



PEMBROKE DOCK

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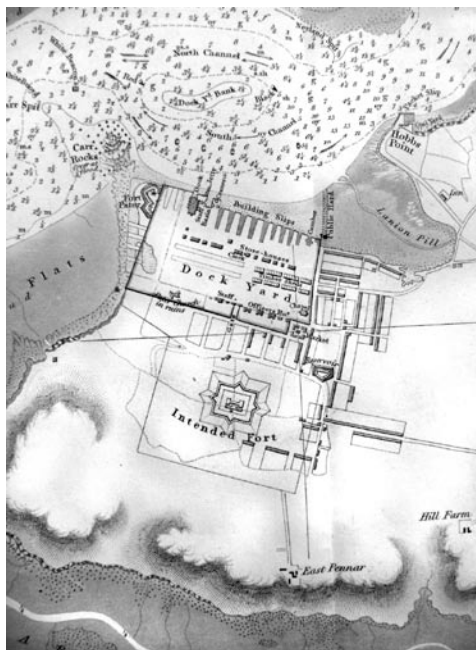
(SM 965035)

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PEMBROKE DOCK (SM965035)

Steeped in military and naval heritage, Pembroke Dock did not exist before 1814. It came into being purely as a result of the decision to locate a naval dockyard on land owned by the Meyrick family of Bush. Shipwrights and carpenters, blacksmiths and riggers flocked to the new yard from villages on the Haven and from other dockyard towns, notably Plymouth. They and their families needed to be housed, and Pembroke Dock rapidly grew in classic grid-iron style, the pattern of streets still very much apparent today.



A map showing the development of Pembroke Dock in 1830.

Royal Naval Dockyard (SM 961037):

Protected by high walls and gun towers, the Naval Dockyard occupied an 80-acre site. Work on building the dockyard began in 1814 and by 1890 some 2,000 men were employed constructing ships for the Royal Navy. Among the many notable vessels built were the 140-gun *Duke of Wellington* in 1853, the 49-gun battleship *Empress of India* in 1891 and the first-class armoured cruiser *Duke of Edinburgh* in 1904. The Naval Dockyard closed in 1926, and remaining traces include the grey-stone buildings of The Terrace and the recently restored Avenue and Dockyard Chapel. The western end of the dockyard is still occupied by the Royal Navy and here can be found a former oakum store, the pickling pond and a couple of slipways. The deep water Carr Jetty was built in 1898 and superseded Hobbs Point as the quay

for fitting out warships. The 12 foot high dockyard wall is still more or less complete, except for breaches to allow a railway line and, more recently, a new road to the Irish ferry terminal. Inside the original dock gates is a mural depicting the badges of all the regiments which garrisoned the town for a century and a half.

This early postcard shows the massive roof constructions covering the building slips in the dockyard.



It was originally intended that the market hall would be within the dockyard wall. When this plan was changed the wall had to be diverted around the market, creating a blind spot which was not covered by the artillery in the two gun towers. Consequently this section of wall was fitted with musketry loopholes which are still visible. Outside the Dockyard, in Fort Road, are the remains of the Admiralty gasworks dating from 1855. The nearby South Pembrokeshire Hospital was built as a Naval Hospital in 1902 and was extended by the RAF in World War II.

Paterchurch Battery (SM 956039): Paterchurch Battery was built by the Admiralty in 1840 - 42 on the western side of Pembroke Dockyard, on the site of a fort built during the Seven Years War. In 1856 the battery was taken over by the ordnance department and renovated from plans prepared by Lieutenant Charles Gordon (1833 - 1885), later General Gordon of Khartoum. This famous military figure was stationed in Pembroke Dock with the Royal Engineers in 1851, and sailed from the town that year for the War in the Crimea.

The battery, which mounted 23 guns, was much used by the Pembroke Dock Artillery Volunteers for practice and drill. This volunteer movement was first started in the town in 1859 and the men wore a grey uniform. In 1860 its name was changed to the 2nd Pembrokeshire Rifle Volunteers, but two years later this name was altered to the Pembroke Dock Volunteer Artillery. The commanding officer was Captain Edgecumbe Chevalier who was eventually succeeded by Captain J Richardson. He held command for some years. The post of surgeon at that time was filled by a Dr Reynolds, and the sergeant majors were W H Lloyd and George Sloggett.

