

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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GLAN-Y-MÔR COTTAGE Morfa Borth.

At the beach side in the middle of Borth High Street. Formerly called Number 2 Brynmawr Place, 'Madeira House' and 'Seashore'. Home of a Richards family of mariners from 1825 and still in 1936, and for many years the Richards family also owned the cottage next door where 'Sydney House' is today.



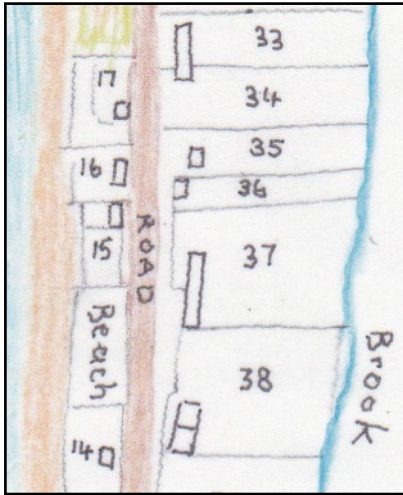
The name of the cottage means 'bank of the sea' in Welsh. Glan-y-môr is part of a terrace between Ynyswen and Sydney House and is a single storey cottage under a gable roof parallel to the street. There is an attic floor under the roof lit by roof lights in the front and back. There are no chimneys. The front door opens directly on to the street and is

interesting because there is no step down to the pavement. The front door is modern and as with all the old Borth Cottages it is not in the centre, there was once a large living room with the hearth on one side, a central passage, and a smaller room on the other side, usually the owners' bedroom. The living room would have had a fireplace with a chimney that end of the building. The walls are rendered with a rough cast finish and the history of the cottage suggests they are rubble stone. Today the two front windows are modern canted bay windows under a nearly flat roof. The numerous panes suit an old cottage. In front neat rendered walls enclose an area of hard standing.

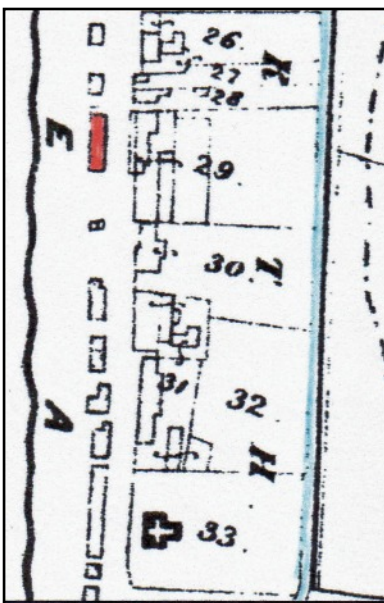
ABOVE and BELOW Photographs taken in 2015.



At the back the cottage has a large modern bay window with views over the beach. On the south side of the yard is a detached lean-to building up against a tall boundary wall with Ynyswen. The yard ends with a wire netting fence with slender posts on top of the sea defensive wall of vertical sleepers. The southern end is vertical sleepers. The cottage fits tightly up against both its neighbours, and has not extended out into the yard and so keeps the old cottage shape it had in 1886.



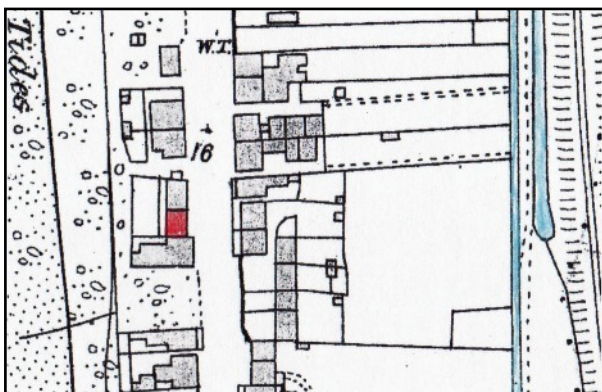
The ground for this house is the stone bank thrown up by the sea and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor Court who owned it as it was no use for farming. It was enclosed in 1825 by John Richards, and measured 25 perches. On a map of 1829 (LEFT) it is Number 15 and there was a cottage built on it. A rent of 16s a year had to be paid for the ground - and it could be bought for two years rent. There was a fenced off southern section of this ground. (Map 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 cottages and houses on the other side of the road.



LEFT In 1848 there was a block of cottages on this land and it is marked in red. Because they had no gardens these cottages paid no tithe and so we do not know how many cottages or who lived there. (Tithe Apportionments Map Llangihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township - on line at CYNEFIN - National Library of Wales).

