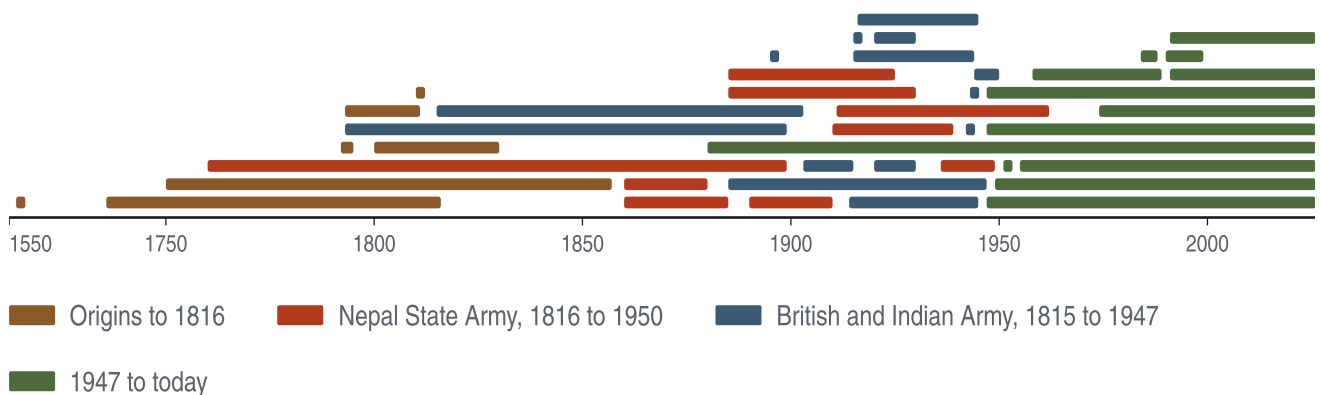
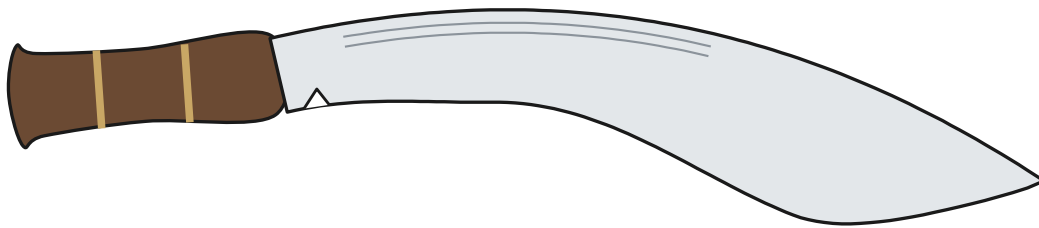


The Military Kukri/Khukuri

From the Gorkhali wars to today: 43 patterns, their dates, armies, makers and marks



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How to use this paper. Chapters 1 to 10 tell the story era by era. The catalogue in chapter 11 gives one entry per pattern; the codes (KK-001 to KK-043) match the interactive Khukuri Timeline at everestforge.com.

About the evidence. No army has published official specifications for its kukris, so much of this history rests on museum records, regimental histories and collector research. Each entry says how sure the dating is, and where sources disagree, both views are given.

Author. Written and researched by Deepak Sunar, founder of Everest Forge.

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1 Introduction

This paper traces the military kukri/khukuri from the wars that built the Gorkhali state in the eighteenth century to the knives issued to soldiers today. It is written for collectors, buyers and anyone trying to identify an old knife, and it supports the numbered pattern index that Everest Forge, a hand-forging workshop in Kathmandu, uses for reproductions.

What the paper covers

The index lists 43 patterns, coded KK-001 to KK-043. When a pattern is mentioned its code follows in brackets, for example the Mk II (KK-016). Some entries are true issue patterns, made to a standard and inspected. Others are types that share a form, a user and a date range, such as the officers' khukuris of the Nepalese army. A few are single important objects, such as the khukuri in the Qianlong Emperor's collection (KK-003). The kora (KK-007), the Gorkhali war sword, is included because early accounts so often confuse it with the khukuri.

The patterns fall into four eras, which overlap because several armies used the kukri at once:

1. **Origins to 1816:** the Gorkhali state up to the Treaty of Sugauli (KK-001 to KK-007).
2. **Nepal State Army, 1816 to 1950:** knives made for Nepal's own army and court (KK-008 to KK-013, KK-035 to KK-037).
3. **British and Indian Army, 1815 to 1947:** knives of Gurkha units in British Indian service (KK-014 to KK-021, KK-038 to KK-043).
4. **1947 to today:** the separate British, Indian, Nepali, Singapore and Brunei lines (KK-022 to KK-034).

Chapter 7 covers the decorated kothimora and the customs around the knife. Chapter 8 explains how to read marks.

Gorkhali, Gurkha and Gorkha

This paper follows the usage set out by the researcher V.K. Kunwor (Kunwor 2012, p.6):

- **Gorkhali:** the people, army and state of Gorkha and Nepal from Prithvi Narayan Shah onward, used here for Nepalese state troops and knives before 1816.
- **Gurkha:** soldiers of the British Army, today's Brigade of Gurkhas.
- **Gorkha:** the town of Gorkha, and the Indian Army regiments that kept that spelling after 1947.

Before 1947 British Indian regiments used several spellings, including "Goorkha". Those spellings help with dating (Chapter 8).

Kukri and khukuri

English sources spell the knife kukri, khukri, khukuri, kookree, cookri and, in 1793, "Khookheri". The Nepali word खुकुरी is closest to "khukuri"; "kukri" is the older British Army spelling. Kunwor uses "kukri" for familiarity while noting that "khukuri" is the proper form (Kunwor 2014a, p.1). This paper uses both. Neither spelling signals a different knife.

How dates are rated

Every date in the index carries one of three ratings:

- **Documented:** a dated inscription or stamp, a museum record or a contemporary written source supports it.
- **Collector research:** experienced collectors and dealers agree, but no official document has been found. Most pattern dates fall here.
- **Uncertain:** one source, a seller's claim, or sources that disagree.

Why so much rests on collector research

No army has published official specifications for its kukris. No Nepalese ordnance document naming patterns has been found (Judkins 2012a). For the British Indian Army, no adoption record for any Mark has been located, and the dates of 1903, 1915 and 1943 come from collectors (spiral 2009; seitengewehr.de n.d.). For the period after 1951, no British, Indian or Nepali specification was found at all.

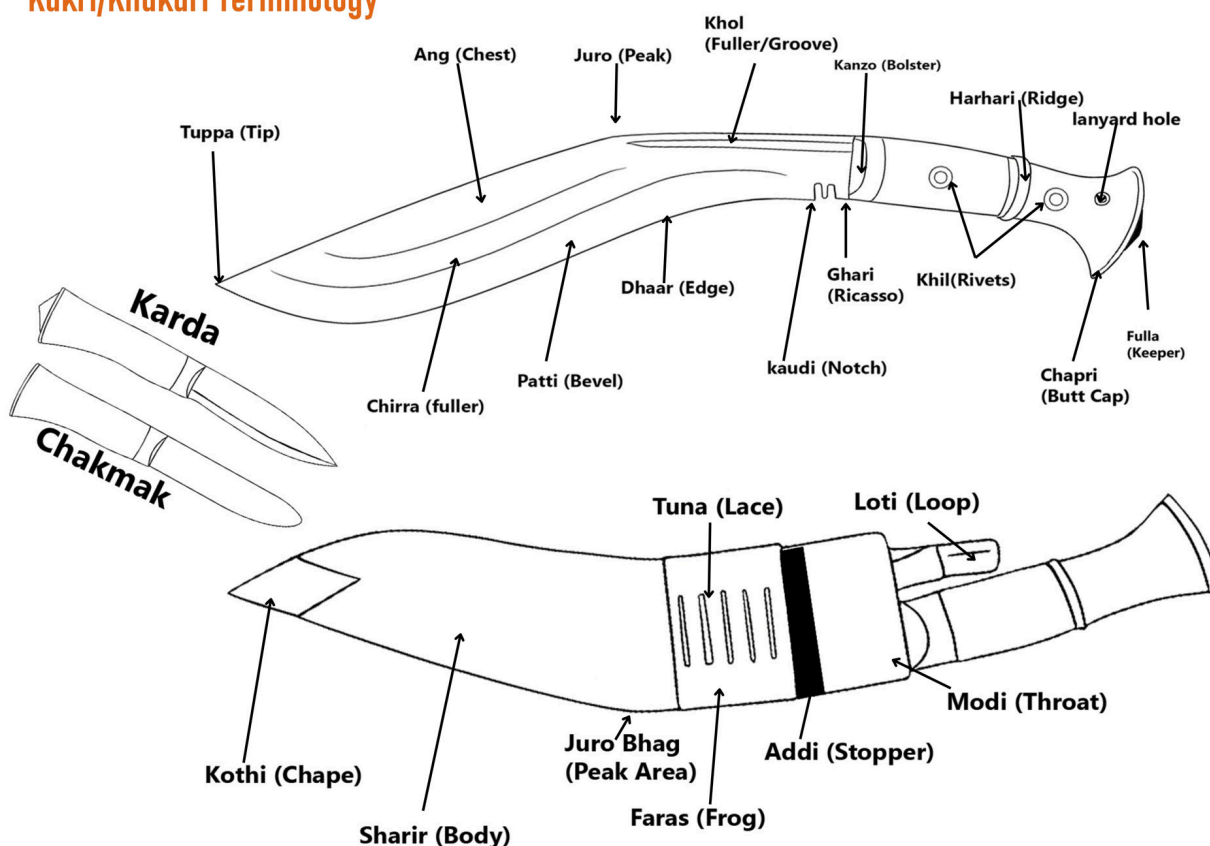
Most of what is known comes from a few researchers: Ben Judkins on the Nepalese arsenal knives (Judkins 2012a), the collector who posts as “spiral” on the British Marks (spiral 2009, 2015), Peter Dekker of Mandarin Mansion on early pieces, and Kunwor, whose papers publish his collection and gather two centuries of written descriptions. Names such as “Mk I”, “Long Leaf” and “Bhojpure” are collector or trade labels, and the paper says so where it uses them.

2 Anatomy of a military kukri/khukuri

A kukri/khukuri is a forward-curved, single-edged knife with its weight well towards the point, so it chops like a small axe and cuts like a knife. Kunwor gives a typical example as a blade of 30 to 35 cm bent forward about 20 degrees, a spine up to about 1 cm thick and a handle of 10 to 13 cm (Kunwor 2007, p.1). Military patterns run from a blade of about 23 cm on modern Nepali Army issue to nearly 40 cm on the Military Budhume (KK-009).

Smiths in Nepal have their own name for every part. The diagram uses the Nepali terms with the English in brackets, and this paper uses both. Each label in the diagram links to the full terminology guide on everestforge.com.

Kukri/Khukuri Terminology



Kukri/khukuri terminology, Nepali names with English in brackets. Select any label, or see the full [kukri/khukuri terminology guide](http://everestforge.com) on everestforge.com.

The blade

- **Tuppa (tip):** the point.
- **Ang (chest):** the broad, deep part of the blade ahead of the bend, where the weight sits. A broad ang makes a heavy chopper; a slim one, a faster blade.
- **Juro (peak):** the high point of the spine where the blade bends forward.

- **Dhaar (edge):** the sharpened inner curve, hardened more than the spine.
- **Patti (bevel):** the ground slope that runs down to the dhaar.
- **Khol and chirra (fuller or groove):** grooves that save weight and stiffen the blade. The khol runs under the spine; chirra are the grooves along the blade face. Nepali usage counts them: *dui chirra* (two), *tin chirra* (three), *char chirra* (four) (Kunwor 2012, p.6). Spine thickness at the handle helps separate patterns, from 7 to 8 mm on the Military Sirupate (KK-008) to 13 mm on the Classic Gurkha Army Kukri (KK-010) (Judkins 2012a).
- **Kaudi (notch):** the small notch in the edge near the handle, also called the cho, kauri or kaura. It ranges from a barely cut curve on the earliest knives to carved, elaborate forms, and some wartime knives omit it. Practical explanations include a drip point for blood or sap; religious readings link it to Shiva (Kunwor 2015b, p.9).
- **Ghari (ricasso):** the short unsharpened section between the kaudi and the handle, where issue knives often carry their stamps.

The handle and tang

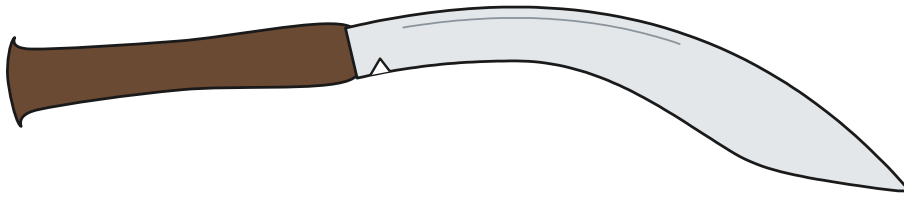
- **Kanzo (bolster):** the metal collar where blade meets handle. The Mk II (KK-016) has a steel kanzo; the Mk III (KK-020) has none (spiral 2015).
- **Harhari (ridge):** the raised rings around the grip that give purchase and help identify makers.
- **Khil (rivets):** the pins that hold the handle scales to a full tang, as on the Mk III.
- **Chapri (butt cap):** the metal fitting at the end of the handle. Nepalese arsenal knives had a steel plate fixed with two hand-threaded screws (Kunwor 2013, p.3).
- **Fulla (keeper):** the small fitting at the butt that holds the tang, often with a **lanyard hole** for a wrist cord.
- **Handle material:** usually wood or water-buffalo horn; walnut and the hill timber *pat-pate* are recorded (Gurkha Museum 1994, cited in Kunwor 2014a, p.30). Some military kukris have metal handles.
- **Tang:** a partial, stick or rat-tail tang runs inside a one-piece handle and is set in resin, or peened or nutted at the butt. All the Nepalese arsenal types have partial tangs in glued, replaceable grips (Judkins 2012a), and the Mk I (KK-015) has a full-length rat-tail tang ending in a recessed nut (spiral 2009). A full or slab tang is as wide as the handle, with two scales held by khil.