On July 10, 1861, a ceremonial silver bugle was presented to the Volunteers who also received a set of Colours - the imaginative and skilful work of some Pembroke Dock ladies. These Colours were later given to the Vicar of St Mary's Church, Pembroke, presumably after the regiment was disbanded outside the old Pater Battery in 1884. It would be interesting to know what became of them.

In 1904 a new volunteer company, known as C Company, the 1st Volunteer Battalion, Welsh Regiment, was formed in Pembroke Dock, and some time later the silver bugle presented to the town's volunteer artillery back in 1861, was passed to the new company during an official parade.

The battery itself was dismantled in 1903, but traces of the defensive walls of the original fort can still be seen on the seaward side and the Resident Naval Officer's Office is the former soldiers' quarters.

North East (Front Street) Gun Tower (SM 965038): The two gun towers - known locally as 'Martello' towers - formed part of the defences of the Royal Dockyard. Construction of the Front Street tower began in 1849 and the fort was built to house one officer and 33 gunners who would have manned the three 32-pounder smooth bore cannons which formed the main rooftop battery, and also the three 12-pounder bronze howitzers on the main level. By the late 1870s the development of armoured warships and rifled guns firing explosive shells meant that the smooth bore cannons on the Gun Tower were obsolete. The guns were removed in about 1881. In WWII, three Lewis light anti-aircraft machine guns were positioned on top of the tower to deal with low-flying enemy aircraft. The Gun Tower is now a museum and visitor centre, housing displays on the history of Pembroke Dockyard and on the fortifications of Milford Haven. On the roof is an 18-pounder smooth bore cannon, cast in about 1812-16, which came from Popton Fort. It is still capable of being fired.

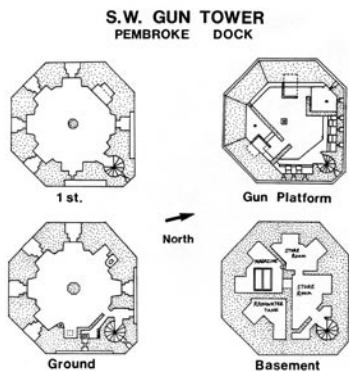
From the gun tower a sentry post can be seen on the dockyard wall. This sentry post was originally part of Paterchurch Fort and was probably moved to its present site in the 1840s.

South West (Fort Road) Gun Tower (SM 955035): The Fort Road, or South West tower was built in 1848-51 simultaneously with the Front Street tower and could contain a garrison of 24 men. The gun tower's main armament was a 32lb smoothbore cannon mounted on a cast iron platform on the roof. Internally there were four bronze 12lb howitzers - two on each floor - and also on each floor was a rack for 16 rifles. The fort

was cleverly situated so that it not only guarded the Milford Haven approach to the dockyard, but on the landward side it commanded a field of fire along the entire length of the southern dockyard wall, from the sea to the market hall. With the Front Street



Trading ketches beached alongside the gun tower in Front Street, now a museum.



gun tower commanding the eastern wall along Commercial Row, any enemy force attempting to attack the dockyard from the landward side would be raked with gunfire from the two forts. Both were obsolete for military purposes by the end of the 19th century, although in WWII, two Lewis light anti-aircraft machine guns were positioned on top of the tower. The Fort Road tower was later utilised for storage and is now privately owned.

Plan of the South West Gun Tower at the end of Fort Road.

Defensible Barracks (SM 961031):

These barracks were built in the 1840s to house the Royal Marines charged with defending the dockyard, and also to act as a gun platform capable of protecting the dockyard from attack by sea or land. When the fort was built, numerous properties in Pennar were requisitioned and pulled down to allow the guns a clear field of fire. Superbly built in limestone to a classic, if outdated diamond-shaped design, the barracks came complete with a dry moat guarded by corner bastions. A drawbridge led over the moat and through an entrance arch in the gate-house. Inside the fort, the barrack square is flanked by four, two-storey terraces; it has been described as 'the finest Georgian style square in Wales'.



A recent aerial view of the Defensible Barracks.

