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english edition

Edition: January 2024

since 2023

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Wenger Modell 1890 Typ II, p. 2

Le Couvreur de Salomon Suisse - Entre Arny Knif, Thierry Delafosse 2022

Dieses Heft von 2022 auf Französisch umfasst auf 35 Seiten die Entwicklung des Schweizer Soldeirosens. Es ist sehr übersichtlich, einfach und verständlich, aber auch von ein paar Fakten sowohl in der Fachsprache wie auch von die Fakten ergibt. Diese Informationen sind auch auf der Homepage <https://www.elsinox.com/de/collectors-guide> abrufbar.
Peak: keine man haben, muss man aber nicht, aber nicht empfehlenswert, da der Wissensstand nicht der aktuellste ist.



A Collector's Guide to Vintage Wenger Knives, Dave Arnold 2022

Dieses Werk über die Taschenmesser der Firma Wenger von Dave Arnold umfasst auf über 350 Seiten die verschiedenen älteren Modelle der Firma ab den 1920er Jahren und beschreibt, Es hat eine viele Abbildungen, welche eine Sammlung sehr anerkennen. Dave Arnold, selbst langjähriger Wenger-Messer-Sammler und großer Messer-Experte. In dieses Werk Zusammenstellungen und zu fotografieren und in Buch zu veröffentlichen. Dieses Buch ist die Referenzwerk für Vintage Wenger Taschenmesser und die Maß für Sammler. Es hilft sehr bei der Orientierung. Es ist sicher nicht perfekt, wie alle anderen Werke sein es zu verbessern, wenn es paar Jahre eine neue, verbesserte Version erscheinen würde, dann man kann immer einen Peak. Philosophie für eventuelle Sammler von Vintage Wenger Taschenmessern.

Literature about SAKs, p. 15



Victorinox Modell No. 620, p. 24



Cutler Arnold, Solothurn p. 40

The first Swiss soldier's knife from Wenger, Delémont

The Wenger Delémont company, founded in 1893, was known, alongside the Victorinox company, for supplying the Swiss Army with original Swiss soldiers' knives for decades. But what exactly were the beginnings like?

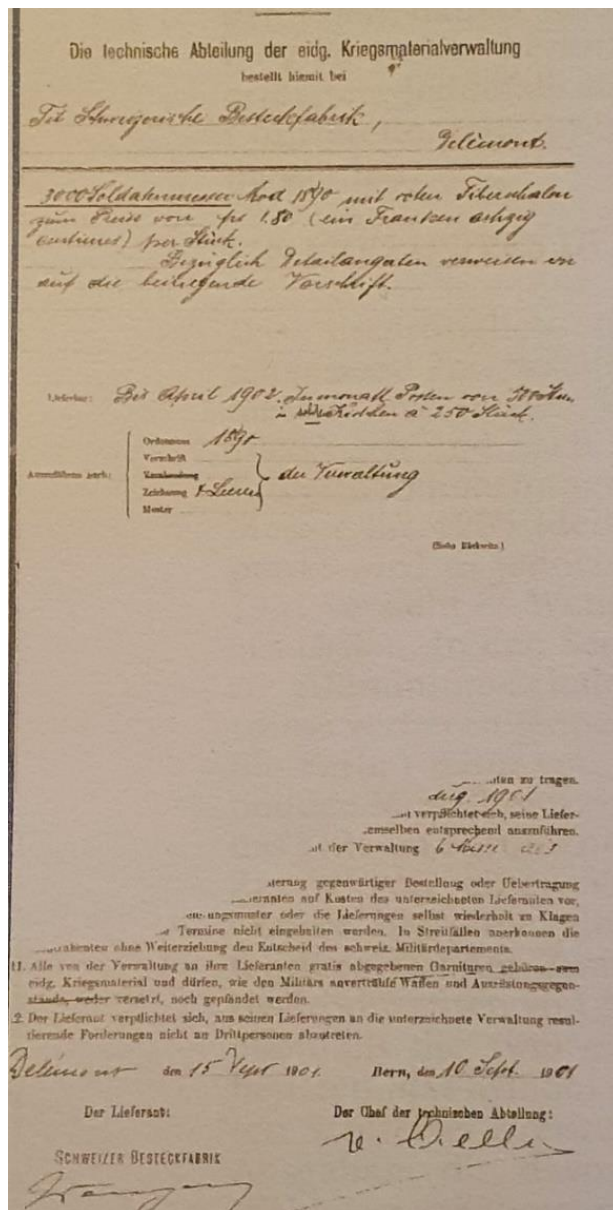
The soldier's knife model 1890 was first delivered by the German company Wester & Co. In the years that followed, Swiss cutlers took over the production and delivery of soldiers' knives, in particular the two companies Elsener from Schwyz and Leresche & Co from Vallorbes. The Model 1890 was replaced in 1908 by the Model 08. However, there were two different versions of the Model 1890, with black scales made of wood (oak or walnut) or with red scales made of fiber. These were first ordered in 1901 and replaced the black bowls. The designation Type I (black scales) and Type II (red scales) is therefore used among collectors. However, these two types were identical in terms of structure and tools. For more information about the Model 1890, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nzkzyUzWDo>



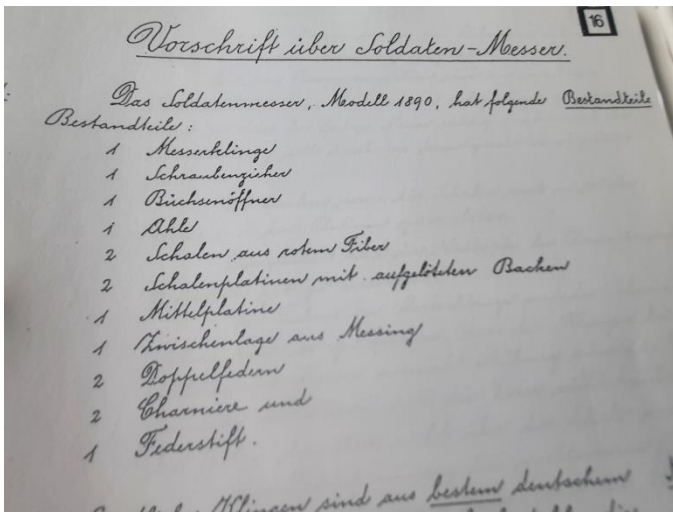
Every year the soldiers' knives were put out to tender for a very specific quantity. There are documents here that prove the order quantity every year. Interested parties could apply for the advertisement. There was a minimum delivery quantity, which was between 3,000 and 5,000 pieces. In 1901 the quantity to be ordered was 22,500 soldiers' knives. The public tender took place in July 1901.

In this year, 1901, an order was placed for the first time from the Wenger Delémont company, then under the company name Schweizer Cutlery Factory. Here on the right is a photo of this document, which illustrates the order (see Wenger, La passion du couteau, 1993).

“The technical department of the Federal The War Material Administration hereby orders 3000 soldier's knives model 1890 with red fiber scales from “...Swiss Cutlery Factory, Delémont” at a price of CHF 1.80 each. Delivery: until April 1902 in monthly batches of... In boxes of 250 pieces... Signed, 1901.”



In September 1901, new regulations for soldiers' knives were published (see 100 years of the Swiss soldier's knife, 1991, p. 16).



The new regulations for the model 1890 soldier's knife particularly affected the change in the scale material. The new scales had to be made of "red fiber".

It can be assumed that this change was made because the fiber material performed better under stress than the previous black wooden scales made of oak.

Since the tender in July 1901 was for soldiers' knives of 1902, and the regulations document was dated September 1901, one would assume that the order in 1901 was still for soldiers' knives of type I. However, this was not the case and Type II soldiers' knives were ordered.

On February 23, 1901, the model protection for the model 1890 soldier's knife expired. From this point on, every manufacturer was allowed to produce the model 1890 soldier's knife and sell it privately. Previously, this was only permitted to the companies Wester & Co (until February 23, 1896) and then Peres, Daniel, both from Solingen Germany. The Swiss knife manufacturers were only allowed to produce directly for the Swiss army.



Illustration of a soldier's knife model 1890 Type II from Coutellerie Suisse (Wenger Delémont)

Soldier's knife model 1890 type II

Story

The Model 1890 Type II soldier's knife was manufactured from 1901 to 1908. It therefore has a relatively short history. There were no changes to the soldier's knife during this time. The specifications of the technical department of the War Material Administration were very strict and very precise.

The Type II was basically a Model 1890 Type I soldier's knife, simply with red fiber scales instead of the black wooden scales.

Functional parts

The pocket knife No. 200 model 1890 had a large cutting blade, an awl, a screwdriver and a can opener. The model was not available with the bracket/key ring option. All tools were made of carbon steel.

Material thickness

Large cutting blade: 3.7 mm; Screwdriver: 3.3mm; Can opener: 2.8 mm; Awl: 2.3 mm. There was a great deal of tolerance, which was accepted by the war materials administration.

The soldier's knife weighed approx. 144 grams.

Construction

The Model 1890 Type II soldier's knife was a 2-layer pocket knife. A large cutting blade and screwdriver revolved around the head rivet, and the awl and can opener revolved around the foot rivet. A center rivet held the back springs in place.

Scale material

The knife manufacturers used red vulcanized fiber as the scale material for this soldier's knife.

Circuit boards/liners/rivets

The middle plate and the rivets were made of steel, the intermediate layer of brass.

Trade name: Soldier, soldier knife 1890



This is what the Model 1890 Type II soldier's knife from Coutellerie Suisse looked like:



Typical features: Coutellerie Suisse embossing plus the winged wheel (Coutellerie Suisse trademark) on the cutting blade; no further embossing on the tools.

Cross embossing on the bowl (control stamp), faintly visible here, which is, however, absolutely normal (clearly visible cross stamps can indicate that this was added later or that the bowls were completely replaced).

How many model 1890 soldiers' knives (Type I and Type II) were produced? The numbers can be reproduced very precisely based on the competition tenders:

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1890	Für Rekruten 1891	I	15'000
1891	Grossbestellung für alle Bezugsberechtigten plus Rekruten der Jahre 1892 und 1893	I	150'000
1893	Für Rekruten 1894	I	15'000
1894	Für Rekruten 1895	I	15'000
1895	Für Rekruten 1896	I	15'000
1896	Für Rekruten 1897	I	15'000
1897	Für Rekruten 1898	I	17'000
1898	Für Rekruten 1899 plus Reserve	I	25'000
1899	Für Rekruten 1900 plus Reserve	I	26'000
1900	Für Rekruten 1901 plus Reserve	I	26'000
1901	Für Rekruten 1902 plus Reserve	II	22'500
1902	Für Rekruten 1903 plus Reserve	II	25'000
1903	Für Rekruten 1904 plus Reserve	II	25'000
1904	Für Rekruten 1905	II	16'000
1905	Für Rekruten 1906	II	16'000
1906	Für Rekruten 1907	II	16'000
1907	Für Rekruten 1908	II	20'500
1908	Für Rekruten 1909 plus Reserve	II	24'000
Total			484'000
Typ I			319'000
Typ II			165'000

So a total of 484,000 soldiers' knives were ordered and certainly manufactured, of which 319,000 were of the Model 1890 Type I (black scales) and 165,000 of the Model 1890 Type II (red scales).

For the Model 1890 Type I, the quantities can be determined quite precisely for each individual manufacturer. This is not possible for the Model 1890 Type II. Personally, I estimate that the majority of the 165,000 pieces were manufactured by the companies Elsener Schwyz and Leresche & Co, and around 30,000 - 40,000 pieces by the company Wenger Delémont. However, it is clear that the overall number of Model 1890 Type I was significantly higher than that of the Model 1890 Type II.

Since the soldier's knives Model 1890 Type I and Type II only differ in the scale material, there was and still is a lot of tinkering and "faking" by swapping or changing the scale material. There are hardly any original 1890 models left, which is very unfortunate. Since it was not yet common practice to use repair stamps, changes can hardly be tracked. Typically there were the following modifications to an original soldier's knife:

- Defective red fiber scales were replaced with black scales. This (unfortunately) happens again and again with the 08 model.
- Weapons control stamp will be added later.
- Defective tools are replaced, sometimes not with original parts, but with parts from the 08 model

This also happened with the Model 1890 Type II from Wenger Delémont. Individual variants with black bowls appear here again and again, leading collectors to speculate as to whether the company also produced the Type I model. However, all evidence clearly suggests that this was not the case.



Pictured above is a Model 1890 Type II soldier's knife with special stamps on the scale. The small cross is a repair stamp, the second stamp, which is not very visible, is a weapons control stamp that was used from 1915 to 1950. The tools are all original Wenger Model 1890. This indicates that a repair was carried out (most likely a scale change) after 1915. Since the knife was still fully functional and original, it was stamped again with the weapon control stamp and thus re-approved for service in the Swiss Army. Such repairs were usually carried out in armories.

