



SUGGESTED RESEARCH REFERENCES

To be blunt collecting antique and historic arms, accoutrements and militaria can be an expensive pastime. So it is wise that if you are going to take up this enjoyable pastime that you prepare yourself by acquiring sufficient background knowledge to safeguard your investment. And that is easier said than done.

In this hobby it is very much up to the individual how much they want to learn about their chosen part of it. From the very beginning you are really on your own and you must be prepared to make mistakes. You will also, to your chagrin, find that sometimes you will acquire items that on investigation prove to be not what they are claimed to be. If you are lucky you may get your money back but be warned that this won't always be the case so it is a pursuit in which the old maxim *caveat emptor* reigns supreme.

To protect yourself from both being out of pocket and also from feeling like an idiot there is but one remedy and that is research. One part of that is getting involved in the Guild and attending our regular meetings you will not only find interesting and informative displays but also people who will discuss the items in their displays quite happily.

That's only the beginning and like everyone else you will find that the more you learn the more it seems you don't know, which is the essential discovery. In other words the breakthrough comes when you can truly admit that you now know what you don't know. That way you can focus your research away from endlessly bowerbirding loose information and begin concentrating on acquiring information about the specific items that interest you.

The person writing this began collecting back in the 1960s when the basic research materials were all printed - books and periodicals. Some of which still stand out today as great sources of information. However a book, no matter how authoritative, is only as up to date as the day it went from the author to the printer and no field of knowledge remains static. And some of those old and formerly revered sources are now hopelessly outdated – good for whatever illustrations they had but that's all.



In the late 1960s and continuing through into the 1970s there was a range of general publications on firearms and weapon history, mostly in what was termed the coffee table format. These coincided with new cheaper printing technology that for the first time allowed relatively cheap colour printing. These books, if they can be found, offer useful general historical details and illustrations. But because the illustrations were usually sourced from the same museum collections, or the author published the same basic material with different publishers, there is a lot of repetition in their contents.

For the past couple of decades we've had the internet, which is a wonderful source and growing exponentially, but one that must also be treated warily at times because anyone, no matter how informed or ill-informed, can post information. However, because the forums etc. where people discuss the things we find interesting are open to all opinions they tend to correct erroneous information fairly promptly.

To close, the collector must be aware that the field in which they are interested is never static. It's your responsibility, if you are serious about the hobby, to keep up to date. New books and articles are published every year and while one necessarily needn't buy them all, or even try to read them all, it is wise to keep up with new information in your chosen field.

Also please be aware that because of the huge number of specialist publications on firearms and edged weapons this list is just a very broad summary for the beginner.

And remember the old but true maxim

“EVERY TIME YOU BUY A GUN BUY A BOOK”

Note

Because books on firearms and general militaria are a specialist topic most of these books are not going to be available in bookshops so use the internet if you wish to track them down. Often just typing in the title and author into your search engine will throw up a reference to a book being available in new or secondhand condition on eBay, AbeBooks or Amazon. Always try eBay first – it is surprising the good deals and cheap postage that can be found there. We suggest that you check for the best deals and try to avoid the excessive overseas postage rates by buying locally if you can.

Don't forget local secondhand book dealers, and the vendors at the various Arms and Militaria Fairs that are held regularly each year in Melbourne or in the country at Ballarat, Bendigo and Shepparton.

For books and magazines in languages other than English and which are dealing with the arms of non-English speaking countries we suggest that you use the internet.

Finally if anyone reads this and has a suggestion for a book they feel should be added to the list, in particular non-English language publications please contact the Guild and let us know.



GENERAL REFERENCES

American, British & Continental Pepperbox Firearms

Jack Dunlap; an old OOP work but still very useful.

Antique Guns and Gun Collecting

Frederick Wilkinson

Antique Pistol Collecting 1400 – 1860

James Frith and Ronald Andrews

Antique Pistols: An Illustrated Reference Guide for Collectors

Frederick Wilkinson

Antique Weapons for Pleasure and Investment

Richard Akehurst

The Art of the Gunmaker: Vol. 1 1500 – 1660

J. F. Hayward; OOP

The Art of the Gunmaker: Vol. 2 1630 – 1830

J. F. Hayward; OOP

Boarders Away (2 Vols.)

