

# 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.*

# GLAN DYLAN

## Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

Formerly Snowdon House. Built by 1895 for a master mariner, Thomas Lewis. Later a retired schoolmaster's home, and then the home of a craftsman. It had accommodation for holiday visitors.



*LEFT and BELOW the front of the house in 2008.*

This is a house on Princess Street, which ran northwards from the High Street. It has its back to fields reclaimed from the Cors Fochno, and across the road in front is the promenade and beach. It is a tall house of two and a half storeys with dormer windows lighting rooms in the roof. There is a gap between the house and Rhyd Cerrig next door on the north, and a narrow gap with room for a path and gate on the other side. At the back is a deep extension of two storeys on the northern side of the garden, and the garden ends at a small lane.

The walls are rendered. In front are bay windows on the ground and first floors. The glazing bars follow the pattern of old sash windows. The front door has a plain rectangular light over it, and the house opens onto the street. The façade is very plain, but finials decorate the tops



of the dormer windows and the northern end of the roof, and there are red ridge tiles topping the slate coloured roof. The chimney is decorative and of yellow bricks with a red edging to a wider lower section, and a red rim around the top. There are two chimney pots, but room for others. Old photographs show there was another chimney at the northern end of the roof, and no chimney pots at all.

This house was once more decorative. Old photographs show the walls were rendered in a pale colour, and picked out in a dark colour was a

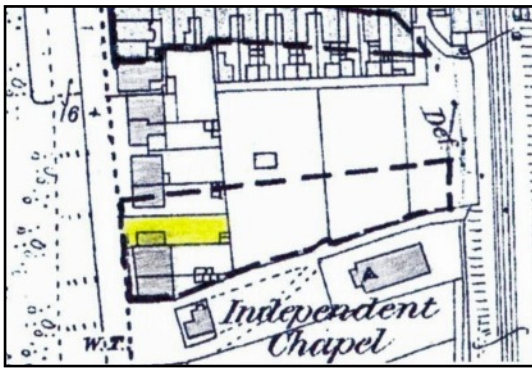


ABOVE and RIGHT  
Details from  
postcards (private  
collection).



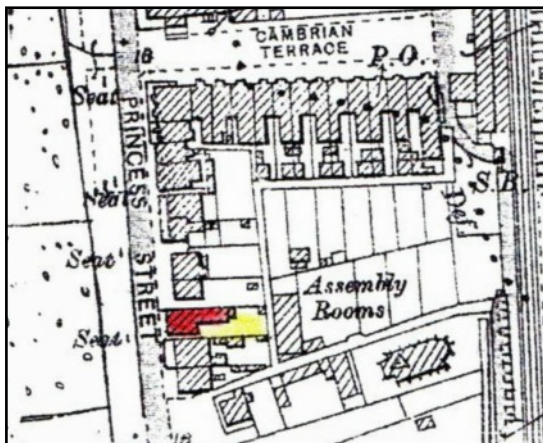
There was also a curving shape above the second floor window on the façade. Dark woodwork framed the windows and front door and there was a string course - line of moulding below the upper windows.

NEAR LEFT This is a detail from a family photograph taken in 1915. The sea defence was then timbers hammered into the stone bank.



LEFT In 1886 there was one small building on this site. The dashed area - drawn on this map when it was owned by the Council shows a piece of land originally owned by a lawyer and small holder, John Lewis, who enclosed it in 1809 and bought it from the 'waste' owned by the Crown Manor on the pebble bank. (Map Detail Ceredigion Archives, Ordnance Survey 25 inch, surveyed in 1886 published in 1888, Cardiganshire III.10) and John Lewis Enclosure Map 1829 National Archive LRRO/1/3060).

There were no buildings on this site in 1848, and John Lewis sold his piece of land to Savin who brought the railway to Borth and had built the Terrace which with its back gardens at the top of this map by 1870. A garden area of the Terrace was then behind the site of Glan Dylan.



