

STARTING HANDLES

In pre, and immediate post war years, if you were buying a car, the handle was just as important as a jack, and wheel brace, for checking compressions, tappets, and points / timing.

It was also a handy instrument for robbers, used to threaten their victims I recall.

When was the last time you used a starting handle ? or, when was the last time you had a car with one ? I don't recall any East - West engined cars having this facility. My A40 Farina has one and the range was discontinued in the late 60's likewise the Wolseley /Riley 1500 cars. I can't remember any Fords after the sit up and beg E93A's fitted with one , possibly Joseph Lucas was making better batteries and starter motors, so it was deemed by manufactures, they could do without them. Older vehicles had the handle permanently lodged in the front and secured with a leather strap to stop them swinging about.

Most pre and immediate post war cars had clips to locate them on the bulkhead or in the boot. Later on, they were in a bag with the jack and brace in the boot to slide around. There was an art to starting with a handle, and I've met a number of men who have injured themselves whilst attempting to start their cars , when the engine has kicked back.

Member Tony Lucas has just acquired a Citroen Dolly 2CV, and tells me it has a hole in the front bumper for a handle. This model was phased out in 1991, so may be these were the last ones to have an alternative method to start your car if the battery was flat. Does anyone out there know better?

Regards
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