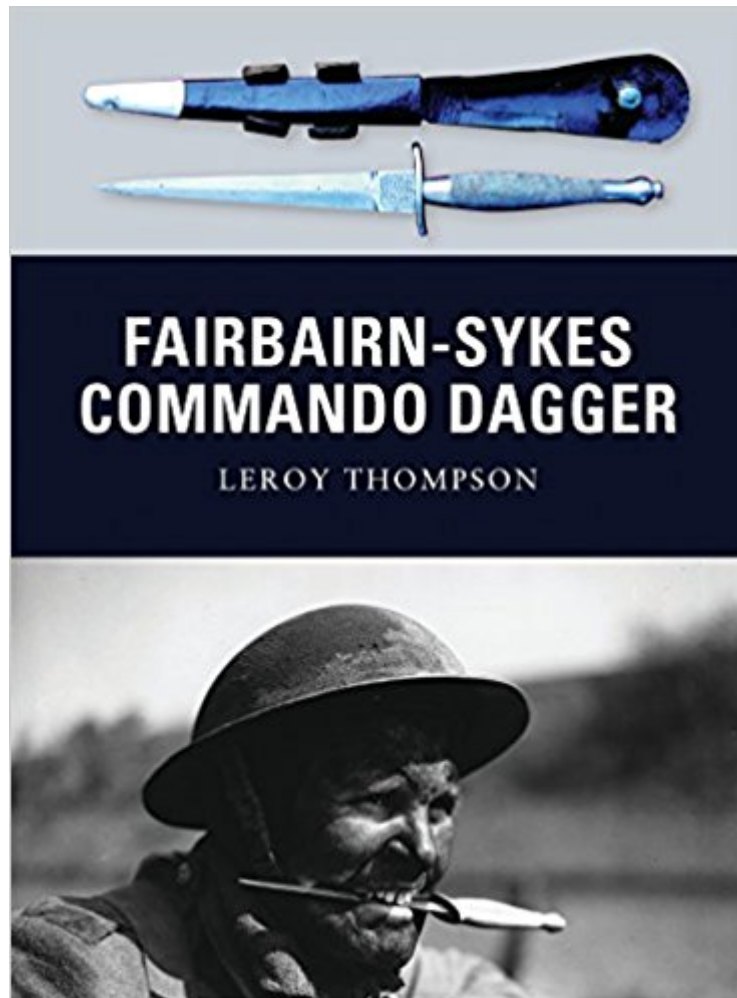




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# Fairbairn-Sykes Commando Dagger (Weapon)



## Synopsis

The Fairbairn-Sykes Commando dagger has become iconic as the most widely recognized fighting knife in the world. The origins of the dagger can be traced to Shanghai in the 1930s where W. E. Fairbairn and US Marine officers including Sam Yeaton carried out experiments in developing what they considered the perfect knife for close combat. When Fairbairn and Sykes became instructors for the Commandos, they refined the design which would evolve into the classic Fairbairn-Sykes dagger. The dagger was first used during early Commando raids into occupied Europe but saw action in every theatre of World War II (1939-1945). US Rangers and Marines who had trained with the Commandos took their Fairbairn-Sykes daggers home which also influenced the development of American Special Forces daggers. The Fairbairn-Sykes remained in use with many units after the war, and has become a symbol of commando and special forces units throughout the world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Thompson painstakingly describes the differences in detail of each Fairbairn-Sykes commando dagger variant, whether of those of direct lineage or those influenced by the design. Many photographs, whether from the WW2-era or modern close-ups of items in various collections, give good visual to the author’s descriptions.”  
— C. Peter Chen, [www.ww2db.com](http://www.ww2db.com)

Leroy Thompson trained and advised military and police special operations units around the world,

focusing especially on the tactical use of firearms. He has previously had 38 books published and more recent titles include *The Hostage Rescue Manual*, *The Counterinsurgency Manual* and *Secret Techniques of the Elite Forces*. He has also had various firearms books published including *Great Combat Handguns*, and appeared as a weapons expert on documentaries for Discovery, National Geographic and the BBC.

This Osprey title is a well-documented primer on the development and employment of the most iconic special warfare weapon, the Fairbairn-Sykes Fighting Knife used by elite forces the world over with its deep rooted history with special operations. The FSFK is a double-edged fighting knife resembling a dagger or poignard, developed by William Ewart Fairbairn and Eric Anthony Sykes in Shanghai based on concepts which the two men initiated before World War II while serving on the Shanghai Municipal Police in China. The book explains how the FSFK was made famous during WWII when issued to British Commandos. With its acutely tapered, sharply-pointed blade, the FSFK is frequently described as a stiletto, a weapon optimized for thrusting, although the FSFK is capable of being used to inflict slash cuts upon an opponent when its cutting edges are sharpened according to specification; making this dagger ideal for sentry removal and silent enemy liquidation. The FSFK is strongly associated with the British commandos and the US Special Operations Forces, who based their issued knife on the FSFK. It features in the insignia of the British Royal Marines, British/Australian/New Zealand Special Air Service (SAS), the American Special Forces and Rangers (Rangers were co-founded with the British Commandos). The book also details of FSFK's application for use in commando hand-to-hand combat is covered and quite interesting. The methods were so effective the Germans published counter techniques to FSFK which can read in the book *À Silent Killing - Nazi Counters To Fairbairn-Sykes Techniques: The Annotated English Translation of the Classic German World War II Manual*, which I highly recommend. Overall this is a well done Osprey publication and ideal for the novice knife collector and military combatives enthusiast.

This book discusses the Allied commando knife which became famous during WWII. Based on a knife designed by Fairbairn and Sykes while serving on the Shanghai police force during the 1920s and 1930s, the F-S Knife was quickly designed and produced for the fledgling special warfare units raised by the Commonwealth early in the war. The book discusses the features of the knife which made it ideal for silent killing and illustrates how the knife was employed by commandos, SOE operatives and other Allied special forces types. It is no wonder that this knife became the symbol

for many special forces. This is well-illustrated with photos, drawings and other artwork. The book discusses and illustrates many of the variants of the F-S knife, but falls well short of being a collectors guide.

One of the best books I've ever read about an individual weapon. Thompson goes into great detail on the history and development of the three patterns of the FS fighting knife. There are also short histories of its use in various raids as well as its adoption by the US Marine Raiders in WWII as the Marine Stiletto. A closing chapter covers the descendants of the FS such as the Applegate - Fairbairn fighting knife and the new UK-SFK fighting knife which is issued to British Special Forces. An excellent read and a nice resource for collectors.

Great book on the F-S fighting knives and those spawned off of that model. Excellent photographs and terrific writing.

Good history book Not a how to well-written with good pictures. A must have for former spec ops guys who like history

Good book with some great pictures of not only the knife but the soldiers who used them

Great book on the history and use of the FS fighting knife.

Fascinating and informative in all aspects - with the history and technical attributes of this legendary weapon, brought to life with rivetting accounts and rich graphics. Thank you Mr. Thompson for a work beautifully done!

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