

The Angas Family and Their Pre-War Motor Cars

Gilbert M Ralph Hon. Archivist SHRF

On our return to Melbourne after a short holiday in the Grampians in April my wife, Nanette, and I called into see Peter and Elizabeth Crauford at their grazing property, *Lexington*, near Moyston in Western Victoria. After a warm greeting on the veranda and the customary chat about the weather, the lack of feed and the depressed prices for rural produce we, and our travelling companions Noel and Judith Richardson, were invited to have a look at Peter's collection of motor cars while Elizabeth disappeared into the kitchen to prepare a 'cuppa'.

As the heavy door rolled open and the lights were turned on we were impressed with the display of exotic cars. Currently there are five very desirable motor cars on view – a 3litre WO Bentley tourer, a Vauxhall 30-98 tourer, a 1923 Silver Ghost 38EM Park Ward saloon, a 1925 Phantom I 10LC Barker sedanca de ville, a 1957 Bentley S Continental Park Ward 2-door saloon BC82BG which had once belonged to Alastair Angas.

Over morning tea the conversation quite naturally drifted around to our

motoring interests and Peter showed me an album featuring an assortment of the motor cars owned by the Angas family from the Barossa Valley. I was very impressed with the quality of the photographs and asked if I might borrow the album to scan the photographs for inclusion in the Sir Henry Royce Foundation's Archive collection. The album belongs to Elizabeth's father, Colin Angas, who at 93 years of age lives in retirement at Angaston and he very kindly acceded to my request and I have scanned them at a high resolution for inclusion in Foundation's collection and offer a selection for readers of *Præclarvm* to admire.

The Angas family are a well-known and respected family of pastoralists descended from George Fife Angas from Newcastle on Tyne who became Chairman and a major shareholder of the South Australian Company which in effect brought about the establishment of South Australia in 1836. In 1843 he sent his nineteen year old son John Howard Angas to South Australia to establish the family

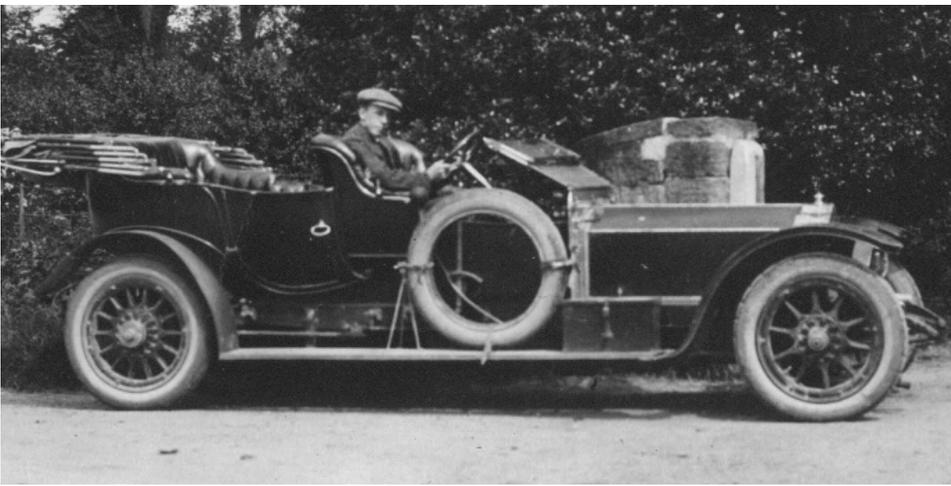
farming properties near what later became Angaston. George Angas also migrated to SA in 1851 and became an influential figure in the community and a member of SA Legislative Council. John's son, Charles Howard, succeeded his father and expanded the family's interests in pastoral and mining ventures which brought great wealth to the family. They held substantial holdings in sheep grazing properties including, *Lindsay Park* and *Collingrove* near Angaston and *Hill River Station* near Clare. In 1909 Charles H Angas was the first person to import a Rolls-Royce into South Australia and he and his three sons, Ronald, Dudley and Keith all became enthusiastic motorists and the photograph album highlights their choices in exotic cars.

There are 77 images in the album of which 45 are Rolls-Royces, 9 are Lancias, 21 are Delages, one Hispano Suiza and one Sheffield-Simplex. There is a story to tell about each of the cars and their various owners but that would fill a book and so I propose to provide readers with some selected photos from the Angas album together with a brief account of each car. A few of these images have appeared in *Præclarvm* previously but I thought readers might appreciate seeing them in one edition.

Pic 1 below:

This delightful scene is in the Scottish Highlands in 1909 when Ronald Angas was enjoying a trial run in Claude Johnson's 40/50 demonstrator car, chassis 1100, with Barker Roi-des-Belges body. Ronald is leaning on the spare wheel and Charles Angas is the man on the right smoking a pipe. The man on the left may well be a curious local.





Pic 2 left:
This unidentified Silver Ghost is captioned, 'Barker tourer borrowed from the factory by Ronald F Angas'