The scabbard and companion knives

- **Sharir (body):** the scabbard itself, usually a wooden core covered in leather. Military scabbards are often stamped separately from the knife.
- **Juro bhag (peak area):** the bend of the scabbard that follows the juro of the blade.
- **Kothi (chape):** the metal tip of the scabbard, usually brass on issue pieces. A decorated, often silver, kothi gives the kothimora its name (Chapter 7).
- **Modi (throat):** the mouth of the scabbard where the blade enters.
- **Addi (stopper):** the band near the throat that stops the frog sliding.
- **Faras (frog):** the leather or webbing holder that carries the scabbard on a belt.
- **Tuna (lace):** the lacing that ties the faras to the scabbard.
- **Loti (loop):** the small loop that secures the knife in the scabbard.

- **Karda:** a small companion knife carried in a pocket on the back of the scabbard. The Beijing khukuri carries three (Dekker n.d.d).
- **Chakmak:** a blunt hardened steel for touching up the edge and striking fire.

3 Origins to 1816



A long-hilted hanshee fighting khukuri, the form carried in the Gorkhali wars. Drawing by Everest Forge.

The popular image of the kukri/khukuri as an ancient Gurkha war knife goes well beyond what surviving objects and records show. This chapter separates evidence from tradition for KK-001 to KK-007.

Theories of origin

The origin theories are hypotheses or legends, not history.

- **Greek and Indian ancestry.** The kukri is often linked to the Greek kopis, supposedly brought to India by Alexander's army, and to the Indian *nistrimsa* sabre. Kunwor traces a longer chain back to the Egyptian khopesh but calls it speculation and gives no sources (Kunwor 2007, pp.2-7). Dekker places the khukuri in a family of forward-curved blades with the Ottoman yatagan, suggests it may have reached Nepal from Bengal, and notes that none of this is generally accepted (Dekker n.d.a).
- **Early dates.** A claimed 7th-century origin has no traceable source (Wikipedia n.d.a). The 13th-century date given by the Gurkha Welfare Trust and on a National Army Museum label (GWT n.d.a; Kunwor 2014a, p.50) is not supported by any object.
- **Divine and local origins.** Tradition holds that the gods gave the khukuri to King Drabya Shah to found the kingdom (Kunwor 2007, p.6).

A forward-angled blade has a long history across Asia, but no chain of dated objects connects any ancient blade to the khukuri.

The Drabya Shah khukuris (KK-001)

The National Museum of Nepal at Chhauni displays a case labelled as the weapons of Drabya Shah, king of Gorkha from 1559 to 1570, including two slender khukuris (Kunwor 2015b, p.9). The published dates disagree. Kunwor gives about 1550 (Kunwor 2012, p.10). Bammi and a BBC report give 1627, after Drabya Shah's reign (cited in Kunwor 2014a, pp.39, 43). Dekker judges the attribution a likely mistake, because the knives match the long-hilted hanshee form of the late 18th or early 19th century (Dekker n.d.b). No catalogue number, measurements or inscriptions are published. **Rating: Uncertain;** the attribution is a museum tradition that cannot yet be tested.

The first securely dated khukuri (KK-003)

The earliest khukuri with a secure history is in the Qianlong Emperor's collection at the Palace Museum, Beijing. It was acquired about 1792 to 1795, as a capture in the Sino-Nepalese War or a gift from a Nepalese tribute mission, and is published in the museum's *Qing gong Wubei* (2008, vol. 56, p.151). Dekker states that no other khukuri has a solid 18th-century provenance (Dekker n.d.d).

Rating: Documented. Its features differ from later knives: a moderate curve with no hump on the spine, a stubby hilt with little pommel flare, a very shallow cho with no tooth, a strongly recurved scabbard with a large chape, and three karda plus a chakmak in slots on both sides. No measurements are published, so any reproduction is a reconstruction.

Kirkpatrick's plate (KK-004) and the V&A khukuri (KK-005)

The first European picture is the "Khookheri & Khora" plate in Colonel William Kirkpatrick's account of his 1793 mission (Kirkpatrick 1811, pp.118-119). It shows the khukuri in its scabbard beside a kora, so the blade cannot be seen (Kunwor 2012, p.1). Kirkpatrick treats the knife mainly as a tool for lopping branches and clearing roads (Dekker n.d.a), and recorded that a soldier's class was judged by the number of koras he mustered (Kunwor 2012, p.2). Kunwor reads the scabbard as a decorated kothimora belonging to a noble (Kunwor 2012, pp.3-5). **Rating: Documented** as an image.

The Victoria and Albert Museum's slim khukuri 3095(IS) is 19 in (48.3 cm) long and 1.5 in (3.8 cm) wide, with a wooden hilt damascened in gold flowers. It came from the India Museum in 1879 and is Egerton catalogue no. 314. The V&A dates it to the early 19th century (V&A 3095(IS)); Dekker places it in the late 18th (Dekker n.d.a). **Rating: Documented** object, disputed date.

The hanshee (KK-002)

The hanshee, also hamsiya or lambendh, is a long-hilted fighting khukuri with a long, narrow, strongly curved blade and a handle of at least 13 cm. The earliest clear picture is in the Fraser Album drawings of Gurkha soldiers made at Saharanpur in July 1815. Comparable museum pieces include Pitt Rivers 1886.1.33.1, collected before 1830 (Dekker n.d.b). Kunwor, via Dekker, says it was popular in the unification wars of about 1750 to 1770 and stayed in use until 1857 (Dekker n.d.b); elsewhere he extends it into the early 1900s (Kunwor 2007, p.8). One mid-19th-century example in his collection is 52 cm overall (Kunwor 2015a, no.2). The name may borrow from *hasiya*, a village sickle (Kunwor 2015b, p.11), and the story that it was a "ladies' khukuri" is folklore. **Rating: Collector research.**

The chupri bayonet khukuri (KK-006)

The chupri has a socket for mounting on a musket muzzle. Inscriptions on some point to about 1810, some invoke Gorakhnath, and a few may have served into the 20th century (Judkins 2012a). Toker wrote that early Gorkhali troops seem to have had a way of fixing the kukri to the firelock (Toker 1957, p.276, cited in Kunwor 2014a, p.26). **Rating: Documented** from inscriptions; service span uncertain.

The kora (KK-007)

The kora is the heavy forward-curved sword with a broad tip that was the main Gorkhali fighting blade. Two koras in the Royal Danish Kunstkammer have been recorded since 1674, a century before the earliest provenanced khukuri; they are straighter and slimmer than later ones. Koras associated

with the battle of Kirtipur in the 1760s are kept at the Bagbhairab temple in Kathmandu (Dekker n.d.c). The kora is now mainly a sacrificial blade (Kunwor 2007, p.7). **Rating: Documented.**

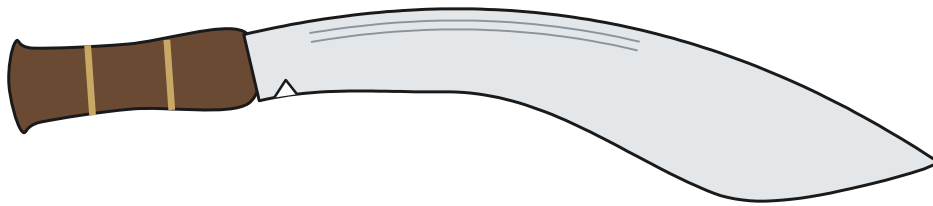
The unification and the Anglo-Nepalese War

The khukuri was in Gorkhali use during Prithvi Narayan Shah's conquest of the Nepal valley in 1768–69. Judkins describes it as a reserve weapon behind bow, spear or sword, with a blade of about 33 cm, but names no primary source (Judkins 2012b). The khukuris of Prithvi Narayan Shah, Kalu Pande, Amar Singh Thapa, Balbhadra Kunwar and Bhimsen Thapa are said to be in the National Museum (Kunwor 2014a, p.40; Limbu 2002), but no catalogue data is published. **Rating: Uncertain** for individual attributions.

British and Gorkhali forces first fought at Nalapani (Kalanga), held by Balbhadra Kunwar from 31 October to 30 November 1814. The war ended with the Treaty of Sugauli, ratified on 4 March 1816. Its records complicate the “kukri charge” image. British accounts of Kalanga and of an ambush at Ryla in 1815 describe “semicircular and heavy swords” (Mill and Wilson 1846, cited in Dekker n.d.c), which were koras. The khukuri appears as a sidearm: an Adjutant-General's letter of 27 December 1814 describes a large knife worn at the waist (Dekker n.d.a), and a painting of 1815 by Ali Khan Ghulam at the Gurkha Museum shows it worn at the front (Kunwor 2012, p.2).

British recruiting began during the war. The Nasiri battalion (later 1st Gurkha Rifles), the Sirmoor battalion (later 2nd) and a Kumaon battalion (later 3rd) were raised in 1815 (NAM n.d.). From here the khukuri's history splits into the Nepalese and British Indian lines of the next two chapters.

4 Nepal State Army, 1816 to 1950



The Classic Gurkha Army Kukri, sold as the Long Leaf, from the Nepal arsenal. Drawing by Everest Forge.

After Sugauli, Nepal kept its own army, controlled from 1846 by the Rana family of hereditary prime ministers. Its kukris/khukuris were made in Nepal, largely by hand, and kept in state arsenals. This chapter covers KK-008 to KK-013 and KK-035 to KK-037.

The Lagan Silekhana cache

Most of what is known comes from one event. In 2003 International Military Antiques (IMA) and Atlanta Cutlery bought the old arsenal stock at the Lagan Silekhana palace in Kathmandu (Kunwor 2013, p.3). Judkins estimates it held 14,000 to 15,000 khukuris from the mid-19th century to after the Second World War. No inventory was made, and most scabbards had rotted, so the knives were sold bare (Judkins 2012a).

Judkins' 2012 typology, with measured samples, is the reference every later source uses. He presented the names as working labels, and no Nepalese document naming patterns has been found, so every name below is collector-derived; dealers' trade names are given as aliases. All the types have a partial tang in a glued, replaceable wooden grip (Judkins 2012a), and were originally fitted with a steel butt plate held by two hand-cut screws. Many plates were later removed, so a missing plate is normal (Kunwor 2013, pp.2-3).

Military Sirupate (KK-008)

A long, lean blade with a shallow, elongated cho: overall 40 to 45.5 cm, blade 29.8 to 35 cm, spine 7 to 8 mm, weight 400 to 614 g. About 300 to 400 were in the cache. Judkins dates it no earlier than 1850, probably about 1860 to 1880 (Judkins 2012a). "Sirupate", a blade shaped like a leaf of *siru* grass, stayed in wide use; Kunwor shows metal-handled sirupates carried privately in the Second World War, one by a sergeant of a British regiment in Burma (Kunwor 2014a, p.33). **Rating: Collector research**; date uncertain.

Military Budhume (KK-009)

A very broad, heavy blade with a finely carved cho and the two-screw butt plate: overall 48.5 to 50 cm, blade 38.5 to 39.5 cm, spine 9 to 11 mm, weight 759 to 907 g. Every example Judkins saw bore a stamp read as "papu", of unknown meaning. He dates it about 1890 to 1910 (Judkins 2012a). *Budhume* is

recorded in a 1931 Nepali dictionary as “squat, short” (Dekker n.d.e). **Rating: Collector research.**

Classic Gurkha Army Kukri, “Long Leaf” (KK-010)

A hatchet-like blade, made by hand but in quantity, and about 30% of the cache: overall 45.2 to 48 cm, blade 34 to 37 cm, spine 9 to 13 mm, weight 579 to 892 g (Judkins 2012a). IMA sells it at about 18 in (45.7 cm) overall (IMA n.d.a). Most carry the spine inscription “Shree Teen Chandra”, for Chandra Shumsher, prime minister 1901 to 1929, followed by a unit abbreviation and rack numbers (Judkins 2012a). This is the most reliable dating anchor in Nepalese military knives. IMA’s earlier date is discussed in Chapter 9. **Rating: Documented** dating by inscription; collector research for the type.

