

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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HAFOD Morfa Borth

On the beach side at the north end of Borth High Street. Formerly Osborne House and Raglan House. Home of Captain David Daniel 1830 - 1891 and used for holiday visitors as well, and then Captain William Francis and his family, and later of a doctor. Built after 1859, possibly by 1866.



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 Hafod in 2016 BELOW The front in 2017

Hafod is a three storey, single fronted terrace house. The gable roof is parallel to the street and is shared with Windsor House and Y Glyn to the south. There are roof lights at the front and back for an attic floor. The roof has an overhang supported by pairs of dentils (brackets). The walls are rendered, and at the date of building, likely to be rubble stone. The upper wall is plain, but on the ground floor the rendering has the pattern of rusticated masonry. The lead roofs of the door and bay window have attractive curves where they overhang. The placement of the windows at the front and back, and the front door suggest this house is a pair with Windsor House and possibly was built

at the same time. It is likely the windows are modern, but they keep the appearance of the original sash windows. The narrow front garden is enclosed by a yellow brick wall topped by railings and a gate. Yellow bricks were not made locally, and would have come on the train from North Wales. This house had a front garden on the old maps, its neighbours did not.





ABOVE The rear of the house from the beach in 2016.



The first floor of the house at the back opens on to a balcony with good views of the sea, and so has its oriel bay window. The balcony staircase is well designed for adults and children to reach the yard safely. It is noticeable that the yard of Hafod has some brick walls to protect it from the sea during bad storms.

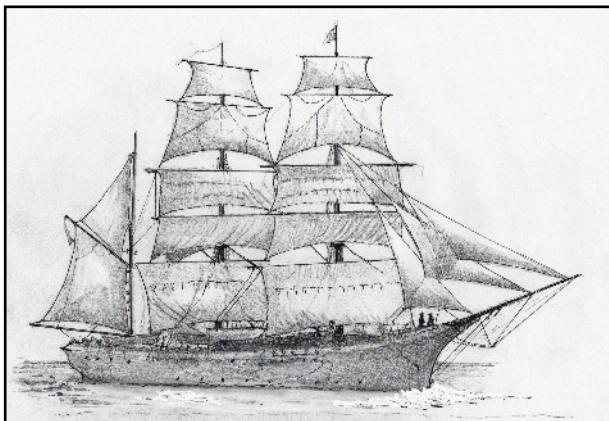
LEFT Hafod on the left and Windsor House on the right are very much a pair.

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 of Hafod 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 (numbered 18k) was drawn and said 'sold' but the surveyor had not drawn any buildings on it (1859 Map National Archives LRRO 1/3060).

The house was there at the 1871 Census, and in the house was the wife of a master mariner, Jane Daniel, aged 40 and born in Clarach. With her were six children; David Daniel 13 and Thomas Daniel 11 both born in Aberystwyth, Margaretta Daniel 8, Rosina Daniel 5, Richard L. Daniel 2, and a baby James Daniel 5 months old. With them was a domestic servant Sarah Oliver aged 19. The Daniel family who originated from Penygraig Farm produced master mariners, and had shares in, and owned wooden sailing ships. In 1855 Captain Thomas Daniel and his wife Anne had shares in the 'Rosina' a 91 ton schooner, She sailed until 1893 when she was lost (Aberystwyth Shipping Register, Ceredigion Archives). Terry Davies writes that Captain David Daniel of Osborne House bought a barque called Bertie in 1879. It was a large sailing ship, and sailed as far as West Africa, South America and Brazil. This Daniel family would be able to afford a newly built house. The history of the Daniel family can be found in Terry Davies, 'Borth; A Maritime History' from page 15.

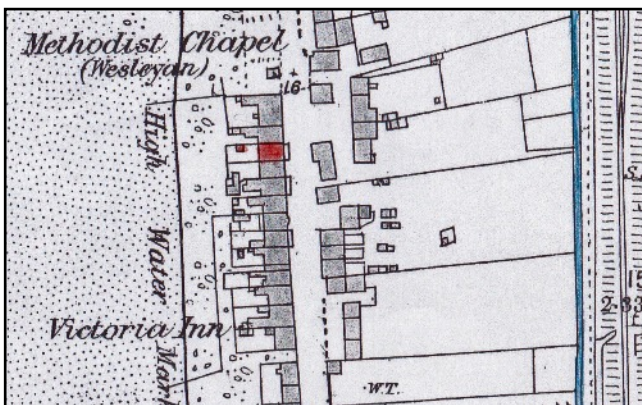


LEFT A Barque.

