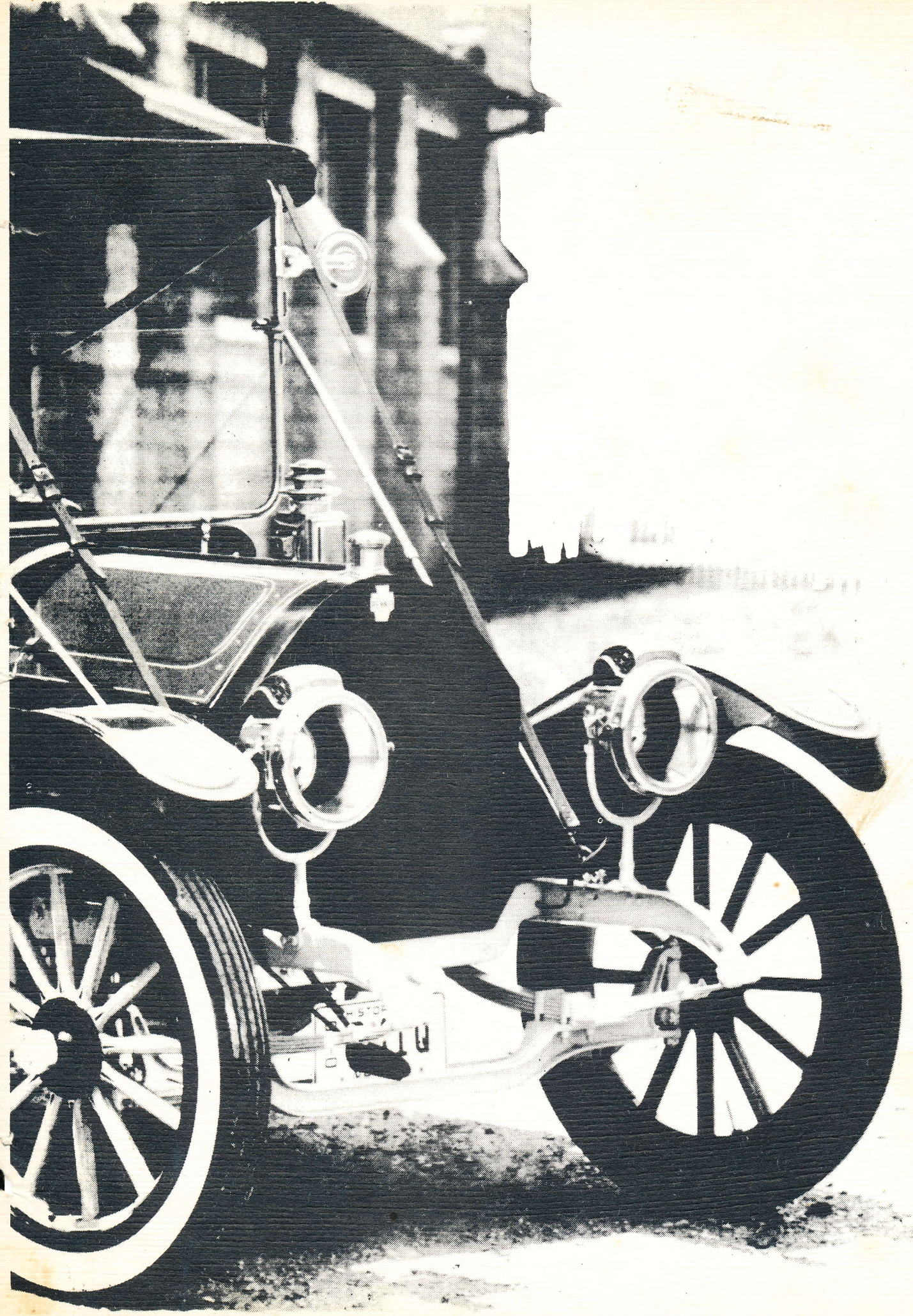




NORTH ALABAMA REGION NEWSLETTER



FEBRUARY, 1976

Tri-Cities

BUSINESS MEETING NOTES:

21 Members meet at Joe Wheeler State Park to look over the facilities on February 22 and decided to have their annual meet there, August 28, 1976. (Editor's Note - Huntsville support would be appreciated and should be discussed in our next meeting.)

PROGRAM: Auto body work demonstration - Given by Tommy Fulton, Instructor at Burrell State Trade School.

