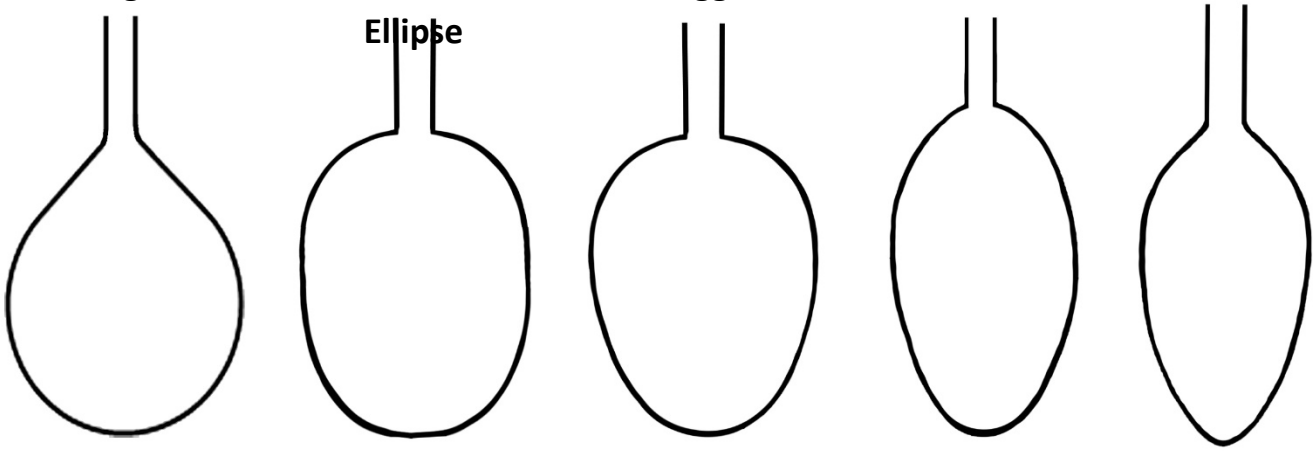
Utensil Handout

Contents

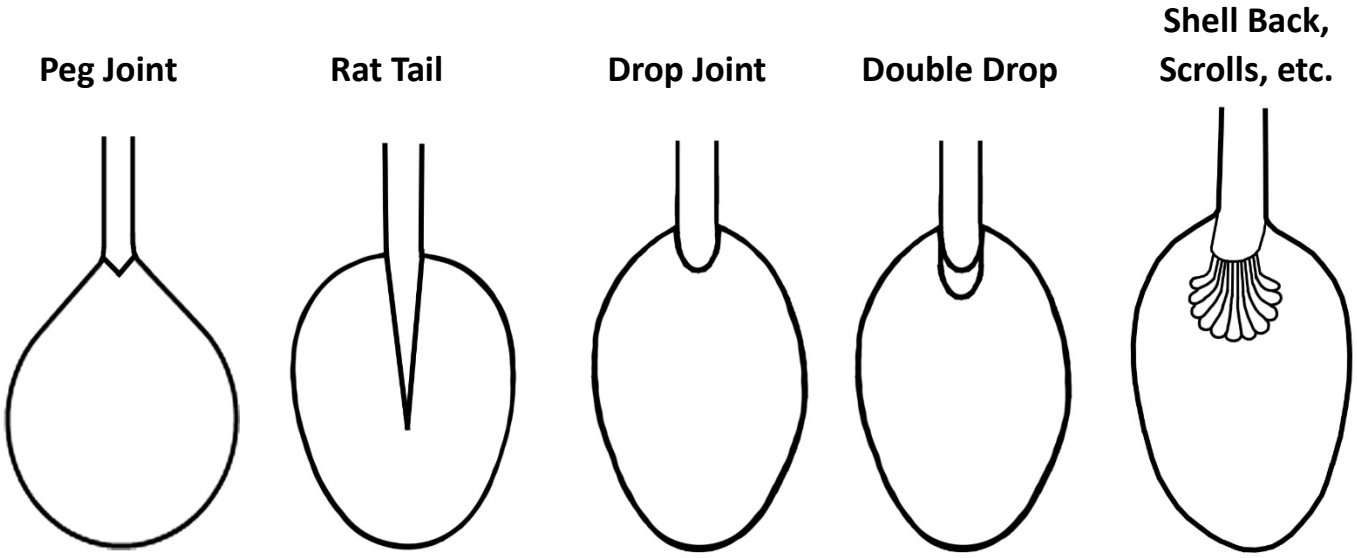
Spoon Bowls

Bowl Shape



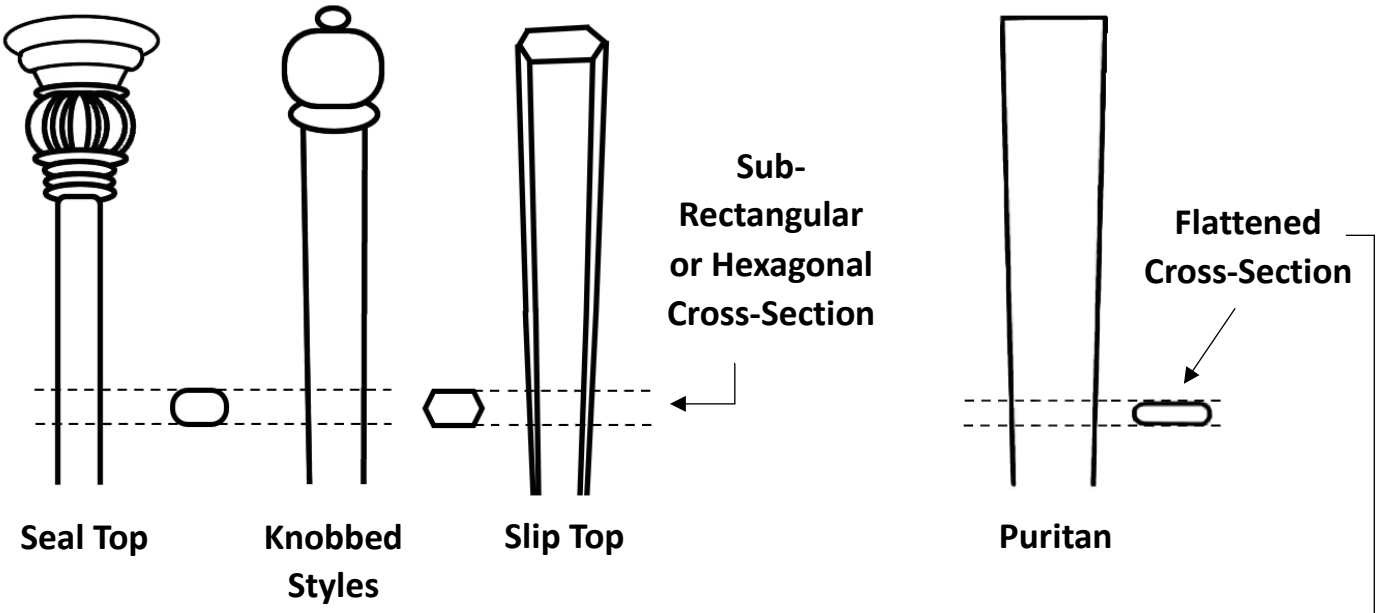
