

# 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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# BRONHEULYN COTTAGE

Today the remains of a beach pebble built ancient cottage are part of a modernised cottage sharing a wall with the back of Bronheulyn.



*LEFT The cottage from the garden of Brig-y-don.*

Today this is a separate property from Bronheulyn House, but there was still no Bronheulyn Cottage by 1963 in the Rates and it had been drawn as part of Bronheulyn House and garden on the 1888 and 1905 25 inch Ordnance Survey Maps (Rates, Ceredigion Archives). This suggests that then it was part of Bronheulyn House but was sectioned off sometime in the twentieth century. Today it has a modern kitchen, with a fireplace and chimney at the south end of the building, large windows of the classical, many paned 'sash' variety with the entrance door on its east facing front, new stairs, and upstairs a modern bathroom and two bedrooms. There is a small attic in the roof space, and an area of yard.



*LEFT The entrance passage to the cottage past Bronheulyn House showing the beach pebbles in the wall from the old cottage. This cottage had an upper floor and stairs, and the beach pebbles go right up to the top of the gables. These walls would have had lime plaster and coats of lime wash to protect them, and though dampened by rain, would dry out and keep the inside of the cottage warm and dry.*

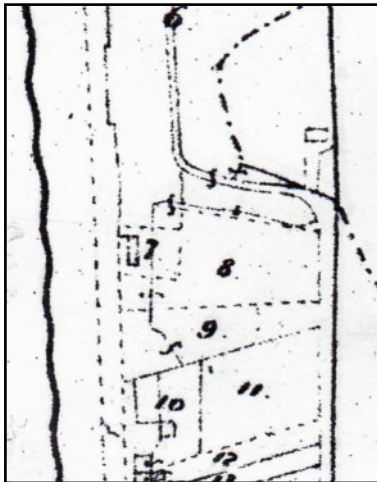


*LEFT* The entrance door of this old cottage was in the northern gable wall, and is now blocked up by bricks. The old door like those in Morfa Borth's pre-railway buildings has an arch of stonework above it. That wall also had a fireplace - now hidden.



*RIGHT* High up on the wall is an old window showing this cottage had an upper floor. Photographs taken in 2013.

The ground for the cottage was enclosed from the pebble bank which the Crown Manor Court called 'waste' because it was no use for farming. Someone called Jones enclosed an acre and 24 perches (nearly an acre and a quarter) it in 1823 and built a small cottage on it (Map 1829 National Archives LRRO 1/3060). I

