



Volume 20 • Number 5 • August 2021

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

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The robot that sends it out refuses to learn to read. If you have comments or questions, send email to:

richard@richardspens.com

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Summer Cruising

The image above shows an imaginary desktop, that of an American battleship captain in the second decade of the 20th century. Nearing the end of a cruise, our captain has just finished a post card addressed to his beloved wife, Mrs. Cecilia Whitehead of 4 South Elm Street, Rockford, Illinois:

Dearest Ceci,

As we near the end of our cruise, my thoughts turn to you. My officers and crew continue to perform well, and I shall doubtless receive an excellent report, but you remain in the forefront of my brain. I am counting the hours. The giant pen that Mr. Rider so kindly made for me continue to write perfectly.

Yours a loving husband,
Howard

write perfectly.

Your loving husband,

Howard

The giant Rider pen, with which he is obviously well pleased, is only slightly an anachronism; it bears an Ann Arbor, Michigan, imprint, but the J. G Rider Pen Company did not move from Rockford, Illinois, to Ann Arbor until 1920. The pen appears actually to have been made as a salesman's sample; the nib is a Mabie Todd No 8, not a Rider-imprinted nib.

Perhaps one of the most interesting Rider pens is this one, which was the personal property of Jay M. Rider, the son of company founder Jay G. Rider:



Rider pens were innovative and very well made. They were of course eyedropper-fillers, but there was no section joint. Instead, there was an easy way to remove and replace the feed without disturbing the nib. Rider pens are today rare and highly collectible. Read my profile of the J. G. Rider Pen.

BROAD STROKES

When I designed the *Glossopedia*, I took the lazy way out with numbers like 5-30 and 45 and 2000. Instead of creating a page for each letter and one for

numbers, I just put all the numbers into the letter pages, each one going on the page where it would be if it were spelled out. For example, 45 went on the F page (forty-five) and 2000 went on the T page (two thousand). I explained this system in the Introduction, and I was good to go. That made things easy for me, but it turns out that easy for me wasn't the right answer. A few days ago I was discussing this with a friend who threw me down and stomped on me by playing devil's advocate. "I can't spell." Now, I know that this person can spell, but hearing "I can't spell" really disturbed me. So this month, after a few days' work, I am unveiling a shiny new feature in my *Glossopedia*: a **Numbers** page. Now, when you go to the *Glossopedia*, the top of the page will look a little different. Here's the top of the new Numbers page:

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL localhost/richardspens.com/ref/gloss/0.htm. The page is titled "Glossopedia of Pen Terms" and includes a sub-header "(This page published August 1, 2017)". The navigation menu at the top has a "Numbers" link, which is circled in red. Below the menu, the word "New!" is written in red next to the "Numbers" section title. The main content area contains several entries for pen numbers and alloys, such as 3-25, 5-30, 7-30, 9K, 12K, and 14K.

Code	Description
3-25	A Sheaffer model designation indicating a pen that had a № 3 nib and was warranted for 25 years. See also 3-30 , 7-30 .
5-30	A Sheaffer model designation indicating a pen that had a № 5 nib and was warranted for 30 years. See also 3-25 , 7-30 .
7-30	A Sheaffer model designation indicating a pen that had a № 7 nib and was warranted for 30 years. See also 3-25 , 5-30 .
9K	(also 9C) A designation indicating an alloy that contains 9 parts of gold, by weight, per 24 parts of the total metal content. The same as 375. 9K alloys were used for some excellent low-priced flexible vintage nibs, and some modern makers have used 9K for solid-gold furniture. See also karat .
12K	A designation indicating an alloy that contains 12 parts of gold, by weight, per 24 parts of the total metal content. The same as 500. Used to conserve resources or cut costs by WASP (a Sheaffer sub-brand), various 19th-century dip-pen makers for their lower-line models, some Japanese manufacturers in 1937, and some Chinese manufacturers during the 1950s and '60s. See also karat .
14K	(also 54C) A designation indicating an alloy that contains 14 parts of gold, by weight, per 24 parts of the total metal content. The same as 585. See also karat .

You might notice, when you visit the Numbers page, that I've taken the opportunity to add a few brand-new entries there.

The next edition of the *Glossopedia* ebook will pick up this new feature, too, and updates are always free.

BROAD STROKES

Take Two!

As more and more enthusiastic new pen collectors approach maintaining and repairing their pens, they are bound to make a few mistakes. I know because I've been there. In an effort to prevent at least some of those mistakes, I've created a new page for the Repairer's Corner. The new page, created with a little help from my friends Mike and Linda Kennedy of Indy Pen-Dance, is titled "**Essential Tools and Supplies for Pen Repair.**"



The RichardsPens Bookstore

I don't actually have a bookstore, but I have written a few books, and I let other people do all the work of selling them. Right now, I'm working on the second edition of *Japanese Pocket Pens* and the fifth edition of the *Glossopedia*, and there are new books in the planning stage. **My latest book, *The Best of the Pen Doctor*, arrived in Amazon, Apple, and Barnes & Noble ebook stores last May. It's selling well, and it's also available**

as a deluxe full-color paperback.



There's a complete listing of my books on my site, with direct links to pages on Amazon, Apple, Barnes & Noble, and Lulu where you can buy them for your own library.



*By Don Fluckinger
July 2005*

For the uninitiated, “Sumgai” is an Asian-sounding mangling of the words “some guy,” who is the person collectors often hear about when inquiring about pens with friends, relatives, antique shop proprietors, or flea market vendors: “Yeah, I had a [Snake Pen/Flighter 51/Hundred Year Pen/whatever] here earlier but I [sold/gave] it to some guy who was just here.”

You can read about the original Sumgai in a story by Bill Riepl.

Here are Don's **Five Steps to Sumgai-dom**.



From the *Glossopedia*

With more than 1,550 entries comprising (with subentries) more than 1,700 individual terms, more than 1,000 illustrations, more than 200 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.

**Amb
assad
or** A J. Harris sub-brand (1920s-1940s). Ambassador pens were lever fillers and were generally cheap and of poor quality, but they did have 14K warranted nibs. It appears that when J. Harris became the Majestic Pen Company, it kept the Ambassador brand; later Ambassador pens resemble contemporaneous Majestic models. See also Harris.

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 more than 129 years (note how this number keeps growing as new entries are added) to see the whole *Glossopedia* here, one entry at a time (if I don't slip up and repeat an entry or three), 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.

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 past prescriptions here.

Q: I know this is a probably a dumb question, but I have several Pilot Vanishing Point pens and I want to know if I can use the nib from a Pilot Capless in them. They don't sell the Capless here in America so what's

the difference between the Capless and the VP?

Rx: If you're talking about a current (post-2000) Capless, there's no difference between the pens except the name. Here are a Vanishing Point and a Capless together; can you tell which is which?



My theory is that Pilot USA decided back in 1970, when they started selling the Capless in the U.S., that "capless" might imply that the pen was missing something, so they chose "Vanishing Point" because it seems like a techie-cool name. But that's just a guess.

With the foregoing said, I'll point out that you're more likely to find a 14K gold nib in a Capless than in a Vanishing Point. It's also possible to find a steel nib from time to time; apparently, Pilot in Japan still sells steel nibs for the Capless. But this won't change the way the pen works; mechanically, the nibs are the same, just as the pens are.



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