Short Gurkha Army Kukri, “Bhojpure” (KK-011)

A shorter, broader blade, 50 to 60% of the cache: overall 41 to 42.5 cm, blade 31.5 to 32 cm, width 5.5 to 6.5 cm, spine 9 to 12 mm, weight 495 to 650 g. A Nepalese figure mark often appears on the handle base, and some have a diamond-shaped cho (Judkins 2012a). IMA sells it at about 16 in (40.6 cm) (IMA n.d.b). Here “Bhojpure” is a trade name for a proportion class, not proof of manufacture in Bhojpur. Some examples bear First World War dates and the British broad arrow, perhaps because the Nepalese contingent that garrisoned India from 1915 to 1918 was allowed to take its issued arms home (Husain, cited in Kunwor 2013, p.10). **Rating: Collector research;** date disputed (Chapter 9).

Late Gurkha Army Kukri, “WWI Vintage” (KK-012)

A thinner, more uniform blade showing machine grinding, usually with three shallow fullers: overall 42.5 to 46.5 cm, blade 32.1 to 34 cm, spine 7 to 9 mm, weight 547 to 671 g. Judkins dates it, as a rough guess, to the late 1930s and 1940s, possibly later, and calls the “WWI” label wrong (Judkins 2012a). **Rating: Collector research;** date uncertain.

Tulwar-hilt khukuri (KK-013)

A few khukuris have a disc guard and pommel like a tulwar or kora. IMA sold one gold-inlaid example from the cache, noting only a very few were found (IMA n.d.c). Kunwor’s example is 58 cm overall, and he dates the type from about 1760 to the late 19th century (Kunwor 2015a, no.1); the Metropolitan Museum’s 36.25.828a-d is another (Kunwor 2014b, p.4). One collector suspects some such hilts were fitted later to Chandra-era blades to appeal to buyers. **Rating: Uncertain.**

Officers’ khukuris (KK-035, KK-036)

The Nepalese army’s officers carried better-made khukuris with engraved emblems, known mainly from Kunwor’s papers.

- **Rana Lion mark (KK-035), c.1860 to 1885:** a blade engraved with a lion holding the Nepali flag. A matching piece in the National Museum belonged to General Jagat Shumsher Rana (Kunwor 2015a, no.7). **Rating: Collector research.**
- **Sun and Lion mark (KK-036), c.1885 to 1925:** a sun on one face and a lion on the other, some inscribed “Sri Shakteya” with a number, on horn hilts with metal bolster rings (Kunwor 2015a, no.16; Kunwor 2013, p.5; Kunwor 2014a, p.29). **Rating: Collector research,** with one dated example.

That dated example was presented by General Sir Tej Shumsher Jung Bahadur Rana, who commanded part of the Nepalese contingent in India in the First World War. Its steel butt plate, fixed with two screws in the arsenal manner, is engraved with his name, his KCIE and the date 6.1.20 (6 January 1920). It is a full-size military khukuri with a leather scabbard, cloth frog and two small knives, and it was found in the United Kingdom, not in the arsenal stock (Kunwor 2013, pp.1-3). No measurements are published.

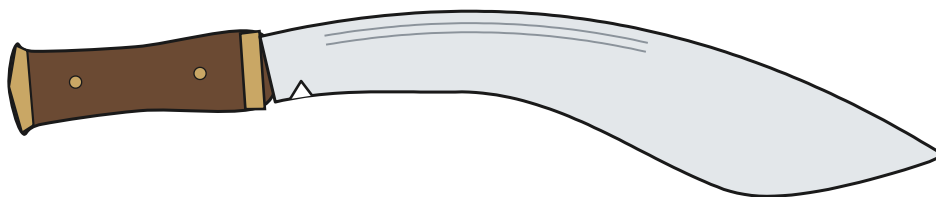
Rana and royal state kothimoras (KK-037), c.1911 to 1962

The Nepalese court gave decorated kothimoras as diplomatic and personal gifts. Their mounts carry the Nepal coat of arms (at least 1911 to 1962) or the Rana Maharaja's arms (late 1920s to late 1940s), and some carry a Nepali numeral: 5 for *Shree Panch*, the king, or 3 for *Shree Teen*, the prime minister. One was given to a bodyguard on the Prince of Wales's Nepal hunt of December 1921 (Kunwor 2015a, nos.17-24). **Rating: Collector research.**

Was there a single issue pattern?

Probably not. Comparing variations in Judkins' collection, Kunwor concludes that the Nepalese army had no single standard model in the First World War: several styles were in use, made by hand in workshops around the Kathmandu valley (Kunwor 2013, pp.4-7). Vansittart recorded in 1896 that every Nepalese soldier carried a kukri as well as his bayonet (cited in Kunwor 2014a, p.16). Which districts supplied the arsenals is undocumented.

5 British and Indian Army, 1815 to 1947



The Mk II, issued from 1915 through the Second World War. Drawing by Everest Forge.

For most of the 19th century there was no British issue kukri/khukuri. Standard patterns began in the early 20th century, and the British Indian Army used three before independence. This chapter covers KK-014 to KK-021 and KK-038 to KK-043.

Privately bought knives and the Longleaf (KK-014), c.1815 to 1903

An 1871 account states that each recruit brought his own kukri on enlistment and wore it on the right side in a leather frog (cited in Kunwor 2014a, pp.10-11). Battalions carried knives bought privately or by the unit from Nepalese and Indian makers (seitengewehr.de n.d.). Period writers describe a long, heavy knife: a blade of 14 to 16 in in 1852 (Smith 1852, p.250) and about 20 in from handle to point in the 1890s (Vansittart, cited in Kunwor 2014a, pp.14-16).

Spiral calls the dominant form the Longleaf: blade 14¾ to 16 in (37.5 to 40.6 cm), about 19 to 20 in overall, 25 to 32 oz (709 to 907 g). British Gurkha Longleafs were generally finer than the Nepalese army's, often with a T-section spine suited to parade and inspection (spiral 2015). "Longleaf" thus names two knives, this one and the Nepalese CGAK (KK-010), and the index keeps them apart. No Sirmoor or 2nd Gurkhas regimental pattern is documented; modern "Sirmoor" kukris are commercial names. **Rating: Collector research.**

The Mk I (KK-015), c.1903 to 1915

The first standard pattern had a full-length rat-tail tang through a one-piece walnut grip, ending in a slotted nut recessed into the butt, and was heavy at the front. Blade 13¾ to 14 in (33.7 to 35.6 cm), about 17¼ to 17¾ in overall, 24 to 35 oz (680 to 992 g) (spiral 2009, 2015). The name was applied later, by working back from the stamped "II" of its successor (seitengewehr.de n.d.).

Most are unmarked. Some 1915 pieces carry the "Co." of Cossipore Arsenal, and inspection marks of Fort William (FW), Quetta (QA) and Rawalpindi (RP) occur (spiral 2009). Kunwor publishes a piece stamped "Q.A 5.05", read as Quetta Arsenal, May 1905, with Army Bearer Corps numbers on handle and scabbard, so the Mk I also went to non-Gurkha support units (Kunwor 2015a, no.9). He dates the

Mk I more widely, to about 1900–1920s (Kunwor 2014a, pp.27, 32), and shows slim and broad-bellied variants (Kunwor 2014a, p.18). One weapon profile gives it a 12 in blade, contradicting every measured example (Militaria.co.uk n.d.). **Rating: Collector research.**

The Mk II (KK-016), 1915 to about 1944

The Mk II has a steel bolster and butt cap with grip scales riveted to the tang, and is the only Mark that carries a stamped “II” (seitengewehr.de n.d.). Blade $13\frac{1}{4}$ to $13\frac{3}{4}$ in (33.7 to 34.9 cm), about $17\frac{1}{2}$ in overall, 20 to 28 oz (567 to 794 g); Second World War pieces are usually heavier (spiral 2015). Recorded First World War makers are Cossipore, the main maker from 1915 to 1919, GDB & Co., DHW, E. Boota Singh & Sons and AS & Sons; Ishapore made a small batch in 1926–27. Second World War makers include ATD (Army Traders, Dharan), MIL, Pioneer of Calcutta, Queera Bros and JNB (spiral 2009, 2015), and Kunwor adds Mukand Iron & Steel Works of Lahore (Kunwor 2015a, no.32). Wartime scabbards are black leather with an integral frog, some canvas-covered.

Issue Mk IIs had steel bolsters, never brass, so brass-bolstered “Mk IIs” are considered fakes, and fake regimental marks are being added to genuine blades (spiral 2009, 2015). **Rating: Collector research;** the “II” stamp is documented.

The Enfield-inspected kukri (KK-017), 1915 to 1916

A rare, light British-made kukri with a rat-tail tang, birch hilt and often a recessed ricasso: blade $12\frac{1}{4}$ to $12\frac{3}{4}$ in (31.1 to 32.4 cm), 15 to 17 oz (425 to 482 g). It carries Enfield inspection marks and was made by S&J Kitchin of Sheffield (spiral 2015). Fewer than about 15 are known, and fakes exist. **Rating: Uncertain.**

The Jodhpur aluminium-hilt kukri (KK-018)

A cast white-metal or aluminium handle with rings, a flat unfullered blade and a quick-draw scabbard, about 46 to 48 cm overall. Kunwor attributes it to Jodhpur state troops in the First World War, citing similar pieces in the Mehrangarh Museum, and records a trident stamp (Kunwor 2015a, no.11). Other collectors date it to about 1945. **Rating: Uncertain** (Chapter 9).

Battalion and emergency kukris (KK-038, KK-019)

When government supply ran short, battalions made their own.

- **Battalion Issue Sirupate (KK-038), c.1914 to 1945:** a slim sirupate blade made by or for the battalion, outside the War Office pattern, with a stick tang peened over an oval metal butt plate. The ricasso is stamped with battalion, company and soldier’s number, for example “2/8 GR” and “4726” (Kunwor 2018, pp.3–5). The 8th Gurkhas’ history records that the regimental centre set up its own kukri workshops, working from scrap such as car springs (Huxford 1952, p.277, cited in Kunwor 2018, p.3). **Rating: Documented.**
- **Emergency slab-hilt kukri (KK-019), 1942 to 1943:** coarse, with no cho, by makers marked SCW and Siraj, probably made in railway workshops. Fakes exist (spiral 2015). **Rating: Uncertain.**

The Mk III (KK-020), 1943 onward

The Mk III dropped the bolster for a full-width slab tang with large rivets and a sturdier butt cap, with a more angular, slightly hollow-ground blade: about 12¼ in (31.1 cm) of blade, about 17 in overall, 19 to 26 oz (539 to 737 g) (spiral 2015; IMA n.d.d). Recorded makers include WSC, CMW of Calcutta, HW, Mil, “P.C. Co.,” Chowdri and DKW, mostly dated 1944–45 (spiral 2009), and Kunwor adds “MG” (Kunwor 2015a, no.33). Its start date is discussed in Chapter 9. Blade length shrinks steadily across the period: about 15 to 16 in on the Longleaf, 13½ to 14 on the Mk I, 13¼ to 13¾ on the Mk II and 12¼ on the Mk III. **Rating: Collector research.**

Officers’ mess kukri (KK-041), c.1944 to 1950

Standard blades, especially the Mk III, sometimes appear on ivory or bone handles, usually taken to be officers’ or “mess” kukris (Kunwor 2012, p.5). Kunwor shows a Mk III with a hexagonal-section handle, dated about 1944 to 1950 (Kunwor 2015a, no.34). **Rating: Collector research.**

Inter-war regimental kukris (KK-039, KK-040)

- **4th Gurkhas Bakloh contractor kukri (KK-039), c.1920 to 1930:** blades acid-etched with the 4th Gurkha Rifles badge, the British royal arms, Union flags and crossed kukris, signed by the contractor Lal Sing of Bakloh, the regimental depot. One is spine-dated 1925 (Kunwor 2015a, nos.26, 28). Fewer than 20 antique 4th Gurkhas kukris are known (Kunwor n.d., p.7). **Rating: Collector research.**
- **Regimental Dashain kukri (KK-040), c.1920 to 1930:** a kukri over 60 cm long marked to the 4th Gurkhas, which Kunwor believes was made for the Dashain sacrifice (Kunwor 2014a, p.41). **Rating: Collector research.**

Kothimoras before 1947 (KK-021, KK-042) and the Afghan kukri (KK-043)

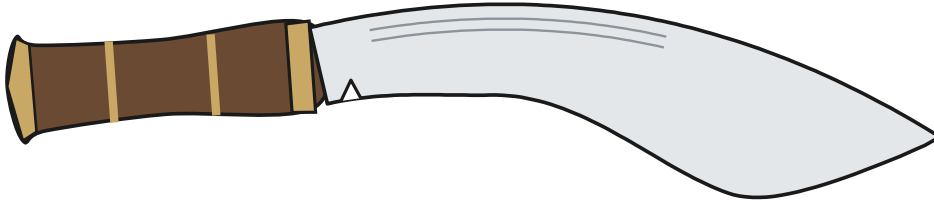
Decorated kothimoras were made for British and Gurkha officers throughout the period: the older tradition under KK-021 and the regimental pieces of armourers and contractors under KK-042. Both are described in Chapter 7.

Kunwor also publishes a khukuri with a blade between the Mk I and Budhume forms and an arsenal stamp he reads as Mazar-i-Sharif, dated 1895, 51.5 cm overall; he knows fewer than ten (Kunwor 2015a, no.8). It shows an Afghan arsenal making the form. His suggested link to Gurkha service in Afghanistan is speculation. **Rating: Collector research** for the object.

