

PUBLIC RECORDS ON JOSEPH BIJUR

Research by Lucy Allard

May 25, 1894 Passport application:

Student. Height: 5' 8-1/2" broad forehead, hazel eyes, prominent nose, medium mouth, blunt chin, black hair, dark complexion, oval face.

September 10, 1894, Joseph Bijur arrived in New York, New York from Liverpool, England on the "Etruria". Student.

1895 attended Columbia College in New York City

1910 census Manhattan, New York County, New York: Bijur, Joesph white male, 35 years old, married 14 years, born in New York, fahter (sic) born in Germany, mother born in Germany speaks English, president Electircal Engineers (sic) Co. Bijur, Alice, white female, married 14 years, born in New York, father born in Germany, mother born in France. Bijur, George A., white male 8 years old, single, born in New York, father born in New York, mother born in New York. 2 servants, a nrurs (sic) and a cook.

September 12, 1918 WWI Draft

Registration: born April 15, 1874. Height: 5" 9-1/2". Gray hair and eyes. President/Manager Bijur Motor Appliance Company, Hoboken, Hudson County, New Jersey

Dated December 1, 1919 and received March 13, 1920: "Application for Amendment of Passport": Object of Visit: Commercial Business. Countries to Visit: British Isles, Belgium, France, Holland, Italy plus Switzerland.

October 9, 1920: Joseph Bijur arrived in New York, New York from Southampton on the "Aquitania". (Alice is not with him.)

September 30, 1927: Joseph and Alice Bijur arrived in New York, New York from Southampton on the "Aquitania". (Her birth date is given as September 9, 1875.)

Source: Ancestry.com

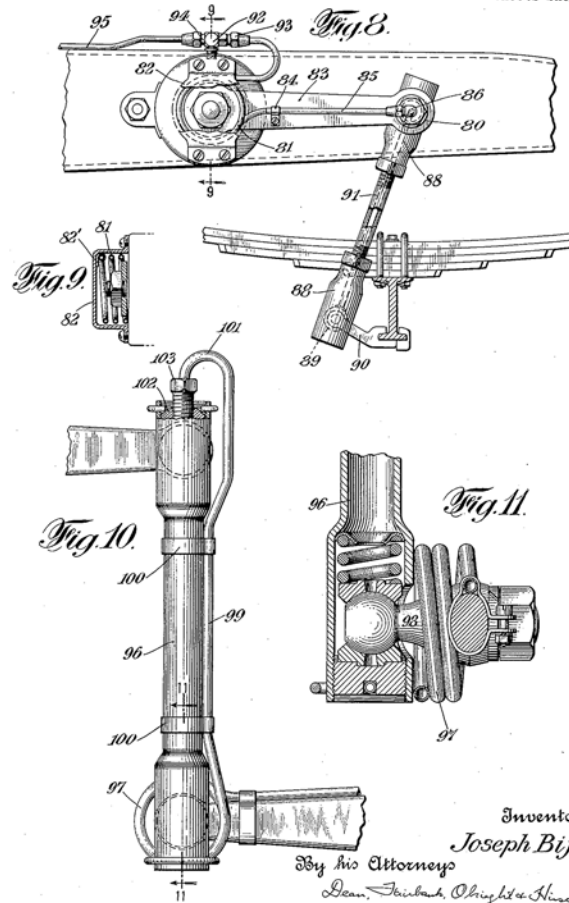
Feb. 6, 1934.

J. BIJUR
LUBRICATION

1,945,512

Filed Aug. 10, 1925

5 Sheets-Sheet 3



Inventor
Joseph Bijur

By his Attorneys
Dean, Steinhilber, Olbright & Hirsch.

United States Patent Office #1,945,512 Lubrication
Joseph Bijur, New York, N.Y. assignor to Auto Research Corporation,
a corp. of Delaware.

Application date: August 10, 1925 Patent Date: February 6, 1934

My present invention relates to lubrication and more especially to the lubrication of automotive chassis elements and particularly instrumentalities such as shock absorbers or rebound checks associated with a motor vehicle and to the supply of lubricant to the casing of a shock absorber.

Lubrication is desired for the interior bearings and pivot joint of the links of shock absorbers of the liquid resistance and friction clutch types, and also in some instances, for the rubbing surfaces.....

Editor's Note: Val Dickison's research on Joseph Bijur painted a picture of a bright inventor (with numerous patented processes bearing his name) and astute businessman with a troubled and sad end to his life. It seems odd that so little has been written about a man whose name is on dozens of patents and whose company has remained in business for more than 100 years. It seems particularly unusual that despite a thorough search of the web (including Lucy Allard's efforts on Ancestry.com) and directly contacting the company and his descendants that not a single photograph could be found.