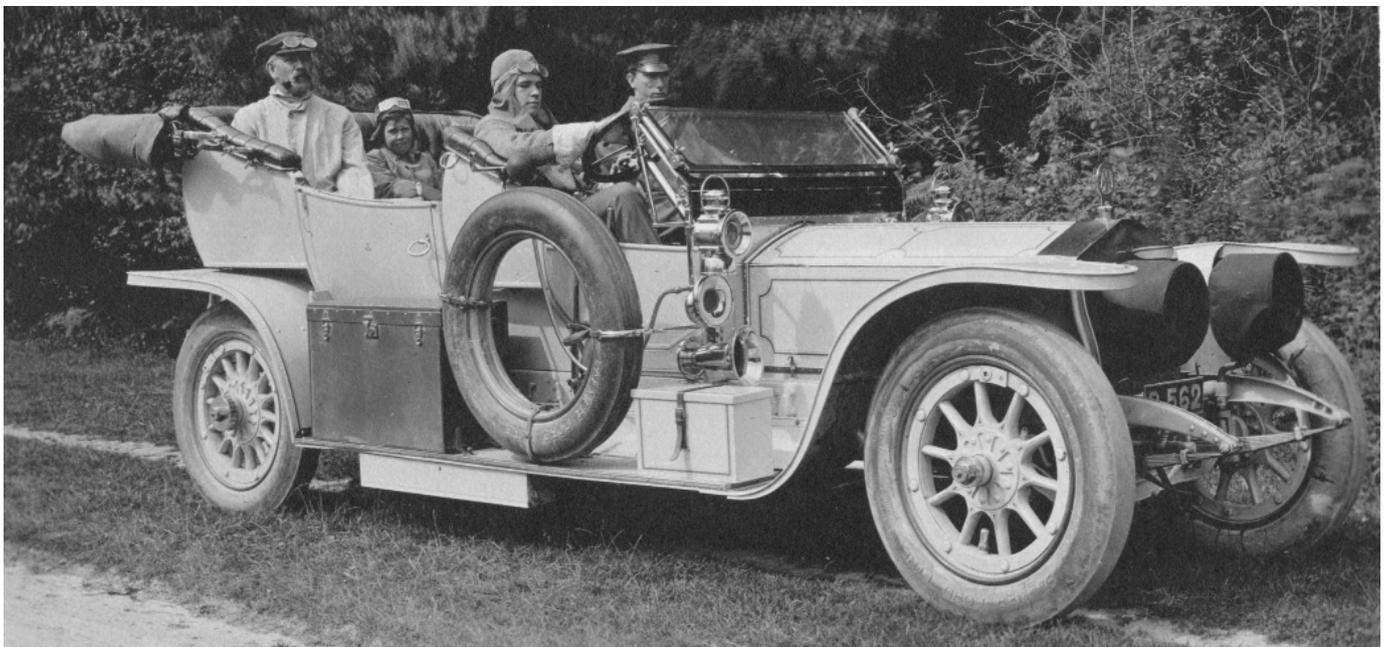
Pic 3 below:
This Silver Ghost, chassis 60922 which came off test in March 1909, was the first Rolls-Royce purchased by Charles Angas while in London. The original Roi-des-Belges tourer coachwork shown here was thought to be by Grosvenor & Co but Tom Clarke in his article *The House of Grosvenor, Coachbuilders*, confirms that it was by Brainsby & Sons of

Peterborough and London. Note there is no mascot as they came later. Charles Angas used this car extensively while touring in the UK between 1909 and 1912 when the car was shipped to South Australia. Ian Irwin has written a comprehensive account of this car in his book, *Silver Ghosts of Australia and New Zealand*.



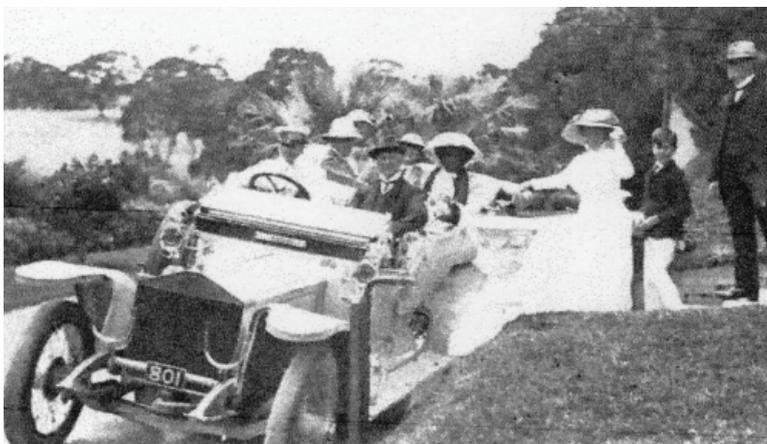
Pic 4 below:

This is the same Silver Ghost as above when in Oxford. It bore registration R562. Note the addition of the Automobile Association badge as an ornament on the radiator cap and the spare wheel and travelling case on the off-side running board and an electric horn. Ronald Angas is in the driver's seat and his father, Charles, is in the back seat. We can assume the man with the peaked cap is the chauffeur. Fasal & Goodman in *The Edwardian Rolls-Royce* record that it bore a plate on the front of the firewall displaying the name, *Silver Dawn*, but Tom Clarke suggests that as it was not painted silver but cream, that the name may have been *Golden Dawn*. This dilemma has yet to be resolved. Chassis 60922 was returned to the Rolls-Royce factory for a complete overhaul and upgrading before being shipped to South Australia in 1912. Irwin records that the overhaul included the replacement of the crankshaft, pistons, valves, guides, tappets, clutch, gearbox, crown wheel and pinion as well as an overhaul of many other components. Whilst the mileage travelled is not recorded, such an extensive overhaul highlights the fact that motor cars wore out more rapidly in that era and the Angas family were no doubt anxious that it should be in good mechanical condition on arrival in country South Australia miles from any authorized repairer.



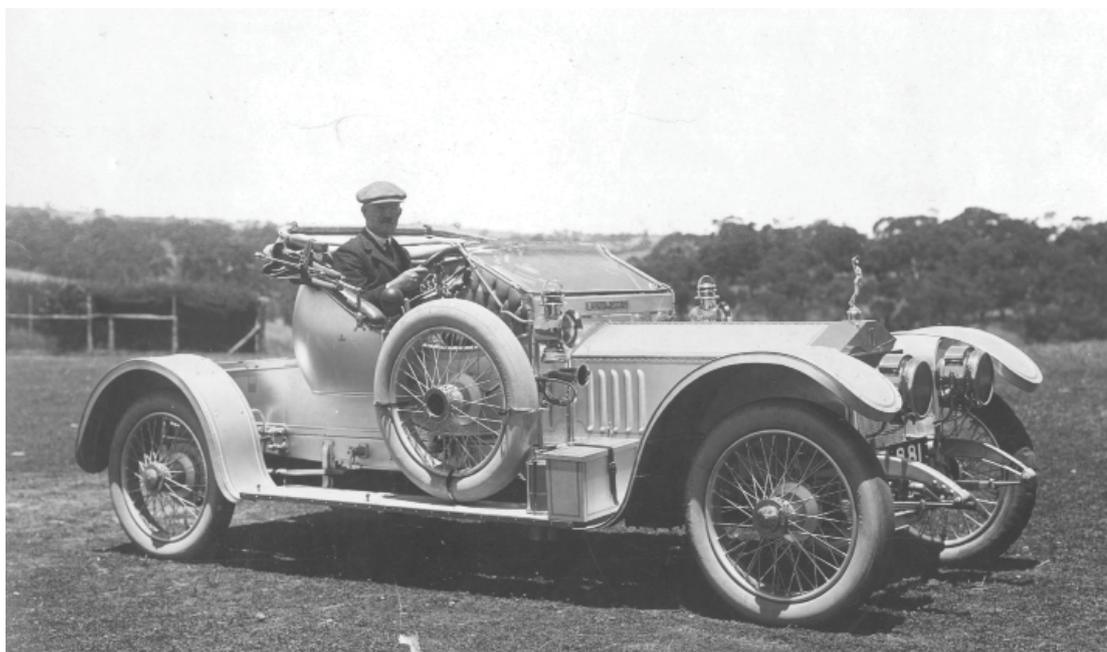
Pic 5 right:

