

COLLECTOR

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A Quarterly Look at Our World in Miniature



A View from The Trenches...

WELCOME TO THE VERY first edition of COLLECTOR, King & Country's own look into the fascinating and colourful hobby of collecting miniature figures.

The aim of this quarterly newsletter is to provide you, our valued customer, with an interesting and we hope, entertaining insight into our world.

We want to take you "behind the scenes" and show you exactly what goes into the production of a new range or the expansion of an existing series. We'll attempt to explain the creative process from conception of an idea through design to master carving and painting all the way up to final production*.

At the same time COLLECTOR will feature guest contributors who will tell you about some of the more unusual and varied aspects of collecting toy soldiers and figurines.

Finally, we will preview some of our latest releases and give you a "sneak peek" at a few of our upcoming offerings.

We're excited about this new development and want to share it with you... we hope you like it. Any comments, good or bad will be welcome. In the meantime, sit back and enjoy this first edition of COLLECTOR. Happy Collecting!

* An in-depth feature in our next issue will focus on this creative process from concept through to finished product.

"Forward March!"
A selection of some of our new Black Watch figures.

Andy C. Neilson
Co-founder & Creative Director
King & Country



A concept sketch of a German N.C.O. from our upcoming GROSSDEUTSCHLAND series.

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To Hell and Back

OCTOBER 2002 SAW THE release of three sets of GI's in action to add to our D. DAY'44 collection. In the past, America's foremost fighting Divisions – the 1st Infantry (*the Big Red One*); the 29th Infantry (*the Blue and Grey*) and, of course the two famous Airborne divisions – the 82nd (*All American*) and the 101st (*the Screamin' Eagles*).

This time we wanted to highlight one more famous fighting unit...the 3rd Infantry division (*Rock of the Marne*). This particular division saw action in North Africa, Sicily, Italy and France before finishing the war in Germany in 1945.

The Medal of Honor, established in 1861, is the highest U.S. award for bravery



we've featured many of our GI's in action to add to our D. DAY'44 collection. In the past, America's foremost fighting Divisions – the 1st Infantry (*the Big Red One*); the 29th Infantry (*the Blue and Grey*) and, of course the two famous Airborne divisions – the 82nd (*All American*) and the 101st (*the Screamin' Eagles*).



DD33

Probably the Division's most famous soldier was a young Texan called Audie Murphy, who became America's most decorated combatant of WWII. Audie Murphy survived the war and returned a hero to the "States". He was invited out to Hollywood and at the suggestion of screen tough guy James Cagney became a movie actor and author. His first major role was as a young Union soldier in John Huston's film of Stephen Crane's classic tale of the Civil War, "The Red Badge of Courage".

Audie also wrote his own biography which later became a box-office hit movie "To Hell and Back!". After twenty years of movie making, mostly Westerns, he was tragically killed in a plane crash in 1967.

As a young boy growing up in Scotland in the 1950's, I well remember seeing the movie "To Hell and Back!". I little realized that one day, many years later, I would design a set of figures and a fighting vehicle as a tribute to Audie Murphy and the men of the 3rd Infantry Division.



AVAILABLE NOW!

DD32 THE MORTAR TEAM

Three 3rd Infantrymen man an 81mm Mortar.

DD33 THE PATROL

A four-man patrol of the 3rd Infantry.

DD34 AIRBORNE BAZOOKA TEAM

Three paratroopers and a glider trooper of the 82nd Airborne.

DD35 M16 QUAD .50 HALFTRACK

The M16 Halftrack comes with a fully rotating and elevating .50 calibre gun mounting and three figures – all 3rd Infantry Division.

DD35



QUESTION & ANSWER

Q. What's a "Tommy Gun"?

A. During World War One it was realized that rifle sections needed a light-weight automatic weapon that could be used at close quarters. The Germans as usual, had in fact invented a relatively light weight fully automatic submachine gun that could be carried and operated by one man. The Bergmann, named after its inventor, was used by their storm troops in the last major German offensive in 1918. It proved to be a useful and practical weapon.

Over the Atlantic in America, John H. Thompson was at work on his own fully automatic weapon which he patented in 1921. Unfortunately for him the much reduced and seriously underfunded U.S. Army of the 1920's showed little or no enthusiasm for the new weapon.

The roaring 20's, Prohibition and the rise of organized crime unexpectedly came to his rescue.

