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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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One of the ways to make the boring black pens of the 19th and early 20th

centuries more attractive was the decoration. Sometimes it was simply chasing in artistic patterns, and sometimes it was far more lavish. I'm a particular fan of *repoussé* work of the kind shown on the ribbon-styled overlay of the pen above and on the panel behind the pen. To make a *repoussé* object, the artist creates a negative mold of the desired surface and then uses burnishers and other tools to press a thin sheet of metal carefully into the mold from the reverse side, so that the side in contact with the mold assumes the contours of the mold's surface. (When I was a kid, we could buy kits to make a *repoussé* copper picture about four inches square using a plastic mold.) The process can be partly mechanized for producing many copies of a piece, but it all starts with the skilled hands of the artist. The pen shown above is a sleeve-filler made by the Century Pen Company of Whitewater, Wisconsin. This pen was made probably between 1900 and 1910. There is more about Century in my *Glossopedia*. The pen shown below is an eyedropper-filler made by an unknown company. Cheaply made pens of this type sold at prices ranging from \$1.00 to \$3.00, depending on just how fancy they were.



We're Number One! And That's Not a Good Thing.

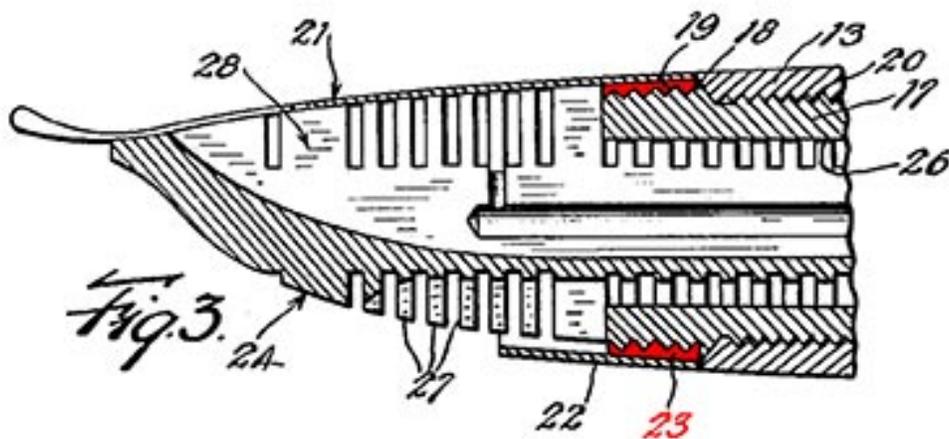
The lockdown continues. Or at least, with America's COVID-19 death toll soaring past a world-beating 100,000 with no real signs of slowing down, the lockdown *should* continue. Yet more and more thoughtless people are out there, flouting all the common-sense rules of safety as they flock to beaches in large crowds or protest *with guns* that their rights are being violated. I worry about all my friends in the pen community. I hope you are taking the proper precautions: social distancing, masks, and hand sanitizing. If we all pull together — so to speak — we can beat this thing. If we don't, we could lose everything we know and love, including pen shows and the wonderful community of which we are a part.

Our Next Pen Show

As I said above, we don't know with any certainty when our next show will be. Washington DC is still scheduled for early August, but I'm not hopeful that they won't have to cancel. Chicago has rescheduled itself for the same mid-September weekend as the Commonwealth Pen Show, but as time passes, that date, too, looks less and less likely. We'll know in plenty of time if either of both September shows will go on. I'm now pinning my hopes on Ohio.

BROAD STROKES

Some years ago, I wrote for my website an article about Sheaffer's "TRIUMPH" point nibs. At the prompting of Mike Kennedy, I set out this month to write another article, a more technical one, approaching these nibs from the perspective of a repairer. The new article began to get out of hand, and when it started grabbing for some of the content from the earlier article, I went with the flow. The new article has now replaced the old, and it's available for your perusal. I hope repairers and non-repairers alike will find it useful.





By Don Fluckinger
October 2002

[Editor's note: Jim Hickman, about whom Don writes in this month's *Extra Fine* reprint, died in December 2004; but what Don wrote in 2002 is a study in how to do things right in the pen business. We could all take a lesson from Jim.]

“To get people to look at a new pen, you’ve got to have something different,” says Jim Hickman, a semi-retired history professor with Newman for a middle name. That’s where he derived the name of his fledgling fountain pen manufacturing company, Newman Pens of Duluth, Georgia.



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.

