Introduction & thanks

– the purpose of this book

The Silver Shadow and T caused a storm when they were introduced in the autumn of 1965, for they took the revered names of Rolls-Royce and Bentley into a new era. Bristling with technology, and designed in accordance with the most modern car-making methods, the Silver Shadow and Bentley T consigned traditional Rolls-Royce manufacturing practices to history. The stunningly modern and, arguably, less ostentatious Rolls-Royce appealed to a much wider, and noticeably younger, clientele than before.

With total production of the Silver Shadow exceeding 40,550 vehicles, a figure nearly twice that of the previous model built at Crewe, the new model secured Rolls-Royce's fortunes for the future.

Manufacturing methods might have changed with the Silver Shadow and Bentley T, but happily Rolls-Royce's legendary attention to detail did not. That the cars still appear fresh after more than forty years is a tribute to the efforts of Rolls-Royce Chief Stylist John Blatchley and his dedicated team. Because of its purity, styling changed little during the cars' fifteen-year production run, the essential format continuing to grace the Corniche until 1995.

Today, the Silver Shadow and Bentley T are sought-after classics which promise many years of driving pleasure. This is where this book comes into its own; for within the following pages there is everything you need will to know when contemplating a purchase. A vehicle's grand image might initially influence a decision to buy, but a

The imposing front profile of the Silver Shadow.

vehicles will have maintained their prestige appearance for much longer than some other high quality cars.

There is excellent parts availability, and many Bentley dealers as well as autonomous marque experts provide a first-rate service by way of servicing and restoration. Moreover, the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club maintains records of all Crewe-built cars. Such was Rolls-Royce's commitment to perfection that the factory kept details of each car's interior specification so that the hide, veneers, and soft fabrics could be matched if required.

Bad points

These are big cars and care needs to be taken when negotiating narrow and twisting lanes. Likewise, parking can be problematic. Sadly, cars such as these can attract malicious attention when parked in the open.

Cars, particularly Silver Shadows, are often purchased purely for the status the name and R-R monogram affords. These cars may not always be treated to proper servicing schedules and will be discarded once the novelty of ownership has worn off. This tendency is less common now that the cars have reached classic distinction, though a vehicle with a long list of owners in succession might be one to regard with suspicion.

Open the bonnet and you'll find an engine compartment filled to capacity and bristling with technology, a sight bound to discourage the DIY mechanic. Component access can be difficult, and replacement parts are often expensive, as is routine servicing that, more often than not, requires specialist attention.

General view of the Silver Shadow.

Lush interior of a late model Corniche drophead coupé.

The battery is located in the boot, and would normally have a protective cover.

Beware badly fitting or damaged bumpers; they're horribly expensive to repair and replace.

chrome quarter-sections and ensure there is no evidence of rust. Series II cars have bumpers with a moulded polyurethane insert; again, damage will be expensive to correct.

Under the bonnet

First impressions are very important. Although the engine bay of a Silver Shadow or T appears somewhat intimidating, there are clues which give an indication as to the car's condition. The flexible trunking should be free from splits or damage, and, while this might not pose a major problem, it is, nevertheless, costly to replace. Make sure that there are no signs of water leakage from the radiator or header tank, the tell-tale sign being the remnants of anti-freeze, particularly around the round cover on the top of the header tank. There is little more to do at this stage other than to check the condition of the engine oil by inspecting the dip-stick, and to generally appraise the cleanliness or otherwise of the engine compartment.

Under-bonnet trunking should not be split or damaged.

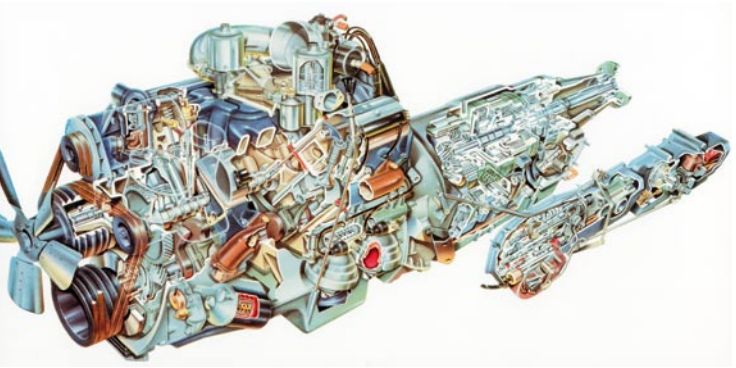
Interior

Now it's time to take a look at the interior of the car. Yet again first impressions count, but it's important to look beyond the lush carpeting and leather seating. The carpets should be your first area of inspection. Water leaks from the windscreen are common and should not present a problem as long as they have been addressed in good time. Water leakage that has not been remedied will result in the front carpets rotting at the edges. The carpeting has a thick foam underlay which will absorb moisture, and there is also a waterproof membrane which will prevent the dampness rising to the surface of the material. In the event of a water leakage not being addressed, there is a danger that the moisture-laden underlay will cause the floorpan to rot. A vehicle showing signs of decay in this area should be treated with caution, the repair being very costly.

