

THE BUILDINGS OF MORFA 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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EFELWEN

Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

Formerly part of Rose Place. Called Efelwen by 1891. Very much a family home and formerly with a workshop for the joinery business of John Beynon and his sons. Possibly built by 1874. Definitely there in 1877.



LEFT Efelwen

This is the southernmost house of a terrace of three. It is a two storey house, and a long gable window on the front roof gives an attic floor under the roof. The roof is a gable roof parallel to the street. The rubble stone walls are rendered. The front wall has a bold pattern of quoins on the edge of the house, and a pattern of rusticated masonry on the ground floor. There is a front porch with a sloping slate roof, and a string course (line of moulding) joins it to the edges of the house. It is a double fronted house. The



front door is not central, allowing a larger ground floor room one side as is found in old cottages. Today the front door is on the north side of a glazed porch. The ground floor windows have moulded hoods. There is a narrow front garden enclosed by a low wall.



LEFT A patch of colourful Victorian tiling has been preserved in the front garden.

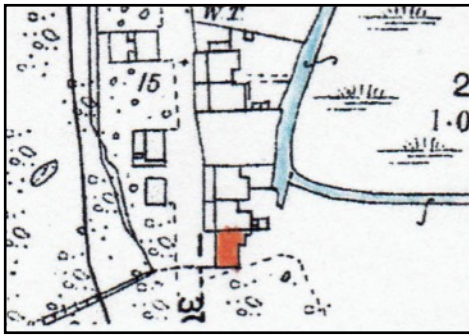
There was empty ground where the house stands in 1829 and still in 1848, and it was not far from the southernmost of Morfa Borth's four limekilns on the other side of the street (National Archives Map LRRO 1/3060 and Tithe apportionments Map for Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township, on-line at CYNEFIN). The ground was the pebble embankment thrown up by the sea, and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor who owned it because it was no use for farming. It extended to a brook. 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 .

In earlier Census's it is not possible to find the families there but Evan Griffiths was two doors away at Pencarreg, and his daughter Jane would marry John Beynon a builder and joiner who would set up home at Efelwen. John Beynon and Jane, not long married were with the Griffiths family in 1871 so Pencarreg one of the three houses was built by then.



ABOVE This was the terrace in an old photograph published in Y Tincer in Tachwedd 1977 with an article called 'Uppingham' by Mr A.(Albert) Edward Richards. John Beynon was his grandfather, and he writes that when the Uppingham School had moved to Borth for the school year 1876 to 1877, the Headmaster Dr Thring stayed at Efelwen. In this old photograph the Beynon family had not yet built their workshop next to the house. The side of the house had a small window and was nicely rendered. The front is rubble stone and the sash windows have small lights. These were larger windows than those in the other two houses. The stones all over the road were thrown up by the sea in a storm.

At the 1881 Census at Number 1 Rose Place was a general labourer John Richards, aged 60 born at Llanafon in 1821. Also in the house was his grand-daughter Margaret Jane Vaughan aged 14, a general servant, and another grand daughter Jane A. Jenkins aged 4.



LEFT In 1886 Efelwen marked in red was the southernmost building of the High Street. It was a decent sized house which was wide, as though it had been extended. On the south was open ground, and the back was open ground too. However the family could reach the brook for their fresh water (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888, Cardiganshire NW III.10)

By the 1891 Census John Beynon and his family were living at Efelwen and the house had its name which is Welsh, a 'Gefail' was a smithy. Yr Efailwen was the smithy of a white smith or tinsmith. John Beynon was then aged 42, he was born about 1849 at Penbryn and his wife Jane was born in Borth about 1850. They had wed in 1869 (she was 19) They would have twelve children, three of whom died. At Efelwen in the Census's were Louisa born in 1874 who wed a Richards, and had a son Albert Edward Richards in 1911, Annie in 1878 who was a dressmaker by 1901, Jane was born in 1882), Evan Hugh in 1884), Llewellyn in 1886), Ernest in 1888, Henry B. in 1889 and Olwen in 1891. All the sons became joiners and Ernest and Henry were helping their father in 1911.

