

Hudsonotes

Column of Mechanical Miscellany
by George Schmidt
Mishicot, Wisc.

The Accessory Scene

(18th of series)

A SNOW BRUSH, usually with a wood handle and built-in ice scraper, designed specifically as an auto accessory, is often useful, but apparently did not become a popular item until the mid-1950's. (Has anyone an older example?) Separate ice scrapers, usually of plastic but sometimes including a rubber edge, were available earlier, often as a gift or advertising item. No doubt some were made with a Hudson dealer imprint.

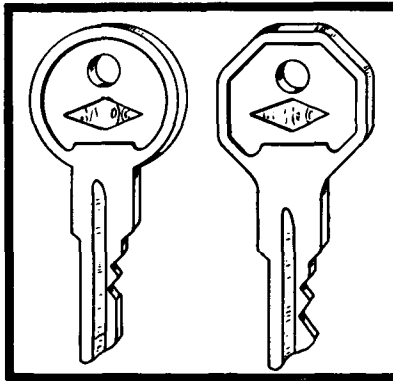
Windshield wipers were an aftermarket accessory until the late 1920's. Many early ones, such as the "Outlook" brand, were hand-operated. A 1920 ad for this wiper was reprinted in one 1987 issue of the Chicago/Milwaukee Chapter's *Hud-Nut News*. Price of this accessory was \$2.

Added accessories for standard-equipment wipers since the late 1930's have included windshield washers, rear wipers, vacuum booster pumps, and sometimes auxiliary hold-down springs and slightly longer-than-original rubber blades (July/August 1979 *WTN*). A special type of accessory replacement wiper blade was introduced by Anco in the mid-1960's. This had the entire blade and vertebrae assembly covered by a single black rubber boot, and was especially recommended for winter use since it would break away more easily from ice deposits without damage to blade edge. These blades are still available and were also offered in sizes to fit many Hudsons and other older cars, but of course do not look original.

Standard-type replacement wiper blades can still be found or ordered to fit most Hudsons, though they may perhaps come from old stock, and when installed, are often used on a collector vehicle that is rarely driven in rain or snow. For these reasons, the rubber blade surface is likely to age and lose much of its wiping ability



long before the blade is actually worn out or torn. Accessory catalogues in the past have offered a liquid product intended to soften and restore old wiper blades. Sometimes a very careful wiping with a cloth and lacquer thinner (off car), or with one of the products used to remove old oxidized rubber from tire whitewalls, will also help to re-soften the blade rubber, at least temporarily.



A DUPLICATE SET of keys is an important extra for any car, new or old, and should be kept where it will be available when needed. If the original spare keys supplied by factory have disappeared, new spares should be cut. If possible, key code numbers for each vehicle should also be written down and put away. (See May/June 1980 *WTN*). Key blanks fitting most Hudsons back to the mid-1930's and perhaps earlier are still readily available. The B-1 blank (Briggs & Stratton, #1 groove, round handle) is found in nearly all assortments, although one may sometimes need to search for the B-2 (same groove, with octal handle). Brands which have been offered include Briggs

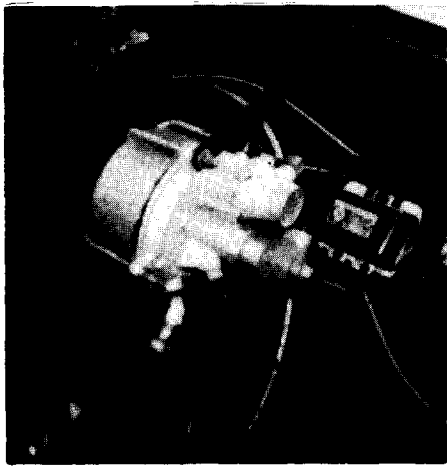
(Basco), Cole (National), Curtis, Independent Lock (Ilco), Hudson (apparently separate from the car company), Autogram (for fancy keys and tags bearing the Hudson or other car emblem), and possibly a few more. At least three of these brands are still marketed today. Remember that Hudson used the round-handle key for doors/ignition and the octal one for trunk/glovebox — not vice versa. Novelty key blanks have also been made up for a few companies as an advertising item, and silver and other "jewelry" keys have also been made.

There are several methods of cutting a duplicate key. Most familiar is the cutting machine with a sawtooth wheel and a carriage which is guided by an original key used as a pattern. This same machine is sometimes also used to cut a key when only the code number is available. If the number, when decoded according to listing in book, indicates that the actual teeth cut in the key should be of (for example) #4, #5, and #3 heights, the first tooth can be cut using a pattern key which is made with all #4-size teeth, the second tooth cut using a pattern key which has all deeper #5-size teeth, and the last two cut using a pattern key with all #2-size teeth. Sets of such pattern keys (and sometimes assortments of ready-cut keys as well) were formerly supplied by Briggs & Stratton and others.

