

FASCINATING FIND

BLARNEY



The Gympie Fire Brigade started in 1901. In late 1908 the brigade purchased its first horse, Blarney, from a doctor. Blarney loved his new job. When the fire bell rang he would race to the hose-reel, and stand impatiently between the shafts, waiting for the harness to be lowered onto him and secured.

One day he knocked his stable door down when it was not opened quickly enough. He was the idol of the town, and it was said he could gallop the hills of Gympie as fast as a car. A trial run in 1913, from receiving the call to arriving at the Northumberland Hotel, and unreeling 300 feet of hose, was timed at 4 minutes 14 seconds.

Blarney died from lockjaw (tetanus) in early 1916 after picking up a nail in one of his hind feet. He was sadly missed. Other horses replaced him until 1924 when the brigade purchased two Ford-Hale pump trucks.

This water colour painting by R. W. Wright is of the famous Blarney. It is on display with the photo of Blarney by Leonard Birt, in the cottage at the museum.