



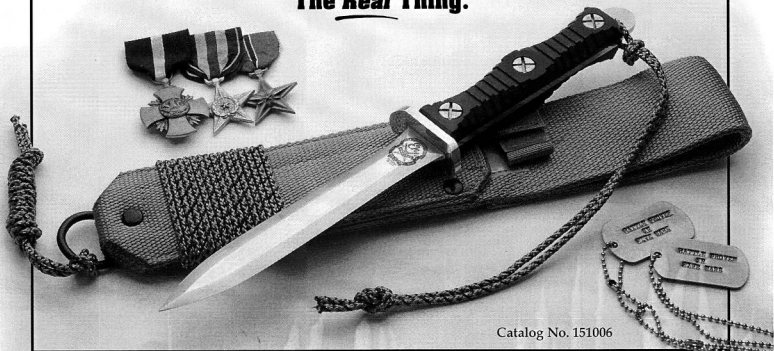
Ek[®] Commando Knife Co.

**Famous Since 1941...
Battle Proven in Five Wars:[™]
World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Gulf War and Iraq.**



**The Best Knives For Military Men,
Special Operators, Law Enforcement Personnel,
Professional Adventurers and
Those Who Must Tread in Harm's Way.**

The Real Thing.



Catalog No. 151006

Testimonials

Throughout this catalog we bring you the words of combatants – military men, special operators, law enforcement personnel and professional adventurers – who have shared their Ek Commando Knife experiences with us. Their frank reviews convey the philosophy and craftsmanship of Ek Commando Knife Co. better than the slick words of an ad agency. (For many more see www.ekknife.com)

"I consider Ek knives to be every bit the equal of Randalls. They are beautiful, well made, sturdy and have a great history behind them. I've owned them for 15 years, and they are the 'Real McCoy!'"

- G. W., Dallas

"Dad loves knives and made it home with many types. I have the same 'affliction' and over 30 years of covert ops. I took [my Ek] on the Iran Hostage Rescue Raid in 1980. I took a Randall #1 and Dad's Ek when I was a bodyguard to the Shah of Iran."

- P. C., Arizona

"I must say it is truly a work of art. The finish is beautiful. I have owned Randall knives in the past, and I must say that your product really exceeds the Randall. I have already determined my next Ek purchase."

- Dan D., FL

"It's excellent – you could easily double the price – I know, I've got some really good ones (knives) – I've been in the Marine Corps for 20 years."

- S.C.

"Once you see an Ek and use one it sells itself – it's a time-proven design."

- R.P., VA

"I just received my Marine Raider Stiletto. What a great knife, thank you. I served in the Marine Corps for six years and have been a police officer in FL for seventeen. I've owned a few knives in that time including many Randalls. Your knives are second to none. Thanks again for a great knife. Semper Fi."

- E.F., FL

Why Ek? - Our Philosophy on Knives

Anyone can own a mass-produced "factory" knife. But such knives are made on production lines to "price points", and a bevy of cost accountants are always looking for ways to save a nickel here, a dime there. With such knives, the heart and soul have been cut out, so these knives do not provide a deep satisfaction of ownership.

At Ek, we appreciate the process of good knife-making and embrace it for the reward that comes from doing something we can be proud of – providing tools of war that can save the lives of U.S. military men, special operators, law enforcement officers and professional adventurers. This is not a big corporation that must answer to thousands of stockholders. We don't have assembly lines or bean counters. The company is owned by one man, and he made his money decades ago in other fields of weaponry, military history and military knives and by writing respected books and magazine articles about military knives, over a period of 30 years. This is a labor of love and a source of pride for all who work here – a tradition that stretches back in time to 1941 and the days of John Ek, himself.

Each Ek Commando Knife is imbued with a spirit – the spirit of combat that lives in each knife and which you sense when you hold one. As a newspaper writer described it forty years ago in an article about our knives, it is a confidence that gives the owner "a feeling of invincibility". As a recent test by *Knife World* magazine put it, Ek Commando Knives are "lively in the hand and extraordinarily quick...designed to leap into the hand and spring into action...in the grimmest of circumstances." In contrast, factory knives just feel mass produced.

