

Assembly Plants and Body Numbers

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I have undertaken a research project, trying to identify the Model A Ford Assembly Plants and the codes that were stamped into the frames on the bodies of some Model A's. I know this project has been addressed in the past.

Location of the Assembly Plant ID Number

The body assembly plant number was stamped into the top of the horizontal front body cross member, into the body side rails on the floor board level, or into the wooden cross member on certain body styles such as Cabriolets and Fordors. The number can be located anywhere on the cross member and can be oriented to read from driver to passenger side, from passenger to driver side, or from back to front. Also, the size of the stamp used differs from one assembly plant to another. Briggs and Murray bodied cars had a tag affixed to either the wooden body cross member or firewall. I am not collecting these tag numbers. Body tag number information can be found at:
<http://www.mafca.com/bodynumbers.html>

Most, but not all, of these numbers contain from one to five letters that denote the specific assembly plant where the car was assembled. The digital portion of the number could indicate body style production. To date, **31** of the 35 assembly plants have been equated to their letter codes. It would appear that all of the assembly plants, regardless of its particular capability (i.e., major, standard or minor assembly plant), stamped these numbers into the cross member or side rails. For some unknown reason, not all Model "A" cars have an assembly plant number, but could largely be a result of the body cross member or side rails being replaced or the assembly plant number being filled in during restoration.

Model A Ford Assembly Plants (US)

Following is a list of the assembly plants with their equated letter codes.

#	Letter Symbol	Location
1.	A	ATLANTA, GEORGIA (the star is sometimes stamped at the end) AA ALSO NOTED
2.	BO	BUFFALO, NEW YORK
3.	CE	CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA
4.	CR	CHESTER, PENNSYLVANIA
5.	CHI	CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
6.	CI	CINCINNATI, OHIO
7.	CL	CLEVELAND, OHIO (CLE) ALSO NOTED
8.	G	COLUMBUS, OHIO
9.	DS	DALLAS, TEXAS
10.	DR	DENVER, COLORADO
11.	DM	DES MOINES, IOWA
12.	E	EDGEWATER, NEW JERSEY - Opened Nov 15, 1930 and replaced Kearny, NJ.
13.	H	HOUSTON, TEXAS
14.	I	INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
15.	JE	JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA
16.		KANSAS CITY MISSOURI (possibly used letters "AF")
17.	KY	KEARNY, NEW JERSEY
18.	LA	LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA - Opened June 1930 and replaced Los Angeles. Used LA through at least August 1931
19.	LA	LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA (the month and year appear as part of the number)
20.	LE	LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY (the month and year appear at the end of the number)
21.	MEM	MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE (Sometimes has "AX" preceding the number)
22.		MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
23.	NO	NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA (the number "2" precedes the "NO")
24.	NK	NORFOLK, VIRGINIA
25.	OC	OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA
26.		OMAHA, NEBRASKA - Possibly used "AU" .
27.		PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
28.	PO	PORTLAND, OREGON
29.	R	RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA - Opened in August 1931 and replaced San Francisco
30.	F	DETROIT (ROUGE), MICHIGAN
31.	SFA	SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA (SFAA) has also been used
32.	AS	SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
33.	S	SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS (also used letters S-S, SAXC, SAX and SSAX)
34.	STL	ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI (has AX preceding the STL).
35.	TC	TWIN CITY, ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

Note that most of the letter codes are from one to five letters and there is a systematic way most of the letters were derived from the city location of the assembly plant. When

assembly plant location cities have a single word, the letter code is generally the first and last letters (i.e. Buffalo - BO, Charlotte - CE, Chester - CR, etc.)

Assembly plant locations having two words generally use the initial letter from each word (i.e. New Orleans - NO, Oklahoma City - OC, Twin City - TC and so forth).

It is difficult to differentiate the stamp used to represent the letter O from the stamp used for the zero, and this presents a problem for some of the body assembly plant letter codes.

Anyone having a Model "A" with a number containing letter codes listed above can determine the origin of that car body and possibly its final assembly, while others will have to wait for more numbers to be collected. The following additional letter codes have been noted but are not yet equated to their assembly plant: AEX, AXC, DO, ~~T, W, 3S,~~ and 5S.

Model A Ford Assembly Plants (Canada)

Following is a list of the assembly plants with their equated letter codes.

#	Letter Symbol	Location
1.	M	MONTREAL, QUEBEC -- 119-139 LAURIER AVENUE EAST
2	T	TORONTO, ONTARIO -- 2951-2991 DANFORTH AVENUE
3	W	WINNIPEG, MANITOBA -- PORTAGE AND WALL STREETS
4	V	VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA -- 1160 HAMILTON STREET

Most, but not all, of the cars having the "F" code compiled to date are 1928 or 1929 Tudors. The numbers following the letter assembly code increase when the cars are put in month and year order. Following is a list of 1928 and 1929 Tudors with the "F" letter code in production date order: (read assembly plant number, production date and current location).

Assembly Plant#	Production Date	Current Location
F1334	2/28	OHIO
F5065	2/28	ONTARIO
F7368	7/28	NEW JERSEY
F16307	-/28	MICHIGAN
F41967	10/28	OHIO
F42469	11/28	MICHIGAN
F56571	1/29	MARYLAND
F75541	3/29	MICHIGAN
F78541	3/29	MICHIGAN
F83633	4/29	PENNSYLVANIA
F83683	4/29	VERMONT
F88948	5/29	ALABAMA

F89177	5/29	INDIANA
F94407	5/29	KENTUCKY

Some "F" bodies were assembled outside of the U.S. and have Canadian engine numbers. In fact there is almost equal mix of U.S. and Canadian assembled cars with "F" series assembly plant numbers. The "F" series system was modified in late 1929. On these cars the letter F is preceded by a number, indicating the body style. Below is a listing of the numbers compiled to date equated to their body style.

1F	STANDARD COUPE	45A,B
2F	SPORT COUPE	50A,B
3F	STANDARD FORDOR	165C
4F	TUDOR	55A,B
5F	TOWN SEDAN	155C
6F	PHAETON	35A,B;180A
7F	ROADSTER	40A,B
8F	ROADSTER	40A,B
9F	OPEN CAB PICKUP	76A,B
11F	DELUXE ROADSTER	40A,B
12F	CLOSED CAB PICKUP	82A,B
15F	S/W FORDOR	
16F	TOWN SEDAN	155A,B,C,D;160B

It is very interesting to note that all cars noted to date with letter code of "D" or "DO" are 1928 or 1929 Coupe bodies (i.e. Standard, Special, Business or Sport Coupes).

Summary

I would like to collect additional body assembly plant numbers from as many MAFCA members as possible. In addition to the body assembly plant number, please forward as much of the following data as possible:

- general location of the number on the cross member or side rail
- orientation of the number (does it read from the drivers side to passenger side or visa versa)
- date on firewall for 1928 and 1929 years
- frame, engine number or both if different
- month and year
- body style
- current location of the car
- original owner location of car, if known

It only takes a few minutes to locate the body assembly plant number, if there is one to be found. Just lift the front floor mat or carpet and look on the top of the front body cross member in front of the seat riser or support or on either side rail. The only assembly plants known to stamp assembly plant number on the side rail is Denver.

Further, I would like to correspond with anyone having additional information, specific knowledge regarding assembly plants, which were classified as major, standard and minor and when or why the body assembly plant numbers may have been stamped into the body. It's about time we solved these numbers for the Model "A" community. A good number of Model 'A' owners have expressed an interest in tracing the history of their cars. An assembly plant number will provide them with a starting point.

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