

CLASSIC DRIVER

1937 Cord 812 S/C Cabriolet 'Sportsman'

- Lot sold
USD 375 000 - 450 000
Year of manufacture 1937
- **Lot number** 050
- **Drive** LHD
- **Condition** Used
- **Location** 
- **Exterior colour** Other
- **Car type** Other
-

Description

PROVENANCE

James Robertson, Montreal, Canada (acquired new in 1937)
Secord Family, St. Catharines, Canada (acquired from the above)
Find Christiansen, Burlington, Canada (acquired from the above circa 1990s)
Current Owner (acquired from the above in 2002)

EXHIBITED

Curves of Steel: Streamlined Automobile Design at Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, Arizona, April-June 2007

LITERATURE

Jonathan A. Stein and Michael Furman, , featured and pictured on pp. 44-49
Josh B. Malks, , chassis no. listed on p. 262
Josh B. Malks, , chassis no. listed on p. 304

THIS CAR

Few cars can boast a list of innovations as impressive as that of the front-wheeldrive Cord 810/812, a car also endowed with timeless beauty. While sedans comprised almost three-quarters of Cord production, most desirable among all body styles has been the Convertible Coupe, particularly when equipped with the supercharged version of the Lycoming V-8 engine. Just 64 were originally equipped as such, including the example presented here.

The Schwitzer-Cummins supercharger boosted horsepower by more than one-third, and that abundant power translated into effortless cruising, mated to a transmission with overdrive ratios in both third and fourth gears. Gear selection was via a Bendix "Electric Hand" transmission, allowing for conventional or preselect shifting wherein a gear was chosen but would not engage until the clutch pedal was depressed.

Complementing these state-of-the-art mechanicals was a streamlined design created by master stylist Gordon Buehrig. The trademark coffin-nose hood, pontoon fenders, elimination of running board, and a built-

in trunk were integrated into a stunningly attractive design. So much so that The Museum of Modern Art selected a Cord as part of its 1951 exhibit titled "8 Automobiles," one of the earliest instances of the automobile being recognized as a form of art.

This car spent most of its life in Canada, beginning with its original owner James Roberston of Montreal. It then passed to the Secord family of St. Catharines, Canada, first owned by James Secord, then moving on to his son. By the 1990s, the car became part of Find Christiansen's collection, of Burlington, Canada. A classic car enthusiast, Mr. Christiansen enjoyed a range of marques, including Cadillac, Franklin, Jaguar, Lincoln, and Packard.

The current owner acquired the car in 2002 and embarked on a thorough restoration by RM Auto Restoration who had numerous Best of Show wins to their credit. Work was completed in 2005, with the car finished in color combination no. 37, gleaming Cadet Grey with blue leather upholstery. This stunning presentation of a landmark design was one of the cars selected for the 2007 Phoenix Art Museum's exhibition of streamlined automobiles.

With limited show history, this Sportsman would be welcome on any concours field and equally at home on the open road where the driver can exploit its full driving potential. A period Cord advertisement succinctly stated: "Any driver that passes the Super-Charged Cord knows he does so only with the Cord driver's permission." Such mastery of the open road awaits its next owner.

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