

# Flookburgh

**A window into the Flookburgh area through the newspaper articles that refer to the Crown Inn on Market Street in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.**



The Crown Inn was probably built in the early 1700s. The Crown Inn was a Hartley's public house. Hartleys Brewery was founded about 1755. 1896 the Old Brewery was conveyed from the trustees of John Booth to Robert and Peter Hartley and in 1919 Hartleys (Ulverston) Limited was incorporated. In July 1982 the company was acquired by Frederic Robinson Limited of Stockport who sold the Crown Inn in by auction in 2017. It was described in the catalogue as a substantial Grade II Listed early 18th Century former public house with extensive accommodation arranged over three floors together with an attached barn, large car park, courtyard areas, a garage and a garden. In all around 0.38 acres.

This edited article will look at the part the Crown Inn played in the Flookburgh community in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The full article with the newspaper articles is on the website. The Crown is situated on the old over sands route from Lancaster to Ulverston and was typical of inns that grew up beside major highways in the coaching era. It would have been used by visitors using the popular Cartmel spa at Humphrey Head.

The Inn was used for many years as the venue for land, farm and buildings auctions. A few examples below give fairly comprehensive descriptions of buildings and land for sale in Flookburgh and the surrounding area. In August 1808 the Crown was the venue for the Letting by Ticket of the Estate or Farm of William Wilkinson, deceased in Flookburgh. William was the brother of John Wilkinson, iron master. James Stockdale states " The late Mr. William Wilkinson, brother of John Wilkinson ... purchased in 1798, a considerable quantity of the common land on Winder Moor, and for the accommodation of this and other land, erected the very large farm buildings now standing in Flookburgh." Is this Mireside Farm on Winder Lane or Flookburgh Farm just off Flookburgh Square?

In 1818 the innkeeper is now John Roberts and the 3 estates or farms to let are situated at Cartlane, Birkby and Flookburgh. Notice that 2 of the farms are tithe-free – one object of the Enclosure Acts was to get rid of the obligation to pay tithes. An advert in 1815 states that the freehold land at West Plain is to be sold or let and includes the farm, land, 2 thrashing machines, part of the sea embankment, salt marsh and one sixth of the spa at Humphrey Head, here known as Cartmel Spa. And in 1820 Wyke farm is to be sold with a young wood, limestone quarry, beautiful surrounding country and fine views. It

is close to Cartmel Spa and includes 2 further fields in Flookburgh, a turf moss and one share in the Lancaster canal. At this time it is freehold and tithe free.

A property now known as Jeremy Hill in the centre of Allithwaite was advertised for auction in May 1827. John Roberts is still the innkeeper at the Crown Inn. On 17 October 1829 the almost exact notice was published in the Lancaster Gazette again. Was it sold again 2 years later or was it not sold in 1827? In 1841, the innkeeper at the Crown Inn is now James Johnson and 4 lots are up for auction at the Crown. It is not clear if Lot 1 and Lot 2 are in Flookburgh or Hest Bank as the previous owner, deceased, lived in Hest Bank. As the main road to Flookburgh was across the sands Hest Bank would have been seen to be in close vicinity to Flookburgh. Auctions and sales at the Crown Inn were not limited only to farms and estates but woods were also sold. A Coppice Wood is being sold in 1835 by James Stockdale, the owner, and is over several lots in the area of Howbarrow, Burns's and Speelbank estates.

Inquests were also held at the Crown Inn, usually for victims who had drowned in the Flookburgh sands area. It appears that 3 people had drowned in the bay in 1827, only one body had been washed up. They were crossing the Sands route but had misjudged the tide as it had not gone out completely. Two inquests were held at the Crown in 1841 before one of the Lancashire coroners, John Gardner. John Gardner lived in Garstang and was a coroner from 1803 to 1852 (almost 50 years) when he died, aged 72 years, still working as a coroner. He was coroner for the Lonsdale Hundred and he travelled from Lancaster to the Cartmel peninsula on a regular basis, crossing the sands regularly.

The Crown was first and foremost a drinking house and the newspapers would only print anything out of the ordinary which happened at the Crown. In 1855 an assault of 'a wife' after a Ball at the Crown was reported. The guilty man and the husband of the victim were a navvy and a ganger on the railway respectively. The Ulverstone and Lancaster Railway was being built at this time and there would have been many navvies in the area.

The Crown Inn was also a registration point for local competitions, including Ploughing competitions which were advertised in 1856 and 1857. It is interesting to note that the winners have to pay a part of their prize towards the second prize and also that the boys have to produce a certificate to show they are under 18 years of age. In 1940 Emma Repton, innkeeper was fined £1 for failing to obscure lights in the Crown Inn during the blackout in World War Two

In the full article on the website there is a list of the innkeepers at the Crown Inn from the 1800s compiled from censuses, newspaper articles and Grange Red books.

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