

Cark in Cartmel : Cark Auction Mart

One consequence of the establishment of a railway station at Cark, was the launch of a livestock market, which was to remain in the village for over a hundred years.

"From about 1850, livestock auctions brought much needed financial stability to the breeders and feeders of the North of England by providing a means of ascertaining the value of their livestock and guaranteeing payment of the full price. This development had been delayed and hindered by a tax of five percent which had been levied on all sales of farm stock by means of an auction held elsewhere than on the farm; however in 1846 the tax was abolished. This coupled with the introduction and rapid development of the railways, provided an opportunity for enterprising auctioneers and farmers to open the first few auction mart"¹.

The Furness Railway opened a station at Cark in 1857 with much support from Lord Cavendish of Holker Hall who had become a reputed breeder of Shorthorn beef cattle. The original function of the railway was not for the movement of people but the transportation of freight and livestock. On February 1st 1858, a livestock auction mart was opened at Cark station.² . On the station itself there were two cattle docks ; one on the current cemetery side of the railway track roughly where the new church is today and this was used by farmers for giving and sending cattle. A bigger dock was located in the mains goods yard which dated from when the railway first opened and was extended around 1900 as evidenced by the photo below.

Initially to accommodate an overflow from the pens, lands adjoining the station were also used one parcel being a small field adjacent to the current station entrance where today there is the bungalow of Mr. B Greaves opposite the old Station Hotel.

The photo below shows the Livestock market at the Cark and Cartmel station in 1908³.



¹ Thompson , A. M. (2014) Farmers went to market; Auctioneering History and Livestock Marts in the Northern Counties of England. Thomson, Cumbria.

² Gooderson, P.J. (1970) Railway construction in mid nineteenth century north Lancashire based on the diary of James Stelfox 1855-70. The Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire. Vol 122.

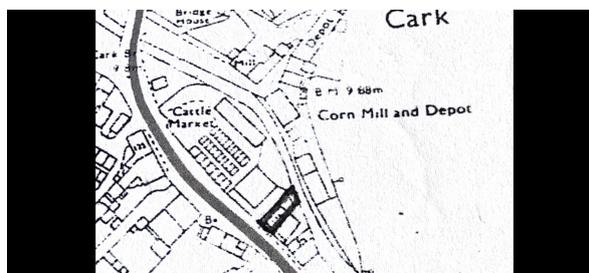
³ Perriman, D. Cark and Cartmel Railway 1908. Cumbria Image Bank. Cumbria County Council.

However, by 1912, new premises were being sought and in June 1912, Hodgson and Son of Grange drew up a plan for the building of a new Auction Mart in the village. ⁴ The chosen piece of land was opposite the Station Hotel with Cark Beck to the north east, and Station road to the south west and to the south east the two newly built semi detached properties of Fair View (116) and Green View (114) and 112 & 110 Station Road. This parcel of land had originally been part of the Cark Hall estate and was passed to the Rawlinson's heirs, who were the Riggs of Wood Broughton.⁵

Whilst only a once a week auction, it brought business and visitors to the traders in Cark and the three banks that were established in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were there primarily to serve and facilitate the needs of those attending the auction.

However, by the 16th of September 1929, the Cark Auction Mart had to draw up a list of persons holding shares as no dividends had been paid and Kendal Auction Mart Ltd. stepped in to purchase the Cark Auction Mart. ⁶ There were nearly a hundred shareholders listed in the company in 1929 with the majority being either farmers or butchers. Most were men with the occasional farmer's wife or butcher's wife's who came mainly from the villages of Cark in Cartmel, Cartmel, Flookburgh and Allithwaite in the Cartmel Peninsula but some were from Ulverston with cattle dealers from Kendal and even as far as Blackburn. By the 24th of February, 1934, the Cark Auction Mart had gone into liquidation and John Tyldesley Lowe of 7 Stricklandgate drew up a conveyance to the Kendal and District Auction Mart Co Ltd. ⁷ Perhaps in an attempt to bring in much needed revenue, the auction mart was used by travelling fairgrounds in the 1920's and 30's and in addition it was used by 'pot fairs'⁸. According to National Archive records, the Auction Mart was dissolved in 1948⁹

Several maps show the land on which the Cark Auction Mart was built on and later the 25" OS map of 1970 clearly shows the constructed cattle pens of the later Cattle Market



OS MAP 25INCH 1970 BARROW ARCHIVES

⁴ BS R DNL/2/694 Plan of Cark Auction Mart, 13/6/1912 Hodgson & Son. Grange.

⁵ WPR/ 89/Z3 Enclosure map

⁶ BDHJ 377/63 Shareholders in the Cark Auction Mart.

⁷ Title Deeds for 116 Station road, Cark in Cartmel.

⁸ Personal communication, Leslie Gilpin who recalls his mother buying half a willow tea service with his grandmother having the other half.

⁹ BT31/32435/168659 Cart Auction Mart Company Limited dissolved in 1948, National Archives Kew

Finally by July 20th. 1970, the Auction Mart at Cark in Cartmel now under the ownership of the Kendal Auction Mart Co Ltd. was sold to the North Lonsdale Rural District. They acted as agents for the former Auction Mart and had paid £4000 for 1904 square yards. ¹⁰

¹⁰ Ibid.