

## 1937/38

**SYMBOL:** A lower-centre escutcheon (this being the profile of a protective key-hole cover).

**COLOURS:** White on black.

Finally the public was treated to the aura of a symbol exhibiting a touch more creative imagination than the somewhat pedestrian endeavours volunteered until then. But this encouraging initiative would be stymied forthwith by the dogmatic doctrine pontificated by the latest generation of luminaries (who were just as encrusted in the barnacles of conservatism as their predecessors) that the serials be white and the backdrop go back to being a drab black.

**Passenger** - For the second successive year the foreseen apportionment of passenger plates betwixt the by now 18 postal districts (seen in [Appendix 5](#)) can be disclosed. But again a timely reminder is appropriate drawing attention to the reality the data is largely derived from little more than figures plucked out of thin air.

An enormous incongruity is manifest between the volume of registrations alleged to have been distributed during 1937/38 (a contended 186,000 sets) and the fact that we are familiar with a couple where the serials are more bounteous than this.



If we are to presume the series began at **1,001** (see the Rental & Private Hire remarks below) then to all intents and purposes it should have finished at **187,000**. So where does an ascribed plate divulging **189,970** fit into the pattern? Could this whole issue have started higher up the numeric grid, say at **4,001**, and ceased at **190,000**? But, if so, why?

There is however another complication fanning the flames. We are also aware of a plate, last seen in a museum near Wellington, with the serial **200,016**. Was Precision called on to evolve supplemental plates when a reading of the tea leaves prophesied there was going to be an overall shortfall? Similar, for instance, to the divining that took place two years prior when Rental & Private Hire had a contingency plan - lest their allowance evaporated before due date - for another hundred registrations from much further up the serial scale? While it all came to nothing in 1935/36, this most definitely was a safety valve twice capitalised on in an upcoming series. So can the same have held true here?

Or one could look at these two inconsistencies from another angle altogether and simply deduce the given statistic of 186,000 must be way off beam. After all, is it not intriguing only 2,000 extra passenger plates are claimed to have wriggled free during this registration year over the previous one? If we probe into the fairly recent past and investigate the rates of annual growth between the two former issues, it becomes piercingly clear the increment here should have been in the orbit of tens of thousands. Fortifying that premise moreover is the authoritative revelation there were 195,972 cars registered in the country as at 31 March 1938. On that evidence alone this last supposition is conducive to being the most coherent and does much to support the hypothesis the output for 1937/38 must have been closer to 206,000 pairs.

#### Motorcycle



*.1 to 25.500*

#### Large Vehicle Dealer



*D.1 to D2.050*

**Motorcycle Dealer** - Only 200 pairs popped up.

#### Exempt



*E.1 to E3.150*

**Government** - 2,900 sets were handed over.

#### Heavy Vehicle



*H.1 to H22.300*

**Light Vehicle**

*L.1 to L28.500*

**Bus** - 730 pairs came in to bat.

**Service Vehicle** - 850 sets were accumulated.

**Taxi**

*T.1 to T2.500*

**Rental & Private Hire** - In rapport with all the statements garnered, these two only purloined the foremost 1,000 serials from the passenger ration, so this has to refute any perception Precision churned out another bunch of registrations for this combo. Not only that but, had this happened, the end total of 1,000 registrations accredited to Rental & Private Hire would have taken an appreciable upward hike.



**Trailer** - At last some evangelist with commensurate clout had a miraculous epiphany which inspired in him the conception that the scattering of trailer plates in pairs these erstwhile three years had been a mighty idle and costly drill. Auspiciously he then went about spreading the gospel amongst his flock at the Registrar's office who made it their calling to ensure the 7,650 registrations to come forth this year (and forever more) did so only as singles.

**Contract Vehicle**

*V.1 to V1.650*

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