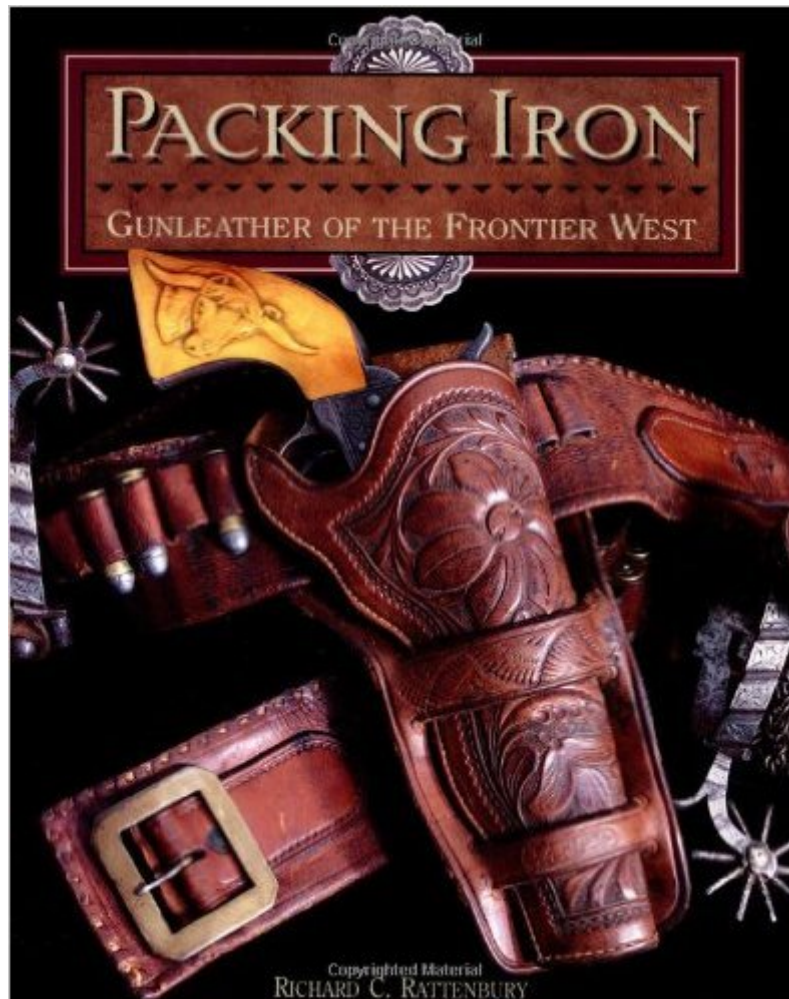


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# Packing Iron: Gunleather Of The Frontier West



## Synopsis

Western gunleather is an icon of American frontier lore. Packing Iron celebrates the artistry and innovation of the craftsmen who designed the gun rigs of the old time cowboys, troopers, lawmen, and Hollywood heroes. This unique art form is fully described and richly illustrated with more than 300 exciting color photographs and nearly 100 rare historic images. In the pages of Packing Iron you will discover gunleather produced by historic government arsenals, along with the famed frontier craftsmen like Collins, Meanea, Gallatin, and Heiser.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As a leather craftsman specializing in authentic reproductions of frontier gunleather, I consider Packing Iron to be a must-have -- the bible of holsters and cartridge belts. The pictures show great detail and the text reveals the significant history of the development and the impact of various holster designs. It's my #1 reference material.

This is the book you need if you want to know what real people in the 19th century west used to carry their guns and ammo. I bought it to help document my choices for leather gear for my Cowboy Action Shooting character, Marshal Thos. C. McGavin. There is everything you need to know about the holsters, belts, scabbards and slings used by cowboys, soldiers, lawmen and outlaws from just before the Civil War to the turn of the century. Lavishly illustrated in color, the descriptions and text detail all the great makers including the anonymous ones who didn't sign their work. Originals of

this art form, and it is art, are getting quite expensive. Several contemporary leather workers are producing high quality replicas or reproductions using this book as a guideline. They will even cite the page number where the original can be found. Anyone with an interest in the Western Frontier, the Civil War, Indian Wars or Spanish American war, reenactors, film buffs (and film propmasters, who could definitely learn from this book) will find this a fascinating and authoritative tome.

One of the most visually spectacular books on the old west I have read. Each and every photograph is of the highest quality, none are equal! You can almost smell the aroma of freshly tanned leather as you page through this story of old west leather work. Reading this book takes you back to the days when all men carried a sixshooter on their hips and gun fights in the town square settled disputes. Also explained in detail the evolution of gun leather and how functional it became, along with how it became a work of art a owner could wear with pride, most certainly also a status symbol. A book not only a old west buff would enjoy but anyone with a love of leather work and its artistry.

This is a one-of-a-kind look at gun leather. As a leather crafter for over 20 years I use this book as a guide and a catalog of sorts for my customers. I recommend it highly and often. Stan Freeman  
Freeman Leather Co. Whitefish, MT

I acquired this book after hearing it's praise and having begun making old west gun leather myself. It has been called the Bible of gun leather history and authenticity. I feel that could be future edition's new title, or more practical, the subtitle. I found to my disappointment that the Hollywood holster which hung down at that "cool" slant, was not historically authentic. But that's why a book such as this is so important; it corrects the mythology of the romantic and gives the truth, even if it is "disappointing". However the Hollywood genre is not omitted or treated with disdain. Rather, the early to mid-hollywood span is objectively covered with credit given to the film industry's creator of the holster which I mentioned above. As for the personal influence on leather work, it directed me to whole new love for the true style of historical accuracy and where they evolved from in the practical purpose they came. One prominent instance was the debt owed to the culture south of the border. The Mexican cowboys or "Vaceros" (sp) had been doing cowboy work long before the American counterpart. The holster which first accommodated the cartridge belt, was the "Mexican Loop". A beautiful style of leather braiding to trim belts and holsters is the "Mexicana Round Braid". These have been deeply ingrained into my gun leather work. Now, I have gone on for a great length here and overused the personal pronoun but this only due to an enthusiasm for, thus far, the definitive

authority of how the western "hogleg" was carried on the cowboy's tool belt. If the subject interests you and you want to read a number of books about it, beware...all other books will be diminished by comparison; "Packing Iron" is the last book, or only book you'll need.

Many of us who grown up watching western movies ( most of wich made before the "Spaghetti westerns era") really have no clue about how were guns holsters in the old west and surely thought that Hollywood made good researches about these important details in cowboys gear. This book will make you change your point of view offering the most complete display of models from the early 19th century to Hollywood era in the 20th century. Loads of pictures with brief descriptions offer you the knowledge about the historical holsters either military or civilian and very good suggestions if you want to make yourself a nice gun holster to show when at shooting matches to all friends. A great book in my personal opinion, useful when peoples ask you for a holster (to make for cheap price of course...LOL) but have no idea on what they're asking about. I make my holsters by myself (as T. Roosevelt did )and not just for a price reason but mainly to have the most comfortable way to carry my guns at matches: this book will allow me to improve historical details and offer a further service to friends who ask me for gun leather.

This is a terrific reference to holsters, belts, and scabbards made from the early 1800's to the prop leather used by Hollywood's Western stars, on into the end of the 20th century. Some truly beautiful examples of leather design and carving. Excellent book.

I purchased a copy of this book when it was first published during the early days of the Cowboy Action Shooting craze. I was blown away by the beauty of the photography. I have been viewing the pictures over the years since then\, and they never loose their power. I began making holsters for others and use this is a "catalog" of sorts and it has proven to be invaluable to me.

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