



Autopoint + Realite - The Confluence of Two Pencil Companies

Autopoint's Early Days

The April, 1920 edition of *Typewriter Topics* announced the organization of the Autopoint Pencil Co., 362 Grand Avenue, Chicago, Ill., and its selling company, the Autopoint Sales Co., First National Bank Building, Chicago. It is the outcome of plans formulated some time ago by a number of former members of the organization of the Wahl Co., of Chicago, manufacturers of the well-known Eversharp Pencil. The more prominent men in the new company are: **C. R. Keeran, inventor of the Eversharp Pencil** (note that this name appears under Realite also) and others: W. E. Gerry, former Eversharp sales manager, and W. E. Smith. It is supposed that a countrywide and international organization will be formed, that the product has particular merit and that it will be sold to the public at an attractive and reasonable price.



The May, 1920 edition of *Typewriter Topics* trumpeted the "New Autopoint Pencil" as well as the officers of the newly organized company. The pencils illustrated included a wooden barreled model selling for 50 cents (left), and one item of an engine turn(ed) design (right). The officers of the Autopoint Pencil Co. are W. E. Gerry, president; H. S. Hasselquist, vice-president, former general superintendent of the Wahl Co.; John T. Booz, treasurer; E. L. Campbell, secretary and assistant treasurer. All the above-mentioned are directors except Mr. Campbell, other directors being H. L. Huddleston, C. R. Keeran, inventor of the Autopoint, W. E. Smith, for many years with L. E. Waterman Co. and more recently with Wahl Co., and Chas. E. Stevens, president of Stevens, Maloney & Co., leading Chicago stationers.



The June, 1920 edition of *Typewriter Topics* announced that other prominent stationery men have been made directors in Autopoint Pencil Co., including James B. Irving, President of Irving-Pitt Manufacturing Company, Kansas City, Mo., and A. Pomerantz of A. Pomerantz and Company, stationers, Philadelphia. The article notes that financing of the new company is practically completed, the factory is now in production, and shipments of pencils have commenced. Also, the factory is said to have \$500,000 of orders from the trade, all booked in the last 45 days. H. S. Hasselquist is now noted to be in charge of mechanical operations, and John T. Booz is now both Treasurer and Corporation Counsel.

The July 31, 1920 edition of *The American Stationer and Office Outfitter* indicates that a western office for the Autopoint Sales Company has been opened on the fifth floor of the Cunard Building, 503 Market Street, San Francisco. Mr. Eddleston, one of the organizers and directors of the company, is in charge.

The November 13, 1920 edition of *The American Stationer and Office Outfitter* notes that according to A. Pomerantz additional machinery is being installed by the Autopoint Pencil Company in its new 5 story factory, due to the rapidly increasing demand for the Autopoint Pencil. The Company is concentrating on window displays in the stores carrying this novelty, popular not only because this type is just now the vogue but because the Autopoint retails at but fifty cents. It is produced in black wood with metal top and bottom with one long piece of lead (editor: and an Autopoint logo impressed into the wood barrel in block letters filled with gold paint). Shortly the Autopoint will be placed on the market in silver, gold and filled metals.

The December 11, 1920 edition of *The American Stationer and Office Outfitter* announces that A. Pomerantz & Co. has just received the first advance samples of the Autopoint Pencil, and that the new line is shown in gold and silver and in gold and silver plated effect.

By the end of 1920 Autopoint had designed and produced enough early mechanical pencils that they could be offered as “premiums” in a 1921 cigar catalog. The clip from that catalog indicates the number of certificates required to “earn” a free Autopoint pencil.



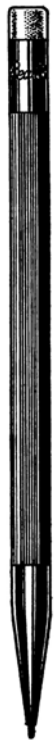
The February 9, 1921 issue of *Jeweler's Circular* indicates that E. W. Hough, general manager of the W. S. Hough, Jr., Co., Providence, is now president and chairman of directors of the Autopoint Pencil Co. Mr. Hough is very enthusiastic over the prospects of this concern which has just completed a large new factory at 4625 Ravenswood Avenue (Chicago) and last week reached a production of about 4,000 daily. That issue also noted that Theodore Huggins of A. I. Hall & Son, San Francisco, was named exclusive distributor of Autopoint pencils on the West Coast.

