

NEHI Leg Knives

By Dennis Ellingsen (Knife World Magazine June 2025)



This group of Nehi leg knives contains both original 1920 Remington knives and the 1980s reproductions. Which are the originals? The answers can be found on page 6.

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BY DENNIS ELLINGSEN

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I do not recall what caused me to do the research on the Remington Nehi premium advertising knife. I had been aware of the knife since it was offered as a novelty knife in the 1980s. I had only assumed that Remington made one for Nehi in the 1920s era, but I had no proof nor documentation to support this. And for a long while it was not that necessary for me to pursue. But then one day

At the turn of the century in the early 1900s, Royal Crown Cola was bottling a ginger ale drink. In 1905 they introduced Chero-Cola. NEHI, a product of Royal Crown Cola Co, had its debut in the early 1920s as part of the Chero-Cola Company. Chero-Cola was the first flavored soda line; and Nehi was introduced to provide a multi-flavored drink. Since it became so successful, the company then changed its name to Nehi Corporation.

To promote its product, Nehi had many promotional prizes available. In their promotional booklet that appeared in the early 1920s, one could get prizes from wagons to knives. In this first booklet, a lady's leg knife was shown as well as a four blade utility pattern knife. I have no clues to the stamp on these knives. If you saved the requi-



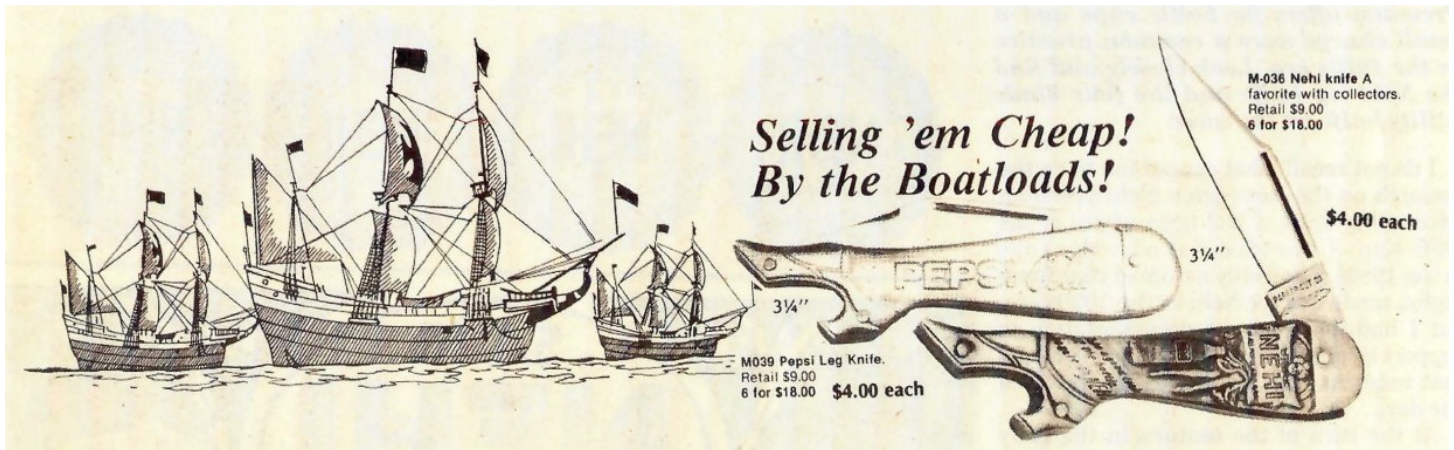
VALUABLE PREMIUMS

Premium offers for bottle caps and a small charge were a common practice in the 1920s era. Look closely and find the Nehi leg knife and the four blade utility knife on the cover.

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This 1982 ad shows the marketing campaign of the reproduction Nehi knives.

site number of Nehi bottle caps and paid a small sum, you could go down to your local store and purchase these premium prizes.

The 1920s vintage coupon booklets were printed by the bazillions and can easily be found on eBay. Just in passing one time, I noted a Nehi premium knife advertised in a booklet with a Remington etch on the blade. The catalog page also showed a Remington four blade utility knife that had been etched with the Remington logo on the main blade. After a about a year of diligent searching, I was again able to locate one of these premium catalogs showing the Remington knives.

As difficult as the booklet was to locate, the offering of the Remington knives must have been short lived too. The booklet gave a date of 1929, which documents when this knife was first offered. A bit of guessing and putting clues together made me think that only one run of this Remington Nehi knife was manufactured. It has been reported that Remington had the ability to produce 10,000 knives a day, so a bunch of knives could be punched out to satisfy the Nehi program. The Depression in the early 1930s would have put a stop to the making of this style knife; and in a 1930 Remington catalog, this leg style pattern R019 was marked discontinued. When considering the rarity of the original Remington knife, it can be surmised that there was a very limited production period.