An alternative method is to use a special key-punching tool (usually shaped like a large pair of pliers). The required tooth heights are set up on this tool, and then the blank key is inserted and is cut with one stroke of the handles. It is also possible to duplicate a key at home, using a blank, a small vise, several small files, much patience, and special care to avoid damaging the original key used as a pattern.

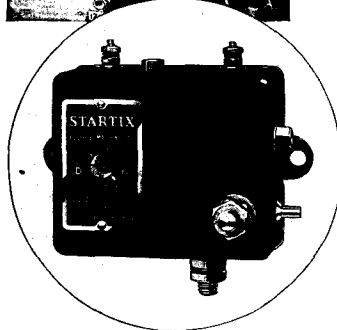
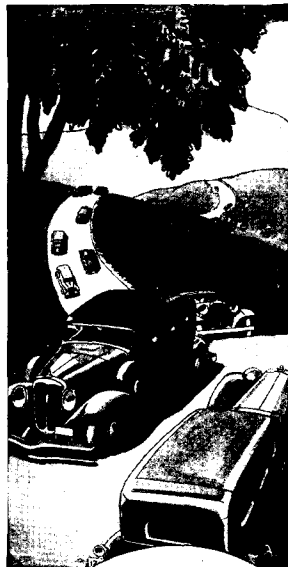
Where does one store duplicate keys? Some of them are "stored away" so thoroughly that they are never found when needed. For those who wish to keep one set of duplicates hidden in the car itself for possible emergency use, a helpful accessory has been available since the early 1950's. This is a small light metal box with a strong magnetic base, designed to hold two or three keys and to be placed on nearly any concealed part of the steel body or frame, under fenders or hood, etc. The original brand was called "Hide-A-Key."

HUDSON POWER BRAKES are the subject of a letter from Gerald Barnes, Pennsylvania, who reports that the Bendix vacuum booster unit on his 1952 Hornet is not of the usual 1954-and-up factory type (see November/December 1987 *WTN*), but is the alternative type also found by John O'Halloran on his 1954 Hudson (May/June 1988 *WTN*). This latter type of unit is used along with, not in place of, the standard Hudson master brake cylinder and mechanical safety linkage. Gerald writes that he is the car's third owner, and that the brake power unit was installed more than twenty years ago, apparently by or for the car's first owner. He is trying to find more information about it.



Although we do not have definite information about this unit, it appears likely that this was a Bendix accessory product designed for add-on installation (dealer or aftermarket) on nearly any Hudson or other car or light truck equipped with non-power hydraulic brakes. We too would like to know more about it. Has any other member seen one of these units, or perhaps a set of installation or service instructions?

BENDIX IN EARLIER years offered a variety of add-on auto equipment in addition to the components built for new-car manufacturers. This past summer, H-E-T Club founder Merritt Marks sent me an assortment of pages from old automotive trade journals, mostly 1932-1933, and these include a number of full-page Bendix advertisements. Bendix power brakes were already available at that time as an optional new-car feature on several makes, as was the Bendix vacuum-operated automatic clutch. Both were made by Bragg-Kliesrath (B-K), a



It's a safer

BENDIX

STARTIX

THE AUTOMATIC STARTING SWITCH

ANY car is a safer car if Startix equipped because Startix is always in full automatic control of the engine while the ignition is "on".

All you do is turn the key — then Startix takes control; starts the engine; restarts it automatically in event of an accidental stall.

Startix is an important aid to free wheeling — keeps the engine running. And it's a wonderful convenience too — no starter button to grope for, perhaps at a critical moment.

Many of the new cars have Startix as Standard equipment but it can easily be installed on any car equipped with the Bendix Drive.

ECLIPSE MACHINE COMPANY, Elmira, New York
ECLIPSE MACHINE COMPANY, LTD., Walkerville, Ont., Canada
(Subsidiaries of Bendix Aviation Corporation)

B E N D I X



The BENDIX DRIVE
Standard on more than twenty million cars running today. So reliable that its faultless performance is taken for granted.

A U T O M O B I L E

AUTOMOBILE TRADE JOURNAL
DECEMBER, 1932

Bendix subsidiary. Salesmen were urged in February 1933 to use this equipment, which "sets an accurate standard of modernity," as important new-car selling points.

