

Lift the Dot

By Dave Doroghy

I was in the middle of writing an article about just how difficult I find it to put the top up and down on my Morgan, when my buddy David Kincaid (the same guy who is a reporter on the CTV evening news) tells me that the little snaps that fasten the top down on a Morgan have a cool name – Lift the Dot. David has been into cars his whole life and, like me, is easily amused by automotive trivia. So, I have put my article on Morgan top assembly on hold so I can enlighten the readers of “Dorg’s Morg” on these little silver “*doo-hickeys*” that surround us as we sit in our driver’s seat. Don’t worry, my scintillating, article on the inadequacies of Morgan tops will be featured in the next MOGNW issue, and you won’t want to miss it. In the meantime, I have become completely distracted and fascinated by the Lift the Dot invention, and the historic American corporation that manufactures and distributes this important part of our car.

Top snaps, fasteners or the little “*watcha-ma-call-its*”, as most people call them, are an overlooked and often forgotten part of a Morgan. Most people ask me what type of engine I have under the hood. I have never had someone ask, “hey, I like your car, what type of snaps do you have?”

First of all, it is important to know how many snaps you have. My 1965 Plus Four has 24. When you go out to your garage to count them bring, a magnifying glass. You’ll want to hold it close to each little fastener to be able to reveal the catchy Lift the Dot branding. Imagine that, a brand name that actually describes what you have to do. If only all Morgan parts could be that logical. I also have had the good fortune of having the Lift the Dot brand fasteners on an old MG of mine, and David tells me they are found on a wide range of British convertibles. The brand has been around for a long time.

You think that your Morgan is made by an old company. After all it is the Morgan Motor Car company’s 100th anniversary next year. But the Morgan Motor car company is just a spring chicken compared to the corporation that makes the Lift the Dot fasteners. When the inventor of our beautiful cars, Harry Frederick Stanley Morgan was born in 1881 the Scovill Company had already been stamping out these tiny “*thing-a-ma-bobbers*” for 79 years. You see, the Lift the Dot brand is manufactured by Scovill Fasteners, a large custom medal stamping and injection moulding company who are now based in Clarksville, Georgia.

The heritage of the little snap “*jobbies*” on your car is fascinating. I must have a very simple mind because I get a kick out of totally useless information like this. And I know you will too. As a matter of fact, after reading this short article you will be able to bore people to tears at cocktail parties talking about these often overlooked labour saving devices.

The Scovill Company was founded way back in 1802 in Waterbury, CT, when the United States was only 26 years old. That’s a long time ago. They have survived through peace and war, depression and prosperity. They are one of the few American companies that can boast being in business for three Centuries. And from that humble beginning long long ago they have grown to become one of the world’s largest manufacturers of apparel and light industrial fasteners. Every year they pump out billions and billions of fasteners for marine and outdoor use, for sporting goods and apparel, for the military; oh yes, and for automobiles. One of their smaller long term accounts would be the Morgan Motor Car Company in Malvern Link, England.

But wait it gets even better. Those little snaps on your Morgan are stewed in history. Their lineage is worth knowing about; next time you are snapping down your Morgan’s top just think of this: Scovill’s buttons have been attached to many U.S. military uniforms since the war of 1812, but

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among the most famous pieces produced by Scovill is a set of closures made for General Marquis de LaFayette and presented to him when he visited the U.S. in 1825. These 17 closures featured the head of George Washington and were acclaimed as masterpieces of their time. They were made of solid gold which was obtained from a single nugget found in North Carolina. The little snaps on my Morgan don't have Washington's head on them; they just say "Lift the Dot". Come to think of it, they are not made of gold either.



Scovill are a global company in every sense of the word. Their fasteners can be found all over the planet. They have sales offices and / or distributors everywhere. They even have a new state of the art plant in Shenzhen, China. And there is a Canadian angle – in 1990, the Scovill company acquired RAU Fasteners of Montreal, makers of Klikit brand snaps. The Klikit brand name is cool, but not as cool as Lift the Dot.

In my research I learned that Lift the Dot is one of four brilliant names they have come up with to describe their fasteners. There are actually four different lines of fasteners made by Scovill: Durable Dot, Common Sense Dot, Pull-the-Dot, and of course my favorite Lift the Dot. These guys are good. They have taken "fastener marketing" to a whole new level. You gotta love it. They have great copy writers working for them too. Here is a paragraph from their website that pretty well sums up, or fastens down, what they do: "Our products represent the cutting edge in form, fit and function in the closure fastener industry. From high fashion to infantswear, career apparel, to designer jeanswear, leather products, and sporting goods, Scovill snap fastener and button closures meet the demands of today's market application requirements for quality, durability and delivered value." The only thing that was missing from that promotional text was a reference to being the official fastener to the Morgan Motor Car Company.
