

# 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.*

# BEATRICE

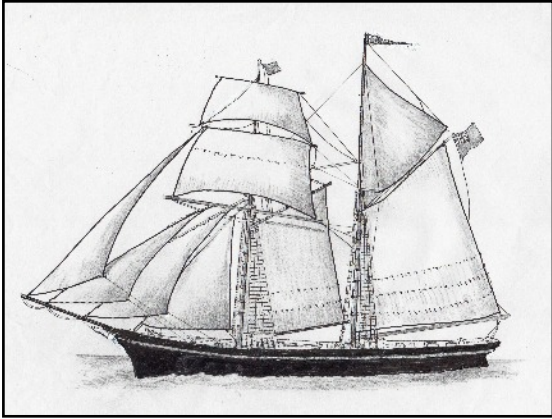
Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

The home of Enoch the son of Enoch James of the White Lion Inn on ground he had inherited from his father. Probably built by 1861. Still owned by the James family in 1910.



*ABOVE Beatrice in 2018.*

The house's name comes from a schooner called the 'Beatrice' that could carry 84 tonnes. She was built at Aberdovey by John James in 1855. On May 31 1858 Enoch James the son of master mariner and innkeeper Enoch James of the White Lion Inn was the captain and owned all 64 shares. She sailed for nearly thirty years until 14 December 1886 when she was wrecked off County Donegal, Ireland. Being the managing owner who arranged the cargoes



and the routes sailed, Enoch James and his children would have earned a good income from her.

*LEFT A Schooner*

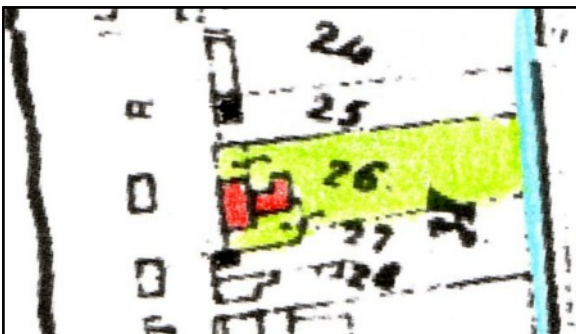
Beatrice is a semi-detached house, one of a pair with Ty Leri next door on the south. It has a gable roof parallel to the street and its walls are rendered. They are rubble stone with rounded stones from the beach. Either side of the front door in the rendering is a pattern of pilasters topped by a bracket holding up a cornice over the door. There is also a pattern of quoins between the house fronts. Beneath the ground floor wooden floorboards is sand. The front room on the south side once had a fireplace with a bread oven, suggesting this was the main living room of the house with a hearth suitable for cooking. Its chimney has gone.



*LEFT Beatrice nearest the camera and Ty Leri.*

In an old photograph on a postcard these house fronts were very much the same and they are very similar today though Beatrice has a smaller chimney than Ty Leri. At Ty Leri was master mariner David Daniel's widow. She too had shares in ships inherited from her husband and could have afforded a good house.

The Reverend Christmas Humphreys writing in 1929, and related to the Ellis family who had a great aunt who'd lived in Borth since 1819 - wrote that Beatrice was built on the site of a thatched cottage belonging to Evan Evans. (Terry Davies Website, translation of 'Borth Rhwng 100 a 50 o Flwyddoed yn ol') At the 1841 Census he was 45 years old and a mariner.



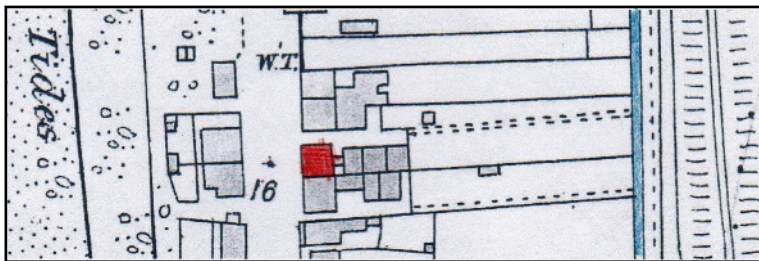
*LEFT In 1848 the building marked in red on Number 26 was the White Lion Inn - Resolute was probably already built beside it. Beatrice was not there yet. Marked in black to the south of it is the little cottage of Evan Evans (Detail from the Llanfigangel Genau'r Glyn Tithe Apportionments Map, cyfoeth Township, on-line at CYNEFIN).*

A possible remainder from his cottage was that animal bones were found under the floor of part of Beatrice - perhaps left from Evan's old cottage with a place for stock one end and people the other?

