

# 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

*This work is for research and educational purposes only.*

# ERWAU GLAS and POST OFFICE

Morfa Borth, Borth Marsh.

At the northern part of the village facing the beach. Built on roadside ground formerly belonging to the Cambrian Hotel (later Pantyfedwen).



*LEFT This was Erwau Glas (Green Acres) in 2009. It is a Post Office and a post box stands near the wall to the lane.*

The bungalow has a hipped roof and seems to be designed as a corner house, suggesting it was built at the time the lane beside it for homes at the rear was being laid out.

There are no chimneys

and the walls are rendered. The dormer window at the peak of the roof gives a view of the sea. On the south side of the front is a gable with a canted bay window echoed by an identical one on the south side of the bungalow which has a porch with the main entrance. The windows are modern. The front garden area has hard standing and plants, enclosed by a very low, rendered wall.



*ABOVE The south and east sides of Erwau Glas in 2016. The south roof has solar panels.*

Around the base is a panel edged by a moulding which is a good solution to the sloping site. This in 2016 is rendered white, the walls above are yellow pebble dash. A wall separates the post office entrance from a grassy garden area beyond. The lane at the side and rear is un-adopted and has no name. The bungalow has a wide drive way of hard standing with room to park vehicles and a boat. The pair of windows match the others, the ones on the south face of the bungalow. The roof has one roof light for an attic room.

*BELOW The north side of Erwau Glas in 2016 with another porch and entrance. It is close to the boundary wall with Tir-a-mor.*

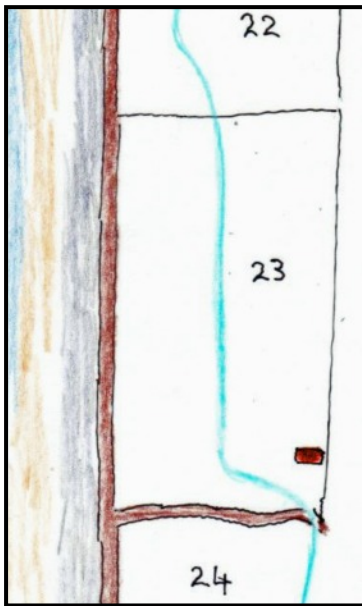


The ground for this bungalow was enclosed in 1809 by a local lawyer called Big John (John Lewis) from the pebble embankment thrown up by the sea, and called 'waste' because it was no use for farming, and the marsh ground beside it (also called 'waste') was reclaimed for pasture with drainage ditches. It was a field of 4 acres, 3 rods and 20 perches, that is almost five acres, and across it ran a brook on the old course of the River Leri. John Lewis had a cottage on it called

Terfynau (boundaries) – where the railway station is today. There were no other cottages. On a map of 1829 it the ground was Number 23. A rent of £16 had to be paid every year to the Crown manor who owned the ground, but there was an option to buy it for twice that, and a note with the map said that John Lewis had bought it at a Manor Court Leet in 1809.



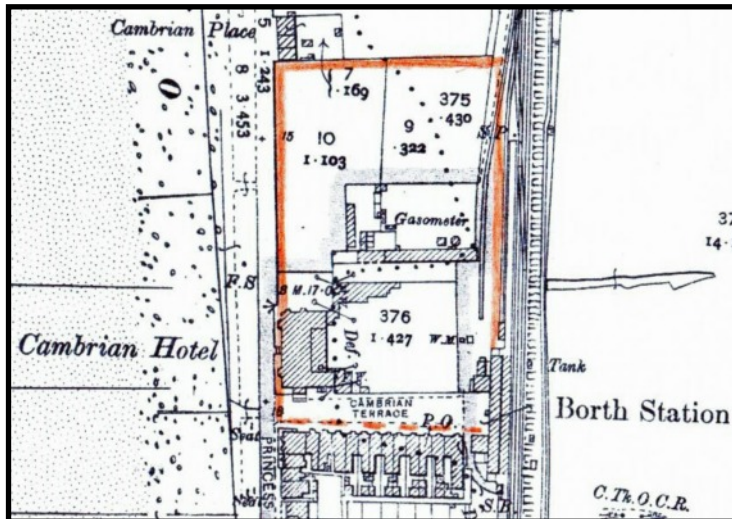
*ABOVE A pre-1956 postcard called 'Sea View Terrace, Borth' shows that the bungalow once had a chimney on its north side and another on the east side of its gable on the south side. These were rendered, but have the shape of brick chimneys. Each had two chimney pots (two flues). The grass and sand of the beach is in the foreground. There was no dormer window. When the promenade and sea defensive wall was completed in 1956 the lower windows would have lost their view of the beach. Today the dormer window in the front of the roof allows for a sea view, and for a room in the roof.*



