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

[richard@richardspens.com](mailto:richard@richardspens.com)

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Don't send email directly to me; the list is handled by a remote server.**



Here it is September already, and we'll soon begin to see leaves along the highways turning as autumn creeps up on us. We're reminded that it's time to get those last-minute repairs done for the approaching winter, and the red pen in the photo above bears a relationship to the need for repair. It's a Sheaffer service pen, otherwise known as a loaner, and it could have been made any time from 1934 until about 1942. Back when fountain pens ruled, most people had only one pen, and to be without your pen was to be without a way to sign documents, write letters, cash checks (this was before bank cards), and who knows what else. If your pen was a Sheaffer, your Sheaffer dealer had a supply of service pens and would lend one to you while your pen was in the shop for service.

Early Sheaffer loaner pens were just ordinary pens with a legend like the one below imprinted on the barrel or cap and with a smaller nib than standard for the model.

**SERVICE PEN LOANED BY  
DEALER'S NAME HERE**

The pen below is a standard 5-30 model from about 1925, but with the imprinted **SERVICE PEN** legend and with a No. 3 nib instead of the No. 5 that the 5-30 normally came with.



It's possible that too many pen owners realized that the pens they had taken in for repair were still going to be worse off than the loaners they were using and were going to cost money to reclaim, too. It would have been easy to "just forget" to reclaim their own pens. Sheaffer solved that problem, if it did occur, by making loaner pens in bright red with nickel- or chrome-plated furniture.



The flat-top Secretary model was also being made in bright red when Sheaffer started making red loaners, but the Secretary had gold-filled furniture (including a cap band) and was fitted with an appropriately sized nib instead of the ridiculously puny No. 2 nib in the loaner above. It wouldn't be easy to

hide such a flashy pen; someone seeing it might want one like it, and it would be difficult to explain away the imprinted **SERVICE PEN** legend.

Did other manufacturers have loaner pens like these? I believe Parker did, but I've never seen a Parker loaner. Beyond that, I simply don't know. If you *do* know, please consider writing me an email.

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## Get Thee to a Pen Show!

September is Commonwealth Pen Show month! More than that, this year, for the first time, the show will be two full days! Barbara and I will be there both days, and our mid-teen grandchild Marin will be presiding over the ticket table. I will be working on nibs, and two of my former students and now pros in their own right, Pierre Miller of the Desiderata Pen Company and Joshua Lax of the J. J. Lax Pen Company, will also be there. As always, Barbara will be making sure I keep my nose to the grindstone. Pen repair will also be available.

Please read our **“Table Talk” FAQ** to learn how we operate at a 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**.

Come on over to Somerville, MA, Saturday and Sunday, September 17 and 18, and visit us at the Boston-Bunker Hill Area Holiday Inn. The show will be in the Assembly Ballroom.

For more information, visit the **Commonwealth Pen Show's newly redecorated site**.



We look forward to seeing old friends and meeting new ones. We hope to see you there!

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## Keeping up with the Joneses

Recently, a couple of regular visitors to my site remarked that the way I displayed images that could be zoomed for more detail was archaic and that I should get with the times. Okay, I can do that. In the past, each zoomable image had a magnifying glass icon beside it:



Clicking the magnifying glass would pop up a new window with a higher-resolution version of the image. But these days, that magnifying glass is just unnecessary screen clutter. Modern users are accustomed to just mousing over an image and clicking it to see if it'll respond, so that's what you get now. The magnifying glass is gone.



When you move your mouse over a zoomable image now, it will grow a little bit, and your mouse pointer will change to a magnifying glass. Click to zoom, and the zoomed image pops up as before. (For touchscreen devices, touch and hold your finger on the image briefly to see if it reacts. If it does, you can tap it.) There will be an X in a circle at the upper right corner of the zoomed window. Click there to close the window, or click on the usual close symbol that your browser displays. Either way works.

And it turns out that the new design saves 144 bytes per instance, so pages will load a little faster. If you're among those who still use a 56k dial-up connection (nearly 3 million people in the U.S. alone), you'll appreciate the difference. (At 56K, my profile of Japanese pocket pens will load more than three minutes faster!)

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## FROM THE CRYPT

*A decade ago, I wrote a series of seven quickie articles that I posted somewhere. The Internet being a graveyard, I've exhumed them, and I'll be running them here. Here's the first:*

### Moore & Evans

For many years, I've seen references to Moore & Evans, of Chicago, as if the combination of names represented a cooperative venture between the Moore Pen Company of Boston...

MOORE PEN

...and the Evans Dollar Pen Company of Waterloo, Iowa.

WELTY PEN

The Moore Pen Company came into being in 1917 as a result of the dissolution of the Boston Fountain Pen Company. Wahl-Eversharp bought Boston, and some of Boston's people went over to the American Fountain Pen Company, which renamed itself after its principal product, Moore's Non-Leakable Safety Pen.

The Evans Dollar Pen Company was founded in about 1906 by William A. Welty under his own name. In 1915, the company was renamed in recognition of Patrick H. Evans, who had provided an infusion of cash after Welty won a lawsuit brought by Conklin charging patent infringement for his hump filler design. Welty himself moved to Chicago and started a new company, and therein lies a tenuous connection lending some sort of credibility to the idea of a Moore/Evans venture. I was convinced that these two companies had never formed any such alliance; I could find nothing relating to either that even remotely hinted at such a thing. But I had no proof.