With Prohibition (the ban on the production, selling and buying of liquor) came into force in 1920, there was an explosion of illegal bootlegging and associated crimes. Gangs of criminals fought the law and themselves to capture and hold lucrative States and cities.

To handle these violent gangsters, law enforcement found itself seriously "under-gunned". The quick-firing Thompson submachine gun rapidly became an essential weapon in the police arsenal. Orders began to pour in for the Thompson now better known as the "Tommy Gun". Soon however it fell into the hands of the gangsters as well and received another nickname... "The Chicago Piano".

No Hollywood crime movie of the period was complete without "hoods" and cops shooting it out with their "Tommy-Guns".

By the outbreak of WWII, the Thompson had long been accepted by the U.S. Army and went on to arm many other allied nations.

A few "Tommy-Gun" points-of-interest...

- Tom Hanks in "Saving Private Ryan" carries an M1A1 Thompson.
- The Thompson fires a .45 calibre round (same as the 1911 Colt automatic pistol) and has a cyclic rate of fire of 700-800 rounds per minute.
- Three different bullet magazines are available: a 20 round stick, a 30 round stick and a 50 round drum.



Classic Blitzkrieg

KING & COUNTRY'S LATEST additions to its World War II range are a bit of a departure. Gordon Neilson, younger brother of Cofounder Andy C. Neilson explains, "Virtually all of our previous German releases were Waffen SS infantry who pioneered the use of camouflage uniforms in WWII. We felt it was time to show the Wehrmacht (the regular German Army) in action and the company chose the early-mid war period of 1939-1943."

"At that time," he continues, "the standard German uniform was a gray/green tunic and field gray trousers with long jackboots."

With this in mind, King & Country delved into their photo and video archives to research exactly how these troops looked and how they wore their uniform and equipment.



"There was a lot of visual information on the BLITZKRIEG period - the Fall of France; the Invasion of Russia" Gordon says.

As both of these epic events took place in the hot summer months of 1940 and '41, a general look for the new figures was

easily agreed upon. Open-necked tunics, rolled-up sleeves and steel helmets in some cases slung on belts.

Five different sets were designed including an anti-tank gun and a brand-new Panzer II light tank. "All of the sets," Gordon says, "can relate to each other and when put together can tell a story". Many of the individual figures were modeled on real photos of the period and capture the optimism and confidence of the ordinary German soldier at this victorious period of the war.

K&C chose to name these figures after one of the Wehrmacht's most famous fighting Divisions... "GROSSDEUTSCHLAND". This division saw continuous action throughout WWII from the lush fields of France to the barren wastes of Russia and many points in between.

For collectors of our recently released German Cavalry and some of our early-war, gray painted fighting vehicles, these "Classic Germans" will be a welcome addition.

Here's a quick look at what will be available by December 2002.



"GROSSDEUTSCHLAND" Infantry and Armour

WS38 "MG34 GUN TEAM"

A lying prone machine-gunner takes aim while his kneeling section leader observes the enemy position. Backing them up are two rifle carrying infantrymen.

WS39 "ATTACK!"

A sergeant indicates the enemy while a kneeling rifleman takes careful aim and two other infantrymen rush forward.

WS40 "MARCHING INFANTRY"

Contrary to popular myth, the majority of German Infantry went into battle on foot. 75% of the army's transport and artillery was horse-drawn! Here four foot sloggers make their way forward.

All are in a weary but cheerful mood, they confidently expect victory is within their grasp.

WS41 "PANZER II SET"

In the early-war years, the PANZER II formed the backbone of the German armour and fought in Poland, the Low Countries and France and, of course, Russia.

Our model is in panzer gray but covered in dust from the rapid advance.

A young tanker appears out of the turret hatch looking on as two Infantry use his tank for cover in their attack.





Somewhere in France, June 1940

WS42 "THE 37mm ANTI-TANK GUN"

This small, easily portable anti-tank gun was an infantry support weapon and could knock out or disable most enemy armoured vehicles of the early-war era.

An NCO directs his two gunners onto a new target whilst the supporting infantry put in a flanking attack.

WS42



BACKGROUND FACTS

"GROSSDEUTSCHLAND" was originally formed as the resident guard Regiment in



pre war Berlin. "Greater Germany" and its members were chosen from all over Germany. It was awarded a prestigious cuff title (worn arm) in 1940 and its sign was a "Stahlhelm" (steel



This is a typical line sketch showing the pose, equipment and uniform of one of our classic German infantrymen. Our sculptor will use this as a reference.