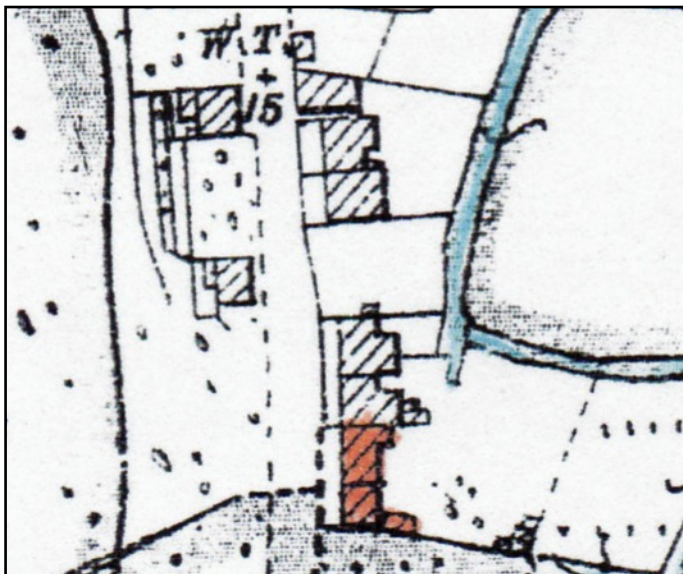
Terry Davies wrote that John Beynon played an important part when groyne's were constructed for Borth beach - the first large scale sea defences for the village. In October 1884 the Improvements Committee were erecting 'sea groins' and had asked the Cambrian Railway Company to contribute - they did not (The Coast Lines of the Cambrian Railways, Green, Aberystwyth Public Library). "Mr John Beynon a local builder, whose house had been half filled with shingle (in February 1877) conceived the value of saddleback groynes and built a series between Upper Borth and Morfa Borth, arresting the northerly flow of the shingle and gradually a substantial bank grew. Now under thousands of tons of stones, a new road was able to be built on this between Upper Borth and the Lifeboat House." (1880 Cambrian News. Ceredigion Archive)



ABOVE In this detail from an old postcard of the beach in 1892 Efelwen is the last house on the right, and beside it can be seen the Beynon family's carpenter's workshop and a smaller building behind it. There was still rough ground this side of it. There is a boat parked there.

In 1897 John Beynon was an adjudicator at Borth's Eisteddford. He was also on the Parish Coouncil. (Cambrian News, June and July 1897)

In 1894, on Tuesday 25th September and Thursday the 4th of October John Beynon was a juror at the Inquest on the death of Mary Davies. He made a scale model of her house at London Place, Borth for the final trial and drew plans of the interior. (Mary was murdered by her brother in law). ('Ceredigion' Journal, Vol. XV1 N0. 2, 2010, pages 11-40)



LEFT On the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map of 1905, revised in 1904 a workshop and another small building had been added to Efelwen on the south, and a fence or wall enclosed the back which was shared by all three of the terrace of houses from the rough ground to the south (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire NW III.10)

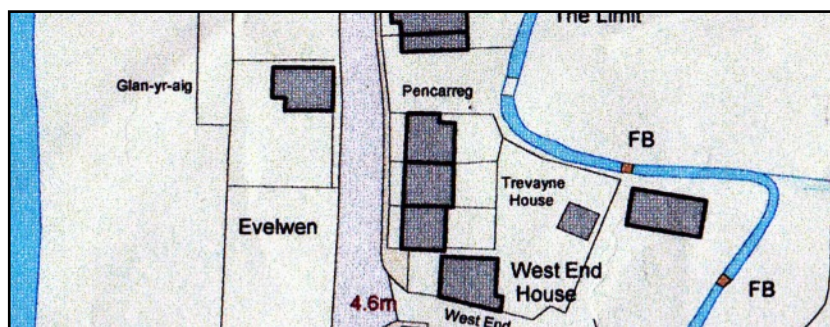
In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied Efelwen was valued at £255. There would have been £7.4s.6d. to pay, £8.10s gross. John Beynon owned the house. The house was like its companions in the terrace, both were £153, but Efelwen had a workshop and John Beynon's business as a builder and joiner was thriving. (Ceredigion Archives and the National Library of Wales). Villagers remember that they made coffins. In the Census of 1911 there were seven main rooms in the house, and there was a visitor D. H. Lloyd. In January 1911 Mr Ernest Beynon and a Miss Beynon were performers at a Concert in the Assembly Rooms in aid of street lights . (26 January Cambrian News)

On Good Friday 1924 Beynon children won awards for singing at the Soar Chapel's Competitive Meeting. (Cambrian Times, October.)

