

John Brian Leck d 28 August 1950 & John Towers Leck d 9 June 1963



In Loving Memory of
JOHN BRIAN LECK
BELOVED SON OF **JOHN TOWERS** AND **MARY LECK**
WHO WAS ACCIDENTLY (sic) KILLED ON MONDAY
AUGUST 28TH 1950, AGED 17 YEARS.
“AT REST”
ALSO **JOHN TOWERS LECK**, HIS FATHER,
BORN 19TH APRIL 1908. DIED 9TH JUNE 1963.
AND **MARY LECK**, HIS MOTHER,
BORN 7TH OCTOBER 1909, DIED 18TH SEPTEMBER 1988



On 9 September 1950 the following letter appeared in the Barrow News:

The late Brian Leck

Sir. – We were all very grieved to hear of the fatal accident to Brian Leck. As one of the oldest sporting men in the district, I would like to offer our very deepest sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. Leck, of Mayfield, Springfield Road, Ulverston, and their family.

I have judged Brian riding at the shows and in the leaping competitions and often watched him. He was a courageous, capable rider.

It grieves us that such a bright, promising career should be cut short. –
GEORGE DICKINSON, The Mount, Cark.

Elsewhere in the same edition appeared the photograph of Brian riding, and a report of the inquest:

INQUEST ON ULVERSTON SCHOOLBOY

“I DON’T think he ever saw me at all”, a tractor driver said at the inquest at Ulverston on Friday last week – briefly reported in our last issue – on John Brian Leck, a 17 years-old Ulverston Grammar School boy, of Mayfield, Springfield Road, Ulverston, who was fatally injured when riding his motor-cycle, in a collision with a tractor on the previous Monday.

A verdict of “Accidental death” was returned.

Evidence of identification was given by John Towers Leck, the boy’s father, who said that his son had held a provisional licence and had driven motor-cycles since Easter. On August 19 he bought him a 350c.c. motor-cycle, and was satisfied the boy was competent to drive it.

P.C. Gee told the Coroner (Mr. J. Poole) that it was practically a straight piece of road where the accident occurred in Swarthmoor Hall Road, Ulverston. The road was 7ft 10in wide and the tractor 5ft 3in wide.

Alfred Charles Burch, of Crowtrees Farm, Pennington, the driver of the tractor, which was owned by his father, said he was travelling at 6 M.P.H., when nearing Swarthmoor Hall he saw about 60 yards ahead a motor-cycle approaching at speed on the wrong side of the road.

The motor-cyclist had his head turned round to the right and appeared to be looking at his exhaust pipe. He did not lift his head.

Burch said he pulled in to his own side and had almost stopped when the motor-cycle hit the tractor, mounted the grass verge and finished upside down.

“I don’t think he ever saw me at all”, he said.

The Coroner expressed sympathy with the relatives, with which Supt. J. H. Bell, Mr. C. G. Penny and Mr. J. Heron, for the tractor driver, associated themselves.

Mr. G. N. Worthington appeared for the relatives.

Mr. C. G. Penny was foreman of the jury.

A Brian Leck Memorial Trophy was instituted at local shows e.g. Barrow News 5 September 1958 has as part of its report on the Lowick Show “.. it is this show’s turn to have the Brian Leck Memorial trophy for the junior leaping event.”

In the **1911 Census** Brian’s father was living at Moss House, Lowick. The household contained John Leck (42) Stonemason, born Greenock, Scotland; Rebecca Leck (38) no occupation recorded, born Lowick, Lancs. *Rebecca must have been John’s second wife, since the record says that they have been married for three years, with one child born;* Hugh Leck (17) House Carpenter Apprentice, born Lowick; Margaret Leck (13) School, born Lowick; Robert Barrow Leck (11) School, born Lowick; John Towers Leck (2) born Lowick; and Eleanor Ann Ferguson (32) Single, Boarder, Machinist (dressmaker) bone Ulverston, Lancs.

In the **1921 Census** they are still at Moss House, Lowick. Ancestry has transcribed the name as Teck, but living there are John Leck (52) Builder (Own Account), born Greenock, Scotland; Rebecca Leck (48) Home Duties, born Lowick; Margaret Leck (23) Single, Uncertificated Assistant Teacher, working at Lowick C of E School, born Lowick; Towers Leck, Whole time School, born Lowick; Kathleen Leck (5) Whole time School, born Lowick; and Eleanor A. Ferguson (41) Single, Visitor, Domestic Work (Disabled), born Ulverston.

