



Queen Classics Knives, A Special Factory Order in 2002

Dan Lago, 4-27, 2021

Ken Daniels began his work with Queen Cutlery with some special order knives (SFO) in the late 1990s, using the name and tang mark "Cozy Glen." They are hard knives to find.

However, I think his best early work with Queen was the Queen Classic knives in early 2002, or after, based on the tang mark "PH D2" first cataloged in that year and shown on the tang of any Queen Classic knife I have seen. The name of the series is an allusion to the earlier **Case Classic** knives produced by Queen for Case Cutlery at the very end of the 1980s and early 1990s, and very popular with collectors because of their small edition sizes.

None of the SFO Queen Classic knives were cataloged by Queen. It should be stressed that this series is NOT the same as a short-lived series in 1990-1992 featuring either stainless or carbon steel blades in popular patterns that were featured in Queen catalogs (see references).

These knives all were provided in a two-piece black or brown boxes with a label that showed the same image as the etches on the blades. In a sense, this series previewed the way Schatt and Morgan annual Keystone sets in 2004-2006 were designed, with very individualized labels that exactly matched the knife inside.



Figure 1. Box for Queen City Classic, #29 English Jack, showing serial number on the box label and match between the blade etch and box top label. (See this knife in Figure 7).

The knives were extremely well made, with fine fit and finish, and a variety of quality handle materials, often in very small editions. As an example, the swing guard knives were produced with nine different handles and many of those were made in editions of less than 10, including Abalone, four celluloid swirl designs, one casein, red stag, stag, and dark brown winterbottom. They all tended to use a traditional heraldic shield that was repeated on the box label. Edition sizes are not noted on boxes or knives markings. Like many subsequent Daniels Family Queen knives, there are no records of how many knives of what pattern or handle material were produced.

One of the things I like greatly about these knives is the specificity of the blade etches which show the handle material used in each knife. The following photographs show the etches for stag, red stag, celluloid, casein, and bone. Due to collector concerns about celluloid knives being beautiful to collect, but unstable in certain storage conditions, the celluloid knives were marked so collectors would know what they were buying. Casein, a traditional handle material made of milk protein, but very hard to find in the modern era, but with a great reputation for long term stability was offered (in a beautiful tortoise shell version), to provide collectors with an unusual choice.



Figure 2. Queen #64 canoe, with tortoise shell casein. Note the repetition of the heraldic shield on the blade etch. Each etch shows the handle material on the right of the etch.

All photographs are kept large to permit examinations of blade etches.



Figure 3. A celluloid etch on the blade of a swing guard knife. While the PH-D2 tang mark on the guard is somewhat hard to see, it is there. This image permits a close look at the blade inside its vacuumed-sealed holder. This experiment was begun 13 years ago, and while you can see some old "oil-bumps" on the blade, so far, the knife shows no damage. So, this article has prompted a review of this plan. Maybe time to clean and re-seal this knife.



Figure 4. Two swing guards with light blue and brown swirled handles and "Celluloid" blade etches, both in the same vacuumed-sealed strategy. There are two other celluloid swirl handles- one in yellow and another in bright green in the Queen Classics line.

I will admit this treatment makes the knives not so pleasant to handle, but I was completely depressed when another celluloid knife destroyed itself. So, I am not highly recommending this vacuumed seal method, but it is another approach than keeping celluloid knives in cool and dark storage, or buying knives with no symptoms of "gassing out."



Figure 5. A swing guard in torched Sambar stag with the matching blade etch. The stag on this knife is superb, but the focus in this story is the etches, so no of these images do justice to the attractiveness of the total knives in this series.



Figure 6. A swing guard with a redstag handle and matching etch. One of the features of the swing guards in this series, is NO movement of the guards against the bolster. These knives have a very solid feel. This is one of the things I look for in evaluating a Queen swing guard knife.



Figure 7. An English Jack with a blade etch that shows "Bone." This knife is different from the other Queen Classics in this article in several ways. It shows the "Queen City" script tang stamp on both blades, and it shows the blade etch as "Queen City Classics" (not "Queen cutlery"). Further it shows more of a dog-bone shield with the company initials and a serial number (29) on the mark side bolster. It is a beautiful knife, IMO!

Both the "bone" and "celluloid" etches do not give details of the particular piece – a Winterbottom bone, or this green jigged bone in Figure 7, show the same label. Same with the celluloid etch. We have not seen other etches in this series, but it is entirely possible there may be others. So far, no sign of "acrylic" nor "micarta," for example.

This is a quick run-through of this very interesting Queen Cutlery special Factory order series, and a bit of a preview of the era Daniels Family Ownership of Queen Cutlery. It is preliminary and if any reader has examples of these knives, patterns, handles, and other blade etches, we would be very happy to expand this first effort. Thank you.

References

Queen Classics Carbon and Stainless. [Queen-Classics-stainless-Carbon-10-2019.pdf \(queencutleryguide.com\)](#)