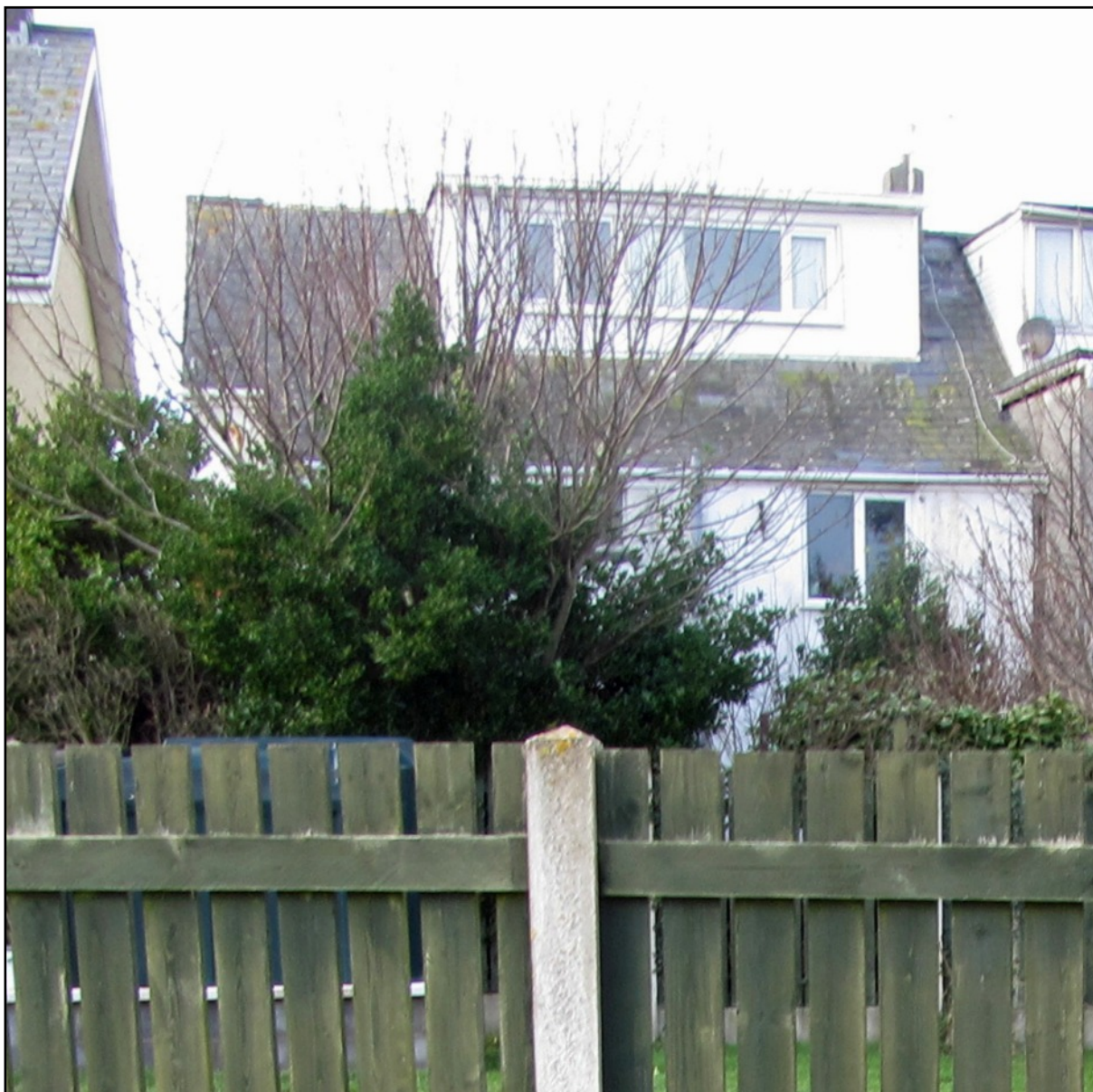
Paying the Rates in 1925 and 1934 was Mrs Jane Beynon who lived there and Terry Davies wrote that she remembered two limekilns on the Borth shore. (Borth, A Seaborn Village). Her memory would have gone back a long way she was born in Borth in 1850. There had been four limekilns there in 1848 (Tithe Apportionments Map for Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township, on-line at CYNEFIN).

Paying the Rates for the house in 1949 and still in 1963 and with a vote for the house was Mrs Olwen Jones, the Beynon's youngest daughter. H. Launder paid rates for a caravan at the rear of Efelwen (Electoral Registers and Rates Ceredigion Archives).

By 1975 the Beynon's workshop had gone and a new Police Station was built close beside Efelwen but set back from the High Street. Efelwen had its own back garden. The building behind may have been the caravan (Historical Maps On-line).



LEFT Efelwen now has its own garden (Detail from a Council Map courtesy of Councillor Ray Quant who provided it for research for a village event).



ABOVE The back of the house in 2019. The dormer windows would give a good view over the rough ground and marsh to the hills beyond. There is an extension to the original house.

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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-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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