

at the rate of 1/3d. in the pound on the first £135 of taxable income and at 4/9d in the pound thereafter. It is difficult to be precise but it would probably not be far wide of the mark if one estimated that he had something in the region of upwards of £2,500 p.a. of nett income. Interest on his borrowings, which had increased since he bought his brother's share of Castell Gorfod, and his running costs and recurring extraordinary items, would have left nothing to spare. It is little wonder then that there were moments of stringency - but they seldom lasted long before a loan or a mortgage was raised.

I set out to give a picture of life in a small country house in Carmarthenshire some fifty of sixty years ago, and I am not aware of any exaggeration or distortion of fact. Two questions, however, remain. How typical was the household and how happy was it? No human being or gathering of persons is identical to another, but I believe that our way of life mirrored that of other families in the county. They too had servants, governesses, debt - and not enough to do, although they were unaware of this. How happy was the household and how happy was my childhood? I have often wondered.

NOTES

- 1 Lt Col William Howell Buckley, DL 1896-1981.
- 2 Karolie Kathleen Buckley, 1900-1976.
- 3 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards.
- 4 Lt Col William Henry Olphert Kemmis, 1864- 1939. Frances Maude Kemmis (née Beauclerk). 1864-1942.
- 5 For the wholly remarkable story of how the Kemmis family amassed a fortune, were unable to use it, and saw it dwindle to nothing, see the letters of T. S. Kemmis to the author in the Ballinacor Papers in the Castell Gorfod mss in the C. R. O.
- 6 Muriel d. of Lt Col W. P. Howell of Penrheol, d. 1927. m. W. J. Buckley, J. P., M.F.H. of Penyfai, Llanelly and Castell Gorfod HS, 1987.
- 7 Susan b. 1927, m. Dr Daniel H Adler M. D. of Weston, Conn., USA
- 8 Lt Col James Wedge Buckley, MCDL, 1898-1962 and his first wife Gwladys (née Evans of Danygraig, Burry Port), d. 1951.
- 9 Major John Wedge Buckley, b. 1920.
- 10 Pamela Phoebe b. 1922, m. Richard Blyth.
- 11 The children of Lt Col William Parker Howell and his wife Gertrude were: Ernest d. 1945; Mary (Bunny) d. 1936; Louisa (Zellie) d. 1947; Rosalie d. 1936; Katherine (Tippie) d. 1898; Muriel (Pug) d. 1927; Edward (Martie) d. 1914; Winifred (Cussie) d. 1932.
- 12 Neé Walsh, d. of the first editor of *The Field*, d. 1940.
- 13 Fashions in pre-lunch and dinner drinks changed from time to time. I recall in particular that neat sherry was sometimes varied by sherry and angostura bitters or sherry and gin in equal measures. At least one guest, Pammie Segrave, drank gin and Italian vermouth: there were few who drank whisky except as a nightcap before going to bed. Eyebrows were raised if a guest asked, as Sir Lewes Pryse of Gogerddan did when he came to stay, for brandy and soda.
- 14 They arrived at the table perched on pieces of toast and the marrow was extracted from the bone to toast with the assistance of a long, thin, silver scoop.
- 15 (1908-) d. of Brigadier General Segrave, late HLI, m. 1942 Maj Gen John Dalton late RA d. 1982. By an extraordinary coincidence she wrote to me for the first time in 45 years as I was writing this essay.
- 16 Wilma Susan Morwen (1898-1979) d. of J. F. H. Buckley FSA.
- 17 m. J. G. Protheroe Beynon of Trewern, HS 1960.
- 18 (1908-) d. of Lt Col R. E. Jennings of Gellideg, HS 1903. m. Major David Collins, RA.
- 19 Mr and Mrs 'Freddie' Peachall of Quorn Hall.
- 20 (1873-1947) A distinguished lawyer, he was in addition Mayor of Llanelly and a Freeman of the Borough.
- 21 m. Cdr Tom Brayshay of The Glen, Laugharne.
- 22 John. Louise and Peter, children of Major John Francis, D. S. O.
- 23 Trevor, Edith and ? , children of Captain Evans.
- 24 (1922-) s. of Major 'Jimjack' Evans. MC m. Hon Mrs Cherry Drummond of Megginch and assumed the name of Drummond of Megginch by decree of Lyon Court in 1986.
- 25 Frances, Susan and Hugh, children of Waldie Griffith agent to the Cawdor estate.
- 26 Valerie and Rosemary.
- 27 (1921-) now Mrs Brian Evans, JP, MFH.
- 28 HS 1955.
- 29 Revd Charles Beauclerk, d. in 1870s as Vicar of Holy Trinity, Boulogne. A scion of the St Albans family he was blamed for losing by negligence the Duchess's jewellery and was disowned. My grandmother's first memory of him was seeing him with two other men on their knees under the dining table in a rented house in Guernsey. 'What are you and the other gentlemen doing under the dining room table?' she said. 'We are looking for the Devil', said her father. The two other men were Moody and Sankey.
- 30 His papers are in the C.R.O. - Castell Gorfod mss.
- 31 I am obliged to the Directors of Crown Buckley for allowing me to see the minutes of relevant Board meetings.

