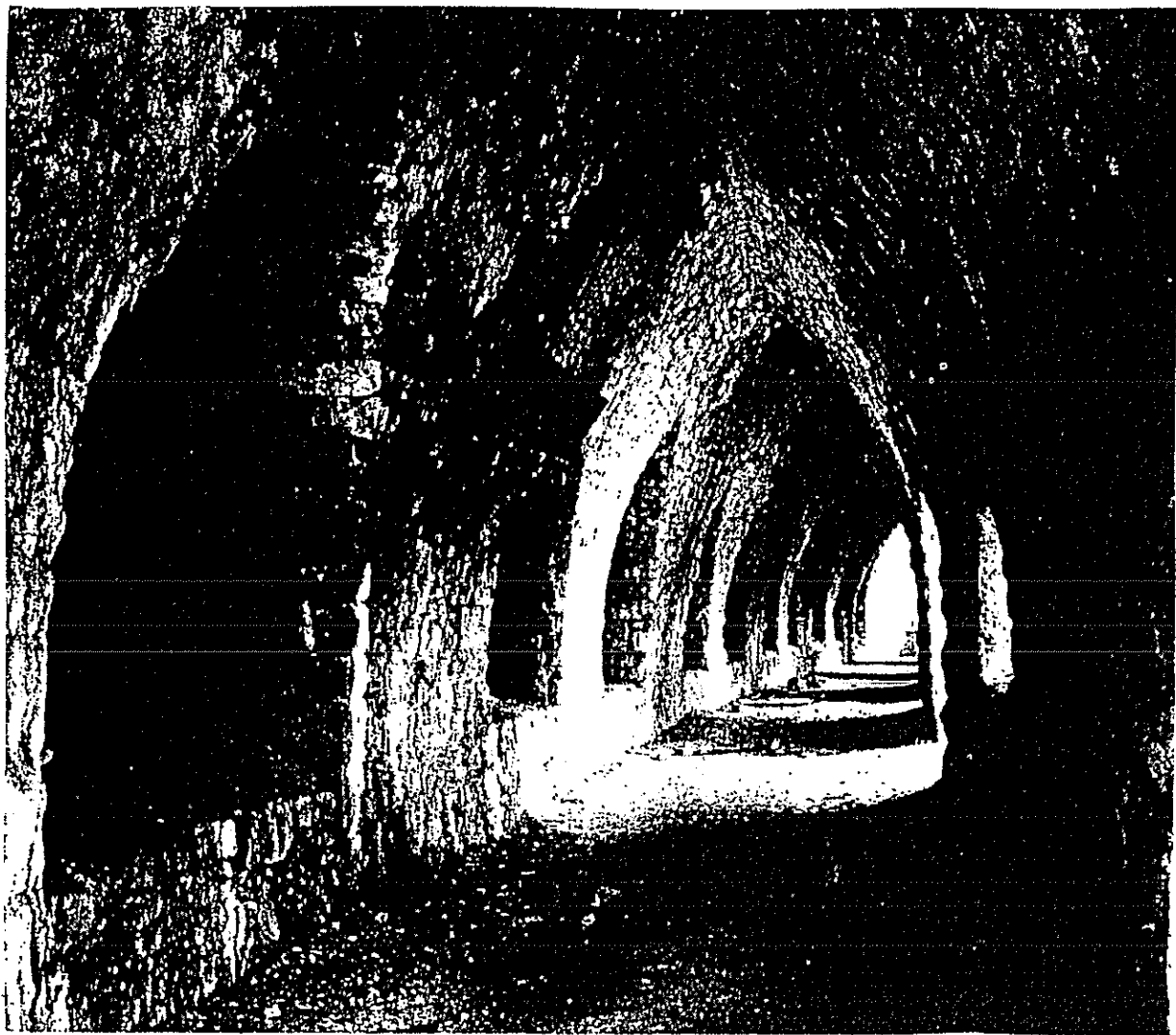


KILN PARK HOLIDAY CENTRE

An Archaeological and Historical Survey



Dyfed Archaeological Trust 1992

The Archaeology and History of the Kiln Park Holiday Centre, Tenby

The Brief

This short history of the Kiln Park Holiday Centre site was commissioned from Dyfed Archaeological Trust by Bourne Leisure West Ltd. on 5th August 1992. It followed a site meeting between Mrs H. James, Principal Archaeological Officer (Curatorial) of the Trust and Mr Philip Morgan, acting for Bourne Leisure in their pre-planning inquiries regarding developments at the Kiln Park Holiday Centre.

Following the site visit, Dyfed Archaeological Trust confirmed that should the development proposals proceed to a formal planning application, the Trust would not object on archaeological grounds but would draw the relevant planning authorities' attention to the archaeologically sensitive areas of the site and the existence of a Scheduled Ancient Monument in the form of the Limekilns. The Trust also considered that there is potential on the site for interpretation and presentation of historical features. The brief therefore required a short history of the site and some preliminary recommendations on ways in which aspects of that history could be presented and interpreted for the benefit of holiday makers and local communities (particularly schools).

In addition to describing the importance of the Limekilns in Industrial Archaeology terms, opportunity has also been taken to document the potential of the site for environmental archaeology. An indication is given of the kinds of artefacts and occupation traces which might be expected should substantial land disturbance take place.

Description of the Desk Top Assessment

The Assessment is based on consultation of Dyfed Archaeological Trust's *Sites and Monuments Record* and examination of the whole area of the site on the ground. This was followed by a rapid search of the main published sources and of manuscript, map and pictorial sources at Tenby Museum, Tenby Library, The County Record Office, Haverfordwest, The Local Studies Library, Haverfordwest, and the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth. A full list of sources consulted and references is given in the Appendix. There is no doubt that a more exhaustive examination of archive material would provide more detail. However this was not possible within the agreed budget of £800 for the Report. The Trust however considers that the Assessment contains sufficient detail to cover the whole history of the area and that further investigation of specific subjects would be more appropriate if and when any of the Recommendations for interpretation and presentation were taken up.

The Geological and Prehistoric Background

Kiln Park Holiday Centre lies within an area known as 'The Marsh' and 'The Burrows', both inland of the long sandy stretch of South Beach, Tenby between the cliffs below the present day Esplanade and Giltar Point. The caravan site is separated from the Golf Course by the limestone crags of Black Rock, which have been extensively quarried in the past and where the celebrated banks of limekilns which give the site its name are sited. The northern boundary of the site is marked by the now canalized course of the Ritec stream.

The whole area apart from Black Rock crags was once under the sea and forms a drowned estuary mouth or 'ria'. Once dry land and drained by the precursor of the Ritec stream, the area was inundated by the sea about 8000 years ago at the end of the last Ice Age. The marsh was not reclaimed until the early 19th century so the present day appearance of the area is of comparatively recent origin.

The Tenby area contains two kinds of sites which contain evidence of the environment and of human occupation in the Palaeolithic or Old Stone Age period during the last Ice Age and through the age of the 'Mesolithic' (Middle Stone Age) period through to the Neolithic or New Stone Age c. 4000 BC when farming began to replace the hunter/gatherer lifestyles of the Mesolithic. These sites are the submerged forests and caves. The nearest examples of the submerged forests of the post-glacial period, before the rise in sea levels at the end of the last Ice Age was complete, are at Lydstep and Amroth. Caves yielding evidence of extinct animals and prehistoric man are known from Caldey Island, further inland in the Ritec valley at Hoyles Mouth and Longbury Bank Caves (both now protected as Scheduled Ancient Monuments) and from caves which once existed at Black Rock itself but have now been quarried away. This archaeological richness and the activities of local antiquarians are responsible for the splendid collections of national importance at Tenby Museum.

