

Springtime Year

HARDWARE STORES are occasionally a source of small items for your Hudson which are not as readily found at the usual auto parts outlets. Machine or sheet-metal screws with Phillips heads to match those on older vehicles are one example. Rubber grommets in assorted sizes are another. Grommets are needed wherever wires, tubing, etc. must pass through sheet metal. And the hardware store's assortment of coil springs in various lengths, strengths, and sizes can be useful.

Some auto and hardware stores have carried universal-type replacement return springs for handbrake, clutch, and throttle, supplied on familiar green display cards without a brand name. If you cannot find correct original return springs for your car, these may be an O.K. alternative, if carefully installed. They were made with one long straight wire end which could be bent and cut to fit as required.

For more positive handbrake release, two original return springs can also be hooked side by side, underneath car. Note too the other two coil springs (one large; one small) which should be in place on the brake safety linkage under car.

A staple item for years in most auto machine shops was a rack with special washers in various sizes and thicknesses, to be used as spacers in order to stiffen engine valve springs, especially older or uneven ones, when necessary. We have no information as to whether these spacers were ever used in rebuilding Hudson engines, nor whether they were effective or safe. Can a reader tell us? The usual tool for testing valve (and clutch) coil springs is made as an attachment for any standard torque wrench. With this, weak springs can be identified and a uni-

form set chosen for use.

Besides the standard pedal return spring, most Hudson clutches have two others—a small light one to hold the clutch fork and throwout collar in contact, plus a much heavier “over-center” spring, with hook on car frame. This heavy spring may be omitted on Drive-Master or Vacuum Clutch models, but can be added (using a turn-buckle-type tool).

“SPRINGTIME” CAN ALSO come eventually for some Hudson stepdown cars, if they sag a bit at the left-front corner, apparently as a result of the original suspension pre-load used on these models. One correction for the sag might be to use a slightly stiffer coil at left front on car (perhaps #C 301621, for example, in place of the # C 300442 which was standard for 1948-49). Part number is stamped near upper end of coil.

My own favored correction, however, is simply to add a C-shaped aluminum or rubber spacer ring, 1/2 inch thick, to the bottom of the original left-front coil spring. This C-spacer is also better than the types which fit between turns of the coil, since it does not change the suspension travel or the ride. (If front end still bottoms out, check shock absorbers and also the four rubber bumpers.)

Coil springs on most Hudsons vary in size from the big ones for front suspension to the tiny ones inside door locks or on governor contacts; and can be of the tension, compression, or torsion (windup) types. Some are not highly functional—those on the Trico windshield wiper cable pulleys, for

instance, are useful only while the cable tension is being adjusted. The springs inside light sockets (and switches) can sometimes be replaced if they are not firm enough, to ensure good electrical contact. The horn wire on some models (at steering-wheel-hub) also has a snail conical contact spring.

A few springs are of special shape, such as the flat U-shaped ones used as handbrake ratchets on Hudsons for 1940-51 or later. These should be checked for excessive wear (or break-



Front Shock Absorber Mounting

age) at center. They may also be reassembled with unworn face toward ratchet rod. Use an occasional drop of oil or dab of lithium grease on the rod to minimize future wear. An oil-retaining sleeve for the rod can also be made, using leather or felt—but it must not interfere with the ratchet springs. At the same time, check the cast-iron rod holder for excessive wear which puts the rear end of rod out of line with the brake cable. Sometimes it is advisable to add a washer or two, or a thin spacer strip, to the two forward bolts on the rod holder. This will raise rear end of rod slightly—and if the spacer strip

Around

is made longer at one end, it also provides an ideal mounting spot for a handbrake warning light.

IN 1921, HUDSON pioneered fore-and-aft adjustable front seats; and later some 2-door models c. 1940-47 featured a more elaborate mechanism which also allowed pivoting of one end of the seat forward to permit easier egress and entrance of rear-seat passengers. All of these under-seat parts—tracks, levers, springs, etc.—need to be in good condition, and probably given an occasional touch of grease or oil, to avoid sticking (or accidental unlocking). It is interesting to note the comparable devices (sometimes power-operated) which have been re-introduced on a few late-model vehicles for the convenience of rear-seat riders.

On the Hudson sedans and trucks, and on all stepdown models '48 and up, the front seat tracks are simpler, but may be somewhat stiff. A return spring (pulling seat forward) is used at each side, and for smoother operation it may be helpful to hook a third one of these springs in place so that there are two on the driver's side. The seat adjustment lever (with chromed handle for '48-49, but one-piece thereafter) has its own small return spring. If this is not reliable, use the factory's # 215126 replacement spring—or one from the hardware store.

