
1111 Bugatti Type 57 Ventoux - 57 Ventoux

57 Ventoux

Lot sold	USD 0 EUR 0 (listed)	Drive	LHD
Year of manufacture	1111	Interior colour	Other
Chassis number	57579	Condition	Used
Lot number	40	Location	
		Fuel type	Other
		Exterior colour	Other
		Car type	Other

Description

Unregistered

- Offbeat history
- Only known survivor of former version of 'Gangloff streamlined saloon'
- Prestigious model

Chassis 57579 was assembled in August 1937 and assigned to W, the code-name for Wiederkehr - the name of the company in Colmar that Gangloff took over in 1930. The Bugatti factory's Delivery Register reveals that 'on 8 September 1937, chassis 57579/engine 417 was conveyed by road, driven by employee Paul, to Gangloff in Colmar' for bodywork. The word Salon appears on the document, suggesting the factory hoped the car would be finished in time for the Salon de l'Automobile (Paris Motor Show) that opened on 7 October 1937. It is impossible to know if the car was displayed at the Salon or even if it was shown outside the Grand Palais where the Salon was held. A note in the factory's monthly Sales Register reads: '8 September 1937, chassis 57579 - Colmar Stock.' A second mention of the vehicle can be found in the Delivery Register on 17 November 1937: '57579-417 C.I. route Peigues.' This confirms that the vehicle was a 'Conduite Intérieure' (four-door saloon) and must have been made by Gangloff - Bugatti did not build any saloons in 1937.

The Sales Register also records that, 'on 24 March 1938, the Bugatti saloon, chassis 57579/417, was

sold to Moreau-Lanez, price FF70,000.' The vehicle was described as 'ex-demonstration M. Peigues.' The Delivery Register reveals that, on the same day, the vehicle was taken by road to 'Moreau et Cie': a reference to R. Moreau-Auto Garage, Bugatti dealers in Sainte-Savine, a suburb of Troyes (they were also agents for Fiat, George Irat, La Buire and Mathis). Moreau sold several Bugattis - notably to top-brass from the local hosiery trade. Lanez was the name of the buyer: a director of the Dienville flour mill a few miles east of Troyes.

Jean Lanez (1897-1944)

Jean Lanez was born on 10 July 1897 in Bellevue, just outside Paris. His father was on the board of the famous Au Bon Marché department-store. After a brilliant school career at the Lycée Stanislas in Paris, Jean Lanez was in England when war broke out in 1914. He returned home and, after lying about his age (he was 17), joined the 26th Infantry Battalion in Vincennes. By 22 September 1914 he was at the Front. On 15 July 1915 he became the youngest Sub-Lieutenant in the French Army. On 12 September 1917 he acquired his pilot's licence and was transferred to S.P.A.D. 87 squadron as Lieutenant Commander. Official records show he shot down seven enemy planes. By the end of the war he had been wounded three times, earned five mentions in despatches, and received the Légion d'Honneur. All this at just 21!

Four years later he was appointed director of the Brisson-Dauthel flour mill at Dienville near Brienne-le-Château, and moved to southern Champagne. In 1922 he was made second-in-command to Monsieur Brisson, and acquired the Château de Dienville, a large residence whose grounds extended south towards the mill. In 1934 modern silos were erected and in 1935 Jean Lanez began constructing the current mill. By 1939 the Moulins de Dienville were among the most modern factories in France, with their own railway-siding for loading. The factory was a pioneering exporter to Egypt and neighbouring countries.

After the outbreak of World War II Jean Lanez refused to avail himself of his Director's status to remain at the mill. He became a member of the Resistance and was tasked by Commandant Montcalm with organizing supplies for his sector. Lanez was head of the Piney-Brienne Sector when he was arrested on 12 January 1944. He was held for 40 days in Troyes Prison on Rue Hennequin, then transferred to Châlons on 7 April 1944 and later to Compiègne before being sent to Auschwitz and Buchenwald. At Flossenbürg concentration camp Lanez was reunited with Jean Hoppenot, an old comrade-in-arms. After refusing to work in an armaments factory, the two men were sentenced to hard labour and worked to the brink of exhaustion. Jean Lanez died on 15 January 1945, a few days after being brutally beaten. He was survived by his widow, son (Claude) and two daughters (Jacqueline and Françoise).

sources: André Beury: Souvenirs Familiaux; Le Petit Troyen (20 June 1945)

Resold in Paris in 1946 - Abandoned in Montrouge in the mid-1950s

The Bugatti 'Streamlined Saloon' was officially re-sold a year after Jean Lanez's death, and registered in the Seine département on 11 July 1946 with the number-plate 3135 RP 3. Its new (unidentified) owner kept it for two years. On 2 July 1948 it was acquired by another Paris buyer then, on 21 April 1949, transferred to the neighbouring Seine-et-Oise département in the name of Jacques Dupont of Etang-la-Ville, with the registration number 4817 YD 1.