Our motto is "Constant Improvement", which you can see in the gradual evolution and perfection of our knives over time. This results in periodic variations in design, which adds greatly to the interest in collecting Ek Knives.

All our knives are the *strongest design – full tang*. And *all* – as advocated by John Ek and Col. William E. Fairbairn – are designed to fall *into* the hand, not *out* of it. The long grip, full tang and solid brass "X-Head Fasteners"™ achieve this.

It is interesting – and significant – to note that more than half of our orders come from men who have owned, or who currently own, an Ek Commando Knife. Indeed, a Marine combat veteran (an Ek owner for 40 years) recently told us, "I am going to call the President and tell him all of our troops going to the desert should have an Ek – they're the best out there!"

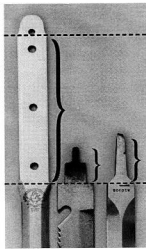
If you don't already own an Ek, join the ranks of combat troops and veterans who do. We constantly look back and remember, "Continue the mission." Simultaneously, we look forward saying, "Press the attack!", bolstered by the confidence that comes from owning a knife that has been, as our motto proudly declares, "Battle Proven in Five Wars." There are plenty of new, wanna-be knives out there that have been around for only a few years (the FNG's). But when you get an Ek, you own *The Real Thing*. Why settle for less? *One day, your life might depend on it. When your life depends on a knife, make sure its an Ek!*



Some of our staff have been working with Ek knives for a quarter century. No assembly lines here... quality not quantity. Our motto is "Constant Improvement", using the best materials and precision craftsmanship.

Full-Tang Design - the Strongest

All Ek Commando Knives are full-length, full-width, full-thickness tang construction - the undisputed *strongest* - a feature rarely found on other knives (because it requires more steel). If your knife doesn't have a full tang, it's not designed for maximum strength. In photo below, Ek is at left, a "Survival" knife is center, and the Gerber MkII is at right.



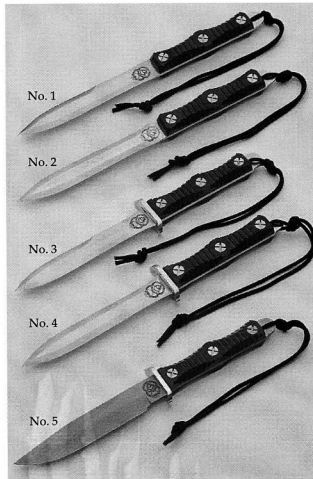
Above and Right: Checkered Walnut and Micarta grips feature the ergonomic "Handprint"® grip shape and X-Head Fastener System.™



Far Right: Parachute Cord wrapped grips are available on the Ek Desert Patrol™ Survival Fighter, Tac-Ops and A.C.U. Ranger series.

The Ek Blade

Blades are high-carbon surgical stainless steel, HCS1415, heat treated to 1950°F, then plunged to 120°F below zero to retain a razor edge and hardened to Rockwell C57-59. Model No. 1-4 are precision, low-glare satin finish.



All Bowies (No. 5's) are tactical, low-glare, bead-blast finish.

The Ek Numbering System:

No. 1 - Edge-and-a-half, no crossguard (6-5/8" blade)

No. 2 - Double-edge, no crossguard (6-5/8" blade)

No. 3 - Edge-and-a-half with crossguard (6-5/8" blade)

No. 4 - Double-edge with crossguard (6-5/8" blade)

No. 5 - Bowie with cross-guard (6-3/4" blade)



When Hollywood needs a real military fighting knife they call on Ek Knives. The S/F 4 is seen in the movies: "Sniper" and "Hamburger Hill".

"Thanks for continuing to make a great knife. I have tried several makes including Randall's, but yours is still superior. No wonder it has such a long history participating in conflicts and wars...your knives are the best."

- M.W., California

"I've had an Ek for some time, and every time I pull it out of the sheath people say, 'Where did you get THAT!'"

- Recon Marine Major

"I have been looking for the right blade for myself (high kidnap risk)... Actually gave up on finding a good double edge fighting knife and thought I would have to make my own. So glad I found out about Ek."