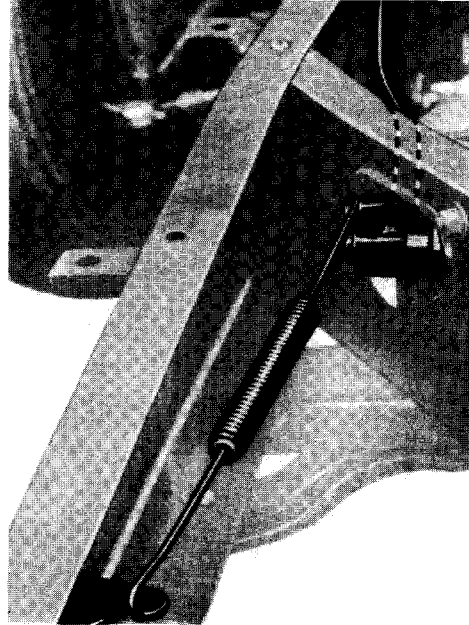
PROBABLY NO ONE has ever tried to count all of the springs on a Hudson. Most models c. '48-51 have a plain throttle bellcrank, with return spring, at left-rear corner of engine; but some cars (with overdrive, Vac. Clutch, etc.) have an extra torsion spring fitted into the bellcrank—and if this is not stiff enough, a homemade tightener for the torsion spring may need to be added. The gearshift-lever return spring (inside shaft, at steering wheel) is also stiffer on overdrive cars—

—and much stiffer on Drive-Master ones—but these are interchangeable.

The plain throttle return spring at engine corner on most stepdowns is not a problem unless it is distorted or nearly worn or rusted through. However, an important safety rule for all cars, new or old, is that if the engine ever suddenly "runs away" or races, due to throttle-control or other failure, a quick shut off at the ignition key must be the driver's immediate move. On a few cars, mostly non-Hudson, the throttle has jammed open because the engine could rise and twist under torque load, owing to a torn rubber engine mount. One noted Brand X even offered an add-on chain-link safety kit to prevent this. Check the left-front rubber mount—on Brand X and Hudson—with especial care.

A small spring inside most Hudson/Borg-Warner overdrives may be another one which should have been slightly stiffer. It is # BT 301749, on the shift-rail sleeve—and when a shift is made to reverse (with overdrive not locked out), several extra wiggles of the hand lever are sometimes needed before this spring will lock out free-wheeling to permit rearward drive, especially in cold weather. Anyone know of a good replacement to fit in here?

Brake shoe return springs on most 1940-54 Hudsons, # F 151027, were color-coded turquoise blue. Any spring which shows loss of strength due to overheating, perhaps with scorched paint or several distorted turns, must be replaced. The small black spring which joins the two shoes (at adjuster screw) also was usually the same (# F 37985). Some later ones were of larger



Clutch Pedal Assisting Spring

diameter, but seem to interchange O.K. The light compression spring inside each hydraulic brake cylinder was originally a plain one, usually # F 152063; but some later replacements may have a metal "expander" cup at each end, or may have the last few turns at each end of the coil shaped to act as an expander for the rubber cup. Though not original, these types sometimes give better

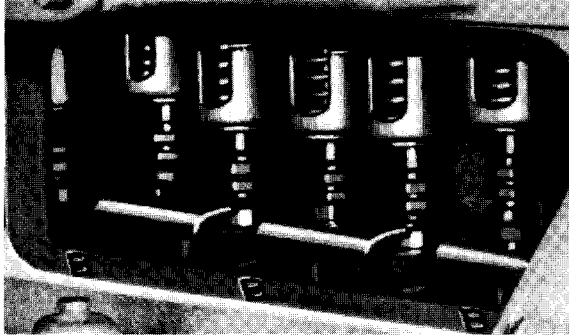
results when an old cylinder must be honed and rebuilt.

REAR-WHEEL LEAF springs were interchangeable as to size and fit on all 1948-54 Hudson's except Italia/Jet; and likewise on all 1946-47 plus most '40-42 (with 60-inch spring length). In both cases, however, there were other differences: load capacity varied from 610 to 1000 pounds (1430 for trucks); and spring rate—the poundage required to bend a spring one inch—ranged from 100 to 140 (or 355 on trucks). Also different was the number of regular leaves: 7 or 8 (12 for trucks); the use of fabric or metal covers and/or inter-leaf spacers (or none); the use on some of a half-length "rebound leaf" on top (to reduce wrap-up from torque); and a miscellany of center bolts, rebound clips, and the like. Hudson parts books thus might list from six to about fifty rear spring types—some of them standard on specific models, some optional, and some merely production changes. Most Hudsons, of course, can safely use several of these different spring types for replacement, if they are in a matched pair. The factory also offered an add-on "helper" spring leaf for 1940-47, and aftermarket helper springs have been available since then. (We'd like to hear from Hudson owners who have used any of these.)