A Command Stop Line on Rhos Llangelor

WITH FURTHER REFERENCES TO PEMBREY AND BURRY PORT

D. G. GLOVER

'We shall not flag or fail. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.' Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965), *Speech to the House of Commons, 13 May 1940.*

These were the confident sentiments of a leader who inherited a demoralised government of appeasers, on the eve of Britain's defeat in France. After the withdrawal of the British Expeditionary Force from France at the end of May, to the beginning of June, 1940, it appeared that all that stood between the victorious German armies and Britain's defeat was the English Channel, a situation which must have cast grave doubts upon the veracity of his words at that point in time. However, during the period of the 'Phoney War' and immediately after the withdrawal of the BEF from Dunkirk, a complex network of defences was hastily constructed all over Britain. These fortifications were tactically and strategically sited: at road junctions; along the lineaments of railway embankments; on the routes of canals; hidden inside seaside kiosks, farm buildings and railway stations; in the middle of fields, or on village greens.

There are a whole variety of these defensive constructions (sited with the utmost care) embraced by the generic term of pillboxes, although strictly speaking it was only the circular

concrete fortifications which represented the form of true pillboxes. Since 1945 these fortifications have been disappearing, as a result of building schemes and road works developments and by the simple process of subsidence into the ground. Attempts to research a particular site and its purpose quickly reveal that there is no record of these fortified sites, defence lines and General Headquarters Stop Lines, and that the designs for the pillboxes do not exist. Furthermore, the little information which is available to researchers is lamentably poor.

It appears that the caution prevailing in 1940 prohibited the possibility of making records for future reference whilst the termination of the Defence Regulations after the Second World War and the creation of the Property Services Agency, to replace the former Royal Engineers Works Service, probably resulted in a destruction policy which led to the loss of valuable documents containing the vital instructions and plans indispensable to understanding the part that pillboxes had played in the defence system hastily devised in 1940. Sadly the only Command papers which appear to have survived this process of historical indifference, are those of Southern Command, which are now located in the Public Record Office. These are of little use in intimating the process of the development of the defensive network in Wales.

After Germany's successful campaigns through Belgium and France during the months of May and June, 1940, which completely altered the war situation by placing Antwerp and its port in enemy hands, the coasts of Britain from the Wash to Land's End were exposed to

attacks from hostile craft which might be launched from the ports of France and Flanders. All of these ports pointed like loaded pistols at the heart of Britain, consequently invasion seemed inevitable, because Hitler (like Napoleon Bonaparte and the French before him) had concluded that for Germany to win a decisive victory, it would be necessary to defeat Britain and the most successful way of achieving his objective was to invade directly across the English Channel. An immediate invasion was prevented by this very geographical feature. But the relief for Britain of the initial security was transcended by doubts as to whether our coastal defences and the small craft patrolling the Channel would be capable of preventing determined landings.

Just as Napoleon had demanded command of the Channel's waters for twenty four hours, as a pre-condition for invasion, so Hitler required command of the air above the Channel, before launching operation 'Sea Lion', thus providing the proposed invasion force with the confidence of un-opposed air cover. Operation 'Sea Lion' was also an expression of Hitler's disappointment at Britain's refusal to concede defeat and sue for peace after the fall of France, but the invasion project was viewed with considerable restraint by the High Command of the Wehrmacht and Kriegsmarine. Only Herman Göring expressed any enthusiasm for it, supporting the idea of the operation, as an opportunity to prove the invincibility of the Luftwaffe and the concept of air power as an independent strategic weapon, an illusion that was shortly to be shattered in the 'Battle of Britain', which proved that firstly the battle for the skies must be won, before using air power as a strategic weapon. Even whilst the battles for supremacy of the skies were in contention above the coasts and meadows of Britain, the German armed forces commenced to assemble the necessary troops, supplies and ships (essential to the provision of an invasion force) in the ports of Northern France and Flanders.

