

MYSTERIOUS MASCOTS

There are always some of these around. The mascot, pictured below, from an auction catalogue in which it was titled 'Mystery', is similar to the one pictured and described by Martin Cannell in the RREC *Bulletin*, Issue 229, July/August 1998. He acquired two of these sculptures "from some effects which had been sold from the offices of Park Ward Ltd., the coachbuilders, prior to the company being purchased by Rolls-Royce in 1938/39." He said that they were originally nickel-plated bronze and were subsequently chromium-plated, and "both are correctly signed 'Charles Sykes' on the top of the veil." One or other of these, or another one altogether, was offered at an auction by Bonhams & Butterfields at Quail Lodge in August 2004, with a suggested price range of \$14–18,000 USD. The same sculpture, the other one, or another one altogether was offered by the same auction house at Hershey in October 2006, with an estimated selling price range of \$8–9,000 USD. I have now seen three pictures of this or these mascots with a different base in each picture. It is said to be an experimental 20hp mascot that was not adopted for

The 'Mystery' mascot by Charles Sykes. This photograph is from an auction catalogue of August 2004. It has no wings and is very tall. Although it has a Sykes signature, it is unlikely to be a car mascot, even though it is here mounted on a R-R radiator cap.



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The Spirit of Ecstasy

— Part Four —

by
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use. There are at least two reasons for doubting this. First, it is far too tall to be appropriate for a 20hp, whose Sykes mascots are, typically about half as high. Secondly, Jo Phillips mentions only "a short-winged mascot" as a variant but adds: "My father did not like it and persuaded R-R Ltd. that it was not 'a good thing' so it was never adopted." This mascot has no wings at all. It could have been made and signed by Charles Sykes, but perhaps not as a Rolls-Royce mascot but as separate artistic exercise altogether. A doubting Thomas (John 20:24-29) might opine that it could be a sculpture on which its creator bestowed a Charles Sykes signature without authorization, but this might be considered carping.

This mascot is, according to its owner, a "short wing design". I have reproduced its shape by flattening the wings of a wax pattern of the same mascot type. Perhaps a reader knows more about this unusual mascot.



When the Conduit Street offices were closed, there was an auction of some of the contents. A fellow enthusiast attended this auction and purchased a mascot that he believes was an alternative mascot design sculpted by Sykes. It is an appropriate size for a mascot, has a similar artistic theme, and looks fine on a Rolls-Royce radiator. But unless some written or anecdotal evidence comes to light, this origin for the item should probably remain speculative.

In 2000, Martin Cannell described, in the RREC *Bulletin*, Issue 239, an unusual mascot that he acquired, pictured below centre. He said: "The 'short wing' design featured in this article may well be a representation of the 'New Phantom' mascot. The redesigned 'wings' were spread in a horizontal manner, giving the effect of a much lower profile from all angles." He thinks it may be of silver, but had not tested this at his time of writing. He noted that the overall height was 4.25 inches and the wing spread 5 inches. He said there were the usual base inscriptions but no underwing markings. This mascot is certainly unusual. The cap on which it sits is not the usual hexagon or octagon, and it is

This mascot was purchased at the Conduit Street closing down auction. It might be a trial R-R mascot, but this is speculative.



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most unusual to have base inscriptions and nothing under the wings.

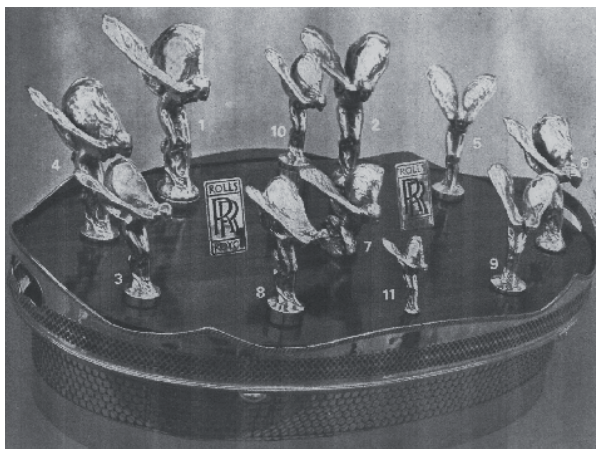
Martin's mascot is probably not, as he suggested, a short-winged version of a standard mascot, designed, it is said to permit the opening of the hood without mascot-turning. I have made comparison measurements of a mascot I have which has the same shape and base inscriptions as the Cannell mascot, and the wings of either would require mascot rotation to open the car's bonnet without obstruction. I have made a wax replica of my mascot, and can replicate the shape of his by bending the wax wings down to match. I believe that this wing-bending would account for the unusual shape of his mascot. This may be a coincidence, but my example of the early Springfield mascot also has wings at the same level as the head, and they are very wide. Perhaps there is a connection?

