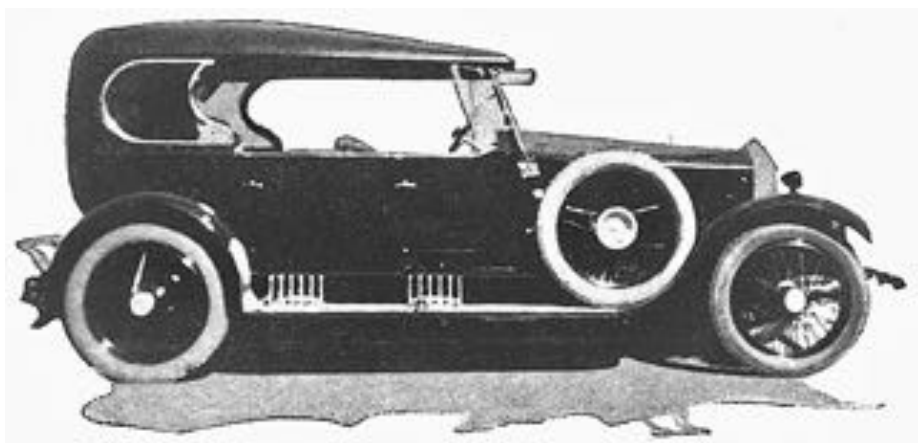


Fred T Hack
Coachbuilder, Motor Body Builder and Cricketer
Adelaide and Sydney

David Neely

In 1898 Fred Hack was working as a coachbuilder when South Australians saw a motorised vehicle for the first time. Hack played interstate cricket for South Australia as an opening batsman from 1898 to 1909. He ran a very successful carriage and motor body building enterprise in Adelaide from 1904 to 1917 and then moved to Sydney and established the Missenden Road Motor Body Works.



Above: This portrait of Frederick Theodore Hack appeared in the 3 February 1900 issue of 'The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser' with the caption in part, "the batsman who played a big innings of 158 not out for South Australia against New South Wales in a recent match."

Top: Adelaide – Hack & Pengilly built the body on this 14-16 h.p. De Dion Bouton. It was displayed on the Eyes & Crowle stand at the 1909 Adelaide Spring Show. [Australian Motorist' November 1910 via Serpolett's Tricycle No. 2 June 2012 edited by Leon Mitchell]

Bottom: Sydney – Hack produced this California top tourer on 1923 Rolls-Royce Twenty chassis 83K7 at Missenden Road Motor Body Works. [Motor Life' 22 November 1924]



In May 1898 French woman Mlle Serpolette demonstrated a motorised Gladiator tricycle in Adelaide. Far reaching consequences for the South Australian coachbuilders were ahead. The following year, David Shearer's steam carriage made its first run down the main street of the Murray River town of Mannum on 5 June 1899. However, it was the appearance of the first petrol driven motor car built in South Australia that set the stage for change. Increasingly, the coachbuilders faced the transition from horse-drawn to motor vehicles. Those who chose to become motor body builders.

Above: Mlle Serpolette demonstrated a motorised Gladiator tricycle in Adelaide. She preferred to wear bloomers on the continent, but in deference to the conservative nature of English speakers she wore bifurcated skirts of her own design while touring Australia. [Leon Mitchell and the State Library of South Australia]



Above and right: The 1899 Shearer steam carriage. [History Trust of South Australia]



That first South Australian car was built by Vivian Lewis and Tom O'Grady of the Lewis Cycle and Motor Works. It made its public debut in November 1900. The body was built by Duncan & Fraser, their first on a motor car. Construction was similar to those built on horse-drawn vehicles at the time. As the motor car developed, however, wood bodies needed to be replaced by metal panels. That development meant establishing panel beating departments and not



all the coachbuilders embraced the new technology. Hack was in the younger generation of coachbuilders and the firm he created in 1904 moved ahead with the automotive times.

Above: Lewis Cycle and Motor Works, with Adelaide horse carriage and tram builders Duncan & Fraser, produced the first petrol-driven motor car in South Australia in 1900.

Below: Vivian Lewis shown here at the wheel with Tom O'Grady beside him and Murray Aunger, the Lewis Cycle works star racing cyclist, is seated just ahead of the front wheel. Workmen from the Lewis Cycle and Motor Works stand around. [State Library of South Australia B 7485]





Above: The first run of the Automobile and Motor Cycling Club of South Australia (later the RAA). The two motor cycles on the right are Lewis machines. Vivian Lewis is the passenger on the Oldsmobile on the far right. [Adelaide AZ]

But at this time Hack was more famous for his success on the cricket field. The Adelaide 'Observer' on 9 December 1899 reported, "Hack demonstrated the development of his batting talent to a wonderful degree, and the promise he gave last year has early been fulfilled. He was, at the end of last season, looked upon as a permanent member of the South Australian team, and has now established his right to be looked upon as one of our best batsmen. His performance was of high-class merit, and in recognition of its worth Hack has already received presentations of two bats. His Sturt comrades were almost besides themselves with joy at his success." Hack played with the Sturt Electorate Club with his brother John.



Above: Fred Hack is on the far left in the back row with the South Australian cricket team which visited Western Australia in 1899. [State Library of South Australia B 34426]

'The Adelaide 'Observer' on 20 January 1900 recorded, "Fred Hack wound up his second intercontinental season in brilliant style on Friday by scoring 158 not out in Sydney." Hack continued playing for South Australia until 'The Gadfly' (a satirical newspaper published 1906-09 in Adelaide) noted wryly on 9 December 1908, "Fred Hack, whose sudden drop from interstate cricket was a surprise, laughed at the selectors to the tune of 148." He played 39 matches for South Australia from 1898 to 1909. He had a reputation as a stonewaller and his defensive play was not always popular with spectators.

Frederick Theodore Hack (1877-1939) grew up in Aldinga, south of Adelaide. He served his apprenticeship with one of the long-established coachbuilding firms. Hack married Rosa Pengilly (1873-1940) in April 1905. The Hacks and the Pengillys had a long association in the Aldinga district. Indeed, Hack would go on to form a business partnership with a Pengilly.

Hack's grandfather was John Barton Hack (1805-1884) born in Chichester, Sussex, England, and he married Bridget Watson (1806-1881) in 1827. The family migrated to South Australia in the 'Isabella' and arrived at Holdfast Bay (a small bay in the Gulf St Vincent, the surrounding area was renamed Glenelg in 1836) in February 1837 just two months after the proclamation of the colony. The Hacks travelled via Launceston where John bought livestock and equipment. He was a successful businessman in England but illness affecting his lungs and favourable prospects in a new colony prompted the journey. Well prepared, he brought two portable houses, one he erected at Glenelg and the other where Adelaide was being established. In March 1837 he bought sixty acre-lots in Adelaide. In 1838 he established the family property at Echunga Springs (in the Adelaide hills south east of Adelaide) on 4,000 acres with crops, dairy and 1,000 cattle. A Quaker by upbringing he became a Wesleyan Methodist. He was described as too soft hearted to be successful in business. He paid high wages, gave generous credits and neglected to cover his interests. He went bankrupt in 1843 and returned to Adelaide in 1863. John became general accountant to the railways in 1870 and retired in 1883.