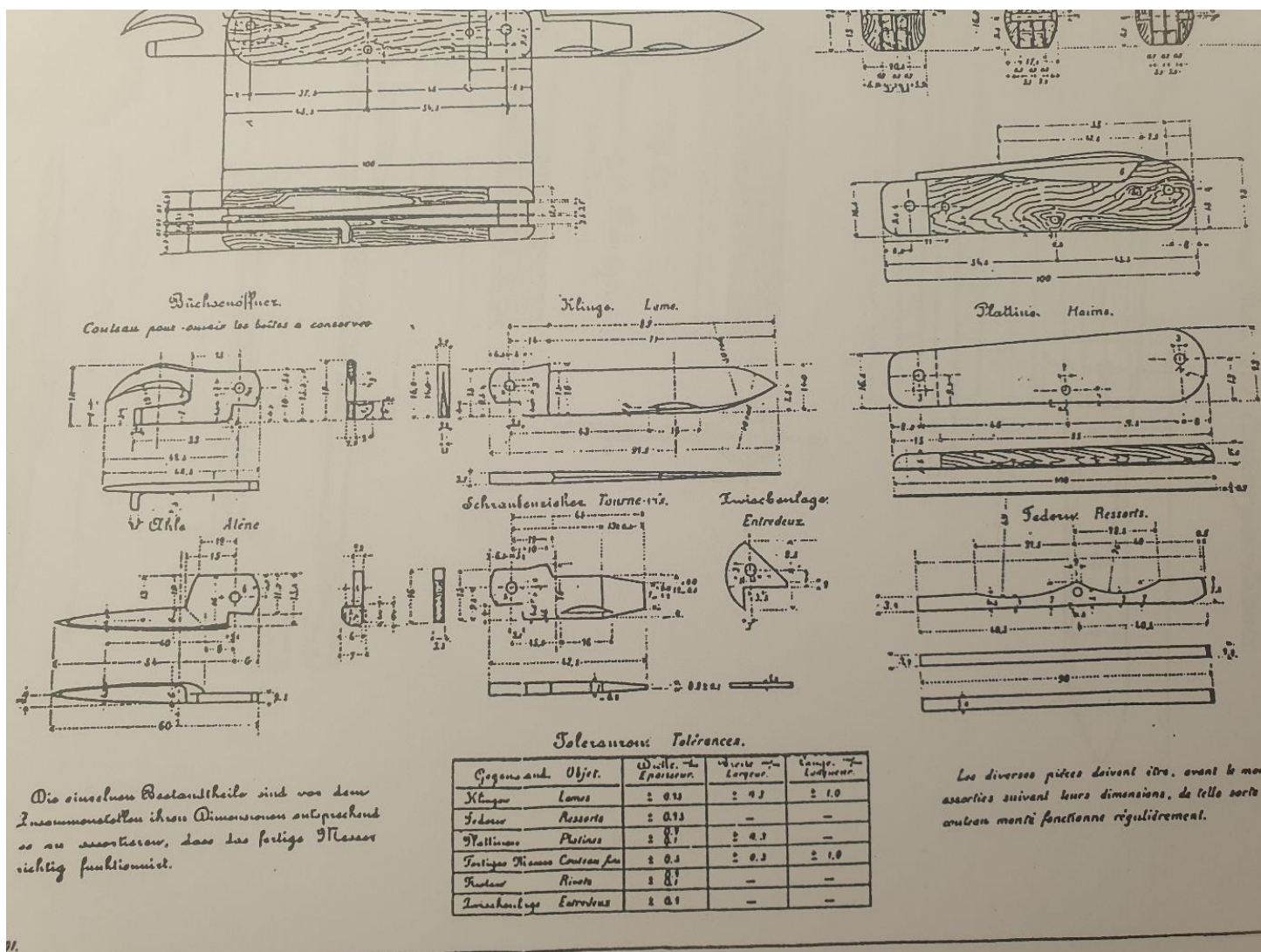
In 2008, the Wenger Delémont company created a replica of the first soldier's knife, Model 1890 Type II. This year it was exactly 100 years since the introduction of the Model 08 in 1908. Here is a short press article about it:

"The knife manufacturer Wenger has just created a replica of one of the greatest legends of the Swiss knife industry in its workshops. Wenger began producing the original soldier's knife on behalf of the Swiss Army in 1901. All later versions of the multifunctional knife were derived from that model, resulting in the famous Swiss knife. The knife edition, limited to 1893 copies - 1893 was the year the Wenger knife factory was founded - corresponds in every detail to the plans from that time. The numbered knife models are complemented by a faithful copy of the technical drawing of the original knife, which has been carefully preserved for 107 years. The plans, which have been kept in the factory since January 1901, are signed by the Federal War Material Administration, Technical Department. At the time, the archive documents were used to produce the very first model of the soldier's knife commissioned by the Swiss Army. With these technical drawings, Wenger is in possession of the birth certificate of the great-grandfather of the famous Swiss knife. Therefore, it was decided in Delsberg to make a replica of that legendary knife model. Exactly 1893 pieces were to be produced, considering that 1893 was the year the Wenger knife factory was founded. The knife created is a model example of craftsmanship and Swiss precision. Each example is assembled and adjusted by hand by a cutler. The only differences from the original are that stainless steel is now used and the mechanism has been adapted to make opening easier. Operating the various tools used to require a lot of effort. The scales of the replica knife are made of high-quality vulcanized fiber, because the metal side surfaces with the embossed shield with a Swiss cross were only developed much later. The knife is equipped with a blade, a screwdriver, an awl and a can opener. The interest in this historic pocket knife is undisputed, as it symbolizes the original model of the multifunctional knife - that Swiss legend - which has been successfully exported all over the world for decades. Each numbered example comes with a certificate of authenticity, packaged in a walnut and leather box reminiscent of the large steamer trunks used by the army at the time. The box can be hung vertically when open. The knife is held in place by a magnet and can therefore be presented along with its packaging. The models are available for sale at the usual Wenger sales points. The 1,893 copies are intended for Wenger customers and collectors. The demand for the limited series of knives has already far exceeded the number of units available. "

<https://www.presseportal.ch/de/pm/100003381/100569733>

The beautifully described boxes for the replica were unfortunately of poor quality, and almost all of these boxes fall apart over time, despite careful storage.

It's worth comparing how closely the replica was based on the original. According to the press release, a 1:1 copy of the original model was made, based on the old plans. Here is an excerpt from the plans: (see 100 Years of the Swiss Soldier's Knife, 1991, p.13ff.).



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Now let's compare the replica with an original model from the period between 1901 and 1908 and compare it with the plans.



Some differences are already noticeable here. The photos show the original on the left and the replica on the right. The blade length is identical. However, the width of the replica is significantly smaller than the original. You can see this very clearly in the photo. Here the replica is closer to the plan than to the original model. The jaws on the replica are noticeably blunter and less round than on the original, very similar to those on the blueprints. In reality, however, all of the original jaws look the same as on this model, both on the 1890 and 08 models. When viewed from above, you can see that the can opener is longer on the replica than on the original. The tool thickness of the replica is also smaller (3.0 mm to approx. 3.3 mm) of the entire screwdriver/can opener layer). The scale material of the replica is thicker than the original. A completely different fiber material was also used, which can be clearly seen in the coloring of the scales.



The awl on the replica is beefier/thicker than the original, but the screwdriver is smaller. There is also an important detail about the awl that is different on the original than on the replica. On the original the awl foot is strongly rounded, while on the replica it is angular. I have looked at various old original models, and in all of them it is the same that there is a rounding effect. On the construction plans the awl base is angular.

When it comes to the can opener, the differences are minimal, apart from the smaller material thickness of the replica. What is unsightly in my opinion is the riveting of the head rivet on the replica. Here you can clearly see the edge of the rivet. There is no sign of this in the original. Such clearly visible rivet edges usually indicate that a tool has been replaced.



Overall, it can be said that the developers of the replica soldier's knife followed the construction plans almost 1:1, exactly as described in the press release. Normally it is assumed that the engineers at the time adhered to these construction plans 1:1. However, various small details - which are the same for all Wenger model 1890 soldiers' knives - indicate that there were some changes. Since certain tolerances were deliberately built in, this did not matter and they were accepted by the Swiss Army. Now the question is: what is more important, to orientate yourself on the originally produced models from the time or on the construction drawings. The decision was made to use the construction drawings. In my opinion, it's a shame, because there must have been reasons why production deviated from the construction plans at the time. I think it's a shame that the material of the screwdriver, can opener and the corresponding back spring are significantly smaller. Nevertheless, I think the replica turned out very well.

What is also interesting is to see whether the originals from Wenger Delémont and Elsener Schwyz also differ. Here is the compilation, on the left the Wenger model, on the right the one from Elsener.



Similar to the comparison of replica Wenger - original Wenger, there are also some differences in the comparison of original Wenger - original Elsener. The cutting blades are roughly identical, both clearly different in width from the replica and also from the construction plans. When viewed from above you can see that the can opener is longer on the Elsener model than on the Wenger, similar to the replica. The can opener on the Elsener is also shorter and less coarse. The scale thickness is identical on both originals, as is the riveting. The jaws of both are strongly rounded, as already described above.



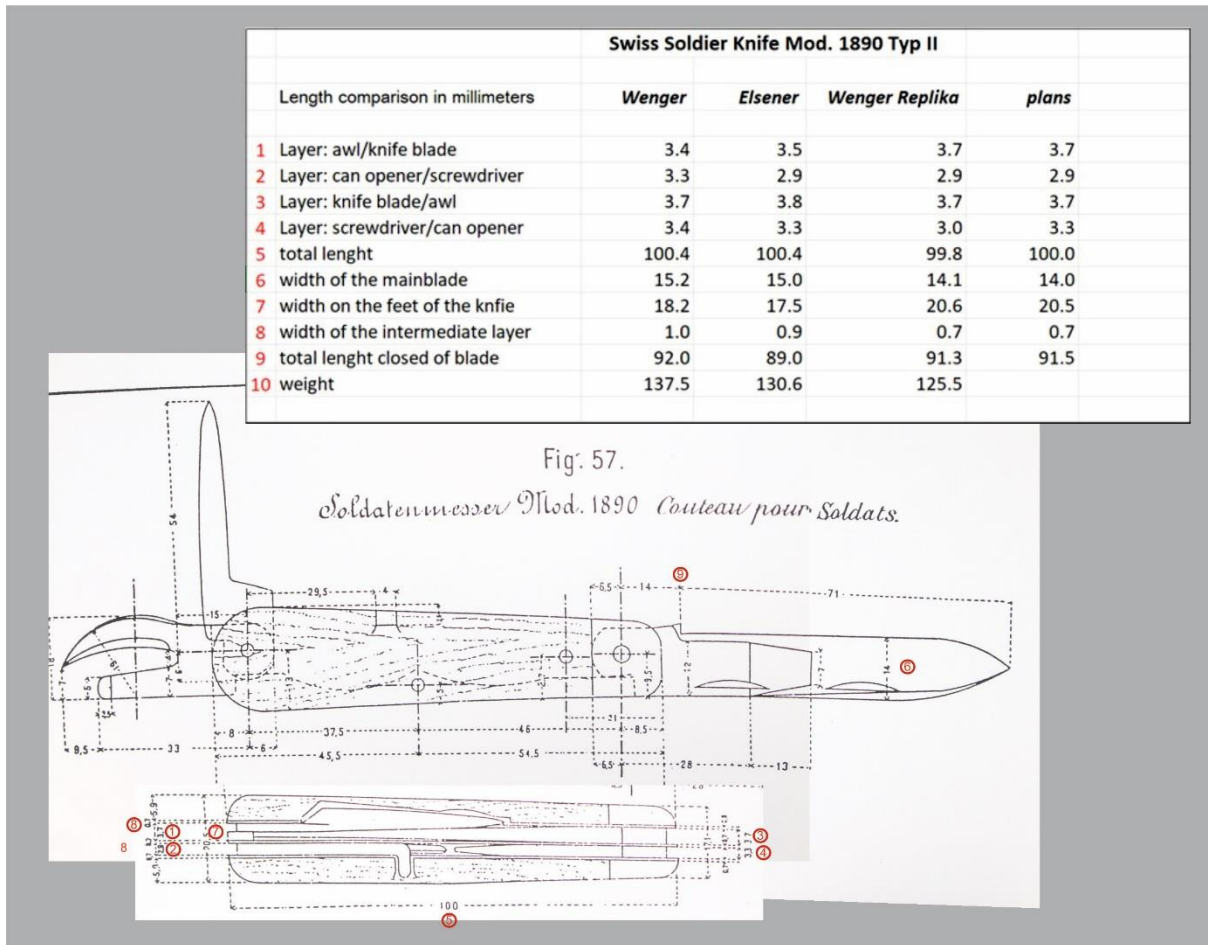
When it comes to the can opener, there are hardly any differences between the two originals, except that the right arm is longer on the Elsener model. It is not easy to say whether this has an impact on functionality. With the awl you can see clear differences again. The Wenger awl is narrower and less thick, and the awl foot is also strongly rounded, in contrast to the Elsener awl foot, which is angular.

This comparison shows that the Elsener company as a whole oriented itself more towards the construction plans and implemented them for their original Model 1890 Type II soldier knives than the Wenger company. Now you could say that these are individual cases that are being compared. In fact, there were some tolerances in the production as a lot of work was still done by hand back then. However, the following picture illustrates that certain differences were clearly manufacturer-related and consistent:



The awls on the original 1890 Type II models from Wenger (left) are all significantly narrower and more delicate than those from Elsener (right). The Wenger screwdrivers are longer than those from Elsener, and there is also a significant lengthening of the right arm of the can opener on Wenger compared to Elsener. All Wenger awls also have this rounded awl base, while Elsener's awl is completely angular.

It gets exciting when you compare certain dimensions of the original models to the replica and the construction plans:



What was described above and already suspected can now be seen clearly here. The original Wenger model deviates the most from the construction plans. The replica is virtually identical to the blueprints, and Elsener's original model lies somewhere in between. Various sources give the figure of 144 grams as the weight for the original Model 1890. The replica doesn't come close to reaching this number. The closest thing to this is Wenger's original model. This is not surprising, as Wenger used more solid material for almost all metal components than was the case with the replica and was also intended in the plans. The fact that the replica is much closer to the construction plans than the original models is surprising. I expected this to be the other way around.

These small details can help you make the determination, especially if you want to find out if there was a blade replacement and if a different, non-original blade or tool was used.

Unfortunately, there are not that many auctions of 1890 Type II models that are suitable for deepening knowledge and using concrete examples to show whether they are presumably original or not. Here are a few links to current or past auctions and my assessment:

https://www.ricardo.ch/de/a/antikes-militaermesser-1901-coutellerie-suisse-sackmesser-1238584652/#image_gallery_fullscreen

In this example, you immediately notice the head rivet, which indicates that a change was made here. In this example I assume that the tools and back springs were once nickel-plated or chrome-plated. To do this, it was necessary to completely disassemble the pocket knife and then reassemble it. New scales were probably also installed. The control stamp is also missing or not visible. From my point of view, everything else looks original, the Wenger typical rounded, graceful awl, the solid screwdriver, etc. In my opinion, a very fair price that was quoted here. Is it original? In my opinion not (anymore), but certainly still 90%.

<https://www.ricardo.ch/de/a/sackmesser-coutellerie-suisse-um-1900-1135729832/>

In my opinion, this copy is 100% original. Nothing indicates any modification or repair. It is normal for this age that the control stamp is no longer visible. Also that the fiber scales have these colors. Of course it would look nicer with new bowls. But I would leave it exactly as it is.

Note on both copies shown above. Please NEVER open the tools the way they were done here for the photos! There is a high chance that a back spring will break when all 4 tools are opened at the same time. A broken back spring will roughly halve the value.

