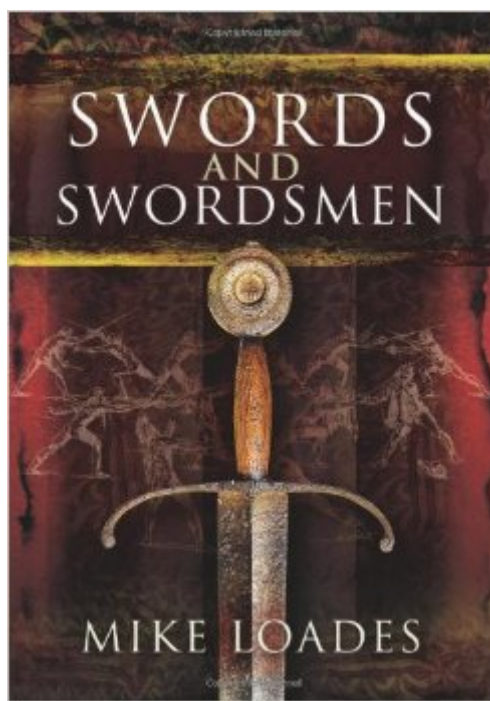


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# Swords And Swordsmen



## Synopsis

This magnificent book tells the story of the evolution of swords, how they were made, how they were used, and the people that used them. It doesn't claim to give comprehensive coverage but instead takes certain surviving examples as landmarks on a fascinating journey through the history of swords. Each is selected because it can be linked to a specific individual, thus telling their story too and giving a human interest. So the journey starts with the sword of Tutankhamun and ends with the swords of J E B Stuart and George Custer. Along the way we take in Henry V, Cromwell and Uesugi Kenshin, and there is the most detailed discussion you'll find anywhere of all of George Washington's swords. The chapters on these specific swords and swordsmen are alternated with more general chapters on the changing technical developments and fashions in swords and their use. The reader's guide on this historical tour is Mike Loades. Mike has been handling swords most of his life, as a fight arranger, stuntman and historical weapons expert for TV and stage. He considers the sword as a functional weapon, work of art, fashion statement and cultural icon. As much as his profound knowledge of the subject, it is his lifelong passion for swords that comes through on every page. His fascinating text is supported by a lavish wealth of images, many previously unpublished and taken specifically for this book.

REVIEWS

- *Military Illustrated*, January 2011 | truly a high quality product, beautifully produced and with lavish illustration throughout | a great read and highly recommended.
- *Armchair General.com*, 01/2011 | the reader is quickly drawn into a journey into man's past that is both illuminating and entertaining. If more scholarly works were as well researched and as scintillating, the hallowed halls of academia would be that much more attractive!
- *Ancient Egypt Magazine*, February/March 2011 | Well illustrated and written, this is a social and martial history all in one.
- *The Sword*, January 2011 | handsome, 494 page volume (including glossary, bibliography and index) investigates both the technical aspects as well as the societal impetus behind sword evolution in a way that is both academic as well as highly fascinating | presents swords as seen through the eyes of prominent historical figures who used them and of particular interest is the highly detailed focus on actual pedigree pieces. Generously illustrated with period images, fine line drawings and photographs of original antique swords from museums and private collections. Whether a new enthusiast just starting out, a practitioner of the sword arts or an advanced aficionado or collector,

there is something in *Swords And Swordsmen* for everyone | [Swordforum.com](http://Swordforum.com), May 3, 2011  
From its earliest pages to its epilogue (which treats the sword in its modern incarnation from a 19th century dueling implement to the modern sport of fencing), *Swords And Swordsmen* makes it clear that no study of the design, function and symbolism of the sword can be entirely complete without an understanding of the code of chivalry, and vice-versa. *Chivalry Today*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

(Reviewed by Scott Farrell, contributing author of the book "Martial Arts And Philosophy" - 2010, Open Court Press *Martial Arts and Philosophy: Beating and Nothingness (Popular Culture and Philosophy)*) The study of the ideals of chivalry is almost insuperable from the study of arms and armor, and the men (and women) who used them throughout history. In that regard, the new book *Swords And Swordsmen* by noted historical interpreter Mike Loades (Pen & Sword Books, Oct. 2010, 494 pgs.) is a fascinating read for anyone who is enthralled by the lore of the sword, not just as an icon of the medieval knight, but as a symbol of the highest ideals of martial endeavor throughout history. Fans of historically based television programming on the History, Discovery and National Geographic Channels will immediately recognize Loades from his many appearances as an expert commentator on a variety of shows. Perhaps just as recognizable as his face, however, is Loades' eager and enthusiastic voice as an advocate of active, engaging historical studies. His philosophy is based on the premise that history can't be truly understood from a distance - and *Swords And Swordsmen* is written in precisely this vein. The book straddles eras from Ancient Egypt during the rule of Tutankhamen (in 1336 B.C.) to the careers of J.E.B. Stuart and Gen.

Custer. Almost every chapter focuses on a sword representative of a specific historical era, using the weapon to delve deeply, and sometimes very personally, into the background of a historical figure who carried and used the blade (or, at the very least, who probably carried and used one much like it).

Sword devotees, fan and scholars all likely have their favourite sword or 'type' of sword. Mike Loades recent submission entitled, 'Swords and Swordsmen' likely has something for everyone! This beautifully presented work features high quality photographs and imagery which accompany a text spanning many boundaries in both time and space. This lovely book takes us on a journey which begins in antiquity with an explorative look at, the swords and sword culture of the ancient Egyptians. The book goes further however, as it offers us a glimpse into many other areas of their lives and culture as well! This is done seamlessly without breaking stride or losing sight of the topic, but rather, weaves elements such as social context into the tapestry of a particular sword culture. Not unlike a textual Westward expansion, the reader's journey continues onward to Greece and Rome and forward into the Iron Age. Continuing the journey both westward and forward readers are offered a tantalizing view not only of the history and development of the sword but, of the history and development of peoples and cultures. Never losing the sword as the focal point of his work, Mr. Loades incorporates cultural elements which strengthen the readers understanding of how swords effected cultural development at multiple stratospheric levels of societal living. Readers meet the Celts, the Vikings and Crusading Knights as they travel through time, from the Iron Age into (and through), the Medieval era. As the Medieval world gives way to the Renaissance, many changes occur with regards to the history and development of the sword. It seems only fitting that at this point in the book, the reader's journey is abruptly changed as well.

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