- R.M., Iraq

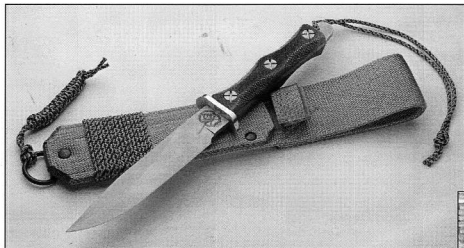
"I've been in Iraq about 6 months and have about another 6 to go. This is my second tour to Iraq. I was part of the northern airborne/special operations. My job is to go to the different outposts by flying either Blackhawk or Chinook helicopters. On one mission, an officer with me had an Ek Model 4 that his father had carried years before and had given to him for his deployment. He let me hold the Model 4. It was beautifully balanced, and I had great confidence knowing this blade would most definitely perform when called upon. During OIF-1 (invasion) and this deployment I have my Randall Model 18 attached to my IBA. I will wear your Ek M4 on my belt."

- K.B., Iraq

"THE ULTIMATE."

- L.M.

Ek® Commando Knives



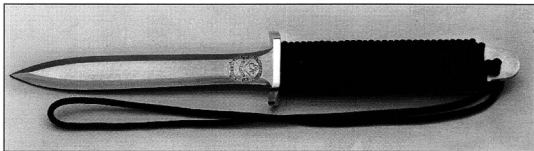
◀ **Checkered Walnut Grips**, shown here configured as an Ek Bowie (so this is a CW5). Like gunstock grips, in "Handprint"™ pattern with "X-Head Fastener System"™. Note the *generous* choil on this blade, so you can "choke up" on this, with your index finger wrapped around the blade shoulder (most others make this too small). Checkered Walnut grips are also available with all other Ek blades.



▲ **The Ultimate Military Fighting Knife – the Ek Micarta "M" Series.** The "Gripping Grooves" on this Black Micarta grip and the brass X-Head Fastener System™ make this one of our most popular knives. The U.S. Army features a crossed pair of these in their "Best Ranger" Trophy. Shown above configured as a M4. Ships in an Ek sheath in your choice of colors: O.D., Black, Desert Tan or A.C.U.



▲ **The Ek Survival/Fighter.** The S/F series features an O.D. parachute-cord-wrapped cord grip and O.D. web sheath. Shown above as a S/F 3 with a edge-and-a-half blade and solid brass crossguard.



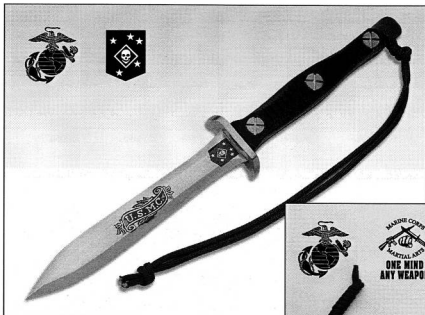
◀ **The Ek Tac/Ops**
Black parachute-cord-wrapped grip and matching black sheath. Shown at left is a Tac/Ops 4.

Satisfaction is guaranteed or return in 30 days for a full refund. We accept VISA, MasterCard, American Express and Discover. You can order on our web site or by phone, fax, or e-mail. Most orders ship within three days to three weeks. If you are a U.S. military serviceman, let us know, so you will go to the head of the line. Phone (804) 257-7144 • Fax (804) 320-3223 • www.ekknife.com • e-mail: hq@ekknife.com

All Ek Knives include the Ek LC-2 Sheath.

See page 6 for details.

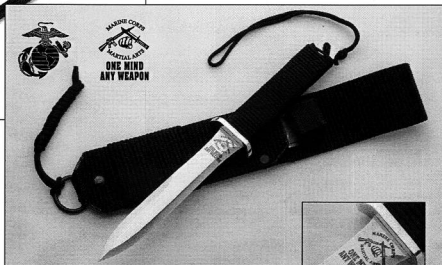
Ek® Commando Knives



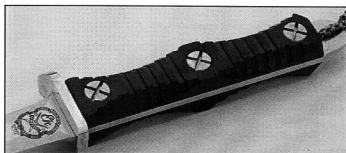
◀ **The Marine Raider Stiletto MkII™**
Officially Authorized by the U.S. Marine Raider Association. The spirit and legacy of the WWII original, updated with the best materials and strongest design. As with the original, the "USMC" scroll is etched on the blade. Battle-worthy, full-tang design for maximum strength. The first one of these knives is on permanent display at Raider Hall, Quantico MCB, the home of the U.S. Marine Corps' MCMAP program.

