

From the Land Rover FAQ

LR FAQ - Shelley Jacks by Dixon Kenner

Shelley Jacks, or more than you ever wanted to know, and one where there is no definitive answer fifty to seventy years after the fact.

History: The history of Shelley is fairly simple. It was started, as RT Shelley, in 1908 as a private company. In 1913, because of troubles within the Norton motorcycle company, Shelley and other creditors bought Norton and saved it. R.T. Shelley was already a supplier to Norton so the transfer of power was made a little easier. However, the relationship between Bob Shelley and James Norton was not good. James Norton was not a business man; his strengths lay elsewhere and the two clashed.

In 1916 the Shelley company moved to Aston. A Shelley manager, Bill Mansell moved from R.T. Shelley to take over Norton Management and under his guidance the company was reformed in 1926 as the Norton Motors (1926) Ltd. One should note at this point, R.T. Shelley died in 1927. (1)

Things continued on smoothly for the Shelley company until 1953 when AMC (Associated Motorcycles of Woolwich) acquired Norton, including its wholly-owned subsidiary R.T. Shelley.



Shelley LJ263 Jack

By 1961 Shelley was known as general engineers, manufacturing tools (spanners &c.) and components for automobiles, aero engines; also manufacturing lifting jacks for private and commercial vehicles. Shelley, as a subsidiary, had some 400 employees.

By the late Sixties, the British motorcycle industry was in rapid decline (read, collapse). AMC itself collapsed in 1966 and was reformed as Norton-Villiers. Seeking cash flow, Norton-Villiers sold their Shelley subsidiary to Tangye in 1969. (2)

Tangye was another jack manufacturer and the company renamed Tangye-Shelley, after which, all Shelley records were lost. This being England, where the City views assets as "dead money", Tangye-Shelley was purchased by Central Wagon Group, who were best known as asset strippers. They sold Tangye's facilities in Cornwall and moved them into Shelley's Birmingham premises. They then discontinued all of the old jacks and only manufactured ship and aluminium jacks. Thus ended Shelley jacks. Tangye, on the other hand, is still active as part of Allspeeds of the UK. (3)

The Jack: Now, a few of the Series owners out there may still have the original cast iron lump of a jack still hanging out on a shelf or rattling around in a compartment on their Land-Rover. Many don't realise that this lump of iron is actually the original jack, as it is a bit different from what they might be used to in North America. Mostly supplied by Shelly, it is a screw-type jack, where turning a gear, raises up the jack. Shelly made a huge variety of jacks for different cars and different purposes.

The jack comes in three major pieces:

1. The jack proper. A large lump of iron, sometimes stored in the tool box under the driver's seat, or otherwise in the left rear tool box in the rear box. Usually wrapped in some cloth to minimise the noise as it bounces about.
2. The jack handle bar. A square iron bar, some three foot plus long, with a square head that fit into the side of the jack, with a ring at the opposite end to a handle. There are at least two different lengths to this bar. Only one fits in the 80" rear box. The longer is 41 and a half inches. Storage - In the Series One 80 inch, this

bar clipped to the left side of the rear box in a pair of clips. In the Series 86 inch through Series III, where the vehicle had a bulkhead behind the front seats, the jack handle clipped to the front of this bulkhead, behind the seats. In the 109 Station Wagon, the jack handle bar clipped to the back of the seatbox.

3. The jack handle. A wooden handle that fits one way into the ring at the end of the jack bar. Stored in the tool box under the driver's seat. Usually perished or missing. It is still currently available from LR parts suppliers.

Maintenance: The jacks come apart easily for refurbishment. There are only a few wear points. The bevelled gear inside, and the roller bearing cage. The roller bearings could be pieces of rod, which would have to be obtained and cut to length, or could be ball bearings, which could be available from a bicycle shop or elsewhere. A video on disassembling the LJ263 exists on YouTube. The rest of this family of jacks would be essentially the same process. (4)

By Vehicle: But what jack is correct for your vehicle? An interesting question. While this article deals with Shelley, many have observed Land-Rovers with Metallifactory, King Dick, and Lake & Elliot jacks. All of which are very similar in design. Further, the War department bought these jacks by the tens of thousands, and they were supplied in other British vehicles too. Rover would have ordered jacks by the pallet, so what arrived, is what went into the vehicle at that time. So, that jack with your vehicle may or may not be original, telling would be difficult.

Here in North America, the jack is probably correct for the vehicle, as American and other manufacturers were using scissor jacks and other combinations at the time. Cross pollination of jacks between British cars is possible, but unlikely.

