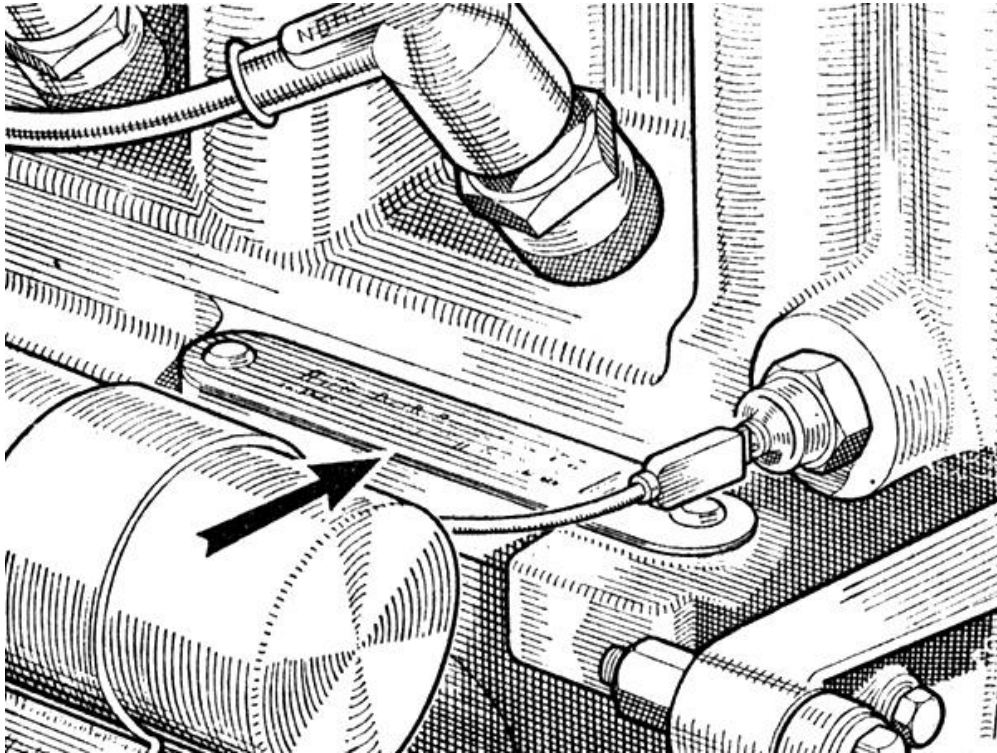


BMC type engine numbers

This is not an exhaustive history of the plates but should help to throw some light on the details

Engines covered are: A series: 900-1300cc (1952-2000), B series: 1300-2000cc (1953-81), and C series: 2000-3000cc (1954-67)

BASIC MAKE UP:



Typical A series type

Most of the above engines had the serial number embossed (stamped from below) on a plate on the upper part of the block. Exceptions are: A) Early 1950's motors. B) 1995-00 A series engines - the number was machined into the same surface of the block. C) Some overseas assembled engines had the number stamped in.

