

The Derwen Fawr estate

The ancient name for the estate was Sketty Isaf, given to the farm situated to the south of the village of Sketty, Glamorgan, on the brow of the slope looking down towards the River Clyne to the west and the sea to the south. Later it was also known as Lower Sketty and Hendderwen.

During the 18th century the farm was leased by Sir Francis Holbourne, however during the 19th century the house had a number of occupants and its name changed first to Hendderwen (Old Oak Tree) and then Derwen Fawr (Great Oak). A mansion house replaced the original farmhouse and a new farm called Lower Sketty or Sketty Isaf was built on the other side of the road.

During the 1840s the coalmaster, Charles Henry Smith, moved here from Gwernllwynchwyth, Llansamlet. He first leased and then purchased the freehold of the small estate at Sketty Isaf along with some lands in the parish of Oystermouth. The family was living there in 1851 but by the late 1860s they had decided to let the property and in 1868 it was leased to Jeremiah Clarke Richardson. At the time of his death in 1878 Charles Henry Smith was residing in Tenby; his will left the estate in the hands of trustees.

In the 1920s and 1930s the estate was bought by the Bible College of Wales; Derwen Fawr and Glynderwen (formerly Casino) became the Bible College and Sketty Isaf Farm became the Bible College School later called the Emmanuel School.