The kukri in the world wars

A 1914 press report noted that Gurkhas in Europe kept the kukri alongside rifle and bayonet (cited in Kunwor 2014a, p.19). Subedar Lal Bahadur Thapa of the 1/2nd Gurkhas won the Victoria Cross in Tunisia in 1943 fighting with kukri and pistol (Kunwor 2014a, pp.23–24). Many non-Gurkha troops also carried kukris, usually as private purchases (Flook 1999, cited in Kunwor 2014a, p.32).

6 1947 to today



The modern British Gurkha service kukri. Drawing by Everest Forge.

Indian independence split the Gurkha regiments: under the 1947 Tripartite Agreement four went to the British Army and six stayed with India. The agreement also covers the soldiers' right to carry the kukri/khukuri (Bammi 2009, p.167, cited in Kunwor 2014a, p.41). This chapter covers KK-022 to KK-034. No official specification was found for any pattern in it, and where a fact comes only from a maker or seller, the text says so.

British Army: the Wilkinson trial (KK-022), 1951

The Gurkha Museum records that Wilkinson Sword made about 1,400 kukris in 1951 to test moving production to Britain. Issued in Malaya, they failed because the edges were hard to resharpen on campaign, and production stayed in Nepal (Gurkha Museum n.d.a). **Rating: Documented.** A dealer adds that the design was dated 12 October 1950 and the knives were stamped "WSC 51", with chromed fittings, karda and chakmak (Great Scott Antiques n.d.a). Spiral believes about a dozen survive (spiral 2015). Collectors call it the "Mk IV"; the number is not official.

British Army: the Nepal-made line (KK-023 to KK-027)

From the late 1950s or early 1960s the Brigade of Gurkhas used a shorter, lighter Nepal-made kukri, which spiral links to the issue of the SLR and Sterling. Through the 1980s the blade was about 11 in (27.9 cm) and the weight 14 to 17 oz (397 to 482 g), with contracts let annually to the lowest bidder (spiral 2007, 2015). Collectors call it the "Mk V" and the trade "BAS" or "BSI"; none is official (KK-023, **collector research**). In the mid-1980s higher-grade pieces stamped "Ordep Nepal" with a date were made at the British base at Dharan (KK-024, **uncertain**), and in the 1990s a 10¼ in (26 cm), 17 to 19 oz version became common (KK-025, **collector research**) (spiral 2015).

Since about the early 1990s every British Gurkha recruit has received two kukris, one for parade and ceremony and one for training and general use (GWT n.d.b): Service No.1 (KK-026) and Service No.2 (KK-027). Gurkhas carry no bayonet; the kukri is their close-quarters weapon (Forces News 2025).

Rating: Documented for the two-kukri issue. The detailed specification comes only from the contract maker. A Nepal-based contract maker states that the current issue has a 10¼ in blade with a

9 mm spine, a buffalo-horn handle on a rat-tail tang, brass fittings and a weight of about 515 g, the No.1 mirror-polished with a patent-leather scabbard and the No.2 left dull, and that recruits keep their pair for their whole career. **Rating: Uncertain** for these details; blade lengths in other sources disagree (Chapter 9).

In the Falklands in 1982, a patrol of the 1st Battalion, 7th Gurkha Rifles took Argentine soldiers prisoner at kukri-point (Gurkha Museum n.d.b). No source names the pattern; by date it would be KK-023.

Indian Army (KK-028 to KK-030)

India kept the Mk III in production for decades. Makers include WSC, CMW, Chowdri and DKW, and pieces marked “Allied Steel” or “Tempered Steel, Made in India” date to about 1947 or later (spiral 2015). Many wartime blades carry post-1947 Indian inspection marks (Judkins 2012a). Collectors say a variant is still issued (KK-028), with a blade of about 12 to 13½ in and 19 to 26 oz. **Rating: Collector research.**

Bammi records that every officer and soldier of a Gorkha unit has his own kukri for parades and ceremonies, and that the government issues a reserve stock, made by contractors, for uses such as the Dussehra sacrifice (cited in Kunwor 2014a, p.40). Kunwor adds that 8th Gorkha Rifles battalions still use metal-handled duty kukris, keeping the government issue for parade (Kunwor 2018, pp.8-9). The best-documented Indian kukri action is the silent assault by 4/5th Gorkha Rifles (Frontier Force) at Atgram on the night of 20-21 November 1971 (Bharat Rakshak n.d.).

A shorter Indian Standard Issue (KK-029) is known only from the trade: a Nepal-based contract maker describes a 10 in (25.4 cm), 475 g, full-tang kukri made in Dehradun. The Assam Rifles (KK-030), re-designated the Assam Military Police in 1882, took a crest with two kukris (Bammi, cited in Kunwor 2014a, p.41); an Indian maker markets a double-fullered 13½ in “Assam” kukri as current issue, but no independent source confirms a distinct pattern. **Rating: Uncertain** for both.

Nepali Army (KK-031)

Open sources say little. The khukuri appears in Nepali Army officers’ rank insignia and the paratrooper badge (Kunwor 2014a, pp.29, 33), and crossed khukuris were on the national coat of arms until 2006 (Kunwor 2012, pp.8-9). A Nepal-based contract maker states that the current issue has a blade of about 9 in (22.9 cm) on a stick tang, weighs about 425 g, carries no markings, and has a polished parade counterpart; one seller gives 13 in and 500 g instead. Judkins notes only that Nepal’s armies now buy factory-made kukris (Judkins 2012a). **Rating: Uncertain.**

Singapore and Brunei (KK-032, KK-033)

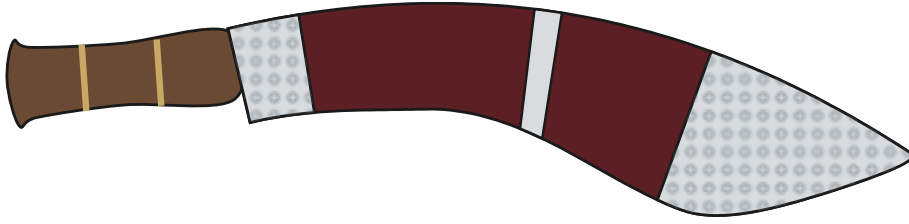
The Gurkha Contingent of the Singapore Police Force was formed in 1949 from former British Gurkhas. One seller describes an 11 in “jungle” kukri for it, but no official specification was found. The Gurkha Reserve Unit in Brunei was established between 1974 and 1980 (Wikipedia n.d.b); no pattern information was found. **Rating: Uncertain.**

Officers' showpieces and regimental kothimoras (KK-034)

The presentation kothimora continued after 1947. Kunwor publishes an Indian scabbard with Ashoka lions, a 2nd Gurkhas piece engraved for a lieutenant in 1959, one made by a battalion smith of the 1/10th Gurkhas dated 29 March 1963, and a Queen's Gurkha Signals piece of about 1970-90 (Kunwor 2015a, nos.38, 40-42). **Rating: Collector research.**

No reliable source documents formal issue of the kukri to any force outside these Gurkha and Gorkha units.

7 Kothimora, ceremony and custom



A kothimora: the scabbard dressed in velvet with an embossed silver chape (kothi) and throat. Drawing by Everest Forge.

For Gurkha and Nepali soldiers the kukri/khukuri is a symbol as well as a tool and weapon. This chapter follows the decorated kothimora across the four eras and the customs, or *kaida*, around the knife.

What a kothimora is

A kothimora is a kukri whose scabbard is decorated with metal mounts, usually silver, sometimes gold; the blade may be of any form. Kunwor explains the name as “kothi”, the chape, and “mora”, moulded: a scabbard with a moulded chape. He credits this reading to Saroj T. Lama (Kunwor 2012, p.3). Other etymologies circulate, and the question is not settled.

Kunwor’s typology

Kunwor sorts kukris by use into village kukris, military issue kukris and kothimoras, which differ mainly in scabbard and materials (Kunwor 2012, p.5). He divides kothimoras by construction:

- **Classical:** a moulded top mount and chape with the bare scabbard covering (leather, skin or velvet) showing between them; historically the commonest form.
- **Hybrid:** a decorated scabbard without a true moulded chape, such as carved wood, full metal covering, or velvet with regimental insignia.

Classical kothimoras are further grouped by motif: **official** (regimental badges or coats of arms), **religious** (Hindu, Tibetan Buddhist or shamanic imagery) and **decorative** (floral or abstract patterns). He places Kirkpatrick’s 1793 khukuri in the decorative group (Kunwor 2012, pp.3-6).

Kothimoras across the eras

Before 1816. If Kunwor’s reading of Kirkpatrick’s plate is right, the kothimora is as old as the first European picture of the khukuri. He says most kings of Nepal have carried kothimora-style kukris at least since the 18th century (Kunwor 2012, pp.3-5). The Metropolitan Museum’s Stone bequest

includes 18th- and 19th-century kukris with gold or silver mounts, such as 36.25.713a-b and 36.25.827a-e (Kunwor 2014b, pp.2, 5). None carries military marks; the index groups such court pieces under KK-021.

British Indian service. Late 19th-century British officers of Gurkha regiments received silver-mounted kothimoras with British heraldry; one dealer example has a 13¾ in sirupate blade and stag-horn karda and chakmak (Great Scott Antiques n.d.b). A 4th Gurkhas kothimora is inscribed with the name of its maker, the armourer Bhanu Lohar of the 1st Battalion (Kunwor 2015a, no.5). From the 1920s to 1947, regimental kothimoras (KK-042) became a distinct type: velvet-covered scabbards with silver or brass mounts bearing the regimental badge, often with a coin or stones set in the top mount, made by armourers or contractors and given to officers. Dated examples include a 2/4th Prince of Wales's Own piece made by Armourer Havildar Damar Sing between 1924 and 1935, a 7th Gurkhas presentation of 1939, and 8th Gurkhas pieces of 1938, 1940, 1945 and 1947 (Kunwor 2015a, nos.27, 30, 35; Kunwor 2018, pp.6-8). Kothimoras could be bought in the bazaar, made by the regimental smith or ordered from the contractor (Kunwor 2018, p.6).

The Nepalese court. The Rana and royal kothimoras of about 1911 to 1962 (KK-037) were given to foreign dignitaries and carried by senior officials (Kunwor 2012, p.6).

After 1947. The tradition continues in all three armies (KK-034). The Gurkha Museum notes that kukris with gold and silver scabbards and ivory handles serve ceremonial and presentation purposes (cited in Kunwor 2014a, p.51), and kukris are often given as gifts or awards within the regiments (GWT n.d.b). Kothimoras go to respected members of a unit, friends of the regiment and benefactors (Kunwor 2015b, p.6).

Dashain and the sacrificial kukri

Dashain (Dussehra or Durga Puja) is the most important festival in a Gurkha regiment's year. Animals are sacrificed to the goddess Durga, smaller ones with the khukuri and larger ones traditionally with the kora, and the practice continues (Kunwor 2015b, p.4). Bammi records that larger kukris, drawn from a government reserve stock, are made for the single-stroke sacrifice of a buffalo (cited in Kunwor 2014a, pp.40-41), and a Gurkha Museum note describes a sacrificial form with a longer blade and two-handed grip (cited in Kunwor 2014a, p.51). The 4th Gurkhas kukri of over 60 cm (KK-040) is a surviving example.

Kaida

Kaida means custom and tradition in Gurkha units, and the khukuri sits at its centre (Kunwor 2015b, p.1).

- **Issue at selection.** A recruit receives his khukuri when he passes selection and then serves “under the khukuri”, which appears in every Gurkha regimental badge (Kunwor 2015b, p.3).
- **The household knife.** Families, especially those with military ties, keep a khukuri in the puja room and bring it out yearly to be blessed (Kunwor 2015b, p.8).
- **The king's seat.** At state functions the king could not attend, a khukuri was placed on his seat to represent him (Kunwor 2015b, p.8).
- **Carrying the knife.** The Rana prime minister Padma Shumsher said a Gurkha should carry the khukuri while awake and keep it under his pillow at night (Kunwor 2015b, p.12). Bammi, by

contrast, describes carrying it as a customary right with no religious significance (cited in Kunwor 2014a, p.41).

Folklore

Some popular stories lack evidence. The best known is that a drawn khukuri must draw blood. In France in 1915 Gurkhas were reported nicking their fingers for curious civilians (cited in Kunwor 2014a, p.20), which shows the story was already current, not that it was a rule. Accounts of kukris thrown in the charge (Montagu 1898, cited in Kunwor 2014a, p.17) are also best treated as legend.

8 Reading the marks

Many military kukris/khukuris carry maker and inspection marks, but not all (Kunwor 2007, p.1). A full table of known marks is given separately; this chapter explains how to approach them.

Where to look and what to look for

Check the ricasso (the flat area just ahead of the handle), the spine, the butt cap or plate, and the scabbard, especially under the frog and near the chape. On Nepalese arsenal knives, look at the spine and the handle base. Spiral advises examining any regimental mark under about 10x magnification (spiral 2009). There are four kinds of evidence:

1. **Arsenal and maker stamps.** British Indian issue stamps usually combine an arsenal or maker code, the broad arrow (government property), “I G” for India Government, a year and an inspector’s number. Second World War makers often used a letter plus a two-digit year (Kunwor 2015a, nos.31, 33).
2. **Inscriptions.** Nepalese army knives carry Devanagari spine inscriptions naming the ruler, then a unit abbreviation and numbers. John Walter’s *Guns of the Gurkhas* decodes about 70% of the unit abbreviations (cited in Judkins 2012a). Presentation pieces carry engraved names and dates.
3. **Emblems.** Regimental badges, the British crown, the Nepal arms, the Rana lion, the sun and lion, the crescent and the Indian Ashoka lions each have approximate date windows.
4. **Spelling and titles.** Regimental spellings and titles changed at known dates.

