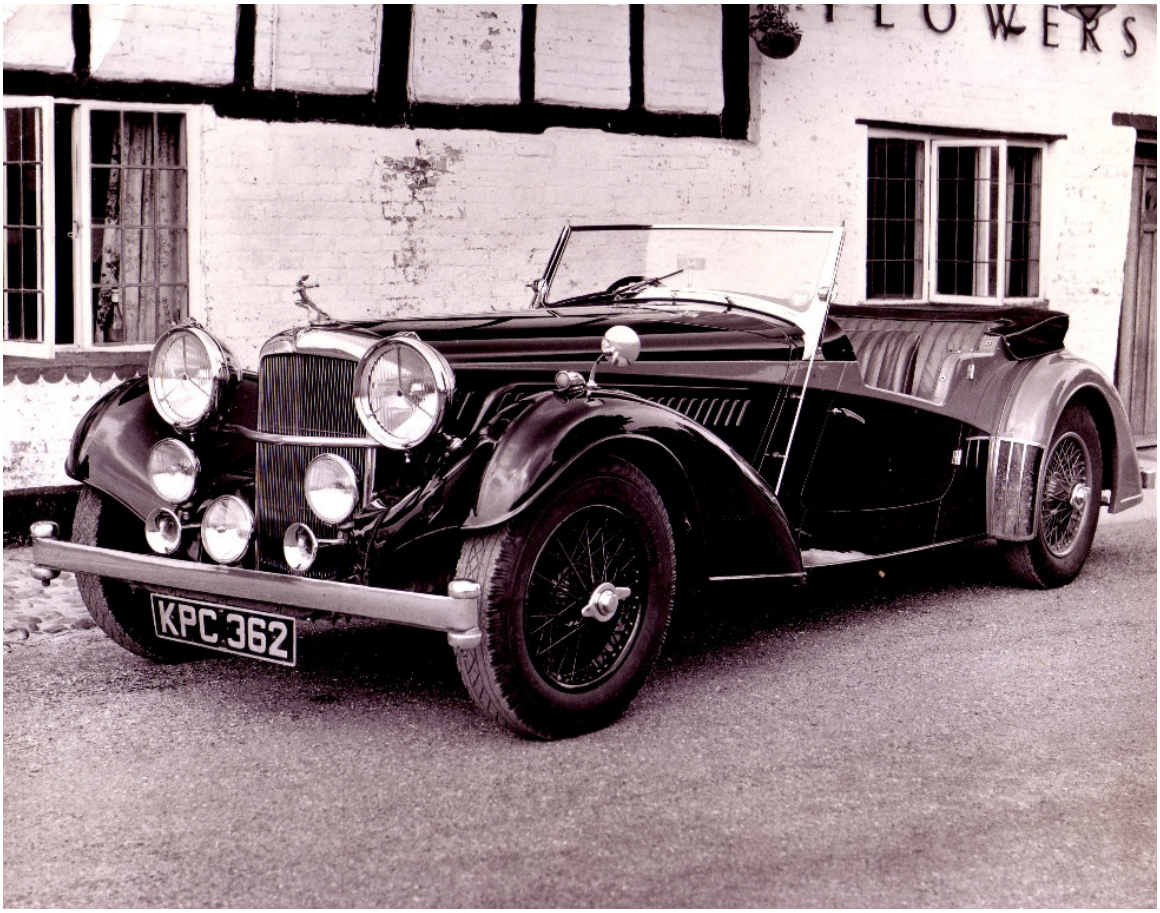


Recently Dan Geoghegan supplied this photo of KPC 362 wearing non standard pass lamps, an antenna and a SEP 1963 tax disc. On the back is written: "4.3 Litre Alvis, Owner: R. A. Parker, 214 Edward Street, Nuneaton 3339, Warks." "Photograph by Jeremy Mason, 1 Munro Terrace, London, SW 10, Flaxman 0305"

The photo reminded me that there are unanswered questions surrounding 4.3 Litre SC Vanden Plas 3659 short chassis Tourer 14856, KPC 362.