The Marine Raider/ MCMAP Knife ▶

The Marine Raider/Marine Corps Martial Arts Program (MCMAP) Knife is officially authorized by the U.S. Marine Raider Association and keeps alive the spiritual bond between the WWII Raider Marines and the MCMAP-trained Marines of today. Four times a year, the U.S. Marine Corps presents one of these knives to an outstanding graduate of the Black Belt Instructor/Trainer MCMAP class, at MACE; this is the Dunham-Wetherbee Award. Inspired by the Marine Raider Stiletto of World War II fame, its business end is a similar, double-edge, razor-sharp blade – but with a sturdier design. The crossguard is thick solid brass. The grip is wrapped with Mil-Spec parachute cord, inspired by the traditional, wrapped grip of the sword of the ancient Samurai warrior, an icon of the martial arts. The cord wrapping and sheath are black, the traditional color of the highest order, or "belt", of fighting skill, the Black Belt.



The blade shoulder (show side) carries the symbol and motto of the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program. The blade shoulder (reverse) portrays the famous "Death's Head" symbol of the Marine Raiders (with the five stars of the Southern Cross), with the name of the knife and the name of the official maker.



◀ **The new Gripping Grooves™** – wider and deeper for much more gripping power, especially in the all-important thrust, especially if the grips are wet with sweat, blood, mud, water or oil. These deep grooves were inspired by the military "lug" tire-tread pattern, proven for over 60 years on U.S. military vehicles. All our Micarta grips now feature this design. These and our Checkered Walnut grips provide better gripping power than any other knives in the world.

Available for all Ek knives is a wall-mounting Walnut Display Case with fitted velvet liner and locking glass lid.



"I am very attached to my Ek Knife as I have and do carry it on our SWAT team. It symbolizes the mindset I must carry into our situations."

- Sgt. S.O.

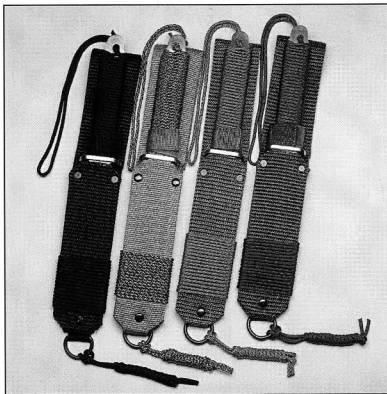
"This is one serious piece of steel!"

- A.C., California

The Ek® Commando Knife Sheath

The LC-2 Ek Sheath is included with every Ek Commando Knife. You can also order *extra* sheaths in colors to further mission-tailor your knife. The Ek Sheath is designed to meet and exceed the demands of military combat, with these special attributes:

- Wide loop for pistol belt
- Designed so it can rotate on belt when sitting in a Humvee, Amtrac, APC, etc.
- Made of Mil-Spec, battle-proven LC-2 (Load Carrying Equipment) Web Belt for battle-proven long life
- No hard plastic to rattle – better noise discipline
- No-ravel, heat-sealed ends
- Metal riveted and double-lock stitched for long life
- Slip-Strip lined for no-scratch, no-wear, *silent* in/out of sheath
- Hilt retention strap of HD Velcro and HD nylon strapping
- Lower-side slit openings for rain/river water drainage
- Subdued black “D”-ring at tip for lash-down
- P-Cord (4’) attached to “D”-ring for lashing to leg or equipment
- P-Cord (12’) – wrapped around sheath body – plenty for lashing sheath to Body Armor, Flak Jacket, Combat Vest, Belt Suspenders, MOLLE gear, and other LBE.



The Ek Sheath shown above in choice of colors for best camouflage discipline: Black, Desert Tan, A.C.U. or O.D. The P-Cord wrist strap on the knife corresponds with the P-Cord on the sheath.

