

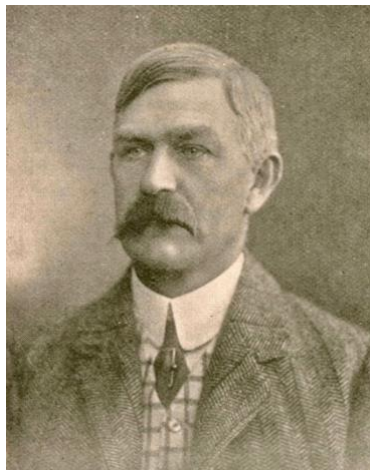
A Dozen Rolls-Royce Owners in South Australia in 1926  
“C. H. Angas, Angaston”  
1911 Silver Ghost, chassis 1524, Grosvenor (UK) Brougham

David Neely, Historical Consultant, Sir Henry Royce Foundation, Australia, 2022

“Rolls-Royce Owners – Twelve in State” was the heading of an article in the 26 January 1926 edition of the Adelaide newspaper ‘News’, which was published from 1923 to 1954.

It continued: “There are 12 owners of Rolls-Royce cars in this State so far as can be ascertained from records. On account of this rather small number casual observers usually look twice if they happen to see a Rolls-Royce purring along. Among those who are stated to own one of these cars, which are regarded as the aristocrats of the road so far as the British automobile industry is concerned are Messrs T. E. Barr Smith, Glen Osmond: T. Tait, Oaklands: C. H. Angas, Angaston: G. Milne, Brougham Place, North Adelaide: J. M. Reid, Victoria Avenue, Unley Park: J. P. Lewis, Nelyambo Station, Wilcannia: Napier Birks, Park Terrace, Parkside: Mesdames W. T. Mortlock, Martindale Hall, Mintaro: L. Hughes, Lee Lodge, Strangways Terrace, North Adelaide: M Symonds, Walkerville: T.R. Scarfe, Eden Park, Marryatville: and Miss M. F. Simms, Moseley Street, Glenelg.”

Charles Howard Angas (1861-1928), pictured below from Ancestry, was one of South Australia’s most prominent pastoralists. Born in London he came to South Australia in his infancy and returned to England for his education. His family returned to South Australia in 1879 on the death of his grandfather George Fife Angas (1789-1879) the so-called founder of the colony. The family properties passed to Charles when his father John Howard Angas died in 1904. Charles married Eliza Etty Dean (1861-1926) in 1885.



Angas owned three Rolls-Royce Silver Ghosts: 1909 chassis 60922 with a tourer body by Brainsby & Sons, London and Peterborough; chassis 1126 with a two-seater body by Grosvenor; and, 1911 chassis 1524 with a Grosvenor brougham (or coupe de ville) body. By 1917 chassis 60922 had been sold and in 1921 chassis 1126 was reported by Rolls-Royce as unrepairable following a major accident. At the time of our 1926 newspaper list of Rolls-Royce owners Angas had 1524 and would have been well-known as a Rolls-Royce owner in South Australia.

