31 Leinster Express 1981

Special 150th Anniversary Edition

Vol. 151, No. 39, 26th September, 1981 Price 30p

National Library of Ireland 28 SEP 1981 Ms Division

150 YEARS SERVING THE MIDLANDS

Leinster Express celebrates 150th Anniversary

THIS week the Leinster Express celebrates its 150th birthday. There are five newspapers in Ireland — one more than in the world for that matter — that has the same title as ours. The Leinster Express is appearing on the streets of Laois and Offaly consistently week after week for the last one and a half. It has recorded the passing scene through these 150 years — a scene that has passed away. The Leinster Express has evolved, become a story itself.

[illegible] circulation in the neighbouring counties of Carlow, Kildare and King's County (Offaly) as well.

The late 1830s and 1840s saw a turbulent period in Irish history. The Tithe War, the Repeal Movement, all fostered the development of a political consciousness among the people. It is hardly surprising that the growing awareness was reflected in the rapid expansion of provincial newspapers, both unionist and liberal. The number of Irish provincial newspapers increased from 41 to 63 in the period 1837 to 1842. Greater political awareness was the fuel on the growth in demand for newspapers. Newspaper was the fuelled priest.

[illegible] concerned to [illegible] and [illegible] nationalists. [illegible] in the 1830s and [illegible] in 1839.

[illegible] such as the Leinster Express [illegible] in 1831 could not [illegible] circulation. The [illegible] of the Irish [illegible] of that time were [illegible], which employed [illegible]. A 4d newspaper [illegible] beyond the reach of all [illegible] but of the social [illegible]. The average circulation [illegible] supply in 1830 [illegible] Ireland [illegible] business [illegible].

ONLY PAPER IN LAOIS

When Henry R. Talbot [illegible] the Express in [illegible] he was the only newspaper produced in Laois-Offaly. The records of Newspaper was a good time to [illegible] a newspaper as the [illegible] was at and the letter off, at least, could work down to read three-letter words over the winter months. In addition Talbot appeared to have grasped an opportunity created by the death of Richard Pope, the proprietor of the Carlow Morning Post. This paper was probably owned by Pierce Grace in partnership in 1837 or 1838. Some six years later, in 1838, Pope was able to claim that the Post "circulates widely in the Counties of Carlow, Wicklow, Kildare and Queen's County in which there is no another paper printed, also in the Counties of Kilkenny, Wexford and Waterford."

The Post did in fact survive the death of its founder and managed to outlast until 1851. But after 1839 it was the monopoly of the liberal Catholic newspaper and as such did not appeal to Conservative Episcopalian taste. Talbot gained the opportunity to supply the monopoly subscription market and hence the success of his paper. The motto of the Express was "The Law — The King — The People" — hardly the choice of a radical organ, it remained for most of its history a highly conservative journal.

EXPANSION

Talbot did not allow his conservatism to get in the way of business and within three months of starting the Express he was able to inform readers that its circulation was only 400 copies and that in addition it had an overseas circulation in King's County (Offaly) and Kildare.

This may have been one of Kildare, but it was few miles of Offaly. Using a local printing shop Talbot attempted to establish the Express in Tullamore in late 1832 and made arrangements to have news supplied in County Offaly. Expenses in this area [illegible] and in March 1833 Talbot sold his readers that:

"Our patron having elapsed since the introduction of the Express into the shire of King's County, we feel it to our duty to state, that we have not received sufficient encouragement to enable us to continue the publication of our journal in Tullamore [illegible] to attend the proceedings of public meetings."

A little over a year later Talbot made a second attempt, this time in relationship with the printing firm of Francis Shields in Kilbeggan (Westmeath). This was a little more successful, County

(Continued on page 9)

The Leinster Express premises as they appear on the 150th Anniversary of the newspaper this week. The spacious modern building at the Dublin Road, combining the office and printing works, has housed the entire Leinster Express operations for the past five years.

The old Leinster Express building was demolished earlier in the year. This picture [illegible] to be an heavy machine shovel to deliver the killer blow. The [illegible] premises had been the cog for newspaper activity in the South Midlands for a century.