William Gilkerson

The Book of the Gun

Harold L. Peterson; OOP, a general survey with good illustrations.

The Book of the Gun & Gunsmiths

Anthony North and Ian V. Hogg

The British Bulldog Revolver: The Forgotten Gun that Really Won the West

George Layman.

Collecting Antique Firearms

Martin Kelvin; OOP

The Collectors Illustrated Guide to Firearms

Martin Miller

The Complete Handgun 1300 to the Present

Ian V. Hogg and John Batchelor

The Earliest Hand Firearms

Robert C. Clephan; OOP

Early Percussion Firearms: A History of Early Percussion Ignition – from Forsyth to Winchester .44/40

Lewis Winant

Firearms

Howard Ricketts

Firearms

Frederick Wilkinson



GENERAL REFERENCES *(cont.)*

Firearms: The History of Guns

Frederick Wilkinson

Firearms: A Global History to 1700

Kenneth Chase; Contains useful sections on the early development of firearms in Asia, the Middle East as well as Europe.

Firearms Curiosa

Lewis Winant; OOP

The Flintlock: Its Origin and Development

Torsten Lenk; OOP

Flintlock Pistols

F Wilkinson

The Great Century of Guns

Branko Bogdanovich and Ivan Valencak

Guns, Pistols Revolvers

Heinrich Müller

Guns – The Development of Firearms, Airguns and Cartridges

Warren Moore

Guns & Gun Collecting

De Witt Bailey, Ian Hogg, Geoffrey Boothroyd and Frederick Wilkinson; OOP

Guns and How They Work

Ian V. Hogg

Guns and Rifles of the World

Howard L. Blackmore; OOP but a very detailed and well-illustrated survey of longarms both sporting and military.

The Handgun

Geoffrey Boothroyd; OOP but worth getting for its extensive, if a little dated, coverage.

The Illustrated Encyclopedia of 19th Century Firearms

Frederick Myatt; OOP but a comprehensive illustrated guide.

The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Pistols & Revolvers

Frederick Myatt; OOP but a very comprehensive illustrated guide.

Illustrated History of Small Arms

Christopher Chant

100 Great Guns: An Illustrated History of Firearms

Merrill Lindsay; OOP however has pictures of some very fine guns.

The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Firearms

Ian V. Hogg



GENERAL REFERENCES *(cont.)*

Percussion Guns & Rifles

D. W. Bailey; OOP

The Pictorial History of the Under-Hammer Gun

Herschel C. Logan; OOP

The Pinfire System

Gene P. Smith and Chris C. Curtis; OOP but a very important reference on pinfires.

Pistols of the World

Claude Blair

The Pleasure of Guns

Joseph G. Rosa and Robin May

The Price Guide to Antique Guns & Pistols

Peter Hawkins

The Revolver 1818 – 1865

A. W. F. Taylerson, R. A. N. Andrews and J. Frith

The Revolver 1865 – 1888

A. W. F. Taylerson

The Revolver 1889 – 1914

A. W. F. Taylerson; OOP but a must have 3 volume classic reference work.

Rifles and Pistols

Jeremy Flack

Secret Firearms: An Illustrated History of Miniature and Concealed Handguns

John D. Walter; OOP

Weapons and Equipment of the Napoleonic Wars

Philip J. Haythornthwaite

The World of Guns

Richard Akehurst

The World's Greatest Guns

Frederick Wilkinson; OOP but a good basic historical summary.



AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

These are a small selection of general works, but details of Civil War usage of weapons will also appear in the books listed in the various makers references and in the general section.

American Civil War Cavalry

Michael Blake

American Civil War Infantry

Michael Blake

Arms and Equipment of the Civil War

Jack Coggins; OOP, an old but still useful general work.

Carbines of the Civil War

John D. McAulay; OOP

Civil War Collectors Encyclopedia

Francis A. Lord, several editions of this work were published. It is an old work but still useful.