The March 26, 1921 issue of *Advertising & Selling Magazine*, and the April 21, 1921 issue of *Printers Ink* note that Autopoint Pencil plans an extensive advertising campaign to be placed through Critchfield & Company, Chicago. New executives of the company are E. W. Hough, president; Hugo S. Hasselquist, first vice-president and director of manufacturing; Alfred C. Bergholl, second vice-president and director of sales; Charles A. Stevens, treasurer; Charles A. Manchester, Jr., assistant treasurer, and E. L. Campbell, secretary.

The 1923 journal of *Iron Age* indicates that the Realite Pencil Company, 2911 Montrose Avenue, Chicago has bought the Autopoint Pencil Company, including the latter's plant at 4621 Ravenswood Avenue. It has changed its corporate style to the Autopoint Products Co. and has removed to the Ravenswood Avenue address, where it now has 20,000 sq. ft. of floor space as compared with 5,400 sq. ft. at the former location. Its purchase of new equipment..... Officers are C. R. Keeran, president; Frank C. Deli, vice-president; John P. Lynn, treasurer; and Michael M. Kaufmann..... (editor: portions of this article could not be read.)

The *National cyclopaedia of American Biography* published in 1967 notes that in 1921 he (Frank C. Deli) and two associates organized in Chicago the "Composition Products Co." to manufacture a mechanical pencil and other products invented by him. This company became successively the Realite Co., Realite Manufacturing Co., Autopoint Products Co., and in 1924 the Autopoint Co.

Realite's Early Days



The August 27, 1921 edition of *The American Stationer and Office Outfitter* announced the formation of a new pencil concern called the Realite Pencil Co., 3011 W. Montrose Avenue, Chicago. This concern will manufacture and sell the "Realite Pencil" which is a propelling pencil octagonal in shape, the barrel being made of a composition which is very light and also very hard. It therefore takes a fine finish. The new pencil has a red eraser and a magazine for extra supply of leads. It is very simple in construction and so does not get out of order. The firm members are M. M. Kaufmann, president, who is an expert on handling the composition used; F. Deli, vice-president, is an expert mechanic and inventor of the pencil; John Lynn, treasurer and **C. R. Keeran, general manager**. Under "News of the Chicago Trade", this edition also notes that **Mr. Keeran, the inventor of the Eversharp and Autopoint, is the new sales manager of the Realite Pencil Company**, which is making a new propelling pencil the body of which is redmanol or better known as Bakelite and is an octagonal shape and promises to be a winner.

The September, 1921 edition of *Factory, The Magazine of Management* includes an advertisement for Redmanol, the Perfect Molding Material, with a picture of two typical Realite pencils as examples of that material's suitability and use.

The February, 1922 edition of *Typewriter Topics* announces that A. L. "Art" Kugel joined the new Realite Pencil Co. as Eastern sales and export manager in the Penn. Terminal building, 370 Seventh Ave., New York. The lengthy article is illustrated, as is also the new easel which the company is distributing to dealers for window and counter display. The article extols the benefits of Redmanol at length, and notes that even though (Redmanol) is in its early stage it is becoming more and more popular and has been applied as a substitute for amber in cigar and cigarette holders, etc. Through the use of Redmanol in the barrel, Realite Pencils are light in weight and claimed to be the solution of the propelling pencil problem and still retaining the light weight and perfect balance features of the wood lead pencil. Realite Pencils are being furnished in green, black, maroon and two-color combinations of Redmanol. The tips are either of duralite or gold, the former retailing at 50 cents and the latter at \$1. Silvered pocket

clips are 15 cents and gold-filled clips 25 cents extra. The article continues at length about the simple mechanism of the Realite Pencil which is composed of four parts, tip, cap, barrel and propeller, with simple, easy to hand operation. The article also notes that "Art" Kugel Eastern sales manager, previously had a long connection with the Sheaffer Pen Company. Finally, the article notes that one of the outstanding features of the Realite Pencil made possible by the use of Redmanol in its barrel is the advertising novelty characteristic which it possesses. White or gold imprints of an advertising nature are possible on the barrel and constitute a souvenir or advertising novelty which is valuable out of the ordinary.

