



# BOOK REVIEWS

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■ Reviews of books of interest to history buffs as well as toy soldier and model figure enthusiasts.

## THE HERALDIC KNIGHTS AND SCULPTURES OF BRIAN RODDEN

**Author:** Philip J. Bennett  
**Published by:** Philip J. Bennett & Blurb  
**ISBN:** 978-1-4507-8391-0  
**Price:** \$75 to \$80 U.S.  
**Reviewed by:** Stuart A. Hessney

"The Heraldic Knights and Sculptures of Brian Rodden: The Age of Chivalry in Miniature!" is author Philip J. Bennett's first book, a labor of love and a beautiful work of art in its own right.

"My purpose for writing this book is to introduce the artist and his work to a larger audience of collectors and to document and preserve the art for future generations," Bennett said.

Rodden is a college history professor who lives in New Hampshire. Receiving a Courtenay knight as a gift helped spark the American artisan's abiding interest in the Middle Ages. His quest for knowledge has complemented his skills as a craftsman as he has devoted himself to researching, sculpting and painting knights and their heraldry.

Rodden's early work included 90-mm or larger medieval figures commissioned by customers. He went on to create the large-scale "Silver Knights" range and American Revolutionary War Bicentennial figures for the Shreve, Crump & Low jewelry store in Boston, Mass.

Rodden's first small-scale series included three 60-mm foot figures and one 90-mm man-at-arms sold as castings by the Monarch Co. of Long Island, N.Y. From 1976 to 1983, he worked with Chilmark Co., which also sold unpainted pewter sculptures under the Lance and Hudson brand names. Rodden expertly sculpted everything from Bible scenes to knights and varied figures inspired by America's Old West for Chilmark.

The craftsman became associated with Brielle Galleries in 1986. He spent the ensuing decade conjuring up a spectacular body of collectible work composed of 90-mm heraldic knights cast in pewter and hand-painted.

In the toy soldier and model figure

hobby, Rodden is known for his ongoing production of dynamically animated and exquisitely detailed 50-mm and 54-mm knights on foot and mounted. Many are specially commissioned by private collectors.

Bennett is a lifelong collector who has specialized in the medieval period for the last dozen years or so. He also does business as a dealer under the Lord Tancervills Knights banner.

The author produced this hardcover, 120-page book in conjunction with the Blurb self-publishing service. Eleven chapters profile Rodden, outline his methods, and cover everything from his superb "Silver Knights" to his latest 50-mm and 54-mm knights. Short histories of the Hundred Years' War and battles such as Bannockburn add context to the miniature works of colorful art.

In addition, Bennett has painstakingly compiled auction results, a bibliography and an index to help guide fellow collectors and dealers. The index is invaluable for referencing all the real knights in shining armor and their heraldry portrayed in miniature by Rodden.

However, the true heart of the author's noble effort is this book's more than 240 photos printed in glorious full color. They all add up to a reasonable way to put a complete collection of Rodden's fabulous work in a reader's hands. This book is a must for anyone who is either interested in toy knights, simply admires magnificent figures regardless of genre, or is fascinated by the history of our hobby.

A limited edition of 100 copies of this book signed by both Rodden and

### The Heraldic Knights and Sculptures of Brian Rodden

The Age of Chivalry in Miniature



by Philip J. Bennett

Bennett are available for \$75 directly from the author or for \$80 from Remsons Executive Collectibles. Unsigned books are available through Blurb for \$80. Shipping is extra.

Bennett already has two more books in the works for collectors to look forward to: "Magic in Metal: A History of the Metal Shed and Bruce Hebron" and "The Heraldic Knights and Miniatures of Jacques Cuypers."

### get in touch

To ORDER The Heraldic Knights Book  
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