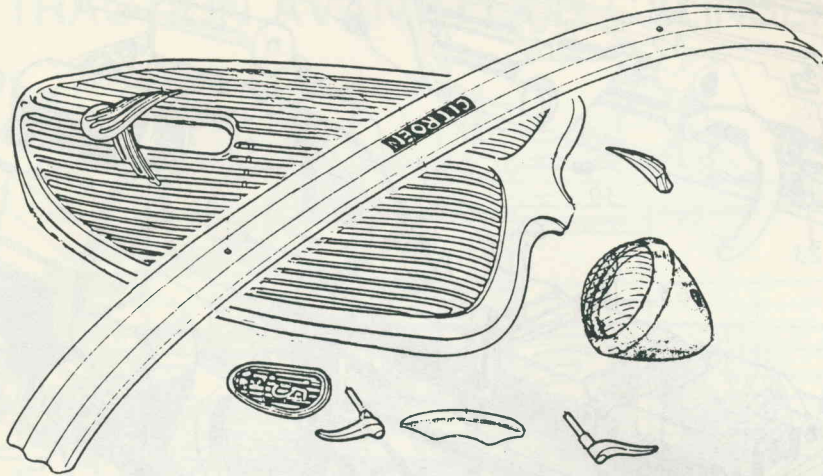


PITS IN BRIGHTWORK



The bright work of your car is one of its eye-catching features. Unfortunately, when you go to have bright work replated, you will often find that the surface is pitted due to localized corrosion. This is most likely where the underlying base metal is steel (as in bumper bars, and particularly, in grills) or die-cast alloy. Brass is not normally affected. In any case, it's a pity to plate over pitted base metal if you can avoid it.

Shallow pits can be removed by grinding or buffing away the surrounding metal to the depth of the pits, although this, as well as being time-consuming and likely to spoil the detailed surface contours, may also cause unacceptable loss of metal and hence loss of strength—say in pressed steel grills.

A note in an earlier "Restored Cars" caught my eye - it suggested filling the pits in steel items with silver solder and polishing off level before sending the items to the platers. I discussed this approach with a couple of experts - Frank Pittard of Pittard Electroplating, Fitzroy, and Jack Brennan who has been repairing top quality bright work for 50 years.

One objection to applying silver (hard) solder is that its melting point is moderately high. Hence, a flame must be used and there is the risk of causing heat distortion of the thin base metal, or even burning through it if you don't take enough care. Certainly, you will burn off existing electro deposits (copper etc) on the base metal. Hence, if you are going to fill pits with solder, it is better to use soft solder (tin-lead alloy) since this can be applied at a sufficiently low temperature (soldering iron) that heat distortion is unlikely. Soft solder is also easier to dress down. However, the soft solder

should be protected from surface attack during the subsequent "etch dip" stage, and this can be achieved by plating a layer of copper over the solder before the etch dip.

Hence, for deep pits (see below for shallow pits) in unplated steel (comments on plated steel below), the procedure would be:

- Nickel plate (for a good key on steel)
- Copper plate
- Soft solder (to fill pits)
- Dress solder down flush and smooth
- Copper plate (to seal and protect solder)
- Etch dip
- Nickel plate (to seal against corrosion — polish to mirror finish)
- Chrome plate (to protect from surface tarnish)

Because of the extra steps in soldering (and hence extra cost), if the pits are numerous and shallow, it may be better to put on a thicker copper coat and polish this back to effectively eliminate pits showing at the surface, before the next steps.

In repairing an already plated item, it should not be necessary to "electrostrip" the item back to base metal, since you lose the existing coating and possibly even some of the base metal. However, some cleaning up etc may be needed before starting the replating sequence.

It is important to disassemble the item (grill etc) before plating, to ensure all surfaces are fully covered, and even to have the odd component re-fabricated (this may be better overall than filling pits etc).

