

# HUDSONOTES

Column of Mechanical Miscellany  
By George Schmidt

## SUMMER SHORTS

TWO MORE LETTERS from readers offer us additional comments about the optional use of oil filters on Hudson splash-lubricated engines. Wayne Slife, now of Florida, has written that his favorite car (of 54 owned over the years) was a 1950 Hudson Commodore 8. It was bought new, and Wayne, who put many miles on his cars and usually had oil filters on them, ordered the optional dealer-installed oil filter kit for this car, though the service manager pointed out that these engines have only very low oil pressure for operating a filter.

Wayne noticed immediately that the oil warning light came on during idling, and intermittently during low-speed or stop-and-go driving—alarming him so that he had the filter removed after about a week. However, his travels at the time also took him to Hudson dealerships in many other towns for oil changes (done at 1000 miles, not 2000). “Almost without exception,” he relates, “the service people would ask me if I had had any bearing trouble yet. That made me nervous. I figured they must know something I didn’t know. I thus traded the car in with only 22,000 miles on it, and have kicked myself ever since.”

Your columnist is frankly puzzled by these references to bearing trouble on Hudson straight-8’s. He has driven three of them hard (using oil about one grade heavier than originally specified, since they were worn); and despite other problems has never had a bearing failure. One wonders how the bad-bearing rumor originated. One Hudson (later Lincoln) service manager

told me that just after World War II, Hudson apparently released a few Eights with noisy timing gears that needed to be replaced before the cars were delivered; but he did not mention any bearing troubles. (The replacement gears were fibre type rather than aluminum.)

About the oil-light problem on Hudson splasher engines when equipped with filters, Kenneth (Rod) Hudson points out that the standard correction is to install a flow restrictor in the oil filter line. Though further slowing the filtration rate slightly, it will much reduce the pressure drop at oil light switch. To avoid clogging, it is best placed only on the clean-oil side of the filter; but it is seldom needed with the heavier grades of oil. I still have several of these restrictors here, N.O.S., which apparently came with older add-on filter kits, but then were not required on many

car models. They are made of brass, with  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch pipe thread, and a  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch center hole (which can be drilled out for less restriction,  $\frac{3}{32}$  or  $\frac{7}{64}$  inch usually being about right). Some also were made in elbow form, and would fit the flare nuts on most flexible oil lines. Note too that the tiny hole in the Hudson oil switch plunger is essential on non-filter models, but it could safely be blocked when the oil filter provides an alternative relief path.

Flexible oil lines were used with the filters on Hudson stepdown 6’s, and they may also make valve tappet adjustments and similar chores easier on the straight-8’s. If replacement oil hoses are hard to find at present, a good-quality hose made for the nozzle of a high-pressure grease gun will usually fit and work well. A much harder part to find, however, is

HERE IT IS...

HUDSON

*Oil Filters*  
by **FRAM**

FOR ALL 480 and 490 SERIES  
SIX and EIGHT CYLINDER

*New Products New Profits  
More National Advertising*

the original factory bracket, #BO 302529, along with three spacers # BO 71721, for mounting the filter in its proper place on the intake manifold of a stepdown Eight. This in fact is one part I should much like to steal or borrow (to be returned after copying, since it is not a very complex piece). The Sixes '48 and up, of course, have oil filter bolt holes provided on the block, and so do not need a bracket. But they do need a filter, to help give longer happy mileage.

In the good old days, many cars seemed to do very well without an "oil purifier." The slogan during the 1920's and '30's, especially in winter, was: "change your oil every 500 miles"—as noted even by comedians such as Jones & Hare. Also, Hudson manuals as late as the stepdown period advocated removing the oil pan for cleaning each year, although we wonder how many dealers or owners did this.

But best of all, engine overhauls cost much less in those days.

