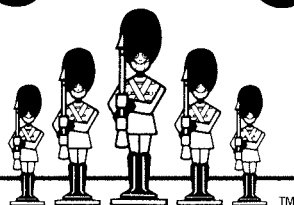


Spring  
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The Journal for Collectors

Volume 35 Number 1  
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**Publisher**

Ray Haradin raytoys@aol.com

**Editor**

Norman Joplin info@normanjoplin.com

**Advertising**

Ray Haradin raytoys@aol.com

**Circulation**

Nancy Haradin raytoys@aol.com

**Technical Production**

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**Proofreader**

Roberta Haradin

**Staff Photographers**

David Haradin

Noel Schlageter

**Staff Cartoonist**

Sue Joplin

**Show Reports**

Ray Haradin, Norman Joplin, Noel Schlageter

**General Inspection-New Product Review**

Russ Bednarek

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Correspondence, including Manuscripts, Trade and  
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Telephone (412) 343-8733

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E Mail: raytoys@aol.com

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**IN THIS ISSUE**

**ARTICLES**

The Roy Selwyn-Smith Archive - Part One

*By Norman Joplin* ..... 10-11

Len Richards- Pioneer Researcher

*By Rob Wilson* ..... 14-18

Australian Hollow Casts

*By Norman Joplin* ..... 32-35

BRITAINS SET #168 Civilians/Pedestrians

*By Joe Wallis* ..... 42-43

History Cast in Tin

Hermann von Wissmann "Germany's  
Greatest African"

*By Earl Jorgensen* ..... 48-52

JOHN M. HAMISTER ...

An Uncovered Gem Found for the Lore  
of Dimestore Conversions

*By Louis S. Steinberg* ..... 56-59

**FEATURES**

Hobby News .....6-7

Auction Previews and Reviews .....19-27 & 31

Toy Soldier Market Place .....64-65

Toy Soldier Show and Auction Calendar ..... 66

Advertisers Index.....67-68

Subscriptions .....69-70

**ON THE COVER**

Britains Special King George 6th

Photo Courtesy Jo Selwyn- Smith

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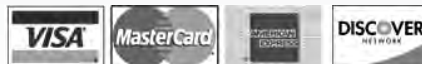
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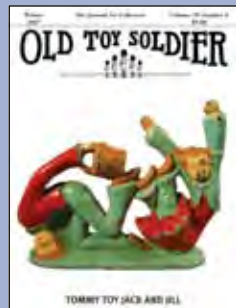
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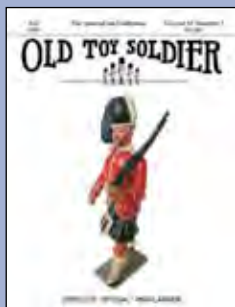
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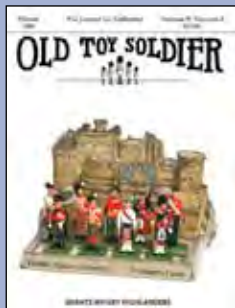
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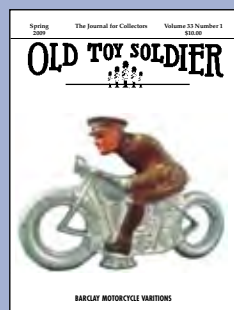


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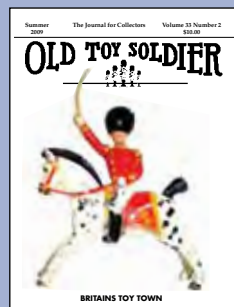


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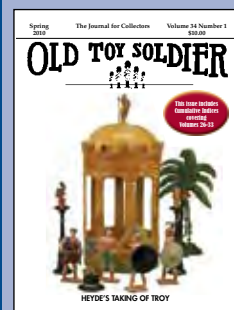


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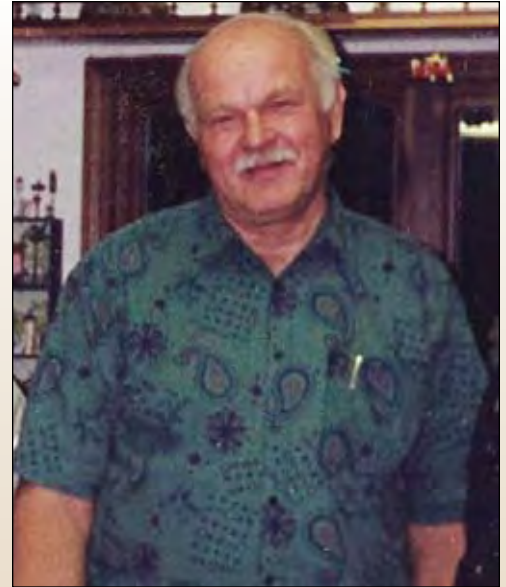
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## Obituary ❁ Marv Breitlow

The toy soldier hobby has lost another friend with the passing of Marv Breitlow on February 15, 2011. Marv, who lived in Elgin, Illinois with his wife, Charlene who attended OTS Show with him, was 73 and collected toy soldiers for more than 50 years. Locally he was known as "Marv the Plumber" and was a frequent visitor to all the local toy and toy soldier shows in the area. His collection ranged from Dimestores to Mignot to Britains and literally everything in-between, except plastic. He accepted plastic in the toy cars he collected but never in his soldier collection. A kind soul and generous individual, Marv made it a habit to give a toy soldier to every youngster who ever visited his house. Anyone who has been at the Chicago Toy Soldier show would recognize Marv as the old guy who checked dealer badges at the entrance to the main hall. He always volunteered for that job on Sunday because, as he put it "I have already spent every cent I had on toy soldiers this week, no sense in going into the show and just drool." We in the Chicago area will miss him immensely and I personally have lost one of my best friends and a great collecting buddy. ~ Don Pielin



## Obituary ❁ Warren Mitchell



MITCHELL K. Warren Mitchell, 73, passed away at his residence on Wednesday, April 20, 2011. A Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, April 23, 2011 at 11 a.m. at KAUBER-SAMMONS FUNERAL HOME, 289 S. Main Street, Pataskala, OH 43031, with Pastor Calvin Alexander officiating. Mr. Mitchell was born October

8, 1937 in Detroit, MI to the late Bernie and Irene (Anderson) Mitchell. Up until his passing he was a highly respected appraiser and dealer of collectable toy soldiers and was a member of the US Air Force. He was an avid collie lover, rescuing many, leaving behind his beloved Leslie. He is survived by his son, Kasey Alen Mitchell of Powell; daughter, Kelly Ann (William) Macko of N. Royalton; brother, Brian (Ellen) Mitchell of Seattle, WA; five grand-children, Kyle Mitchell McDougal, Kourtney McDougal, Zachary McDougal, Alexander Macko, and William Richard Hunter Macko, III; two nieces, Erin and Bridget Mitchell. Preceded in death by a brother Donald Mitchell. The family will receive friends from 10-11 a.m. on Saturday, April 23, 2011 at the funeral home. Memorial contributions can be made in memory of Warren to the Almost Home Dog Rescue of Ohio at [www.almosthomeohio.org](http://www.almosthomeohio.org). An online memorial will be located at [www.kaubersammons.com](http://www.kaubersammons.com)

Footnote: Tributes to K. Warren Mitchell will be published in OTS August 2011 issue.



### Zachary Solonika

Old Toy Soldier Magazine's latest and youngest subscriber, 8 year old Zach is an avid Redcoats collector and is also a member of The William Britains Collectors Club. His enthusiasm for the hobby of collecting toy soldiers is hardly surprising, Zach being the grandson of Sue and Norman Joplin.

If any subscribers have a budding young toy soldier collector in their family, please submit some brief text and a picture and the editor will be pleased to print it in a future OTS Hobby News.



## Obituary ❧ Steve White

On February 11, 2011, America lost an unsung hero and the toy soldier collector community lost a friend. Steve White was known to most of us as a fellow toy soldier collector, but only a few of us knew that he was a Special Agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration. Steve finally retired from that life and was able to spend more time with his wife Viola and spend time pursuing his passion of toy soldier collecting, repairing and painting.

After a hard day's work chasing drug dealers, Steve would come home to release his mind and step into another world where toy soldiers were waiting. He would lose himself in the repair and repainting of damaged figures. Steve loved Britains, and his collection contained numerous examples that spanned the years from the late 1800s to the modern day. Over the years, he mastered the art of the Britains style of painting and was able to capture the details in his figures some have said were "even better than the originals". Steve did not confine himself to any one toy soldier maker. Even though most of his figures were Britains, he had numerous examples of other English makers such as Johillco, Crescent, Timpo and Cherilea

to name a few, plus American Dimestore soldier makers to include a large number made by Jones of Chicago.

Steve once told me that it was important to him to make the soldiers he had look good as new. Many times, that involved repainting and restoring figures, including rare ones. He had his collection displayed in numerous display cases throughout his house. While looking through Steve's collection, it was apparent that restored figures took their place on the shelves alongside the original factory painted figures, and sometimes, it was very hard to tell them apart. Steve collected civilian figures as well as military, and had many shelves displaying farm, circus and zoo activities. He had display cases of Dimestore figures and wall hanging cases of rare and unusual assorted figures. Steve had several large closets of boxes full of items in need of restoration. His workshop was located in a room dedicated to his hobby and included many display cases of figures and book cases of reference materials. This room had two tall shelving units with shelves three inches apart that contained hundreds of figures in various stages of repair. Steve's repair desk was in the



center surrounded by hundreds of small paint bottles, brushes, and soldier parts. His well-used soldering iron was strategically located on this desk.

Over the last five years, Steve's health limited his travels to the toy soldier shows. Steve will be remembered by many as one in the crowd of people digging through the boxes of damaged figures in Warren Mitchell's room at the Chicago OTSN show. Just like most of us, he walked the halls and aisles of the OTSN show looking for a treasure. Steve is a treasure we will all miss.

## NEW YORK LANDMARK TO CLOSE DOORS

Burlington Antique toys, a fixture on Madison Avenue in New York for over 3 decades will close on April 30, 2011.

It has been a great experience for owner Steve Balkin, but the time to move on has come. Much has changed in the 43 years since he began cataloging the sales at Sotheby's, Phillips, Christies, Doyles and other auction houses. He fondly remembers

working under Peter Blum at the Original "Soldier Shop" when it opened in the 1960's.

