

Dear Malcolm,

23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2000

I have just made an important discovery which I should perhaps have spotted earlier - another Type 57, Chassis No 57634, is ALSO listed in the factory records as being fitted with Engine No 456! Furthermore, this other car survives in France and is evidently still fitted with Engine No 456 so there is obviously a mistake in the records. Accordingly please amend my catalogue entry as follows:- Engine No: 474:- Preface the paragraph commencing "This particular example" with the clause "According to transcriptions of the factory records . . .". In the next paragraph replace the final sentence with "Thus by this date the car had seemingly had an engine change, and had also been supercharged. Then continue with these two new paragraphs:- However further examination of the factory records reveals the surprising fact that another Type 57 Bugatti, Chassis No 57634, is also listed as being fitted with Engine No 456. This other car is a Ventoux which survives to the present day in France and is recorded in Hugh Conway's 1962 and 1973-74 Bugatti Registers, both of which confirm that it is indeed fitted with Engine No 456. As the engine of the subject car is clearly marked with the numbers 57641 and 474 in authentic stampings it must therefore be the case that 474 is actually the correct original engine number of this car. A likely explanation for the error in the records is that Engine No 456 was initially intended for fitment to this car and duly recorded as such but that Engine No 474 was then substituted, the former having perhaps proved faulty on test. It is significant that Chassis No 57634 to which Engine No 456 remains fitted was not invoiced until 25th January 1939, over two months later than this car. A supercharger was evidently added to this car's engine sometime between 1962 and 1974 and although the exact date remains unknown it may well have been fitted by Novo at around the time that the coachwork was changed. Finally, delete the paragraph commencing "The engines fitted to Type 57C Bugattis . . .".

Kindest regards,  
David Sewell.

Dear Malcolm

19<sup>th</sup> April, 2000

Here as promised is my proposed catalogue entry for the Type 57C Bugatti Atalante which is to be offered at your forthcoming Los Angeles sale:- 1938 BUGATTI TYPE 57C ATALANTE Chassis No: 57641 Engine No: 456 or 474 (See appended notes) Coachwork: Atalante with roll-back top by Bugatti (Ditto) Two-tone silver and grey. Engine: straight eight, twin overhead camshafts, sixteen valves, Bugatti-Roots supercharger and twin-choke Stromberg UUR2 updraft carburettor, coil ignition, 3257cc giving 160 bhp @ 4500 rpm. Gearbox: 4-speed manual; Suspension: beam front axle with half-elliptic springs, live rear axle with reversed quarter-elliptic springs and de Ram shock absorbers front and rear; Brakes: fully compensated cable system operating on drum brakes; Right hand drive. The Series 2 Type 57 Bugatti was introduced for the 1936 model year and improvements over the original version included a flexibly mounted engine giving greater refinement which was fitted to a necessarily stiffer and heavier chassis frame. The engine had detail changes to its camshafts and timing, its exhaust manifold was redesigned and its crankcase was further modified to provide an extra drive permitting an optional supercharger to be fitted. De Ram shock absorbers replaced the earlier Telecontrol Hartfords and finally the dashboard featured two large central instruments rather than the previous single unit. The four standard styles of coachwork on offer remained essentially unchanged, these being the Galibier four-door saloon, the Ventoux two-door coupé, the Stelvio cabriolet and the two-seater Atalante.

1. This particular example, Chassis No 57641 fitted with Engine No 456, was invoiced as a Type 57 Ventoux on 15th November for delivery directly to its first French owner who was named Baptifaut. By around 1960 it had passed into the ownership of Henri Novo, the well-known Parisien Bugatti enthusiast and restorer, having already been re-registered with the number 8335 Z 75 in the new French registration system introduced in 1950. According to French Bugatti authority Pierre-Yves Laugier this car was fitted with Atalante coachwork taken from an earlier car by a garage in Paris in around 1956-61. However, Hugh Conway's 1962 Bugatti Register lists the car as still a Ventoux so the change, probably executed by Novo himself, may have been completed shortly thereafter. In Hugh Conway's update to his original register published in instalments during 1973-74 in 'Bugantics', the quarterly journal of the Bugatti Owners' Club, the car is listed for the first time as a Type 57C but fitted with Engine No 474 and owned by A Delincourt of Montreuil but without any reference to its style of coachwork. Thus by this date the car had evidently both had an engine change and been supercharged.