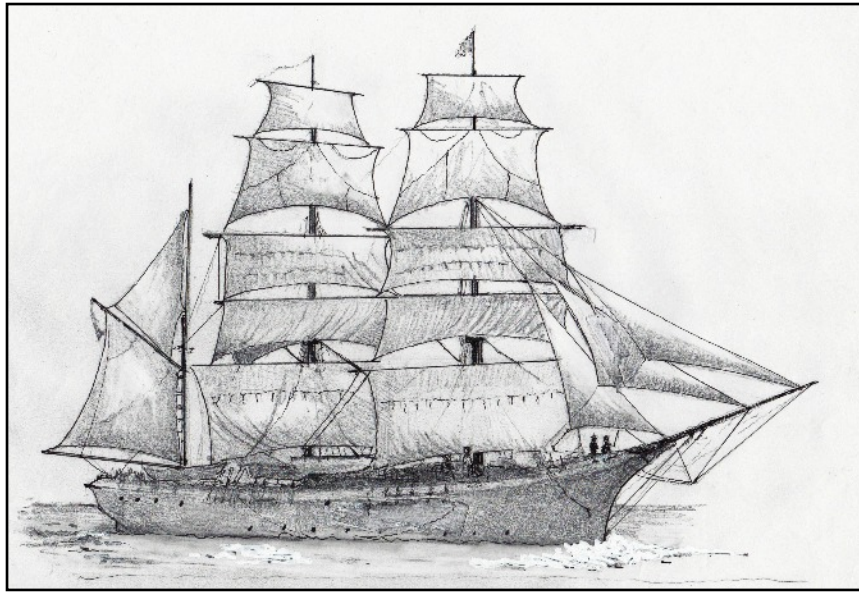
LEFT On this map of 1904 Glan Dylan - then called 'Snowdon' was built and is coloured in red. It was a building of great depth, and almost filled the available space.

An Assembly Rooms had been built behind it - now rebuilt as a garage (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905).

The first owner was a master mariner and the house was named 'Snowdon' after his ship. She was a barque, an ocean going sailing ship whose master in 1882 was John Lewis (Dr Terry Davies,

'Borth A Seaborne Village). In 1895 Thomas Lewis, also a master mariner was living in Snowdon House (Kelly's Directory Ceredigion Archives). That year Mrs and Miss Lewis presided over a table for a tea at the Assembly Rooms given by the landowner Miss Lewis (Cambrian News, October 14<sup>th</sup>.)

In July 1898 visitors were listed as staying there, making extra income for the Captain's family (Towyn on Sea and Merioneth County Times). It was a handsome house.



*A Barque.*

By 1910 the house had a new owner. For a valuation for a tax that was planned but not levied this was considered a good house, valued at £600, with £16.3s to pay and £19 gross. The site was valued at £62. The owner and occupier was Samuel Prosser (Ceredigion Archives T/DV/18 and Map National Library of Wales). He was a retired Elementary School Head Teacher, living on a pension. He had been the master at the Upper Borth Board School in 1895 (Kelly's Directory) and would have lived then in the schoolmaster's house. He was an incomer, being born in Crickhowell, Breconshire about 1842. In 1911 he was a widower, with an unmarried domestic servant aged 59 called Hannah Price. She too was from Crickhowell and an English speaker. Mr Prosser spoke both Welsh and English.

When he died, the Probate of his Will was dated 20 May 1928, and Snowdon House which was freehold, went to his daughter, Elizabeth Christiana. She was the wife of Richard William Roberts, and they lived there. Mrs Roberts died on 16 May 1944, and the house went to their son Harold Prosser Roberts who lived in Brecon. He was then a flying officer in the RAF (Deeds, Ceredigion Archives) In the 1911 Census the house was listed with ten main rooms, not including any bathroom or back scullery.

Sometime after 1922 the house was advertised with four furnished bedrooms and two sitting rooms for holiday visitors (The Illustrated Borth Guide, Aberystwyth Public Library).

Paying the rates in 1938 was Elizabeth c. Roberts.

Living in Snowdon in 1949 was Mrs J. C. Matthews who was the superintendent of a Borth detachment of the Red Cross and her husband was on the Borth Improvements Committee (Borth Review, National Library of Wales) She was running a boarding house.

By the 1960s the house had a telephone, Borth 316, and living there was a Mr F. R. Holland, a carpenter and decorator. Mrs Holland ran a bed and breakfast and evening meal for visitors. She advertised in a 'Handbook and Guide to Borth Village' and the house was then called Glan Dylan. In 1963 Catherine E. Roberts had a vote for the house and paying the rates that year was Miss Ceirios Jenkins (Electoral Register and Rates Ceredigion Archives).



*ABOVE Glan Dylan from the small lane at the rear of its garden. The house has a substantial two storey wing which was already there on the 1904 map. It has a Victorian coloured brick chimney - suggesting this was where the original kitchen had been. There is also with a lean-to extension on the end of the wing. The windows are modern.*

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**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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