

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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GLASFÔR Morfa Borth

At the middle of Borth High Street on the beach side. Once part of St David's Place. At one time with the same owner as others in the terrace, and used for letting. Formerly Number 1 Maglona Terrace with a connection to a schooner called Maglona built in April 1876 in Aberdovey and lost in 1887.



Glasfôr is a two storey, single fronted terrace house with dormer windows front and back to light an attic floor. It has a gable roof parallel to the street. The walls are random rubble stone, with some rounded stones from the beach, and are rendered. At the front the windows are matching sash windows, and there is a canted bay window on the ground floor. The front door is modern but in the style of an old door with old style hinges. Like other old cottages it shared its chimney with the cottage next door. These homes are much taller and better than the terrace of mud cottages adjoining the Railway Inn over the road.

LEFT Glasfor in 2015.

BELOW LEFT The house is small compared with tall Gwendon next door.



BELOW RIGHT This view from an old postcard shows the house had exposed stone walls, and probably red bricks around the windows and front door. The join to the bay window looks very dodgy - suggesting it was added on to the front and not part of the original cottage.

Next door was Liverpool House, a shop. (Detail from a postcard, 'High Street Borth', in the Amgueddfa Ceredigion Museum)



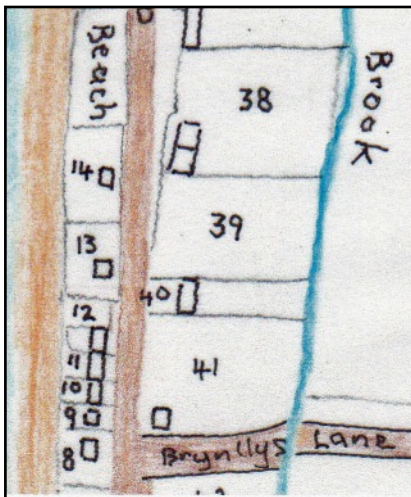


The house from the beach in 2015. The wing at the rear is two storey. There are fine views over the beach from the upper window of the wing and from the wide dormer window. There are further extensions to the wing, but single storey. The wall of vertical sleepers is a defence against the sea during storms, and there is a gateway to the beach, boarded up. The yard is the same depth as the two cottages beyond.

The Welsh house name probably means 'blue sea' or perhaps 'green sea'.

The ground for this house was enclosed in 1825 by Moses

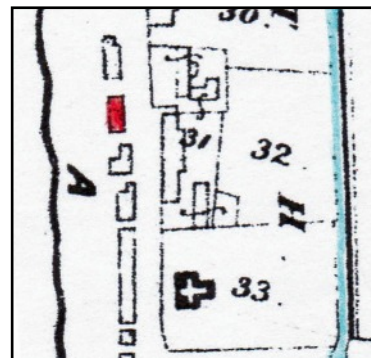
Jones from the stone bank thrown up by the sea and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor Court who owned it as it was no use for farming. His ground measured 20 perches and a map of 1829 shows a cottage built on it, described as 'cottage and beach'. Moses Jones was a master mariner with a daughter born in 1818 (Parish Register Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Ceredigion Archives) 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.



LEFT A detail copied from the map of 1829. Moses Jones's plot was Number 14 and he had plenty of ground around his cottage. (National Archives LRRO 1/3060) Today six cottages fit into his road frontage, Glasfôr to Golf Cottage..

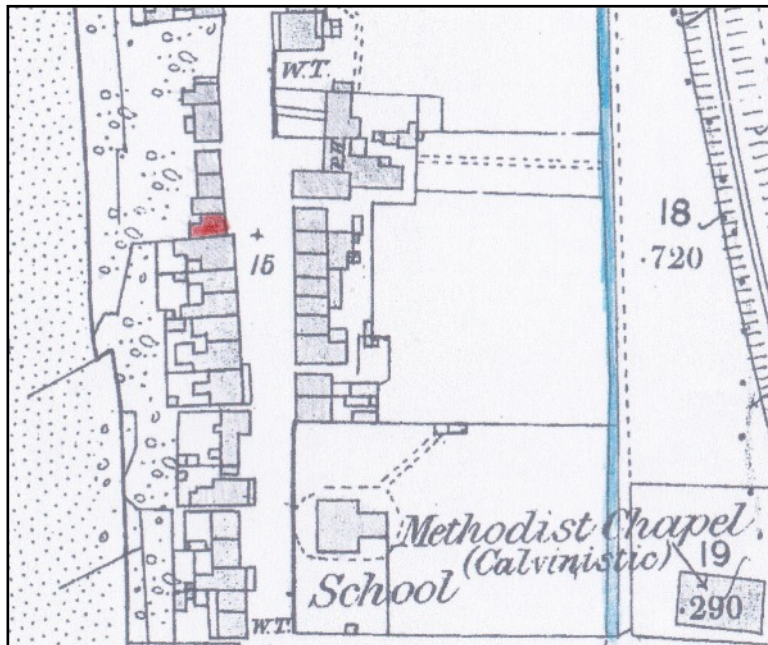
RIGHT By 1848 more buildings, coloured in red, had been built on Moses

Jones's ground. We have no details of these as they had no gardens and paid no tithe. (Tithe Apportionments Map, Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township, on-line at CYNEFIN.)