Civil War Sutlers and Their Wares

Francis A. Lord

Civil War Guns

William B. Edwards; OOP a little dated now but a good basic starting point.

Civil War Pistols

John D. McAulay; OOP

Confederate Arms

William A. Albaugh and Edward N. Simmons; OOP a little dated now but a good basic starting point.

Confederate Handguns

William C. Albaugh, Hugh Benet and Edward N. Simmons; OOP a little dated now but a good basic starting point.

The Confederate LeMat Revolver

Doug Adams

Firepower from Abroad: The Confederate Enfield and the LeMat Revolver

Wiley Sword

Johnny Reb: The Uniform of the Confederate Army, 1861 – 1865

Leslie D. Jensen

Uniforms of the Civil War

Francis A. Lord and Arthur Weiss; old but still a good basic source.

Union Cavalryman; 1861 – 1865

Philip Katcher and Richard Hook



COLT

'51 Colt Navies

Nathan L. Swayze; OOP

The Book of Colt Firearms

Robert Q. Sutherland and R. L. Wilson; A must have for anyone interested in Colt.

Colonel Colt London

Joseph G. Rosa; OOP

Colt: Single Action Army Revolvers and the London Agency

C. Kenneth Moore

The Colt Armory: A History of Colt's Manufacturing Company

Inc. Ellsworth S. Grant

Colt Firearms from 1836

James E. Serven; long OOP but still a useful survey.

Variations of Colt's: New Model Police & Pocket Breech Loading Pistols

John D. Breslin, William Q. Pirie & David E. Price

ETHAN ALLEN *(cont.)*

Ethan Allen, Gunmaker: His Partners, Patents & Firearms

Harold R. Mouillesseaux; OOP

Ethan Allen and Allen & Wheelock: Their guns and their legacy

Paul Henry

The Story of Allen & Wheelock Firearms

H. H. Thomas; OOP

MANHATTAN

Manhattan Firearms

Waldo E. Nutter; OOP

REMINGTON

Remington Handguns

Charles L. Karr and Caroll R. Karr; long OOP but worth chasing down.

The Karl F. Moldenhauer Collection of Remington Arms

Richard A. Bourne Co. Inc.; OOP this is an auction catalogue in hardcover and a very valuable reference for Remington arms

Remington since 1816: America's Oldest Gunmaker

Roy Marcot; OOP

Remington's Vest Pocket Pistols

Robert E. Hatfield

A Study of Remington's Smoot Patent & Number Four Revolvers

Harry J. Parker, Ora Lee Parker and Joan S. Reisch



SMITH & WESSON

History of Smith & Wesson

Roy G. Jinks; OOP

Smith & Wesson 1857 – 1945

Robert J. Neal and Roy G. Jinks

WHITNEY

The Whitney Navy Revolver: 1857 – 1866

Daniel E. Williams

GENERAL

All About Southerners

Lionel Bogut; OOP but a very good reference for the Southerner derringer.

American Percussion Revolvers

Frank M. Sellers and Samuel E. Smith; OOP

The Collecting of Guns

James E. Serven

Colt Conversions and Other Percussion Revolvers

R. Bruce McDowell

The Deringer in America: Vol. 1 The Percussion Period

R. L. Wilson and L. D. Eberhart

The Deringer in America: Vol. 2 The Cartridge Period

R. L. Wilson and L. D. Eberhart

Early American Underhammer Firearms

Nicholas L. Chandler

The Fireside Book of Guns

Larry Koller; OOP but some nice pictures.

Flayderman's Guide to American Firearms & Their Values

Norm Flayderman. Now no-longer published but a one stop guide to American antique firearms. It ran to 9 separate editions before publication ceased – the later and most comprehensive editions can still be found for sale on the internet.

The Great Guns

Harold L. Peterson and Robert Elman; OOP but another useful survey orientated towards American guns.

The Peacemakers: Arms & Adventure in the American West

R. L. Wilson; OOP

The Pennsylvania – Kentucky Rifle

Henry Kauffman; OOP

James Reid and his Catskill Knuckledusters

Taylor G. Bowen



GENERAL *(cont.)*

The Rifled Musket

Claude E. Fuller; Long OOP but still a useful source

Suicide Specials

Donald B. Webster; Long OOP but still a definitive source.

