

Mr Watson's Hearse

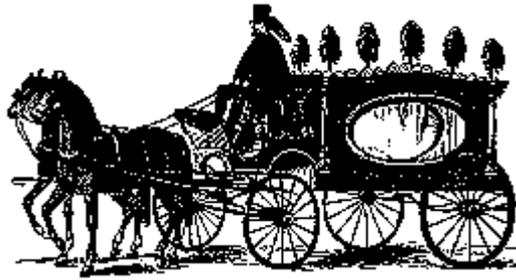


Image: <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~familysoup/images/hearse.gif> accessed 1 Feb 2017

In William Field's log book Ann Field wrote her diary from about 1870 to 1890 and she included information about funerals that took place at Cartmel Priory and elsewhere. Mr Watson's hearse is frequently mentioned between 1874 and 1879 but it is never described. Above is a picture of a Victorian horse drawn hearse to illustrate what it might have looked like. She includes a count of the number of times Mr Watson's hearse is used during the two years 1874 and 1879 only but why is a mystery. My theory is that she had wanted to buy the business but her husband had not been in agreement.

The entries started with recording the sale of the hearse and its acquisition by Mr Watson.

1874 May 5th + 6th The sales of furniture at Cavendish Arms Mr Burrow leaving and going to Morecambe. Tom Brockbank bought the hearse for £91.

May 9 Tho^s Brockbank resold the hearse to Tho^s Watson.

May 11Lawrance Raven Winder interr'd at Cartmel Church the hearse out for the first time, after being in Watson's possession.

May 12 Tho^s Watson came from Carke, to the Cavendish Arms, Cartmel. Tho^s Burrow left the Cavendish Arms after being there 8 yrs.

May 18 Mrs Bell, The Slack, died in her 97th year. Mr Watson's hearse required the 2nd time.

May 22 W^m Hodgson Flookboro, interr'd at Cartmel Church, Mr Watson's Hearse required, but being a pauper had no plumes on 3rd time out.

May 23 Mr Stockdale interred at Cartmel Church had Mr Watson's hearse 4th.

June 5 Mrs Lomax taken to Bury, to be interr'd there, Mr Watson's hearse took her to Carke station.

June 6 A man drown'd at Grange, whilst bathing, he had been billiard master, at the Hotel for a few years, the visitors got up a subscription, and got £22 he had supported a widowed mother at Milnthorp.

June 9 Mr Watson's hearse took the man that was drowned to Milnthorpe to be interr'd Tho^s Durham Aged 19 yrs.

June 12 Rich^d Chatterton Jameson, interr'd at Cartmel Aged 38 yrs Mr Watson's hearse went. This is the 7th time the hearse has been out.

This count continued until this entry: *1876 March 7 Crown Inn interr'd at Milnthorp had Mr Watson's hearse + cover'd car - 65th.* This is the last time the writer kept count that year. However Mr Watson's hearse continued to be included in the diary at every funeral where it was used but there are funerals where no mention is made of the hearse throughout the period of the diary which suggests that there were other funeral directors. This example is quite clear that she was only interested in Mr Watson's hearse.

1874 July 10 Two funerals at the Church, Mr Watson's hearse required for one of them, this is the 8th time for the hearse

The last time Mr Watson's hearse is mentioned is *March 29 1879 Mr Nash interred at the Height, had hearse and wagonette 19th.*

Thomas Postlethwaite Watson was born in Ravenglass, Cumberland about 1830 and in 1864 had married Rachel Jane Graham who was born in Liverpool in 1839. In the 1871 census he was an innkeeper at Cark. The 1881 census records the family at the Cavendish Arms, Cavendish Street, Cartmel where both Thomas and Rachel are described as licenced victuallers. The 1891 census shows the family in Market Square, Cartmel (they had left the Cavendish Arms) and Thomas's occupation was recorded as farmer and keeper of post houses. At no time did Thomas give his occupation as funeral director or undertaker. This shows how difficult it could be to find funeral directors and undertakers from the census. Who the other funeral directors were in the Peninsula at this time has not been researched and I have not found any adverts for funeral directors in the Cartmel Peninsula during the Victorian Period in local newspapers.

Pat Rowland Feb 2017-

