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1921 SUNBEAM GRAND PRIX

- One of the most important British racing cars of all time
- 5th average speed at the 1921 Indianapolis 500 miles with Ora Haibe
- Raced by Hero Sir Henry Segrave at the 1921 French Grand Prix - Le Mans (9th), 1921 Brooklands 250 miles (1st average speed of 94.64 mph) and at the 1922 Isle of Man T.T. (recorded the fastest lap at 57.7 mph)
- Astonishingly original thanks to stints in two major UK collections, offered from a private collection after 35 years

The 1921 Grand Prix Sunbeam was built under the 3-litre formula for international Grand Prix events. One of a select few constructed, this example is one of only two surviving in standard T.T. form. Before and after the First War, Sunbeam flew the flag for Britain in international racing and record-breaking, guided by the policy of the great designer Louis Coatalen, with a highly professional team of many of Britain's greatest drivers.

The eight-cylinder twin-cam powerplant boasts four valves per cylinder, following practices of Swiss engineer Ernest Henry, with two alloy blocks spanning the extraordinary length of its plain bearing crankshaft. With the power unit packaged in a low-slung chassis, cable-operated brakes on all four wheels were an innovation.

In its auspicious American debut the prior year, this Sunbeam obtained the best European result in the 1921 Indianapolis 500, piloted by American Ora Haibe into 5th place at 83.86 mph, carrying a single-seat pointed tail body and rear-wheel brakes only.

Rebodied with dual seats, chassis two was driven by record-breaker Sir Henry Segrave with Moriceau as riding mechanic in the 1921 Grand Prix de l'Automobile Club de France at Le Mans, finishing 9th. A repair still seen in the dry sump tank is testament to one of many stones thrown up from the primitive track, and a reminder of the harrowing racing conditions of the period.

Of this his first road race, Segrave would write that even if one of the axles had broken, he would somehow have gone the full distance. "To get there meant more than anything else in the world to me at that time."

This famous works Grand Prix Sunbeam was also driven in the 1922 Isle of Man Tourist Trophy. Segrave set the fastest lap from a standing start, a sign of Segrave's approach to racing and earning chassis two its status as the Segrave T.T. car. Leading the race in terrible conditions, Segrave paired with mechanic Dutoit was eliminated when a magneto contact breaker came adrift, leaving another Sunbeam to take the win.

Segrave of course is one of the immortal names of British racing and record-breaking. A pioneer and a hero to schoolboys and grown men alike, he did what had never been done before. The lure of speed saw Segrave become the first to exceed 200 mph in a land speed record set at Daytona aboard the 1,000 HP Sunbeam, and the first to exceed 100 mph on water aboard his hydroplane Miss England II.

After its racing life was curtailed by a change in the Grand Prix formula, chassis two was retired, and historian Anthony Heal (author of the reference work on Sunbeam Racing Cars) rescued the car from a Bradford garage in 1941, pressing it into road use. It was later acquired for the Rootes Group collection, and used as a promotional tool across America.

Later Rootes director John Panks purchased the Sunbeam, running it in U.S. events before returning it to the U.K. Purchased by Guy Shoosmith in 1968, a full restoration was carried out, and the car was later displayed at the Donington collection.

This Grand Prix Sunbeam is offered from a distinguished British collection after 35 years of loving ownership. Very seldom does the opportunity arise to acquire a historic racer of indisputably international importance, with the strongest links to one of Britain's greatest racing heroes.