U.S. Dragoons 1833 – 1855

John Langellier and bill Younghusband

United States Firearms: The First Century 1776 – 1875

David F. Butler

U. S. Cartridges and Their Handguns

Charles R. Suydam, OOP

U. S. Naval Handguns 1808 – 1911

Fredrick R. Winter

Weapons of the American Revolution and Accoutrements

Warren Moore

AUSTRALIAN ARMS

Australian Military Rifles & Bayonets

I.D. Skennerton

Classic Rifles in Australia

J. Corcoran & F. Bienvenu

Colonial Australian Gunsmiths

Robert B. Shannon; OOP

The Convicted Gunsmiths of New South Wales: A Definitive History 1788 – 1850

R. C. Solomon; OOP

Guide to Small Arms of Western Australia

George B. Trotter

Guns in Australia

Christopher Halls; OOP and quite old but still interesting.

The Military Small Arms of South Australia 1839 – 1901

A.F. Harris

Service Arms of the South Australian Police 1838 – 1988: The First 150 Years

Max Slee

Arms in the Service of Queensland 1859 – 1901

J. S. Robinson

Victorian Land Forces 1853 – 1883

George F. Ward



BRITISH ARMS

Arms & Armour of the English Civil Wars

David Blackmore

The British Duelling Pistol

John A. Atkinson; OOP

British Cavalry Carbines & Pistols of the Napoleonic Era

Barry Chisnall and Geoffrey Davis

British Non Ordnance Military Carbines 1750 – 1900

Barry Chisnall

British Military Firearms 1650 – 1850

Howard L. Blackmore.

British Military Flintlock Rifles

D.W. Bailey

British Military Longarms 1715 – 1815

D. W. Bailey

British Military Longarms 1815 – 1865

D.W. Bailey

British Military Pistols & Associated Edged Weapons

R.E. Brooker

British Pistols and Guns 1640 -1840

Ian Glendinning

The British Soldier's Firearm, 1850 – 1864

Dr. C. H. Roads

The Brown Bess

Erik Goldstein and Stuart Mowbray

Blunderbusses

D. R. Baxter; OOP

English Gunmakers: The Birmingham and Provincial Gun Trade in the 18th and 19th Century

De Witt Bailey and Douglas A. Nie; A very useful addition to a gun library.

English, Irish and Scottish Firearms Makers

A. Merwyn Carey; Now superseded by more recent publications but still useful.

English Pistols

Howard L. Blackmore; a brief but well-illustrated guide.

English Pistols and Revolvers

J. N. George; OOP but available in facsimile, an old work but still useful.

.577 Snider-Enfield Rifles & Carbines

I. D. Skennerton

Forsyth & Co.: Patent Gunmakers

W. Keith Neal and D. H. L. Black



BRITISH ARMS *(cont.)*

The Firearms of William Tranter: Birmingham Gunsmith

Ron Stewart; OOP

Game Guns & Rifles: Percussion to Hammerless Ejector in Britain

Richard Akehurst; OOP

Georgian Pistols: The Art and Craft of the Flintlock Pistol, 1715 – 1840

Norman Dixon; OOP

Gunmakers of London 1350 – 1850 and Supplement

Howard L. Blackmore

Hornblower's Navy: Life at Sea in the Age of Nelson

Steven Pope

London Gunmakers and the English Duelling Pistol 1770 – 1830

Keith R. Dill

The Mantons: Gunmakers and the Manton Supplement

W. Keith Neal and D. H. L. Black

Nelson's Navy: The Ships, Men and Organization 1793 – 1815

Brian Lavery

The Pattern 1853 Enfield Rifle

Peter Smethurst

Pollard's History of Firearms

Claude Blair

The Queen Anne Pistol 1660 – 1780

John W. Burgoyne

Red Coat and Brown Bess

Anthony D. Darling

Scottish Firearms

Claude Blair and Robert Woosnam-Savage.

