


CLASSIC DRIVER



1939 Lagonda V12

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|---------------------|--|-----------------|---|
| Lot sold | USD 39 227 - 52 303 GBP 30 000 - 40 000 (listed) | Drive | LHD |
| Year of manufacture | 1939 | Condition | Used |
| Chassis number | 16035 | Location |  |
| Number of seats | 2 | Fuel type | Petrol |
| Drivetrain | 2wd | Exterior colour | Other |
| Lot number | 185 | Engine number | 16035 |

Description

1939 Lagonda V12 Saloon de Ville

Registration no. GSU 221

Chassis no. 16035

Engine no. 16035

'In making an evaluation of the better British cars, the Lagonda V12 certainly must be considered an excellent design and one that contributed to raising the state of the art - not forgetting, of course, that it probably should be considered W O Bentley's masterpiece.' - Road & Track, October 1978.

A quite remarkable piece of automotive engineering, the W O Bentley-designed Lagonda V12 was one of the outstanding British models of its day and one of the exclusive handful of 1930s road cars that could exceed 100mph in standard tune. Not only that, but the magnificent, 4.5-litre, V12 engine produced sufficient torque to endow the car with a walking-pace-to-maximum capability in top gear. First seen in 1936, the Lagonda V12 did not commence deliveries until 1938 and only 189 had been built before the coming of WW2 ended production.

The example offered here was purchased in January 1956 from the Castle Garage, Torquay by Norman 'Iggly' Egginton, landlord of The Trout public house in Longtown near Hereford. While on holiday the current owner spotted the Lagonda minus its radiator and bonnet while he was filling his

car with petrol. A pint later and an offer had been made to buy it for £120, which was accepted later. Apparently, the car had been laid up since the radiator froze one night in the 1960s. The Lagonda finally changed hands in September 1967 (see 'as found' photographs on file).

After the radiator had been repaired and a new water pump fitted, the Lagonda was started on Easter weekend 1968 by being towed behind the owner's TR4A. The engine was then rebuilt by the Solo Motor Company of Worthing and the cosmetics attended to, after which the car was used for the next few years until (in 1983) the vendor decided that a complete restoration was called for. This 'last nut and bolt' rebuild was entrusted to Brian Wilson (of Vintage & Classic Restorations, Oxfordshire) and completed in March 1985 by Barry Blight at a cost of £60,000, which at the time was almost double the average UK house price! When the Lagonda returned to the road, the DVLC (as it then was) issued a new registration number - 'GSU 221' despite strenuous efforts to retain the original registration, 'HPL 289'. The car was much used for weddings and trips to the races until approximately 2000, when the coolant boiled while queuing for Ascot and the block cracked.

The radiator, bonnet, front bumper and lights were removed, followed by the engine, which was then stripped, cold-stitch repaired and pressure tested, all being found satisfactory. It was then that the company carrying out the engine rebuild went into administration and the vendor had no option but to take it away, still dismantled. The Lagonda has not turned a wheel since then. For transportation and photographic purposes the radiator, bonnet and front bumper have been temporarily refitted. With all engine parts readily available from marque specialists, this relatively straightforward restoration project represents an exciting opportunity for the Lagonda enthusiast. Still presenting well and possessing a delightful patina, the car is offered with bills for the aforementioned restoration, Lagonda Club dating letter, expired MoT (1988) and V5 registration document. Sold strictly as viewed.

Bonhams 1793



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