You wouldn't think the Remington knife to be rare, because a replica knife appeared in the 1980s. These replica knives were made by the bazillions and were sold for very inexpensive prices.

In 1982 Jim Parker sold Nehi reproductions and continued to advertise them for sale into the late 1980s. At one point they first real, in the hand original Remington Nehi knife. I also came upon an advertising knife for Raybestos in the leg pattern that helped me to authenticate my original Remington Nehi. The Raybestos company made friction brakes for automobiles. The Remington Raybestos knife was the same construction and proved both knives to have been made by the same company. After making this discovery I searched on eBay to see how many more originals would show up for sale. Slight few, I found out.

I then thought I would sell the secrets I had found to identify the real Remingtons. Something like 39 Nehi bottle caps and \$39.00 seemed a fair price to recoup my expenditure of many dollars in acquiring knives to discover the secret. But dear elayne is my conscience, and this plan was scrapped.

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On the tang of the reproductions can be found the following markings:

NEHI

NCCO

Remington Made in USA

Remington UMC

Parker Cut Co

Surgical Steel

And on the original we find:

Remington UMC - Made in USA

At one time I thought that I could determine an original Remington by the Made in USA tang stamp. I didn't think that a Japanese made knife would have this mark. But they did. The only differentiation is the original has the UMC mark under the Remington name on the tang. The reproduction has a straight line under the REMINGTON stamp, and the MADE IN USA encircles the Remington mark. But then again there is the tang mark on the reproduction that has the UMC mark but no MADE IN USA around the circle.

All of the reproductions have stainless steel blades, whereas the original Remington has a carbon steel blade. Some of the reproductions appear to be worn and rusted to make them look like they are original, so be careful. Blade steel is difficult to determine in a low-resolution picture.

I studied the originals and the reproductions with a magnifier and finally discovered a few clues to spot differences. One slight variation was the bottle band that was located on the bottom of the bottle shown on the knife. Most reproductions do not have this band shown. But not all. The other minor clue was the size of the rivets. The original Remington versions had smaller rivet heads than the reproductions. This is difficult to spot on a picture, but two knives held side by side reveal this difference. One blatant clue is the positioning of the rivet near the heel of the shoe. If the rivet touches a line or bisects the line, then this is a reproduction. The original designs had the rivet above the line and in the open area of the heel area. But not ALL reproductions follow this rule, as I have a few where the rivet does not bisect or touch the line. There were numerous variations of the reproduction knives, and slight variations within these can easily be found.

(Don't Let Em Fool You)

NEW HAVEN "TOMMY TICKER"
WATCH

Every boy wants one of the famous "Tommy Ticker" Watches, and Daddy should use one of these "True Time Tellers" at least six days in the week. Made of high grade German Nickel, silver dial, non-breakable crystal, octagon shaped. Guaranteed by the manufacturer.

85c and 85 NEHI Crowns.

(Actual Size)

COMBINATION NEHI KNIFE

Especially designed for us by Remington. All metal handle—embossed with NEHI trademark—highest grade steel blade—leg shaped. Heel may be used for bottle opener.

39c and 39 NEHI Crowns.

BOY SCOUT KNIFE

Regulation size, just what every boy wants, and a valuable article to have in the home. Ideal for fishing, hunting and outdoors. Made by Remington of highest grade steel. Stag handle—Nickel Bolsters—Brass lined. Ring in end for hanging or attaching to belt.

66c and 66 NEHI Crowns.



Note the Remington blade etches on these illustrations from a 1929 Nehi coupon booklet.

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Another clue, when applied to all the other clues, is the placement of the rivet just above the ball of the shoe. It appears that the Remington rivet comes close to the bottom of the knife and almost bisects the line on the sole of the shoe. On most reproductions the rivets are placed higher.

But the real clincher to identify real from reproduction lies in the bottle opener feature at the heel of the knife. The original has a pointed sharp piece of steel that is exposed beyond the nickel silver handle. This steel projection was there to get a grip on a bottle cap to open the bottle. No reproductions have this steel projection, but all original style leg knives do have this feature. If you run your finger on this area, you can feel the sharpness of the point.

An eBay sale of one of the reproductions went for over \$150.00. The rivet bisected the line, there was no barrel band and no protrusion of steel spike at the inside heel. I really felt badly, but then it was not my place to jump up and down and yell, "Be careful!" For all I know there could have been several reasons why this went so high, and it was not mine to judge. However it is mine to let people know what I have found out about these knives.

In most knives pictured on eBay, it is really hard to see this pointed projection. On the ones I purchased, I used all the clues to verify if it were true. If the steel projection was visible, I knew it was an original for sure. I now have several original Remington Nehi knives. It was an expensive investment, but somehow it was pleasantly rewarding. It always is rewarding when you discover an answer to a mystery. So bottoms up, and a Nehi toast to the Remington Nehi premium leg knife. DE

An original Nehi leg knife is flanked by two reproductions.

