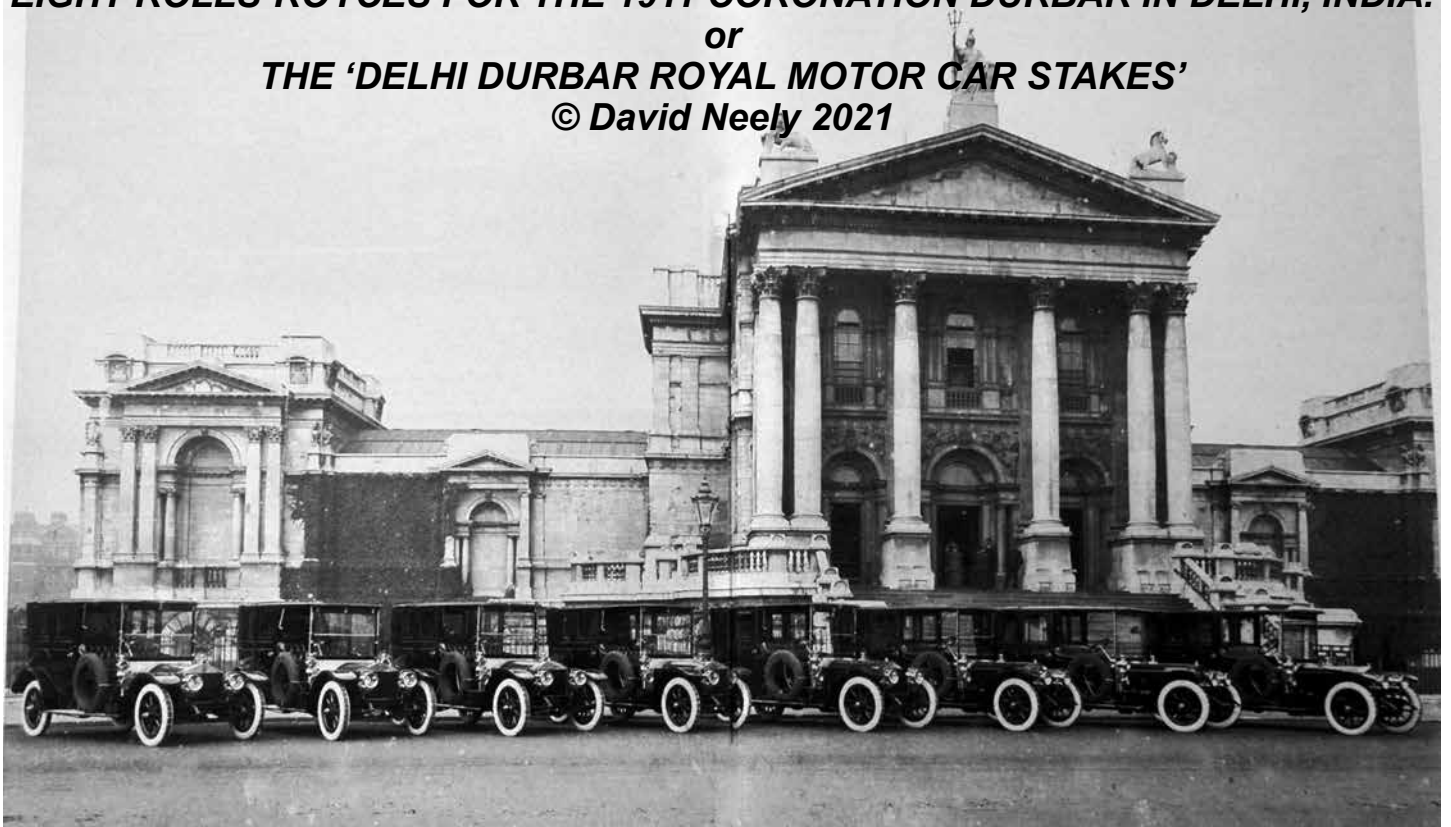


EIGHT ROLLS-ROYCES FOR THE 1911 CORONATION DURBAR IN DELHI, INDIA. or THE 'DELHI DURBAR ROYAL MOTOR CAR STAKES' © David Neely 2021



