

Knot



News

INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS - PACIFIC AMERICAS BRANCH

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Joseph Schmidbauer-Editor

Issue #33

From the Ditty Bag:

Knives

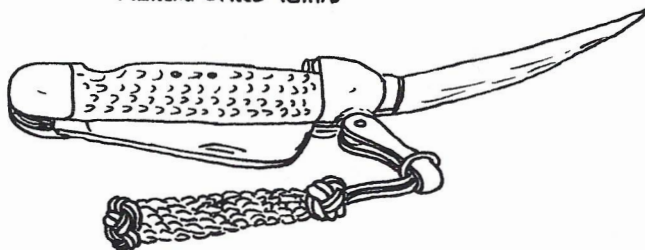
by Roy Chapman

I hope you have been happily looking forward to this column of suggestions of tools to make. I also hope you won't be disappointed with the following about tools to buy. Without wanting to sound like that advertisement for some greasy fish and chips; here is one you can't make at home. Actually you can... it just isn't worth the bother, not at this price! There is a type of folding knife, often sold as a "Rigger's Knife", or "Marlinspike Knife" or "Sailor's Knife", which combines a marlinespike, which I'll call a *pricker*, and a straight blade in one folding knife. This might not be the tool I *choose* first, when my ditty bag holds a tool for each task. But this is the tool I often *use* first, because it is with me for the unexpected work. You can cut $\frac{3}{4}$ " rope in a single slash, open some fool's knot that has been drawn down as hard as a rock by towing a Pontiac, save your manicure when splicing old swing rope at your second cousin's cabin or draw down an impromptu decorative knot that you tied while waiting for someone whose watch has broken. You need this tool. Perhaps not *need*, but certainly will enjoy. There is never a day when I don't use one. I carry one in a belt sheath/pouch so it goes on when I get up and comes off when I go to bed.

Smokey Mountain has generic sheaths for \$2. I have three knives: a BUCK, a CAMILLUS and a CASE. A.G. Russell offers one too. And there are military surplus ones from several nations. All

have a pricker that locks open, very stoutly. All have a *shackle* that serves as a lanyard loop and as a lever to unlock the pricker. All have nearly identical rigger's style blades, that is to say a straight edge and no point (a shape sometimes called "sheep's foot" in the knife brochures). All are strongly made from good steel, with brass liners and synthetic scales. Camillus "U.S. Navy Marlin Spike" #697 and Case #125 have nickel silver bolsters, while Buck scales are integral (as are Camillus #695 and #696). The Buck has long been discontinued, but I see them offered "used" from time to time so include it here. The Buck claimed their steel to be stainless, but I suggest you beware of leaving any good knife in the bilge of your blue-water boat. I have never had rust or even a hint on my Case or Camillus and I live in 100% humidity, so I suspect all to be nominally "stainless". Still, I personally saw a ruined Buck. I think it is on the bottom of Long Island Sound or off Block Island now. Crazy Lou didn't have a Camillus or Case to ruin so I can't personally report on "total abuse" of them.

"MARLIN SPIKE" KNIFE



R. CHAPMAN
2 AUGUST 2001

Case is \$29.99 and Camillus is \$31.99 from Smokey Mountain Knife Works (July 24th, 2001), while A.G. Russell asks \$79. As with most mail order, you pay the shipping. The Russell knives come with choices of scale materials and are surely the most beautiful works of art. I can't afford a Russell but their quality control and reputation assure a good blade of good steel. The angle of the grind on the Case (in fact, all three) makes it very hard for me to get a "shaving sharp" edge, as the final sharpening bevel gets pretty wide if it is thin enough to shave hair. You can do it if you must. Fortunately you will seldom have need to shave hair under the conditions where this tool is all you have at hand. You could skip shaving for a while... I have for sixteen years. All sharpen easily, unless you demand that razor edge. All hold the edge well. If you are a "slicer" I suggest that you use a diamond hone (and a coarse one at that) on these blades to take advantage of the microscopic serration created by the diamonds. It won't shave then but it will zip through rope like Congress through taxes. Buck (similar to Camillus #696) offered theirs serrated as well as plain, which is good for "hurry up" rough cuts but has some disadvantages: you can't easily whittle a toggle or carve out a "broom handle fid" very well with a serration. You restrict yourself to just cutting fibrous material (rope). I also find it difficult to do "dainty" work with serration. If you get a serrated blade get a tapered diamond lap at the same time. If you, personally, don't slice rope, but pound the blade through with a billet of wood then get the unserrated version. My old Buck is a little thicker at the back than my new Case, which is a little thicker than my older Camillus #697. If you can preview all three blades before you lay down your money you can pick the blade that suits your style. Hopefully you will like the pricker on that one too.