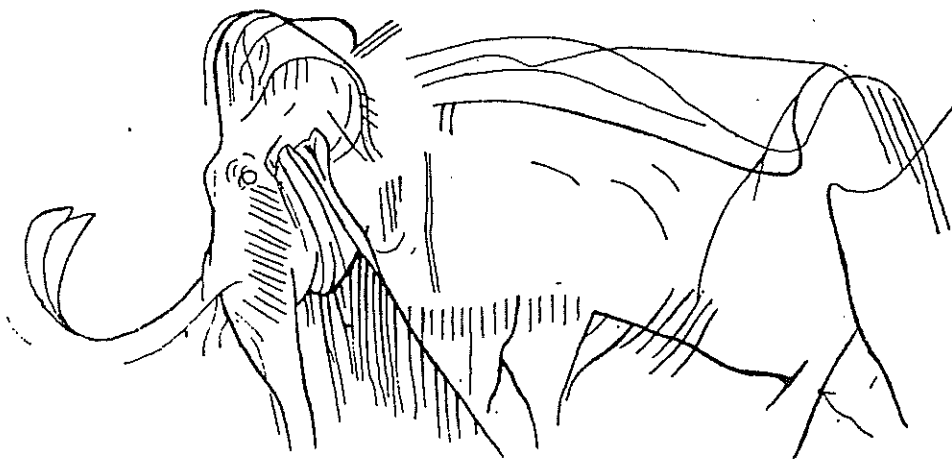


FIG. 262.—Mammoth engraved on ivory, from La Madeleine.
($\times \frac{2}{3}$. After Lartet and Christy.)

The Black-rock Cave, near Tenby.

I met with this remarkable kind of calcareous deposition in a second cave in the neighbourhood of Tenby. When examining the Black-rock quarries in 1871, the workmen pointed out a small opening which they believed to be the entrance of a cave, but which was too small for them to enter. By knocking off, however, a few sharp angles, I got into a small chamber about five feet high, with sides, roof, and bottom covered with

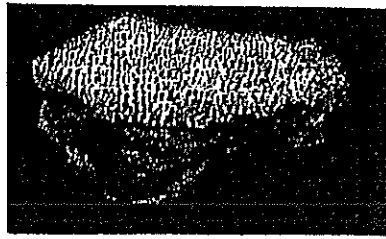


FIG. 18.—Fungoid Structure, Black-rock Cave.

massive dripstone. A few loose stones rested on the bottom. The whole surface, even including the stones upon the floor, one of which is figured (Fig. 18), was so completely covered with these peculiar fungoid bodies, that it was impossible to move without destroying hundreds of them. All were about the same height, 0·2 inches, snow-white, or of a rich reddish brown, and conformed to the unequal surface on which they stood. It is quite impossible to describe the effect of a whole chamber bristling with these peculiar structures. The only author by whom they are mentioned, Mr. John Beaumont—who described the caves of Mendip in 1680, considered them to be veritable plants of stone.¹ The beautiful forms assumed by the dripstone in the caves of Caldy and Black-rock are by no means uncommon, but I have never met with them anywhere else in such perfection. They may be studied in all stalactitic caverns.

from Cave-Hunting E. Boyd-Dawkins 1874.

The environment during the occupation of the caves during the last Ice Age resembled that of the arctic tundra today although there were more temperate periods during the so-called 'interglacial' intervals. Preserved in Tenby Museum are bones of numerous Pleistocene mammals, including hyaena, fox, hippopotamus and mammoth, to complement bear bones from Hoyles Mouth. The Black Rock quarry caves do not seem to have produced evidence for human occupation but as Dr Stephen Aldhouse-Green of the National Museum of Wales reminds us "It is most useful to see Ice Age humans as one species in a range of predators - others being hyaena, lion, wolf and so on - operating across the Welsh landscape and in competition with each other" (Green 1992).

It is probable that the ground outside the caves at the foot of the limestone crags like Longbury bank and Black Rock was part of the so called 'raised beach' which was formed probably in interglacials above a much lower sea level than at present. But there can be no doubt that by the Neolithic period the sea had risen to approximately its present levels and the Ritec was a tidal estuary. Leach identified marine shells in the fine silt clay alluvium below Hoyles Mouth which seems to have been quarried for brick making during the late 19th century. A dug out boat, carved out of a single tree trunk and possibly of Neolithic or Bronze Age date was found in 1858 close to this area, although the exact location is not now known.

It is possible that more precise mapping of pleistocene and prehistoric shorelines closer to the estuary mouth of the Ritec can be made on the basis of borehole profiles although these would need to cross the now reclaimed valley from side to side.

Following the rise in sea levels which drowned the shallow mouth of the Ritec estuary the normal processes of 'long shore drift' along the coastline will have built up a sand bar extending northwards from Giltar Point to Tenby. The Ritec therefore became a tidal pill which filled and flooded at high tide but at low tide reverted to a small stream tracing a meandering course through saltmarshes, the lower parts of which regularly and the upper infrequently being covered at high tide. This bar which formed some 8000 years ago became the nucleus for the present day sand dunes, which formed very rapidly following the final enclosure of the Marsh in the 1860s.

The Early Uses of the Marsh

The Pill/ Backwater/Holloway's Water

There are a number of 18th and 19th century maps, and a fine series of watercolour views in Tenby Museum which show the tidal estuary of the Ritec which was then known as 'The Backwater' or 'The Pill'. John Butcher's Map of 1740, the earliest large scale map of Tenby has a drawing of a 3 masted ship in the pill close to common land called 'The Green' and he also marks the large area known as 'The Marsh'. Seventeenth century Bailiff's accounts record boat loads of stone being landed at 'Pill Lake'. Early maps also mark a quay near Marsh Road and Edward Laws described the ruins of the former 'Quay House'.

Two Admiralty Charts of 1831 (surveyed by H.M. Denham and 1856 (Captain All-dridge) together with the first edition Ordnance Survey 1 inch Map of 1831 show the former course of the Ritec before it was canalized and culverted to its present position on the north side of the Kiln Park site. Old courses of the river therefore lie buried beneath the present drained and levelled ground over the northern half of the caravan site.

It is probable that boats and ships were moored in the lower reaches of the Pill awaiting the flood tide to get up to the Backwater Quay and that they were 'neaped' between spring tides on the saltmarshes. It is not impossible therefore that hulks of ships and boats may be preserved in the alluvial silts below the present day surfaces of the Marsh and be uncovered in the event of any new landscaping which creates ponds and lakes.

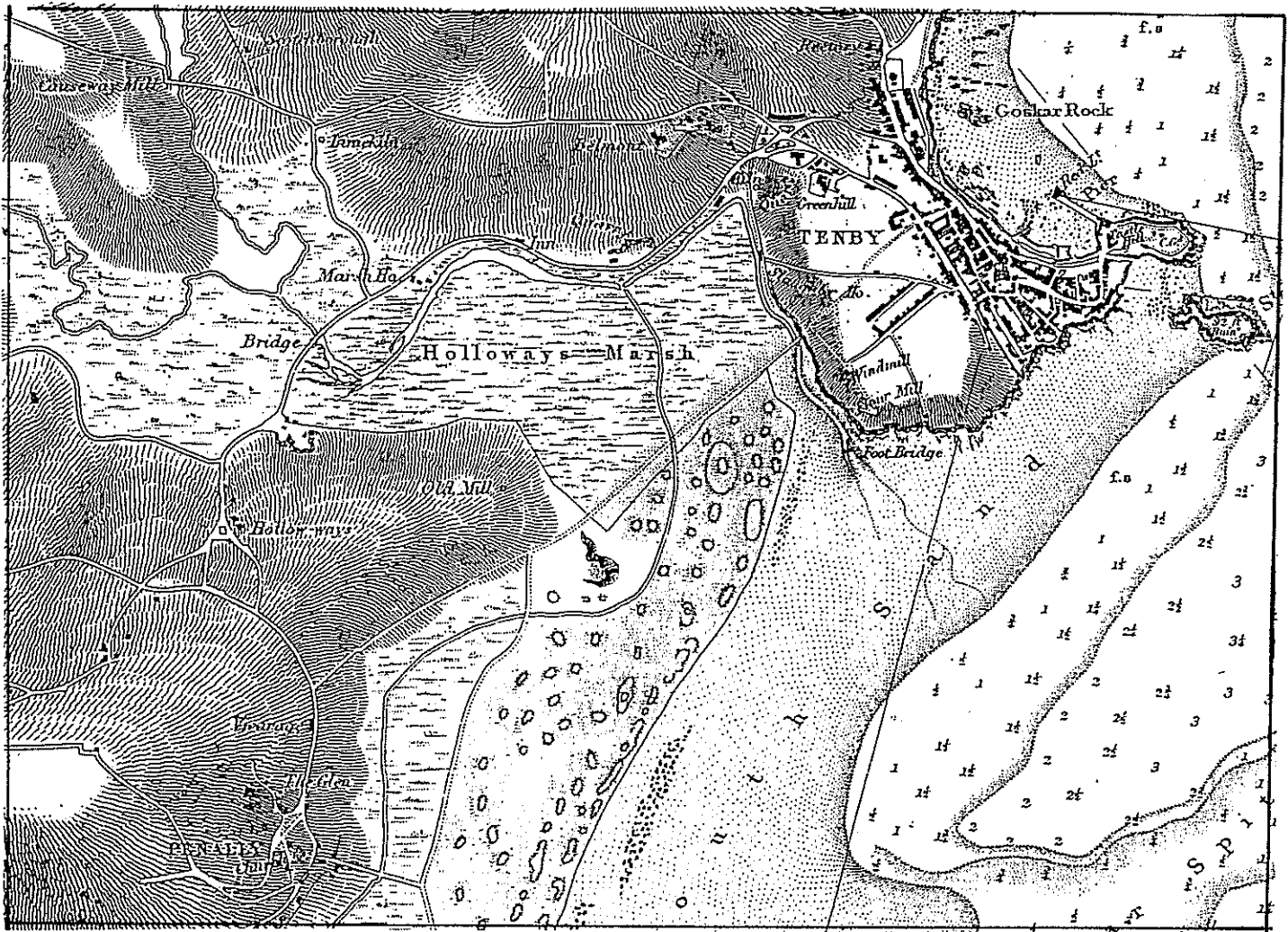
The Causeway and Holloway Farm.