"In addition to making car operation far easier and more comfortable, Bendix Automatic Clutch — new, better — with its extraordinary new Cushion Control absolutely perfects clutch operation; eliminates all the evils of varying, uncertain physical operation; engages and disengages the clutch exactly as it should be operated. Get-away is swift, and smoother; never a grab. Clutch and clutch bearings last much longer.

"As for B-K Vacuum Power Brakes — they are necessary. Safety, control — these are today's crucial problems in motor car buying and selling. And only

power brakes will control modern lighter, faster cars. Safety bodies and public opinion all demand them.

"That means B-K. For vacuum is the simplest, most exactly controllable, most reliable, most economical form of power for motor car brakes. *Let us help you sell. . .*"

Another Bendix ad, August 1932, indicated that there was a B-K add-on power brake unit available to fit Fords and Chevrolets, if not Hudson or other cars. This unit, of course, was designed as a booster for mechanical (non-hydraulic) brakes.

THE SAME 1932 ad also shows a Bendix vacuum clutch control system for aftermarket installation, describing it as follows: "This amazing unit is 'the biggest

thing' in the industry; a vital contribution by Bendix to driving ease and safety. Note what a big majority of the new cars have clutch control as standard equipment — Chrysler, DeSoto, Dodge, Plymouth, Hudson, Essex, Cadillac, Marmon, Graham-Paige, Packard, Buick.

"The public *wants* Bendix Clutch Control. *You'll sell 'em*— those drivers who are making the old cars do for a while; a low-cost way to bring those cars up to date. Put Clutch Control on old models you have in stock, and second-hand cars; makes them worth more, and easier to sell.

"We're all set for you, with a sturdy fool-proof unit that goes on easily, fits practically any car. Prices are attractive . . ."

This add-on automatic clutch unit differed from the factory-supplied types on Hudson, Essex, and most others in having the vacuum cylinder placed vertically, with a cable (not rod) connection to the clutch. Like 1933-1936 types, it was non-electric; unlike them, it did not include the added "Cushion Control" or pendulum valve (see May/June 1978 *WTN*).

It would be interesting to know whether any of these early accessory clutch or brake units survive today. Sales understandably were very limited during the Depression, and control of Bendix was soon taken over by General Motors, although Mr. Bendix's personal lifestyle reportedly was not well adapted to the GM conformist pattern.

The Bendix company, to be sure, was not alone in power-brake and automatic-clutch development during the 1930's. Several of its vacuum units used Belgian (Dewandre) patents under license; and in France the Hispano-Suiza had a very effective all-mechanical system which was powered by a friction-clutch pack on the driveshaft. This provided no brake boost at a standstill, but plenty of it at speeds when needed. Also, in the U.S., a September 1932 magazine reported that one Ford-authorized accessory for its new V-8 models, available for dealer installation, was a unit made by the Velvet Power Brake Company, which used a single vertical vacuum cylinder for both power-brake and automatic-clutch operation. This unit was still in the pilot-production stage at the time, and there is no indication of how many eventually were built or sold.

THE HUDSON/BENDIX vacuum clutch system was changed to include partial electrical control (with solenoid valve, governor, etc.) for 1937; and more complete electrical control for 1938-1951. It could be used either alone or combined with Electric Hand — or later, alone or with either Drive-Master or overdrive, or with both of these. Careful adjustment, and sometimes electrical checking, is necessary to assure correct operation of this Hudson accessory (see manuals; also June, July, and August 1974 *WTN*), but it is fun to drive and also very convenient in traffic. Hudson enthusiasts who have never driven a car equipped with automatic vacuum clutch should try to do so, even if only for a few blocks. It is a welcome change both from constant pedal pushing and from the mindless machinations of a typical modern automatic transmission.

If a Hudson Drive-Master or Super-Matic system needs adjustment or restoration, it is important to be sure that the vacuum-clutch portion of the system is working properly, before going on to the gearshift section. Hudson's earlier Electric Hand or Selective Automatic Shift, however, can be used with or without vacuum clutch operation, as preferred.

Your columnist was dismayed during the past year to receive two inquiries about the possible *removal* of some of this distinctive vacuum accessory equipment from Hudsons, instead of restoration. Although this was the cheap and common practice on third-rate used-car lots many years ago, it seems jarringly out of place on a collector vehicle today. Why not complete the mutilation by painting all of the chrome trim black (or removing it), and installing modern anti-smog junk and seatbelts?

Bendix Automatic CLUTCH CONTROL will pay you big profits



LOOKING for quick-moving, profitable items? — *Sell Bendix Automatic Clutch Control.*

This amazing unit is "the biggest thing" in the industry; a vital contribution by Bendix to driving ease and safety.