FULL WHEEL COVERS, in place of separate hubcaps and beauty rings, appeared on Hudson models around '53, though they had been available as a dealer-installed option since '51. These bright chrome covers were practically the same as those on Kaiser and several others at the time (except for the center emblem), and were dished sufficiently at the edges so that extra-long tire valve stems or extensions were not needed. As with hubcaps, the center design sometimes needs to be touched up with colored enamels. My own method is to apply paint with a small art brush, and then wipe up any which overruns the indented portions of the design by using a thin cloth wrapped tightly around a small flat wood block. Allow one color to dry fully be-

fore applying another.

But my own major problem with these covers is that some of them persist in falling off, even without assistance from washboard roads or hubcap thieves. The corrections which help for most wheel covers—careful bending of the teeth at edges for a sharper and extra-tight fit on the wheel—do not seem to be of much use here. One factor is that some older wheels may have a slight outward flare at the surface where teeth of cover must hold. These wheels should not be used with covers, and would need to have even beauty rings fitted extra-snugly. But beyond that, I am stumped for remedies, and would like to know what other members do to help hold these wheel covers in place.

This style of cover has no center ornament which can loosen and rattle, but it may sometimes produce a small squeak or grunt at outer edge as the wheel flexes slightly on the road. The usual cure is to use a bit of heavy

It's new . . . in demand . . .

**Sells on sight!**

## HUDSON WHEEL DISCS

Here's something that's new, in big demand, and sells on sight to new-car buyers and present owners:

These beautiful, solid wheel discs are made of stainless steel for permanent lustre. The Hudson medallion is in full colors—blue, red, white and silver. One-piece construction, easy to install, will not come off, rattle or vibrate.

This is a very hot item. And rightly so. It adds beauty, improves appearance, makes any car more attractive. It's an item owners really want . . . and will buy!

You've asked for it. Your customers want it. And now, here it is, to be sold exclusively by Hudson dealers.

For quick delivery, fast sales and more profits, order your stock of these new wheel discs from your Zone or Distributor at once. Don't delay . . . do it today!

PART NO. HA 306197

Actual photos of Custom Tailored Hudson wheel disc installed. Note the added beauty and smart new appearance. Fits all "stepdown" models.



HUDSON MOTOR CAR COMPANY, Detroit 14, Mich., U.S.A.

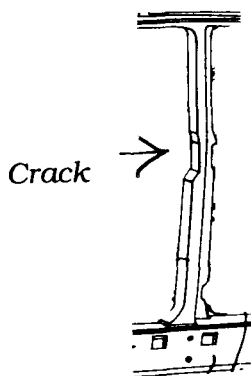
grease on the surface where teeth of cover rest. This does not seem to worsen the dropping-off problem; but it may help to reduce the tendency of some covers to "walk" around the wheel (thus pulling the tire valve stem out of line); and it does inhibit rusting and noise.

MYSTERIOUS BODY noises are the bane of collector vehicles (and we won't comment upon the newer models). My present '50 C.8 is my first 4-door Hudson, and in general this body style has fewer problems with door fit, latches, vibration, etc., simply because the doors are smaller. But the B (center) body pillar should be checked with extra care when restoring, even on a sedan—and even if the car is a Hudson stepdown. In a few cases on both 2- and 4-door models when old, this pillar may show a tiny crack near its middle, at beltline of car. This crack will need to be repaired by welding, with all soft trim and wiring removed (see July/Au-

gust '84 *White Triangle News*). Re-adjust door strikers and hinges slightly at the same time if necessary.

Sometimes this repair can bring a perceptible improvement in both solidity and quiet, on the road and also when closing the doors. It should not be necessary to make the B-pillar or other body parts far more rigid than they were when new, since added transmission of road rumble can be caused in that way.

At the same time, check the inside metal web which is spot-welded in the pillar for added strength and also to hold the trim-retainer clips. Your columnist has had an odd experience with a noise located near the left-front door, which sounded like squeaky rubber weather-stripping. When that cause was ruled out, it was discovered (by vigorous manual shaking of the pillar) that the noise was within the B-pillar itself, and originated at a few broken spotwelds between the inner web and the main pillar metal, which allowed the two edges to rub slightly. Since re-welding was not immediately practicable, temporary quiet was achieved by placing a few drops of oil on the edges. The opposite B-pillar is solid and has produced no noises so far.