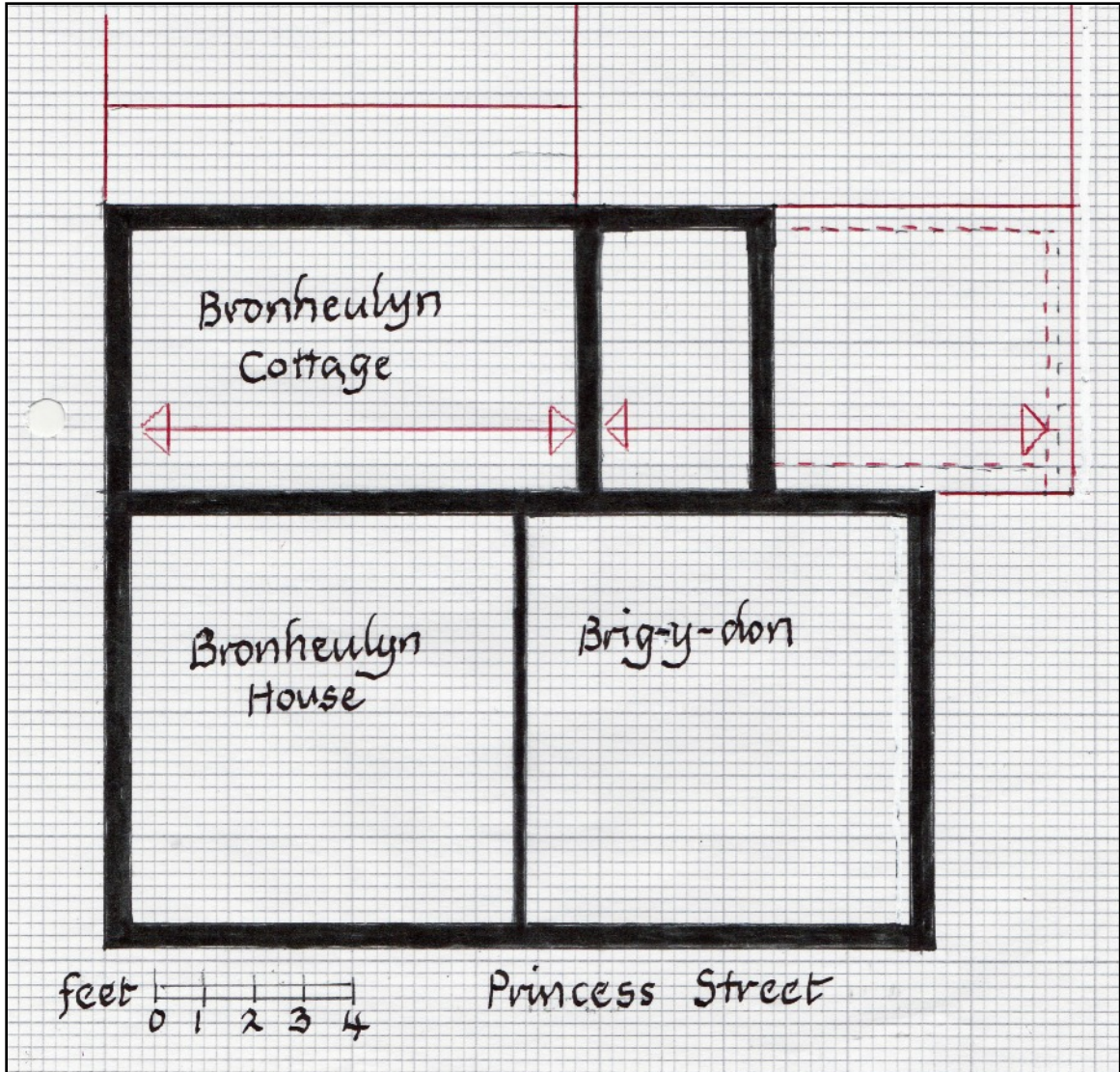


*LEFT* By 1848 there were two cottages with gardens of 25 perches, no. 7 on this detail from the Tithe Apportionments Map. They were set back a little from the street. Behind was a large 'garden' of John Thomas. They were owned and occupied by John Harter (a mis-spelling of Arter) and Evan Jenkins. Both were mariners, and Evan Jenkins was also a ship owner. Lewis Jenkins who died in 1826 aged 71 'of Bronheulyn' was Evan Jenkins's father and also a mariner, and it is probable that the name Bronheulyn goes back into the eighteenth century. The Welsh may translate as 'Sunny Top'

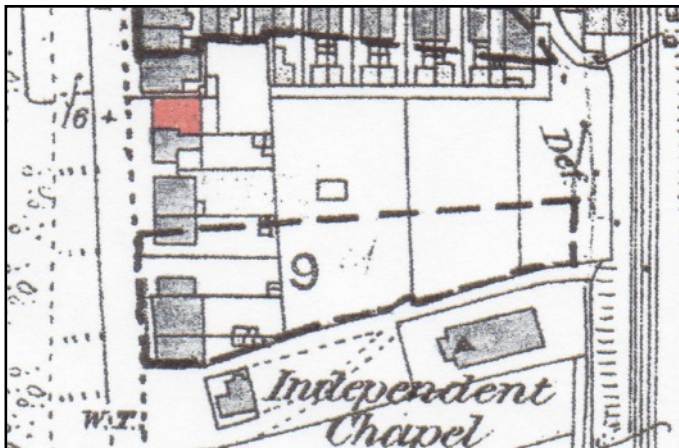
The railway opened in 1863 and Savin had by 1870 built his huge Cambrian Hotel and The Terrace on the land immediately to the north of the cottages (number 6 on the map).

