

★ KING & COUNTRY ★

COLLECTOR

蒐集者

A Quarterly Look at Our World in Miniature

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EMPERORS, ENSIGNS
& ENEMIES...



Chinese woman with child



Reichsparteitag-Nürnberg



A View From The Trenches...



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WELCOME TO THE SECOND issue of "COLLECTOR", our very personal glimpse into the world of toy soldiers and miniature figures.

In this edition we will be showing (and telling) you about how we go about creating some of the figures we produce. This article will be in 3 parts... the first installment, looks at the initial stages of the creative process.

We will also be turning the spotlight on one of our more controversial ranges... the Berlin'38 series which features Hitler's SS bodyguard Regiment "Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler". This long-running collection has recently been completely redesigned and resculpted. The finished results await your inspection... and comments.

On a more colourful note we are also launching our first new Napoleonic soldiers in almost 10 years! You'll be getting a preview of what's in store as well as some fascinating background details.

Another feature highlights the passion of one of K&C's biggest fans... Mr Peter Martin of Thousand Oaks, California. Peter, has converted one whole room of his beautiful home into a K&C battleground. An urban landscape of battle-scarred houses and streets is fought over by literally hundreds of King & Country World War II soldiers and fighting vehicles.

So, sit back and relax and begin your journey into our world in miniature. **HAPPY COLLECTING!**

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

*A group of 71st Highlanders
defend the Colour.*



Up From The Drawing Board...

SOME OF THE QUESTIONS I get asked most often by collectors are "How do you go about designing and making toy soldiers? Where do you get the ideas? How long does it take?" I hope this three-part article will give you the collector a better insight into exactly what we do, why we do it and how we do it.

Creative Conception or "Think up an idea!"

I never have any shortage of ideas for figures. If anything I have too many! History provides literally thousands of potential ideas for figures... Ancient Rome... Medieval Europe... the First and Second World Wars to name but a few. Then there's great movies like "ZULU"... "SAVING PVT. RYAN"... "BLACKHAWK DOWN". Current affairs inspired K&C to produce our best-selling "AFGHANISTAN" range of Special Forces. So, there's plenty to choose from, but we still have to narrow it down to a specific era or event.



Strategic Planning

Every year we plan ahead for the coming 12 months. We look at what's selling and how fast. We consider additions to existing series and completely new ranges. Discussions between the creative team and the sales and marketing people narrow the focus onto specific areas which we feel will be both artistically challenging and commercially popular.



Our soon-to-be released "Age of Napoleon" series is a good example of how our system works. The creative group loved the vibrant colour, incredible variety and dynamic action of the Napoleonic Wars. Sales and Marketing actively supported this because they were getting a lot of requests from dealers and collectors alike for K&C to move into this important area. All of us felt that K&C could bring a fresh and exciting approach to this particular area of collecting.

Two Dimensional Design

First we decide on a certain number of figures to produce. In this case 12 British and 12 French. What should they be doing? We reasoned that the French should attack and the British should defend. At K&C we like our figures to tell a story...

Going over some books on the Peninsular War in Spain I came upon a long-forgotten action where a company of the 71st Highlanders went to the aid of a colour party of the 50th Foot who were being attacked by French Infantry. Perfect! A small dramatic action that illustrated our idea.

Now we had the idea, next we needed the figures... K&C's library of illustrated history and uniform books provided a wealth of detail on dress, equipment and weaponry. Battle paintings in some of these books suggested poses for the soldiers. I make lots of rough pencil sketches before I select the best to be line drawn in ink to present

to our team. At that meeting alternations are suggested... amendments made... and, sometimes completely new ideas are put forward. For King & Country this preliminary stage is vital. We save a lot of time, money and energy working out visually what works before we bring in the sculptors.

It's amazing how a set of line drawings side-by-side can alter the action of the figures. It's also fascinating to compare the original concept drawing with the finished figure and see some of the subtle differences and changes that have been incorporated.

Finally, we're ready to go to the next stage... sculpting. In the next installment we will explain and illustrate how one of our skilled sculptors converts a 2-dimensional idea into 3-dimensional reality.



