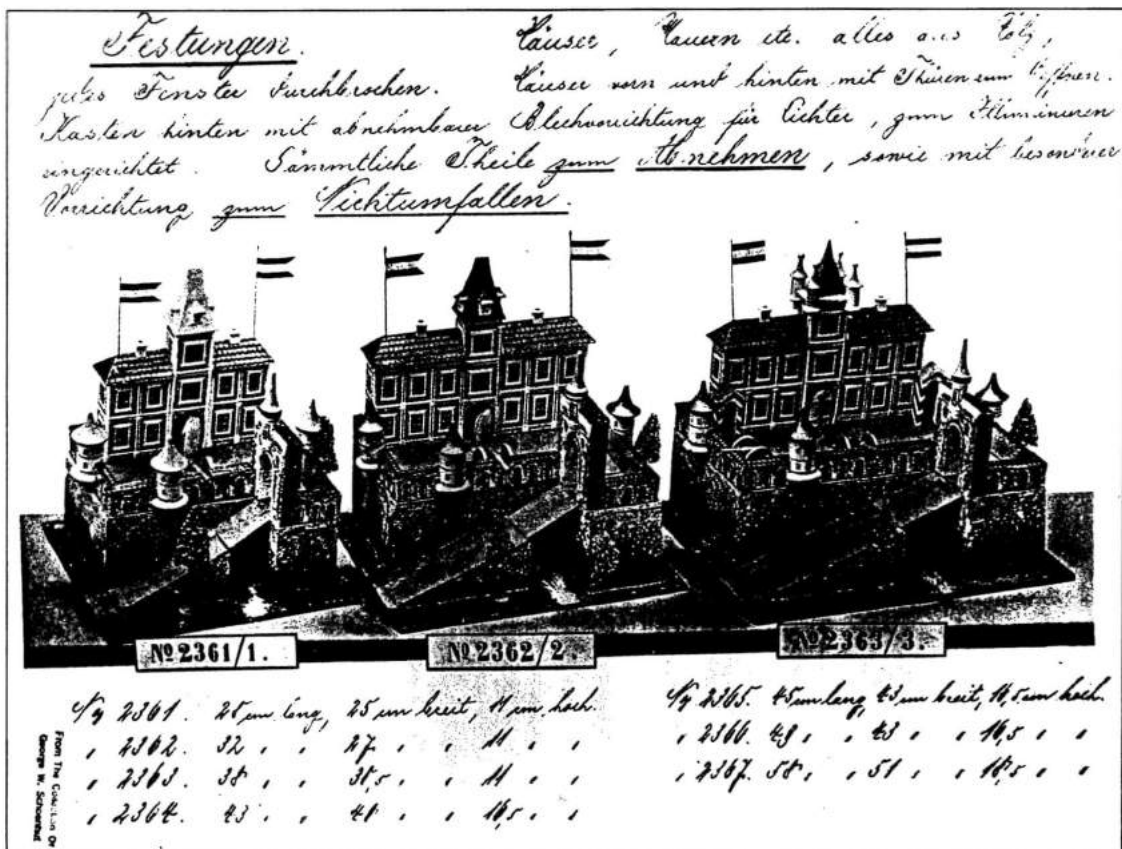
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From Dollhouse to 'Fortress'

The Military Aspect of Moritz Gottschalk's Toy World

by Allen Hickling

By the age of 25 Ludwig Moritz Gottschalk (1840-1905) had already used his bookbinding skills to create children's toys from paper and cardboard. This start, plus lithographic printing and wood easily available from the local forests of his native Saxony, provided the basis for his enormous success as a manufacturer of dollhouses and related products (rooms such as kitchens, dollhouse furniture, etc).

He went through a preliminary stage of employing piece workers in a sort of 'cottage industry' but, by 1875, he owned a 'factory' employing twenty people. Logs were sawn into boards in their own water-powered sawmill, and the final production, which included the capacity for full-scale lithography, was done in the factory proper.

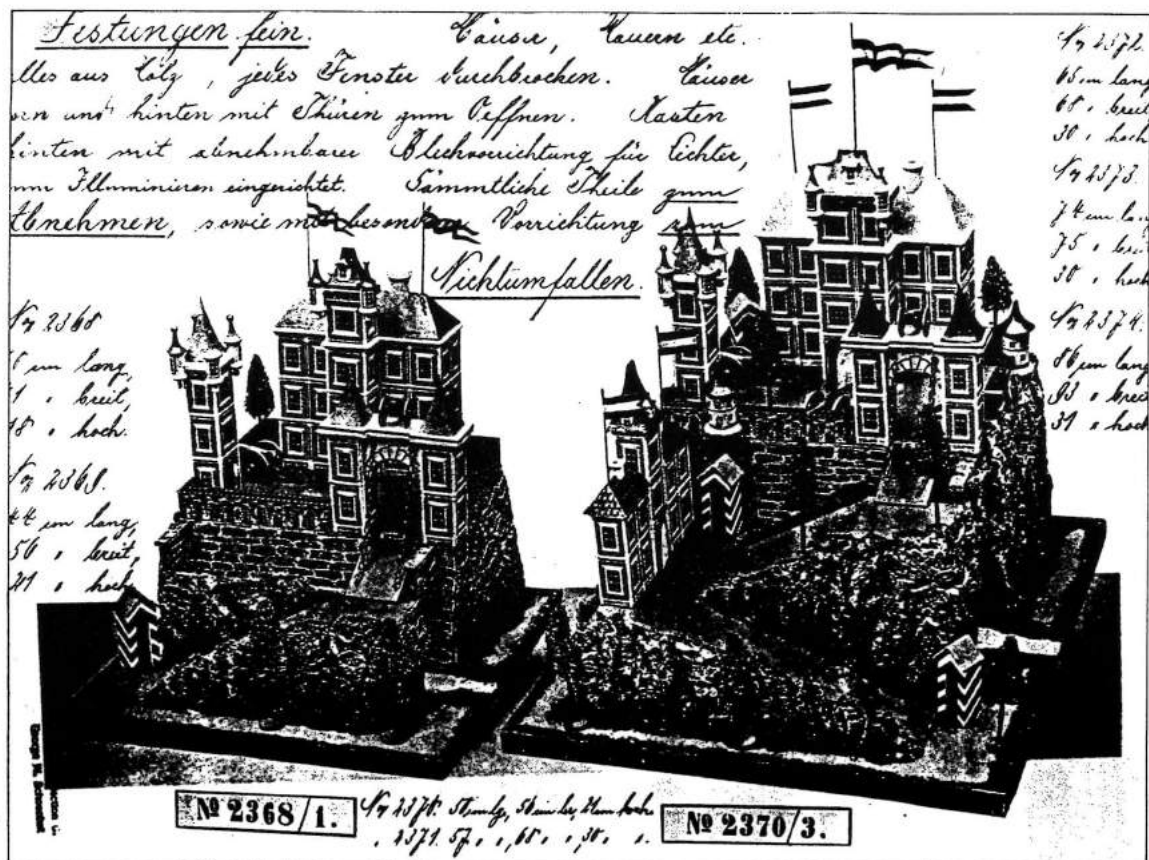
It was only a short step to diversification into different markets - such as grocery stores, stables, warehouses and so-called 'fortresses'. 'So-called' because 'fortress' seems to be an inappropriate description of buildings which were more in the nature of lightly fortified mansions with the occasional drawbridge, sentry box and minor crenellation. We

are definitely not talking of the military installations more usually described as forts, such as those built in the Celtic heartland by the kings of medieval England.

The First Fortresses

The first indication of Gottschalk's fortress production is a catalogue from about 1885. Toy fortresses from two series were offered. The first (the 2300 series) comprised fourteen models numbered 2361 to 2374. This provided a range of sizes from No:2361 which, according to the catalogue, measured 4¼"(high) x 10"(wide) x 10"(deep), to No:2374 which was 12¼"(high) x 34"(wide) x 36½"(deep)

The second (the 2500 series), comprised ten models numbered 2592 to 2599. This series also provided a range of sizes from No:2592 which measured 12¼"(high) x 15¼"(wide) x 9½"(deep), to No:2599, which was 23½"(high) x 32"(wide) x 27½"(deep).