Down a French road the advance continues...

Its title means "Lightning War" and that is what Poland experienced on September 1, 1939. Form dawn, concentrated columns of fast-moving armour, infantry and artillery punched holes through the static Polish defences and advanced deep into the country.

BLITZKRIEG

Blitzkrieg literally translated means "Lightning War" and that is what Poland experienced on September 1, 1939.

From dawn, concentrated columns of fast-moving armour, infantry and artillery punched holes through the static Polish defences and advanced deep into the country.

At the same time airfields, railway junctions and communications centers were attacked by Goering's Luftwaffe and left in ruins. Refugees fleeing the battles and reinforcements trying to move forward were constantly bombed and strafed from the air further spreading panic.



All of this combined to confuse the Polish defenders and enable the German attackers to surround and destroy their opposition almost at will. This was Blitzkrieg working with a vengeance. By September 12 virtually all of western Poland and most of its Army was in German hands.

But Poland was only a preliminary...the real test of Blitzkrieg was still to come – the attack on Holland, Belgium and France. As 1939 ended and 1940 began the German High Command and Hitler planned, schemed and fine tuned their Blitzkrieg tactics. Even they could not have dreamed how successful they would be in the coming battle.



Beware of the Tiger!

OF THE MANY WEAPONS used during WWII, a number became famous and a few became household words... Spitfire... Mustang... Jeep and, of course, TIGER.

Germany's Tiger tank not only became a much-feared legend because of the Nazi propaganda machine but also because to the Allies it was the most powerful and deadly enemy tank.

For almost 3 years, no Allied tank could match its awesome capabilities. Its combination of armour, firepower and maneuverability made the Tiger a challenger none of its opponents could meet on equal terms.

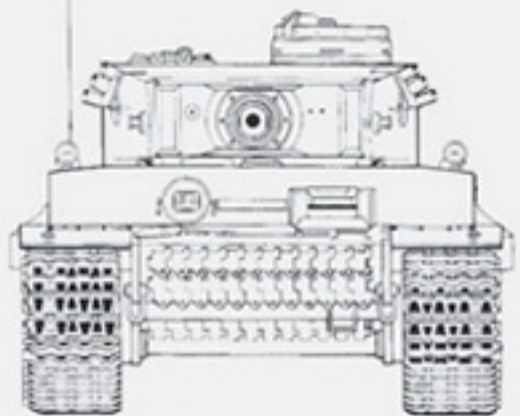
TIGER PRODUCTION

This is K&C's fifth version of the mighty monster. 10 years ago, we produced our first - a wooden model made in China (only 50 were built). Then we shifted to the Philippines for our Mk.2 - another 50 hand-carved versions produced. These were beautiful models with opening hatches, elevating guns but also incredibly expensive (original retail price US\$350 each).

If you can obtain one of these rare Tiger models today expect to pay upwards of US\$1800, one of our top U.S. collectors just did!

Our third model was the first polystone Tiger, made in China again. Hull number 205 came complete with a standing Michel Wittman and was produced in both winter and summer camouflage versions. Hundreds of these were manufactured. It sold out in less than 9 months.

In 2001, we designed and produced a brand-new 4th version polystone Tiger. This one (hull number 131) featured two open turret hatches complete with a tank commander and a crewman. Again it was a best-seller and sold out by the summer of 2002.



A NEW TIGER

With the imminent sell-out of this 4th version, we started planning a replacement immediately. In line with our policy of always wanting a new model to be an improvement on its predecessor and even better value for money the design work began.

TIGER #5 is, without doubt, the best yet. We've decided to make another Tiger associated with Michel Wittman, the legendary tank ace. This time, most poignantly, his last Tiger, hull number 007. This was the vehicle he was in when leading a troop of Tigers in a counter attack on Allied armour in Normandy on August 8, 1944.



Michel Wittman
Germany's
leading tank ace
of WWII

After knocking out several enemy Shermans, Wittman's own tank was ambushed by five other Shermans including a British Firefly version armed with a 17lb gun. This was the only Allied tank gun capable of disabling a Tiger. Simultaneously fired on from three sides, Wittman's Tiger blew up...there were no survivors.

