

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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GWYNFA Morfa Borth

At the southern part of Borth High Street on the beach side. Built between 1909 and 1911 on the site of an old cottage of the Pierce family.

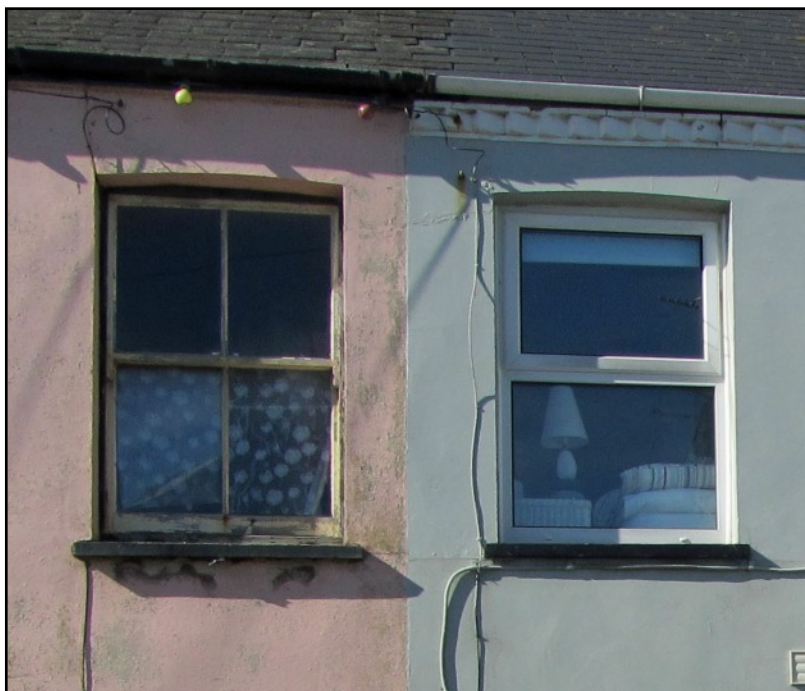


Gwynfa in Autumn 2016

Gwynfa is a single fronted, two storey house with a tiled gable roof parallel to the street, and is semi-detached. There is a slab chimney on the south end of the roof. The house seems planned to be a pair with Kidderminster House to the north of it, the upper windows and doors match in size and shape. The ground floor has a canted bay window with a central sash window. The upper windows too are sash windows. The front door is on the north side, and there is a step down to a hard standing platform beside the street.



ABOVE The front door. LEFT This is one of the few houses in Morfa Borth with old sash windows, with their delicate wooden frames. Compare it with the thick plastic frame of the modern window of Kidderminster House on the right.





The chimney has two sections, one red brick, one yellow brick.

At the back Gwynfa and Kidderminster House share a wing with a gable roof at right angles to the house. At the end of its wing Gwynfa has a railed balcony in front of glazed doors with a fine view over the beach. To support the balcony metal beams sit on three walls. The balcony reaches to the rendered end wall of the yard, and steps lead down from the balcony into the yard. On the north side of the yard a passageway leads to the beach. The yard is protected by a wall there too, but there is an opening to the passage. Below the balcony seems to be walled. This is one of the best protected

houses from the sea during storms along the beach side of the High Street.



Views from the beach in 2015. The two houses share a one and a half storey wing, Gwynfa is on the right, Kidderminster House is on the left. On its upper floor three windows look out south, and facing the beach is the double glazed door on to its balcony.



The ground for this house is the stone embankment thrown up by the sea and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor who owned it as it was no use for farming.

A plot was enclosed in 1826 and Evan Hughes had a cottage on it. His ground measured 24 perches, just over an eighth of an acre. A rent of 16s had to be paid every year, or by paying £4 he could buy the plot (National Archive, map and details, 1829, LRRO 1/3060). Evan



Hughes in the 1841 Census was a mariner, born about 1786. He would have been a man of 40 when he enclosed the ground. His wife Margaret was fifteen years older.

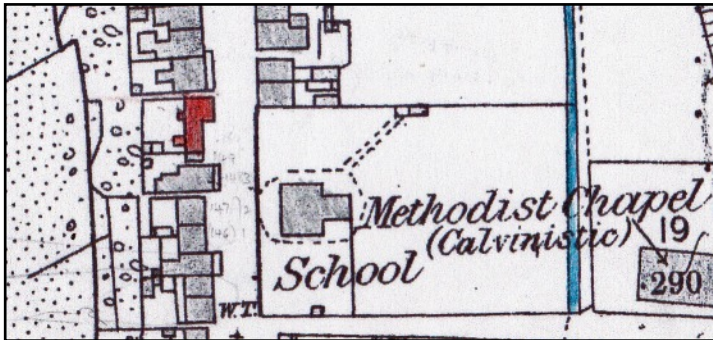
On this detail copied from a Crown Manor map of 1829 Evan Hughes's cottage is Number 12 with an empty plot beside it.