Extracts above and facing page are from the catalogue c1885 (the 2300 series). The text translated from the German reads as follows. "Fortresses. Buildings, walls, etc. all made of wood, each window opens. Buildings have doors front and rear and can be opened. Rear box has removable metal plate for lights, to control illumination. All components can be taken off, and are provided with devices so they do not fall over." The larger ones Nos. 2368 to 2374) were described as "Fancy fortresses".

Nothing is known about Gottschalk's fortress production earlier than this. However, considering that the factory had been in production for ten years there could have been an earlier series. His numbering system is not much of a help – but at least he had one, which is more than most of his contemporaries. It is generally agreed is that the numbers reflect a chronological order, but there is no evidence about where they started – it may have been one but, equally, it might have been two thousand.

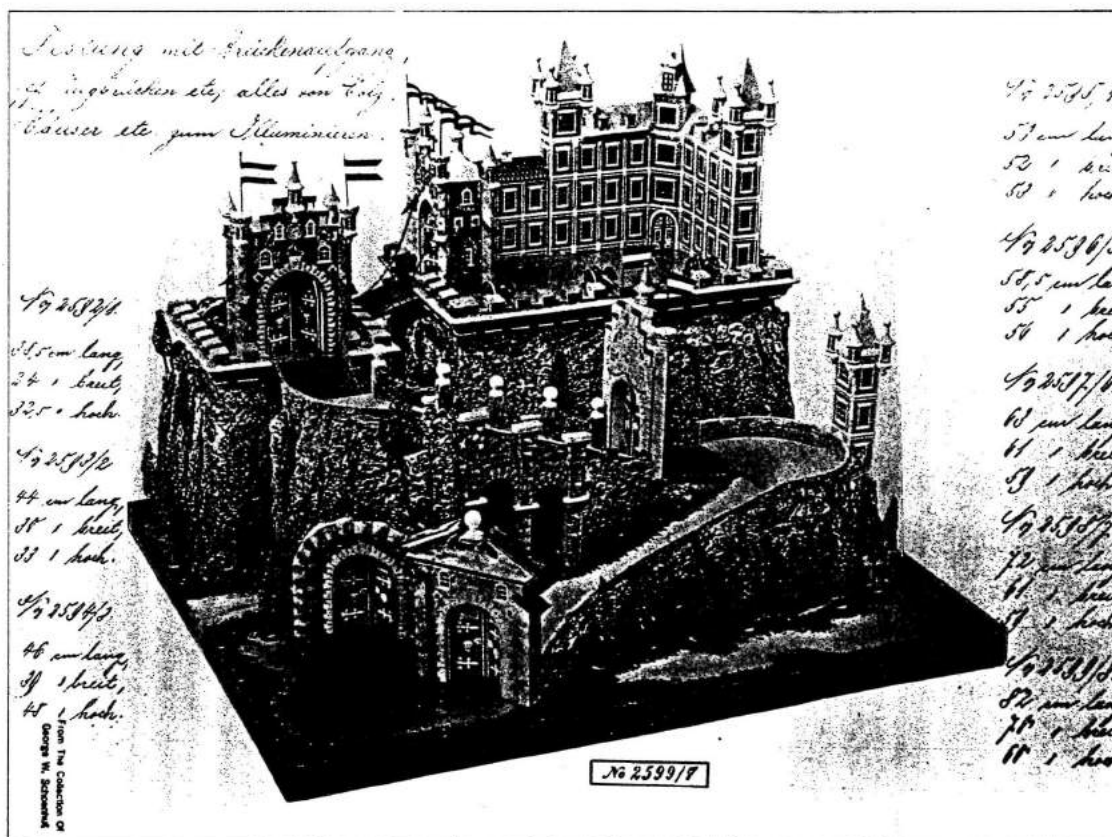
As there are some examples with relatively low numbers, it seems reasonable to assume that the Gottschalk dollhouses were in production at least at the same time as their fortresses, and probably before. This might explain why their fortresses were somewhat domestic in design – displaying a number of dollhouse features - in spite of having to be built to a much smaller scale in order to accommodate toy soldiers.

The buildings were hollow like dollhouses with doors which opened. The catalogue even claims that all

the windows open, but cut-out window openings at the reduced scale of fortresses would have been a serious production challenge. Another particular aspect of their construction was that their buildings were equipped with "anti-tip devices". These may have been metal spikes or nails projecting down from the buildings into holes in the base which became standard practice in the industry. In fact this system does not lend itself to use on hollow buildings and they probably used a technique of simple blocks of wood attached to the base, over which the buildings fitted snugly.

Architectural detail was provided by lithographed paper glued to the bare wood forms. This allowed much decoration and, combined with turned-wood pinnacles and minaret-type details at roof level, admirably intricate designs were possible. Both series used the same papers, although the black and white illustrations in the catalogue give no clue as to their colours. The bases of the smaller models in the range appear to have been covered with tree bark, and the larger ones in cork.

(continued on next page)



This is an extract from catalogue from about 1885 (the 2500 series). "Fortress with driveway, fancy drawbridges, etc. Buildings etc. with illumination". Note that only the grandest model is illustrated.

The Next Generation of Fortresses

The evidence of another 'generation' of Moritz Gottschalk fortresses comes in the form of a single page taken from a catalogue from about 1895. The name Gottschalk does not appear anywhere but the graphics are so similar to those in the earlier one that it would be too much of a coincidence to be anything else.

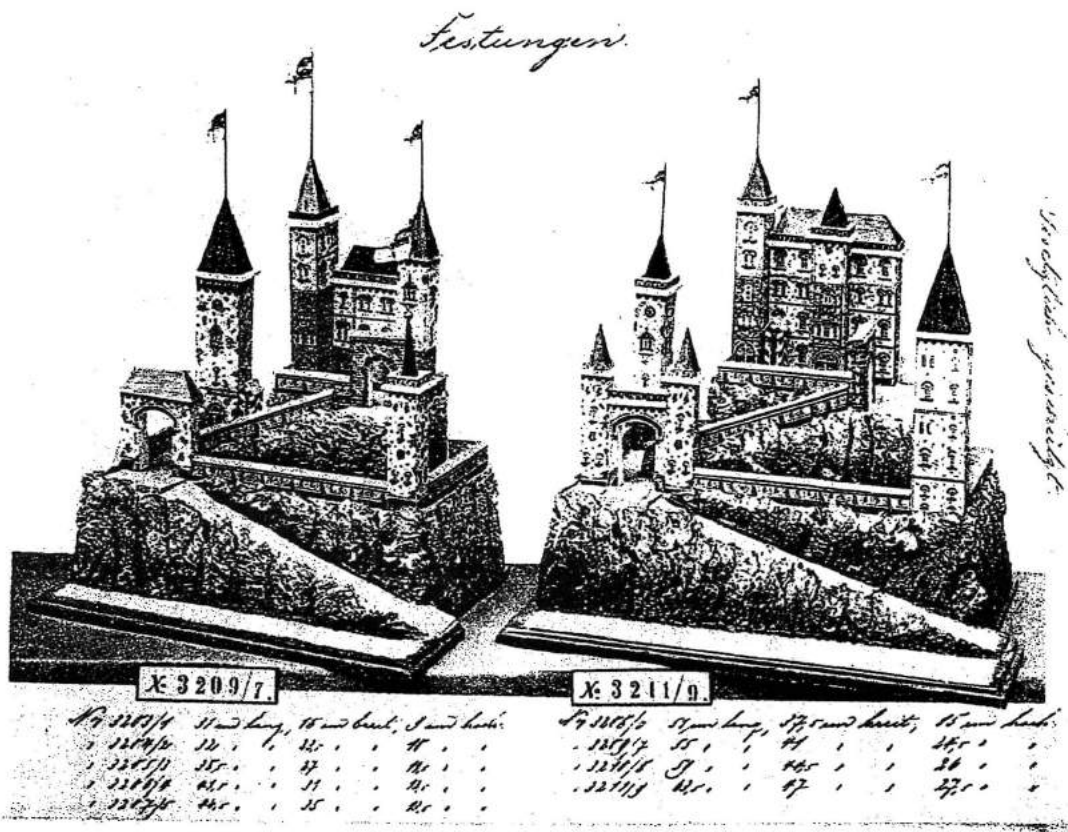
This was the 3200 series - numbered 3203 to 3211 providing a range of sizes similar to the earlier series. The smallest (No:3203) measured 3½"(high) x 12¼"(wide) x 7"(deep), and the largest (No:3211) was 11"(high) x 25"(wide) x 18½"(deep). In fact there must have been other pages in the catalogue because we have examples of other forts in the same series (No:3213 and No:3217).