Three cautions apply. Scabbards were made and stamped separately, so their marks rarely match the knife’s, and a perfectly matched set proves nothing. A coin set in a scabbard gives only an earliest possible date. And fake marks are being added to genuine old blades.

Example 1: a 1915 Mk I

A Mk I in Kunwor’s collection is stamped “Co I↑G 1915” with “16” below (Kunwor 2015a, no.10). In order: Cossipore Arsenal; India Government property, shown by the broad arrow; the year 1915; inspector 16. This fits the evidence that Cossipore was the main First World War maker (spiral 2009). Fake “Co. 1917” Mk IIs exist, so always check a Cossipore stamp against the construction.

Example 2: an arsenal code with a month

An earlier Mk I is stamped “Q.A 5.05”, which Kunwor reads as Quetta Arsenal, May 1905. Its handle reads “ABC 31 286”, for the Army Bearer Corps and a number, and its scabbard is dated 1906 (Kunwor 2015a, no.9). “QA” can therefore be an arsenal code with a date, not only an inspection mark, and a scabbard dated a year after its blade is normal.

Example 3: a Chandra spine inscription

A Nepalese Long Leaf (KK-010) reads “Shree Teen Chandra”, then a unit abbreviation, then numbers. *Shree Teen* is the Rana prime minister’s title, and Chandra Shumsher held office from 1901 to 1929, so the knife was in the arsenal and marked during his term (Judkins 2012a). Collectors warn that a Devanagari 9 can be misread as a 1. An unmarked knife may be later than 1929 or earlier than the stamping programme.

Example 4: spelling and titles

A 4th Gurkhas kothimora reads “1.4 Goorkhas” on the spine. The regiment’s spelling changed from “Goorkha” to “Gurkha” around 1891, so Kunwor dates it before then (Kunwor 2015a, no.5). Another is marked “2/4 P.W.O.G.R.”; the regiment became the Prince of Wales’s Own in 1924, so it cannot be earlier (Kunwor 2015a, no.27). Likewise, Prince of Wales’s plumes in the 4th Gurkhas badge point to 1924 or later, and Ashoka lions point to India after 1947 (Kunwor n.d., p.1). Spelling changes were gradual, so these clues give approximate limits only.

9 Open questions

The evidence for military kukris/khukuris is uneven, and several important questions remain open. This chapter sets out the main disputes and how the index handles them.

When were the Drabya Shah khukuris made? (KK-001)

The museum attributes them to Drabya Shah (reigned 1559 to 1570). Kunwor dates them to about 1550 (Kunwor 2012, p.10); Bammi and the BBC give 1627, which does not fit the reign (cited in Kunwor 2014a, pp.39, 43); Dekker argues on form for the late 18th or early 19th century (Dekker n.d.b). Without measurements, inscriptions or a catalogue entry the question cannot be settled. The index records the attribution as tradition and gives both dates.

How old are the Long Leaf and Bhojpure? (KK-010, KK-011)

IMA calls the Long Leaf the oldest design in the cache, in use until the late 1890s, and dates the Bhojpure from the 1880s to about 1925 (IMA n.d.a, n.d.b). Judkins rejects the early Long Leaf date because most carry the 1901–1929 Chandra inscription, and puts the Bhojpure in the late 1920s and 1930s (Judkins 2012a). The inscriptions favour Judkins on the Long Leaf; neither Bhojpure date is firmly documented. The index shows both and favours the inscription-based reading.

Are “M43” and “K-45” models or stamps? (KK-016, KK-020)

Spiral and seitengewehr.de read “M.43” on a Mk II as a maker’s stamp with a year, probably Military Industries in 1943, not “Model 1943” (spiral 2009; seitengewehr.de n.d.). Kunwor agrees in one paper (Kunwor 2015a, no.31) but captions a piece as the “M43” issue model in another (Kunwor 2014a, p.30), and one seller treats it as an upgraded model. Spiral and Judkins read “K-45” as a 1945 date stamp (spiral 2009; Judkins 2012a), while one seller calls it a late-1945 Rawalpindi design. Kunwor’s reading of “MG-44” as maker plus year (Kunwor 2015a, no.33) supports the stamp reading, which the index adopts.

When did the Mk III begin? (KK-020)

Spiral, citing Indian sources, gives February 1943 (spiral 2009); IMA says 1943 (IMA n.d.d); Kunwor and seitengewehr.de say about 1944. The dates fit together if the pattern was approved in 1943 and mass-produced in 1944–45, but no adoption document has been found.

When and for whom was the Jodhpur kukri made? (KK-018)

Kunwor attributes it to Jodhpur state troops in the First World War (Kunwor 2015a, no.11); other collectors date it to about 1945. Kunwor’s own evidence that the 3rd, 6th and 8th Gurkhas also used metal hilts (Kunwor 2018, pp.8–9) means a metal hilt alone identifies nothing, and no stamped date is known. The index gives both dates.

How long is the current British blade? (KK-026, KK-027)

Collector and maker sources give 10 to 11 in, most often 10¼ in (spiral 2015). A Brigade of Gurkhas guide of 2000 gave about 11 in on a 17 in knife (cited in Kunwor 2014a, p.33). Forces News gives 12 to 13 in (Forces News 2021), and one seller 15 in. The 10¼ in figure has the most support, but without an official specification it remains uncertain. Some of the spread may come from confusing blade and overall length.

How large is the Nepali Army issue? (KK-031)

A Nepal-based contract maker gives about 9 in and 425 g; one seller gives about 13 in and 500 g. No Nepali Army source was found, and the index gives both.

Are the Mk IV and Mk V official?

Kunwor presents Mk 1 to Mk 5 as five official patterns, with the Mk 5 as current issue (Kunwor 2015a, no.42; Kunwor 2018, pp.1-2). Spiral and seitengewehr.de point out that only the Mk II carries a stamped Mark number and that the other numbers are collector usage (spiral 2015; seitengewehr.de n.d.). No document has been found in which an army called the Wilkinson “Mk IV” or the Nepal-made pattern “Mk V”, so the index treats both as collector labels.

Smaller gaps

The meaning of the “papu”, “SS” and “KBD” stamps on arsenal knives is unknown (Judkins 2012a; Kunwor 2015a, no.21). The districts that supplied the Nepalese arsenal are undocumented, the Beijing khukuri has never been measured in print, and there is no primary record of the Dharan “Ordep” workshop. New evidence on any of these would change the index.

10 About Everest Forge reproductions

Everest Forge is a hand-forging workshop in Kathmandu. It holds no stock: each kukri/khukuri is forged after it is ordered. Every pattern in the index, KK-001 to KK-043, can be forged to order, following published measurements where they exist and the described features where they do not. Where no measured original exists, as for the pre-1816 khukuris, a reproduction is a reconstruction in the style of the period and is described that way.

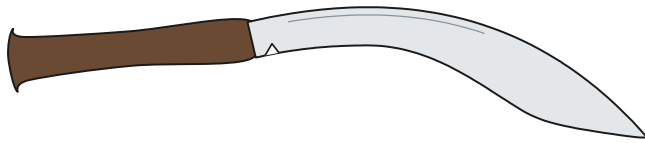
Reproductions are marked as Everest Forge reproductions. They never carry period issue marks that could let them pass as originals: no broad arrow, no “Co.” or other arsenal codes, no issue dates, no unit or service numbers, and no Shree Teen Chandra formula or other Nepalese arsenal inscription. Collectors already face fake marks on old and copied blades, and the workshop does not want to add to the problem.

To order, quote the pattern code (for example KK-016 for the Mk II) on the custom forge page at everestforge.com/custom-forge.

11 Pattern catalogue

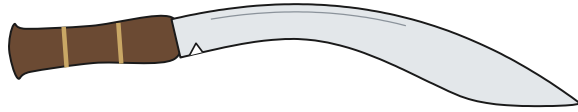
All 43 patterns in date order within each era. The codes match the Khukuri Timeline at everestforge.com, where each entry links to its product or custom forge request.

Ten patterns to scale



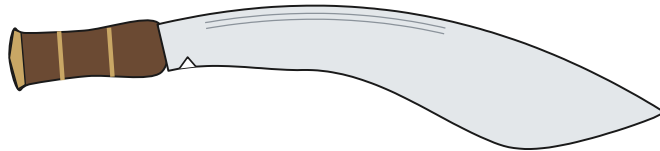
Hanshee (KK-002)

Blade c.33 cm, handle c.17 cm



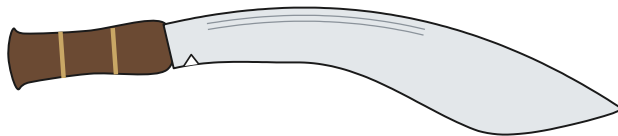
Military Sirupate (KK-008)

Blade c.32 cm, handle c.11.5 cm



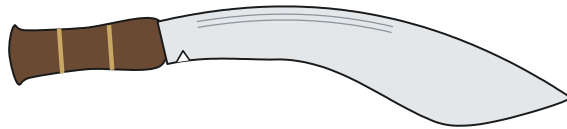
Military Budhume (KK-009)

Blade c.39 cm, handle c.10.5 cm



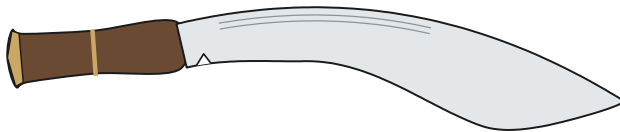
Long Leaf (KK-010)

Blade c.35.5 cm, handle c.11 cm



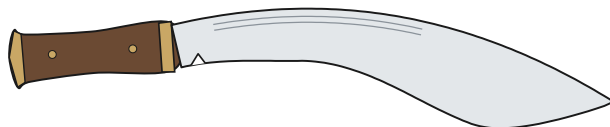
Bhojpure (KK-011)

Blade c.32 cm, handle c.10.5 cm



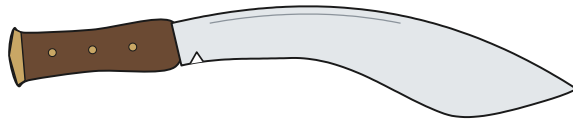
Mk I (KK-015)

Blade c.34.5 cm, handle c.12 cm



Mk II (KK-016)

Blade c.34 cm, handle c.11.5 cm



Mk III (KK-020)

Blade c.31 cm, handle c.11.5 cm



Nepal-made British issue (KK-023)

Blade c.28 cm, handle c.11.5 cm



Service No.1 (KK-026)

Blade c.26 cm, handle c.11.5 cm

10 cm

Ten military patterns drawn to the same scale from published measurements. Drawings by Everest Forge; individual knives vary.

Origins to 1816

The khukuri as the Gorkhali soldier's sidearm, from the unification wars to the Anglo-Nepal War and the first Gurkha battalions.

KK-001

c.1559

Dravya Shah Kukri/Khukuri (National Museum, Chhauni)

Long-hilted 'hanshee' form; displayed as the oldest khukuri in Nepal. Attribution rests on the museum label and tradition; Mandarin Mansion considers it a misattribution. The museum case shows two slender khukuris; Kunwor calls the blade a sirupate.

Dates	Museum: c.1559. Kunwor: c.1550. Bammi/BBC: 1627. Form suggests late 18th-early 19th c.
Used by	Gorkha royal house (attributed)
Also known as	Dravya Shah khukuri; '500-year-old khukuri'
Makers and marks	No catalogue data found
How sure we are	Legend / disputed

Sources: [Mandarin Mansion, hanshee](#); [Kunwor - A exploration of the Kukri in 18th Century Nepali history \(Kirkpatrick\)](#); [Ask Me About Nepal - Khukuri](#)

KK-007

1674

to 1816

Kora (related Gorkhali war sword)

Not a kukri, but the primary Gorkhali war sword alongside it. Koras tied to Kirtipur at Bagbhairab Temple; two in the Royal Danish Kunstkammer since 1674.

Dates	Since at least 1674; Kirtipur 1760s; Anglo-Nepal War 1814-16
Used by	Gorkhali army - the main fighting blade of the period
Also known as	Khora; 'heavy semicircular sword' in British accounts
How sure we are	Documented

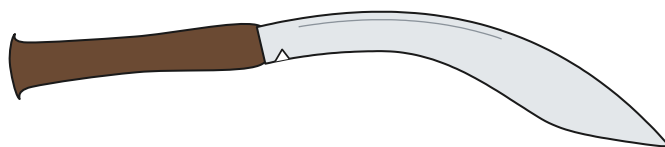
Sources: [Mandarin Mansion, kora](#); [Muzeum Azji i Pacyfiku - Kukri and Kora, the national white weapons of Nepal](#); [Royal Collection RCIN 61962 - Sword \(kora\)](#)

KK-002

1750

to 1857

Hanshee (Hamsiya) Fighting Kukri/Khukuri



Long hilt, narrow, strongly curved blade, shallow notch (cho). First clear picture: Fraser Album drawings of Gurkha soldiers, Saharanpur, July 1815. Declined after 1857. Kunwor uses 'hasiya' for a village sickle-type tool, so treat the 'hamsiya' name with care.

