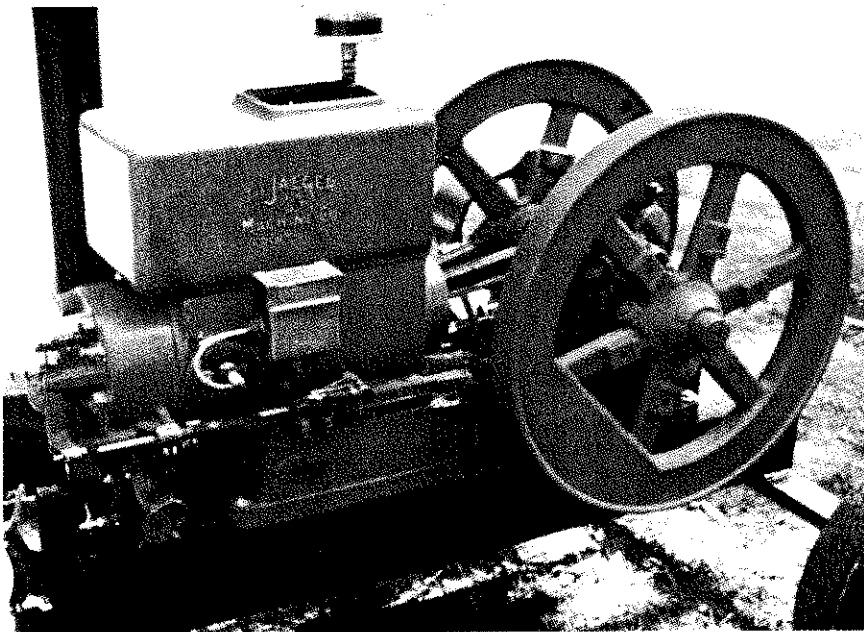


Hercules Engine News



By Glenn Karch

It's a "Loane"-er!



Left: A Loane Machinery Co. engine was reportedly bought in Maryland. Only one other Loane has ever been reported. Loane engines are Hercules look-alikes produced by Jaeger.

The gas engine hobby is full of little mysteries and surprises. Back around 1990, Peter Himmelheber of Maryland sent me some pictures of a "Loane" engine, which was a Hercules look-alike that didn't have the generic Hercules tag on it. Apparently, that tag was missing. That was the only Loane engine ever reported.

On Feb. 25, 2004, that all changed when Gary Martin of West Virginia called me to describe an engine he had recently obtained in Maryland: a Loane engine. It has the generic Hercules tag on it with 3 HP Model H and serial no. 3206#9 (the fifth digit is missing). The engine also has two other tags on it.

One is the Loane tag, which reads, "Loane Machinery Co., Manufacturers and Distributors, Baltimore, Maryland." The other tag – here's the surprise – is the

typical Jaeger Machine Co., Columbus, Ohio, tag designating the unit it came from as "5 L," which stands for the size of concrete mixer and the configuration of the whole unit.

Both the engine's serial number and the "H" indicate it was built in 1924. The missing digit in the serial number must have happened at the tag-supply company, because Hercules purchased its tags with the serial numbers pre-stamped. The horsepower, model and rpm were later stamped at Hercules, as groups of tags were set aside from time to time for various-sized engines.

Loane was most likely a distributor for Jaeger concrete mixers and related equipment in the eastern United States rather than the manufacturer. Farther west, it's not uncommon for a Jaeger engine to have three tags, but the

third is usually a Roy C. Wayne tag. The Wayne Co. was – and still is – a supplier of construction equipment, with Caterpillar as one of its major brands.

The 3 HP engine reported here is then a Jaeger engine. It has the telltale blue cylinder and hopper, but the base is reportedly black, and the flywheels are red. I suspect the black and red colors were added somewhere along the line.

As a side note, Jaeger engines were built with nine different horsepower ratings. They included the 2 HP, 2 HP (re-rated to 2-1/2), 3 HP (re-rated to 3-1/2), 5 HP (re-rated to 6) and 7 HP (re-rated to 8).

The Hercules-built Jaeger engine era began in 1921 with the E models and ended in 1929 with the S models. At various times during that Jaeger-brand era, the firm had some distinctive characteristics. Those included the oiler pipe brace, the vertical fuel spout, the spark plug in the head and the three-hole flywheels. The firm also produced an interesting 8 HP Jaeger engine with the half base and special flywheels.

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