

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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Y GLYN Morfa Borth

On the beach side and the north end of Borth High Street. Formerly called Pilgrim. Built by Captain Thomas Jones and owned by the Jones family until 1953, but also a lodging house, then a private home.

This was the smart end of the town, not far from the railway station opened to passengers in 1863, the imposing Cambrian Hotel (later Pantyfedwen, now gone), and the Cambrian Terrace completed by 1870,. It was also close to the place where the main street runs alongside the beach with no buildings in the way (now with a promenade), and old postcards show that this area had bathing huts and was popular with holiday makers.



LEFT Y Glyn in 2014

Y Glyn is a three storey, single fronted terrace house under a gable roof parallel to the street shared with Windsor House and Hafod, and like them it has an overhanging roof supported by pairs of dentils (brackets). The position of its windows does not match those of Windsor House and Hafod, suggesting that this house may not have been built at the same time. In 1911 it had 10 rooms, not including any bathrooms, and was being used as a lodging house.

Today the walls are rendered and there is a string course (line of moulding) beneath the first floor windows, and below it are incised marks to suggest ashlar masonry. There are bay windows on all three floors. Between the uppermost bay windows are lapped wooden boards, but there is a plain rendered surface between the bays below. The glass is probably modern.



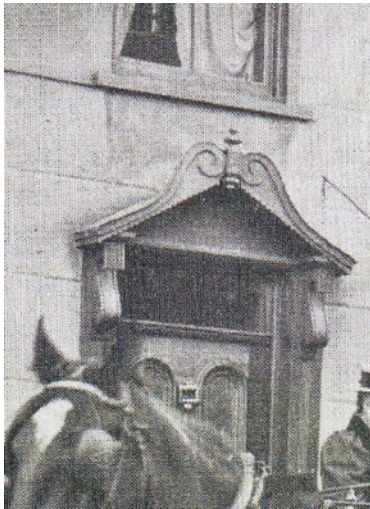
LEFT The rear of the house from the beach, on the left in 2014 and on the right in 2016. There is an extension on the back as it had on the old maps. Today this extends as a single story to the end of its yard. On the south side is access from the house to a gateway to the beach.



LEFT The doorway has decorative carved brackets supporting a plain pediment.

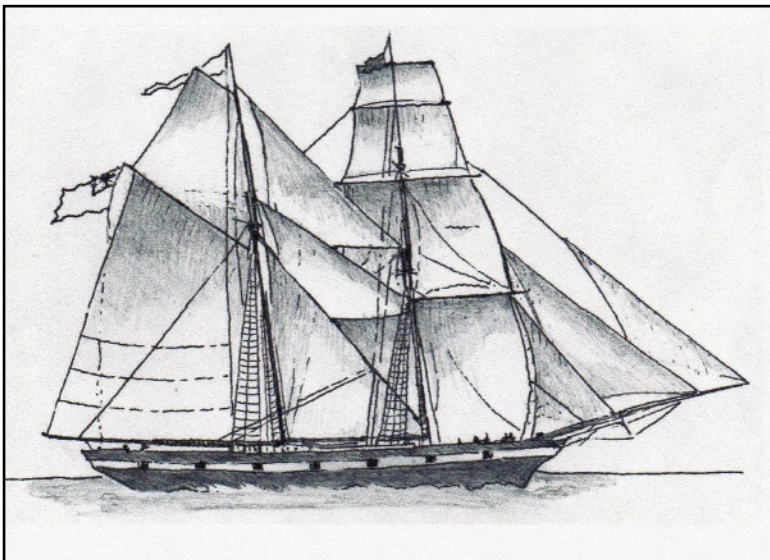


RIGHT There is a very interesting glimpse of the façade in a photograph of about 1910 of people from the parish of Trefeurig having a day out at Borth in a horse drawn 'break'.



LEFT The brackets over the front door support a handsome little classical pediment with broken scrolls, and there is a glimpse of the window above showing mouldings at the sides of the frame. This suggests a very good quality house. There is also a glimpse of a narrow strip of garden with plants in front of the house, behind a low wall topped by railings. ('Bro Dafydd ap Gwilym' David Jenkins)

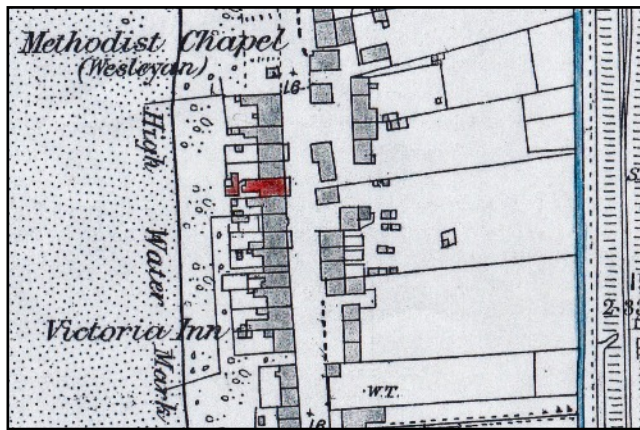
Terry Davies has suggested that this house was built by Captain Thomas Jones, (1823.....) who named it after a brigantine the 'Pilgrim'(Borth, A Maritime History, p. 21). A Brigantine, with two masts was bigger and faster and more manoeuvrable than a sloop or a schooner. The Captain commanded a ship called 'Pilgrim' in 1888. He came from a



farming family to the south of Borth, at Ffosygravel Uchaf farm. The Census's show that in 1881 the house was already called 'Pilgrim,' but was then unoccupied. It seems that Captain Jones's wife Elizabeth (born about 1840) and their children remained at Ffosygravel with his parents which is understandable as he would often be away at sea.