"How long does all this take?"

Initial discussions on new ideas and series can take as little as 30 minutes or as long as an entire working day. In the case of the Napoleonic it only took a couple of hours. The rough pencil stage took a bit longer... about 3 days.

The finished ink drawings of each figure (including additional uniform and equipment research) amounted to approximately 4 weeks. Although I fitted in other work during the same period.

Over the years I've found that the better the idea the easier it is to conceptualize and draw. The Age of Napoleon was a delight to work on... and it made a colourful and welcome change from WWII subjects.

Next Installment: Master Carving...

"Vive L'Empereur!"

FOR TOY SOLDIER COLLECTORS the Napoleonic era remains one of the most collected historical periods. Its popularity is due to any number of factors: The incredible variety of colourful uniforms... The larger-than-life personalities... The dramatic sweep of great military events... and, of course, the spirit of the man who gave his name to the era... Napoleon Bonaparte.

There can be few collectors who are not excited by the sight of a troop of green-coated French Dragoons trotting along a display cabinet. Perhaps it's a company of red-jacketed British infantry forming a defensive square. Maybe it's a pair of cannon being served by their gunners...

For whatever reason the splendour and spectacle of Napoleonic toy soldiers has few equals. That's why King & Country has, after hundreds of requests, decided to enter the battle and throw our hat into the ring!

A figure of Napoleon custom-designed by K&C for Del Prado of Spain. (K&C's own special version)

SETTING THE SCENE...

The years between 1793-1815 provide an amazing wealth of locations where you can feature your toy soldiers in battle. From the burning sands of the Egyptian Campaign to the doomed invasion of Russia... and all points in between.

Nearly all of our competitors "do" the most famous battle "Waterloo". However as K&C collectors know we like to be different and come up with a fresh approach.

The Peninsular Campaign (1808-1813) was a long, grueling struggle for all the combatants. Britain and France and their allies fought a series of great battles that saw the devastation of war rage across Spain and Portugal.

Both sides experienced victory and defeat before the British eventually triumphed in 1813.

This then was our battlefield next we selected the principal players...

SELECTING THE ACTORS...

I often compare producing a new range of toy soldiers to making a movie.

Together with my creative team we select a subject... build a story... choose a setting... select the actors... and then direct the action! Because of the enormity of Napoleonic Armies, we also had to focus on one small area to begin with. We decided to launch an infantry to infantry engagement. We realized that not all collectors have "bottomless pockets". So, early on, it was agreed to design a set of figures that could be bought individually piece-by-piece. That way a collector has maximum flexibility in his purchasing.



NA23
Mounted Officer
of the Third Line
Infantry

Simultaneously we wanted the soldiers to physically "relate" to each other. This means that they can be placed in either small or large groups and they still look as if they belong together.



Kneeling,
loading Voltigeur

COSTUMES & WARDROBE

The background story to our new series featured a small battle between a company of British Light Infantry and a regiment of French Line Infantry. We researched the uniforms and chose typical "Peninsular War" styles to suit the figures. The British forsook their usual heavy gray woolen trousers for cooler, white cotton, locally made versions. However, contemporary reports mention the variable quality of these garments and that they were often easily torn and often patched. The French units involved in this skirmish were Grenadiers and Voltigeurs from the 3rd Line Infantry Regiment. Research showed subtle but important differences in both soldier's uniforms. This was included in our master painting.

These are the kinds of details that K&C like to incorporate into our toy soldiers that make them "come alive" for collectors.



Crouching Voltigeur



"Lights... Camera... Action!"

The figures have been designed... the masters carved and painted... the samples approved... production complete and the first supplies shipped to our warehouse in Hong Kong ready to go overseas! So, what can you expect to see? THE BRITISH (71st HIGHLANDERS) were originally uniformed in the Highland fashion of kilts and bonnets before converting in 1805 to light infantry style of trousers and shako.



