



KNEWSLETTER IN A KNUTSHELL



- ✓ Sidewalk Surgery
- ✓ Scratch & Sniff Label (page 3)
- ✓ Wire Jacks
- ✓ Mike & Barb's Corner
- ✓ Dues B Due & Over Due (page 3)
- ✓ Hand Made Competition

Our international membership is happily involved with "Anything that goes 'cut'!"

January 2003

SIDEWALK SURGERY

By Clyde Shoe

(with much editorial help from my dear wife, Alice)

Prepared for the unexpected, doctors in the 19th century often carried surgical instruments around in their pockets. These were quality folders, distinguished by their extremely fine fit and finish, with that just-what-the-doctor-ordered look.



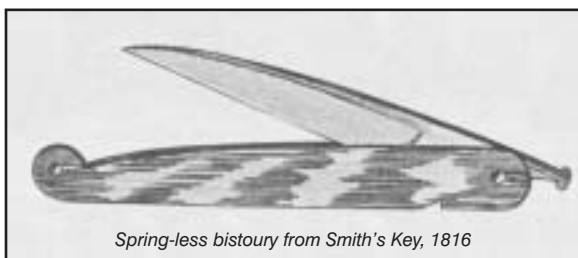
Folding surgical instruments, Ferris & Co, Bristol, England, ca 1870s.

The pictured folder, four inches closed, has polished steel instruments. The brass liners show brightly through the shell and are milled like a coin edge. Tortoiseshell handles are flat and joints are sunk—no hang-ups or bulges in a suit coat pocket from this folder. The serpentine frame is good to see and good to hold. Both tangs are marked Ferris & Co.

Springs and Spring-less.

Two tightly-locking springs are separated by an open back. Instruments are held at 180 degrees, released by lifting the spring tabs with a pinch. This type of spring lock is called a medical pinch lock.

Go back fifty or sixty years before this Ferris folder was made, and we find that folding medical instruments were much simpler. Some examples are found in the 1816 Smith's Key, a marvelous steel-engraved inventory of early Sheffield products.



Spring-less bistoury from Smith's Key, 1816

Pictured is a tortoiseshell-handled surgeon's knife from Smith's Key. It is spring-less, probably unlined, with a 180 degree blade stop.

That's it. Very simple. Quite a bit like a penny knife. Not much like the folding surgical instruments later in the century.

Instruments in folders like these are called bistouries, a French word later adapted to English. Bistouries are small surgical knives or other tools used in minor operations. Levine's Guide IV shows a selection of bistouries on pages 36 and 299.

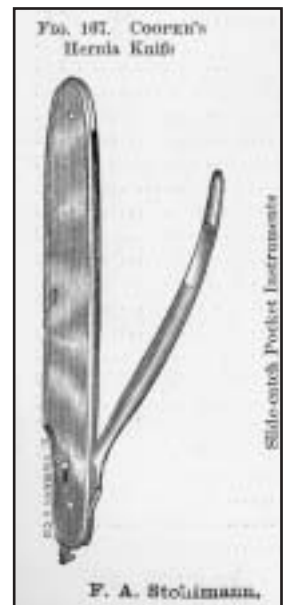
This Ferris folder has a gum lancet at one end, looking like a tiny hatchet. At the other end is a slender scalpel.

The gum lancet was used, as you might guess, for lancing gum abscesses. Abscesses were common when toothbrushes were not. The gum lancet is aptly named. Just looking at it makes my mouth ache. The design must have been precisely right because identically-shaped lancets were in use a long time—from the late 18th to the early 20th centuries. Even so, my dentist didn't recognize the instrument. He could not guess its function until I told him the name.

I got just about the same reaction when I showed the slender scalpel to my doctor. He didn't know it, and he didn't know the word bistoury. Well, that's okay. If I had to choose, I'd rather my doctor and dentist were up-to-date on 21st century medicine than 19th century surgical instruments.

Minor Surgery? The so-called minor surgery use of these bistouries bothers me. One bistoury is named "Cooper's hernia knife." Maybe hernia operations are considered minor in some quarters, I don't know. I do know that my hernia repair hurt like all get-out. That Cooper fellow has a lot to answer for. And have you looked up the uses of tenaculum hooks and lithotomy bistouries? My advice is, don't. You are better off not knowing. Some pocket medical folders had as many as six bistouries—a sobering thought.

Imagine something lodged in your trachea, and a doctor coming at you with his folding surgery, groping for the just-right bistoury to slice a hole in your throat. You are desperately trying to croak out "Heimlich maneuver!," but you are in the 19th century and that maneuver is not to be introduced for a hundred years. Between gasps try to



Cooper's hernia knife with slide catch. c1874 catalog of Tiemann & Co, New York. From LG-IV, courtesy of Bernard Levine.

Continued on page 5

Knots on United States Military Edged Cutlery

by Frank Trzaska

Detroit Gasket Manufacturing Co. M3 scabbards



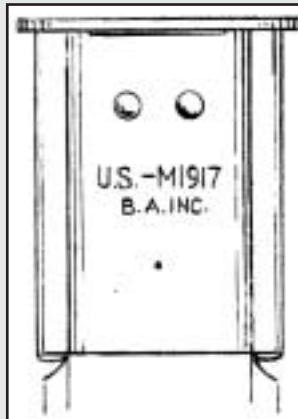
The original contract to Detroit Gasket and Manufacturing Company dated November 17, 1941 was for 450,336 M3 scabbards. This contract was to end in February, 1943, with full production rate to be 60,000 per month beginning in the fall of 1942. Contract # 374ORD 1293 was completed on 6/1/1943. It was the only contract they had which totaled over \$50,000. The sideways "S" with the line through it on the scabbard's throats is the makers mark for Detroit Gasket. The price for an M3 scabbard from Detroit Gasket was \$0.66 each. Try to get one for that price today!

Columbian Rope Co.