The buildings were of hollow construction and made use of the wooden block system of 'anti-tip' devices. Tree bark was used to cover the box base. Lithographed paper coverings were again used to provide details of fenestration, wall texture and colour. Actual examples exist so it is now possible to identify their colours even though the catalogue illustrations are black and white. The red and blue roofed buildings have cream coloured walls with red and black details, and are set around yellow courtyards which are protected by low red capped walls.

Perhaps the greatest difference between this and the earlier series lies in the simplification of design, which would have produced a number of economies. For example, there were no opening doors and windows and some of the buildings were made of cardboard instead of wood. The depth of the buildings was no greater than the very meanest of the 2300 series, meaning they had to give up on their electric lighting!

In terms of architectural style the earlier series were clearly splendid residences - a late baroque or even 18th-19th century style - while the 3200 series was much more austere. For example, there were no more pinnacles and minaret-type details at roof level. On the other hand they were much more defensible with windows narrow enough to be considered arrow slits, and the parapets of the roofs were crenellated.

One is led to wonder why a change was thought necessary. It may have been market forces at work. Toy soldier manufacturers were becoming more and more prolific and their products would have been requiring places to attack as well as accommodation! Or it may have been simply that a differentiation of products was thought to be desirable.



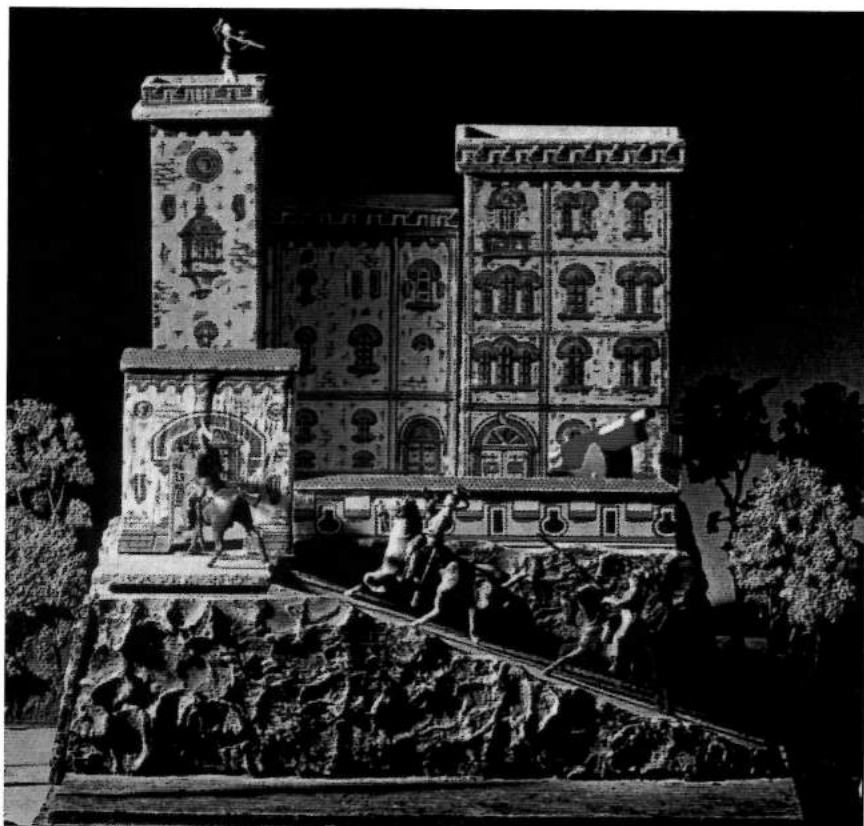
This is an extract from the catalogue from about 1895 (the 3200 series). The series is not illustrated in full in this extract – only Nos. 3203 to 3211 are mentioned, but examples of other numbers exist (3213 and 3217). The only text translated from the German reads as follows. "Fortresses. Copyright reserved".

The End of an Era

This brings the story into the 20th century. Expansion and progress continued unabated, and in 1902 the company had a purpose-made factory built for their now 200 employees. Moritz Gottschalk was allied to Harrods in London and F A O Schwarz in New York in an empire which included not only Western Europe and North America but Australia also.

Perhaps it was the pressure of all this that led, in 1905, to the death of the man himself—toymaker extraordinary. But that was not the end of the name Moritz Gottschalk, or the culture of dedication to the production of quality toy forts that went with it. Wilhelm Gottschalk – son of Moritz – was already waiting to lead the enterprise to new heights.

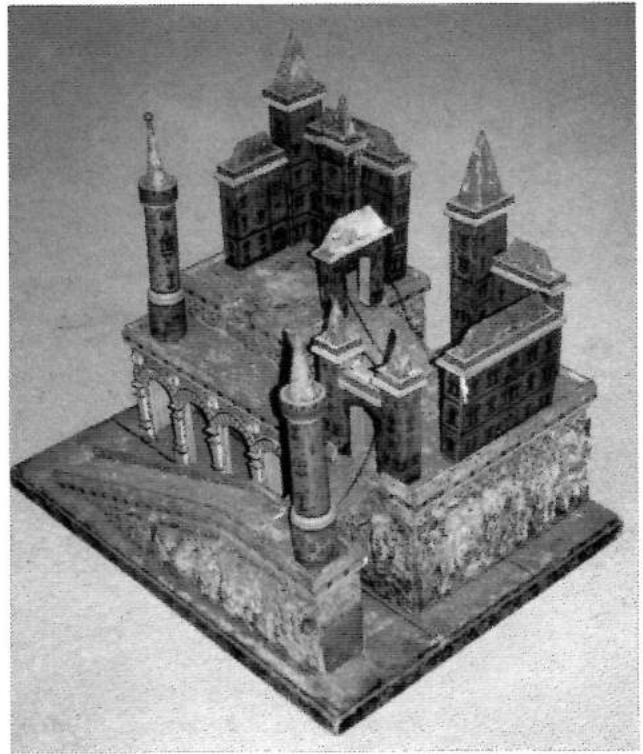
Photo at right is probably No. 3205. It is missing its roofs from the tower and buildings at the back, and the chains to its drawbridge. The figures are Britains standard 54mm size. Photo: Antique Toy World



(continued on next page)



This is No.3213. Its three towers are missing their roofs. Judging from the catalogue those on the two main towers would have been pyramidal, while the one on the front would have been conical. The figures are of contemporary German manufacture about 43mm high. The sentry box is original. Photo: Allen Hickling



This is No.3217. This model was made as a snow castle, but the accumulation of dust combined with the loss of its glitter over the years has removed some of its charm. On the other hand it is complete with all its roofs. The darkening of the lithograph covered walls is caused by exposure to light over a long period. Photo: Allen Hickling

References

Ackerman, Evelyn. *The Genius of Moritz Gottschalk*. Annapolis: Gold Horse Publishing, 1994.
 Cooper, Patty, and Zillner, Dian. *Toy Buildings 1880-1980*. Atglen: Schiffer Publishing, 2000.
 Gottschalk, Moritz. *Catalogues c.1885 and c.1895*
Antique Toy World c1985

Acknowledgements

Bernd Zimmermann, Berlin, Germany
 Jerry Greene, Narberth, USA
 Musée du Jouet, Brussels, Belgium
 Spielwarenmuseum, Soltau, Germany

The number of the castle pictured at right is unknown but it is clearly from the 3200 series. The 'penthouse' on top of the right hand tower at the back is original, but that on the left hand tower is a clumsy replacement. The figures are Heyde knights size 2. Photo: André Raemdonck



PLEASE NOTE: This series of articles will be continued in the next issue of *Old Toy Soldier*.



Radio Controlled Tanks!