The main entrance to the Kiln Park Holiday Centre is next to the former Kiln Park Farm on the A4319 Tenby to Pembroke road. The route is an ancient one and led formerly up through Penally village and onto Pembroke via 'The Ridgeway'. But before the Marsh was drained travellers had to wait until the tide had ebbed before fording the Pill (the Ritec). Holloway Bridge certainly in existence by 1721, when Mayor Athoe of Tenby and his son lured their kinsmen, the Marchants down below its arches and murdered them in a quarrel over the sale of cattle (Laws 1868 p.364). There are numerous accounts and references from the 17th and 18th centuries of the difficulties of this crossing. Perhaps the best is that of Edward Donovan from his *Descriptive Excursions through South Wales and Monmouthshire in the Year 1804* when travelling from Pembroke to Tenby:

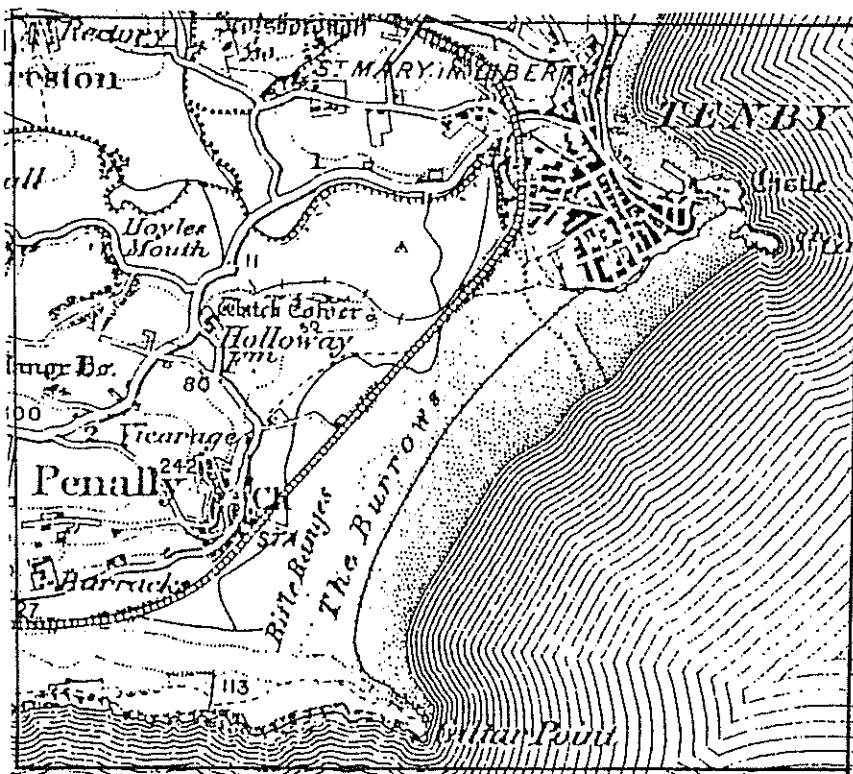
"There is at all times a narrow current through the marshes, along which the superabundant waters of an inland stream are discharged into the sea, but at high water, when the flood is enlarged by the briny tribute of the Severn, the passage to Tenby by fording, as usual at other times, becomes impracticable, or at least dangerous to attempt. The foot passenger crosses over the creek in perfect security when the water is at moderate height by stepping over a number of large stones that are placed across the bed of the stream for that purpose."

Uses of the Saltmarshes.

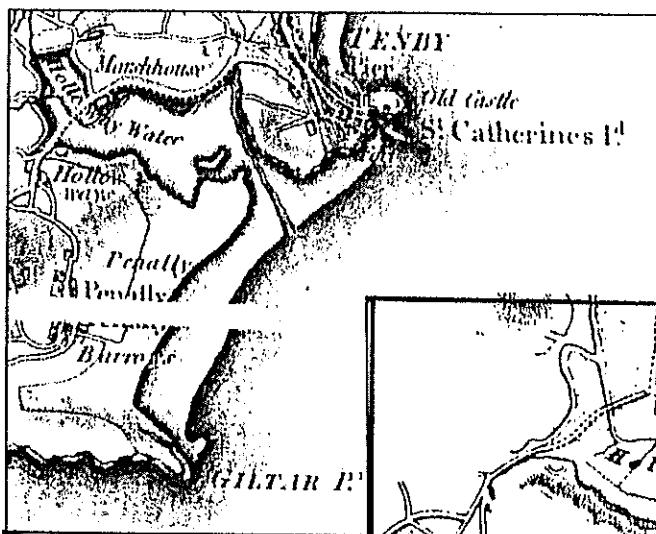
The Marsh was part of the estate of Tenby Corporation and so some idea can be gained of earlier uses from leases that have survived in Corporation records in Tenby Museum. No doubt from the Middle Ages onwards it was used for grazing cattle and horses but our earliest specific reference is in 1731. In that year Sir Arthur Owen of Oriulton leased a piece of 'waste ground under (i.e. below) Saltern. Saltern was the marsh on the north side of Marsh Road and the name survives today though the area of ground in question is now much altered. Owen was allowed to enclose the land to keep his horses and cattle in but the bailiffs and burgesses reserved their traditional rights of 'fishing and fowling' on the Marsh. No more detailed references have been found to fishing, but there was



Captain Aldridge's
Chart of 1856
-note "Old Mill" above
the Marsh. and footpa
shown crossing the Marsh.
to the Burrows.