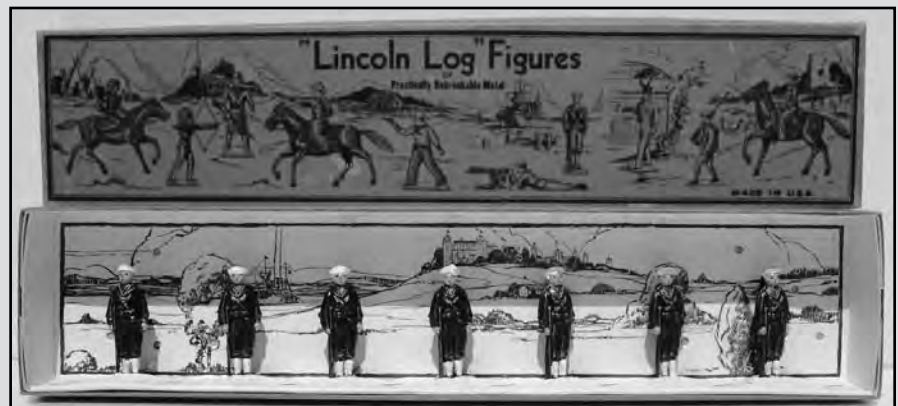
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# The Roy Selwyn-Smith Archive - Part One

By Norman Joplin



Roy Selwyn-Smith

During my research in 2009 for my upcoming reference book *"Behind the Scenes at the Britains Toy Soldier Factory"*, I was introduced, via British collector Alan Spalding, to Jo Selwyn-Smith, son of Roy Selwyn-Smith. Aware of my passion for research and for information on Britains behind the scenes activities, Jo Selwyn-Smith graciously granted me access to the collection of figures, master figures, notes and ephemera that his father had accumulated and which had been passed down to the Selwyn - Smith family when Roy died.

My visit to view the items in 2010 brought to light much information not before available in the public domain and contained many surprises.

Roy Selwyn-Smith designed numerous items and was associated with many of the well known names in the toy soldier manufacturing world: Otto Gottstein, Denny Stokes, Zang, Herald, Britains, Timpo, Willmore, Courtenay, Ping, and Katherine Ball (Of Greenwood and Ball). Roy's own range Selwyn Miniatures, including Knights are probably some of



Britains special paint King George the VI.



Selwyn Miniatures Winston Churchill.



Herald prototypes including Lorde Nelson and the Duke of Marlborough.



Prototype lead sailors with swivel waist and moveable head.



## The Roy Selwyn-Smith Archive - Part One (Cont.)



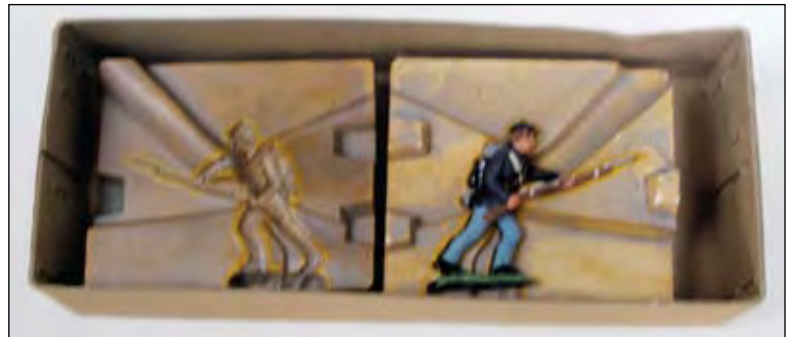
Selwyn Miniatures Princess Elizabeth and "The Missing" Cowboy for Gottstein.



Britains Toy Town.



Zulu prototypes for Denny Stokes.



A plaster master mold for Herald US Civil War.

the most sought after figures for those who collect Medieval items and it was examples of these and other items from the companies listed above that were available for me to peruse during my visit.

Jo Selwyn-Smith was also in possession of a note book that his father had kept containing details of work carried out for some of the companies listed above. Entries in the notebook include: special paints and designs for Britains Hollow Cast Figures, Plaster masters for the Herald range, prototype figures for Herald which were never produced by the company, figures of Princess Elizabeth and Winston Churchill, Britains Toy Town figures (see recently published article in OTS), original drawings and catalogs together with large size sculptures for Herald of items destined to be pantographed down for production are included in the collection. SAS - Special Auction Services in the

UK is scheduled to auction the Selwyn-Smith archive later this year, see this issue for advertisement.

Help -- If anyone has any information that they may like to submit regarding this article or indeed any information on Britains which has yet to be published, please contact me [info@normanjoplin.com](mailto:info@normanjoplin.com). For a future announcement regarding the issue of my forthcoming book *Behind the Scenes at the Britains Toy Soldier Factory* please check upcoming issues of *Old Toy Soldier Magazine*.

For information on the firms listed above and details of Roy Selwyn-Smith's life as toy figure designer, please refer to Peter Cowan's Book - *Selwyn Miniatures* published in 2005 ISBN 0-9548467-1-0



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# Len Richards- Pioneer Researcher

By Rob Wilson



Figure 1: Renvoize Japanese Infantry (This is clearly the figure Richards attributes to Abel. Plate # 37 The boxed set has J.S.R Ltd on the label and small sticker inside with Renvoize clearly marked).

Before the publication of “Old British Model Soldiers 1883-1918” in 1970 most collectors of such figures were “flying blind”. Len Richards distilled many years of careful research into a few pages that shone light on this until then, neglected facet of the collection of model soldiers. Earlier works by Garrett (1959 & 1972) and others had tended to focus on a broad range of figures, and gave prime emphasis to what are now referred to as connoisseur figures, aimed directly at collectors.

Richards, by contrast, had a passionate interest in old toy soldiers, especially those produced by the British company of William Britain and their contemporaries and competitors. His book was the first attempt to catalogue this area systematically. It provided the foundation upon which later works by John Ruddle (1980), Joe Wallis (1981 & 1993), Andrew Rose (1985), James Opie (1985, 1989, 1993, and others) and Norman Joplin (1987, 1993, and many more) would build.

In many respects the Richards book now looks rather old fashioned, with its black and white images and limited text. But its pioneering efforts cleared the path and provided the inspiration for these other authors to give us ever greater detail and insight into this fascinating subject. As a consequence we are much better informed today.

New finds and discoveries continue, especially in the area of early competitors of Britains in the hollow-

cast market. This article focuses on some recent finds and considers what new light they can shed on Richards pioneering work. The following table sets out systematically, plate by plate where new information has been added to what Richards wrote over 40 years ago. Perhaps what is most remarkable is just how little there is to add, a tribute to Richards research long before the internet and other aids made things so much easier. For 30 out of 60 plates there is nothing to add to what he had to say. Column three of the table highlights those areas where it is possible to speculate, clarify, and in a few cases correct, statements Richards made.

In most cases the plates in Richards book have four rows of figures. In theory the bottom line in each plate is row no. 1 and the top line is no. 4. However Richards appears to mix things up in a few cases. The notes here refer to rows from the top down.

The author would welcome any comments or new evidence to support (or contradict) the assertions and speculations made here. In particular, photographic evidence of figures produced by Abel, Faudel Phillips, Renvoize, and similar makers would be very welcome.

Contact details:  
+(44)1926496062  
email [r.a.wilson@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:r.a.wilson@warwick.ac.uk)



## Len Richards- Pioneer Researcher *(Cont.)*

Notes on the Plates in Richards		
<u>Plate no.</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Notes</u>
1.	Life Guards	No comment
2.	Horse Guards	No comment
3.	5th Dragoon Guards	Richards does not comment on the second row down of this plate which contains on the left hand side an empty-handed figure riding on a Scots Grey horse and then a figure carrying a carbine on the head up trotting horse. Both are unusual. They may be specials or possibly from the Paris Office.
4.	Boer War	No comment
5.	Fusiliers & Ghurkhas	Richards attributes the two Fusiliers on the left in the third row down to Abel. They are quite different castings, one stepping off the right as opposed to the more usual left foot. It is possible that one may be by Faudel Phillips & Sons (see Figure 3). This company is not mentioned by Richards but we now know that a number of fine figures were sold under this trade name, (see also Figure 2).
6.	Highlanders	No comment
7.	Infantry of the Line	No comment
8.	Hussars	Richards does not comment on the figure on left in the 3rd row down. This appears to be on a pony horse and carrying a carbine. It is possibly a special of some kind or it may be a Paris Office offering.
9.	Other Hussars	No comment
10.	Lancers	<p>At the time it was thought that the plug armed charging Lancers had no set numbers. Based on a catalogue in the author's possession we now know that they were numbered as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set # 4 – 12th Lancers</li> <li>• Set # 5 – 17th Lancers</li> <li>• Set # 10 - 16th Lancers</li> </ul> <p>Each set contained 9 figures, including officer with sword and trumpeter. There were two variants, with and without cap-lines, with the former being slightly later.</p> <p>All three sets were discontinued and replaced by single row sets of 5. In the case of the 16th lancers set #10 was replaced by Set # 33 which used the cross-legged figure, with officer turned in the saddle. This happened around 1894/95. The same castings were used for the 5th and 9th Lancers (sets # 23 and 24 respectively). For the 17th Lancers the replacement set was introduced in 1897 (Set # 81), using the rocking horse, which can be seen as a more direct improvement of the plug armed figure. In the case of the 12th Lancers, it was not until 1903 that a new set appeared, with slung lances, and using the newly designed head up trotting horse.</p>
11.	Other Lancers	No comment
12.	RMA & RMLI	The fixed arm figure on the left in the second row down is attributed by Richards to Renvoize but seems more likely to be a second grade Britains or possible a copy by Hanks.
13.	Mountain Artillery	No comment
14.	Officers: Drums & Bugles	The fixed arm officer on a dark, possibly black, horse is unusual and may have been sold individually. The normal painting for the sway back officer was a grey horse.
15.	Coldstream Guards Band	No comment