On 24 May 1951 the car was sold to Georges de Changy, an engineer domiciled at 43 rue Paul-Vaillant-Couturier in Clamart, a Paris suburb, with number-plates 4723 AG 75. Jean-Baptiste Lefebvre, a friend of the Bugatti's owner (and fellow-engineer), remembers using the (black) car in 1955. The vehicle still retains its Paris number-plates, 64 years on - the car's final owner never got around to changing them!

On 26 July 1955 the Bugatti was officially registered in the name of Pierre Proust, whose garage in Montrouge (41 rue Racine) specialized in Bugattis. Shortly afterwards Henri Novo, who had been working at the Proust garage for many years, rented a yard on nearby Avenue de la République from the father of the French rally-driver René Metge. He used it to store cars - including over a dozen Bugattis - for himself and his boss. It was here, in what amounted to a Bugatti Cemetery, that the Gangloff 57579 saloon ended its days.

The Ventoux Coach chassis 57659 - Source of the Bodywork

On Avenue de la République, Jean Lanez's old car rubbed shoulders with a Ventoux Coach chassis

57659 that had been acquired as new in May 1938 by Gaston Garcin, an Amiens industrialist who owned several Bugattis before World War II (his paper business on Rue des Sergents existed until the 1950s). In April 1952 this Ventoux Coach was sold to another Amiens businessman, called Sarrazin, who ran a household goods store on Rue Duméril. In 1955 it took part in the Rallye des Routes du Nord - having had just two owners since 1938, the car still looked good. The co-pilot was Lucien Guichard, an Amiens garage-owner based in the city's St-Maurice district. The photo of the Bugatti was taken in the snow outside the Parc des Expositions in Lille, at the start of the two-day rally held on 12/13 February 1955. The Ventoux Coach (numbered 1) pulled out during the seven-lap speed trial at the circuit in Cambrai. Just 56 of the 116 entrants completed the rally.

A few years later the Ventoux 57659 also ended up in Novo's yard in Montrouge, where cars were left to decay or used as a source of spare parts for other Bugattis that could be salvaged. The Ventoux lost its engine and wheels; the bonnet was set aside, and some of its parts may have been used for the Type 57 Sport Henri Novo had built in the early 1980s.

The Ventoux 57659, identified by its 610 AN 80 number-plate, appears on a melancholy photograph taken on Pierre Proust's premises in Montrouge in the late 1950s. It must have provided the bodywork currently on chassis 57579, bought by Jacques Baillon, a haulage operator from Niort, on 28 August 1964. He registered it in the Deux-Sèvres département, acquired fresh number-plates (646 FR 79) and, for the next fifty years, it was kept in one of the barns on his estate.

Examination of the vehicle

An examination of the vehicle leaves no doubt as to its identity, as the engine and rear axle bear the numbers 57579/417. Further supporting evidence is provided by the 4723 AG 75 number-plates still on the car. The Ventoux body number 86 cannot come from the 57579 (the Gangloff saloon shown in our photos) but, instead, corresponds to the Bugatti Ventoux Coach chassis 57659/474 assembled on 18 May 1938 (Coach chassis 57706, assembled on 5 July 1938, is numbered 92).

So Jean Lanez's Bugatti has survived, albeit with a more traditional appearance than that of a very rare Gangloff streamlined saloon. Its new owner can choose either to retain the Bugatti Ventoux with body number 86; or to give renewed form to what is potentially the only Gangloff streamlined saloon from 1937.

The car's original design can be attributed to Gangloff in Colmar, who built very few saloons in 1936/7: just eight in 1936 and 23 in 1937. Only a small percentage of these were streamlined, and none seem to have survived. Of the streamlined designs from 1936, chassis 57476 was dismantled a few years ago; 57579 was one of the few from 1937 designed with the spare-wheel visible to the rear.

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