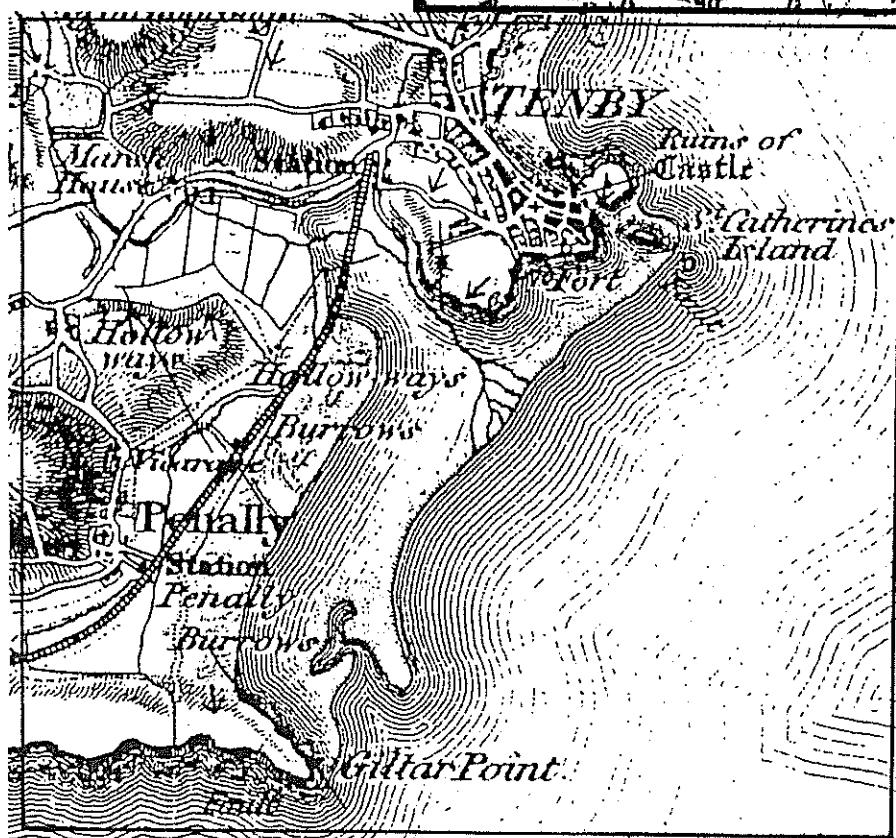
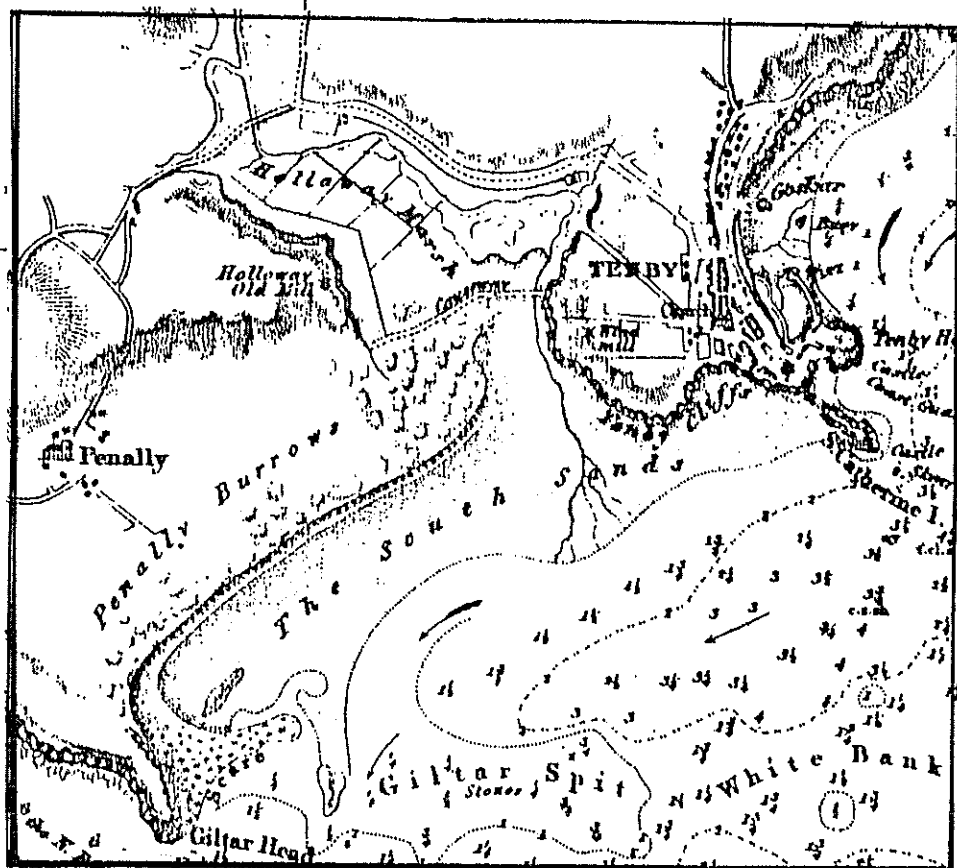


Late 19th C. edition of
One inch O.S. - shows
new railway station - old
line and single track in
the Black Rock quarries
- the old mill is now an
Ancient Mon. "The Watch
Tower"



18th edn. O.S. 1" Map
 - shows the tidal pill and
 the flooded marsh
 "Holloway Water"

H.M. Denham's
 Admiralty Chart 1831
 - shows Owen's
 'Causeway' - also
 drains cut across
 the marsh and the
 remaining salt-
 marsh area.



O.S. one inch
 map - 1860s -
 - shows the P. & T. line
 built partly over
 Owen's causeway
 & Maria's's repaired
 bank.

probably stake netting and weirs like those found in other tidal pills and estuaries in Wales (Jenkins, 1974). Other rights of burgesses were those of quarrying stone from the stone quarry below the cliff and using the town lime kiln there, both close to the Backwater Quay. That area was used for the first Railway station at Tenby and is now known as The Green. The existence of this quarry will be mentioned again later since it is relevant to the question of when the Black Rock quarries began to be worked.

Another traditional right mentioned in a lease of 1732 of part of The Marsh and of marshlands further up the course of the stream known as Clicketts was that of 'digging and carrying away slime'. Further light is thrown on this in a footnote to an 1860s edition of Allen's *Guide to Tenby*. Here it is explained how culm (a mixture of anthracite coal dust and clay) was made up and universally used as a fuel to keep fires, grates and ranges in overnight:

The small dust of coal, called culm, is mixed with soft moist clay or 'blue slime' here dug out of slime pits on The Marsh near Holloway; this with the addition of water is kneaded into a tolerably smooth mass by men who are called 'ball-makers' and charge 1/6d. for making 'a load of balls'.

Drainage and Enclosure of the Marsh.

There are two enclosure banks on the west, upstream side of the present A4139, of unknown date (probably 17th century). A bank (The Causeway) extends southwards from opposite Scotsborough House down to near Holloway bridge draining land in the valley of the Knightsford Brook and another cuts the Marsh at Gumfreston. But the enclosure of the Marsh below Holloway was not begun until the early 19th century. By this period the Owens of Orielson had secured control of most of the Marsh. Between 1811 and 1820 Sir John Owen constructed a sea wall which extended from the seaward end of the Black Rock crags into where the Ritec swung past the Old Quay close to the Town Quarry below the cliffs. Owen probably founded part of his bank on the existing low sand bar which had formed across the mouth of the bay. The embankment was later utilised as we shall see for the earliest railway embankment. Sir John Owen was but one of many landowners investing capital works to reclaim land from the sea in the early 19th century; undoubtedly his motive was to create prime pasture land. His political expenses in fighting elections and other land purchases severely strained his resources and a letter survives in his hand asking for a £2000 loan from his relative John Colby to complete the embankment on Tenby Marsh and in building Landshipping Quay. (NLW Owen & Colby 2073).

The sea wall was breached by the sea during storm and surge conditions in October 1826 and the briefly reclaimed marsh must have reverted to salt marshes again as the sea entered in and out of the breached wall. But by then the ownership of the Marsh

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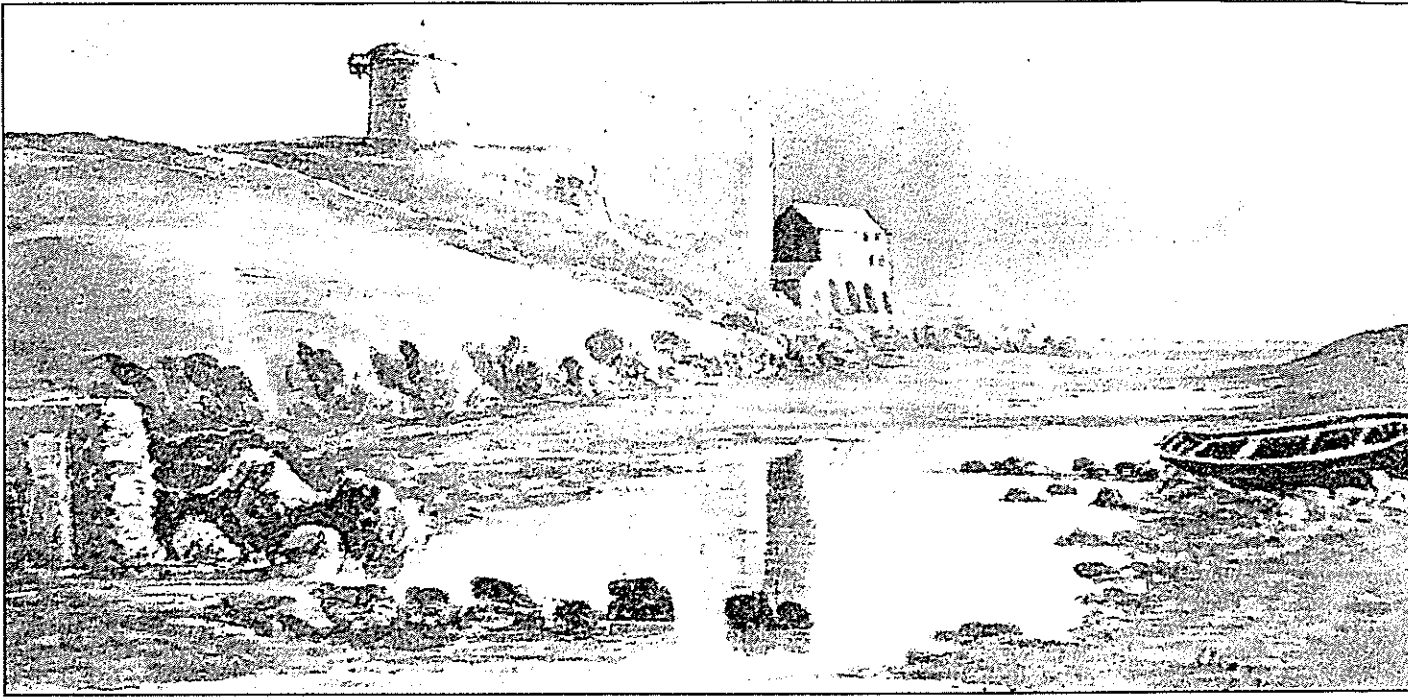
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The sea wall was breached by the sea during storm and surge conditions in October 1826 and the briefly reclaimed marsh must have reverted to salt marshes again as the sea entered in and out of the breached wall. But by then the ownership of the Marsh had passed from the financially embarrassed Owen to Charles Mathias of Lamphey Court. He finally repaired the wall in 1840 and from then on the sea was kept out and the Marsh reclaimed. The boundaries on the 1832 first edition OS one inch map show a partly reclaimed marsh with a series of drains extending across from a boundary wall



