
1937 Bentley 4 1/2 Litre

Lot sold	USD 20 511 - 27 348 GBP 15 000 - 20 000 (listed)	Drive	LHD
Year of manufacture	1937	Condition	Used
Chassis number	B188LS	Location	
Number of seats	2	Fuel type	Petrol
Drivetrain	2wd	Exterior colour	Other
Lot number	170	Engine number	M8BB

Description

1937 Bentley 4¼-Litre Sports Saloon Project

Coachwork by Hooper & Co

Registration no. GEV 2

Chassis no. B188LS

Engine no. M8BB

Although Rolls-Royce's acquisition of Bentley Motors in 1931 had robbed the latter of its independence, it did at least ensure the survival of the Bentley name. Launched in 1933, the first of what would become known as the 'Derby' Bentleys continued the marque's sporting associations, but in a manner even more refined than before. Even W O Bentley himself acknowledged that the 3½-Litre model was the finest ever to bear his name.

Based on the contemporary Rolls-Royce 20/25, the 3½-Litre Bentley was slightly shorter in the wheelbase at 10' 6" and employed a tuned (115bhp), twin-SU-carburettor version of the former's 3,669cc overhead-valve six-cylinder engine. Add to this already remarkable package an all-synchromesh four-speed gearbox and servo assisted brakes, and the result was a vehicle offering the driver effortless high performance in almost absolute silence. 'The Silent Sports Car', as it was quickly dubbed, had few peers as a tireless long-distance tourer, combining as it did traditional Rolls-Royce refinement with Bentley performance and handling.

By the end of the 1930s the 'Derby' Bentley had undergone a number of significant developments, not the least of which was an increase in engine capacity to 4,257cc, a move that coincided with the adoption of superior Hall's Metal bearings. This new engine was shared with the equivalent Rolls-Royce - the 25/30hp - and as had been the case with the preceding 3½-Litre model, enjoyed a superior specification in Bentley form, boasting twin SU carburettors, raised compression ratio and a more 'sporting' camshaft. Thus the new 4¼-Litre model offered more power than before while retaining the well-proven chassis with its faultless gear-change and servo-assisted brakes.

Chassis number 'B188LS' was completed in May 1938 with two-door sports saloon coachwork by Hooper & Co. Its first owner was a Mr Cohen of Curzon Street, London W1. Accompanying copy chassis cards list only one further owner, H A Chetham, who acquired the Bentley in November 1949 and was still its owner in July 1951 when he changed address. 'B188LS' was bought as a complete car in 1979 after the previous owner had holed the cylinder block. The vendor's father subsequently stripped the car, removing the aluminium body, which has been stored outside under cover for the last ten years. We are advised that the dismantled engine is 'practically' complete, as is the body, and that the dashboard and instruments come with car also. There is no interior. Offered for restoration and sold strictly as viewed, this potentially most rewarding project comes with an old-style logbook and V5 registration document.

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