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About William Mitchell

British based William Mitchell Calligraphy has been designing and manufacturing exceptional pens for almost 200 years.

The William Mitchell heritage in making pen nibs began whilst working with his brother John Mitchell in the early 1820s. William Mitchell established his own business in 1825 to become one of the leading nib manufacturers and famous for lettering pens. Almost 100 years later William Mitchell merged with Hinks, Wells & Co another pen manufacturer to form British Pens employing around 1000 people in the Bearwood Road area of Birmingham. During the early 1960s British Pens acquired the pen business of other pen manufacturers Perry & Co and John Mitchell once again reuniting the two brothers. Joseph Gillott who were famous for their artist drawing and mapping nibs amalgamated with British pens in 1969.

William Mitchell and Joseph Gillott established in Birmingham during the early part of the nineteenth century and are still proudly made here.

British Pens were subsequently purchased by its current owner Byron Head the owner of William Mitchell (Sinkers) in 1982 and was subsequently renamed William Mitchell (calligraphy) Ltd.

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Established in 1827 Joseph Gillott was one of the pioneers of mass steel pen nib manufacturing. The company was particularly strong in the American market, prompting Elihu Burrit the American consul to write “In ten thousand school house across the American continent between two oceans, a million children are as familiarly acquainted with Joseph Gillott as with Noah Webster” (The compiler of the famous American dictionary) The company consequently received visits from many notable Americans, including president Ulysses S Grant.

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