

THE BUILDINGS OF MOREFA BORTH

- the Marsh Harbour

Ceredigion



That part of Borth Village on a pebble bank with the sea on one side and the Cors Fochno marsh some reclaimed and the railway on the other. In the distance is the River Dyfi. Photograph Michael Lewis

Photographs and History by BERYL LEWIS

This work is for research and educational purposes only.

ABERCELDŶ Morfa Borth

At the central part of Borth High Street, on the beach side. Formerly Ty Mawr (big house) home of several master mariners. On ground with a cottage enclosed in 1824 by Evan Evans. Built before 1861.



Aberceldy in 2016

Aberceldy is a two storey, double fronted, semi-detached house, the southernmost of a terrace of five single-fronted houses under the same height gable roof parallel with the street. Aberceldy has roof lights for an attic floor in both the front and rear of its roof. Today the walls are rendered, but an old photograph shows the front wall is good quality squared and coursed stones, with oblong stones above

the windows. This is expensive building, and rare to find in Morfa Borth. Today there are no chimneys and solar panels have been laid on the roof. . Decoration has been added with the rendering of the front wall. A string course (line of moulding) runs beneath the upper windows - higher than the one on Ty Canol next door. Beneath is a pattern of rusticated masonry, and a pattern of quoins has been made on both sides of the front wall. The windows have been given keystones, and a frame with a circular motif in the centre, each side. The size and position of Aberceldy's windows is quite different however to that of Ty Canol suggesting Aberceldy was built at a different time. Pilasters with plain capitals edge the front door which is modern. There is an interesting feature about the position of the front door. It is not central, like the old cottages which had a larger living room with the hearth and chimney one side, so on the south side of Aberceldy's front door it is wider. Above the front door is a cornice



copying Ty Canol's. Steps from the front door lead down to the street and today the front is open to the street. Maps dating back to 1884 and the old photograph show a narrow front garden enclosed by walls and railings. It was then the only house in the terrace with a front garden.



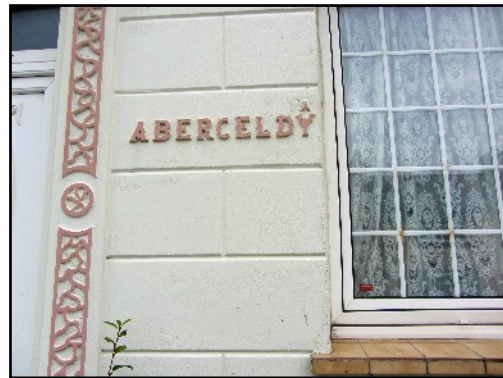
LEFT Plaster work above the front door. BELOW The modern windows, with 20 apparent panes are a reflection of the old twelve light sash windows.

The south side of the house is the wall of a public passage to the beach, and from it a door gives access to



Aberceldy's back yard.

At the back the top storey of the house is timber clad, and so is central wing with a nearly flat roof at right angles to the main house. Its upper floor has windows either side, and a very large window probably as sliding doors opening on to a railed balcony with steps down to the yard. This would give a fine view of the sea over the walling at the end of the yard. The back of the main house, on the ground

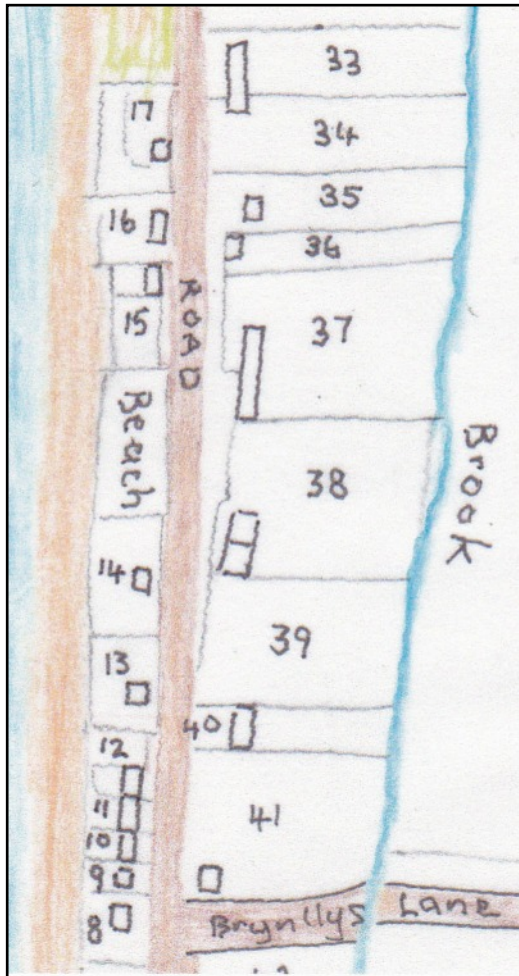


The back of the house from the beach in 2015.

