

# 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

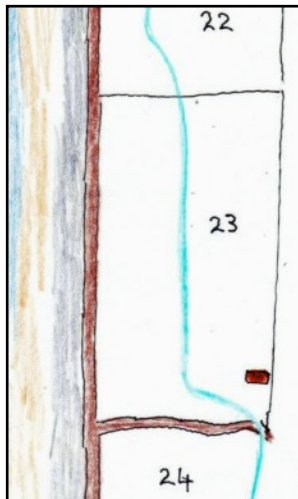
Photographs and History by BERYL LEWIS

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# THE CAMBRIAN HOTEL

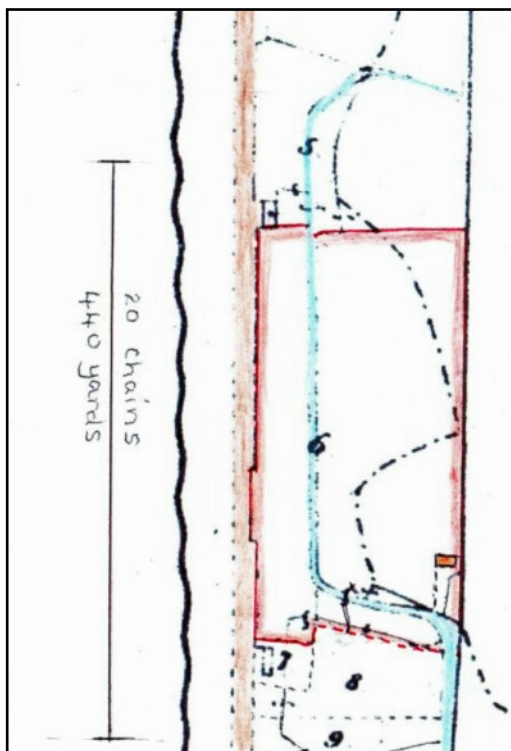
## Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

Licensed for the sale of alcoholic liquor in September 1864. It was the Borth Hydropathic Establishment in 1896, the Grand Hotel after 1931, the Pantyfedwen Conference Centre for Yr Urdd Cymru - the Welsh League of Youth- from 1947 and was demolished in 1979. Today flats and homes have been built on the site.



The ground on which the hotel was built was originally 'waste', a shingle bank between the sea and the Cors Fochno marsh. It was owned by the Crown Manor, and had been enclosed in 1802 by John Lewis, a lawyer and smallholder, and with drainage ditches had become pasture. He was able to buy it from the Manor. It was on the east side of the main street and was nearly five acres. There was only one building on it, John Lewis's home, Terfynau (Welsh for boundaries) which stood somewhere beneath the present station building. A lane led to John Lewis's home and a large reclaimed pasture of Pryse Pryse of Gogerddan adjoined on the east.

*LEFT A detail copied from a 1829 Crown Manor Map. Terfynau is coloured red. The watercourse was a brook of fresh water. (NA LRRO/3060)*



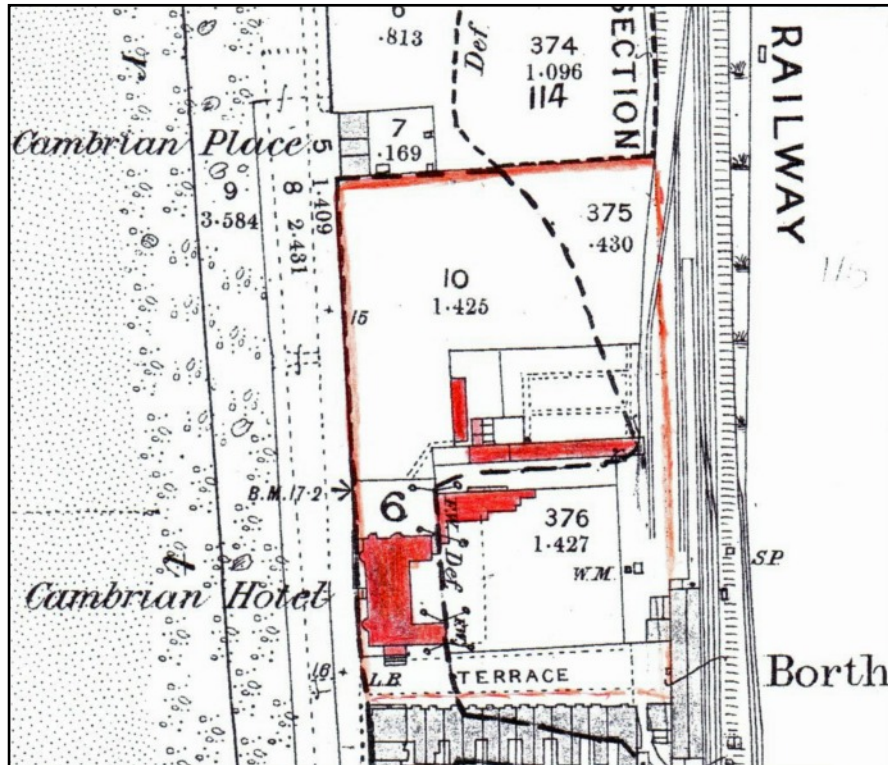
The road had been there for centuries and was a quick way to North Wales using a ferry from Ynyslas across the River Dovey to Aberdovey. It had become a turnpike road by the 1770s.