Researching numerous sites indicates that these were possible jacks for the Land Rover (5)

- Series One : Shelley LJ25C, Shelley LJ263, Metallifactory LR, Shelley 256
- Series II & IIA : Shelley LJ25C, Shelley LJ263, Shelley LJ264, Shelley 256
- Series III : Shelley LJ25C, Shelley LJ263, Shelley LJ264

By Jack

- Shelley LJ25C - Series I, II, IIA, & III
- Shelley LJ263 - Series I, II, IIA, & III
- Shelley LJ264 - Series II, IIA & III

Land Rover part numbers:

- Clips to hold the jack bar, as well as the starter handle on some vehicles, are 508035 or 334073. They are available through secondary sources as Terry Clips.
- Series One 1948-51 & 52-53: Jack - 278345; extension - 261512; handle - 261513. (*Series One parts catalogue TP/111/G, publication no. 4051*)
- Series One 1954-58: Jack – 218509; extension – T1512 or 261512; Handle T1513 or 261513 (T-numbers are earlier Rover part numbering scheme).. Rover car had a Bevelift jack
- Series One 1954-58: Shelley jack - 514263; handle for jack - 514264. Metallifactory jack - 513071; handle for jack - 513072. Extension for both jacks is - 261512 and the wooden handle is 261513. (*Series One parts catalogue TP/155/E, publication no. 4107*)
- Series Two: Jack (screw type) – 278345; Extension for jack – 261512; wooden handle for jack – 261513, 543301 (*Series II parts catalogue, 1959*)
- Series Two: Jack (ratchet type) – (Shelley) 514623; handle 514624 (no extension listed)



Shelley LJ25C Jack



Shelley LJ264 Jack

- Series Two: Jack (ratchet type) (Metallifecture) – 513071; handle 513072 (no extension listed)
- Series Two & IIA: Lifting Jack ratchet type – 514623; Handle for jack (spade end) - 514264, Handle for jack (square end) - 513072; Extension for jack (screw type) 261512; Handle for extension – 261513
- British Leyland Era: Jack – 90624214; Extension – 592219; Handle - 543301. There is also an extension with a metal handle. Part no,

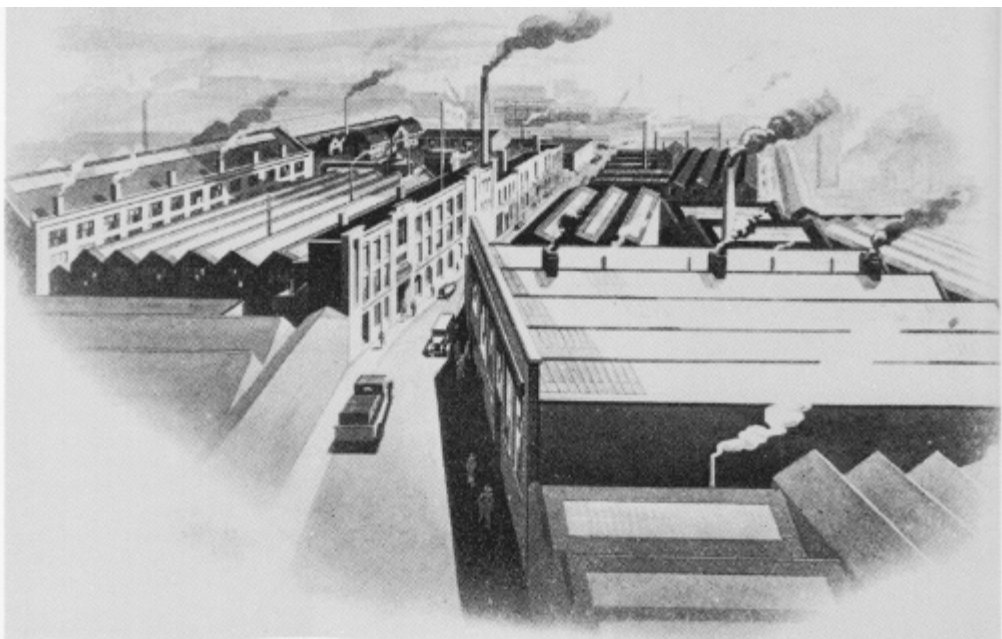
NRC3549 with the handle no. NRC3215 that appears in the later Seventies after British Leyland abandoned North America.

As per Lake & Elliot, they closed in 1990. The site where they were situated has been redeveloped.

If you have additional information, even to say which kind you found in your truck, do say. There seems to be little pattern at times beyond what may have been cheaper for Rover to buy by the pallet. There will be two subsequent, brief, articles on the known jacks in the Defender, Range Rover, and Discovery, as well as one for military Land-Rovers.

Notes:

1. Grace's Guide to British Industrial History - [https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/R. T. Shelley](https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/R._T._Shelley)
2. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norton Motorcycle Company](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norton_Motorcycle_Company)
3. History of Tangye - <https://www.allspeeds.co.uk/the-history-of-tangye-1957-present/>
4. <https://youtu.be/AuPz9xjs-Fs>
5. Websites consulted:
 - Land-Rover Series One Club (<http://www.lrsoc.com/forum/>;
 - Land Rover Series 2 Club (<http://series2club.co.uk/>);
 - Land-Rover Frequently Asked Questions (https://www.lrfaq.org);
 - Classic British Car Jacks (<http://www.classic-british-car-jacks.uk/>);
 - Military Lightweight Forum (<https://forum.militarylightweight.co.uk/viewforum.php?f=4>);
 - Ex-Military Land Rover Association (<http://www.emlra.org/>)



To the left, a drawing of the combined RT Shelley and neighbouring Norton Motorcycle factory as it appeared in the 1930 Norton catalogue.