2. The engines fitted to Type 57C Bugattis were allocated a separate series of engine numbers with the suffix "C" so the replacement No 474 was not originally a supercharged example. Unfortunately, Engine No 474 is one of the few for which the specific Type 57 chassis to which it was fitted remains unknown, however Nos 473 and 475 were fitted respectively to Chassis Nos 57645 and 57650 so it must have been close to that of this particular car. Although the supercharger was evidently fitted between 1960 and 1975 the exact date is not known, however it may well have been fitted by Novo at around the same time that the coachwork was changed. Apart from the later Aravis cabriolet the Atalante was by far the rarest style of standard coachwork fitted to the Type 57 Bugatti, only 37 examples being produced between 1935 and 1939. The great majority were built by Bugatti's own

coachbuilding department at their Molsheim factory and the remainder by Gangloff of nearby Colmar. Interestingly the factory records for 1935, its first year of its production, refer to the model as the Faux-Cabriolet, not designating it as an Atalante until the following year. Of the eight examples constructed on the Series 1 Type 57 chassis during 1935 it is believed that only two or three featured the roll-back bureau-style top as fitted to the example on offer. Only one further such example was produced, in 1936 on a Series 2 car which survives in its original form to the present day, and therefore it is concluded that the coachwork fitted to this particular car in around 1962 was taken from a 1935 model. Since its ownership by Delincourt this car has for the last several years formed part of the large stable of an internationally renowned French collector. It is finished in two-tone silver and grey paintwork with matching grey leather upholstery and wool carpets. Estimate \$550-650,000.

Please note that I have also quoted Engine No 474, as given in Conway's 1973-74 register. In fact the original No 456 is now fitted then it should have 57641 & 456 stamped on the rear left (passenger) side of the upper crankcase. It may of course have been over stamped! If however it is actually No 474 it should also have the corresponding Chassis No (57650 or thereabouts) stamped in the same place. I am afraid that you will have to check this, either directly or via the vendor, and then amend my entry if necessary.

I may be wrong but I do not think that Gangloff produced any decapotable Atalantes, hence my claim that the coachwork is by Bugatti. But do please first check also whether any Bugatti (or Gangloff) plates are fitted, as for example on Atalante #57254 you had at Pebble Beach last year. Also, although the car was not invoiced until November 1938 I am almost certain that it is a Series 2 and not a Series 3 which was introduced in March 1938 but not I believe marketed in any significant numbers, if indeed at all, until towards the year end. If however the car should feature telescopic shock absorbers instead of de Rams and original Bugatti- Lockheed hydraulic brakes (the latter sometimes retro-fitted, the former rarely if ever), then please amend these details given to match those of 57723 sold at Nine Elms on March 27th.

3. Pierre also advised that, whilst the main bodywork, rear wings and bonnet had been sourced from an earlier Atalante, he thought that the front wings may be from the original Ventoux. I was unable to check this from your faxed photos which were not too clear so I suggest that you check them against other Atalante and Ventoux photos, notably #57254 above, although it has to be conceded that all too often ostensibly identical models do appear to differ one from another in many minor details anyway.

I am sure that you appreciate that writing catalogue entries such as the above is rendered far more difficult when the car has not even been seen let alone inspected, and in this instance particularly so because the car does not appear in either of the two more comprehensive (i.e., the British and American) Bugatti registers. Please do not infer that I am seeking the opportunity to inspect all cars in future, far from it because I fully realise that in most cases this would not remotely be viable. But I am afraid that it does mean that I have to ask you to check various matters yourself and then amend my entry accordingly. Nevertheless, I trust that these notes will assist you in this respect, but should you need any further advice then as always please do not hesitate to contact me again.

Kindest regards, David Sewell.