MASCOT COLLECTIONS

Stanley Sears had a fine mascot collection, which was photographed extremely well by Rolls-Royce in 1960. Curiously, a mascot he said was for a 1911 Silver Ghost is only 5 inches high, not the 7 inches that most authorities state.

John Schroeder displayed his fine collection in a one-page article, with group photograph, in the *RREC Bulletin*, March 1975, page 13. The text and photograph were reproduced in *The Flying Lady*, 80-5, page 2310. Joe Fildes has pictured his extensive mascot collection and accompanied it with very comprehensive descriptions, plus five measurements of each mascot, for eleven different mascots. It is the most detailed size and inscription information I have encountered.

Occasionally a 'complete set of mascots' appears for sale or auction. A set of eleven, unmounted, appeared on the front page of the *RREC Advertiser* of September 1985. Two years later, a Southeby's catalogue for an auction in London on 30 November 1987 pictured a superb set of 14 mascots dating from 1911 to 1987, all mounted on wooden bases. The suggested auction price range was from £5-8,000, which is, by today's standards, a low price for genuine Sykes mascots.



Above: This Joe Fildes mascot collection gives an excellent overview of the variant mascots, and suggests R-R models they would suit: 1. Early Silver Ghost 1911-14; 2. Post-War Silver Ghost; 3. Twenty HP; 4. Phantom I; 5. Phantom II; 6. 20/25; 7. 20/25 to Silver Dawn; 8. Silver Cloud; 9. Early Silver Shadow to Silver Shadow Spring-Loaded; and, 11. Presentation only.



Above: This fine John Schroeder mascot collection identifies mascots according to size, a practical approach to identification. (See his publications cited, left.)

Below: Fourteen mascots offered for auction in this very desirable Lot 241, Southebys, London, 1987.



The Spirit of Ecstasy

DETAILS OF SYKES CAR MASCOTS AND INSCRIPTIONS

(Note the idiosyncracies of style in the inscriptions, which are highlighted in red in the following text - Editor.)

The mascots I describe here are from my collection, and are either Sykes mascots, or very good reproductions of them. I describe them in what I believe to be the order that Sykes made them, but I could be in error. I also describe some mascots I am reasonably sure were not made by Sykes, for the purposes of comparison. The measurements are in millimeters, to provide simple, precise figures. Because of the variability inherent in casting wax patterns, I provide only the 'nose to toes' measurement, described earlier, and the diameter of the base, plus descriptions.

THE BIG PRE-WWII MASCOTS

1. Silver-plated; N-T: 113 mm; base 50 mm dia. and hollow; RHS base blank; LHS base Charles Sykes; under wings blank; vertical sides of base: **ROLLS-ROYCE LIMITED FEB.6TH1911** ; Alice band 10 x 3 mm, deeply scribed, left wing lower than right.

Comments: I first saw examples of this mascot (two) at the Alpine Celebration Tour 2003 in Austria, and since then have seen more examples, for sale and at auctions. Some have said it is a post-WWII sculpture, and not by Sykes. This possibility does not detract from its striking appearance and artistic merit. It is a fine mascot. A solid silver version exists.

2. Silver-plated; N-T: 103 mm; base 42 mm dia. and hollow; RHS base blank; LHS base Charles Sykes; under wings blank; vertical sides of base: **ROLLS-ROYCE LIMITED FEB6TH 1911**; Alice band 5 x 2 mm, faint; left wing lower than right.

Comments: This is by far the most common large early mascot, and is, in my view, suitable for all pre-WWI cars. Many replicas must exist, because only about one in ten pre-WWI chassis were ordered with this or a slightly later mascot.