SS HAUPTSTURMFÜHRER MICHEL WITTMAN

Michel Wittman was born on April 22, 1914 in Vogelthal, Germany. He enrolled in the Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler in 1937 and commanded an armoured car in the early campaigns in Poland and France.

By 1941 he was in the Balkans in charge of a self-propelled assault gun and won the Iron Cross. In his baptism of fire in Russia,

Tiger ausf E

Length 27 feet 9 inches
Width 12 feet 3 inches
Height 9 feet 4 2/3 inches
Weight 56 tons



WS43

Michel Wittman's
Last Tiger. Fully elevating
88mm gun plus three crew figures.

his STUG assault gun knocked out 6 of 8 attacking Soviet tanks. Wounded twice he was awarded his second Iron Cross in September 1941.

He was commissioned an officer in December 1942 and early in 1943 was commanding his first Tiger in Russia.

By January 1944, his personal tally stood at 66 enemy tanks. The day before he received his knight's Cross, he destroyed another 19 Soviet tanks and 3 assault guns.

In April 1944, Wittman and Leibstandarte were transferred to France to prepare for the long-awaited Allied invasion. His tank kills alone now stood at 117 "Kills". He was further awarded the Oak Leaves to his Knight's Cross.

On June 13, seven days after D.DAY, Wittman led an attack by 4 Tigers and a Panzer IV against a British armoured column in the small Normandy town of Villers-Bocages.

The British, who had halted, were caught by surprise as Wittman and his troop rampaged through the town destroying the Allied tanks and halftracks at point-blank range. Over 25 armoured vehicles were left in flames before Wittman escaped and the entire British advance ground to a complete halt.

For this particular action, he was awarded Swords to his Knight's Cross on June 22, 1944 and promoted to SS Hauptsturmführer (Captain).

Just 6 weeks later he was killed in action. His final tally was 138 tanks and assault guns and 132 anti tank guns.





On The Streets Of Old Hongkong

COLLECTORS OF THIS nostalgic and colourful series always know to expect something special for the festive season and this year is no exception.

THE FLUTE PLAYERS

Set #HK106 features a group of five young ladies at flute practice. Each of the seated group plays a different kind of flute and each is superbly painted* in a different style of traditional Chinese "Cheung Sam". "Street" enthusiasts also expect attention paid to even the smallest details. That includes the ceramic drum stools the ladies are sitting on. Each one has a varied style and pattern but all accurately mirror the real designs of actual antique drum stools.

Set #HK107 "A Chinese Lady Painting" is just what it says. Here a young lady from a wealthy family delicately paints a floral scroll whilst seated at her painting table. Carefully arranged upon it are her paints and brushes as well as a European clock to remind her of the passing of the day. Study this piece carefully and you will see that she is also carefully holding the sleeve cuff of her jacket. This is to ensure she does not get paint on it and that the long cuff does not smear her delicate painting.

Both of these sets will be available in early December 2002.

* PAINTER EXTRAORDINAIRE

Over the years King & Country has been fortunate to utilize the creative expertise and talents of some very fine figure painters.

One of the finest and most skilful of this small select band is Mrs. Vicky Holmes, a native Singaporean who along with her British husband David has lived in Hong Kong for many years.

Her involvement with K&C goes back almost to our very earliest days. At that time (the mid 1980's) we actually painted many of our toy soldiers "in-house" here in Hong Kong and were looking for part-time painters. After placing some advertisements in local magazines, we recruited a team of amateur but enthusiastic figures painters of which Vicky was one.

Very rapidly her natural artistic flair came to our notice. Entirely self-taught she had no formal art training at school but had an innate ability and skill with colour and form.

She very quickly graduated from the "production line" to master painting which is to paint the sample all other "line painters" try to emulate.

As K&C's figures grew in detail and complexity so too did Vicky's skills. Whether it's painting a difficult camouflage pattern for a World War Two German or creating a finely detailed pattern on a traditional Chinese costume Vicky will always rise to the occasion.

HK107



Some fine model figure painters have the ability to copy and translate a 2-dimensional illustration of a uniform in a book into a 3-dimensional figure.

Vicky can also do that with consummate skill. But, very, very few can design in their own head and create an intricate native costume for a non military subject with little or no background information.

