

LOUIS  
RENAULT



**RENAULT**

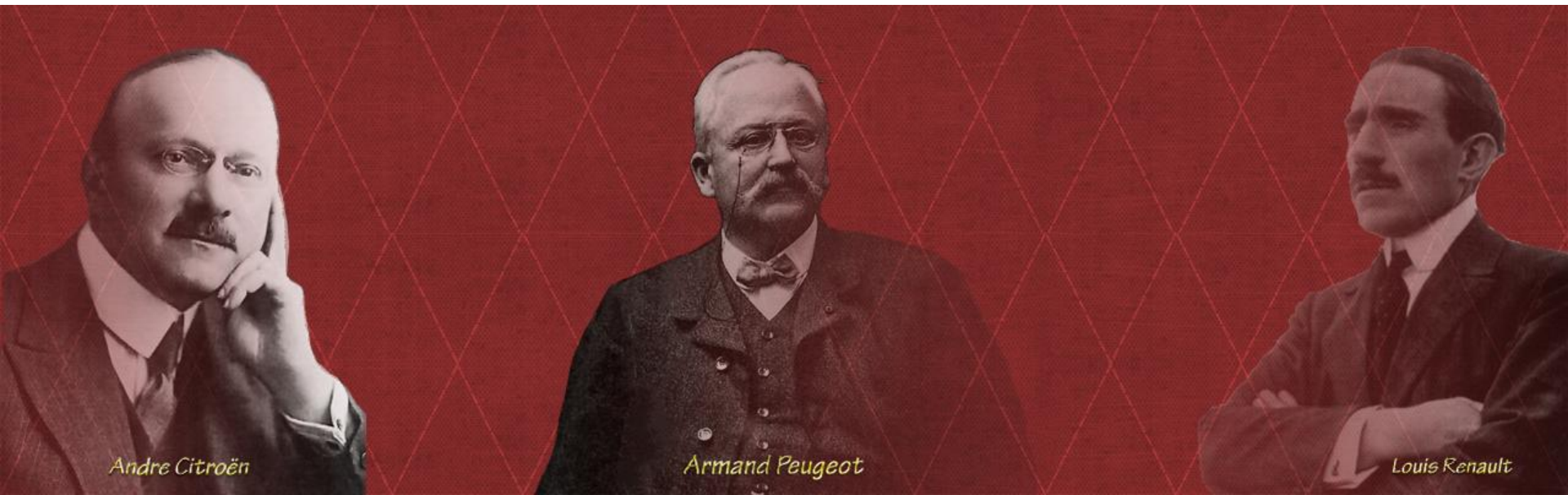
MANUFACTURER WHO BUILT  
THE LARGEST AUTOMOBILE COMPANY IN FRANCE



# LOUIS RENAULT

invented the direct-drive transmission and became the Henry Ford of France — hard-charging, obsessive, and vastly rich.

Louis Renault, like Armand Peugeot and André Citroën established a motor car manufacturing company that was influential not only in France but throughout Europe.



