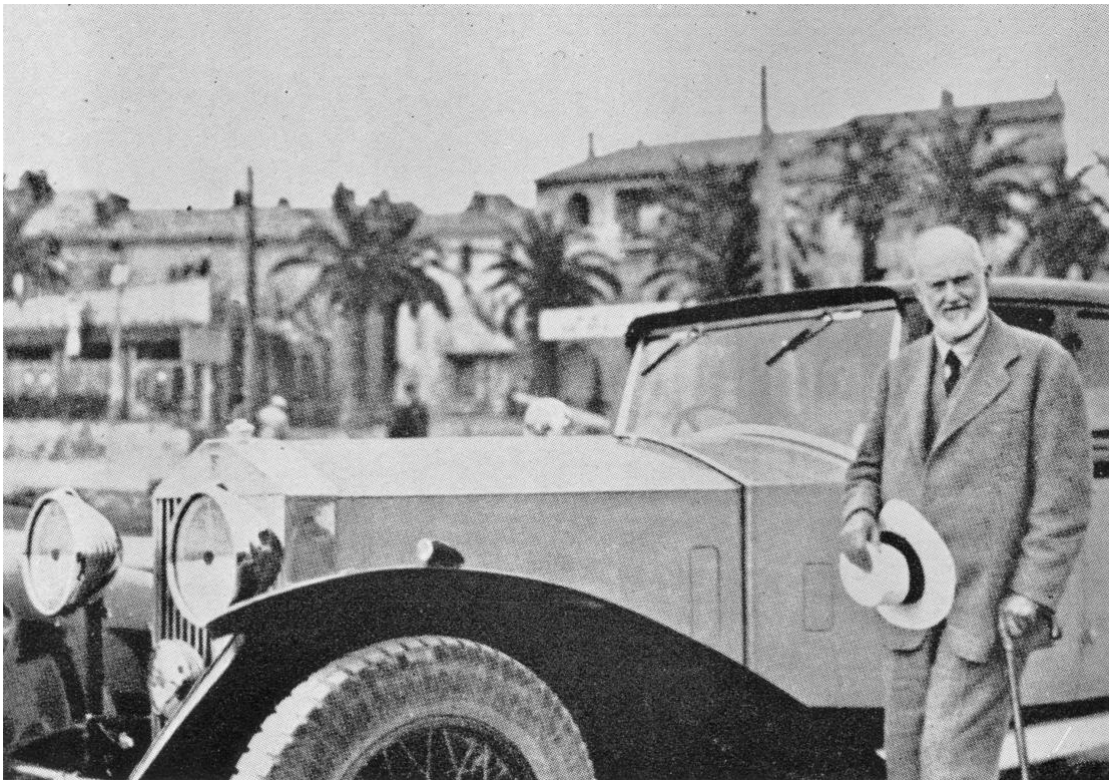


IN THE REAR-VIEW MIRROR

SIR HENRY ROYCE CELEBRATION OF BARONETCY

Royce was created a baronet soon after the introduction of the Rolls-Royce Phantom II. The Phantom II was the last of the great six cylinder cars, following the Silver Ghost and the Phantom I, that the master himself, F. Henry Royce, personally designed.



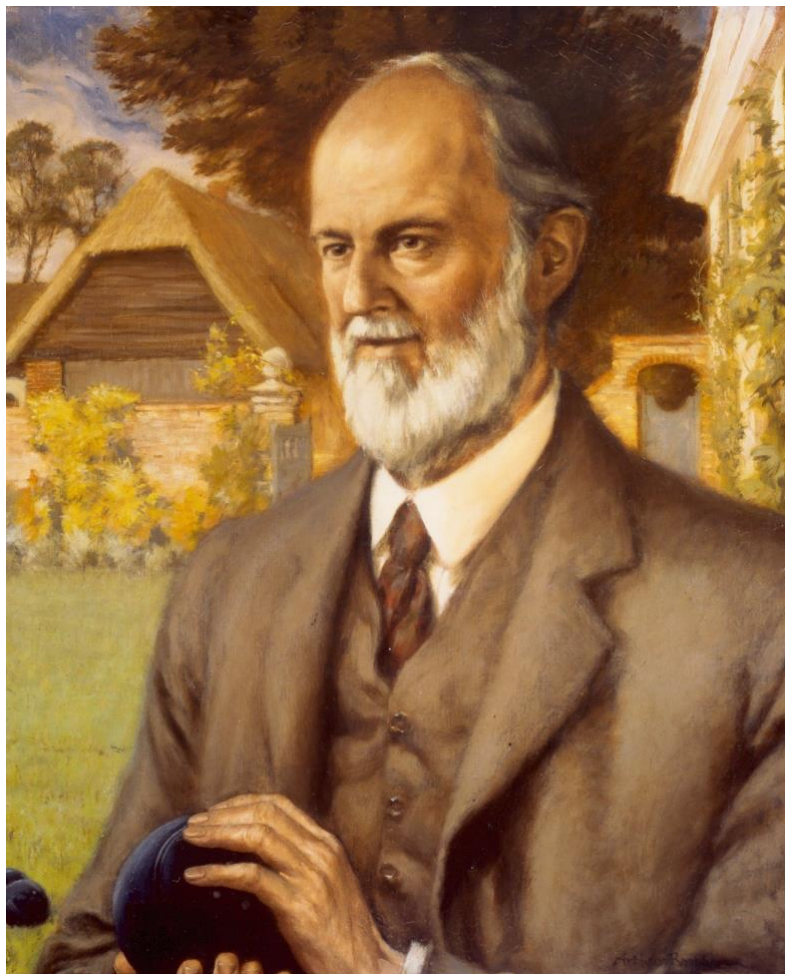
Tom Clarke kindly provided the background for this photograph, "Plain F. Henry Royce ('R', not yet created a baronet) is seen here in early 1929 near his home at Le Canadel in the south of France. The car is experimental Phantom II 18EX, Barker lightweight saloon, completed in December 1928 with many features approved by Royce - low roof line, 20 inch wheels, and no mascot. It carried twin spares at the rear behind a detachable luggage trunk. The photograph was almost certainly taken by Royce's driver, the late Frank Dodd. It is interesting to see 'R' leaning heavily on his cane, a sign of some debility perhaps. He used the car during his periods in France, and West Wittering in Sussex, until mid 1931. In its issue for 24 September 1929 'The Motor' road tested the car. They praised its light steering, acceleration (Derby found its top speed to be 85 m.p.h.), and phenomenal brakes."

