

SPANNER & WRENCH COLLECTOR



HAND TOOL PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION OF
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Spanner Special Interest Group Newsletter

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J. Oswald Jr. by G Radion, Research R Klamt (m's)

An Axle spanner marked "J. Oswald Jr." in my collection, has been a mystery to me for many years.



J. OSWALD JNR

Roland has been helping me identify some of my mystery items and he had success with this one.

It turns out that J. Oswald Jr had a blacksmith shop adjacent to J. Oswald (Sen) in Corowa in the late 1800's.

Oswald Jr gets a mention in the 1894 ed of the "Corowa Free Press" for his "J. Oswald Jr's collection of vineyard implements were creditable to a high degree (1)

"BIG FIRE AT COROWA. The most disasterous fire here for years occurred last night, through which Mr J Oswald senior, who carries on business as wheelwright, blacksmith etc had his shop, which was built of wood, totally destroyed, together with his tools, appliances etc..... The firemen had great difficulty saving the blacksmith's shop, a brick building adjoining, occupied by Mr. J. Oswald Jr....."(2)

J & T Chivell of Corowa

Chivell has a history in Corowa, there is a street named after him. He was a Local Blacksmith and publican.



It appears that Corowa was a busy manufacturing centre in the late 1800 - early 1900's., here is another maker:

J & T CHIVELL of Corowa spanner (GR Collection)

HENDERSON'S "RIVERINA" HARVESTER WORKS. Corowa

Messrs. Henderson Bros. have established a reputation for their Harvester locally, and it is extending in use far beyond its initial environment. The business has been built up in Corowa during the past ten years, when the father of the present members of the firm, Mr. Thos. Henderson, left Melbourne and Footscray, where in his large factories he employed some hundreds of men, and the output was perhaps the best known of all Victoria's industries. As a farming implement maker he distanced most of his competitors and "Henderson" was a name for anything that was excellent in farm use. In the civic arena as in business circles Mr. Thomas Henderson was prominent, and served the high office of Mayor of the important Borough of Hotham. But, the boom of 1893 caught Mr. Henderson in its meshes, and when he succeeded in liberating himself he selected Corowa as the scene of his future labours. (3)

Ref (1) Corowa Free Press, 16 Aug 1894, p3 in a Corowa Show Report.

Ref (2) Evening News, Sydney Dec 31 1897, p5

Ref (3) Corowa Free Press, 17 Nov 1905, p5

Villiers Spark Plug Spanners *by Roland Klamt (m)*

Villiers developed numerous Two-Stroke engines focused on transport, for motorcycles, autocycles, cars and also industrial uses. For example, Mark V111A 2-1/2 H.P (247cc) and Mark V111B 3 -1/2 H.P (342cc) motorcycles engines of 1920's were provided with a Spark Plug Box Spanner. There seemed to have been two variants. Generally, early two stroke engines up to 1940 used box spanners similar to Fig 1. These engines used 18mm spark plugs. The Hex came in two sizes 15/16" and 1-1/32" to suit plugs of the time and simply branded VILLIERS.



Fig 1

After WWII and in the 1950's we see the style of the Spark Plug spanner change as in Fig 2. Generally, a hex head socket of 1" in size, welded to the arm. The arm branded with part number proceeded by a prefix letter D. or E., VILLIERS and MADE IN ENGLAND.

D. was on 18mm and E. on 14mm size spark plug spanners. However, there is an E.9314 variant of the 14mm with 2" long hex socket, supposedly for a motorcycle toolkit.

For example the Mark 27B 'Petite' Car (346cc) 18mm spark plug used Part No D.5979, as did the Junior De-Luxe engine for Auto-Cycles (98cc).

Two-Stroke engines for Industrial applications like the Mark 2 & 3 'MIDGET' (98cc) 18mm spark plug used Part No D.5979 also.



Fig 2

Well known Four-Stroke engines for Industrial and Agricultural applications included the Mark 10, 12 and 15 series.

Mark 10 (98cc) & 12 (120cc) 18mm spark plug used Part No D.5979 to suit plug with 15/16" across flat and Part No D.2497 to suit plug with 1-1/32" across flat.

Mark 10/1 , 10/2 , 12/1, 12/2 used 14mm spark plug and spanner Part No E.7402. The Mark 12/1 (Vapourising Oil) engine variant used 18mm spark plug with the Part No D.5979.