Note To Military Personnel On Knife Selection

If you are deploying overseas, selecting the right knife could mean life or death. If you run out of ammo or if your weapon jams, the fighting might quickly become, for you, hand-to-hand. At that point, you want a military fighting knife. You don't want a multi-purpose, open this-and-that-and-the-other knife.

In knife fighting, the decisive move (that ends the fight the quickest) is the thrust. *Ek Commando Knives are the best knives in the world in the thrust.* The spearpoint design (of the Models 1, 2, 3, and 4) concentrates 100% of the power of the thrust force vector directly along the exact center of the knife (a bowie design or other shape places the point off center, not taking advantage of basic physics).

The Ek blade is *exactly* the right thickness – not so thin as to be brittle, but not so thick that this thickness, itself, would reduce the effectiveness of the all-important thrust. To wit, if you place a quarter on a table, you can jam the point of an Ek Commando Knife through it. Try that (at your own risk) with a multi-purpose knife!

Even the ergonomic “Handprint”™ grips are designed to maximize purchase in the thrust. As with a fencing foil,

and as taught by Col. William E. Fairbairn (of the British Commandos and Fairbairn-Sykes Fighting Knife fame), a true fighting knife should be held in the diagonal, cross-palm “fencing grip” position. The eight scallops of the Ek grips provide an ergonomic position for (1) the ball of the hand, (2) the thumb, (3) the index finger and (4) the last two fingers. The “Gripping Grooves”™ in each grip are deeply cut *perpendicular* to the central thrust axis to maximize the force of the thrust.

Having said this, military men with experience in combat also extol the many other virtues – and uses – of the Ek Commando Knife. And the unbeatable strength of the full-tang design adds to their confidence.

So, even if you are rear echelon, with the type of combat these days you might suddenly find yourself ambushed and in the thick of it. At that time, be sure you are well prepared with a military fighting knife, designed to give *you* the maximum advantage and the best chance of coming home – as General Patton said, to “give the *other* poor bastard the chance to die for *his* country!”

Continue the mission...

Considering the important 20th century American knife designers and makers, the name John Ek stands out with as much mystery as respect.

In a sense, he was the Jim Bowie of the 20th century. As time passes and more is written about this man and his knives, his fame as a pioneer in American knife-making will continue to spread. Like Bowie, John Ek pioneered a classic design unlike any other. And his knives were made for fighting - by American military personnel. One newspaper article indicated that Ek knives "became surrounded almost immediately by an aura of fame and invincibility." John Ek has even been referred to as "the Stradivarius of the blade."

John Ek knives are in that highly restricted category of knives that have been battle tested and battle proved by Americans in five wars - World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War and Iraq. As he said in the mid-1970's: "There's been hardly a break without some kind of military involvement since 1941, so we've been busy with knives ever since." He called his knives "Ek Commando Knives." This was a reference to World War II Allied Commando-type units (such as the U.S. Marine Raiders, Rangers, First Special Service Force, and British Commandos), who were highly respected for their knife-fighting abilities. Ek often met with military personnel to discuss knife design and close-combat fighting. Company reports indicate that he requested - and received - permission from the British War Office to use the term "Commando."

It is reported that President Franklin D. Roosevelt kept a John Ek Commando Knife on his desk in the White House until the time of his death. This certainly seems possible, as photographs exist of John Ek with a large display of Ek Commando Knives on exhibit in the White House in 1944.

General George S. Patton, Jr. also owned a John Ek Commando Knife (as did several of his subordinates). John Ek even named his Model No. 6 the "Patton Knife." Captain Clark Gable, while not necessarily expecting to see combat, was none-the-less a customer of John Ek - thinking that if the situation took him in harm's way, he would have a dependable knife.

MILITARY FIGHTING KNIVES

The recorded information on our registry files shows that Ek knives were and are owned by men of all ranks in every branch of service - Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marine. Their mailing addresses prove that Ek knives were used in every theater of operation around the world. In fact, Ek knives probably hold the record for being the leading privately-purchased military knives in American history.

During World War II, John Ek had very strong feelings about restricting his knives to active-duty servicemen. He did not want his knives to fall into the wrong hands. Ek felt his knives were the finest made and that they gave the user an advantage over any adversary. His philosophy was "A knife is more deadly than a gun. A gun will run out of ammunition, but as long as a person is behind a knife, it can kill."