<https://www.ricardo.ch/de/a/selten-messer-1890-schwarz-wenger-1107450496/>

In my opinion this copy is 0% original. Everything is wrong here. This is clearly a model 08 soldier's knife with black scales. Recognizing this is easier for experts but difficult for laypeople. It is advertised as a rare, original 1890 model from Wenger. The fact that almost CHF 500 was paid for it is nice for the seller, but in my opinion it is absolutely far too much. In my opinion the value is approx. CHF 10.- How can you tell that it is not an original? A few notes: Blade shape of the cutting blade typical of model 08; There was no Wenger Delémont stamp back then, it was Coutellerie Suisse; Screwdriver has the shape of model 08; etc. The black scales are intended to indicate that it is a Model 1890 Type I, which Wenger never manufactured anyway. I don't know who bought the knife. But I'm sure that person will be very disappointed when they find out what they bought. If the seller can be proven to have intentionally misled people knowing what he was dealing with, it's a scam. Proving this is almost impossible. Therefore, as an unsuspecting seller, I would definitely refund the amount if the buyer came forward and requested a return. How can you prevent such sales? This is almost impossible, unfortunately. This copy would have to be taken out of circulation, either dismantled into individual parts, or disposed of. Everything else is just harmful because it is exactly these specimens that keep turning up somewhere. The buyer - when he realizes what he has here - will try to get his money back. If he doesn't succeed, what does he do? He wants to try to minimize the damage. Accordingly, there is a great risk that he will offer it for sale again and probably in the same or similar way as the seller did before. Because if it had been clearly described here what it was, hardly anyone would bid.

Basically, I consider collecting soldier knives to be a very exciting collecting area. However, it requires certain knowledge so that there are no major disappointments. If in doubt, it is better to ask the experts again. There are some here who share their knowledge for free and would certainly be happy to make an assessment, ideally before a possible purchase of course.

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Above are the stamps of the Model 1890 Type II soldier's knife from Coutellerie Suisse. Below is the back of a Model 1890 Type II from Coutellerie Suisse.



Literature Swiss Army Knife

When you start collecting Swiss Army knives as a collector, “mishaps” often happen at the beginning. You buy something for a lot of money in the belief that you are buying something special, only to later realize that what you bought is not original or not worth what you paid. There are many reasons for this. These include:

- Profit-making and profit-making behavior of some retailers and private providers. Sometimes an attempt is made to specifically make a product scarce by buying up large batches of limited-edition pocket knives in order to then sell them a short time later at inflated prices. Sometimes known facts are deliberately concealed in order to achieve a high price, especially with vintage pocket knives.
- Online retailers in particular often try to order certain special models or special configurations directly from the manufacturers in order to then offer them online at high prices.
- The distinction between “original” and “custom made” products is becoming increasingly difficult.
- There are countless counterfeits and cheap copies on the market of supposedly very expensive and exceptional models.
- In order to distinguish an original from a copy, a fake or an imitation, you need years of experience in handling Swiss Army knives.

And from my point of view, an important point is that there is a lack of good, available literature to get an overview and acquire knowledge. If you compare Swiss pocket knives with Swiss watches - both world-famous products that Switzerland is a leader in manufacturing - there are big differences. Large, renowned watch brands such as Omega, Rolex, Patek Philippe and many others have half libraries of documents about the companies. Sometimes there are entire books on just one model. Watches are comparable in development to pocket knives. There are always improvements and changes, although the basic model always remains the same. The difference with watches is that every little change is often documented in great detail. The serial number makes it incredibly easy to find out exactly what kind of watch you have, from what date and with what specifications. Almost all major watch brands allow you to send in a watch for an extract from the archive. In some cases this is free, such as with the “Longines” brand, while with other brands it costs half a fortune, such as “Rolex”. Another difference is that watch brands are very interested in literature about their products coming onto the market. They sometimes hire an entire team themselves to write literature and feed the collectors with information. This is different for the large Swiss knifemakers, Victorinox and formerly Wenger. In both cases there was only a unique situation in which a work was published and published by the manufacturers themselves. These two works are briefly presented and evaluated below, alongside other literature on Swiss Army knives. Almost all literature is out of print and is only available second-hand, if available at all.

There are certainly many reasons why there is no more or “better” literature. If you look at other large international knife manufacturers, it is usually no different than the Swiss manufacturers. I think it has, among other things, to do with the fact that knives are often still everyday items that can be purchased for relatively little money. This has been different for watches for a long time, and the collector community has existed in some cases for a very long time.

If you look at Victorinox, the hype surrounding Alox pocket knives has only been around for about 10-15 years. Alox models were originally developed for the rural population as robust and inexpensive knives with tools for everyday use. Aluminum was used as the scale material because it is easy to clean and yet robust and stable. Victorinox has now recognized that there are many collectors, and for a good 10 years Victorinox has been managing the collector market very specifically and very consciously. At the same time, Victorinox started building an archive and creating its own collection, something that didn't exist before. Every knife and every product was tried to be sold profitably and passed on. That's why people here are still at the very beginning of coming to terms with their own history and identity and are specifically interested in products from the past.

When it comes to official articles and literary contributions from Victorinox, the impression is that they don't want to publish anything that isn't absolutely watertight. I can understand this and the reasons for it. At the same time, scientific research is always an attempt to form hypotheses only to later reject them because new information has been added.

What I find more difficult is that things are only published very sporadically, and then nothing comes out for a long time, and everyone refers to this “reference” that was once produced, even though the level of knowledge is now different and a lot of the content from back then is outdated. The book “The Knife and its History” serves as an example.

The literature presented below is compared to how it serves serious collectors to gain new information. In my opinion, anything that helps you check an existing knife for originality and allows you to classify it over time, as well as information about the model, its history and possible variants, is helpful for collectors. Serve for:

- Overview of the manufacturer brands used
- Overview of developments over time, which models/tools were produced and when
- Overview of the different models and variants throughout the company's history

I personally know whether literature is still good from my point of view two years later than when I bought it by asking myself how often I have looked at a specific work during this time in order to obtain specific information.

The knife and its history. Victorinox. 1984

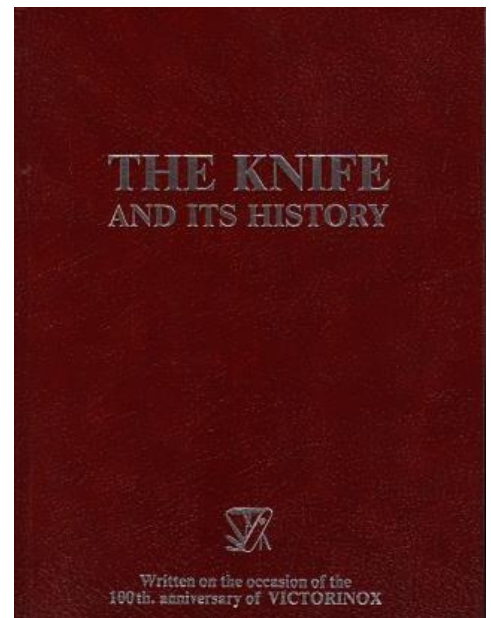
This work was published in 1984 to mark the 100th anniversary of the Victorinox company and was written in German, English and French. The book has 192 pages and is divided into 3 parts.

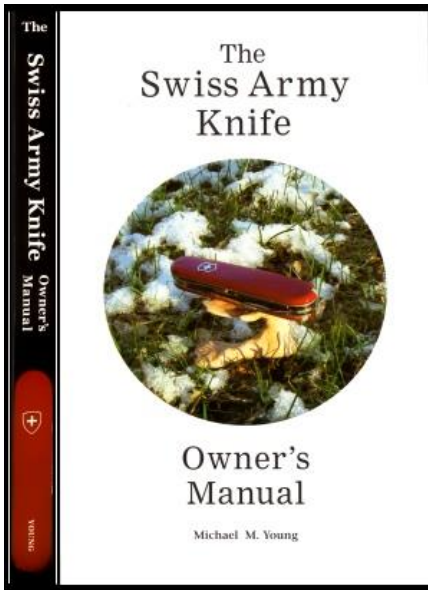
- 1st part: knife production from the beginning to 1900 (pages 1 – 120)
- Part 2: 100 years of Victorinox (pages 121 – 161)
- Part 3: Victorinox today (1984) (pages 162 – 192)

In my opinion, the first part is interesting, but very general. This is about the history of knife making. This is of little importance to collectors of Swiss Army knives. In my opinion, the second part is the most interesting of the whole book. The most interesting are 2 illustrations, one “The development of the factory marks” and the other an illustration on the development of the Swiss soldier's knife and the officer's knife. These images helped me a lot when I first started collecting. For example, it was there that I first became aware that the “Elinox” brand belongs to the Victorinox company. However, I now know that both illustrations are incomplete and not comprehensive. Illustrations from old catalogs are also interesting. The rest of the second part describes the history of the company, who married whom and when, when the extensions were built, when what changes occurred, etc. The third part contains photos from around 1984.

What is missing here, as in almost all works, is concrete and correctly stated literature references as to where each piece of information comes from.

Conclusion : the work is now almost 40 years old. This should not be forgotten. Some content is now outdated and the most important information is available online. It is an interesting work, but for collectors it is not necessary to own it in order to get their bearings. In my opinion it is not suitable for that.





The Swiss Army Knife – Owner's Manual. Michael M Young. 2011

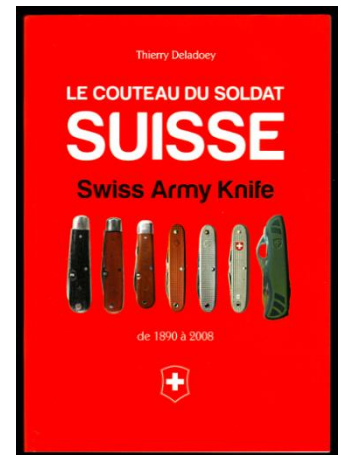
This book in English summarizes the most important facts about the two companies Victorinox and Wenger on over 200 pages in a compact format. In my opinion, the content is very successful and the book presents many facts and interesting facts about Swiss army knives. The author also gives tips about pocket knives, the use of the individual tools and instructions for repairs. The book's small format makes it a little more difficult to read, especially since there aren't too many illustrations. Overall, it is certainly a very good book for knife enthusiasts and lovers, but also for knife collectors who are just starting out and would like to get a rough overview.

Conclusion : good, relatively current work that deals with many areas of the Victorinox and Wenger companies. Recommended.

Thierry Deladoey. 2012

This issue from 2012 in French attempts to depict the development of the Swiss soldier's knife on 55 pages. It is very clear, simple and understandable, but also has a few errors in both spelling and facts. This information is also available on the homepage <https://www.couteaux-du-soldat-suisse.ch>.

Conclusion : you can have it, but you don't have to. Rather not recommended as the level of knowledge is not the most up-to-date.



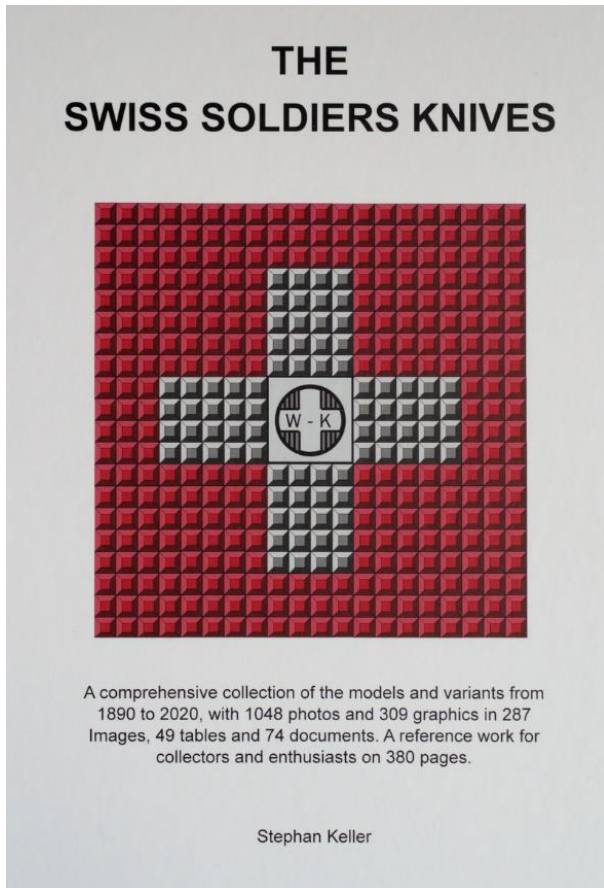
Le Couteau du Soldat Suisse – Swiss Army Knife.



A Collector's Guide to Vintage Wenger Knives. Dave Arnold. 2021

This work about the Wenger pocket knives by Dave Arnold attempts to depict and classify the company's various older models on over 350 pages. It has a lot of illustrations, which make orientation much easier. Dave Arnold, himself a passionate knife collector, managed to collect knife specimens from many important and large knife collectors for this work, photograph them and publish them in the book. This book is the standard reference for vintage Wenger pocket knives and a must for collectors. It helps a lot with orientation. It's certainly not flawless. As with all such works, it would be desirable if a new, improved version were released every few years. Because you always learn something new or gain new insights.

Conclusion : Required reading for serious collectors of vintage Wenger pocket knives.



The Swiss soldier knife. Stefan Keller. 2020

Here Stefan Keller tries to give a relatively current overview of the Swiss soldier's knives. He uses his very comprehensive collection as a basis, but also common literature, for example the work "Le Couteau du Soldier Suisse" or the work on the 100th anniversary of soldiers' knives, which various collectors put together at the time. This is where I see the biggest problem with this comprehensive work, namely that the basic literature to which Stefan Keller refers is often already incorrect, and the same misinformation is now being repeated. Nevertheless, it is a very nice and helpful book, large format, with over 300 pages and many photos. The quality of the photos is rather poor. In addition, some graphics and compilations are preserved in the book (for example by me) without ever asking the authors for permission or correctly referring to the authors. I think the basic idea is great: there are several editions and editions, and each new edition tries to reflect the current state of knowledge. The book is/was not exactly cheap, so it is unlikely that collectors will purchase more than 1 copy of it. I sometimes got the impression that every little hint was used to point out a special model or variant. The fact is for me: the minimum order quantities were large (at least 3000 pieces). If a special configuration (e.g. rare, "new" manufacturer) appears, this doesn't mean anything, nor does the existence of two or three copies of this configuration. From my point of view, if there are 10 known copies of a variant, you can assume that it was actually

officially ordered and manufactured.

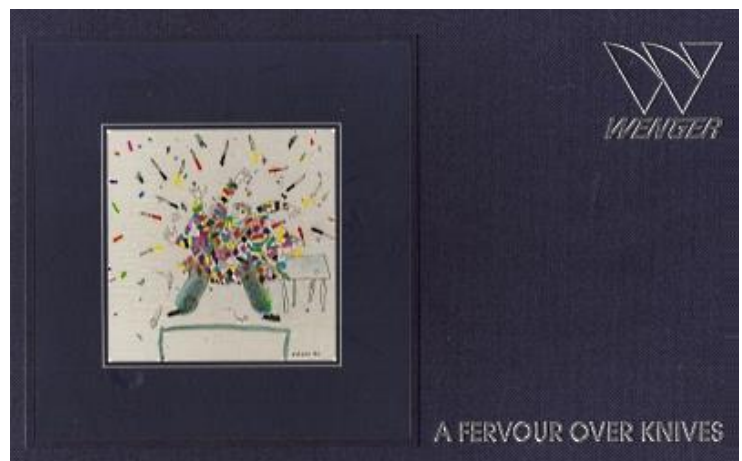
Conclusion : Interesting and instructive for serious collectors of soldier's knives, but should be enjoyed with the necessary caution.