The entrance to Holloways Water through what is now the South Beach 1837. The first Sea Wall had been breached by storms in 1826. Repairs were not carried out till 1840. From a Drawing by Charles Norris.

along raised ground at the base of the Black Rock crags. It looks as though another watercourse for the Ritec had temporarily formed across the Marsh.

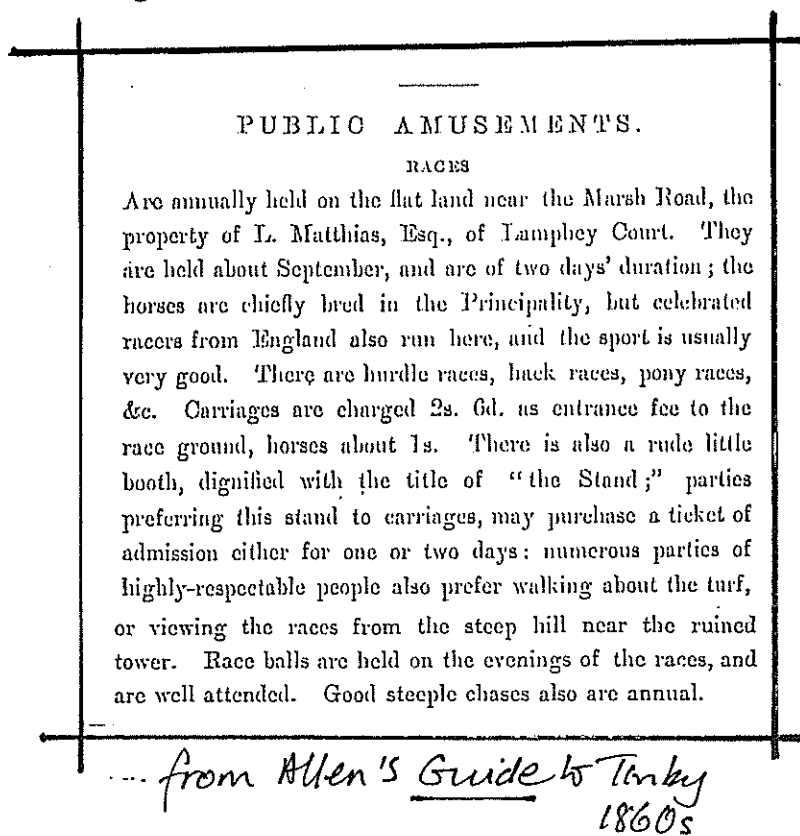
The effects of constructing the sea wall and draining the Marsh were swift and dramatic. Even by 1858, a local student of geology, a Mr Mason, could report, in a paper read to the Geological Society of London that "There are those now living who can remember the time when vessels proceeded nearly a mile over what is now pasture land" as though referring to a very distant past. And a wide dune belt built up very quickly in front of the embankment. There were problems of flooding over the newly enclosed land because sand tended to block the short length through which the Ritec flowed in meandering and braided courses across the sands to the sea after being discharged through flood gates built on the causeway. It seems that for a payment of £2500 from the landowners, Charles Mathias and the Corporation of Tenby, David Davies of Llandinam, the railway engineer undertook to build a culvert for the Ritec on the seaward side of the floodgates - but its sides collapsed, there was more flooding and Mathias and the Corporation refused to pay. The Corporation raised a loan to replace the floodgates and build another culvert but the lower Marsh continued to flood. Much money has been spent over the years in solving the flooding problems, which still occur although a deep culvert now discharges the Ritec below the Low Water Mark. still remain.

The rapid build up of a dune system across the mouth of the Marsh, extended the sand dunes southwards from Giltar Point towards Tenby right to the foot of the south cliff. A.L. Leach estimated that there had been a 20 foot build up of sand below The Esplanade, which completely buried the entrance to Merlin's Cave, once a prime 'visitor attraction' at the foot of the limestone cliffs. The whole sand dune area was known as the Burrows and Victorian guide books extol the beauties of the dune flora.

In 1888 a Golf Club, one of the earliest in Wales, was founded on the Burrows, an area adjacent to today's Kiln Park site. There is much interesting detail in the Centenary history published by the Golf Club in 1988. The 18th and 19th Holes used to be on Matthias's land where now the Holiday Centre's shop and cafe is sited. But he quarrelled with the Club and withdrew the land and they had to build new holes out on the Burrows. In the 1860s a Rifle range was established on the Burrows near Giltar Point and later an Army camp for training purposes. There were quite large garrisons maintained in Milford Haven once the system of coastal forts (which includes the Fort on St Catherine's Rock) was inaugurated by Lord Palmerston. Huts were built on the Range to accommodate the detachments of troops regularly sent by rail for rifle training. Although the detailed history of this Range is outside the scope of this report it forms an additional facet to the history of the area of the Burrows and could be researched further if necessary if only to locate some early photographs.

Horse Races on the Marsh.

As the numbers of holiday visitors to Tenby increased in the second half of the 19th century, due mainly to the railway links an increasing number of 'attractions' were provided for visitor and resident alike. Among the oldest of these were the annual horse races which took place in the early part of the century along the sands of South Beach. By 1815 these were transferred to the newly reclaimed flat lands of The Marsh. Here a 'rude little booth' was built by the track. But it provided standing room only and that at what was considered to be a high price. So many people watched the Races during Race Week in August from the heights of Black Rock crags near 'The Old Tower'. Despite much speculation about beacons and watch towers it is likely that this was in origin a windmill tower. Antiquarians have unwittingly been misled about its function since stonework from an old demolished house in Tenby town was inserted into the Tower forming an arch. The racecourse was in use in the 1850s, 1860s and 1870s and as the excerpt below shows there was the added attraction of Race Week Balls and Dances in the evenings.