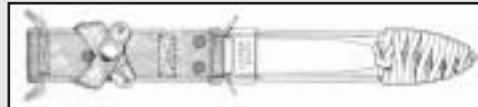
Never heard of them?? Can't say I blame you on this one. Columbian Rope Co. was located during the time in Auburn, New York; and they reported to the Rochester New York Ordnance District. They were awarded a small contract (1,000 items) to make M3 scabbards on 12/16/1941. The price was \$1.00 each which was much higher than the two competitors, Beckwith Mfg. (\$0.79 each) and Detroit Gasket (\$0.66 each). I wish I knew how to tell you what to look for on these things to tell the difference, but I haven't a clue. I know they were issued a contract but do not know if it was completed. According to *Bayonets, Knives and Scabbards* (Yes, that is a shameless plug) they were completed but not satisfactory to procure more of them. Seems the plastic they were using was much too brittle, more so than even the Detroit Gasket scabbards. Tests were conducted at Rock Island on the various scabbards then being produced and prototype test items alike. I have never seen this test but would sure like to get my hands on a copy. Anybody have one?? Scabbards were made by Columbia painted for the 1,000 and unpainted for testing by Rock Island.

B.A. INC. Marked Scabbards

We can now say those are Beckwith scabbards, Beckwith -Arden Inc. scabbards to be precise. Edwin L. Beckwith of Harvard Mass was the primary concern in the venture. Situated in Watertown, Mass., the corporation was listed as a New Hampshire company?? Beckwith - Arden filed for Patent protection on the M8A1 style scabbard on 27 Oct. 1964 under serial number 82,337. A Design Patent was issued on 20 Sept. 1966 under the number 205,769. Other references cited referred to previous Patents by Beckwith (D128,614), Maxim (1,276,554) and Morseth (2,650,008). Five figures are shown on the Patent file, none include the webbing holder, just the body and throat.



M8A1 Scabbards



The current Fed Log (Federal Logistics) states the Army, Navy and Air Force call for scraping 1095-00-508-0339 (M8A1) if it is deemed unserviceable and replacing with 1095-00-223-7164 (M10). The Marines cite it as a repairable item at the Company Armorer level, and parts are to be procured through CAGE 19205 (Springfield Armory) or CAGE 83421 (National Industries for the Blind) located at 1901 Beauregard St. Suite 200 Alexandria, Va. 22311. With all the M8A1 scabbards being put on the market by the DRMS, I wonder if the Marines will ever need to buy another one?

Crash Ax

Yet one more item I found while on the search for the "Pocket, Cutter and Line" is the WW II era United States Army Air Force Crash Ax. I don't have the slightest idea how many years these items were used as emergency gear, but the last supplier was The D.L. Auld Co. of Columbus, Ohio. They are not listed as a current supplier for the government, and I do not know if they are even in business anymore. The ax still has an active NSN of 5110-00-814-2027 but has

been listed as "no longer procured, used on schedule A equipment." The last listed unit price was at a flat \$69.00 even. They do not list the year that this last purchase was made. The CAGE Code for The D.L. Auld Co is 70677 for those interested in further research and the part number is still listed as 42D8331. That tells me it was adopted in 1942 but little else. Official nomenclature is "Ax, Crash" again short and to the point albeit backwards. Interesting that the remaining stocks are held by the Coast Guard for replenishment by interested and qualified government branches to procure from. They are supposedly held at the United States Coast Guard Aircraft Repair and Supply Center in Elizabeth, North Carolina. I wonder if they really do have any left??

Mad Dog WSP1

A fellow collector recently turned up a Mad Dog knife with a strange etching and grind. The markings were WSP1, and the knife was divided into three sections. The front or tip section was like that of a normal knife, the center was serrated and the rear section up near the handle was also sharpened like a knife section. I am told the WSP is for the Water Safety Program of the Secret Service and about 50 of these knives were made. Also we hear that the rear sharpened section was for sharpening pencils! Take it for what it is worth, it's only what I heard. Anyway it is an extremely well made knife as are all the Mad Dog products I have had the pleasure of viewing. Kevin makes an awesome knife.

Frank Trzaska [trz@mcsystems.net]



OKCA Knews and Musings

ibdennis

Dues B Due and Over Dew....

The mailing label seizes it all. If the number in the corner is 2002, then this will be your last Knewsletter. You want it to say 2003, and to do that you need to renew membership. Aside from not getting future Knewsletters, you will not get early entry into our April 11th Friday members only day. When the rest of the membership storms the Show at 10 am, you will be relegated to cooling your heels until 2 pm when we will renew your membership. So don't you think it might be in your best interest to renew your membership with the application form you will find in this issue?

Scratch and Sniff label and banana colour...

We decided to try something new with the mailing label. Scratch and sniff has been around for years. So those that have a mailing label with the number 2002, you are out of luck. Scratch if you like. Rub if you like but alas. Those that have their dues to be due will also be members by default of the banana club. You don't want to be in that club. The colour on the label tells all.

Membership cards and Table Confirmations....

By now you should have received your 2003 membership cards. Those who applied for tables should have received their table confirmations. Didn't get either and you thought you should have? Call us or email us pronto quick so we can punch the computer for screwing up. Failure to correct an error now will only make it "much worse" later.

The Mini Winter Christmas Show....

A great event. Without fail the heat was not turned on. Thank you to all the lovely ladies who put their cold hands on my cheeks to make me aware of this fact. (Now there are mixed emotions for you.) There were a few "down beats" that seemed minor when the magnitude of the event was realized. The food service left much to be desired. That WILL be corrected. We are also entertaining the idea of moving to another building. One where the walls don't leak heat, and where we can have even more tables. It will still be at the Lane County Fairground but a different building.

And then there were those that left early. I begged and pleaded that this not happen. Letters have been sent to the offenders, and they will not be table holders at the next Mini Winter Show. At first I was going to ban these people from the April Show, but the board voted nay, nay; however the April Show is a different story. I do consider dismantling a table prior to 3 pm on Sunday April 13th the same as leaving early. Your table should have the same appearance at

the closing bell as it has at the opening bell. I will send people around to make sure this is enforced. Please understand that we are trying to make Sunday as important a day as Saturday, and a full Show works well for all.

So please do not leave early on Saturday or Sunday. Covering tables during Show hours is also a major no-no. Dismantling or boxing your table prior to closing is also a major transgression. Please help us to keep our Show alive and fun.

Vallotton Club Knives...

All gone.... What a great Club project. Thank you one and all for supporting this.

