

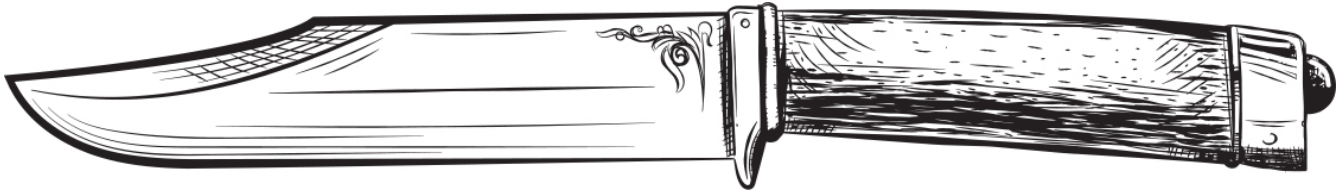


December 2017

OLDE TOWNE *Post-Dispatch*

British Edition!

Volume III

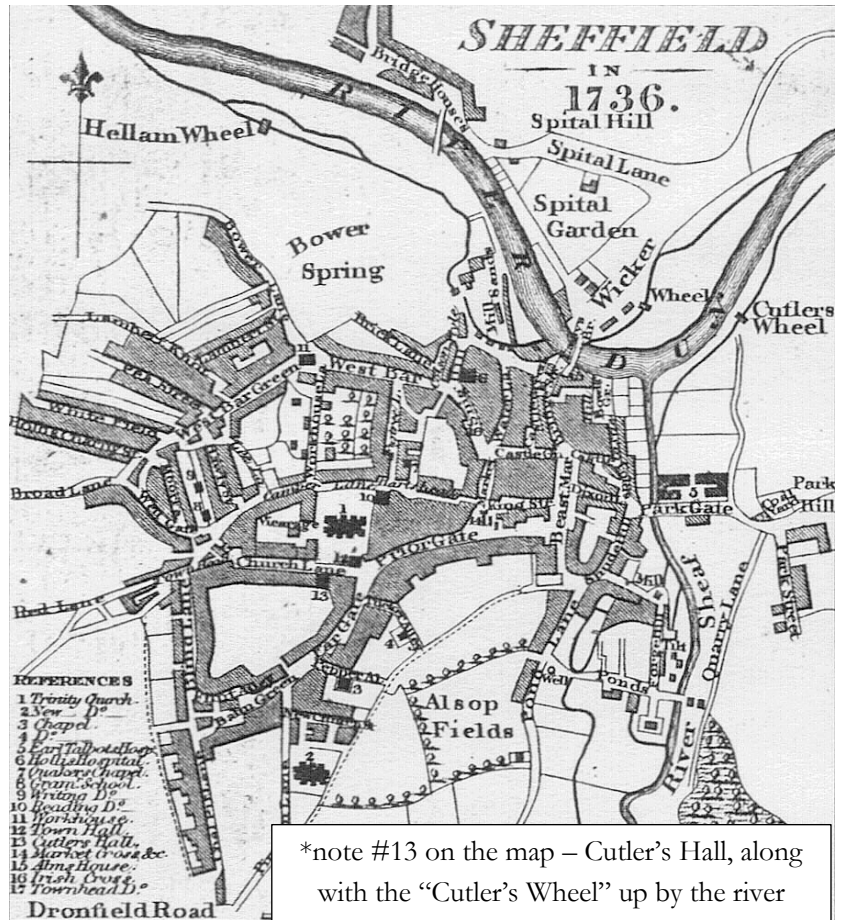


GREAT KNIFE STORIES IN HISTORY

AMERICA'S ENGLISH ROOTS IN SHEFFIELD, ENGLAND

American Cutlery is revered for many notable contributions to the greater global edged tool community. The Bowie Knife for example is found all over the planet and has been manufactured the world over since it became famous back in the early 19th century. But we live in a rather young country by global standards, and our traditions typically come from somewhere else. With respect to our interest in knives, those roots are found in Sheffield, England. Read on to find out more about this fascinating and historic place which contributed so much to American cutlery traditions.

