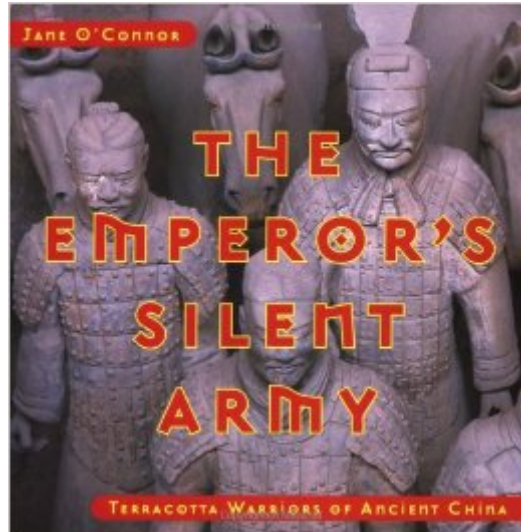


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# The Emperor's Silent Army: Terracotta Warriors Of Ancient China



## Synopsis

Lintong County, People's Republic of China, March 1974 Three farmers are digging a well when suddenly their shovels hit something hard. It is a clay head of a man who stares back at them, open-eyed and amazingly real looking. The farmers have never seen anything like it; neither have the archeologists who arrive and begin to uncover more and more pottery men—first dozens, then hundreds and eventually thousands! Buried for more than 2,200 years, they are soldiers, life-size as well as life-like, and they stand at attention as if waiting for the command to charge into battle. The only thing missing is their weapons, and soon those are found too—thousands of real bronze swords, daggers, and arrowheads still so sharp they can split a hair. Now, after almost thirty years of ongoing excavation, a buried army of 7,500 terracotta soldiers and horses has emerged. And this site that three farmers accidentally stumbled upon ranks along with the Great Pyramids in Egypt as one of the true wonders of the ancient world. The Emperor's Silent Army features more than forty full-color photos that showcase the terracotta troops. A vivid and engaging text tells all about the army as well as the extraordinary story of the men who commanded its creation—the ruthless and tyrannical first emperor of China.

## Book Information

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Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars See all reviews (20 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #78,709 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in Books > Children's Books >

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Rich with exciting historical details, *The Emperor's Silent Army: Terracotta Warriors of Ancient*

China by Jane O'Connor offers a well-researched book that tantalizes the reader with tales of a poisoned King, a camouflaged dead body, and a booby-trapped tomb. The targeted audience of ages 9-12 will thrill with the adventure while simultaneously profiting from their newfound knowledge of China's first Emperor, Qin Shihuang, and his war and burial customs. Heavily strewn with color photographs, computer images, maps, drawings, and charts, the book easily captures interest and successfully holds attention with its succinct wording and short chapters that directly complement the images. Jane O'Connor's career spanning roles as editor-at-large, president of mass market children's books at Penguin, and prolific author is crowned by her most recent gem, *The Emperor's Silent Army: Terracotta Warriors of Ancient China*. Realizing that no children's books had thoroughly documented the world wonder discovered in China, O'Connor successfully fills the void. This book is a must for any library! The only negative aspect is that the book fails to be part of a larger history series since once the book is read, the reader will want to read more. The detailed bibliography and author's note provide a scope for further reading on the Terracotta Warriors, but readers will long to learn the same concise and tantalizing information on other subjects as well! Hopefully, Jane O'Connor will follow with more books to engage children and adults since *The Emperor's Silent Army: Terracotta Warriors of Ancient China* masterfully explores its subject.

