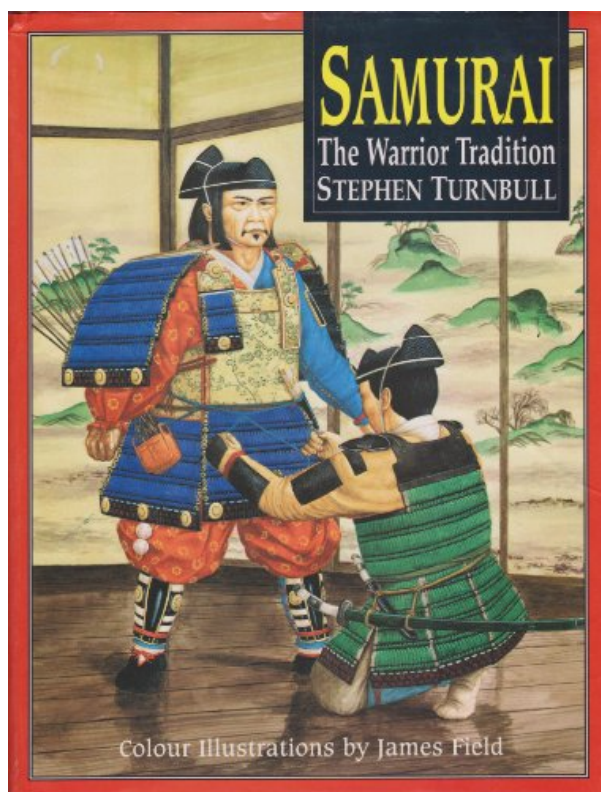
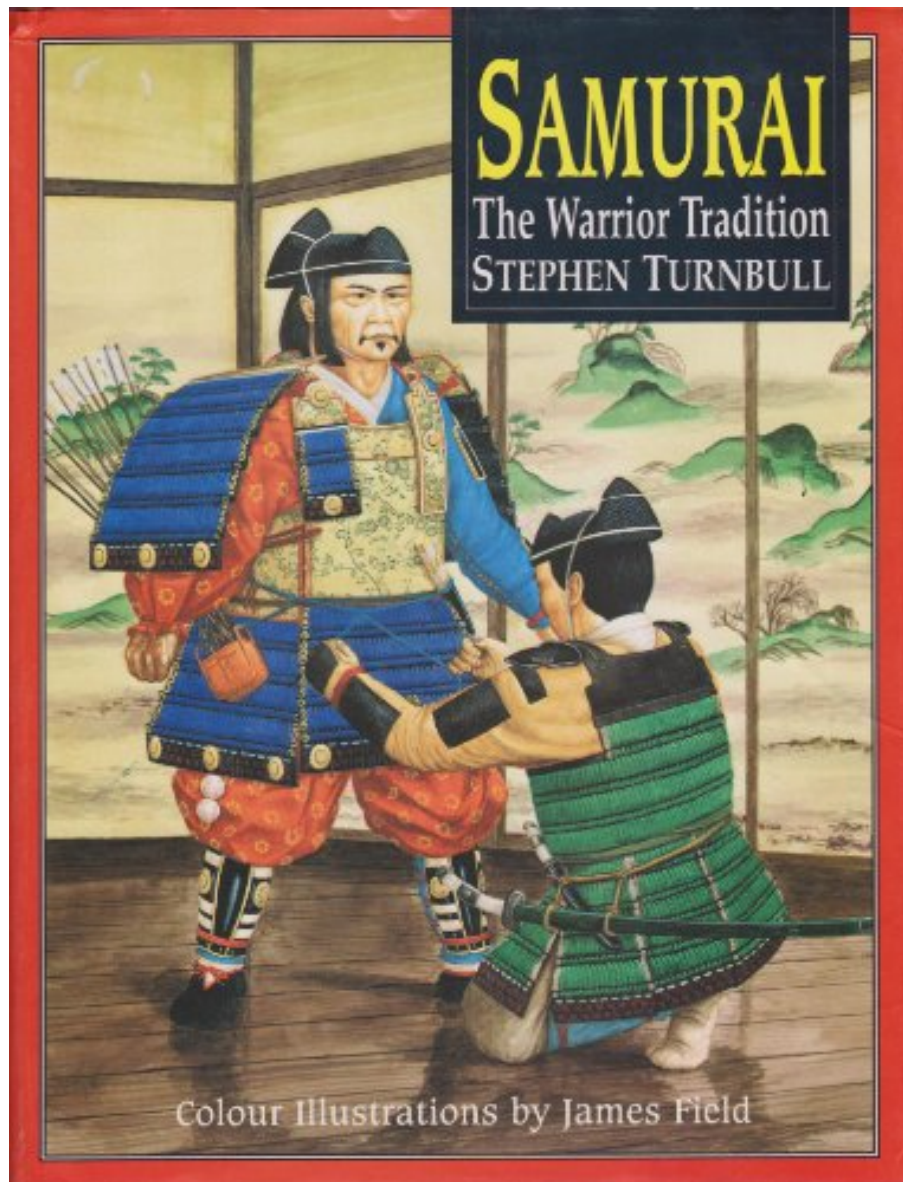