One day, while I was researching something else entirely, I stumbled across an advertisement for Moore & Evans. What it showed was that Moore and Evans didn't run off a bunch of pens together. In fact, Moore & Evans were a Chicago-based wholesale jeweler that also sold pens at retail. There do exist some pens branded MOORE & EVANS, but these pens were almost certainly bought from a jobber for resale, as was common practice. (One of the places the supposed linkage showed up was in an eBay auction for an ordinary BCHR flat-top lever-filling pen. The auction would expire, and the seller would put it right back up. Fortunately for my sanity, the pen either sold finally or was withdrawn; the last time I checked, it was no longer there.)

The next question is, "Who actually made Moore & Evans pens?" I'm not even close to that answer yet, and I probably won't ever get there — but in the meantime, here is the October 1894 ad in question. (Click [here](#) for a zoomed version.)



The pens in this ad were not Moore & Evans' own; they are a brand that was available through other retail channels, including the Sears catalog. In fact, the cut used in this ad was simply modified for use in the Sears catalog.

It's possible, even likely, that over the years Moore & Evans pens came from several sources. One of those sources might have been William Welty's Chicago company, which did indeed make ordinary BCHR lever fillers.

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## BROAD STROKES

It's time for another short Adventure in Pen Restoration. This one is an abridged version of one of my serious repair articles; if you've already read the repair article, please don't complain. It's wicked hot here in Nashua.



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### The *Nib Noise* Archive

In case you missed the announcement last month, I've uploaded the past issues of *Nib Noise*, all the way back to April 2002, to my site, and the *Nib Noise Archive* is now on line. I had initially missed uploading the last three plain-text issues, from the beginning of 2019, but that omission has been remedied.

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### *PEN WORLD* and Me

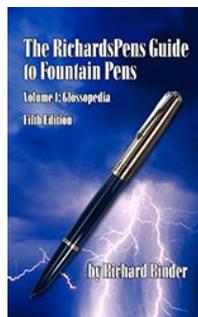
The four-part series of Richard Binder articles in *PEN WORLD* Magazine that finished in August concerned what happened to the fountain pen during World War II. The series was essentially an abridged version of an article that was already on my site, but there was also new information as well. The single-part Web version of the series is titled **World War II and the Fountain Pen**. This version has been updated and is significantly expanded over the four-part *PEN WORLD* series.

My next article for *PEN WORLD* is in process. It will be a two-parter, but I'm not yet sure which issue will carry the first part. I'm hoping, and expecting, that it will be October, but space considerations might push it out to December. If you don't already subscribe to *PEN WORLD*, I recommend it as good reading and an excellent way to keep abreast with what's going on in the (pun intended) pen world. Print editions are available by subscription or on newsstands, and digital editions are available by subscription. Back issues are available.

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### My Books

I successfully published the *Fifth Edition* of my *Glossopedia* last month. The new edition is available from Apple, Amazon, and Barnes & Noble. If you had an earlier edition, the update is free. I've figured out how to do updates on all three platforms now, and I've updated my **Books page** with instructions.



I invite you to visit my website's **Books page**. It has a complete listing of all my books, with direct links to the vendors' pages where you can buy them for your own library.



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.



By Don Fluckinger

## October 2004: Finding Pens at Flea Markets

Here's my lucky seven tips for cruising flea markets. I've had a great year; even the "ones that got away" stories are better than the typical flea-market season's keepers.



This button-filling Striped Lady Duofold, found at Todd's Farm in Rowley, MA just needed a sac.

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## From the *Glossopedia*

With more than 1,600 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.

**Snow Pen** A limited edition of the Sheaffer Prelude, decorated with roll-engraved snowflakes on the barrel and produced for the Christmas season in 1997, the second and last of an annual holiday series that lasted only two years. See also [Holly Pen](#).



If you would like to suggest an entry for the *Glossopedia*, I invite you to send an email to me at [richard@richardspens.com](mailto: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 133 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).

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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.

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## 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:** Some time ago, you mentioned that sooner or later anyone interested in do-it-yourself nib modification would have to learn to "mitigate the slit." Trial and error is the best teacher but my problem is that the times I succeed beyond my expectations, I'm not sure what I did correctly. Conversely, some nibs are dismal failures beyond my understanding. Under the scrutiny of an 18x loupe they look like they *should* work, but they catch on an "up and to the left curly cue" stroke (I'm right handed), which I assume is the inner edge of the right tine. I often end up whittling these nibs down to useless nubs in the attempt to file the fang out and was hoping you might have a prescription for how I might better practice this mitigation with a better chance of perfection.

**R:** You may be looking for love in all the wrong places. The stroke you describe tends to press the nib such that the edge that catches isn't the slit edge of the right tine; instead, it's the outer side of the left tine. Look there with your loupe, turning the nib at various angles to catch all the contours, and you may see a tiny mountain leading to a sharp point. This kind of thing may be very hard to see! If the trouble does actually turn out to be the slit edge, you'll need to learn how to bend first one tine, then the other, downward gently to expose its edge, and shape the edge by buffing the corner diagonally. *Be very gentle here!* Be sure you work all the way from the underside around to the very tip; don't just go after the little bit that you think is hitting the paper. (This is because, as it drives across the paper, the nib can actually make a small furrow in the paper; so you can't predict the exact area that's in contact with the paper.)



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