

## PLANTAGENET KNIGHTS

**Author:** Philip J. Bennett

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**Reviewed by:** Stuart A. Hessney

Philip J. Bennett opens a portal into both the Middle Ages and the work of a modern-day artisan in "Plantagenet Knights: A History & Collector Guide to the Heraldic Miniatures of John Braithwaite."

U.K. heraldic miniatures expert Peter Greenhill wrote the forward to this 120-page, coffee-table book liberally illustrated with about 225 color photos. American collector/author Bennett focuses on the work of Braithwaite, who was born in London in 1933 and died in 1992.

Vital contributions come from the craftsman's daughter, Catherine Braithwaite Miller. She recounts how her father, who was a Royal Air Force veteran and electronics engineer, started creating miniatures as a hobby in the 1960s.

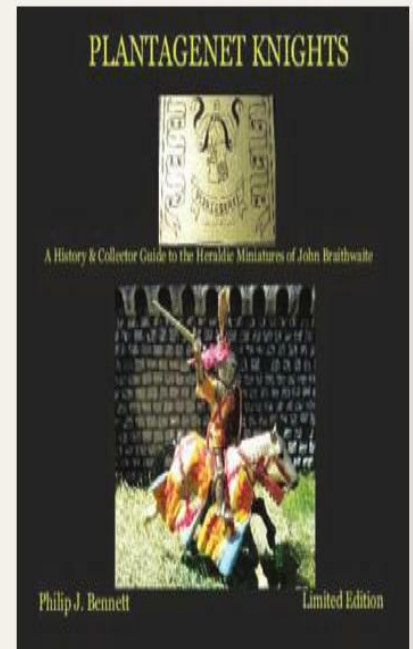
Braithwaite began making miniature wargaming figures for Greenwood & Ball during the 1970s and became a partner. In the late 1970s, he launched its Falcon

range of 54-mm English knights.

After Greenwood & Ball founder William Pearce died and the company closed, Braithwaite started making his own Plantagenet series of Agincourt knights in 1984. The following year Catherine was enlisted to help paint figures for the family business. She even carried on for a while after her father's death. She shares insights into the sculpting, casting, assembly and painting processes.

Heraldry was thoroughly researched from various publications, Braithwaite's visits to the British Museum in London and consultations with colleagues such as Greenhill. The results were colorful mounted and foot figures that were spot on. Many of these little works of art were bespoke pieces in the manner of U.S. heraldic knight makers Brian Rodden and Jacques Cuypers. Both have been the subjects of previous Bennett books.

Braithwaite was an avid wargamer, so naturally tangents in this book include a look at his beautifully rendered 25-mm armies of varied eras. Another aside provides a peek at what might have been a wonderful series of 54-mm toy soldiers portraying the British



Indian Army. However, the spotlight rightfully shines brightest on his knights and men-at-arms, including special custom figures. Some fabulous photos are supported by reproductions of catalogs and sales materials.

This attractive book is a very limited edition of only 40 copies signed by the author, so they shouldn't last long. ■

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#### PLANTAGENET KNIGHTS

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