The eight virtually identical Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost landaulettes ordered by the Government of India for the Coronation Durbar in Delhi. Photographed outside the Tate Gallery, London, 30 September 1911 prior to shipment to Calcutta. Cars left to right are 1664, 1667, 1669 and 1670 all by Barker; 1672 Hooper; 1674 Thrupp & Maberly; 1677 H. J. Mulliner; and, 1679 Arthur Mulliner. [Photographed from a double page image in John Fasal and Bryan Goodman's 'The Edwardian Rolls-Royce', Vol. 1, pages 416-7.]

The line-up of cars for the Delhi Durbar, alphabetically, included Rolls-Royce, Standard and Wolseley.

"Rolls-Royce Cars for Indian Durbar" was the heading in 'Indian Motor News'. "The Rolls-Royce Company were recently honoured by the Government of India with instructions to furnish them with eight Rolls-Royce cars for use during the forthcoming Durbar in Delhi." A durbar is a public reception held by an Indian prince or a British governor or viceroy in India, or in this case by King George V, Emperor of India.

Rolls-Royce was only one of the British car manufacturers that provided cars for the Royal visit and Coronation Durbar. The Standard Motor Company supplied a very large number, and so deserve some detailed coverage here. Fortunately we have contemporary descriptions of the Standards. Other first-hand accounts include those of the official historian and the reminiscences of the Viceroy. Pageantry was the order of the day in India in 1911 and the scale was staggering.

Lord Hardinge (1858-1944) arrived in India on 18 November 1910 to take over the post of Viceroy and Governor-General from The Earl of Minto. Responding to a welcoming address, Hardinge noted he was following in the footsteps of his grandfather, Sir Henry Hardinge, who was Governor-General of India from 1844 to 1848. But he had some startling news, "In my reply to the address I made the further announcement, which I had only learnt by telegram on my arrival, that the King and Queen would hold an Imperial Durbar in India in December 1911." The Royal Proclamation of 22 March 1911 put it, "We do hereby charge and command Our right trusted and well beloved counsellor Charles Baron Hardinge of Penshurst, Our Viceroy and Governor-General of India, to take all necessary measures in that behalf." Hardinge noted in his reminiscences, "This prospect naturally created great enthusiasm throughout the whole of India." It also created an enormous additional workload and challenges for Hardinge. Not least, by law the Coronation crown could not leave England. A new crown would need to be made.

HM King George V formally announced the proposed visit to India during his first speech to Parliament on 6 February 1911. John

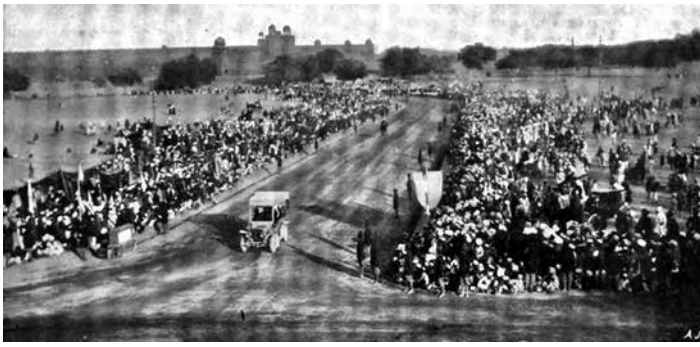


The fleet of Standard cars assembled before leaving England for the Royal Visit and Coronation Durbar. (Newspaper Illustrations Limited)

Fortescue, who accompanied Their Majesties as the official historian on the visit, noted the King's earlier visit to the Indian Empire, "He then bethought himself of the words that he had spoken and conceived at once an earnest desire to revisit India as King-Emperor. The idea, wholly his own..." King George was reflecting on his 1905/06 tour of the Indian Empire with Queen Mary, when they were the Prince and Princess of Wales.

