Battle for Berlin
The Fall of the Third Reich
A View From The Ruins...

THE LIBERATION OF EUROPE and the final defeat of Nazi Germany was a long, drawn-out affair. From the first major British victory at El Alamein and the Russian counter attack at Stalingrad (both in November 1942), the Allies had slowly began to push the Germans onto the defensive. But it was never easy... by January 1944, the Red Army had only just fought their way into Poland. It was to be June of that same year before the Western Allies invaded France through Normandy.

By early 1945, however all of the Allies were on German soil and the once-mighty German Army was beginning to crack under the enormous strain of fighting on two fronts against well-armed... well motivated and... well led enemies.

King & Country's latest releases focus on that last final struggle that culminated in the demise of the Third Reich... the Fall of Berlin. We are bringing out no less than 17 sets of fighting vehicles... soldiers... and diorama buildings that tell a major part of the dramatic story of those last desperate days of Hitler's much vaunted "Thousand Year Reich".

The Russian victory in Berlin was extremely costly both for the attackers... and the defenders, but it did bring the most murderous war in European history to a final conclusive end.

Sixty years on we still need reminders about those epic struggles and how we overcame them.

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Front Cover:
RED FLAG OVER BERLIN The Soviet flag is fixed to a column on the Reichstag roof by two Red Army soldiers. The next day it was removed, to fly proudly over the city from the Reichstag's shattered dome.
After weeks of preparation the Red Army broke across the Oder for its long-
expected attack on the German capital, and within ten days had completely
encircled it. But the city fell only after bitter fighting, street by street...

Battle for Berlin

On 12 April 1945 Adolf Hitler heard the news of the death of U.S.
President Franklin Roosevelt. Dr. Goebbels his fanatical Nazi
Minister of Propaganda was overjoyed, "My Führer, I
congratulate you! Roosevelt is dead. It is written in the stars
that this April will be the war’s turning point for
Germany."
The Führer was now so
distant from reality that he was
consulting astrologists and mystics
on a regular basis.

Closing in for the Kill

The inevitable downfall of the Third Reich was about to reach its final, violent
conclusion as Stalin’s Red Army closed in
on Berlin.

This last Soviet offensive began on 16
April with a giant pincer movement.
On the Baltic, the 2nd Belorussian Front
under Marshal Rokossovsky crossed over the
Oder at Stettin. On his left flank, the
1st Belorussian Front under Marshal
Zhukov had already pushed over the
Oder and was ready to strike at the heart
of the Reich. Further south Marshal
Konev’s 1st Ukrainian Front moved north-
east across both the Oder and Neisse
rivers.

On these three fronts alone, the
Germans faced a total of 2.5 million
soldiers, 6,300 armoured vehicles, almost
10,500 artillery pieces and over 7,500
aircraft.

By 19 April, despite fierce resistance, the
Russians had reached the outer suburbs
of Berlin itself. On 25 April Zhukov’s
forces linked up with Konev’s and Berlin
was totally surrounded. Inside the
Reich’s capital, trapped, was a garrison of
200,000 men. To the west of the city
was another beleaguered pocket with
more than 200,000 soldiers in it.

The city already badly battered by
repeated British and American bombing
raids would now be subjected street-by-
street... house-by-house to an even more
brutal battle.

With its rivers, canals, subway system
and sturdy stone constructed buildings, it
was perfect for street fighting - especially
by determined defenders.

An outerbelt of defences stretched
almost 20 miles from the center of the
city. An inner defence line was
established 10 miles closer using the city’s
subway system to connect it. Finally, at
the heart of Berlin was the “Citadel”
where all the main Government offices
and the Reich Chancellery with its
Führerbunker were located.

The Citadel

The Citadel itself was divided into 8
separate defence sectors. Among its
defenders were men of the 11th Waffen
SS Panzer Grenadier Division “Nordland”.
Curiously, this particular SS Division
contained few ethnic Germans. It was
made up of mainly Scandinavian and
French volunteers. In addition, there was
a mixed collection of “Volkssturm” (Home
Guard), “Volksgrenadiers”, “Hitler Jugend”
and regular Wehrmacht units.