*LEFT The ground in 1848. John Lewis's field was Number 6. His land is outlined in red, and the main street in brown. The dotted line on the map represented a township boundary - Cyfoeth on the west and Henllys on the east and was on the old course of the River Leri. (Tithe Apportionments Map for Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township)*

John Lewis's land was sold to the developer Thomas Savin who brought the railway and built a Borth Railway Station, the great Cambrian Hotel and Cambrian Terrace. Borth Railway Station opened to passengers in 1863. Holidaymakers could comfortably reach the Borth from the Midlands and farther afield by train on Savin's railway line. The Hotel was a very imposing building indeed for

Borth's collection of relatively small whitewashed rubble stone houses and cottages. The village had almost ended there, only a single group of three houses and a few widely spaced cottages were beyond. Savin balanced his large hotel with the three storey Cambrian Terrace on the other side of the road to his station. This and the station were red brick with yellow

sandstone dressings. However Taliesin, the large beach front corner house of the Terrace and Uppingham House alongside, were rendered to match the hotel. Compared with the intricate Gothic splendour in carved ornament of Savin's Castle Hotel now part of the University, the Borth Cambrian Hotel was a simple and very much cheaper building and called 'Cambrian' because it was owned by the Cambrian Railway Company.

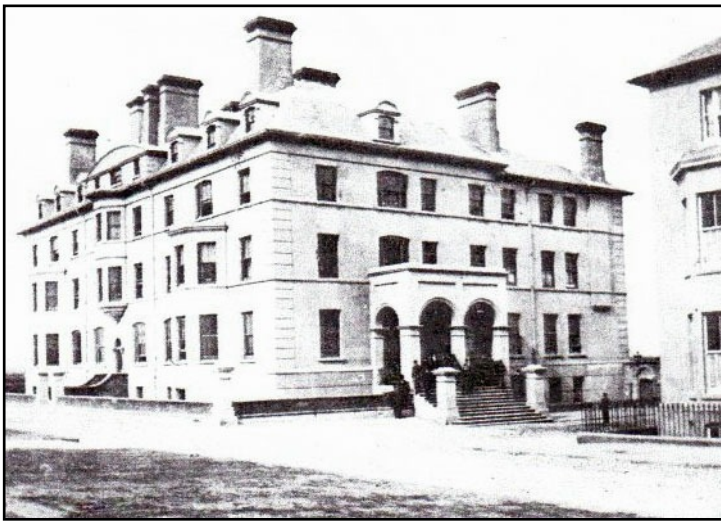


This is a detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map of 1888, the hotel and its outbuildings are marked in red, and the red outline is John Lewis's land purchased for it. The hotel grounds were quite spacious, in 1910 they measured nearly four and a half acres – 4 acres, 1 rod and 24 perches. (Ceredigion Archives T/DV/18). The ground ended at Cambrian Place, today at the house called Bodlondeb. C S. Briggs has suggested that the map shows us a garden with garden paths and a conservatory. (RCHMWales 2005) Savin established a garden at Ynyslas to supply his hotel with fruit and vegetables. We do not know what was grown in this hotel's grounds. Certainly there was a large 'pleasure garden' with two acres of lawn for croquet. Access for vehicles to the hotel and the outbuildings was from the rear along the eight-foot wide lane beside the station. A wall enclosed the hotel ground, and vehicles would have turned through a gateway into a passage alongside the long outbuilding. Later photographs show a brick wall with buttresses supported this passage and outbuilding because the 'garden' ground on the south side was much lower. The long building had a coach house and stables, a three room cottage with a room over, and a large storehouse which opened into the railway yard. Two railway sidings brought coal and other materials to that place. Coaches and horses owned by hotel guests could also be loaded and unloaded there as the hotel opened 30 or so years before cars. The hotel itself had horses, carriages and donkey traps for guests. It was not always a quiet site as the railway had sidings close to the hotel ground and the station had two lines to enable trains to overtake there, and there would have been whistles, puffing and clanking. The dark dashed lines on the map shows the township boundary, Cyfoeth-y-brenin on the west, Henllys on the east. This map from the Ceredigion Archives was an ex-Council map and one of the staff has added the number 6 from the Tithe Map.

