

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

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ALMA

Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

Formerly Number 1 Alma Place. Built by 1861 on land owned by the Jenkins family it was the home of John Jenkins, a master mariner and his wife Ann, and their descendants.



ABOVE Alma in June 2009



LEFT Alma on the east side of the High Street is one of a pair with Glanaber.

Alma is a single fronted two storey house, under a gable roof parallel to the road. The walls are rendered, and probably are rubble stone. The ground floor rendering has a pattern of ashlar masonry, and there is decoration around the upper windows of pilaster strips with a prominent keystone with a random pattern. There is a a



diamond shape decorating the centre of the strips. Around the front door is the same decoration, and brackets support a protruding moulding. The chimney is on the south. The front door is on the southern side of the front, and beside it on the ground floor is a small canted bay window. All the windows and the front door are modern. In the gable end wall are two small windows to light attic rooms under the roof. The roofing material appears to be slate. The house opens on to the street.



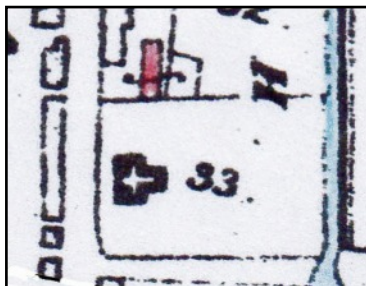
LEFT ABOVE Details of the pattern made by the rendering.

LEFT The chimney has one flue with a chimney pot but has room for more.

The ground on which the house was built was the stone embankment built up by the sea. The road was very old and a quick way to North Wales via a ferry across the River Dovey. It was a turnpike road by the 1770s.



LEFT A narrow plot, number 40 of just four perches on the stone embankment owned by the Crown Manor had been enclosed by 1825 by David Jenkins, a mariner. There were cottages on it in 1829 set back from the road, but none on the roadside where Alma stands today. Number 41 was owned by the church (Detail after a Crown Manor Map of 1829, National Archives LRRO 1/3060)



LEFT David Jenkin's cottages in 1848, marked in red. The church had built a school on number 33 (replaced by the Meddygfa) (Tithe Apportionments Map, Llanfidhan-gel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township. On-line at Cynefin).

Alma with Glanaber and a cottage at the back were called by the Census takers 'Alma Place'. These houses were homes of a Jenkins family. I did not find them in the 1851 Census, but by the 1861 Census there were three homes with three Jenkins families living next to the school (gone, now the Meddygfa).

In one was Anne Jenkins, born in 1816 with a daughter Ann born c. 1848. In another house was Elizabeth Jenkins, a widow aged 67, born in Borth about 1794. In the third house was Anne Jenkins, born in Glanwern about 1817, with a daughter Mary born c. 1844. The two Annes were the wives of the master mariner brothers, David 1814 - 1905 and John Jenkins 1820 - 1878. They were the sons of David Jenkins and his wife Eleanor (Parish Register). Captain David Jenkins lived in Alma.

In the summer of 1871 the Cambrian News reported holiday visitors staying in a house in Alma Place for six weeks. They were mostly from Oswestry and probably came on the train because the railway had opened in 1863. Their landlord was Captain Jenkins. Visitors also

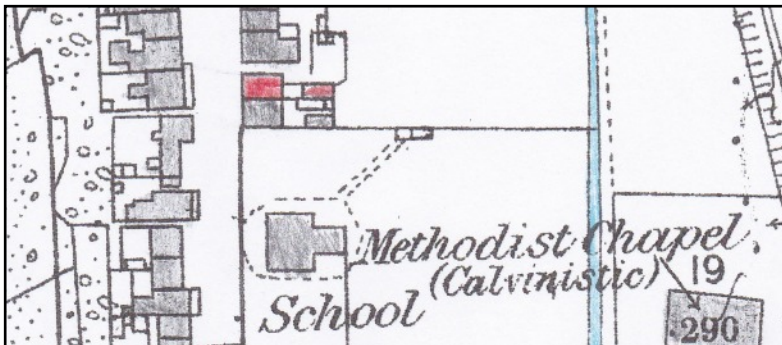
stayed in 1880 - Mrs A. (Anne) Jenkins's was their landlady, the Captain Jenkins mentioned in the newspaper could be either David or John, and Mrs Ann Jenkins could be the wife or widow of either of them.