- NA01 British Standing Ready
- NA02 British Kneeling to repel
- NA03 British Standing Firing
- NA04 British Kneeling Firing
- NA05 British Standing Loading
- NA06 British Kneeling Ready
- NA07 British Fighting Sergeant
- NA08 British Bagpiper
- NA09 British Officer with Flag
- NA10 British Mounted Officer
- NA11 British Standing Ready (No Hat)
- NA12 British Kneeling to repel (wounded)



THE FRENCH (3rd Line Infantry Grenadiers & Voltigeurs). The Grenadiers can be instantly recognized by their red cords, facings and white gaiters. The Voltigeurs (or skirmishers) by their yellow and green cords, facings and black gaiters.

- NA13 French Grenadier Officer Marching
- NA14 French Grenadier Marching with Rifle
- NA15 French Grenadier Advancing with Rifle
- NA16 French Grenadier Drummer Marching
- NA17 French Voltigeur Bugler

- NA18 French Sergeant with Flag
- NA19 French Corporal Crouching
- NA20 French Kneeling Firing
- NA21 French Kneeling Loading
- NA22 French Standing Firing
- NA23 French Mounted Officer
- NA24 French Wounded Officer



So, What's Next?

These are just the first releases of what we believe will be a major series for K&C collectors. We are now at work on a very different and unique diorama setting of buildings and figures that will feature Napoleon himself. This will be available later in 2003. Look out for it!



"To Take The King's Shilling"

At the beginning of the Napoleonic Wars the ordinary British soldier was often looked upon with hostility and contempt by his fellow countrymen. The regular army offered a miserable life for an unspecified length of service. It was widely believed that only the most desperate or disreputable characters would be attracted to it.

Recruiting parties regularly attended the local Magistrates' courts looking to fill their ranks with petty criminals, vagabonds and debtors who were willing to "take the King's shilling" to avoid either jail or transportation to the penal colonies.

As the war progressed and the threat of France increased so too did the Army change. Some reforms and improved conditions did attract a better quality of recruit and the public attitude to those who "took the King's shilling" also changed.

Slowly but surely the red coat became a symbol of pride as opposed to a mark of shame.

Knights of the Swastika

AN INFORMED INTEREST in the Nazis and their regime should not be mistaken for any imagined sympathy for their distorted and perverted policies and ideals. As Winston Churchill memorably remarked "people who want to ignore unpleasant parts of history are doomed to repeat its mistakes!"

For the majority of collectors pre-war Nazi Germany is a fascinating and infamous period of modern history. A major part of this interest is the Nazi use of uniforms, symbols and displays to relay their message to their people and the rest of the world. The SS with their sinister black uniforms, nordic signs and aryan symbols played an important part in this process. A seemingly endless stream of books, documentaries and films continue to illuminate this dark era of European history.

LAH37

Standard Bearer at attention

Leibstandarte...

Originally formed in 1933, SS Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler was the Fuhrer's own Praetorian Guard. Where he went... they followed providing guard and security details at the Reich Chancellery in Berlin...at Berchtesgarden in the Austrian Alps and at all Nazi Party functions. The Leibstandarte and



LAH36

its commander Sepp Dietrich answered directly and only to Hitler.

When war broke out they became part of the "Waffen SS" or fighting SS. They saw service in Poland and France before being upgraded to armoured division status for the invasion of Russia in June 1941. The remainder of the war saw them constantly in action on the Eastern and Western Fronts. Finally they met their end trying to stem the Russian advance into Hungary in April 1945. "Leibstandarte" enjoyed a reputation for aggressiveness in attack and ferocity in defense.

LAH29

The Blood-Flag Bearer

Unfortunately they also had a darker reputation for their often ruthless and callous disregard for prisoners-of-war and civilians.

About The Figures...

24 different pieces are available in a wide variety of individual and special groupings. Among these are several well-known and infamous "personalities".

LAH31 Obergruppenfuhrer Joseph "Sepp" Dietrich.

Leibstandarte's commanding officer was a tough ex soldier who always had the welfare of his men at heart.

LAH35 Reinhard Heydrich, Chief of the dreaded SD (the Reich Security Service) and Himmler's Deputy. Cold, cruel and ambitious. Heydrich met his well-deserved end when he was ambushed and killed by Czech resistance fighters in 1942.