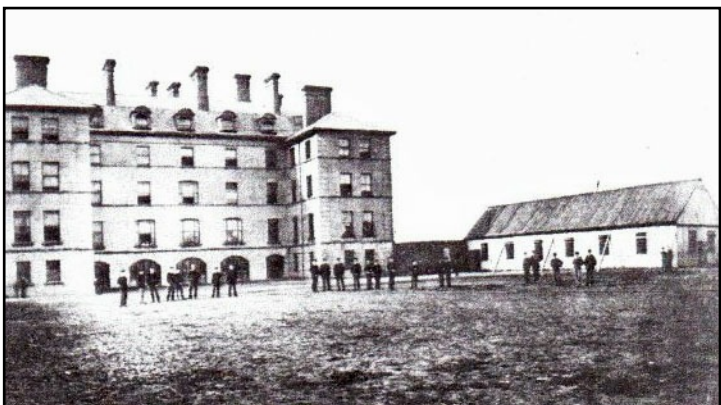


### *The Cambrian Hotel Page 3*

The clerk of works was George Jones and it is thought that the architect J.P.Seddon was consulted. ( 'The Buildings of Wales, Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion'pp.439-450) The design of the building was in the Italianate style, and with a height of four storeys including the basement and a width of nine bays it was on a grand scale. Built in brick, the bricks and other building materials for the hotel could be brought by train. Water was piped to the hotel by a four-inch water main from a reservoir on land belonging to the Cambrian Railway Company, fed by spring water from Penywern, part of a system to provide water for the locomotives (they had priority), for the station, and for all the houses in the Cambrian Terrace, and their gardens. A tap was also put in the street for the villagers. A deed made in 1878 with George Lewis allowed water used by the hotel to be carried away, and he was responsible for the maintenance of the reservoir and the pipework. (Ceredigion Archives, ADX/376) The owners of the hotel were allowed to use the seven-foot wide road (the Cambrian Terrace) built by Savin from Borth's main street to the station, and also the eight-foot wide road to the hotel's stable yard and store at the rear of the hotel's ground alongside the station. The hotel was a symmetrical building, and the main entrance was on the south side at the porch up a flight of stairs from the Terrace. There were some unusual features on the site for a builder to take into account. First the basement had to be settled in the shingle bank, and the architect or builder decided to make a semi-basement which meant the ground floor was raised up and had to be approached up a flight of steps. It was a large basement as it had room for a ballroom as well as the domestic services and cellars. The main weight of this tall building sat on the stones of the shingle bank, and the building, though brick was intended to be rendered. There were wings at the rear on both sides of the building which were made to sit comfortably on the slope between the shingle bank and the flat lower ground, formerly pasture which had been reclaimed from the Cors Fochno bog.



*LEFT These are our earliest photographs of the building taken in 1876 or 1877, by courtesy of the Archives of Uppingham School. Pupils can be seen in the lower photograph possibly lined up specially for the picture, and a timber building on the right was erected for them with room for classrooms for the whole school. In the foreground was probably a wall.*



The Italianate features copied by the Victorians from grand Italian Renaissance buildings, on this building were the string courses (mouldings that cast a shadow) between each storey of windows, the overhanging roof which cast a deep shadow, the arched porch with its flat top, more arches at the rear, and the large quoins in the rendering on the edges of the building. A few of the windows and doors had arched tops, but

some had shallow arches. John Pollard Seddon, if he was involved in the design of the Cambrian hotel, went on to build the immensely Gothic Castle Hotel (now the University building) for Savin from 1864 to 1865 when the railway reached Aberystwyth. Pollard preferred the 'Gothic' but could use an Italianate style as he had in 1854 for St Michael's Church in Hoarwityh in Herefordshire. What was not Italianate about the Cambrian Hotel I think were the hipped roofs and very pronounced chimneys. Italianate buildings appear to end flat, topped with a balustrade as at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight.



*This painting shows the hotel from the north on its sloping site, and the Esplanade. A strip of grass edged the road. The walkway was on a bank above the beach, and the top of a wall of planks fastened into the bank can just be seen where the dog is looking out over the sand. The plank wall was needed as a sea defence. There were two wheeled bathing machines on the beach. There were no groynes drawn so this may date from before 1884. (Courtesy of the Borth Railway Museum where it may be seen).*

The building was called 'The Cambrian Hotel' from the beginning. A new licence was granted to Miss Hilditch in 1864. In 1868 the licensee was Miss Franks. In 1871 the Cambrian News listed it with visitors for nine weeks during the summer. At the week of July 28th. Mr and Mrs Savin were among the guests with two 'Master Savins'. They were among 32 other single people or families and their servants. Guests included clergymen, doctors, and military men.

Mr Mytton was the licensee of the Hotel in 1875. 'He is very honest and kindly. It was the best lodging house in Borth'. That was the opinion of the Rev. Dr Edward Thring, the headmaster of Uppingham School in 1876 who was looking for a place to remove his school to because of an outbreak of typhoid in Uppingham (Rutland). Savin's roomy hotel was in one of its frequent periods of disuse,

Skrine, writing an article for 'Will of the Wisp' wrote that 'the school found refuge partly in the huge empty hotel'. (Cambrian News, 15 October 1880). There were also empty houses in Savin's Cambrian Terrace when the school came. (The Coastlines of the Cambrian Railways, Vol. 1 C.C. Green 1996 p. 139). The school arrived on a special train. Headmaster Thring put 150 boys, his own family, and two masters into the Cambrian Hotel. The passage on the ground floor was fitted up with a narrow table for dining and could seat 140. ('Edward Thring his Life, Diary and Letters', George R. Parkin, 1898). The Hotel charged £1 per head for the boys to include board



and bed. The schoolmasters brought servants to attend the boys. One stable was used for carpentry, the large coach house shed was a gymnasium, and they had to build a lavatory with 30 basins, and a wooden 'room of rough shingle' behind the hotel, 83 feet by 20 feet, for a schoolroom. Boys stayed and had rooms for studies in the nine houses of the Terrace, and in cottages in Morfa Borth, and as they could not hear a bell to summon them to lessons because of the noises of the wind and sea, a flagpole was erected over the road from the hotel and three flags marked 'moments in the school day'. The school stayed for a year, the head master giving an excellent sermon at the opening of St Matthew's Church on September 15th. 1876, and boys and masters helped the local people after a really bad storm and very high tide and flooding on February 2nd. 1877. The Aberystwyth Observer wrote that sea water poured into the cottages and much furniture and property has been lost. The masters and pupils of Uppingham School set themselves manfully to help with the clearances. They assisted to move furniture, helped to construct barricades, and did indefatigable and valuable service. The residents had asked the paper to tender to those gentlemen their sincere and



earnest thanks for their zeal and kindly energy. (3rd February 1877)

*This postcard shows the flagpole and also shows a wicker bathing machine up on the Esplanade. There had been a storm and are stones on the 'Esplanade' and on the grass. It dates from after 1884 because there are groynes on the beach. It also shows one of the extensions on the north face of the building to allow a view of the sea.*

(Postcard courtesy of the Amgueddfa Ceredigion Museum.)