In 1871 living in the cottage then called Number 1 Princess Street, was Ann Jenkins, aged 62, a widow and also owning ships, born c. 1809. When the takers of the 1871 Census called, also in the house was her nephew John Jones, a master mariner. There is no mention of the place in the 1881 Census, but the Jones family were to inherit the site. They were a Borth family. Going south along the street the cottage was the first without a name - as the shop next door (now the Premier Stores) was called 'Garibaldi. That Census did

not call cottages by names - only more important buildings. In the other cottage had been the Arter family, another Borth family, and in 1891 the Arter family were still living on the same site in the new Brig-y-don, then called Bay View. There are no photographs of the old cottages found so far.



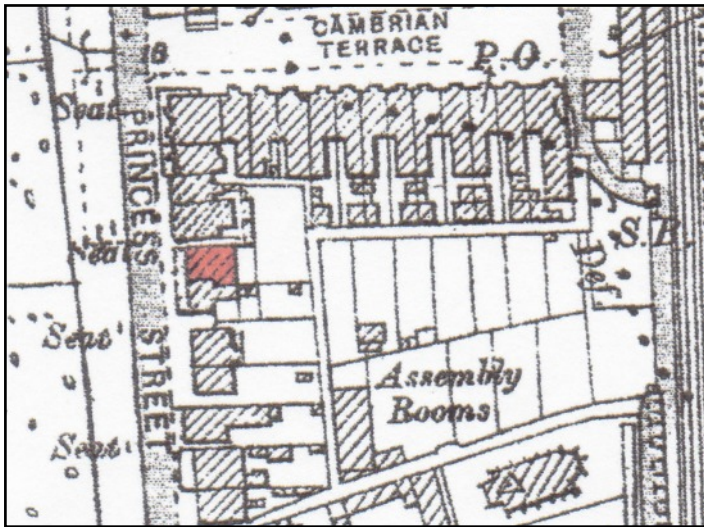
ABOVE A reconstruction showing the position of the pair of old cottages - the red lines from the 1886 Ordnance Survey 25 inch map published in 1888, Cardiganshire III.10.



LEFT In 1886 Bronheulyn House is marked in red, and the surveyor drew it as one house with a small back garden. Garibaldi (shop and house) was just to the north and behind was a garden belonging to Savins's Terrace. Bronheulyn House and Brig-y-don were probably the houses we see today and the second old cottage, once behind Brig-y-don had gone.

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In the other cottage had been the Arter family, another Borth family, and in 1891 John Arter, a mariner, was living in the other half of the new building, Brig-y-don, then called Bay View.



*LEFT Bronheulyn house in 1904 (a detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire III.10)*

Today Bronheulyn Cottage is a separate property from Bronheulyn House, but there was no Bronheulyn Cottage in the Rates Valuations of 1910 and 1925, and it was drawn as part of Bronheulyn House and garden on the 1888 and 1905 25 inch Ordnance Survey Maps.

The rates of 1935 mention a 'bake house' with Bronheulyn House -

perhaps in the old cottage section at the back? It was then in the ownership of the Roberts family who had the Garibaldi then called 'Roberts Stores' beside it to the north and which then had a café upstairs. There was no mention of a bake house in later rates. By 1963 there was still no mention of a Bronheulyn Cottage in the rates or the electoral register (Ceredigion Archives).

Today it is a complete home with its modern kitchen, with a fireplace and chimney at the south end of the building, and large windows of the classical, many paned 'sash' variety, and an entrance door on its east front.

*LEFT There is a new staircase and this recess was where the stairs of the old cottage had been.*



*(The author would like to thank the present occupier of the cottage for help with this article)*

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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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