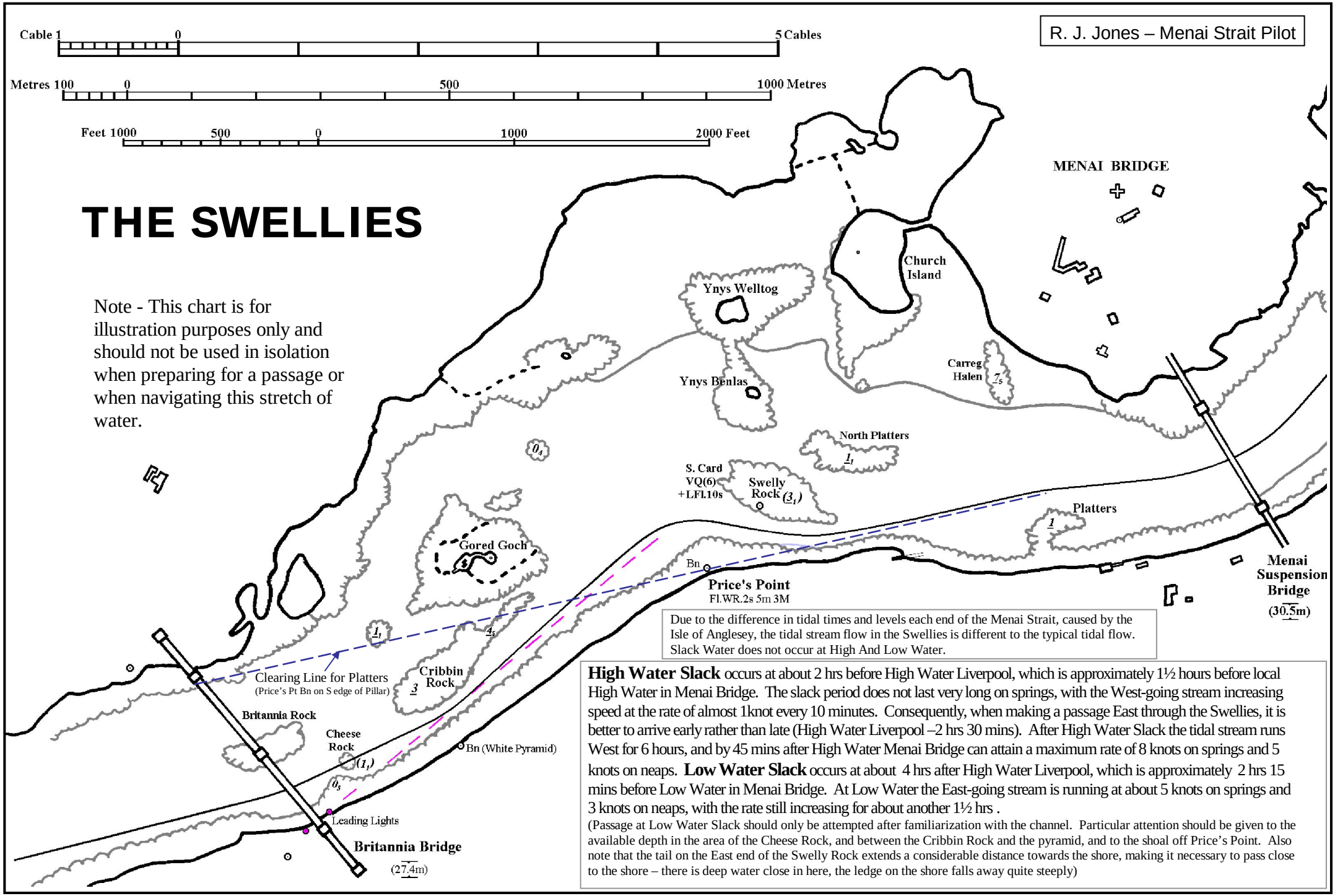
R. J. Jones – Menai Strait Pilot



Due to the difference in tidal times and levels each end of the Menai Strait, caused by the Isle of Anglesey, the tidal stream flow in the Swellies is different to the typical tidal flow. Slack Water does not occur at High And Low Water.

High Water Slack occurs at about 2 hrs before High Water Liverpool, which is approximately 1½ hours before local High Water in Menai Bridge. The slack period does not last very long on springs, with the West-going stream increasing speed at the rate of almost 1knot every 10 minutes. Consequently, when making a passage East through the Swellies, it is better to arrive early rather than late (High Water Liverpool –2 hrs 30 mins). After High Water Slack the tidal stream runs West for 6 hours, and by 45 mins after High Water Menai Bridge can attain a maximum rate of 8 knots on springs and 5 knots on neaps. **Low Water Slack** occurs at about 4 hrs after High Water Liverpool, which is approximately 2 hrs 15 mins before Low Water in Menai Bridge. At Low Water the East-going stream is running at about 5 knots on springs and 3 knots on neaps, with the rate still increasing for about another 1½ hrs .

(Passage at Low Water Slack should only be attempted after familiarization with the channel. Particular attention should be given to the available depth in the area of the Cheese Rock, and between the Cribbin Rock and the pyramid, and to the shoal off Price's Point. Also note that the tail on the East end of the Swelly Rock extends a considerable distance towards the shore, making it necessary to pass close to the shore – there is deep water close in here, the ledge on the shore falls away quite steeply)