3. Silver-plated; N-T 105 mm; base 41 mm dia., with vertical cylindrical section below, 37 mm dia. and 3 mm high; RHS base: **R-R LTD 6-2-11**; LHS base: Charles Sykes; TRADE MARK REG. under right wing; REG. U.S. PAT. OFF. under left wing. Alice band 7 x 2 mm, well-defined.

Comments: This is a rare mascot. Its cylindrical base appears to be a vestigial version of that on mascot No. 2. A colleague has one, which showed clearly the remains of original silver-plating. Another was pictured in an article by Pedr (sic) Davis at page 62 of the *Australian Bulletin*, February 21, 1984.

4. Nickel-plated; N-T 103 mm; base 36 mm dia. RHS base: **ROLLS-ROYCE LTD Feb 6 1911**; LHS base Charles Sykes; TRADE MARK REG. under right wing; REG. U.S. PAT. OFF. under left wing; Alice band only a depression on this mascot; base has vertical, cylindrical sides, higher at rear.

Comments: This is a common and attractive mascot. The vertical sides to the base make it easy to identify. It would, in my opinion, be suitable for a Silver Ghost or Phantom I.



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5. Nickel-plated, but perhaps originally silver-plated; N-T 101 mm; base 37 mm dia. RHS base:

ROLLS-ROYCE L^{TD} 6.2.1911; LHS base Charles Sykes; TRADE MARK REG. under right wing; REG. U.S. PAT. OFF. under left wing; Alice band only a depression on this mascot. Left wing slightly lower than right.

Comments: This is an excellent mascot for most Silver Ghosts and perhaps Phantom Is. It is handsome, large, and impressive. It resembles closely mascot No 4, but has a rounded, not cylindrical base and is dated 6.21911 and not Feb 6th 1911.

6. Nickel-silver or German-silver, no evidence of any plating; N-T: 100 mm; base 40 mm dia; RHS base: **R-R L^{TD} 6.2.11**; LHS base Charles Sykes; TRADE MARK REG. under right wing; REG. U.S. PAT. OFF. under left wing. No Alice band. Head heavily polished.

Comments: An excellent example of an unplated mascot, with the slight yellowish tinge of nickel- or German-silver. Polishing has started to erase the scribed inscriptions. The base is very wide, and would overhang slightly the usual mascot radiator cap. There are three deep, vertical grooves 5 mm long below the toes of the left foot. I cannot explain them. As it is unplated, it is probably more suited to Silver Ghost than Phantom I and is almost certainly a Sykes product.

7. Nickel-plated; N-T 96 mm: base 40 mm dia. RHS base: **R-R L^{TD} 6-2-11**; LHS base Charles Sykes; TRADEMARKREG (note no stops) under right wing REGUS PATOFF (note no stops) under left wing. Raised Alice band, 5 x 2 mm. Very rounded base.

Comments: This mascot is very similar to 4 and 5, but has a well-rounded base. The owner is confident it was supplied with a Phantom I chassis.

8. Nickel-plated; N-T 94 mm; base 39 mm dia. RHS base: **ROLLSROYCEL^{TD}Feb61911**; LHS base Charles Sykes; TRADE.MARK.

REG. under right wing; REG.U.S.PAT. OFF. under left wing. Traces of Alice band; base rather flat.

Comments: This mascot has a smooth finish with little surface detail. The head is large and the figure full, with broad hips. The under wing writing is twice the usual height and angled differently. It is smaller than Silver Ghost mascots. The mascot measurement tables, supported by Joe Fildes, identify this as a Phantom I mascot, but I have seen very few so fitted. It would also look appropriate on a Phantom II, 20/25hp or 25/30hp.

THE SMALL PRE-WWII MASCOTS

I will describe these from small to large, which I believe was the way they were developed.

9. Nickel-plated; N-T 74 mm; base cylindrical, 28 mm dia., 5 mm thick front, 8 mm thick rear, RHS base: **ROLLS ROYCE L^{TD} FEB 6 1911**; LHS base C Sykes TRADE MARK REG under right wing; REG US. PAT OFF under left wing; No Alice Band;

Comments: This is the smallest mascot I have seen on a pre-WWII car. It was on a very early 20hp, probably original equipment and has a delicate appearance. It is unusual in that the date is written FEB not Feb, the signature is not 'Charles Sykes' as used on pre-1930 mascots, but 'C Sykes' as used on post-1930 mascots, and no periods are used. It is somewhat larger than Cloud and Shadow mascots, .



