

from the Morgan Oasis Garage

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This month's epistle to the Mognoscenti is a simple project that requires only the most basic tools and no talent whatsoever. With the exception of an ophthalmologist or two I'm sure it's within the ability of our splendid membership.

The subject of this task is the oval country of origin badge seen on European and British cars. I for Italy, F for France, GB for Dear old Blighty. It can be whipped up with almost any piece of aluminum left over from the biplane project or gathering dust and patina under the shop bench. I had some fifty thou aluminum and this is about right for this project, though if I had sixty two thou (.062) I'd try that.

For a pattern I used an English badge; you might draw one as well, but the promise of no talent allows the easy way. Trace it around a sweet ellipse onto paper. Then glue the paper pattern onto a piece of aluminum about six by four inches and get out the drill motor and a sharp bit about an eighth of an inch. By drilling a series of holes near the lines you've traced you can then file out the desired shape. I like to leave a beveled edge around the letters and ovals and that's why the thicker metal appeals. More of these bevels to attract the eye.

That is all there is to it, a nice rainy day project if we'd ever get some rain here in the sunny Northwest. Make copies of the pattern and glue them to the aluminum. While on the badge page here I'll tell you the dolt who works here whose name I won't mention has put the GB badges (his initials) on all his rides cuz he sez he can then find his pickup at the Wallyworld parking lot. Don't feel constrained to do only GB badges. Your initials, your cat's initials, anything goes. A Scot could use a clan tartan under the letters; a person of Canadian persuasion could use the Hemlock motif of our northern cousin's national flag. Don't feel you must follow the pattern, it's only there as a suggestion.

Another way of making a badge would be to let the letters run out to the ring thus making one ellipse with the negative spaces removed and containing letters and the ring, with the base plate colored to show contrast. To assemble the pieces let me recommend 1/16 inch rivets. I have a nail set that I put in the vice, and the rivet head sets into the nail set. Then you snip the rivet to an eighth of an inch or so and peen it with the small end of a ball peen hammer. A couple of practice rivets and you'll see how pleasant and easy it is to rivet. You'll never consider pop rivets once you try soft aluminum rivets.

Any hardware store should carry rivets if you haven't a friend at the old Lazy B (Boeing Aircraft in Seattle). Someone ought to write a book on what has been built using Boeing goodies taken out in lunch boxes. I know for a fact you can buy rivets and other exotic stuff at Spencer Aircraft in Seattle. AN fasteners for example, for those of you who aspire to being boy racers.

