

Stop Light Switch Anatomy

by Tom Endy 2023

The original stop light switch on the 30-31 cars was very well made. There was a bronze bushing at each end of the actuator shaft. However after 90 plus years few are still in service. My Victoria is an exception, it has an original switch installed and it works very well.

The design is such that when installed on a car the switch is activated and the contacts are open and it is in the off position and the stop lights are off. When the brake pedal is depressed the switch is deactivated and the contacts close and turns the stop lights on. The drawback to this design is when removing the transmission, bell housing, and pedals care must be taken as it is easy to bend the shaft when reinstalling everything.

Years ago the only reproductions available were made in China, and they were very poorly made and did not have bushings and could easily and did short out. If it did not take out the fuse, when one was installed, it could easily burn the car down. About 20 years ago A&L Parts Specialties located in Canton, CT began manufacturing 30-31 stop light switches per the original design. The price then was \$35 and they were originally introduced at a MAFCA meet. Al Lepore, the owner of A&L passed away in 2010, he was known as the maker of quality Model A parts. Al's son still runs the business but now only sells wholesale to the Model A suppliers.

Bratton's Antique Auto carry both the A&L product and the Chinese product. Inflation has increased the A&L product price significantly. Photos are from Bratton's on-line 2023 catalog.



The A&L product p/n 19411 \$64.95

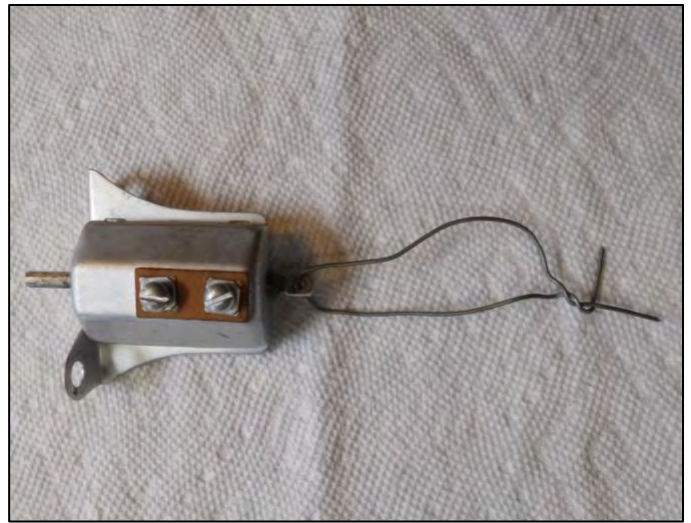
The Chinese product p/n 19410 \$10.95

Prudence dictates that an owner of a 30-31 Model A should check and see which stop light switch is installed on their car. The 28-29 cars use a stop light switch of a different design.

When we obtained my grandson's 1930 Tudor, it had the Chinese stop light switch installed. I took it off and threw it away and purchased the A&L stop light switch from Bratton's. During the recent removal of the transmission, "someone" was not careful and the shaft got bent. The bent shaft later jammed and there were no stop lights, not a good thing. We removed the switch and were able to straighten the shaft and restore the switch to a serviceable condition.



The bent shaft



The shaft has been straightened

The photo on the left shows the bent shaft. On the opposite end of the shaft there is a hole for the purpose of hooking a length of bailing wire through it and pulling the shaft to extend it and then tying it off out of the way when the transmission is removed. This will ensure the shaft does not become bent when the transmission is reinstalled.

The photo on the left shows the installation of the 30-31 stop light switch. The switch is bolted to a cross member with the actuator shaft protruding through a hole in the crossmember. On the front side of the crossmember is a rod that is attached to the brake pedal that pushes on the actuator shaft. The bailing wire on the rear of the stop light switch can be temporarily connected to the E-brake cross shaft to pull the actuator shaft away from the hole in the cross member and tie it off out of the way.

