

## A Pressing Matter (spokes that is)

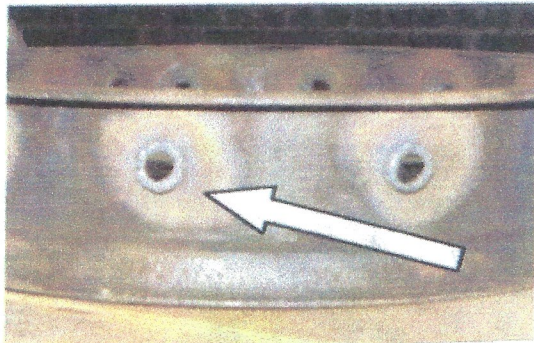
*The adventures of Ralph and Gary*

Solid usable wheels are getting harder to find in both 30 and 21 inch variant. If however, you should happen to need a 6:00 X 20 for the back of a TT you will quickly realize two important truths.

1. TT rear wheels (6:00 X 20 at least) are made out of "unobtainium"
2. All parts made from "unobtainium" are alloyed with a large percentage of "cantafordium".

This leaves one with few choices and the wait to get one of these things re-spoked is 4-6 months! Fear not! It is not that difficult to re-spoke a steel felloe wheel and produce a true and very tight one at that. It does take some patience and persistence.

- If you own a wood lathe, you're off to a better start than the guy who buys the junk new spokes from the vendor. Of the set I bought the thickness of the spokes were all different and varied as much as .190 from the thickest to the thinnest. The transition area near the hub wasn't cut in the same place on any of them and I had to put them on my lathe and cut them back to get all twelve the same. You might as well make your own from dried wood, try to get them all within .030 thickness at the hub end. This will produce a wheel that does not wobble an excessive amount.
- Put the hub back on the axle shaft and with a dial indicator check the runout. If it is more than say .002 or .003 have a truing cut taken on the flange of the hub.
- Test fit the nipple end of the spoke in the felloe, if it goes in easily you have some work to do. The felloe in this picture was terribly worn and the holes had to be welded smaller so they would be a pressed fit.

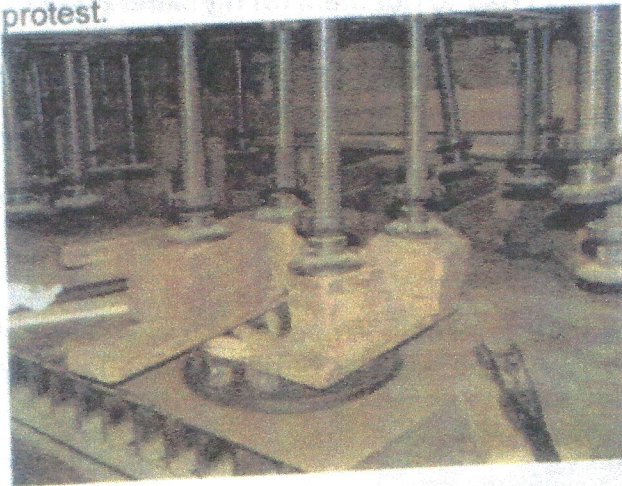


Weld around the perimeter of the hole making it smaller. It does not have to be perfectly round as the wood fiber will crush some when they 'pop' in.

- Contrary to the way most folks will tell you to put in spokes, Ralph Williams and I do it backwards (why does that not surprise anyone). We have found it about 834% easier to raise the felloe and support it temporarily, then arrange the spoke in an "inverse" Tee Pee without the hub. Now press down on the felloe and even the short fat TT spokes will pop into place.



Ken Jack of Memphis commented when the spokes were snapping and popping into place that it sounded like his knees when he got up out of his chair. Don't be alarmed, it takes a lot of pressure to put them in and they will make sounds of protest.



Everybody needs a friend who has access to an old press table! This setup is perfect for model T wheels and Ralph is lucky enough to have access to it everyday.

Ralph said this press table came from the railroads and dates back to the 20's.

Fit the hub and bolt it together and you are ready to sand and paint.



**GOOD FOR ANOTHER 80 YEARS!**