

Vintage Bentley Ltd.

1929 BENTLEY 4.5 LITRE

CHASSIS # AB 3373, ENGINE # AB 3374

U.K. REGISTRATION: GU 6544

- * **BENTLEY MOTORS FACTORY MATCHING.**
- * **UNIQUE CUSTOM-BUILT DROP-HEAD COUPE COACHWORK BY SALMONS AND SONS OF NEWPORT PAGNELL, ENGLAND FOUNDED IN 1830.**
- * **EXTREMELY RARE FOUR OWNERS FROM NEW INCLUDING HUNTER FAMILY OWNERSHIP FROM NEW UNTIL 1973, FOLLOWED BY 30-YEAR OWNERSHIP BY DISCERNING ENGLISH COLLECTOR MR GEORGE MILLIGEN WHOSE COLLECTION INCLUDED A UNIQUE BARKER-BODIED SPEED SIX BENTLEY AND AN ULTRA RARE ORIGINAL BODIED SSK MERCEDES.**
- * **TOTAL MECHANICAL AND COSMETIC RESTORATION BY VBE RESTORATIONS OF FLECKNOE, WARWICKSHIRE, ENGLAND, COMPLETED IN SUMMER OF 2022.**

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BENTLEY MOTORS FACTORY BUILD-SHEET:

Chassis # AB 3373, Engine # AB 3374 was custom built to the order of Mr Edward W. Hunter in November, 1928, through the Agency of Ashworth and Merideth of 167, The Strand, London West-Central. The specification was for the 10 foot, 10 inch wheelbase 1929 model with plate-clutch, self-wrapping front brakes, 15/53 ratio back-axle, "C" type gearbox # 6418, single-pole wiring and interchangeable Young's batteries, parts # BM 3961 and # BM 3979.

#AB 3373 was collected by the Coachbuilder, Salmons and Sons of Newport Pagnell, on November 26th, 1928, and the completed car was delivered back to the Bentley Motors Factory for Final Testing on 13th May, 1929. The weight of #AB 3373 was recorded as: 1 ton, 17 hundredweight and one quarter.

#AB 3373 was first registered on 13th May, 1929 and the Bentley Motors Five-Year Guarantee ran from this date until 13th May, 1934.

COACHWORK SPECIFICATION:

Mr Hunter specified a handsome Drop-Head Coupe with rumble-seat and special accommodation behind the front seats for his fishing tackle. He commissioned Salmons and Sons of Newport Pagnell to accomplish the work. This Coachwork is unique on the Bentley 4.5 liter as commissioned from new.

Salmons and Sons were a high quality Coachbuilder which had been founded in 1830 by Joseph Salmons. The Company remained in the Salmons Family ownership until the retirement of the grandsons of the founder during the 1940s. The Company was renamed Tickford Ltd in 1943 and was acquired by David Brown of the famous Aston Martin and Lagonda Company in 1955.

Salmons and Sons were renowned for their quality and innovative designs, holding several patents. Their main production facility was in Newport Pagnell which has become famous owing to the hand-built Aston Martin connection. Salmons and Sons also operated a painting and upholstery workshop and their main Showroom at 7, Upper St. Martin's Lane, London West-Central.

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BENTLEY MOTORS FACTORY SERVICE RECORD:

The Factory Service Record runs uninterrupted from 1929 to May, 1939 (the Service Department was to close at the onset of World War II) and demonstrates Mr Hunter's meticulous ownership of #AB 3373. There is an entry for every year between 1929 and 1939 for largely routine inspection and maintenance. In some instances, the Bentley Factory sent out a mechanic (seen as O.R. Visit) to Mr Hunter's premises.

In 1932, a minor accident is recorded, but this required only examination of the steering, slack in the drag-link taken up and axle centers checked.

The engine was decarbonized in 1934 with fitment of new pistons. In 1938, a second decarbonizing was performed with re-boring of the cylinder-block and fitment of new pistons and remetalled connecting rods.

OWNERSHIP BY THE HUNTER FAMILY FROM 1929 TO 1973:

The original owner, Mr Edward W. Hunter, had a London town-house at 5, Upper Phillimore Gardens, Campden Hill, London, W8 and a country mansion at Frensham Village in Surrey County, South of London.

Mr Hunter was himself an ambitious, innovative and ultimately a very successful and wealthy gentleman. In 1898, he founded the Anglo Engraving Company in Faringdon, which lies 18 miles to the South West of Oxford.

In 1911, he established a new firm, Sun Engraving, at Milford House, The Strand, London. In 1919, he consolidated all production operations at Whippendell Road, Watford, North of London. Mr Hunter's business grew from strength to strength such that, by 1935, he was printing 70% of Britain's periodicals and magazines. Mr Hunter's firm was a leader in both quality and technology, including an early specialization in colour. At one point, Mr Hunter could claim to lead the largest letterpress and photo-gravure operation in the World.

His main hobby was fishing- hence the special accommodation for his rods and tackle in his Salmons Bentley. He was also keen on Bowls and a cup, known as The Hunter Cup, is still awarded annually in the village of Frensham, Surrey, the site of his country house.

The Hunter family retained #AB 3373 until they sold it at the Christie's Auction on July 12th, 1973 for the sum of £3,800, a very considerable sum in those days. #AB 3373 was bought at that auction by Danny Margulies, the London dealer.

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OWNERSHIP BY MR GEORGE EDWARD MILLIGEN, 1974 TO 2004.

George Milligen purchased #AB 3373 in early 1974 from Margulies, the dealer. Mr Milligen was an extremely discerning collector, renowned in his day for owning examples of some of the World's rarest automobiles.

