

A SIMPLE GUARDROOM, STABLE AND STORES

Cheaply produced
from commercial
parts by
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IF ONE WANTS TO GO BEYOND a simple perspex box for displaying and photographing military figures, model military buildings in 1/32nd scale are hard to come by, although the smaller figures are well catered for by the model railway trade. In its simplest form, a background can consist merely of a row of railings, either soldered up from wire or as sold for model zoos, while for more ambitious projects much can be done in balsa, plastic sheet and card, but there really is a need for a substantial structure which is simple to erect, requires little painting and can readily be modified.

One commercial product which

meets these requirements is the riding stable manufactured by Britains. If used as supplied the basic building with the addition of only a few signs gives a military appearance, while minor alterations will give it a flavour of the period and the place, whether it be Ballycarrick Barracks or Bangalore Cantonments.

I prefer backgrounds in low relief, since only one side will generally be visible, and a single kit gives double the length of building.

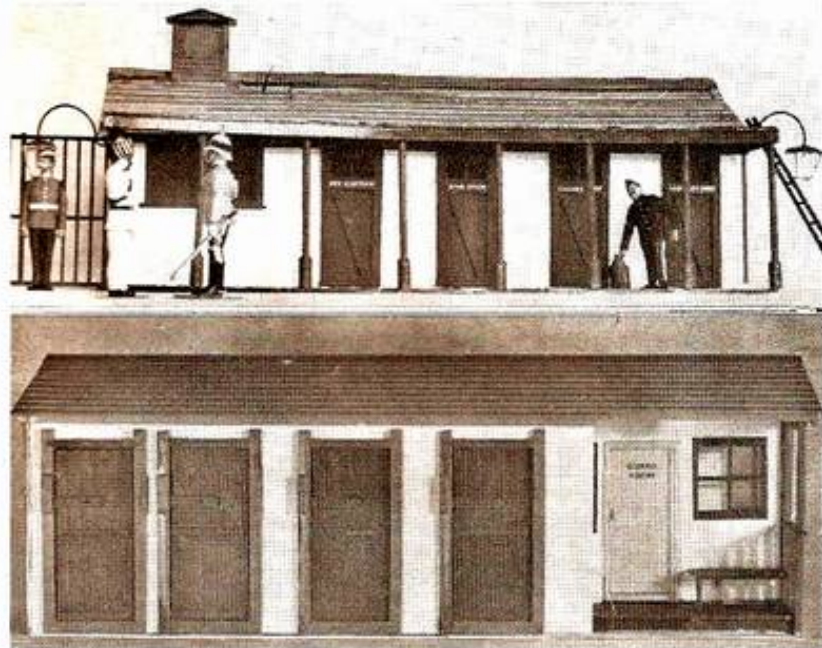
I found a trial run invaluable, making up the kit according to the instructions; although intended basically as a child's toy, it is not all that simple to

assemble. It is meant to be 'snap-together' in construction and can be left that way for ease in storage, but if it is to be permanently assembled it is best cemented together, when the lugs will repay a little filing to make them a better fit.

Looking at the assembled building, it would appear at first glance that the ideal line of division would be immediately behind the tack room front wall, but this would give little room for a horse in the stable stalls (which are retained). It is suggested, therefore, that the structure be split along the centre line of the roof, after cementing the tack room outer wall in place. Although there is a tempting line already marked on the inner face of one of the large outer walls, it is best to make the initial cut in the *outer* face of the walls to about half depth, when the walls will split by finger pressure, giving a clean edge. After bisecting the inner end wall, clip the resulting halves into the tack room floor and use the cut edges as a guide for cutting this component; owing to its construction it is best to saw through the floor—any rough ends can be left as they will be hidden at the back.

Use two pieces of card or plastic sheet as base plates: one 140 mm x 60 mm (11 in. x 2½ in.) for the 'guardroom' section, the other 140 mm x 100 mm (11 in. x 4 in.) for the 'stores' section.

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Heading, a close-up of the guardroom entrance. At left, the stores section, and below, the guardroom section before detailing was commenced.

GUARDROOM AND STABLES

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'Whitewash' all plain walls (whatever their original colour) with white acrylic poster paint and paint all wood surfaces with Humbrol G.W.R. chocolate. Alternatively, the walls can be covered with dirtied-down dolls house brick paper or a suitable stone paper. Replace the gymkhana poster with a contemporary recruiting poster or a board showing a regimental badge and designation, and cement a piece of dark paper across the back of the buildings, first furnishing the rooms to taste. I was tempted to discard the clock tower as being too difficult to cut in half, but it can be sawn through after assembly, when only half above the guard room should bear a clock face.