Val sent this story to Joan Adler of the Straus Historical Society and Joseph Bijur's distant relative Vicky Bijur, a literary agent in New York. Both expressed a keen interest in Val's research and expressed thanks to the PNR-CCCA for providing a missing chapter in the family's history. She also sent copies to the president of the Bijur Delimon Corporation and to Ken Bannister, Contributing Editor for Lubrication Management & Technology and blogwriter at Bijur. Ken sent the following reply...."Thank you so much for passing along the information and allowing me to read your article, I was mesmerized!" Copies of the Bumper Guardian will be sent to each of these contributors.



THE ELUSIVE MR. BIJUR AND HIS AUTOMATIC OIL DELIVERY SYSTEM

By Val Dickson

At the February CCCA Board of Managers' meeting I heard the word "Bijur" and my ears pricked-up. I believe it was Karen Hutchinson who said "They leak all over". Her husband Barrie laughed and countered "That's because they are doing their job". My personal remembrance of the Bijur system is that our 1931 Rolls Royce Newmarket leaked oil all over our garage floor. We were constantly changing the rags under the spots where "Berty" delightfully dripped. I thought "Bijur system" was an antiquated term; glad that's a thing of the past. But in preparation to write this article I looked up Bijur on the internet. Holy smokers! They are still in business; bigger than ever, supplying to industries such as steel mills, oil refineries, earth movers, factory equipment of all types, railroad and even wind turbines. They've gone global and bought-up most of the competition including Farval, LubeSite, Delimon and Denco. Once a little company known as the General Storage Battery Company in 1904, and then the Bijur Motor Lighting Company at 15th & River Street, in Hoboken, NJ, circa 1910, they have grown to a multi-billion dollar corporation, with branches scattered worldwide.

In 1923 inventor Joseph Bijur, revolutionized the automotive industry by developing a self-contained, engineered lubrication pump with a centralized delivery system for oil. I loosely quote Ken Bannister in his 2010 blog posting at www.bijur.com. The pump system was referred to SLR (Single Line

Resistance). Pull the handle and swoosh, you got oil! This single-shot, total loss method, in a low-pressure design, delivers an amount of lubricant to every point when the pump is operated, up to 200 points. This eliminated the "feast or famine" situation with lubricating your vehicle. No more getting it up on the hoist and hoping you avoided metal fatigue due to lack of lubrication. It is believed Bijur's system reduced mechanical failure by one third due to its continual lubricating power. I invite you to view their website to see their full range of products and applications in today's marketplace.

Bannister theorizes that Bijur probably studied Elijah McCoy's steam-pressurized single-point oiling device that used steam pressure to lubricate railroad engines, circa 1870s. This system worked so well, any other system offered to the railroad industry was shunned in favor of "The Real McCoy".

The Bijur System became a practical main-stay in automotive manufacturing during the 1930s and 1940s; right up to the 1961 Rolls Royce. There was competition though. Trabon delivered the "Series Progressive Divider System". Lincoln had the "Single Line Positive Displacement Injector System"; Farval had its "Dualine Positive Displacement Injector System" and Tecalmit called theirs the "Pump-to-Point System". With Bijur's redirection of focus to industry, Bijur's oil delivery system of today is computer controlled.

It is self-diagnosing and delivers oil as needed, without the need of a manual pull. It is now okay to be "asleep at the wheel". Today's systems triple the life of equipment.

But what of the man? Who was Joseph Bijur? I asked my husband what he knew about the man and other than the invention he said he thought the man was French. There is very little written on Joseph. Internet articles listing the inventors of the 20th century do not include Bijur. The company bearing his own name, now known as "Bijur Delimon" has no history on the man on their website, other than to state he developed the SLR in 1923. There are a few obscure books at www.archives.org that mention Joseph Bijur. "American Electrochemical Society" listed him as a member of their society since 1903, in their 1916 meeting volume. Amazon.com offers a couple of old pamphlets for sale on second market. And at that website you can buy various new Bijur whiz-bangs for your industrial machines. His patent applications are available for viewing on the internet and offer beautiful technical drawings with copious details concerning the patent to which they were applying. He obviously had a brilliant mind. If he was the creator of the drawings, he was also an excellent artist and draftsman.

Donald Preston was President of Bijur for several years, starting in 1984. His email reply to me indicated he knew virtually nothing of the founder, Joseph Bijur. Preston cited in his memoir "I Love You One Thousand Houses" that around 1980 Bijur had offices in Oakland, New Jersey, which also served as company headquarters and also Bennington, Vermont; Ennis, Ireland; and sales offices in France, Switzerland and Canada.