This picture of 60922 is in front of *Lindsay Park* near Angaston after 1912. It now displays SA registration 801 which was transferred from an earlier Lancia car. Whilst not legible, there is a name plate on the firewall – it may be *Silver Dawn* or *Golden Dawn* as suggested by Tom Clarke. The original artillery wheels had been replaced with wire-spoke wheels in 1910. As was customary at the time the headlamps were temporarily removed to avoid damage. Mr and Mrs Charles Angas are on the right with their youngest son Keith farewelling guests. Clarke and Neely in *Rolls-Royce and Bentley in the Sunburnt Country*, record that the Angas family sold this car in 1915.



Most researchers agree that the car was sold to Norris Duval in Sydney alternative dates being 1917

or 1919. The car was rebodied in Sydney and subsequently passed through numerous owners in NSW until about 1927 when it went to Victoria. It lay derelict until 1963 when Fred Miller Robinson and Harry Markoff bought it and Markoff had it rebodied by Horner in Melbourne in 1964. Markoff participated in the RROCA Federal Rally at Mildura in 1965 and won the Veteran Class and Ladies Choice awards and in 1968 he sold it to Rolls-Royce enthusiast R C Adams in California. The car has since been restored and took part in the 2013 Centenary Alpine Trial.



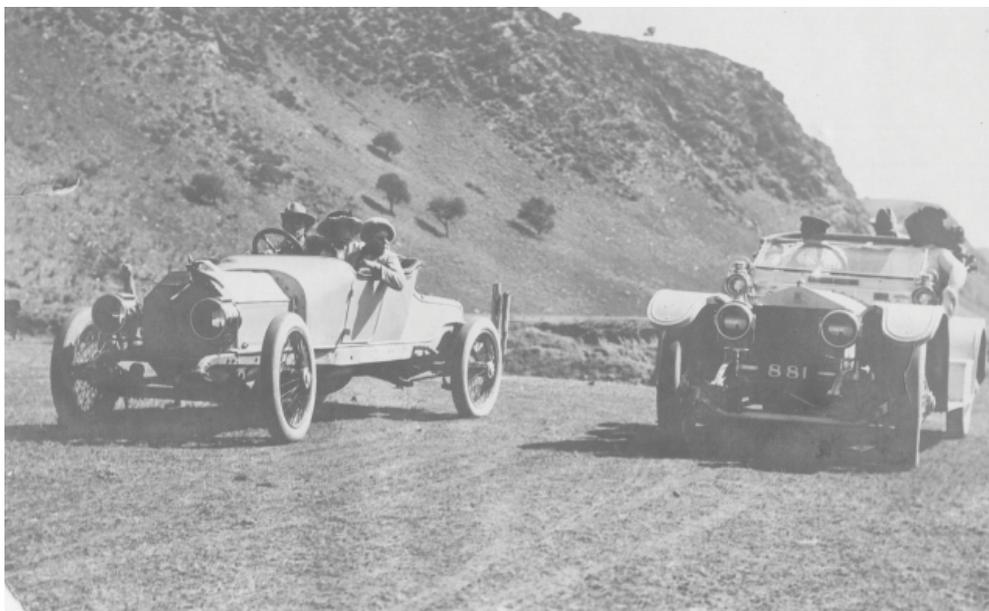
Pic 6 left;
The second Rolls-Royce ordered by Charles Angas was in July 1909 and it was ready for delivery in October in the same year. It was a short chassis 1126, fitted with Rudge-Whitworth wire wheels and a two-seater body with a dicky seat by Grosvenor & Co. It was shipped to South Australia and arrived at *Lindsay Park* in March 1910. It was the first Rolls-Royce imported into South Australia. Clarke and Neely, and Fasal and Goodman, suggest this chassis

originally carried a tourer body which was replaced by this two-seater body. The name, *Silver Dawn*, is clearly visible on the scuttle and its registration number was 881. The pre-Spirit-of-Ecstasy mascot on the radiator, known as *Bacchante*, is thought to have been crafted by Charles Sykes. The driver is Charles Angas. A few years later the car passed to his son Dudley. Irwin gives a good account of this car in his book including a copy of the factory invoice and detailed specifications.

Pic 7 right:

This photograph was taken in the vicinity of Second Valley, south of Adelaide in about 1912, when the two cars travelled from Angaston to Cape Jervis. It shows 1126 in company with Ronald Angas's 4.2 litre 25hp 1910 Lancia which had been stripped of its mudguards.