A Selective Overview

by E. W. Fitzgerald



The publications of the U.S. Army Armor School at Fort Knox, Kentucky state: *Armor operations are mobile in nature, violent in action and are calculated to obtain decisive results. Successful operation of armor units depends on proper utilization of the tanks' characteristics of armor-protected fire power, mobility, shock effect and flexible communications.*

For over twenty years toy army commanders have had access to radio-controlled tanks capable of great mobility in scales ranging from 1/32 to 1/18. All were made in Asia, costing from \$75 to \$200 in the USA. Some of the best of these plastic panzers are presented here.

The Sherman

The Sherman was the most important tank in service with the British and American armored forces during World War II, with nearly 40,000 being produced.

Technical Data:

75mm or 76mm main gun
 .30 and .50 caliber machine gun
 Crew 5
 500 bhp gasoline engine
 Range 100 miles
 Maximum speed 26 mph

In 1980 Radio Shack produced a nice, approximately 1/20 scale model Sherman made in Singapore powered by 3 x 1.5 volt "D" batteries and finished in a dark green color scheme. It goes forward, stops, makes left and right turns. *(continued on next page)*





The Leopards

Following defeat in World War II, the German Army was recreated at the end of 1955. Ten years later the first Leopards rolled out of Krauss-Maffei's Munich works to help NATO defend against Soviet aggression.

Technical Data, Leopard I:

105mm main gun
2 x 7.62 machine guns
Crew 4
830 bhp multi-fuel engine
Range 373 miles
Speed 40 mph

In 1978, the plastic model kit maker Monogram Models imported a fine Japanese-made 1/32 scale Leopard I, powered by 3 x 1.5 volt D batteries and finished in a lighter green color scheme. (Note the Canadian national markings were added by the author in honor of Canadian use of the Leopard I.) Goes constant forward; makes left and right turns.



In 1989, Radio Shack brought a good, approximately 1/28 scale Leopard I from China, run by 6 x 1.5 volt AA batteries. This tank features "cannon sound and light." (Note the bulbous red light at the tip of the main gun.) The radio control logic on this one is awkward, requiring the tank to be stopped and backed up with only the left track powered to change direction. Done in dark green finish.





The Abrams

General Creighton Abrams (1914-1974) was described by General Patton as "the world's best tank commander" when he led the fabled 37th Tank Battalion that broke through the Germans encircling Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge. This pure soldier was ultimately to become Army Chief of Staff. It is no wonder that the U.S. Army named its modern and innovative new tank the Abrams as it first rolled off the production line in February 1980. Abrams tanks served with great effect during the 1991 Gulf War.

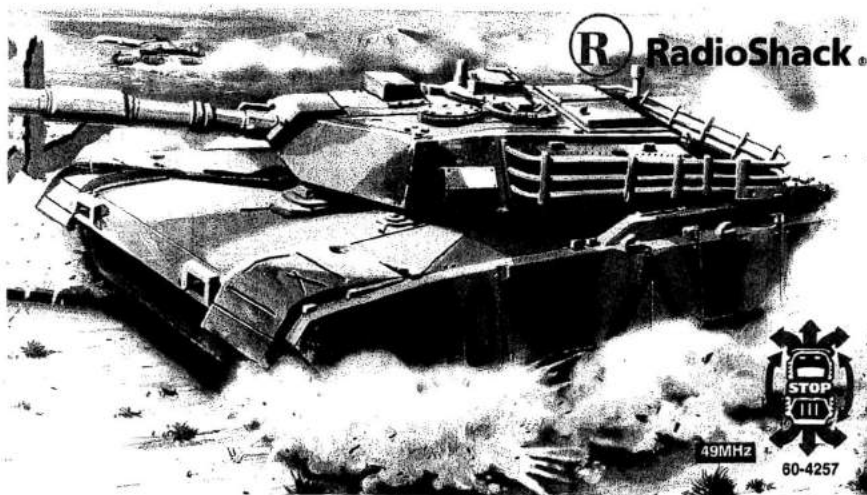
Technical Data:

120mm main gun (advanced fire control)
7.62mm and 50 cal. machine guns
Crew 4
1500 bhp gas turbine multi-fuel engine
Range 288 miles
Maximum speed 42 mph

As a follow-up to the successes of Abrams tanks during the Gulf War, Enjoy Toy and Model Corporation of Taiwan in 1992 produced a spectacular 1/18 scale desert sand Abrams tank powered by a 9-volt rechargeable battery pack. This model is capable of outdoor speeds in excess of 20 miles per hour and should be used indoors with care! It can, on command, go forward, reverse, turn right or left and stop on a dime.

In 2000, Radio Shack imported a 1/24 scale Abrams in desert sand driven by a 6-volt rechargeable battery pack. This model features controller-activated diesel engine and firing sounds and has a small red bulb that shines at the end of the main gun when it is firing. It can move forward, reverse, make right or left turns and stop instantly. The turret can also be made to turn 45° to each side.

The modern toy army of today can operate model tanks that move and shoot by radio control just like the big ones.



Photos. Page 31: Radio Shack's Sherman with box; opposite page top: Monogram's Canadian Leopard I; below, Radio Shack's Leopard I; this page, top: Enjoy Toy's Abrams; bottom, box for Radio Shack's 1/24th scale Abrams.

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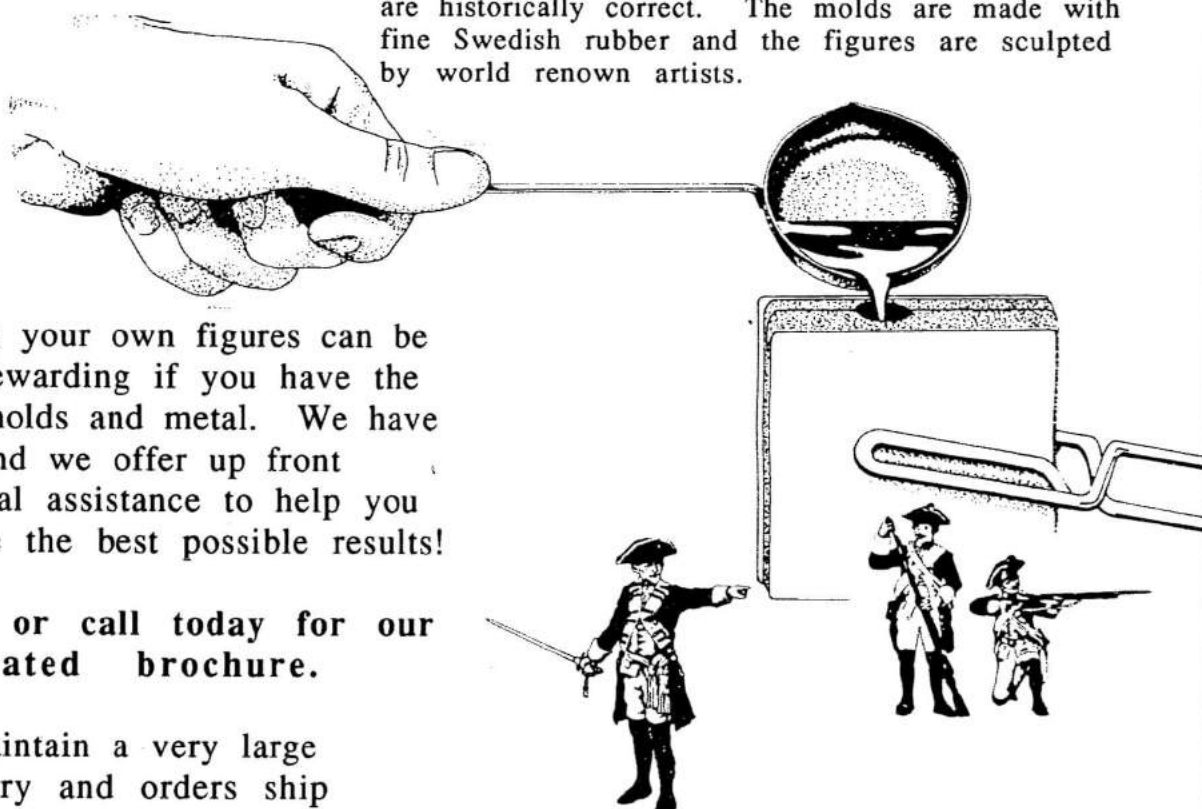
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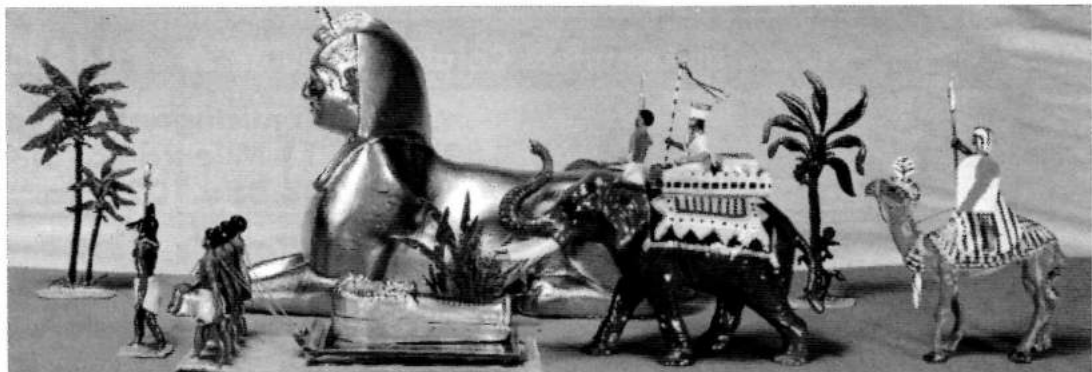
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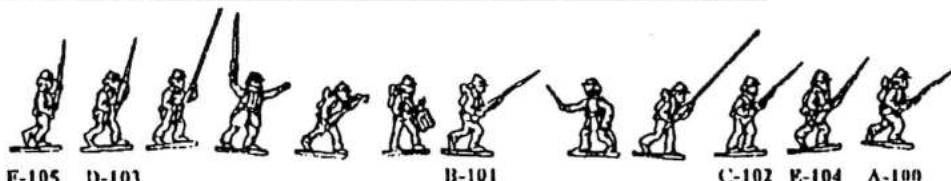


