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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GLAN YNYS Morfa Borth

On the beach side in the northern part of Borth High Street. A home built by the Simon family of master mariners for themselves. Formerly Number 2 Adelaide Place. Built after 1859 and by 1871.

LEFT Glan Ynys in 2016.

This is a two storey, single fronted, semi-detached house under a gable roof parallel with the street. It also has an attic floor lit in the front and back by dormer windows. The front dormer window matches that of Hafan next door. The house is a pair with Hafan and they share a brick chimney with yellow bricks. Each house has three flues. The house has its own chimney on the other end of the roof and that too is brick. Coloured bricks make a low arch over the upper window which is a sash window and the front door. The base of the bay window is dark brick. Though the rubble is random, some of the stones are squared up and coursed. This was a house in which the stones, and the coloured bricks were meant to be exposed. This had come into fashion in the later part of the nineteenth century, as for example in Chesterton and Gordon Villa further south along the street. Bricks at this time were not made locally and would have come on the train, possibly from a quarry at or near Ruabon North Wales. The dormer window was not there on a photograph for a postcard of 1921, nor on a postcard dated 1968. The first floor window has replaced a four light window there in 1995. Above the front door is only a narrow window to light the hall. The front of the house opens directly on to the street and a low brick wall separates it from the modern Kyana next door on the north. There are two shallow steps down to an area of hard standing which adjoins the road. The Welsh name 'Glan Ynys' means the bank or shore of an island.
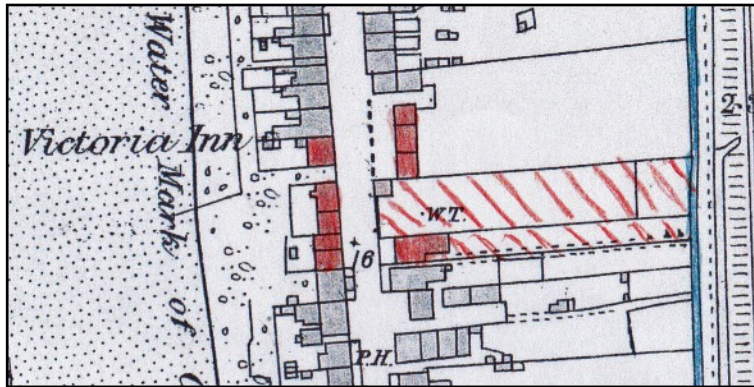

LEFT The pair of houses.

The rear of the house from the beach in 2016. The main house has wide dormer windows with fine views of the sea. The top floor window is modern. On the ground floor access to the yard is from a porch with a back door. On the north side of the yard is a two storey brick extension. This was built after 1905. Its upper floor opens on to a balcony with sea views. This has a ladder down into the yard which is enclosed by wooden fences. There is gateway in the rear fence leading to the beach.
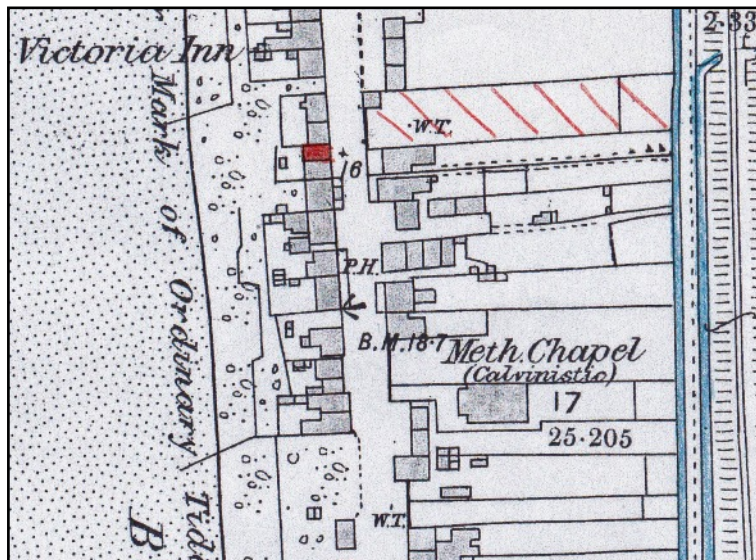
 The ground for this house is the stone bank thrown up by the sea and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor who owned it as it was no use for farming. On a map of 1829 it was beach (National Archives LRRO 1/3060) The road had been there for centuries, it was used in the twelfth century and was a turnpike 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 cottages and houses came from a brook behind the buildings on the other side of the road. By 1886 there were taps in the streets.

In 1824 on the other side of the street, Margaret Simon, a widow, had an encroachment of 2 rods and 16 perches (nearly three quarters of an acre). By 1829 this had a cottage or house on it (Map Map National Archives LRRO 1/3060). A map of 1848 shows a garden beside the house. However there were no buildings as yet on the beach side of the road (Numbers 19 and 20, Tithe Apportionments Map Llangihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township - on line at CYNEFIN - National Library of Wales). However on a map of encroachments belonging to the Crown Manor in 1859, plots on the beach side ready for cottages are marked, but no buildings were drawn on the plots opposite the Simon's house where Glan Ynys stands today, however a row of cottages had been built just to the north of it. (Plot 18f, Map, National Archives LRRO 1/3060)

Captain John Simon 1807 - 1881 the master mariner son of Margaret Simon had commanded the sloop Rebus, but it was lost in 1855. He then commanded the schooner Adelaide in 1861, and named his home 'Adelaide' after her so the nearby cottages were called 'Adelaide Place'. He owned many of them and must have bought the marked out beach side plots from the Crown. His wife Mary was born about 1816.