Mark 15 and 15/2 (147cc) used 14mm spark plugs with the Part No E.8612 spanner with a 1-1/4" long hex socket (Fig 3).



Fig 3

In early 1950's Villiers opened a factory In Ballarat to produce Industrial and Agricultural engines. One famous product that came out was the development of a new two-stroke engine, the 7F Villiers, to compete with Victa. The Villiers Torque-Master lawnmower with 7F motor came with the E.7402 spark plug spanner. Australian manufactured spanners of the models above did not have country of manufacture on spanners. Based on Information provided to me by G.Radion via Staurt Lawson, there were spanners in the late 1960's of this style for Industrial 4-Stroke engines with an AU prefix, D404AU, D.465AU/1 and E.465AU.

In the 70's like many other mower manufacturers, mass produced non-ferrous die cast spanners like this 14mm Villiers trademarked example replaced the steel ones, in Fig5.



Fig 4



Fig 5

Dropstamco Spanners by G Radion (m), Research by Roland Klamt (m)

Dropstamco Superchrome open ended spanners are often found when looking for spanners for British Marques. I have a few in my collections but have never found much information about the maker.

Now Roland Klamt has had a deep dive into the history of the company and the results are presented below.

I have two copies of Ben's Hardware Directories, 1967 and 1969 Editions.

The company had a one line entry in the 1967 edition, but no advertising (like in the extract from the 1954 ed, below)

By the 1969 ed, there wasn't any entry for Dropstamco.

This suggests to me that the Company was already on the downward spiral and the info below - that they sold up in the early 1970's.

Roland's research:

"The other day I found a spanner marked "DROPSTAMCO SUPERCHROME / MADE IN ENGLAND" which I have just researched. Not much available but here's what I found.

Drop Stamping Company Ltd.(DROPSTAMCO) Birch-road, Witton, Birmingham was founded in 1934.

It was a small business of hot forgings manufacturer carried on by C., H., and A. Hickman, presumably brothers, as permanent directors C. Hickman. H. Hickman (chairman), and A. Hickman.

The "Dropstamco" trademark wasn't filed till 1949.

On a History forum the following remark is interesting.

"The factory was an amazing United Nations of people. Huge Polish "stampers" who ran the big hammers and furnaces. Ukranians, Welshmen by the dozen, German ex prisoners of war and pre war emigres, Latvians, Lithuanians. Even a Brummie or two. You'd be lucky to hear English..."

"...in the early 70s the Hickmans sold up - or went out of business...."

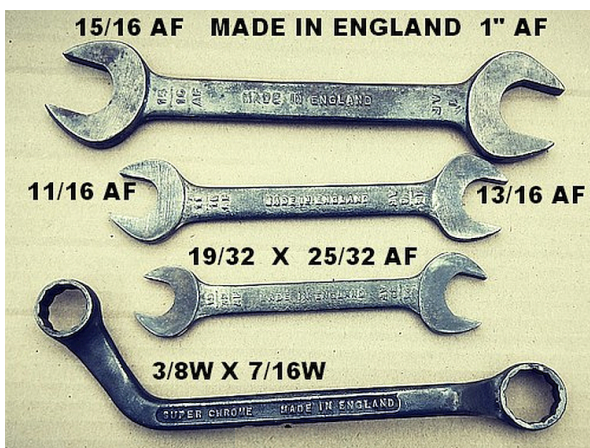
Graces Guide has reference to Drop Stamping Co , in a Who's Who in the Motor Industries, Companies in 1971

Based on advertisements I found, there appears to be open ended, ring , Belor: Advertising in Benn's Encyclopedia, 1954

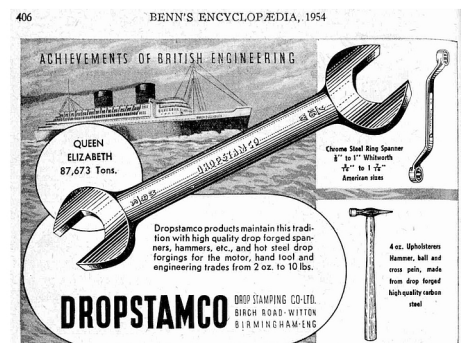
socket spanners , pliers and hammers manufactured.

The spanners being in Whitworth and American AF sizing.

