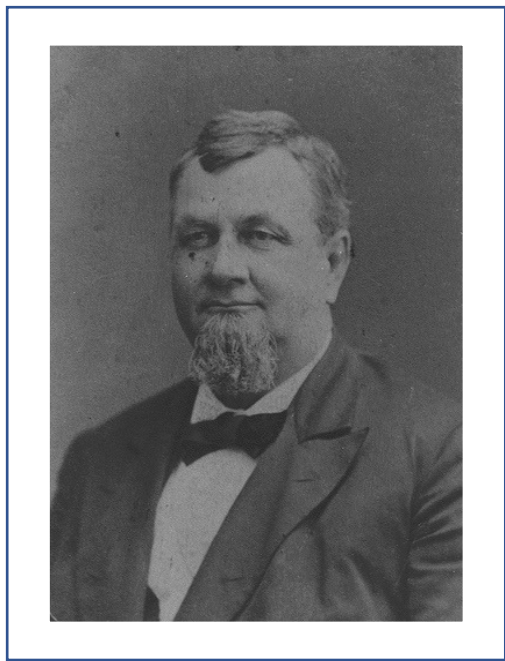


The Hotchkiss Car Company Hotchkiss et Cie

The Hotchkiss Company got its start in automotive manufacturing by making crankshafts and other engine components for other pioneering auto makers. At the turn of the 20th century, Hotchkiss began making its own line of cars in France. The first Hotchkiss car, a 17 horse-power four-cylinder model, was shown at the 1903 Paris Salon.



Founder Benjamin B. Hotchkiss, an American, had manufactured armaments used as early as the American Civil War.



The badge consisted of a pair of crossed cannons—as a salute to the company's first products. It was displayed on the radiator.



This 1913 Hotchkiss AD was 5.5 feet wide, 15.2 feet long, with an 11-foot wheelbase. It was produced in three- and four-cylinder models, with 12/16, 16/20, and 20/30 bhp (brake horse power), and two six-cylinder, 20/40 and 40/50 bhp.



1931 Hotchkiss AM Grand Tourer

Hotchkiss cars performed well in long-distance trials in France, Ireland, and India. This contributed to the company's reputation for quality cars.

In 1907, the company vice president and three others, complete with luggage, took a 6-cylinder model on a tour of France and England to promote the brand's robust and reliable performance.

A 4,000 mile track demonstration in 1929 was completed over 16 days at an average speed of 66 mph, breaking 19 world records and 27 international records.



1936 Hotchkiss 686

At the 1927 Monte-Carlo Rally, three Hotchkiss cars placed in the top 25. The Monte Carlo Rally was the one to win, and Hotchkiss took first in 1932, with a 100 mph 3.5-liter saloon. Hotchkiss took first again in 1933, 1934, 1939, 1949, and 1950.



1939 Hotchkiss Monte Carlo 680 Discoverable

The Hotchkiss drive is a shaft drive form of power transmission from the engine to the differential on its rear axle, which through leaf springs both locate the rear axle and transmit drive forces. It was the dominant means for front-engine, rear-wheel drive cars in the 20th century.



1954 Hotchkiss Morceau

In 1954, the company bought French manufacturer Delahaye. In 1956, Hotchkiss merged with French car maker Brandt. During this time, The Compagnie Française Thomson-Houston (CFTH) was formed in Paris, a sister company to General Electric in the United States. In 1966, CFTH merged with Hotchkiss-Brandt to form Thomson-Houston-Hotchkiss-Brandt. The last Hotchkiss car was produced in 1970.

Hotchkiss-designed vee-twins were used in BSA front-wheel drive three-wheel cars. Later, Hotchkiss engines were used in early Morris Cowley cars. Hotchkiss was one of the first manufacturers in the world to adopt the in-line six-cylinder formula for its most luxurious models. The Hotchkiss drive was the dominate means for front-engine, rear-wheel drive cars in the 20th century. It is a shaft drive form of power transmission from the engine to the differential on its rear axle, which through leaf springs both locate the rear axle and transmit drive forces.



By 1905, Hotchkiss cars were favored by many of the English aristocracy. Hotchkiss, along with Mercedes and Rolls-Royce, became one of the most admired car marques, with a reputation for consistent high quality. The company flourished, but switched to military vehicle manufacturing when the Great War broke out.



Car production was again interrupted by WWII and the company produced military vehicles. The firm returned to passenger car production in 1946.



1950 Monte Carlo Rally winning team of Marcel Lesurque (l) and Jean Trevoux.



Hotchkiss remained the only car brand to have won six victories in the Monte-Carlo Rally until 1979.

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