

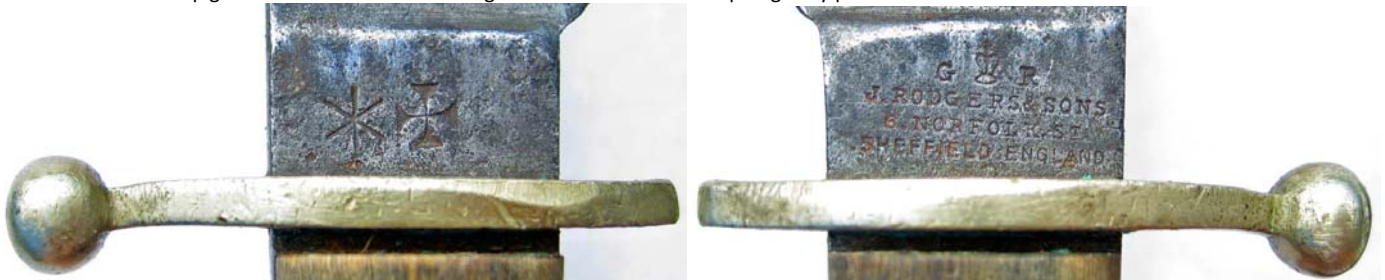
Pattern (name): English Dirk Charles Sumsion. Introduced into NZ Service: From 1863. Withdrawn: 1886?

This English Dirk made by Joseph Rogers, Sheffield, England c1820s has a best carbon steel hollow ground blade length 6.6" (167mm), width 1." (25mm), thickness 0.22" (5.3mm) tapering to a spear point. The German Silver cross guard originally about 2.36" (60mm) long, 0.6" (15.5mm) wide and 0.18" (4.5mm) thick, the catch ball 0.32" (8mm) diameter. The handle is 4.15" (105mm) long, 0.83" (21mm) tapering to 18.5mm wide, full width steel tang 0.22" (5.3mm) thick. The hardwood (type unknown) scale grips fixed to tang with five steel pins. The sheath belt loop fits a 3.5" (89mm) belt but has been stitched with copper wire to fit a 2.5" (63.5mm) belt, 0.90" (23mm) wide loop is copper riveted through the leather and wood lining and the German Silver cap, leather and wood lining at the mouth.

Provenance: This English Dirk is reputed to have belonged to and used by Private Charles Sumsion, who in September 1863 joined the New Zealand Forest Rangers, serving for one year 23 December 1863 to 8 December 1864. Sumsion's major battle engagements included Paterangi Pa 11 Feb 1864, Rangiaowhia 21 Feb 1864 and Orakau 31 March-1st April 1864.



The German silver cross guard has had the lower catch ball end removed from the cutting edge side probably when its fighting knife days were over and the knife was being used as a Bush / Hunting knife, the extended ball end on the cross guard would get in the way when the knife was used for skinning. The wood lined brown pigskin covered sheath is missing the German silver end cap originally pinned to the sheath.



Joseph Rogers trademarks * ✱ Renowned Star and Maltese Cross

G crown R (King George IV of England 1820-1830)

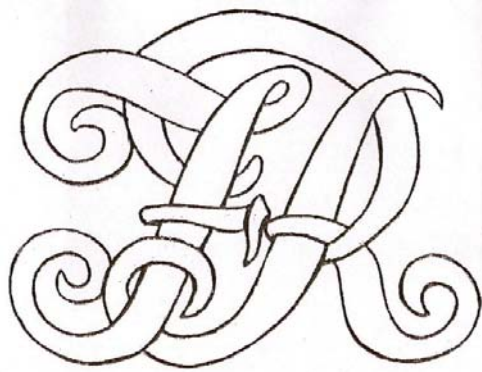
This English Dirk is reputed to have belonged to and used by Private Charles Sumsion, born 1837 in Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire, England, after trying his luck in the Victorian goldfields he sailed to New Zealand aboard the "Cadurus" and in September 1863 joined the 1st Regiment Waikato Militia No 939 then volunteered No 55 to join Captain von Tempsky's new No 2 Company, New Zealand Forest Rangers, serving for one year 23 December 1863 to 8 December 1864. Sumsion's major battle engagements included Paterangi Pa 11 Feb 1864, Rangiaowhia 21 Feb 1864 and Orakau 31 March – 1st April 1864. In a testimonial dated 8th December 1864 Major von Tempsky stated "I hereby take much pleasure in testifying to the good character of Charles Sumsion, who was this day discharged from No 2 Company, Forest Rangers. In action I have found him to be invariably brave and his conduct on ordinary occasions has been most exemplary". Later Sumsion received the New Zealand War Medal named to the Forest Rangers. Sumsion moved to Kumara on the New Zealand West Coast Goldfields from where he made his medal claim in 1881.

Acknowledgements and special thanks to: Egginton Bros Ltd. Owners of Joseph Rogers & Sons Ltd www.eggintongroup.co.uk/rogers1

Further information on NZAR ID No: 134. English Dirk used by Charles Sumsion in NZ.

The world famous *✠* Renowned Star and Maltese Cross trademark was granted to Joseph Rogers by the Cutlers Company in Hallamshire (Sheffield, England) in 1682, and registered in 1764, by the end of the 1700s the firm had established a factory at Norfolk Street, Sheffield and became one of the largest cutlery manufactures in the world with their own crucible and shear steel manufacturing works. The company received its royal warrant from King George IV in 1821.

Major von Tempsky encouraged his men in the NZ Forest Rangers to carry fixed blade fighting knives (not formally issued and purchased at their own expense and not to any pattern) and trained them in their use. Normally the knife was held diagonally in a sheath fixed to the front waist belt for ease and quick knife withdrawal. Later Armed Constabulary Force Inspector John Roberts outlined the training, - "We were taught knife fighting drill, grip the knife handle, small finger against the guard, bending the wrist so that the blade was laid along the inner arm enabling warding off, cutting and stabbing actions by arm extensions and wrist movements".



Outline of the cloth badge of the NZ Forest Rangers 1863-67