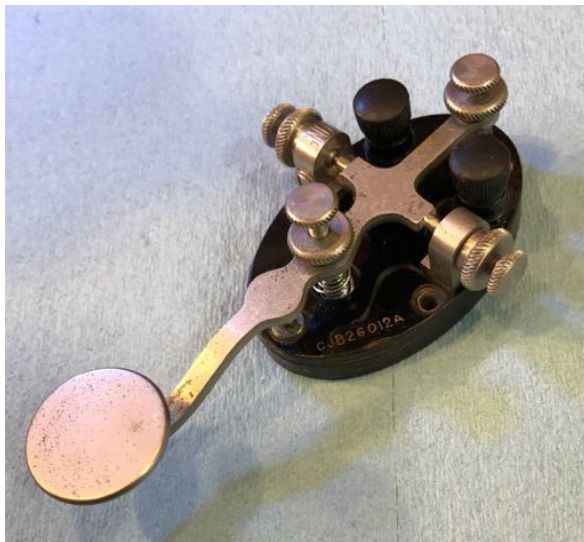


Restoring a Telegraph Key from World War Two

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A Fellow of the
California Historical Radio Society – © 2016



J. H. Bunnell Company of
New York made this Model
CJB26012A Telegraph Key
for the U.S. Navy during the
Second World War.

As Found in the Flea Market at Radio Central, 2016:

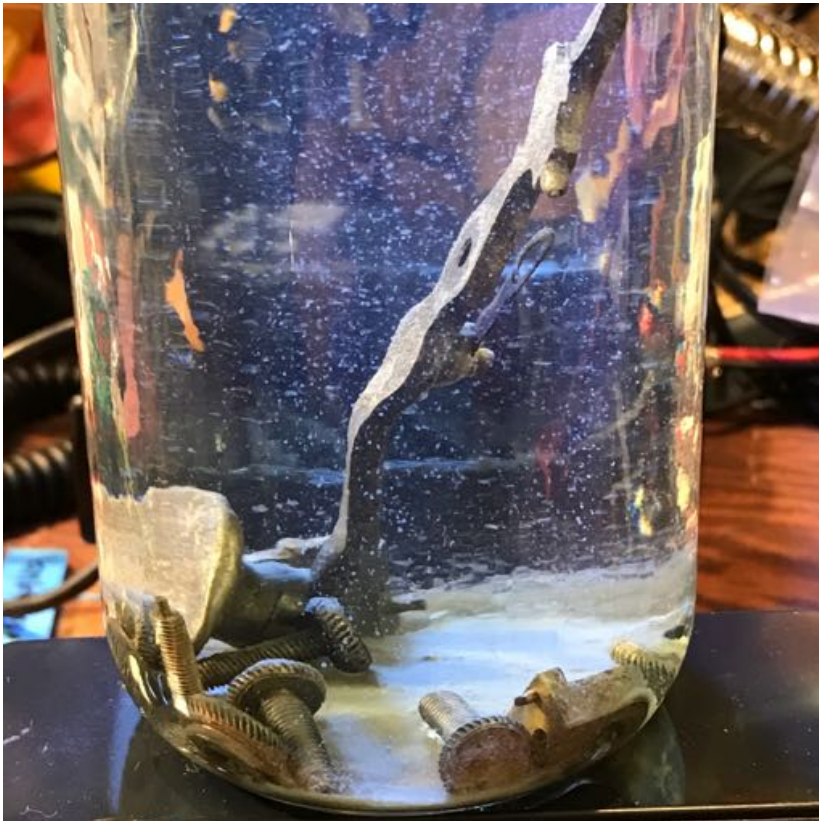


A Rare Knob Configuration:

- **The key is nickel-plated steel. The base is Bakelite.** The key connects to the transmitter or other circuit by means of two binding posts on the base. The keying mechanism (the left side “trunion” connector) also provides for a wired ground connection to the key lever.
- **The knob on the key lever is bare, uninsulated metal, not the universal Bakelite or rubber key knob.** This makes it nearly unique. More than 1,000 pictures of telegraph keys appear on the Internet. This is the only one since 1844 (Vail’s original key) that does not have an insulated knob. The key’s arrangement operates the key lever at ground potential, as usual, hence no need for an insulated knob. Nonetheless, almost all keys feature insulated knobs, perhaps for safety reasons.

Restoration:

- Disassemble all of the metal parts
- Soak all of the parts in vinegar for 40 days.



Corrosion precipitates off and settles at the bottom of the glass jar.

Out of the Jar, On to the Bench:

- Rinse and Clean the Parts.



Brush Clean & Polish the Parts



Noxon Metal Polish seemed best for these nickel plated steel parts.

Clean and Polish Bakelite Base



Novus Fine Scratch Remover for plastics seemed like a good way to go.

Re-Assembled, but with Kluged Spring



Maybe this key was abandoned to the elements because the spring was lost! But Larry Nutting, CHRS, supplied a N.O.S. replacement!

The Metal Uninsulated Knob



An Insulated Knob Version, CLT26012B Key with GND



CLT-26012B is a nearly identical key with an insulated knob. Like the Bunnell key, it is a World War Two era open circuit key. Lundquist Tool & Manufacturing Co., of Worcester, Mass. fulfilled this “B” contract. (A closed circuit landline key uses a horizontal lever to keep the circuit closed except when keyed, in order to always receive messages on the circuit).

Vail’s original landline key, circa 1844 (replica); it operated a low voltages and current:



The WW II Key Restored:



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