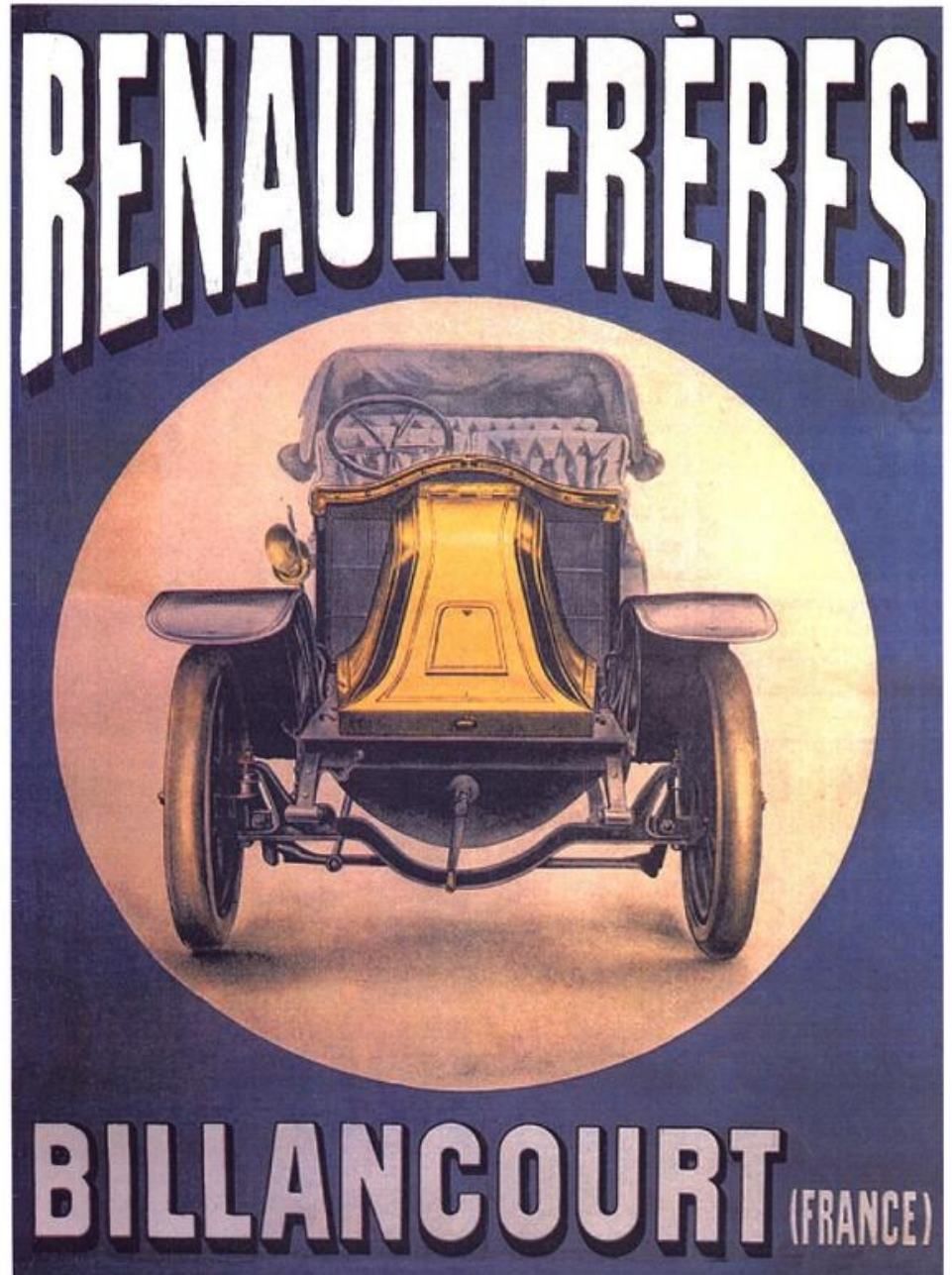
*André Citroën*

*Armand Peugeot*

*Louis Renault*

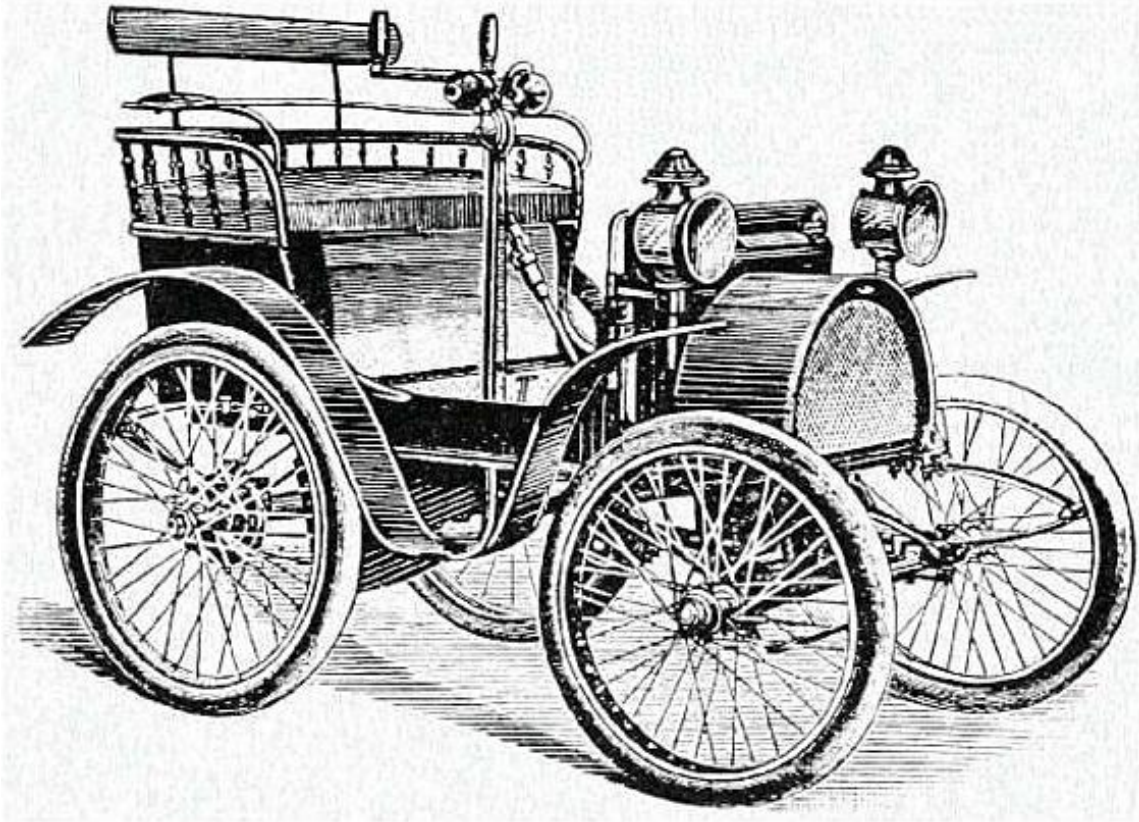
He was born in Paris and when young visited the workshops of the steam-powered car manufacturer Gardner-Serpolet, which had been established by Leon Serpollet (1858-1907).