Anthony Bird and Ian Hallows observed in the 'The Rolls-Royce Motor Car' published in 1964.

“For his work in the first German war Henry Royce was rewarded with the O.B.E., which as Mark Twain observed of the Cross of the *Légion d'honneur*, was a distinction which few could escape. For his contribution to the Schneider Trophy success he was made a baronet in 1930, but Sir Frederick Henry Royce, Bart. O.B.E., M.I.M.E., remained – in his own estimation – Henry Royce, mechanic.”

'The Daily News' in Perth reported on 22 July 1930, “In addition to receiving the baronetcy, Sir Frederick Royce was recently the subject of a further presentation. At a meeting of the Royal Aeronautical Society, he was presented with a medal for 'the most conspicuous efforts during 1929 for the improvement of British aero engines, and the outstanding successes of Rolls-Royce aero engines.'”

Royce was a member of the Institution of Automobile Engineers which he joined in 1910 and received the I.A.E.'s medal in 1930.



This portrait by Sir Arthur Rackham is from around 1930 when Sir Henry was made a baronet. It now hangs at the Sir Henry Royce Memorial Foundation in Paulerspury, Northants. [Courtesy of Tom Clarke]

'The Week' in Brisbane on 17 October, 1930, reported, "Sir Henry Royce – Celebration of Baronetcy". It continued, "Surrounded by the men who had helped him to build his first car in 1904, Sir Henry Royce was the chief guest at a private luncheon given recently to celebrate a baronetcy upon him. The host was Lord Wargrave, chairman of Rolls-Royce Ltd., and the other guests were all personal friends, amongst them Lord Wakefield of Hythe, Sir Max Pemberton, Mr. J. H. Thomas (Secretary of State for the Dominions). and Colonel the Master of Sempill.

Mr. Thomas said that this recognition of Sir Henry was essentially a British honour to a man who worked his way up. 'And it is typical of our guest that he never forgets old friends and hard times – that when this little gathering was being arranged in his honour he insisted on including those who had been associated with him in his humble days.'

Mr. Thomas referred with pride to his own 21 years' association with Derby. He mentioned having known one of the guests in former days as an engine driver like himself – 'though not so good a one as me,' he added amidst laughter.

Sir Henry Royce sketched the history of the company since its early days, referring especially to the development of its aero-engines during the war, and in particular to the highly successful 'Eagle' engine. 'When we offered this engine to our allies to copy,' he said, 'they thought it had too many complications – that it 'needed a shave.' But they soon found we were right.'

He could not believe that the present industrial situation would continue for long. It was only a question of adjustment. This country and Empire should not be allowed to be the dumping ground for the over-production of other countries. One of the solutions to our present difficulties, he firmly believed, was in specializing to a much greater extent than we have done in the past.

Lord Wakefield, proposing the toast of the company, said he knew few firms whose directors took a keener personal interest in the business. It was one of them, in fact, who had sold him his first Rolls-Royce car!"

Like knights, baronets are accorded the style "Sir" before their first name. Unlike knighthoods, which apply to the recipient only, a baronetcy is hereditary entailed. However, as Sir Henry had no children the title became extinct upon his death on 22 April, 1933.

Compiled by David Neely,
Historical Consultant,
The Sir Henry Royce Foundation,
Australia, 2020.