The pointed piece of steel protruding from the inside heel is for gripping the edge of a crown bottle cap for opening.

A clincher to identify an original Remington knife.



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Nehi Group Decoder - this thumbs-up or thumbs-down key to the image on page 1 will tell you which Nehi leg knives are authentic, and which are not.

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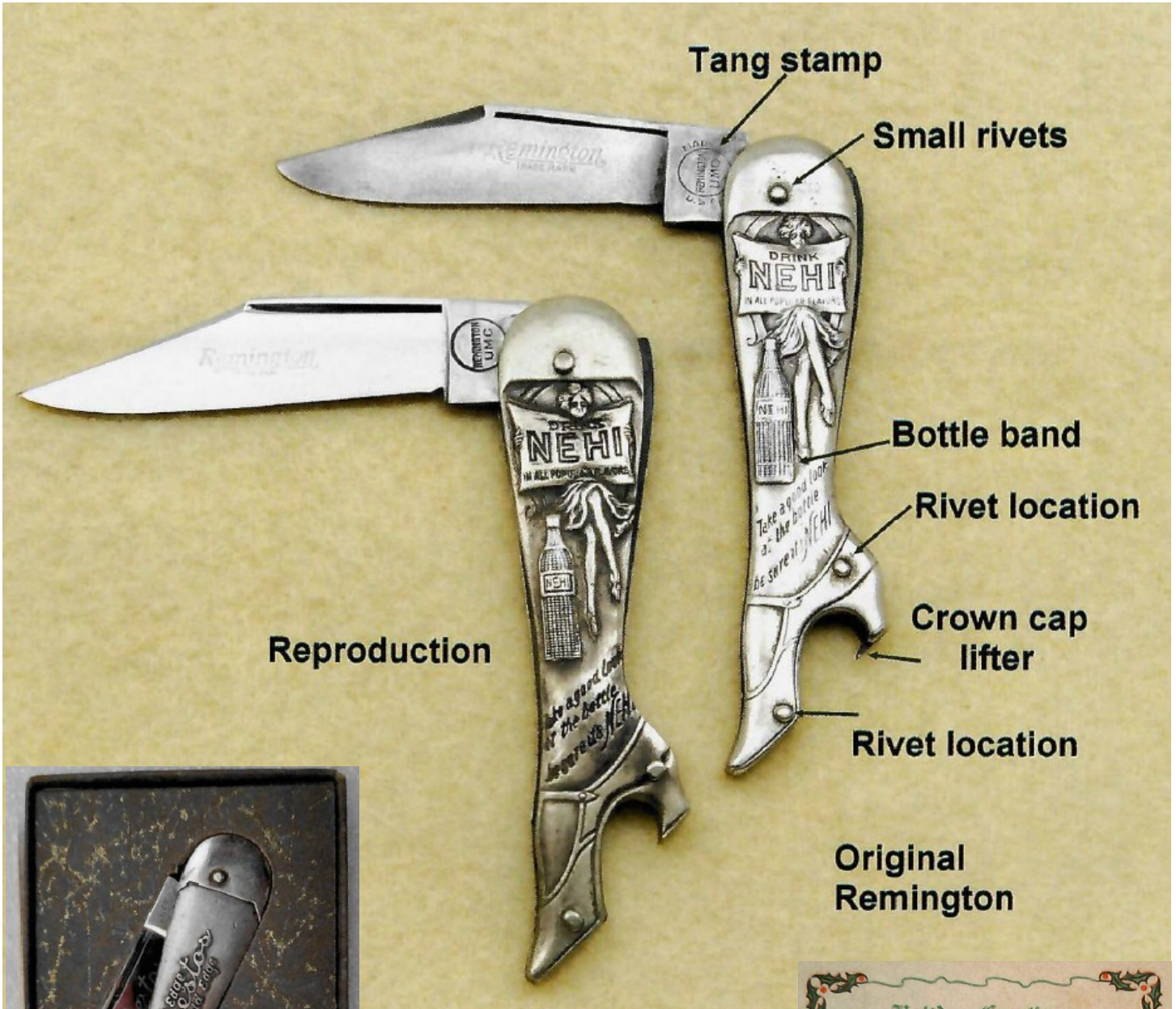
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They do look nice and are well made, but none of these are original 1920s vintage knives.

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Reproduction

Original
Remington



The Raybestos knife pictured here helped to authenticate the original Remington Nehi Knife, as the construction details are identical. Instead of soda pop, the Raybestos company produced automobile brakes.



Christmas card included with the Remington leg knife produced for Raybestos.