

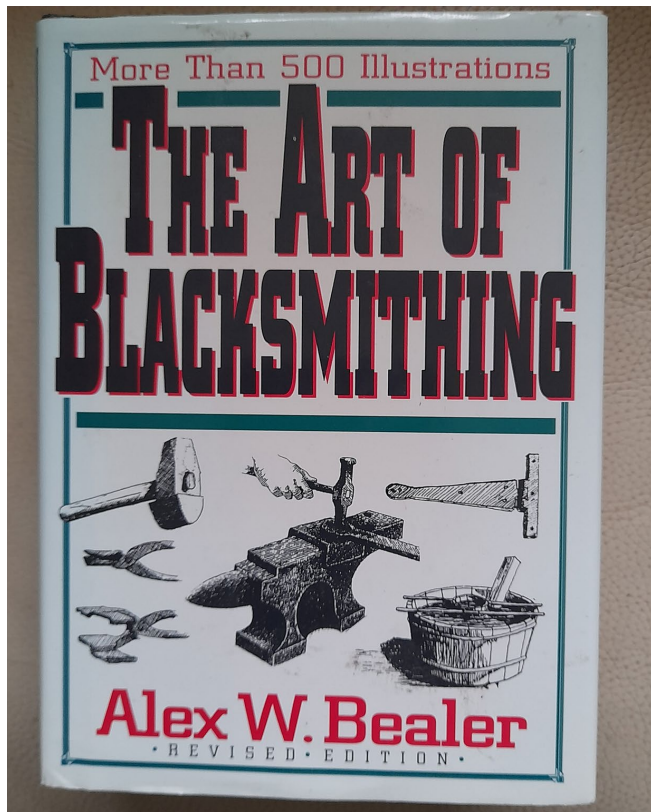
The Art of Blacksmithing.

By Alex W. Bealer

First written in 1969, this edition published in 1995

A conventionally sized hardback book of 424 pages with B&W line drawings.

While this is an American book, focussing on the activities of their Blacksmiths, the skills are common across the world, but with reference to the worldwide art prior to the discovery of the Americas.



A great treatise on the skill, taking you through the historic foundations of when the village Blacksmith was an essential artisan to ensure each horse had shoes, each farmer had the implements to till, sow and harvest the land, every door had hinges, locks and handles, each kitchen had pots, pans and a cooking range, each cart had axles, each wheel had tyres, each craftsman had iron tools, each army had weapons, the list goes on. Suffice to say the need for iron crafted to a specific use was essential to the survival of mankind to the standard they had achieved.

Sadly, these skills started to fail when industrialisation got going and the need for the blacksmith reduced drastically, fortunately this has been revived to an extent, with the artisan craft making tradition items for use and decoration, with the core skill - shoeing which never wavered, but which has been specialised into the skills of the Farrier.

We tend to forget how and where everyday items come from, and how they were made, we take the joining of two pieces of metal for granted, but how was this done before electricity? The Blacksmith had the answer! All the development of most modern technology started in the Smithy... firearms, cannons, steam engines, the list is endless.

The Blacksmiths tools are depicted with detailed explanations of their use, virtually every type of item ever made by the Blacksmith is covered, explaining the methodology used.

Despite its looks this is a fascinating book containing a wealth of information on the history of iron crafting across the world and the vast array of items made by that craftsman hidden away in the Smithy. Well worth a read if you are interested in traditional skills, and if you want to get into any metal working will give lots of useful ideas, techniques and skills.

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Tony Ashgrove Feb 2025