

# 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.*

# BORTH'S ASSEMBLY ROOM

Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour.

Now gone. A garage very much the same size stands on the site which is on Chapel Lane behind Pebbles. Built on former garden land behind of Cambrian Terrace.



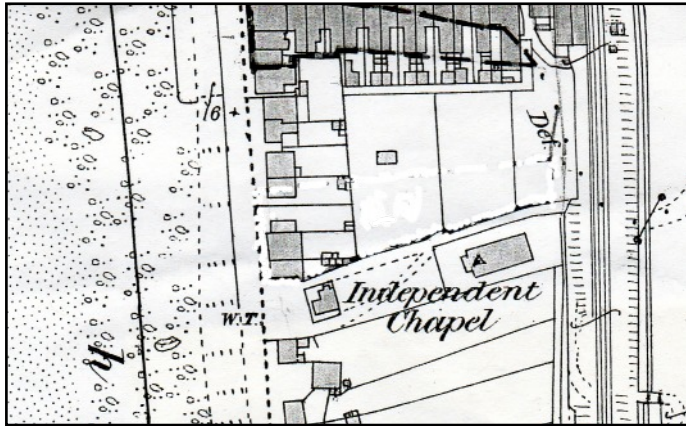
Borth was very late in having one of these but it was built by 1885 and a company had been formed, the Hon. Secretary was Lieutenant Colonel R. Fielding of Rutland House Cambrian Terrace (Kelly's Directory) It had a stage or platform as in 1889 one April evening an operetta was performed there by a class from the Board School - Borth's 'Top School' at Y Borth (14 April, Cambrian News). Another dramatic performance was held there in aid of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in July 1906. There was a kitchen area as in 1898 as Miss Lewis the owner of the Glanleri Estate who had Bibury in Cambrian Terrace when staying in Borth, held a tea there for members of St Matthew's Church (Dec 2 Cambrian News). Concerts were held there, as for example one by the Borth Chapel Society in August 1890, and one in aid of funds for street lights in 1911 (Jan 20<sup>th</sup>.) In 1891 there was a 'Grand Bazaar' held there to raise funds for the church heating and lighting. The Assembly room was also used for a more serious purpose when the Inquest on the murder of Mary Davies was held there on the 4<sup>th</sup> October 1894.

This was the traditional set up for an Assembly Room. In July 1820 one in Aberystwyth was 45 feet by 25 feet and contained a 'ball and promenade room' and through folding doors a 'card room' 25 feet by 18 feet, a billiard room the same size as the card room, and a 'reading room with newspapers. There was a ball every Tuesday in the season – July to October, a gentleman's subscription was one pound ten shillings, and a lady's one pound. Tea was included. No gentleman in boots was allowed in unless they were 'military'. The ladies drew tickets for places when they came into the room, and they took their places at the bottom after a dance. There was a master of ceremonies. The 'Promenades' were the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday in July at 1 o'clock, and then twice a week during the season. On Wednesdays