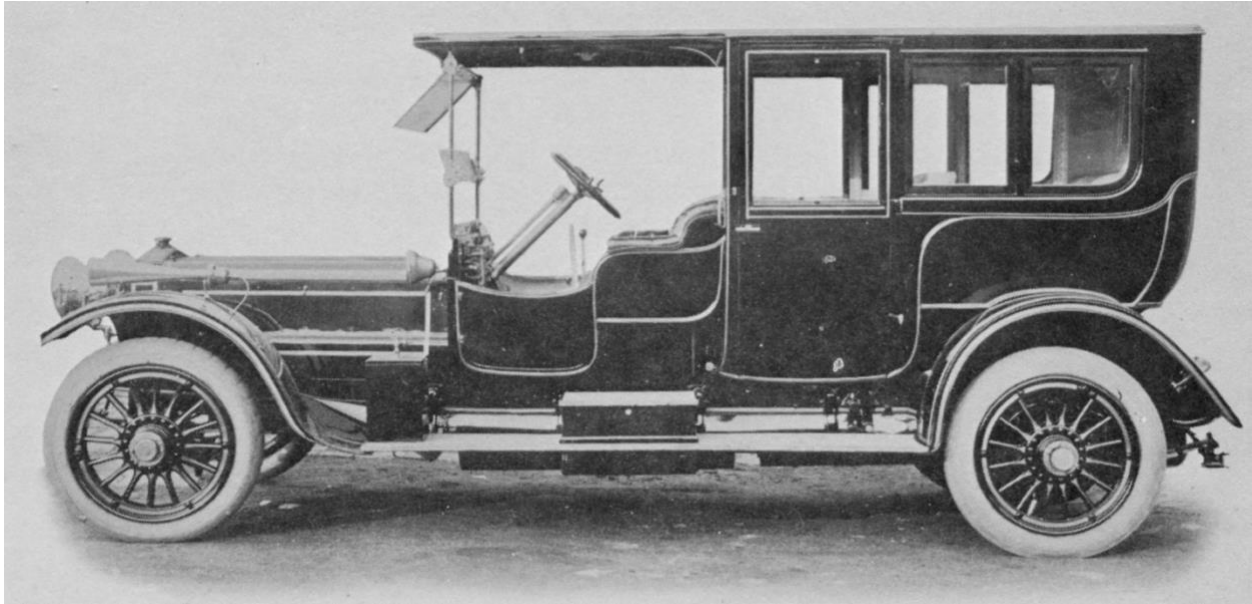
The Grosvenor Carriage Co Ltd was established in Kilburn, North-West London, about 1910. Angas’s second Rolls-Royce, 1126, was off test in September 1909. Angas was in London when he ordered the Grosvenor body, which seems to be an early commission for the firm. It is interesting that Angas chose a new coachbuilder rather than one of the long-established firms like Barker or Hooper. He would repeat his preference for Grosvenor when it later came to Silver Ghost 1524.



**Above:** Lindsay House and Park, near Angaston, the residence of George Fife Angas (1789-1879), Charles's grandfather. Photographed about 1875. [State Library of South Australia.]

**Below:** Collingrove was commenced in 1856 and was the family home of John Angas, Charles's father. This photograph taken about 1875 shows a gardener digging in the flower beds while two members of the family watch from the front verandah. [State Library of South Australia.]





*Above: The first body on 1524 was a Hooper & Co "Limousine like H. M. The Kings". It would have looked like this Hooper bodied limousine on the Japanese Emperor's 57 h.p. Daimler, styled exactly like those built for King George V. [Brian E Smith, 'Royal Daimlers'.]*

"Angas ex Royalty" was written on the Rolls-Royce sales sheet for 1524 when it was purchased for £1,200 by Angas on 9 May 1912. The annotation "Royalty" has led to the suggestion that 1524 was a Royal commission or connection. If so, it would have been a significant departure from the Royal family's steadfast loyalty to Daimler.