Hack's father Alfred Hack (1833-1908) was one of 15 children. He married Susan Pengilly (1849-1906). Alfred served his apprenticeship with Messrs F H Faulding & Co as a chemist. Owing to ill-health he engaged in auctioneering and farming in the district of Aldinga. For many years he was the sanitary inspector of Adelaide.

Hack's brother John Barton Hack (1871-1930), named after his grandfather, was also a coachbuilder at Unley Road, Unley, for 30 years.



Fred Hack served his apprenticeship with Thomas Barlow & Sons which was established in 1854. Thomas Barlow (1799-1866) arrived from Staffordshire, England, the previous year with his wife Elizabeth Derry (1795-1863). They travelled on the American ship 'Shackamaxon'

and set foot in the colony on 19 January 1853 with four sons and two daughters. Three of their sons, George (1831-1886), Joseph Gould (1834-1892) and Ebenezer (1838-1921) joined their father in the business the following year.

Above: Barlow & Sons pictured in 1872 on the corner of Rundle Street and Union Street Adelaide. The royal coat of arms displayed on the roof was a royal warrant – "By Appointment to H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh" – granted in 1866 for the construction of a coach for Prince Alfred's visit to South Australia in November 1867. [State Library of South Australia B 8045]

Among the 700 onboard the 'Shackamaxon' the extraordinarily high death rate of 64 passengers led to an enquiry into the competence of the surgeon-superintendent and others when it arrived in South Australia. Barlow in his capacity as the ship's Chief Constable gave evidence against them. It appears the results were never published.




Above: The packet ship 'Shackamaxon' on which the Barlow family travelled to South Australia. This lithograph was taken from a painting by C P Williams in 1851. She was among the famous packet ships which are considered as the forerunners of the modern ocean liners in that they ran between specified points on a regular schedule, and also because they offered the passenger what contemporary advertising extolled, "the most palatial and luxurious accommodations." [Naval History and Heritage Command NH 108762]

Thomas Barlow & Sons enjoyed royal and vice-regal patronage. In 1866 a royal warrant, "By Appointment to H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh", was granted for the construction of a coach for Prince Alfred's visit to South Australia in November 1867. In 1870 they were appointed coachbuilders to Sir James Ferguson governor of South Australia 1869-1873. In 1883 they employed about 36 men, including six smiths (blacksmiths), six strikers, seven bodymakers, six painters, four trimmers, four wheelers and three vicemen (blacksmiths who worked with a vice rather than an anvil).

Below: Barlow & Sons advertisements spanning 40 years, Buggy and Carriage Builders in 1873, to Carriage and Motor Body Builders in 1913.

BY APPOINTMENT

To H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh.		To His Excellency Sir James Ferguson, Bart.
--	---	---

THOMAS BARLOW & SONS,
OLD ESTABLISHED
BUGGY AND CARRIAGE BUILDERS, RUNDLE STREET, A DELAIDE.

EVERY DESCRIPTION OF VEHICLE MADE TO ORDER.
Workmanship Guaranteed. Repairs expeditiously performed. Charges Moderate.
CARRIAGES BOUGHT, SOLD, OR EXCHANGED.

MESSRS. BARLOW & SONS obtained at the Exhibition of the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society in 1871 the Highest Prize—a Silver Cup—ever awarded to their Branch of Colonial Industry. Also, a Certificate of Merit at the Show of 1872. First Prize for Express Wagon, and Special Prize awarded afterwards by the Committee for Successors.



THOS. BARLOW & SONS
LIMITED.

HINDMARSH SQUARE

Viceregal Carriage Builders for the
past 59 years.

Carriage, Motor Body Builders, and
Motor Engineers.

New and Secondhand Vehicles in
Stock. Repairs a speciality.

MOTOR REPAIRS

Under the supervision of Mr.
Frank Burden.

Following the deaths of Thomas and George in 1866, Joseph and Ebenezer continued the business. The firm went on to motor body building. 'The Mail' on 8 November 1913 illustrated a car, under the caption "South Australian Bodywork", "This delightful body was manufactured and fitted by Messrs. T. Barlow and Sons, Limited. The car is owned by Mr. G. H. Prosser, of Norwood."

Only Ebenezer Barlow survived to celebrate the firm's 50th anniversary in 1904. The jubilee celebration was no doubt more tea and scones than champagne corks popping. The patriarch Thomas was well known for his enthusiastic involvement in the temperance movement and Ebenezer, who died in 1921 aged 83, was a prominent member of the Congregational Church.

Fred Hack went into business and by March 1904 Hack & Pengilly were well-known as carriage builders and listed as such at 50 Flinders Street in the Sands & McDougall's South Australian Directory. The premises were formerly occupied by William Fisk coachbuilder, harnessmaker and cycle importer in 1900-01. Then John Videon coachbuilder in 1902 and 1903. The only Hack identified in listings and the press was Frederick Theodore and the only Pengilly was Frederick Charles (1877-1939). They are both identified in the 1909 Cyclopedia of South Australia. They were both aged 27 when they started at 50 Flinders Street. In 1904 G B Dornwell coachpainter was with Hack and Pengilly.

HACK & PENGILLY

(Fred. T. Hack). (Fred. C. Pengilly).

CARRIAGE BUILDERS

Abbots, Sidebars, Phaetonettes, Marnis, Expresses, Sulxies, &c., built to latest designs.

Repairs and Repainting a specialty.

Tyreing done daily. Rubber Tyres fitted.

Write for Price-Lists.

50, FLINDERS-STREET, ADELAIDE.

