

AIRGUN LITERATURE

AN ANNOTATED PARTIAL REFERENCE LIST

By Dr. Robert D. Beeman

Largely limited to separate publications such as books, periodicals, and booklets, rather than individual airgun articles. (For a large listing of airgun articles prior to 1990 see Groenewold [1990]). For more information and a detailed analysis of the references listed below, see the Literature Review section of www.Beemans.net and a less up-to-date analysis in the Second Edition of the *Blue Book of Airguns*.

PERIODICALS:

The latest contact and subscription information is available on www.Google.com. Older issues sometimes available at secondary book markets, eBay, Doug Law dlaw1940@yahoo.com (PO Box 42, Sidney, NE 69162), FSI at 906-482-1685, gunshows, etc.

Airgun Ads (Barry Abel, Box 1795, Hamilton, Montana 59840). Small monthly, only ads for airguns and accessories.

Addictive Airgunning. (www.airgunshow.net). January 2004 to date. Online format allows large articles and color pictures. Excellent for both collectors and shooters.

Airgun Hobby (www.airgunhobby.com). October 2004 to date. Now America's only printed airgun periodical. Quarterly published by airgun enthusiasts Ron Sauls and Jim Giles. Less glitzy than some previous airgun periodicals, but far superior in reporting airgun events and information on airgun collecting and use.

Airgun Illustrated. August 2002 to January 2004. The first five issues, with Tom Gaylord's input, were truly wonderful.

Airgun Journal (Beeman Precision Airguns). Small, only 1979 to 1984. Edited by Robert Beeman. Many articles valuable to airgun shooters and collectors. One of the rarest of all airgun publications. Less than 500 copies of each of the six issues were printed. Beautifully printed on heavy, textured deep tan paper with green and brown masthead - extremely difficult to scan or photocopy because of the dark paper. Back issues available at www.Beemans.net.

Airgun Letter. Monthly newsletter of 12-16 pages, plus *Airgun Revues* 1-6 of about 100 pages each, perhaps the world's best reference material on adult airguns. Closed August 2002 when editor Tom Gaylord moved to *Airgun Illustrated*.

Airgun News & Report (later as *American Airgunner*). Valuable articles, out of print.

Airgun World and Airgunner (both by Romsey Publishing Co., 4 The Courtyard, Denmark St., Workingham, Berkshire RG402AZ, England). British monthlies. *Airgun World* articles of Roy Valentine (under pen name "Harvey" in 1970s) and later, those of John Atkins in *Airgunner* and "Tim Saunders" in *Airgun World*, are especially valuable to collectors.

Guns Review. British gun magazine formerly carried excellent articles on airguns; especially the pioneer research of John Walter and the late Dennis Commins around 1970s.

New Zealand Airgun Magazine. Pub. by Trevor Adams from February 1986 to April 1988.

Philippine Airgun Shooter. Only four quarterly issues, plus an annual, in 1989.

Shotgun News. Newspaper format, mainly firearm ads, but also airgun ads and America's only airgun column - by outstanding airgun writer Tom Gaylord.

U.S. Airgun (last issue as *Rimfire and Airgun*). Valuable articles for airgun shooters and collectors, out of print.

VISIÉR, Das Internationale Waffen-Magazin. Lavishly illustrated, prestigious slick German language magazine. Basically a firearm publication, but contains some of the best written, best illustrated airgun articles ever. *VISIÉR* Specials, such as 1996 Special Number 4, may have only airgun articles.

Other gun periodicals sometimes have airgun articles: *Precision Shooting* and *The Accurate Rifle*, perhaps the best shooting magazines in the English language, frequently present excellent articles on airguns. *The Rifle* and *Guns* previously featured airgun columns. Most American gun magazines such as *American Rifleman*, *Arms and the Man*, *Guns and Ammo*, *Sports Afield*, etc. have only occasional airgun articles.

REFERENCES:

Adler, Dennis. 2001. (Edited by Dr. Robert D. Beeman and S.P. Fjestad). *Blue Book of Airguns*, First Edition. 160 pp. Blue Book Publications, Inc., Minne-

apolis, Minnesota. Now a rare collectors' item (hardbounds sell for \$100+).

