


CLASSIC DRIVER



1944 Willys Jeep

Lot sold	USD 15 550 - 19 437 GBP 12 000 - 15 000 (listed)	Drive	LHD
Year of manufacture	1944	Condition	Used
Chassis number	MB341332	Location	
Number of seats	2	Fuel type	Petrol
Drivetrain	2wd	Exterior colour	Other
Lot number	5	Engine number	WOF 19065

Description

1944 Willys Jeep
Registration no. 686 UXT
Chassis no. MB341332
Engine no. WOF 19065

Although forever associated with Willys-Overland, the original Jeep military vehicle was developed by American Bantam, formerly American Austin. Designed to meet the US Army's requirement for a rugged, go-anywhere, four-wheel-drive vehicle capable of surviving on the barest minimum of unskilled maintenance, Bantam's prototype was up and running by 1940, meeting the Army's requirements apart from the engine, which was deemed insufficiently powerful. The Pentagon though, doubted Bantam's ability to meet the military's post-Pearl Harbour demands so the major contracts went to Willys - the only other firm that had submitted a tender - and the Ford Motor Company, which would be responsible for the Jeep's trademark slotted radiator grille. Willys made various modifications to take advantage of a revised maximum weight requirement, which meant it was able to use its relatively heavy but adequately powerful 'Go Devil' engine. It was in this revised form that the Jeep would enter volume production. Willys-Overland's final production version was the Model MB, Ford's being designated the Model GPW. There were subtle differences between the two versions, Ford's having its components marked with the letter 'F'.

After extensive field testing, the Jeep's off-road capability was first publicly demonstrated early in

1941 when one was driven up the steps of the United States Capitol by Willys's test driver, Irving 'Red' Hausman. Produced by the million, the ubiquitous Jeep saw service in every theatre of the Second World War and continued in military service with armies world-wide for several decades thereafter. Today the Jeep remains highly sought after by discerning military vehicle enthusiasts.

Fully restored circa 2006, this Willys Jeep was purchased at Bonhams' Goodwood Revival Sale in September 2013 (Lot 201) and since then has been stored by Polygon. While at Polygon it has been regularly serviced and maintained, and remains in generally very good condition. There is a Military Vehicle Trust dating letter on file together with a couple of invoices, one of which is for the installation of a wiring loom to incorporate indicators and side lamps in the original housings, and to fit 6V halogen headlight bulbs, new reflectors and a new voltage regulator. Offered with recently expired MoT/tax (June 2014) and Swansea V5C, this would be ideal period transport for this year's Goodwood Revival meeting.

Bonhams 1793

Bonhams

AUCTIONEERS SINCE 1793

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