



Queen Cutlery Guide

Queen Hawk & Rawhide Series Lockback Knives, 1982-2000.

Fred Fisher and Dan Lago

The success of the Buck lockbacks (110) soon had every cutlery company making competitive knives. The Hawk Series with its large slanted nickel silver bolsters, striking black staminawood handles, stylish blade etch, and high level of polish, was positioned as the higher-level Queen offering. The Queen Rawhide Series lockbacks, some with brass or no bolsters, and brown wood handles were the other offering. Both series used identical frame patterns, bolster styles, and blade steels. There is very little difference when comparing the similar knives from each series, except for handle colors and blade etches.

The Hawk Series included five folding lockback knives:

The Sparrow Hawk, single blade (Model # 1200) Small lockback frame, 2.88”

The Pigeon Hawk, double blades (Model #1205) Small lockback frame 2.88”

The Duck Hawk, single blade (Model #1210) Medium lockback frame, 4.12”

The Night Hawk, single blade (Model # 1215) Large lockback frame, 5.25”

The Broad-Winged Hawk, double blade (Model #1220) Large lockback frame, 5.25”

Figure 1. The Queen Cutlery Hawk Series, Lockback Knives, 1982-1992



The differing hawk images pictured on the blade etches of the various models are detailed and quite nice. The big etch for the broadwinged hawk is quite impressive.

The Rawhide Series knives were

Minuteman Lock, (Model# 8445), Small Single Blade, 2.88”

Drop Point Hunter, (Model # 4225), Medium Single blade, 4.12”

Paul Revere, (Model # 8450), Large Single Blade, 5.25”

Double Folding Lockback, (Model# 6150), Large 2 locking blades,5.25”



Figure 2. Rawhide Series Lockback models

The Rawhide Series began in 1980, preceding the introduction of the Hawks, and lasted almost twice as long, until 2000. This longer duration is probably why many more variations in Rawhide Series knives can be found. This is true of the #4225 medium lockback, also shown in the photo above in a barehead version. The Paul Revere Lockback also had several cataloged variations, as shown below.



Figure 3. Samples of Rawhide variations in the large lockback, “Paul Revere” #8450

The Paul Revere lockback (top) is shown in a 1982 version – medium brown staminawood. The two lower versions, without bolsters and with brass impressed shields, show two different styles, 1995-6 dark brown with finger grooves (middle), and 1998, stabilized white oak scales with a Broadwinged Hawk etch replacing the usual Paul Revere (bottom).

In 1982, as the new wave of innovation for “collector knives” took hold at Queen, a special version of both the large and small Rawhide lockback were produced with an engraved blade for “Fathers Day, 6-20 -1982,” and black Staminawood scales. Fred Sampson, Queen Master Cutler, and Bob Siple, Queen Director of Sales at that time, both recalled these knives as great sellers – “We made hundreds of them.” Both knives are seldom seen, and neither of your authors, with over 50 years of looking have ever seen a small “minuteman” with this treatment.



Figure 4. Fathers Day version of Paul Revere, #8450



Figure 5. Fathers Day complete, Rawhide Paul Revere #8450



Figure 6. A comparison of the Broadwinged Hawk (right) with the dual lock-back #6150 Rawhide (left)



Figure 6. Three large single blade lock-backs – A Paul Revere in Rawhide series (lowest), A "nighthawk" in the Hawk Series (middle), and a similar knife, (top) sold without the high degree of polish.



Figure 7. Nice picture of a big Rawhide double lockback knife, 5.25".



Figure 8. Two medium size lockbacks, 4" closed for each. The "Duck Hawk" in the Hawk series, (above) and the #4225 in the Rawhide Series (below). These medium sized knives were the most popular of the Queen Lockback knives during the period 1980-2000.



Figure 9. Two examples of the small lockback knife made by Queen in the 1980 and 1990s. The "Pigeon Hawk" (above) is the only dual-blade lockback knife in this size that Queen produced. Rawhide small lockback (bottom), named the "Minute Man," was produced for a longer period of time and is somewhat easier to find, although many of these knives seem to have been carried and used harder.

COMMENT

In general, Hawk Knives were done being produced by 1992, while Rawhide Lockbacks each had a solid 20 years of production from 1980 till 2000. Generally, larger lockback knives outsold small frame knives and single-blade models outsold double blade models. Thus, Hawks are harder to find than Rawhides, and the Pigeon Hawk, the only double-blade small frame knife by Queen, is thus the rarest of this entire regular production group, even though it was offered for the full 10-year production life of this series.

The massive 1980s lockblack knives, with their slab sides, heavy bolsters, and “dated” appearance are not in high favor today. Certainly, other American-made competitors and cheap import copies flooded the markets for a generation. It is easy to overlook these 1980s lockback knives. But their success represents an important transition in preference for folding knives that emphasized size and function over traditional pocket knives. These locking knives looked modern, could replace fixed blade sheath knives, and be carried in a (strong) pocket, or worn on belt with sheath, but less visible than a traditional fixed blade knife.

Their unique design is complemented by some interesting variability in knives offered across the combined Hawk and Rawhide Series. They represent a unique phase of Queen production and provide yet another example of how adaptable the company had been in providing desired cutlery. Although many of these knives sold in huge numbers, it will not be surprising when the higher quality survivors, with sheaths and boxes, start to increase in collector desirability. We like the Hawk Series a bit more because the knives have a name and not just a number, the black and stainless high polish appeals more than the brown, their blade etches are very nice, and they are less common.

At the present time, these knives do not command a hefty price, but with time, the best of these late 20th century knives will have a prominent place in some collections. Probably the mid-size Rawhide #4225 lockback is seen the most and usually provides obvious examples of how hard these knives were used. While still one of the best bets for everyday use, this knife is at the low end of collector interest at this time.

This summary is based on two catalog summaries from Queen's Historical database: first: http://queencutlery.com/uploads/Hawk_Report_1980-2013_7-27-2015.pdf. The second report is for the Rawhide Series: http://queencutlery.com/uploads/Rawhide_Series_7-27-2015.pdf.

Those sources, updated will eventually on this site.