Small Arms of the British Forces in America

D. W. Bailey

Those Entrusted with Arms: A History of the Police, Post, Customs and Private Use of Weapons in Britain

Frederick Wilkinson

The Trafalgar Companion

Mark Adkin

A Treatise on the British Military Martini Henry 1869-c1900

B. A. Templeton & I. D. Skennerton

Weapons of the British Soldier

H. C. B. Rogers

Webley Revolvers

Gordon Bruce and Christian Reinhart; OOP



EUROPEAN ARMS

European Hand Firearms of the 16th, 17th and 18th Centuries

Herbert J. Jackson

Four Centuries of Liège Gunmaking

Claude Gaier; OOP

The French Trade Gun in North America 1662 – 1759

Kevin Gladysz

German Handguns: The Complete Book of the Pistols and Revolvers of Germany, 1869 to the present

Ian V. Hogg

A History of Spanish Firearms

James D. Lavin; OOP

Note

Try the online site <http://www.littlegun.be/> for Belgian, French and several other European countries
This is a mine of information on Liège gun makers.

ACCESSORIES, UNIFORMS AND ACCOUTREMENTS

A Brief History of Bullet Moulds

Codman Parkerson

British Naval Dress

Dudley Jarrett

The Broad Arrow

Ian Skennerton

Dressed to Kill,: British Naval Uniforms 1748 – 1857

Amy Miller

Early Loading Tools and Bullet Moulds

R. H. Chamberlain

Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay

Don Rickey; the classic description of life in the U.S. Army on the frontier after the Civil War.

Kit Muster: Australian Navy 1865 – 1953

John Perryman

New Zealand Army: Personal Equipment 1910 – 1945

Barry and Matthew O'Sullivan

The Powder Flask Book

Ray Rilling; The basic text on powder flasks.

Rank and Rate (2 Vols.)

E. C. Coleman

Soldiers Accoutrements of the British Army, 1750 – 1900

Pierre Turner



EDGED WEAPONS

Battle Weapons of the American Revolution

George C. Neumann

Bayonets Illustrated

Bert Walsh

Bayonets an Illustrated History

Martin J. Brayley

The Book of the Sword

Richard F. Burton

British Basket-Hilted Swords

Cyril Mazansky

The British Cavalry Sword from 1600

Charles Martyn

The British Cavalry Sword 1788 – 1912

Richard Dellar

British & Commonwealth Bayonets

Ian Skennerton and Robert Richardson

British Cut & Thrust Weapons

John Wilkinson-Latham

British Military Swords

John Wilkinson-Latham

British Military Swords 1786 - 1912

Harvey J. S. Withers

The Naval Officer's Sword

Henry T. A. Bosenquet

British Naval Swords and Swordsmanship

John McGrath and Mark Barton

A Collectors Guide to Swords, Daggers and Cutlasses

Gerald Weland

The Collectors Pictorial Book of Bayonets

Frederick J. Stephens; OOP

Culloden: The Swords and the Sorrows

National Trust for Scotland

Illustrated Directory of Swords & Sabres

Harvey J. S. Withers

Knives and Daggers

Zdenek Faktor

Naval Edged Weapons 1775 – 1865

Sarah C. Wolfe



EDGED WEAPONS *(cont.)*

Naval Swords and Dirks (2 Vols.)

Sim Comfort

Naval Swords

P. G. W. Annis

Pictorial History of the Sword

Harvey J. S. Withers

Socket Bayonets

Graham Priest

A Sure Defence: The Bowie Knife Book

Kenneth J. Burton

Swords & Blades of the American Revolution

George C. Neumann

Swords and Hilt Weapons

Michael D. Coe

Swords for Sea Service (2 Vols.)

W. E. May and P. G. W. Annis

Swords and Sword Makers of England and Scotland

Richard H. Bezdek

Swords of The British Army 1788 – 1914

Brian Robson

The World Encyclopedia of Knives, Daggers & Bayonets

Tobias Capwell

The World Encyclopedia of Swords and Sabres

Harvey J. S. Withers

World Swords 1400 – 1945

Harvey J. S. Withers



JAPANESE SWORDS

Japanese swords have a history of over 1,000 years and the literature is vast, a lifetime being scarcely enough to fit around it. The major barrier to study and collecting in this field is the Japanese language. However, major publications in English are increasingly available and one should google Markus Sesko for a full list of his remarkable series of books and publications in English. The following books on Japanese blades are recommended for a beginning collector. The parts that go to make up the mounting for a sword blade have an equally extensive publication list in their own right. Budding collectors will have to find their own way through this maze.

