GHOST 20 CLUB

An Introduction to



The 20-Ghost Club

The Oldest Rolls-Royce Club in the World

1949-2019

by John Stuttard

ISBN 978-1-5272-4256-2

An Introduction to
The 20-Ghost Club - The Oldest Rolls-Royce Club in the World - 1949 to 2019

ISBN 978-1-5272-4256-2

Henry Royce met The Hon Charles Rolls in Manchester in 1904 and the world's most celebrated motor car company was formed. The legendary Silver Ghost was introduced in late 1906 and its reputation was immediately established in a series of demanding reliability trials. Then, in 1913, Silver Ghosts won the three major international endurance competitions: the 3,800-mile St Petersburg to Paris Rally, the Spanish Grand Prix and, finally, the major individual prizes in the gruelling Alpine Trial. With these achievements, the Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost became known as 'The Best car in the World'.

Not only was the chassis better proportioned than most of its contemporaries, but it attracted some extremely attractive coachwork. The motor cars had more than adequate performance; they were extremely quiet and smooth; and every control worked with a degree of precision that delighted the user. The best examples are today considered closer to a work of art than a motor car.

Over the succeeding decades the prestige and reputation of the marque grew such that a Rolls-Royce became the motor car of choice for royalty, the aristocracy, the wealthy and anyone who had been successful in finance, commerce, industry or the arts. The company's major markets were, in addition to the UK, the United States, Australia and India.

During the Second World War, in the UK, many of the early Rolls-Royce motor cars were laid up in garages due to the shortage of petrol or because their owners were away fighting in the War. Then, in 1945, fuel shortages continued and many of the cars which were, by then, over 20 years old looked outdated but still had strong powerful engines and robust chassis. So, many were converted into trucks and hearses or used on farms or in workshops for driving machinery.

It was with this background that a group of individuals formed The 20-Ghost Club in 1949 to protect pre-War Rolls-Royce motors cars from destruction. They encouraged their members to acquire, restore, drive and maintain these unique objects. The concept was that the cars should not be stored in museums but used and seen on the roads, to be enjoyed by their owners and admired by the public. Over the last 70 years, members of the Club have ensured the survival and restoration of very many examples of the different pre-War models manufactured by Rolls-Royce, many bearing original bodies by well-known coachbuilders such as Barker, Hooper, Park Ward and Mulliner.

This book, published to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Club's formation, describes the history of the Club and its members. It includes descriptions of over 200 Rolls-Royce motor cars and their original and subsequent owners. It relates stories about the Club and the major tours and historical re-enactments which have been organised for members. With contributions (of text and illustrations) from many members and edited by Sir John Stuttard, it is a mandatory reference book for those wishing to understand the history of Rolls-Royce motor cars built between 1904 and 1939 and the part which The 20-Ghost Club has played in the survival and care of these precious works of art.

The book is available to anyone with a genuine interest in pre-War Rolls-Royce motor cars at a price of £75 each including UK postage (please enquire about postage outside the UK) from the membership secretary of The 20-Ghost Club, Johnnie Gallop: jgallop66@gmail.com
Payments can be made by PayPal or alternatively into one of the club's bank accounts or by cheque. Johnnie Gallop will provide details if you e-mail him.


GHOST
2
CLUB