



Above:
A painting at Shambhu Niwas Palace from 1905 CE shows Maharana Fateh Singh (r. 1884–1930 CE) receiving his son Maharaj Kumar Bhupal Singh

Right:
Maharana Bhupal Singh (r. 1930–1955 CE) holding court under a tent, with his son Maharaj Kumar Bhagwat Singh seated near him
Accession No. 2008.07.0175



Facing page:
Shriji Arvind Singh Mewar with his son Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar at the Holika Dahan ceremony at Manek Chowk, The City Palace, Udaipur, on 3 March 2007



SHRIJI ARVIND SINGH MEWAR
WITH HIS SON
LAKSHYARAJ SINGH MEWAR



MAJOR GENERAL HIS HIGHNESS ARYAKUL-KAMAL-DIWAKAR RAJ-RAJESHWAR
NARENDRA-SHRIMONI HINDUA-SURAJ MAHARAJADHIRAJ
SHREE I08 SHREE EKLING DIWAN
SHREE MAHARANA SIR BHUPAL SINGH BAHADUR G.C.S.I., K.C.I.E.
OF UDAIPUR, MEWAR
r. 24.05.1930 to 04.07.1955

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Rolls-Royce (RR) motorcars and India have enjoyed a very long and close association. This relationship dates back to the early 20th century and the era of Maharajas and the British rule in India, and it would not be wrong to say that if Rolls-Royce is today perhaps the most honoured luxury marque in the history of the automobile, it owes it to India.

This is because the Indian subcontinent was the ultimate destination for many of Rolls-Royce's early cars, as the Indian Maharanas and Maharajas were only too happy to make the transition from horse-drawn carriages to a horseless one.

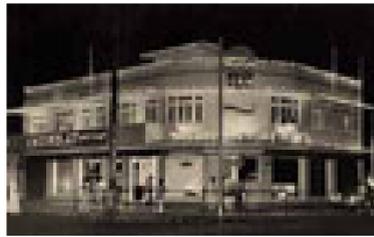
In 1907, an English businessman brought the first Rolls-Royce to India. It was christened the 'Pearl of the East' and participated in a 620-mile Reliability Trial, spread over six mountain passes. The Rolls-Royce performed brilliantly and after winning many awards, it was sold to the Maharaja of Gwalior. The resultant publicity did much to enhance the reputation and sales of the model that went on to become widely known as the 'Silver Ghost'. By the time King George V of Britain was crowned Emperor of India at the Imperial Delhi Durbar in 1911, Rolls-Royce had already established its presence and a keen following in India and eight identical Silver Ghosts had been ordered for official use at the Durbar. In the same year, a team from Rolls-Royce was sent out to India to establish a sales-and-repair depot. Over the next few years, most royal garages in India had a Rolls-Royce in them. In fact, the Maharaja of Patiala went on to own a total of 44 Rolls-Royces before his death in 1938.

The princely state of Udaipur (Mewar) was no exception. The first Rolls-Royce entered the Royal Palace Motor Garage of Udaipur in 1914 when Maharana Fateh Singh ordered a Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost Colonial Tourer 40-50 HP with coachwork by Hooper. He used the Silver Ghost extensively, even taking it on *shikar* (hunting) trips and its pleasing performance paved the way for many more Roll-Royces (see Chapter 8) to become part of the Palace Motor Garage of Udaipur. Maharana

Facing page:
Maharana Bhupal Singh, who had purchased
the Rolls-Royce tourer 20 HP GLK 21
Accession No. 2008.06.045



Seth Shri Motilalji Sanghi of M/s Sanghi Motors, Jodhpur, India, was a pioneer in importing cars to India.



The Sanghi Motors showroom at Jodhpur

Fateh Singh's successor, Maharana Bhupal Singh's favourite RR was a 1922 Tourer 20 HP (chassis no. 42 GO) that he purchased in 1925 for Rs 15,551 (a little over \$250 at 2012 exchange rates).

Maharana Bhupal Singh purchased many more Rolls-Royces, but RR 42 GO remained his favourite. He went for a drive in it almost daily and also used it on ceremonial occasions when it was flanked by colourfully decorated elephants and horses and surrounded by a mass of people. Some old-timers even say 'the animals were better behaved in the presence of silent Rolls-Royces than other makes of cars!' Those were the days of great pomp and pageantry in 'Princely India' and elephants and horses adorned with pure gold jewellery and precious stones began to run shoulders with the Roll-Royces sporting shiny chrome radiator grilles.

With the passage of time and extensive usage, the RR 42 GO began to require some maintenance work. But spares were not easy to procure so the State of Udaipur (Mewar) in 1936 purchased a 1924 Barker bodied Tourer 20 HP (chassis no. GLK 21). This car was originally ordered by the Maharaja of the neighbouring state of Jodhpur. It was purchased from him by one of India's pioneering car importers and dealers, Seth Shri Motilal Sanghi, also of Jodhpur. And it was Motilal Sanghi who sold RR GLK 21 to the Maharana of Udaipur for Rs 5,721 (less than \$100 at 2012 exchange rates).

Shortly after RR GLK 21 arrived in the Palace Motor Garage, it was cannibalized and its engine removed and fixed in RR 42 GO. Then Second World War happened and RR GLK 21 got entwined in history and was surrendered to the ravages of time. From 1940s to the end of the century, a period of almost 60 years, it lay forgotten in the Zenana Mahal (ladies' quarters) inside the City Palace, Udaipur.



A line-up of the cars at Wimbledon, England, in June 1925. Third from left: 1924 RR Tourer 20 HP GLK 21, Coachwork by Barker
Photo courtesy: J.M. Fasal

Following page :
A fleet of new Rolls-Royces and Vauxhalls ordered by Maharaja of Jodhpur in 1924 and photographed in Wimbledon in June 1925. Fourth from left: 1924 RR Tourer 20 HP GLK 21, Coachwork by Barker
Photo courtesy: J.M. Fasal