Al Mar Customized Display Award Knives

Wayne Morrison has informed me that the Al Mar Sere 2000 folding knives that were donated by Gary Fadden have been all been allocated to the makers who will enhance this knife. These knives will be the awards for the displays at our April Show. Similar displays are most often found in museums. Because our displays are so special, we offer one of a kind knives that the displayers can take home with them. This year will see more displays than we have ever had before.

Those who have agreed to enhance the Al Mar knife are: **Bill Burke, Rich Chandon, Foy Cochran, Tom Ferry, Cameron House, Gary Little, Gene Martin, Craig Morgan, Kirk Rexroat, John Sevey, Ford Swauger, Tommy Thompson and Nick Wheeler.** These are very talented and well-known knife makers. Further enhancements to these knives will be done by **Juanita Conover, Bob Hergert, Craig Morgan and Jerry Whitmore.**

Monthly Meeting for January

The current board members have consented to run again for 2003. These people are listed in our **who b who** column. Come to the January 9th meeting and vote these people in or vote to change. This is your organization so voice your wishes and support.

Articles in the Knewsletter....

I am quite pleased at the articles that we receive for our Knewsletter. Our format and interests lend well to articles that are short and singular. And even though we have a few articles in reserve, we can always use more. In fact we are very lopsided in our mesh of "maker" type articles to "historical" type knife articles. For a knife show that sports 50% of each category our Knewsletter ratio is 90% to 10%. Now this isn't a complaint, but more an observation. But I would like to see the percentage shift a bit.

A special thanks this month to **Clyde Shoe and Glen Davis** for their contribution to our Knewsletter. And of course our regulars are not to be forgotten. **Frank Trzaska, Mike & Barbara Kyle, John Priest and dear elayne.**

Dis & Dat.....

When you get your membership cards, please note that the hanger clips are not included. Every member gets one free clip; and if your dawg eats that or you lose it, then you can get another for a one buck donation to the OKCA. Help support your OKCA by losing your membership hanger clip.

The stuffing of envelopes is a jawb intensive task. This year we formed a volunteer work



group to simplify this process. **Barbara Kyle, Cheri Criteser and Elayne did most of the work while Mike Kyle, Larry Criteser, Ole Olson and ibdennis cheered them on.** I think this year we finally have Ole trained not to lick the stamps.

More "up for Five"...

Thank you **Chet & Christine Kantor (Gladstone Oregon) and Joe Chance (Kermit Texas)** for your support in the Oregon Knife Collectors by renewing your membership dues for 5 years. This act shows rock solid support for our efforts. These people now join the ranks of Jack Squires and Fred Coleman.

Some Show Thoughts for April....

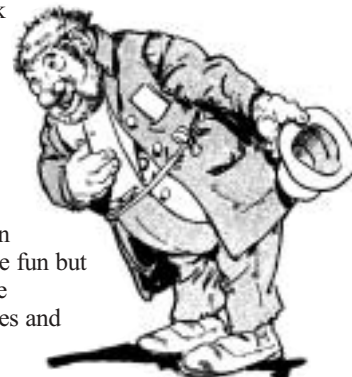
I wish we could say we plan the April Show around other events for that weekend, but alas it is a matter of chance. This year is a plus year as there is the Piccadilly Flea market on Sunday, a Gem Faire and a Gun Show all located at the Convention Center.

We have requested that table holders not have pole signs at our April Show. No signs or banners that rise above the head of the table holders are permitted. There are many reasons for this, plus it is a hazard. So if you don't rise to the occasion, then we won't rise to the occasion to ask you to take them down.

Hand Made Knife

Competition:

Please read John's article in this issue. Have fun but be aware of the categories, times and places.



The Seek-re-tary Report

by elayne

The December show was a success if it can be judged by the presence of the table holders and the visitors. Thank you, **Michael Kyle**, for a job very well done. We received many thank you's from the table holders for a fun time as they departed. I hope you realize that we do very much appreciate the acknowledgment.

The Club table did a brisk business, last minute is always better than not at all, right?? We received payments for 184 memberships and 54 tables. Ain't bad for a few hours work, hey?

The pot luck was good food to be had. **Barbara Kyle** did an excellent job. Unfortunately it has come to be expected and sometimes we forget the work it entails. Both Michael and Barbara have agreed to do it again next year.

Thanks to the much appreciated help of **Larry Criteser, Sheri Criteser, Barbara Kyle** and **Michael Kyle**, we have finished mailing the table confirmations and the membership cards to all persons who did not pick up their cards at the December show. **Please, please, check the envelopes to be sure you have your**

cards and not incorrect cards. If you believe you should receive cards and did not, call, write or email. We try to double check everything, but sometimes some things fall through the cracks.

Remember January is the election of officers. The current slate of officers have agreed to re-up if there are no objections. We work well together and hopefully you, the membership, are in agreement that we are doing an OK"ca" job.

Hope to see you at the January meeting. Bring something for Show and Tell.

Hope your holidays were healthy and happy.



Places to Stay when attending the Show

The Valley River Inn

(800) 543-8266 • (541) 687-0123
Our top recommendation. Fills up fast. A quality place to stay. Official home for folks away from home visiting the Oregon Knife Show. Special Show rates if you mention the OKCA Show.

The Campbell House

A City Inn
(800) 264-2519 • (541) 343-1119
Classic Hospitality. A very unique experience. Top quality.

The Red Lion

(800) Red Lion • (541) 342-5201
Not far from the Show and a great place to stay. Mention the Knife Show for the special rates.

Courtesy Inn

(888)-259-8481 • (541) 345-3391
The closest motel yet to the Knife Show. A Budget motel and special rates if you mention the Knife Show.

Say the words--the Oregon Knife Collectors--and you will get the special rate; and it helps to promote our Show.

Self-contained motor homes can be parked in the parking lot at the Convention Center. There is a charge of \$15.00 per night, or \$50.00 for up to a week. Register with the office.