Dates	c.1750-1857 (Kunwor extends use into the early 1900s)
Used by	Gorkhali soldiers of the unification and Anglo-Nepal War
Blade	c.33 cm (13 in) per one secondary source
Also known as	Lambendh; long-hilt Gorkhali khukuri
Makers and marks	Not documented
How sure we are	Probable (scholar/collector)

Sources: [Mandarin Mansion](#), [hanshee](#); [Met Museum 36.25.714a-g - Knife \(Kukri\) with two sheaths](#); [Pitt Rivers Museum 1886.1.33.1](#)

KK-003

1792

to 1795

Qianlong Palace Museum Kukri/Khukuri

Earliest khukuri with solid provenance. Moderately curved blade with no spine hump, stubby hilt with little pommel flare, very shallow cho, strongly recurved scabbard with large metal chape, 3 karda + 1 chakmak.

Dates	Acquired c.1792-1795
Used by	Captured or presented during the Sino-Nepalese War / tribute missions
Also known as	Beijing khukuri; Sino-Nepalese War khukuri
Makers and marks	Published in Qing gong Wubei (2008) vol.56 p.151
How sure we are	Documented

Sources: [Mandarin Mansion](#), [Palace Museum khukuri](#); [China News - Palace Museum Gurkha knives](#); [The Araniko Project - Everything Nepal in the National Museum of China](#)

KK-004

1793

to 1811

Kirkpatrick 'Khookheri' (first European illustration)

Plate in Kirkpatrick's 'Account of the Kingdom of Nepaul' (1811), pp.118-119. Engraver exaggerated the upturned tip.

Dates	Mission 1792-93; published 1811
Used by	Nepal (described as worn by everyone, used mainly as a cutting tool)
Also known as	Khookheri & Khora plate
How sure we are	Documented

Sources: [Mandarin Mansion](#), [Palace Museum khukuri](#); [Royal Collection Trust RCIN 1022286](#); [Kunwor - A exploration of the Kukri in 18th Century Nepali history \(Kirkpatrick\)](#)

KK-005

1800

to 1830

V&A Gold-Inlaid Kukri/Khukuri 3095(IS)

Steel blade, shallow notch, wooden hilt damascened with gold eight-petalled flowers. In the India Museum by 1855; to the V&A 1879. Sources disagree on the date.

Dates	Late 18th c. (Mandarin Mansion) or probably early 19th c. (V&A)
Used by	Nepal (possibly Indian work)
Total length	19 in (48 cm)
Also known as	Egerton no.314
Makers and marks	Width 1.5 in (3.8 cm)
How sure we are	Documented object; date disputed

Sources: [V&A 3095\(IS\)](#); [Wikipedia - Kukri](#)

KK-006

1810

Chupri Socket-Bayonet Kukri/Khukuri

Kukri blade on a socket that fits the Brown Bess musket; some invoke Gorakhnath in an inscription. One of the rarest types in the Lagan Silekhana cache.

Dates	c.1810
Used by	Nepal state army (fits Brown Bess musket)
Also known as	Bayonet khukuri; offset-handle khukuri
Makers and marks	Inscriptions on some
How sure we are	Collector consensus

Sources: [Judkins 2012](#), [Chinese Martial Studies](#); [College Hill Arsenal - Nepalese State Troops kukri bayonet for India Pattern Brown Bess](#); [IMA NB1795 - Original Brown Bess Gurkha kukri chupri bayonet](#)

Nepal State Army, 1816 to 1950

Patterns from the Royal Nepalese Arsenal at Lagan Silekhana, plus the marked khukuris of Nepal's officers and royal house.

KK-013

c.1760

to 1899

Tulwar-Hilt Kukri/Khukuri

Kukri blade fitted with an Indian tulwar-style hilt, some gold inlaid. A forum collector suspects some hilts were added later.

Dates	c.1760 to late 19th c. (Kunwor); 'Victorian' per IMA
Used by	Nepal arsenal (few pieces)
Total length	c.19-23 in (48-58 cm)
Blade	c.15 in (38 cm)
Also known as	Gold-inlaid tulwar-style handle kukri
Makers and marks	IMA ON1300 (sold out)
How sure we are	Uncertain

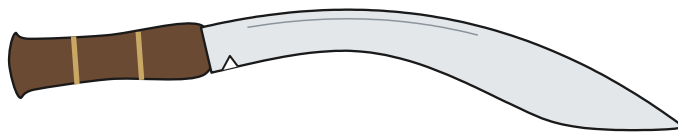
Sources: [IMA ON1300](#); [Mandarin Mansion \(atarn mirror\) - Nepal items: "Sword hilted khukuri"](#); [Vikingsword Ethnographic Arms - Nepalese kukri handles](#)

KK-008

1860

to 1880

Military Sirupate Kukri/Khukuri



Slimmest military type. Shallow, long kaudi (notch area). Handles often replaced, sometimes with sword hilts. Partial tang, glued wooden grip.

Dates	c.1860-1880 (not before 1850)
Used by	Nepal state army (Lagan Silekhana arsenal)
Total length	40-45.5 cm (15.7-17.9 in)
Blade	30-35 cm (11.8-13.8 in)
Spine	7-8 mm
Weight	400-614 g
Also known as	No fixed trade name
Makers and marks	300-400 pieces in the cache
How sure we are	Collector consensus

Sources: [Judkins 2012](#), [Chinese Martial Studies](#); [Horniman Museum nn18527 - Sword \(sirupati kukri\)](#)

KK-035

1860

to 1885

Royal Nepal Army Officer Kukri/Khukuri - Rana Lion Mark

Officer-marked khukuri carrying the Rana lion emblem; dated by collector comparison.

Dates	c.1860-1885
Used by	Nepal state army officers
Also known as	Rana lion khukuri
Makers and marks	Rana lion emblem
How sure we are	Collector consensus (Kunwor)

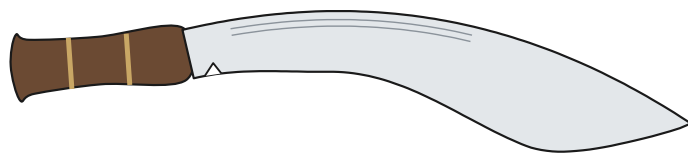
Sources: [Kunwor](#), [SirKukri & Gurkha Antiques collection](#)

KK-010

1885

to 1930

Classic Gurkha Army Kukri/Khukuri (CGAK)



Large leaf blade, usually two fullers. Most carry the 'Shree Teen Chandra' spine inscription (PM Chandra Shumsher, 1901-1929) plus unit abbreviation and rack number - which argues for Judkins' later dating. Partial tang, glued wood grip.

Dates	Judkins: mostly pre-WWI, in service through interwar. IMA: in use until late 1890s (conflict)
Used by	Nepal state army
Total length	45-48 cm (17.7-18.9 in); IMA approx 18 in
Blade	34-37 cm (13.4-14.6 in)
Spine	9-13 mm (IMA 3/8 in)
Weight	579-892 g
Also known as	Long Leaf; Victorian Long Leaf; Longleaf
Makers and marks	Shree Teen Chandra inscription; c.30% of cache
How sure we are	Collector consensus (dates disputed)

Sources: [Judkins 2012](#), [Chinese Martial Studies](#); IMA NB1902 - Original 19th c. Nepalese Long Leaf kukri; [BladeForums - 19th century khukus compared to HI \(tons of pics\)](#)

KK-036

1885

to 1925

Royal Nepal Army Officer Kukri/Khukuri - Sun & Lion Mark

Sun and lion emblem, some inscribed 'Sri Shakteya'. Dated example: General Sir Tej Shumsher Rana's kukri, steel butt-plate engraved and dated 6 Jan 1920, fixed with two screws; leather scabbard, cloth frog, karda and chakmak.

Dates	c.1885-1925
Used by	Nepal state army officers and generals
Also known as	'Sri Shakteya' khukuri; the Nepalese General's kukri
Makers and marks	Sun & lion emblem; engraved butt-plates
How sure we are	Documented (dated example)

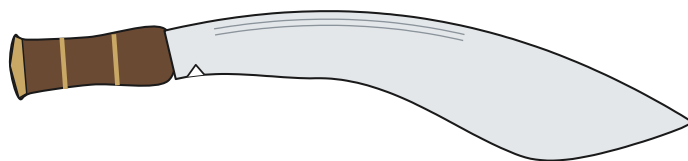
Sources: [Kunwor \(2013\)](#), [The Kukri of a Nepalese General](#)

KK-009

1890

to 1910

Military Budhume Kukri/Khukuri



Very broad blade, carved kaudi, steel butt-plate held by two screws, unexplained 'papu' stamp on every example. One collector argues a US dealer's 'Budhume' was really an early Long Leaf.

Dates	c.1890-1910
Used by	Nepal state army
Total length	48.5-50 cm (19.1-19.7 in)
Blade	38.5-39.5 cm (15.2-15.6 in)
Spine	9-11 mm
Weight	759-907 g
Also known as	Budhume; Budhune
Makers and marks	'papu' stamp; 200-300 pieces
How sure we are	Collector consensus

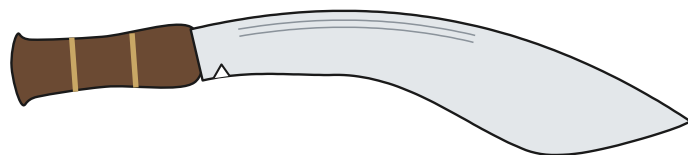
Sources: [Judkins 2012, Chinese Martial Studies](#); [Mandarin Mansion - A fine budhune khukuri](#); [BladeForums - Kukris from Nepal](#)

KK-011

1910

to 1939

Short Gurkha Army Kukri/Khukuri (SGAK)



Down-scaled Long Leaf. Often a Nepalese figure mark at the handle base; diamond cho on some. Most common type in the cache. 'Bhojpure' here is a size class, not proof it was made in Bhojpur.

Dates	Judkins: late 1920s-1930s. IMA: 1880s to c.1925 (conflict)
Used by	Nepal state army
Total length	41-42.5 cm (16.1-16.7 in); IMA 16.5-17.5 in
Blade	31.5-32 cm (12.4-12.6 in)
Spine	9-12 mm
Weight	495-650 g
Also known as	Bhojpure; Bhojpuri; Small Bhojpure
Makers and marks	Figure mark; 50-60% of cache; some WWI-dated with broad arrow
How sure we are	Collector consensus (dates disputed)

Sources: [Judkins 2012, Chinese Martial Studies](#); [IMA NB1906 - Original Nepalese kukri, Bhojpure, unmarked](#); [Last Stand on Zombie Island - Testing the Bhojpure](#)

KK-037

1911

to 1962

Rana / Royal State Kothimora (Coat of Arms)

Kothimora scabbard with the Nepal coat of arms or the Maharaja (prime minister) crest; Nepali numeral 5 (Shree Panch, the king) or 3 (Shree Tin, the Rana PM).

Dates	c.1911-1962
Used by	Nepal royal family, Rana prime ministers, state presentation
Also known as	Shree Panch / Shree Tin kothimora
Makers and marks	Coat of arms; Nepali numerals 5 or 3
How sure we are	Collector consensus (Kunwor)

Sources: [Kunwor](#), [SirKukri](#) & [Gurkha Antiques collection](#)

KK-012

1936

to 1949

Late Gurkha Army Kukri/Khukuri (LGAK)

Often three fullers; signs of machine grinding. Thinner spine than CGAK/SGAK.

Dates	Late 1930s-1940s
Used by	Nepal state army
Total length	42.5-46.5 cm (16.7-18.3 in)
Blade	32-34 cm (12.6-13.4 in)
Spine	7-9 mm
Weight	547-671 g
Also known as	'WWI Vintage' (trade label, called wrong by Judkins)
How sure we are	Collector consensus

Sources: [Judkins 2012](#), [Chinese Martial Studies](#); [BladeForums - Kukris from Nepal](#); [World War Historic Kukri I the knife used by Gurkhas during WW](#)

British and Indian Army, 1815 to 1947

From privately bought Longleafs to the issue Mk I, Mk II and Mk III, regimental workshop kukris and presentation pieces.

KK-021

1793

to 1899

Kothimora Kukri/Khukuri (18th-19th c.)

Silver- or gold-mounted scabbard ('kothi' = chape, 'mora' = mould). Shown in Kirkpatrick's 1793 plate and carried by Nepal's kings from at least the 18th century; later presented to British and Gurkha officers, some with British royal arms.

Dates	From at least 1793 (Kirkpatrick plate) to late 19th c.
Used by	British and Gurkha officers (presentation)
Also known as	Silver-mounted presentation kukri
How sure we are	Collector consensus

Sources: [Kunwor \(2014\)](#), [The Kukri of the Gurkhas 1793-2014](#); [Royal Collection Trust: Knife and sheath \(kukri\)](#), RCIN 37595; [Bonhams: A silver-mounted kothimora kukri \(Sale 22403, lot 5013\)](#)

KK-014

1815

to 1903

Pre-Standard Longleaf Kukri/Khukuri (Gurkha regiments)

No standard issue before 1903. Main 19th-century military form, often with a partial T-spine. No regimental (e.g. Sirmoor) pattern documented.