Atkinson, R. Valentine 1992. *Air Looms*. *Gray's Sporting Journal*. Sept. 1992: 35-41. Beautifully illustrated report on some of the Beeman collection. Some garbled information.

Baker, Geoffery and Colin Currie. 2002, 2003. Vol 1: *The Construction and Operation of the Austrian Army Repeating Air Rifle*, 62 pp.; Vol. 2, *The Walking Stick Air Gun* 79 pp. From Bryan & Associates (864-261-6810 or BryanAndAc@aol.com) or directly from geoffrey.baker@virgin.net. Detailed photos, full-scale drawings, and measurements. Everyone even slightly interested in these amazing airguns and certainly anyone who contemplates opening one should have these guides. Wait for the 2005 revision of the Repeating Air Rifle guide. More guides in planning.

Beeman, Robert D., 1977. *Air Gun Digest*. 256 pp. DBI Books, Northfield, IL. Airgun collection, selection, use, ballistics, care, etc. When I did this volume way back in the 20th century when the field of adult airgunning hardly existed, I never dreamed that someday it would be called a classic collectible, but I'm not going to fight it.

Beeman, Robert D. 1977. *Four Centuries of Airguns*, pp. 14-26. *The Basics of Airgun Collecting*. Pp. 218-235 (Later reprinted together as *The Art of Airgun Collecting* by Beeman Precision Arms in 1986, 23 pp.). Considered as the first guide to airgun collecting. A key work. Should be teamed with the "Rare Air" airgun collecting article by R. Beeman in the First Edition of the *Blue Book of Airguns*.

Beeman, Robert and M.J. Banosky, John W. Ford, Randy Pitney, Joel Sexton. 1991. *Air Guns, A Guide to Air Pistols and Rifles*. National Rifle Association, Washington, D.C. Abbreviates and revises the original Beeman manuscript, but very useful introduction to airgun shooting and programs.

Beeman, Robert D. 1995. *The Odyssey of the Beeman R1*. Chapter in the Beeman R1 Supermagnum Air Rifle, pp. 1-9. GAPP. The real story of the gun that brought America into the adult airgun world - and gave rise to the HW 80.

Beeman, Robert D. and John Allen. 2002-2005. *Blue Book of Airguns*, Second through Fifth Editions. Blue Book Publications, Inc., Minneapolis, Minnesota. Price is not the primary purpose of these guides. Model ID and information are. From 19th century to latest guns. Valuable to all airgunners. Every volume has valuable articles; serious airgunners should have a complete set of all editions!

Bruce, Gordon. 2000. *Webley Air Pistols*. 224 pp. Robert Hale, London. The bible on Webley air pistols.

Brukner, Bruno, 2000. *Der Luftpistole*. Second edition, 230 pp. Journal Verland Schwend. Outstanding book on air pistols. All air pistol fans, not just those reading German, should have it. Just the diagrams are worth the price of admission.

Brychta, Frank S. 1994 a. *FSI Airgun Ballistic Tables*. 88 pp. 1994b. *FSI Advanced Airgun Ballistics*. 52 pp. *Firearms & Supplies*, 514 Quincy St., Hancock, MI 49930. Absolutely essential pair of books for all who are interested in airgun ballistics, field target shooting, and airgun hunting ballistics. Mainly very useful tables.

Cardew, G.V. & G.M. Cardew, E.R. Elsom. 1976. *The Air Gun from Trigger to Muzzle*. 96 pp. Martin Brothers, Birmingham, England. Highly technical. The best guide to internal airgun ballistics.

Cardew, G.V. & G.M. Cardew. 1995. *The Airgun from Trigger to Target*. 235 pp. Privately published. ISBN 0 9505108 2 3. Extension of Cardew's pioneer book to include external ballistics. Reveals how much and how little we know about airgun ballistics.

