

Sharpening Your Accessory Knowledge

Diann Eason
Model A Ford Club of Colorado



Walking into the fashion judging room requires knowledge of five fashion areas for competition. As an entrant, the primary focus is on the Major Garment, then Coordinating Apparel, those fabulous Hats and Hairdos, and of course Footwear. Accessories provide hundreds of combinations to complete your ensemble. Men and women have three accessories with them, which not only complete the ensemble but can add interesting information to the written description, valuable points toward the final score, and a bit of spark to the entrant's overall appearance. Adding information obtained by research will give the judges the information necessary to confirm the entry. Ensuring your accessories are within the 1928–1931-time frame, in good condition, and coordinated with the major garment will make your fashion judging a wonderful experience.

MAFCA fashion judges are always curious as to what is pulled from the pockets of the gents, and carefully removed from the fragile purses of the ladies. Pocket watches, handkerchiefs, compacts, pen and pencils, mirrors, or coins are commonly seen. How about pocket knives? While not the usual accessory, pocket knives can make an impact and will make a point of the depth of research.



Figure 1 Camillus Knife

Knives of many forms and styles have been used since the caveman era; necessary for protection, securing food, and for crafting utensils. Many manufacturers of pocket knives pre-dated the Model A Era, so doing the research on the manufacturer will result in the possibility of a higher score for authenticity of the era.

Figure 2 Tang Stamp



The logo or company stamp can often be found on the tang stamp located at the bottom of the blades near the hub of the knife handle.

Pocket knives available during the Model A era were made by several well-known manufacturers: US Wallkill River Works, Walden New York The New York Knife Company, Colonial Providence RI, and Shapleigh Hardware Company/Diamond Edge Company, Boker Knife Company, Solingen Germany and the United States of America, Hammer Brand Knives, and the Camillus Knife Company.



Figure 3 Boker Knife with Trademark Tree

Pocket knives were used by men and women for many different careers, sporting activities, and homelife. A tradesman would take his sturdy pocket knife from his uniform to cut a box, or use it as an all-in-one type tool depending on number of blades and/or attachments. A golfer could use a pocket knife to remove dirt clods from the golf cleats. Of course, at home, a pocket knife could have been used in the garden to cut string, hose, or a plant by a man or woman.

The length of the knife could vary from two- and one-half inches to seven and three fourth inches with blades fully extended. The blades were made of hardened stainless steel and sharpened to a fine razor edge. The handles were often wood, ivory, celluloid, polished steel, silver, brass, pearl, or bone stag handles.



Figure 4 Stag handle

The inner casings were brass. The placement of the hinges could be as various as styles. One knife could have one or two blades at one end with a single blade of a different width at the opposite end. Another pocket knife might have two blades moving independently of each other at the same hinge. The shape of the blades differed based on the function. A shorter, thicker blade with a flat tip could be used as leverage, while a blade with a sharp point was used to get into tiny spots.



Figure 5 Utility knife with blunt blade



Figure 6 Montgomery Wards & Company 1929-1930

Gentlemen often wore a pocket knife attached to a metal chain, similar to a watch chain and fob. A smaller pocket knife with a chain is appropriate to be worn with a business suit or sport ensemble.

Women may have had smaller or “lady like” pocket knives for self- protection. In



Figure 7 Small ladies pocket knife

addition, a pocket knife would be helpful for those minor repairs necessary when driving your car without a man present!

When considering the accessories for your Model A Era ensemble, certainly coordinate the items with the main garment, but provide an element of surprise and unpredictability with a pocket knife.

Several sales catalogs show the unique styles of pocket knives. Attach copies of documentation, showing the authenticity of your accessories to your fashion judging entry forms.



Figure 8 Montgomery Ward’s & Company 1929-1930 1

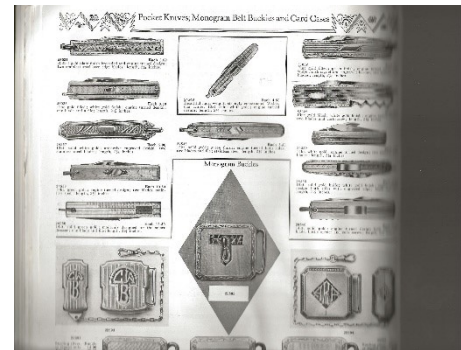


Figure 9 Decorative pocket knives in jewelry catalogs

References:

Kerzman, Joe (2003), “Pocket Knives”, *Sporting Knives* 2003, 117,148-149 IBN 0-87349-430-X
*The Winchester *Keen Kutter* Diamond Edge Chronicles*, Volume 1, Number 3&4, March 1997
 New York State Museum’s, *Cultural Resources Site Examination Report 2002*
 Stewart, Ron and Ritchie, Roy. *Big Book of Pocket Knives*

#####