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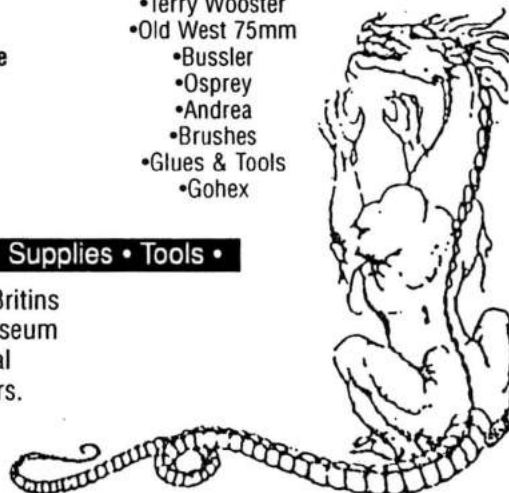
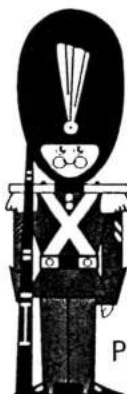
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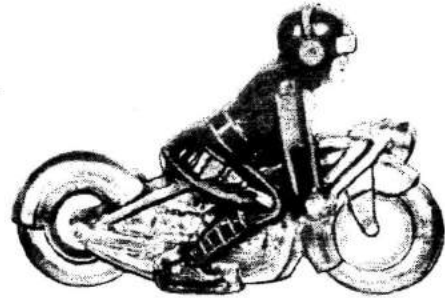
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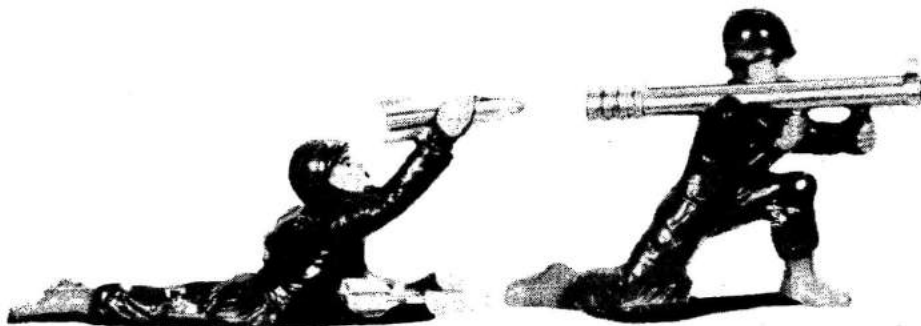
by Richard O'Brien

Despite years of research, there are still plenty of questions about the soldiers sold in the five and tens before the Second World War and after. Just when did certain pieces appear, when did paint styles change, when did prices escalate? Luckily, at least one collector kept records, and he recently sent me that information.

Bill Dunfee has already done a lot for the hobby by sharing the catalog pages he got from Barclay in 1955. Now, with his notes, he gives us a pretty good sense of when some things may have happened, since he says he bought new soldiers as soon as they appeared. As a result, we can say with some certainty that the Barclay pot helmet soldiers emerged in 1947 (and certainly by that date) priced at a dime, that Manoil's price for a figure in 1948 had risen to fifteen cents (except perhaps for Happy Farms — see 10/17/50) and Barclay's apparently to thirteen cents. 1948 also could be the year that Manoil introduced its 45/7 through 45/16 line, despite the prefix that suggests initial 1945 manufacture.

1950 may have marked the first appearance of Barclay's white-helmeted bandsmen and Barclay's WWI-helmeted figures (though apparently in green helmets) were still on sale. Finally, as late as December 1950, Barclay's podfoots may still have been unborn since Dunfee is pretty sure he would have bought the smaller-sized pieces if he'd found them, as they'd have looked right as figures in the distance in his dioramas (1952 is the earliest date I've been able to find for them). At any rate, here is Dunfee's list. As a bit of confirmation, his buying Toy Creations pieces in 1947 echoes the information I've found that those soldiers did debut in that year. If anyone wonders why Dunfee didn't buy more pieces, it's possible these are all his local stores offered (many five and tens only carried some of a firm's line), or that they were all he could afford at the time; his notes also show plenty of buys from his friends during this period, at various prices.





Bill Dunfee's Purchase Record

- 9/1/47 Toy Creations TC11 Grenade Thrower for 10¢
- 9/1/47 Toy Creations TC20 Soldier with Bazooka for 10¢
- 9/1/47 Barclay B211 Marching, slung rifle in Pot Helmet for 10¢
- 11/28/47 Barclay B203 Port Arms, Pot Helmet, for 10¢
- 5/15/48 Manoil M82 Motorcycle Rider for 15¢
- 5/15/48 Manoil M76 Navy Gunner for 15¢
- 5/15/48 Manoil M186 Mine Detector for 15¢
- 5/15/48 Manoil M183 Soldier with Bazooka for 15¢
- 5/15/48 Manoil M184 Soldier with Shell for Bazooka for 15¢
- 5/16-6/1/48 Barclay B125 Standing at Searchlight: four for 50¢
- 5/16-6/1/48 Manoil M29 Sailor Signal Man for 15¢
- 5/16-6/1/48 Manoil M181 Sniper for 15¢
- 5/16-6/1/48 Manoil M182 Tommy Gunner for 15¢
- 5/16-6/1/48 Manoil M180 At Attention for 15¢
- 5/16-6/1/48 Manoil 179 Combat for 15¢
- 5/16-6/1/48 Manoil 185 General for 15¢
- 9/4/48 Manoil M35 Doctor (khaki) for 15¢
- 10/17/50 Manoil M164A Man Juggling Barrel (khaki) for 10¢
- 12/19/50 Barclay B132 Leaning Out, with Field Phone, green helmet, for 15¢
- 12/19/50 Barclay B202 Kneeling Firing Rifle, Pot Helmet, for 15¢
- 12/19/50 Barclay B214 Drummer, White Helmet, for 15¢
- 12/19/50 Barclay B77 Soldier Bomb Thrower for 15¢
- 12/19/50 Barclay B206 Prone Machine Gunner, pot helmet, for 15¢



Anyone else out there have similar records they can share with us?

Note: The figure designation numbers in Bill's list are those used in O'Brien's books, like his Collecting American-Made Toy Soldiers, not the Barclay or Manoil factory numbers. For example, O'Brien's B132 is Barclay number 782, or O'Brien's Manoil M181 is Manoil cataloged as 45/11.