So from by 1891 to 1911 or later, Pilgrim was a lodging house run by two sisters, Jane Williams (born about 1843) and Margaret Williams (born

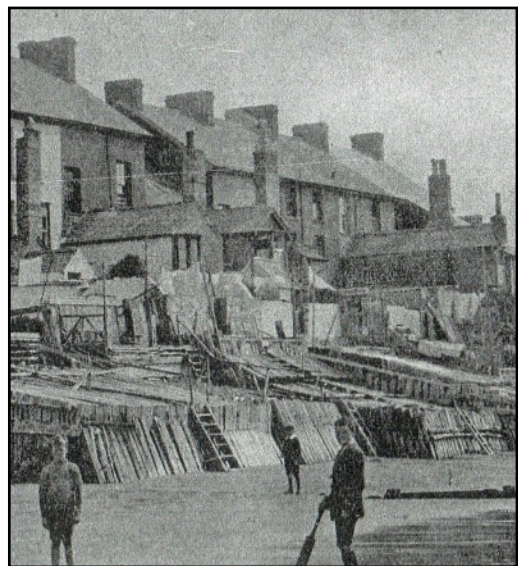
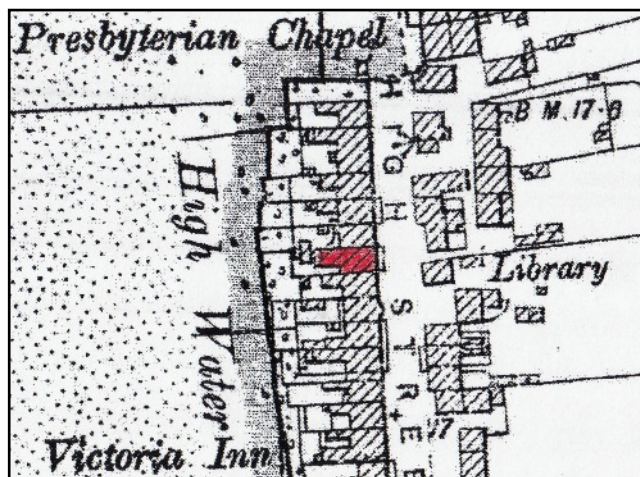
about 1861). Neither had married. Jane was born in Breconshire at Ystradgynlais, her sister in Borth. Staying with them in 1891 was Mary Jones, their niece, the Principal of a Ladies School. She was born in Newport. Another niece called Mabel Parry was staying there in 1901. The Census's also list boarders in the house.



LEFT The house in 1886 is marked in red. One small building in the yard would have had its outside lavatory.

(A detail from the 25 inch Ordnance survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888. Cardiganshire III.10)

BELOW LEFT The house in 1904. It seems to share the small building in the yard with Windsor House (A detail from the 25 inch Ordnance survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire III.10)



ABOVE RIGHT Y Glyn is on the left in this detail from an old postcard. It had a very substantial slab chimney, and the curiously placed pair of windows on the back wall. A wall protected the upper yard (Detail from a postcard by 'Williams' called Borth Woods, Private Collection)

In 1910 the house was valued for Rates at £300, with £11.18s to pay and £13 gross. This was the same as Windsor and Hafod next door. The Williams sisters were still living there, but Captain Thomas was dead, and Elizabeth Jones of Ffosygrafal Ucha was the owner, his elderly wife perhaps?

In 1925 the house was still called Pilgrim, the gross Rate had increased to £14, and the two unmarried Jones sisters, Elizabeth and Mary had become both the owners and occupiers. Terry Davies found out that they had retired there, and gave piano lessons, and became tired of being called 'the Pilgrims' so they changed the name of the house to Y Glyn. Mary died in 1951, and Elizabeth in 1953.

In 1953 the house as left by the two sisters was up for sale by auction on Wednesday August 28th. There was a description of the house which was freehold. On the ground floor was an entrance hall, two reception rooms with modern grates, and the kitchen had a modern Rayburn Cooker and built in cupboard. On the first floor was a sitting room, bedroom and box room, bathroom and lavatory with a wash hand basin. On the second floor were two bedrooms. In the yard was a coal store, shed and W. C. with a back entrance to the beach. This was stone built with cement facing and roofed with slate. The house was in a good state of repair, and water and electricity were laid on (Cambrian News, August 21st. 1953).

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Paying the rates in 1963 were Miss Jones and Mr Henry. With a vote for the house was Thomas Merry (Electoral Registers and Rates, Ceredigion Archives).

The ground for the 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 the time this house was built there was one tap with good spring water in the street outside the Cambrian Hotel. In 1848 the site was still not built upon. (Tithe Apportionments Map Llangihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township - on line at CYNEFIN - National Library of Wales). However on a map of encroachments on the waste belonging to the Crown Manor in 1859, a wide beach side plot (18k) was drawn and said 'sold' but the surveyor had not drawn any buildings on it (1859 Map National Archives LRRO 1/3060). So it is possible to say that Y Glyn was built after 1859 but by 1881 when it was mentioned and named in the Census, but was empty.

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Tai'r Borth / Houses of Borth
gan/by Beryl Lewis
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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-eredigion.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-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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