

## ENGINE/CHASSIS/BODY NUMBERS MORRIS 8 CARS 1934 to 1938

### Engine Numbers.

These numbers were stamped on the Bulkhead Plate.

New original engines had these numbers stamped on the engine block usually (but not exclusively) with a UB prefix.

Early Pre-Series engines may have had the number stamped on a 'cast in' raised area on the starter motor side of the cylinder block.

But generally all engines had the number stamped on a 'cast-in' sloping face on the manifold side of the cylinder block towards the rear and immediately below the cylinder head joint.

In general the numbers roughly correspond with the chassis number within a hundred or two, but do not always follow consistently.

If your engine is not stamped as described above, then it will be a replacement engine.

### Chassis Numbers.

These numbers were stamped on the Bulkhead Plate.

They were also stamped on the top face of the chassis near the front on the offside (driver's side for RH drive cars) in the vicinity of the area above the steering column mounting bracket. They are normally hidden under the felt strip between front wing assembly and chassis and are therefore not immediately in view. However if you look just forward of the small plate used to access the steering box mounting bolt, and if the wing/chassis joint felt is not in the way, the number can be seen. Whilst being stamped an indentation was made by the impact and this sometimes retains water and corrodes, often rendering the number illegible.

On the bulkhead plate only, the added prefix of 35/E, S1/E and S2/E is included dependent on the specification and year of manufacture.

### Body Numbers.

I do not at present have any information on Van body numbers.

On 2- Seater and Tourer bodies the number was stamped into the timber frame and was accessible from the passenger side cubby hole.

On saloon bodies a body number plate was rivetted to the lower front of the body, immediately behind the bulkhead/body joint and visible from beneath the running board.

#### Pre-Series and Series I Saloons.

From detailed inspection of both original Pre-Series and Series I cars, there appear to have been two different body number plates on each body. The only explanation I can give is that the first plate ( I will call it Plate A) was to record the numbers of 2 door and 4 door bodies when the bodies were initially built and welded up, and that the second plate (Plate B) recorded the refinement of adding the drainage channels and covers and the cut outs for them possibly all carried out later in production in a different factory building. It appears from recent hard evidence that these two plates were adjacent to each other on the same side of the car. i.e.Nearside on right hand drive cars.

Plate A was an elongated oval 'stamped' brass plate with the number prefixed either E2 (ie Eight 2 Door) or E4 (ie Eight 4 Door).

Plate B was a lighter oblong sharp-cornered 'embossed' brass or possibly aluminium plate with a different number to that on Plate A and prefixed either E, EF, EL or EFL.

- However my 'theory' regarding the purpose of Plate B is that the more complex prefix was used to differentiate between Sliding Head and the more basic Fixed Head bodies. Sliding Head bodies required additional processes before painting to accommodate roof drainage apertures and channels (particularly at the front where they were sealed or lead loaded to the body), and for the four cover 'louvres' to be screwed to the body. I believe that these were the only fundamental construction difference in the actual body manufacture, and perhaps the factory needed to show

this in the Body Number. So far I have come across several examples of three versions of Plate B, for instance:- one marked EFL 946 from an Eight Four Door Sliding Head ( Eight; Four; Louvre?). Also one marked EL 9754 from an Eight Two Door Sliding Head ( Eight; Louvre?). Also one marked E 9591 from an Eight Two Door Fixed Head ( Eight ?). I do not yet have the fourth variation which would be marked EF 'xxxx' from an Eight Four Door Fixed Head.

#### Series II Saloons.

It may well be that Series II saloons were dealt with in the same way as Pre-Series and Series I. However I do not as yet have firm evidence of a Plate A on a Series II body, and all examples seen of Plate B on a Series II body have been on the opposite side of the car. i.e. Offside on right hand drive cars.

Thanks to some of the sources of information:-

Peter and Elizabeth Larkham for starting me off on this years ago when they showed me the original Plate A from their Pre-Series Two Door Sliding Head saloon.

David Clitheroe for information confirming that his 1937 Series II Four Door Sliding Head saloon Chassis Number 170983 has a Plate B embossed E. F.L. 946 (unevenly spaced as I have written it).

Graham Townsend for letting me inspect his very original 1938 Series II Two Door Sliding Head saloon Chassis Number 199743 which has a Plate B embossed E.L. 9754.

John Sargeant for showing Plate A stamped E2-4118 and Plate B embossed E.L. 2796 from the early Pre-Series Two Door Sliding Head saloon under restoration 2014.

Plate A was 3.25 inches long by 0.75 inches high approx. with radiused corners and stamped markings.

Plate B was 2.50 inches long by 0.75 inches high approx. with square corners and embossed markings.

#### General Notes.

I would be interested to hear from anyone with any car that still has its original body number plate(s), in order that I can establish and confirm further details. In particular those from any body configuration of Series I saloons, and particularly a plate from a Four Door Fixed Head Series II saloon. At present I do not have sufficient evidence regarding the precise positions of attachment of these plates to the body.

Please take a look at the body panel on either side of the car below the front door underneath the running board.....if there is a body number plate please let me know!

I would appreciate any good photographs to add to this article; should any of you have suitable ones perhaps you would let me know.

(Confession time! The oval plate on the nearside of my car is of my own making to the Plate A pattern, and is not the original verified number).

No VIN numbers were used in the 1930s, basically the chassis number was used instead.

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