



## Imperial War Museum Duxford (152)

Wed, 14th Oct 2015, Imperial War Museum Duxford

### Lot 41

**Estimate:** £75000 - £90000 + Fees

**1939 Lagonda V12 Sedan de Ville**

**Registration No:** NGK 894

**Chassis No:** 18021

**Mot Expiry:** Exempt

- The last LWB car and current ownership since 1973

Debuting in prototype guise at the October 1936 Olympia Motor Show, the Lagonda V12 was engineered by a crack team of ex-Rolls-Royce employees including W.O. Bentley, Stuart Tresillian and Charles Sewell. Boasting sophisticated unequal-length wishbone independent front suspension actuated via unusually long torsion bars and special shackle pins that helped obviate side thrust on its semi-elliptic rear leaf-springs, the newcomer also incorporated a Marles steering box, Salisbury hypoid rear axle and twin master cylinder Lockheed hydraulic drum brakes. Singularly advanced, the model's aero-engine inspired SOHC V12 featured twin SU carburettors, a combined duplex-chain / gear-driven timing system and Lanchester-type vibration damper. Displacing 4480cc, the unit was quoted as developing 180hp @ 5,500rpm. Available in 10ft 4in, 11ft 0in and 11ft 6in wheelbase lengths, Lagonda's flagship was among the fastest cars of its generation. Though, the provision of a centre-change four-speed manual gearbox (with synchromesh on the top three ratios) and conventional pedal layout made it surprisingly easy to drive. Of the 200 or so Lagonda V12s produced between 1938 and 1940, less than 100 are thought to have survived to the present day.

H&H are indebted to the Hon. Registrar of the Lagonda Club, Arnold Davey Esq., for the following information: 'Chassis 18021 was the last of the long (11ft 6in) wheelbase V12s. Lagonda offered no factory bodies on this series which was the firm's attempt at catering for the chauffeur-driven market. 18021 was ordered by the newly merged Hooper / Barker firm on 21st February 1939 and the order was for the car to be the "Barker Demonstrator". The chassis was despatched to Hooper on 24th November 1939, by which time war had broken out. As the chassis was intended for the coachbuilder and not for sale to a customer it is reasonable to assume it didn't get completed until after the war. Lagonda required an outside coachbuilder to submit the finished car to them for inspection and weighing before issuing their warranty and this was not granted until 12th April 1945. Hooper's Body Number was 9100'.

An accompanying continuation buff logbook issued on 19th September 1952 shows that the Lagonda initially bore the number plate 'KMX 1' prior to being re-registered as 'NGK 894'. Belonging to William Henry Beech-Allen Esq. of Princes Gate Court, London SW7 at the time (who may or may not have been its first owner), the V12 is known to have passed through the hands of Roger Neville Barndwood Esq., Bertram Edward Ransome Rope Esq., Leonard John White Esq. and

D. Hollick Esq. before entering the current ownership during July 1973. A non-runner upon acquisition, 'NGK 894' was promptly dispatched to B.M. 'Rusty' Russ-Turner's renowned Blackmore Engineering Co Ltd in Horsham where it underwent a thorough engine overhaul.

Part of a significant private collection for the past forty-two years, chassis 18021 has covered a modest mileage during that time and indeed was dry stored from the mid 1970s up until 2006 when the second phase of its restoration began. As well as attending to the brake system, wiring, ingenious retractable driver's compartment roof section and fuel tank / lines / carburettors etc, David Wall Vintage & Classic Cars of Wroxham, Norfolk also carried out various repairs to the alloy bodywork prior to repainting it in Black over Maroon. Showing a credible but unwarranted 75,700 miles to its odometer (which like the rest of its instruments was refurbished in 1975), more recent work has seen the Lagonda benefit from a full re-trim (Maroon leather front / Bedford Cord rear), intercom overhaul and sundry re-plating. Treated to a rejuvenated water pump and new SU fuel pumps last September, the V12 started readily upon inspection.

Various rating 'NGK 894' as 'very good' (bodywork, paintwork, four-speed manual gearbox), 'overhauled' (engine) or 'as new' (interior trim), the vendor nevertheless concedes that this elegant Sedanca de Ville now needs using and finishing off in terms of its centre-mounted spotlight, electric division motor and boot compartment etc. Offered for sale with continuation buff logbook, expired 1960 tax disc, reprinted instruction book, servicing pamphlet, Arnold Davey letter, V5C Registration Document and Blackmore Engineering / Classic Restorations / David Wall invoices.