Figures illustrating this article are reproduced from O'Brien's The Second Catalog Book, p. 10,12-13.

Kober Toys, Vienna

by GEORGE KEESTER

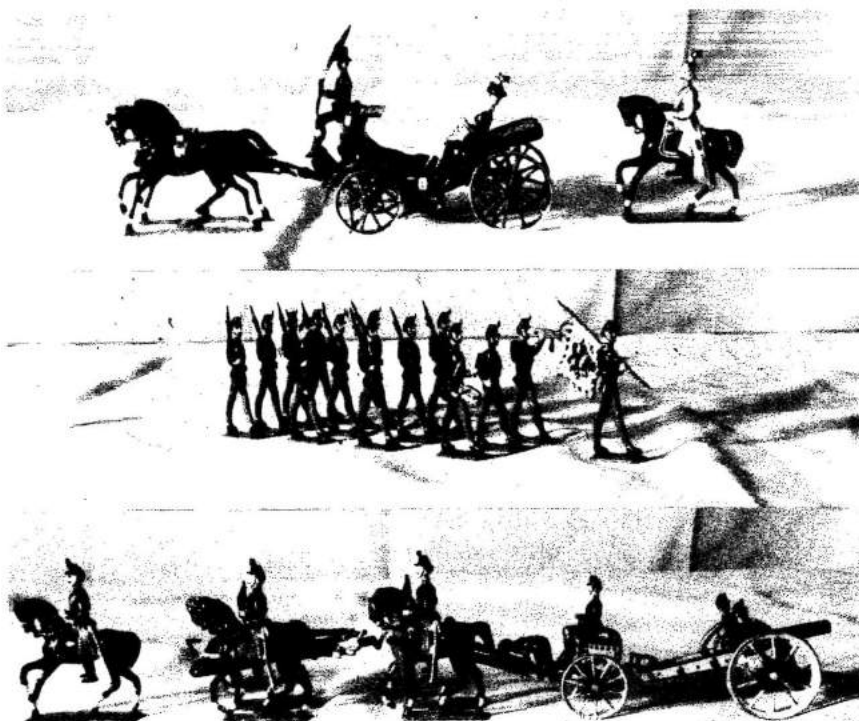


Some twenty years ago when my wife and I were visiting New York City, we were hurrying down Lexington Avenue when we saw a little shop called *Gina and Selma*--with some remarkable little figures in the shop window. They were semi-flat figures in full form carriages, about 35mm high, beautifully painted, and all of the Franz Josef, old Vienna period. The Emperor and Empress rode in carriages escorted by infantry, cavalry and bands. We bought one or two pieces and were informed these were Kober figures.

The name Kober was unknown to us and we did not hear it mentioned again until Salzburg, Austria on a subsequent trip. We were in a toy shop in the city of Mozart when I saw some figures on the shelves which looked similar to those in New York. When asked about them, the shop owner said they were from Kober's in Vienna and since that city was next on our itinerary, we naturally made an effort to find this elusive *Kobers*.

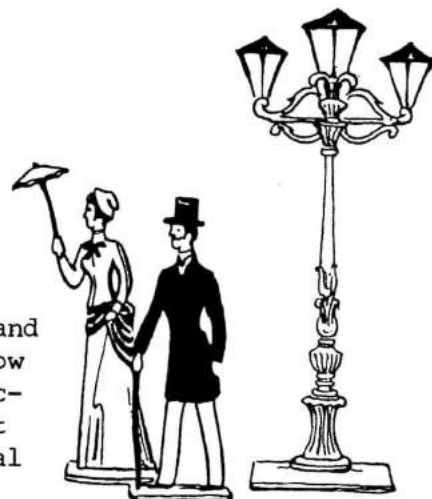
Down Kartnerstrasse almost to St. Stephan's Cathedral in Vienna is a street called Graben and there we found Kober's shop. Over the door it says *KOBER SPIELWAREN Gegrundet* (founded) 1868. This old toy store, one of the most famous in Europe, is still in operation after surviving two world wars. It is crammed with toys of all kinds, dolls, games and, of course, shelves full of soldiers. It was a collector's paradise in which we were transported back to the long ago days of pre-World War I Vienna. On the shelves were Franz Josef and his ill-fated beautiful wife Empress Elizabeth, ladies and gentlemen of the court, Household Guards, staff officers, cavalry in camp, and bands by the score--both on the march and playing on band stands. Indeed, all the pomp, color and majesty of the old Austro-Hungarian monarchy was displayed on shelf after shelf in beautifully painted figures of 38mm and 55mm size.

Herr O.M. Walter, manager and part owner of Kober, turned out to be a genial and most helpful gentleman who spoke excellent English. Sensing our obvious interest, he graciously gave us the story of Kober figures. He explained these were J. Wollner figures made from moulds that were about 100 years old. Wollner was a Bavarian from Nuremberg and the moulds had been found outside Vienna and bought for a nominal sum by Herr Walter, who put them into current production about 1950.





Wollner moulds are made of slate, engraved and meant for hand production. Herr Walter took us down to a little room below Kober's where we were shown several hundred moulds. Production is erratic and slow, most of the casting being done at Kober's while the painting is farmed out in homes, a typical cottage industry involving about twelve people. There are an amazing variety of sizes in the moulds: 20mm, 35mm, 38mm, 47mm, 55mm, and larger figures up to 120mm scale. Some are semi-flat and many are reminiscent of Georg Heyde soldiers with removable heads, riders that dismount, and other features of the Dresden-type productions of 1870-1890.



We finally tore ourselves away from Kobers with a suitcase full of Wollner soldiers. Although scarce and somewhat expensive, they are worth the extra effort involved to visit Vienna and add some of these wonderful figures to your collection. The book Model Soldiers--Armies in Miniature, edited by Massimo Alberini, has several color plates of Wollner (Kober) 38mm figures. Kober-Wollner figures can also be seen in Color Treasury of Model Soldiers, Crescent Books, 1972, Collecting Old Toy Soldiers by Ian McKenzie, and Hans H. Roer's new book, Bleisoldaten.



This article is reproduced as it originally appeared in Volume 6, Number 2, April, 1982. We called avid German figure collector Michael Henry to verify that Kober Toys in Vienna was still in business almost twenty years later. Michael confirmed this is indeed the case, and that the shop is considered the "Hamleys of Vienna". It is still at Graben 14.

Unfortunately, this article's author, Ohio collector George Keester, died several years ago. Mr. Keester was an invaluable source for reference material and background information to OTSN for the first decade of the magazine. The photos on the opposite page, along with other helpful information, originally came from collector Phil Bordan.





"CORPSMAN"

IWJ 12 "Medical Support"
Two US Navy Corpsmen (Medics) provide first aid to two wounded Marines.

IWJ 13 "Artillery Fire"
Three Japanese soldiers man a small mountain gun and prepare to fire.



"COUNTER-ATTACK"

IWJ 14 "Banzai One"
Banzai literally translated means "Long Live The Emperor". Here, an officer leads two of his men in a last ditch attempt to stem the



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IWJ 15 "Banzai Two"

Three more Japanese take up the doomed charge in a desperate final effort.

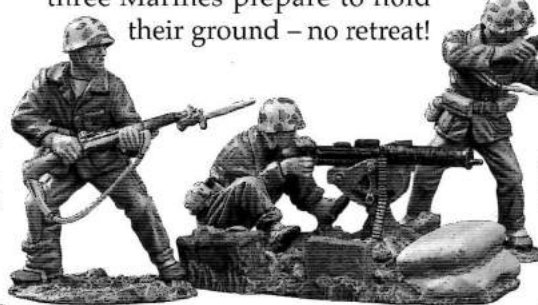


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Calendar

May 20. 9th Ohio Toy Soldier Show and Sale. 10-3. Holiday Inn Richfield; 4742 Brecksville Rd.; Richfield, OH. Doug McClure: 330-722-6751.

May 20. The Connecticut Toy Soldier Show; Ramada Inn at Bradley Airport; 5 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Windsor Locks, CT. 11-4. D. Karppinen: 718-219-4919.