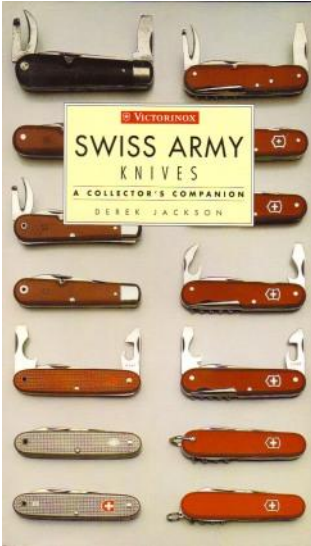
Wenger – La Passion du Couteau. 1993.

1993 - for the company's 100th anniversary, Wenger publishes his own book, comparable to Victorinox's book for their 100th anniversary. In contrast to Victorinox, this book describes almost exclusively your own history and identity. It is very readable and exciting. It is very general and takes you through 100 years of company history, shows certain developments, describes anecdotes, special features, etc. For collectors who want specific information about individual models and their development history, they will probably be disappointed.

The book was published in French, German and English.

Conclusion : worth reading and exciting for general knife enthusiasts. Not a must-read for serious collectors as there is little that is new or helpful.





Swiss Army Knives. A Collector's Companion. Derek Jackson. 1999

This book summarizes the important historical background of the Victorinox company in particular on around 190 pages. In many areas it is very similar to the book celebrating Victorinox's 100th anniversary. It's good quality, very good photos, but very general. Many graphics can also be found in other literary works.

Conclusion : good, inexpensive entry-level book. Too general and not concrete and specific enough for serious collectors. At the end, as in the book for the 100th anniversary, you are left with two graphics in particular: the development of officers' and soldiers' knives, as well as the table of factory marks. Both of these are graphics that have now been outdated several times and are no longer current.

In addition to physically available literature, there are also various online sources that deal with the topic of Swiss Army Knives. The most important one here is certainly the homepage SakWiki.com

SAKWIKI

The homepage www.sakwiki.com is an online collection of Victorinox and Wenger pocket knife models with a lot of information. The site was created by a collaboration of many pocket knife enthusiasts who have set themselves the goal of developing and maintaining the most comprehensive online encyclopedia on Swiss pocket knives. You can find practically all models and variants of Swiss pocket knives from these two companies from around 1980 onwards. The search is simple and intuitive. You select the appropriate company, choose the length of the pocket knife when closed, and then the number of knife layers in order to get to the individual models. Each model has its own page with various cross-references and helpful information. Basically, SakWiki is based on the "names" of the pocket knives, and not on the "numbers".

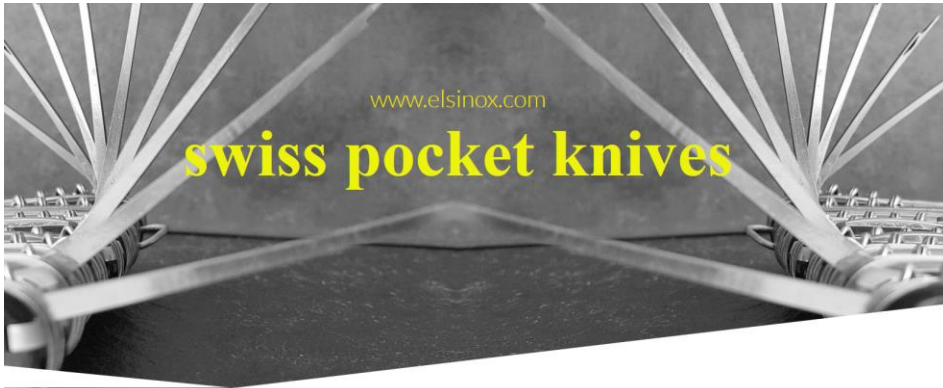
Conclusion : In my opinion, SakWiki is a great online platform for getting information. I highly recommend the site for more modern pocket knives, from around 1980 onwards. I don't think the site is particularly suitable for older pocket knives, as information is often missing or incorrect/incorrect.

There are several other online sites that reference SakWiki. Some of these sites are either very old and not updated, or no longer work at all.

Elsinox.com

I currently run the homepage www.elsinox.com, which mainly deals with vintage Swiss pocket knives, not just from the manufacturers Victorinox and Wenger. It is based on the previous model numbers and the individual manufacturers. In my opinion it is quite comprehensive when it comes to older models. The information about the individual Victorinox models is short and concise, with many photos of the individual variants. From my point of view, it would be difficult or hardly possible to include the newer models in this list, as today's orientation towards trade names is completely different than the orientation towards production numbers back then.

There is a lot of information about the individual manufacturers from official registers and databases as well as some existing old catalogs.



via the homepage www.elsinox.com, as well as the basic work “Encyclopedia of Victorinox pocket knives – from the beginning to the 1970s”. Most of the products can be purchased digitally via Amazon as a Kindle version <https://www.amazon.de/s?k=elsi+nox>. The encyclopedia is an attempt to summarize, describe and document all known pocket knife models from Victorinox from 1884 to the mid-1970s. The printed version in hardcover contains over 1600 pages, is only available in German and limited to 100 copies. The printing costs were immensely high, which is why the selling price is correspondingly high. There are no plans or considerations to release further, improved or renewed versions, even if it would make sense. The information content is currently quite up-to-date and based on current knowledge.

There is other literature that deals with Swiss Army knives. This is not listed here because in my opinion it is not suitable for collectors.

Trade name or model number.

For me, the SakWiki site raises a fundamental question as to what should be used as a guide: trade names or production/model numbers.

Between 1884 and around 1975, Victorinox and Wenger did not have “trade names” for most models, just a number. For example, the “Spartan” model from Victorinox was model number No. 205, later No. 234, and today it is No. 1.3600. Then there is also the question of what distinguishes one model from another, when is it an independent model and when is it just a variant of a basic model. For me the definition is clear. A model is a specific basic configuration of tools that are tensioned by springs. Omitting or adding options such as key ring, light, ballpoint pen or toothpick/tweezers as well as different scale materials do not create a separate model, but are simply variants of the basic model. For example, in the area of 58 mm Victorinox pocket knives, the basic configuration is:

- **Cutting blade, scissors, nail file** : 1 model

In my opinion, the names “Tomo”, “Bijou”, “Classic SD”, “Companion”, “Diplomat”, “Broker”, “SwissLite” etc. are just variants of the basic model, but not independent models. All of these variants are listed as separate models on SakWiki. Historically, until the 1970s, it was never the case that these were separate models, but there was always a basic model and then various options, with or without toothpicks/tweezers, with or without a bracket/key ring Scales made of cellidor, horn, tortoiseshell or mother-of-pearl, etc. In addition, many “names” are not or were not official names of Victorinox, but were called so by dealers or importers, and some names were used for different models, and certain models also given different names. Today, in my opinion, the chaos is perfect, which makes allocation and orientation difficult. Victorinox is trying to use names quite consistently this year, although they change often. For example, Victorinox called the first

models of the 58 mm series with USB storage devices “SwissMemory”, later they changed to “Victorinox Flash”, and the current name is “Victorinox@Work”. But the model is always the same.

Personally, I still find it easiest and clearest to choose either a number for the basic model - e.g. number 623 for the 58 mm model with cutting blade, scissors and nail file - or a name for the basic model - e.g. "Classic" for the model described above - with then different options/variants. So the Classic is available in red, blue or green, with or without toothpicks/tweezers, with light or without light, etc. But it is and remains a “Classic”, or a model no. 623. That this is wishful thinking is true clear to me. It will most likely not change the name and number chaos. For me, this situation is partly responsible for the fact that collectors find it difficult to orientate themselves and connect emotionally with the products. The Puma company from Solingen, for example, shows that numbers work very well. There is and remains a knife number 959, this number. Designations - names - were often added there, but in contrast to Victorinox, the same names and numbers were used very consistently for the same knives. When it comes to watch manufacturers, it is completely clear. An Omega Speedmaster remains an Omega Speedmaster, even if the watch has continuously developed since the first production.

In my opinion, SakWiki also suffers from this. It's difficult to keep track. Many “names” were also used that were never official Victorinox names. I find all the names for the Alox 93 mm knives to be completely absurd. These knives were originally made for the rural population and sometimes had a sack awl as a tool to sew potato sacks together when they got holes in them. A useful tool that Victorinox has been installing on its pocket knives for over 100 years. Between 2009 and 2013 it was possible to order small series of pocket knives from Victorinox according to customer requirements. This also includes special configurations that were never officially released on the market by Victorinox. Various models of the 93 mm series were ordered with this awl, and the scales were given different imaginary names, which were intended to create a reference to seafaring. These were names such as “First Mate”, “Sailor” or “Seaman”. These names have now become widespread among collectors, and today many people use these names. From my personal point of view, I find this very special. The sack awl suddenly became a marl spike, thus creating a non-existent connection to seafaring. Anyone who has tried it will immediately notice that this awl is absolutely not suitable for splicing rope or untying knots in rope. And you should also ask yourself why this tool has an eyelet. Today many people no longer know where these names come from and think they are official names from Victorinox. For me personally, such incorrectly used names and designations do not respect the history of the company or ignore it.

Official Products, Special Orders, Custom Made Products

It would actually make sense to make a clear distinction between “official products” from Victorinox on the one hand, which were manufactured in these configurations and offered via the official sales channels (homepage, Victorinox shops), and so-called “special orders”. “Special runs” at Victorinox by companies or private individuals that were never offered through the official sales channels, and finally “Custom Made” products, those that use Victorinox components but are modified or changed in some way by another company or person became. All of the promotional knives fall out of the “official products” category.

This would require a homepage or a reference work for the “Official Products” and one for the “Special Runs”. The Alox models already have something like this with the homepage <https://swissknives.info>. However, most promotional knives are not listed there.

Basically, it can be said with certainty that the entire special runs have also led to more people becoming interested in pocket knives and a large collector community has been able to form, especially for the Alox models. This ultimately helps everyone, the Victorinox company, but also all customers of the “Official Products”. I think that these Alox Special Runs have also led to the series of 93 mm Alox pocket knives still being available at Victorinox, and Victorinox now producing different colored Alox pocket knives themselves and selling them through their official channels. But Victorinox also seems to have recognized that it makes little sense for them to leave the profitable business with special editions and special runs to a few players. Because it's no secret that many of the special runs were ordered from Victorinox relatively cheaply in order to resell them at a sometimes horrendous margin.

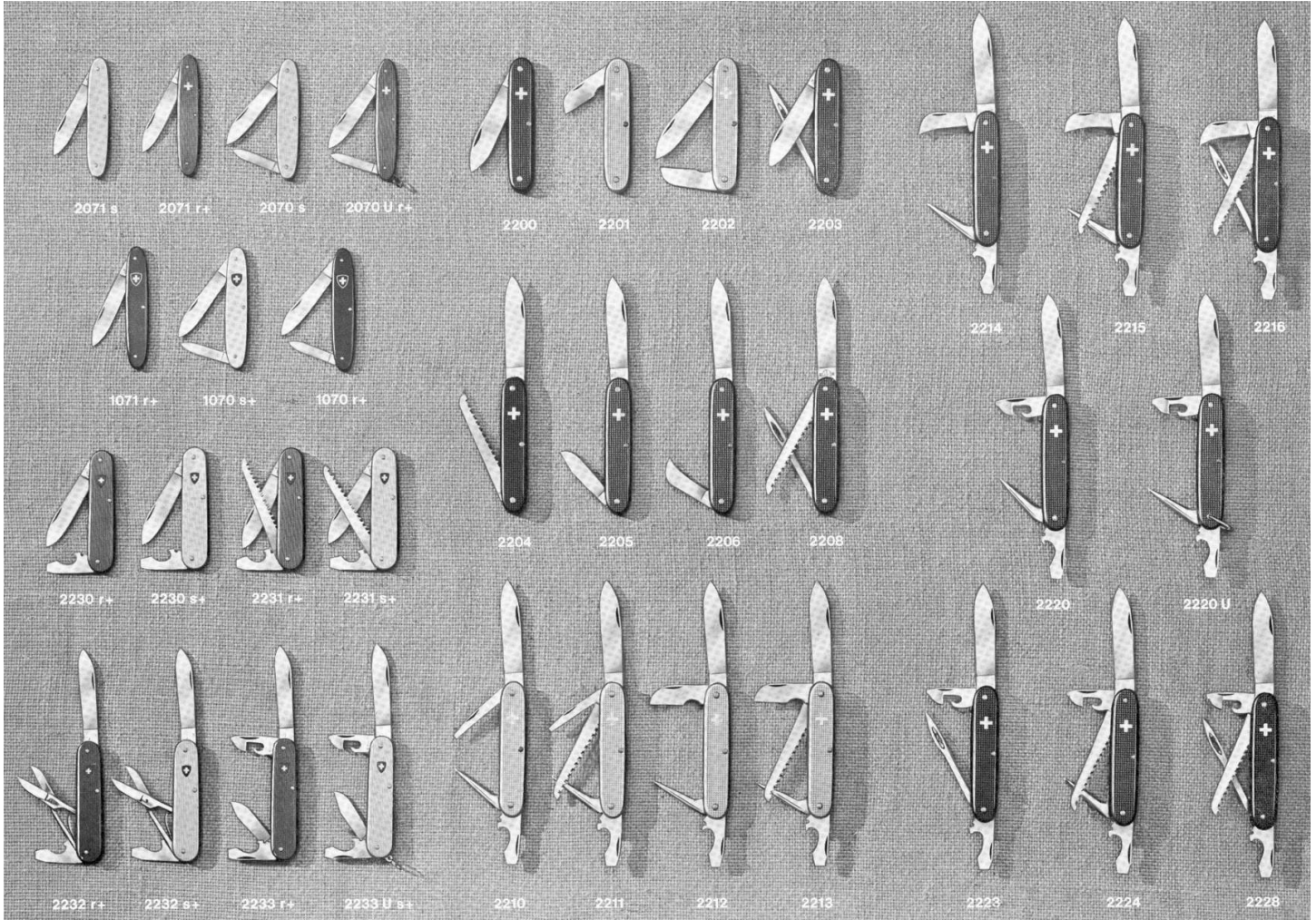
You still have to be careful here. A certain normal margin is good, but it shouldn't be exaggerated, especially if you haven't done anything to develop a product yourself. For example, on Martin Desax's website, <https://knives-n-tools.ch/>, the

Elsi Post

~ 23 ~

standard models from Victorinox with scales from Edisona SA are offered for CHF 99. The official retail price for these models is or was CHF 49.- <http://www.edisona.ch/all/style1.php?id=71&h=790&l=1620> So they charge more than twice as much as all other official sales outlets this pocket knife. Basically, you would expect that things can be offered online not only at the same price, but also cheaper than in stores, as many fixed costs for store rent and staff are eliminated. But this is not the case.