## Len Richards- Pioneer Researcher *(Cont.)*

Notes on the Plates in Richards		
<u>Plate no.</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Notes</u>
16.	Royal Sussex, etc	The figure in row 2 down on the far right hand side attributed by Richards to Abel could be Faudel Phillips (see Figure 1). The same applies to the similar figure in the top row, which Richards attributes to Renvoize (This looks very like the figure on the right in Figure 4).
17.	Rifle Brigade	The first figure in the top row is by Wellington Toy Company not Fry
18.	Dragoons	The 1st Dragoon figure on the far right hand side in the third row down is on a pony horse. It may be a special of some kind or could be a Hanks copy.
19.	Foot Guards in action	The standing officer with binoculars was also available in set no. 131, and also (at a much later date in set no. 1908).
20.	Indian Army	No comment
21.	Indian Cavalry	The two figures on the right in the bottom row are conversions (now in the author's collection).
22.	Colonials	No comment
23.	Foot Guards	No comment
24.	Royal Navy	The 2nd figure in row 2 has also been attributed to Faudel Phillips.
25.	RNLP & Belgians	No comment
26.	Highlanders in action	No comment
27.	Infantry of the line in action	No comment
28.	Dragoon Guards	In the bottom row the officer with sword on the right hand side is unusual and may be a special. In the 3rd row down the two figures on the left hand side on pony horse are probably Hanks rather than early Britains. The same is true of the 7th Dragoon Guard in the 2nd row down.
29.	Life Guard Band	No comment
30.	USA	No comment
31.	Spanish & Prussians	No comment
32.	Infantry of the Line	No comment
33.	Highlanders	The two unidentified figures on the left of row two are Faudel Phillips. The last figure in the top row is Wellington Toy Company not Fry.
34.	Egyptians, etc	In the third row down, the last figure at the halt is a special painting. In the second row down the Arab marching at the slope on the right hand side with a very pale face is probably from the Paris Office.
35.	Boer war	The figure in the 2nd row down standing at the ready in a pith helmet, unidentified by Richards, is by Faudel Phillips (see Figure 3).
36.	Russians	The Cossack in the top row with sword is by Phillip Segal not BMC.
37.	Japanese	The Japanese figure running is by Renvoize not Abel (see Figure 1).
38.	French	Bottom row, the marching Legionnaire is by Crescent not Hill.
39.	French cavalry	No comment
40.	Royal Artillery	No comment
41.	Zulus, etc	The unidentified Piper may be Hill, based on a boxed set in the authors possession



## Len Richards- Pioneer Researcher (Cont.)

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<b><u>Plate no.</u></b>	<b><u>Subject</u></b>	<b>Notes on the Plates in Richards</b> <b><u>Notes</u></b>
42.	Cowboys & Indians	Row 2 The Mounted Cowboy on the left was produced by G.W. Wood in 1912 and was later made by BMC * Row 3 left to right Crescent ex Reka, three by Hill, the large Indian is Hanks and is sometimes found marked Hanks and Sutton * Row 4 all apart from the BMC figures are Britains *
43.	Italians	No comment
44.	Mexicans, etc	No comment
45.	Salvation Army, etc	No comment
46.	Medical	Row 3 The second figure from the left is Wellington Toy Company, sometimes found in boxed sets with a Charterhouse Series label and also issued in boxes by Oliver Harper * Row 4 The large size Scout appears in the Reka catalogue and is therefore probably not BMC although moulds were often exchanged between firms as companies went out of business *
47.	Austro Hungary	No comment
48.	Balkans	No comment
49.	RHA b-sized	No comment
50.	b- sized infantry	No comment
51.	b-sized cavalry	The second figure from the right in the bottom row is probably a Hanks copy of the RHA escort in service dress.
52.	w/b-sized	The last three figures in the bottom row are Paris Office (Infanterie de Ligne officer, and possible Chasseurs a Pieds).
53.	w-sized cavalry	No comment
54.	X series	The figure in the 2nd row down with a base is probably from a Parade series set of Fusiliers. In the third row down the second figure on the left with sword on a pony horse could be special, Paris Office (or possibly a Hanks copy).
55.	X and A series	The Bugler in the top row is from the large khaki display set no. 1407.
56.	Copies of Britains	The figures in the 2nd row down are by Heinrichsen. It is a moot point who copies whom!
57.	Territorials, etc	The Territorial Yeomanry figure with lance may be a special or possibly a Paris Office figure
58.	Other khaki	The unusual figure in the third row down in the first movement towards the "order arms" position is a repainted figure by Fry. Row 1 The first figure is by French manufacturer S.R. the second figure is BMC. The third remains unidentified and the fourth may be Renvoize* Row 2 Left to right BMC, Hill and Reka Row 3 Hill, Unidentified, 3 Hill, Fry and 2 Hill Row 4 The third figure is Fry followed by two BMC and a Russell Manufacturing Company item *
59.	Artillery	No comment
60.	Boxes	No comment

## Len Richards- Pioneer Researcher (Cont.)



**Figure 2: Faudel Phillips 19th Princess of Wales Own Infantry**  
(This very rare mint and boxed set includes just 7 figures, finely painted. As shown in Figure 4 they are similar but not identical to the Abel Plate # 16 example).



**Figure 3: Faudel Phillips 19th Royal Engineers**  
(The casting is the same as the unidentified Boer war figure in Richards plate no. 35. Here they are in red tunics and blue trousers). Note the superbly illustrated box which appears to be unique to each set.



**Figure 4b: Abel (left) and Faudel Phillips Infantry of the Line at the slope. The figure on the left in each shot is by Abel (designed to fit on to their patent drill display). The one on the right is by Faudel Phillips. It appears to be the same as the Figure in Richards plate no. 16 that he attributes to Renvoize. Rose (page 98, items 7-9, attributes it to Abel).**

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- Wallis, J. (1981) *Regiments of All Nations* (published by the author) ISBN 0-9605950-0-7
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Although the Richards book title is 1893-1918 a number of items illustrated were not made until after the 1918 date\*

There is at present no concrete evidence that Faudel Phillips were actually manufacturers of toy soldiers and it is possible that the items issued by them were made by another company, research is ongoing.\*

Renvoize also traded under the name British United Toy Manufacturing Company and produced a range of non lead toys, but again it is possible that they were not manufacturers of toy soldiers and that their figures were produced and imported from Germany, Peter Cowan's published article in a recent British Model Soldier Society Bulletin gives rise to this theory.\*

\* Indicates additional information added by O.T.S. Editor Norman Joplin



# AUCTION REVIEW

## Vectis

The first *Vectis Military, Civilian Figures, Equipment and Accessories Sale* of 2011 including Part 1 of the *Nils Fischer Britains Collection* was held on Wednesday 30th March 2011. The sale was an overwhelming success with 96% of the 925 lots on offer being sold and the sale grossing just short of £190K.

For the third sale in a row Vectis achieved a string of World Record prices for plastic figures with lot's 4121 and 4122 [Herald English Civil War Two Figure "Half Moon" Card sets] each achieving £1800 and Lot 4127 [Herald Wild West Set H7603, containing 6 Cowboys] making £1700.

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] single Herald Ballet Figure in Yellow which achieved £140 [the only known boxed set will be included in the June 28th sale], Lot's 4273 and 4274 [prototype Deetail Knights] made £220 and £240 apiece, the Wax Master Figures [Lot 4325] sculpted by Norman Sillman for the Garden Folk Set [1967] made £800 and a set of metal test masters [Lot 4406] for the plastic Mini Sets Range made £540.

Rarities abounded throughout the catalogue and subsequently attracted heavy bidding, a U.S. 18 Pounder Gun [lot 4443], from 1935 made £300, Three boxed Monoplanes in U.S. markings [Set 435 – Lot's 4428/4429/4430] from the 1930's finished in Green, Blue and Yellow made £3600, £5600 and £5600 respectively, a Set 1641 [Underslung Lorry] finished in a rare pale blue paint scheme - £620 and a set of U.S. Export [tagged] Lancers [Lot 4488] was finally sold for £540 after some fierce bidding.

Pieces from the W Britain 1880 Catalogue many with their original boxes sold well with the *The Automatic Foot Race* [lot 4490] achieving £3200, *The New Horse Race* [lot 4494]- £2000 and the *Balancing Clown* [lot 4497] £1800



# AUCTION REVIEW (Cont.)

In the Civilian Section of the sale notable prices were evident throughout, highlights included: an unboxed Racing Colours model [lot 4501] in the colours of the Duchess of Norfolk [*Mickey Mouse*] from 1938 eventually selling for a staggering £3200 after a frenzied bidding war between telephone and internet bidders, an extremely rare Horse Blanket [lot 4507] made from linen with leather straps to be used on Britains Horses and issued by an Australian Department Store in the 1930's achieved £480, a pre-war issue boxed model No'912 - Giraffe [lot 4551] made £950 and a rare variant early 1960's issue Fordson Tractor [lot 4639] finally went down at £1200.

In other areas of the sale a Hummel House of Miniatures Catalogue from the 1950's [lot 4698] made £520, a Tipp and Co German M/C Combination [lot 4723] £900 and a Heyde diorama depicting Dubai in the 19th Century [lot 4780] £2100.

All in all a fantastic start to the Vectis 2011 figure auction season which will continue with another landmark sale featuring Part 2 of the Fischer Collection. The sale will be held on 28th June and will contain a plethora of rare and desirable items, including: Britains Archive Sale material, a fantastic selection of Hugar Buildings [military and civilian], 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.

For further details contact Simon Clarke at [simon.clarke@vectis.co.uk](mailto:simon.clarke@vectis.co.uk)



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# AUCTION PREVIEW

## Vectis Military, Civilian Figures, Equipment and Accessories Sale of 2011

The Second Vectis *Military, Civilian Figures, Equipment and Accessories Sale* of 2011 including Part 2 of the *Nils Fischer Britains Collection* will take place on Tuesday 28th June 2011 at Stockton on Tees, England.

This landmark sale will contain a further plethora of rare and desirable items, including: Britains Archive Sale material, a fantastic selection of Hugar Buildings [military and civilian], Original Britains moulds [Figures/Equipment/Animals – including the *Edwardian Family*], original Hand Casting Tools and Britains Design Department - research and design notes, uniform reference files and production documentation.

The other Vendors Section of the sale will include: A large collection of retired/vintage King and Country sets, a selection of Lucotte and Mignot Sets, Heyde and other German Makers, Composition and Tinplate from Elastolin, Gottschalk, Hausser and Tipp, Rare vintage plastics from Herald, Britains and Timpo and a selection of pre 1939 Britains Military sets.