His family had a  
leisure-time home  
at Billancourt,  
then on the edge  
of Paris,  
where he stripped  
down motor engines.



Renault built his first automobile in 1898. He and his brothers Fernand and Marcel then built a series of small cars and formed the automobile firm Renault Frères (“Renault Brothers”).

# Renault Little Car



The **Renault Voiturette** (Renault Little Car) was Renault's first ever produced automobile, and was manufactured between 1898 and 1903.

The first Voiturette was sold to a friend of Louis' father after going for a ride with Louis along Rue Lepic on December 24, 1898. Twelve more cars were sold that night. The main reason for the man to buy the car was the incredible ability of the car to climb streets without any difficulty and its fuel economy. The car mounted a De Dion-Bouton 1 cylinder engine, which allowed it to reach a top speed of 32 km/h.





Renault vehicles attracted much attention by winning numerous road races until Marcel was killed during a Paris-Madrid run in 1903.

Renault Brothers (Marcel, Louis, Fernand)



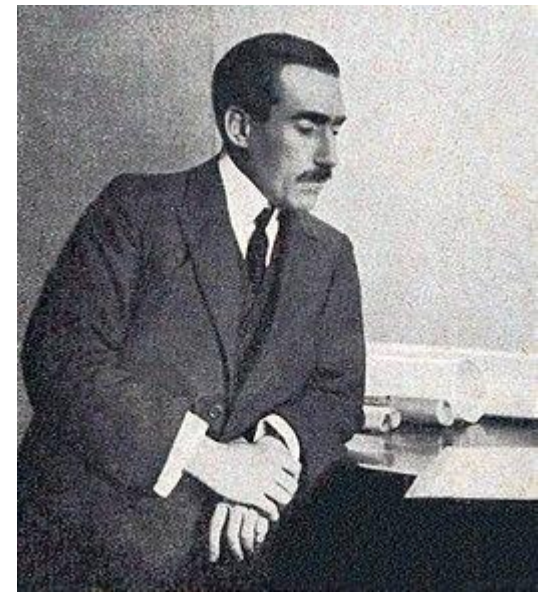
# Renault Brothers



**Fernand Renault**



**Marcel Renault**



**Louis Renault**



BLANCOURT - Sortie des ouvriers des Usines Renault E M



*www.Cpa-Bastille.com*

Renault cars were extremely popular on the racing circuit and brought the company a great deal of success. Unfortunately, the personal lives of the founding brothers were often tragic. In 1903, Louis's brother Marcel was killed in a racing accident.

Co-founder of french car brand Renault, Marcel Renault and his mechanic a few kilometers before his fatal car crash during the Paris-Madrid race in 1903



He was going too fast and lost control, crashing into a tree. Théry stopped his Decauville to try and help Renault and his riding-mechanic Vauthier. There was no doctor nearby so Théry went and found one and sent him back on a bicycle. Sadly Marcel Renault died at the scene.



Renault then abandoned racing and concentrated on manufacturing. In 1918 he produced the Renault tank, which was often used as a troop-escort vehicle in the last months of World War I.

He continued to increase the productive capacity of his Boulogne-Billancourt works and after the war extended his production to include farm equipment, marine and industrial machinery, and diesel motors.



WWI, 1918 - Renault FTs of a US tank company undergoing repairs while awaiting orders for the drive north of Verdun. Taken in Bois de Hesse, north of Ricicourt, Meuse France on Oct 12, 1918.

Renault continued his innovative work in the industry. During World War II, his company produced military equipment under German occupation. After France's liberation, he was jailed on charges of collaboration with the Nazis.

He died awaiting trial in 1944, and his company was subsequently nationalized by the French government.

**Louis Renault** died Oct. 24, 1944, Paris