Construction of the Railway

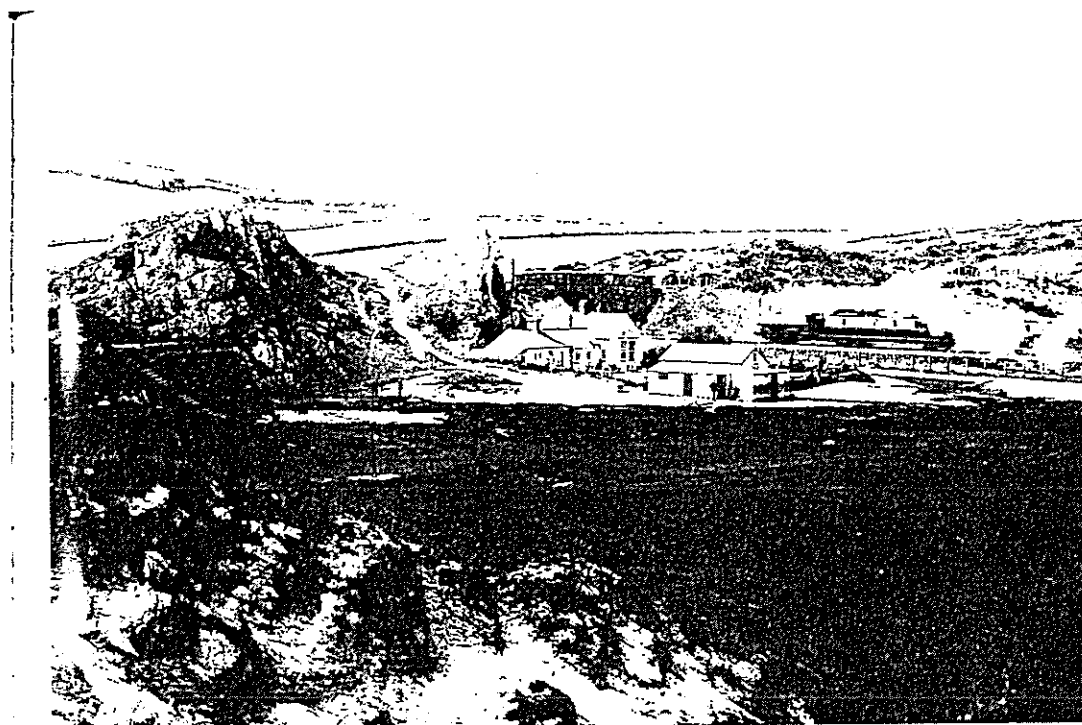
In 1859, impatient with the lack of progress in linking the growing south Pembrokeshire towns of Pembroke, Pembroke Dock and Tenby with the national rail network, local businessmen combined forces to incorporate by Act of Parliament 'The South Wales, Pembroke and Tenby Junction Railway'. But only when the famous Welsh railway builder, David Davies of Llandinam, became dominant shareholder and contractor in 1862 did work begin to construct the 'P & T' (Pembroke and Tenby railway). It was an independent minded venture in that the standard gauge width of 4' 8" was chosen, not the broad gauge of the Great Western Railway whose station at Whitland was the natural point where a link might be made to a country wide network. The 11 mile length of the 'P & T' was initially built unconnected to any other rail network!

Lack of time has prevented a time-consuming search into the railway archives to precisely document all the sales of land needed for the railway to proceed across the Marsh from Tenby to Pembroke, although detailed plans survive as fragile tracings in Tenby Museum archives. But Charles Mathias who had bought the Marsh and other properties from the financially embarrassed Sir John Owen must have come to an arrangement with the 'P & T' for his repaired embankment across the Marsh was strengthened and built up to serve as the railway embankment. On 22nd September 1862 the schooner 'Pembroke' beached on South sands Tenby and construction materials were hauled across the dunes to begin construction. The Town Quarry with its Lime Kiln was chosen as the site for the new station and some diversions of roads and tracks was necessary (see Map below) The embankment was built up to allow a very gradual ascent in level across the marsh and the Burrows to the first station on the line, close to the village of Penally. Work proceeded swiftly but thoroughly and the line was opened with much junketing in July 1863.

After some difficulties agreement was reached in 1864 on the course and funding of the more demanding 16 mile extension from Tenby to Whitland, involving far more earth moving, and masonry. The initial problem was the location of Tenby Station; there was no way an ascent could be engineered up to sufficient height to progress north westwards to Whitland. A new embankment had to be constructed for a new length of line on the seaward side of the old embankment and this is the railway embankment we see today. It branched off from the old embankment at Black Rock where a new junction was created, climbing on a much higher embankment to a new, higher level Station. Although rebuilt in 1959 this is still the site of today's station at Station Road. The track was carried northwards on the striking 7 arched viaduct still to be seen today, bridging Greenhill Road.

Work began at Black Rock in August 1864 and the whole line was completed by 4th September 1866. The old Tenby Station was retained, now serviced by a branch line as a goods yard and loco depot, and became known as Old Station Yard. This was closed in 1966. Today all traces of the Old Station have gone, the site is covered by a Car Park, Sewage Works and the Saltern Industrial Estate. The P & T finally merged with the Great Western railway in 1897. What will happen to the line if British rail is privatised

and broken up into separate services is impossible to predict, but perhaps a more tourist/special attractions approach might keep people using the railways. In 1985 Tenby Station hosted British Rail's special exhibition coach celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the Great Western Railway. Martin Connop Price, historian of the 'P & T,' feels that there is scope for more presentation of the 'P & T' era itself. And as described in the following section, the history of the lime quarries and kilns is closely associated with the railways.



A down train passes Black Rock, south of Tenby.

M.R.C. Price Collection

Black Rock Quarries and the Lime Kilns.

The National Geological Survey, in its 1921 Report on the Country around Tenby and Pembroke, noted that there was (and is) a plentiful supply of limestone for quarrying as building stone, lime burning and hardcore in South Pembrokeshire. In the absence of detailed documentation (which might be tracked down by more lengthy research) it seems likely that the Black Rock Quarries, and the two banks of limekilns which survive as such spectacular structures today were constructed in response to a clear need for hardcore, building stone and lime when the railways were built. They may have been opened up by George Mathias in 1863 but it is more likely that their exploitation dates from 1864 when the Black Rock junction was built and with it a set of tracks directly into the Quarry itself. In other words we have a planned whole, an interdependent complex in which rail links, tramways quarry faces and kiln charging platforms and the continuous arched over track at the base of the kilns visible today where the lime was drawn off were all constructed at the same time. Although little over half a century separates us from this period it is a vanished age - because then steam power and railways were paramount for movement of quarried stone and for most lifting and processing plant - the petrol age separates us irrevocably from the steam age.

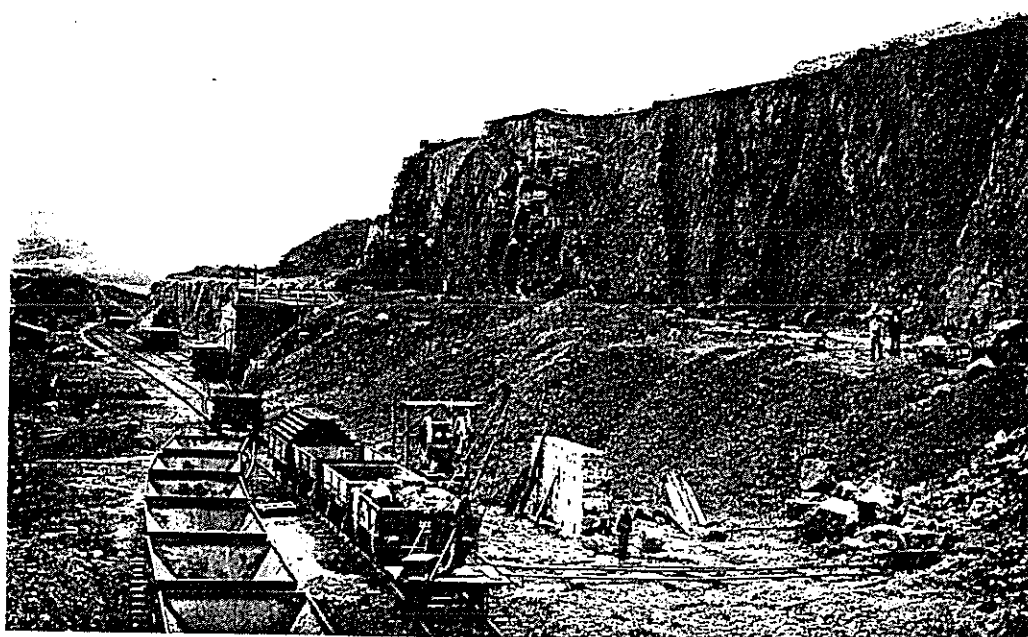
Earlier Kilns and Quarries.

It is not proposed to extend this report by a lengthy introduction into the history of limeworking and kilns in south Wales. Lime was in widespread use from the 16th century onwards to improve the acid soils of many south west Wales farms and the trade was often a coastal one - either by beach landing of limestone to cart inland for burning or by quarrying close to the coast often with kilns on site for coastal or overland transportation of the unslaked lime.