The road had been there for centuries and was a turnpike road by the 1770s. It led to a ferry from Ynyslas to Aberdovey, a quick way to

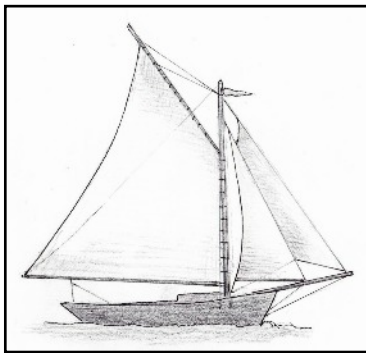
North Wales. Fresh water for the old cottages came from a 'brook' behind the cottages on the other side of the road, and for fuel the villagers could dig peat on the far side of the River Leri just north of Ynys Fergi.

Evan Hughes's plot was number 12 and he had some empty ground to the north of the cottage. Now his cottage has gone and his run of street frontage now has Ardwyn, Beach House, Gwynfa and Kidderminster House built on it. There was only room for these to be single fronted, and Beach House is particularly narrow. Across the road Number 41 with a cottage belonged to the Vicar and the National School would be built there in 1842. The lane to Brynlllys was narrowed later by another Glanrhyd Cottage added to the row already there on Number 42. By 1848 a long building was added on to the north of Evan Hughes's cottage.

At the 1881 Census there were four cottages each called Providence House, named after the sloop owned by Evan Hughes. Number 3, where Gwynfa now stands was unoccupied. (Numbers 1 and 2 belonged to members of the Hughes family - now Y Nyth and Ardwyn) Number 4 was a grocer's shop of the Pierce family.

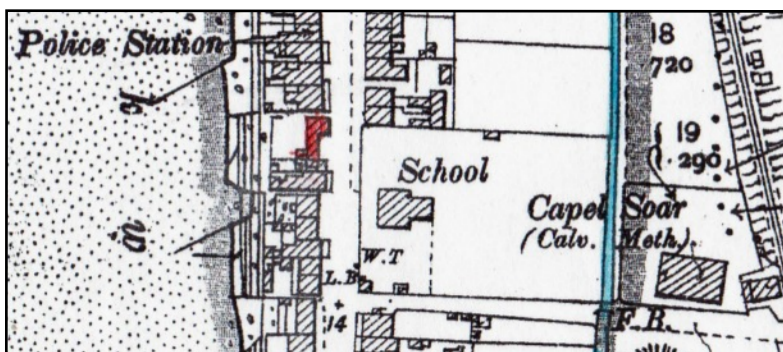


In 1884 and coloured red is the long building on the site on which Gwynfa and Kidderminster House now stand. A shop stood at the northern end. In the small buildings in the yard was probably their Ty Bach (outside lavatory). (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1884 and published in 1888. Cardiganshire NW)



At the Census of 1891 the Pierce's home had a name, Carnarvon Cottage. It seems that all the long building now had that name and had both a cottage (on the site of Gwynfa) and a grocer's shop, and it all belonged to the Pierce's. John Pierce was a deepwater mariner, his wife Margaret ran the grocer's shop. By the 1901 Census Margaret had died, and John Pierce had retired from the sea, and aged 66 was running the grocer's shop. It seems his son, John D. Pierce had moved into the much grander Abergeldy House next door.

ABOVE A Sloop



In 1904 the cottage/shop long building is much the same. The four rows of fences at the back were sea defences, rows of stakes anchored into the stone bank. There had been a seriously bad storm in 1896. Brynawel, now Beach House had been built next door.

For a tax planned but not levied in 1910 the house was still called Carnarvon cottage and valued at only £30 - that of a very poor cottage, with £3 to pay, £3.15s gross. Living there were John Pierce and Miss H. J. Jukes. The owner was T. C. E. Moore.

By 1911 the cottage had been rebuilt as the house, Gwynfa - white place - it had seven rooms, and in the house was Francis Edward Brookling, aged 25 and the golf professional at the Borth Golf Club. He was an Englishman born in Putney. His wife Elizabeth and he had been married for only one year and had no children. She was local, from Machynlleth.

Paying the rates for Gwynfa in 1925 had been Sarah Shuker as owner and occupier, but this was altered to C. J. Meredith Jones. Kidderminster House next door was a shop. The houses were valued the same as Ardwyn Villa. Paying the rates in 1934 had been C. J. Meredith Jones, but this was altered to Dr Woodman as owner and occupier. C. Meredith Newling paid the rates in 1938.



On this photograph from a glass plate, Gwynfa is in the foreground on the right. It was indeed a 'white' place. It had a narrow enclosed front garden, with a wall and gate.

This dates from after 1936. Over the road behind the wall was the National School. (Courtesy of Peter Fleming)

In 1945 with votes for the house at the General Election were Joan Hargreaves and Edith F. Holford.

In 1949 paying the rates was Myfanwy Jones. From the 10th September 1949 the house had also increased in value, from £8 to £11 to pay, and £15 to £17 gross. She also paid the rates in 1963 and had a vote for the house. (Rates and Electoral Registers, Ceredigion Archives).

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[cyf/ref ADX/1629]

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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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