

LOT **119**

1946 CHRYSLER TOWN AND COUNTRY CONVERTIBLE

135bhp, 323cu. in. Spitfire straight-eight cylinder, dual downdraft carburetor, Fluid-Drive transmission, front independent coil springs with rear rigid axle and semi-elliptic springs, four wheel drum brakes. Wheelbase: 127.5"



CHASSIS NO.
7400604

ESTIMATE:
\$125,000 -
\$150,000

The great demands of World War II kept the car industry from developing newly designed vehicles for much of its duration. By 1944, however, there were indications that the Second World War would soon be coming to an end, and that the automobile industry would once again resume its regularly scheduled production. While the process of re-tooling for vehicle production lasted nearly six months, stylists had time to expand upon the company's most popular designs. As such, the Town and Country model was reborn and became the very first production type, "personal car" for Chrysler.

The Town and Country models were no longer considered station wagons as they were originally conceived in 1941, under the direction of company president David A. Wallace. The big change came in the announcement of several new models, including a two-door, two four-door sedans, a convertible and a roadster. Unfortunately, only one pilot model of the two-door was built while the roadster was dropped before any production began. Nevertheless, the

remaining Town and Country models gathered much attention with their varnished mahogany and ash wood body panels blending perfectly with an equally attractive interior. Models could be purchased with all-leather bolsters with plain or pleated Bedford cord. The buyer could also select from a wide variety of exterior colors, including Newport Blue, Heather Green, Dove Gray, Catalina Tan, Royal Maroon, Sumac Red and Palace Brick Brown. Convertible top choices were available in black, tan, dark green, dark blue and Pepper Red. Interestingly, before the year was out only the four-door sedan and convertible coupe would ever be produced.

The very rare and desirable 1946 Town and Country convertible coupe presented here is without question, one of the few remaining examples of its kind. Officially built August 8th, 1946, this particular automobile is the first car to receive Di-Noc, a simulated wood grain vinyl that is inserted within the white ash framing. Most interestingly, Di-Noc was not used for assembly line production until late 1947,

however, this C-39 model is the 9th Town and Country built for 1946 and is believed to have been a one off, styling exercise. This car is also documented as a special factory order by Mr. Fleming, General Works Manager of Chrysler, and is authenticated by a secondary identification plate located on the firewall. The vehicle was later sold to a dealer in El Paso, Texas before being driven to New York where it sat in storage until June of 1974. Shortly thereafter, it was acquired by a gentleman in Ancaster, Ontario Canada before being purchased in 1993 by its present owner.

A complete and proper restoration was undergone in 1998 by Glazier Pattern & Coachworks in conjunction with Bastian Auto Restorations of Ohio. The engine was rebuilt and the upholstery and top were restored. The individual body panels have been metal-finished by hand while the correct Royal Maroon color has been applied in a single stage, urethane paint system and finished to show quality. The wood components have been coated in a hi-gloss urethane that took three months to apply and all the chrome accents have been completely refinished to a sparkling shine. The car's interior is new and matches the original maroon leather and Bedford cord upholstery. The Royal Maroon colored dashboard has highly polished, original plastic trim panels that complement the matching handmade convertible top with tan liner. The car also features a radio and clock, dual spotlights, 2-speed wipers and maroon cut-pile carpeting.

Under the hood reveals an impressive 323 cubic inch Spitfire straight-eight cylinder engine with a Fluid-Drive transmission that can be shifted without using the clutch while the car is in motion. The engine bay is highly detailed with components accented in silver and gloss black paint. The chassis, suspension, and driveline are also finished in gloss black while the underside of the floor-pan, hood and inner fenders have been completed to original Chrysler blue/gray primer. The car has blackwall tires with the original, white trim rings mounted to the wheels to simulate whitewalls.

Although the entire restoration process took over two years to complete, ending in early 2001, it has been time well spent as this '46 Town and Country has won numerous awards at the Antique Automobile Club of America and several distinctions at concours d' elegance events. This vehicle has also been featured on the October 2001 cover of *Cars and Parts* magazine with an extensive series of articles outlining its recent restoration and its one-of-a-kind characteristics. "The '46 T&C was possibly the most successful redress ever completed of an existing model." according to *Cars and Parts*. Prospective buyers are invited to examine this wonderful convertible, as it is extremely rare and one of the favorites in the collector car market.