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**Britains Rare Pre War R.H.A. at the Halt.**



# AUCTION PREVIEW (Cont.)



Rare Crescent New York Police



Britains Pre War Egyptian Infantry and Cavalry



Britains Pre War Arab Display



Britains Swopett Knights



Britains Post War Cavalry



Britains Pre War Infantry and Cavalry



Britains Home Farm



Timpo Model Zoo



# AUCTION PREVIEW (Cont.)



Britains Pre War British Army Display



Crescent Triple Row West Point Cadets



Timpo Tiger Hunt



Britains Tractor



Britains Picture Pack Display Cabinet



Charbens Pre War Organ Grinder Set



Britains Rare Pre War Coronation Territorials



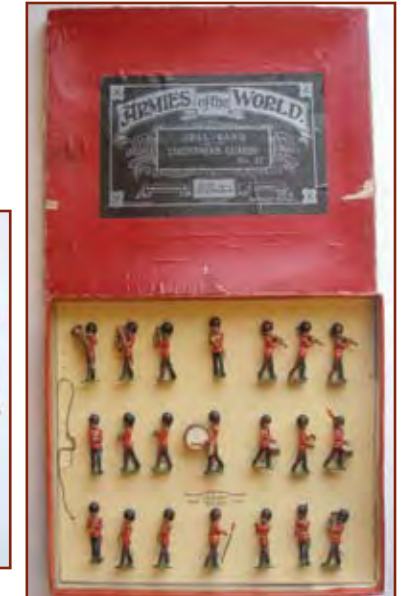
Benbros Robin Hood



"Ancient" Britains



Britains Pre War Infantry and Cavalry



Britains Pre War Coldstream Band



Britains 9000 Series



Britains Rare Boxed Label for 12th Royal Lancers



# AUCTION PREVIEW (Cont.)



Britains "Eyes Right" Bands



Heyde Cavalry with Original Boxes



Mignot Displays



Britains Post War Infantry



Britains Pre War Rare Set 93



Britains Post War Animals



# AUCTION PREVIEW (Cont.)



King & Country Ancient Egypt



King & Country Kaiser's Staff Car



Imperial Highland Color Party



Mignot French Horse Drawn Artillery



Pottsdamer/Shimek Cottage set



Soldier Centre Steam Tractor



Mark Time Royal Engineer Balloon Winch Unit



King & Country Armored Car



Trophy



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Pottsdamer/Shimek Churchill Train Set



Trophy Zulu War



Trophy Napoleonic



# AUCTION PREVIEW (Cont.)



Mignot Caserne



Blenheim Zulu War Gift Set



Tradition Napoleonic



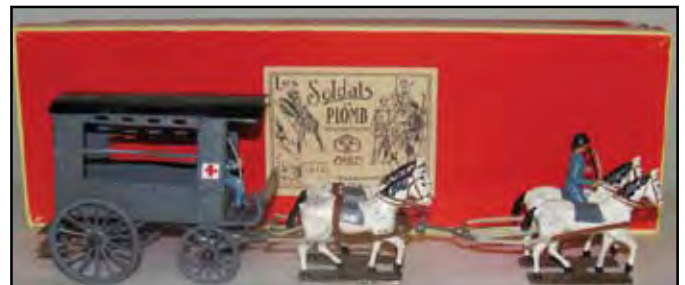
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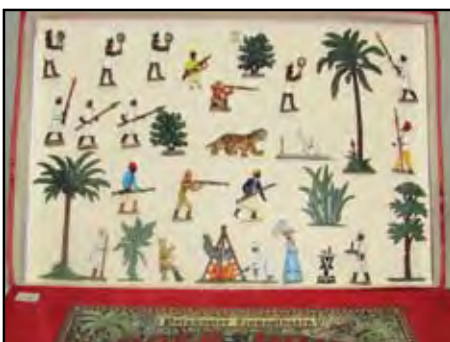
Mignot Ambulance



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### Image Bottom

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# AUCTION PREVIEW



**Courtenay, William Lord Greystoke**  
mounted, 'Joan of Arc' brown Palfrey without  
base, rider figure number 19, with two handed  
sword, un-named and unsigned (G) (1)  
£300-400

## Bonhams Courtenay



**Courtenay, Historical Figures, Assyrian  
Bowman**, signed made in England by R.  
Courtenay, Queen Cleopatra, Toy Retarius and  
Scutor, unsigned (VG) (4) £200-300



**Courtenay, The Black Prince 1**  
mounted figure H6, in blackened armour, with  
axe, green base, signed made in England by  
R. Courtenay (VG) (1) £300-400



**Courtenay, Edward III King of England**  
mounted M2, shield, lance in movable arm  
and great helm with depicted lion, black base,  
unsigned, sold for three shillings (G) (1)  
£300-400



**Courtenay, Historical Figure, King Henry  
V, mounted** movable sword arm, titled under  
belly Henry V made in England (VG-G) (1)  
£200-300



**Courtenay, Sir Bartholemew Barghurshie**  
mounted H2, visored, with shield and movable  
lance arm, green base, signed made in  
England H2 by R. Courtenay (VG) (1)  
£300-400



**Ping Types of the Ancient World**  
Assyrian Warrior, Roman Legionary, British  
Chief and Romano-British Princess, mounted  
on titled wooden plinths (G) (4)  
£200-300



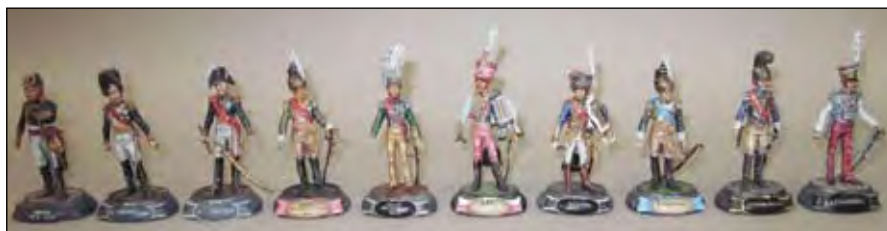
**Courtenay RARE walking Medieval soldiers**  
bowman in hood (reputedly the portrait head  
of John Cammidge), bowman in cap and  
billman in helmet (VG) (3)  
£200-300



**Labayen, 54mm French Expeditionary Force  
to the Americas, U.S. War of Independence**  
Colour Bearers, Regiment Royal Deux Ponts  
and Regiment Soissonais (VG) (2) £200-300



**Ping Kings and Queens of Great Britain**  
James II, William III, George I and Victoria,  
mounted on titled wooden plinths (G) (4)  
£200-300



**Labayen 54mm Portrait Figures, Napoleon's Marshals and Generals**  
mounted on oval metal titled bases, EXPORT QUALITY, Kleber, Davout, Ney, Barraguet  
d'Hilliere, Murat with A.D.C., Mortier, D'Ornano, Gouvion de St Cyr and Krasinski (VG) (10)  
£300-400

# Australian Hollow Casts

*By Norman Joplin*

As so often happens EBay has once again provided a source of reference for some previously unknown toy soldiers and figures.

The accompanying picture (see page 4 of this article) of what is believed to be a Salesman's Sample was offered for sale some time ago and has remained in my collection while I was researching the origin. It appears that the figures tied to this large card had originally been pre World War 2 products of John Hill and Company (Johillco), Crescent and other British Hollow Cast manufacturers.

Markings on the bottom of each figure have been removed at some point after the items were shipped to Australia and retooled. The figures were part of a line produced, I believe, during the early post World War 2 era. The discovery of a boxed set with an "Austra" label and of several single figures subsequently obtained from EBay Australia by Rodney Hopson (Rodney's Dimestore Gallery) suggests that Hollow Cast figures were readily available in Australia after the war.



Swagman Front and Back

## Definition of Swagman

"A swagman is an old Australian or New Zealand" term describing an underclass of transient temporary workers, who travelled by foot from farm to farm carrying the traditional swag (waterproof bedroll). Also characteristic of swagman attire was a hat strung with corks to ward off flies.

During the Depression of the 1890's and the Great Depression of the 1930's, unemployed men travelled the rural areas of Australia on foot, with their few possessions rolled up and carried in their swag. Typically, they would seek work in farms and towns as they travelled across the country and in many cases the farmers, if no permanent work was available, would provide food and shelter in return for some menial task."



Australian "Digger"



## Australian Hollow Casts (Cont.)



"Austra" Box Set



Close up of Austra contents

The 65mm Swagman figure and "Digger" were produced in the 1930's by Crescent and are extremely rare, with few examples ever emerging for sale in the UK, this gives rise to the possibility that Crescent and other British manufacturers were engaged in supplying figures pre war to Australia, the conversion of the Khaki troops to Australian hats also indicates a prior connection to UK manufacturers.

Several of the figures contained in the "Austra" boxed set have never been found in the UK but can certainly be attributed to British pre war companies and may throw light on some of the descriptions listed, in particular in the Crescent pre war catalog that have yet to be matched with figures.

## Australian Hollow Casts (Cont.)



**Guardsman  
Paint Variations**



**Highlanders  
Paint Variations**

### **Paint Differences (See page 4 of this article)**

The painting of the figures in top row are all consistent with the Crescent Paint finish. The word "Digger" is written underneath what Crescent listed as an Australian.

Second row figures are consistent with their original manufactures paint style except for the Crescent Officer which is in Blue rather than the Crescent Khaki version.

Third row figures are painted in the same style as John Hill and Company or Fry, however Australian heads have been added to the fourth, sixth, seventh and Eighth figures.

Fourth row. I have never seen the original of this but assume the White Helmeted Policeman represents an Australian Police Uniform?

Fifth row. The painting of the second and fourth figures differs from that of John Hill and Company.



**Officer in Blue**



## Australian Hollow Casts (Cont.)



Top Row. ( Left to Right ) 65 mm Highlander, Australian/Digger & Guardsman all taken from Crescent, Lying Machine Gunner from John Hill and Company and Fireman and Swagman from Crescent.

Second Row. ( Left to Right ) Two 54 mm Guardsmen, Possibly Pre War Charbens, Guardsman and two others On Guard - Maker Unknown and 65 mm Officer from Crescent.

Third Row. ( Left to Right ) 54 mm Khaki Troops all John Hill and Company except Grenade Thrower, Maker Unknown and Kneeling Machine Gunner possibly Fry. Railway Porter and Cart John Hill and Company.

Fourth Row 54 mm Australian Policeman in White Helmet, Possibly Crescent.

The rest of the figures are missing from the card however the writing on what is left of this section indicates they were Bandmen

Fifth Row. 54 mm First two figures are Airmen, Fourth Figure and the Sailor on Guard are taken from John Hill and Company. Second and fourth Airman are Crescent as is the Sailor with Telescope. The small scale Porter carrying luggage is a Dinky Toy.