On page 145 of *Vanden Plas Coachbuilders*, by Brian Smith, it states Vanden Plas body 3659 on 4.3 Litre chassis 14856, a Sports for Alvis Ltd., Black & Red, was completed in March 1939.

No Car Record or Guarantee Card has been found for chassis 14856. Apparently no *authenticated* car number was issued to chassis 14856. Car number 20026 has been quoted. However, 20026 is the car number for 4.3 Litre SC Vanden Plas 3639 short chassis Tourer 14818, EDU 53, authenticated by Alvis Ltd. Records.

The next information we have on chassis 14856 is in the following ad from Used Car Market, page A32 of *The Motor*, September 26, 1945:

New unregistered 4.3 ALVIS Special Vanden Plas sports 4-seater tourer, all-weather equipment equal to saloon, performance "Motor" test May 23, 1939, top gear 10-80 m.p.h. in 30 secs., max. 105m.p.h.; third speed over 75 m.p.h. S.S. to 50 7.6 secs.; 137 b.h.p. at 3,600 r.p.m. All gears synchromesh, hydraulic jacks, quiet, well sprung, three controls, believed to be the last car made of this description and the only new one in the country. Cost the present private owner in 1943 £1,600, plus perfect maintenance; receipt shown. Colour scheme: Bonnet, front wings and wheels and enclosed spare wheel at back, all black; scarlet develops in coachwork from radiator and takes in rear of car, back wings and wheels; scarlet soft leather upholstery and carpets. Separate tonneau covers to front and back seats when used as open car. Must be examined to appreciate. Price £2,500. Box 7561

ALVIS

1937 ALVIS 20 limousine, 10,000 miles. British and Colonial Motors, Ltd., Upper Saint Martin's Lane, W.C.2. Tem. 3588. 283-82

NEW unregistered 4.3 ALVIS Special Vanden Plas sports 4-seater tourer, all-weather equipment equal to saloon, performance "Motor" test May 23, 1939, top gear 10-80 m.p.h. in 30 secs., max. 105 m.p.h.; third speed over 75 m.p.h. S.S. to 50 7.6 secs.; 137 b.h.p. at 3,600 r.p.m. All gears synchromesh, hydraulic jacks quiet, well sprung, three controls, believed to be the last car made of this description and the only new one in the country. Cost the present private owner in 1943 £1,600, plus perfect maintenance; receipt shown. Colour scheme: Bonnet, front wings and wheels and enclosed spare wheel at back, all black; scarlet develops in coachwork from radiators and takes in rear of car, back wings and wheels; scarlet soft leather upholstery and carpets. Separate tonneau covers to front and back seats when used as open car. Must be examined to appreciate. Price £2,500. Box 7561. 273-19

BROOKLANDS of Bond St. buy and stock ALVIS 103 New Bond St., W.1. May 8351. zzz-501

1937, July, ALVIS Speed 25 4-door sun saloon, black, beige leather, £795. Lionel H. Pugh, 13-14 Brooks Mews, W.1. Mayfair 4433. 283-156

The record for KPC 362 in the DVLA database shows the Date of First Registration as 15 February 1946. The registration mark KPC was issued by the Surrey County Council.

A photo from the September 1955 edition of an unknown magazine, apparently published in the States. The caption under the photo of 14856 in the September 1955 magazine is: "This rare 4.3 litre Alvis, with Van den Plas body and the proverbial block-long hood, is the pride and joy of Mr. & Mrs. Michael Rennie. Of 1938 vintage, it is one of the best known cars in the film capital, where fabulous autos are commonplace." The photo shows Michael Rennie, and his wife, with a 4.3 VdP s/c tourer, wearing Ace Wheel Discs and bearing the registration KPC 362, apparently while resident in California. The fact that the photo appeared in a 1955 magazine does not necessarily mean the photo was taken in 1955.

