How to make your own saddle clamps

Saddle clamps are often lost or tear off due to the permanent load when driving, especially on unsprung motorcycles. In addition, the heads of the corresponding rivets are often pulled through the saddle's upper material by this strain and are therefore no longer able to hold the clamps (figure 1).

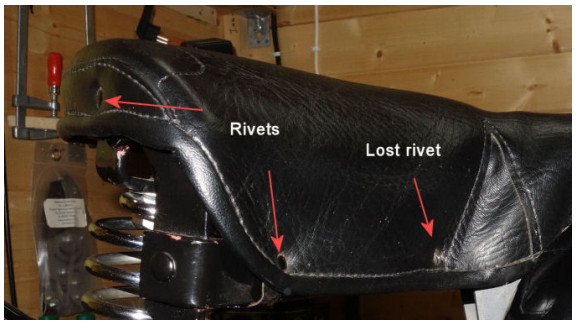

Figure 1 – Illustration of the saddle cover fixationon on the saddle frame.

For the thin strips that hold the cover on may either cut strips of thin metal sheet or use the metal strapping that comes around wooden crates (builders merchants have bricks delivered on pallets strapped together with this strip, which then gets thrown away). The strip needs to be foldable with the fingers to get it round the saddle frame, so can't be too thick. So if you pass a building site, you should look for this metal strip. Figure 2 shows such metal strips which I have stolen from a construction site.

The stripes are generally rusty. However, this is no problem as they have to be ground and painted anyway (figure 3 and 3).

To produce suitable saddle clamps, these strips must first be removed from the rust, cut to the correct length and then painted. It must be borne in mind that the stripes have to be doubled, otherwise they are too thin. This should be done after painting otherwise the strips may break when bended too often. After the strips have been doubled, holes must be drilled at the ends of the open sides for the rivet fasteners. It is no problem to drill both overlapping strips together. They are then ready for installation (figure 4).

As already mentioned, the heads of the corresponding rivets are often pulled through the saddle's upper material. These rivets - called bifurcated rivets - used by leather workers - have a slit cut into their ends. They are available from craft shops/upholsterers, but also at internet dealers like Amazon and Ebay. Ideally one buys fairly robust ones. After their heads have been pulled through the saddle cover, the saddle holes are usually damaged to such an extent that the rivet head is too small. Unfortunately, rivets with significantly larger heads are difficult to find. Therefore it is necessary to use washers that have been painted like the rivets (figure 5).

The metal strips can now be attached to the saddle cover and bent around the saddle frame (figure 6).

Figure 2 – A bunch of metal strips from a construction site. Such strips strap pallets together.

Figure 3 – The end of a single metal strip.

Figure 4 – The saddle clamps bent around the saddle frame.

Figure 5 – Washers below the rivet heads.

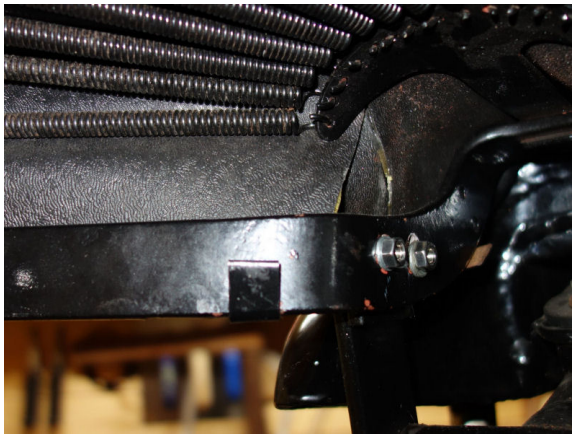

Figure 6 – The saddle clamps below the saddle.