Mr Milligen owned an extensive farm and Manor at East Ruston Manor, Stalham, Near Norwich, Norfolk in the East Anglian Province of England. He was the ultimate died-in-the-wool motoring enthusiast. He came from a wealthy family and his mother bought him a brand new Vauxhall 30/98 Velox in 1927 when he was still a teenager! Thus began his lifelong interest in automobiles. His interest was very wide-ranging. He was as passionate about his brass cars as he was about his rare 1960s cars.

Mr Milligen delighted in ultra rare automobiles with unique coachwork. He became very well known for his 1929 Mercedes-Benz SSK which carried very sporty coachwork by the Carlton Carriage Company. This was a car he paid £400 for in 1941, and which sold for over £4,000,000 after his death. He loved his two Vintage Bentleys, a unique Barker bodied boat-tailed Speed Six and #AB 3373, which he had mechanically restored by Antique Automobiles and Arthur Archer of Dunmow, Essex. He used #AB 3373 extensively, motoring from Norfolk to Kensington Gardens in London for the annual Bentley Drivers Club Concours D'Elegance on several occasions.

After his death in 2004, his family sold his collection of vehicles on September 3rd, 2004, at the Bonhams Goodwood Revival Auction. #AB 3373 was sold for £117,000, including premium.

SUBSEQUENT TWO OWNERSHIPS:

Mrs Maggie Newman purchased #AB 3373 at this 2004 Bonhams Auction. She is a well respected US enthusiast who used #AB 3373 on several of the North American Vintage Bentley Meets. In the Summer of 2019, Mrs Newman sold #AB 3373 to the current owner. He is a highly regarded collector and enthusiast who commissioned the total mechanical and cosmetic restoration by VBE Restorations of Flecknoe, England, which was completed in the Summer of 2022.

PHOTOGRAPHIC REFERENCES:

Book "Pride of Bentleys" by Roberts and Adams: Pages 86-87.

Book "Coachwork on Vintage Bentleys" by Nick Walker: Page 111.

Book "Bentley-The Vintage Years" by Clare Hay, Third Edition, Volume II: Page 601.

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Chassis AB3373 Reg No G.U.6544. Salmon & Sons Boule

Ashworth & Merideth Ltd. 167, Strand, W.C. weight 1 Ton 14 cwt 1 lb.
 2. E. 13. 5. 34

Engine AB3374 15/53 axle ratio 1929. 4 1/2 litre 6. D. 26. 11. 28. F.T. 13. 5. 24

'C' type gearbox 6418 single pole ^{overing} synchrom. 10'10 1/2 W.B.

Interchangeable Young's Batteries BH3961 - 3979

E. W. Hunt 5, Upper Phillimore Gardens, Campden Hill, W. 8.

Mileage 1885. 1929.
 9.10. F.W.B.s roughed up. Minor adjustments.

Mileage 3432. 1930. Mileage 4063.
 11.2. New set of mag cross shaft gears & bushes fitted. Autovac changed 25.3. Minor adjustments carburation. Brakes recompenated. 1931

Mileage 11631. Mileage 11832 Mileage 12447.
 18.8. Engine decarbonised. 1 new rocker roller fitted. Dynamo adjusted. 29.9. Carbo repaired. 17.11. Minor work

Mileage 13584. Mileage 15334. Mileage 301. 1932.
 12.2. 7.5 Mag. changed. 16.6. O.R. Visit. 15.11. (Accident. Steering examined. Black in F & A rod taken up. Rod centres checked.)

Mileage 2115. Mileage 6079. Mileage 23119. 1933
 21.3 O.R. Visit. 23.10 O.R. Visit 20.12 O.R. Visit. 1934
 Mileage 6041

2.1 Engine decarbonised. 1 set pistons fitted. New crankshaft thrust race fitted. Flywheel teeth rebuilt. Rad. chromium plated. Black in steering taken up. All brakes relined. Shackles skimmed

Mileage 8255. 1935
 up 30.7 O.R. Visit.
 Mileage 16300 Mileage 16911

18.11 O.R. Visit. 17.12 O.R. Visit. 1936
 Mileage 15158

17.2 O.H. G. adjusted. Carbo & mag adjusted. Brakes roughed up - recompenated. Dynamo overhauled. 2 new balljars. Clutch relined. Black - left in steering taken up. 11.6. O.R. Visit. Mileage 19871

Mileage 20318. 1937
 3.2 Engine decarbonised. 1 new valve & 8 guides fitted. Flywheel teeth rebuilt. Rad. repaired. Clutch liner roughed up. F & A rod overhauled. Track checked. Front brakes relined, rear

roughed up. Front springs recomended. Rear shackles skimmed up. D.A.s overhauled. Mileage 211232

13.4 Minor work. Brakes recompenated. 1938
 Mileage 25962

20.2 Mag. coils & contacts adjusted. Front brakes relined. D.A.s adjusted. Dynamo adjusted. 9.9 Engine decarbonised. Block relined to 100.5%. New pistons & rings fitted. Mileage 29287

4 rematted con. rods fitted. Main bearings taken up. Dynamo adjusted. 15.11. D.A.s running adjusted. Mileage 34189. 1939.
 4.5 Steering wheel changed

Certified to be a true copy of Bentley Motors Ltd
 Build-sheet and Service Record for 1929 4 1/2
 litre Bentley, Chassis # AB 3373, Engine # AB 3374,
 fitted with unique Salmons and Sons Drop-head
 Coupe Coachwork. Dated 5th September, 2022. Thoulding