By the 1851 Census Evan Evans had gone. When Enoch James of the White Lion Inn died in 1856 Enoch his son had a house owned by his father, but it is not possible to say if it was Beatrice (Enoch James Will 1856 National Library of Wales). Possibly Enoch of the White Lion had

already bought the Evan Evans cottage? The schooner Beatrice was built in 1855 and came to Enoch James the elder the year before he died. At that time his son Enoch was a thirty five year old master mariner. In the Census of 1861 there were two houses adjacent to the White Lion Inn empty. Next was Enoch James's home probably Beatrice. He was away at sea. His wife Jane was there. She was 31 years old and born in Frongoch, Henllys, Cardiganshire and had married Enoch on January 23 1852 (Parish Records Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn). His father was to provide them with a house by buying or inheriting the Evan Evans's cottage and garden. Their son Richard was born about 1860. Jane was the daughter of William Owen. In Borth at this time around 1860 there was a great deal of building going on as the railway was coming, the station opened to passengers in 1863.

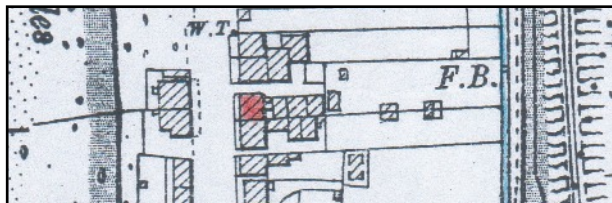
By 1866 the terrace of three White Lion Lane cottages had been built behind Beatrice. Enoch inherited all the ground around the old Inn, and he retired from the sea to live in Beatrice, and was buried on 24 February 1886 aged 64. (Gravestone Llandre Church. It is in Welsh). His widow Jane continued to live in Beatrice.



*LEFT This was Enoch James's Beatrice, marked in red, in 1886. It had no front garden. The footpath allowed all the families in the James's houses to access a brook of fresh water at the end of the garden (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey*

*Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888, Cardiganshire NW III.10)*

In the 1891 Census Enoch James's son Richard, a master mariner like his father was living there too. He was briefly married in 1908 to Mary Elizabeth Margaret Williams but she died in 1911. His mother Jane was still there in the 1901 Census, aged 73, looked after by a sixteen year old local girl and relation, Sarah Pryce Ellis. Jane James died in 1908. (Gravestone Llandre Churchyard)



*LEFT In 1904 the house, marked in red had a front garden. F. B. was a footbridge over the brook (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire NW III.10).*



*LEFT Ty Leri is nearest the camera in this photograph on an old postcard. It showed the houses had sash windows and both front gardens had identical low walls topped by good quality railings. Beatrice then had a chimney at the north end of its roof (Postcard private collection and the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments Wales have a copy which they have put on-line).*

## *Beatrice Page 4*

In 1910 the house was owned by Jane's son Richard James and living there was a young John Morris Evans who worked for a baker and confectioner. He had been born in Porthmadoc about 1882. Sarah Pryce Evans née Ellis had become his wife. In 1911 they had been married for two and a half years, with two children, one of whom had died. At the Census in the house was their baby David Eifion Evans who was 12 weeks old.

In 1925 and 1934 John Morris Evans paid the Rates for the house as the owner, and Kelly's Directory of 1824 listed it as a 'private residence'. Sometime after 1922 apartments for holiday makers were advertised with 3 bedrooms and 1 sitting room. (The Illustrated Borth Guide, Aberystwyth Public Library).

With votes for the house in 1945 were John Morris Evans and his wife Sarah, Thomas Arfan Evans and Richard Evans. The Rates in 1949 and still in 1957 were paid by Mr Evans.

In 1963 Sarah Pryse Evans had a vote for the house (Electoral Registers and Rates, Ceredigion Archives).



After 1968 a painter and decorator Harry Philip lived there, and advertised himself in a 'Handbook and Guide to Borth'. His wife was Violet Elizabeth Philips.

*LEFT By 1975 Beatrice had been extended at the rear to join White Lion Place Cottage Number 3. The extension is only one storey high so the rear windows of Beatrice can look out over it. There are roof lights for the attic floor (Photograph 2015)*

Beatrice once had a cellar but during modern improvements to the interior this was filled in.

Beatrice is a handsome house, and with James ownership for so many years we can possibly enjoy how its street front looked when it was built.

The author would like to thank Mrs Davies for some useful information for this article. She had lived in Beatrice and with her husband had modernised the interior, also Mr John Ellis and Mr David Rowlands for family information.

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

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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-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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