

## 1927/28

**SYMBOL:** A mid-centre five-pointed star.

**COLOURS:** Orange on black.

This issue was to foster a formative stride into the diversification arena where separate registrations were placed within range of a newly defined conveyance sector (detailed later). Furthermore the digits on passenger-sized plates returned to being 3½ inches high, an attribute that hereon in would be sacrosanct. However all the prefixes, pertinent to both the incoming pioneers as well as the familiar **D**, were now pruned down to two and two third inches, an apex that was immutable until a pervasive modification to the die five years down the track was to brook some discreet inflation.

And, in what was to be the incipient but daring dip of the toe into the waters of annual hue variations, all the characters were hereby given indemnity to robe themselves in bright orange. However no such franchise was professed for the base which had to go on being draped in a funereal black.

Launched too was the very first symbol. Yet why is it in these primordial days, and all the way to 1932/33, there was such aversion to accommodating them, above all on passenger-sized registrations, when the serial was below **1,000**? If one subscribes to a formerly alluded to vagary that it is not prudent to scatter temptation in the way of sly individuals with the ingenuity to come up with their own painted elaborations, then it is stupefying this spectacle went on for as long as it did. It must also be remembered that throughout this whole epoch, until dispersals to postal districts became more impartial (also in 1932/33), those in northern climes who had come by low serials one year were the very same ones receiving them the next. What is more, even for those punters loathe to risk splattering pigment on their clothing, twice the opportunity to exploit lapsed plates was gifted to them on a platter when two series reverted to dressing up in nothing other than the same dyed finery viewed four years ago.

Also from now on the maker would be given the liberty to add his logo to every item. This was an unpretentious, roughly ¾ inch long line oval encircling the words **PRECISION N.Z.**, where the curved name was poised atop the initials. On big registrations it was stamped vertically and, more often than not, centrally at far left on the outer surface but certainly not always as it has also been detected in other hollows with the rare random pariah even drifting onto the back. Although one ought to be able to declare quite categorically the imprint should be blatant on every post 1926/27 plate, it must be confessed its legibility on some does leave a lot to be desired, and even more so if repainting has occurred.

**Passenger** - Compatible with above comments, the emblem was warranted to be surplus to requirements on registrations with serials to **999** of the 135,700 pairs hustled in.



**Motorcycle** - A star definitely never twinkled on the rear plates - and there is ambiguity it did so on their fellow front ones - when either had three or less numerals. In all 34,000 sets were enticed into the open.



**Large Vehicle Dealer** - The **D** now took on stockier properties while also being lopped down to the aforementioned two and two third inches. And again the symbol declined to poke its head out of hiding on the core 999 of the 2,700 pairs to clock in.



**Motorcycle Dealer** - Here the star threw aside its inhibitions by unabashedly strutting its stuff on the 500 perpendicular registrations. But it is a riddle why it should have been half-hearted about it and refuse to do the same on the horizontal ones.



**Exempt** - Because the list of organisations imploring for - and being acceded - immunity from payment of a registration fee had lengthened so dramatically since enactment of the new scheme just over two years prior, it was resolved their vehicles no longer be induced to affix (albeit gratis) passenger plates but instead be given rites of passage to an issue of their own.

Apart from private welfare societies, two other groups had also over the months vied for relief from the annual costs. One was made up of owners whose mechanical entities, on the basis of their premeditated duties (excluding farm tractors which had already been absolved), were expected to stay cooped up inside the

boundaries of rural properties and never trespass onto public thoroughfares. The other was made up of councils and regional bodies who were incessantly enlarging their inventories of road construction and repair equipment such as graders, asphalt laying trucks, etc.

But it had not ended there. Not to be forgotten were state-owned boards who, even though they had never been in the gun to remit registration levies, were still sanctioning their plethora of contraptions to go on being girded with the same enamelled plates that had mesmerised them since the youthful 1920's. It was proper time, so intellectual reasoning went, to bring them in step with the rest of the nation by entrusting them with embossed registrations from this latest exempt series. Cavalcading in therefore came a quartet of plates boosted by either an **A**, **B**, **C** or **E** prefix with the express objective that each selectively mingle with one of these four sub-categories.

Whereas three of the factions unhesitatingly transferred their allegiance in a flash, something went haywire when it came to contrivances the property of the Crown for, in a last minute back-flip, they suddenly battened down the hatches and



completely reneged on their earlier oath to follow suit. In the aftermath that left only a trio of partakers being courted by a surfeit of letters and the truth is we are still in the dark as to who got to canoodle with whom. But of two occurrences one can be unequivocal. None of the characters wound up being a wallflower despite there now being a deficit of qualified collaborators with whom they all could waltz into a permanent union. And, for those who did make their catch and then struck up a stable bond, but had the nerve to lay bare a plunging serial below **1,000**, they most assuredly never got to have a star pinned on them.

It has been chronicled 3,600 sets of exempt registrations, encompassing all four denominations, made it onto the starting grid but, if correct, this does not reconcile itself to why some known plates far outstrip that figure. For example there is awareness of one flaunting **B4,617**. Can it be mammoth gaps in the serials were allowed for between the prefixes? But then how come we are also intimate with a registration numbered **B127**? Lamentably, while the relevant data persists in remaining buried in the sands of obscurity, this will have to go on being another one of life's little mysteries...

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