Dates	c.1815-1903
Used by	East India Company / British Indian Army Gurkha battalions (private or unit purchase)
Blade	14.75-16 in (37.5-40.5 cm)
Weight	25-32 oz (710-910 g)
Also known as	Longleaf; pre-Mark kukri
Makers and marks	Mostly unmarked
How sure we are	Collector consensus

Sources: [spiral](#), [vikingsword forum 2015](#); Ben Judkins, "Identifying and Collecting the Nepalese Military Kukri" (Kung Fu Tea); IMA: 19th C Unit Marked Gurkha Kukri with WWI 1917 Dated Scabbard

KK-042

pre-1891

to 1947

Regimental Kothimora (Pre-1947)

Presentation kothimoras made by regimental armourers (Bhanu Lohar, 1/4 GR, pre-1891; Damar Sing, 2/4 PWO GR, 1924-35) and given to officers (7 GR 1939; 8 GR 1938-1947). The 'Goorkha' spelling dates pieces before 1891.

Dates	Pre-1891 to 1947
Used by	Gurkha regiments and officers (1/4 GR, 2/4 PWO GR, 7 GR, 8 GR; Mountbatten)
Also known as	Armourer's presentation kothimora
Makers and marks	Armourers' and unit inscriptions
How sure we are	Documented (dated, inscribed examples)

Sources: [Kunwor](#), [SirKukri](#) & [Gurkha Antiques collection](#)

KK-043

1895

Afghan Mazar-i-Sharif Arsenal Kukri/Khukuri

Khukuri made at the Mazar-i-Sharif arsenal and dated 1895 - a non-Gurkha army using the form.

Dates	1895
Used by	Afghan army (Mazar-i-Sharif arsenal)
Also known as	Afghan army kukri
Makers and marks	Mazar-i-Sharif arsenal, 1895
How sure we are	Collector consensus (Kunwor)

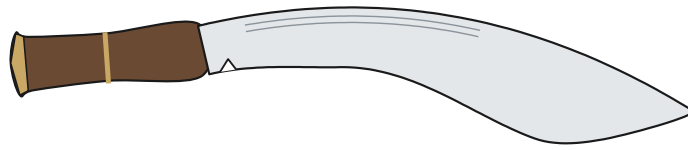
Sources: [Kunwor](#), [SirKukri](#) & [Gurkha Antiques collection](#)

KK-015

1903

to 1915

Mk I Kukri/Khukuri



Rat-tail tang through a one-piece walnut grip with a nut recessed in the butt. Heavy, front-weighted blade.

Dates	c.1903-1915 (Kunwor: c.1900-1920s)
Used by	British Indian Army Gurkha regiments
Blade	13.25-14 in (33.5-35.5 cm)
Weight	24-35 oz (680-990 g)
Also known as	Mark I (collector term, applied in hindsight)
Makers and marks	Mostly unmarked; some 'Co.' (Cossipore) 1915; FW, QA, RP inspection marks 'Q.A 5.05' = Quetta Arsenal, May 1905. Kunwor shows dated, regiment-marked examples; also issued to the Army Bearer Corps.
How sure we are	Collector consensus (dates disputed)

Sources: [spiral](#), [vikingsword forum 2015](#); [Great Scott Antiques: 1915 Dated MK 1 Kukri](#); [Sir Kukri & Co.: The MARK 1 \(MK1\) Official Standard Pattern Issue Kukri, ca. 1903-1915](#)

KK-038

1914

to 1945

Battalion Issue Sirupate (Regimental Workshop Kukri/Khukuri)

Slim sirupate-type blade made by or for the battalion, outside the War Office pattern. Stick tang peened over an oval metal butt plate. Ricasso stamped with battalion, company and service number (e.g. '2/8 GR 4726'). 8 GR ran its own WWII workshops using car-spring steel.

Dates	c.1914-1945 (WWI-WWII)
Used by	Gurkha battalions (e.g. 2/8 GR) when government supply ran short
Also known as	Regimental sirupate; 8 GR workshop kukri
Makers and marks	Battalion + company + service number on ricasso
How sure we are	Documented (regimental history + marked examples)

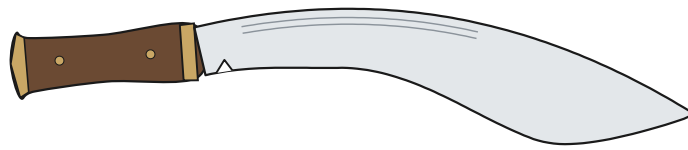
Sources: [Kunwor](#), [Historical Khukuri of the 8th Gurkha Rifles](#)

KK-016

1915

to 1944

Mk II Kukri/Khukuri



Steel bolster and steel buttcap (brass-bolstered 'Mk II' = fake). Riveted grip scales; WWI pieces have two small round pommel rivets. Some stamped 'II'.

Dates	1915–c.1944 (WWI and WWII)
Used by	British Indian Army Gurkha regiments (WWI & WWII)
Blade	13.25–13.75 in (33.5–35 cm)
Weight	20–28 oz (570–790 g)
Also known as	Mark II; 'M43' (maker + year stamp per most collectors; Kunwor and some sellers treat it as a model)
Makers and marks	WWI: Co./Cossipore (main), DHW, GDB & Co., E. Boota Singh & Sons, AS & Sons. RFI Ishapore 1926–27. WWII: ATD, M/MIL, Pioneer Calcutta, Qeyoom/Queera Bros, JNB Also Mukand Iron & Steel Works, Lahore (WWII). 1942-dated example recorded. 'Co I-arrow-G 1915' = Cossipore, India Government, 1915.
How sure we are	Collector consensus

Sources: [spiral](#), [vikingsword forum 2015](#); [Kunwor - SirKukri collection \(Mk II, M43, Mukand Lahore\)](#); [seitengewehr.de: Kukri \(German PDF on British military models\)](#)

KK-017

1915

to 1916

Enfield-Inspected WWI Kukri/Khukuri

Birch hilts, rat-tail tang, light blade, often a recessed ricasso. Fewer than 15 examples known. Also faked.

Dates	1915–1916 (all known examples)
Used by	British supply (Sheffield-made)
Blade	12.25–12.75 in (31–32.5 cm)
Weight	15–17 oz (425–480 g)
Also known as	Sheffield kukri (S&J Kitchin)
Makers and marks	S&J Kitchin, Sheffield; Enfield inspection marks
How sure we are	Uncertain

Sources: [spiral](#), [vikingsword forum 2015](#)

KK-018

1916

to 1945

Jodhpur Aluminium-Hilt Kukri/Khukuri

Aluminium/alloy hilt; some with a trident stamp. Caution: 3, 6 and 8 GR also used metal hilts from the interwar years, so a metal hilt alone does not prove Jodhpur.

Dates	WWI (Kunwor, Mehrangarh Museum parallels) or c.1945 (other collectors) - disputed
Used by	Attributed to Jodhpur supply - the Jodhpur museum curator knows of no kukri made for the Lancers
Also known as	Maharajah of Jodhpur kukri
How sure we are	Uncertain

Sources: [spiral](#), [vikingsword forum 2015](#); [Rolf Selzer, seitengewehr.de: Kukri with aluminium grips \(German PDF\)](#); [Militaria Hub: Nepalese C.WWI Aluminium Gurkha Military Kukri](#)

KK-039

1920

to 1930

Regimental Contractor Etched Kukri/Khukuri (4 GR, Bakloh)

Acid-etched blades signed by the Bakloh contractor Lal Sing; one spine-dated 'C.S.F. 1925'.

Dates	c.1920-1930
Used by	4th Prince of Wales's Own Gurkha Rifles
Also known as	Lal Sing kukri
Makers and marks	Lal Sing (Khukris Contract Co.), Bakloh
How sure we are	Collector consensus (Kunwor)

Sources: [Kunwor](#), [Khukuri of the 4th PWO Gurkha Rifles](#)

KK-040

1920

to 1930

Regimental Dashain (Sacrificial) Kukri/Khukuri

Very large, heavy khukuri kept as regimental property for the Dashain/Dussehra sacrifice.

Dates	c.1920-1930
Used by	Gurkha regiments (e.g. 4 GR) for the Dashain sacrifice
Total length	Over 60 cm (24 in)
Also known as	Dussehra kukri; bali khukuri
How sure we are	Collector consensus (Kunwor)

Sources: [Kunwor \(2014\)](#), [The Kukri of the Gurkhas 1793-2014](#)

KK-019

1942

to 1943

WWII Emergency Slab-Hilt Kukri/Khukuri

Crude slab hilt; probably made in railway workshops. Also faked.

Dates	1942-1943
Used by	British Indian Army (wartime emergency production)
Also known as	Railway-workshop kukri
Makers and marks	Makers SCW, Siraj
How sure we are	Uncertain

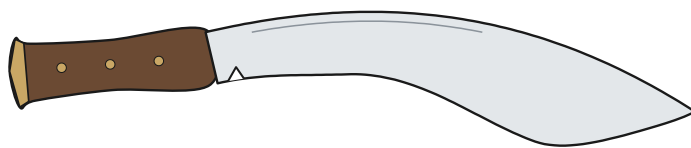
Sources: [spiral](#), [vikingsword forum 2015](#); [BladeForums: 20th Century British Military Gurkha Issue Kukri article update 2015](#)

KK-020

1943

to 1945

Mk III Kukri/Khukuri



No bolster, much larger rivets, sturdier pommel cap, full-width tang under slab wooden grips, more angular blade with a slight hollow grind. WWII scabbard: rounder black leather, integral frog.

Dates	Feb 1943 (Indian sources) or c.1944 (Kunwor); mass-produced 1944-45
Used by	British Indian Army Gurkha regiments (WWII, Burma)
Blade	c.12.25 in (31 cm)
Weight	19-26 oz (540-740 g)
Also known as	Mark III; 'K45' (a 1945 date stamp per most collectors; one seller calls it a Rawalpindi design)
Makers and marks	CMW, WSC, HW, Mil, P.C. Co., Chowdri, DKW; broad arrow over I; dates Also MG (1944). 'M 43' / 'MG-44' style stamps are maker + year.
How sure we are	Collector consensus

Sources: [spiral](#), [vikingsword forum 2015](#); [Great Scott Antiques: WW2 Indian Army MK III Kukri](#); [IMA: WWII 1945 Dated MkIII Kukri with Maker Marks](#)

KK-041

1944

to 1950

Officer's Mess Kukri/Khukuri on Issue Blade

Standard issue blade (e.g. Mk III) re-hilted with a hexagonal ivory or bone handle for the officers' mess or presentation.

Dates	c.1944-1950
Used by	British and Gurkha officers
Also known as	Ivory- or bone-hilt Mk III
How sure we are	Collector consensus (Kunwor)

Sources: [Kunwor](#), [SirKukri & Gurkha Antiques collection](#)

1947 to today

British Gurkha Service No.1 and No.2, the Indian Gorkha Rifles, the Nepali Army and the Gurkha police units of Singapore and Brunei.

KK-031

1880s

to today

Nepali Army National Issue Kukri/Khukuri

Kept for a soldier's whole career; separate polished parade version. Sources conflict on size (c.9 in vs c.13 in). Royal Nepal Army khukuris with a Sun and Lion mark exist from the late 19th c. (see KK-036).

Dates	Late 19th c.-today (Royal Nepalese Army to 2008, Nepali Army after)
Used by	Nepali Army (Royal Nepalese Army until 2008)
Blade	c.9 in (23 cm) or c.13 in - sources disagree
Weight	425 g (maker's figure)
Also known as	Royal Nepalese Army issue (to 2008); Nepal Army khukuri
Makers and marks	Unmarked
How sure we are	Uncertain (conflicting sources)

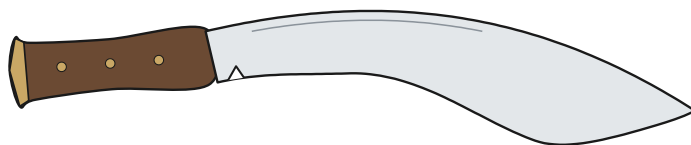
Sources: [Nepalese Army Khukuri...PT1: Overview](#)

KK-028

1947

to today

Indian Army Gorkha Rifles Kukri/Khukuri (Mk III type)



Continuation of the WWII Mk III pattern with riveted full tang and wooden grip. No Ordnance Factory production confirmed. The 1947 Tripartite Agreement covers Gorkha soldiers' right to carry the kukri.

Dates	1947-today
Used by	Indian Army Gorkha Rifles (e.g. 4/5 GR at Atgram 1971)
Blade	12-13.5 in (30.5-34 cm)
Weight	19-26 oz (540-740 g)
Also known as	Gurkha Regimental; Indian Mk III
Makers and marks	WSC, CMW, Chowdri, DKW; 'Allied Steel', 'Tempered Steel Made in India'
How sure we are	Collector consensus

Sources: [Identifying and collecting the Nepalese military kukri](#), [Kung Fu Tea \(Chinese Martial Studies\)](#); [WW2 Indian Army MK III Kukri](#), [Great Scott Antiques](#); [2015 update to the 20th century Gurkha issue kukri article](#)

KK-030

1947

to today

Assam Rifles Kukri/Khukuri

Brass lion-head pommel. Issue status is a marketing claim only. The force (Assam Military Police from 1882) adopted a crest with two crossed kukris.