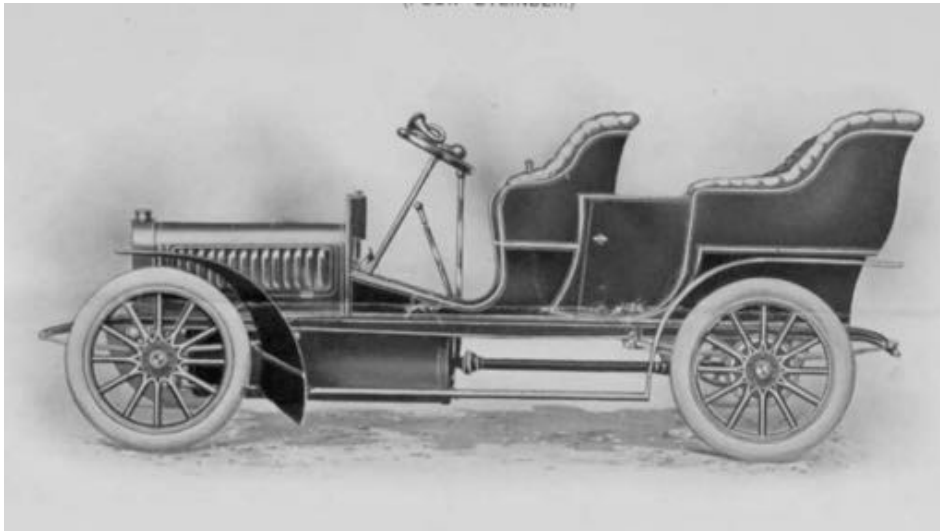
55eow:51x52:44

Above: This advertisement appeared in the Adelaide newspaper 'The Advertiser' on 13 August 1903.

In 1906 Vivian Lewis engaged Hack & Pengilly to build a body on the 14-16 Aster chassis he had imported from France. 'The Advertiser' of 4 December 1906 reported, "The body is of the Roi-de-Belges type, and is the first of its kind turned out in South Australia. The car having a short wheel base, it is fitted with a swing seat, which provides for a side entrance. This works on a roller track with a pin hinge, and is very rigid. The upholsterings are in keeping with the build of the car, the body being varnished over crimson lake. The seating is mounted in Australian leather of a colour to match the body of the car, and

where possible the metal work has been nickel-plated. It is the intention of the firm to lay down new machinery in order to keep pace with this class of work.”

In March 1907 the business was described in the press as “coachbuilders and motor car bodymakers” and then “carriage and motor body builders” in September 1908 when they exhibited motor bodies fitted on three Alldays chassis, two being single-seated bodies and a Roi-des-Belges side-entrance body. Also in September 1908 they completed a Roi-des-Belges body for W H Ringwood’s Minerva and another seven bodies on different makes of chassis were under construction. They also manufactured folding Cape cart hoods.



Right and above: A corner of the Argyll Motor Cars workshop in Glasgow illustrating the Roi-des-Belges stamped sheet metal panels and a completed car from their 1905 catalogue.



Frederick Charles Pengilly (1877-1965) was born at Aldinga. He married Charlotte Scoresby Lockwood (1878-1967) in 1901 at Flinders Street Baptist Church. He was the second son of Henry Pengilly (1843-1898) and Jeannie Greenlees (1850-1885).

Charlotte's family came from England. Her father George Lockwood (1821-1899) was born in London. Her mother was Mary Hannah Culley (1834-1936). Her father arrived in 1851 and spent three years on the goldfields of Victoria before moving to Adelaide where he was engaged in the upholstery trade with a business in Roper Street.

Frederick Pengilly's mother-in-law, Mary Hannah, was living with them at 28 Kyre Avenue, Kingswood, a suburb of Adelaide when she died aged 101 years and 7 months in 1936.

Hack & Pengilly continued at 50 Flinders Street as carriage builders to 1907 and in 1908 and in 1909 motor builders was added their listing. Hack & Pengilly were listed in the 1909 Cyclopaedia of South Australia as "Hack, Frederick Theodore, Pengilly, F C, Coachbuilders, motor car body makers repairers." In 1910 the listing changed to F T Hack carriage and motor builder. In 1911 F T Hack had changed address to 44 Flinders Street and was now described as a motor house proprietor. In 1914 "Pengilly, Fdk, motor body maker" was listed at 50 Flinders Street along with Morris and Knight, motorcar and carriage painter and J H Jenkinson carriage and motor car trimmer.

Adelaide newspapers, accessed through the National Library of Australia's Trove, provide descriptions and developments in Hack's business.

In March 1907 the Adelaide 'Chronicle' reported, "Messrs. Hack & Pengilly of 50 Flinders Street ... exhibited a very fine Roi-des-Belges phaeton, side entrance, motor car body, of the latest English design, covered with double Cape cart hood of six bows, their own design; also, two side-entrance bodies with double Cape cart hoods. These are the two latest designs used in England and the Continent, all the panels being solid pressed steel." The pre-fabricated steel panels were imported from England. It was an early approach to deal with metal panels. They were superseded with the introduction of new body styles, which required panel beating using aluminium. Around 1909 panel beating had become a recognised branch of the motor body trade in Australia.

The firm's Roi-des-Belges bodies led the 'Register' to predict on 11 September 1908, "Messrs. Hack & Pengilly were making a specialty of this particular line, and there is every probability that their manufacture will become a great State industry." However, the production of horse drawn vehicles remained part of the business. Also in September 1908 the Adelaide 'Observer', "Messrs. Hack & Pengilly, carriage and motor body builders have among their exhibits three particularly neat light buggies.... They also have a Runabout buggy, which is very popular at the present time."

The 11 October 1911 Adelaide newspaper 'The Register' reported, "Mr. Hack's establishment is the oldest of its kind in South Australia, and its work is very favourably known. Until May last the business was conducted in Flinders Street, but larger premises were sought, and eventually secured in the new and spacious factory in Gawler Place. Here the latest machinery used in motor body construction has been installed. The whole of the work is under the supervision of the proprietor, Mr. Fred. Hack, who keeps up with the latest designs in motor car work. A feature at the recent show of motor cars was a

large flush sided charabanc body, with hood and windscreen, to seat 25 passengers. This was designed and built on those premises, and is the first of its kind built in Australia.” Hack would specialise in commercial bodies later in Sydney.

FRED. T. HACK,
NEW MOTOR HOUSE,
44, FLINDERS-ST., Telephone 1,814.
 Latest type Extension Cape Cart Hoods, “Fast-lock” and “Quadrant” Patent Folding Wind Screens. Painting and Varnishing with special Autocar Varnishes, Motor Bodies, made to order. Prices reasonable. Satisfaction guaranteed.
 174walc

FRED T. HACK,
MOTOR CAR BODY BUILDER,
GAWLER-PLACE. PHONE 1,814.
TORPEDO OR ANY STYLE BODY TO ANY MAKE CHASSIS.
CAPE-CART HOODS IN “KAMAC” OR MOTOR TWILL. PATENT FASTLOCK WINDSCREEN FITTINGS, PAINTING VARNISHING, AND UP-HOLSTERING A SPECIALTY. 261aiwex266c

Advertisements from ‘The Advertiser’ on the left from 13 April 1910 and on the right from 4 October 1911. They show Hack in business on his own and the move from Flinders Street to Gawler Place.

