



**Brack, H.G.**

**HANDBOOK FOR IRONMONGERS:**

*A Glossary of Ferrous Metallurgy Terms*

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Students, researchers and museum visitors will benefit from this guide to the history of metallurgical terms.

The layout of the book, published by Maine's Davistown Museum, aids readers in finding specific terminology and guides their further study. Entries are detailed and often end with cross-references or other terms of interest. In addition to the alphabetical glossary, which makes up the bulk of the work, there is an interesting historical timeline at the book's beginning, and several detailed charts for the most serious modern-day toolmakers. Younger students and readers who are not standing in the museum will bemoan the lack of illustrations or photographs. While a glossary of metallurgical vocabulary would not seem

to be a venue for radical or revolutionary ideas, there are some strikingly avant garde political views tucked in among the descriptions of Japanese Water bellows and the Lost Wax Process. For example, the author includes notes on "Biocatastrophe, Biomass fuels and Biosphere as bank account" in addition to "BSCF" (Biologically Significant Chemical Fallout), which will have a "major role in the ongoing decline of the biodiversity of most ecosystems." While blacksmiths and historians may find this kind of ecological information superfluous, this text is also aimed at another group of readers—those who recognize "the urgent need to maintain or reestablish sustainable environments and lifestyles in the coming age of biocatastrophe." Successfully piercing the historical secrecy surrounding the art of steel-making and delving into the surprising history of tool-making in the early Americas, Brack has plenty of interesting revelations for the metallurgical cognoscenti. Expert readers will be satisfied by the detail and plethora of information included, while those with less background in the subject matter will also find information at their level.

A well-organized reference tool packed with useful information; accessible to all but the youngest readers.

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