

MEMORY LANE



By COLM O'NEILL

Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland (Valentine Collection).

Our picture this time is of Grand Parade in Cork taken about 1951. The austerity of wartime has begun to lift, as motor vehicles are being used more widely and there are a few post-war cars visible. Viewing the cars closest to the camera and sweeping from the left, there is an Austin A40 Devon or A70 Hampshire. Next is a Hillman Minx registered ZB 5525 with the 1939/40 front end styling. Moving further right is a Ford Prefect E93A of the 1939/49 era, but as the grille appears chrome plated rather than painted, it may be the post-war version.

Further to the right is an Opel Olympia. It has the early post-war wheel arches with the horizontal chrome "eyebrow" strips. Being registered in Co. Kerry as IN 7252 dates it to early 1950. Opels at that time were assembled and distributed by O'Sheas of Cork. To its right is another of the Ford Prefects, this one registered in Cork City as ZF 14??, indicating the end of 1948 or start of 1949. The car partly hidden by the man seated on the bench is a Ford Model Y of the 1933/37 era to judge by the rear bumper style. Then yet another of the upright Prefects, this one is sporting a GB touring plaque

and the number FHN 200, a 1939 issue. The second last car to the right seems to be an Austin 12 of about 1938/9, Cork County numbered ZB 4551. Finally, and completing the line is what I suspect is a Daimler DB18 with a 1948 registration ZF 1078.

Looking left once more we can see the roof of a Fordson 10 cwt. Van, Model E83W and to its right a Ford Anglia or Ford 8 of the 1937 to 1953 era. To the centre of the picture and in the middle distance are at least three more of those Prefects. At this point Ford had a huge market share and these Prefects were Ireland's best selling cars by a long margin, mainly because of price, mechanical simplicity and a very extensive dealer network. To the right of the cattle truck is a side view of a black Prefect. Beyond it seems to be the hind quarters of a pale coloured Jaguar Mk.V and beyond that an assortment of more small Fords and then a Ford V8 truck of about 1938. Lastly, coming towards the camera is an Austin A40 Van, derived from the A40 Devon saloon. These vans were produced from 1947 to 1956 and had a separate chassis like the Devon and used the same general front body pressings. However, the earlier versions were built with aluminium rear panelwork.

