

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 HOUSE

Princess Street Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

Princess Street is an extension of High Street, and there is a small footpath between Bronheulyn House and the Premier Stores building next door on the north. It is one of a pair with Bay View next door and has Bronheulyn Cottage joined to its rear. Across the road is the promenade and the beach. This was the smarter end of Borth, near the impressive Cambrian Hotel, the Cambrian Terrace, the Railway Station and the Golf Course. Built by 1886 and with 14 main rooms this was designed and used for holiday visitors who before the age of cars, could come to Borth on the train.



ABOVE Bronheulyn House is the left hand house of the pair, Brig-y-don is on the right.

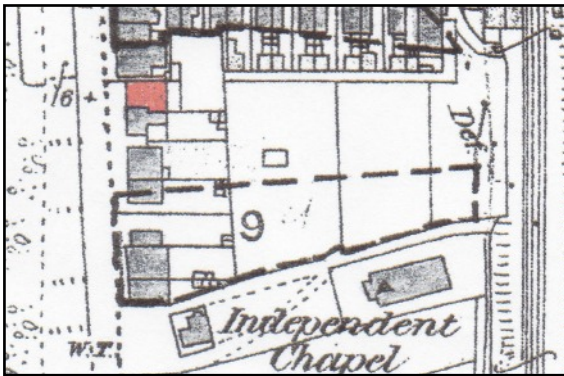
The houses are a full three storeys with roof lights adding an extra floor under the roof. It is a gable roof parallel with the road. The walls are rubble stone - exposed at the front but rendered at the sides and rear. This use of exposed stone walls with yellow bricks at the edges was popular in Borth at the latter part of the nineteenth century, for example the pair of Chesterton (Lorne Villa) and Gordon Villa which date from 1891 and the large London House. These were not local bricks but came on the train from places such as Ruabon in North Wales. The builders made an attractive pattern with yellow and red shaped bricks at the eaves. Bricks made a very tidy edging for rubble stone walls. Bronheulyn and Brig-y-don

have arches over their front doors. The bay windows were already there in 1906. Today the windows are modern. There would be a good view of the sea from all the front windows.



LEFT One of the upper windows with details of the decorative bricks under the eaves. The wall is not coursed rubble stone and there are no rounded stones from the beach.

Today there are no chimneys, but a postcard of 'South Parade' and a Frith postcard of 1906 shows a substantial chimney at the end of a smooth slate roof.



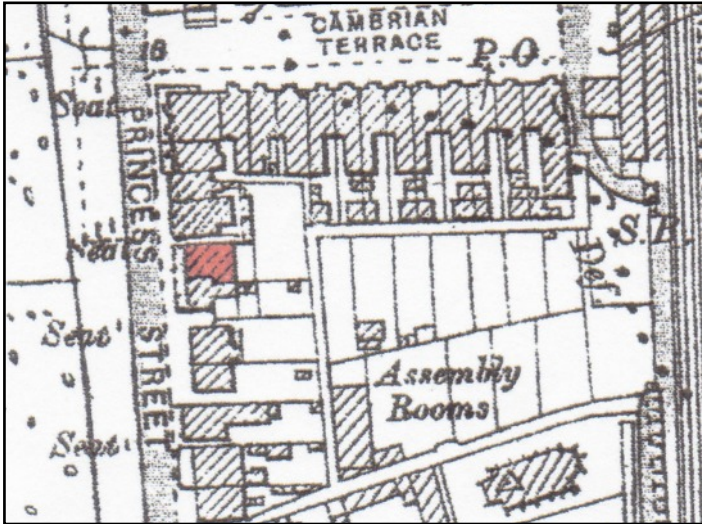
LEFT Coloured red is Bronheulyn in 1886. It only had a small back yard and the ground behind was with Savin's Cambrian Terrace houses. Bronheulyn's shape indicates that what today is Bronheulyn Cottage was part of the main house as the usual shape for such a 'villa' at that time was with an extension at the back for its kitchen as Brig-y-don had next door. It had no cottage on its rear. The front of these houses opened directly on to the street but was set back a little from Uppingham House to the north. The big areas of ground at the back were the gardens belonging to the Terrace houses.