For this reason, during WWII each knife was individually serially numbered and registered in the owner's name. The purchaser had to fill out a registration card certifying that the owner was a member of the armed forces, giving his name, rank,

and service serial number. This strict screening procedure also applied where knives were purchased by military men or individuals through dealers. Before the knife would be made available, the individual had to fill out the same form, and it had to be returned to the company. If a dealer failed to return a registration card, future orders would be by the number of missing registrations until the missing card was returned.

John Ek could certainly have sold far more knives had he not been concerned about the strict registration procedure. But he was a strongly patriotic American, a newspaper headline once calling him a "Modern Day Thomas Paine."

During a time of steel shortages, the U.S. Government War Production Board tested and approved the designs of the Ek knives and authorized John Ek continued availability of the high-quality, nickel-chrome-moly steel. As a strategic material, this was scarce. It speaks well of the John Ek knife that the government wanted him to continue production and that he was admitted to the Army Ordnance Association.

RUGGED DESIGN - FULL TANG

Several aspects of his design made his knives distinctive and rugged. First of all, the knife was of full-width, full-length tang construction. Not only did the tang (the extension of the blade which runs through the grips) run the entire length of the grips, but the tang was also the full width of the grips. In other words, the grips were about one inch wide and five inches long - and so was that portion of the steel blade. This provided maximum strength. By comparison, most knives of the day (even ones made today) had narrow "rat-tail" tangs - many running only one-third the length of the grip.

Also unusual was the extended butt, a direct extension of the blade and the blade tang itself. Depending upon the year of manufacture, the butt could vary in length anywhere from nearly one inch to approximately one-half inch beyond the grip. It could also be used as a pry bar for opening ammunition crates or, according to Ek's 1944 manual, *Your Silent Partner*, for "an upstroke to lay your opponent out." Another use of this extension was to protect both the hand and wooden grips when the butt was used as a hammer.

The extended butt of the Ek Commando Knife may possibly have inspired the design of the "skullcrusher" pommel on the First Special Service Force V-42 Stiletto, which appeared in 1943.

The grips were of Rock Maple, selected for a number of reasons. John Ek preferred wood to leather, as the latter rotted, particularly under tropical conditions. He also chose it over the brass/alloy grips of the British Fairbairn-Sykes Fighting Knife, finding it to be more comfortable and to provide better gripping power, especially when the hand was wet with perspiration. This also allowed the owner to custom fit the grip by sanding, to the exact contour of his hand. For a number of years the company included a piece of flint paper with each knife for this purpose.

The grips on his more-popular knives had eight scallops - four on each of two grips. The gripping power was so good that John Ek found that a cross-guard was not necessary to prevent the hand from slipping. When questioned about this by the War Production Board, Ek graced his hand and plunged one of his knives into the wooden floor with such

force that no one was able to pull it out. This dramatically demonstrated that the crossguard was not necessary to keep the hand from sliding onto the blade.

He preferred his knives without crossguards for ease of concealment and for quick withdrawal (no crossguard to snag on clothes). In fact, when his range of knives was finally expanded to 10 different models, only three of these had crossguards. Evidently, military men agreed with him, as his Model No. 1 and Model No. 2 (single-edge and double-edge, respectively) were always his most popular knives, and neither of these had guards. (Note: The Model No. 1 and Model No. 2 were discontinued in the late 1980's but, popular with

(continued on back page)

"Thanks for your cooperation and help. Very satisfied with my Ek. Any Marine would be proud to have one with their issue 782 gear. Semper Fi."

- T.R., Texas

"I carried my Ek Bowie with me all the time I was in Iraq. Whenever I pulled it out, everyone around was drawn to it, asking, 'Where did you get it? Who made it? I had my Ek Bowie in my hand cutting something, and a belligerent Iraqi walked towards me from behind. I turned around to see who it was. That Iraqi saw the knife, and his eyes got REAL big, and he started backing away, saying, 'No, mister. No, mister!' While your knives are good looking in a glass showcase, they are more than capable of getting the job done. Good job! My hat's off to you."

- SGT C.U., U.S.A., Tenn.