While on vacation in China, Jane O'Connor visited the thousands of life-sized terracotta warrior statues discovered near the tomb of an emperor in northern China. She was inspired to find out more about both the army of ghostly gray warriors and the man who had ordered their creation. But as O'Connor read everything available about the first emperor and his buried army she discovered that a book on the subject had not yet been written for children. "*The Emperor's Silent Army: Terracotta Warriors of Ancient China*" rectifies that mistake. In March 1974 three farmers digging a well near the city of Xian in Lintong County of the People's Republic of China, discovered the clay head of a "pottery man." Neither the farmers nor the archaeologists who arrived to investigate the figure had ever seen anything similar to the life-like figure, and were astounded to discover dozens, and then hundreds and finally thousands of these terracotta figures. When the excavation was done, an army of 7,500 soldiers and horses has been uncovered (so far), after being buried for more than 2,200 years. The life-size figures weighed as much as four hundred pounds each and wore knee-length robes, armor made from small iron "fish scales," and elaborate topknot hairdos (the low-ranking infantrymen did not wear armor). The figures stand at attention and archaeologists also found the hundreds of real bronze swords, daggers, battle-axes, and arrowheads, these silent warriors were carrying. After sharing the story of the discovery of the figures, O'Connor tells the story

of Qin Shihuang, the divine Son of Heaven, who was the first emperor of China. Qin was a paranoid tyrant, and fearing that grave robbers would loot the treasures in his tomb after he died. O'Connor talks about the measures Qin took to protect his final resting place, which included the terracotta figures, stationed in underground trenches, less than a mile from the tomb. The details about the figures, as to why they do not wear helmets or shields and why they are facing east, are quite interesting. There is logic to their arrangement that O'Connor is able to explain, as well as the difference between the 350 chariot horses and the more than 100 cavalry horses. There are more than forty full-color photographs in the book, which help to distinguish between the different types of warriors. The only disappointment here is that there are not more such photographs. One of the most amazing things about the figures is that of the two thousand unearthed at the time O'Connor's book was published, no two had been discovered to be the same. The figures represent different ages, different parts of China, and even different temperaments. A colored computer image shows how one of the figures would have looked originally when it was painted. Another fascinating section has to do with modern artisans making replicas, following the techniques of 2,200 years ago, to help archeologists understand how the original figures were created. The final chapters of the book are devoted to what it was like inside the Emperor's tomb, where the body may be wearing a jade funeral suit (the government has no intention of actually opening the tomb and looking, but other tombs have been opened in the past to give us some ideas), and Qin's legacy, which is mainly the first Great Wall of China that he had made with a workforce of half a million slave laborers working for a dozen years. However, it would be Qin's silent army that is probably most responsible for what immortality the first emperor possesses today. Seeing them in person would be an unforgettable experience, and O'Connor's book does an excellent job of making that impression on her readers, young and old alike.

The book is a great balance between text and pictures. I bought it for my grandchildren prior to taking them to Atlanta's (GA) High Museum to view the warriors which are on exhibit there until mid-April. They enjoyed the pictures and couldn't turn pages fast enough. They grasped the information about the life of the emperor, the building of his tomb, the creation of the warriors, and their discovery some 2000 years later. I highly recommend the book for a fairly complete overview.

My son chose this book as part of his Connections Academy independent learning. I was worried, then I received the book. My fears were gone, the book was dissected into short chapters and had great photos. The story was written for kids, but held adult interest as well as our audience was age

45,44, 12 and 10. A great book about the first emperor of China and the Terracotta warriors and how they may have come to be.

I bought this book to read with my daughter before we went on vacation to China and actually saw the Terra Cotta Warriors. I doesn't come close to showing how phenomenal they really are but the history is wonderful and now it's a great reminder of a wonderful trip.

I loved everything about this book! Most non-fiction I enjoy reading once but would not likely re-read or purchases, this one I would. This fascinating look into the discovery of the terracotta warriors life-size statues and insight into their commissioner Emperor Qin Shihuang is perfect for middle school readers on up. For me, when I read something that sparks my interest to learn even more that is when the author has done their job well.

Excellent pictures. Concise, but easy to read information about the Emperor Qin and the Terra Cotta warriors. Good for olderchildren or coffee table book.

This is good picture book for kids, but not for adults truly interested in the subject. It's only 48 pages and not really worth buying unless you're trying to introduce your kids to Chinese history and or archaeology.

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