The Alvis, Ltd. Service File for chassis 14856 at Red Triangle contains correspondence with E. S. Powers regarding his 4.3 Litre, chassis 14856, in August 1951 and October 1952.

Edmund S. Powers of Geo. E. Cloke Ltd., Council and General Contractors, "Elmsted", Neasden Lane, London, N.W.10. **&** 99 Bridge Lane, Hendon, London, N.W.11, Tel: MEAdway 1823 was an early AOC member whose member number has not been located. Most of the early members without member numbers fall between members 171, circa 1952, and 453, October 1954.

The following four ads appeared in AOC Bulletins in 1953, 1954 and 1955:

AOC Bulletin of 14th December 1953, For Sale: 4.3 short chassis V. d. P. tourer first registered 1946. Engine just rebuilt by Alvis - new block and camshaft supplied. About £700 spent on the car during the last three years for which bills can be shown. This car is in exceptionally fine condition and offers in the region of £1,000 would be considered. Enquiries should be addressed to the General Secretary ((Ken Day was the General Secretary from September 1953).

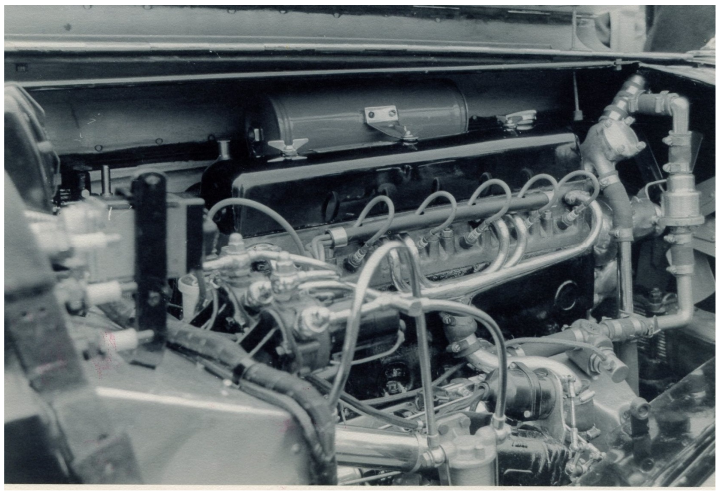
AOC Bulletin of 30 June 1954, For Sale: 1946 (registered) ?Speed 25?? SC VdP tourer by E. Powers, Elmsted, Neasden Lane, N.W.10.

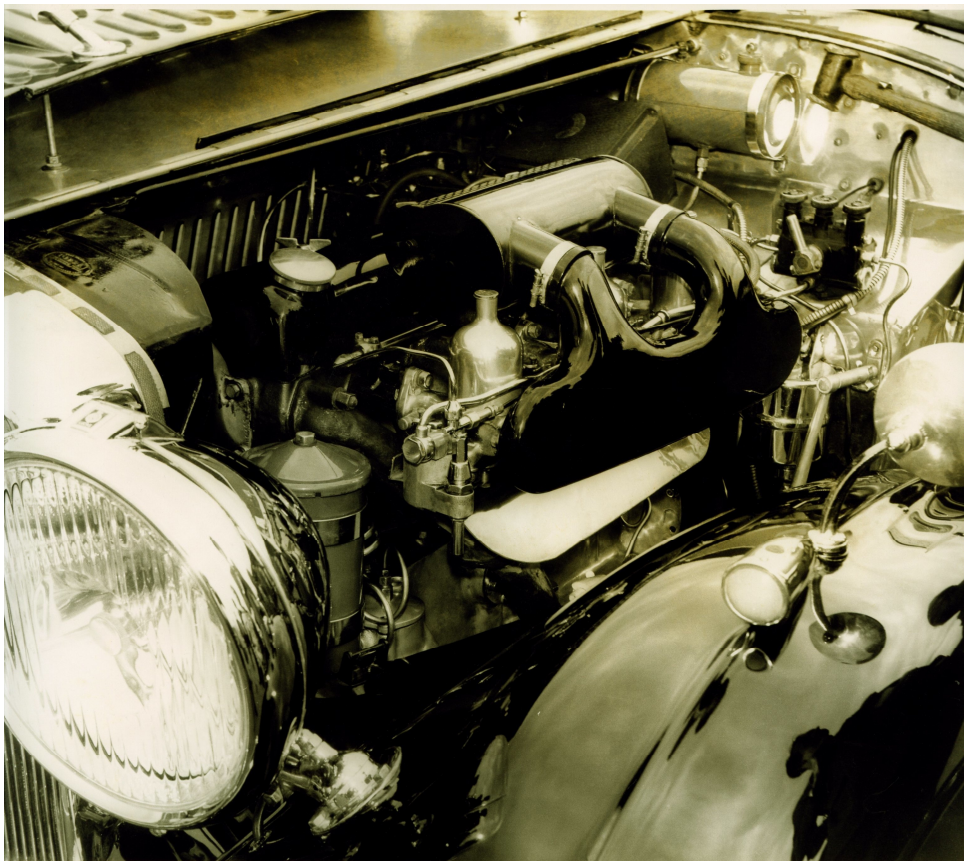
AOC Bulletin of 21 April 1955, For Sale: 4.3 Litre SC VdP tourer red & black, first registered 1946, E. Powers, 99 Bridge Lane, Hendon, N.W.11.

