

Regal Red

Documented History

Jaguar, Chassis number T 825127 DN, XK 150 S 3.8 Litre FHC RHD was manufactured Monday 4th January 1960.

One LHD FHC 150 S 3.8 Litre, T 836656DN was manufactured on the 1st January. The factory was open for work on New Years Day, Friday 1st, this day not being a public holiday in England at that time.

Another 3.8 Litre S model, T820067 DN, was manufactured on the 4th, this being a OTS and is believed to still exist in England.

Our car was the first RHD FHC manufactured in 1960. 115, 3.8 'S' XK's in this configuration were manufactured with our car being the 33rd manufactured. Biscuit was the colour of the trim and Regal Red was the exterior colour.

The car was dispatched from the Factory on 22nd January 1960. The original Dealer being Henlys London and the car was registered YLY 299 on the 29th January 1960. The first owner was John Bodie of 8 Cornwall Gardens, London SW7. The Retail Dealer was Harold Radford and Co. of Kensington, whose plaque is attached to the RH side sill face and is clearly visible when the door is open.

When John E Bodie passed the car onto the next registered owner his address was given as 22 Kensington Gate London W8

The original Registration booklet records the change in ownership. D E and J Levy are the second owners. The car was registered under this name on 21/12/1961 and address being recorded as Estate House, 58 Haymarket, London SW 1. When the car was sold by Joseph Levy of D.E & J. Levy on 26/09/1962, the address of the owner was Estate House, 130 Jermyn Street, Haymarket SW1.

The third owner recorded was Ian Spry. Ian Vincent Spry, 180 Earls Court Rd London SW5, purchased the car on 12/08/1963 from Clayton's Cars of Berkeley Square, London. A deposit of 185 pounds was paid on 07/08/1963 and the final payment of 415 pounds paid the next day.

The car appears to have been for sale from the time sold by Joseph Levy to Clayton's Cars, some eleven months.

Ian Spry went to England with the purchase of a XK 150 his intention. Prior to the purchase of our car Ian had also purchased a XK 150 registration number UJU 463 on 01/04/1963 from Rowland Smith Motors Limited of Hamstead High Street, London NW3. Ian's address given as c/- 3 Bersondy Rd, Llanarth, Nr. Raglan, Mon. The guarantee on this sale expired on 01/08/1963.

Clayton's Cars issued a notice to Thos. Cook and Sons Ltd., Shipping and Forwarding Agents of London, stating that "this car is in excellent condition with the exception of a small dent on the off-side and near side front over-riders", on August 14th 1963.

The car was insured for 850 Pounds at a cost of 6 Pounds 4 shillings and 11 pence.

'One unpacked 1960 Jaguar XK 150' was shipped from London to Melbourne on the "Port Brisbane" to Consignee Sprys, Riverina Transport Co., 22 Boonah St. Griffith, NSW, Australia.

Mullaly and Byrne Pty. Ltd. Licensed Customs and Shipping agents arranged the delivery of our car on October 2nd 1963. Duty calculated as 329 Pounds and various charges being 31 Pounds. The calculated value of the car was 560 Pounds Australian for tax purposes, being receipted as 600 English Pounds purchase price.

Ian Spry owned the car until 1966 when he sold the car to the 'new owner' in Albury, NSW.

No other recorded history is known of the car until June 22nd 1969, when I, John Ledbrook, purchased the car from John Thompson Performance Cars. I was then living in Peakhurst, NSW.

Researched History

John E Bodie, a Surveyor, ordered the car through retail dealer Harold Radford and Co., and wanted a fully optioned car. He ordered his car to be Factory fitted with a boot rack, badge bar, centre dash panel to be upholstered in Red leather instead of the standard Grey leather finish.

Another item that is fitted under the dash on the LH side is a map tray. When the car had an upholstery replacement, the map tray covering was removed and it had hand written notation stating the order number 026880, part number BD12707 and it being for 'RHD Red'. The part number is believed to be similar to one used for a MkV111 Sedan and would have been custom fitted to the car. There is no listing for this part on a 150 accessory list.

The car was also fitted with period c/p racing mirrors placed on top of the mudguards. I believe all of the above items to be Factory fitted.

Harold Radford fitted a Motorola radio and possibly custom made rubberized floor mats that were a light biscuit colour and leather bound with 'Spot the Dot' fixings to the floor. Fitted on top of the front guards were a bulbous light, with a red and white lens on opposite sides of the glass lens. The switch for these lights was fitted just under the dash on the 'A' pillar. I have been told that these lights could have been fitted on cars likely to be parked in fog areas, so oncoming traffic could determine the position of the car. This car was based in London.

On the dash, next to the glove box on the LH side is a multi directional map light which could have been fitted by any of the previous owners.

Harold Radford & Co. of South Kensington SW7 had a bespoke coach building business, as well as being retailers of new cars. Rolls Royce and Bentley cars could be customized to their specifications by owners wishing to have an "updated" car to suit.

In the mid sixties Harold Radford was on a winner with the Mini Grande Luxe de Ville, as one motoring journalist of the day commented 'Outwardly the only distinction was the magnesium alloy wheels, sunroof and non standard paint. Inside everything seemed like a refugee from a Rolls Royce'.

