

Photograph 7 shows the undercoat used for the belts. A lot of people find difficulty adding acrylics over the top of dried oils (it is important that they have dried fully before attempting any addition of paint), but it can be done by using Isopropyl Alcohol to thin the acrylic heavily and by adding just one coat of this to the desired area. After that has dried, acrylics can be added as normal (with water mixed in to thin them). This has been done here and I'll then paint these straps with oil paints – more khaki colours, but this time with more yellow and white mixed in.

Yet again I had to let things dry, and so I moved on to the helmet. I wanted a damaged and worn look to the object and began with an acrylic coat of rusty looking metallic paint – Chainmail and Machrite Red from GW. It gives an overall rusted metal look, and appeared horribly false – I didn't dare show it to anyone or take photos to be honest!

Over this I dabbed a bit of Marmite, the only use for this noxious, greasy smelly goo that I can think of (they do say you either love it or hate it! Ed.), using a small piece of the sponge packaging that came with the kit. Then out came the airbrush and several thin coats of differing colours of greenish-yellow were applied. This was allowed to dry for about half-an-hour or so, then gently washed with soapy water and a soft toothbrush.

The result is shown in Photo 8; where the Marmite doesn't allow the paint to stick and is then removed by gentle brushing, the effect is that of paint which has chipped and rubbed off, and although the colour looks a bit "eek!" it was as I intended because it's not finished yet.

Photograph 9 shows how selective washes of dark oil paint can tone down the effect, and whilst it looked better with the addition of some Burnt Umber and Mars Black, it still doesn't have that satin appearance that these helmets seem to have when in museums. However, with the addition of a couple of coats of Tamiya Smoke X-19 (thinned with

water), the satin 'handled and used' lookis arrived at in **Photo 10**. Although a longand drawn-out method it gave me the finish I desired, and that's what matters.

Because the helmet looks like it has seen better days, I thought that the helmet strap should look a bit worn too, and in **Photo 11** I've painted that with various browns to look scratched and a little frayed around the edges. The brown colours are built up from oils, using the darkest colours first – Mars Black and Mars Brown, then adding Light Red and a little Mars Yellow. Blending with a soft brush and getting what appears to be a nice smooth leather belt finish. The scuffing and damage is then added with a nice new brush – one that can be brought to a sharp point easily, and with a mix of Titanium White and Mars Yellow for the exposed edges that have been damaged. The cuts to the leather are painted in with a single line of the light colour followed by some of the darkest leather colour used initially and by pitting a line of that colour directly above the light colour. This is because the light would catch the exposed edge of the cut as it gapes slightly under tension, but that edge will be below the actual cut or break in the leather. There is no actual damage or alteration to the moulded resin that depicts the strap, all the 'damage' is painted on – simple but effective.

In **Photo 12** I've temporarily popped the helmet in position. You can see the buckle fastenings for the chinstrap at the sides of his head that still need painting. Visible in this view, but not perhaps as obvious, are those additions to the skin that bring the face to life – eyes painted in, a bit of a blush of carmine on the cheeks, chin and nose, some darkening under the eyes to hint at fatigue etc.

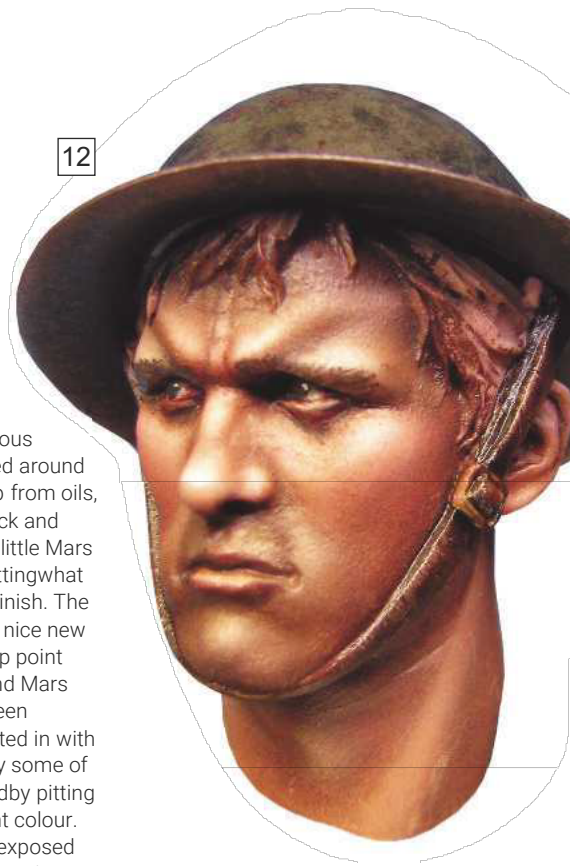
Rifle and shovel

There's only a short length of this, just the bit that would appear when it's slung on the soldier's back. However, it does allow the painter some chance to depict different texture and colour. I decided to paint up some nice decorative woodgrain, it's relatively easy and uses the same colours I'd put out on the palette for the leather chinstrap – well, and it's economical if nothing else!

There are two wooden sections to paint on the rifle, the upper and lower sheaths that cover the barrel and whilst I wanted to depict both parts with a similar pattern, I didn't want them to look like it was just one piece of wood. **Photograph 13** shows the lower section having been painted, and like the leather chinstrap I began with a brown acrylic undercoat followed by oil colours to create the texture.



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