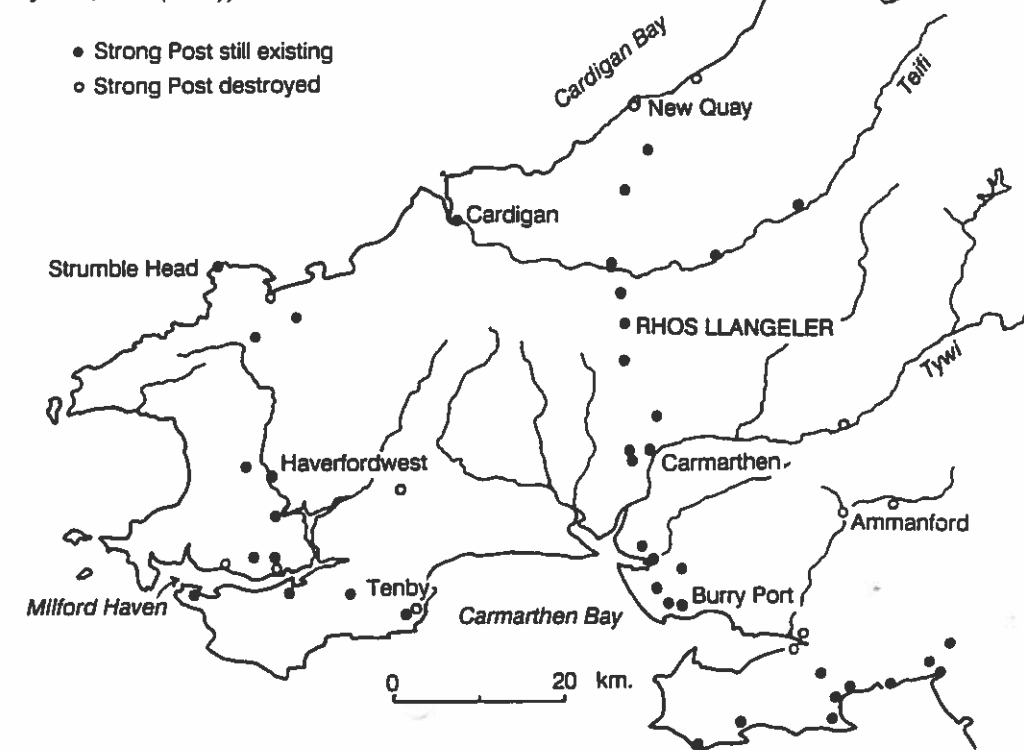
The British Air Staff believed that the Germans had the capability to put seven key airfields out of action, using 5,000 airborne troops

during the initial stages of a seaborne landing, whilst 20,000 soldiers could be landed, with armoured fighting vehicles, over our beaches and then be deployed successfully inland. Therefore the 'Home Defence Executive' was established on 10 May, 1940, under the Directorship of General Sir Edmund Ironside, Commander-in-Chief Home Forces, whose commission it was to examine and direct all matters relating to home defence, and though the exact form in which this military threat would manifest itself had not yet been defined, the evacuation of the BEF from Dunkirk, between 27 May and 4 June 1940 brought the condition of home defence into immediate focus. On 2 June 1940, Ironside and his staff commenced the implementation of a defence system which took into consideration the fact that Britain would have to rely upon ill-equipped troops, shorn of tactical mobility. Consequently a plan was devised to protect Britain's centres of government and industrial complexes, by placing a series of General Headquarters Stop Lines, Command Stop Lines, Corps Stop Lines and Divisional Stop Lines, between these sensitive sites and the coasts of Britain. By 12 June 1940, the whole of the country was divided up into lines of defence sited on every town, village and river concourse in the country, to provide tactical and strategic lines of *non plus ultra* running in every direction.

Ironside also advocated the construction of blockhouses on all nodal points, behind these stop lines and remarked upon 'the failure to realise that all nodal points inland should be fitted with blockhouses to cover large blocks and so prevent enemy columns rushing about the country, should a defence line be penetrated'. He also recommended the de-centralisation of the construction work to 'lesser commanders' and 'the involvement of all civilian contractors' to complete the work 'without frills'.

The basic function of Ironside's first line of defence was not dissimilar from that of the 'Forlorn Hopes' of the eighteenth century, taking the form of an 'extended crust' along all of the probable invasion beaches, whose purpose was to repulse any minor landings and in the event

Fig.1. Map of west and south west Wales, showing concentric lines of fortifications and the distribution of known strong post sites (after W. Wills, *Pillboxes: A study of UK defences, 1940* (1985)).



of a major invasion to delay and canalise enemy penetrations, whilst the troops employed in these positions had to fight where they stood, in order to gain time for mobile units to be moved up into support positions to undertake an immediate counter attack.

In a sense the 'extended crust' was a projection of the coastal defence system of the Royal Artillery, which actually began to be operational from the time of the Munich Crisis. Hitler's warlike postures at this time and his fervent attempt to escalate the situation into a *casus belli*, forced Britain to rehearse the mobilisation procedures and defence systems of the country in the early autumn of 1938, which enabled us to discover and correct the weak-

nesses of the home defence schemes existing at that point and gave us time to rectify them during the succeeding eleven months.