In 1880 the Cambrian News listed seven weeks of visitors during the summer, with at least twelve families with their maids being looked after. These would not have filled the hotel. They included some county people from Herefordshire, the Hon. Mrs Harley and her husband, Colonel Donne and his family and the Hon Mr and Mrs Evans and Sir Alexander Ramsey from Leominster, and these travelled with their maids. There were also doctors, colonels and captains amongst the other guests. Some came from as far away as Liverpool, Leicester, Malvern, Leamington and Kensington, and several from Oswestry. Outside the hotel in the evenings the villagers were amazed and admiring of the ball dresses and jewels worn by the hotel guests. They had never seen anything like it. Local families with relatives in Borth at that time say that the rich came on the train, their servants in the family coaches.

By 1881 the manageress of the Hotel was Miss Georgiana Annie Helby. Miss Helby was an Englishwoman aged 36 at the Census and born in Portsmouth, and the staff with her in the building that

SEA BATHING.



**CAMBRIAN HOTEL, BORTH.**

**B**ORTH is a rising Watering Place, in Cardigan Bay, midway between Aberystwyth and Barmouth. It is conveniently situated for the most attractive places in North Wales, commands beautiful mountain scenery, has a very fine beach of five miles in length, of firm sand, and there is no safer place for bathing in the kingdom. The air is pure and light, and the climate most salubrious; so much so that this place was selected by the authorities of Uppingham School when it migrated here in 1876 and 1877, while the necessary sanitary improvements were being made at Uppingham, in Rutland.

**THE HOTEL.**

Which is situate on the Beach, is one of the finest and most conveniently arranged in Wales; it has been recently *redecorated and refurnished*, is now under entirely new management, and may in every respect be termed a First-Class Hotel. Terms moderate either by the day or week.

**TABLE D'HOTE DAILY.**

Billiards, Bowling, Croquet and Lawn Tennis Ground; Hot, Cold, and Shower Baths, &c. A handsome little Church has also been recently erected for the accommodation of Visitors.

All communications to be addressed to  
THE MANAGERESS,  
CAMBRIAN HOTEL,  
BORTH, R. S. O.,  
CARDIGANSHIRE

Sunday were two housemaids, a cook, and a coachman and his wife and two children.

ABOVE The 'handsome little church recently erected' dates this advertisement to just after 1876 when St Matthew's Church had been built for a newly created parish for Borth, and the re-decorated and entirely new management suggest it was after the Sale of 1888.

*Manageresses were in charge of the hotel in its earlier days. (Aberystwyth Library, on-line. By courtesy of the County Council)*

It seems that the hotel continued to be too big and grand to be profitable and the boarding houses in the Terrace too were not having enough guests. In 1888 the Cambrian Hotel Company belonging to the railway, the owners of the hotel, had accumulated several mortgages, and the mortgagees put the hotel up for auction (together with The Terrace) on September 20th. The Cambrian News of 7 September 1888 commented, 'it is not too much to say that the future of Borth partly depends on this large and important premises finding a purchaser. The idea of converting Borth into a large and prosperous watering place has not yet been realized and it would have undoubtedly been better for the shareholders in the railway company if the line had been carried through Taliesin and Talybont instead of being carried over the bog in order to make Borth.' We get a picture of the hotel when on the 7th September 1888 the Cambrian News reported the Sale. It was said to be 'well arranged' and contained substantially built Hydropathic Matlock Baths, a laundry, stables, a coach house and outbuildings, a large tennis lawn, gardens, and a paddock etc. It occupied a site of about five and a half acres with frontage to the Esplanade and sea of about 350 feet. There were eight private sitting rooms, large dining and drawing rooms, over 40 bedrooms and dressing rooms, a bath room, bar, smoke room, billiard room, ballroom, five wine and beer cellars and domestic offices.' It seems the buildings were sold separately from the contents. On October 26 the paper reported a Sale of the contents held on Thursday September 20<sup>th</sup>, which had a catalogue of 1,461 lots. It was held at the hotel and there was a large attendance each day from Cardiganshire and adjacent counties. The bidding was brisk, the sale punctual and business like, and good prices were obtained for suites of furniture of 10 dining, coffee, drawing and sitting rooms, the contents of the hall and staircases, smoke room, bar, billiard and tennis rooms, tap room, guests and ladies' bathrooms, lavatories and the valuable appointments of 50 bedrooms. Also the contents of domestic offices and storerooms, bed and table linen, cutlery, china, glass, carriage horses, carriages and harness etc. This suggests quite a few amusements for the guests, including using the hotel's carriages for excursions into the countryside.

