

THE WILKINSON STORY ACCORDING TO GILLETTE MAN

What Wikipedia reports about the origins of the Wilkinson Sword brand has long been accepted as the official and approved version. Yet, when we read it carefully, it appears to be a story that is convenient, ritualized, and wrapped in perfect English aplomb. Therefore, I choose to question it.

The English have always been a conservative people. They have demonstrated it with very few words but many actions. They have never abandoned the Crown, their traditions, their flag, or their patriotism.

They are the only people who truly colonized the world. Proof of this lies in the fact that 1.4 billion people are born into the English language, while more than 4 billion speak it fluently.

In a sense, we are all English now: English has become the world's common tongue.

In the early nineteenth century, a royal guard serving Her Majesty the Queen, known simply as Wilki, was getting ready at home before leaving for duty. As always, cleanliness and appearance came first.

He reached for the knife he normally used for shaving, only to discover that it was gone. His daughter had borrowed it before leaving to visit an aunt. She needed it for personal grooming ahead of a romantic meeting with an American gentleman. Such matters were considered women's business, and men were not expected to ask questions.

Time was running short.

Wilki turned to his wife and asked what he should do.

Without batting an eyelid, she replied:

"Wilki, take the sword and shave yourself."

Henry Wilkinson was a polymath of extraordinary talent, particularly gifted in engineering and the natural sciences. He also maintained business relations with the British Royal Family.

From that moment, the ritual of the sword was born.

Later it became a tradition for the son as well.

From Wilki, the name evolved into Wilkinson, and Wilkinson & Son became the family trade, transforming a household ritual into a business and laying the foundations of the name we know today.

Between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the company expanded into shaving products and supplied its first razor blades to the military — two million during the First World War.

English customers did not go into shops asking for razor blades.

They simply said:

"Give me the two swords."

Meanwhile, production expanded into scissors, shears, and many other cutting instruments.

THE TWO SWORDS OF HER MAJESTY

Ferdinando Frega