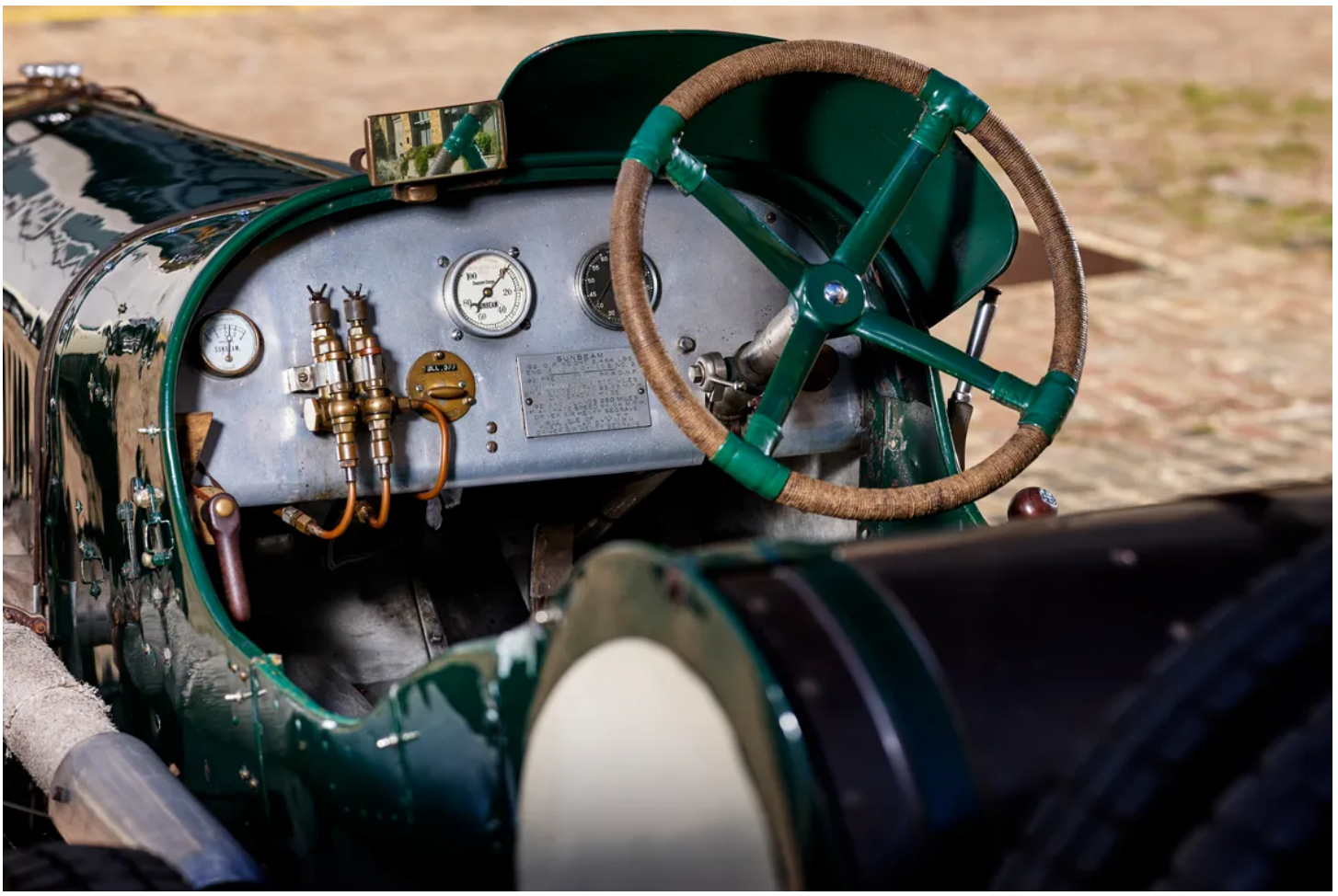
Although a century has passed, any of those fortunate to hear her thunderous exhaust cannot help but be transported instantly back to the T.T. and Grand Prix of those pioneering days, and imagine themselves riding along with Segrave. For all she represents and so much unchanged, this Grand Prix Sunbeam can also silence an onlooker with wonder.