ca. 1500-1650 | ca. 1650-1700 | ca. 1690-1760 | Post 1750

Back Treatments



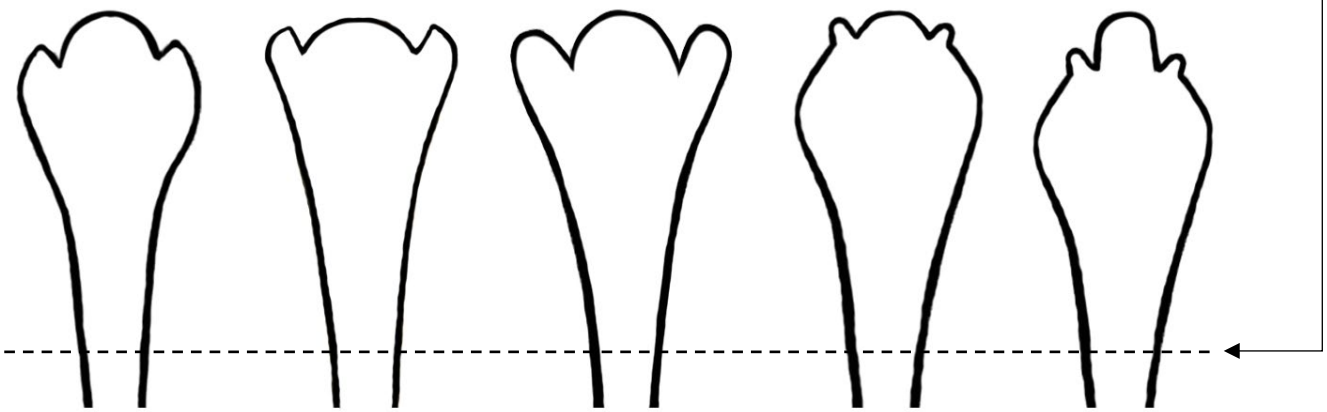
ca. 1500s-1670 | ca. 1660-1715 (ca. 1750 on pewter) | ca. 1730-1800 | Post 1740

