

The following excerpt is used with permission of the author and taken from the book 'The Steel Pen Trade (1930-1980)'

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Lacquering

The final operation before 'looking over' or 'viewing' and subsequently boxing and labeling was the lacquering process.

In the early 1930's and indeed later the lacquering department was a special room which was kept completely free from dust. The actual lacquering solution was a mixture of methylated spirits and orange or lemon shellac and this solution was prepared by the man in charge of the lacquering shop. The process was as follows: - The pens were put into an open top wire basket and were then dipped into the lacquering solution, they were then removed from the solution, allowed to drain for a few moments and then the basket was put into a spinner which was operated by a motor driven belt which threw off the surplus lacquer, which was used again. Following this the pens were put into a horizontal wire basket and were spun round at a considerable speed until the lacquer dried. As it dried the pens were left with a white coating and when this had been achieved they were again tipped out onto a tray and put into a gas heated, open fronted barrel similar to the coloring barrel and the tempering barrel. This barrel was heated by gas jets and had the effect of baking the lacquer. Not only did it bake the lacquer till it was quite dry but the effect of this was to produce a sheen on the nibs of a high standard. At this point the processes for the manufacture of the steel pen have been completed.