

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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CRAIGLEE Morfa Borth

In a terrace on the beach side in the centre of Borth High Street. Formerly its address was Picton Terrace. For some time in the same ownership as Ty Canol - possibly built by a Jones family of master mariners before 1871. A police station in 1895.



Craiglee is a single fronted, terrace house of two storeys, plus an attic floor lit by roof lights both sides of the roof. It shares a gable roof parallel to the street with four other houses. The chimney is stone and massive and shared with Ty Canol. At the eaves are five single brackets sitting on a line of moulding picked out in white. This is a stone house with careful rendering on the front. A string course divides it into two halves with smooth rendering above and a pattern of rusticated masonry below. Around the upper windows are moulded frames with bold keystones with random patterns inside. The front door is made prominent by its framework of rendering with a pediment above. The windows are modern, but the upper ones keep the sash

pattern, and the lower one has a pattern of a sash window with many small panes. The low wall enclosing the front garden is topped by some pretty railings with a gate, and with a tall posts on each corner.



The decoration and pediment around the front door is almost the same as that of its neighbour Ton-y-môr. The pattern of stones of the rusticated masonry is well drawn. The living room extends the full width of the house.

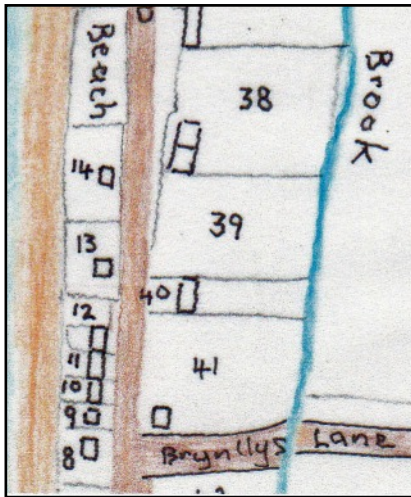


LEFT Old maps show that Craiglee was a mirror image in plan to Ty Canol, and under the same ownership, but interestingly the fronts of Craiglee and Ton-y-môr on the right also seem to be a pair, with matching spacing of their windows and front doors suggesting they may have been built at the same time. Details however vary, for example Ton-y-môr has brackets supporting its upper window above the front door.



Seen from the beach in 2105 the back of the house and its wing is the mirror image of Ty Canol. It is well defended from the sea, an area of hard standing has low walls of vertical boards, beyond is a tall block wall with a solid gate giving privacy to its yard. A taller wall on the north side encloses a raised area either a balcony on the end of the wing, or a raised platform. These would give a view of the sea over the tall end wall. The hard standing in foreground is the same size as Ty Canol's next door.

The ground for this house was enclosed in 1824 by Evan Evans from the stone bank thrown up by the sea and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor Court who owned it as it was no use for farming. His ground measured 24 perches and a map of 1829 show a cottage built on it, described as 'cottage and beach'. Evan Evans was a master mariner who owned shares in the sloop 'Liverpool Trader'. The road had been there for centuries and was a turnpike road by the 1770s. It led to a ferry from Ynyslas to Aberdovey and was a quick way to North Wales.

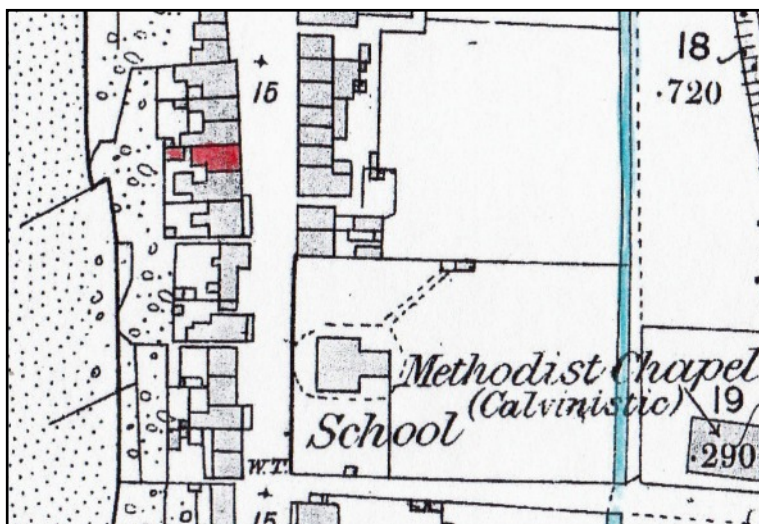


LEFT A detail copied from the map of 1829. Evan Evan's plot was Number 13 and he had plenty of ground around his cottage. (National Archives LRRO 1/3060)

By 1848 another cottage had been joined on to the old one on the site of Aberceldŷ but the ground on the other side of the old cottage did not yet have any cottages on it. (Tithe Apportionments Map, Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township, on-line at CYNEFIN.)