Also for motor homes or campers:

Creswell KOA Mobile Home Park
(800) 562-4110 • (541) 895-4110
Premier RV Resorts (541) 686-3152
Eugene Kamping World & RV Park
(800) 343-3008 • (541) 343-4832

Go to www.oregonknifeclub.org to get more information on these places. Don't put off making reservations as you might find the place of choice to be all full up. Especially the Valley River Inn. Failure to mention our Show at these places will not afford you the huge discounts we have negotiated for you. A buck saved is a buck gained toward a new knife

Cut-toon

Drunk Knives 10,000 BC.



Bali-Song, dangerous in hands of chump o

Williams
Base for
Three

OKCA Club Whot-zits & Whos Zits

Darold (Ole) Olson

President (541) 914-7238

Loy Moss

Vice President (541) 747-7600

Elayne Ellingsen

Sec/Tres. (541) 484-5564

Michael Kyle

Master at Arms (541) 998-5729

Dennis Ellingsen

Show Coordinator (541) 484-5564

Knwsltetter by elayne & dennis

Cut-toons by Judy & Lonnie Williams

Web page <http://www.oregonknifeclub.org/>

Club e-mail okca@oregonknifeclub.org

OKCA, PO BOX 2091, EUGENE, OR 97402
(541) 484-5564

Copyright © 2003 Oregon Knife Collectors Association. No part of this newsletter may be reproduced without permission of the OKCA. Email info@oregonknifeclub.org. Layout and printing by Insta-Print - 1208 W. 6th - Eugene, OR 97402

Sidewalk... (Continued from page 4)

look on the bright side. A sidewalk tracheotomy is better than the alternative. Aren't you glad the doctor had his pocket kit along?

Where did these emergency surgeries take place? Any place—a park bench, in a carriage, a curbstone, a pub, the seashore. We are not talking doctor's offices or even black bag house calls. We are talking happenstance and short notice. That is why pocket surgeries were carried.

Talk about blind luck. I was getting nowhere trying to find out about Ferris & Co, when I stumbled into a website and met hostess Cynthia, a Bristol resident. Cynthia's interest in Bristol history dovetailed with my interest in Ferris history. She soon came up with a February 5, 1955 trade journal, *The Chemist and Druggist*, containing an absorbing story about the life and death of Ferris & Co. My desiccated old heart soared.

Pills and Scalpels. In business in Bristol, England 1770-1955, Ferris & Co had an eventful history. Founded by Dr Tilladam, a Quaker, Ferris survived two disastrous fires. One fire was in 1834 caused by a dropped ether bottle; another was in 1940 caused by a dropped German bomb. The firm recovered speedily both times.

In 1825 Mr. Gibbs, a partner, made a very bad career move when he switched to railroading. While on an inspection tour, he stuck his head out his coach window as the train entered a tunnel—and was decapitated.

Moving right along without Mr. Gibbs, Ferris and Co received royal warrants in the 1830s from King William IV, renewed in 1840 by Queen Victoria. The rub from our standpoint is that the company was appointed, not as cutlery to the royals, but as chemists. Ferris & Co was first and foremost a pharmaceutical house, making and selling many dozens of drugs. Their line even included a new (in 1835) concoction called creosote, dispensed for its antiseptic properties. Now we call it a carcinogen.

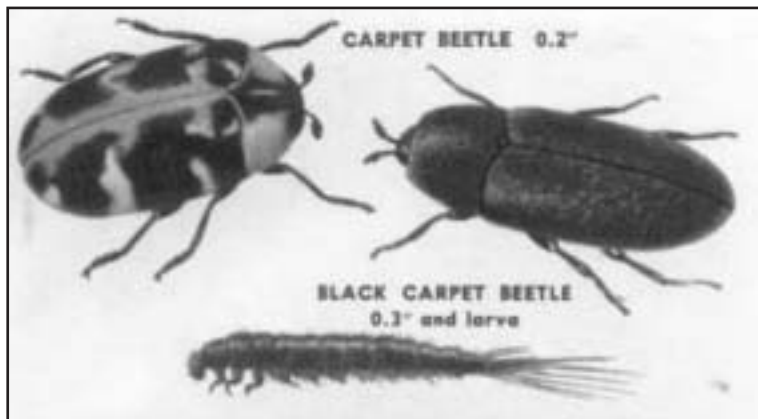
Ferris & Co were importers and manufacturers, selling mainly to the wholesale trade. There was a dispensing department, a plant for making tablets, another for sterile solutions, still another for aerated (carbonated) waters. The St Stephen's Street offices had surgical

instrument showrooms and a surgical instrument retail store.

But did Ferris & Co make surgical instruments? No, it did not. Bernard Levine helpfully checked in his 1915 Kelly's Directory for Bristol cutlery dealers and surgical instrument makers. No Ferris & Co. I find that it was not uncommon for drug houses to distribute surgical instruments. Apparently Ferris bought surgical instruments for resale, already stamped with the Ferris mark, from some quality maker who did private brands. Who was that maker? Not even Cynthia could find that out.

I said that the 1955 trade journal account covered the life and death of Ferris & Co. I lied. The life, yes, but there is nothing in the account about the death. It is like an obituary that fails to mention the demise. Was something covered up? Did Ferris put out a bad batch of pills? Did someone get too much creosote? Was there an economic downturn? Was the end of the account written on an Etch-a-Sketch?

Little Bugs. I bought this pocket surgery



from an eBay seller in Bristol who pictured and described a nick in the lower handle. You can see it if you look closely. It didn't look like a nick to me, but I thought I knew what it was. Sure enough, when I had the folder in hand, it clearly was a beetle gnaw, or rather, a beetle larvae gnaw. These larvae are small, but they can chomp away for a whole year before pupating. A squad of larvae can reduce a solid horn or shell handle to a honeycombed skeleton. Horn and shell are at risk, but bone and stag are not. Your bone and stag collection is safe. Watch your wool carpets, though. These larvae are the very same vermin we call carpet beetles.

If you want to read the definitive word on these guys, go to theClub website www.oregonknifeclub.org, then member

links, then Bernard Levine links, then scroll down to insect damage. That insect essay will tell you all you ever wanted to know about *Attagenus piceus*, the black one, and its colorful cousin *Anthrenus scrophulariae*.

Really Little Bugs. Instrument sterilization was introduced into medical practice in the 1880s. How clean were those bistouries before sterilization? We don't have to wonder, do we. A wipe with a rag just didn't cut it. Those instruments were swarming with microorganisms, waiting for the next open wound to be conveniently served up by the surgeon. Death from septic surgical instruments was common.


