

THEN *and* NOW!

Cutting Through The Myths About Knives

(NAPSA)—A rock may not seem like a precision tool, but in the Stone Age, it was on the cutting edge. Early man used pieces of flint and other soft stones to fashion blades for making clothing and shelter. From there, the knife took off, becoming one of the most widely used tools in history. Here's a closer look:

Then

Perhaps one of the best-known American knives gained notoriety when its owner, Jim Bowie, used it to fight at the Alamo. Bowie died in the battle, but was said to have fought bravely. He and his knife soon became the stuff of legends and people across the U.S. began buying the now infamous Bowie Knives.

A second knife, known for its almost countless uses, was invented in 1891 by a man named Karl Elsener. After learning that the Swiss army used knives that were made by Germany, Elsener made it his business to design a knife the Swiss could call their own—the Swiss Army Knife. His company still manufactures knives for the Swiss military today.

Now

Today's pocketknives have become multipurpose tools with virtually every bell and whistle—from screwdrivers, pliers, wire cutters and chisels to bottle openers, flashlights and (of course) knife blades. For instance, a company called Sheffield Mfg. created a miniature multitool that can be fastened to a key chain, as well as a larger one designed specifically for rock climbers, mountain bikers and extreme outdoorsmen. It's a



Multitasker—The pocketknife of yesterday has turned into today's multitool.

heavy-duty, 14-in-1 knife with a lightweight aluminum handle and a "d-ring" that lets users clip the tool to just about anything.

The company also makes a knife for handymen called the Folding Combo Utility Knife. It features a razor-sharp, partially serrated blade on one side of the handle and a traditional utility blade on the other.

The utility and multitool knives of today represent a stark change from the earliest knives on record, or even the specialized Bolo knives used to cut sugarcane in the Philippines or the Machetes used in South America to clear the jungle. Besides being smaller and easier to carry, today's knives tend to have many more uses—a change that either reflects new technology or people's increasing need to multitask.

For more information, visit www.sheffield-tools.com or call (800) 457-0600.