



The mill at Pabu Campsite – Jonathan

Jon: I am standing outside the mill at the minute. Now this used to be a flour mill and then changed, I think.

Jonathan: Yes. So the, the old manor, just up above here, bought the land and the mill in about 1840, and they saw the potential of the linen industry and rebuilt... rebuilt the mill much larger, modernised it with all, lots of modern linen scrutching machinery.

Jon: What exactly is scrutching?

Jonathan: It is when they, they beat the fibres, well, the stems of the uh, the flax plant, mechanically, to separate the, the fibres and then that later goes to be woven elsewhere, so there is lots and lots of money in that industry between about 1850 and 1950, which is when the mill finished working.

Jon: So how many people would have worked here at its peak?

Jonathan: At its peak there were 20 laborers here, seven or eight ladies, one or two boys and then the rest men of different ages.

Jon: And you told me an interesting story the other day about um pottery.

Jonathan: Yeah, so the, the labourers were encouraged to bring any broken crockery, porcelain from their homes to work to throw into the river to make the riverbed white, next to the mill, so that whenever salmon came up the river they would be much easier to spot and then they would be speared, or forked and then fed to the, the laborers for lunch. So there was a limit, the laborers asked that they.... there only be a maximum of two salmon meals a week, because it is very salty and wasn't seen as the luxury food that it is today.

Jon: It wouldn't happen today.

Jonathan: No, no, no.

Jon: But we can see here that the water level is very low. Is that usual?

Jonathan: It's extremely low this year. I mean we haven't had any decent rain since I think probably March this year, so the river is, is very low and the salmon unfortunately are sort of caught in pools, well, trapped in pools further down the river, so the next decent rain we get it will be, it'll be really spectacular watching all the salmon come up the weir. I haven taken photos of them launching in the air sort of trying to get up the weir and it is brilliant.

Jon: Well, we'll have to pay another visit. Hopefully we'll get three salmon. Jonathan, thank you very much.

Jonathan: You're welcome.

