

The Entombed Terra Cotta Warriors of Xi'an

The Entombed Warriors of Xi'an are one of many legacies left by Chinese Emperor Qin Shi Huang, born Ying Zheng in 259 BC.

After succeeding his father at the age of 13, he took power over the state at the age of 22. As an ambitious and aggressive leader, he was able to unify the warring states using the powerful political, economic and military strength of the Qin State. To unify the various regions, he used the constant attacks from bandits to convince the leaders of the existence of a powerful major enemy, to the north of China. To ward off attack the various warlords worked together to join the independent segments of fortifications each had built. So began construction of what is now known as the Great Wall of China.

By 221 BC, having secured the throne and unified the efforts of the northern regions, he declared himself the first Emperor of a unified China. The reign of Qin Shi Huangdi, which literally means the "First Sovereign Emperor of Qin" had begun. As a monument to his greatness, Ying Zheng commissioned the construction of a great Mausoleum and a terra cotta army to guard the entrance.

The figures were all hand made using the faces of local and imported labourers to give each piece a character of its own. However, the construction of such a large-scale project used up much manpower and resources and cost the lives of countless conscripts.

Although the efforts of Ying Zheng bought about the Qin Empire, his death in 210 BC was to lead to a quick exit for the Qin. The dynasty lasted only until 206 BC, when it collapsed following the Peasant Uprising. Ying Zheng unified the warring states of China and was responsible for the construction of two of the great monuments of China, the Great Wall and the Entombed Warriors of Xi'an.

The site itself laid buried for over 2000 years and was only unearthed in 1974 when discovered by a farmer in search of water. Terra cotta fragments unearthed by the farmer were recognised as pieces of the great army, destroyed during the peasant uprising.

The site represents one of the greatest archeological finds of the modern era and today, having been recognised for its historical value, is protected under the national interests. The site is continually growing as more pieces are unearthed and prepared for display.

The only way to possess a piece of this unique discovery, is a replica of the originals from one of the few pottery workshops in China commissioned to make the replicas. All of the pieces in our range are made in a factory very close to the archaeological site, from the same type of terra cotta clay as the originals. The attention to detail and fine workmanship make these an ideal gift or personal ornament for both indoor and garden settings. The range available includes smaller pieces from 15 cm, through to larger full size pieces up to 2 metres tall.

Currently, our range consists of fifteen centimetre, three and five piece sets, 25cm individual pieces and a 60cm replica of one of the "General" figures, together with a delightful 1/16th scale reproduction of the bronze chariots, remnants of which were also found at the site. The pieces in our range are a high quality, close reproduction of the original items, particularly in the larger sizes.

All of the larger pieces are available from the factory and supply can be arranged by special order through an outlet of The Eastern Red Trading Company.