In 1896 the Hotel was sold again. Edward Parker Dove and James Brodie of the first part, and Charles Beever of the second part sold the hotel to a Cardigan Bay Hydropathic and Hotel Company Ltd. It was a power of sale vested in Trustees for debenture holders. The hydropathic opportunities for guests were a facility offered by many other hotels at that time. It employed a physician, Dr Harden J. Jones who lived over the road in 9 Cambrian Terrace and visited daily. Hot seawater baths and cold or cooling baths were provided—sweating and then cooling were used to relieve the pain of for example, rheumatic ailments or gout. Notice that among the 1897 attractions of the hotel were included, 'Russian and hot sea baths. A qualified staff would be needed to look after the patients. Social promenading and healthy exercise both indoors and outdoors were usually considered part of the treatment. For example; croquet and tennis and bowling and specially printed 'Plans of the Links' in 1892 to encourage golfers were available for guests. It is likely that entertainments such as music, charades and other games were provided in the evenings and there was dancing in the ballroom. Alcohol however was considered unhealthy so perhaps the bar, taproom and five wine and beer cellars were perhaps used less? The Census takers in 1891 listed in the building, besides the manageress and two guests, a civil engineer and a boarder, a book-keeper, bar maid, waitress, bath-man, bath-maid, cook, chambermaid, laundress, kitchen maid and house maid. Only the kitchen maid was Welsh, she was from Llanidloes. The staff must have answered advertisements as they came from all over England and one was born in Ireland, and one in Scotland and one as far away as Orkney.



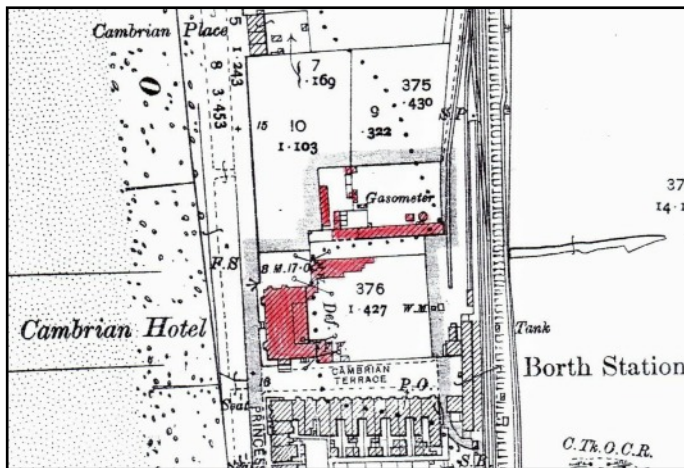


*ABOVE A rather faded picture from the Aberystwyth Public Library - online - courtesy of the County Council. The 'lady manager' was Miss Mary Dilly.*

In an advertisement for the hotel in the *Cambrian News* on Friday June 18th. 1897 the word 'hydropathic' was not used – but healthy pursuits were suggested. The Cambrian Hotel was 'well-furnished and facing the sea. Borth has the most bracing climate and safest bathing on the coast, highly recommended by the medical faculty'. The hotel was the headquarters of the Cyclists Touring Association, and there were four miles of hard sands to cycle, and also an 18 hole golf course in the pink of condition, tennis, and boating. The stables were being used for the hotel's pony and donkey traps, there were still the 'Russian and Hot Sea Baths, choice wines and spirits and very moderate terms'. The hotel had previously been run by manageresses, however this was to change.

By the 1901 Census the proprietor was a Hungarian born man, but a 'British Subject', Mr Jules Hohenberg. He was then aged 47, and had come from Bradford in Yorkshire where had had been a club steward and restaurant keeper. His wife Charlotte was from Yorkshire, and they had sons Arthur and Henry. The Hohenberg family did not live in the hotel, they rented 5 Cambrian Terrace over the road. In 1902 the Hotel was owned by the White Nuns of Brittany. It was fully licensed for 7 days a week, and had four entrances, with 23 rooms downstairs, 58 bedrooms, an indoor lavatory and closet and stabling for 12 horses (Talybont Petty Sessions, licensing details, Ceredigion Archives 2PS11)

In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied, the hotel was valued at £3,100 and the buildings and other structures at £2,000. The rate to pay would have been £97 15s, gross £115. Mr Hohenberg was listed as the tenant and the Borth Hydro Hotel Company owned the bowling green which was between the rear of the hotel and the railway. The 1911 Census listed the hotel with 115 main rooms. Mr Hohenberg had his wife and a 30 year-old stepson helping with the management, and there was a new feature, a shop. In the hotel were; a cook, chambermaid, waitress, two shop assistants, a stable man, and a kitchen girl born in Germany. Only one employee was from Wales, Alice Price the waitress was from Flintshire.



*LEFT The Hotel in 1904. There is a new feature in the garden and close to the railway sidings - a gasometer. Street lamps in Borth were lit by gas, and it is likely that gas lighting was used in the hotel.*

*(Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey map of 1905 revised in 1904)*

In 1913 there was a Sale by John Pugh at the hotel of its, 'Superior Furniture'. A catalogue for this can be seen at the National Library of Wales. In 1917 the hotel ballroom could accommodate an operatic performance of 'The Bohemian Girl' by the Rheidol Ladies' Choir.