One of the Realite easels for counter and window display by dealers.



The Realite Pencil

The Simplest, Lightest, Most Efficient and Beautiful Mechanical Pencil Made

A Realite Pencil has only Four Parts: all standard in manufacture; repairs eliminated, replacements made easy. Simplest of all pencils to load.

Realite Pencil Barrels are made of REDMANOL, a new composition as light as wood, more beautiful than hard rubber—will not chip, crack, warp or discolor. The use of REDMANOL makes REALITE the only existing pencil combining the efficient features of a mechanical pencil with the light weight of the wood lead pencil. REALITE is a REAL PENCIL.

Realite Pencils are made in two grades, retailing in the United States at—silvonia 50c., with clip 65c.—Gold Filled \$1.00, with clip \$1.25. Each pencil fully equipped with eraser and extra leads.

Realite Pencils are manufactured under the supervision of the foremost mechanical pencil designer in the world.

Redmanol is a beautiful substance in appearance. Realite Pencils come in plain black, maroon, green, mottled black, maroon, green or orange. Imprinting possibilities are one of its features making an unusual advertising novelty of the Realite.

There are many dealer and sales promotion helps available. Below is one of our attractive display easels for dealers.

DEALERS IN ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD ARE URGED TO GET INTO TOUCH WITH US. THE REALITE POSSESS REAL PROFIT MAKING POSSIBILITIES.



Realite Pencil Co.
370 SEVENTH AVENUE
A. L. KUGEL NEW YORK CITY
Manager U. S. A.

The February, 1922 edition of *Typewriter Topics* included an advertisement for Realite mechanical pencils, trumpeting the benefits of that brand. Note that the pencil pictured is now imprinted "REALITE is a real PENCIL", same as the blimp on the easel. Also pictured is the Realite easel for dealers with the blimp logo with REALITE inscribed thereon. The prices for Realite pencils with silvonia tips are \$.50 without clip, and \$.65 with clip. The prices for Realite pencils with gold filled tips are \$1.00 without clip, and \$1.25 with clip.

The December, 1922 edition of *Typewriter Topics* notes that the capital stock of the Realite Pencil Mfg. Co., 3011 Montrose Avenue, Chicago, has been increased from \$12,500 to \$250,000.

The 1923 journal of *Iron Age* indicates that the Realite Pencil Company, 2911 Montrose Avenue, Chicago has bought the Autopoint Pencil Company, including the latter's plant at 4621 Ravenswood Avenue. It has changed its corporate style to the Autopoint Products Co. and has removed to the Ravenswood Avenue address, where it now has 20,000 sq. ft. of floor space as compared with 5,400 sq. ft. at the former location. Its purchase of new equipment..... Officers are C. R. Keeran, president; Frank C. Deli, vice-president; John P. Lynn, treasurer; and Michael M. Kaufmann..... (editor: portions of this article could not be read.)

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The Confluence

Realite Pencil Company bought the Autopoint Pencil Company sometime during 1923. The name of Realite Pencil Company was changed to the Autopoint Products Co., and later to the Autopoint Co. The ubiquitous Charles R. Keeran became president of the "combined" company.

I personally believe that the predecessor Autopoint sorely needed the mass production facilities and capabilities already in use at Realite. According to the recollection of the son of Michael Kaufmann, one of Realite's founders, Autopoint was experiencing great difficulty in containing costs while properly finishing the wooden barrels of its low end pencils. And the metal, engine-turned pencils were never cheap to produce. Realite had developed and refined a manufacturing process using Redmanol (later to become known as bakelite) and was rapidly, inexpensively molding pencils every day.

The "combined" company Autopoint Products Co. went on to become bigger and better, and by December 5, 1927 filed a patent application for the now very hard to find, high quality Autopoint fountain pens with the "lever under a blind cap" filler.

But that's a story for another rainy day.

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