

## The MG TC Battery and British Jargon

by Doug Pelton

When I began my quest to find the original pieces for TC 7670, I included on my list the battery hold down. Of course every battery has a hold down, but there was none to be found for the TC. Surely, someone must have one to show me so I could at least duplicate it. I finally found what I was looking for.

During a past visit to see Joe Douglas and TC 7383, (Joe is the original owner), he was kind enough to "pop the bonnet" to his very original car.

(Please don't refer to the bonnet as the hood as the hood is the canvass top to the car.) Upon inquiry of the battery cables and battery box, I asked him to tell me about the original battery. "Do you want to see it", Joe said. I thought to myself, nobody has their original battery. From 1948? "Sure!" I exclaimed thinking 'impossible'. In the wink of an eye, he pulled the original Lucas, tar top battery from the corner of his garage. At first sight, it explained everything. The battery had 2 extended "ears" or tabs on each end with a hole in them. These ears were used to hold the battery in place with two 1/4 BSF bolts 9 1/8" long. The bolt fastener nuts are integral to the bottom of the battery box and can be found today in any TC. According to the TC factory specifications, the battery is listed as Lucas STXW, 9A, 12V, complete with 6 drip cups. Still not sure what drip cups are but have to assume this is a British term for filler caps. Included with the battery were 2 "fixing screws" for the battery lugs. More British jargon, but this helps to explain the next item of originality.

The original battery cables had "helmets" (battery connectors) on the cable ends that fit onto the lugs (battery posts). The fixing screws were simply a slotted round head sheet metal screw that went through the center of the helmet into the center of the lug to secure the helmet and make the electrical connection for the battery to the car. One originality question that is common for exported TC's is what



type of battery cable is original? This is because a "helmet" is rarely seen on our cars in the US. Upon close examination of Joe's car it was clear that the answer is that cars left the factory with helmets. With the passing of time most of the battery cables have been swapped out for what many of us now consider to be the "original" clamp type cable.

So the when you are at the next MG gathering, ask to look under the bonnet to see the battery with ears and drip cups and also check to see if the battery has helmets with fixing screws on the lugs.

And oh, by the way, Joe.....  
If you read this article, you may want to consider a battery change. Your battery shows June 1996 and it may be time for a change. And, you don't need to save this one!

*Doug Pelton*

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