On 22 June 1940, France finally fell and from that moment onwards it became imperative for Britain to prepare for the invasion and in accordance with all the other defensive expedients which were being considered from 25 June 1940, it was decided to surround Britain from the Orkneys to the Outer Hebrides with a circle of Coast Defence batteries to cover the approaches to every probable, or even possible landing place, whether port, harbour, bay, cove, inlet or open beach. This programme entailed an immediate expansion of coast artillery units and battery sites, which went beyond the wildest

dreams envisaged in pre-war days; but in reality the major problem was finding the guns with which to arm these batteries, as there was scarcely any reserve of coast-defence armament held by the Ordnance department. Formidable as this problem appeared, it was fortunate that the Royal Navy had saved and stored a variety of guns, with their mountings, from the ships scrapped between the wars and 6 inch, 5.5 inch and 4 inch guns were supplied to the newly-named 'Emergency Coast Batteries'. The ammunition for these guns was also supplied by the Royal Navy, but it was in extremely short supply, averaging only 50 rounds of ammunition per gun. In fact it would appear that there was a general shortage of all armaments in Britain at this time; a report, dated 22 May, 1940, claimed that there were only 150,000 rifles in the whole of the country on that date.

The second line of defence was composed of road blocks which were placed between the coasts and the GHQ Stop Line and manned by

the Home Guard; they were sited at all nodal points and covered all defiles. It was the optimistic task of the troops manning these defences to stop and delay German armoured columns and additionally to harry any penetrations made by the enemy. A whole variety of obstacles were devised to assist in the arrest of the enemy's progress and missiles of several types were also made, 'flame fougasses' and the ubiquitous 'Molotov Cocktails' being favourite devices for the use at road blocks. The obstacles represented the subordinate Command Stop Lines and, theoretically, created smaller fortified zones in which enemy penetrations could be contained inland.

Finally, the third line of defence was the GHQ Stop Line. This, the last defensive line to protect the capital and the industrial areas, was garrisoned by three infantry divisions and one armoured division, which were tactically and strategically placed to deal with a major breakthrough. They were backed by small mobile

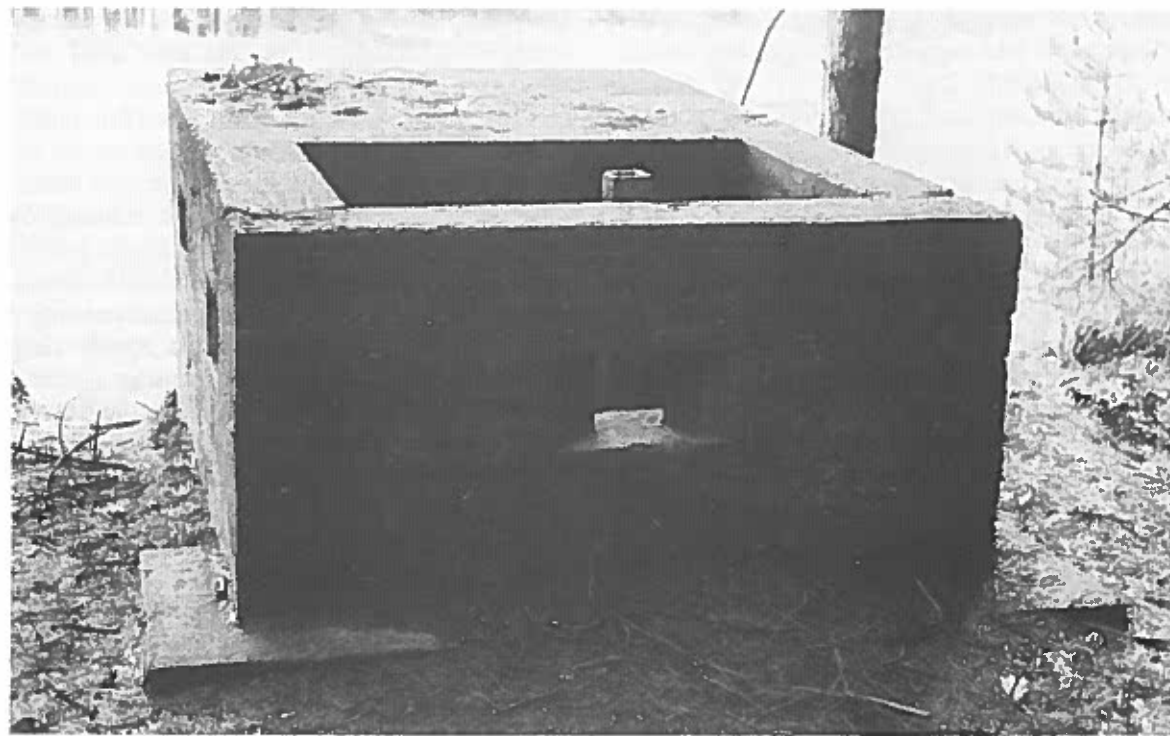


Fig. 2. Pillbox with central well and pillar to facilitate the use of the Bren gun in its anti-aircraft role. Located in the sand dunes Pembrey Country Park (Photograph de Gruchy-Glover Collection)

reserves, in order to provide paratroop and minor breakthrough units for counter attacks upon the enemy. The GHQ Stop Line traversed the contours of natural and artificial waterways, as well as incorporating the advantages of topographical features wherever possible, in an effort to create a continuous geographical anti-tank obstacle; it contained a heavy concentration of defence works, with strong posts (pillboxes) designed for rifle, machine-gun and anti-tank fire.