Hitler, Goering and Himmler inspecting an LAH detachment, Nuremberg 1938

LAH36 Leibstandarte's own drum horse "Sigrune"

This famous all-white stallion was a popular sight at parades and party rallies in pre-war Berlin and Nuremburg.

Two larger combinations also feature unique set pieces... **LAH32 The Leibstandarte Drum & Fife Corps.** 4 side drummers and 4 fifers led by a drum major.

LAH40 The "new" Hitler Staff Car.

A standing saluting Führer in his custom-made, 6-wheel Mercedes Staff Car. With him are his personal chauffeur; an SS Adjutant and 3 SS bodyguards... all seated.

LAH32



Fife and Drum Corps on parade

Release Dates

The majority of these dramatic new figures will be launched in late March/early April. Hitler's new Staff Car and the LAH Drum Horse are expected to be released sometime in April/May 2003.

Question & Answer

Q. How did the SS come into being?

A) During the 1920's Germany was in political turmoil. One group, the National Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP) or Nazis for short was led by a WWI veteran and agitator, Adolf Hitler. To protect their political meetings from disruption the Nazis formed a special strong-arm group of toughs...the Sturmabteilung or SA. Because they wore a brown uniform they were known as "Brownshirts".

Within the SA, Hitler chose a small, select sub-unit to be his personal bodyguard... the Schutzstaffel (Protection Squad) or simply the SS. Command of this group was given to a young ex chicken farmer, Heinrich Himmler. It was him who organized the SS and gave them their distinctive black uniforms, the death's head insignia and the two lightning flashes they wore on their collar patches.

As Nazi popularity grew so too did the SA and the SS. Eventually, after becoming chancellor in 1933 a power struggle developed between Hitler and Ernst Rohm, the Head of the SA. Hitler used the SS to purge him from the party in 1934. In what became known as "The Night of the Long Knives", Rohm and many of his SA leaders were ruthlessly dispatched by the SS.

On the SS became Hitler's Praetorian Guard... loyal to him and no other. Twelve terrible years were to follow which finally came to an end in the bombed, charred ruins of Berlin in May 1945.

Some SS facts...

- Prominent German businessmen who donated funds to the SS were given honorary SS ranks.
- Many of the SS rank and file were farmers' sons or came from a rural background.
- Pre 1939 no man could join the "Leibstandarte" if he had even a single filled tooth!

LAH38



SS Bugler with Death's Head Banner

Leibstandarte Officer
Leading an honour guard,
Berlin, 1935

LAH23

Officer presenting sword.
This figure is based on the above
photograph.

Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler
cuff-title based on
Hitler's signature.

LAH25

Presenting
arms

Adolf Hitler

Battleground!

PETER MARTIN LOVES King & Country. Every guest who visits his beautiful home in Thousand Oaks, California is sooner or later invited to view his spectacular K&C collection of WW2 fighting vehicles and soldiers.

American armour moves up to attack



A pair of Tigers, backed up by infantry, warily move through Peter's village...

What makes Peter's collection so special is its setting. He has converted one entire room in his home into an urban European battlefield circa 1944. A custom-built table measuring almost 60 square feet supports a maze of streets and bomb-damaged buildings that is being fought over by British and American infantry supported by Allied tanks against an entire German Battle Group. Even the most casual visitor is soon drawn in to the dozens of little dramas being played out in the miniature streets, alleyways and ruined houses of

Peter's amazing display.