Slot machines still causing controversy in Portarlington

THE tale of the Gaming and Lotteries Act in Portarlington took another twist last week. For the motion which has previously been defeated and withdrawn has now been adjourned for the second time inside a month. It was first put down for a meeting on September 28, was adjourned until October 5 and has now been put back again until October 27.

This week Deputy G.J. Flanagan who has submitted the motion relating to the Gaming Act to be passed on behalf of supermarket owner Mr John Mitchell has delivered his intention to table the motion at the Laois Council meeting at the end of next month. In reply, however, Anti-Bandit Committee chairman Mr Don Cunningham described as an "act of folly" the presence of some councillors on the issue. He added that he believed it was fair to assume that those councillors who are prepared to support this motion also subscribed to Deputy Flanagan's views on the matter. Mr Cunningham said that if a law or Act is not in the interest of the people, community or exercise good than we have a moral obligation to oppose it.

In a reply to the ARC chairman, Deputy Flanagan said he would be delighted to meet the members of the committee before the Council sitting at the end of October. In his reply he enclosed a copy of a letter he had already sent to the National Federation of Christian Brothers Parent Councils in which he explained his attitude to them in regard to the Gaming and Lotteries Act. They had appealed to him to withdraw the motion.

"TWO SIDES TO EVERY STORY"

Mr Flanagan put it to the Parent Councils and the ARC members that in Portlaoise and Tullamore there were another CBS School that he did not recall having received any representations from them as any other Parent Councils in relation to the granting of Gaming Licences in either town.

He went on to say "It is wrong to have one law for Portlaoise and another law for Portarlington. If such a balance can be granted in Portlaoise by the Courts why should not the Courts in Portarlington be in a position to consider the merit of such application."

In his reply to the CBS Parent Councils the Deputy added: "I also feel that you have not at your disposal all the facts which you would have obtained by a discussion with me as with Mr Tom Keenan, Chairman, Laois County Council. Mr Mitchell is a highly respected and well known trader and the owner of a supermarket in Portarlington. There are two sides to every story. Perhaps the Christian Brothers in Portlaoise and Tullamore may be able to comment on the high standard of supervision of the premises licenced under the Gaming and Lotteries Act in both towns. I have every confidence in the District Court, the Gardai and the owners of such premises and I can state this from my own experience of all concerned."

Along the same lines Deputy Flanagan asked the CBS Federation if they proposed to take the necessary action in relation to Gaming Licences elsewhere. He maintained it was up to the Courts to decide.

"Now I take it that your Federation now propose to take the necessary action to oppose the existing Licences in Portlaoise and Tullamore as the law should be the same for all and if you can be convinced in the case of Portarlington why has Mr Mitchell (indeed any other applicant) been denied one in the way when by objection, whatever, stems from your Federation

(Continued on page 16)

Mountmellick man nominated to fill father's seat

JOHN MOLONEY, as anticipated, received the Fianna Fail nomination to go forward for co-option onto the Council for the seat left vacant by his father the late Councillor Michael Moloney. His name will now be put forward at a future Council meeting when a vote will be taken on the co-option.

If co-opted John Moloney will be the third generation of the family to hold a Council seat. His grandfather also a John Moloney from Mountrath held a Laois Council seat in the 1930's and remained a councillor right up until the time of his death in 1943. The late Councillor Michael Moloney joined Laois Council in 1950 a seat which he held until earlier this year.

At the Timahoe Corbellin Constituency Convention John Moloney contested the party nomination by 17 votes to 11, his opponent being P. J. Phelan originally from Portlaoise, Mountrath, who currently resides in Portlaoise. Mr Thomas Cullinane did not receive the nomination.

Mr John Moloney commented earlier this week that he was delighted to have received the nomination and that if he is accepted onto the Council he would be making himself available to all the people of the Timahoe area. He said he would commit himself to the job and care his co-operation in the next local elections.

Inside this Special 150th Anniversary Edition

48 page supplement reproducing various pages from our files, interspersed with pictures from both the Lawrence and Exeter collections.

* * *

Review of one hundred years of G.A.A. in Laois compiled by Teddy Fennelly.

* * *

Line out of the world's best sports personalities compiled by Michael Doyan.