Living in Bronheulyn in 1891 were Mrs Margaret Jones aged 62 with 'own means' (ie money to support herself) and her daughter Margaret Anne aged 23, of no occupation. They spoke both Welsh and English, and had a general domestic servant, Ann Jenkins, aged 22, born in Bow Street. In 1895 Mrs Jones advertised 'apartments for holiday makers'. Mrs Jones and her daughter had moved there from Picton House, now Arfor. She was the widow of John Jones, a master mariner who died on 17th September 1872 aged only 45. In the great storm of October 9th. 1898, the Cambrian News reported a wall behind Bronheulyn was swept away. Mrs Jones wrote her Will on 3 March 1903 leaving everything to her daughter Margaret.

LEFT Margaret Jones's Bronheulyn on the left in 1892. The front door had a hood to protect it from the weather, and the windows were sash windows with blinds and curtains. The tall chimney was probably yellow brick possibly with red stripes.

There was no one in the house when the Census takers called in 1901.



LEFT Little had changed in 1904 - except that there was a narrow front garden beside the street. The seats on the sea front were for the use of the occupants of Cambrian Terrace (Details from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905. I

In 1910 for a tax planned but not levied the house was valued at £506, with £17 to pay and £20 gross. Brig-y-don next door was £600 - both good quality and valuable houses. The owner and occupier of Bronheulyn was Margaretta Jones.

At the Census of 1911 living in the house with its fourteen main rooms was a Congregational Minister the Reverend Joseph Llewellyn aged 50 and

born in Cilcennig. He had been married for 21 years to Mary Jane Llewellyn born in Clarach. Also in the house were their son Richard Penry Llewellyn 17 and daughter Rhodwen 15, both born in Borth. Also there was their niece, a dressmaker age 29, Elizabeth Grace, single and born in Liverpool, and their nephew Jonathan William Whiterod aged 2, born in Rotherhithe, London. The Rev. Llewellyn was the first chairman of Borth's Public Reading Room and Library (from a newspaper cutting in Aberystwyth Public Library). His photograph taken by John Thomas is on-line from the National Library of Wales.

In 1922 furnished apartments were advertised there to let. In 1925 the owner of the house was Dr John Jones, and occupying it was J. H. Whiterod - perhaps a relative of Jonathan William the nephew of the Jones family (Rates, Ceredigion Archives). With the house was a 'bakehouse' (Rates, Ceredigion Archives)

In 1926 Kelly's Directory listed a private resident living there called John Thomas Davies.

Howard Lloyd Roberts had been paying the rates for Bronheulyn House but he died in 1935, and then paying the rates for the house and bakehouse was Miss Lloyd Roberts. Mary Lloyd Roberts was his daughter and owned the family's 'Robert's Stores' next door (now the Premier Stores) which then had a café. Like her father she could draw very good cartoons and some she drew of local people can be seen in the Borth Review of 1949 in the National Library of Wales. With votes for the house at the General Election of 1945 were Margaret J. Jones, Margaret P. Lloyd Roberts and Mary Lloyd Roberts.

This was a very respectable house, because by 1956 the National Provincial Bank of Aberystwyth rented a room there, open from 9.30 to 11.30 on Thursdays in the winter, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays in July and August (Handbook and Guide to Borth, probably 1968, private collection).

Paying the rates in 1963 was Mr Roberts and with votes for the house was J. Aiton and Sarah Ann Lloyd.

A very old cottage was incorporated into the rear of this house. For the history of the land and cottage please see 'Bronheulyn Cottage'. Brig-y-don also once had an old cottage behind it but that one has gone.

LEFT The rear of Bronheulyn house rendered blue in 2016 and Bronheulyn Cottage behind it.



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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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