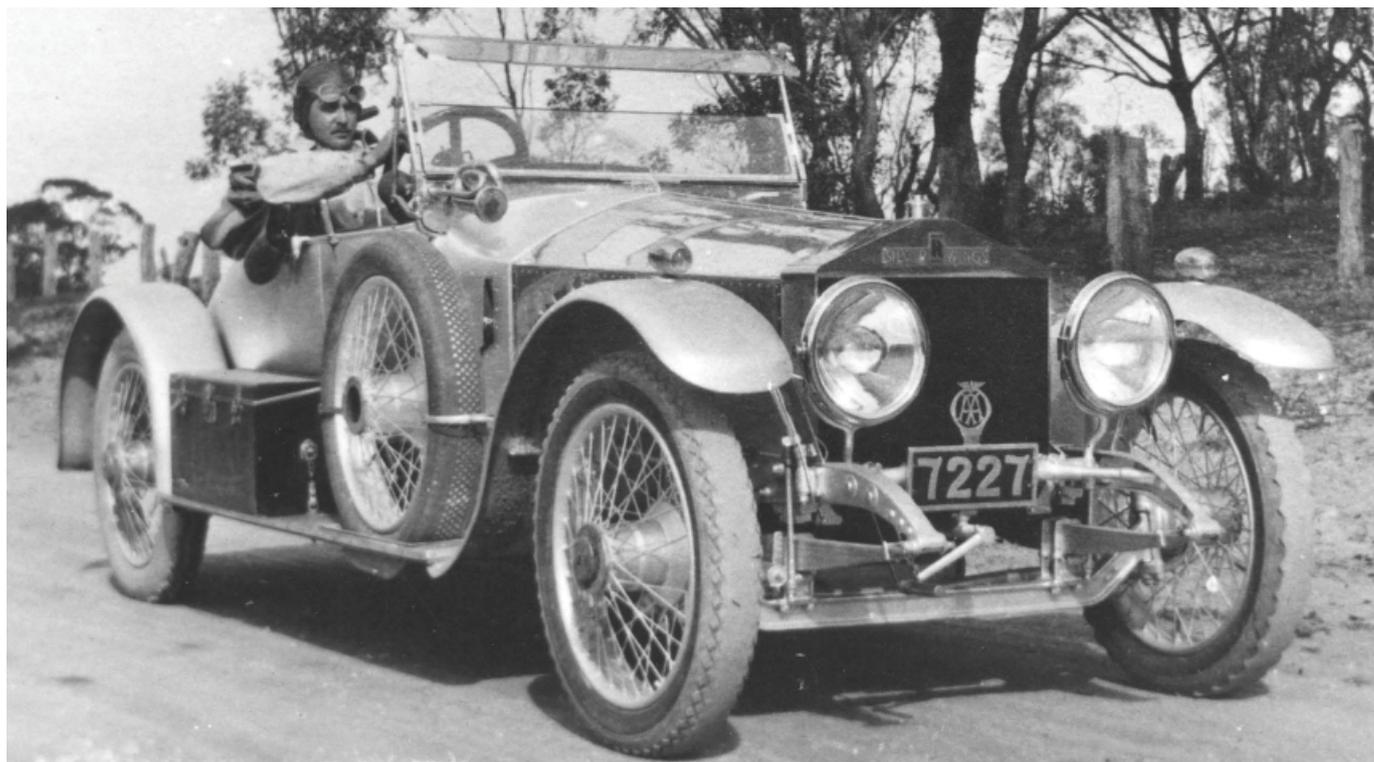
George Brooks, in *South Australian Motoring History Book No 8*, records that in 1912 the Lancia received, 'a new body built to Ronald's design by F T Hack, one of Adelaide's best known body builders of the day, and as a result was on his stand at the Adelaide Spring Show. The motor trade did not think much of this kind of thing, referring to it as a "freak" body. The fact that it had no doors would have made it unpopular on the second-hand car market when it was offered for sale in January 1913.'



From the Sir Henry Royce Foundation Archives:
continued

Pic 8 right:

In 1914 Dudley Angas sent 1126 to England for overhauling by Rolls-Royce and fitting of a new body of his own design by Grosvenor & Co. This photograph shows the end result. Dudley served as a Lieutenant with the Royal Naval Air Service in German South-West Africa during World War 1 where it is believed he had experience with Rolls-Royce armoured cars. He was invalided in 1917 and returned to Australia bringing 1126 with him.



Pic 9 above:

Ian Irwin records that on his return to SA, Dudley Angas had 1126 registered as 7227. What is interesting, however, is there are some minor differences with Grosvenor photograph. Notice that the side lights are now on the mudguards and a folding hood has been added. As there is no scuttle the nameplate previously on 1126 had to be removed and when magnified it clearly shows the name, *Silver Wings*, added adjacent to the R-R emblem on the radiator. Why had Dudley changed the name *Silver Dawn*? Dudley used 1126 while serving as a Recruiting Officer for the Australian Army at Broken Hill and Irwin records that, 'following resentment surrounding the issue of defence force conscription and recruiting, the young Lieutenant Angas was the subject of a sabotage attempt, and he and the car came to grief just outside Broken Hill when a wire was strung across the road. This was the first of two accidents with the revamped 1126'. Dudley managed the 4000 acre grazing property, *Hill River Station*, near Clare and George Brooks recounts a story that 1126, 'took part in a legendary race over six kilometres from the town to Hill River against a Ford, the Rolls travelling in reverse... and winning!' Later 1126 was involved in another more serious accident in Clare and was badly damaged. The chassis was badly twisted and Dudley sent the engine and other salvaged parts to the Rolls-Royce works in England in 1921 to have it repaired and fitted to a new chassis but Rolls-Royce deemed it beyond repair and bought it for spare parts. Tom Clarke remembers seeing the engine of 1126 when working at Crewe. The remains of the twisted chassis was later identified by Dudley's son, Alastair, at *Hill River Station*.

Pic 10 right:

The engine of 1126 was rebuilt and is now on display at the Sir Henry Royce Memorial Foundation at Paulerspury in Northamptonshire. In this more recent photograph Dudley's son, Alastair and his wife, Janet, inspected the engine while visiting Hunt House.





Pic 11 left
The third Rolls-Royce bought by Charles Angas was chassis 1524 – a 1911 Silver Ghost originally fitted with a Hooper limousine body and used by Rolls-Royce as a 'Royalty' loan car. Tom Clarke records that when Angas bought 1524 in May 1912 the Hooper body was removed and retained by the company and Angas had Grosvenor fit 'a Brougham-style coupe de ville (shown left) which was claimed to have been shown at the Olympia Show in October 1912 before being sent to Australia' which contradicts Ian Irwin's statement that, 'it was despatched to Mr Angas on 4th April 1911'. Irwin goes on to describe how 1524 was returned to

England in June 1923 for a thorough overhaul and upgrading after which the Brougham coupe de ville styled body was fitted by Grosvenor & Co and it was shipped back to South Australia in October the same year. This controversy has yet to be resolved. There is no doubt, however, that 1524 was named, *The Dreamer* and that it bore a unique mascot. Clarke and Neely record the later history of this car. 'In the 1930s it was rebodied as a six light saloon with bolt on disc wheels, reg'd SA 34-627 and used as a taxi by Mr Moss in Port Adelaide'. It was later converted into a tourer and passed through several other owners until Colin Angas of *Hutton Vale* acquired it for use as a farm hack not realising it was originally one of his grandfather's cars.