The 1905/06 tour lasted four months with a daunting schedule of Durbars, visits, speeches, unveilings and being hosted by leaders, both Indian and British. The Earl of Minto (1845-1914) was the Viceroy and Lady Minto the Vicereine. As it turned out it was the perfect experience for the coming 1911 Durbar. Motor cars were used, "during their triumphal procession through the Indian Empire", noted 'The Automotor Journal' in January 1906. Photographs of two of the cars used were published, one in the October 1905 issue, an Argyll, and the other in the November 1905 issue, a 24 h.p. Panhard-Levassor tourer. Both were shipped courtesy of their owners. The Royal Daimlers remained in the Royal Mews.

Their Majesties left Buckingham Palace on 11 November 1911



Motoring was a regular form of transport during the 1905/06 tour of India by the Prince and Princess of Wales. In the picture Their Royal Highnesses are arriving in one of their cars at the Mosque of Jama Masjid. The car looks to be the Argyll. ('The Automotor Journal', 13 January 1906.)



Two views of the Argyll used by Their Royal Highnesses on the 1905/06 tour of India. The car was specially constructed at Glasgow, under the order of the Earl of Shaftsbury. It was painted cream, upholstered in blue and had a specially designed canopy with sun blinds and windows. It seated seven.

Pictured here before being dispatched to Bombay. ('The Automotor Journal', 21 October, 1905.)



and travelled to India aboard the P & O Company's steamer 'Medina'. The Coronation Durbar was held at Delhi on 12 December 1911.


Describing the Rolls-Royces, the 'Indian Motor News' continued, "These cars, which are all of the Landauette type of body mounted on the well known 6-cylinder Rolls-Royce chassis

of 40-50 H.P. will leave London on the 30th instant (September, 1911) by the P. & O. Company's Steamship "Simla". In charge are eight Rolls-Royce drivers, and are consigned in the first instance, through the Rolls-Royce Indian Depot at Bombay, which has been established to deal with the sale of Rolls-Royce cars in India, and to study the interests of owners of these cars in that country. The coachwork in every case is of a most luxurious description, no expense being spared in order to make the cars as complete and as perfect as possible. Four of the bodies have been built by Messrs. Barker & Co., South Audley Street, the remaining four being built respectively by Messrs. Hooper, Thrupp & Maberly, H. J. Mulliner and (Arthur) Mulliner Ltd., of Long Acre. The approximate selling price of each car, according to catalogue, is £1,350 complete in London."

The "Durbar" cars, as they were described in Rolls-Royce records, had virtually identical landaulette bodies. They were all painted






Charles Hardinge, 1st Baron Hardinge of Penshurst, and Winifred Selina, née Sturt, Lady Hardinge. (Wikimedia Commons.)



WOLSELEY

CARS FOR THE VICEROY OF INDIA.



The above illustrations show the 50 h.p. Imperial Limousine, the 50 h.p. Cabriolet, and the 20/28 h.p. Limousine Landaulette, recently supplied by us to THE VICEROY OF INDIA.

New Catalogue No. 27, post free.

THE WOLSELEY TOOL & MOTOR CAR Co., Ltd.

Telegrams: "Eascliffe, Birmingham."

LONDON: York Street, Westminster.

Telegrams: "Autocent, London."

Garage: 823 Westminster.

PROPRIETORS: VICKERS, LTD.

ADDERLEY PARK, BIRMINGHAM.

MANCHESTER: 76, Deansgate.

Telegrams: "Automar, Manchester."

Telephone: 6993.