Dates	Post-1947 (maker claim)
Used by	Assam Rifles (claimed)
Blade	13.5 in (34 cm)
Also known as	Assam Kukri
Makers and marks	An Indian maker (claim)
How sure we are	Uncertain (maker claim)

Sources: [Assam Rifles cap badge](#), [Aberdeen Medals](#); [Assam Rifles cap badge](#), [Milivault](#); [Correction of Quotes from Huxford \(Ethnographic Arms & Armour\)](#)

KK-034

1947

to today

Officer's Showpiece & Regimental Kothimora Kukri/Khukuri

Thin blades, horn and ivory grips, flat scabbards; silver Regimental Kothimora given on retirement (maker source). Kukris confirmed as regimental gifts/awards by GWT.

Dates	1947-today (pre-1947 regimental pieces: see KK-042)
Used by	Officers and senior NCOs; regimental gifts and retirement awards
Also known as	Presentation kukri; retirement kukri
Makers and marks	Indian and Nepali makers
How sure we are	Collector consensus / maker claim

Sources: [Presentation of ceremonial kukri to 848 Squadron, Malaya \(IWM film\)](#); [A Fine British Officers Kothimora Kukri](#), [Great Scott Antiques](#); [Spink lot 290, 9th Gurkha Rifles presentation kukri](#)

KK-032

1949

to today

Singapore Police Gurkha Contingent Kukri/Khukuri

Maker describes a Chainpure-style blade, ace-shaped keeper, no bolster ('2009 issue'), plus an SPF ceremonial model. No official spec found.

Dates	Formed 9 Apr 1949-today
Used by	Gurkha Contingent, Singapore Police Force
Blade	11 in (28 cm)
Also known as	SPF Jungle; Gurkha Contingent kukri
Makers and marks	Nepal-based contract makers
How sure we are	Uncertain (maker claim)

Sources: [Gurkha Police Forces at the National Day Parade \(National Archives of Singapore\)](#); [Gurkhas, Singapore Infopedia \(National Library Board\)](#); [With khukris and assault rifles, Singapore's Gurkhas to guard Trump-Kim summit, Gulf News](#)

KK-022

1951

Wilkinson Sword 1951 Kukri/Khukuri

About 1,400 made to trial UK production; edge dulled fast, never reordered. Only about a dozen said to survive.

Dates	1951 per Gurkha Museum (some sources 1949–51); Malaya trial
Used by	British Brigade of Gurkhas (Malaya Emergency)
Also known as	Collector 'Mk IV' (not official); 'WSC 51' (Kunwor calls Mk I–V official models)
Makers and marks	Wilkinson Sword
How sure we are	Documented (Gurkha Museum)

Sources: [Gurkha Museum](#); [Wilkinson Sword Company Kukri \(WSC 51\)](#), [Great Scott Antiques](#); 2015 update to the 20th century Gurkha issue kukri article

KK-029

1955

to today

Indian Standard Issue Kukri/Khukuri

Maker says field knife issued from mid-1950s and a parade knife from late 1960s; made in Dehradun. Unverified.

Dates	Mid-1950s–today (maker claim)
Used by	Indian Army Gorkha Rifles (claimed)
Blade	10 in (25.5 cm)
Weight	475 g
Also known as	ISI
Makers and marks	Dehradun makers
How sure we are	Uncertain (maker claim)

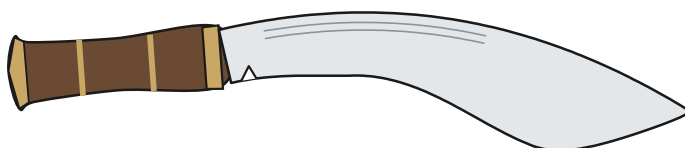
Sources: [Post #4, spiral \(Feb 2015\)](#)

KK-023

1958

to 1989

Nepal-Made British Service Kukri/Khukuri (BAS/BSI)



Made in Nepal under annual lowest-bid contracts. 'BSI'/'BAS' are trade terms, not official names.

Dates	Late 1950s/early 1960s–1980s
Used by	British Brigade of Gurkhas (Borneo 1962–66, Hong Kong, Falklands 1982)
Total length	c.17 in (43 cm) per Brigade of Gurkhas guide (2000)
Blade	c.11 in (28 cm)
Weight	14–17 oz (400–480 g)
Also known as	Collector 'Mk V'; BSI; BAS
Makers and marks	Nepal-based contract makers
How sure we are	Collector consensus

Sources: [spiral](#), [vikingsword forum 2007/2015](#); [MK 5 Kukri](#), [Great Scott Antiques](#); [Your BSIs, \(HSIs / MSIs\)](#), [BladeForums](#)

KK-033

1974

to today

Brunei Gurkha Reserve Unit Kukri/Khukuri

No pattern information found; Nepal-based contract makers claims to supply.

Dates	1974 (fully established 1980)-today
Used by	Gurkha Reserve Unit, Brunei
Also known as	GRU kukri
How sure we are	Uncertain

Sources: [Wikipedia: Gurkha Reserve Unit](#)

KK-024

1984

to 1988

Dharan 'Ordep Nepal' Kukri/Khukuri

Higher-grade pieces made by Nepali workers at the British Army's Dharan base.

Dates	Mid-1980s
Used by	British Brigade of Gurkhas
Also known as	Dharan base kukri
Makers and marks	Stamped 'Ordep Nepal' + date
How sure we are	Collector consensus

Sources: [spiral](#), [vikingsword forum 2007/2015](#); [Inscription \("Ordep Nepal 87"\)](#), [BladeForums](#)

KK-025

1990

to 1999

Short British Service Kukri/Khukuri (10.25 in)

Shorter, heavier version common in the 1990s.

Dates	c.1990s
Used by	British Brigade of Gurkhas
Blade	10.25 in (26 cm)
Weight	17-19 oz (480-540 g)
Also known as	-
How sure we are	Collector consensus

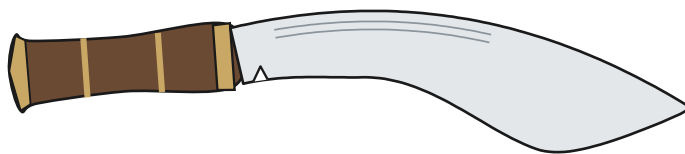
Sources: [spiral](#), [vikingsword forum 2007/2015](#); [Military Issue Khukuri \(Kukri\) Knives](#), [Collectors Weekly](#)

KK-026

1991

to today

British Gurkha Service No.1 Kukri/Khukuri (parade)



Polished blade, patent-leather scabbard; carried on parade. Issued with a Service No.2.

Dates	Early 1990s-today
Used by	British Brigade of Gurkhas - every recruit gets one
Total length	c.17 in (43 cm) per Brigade of Gurkhas guide (2000)
Blade	10.25 in (26 cm)
Spine	9 mm
Weight	515-585 g
Also known as	Service No.1; current issue
Makers and marks	Nepal-based contract makers (Dharan); maker's mark plus year
How sure we are	Documented (two-kukri issue); blade length disputed (10.25 in maker / 12-13 in Forces News)

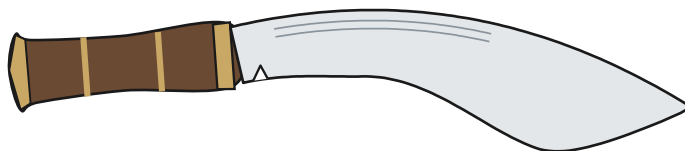
Sources: [Khukuri, Nepali Times \(2002, Ramyata Limbu\)](#); [British Gurkha Army playing with kukri / Intake 2020; Kukri - 2, Army Rumour Service \(ARRSE\)](#)

KK-027

1991

to today

British Gurkha Service No.2 Kukri/Khukuri (field)



Unpolished field version. Maker spec (2022): 5160 steel, buffalo horn handle, rat-tail tang, brass fittings, karda and chakmak. Gurkhas carry no bayonet; the kukri fills that role.

Dates	Early 1990s-today
Used by	British Brigade of Gurkhas - field and exercise
Blade	10.25 in (26 cm)
Spine	9 mm
Weight	515-585 g
Also known as	Service No.2; training kukri
Makers and marks	Nepal-based contract makers
How sure we are	Documented (issue); blade length disputed (10.25 in maker / 12-13 in Forces News)

Sources: [Training with the famous kukri knife, Forces News](#); [Kukri - 2, ARRSE](#); [Military Issue Khukuri \(Kukri\) Knives, Collectors Weekly](#)

12 Marks and dating guide

Type	Mark or clue	What it means	Patterns
Stamp	Co I†G 1915 / 16	Cossipore Arsenal, India Government, 1915, inspector 16	KK-015, KK-016
Stamp	Co. / Co 1917	Cossipore Arsenal (main WWI maker). Beware fake 'Co. 1917' Mk IIs with brass grip rings	KK-016
Stamp	Q.A 5.05	Quetta Arsenal, May 1905 (arsenal + date)	KK-015
Stamp	FW / RP	Fort William (Calcutta) / Rawalpindi inspection	KK-015
Stamp	M 43, MG-44, K.45	Maker + year stamps (most collectors). Some makers sell 'M43' and 'K45' as models	KK-016, KK-020
Stamp	Broad arrow over I	Indian government property mark	KK-015 to KK-020
Stamp	C† / P† + number	Inspector marks	KK-015 to KK-020
Stamp	ABC + number	Army Bearer Corps issue	KK-015
Stamp	2/8 GR 4726 (unit + service no.)	Battalion issue; company letter sometimes added	KK-038
Stamp	CA / CO 1945 on scabbard	Scabbard arsenal + date (Cawnpore / Cossipore); often a year after the blade and rarely matching it	KK-016, KK-020
Stamp	'Ordep Nepal' + date	Dharan, British Army base in Nepal, mid-1980s. Beware fake 'Ord Nepal'	KK-024
Stamp	Maker's mark + year	Nepal-based contract makers contract issue (e.g. 2013)	KK-026, KK-027
Inscription	Shree Teen Chandra ... + unit + rack no.	Nepal arsenal, PM Chandra Shumsher era 1901-1929	KK-010
Inscription	'papu'	Found on every Military Budhume; meaning unknown	KK-009
Emblem	Rana lion	Nepal officer pieces c.1860-1885	KK-035
Emblem	Sun & lion / 'Sri Shakteya'	Nepal officer pieces c.1885-1925	KK-036
Emblem	Nepal coat of arms	At least 1911-1962	KK-037
Emblem	Nepali numeral 5 / 3	Shree Panch (king) / Shree Tin (Rana PM)	KK-037
Emblem	Crescent moon	Officers' pieces c.1857-1939	KK-021, KK-042

Type	Mark or clue	What it means	Patterns
Emblem	Ashoka lions	Indian, after 1947	KK-028 to KK-030
Spelling	'Goorkha'	Before 1891	KK-042
Spelling	'P.W.O.' (4 GR)	From 1924; Prince of Wales plumes vs royal crown	KK-039, KK-042
Clue	Coin in the scabbard	Gives an earliest possible date	All
Clue	Missing butt plate on arsenal pieces	Normal - the two hand-threaded screws were often removed	KK-009 to KK-012

13 Names explained

Names you will see in shops and listings, and what they really refer to.

Name	What it is	Note
Ang Khola	Civilian / regional style	Traditional village form (seller typology). Not a documented military pattern; fine as a product line, not as 'military issue'.
Chainpure	Civilian / regional style	Regional style name. A Chainpure-style blade is claimed for the Singapore Gurkha Contingent jungle knife (maker claim).
Dhankute	Civilian / regional style	Regional style; no record of supplying the army.
Sirupate (civilian)	Civilian / regional style	The slim village sirupate is distinct from the c.1860-80 Military Sirupate found in the arsenal cache (KK-008).
Bhojpure	Trade name for a military size class	IMA name for Judkins' Short Gurkha Army Kukri (KK-011). Does not prove manufacture in Bhojpur.
Long Leaf / Longleaf	Trade name for a military pattern	IMA name for Judkins' Classic Gurkha Army Kukri (KK-010); also the collector name for pre-1903 British Gurkha kukris (KK-014).
WWI Vintage	Trade label	Atlanta/IMA label for the Late Gurkha Army Kukri (KK-012); Judkins says the label is wrong.
K45 / K-45	Date stamp (disputed)	Most collectors: 1945 date stamp on Mk III. One seller: a late-1945 Rawalpindi design.
M43	Maker stamp (disputed)	Most likely a maker's stamp on Mk II, not 'Model 1943'.
BSI / BAS	Trade terms	Used for Nepal-made British service kukris and scabbard styles; not official names.
Mk IV / Mk V	Collector labels	Wilkinson 1951 and Nepal-made BSI. No official Mark after Mk III confirmed.
Kothimora	Scabbard / decoration style	Means a decorated (often silver) scabbard; applies to presentation pieces of any era.
Hanshee / Hamsiya	Period type name	Long-hilted fighting khukuri, c.1750-1857 (KK-002).
Iraqi / Afghan	Marketing names	Finger-grooved 'gripper' handle; not issue patterns.
Panawal, Dui Chirra, Gelbu, Chitlange	No evidence found	No source tied these to a military pattern; check before using.

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