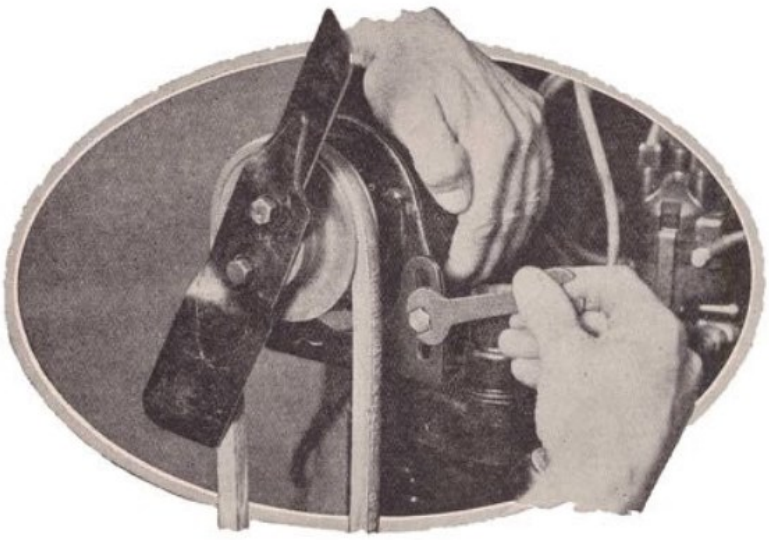
Morris 8 Tool Kit
Double Ended - Sump Ring & Tappet Spanners

Vehicle tool kits usually contain spanners and the Morris 8 tool kit was no exception. In the manufacturers kit there was a set of three double ended spanners ranging in size from 3/16" to 1/2", a sump plug ring spanner and two tappet spanners. The spanners were simply stamped from plate steel and left with a raw finish. Other than the stamping of the size on the appropriate end of the spanner, no other finishing touches were made, not even a coat of paint or the maker's name.

Fig 1

Double-ended Spanner (3/16" and 1/4") - Part No. 41273



Extract
from the Morris Eight
Operation Manual
showing the 3/16" - 1/4"
spanner in use.

The smallest double ended spanner (fig. 1) was stamped 3/16 on the smaller end and 1/4 on the larger, signifying it was 3/16" and 1/4" Whitworth. The spanner measures 4 5/8" (117mm) from one extreme point to the other and is 4mm thick. On some spanners the stamping can be hard to read as the rusting has taken its toll or the stamping was light in the first place.

Fig 2

Double-ended Spanner (5/16" and 3/8") - Part No. 41274

The middle size double ended spanner (fig. 2) was stamped 5/16 on the smaller end and 3/8 on the larger. The spanner measures 6 1/4" (158mm) from one extreme point to the other and is 5.5mm thick.

Double-ended Spanner (7/16" and 1/2") - Part No. 41275

Fig 3

The largest size double ended spanner (fig. 3) was stamped 7/16 on the smaller end and 1/2 on the larger. The spanner measures 8 7/8" (225mm) from one extreme point to the other and is 1/4" (6.35mm) thick.

In my experience the 3/16" - 1/4" spanner is the hardest to find, followed

by the 5/16" - 3/8", then lastly the 5/16" - 1/2". These spanners were originally supplied with some Pre-War MG's.
Prices on eBay for a set of three spanners can vary between NZ$10 to $60.

After WW2 there were a few variations of these spanners produced. For example you may find spanners stamped with, 7/16 BSF 3/8W (fig. 4). This refers to two different measuring systems, British Standard Fine and Whitworth. As Wikipedia notes:
"Whitworth spanner markings refer to the bolt diameter rather than the distance across the flats of the hexagon as in other standards. Confusion also arises because BSF hexagon sizes can be one size smaller than the corresponding Whitworth hexagon. This leads to instances where a spanner (wrench) marked 7/16BSF is the same size as one marked 3/8W. In both cases the spanner jaw width of 0.710 inches, the width across the hexagon flat, is the same. However, in World War II the size of the Whitworth hexagon was reduced to the same size as the equivalent BSF hexagon purely to save metal during the war."
Quoted from Wikipedia - British Standard Whitworth.