LEFT John Lewis's field and house was Number 23 on this detail copied from a map of 1829. NA LRRO 1/3060

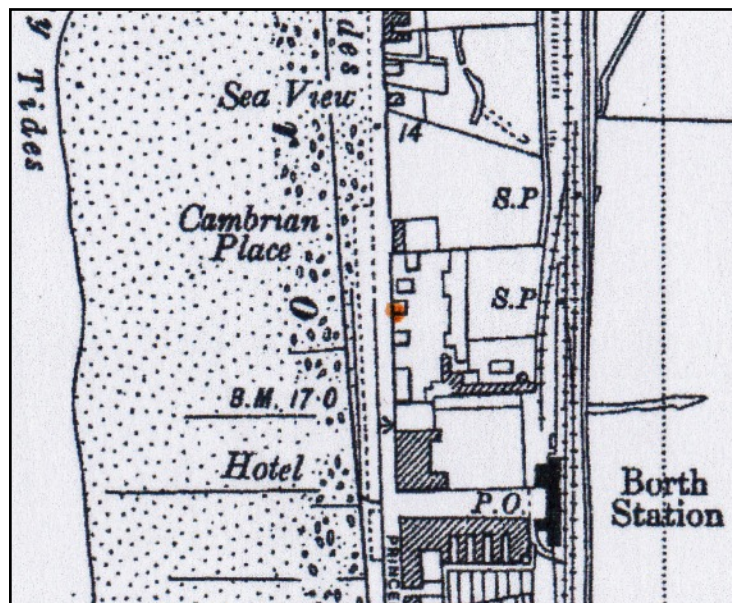
The road had been there for centuries and was a turnpike road by the 1770s. It led to a ferry from Ynyslas to Aberdovey and was a quick way to North Wales. Fresh water for the old cottages and houses came from the brook and for fuel villagers could dig peat on the far side of the River Leri near Ynys Fergi. However, by the time Erwau Glas was built the homes had piped water and coal came on the train.

John Lewis's land was sold to the developer Thomas Savin who brought the railway and built the Railway Station, the great Cambrian Hotel and Cambrian Terrace. The Hotel had large grounds (nearly two acres) for tennis, croquet, pleasure gardens, a bowling green, and possibly a walled garden.



LEFT The huge Cambrian Hotel and John Lewis's land is marked outlined in red. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map of 1905, revised in 1904, Cardiganshire III.10.)

However, the Hotel did not do well, it had a hundred rooms, but often many were empty. It is likely that by the 1920s and 1930s it needed to raise money, and bungalows and houses were built on some of its roadside land and the land behind them was sold off and developed.



LEFT On this detail from a map of 1948 the new houses are sketched in with no shading. Erwau Glas is coloured red, and a row of houses has been sketched at the back (Ordnance Survey 6 inch map, Ceredigion Archives)

The first to live there was Thomas James Davies who first paid the Rates in 1928 for a bungalow and garage (Ceredigion Archives ABR/TR/11/5/4) Mr Davies was the treasurer of the Borth Welsh Congregational Church in 1949. (Borth Review, NLW) He had a vote for the house

in 1945 with Margaret Davies. Their son Dan Davies was to preach in that Church as he had studied Theology, Philosophy and Welsh at Aberystwyth University and graduated in 1951.

## *Erwau Glas Page 4*

He had a sister Gwenith who wrote a poem about an otter in Welsh that was thought to be very good. (Borth Review, 1951, NLW)

The concrete sea wall and promenade was completed in May 1956, and in January 1957 the Aberystwyth Rural District Council charged the bungalows and houses because it now offered them protection from the sea. Erwau Glas with its garage was charged £20. Many owners complained bitterly about the 'unsightly sea wall' and said their homes were less valuable as the ground floor could no longer see the sea - very important for seaside homes that could take in holiday makers or be retirement homes (Ceredigion Archives ABR/HI/6/40)

*BELOW This is why the Council decided to protect these buildings. It was the result of a spring tide combined with a westerly gale and it is thought this was the storm of 1928. In the picture the road has already been shovelled clear of stones. Erwau Glas is just in the picture on the right hand side probably with its original windows with several small lights above a larger light (Picture from Aberystwyth Library)*



Mr Davies paid the Rates in 1963 and he had a vote for the house, so it is likely he was living there (Ceredigion Archives, Electoral Registers and Rates).

Archifdy Ceredigion Archives  
yn cyflwyno / presents  
**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.

Beryl Lewis retains the copyright in her work and the histories are made available for private use and research only.



Cyngor Sir  
**CEREDIGION**  
County Council



Archifdy  
Ceredigion  
Archives