Pillbox, or strong post design was the responsibility of Field Works 3 Branch, Director of Fortifications and Works of the War Office, whose Director in 1940 was Major-General G. B. O. Taylor. A series of drawings were issued by the FW3 Branch to the Army Commands, who in turn issued them to civil contractors. In the case of the fortified line on Llangeler Moor a firm of contractors from North Wales was employed. The Commander Royal Engineers in the various commands then modified the plans

to conform with local requirements and available materials.

Some of the FW3 Branch designs were based upon the type of pillbox used in France in 1939-1940, whilst the coastal defence pillbox was modelled on the hexagonal type of the First World War. In each case principal consideration was given to the weapons to be used and the provision of protection from enemy weaponry; yet with these considerations in mind standardisation was still introduced to assist mass-construction. In 1939 the main infantry weapons of the British were the Lee-Enfield .303 inch rifle, the Bren gun (standard light machine-gun, for which some of the pillboxes were built with a central well, to facilitate the use of the Bren in its anti-aircraft role (Fig. 2); and from 1940 the 5 inch Boys anti-tank rifle was introduced as the infantryman's main anti-tank weapon and this was taken into account at the design stage after this date. The strong posts (pillboxes) with the thinnest skins appear to



Fig. 3. Strong Post of hexagonal design, with 15 inch walls and shuttered with bricks, approved by the War Office as permanent shuttering on the exterior walls, due to the timber shortage. Located in the line of fortifications on Rhos Llangeler. (Photograph: de Gruchy-Glover collection).

have been the ones of hexagonal design with 15 inch walls, which were constructed to give good fields of fire for the Lee-Enfield .303 rifle and these are the type which can be observed in the line of fortifications sited across Rhos Llangeler (Fig. 3). Strong posts with walls providing protection of 3 ft 6 inches in thickness were considered to be shell proof and accommodated the Bren and the Boys anti-tank rifle. The largest strong posts of all were designed to take the 2 pounder anti-tank gun and in some cases could accommodate a 3 pounder, or 6 pounder, but the most effective weapon for use in these strong points was the 2 pounder anti-tank gun which was highly mobile.

Instructions relating to the composition and thickness of the protective walls seem to have been rather arbitrary at the beginning of 1939, but a captured German document of December 1939 caused some rapid revisions to be undertaken in 1940-41, as it clearly demonstrated that an anti-concrete shell, fired from a 150mm. gun, could penetrate eight feet of concrete, and that it was possible for an 80mm. gun placing a close group of anti-tank shells, to penetrate 6ft 6 inches of concrete. As a result of this review an experimental programme was started, under the directorship of Dr (later Sir) William Glanville, British Standards Codes of Practice Committee, 1940-45, which calculated the formulae for resistance of concrete to projectiles, thus enabling more adequate safety factors to be incorporated into the design of pillboxes built 1940-41. By 1941 protection for pillboxes required the walls to be able to resist gun fire from an 88mm. gun, discharged from 500 yards, placing a group of six rounds within an area of six feet square. The roofs were to be made proof against a direct hit by a 250 kilo bomb and these specifications were promptly applied to anti-tank emplacements, which were the first to benefit from the new specifications.

Anti-tank defences were co-ordinated with strong posts (pillboxes) and the development of anti-tank defences corresponded with the rate of pillbox design, a very necessary measure, when it is recalled that there was a desperate shortage of tanks and anti-tank weapons after

the withdrawal from Dunkirk. Consequently, the passive measures of siege tactics were the only forms of offensive defence left available to Britain, to prevent enemy columns from deploying all over the countryside after breaking through the 'extended crust' of coastal defence. Consequently these experiments continued until September 1941, when the resistance of reinforced concrete was tested against 6 pounder anti-tank gun fire.

Behind the beaches were the steel scaffolding barriers, concrete blocks, and anti-tank ditches of various forms and sizes, the general opinion being that such obstacles were the best method of forcing the enemy to stop long enough for local forces to mount an aggressive defence as a delaying tactic, and that such a series of obstacles of ever increasing difficulty would rob the enemy advance of its impetus. Full advantage was taken of geographical features in the construction of these defences, by incorporating such natural obstacles as re-entrants, rivers, marshes and high ground and where the situation did not allow for the use of natural features, anti-tank ditches were dug.

