

Mystery Objects



In the June issue of Stish, readers were asked to identify these objects, found on the shoreline between St Ishmaels and the Carmarthen Bay Holiday Camp.

Ryland Marks, now living in Kidwelly, wrote:

Every boy in Llansaint of a certain age (pre Carmarthen Bay Caravan Park) knows that these pictures show the remains of what we spent most of our summer holidays playing around, 'Y BATRI' . In our time, what remained of the Battery was a one storey building, the Barracks/HQ whatever it was , that was furnished and being used as a holiday home. There was a Magazine which was underground; It was a fascinating place. The Battery belonged to the Coastal Artillery and was part of the country's Shore and River Defence system. The thinking of the Military at that time was that a cannon in a fixed fortification was more accurate and could fire further than from a ship. When it was built, it stood level with the main railway line you see today. The remains of the barrack room (the holiday home) has been knocked down and is now only a few stones high. It is covered with grass and can just about be seen...the sea erosion has not quite reached it yet.

One of the pictures shows a dressed stone block with an iron ring inserted. This would be buried with only the ring showing and linked to the gun, making it secure and stopping any movement. The other picture shows a stone with a channel, called a roller path, which allowed the gun to change position/ direction. This extract from the LLanelly Guardian newspaper dated June 6th 1863 under "Carmarthen News" explains it all:

" The Carmarthenshire Artillery Militia -- a detachment from No1 Battery of this Militia headed by the Band marched to the Junction Station on Tuesday and proceeded to Ferryside for practice for the first time. The Battery, mounting 32 Pounders is erected half a mile below St. Ishmael's Church and the target is placed at a distance of

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1000 yards on the Kidwelly river. The officers superintending the firing were:

Col. Sir J. Drummond Bart; Col. Vaughn Adjutant, Lieut. Hall, Surgeon Hughes and Col. Scott Q.C. were also present. The Artillery - men returned by the six o'clock train, highly delighted with the practical handling of the 'BIG GUN' "



John Evans, Tan y Lan, also identified the objects and added that the Battery was in existence from about 1870 to 1970. Regular militia training took place at the Battery and the men camped in the field opposite the building as shown in this photograph, taken by his father. The officers, of course, were billeted in the building.

Dilyn Tom / Following Tom

As I write this Christmas note, I think of my late father borrowing £15 to buy a lorry he had seen when going to see Wales play the Springboks in St Helens, Swansea in 1932. A kind lady lent him £15 and he started his own business carrying stones, chippings and rubbish. On Wednesdays he put sides on the lorry and carried cattle to Carmarthen Mart.

Now eighty years later, the business continues with branches at Narberth, Swansea and shortly in Bridgend. I wonder "what he would think?" as he sees the new development in Kidwelly and in the Western Mail, 14th December, our company is rated No. 121 of the Top Companies in Wales, the only business listed from this area.

From being a Haulage Contractor, a Quarry Owner, a Lime Kilns Owner, the business has changed to become the oldest Renault Dealer in Great Britain and more recently has added Kia, Subaru and Isuzu to our portfolio of dealerships.

Yes, "what would he think?" as he sees the land rented by his father from Kidwelly Council now housing one of the most advanced car dealerships in Wales. But, we haven't forgotten my late father's principles, the main one being to help the local community which we hope we have done and will continue to do.

Now to our question this time, "When did Tom Gravell obtain the Renault Dealership in Kidwelly?" First to reply will be invited to hospitality at the new Parc Y Scarlets to see one of the Scarlets games in 2012.

Blwyddyn Newydd Dda i chi gyd.

David Gravell