

# The Ford Script Model A Oil Can A-17040

How can you tell if a can is meant for your Model A?



**The Ford Script Model A oil can**, part A-17040 (figure 1) was produced for passenger vehicles as well as commercial vehicles from the start of production until May 1928. The oil can first appeared in the January 1, 1928, *Ford Parts Price List*, but was omitted by the October 1, 1928, list.

Some records indicate that the oil can was supplied until May 1928. If so, this was probably because Henry Ford wanted to use up inventory. The Model A was more advanced in design than the Model T, being fitted with a lot of grease zerks, which tended to make an oil can obsolete.

## Mounting Bracket

The oil can was mounted to the firewall with two sheet metal screws on the bracket's 90-degree bend. The bracket itself was a two-piece stamping made of steel. (See figure 2.) A rivet on the back at the top allows the two halves to pivot.



Figure 1: Ford Script Model A oil can

The front underside of the unit has a spring attached to each half to allow the bracket to open to insert the oil can. Then the spring will place pressure on the oil can to hold it secure.

The bracket was painted black, the same as the chassis. The bracket was positioned between the second and third gas tank flange bolts to firewall flange bolts, just under the flange as seen in figure 3. (I have seen brackets that mount to the third gas tank flange bolt and firewall flange bolt. They look very similar to the bracket that mounts to the head stud bolt on a Model T. I could not find any information in The Ford Archives on these brackets.)



Figure 2: Mounting bracket



Figure 3: Mounted in place



Figure 4: An E indicates the Eagle Manufacturing Co.



Figure 5: Oil can body and cap thread locations

## Identifying Features

How do you identify a Model A oil can from the ones supplied with the Model T and Fordson tractors? The Model A oil can is copper-plated steel with an embossed Ford script on the front and one large manufacturer's letter embossed on the back, as seen in figure 4. (The manufacturer's trademark could also appear on the front side of the can below the Ford script.)

Ford used three manufacturers for the Model A oil can: Eagle Manufacturing Company of Wellsburg, West Virginia (E); the Maple City Manufacturing Company of Monmouth, Illinois (M); and the Noera Manufacturing Company of Waterbury, Connecticut (N).

There are no part numbers on the body or cap-and-spout assembly on the Model A oil can. The cap-and-spout assembly screws into the base. So the threads are located on the outside of the cap and on the inside of the can, as seen in figure 5. The cap-and-spout assembly will measure 5 $\frac{3}{8}$  inches tall, and the cap will have a leather gasket.

For reference, figure 6 shows on the left a Model T oil can with its large Ford script. The Model A oil can on the right has a medium-size script.

Occasionally, oil cans can be found with scripts on both sides. These were practice pieces for the embossing that somehow made it onto the production line.

There are also Ford script oil cans with a small script embossed on them, but they are not Model A oil cans. There are also newer Ford script oil cans in which the cap-and-spout screw over the base. They will have a cork gasket. These are also not Model A oil cans.

Finally, there are also oil cans with the manufacturer's logo on the cap or the patent numbers. These are also not Model A oil cans. ☹

*Lynn Sondenaar of Sandy, Oregon, purchased his first Model A while in the 7th grade. He and his wife, Patty, are members of the Beaver Model A Club of Portland, Oregon, and own a 1929 Roadster Pickup and a November 1930 Victoria.*



Figure 6: Model T can (left) and Model A can (right)

**S**OME OF THE INFORMATION presented in this article came from The Ford Archives, now called The Benson Ford Research Center, and also from The Eagle Manufacturing Company of Wellsburg, West Virginia.