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The majority of the collection cannot be covered in this ad. This is a real money maker for a dealer and a wonderful addition to any collection. If you are seriously interested in buying, call for additional information and colored photos of entire collection. Two large display cases are included. To be sold on an "all or none basis".

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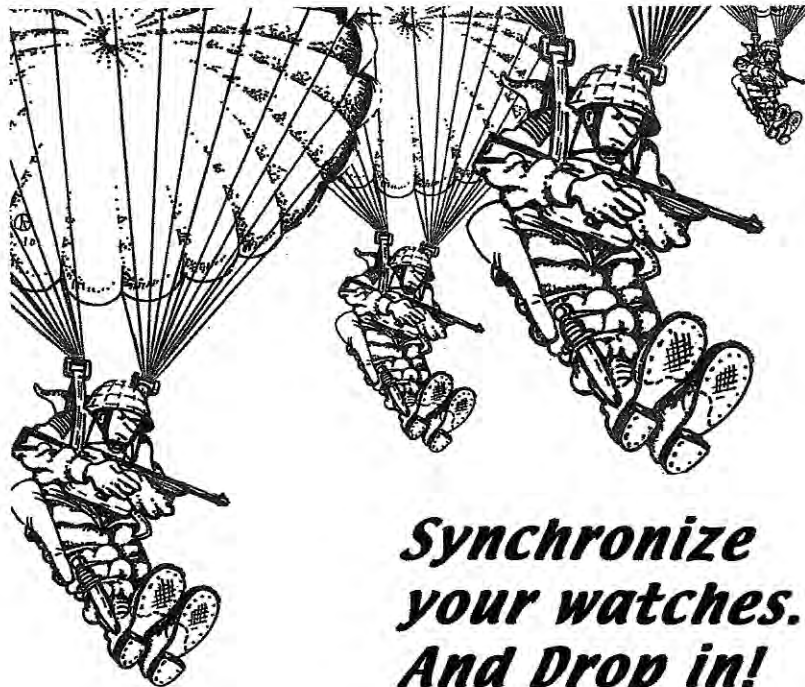


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# BRITAINS SET #168 Civilians/Pedestrians

*By Joe Wallis*

Set 168 was not the earliest non-military set to be issued by Britains Limited—that distinction belongs to Salvation Army Sets 10 and 14 produced in 1906, as well as Railroad Station Sets 155 and 158 first manufactured in 1908. However, Set 168 was inventive and attractive, offering seven different figures among its eight piece repertory.

The first documented appearance of this distinctive set is in the 1913 catalog of Gamage's Emporium in the Holburn section of London, but one has to look closely to find Set 168. On page 101 of Gamage's 1913 catalog is a gallery of small individual drawings depicting a figure from each set in their catalog. One of the Gentlemen Passengers is included and labeled 168 in the collection of illustrations, even though Set 168 per se is not listed with a price in the preceding pages. It is also featured in the 1915 Britains catalog that was reprinted in a limited edition in 1972 autographed by Dennis Britain. In trying to date the beginning of Set 168, it is helpful that the Bersaglieri of Set 169 was the last casting to be date stamped underneath the base for copyright protection in July 1912. Therefore it is likely that Set 168 debuted in 1912 also (even though some of its contents were date stamped 1908 because they had been initiated as part of Set 158, Railroad Station Staff).

The title for Set 168 was simply "Civilians" from its introduction in 1912 until the set title changed to "Pedestrians" in the 1936 catalog. The renaming manifests the greatly enhanced non-military range being sold by the 1930s. There were too many non-military items in the catalog by then to justify calling



any one set "Civilians." The alteration also reflected the listing of Set 168 in the Traffic Series section of the 1936-1940 catalogs. Britains released Sets 1427-1430 containing Road Signs and Traffic Lights in 1936 and this caused the firm to re-title the set to market it with the Traffic Series that they promoted for use with driver education classes. Of course, the original impetus for Set 168 was the immense popularity of model railroads, and several of the items in Set 168 first appeared in Railway Station Set 158, including the Lady Passenger, the Gentleman Passenger in a bowler hat, and the standing Policeman wearing a helmet. Some collectors have speculated that H.G. Wells' comment in his 1911 book *Floor Games* about needing more civilians than the Railway Station ones may have precipitated Britains to produce Set 168, but that remains conjecture.





## BRITAINS SET #168 Civilians/Pedestrians (Cont.)

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Set 168 held eight pieces throughout its life from 1912-41. They included two fixed-arm ladies holding small purses and wearing floor-length coats (one red and one light blue) with scarves tied over their hats. In 1927, this Edwardian lady was replaced in Sets 158 and 168 by the more modern Young Lady Walking (added to the Farm Series as 559 beginning in 1926). This change is documented by a substitution in the catalog illustration of the 806 Lady Passenger, which was the number assigned to this model in the Railway Station Bulk Lines single items offered in the 1926-41 catalogs. In the 1926 catalog, the Edwardian Lady is shown for 806 and in the Railroad Station Set 158, while in the 1927 catalog, the 559 Young Lady Walking is illustrated for 806 and Set 158. While Set 168 is not illustrated in either the 1926 or the 1927 catalogs, it is highly probable that Britains made the same change in Set 168 upon retiring the Edwardian model for the more modern “Flapper” type of the 1920s. The new Lady Passenger appeared in many color variations of skirt and blouse, wore a cloche hat, had a moveable arm holding a larger purse, and was more fashionably slender than the “hour-glass” shape of the earlier Lady Passenger. (It is interesting to note that as times changed an even more modern Lady Passenger holding an umbrella would be issued in Set 1-R from 1954-59.)

The Gentleman Passenger (807 in the Bulk Railroad Station Series) came in two variations, one smoking a pipe and one holding a newspaper. Both were included in Railway Station Set 158, but only the man with a newspaper appeared in Set 168—presumably because a second pipe-smoking man in a bowler hat based upon on the open-coated Salvation Army casting was part of Set 168. The open-coated man typically wore a grey coat, grey trousers, a white shirt, and a black bowler hat. (Postwar Set 1-R gave rise to a modernized, bare-headed male passenger with a pipe.)

The pairs of female and male passengers in Set 168 were accompanied by the fixed-arm “Bobby” wearing a dark blue uniform and policeman’s helmet. The red-and-white armband on his left wrist signifies the City of London Police, while a blue-and-white armband connotes the Metropolitan Police. (The City is the central financial district of London.) He first materializes in Set 158, and beginning in 1926 was given 808 in the Bulk Lines Series.

There was another debonair gentleman in Set 168, nicknamed the “Yachtsman” by collectors. He wears a navy blue blazer jacket over a white shirt, red tie,

white trousers, and a dark blue peaked cap. He smokes a pipe, and uses the same casting as the Gentleman Passenger, except for the peak cap in place of the bowler hat. In 1926 he was assigned 817 in the Railway Station Bulk Lines, although never present in Set 168.

The other two figures were unique to Set 168. There was an open-coated man with empty hands wearing a Stetson hat, and based upon the Salvation Army man of Set 10. He wears a brown suit, tan Stetson (borrowed from the Scoutmaster of Set 161), and a green shirt with a gaudy red cummerbund. The garish outfit led to the nickname of the “Colonial Gentleman” by English collectors. The final figure in Set 168 was a Chauffeur in a dark green uniform with a peak cap. He carried a lantern at first. Early traffic laws required that a man with a lantern precede a motor car at night, and road conditions were primitive enough in 1912 when Set 168 originated that reconnoitering with a lantern was prudent. The arm for the Chauffeur was also used by the 804 Railroad Guard with a lamp in the Railway Station Bulk Lines, but the Chauffeur was never furnished with an 800 number. At some point (perhaps as early as 1927 when the Lady Passenger was also modernized?) the Chauffeur was updated using the Royal Air Force airman from Set 240, and he then no longer carried a lantern. (Note that postwar Set 1-R included a Station Master dressed in dark blue based upon the 931 Taller Zookeeper.)

The box label by Fred Whisstock is very accurate (sometimes Whisstock took artistic license, such as the label for the Rifle Brigade of Set 9 where he depicted a kneeling firing soldier instead of the marching type actually offered inside the box). The charming Edwardian street scene Whisstock drew for Set 168 captures the contents of the set quite clearly: the Lady Passenger, the Gentleman Passenger holding a newspaper and wearing a bowler hat, the Yachtsman wearing a peak cap with his overcoat draped over his arm, the standing Policeman, and the Chauffeur carrying a lantern. A double-decker motor bus depicted with the destination Hornsey Rise (the location of Britains Limited) is shown moving along the broad avenue, as well as a horse-drawn Hansom cab.

The retail price for Set 168 grew from one shilling in 1915 to one shilling 9 pence in 1926, back to one shilling 7½ in 1929, then to one shilling 9 pence again in 1939, and finally two shillings in 1940. By then, it had become very outdated in terms of fashions in clothing, and was never revived after 1941.

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This month we revisit the field at Waterloo once more with a fantastic addition to our 92nd Gordon Highlanders. The first figures in the Gordon Highlander release, NAO204-NAO216, presented the command figures and privates standing in rank. This second release, NAO260-NAO276, adds another 17 sets bringing up our coverage of this famous Napoleonic regiment to 30 unique sets! The new figures are all in fighting poses and represent the first two ranks of a square or line of battle. The overall release was designed from the outset to allow for the creation of a four rank square or four rank line of battle, the only two formations used by the Anglo-Allied army at Waterloo. As you can see from the image, the diverse and historically accurate setup that you can create with this many different figures is totally unreplicated by any other offering and if you want the 92nd Gordon Highlanders in your collection, then surely you need look no further! The 92nd Gordon Highlanders from First Legion will make an excellent addition to any serious Napoleonic toy soldier collection.

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# History Cast in Tin

## Hermann von Wissmann “Germany’s Greatest African”

By Earl Jorgensen



Hermann von Wissmann; explorer, adventurer, author, military leader and the Colonial Governor of German East Africa.

During a recent search on German ebay I happened upon a striking image of an old book cover depicting a barefoot African soldier waving a German flag along with the name of the author, Hermann Wissmann. The name was familiar to me. I had previously seen it adorning the labels of two old German-made sets of toy soldiers: “Expedition Wissmann in Ostafrika” and “Wissmann Expedition”. Being curious, I changed my search topic to Wissmann and found images of monuments, books, postage stamps, currency, commemorative trade cards and even photos of two steamships which bore the Wissmann name. I couldn’t help but wonder who Hermann von Wissmann was and what exactly he had done to deserve these accolades including

the distinction of being immortalized in tin.