Wolseley cars destined to transport Their Majesties at the Durbar. (Courtesy of Tom Clarke)



The King alighting from the Viceroy's 50 h.p. Wolseley Imperial limousine at Calcutta Racecourse. Note the crown mascot. (Courtesy of Tom Clarke)

dark blue and black with red lines. Wilton J Oldham in 'The Rolls-Royce 40/50 hp Ghosts, Phantoms and Spectres' noted, "Claude Johnson was very quick to seize on this piece of publicity, that His Majesty King George V was using Rolls-Royce cars in India. This was not strictly accurate, but Claude Johnson longed for Rolls-Royce cars to replace the State Daimler cars which King George invariably used, so he became carried away with the thought of supplying cars for the celebrations." Similarly, not quite accurate was the view put forward by Anthony Bird and Ian Hallows in 'The Rolls-Royce Motor Car', "Royalty remained faithful to their Daimlers Quasi-Royal approval was given in 1911 when the Indian Government ordered eight Rolls-Royces for King George V and his suite to use at the Delhi Durbar."

The "Durbar" Rolls-Royce chassis were all ready for testing in late June and early July 1911 and the completed cars were shipped to Calcutta (now Kolkata). The "Durbar" cars did not carry special radiator mascots, just the normal town caps, nor did they display the Royal Coat of Arms. They were employed by the Government of India to convey officials to the celebrations in Delhi and also in Calcutta.

Hardinge succeeded The Earl of Minto, who was the Viceroy of India from 1905 to November 1910. Minto used 1909 Silver Ghost 1113 a Barker landaulette, which remained in India on his departure. Again the 'Indian Motor News' reported, "It is, at this time, interesting to note His Excellency the Viceroy of India is a user of Rolls-Royce cars; also that for some years past the Rt. Hon. The Earl of Minto, K.G. (Ex-Viceroy of India), has been a user of Rolls-Royce cars both in India and, later in England, having honoured the Rolls-Royce Company with an order for a duplicate of the car he used in India, on his return to this country." Minto on his return home did indeed order 1910 chassis 1442 with identical Barker coachwork as on 1113. Hardinge used 1113 before it was returned to the Rolls-Royce depot having covered over 7,000 miles in a couple of years.

Hardinge ordered a new suite of cars, but not Rolls-Royces, or Daimlers for that matter. He favoured Wolseleys. His three new Wolseleys arrived in time to be at the disposal of the King and Queen. The King did not take his Daimlers with him on trips abroad and nor did he take his chargers which caused Hardinge some consternation, "A question that preoccupied me greatly was that of the King's charger and carriage horses. Knowing how difficult it was to find a really fine charger for the King that would be

quiet and well trained, I urged H.M. to bring two or three chargers with him but he declined to do so." So Hardinge had to find a charger but there was also the King's Crown, which was required for the Durbar.

Hardinge was a talented administrator and politically astute. When he discovered that attempts had been started to raise funds through subscriptions for the Crown he quickly vetoed the plan judging it was inappropriate. In the end, the Indian Government paid the £60,000 it cost. He also decreed the Imperial Crown of India, made by

Royal Warrant holder Garrard, would go back to England after the Durbar. He judged that if it remained in India it would become a prized trophy for any



This special radiator mascot was fitted to all the Standard cars. (Standard Registrar 1903-1930, Registrar, Leonard Barr, UK.)



Their Majesties leaving Government House, Bombay to depart in the Standard, with its crown mascot. (Stewart & Metsker via Sarmaya Collection.)




The King is in conversation with his chauffeur William Charles Vincent. Mr Vincent was employed by the Standard Motor Company, which supplied the drivers as well as the cars. Following the visit, King George presented Mr Vincent with a number of gifts including a ceremonial Kukri (type of machete) set carved to depict the King on the tiger shooting and a set of gold cufflinks from Garrard.

(Information from W Vincent, grandson in New Zealand via Standard Registrar 1903-1930)


successful insurrection. On return to England the Imperial Crown of India was added to the regalia in the Tower of London. Complementing the grandeur of the Crown was another commission

EMPEROR CORONATION
DURBAR SOUVENIR

BRITISH BUILT "STANDARDS"
Supplied to the order of
The Government of India, The Government of the United Provinces,
The Government of Bombay, H. H. The Maharajah Sir Chandra
Sham Shere Jung Bahadur Rana, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., D.C.L. (Oxon.), of Nepal.



