

CLASSIC DRIVER

Winston Churchill's Daimler DB18 Drophead Coupé under the hammer

Lead

A link with the British wartime Prime Minister Winston Churchill adds extra interest to this already unique 1939 Daimler DB18 Drophead Coupé - the only pre-War example known to exist...

When Daimler released the DB18 in 1939, the timing could hardly have been worse, and production was soon put on hold so that the manufacturer could contribute to the war effort. It's thought that 23 Drophead Coupé versions were initially planned for 1939 but only eight were built before the Blitz of 1940 saw the factory destroyed. Of those eight chassis, five were lost in the bombings, and only one of the remaining three - the car you see here - is thought to survive today.

Churchill's chariot



Chassis 49531 - resplendent in Carlton Carriage Company bodywork - was retained by the Daimler company itself until 1950, so that it could be used for special occasions. These occasions included two separate loans to Winston Churchill, once in 1944 and once in 1949, during which he sat on the rear deck to address the crowds as he was driven through various cities, helped by large speakers temporarily attached to the bonnet.

Now comprehensively restored with two-tone black and silver paintwork and a green leather interior, the graceful car with its 2,900mm wheelbase, 2,522cc six-cylinder engine and evocative history is being offered for sale by RM Auctions on 8 September in London.

Photos: RM Auctions

Gallery