THE FÜHRER’S END

On the night of April 28/29, after
hearing that Himmler had opened
peace negotiations with the
Western Allies, Hitler finally realised
that defeat was inevitable. In the early hours
of April 29, in a civil ceremony performed
by one of Goebbels’ staff, he married his
longstanding and devoted mistress Eva Braun.

After the midday conference in the
Führerbunker on Monday, April 30, with
the Russians now beginning to attack the
Reichstag, Hitler took lunch, then went to
summon Eva in her room. His chauffeur in
the meantime had been ordered to obtain
some cans of petrol. Hitler and his wife
bade farewell to Goebbels, Bornmann and
others who had remained in the bunker.
Hitler’s beloved Alsatian bitch Blondi had
been put down in the early hours of the
morning. After the farewells, Hitler and
Eva retired to the Führer’s suite.

A few minutes later a shot rang out. It
was 3:30pm. Hitler had apparently shot
himself, and Eva - and some say Hitler too
- had taken cyanide. Their bodies were
taken outside into the rubble-strewn
grounds of the Chancellery. Petrol was
poured over them and they were set alight.

front of the Tiergarten near the bunker. She hoped to persuade Hitler to flee
Berlin’s ruins and continue the fight in
the south of Germany. The Führer refused.

Just a day later the entire city became
an even more hellish inferno with savage
the Soviets captured almost 500,000 men. Under the ruins of Berlin lay the bodies of at least 220,000 German soldiers and civilians. Conservative estimates place Russian losses at well over 300,000 killed in this Battle for Berlin.

Following such horrendous losses, it should not be surprising that the Red Army took its tribute in rape and pillage of the unfortunate civilians left behind in the toothless, gaping shell that was once the proud capital of the Third Reich.

BATTLE FOR THE REICHSTAG

The Reichstag building in Berlin became the symbol of last-ditch resistance in the latter days of the Nazi regime. In 1933 the building had been set on fire, and the Nazis blamed it on the Communists. Now, ironically, Stalin’s Red Army would once again turn it into a blazing inferno.

The assault began on 30 April, with an artillery bombardment and Katyusha rockets. The building was eventually stormed by infantrymen of the 389th, 574th and 756th Infantry Regiments. Nazi fanaticism, however, was to make it a long and bloody task. More than 5000 SS men, Hitler Youth and Volkssturm (Home Guard) members resisted desperately, fighting for every room, corridor, staircase and storey. It took the Russians two days to overcome the last vestige of resistance, and some 2500 of the Reichstag’s defenders died, with 2600 taken prisoner.

ABOUT THE SERIES

Collectors often ask, “Where does King & Country get its ideas from?” The answer is usually quite simple... History.
These last few years have coincided with the 60th Anniversaries of many stupendous WW2 events - D.Day... The Battle of the Bulge... Iwo Jima...and now, of course, Victory in Europe.

Last year, 2004, when we were marking the D.Day celebrations, we were already looking forward to 2005 and the defeat of Nazi Germany. We soon realized that the key event in all of this was the capture of Berlin itself by Stalin's Red Army. Another important factor in choosing to do this was the many requests from collectors worldwide to replicate the Red Army in miniature in which would look great in any Berlin scenario. Our particular model carries the 7.5cm cannon in the open-topped turret.

SUPPORTING INFANTRY

As usual our research turned up an amazing wealth of exciting photographs on which to base our figures. Fortunately the Battle for Berlin was covered extensively by the combat photographers of both sides.

An early decision was made to show "scratch" units of assorted Wehrmacht, Volksturm, Volksgrenadiers and Waffen SS troops very typical of the last desperate days of the struggle for Berlin. Many units were split up... cut off and... decimated by casualties. One of the German forces greatest abilities was to form new fighting units from the remains and remnants of different, larger formations.

