

# THAT OX ON THE MORRIS BADGE

by Alan Gulleford

As I understand it, the Morris badge depicts an Ox crossing the River Isis in Oxford. The Coat of Arms for the City of Oxford includes this badge at its centre. This gives us a hint about the various names of Morris models such as Cowley, (presumably from Cowley Road in Oxford). Isis from the river, Oxford from the city, but not the Minor or Major! Apparently most heraldic badges use Bulls but Oxford is happy with its Ox. There are of course differences between Oxen and Bulls, where Oxen are just a little less complete than Bulls. (There's a hint in there phonetically!) The Ox on the Morris badge is not necessarily as happy as it once was though. The badge on Morris cars changed when the 'Bullnose' was replaced with the 'Flatnose' in 1927. On reading EARLY MG by PL JENNINGS, I came across the following comment; Like the Morris Garages, the Ox on the Morris radiator badge seemed to resent the change in radiator shape. In the 'Bullnose' days it was usually a happy-looking animal, placidly standing with its tail hanging down. When the radiator was changed, the Ox became an angry, charging animal, with its tail curved over its back!

*The Authors understand that the real reason for the change was that in the mid 20's it became common practice for Morris Motors to depict their badges in bold silhouette instead of bright colours or half-tone in their advertisements and other material. This resulted in a certain loss of definition and it was no longer clear that it was the tail that was hanging down between the Ox's legs.*

So there you have it, PC was alive and well 94 years ago too!