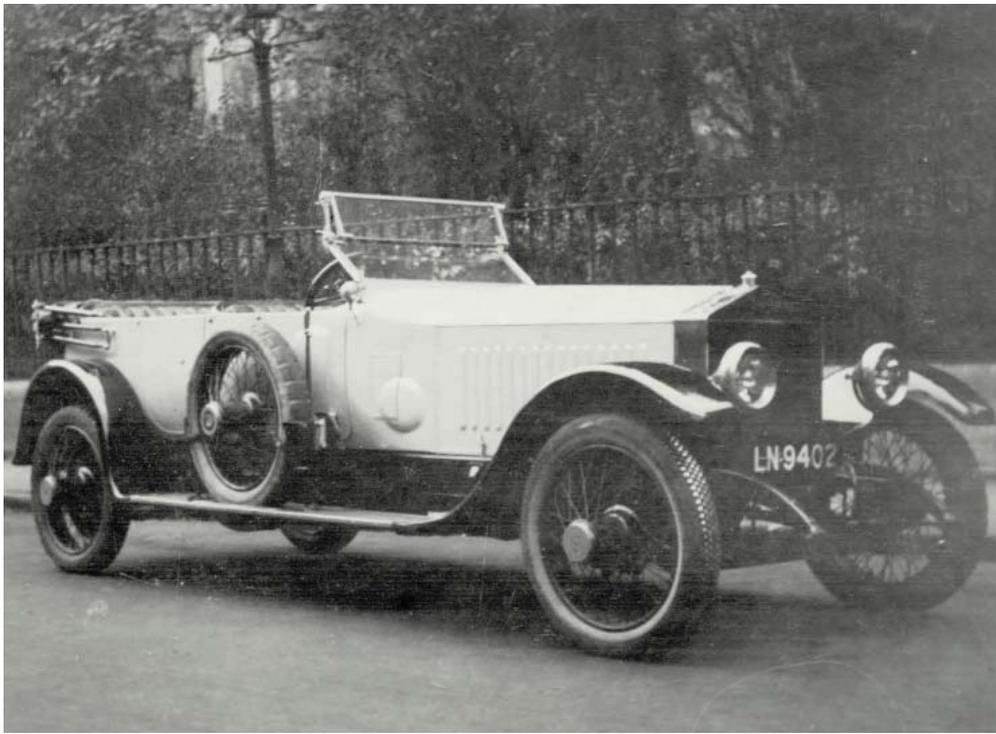
Pic 12 right:
This is 1524 being used as a hack during the 1950s. Colin Angas sold the much deteriorated car to well-known SA Rolls-Royce collector, Gavan Sandford-Morgan in 1956. In 1963 Charles Wright, an Adelaide enthusiast, bought the chassis and over the next 22 years he almost single-handedly renovated the chassis and built a near replica of the Brougham. Not only was Charles a skilled craftsman in wood, metal and upholstery but his capability as a draughtsman is illustrated in a scaled drawing of the chassis he prepared at the time of undertaking the restoration.



Pic 13 below:

This is Charles Wright's hand-built replica of the original Brougham on 1524 at *Collingrove* in June 1995 soon after completion. In this form it won several trophies at RROCA Federal Rallies including the Concours-de-Elegance at Shepparton in 1981 (jointly with 2617). After Charles Wright's death the car was acquired by Sir Henry Royce Foundation Trustee, Malcolm Johns of Sydney who later sold it and the body has been removed and is now on display at *Bill Allsep House* in Melbourne. A new open drive limousine body in the style of Grosvenor was built on the chassis by Roger Fry & Son in Perth for Jorge Frenandez and the car is now in Spain.





Pic 14 left:
The fourth Rolls-Royce purchased by the Angas family was 34ED. The caption to this photograph reads, 'Alpine Eagle Continental Model 40/50 Rolls-Royce. Grosvenor Carriage Co. delivered to RFA Nov 1916. Last civilian car. Chassis No 34ED'. This chassis came off test on 30 March 1915 and was bought by Lieutenant Ronald Angas who served in France for three years while his wife lived in the Grosvenor Gardens flat in London. It bore the registration number LN-9402 in UK. In 1919 34ED was shipped to South Australia where it was registered 03042 - a number also used on one of several Delage cars owned by the family. Later photographs show the body in a lighter colour than the mudguards which leads me to believe it was repainted prior to

being shipped to Australia.

A description of this car was prepared by Ronald Angas prior to offering it in the early 1920s for sale and it is reproduced below as it provides a contemporary record of the vehicle:

"Rolls-Royce Alpine Eagle Type 4 Speed Chassis No 34ED.

Delivered from the works 28 Nov 1915. First on the road January 1916. This was the last chassis delivered to a civilian during the war & no chassis were subsequently produced until August 1919. Except that no engine starter is fitted & no priming device. The chassis is identical with the 1st 1000 post war chassis. Mileage to date 12,300.

Fitted with 4, 895 x 150 Goodyear tyres, and 2, 895 x 150 Barnett Glass tyres. 3 spare tubes.

Complete tool kit: Pump, Jack etc. Spare piston rings. Spare valve springs. Spare valve. Set of lamp globes & other small spares.

The largest size Lucas Generator is fitted. Lucas lamps. Stewart Spot Light. Klaxon Horn. Watford Speedometer max hand and trip. Watford Clock with special trip setting.