level of the yard. The back of the main house, on the ground

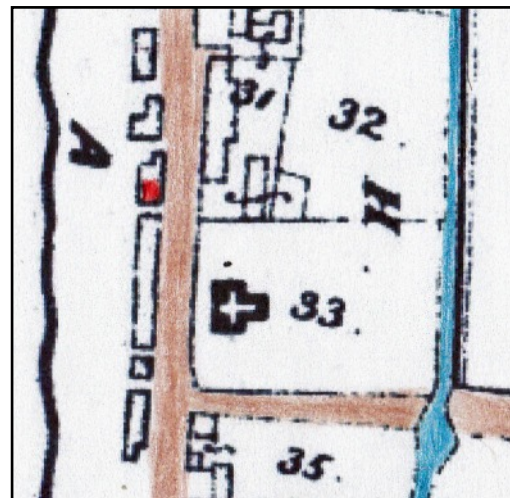


floor on the south side, has a glass roofed extension. A tall wall, partly rubble stone with rounded beach stones and partly block, protects the south side of the yard from the public passageway. Walling and fences of vertical planks and sleepers protect the end of the yard from the sea during storms.



The ground for this house was enclosed in 1824 by Evan Evans, a mariner, from the stone bank thrown up by the sea and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor who owned it as it was no use for farming. His 'cottage and beach' measured 25 perches which is just over an eighth of an acre (40 perches). Evan Evans in 1825 and 1837 had a few shares in the 25 ton sloop 'Liverpool Trader'. (Shipping Register, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion Archives) Born about 1796 he would have enclosed his ground when he was 28 years old. On the beach side, his cottage stood where Ton-y-mor is today, but Aberceldy stands on the south part of his 'beach'.

LEFT A detail copied from the map of 1829. Evan Evans plot and cottage was Number 13.

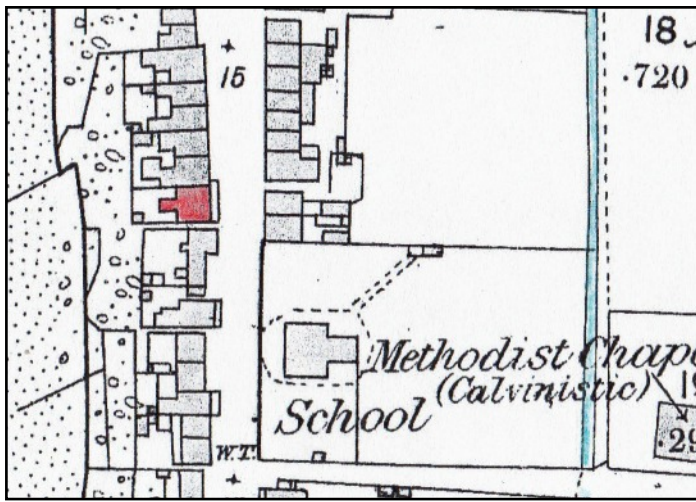


ABOVE Marked in red is the building on the site of Aberceldy in 1848. (Tithe Map, Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township - online, CYNEFIN National Library of Wales.

By 1848 the Tithe Map shows a block of probably two homes on the site of Abergeldy and Ty Canol. They were sketched in on the map, but because they had no gardens, they paid no tithe, were not numbered, and we do not know who lived there.

The Rev. William Christmas Humphreys, able to access information from his wife who was local, and from her aunt whose family had lived in Morfa Borth throughout the nineteenth century, wrote that stone built Abergeldy was the largest of the beach side dwellings, the rest were cottages. ('Borth rhwng 100 a 50 flywyddoed yn ô 1929', translated by Terry Davies on his website). It is likely that the old name of the house described it, Ty Mawr, the big house. Before 1861 it was the home of a master mariner, Captain William Williams. He was buried aged 65 on 3 January 1861. His wife Mary was buried on 2 August 1868 aged 64. Their gravestone at St Michael's Church Llandre was written in English. This dates the house to before the coming of the railway in 1863 - and explains why useful building material such as brick to edge doors and windows, and eaves, which came on the train were not used for this stone house.

In Ty Mawr at the 1881 Census was another master mariner, John Jones, born about 1838 in Borth, his wife Hannah aged 39 from East Ruston Norfolk and an 11 year old ward, Agnes Phillipa Bull born in London. Numbers 1 and 2 Picton Terrace (now Ty Canol and Craig Lee) and Numbers 1 and 2 Ocean Wave (now Ton-y-mor and Hafod Heli) were also listed. Another earlier reference to Ty Mawr was in February 1877, when Captain John Jones of Ty Mawr aged about 39 was on a committee set up during a meeting at the National School to raise money by selling the common to mend damage from the sea of the roadway and embankment during the seriously bad storm of 1876, and for building a defensive wall. (Aberystwyth Observer, 10 February). Terry Davies writes that Captain Jones taught navigation at his house for a fee of 3d a week (Borth A Seaborn Village, page 37). In 1880 Mrs Jones took in



LEFT Captain and Mrs Jones's house in 1886 is marked in red. It had a wing at the back, and a small garden in the front. The building in the yard was probably its Ty Bach, outside lavatory. (Detail from the Ordnance Survey 25 inch map surveyed in 1886, published in 1888, Cardiganshire III.10).