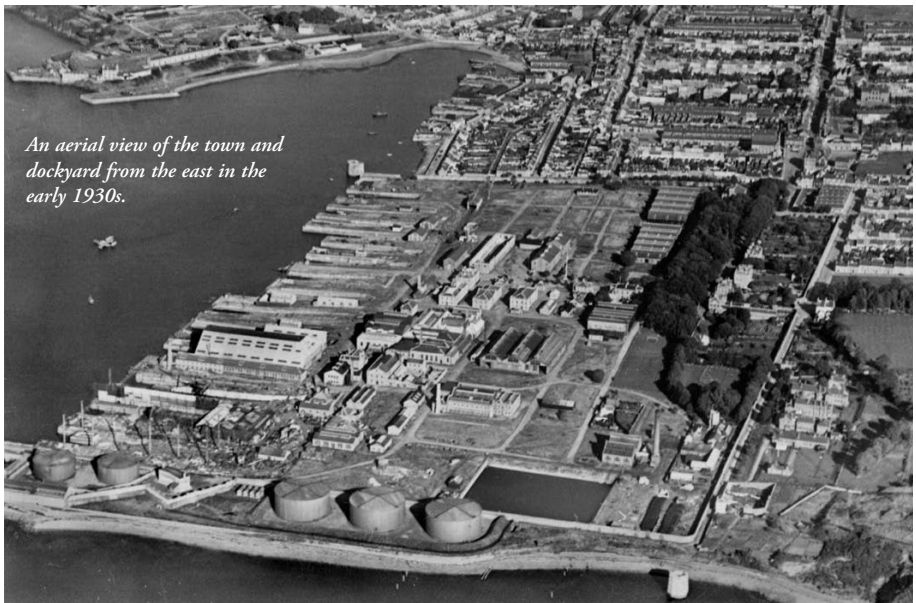


Firing a salute at the Defensible Barracks.

RAF Pembroke Dock

The Royal Air Force's arrival in 1930 brought hope to a community still reeling from the closure of the Royal Dockyard four years earlier. The sheltered Haven waters were ideal for the operation of flying-boats and the newly-formed No 210 Squadron flew here in June 1931. Their Supermarine Southamptons - and later Short Rangoons and Singapore IIIs - were an ever-present part of Pembroke Dock daily life in the 1930s. During WWII Pembroke Dock became one of the most important stations in waging the Battle of the Atlantic and the ceaseless war against the German U-Boat.

At one time in 1943 no fewer than 99 flying boats - Sunderlands and Catalinas - were at Pembroke Dock, making this the largest operational station in the world. Men of many



An aerial view of the town and dockyard from the east in the early 1930s.



A Mark 1 Sunderland L2163 of 210 Squadron, PD's original squadron and the first to receive Sunderlands in 1938.

nations flew from the Haven, their patrols taking them far out into the Atlantic, deep into the Bay of Biscay, above the Western Approaches and - as part of the D-Day operations - protecting the sea lanes leading to the Normandy Invasion beach-heads.

Backing up the front line activity of the squadrons was a substantial maintenance base, a large marine craft section with many and varied craft, and a sizeable WAAF contingent.

Post-war, Pembroke Dock continued as an RAF station (201 and 230 Squadrons) until the Sunderlands were retired from home waters in 1957.

RAF Pembroke Dock eventually comprised several sites. Site No.1 was the former Naval Dockyard where many of the former dockyard buildings were taken over; Site No. 2 was where the Pembroke Dock cricket ground now stands; Site No. 3 was nearby in Britannia; Site No. 4 and Site No. 5 were both at Lamphey, and the war-time Sick Quarters were at Holyland.

Site No. 1 (SM 962037): Today the two unique flying boat hangars still dominate the former RAF station, but the slipway used to bring flying boats ashore was demolished to make way for the new port facilities. The 1930s Officers' Mess - reputedly one of the finest in Coastal Command - was knocked down in the 1980s, as were the 1930s barrack blocks, but the former Sergeants' Mess - located just inside the main gate - was converted into a hotel.



*Aerial view of Pembroke Dock
in May 1943, taken from a
Sunderland of 461 Squadron.*



*RAF Pembroke Dock in 1943 showing the Dockyard
railway extension.*

The two main hangars are rare B Types and are both listed. There were only three hangars of this type built in Britain, though others were built in Gibraltar and Singapore. The eastern hangar (1934) has been restored and similar work has just been completed on the western one (dating from c 1938). Each could accommodate three Sunderlands. A single T2-type hangar, erected in 1943 near the pickling pond, has since been re-clad.