Many of the spanners for sale on internet , state Ex-Military".



Above: A selection of Dropstamco Spanners, (GR collection)



Above: Dropstamco advertising from 1950

DeHaviland Gipsy Major Aero Engine By G Radion, Research by R Klamt, m's

The spanner pictured below has been in my collection for many years and originally mis-identified as a BSA motorcycle spanner.



Member Roland Klamt who is a whiz with research, has found a likely correct identification. It is listed in parts lists for DeHavilland Gipsy Major as "Oil Pressure Relief valve plug spanner" for the Gipsy Major aeroplane engine - T2300/198

Some background from Wikipedia

"The de Havilland Gipsy Major or Gipsy IIIA is a four-cylinder, air-cooled, inverted inline engine used in a variety of light aircraft produced in the 1930s, including the famous Tiger Moth biplane. Many Gipsy Major engines still power vintage aircraft types.

Engines were produced by de Havilland in the UK and by the Australian arm of the company, de Havilland Australia, the latter modifying the design to use imperial measures rather than the original metric measurements.[citation needed]

Design and development

The engine was a slightly modified Gipsy III, which was effectively a de Havilland Gipsy engine modified to run inverted so that the cylinders pointed downwards below the crankcase. The Major was also bored-out (118 mm from 114 mm) compared to the Gipsy III, increasing displacement from 5 L to 6.1 L.

The inverted configuration allowed the propeller shaft to be kept in a high position without having the cylinders blocking the pilot's forward view over the nose of the aircraft.[1]

One initial disadvantage of the inverted configuration was the high oil consumption (up to four pints per hour) requiring regular refills of the external oil tank; this problem improved over time with the use of modified piston rings. First built in 1932, total production of all Gipsy Major versions was 14,615 units.

Further development

In 1934, when Geoffrey de Havilland needed a more powerful engine for his twin-engined transport aircraft, the four-cylinder Gipsy Major was further developed into the 200 hp six-cylinder Gipsy Six.[2] In 1937 even more power was needed for the new D.H.91 Albatross four-engined transatlantic mailplane, and so two Gipsy Six cylinder banks were combined to form one 525 hp (391 kW) Gipsy Twelve 12-cylinder inverted Vee.[3] In military service, the Gipsy Twelve became known as the Gipsy King and the Gipsy Six the Gipsy Queen.

The advent of World War II cut short all civilian flying and after the war de Havilland was too busy concentrating on jet engines to put much energy into its piston engines. The Gipsy did not go without a fight though. In Canada the Gipsy Major was the engine of choice for the DHC1 Chipmunk trainer, which replaced the Tiger Moth trainer in RAF service after the war. By then however, the Gipsy Major was eclipsed by the Blackburn Cirrus Major in Britain and the American Lycoming and Continental horizontally opposed engines abroad. (In a twist of irony, the Blackburn itself was based on Frank Halford's old ADC Cirrus engine; Blackburn had bought the licence in 1934). In its final supercharged form, the Gipsy Major used in helicopter applications delivered 220 hp (164 kW).[4] By 1945 the Gipsy Major had been cleared for a world record 1,500 hours time between overhaul (TBO),[5] surpassing its previously held world record of 1,260 hours TBO achieved in 1943. 1,000 hours TBO had earlier been achieved in 1938"

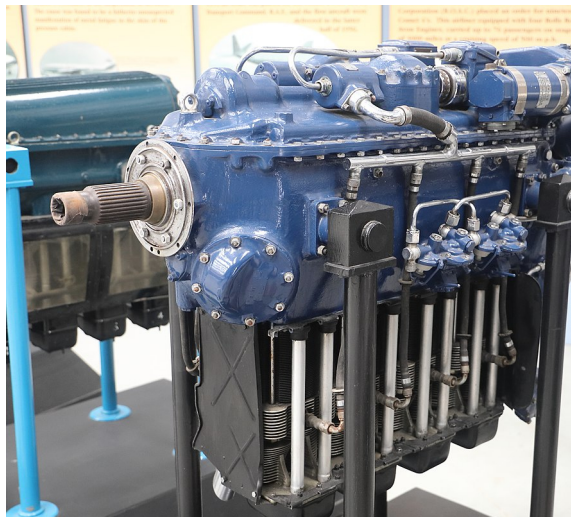
<https://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/research/collections/engine-de-havilland-gipsy-major/>

This is a famous engine and will be remembered by many as the engine which powered the famous DH Tiger Moth, the aircraft which thousands of RAF pilots trained on. The engine is a four-cylinder, inverted, air-cooled, direct-drive

DeHavilland Gipsy Major Aero Engine *By G Radion, Research by R Klamt, m's [Contd]*

type, with a bore of 118mm stroke 140mm and capacity of 6124cc compression ratio 5.25:1, weight complete 306lbs, 2,000rpm approximately (cruising) petrol consumption 9 gallons per hour.