AOC Bulletin 22, May 1955, For Sale: 4.3 Litre S. C. VdP tourer first registered 1946, full history since. £1,000 spent in last 3 years. Works maintained, many modifications and extras. 100% condition. All new tyres and tubes, red and black. Offers - E. Powers, 99, Bridge Lane, Hendon, N. W. 11.

The Alvis, Ltd. Service File for chassis 14856 at Red Triangle contains correspondence with R. G. Sloan from June 1955 to June 1964 and from A. Parker & Son from February 1965 to June 1968.

I received the following comments regarding KPC 362 in a 7 January 2008 letter from Ernest Shenton: "ONE OF MY CONSTANT 'nagging' mysteries is about KPC 362 - that car we refer to as the Michael Rennie car, OR the Sloan car, OR the Reg Parker car. I think it should be referred to as the E. S. Powers car. We don't know to whom the car was first registered, but although there is a picture of Rennie taken in September 1955, we do know that Mr. Powers had the car in 1953 and earlier. The key to this whole mystery lies in one E. S. POWERS, of Hendon. And it is a mystery. KPC was not issued until 1946, but I cannot really just accept Dave Culshaw's suggestion that this was simply mothballed. Certainly NOT by Alvis, NOR by V.d.P at Kingsbury. Both sites were too exposed. At this point, let us think about Mr. Powers. I know, from an *Autocar* statement, that he was a person of some importance to the War effort, as he was able to cover 12,000 miles per year on business, driving a 2 litre Speed Model Aston Martin (GME 888). This suggests to me that he was a War Department 'fixer' or progress chaser. Did he, therefore, come upon this car, unsold, unwanted, held my a person or company willing to dispose of it? Could have been an ideal opportunity. By coincidence, the very next chassis previous to it - 14855 - destroyed by enemy action, was recorded as being in the hands of Patrick POWER of North Acton; the Packing, Sealing and Advertising Group."
(Ernest provided circa 1953 photos of KPC 362 showing the modifications to the engine cooling system when the car was owned by Edmund S. Powers)
"Study of these pictures, in detail, is very revealing. On the full-plate size, you will see that there is an electric fan fitted. On the small one, marked Sloan's car on the back, we are back to the normal Alvis set up. Look at the water-outlet casting in the pics of the cylinder head alone, and you will notice that it is quite different from anything else.
The fun goes on and on. Every thing is so professionally done and nothing appears to have been skimped - no expense spared. To Hell with Poverty - slap another kipper on! This Mr. Powers was a very early member of the Club. In the early days there were some members whose numbers were never properly allocated, these were between 172 and 455 (I think) but when he turned up at Heston in 1953 all this work was already done and this wasn't done on a wet Sunday - it had taken a long time. So had he been able to acquire the car during his work in wartime? Perhaps taking advantage of the uncertain times ahead. He knew, obviously, how to GET THINGS DONE and he may have had some secure bolt-hole where this car could have been stashed away. Sadly, all this has been in my head for years and I have never done anything about it, and equally sadly, anyone who may have known the man is slipping off the twig, as I will. You who are computer literate may be able to raise some information from the Internet, even at this late stage. Who knows?" These photos of KPC 362 from Ernest Shenton taken at the Milfors Concours, 29 March 1953, showing the interesting plumbing for the cooling system.