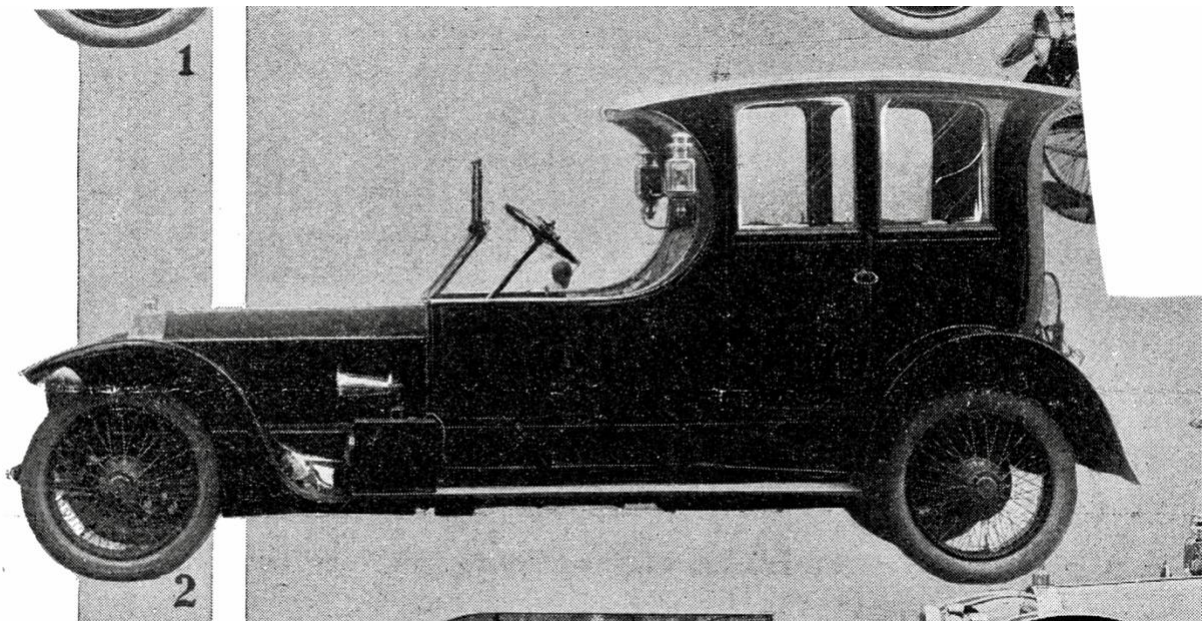
Chassis 1524 was sent to the Testing Department on 1 February 1911. The sales sheet for 1524 recorded, "Wardman" which was crossed out and in its place was written "Royalty". A B Wardman & Sons Ltd, Harrogate, Yorkshire, were automobile engineers and Rolls-Royce agents. They placed regular orders, 23 Silver Ghosts in 1910 and a further two in 1911 before 1524. The date of sale for the Wardman order was 12 August 1910 and a "Limousine Laudaulet" with a "Whitmore" body by Barkers was ordered. This order was cancelled and Wardman was refunded the deposit.

The order was changed to a Hooper limousine on 25 November 1910 in accordance with a body specification dated 17 September 1910. Chassis 1524 was now named "Royalty". The change was made on 5 January 1911 when the Hooper body was finally confirmed. While a new customer is not recorded, the new order placed by Rolls-Royce with Hoopers was for a "Limousine like H. M. The Kings (sic)". This order specified the Royal colour Maroon with Black mouldings, red lined, with enamelled blue leather. The choice of Royal colours leaves no doubt that 1524 was meant to look like the Royal 1910 57 h.p. Daimlers. The completed car with its Hooper body was registered R-1068. However, "Royalty" did not go to the Royal Mews and instead was a Company demonstration car during 1911 and continued as such until May 1912 when Angas purchased it.