In September 1912 the Adelaide ‘Observer’ reported, “Fred. T. Hack, of Gawler Place, had a fine exhibit ... a single-seated torpedo body on a Lancia chassis. This body was built to the order of Mr. R. F. Angas, of Angaston, who also designed it.” This was quite a compliment on the quality of Hack’s work because Ronald Fife Angas (1891-1978) was familiar with the English coachwork on his father’s Rolls-Royces. Charles Howard Angas (1861-1928) had three Silver Ghosts, 1909 to 1911 models, with bodies by the English firm of Grosvenor.

In 1913 Hack embarked on a tour of Europe and America as an honorary commissioner to determine trends and construction methods, his trip being sponsored by the South Australian Government. He wrote back to ‘The Mail’ where it was reported on 16 August, “I came to London to enquire into the motor body building line, but I have discovered a much more interesting theme than that, viz. flying. Last Sunday I went to the Hendon flying grounds and went up in a biplane with M. Verrien, a French airman. He is a marvel at the game. The sensation is rather unpleasant at first as the machine runs along the ground for about 50 yards and then rises. As you leave the ground the machine becomes as steady as a rock. The most unpleasant and perhaps most dangerous feature is banking to turn, that was the only time I felt at all uncomfortable as the machine turned on its side a little but after that all was bliss.... I do not intend to go up again: once is quite sufficient.”

FRED T. HACK, LTD.,
Motor Car Body Builders and Designers,
 292-6 KING WILLIAM STREET SOUTH.
 AGENTS and MAKERS of the CHARLEVILLE PATENT ONE-MAN HOOD and ALL-METAL FASTLOCK WINDSCREEN, “PORTMAN” ONE-MAN HOODS, especially designed for Ford Cars. ENAMELLING, PAINT, VARNISHING, LEATHER UPHOLSTERING. LOOSE COVERS. HOODS RECOVERED. RADIATORS AND LAMPS REPAIRED. Domed Mudguards a speciality. Phone 1814. 174walc

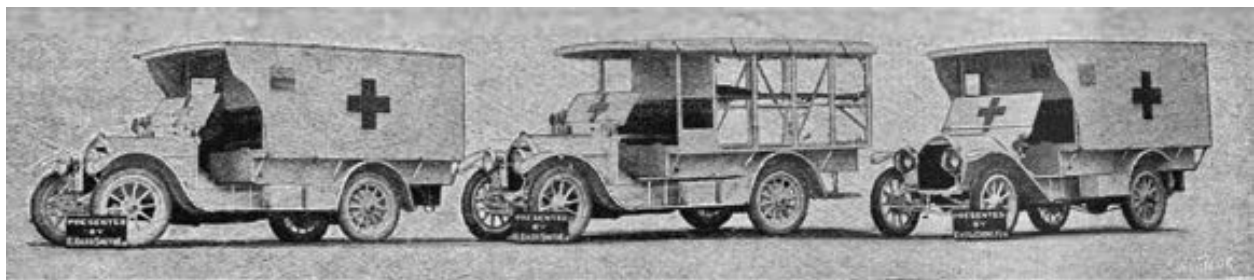
In December 1913 the ‘Advertiser’ reported, “Fred. T. Hack, Ltd. Motor Car Body Designers and Builders. We have just opened our new factory, which covers a space of one acre by 60 ft. frontage to King William Street. The Managing Director has just returned from a trip through Europe and America, where he has obtained the latest machinery, stock and methods for turning out the work absolutely right, having obtained also a most efficient staff of workmen. We have also been appointed sole agents for the patent Charleville one-man hood and Fastlock all metal windscreens.”

Above: This advertisement for the King William Street premises appeared in ‘The Journal’ 5 March 1914.

In March 1914 the Adelaide 'Chronicle' reported, "Messrs Fred. T. Hack, Limited, motor car body builders and designers, of King William Street south exhibited on several of the stands. On the Phoenix Motor Company stand they had a handsome torpedo body enamelled in French grey, with domed mudguards, extension hood, and all metal windscreen. On Messrs Eyes and Crowle's stand they exhibited a smart torpedo body on a 14 De Dion chassis, enamelled biscuit colour, for Mr. J Lewis, of Prospect. On a Minerva chassis they had a very handsome stream lined torpedo body complete with Charleville one-man hood and all metal windscreen, enamelled cloud gray and with white pickings. This car has a fine concave dash which is very difficult to construct. This body was built to the order of Mr. E. A. Willcox of Adelaide. Another beautiful job was also on a Minerva chassis for Mr. Wells of Norwood. It is enamelled white with green and gold lines. This body has loose covers, and completes a very fine design. A Fiat chassis was fitted with a smart body, and also had a Charleville patent one-man hood, and all metal windscreen. It was enamelled French gray. All the motor bodies exhibited by Messrs. Hack Limited were enamelled instead of being painted."

Similar descriptions were provided by 'The Register' 6 March 1914 which concluded, "Altogether, Messrs. Hack exhibited a fine sample of local industry, and there is no reason why all the bodies are not made locally, and with their new factory in King William Street and all the modern appliances they are in a position to meet all requirements."

20 November 1914 'The Register' reported "As already intimated in 'The Register', Mr. R. Barr Smith has presented two motor ambulances, and Messrs. Eyes and Crowle, Limited, a third one, to the Australian Expeditionary Forces. The ambulances are really fine vehicles. They are mounted on 40-50 horsepower Cadillac chasses The bodies were built by F. T. Hack, Limited, King William Street, and each will accommodate four patients and one attendant inside, and three attendants a driver outside. The stretchers are suspended on couplings attached to springs, so as to do away with shock and vibration as much as possible. The top berths can be folded up if necessary, and the ambulance will then afford accommodation for about 12 men. The Red Cross is painted very conspicuously not only on both sides and back and front but on top, too, as a warning mark to hostile aviators."



Above: Ambulances built by Fred T Hack Ltd. pictured here are from 'The Autocar' 13 February 1915. The caption reads, "Three ambulances for the Red Cross Corps of the Australian Expeditionary Force, two having been presented by Mr. R. Barr Smith, of Adelaide, and the other by Messrs, Eyes and Crowle, Ltd., motor agents of that city. The chassis are Cadillacs, and the bodies were made in Adelaide."

In 1 June 1915 the Adelaide 'Daily Herald' reported, "Mr. A. E. Pitman (secretary of the Coachmaker's Union) has received the following letter from Mr. Fred. T. Hack, which explains itself, "You will be pleased to hear we have just had news from England, through a leading magazine, that of all the hundreds of ambulances presented to the British government the most suitable for its work was designed and built in Adelaide, South Australia. They were photographed for the papers, and generally copied by the English coachbuilders. The above refers to the first three ambulances we built in October and which were sent to England."