The defence line crossing the moorland of Rhos Llangeler (which is probably a Command Stop Line) is a remarkably good example of the application of this practice, as the northern flank of five foot square concrete cubes is dominated by a strong post, commanding the Nant Bargod re-entrant and the watercourse of the Nant Bargod in the valley below. The line of cubes continues in a southerly direction to a second strong post at about 250 yards distance, and thence a further 350 yards or so to meet the Felindre-Tycoch road (Fig. 4). At this point another strong post formed a road block, but this has long since perished and its exact appearance is not yet known. Crossing the Felindre-Tycoch road this line then disappears into what is now a forestry plantation, then on a south easterly bearing contacts a line of anti-tank ditches excavated in the hillsides of Carreg Wen, Nantygronw and Nant-gronw. The general north-south course of the line diverted slightly across the bearings north east, to south west and north west to south east, in order to contain the



Fig. 4. Line of five foot square cubes looking due north. Viewed from the approximate site of the Strong Point and road block on the Felindre Road. (Photograph: de Gruchy-Glover collection).

geographical features, until it eventually entered the northern edge of the re-entrant of Cwmduad, through which flows the Afon Bele. Anti-tank ditches of the 'V' type were considered to be proof against 25 ton tanks, being made twelve feet wide at ground level and five feet six inches deep, while the spoil from the excavation was placed five feet six inches on the approach side, thus presenting a potential enemy with an eleven foot drop into the ditch. It would appear from the description given by Mr J. H. Evans of Brynglas farm, that these were the approximate dimensions of the anti-tank ditch dug into the hillsides of the district described above.

In each location where it was impractical to construct a ditch, concrete obstacles of the type to be observed on the moorland were erected instead (Fig. 3). These were mainly established on coastal sites, or at road blocks inland and examples of both are left intact in Carmarthenshire, and the southern tail of this defensive line can be observed in the Kidwelly, Burry Port and

Llanelli area. The line then continues to meander along the course of the river system and coast until it reaches Swansea. A line of concrete cubes identical in size and shape to those on Rhos Llangeler is located hard against the railway line and follows the embankment of the road bridge over the river at Pembrey. Obviously built to resist an approach from Cefn Sidan sands, the line faces due west and its direction points due north and south (Fig. 4).

Five basic designs were used in the production of these concrete obstacles, resulting in the following shapes:—

- 1 Cubes (which can still be seen at Rhos Llangeler, Pembrey and Burry Port);
- 2 Blocks (which were called coffins);
- 3 Pyramids (named 'pimples');
- 4 Cylinders;
- 5 Buoys.

Originally the concrete cubes were manufactured in two sizes: five foot and three foot six

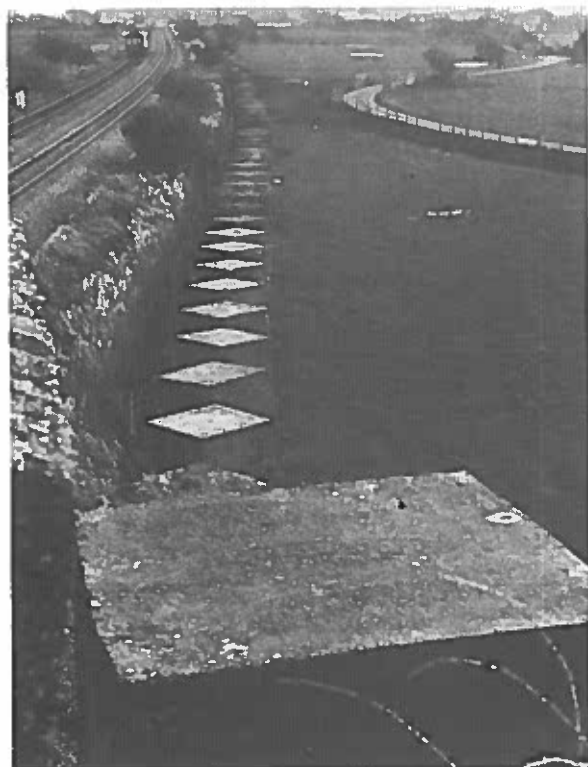


Fig. 5. Line of concrete cubes guarding the railway embankment between Cefn Sidan sands and the A484 road, Pembrey. Photograph: de Gruchy-Glover collection.

inches. They were intended to be placed in double rows, whilst other types of obstacle were dispersed in rows of five and it is the remains of this type of combined land obstacle and road block which are observable on the sites of Rhos Llangeler and Pembrey.

In June 1941 all of these various forms of defence were reviewed, resulting in revisions of their use. From this time forward cubes were to be built edge-on, instead of square to each other and cylinders which had been used in rows, would, henceforth, be grouped in clusters of three, composed of one large and two small, to complete formations of these groups spaced on nine feet six inch centres (Figs. 6 and 7).

Three to four lines of these clusters were recommended to form road blocks and it is the remains of this combination of obstacles which can be seen at Rhos Llangeler, whilst both the position and form of the remaining obstacles

suggest that the erection of these cubes was not completed until after June 1941, which is also affirmed by Mr J. H. Evans, Brynglas, who recalls that the fortified line was constructed between 1940 and the end of the summer of 1941. It was part of a defensive line which straddled West Wales from New Quay, Cardiganshire to Burry Port (Fig. 1).

