



EDSEL FORD'S ORIGINAL DESIGN NEEDS BUT FEW CHANGES TO BECOME A...

Custom Continental

Text and Photos by Dean Batchelor

THE GREATLY respected Lincoln Continental was born in the mind of Edsel Ford, President of the Ford Motor Company and chief of styling, in 1937. His sketches weren't complete until 1938, at which time he took them to the styling section for the finishing touches.

Edsel Ford had not consulted with the company engineers, sales department or production, because at that time he wanted only one car and that one for himself. Before the car was finished, however, he had decided to build two more. These were for Henry II and Benson, his sons.

The last of the three cars, all of which were convertibles, was finished in October 1939. Edsel, after returning from a vacation trip with his new Lincoln about the

time his sons' cars were completed, was enthusiastic about the reception his car had received throughout the country.

He then succeeded in convincing the board of directors that the "Lincoln Continental," as he called it, could very well supply a luxury car for the Ford line.

The first Continentals were delivered in December 1939 (1940 models), and between that date and March 1948, when the Continental was discontinued, the company had built and sold 5,320 Continentals. 3,045 of these were hardtops, the rest convertibles, all of which brings us up to the Customized 1941 Lincoln Continental presently owned by Bob Snyder.

Shortly after the late war, Tommy Jamieson, of Burbank, Calif., purchased

this car in stock condition and started to do some body work on it.

Initially, the work was to consist of smoothing out a few rough spots in the body and removing the hood ornament, to be followed by a paint job.

Tom took the car to Fred Glass and Howard Fall to have the work done. When he got the car back completed, it had an entirely new grille made of steel tubing chrome plated, the crown in the front fenders had been raised almost three inches to make the hood look lower, the headlights were extended forward, '46 Continental rear fenders mounted in place of the originals and the car painted with lustrous jet black lacquer.

'47 Packard bumpers were mounted

front and rear, which gave the necessary protection and at the same time pleased Jamieson's critical eye.

The car was then taken to the Carson top shop in Los Angeles where the padded top was built. The windshield and windows were *not* cut down.

The black lacquer which had been applied, turned out to be from a bad batch of paint and soon deteriorated, so the car was then painted Cimmaron green (a 1941 Cadillac color).

The next step took Tommy, and the Lincoln, to Valley Custom Shop. Here, they lowered the spare tire mount so the tire would not stick out above the trunk compartment and built a gravel shield between the body and the rear bumper. The locking mechanism for the trunk was removed and solenoids and push buttons mounted in the doors which are now electrically operated.

A dropped axle was installed in the front and both front and rear springs were reworked to lower the car still further. The '46 rear fenders are several inches wider than the original '41 fenders, which made the wheels appear to be too far under the car. Special wheels were then made. These placed the tire and rim further out on the wheel center. The rear tread of the car is now about three inches wider than the stock dimension.

The engine was removed and rebuilt (stock) but a dual intake manifold was added to help give the heavy car a little more acceleration performance.

About this time, Tommy felt the "new car bug," and sold the Lincoln to Bob Snyder of Burbank, California.

Not content with the car as it was, Bob took it back to Valley Custom where they removed the stock Lincoln taillights and added '50 Buick lights in their place.

Bob also felt that passenger space in the rear seat was a little cramped for such a large car so he decided to do something about it. Because the top no longer folds, the space left on the sides and around the back of the rear seat was being needlessly wasted.

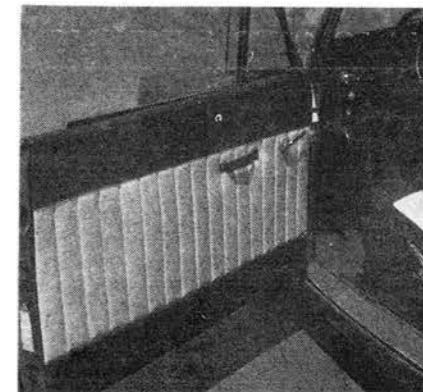
These wasted spaces were utilized by moving the rear seat back about eight inches and widening the seat out into the space formerly occupied by the top-folding mechanism.

The seats were re-upholstered by Card Pierson who at the same time re-covered the padded Carson top.

Another lacquer job of Cimmaron green was put on by Valley Custom and the Lincoln was once again in tiptop shape.

Bob was still not content with the power output of the engine so he proceeded to mill the heads, install a Winfield cam and chop the flywheel.

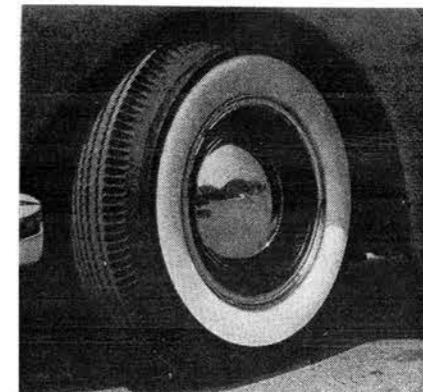
Now that Snyder has enjoyed the car for several years, he too has the new car bug and wants to get rid of one of the most outstanding Lincolns ever built. Our guess is that he may be disappointed with any new car compared to his Continental.



PLEATED side panels, seats and padded top were done in Card Pierson's shop



GRILLE was made from short lengths of chromed tubing welded into place



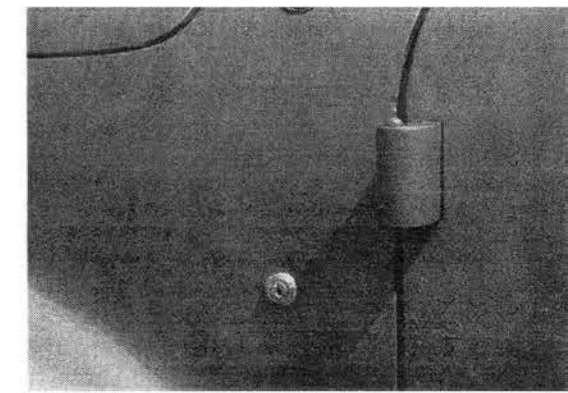
OFFSET wheel rims were needed to help eliminate fender and tire rubbing



SPARE wheel was lowered to conform with Continental's classical body lines



TAILLIGHTS were originally manufactured for the 1950 Buick Roadmaster



DETAIL shot shows location of door solenoid switch that operates door locks

CONTINENTAL fender from 1946 model was fitted with no chrome trim



BUMPERS in the front and rear were removed from a 1947 Packard Clipper