Sheffield, England is a town in south Yorkshire which traces its roots to the first settlers on a clearing at the banks of the River Sheaf in the first millennium, AD. Following the Norman conquest of England in 1066, a castle was built, giving protection, control, and permanency to the settlement.



- REFERENCES
- 1 Trinity Church
 - 2 New D^o
 - 3 Chapel
 - 4 D^o
 - 5 Green Hall
 - 6 Holywell Chapel
 - 7 Quaker Chapel
 - 8 Green School
 - 9 Green D^o
 - 10 Wooding D^o
 - 11 Workhouse
 - 12 Town Hall
 - 13 Cutlers Hall
 - 14 Market Cross &c
 - 15 Abbey House
 - 16 Green Cross
 - 17 Townhead D^o

*note #13 on the map – Cutler’s Hall, along with the “Cutler’s Wheel” up by the river

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK!

Do you like a newsletter like this? We have a three-part structure which includes a “Historical Interest” story, a “Meet a Knifemaker” section, and a “Product Feature and Review” portion. If you have a story that you would like to share or have us investigate, please email us at Info@OTCutlery.com.

Sheffield's proximity to iron ore, water power, and naturally occurring grinding stones made the area a natural fit for the rise of the cutlery trade. By the 1400's, Sheffield was known for its knives, and in 1624 the Company of Cutlers was established. Sheffield Steel became well known all over England, as well as the continent, for producing the finest quality edged tools and weapons. When Daniel Defoe completed, "A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain" in 1724, he included a note on Sheffield, saying, "*This town of Sheffield is very populous and large, the streets narrow, and the houses dark and black, occasioned by the continued smoke of the forges, which are always at work: Here they make all sorts of cutlery-ware, but especially that of edged-tools, knives, razors, axes, &c. and nails; and here the only mill of the sort, which was in use in England for some time was set up, for turning their grindstones, though now 'tis grown more common.*"

In the 1740's, Benjamin Huntsman advanced metallurgy with the first use of the crucible, and after some initial local resistance, his methods were adopted by Sheffield Cutlers and the industry really began to boom. By this point in history, the north American colonies were growing, and the demand for high quality cutlery was intense. Although America had abundant natural resources, the colonies didn't really produce "finished" goods. Therefore, Sheffield products made their way into most American households. These influences dramatically shaped American preferences, and when the American Revolution broke the colonial dependence on the mother country, American cutlers were quick to adopt stylistic and functional concepts in domestically produced products. But industry doesn't develop overnight, and Sheffield continued to supply much of the cutlery used in the United States through the 19th Century.



The Bessemer Process invented in the 1850's further advanced Sheffield's prowess as the epicenter for industrial scale steel production, and Sheffield Cutlers were in full swing supplying the American demand through the Civil War and Western Expansion. Sheffield steel would have been found in most pockets on the battlefield at Gettysburg, and on most chuck-wagons along the trails as the West was conquered by American grit and determination. In the 20th Century, stainless steel shaped Sheffield products, and the factories churned out millions of knives, axes, and tools for both World Wars.

Today, Sheffield has substantially diminished in its place as a leading global production center of cutlery. Cheap overseas competition has hurt the industry, but that can be blamed as much on "disposable-minded" consumers. There are cutleries still operating in Sheffield today, and the products they make are among the finest in the world. Enjoy this snippet of prose by Geoffrey Chaucer.

Ay by his belt he baar a long panade,
And of a swerd ful trenchant was the blade.
A joly poppere baar he in his pouche;
Ther was no man, for peril, dorste hym touche.
A Sheffeld thwitel baar he in his hose.
Round was his face, and camus was his nose;
— Geoffrey Chaucer, The Reeve's Tale from The Canterbury Tales

MEET YOUR MAKER

Ernest Wright and Son

Ernest Wright & Son is the finest scissor maker in the world. At one point there were hundreds of scissor making companies in Sheffield, England. Today, there is only one company left. But the quality of this product is unlike any scissor you have ever seen. Ernest Wright and Son opened for business in 1902, and ever since, it has been known the world over for amazing cutlery products. The Wright family has been involved in the scissors trade since the 1800's. As far back as records can be found, Walter Wright - a renowned 'Little Mester' of Sheffield - specialised in finishing scissor blades as an outworker and was also referred to as 'Master Scissor Putter-Togetherer'.