Each of our 4 sets of German troops demonstrates this. Waffen SS troopers, a Volksturm officer and a Volksgrenadier rifleman.

WS64 "The Russians Are Coming!" Another "mixed bag" of Waffen SS and Volksgrenadiers in action.

WS65 "The Last Stand" Cut off and surrounded this set includes a wounded Panzergrenadier and a "dismounted" tank crew member determined to make every bullet count.

WS66 "Anti Tank Gun" Two Volksgrenadiers man a Panzerfaust adapted to be fired from an anti tank gun. Supporting them is a Waffen SS trooper shoulder-firing another Panzerfaust.

WS67 "King Tiger" The most powerful tank of WWII and long awaited by K&C collectors. Our model comes with three crew figures and in a very typical late-war camouflage scheme.

WS68 "Puma Armoured Car" Mounting a 7.5cm gun, this 8 wheeled vehicle is just one of the many versions the Germans produced of this scouting vehicle. Two crew are standing in the open top.

Finally, there are our brand-new diorama pieces... SP14 "Berlin Tenement". Designed from actual photographs, this battle-scarred shell is the ideal backdrop for any Berlin scene. The structure is fully painted, easy to assemble and ready for display.

SP15 "Reich Chancellery Entrance Way" and SP16 "Reich Chancellery Annex" work singly or together to provide facade-style backdrops to any Berlin battle scenario.

*Please note: Because of the large dimensions of the buildings actual postage must be listed on these particular pieces.
By 1945 the Soviet Red Army had come a long, long way from the demoralized and disorganized Russian Forces that had first faced the Germans in June 1941.

It had grown in numbers of men... quality of equipment... and most importantly... in military expertise. Its soldiers were tough and battle-hardened, its leaders were ruthless and single-minded.

All of them, officers and men, had an abiding hatred of the Nazis for the devastation they had inflicted on Mother Russia. Together with a thirst for revenge, the Red Army eagerly anticipated the reign of terror they were about to unleash on Germany as a whole and Berlin in particular.
RA11 Support Section

The Red Army was the first to utilize large numbers of females in front-line combat roles.

RA15 "Traffic Controller"

IT'S A FACT!

Sometimes overlooked in the West is that fully two thirds of the German Armed Forces fought against the Soviets on the Eastern Front.

Had more (and better) German divisions been available for combat against the British and Americans, then the war in the West would certainly have taken a great deal longer. The Allied casualty lists would also have lengthened considerably. A great debt of gratitude is owed to the incredible tenacity and bravery of the ordinary Russian soldier during what the Soviets called "The Great Patriotic War".

RA14 "KATYUSHKA" Rocket Launcher
JUST IN CASE some of our WW2 collectors thought that with all of our attention seemingly focused on "The Fall of Berlin" we had forgotten them...

Here's actual proof of a few of our next 'D. Day' additions. These photos show some of our latest U.S. Paratroopers & Rangers in Normandy on the 6th of June.

Moving inland we link up with some British forces... in this case, Mr. Churchill's Commandoes and... a great new Bren Gun Carrier. Look out for these (and more) this coming June and July.

ALL-NEW 'CLUB' FIGURES NOW AVAILABLE.

As members of our K&C ONLINE COLLECTORS CLUB already know every year we bring out two or more Exclusive Club figures. This year, besides 1 Year subscription we are launching a 2-Year membership. 1 Year membership members can select ONE figure FREE while 2-Year membership members can choose TWO figures ABSOLUTELY FREE.

In 2005, we are releasing CF03 A Crusader Crossbowman - a typical French Crossbowman of the Third Crusade (1189-1192) and CF04 Wehrmacht Soldier on Parade - a "Schutze" or Private Soldier of the 26th Infantry Regiment as he would have appeared in his parade uniform c.1938.

Besides the FREE figure(s), members can also purchase the others at a "Special Club Price". Please remember these exclusive figures are only available while stocks last.

A small number of CF01 French Foreign Legion Paratrooper and CF02 French Imperial Guardsman are still available. Please visit our website www.kingandcountry.com for more details.