

NEVER MIND THE BILLHOOKS

HERE'S THE

Painting guide

Steve Wood provides an easy 'wargames standard' painting guide aimed at getting your forces battle ready for *Never Mind the Billhooks* in super-quick time.

The following article should help you paint your retinue for *Never Mind the Billhooks* and hopefully give you some ideas regarding colour schemes. But first, a couple of caveats!

I am by no means a professional painter. All of my models are painted with wargaming in mind and are used to fight battles with my wargaming buddies. I tend to use whatever technique will get my figures onto the table in as fast a time as I can manage!

The second caveat is regarding colour schemes and uniforms. The information for this period is sketchy at best. We don't really know how the armies lined up or how they fought in any great detail.

The same is true of the 'uniforms' that the troops wore. We do have details of the likely coats of arms, the flags and banners and therefore, to some extent, the household livery colours and badges that were in use; but there are few contemporary records. I've put a couple of references that I used at the end of the article. The whole point of our gaming group in moving to the Wars of the Roses period for wargaming was to give us some respite from the 'button counting' that goes with some other eras, notably Napoleonic. (Which incidentally, is my favourite period!)

With this in mind, my retinue is entirely fictional. The leader is Sir Harry Hotspur, ably assisted by Sir Eric Diehard and

Sergeant Daniel Rose (who usually takes the left wing). The majority of my army has a white and blue livery, although in this article, I am using a couple of other colour combinations. Within reason, you can choose whatever colours you see fit but again, I've included some actual colour combinations used by the historical houses of the time at the end of the article.

I've given examples of painting billmen and bowmen who were the mainstay of the armies of the time. The techniques can easily be used for other troops.

All figures are Perry Plastics.

All paints used were Vallejo, unless otherwise stated.

PAINING THE ARMoured BILLMAN

1

The model was prepared and assembled in the usual way - scraping off any mould lines that can be seen, then assembled using polystyrene glue. Using polystyrene glue rather than cyanoacrylate (super glue) is my preferred option as not only do you get a better joint but the glue will provide some filling.

I then spray primed the model using Army Painter Plate Mail.

Once it was dry I gave the model a heavy wash using Army Painter Dark tone (black) ink.



2

Using a dry brush technique, I quickly dry brushed the model first in Army Painter Plate Mail and then with Silver (70997).

I also picked out the chin and lower face with Flat Flesh (70955).



3

I then block painted the detail:

- 1 - New Wood (311) was used for the bill staff.
- 2 - Prussian Blue (70965) for the leggings.
- 3 - Leather (70871) for the shoes, belt and dagger.
- 4 - Brass (70801) for the tip of the dagger's sheath.

The figure could have been based at this point and would have look fine for the table, but I wanted to put in a bit more effort.



4

I have touched up some areas to finish off.

A wash of soft tone ink on the flesh and bill staff and boots has added a bit more shading.

I also touched up the silver - dry brushing where I thought it a bit rough!

This technique of getting armoured figures painted quickly works just as well on the heavily armoured foot knight units of the time.



APQS

Army Painter quickshade is a superb product in that it does exactly what is says on the tin and always gives first class results. In addition, the quickshade provides a good protective coat to your model. I do, however, share the reservations of many in the hobby who think that the product is expensive. This is not helped by the fact that the product goes off as the tin is emptied and no amount of thinning helps. I have yet to get to using anywhere near over half a tin before I have to replace it. Once you are halfway down the tin, the air in the tin reacts with the quickshade to produce a skin which leads to the product spoiling. If Army Painter could produce a tin half the size, I am sure that they would convince more wargamers to use what is otherwise a first-class product!



PAINTING THE ARMoured BOWMAN

1

The archer was primed in leather brown, before painting the flesh and helmet.

- 1 - The bow was painted with Old Wood (310).
- 2 - The tips were painted with German Camouflage Black Brown (70822).



2

Next I block painted the main colours. I used a Black (70950) and Red (70957) scheme for the livery. The moulding on the figure makes this straight forward to do, you don't have to be an expert at painting straight lines!

- 1 - I used Stone Grey (70884) for the sleeves.
- 2 - Leather Brown (70871) for the boots.
- 3 - Buff (70976) for the bottom of the gambeson.



3

I picked out some of the detail using:

- 1 - Camouflage Black Brown (70822) for the belt and wrist guard.
- 2 - Orange Brown (70981) for the pouch.
- 3 - Black (70950) for the dagger sheath.
- 4 - Plate Mail for the buckles.

The model was then painted with Army Painter Dark Tone (Black) Quickshade and left to dry for 24 hours before spraying with matt varnish.



4

Just to add a bit of detail and depth, I dry-brushed the helmet with Silver (70997).

Highlighted the face with Flat Flesh (70955) - particularly the nose!

I also carefully re-painted the red side of the tunic to give it a richer colour and retouched the sleeves and gambeson with the original colours.

I also added some arrows to the base. These are from the Perrys' kit and the arrow shafts are painted with Iraqi Sand (70819), the feathers painted with Off White (70820) and then a heavy ink wash of strong tone applied.

Once dry, I retouched the arrow flights with white and recoated the shafts with Iraqi Sand (70819).