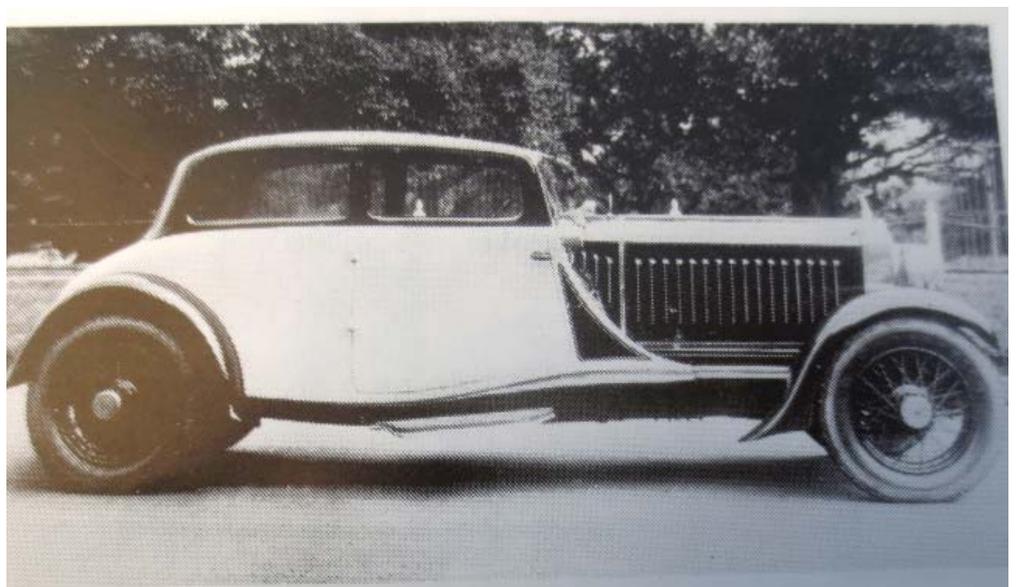
All instruments flush set in instrument board with scuttle cupboards on each side.

Four-five seated open body by Grosvenor Carriage Co, London. Painted Petunia grey. Upholstered in dark purple leather. Set of loose covers fitted. The body is finished with an aluminium moulding attached by concealed brackets. Kopalapso Hood. Beatonson Double Screen. Barker aluminium discs fitted to wheels. Set of spare discs with car.

The car was very little used during the war & before being shipped to Australia last June (1919) was completely overhauled by Rolls-Royce works, Derby, where the car was left for 4 weeks. Mileage since coming to Australia 5,700."

The claim that 34ED 'was the last chassis delivered to a civilian' is misleading. It was certainly the last ED model produced but Fasal and Goodman in *The Edwardian Rolls-Royce* list 106 other chassis produced up to 1917 in the subsequent series RD, CB, PD and AC. Of these 55 went to the Admiralty or the War Office for military use and the remainder were delivered to noblemen, organisations and private owners. Many of those which went to the War Office were as armoured cars.

The car was subsequently bought by W C Crowle of Elizabeth Bay, Sydney in 1922. Bert Ward's records show that it was rebodied in about 1931 by Smith & Waddington.



Pic 15 right:
This rather unusual two-door coachwork on 34ED is attributed to Smith & Waddington but some authorities believe it is too late for that company. Note the drum headlamps and absence of running board. Purist would no doubt have preferred the original London-Edinburgh style Grosvenor coachwork. The whereabouts of this car is a mystery.

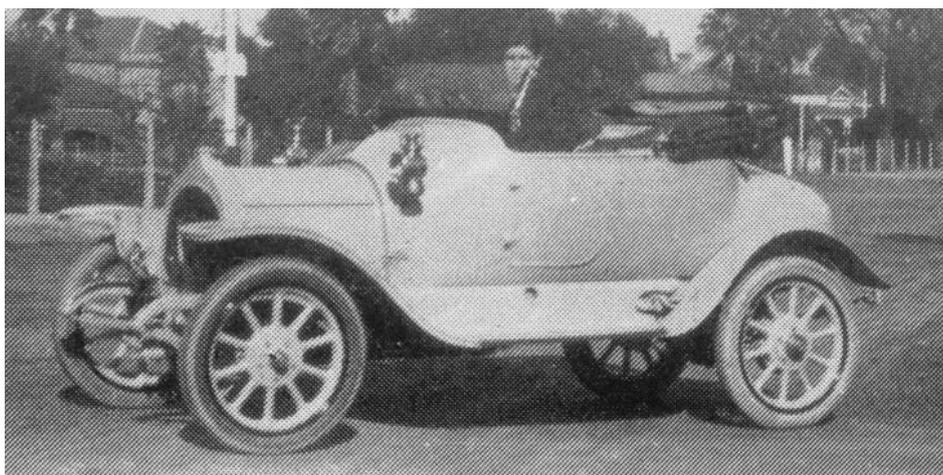


Pic 16 above:

Over the 1910s and 1920s the Angas family bought several other makes of car including Lancias, Stutz, Alvis, Cadillacs and this evocative 1914 30hp 6 cylinder 4.7 litre Sheffield-Simplex shown here in front of *Lindsay Park* with Beryl Angas seated in the rear. This stylish tourer body was built in South Australia by Murray Unger Ltd for Charles Angas and was exhibited at the Adelaide Show in September 1914. George Brooks in *The Sporting Car Club's South Australian Motoring History Book No 8* describes some of this car's features: 'An important innovation for 1914 was the complete electric lighting and starting equipment, wherein the dynamo-starter was built into the flywheel.' Brooks also noted that in 1914 there were 11 Sheffield-Simplex cars registered in South Australia compared with 9 Rolls-Royces. The Angas family at one time owned Sphinx Motor-body Works in Adelaide.