* * *

A complete review of athletics in the county.

* * *

One four pages of Rockin Rollin Roadie by John Walker which includes articles by top professionals in the music industry in Ireland, competitions, album reviews and the usual up to date gossip.

* * *

A special all world poster competition for Laois pupils. There are six prizes in all for this competition sponsored by the management of Laois Jeans Lee/Strauss.

* * *

The Women's page this week includes two competitions. One of the competitions is for twenty four jars of Shamrock Marmalade Mix. The other competition is for 150 Glenwood cook books ... one for each year of existence of the Leinster Express.

* * *

In this edition we also carry our autumn bride feature and to mark the occasion of our 150th anniversary, Principle de Paris, the world's largest hotel retailer are sponsoring a wedding gown valued at £150, a veil and headdress to match, a bridesmaid's dress, flowergirl's dress. Young's Formal Wear for Men will dress the groom for the day. The House of Cadwallr will present the winner with a case of sparkling wine to toast the groom.

* * *

In addition we carry our usual helping of news and sport.

We must apologise however for the poor reproduction quality in some of the pages from our file. Unfortunately this could not be avoided.

May we take this opportunity of thanking all our readers, advertisers, newsagents, correspondents and contributors for their support.

150 YEARS SERVING THE MIDLANDS

The Leinster Express celebrates 150th Anniversary

(Continued from Page 1)

[illegible] in South Kildare. From January 1834 the Express had an office in Athy and was also "published" (in distance from printed) in that centre. Talbot took advantage of the reduction in the stamp duty on newspapers in 1836 from 2d. to 1d. "In bringing our sheet to a size resembling some other newspapers published in Ireland and double (being at least double ... at the usual price," The Express was now eight pages in size and claimed to be the largest provincial newspaper in Ireland. The annual subscription was now 25s. 1 year or 3d. per week. Its circulation in the late 1830s ranged from 700 to almost 1,000 each week — a sales figure which Talbot claimed was exceeded only by newspapers published in Limerick, Belfast, Derry and Newry. In 1841 it was decided to publish the Express twice weekly at 21 half-yearly in advance. This was a devil step among rural newspapers and does not appear to have been followed.

On the demise of the Kilkenny Chronicle in 1844 Talbot was able to at such and successfully tell the Chronicle readers that he had an efficient body of printers and reporters constantly engaged in the Maryborough establishment office.

He also wrote: "For the County of Kildare I have also an office at Naas where the Express is regularly printed and published ... In the County (King's — Offaly) as well as in the Queen's County the Express circulates more generally than all other papers collectively."

An independent newspaper published in the General Advertiser in the mid 1840s indicated that the Leinster Express circulation was between 800 and 900 with about 300 in each of the most counties it purported to cover. The full title of the newspaper at the time left nothing to be imagined and ran:

The Leinster Express, Queen's and King's Counties, County Kildare, Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Meath, Wicklow, Dublin and Midland Mercantile and Agricultural Advertiser.

Talbot continued to preside over the fortunes of the Express until his death in 1859. Following his death the paper was sold by the Talbot family to Michael Charles Carey. The Carey family, father and son, managed and edited the paper until the death of the latter in 1945 at the age of 82.

The Careys continued the Liberal orientation policy of the Express long after it was acceptable from an economic point of view or popular in the political sense. The paper was on the verge of collapse during the thirties but managed to survive the battles until the death of Charles Carey.

The business then passed into the hands of Michael Carey's sister, Mrs Tisdall. She went into partnership with Mr R.T. Worsfold who later acquired a controlling interest in the Express. He set about revitalising the paper but his reign at the helm ended with his sudden death in 1947. Mr Worsfold had earlier been associated with the Freeman's Journal, the Weekly Freeman and Dublin Opinion. He brought in his nephew, Gordon Clarke, to assist in running the Express. Most experts were the Townsends.

Freddie Townsend Snr. struggled to keep the paper alive in the fifties turning it into a popular local paper that incorporated plenty of sport and people with the hard news and also introduced more and more pictures to brighten up the pages. But rising costs and falling sales presented little the writing and by the turn of the decade the expansion of the paper was over alone in jeopardy.