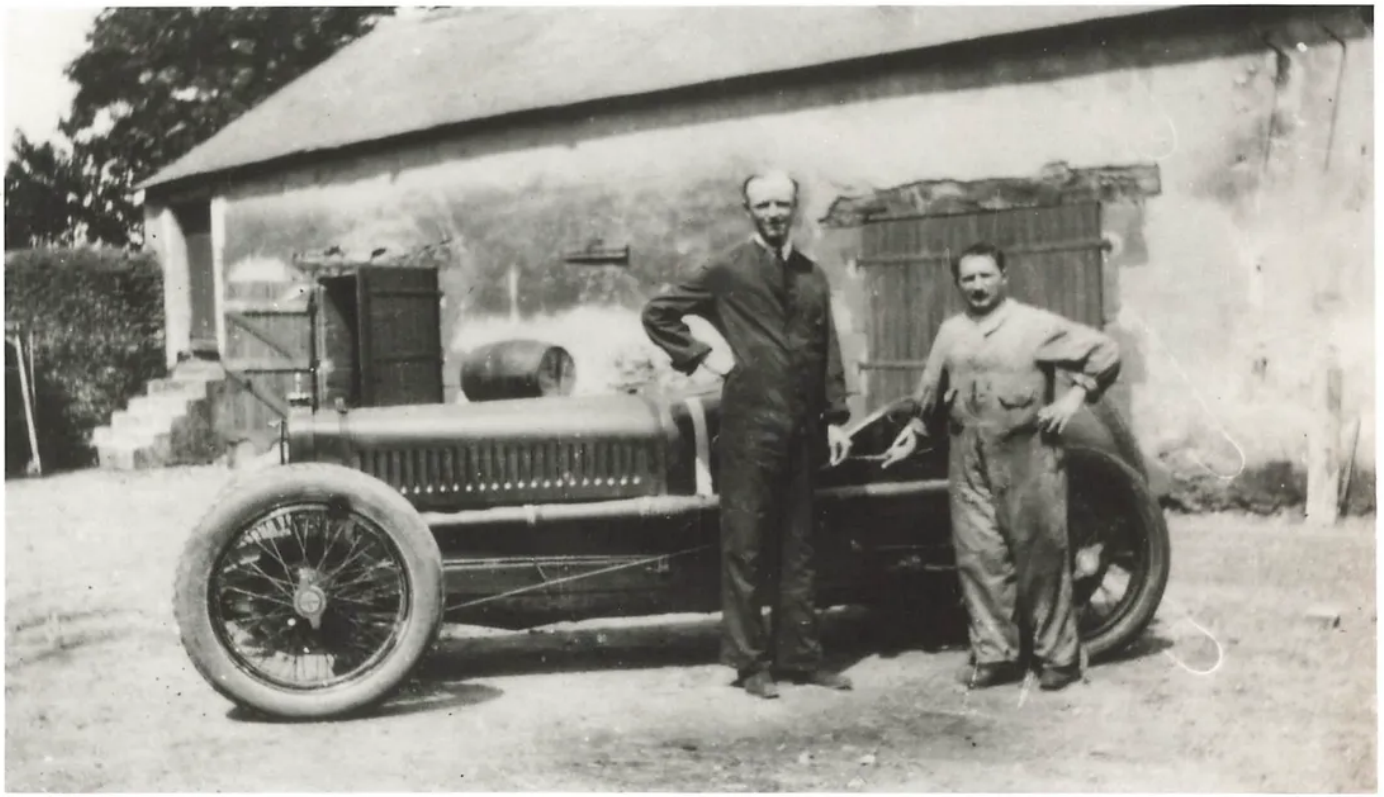
The Segrave T.T. car belongs with one of the world's most discerning and appreciative collections, and would be welcome at a wide variety of outstanding events.

