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1930 BENTLEY SPEED SIX BY SCHUTTE

1930 Bentley Speed Six Owner-Driver Limousine by Schutte

- The only Speed Six with original American coachwork
- New to Gilded Age heiress Ruth Vanderbilt Twombly
- Wartime service with Australia's first ambassador in Washington
- Available from forty-year continuous family ownership
- Suitable for discerning collections and the best Concours events

New to heiress Ruth Vanderbilt Twombly, this superb Bentley Speed Six was specified as a luxurious and imposing conveyance suitable for the utmost echelon of society in America's Gilded Age, and is historically important as the sole example with original American coachwork.

With the five-year guarantee issued on 20 July 1930, Speed Six chassis HM2854 is a very late 1930 model, sold through Rootes to New York in chassis form on the longest wheelbase available (12' 8 ½") and intended to be bodied in America. Engine HM2858 was fitted, the crankcase modified to accept a Bosch starter, and (perhaps with a nod to roads in the new world) high tensile bolts were specified to the front cross member. Just 182 Speed Six models were built at Cricklewood from 1928-1930.

At the instruction of first owner Ruth Vanderbilt Twombly, this Speed Six was bodied by the Charles Schutte Body Company of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, as an owner-driver limousine with sliding divider – making this the only Speed Six with original American coachwork. Founded in 1910, Schutte made bespoke coachwork for fine cars including the Rolls-Royce Phantom II, Duesenberg, Cadillac, Packard, Hispano Suiza, alongside more workaday commissions. The imposing and recognizably American coachwork by Schutte sets this Speed Six apart, with so few with surviving enclosed coachwork.

A suitable machine for the Gilded Age, first owner Ruth Vanderbilt Twombly was a great granddaughter of railway baron Cornelius Vanderbilt. Daughter of Elizabeth Vanderbilt Twombly and Hamilton McKown Twombly, Ruth's life unfolded in New York society, between homes on Fifth Avenue, a "cottage" in Newport, Rhode Island, and the 1,000 acre Forham estate, modelled on the Wren wing of Hampton Court Palace. Never marrying and latterly living with her widowed mother, she was involved with charitable causes and – a lover of Paris – she passed away at the Paris Ritz in 1954.

In 1940 this Speed Six was acquired by Australian Richard Gardiner Casey, an Australian politician and that country's first ambassador to the United States from 1940-1942. In Washington as America entered the war, he played an important role forming the alliance between the United States and Australia, and it is possible to imagine the Bentley in wartime Washington arriving at meetings of utmost importance. A keen pilot and later a member of Churchill's war cabinet and even Governor of Bengal, Casey was also Governor General of Australia

Apparently gifted to a member of staff, the Speed Six was acquired by Bentley doyen Carl Mueller of Milwaukee just after the war, who owned and raced several pre-war Bentleys including the Le Mans winning Speed Six and was active in the early years of the SCCA. In 1975 she was acquired by Fred Berndt also of Milwaukee who commissioned a restoration to a high standard. Acquired by the father of the current owner in 1981, and since then living a relatively discreet life in a superb collection of comparable machines, this Speed Six is offered in excellent condition from well over forty years of continuous family ownership, together with a recent and essential Clare Hay report.

With its original American coachwork and outstanding Vanderbilt and wartime Washington history, this handsome coachbuilt Speed Six should appeal to the most discerning collections, and is sure to be welcomed at the best concours and other events.