Note what a big majority of the new cars have clutch control as standard equipment—Chrysler, DeSoto, Dodge, Plymouth, Hudson, Essex, Cadillac, Marmon, Graham-Paige, Packard, Buick.

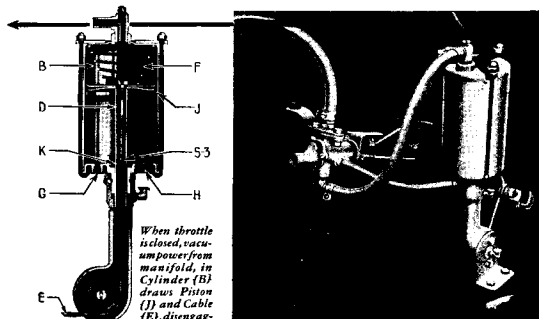
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You sell 'em—those drivers who are making the old cars do for a while; a low-cost way to bring those cars up to date.

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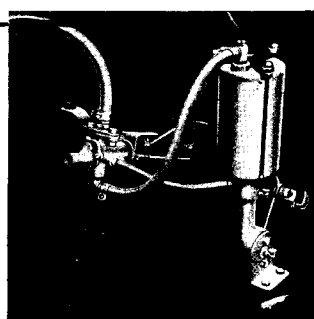
We're all set for you; with a sturdy, fool-proof unit that goes on easily, fits practically any car. Prices are attractive. Get this profitable business. Call the B-K distributor, or write us.

BRAGG-KLIESRATH CORPORATION
South Bend, Indiana
(Subsidiary of Bendix Aviation Corporation)



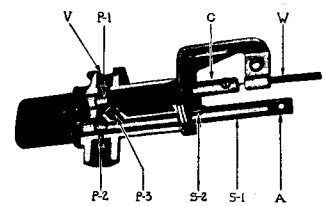
When throttle is closed, vacuum power from manifold, in Cylinder (B) draws Piston (J) and Cable (E), disengaging clutch.

When throttle is opened vacuum is cut off, clutch engages. Piston returns rapidly until air-slot (S-3) passes bushing (K); then final engagement is smooth and easy, air escaping through valve (G).



Typical installation showing how Bendix Automatic Clutch Control books up to clutch pedal, accelerator pedal, and intake manifold.

And here's another profit—
B-K VACUUM POWER BRAKE
for Fords "A" and Chevrolets
A compact, husky unit that puts modern, efficient power braking on Fords and Chevrolets.
Goes on easily, quickly; no installation problems. Pays you well at \$19.50 installed. Ask our distributor or write us.



ACCELERATOR VALVE

Plunger (A) attaches to accelerator linkage; controls operation of clutch. Plunger (C) cuts out operation of Clutch Control at will of operator. Port (P-3) and slot (S-2) regulate speed of engagement to degree of acceleration.

ANOTHER BENDIX accessory device available for Hudson and many other cars during 1932-1946 or longer was called "Startix." It was standard equipment on some car models, and was an option or add-on for any others that also used the familiar "Bendix drive" on the starter motor. Along with the starter drives, it was made by the Eclipse division of Bendix.

Bendix starter drives first appeared c. 1917, and for many years were (along with brake shoes and related parts) the company's best-known product. These drives are of the "inertial" type (see November/December 1980 *WTN*), and are shifted into and out of mesh with the flywheel by screw action without use of solenoid pull or heavy pedal pressure.

The accessory Startix unit was activated merely by turning the ignition key "on" (no separate "start" position was required). It would crank the engine until it started and the drive disengaged, and then would stop the starter automatically. If the engine stalled or stopped, the Startix would automatically restart it. In case of a false start, with engine firing a few times, disengaging the drive, and then stopping again, the Startix would wait a brief instant; then crank engine again.

Startix (Type D for Hudson and most other cars) was a small black box with several electric terminal posts, usually mounted underhood near starter motor. Service and repair instructions can be found in *National Automotive Service Data* and other car repair manuals of the 1930's or 1940's. Has any club member seen one of these units on a Hudson or Brand X vehicle? A December 1932 magazine ad had this to say:

"Any car is a safer car if Startix equipped because Startix is always in full automatic control of the engine while the ignition is 'on.'

"All you do is turn the key — then Startix takes control; starts the engine; restarts it automatically in event of an accidental stall.

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THANK YOU to Merritt Marks and Gerald Barnes for the helpful material which they supplied for this column. Next time: a few more automotive accessories and reader notes.