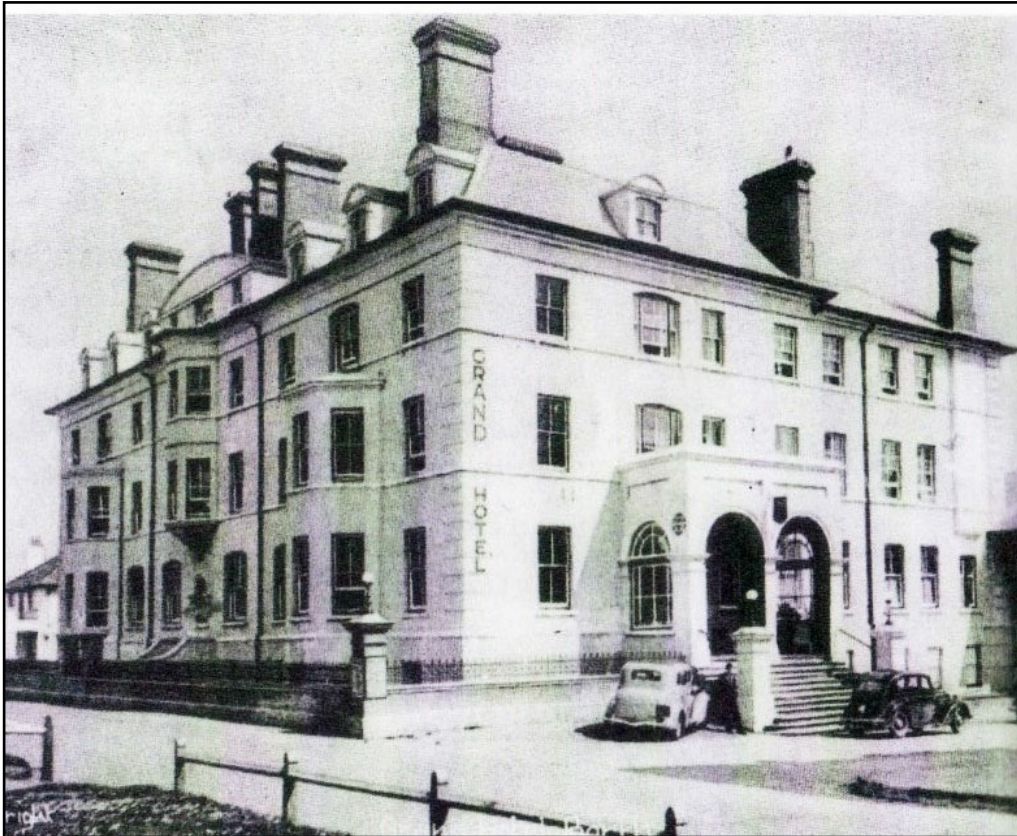
In July 1921 the Hotel re-opened after a refurbishment. The owners were a Land and Development Company of London (Cambrian news, 15<sup>th</sup> July). In May 1924 the paper reported a 'Sparkling Stars Concert' in the ballroom. They were from the Midlands. It was a full house and people were turned away. (9<sup>th</sup> May)

In the rates of 1925 the hotel itself is not in the list. A change of ownership perhaps? However its name had been changed to the 'Grand Hotel' and A. L. Vogel paid a £1 Rate for its Bowling Green.

We have a description of the Grand Hotel in 1931 when it was put up for sale on Thursday July 16<sup>th</sup> at an auction at the Birmingham Grand Hotel, with an upset price of £7.000, or £5000 if the contents were sold separately. The property was freehold and licensed and the brochure for the sale gives us a picture of the hotel then. It was lit by electricity from its own generator, and a boiler in the basement supplied hot water to feed radiators on the landings. This suggests that the rooms still had coal fires in their fireplaces. There was a staircase for guests and a staircase for the staff, and a 'luggage lift' to three floors from the basement. There were details of over 60 bedrooms. (These probably would include staff bedrooms). The brochure said as it was a 'compact hotel' it could be run by a man and his wife. In the outbuildings was a timber built garage for three and six cars, an open garage for five cars, and a brick built garage forming ten lock ups. Also a three roomed cottage with a room over, and a store room opening into the railway yard. There was a brick building for the plant that generated electricity, and beside the northern end of the hotel was a large yard opening on to Borth's main street called Princess Street at that part. There was a walled lawn of two acres. From the brochure we can see that some of the hotel land had been sold off, and the garage spaces suggest that visitors were now coming by car. (Ceredigion Archives ADX/376/10))

The northern part of its garden had had houses being built on it by 1927 so it is no surprise that in 1933 paying its Rates of £105 was a 'Hotel and Land Development Company Borth'. Paying the rates in 1934 of £6 and £4 for a 'Grand Hotel Amusement Shed' until April 1952 was George Bennett. However, the hotel itself does not appear to be in the list. (April 29<sup>th</sup>. Ceredigion Archives, Rates volume 1934) The owners of the hotel were to be Mr George and Mrs Jessie A Bennett.