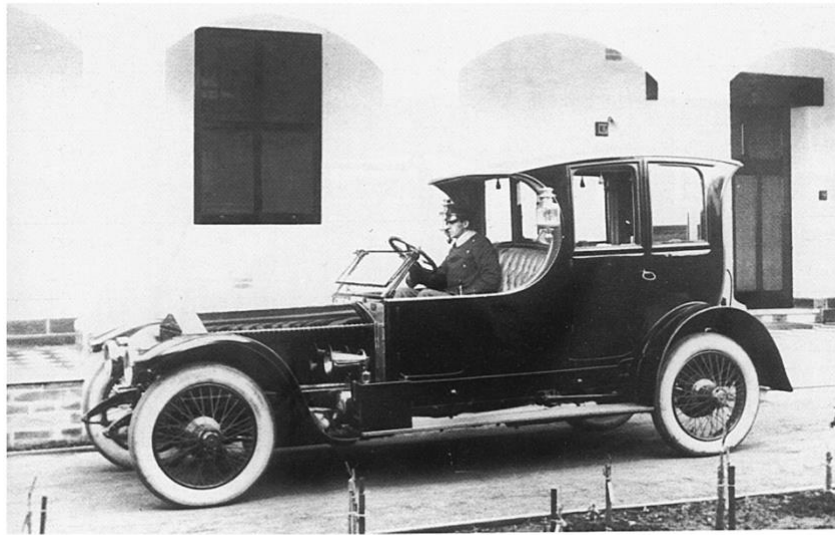


Chassis 1524 was not the only Silver Ghost designated "Royalty". "Royalty No. 1" in Rolls-Royce records was similarly annotated for 1910 Silver Ghost chassis 1237. A third chassis designated "Royalty" has also been identified. The sales sheets for 1911 Silver Ghost chassis 1721 is marked both "Royalty" and "last Royalty". The reasons for naming these Silver Ghosts "Royalty No. 1", "Royalty" and "Last Royalty" remain mysteries. Perhaps it was to proclaim that the Rolls-Royce Silver Ghosts were the equal to the King's 57 h.p. Daimlers. Or possibly "Royalty" was simply a sales pitch to customers who wanted a car which looked like one of the Royal cars. None of these three Silver Ghosts was delivered to the Royal Mews. The most telling case that they were not commissioned by King Edward VII and King George V goes back to Claude Johnson. Throughout his time as Managing Director of Rolls-Royce Johnson, starting in 1906, sought to install Rolls-Royces in the Royal Mews. Had they been Royal commissions Johnson would have proclaimed it from the rooftops of the factory in Nightingale Road, Derby, or the showrooms in Conduit Street, London, or both!

In May 1912 Angas took delivery of 1524 at his residence in Belgrave Square, London, where he was staying at the time. Angas decided to have it rebodied and the first body by Hooper was removed after May 1912. Angas commissioned Grosvenor to construct a brougham body on 1524. The Grosvenor body was photographed in 'Motor Age' (US), 21 November, 1912. It is not known when 1524 arrived in South Australia, however, it was photographed in the December 1914 issue of 'Motor in Australia' outside the Angas residence in Brougham Place, North Adelaide.



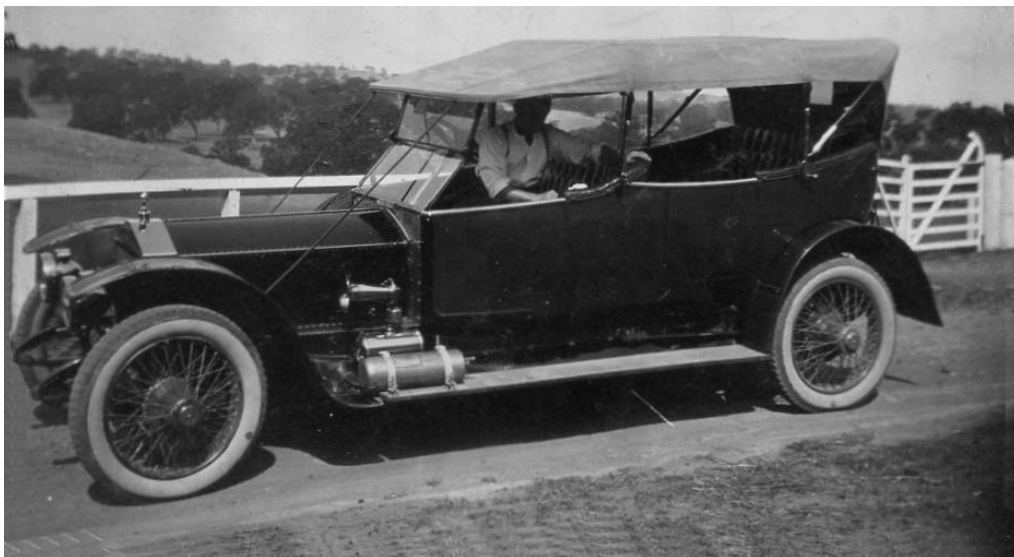
*Above: The Grosvenor brougham body on 1524 seen here in the November 1912 issue of 'Motor Age'.  
[Courtesy of Tom Clarke.]*



