

Figurer - British North Borneo Dyak Police fra Nostalgia Models (1974)

Indledning

Som et interessant apropos til min artikel om British North Borneo Dyak Police, 1882-1918 blev jeg gjort opmærksom på et sæt figurer, som er udbudt til salg på eBay.

British North Borneo Military Police

Figurmæssigt er vi tilbage i midten af 1970'erne, hvor den daværende meget aktive forhandler af gamle legetøjsfigurer, Shamus O.D. Wade i London, udgav en serie figurer under navnet Nostalgia Models.



Nostalgia N38 British North Borneo Military Police, Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee Procession, 1897.

Blandt disse figurer var sæt *N38 British North Borneo Military [1](#) Police, Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee Procession, 1897*. Selvom figurerne måske ikke hører til de meste elegante, så matcher de fint illustrationer af enheden, herunder den meget lange bølgeformede bajonet på Snider-Enfield geværet, som enheden var udrustet med i 1897.

Sælgeren af figurerne oplyser, at de blev introduceret 20. september 1974, og at der i alt blev fremstillet 49 officerer og 451 menige.

Nostalgia Models

Figurerne, men måske ikke alle, blev fremstillet for Shamus O.D. Wade af det waliske firma Blenheim Models, der selv fremstillede egne figurserier [2](#).

Produktionen startede i 1974 og men jeg er ikke klar over, hvornår den stoppede. Så vid vides blev der over årene fremstillet mindst 426 forskellige figursæt.

Alle figurerne forestillede enheder fra Det engelske Imperium og det senere Commonwealth, med hovedvægten på perioden 1850 til 1910.

Shamus O.D. Wade udsendte omkring 1980 et lille katalog, der viste eksempler på den hidtidige produktion. Heraf fremgår, at der som regel blev fremstillet 650 figurer, hvorefter formene blev

destrueret. Denne relativt begrænsede produktion har også gjort figurerne sjældne og det er således ikke så tit, at de ses til salg. Shamus Wade omtaler allerede den problemstilling i kataloget.

De efterfølgende sider er den verbale del af kataloget, der giver baggrunden for figurerne.

Nostalgia Models katalog fra ca. 1980, siderne 7 og 8

NOSTALGIA

The "NEW OLD" Toy Soldiers

Nostalgia Models are made **in the style** of old toy soldiers. They are **not** copies of old toy soldiers. They are painted in gloss paint and have movable arms. They are standard toy soldier size (54 mm scale). They represent different regiments of the old British Commonwealth and Empire, between 1850 and 1910. It is hoped eventually to produce at least one unit from each country, including the Indian Princely States.

The work is divided into three. The research is done by Shamus O. D. Wade. The actual models are created by Jan Evelyn Scroby, the eminent military sculptress. The production side is presided over by Frank Scroby. A number of splendid Welsh ladies in Pontycymmer do the painting. The figures are solid cast in Fry's Tandem K.A., a tin rich alloy that will never get lead disease. They are painted first in metal primer, then in non-toxic enamel.

But, when such splendid connoisseur figures are produced today, why produce "old toy soldier style" figures anyway? Some unkind soul, long ago, when discussing the relative merits of connoisseur versus toy figures said the most important thing about a soldier is that he is a member of a group. A person in military uniform, standing alone on a wooden base, is not a soldier — he is someone with halitosis at a fancy dress ball. The "new old" figure, painted in gloss, with movable arms, can be produced cheaply enough to be bought as a set of eight figures (seven and an officer or N.C.O.), ready painted. The cost of connoisseur figures, even unpainted, is a lot more. The painting of Nostalgia figures (see illustrations) is higher than that of actual toy soldiers.

Another virtue of the "new old" figures is that moulds are cheap enough to make it worthwhile producing a short run (up to 1979, Nostalgia usually produced 650 of each unit). This enables a much greater variety of figures to be produced. Between March 1974 and November 1978, 218 completely different Nostalgia figures (not just repaints, or head or arm swaps), representing 107 different units from 68 countries, were produced. With the cheapness of modern mould making techniques, there is absolutely no excuse for producing the same figure differently painted as "different Indian cavalry regiments."

Perhaps the nicest thing that happened with Nostalgia figures was when our Coke's Rifles figure (see illustration) was praised by a retired Colonel of the regiment.

