



Sickle Sword and Battle Axe: Edged Weapons of Ancient Egypt (Knives, Swords, and Bayonets: A World History of Edged Weapon Warfare)

By Martina Sprague

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Egypt, located around the Nile Valley, is one of the world's oldest and longest surviving cultures. Egyptian history includes periods of stability when Egypt may well have been the mightiest empire on earth, and periods of turmoil when the country was invaded by foreign powers.

The history of ancient Egypt is divided into thirty-one dynasties under the pharaoh kings. Warfare and military operations can be traced through pictorial evidence and narrations carved into rocks for smaller campaigns, and temple walls for major wars. Action scenes portray fallen horses and chariot troops employing bows and arrows, and knives or swords. Warriors ready for combat can be seen wielding battle axes high above their heads. The crescent shaped battle axe could easily kill an adversary by the sheer force of the blow. Hieroglyphs also indicate that three types of sword blades were eventually employed in warfare: straight, curved, and half-curved. Ancient wall carvings frequently depict the sickle sword, suggesting that the weapon was a highly valued instrument of war.

This book begins with an examination of metal and weapon manufacturing in ancient Egypt, and discusses the different sword shapes used. It then explores Egypt's military organization, including the tactics and weapons of chariot, infantry, and naval warfare. Next it discusses the structure of the army, the procedures used for recruiting and training the troops, and the general sentiment of the population toward warfare. The concluding remarks recap cultural traits and important developments in Egyptian history, and also discuss the cultural and spiritual value of the sword.

Knives, Swords, and Bayonets: A World History of Edged Weapon Warfare is a book series that examines the history of edged weapons in Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas, and the Middle East and surrounding areas before gunpowder increased the distance between combatants. The book series takes a critical look at the relationship between the soldier, his weapon, and the social and political

mores of the times. Each book examines the historical background and metallurgic science of the knife, sword, or bayonet respectively, and explores the handling characteristics and combat applications of each weapon. Save by purchasing the full 10-book series in a single paperback volume (538 pages). Look for Knives, Swords, and Bayonets: A World History of Edged Weapon Warfare (the full series).

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9. Longsword and Saber: Swords and Swordsmen of Medieval and Modern Europe
10. Pike, Halberd, and Bayonet: Sharp Weapons in Near Modern and Modern Warfare

Note that the books are written for those with an interest in exploring the historical beginnings of edged weaponry, how edged weapons have been used in war in different parts of the world, and the value the soldier attached to his weapon. Military, social, and political history is discussed. Arms collectors or others with detailed interest in the finer points of weaponsmithing may want to look for books that are more heavily illustrated.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Martina Sprague has a Master of Arts Degree in Military History from Norwich University in Vermont. She is the author of numerous books about military and general history. For more information, please visit her Web site: www.modernfighter.com.

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