Modern 'in line' engines are of the inverted type, an arrangement which gives an excellent forward field of vision for the pilot and enables the cooling of the cylinders to be effected satisfactorily, also the greater bulk of the engine (the cylinders and the lower half of the crankcase) is located below the propeller axis.



A De Havilland Gipsy Major aircraft piston engine, (ref1)



A De Havilland DH.82A Tiger Moth Ref(2)

Lubrication is of the dry sump type; briefly, oil is contained in a tank remote from the engine, and is pumped to the crankshaft, then by suitably placed escape holes, the rest of the engine i.e. cylinder walls and pistons are lubricated. By careful design the oil is then drained down to a scavenging pump and returned through an oil cooler back to the oil tank.

Further development:

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Variants

Gipsy Major I, Gipsy Major IC, Gipsy Major ID, Gipsy Major IF: Aluminium cylinder heads, 5.25:1 compression ratio. Gipsy Major II, Gipsy Major 7, Gipsy Major 8, Gipsy Major 10, Gipsy Major 30, Gipsy Major 50, Gipsy Major 200,

Gipsy Major 215, Alfa Romeo 110 - Alfa Romeo licence production/derivative

de Havilland L-375-1 US military designation for the Gipsy Major I

IAR 4-G1 IAR licence produced in Romania

Ref (1)Wikipedia ; User:Nimbus227. Ref (2) Wikipedia ; By Kogo - Own work, GFDL, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1218484>

Crescent Tool Co Numbering System by R Klamt G Radion & (m's)

"I found a nice Adjustable G-Wrench this morning - 4IN. CRESCENT AT14 MADE IN U.S.A / CRESCENT TOOL CO. JAMESTOWN. N.Y.

Mechanically its excellent, jaws open and close tight, no wobble, just surface tarnish from age. Fig. 1

The recess in the handle where the writing is, goes all the way to the screw, unlike any other pictures shown on Alloy Artifacts website (ref 1)

After checking the brand on Alloy Artifacts, I think this one is old. It does not have 'Crestalloy' or 'Drop Forged Steel' or other marks from 1920's or later. I'm thinking its from around 1915. It Does however have AT14, Is this a date stamp for 1914" ?

Later corres from Roland where he has solved the riddle is reproduced below:

"I was going through Crescent tool catalogues and partially worked it out:

The AT14 identifier is part of their Tool Numbering System

A is for Single Ended Wrench

T – Unknown – Think this may be to do with the shape difference I see, but would need catalogue earlier than 1922 to prove it. Simply cannot find this recess in shape, maybe you have, or catalogues?

1 is for polished finish

4 is for 4 inch long"

A visit to the Crescent Tool Co website and search through over 200 adjustable wrenches, reveals that the majority of today's offerings are of the 'open at the knurl' style. The only ones I could find with a closed knurl were the 24" tapered handled ones in bright finish. (Fig.2) None of the offerings appeared to have any markings as per the Crescent Numbering System detailed in the explanation above.

Note that they claim their tools are: **"DESIGNED & ENGINEERED RIGHT HERE IN THE USA"**.

Note also that these appear to be weasel words to disguise the fact that they are made off shore, and by the look of them, they look to be imported from Asia Spain or Sweden.

The CRESCENT TOOL NUMBERING SYSTEM

Classes of tools are:

A Single end wrenches (based on circa 1922 catalogue)

B Double end wrenches

D Universal plier

E Crescent plier

G MOTOR KIT plier

H CEETEECO plier

J Thin bent nose plier

K HamrHandl screw driver

DB Display boards

L Thin straight nose plier

RP Repair part assortment

AC Crestoloy Single end wrenches (based on circa 1935 catalogue)

BC Crestoloy Double end wrenches

O Auto Wrenches

First Number (Finish)

1 - polish

2 - nickel

3 - black

Other Number(s) (Size) A16 is a single end wrench, polished finish, six inches long.