SOLD





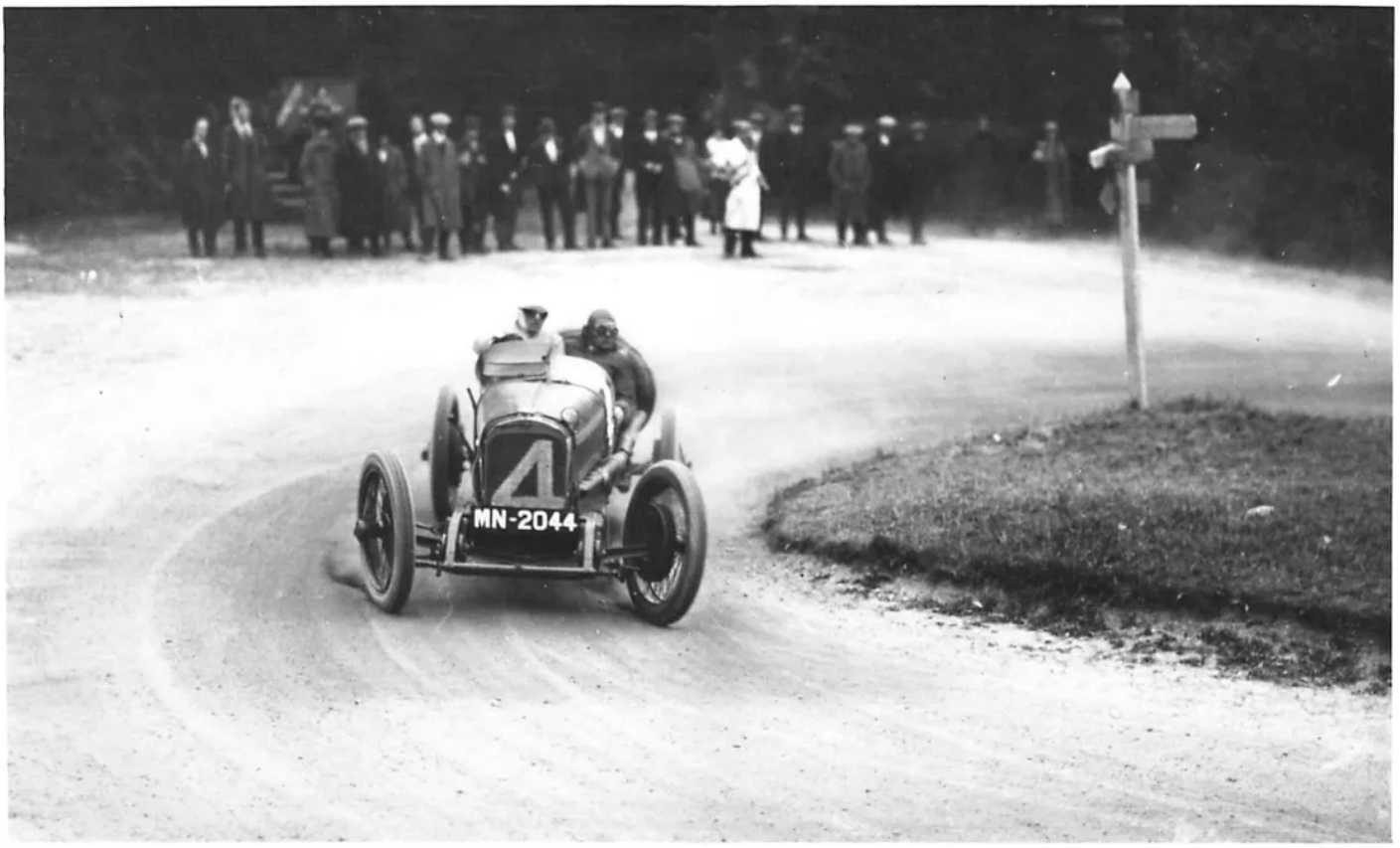




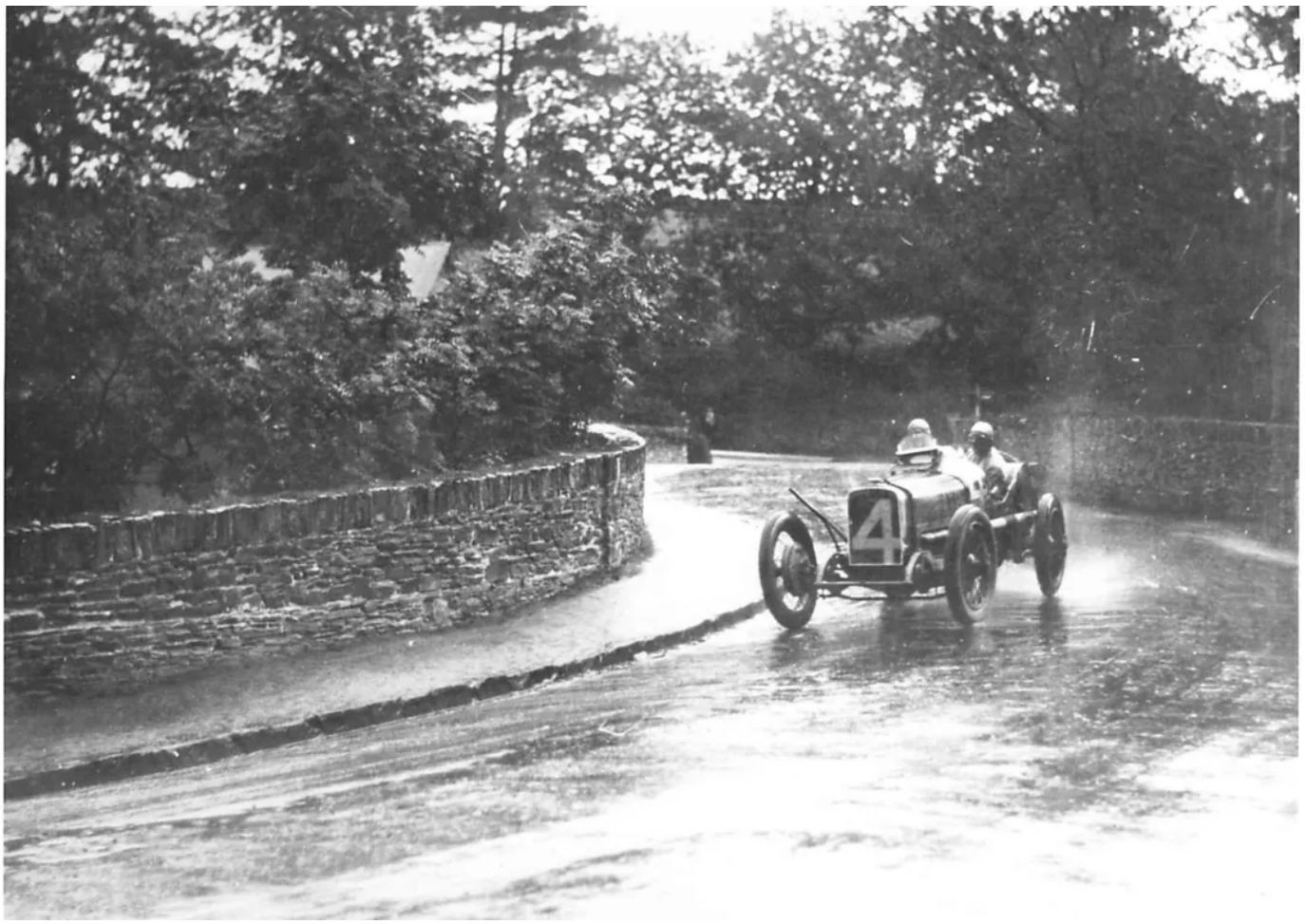
H·O·D. Segrave and J-Moriceau with 3 litre 8 cylinder "Talbot"



ISLE OF MAN R.A.C. TOURIST TROPHY June 1922



H. O-D. Seagrave 8 cyl SUNBEAM at Ramsey during practice. He did a lap


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