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## How They Became Penmen No. 2

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For years I have been out of the coterie of professional penmen that whole-souled, good-natured, generous-to-a-fault class of men. I took a course in penmanship under that master teacher A.H. Hinman, who knows how to inspire students and how to criticize the handwriting for the best good. Mr. Hinman pounded into me that nine-tenths study and one-tenth practice made the fine penman. He is right.

I taught penmanship in connection with business branches until about twelve years ago. I am a greater lover now than ever of beautiful penmanship, whether in the form of body writing, a signature or the sinuous and bewildering beauty of the once famous offhand bird flourish. I am a past master in all and know how to rave over the lines which are as soft as velvet and as springy as steel. To my delight, I am still able to push the pen and, when necessary, to set a dashy copy for a boy who may think he alone knows how to put the ink in the right place to tickle the retina. Sometimes I ask the penmanship teacher to take a "back seat," and I take the class and have some fun.

My success as a teacher of penmanship has been in my ability to systematize, to minimize the useless flourishes, and to employ only exercises that have a positive and direct bearing upon the skill of practical business writing. To criticize a pupil's penmanship helpfully without hurting his feelings and to supplement the copy with words of inspiration to make a boy do his best is almost a gift. I am never too busy to give a boy a lift if he is in earnest about learning to write better. It is fun to teach a boy to reel off his signature and put that arch, fiend Jim the Penman into utter confusion.

The boy who must farm his own fortune needs at least three qualifications: good command of the English language, facility in arithmetic and a fine Handwriting. These are the business man's trinity, the money makers. The boy who has this ability batters down the door of opportunity.

Most modern methods introduce too many false lines and false motions, bad proportions and some rank nonsense. Some of the present penmanship results may be safely compared with a fire sale of a dry goods store.

The business men of this land are indebted to P. R. Spencer, John D. Williams, A. R. Dunton, Peter Duff, H. W. Shaylor, H. W. Flickinger, A. H. Hinman and the great S. S. Packard for what they did for business penmanship. But the present generation is more familiar with the matchless H. W. Flickinger and the artistic Lyman P. Spencer and the powerful A. H. Hinman. On their lines hang beauty, grace, energy, color and life-the kind of penmanship that will not be dismissed lightly. With their copies as models one gives his whole attention to the trail.

In this era of unrest and haste pupils will not bone down to a single copy to conquer. They want the visible and tangible results without the hard work that earns the reward. They want too many changes of copy.

My present touch in writing is retained by signing my business letters and superscribing some of the envelopes daily. Enclosed are some signatures I wrote yesterday.

The boy who loves fine penmanship is to be congratulated if he has a superior and orderly teacher.

My views as to the fitness of lines of penmanship have changed to a greater clearness of forms, with higher values as to simplicity on the one hand and utility on the other. And in teaching I can now accomplish more real good in a twenty minute lesson than I could in two hours twenty-five years ago.