On 30 June 1915, the Adelaide 'Register' reported. "On Wednesday afternoon, at 3 o'clock, Messrs. Fred. T. Hack, Limited, King William Street, received an order for a motor ambulance body. At 1 o'clock, Saturday, the car was finished, ready for the road, the time taken in constructing the body being three days. The ambulance, which is mounted on an 18 h.p. De Dion chassis, was presented to the military authorities by Mr. C. T. Bray, of Glenelg, who also goes to London on Wednesday with the ambulance to offer his services to the British War Office." Cecil Thomas Bray (1874-1937), whose residence was 'Knutsford' at Glenelg. His father, Sir John Cox Bray (1842-1894) was Premier of South Australia 1881-1884. 'Knutsford' was formerly owned by the Birks family and named after their hometown outside of Manchester. Knutsford was also the hometown of Henry Royce from 1898 to 1907 when he moved to Derby.

In 1915 Hack advertised "The Adelaide Torpedo Charabanc to carry 20 passengers. Charabanc derives from the French meaning carriage with benches. They were popular for groups on sight-seeing trips. Hack would also build commercial bodies in Sydney.

THE ADELAIDE
30-cwt. MOTOR LORRY,
 Manufactured and Assembled with the best French
 Motor Parts by
FRED. T. HACK, LTD.,
 KING WILLIAM STREET SOUTH.
 'Phone 1514.
 INSPECTION INVITED. IMMEDIATE
 DELIVERIES. M267tr

THE ADELAIDE TORPEDO
CHARABANC.
 CARRY 20 PASSENGERS. MANUFACTURED
 AND ASSEMBLED BY
FRED. T. HACK, LTD.,
 KING WILLIAM STREET SOUTH.
 'Phone 1514.
 INSPECTION INVITED. IMMEDIATE
 DELIVERIES. M267tr

Above left: 'Observer' 30 October 1915.

Above right: 'The Journal' 29 December 1915.

Below: 'Observer', 19 August 1916.

MOTOR CAR ENAMELLING, PAINTING, and
 VARNISHING.
 HIGHEST GRADE MATERIALS AND
 WORKMANSHIP.
 LATEST AND BEST METHODS.
 All Work Guaranteed. Prices Reasonable.
FRED. T. HACK, LTD.,
 202 KING WILLIAM STREET SOUTH.
 M17mcv1

The South Australian Intelligence and Tourist Bureau purchased a new charabanc in 1913. Its initial run was to Mt Lofty in March. 'The Advertiser' reported on 13 March 1913, "The chassis, of the latest Commer type, is fitted with a 30 h.p. 4-cylinder engine.... The charabanc torpedo body was locally constructed. The all-wood framing is of American white ash, with pressed steel panels. The Cape cart hood, with detachable side curtains, folds down at the rear of the body. The body has been prepared with 17 coats of paint and varnish, and is finished in a handsome French grey with dark gray and green lines." The body builder was not identified but Hack is one candidate. Though others were building charabancs. Eyes & Crowle exhibited a 3 ton Commer lorry fitted with a detachable charabanc torpedo body capable of seating 30 passengers in September 1913. It was built in their own body building department for Mr Thomas Wheeler of Norwood. Commer, founded in 1905, was one of the earliest truck manufacturers.



Above: A group of passengers sightseeing in the South Australian Tourist Bureau Commer charabanc along a muddy road at Mount Lofty in 1913. [State Library of South Australia B 11943]

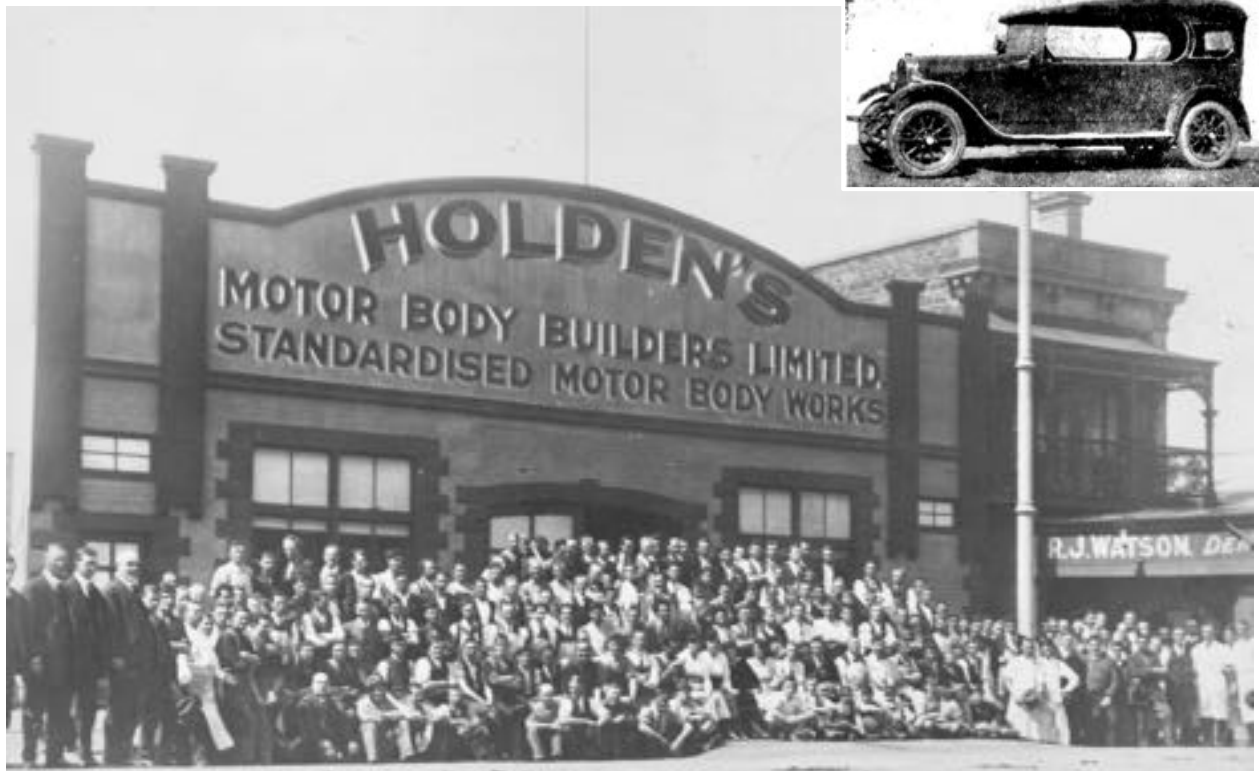
Right: A Lacre charabanc in the Mount Lofty ranges. The Lacre Motor Car Co. produced commercial vehicles from 1904. [State Library of South Australia B 28391]



On 30 June 1917 'The Mail' reported, "The enterprising firm of Fred T. Hack, Ltd., has just completed three motor firereels of compact and attractive design. Delivery was made to them today to Superintendent Dickie of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Station."