"I was aboard the U.S.S. Duluth (LPD-6), an Amphib, visiting our oldest son, then a Lieutenant of Marines. I ran into this Marine - equipped with an Ek S/F3! Small world!"

- Bob Buerlein (Ek President)

(Ek History - continued)

jujitsu-trained knife fighters, brought back in 1997.)

Also unusual and distinctive were the "Poured-Lead" Rivets which were used to affix the two wooden grips to the blade tang. Most knives at the time used standard cutlery rivets or pins, or they were simply driven onto the rat-tail tang. The Poured-Lead Rivets had the advantage that, if the grips ever became loose, they could be tightened in the field without any tools. All the owner needed to do was take a heavy object, such as a rock, and pound the lead rivets to tighten them. Another advantage of the Poured-Lead Rivets was the extra weight which made the knife balance far better than most, as it added weight to the hilt. This caused it to fall into the hand, rather than fall out of the hand. (Note: The present "X-Head Fastener System" enhances both of these benefits).

Ek selected nickel-chrome-moly steel for his blades. He found this material to be extremely strong, yet to have some degree of stain and rust resistance. Of Swedish ancestry, Ek in later years would also use Swedish Sandvik stainless steel, upon request. In April or May of 1939 John Ek designed the first John Ek Commando Knife which he named, appropriately, the Model No. 1. Actually, he thought that one model would be all that would be needed. The Model No. 1 had a single-edged blade of spearpoint design, with a sharpened false edge extending approximately three inches along the back edge of the blade.

Later, a double-edged version of this (the Model No. 2) was developed. Then crossguards were added to these versions, making them the Model No. 6 and No. 7 respectively (today called the No. 3 and No. 4).

HAMDEN: 1944-1949

In January 1941, John Ek started producing knives in quantity in Hamden, Connecticut near Lake Whitney (he had started making knives in 1939). By 1943 he had put six different styles of knives into production, and the quantity of production increased. By August 1944, demand for his knives had grown to the point where three shifts worked around the clock seven days a week, producing 10 different models.

Virtually all of the knives made in WWII by John Ek were numbered. The first number on the blade is the model number; the subsequent numbers are the serial number, preceded by a letter of the alphabet. Starting with the 1000th knife of each model, the letter A preceded the serial number. Serial numbers following the alphabetical prefix went up to 999 prior to shifting over to the next letter of the alphabet. For example, a knife numbered 1B299 means this is a Model 1, serial number B299.

Ek serially numbered these knives to help the owners keep track of them if they were lost, and also because he guaranteed each knife for the lifetime of the original owner. By keeping the original owner's name on record, he could follow up his lifetime guarantee system.

Always interested in improving quality control, his lifetime guarantee increased the probability that he would learn of any mistakes he made. He received back very few of his knives, because they were so rugged; there was very little to break or go wrong with them.

FLORIDA: 1949-1982

In 1949 John Ek moved to Miami, Florida where

he continued production of his famous knives.

From here he provided knives to American forces during the Korean and Vietnam wars. Miami-produced knives were marked "John Ek Knives, Miami, Fla.," whereas earlier knives bore the "Hamden, Conn." identification.

When the U.S. entered and fought the Vietnam War, Ek Commando Knives received acclaim from owners - such as this letter from a helicopter gunship crew chief, received in 1965: "When your ship is shot down in VC territory, your rifle or pistol is of no use to you if you have to walk back to friendly lines. You can't afford that much noise, so your knife and knowing how to use it are your best weapons. The only knives suitable for this type of war and for survival are your Commando Knives."

Another trooper from the 101st Airborne wrote: "I don't know where we all will be going, but I'm sure it's back to the boonies again. I hope to have one of your knives when I return to the jungle. I heard about your unique knives from a friend back in the world who said they were the best in the world and made specially for combat fighting."

John Ek died on 21 October 1976, but the business was continued by his son, who had worked for his father as a knife-maker prior to John Ek's death. Due to the growing crime rate in Miami, it was decided to relocate the operation to St. Augustine until 1982, when it was moved to Richmond, Virginia - halfway between the earlier Connecticut and Florida locations.