EXAMPLES OF LIVERY COLOURS

- Blue & White: Richard, Duke of York
- Black & Red: John Neville, 2nd Earl of Westmorland.
- Green & White: Edward Neville, Lord Abergavenny.
- Yellow & Green: John Bouchier, Lord Benners.
- Blue & Red: William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke.
- Black and White; Humphrey Talbot

You can reverse these colours for different houses and pretty much any combination will do. It simply depends on your taste and how closely you would like to stick to the history that we are aware of.



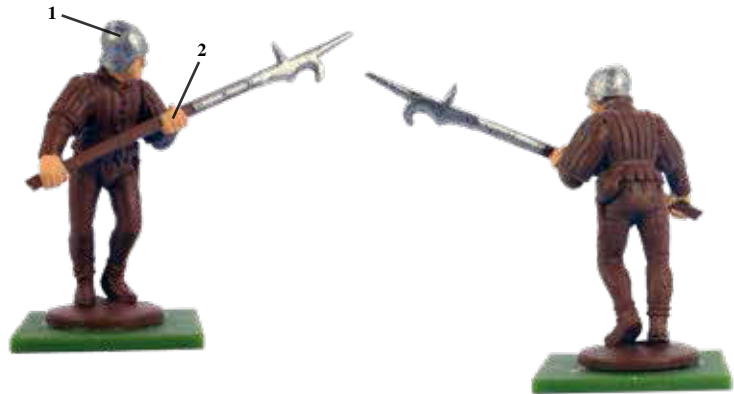
PAINTING THE BILLMAN IN GAMBESON/QUILTED JACKET

1

This time after assembling the figure, I primed the figure with Army Painter Leather.

1 - I then painted the helmet and bill hook with Plate Mail.

2 - The face and hands were done with Flat Flesh (70855).



2

1 - I block painted the gambeson with Buff (70976).

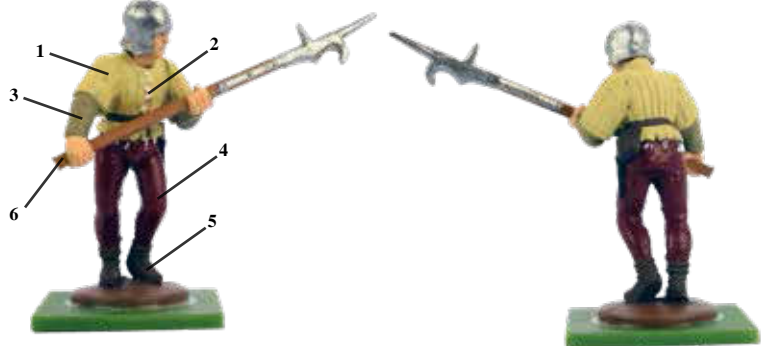
2 - The laces with Off White (70820).

3 - The tunic sleeves are German Camouflage Beige (70821).

4 - The leggings, Burnt Red (70814).

5 - Boots and belt, Leather Brown (70871).

6 - The bill staff is painted with New Wood (310).



3

The figure was then painted with Army Painter Strong Tone (dark brown) quick shade.

Note that I paint the figure - not dip it - that way I can control the amount of shading. It also saves wasting the quick shade and is less messy!

I then left the figure to dry for 24 hours before varnishing with Army Painter Matt Varnish.

Once again, apart from basing, your figure could be used at this point.



4

I dry-brushed the helmet and billhook with Silver (70997) to make them stand out.

I also carefully highlighted the quilting on the gambeson with Buff (70976).

The face received another light ink wash before highlighting the nose and cheeks with Flat Flesh (70855).



BASING

All the bases were carefully covered with Vallejo Dark Earth Textured paste (26218) to blend the figure bases to the Renedra plastic 20mm square bases.

All the figures in my retinue are separately based in this way to allow casualty removal from the movement trays. To add a bit of detail, the billmen had some Woodland Scenics Fine Talus sprinkled on as the paste dried.

Once everything was dry, I carefully paint the base with my favourite brown. It's actually an emulsion paint from B&Q (UK DIY store) called Delhi Bazaar. I also have emulsion pots in Chocolate Brown and one very similar to Iraqi Sand.

B&Q do a great colour matching service - if you take in a paint sample on a piece of paper, they will colour match it and produce a big pot of paint for about three quid! This is ideal for scenery and basing and means that you can save your nice paints for the figures.

The base was then highlighted by dry-brushing with the original brown mixed with Iraqi Sand.

I finished off the base with some Woodland Scenics - scatter and then add some Gamers Grass tufts or flowers - or both.

REFERENCES

From Freezy Water Publications:

Standards, Badges and Livery Colours of The War of the Roses by Pat McGill and Jonathan Jones.

Armies, Battles and Commanders of the War of The Roses. Volumes 1 and 2 by Martin Stephenson, Dave Lanchester and Pat McGill.

From Osprey:

Towton 1461 by Christopher Gravett.

From Helion:

Wargame the War of The Roses by Peter Dennis and Andy Callan.

I also used the *Perry's Art work* by Peter Dennis as well as images from my Pinterest board.