Tenby as we have seen had a town quarry and a limekiln on what became the first station site from the 16th or 17th centuries onwards. Other 17th and 18th century lime kilns and quarries were at Clicketts, Marsh Road and, from an unknown date, but certainly earlier than the main Kiln Park complex, the small quarry and lime kiln adjacent to Kiln Park Farm. This still survives and is a 'double kiln' built against the quarry face with two 'eyes' or drawholes for the lime on either side. Only in the second half of the 19th century do we find an increase in the size and number of kilns.

Black Rock Quarry, Tenby in the late nineteenth century.

British Rail

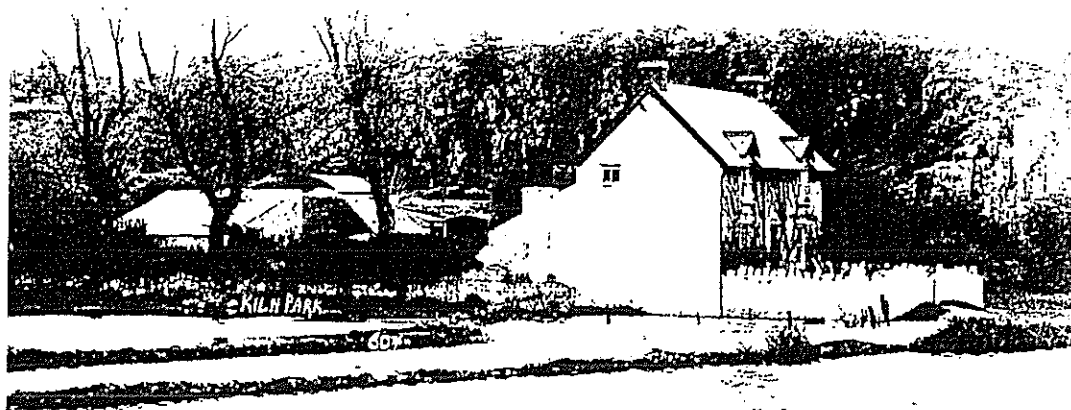


The Kiln Park Limekilns

The main Kiln Park complex thus takes its place as an early example of large scale quarry and kiln working like that of the Llandybie Works at Cilrychen, where the buildings were designed by R.K.Penson. There is no evidence for the oft repeated assertions that the kilns were designed by the architect John Nash although there were Nashes in early 19th century Tenby and he did design some buildings in the area before moving away from Wales. And in any case the dates when Nash was active in

west Wales (1784-1796) are almost certainly too early for the Kiln Park kilns and the Black Rock quarries. Local architects did design kilns in the later 19th century - and the 'Nash' story at Kiln Park is probably a recognition of the high quality of building and design of the kilns - they are imposing and striking structures, well built yet strictly functional. It is perhaps a comment on poorer quality of some of the industrial buildings of our own age that we need to invoke famous architects of the past to link to our industrial remains - as though we cannot quite accept that local builders and quarry owners were perfectly capable of building such fine structures. In short the Kiln Park limekilns don't need John Nash for their quality to be recognised. Indeed it is possible that they were so finely built to show off the architectural possibilities of the Black Rock Quarry's limestone.

A good idea of how the kilns were worked can be gained from the 1888 first edition OS 1:2500, a plan in the 1914 lease mentioned below and the British Rail photograph of the quarries reproduced here by photocopy. Building stone from the quarries may have been dressed on site and moved out by rail; coal for charging the limekilns, probably from the Saundersfoot area coalfields, was brought in by rail. Loading was done with steam cranes, which often ran on rails. The other important building, now gone was the 'magazine', a strongly built store set away from the working areas where the dynamite for quarry blasting was stored. An upper railway line conveyed stone and coal to the 'charging platforms' at the top of the kilns. They were fired from stokeholes at the bottom and if they were operated like the Llandybie kilns could have been on continuous charging and firing - but more detailed research will be necessary to establish the working practices at Black Rock. Railway lines were also sited at the base



75. A card showing Kiln Park, Tenby. The photographer here again is Mortimer Allen, and it looks very much as if this particular area of Tenby has always been subject to flooding. The card is dated January 20, 1917 and is considered quite rare.

of the kilns to transport the lime. The westernmost bank of kilns is the more elaborate. It has a vaulted covered passage for the railway line to move the loading trucks and raised platforms to the stoking holes and kiln 'eyes' or drawholes. It has an imposing facade with dressed limestone and architectural detailing and two tapering side 'wings' above which (now very overgrown) are two ramps leading up to the charging areas. The easternmost bank of kilns does not have the covered passage, the 6 kilns have a curving facade with rounded corners, again of well dressed limestone with architectural details and the pointed arches to the kiln stoke and drawholes.

Black Rock Quarries

Further detailed research would probably document all stages of the quarries' ownership. Mathias, as we have seen, came to an arrangement with the 'P&T' for embankments across his land - he was probably a railway shareholder. By the late Victorian period they had become the property of Edward Laws, who, as a local antiquarian, was able to recognize the importance of the bone caves being revealed during his quarry workings. He in turn leased to the GWR which further confirms the use of the quarries as providers of railway track hardcore and building stone - and the lime for mortar and for sale as fertiliser. The quarries were still expanding at the turn of the century when the *Tenby Observer* reported in 1900 that GWR had leased them to a firm of Newport contractors who had added 2 new steam crushers to the plant.

The file assembled at Tenby Library also includes an interesting incident reported in 1905 of possible industrial sabotage on the belts of one of the crushers and the eccentric rods of 'the big engine'. But by 1911 GWR was pulling out - it was reported that they had all the stone they needed from Fishguard.

More time is required to totally document the 20th century history of the quarries - what happened between the busy industrial scene of the late 19th century photograph reproduced in this report striking photograph reproduced opposite and the secluded quarry parks of the Kiln Park site today. One lease examined in Tenby Museum gives a very good idea of the operation of the quarry. In 1914 Edward Laws' executors, Henry Owen of Poyston and George Eaton Evans of Haverfordwest leased Black Rock Quarries to Tenby Corporation. The lease allowed the Corporation to quarry, to use the lime kilns and to store 'strong explosives' in the Magazine. But perhaps more significantly the lease allowed the Corporation to 'tip any quarry debris or any Town scavenging matter'. I have not yet established when the rail links to the quarries were abandoned. But it is clear that they were increasingly used to tip waste. So the present ground level now occupied by the secluded caravan parks within the quarries is probably much higher than the working floors of the limestone quarries. But they did continue in intermittent operation until the early 1950s; the file assembled by the staff of Tenby Library contains oral accounts by former quarry men of working the limekilns in 1947 and 1948.

The History of the Caravan Site.

There has not been the time within this contract to go into the development of the site as a holiday centre in any detail. A reproduction is enclosed of a press cutting from the 'Then and Now' series in the *Western Telegraph* for 1986 which looks back to 1959. There is probably material within Bourne Leisure's own archives which chronicles the development of the site. Post Cards and Posters as well as early advertising material, backed up by material from specialist camping and caravanning magazines from the 1950s onwards could be located and researched to provide material for an 'All our Yesterdays' type approach to certain aspects of site interpretation and design.

Recommendations for Site Interpretation and Presentation.

Although more detailed research could fill in the details, the outlines of the site's history have been established by this survey. It is an interesting and stimulating story which offers a number of opportunities for on site interpretation and presentation. These are briefly outlined below and the different headings could form the basis for more detailed design briefs.

1 The Limekilns are the most obvious feature on the site. At the moment there is nothing to explain what they are and how they worked. A basic minimum therefore is an interpretation board or panel. But the problem is that the only visible areas (interesting and dramatic though they are) are the 'production end' - i.e where the burnt lime was drawn out and where the tram and railway lines transported the finished product off the site. In order to understand the process and thus to see how the kilns worked it is necessary to see the 'charging platforms' - that is the top of the kilns, where the limestone mixed with culm or coal was fed and fired. It may be possible to clear one of the very overgrown ramps to the charging area of the lower kilns perhaps with a fenced surround and a display board which explains the process. The rear area of the kiln floors themselves has been so altered to the new use as caravan sites that no easily contrived link is possible - but the quarry faces are there as dramatic backdrops to the site and can be seen and understood in general terms. The older, earlier small kiln close to the entrance to the site should be repaired and made part of the trail.