Overlaying maps shows that three cottages were eventually on this ground, Glasfôr was the southernmost. It is not possible to find the families living in these in the earlier Census's as houses did not have names. Even by 1881 none of the homes had a name, they were simply one of the St David's Place cottages and these were on both sides of the High Street. St David's Diocese (the Vicar) had owned the plot marked on the 1829 map above as Number 41, and a school would be built on it (replaced by our Meddygfa), and a row of cottages would be built adjoining it, now on the

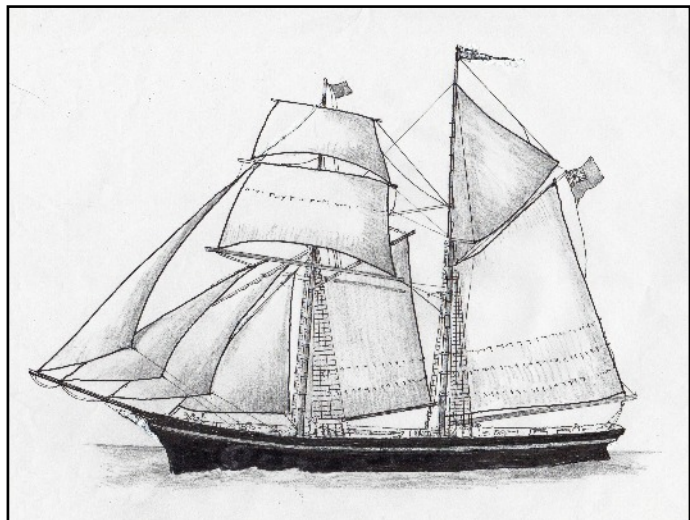
other side of the street from Glasfôr, number 31 on the Tithe Map. It is not known if the Church originally owned the plot they were built on. They would later belong with the Railway Inn.



LEFT The cottage in 1886, marked in red. It had no back yard, all of them shared the beach at the back. It is likely they were all in the same ownership or the surveyor would have drawn in separate yards for them. However they shared two back fences, probably sea defences of rows of stakes driven into the stone bank. Another fence edged the sand (shown as little dots). 'PH' over the road was the Railway Inn. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888. Cardiganshire III.10)

In 1891 at the Census in the cottage was a mariner's wife, Jane Davies aged 27 and born in Borth. With her was her one year old daughter, Maud. They were monoglot Welsh speakers. The house had an address, Number 1 Maglona Place.

Maglona was a splendid schooner, brand new in April 1876, registered with 144 tonnes, and built at Aberdovey by Thomas Richards. She was commanded by Owen Williams and had two masts, and a figure head of a whole woman. Her owners were Morgan Owens, an Aberystwyth ship owner with 52 shares and Richard Owens a timber merchant from Machynlleth with 12. She was totally wrecked off Newfoundland in 1887 (Shipping Register, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion Archives). There were houses called Maglona in Aberystwyth, Aberaeron and Newquay where people had held shares in the schooner. The connection of Maglona Terrace in



Morfa Borth to the schooner was

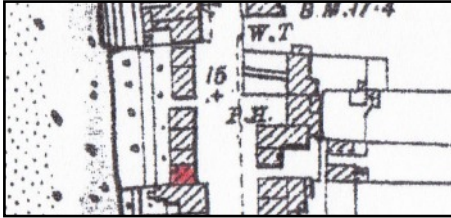
probably from her first master, Captain Owen Williams who wed a Borth girl Elizabeth Davies on 17th August 1859. She was the daughter of a Morfa Borth mariner David Davies and his wife Ann who are in the 1841 Census for Morfa Borth. The Captain and his wife lived in Aberdovey (Captain Owen Williams family tree, on-line). It is likely that one of the six houses in the terrace was called Maglona - or Maglona House, and it gave its name to the terrace. The schooner was sailing between 1876 and 1887 and the name first appeared in the 1891 Census as Maglona Place. It is likely all the crew were drowned when she was lost.

The schooner Maglona based on a painting made when David Richards of Aberdovey was her commander.

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Who remembered the schooner with pride? Mariner's wife Jane Williams aged 50 in Number 4, (Bwythyn Bach), or mariner's widow Jane Davies aged 27 in this house, Number 1?

At the 1901 Census in Number 1 Maglona Place was a general labourer, James Davies aged 31 with his Irish wife Sarah Jane Davies aged 34, with their children Jane aged 6 and John James aged 5, both born in Borth, and a stepson William Byron aged 15 and born in Shewsbury. This too was a Welsh speaking family.



This was their house in 1904. It no longer has an extension at the back, the result of a very bad storm in 1896 which damaged many of the houses. Abraham Davies in this house lost his life - he was a tenant. (Cambrian News February 1899 and a detail from the Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 published in 1905, as before)



Moses Jones's cottage had to be taken down when these four were built. They are all rubble stone with beach stones and shared chimneys. Number 4, Bwythn Bach is in the foreground and is double fronted. Was this possibly the house that gave the name Maglona to the terrace?

In 1910 for a tax planned but not levied, the house was valued at £102. There would have been £3.10s to pay, £4.7s 6d gross. The owner was Joseph Davies who owned all the houses in the Terrace. The occupier was H. H. Bora. The houses now had individual owners. There was no-one to fill in the form in the 1911 Census so the house is not in the list.

In 1925 paying the rates as owner and occupier was H. H. Cockle. Florence Cockle was there too, and the house had its name Glasfôr. Florence A. Cockle paid the rates in 1934 and 1938.

With a vote for the house in the General Election of 1945 was M. E. Vaughan Edwards. Paying the rates for the house in 1949 was A. Fielding.

L.Cockle paid the rates until March 1963, and then J. E. Scholes.

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gan/by Beryl Lewis
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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-eredigion.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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