A rare example of a surviving B-Type hangar, designed by Norman Garnish.



Site No. 2 (SM 971028): Surviving buildings include the wireless telegraphy block which is now used as a cricket clubhouse, and an air raid shelter.



The former RAF wireless telegraphy block at Imble which is now used as a cricket clubhouse.

Site No. 3 (SM 968026): This was used as an accommodation site and has since been swallowed up by housing developments.

There are several reminders of the RAF connection with 'PD' apart from the buildings in the former Dockyard. There are plaques on a wall of St John's Church (close to the war memorial) and on the inside and outside of the Pater Hall. The Pembroke Dock Library has, on loan, the replica RAF Pembroke Dock Memorial Window which was unveiled and dedicated during the last of five Flying-Boat Reunions in 1995.

Military Cemetery (SM 973040): Situated in the area of the town known as Llanion, the cemetery opened in about 1860 for burials connected with The Royal Dockyard. It was handed over to the military authorities in 1865 for use by regiments and naval personnel based in the garrison town. Forty World War One graves are located in the cemetery together with 33 burials from the 1939/45 conflict. These include 17 servicemen killed on April 28, 1942 in an explosion at the Defensible Barracks during a mine disposal course.

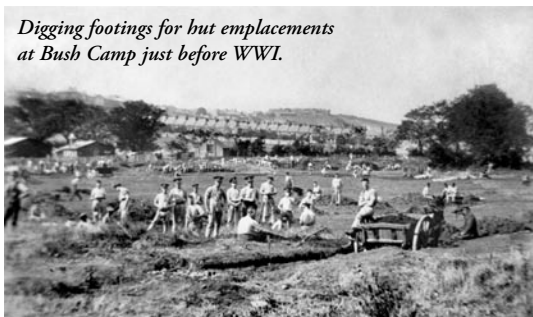
Four of the graves are Australian airmen who were killed on 19th July, 1942 when their Wellington aircraft crash at Milford Docks. Last to be buried here was Second Lieutenant A. H. Baxter who was killed on February 2, 1955.

Park Street Cemetery (SM 967032): Situated in the upper end of Park Street, the cemetery was consecrated in September 1834 by the Bishop of St. David's on land donated by Thomas Meyrick of Bush. The cemetery contains many burials connected with the

Royal Naval Dockyard. It is also the resting place of Captain William Pryce Cumby RN.,C.B., who fought at the battle of Trafalgar. He served as a First Lieutenant on HMS *Bellerophon* and took command of the ship from the mortally wounded Captain John Cooke. Captain Cumby died in 1837 whilst serving as Captain Superintendent of the Royal Naval Dockyard at Pembroke Dock. Over the years the exact position of Cumby's grave has been lost, and is remembered today by a plaque in the centre of the cemetery. Queen Street West was renamed Cumby Terrace in 1906 to celebrate the memory of this famous naval officer.

Llanion Cemetery (SM 980036): The cemetery is situated on the north side of the A477 trunk road at the entrance to the town. Owned by the county council, the cemetery opened in 1869. There are 24 war graves here from World War I, situated in the western part of the cemetery. There are also 54 burials from World War II, including 19 sailors from the bombed HMS *Puckridge*. The remaining graves are of airmen connected with the RAF Flying-Boat base at Pembroke Dock. A number of post-war graves can be found, one being of a Polish pilot, Z Bartosuk, who was killed in August 1952 while making a forced landing at the nearby disused airfield at Carew Cheriton.

Bush Camp (SM 972032): Bush Camp playing field was originally the sports field for a hutted military encampment dating from the First World War and re-occupied during World War II when a barrage balloon was moored on the field. The last of the huts remained until fairly recently as a sports pavilion.



Digging footings for hut emplacements at Bush Camp just before WWI.

Married quarters: Various married quarters still exist in the town, now used as private accommodation. At the top of Tregenna's Hill, the red brick Royal Artillery Married Quarters date from 1902. Behind the Defensible Barracks are Army Married Quarters dating from the 1930s, while Military Road is partly made up of post-war RAF Married Quarters. Near the Dockyard Gate are Sunderland Avenue (RAF), circa 1950; Catalina Avenue (RAF NCOs) circa 1934; Melville Terrace (RAF NCOs) circa 1935 and Southampton Row (RAF Officers) circa 1935.