Fred Townsend Jnr. was now at the helm and in an endeavour to keep the newspaper viable he introduced a new cold Polygraph rotarfilm, backed up by IBM typesetting in 1970. The Leinster Express was one of the very first provincial newspapers in the country to opt for the new technology. But the unusually financial history and lack of financial backing took its toll and in 1972, the paper was put up for sale.

When the present owners, PNPA, bought the Leinster Express in 1972, it meant the beginning of a new era. Under Managing Editor, Dan Cassidy, huge investment of capital were channeled into the ailing concern.

On the printing side two four and fifteen tons have been installed in the company's new modern complex on the Dublin Road where at the moment thirteen weekly publications and numerous bewildering, monthly and annually periodicals are printed.

The Leinster Express has therefore withstood 110 years of political, economic and social change. It has had its ups and downs, but it has survived. That in itself is a proud achievement. But while proud of a long and colourful past, today, Leinster Express looks to the present and future rather than the past. It is now a major employer with a staff fully qualified and competent to deal with the demands of modern technology in an ever expanding newspaper and printing concern.

Already plans are afoot to install a whole new typesetting and composing system which will once again make it Ireland's most up to date provincial newspaper. This will greatly alleviate the manual difficulties experienced since the purchase of the Kilkenny Standard almost a year ago.

On page one our photograph showed a heavy machine about to demolish the old Leinster Express premises at Coote Street earlier in the year. Just an hour later this was the result.

Swift Brook Limited

FOR ALL YOUR PRINTING, COPYING & SUPPLIES NEEDS
SAGGART, CO. DUBLIN.
01 - 589100.

Congratulate

The Leinster Express

on their 150th Anniversary

FOR ALL YOUR PRINTING, COPYING & SUPPLIES NEEDS
PHONE DUBLIN 589100.

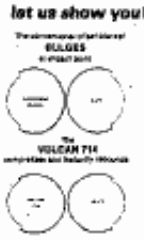
SLIEVE BLOOM ASSOCIATION

A GENERAL meeting of all the branches will be held in Kinnitty Hall on Monday, October 5th at 8.30 pm. Members of the County Council and Midland Regional Tourism will attend.

If you have not yet seen a demonstration of the VULCAN 714

the first compressible offset blanket with *INSTANT REBOUND*

let us show you!



Congratulations from

Hoechst Ireland Limited

Sole suppliers for Vulcan Compressible Blankets and Kalle Gummi Plates

Come shopping this weekend to Straws SUPER VALU CENTREPOINT

LEADING THE WAY IN FRESH MEAT		BAKING SPECIALS TO PLEASE ANY CAKE			PROVISIONS DEPT.	FRESH FRUIT & VEG.
£1.39 lb	STOCK YOUR DEEP-FREEZE NOW!!	VC RAISINS & SULTANAS 55p 1lb pkt	MARIGOLD MARGARINE 12p pkt	KERRY GOLD BUTTER 62p lb	£1.99 each	CARROTS & ONIONS 19p lb
£1.19 lb	FORE QTR BEEF 59p lb	VC CURRANTS 55p 1lb pkt	DEEKO TIN FOIL 39p pkt	LYONS TEA 48p 1/2lb	GALTEE SAUSAGES 67p lb	LARGE, GOLDEN DELICIOUS APPLES 11p each
89p lb	SIDE OF PORK 69p lb	SHAMROCK FRUIT MIX 55p lb	CASTOR AND ICING SUGAR 30p pkt	REX DOG FOOD 19p tin	COOKED CHICKENS £2.50 each	ORANGES 5 FOR 49p
£1.29 lb	SIDE OF BEEF 85p lb	MIXED PEEL CHERRIES 17½p qtr 34p qtr	SHAMROCK WHOLE ALMONDS 49p qtr	TROPIC WASH-UP LIQUID 29p btl	39p lb	LARGE APPLES 5 FOR 49p
£1.49 lb	BOX OF 8 CHICKENS £15.50 1,300 gms size	VC FLOUR 54p 2 kilo	ATORA SUET 42p pkt	VC TOILET ROLLS 23p pkt	WIN A POINTAULT T.V. TICKET WITH EVERY £10 PURCHASED	