When inspecting the seating don't be put off by normal wear marks in the hide.

Check external trim as well as the condition of the boot.

Look for evidence of even minor corrosion which, left unchecked, can become serious.



Engines are inherently reliable as long as they are well maintained. (Courtesy Rolls-Royce)

Examine the front floor of a car by lifting the carpet. If the underlay is wet, the moisture can rot the floorpan. (Courtesy SHRMF)

Advanced corrosion along the lower flanks of a car could be a reason to walk away from a deal!

Ideally, flexible hoses to the braking system should be renewed every 60,000 miles, along with disc brake caliper seals.

with the tool kit. Lifting the boot carpet will reveal a rubber cover which, when removed, allows the spare tyre to be inflated whilst in situ. The tool kit is located within the boot, the heavy items (jack, tommy bar and box spanner) being contained in a storage bag to the right-hand side of the compartment. The tommy bar also releases the wheel discs, and will operate the emergency gearbox selector fitted to early Series I vehicles. The box spanner fits the spare wheel platform, wheel nuts and sparking plugs. A small tool kit is located in the top of the battery box cover: remove the trim around the battery, place fingers in the grooves between the tool tray and slide out.

Mechanicals

Under the bonnet: general impressions

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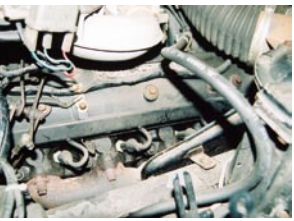

A neglected engine bay says a lot about a car.

There is a myriad of pipes and wiring under the bonnet. Many owners entrust servicing to a specialist.

The engine compartment is packed with pipework and trunking, not to mention the cooling system and the Rolls-Royce V8. Trunking should be in good condition (although it may look inexpensive, it's costly to replace). A well maintained car should show no evidence of water or anti-freeze leaks from the header tank or radiator. In the event of a header tank having to be replaced, this will prove to be very expensive. Look for general tidiness of the under-bonnet area, and note any signs of oil leakage. Check the oil, its condition and level (the dip-stick is on the left-hand side of the engine and is marked ENGINE): oil that is black and thick can suggest neglect. The oil filler is situated on the front face of the B cylinder head, i.e. right-hand side looking from the front of the car.

Engine

Ex 4 Gd 3 Av 2 Po 1

The Rolls-Royce V8 is beautifully engineered and, as long as it's used with respect and regularly maintained, will continue to give excellent service over many thousands of miles. The engine is common to all models, so expect to see Rolls-Royce stamped on the engine in the Bentley variants. An engine should not require major attention under 100,000 miles, but be warned that it might be difficult to diagnose any problems on high mileage cars from within the vehicle owing to the cars' smooth running and highly effective sound deadening. It is usual for the hydraulic tappets to be noisy when the engine is cold, but as soon as the

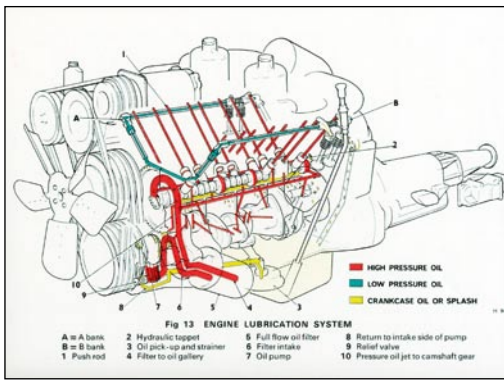

Fig 13 ENGINE LUBRICATION SYSTEM

A = A bank
B = B bank
1 Push rod
2 Hydraulic tappet
3 Oil pick-up and strainer
4 Filter to oil gallery
5 Full flow oil filter
6 Filter intake
7 Oil pump
8 Return to intake side of pump
9 Relief valve
10 Pressure oil jet to camshaft gear

The V8 engine is beautifully-engineered and needs looking after. Tappets are noisy when the engine is cold. The diagram illustrates the lubrication system. (Courtesy Rolls-Royce)