An odd coincidence with his son’s accident appears in the Barrow News 24 March 1928:

AN ULVERSTON COLLISION

A Lowick motor-cyclist, John Towers Leck, of Moss House, and his two friends, Edward Cotton, Lowick Green, and William Lionel Brinklow, Fountain-street, Ulverston, who were riding in the side-car and on the pillion-seat respectively, had a narrow escape from serious injury on Sunday afternoon when the motor-cycle combination was badly smashed in a collision with a motor-omnibus, at the corner of Market-place and Queen-street, Ulverston. Leck was riding towards Queen-street, and the ‘bus in the opposite direction. The off-side mudguard of the ‘bus was damaged. The driver of the motor-cycle escaped with cuts above the eyes, and his two friends, apart from the shock, sustained minor injuries.

John Leck married Mary McGarr in Ulverston Registration District in Q2 1933.

The **1939 Register** has living at Foxdale, Ulverston Road, Backbarrow, John Towers Leck (DoB 19 April 1909) Builder & Contractor (Public Works); Mary Leck (DoB 7 October 1909) Unpaid Domestic Duties; and John Brian Leck (DoB 28 August 1933) At school. The next two records are redacted. *NB The Electoral register has Foxdale as being on Brow Edge Road. NB2 Towers Leck’s birth date is correct at 1909, according to Birth Registration records. It is the gravestone which has the wrong year.*

A lengthy account of Mr. Leck’s funeral, with a long list of attendees, appeared in the Barrow News 14 June 1963. It says that he was “Born at Lowick, he joined his father in the building trade and later took over the firm which is now known as John Leck and Son. The firm also work the Gasgow Quarries in Priory Road, Ulverston.”

The **National Probate Register (Index of Wills and Administrations) 1963** has:

LECK John Towers of Lowick House Lowick near Ulverston Lancashire died 9 June 1963 Probate London 27 August to Mary Leck widow. Effects £8577 19s 1d.

His death was reported in the *Barrow News 13 September 1963* which provides a little more biographical detail:

MR. J. T. LECK, LOWICK

Mr. John Towers Leck, of Lowick House, Lowick, near Ulverston, who died on June 9 last, aged 54, left £8577 gross, £220 net value.

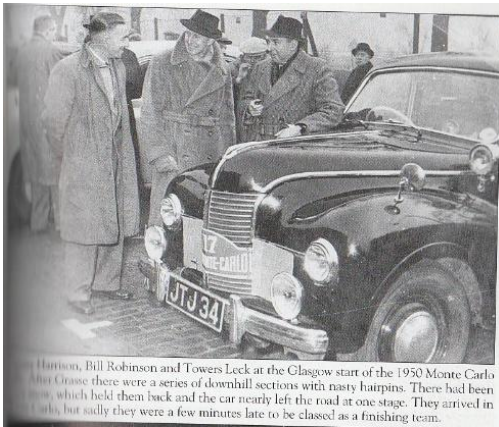
Mr. Leck, a builder and contractor, of John Leck and Sons, was a follower of racing under National Hunt Rules on most Northern tracks, area representative for the British Show Jumping Association and a judge at many jumping events, vice-president of the Furness and District Motor Club, and had taken part in the Monte Carlo rallies.

Probate has been granted to his widow, Mrs. Mary Leck, of the same address, the sole executrix.

According to <http://rallyemontecarlo1950.a.r.f.unblog.fr/files/2011/11/photo-mc50-engag3-img249-img.jpg> Mr. Leck and his co-driver W.H. Robinson took part in the 1950 Monte Carlo Rally (entry no. 117), departing from Glasgow, driving a Jowett Javelin (Reg

JTJ 34). 136 finished from 282 starters (308 entrants registered). Robinson and Leck did not finish in time. The rally took place 22 – 27 January 1950. The start from Glasgow can be found on this old newsreel

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=299536274085039>



Picture from *Jowett 1901-1954* by Noel Stokoe (Tempus 1999) (*Permission to use granted by Noel Stokoe 11/07/2025*), showing (L-R) Tommy Harrison, Bill Robinson, and Towers Leck. Bill Robinson ran Mill Brow Garage at the time. Bill Robinson, Les Hall and Tom Ward competed against Towers Leck, Bert West and Tom Iddon in the Tulip Rally 1949 (*to Amsterdam*). Leck's team had engine trouble near Paris, according to Noel Stokoe's book *Sporting Jowetts* (The History Press 2009). However, contemporary press coverage in the Barrow News 7 May 1949 suggests that Robinson and Leck were in the same car, which finished 21st out of 162 competitors.

Leck Construction is the current entity of the long-standing building company founded by John Towers Leck. It has been responsible for local projects such as Emlyn Hughes House on Abbey Road, Barrow; the houses that replaced Arlington House on Abbey Road; extensions to Ostley House; the Lantern House in Ulverston; Barrow Sixth Form College; replacing the roof on St. James' Church, and rehanging the bells, numerous housing projects, and building Abbey Meadow Nursing Home on Flass Lane, Barrow.