Fig 4

Another variation is the shape of the jaw. The correct Morris 8 spanners had a U shaped jaw. Some similar post WW2 spanners have a hexagonal shaped jaw (fig. 5) like the tappet spanner. There has been lively discussion amongst MGTC owners over when the change in shape to the spanners in their tool kits happened.

This discussion would probably be relevant to Morris 8 Series E owners

with post WW2 cars as they had similar spanners.

Fig 5

Sump Plug Ring Spanner - Part No. 38935

Fig 6

The sump plug spanner (fig. 6) had no stampings or identifying marks. It measured 6 7/8" (175mm) long and 3/16" (4.75mm) thick. The hexagonal cut-out measured just over 40mm across the flats to suit the 15/16" Whitworth brass sump plug on aluminium sumps. Aluminium sumps were fitted to cars from engine number 48105 onward, meaning this spanner was only issued with Series 1 and 2 tool kits. The Pre-Series had a pressed steel sump, with a smaller sump plug, the same size as the gearbox drain plug.

I have been unable to find a price on eBay for the sump plug spanner. This is not because they don't come up for sale, but because they have no makings. Unless the seller knows it is for a Morris 8, and describes it as such, they are sold with a general description marking it hard to find amongst thousands of similar spanners.

Tappet Spanner - Part No. 38381

The two tappet spanners (fig. 7) were each stamped 1/4 (see fig. 8). They measured 6 3/4" (172mm) long and 4mm thick.

Fig 7

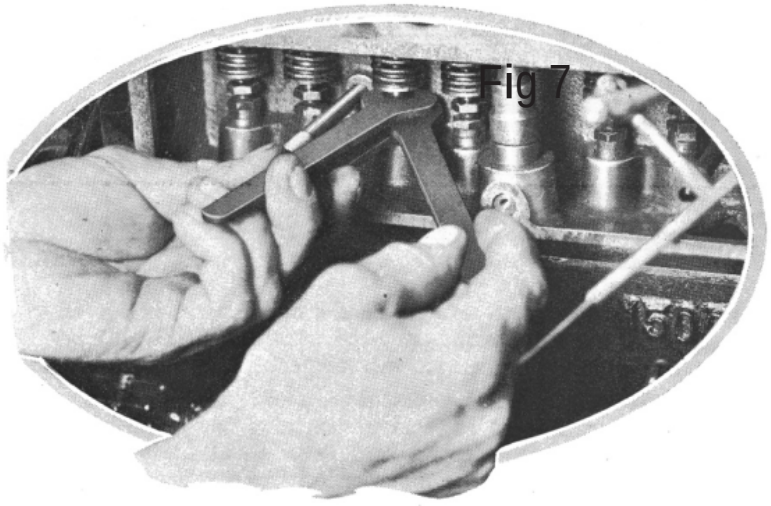


Fig 7

Tightening up the tappets after setting. The tappet stem and tappet screw should be held in position by the special tappet spanners while the tappet lock nut is firmly tightened with the appropriate doubled-ended spanner from the tool kit.

Extract from the Morris Eight Operation Manual showing the tappet spanners in action

As with the double ended spanners, there are also production variations of the tappet spanner. I have found one tappet spanner that is identical to part no. 38381 in shape but is 5.2mm thick. Maybe this was for one of the larger Morris's models. If anyone has any information, please let me know.

A rare earlier design of this tappet spanner, possibly used on the 1933-34 minor, had a feeler gauge riveted to the end of the handle (fig. 8).