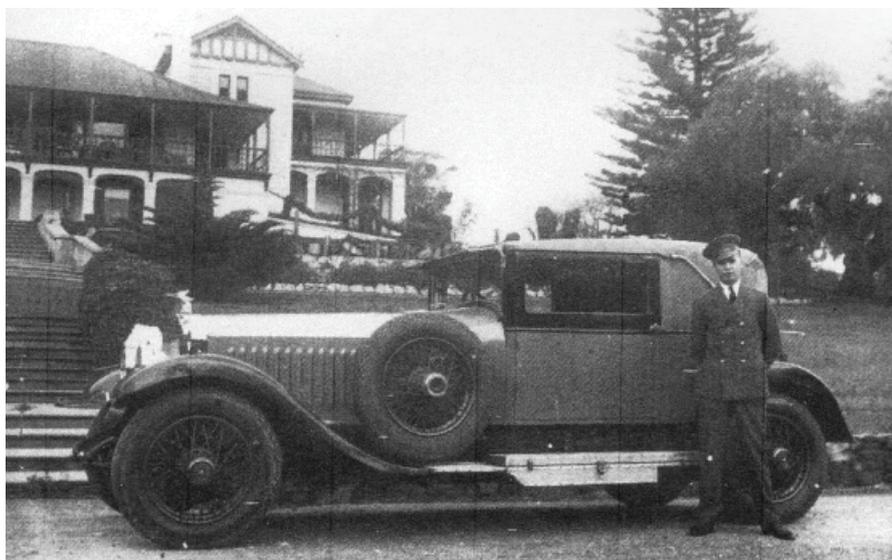
Pic17 right:

J Keith Angas was the youngest of the three sons of John and this was his first car. It is a 12.8hp Zedel which George Brooks describes as "French car current in 1913-14 and probably not new when he registered it" as SA 9264 in September 1917. Zedel cars are rare in Australia

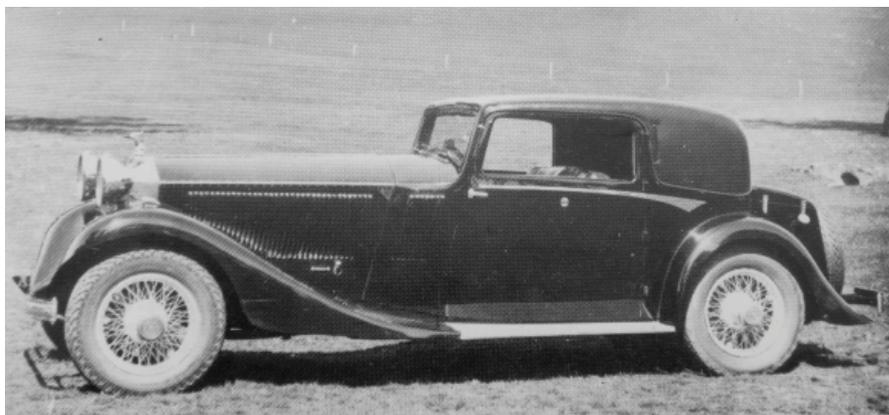


Pic 18 below:

J Keith Angas bought a new Rolls-Royce in 1927. It was a New Phantom, 2HC, which came off test in September 1925. Clarke and Neely record as 'A short wheelbase chassis said to have been exhibited at the Third International Motor Show in Melbourne in May 1927'. They suggest it had a 'Holden tourer fitted for £390, off test at Motors Ltd Aug. 1927; to J K (Later Sir Keith) Angas, *Lindsay Park*, Angaston SA as a chassis Oct 1928 with a Delage in part exchange'. This is the car left with chauffeur (Smith) in front of *Lindsay Park*, Angaston when it when it bore registration number 801, the number previously assigned to 60922. In this form it had a fixed head coupe built by Jim Beetles who at the time worked as a mechanic for the Angas brothers. Beetles was formerly employed by Sphinx Motor Garages and Body Builders in light Square, an enterprise financed by the Angas brothers in 1920 which closed down in 1925. Several of the Angas family cars were fitted with Sphinx bodies.



Pic 19 right: Keith Angas had the New Phantom, 2HC, rebodied by Martin & King in Melbourne in 1934 as a stylish two-door fixed-head coupe complete with family crest on the door. It was substantially different from the former coupe as may be seen in this photograph. Three years later he sold the car and after several other owners it was purchased by Victorian RROCA member, John V Mann. I first saw it at the Federal Rally in Canberra in 1970 but it is no longer listed in Chassis Plate. Does anyone know where it is now?



Pic 20 left Colin Angas told me that the family also had a passion for Delage motor cars and whilst it may be inappropriate to dwell on other makes in this journal I feel this picture and the related story are worthy of inclusion. The car is a 1923 Delage CO2 model with overhead valves, twin plug head, dual magneto ignition, developing 88bhp. Dudley Angas had purchased it in France and decided to return to Australia via USA. Harold Paynting in his book, *The Third James Flood Book of Early Motoring*, records that, 'With his friend, Comte de Boisgelian, of Paris, they called themselves the Bing

Boys, they left Southampton on December 12, 1923, on the Royal Mail Steamer, *Berengaria*, the Delage having left London on December 8th, being shipped on the United States Mail Steamer, *President Adams*.'

The New York *Tribune* on Friday, January 4th, 1924, carried the following article: 'The first transcontinental trip to be undertaken by a French motor car gets underway from New York, with Dudley T Angas, of Australia at the wheel and Comte de Boisgelian, of Paris, as mechanic. The trip of about 8,000 miles started without a repair part on board and is to demonstrate the adaptability of this type of auto to American country road conditions. The itinerary includes Washington, Pittsburgh, Atlanta, Miami, Dallas, San Francisco and Vancouver.' Despite poor road conditions in many parts of the country the car completed the trip successfully without the need for spare parts.



Pic 21 right:

The Angas brothers had a passion for Delage tourers such as this fine example in the driveway at *Lindsay Park* in 1923 with Mrs Monica Angas ready to go to town. This is a CO2 model and it carries the same registration number which was previously on the 1915 Alpine Eagle.

Although not featured in the Colin Angas album Dudley Angas's son, Alastair, is a keen motorist and he has owned 13 post-War Rolls-Royce and Bentleys. He joined the South Australian Branch of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia in 1968 and has owned - a 1949 Bentley MKVI James Young two-door saloon B235EW, a 1951 Silver Dawn SCA47, a 1953 R Type B2UM, a 1954 R Type Bentley B19YA, a 1954 Bentley R Type B208BD, a 1957 Bentley S1 Continental BC82BG, a 1964 Bentley S3 Saloon B68FG, a 1964 Bentley S3 Continental Flying Spur BC4XC, a 1964 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III SGT91, a 1966 Silver Shadow SRH1267, a 1967 Bentley T Series MPW CBH2088 and a 1990 Bentley Mulsanne S BSL 32658 and a 1994 Bentley Continental S BBS52361, not necessarily in that order - but that is another story waiting to be told.