17th-Century Flatware Terminals



ca.1500s- 1670

ca. 1650-1680

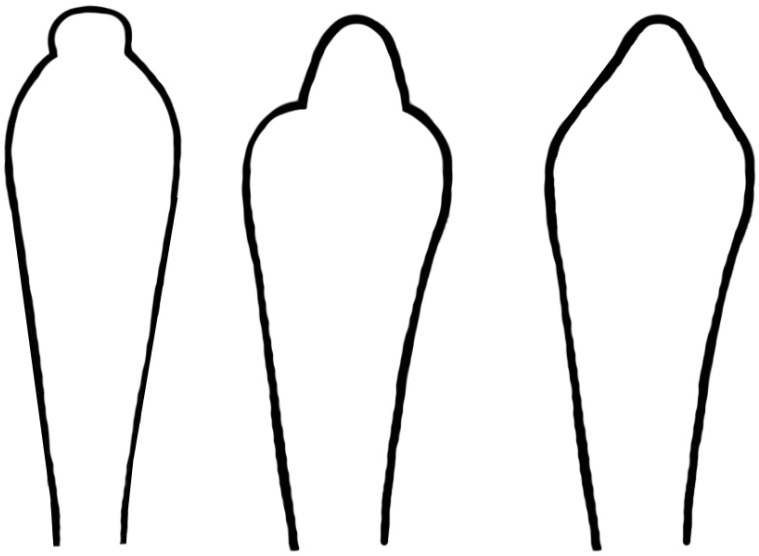


Trefid "Pied de Biche" Variations

ca. 1660-1700

18th-Century Flatware Terminals

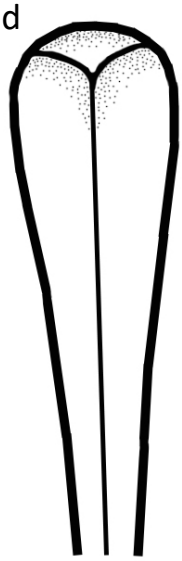
Dognose, Wavy End, or "Shield Top" Variations