But sterilization spelled finis to pretty natural handles. Porous handles are not compatible with autoclaves. Not many ivory or ebony or shell surgical instrument handles were made after the 1880s. Instead there came boring metal handles. Aesthetic considerations took a back seat to antiseptis.

A Dr. Nicholas Senn in 1902 commented on this revolutionary change from septic to aseptic instruments: "All attempts at

ornamentation have been abandoned... The modern surgical instruments are made as plain and smooth as possible... all niches and crevices being avoided whenever possible... The old-fashioned pocket cases have been laid aside."

That is why most collectors prefer instruments from the lethal but artistic days of sepsis.

Buyer Beware. Stainless steel and chromium plating are out—too new. Metallic handles are anathema; collectors want earlier pieces. Civil War items are very collectible, especially if they were for field hospital use, but most are not authentic. If an "authentic Civil War" piece for sale has a metal handle, walk briskly away. You are being measured for skinning.

You can see old medical instruments in the outstanding website www.medicalantiques.com. That site's host is Dr. Doug Arbittier, M.D. Doug has helped me several times with my surgical instrument inquiries. Even if you are not into medical cutlery, observations in the website about collecting, written by a collector, are worth reading. Doug's website introduction goes..."be thankful you live in today's medical world." Amen to that. 

WINTER MINI-SHOW

December 14, 2002



Paul Wellborn



Bev Kirk



Boris Dunkel



Joe Cooley



Mike Kyle



June Morrison



Ed Holbrook



Kay Whitmore



Wendall Fox



Juanita



HoneyBug



Weldon Teetz



The Wire Jack Story

Glen Davis

Twenty years or so ago I found my first wire jack knife. At that time I wasn't really sure what it was, but I liked it so I bought it for my knife collection. At that time I had mostly bone handled pre WWII American made knives in my collection; but as I continued to buy these wirejacks, my collection grew. One time at the Springfield Missouri knife show I had a table next to a gentleman who told me he designed a perfect knife that had the fewest



possible parts. He showed me his design of only five different parts, and then I showed him one of my wire jacks with only three parts. He was truly amazed!

Over time I sold most of my other knives, but I continued to specialize in collecting wire jacks. It was always easy to trade someone a bone handled knife for a couple of old wire jacks, so my collection grew and grew. To this day, most collectors don't seem much interested in wire jacks and some don't even put them on display at shows - as they save their space for more valuable stuff. However, if you ask the folks at the tables, quite a few have one that they can pull out and sell you.

Most collectors still don't know a whole lot about them, so I decided to write a little about them to help educate anyone who is interested. I believe that these knives were one of the most ingenious designs ever conceived because of their simplicity and their great functionality. I still carry one with me for every day use. I prefer the pruner blade and the 1926 version because I like the steel in that one better as it is slightly higher in carbon and cuts real well.

The earliest patent for a wire handle jack knife was granted to George E. Finkenbinder on October 13, 1914. He filed for the patent on July 8, 1913. The sketch on this patent is similar to the George Schrade 3 1/4" spear blade without a cap lifter. Another patent was granted to Frank P. Hemming on December 4, 1917. He filed for his patent on July 12, 1917. The sketch on this patent is similar to the George Schrade 4 3/4" clip blade knife. However, I am not aware that either of these two knives were actually ever manufactured or marketed. Later in 1926, George Schrade also filed for and also received a patent for his version of the wire handled jack knife, and these were produced and sold by the millions.

George Schrade was born in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, 2/13/1860. He learned the toolmaker and machinist trades. In the mid 1880s he worked in a small shop in New York City making mechanical models for the U.S. Patent office, he also had patents on many inventions of his own. George is probably most famous for developing various types of switchblade knives, and there is a lot of information available about them. However, George also invented an improved version of the "Wire Jack" knife, and this is the focus of this article.

George started the Press Button Knife Co. a licensed division of Walden Knife Company (1892 - 1923) Walden, NY. In 1904 George left the Walden

Knife Co. and started Schrade Cutlery (1904- 1946), also in Walden, along with his two brothers, Jacob Louis and William. Early knives were contract made in Germany.

Sometime later (around 1910) George traveled to Europe, initially trying to find outlets to sell his cutlery machinery. He had some success in England, but by 1913 he ended up in Solingen, Germany where he set up a push-button knife factory. He returned to the US in 1916 due to WWI (after having all of his equipment and supplies confiscated by the German government). George then began working for Challenge Cutlery in Bridgeport, CT. He manufactured the Flylock knife for Challenge at his plant at 46 Seymour Street in Bridgeport.



In 1928 Challenge Cutlery went out of business, never making the "Wire Jack" that George patented in 9/21/1926. The patent stated, "The object of the invention is to produce a pocket knife of simple construction comprising but two main parts which are economical to manufacture and convenient and efficient in use."

In early 1929, George started his own company making "Wire Jacks" at Kossuth Street in Bridgeport, using equipment he got from Challenge Cutlery - in exchange for money they owed him for the rights for the Flylock invention. The earliest common "Wire Jacks" are stamped "WIRE JACK" on the tang with a patent date of 9/21/1926. These are 3 1/4" closed. In addition to the spear blades, George made a lot of the pruner or hawk bill patterns that were widely used as advertising knives for various other companies. Later 1926 versions are stamped "Geo Schrade" (curved) and spell out the word "BRIDGEPORT"; some forks also have this 1926 stamp. The 1926 spear blades came with and without a cap lifter slot. The tang stamp on later versions started to abbreviate the name of the town to "B'PORT".