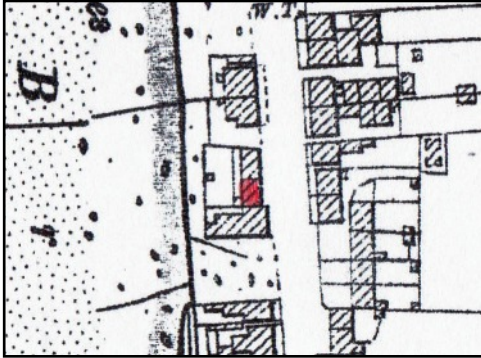
The Census of 1851 lists two Richards families; a master mariner John Richards born about 1798 - probably the man who enclosed the ground and whose cottage would become Sydney House, and a second family, Richard Richards aged 4 with his mother Eliza, and an elder brother John born about 1845 and a sister Catherine born about 1850. Their father was not at home. He was a mariner, John Richards and he and Eliza had their eldest son, another John, baptised in January 1845 (Parish Register, Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn).

Another member of the Richards family was in the cottage at the 1871 Census, another John Richards. He was an elderly widowed master mariner born in Borth about 1813. In the 1881 Census the cottage which is now Glan-y-môr had an address, it was Number 2 Brynmawr Place. Also in the cottage was the next generation of the family; Mrs Jane Richards aged 38 and born about 1843 in the Corn Office, Llanfair, Montgomeryshire and her husband Richard Richards who was a mariner. They had wed in 1878. Also there were their two sons, Richard aged 4 born in Montgomeryshire, and as Thomas aged 3 was born in Bow Street they had moved to the cottage recently.



LEFT A map of 1886 shows three buildings on the site. Glan-y-môr is marked in red. The southernmost one was Ynyswen (then called Beach Grove), then came Glan-y-môr, then came another cottage still there in 1895 which today is re-built as Sydney House. The two cottages had the same owner and shared a yard. There was one fence on the stone bank to protect them from the sea. The high tide line was shown by a black line, and the little dots were the sand (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888, Cardiganshire III.10).

Mrs Richards was there in the 1891 Census. Her son Richard was then 14, and Thomas was 12. She was still there at the 1901 Census. Thomas, now 23 had become a self employed monumental mason and there would have been work for him as Borth had its own St Matthew's Church opened in 1876. Also there was her daughter Mary Ann Richards aged 16, born in Borth, A small two year old relative was also there, Thomas Morris Parry born in London.



LEFT Mrs Richard's house in 1904, marked in red. The two cottages were still in the same ownership and unchanged. On the beach new groynes had recently been built and the high tide line had come closer. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire III.10).

In 1910 for a tax planned but not levied, the cottage was valued at £45. There would have been £1.16s to pay, £2.5s gross. That was usually the valuation of a stone built cottage rather than one with mud walls.

The owner and occupier was Richard Richards. The house then was called 'Madeira House'. The 1911 Census listed just four rooms for the cottage and also that one of the Richards children had died. Mrs Jane Richards was in the cottage.

The Cambrian News of 26th. October 1917 reported that Richard Richards of Madeira House had found a body wearing a lifebelt on the beach near Beach (Grove) House. He was F. Dyer from the S.S. Memphian steaming from Liverpool to New Orleans and it had been torpedoed by a German U-boat. In July 1924 the paper reported that Mr T. (Thomas) Richards of Madeira had broken his leg.

Mr Richards paid the rates in 1925 as owner and occupier of Madeira House. Once again the cottage next door then with its name Sydney and bigger, and with seven rooms it was also owned by the Richards family, Mrs Jane Richards who would have been 77 paid the rates for it, but possibly had died as her name was altered to Dr J. Richards.

In 1934 Madeira House was still owned by Richard Richards. Thomas Richards had been living there, but this was altered in September 1936 to M. E. Edwards and the house had a new name 'Seashore'.

In 1945 at the General Election Doris E. Foster had a vote for the house and Vivian Lewis paid the rates in 1949.

In 1963 Jabez Barker Ltd. paid the rates and he had a vote for the house that year. (Electoral Registers and Rates, Ceredigion Archives).

In 1970 when the Aberystwyth Rural District Council were improving the sea defences behind all the beach side houses the house was still called 'Seashore'.

This is a very special cottage, as few Morfa Borth cottages and houses were still in the possession of the family who enclosed the ground in the twentieth century, and like so many of them it was the home of mariners.

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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.

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