ca. 1690-1715

Round End Variations

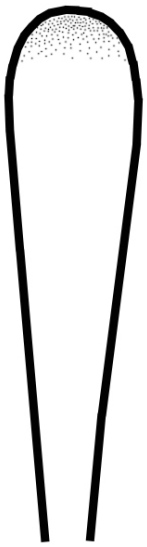
End curved up



Hanoverian

ca. 1700-1760

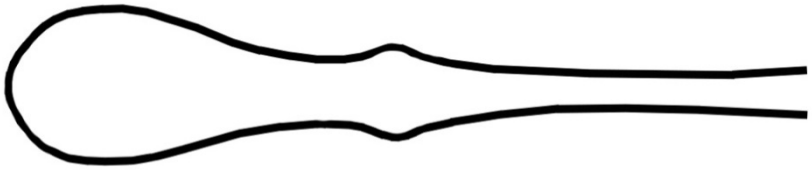
End curved down



Old English*

Post-1750

Scottish Fiddle



ca. 1740-1790

Oar

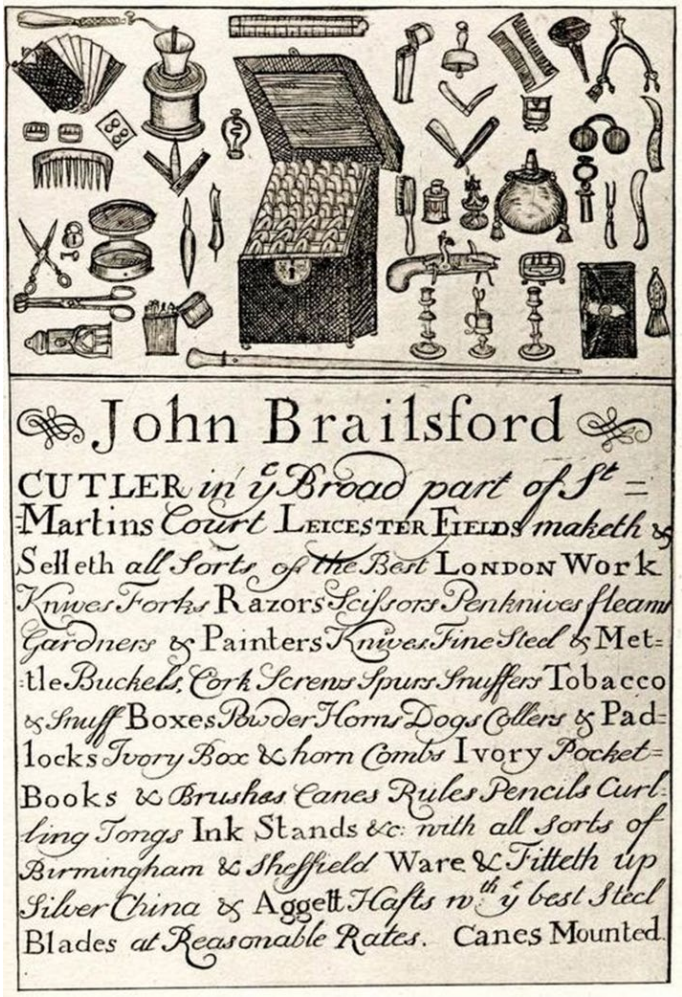
Post-1775

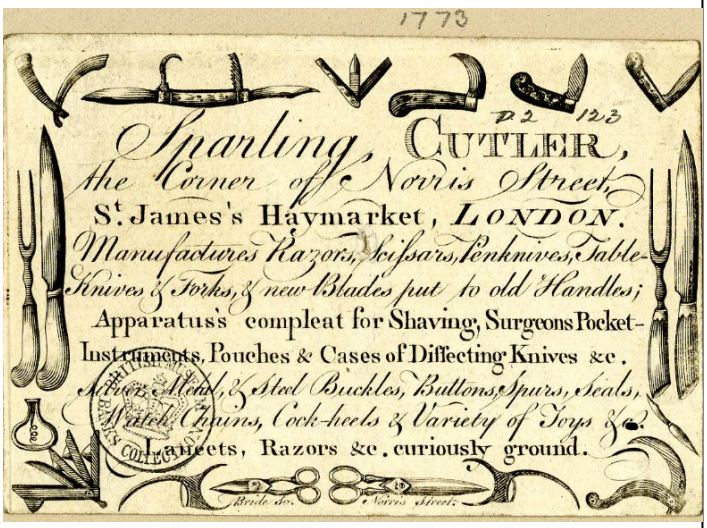
Fiddle*

Post-1780

*Old English and Fiddle styles continue with a great deal of variation into the 19th century.

Cutlery





Trade card images © The Trustees of the British Museum

Overview

Cutlery was a specialized trade working with iron/steel blades. Cutlers made knives, forks, scissors, and other sharp instruments and detailed metalwork. Trade cards offer insight into the goods cutlers made.

17th Century

- Knives were made by cutlers from iron/steel with handles of various materials
- Some knives had matching forks of iron/steel made by cutlers, especially by the end of the century when this became the norm
- Many utensils made for travel; folding styles, or paired in special cases
- People generally carried their own eating tools when travelling

18th Century

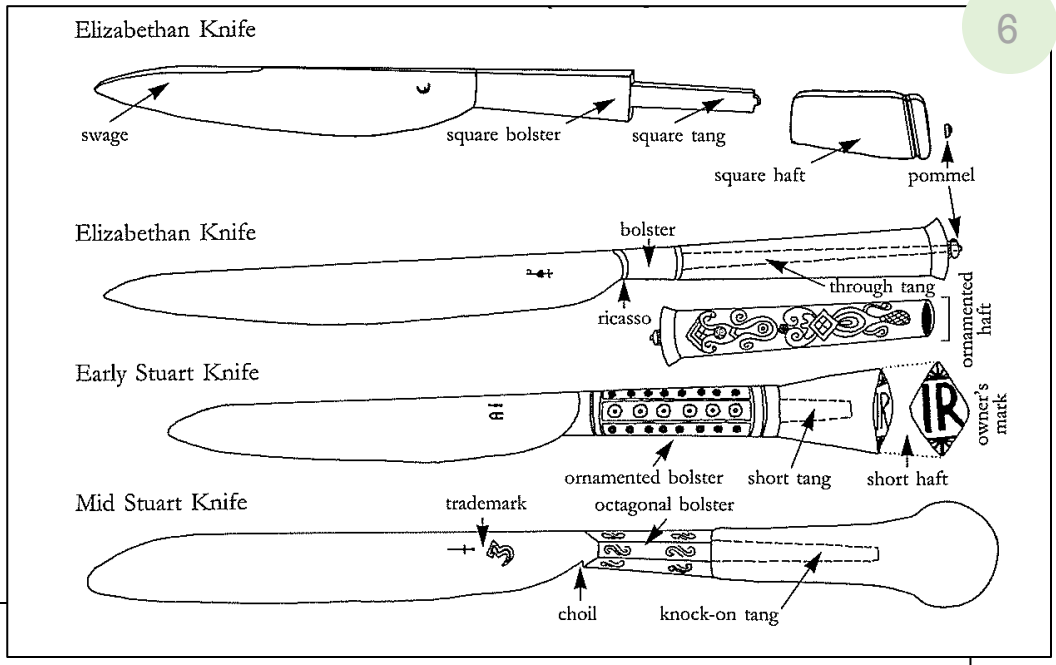
- Hosts began to supply matched cutlery sets for eating with visitors
- Cutlery sets had special boxes/cases
- Now that blades didn't all need to be portable, many became much longer
- Forks had two or three tines; the fourth tine first appears with the "Old English" flatware pattern after c. 1760
- Marks representing cutlers were generally registered symbols, not names spelled out
- See diagrams for changes in shapes over the century