While Hack appears to be at the height of his business success he decided to sell up in Adelaide and move to Sydney in 1917. Holden subsequently took over Hack's former premises at 400 King William Street, Adelaide and built a large four-story factory on the site. The firm started back in 1856 when James Holden (1835-1887) established a saddlery business in Adelaide. His grandson, Edward (1885-1947) joined the firm in 1905 with an interest in motor cars. By 1908 the company had moved into the business of minor repairs to car upholstery. They then began to re-body older chassis using bodies produced by F T Hack and Co. from 1914. They mounted the body and painted it and trimmed it. By 1917 Holden's Motor Body Builders had been established and by the 1920s grew to be one of biggest car body manufacturers in the British Empire.

Fred Hack was given a farewell dinner on 27 September 1917 at the King's Head Hotel with, "Genuine regret at his impending departure, intermingled with expressions of goodwill and wishes for his future success..... there was more than a tinge of sorrow at his decision to leave South Australia and establish himself in the motoring industry in Sydney." As reported in 'The Mail' on 29 September 1917.



Above: Holden's Motor Body Builders Ltd premises at 400 King William Street. Believed taken in 1918 located on the former premises of F T Hack & Co which was erected in 1913. Purchased by Holden's Motor Body Builders in 1917 and pulled down when Holden's four-story building was extended. [State Library of South Australia BRG 213/1/3/1]

Inset: A Dodge car with a California top by Holden's of Adelaide. [The Brisbane newspaper 'The Telegraph' 15 December 1925]

In Sydney Hack went on to head up the Missenden Road Motor Body Works. This item appeared under "Company News" in the Sydney Morning Herald of 24 February 1920, "Missenden-road Motor Body Works, Ltd., capital £10,000, in 6,000 preference and 4,000 ordinary shares of £1 each, to acquire the business of motor body manufacturer carried on by J. N. Grace at Missenden-road, Camperdown. First directors: J. N. Grace, F. T. Hack, and H. R. Cush." Hack was the only motor body builder amongst the directors. Subscribers to the Memorandum of Association were, Joseph Neal Grace, Sarah Selina Grace, Albert Edward Grace, Fred T Hack, Harold Raymond Cush, Samuel James Carruthers and John Farran. Sarah was Joseph's wife and Albert his brother.



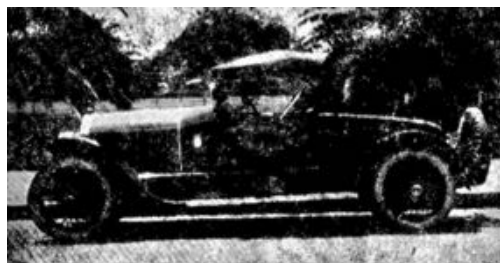
Above: *The Missenden Road Motor Body Works factory at 122-128 Missenden Road is the two-storey building on the left, viewed across the construction site. This side of the factory is in Brodie Street with Missenden Road in the front. In the background on the left opposite the factory is St John's College in the grounds of Sydney University. The housing on the right is the rear of 114-120 Missenden Road. The photo is dated 17 May 1919. [City of Sydney Archive and History Resources A-00038222]*

Joseph Neal Grace (1859-1931) was a retailer and an enterprising business man. Grace was born in England. He migrated to Australia about 1880 and became a retail assistant with the department store Farmer & Co. Ltd in Sydney. About 1883 he bought a horse and cart and took out a hawker's licence. In 1885 with his brother Albert Edward Grace (c1863-1938) he bought a drapery store in George Street West known as Broadway, Glebe. In 1917 the brothers founded the famous Sydney department store of Grace Bros. Harold Raymond Cush (1892-1934) was the secretary and public officer of Grace Bros Ltd.

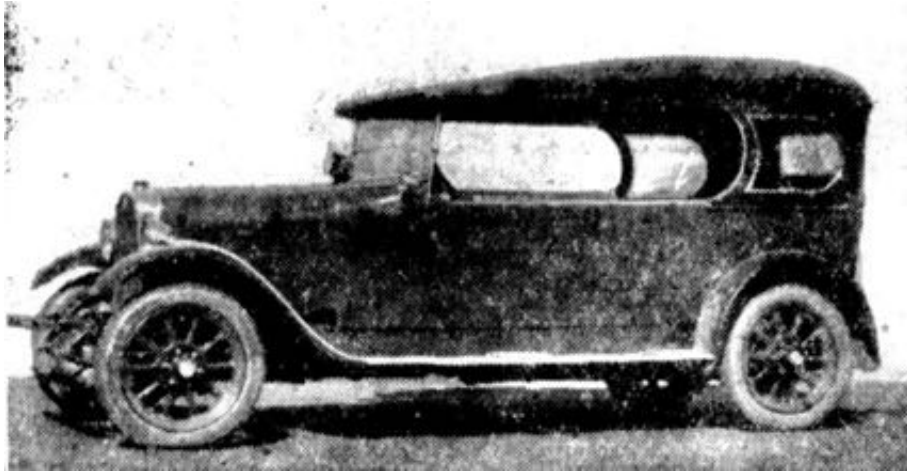
Searches of the Sydney Sand's Directory and Wise's NSW Post Office Directory reveal that Missenden Road Motor Body Works was at 122-128 Missenden Road from 1920 to 1928. In 1923 the street numbering changed to 67-73. As noted, the company registration included, "the business of motor body manufacturer carried on by J. N. Grace at Missenden Road, Camperdown." However, there is no record of Grace in Missenden Road. Propert's City Motor Works though were in Missenden Road. 'Rolls-Royce and Bentley in the Sunburnt Country' notes they operated there from 1914. The address listings in the directories start from 1917 when they were at number 130. In 1918 and 1919 Propert's listing changed to 122-128. Around August 1919 Propert's departed their Missenden Road works and operated at Parramatta Road, Forest Lodge and King Street, Newtown. Grace must have acquired at least the business premises from Propert's in late 1919, certainly in time to list the Missenden Road Motor Body Works in the NSW Post Office Directory published in January 1920.