Every year there is also the situation countless times that when official special editions from Victorinox come onto the market, they are sometimes offered online at significantly higher prices before the public release, and sometimes in large quantities, even though Victorinox has instructed them to do so. Only a maximum of 1 piece can be sold per customer.



Compilation of the official Alox pocket knives from Victorinox in sizes 84 mm and 93 mm

Survey results from Elsi-Post No. 2

Number of Swiss Army Knives

How many Swiss Pocket Knives do you own? / Wie viele Schweizer Taschenmesser besitzt du?

7%	1-5
7%	6-20
0%	21-50
14%	51-100
7%	101-250
14%	251-500
23%	501-1000
21%	more/über 1000
7%	more/über 5000



Neue Abstimmung / New Vote

most important tool / wichtigstes Werkzeug

Aside from the knife blade, what do you consider to be the most important tool in a Swiss Army knife? / Was ist neben der Messerklinge für dich das wichtigste Werkzeug eines Schweizer Taschenmessers?

- scissors/Schere
- saw/Säge
- awl/Ahle
- can opener/Büchsenöffner
- screwdriver/Schraubendreher
- cork screw/Korkenzieher
- philipps/Kreuzschraubendreher
- lens/Lupe
- tweezers/Pinzette
- other



Victorinox No. 620



Kit of a Model 620 from the beginning of the production years

Story

The model with the number 620, later known under the name "Princess", was the first 58 mm model that Victorinox produced. It was developed and put into production in the late 1930s. From the outset, all functional parts were made of rust-resistant steel.

This model remained the only one in the 58 mm size for almost 20 years until the model with scissors, model no. 623, was added.

The first knives of this type had curved springs that tapered off at the rivet point, which matched the shape of the plates and formed a seal with them. These springs disappeared in the 1940s and were replaced by new ones. The old springs had a black coating to protect against corrosion.

For a long time, the rivets were made of nickel silver. Brass was rarely used as a rivet material. The plates were made of nickel silver.

Due to its simple structure and small size, this model was ideal as a promotional knife and was widely used in this area. The bowls were mainly made of Cellidor in the colors black, red and white, although the models in white and black disappeared again in the 1950s. There were also models with metal scales, aluminum scales or celluloid.

In the Cellidor models, the company logo on the promotional knives was made of nickel silver and inserted into the bowls. The lettering was engraved on the metal bowls, which were initially made exclusively smooth and without guilloche. There were also rare cases of engravings on models with Cellidor scales, whereby the depressions created by the engraving were colored or filled with a colored mass.

The model consists of two scale parts and normally two circuit boards. Each rivet fixes a functional part or a spring. Model No. 620 consisted of a minimum of 10 production parts: 4 rivets, 2 scales, 2 springs and 2 functional parts (knife, nail file). This meant that costs could be kept to a minimum.

The rivets were visible on the Cellidor bowls until around 1957. The two scale parts were then pressed onto the boards over the rivets and thus connected/fastened.

Earlier variants did not have a key ring. When the key ring arrived, it was attached to the base of the pocket knife, but a short time later it was attached to the head rivet.

The knife is still in production, albeit in small quantities and only in the version with red Cellidor scales. The name of this model - 1-layer 58 mm pocket knife with 2 tools, cutting blade and nail file - changed again and again. This model is currently offered under the name "Escort", previously it was known as the "Vintage" model. The version with aluminum scales was called "Pocket Pal".

Variants and names

- **No. 620** : earliest variant. No toothpick/tweezers, key ring optional
- **Princess** : Keyring, Cellidor bowls, no toothpicks/tweezers
- **Pocket Pal** : aluminum trays; Key ring optional
- **Vintage** : Cellidor bowls; toothpicks and tweezers; Keyring
- **Escort** : Cellidor bowls; toothpicks and tweezers; Keyring
- **Scribe/Vintage II** : Cellidor bowls; ballpoint pen refill and tweezers; Keyring



Various early variants of model no. 620 with black Cellidor scales and visible rivets

Versions/Details

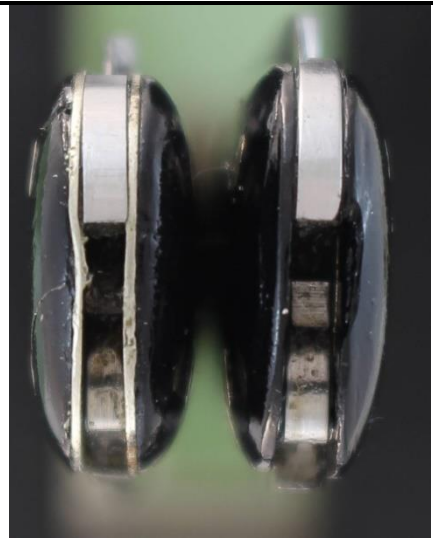


left: with circuit boards; right: without circuit boards

circuit boards

Not noticeable from the outside at first glance, these two pocket knives differ in that sinkers were used in one case and not in the other. Both knives come from the same production period.

Possibly the aim was to save material and thereby produce the pocket knives even more cost-effectively and to be able to offer them to companies more cheaply as promotional knives.



left: with circuit boards; right: without circuit boards

feathers

The 1st generation springs had a black coating on the side surfaces. This disappeared completely with the new feathers.

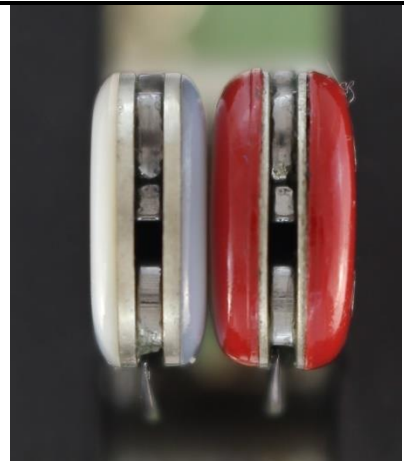
The springs of the later version differ greatly in shape from the springs of the first generation. However, the functionality is identical. Visually, the difference can be seen in particular in the fact that the base of the new spring no longer forms a connection with the plates and the handle scale, as was the case with the early springs. This saves material.

Mother of pearl scales

In model No. 620 P, in which scales made of real mother-of-pearl were used, the plates made of nickel silver are significantly thicker than models with other scale material. The scales made of mother-of-pearl, on the other hand, were significantly thinner compared to Cellidor scales, for example. It can be assumed that this was about saving on the very expensive raw material mother of pearl.



Termination spring/plates for the 1st generation



left: model 620 P; right: Model 620 Cr



View of the 1st generation springs

Functionality and structure of model no. 620

First generation



First generation



First generation



Closed state

The two springs have little tension. The tool tips do not touch the springs because they touch the spring at the impact point on the blade base.

Maximum spring tension

The spring tension is greatest when tools are opened at 90° degrees. The springs bend back. The rounding on the tool base enables a smooth opening movement. The two springs touch each other in the middle. However, they work independently of each other, meaning that the opening of one tool has little or no influence on the other tool and the other spring.

Open state

Both tools are fully open. The impact surface rests on the end of the spring. The springs are under low tension. If the tension is too low, there is a risk that they will close unintentionally when using the tools. If the tension is too high, the tools can only be closed with great effort.



Model around 1980



Model around 1980



Model around 1980

Tool strength

Both the knife blade and the nail file have a material thickness of 1.25 mm. The springs have the same material thickness.

ricasso

The ricasso of the blade increased over the course of development. In addition, there was no longer a typical rash peak.



ricasso model 1st generation



ricasso model around 1980

Versions nail file

Version I



Impact tip available.
Parallel course, small
nail groove. Defined
tip.

90° degree grooves

Version II



Continuous widening;
no impact tip. Defined
tip. Small nail groove.

90° degree grooves

Version III



Parallel course. Large
nail groove. Defined
tip

90° degree grooves
and diagonal grooves

Version IV



Continuous widening.
No division. Entire tip
rounded. Large nail
groove

90° degree grooves
and diagonal grooves

Version V



Parallel course. No
division. Entire tip
rounded. Large nail
groove.

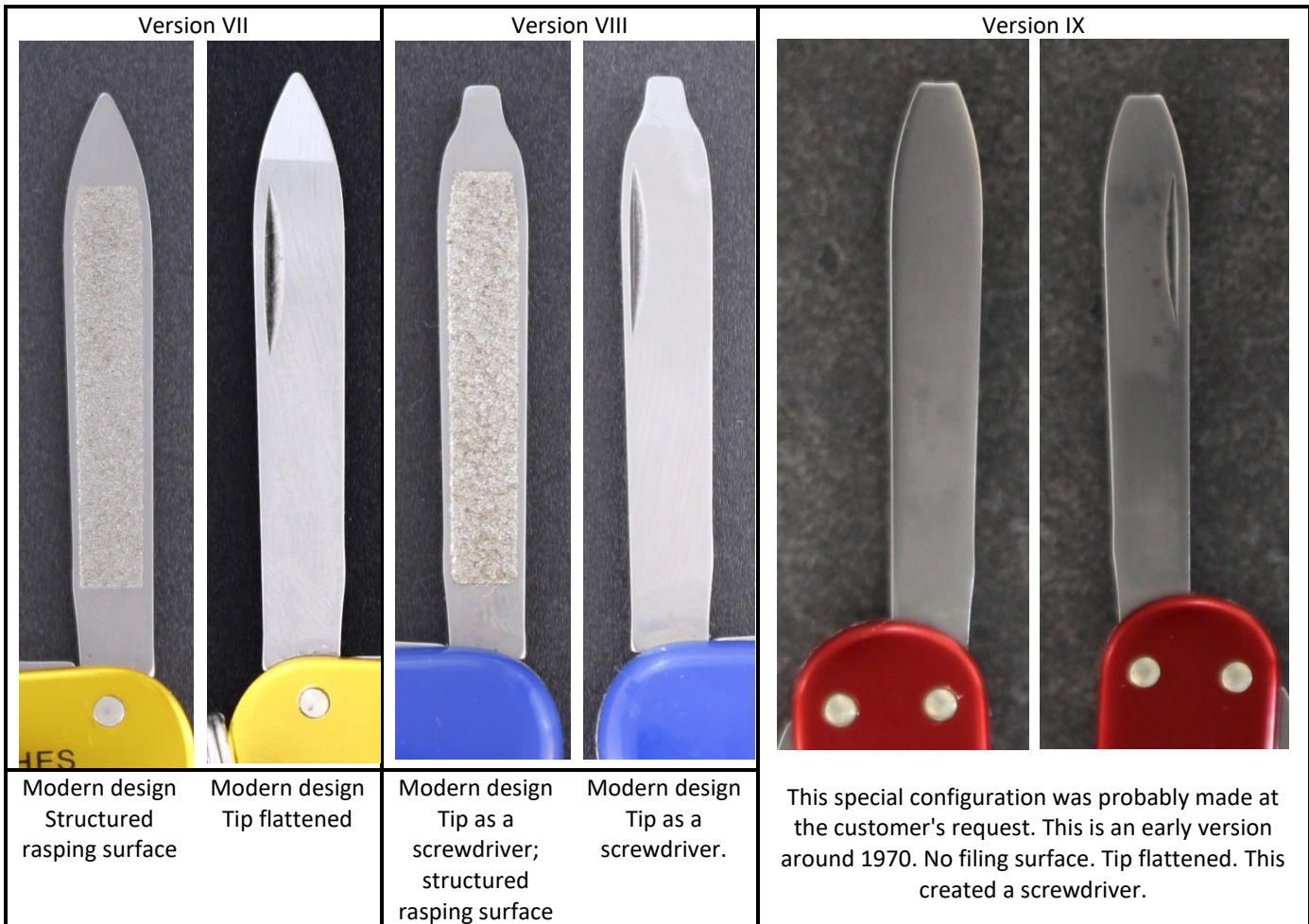
90° degree grooves
and diagonal grooves

Version VI



Parallel course. No
division. Tip not
rounded. Very large
nail groove.

90° degree grooves
and diagonal grooves



The nail files shown are arranged chronologically according to the period of manufacture. Version I was used at the very beginning of production. Versions VII and VIII are the current nail files that have been used for some time. The structure of the filing surface appears very pronounced and rudimentary in version I. Version II looks finer, although the slanted grooves have been omitted. This meant that the filing function was only possible if you moved the nail of the file up and down at a 90° angle.

In version III, oblique grooves were used for the first time, which enabled finer processing of the nail. These first 3 versions all have a tip on the front that separates it from the rest. This is used to clean the fingernails.

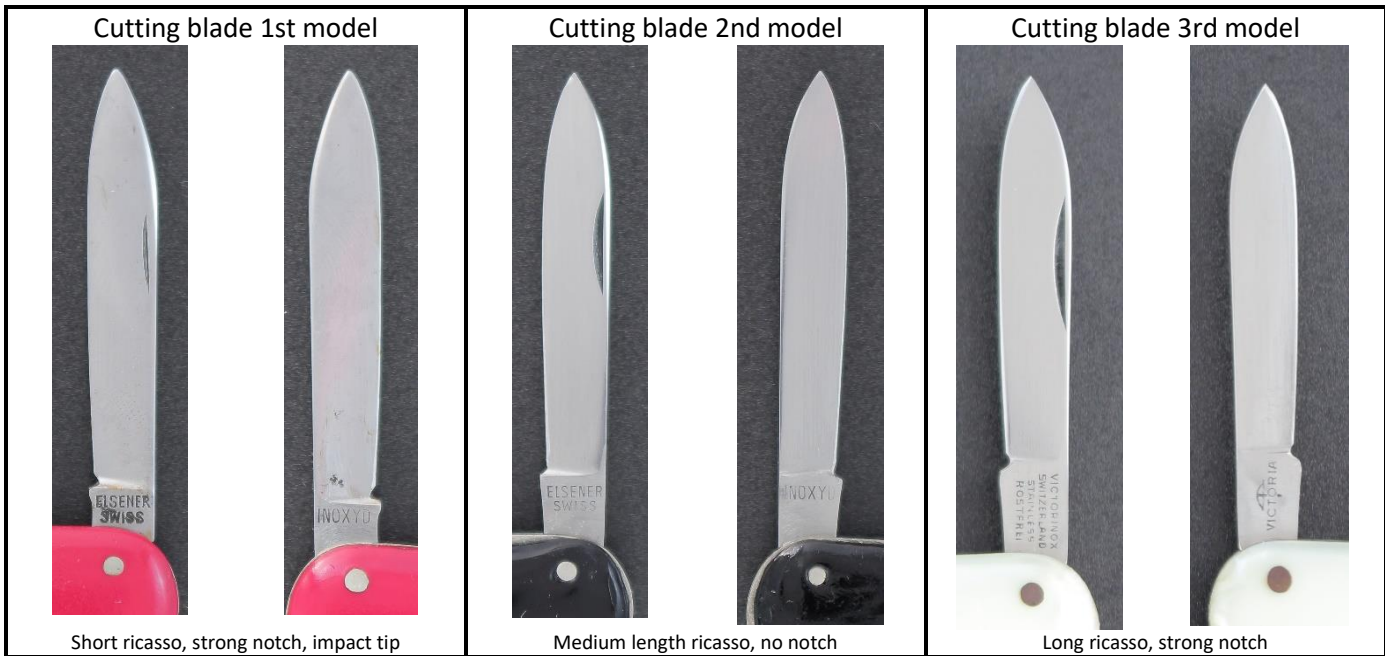
Version IV is very similar in form to version II.