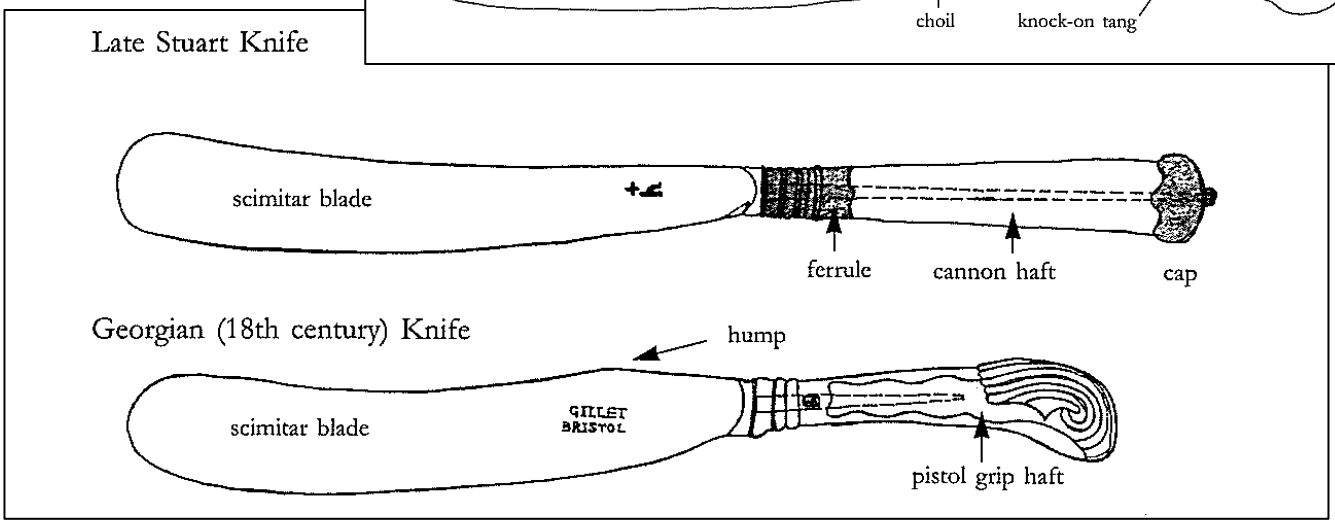
19th Century

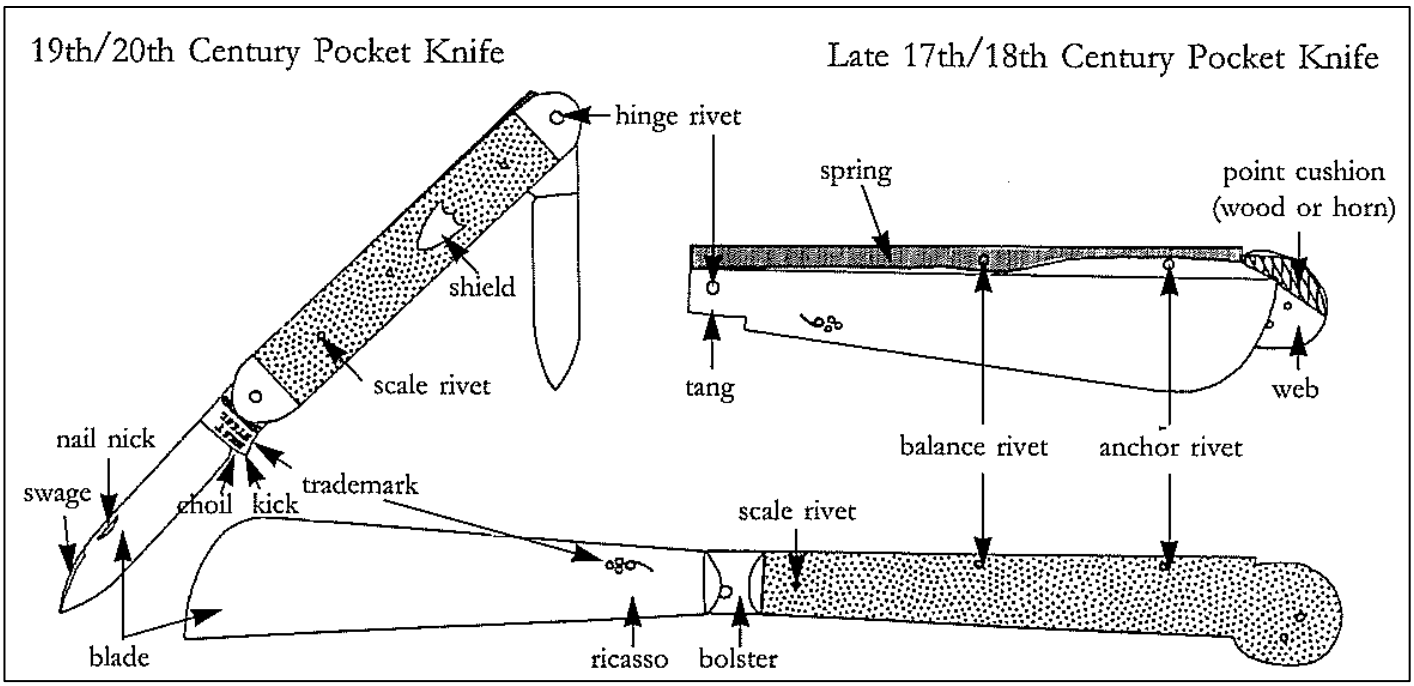
- Blades often marked with cutlers' names
- Blades lose the scimitar curve in favor of parallel sides
- Blades get wider almost immediately after the bolster
- Forks invariably have four tines
- There is an explosion of styles, many of which are inspired by older styles