LADIES NIGHT:

Approx. 80 people came, ate, talked and enjoyed Gene George's presentation on photographing automobiles.

Don Hodge announced the Totcky Award winner 1975 - Charles Mullins of the Tri-Cities for his 1903 Model A Ford.

MARCH MEETING 7:00 ²⁵~~28~~TH, ABOVE BILL PENNY'S
BODY SHOP.

PROGRAM - A TRIP TO G. FORE'S RESTORATION
SHOP. ALL INTERESTED IN
RESTORING OR REBUILDING AN
AUTO, SHOULD COME TO THIS
MEETING!

Our Thanks should go out to Mr. Jimmy Burton of
1131 Ware Bld., Birmingham, Ala. for the information
and help he gave for this article on Ala. License Plates.

Thank You Jim
Ken B. Robertson

EARLY TAGS

(Issued before State Program, which began in 1912.)

MOBILE, MONTGOMERY, AND BIRMINGHAM ISSUED PORCELAIN TAGS AS EARLY AS 1905.

JEFFERSON COUNTY

The first vehicle license issued was on April 15, 1905, for a Marsh Motorcycle, at a cost of 25¢. It is not known if these were stickers or metal.

<u>City of Birmingham</u>	<u>Mobile</u>	<u>Montgomery</u>
1909 - white on blue	?	white on green
1910 - black on white	white on black	? *
1911 - white on blue	?	? *

* I think that Montgomery used 1909 tags for 1910 and 1911. Have never seen or heard of a 1910 or 1911 Montgomery.

ALABAMA ANTIQUE PORCELAIN CAR TAGS

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM



WHITE on BLUE

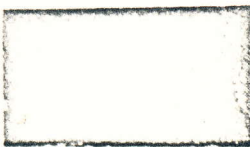


BLACK on WHITE



WHITE on BLUE

CITY OF MOBILE



BLACK on GREEN



WHITE on BLACK



CITY OF MONTGOMERY



WHITE on GREEN



STATE OF ALABAMA

1912



WHITE on BLUE

1913

(couldn't photograph)

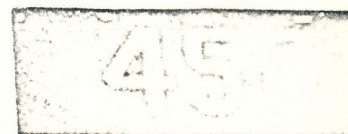
BLACK on RED

1914



BLACK on WHITE

1915



WHITE on GREEN

*None known to exist as of September 1973.

Will pay \$15 for any information that leads to acquiring any of the above!

JIM BURTON

1131 Ware Blvd.

Birmingham, Ala. 35235

1-205-853-2413

COLORS

In 1967 and 1968 there were so many complaints on tags rusting that a new system started in 1969. The 1969 tag was first dipped in a special liquid to prevent rust, then a sheet of plastic was melted onto the background, giving it its color. In 1969 it was clear. Then a different sheet was melted on after drying, giving the letters their color, such as black in 1969. This was the first tag to have reflection paint. 1970 and up tags had reflection paint on letters and background. The 1969 was the start of tags being printed on one side.

ALABAMA COLOR CHART

1912 - White on Blue (Porcelain)	1951 - Black on Yellow
1913 - Black on Red (Porcelain)	1952 - White on Blue
1914 - Black on White (Porcelain)	1953 - Blue on White
1915 - White on Green (Porcelain)	1954 - White on Blue
1916 - Black on Yellow	1955 - White on Green
1917 - Red on White	1956 - Black on Deep Yellow
1918 - Blue on Grey	1957 - Deep Yellow on Black
1919 - White on Dark Green	1958 - White on Blue
1920 - Black on White	1959 - Blue on White
1921 - Red on White	1960 - White on Blue
1922 - Black on Deep Yellow	1961 - White on Black
1923 - White on Dark Blue	1962 - White on Green
1924 - Brown on Cream	1963 - White on Blue
1925 - White on Red	1964 - White on Crimson
1926 - White on Green	1965 - Orange on Blue
1927 - Ivory on Black	1966 - White on Black
1928 - Black on Yellow	1967 - Yellow on Blue
1929 - Yellow on Black	1968 - White on Red
1930 - White on Red	1969 - Green on White
1931 - Yellow-Orange on Green	1970 - Blue on White
1932 - Black on White	1971 - Black on Dark Yellow
1933 - White on Light Blue	1972 - Black on Dark Tourquoise
1934 - Black on Orange	1973 - Red on White
1935 - White on Green	1974 - White on Black
1936 - Red on White	1975 - Black on Yellow
1937 - Purple on White	1976 - Blue on White
1938 - Red on Blue	
1939 - Black on Silver	
1940 - Yellow on Black	
1941 - Black on Yellow	
1942 - Yellow on Black	
1943 - '42 plate with windshield sticker	
1944 - Black on Yellow	
1945 - Yellow on Black	
1946 - White on Black	
1947 - Black on Silver	
1948 - Deep Yellow on Black	
1949 - Black on Deep Yellow	
1950 - Yellow on Black	