June 9. Heart of the South Toy Soldier Show; Annandale VFD Community Center; 7128 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA. Ed Gries: 201-342-6475.

June 30. British Toy Soldier & Figure Show; Royal National Hotel; Bedford Way, London. 10-4. Vectis Auctions Ltd. 44-1642-750616.

July 7. Annapolis Summer Toy Soldier Show; Loew's Annapolis Hotel. Dick Sossi: 410-268-1141.

July 20-21-22. Big-D Collectible Show. Richardson Civic Center (corner of Hwy. 75 & Arapaho Rd); Richardson, TX. Don Maris: 214-339-2935. donmaris@wt.net

August 11. Ninth Annual Southeastern Toy Soldier Show; South Carolina Sate Museum; 301 Gervais St.; Columbia, SC. 10-4. Duan Sinclair: 803-798-5566.

August 26. Westchester Toy Soldier Show; Ramada Inn; 94 Business Park Dr.; Corporate Park, Armonk, NY. 10-3. D. Karppinen: 718-219-4919.

September 8. National Capital Model Soldier Society Show 2001; Tyson's Westpark Hotel; McLean, VA. Steve Page: 703-541-2932.

September 23. 21st Annual OTS Chicago Show. Hyatt Regency Woodfield, Schaumburg, IL. Information: Don Pielin: 847-541-2439.

September 30. The Connecticut Toy Soldier Show; Ramada Inn at Bradley Airport; 5 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Windsor Locks, CT. 11-4. D. Karppinen: 718-219-4919.

October 14 Northeast Toy Soldier Society 26th Show 9-3. Holiday Inn, Dedham, Mass. \$5. Arley Pett: 978-283-2612.

October 21. Pacific Northwest Toy Soldier Show; Lake City Community Center; 12531 28 Ave NE; Seattle, Washington. Dale LaFay: 425-485-2021.

November 3. Open House before the Hackensack Show at The Toy Soldier; 1343 Paradise Falls, Cresco, PA 18326. Jim Hillestad: 570-629-7227.

November 4. East Coast Toy Soldier Show. Rothman Center; Farleigh Dickinson Univ.; Temple Ave.; Hackensack, NJ. Bill Lango: 973-831-8900.

November 18. 3rd Annual Pennsylvania Toy Soldier and Miniature Figure Show. Sheraton Bucks County Hotel; 400 Oxford Road; Langhorne, PA. 201-342-6475.

December 1. Heart of the South Toy Soldier Show. Annandale VFD Community Ctr.; 7128 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA. 201-342-6475.

December 1. British Toy Soldier & Figure Show; Royal National Hotel; Bedford Way, London. 10-4. Vectis Auctions Ltd. 44-1642-750616.

December 9. The Empire State Toy Soldier Show. Hotel Adria; 221-17 Northern Blvd.; Bayside, NY. John Stengel. 718-418-9439.

February 3, 2002. 8th Annual Florida Toy Soldier Show; Airport Holiday Inn; 1301 Belvedere Rd.; West Palm Beach. 9-3. Frank Burns: 561-732-7295.

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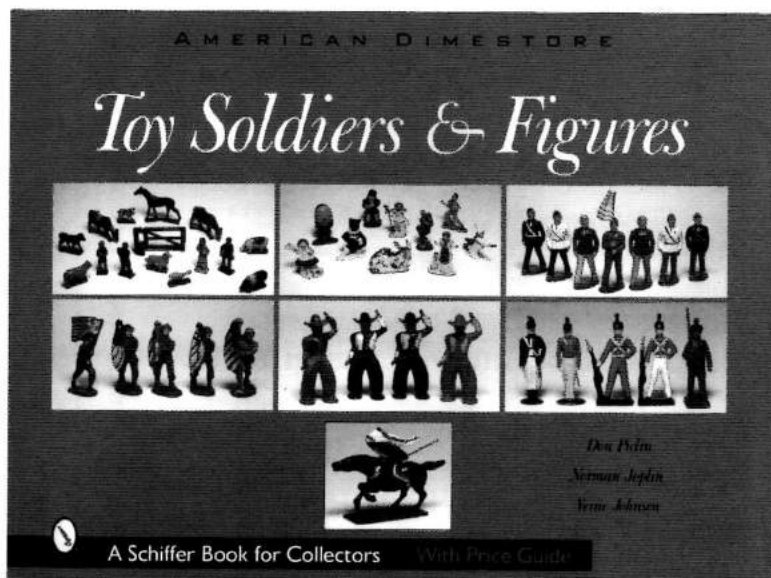
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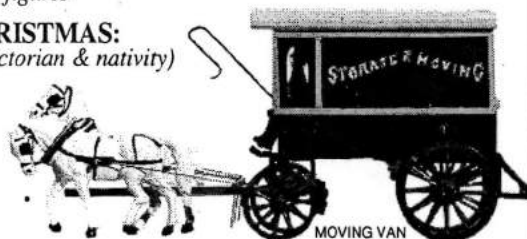
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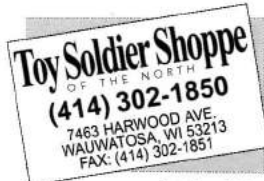
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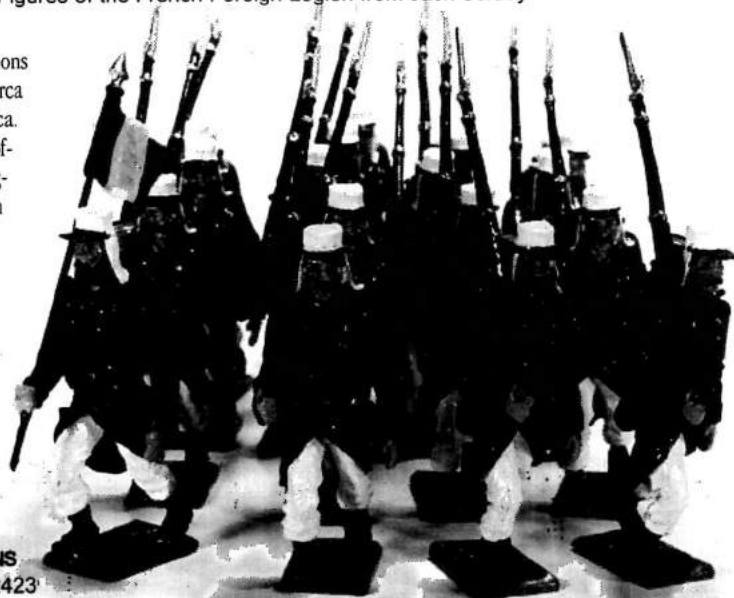