Chapman, Jim. 2003. *The American Airgun Hunter*. 234 pp. Chapman, Jim and Randy Mitchell, 2003. The Airgunners Guide to Squirrel Hunting. 128 pp. Jaeger Press, 67 Sentinel, Alviso Viejo, CA. www.geocities.com/echochap/airgun_hunter.html. The "American" book actually covers airgun hunting in several countries. Entertaining gab mixed into an essential guide - these fel-

- lows are most interested in results while I would lean more towards the quality of the gun. Great.
- Churchill, Bob & Granville Davies. 1981. *Modern Airweapon Shooting*. 196 pp. David & Charles, Devon, England. Authors should be shot for using the word "weapon." Excellent introduction to formal airgun target shooting.
- Darling, John. 1988. *Air Rifle Hunting*. 160 pp. Crowood Press. Classic view of hunting with an air rifle in England.
- Dieter, Ernst 2002. *Luftgewehre und Luftpistolen nach 1945 aus Suhl und Zella-Mehlis*. 143 pp. WTS Waffentechnik in Suhl GmbH, Lauter 40, 98528 Suhl, Germany. Writing under a pseudonym, a former top engineer at Haenel presents invaluable information on almost 60 models - some not known to collectors before.
- Dunathan, Arni T. 1971. *The American BB Gun: A Collector's Guide*. 154 pp. A.S. Barnes and Co., Cranbury, New Jersey. The pioneer work on BB gun collecting. Now badly out of date, but forever essential! The 1970 prices will bring tears to your eyes!
- Elbe, Ronald E. 1992. *Know Your Sheridan Rifles & Pistols*. 79 pp. Blacksmith Corp. The best review of the Sheridan guns.
- Fletcher, Dean. 1996a, 1996b, 1998a, 1998b, 1998c. *The Crosman Arms Handbooks*, 259 pp.; and *The Crosman Rifle 1923-1950*, 265 pp., *The Crosman Arms Model "160" Pellgun*, 144 pp., *75 Years of Crosman Airguns*, 223 pp., *Crosman Arms Library* (CD-ROM). Published by D.T. Fletcher, 6720 NE Rodney Ave, Portland, Oregon 97211. (For more Crosman info see also: Eichstädt, Von Ulrich and Dean T. Fletcher. 1999. *Eine Unbekannte Größe. Visier*, Feb. 99: 52-57 and Oakleaf, Jon B. 1979. *Vintage Crosmans. The Airgun Journal* 1(1): 1-3. Oakleaf, Jon B. 1980. *Vintage Crosmans II. The Airgun Journal* 1(2): 1-7.). The Fletcher works are simply the best, most essential guides to the Crosman and Benjamin airguns! Absolutely essential to anyone interested in these makes and the history of American airguns.
- Fletcher, Dean. Undated. *The Crosman Arms Library*. CD with 888 full color scans of Crosman literature.
- Fletcher, Dean. 1998c. *The Chronology of Daisy Air Guns 1900 - 1981 and Daisy Toy and Metal Squirt Guns*. 18 pp. Published by D.T. Fletcher.
- Fletcher, Dean. 1999. *The St. Louis and Benjamin Air Rifle Companies*, 305 pp. D.T. Fletcher - Publisher.
- Friberg, Av Kenth. 2001. *Luftvapen*. 191 pp. Karlshamm\Göteborg, Sweden. (K. Friberg, Ekbacken 3, 37450 Asarum, Sweden). In Swedish; one of several guides to some airguns not generally known to Americans.
- Galan, Jess I. 1988. *Airgun Digest*, 2nd Edition, 257 pp. DBI Books, Northbrook, IL.
- Galan, Jess I. 1995. *Airgun Digest*. 3rd Edition. 288 pp. DBI Books, Northbrook, IL. Classic books, all aspects of airgunning. Outstanding author.
- Gaylord, Tom. 1995. *The Beeman R1*. 174 pp. GAPP. One of the classic, best books on airguns. Highly recommended by many airgun writers. Includes a chapter by R. Beeman on the Beeman R1 as the precursor of the HW 80. The most useful book on the market for understanding the function and use of ANY spring piston airgun.
- Groenewold, John. 1990. *Bibliography of Technical Periodical Airgun Literature*. 28 pp. Pub. by John Groenewold, Box 830, Mundelein, IL 60060. A great listing. John promises to go beyond 1990 "someday"!
- Groenewold, John. 2000. *Quackenbush Guns*. 266 pages. Pub. by John Groenewold, Box 830, Mundelein, IL 60060-0830. Phone 847-566.2365. The definitive guide to the wonderful antique Quackenbush airguns.
- Hannusch, Larry. 2001. *Pneumatic Reflections*. 280 pages. Self published by L. Hannusch, 5521-B, Mitchelldale, Houston, TX 77092 or lhannusch@netscape.net. Compilation of last twenty years of interesting and valuable articles on airgun collecting by one of the world's leading authorities.