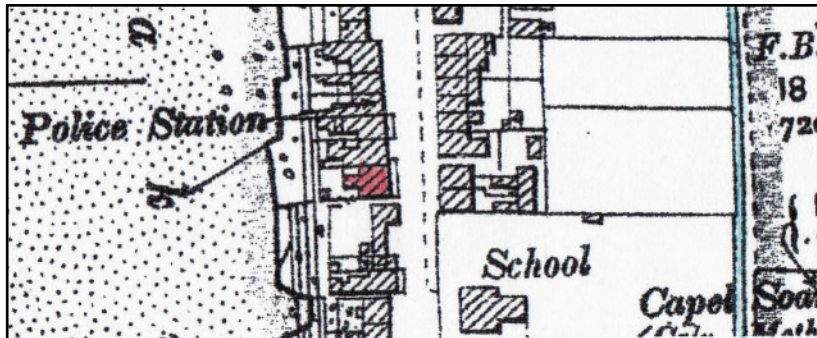


This photograph from a glass plate by John Thomas taken at the end of the nineteenth century shows the house before it was rendered, with its enclosed front garden with a wall and railings. Beyond are the houses of Picton Terrace. Ty Canol is already elegantly rendered. (With permission of the National Library of Wales. The photograph is on-line.)

holiday visitors for 4 weeks, a Colonel and his family and maid from Clifton, and Mrs Captain Enos from Newtown.

At the 1891 Census the house was 'unoccupied'.

In 1895 Mrs Mary Roberts was advertising apartments to let at Abergeldy in Kelly's Directory. It is likely she gave the house the name. And it was then spelt in the English way. Abergeldie Castle in Aberdeenshire is a tall stone building a couple of miles from Balmoral. In 1898 Miss Mary Roberts of 'Abergeldie' was helping decorate St Matthew's Church at the Harvest Festival. (Cambrian News October 14th). Mrs Roberts died in 1899 leaving a daughter Mrs Pierce (Cambrian News, 20th October)



Abergeldy in 1904, marked in red had not changed since the map of 1888.

(25 inch Ordnance Survey Map of 1905, revised in 1904. Cardiganshire III.10)

In the 1901 Census in Abergeldy House was John D. Pierce, 32, a mariner in the merchant service, from Carnarvon, the grocer's shop next door, now Kidderminster House. He had wed the girl next door, then 28, Miss Mary E. Roberts. He was now living in Abergeldy with his wife.

In 1910 for a tax planned but not levied, the owner and occupier of 'Abergelly' were the executives of Joseph Higgs, Church House, Whillington. The house was valued at £306 - £8.10s to pay, £10 gross.

In 1911 at the Census, no one was there to fill in the form so it was not listed.

By 1925 paying the rates as owner and occupier was W. L. Smith. In 1826 Kelly's directory listed Miss D. Smith of Aberfeldy as a 'private resident'. In 1934 she gave a recipe for an American Lemon Pie for a book in aid of St Matthew's Church published by the Cambrian News (Ceredigion Archives).

In 1934 the owner was D. A. Dinsdale, and the tenant Dora W. Smith. Miss Smith paid the rates in 1938 and 1949. With votes for the house in 1945 were Dora Smith and Margaret c. Gordon-Smith.

Miss Smith was still there in 1963.

The house name plate is interesting. All the earlier documents list it as Abergeldie or versions of Abergeldy, but today on the name plate the 'g' is a 'c' and the 'y' has an accent as if spoken by a Welsh speaker.

Archifdy Ceredigion Archives
yn cyflwyno / presents
Tai'r Borth / Houses of Borth
gan/by Beryl Lewis
[cyf/ref ADX/1629]

Mae **Tai'r Borth** yn cynnwys dros 350 hanes sy'n ymwneud ag adeiladau unigol ac mae'r hanesion wedi'u darlunio â chyfoeth o ffotograffau, mapiau a dogfennau. Mae'r ffeiliau ar gael ar ein gwefan: <https://www.archifdy-ceredigion.org.uk/tairborth.php?lang=cy>

Hoffem ddiolch i Beryl am fod mor garedig â chaniatáu i ni rannu ei gwaith â'r gynulleidfa ehangaf bosibl.

Ceidw Beryl Lewis yr hawlfraint yn ei gwaith ac mae'r hanesion yn cael eu rhannu at ddibenion preifat ac ymchwil yn unig.

Houses of Borth consists of over 350 histories of individual buildings, lavishly illustrated with photographs, maps and documents. All the files are available from our website: <https://www.archifdy-ceredigion.org.uk/tairborth.php>

We would like to thank Beryl for her kindness in letting us share her work with the widest possible audience.

Beryl Lewis retains the copyright in her work and the histories are made available for private use and research only.



Cyngor Sir
CEREDIGION
County Council



Archifdy
Ceredigion
Archives