Research is sometimes a long haul. A pillar of strength is Bill Carman, ex-deputy director of the National Army Museum. But the first prize for efficiency in answering a query (on the colour of a painting in the officers' mess) goes to the Adjutant of the 61st Cavalry of the present-day Indian Army; he sent a painter's colour guide with the colours marked.

Research sometimes gets a bit disheartening. For years, Shamus O. D. Wade had been unsuccessfully trying to find uniform details of the Gibraltarian Carreteros del Rey, the largest Empire contingent (for size of population) at Suakin. Recently he discovered that a gentleman who actually made their uniforms as an apprentice was still alive.

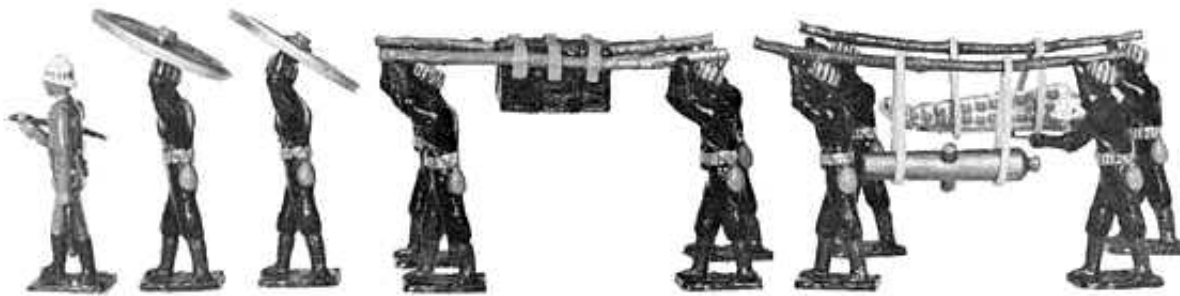
Of course, research is not just uniform details. Just as important is the type of men, who they were, what they did, physique, complexion etc. Most model soldiers seem to be made from the outside in, i.e. endless research is done to get the uniform exactly right, then a standard figure of a man is fitted into it. With Nostalgia, it is the other way round, First the man is discovered, then the uniform is added.



Front to Back: Bombay Sappers and miners c. 1897. Natal Native Horse, 1879. Camel Gunner, 3rd Nizam's Cavalry, 1848.



St. Helena Volunteer Sharpshooters, c. 1905.



Rait's Artillery, Ashanti War, 1874.

Although many Nostalgia figures have worn ornate and brightly coloured uniforms, the one that sold out quicker than any other was dressed in plain khaki. This was the figure of a Mazbhi Sikh of the 32nd Punjab Pioneers, c.1900. Because Jan Scroby knew the history of the Mazbhis, she was able to produce a superb figure with that unique "prickly" look, the result of hundreds of years of being looked down on, combined with fighting ability.

For technical reasons, only a limited number of each Nostalgia unit is produced; then the moulds are destroyed. This has led to rather an odd trade in "old" Nostalgia figures. The Drum and Bugle Band of the Wei-Hai-Wei 1st Chinese Regiment was originally sold, in August 1975, for £24.44. In October 1977 one changed hands for £200.00.

IMPORTANT

Nostalgia Models are produced in limited editions. Two new regiments of foot (or one of horse) are produced each month. The illustrations in this leaflet show some of the models produced between August 1975 and December 1977. They are illustrated to show the standard and variety of Nostalgia Models. None of them are normally on sale today.

**SEND OFF THIS COUPON TODAY FOR
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**To: Shamus O. D. Wade, 37 Davis Road, Acton,
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With every free monthly list of Nostalgia Models, you also get a free list of Britain's and other old toy soldiers.

Per Finsted

Noter:

1) Jeg har hidtil kun set enheden benævnt British North Borneo Dyak Police og British North Borneo Armed Constabulary, men måske også *Military Police* har indgået på et tidspunkt. Tilsvarende enheder i

Indien blev ofte benævnt på denne måde. Se f.eks. Assam Rifles (Wikipedia), der fra 1870 til 1917 bar navnet Assam Military Police.

2) Se The History of "Tin" or "Lead" Soldiers, PART 2 af John Tunstill (John Tunstill's World of Model Soldiers). Sammen med Del 1 af artiklen fås en god introduktion til såvel gamle som nyere legetøjssoldater.