It can be assumed that the same punching tools were used during production and the processing (grooving and rounding of the tip) was carried out in a second operation. The tip on the front of version IV is separated from the rest of the tool.

Version V only differed from version IV in its shape. In comparison, it had a parallel course and no continuous widening. All later models of nail files used this basic shape.

In the first decades, nail file models changed rapidly. Version V was used until around the end of the 1950s. Version VI was then produced for a long time. This no longer had the rounded tip on the front.

Version IX is actually not a nail file at all. This tool, which was created around 1970, is a screwdriver, similar to version VIII, but completely without a filing surface. In principle it would be its own model with the tools cutting blade and screwdriver. Since this was probably a customer order and not an official Victorinox product, and the screwdriver was a modified nail file, it is counted as model no. 620. A screwdriver was used here for the first time, much earlier than it was later officially used in the Vintage variant, for example.



Early embossing/engravings on the ricasso of 58 mm pocket knives

	s	es6	s	i2	es6	vss2	vss4	vssr1	vssr1
FRONT	SWISS ca. 1930/1940	EISENER SWISS ca. 1930/1940	SWISS ca. 1930/1940	INOXYD ca. 1930/1940	EISENER SWISS ca. 1930/1940	VICTORIA SWITZERLAND STAINLESS ca. 1930 - 1952	VICTORINOX 1952 - 1957	VICTORINOX 1957 - 1973	VICTORINOX 1973 - 1986
BACK		i2 INOXYD ca. 1930/1940	i2 INOXYD ca. 1930/1940				vc11 VICTORINOX 1952 - 1957	vc6 VICTORINOX 1957 - 1973	

Compared to other sizes of Victorinox pocket knives, the 58 mm series has relatively consistent embossing stamps. The main stamp at the beginning of production was the *es6* with *i2* on the back. There were also various variations of it, just *i2* or just *es6*. Just like these two embossing dies, the *s* embossing was used exclusively for the 58 mm series. The stamp *s* occurs particularly on promotional knives, mainly on pocket knives with metal scales, which were produced for the Bally company. This Swiss shoe manufacturer was a large international company. *It is possible that the embossed stamp "Swiss" was used in order to distribute such promotional knives internationally to good customers.*

These first embossing dies of the 58 mm series were replaced by the *vss2* embossing die. This was an embossing die that was used for almost the entire range of Victorinox pocket knives. This was followed by the embossing stamp *vssr1* with *vc6* on the back. Later the embossing on the back disappeared completely. The *vc11* embossing was only used very rarely.

Variants of cross/shield on the bowl



various cross and shield on 58 mm models

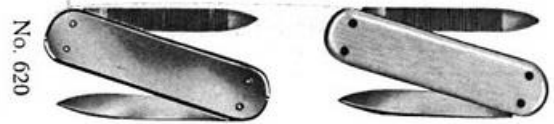
Victorinox patented the logo of a Swiss cross surrounded by a shield at the beginning of the 20th century. Although the basic design was always similar, there were some variations. Originally used on officer's knives, the cross/shield was made of brass and embedded in the fiber scales. For the 58 mm pocket knives, the first Cross/Shield inlays were made of nickel silver, which were embedded exclusively in the red Cellidor scales. Due to the way it was manufactured, the cross/shield consisted of a single unit, i.e. there were short connecting webs from the horizontal ends of the cross to the edge of the shield.



Different variants with colored aluminum scales

Variants of model no. 620

Model No. 620 appears for the first time in the 1942 catalog, back then with metal and cellidor scales. Examples of these with metal scales are primarily known for the Bally company.



In a later catalog of promotional knives from Victorinox around 1946, various variants with different motifs are shown. There are advertising knives for well-known companies such as Continental, Bosch, Siluma, Flawa or Landis and Gyr. Since the illustrations in the catalogs are black and white, the colors are difficult to determine. Most of these advertising knives were probably red or black, a few were white, and very rarely blue. Only examples of the latter are known for Aluminum Laufen AG.

In the 1952 catalog, model no. 620 is officially available in Cellidor red and black, and a little later for the first time with aluminum scales, Alox with or without a cross.

620	4.--	3.75	Cell. rot oder schwarz		
			Alox	& Kreuz	
			4.--	4.20	4.50

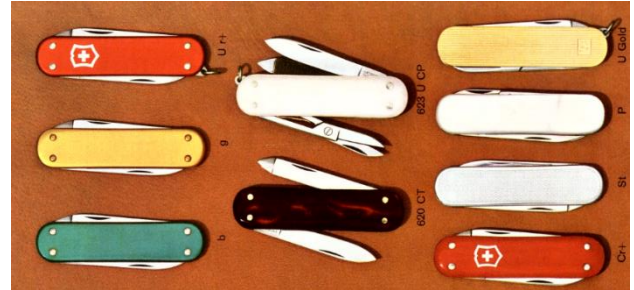


Schalen	No.	Schere		
		Nagelf. Klinge	Nagelf. Klinge	Nagelf. Klinge
Alox blaugrün	b	4.15	8.15*	4.65
Alox goldfarbig	g	4.15	8.15*	4.65
Alox rot m. Kreuz	rt	4.30*	8.30*	4.80*
Cell. Schildpatt	CT	4.30*	8.30*	4.50*
do. mit P & Z	CTa	-	-	-
Cell. Perlmutter	CP	4.50*	8.50*	4.80*
do. mit P & Z	CPa	-	-	-
Cell. rot m. Kreuz	Cr+	4.65*	8.65*	4.80*
do. mit P & Z	Cr+a	-	-	-
echt Horn IIa	H	-	-	6.90
Stahl guillochiert	St	6.40*	10.40*	7.20
echt Horn Ia	H	-	-	-
do. mit P & Z	Ha	-	-	-
echt Perlmutter	P	-	16.--*	-
do. mit P & Z	Pa	-	-	-
echt Gold lkt.	Gold	-	36.--*	-

Die mit * bezeichneten Messer sind auch mit Anhängelbügel "U" lieferbar (620 und 623 mit Ring)

In the 1952 catalog, the range for model number 620 became very large. The model was available with aluminum scales red with a cross, gold or blue-green. Model No. 620 was available with cellidor scales in imitation tortoiseshell or mother-of-pearl as well as red with a cross, and then with guilloche steel scales. With the exception of the Alox blue-green and Alox Gold variants, all pocket knives were available with the key ring option. Tweezers and toothpicks were not available for any of the variants.

There is also an image with certain variants.



1959

		Nailfile Blade
<u>Scales</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>620</u>
Alox blue-green	b	4/4d
Alox golden colour	g	4/4
Alox red, Swiss cross	r+	4/6*
Tortoise-shell imit.	CT	4/6*
same, with T and T	CTa	-
Mother-of-pearl imit.	CP	4/8*
same, with T and T	CPa	-
Red cell., Swiss cross	Cr+	4/10*
same, with T and T	Cr+a	-
Genuine horn IIa	H	-
Steel, engine-turned	St	6/8*
Genuine horn Ia	H	-
same, with T and T	Ha	-
Genuine mother-of-pearl	P	-
same, with T and T	Pa	-
Genuine gold 14 ct.	Gold	-

1972

		No.:	lime lame
<u>Côtes</u>		<u>620</u>	
* Alox bleu-vert	b	3.40*	
Alox couleur or	g	3.50	
Alox rouge av. croix	r+	3.50 U	
Cell. écaille	CT	3.60 U	
idem avec P et C	aCT	-	
Cell. nacre	CP	3.70 U	
idem avec P et C	aCP	-	
Cell. rouge av. croix	Cr+	3.80 U	
idem avec P et C	aCr+	-	
Acier inox guilloché.	St	6.80 U	
Corne véritable	H	7.80 U	
idem avec P et C	aH	-	
Nacre véritable	P	-	
idem avec P et C	aP	-	
Or véritable 14 kt. Gold		-	

In 1959 the selection in the catalog remained the same. The 1972 catalog also includes a version with horn scales. In the 1960s, "trade names" for these models first appeared, such as Pocket Pal and Princess. These designations, sometimes combined with the model number, were largely only present on the US market. The numbering system also changed during this time. The number 620 became the number 0.6100



Different variants of advertising knives with guilloché steel scales

Elsi Post

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Various early variants with red Cellidor scales and visible rivets



Elsi Post

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Various early variants of the model No. 620 Cr

1960s

Pocket Pal \$4.00



1. Small pen blade
2. Nail file
3. Lanyard shackle
2 1/4" closed length

1967

Princess (0.61 01)


Length: 58 mm, 2 1/4"
Handles: Cell.

1. blade
2. nailfile
3. key ring



The number 0.6101 stands for model number 0.6100 with an additional key ring. Here in a catalog from 1982 there are 3 variants of the basic model available, Cellidor red with cross, Alox red with cross, and steel guilloche, all variants with the key ring option. In this German-language catalog you can see that no trade names appear here, only the model numbers.

1982



0.61 01
Schalen: Cell. rot
58 mm lang


1. Klinge
2. Nagelfeile
3. Ring

Art.Nr.	Pack-einh.	Preis	Schalen
0.6100	10	5.50	Cell. rot mit <u>Präge</u> kreuz
0.6100.10	6	7.50	Alox rot mit Kreuz
0.6100.39	6	12.--	Stahl guillochiert
<u>0.6101</u>	10	6.--	Cell. rot mit <u>Präge</u> kreuz
0.6101.10	6	8.--	Alox rot mit Kreuz
0.6101.39	6	12.50	Stahl guillochiert


In 1993, a model appeared in the catalog under the trade name "Vintage" with a screwdriver head on the nail file and toothpicks/tweezers. In 2001 the trade name was given as "Vintage II".

1993

VINTAGE
SMALL BLADE
NAIL FILE W/
SCREWDRIVER TIP
KEY RING
TWEEZERS
TOOTHPICK
COLOR: RED
SIZE: 58MM; 2 1/4"



2001



1. Small Blade
Petite lame
2. Nail File with
Line & angles
and
3. Screwdriver
Tournevis
4. Retractable Ball
Point Pen
Stylo à bille
retractable
5. Key Ring
Anneau
6. Tweezers
Pinces

58mm Vintage II
Red/Rouge 54881

Elsi Post

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Various early variants of model No. 620 CP and CB



The 3 basic variants of model no. 620 Alox - 2 early variants of model no. 620 with toothpicks/tweezers (very rare)



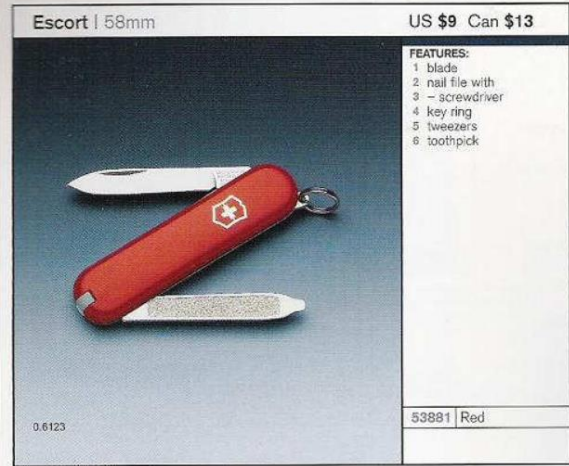
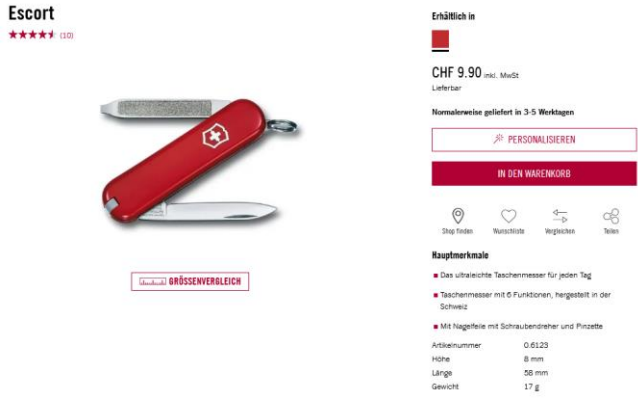
Eis Post

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Different versions of model no. 620 as a promotional knife for the FLAWA company

Elsi Post

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2003	2023
	

In 2003 the Vintage II became the name Escort. The model number is 0.6123. This model can still be ordered on the Victorinox homepage in 2023. It is the only variant still available, only in the color red, and only with a key ring and toothpick/tweezers.

