

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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ARFÔR Morfa Borth

On the beach side in the northern part of Borth High Street. Formerly called Picton House. Built after 1859 and before 1865. Home of a Jones family of master mariners, and in the 1960s used by the Midland Bank.

Arfôr in 2016.



Arfôr is a two storey house, semi-detached and double fronted. There is an attic floor lit by roof lights. The house has two chimneys, the one on the south of rendered rubble stone and shared with Glan-y-don, and a thinner one on the other end of its roof is also rendered. The roof has an overhang supported by pairs of dentils (brackets). The walls are probably rubble stone and some care has been taken with the decoration of the rendering on the front of the house. It is divided



into two with a string course (line of moulding) below the upper windows and the edges of the walls have bold quoins. The upper section is smooth, the lower section has the pattern of rusticated masonry - though not much can be seen as the ground floor bay windows are quite wide and some of the pattern has been lost above these. The upper windows are sash windows with twelve lights. The ground floor square bay windows have with almost flat roofs which used to be edged by patterned railings. Between them is an attractive classically framed front door which is inset. The narrow front garden is enclosed by a rendered wall. This used to be topped by railings but they have gone.

There is a gated passage on the north of the house, partly enclosed and leading on to a building in the yard. The Welsh name for the house means 'on the sea'.

LEFT The nicely framed front door is inset.

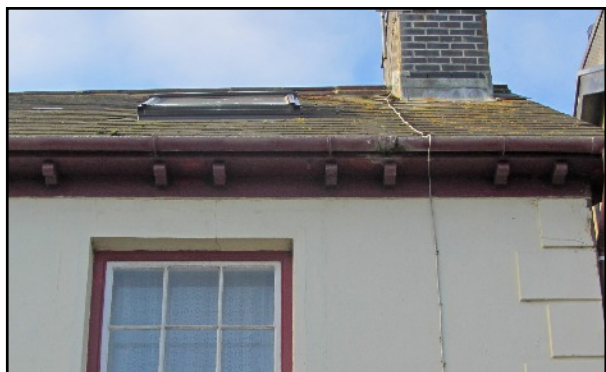


The rear of the house from the beach in 2016. A large dormer window gives a good view of the sea. The extension on the south side of the yard was already there in 1886. The building on the north side has a balcony for good views of the beach. A tall wall encloses the north side of the yard. All the rear windows are modern.



LEFT A large stone wall divides the end of the yard from St Clare next door. There is also an area between the brick wall and the wall of vertical sleepers to protect the rear of the house from the sea during bad storms.

RIGHT Pairs of dentils (brackets) support the overhanging roof, these are at the front of the house.

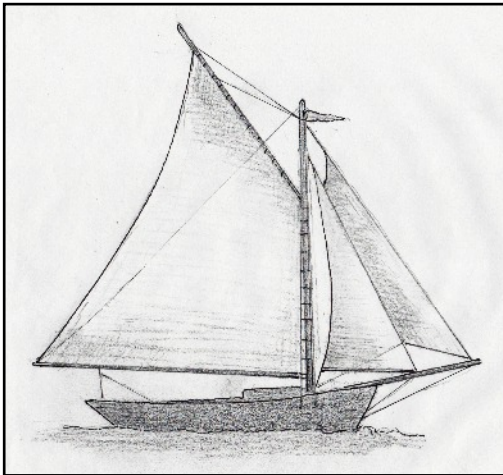


The ground for this house is the stone bank thrown up by the sea and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor who owned it as it was no use for farming. On a map of 1829 it was beach (National Archives LRRO 1/3060) The road had been there for centuries, it was used in the twelfth century and was a turnpike road by the 1770s. It led to a ferry from Ynyslas to Aberdovey and was a quick way to North Wales. Fresh water for the cottages and houses came from a brook behind the buildings on the other side of the road. By the time this house was built there was a tap with good spring water in the street outside the Cambrian Hotel (later Pantyfedwen and now gone).

In 1848 the site was still open ground. (Tithe Apportionments Map Llangihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township - on line at CYNEFIN - National Library of Wales).

However on a map of encroachments belonging to the Crown Manor in 1859 a plot ready for a house is marked but no house had been drawn on it. (Map National Archives LRRO 1/3060)

This was Picton House, probably named after Sir Thomas Picton 1758-1815, who was a famous soldier who died at Waterloo. Borth High Street had a Picton Terrace and sailing ships were named after him. The name Picton House first appears on the gravestone of Catherine Jones who died aged 66 in 1865 (born in 1799) (Gravestone Llandre Churchyard) Her husband John Jones, a master mariner, commanded the sloop 'Picton' and had shares in her. He died in 1834. Catherine was a widow for a long time.

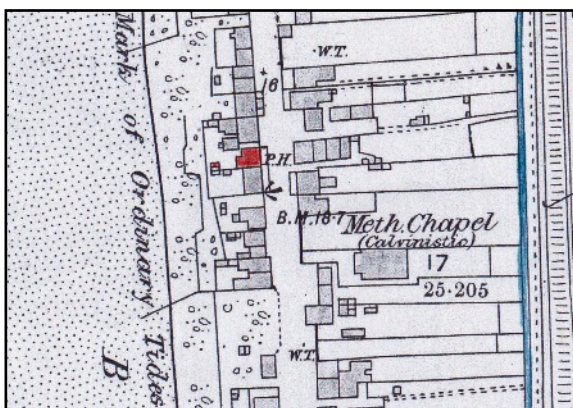


LEFT A Sloop, wooden sailing ships of this size were used in the coastal trade.