Hack continued playing cricket in Sydney and captained the Glebe Club in the Second Grade against Sydney District in 1923. At the time the Sydney 'Referee' reported, "he went in late and hit up 107 in less than 40 minutes, landing four 6's." A similar report in 1924 recorded his success with the Glebe Club and noted, "Fred in his more youthful days was the opening batsman in the South Australian team the time the Wheatfielders possessed ... and many other stars, so he is no dunce at the game of bat and ball." The slang for South Australians as Wheatfielders had a certain resonance when it came to cricketers!

In 1923 the firm built a roadster body on a Stutz chassis for, "One of Sydney's keenest motorists Dr Sproule, of Cronulla (a beach suburb south of Sydney), who has owned quite a fleet of cars. Dr Sproule's latest possession is a magnificent specimen of a single-seater Stutz car, with an Australian made aluminium body built by the Missenden Road Body Works".

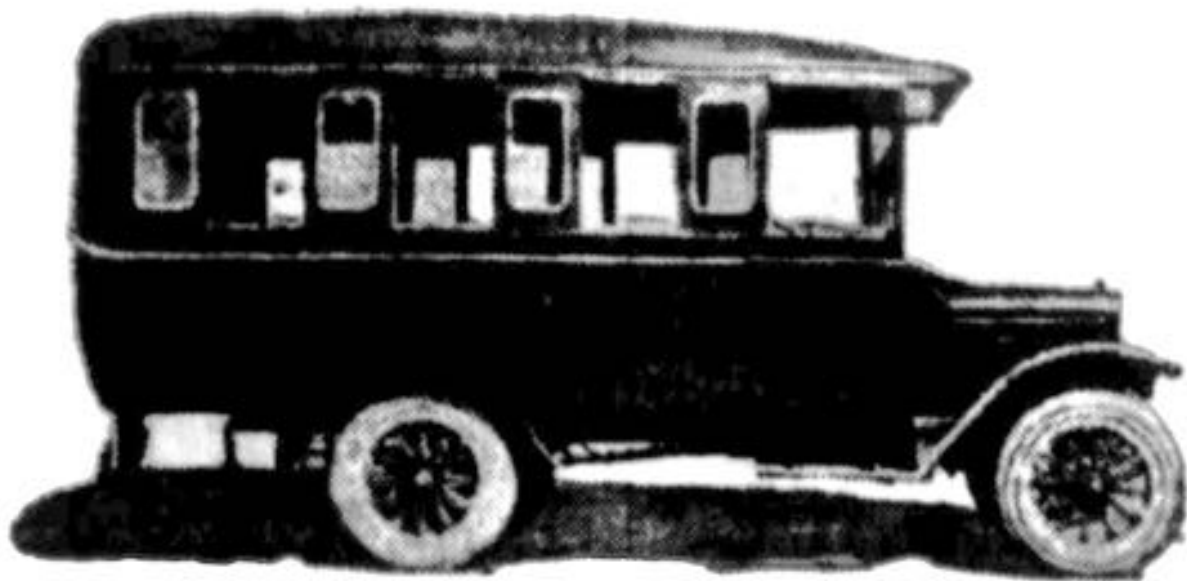


Above: Dr Sproule's single-seater Stutz car by Missenden Road Motor Body Works. ['Sunday Times' 7 January 1923]



Above: An Austin 20 with a California top by Missenden Road Motor Body Works. [‘The Sun’ 18 August 1923]

As well as cars the firm built a bus body on an International truck chassis to hold 18 passengers in 1924. They also built a tipping truck with a mechanism which could be used with horse-drawn or motor vehicles. Reporting on the Sydney Show ‘The Sydney Morning Herald’ on 16 April 1924 that, “A feature of the commercial vehicles shown is a latest model speed charabanc, of remarkably handsome design, with a 16-seater body in brown and black, the canopy being covered in pegamoid. This body was constructed by the Missenden-road factory. The tyres are 33 by 5 inch pneumatics.” Pegamoid was a waterproof lacquer. The next item may relate to the same vehicle.

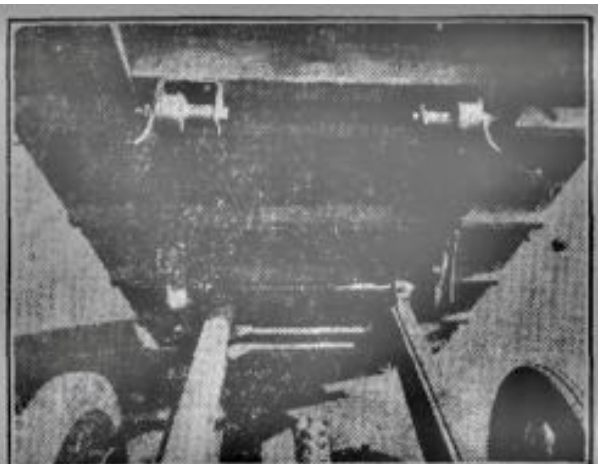


Above: A Missenden Road Motor Body Works bus body on an International truck chassis. [‘Evening News’ 19 September 1924]

The 5 June 1924 edition of 'The Sydney Morning Herald' noted, "The Missenden Road Body Works, Ltd., of which a former interstate cricketer (Mr. F. T. Hack) is the manager, exhibited some very fine handsome examples of motor charabanc construction at the Royal Easter Show, part of the finish being a new idea introduced during the past few years of covering the body fabrikoid instead of painting it." Fabrikoid is an imitation leather composed of cotton coated with nitrocellulose patented in 1915 by Du Pont.



Left and below: Missenden Road Motor Body Works developed a tip truck that could be used with horse drawn or motor vehicles. The man demonstrating the mechanism is possibly Les Bailey, who by now was the managing director of the firm. [The Daily Telegraph' 7 November 1925]



From 1925 Missenden Road Motor Body Works underwent changes in its corporate structure. Dire consequences followed for Fred Hack and an employee Francis Higgins, who had suffered an industrial accident. Hack was replaced when S L Bailey became the principal shareholder of the firm and took over as the managing director.



Above: Les Bailey and the 2¾ h.p. Douglas on which he set the record of 70 m.p.h. for the 350 c.c. class at Brooklands. [‘Motor Cycling’ 24 December 1912]

Stephen Leslie Bailey, known as Les, was born in Newcastle, NSW, in 1889. By the age of 22 he was setting Australian motor cycling records. In 1910 he went to England to pursue his career. After employment in the Humber company workshops he joined the Douglas brothers, motor cycle manufacturers in Kingswood, Bristol. In December 1912 he set a speed record of 70 m.p.h. on a 2¾ h.p. Douglas at Brooklands. he also won the 250 miles Grand Prix Road Race on the Le Mans circuit at 47½ m.p.h. Bailey returned to Australia briefly in 1913 and chalked up more Australian records before going back to England where he was involved in motor cycle engineering and the retail trade of Douglas motor cycles. He returned to Australia in 1925. As well as Missenden Road Motor Body Works, Bailey was the managing director of the newly developed Penrith Speedway west of Sydney.