Diagrams

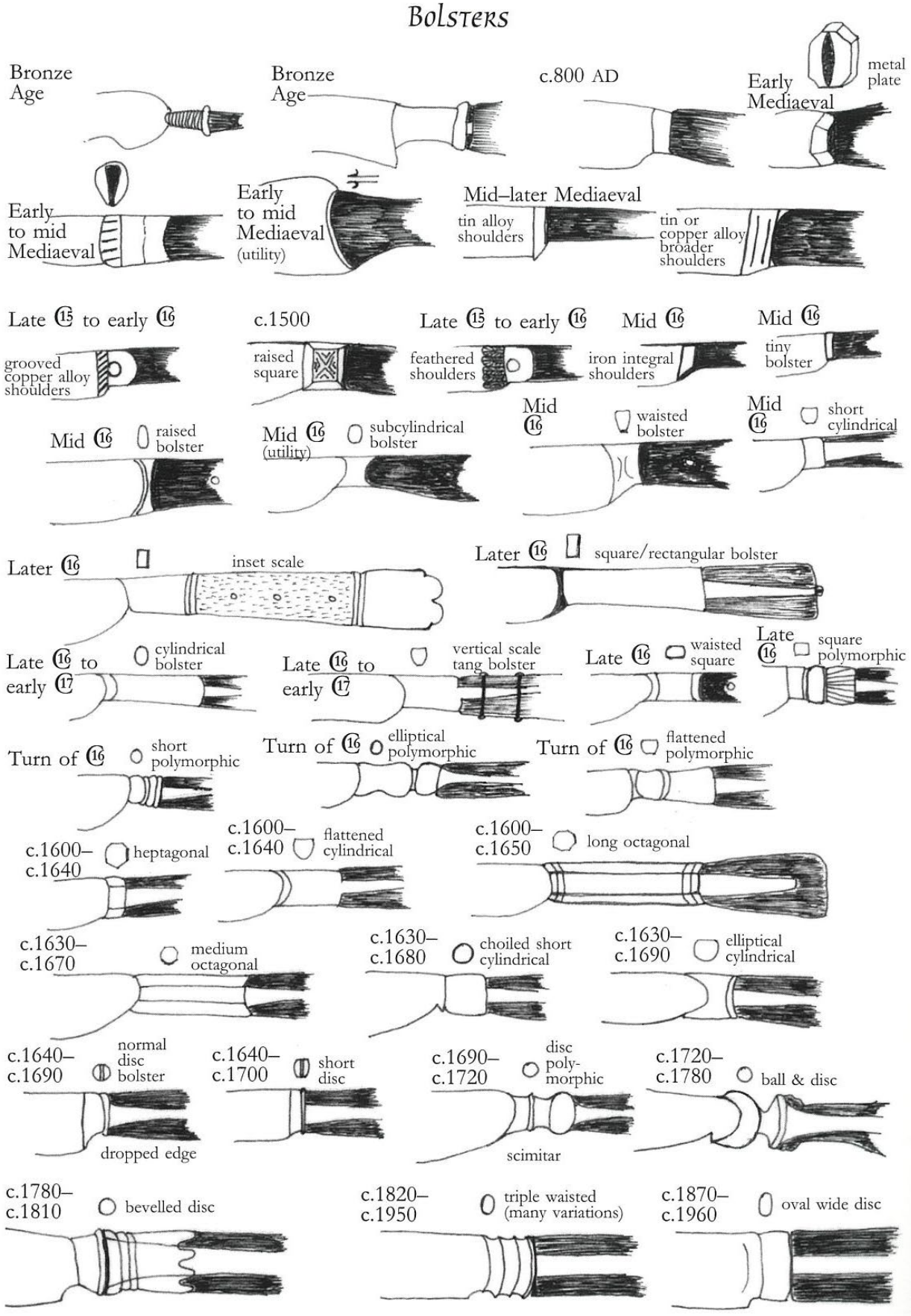
Page 6-7 diagrams from:
Moore, Simon. 1999 *Cutlery for the Table: A History of British Table and Pocket Cutlery*. Sheffield, England: The Hallamshire Press. Appendix four: Blade, Bolster, and Handle Designs.