- Herridge, Les. 1987. *Airgun Shooting*. 96 pp. A & C Black, London.
- Herridge, Les. 1994. *Airgun Shooting Handbook.*, 80 pp. Andrew Publishing Co. Ltd.
- Herridge, Les and Ian Law. 1989. *Airgun Field Target Shooting*. 100pp. Peter Andrew Publishing Co. Basic introductions to British field target airgun shooting.
- Hiller, Dennis E. 1982. *The Collector's Guide to Air Pistols*, Revised Second Edition. 187 pp. Published by Dennis Hiller. Rather dated, depressed values, but invaluable model info - mainly European models.
- Hiller, Dennis E. 1985. *The Collectors' Guide to Air Rifles*, Enlarged Third Edition. 276 pp. Published by Dennis Hiller. See above note. Again, lots of invaluable information.
- Hoff, Arne. 1972. *Air Guns and Other Pneumatic Arms*. 99 pp. Barrie and Jenkins, London. A classic that everyone interested in the history of airguns simply must have!
- Hoff, Arne, 1977. *Windbüchsen und andere Druckluftwaffen*. 105 pp. Parey, Berlin. Updated version of above; in German.
- Holzel, Tom. 1991. *The Air Rifle Hunter's Guide*. 159 pp. Velocity Press, 52 Lang St., Concord, MA 01742. Simply the best book on hunting with an air rifle. Presents crow hunting as philosophically similar to fly fishing. The "Killing as a Sport" chapter is one of the best ever presentations on the morality and ethics of hunting. Includes outstanding, practical material on field ballistics of airguns.
- Hough, Cass S. 1976. *It's A Daisy!* 336 pp. Daisy Division, Victor Comptometer Corp., Rogers, Arkansas. Delightful history of the Daisy Company by one of its longest term executives. Rare, a very desirable collectors' item - softbound.
- House, James E. 2002. *American Air Rifles*. 208 pp., 179 black and white illus. 2003. CO2 Pistols & Rifles. Krause (www.krause.com). Both paperbound books press the theme that pellet guns from Daisy, Crosman, etc. should be seriously considered by adults also. Some of the best ballistic info available for airguns of this level.
- Hughes, D.R. 1973. *An original handbook for the model 35D, 27, 35 & 50 air rifles*. 77 pp. and three fold-out plates. Pub. by D.R. Hughes, England. (Original brand = Diana, RWS, Gecado, some Winchester, some Beeman, some HyScore). Delightful guide to assembly, etc.
- Hughes, D.R. 1981. HW 35. *A Handbook for Owners and Users of the HW35 Series Air Rifles*. 65 pp. Optima Leisure Products, 75 Foxley Lane, Purley, Surrey, England. Another delightful Hughes tour through a famous airgun.
- Janich, Michael D. 1993, *Blowguns, The Breath of Death*. 81 pp. Paladin Press, Boulder, Colorado. Basic info on the most basic of airguns.
- Johnson, Bill 2003. *Bailey and Columbian Air Rifles*. Book plus CD available from Bill Johnson, PO Box 97B, Tehachapi, CA 93581. The definitive work on some of America's most interesting and solid airguns (formerly known as Heilprin airguns). 1/4 and 1/2 scale detailed drawings. Values not given.
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- Kersten, Manfred. 2001. *Walther - A German Legend*. 400 pp. Safari Press, 15621 Chemical Lane B, Huntington Beach, CA 92649-1506 USA. This gorgeous masterpiece covers all Walther guns, including excellent coverage of the airguns. Also available in German.
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- Kolyer, John M. & Ron Rushworth. 1988. *Airgun Performance*. 157 pp. Sangreal Press, Newport Beach, California. Updated version of Kolyer's 1969 work. Even includes blowgun and slingshot data.
- Law, Robert. 1969. *The Weibrauch Handbook*. 44 pp. Air Rifle Monthly, Grantsville, West Virginia. One of a series of how-to-do-it airgun maintenance and tuning booklets by one of America's early adult airgun hobbyists. Verbose but very useful. Last supply available in Sale section of www.Beemans.net .
- Lawrence, Andrew. 1969. *Development of the Hy-Score Air Pistol*. Engineering Case Library No. 134. Department of Mechanical Engineering, Leland Stanford Jr. University. Extremely rare paper on the origin of the American HyScore concentric piston air pistols.
- Marchington, James. 1988. *Field Airgun Shooting*. 200 pp. Pelham Books/London (Penguin). Basic guide to British field target shooting.