THE LARGE door window glass on some 2-door Hudsons may also present a problem; and on the 2-door sedans (Broughams), even the rear quarter glass is extra-large. It is frustrating to replace the door glass on one of these cars, and then find it cracked once more after only a year or two of use. Apparently cracks most often start from the bottom, so it is especially important to check the "rest channel"—the rubber-lined metal rail which is mounted on the glass—before re-using it. This channel must be straight, and free from any weakening rust or other damage. In a few cases it may even be advisable to weld on a reinforcing strip below channel, near the center (where it will not interfere with window lift parts). Although many owners can install a door or quarter glass assembly at home, the rest channel should be put on the glass by a professional shop which has the correct tools. Replacement rubber lining for the channel is readily available, but may lack the water-shedding outer lip found on the original. The shop may also be able to offer other suggestions to help avoid future breakage.

A front quarter wing glass can often be removed and replaced at home, without removing the metal frame from car. Glass sealing compound, preferably black (and not one of the modern super-adhesive types) will be needed, but sometimes the lining strip is re-usable. Remove any rust scale from inside the frame, especially at the forward tip, since this is where leaks, clouding, or cracking most often start.

Often, too, the stainless-steel post between the quarter glass and the main window will be found cracked or split and in need of repair at its lower end (a good replacement post is unlikely, unless from a 4-door

parts car). A broken post causes extra vibration and rumble.

OLD CLOCKS, automotive and otherwise, were a special hobby of this writer even before his Hudson days. Long-retired mantel clocks belonging to aunts, uncles, et al. were brought back to life by my grade-school-age efforts, and my first car also featured a clock—after I hunted through thirteen junkyards to find the correct one for the 1941 Nash. I've had good luck, also, with both the springwound and the electric clocks used on Hudsons, and wouldn't care to drive without one.

Imagine my horror, then, about a year ago, when I read that one company was offering to remove and scrap the original mechanisms of old car clocks, and substitute an inauthentic piece of electronic ersatz which is to be used along with the original face, hands, and case! Perhaps this is not much worse than the large number of non-operating clocks which one sees on "restored" cars at meets, but to me it is still about as appealing as installing a non-Hudson engine in a Hudson-built car.

However, the same company reportedly does also have a stock of authentic repair parts for original Borg car clock movements.

I'VE ENJOYED READING the "Walt's Garage" columns in recent *White Triangle News*'s, and hope you have too. Also hope to see more of them in future issues. Concerning repairs to Hudson clutch throwout linkage parts, however: those old-fashioned "taper pins" fulfilled their task quite well over the years, and have not yet entirely disappeared from the market. These pins were made in various sizes, but the degree of taper for them and for their holes was stan-

standardized so that they could be driven into metal about the same as nails into wood, and would hold rigidly in position; yet unlike rivets or welds they could be non-destructively removed and replaced when necessary.

The clutch throwout shaft on Hudson products for countless years had the fork or yoke held by two #4 taper pins, and the coupling lever (just outside bellhousing) by one #5 pin. This last is the only one which has ever sheared or caused trouble for me, and access to it is quite difficult unless pins in throwout fork are removed first. The external clutch cross shaft also uses one #5 size taper pin (no problems there).

Replacement taper pins should be obtainable from Hudson parts vendors (ask Jack Miller), and from industrial parts suppliers. "Roll pins" are more widely available since they are much used today on farm and other equipment, but I have not been able to trace their history...which probably begins well after the Hudson era.

NIGHT DRIVING of a collector car brings to attention several items which would be unnoticed in daylight. First, of course, are the headlights—with regard both to brightness and to aiming. Second, if taillights seem dim, one partial cause could be internal dullness and dirt (and we hope no one has mistakenly installed a 12-volt bulb!). Also consider the headlight switch, or any dubious wire connections there or at A-pillar, or in trunk. Dome, courtesy, and accessory lights are also on display at night, not to mention the white triangle on hood and the lighting of the dashboard (including dimmer control, if any).