6-Cylinder 20 H.P. Standard Car with Dunlop Tyres
for HIS MAJESTY THE KING-EMPEROR.



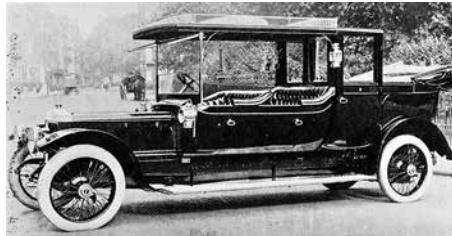
A fleet of "Standard" Cars for the Nepal Shoot.

T. R. PRATT, Norton Buildings, Calcutta,
Agent for The STANDARD CARS.

This advertisement appeared in 'The Empress Coronation Durbar Souvenir from 1911. (Heritage Transport Museum, Gurgaon, India.)



Postcard, "Naval Guard of Honour arrive at the Review - Delhi - 1911". (Raja Ravi Varma Oleographs.)



The specially bodied Daimler for use at the Delhi Durbar. (Brian E Smith, 'Royal Daimlers' page 88.)

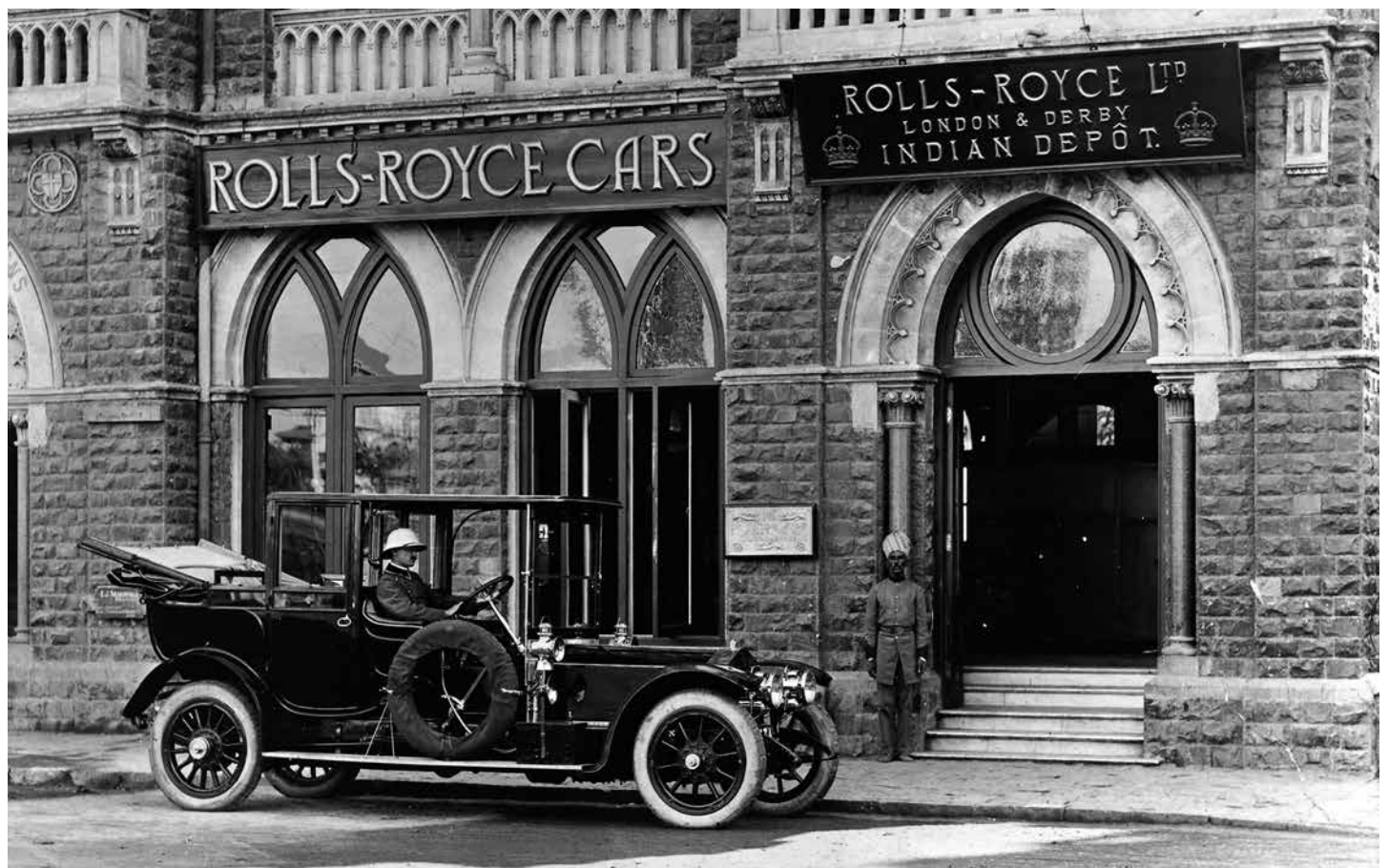
from Garrard by jewellery aficionado Queen Mary for her glittering Delhi Durbar Tiara.

