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Thirty years of use,
and still distinctly a
Loveless from
a distance.

A rare 47-year-old
Loveless—and its travels!

By John Denton

THE SAGA OF A LOVELESS & PARKE



The cracked ivory from the A&F stress test. Considering the ivory handle was frozen and then heated, it is surprising the knife did not receive even more damage.

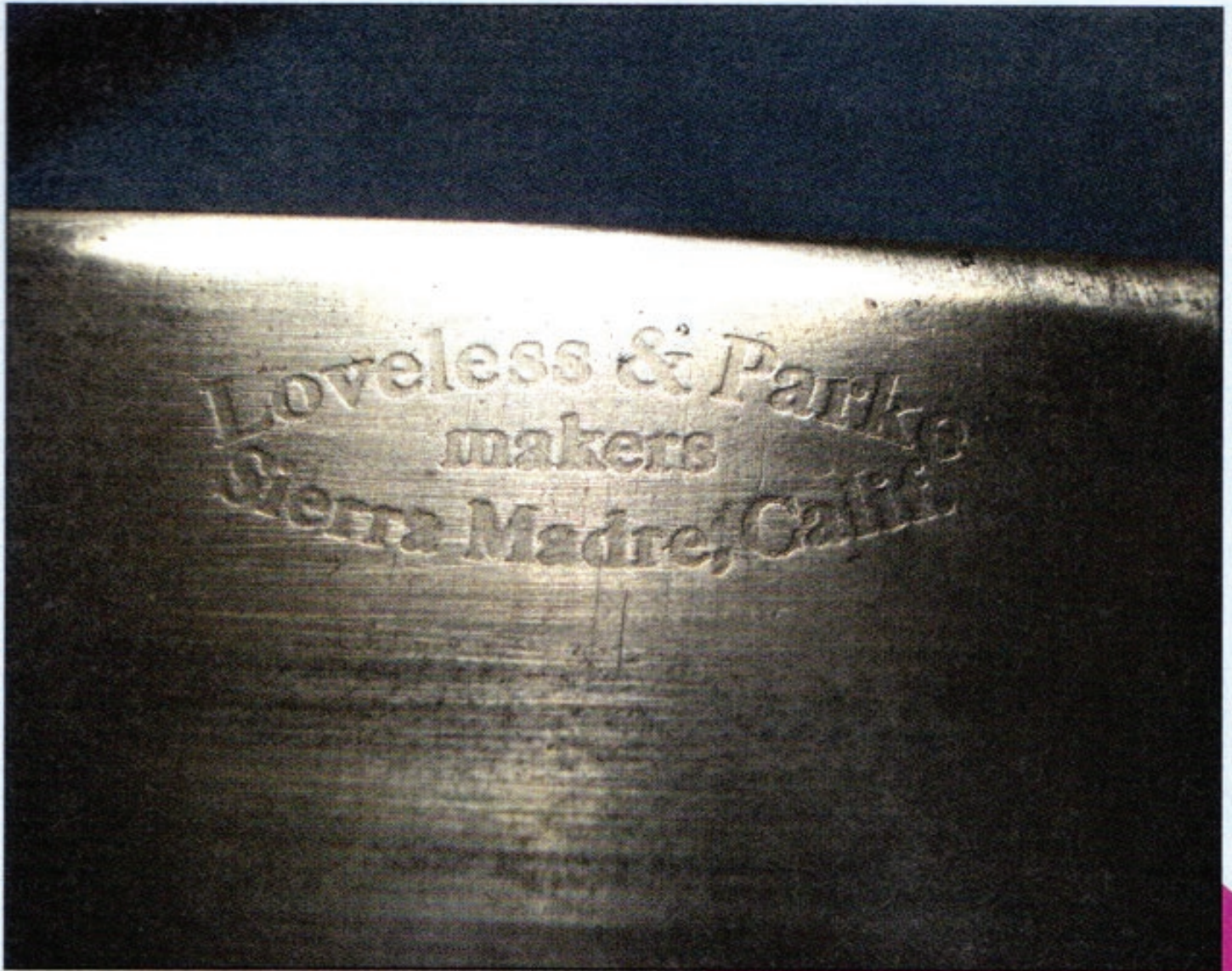
The story of this Loveless knife begins in 1967, when Hall of Fame knifemaker R. W. Loveless considered going back to his roots—specifically for making more knives for the legendary sporting goods supplier in New York, Abercrombie & Fitch (A&F). This is the store that first started carrying his Delaware Maid knives when he first started. The knife was produced with a partner and marked “Loveless & Parke,” which was a partnership that existed to produce a total of only 36 knives.

Back then, A&F was not the preppy clothing store it is today, but instead, one of the finest sporting goods stores in the world. It was at A&F that those polar expeditions and Ernest Hemingway’s African safaris were outfitted. It was A&F that carried some of Scagel’s

knives, and it was at A&F that part-time maker R. W. Loveless returned to the store that gave him his first big order of knives.

Bob sent the hidden-tang ivory-handled knife with finger grooves to the store, but things had changed since the Delaware Maid days. A new buyer was in the knife department, and the buyer decided to test the ivory-handled Loveless by freezing it and then super-heating it. As expected, the ivory handle cracked. A&F rejected and returned the knife to Loveless because it had not survived the test. Loveless summed it up quickly: "If they knew so little about knives that they would treat an ivory-handled knife in that manner, then they didn't deserve to be selling Loveless knives."

Loveless gave the cracked-handled knife to his first wife, and when they divorced in 1967, the knife went with her. In the ensuing 30 years, she used the Loveless-Parke as a standard kitchen knife—chopping, cutting and banging it against a stainless steel sink. When she



passed away, the knife was inherited by Loveless' daughter and purchased from her in 2001 by J. W. Denton, in whose collection it remains today. **KI**

Close-up of the rare
"Loveless & Parke makers,
Sierra Madre, Calif" mark.