John, Paul, Ringo and George each had one of these special Mini-Cooper S cars as did many other well known identities. A total of 63 extras could be ordered from Radford's!

Our car had some personalized treatment from Harold Radford in the colour selection of 'Regal Red' and the fitment of extras. The exterior colour, "Regal Red" was a special order paint finish. Regal Red being manufactured by ICI Belco and is believed to be a colour used by Rolls Royce. This car was the only XK (120, 140, 150) to be painted Regal Red, which is a metallic paint.

Ian Spry had an accident in the 150, damaging the front guard and the car was sent to Brysons in Melbourne for repair. The repair presented a small problem in that they could not match the paintwork on the car. Regal Red being a non standard colour could not be matched with paints available in Australia at that time so 'Carmen Red' was selected and the car returned to Ian in that colour and remained in that hue for the next thirty odd years until a total respray had been carried out.

The early metallic paint was unstable and over the years the base colour cracked and crazed so much so that in 1984 when we drove to W.A for the National Rally a comment I heard was that our car had a map of Australia on the roof, meaning that the cracks seemed to replicate the coastal outline of Australia.

In the late nineties the car was completely stripped of paint and returned to its original colour selection of Regal Red.

Whilst in the ownership of Ian Spry, Ian's father on a trip overseas, returned home with a Phillips, made in Germany, 45, 12 volt record player to fit into the 150. I did not get to see the player installed but have seen photos of a 150 with one installed, I have the record player and have heard it play a record on a work bench. The player is a positive earth and is not suitable for the car now as I have changed the earth to negative.

I wonder if you played it while driving or was it only used on picnics???

How long the car was in Albury before being bought by me in Sydney is unknown. Recently, after a discussion with some members from the Riverina Sports Car Club in Albury I had been informed that a watchmaker/jeweler did have a Red 150 parked in his carport in the sixties. W. Rose is thought to be the owner.

With my conversation with the spare parts men at Brysons, on some of my not too frequent visits, I was told that a mechanic from Brysons was also a previous owner of our car. Unfortunately I cannot verify either of these possible owners of our 150.

During the respray of our car the vehicle identification plate was removed. On the back of the I.D.plate was written the following:

Carl Carter,
76 Bulkington Road,
Bulkington, nr. Nuneaton,
nr Coventry, Warwickshire,
England'.

I had posted a letter to that address but it was returned "unknown at this address". On our first trip to England last year we went looking for that address but it no longer existed so the mysterious Carl remains as a person who probably was the worker in the Factory who stamped the numbers on the plate and put his details on the back of it. This is like putting your name into a bottle and setting it adrift hoping one day to be found and the sender notified that you have found it. Sorry Carl! I did not discover it till thirty years after you put it there, perhaps someone reading this can identify him and let him or his family know that his name lives on .

My wife, Liz, whose name does not appear on any documentation, became a part owner in December 1971. (she will be proof reading this article before it is passed for circulation!!)

Our interest in this research reached a HIGH point last year before we left for our trip to England. I had ideas of looking up the known address of the last owner in London and take a photo of that location. I have the original log book of registered owners and this time I noticed that the last owner had a stamp under his name, D E & J Levy. A search on the internet came up with an encyclopaedia of information.

Joseph Levy, the last signator, with his brother David, were involved in property development and Real Estate in London and helped in the rebuilding of the city after the Second World War.

Joseph Levy CBE BEM 1906-1990, had received his commendations for his dedication to charitable causes. He was the founder of the Cystic Fibrosis Trust and also had deep concerns for the welfare of young people and worked tirelessly for many charitable causes.

The next piece of the jigsaw puzzle then fell into place: John E Bodie was an employee of this firm!! John joined the business in the forties as a Surveyor. When John was thirty he ordered his XK 150 S. Within a year John became a Senior Partner in the Firm of Chartered Surveyors and spent the rest of his working life with them.

Wow, all this information to follow up on! Letters were sent to addresses that I found on the internet and then 'bingo! : John receives my letters and replies by email. He is amazed that his car has survived and that I have found him alive and well and approaching ninety years old.

We have exchanged many emails since and he confirms some of the details about the car when he purchased it.

The second owner on the registration book was because the 150 was now a Company car, though solely for John Bodie's use. John has told me that the luggage rack was fitted as the suitcases used in those days were rigid and difficult to fit in the boot. John remembers

on one trip to Italy he arrived at his destination to find that his luggage had gone, removed in a village that he had passed through by very crafty villains.

Our car has now been to Italy and France and we haven't !!!

John E Bodie received an OBE from the Queen for services to charity, especially to Health and Education. He has been a benefactor to many charitable projects, particularly education. He is well known and respected for his fund raising prowess and is a Trustee of the St James Conservation Trust. He now devotes his working day to Philanthropic outcomes.

My wife is now keen to return to England to see John and have photos taken of the two owners.

After fifty years of ownership what other surprises will we find ???

This car keeps on giving and leading us in all directions.

John will finish his emails with the notation: 'hope you are looking after my car'.