

# 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

*This work is for research and educational purposes only.*

# HAZELMERE

## North Parade Morfa Borth

At the north end of the village, facing the sea. Home of Captain John Hughes James and his wife Ellen.



Hazelmere is a two and a half storey, single fronted, terrace house, under a gable roof parallel to the road. It has decorative red roof tiles and a yellow brick slab chimney with red brick bands shared with Ballarah. This has room for six chimney pots for each house, so plenty of rooms were warmed. The two dormer windows have plain barge boards. The walls are rendered. The sizes of the windows are well judged, with the one over the front door matching the ones in the front of the bay and the dormer windows a similar proportion but smaller. Today these are modern windows. The first floor window has a 'frame' made for it in the rendering. The front door is very wide, and glass panels light the hall. Each side of the door are pilaster strips with decorative panels, and brackets support an entablature over it. In the centre is a keystone supported on a line of moulding.



A visitor to one of these terrace houses noticed a good quality slate floor in the kitchen and some curving walls - a feature of the brick St Alban's Villas at Upper Borth.

*LEFT The brackets have attractive fan details, and are the same as those of Montfort.*



*LEFT The keystone above the front door.*

The house has two steps down to a hard standing, a patch of grass, and the street. The house with Montfort and Tremydon was one of a group of three on a map surveyed in 1904. All three have wide front doors unlike the remainder of the terrace.



*RIGHT The top of the bay windows the were once like this. An old postcard shows these had bold string courses (lines of moulding) and the top wall was higher to hide the roof and decorated with a half circle. We are lucky that Ballarah pictured on the right still has this feature - even though it was built after the rest of the terrace, but was designed to match its neighbours. Hazelmere has lost this.*



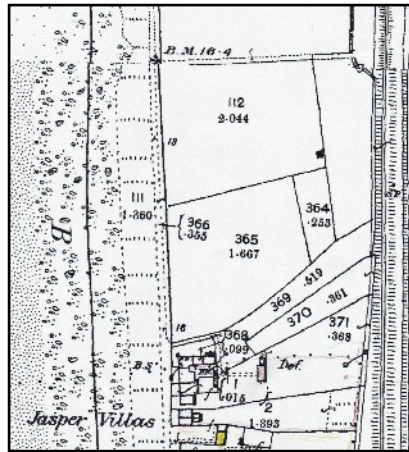
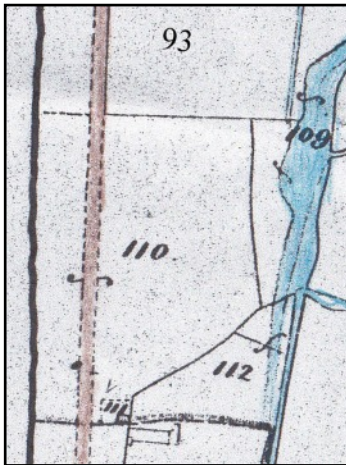
*ABOVE The back of Hazelmere from the small lane or track that runs behind the terrace. The house has an extension on the north side and the roof is wider to cover it. The dormer windows match those at the front of the house and some roof lights light an attic floor. A section with no rendering on the extension has red bricks showing beneath a grey rendering. There is a single storey further extension along the north side of the back garden. A fence encloses a small yard with a tree. This has a high wall between itself and Ballarah for privacy.*



*LEFT Most of the walls are hidden under the rendering, but this area on the extension has grey and pink coloured bricks.*

The name of the house is Welsh and means ‘in sight of the wave or waves’ as indeed it was. Before the concrete sea defensive wall and promenade was built about 1960 the ground floor windows too could see the beach.

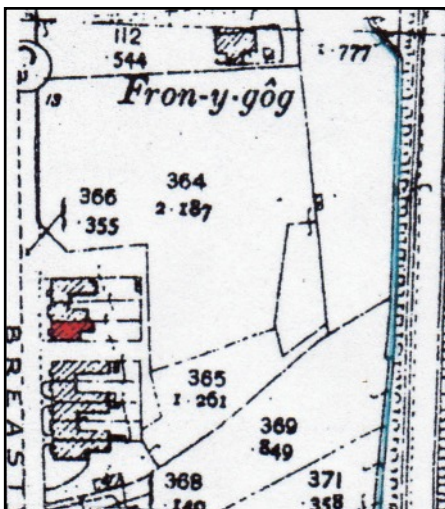
The ground on which Hazelmere stands is a stone bank thrown up by the sea and called ‘waste’ by the Crown Manor who owned it as it was no use for farming. The road had been there for centuries, it was used in the twelfth century and was a turnpike road by the 1770s. It led to a ferry from Ynyslas to Aberdovey and was a quick way to North Wales.