What's also amazing is how Vicky manages to do all of this whilst also running her household, looking after her husband and two sons and playing competitive tennis. She's also a highly skilled home decorator - superwoman indeed.

At King & Country, we feel privileged to work with her and fortunate to employ her many talents.

Vicky's most recent creative assignments have included master painting HK106 The Flute Players and our very first Santa Claus set XM02-01 both of which should be on sale in December.

EXTRA SPECIAL CHRISTMAS PROMOTION AT PACIFIC PLACE

Pacific Place is Hong Kong's premier shopping mall and the location of the King & Country Store. Every year Pacific Place runs a special Christmas Gift Programme to reward regular customers with a unique item.

This year we're proud to say King & Country was selected to participate in this exciting event.

Our help was also requested to make two fabulous displays as part of Pacific Place's Christmas decorations.

Our displays are in the form of giant glass snow globes* containing an English village setting from "The World of Dickens" and part of a traditional Chinese town from "Streets of Old Hong Kong".

These miniature landscape dioramas will contain many unique features such as house lights that go on and off, a moving train and swirling snow flakes.

Visitors will also see hundreds of our figures from both series populating the displays.

HK102



An enlarged section of HK102 "The Opium Smokers" showing some of the fine detail and character in Vicky's painting.

Revolution

KING & COUNTRY's 1776 series of American Revolution figures is one of our best selling ranges. Launched back in the year 2000 this group of figures has gone from strength to strength. This is already the second group of additions.

Featured this time are seven individual soldiers of the famous Scottish Regiment, The Black Watch. These are available in dramatic action poses and sold singly.

We've also produced after many requests, two sets of 4-man gun crews to man our separate Revolutionary War cannon. One set is painted to represent the Royal Artillery, the other as a typical Continental Army gun crew.

First launched at the Chicago Old Toy Soldier Show* in September 2002, these new figures received wide acclaim for their detailed sculpting and painting. Among the new pieces are...

- BR24** Marching Highlander
- BR25** Standing Firing Highlander
- BR26** Standing Ready Highlander
- BR27** Highland Drummer
- BR28** Highland Bag Piper
- BR29** Highland Officer with Flag
- BR30** Kneeling Ready Highlander

BR31 Royal Artillery Sergeant and Three Gunners ready to man their piece

AR34 Four Continental Gunners in the same action poses



THE OLD TOY SOLDIER SHOW • CHICAGO • 2003

*The Old Toy Soldier Newsletter Show (OTSN) is held annually in late September at the Hyatt Regency, Schaumburg, near Chicago, Illinois U.S.A. The 2003 Show takes place on September 28 from 10:00am to 3:30 pm.

Dealers, vendors and collectors from all over the world start arriving as early as the previous Wednesday (the actual public show is held on the following Sunday). Hotel rooms are converted into mini showrooms and shops. Dealers and collectors alike roam from room to room looking, buying, exchanging and just having fun. Rooms stay open from early morning till late at night and you're always sure of a welcome.

It is the biggest gathering of toy soldier people in the world and great fun. If you would like more details, contact Mr. Don Pielin at 847-541-2439 or King & Country. If you love toy soldiers, this is the Mecca for you.

ALSO AVAILABLE:

- AR26** Continental Cannon
- BR15** British Cannon

THE BLACK WATCH

One of Scotland's oldest Regiments and most famous. The 'Watch' has fought in every war involving the British Army since its formation in the early 18th Century. It was also the last British Regiment to serve in Hong Kong before the Colony's handover to China in 1997.

Santa's Book of Good Little Girls & Boys

And now for something completely different... our first ever Santa Claus figure. For many collectors, the Christmas season is their favourite time of the year. It's when family and friends buy them a special set or

BR24



XM02-01



figure or the collector buys sets and figures as gifts for others.

Whatever the reason one of the great symbols of Yuletide is Father Christmas or Santa Claus.

As it's also our favourite time of the year we decided to start a new King & Country tradition - a Santa Claus figure. Every year from now on, we will produce a limited edition figure featuring Santa and different aspects of the Festive Season.

XM02-01, our first release, shows a seated Santa, a bursting satchel full of toys at his feet consulting his address book to see which little boys and girls have been good all year and deserve a visit from him.

In the background is a traditional Christmas Tree complete with candles, decorations and even more presents surrounding it.

If you wish to obtain this very first Santa, contact your nearest K&C dealer or call us direct.



AR34