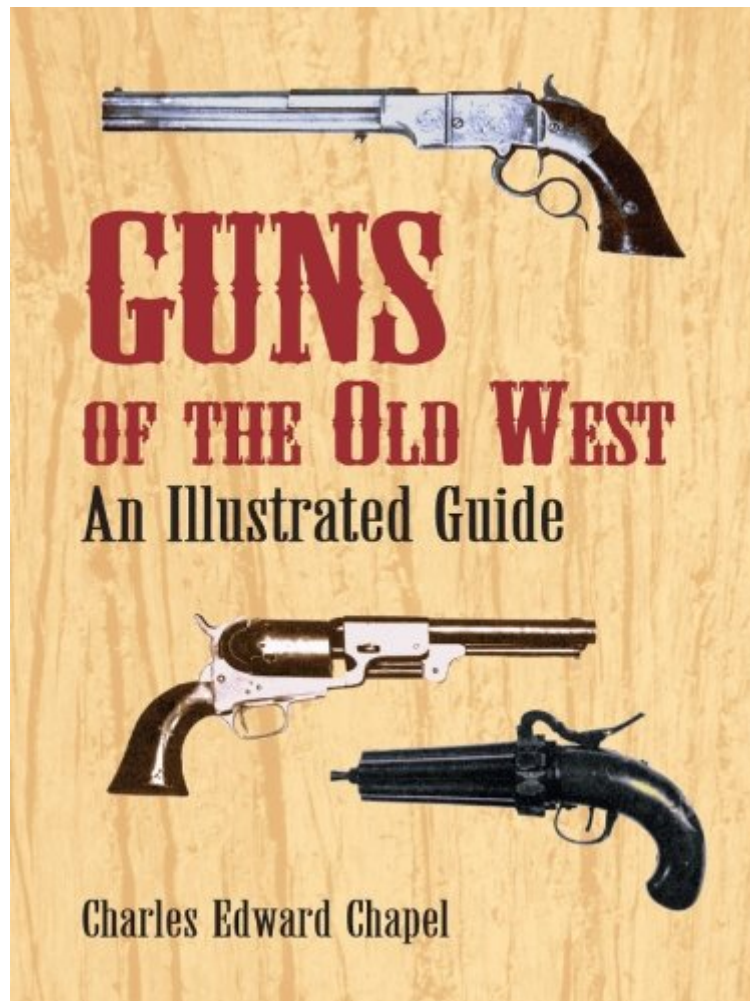


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Guns Of The Old West: An Illustrated Guide (Dover Military History, Weapons, Armor)



Synopsis

Firearms played an important role on the American frontier. Used to hunt animals for food and clothing, they also safeguarded one's home against outlaws and other hostile elements. This definitive, scrupulously researched work describes and illustrates the many different weapons that opened up and secured the American West. Enhanced with colorful anecdotes, the vividly detailed narrative tells the dramatic story of shoulder arms, hand guns, percussion and cartridge weapons, and describes the hunters, settlers, peace officers, stagecoach drivers, soldiers, range detectives, rustlers, outlaws, Indian chiefs, and other picturesque characters who used them. Here are detailed descriptions and illustrations of the Kentucky rifle that saw battle in the American Revolution and in the War of 1812; the repeating rifle used in the Civil War; the Sharps rifle that wreaked havoc during the great buffalo hunts; the Colt revolver, used by cowboys and outlaws alike; the fast and reliable Winchester rifle, the most widely used shoulder arm of the post-Civil War era; as well as flintlock pistols, derringers, muskets, buffalo guns, carbines, signal pistols, Confederate revolvers, and many other celebrated firearms. Illustrated with nearly 500 photographs and line illustrations, this classic reference will not only be invaluable to dealers and collectors but will also appeal to Americana devotees, weaponry enthusiasts, and students of the American West.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Since this is a reprint of a 46 (1961) year old publication my main criticism is that it was just copied and all of the original omissions and mistakes are presented again, just as they were in 1961. As a collector of 19th century Smith & Wesson's and it's predecessors, this book misses the factual marks of that manufacturer repeatedly. It lists the products of the first Smith & Wesson company (1852-1854) as being produced by another company (Volcanic Arms) and it plays down the significance of the development of self-contained cartridge firing handguns by Smith & Wesson throughout it's presentation. It truly glorifies the development of the cartridge firing revolvers by Colt's and almost ignores those by Smith & Wesson even though the number of Smith & Wesson revolvers produced prior to the turn of the 19th century was far greater than the number produced by Colt's. No wonder most uninformed people believe that the Single Action Army revolver was the only gun popular in the Old West when there were far more Smith & Wesson's produced and sold during that time period. The sections on pre-Civil War arms was well done except I did notice the very limited mention of the U.S. Model 1841 so-called Mississippi Rifle which was very important during both the War with Mexico and the Civil War. If you are looking for a definitive reference on the Guns of the Old West, this really isn't it, however some of the background information and stories are wonderful.

Overall a good book with lots of information on the subject. A few of the pictures in the book were labelled with the wrong descriptions. Otherwise, worth the money.

Firearms played an important role in the West, guarding against animals and outlaws alike. *Guns Of The Old West* is an informative survey which will interest a wide range of readers; from those interested in early firearms, to others who want an accurate narrative of those who used them. Descriptions accompany black and white drawings of rifles, revolvers and other weapons. The history is lively and well done and will interest a large audience.

I definitely don't want to be too critical- I've kept this book now for over thirty years. When I was 14 years old, and had been to the theater to see the Outlaw Josey Wales, the Wild Bunch, and the Long Riders, I immediately came home and lost myself in this book, which some great soul had given me for Christmas or a birthday. Chapel's *Guns of the Old West* is lively and entertaining, but

mighty thin. It's a book of its time, perhaps, when black and white photos and a mishmash of historical stories could find an audience among the many gun nuts - and I'm one of them- around the world. I had this book on the shelf for years and years, occasionally picking it up, enjoying a photo and caption, learning something about old guns. But there's no real rhyme nor reason to the book, very little structure. For serious students of the history of western firearms- the guns used during the time of the opening of the western territories, there are only hints to be used for further research. Don't expect too much, but it belongs on your gun book shelf, and you CAN expect to be surprised, at times, by Chapel's obvious enthusiasm for his subject. Hal Herring author of

I bought this due to my interest in what is called cowboy guns. It is a little more in depth than that, covering the firearms used from the Civil War to the end of the 19th century. This book is great in referencing firearms I didn't even give thought to. The stories from history are engrossing, and the technical write-ups are good too. The only thing that brings this down from a 5 star rating is that some of the firearms photos are not really discussed, but just put in the book as a photo.

Well if your a gun nut or collector interested in a resource of actual firearms used in the old west than this has detailed information not normally available in other books.

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