+++++

Additional Last Letter (for wrench repair parts)

J - Jaw

P - Pin

K - Knurl

S - Spring

ie A16J is a Jaw for a single end wrench, polished finish, six inches long.

+++++

Classes for Snips

Other Number(s) (Size)

ie A16 is a single end wrench, polished finish, six inches long.

+++++

Additional Last Letter (for wrench repair parts)

J - Jaw

P - Pin

K - Knurl

S - Spring

ie A16J is a Jaw for a single end wrench, polished finish, six inches long.

+++++

Classes for Snips

S - Cresent Tinnerns Snips

T - Cresent Circular Cutting Snips

U - Cresent Combination Cutting Snips &

Crescent Heavy Duty Snips

First Number (Finish)

4 - possibly 'polished Special Forged Steel, Blue enamelled handle' for Snips

ie S47 for Crescent Tinnerns snips, polished finish, seven inch long.



Fig. 1 - Roland's 4 inch Adjustable Crescent Wrench

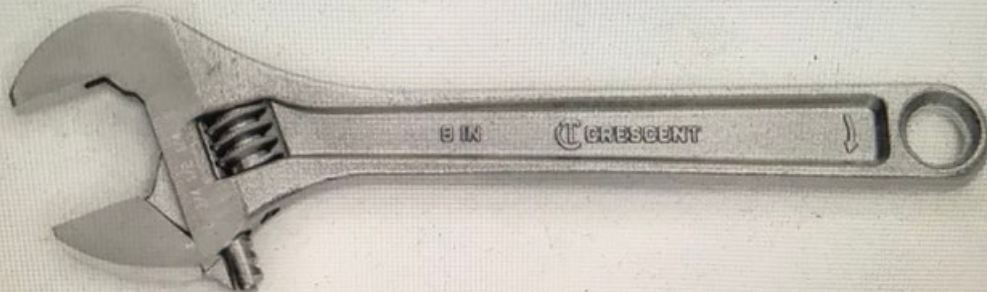


Fig. 2 Current stock on the Crescent Tool Co website

A question to our Adjustable wrench expert - John Hawking reveals that they would have been made in China for the Apex tool Group.

Seen below is an extract from John's forthcoming book on Adjustable wrenches found in Australia.

Style 6. Crescent introduced the 'CT CRESCENT' brand on 1 December 2017 and from this date shifters were forged with the new 'CT CRESCENT' Figurative Mark. ^{C31} The design varies from the previous model, in the inner margin of the upper jaw has been modified and the forged inscriptions have changed. The shifter is made in China.



Crescent's CT CRESTOLOY, Style 6, profile (4in/.

Mystery items Etc

This unusual Gripper / Spanner was brought to our member meeting at Jells Park in January 2024 by Bruce Williams. he did not know what it's for nor who made it. It is about 15 inches long. Suggestions as to it's purpose are invited from readers, see spanner below.



Bruce Williams' Spanner

*At right -
This is how a dedicated Sidchrome collector treasures his collection.*

*And this is only a tiny part of it.
There are also a lot of Dawn Vices and
stuff in the same room*



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Welcome to Edition 55, Issued in conjunction with the "Tool Chest" number 151.

If you require a copy of a back issue, contact the editor. Keep the contributions coming so that we can cover a broad range of topics.

An electronic index of spanners covered so far is available from the Editor.

If you have an email address, and would like an electronic copy of this newsletter in .pdf format, contact the editor.

Wanted to buy or swap - Stanley Australia Roller Ratchet Screwdrivers, Screwdrivers marked "AKURATE", small Snail Brand spanners, agricultural machinery nameplates, parts lists and interesting spanners for agricultural, vintage motor vehicles and vintage motorbikes.etc, also other interesting shifters and spanners & tool company catalogues from Australian, British, American and Continental Makers etc. Contact G Radion

*Feedback from those who find this newsletter useful would be appreciated. **Continued contributions are required to keep it interesting.** Thanks to those who have sent content, your stuff will all be used eventually.*

This Issue Edited by George Radion.
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Aims of the Spanner & Wrench SIG:
Promote the conservation, identification and collection of spanners & wrenches and to share information with the group to that end.