

12 John Park (d 1934) and Flossie Park (d 1940), victims of road accidents



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
JOHN RIGG PARK
BELOVED SON OF WILLIAM
AND MARY ANN PARK
ACCIDENTALLY KILLED
JULY 17TH 1934
AGED 16½ YEARS
SO LOVED, SO MOURNED
ALSO THEIR BELOVED DAUGHTER
FLORENCE (FLOSSIE)
ACCIDENTALLY KILLED
NOV 22ND 1940

Where is the grave?

Walk west from the South (disused) Chapel, with the wall on your right. The Park grave is close to the first path off to the left.

Given the amount of traffic on the roads in the 1930s, and in the war in 1940 when petrol was rationed, it is surprising the number of deaths on the road. Reading newspapers as part of the research for this document, many of the dead were pedestrians or motor-cyclists.

In pre-war and wartime Britain, travelling on the roads carried a greater risk of being killed. For example, between 1939 and 1941 the number of fatalities averaged around 8,700 per year, over three times the annual number killed today. Since the 1970s the number of road deaths has fallen considerably, from over 7,700 deaths in 1972, to 1,754 in 2012. The figures for 1934 and 1940 were 7,343 and 8,609 fatalities.¹

Even so, for one family to lose teenagers in separate accidents six years apart must be unusual, and bad luck of the worst kind.

Barrow News Saturday 21 July 1934 reported:

DALTON YOUTH KILLED IN COLLISION DEAD ON ARRIVAL AT INFIRMARY

A Marton, Dalton in Furness youth named John Park, a farm labourer, living at Goosnargh, was killed in a road collision near White Hill corner.

He was riding a pedal cycle along Inglewhite-road, Goosnargh, when he came into collision with a car driven by James Slater (18), joiner, of North Bridge, Chipping.

The injured boy was taken to Preston Royal Infirmary suffering from head and other injuries. He was pronounced to be dead on arrival there.

Barrow News Saturday 28 July 1934 reported on the funeral, with a list of mourners, including 3 sisters and 3 brothers:

There were many beautiful floral tributes, including a wreath from the Inglewhite Congregational Sunday School, where he was a pupil. There was a beautiful letter of sympathy from Mr. A.E. Bancroft, former headmaster of Dowdales Central School, where John was a former pupil.

Barrow News Saturday 23 November 1940, reported:

LINDAL ROAD FATALITY

A sad fatality occurred at Lindal cross-roads soon after 2pm. on Friday, when Miss Flossie Park (17), daughter of Mr. W. Park, Lindal Cottage, was killed as a result of a mishap with a motor van travelling in the direction of Dalton, just after it had passed Lindal cross-roads.

When Dr. E.R. Gunson arrived at the scene he pronounced life extinct.

There was an account of the funeral in the edition of 30 November 1940. In the same edition, the inquest returned a verdict of 'accidental death'.

¹http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CDcQFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.parliament.uk%2Fbriefing-papers%2Fsn02198.pdf&ei=iRAxVcLIMsGVapylgRA&usg=AFQjCNGUclQnQ_ZOTynZ2EOLLGY4Ktwlew&sig2=kf_VfjBi7UmTmr9fo_-15w&bvm=bv.91071109,d.d2s House of Commons Library SN/SG/2198 Reported Road Accident Statistics 24 October 2013
Keep & Rutherford

DANGER CROSSING THE ROAD

GIRL VICTIM AT LINDAL

Mr. F. W. Poole, coroner for Furness, held an inquest on Saturday on Florence Park (17), who died on Friday week as a result of a motor accident at the Lindal cross-roads.

Mrs. Mary Ann Park, wife of William Park, retired iron ore miner, said that deceased was her daughter. She had been delicate from birth but her sight and hearing were good.

Answering Mr. S. J. Fisher, representing the driver, she stated that her daughter knew Lindal well, and she was out shopping at the time.

Mrs. Elizabeth Rigg, Emplands Cottages, Lindal, said she was standing at the side of the road about 2 p.m. on Friday and she saw deceased crossing the road on the post office side. As she got across she seemed to turn back. She (witness) saw a motor van coming over the cross-roads towards Dalton. It was going at a moderate speed and on its correct side. Witness shouted to the deceased to stop and also motioned to her but she was unable to attract her attention.

After the accident, witness assisted to carry her into the post office nearby and she was with her until the doctor came, when she was removed in the ambulance. She was then still alive.

P.C. R. May said the deceased was still alive when he saw her and suffering from facial and other head injuries.

Dr. E. R. Gunson ordered her removal in the ambulance.

DRIVER'S STORY

Robert Bell Reid, 29, of 4, Nevin-road, New Moston, Manchester, the driver, said he was driving a two-ton motor van, and on approaching Lindal he was proceeding at 28 m.p.h., but in noticing the warning sign slowed down to 26 or 27 m.p.h. He sounded his horn, but did not see anyone until approaching the crossing, when he saw the girl.

She was crossing the road very quickly with her head down, and he blew his horn. He saw a woman on the other side of the road waving to the girl to stop.

The girl turned and crossed right in front of him. He jammed on both brakes and swerved to avoid her, but the offside front mudguard her.

The Coroner said that accidents ought not to happen, and drivers should avoid people crossing the road. He found that this was an accidental death and that the driver had done what he could to avoid this girl as she was walking across right in front of his vehicle.

If I have identified the right family on Cumbria BMD, Mrs. Park's maiden name was Rigg, and they had 11 children: Benjamin (1906-1907), Elsie (1907), Lilian (1909), Jeanie (1910 -1910?), Mary (1911-1911?), William (1912), Doris (1915), John (1917), Ben (1919), Frank (1920), and Florence (1923-1940). John's death in 1934 would have been registered elsewhere.

The oldest surviving son, William, also died accidentally:

Barrow News 28 June 1941:

MARTON FAMILY'S TRAGIC LOSS

FUNERAL OF MR. WILLIAM PARK

Mr. and Mrs. William Park, of 2, Moor Cottage, Marton, sustained a tragic loss by the death of their eldest son, William (Billie), who was found drowned in a cattle drinking pond at the farm where he was in service at Bradkirk Hall, Kirkham, the day following his 29th birthday.

The funeral took place on Friday week at Dalton, following a service in Lindal Parish Church, conducted by the Rev. J. J. Jackson, M.A., the Vicar, the hymn, "For ever with the Lord", being sung.

The mourners were: Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Park, parents; Mrs. Middleton (Ambleside), Mr. and Mrs. J. Metcalfe, Mrs. Porter, Mr. and Mrs. H. Huddleston (Kirkby Lonsdale), Mr. and Mrs. John Creary, brothers in law and sisters; Mr. Ben Park, brother; Miss Doris Park, sister; Messrs. Thomas and William Holmes and Sidney Porter, nephews; Miss Marjorie Holmes, niece; Mr. Geo. Atkinson and Mr. Jos. Rigg, uncles; Mrs. Brocklebank, Mrs. Tyson (Ulverston) and Mrs. Jackson (Askam), and many others.

The bearers were Messrs. John Creary, Jas. Metcalfe, Harry Huddleston (brothers-in-law) and Thomas Butcher (nephew)

There were numerous floral tributes.

