

## Cyril de Vère

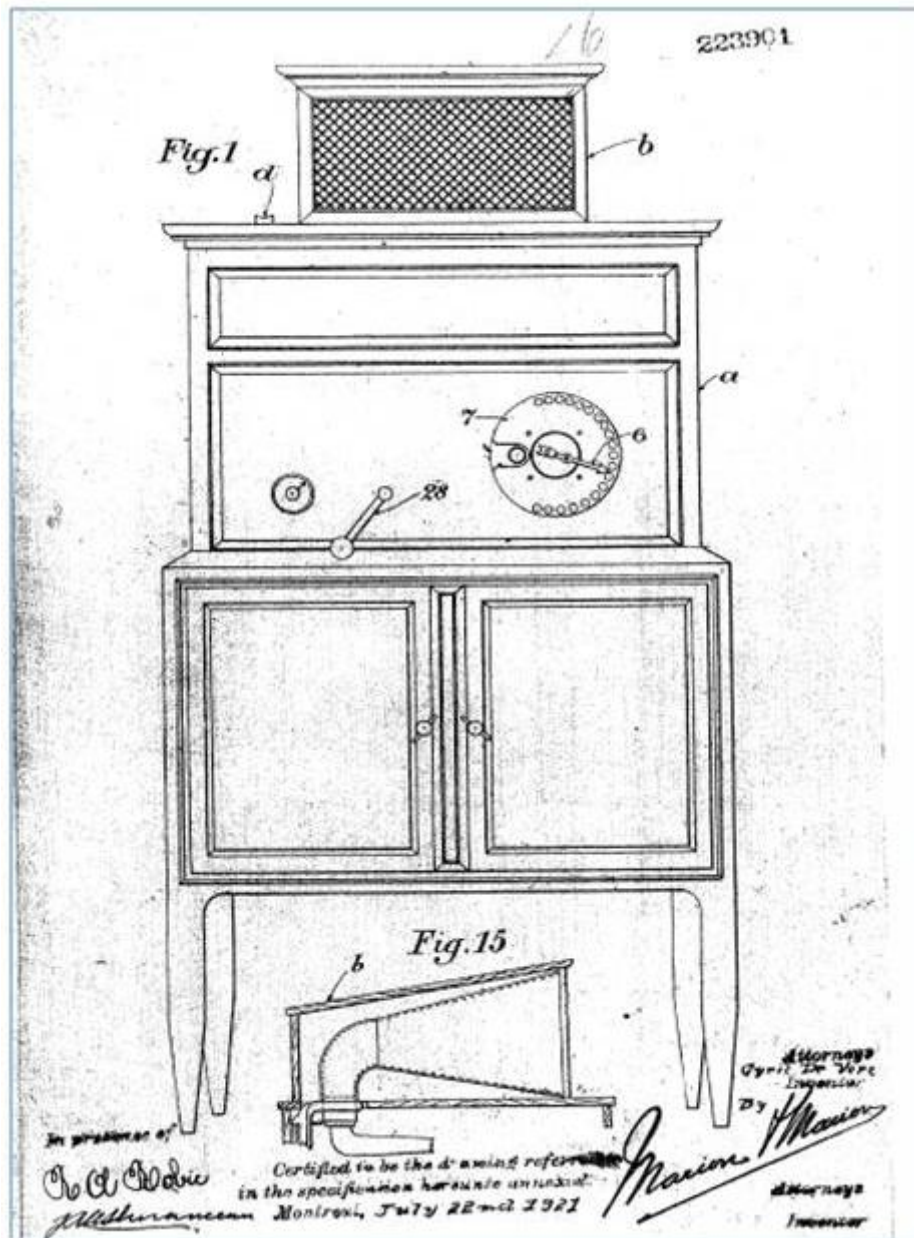
Cyril Duchène de Vère was born on the 4th January 1881 in Vilvoorde, Belgium, as the son of British parents Herbert Shakespeare Gardiner Williams de Vère (1843-1931) and Julia Ferrett de Vère (1852-1916). Siblings: Claude Williams de Vère (1874), Caroline Florence de Vère (1875-1901), Constance Élise de Vère (1879-1966), Camille de Vère (1883-1909), Clairette de Vère (1886), and Clémentine Listine de Vère (1888-1973). The father Charles (*H. S. G. Williams*) de Vère was a performing illusionist and a manufacturer of conjuror's supplies and technical equipment for illusionists and magicians with his own magic shop in London from 1873, and he moved via Brussels in 1878 on to Paris in France, and established showroom and workshop at 17 Rue Saulnier in Paris in 1892. The mother Julia Ferrett de Vère was in London also known by the stage name *Okita*, performing an Oriental magic act. Cyril de Vère's sister Élise became well known as a soubrette in music halls during the Belle Epoque, and his sister Clémentine became well known in England by the stage name *Ionia*, a talented magician and illusionist.