*ABOVE FAR LEFT The house stands on a five acre field, number 110 in 1848, and called an ‘allotment’ after the ‘waste’ was enclosed. Pryse Pryse of the Gogerddan Estate had it and used it as pasture. (Tithe Apportionments Map, Llanfihangel Genau’r Glyn, Henllys Township, online at CYNEFIN, National Library of Wales).*

*ABOVE RIGHT In 1886 there was still nothing built in field 110. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888. Cardiganshire III.10)*

In 1891 Pryse Pryse sold some of Number 110 to Elsie Cecil Wright, the wife of a Birmingham manufacturer of screws and a keen golfer. She had the bungalow Fron-y-gôg built on a strip of it, and had four acres of agricultural land as well. (Deeds to Morlais, private collection). By the 1901 Census Hazelmere was built.



*LEFT Montfort, Tremydon and Hazelmere in 1904. Hazelmere is marked in red and had the extension in its yard as it does today. Ballarah was not there yet. Some other houses in the terrace had also been built. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905 Cardiganshire III.10).*

In Hazelmere at the 1901 Census was a sailor’s wife, Ellen (Eleanor) James and local, and their daughter A. C. M. James. The James family and later the Mackintosh family lived in a flat in Hazelmere.

In 1910 for a tax planned but not levied the house was valued at £632, the same as Montfort. There would have been £17 to pay £20 gross. The owner and

occupier was Captain John Hughes James. He also owned a plot of land by the house and one by Richmond - further along the High Street on the beach side. (Ceredigion Archives T/DV/18 and map at the National Library of Wales). In the 1911 Census the house had eleven main rooms. Ellen (Eleanor) née Jones and niece of Captain Richard Jones of Hopewell House was aged 54. She and Captain James were married in 1882, and had two children, one of whom died. With her in the house was her sister Anne Jones, a widow of 67, and a domestic servant, 19 year old Ellen Griffith born in Penclawdd, Welig, Cardiganshire. Also in the house was her sister in law, Ellen Francis, aged 45, unmarried and a housekeeper. She was local.

Sometime after 1922 furnished apartments with seven bedrooms and three sitting rooms were advertised in 'The Illustrated Borth Guide' (Aberystwyth Public Library). In February 1924 Mrs James of Hazelmere and Mrs James of Scranton gave silver water jugs to the Wesleyan Chapel. (Cambrian News February 24th) In October 1924 Captain James of Hazelmere had died and his daughter Anne Clarissa Roseline James married Stanley Wilson at the Wesleyan Chapel.

In 1925 paying the rates had been Eleanor James but that year A. C. R. Williams paid. Eleanor James paid the rates in 1934, then from September that year paying the rates was as owner was Eva James, and her tenant was Miss Eve Julash. The rates had increased from £22 to £25 and gross £30 to £35 as there was a garage.



*ABOVE The completed terrace - Ballarah had been added, and Gwynt-y-mor at the far end. This shows the importance of those string courses (lines of moulding) which linked all the houses together. Over the road was grass and the beach.*

*(Postcard courtesy of the Amgueddfa Ceredigion Museum)*

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Paying the rates in 1938 was A. R. Mackintosh. With votes for the house at the General Election of 1945 were John and Annie C. R. Mackintosh and she paid the rates in 1949.

In 1950 in a Borth Guide Book there was an advertisement for a flat to let with five bedrooms and one sitting room and the house was 'all electric'. Apply to Mr Mackintosh. Paying the rates in 1950 and still in 1963 was John M. Mackintosh. (Electoral Registers and Rates, Ceredigion Archives).

In 1962 a flat was advertised suitable for five persons. Mr Mackintosh had a vote for the house in 1963.

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**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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