In 1871 holiday visitors stayed in the house for two weeks in the summer and it had the name 'Osborne House'.

In 1880 holiday visitors stayed in Osborne House for seven weeks. Captain Daniel was their landlord. Several came from Welshpool and Newtown, some from as far away as Tunstall in Staffordshire (Cambrian News).

In 1881 at the Census in the house were five of Captain Daniel's children; Anne Jane Daniel 27, born in Aberystwyth was looking after Margaretta D. Daniel 18 born in Penybont and employed as a servant, Rosemary Mary Daniel 15, Richard Daniel 12, and Eugenia Daniel 7. The last three were born in Borth and this suggests the family were in Borth in 1866. Was this to come to a newly built 'Osborne House' perhaps?

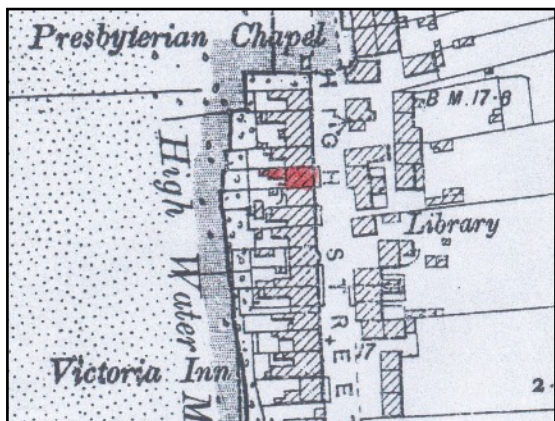


LEFT The Daniel's Osborne House in 1886 is marked in red. It had a small front garden, and its shape matched that of Windsor House next door. The small building in the yard was probably its Ty Bach - outside lavatory (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888. Cardiganshire III.10)

In 1891 Captain David Daniel died of yellow fever when on a voyage to Brazil. He was 61 years old.

In 1891 the house had a new name and a new family living there. It was called Raglan House, and at the Census in the house was a master mariner's wife, Mary Jane Francis aged 36 and born in Borth. With her were her two children, both born in Borth; Anne Elizabeth Francis aged 7 and Hilda Francis aged 3. They had a servant Mary Davies who was 18. Captain William Francis was away at sea. In 1891 he was captain of the S.S. Glantivy for the Cambrian Steam Navigation company of Aberystwyth. (Terry Davies, 'Borth A Seaborne Village, page 43)

At the 1901 Census in Raglan was Hilda Francis then aged 13, a 'daughter' with her mother in law, a 69 year old widow, Elizabeth Taylor. They had a general domestic servant, Sarah Price Jones aged 21.



LEFT Raglan, the house of the Francis family is marked in red. There was an extension on the rear which would have had a chimney for a kitchen. The small detached building has gone there had been a seriously bad storm in 1896 with much damage. The Ty Bach by 1904 may have been at the end of the extension.

In 1910 for a tax planned but not levied, Raglan was valued at £300 the same as Windsor House and Y Glyn (then called Pilgrim). The owner and occupier was Hilda Francis.



ABOVE We can see what the Francis's house looked like about 1910 in a photograph of a horse drawn 'break' with people from Trefeurig parish who were on a day trip to Borth. Raglan is on the far right of the photograph. The upper windows were sash windows, and below is a dainty bay window. The door and windows matched Windsor House next door. (From 'Bro Dafydd ap Gwilym' by David Jenkins, Aberystwyth Public Library)



The house was not listed in the 1911 Census, suggesting no-one was there to fill in the form.

LEFT In this detail from a post-card showing the backs of the house, Hafod second from the left and a dark colour had an imposing slab chimney and a single storey extension with a chimney. There was some tall fencing near the house to protect it from the sea, as well as a fence where the sand began. (Postcard courtesy of the Amgueddfa Ceredigion Museum).

By 1925 the house had its present name 'Hafod', which means 'summer dwelling' in Welsh. Paying the rates in 1925 had been Dr R. D. Thomas but this was altered to J. D. J. Hughes who paid the rates in 1934 and 1938 as owner and occupier.

Paying the rates for Hafod in 1949 was Miss M. Nicholson.

Paying the rates for Hafod in 1963 had been Agnes Wilkinson, but this was changed to Dr John D. Wilkinson. Agnes Wilkinson had a vote for the house.

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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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