RICHMOND: 1982 to Today

Knife making began in Richmond, Virginia in 1982, when the company went under the direction of Robert A. Buerlein. The Ek motto became "Constant Improvement," and changes made over the years help identify the date of origin. Efforts concentrated on developing tighter technical specifications for the knives for higher and consistent quality. They were made sharper (razor sharp) and more robust, with state-of-the-art materials.

Locations for the grip fastener system were moved for greater strength, and a new crossguard was developed. This latter was thicker with quillons that curved forward slightly, to prevent jamming the thumb. Poured-Lead Rivets were initially used in all production for the first several years, but this gave way to the newly-developed "X-Head Fastener System." These were solid-brass precision-made screw fasteners which provided the desired weight of lead (for proper knife balance). Yet, they also allowed quick removal and easy replacement of grips, if the owner desired. Sturdy and split-profile Pakkawood and, later, Micarta, grips replaced the maple and, later, walnut grips of earlier knives. Different sheath configurations were also developed, including the utilization of brown leather, black leather and later, olive drab, black, tan and ACU Mil-Spec web material.

In 1993 BlackJack Knives, Ltd. of Effingham, IL became involved with manufacture of "production" knives (for two years), while Ek Commando Knife Co. in Richmond continued primarily with custom

commando knife-making and sales. When BlackJack ceased operations in the mid-1990's, the making of production knives returned to the Richmond operation, but back to its time-honored, benchmarking approach, with emphasis on quality, not quantity. The Model No. 1 (edge-and-a-half, without crossguard) and Model No. 2, (double-edge, without crossguard), which had been discontinued in the late 1980's, were re-introduced in 1997, and in 1997, leather sheaths were discontinued, replaced by the military-style web sheaths.

In 2004, the Marine Raider/MCMAF Knife was introduced, authorized by the U.S. Marine Raider Association. One is presented, in a walnut-and-glass display case, at MACE (Martial Arts Center of Excellence) at Raider Hall, Quantico MCB, to an outstanding Black Belt Instructor/Trainer in each graduating class. This is the Dunham-Wetherbe Award. In 2004, the Marine Raider Stiletto MKIII™ was also introduced - authorized by the U.S. Marine Raider Association and inspired by their WWII Stiletto. Also in 2004, Checkered Walnut grips were offered for the first time. In January 2005, the Ek Bowie (Model 5) was re-introduced, and in January 2006 Poured-Lead Rivets were re-introduced, on a special-order basis. In the spring of 2006, the new Army Combat Uniform (ACU) Universal Camouflage pattern was made available for Ek sheaths and with a new Paragrip™ knife, the ACU Ranger. In September 2006, the new "military-lug-pattern" gripping surfaces were introduced on the Micarta grips.

Over these many years, the Ek Commando Knife Co. has continued catering to requests from military men, special operators, law enforcement personnel, professional adventurers and collectors the world over, most of whom have been Ek Commando Knife owners for many decades.

The tradition continues, always influenced by the words of John Ek: "A good knife can save a life."

Many an American life was saved in five wars by John Ek's Commando Knives. The thousands of letters he received during his lifetime from satisfied GIs were the ultimate satisfaction for this patriotic American. His name, his knives, and the Ek Commando Knife Co. live on today as a legacy of his ideas, his skills and his patriotism.

Continue the mission...

Identification of Ek Commando Knives

Ek Commando Knives are nearly always marked with the location of the company at that time. Richmond-marked knives can be dated as below: Lower banner etched "Commando": 1982-1991 Lower banner etched "Gulf War": 1991-2004 (Sept.) "Iraqi War" banner added in lower right: 2004 (Oct.) Some knives made in Richmond in the late 1980's did not have the Richmond, VA address on them.

Model numbers have changed over the years. Ever since 1982 model designations have been:

- Model 1: Edge-and-a-half, w/ crossguard
- Model 2: Double edge, w/ crossguard
- Model 3: Edge-and-a-half, with crossguard
- Model 4: Double edge, with crossguard
- Model 5: Bowie, with crossguard

The model prefix describes the grip. Current grips are Micarta (M), Checkered Walnut (CW) and parachute cord (in four colors/patterns of camouflage). For example, an M4 has Micarta grips, double-edge blade and a crossguard.



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