An early postcard view of the RA Married Quarters at the top of Tregenna's Hill.

*Aerial view of Llanion in 1954.
Crown Copyright, 1954*



Llanion Barracks (SM 971040):

This large complex of red brick buildings was built for the local garrison at the turn of the 20th century to complement a huttied encampment which had existed since the Crimea War. A further phase of construction was undertaken during WWII. The last regiment to serve there before the barracks became surplus to British Army requirements in 1967 was 37 Heavy Air Defence Regiment, Royal Artillery.

Many of the buildings are now used as offices. The surviving buildings include the two storey colonel's residence which is now the area office of the Countryside Council for Wales, and the officers' mess, dated 1904, and the two storey officers' quarters which are home to the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority. The National Park offices contain a display of cap badges and photographs reflecting the building's military past. Other



Troops on parade at Llanion Barracks.



Llanion has changed considerably since this photo was taken, with the terrace in the foreground comprising Sergeants' Quarters and Married Sergeants' Quarters having been demolished.



The officers' quarters are now home to the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority.

surviving buildings include a single storey store, a motor transport shed and NCOs' quarters.

In nearby Devonshire Road can be found a small arms ammunition store, recreation rooms, the institute and a guardroom, while a former produce store survives in Glen View Avenue. The Kingdom Hall was the sergeants' mess. Devonshire Road also leads to the former parade ground.

The old parade square was used as a car park for many years but is now largely given over to housing development. On this square on April 1, 1944, General Dwight D Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander for the Invasion of Europe, inspected troops of the 110th Regiment, 28th US Infantry Division, some 800 of whom were based at the barracks from October 1943 until April 11, 1944 when they took their leave for a camp in Wiltshire in readiness for D-Day. They were replaced at Llanion Barracks by the US 2nd (Indianhead) Infantry Division who arrived from Armagh, Northern Ireland on April 15, 1944. Their stay was brief for they left for France on D-Day Plus One, June 7. The Americans were the only foreign troops to be based at Llanion Barracks during its 40 years' military history.

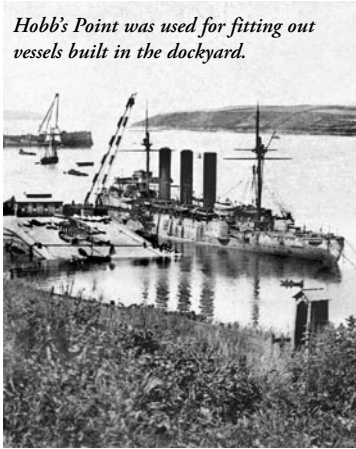
Sussex Row, Kent Row and Dorset Row comprise the barrack blocks themselves, now altered into flats. Built in 1904, these two storey, 28-bay blocks originally had verandahs to the rear. Each block could accommodate half a battalion, giving the barracks a capacity of a battalion and a half. The married quarters attached to the barracks still survive in Shropshire Road and Canterbury Road, two-storey, brick-built houses. In Essex Road, the former administrative offices have been converted into a pair of bungalows. In Stockwell Road are a number of ancillary buildings, including a chapel/ gymnasium, a gun store, a motor transport shed/ workshop with a large sliding door in the gable end, and a 'Romney hut' type store and caretaker's house behind the former Grainger Tubolt building, which itself was an anti-aircraft ordnance depot.



Alongside the footpath on the north side of the hill, overlooking the Haven, are the remains of ammunition magazines built into the hillside in the 1860s and '70s. During the Cold War, these magazines were used to instruct troops about convoy movements. A little to the east of the magazines was a rifle range.

The Guard House - a dockyard office building dating from about 1840.

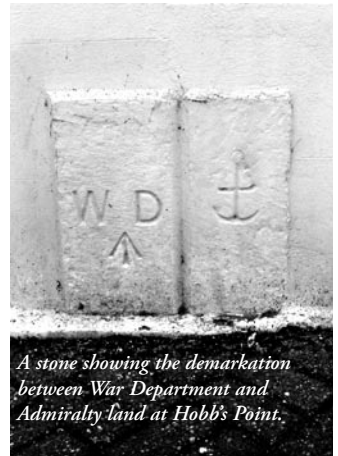
Hobb's Point was used for fitting out vessels built in the dockyard.