What happened to the old cottages is not yet known, nor the building date of the present house. However an old photograph shows the house when it had an exposed stone front, and there is no sign of pale coloured (usually yellow)

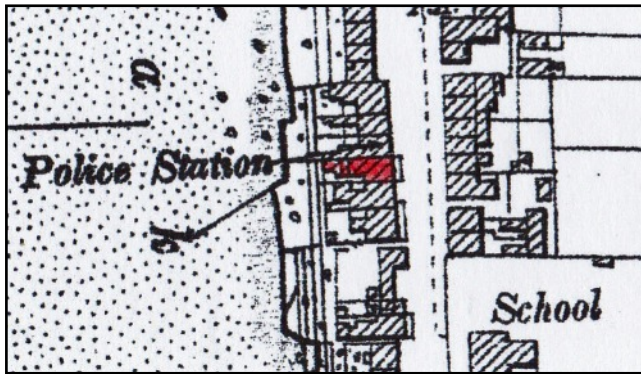
bricks that made an easy job of edging doors and windows and outer walls on a house built of rubble stone. These were widely used after they could come on a train - so a date of pre-1863 is likely for the house. It is not possible to pick up the families living in the house until the 1881 census, when its address was Number 2 Picton Terrace. In the house was a master mariner, Hugh James aged 36 and local, with his wife Maggie who was 30 and born in Merthyr. Their son John Watkin Williams James was born in Scranton, Luzern, County of Amrisca. He was possibly nine years old - the Census taker was not very sure, and there was a baby a few months old, born at sea, but a British Citizen. At that time some master mariners took their wives with them aboard their sailing vessels. The name Picton originated from a famous army general who died at the battle of Waterloo. Ships were named after him, and a wooden sailing ship, a smack enlarged to a sloop of 40 tonnes was called 'Picton' and was owned and sailed by a Borth Jones family. Richard Jones was her master in 1836. (Shipping Register, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion Archives). It is possible that Ty Canol and Craig Lee were named after the ship - and the name Picton Terrace was later used for other houses in the row. There was also a Picton House in Morfa Borth, now Maes Arfor, another house of the Jones family of master mariners.



LEFT This was Captain James's house in 1886, marked in red. The map shows that both Ty Canol and Craig Lee had the same owner (possibly Captain William Jones of Ty Canol) and they shared the back yard. The fronts opened directly on to the street. The small detached building in the yard may have been their Ty Bach - outside lavatory. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886, published in 1888, Cardiganshire III.10.)

In the 1891 Census the house was unoccupied. By 1895 it had become a Police Station (Kelly's Directory). In the house at the 1901 Census was Mrs Margaretta Davies, aged 31 and local. Also there were her daughters, Dora aged 13, Vera aged 1, and a son Howard aged 3. They were all born in Borth. Police Constable Davies, born in Llanwenog had moved into Picton Terrace by 1895. He was not in the house when the Census takers called. It is not clear at present what relationship he had to Margaretta, she was of the next generation. He was to

move off to retire in Pomona House, also in Borth High Street (1911 Census). He and his wife Margaret had one child - possibly Margaretta's husband?



The map shows the home of the Police Constable and Mrs Davies in 1904. The house now had a different owner from Ty Canol. There were three rows of sea defences at the back, usually stakes anchored into the stone bank, shared with Aberceldy and Ty Canol. There had been a bad storm with much damage in 1896.

In 1910 for a valuation for a tax, planned but not levied, the house was valued at £220, the same as Ty Canol next door. There would have been £8.10 to pay, £10 gross. The owner and occupier was John Jones. He was a mariner, 67 years old and born in Aberystwyth. and in the 1911 Census he was there with his wife Sarah aged 50, much younger and local. They had been married for 20 years and had two children, one of whom died. With them in the house was their 18 year old son Horace Jones. The house had nine main rooms.

In the house in 1934 was a Miss Jones (Cambrian News). In 1925 the house had its name Craiglee, and for the rates Miss Sarah Jones was the owner and occupier. Sometime in the 1920s furnished holiday accommodation was advertised in the house offering five beds, four bedrooms and two sitting rooms (Borth Illustrated Guide, Aberystwyth Public Library). Sarah and Winifred Jones had votes for the house in the 1945 General Election and Sarah paid the rates in 1949. The house was valued the same as Ty Canol and the two Ocean Wave houses - now Ton-y-môr and Hafod Heli.

Terry Davies writes in his 'Borth, A Maritime History' about the mariner Horace Ivor Jones 1895 to 1963 who lived at Craiglee and his career on steamships (page 71). In 1963 John Richard Jones had a vote for the house and the rates were paid by Mrs Jones.

BELOW In this photograph by John Thomas dating from the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Craiglee is the third house from the left (National Library of Wales, on-line).



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yn cyflwyno / presents
Tai'r Borth / Houses of Borth
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.

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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