2. If the above clearance were to take place the vantage point at the top, charging platform of the kilns would provide a splendid view of the site and Tenby at a distance. Another panel could give, in easily understood outline, the 'natural' history of the drowned estuary, the Backwater, the drainage of the Marsh and so on, while an accompanying board could show the new features of the site and the wildlife reserves. This 'mini-trail' would be a new attraction to the Holiday Centre - a circular route could be provided by steps down into the quarry - and it would counteract the rather flat, single level perspective at present available to site visitors and residents. It should be noted that Scheduled Monument Consent would be required from the Secretary of State, via Cadw for any changes to the Limekilns, though in the Trust's opinion, a privately funded interpretation and access initiative should be favourably received.

3. The overall 'story' of the site could be presented in a number of ways: - by using large scale reproductions - for example of the very high quality watercolours and early black and white photographs of the Backwater Pill, the Black Rock Quarries, the Railways and perhaps early scenes from the 1930s of tents and caravans - as part of the decor or features to any new buildings planned for the site.

4. This could be taken a step further with an interpretation 'area' - well designed, easily understood and not too detailed as part of a reception area - starting with the Ice Age animals - woolly mammoths etc - whose bones were found in the Black Rock caves, through the changes in sea level (submerged forests) the uses of the Pill and saltmarshes, the drainage - tied into the larger than life characters of Sir John Owen, and later on, the railway engineer David Davies of Llandinam, the Victorian owners, Edward Laws and Charles Mathias, the Victorian horse Races, the growth of the 'tourist' or 'leisure' industries - history of caravanning and camping through to today's site. Such an Interpretation area should also including a strong natural history presentation - themed on different habitats, to get in the sand dune flora as well as the wetland birds and animals? The whole display could have a strong educational appeal, especially if combined with a structured 'trail' and interpretation area at the Limekilns. But it should be fairly lighthearted and enjoyable in its manner of presentation - mainly pictorial, with models and reconstructions.

5. All the above initiatives could be backed up by a short, popular, leaflet which could be made widely available on site, and/or as part of the holiday makers package. After all, a lot is given out about attractions close to the site - so what about something which shows that the site itself has an interesting history?

H.J.James September 1992

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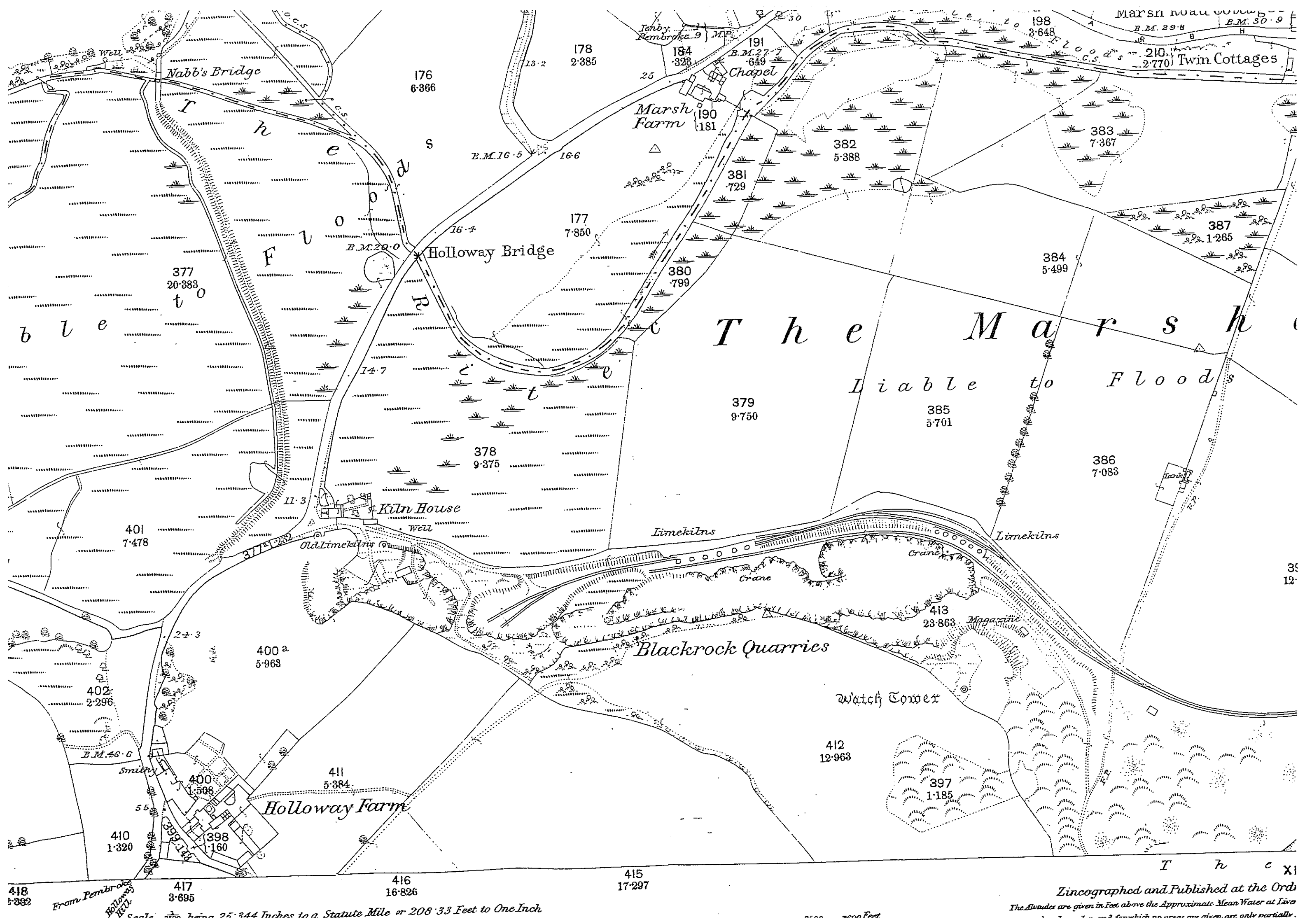
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CONSORTIUM WHICH BEAT OFF THE 'HI-DE-HI' CHALLENGE!

THEN AND NOW NO. 294

BY LEN MULLINS

Our old photograph shows Tenby's Kiln Park — one of Britain's top holiday complexes — as most people have never seen it before.

There are probably less than 50 caravans on the massive site interspersed by tent pitches.

That's a far cry from the Kiln Park of today which has room for 550 static and 60 touring caravans and 180 tent pitches.

Its popularity isn't solely due to the boom in self-catering holidays in recent years, but is also a tribute to the entrepreneurial skills of the consortium of local businessmen who ran the development for some time.

In 1959 — seven years after our 'Then' photograph was taken on an overcast August Bank Holiday Monday — strong rumours were circulating the resort that Hi-De-Hi king, the late Sir Billy Butlin, was considering purchasing Kiln Park to add to his list of holiday camps around Britain.

To keep him at bay, a group of Tenby businessmen bought the site and formed Kiln Park Estates Limited.

HOTELIER

One of the original members of the consortium was local hotelier Geoffrey Reason Jones. At the time of his tragic death in 1980, he was the company managing director and was also deputy chairman of the Wales Tourist Board.

Another Tenby hotelier also in the original consortium was Gwilym Jones, who was chairman of the directors. A former farmer, he ran the Beauchief Hotel for many years. He passed away in April 1984.

When Kiln Park Estates Limited sold out to a family-owned company from Hertfordshire two years ago, the other directors were: Basil Rees; David Hughes, joint managing director of T. P. Hughes and Son and a brother-in-law of the late Mr. Reason Jones; Mr. Bill Hayes, a former director of James Williams and Sons, Narberth; and Mr. Philip Booth.

Mr. Booth's own company — amusement arcade operators Frank Booth and Sons — were the biggest shareholders in the company at the time of the sale, owning around a sixth of the 250,000 shares.

He held the position of acting chairman of the directors during the sale negotiations with Bourne Leisure, the present owners.

A business move five years ago enabled Kiln Park to safeguard its access for visitors to the South Beach through the Burrows.

It involved Frank Booth and Sons and Kiln Park Estates jointly purchasing the freehold of the 84-acre Burrows Estates which adjoins Kiln Park and includes part of Tenby golf course.

The Bourne Leisure Group Limited — which owns and operates 15 other holiday parks in the United Kingdom — purchased Kiln Park Estates from 38 shareholders.

General manager Harry Boyer continued in his role, and summed up most people's feelings when he reflected that the sale probably marked the end of an era in Tenby.



• This week's old picture courtesy of Mrs. P. M. Day, formerly of the Crown Inn, Penally.