Wissmann was born in Frankfurt an der Oder on Sept. 4, 1853. He entered the military in 1870 and rose to the rank of Lieutenant. Records indicate that he also served a four month prison term for causing bodily injury during a pistol duel. In 1879 Wissmann met Dr. Paul Pogge, a well known German explorer employed by the African Society which promoted scientific explorations of the African interior. Wissmann requested an extended leave and in 1880 accompanied Dr. Pogge to Africa.

On June 2, 1881, the two set off from the Atlantic coastal village of Luanda on an expedition sponsored by the African Society to “explore hitherto unknown areas in Central Africa”. When health problems forced Dr. Pogge to abandon the expedition, Wissmann continued and on Nov. 15, 1882, arrived at the city of Saadani on the Indian Ocean. Information gathered during the 22 month journey added greatly to the knowledge of the upper Congo basin and Wissmann, now recognized as the first European to cross the African continent from coast to coast, became an immediate in-



The image of the barefoot native Askari soldier waving the flag of Germany which caught my attention and sparked my curiosity.

ternational celebrity. He spent the next two years exploring the areas around the Kasai River basin for King Leopold II of Belgium and in 1886 he crossed the continent for a second time, reaching the coast in Mozambique in 1887. Although health issues forced Wissmann to return to Germany shortly thereafter, his adventures in Africa were far from over.

In the spring of 1888, the Sultan of Zanzibar signed a treaty with Germany which ceded control of the coastal region of East Africa to the private Deutsch Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft for a period of 50 years. Local hostility toward



The box label for the “Expedition Wissmann in Ostafrika” set (undetermined maker).



Figure Examples from the “Ostafrika” set.



The box label for the “Wissmann Expedition” set (undetermined maker).



## History Cast in Tin (Cont.)



An early set of flats depicting a German naval assault on a city. The presence of mosques indicates the location is German East Africa. Wissmann ordered naval bombardments and amphibious assaults to retake the coastal cities of Pangani and Tanga during the 1889 Abushiri Rebellion.

the Germans soon erupted into a bloody insurrection. Germans who survived the initial assaults took refuge in the coastal cities of Dar-es-Salaam and Bagamoyo and pleaded for military assistance. In response Chancellor Otto von Bismarck appointed the famous explorer as the Reich Commissioner for the German Territory of East Africa. He was promoted to the rank of Captain and departed for Africa to carry out the simple order: "victory".

Wissmann arrived in Zanzibar on Mar. 31, 1889. He immediately assembled a formidable army of native mercenaries commanded

by veteran German officers and set about the task of restoring German authority throughout the territory. Artillery fire and bayonet charges quickly broke the spirit of the rebellion and by mid-December it was over. The leaders were arrested and hung but, in a surprising display of mercy, Wissmann issued a general pardon for their followers. In early 1890, Wissmann was promoted to the rank of Major and summoned to Germany where he received a hero's welcome.

On Jan. 1, 1891, the territory of German East Africa (present day Tanzania) was officially designat-



"Gefecht in Deutsch-Ost-Afrika" by Ernst Heinrichsen. A mounted Captain Wissmann leading his mercenaries (known as the Wissmanntruppe) against rebellious Arab merchants and natives during the Abushiri Rebellion of 1889. Wissmann often used detachments of German Marines to supplement his mercenary army.

(Sulzer, Alfred. 150 Jahre Feinste Zinn-Conposition Figuren; Zinnfiguren Museum Zurich)

### German Military in Colonial Africa

Prior to Wissmann's appointment as the Reich Commissioner for the territory of German East Africa, Germany's four African territories were managed by private companies chartered by the Reich. Each company employed a relatively small number of native police officers to maintain order and security. In 1884, German interests in the territory of Kamerun were challenged by a native revolt and, in response to pleas for assistance, Bismarck dispatched a naval squadron to the west coast of Africa. (See Kamerun, OTS Winter, 2009) Germany continued its naval presence in coastal Africa through World War One and played a major roll in the suppression of native rebellions in East Africa, Southwest Africa and Cameroon. Wissmann often supplemented his forces with detachments of marines. Prior to 1889, German sailors and marines provided the nation's only military presence for the African territories.

In 1891 Germany formally declared its African territories as "Protectorates". Many of Wissmann's native mercenary soldiers (Wissmanntruppe) were incorporated into the newly formed schutztruppen (colonial defense forces) of the German Army. South West Africa however, harbored a deep mistrust of native soldiers and fielded a defense force made up primarily of German volunteers.



## History Cast in Tin (Cont.)



**"Deutsche Flagge um Afrika" by Heinrichsen issued in 1885. On Aug. 7, 1884, the "Reichskriegsflagge" was officially raised over the new German territory of South West Africa. (Paradestucke. Spielzeugmuseum, Nuremberg)**



**A period illustration depicting the uniforms of the "Wissmanntruppe"**

ed a protectorate of the Reich. A new governor was appointed and Wissmann was named as commissioner for the western region, an area he had explored during his 1886-87 expedition. Steamships intended for Lakes Tanganyika and Nyasa were en route from Germany and Wissmann spent the next two years overseeing the project. (See S.M.S. von Wissmanns) Upon its completion he returned to Germany, married and settled into civilian life. Africa, however, was still not finished with Hermann von Wissmann.

In 1895 Wissmann was appointed to the position of Governor to the German colony of East Africa. His predecessor had proved ineffective in dealing with a new native rebellion and a frustrated Bismarck again called upon the experienced veteran to end the conflict. Wissmann was promoted to the rank of Colonel and awarded the Order of the Red Eagle (3rd Class) for "valor in combat and excellence in military leadership". His tenure as Governor, however, was short-lived. In 1896 failing health again forced him to return

to Germany where he settled into the comfortable lifestyle of a retired country gentleman. He lectured extensively, authored three books detailing his adventures in Africa and died in a hunting accident on June 15, 1905.

Now that I understood why Wissmann had been so honored, I wondered if additional sets bearing his name had been produced and started searching through catalogs of old German makers. Surprisingly the only reference I found was the Wissmann name



**Heyde figures depicting German Marines doing battle with rebellious African natives. Since German Marines provided military assistance in Cameroon, South West Africa and East Africa, one can only guess which conflict is represented. (Figures from the collection of Gisbert Friber).**



## History Cast in Tin (Cont.)

in a brief description of a set titled "Gefecht (combat) in Deutsch-Ost-Afrika" (#155p) listed in an early Ernst Heinrichsen catalog. What caused the famous hero to literally disappear?

During the Crimean War a few makers such as Haffner started to experiment with sets depicting individual battles which were made available to the public shortly after the event occurred. (See Battle of Inkerman, OTS Winter, 2009) Increased sales proved there was a strong market for such sets and the practice quickly spread throughout the German toy soldier industry. As stated in a recent article by Thomas Mannack, "The combatants of every single war or battle, however small or distant, were issued as quickly as possible by all German factories. Tin soldiers were almost as up to date as contemporary newspapers."<sup>1</sup> According to a Google search, a total of 132 wars occurred between the Crimean War and the end of the century. Since the word war is defined as a "prolonged conflict" consisting of multiple battles, the number of new sets produced to keep "up to date" must have been huge. These sets had a relatively short production life; because out of date sets were replaced as new-

### S.M.S. von WISSMANN

In 1890 the firm of Janssen & Schmilinsky of Hamburg was awarded a contract to design and construct two armed steamships for service on Lakes Nyasa and Tanganyika. The ships were built in sections, shipped to Africa, transported overland and assembled on site. The larger vessel, christened Hermann von Wissmann, was launched on Lake Nyasa in Sept., 1893. The "Hermann" has the distinction of taking part in the first recorded naval engagement of World War One. The Hermann's captain was unaware that war had been declared and beached the ship for routine maintenance. The engagement consisted of a single cannon shot. The captain and crew were arrested by the British and the "Hermann" was "rendered inoperable" and abandoned.



The S.M.S. Hedwig von Wissmann

A slightly smaller version of the Hermann christened Hedwig von Wissmann (Hermann's wife) was launched on Lake Tanganyika in Sept., 1900. She was sunk in Feb., 1916, during an engagement with two small British motor launches, the H.M.S. Mimi and the H.M.S. Toutou. Details of the engagement may have inspired the script of the famous movie "African Queen."

er sets were introduced. The previously mentioned Heinrichsen set was from a catalog printed in the late 1890's. Nearly a decade had passed since Wissmann had been declared a national hero and during those years Germany's African colonies had endured four more native rebellions. Simply put, Wissmann was

old news.

The catalog does, however, list a multitude of sets based on the four more recent native rebellions. The colony of Kamerun (present day Cameroon) had experienced the Abo rebellion in 1891 and the Dahomey slave rebellion in 1893. Ost-Afrika (present day Tanzania) experienced the HeHe rebellion



From "The Insurrection of the Hereros" by Georg Spenkuck. Figure details of both the Colonial Defense Forces and the Herero fighters. The insurrection occurred from 1904 to 1907 in Southwest Africa. (photos by Bernhard Schwarz)

## History Cast in Tin (Cont.)



The "Aufstand (insurrection) in Deutsch-Sudwest-Afrika" set by Georg Heyde.

which lasted from 1891 to 1894 and Sudwest-Afrika (present day Namibia) battled the Hereros from 1893 to 1894. The 1906 edition of the Heinrichsen catalog retains many of the sets cited above, but also includes an additional set titled "Herero-Aufstand" (insurrection) which occurred in Sudwest-Afrika from 1904 to 1907.

Germany was stripped of its colonial possessions at the end of World War One and the change is clearly reflected in post-war German toy soldier catalogs. Sets representing the former Ger-



A beautiful set titled "Gefecht Deutschen Kolonialtruppen und Afrikaner Heraus" by Christoph Ammon depicting the Herero Rebellion (1904-07) of South West Africa. (Paradestücke. Spielzeugmuseum, Nuremberg)

man Colonial Empire are, for the most part, no longer listed. Although the catalogs still include sets of Schutztruppen, they are no longer engaged in a life or death struggle with, as described in a 1896 Rupprecht catalog, "the savages in the Congo". Likewise sets depicting native Africans continue to be listed but they are now engaged in less threatening activities such as hunting, village life and even assisting great white hunters. There is, however, always an exception. A post-war catalog from the firm of Georg Heyde continues to offer a beautifully designed set titled "Aufstand in Sudwest-Afrika". The glory days of Germany's former Colonial Empire are recalled and for one last time we see a detachment of German Marines storming ashore under the cover of the "Westafrikanische Geschwader" to subdue the rebellious natives

while the flag of the "Deutsch Kriegsmarine" again flies proudly over Africa.