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Bold, ruthless, and fierce combatants, the samurai were the military elite of old Japan, warriors and warlords who commanded respect from entire nations. Take an exciting look at the hidden culture of this unique group, and get a remarkable insider's view of their ornate costume, armor, and weapons, and their special role within society. Compiled entirely from Japanese sources, this riveting narrative is accompanied by specially commissioned artwork and beautiful photography of ancient artifacts.

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Five Stars

By John John

An excellent book. Second hand but delivered in wonderful condition. A truly great purchase.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

The best from Stephen Turnbull...

By Michael Valdivielso

This is an omnibus edition of 'Samurai Warriors' and 'Samurai Warlords', giving you over 300 pages of colour illustrations, black and white photos and some of the most detailed information about the Samurai. The first part of the book deals with the warriors, from the early warriors from the Heian Period to the end with the last true samurai, Saigo Takamori, who in 1877 raised a rebellion against the new order and failed. The books deals with armour and weapons, equipment, tactics and training.

The second part of the book deals with the Daimyo, the warlords of Japan, starting with the first Samurai Warlord, the 60 year old Hojo Soun in 1491, and goes into detail about their culture, training, family life, women's roles and even how they dealt with death.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

The samurai influence on Japanese history

By Stuart C.

An excellent 335 page introduction for anyone interested in the part played by the samurai in Japanese history from their early origins through the Heian (Kyoto as capital), Kamakura, Muromachi, Sengoku, Momoyama, and Edo (Tokyo as capital) periods until their eventual decline in the 19th century.

The book is enhanced by many beautifully painted colour plates by James Field of samurai generals in full armour, as well as the simpler armour worn by foot soldiers, and others depicting aspects of samurai life. Black and white diagrams depict details of armour lacing and how the different sections of armour work together. There are further colour plates depicting normal day to day samurai costume.

The book contains chapters covering each major period in samurai history, describing significant battles and personalities, as well as the role of warrior monks, the samurai elite, sex and the samurai, the cultured warlord, the duty of vengeance and the attitude toward death.

Many woodblock print reproductions in colour and black and white are included, together with contemporary photographs of castles, temples, houses, gardens and other landmarks. Several maps are also included but being a compilation of two previous works by author Stephen Turnbull some of these are oddly repeated, as is an illustration which is repeated in colour although appearing in an earlier chapter in black and white.

Despite these publishing discrepancies Stephen Turnbull is an expert in the field with the knack of being able to provide a wealth of information in an easily digested. The book provides a fascinating insight into the often amazingly brave but brutally brief lives of the samurai warrior and, in Western eyes, some of their macabre rituals, such as the head viewing ceremony. It also describes their involvement in the arts and other aesthetic pursuits such as the tea ceremony, theatre, meditation, and the relaxation gained by high ranking samurai from their tranquil Japanese gardens. It is also interesting to read that some samurai did have a well developed sense of irony and humour, and did on occasion display compassion despite their fearsome reputation as the ultimate warrior class.

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