Missenden Road Motor Body Works had a nominal capital of £10,000 of which 2,000 £1 preference shares and 4,000 £1 ordinary shares were paid up. About July or August 1926 the company was taken over by another company, in which Bailey held 6,000 of the 6,007 paid up shares. Seven other shareholders held one share each. On 14 October 1926 a debenture was given to Bailey by the company to secure an amount of £1,719 11s 3d and further advances not to exceed in all £2,000. Bailey himself was one of the directors who signed the debenture.

What ultimately happened was headlined in the 29 April 1928 issue of the ‘Truth’, “Maimed Workman Is Without Redress! Be Your Own Preferred Creditor. How Mr. Bailey Came First When His Business Put Up the Shutters.” It continued, “S. L. Bailey, managing director and principal shareholder in the late Missenden Road Motor Body Works Ltd., acted on this principle with excellent results so far as he himself was concerned. The creditors, including one man who was permanently maimed in the company’s employ, and now finds that he was not insured and cannot gain compensation, are left lamenting.”

“Francis Higgins, who lost several fingers while working for the Missenden Road Company (on 25 June 1927), was awarded £217 10s with £50 medical expenses

compensation, by consent, in the Workers' Compensation Court, but he has not received a penny of that. Nor does he see any possibility of obtaining a penny, while Bailey has pocketed about £2,000."

The article noted, "Bailey, it must be stressed, had a perfect legal right to pocket that £2,000. He has acted within the law, and no legal blame can be attached to him – except in so far as he failed to comply with the compulsory provision of the Workers' Compensation Act and insure his employees."

Finally, Bailey was the chairman of the meeting of shareholders of The Missenden Road Motor Body Works Ltd on 4 January 1928 when it was resolved that the Company "... cannot by reason of its liabilities continue its business". A liquidator was appointed on 25 June 1928. Bailey as it transpired was an archetypal corporate raider.

The listing in 1927 for 122-128 Missenden Road also included the Motor Trimming Co. and the De Luxe Motor Painting Co. Hack may have been involved with the painting company. In 1929 Hack is listed at 555-7 Parramatta Road, Leichhardt, as a motor body builder. Occupying the same premises was H Lee a motor engineer, H Riley a motor trimmer and W Hammer a sheet metal worker (sic). However, the following year in 1930 the Imperial Skating Rink was established at number 555. Hack is not listed in the 1931 and 1932 Post Office Directory under "Motor Body Builders" or "Motor Car Painters". It was of course the time of the Great Depression.

There is no indication that Hack's family followed him to Sydney. However, it appears he was back in Adelaide when his eldest son, Alfred Thomas, born 1905, died on 4 February 1933, following complications from an operation for appendicitis. Alfred was only 27. He was also a cricketer and represented South Australia as a wicket keeper. The notice of his death in 'The Mail' recorded "Mr. and Mrs. F. T. Hack, of No.12 Ramsgate Street, Glenelg." Hack, however, died in Brisbane in 1939 while his wife Rosa died in South Australia a year later in 1940. Their children, Norman Reginald (1907-1971) and Nancy Rosa (1909-1988) died in South Australia. The youngest, Jean (1911-1982), died in Mildura, Victoria.

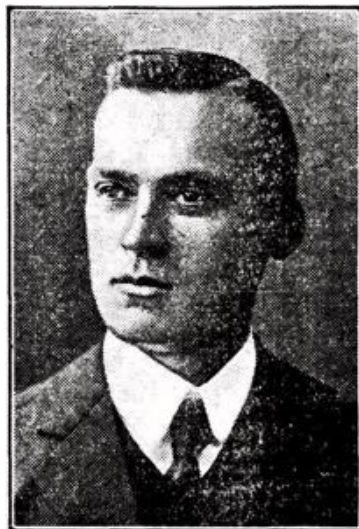
The luxurious body on the Rolls-Royce Twenty pictured at the beginning of this article was described in 'The Richmond River Herald and Northern Districts Advertiser', NSW, on 22 August 1924, "A Beautiful Rolls-Royce De Luxe" was the heading, "A 20 h.p. Rolls-Royce, with California top, has been prepared by a city firm for Mr. A. G. Chapman, proprietor of the Sydney Bag Stores. The body, mud-guards, and valances are made with English hand-rolled aluminium. The cushions, seats and lining of the hood are upholstered in Velmo plush. An ice-chest is fitted in the back of the front seat. It has polished maple doors. There is also a washing basin, and spirit decanters, photographic appliances, and tools which are fitted into the doors. There is a two-corner and roof lamp with holophane globes and a cigar lighter and smoker's companion on the dash. There is a specially embossed sun visor and bevel plate glass side deflectors. Flower vases in cut glass are fitted in the hood. The steps are finished with turn-over valances to the edges. The grids and mats are nickel plated. The luggage carrier at the rear is fitted with spring

catches. The bevel plate glass windows have brown silk blinds to match the upholstery. Bumper bars are fitted to the front and rear of the car.”

The “city firm” was Missenden Road Motor Body Works when Fred Hack was in charge.

There is a curious ending to the story of Fred Hack. A legal notice placed in the Brisbane newspaper ‘The Telegraph’ on 12 March 1941 reveals two aliases, “In the estate of Frederick Theodore Hack otherwise known as Francis Charles Anderson or Charles Francis Anderson, late of Gregory Court, Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, in the State of Queensland, Motor Body Builder deceased. All persons and others having claims against the estate of the abovenamed deceased, who died at Brisbane Hospital on 10th April, 1939, are requested to forward full particulars.” The notice was placed by the Adelaide firm of Elder’s Trustee & Executor Company, Limited, Currie Street, Adelaide. The chairman of directors was T E Barr Smith. Incidentally, Barr Smith’s 1910 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost was the beginning of a long run of Rolls-Royce purchases by this distinguished South Australian family.

The final legal notice for Hack and his wife was lodged by Elder’s Trustee & Executor Company in the Adelaide newspaper ‘The Advertiser’ on 24 January 1946, closing the estates of, “Hack, Frederick Theodore (otherwise Francis Charles Anderson), late of Gregory Court, Gregory Terrace, Brisbane, Queensland, Motor Body Builder. Hack, Rosa, late of Ramsgate Street, Glenelg, S.A., Married Woman.”



This portrait of the enigmatic Frederick Theodore Hack appeared in the Adelaide newspaper ‘The Express and Telegraph’ on 12 March 1914.

Acknowledgement: Assistance from Tom Clarke. David Neely, Sydney, September 2024.