I appreciate the opportunity to present these photographs and thank Colin Angas for permission to do so. I also acknowledge having reproduced selected information from Fasal & Goodman's excellent book, *The Edwardian Rolls-Royce*; Clarke and Neely's valuable work, *Rolls-Royce and Bentley in the Sunburnt Country*; Neely's detailed history of the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia, *In the Rear-view Mirror*; Ian Irwin's two detailed volumes, *Silver Ghosts of Australia and New Zealand*, Harold Paynting's book, *The Third James Flood Book of Early Motoring* and a series of eight booklets by George H Brooks titled, *South Australian Motoring History Books* published by the Sporting Car Club of South Australia.

Colin and Alastair Angas have been very helpful in providing photographs and recollections and I appreciate their valuable contributions and also generous advice from Tom Clarke and Peter Crauford, both of whom have shared their knowledge of these cars and their owners. Gilbert Ralph, SHRF

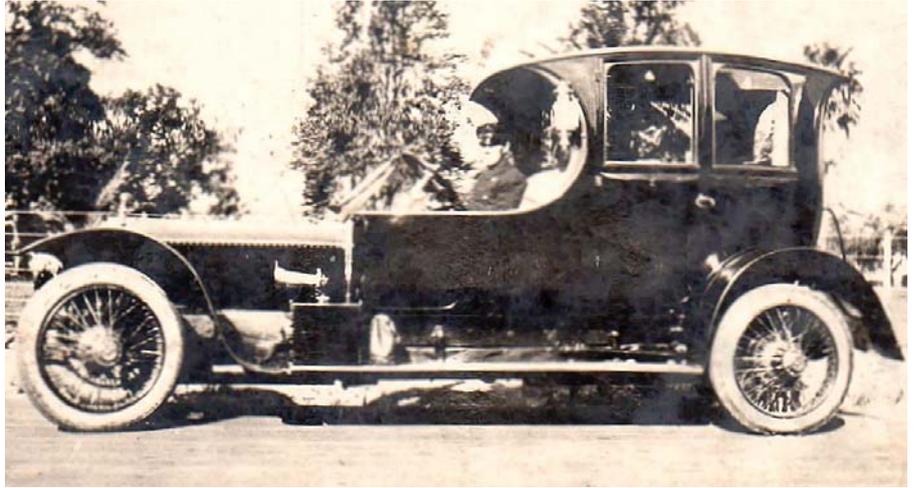
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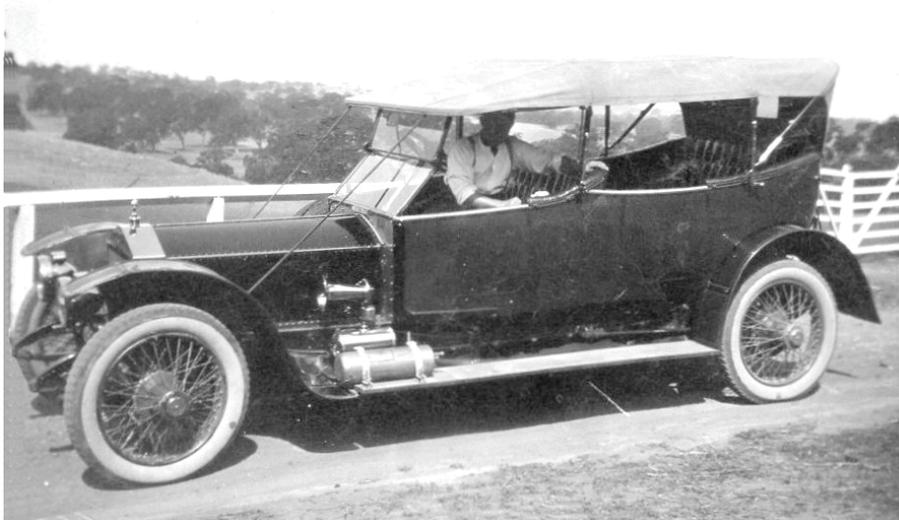


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above: The Angas family's Silver Ghost 1524 with chauffeur Frank Johnson at the wheel

below: Silver Ghost 1524 as a tourer the original wings and other features. Note the incredibly high rake of the original limousine steering. In addition, a photo emerged of 1524 on the road with its chauffeur, Frank Johnson, but still with the brougham body. The chances are that this body was impractical and was replaced early in Australia by the tourer shown. But I don't entirely rule out that rare option of summer and winter bodies.

On page 6574, picture 15 shows the former Angas car 34ED rebodied by Waddington, not Smith & Waddington. The former was the smaller successor to the latter. The body shown was mimicking the same style by Lancefield in England. On page 6576, picture 19's caption asks where chassis 2HC is now. This stylish car is now in the late Prince Rainier collection in Monaco.



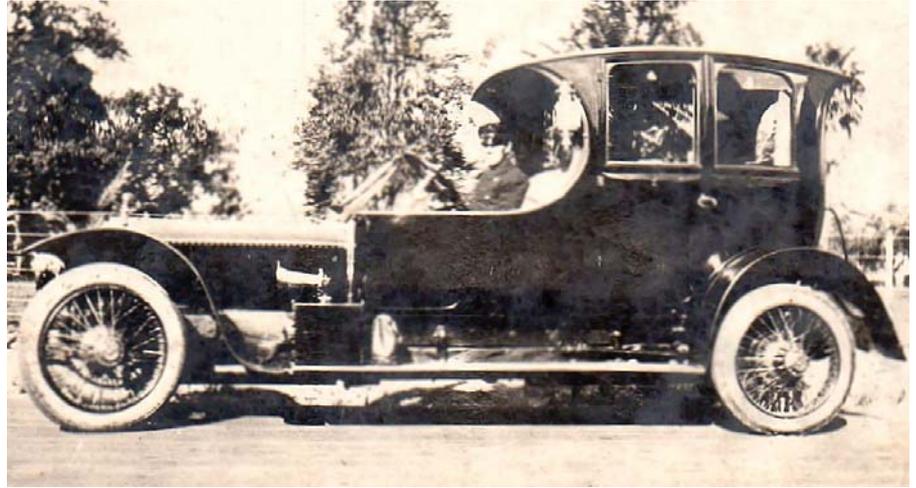
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