A Swedish 30-pounder cannon at Hobb's Point. It was first captured by the French before being subsequently captured by the Royal Navy.

Pier Road and Hobb's Point (SM 968042): Many of the buildings along Pier Road originally formed part of the army's ordnance depot and were specifically built for that purpose. Units 1 to 7 comprise a row of stables, originally two storey but now single storey, dating from the days of the huttet encampment in the 1850s. Units 8 and 9 are stores built in 1940, and Unit 10 is a carriage shed dating from 1915. Units 11 to 14 comprise a row of two-storey stables, originally attached to the adjacent three-storey Royal Hotel of the 1830s but later requisitioned by the local garrison - as was the hotel which was used by the Royal Engineers while planning the building of the Haven's fortifications. Other buildings in Pier Road include several single-storey military storehouses, some dating from 1860 and others dating from the First World War and built in connection with a railway spur which once ran along here from the town station to a jetty. These latter storehouses had their own railway platform, that can be seen near Asda petrol station.

Hobb's Point is a limestone quay with granite copings built in the 1830s for the Irish packet trade. This proved short-lived, and it was later used as a fitting out quay for the Royal Dockyard, complete with shear-legs. The bollards on the quay are Swedish 30-pounder cannons, captured from a French warship during the Napoleonic Wars; it was common practice to use captured guns as bollards on Admiralty quays. Kelpie's was originally built for the Navy but was later used by the Royal Artillery District Establishment which was responsible for maintaining the guns on the forts around the Haven. The walled compound to the east of Kelpie's was originally a coal store.



A stone showing the demarkation between War Department and Admiralty land at Hobb's Point.



A remarkable number of Flying Boats can be seen in this aerial photo. as well as a couple of bomb craters on the Barrack Hill.

Barrack Hill (SM 957033): Until fairly recently, a central cable loop set in a concrete block situated near the bus stop marked a barrage balloon site. The main block was encircled by eight concrete tethering blocks, but they have all been removed.



A pall of smoke rises from the burning oil tanks at Llanreath.

Llanreath Oil Depot (SM 951030): This Admiralty oil tanks complex consisted of 17 storage tanks surrounded by earthwork bunds. In August 1940 three German aircraft made a low-level attack on the fuel depot, causing a fire which burned for three weeks and claimed the lives of five firemen. Six tanks survived and stood until 1985 when they were finally demolished. A single storey pumphouse and the dry moats still remain, while bomb craters to the south are visible as crop marks.



Llanreath wireless station as it looks today.

Llanreath Wireless Station (SM 955033): This was built in WWI as a Y-Station to intercept German radio transmissions. It

remained a wireless station right through WWII and is still used by the MoD as a radar station.

Jacob's Pill (SM 965022): A ship-building yard once stood at Jacob's Pill. The most notable vessel to be built here was the *Hiei*, which was constructed for the Japanese Navy by Sir Edward Reed, former chief constructor for the Royal Navy. *Hiei* was first commanded by Lt. Hechahiro Togo who had qualified as an officer with the Royal Navy. He later became Supreme Commander of the Japanese Grand Fleet. All that remains of the Jacob's Pill Yard today

is the crumbling dock gate and an ivy-covered ruin that was once the mould loft and later an isolation hospital. During World War Two this building was used as an equipment and ammunition store, supplying the local anti-aircraft batteries.

Pennar (SM 963030): At Bethany is a single-storey, L-shaped ARP civil defence centre. It is brick built with a flat, reinforced concrete roof and small, high windows. It is now used as a scout hut.

Pennar Barracks (SM 946029): Royal Engineers Barracks were built here in 1903 in connection with a submarine mining establishment at Pennar Point which had been in existence since about 1875. The barracks complex comprised workshops, offices, mine stores, quays, married quarters, barracks, a raised water tank, ablutions blocks and various ancillary buildings. Today the site accommodates a large housing development and only a small quay and a row of military fence posts remain to remind of its military and naval past. During WWII it was again used as a barracks and also housed RN coastal forces.

