

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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CRAIGFRYN

Wernfach - little marsh - Morfa Borth

At the southernmost end of Morfa Borth, at the foot of Upper Borth. The house is at the beach end of a row of old cottages. The Estate at Cwmcynfelin, Llangorwen had owned these but had sold them by 1910. The cottage now Craigfryn was re-built from the cottage nearest the beach between 1915 and 1925.



Craigfryn lies on the corner of the Lôn Glan-y-môr on the right and the road to Clarach on the left. This photograph was taken in 2016.

Craigfryn is a substantial house of two floors with attics above and a conservatory on the southern side of the second floor allowing fine views across the beach and to the hills. The Conservatory opens on to a walled balcony facing the sea. There is a slate coloured gable roof parallel with the road to Clarach with roof lights and small windows in the side gable



for the attic floor. It has a red brick chimney and all its walls are rendered. On the sea front of the house the single upper window is a picture window. Below is a lean-to extension. All the windows are modern.

LEFT On the north side of the house is a yard with outbuildings, and the main door of the house opens into it and there are extensions on the east too.



LEFT The north side of the house has a few spaced out windows and it joins on to the row of old cottages of which it was once the front cottage.

BELOW The rear of the house has a prominent gable window in the roof for one of its attic rooms.

The house stands on a bank of shingle, and in 1829 was part of a 'piece' of ground with no cottages on it. The Crown Manor owned it and it was part of their 'waste' being unsuitable for farming. It had been enclosed by a Mr Williams and a John (illegible) and

a note said it was surrendered at the last Court Leet. This usually happened when an owner had died and his heir wanted to inherit it, or wanted to sell it.

What happened is illegible. (Number 51, Map Natonal Archives LRRO 1/3060)



By 1848 an L shaped block of cottages had been built on the shingle bank at the beach end of that



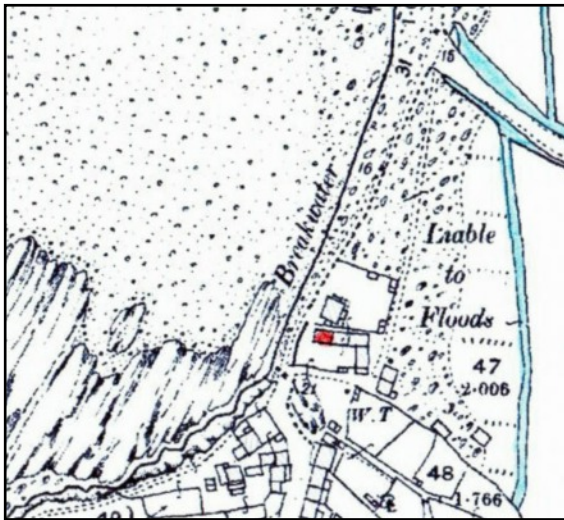
ground and numbered 50. They were at right angles to the beach, and opened into a small lane. Behind was a yard area shared by all the cottages opening on to the Lôn Glan-y-môr. The owner was Matthew Davies Williams of the Cwmcynfelin Estate at Llangorwen. (Tithes Apportionments Map for Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township).

A detail from the Tithe Map. Individual cottages were not drawn.

So tenants came and went. In 1848 in one of the cottages was John Davies – perhaps a John Davies shoemaker or a John Davies farm worker (1841

Census).

The cottages were drawn on the Ordnance Survey 25 inch Map of 1888, surveyed in 1886. The yard belonged to all of them. Beach Cottage had been built close to them by then. A



A detail from the Ordnance Survey Map of 1888 surveyed in 1886. Craigfryn is marked in red. In blue are drainage ditches for the marsh behind the shingle bank.



RIGHT The old cottage in 1895, nicely whitewashed and close to the Beach Cottage. Craigfryn's chimney was on the beach side and there was a brushwood fence to protect it from the sea.

A detail from a Frith postcard - private collection.

small unfenced Glan-y-môr (sea bank) lane ran along as it does today. The other buildings are our Upper Borth on either side of the road to Clarach.