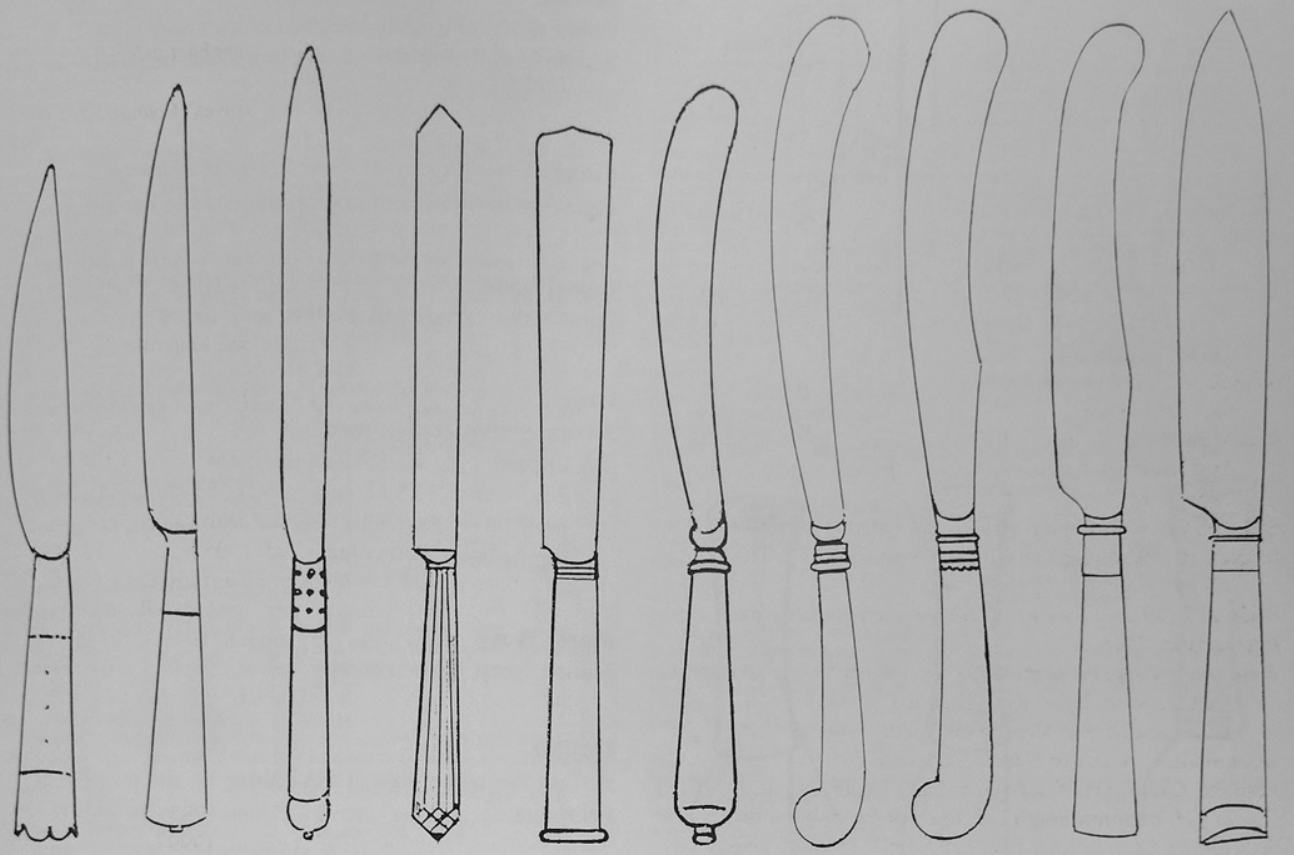


Bolsters


Bronze Age
Bronze Age
c.800 AD
Early Mediaeval
metal plate
Early to mid Mediaeval
Early to mid Mediaeval (utility)
Mid–later Mediaeval
tin alloy shoulders
tin or copper alloy broader shoulders
Late 15 to early 16
grooved copper alloy shoulders
c.1500
raised square
Late 15 to early 16
feathered shoulders
Mid 16
iron integral shoulders
Mid 16
tiny bolster
Mid 16 raised bolster
Mid 16 (utility) subcylindrical bolster
Mid 16
waisted bolster
Mid 16
short cylindrical
Later 16 inset scale
Later 16 square/rectangular bolster
Late 16 to early 17 cylindrical bolster
Late 16 to early 17 vertical scale tang bolster
Late 16 waisted square
Late 16 square polymorphic
Turn of 16 short polymorphic
Turn of 16 elliptical polymorphic
Turn of 16 flattened polymorphic
c.1600–c.1640 heptagonal
c.1600–c.1640 flattened cylindrical
c.1600–c.1650 long octagonal
c.1630–c.1670 medium octagonal
c.1630–c.1680 choiled short cylindrical
c.1630–c.1690 elliptical cylindrical
c.1640–c.1690 normal disc bolster
dropped edge
c.1640–c.1700 short disc
c.1690–c.1720 disc polymorphic
scimitar
c.1720–c.1780 ball & disc
c.1780–c.1810 bevelled disc
c.1820–c.1950 triple waisted (many variations)
c.1870–c.1960 oval wide disc

Page 8-9 diagrams copied from:
Brown, Peter, ed.
2001 *British Cutlery: An illustrated history of design, evolution, and use.* London: York Civic Trust, Philip Wilson Publishers.

GLOSSARY

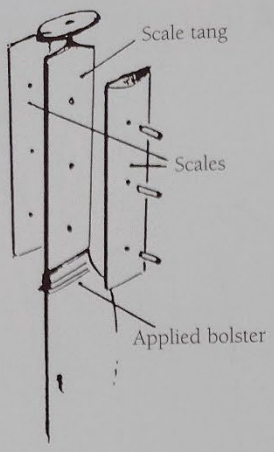


Antler
Annual growth of horn of deer; the central core pith makes it weak to use in full section but good for scales. Indian Samba deer preferred for full handles.