Western Way car-park (SM 968037): Guarding the car-park is a Chieftain tank, a gift to the town from the commandant of the Castlemartin Field Training Centre in the late

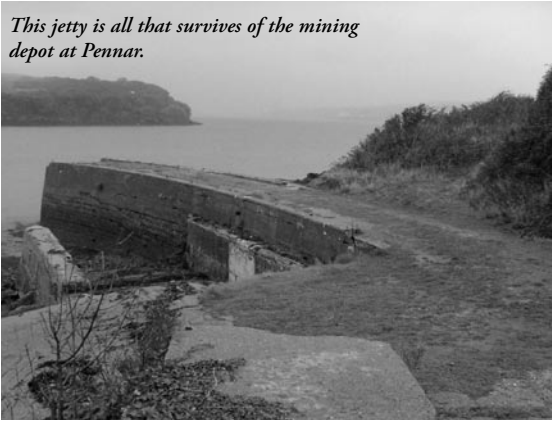


An early map showing the lay-out of Jacob's Pill shipbuilding yard.

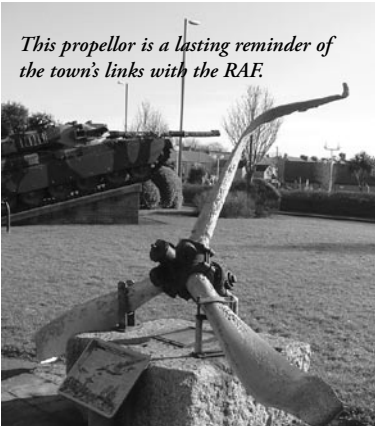


No trace remains of Pennar Barracks, pictured in about 1910.

This jetty is all that survives of the mining depot at Pennar.



This propellor is a lasting reminder of the town's links with the RAF.



Albion Square (SM 963034): At the end of the First World War, a fund-raising event was held in Albion Square by the War Savings Association; it featured a mock-up tank. A white WWII 'shelter' direction sign can still be seen at the Maypole Corner, nailed to a tree which is now growing around it. The sign pointed to an air raid shelter in Albion Square.

Bomb damage: Pembroke Dock suffered terrible bomb damage during the war, particularly during the air-raids of May 1941, and gaps in the terraced streets still indicate where the bombs fell. Particularly badly hit was the Criterion corner on London Road, where the Pier Hotel was destroyed by a parachute mine. Other areas to bear the brunt were Laws Street, the lower part of Gwyther Street, Bush Street, Queens Square and the Market

1990s. The tank is unusual in that it is fitted with 'Stillbrew' up-armouring around the turret and the driver's compartment. This is the second tank to be presented to the town; following the First World War a Mark IV tank was displayed in the Memorial Park. It was scrapped before the end of WWII. A three-bladed propeller is also displayed on the Western Way car park, another reminder of the town's RAF connections.

Llanion Oil Depot (SM 976042): The depot was built around 1927, and included a concrete-lined tunnel through Llanion Hill from the oil depot to a jetty which was for many years the home of the hulk of HMS *Warrior*, the first ironclad battleship, now restored and moored in Portsmouth. The majority of the oil tanks on the hill were demolished in about 1978 and the rest have since been removed. The few surviving buildings include married quarters in Waterloo Road - a semi-detached house - and the brick pumphouse at the end of the tunnel.

The Chieftain tank on Western Way.





This WWII sign pointing towards an air-raid shelter in Albion Square is gradually being swallowed by a tree.

Street/ Princes Street area. Immediately after the war, a large estate of prefabricated houses was built at Bufferland to house those made homeless by the bombing, while King Street was eventually rebuilt anew.

Further reading: *History of Pembroke Dock* by Mrs S Peters; *The History of Pembroke Dock* by Phil Carradice; *Pembroke People* by Richard Rose; *Inferno* by Vernon Scott; *Pembrokeshire Under Fire* by Bill Richards; *In Harm's Way* by Vernon Scott; *An Experience Shared 1939 - 1945* by Vernon Scott; *The Pevsner Guide to the Buildings of Pembrokeshire* by Lloyd, Orbach and Scourfield; *P D Days* by various authors; *Flying Boat Haven* and *Sunderland Flying Boat Queen* by John Evans.



Hangars and other buildings in the Dockyard carefully camouflaged to look like terraces of houses during WWII.