

CLASSIC DRIVER

Winston Churchill's Land Rover Comes to Auction

Lead

A Land Rover given to Sir Winston Churchill as an 80th birthday present could fetch up to £60,000 when it comes under the hammer at auction house Cheffins in October.

Kent farmer Frank Quay bought the Series One pick-up for £320 in 1973 from a friend who had secured it at a farm contents sale held by Churchill's son-in-law, Christopher Soames.

For a while, Quay used the dark green pick-up for light farm duties and towing his daughter's horse trailer until the last road fund licence disc expired in 1977, at which point he stored it in a lean-to 'for his retirement'.

Sotheby's tried to sell the Land Rover on Quay's behalf back in 1999 as part of a pioneering foray into on-line auctioneering, in partnership with Amazon - but technological gremlins and a shortage of internet-savvy bidders resulted in the lot being withdrawn before the then-hoped-for price of £30,000 had been reached.

Quay subsequently put the remarkably original vehicle back into storage where it has remained ever since - despite various attempts by enthusiasts to get their hands on it, following a surge in the values of Series One Land Rovers, the best of which (without Churchill provenance) can fetch in excess of £20,000.



Rover presented the car to Churchill at Chartwell, his country estate, on the occasion of his 80th birthday in November 1954. Registered 'UKE 80', the Land Rover was fitted with an extra-wide passenger seat to accommodate the wartime leader's well-upholstered rump, a leather-covered, roof-mounted grab handle so he could haul himself in and a padded armrest in place of the standard, centre seat.

Perhaps the most intriguing feature, however, is a wooden box specially fitted into the pick-up bed which Quay believes was intended to accommodate a trowel and a bag of mortar, so that Churchill could indulge in his fondness for bricklaying.

Still only displaying 12,932 miles (just one more than when it was offered in 1999) and in completely original condition - save for a truck cab and footwell heater added during Churchill's ownership - the Land Rover has been given a pre-sale estimate of £50,000 - 60,000. It will be sold complete with the original, buff log book carrying his name and signature.

Name and Address of the Person Registered with the Council whose Date Stamp is affixed hereto, as the Person keeping the Vehicle, the particulars of which are given on page 7.

Name and Address of the Person Registered with the Council whose Date Stamp is affixed hereto, as the Person keeping the Vehicle, the particulars of which are given on page 7.

(These Notes are

Rt. Hon. Sir Winston Spencer Churchill
K.G. O.M. C.H.M.P.

Full Name (IN BLOCK CAPITALS)

Address Chartwell,
Westminster,
Kent.



Usual Signature

1st CHANGE. Rt. Hon. A.C.T. SCANES, C.B.E., D.P.

Full Name (IN BLOCK CAPITALS)

Address HATSELL ROAD,
ERIDGE GREEN,
MIDNBRIDGEWELLS.



Usual Signature

Christopher Sam

2nd CHANGE

Full Name (IN BLOCK CAPITALS)

Address



4th CHANGE.

Full Name (IN BLOCK CAPITALS)

Address



Usual Signature

5th CHANGE.

Full Name (IN BLOCK CAPITALS)

Address



Usual Signature

6th CHANGE.

Full Name (IN BLOCK CAPITALS)

Address





For more information on Cheffins' 'Vintage' sale of October 20, where the Land Rover will be offered, contact Jeremy Curzon at Cheffins on +44 (0) 1223 271971 or see cheffins.co.uk.

Photos: Frank Tapley

Gallery

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