The rear springs on 1929 Hudsons were usually not covered, but optional covers for them were available from the

accessory catalogue.

Rear springs on Hudson step downs were apparently all of the same length, but varied as to number of leaves (7, 8, 8 1/2), and leaf thickness—usually with steel covers; but there was also an uncovered (and ungreased) version which had a rubber pad out at the ends of each leaf. Does anyone know of a source of replacement pads for these? Spring load capacities were 875 pounds (light), 950 (medium, including the coverless ones), or 1000 (heavy). They were not mounted parallel, but were set farther apart at rear.



Cylinder Bore Markings

It appears that Hudson rear springs were not often troublesome, except possibly when regular-scale ones were used in extended heavy service, as on taxi cabs. Hudson cabs were a familiar sight in some areas (including Manitowoc, Wisconsin, where they were operated by local dealer Frank Parlow during the late 1940's.) The article on Venezuelan Hudsons in the May/June issue of the WTN features a photo of 100 Hudsons sold to a Caracas taxicab operator. Perhaps readers can tell us about Hudson taxis used in other towns. Factory listings also included special parts for installing taximeters on 1940-47 Hudsons, although meters were seldom needed in the smaller cities.

AS FOR TINIER springs, on 1948-49 Hudson/Lux springwound clocks, occasionally the mainspring is not quite heavy enough for reliable running when the clock is old. One good remedy is to use the stiffer spring (or the complete clockwork) from a later Hudson/Lux clock, retaining the '48-49 face, hands, and small plastic winding knob. On a Hudson/Borg electric self-winding clock, the small mainspring may need to be tightened by bending one hook on the clockwork frame slightly. Also check the small

flat spring and its strut which should cause the contact points to snap cleanly open and closed; and be sure the miniscule wire springs on the ratchet pawls are O.K. Borg and Lux clocks were also used on 1946-47 (and some pre-war) Hudsons, except for a few late-'47 electrics which were made by New Haven. On many pre-1948

Hudsons (and other cars), it is essential to avoid damaging clockwork by hard slamming of glove box door. On some Terraplane

and Hudson 112 models without provision for clock, it may be possible to use a matching glovebox door, with clock hole, from a full-sized Hudson.

There is something specially dismal about seeing an old car which is in beautiful condition except for the clock, which either doesn't run, or has had its insides replaced by anachronistic trash.

TRUNK HINGES, window regulators, and hood prop arms on most Hudsons have coiled springs which serve much the same purpose as counterweights. If these springs persist in "grunting" with use even when well greased or oiled, try washing them with solvent and then lubricating them between the coils with rubbing compound: They can probably be re-oiled after a season or two. On many Hudsons '50 and earlier, the latch clevis on either side of trunk opening must be held in the full-up position by its spring; and the trunk handle (large or small type) has a return spring on its shaft which should remain hooked in place (if it doesn't, try separating the turns slightly).

Some earlier Trico windshield-wiper arms (1940's) had an internal flat spring and roller to hold them against the glass; later ones had an internal coil spring instead, which is usually more efficient. If necessary,

either type can use one of the aftermarket spring-wire "helpers" which were available until recently.

The springs inside most Hudson door latches have been extremely reliable; but in case of weakening or failure, the entire Hudson/Steelco latch mechanism may need to be replaced.

If you have any more "springy" suggestions for Hudsons, please let us know.

SEVERAL ABSURD errors in the March/April column are traceable to one piece of WTN equipment which insists upon printing 5's when 3's are needed. For example, the custom Hudson with "cat's eye" Woodlite headlamps was a 1931 model (not 1951). Likewise, the "Tell-Turn" signals were offered on the 1936 (not 1956) Hudson. They were also available in 1934 and 1935.

We're grateful to Carl Weber, Massachusetts, for pointing this out. He sent an extremely interesting letter (complete with photos of his Hudson memorabilia collection), and mentions too that some 1914-15 Hudsons still had separate parking lights. The small accessory rear-fender light (red/clear) was required in some states for a few years for over-night parking in the street, he tells us.

Carl also has one of the Hudson/Remington dual-voltage shavers, in original box, and a 6-volt baby-bottle warmer (Hanksraft, aftermarket).

More reader comments and corrections another time.

THIS CONCLUDES the one-hundredth Hudsonotes column for the *White Triangle News*. (The first one was published in the March/April 1978 issue.) Future plans are uncertain, although we'd still like to hear from you—about springs or any other Hudson, topics, and meanwhile, a good summer and Happy Hudsoning to a all!



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