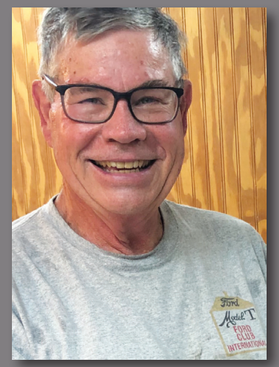

THE MODEL T FORD

ITS REPAIR, SERVICE, AND RESTORATION

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Graphite Coating Leaf Springs

Ford assembled leaf springs at the factory with a thin layer of paint between the leaves. The paint contained graphite to act as a dry lubricant between the sliding leaves of the springs. According to records, the paint was made with thinned M-170 black enamel and M-1012 graphite flakes, in about a 2:1 ratio of graphite to enamel before thinning.

Today, similar dry lubricant paints can be found under several trade names, EZ-Slide® or SLIP Plate®, instead of mixing up your own brew. This paint is full of graphite and dries quickly, leaving a slick surface that duplicates Ford's method of a dry lube. Typical oils can be used on spring leaves, but that allows dirt and grit to adhere to or lodge onto the leaves.

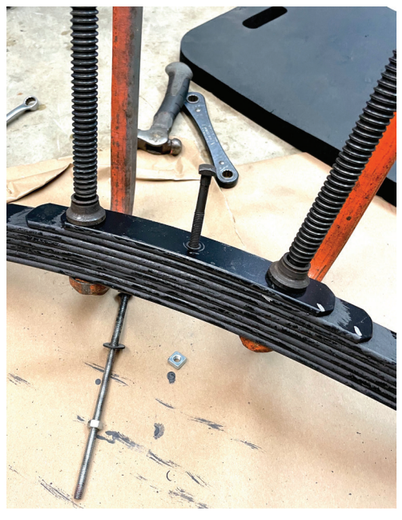
I recently purchased a new front spring and, while it was great quality, the spring leaves were just painted with a thin black paint. I separated the leaves to allow for painting each sliding surface with EZ-Slide graphite paint.

New front spring taken apart. Leaves were painted without a dry lubed surface.

Each leaf marked to identify its mate in the stack, and the contact surfaces above and below each leaf coated with dry lube.

I stacked the painted leaves in line and fitted a length of all-thread rod to the center hole. Then, using nuts above and below the all-thread rod, I tightened the stack. Next, to replace the all-thread rod with the proper center bolt, I used large C-clamps to keep the stack from flying apart. Use extreme caution when you disassemble or assemble springs, as serious injury can occur due to the high-tension forces of the compressed steel springs.

All-thread rod used to compress the leaves to complete the spring stack



Heavy C-clamps hold the dangerous spring stack, now under extreme tension, to remove the all-thread rod and insert the center bolt and its lock nut to keep the stack compressed

Now the new front spring is completed with dry film lubricant between the leaves and ready to receive a nice finish coat of shiny black enamel and install on the T. The dry lube should last and last.

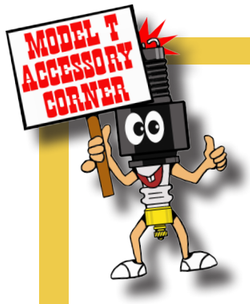
In the high use days of the Model T, owners drove in rain, across streams, and on dirt roads, so the springs took a beating. A *Service Bulletin* was even printed to instruct how to put graphite back into the stack when on the car. For this method, oil helped to slide the graphite into parts of the spring! • • • •

Front spring completed with dry lube paint, ready for finish

Lubricating the Springs

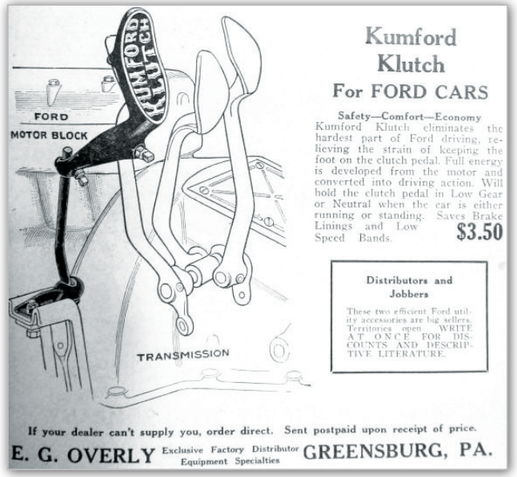
Here is a way to save time and work in graphiting the springs of the car. Jack the weight of the car off the springs and insert a paste made of oil and flake graphite between the leaves of the spring with a piece of hack-saw blade.

Fig. 69
July 1, 1919 Service Bulletin



A showcase of aftermarket accessories from the past, often found on the Ford. Many thousands of inventive products were sold to dealers and owners to upgrade, customize, or improve over the factory parts…in most cases, not so much!

by Dan Treace
Technical Editor



Kumford Clutch

This spring-loaded pedal accessory fitted to the crankcase arm and provided an advantage in operating the Ford in low speed. This pedal could be controlled by the foot to engage and hold the low/clutch pedal in, so the Ford remained in low gear for hill climb or descent. An added feature was that low pedal could be placed in 'neutral' with a touch of the foot, without moving the handbrake lever. • • • •