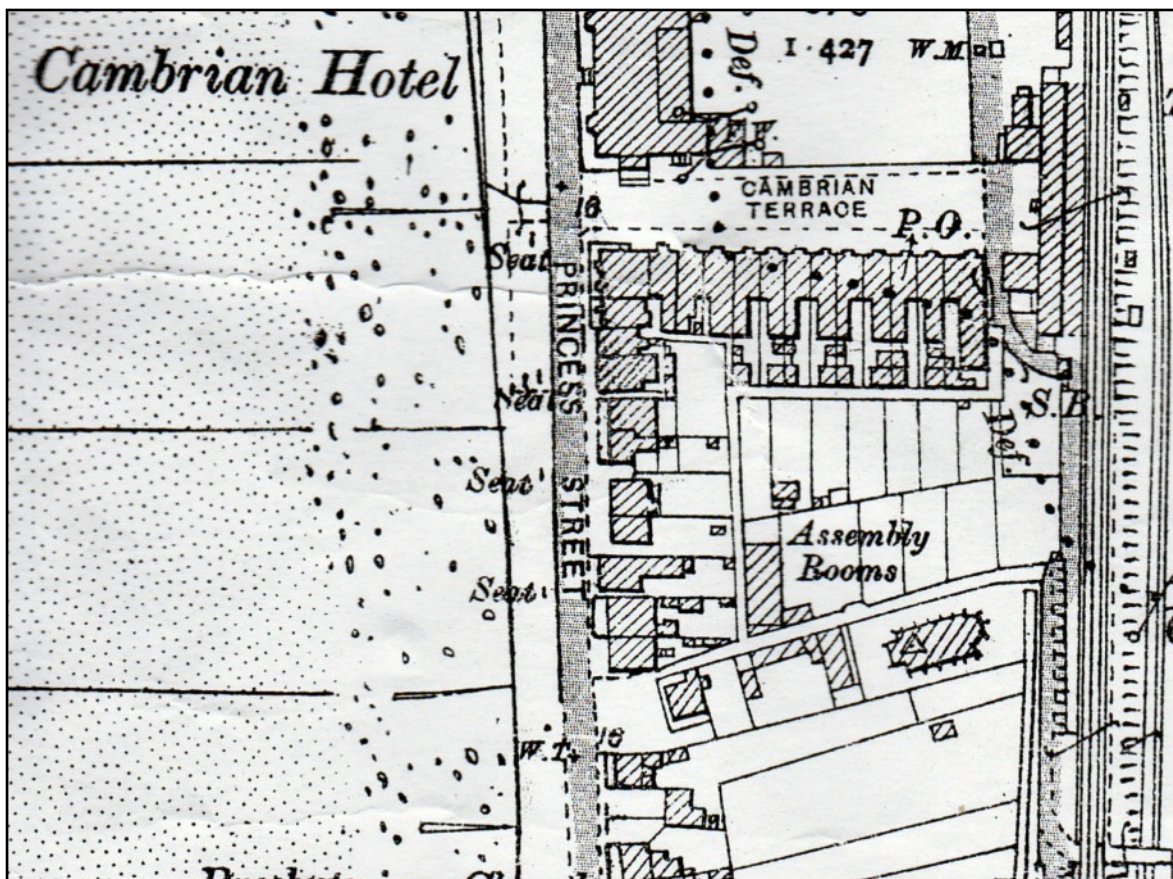
*Borth's Assembly Room (now gone)*

a Welsh harpist attended, on Fridays a small military band alternately with a harpist. There would probably have been a platform for the musicians.

There is no mention of 'balls' in Borth's Assembly Room in the newspapers possibly because there was a ballroom and billiard room in the Cambrian Hotel. Borth's Assembly Room was more like a large and convenient public hall. Borth was to have a billiard room much later in an old chapel in the 1920s.



*LEFT The site of the Assembly Room in 1886 - just an area of gardens behind The Terrace (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888, Cardiganshire NW)*



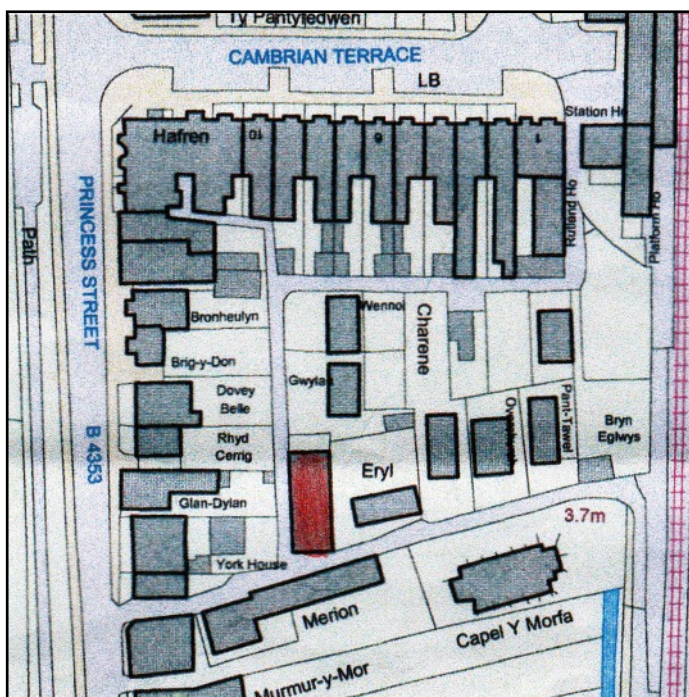
*ABOVE The Assembly Room in 1904. The front is angled with the lane (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map of Cardiganshire NW revised in 1904 and published in 1905)*

In 1910 the Assembly Room was valued for a tax not levied at three pounds four shillings, gross four pounds and was owned by the Assembly Room Company. It was not considered very valuable, the same as an older two storey house in the High Street such as Pomona.

*Borth Assembly Room (now gone)*



*LEFT The gardens of the Terrace in 1880. The Assembly Room would be tucked into the south western corner - not allocated to a specific Terrace house. Number 1 was Rutland House the home of the Hon. Secretary Lieutenant Colonel Fielding (Map based on a map of 1880 for a Sale, now at the Borth Railway Museum).*



*LEFT On this detail from a modern Council map the garage now on the site of the Assembly Room is marked in red. It is very similar in size to the Assembly Room. Today in 2019 the front of the garage is set back from the lane but the footing of this building is still visible. (Council Map courtesy of Councillor Ray Quant who provided it to help with research for a village event).*

The Assembly Room was replaced by a Memorial Hall which opened in 1925 in the middle of the village behind Welfare House.

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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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