By 1941 there were five successive lines of deterrents in the chain of defences located in Welsh Wales:—

- 1 Low level radar from Cardigan to Swansea (CHL);
- 2 Extended Crust;
- 3 Coastal Artillery Batteries;
- 4 Road Blocks;
- 5 Command Stop Line.

Strong posts (pillboxes) were usually grouped two or three per site, in order that each one could give the others support. To increase the effective military potential of these defences, where the terrain was suitable, infantry support trenches and section posts were also built in the vicinity. Although no records relating to the fortified line on Rhos Llangeler have been discovered, the complement of soldiers can be postulated from information in the war diary of Henry Manning, who was the commander of three strong posts on the south coast of England. In his entry for 22 October, 1941, he remarks that the men should be told off and trained to close road blocks quickly, that gaps in the tubular scaffold should be closed more quickly and that the soldiers needed more training, that the hessian screens must be correctly sited and hung. He also remarks upon the ammunition (especially in pillboxes) which it was recommended should be cleaned and inspected regularly and that range cards were to be made for Bren and Mortar teams. Post commanders were also to check all stores in strong posts, particular attention being given to light signals, ammunition, food and water, and pillboxes were to have a reserve of hard rations and water to last for three days.

The strong posts under the command of Henry Manning were named as follows: Hellfaya Corner, Snackers and Gull's Nest, and

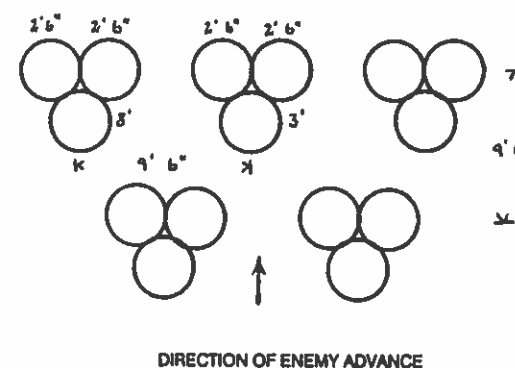


Fig. 6. Group of concrete cylinders arranged in cluster of three. (Drawing: de Gruchy-Glover collection).

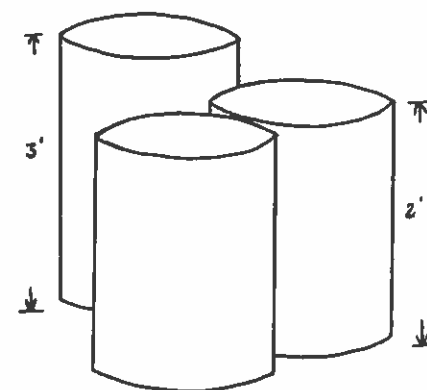


Fig. 7. Configuration of clusters of concrete cylinders, used in conjunction with concrete cubes. (Drawing: de Gruchy-Glover collection.)

maintained the following manning complement and equipment:

- 1 *Hellfaya Corner*: Platoon commander, section corporal, 7 soldiers, 1 x 6 pounder gun and 48 rounds of ammunition, 1 medium machine gun and 5,000 rounds, 1 light machine gun and 2,000 rounds, Verrey pistol, water and rations.
- 2 *Snackers*: Section corporal, 6 soldiers, 1 light machine gun, 1 anti tank rifle, 1 searchlight, water and rations, 1 cook, 1 driver.
- 3 *Gull's Nest*: Platoon sergeant, section corporal, 6 soldiers, 1 medium machine gun, 1 light machine gun, 1 x 2 inch mortar, water and rations.

In the absence of primary source material relating to the fortified line on Rhos Llangeler,

it is still possible to assess the tactical intention in 1940-41 from documents concerning the defence of Carmarthen during the period January-April, 1944, compiled by Private B. Downs, 'C' Company, ATS, who appears to have been the company clerk to Captain Ernest Evans, Adjutant, 1st Carmarthen Battalion, Home Guard, and through which the general operational purpose of the fortifications can be identified (CRO, Acc. 4236).

Certain factors relating to the defence of Carmarthen and Carmarthenshire remained immutable throughout the course of the Second World War and it is the affirmation of these that provides reliable evidence of the purpose for which the fortified line on Rhos Llangeler was constructed 1940-41. It is also evident from the data prepared by Captain Ernest Evans, that the assumed approach of an invader would be from the west and north, creating an operationally defensive area west - north-west - north of the strategic enclave of Carmarthen town itself.

Newcastle Emlyn was one of two 'Defended Localities' near to Carmarthen, encompassing the geographical area Newcastle Emlyn - Blaeny-coed - Crynfryn - Bwlchnewydd, garrisoned by the 5th Carmarthenshire Battalion, Home Guard, with a battalion strength of 300 men: and it suggests that the Home Guard troops responsible for running the strong posts on Rhos Llangeler (mentioned by Mr J. H. Evans), were drawn from this battalion after the withdrawal of the Regular Army troops. The other 'Defended locality' was composed of the area Conwil to Carmarthen, via Bwlchnewydd and garrisoned by the 1st Carmarthen Battalion, Home Guard, whilst the flanks of the two battalions' defences probably overlapped for mutual cover on Bwlchnewydd, with the Defended Localities being based upon the approximate north-south axis of the fortified line.

