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Welcome to *Nib Noise*. I hope you'll enjoy reading this month's issue.

PLEASE DO NOT REPLY TO THIS NEWSLETTER!

The robot that sends it out still hasn't learned to read. If you have comments or questions, send email to:

richard@richardspens.com

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<http://www.richardspens.com/?info=nibnoise>



Fall Has Fell

It's September, and harvest season is here with a vengeance. Tomatoes, sweet corn, apples, peaches, you name it, and it's available in virtually every roadside farm stand here in New England. I couldn't resist making a photomontage with this second-generation Mabie Todd Swan Leverless; the color is just perfect to go with the greens of many of the autumn squashes. But the pen is a Leverless in name only. After World War II, Mabie Todd replaced the original Leverless mechanism design with a button filler that's operated by turning a knob connected to a cam inside the pen. The cam pushes on the end of the pressure bar. That said, it's a pretty pen that writes very nicely — but repairers beware: the knob is casein, and soaking the back end of the pen is the fastest way to find yourself looking for a replacement.

It's Showtime!

Our next pen show, less than two weeks hence, will be the Sixth Annual Commonwealth Pen Show at the Holiday Inn Boston Bunker Hill Area Hotel, on Sunday, September 15. It's a one-day show, but it's a good one, growing bigger and better every year, and well worth the trip if you are close enough. The weather outside might be a little cooler than it was a couple of weeks ago, but the pen show room will be hot! Come and enjoy the fun of a classic New England-style pen show!

If you plan to come and haven't ever been to a show before, you might want to read my article on Your First Pen Show:

<http://www.richardspens.com/?shows=firstshow>

Also, please read our "Table Talk" FAQ to learn how we operate at shows:

<http://www.richardspens.com/?info=shows+faq>

For information about the show and the hotel, please visit the show's Web site.

<http://www.commonwealthpenshow.com/>

I will be working on nibs to improve or customize your writing experience, and Barbara will be juggling people to make sure I don't have time to go on a buying spree.

We can accept your MasterCard, VISA, American Express, or Discover card — but some of the vintage dealers are hobbyists who can handle only cash, so be sure to bring some (cash, that is) or note the location of the ATM in the hotel lobby.

We look forward to seeing old friends and meeting new ones. We'll be there all day. Will we see *you* at our table? (If you won't have any pens for me to work on, please do feel free to stop by anyway and at least say hello!)

The Glossopedia

With more than 1,475 entries comprising (with subentries) more than 1,625 individual terms, more than 950 illustrations, more than 190 patent citations linked to their respective patent documents at various archives, and extensive cross-references, the RichardsPens Glossopedia is the most comprehensive resource of its kind anywhere. Each month, *Nib Noise* includes a randomly chosen Glossopedia entry.

nickel silver (also *Alpaca*, *Argentan*, *German silver*, *New Silver*, *paktong*) A silvery tarnish-resistant alloy, one of the Monel metals; contains no actual silver. Used for making furniture on some pens (*e.g.*, the lever and the very attractive accommodation clip on the 1910s no-name pen shown below), nickel silver was first produced in 1770 to duplicate a Chinese alloy called *paktong* that was used to mimic real silver at much lower cost. One common formulation (ASTM B122, alloy 75200) contains 65% copper, 18% nickel, and 17% zinc. Do not confuse nickel silver with Nikargenta. See also Monel metal, nickel, Nikargenta, paktong.



To immerse yourself in the Glossopedia, follow this link:

<http://www.richardspens.com/?gloss=>

If you would like to suggest an entry for the Glossopedia, you are most welcome to do so. Send an email to me at this address:

richard@richardspens.com

Broad Strokes

The Pen Doctor dropped by the Nashua Pen Spa, so this month you get a double shot of his “stylomedical” knowledge. First his latest offering, then the usual monthly selection:

<http://www.richardspens.com/?pendoc=XXXII>

Or, if you don’t read roman numbers, this link will get you to the same place:

<http://www.richardspens.com/?pendoc=32>

To help you find reference articles on my site that have been edited recently, there is a handy heading right at the top of the reference index, listing the five most recently added or edited reference pages. For edited pages, there are brief descriptions of what was changed.

The Pen Doctor

The Pen Doctor is a regular visitor to the Nashua Pen Spa, and every so often he puts a few prescriptions up on my site. Each month (except when I forget), I’ll be reprinting one of his prescriptions here.

Q: What’s with the new olde-fashioned Rx thingie? What was wrong with the old one?

Rx: When I asked Richard this question, he told me he was tired of the old version that he made in Photoshop. He finally went out and found a font that includes the correct symbol. (Apparently, most don’t.)

Q: I have several pens (usually the cheaper ones) which have a nasty habit of leaking ink over the top surface of the nib near the tip. This may occur no matter how the pen is stored or kept in my pocket. I often try to wipe off the nib before I write with it, but sure enough, several minutes later the ink will leave the slit and form on the top face of the nib again. The cost and value of these pens makes me reluctant to spend the money to send these to a repair person, especially if the fix is a simple one.

Rx: Richard’s Glossopedia contains an entry on nib creep; I’ll reproduce it here for convenience:



nib creep. The spontaneous accumulation of ink on the top surface of a nib; the ink is said to “creep” up out of the slit. Some inks are more prone to creep than others, but in most cases the root cause of the phenomenon is a nib slit that is either damaged or manufactured with insufficient attention to finishing; nicks, scratches, *etc.*, can create a capillary path across the edge between the slit wall and the top surface. Platinum-plated nibs are more prone to nib creep than are unplated nibs because platinum is more wettable than gold. See also capillary action, wettability.

If you’re using a creep-prone ink such as many of Noodler’s bulletproof colors, you might stop the creep simply by using a different ink. But if the nib is bad enough, even the best inks will creep on it. In this case, the solution requires intervention by a qualified nib specialist to deal with the slit problem(s).



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