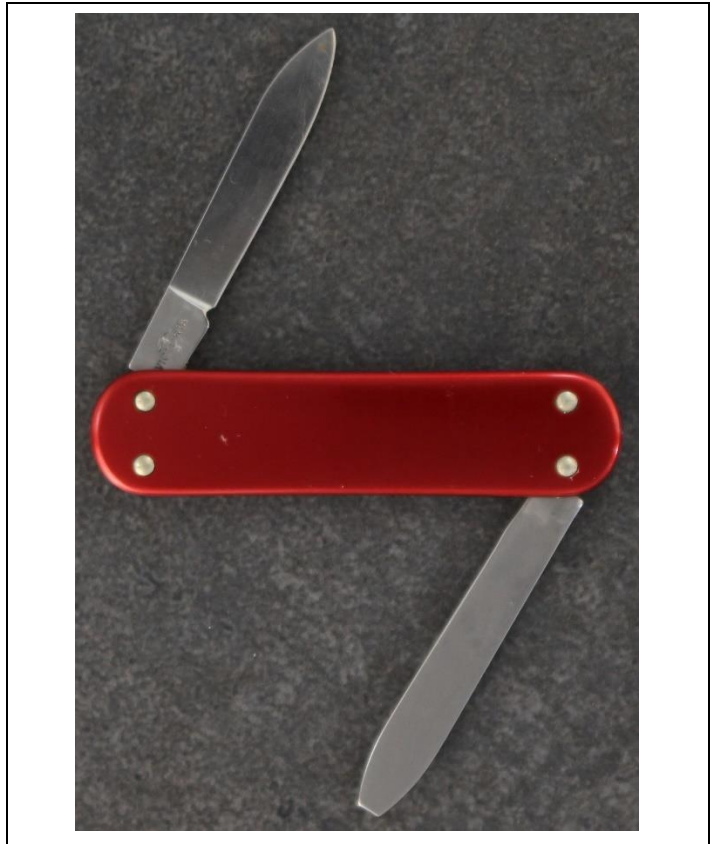
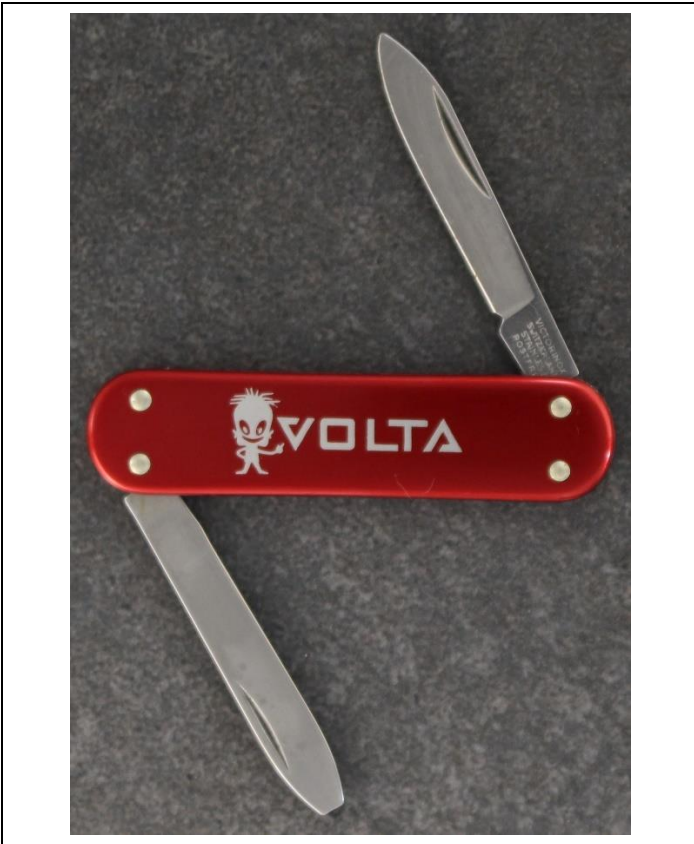


Different variants of model no. 620 in Alox as a promotional knife for the Philips company



The model no. 620 in mother-of-pearl (above) and horn (below)

Examples



2 examples of model no. 620 with open blades. Above is the special customer-requested model with the screwdriver instead of the nail file, and below is the early standard model with red Cellidor scales and visible rivets.

Elsi Post

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Cutler Arnold, Solothurn

Der Bund, Band 2, Nummer 285, 15. Oktober 1851|

2 Bei Unterzeichnetem können sogleich 2 bis 3 in
ihrem Fach: gut bewanderte Arbeiter auf längere Zeit
eintreten.

Arnold,
Messerschmied in Solothurn.

*If signed, 2 to 3 workers who are well versed in their field can immediately join for a longer period of time.
Arnold, cutler in Solothurn.*

Der Bund, Band 4, Nummer 266, 27. September 1853

Arbeits-Antrag.

2 Ein geübter Arbeiter findet bleibende Arbeit in So-
lothurn bei **L. Arnold,**
Messerschmied und Instrumentenmacher.

Intelligenzblatt für die Stadt Bern, 14. Februar 1855

5.9 Ein gesunder, wohlzogener Knabe kann un-
ter annehmbaren Bedingungen sogleich in die Lehre
treten. Auf frankirte Anfragen ertheilt Auskunft
Leonhard Arnold,
chirurg. Instrumentenmacher u. Messerschmied
in Solothurn.

A healthy, well-bred boy can immediately begin his apprenticeship under acceptable conditions. Leonhard Arnold, surgical instrument maker and cutler in Solothurn, will provide information on postage-paid inquiries.

The first entries about the cutler Arnold from the city of Solothurn date from around 1850. The year the cutler was founded is not known.

Der Bund, Band 13, Nummer 92, 3. April 1862

Aufforderung.

Herr Leonhard Arnold, Messerschmied und Instrumentenmacher in Solothurn, wird hiemit öffentlich aufgefordert, die ihm anvertrauten Gegenstände innert 14 Tagen dem Unterzeichneten zurückzugeben, wenn er sich nicht weiteren Unannehmlichkeiten aussetzen will.

König, den 31. März 1862.

E. Krebs, Arzt.

request

Mr. Leonhard Arnold, cutler and instrument maker in Solothurn, is hereby publicly requested to return the items entrusted to him to the undersigned within 14 days if he does not want to subject himself to further inconvenience.

König, March 31, 1862. E. Krebs, doctor.

Grütlianer, 17. April 1872

Für Messerschmiede.

Ein bis zwei tüchtige Messerschmiede finden dauernde Arbeit unter Zujicherung von gutem Lohn bei

Leonh. Arnold, Messerschmied in Solothurn.

For cutlers.

One or two skilled cutlers find permanent work with the promise of good wages with Leonhard Arnold, cutler in Solothurn.

Der Bund, Band 25, Nummer 167, 19. Juni 1874

für Messerschmiede.

3 Tüchtige Messerschmiede finden dauernde Beschäftigung bei gutem Lohn bei

Leonh. Arnold, Messerschmied
in Solothurn. (2370)

Illustrierte schweizerische Handwerker-Zeitung : unabhängiges Geschäftsblatt der gesamten Meisterschaft aller Handwerke und Gewerbe, Band 4 (1888)

Für die Werkstatt

Auf Frage 124. Unterzeichnete sind die einzige richtige Bezugsquelle für Kabis- und Rübenschnidmaschinen; 245 Stück bis jetzt fabrizirt. Garantie 1 Jahr für jede Arbeit.
L. Arnold u. Sohn, Messerschmiede, Solothurn.

The undersigned are the only correct source of cabbage and beet cutting machines; 245 pieces manufactured so far. Guarantee 1 year for every work.

L. Arnold and son, cutlery, Solothurn.

Illustrierte schweizerische Handwerker-Zeitung : unabhängiges Geschäftsblatt der gesamten Meisterschaft aller Handwerke und Gewerbe, Band 5 (1889)

Verschiedenes

122. Wer verfertigt in der Schweiz Kabischnidmaschinen?

Auf Frage 122. Kabis- und Rübenschnidmaschinen verfertigen seit 30 Jahren als Spezialität in unübertroffener Arbeit und versenden solche nach dem In- und Auslande, in den letzten Jahren bis nach Amerika. L. Arnold u. Sohn, Messerschmied, Solothurn.

cabbage cutting machines in Switzerland ?

Cabbage and beet cutting machines have been producing cabbage and beet cutting machines as a specialty for 30 years with unsurpassed work and have been shipping them at home and abroad, in recent years as far as America. L. Arnold and son, cutlers, Solothurn.

Illustrierte schweizerische Handwerker-Zeitung : unabhängiges Geschäftsblatt der gesamten Meisterschaft aller Handwerke und Gewerbe, Band 16 (1900)

430. Wer liefert Kabishörel (zum Kabis einmachen) eventuell wer renoviert auch solche?

Auf Frage 430. Liefere Kabis- und Rübenschnidmaschinen als Spezialität. Gust. Arnold, Messerschmied, Solothurn.

Who supplies Cabi planes (for canning Cabis) and who also renovates them?

Supply cabbage and beet cutting machines as a specialty. Gust. Arnold, cutler, Solothurn.

Schweizerisches Handelsamtsblatt = Feuille officielle suisse du commerce = Foglio ufficiale svizzero di commercio, Band 8 (1890)

Bureau Stadt Solothurn.

1890. 11. Oktober. Inhaber der Firma **Gust. Arnold Messerschmied** in Solothurn ist Gustav Arnold von und wohnhaft in Solothurn. Natur des Geschäftes: Fabrikation und Handel von sämtlichen Messerschmiedwaaren, Kabis- und Brotschneidemaschinen nebst Schleiferei. Geschäftslokal: Landhausquai.

Bureau City of Solothurn.

1890. October 11th. Owner of the company **Gust. Arnold cutler** in Solothurn is Gustav Arnold from and lives in Solothurn. Nature of the business: Manufacture and trade of all cutlery, cabbage and bread cutting machines as well as grinding. Business premises: Landhausquai.

Around 1890, Gustav Arnold took over the business from his father Leonhard. The business seemed to have been very diverse, on the one hand its own production, on the other hand trading and grinding. The company was obviously known for its cabbage and bread cutting machines, as various advertisements have shown before.

Schweizerisches Handelsamtsblatt = Feuille officielle suisse du commerce = Foglio ufficiale svizzero di commercio, Band 36 (1918)

30. Januar. Die Firma **Gustav Arnold, Messerschmied**, in Solothurn (S. H. A. B. Nr. 148 vom 16. Oktober 1890, Seite 746), ist infolge Todes des Inhabers erloschen. Aktiven und Passiven gehen über an die neue Firma «Wwe G. Arnold» in Solothurn.

Inhaberin der Firma **Wwe G. Arnold** in Solothurn ist **Karolina Arnold** geb. Goller, Witwe des **Gustav Arnold, Messerschmied**, von und in Solothurn. Die Firma übernimmt Aktiven und Passiven der erloschenen Firma «**Gustav Arnold, Messerschmied**». Fabrikation und Handel von sämtlichen Messerschmiedewaren, Kabis- und Brotschneidemaschinen und Schleiferei; Landhausquai Nr. 129.

January 30th. The company **Gustav Arnold, Messrschmied**, in Solothurn (SOGC No. 148 of October 16, 1890, page 746), has expired due to the death of the owner. Assets and liabilities are transferred to the new company "Wwe G. Arnold" in Solothurn.

The owner of the company **Wwe G. Arnold** in Solothurn is **Karolina Arnold née Goller**, widow of **Gustav Arnold, cutler**, from and in Solothurn. The company takes over the assets and liabilities of the defunct company "**Gustav Arnold, Messrschmied**". Manufacture and trade of all cutlery, cabbage and bread cutting machines and grinding; Landhausquai No. 129.

In 1918, Gustav Arnold died and his widow took over the company's assets and liabilities.

Schweizerisches Handelsamtsblatt = Feuille officielle suisse du commerce = Foglio ufficiale svizzero di commercio, Band 37 (1919)

Solothurn: Va. 573 Lachat, Alphonse, Wwe., G. Arnold's Nachfolger, Messerwaren.

Bureau Stadt Solothurn

Messerschmiede. — 19. September. Die Firma **Wwe. G. Arnold**, Fabrikation und Handel von sämtlichen Messerschmiedewaren, Kabis- und Brotschneidemaschinen und Schleiferei, in Solothurn (S. H. A. B. Nr. 26 vom 1. Februar 1918, Seite 174), ist infolge Verzichts der Inhaberin erloschen. Aktiven und Passiven gehen über an die neue Firma «**Alphons Lachat, Wwe. G. Arnolds Nachfolger**», in Solothurn.

24. IX. 1919

Inhaber der Firma **Alphons Lachat, Wwe. G. Arnolds Nachfolger**, in Solothurn, ist **Alphons Lachat, Alphons Sohn**, von La Scheulte (Bern-Jura), Kaufmann, in Solothurn. Die Firma übernimmt Aktiven und Passiven der erloschenen Firma «**Wwe. G. Arnold**», in Solothurn. Fabrikation und Handel von sämtlichen Messerschmiedewaren, Kabis- und Brotschneidemaschinen und Schleiferei. Landhausquai Nr. 129.

Bureau City of Solothurn

Knifsmith. - September 19th. The Wwe company . G. Arnold, manufacture and trade of all cutlery, cabbage and bread cutting machines and grinding, in Solothurn (SHAB No. 26 of February 1, 1918, page 174), has expired due to the owner's renunciation. Assets and liabilities are transferred to the new company "Alphons Lachat, Wwe . G. Arnold's successor", in Solothurn.

Owner of the company Alphons Lachat, Wwe . G. Arnold's successor, in Solothurn, is Alphons Lachat, Alphon's son, from La Scheulte (Bernese-Jura), merchant, in Solothurn. The company takes over the assets and liabilities of the defunct company " Wwe" . G. Arnold", in Solothurn. Manufacture and trade of all cutlery, cabbage and bread cutting machines and grinding. Landhausquai No. 129.

A year later, in 1919, an Alphons Lachat took over the business from Gustav Arnold's widow. It can be assumed that the widow looked for a buyer for the business after her husband's death and found him in Alphons Lachat.

Neue Zürcher Zeitung, Nummer 432, 22. März 1921 Ausgabe 02

Zu verkaufen:
Ein Auto

2plätzig, Marke „Opel“ raffinierter Steiger, mit Aga-Beleuchtung, und geringem Benzinverbrauch, sehr preiswürdig.
Zu erfragen bei (H 1797)

A. Lachat-Arnold, Messerschmiede
Telephon 7.35 Solothurn.

For sale : A car. 2 seats, brand "Opel", classy Steiger, with Aga lighting, and low fuel consumption, very worthy of the price. For further information please contact A. Lachat-Arnold, Messerschmiede. Telephone 7.35 Solothurn.

Schweizerisches Handelsamtsblatt = Feuille officielle suisse du commerce = Foglio ufficiale svizzero di commercio, Band 44 (1926)

Bureau Stadt Solothurn
Messerschmiedwaren, Kabis- und Brotschneid-
maschinen; Schleiferei. — 22. Juni. Die Firma **Alphons Lachat, Wwe. G. Arnolds Nachfolger**, in Solothurn (S. H. A. B. Nr. 229 vom 24. September 1919, Seite 1681), ist infolge Verzichts des Inhabers erloschen.

