

Early New Mexico License Plates

Newsletter #1

October 2017

Because there are no plans to publish any further editions of the *Early New Mexico License Plates* book, I expect that from time to time we'll send out updates via email, with this being one of them. Ideally, I'd like to distribute this information to all persons who have an interest in New Mexico plates. That being the case, this email is going out to about 150 ALPCA members in this category, which we hope will catch most people sharing this interest.

With that, below you'll find an update regarding a particular aspect of New Mexico's early Commercial license plates...

In several places in the *Early New Mexico License Plates* book it is mentioned that it was the *1923 Laws of New Mexico*, Chapter 96, that brought about New Mexico's first Commercial plates, the use of which was required beginning July 1, 1923. These plates, made of embossed steel, replaced the porcelain plates previously issued to these vehicles. The text goes on to state that this was also the origin of the weight/capacity seals ("tabs") found on commercial plates of the 1920s to the 1950s, and further states that for reasons unknown the tabs did not appear on the new 1923 "tin" plates, but that they did appear beginning with 1924 plates. And in at least one place I referred to this 6-month delay in the appearance of the tabs as a "mystery."

In fact, there is no mystery at all, and the explanation is even found elsewhere within the book itself. Chapter 46 reproduces the 1923 law in its entirety, and Sec. 4 and Sec. 5 of the law clearly state that it was beginning January 1, 1924 that the weight and capacity of these vehicles were to be reported on the registration application, and that plates bearing this information were to be issued beginning that same date.

So the information was right under our noses all along that 1923 Commercial plates definitely did *not* have weight/capacity seals, and that 1924 was the first year of their appearance.