The Case Cutlery Company also sold a "Wire Jack" pattern knife (W1216) using a tang stamp of "CASE TESTED XX" and "CASE PAT. 9-21-26". In both of these stamps, the word "CASE" is the older "tested" 1920 - 1940 version. The stamp could appear either above or below the cap lifter. These "Case" knives were made entirely in the Schrade company in Bridgeport, Ct. This was common for one knife company to make knives for another, Schrade also made "Pull Balls" for Case and large switchblades for Remington

Both Boy and Girl Scouts used these "Wire Jack" knives in their utensil kits. The first Boy Scout kits were available in their October 1932 catalog item #1384, and the three piece set sold for only \$1.00. The Girl Scout versions came later. Many of the forks (about 1/3) are stamped "1/72/42" in error, the correct stamp is "1/27/42". However, before the three piece Boy Scout kits, George Schrade had a "Scout Chow Kit" that came in a smaller leather case and did NOT have a spoon. In this older kit, the knife was usually either a "1926 curved Geo Schrade" stamp or a "Wirejack" stamp w/cap lifter slot. The fork looked the same as the other forks and came with one of the older tang stamps. Many of these kits had customized embossing on the leather pouch, e.g. "Souvenir of Mohawk Trail."

George died in 1940 and had 35 employees at the time. George's heirs continued to run the business after his death. By 1942 George M. Schrade (son) reapplied for new patents and started using a newer tang stamp with the 1942 date. The earliest 1942 knives still had "GEO SCHRADER" curved; newer versions straightened out the name. These knives were now made with more stainless steel, whereas the older knives were higher in carbon. They also produced several larger "Wire Jack" knives of 4" and 4

Continued next page

3/4" and added a fish blade pattern in the large knife (all of the 3 1/4" 1942 spear blades now had cap lifter slots). I have also seen a picture of a Wire Jack Axe on a 4 3/4" wire frame. The family ran the business until 1956 when they sold out to Boker. At that time the company had grown to 100 employees. Boker continued the small 3 1/4" pruner "Wire Jack" pattern with their own stamp until 1958 when they were discontinued. (I have never seen any other Boker patterns.) Boker's main product in the old Schrade plant was switchblades and in 1958 when Congress banned switchblades they had to close.



One other very rare Schrade wirejack came with a copper blade for working around explosives, I am not certain about the tang stamp on this knife.

I have seen one other tang stamp on a wirejack frame; it was A.W. Wadsworth & Sons, Germany.


Because wirejacks were so inexpensive, it seemed odd that someone would put another blade on one of them; therefore, I explored the possibility that Schrade had some early models made in Germany. I had really hoped this was a valid tang stamp as it would be a unique addition to my collection. I completed a thorough study that included sending it to another collector (Dennis Ellingsen) for his inspection and opinion. After all that, I am convinced that the knife is NOT real. This raises the question of why anyone would put a Wadsworth blade on a wirejack frame? The most likely scenario that I can envision is that 75 or so years ago someone owned a new Wadsworth knife and broke the handle. Not wanting to waste a perfectly good blade, a wirejack frame was easy to mount the blade on. Then for the next 75 years, the knife and frame wore, pitted and aged together so that today they look like they have always been together.

Well, this is where this story ends for now. However, with the success that this pattern has had in the past, I wouldn't be surprised to see some company make it again sometime in the future.

For your information, some of this information in this story comes from my own observations from collecting Wire Jacks for many years; however, most of it comes from the following individuals who were very generous in sharing their valuable time and information with me:

Bill Schrade, personal conversations and his book *George Schrade and His Accomplishments* George Schrade Knife Company 1982.

Dennis Ellingsen, personal conversations and his September, 1981 article in *Knife World* magazine.

Ed Holbrook, personal conversations and his book, *Official Scout Blades* 2nd printing 1998. 

Anything can be found on eBay. And likewise anything will be bought on eBay. And I am now the proud owner of this described and pictured one of a kind knife. The interesting part is that there were several bidders on this item that actually thought it was a real for true commercial knife. Oh sigh. ibdennis

You are looking at an extremely rare Ideal-Imperial-Colonial twelve-blade prototype pocket knife. In fact it's so rare that it's the only one that exists. It's a working-design concept prototype that was made on the spot to demonstrate the limitless possibilities of combining the technologies of these three great American knife companies. Incorporating patented Lohr and Stiehl technology, this stunning knife illustrates that most American of industrial philosophies: More is Better. Based on the time-tested "Kamp King" platform, this knife contains spear point, sheeps foot, clip, spey, Wharncliffe, and pen blades, and a punch, needle, small and large screwdrivers (one with cap lifter), and two can openers. Yet, when closed, it is a mere 3.75 inches long. A real pocket full of cutlery. As a work-in-process design there are some "rough edges" as individual components were hand made or modified to test their functionality; but the participating companies were so impressed with the end result that they took turns stamping their names on many of the blades. The tentative release date for the production run is April 1st, but through a special arrangement with the owners I am able to make this pre production developmental unit available for purchase now. Don't miss out on this once in-a-lifetime opportunity to own a one-of-a-kind groundbreaking piece of cutlery history.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

OKCA Membership includes Knewslettter, dinner/swap meetings, free admission to OKCA shows, free OKCA Winter Show tables, and the right to buy the OKCA Club Knife.

Please mail to OKCA, Box 2091, Eugene, OR 97402

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: Eve (_____) _____ Day (_____) _____ Date _____

- Collector
- Knife-maker
- Dealer
- Mfr. / Distributor
- Other _____

Please Start Renew my/our OKCA membership (\$20 individual / \$23 family) \$ _____

Mike & Barbs Corner

The 2002 Christmas Mini Show has come and gone for this year. I counted 95 tables being used by OKCA members. The pot luck was not too bad either; we had about 54 people join in the dinner. All and all this was a very good show and thanks to all the people who told us so.

When Barb and I arrived at 6:30 AM, there were about fifteen people or so waiting to get in and claim a table. By 8:00 AM the place was just about full of knife people. During the show I got to see some once in a life time knives. Barb got to hold the biggest automatic knife that I had ever seen.

Barb and I just wanted to make sure that everyone had a great time and enjoyed themselves. To get this done we had the help of many people in the Club. To all the people who helped with this show, "We thank you very much." We and the Club members hope that all of you had a great

time and got home safe. Some of the members had a long way to drive after the show to get home. We thank you for coming to this show and hope to see you next year for the 2003 Mini Christmas show. (We hope to have a talking dog at this show. We hope this dog can bark jingle bells for all of you.)