GRAPHICS & NUMBERS

"COUNTY" NUMBERS

1942 was the first year for county number to appear.

000-000

A tag with 000-000 is a sample tag. The State sends this tag to each state showing our colors. They used to be for sale for \$1 before 1969, but because of counterfeiting into usable tags, it was discontinued. The oldest tag I have seen is 1934.

'80'

The number 80 tag is a supplement tag. It is used when a county runs out of its tags. This started in 1967. They are also used as of 1971 on extra large trucks.

LETTERS

A, B, C, D

(Old Tags up to 1952)

Tags had these letters up until 1952 and were issued according to weight.

"A" - 2,000 lbs. or less, sold for \$5.00 (small cars like Crosely, Henry J., and Model T)

"B" - 2,000 lbs. to 2,500 lbs., sold for \$9.00 (Model A)

"C" - 2,500 lbs. to 3,250 lbs., sold for \$13.00 (Dodge)

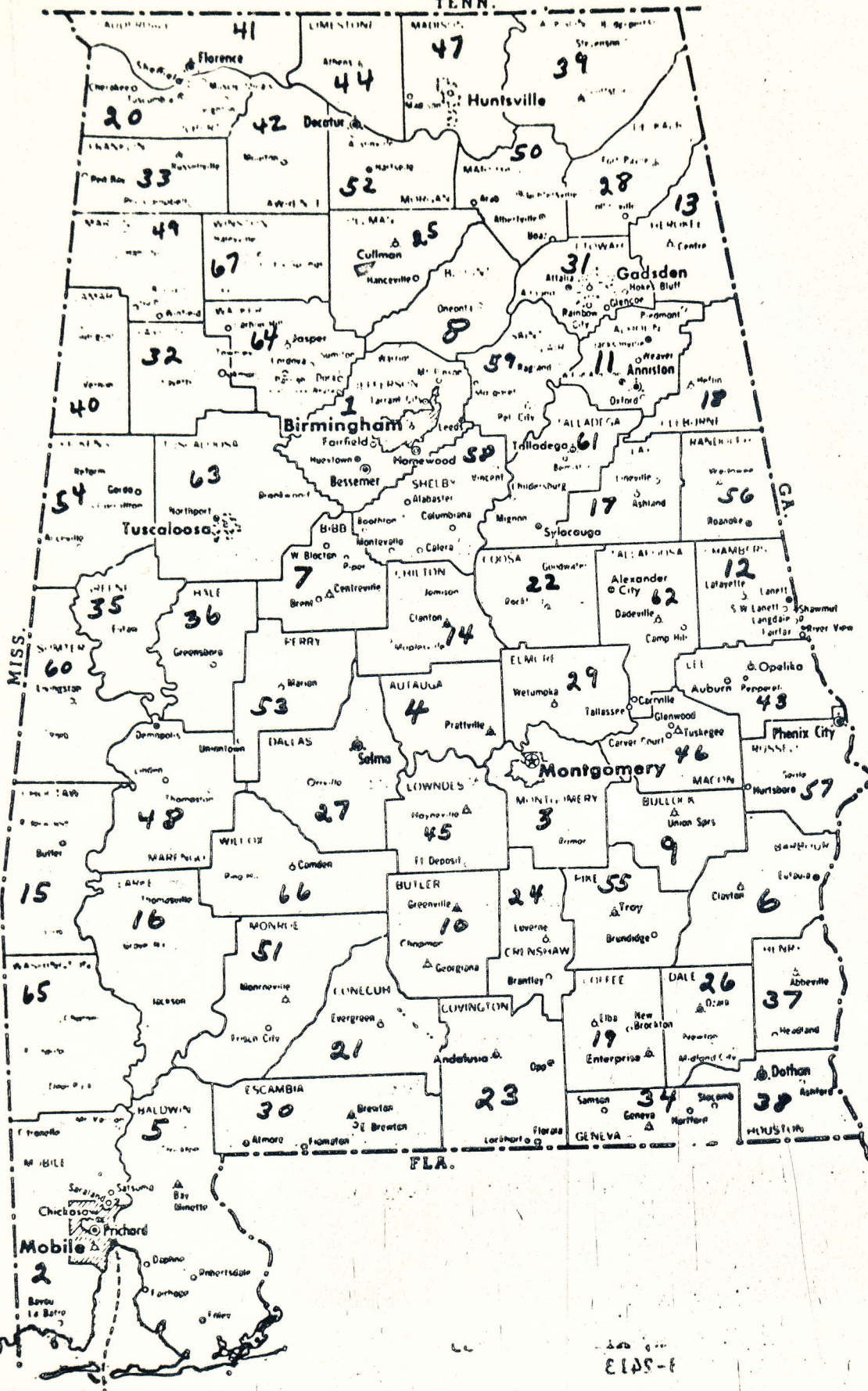
"D" - 3,250 lbs. and up, sold for \$18.00 (big cars like Packard and Cadillac)