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- Munson, H. Lee. 1992. *The Mortimer Gunmakers, 1753-1923*. 320 pp. Andrew Mowbray, Lincoln, Rhode Island. Includes excellent material on the elegant large bore airguns made by the Mortimer family, 1700s to early 1900s.
- Nonte, George C. 1970, *Complete Book of the Air Gun*. Stackpole, Harrisburg, PA. Somewhat lightweight and dated, but very useful.
- Oscar Will-Catalogue Venus Waffnerwerk Reprint of 1902/03 catalog. 94 pp. Journal-Verlang in Schwäbisch Hall.
- Parks, Michael R. 1992, 1994. *Pneumatic Arms & Oddities*, Vol. 1 and Vol. 2. 245 and 211 pp. Southwest Sports, 1710 Longhill Road, Benton, AR 72015. Fascinating collection of older American airgun patents.
- Punchard, Neal. 2002. *Daisy Air Rifles & BB Guns, The First 100 Years*. 156 pp., 300 color illustrations, MBI Publishing. Not really a guide, but a beautiful celebration of Daisy air guns!
- Reno, Brett, (2004). *Airgun Index and Value Guide*. 13th edition, 150+ unnumbered pages in three-ring binder. Brett Reno, RR2 Box 63, Heyworth, IL 61745. No illustrations, descriptions, history, model details, etc. but invaluable for its literature references!
- Robinson, Ron, (1998) *The Manic Compressive* 125 pp.; (2001) *Airgun Hunting and Sport*, 138 pp.; (2003) *A Sporting Proposition*, 126 pp. Ron Robinson, 4225 E. Highway 290, Dripping Springs, Texas 78620. Three thoroughly Texan tomes on airgun hunting. Loves hunting with airguns, from favorite Beeman R1 to latest oriental big bore airguns. A real hunter, real character, real ego! Every airgun hunter should have all three.
- Skanker, Ragnar and Laslo Antal. 2001. *Sportliches Pistolen-schießen*. (Competitive Pistol Shooting). In German. 194 pp. Motorbuch Verlag, Postbox 103743, Stuttgart 70032, Germany. Includes a chapter on air pistol target shooting.
- Shepherd, Arthur. 1987. *Guide to Airgun Hunting*. 123 pp. Argus Books, London. Very interesting, but severely British.
- Smith, W.H.G. 1957. *Smith's Standard Encyclopedia of Gas, Air, and Spring Guns of the World*. 279 pp. Arms and Armour Press, London and Melbourne. The initial bible of airguns, badly dated and with many errors, but absolutely indispensable.
- Stöckel, Johan F., 1978-82. Revision edited by Eugene Heer: *Heer der Neue Stöckel*. Internationales Lexikon der Büchsenmacher, Feuerwaffenfabrikanten und Armbrustmacher von 1400-1900. 2287 pp. Journal-Verlang, Schwend GmbH, Schwäbisch Hall, Germany. Extremely expensive, extremely useful three volume guide to virtually all gun makers from 1400 to 1900. In German, but that is not much of a handicap for those speaking other tongues when looking up names and dates.
- Thomas, James F., 2000. *The BB Gun Book - A Collectors Guide*. 75 pp. Self-published. (Basically a brief update of the classic 1971 Dunathan book).
- Townshend, R.B. 1907. *The Complete Air-Gunner*. 88 pp. plus foldout figure. I. Upcott Gill, London and Chas. Scribner's Sons, New York. (reprinted). Delightful insight to airgunning at the beginning of the 20th century.
- Traister, Robert J. 1981. *All About Airguns*. 306 pp. Tab Books, Blue Ridge Summit, PA. Pot-boiler, largely derived from 1980 Beeman catalog.
- Tyler, Jim. 1988. *Vermin Control with an Air Rifle*. Andrew Publishing Company, Ltd. Controlling what Americans call "varmints" or pests.
- Wade, Mike, 1984. *The Weihrauch HW 80 and Beeman R1 Air Rifle, A User's Guide to Higher Performance*. 19 pp. Techpress, Mike Wade Engineering, 87 Elgin Rd., Seven Kings, Ilford, Essex, England. Technical, excellent.
- Walter, John. 1981. *The Airgun Book*. 146 pp. Arms and Armour Press, London. British based register of then current airguns. Excellent.
- Walter, John. 1984. *The Airgun Book*, 3rd Edition. 176 pp. Arms and Armour Press, London. Contains best ever survey of airgun manufacturing history from 1900 to 1984.
- Walter, John. 1985, *Airgun Shooting, Performance Directory and Index of Suppliers from A to Z*. 96 pp. Lyon Press Ltd., West Hampstead, London. Tall, little guide to fit the vest pocket.
- Walter, John. 1987. *The Airgun Book*, 4th Edition. Arms and Armour Press, London. Broadened the scope of this series. The last of an excellent series.
- Walter, John. 2002, *Greenhill Dictionary of Guns and Gunmakers*. 576 pp. Greenhill Books, London and Stackpole Books, PA. Indispensable guide includes amazing amount of airgun information. Covers 1836 to 2000.
- Wesley, L. and G.V. Cardew. 1979, *Air-Guns and Air-Pistols*. 208 pp. Cassell, London. Updated revision of a British classic on all aspects of airgunning and airguns.
- Wolff, Eldon G. 1958. *Air Guns*. 198 pp., Milwaukee Public Museum Publications in History 1, Milwaukee, WI. A classic work on antique airguns. Try to find an original museum edition!
- Wolff, Eldon G. 1963. *Air Gun Batteries*. 28 pp. Milwaukee Public Museum Publications in History 5, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Concise guide to how airgun mechanisms, from early to modern, work. Rare, valuable. Reprints available in Sale section of www.Beemans.net.
- Wolff, Eldon G. 1967. *The Scheiffel and Kunitomo Air Guns*. 54 pp. Milwaukee Public Museum Publications in History 8, Milwaukee, WI. A rare booklet on an unusual pair of antique airguns. Rare collectors' item.

