



Jaeger Clock repair for a Paris-built Traction

Paul Bodiam has written an excellent and very detailed article giving a blow-by-blow account of how to carry out this work. Alas, with pictures it is far too long for Floating Power and what follows is an introduction. We are aiming to provide a copy of the full article electronically on the club website should you wish to undertake this work, and have also asked Paul to consider putting it on the Forum for future reference. The kit referred to in the article also provides detailed instructions. Editor

Ever since I bought my 1950 11BL, the clock has been telling me that it is 2 minutes past 2. While this is technically right twice a day, it is not terribly helpful in getting me to the pub on time.

Asking around other more seasoned Traction owners, it seems that it is very rare to find a Traction with a working clock. The clock mechanism is a fascinating piece of electro-mechanical design, using standard clockwork components to drive the hands but, instead of a wind-up spring driving the mechanism, it uses a solenoid coil to give a little magnetic "kick" to the balance wheel on every tick of the clock, which keeps the clock running. The coil is energized by a tiny pin attached to the balance wheel that makes/breaks a contact each time the balance wheel turns. This happens 5 times every second. Over time, the contacts become corroded, and the clock stops working. Reading-up on the subject, I learned that it is sometimes possible to clean the tiny contacts, but this is rarely a long-term fix. Another possible cause of failure in these clocks is that the very fine wire used inside the magnetic coil can break or, if the car has been converted from 6V to 12V operation, the coil can eventually burn-out.

I did a bit of Googling, looking for someone who might be able to repair my clock, and stumbled across the website of Clocks 4 Classics; they offer a repair kit for Smiths and Jaeger clocks as fitted to a wide range of classic cars (Smiths and Jaeger use the same mechanism under the covers). Looking at their website (clocks4classics.com) they list a wide variety of cars that the kit is suitable for, including Slough-built Traction Avant models, but they did not list the Paris-built cars. Chatting via email with Mark Willows at Clocks 4 Classics, he explained that their fitting list is based on the vehicles that his customers have ordered kits for and, at that time, all the kits they had sold for the Traction Avant had been for UK cars. This intrigued me, knowing that the Jaeger clock mechanism should be more-or-less the same as the Smiths one used in Slough-built cars, so I ordered a kit and set about seeing if it could be made to fit a Paris-built car.

There are some small (but important) detail differences between the clock from my 1950 BL and the Smiths/Jaeger mechanism that the kit was designed for. Clocks 4 Classics have excellent fitting instructions which can be downloaded from their website, together with several videos on YouTube showing the process of dismantling, cleaning, and then reassembling a clock using the repair kit.

I am grateful to Mark Willows at Clocks 4 Classics for his help and advice in making this successful repair/conversion.

Total expenditure:

Smiths/Jaeger clock repair kit (Clocks 4 Classics): £69*

12v coil (Clocks 4 Classics): £35*

Isopropyl Alcohol (Amazon): £5.70 for 500ml which is more than enough

M3x12 brass nut bolt and washer (eBay) £2.69 for a pack of 5

*If the repair kit and 12v solenoid coil are bought together, Clocks 4 Classics offer the combined kit for £95

Paul Bodiam

For details of Clocks4Classics kits: clocks4classics@gmail.com, Mountford Close, Wellesbourne, CV35 9QQ

