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The Metamorphosis of a Briton

The wealthy lady Escher-Abegg lived in Zurich's Schneideggstraße 22 on the threshold of the 1920s to the 1930s. This lady had the wish to own a Rolls-Royce and ordered a new Phantom II model front the British factory. The purchase price of 34,000 Swiss franc included a car body made by the London body maker specialists of Thrupp & Maberly. After almost ten years, the lady had to give up her British luxury vehicle, because she was forcibly expropriated. Following an advertisement in the Swiss newspaper 'Neue Züricher Zeitung' in March 1940, the Briton finally ended up in the hands of the fire brigade of Lenzburg, which showed particular interest in passenger cars for its fleet. On June 29, 1940, a purchase contract was signed and Madame Escher-Abeggs Rolls-Royce changed hands for 2,500 Swiss francs.

In order to make the Rolls-Royce 'fit' for its new usage – firefighting – the authorities did not shun to convert the British luxury vehicle and commissioned the local body maker

'Carosseriefabrik Berner & Co' located in Hunzenschwil. The body maker successfully changed the rear area to a box structure and kept the basic four-door design. Onto the roof a ladder bracket was mounted and two blue emergency lights were also part of the new fire brigade equipment.

In January 1941, the car conversion was completed and was read to be covered with the distinctive red paint of fire engines. This was done by Eugen Haemmerlie's 'Auto-Spritz Lackiererei' located in Lenzburg. The Rolls Royce was based and in use for the Lenzburg Fire Brigade until 1961. Until the present day, the special Briton is in possession of the Lenzburg Fire Brigade and is lovingly nourished and cherished.

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