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1925 BENTLEY 3-LITRE SPEED MODEL

1925 Bentley 3 Litre Speed Model

- Still featuring its original engine and A-type gearbox
- Offered from 36 years of single-family ownership
- Sporting and elegant two/four-seater coachwork
- Accompanied by full report from marque authority Clare Hay

Thanks to its sporting, minimalist coachwork, this Bentley 3 Litre exudes great presence and purpose, and beneath the skin it is an extremely original example of this legendary model.

Chassis number 1216 was built as a 1926-specification Speed Model on the 9ft 9.5in chassis. It was delivered to Vanden Plas in September 1925 to receive a standard, catalogued four-seater tourer body, which was completed by 4 November.

Finished in blue with black wings, wheels and chassis, it's thought that the Bentley was initially pressed into service as a demonstrator because it was not registered until 13 August 1926. It was then supplied via Central Garage in Bradford – the main Bentley agent for Yorkshire – to first owner J Wightman Jnr, who lived at Great Carlton Lodge in Lincolnshire. Wightman Jnr was clearly a great marque enthusiast because '1216' was amongst no fewer than five Bentleys that he owned during the 1920s and early 1930s.

The car's extensive factory service records then show that the Bentley went to AF Sinclair in London by June 1929, and that the engine, rear axle and propshaft were all overhauled during his ownership.

The Bentley was acquired by JC MacDonald of Golders Green in 1932, then HC Hordern of South Kensington the following year. At some point, it must have been used for a road-trip to the continent because the factory records note engine work being carried out in France in 1935.

By 1950, the 3 Litre was owned by S Neville of Cheshire, and was later offered for sale by well-known dealer Brian Classic in 1974. His advert contains the earliest known photograph of '1216' with the distinctive replacement body that it wears to this day, but it's thought that it could actually have been fitted much earlier in the car's life – possibly during the pre-war years.

The two/four-seater coachwork features a lengthened bonnet that is likely to be the original Vanden Plas item – '216' is still visible stamped into one of the side panels. It also boasts a very shallow windscreen and a larger-than-standard fuel tank mounted high between the rear chassis dumb irons.

Classic sold the car to Frank Dale & Stepsons, who had it fully restored before selling it in 1976 to Javier S Leon in Hubbard, Texas. After picking up numerous concours awards, the Bentley returned to Europe and was sold by Sotheby's in Geneva in March 1988. A further short stint in the UK later, it was acquired by an Austrian-based enthusiast in December 1989 and has remained with his family ever since. During this current ownership, the Bentley has been displayed at the prestigious Villa d'Este Concours d'Elegance and has also taken part in the Gaisbergrennen and the 500km Slovenskych rally.

This Bentley, as inspected by Clare Hay in 2018, still boasts her original Supersports engine stamped '1227 SS' and, according to notes kept by one of Bentley's factory road-testers, her original A-type gearbox. Handsome, versatile and highly eligible, she embodies all the best qualities of this enduring model and is offered from 36 years of continuous family ownership, ready to offer its next custodian many more years of pleasure.

SOLD


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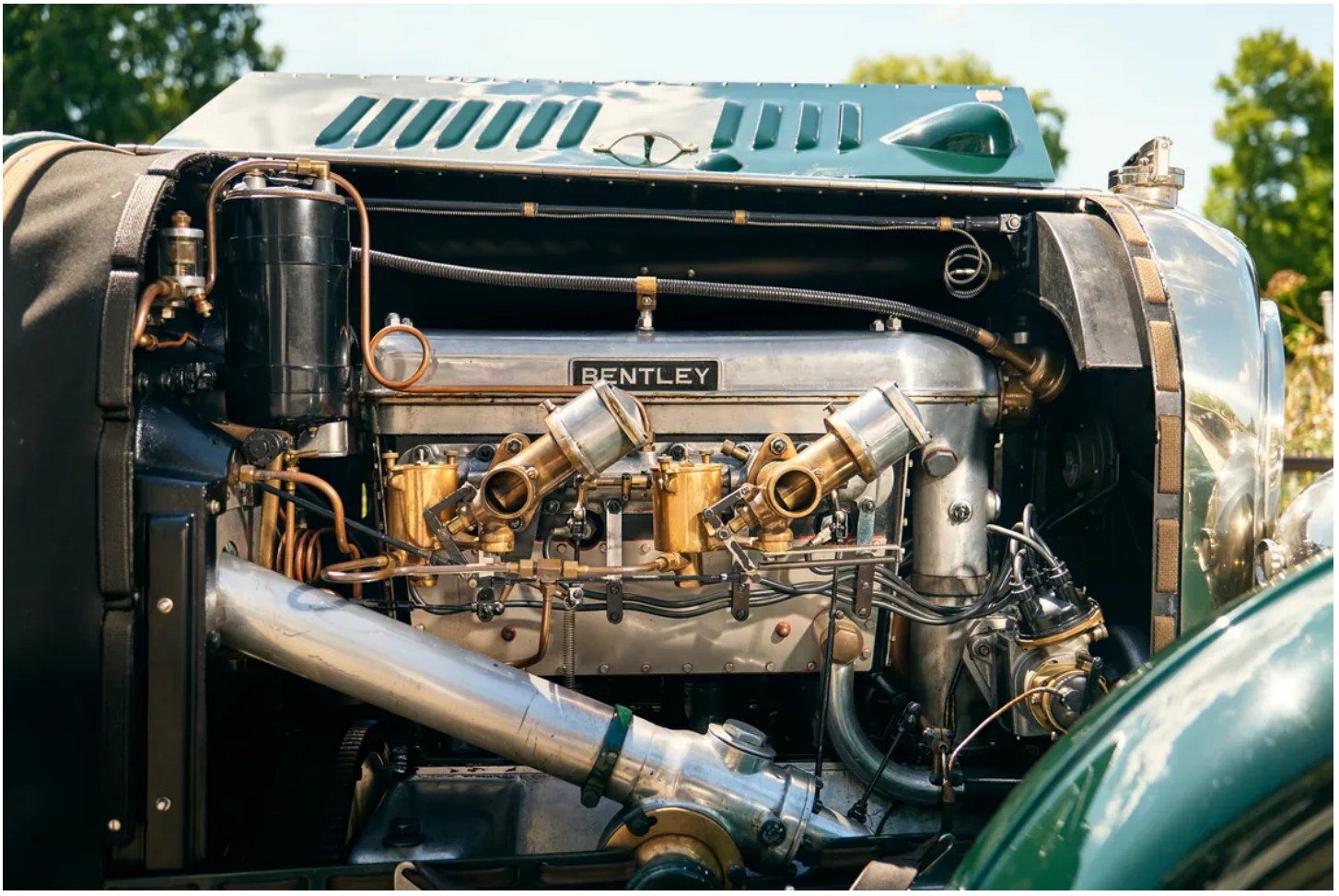

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