Daimler, the Royal Warrant holders, did not supply cars for Their Majesties to use in India. However, as Brian Smith writing in 'Royal Daimlers' noted, "The Daimler Company furnished dignitaries and Indian Princes with an attractive variety of motors. The Daimler orders were principally placed through the Bombay Motor Car Company and before the opening of the Durbar all their stock had been disposed of."

One spectacular Daimler was notable for its extra length, a fea-

ture favoured by Indian Princes. It was described by Brian Smith, "A Pullman limousine specially constructed by Offord & Sons, Ltd, was built on a specially prepared 38 hp six-cylinder chassis having a wheelbase of fourteen feet. The body allowed for eleven occupants - five in the landaulette rear part on armchair-type seats so constructed to face forward or backward. The upholstery was in a delicate light blue cloth with laces to match, and the windows were fitted with silk blinds. The exterior was painted royal blue with fine lines in yellow and the fittings and mountings both inside and out were of silver."

It was, however, the Standard Motor Co. of Coventry that made the greatest automotive contribution to the Royal visit and Coronation Durbar. Its Managing Director, Sir Charles E H Friswell (1871-1926), sailed to India in April 1911 and held talks with Indi-



One of the "Durbar" Silver Ghosts, 1674, the Thrupp & Maberly landaulette, outside the Indian Depot. Harry Fleck one of Rolls-Royce drivers is at the wheel. Fleck's diary records he drove the "King-Emperor". The Crowns on the sign signified that the cars used by the Viceroy, the Earl of Minto was the first, and the Governors of Provinces displayed the Royal Crown on the front of their vehicles. (Information courtesy of John Fasal, image Rolls-Royce Press.)



The King and Queen setting out from Nagpur railway station in a Siddeley-Deasy. (Team-BHP.com.)

an Government officials and entered into a contract to supply cars for the Durbar Coronation ceremonies. He also made a contract with the Vice Regal Department for the provision of Standard cars for the whole of the Royal suite. The crowning glory, to coin a phrase, was that Friswell arranged to provide Standard cars for the personal use of the King Emperor during the Royal Visit and Durbar celebrations.

Four fleets of Standards, 42 in all, were in Bombay (now Mumbai), Calcutta, Delhi and Nepal. After the Durbar the King went to Nepal for a shooting expedition while the Queen went sightseeing. The fleet in Nepal comprised, "two 20 h.p. Standard cars with luxurious landaulette bodies, two beautifully fitted double phaetons for the Royal visitors attending the shoot and several 20 h.p. lorries to convey the beaters and the impediments of the shoot". Official historian Fortescue recorded that on just one day in Nepal, "Five tigers, a rhinoceros and a hog deer (a small deer, native to Nepal) were the King's bag for the day." The King killed another seven rhinoceros over the ten days of the shoot.