The Samurai Sword: A Handbook

John M. Yumoto. (A readily available and cheap introductory book.)

The Connoisseur's Book of Japanese Swords

Kokan Nagayama. (This book is among the more encyclopaedic references you can get for the money.)

The Art of the Japanese Sword: The Craft of Swordmaking and its Appreciation

Kapp and Yoshihara. (This book explains more about why and how the Japanese sword is the way it is, the metallurgy and artistry and craftsmanship that gives rise to its features.)

Facts and Fundamentals of Japanese Swords: A Collector's Guide

Nobuo Nakahara.

The Japanese Sword: A Comprehensive Guide

Kanzan Sato.

The Arts of The Japanese Sword

B.W. Robinson. (This book has a guide to the reading of Japanese characters on sword tangs)

Increasingly one can download complete books (usually in pdf format) that are long out of print and which were very expensive initially.

One such highly recommended book is:

Art of the Samurai: Japanese Arms and Armor, 1156–1868

Morihiro Ogawa, et al.

This is a free PDF download from the website of The Metropolitan Museum of Art:

https://www.metmuseum.org/art/metpublications/Art_of_the_Samurai_Japanese_Arms_and_Armor_1156_1868

There are many other Japanese related publications available on there as well if you search.



JAPANESE SWORDS *(cont.)*

A collector of 55 years standing in this field started out by joining clubs around the world. Journals would arrive by post at intervals. Knowledge gained was slow as books in English were not so readily available 30 or 40 years ago. The rise of the Internet has hugely increased the amount of information available to collectors and largely supplanted membership of clubs as such; however, many of the better organised clubs now have a presence on the internet. Here are a few of the better known ones:

Japanese Sword Society of the United States

Simply put the keyword jssus into google for an extensive list of what this organisation offers. Entering the keyword also offers a drop-down menu with other suggestions to follow if one wishes.

Northern California Japanese Sword Club

Similarly ncjsc keyword.

The To-ken Society of Great Britain

<http://to-ken.uk/>

Rather than list any more individually this link offers more website references:

<https://www.nihonto.com/links/>

Finally, for anyone interested in Japanese swords an excellent place to start is a discussion board or forum. The pre-eminent forum in the world today is the Nihonto Message Board:

<https://www.militaria.co.za/>

The opening page explains the rules of the Board. It is not necessary to register to read the discussions. This page then links to the main Board – and your lifelong journey with Japanese swords has begun.



PROOF MARKS AND OTHER GUN MARKS

Gunmarks

David Byron; OOP but useful for finding out about the strange stampings you can come across.

The Standard Dictionary of Proof Marks

Gerhard Wirnsberger; Every collector should have a comprehensive reference for proof marks.

REPAIRS AND GUNSMITHING

Antique Firearms: Their Care, Repair & Restoration

Ronald Lister; OOP but a classic for anyone seeking to have a gun restored.

Lock, Stock and barrel: Antique Gun Repair

R. H. McCrory

MAGAZINES

Specialist magazines on antique and historic arms collecting seem to be a bit of a dying breed. The estimable *Man at Arms Gun Collector* is one of the best in the world, and covers all sorts of arms of various nationalities – a subscription to it is very useful.

Another American magazine which offers a variety of articles is the online *Arms Heritage Magazine* <https://armsheritagemagazine.com/>. Subscription to it is very cheap and it appears bi-monthly. It was the successor to the *Gun Report* which ceased publication in 2010 after the death of its founder Ken Liggett.

There is also a British publication *The Armourer* which succeeded *Classic Arms & Militaria* and mainly publishes articles on 20th century guns and militaria and military history, however, they still have articles on antique firearms, swords and militaria occasionally.