

Cattle trampling case settled out of court after seven years

SEVEN years after an Eden woman was trampled and seriously injured by cattle near Greystoke, the legal action that she launched has been settled with an out of court payment.

Shirley McKaskie, of Croft Barn, Greystoke Gill, suffered serious head injuries and was hospitalised for months following the incident at Millrigg Farm, near Greystoke, on 10th May, 2003.

She sued Greystoke farmer John Cameron for £1 million in a civil court action which ended in July last year with Judge Nigel Howarth ruling in Miss McKaskie's favour.

Mr. Cameron's legal team applied for permission to challenge the judge's verdict and were granted leave to appeal. However, with the appeal due to be heard on 2nd February, Mr. Cameron's legal advisers took the decision to settle out of court.

Commenting on the outcome of the long-running case, Miss McKaskie's solicitor, Frank Matthewson, of Sintons, said: "I am pleased that the legal representatives of John Cameron have now consented to the dismissal of the appeal which has enabled the parties to settle the claim.

"I am delighted for Shirley that the claim has finally reached a conclusion. She suffered serious injuries in the incident and it is a testament to her that despite this she has managed to remain happy and positive throughout a difficult legal process."

Neither Miss McKaskie's lawyers nor the Cameron family would comment on the eventual amount of the payment.

However, Mrs. Doreen Cameron told the *Herald*: "We are very pleased that it is over, because it has been nearly seven years, but we are disappointed by the amount of the settlement."

John Cameron added: "I haven't backed down. It is the solicitors and the insurance company that have decided."

In settling out of court, said Mr. Cameron, any future cases of a similar nature would be heard with a "fresh start", and not coloured by the pronouncements of Judge Nigel Howarth in this case.

The case has been followed with keen interest by the farming community nationwide, as well as walkers' interest groups — Miss McKaskie was walking her dog at the time of the attack by John Cameron's 40-strong beef suckler herd of Simmental cross cattle.

Among the issues debated during the court case, which took months to come to its conclusion, was whether Miss McKaskie was technically a "trespasser" at the time of the incident, which happened away from the public footpath.