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

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richard@richardspens.com

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It's January. A new year is here, time to look to the future for new things to do to improve the world around us (starting, of course, with our pen collections). The Inkpak pen shown in the picture above was made in the 1930s. Its creation was an attempt to improve life by making a pen that would produce its own ink when filled with water. That was something old, not something new, but with a difference that would make it new: it was actually going to work well. Unfortunately, like others of its ilk, it didn't do all that well; and only a few years after its founding, Inkpak was selling ordinary lever fillers, with nothing at all to distinguish them except the rakishly slashed cap crown.

New Features for a New Year

First, you might notice, as you read this issue, that in addition to the links that have always been here, such as the one that points you to the content of "Broad Strokes," there are now additional links scattered through the text (such as the one in the introduction above). I hope my inclusion of these additional links will add to your pleasure in reading *Nib Noise*.

Second, I have begun re-running the "Extra Fine Points" articles that Don Fluckinger wrote for *Nib Noise* from its April 2002 birth until the end of 2012, when the time came for him to hang up his ink bottle. These articles are filled with entertaining and useful information, and while some of it is outdated, they are still well worth reading. In this issue, you will find Don's introductory article, "The Dating Game." (*Please note that Don is no longer a freelance writer. His full-time job keeps him quite busy.*)

This Year on the Show Circuit

Barbara and I get to stay at home until late February, when we begin our

annual show circuit anew with the Baltimore-Washington International Pen Show, followed only a week later by the Long Island Pen Show. We hope to see many of you at one (or more) of the shows we'll be attending this year. (For a complete listing of U.S. pen shows, see the US Pen Show Schedule at Indy-Pen-Dance.)

BROAD STROKES

The December issue of *PEN WORLD* Magazine was a little late, arriving in my mailbox just yesterday (January 3). In it you will find the penultimate entry in my year-long series about Japanese pocket pens. For those of you who don't yet subscribe to *PEN WORLD*, I present here a copy of that article, exactly as it appears in the magazine. The finale will arrive in February, and by that time you'll have had time to subscribe to *PEN WORLD* for yourself. It's an excellent magazine, and that's not just because I write for it.

http://www.richardspens.com/pdf/PW33.1_BinderLongShortVI.pdf



By Don Fluckinger

With the exception of date-stamped Parker "51"s and Vacumatics, have you ever tried to conclusively determine the year of a pen's manufacture, or even figure out an accurate range of years?

<http://www.richardspens.com/?xf=0204>

From 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

discoloration A change in color, usually for the worse. Hard rubber oxidizes, crazing and turning brown or even olive green; the process is greatly accelerated under the effect of actinic light. (See below, an oxidized Waterman's Ideal N^o 452.) Celluloid discolours by turning brown when exposed to the sulfurous exhalations of rubber (e.g., from the pen's sac, illustrated here by the discolored barrel of a Parker vest-pocket Duofold). The effect on celluloid, chemically speaking, is also oxidation; and clear celluloid exhibits a less rapid (and usually less disfiguring) oxidation referred to as ambering. See also ambering, crazing.



If you would like to suggest an entry for the Glossopedia, I invite you to send an email to me at richard@richardspens.com with your proposed entry. If you don't have a definition for your entry, I'll do my best to find one.

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.

Frank Dubiel, while noting that the shell of a Parker "51" must touch the nib, says that if it contacts the nib too tightly it will restrict ink flow. Is heating the shell and either pressing the nib against the shell or the shell against the nib a reliable means of increasing or decreasing in flow in a "51"?

Rx:

First off, I have to disagree with Frank. I've seen innumerable "51"s whose shells were very close to, but not in contact with, the nib, and in fact the shell on my "regular carry" pen doesn't contact the top surface of the nib. That said, it's certainly desirable that these parts be very close together, as the shell is part of the capillary system by which ink is brought to the nib tip.

Heating the shell is generally, I think, a bad idea. Mark I and Mark II "51" shells are acrylic and will take a lot of heat without even hinting that they want to bend, but Mark III shells are a polystyrene plastic, similar to the stuff used in the 61 but not so brittle, and these won't take nearly that much heat

without going limp or, usually, shrinking. Which is which? Richard's "51" profile will help you to identify your pen, but even so there is a nontrivial risk of damage.

To adjust the flow in a "51" I use three techniques, all of which require that you remove the shell. The first is adjusting the tine spacing. (Please don't just grab the pen and force an X-acto knife or other metal-destroying object between the tines; you will damage the slit walls.) This almost always results in a need to realign the tines and smooth the tip, but it is often easy and effective. Sometimes the fit of the shell is too close to allow the tines to be adjusted, and in these cases I use a small rat-tail file to remove a very small amount of material from the inside of the shell where it lies adjacent to the nib. The last method, which I use primarily to restore flow on pens that quit from time to time, is to heat the feed and bend it very slightly toward the nib. The bend is in the vicinity of the breather tube's vent hole near the back of the feed. Be careful here, as later feeds are plastic, not hard rubber, and don't like this treatment at all!



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