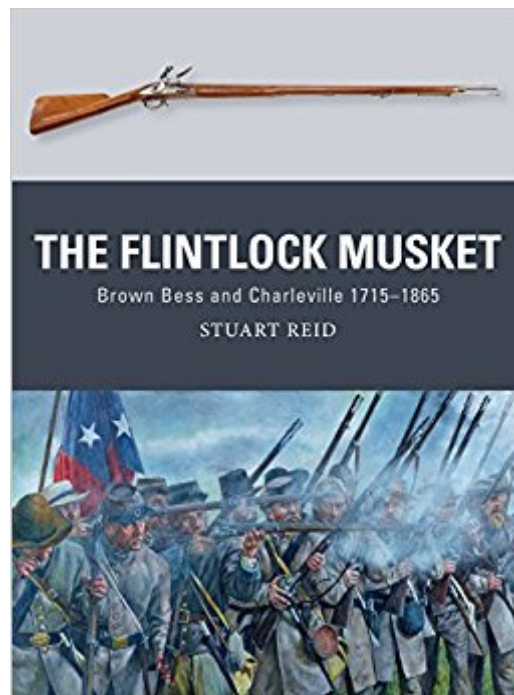




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# The Flintlock Musket: Brown Bess And Charleville 1715–1865 (Weapon)



## Synopsis

The flintlock or firelock musket is one of the truly iconic weapons in history: first used on the battlefields of the Thirty Years' War and the English Civil War, it was carried by both sides at Bunker Hill, Waterloo and the Alamo, and can truly be said to have dominated warfare for more than 150 years, until the advent of cartridge ammunition and breechloading weapons in the 1840s and 1850s and were still being widely used as late as the American Civil War in the 1860s. During the 18th century flintlocks tended to follow one of two basic patterns: from 1722 the British .75-calibre model, the 'Brown Bess', offered better man-stopping qualities and influenced the Prussians and others, while from 1717 the lighter, handier but more sturdy French .69-calibre Charleville served as a pattern first for the other Bourbon kingdoms such as Spain, then the American Springfield family of weapons, and finally for just about everybody else in Europe during the Napoleonic era. Featuring specially commissioned full-colour artwork, this engaging study examines the role played by the flintlock in close-order combat on European and other battlefields, employing first-hand accounts to show how tactical doctrines were successfully developed to overcome the weapon's inherent limitations; it also explores the use of the flintlock musket by individuals in irregular warfare, chiefly in North America. These two threads are combined in an analysis of the weapon's lasting impact; notwithstanding its frequently negative portrayal in popular films and otherwise respectable histories, it was extremely effective and the first truly universal soldier's weapon.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Stuart Reid was born in Aberdeen in 1954 and is married with two sons. He has worked as a librarian and a professional soldier and his main focus of interest lies in the 18th and 19th centuries. This interest stems from having ancestors who served in the British Army and the East India Company and who fought at Culloden, Bunker Hill and even in the Texas Revolution. His books for Osprey include highly acclaimed titles about King George's Army 1740-93 (Men-at-Arms 285, 289 and 292), and the British Redcoat 1740-1815 (Warrior 19 and 20). The author lives in Whitley Bay, UK.

The flintlock musket enjoyed a long service life as a weapon of war. It equipped armies around the world from the European wars of the early 1700's through the conclusion of the American Civil War. The weapon itself was relatively simple to build and use, yet with it, farmers and tradesmen could be turned, with a little training, into deadly infantrymen. "The Flintlock Musket" is an Osprey Weapon Series book by Stuart Reid, with illustrations by Steve Noon and Alan Gilliland. Roughly the first third of the book is devoted to a detail technical description of the flintlock and its evolution over time. Another large segment is devoted to the struggle of mainly European armies to develop tactics to best employ the flintlock musket on the battlefield. The last and perhaps best third is a concise history of its use on the battlefield, touching examples in Europe, India, and North America. The text is nicely supported by a collection of photographs, diagrams, and period and modern illustrations. As the author notes, the flintlock musket lasted such a long time because, coupled with a bayonet, it was a highly lethal weapon whose users, whether Highland light infantry, Indian Sepoys, or American farmers, required relatively little training to become effective in battle. Recommended as a highly readable introduction to the topic.

Since I shoot a replica 1777 Charleville and some of my friends shoot replica "Brown Besses", I was interested in what this book had to offer. Although there is a discussion of the differences between the Charleville and Brown Bess (the Charleville is judged superior, which I would agree), the differences are more technical than operationally significant. The book concentrates on the development of tactics for the military flintlock musket (a word on nomenclature: "musket" is generally used now to refer to any type of muzzle-loading longarm. If it is rifled, rather than smoothbore, it is referred to as a rifle-musket). These two flintlock muskets were the instruments with which France and England made themselves into world powers - the standard infantry weapons from the early 1700s through Waterloo, some being used as late as our Civil War. It is also interesting how little these muskets changed over that hundred year period; more tweaks than

substantive changes. The 1766 Charleville was used extensively by American forces in the Revolution and was the basis for the 1895 Springfield - the first American made military longarm. A book aimed more at the general reader than the specialist, it will give the reader a good picture of these iconic arms and how they were used.

Great book!. I wish Mr. Reid had written this volume about 5 years earlier. There is a ton of information here and a lot of history. Consider this review 4 and 1/2 stars. Good for the wargamer and figure modeler interested in the musket era. My faults are minimal. I found the language, at times, flowery and unnecessary for the subject matter. This is not a great novel. I also found the discussion on developing firing methods, platoon firing, etc. confusing, but that may just be me. If you are questioning whether to purchase this volume, you should be able to tell from the title and back cover. This is the weapon that was carried across historically significant battlefields around the world. If you have an interest in the musket era you should be able to tell if it is or it isn't your cup of tea. Thank you, Mr. Reid, for your effort in writing this volume.

This was a very good read with lots of interesting facts. It helps provide answers as to why some battles resulted in the way they did

Historical information and great overview of the development of the most fundamental change in military tactics until the machine gun is brought forth and the tank.

Very informative & detailed.

the item was as stated and new.

I just didn't get a lot out of this book. I expected a lot of detailed close up photos of the Brown Bess musket. there are a few but not a lot. If you are interested in the Brown Bess, don't buy this book.

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