The Toys For Tots turned out just great for the kids who will get the presents. CPL. Casey Johnson of the Marine Corp Reserve in Eugene picked up the Christmas gifts. Six or seven trips were made to Cpl. Johnson's SUV with gifts, and it was full. I have kept track of when the Marines gave out the gifts, and it was the week-end, the 21st and 22nd. I hope we get Cpl. Johnson next year for the Toys For Tots; he was really squared away. He looked good in dress blues (lean and mean). The way I looked when I was in the Marines some 36 yrs ago. Ha!Ha! Seriously we would really like to thank you all for the gifts for Toys For Tots. Eric Bergland, who is also a former Marine, helped carry out the Toys for Tots. Semper Fi.

The only thing left to say at this point is get ready for the April Knife Show-- April 11 for Club members, April 12 & 13th for all.

Have a Happy 2003 New Year and stay Safe.

Mike & Barb Kyle

A WORD ABOUT THE CUSTOM KNIFE JUDGING

John Priest

This will be the tenth year my wife, Karen, and I have run the Custom Knife Competition; and I think I finally have an idea of what's going on. For those of you makers who want to better your chances of winning: pay heed, those of you who don't, go to the next article.

First and foremost, Read the Rules!! These are the rules that you will find in your Show envelope when you arrive. Especially those parts that pertain to categories, disclosure and new makers.

Every year we get several knives that are obviously in the wrong category. Before you choose, think about whether it really fits.

On every entry there is a place to disclose what part of the knife (if any) was not done by the person entering it. This should be things like engraving, scrimshaw, specialized heat treating, etc. The maker is responsible for conceiving and executing the knife, not just assembling parts. The judges are looking at the basic knife and will take into account any special embellishments that couldn't reasonably have been done by the maker.

And now for the judges. These guys know what they're doing. Knife judging is highly subjective, so we try to get people with differing tastes who will balance out. However, they all know what to look for in a winning knife. In the last five years they have differed some on the category winners but have been unanimous on the Best of Show.

The judging this year will take place **Friday April 11, 2003**. This will allow the judges to do the Show on Saturday and Sunday and to allow the winning makers to strut their stuff.

We will start taking the knives at **2 PM** and stop at **4 PM**. The judging takes place starting at 4 PM. We expect about 100 entrants and encourage everyone to enter, but please do your part. Read the rules that will be included in your Show packet and enter early.

The categories for the Custom Knife Competition are:

ART KNIFE
BOWIE KNIFE
MINIATURE KNIFE
HUNTING-UTILITY KNIFE
HAND FORGED (Non Damascus)
NEW MAKER
DAMASCUS KNIFE (You must forge your own blade)
FOLDING KNIFE
FIGHTING KNIFE

There will be one knife designated as **BEST of SHOW**.

This year we will again allow any OKCA club member to submit a knife into the New Maker category. The knife must be presented in person, and you do not have to be a table holder for this category. A New Maker is one who has not entered custom competition ever before. You must be a table holder to enter all other categories.





OKCA Free Classified Ads

Free classified ads will run up to three issues and then be dropped. Available only to paid members. Write your ad on anything you have handy (except Yum Yum Yams) and mail to the **OKCA, PO Box 2091, Eugene OR 97402**. The number and size of ads submitted by a single member will be accepted or excepted dependent on available space and the mood of the editors.

US Bayonet Letters Patents. Over 600 pages of full text and original drawings on U.S. Bayonets and related equipment. Offered for the first time on convenient CD-ROM format for your PC. Special Introductory Offer of \$16.00 postpaid for 90 days, a regular retail cost of \$19.95, get yours now! Send to: Knifebooks PO Box 5866, Deptford NJ 08096 J

European Red Stag-Good supply of crowns and slabs available, also available some knife parts mostly nickel silver guards and pommels. Call or email for information or see me at the April show (Tables S1) in Eugene. Wild Boar Blades-Kopromed USA 1701 Broadway #282, Vancouver, WA 98663 1 (888) 735-8483 info@wildboarblades.com D

Waterjet Your Knife Parts - no heat effect, finished edge. Tolerance to .005. We will accept your DXF files or we will reverse engineer your physical parts and convert to computer drawings. Price, quality, service! References upon request. Hydratech Industries Springfield OR (541)746-3366 D

For Sale - Randall knives bought, sold and traded. Also looking for a 1983 OKCA Gerber Paul Club knife. Call or email for current inventory: Jim Schick (209) 333-1155, email jbschick@pacbell.net N

For Sale - Overholser lock blade folding knife for sale. \$250. 3" blade, brass liners and bolsters, stag handle slabs. Marked #1 1987. (541)689-8098 ask for Wayne. e-mail wgoddard44@earthlink.net S

For Sale - Six custom Goddard folders made in the mid 70's for sale individually.(541)689-8098 ask for Wayne. e-mail wgoddard44@earthlink.net S

For Sale - New Dayton motors \$100. 1-1/2 hp 3450 rpm 115/230 56c face frame. Three at this price. 4x60 abrasive belts 80-120-320 \$2.00ea. CPM-S 30v steel 3/16x1-1/2 \$16.50 foot. Call John @ Tru-Grit (800)532-3336 S

For Sale -6" x 12" Covel Surface grinder, 1/2 hp 110v, includes diamond dresser and assorted grinding wheels. \$2,000.00, contact Jim Gillespey Vancouver, WA (360)576-9114 or jmgillespey1@attbi.com S

Wanted - Commemorative Blue Grass Series-Belknap Hardware Company. Need mint condition numbers 1, 2, 7, 9, and 10. Please call Mike at 541-336-2107 or email at Mtyler77@webtv.net S

Wanted - John Ek knives marked Hamden,Conn and Miami,FL. Also original sheaths, catalogs and advertising items. Contact Richard at: (619)437-0564 or at: kaasu111@aol.com S

For Sale - Blade blanks. Also some A2, D2 and O1. Contact Gene Martin at (541)846-6755 or email me: bladesmith@customknife.com S

For Sale - Complete engraving outfit. Large GRS ball w/accessories kit (1 piece missing), Gravermiester compressor, foot switch, one hand piece, assorted cutters, engraving book, GRS sharpener with diamond and stone wheels, tool sharpener jig. Won't break up the set. Firm \$1,800. Contact Bill Herndon (661)269-5860 bhernsons1@aol.com S