180 (colloquially, *one-eighty*) A pen model introduced by Parker in

1977. The 180 was initially fitted with a two-sided 14K nib that wrote a finer line when “flipped” so that the nominal upper surface of the nib was downward. The 180 name derived from the 180° rotation when the pen was flipped. Two user-interchangeable nib grades were offered: XF/M and F/B. (The pen shown here has an XF/M nib unit.) In their book *Fountain Pens and Pencils: The Golden Age of Writing Instruments*, George Fischler and Stuart Schneider commented that the performance of the 180’s nib was unsatisfactory in either direction; but when the nib is tuned, the pen is an excellent, if quite stiff, writer. In 1983, Parker replaced the 14K nib with a gold-plated steel nib that was not flippable, and in 1986 this model was subsumed into the Classic range.



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.

And if you don’t think you can wait 122 years and ten months* to see the whole *Glossopedia* here, one entry at a time, you can easily jump the gun by purchasing your own copy in ebook form for Amazon’s Kindle and Kindle app, Apple’s Books app, or Barnes & Noble’s NOOK and NOOK app. I just released the Fourth Edition this past month.

* It’s actually longer than that now, because the Web version of the *Glossopedia* has grown to more than 1,500 entries, comprising with subentries more than 1,650 individual terms.

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.

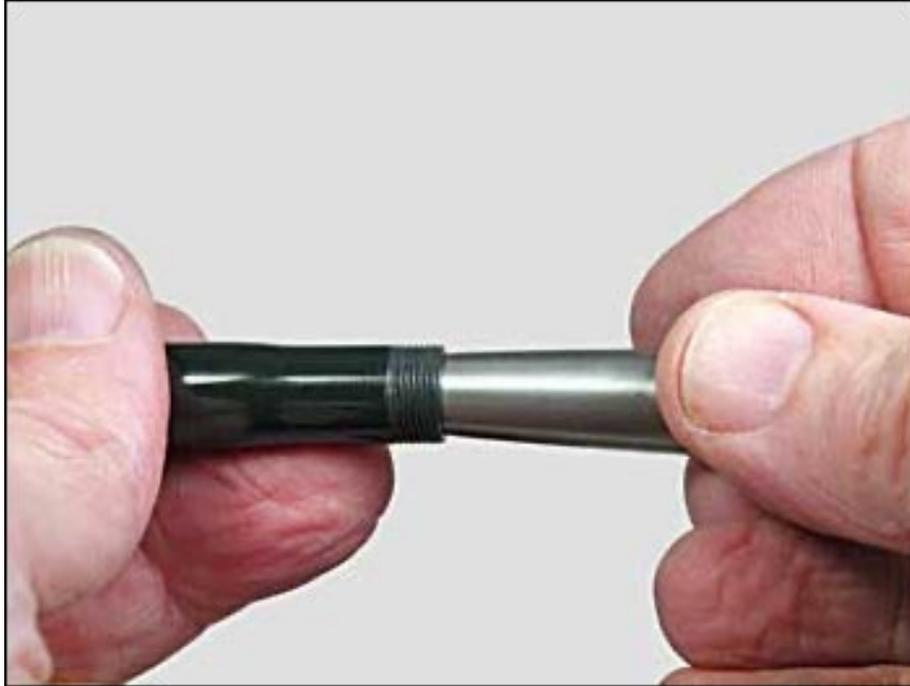
The Pen Doctor

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: I have a great Eversharp Skyline, but the cap threads don't work right. When you screw the pen in too firmly, it goes beyond the end of the threads, and then it's loose again. What size of threads repair tool should I use?

R_x: You cannot restore the threads with a chasing die (thread repair tool) because it's a multiple-lead screw that's not a standard size, and it's loose because some of the plastic material has worn away or has shrunk, or both, over years of use. Instead, you must expand the diameter of the barrel very slightly at the threaded end. To make the tool you need for this task, remove the clip from a Parker 61 cap.

Heat the open end of the barrel gently using a heat gun, never an open flame! When the end of the barrel has begun to soften the least bit, carefully press the smaller end of the 61 cap into the opening just enough to expand it by about 0.004" (0.1 mm). Allow the pen body to cool, then remove the 61 cap. Usually, 0.004" is enough to make the threads engage, but you might need to repeat the operation to expand the body opening a little further.



Done right, this technique creates a slight taper on the inside of the barrel end. If you did the work carefully, the barrel will probably still fit the section tightly enough. If it's too loose, shellac it in place, and let the shellac dry for 72 hours before trying to use the pen.

As with any repair technique that is new to you, try this first on a pen you don't care about, not on your Skyline.



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