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10. Nickel-plated; N-T 76 mm; base 33 mm dia, cylindrical and uniformly 8 mm thick. RHS base: **ROLLS ROYCE L^{TD} FEB 6 1911**; LHS base 'Charles Sykes'; TRADE MARK REG. under right wing; REG. U.S. PAT. OFF. under left wing. No Alice band.

Comments: This too is from an early 20hp and probably original equipment. The most noticeable feature is the thick base, and I have seen examples with even thicker bases. The **FEB** and **C Sykes** of No 9 have changed to **FEB** and **Charles Sykes**.

11. Nickel-plated; N-T 82 mm; base 35 mm dia., cylindrical and 7 mm thick all around. RHS base: **RRL^{TD}6-2-11**; LHS base Charles Sykes TRADE MARK REG. under right wing; REG. U.S. PAT. OFF. under left wing.

Comments: This mascot features very large lettering, twice the height of the earlier mascots, both on the base and under the wings.

12. Nickel-plated; N-T 83 mm; base 32 mm dia. and very rounded; RHS base **R-R L^{TD} 6-2-11**; LHS base CSykes TRADE MARK REG under right wing REG. U.S. PAT. OFF under left wing (inscription at right angles to usual). Alice band 7 x 2 mm and prominent. Comments: This mascot is from an early 20hp but was probably retrofitted. The lettering on the base and under the wings is large and the face aquiline. The body is much thinner than Nos. 9, 10 and 11, but taller. The big difference is, however,

the C Sykes signature, which is in normal printing and NOT the Sykes style, which uses Greek e and s lettering. It is unlikely to have been lettered by Sykes.

13. Nickel-plated; N-T 81 mm; base 34 mm dia., very rounded and deeper than No. 12. RHS base **R.R. L^{TD} 6-2-11** LHS base C. Sykes; TRADE MARK REG under right wing REG. U.S. PAT. OFF. under left wing. No Alice band.

Comments: This mascot has the same large lettering, the same non-Sykes signature, and the same rounded base as No. 12, but the face and body are correctly proportioned, not thin, and the face is not aquiline. All of No. 12's dimensions are slightly smaller than No. 13's, suggesting that it is a reproduction of No. 13.

14. Chromium-plated; N-T 83 mm; base 33 mm dia., gently rounded. RHS base **ROLLS ROYCE L^{TD} 6-2-11**; LHS base Charles Sykes REG. U.S. PAT. OFF. under right wing TRADE MARK REG. under left wing. Alice band 5 x 2 mm but faint.

Comments: This mascot was sold as coming from a 20/25hp. There is good detail in the draperies. The under wing inscriptions are very large, but the base inscriptions are quite small. The date extends to under the toes of the left foot, the only mascot so lettered in my collection. But the most unusual feature is the reversal of the under wing inscriptions,

15. Chromium-plated; N-T 74 mm; base 33 mm dia., cylindrical, and 7 mm high front and 10 mm high rear. RHS base blank; LHS base blank; Blank under right wing; Blank under left wing. Alice band simulated by deep 7 mm groove.

Comments: This is NOT a Sykes mascot, but one supplied by R-R Motors Ltd in the 1980s in response to requests from customers requiring a pre-WWII mascot. It is not a copy of any Sykes mascot but does resemble some of them.

16. Chromium-plated; N-T 119 mm; base 33 mm dia. RHS base **26-1-34** LHS base C:Sykes; TRADE MARK REG. under right wing REG. U.S. PAT. OFF. under left wing. Alice band 7 x 2 mm, faint.



Comments: This is a pre-WWII Sykes kneeling mascot, and has a date and signature, unlike the almost identical Silver Dawn Mascot, which has neither. All the inscriptions are hand-scribed, but the Sykes signature lacks the Greek e and s, and was probably not lettered by Sykes. The drapery details are flowing, artistic and more pleasing than those of the Dawn mascot. Note that the N-T measurement is from the nose tip to the tip of the big toe of the extended left foot.