"E" - 4,000 lbs. and over for 1933 and 1934 only, sold for \$30.00

"E" - on truck tags from 1921 and 1922

TENN.

COUNTY-TOWN ALABAMA



ALABAMA COUNTY TAG NUMBERS

Jefferson	1	Greene	35
Mobile	2	Hale	36
Montgomery	3	Henry	37
Autauga	4	Houston	38
Baldwin	5	Jackson	39
Barbour	6	Lamar	40
Bibb	7	Lauderdale	41
Blount	8	Lawrence	42
Bullock	9	Lee	43
Butler	10	Limestone	44
Calhoun	11	Lowndes	45
Chambers	12	Macon	46
Cherokee	13	Madison	47
Chilton	14	Marengo	48
Choctaw	15	Marion	49
Clarke	16	Marshall	50
Clay	17	Monroe	51
Cleburne	18	Morgan	52
Coffee	19	Perry	53
Colbert	20	Pickens	54
Conecuh	21	Pike	55
Coosa	22	Randolph	56
Covington	23	Russell	57
Crenshaw	24	Shelby	58
Cullman	25	St. Clair	59
Dale	26	Sumter	60
Dallas	27	Talladega	61
DeKalb	28	Tallapoosa	62
Elmore	29	Tuscaloosa	63
Escambia	30	Walker	64
Etowah	31	Washington	65
Fayette	32	Wilcox	66
Franklin	33	Winston	67
Geneva	34	Replacement	70

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"PRIVATE"

In 1922 to 1926 the word "private" appeared on passenger cars and 'truck' for a truck, also 'taxi' and 'trailer' for 1925 and 1926.

THE HEART

1955 was the year of the first heart and the "Heart of Dixie." 1956 to 1960 the heart was smaller in the lower left corner. 1961 it became smaller and is the same up to today. In 1974 the heart was moved to the lower right corner - just for change.

FRONT

1937 was the only year that a tag had the word "front" indicating the positioning of the tag. Also, the only year that purple paint was used. This started the issuing of two tags per vehicle except for 1948 (unknown at this time) and 1952 because of metal shortage due to Korea.

ARROWS

From 1937 to 1940 an arrow was used as a space filler if a tag had less than six digits.

"V" AND "D"

Tags today that have "D" are dealer tags. Automobile dealers are issued one tag per salesman, which is kept on his demonstrator model and he transfers it himself from car to car. This practice started in the early 20's and had the letter "V". In 1968 the letter "D" was started and the tags made in different colors from regular tags.

ANTIQUE TAGS

If you own an antique car, to get an antique tag, do the following: You must get a special form from the Court House. The tag will cost \$10.00 and is made out to the car. The tag should stay with the car if it is sold. It can be used only during parades and special events, not for every-day use. If you have this tag and it is destroyed, a new tag can be made with the same number for \$1 plus the old tag and a special form.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

SIZES

Tags from 1912 to 1972 have varied only about an inch. Porcelain tags were 12" x 5" - 20's, 15" x 6" - 30's, 13½" x 5½" - 60's, 12" x 6".

HOLES

Many old Alabama tags have extra holes because many wouldn't fit a vehicle so an extra hole had to be added.

