

OPEL

SIGNS OF THE TIMES



In the beginning: Sewing machines and bicycles



1862

The new businessman Adam Opel proudly presented his initials 'A' and 'O' on the cast iron side panels of his sewing machines. Over the years he varied the company logo but always kept the two letters of his initials.



1888

In 1887 Adam Opel expanded production and began manufacturing bicycles in addition to sewing machines. Over the decades, the bicycles were adorned with a wide variety of head badges, first as a decal and later also as a nickel-plated brass plaque. As early as 1889, the term Blitz appeared with various models, sometimes combined with other names such as Saint Hubertus or Victoria, the Roman goddess of victory.



1893



1914



1889



1928



1920

Automobile production takes off with Sophie Opel and Friedrich Lutzmann



1899



1902



1904



1905



1908



1909



1935

Four years after the death of company founder Adam Opel, Sophie Opel and her sons turned to automobile production in 1899. They started by taking over the Anhaltische Motorwagenfabrik from Friedrich Lutzmann, who adorned the sides of his vehicles with a stately polished emblem. After Lutzmann moved his team and production facilities to Rüsselsheim and his motor coaches were marketed as Opel cars, he also modified the text on the emblem. After ending the Lutzmann collaboration, from 1902 onwards the Opel models were equipped with a much smaller brass signet, which introduced the form of the subsequent "Opel Eye". Around 1904, a 'creative phase' began in the badging of the Rüsselsheim models. Most experimentation took place with the "Opel" lettering in advertising as well as on the radiator grilles of motor vehicles and on the tanks of motorcycles in the portfolio between 1901 and 1907. However, by today's standards this cannot be considered a logo – it was more of a decorative element that was still well received by customers in the mid-1930s in an updated form.

Opel Eye is first enduring logo



1910



1924



1926



1934



1935



1928



1935



1937

It is said that Grand Duke Ernst Ludwig of Hesse spontaneously sketched a draft at a meeting with Wilhelm Opel, who immediately took to it.

In its basic form, the eye remained the official Opel logo until 1935. The last versions, one in a well-balanced cursive script and ultimately in modern sans serif, were found on the radiator grilles of the P4, Olympia and 2-litre models as well as in advertising and printed materials from the late 1930s.

The most famous Opel motorcycle, the 1928 Motoclub, also carried the Opel Eye. It was in enamel on both sides of the front fork – in white/gold on a fire-red circle.

The Opel Eye was also used to badge Opel bicycles for many years, even after the sale of this business to NSU in 1937.