I think it easier to file the pricker than to reshape the blade. I reworked the pricker on Buck and Camillus but not Case, finding it excellent as shipped. The fit and finish of the Case is the best of my three knives (remembering I don't own a Russell), Camillus running a close second. The Case and Buck use a two-piece spring, but I don't think it matters (although it seems like another place to accumulate trapped salt).

Order anyone of the three up and learn to enjoy it for what it is: the knot tyers most useful 143 grams (5 ounces) that can be put in pocket or purse or hung on a lanyard "to go". All three are USA made and can be obtained from dealers directly or

by mail (yes, they all have internet sales... if you must). Call or write the manufacturer for a list of dealers in your area. I have bought from SMKW and Russell and have been very well treated.

CAMILLUS CUTLERY

54 Main St.
Camillus, NY 13031
800-344-0456

W.R. CASE & SONS CUTLERY CO.

Owens Way - PO Box 4000
Bradford, PA 16701
814-368-4123

SMOKEY MOUNTAIN KNIFE WORKS

Hwy 66
Sevierville, TN 37862
800-251-9306

A.G. RUSSELL KNIVES, INC.

1705 N. Thompson St.
Springdale, AR 727764-1294
800-255-9034

[This is the last of the "From the Ditty Bag" series from Mr. Chapman and the Editor which to express his heart felt thanks to Roy for sharing these articles with us. They were greatly appreciated by all who had the pleasure of reading them.]

As to the making of Knots themselves, it should be kept in mind by beginners that all Knots and Fancy Work are made up of very few simple turns and tucks. I think they could be counted on the fingers. The skill to be attained is that required by a man in handling several strands at once and in recognizing where to make the next tuck. The art consists in making the combinations of the simple elements. Incidentally, it may be remarked that the finished work looks far better than any illustration!"

Charles Spencer
Knot, Splices and Fancy Work



01 of 12
Youngman Lee.

From the Secretary

It is June and time again for the IGKT-PAB election of Officers and Board. There are four Officer positions: President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Librarian as well as four Board positions.

Lindsey Philpott as agreed to continue as our President and Jose Hernandez-Juviel has volunteered to become our Librarian. All the other positions are up for grabs.

You are welcomed to send in a proxy vote for the above-mentioned members (if you are too far away to attend the Meeting) as well as a write in ballot if you would like to take on the responsibilities of any of these offices. If no one does agree to carry on these duties, we will have to make other arrangements. Details about the upcoming AGM will be made known as soon as they are available.

From the Mailbag

Our newest member, Youngmin Lee of California wrote us this description of the kind of knotting she does:

Maedup (Korean Knotting)

In Maedup, Korean traditional knots were used in interior decoration such as calligraphy scrolls, door screens and bamboo blinds and home decorative paintings. It was used as an ornament or pendant on musical instruments and in Buddhist rituals.

Maedup is related to macramé however macramé uses many separate cords while Korean knots mostly use one or two cords.

The Maedup is a structure formed by at least three points of contact on a single cord. Tying a knot involves two distinct steps. First comes the intertwining process. Even when a cord is properly intertwined, it loses its shape if not properly tightened. The tightening must be very even. All knots begin by dividing a single cord into two equal lengths. Different knots have a separate process of intertwining and tightening. A well-formed knot shows perfect symmetry and is identical in appearance on both sides.