Pits (and even complete breaks) can also be repaired in die-cast items (ornaments, handles etc) with skill and

using a special solder (e.g. All State No. 53 and No. 53 flux), provided the die-cast hasn't "aged" too much. However, it may be cheaper and more satisfactory to try to obtain new or at least items in better condition, or even to have the items re-cast in bronze and have this plated (see ad. by Billmans, Castlemaine - Restored Cars No. 59, p. 41).

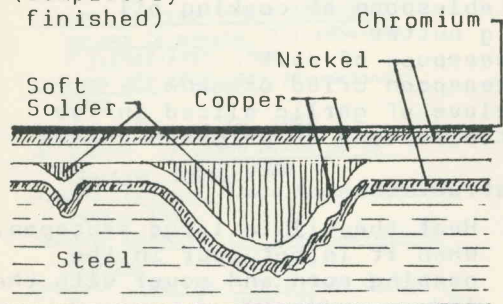
In the more complex situations, you should be able to count on the experience and knowledge of good re-

pairs and plating people to select a set of steps which give a high quality and long lasting finish at not excessive cost. Certainly, it will help to have a bit of background knowledge when you are looking to have a job done for you, and of course if you are looking to save a dollar.

However, your pride and pleasure in a good job will almost certainly outlast the memory of the costs.

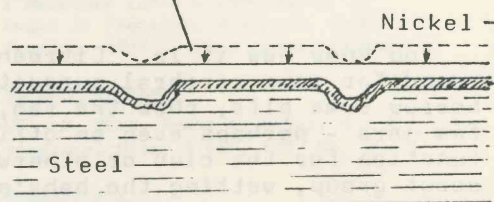
Bill Graham.

Deep Pits
(completely finished)



Shallow pits
(initial steps)

Thick copper deposit polished back smooth.



SPECIAL INTEREST CITROENS

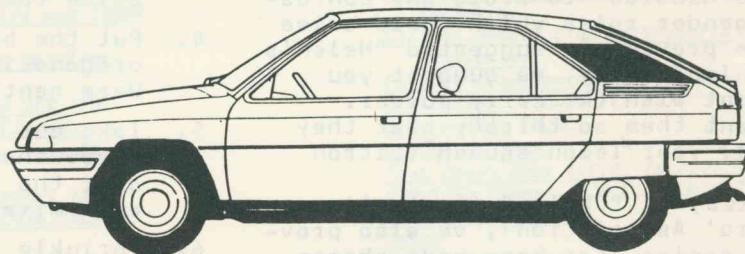
Citroen BX for Australia

Final plans are being made for the entry of the Citroen BX into the Australian market. The agreement is being thrashed out between Citroen and Maxim Motors Brisbane, the Australian importer. It envisages 300 BX on sale before the end of the year.

The cars will be variations of the 1.6 litre BX and a fuel-injected 1.9 litre version. The 1.9 litre will sell for around \$22,000 and the 1.6 for between \$17,000 and \$19,000. The flagship, the automatic, fuel injected 2.5 litre CX, will continue to be offered as will a few GTis.

Citroen dealers in Australia are hoping the BX will generate interest in the marque. They say that at present it's hard going, as for three years Citroen was not in Australia and it's difficult getting people to think Citroen again. The BX could help.

WHEELS July 1985.



Cronulla, NSW.
February 11th, 1985.

Dear Bill,

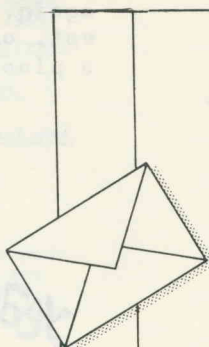
Thank you for your letter and report for the magazine. We were very surprised that you did not receive the photos and some history on the car sent to you in July last year. Anyway, please find enclosed some more photos and report.

Tom's Normale is now half completed, ready to be painted. He was in Paris for one month and visited "Depanoto" 80 km from Paris where he purchased lots of spares. They have everything either new or used.

So long for now,

Gabriel de Figueiredo.

Note: Some letters held over for later.



LETTERS