

Essay Competition

In an effort to interest young people in local history and folklore, the Committee intends to sponsor an essay competition for post-primary schools beginning this year. All post-primary schools in the County were contacted and there was a tremendous response. All competitors went to considerable trouble and the general standard was high. The Judges were — Mrs. Mary Kenealy, Mr. Frank McEvoy and the Hon. Editor.

The following are the winning essays. As there was only one prize the judges recommended its being shared jointly.

The Railway Comes and Goes

THE construction of the railway line between New Ross and Waterford commenced in 1899, with labourers then working a sixty-hour week, starting at 6 o'clock in the morning and working through to 6 o'clock in the evening, having only a break for dinner. The railway took four years to complete.

The railway laying employed five-hundred. Many of these were local men, three of whom lost their lives during the construction. The foreman throughout the construction was Mr. Murtagh Cashin of Shanbough. He was paid a nominal wage of thirty shillings a week. The track layers only got eighteen shillings weekly.

The track, being fifteen miles long is ideally situated. It has many bridges en route. Two bridges in particular, one in Annaghs and another at the "Bridal Road" in Shanbough had to have materials imported for their building. The bridges and the railway are of amazing structure for their era. The bridge at Annaghs is only thirteen feet high and carrier freight travelling the main Waterford to New Ross road have to detour to reach their destination.

The train makes one stop en route, in Aylwardstown in Glenmore. The Railway Station was built at New Ross because of its port, which today is a very important one. The trains were used to carry general merchandise and C.I.E. also operated a passenger train service, six days weekly.

In 1968 the passenger train service ceased. From that date, there were only goods train services.

One of the oldest steam engines, that was a frequent

visitor to New Ross as a freight and passenger train between Waterford and Wexford was presented to C.I.E. at a nominal cost of £1. It had a wheel composition of 0-60. The number of the engine was A186.

In November of this year C.I.E. granted a new fertilizer train to Albatross Fertilizer Company, New Ross. The train will run on the New Ross railway line.

The only passenger train service operating now are excursions to Tramore, Co. Waterford, on the 15th August and on the day of the Augustinian Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine, Co. Mayo, in September.

In August of this year, a special passenger train was operated to bring emigrants from Rosslare to New Ross, for a Welcome Home Festival.

The future of the railway has been threatened many times but the industrial revival of New Ross town has helped its battle for survival.

Name : Geraldine Cashin, Age 14 years,
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Mallardstown Mill

MALLARDSTOWN Mill is situated about 1 mile outside Callan. It is the only surviving Mill in Callan. The present owners are Mr. and Mrs. Somers, of Mill Island, Mallardstown.

It is a very old building, and it is thought to be between two hundred and three hundred years old. It consists of six floors mainly used for the storage of corn. It is still in good repair today. The walls outside were built with mortar and stones. They were plastered with the old mortar lime, sand and cow hair, which could date back to the seventeenth century. It is fifty feet high and twenty three feet wide. The windows are long and narrow.

The Mill was always a corn mill, though before Patent Flour appeared, Bolted Flour was produced. The Somers (present owners) up to the early nineteen thirties turned out Bolted Flour and Wholemeal also Maize meal, crushed oats, barley meal and all kinds of fowl and animal feeding stuffs.

The Mill is still in use as the present owners grind and dry corn for the local farmers.

The Mill consists of six floors each of which were used for storing the corn, and are still used by the present owners.

The Mill was first owned by the Brian family of Mallardstown. It is thought that the Mill was built by this family but no records say so. When this family died, Fitzgerald's took it over, sometime in the eighties. It was known locally as Brian's Mill, then Fitzgerald's Mill. The present owners, Somers took over the Mill in 1918. The Mill was leased to them by Mrs. Fitzgerald of Mill Islands after her husband's death. Then Frank Somers bought the property on the expiration of the lease in 1943. Frank's brother was a partner up until 1943, but then he phased out of the business and set up a grocery business in Callan.

During the years when Fitzgerald's were the owners, a creamery was in the building. The creamery was on the first floor. The door where the milk was taken in, and separated milk given back, is still to be seen. The room where the milk was separated and butter produced is also there. At present an electric grinder is placed in front of this room for grinding the corn for the local farmers.

The wheel was run on a water Fower of a four hundred horse power undershot wheel. There are three different kinds of mill wheels:—

- (1) Under shot — water flows under wheel.
- (2) Breast shot — water meets wheel at axle level.
- (3) Over shot — water flows over wheel.

The present owners, Somers' worked the former and latter but never the Breast shot.

The wheel had four pairs of Mill Stones. At the moment it is all electric, and modern methods have replaced the old methods. The Mill Stones are not being used anymore. The wheel is 18 ft. high eight feet wide. It is made of steel and timber. The last time it was used was in 1918.

The Mill Wheel is not in use because the river is "too dirty" and would damage the mill wheel. The tail races where the water flows in and out of the mill wheel needs cleaning and this would be expensive to do. The wheel is said to be about two hundred years old.

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