The resulting two buildings, while adequate, are rather plain, as can be seen from the photo-



are $\frac{1}{8}$ in. dowel with a strip of paper to thicken the base, to which can be added curved supports made from wire wound round the top of a milk bottle, quartered and cemented into place (fig. 2). For an 'Indian' appearance, construct the verandah supporters from $\frac{1}{8}$ in. square balsa and add corner supports and railings as shown in fig. 3. The trans-

At top, another general view of the guardroom section, and below, the 'stores' section before detailing.

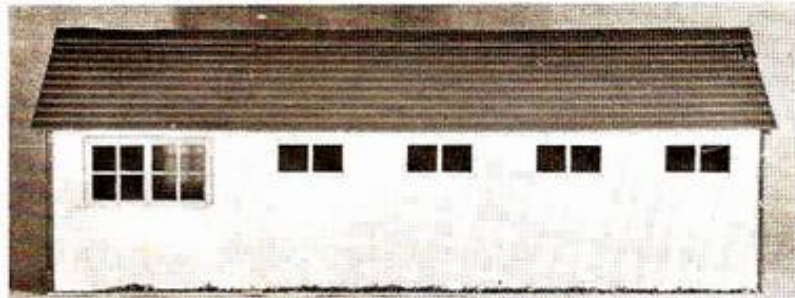


fig 1

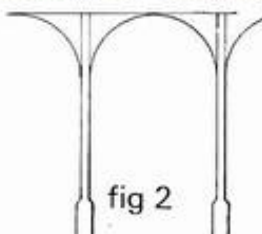
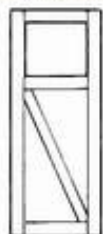


fig 2

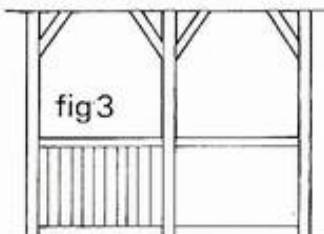


fig 3

graphs. Some little additions can be made which will make a deal of difference.

For the back of the former stables, now the 'stores' section, make four part doors, each $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. x 1 in. to reach the lower edge of the existing windows (which are incorporated into the doors), and build up with strip as shown in fig. 1, adding pin heads to form door knobs. Paint chocolate or light brown and add a suitable legend to each, e.g. 'MAGAZINE', 'R.S.M.', 'A COY. STORES', 'ARMOURER', etc.

Next, add a verandah. In the British version, the supporters

parent roof is made of clear plastic, 11 in. x $1\frac{1}{2}$ in., suitably reinforced by strip.

The last touches are a gong, fire buckets, bedding for the stables and gas lamps.

A fire or regimental gong was an essential piece of equipment pre-1914, and two types were in general use: either a simple tripod supporting a small gong or bell, or a large gong with side supporters as shown on fig. 4 and the photographs (don't forget the tiny striking mallet in either case). A useful gong can be made from the plastic end of a Smarties tube, with the embossed material

fig 5



fig 4



filed away and the whole painted silver.

A row of red fire buckets filed up from dowel and painted red can be affixed on a bracket near the guard room.

The stable doors are made to open, and bedding and stable litter are easily simulated from teased-out string, while a heap of muck and a wheelbarrow are usually somewhere around. Even if you are not modelling a cavalry barracks, an infantry regiment's officers need stables for their mounts, not to mention the regimental transport horses.

Finally, the ubiquitous gas lamp. Cut a strip of plastic, clear for preference, although silvered opaque is quite effective, $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. x $\frac{1}{2}$ in. as shown in fig. 5, scoring the divisions at a constant angle. Split along the cuts and reassemble with a small square of card for the base and a shaped top from body putty in which is embedded an 'S' bracket. Fit these lamps at intervals into holes drilled in the walls - one at the guard room is essential.

The square pillar is a simple box of plastic with body putty cap and a card base, and the railing is a commercial product.

For a more modern, post-1918 appearance double garage doors can be placed over the windows of the stores section using the method outlined above, and the verandah dispensed with.

For those who are wondering, the young lady at the guard room door (and who has lately descended from an Airfix bus) is not making the usual complaint about the rude and licentious, but is seeking a post as a nanny. . . .