After his brother Camille died aged 26 from diabetes mellitus in 1909, and his parents retired to Rosny-sous-Bois, Cyril de Vère managed the family magic shop in Paris, and in 1914 Cyril de Vère became investor and partner in the Société Anonyme des Appareils Automatiques Bussoz (1908-1920) established by the brothers Maurice Alphonse Bussoz and Pierre Joseph Bussoz and investor F. Bonnardot, and the company was renamed Société des Phonographes Automatiques Bussoz Frères et de Vère (1920-1923), with additional investors E. Timmermans and A. Badarous. Cyril de Vère finally left the Bussoz partnership late in 1939, since he was a British citizen, to live in Bursinel, Vaud in Switzerland, with his sister Élise during the war years. The company was renamed Société Bussoz Frères (1923-1938), and finally renamed Établissements Bussoz SA from the 7th March 1938 until the 22nd July 1999. In fact the family named company was active for hundred years, since it was originally founded by Pierre Joseph Bussoz in 1898 at 27 Rue Condorcet, and soon also at 40 Rue Rochechouart in Paris.

The skilled industrial engineer Cyril de Vère had at least 13 patents registered to his name including the patent for the mechanism of the automatic 20-selection "Bussophone" filed on the 15th July 1919 in London, four days before the patent was filed in Paris. His first patent was filed in France in 1912, and his last patent was filed in Switzerland in 1943.

Cyril de Vère was a well known race driver for decades, and participated for the Société Côte\* of Pantin in the French Grand Prix on a triangular circuit near Le Mans in 1911, and also in the French Grand Prix the following year on the dangerous circuit at Dieppe for the Société Côte. Cyril de Vère was also a driver in the 24 hour races at Circuit de Spa in Belgium in 1928 and 1929, and in the famous 24 hour races at Le Mans in 1928 and 1929 for the Grand Garage Saint-Didier of Paris, with co-drivers Louis Chiron and Marcel Mongin. Cyril de Vère also participated in several French endurance races with Chrysler.

In 1926 Cyril Duchène de Vère was appointed Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur, the French order of merit, as a British citizen (*published in "Le Figaro" on the 17th November*), and he passed away in Paris aged 83 on the 30th September 1964. The grave of Cyril de Vère can be found at the de Vère family monument, [grave marker 273292](#), at the Cimetière des Batignolles, 8 Rue Saint-Just in Paris 17e.



Bussophone



Charles de Vère



Julia de Vère



Cyril de Vère (1929)



Élise de Vère



Clémentine de Vère



Cimetière des Batignolles  
Grave Marker 273292



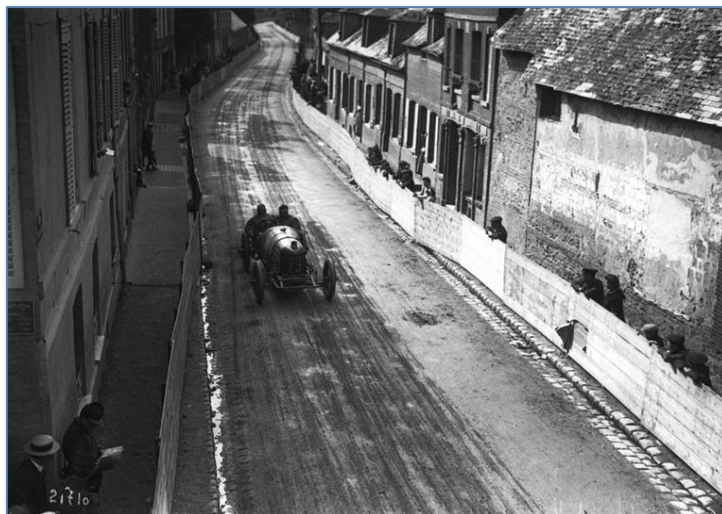




Cyril de Vère at the French Grand Prix at Le Mans, 1911.



Cyril de Vère at the French Grand Prix at Dieppe, 1912.



No. 29, Cyril de Vère in the Côte at Dieppe in 1912.



No.5, Chrysler "72" at Le Mans, 1928, Cyril de Vère and Louis Chiron.



No. 12, Chrysler "77" at Le Mans, 1929, Cyril de Vère and Marcel Mongin.



Detail from promotion postcard,  
Dieppe - 1912.



Cyril de Vère, No. 14, Chrysler 5 L Sport, Paris-Nice, 10th March 1928.



Cyril de Vère and Marcel Mongin, 2nd place, Circuit de Spa, 1928.

\* The automobile manufacturing company Côte was first active for a year in 1900 in Saint-Dizier, and then active again in Pantin, a suburb to Paris, in the years from 1908 until 1913. Historic information about the Société Côte is appreciated, especially information about the founders in Pantin, and any connections between the company and investors like the race drivers Cyril de Vère and Fernand Gabriel.