SLOTS

The 2 to 4 slots in earlier Alabama tags were for strapping a tag to a vehicle because many didn't have bumpers.

PAPER STICKERS FOR WINDSHIELD

1943

In 1943 because of World War II the State of Alabama was faced with a metal shortage, causing the first paper windshield sticker to be issued. On the front of this sheet is a similar picture of what the sticker looks like. You were instructed to leave the 1942 metal tags on your vehicle and place the sticker in plain view on the windshield. In November of 1943 your sticker was void and then you purchased your 1944 metal tag with matching (black on brown) front sticker. Many people at this time would scrape the 1943 sticker off of the window which is the real reason why they are so rare to find. Several collectors have been fortunate enough to find sticker still on windshield which they cut the glass off of the windshield. The only 1943 sticker in the package known in existence is owned by Rex McCrary of Birmingham.

1944

There has been some discussion among tag collectors about the 1944 sticker. Many collectors including myself never knew they existed until I saw the perfect sticker with matching metal tag at the home of Bill Johnson, 122 Cedarcrest Drive, Florence, Alabama. The copy on the front of this sheet is word for word of what the sticker looks like. After discussing the sticker with several other collectors and one of them working at the County Courthouse in Cullman during the War and who had part of the responsibility of issuing tags along with gas ration stamps does not recall ever seeing this sticker being issued at that time. This leads us to think that the sticker was issued only on a County wide basis. But as you can clearly see this stamp was issued by the State Department of Revenue.

"New Look"
TAGS
Coming In
1976

Are you one of those smug Alabama drivers who has painstakingly memorized the county code numbers used on automobile license tags in this state? Are you one of those who knows without blinking an eye that "13" is Cherokee, "29" is Elmore, "56" is Randolph and "67" is Winston?

Well, enjoy yourself for the next 12 months, because come October 1976 every Alabamian who can read will know where a car is from. Next year the county code system will be junked and thereafter the name of the county will be printed on the bottom of the tag.

This is but one of several major changes being made in the auto tag system in Alabama. Beginning with the 1977 tag the plates will not only have a new look but there will be a new procedure as well for buying tags. Alabamians will buy a tag once every five years. However, before you stand up and shout, thinking that you will not have to stand in those long lines every year, you better read on. You will have to stand in line...not for a tag... but for an up-date sticker each year. And the cost of that little sticker will be precisely what you have been paying for the tag.

Travis Williams, assistant commissioner of the State Department of Revenue, said, "The license plates which go into effect for the '77 tag year are alpha-numerical in design. That is they consist of a series of three letters of the alphabet and three numerals. Individual counties will not have a specific tag number, rather all tags will have the county name printed at the bottom. By using the alpha-numerical design we can get about 15 or 16 million combinations after the bad words are eliminated. And since we manufacture about 3 million tags, you can see that this method will be more than sufficient."

The new tag law which will apply only to passenger vehicles and pick-up trucks was necessitated for several reasons, space being the primary one. Said Williams, "The larger counties, Jefferson, Mobile and especially Madison are simply running out of space on the tag. There is no more room for numbers. Madison County is a double digit county (47) so it has one less space for a digit. If we don't change the plate style, the numbers will simply run off the tag," said Williams.

"Another reason for the change is that the plates are much easier to read and remember. Three letters of the alphabet and three numbers make the job much easier for law enforcement officials. It's mighty hard to remember a series of five or six numbers jammed together." Still another reason for the new tag concerns the manufacturing of the more than 40 classes of license plates in Alabama. Presently each county has a set of each of the 40 types. Under the new law the tags will be manufactured in continuous order, reducing dramatically the overrun of plates.

The Department of Corrections, which has the responsibility of manufacturing the plates, has an appropriation of \$1,552,000 for making the plates for the 1977 tag year. And says Williams, "It will cost them money the first year of the five-year-tag. The savings will not come until the second, third, fourth and fifth years. During the first year they will have to manufacture three million tags and these tags will have to be better tags so they will last five years," Williams added. "No doubt it will cost them more than the 50 cents per tag they were appropriated."

"However, during the succeeding years the Department of Corrections will manufacture only about a half million plates (for the new cars and new residents). And since they will receive approximately the same appropriation as during the first year, their expense will be much less. The up-date stickers probably will not cost them more than three cents apiece," said Williams.