The The 1905,

25 inch Ordnance Survey Map shows it had a small building in the yard – a Tŷ Bach perhaps. The old cottage would probably have been built of stones from the beach like the other three. At the 1901 Census it was empty. The cottages were eventually sold by the Cwmcynfelin Estate and by 1910 there was a new owner, William Jones a farm labourer.

In 1910 the cottage was valued for a tax planned but not levied at only £22, and there was £2 to pay £2.10s gross. It was half the value of the other three cottages, the others being £40, £45 and £90. Possibly it was not in good condition. At the 1911 Census it was listed with four main rooms. In the cottage in were a farm labourer's wife called Jane Jones, aged 30, born in Bontgoch, with her children; Jenny Jones 6, James D. Jones 3 and Thomas 6. They spoke both Welsh and English.



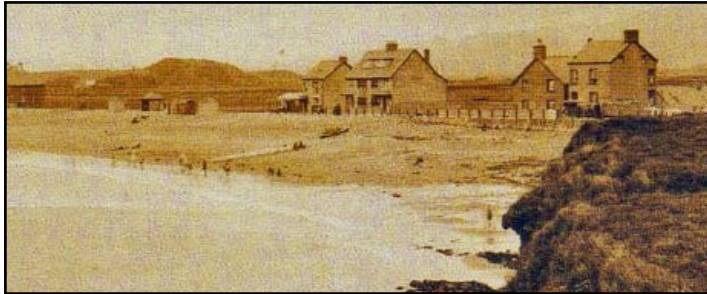
LEFT A postcard dated 1915 of 'Welsh Women' made up of several small photographs shows 'the Beach' and a careful look at the cottage next to Beach Cottage shows a ruinous cottage with no roof on. Dr Terry Davies mentions a ruined cottage of William Jones who was a healer. He writes that 'William Jones was using wool as a healing medium, a common practice in Wales. He would bind various parts of the body with woollen twine or cloth which he would remove and rebind until the patient was cured'. (Borth

A Seaborn Village page 83.)

In 1910 William Jones had been the owner and occupier, and by 1925 he was still the owner and he had improved it as it was rated at £4.16s, gross £6. He was the 'occupier' too. By 1934 when he paid the rates it had increased to £6 to pay and £10 gross. This was the same as Rock House and as the other cottages were still paying £2, £3 gross I think a sizeable house

had been built out of the old ruined cottage. Had his healing skills earned him money for the re-building?

We can see what had been built on several old postcards as we are lucky that this area with Upper Borth on the hillside looking south, and looking the other way, views along the beach showing Morfa Borth to the north were popular with the photographers.



LEFT This detail is from a postcard dated 1925 so we know the tall Craigfryn was built by then. It had a large chimney, so flues would heat several rooms. There were sash windows, one is partly open. The front door was on the beach side of the house.



ABOVE This detail from a Valentine's postcard shows there were windows in the gable to light the attic floor. It was hand coloured so we do not know the correct colour of the roof which was likely to have been slate (Ceredigion Archives).



LEFT The front of the house is on the far right in this detail from another later postcard, and it looked very smart with white plaster. Today the front of Craigfryn shows major changes from this (This Postcard and the one at the top from a private collection).

In 1910 James Davies Jones the son of William and Jane Jones of Craigfryn died aged 22. In 1916 Private Llewellyn Jones another son was home on leave from the first world war. Another son William John Jones died aged 24 in 1917. Sometime after 1922 furnished apartments of four bedrooms and one sitting room were advertised to let. (The Illustrated Borth Guide price 6d, Aberystwyth Public Library).

There were new people in the house by 1945. With votes for the house in the General Election were Ebenezer M. Ellis and Margaret Ellis. In 1949 paying the rates so probably the owner of the house was David D. Jenkins.

In 1962 Mrs Jenkins was offering 'Bed and Breakfast' to holiday visitors, and the house had a telephone, Borth 426. (Borth Handbook and Guide, Aberystwyth Library). In 1963 David Jenkins paid the rates of £25 (Rock House was £26), and on the Electoral Register that year were David John Jenkins and Dorothy Jenkins.

An Ordnance Survey Map of 1975 shows the house still with the ground plan shape of an old cottage though slightly wider than its neighbours (Historical Maps On-line).

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

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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-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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