OHMITE VT 8-G Variable Transformer

This is another item I picked up at a local Ham flea market. It was in rough shape and I did have a concern as to the condition of the variable autotransformer. It used a non-polarized two conductor line cord and a two conductor non polarized AC socket. The socket had indications of arcing on it and it was also broken. I am not sure of the vintage but guessing it was built in the 1950's.

It has two voltage ranges, 0-120 and 0-140 volts AC and is rated at 6 or 7.5 amps depending where you get your information.

When I checked the variable autotransformer it was fine.

The line cord was changed to three conductors. A three conductor AC socket was installed on the end of a short pigtail at the output. There may have been space to add a three conductor socket to the front panel but I did not have one and would have required doing some body work.

It came with a 7.5 amp circuit breaker but it was defective. It was replaced with a fuse as shown in the above photo.

One thing I found interesting was originally when you switched voltage ranges it would also flip the hot and neutral on the AC socket. This was corrected.

The handle shown is not original. The case was spray painted with a colour close to the original.

The photo of the autotransformer on the left was found on-line. This is the type and model used here. It does not provide any isolation from the line as typical with any variable autotransformer.

I should mention that this device may sometimes be called a "Variac". The name Variac was a US trade mark of General Radio for a variable autotransformer. It now seems acceptable to call any make of a variable autotransformer a Variac.

September 5, 2026