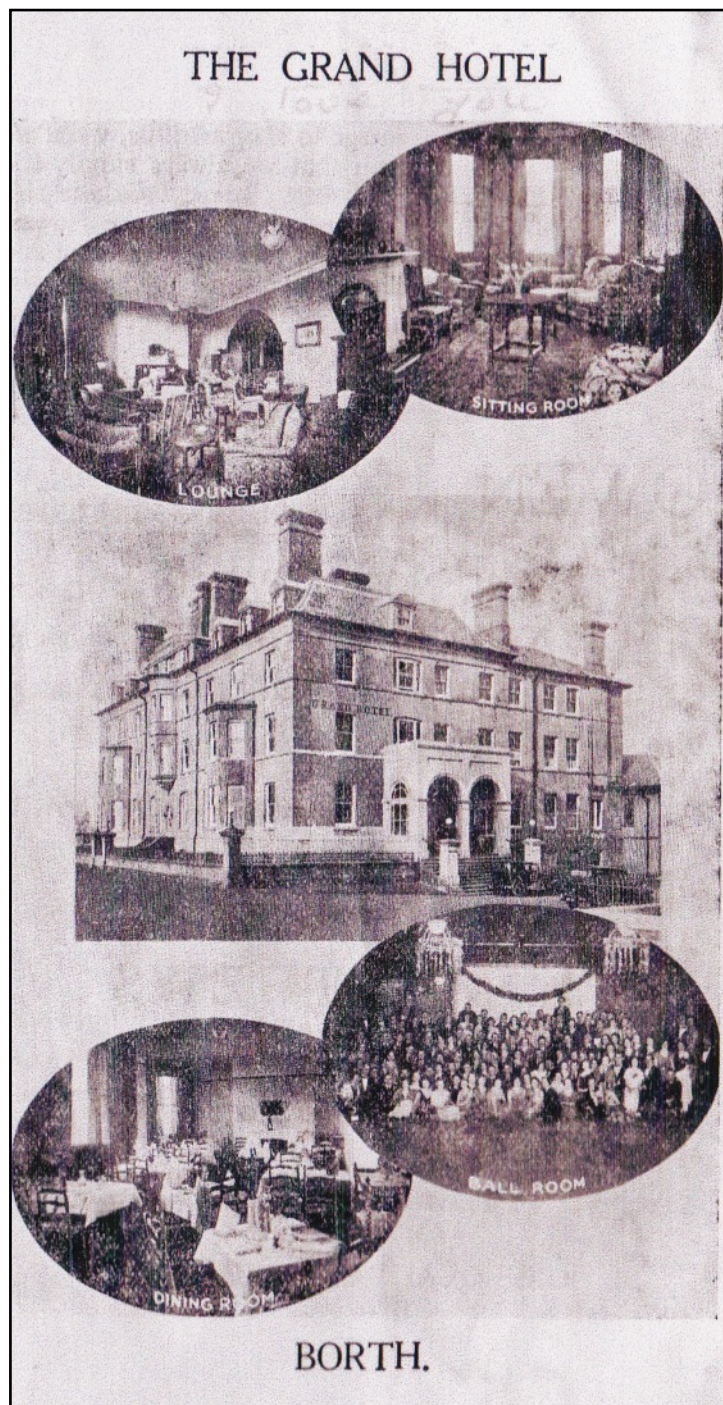


*The Grand Hotel. The building looks in very good repair. The porch had been filled in on either side with windows. The balls on top of the pillars on the enclosing wall were still there. On the former hotel ground on the north a house had been built.*

*BELOW In 1938 this group of people in fancy dress were photographed on the steps. It gives some idea of the grand scale of the building. The front door and its surround was coloured and patterned glass with golden and pale green. (Private Collection).*







ABOVE *An Advertisement for the Hotel in 1934, printed in a booklet in aid of St Matthew's Church Borth's Bazaar by the Cambrian News. The Sitting Room and Dining Room had tall windows in the bays overlooking the sea. The ballroom below did have some small windows with a decorative shape. There were wrought iron railings beside the pavement - a detail of the pattern can be seen on the left in the photograph opposite. (Ceredigion Archives)*

Students from Alexandra Hall of Aberystwyth University stayed there from 1937, and it became a Hall of Residence for the students of the College of Librarianship.

Just before the second world war there was gambling in the hotel, and a gambler who was the representative of a spirit firm, when he lost, gave his samples to the hotel in payment. They came in handy in wartime Terry Davies says Len Dennet was the barman from 1945 to 1979. In 1939 a Women's Physical Education College from Chelsea was evacuated to the hotel and they were there until 1948. 'Buxom girls' commented the Borth Review (National Library of Wales) The manager in the 1940s was Douglas Fleet.

In 1948 Mrs Bennett was said in the Borth Review to have been the most successful owner in the history of the hotel. She sold it to David John James from London for £16,000. Mr James who was a pioneer of the cinema and a philanthropist and later knighted gave the hotel to be a Conference Centre for Yr Urdd Cymru, the Welsh League of Youth. He changed the name to Pantyfedwen, a part of a trust he had set up to benefit Wales named after his home farm.



*LEFT The name above the beachside entrance of the building - by then a window and not a door. (Photograph courtesy of Aberystwyth PublicLibrary - online).*

While still owned by the Urdd the building was advertised as a 'hotel'. In 1962 it was called a private hotel with hot and cold in all bedrooms, spacious lounges, television, three dining rooms, a games rooms, tennis courts, garages, and free parking. The manager was M. W. Jones and there was a telephone, Borth 310. Listed were 364 residents. With the rates of 1963 are mentioned 21 garages, and the County Council had premises there for a library.



