

Sale **18185** - The Greenwich Concours d'Elegance-Collectors' Motorcars and Automobilia, including the Italian Vintage Cars Collection, 6 Jun 2010
Greenwich,CT

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Prev. Next
Lot Lot



Lot No: 479*

'Barn discovery'

1937 Aston Martin 2 litre 15/98 Speed Model Four Seat Tourer Former UK Registration no. FKJ 701

Chassis no. H8/791/LT

Engine no. H8/791/LT

The new 2 litre Aston Martin was introduced in 1936 as the successor to the 1 1/2 litre models which had distinguished themselves so well both in competition and also as commercially successful production cars. The design of the 2 litre was the combining of the fertile brains of R G Sutherland and Claude Hill, with coachwork by the renowned E Bertelli. With a four-cylinder, single overhead camshaft, wet sump engine, the new car developed some 98bhp and it featured a four-speed Moss synchromesh gearbox, Girling rod mechanical drum brakes and overall was an exceptionally well-balanced car, described in a contemporary Autocar road test as 'softer, quieter and more flexible, whilst acceleration and general suitability for every day purposes have increased out of all knowledge.' The 15/98 in Speed Model form had a top speed of 90mph and was listed in 1937 at £575.

The Aston Martin Heritage Trust through Piers Loxton-Edwards have kindly provided copies of the early factory records for this car which confirm it to have been fitted with the Standard Touring bodywork that it still wears today and this was finished in black and trimmed in green upholstery. Their ownership records state it to have been sold to G.E. Layte & Co. Ltd. and then through Masons Garage on London's Maddox Street, W1. A new owner, Mrs McDougall of Ashford in Kent was noted on April 3rd 1939, though no further notes of ownership are listed. The car was serviced by the works up to the war and from 1946 through to 1954, suggesting that it remained with Mrs. McDougall throughout this time. On file is an old green log book confirming that the previous owner of the Aston purchased it in the early 1960s, whether this was from Mrs. McDougall is not known. The present Aston Martin Enthusiast owner acquired the car in 2008 thinking it would be a perfect foil to his post-war cars, but on reflection has decided not to pursue the restoration and so offers it now for sale.

In the course of the previous ownership of forty years the car underwent some restoration over time, while continuing to be used. A few invoices attest to this, the interior was re-done in red fabric in 1970 and the car repainted to its present green, while the engine had its cams rebuilt, and more substantial engine work was completed in the mid-1980s and followed up a few years ago. However, from its condition today, the car does not have the appearance of ever having been totally dismantled quite simply because it is too complete! Aesthetically, the green paint is starting to flake in places, revealing what must be the original black and some aluminum oxidizing, while the engine bay and chassis show some surface corrosion. The trunk lid is designed to carry side curtain panels, some of which are still in place and clearly have never been replaced. Of particular note is the fact that all dashboard instrumentation remains in place, as well as a St. Christopher badge for suppliers.

Unusually for a car that might well be considered cosmetically as 'barn fresh,' the Aston is 'on the button' and on inspection started promptly and could be maneuvered with ease although it was not driven any distance. This honest and complete 'matched numbers' example offers the possibility of preservation or restoration, supported by an uncomplicated history, at a time when pre-war Aston Martins are an increasingly popular commodity.

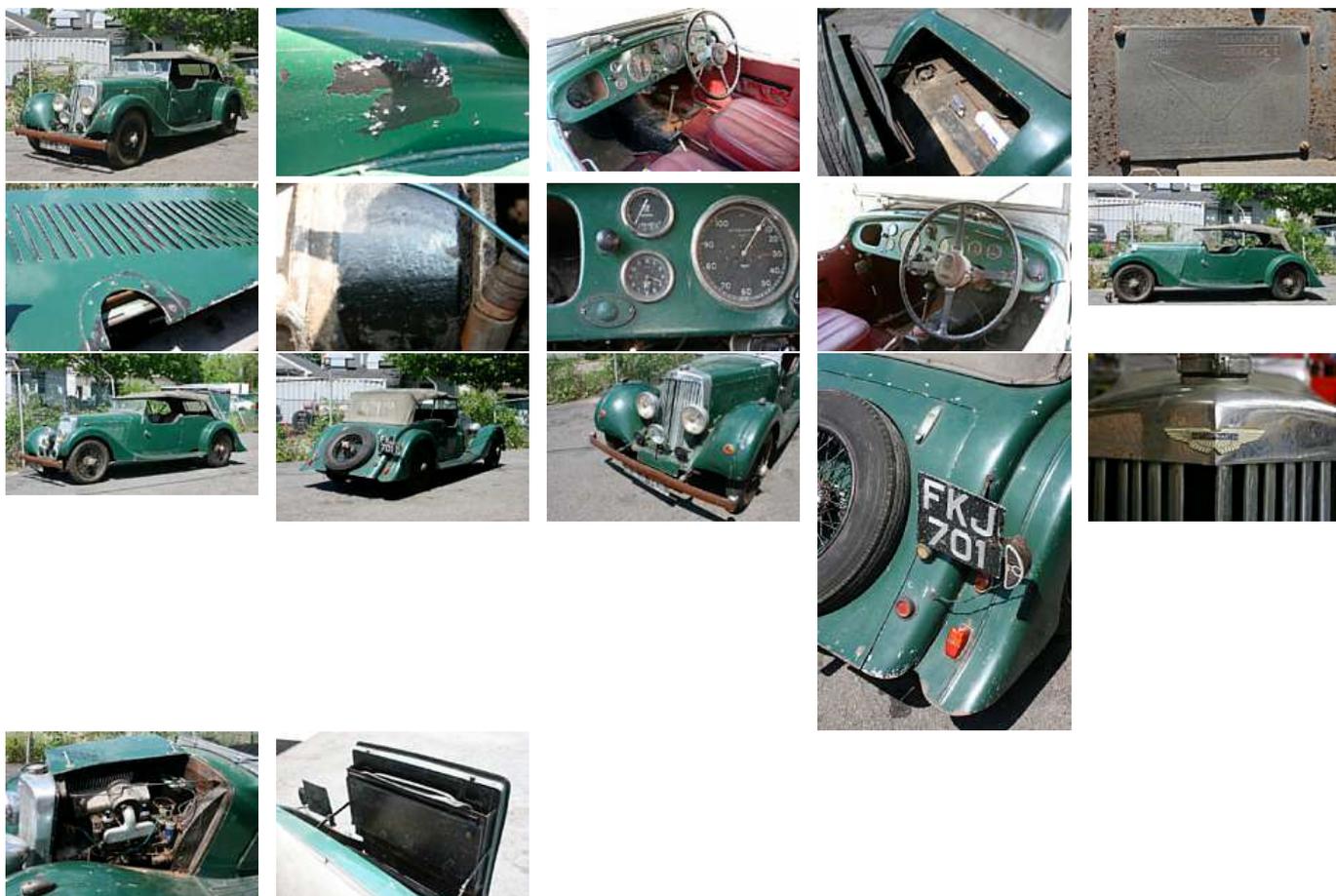


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