It was certainly their responsibility by 1944 to control the west - north-west - north approaches and to deny progress to armoured fighting vehicles (AFVs) and tanks, except by passage of the main roads, along which it was intended that they should be channelled into a killing ground on the south-west flank of Rhos Llangeler for-

tified line and to the north-western approach of Carmarthen, in the Blaenycloed - Crynfryn area, with a second AFV and tank ambush prepared on Carmarthen itself.

Theoretically, the fortified line at Rhos Llangel would be used to force an invader to probe for a weakness on its left flank, causing his armour to sweep around the obstacles to the south-west and consequently be manipulated into the killing grounds awaiting them there, where they could be emasculated by a barrage of sub-artillery weapons (types not recorded).

The evidence of Captain E. Evans's file also exemplifies the disadvantages of strong posts

and static defences whose immobility robs the defenders of the initiative to choose a geographical point at which to draw their enemy into the field to be destroyed, but instead forces them to decide battles in the vicinity of where the fortifications are sited. Fortunately the tactical effectiveness of the fortified line on Rhos Llangel and its complementary killing grounds was never put to the test, as the Battle of Britain decided the control of the air in Britain's favour and the German military leaders turned their attention to the conquest of the Soviet Union.

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SHORTER ARTICLES AND NOTES

THE CARMARTHENSHIRE PLACE-NAME SURVEY

The study of place-names has always been part of this Society's field of interest. One has only to thumb through the pages of the *Transactions* or the *Antiquary* to see that throughout our history members have interested themselves in the subject. In that pleasing *pot pourri* of Carmarthenshire history, *Yr Encillion* (1912) a section was devoted to placenames. Despite this evident interest, there has never been a systematic study. Following a joint meeting with the Montgomery Place-name Survey (Powysland Club) and the Clwyd Place-name Council it was decided to form a sub-committee of the society to organise the collection and study of place-names. Subsequent meetings have taken place at Gregynog, which members of the society have attended. At the same time a national move has been made by the Board of Celtic Studies with the formation of the Place-Names Survey of Wales under the directorship of Professor Gwynedd Pierce. A guide to the collection and recording of placenames was produced by him in March (see below). The latter committee has invited a member from each of the county societies currently working on placenames to attend their most recent meetings, at which our editor has represented the Society. I have also attended representing the 'computerisation' interests of the survey. Great strides have been made towards the creation of a national collection of place-names, in which this Society can be proud to be a participant. At the time of writing the formulation of a policy to computerise the late Melville Richards's archive of place-names at Bangor was well advanced, and it is hoped that the momentum of this project will be extended to form a national computerised database.

Our Carmarthenshire Place-name Survey was launched officially at a day school last March when Professor Bedwyr Lewis Jones and local speakers outlined the subject, and its multifarious branches of interest. The basic aims of our survey were defined, and many members became involved as 'collectors' of names, under the guidance of 6 co-ordinators (see Report of Executive Council towards rear of this

volume). The *primary* objective is fairly modest: to transcribe names from the OS first edition 1:25,000, 6-inch, 1-inch and OS original drawings. Although modest, the number of names collected will be quite sizable, estimated at 50,000 for the 1:25,000 map alone.

The work on the primary task is well under way, with some collectors already nearing completion. There are, however, areas where collectors are thin on the ground, and more volunteers would be very welcome. The printed maps mentioned above offer a complete coverage of the whole county. The next step will be to move on to more disparate sources — manuscripts and manuscript maps, deeds and documents. It is clear that some parishes will be very well served by such sources whereas other areas will be less fortunate in the survival of documents. Thus in the next stage geographical coverage of the county will become inevitably uneven. We are very concerned that oral place-name evidence is collected. With the pressures of modern 'media' on language and culture, it is clear that many placenames, and their pronunciations, must be recorded before they are lost for all time. Here again volunteers are needed to undertake this work, which needs special, sympathetic, skills, a good ear and an insatiable appetite for tea drinking. Welsh speaking will of course be more than useful. Those whose eyesight prohibits concentrated work on maps and documents, may prefer recording oral testimony.

We all have ideas about the applicability of place-name studies: the linguist will be concerned with dialect and regional patterns, the historian with perhaps property ownership, or personal and family links, the geologist or geographer with topographical placenames and distributions, and the archaeologist with names indicative of ancient monuments — like *caer*, *castell* or *camedd*. The aims of the survey have been encouraged by the Dyfed Archaeological Trust, whose Sites and Monuments Record *inter alia* holds placenames indicating locations of surviving and lost field monuments. The record is *not* a record of placenames, but of sites of historical and archaeological interest. That said, the record does include the *names* of many archaeological or historical sites, a list in excess of 23,000 entries. The Trust's