
1936 Alvis Silver Eagle

Lot sold	USD 55 310 - 69 138 GBP 40 000 - 50 000 (listed)	Drive	LHD
Year of manufacture	1936	Condition	Used
Chassis number	13520	Location	
Number of seats	2	Fuel type	Petrol
Drivetrain	2wd	Exterior colour	Other
Lot number	143	Engine number	13190

Description

1936 Alvis Silver Eagle Drophead Coupé

Coachwork by Cross & Ellis

Registration no. CXE 184

Chassis no. 13520

Engine no. 13190

Despite the somewhat conservative image Alvis has today, T G John Ltd produced some technically innovative cars in the inter-war period, pioneering front-wheel drive technology and championing small-capacity, high-performance engines. Engineer T G John had founded the Alvis company in 1919 when he acquired the rights to an automobile engine and with it the brand name of its aluminium pistons 'Alvis'. The first Alvis car - the 10/30hp - appeared in 1920.

'Well equipped, beautifully finished and of up-to-date design, the price of £595 is moderate considering the quality of the chassis and coachwork,' was how Motor magazine summed up the new 16hp Alvis Silver Eagle saloon in April 1934. First introduced in 1929, the Silver Eagle had been revamped for '34, gaining a stronger X-braced frame and a new all-synchromesh four-speed gearbox. The sturdy and reliable Alvis six-cylinder engine was available in either 2,148cc or 2,362cc capacities and produced 60-70bhp, which was good enough for a top speed of around 75mph and comfortable cruising at 60.

The Silver Eagle offered here features well-proportioned drophead coupé coachwork by Alvis' Coventry neighbours Cross & Ellis, and has been fitted with a 2½-litre engine from an Alvis Speed Twenty. Chassis number '13520' was dispatched to Messrs Follett Ltd of London on the 6th April 1936. Little is known about its early history, though five previous owners are listed in accompanying documentation and it is understood that the Alvis was driven by the incomparable Joanna Lumley in an episode of the 'Miss Marple' television series ('The Body in the Library') screened in the late 1990s.

The current vendor has owned and enjoyed this Silver Eagle since November 2008 and has undertaken comprehensive works on the brakes, engine and suspension. Numerous bills are available with the car, detailing work undertaken by marque specialists Red Triangle. An overdrive has been added by Auto Classico of Bristol, the brakes been renewed and sundry other mechanical works undertaken, including fitting electronic ignition, the total cost the foregoing being circa £18,000-19,000. Within the last three years, the wings and running boards have been repainted by Auto Classico and the water pump renewed by Red Triangle (see bill for £1,700 dated June 2015). Lucas P100 headlamps have been fitted (re-chromed and re-slivered) and the car also comes with its 10" originals.

The result is a very handsome motorcar with many beneficial features such as the larger engine, up-rated brakes, synchromesh gearbox and overdrive, making it a very practical post-Vintage tourer. It ran beautifully and drove very well when inspected by Bonhams, and is only offered for sale because of the vendor's ill health.

Finished in Forest Green with fawn leather interior, this delightful 1930s sporting thoroughbred is offered with an extensive history file containing sundry restoration and maintenance invoices, Alvis Limited Car Record (copy) and V5C registration document.

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<https://www.bonhams.com/auctions/22724/>

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