In the house in 1871 at the Census were only two mariner's children; Richard Jones aged 8 and Margaret A. Jones aged 3, being looked after by a servant Margaret Morgan aged 28 and single. A gravestone at Llandre has the mariner, a master mariner John Jones of Picton House, born in 1827 and he died on 17th September 1872 aged only 45. His wife Margaret Jones lived to be 75 and died in 1903. She was local, born in Borth. Six of their children died; Mary aged 3 months, Henry Holland aged 7, Margaretta aged 2, Mary aged 3 months,

Margaret Anne aged three weeks, and Morgan aged 4 months (Llandre Churchyard) John Jones was the commander of the 'Picton' on 3rd January 1861 and the 6 February 1871. (Aberystwyth Register of Shipping, Ceredigion Archivbes).

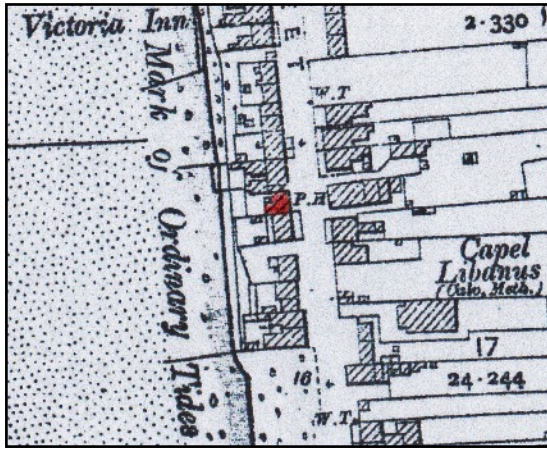
The widowed Mrs Jones was in Picton House in the summer of 1880 and she had holiday visitors staying for four weeks They were from Newtown and had probably come on the train (Cambrian News, guests were listed in each weekly edition). There was enough room for two families to stay in the house at the same time. In the 1881 Census she had 'independent means' and was then aged 52. In the house was her daughter Margaret Anne aged 13. She had a 36 year old, unmarried domestic servant, Margaret Morgans - who was local. Another widow with independent means was visiting them, 73 year old Anne Jenkins.



LEFT Mrs Margaret Jones's house in 1886 is marked in red. Interestingly the surveyor has drawn the yard shared with St Clare, indicating they both had the same owner at that time. The small building in its yard was probably its Ty Bach - outside lavatory. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888, Cardiganshire III.10)

In the house at the 1891 Census was another Mrs Jones, Mrs Frances Jones aged 34 who was born about 1857 in London. With her were two small daughters; Frances B. Jones aged 5 born in Borth, and Lilian Jones born in Llantrisant. They spoke both Welsh and English The head of the household was a widower,

Richard Davies, born in Llangwyrfron Cardiganshire about 1823. Kellys Directory of 1895 lists him as the Rev. Richard Davies, a Welsh Calvinistic Methodist minister. Also listed at Picton House was a master mariner John H. Williams.



Picton House in 1904, marked in red. The small building in the yard had gone and there were more fences between the house and the beach. There had been a bad storm in 1896. The house then had its own yard. (Detail from the 25 inch map, as before, revised in 1904 and published in 1905)

In 1910 the distinguished mariner Captain Lewis Williams was both the owner and occupier of Picton House. For a tax planned but not levied, the house was valued at £306, with £11.1s to pay, and £13 gross - the value of a good house, Glan-y-don next door was £245. (Ceredigion

Archives, T/DV/18 and map at the National Library of Wales). In 1920 Captain Williams was the master of a steamship, which he left Borth to join at Middlesborough (Cambrian News April 3rd.)

Captain Williams was listed as Paying the rates in 1925, but this had been altered to David Lloyd. The Captain had taken his family to a bigger house, next to Bardsey in the terrace at the north of Borth, and he took the name 'Picton House' with him. So the house had to have a new name and became Arfôr.



David Lloyd paid the rates in 1934 and 1938 for 'Arfor'. Mrs Lloyd ran a clothes shop (Y Tincer May 1986, article on the Borth Memorial Hall).

With votes for the house in the General Election of 1945 were Ivy D. Lloyd, Sarah Lloyd and Frederick Arthur Pugh. Also with a vote was Elizabeth S. Pugh who paid the rates in 1949.

LEFT In this detail from an old postcard dated about 1955 Glan-y-don is nearest and beyond is Arfor which had a decorative balustrade above its bay windows.

About 1962 Mrs B. Pugh was advertising furnished accommodation of four bedrooms and one sitting room to let for holiday visitors ('Guide to Borth', Aberystwyth Public Library)

Paying the rates in 1963 was E. S. Pugh with a rate for the 'back house' and a rate for a Bank. With votes for the house that year were Raymond and Bridget Crotty. Possibly Mrs Pugh was putting tenants in the house.

The bank was the Midland Bank, who in 1968 were using the house, between 9.30 and 11.30 on Thursdays in winter and on Tuesday and Thursdays in July and August. Mr Pugh advertised three bedrooms and parking and a furnished bungalow chalet ('Handbook and Guide to Borth', Ceredigion Archives).

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Tai'r Borth / Houses of Borth
gan/by Beryl Lewis
[cyf/ref ADX/1629]

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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-eredigion.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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