There are thirty-three different kinds of knots, called by different names in different provinces of Korea.

Maedup requires calm mental concentration. The creative tension of knot making enhances our mental health as well as the beauty of life.

We can use a single cord to make lots of creative and decorative ornaments like wall hangings, bracelets, key chains and rings. You can decorate pouches, handbags and clothing. We can even

make animal ornaments like dragonflies, butterflies and turtles."

[The picture Ms. Lee sent is in color. It loses something in the black and white copy but you can still enjoy the workmanship!]

An industrious worker, with but a little patience and experience, can originate a great variety of designs and patterns in almost every type of Square Knot work, thereby making the work interesting and at the same time a constructive way to while away idle hours."

Raoul Graumont and John Hensel
Encyclopedia of Knots and Fancy Rope Work

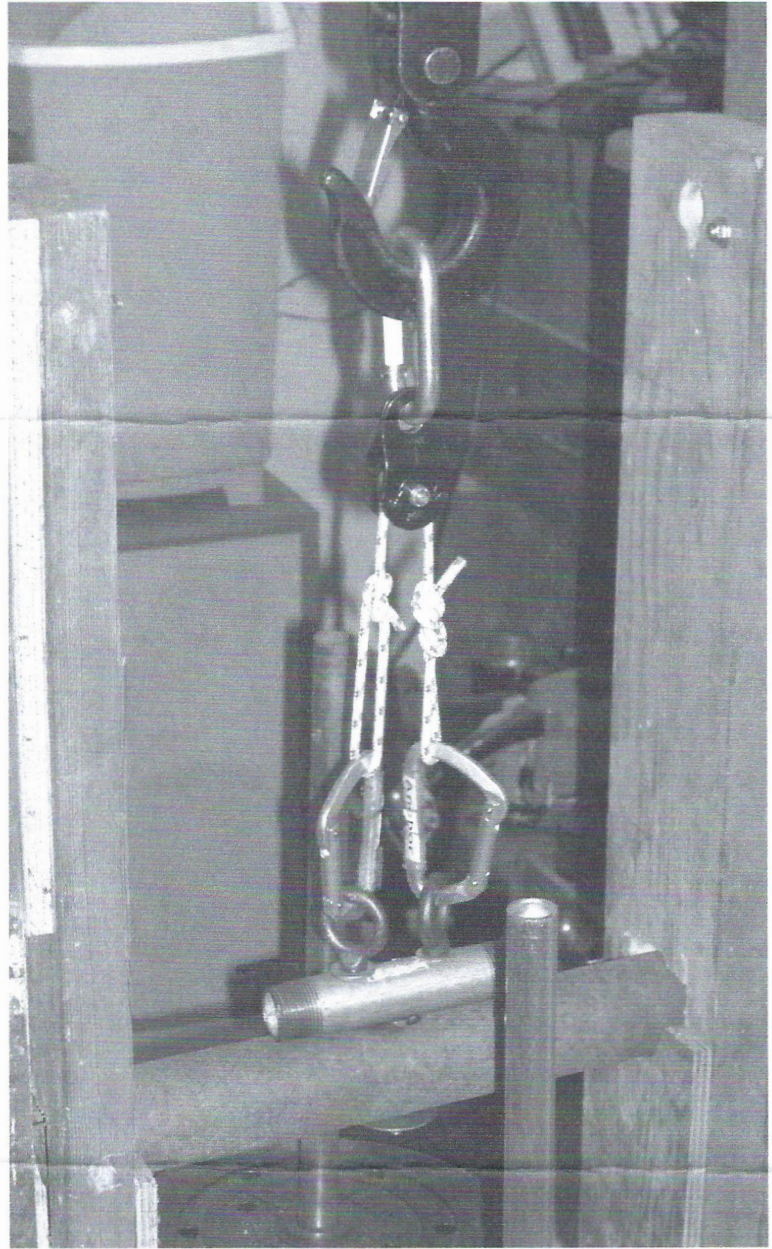
Ed Haegele of California sent in this short note with some photos [see next page]: "In the latest issue (KN #32, April 2002) an article *Thinking of Knotting* particularly caught my eye. I have been testing various knots both against each other and individually against weights. My testing device, pictured on attached sheets, leaves a lot to be desired when trying to determine actual strength but seems to do the job in testing. One knot against another."