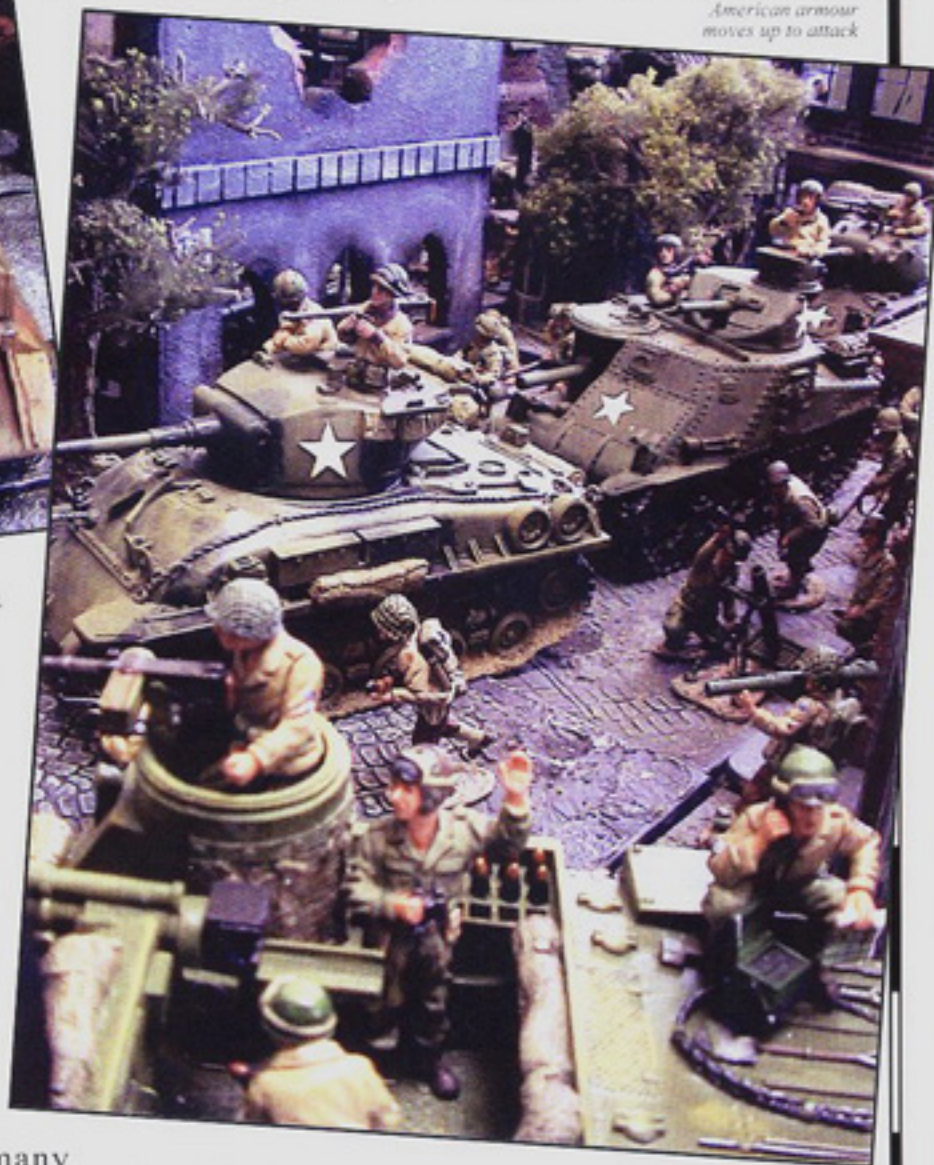
Having had the good fortune to see Peter's work at first hand I can vouch for his attention to detail and accuracy. The expatriate Brit has over the last couple of years spent many thousands of dollars on his display. More importantly for him are the many hours of enjoyment he's had building his diorama. "When I first started collecting K&C's WW2 figures and vehicles I loved the realism of them," Peter says. "In the beginning I was perfectly happy to display them on a shelf or in my display cabinets". "After a while I bought a couple of model buildings and incorporated those in my set ups." He continued. "I was amazed at how much more alive the vehicles and the figures became. You could almost see them move and hear the battle sound effects".

One building led to another... one street grew into a road junction... other

streets...

a town square. It was not long before a complete town was built. "My display is constantly evolving - I change items and accessories around to bring in the latest K&C fighting vehicle or set of soldiers," Peter says.

of his handiwork Peter is already looking to extend his "Battleground". I think I have covered the urban scene pretty well I'd like to add some countryside on the outskirts of the town". "Can you imagine a German occupied farmhouse being attacked by an American patrol?" he asks. Knowing Peter if he can imagine it.. he will be building it soon!



An American recon patrol heads down an alley...