So who exactly was Hermann von Wissmann? History records him as one of the world's great African explorers. History also records him as a competent military leader who carried out the bidding of his nation during a period of great controversy often referred to as Europe's "Scramble for Africa". Yet, as often happens, men of importance and the impact of their actions, both good and evil, are all but forgotten with the passage of time. I would like to thank the person responsible for posting the image of the Wissmann book which initially caught my attention and the two unknown old German toy soldier makers who produced the Wissmann sets for providing the inspiration to briefly explore the man and his times.



A wonderful assortment of miscellaneous African colonial figures by Georg Heyde. (Figures from the collection of Gisbert Freber)

<sup>1</sup> Mannack, Thomas. *The Ancient World in Miniature: Flat German Tin Figures of the 19th and 20th Centuries*. 2663506.pdf (Secured) University of Oxford, Beazley Archive.





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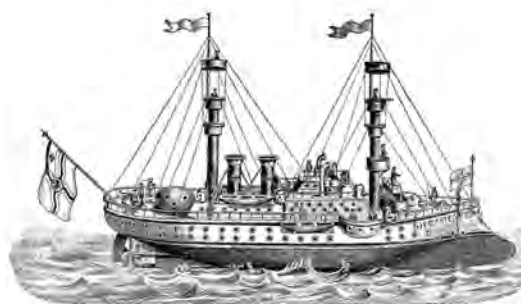


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# JOHN M. HAMISTER ...An Uncovered Gem Found for the Lore of Dimestore Conversions

By Louis S. Steinberg



**John M. Hamister**  
a debonair gentleman

*It was about two years ago when I received from Warren Mitchell an interesting E-mail saying he had acquired the Dimestore collection of a Mr. John Hamister.*

*His note further stated that Mr. Hamister's figures also contained quite a few converted Dimestore pieces that may well complement my own collection of conversions by other hobbyists. Some pictures were available for my perusal, if I was interested.*

*I replied to Warren explaining that I had curtailed acquiring more pieces since, in jest, "I really don't know exactly what I have, but I think I know what I'm missing."*

*And, who is John Hamister? I thought that I knew all the Dimestore folks that did conversions and/or produced new lines of corresponding toy soldier figures. Just how did I miss John all those years?*

*For many years figure conversions have been my collecting specialty. Also, I have recently enjoyed writing and documenting in this magazine the creative works of other Dimestore enthusiasts. How could I not have known about John?*

*Anyway, I asked Warren if he would not mind giving me Mr. Hamister's phone number so that I may approach him to obtain his approval for a forthcoming OTS article.*

*At this juncture I was informed that John Hamister had passed on in late December of '08. Well, it had not been mentioned to me and it was somewhat shocking. It was more of my own doltishness. Authoring the Hamister article was then deleted from my thoughts.*

*Now, seeming somewhat unbelievable, it was only several weeks ago I got an E from Warren saying he rediscovered my old mail within a four inch pile on his desk. However, he had misplaced Hamister's phone number, that is, that of his son-in-law's, Edward, who had handled the sale of the collection, but did have his E-mail address.*

*He then advised me to contact Don Pielin who knew him from the Chicago Shows he attended. I did just that. It is always nice talking with Don who could only fill me in with minor chitchat but said he would contact Warren regarding a phone number. I did mention that I already had been there. Oh, OK....*

*The circle thus became completely round. I had gotten absolutely nowhere. Next, I wrote Roger Dubois who never misses the Chicago Show. But, a year or so way back when, I had then asked him, and he said he never heard of John Hamister.*

*So who really was John Hamister? The following day Roger went on-line to speculate in looking up the name. And, BINGO, there it was! Roger was brilliant! Up came the detailed obituary of **John M. Hamister (1929-2008)** of Hillsboro, Illinois.*

Therefore, it did not necessarily take a whole "Village." Then again, it did take several contacts of good friendships that rose valiantly to help a fellow toy soldier hobbyist to overcome a big research dilemma.

I reached out to Warren once more and no phone number could be found, but he did provide an E-mail address for Edward Boyd, the son-in-law of John Hamister. I jumped on that like there was no tomorrow and patiently awaited a reply.

In the meantime, it was back to Pielin. Don told me of the times he often met John yearly at the Chicago Toy Soldier Shows and the Kane County Fairgrounds Toy Shows. He said, "John was a soft-spoken, reserved person whose love for collecting

toy soldiers was inculcated to him through his childhood years of the 30's and 40's. (The toy soldier syndrome: 'I played with them as a kid.')

"To my knowledge, he traveled alone to the Chicago Show. Stayed at a nearby Holiday Inn and never had a table setup, but enjoyed hunting for figures through the attendees' room displays. This is how he built his Dimestore collection, and searched for other off-condition, inexpensive soldiers for his converting interests.

"Our conversations were always very pleasant and I remember John smiling often as he was showing me several figures he discovered...one for his collection and the other for altering."



## JOHN M. HAMISTER ...An Uncovered Gem (Cont.)



Note Tall Searchlight



Doughboy with Same



WW I with Short Light



WW II with Same



Repaint WWII German

Well, ten days had passed and no reply to my three E-mails to son-in-law, Edward. You know what that means...Yeap, back to Warren!

He mentioned that Edward's computer possibly could not recognize my E- address and tossed it into spam. What! Me into Spam!

Anyway, Warren offered to give the E-mail a try and introduce me and my reason to make contact. In less than an hour I received a new phone number to call Edward any day after 5PM. I was anxious for tomorrow to pass.

It was the very next evening that I reached Edward Boyd. Upon briefly offering my condolences in the passing of his father-in-law, I began explaining who I was, and that I received his number from Warren Mitchell and was wishing to discuss John's fondness and affinity for toy soldiers.

The phone almost became silent. Only an inaudible whisper was heard. It was for just a few seconds. My psychosis registered minutes. Then all normalized as a pleasant voice announced a nice, "Hello, I am Elizabeth, John's daughter."

By asking questions and writing as fast as I could, Elizabeth related to me, "My Father had strong interests in Dimestore toy soldiers all his life...but, only began seriously collecting them in the early 80's. He possibly had over a thousand pieces. He never lost his curiosity for collecting nor his creativity to make something different.

"Many were displayed in the house. However, most were in his workshop in the basement where, after supper, he spent many hours working with his toy soldier army.

"He also corresponded with a group of other collectors exchanging soldier wish lists and want lists."

In viewing all of John's pictures that Warren forwarded to me, I noted that he made up a lot of German figures that he had mildly converted by painting and simply adding a WW II helmet and canister. They were very properly presented, but not as complex as some of the other items I have pictured.

I further found out from Elizabeth that her Father relished other collectible items. She said, "Why he had drawers full of the likes of matchbooks, coins, bottle caps, comic books and VHS tapes. Although he was a bit reticent, you had to know him because he was rather lively, especially when telling jokes. He liked that."

## JOHN M. HAMISTER ...An Uncovered Gem (Cont.)



WWII Geese Hunt



Getting Orders



Having a Hot Time



WWII I'll Get There



WWII Come On



WWII Launcher



WWII Loader



WWII Gas Attack

After a short pause that allowed me to catch-up on my scribbling's, I was told by Elizabeth, "My Father possessed an encyclopedic knowledge of all history, especially Military History, and especially the History of World War One...The War to End All Wars."

In 1929, Ithaca, New York was the place of choice for Theodore and Margaret Hamister to welcome the birth of their son, John. 1947 saw him graduating Ithaca High, and soon after he was in the U.S. Army in Germany and serving there in Intelligence through the Korean Conflict, 1951-52. A few years later, John graduated in 1959 from Cornell University with honors and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

The year before finishing Cornell, John, bitten by the love bug, in 1958 married Jean Rumsey in Ithaca. They moved later to Hillsboro, Illinois, in 1970 when John became employed as a civil engineer with the nationally recognized firm, Hurst-Rosche Engineers and Design Architects.

John was a respected engineer, spending twenty-two years with Hurst-Rosche and working throughout the Midwest on many major projects from building highways, tunnels, a dam, bridges and various urban planning undertakings.

His passing in 2008 was the result of complications from an earlier broken hip.

Many thanks are due to Warren Mitchell and his son, Alen, for contributing to this article all the pictures of John's toy soldiering; and for Warren's thoughtfulness to follow through on my request, asked two years ago, in a rediscovered E-mail; and for opening the door to his contact in John's family.

Don Pielin captured and relayed first-hand, introspective feelings of John's determined interest in the quest he so enjoyed. I am thankful and obliged, Don.

My converting soldier friend, Roger Dubois, whose research on-line sadly revealed through an obituary a short storied biography of the background of Mr. Hamister. Roger's intuition literally saved this article.



## JOHN M. HAMISTER ...An Uncovered Gem (Cont.)

How about Rodney Hopson? If there is anything you ever wish to know about Dimestore folks and/or Dimestore toy soldiers, ask Rodney. Thanks for sharing your knowledge with me.

And, of course, Elizabeth, for without her time and most generous input about her Father, from the trivial to the significant, this article would have had an immense void. A very special "Thank You," Elizabeth!!

Well, I feel that I have now known **John Michael Hamister** through slices of his life and his hobby for toy soldiering. Coincidentally, John did not sell his conversions.

You know, I would have liked him very, very much and would have most enjoyed walking by his side through the rooms and the aisles at the various Shows.

The most untimely passing of Warren Mitchell, our friend, so sadly happened before he saw the above and how much his friendship meant.

May Warren's eternity with God in His Heaven bring him everlasting Comfort and Peace.