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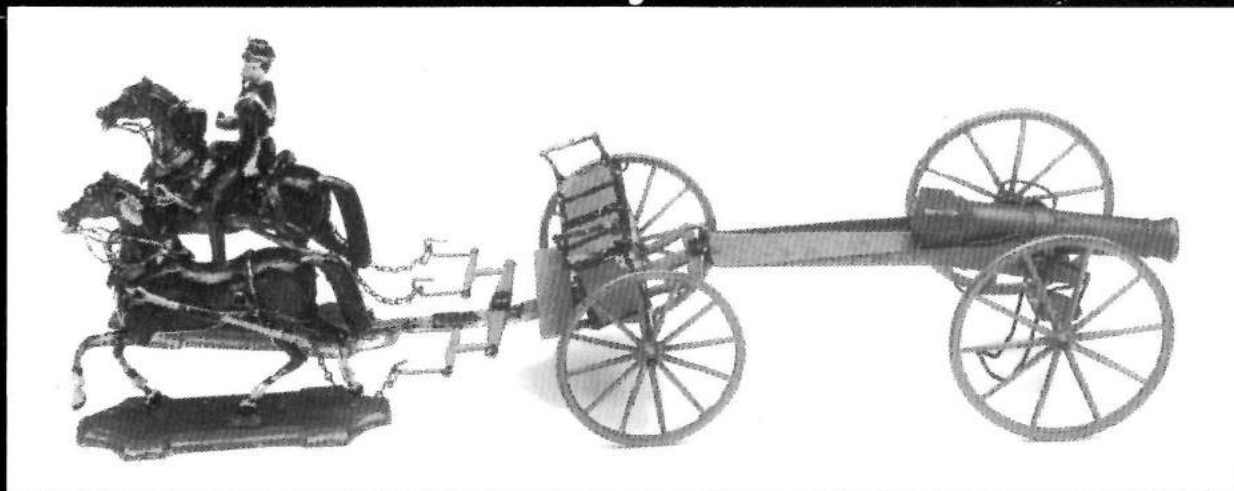
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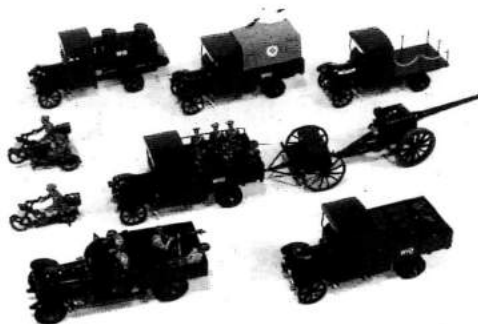
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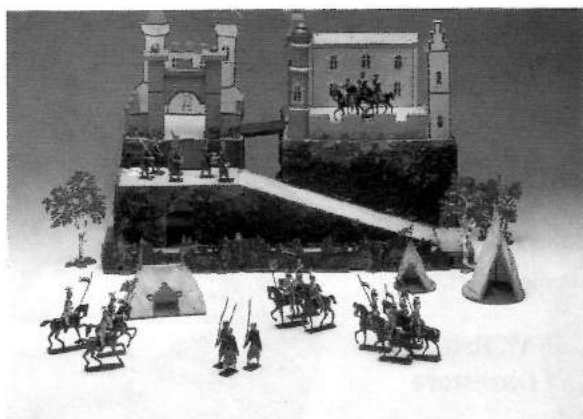
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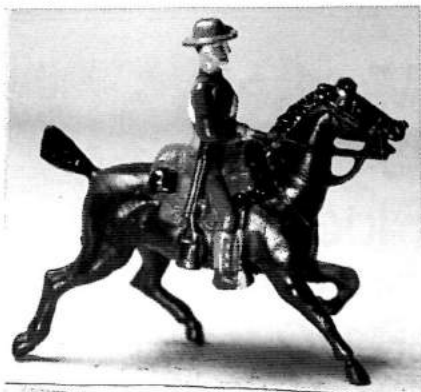
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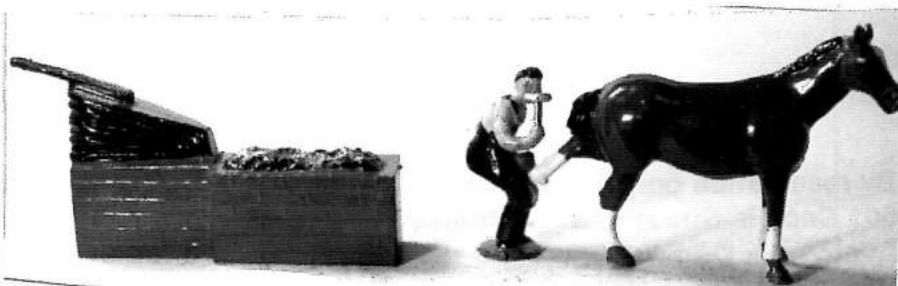
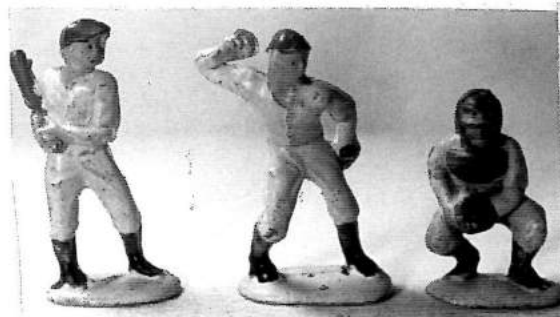
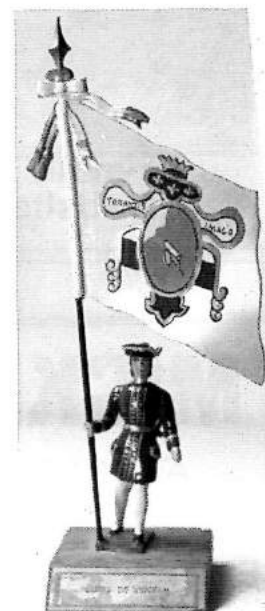
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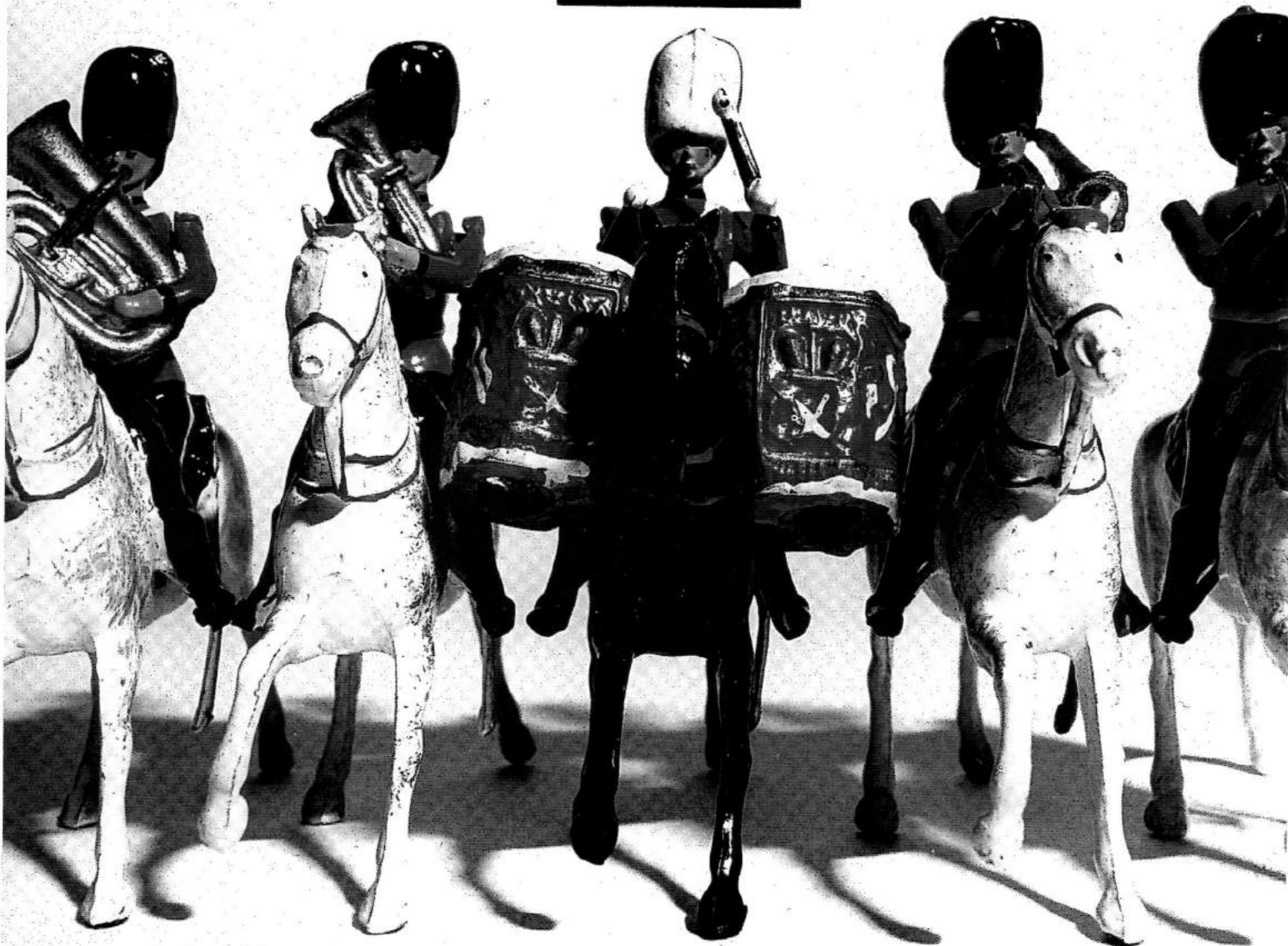
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