*LEFT The small building on the right was the County Library. In the background is a glimpse of the long range of outbuildings with many chimneys.*

There are some more details in of the site and building worth

adding. *RIGHT The windows were sash windows with four lights, and blinds were fitted to control the sunlight. This photograph also shows part of the quoins in the rendering on the far right hand side. In the foreground are the railings on the rendered wall that prevented people falling down on to the basement floor level, and one of the decorative pillars at the corners of the wall. This detail is from a postcard sent after 1931 when it was the Grand Hotel. (Private Collection)*

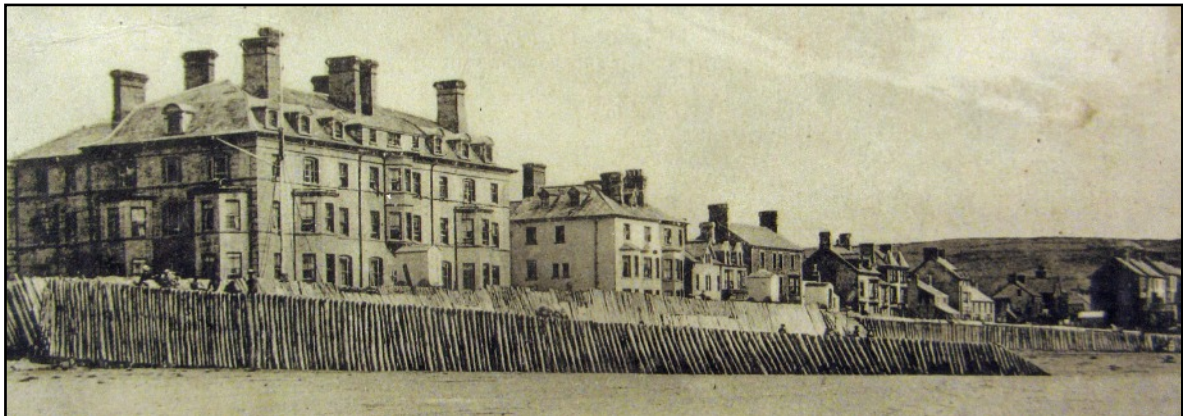






*LEFT A postcard by Williams of Borth shows the wall of planks anchored into the bank to protect the Esplanade and the Hotel from the sea. The beach was then sand and not stones as today (Courtesy of the County Council)*

*BELOW Easy access to the beach was arranged. Also in the photograph are some wheeled bathing machines (Private Collection)*



Before the building was demolished, there is a collection of colour photographs taken of it, as Pantyfedwen, and particularly special as some were taken indoors even though the building being dismantled at the time. These are now in the Aberystwyth Public Library and on-line *BELOW The front of the hotel from the beach. It shows the interesting angles and position of the chimneys, and the importance of the centre front with high bay windows. In the foreground is the concrete wall and walkway that replaced the wooden sea defences. It was completed by May 1956, and the sea had piled stones up against it. The photograph shows the building in 1978. (This photograph and the following photographs or details from photographs courtesy of the Aberystwyth Public Library)*







*ABOVE* The rear of the hotel with an extension on the ground floor and the series of arches of the original building *ABOVE RIGHT* are lost. On the left is the library building. (Small photograph dating from about 1876/7 courtesy of the Archives of Uppingham School).



*LEFT* The library building echoed the hotel with its hipped and overhanging roof. A brick wall protected the hotel's yard and garden.



*RIGHT* and *BELOW* What remained of the long outbuilding that had reached almost to the railway. It was given a ramp above the level of the hotel garden and bowling green - once reclaimed marsh.



A house was included in it. The adjacent brick building may have been the remains of stables with rooms above for grooms later used for some of the 21 garages.

*RIGHT* Details of the arches and columns used in the interior of the hotel for the main staircase, and the banisters with their elegant shaped posts.







*ABOVE* The banisters appear to be flat cut-out shapes. Behind are pieces from dismantling the building.



*RIGHT* The main entrance door has decorative stained glass panels.

*RIGHT and BELOW* a Teapot, water jug and sugar basin, post 1931 when the Cambrian Hotel had become the 'Grand Hotel'. It was called 'Elkington Monarchy Plate' and made by Walker and Hall, Sheffield, EPNS, and warranted 'hard soldered'. (Author's photographs, courtesy of the Amgueddfa Ceredigion Museum)





*Photographs of the decorative colourful glass dome which lit the main staircase were taken and are on-line but were too dark to reproduce (Aberystwyth Public Library - online)*



*ABOVE The end of Pantyfedwen came when the building was too big and expensive to maintain and had become run down. It was taken down and in January 1979 just the porch was left standing, and the outer wall with its railings.*

*Photograph by courtesy of Y Tincer.*

Today on the site are flats and houses with a Pantyfedwen Clos named after the Hotel.



*ABOVE This photograph taken in 1876 or 1877 shows members of Uppingham School in the yard at the rear of the building with some very distinctive windows in the background. (See the photograph on Page 3). These members of staff and pupils may well have been staying in the hotel. A photograph of 1959 at the National Library of Wales shows an interior room with men and women folk dancing past these windows at a Christmas Course at the then Pantyfedwen. The sloping rear of the pebble bank allowed a better height for basement windows at the rear of the building. The room was large enough to hold a folk dance in - but I do not know if this was the ballroom (Photograph courtesy of the Archives of Uppingham School)*



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

Mae **Tai'r Borth** yn cynnwys dros 350 hanes sy'n ymwneud ag adeiladau unigol ac mae'r hanesion wedi'u darlunio â chyfoeth o ffotograffau, mapiau a dogfennau. Mae'r ffeiliau ar gael ar ein gwefan: <https://www.archifdy-ceredigion.org.uk/tairborth.php?lang=cy>

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-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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