He was moving now into real ship's territory: Tomb's dry dock, another dry dock, the reek of hot pitch, the unwaled ships abuilding looking like the rib cages of gargantuan animals. In Canon's Marsh he took the rope walk through the marsh rather than the soggy footpath which meandered along Avon's bank, nodding to the ropemakers as they walked their third-of-a-mile inexorably twisting the hempen or linen strands, already twisted at least once, into whatever was the order of the day—cables, hawsers, lines. Their arms and shoulders were as corded as the rope they wound, their hands so hardened that all feeling had left them—how could they find pleasure in a woman's skin?"

Colleen McCullough
Morgan's Run



Set up to do "head to head" testing. Pictured a bowline against a figure eight loop. (The figure eight loop won.)



Why are there four and only four starts to making single strand Turk's Heads?

Leads x Bights

Over or Under
Ahead or Behind

when Crossing
when Following

3Lx2B 1Lx0B on the way to 3Lx5B

3Lx4B 1Lx2B

4Lx3B 2Lx1B

4Lx5B 2Lx3B Overhand knot

Odd Leads, Even Bights

Odd Leads, Even Bights

Even Leads, Odd Bights

Even Leads, Odd Bights

$$TH = \text{IsInteger?} \left(\frac{\text{Leads}}{n} \right) \text{ AND } \text{IsInteger?} \left(\frac{\text{Bights}}{n} \right), \text{ Where } n = (1, 2, 3, \dots)$$

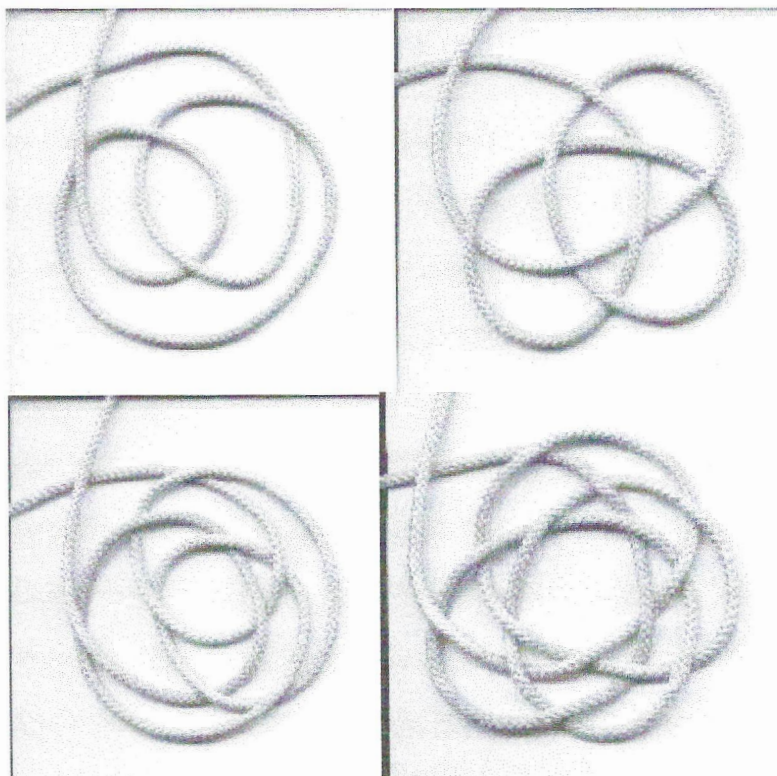
IsInteger? means "Does the expression in parenthesis evaluate to an whole number."

If TH is TRUE then

If $n = 1$, then TH is a Single strand Turk's Head.