WWII German MG



WWII with Auto Rifle



WWII Checking In



WWI with Flair Gun



WWII with Rifle



WWII with Ammo Box



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WWI with Flamethrower



WWI Small Searchlight

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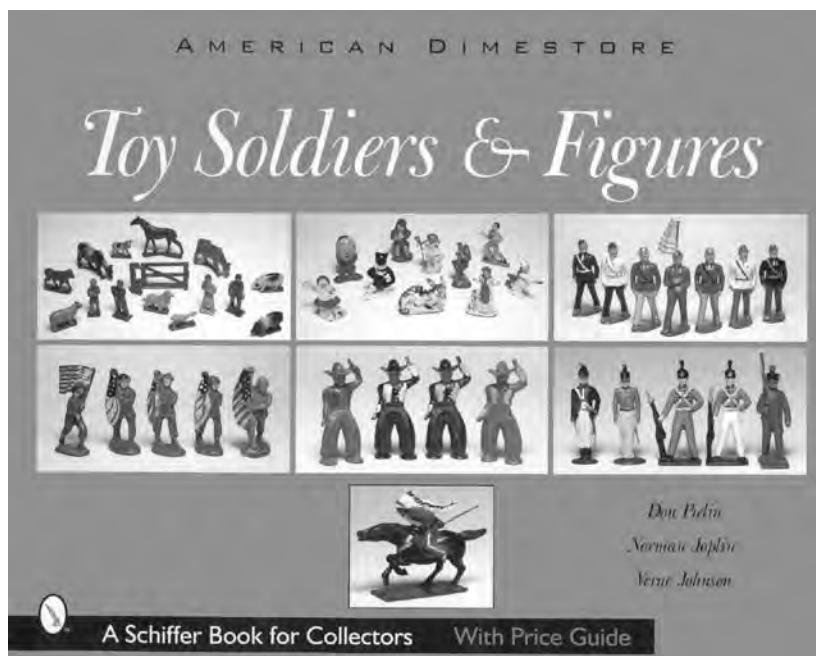
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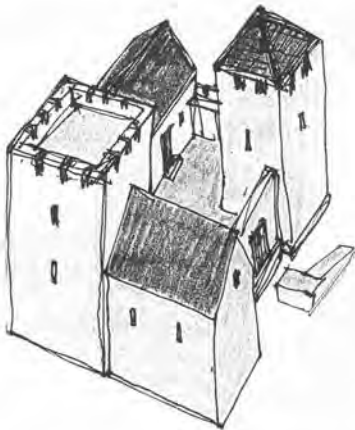
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## 2011

**May 15 - Sunday** Ohio Toy Soldier Show Galaxy Banquet Center Wadsworth Doug McClure 339-722-7651

**May 21 & 22 - Saturday and Sunday** Old Toy Soldiers Auctions USA. The Late Don Darnieder Collection Part One and The Late Fred Wehr Collection Part Two and other properties Contact Ray Haradin Tel 1-800-349-8009 raytoys@aol.com otsauctionsusa@yahoo.com or Norman Joplin info@normanjoplin.com Tel 262-692-3913.

**May 20,21,22 Friday, Saturday, Sunday.** Philip Weiss Auctions. Oceanside NY Contact 516 594 0731 www.weissauctions.com

**May 27, 28 & 29 - Saturday, Sunday, Monday.** Texas Toy Soldier Show Menger Hotel San Antonio, Texas Nick Versteeg 760-723-6583 www.sdsoldiers.com

**June 2 -Thursday.** Bonhams Auction Montpelier Street. Knightsbridge London UK. The Gene Johnson Collection and the Isaac Gutman Collection Part 1 Collection. Contact Leigh Gotch 44(0) 208 963 2836 www.bonhams.com

**June 4 - Saturday** Heart of the South Toy Soldier Show Annandale Ed Gries 210-257-2687

**June 25 - Saturday** Toy Soldier Show London Royal National Hotel www.thetoysoldiersshow.com

**June 28- Tuesday.** Vectis Toy Soldier and Figure Auction Nils Fischer Part 2. Teeside UK. Contact simon.clarke@vectis.co.uk www.vectis.co.uk

**July 2- Saturday.** Special Auction Services. **The Roy Selwyn Smith Archive Collection Auction.** Newbury United Kingdom Contact Hugo Marsh or Bob Leggett (0) 44 1635 580595.toys@specialauctionservices.com or for more info **SEE ARTICLE AND ADVERTISEMENT IN THIS ISSUE.**

**July 23-Saturday and July 24 Sunday** Toy Soldier Extravaganza & Toy Soldier Auction. Saturday. Toy Soldier Show Sunday. Holiday Inn, Livonia, Michigan. Contact Joe Saine 419 662 8697 www.josephsaine.com

**August 11 & 12 Thursday and Friday** Kulmbach, Germany www.stadt-kulmbach .die

**August 13- 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 Tel 803 419 6747.

**September 10 - Saturday** Norman Joplin's Old Toy Soldier Show Holiday Inn Bloomsbury London. Email info@normanjoplin.com

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

**September 25 - Sunday** 31st Annual Old Toy Soldier Show Chicago. Contact Don Pielin 630-497-1239 Email dimestores@aol.com

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

**October 16- 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

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

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

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

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# Advertisers Index



Alekna, Stan Email: salekna1936@yahoo.com Tel: 717-228-2361.....	40
American Dimestore Toy Soldiers and Figures - Book (Pielin, Joplin & Johnson) Email: pielin@aol.com Tel: 630-497-1239...	60
Antique Toy World Magazine PO Box 24509, Chicago, IL 60634.....	60
Arley L. Pett Antiques Email: APett92117@aol.com Tel: 978-283-2612 Fax: 978-283-2496 .....	63
Armies of the World - Book, Joe Wallis .....	60
Belgian Composition - Vin Russo Tel: 203-266-4235 Email: vindotti@erols.com.....	61
Bonhams www.bonhams.com Leigh Gotch +44 (0) 20 7393 3898 leigh.gotch@bonhams.com James Opie +44 (0) 20 7794 7447 jamesopie@yahoo.co.uk.....	30
Britains Civilian Toy Figures Tel: 262-692-3913 Email: info@normanjoplin.com .....	40
Brunton's Barracks www.bruntonsbaracks.com Email: pam@bruntonsbaracks.com Tel: 928-717-1698 .....	62
Bryerton's Military Miniatures Tel: 312-666-2800.....	13
Clark, Peter Tel: 202-544-3348 Email: psclark@verizon.net.....	62
Collection For Sale Bud Wagner Tel: 715-421-4664 .....	36
Counterpane Gallery Email: countRpane@aol.com Tel/Fax: 703-536-3064 .....	46
Dutkins Collectables www.dutkins.com Email: richd@dutkins.com Fax: 800-682-8163.....	44
East Coast Toy Soldier Show - Hackensack Bill Lango Tel: 973-831-8900.....	41
Figuren Magazin www.figuren-magazin.de Email: redaktion@figuren-magazin.de Tel: +49 30 392 94 90 Fax: + 49 30 398 48 166 .....	13
First Legion www.firstlegionltd.com .....	47
Green's Collectables www.greenscollectables.com Email: ma52557@aol.com Tel: 973-627-4961.....	53
Henry Kurtz, Ltd. Tel: 212-642-5904 Fax: 212-874-6018 .....	63
Hobby Bunker www.hobbybunker.com Email: matt@hobbybunker.com Tel: 781-321-8855 Fax: 781-321-8866.....	12
Hocker, William Tel: 510-841-4458.....	4
Keller, Christian B. Email: doktorkec@aol.com .....	61
King and Country Tel: Hong Kong (852) 2861 3450 Email: sales@kingandcountry.com .....	IBC
La Boite De Soldats Tel/Fax (0) 1 45 78 89 44 .....	46
Le Petit Soldat www.lepetitsoldat.com Email: jcarleton@aol.com Tel: (314) 567-3311 .....	53
London Bridge www.londonbridgetoys.com Email: lbt@londonbridgetoys.com Tel/Fax: 610-967-6887 .....	55

## Advertisers Index (Cont.)

Memphis Toy Soldier Tel: 901-218-7046 memphistoysoldier@bellsouth.net.....	54
Mignot www.lepetitsoldat.com Email: jcarleton@aol.com Tel: 314-862-3311 / 866-862-3311; Fax: 314-862-8311 .....	53
Moorefield Miniatures 937-399-6507 .....	62
Morlan, Scott G. Tel: *82 949 574 9259 email: scotoyz@hotmail.com.....	61
Norman Joplin's Old Toy Soldier Show .....	38
Northcoast Miniatures 54mmtoysoldier.com Email: joconnell06@comcast.net Tel: 707-537-7620 .....	54
Ohio Toy Soldier Show Contact: (330) 722-6751 .....	40
Old Toy Soldier Auctions USA Email: raytoys@aol.com • info@normanjoplin.com .....	IFC
Old Toy Soldier Back Issues Email: raytoys@aol.com .....	3
Old Toy Soldier Home www.oldsoldierhome.com Tel: 760-758-5481 Fax: 760-758-7004.....	55
OTSN Chicago Show Contact 630-497-1239 Email: dimestores@aol.com .....	39
Peter Nathan Toy Soldiers Tel: (612) 9279 2668 Fax: (612) 9279 2658 www.toysoldiers.com.au Email: peter@toysoldiers.com.au .....	13
Rodden Heraldic Sculpture roddenheraldic.com Tel/Fax: 603-742-7480.....	45
Rodneys Dimestore Gallery Tel: 850-932-6522 Email: castings@mchsi.com.....	8
Saine, Joseph 419-662-8697 www.josephsaine.com .....	54
Sierra Toy Soldier Company Tel: 408-564-4133 Fax: 408-257-0166 www.sierratoyssoldier.com.....	13
Somerset Ltd. Tel: 615-513-9965 Email: somersetltd@earthlink.net .....	61
Special Auction Services Contact Hugo Marsh Tel: 011 (44) 1635 580 595 .....	29
Stan Clark Military Books Tel: 717-337-3669 Fax: 717-337-0581 Email: scmb@earthlink.net.....	62
Toy Soldier Extravaganza - Joe Saine Tel: 419-662-8697 www.josephsaine.com .....	37
Toy Soldier Museum, The www.the-toy-soldier.com. Tel: 570-629-7227 .....	55
Toy Soldier Shop 202-546-2201 toysoldiershop.com.....	40
Toymaker of Williamsburg, The www.toymakerofwilliamsburg.com Tel 800-343-8697 .....	5
Tradition of London Limited www.traditionoflondon.com Email: shop@traditionoflondon.com Tel: 011-44-207493-7452 Fax: 011-44-207355-1224 .....	BC
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Vectis Auctions www.vectis.co.uk Email: admin@vectis.co.uk Tel: 011-44-1642-750616 Fax: 011-44-1642-769478 .....	20
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