

# Mercury—A



by John Lee



**F**ORD WAS THE undisputed, and basically unchallenged, station wagon king when the 1940s rolled around. Henry Ford had started some 11 years earlier to mass-produce station wagons with the same assembly line efficiency that he had used to build millions of Model As and Model Ts.

Then, as the Great Depression was winding down in the final years of the 1930s, Ford Motor Co. launched a new automobile marque. The 1939 Mercury filled a market void between Ford, one of the industry's low-priced three, and the Lincoln, which competed with the likes of Cadillac and Packard.

In 1941, its third year of production, the Mercury would be built with the same body as the Ford, but on a four-inch-longer wheelbase. The difference would be ahead of the cowl, with the more massive Mercury front sheet metal encasing a 95hp flathead V-8, a slight improvement over Ford's 90hp version. The Mercury would, naturally, have its own grille, taillights, and other trim, as well as nicer interior appointments.

Since the two lines would share bodies, Mercury could also market a station wagon. Ford had an unlimited hardwood supply from its thousands of acres of forest in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, and apparently the 300 workers at the Iron Mountain wood body factory were capable of supplying a few hundred Mercury bodies a year in addition to the Fords.

Upgrades on this 1946 Mercury station wagon, owned by Stuart and Bonnie Resor, include a chromed grille frame ala the 1947-48 models, whitewalls, fog lights, and bumper wing tips. Photo by Stuart Resor