

CLASSIC DRIVER

The Railton Clairemont was a streamlined marvel

Lead

William Towns might be best known for designing the Aston Martin DBS and Lagonda, but we think his quirky and largely forgotten Railton Clairemont – a streamlined version of the Jaguar XJ-S – warrants more recognition. One of the two examples extant will soon be sold by Silverstone Auctions...



Anyone who delves into British automotive history of the pre-War period will inevitably encounter Reid Railton, the designer whose audacious Anglo-American sports cars set a raft of speed records in the 1930s. Incidentally, he was also involved in the development of Malcolm Campbell's glorious Bluebird cars and boats. The legend of these early speed record cars always fascinated William Towns, the designer who shaped the Aston Martin DBS V8 and, later, the obscure Lagonda.

In the mid-1980s, with the support of the multi-millionaire John Ransom, he set about creating a modern interpretation of Railton's record cars. A new Railton Motor Company was founded, and a Jaguar XJ-S was clothed in a surprisingly organic body by the specialist Park Sheet Metal, which was later responsible for building the Jaguar XJ220. Only two examples were built – the metallic blue Clairemont here differed from its burgundy-coloured counterpart, christened the Fairmile, in that its rear wheel arches were concealed.



On 11 May 2019, the once £100,000-plus unique convertible will be [offered by Silverstone Auctions in Chipping Norton](#), where it's estimated to realise £60,000–70,000. In addition to the eccentric unicorn, numerous other exciting collector cars

will cross the block in two separate sales, held on the same day: [The Sale of British Marques](#) and [The Heythrop Classic Car Sale](#).

Gallery

Related auctions:

Silverstone Auctions -The Sale of British Marques 2019 Silverstone Auctions -The Heythrop Classic Car Sale 2019

Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/cars/railton-clairemont-was-a-streamlined-marvel>

© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.