Bolster
The support or thickening between the blade and tang.
1) Can be forged with the blade
2) Tang and bolster forged in one piece of iron and welded to a steel blade. 18th–19th century
3) Copper alloy shoulder plates applied to a scale tang by rivets or soldering. Medieval
4) White metal bolster of 'run on tin' applied after handle has been fitted. 19th century
5) Bolster as part of the construction of frame handle. 19th century
6) Egg Waterloo bolster, waisted elliptical disc between blade and tang, now made in one piece with the blade. 19th–20th century
7) Mean bolster, blade ending in small flat disc to match the section of the handle. Throughout
8) Flying bolster, a spherical bolster with the scimitar blade 'flying' away. 17th–18th century.

Cap
Separate fitting on the end of the handle usually of different material, i.e. silver.

Celluloid
Thermoplastic material used for knife handles patented by Hyatt Brothers USA in 1869. This plastic material was based on Parkesine invented by Alexander Parkes G.B., 1840. Other trade names include Ivorine and Ivoride.

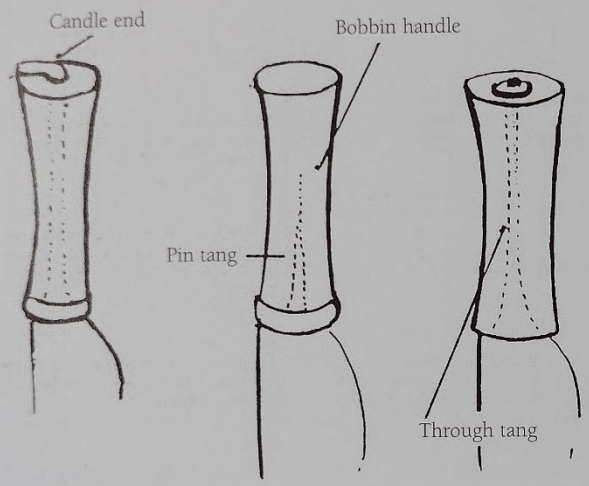


Choil
Chin of blade just below bolster.

Ferrule
Collar of metal usually between bolster and handle. Applied to the handle this collar helps to prevent splitting.

Finial
Figure or decorative device on the ends of handles.

Jigged Bone
Bone scales carved and dyed to look like stag.



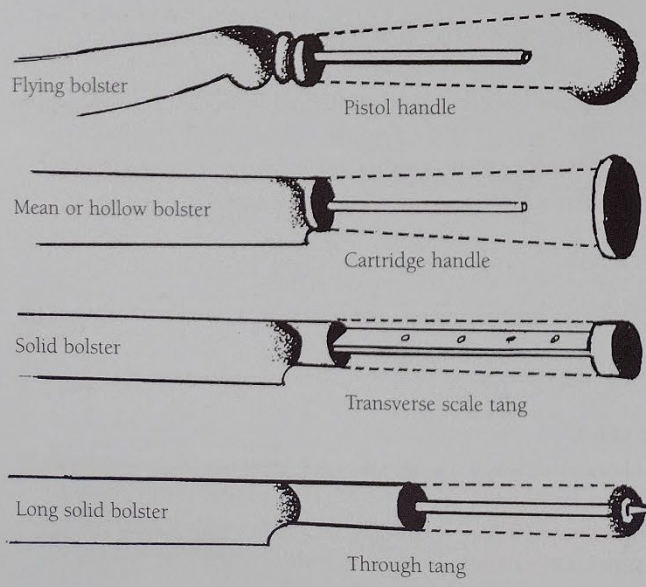
Latten
A copper alloy consisting of:

Copper	72.50%
Zinc	25.22%
Iron	1.82%
Impurities	0.46%

Morse Ivory
Marine ivory; Walrus tusk.

Quillon
A short bar either side of the bolster for the purpose of a hand guard.

Tang
Part of knife to which the handle is fitted
1) Scale tang – continuation of blade to which scales (plates) are fitted on either side.
2) Knock on tang – pointed spike onto which a handle is hammered.
3) Pin tang – for fixing hollow handles onto such as silver and some hollow ceramics.
4) Through tang – this thin rod goes right through the length of the handle and is fixed at the end usually with a washer or bent over into a candle end.
5) Transverse tang – a scale tang that is at right angles to the plane of the blade.



Terminal
Protruding decorative feature applied at the end of a knife, probably as a fixing on the tang. See also Finial.

Xylonite
See Celluloid.

References

Dates and forms based on a synthesis of the following source material:

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1987 Spoons 1650-1930. Shire Album 211. Buckinghamshire, UK: Shire Publications, Ltd.
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2007 [1908] *Old Base Metal Spoons*: *A guide to antique pewter cutlery and its marks.* J.M. Classic Editions.

Disclaimers

Date ranges are designed to bracket the main period of popularity, so earlier and later examples are never out of the question. The books listed above do not always agree, so the date ranges are subject to change as finds from dated archaeological contexts are amassed to derive dates from archaeology rather than collectors books alone.

This is not a comprehensive list of styles. In general, all terms and labels come from the sources above. Where no such terms were available labels are strictly descriptive, such as “elongated oval.”