

The materials, which are used for manufacturing of handles for razors.

Today I want to tell about various materials of razor handles.

Celluloid.

Celluloid was one of the most widespread materials for manufacturing of handles. The first celluloid as a bulk material for forming objects was made in 1856 in Birmingham, England, by Alexander Parkes. It's a mixture of cellulose nitrate and camphor. And only in 1869, it received commercial use. This date needs to be considered at definition of age of the razor. It's impossible to find razor with celluloid handle that was made before 1869.



Ivory.

Ivory is a naturally occurring material generally thought to come from elephant tusks. Ivory handles always were graceful and beautiful. The price for them was respective. The use of ivory leaves in depth of centuries.



Practical advice: if you are going to store the razor with the ivory handle, for preservation of an edge use special wax, but not oil. Since the handle can become impregnated with oil and change color, etc.

Water Buffalo Horn.

Handles from this material, likely, the most widespread at razors of the 19th century. The horn is black and shiny. Horn may have pressed or carved designs.



This handle pattern was popular from about 1830 to the late 1860's.



Mother-of-Pearl.

Mother-of-Pearl handles are very beautiful and expensive. They are very rare. The beginning of production of such handles began at about 1830's.



Cracked Ice.

This term is used to describe imitation mother-of-pearl. Both celluloid and modern plastics have been used for this. Neither have been able to capture the iridescent qualities of mother-of-pearl.



Bone.

Along with a horn, handles from a bone are very widespread at razors of the 19th century. The bone handles are very convenient, pleasant to the touch and rather durable.



Tortoise Shell.

This is a rare handle material. It certainly has not been used since sea turtles became a protected species. It wasn't used very much even in the 1800's.



Metal.

First of all it is necessary to tell about silver handles. Sterling silver is an alloy of 925 parts pure silver and 75 parts copper. This mixture meets the standards for silver set by the British government and recognized around the world. Sterling silver was first widely used on razors during the 1890s. Such handles are very rare and have the high price.



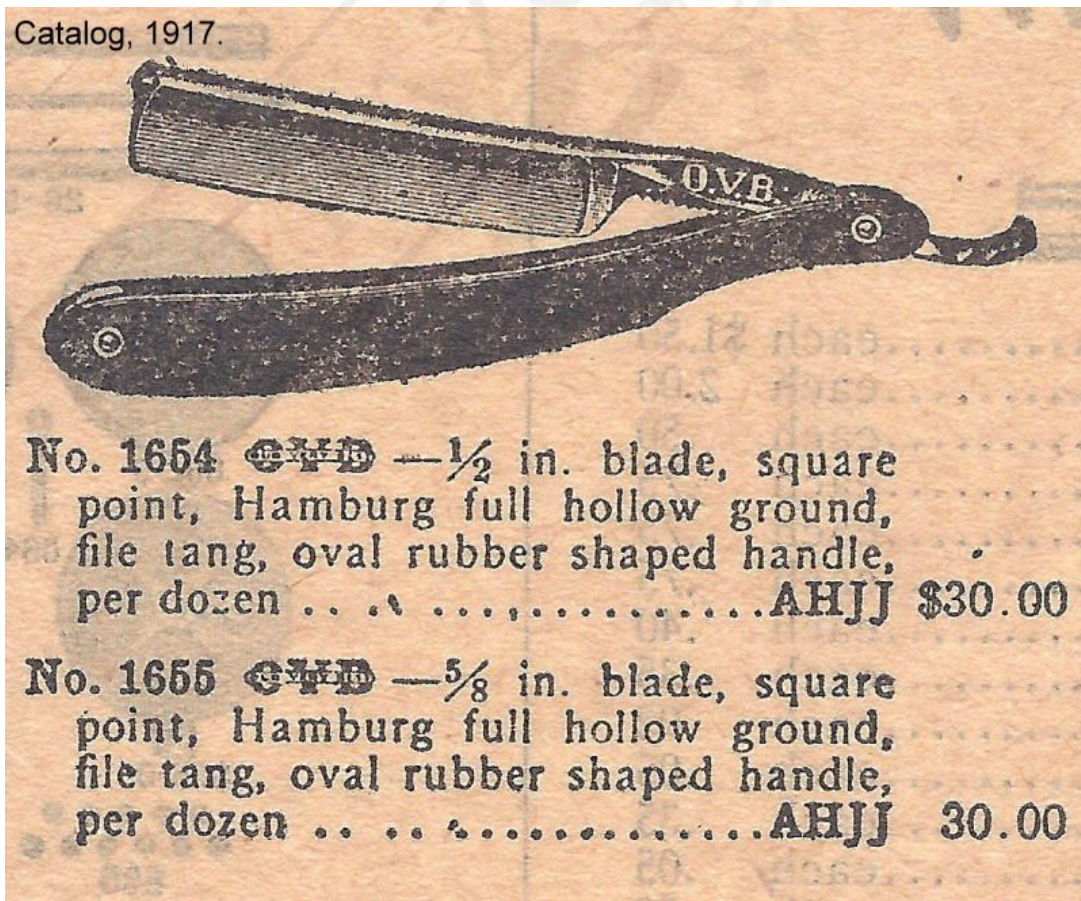
In the 20th century, began to use aluminum and stainless steel for manufacturing of handles. Aluminum handles are also representing great collection value. Silver handles were first used on razors in the 1920's.

Hard Rubber(Ebonite).

One of the most popular handle materials at the end of 19th and the beginning of 20th century.



Catalog, 1917.



No. 1654 ~~O.V.B.~~ — 1/2 in. blade, square point, Hamburg full hollow ground, file tang, oval rubber shaped handle, per dozenAHJJ \$30.00

No. 1655 ~~O.V.B.~~ — 5/8 in. blade, square point, Hamburg full hollow ground, file tang, oval rubber shaped handle, per dozenAHJJ 30.00

Wood.

Wood-handled razors are arguably the rarest of razors. Although in the earlier years wood was commonly used for scales, it didn't stand up well to the water and soap encountered in shaving or to time. Original wooden handles are pre-1820.

There were more different materials which were used for production of handles, but they occupy a small part from total.

Sources:

"Standard Guide to Razors", Roy Ritchie & Ron Stewart,

Website Wikipedia www.wikipedia.org

SRP forum www.straightrazorplace.com

©Alex Tseitlin (aka manah) www.strazors.com