As well as being geographically deployed for the celebrations the Standards were colour-coded! Those for the King were royal blue with red lines and upholstered, some in grey and some in blue. Those for the Viceroy and his suite were painted in the Royal colours. Those for the Government of India were painted green and upholstered in green. Those for the Governor of Bombay and suite were all in French grey throughout.

One of the Standards for the King was described in the 'Indian Motor News', "The Bombay Cycle and Motor Agency are busy unpacking the 'Standard' cars, which are to be used by Their Majesties, the Governor of Bombay and the Royal visitors. The actual car for the King's use is a 20 h.p. six-cylinder British built 'Standard' made by the Coventry firm for whom the Bombay Cycle and Motor agency are sole agents, and who have it on view at their show rooms in York Buildings, Hornby Road. The carriage is painted Royal blue with thin red lines and the crown on the panels of the doors. The interior is the acme of comfort, upholstered in grey cloth with artistic trimmings of silk white ivory and silver." The Bombay Cycle and Motor Agency started selling bicycles in 1885 and in 1898 began selling imported cars.

In the Durbar grounds 233 camps covering 25 square miles were erected with 10 square miles of canvas to accommodate 200 Indian Princes, Provincial Government officials and 70,000 troops. Lady Llangattock (1837-1923), Charles Rolls' mother, was among the guests. A large number of tourists attended including a group of school boys from the King's School, Parramatta, Sydney. Perhaps an appropriate Royal connection as their school was founded in 1831 by the command of King William IV. There was seated accommodation for 100,000. Forty miles of roads were constructed and 36 miles of railway lines and 24 new railway stations were built. The King's camp covered 85 acres and was beautifully laid out with roads, green lawns and rose gardens.

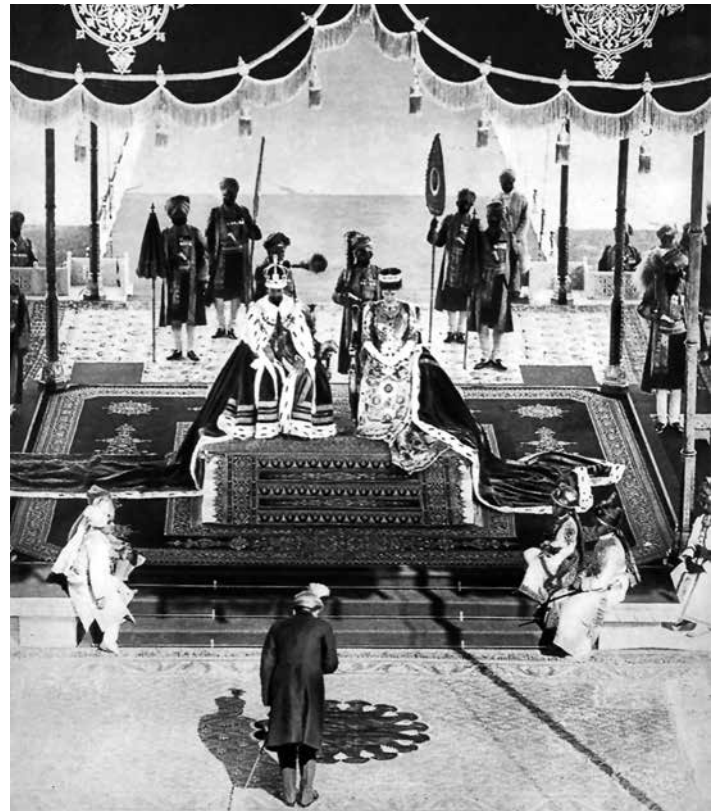
There were instances where the designated Royal Standards and Viceroy Wolseleys were not used to convey Their Majesties. One of the Rolls-Royce drivers, Harry Fleck, wrote in his diary that he drove the King Emperor. On another occasion The King and Queen were conveyed in a Siddeley-Deasy car belonging to Mr Craddock, Commissioner of the Central Provinces.