OTHER LITERATURE:

In addition to following the current airgun periodicals and latest books, one cannot remain current, or develop understanding of older models, without consulting the latest and old catalogs from Beeman Precision Airguns, Dynamit-Nobel (RWS), Air Rifle Specialties, etc. There is a wealth of information in factory bulletins and ads. Beeman Precision Airguns was especially productive: look for pre-1993 *Beeman Technical Bulletins*, and the early *Beeman Precision Airgun Guide/Catalogs*, starting with Edition One (only 500 were printed!) in 1974, and *Beeman's Shooter's News*, basically a sales bulletin to its retail customers. Especially interesting to airgun collectors are the *Beeman Used Gun Lists* (the "UGL") published in the 1970s to 1990s. They hold a wealth of information on the large numbers of vintage and antique airguns sold by the company over that period. The former prices of the collectors' items will make today's collectors pale. Old Crosman manuals are also highly collectible.

Finding and Collecting Airgun Literature: Astute collectors, most notably Dean Fletcher and Doug Law, have realized that airgun literature itself has become a key field of collecting. Unlike the airguns themselves, the literature, especially the airgun company literature, generally is quickly lost. Thus the literature becomes both a challenge to collect and a vital link to the special history of the field, which, like so many histories, soon becomes very hazy. As every year passes, this literature becomes harder to find and more valuable in several ways. Many readers will find that many of the references mentioned here have been printed in only limited editions and can be purchased "not for love nor money." Try gunshows and the special order desks of Barnes and Noble and Brothers book stores, and the search services of their websites and those of www.Amazon.com, www.Alibris.com, and especially www.AddALL.com used and out of print books. Check the website of Ray Reiling of New York for the world's largest selection of out of print gun books; sometimes he has a few airgun books. Generally these books are not going to be easy to find, so act fast if you do find any. Some airgun literature is available in the "Sale and Wanted" section of www.Beemans.net. Doug Law dlaw1940@yahoo.com (PO Box 42, Sidney, NE 69162) specializes in the sale of airgun literature. (The *Blue Books of Airguns* themselves have become a very collectible series. Hardbound editions are the most sought and can sell for 100 dollars and up.)