Michael Rennie (August 25, 1909 – June 10, 1971) was an English actor.
He was born Eric Alexander Rennie in the village of Idle, Bradford, Yorkshire, England. He had several other jobs before gaining employment as a stand-in in a Hitchcock film of 1936. Acting then became his profession but it was after many years touring in British repertory before he found success as a leading man in the cinema, his exceptional height (6'4") and gaunt chiselled features standing him in good stead. In 1945 he played a major role in the original version of The Wicked Lady, starring Margaret Lockwood and James Mason. From that point on he was a star and shortly afterwards he moved to the USA where, in the early 1950s, he had significant roles in several major productions of 20th Century Fox, including the lead in The Day the Earth Stood Still, the part for which he is best remembered today.
In 1959 Rennie became a familiar face on television taking the role of Harry Lime in The Third Man, a spin-off TV series from the film starring Orson Welles. During the 1960s he continued his TV career with guest appearances on such series as Route 66, Alfred Hitchcock Presents, Perry Mason, Wagon Train, Lost in Space (where he worked again with his "The Third Man" co-star Jonathan Harris), The Time Tunnel, Batman, The Invaders, and The F.B.I.
Both his marriages ended in divorce. His second marriage was to actress Maggie McGrath. Their son David Rennie is a UK High Court judge in Lewes, Sussex. He also had a son, John Marshall, by his long time friend and mistress Renée Gilbert. Michael Rennie was also briefly engaged to the ex-wife of the Hollywood director, Otto Preminger.
He moved to Switzerland in the latter part of his life. However, it was during a 1971 visit to his mother at Harrogate Yorkshire, following the death of his brother, that he died, from emphysema.

Known (to me) owners and dealers for KPC 362 include:

Eric Alexander Rennie, aka Michael Rennie, England, Los Angeles area, Switzerland

Edmund S. Powers, Geo. E. Cloke Ltd., Council and General Contractors, “Elmsted”, Neasden Lane, London, N.W.10. **&** 99 Bridge Lane, Hendon, London, N.W.11, Tel: MEAdway 1823, circa 1951 - 1955

R. G. “Reg” Sloan, The Swan Revived, High Street, Newport Pagnell, North Buckinghamshire, Tel: 33, circa 1955 - 1964

Reg A. Parker, 210 Edward Street, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV11 5RP, 01203 383339 to 1998 **&** A. Parker & Son, 212 - 214 Edward Street, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, Nuneaton 3339, circa 1964 - 1999

Lukas Huni, Lindenstrasse 26, 8008 Zurich, Switzerland in 1999

Bob Lalement, Belgium

Marryet Classics, Marryet Classics, Victor Bocquéstraat 15, 9300 Aalst, Belgium in 2006

Serge van Harve, Belvedere, Schynparklaan 52, 2110 Wynegem, Belgium to 2009

Questions surrounding KPC 362:

Why was 4.3 Litre 14856 not sold soon after the body was completed in March 1939?

Where was it during the war?

Who purchased it in 1943?

Who placed the September 1945 ad in *The Motor*?

To whom was it registered in February 1946?

When was it in Southern California with Michael Rennie?

Who was the first owner, Edmund S. Powers, Michael Rennie or someone else?

Where is KPC 362 today?

Ain't mysteries fun?