A scissor "Putter-Togetherer" is the proud title given to the holder of a five-year-to-fully-apprenticed skill set and trade, known and still used in the industry today. To fully understand what a "Putter-Togetherer" is, you [must see the film "The Putter"](#); which was created by a man named Shaun Bloodworth and Sheffield University.



The company was struggling to regain ground lost in a global market to cheap overseas production, and this beautiful and fascinating film went viral on the internet and brought buyers from around the world; including Olde Towne Cutlery. The successful turn around was thoroughly documented by the BBC in another film called ["The Disappearing Art of Scissor Making"](#). Both films are fascinating, and a must see for anyone who appreciates handmade traditional products.

FEATURED PRODUCT AND REVIEW

Scissors obviously had to make the list! But this week we also have a White River Firecraft and a Winkler SAR Knife. All superbly made and exceptionally beautiful products. Check them out below.

[Ernest Wright and Son 7" Cutting Out Scissors](#). Cutting Out Scissors, Carbon steel blades, mirror polish finish, 7" OAL. Made in Sheffield, England, these Ernest Wright & Son scissors are exquisite. Hand-made of supreme quality, these scissors will feel like nothing you've ever used. When I first held them in my hand and tried a pair, I was completely amazed at the difference in a quality pair of scissors. This is the last pair of scissors you will ever buy; unless you want another size of these Ernest Wright masterpieces.



[To see the whole Ernest Wright Line, click here](#)

White River Firecraft FC5, S35VN Stainless Steel, Stonewashed finish, Olive Drab Micarta handles, Blade length 5", OAL 10", Leather Sheath. White River has designed this knife for your ultimate outdoor survival experience. It comes with a ferro-rod striker notch on the top spine and a stainless-steel bow drill divot, both of which will assist in starting a fire. The



The Firecraft has Micarta handles to provide the durability and comfort needed when using the knife for prolonged periods of time. This is the ultimate camp and survival tool. The stitching on the leather sheath is set in a groove to minimize tear out and it has a welt to prevent the blade from cutting the stitch. White River has a 100% satisfaction guarantee on their products, and I guarantee you will love this knife. The fit and finish is absolutely superb, and we are thrilled to be carrying White River.

[To see the whole line of White River Products, click here](#)

Winkler SAR

The Sar might be the coolest “Search and Rescue” knife ever made. It is brilliantly thought-out and has incredible ergonomics. The steel is CPM154 Stainless with a Caswell finish. We have the knife in several different handle materials, but this particular one has sculpted walnut. The sheaths are amazing too with Kydex lined



leather and have a felt inner for a silent draw. Daniel Winkler designed the SAR as a combination of the Utility and Spike Knife at the request of municipal Search and Rescue Teams. The knife has a glass breaker at the butt of the handle and the serrations give an ultimate cutting edge on the top.

[To see the whole line of Winkler Products \(with our revised photography\) click here](#)

Melissa and I sincerely hope this newsletter had something you found useful or interesting. Thank you so much for taking the time to read. Please keep checking the site for new product as more items are rolling in each week. Thank you for reading. Lee and Melissa

1-833-GOT-KNIVES

oldtownecutlery.com

Email - info@OTCutlery.com

Instagram – www.instagram.com/oldtownecutlery/

Pinterest - www.pinterest.com/oldtownecutlery/

Facebook Page – www.facebook.com/OldeTowneCutlery/

YouTube Channel - www.youtube.com/channel/UCvBwPoFVfD3AEYHplRAgpKg