He goes on to state there were no reliable monthly accounting statements for the company; something he remedied post-haste. Both he and Ken Bannister mention the company was owned by Dr. Peter Bing, a doctor in California. Research indicates the Bing family was exceedingly wealthy due to grandfather, Leo S. Bing's extreme good fortune in New York City real estate. Peter Bing's son, Steve, inherited \$600 million from his late grandfather's estate. The Bing name is well known in Stanford University circles and has donated millions to the university and to other California causes. Steve Bing is known as quite the playboy, but I shall leave that to one alone.

But back to Joseph Bijur. Not only is Mr. Bijur known for his lubricating system, but also for his starting and lighting systems on early automobiles. The patents include: Electrical Regulator, 1906; Automatic End Cell Switch, 1907; Electric Circuit Changing Apparatus, 1911; Battery Connector, 1914; Electrical Circuit Changing Apparatus, 1918; Engine Starting Device, 1919; Dynamo Engine Apparatus, 1920; Flow Control Fitting, 1922; Trunnion Joint & Lubrication Thereof, 1924; Central Lubricating Device, 1932, 1934, 1936 and 1939. Obviously as the lubricating system was refined he refiled his patent noting the upgrades. In 1923 alone, he applied for five patents under the Bijur Motor Appliance Company name; often in conjunction with other partners. One patent concerning "starting airplanes" was found in the 1923 edition entitled "Index of Patents – 1923" which is available for reading online at www.archives.org. After his death, his patents were filed by one George Bijur, Executor. It took me a lot of digging but I finally discovered George was Joseph's son.

Two other texts at www.archives.org are "Automotive Wiring Manual 1912-1920" by Harry Lorin Wells – 1920, for use in the classroom. Included are circuit diagrams for a number of six cylinder vehicles, starting and lighting systems. Bijur's drawings are included with well known names such as Westinghouse, big competition then and now.

R.C. Fryer's book of 1918 "Classroom Lecture notes" also offers Bijur drawings on pages 120 through 124.

But still, what of the man's personal life? After many hours at the computer, with eyes burning like red hot coals, I came across the Straus Historical Society's website and I'm not quite sure why. I wrote to their director, Joan Adler, who sent me a shocking email. Joseph and his wife Alice had a suicide pact which they carried out together. Here is the personal information Joan shared with me:

Joseph was born April 15, 1874 in New York. His parents were born in Germany. Wife was Alice Pronick, (shortened from Prochownik); same age. Her father was born in Germany and mother in France. Alice was loosely related to the Levi Straus family. On May 1, 1896 Joseph married Alice at her parent's home at 122 East 60th Street, where several hundred guests were in attendance, with names such as Rothschild, Straus and Blumenthal. Joseph's brother Nathan Bijur (successful New York attorney and later Supreme Chief Justice in New York), married Alice's sister (date not given). Only child born to Joseph and Alice was George Bijur who became a Manhattan advertising man. Joseph was registered for the World War I draft. It is not stated if he served for military duty.

(Paraphrased) New York Times, October 20, 1931: "Joseph Bijur Dies in Suicide Compact". Husband and wife Alice found dead in the Bijur Lubricating Company at 22-08 43rd Avenue, Long Island. Both had been in very poor health of late. Employees find bodies seated back to back in chairs with pistols besides each. Both had been shot by a single bullet to their heads. On a bench near the bodies they found a note addressed to their son, George. Joseph was 57 at time of death; a graduate of Columbia College and the Columbia School of Mines. Funeral services were on the 21st at the Universal Funeral Chapel.

It is a shame that this inventor, who was so important in the early automotive industry, is not lauded such as the likes of Henry Ford. Having taken his own life, I now can see why information about him was so unavailable. Perhaps even more than now, the Jewish faith looked upon suicide as a deep and grave sin against God; Jewish funeral services and mourning rites were not permissible for suicides. Note they were buried the day after they died.

When I started this article several days ago, blithely assuming Joseph Bijur peacefully died in his sleep at a ripe old age, I did not realize the turn where this story would take me. I had theorized Joseph was a Jewish immigrant, who came to America to make his fame and fortune. True Joseph was a driven and clever man who added much to make America strong. Perhaps a bit obscure today, because history has shamefully swept his sin under the rug. Regardless of his pain and sorrow in life, we shall remember Joseph Bijur's contributions every time we clean the oil from the garage floor under "Old Betsy."