LEFT There were nine cottages called Adelaide Place at the Census of 1881 and we can see them on the 1886 map. At the 1881 Census Mary Simon (probably John's widow) was living in the one on the beach side next to the gap in the row. It was the biggest and best of the row. Over the road Bryngwyn had replaced the Simon's old house.
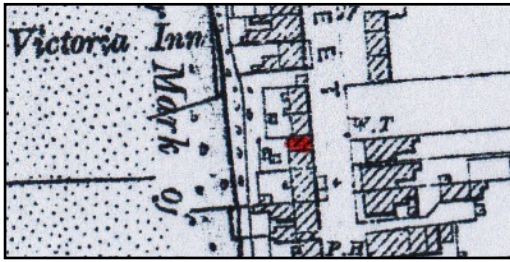

LEFT This was Glan Ynys in 1886, then Number 3 Adelaide Place and marked in red. It had no extension on the back and opened directly on to the street. The shared yard meant the Simon family owned both. The small building in the yard was probably their Ty Bach - outside lavatory. The Simon family still owned the ground over the road marked with stripes. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888. Cardiganshire III.10)

We do not know at present if any small cottage was on this ground before Hafan and Glas Ynys were built. They were both there by 1886, and the address was Adelaide Cottages. Captain Simon and his wife retired to the largest one by the gap in the row. Hafan was used for the next generation, his son, another Captain Simon and his wife Jane. The Simon family still owned all four beachside cottages in 1910 (Ceredigion Archives, T/DV/18 and map at the National Library of Wales).

Glan Ynys began as a home for a member of the Simon family. At the 1871 and 1881 Census in Number 2 Adelaide Place was a seaman, John Hughes and his wife Eliza. Both were local and born about 1834. She was Eliza Simon, one of the Captain's daughters and they wed on October 5th. 1860. He too was the son of a mariner (Parish Register).In 1861 she was 27, her husband was away at sea, and in the house was her sister Mary Simon. Then, they lived next to Captain Simon's wife Mary. This would be in one of the old cottages. By the 1881 Census they were in Number 2 Adelaide Place (Glan Ynys) - it had been built.

By the 1891 Census Eliza was a widow of 57, and was earning a living as a 'lodging house keeper'. At the 1901 Census she was still doing it, with a boarder in the house, R. Eurog Jones, a 25 year old Wesleyan Minister born in Newborough, Anglesey.

LEFT In 1904 the two houses still shared a yard though one more small building was in the yard. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905. Cardiganshire III.10)

In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied, the house was valued at £114, the same as Hafan. There would have been £3.4s to pay, £4 gross. (Captain) John Simon owned it, and his tenant was called Liller. At the 1911 Census the house is not listed, there was no one there to fill in the form. We do not know how many main rooms it had - but Hafan next door had six. The house was still named 'Adelaide Place'.
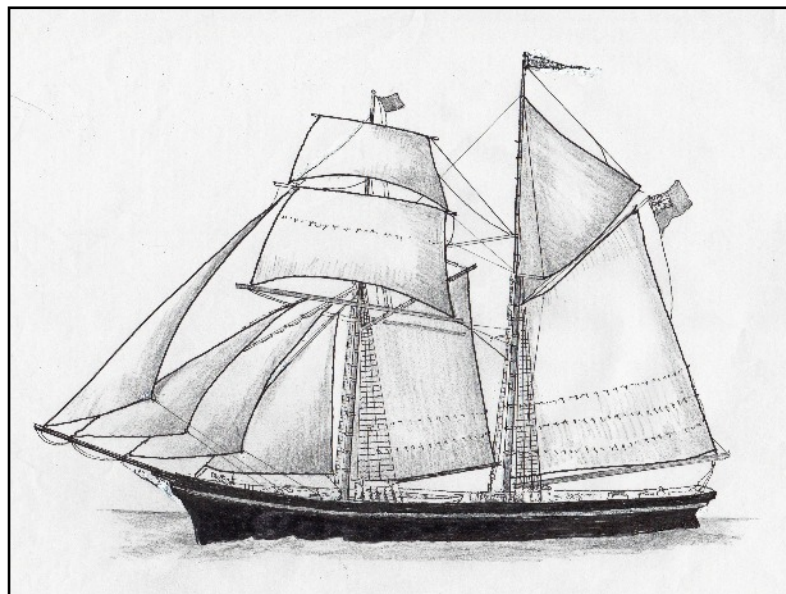
In 1925 David Amos had paid the rates as owner and occupier, but this was altered to Henry Woolan. The Simon family still owned the house.

Henry Woolan paid the rates in 1934 and 1938, and Jane Simon, next door, owned the house. The house had its name, Glan Ynys. He paid the rates in 1949 and 1963 too, and is spelt 'Woollam' by the Council at that time. With votes for the house in 1963 were John H. Woollam and Hilda Mary Woollam.

LEFT In this detail from a postcard of the 1920s the pair of houses are on the far right - and they did not then have dormer windows.

BELOW Captain John Simon's 'Adelaide' was a schooner. She was 45 tonnes and built in Aberystwyth in 1835 and sailed until 1873 when she was broken up at Newquay. (Shipping Register, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion Archives) *These wooden sailing ships carried plenty of sails and could cross the Atlantic.* (The drawing is based on another Borth schooner, the Dovey Belle).

In 1995 the ground floor had outer and inner halls floored with quarry tiles, a lounge, a dining room with a probably original stone slab floor and a kitchen. Upstairs on the first floor were landings and a sun room with wide views of the sea, a front bedroom a shower room, a bathroom and a lavatory. Under the roof the landing was lit by a dormer window, as were a front and a back bedroom (Sale details Ceredigion Archives).

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.