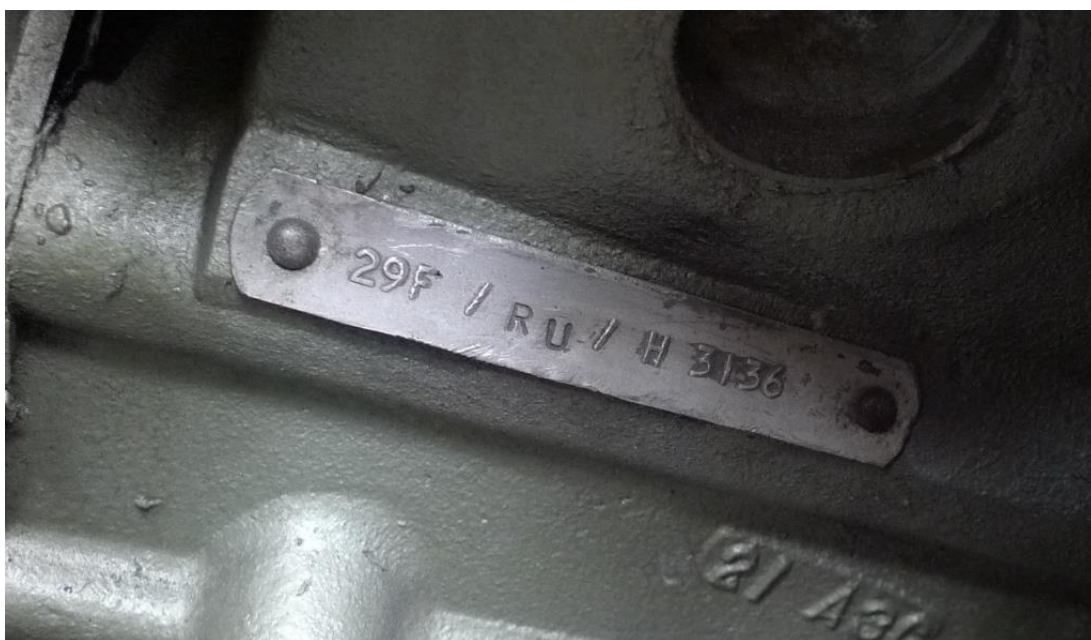


Some plates had a mixture of embossed and stamped numbers to denote further detail when assembled (see below) and the additional numbers may or may not appear on the registration document.

This is a Gold Seal original replacement A series motor, with additional numbers stamped into the plate and the block



Below is a C series motor with a combination of markings



DETAILS: The first part of the serial number will denote the type of power unit and details of it; the second part will be its serial number. The shape of the plate varied on A series blocks; the earlier plate which was used up to approx. 1967 had rounded ends.

So the plate below is: (Pre 1967) 9= 998cc; WR = Wolseley Hornet / Riley Elf type motor; U= Direct type gear change; H= High compression engine; 31391 is the serial number.

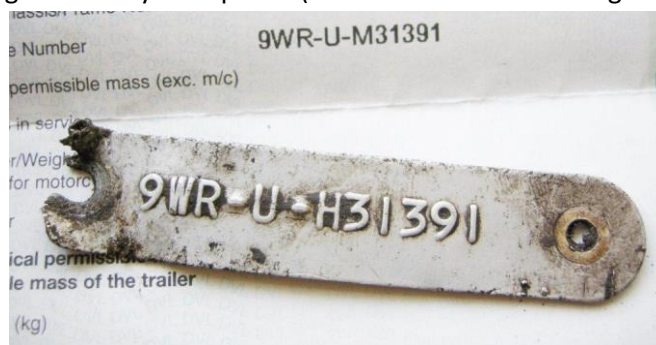


The later plate was narrower and the ends were not a continuous curve. B and C series engines appear to have remained constant in shape and the hole centres for each model remained the same.

SO YOU WANT TO WORK OUT THE CORRECT NUMBER THAT YOUR CAR WOULD HAVE HAD? COMPLICATIONS:

In many cases the number was not noted in full on the registration document – just the serial number, particularly in the late 1960's when the volume of cars was such that some of the finer details were omitted in paperwork. The above plate would just have been shown as 31391 on the UK registration document. On many overseas registration documents the same type of thing also happens.

Also when the numbers were transcribed from written to computerised form some other anomalies also crept in with letters being incorrectly transposed (See H and M below on registration document).



We may be able to help with the detail on plates, particularly on Minis but for other models and we will always try to apply the number in as original form as possible, but it may be best to approach a specialist car club or BMIHT.

REMOVAL AND FITTING OF PLATE



The plates were held on by a Hammer Drive Screw – that is to say a screw that is fitted using a hammer into an interference-fit hole. They are threaded, although the block is not. If you want to remove, do not chisel off and hope to drill out the remains – they are so hard as to resist a drill. You can drill a series of tiny holes round the outside to allow them to come out. Otherwise they require a spark eroder to remove.

First, soak with penetrating oil and tap the head of the screw to loosen the bond it has with the head. Removal will be easier if you turn the head of the screw anti-clockwise to remove it. Taking care if you want to retain the existing plate, get a pry bar, chisel or screwdriver (depending on your level of technicality) under the head of the screw (damaging the aluminium of the plate a little) to start it. (The alternative way is to cut a slot in the head to allow a screwdriver to be used). This will allow you to hold the head of the screw - shown here using a locking pliers (Mole grips to us Brits) to pull and turn whilst removing it. You can sometimes remove just by careful application of a pry bar. The main thing is not to shear it off

Re-fitting just requires hammering in, although I would recommend some oil or grease to make removal easier if ever needed. If the old screws have been sheared off, you will have to drill two new holes to one side or cut the heads off the new screws and glue the whole assembly onto where it should go.

Shown below are the styles of plates.

Top: C Series

Next: Longer plate for A and B series where you want to use one existing hole and re-drill another

Next: Post 1967 A and B series

Next: Pre 1967 A and B Series



Before and after: A post 1967 B series motor

