



Volume 21 • Number 1 • April 2022 • Special All-Parker Issue

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 *Nib Noise* out refuses to learn to read. If you have comments or questions, send email to:

richard@richardspens.com

PLEASE READ: I am terribly sorry for the email storm last month. I believe that I have fixed the administrative error that let it happen, but I'd rather not find out the hard way, so really, don't reply to this address.

I have not removed anyone who asked to be removed as a result of that fiasco. I hope that those of you who were angry will reconsider. You subscribed to *Nib Noise* because you like pens and found *Nib Noise* useful and enjoyable, and I hope it's still what you subscribed for.

To subscribe or unsubscribe, please visit the Free Email Newsletter page on my website. Don't send email directly to me; the list is handled by a remote server.



“These famous P-51’s have more than a name in common!”

On April 29, 1944, while World War II was in full fury, the Parker Pen Company advertisement above appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*. Possibly Parker's single most collectible ad, it was intended to whet the public's appetite for the new Parker "51" fountain pen by likening the pen to the celebrated North American P-51 Mustang fighter. That was a not unreasonable comparison, considering their streamlined looks and the advanced technology they both embodied. The "51" was, of course, virtually unobtainable if you were a civilian, but that ad and others that came before and after it did their job, and sales of the "51" took off like a rocket when the war ended and the civilian market could stop worrying about rationing. The pen lying across the advertisement is a 1941 (first year) "51" in Blue Cedar, with a "Wedding Band" cap. The painting is by Boris Artzybasheff (1899–1965), a famous Russian-American illustrator who did dozens of "hand" paintings for Parker "51" advertisements.

BROAD STROKES

In response to unrelenting pressure from certain quarters, I have donned my author's hat once again to put together another book of fountain pen profiles. This time it's Parker's turn. There are fifteen profiles in this new book, beginning with the legendary Duofold and ending with the underappreciated 180. All have been brought up to date with new information and other revisions of varying scope.

I will be announcing the book on social media later today, but I wanted to announce it here first. See Below, **My Books**, for a link to the page on my site that lists this newcomer along with all of my other books.



The companion Web pages have also been updated.



My Books

As always, I invite you to visit my Books page. I don't sell anything from my site, I prefer to let the bookselling pros do the heavy lifting. There's a complete listing of my books on my site, with direct links to the web pages where you can buy them for your own library. To better show you what each book looks like, I've updated all the cover images on the page to the larger size you see above.

As an Amazon, Apple, and Barnes & Noble Associate, I earn a commission when you purchase one of my books by following a link from my Books page.



As noted above, my newest book, *Fountain Pen Profiles: Parker*, is now available!



By Don Fluckinger
March 2006

Parker Penmanship: Myth or Reality?

Parker Penmanship? What is that? I'm wondering if that was something that Parker promoted to schoolchildren in hopes of selling them pens...



From the *Glossopedia*

With more than 1,575 entries comprising (with subentries) more than 1,750 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.

Zephyr. A lever-filling bottom-line pen model (properly the Parkette Zephyr) produced by Parker beginning in about 1940. See the illustration below. See also [Parkette](#).



(Yes, this really was the *Glossopedia* entry that came up on the home page when I went to my website to collect an entry for this space.)

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 132 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. When I release the next edition, your ebook vendor will notify you (or make the update silently).

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 have just acquired a new nib for my Parker "51", but am not sure how to take it apart so it can be fitted. Advice would be welcome.

R: The shell (hood) on a "51" is held in place with an adhesive that softens when heated. I recommend using a rubber stamper's embossing-type heat gun like the one illustrated in Essential Tools and Supplies for Pen Repair. The adhesive softens at a much lower temperature than would be needed to damage the shell, so you should keep an eye on things. Too much heat, too fast, will shrink the shell — especially on Mark III pens, whose plastic is polystyrene rather than the earlier Lucite®.

- 1 If the pen is an Aero-metric model, remove the barrel. If the pen has been allowed to dry with ink in it, soak and flush it thoroughly before attempting to disassemble it; dried ink does not release under heat, and too much force can break the pen. Heat the area of the shell adjacent to the clutch ring for a minute or so, spinning the pen slowly so that all sides will be heated. Then grasp the clutch ring and the threaded barrel connector or barrel firmly (I use section pliers) and unscrew the shell (I use a second set of section pliers). If it won't come with relatively little effort, it may need more heat.
- 2 Some Aero-metric versions of the "51" have a rubber O-ring at the joint between the shell and the clutch ring. If yours is one of these, the shell will resist being unscrewed after it has come loose far enough that you know it should come off. If this happens, screw the shell back down, screw it off again until it binds, pushing just a little to force the O-ring to let go a little. Repeat this back-and-forth procedure until it finally frees the shell.
- 3 Once you have the shell off, you can simply slip the nib out of the end of the collector with a gentle pull, twisting slightly back and forth to rotate the nib and break it free if it's a little stuck.
- 4 While you have the pen apart, go ahead and remove the collector, slip the feed out of the end of the collector, and clean the whole shebang before reassembly.
- 5 The first step of reassembly is to assemble the collector, feed, and nib. The collector has a thin slit running almost its entire length, and a broader air channel running along the opposite side of the finned area. Insert the assembled feed and breather tube, and then the nib, into the collector with the top surface of the feed and nib lined up as exactly as possible with the broad air channel. This is the way the original "51" design documents specified assembly. A later Parker service manual stated that aligning the nib and feed with the air channel isn't necessary, but my experience indicates that the pen will flow more reliably with these parts aligned.
- 6 Set the collector assembly aside. Screw the shell onto the connector until it stops against the clutch ring. Take careful note of how the point of the shell aligns with some mark on the sac guard; if it's right in line with the top edge of the word PARKER, for example, that's your "index mark." (Some repairers make a small mark on the connector next to the collector's capillary slit before disassembly, but that does not work reliably because the parts won't necessarily line up the same way on reassembly.) Remove the shell again, and insert the collector assembly. Align the collector assembly so that the nib is just barely not in line with your index mark, such that the shell will need to turn an exquisitely tiny fraction of an inch past where it stopped when you tested it.
- 7 Test the shell's alignment again. The point of the shell should be about in the middle of the right tine. If it lines up with the outer edge of the tine, that's too much; it'll need to be forced too far when you screw it on permanently. If it lines up with the slit, that's too little; it won't hold things securely enough to keep the clutch ring from spinning around the pen's body.
- 8 Apply shellac to the threaded area of the connector where it will be covered by the shell. Screw the shell on, taking it all the way down, and use just enough force to align the shell with the nib. Clean off any shellac that squeezed out; I find that Simichrome, applied with the fingers and wiped off with a clean flannel cloth, works well for this.



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