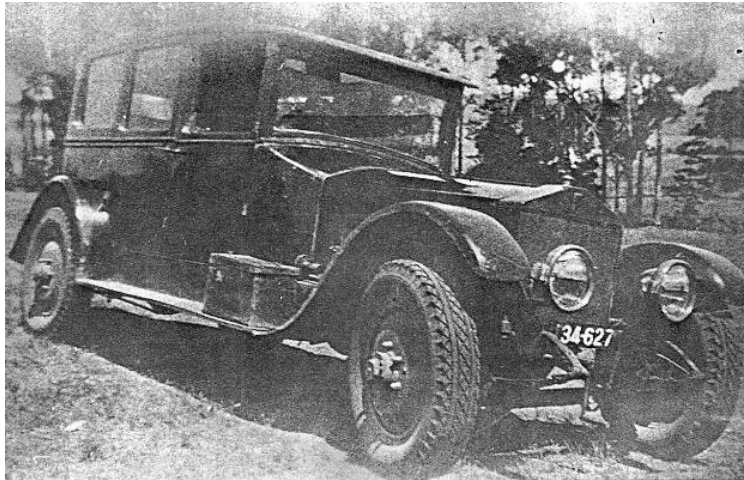
***Above:** Angas named 1524 'The Dreamer' and it was the third of his Silver Ghosts. 1911 Silver Ghost with the Grosvenor brougham body is seen here outside Charles Angas's home, 52 Brougham Place, North Adelaide. The chauffeur is Frank Johnson. ['Motor in Australia',*

The next body, while 1524 was with the Angas family, was a tourer. It appears the tourer body was on the car when it was still quite new as it used the mudguards and windscreen from the Grosvenor brougham. It is likely that it too was a Grosvenor body. It is possible that it was a pair, the Grosvenor brougham for winter and the Grosvenor tourer for summer.

***Below:** This tourer body on 1524 appears to have been when the car was still quite new. It used the mudguards and windscreen from the Grosvenor brougham and it is likely that it too was a Grosvenor body. It is possible that it was a pair, the Grosvenor brougham for winter and this Grosvenor tourer for summer. [Courtesy of Tom Clarke.]*



Silver Ghost 1524 was still with the Angas family when it was returned to England for an overhaul in 1923. When it left the Angas family is unclear, however, it was rebodied as a saloon in the 1930s and used as a taxi in Port Adelaide. In the 1950s it was acquired as a chassis by Colin Fife Angas (1920-2016) who was not aware at the time it had been his grandfather's Rolls-Royce. It was given to Gavin Sandford-Morgan, RROCA HLM-1976 (SA), in 1954 in exchange for the proceeds of the sale of the good tyres. In 1963 it passed to Charles Wright, RROCA HLM-1987 (SA), who personally restored it with a magnificent brougham body, which he designed and built. It was the joint winner of the Overall Trophy at the 1981 Shepparton Federal Rally.

