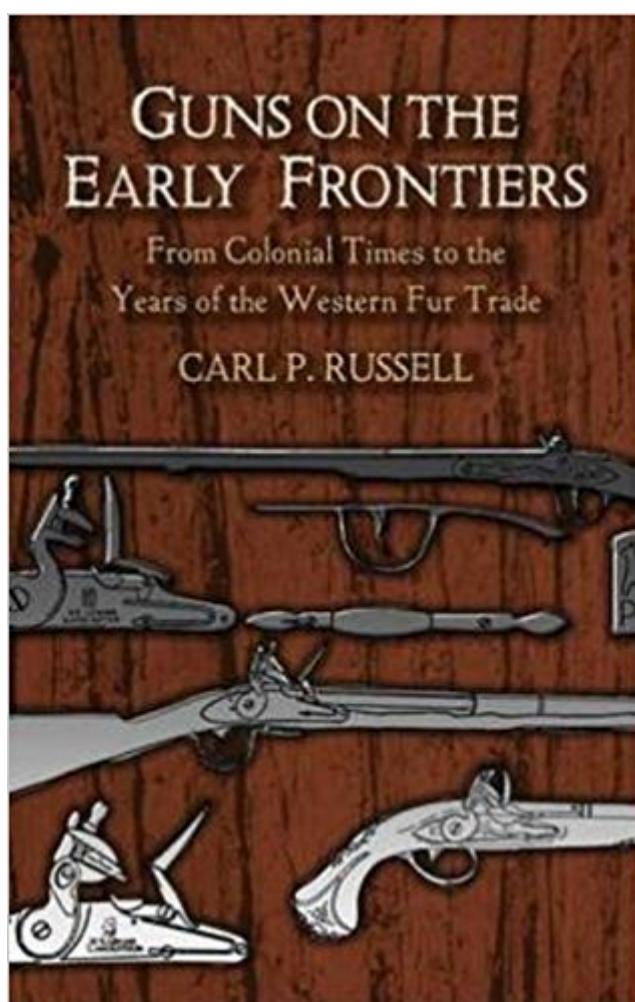


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Guns On The Early Frontiers: From Colonial Times To The Years Of The Western Fur Trade (Dover Military History, Weapons, Armor)



Synopsis

This thoroughly documented, authoritative, and highly readable book not only details the weapons used during the settlement and westward expansion of America but also describes their use by fur traders, trappers, soldiers, and Native Americans. The result is a lively historical examination of the momentous events that were strongly influenced by the gun trade. The text is augmented and enriched throughout with clearly identified illustrations of everything from antique muskets, flintlocks, repeating rifles, and howitzers to bullet molds, powder horns, and other firearm accessories. An outstanding contribution to firearms literature. It sets its own standard. "The New York Times." For collectors, museum curators, archaeologist-historians, this book is "in its field" an essential contribution. "Kirkus." A Glossary of Gun Terms, ample footnotes most skillfully arranged, and illustrations complement the text which achieves the miracle of scholarship without tedium. "San Francisco Chronicle."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is the new 2005 reprint of this classic book originally published in 1957. As the title says, it covers the frontier as it moved from the original colonies to the west. The first story takes place on July 30, 1609 when a fellow killed a captured Iroquois with a single shot from an arquebus. From there it goes on to the mid 1800's ending with the first battle of the Mexican War. ==The treatment that the book gives these guns is a combination of technical, especially as this was the

time of great improvements from the matchlock of 1609 to Colt's revolvers, and of the history of their use such as that by Walker which resulted in the definition of the Walker Colt. It is illustrated with 58 line drawings that show both the weapons and the people who used them. This book covers an area that has largely been ignored in other books. It is well written and recommended for readers with this interest.

This is a classic reference book on the guns used in America from the 17th to the mid 19th centuries. It is a MUST HAVE for the new student of firearms history. The documentation is excellent! Some of the illustrations are not up to par, but others are top rate. It belongs on the shelf of museum curators, archeologists, etc.

I found this to be an interesting book on the development of firearms over on this continent integrated with the rest of the world. Interesting portion about Arming the indigenous population and the concerns in doing so that I would not have thought about in today's world. Good companion to any study in early American life.

Great reference book. As others have stated, it was written in 1957, so the prose style is a little awkward when compared to more contemporary works. That said, it's packed with very good information with an almost laserlike focus on the subject material. I purchased this as part of my research efforts into early 19th century American plains migrations and explorations. I am also interested in how the 18th century arms trade between the European powers and the indigenous Americans may have impacted colonization and set the stage for the American Revolution and the War of 1812. I don't think this is emphasized much in history classes any more, but Russell does a good job laying out the efforts England, Spain, France, etc went through to arm the Native Americans via trade muskets. Again, it's sometimes dry but the motivated reader will get much information out of this book.

An excellent history of weapons used by people on the frontier of America. Fur traders, Indians as well as those during the Colonial Period. Very useful for Historical Archaeologists, collectors and gun nuts. Clear reading in understandable language.

Carl Russell has provided the reader with an in depth study of firearms beginning with the first explorers to America; i.e., Spanish, French, etc. and trade muskets they provided the Indians. Rather

than go on ,all I can say is buy a copy and add it to your collection.

Russell's great strength as a writer and as a historian lies in his ability to look at the objects of history (as opposed to its documents) and discern the story they tell. In the process he finds many insights to American history that you did not learn in school. This book, for instance, goes into depth on the history of frontier America seen as the process of arming its native inhabitants. We see how these guns caused enormous upheaval in relationships between tribes, shaping the lives and fates of thousands who had never even laid eyes on a white man. We see how gun sales were the primary instrument for developing strategic and military alliances between Europeans and native peoples, how they were used to leverage the dreams of empire by many European countries (the Swedish, Dutch, English, French, and Spanish, and finally the Americans), and how they served both to unite and divide the native peoples. In the process you learn much about the development of a North American character - what we now call the American pioneer spirit - and about the deep reasons why firearms are so fundamental a part of that character. Insights abound. This is one of those rare books that I have to put down every few pages to search the Internet or just to gaze off into the distance and really think about what I've just learned, and how much of what I have learned in the past must be unlearned, and how many things suddenly make sense where they never did before. A memorable book.

I teach history, I work as a docent in a local museum, and I like guns. I remember reading this book years ago in the library and I understand it's been out of print sometime now. I was thrilled to see that it was released for Kindle. And they did a fine job formatting it for this medium. I enjoyed the book immensely. It tells the history of the American journey westward using the weapons that helped win a continent as the backdrop. I thoroughly enjoyed the book. I am interested in flintlocks - perhaps my next big hobby - and truly enjoyed the very expert treatment of this influential technology in the book.

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