PRE-WWII NON-SYKES MASCOTS

17. Nickel-plated; N-T 98 mm; base 37 mm dia. Base is steeply rounded. RHS base R.R. LTD.; LHS base C-Sykes. TRADE MARK REG. under right wing REG. US. PAT. OFF. under left wing. Alice band 8 x 1.5 mm, hair permed. Comments: This mascot has an acceptable appearance, but is clearly not made by Sykes. The drapery details are mechanical and excessive, the hair is overdone and the date is missing. Most people would not, however, notice these details, and if the alternative is no mascot and the price is reasonable, it would be acceptable to many owners.

18. Nickel-plated; N-T 96 mm; base 37 mm; No inscriptions anywhere. This is a die casting in a lead-, tin-, or zinc-based alloy. Comments: This is a diecast copy of No. 17, and shows from the moulding fins that the mould was in five or more parts. This mascot would be suitable to fit to a car where theft is likely. The buyer should not pay more than a few dollars for one. It will make a dull sound when tapped.



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19. Nickel-plated; N-T 95 mm; base 41 mm dia. No inscriptions on base or under wings. Alice band 9 x 2 mm and very prominent, hair ribbed; base closely resembles that of mascots Nos 1 and 2, with a prominent vertical cylinder 7 mm high under the base.

Comments: This is an attractive mascot, but clearly not a Sykes or a Sykes replica. Many purchasers would deduce this from the absence of any inscriptions. But if you need a nice-looking mascot, this would be worth considering if the price was acceptable. The wings are steeper than is usual, but this is not obvious unless a genuine mascot is nearby for comparison.

POST-WWII R-R MANUFACTURED MASCOTS

20. Chromium-plated; N-T 112 mm; base 33 mm dia. RHS base blank; LHS base blank; TRADE MARK REG stamped, not scribed, under right wing; REG US PAT OFF stamped, not scribed, under left wing. No Alice band, hair ribbed.

Comments: This is the first mascot made by R-R Ltd. It is a kneeling version of the Spirit of Ecstasy and was supplied with each Silver Dawn and Silver Wraith, unlike the pre-WWII cars where the mascot had to be specifically requested when the chassis was ordered. It is a copy of the Sykes version, but the drapery is more mechanical and it lacks the artistic appearance of the original. After a while, owners requested replacements of mascots lost, stolen or strayed, and those supplied by R-R after 1972 can be identified by the engraved lettering on the front of the base, which reads Rolls-Royce Motors Limited.



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21. Cast stainless steel; N-T 71 mm; base 33 mm dia. RHS and LHS base and under R and L wings, blank. Comments: The Silver Cloud, Shadow, Spirit, Spur and derivatives all have basically the same form of mascot. Silver Cloud mascots are bolted into the radiator cap. Silver Shadow and later mascots are either spring-loaded or retract below the radiator top, mechanically or electrically, to conform to the safety regulations of various countries. It is difficult to identify the correct mascot for each model as the differences are subtle. Martin Bennett's photograph of four mascots shows the difficulties facing the budding mascot expert, or concours judge. But if you are buying a replacement mascot for your Cloud, Shadow, Spirit, Spur or derivative, you should check that the

diameter of its base and the method of securing it to the radiator are correct for your model.

22. Cast stainless steel; N-T 51 mm; base 41 mm dia. RHS and LHS of base and underside of R and L wings blank. Base very wide and gently curved. Comments: This is the latest mascot, made specifically for the Goodwood Phantom. It is much smaller than any previous Spirit of Ecstasy car mascot and has extremely thick wings, considering its small size. It is doubtful if any Goodwood Phantom owner needs to know more about this mascot. It can be retracted into the radiator shell at any time using the manual switch, or will retract when the doors are locked when in the automatic mode. Better still, if the owner forgets, the mascot

retracts automatically if interfered with. Thus the mascot is immune from theft or damage, and is unlikely ever to require replacement.

There are several versions of small presentation or decorative mascots, some of them encased in plastic and presented to long term employees by Rolls-Royce. A wide range of mascot jewellery is also available, but describing these would make an already long dissertation far too long. Perhaps a reader with jewellery expertise can prepare an article on the various small Spirit of Ecstasy items which they have encountered. But thank you, any reader who has persevered to the end of this series. If you have any additions or corrections, please send them to me or the Editor.



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Epilogue
"Honesty is the Best Policy"

This mascot is on Silver Ghost 452G, which is the property of the Hawke's Bay Branch of the Vintage Car Club of New Zealand. The base is inscribed, with commendable candour, "HBVCC REPLICA".

- Editor.