For Sale - Natural finish Oak display box lined with black velvet 13-1/4 x 3-3/8 id dimensions 1-1/8 deep \$50 + s/h Craig Morgan (541)345-0152 S

Wanted - M..W. Seguire knives, Juneau, Alaska maker. Will consider most any condition. Contact Jack (805)489-8702 or email jh5jh@aol.com S

Your Knife Questions ANSWERED ONLINE. Bernard Levine, author of Levine's Guide to Knives and Their Values, will answer your knife questions on the Internet. Is that knife on eBay real or fake? Is the knife you're thinking of buying authentic? What kind of knife do you have, and what is it worth? What is the value of your collection, for insurance or tax purposes? Instant payment by Visa, MasterCard, or PayPal. Go to: <http://pweb.netcom.com/~brlevine/apprk.htm> or to www.knife-expert.com

"Randall Fighting Knives In Wartime" by Robert E. Hunt. A colorful and interesting guide to Randall knives spanning the three major conflicts (WWII-Korean-Vietnam). Call (270)443-0121 Visa/MC (800)788-3350

"Knife Talk" by Ed Fowler. 60 past *Blade Magazine* articles combined w/the author's updates and 200 photos. Take a trip with the father of "Multiple Quench" \$14.95 plus \$3.20 S&H - Ed Fowler - Willow Bow Ranch P O Box 1519 Riverton WY 82501 - (307)856-9815

"The Wonder of Knifemaking" by Wayne Goddard is soft cover 8½ x 11, 160 pages, 16 page color gallery. \$19.95 + \$3.05 (\$23.00) shipping in U.S. Send a check or money order to: Goddard's, 473 Durham Ave, Eugene, OR 97404. Or call (541)689-8098 to order using Visa, MC or Discover cards.

The views and opinions implied or expressed herein by authors and advertisers are not necessarily those of the Oregon Knife Collectors Association, its editors, or its officers; and no responsibility for such views will be assumed. The OKCA, its officers and its editors assume no responsibility for claims of advertisers for the quality of goods and services the advertiser provides. The act of mailing or delivering a manuscript or advertisement shall constitute an express warranty on the part of the contributor that the material is original and in no way an infringement upon the rights of others. The act of mailing or delivering a letter or question to the editor shall constitute permission to publish the letter or portion thereof unless the Oregon Knife Collectors Association is informed otherwise in that letter.



The Knewsletter
 Oregon Knife Collectors Association
 PO Box 2091
 Eugene, OR 97402

First Class Mail
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 Eugene, OR
 Permit No. 388

Events Calendar January 2003

----- **January 2003** -----
 Jan 11-12 - Great Northwest Show - Salem OR (KW-B)
 Jan 17-19 - Las Vegas Classic Knife Show (KW-B)
 Jan 24-26 - Chattanooga Knife Show -TN (KW-B-KI)
 Jan 24-26 - Wolverine Knife Show -Novi MI (KW-B-KI)
 Jan 25-26 - Gateway Area Show -St Louis MO (KW-B-KI)
 Jan 31-02 - Gator Cutlery Show -Lakeland FL (KW-B)
 Jan 31-02 - American Bladesmith Expo -Reno NV (KW-B-KI)
 ----- **February 2003** -----
 Feb 08-09 - Arkansas Custom Show -Little Rock (KW-B-KI)
 Feb 21-23 - Knife Expo 03 Buena Park -CA (KW-B)
 Feb 22-23 - Atlanta Knife Show -GA (KW-B)
 ----- **March 2003** -----
 Mar 08-09 - Bunker Hill Knife Show -Godfrey IL (KW-B)
 Mar 07-09 - East Coast Custom -New York (B)
 Mar 14-15 - Mason Dixon Show - Sharpsburg MD (KW-B)
 Mar 14-16 - NKCA Ohio Spring Show -Wilmington (KW-B)
 Mar 21-22 - Knife Show at McKinney Texas (KW-B)
 Mar 21-23 - Badger Knife Show -Janesville WI (KW-B)
 Mar 22-23 - Western Canada Knife Assoc. -Kamloops (KXA Grounds)
 ----- **April 2003** -----
 Apr 04-06 - Shenandoah Valley Show -Harrisonburg VA (B-KI)
 Apr 12-13 - **Oregon Knife Collectors -Eugene OR (KW-B-KI)**
 Apr 11-12 - Canadian Guild Show -Toronto (KW-B)
 Apr 25-27 - Louisville Spring Show - KY (KW-B)
 Apr 25-27 - Solvang Custom - California (B)
 Apr 26-27 - Gulf Coast Custom -Gulfport MS (KW)
 ----- **May 2003** -----
 May 03-04 - Lugano Switzerland Espolama Knife Show (KW-B)
 May 24-25 - Australian Knifemakers Guild - Melbourne (B)
 May 31-01 - The Dover Show - Ohio (B)
 ----- **June 2003** -----
 Jun 13-15 - Blade Show -Atlanta GA (KW-B-KI)
 Jun 20-22 - NCCA Knife Show -Stamford CT

Jun 21-22 - Midnight Sun Custom Knife Show -Anchorage AK
 Jun 27-29 - Springfield Knife Show -MO (KW)
 ----- **July 2003** -----
 Jul 11-12 - Knifemakers Guild Show -Orlando FL (KI)
 Jul 18-20 - Montana Custom Show - Missoula MT
 ----- **August 2003** -----
 Aug 01-03 - Central Texas Show -Austin TX (KW)
 Aug 08-10 - Central Kentucky Knife Show - Lexington (KW)
 ----- **September 2003** -----
 Sep 12-14 - Spirit of Steel -Mesquite TX (KI)
 Sep 19-21 - Louisville Fall Show -KY (KW)

DINNER MEETING



Thursday Evening

January 09, 2003

**G. Willickers
 440 Coburg Road
 Eugene Oregon**

**6:00 PM Dinner
 7:00 PM Meeting**

***Election of officers
 Show-N-Tell -
 Bring a special knife!***

Contact Dennis or Elayne (541) 484-5564 for additional information on OKCA events. For non-OKCA events, contact the sponsoring organization.
 Additional info = (B)lade Mag. -(KW) Knife World - (KI) Knives Illustrated