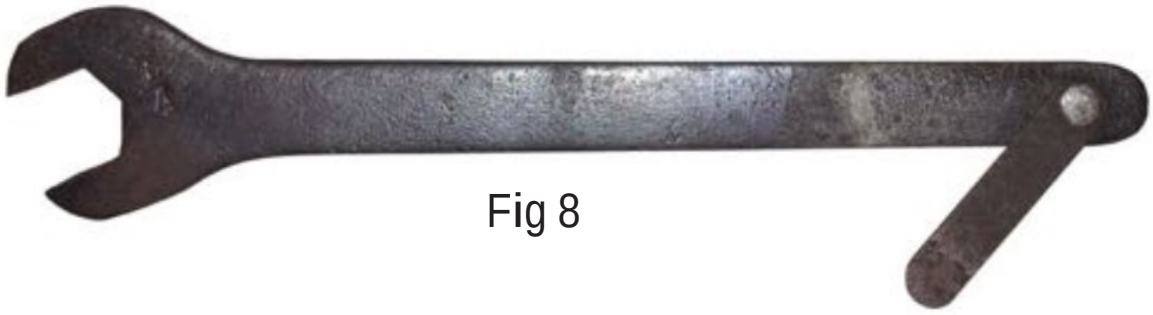
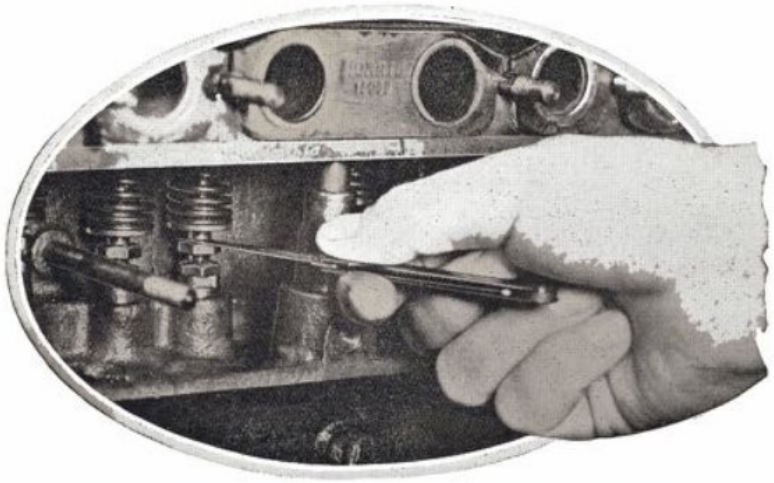


Fig 8

Figure 9 shows an extract from a Morris 8 Operation Manual (all editions 1934 - 1938). The caption reads, "Testing the valve clearance with the feeler gauge attached to the tappet spanner."

Fig 9



Testing the valve clearance with the feeler gauge attached to the tappet spanner.

This sentence was copied from earlier Morris Minor manuals. The same picture was even used in the Series E manual but at that stage the words "attached to the spanner" had been dropped. The inclusion of this statement in the manual would indicate that all Morris 8 tappet spanners were supplied with feeler gauges attached. I have found the opposite to be true. As explained in an earlier article, a 0.019" feeler gauge was supplied separately for the purpose of setting the tappets.

I have also seen two or three tappet spanners with a hole in the end (fig. 10). I initially believed it may have been a hole drilled by the owner from which to hang the spanner. However the hole corresponds with the location of the rivet holding the feeler gauge on the earlier type tappet spanner. I can only assume they were spare pre drilled spanners that needed to be made use of.

Fig 10

The tappet spanner is fairly regularly available on eBay with an average price of around NZ$10.

Morris had a subsidiary company called - Nuffield Tools & Gauges Ltd which was separated into a standalone company on, 5 Nov 1942. I speculate that as well as producing production tooling, this company may possibly have produced the spanners listed above. Unfortunately the Nuffield Tools & Gauges archives, which are stored at the University of Warwick, given no indication of whether this was the case.
Feel free to contact me with your experiences of collecting Morris tools or to share information on any original tools you have.

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