RIGHT David Jenkins son of David Jenkins 1814 - 1905. He became a Captain in 1868 but moved away to live in Averystwyth (Picture and details courtesy of Dr Terry Davies).



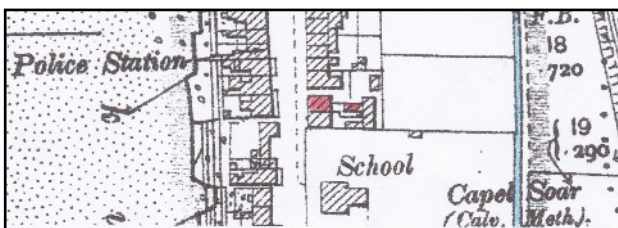
In 1871 living in Alma was the other Anne - John's wife, she was 58 and had a daughter Mary, 27 married to a master mariner called Lloyd. There was a grand-daughter Anne Ellen Lloyd. John was away at sea when the Census takers called. He was to die in 1878.

In 1881 at the Census their daughter Mary Lloyd, by then a widow was keeping a lodging house, with her daughter Ann Ellen, at Number Two, and at Anne Jenkins, then 66 years old and a widow was keeping a lodging house at Alma.



LEFT Anne Jenkin's Alma in 1886, marked in red, seemingly there were remains of one of the old cottages in the garden. Marked in blue is a brook of fresh water (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888, Cardiganshire NW III,10)

In 1891 there were still three homes called Alma Place. John's widow Ann died that year, She was buried at The Garn in Bow Street, so this was a chapel going Jenkins family. Her grand-daughter Ann Ellen who had married a mariner Edward Meddins was living at Alma. In the cottage at the back was a deaf young mariner's wife Mary Davies.



LEFT By 1904 there was a new building along the back of the Alma Place pair of houses (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire NW III,10)

In 1910 for a tax planned, but not levied, Edward Merrins was living in Alma, but the owner was Anna Ellen Hughes. I think that Ann Ellen had married again and was now Mrs Hughes and Edward was her son by her first husband. They also had the (then) cottage at the back.

A Guide Book to Borth in the 1920s advertised Alma with holiday accommodation of three beds in two bedrooms and two sitting rooms (Aberystwyth Public Library).

In the Rates of 1925, we have only two homes listed, Edward Meddins was still at Alma. The present Glanaber was called Lerrri Dale and the owner and occupier was David Hughes, perhaps a son of Ann Ellen when married to Mr Hughes?



In 1949, for the Rates, Alma was owned by Nellie Meddins, Ann Ellen's daughter, and Edward Meddins her son was living there.

LEFT In the foreground is Alma, very much as it is today except for sash windows with eight panes. Beyond Glanaber is the National School. The photograph from an old glass plate is pre 1995 when the old school was demolished (Photograph courtesy of Peter Fleming).

The Rev. J. H. Bloomer paid the rates for Alma in 1957. With votes for the house in 1963 were John Howard

Bloomer and Elizabeth Florence Bloomer (Electoral Registers and Rates Ceredigion Archives)

Today Alma is a two bed roomed home.

A modern map lists a Ty Bach across the rear of Alma and Glanaber, and is the building drawn on the 1905 map.



LEFT A large modern house now sits across the rear of both houses within their former gardens and may have developed from the 1905 building.

Alma was a battle in the Crimean War in September 1864, a victory for the British and French, and Alma was a nearby river. The date fits quite well with a date of about 1861 for the houses of Alma Place.

(On Terry Davies's borthmaritimehistory web site is an article about the Jenkins family's and their ships.)

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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.

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