Sometimes dashboard appearance is spoiled because one unit (perhaps the speedometer, or the gauge cluster) is not as brightly

lit as the rest. First check that the bulbs are uniform (usually #55's except for radio). Next, remove outer shell of the dim-lit unit from car, and clean any chipped or peeling paint from inside of it; then repaint the inside in white (spray is best). In a few cases, the internal light baffle may also need to be modified slightly for best uniformity. The result will be a handsomer and more readable nighttime dash. Usually the dials and pointers late-'49 and up also retain a trace of their original phosphorescence, but unfortunately I do not know any way of restoring this to its pristine brightness.

ANOTHER BRIGHT IDEA made its appearance in the early postwar years, introduced by the Minnesota Mining & Manufacturing Co. (now 3M). This was "Scotchlite," a tape material with special directional reflective properties. Its most familiar color was a scarlet red, and this was promoted as an add-on "safety" item for automobiles and similar applications. Usually the effect of Scotchlite tape applied to bumpers and other exterior parts of a car was far from artistic, but one other suggestion—placing tape on the rearward-facing edges of car doors, as a warning to motorists behind that the door (or trunk lid) was open, was not so ugly, and in fact was fairly typical for the period. It also remained out of sight when the doors and/or trunk were closed. One or more short pieces of reflective tape, placed uniformly either straight or diagonally at each door, were usually sufficient.

Small thin accessory stick-on red reflectors have sometimes also been used for this purpose, and in later years some Brand X's achieved a similar warning effect by including one red lens in each in-door courtesy lamp

assembly.

This writer, however, confesses to have found one other Hudson application for the leftover pack of red Scotchlite which had been here since the '50's. The red-and-silver plastic "Hudson" trunk ornament on most 1950-55 models was handsome but has tended to fade sadly with the years. Although reproductions are now available from K-GAP, California, an alternative repair (if silvering in letters is in good condition) is to remove carefully the rest of the silvering from back of ornament, and then to back the ornament with red Scotchlite, placed between the plastic and the steel plate. While a repair suggestion of this kind might possibly cause me to be carbon-monoxidized by Hudson purists, it is inexpensive and is perhaps worth trying.

Reproductions also are again available for the Hudson front hood emblem (including lighted white triangle). A Scotchlite repair here might be more difficult, partly because of the diagonal silver pinstripes in the red (1950-55) version. Unfortunately I've seen no word so far about a reproduction of the miniature red-and-silver Hudson emblems used on 1950-51 Commodore & Hornet taillight fins. These also tend to fade, and must match the hood and trunk ornaments in all cases (1948-49 versions were black, but those are more easily retouched with paint). The two on my '50 C.8 are backed with Scotchlite for now. If a deeper ruby-red reflective tape can be found, this would be a more accurate match for the original color. Check with local sign-painter and similar sources.

Hudson trunk ornaments for 1948-49 are simply cast plated metal, and these can usually be freshened with a coat of black paint (preferably semi-gloss) around the lettering. Use this also for the lettering of triangle

on front fender arrows. For '50 Pacemaker trunk ornament, use the same red enamel as for most hubcap triangles.

"DREAM CARS" and "cars of the future" apparently have gone out of fashion in recent years, if you've noticed. Not so long ago, boys regularly were seen drawing "future cars" during their spare (or not-so-spare) time in school, and also saving and collecting pictures of them from other sources. During about 1945-1960 and perhaps longer, there was an enormous market, too, for magazines large and small, and newsstand books, about customizing and re-styling (and how to do it), with pictures of dream and fantasy cars—including many in actual metal. Artistic taste (and occasional lack of it) were very much on display; and even the more baroque examples with their excesses of fins, pleats, chromium, and convexity bespoke self-expression and a happy automotive optimism for the future.

Today "cars of the future" pictures are scarce, and even the few which one sees (mostly from major auto shows) bespeak nothing of freedom, speed, power, spaciousness, or grace, but only of an oppressive and distorted view seen either through a laugh-house mirror or through the eyes of the environmental and safety freaks.

No wonder boys no longer care much about seeing or drawing pictures of possible "cars of the future."