Duncan & Fraser, the Adelaide agent for Standards, placed this advertisement in 'The Advertiser' on 1 June 1912. It was headed "Royalty Used Standard Cars at the Delhi Durbar." This message was reproduced in the advertisement:

"King Emperor's Camp, India, 5/1/1912. Dear Sir Charles Friswell - I write to say that the cars supplied by you during the tour of India have been in every way satisfactory, and, please, allow me to thank you for all the trouble you have taken about them. Yours truly, (signed) R. E. Kingston, Br.-Gen., M.S. to the King Emperor."

The suite of eight Rolls-Royces made an impressive display in India. So how did 'The Best Car in the World' become outranked in what I like to term the 'Delhi Durbar Royal Motor Car Stakes'? There were two reasons. First, the entrepreneurial genius of Standard's Sir Charles Friswell and second, Lord Hardinge's patronage of Wolseleys.

Acknowledgements: Special assistance from Tom Clarke Honorary Life Member RROCA from 1979 (WA/UK) and John Fasal (UK); My Indian Years 1910-16, The Reminiscences of Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, K.G., P.C., G.C.B., G.G.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O., LL.D.; and, Narrative of the Visit to India of Their Majesties King George V and Queen Mary at the Coronation Durbar Held at Delhi 12th December 1911 by The Hon. John Fortescue.



The Nizam of Hyderabad paid homage at the Delhi Durbar. Until his rule ended in 1946 he was reputed to be the richest man in the world. (A print from King Emperor's Jubilee, 1910-1935, by FGH Salusbury, Daily Express Publications, London, 1935.)



Their Majesties driving to the Durbar. Lord Hardinge's offer of his State carriage horses for the King's use was inexplicably declined by the government. He had specified that the King and Queen were to arrive in a State carriage with six horses while his was to have four. Hardinge wrote, "My disgust may be imagined when I saw the King and Queen arrive with only four horses to their carriage (as pictured here), and not worthy specimens at that." (National Portrait Gallery, London.)



(Clockwise from above) Queen Mary wearing the Delhi Durbar Tiara. It was surmounted by ten large emeralds to match the suite of diamond and emerald jewellery, which she also had made for the Durbar.

(Wikimedia Commons.)

(Top right) Titled "King Emperor's Hunt in India" taken on the shooting expedition in Nepal following the Durbar. (Bain News Service via the Library of Congress.)

(Right) The Duncan & Fraser advertisement in the 1 June, 1912 issue of 'The Advertiser' (Adelaide).



Royalty Used "Standard" Cars At the Delhi Durbar.

Can there be any more striking tributes to the super-excellence of the "Standard" than the following:-
"Standard" Cars were used by His Majesty the King, the Royal Suite, the Bombay Presidency, and the Indian Government at the Delhi Durbar Festivities, 1911.



King Emperor's Camp,
India, 5/1/1912.

"Dear Sir Charles Friswell—I write to say that the cars supplied by you during the tour in India have been in every way satisfactory, and, please, allow me to thank you for all the trouble you have taken about them.

Yours truly,

(signed) R. E. Kingston,
Br.-Gen., M.S. to the King Emperor."

DUNCAN & FRASER

FRANKLIN-STREET,

(near G.P.O.), ADELAIDE.

Club Members' Advertisements



FOR SALE: Four 15 inch alloy wheels ex 1980s Bentley with appropriate mounting studs, shown as fitted to this T Type but not included in its recent sale. Contact Ron Hasell ar (03) 942 1105 or ronhasell@gmail.com



FOR SALE: POCHER ITALIAN MADE 1/8 MODEL OF A 1932 PHANTOM II SEDANCA COUPÉ I have been sitting on a model Rolls-Royce Phantom since I bought it in the late '70s and my brother brought it home after his OE for me to assemble and enjoy. I started to assemble the engine and one wheel, but life got in the way, and now my old fingers and failing eyesight mean I think someone else will enjoy the experience more than I can.. **Offers please: what better way to come out of enforced spare time with an achievement?** Contact rusby@xtra.co.nz or 0274100889

