



Lead Toy Cricket Figures

Sold



## Description

### Lead Cricket Toy Figures.

An unusual and very rare set of lead toy figures of cricket players. The figures have been set out as a cricket match and comprise of two Batsmen, two Umpires, Bowler, Wicketkeeper, three Slips, six Outfielders and two Wickets. The lead cricketers were made by F. Kew & Company and were originally issued in 1928. All the pieces are with original paint although they have minor paint loss. A great little set for the cricket enthusiasts or lead figure collector. Figures are approx. 4cm high.

Lead toy figures was big business with 'Britains' toy figures being the standard to which companies such as Hanks Bros. and John Hill and Co. aspired too. When WWII started the need to divert lead supplies for the war effort meant that lead figure manufacturing ground to a halt. After the war when lead became available again the expected resurgence didn't happen and several smaller companies disappeared.

F. Kew & Company were a London based company who in around mid-1920's started producing commercial promotional pieces for companies. They soon introduced a series of farm animals and other farm pieces, and later moved on to produce a range of licensed comic book characters. At the end of the 20's or early 30's Kew merged with another lead manufacturer The Pixyland Manufacturing Company, together know as Pixyland-Kew or Pixyland/Kew. The Pixyland Manufacturing Company started before Kew at the start of the 1920's and produced a range of nursery-rhyme characters like Little Red Riding Hood and Old Mother Hubbard. They quickly added a range based on popular cartoon characters.

William Britain Jr. was a British toy manufacture who in the early 1890's invented the process of hollow casting in lead. This process revolutionised the production of lead toy soldiers making 'Britains' toy figures the standard to which companies such as Hanks Bros. and John Hill and Co. aspired too. While 'Britains' is mostly known for its military themed figures the company did also produced a range of other lead toy sets and pieces, football teams being amongst them. After William's death in 1906 his son began to expand the range of figures by producing lines based on the Salvation Army, the Boy Scouts and on railway figures.

John Hill & Company (or Johillco) were in direct competition to 'Britains' and was started by a former employee of 'Britains', a Mr F. H. Wood, where the name of John Hill came from is unknown. In contrast to 'Britains', Johillco was the first British hollow cast figure company to sell their figures individually rather than in sets. They were also known to have produced souvenir items of the 1937 Coronation, such as boxed display cases for horse drawn carriages and models of King George the Fourth and Queen Elizabeth. In addition to the soldiers they made cowboys and Indians and many figures of knights.