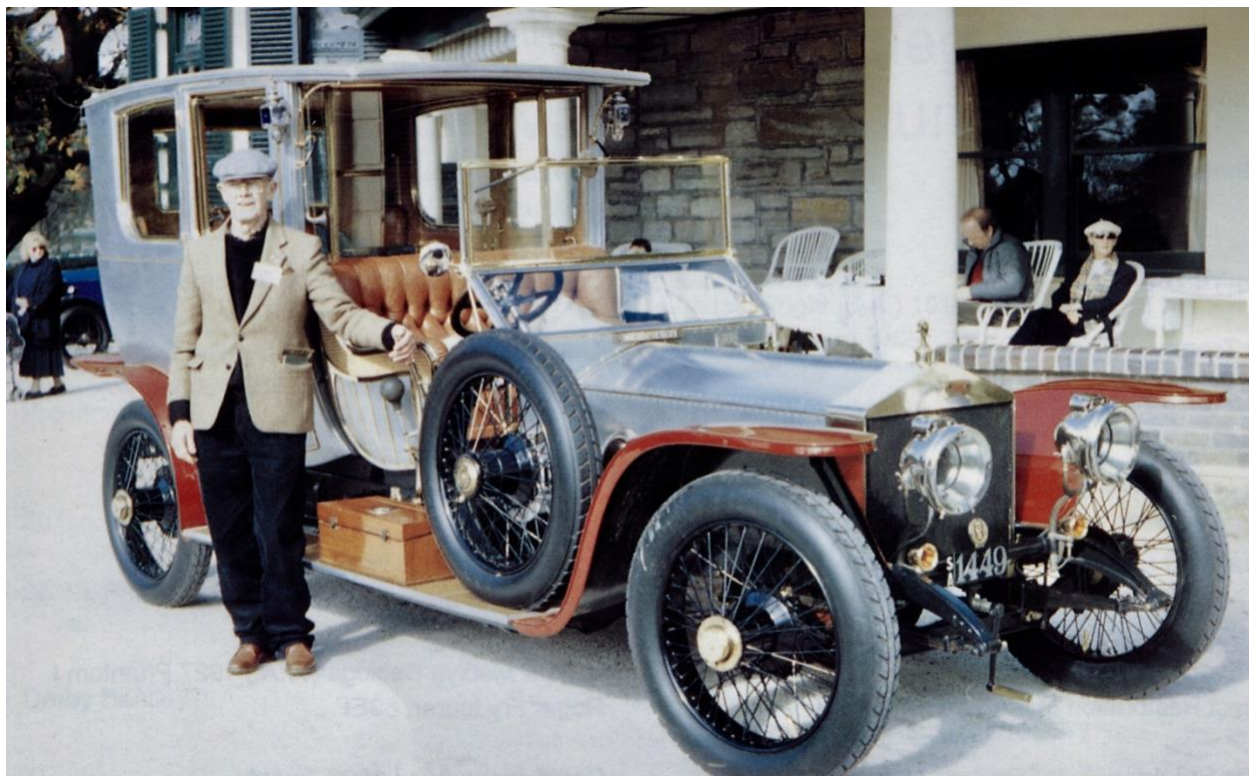


*Left: Silver Ghost 1524 in the 1930s when in use as a hire car in the Port Adelaide district. Note the disc wheels fitted to carry larger section more modern tyres. [Courtesy of Gavin Sandford-Morgan.]*

*Below: 1524 in 1955, ready to leave 'Hutton Vale', the Angaston property of Colin Angas which adjoined both his father's 'Collingrove' property and 'Lindsay Park', then owned by his uncle Sir Keith Angas, and former home of his grandfather Charles Angas and, of course, 1524. Note the near-new tyres. [Caption and photograph from Gavin Sandford-Morgan, Praeclarum, April, 2002.]*







**Above:** Charles Wright with 1524 and the brougham he personally designed and built. [Praeclarum, August 1995.]

**Below:** The wistful looking young lady mascot that Charles Angas acquired for 1524 to complement his choice of 'The Dreamer' for the name of his car. [Praeclarum, December 2000.]



Charles Wright was a Foundation Member of the South Australia Branch. He recorded in the minutes of the Foundation Meeting held on 4 March 1958: "It seemed that we almost had a duty to save the old Rolls-Royce cars from falling into wrong hands and disappearing, but on the contrary [a duty] to rescue, restore and maintain them in as nearly possible their original condition, for their like will not be seen again." Charles most certainly embodied these sentiments in his restoration of 1524.

The Wright body was donated to The Sir Henry Royce Foundation, Australia, and the Grosvenor body was replicated by Roger Fry and Sons (WA) in recent times.

To return to the Angas family's Rolls-Royces, Charles and Eliza had one daughter, Dorothy Beryl (1887-1970) and three sons. All of the sons had Rolls-Royces: Dudley Theyer (1892-1942) 1909 Silver Ghost chassis 1126, first owned by his father, with its second Grosvenor body a 1914 two-seater in silver; Ronald Fife (1889-1978) 1915 Silver Ghost chassis 34ED a Grosvenor tourer; and, John Keith (later Sir Keith) (1900-1977) 1925 Phantom I, 2HC, as a chassis in 1928. Keith Angas designed and built a fixed head coupe with considerable help of a former Holden motor body builder, John (Jim) Bettles. 1910 Silver Ghost, chassis 1388, originally owned by Tom Barr Smith, was also in the Angas family in the 1940s.



*Above and right: The Roger Fry and Sons brougham body on 1911 Silver Ghost 1524. [Source unidentified.]*