Bureau City of Solothurn

*cutlery, cabbage and bread cutting machines; Grinding shop. - June 22. The company **Alphons Lachat, Wwe. G. Arnold's successor**, in Solothurn (SOGC No. 229 of September 24, 1919, page 1681), has expired due to the owner's renunciation.*

Alphons Lachat only ran the business for 7 years. The company went out of business in 1926. I think it was exactly the time when small knife makers in Switzerland were having a very difficult time. During this time, the two large companies Elsener, Schwyz and Wenger, Delémont, continuously expanded their production. Delémont is only a few kilometers away from Solothurn

Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Forstwesen = Swiss forestry journal = Journal forestier suisse, Band 79 (1928)

Forstmeister Friedrich Arnold



Forstmeister Friedrich Arnold
14. September 1856 bis 4. September 1928

79. Jahrgang November 1928 Nummer 11

† Forstmeister Friedrich Arnold.

Noch trauert der Winterthurer Wald um den Verlust seines Hüters und Pflegers, der ihn während 29 Jahren sein Bestes gemüht und gepflegt hat. In treuer Hingebung und mit nie ablassender Begeisterung und Arbeitsfreudigkeit war er stets und erfolgreich bestrebt, die forstwissenschaftlichen Grundbilde und Lehren auf die gegebenen Verhältnisse seines Wirtschaftsterritoriums in möglichst nutzbringender und pflegerischer Weise praktisch anzuwenden, und sich selbst fachwissenschaftlich weiterzubilden. So hat denn auch die Winterthurer Waldungen unter Forstmeister Arnolds liebevollster Leitung im In- und Ausland zu einem der angesehensten Lehr- und Versuchgebiete geworden, das Jahr um Jahr von Vertretern der Wissenschaft und Praxis aus aller Herren Länder, wo Forstwirtschaft und Forstwissenschaft gepflegt wird, in steigendem Maße immer und immer wieder aufgesucht wurde. Namentlich gelang das der waldbaulichen Gesichtspunkte und der Art und Weise ihrer praktischen Durchführung wegen. Unter aller Wahrung der ökonomischen Anforderungen war Arnold doch stets darauf bedacht, bei seinen wirtschaftlichen Massregeln auch die natürliche Waldeshöhlichkeit zu fördern, und es ist ihm denn auch gelungen, die Winterthurer Waldungen in verhältnismässig kurzer Zeit und ohne nennenswerten Schaden zu einem grossen Teil umzuwandeln. Diesen ausgeprägten Sinn und die große Liebe für natürliche Waldeshöhlichkeit hat Arnold — ihm selbst noch unbekannt — schon in seiner Jugendzeit unter dem Einfluss der an schönen Baumgruppen, Wald- und Feldpartien, Schluchten und anderen Naturschönheiten so reichen Umgebung seiner Vaterstadt Solothurn in sich aufgenommen, wo er am 14. September 1856 als Sohn des sehr geschätzten und weithin bekannten Messerschmiedes Arnold geboren wurde und wo er auch die Stadtschulen und die Kantonschule absolvierte.

Im Herbst 1877 wandte sich der begeisterte Natur- und Waldfreund nach Zürich an die Eidgenössische Forstschule, wo er im März 1880 die Diplomprüfung mit bestem Erfolg bestand.

Seine erste praktische Beteiligung — abwechselnd forstlicher und vermessungstechnischer Art — fand Arnold bei Forstmeister Schwyter und Geometer Oeger in Aarau, und zeitweilig hat er diesen beiden ersten

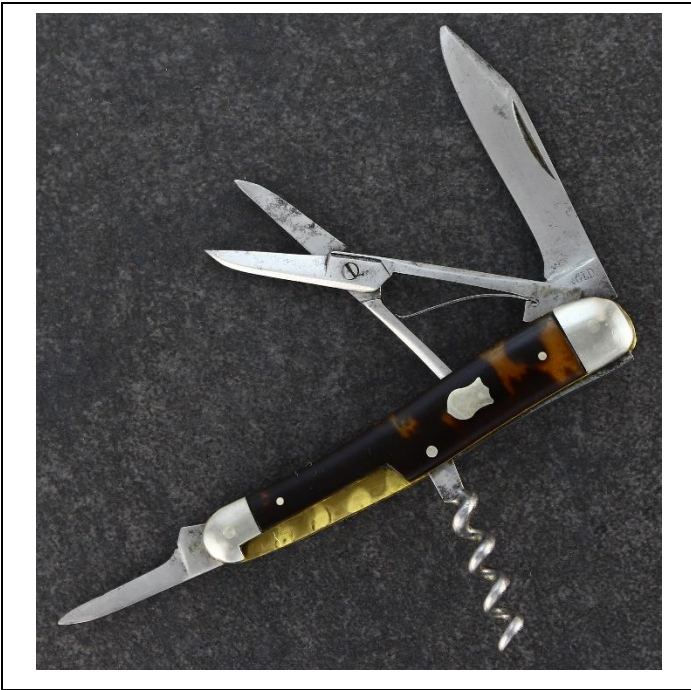
«Forest Master Friedrich Arnold, September 14, 1856 to September 4, 1928
...was born as the son of the well-known knife maker Arnold...»

Elsi Post

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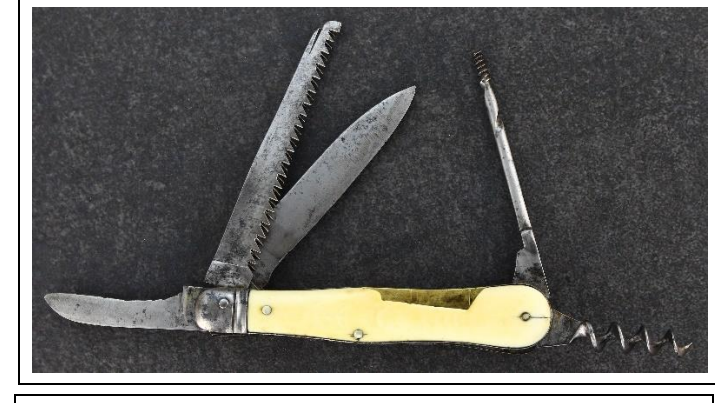
In 1928 there was an obituary for the son of the cutler Arnold in the newspaper, which made it clear that the cutler Arnold was widely known at the time and had a good reputation.

Examples



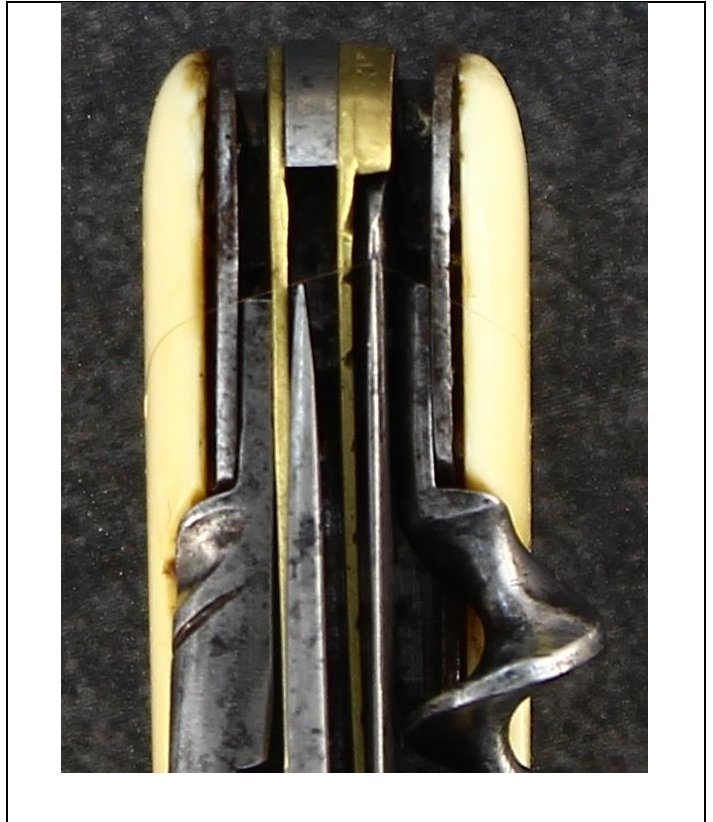
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Elsi Post

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Anecdotes from the past

Intelligenzblatt für die Stadt Bern, 6. August 1903

Kleine Zeitung.

* Dem „Soloth. Tagbl.“ entnehmen wir folgenden Unglücksfall, der sich am Samstag, zirka um 9 Uhr, auf der Aare bei Solothurn ereignete. Vier junge Leute: Jakob Steiner von Burgdorf, Pflasterer; Albert Buache von Payerne (Waadt), Gipser; Albino Condolfo von Comologno (Tessin), Gipser; Modeste Bezzola von Comologno, Gipser, fuhren mit einem Weidling vom Kreuzackerplatz gegen die obere Aarbrücke. Hier angelangt, kam durch ungeschicktes Benehmen in dem ziemlich starken Strom, Wasser in den Weidling. Keiner der Insassen war mehr imstande, das Fahrzeug zu lenken; sie verloren die Geistesgegenwart und sprangen in der Angst ins Wasser. Durch das Hinausspringen kippte das Schiff um; Steiner konnte bis ans Ufer schwimmen, Buache und Condolfo hielten sich am umgekehrten Fahrzeug fest,

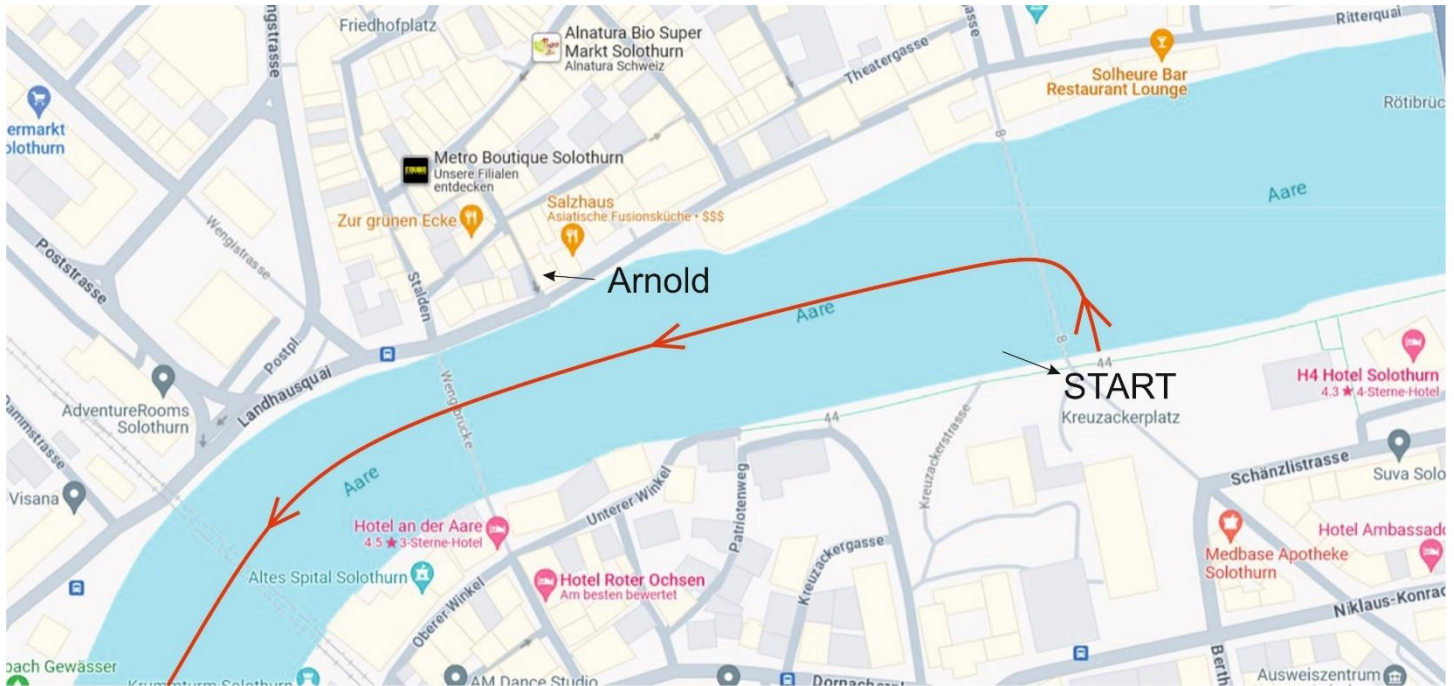
bis ihnen Herr Messerschmied Arnold mit einem Weidling nachfuhr und die beiden auf diese Weise rettete, während Modeste Bezzola in den Fluten den Tod fand.

Small newspaper

The "Solothurner Tagblatt" tells us about the following accident that occurred on Saturday, around 9 a.m., on the Aare near Solothurn. Four young people: Jakob Steiner from Burgdorf, paver, Albert Buache from Payerne (Vaud), plasterer; Albino Condolfo of Comologno (Ticino), plasterer; Modeste Bezzola from Comologno, a plasterer, drove a Weidling from Kreuzackerplatz towards the upper Aare bridge. Once here, water came into the Weidling due to clumsy behavior in the rather strong current. None of the occupants were no longer able to steer the vehicle; They lost their presence of mind and jumped into the water in fear. Jumping out caused the ship to tip over; Steiner was able to swim to the shore, Buache and Condolfo held on to the upturned vehicle until Mr. cutler Arnold followed them with a Weidling and in this way saved the two of them, while Modeste Bezzola found her death in the floods.

Elsi Post

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Roughly the route that Weidling took (marked in red) shown in red above, based on a current map. The named bridges are also marked and are roughly the location where the cutter Arnold had his shop. A Weidling is a flat boat without propulsion that is moved forward with a standing oar. This traditional type of boat still exists.

Geschäftsblatt für den oberen Teil des Kantons Bern, Band 57, Nummer 65, 13. August 1910 Ausgabe 02

Solothurn. Ein waderer Ferge ist Herr Messerschmied Arnold am Landhausquai zu Solothurn. Sein Wohnhaus und die Werkstatt liegen nur wenige Schritte vom Ufer, zwischen den beiden Brücken. Dort hat er auch sein Fahrzeug bereit, mit dem er bis heute nicht weniger als 57 Personen den Fluten der Aare entzogen hat. Die „Solothurner Zeitung“ stellt diese Zahl fest bei Anlaß der Registrierung der letzten Rettung, die Herr Arnold letzten Donnerstag nachmittag an einem in die Aare gefallenem Knäblein mit Erfolg vollzogen hat.

Solothurn. A brave ferryman is Mr. Arnold, the cutter on the Landhausquai in Solothurn. His home and workshop are just a few steps from the banks of the Aare, between the two bridges. There he also has his vehicle ready, with which he has to date rescued no fewer than 57 people from the floods of the Aare. The “Solothurner Zeitung” noted this number when registering the last rescue that Mr. Arnold successfully carried out last Thursday afternoon on a little boy who had fallen into the Aare.

- the end -

Elsi Post

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