If $n > 1$, then TH is a Multi-strand Turk's Head,

Such as a Three lead Fixed Turk's Head, ABOK #1282



Single Strand Turk's Heads Philpott Knot Notation

T A B L E

Type	Routine
Start 1	Odd Leads, Bights = Leads - 1
3L2B	X Xb U O
(3L5B, 3L8B, 3L11B, ...)	+ Pu U O U O
5L4B (from 3L2B)	3L2B+ Dr Dlo O WI Wr
7L6B (from 5L4B)	5L4B+ Dr Dlo WI Wr
Start 2	Odd Leads, Bights = Leads + 1
3L4B	X U(tail) Xa U Po O U
(3L7B, 3L10B, 3L13B, ...)	+ O U Po O U
Start 3	Even Leads, Bights = Leads - 1
2L1B	X
4L3B	OKL TI Drc WI
(4L7B, 4L11B, 4L15B, ...)	
4L7B	DOKL TI Tr TI Drc WI Wr WI
4L11B	TOKL et cetera
6L5B (from 4L3B)	4L3B+ Dr Dlu Wr WI
8L7B (from 6L5B)	6L5B+ Dr Dlu WI Wr
Start 4	Even Leads, Bights = Leads + 1
2L3B	OKL O
4L5B	OKL O U(tail) Tr O U O(tail) Wr WI
(4L9B, 4L13B, 4L17, ...)	
4L9B	DOKL O U(tail) Tr TI Tr O U O(tail) Wr WI Wr WI
4L13B	TOKL et cetera
6L7B (from 4L5B)	4L5B+ U(tail) Dro Dlu O(tail) Wr WI

K E Y

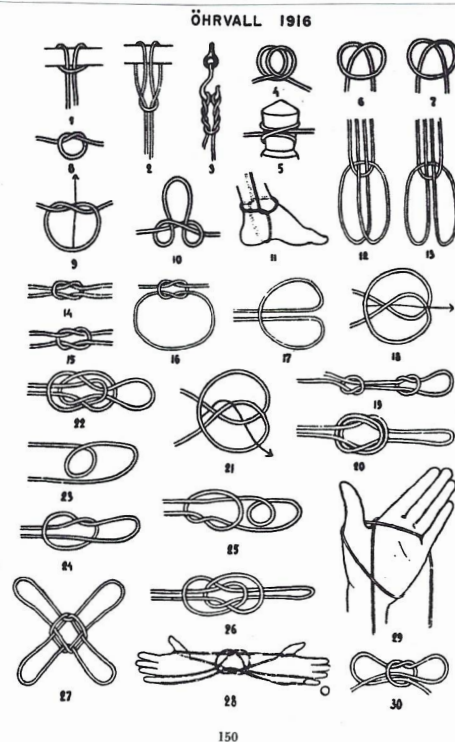
Mnemonic	Instruction
X	Cross working end over the tail
Xa	Cross working end over a strand, Ahead of where the tail crossed the strand
Xb	Cross working end over a strand, behind the tail
Pu	Pull a bight under strand
Po	Pull a bight over strand
Dr	Double the tail to the right
Drc	Double the tail to the right, contrary crossings
Dru	Double the tail to the right, under (same)
Dro	Double the tail to the right, over (same)
DI	Double the tail to the left
Dlu	Double the tail to the left, under (same)
Dlo	Double the tail to the left, over (same)
OKL	Overhand Knot, Left-handed
DOKL	Double Overhand Knot, Left-handed
TOKL	Triple Overhand Knot, Left-handed
TI	Tuck to the left through the overhand knot
Tr	Tuck to the right through the overhand knot
Wr	Weave to the right to complete a regular plait
WI	Weave to the left to complete a regular plait

IGKT-PAB Schedule

There will be no meetings during July and August.

The next scheduled Monthly Meeting of the PAB will be September 10th, 2002 at the Los Angeles Maritime Institute in San Pedro, California at 7:00 PM.

The details of the June AGM will be published when available.



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