

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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HOPEWELL

Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

At the northern end of the village with the beach over the road. The house is on the site of Captain Thomas Jones's cottage on two acres of land he enclosed in 1824. At some time the northern part of the cottage became Otago, and the rest of the cottage was given an upper floor. His son Captain Richard Jones then lived in Hopewell Cottage. Later Richard Rees Davies and his wife ran a bed and breakfast there from the 1940s to the 1970s.



LEFT Hopewell in 2015.

BELOW Its long front garden shows how it is set back from the road and it has a special relationship with Otago, it is less tall and has no similarities at all in design.

Hopewell is a two storey, double fronted, semi-detached house under a gable roof which is at an angle to the road. There is a chimney on the southern end of the roof. The walls are rendered and it is likely that at least part of the walls are rubble stone. The windows are modern but with the pattern of sash windows. The front door is protected by a porch. On the south side of the house is a garage, set back, and a drive leads out to the road.

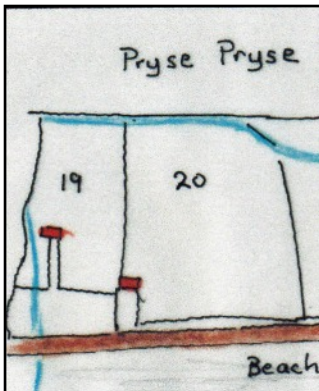




LEFT The oldest view we have of Hopewell is in this photograph of Elton House. Part of Hopewell, then a single storey cottage can be seen behind it. Otago in its present form was not there yet. The cottage beyond was the Thomas cottage now a tiny ruin.

The ground for this house is land reclaimed from the Cors Fochno marsh and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor who owned it. It was enclosed in 1824 by Captain Thomas Jones and his ground measured two acres and extended from the road to a brook. On a map of 1829 it was Number 20 and there was a cottage on it set back from the road and like Morfa Borth's oldest cottages it is on the side of the pebble bank away from the sea. A rent of £3.8s had to be paid to the Crown Manor and there was the option to buy it for £17. However in 1829 it was still rented. The road had been there for centuries and was a turnpike road by the 1770s.

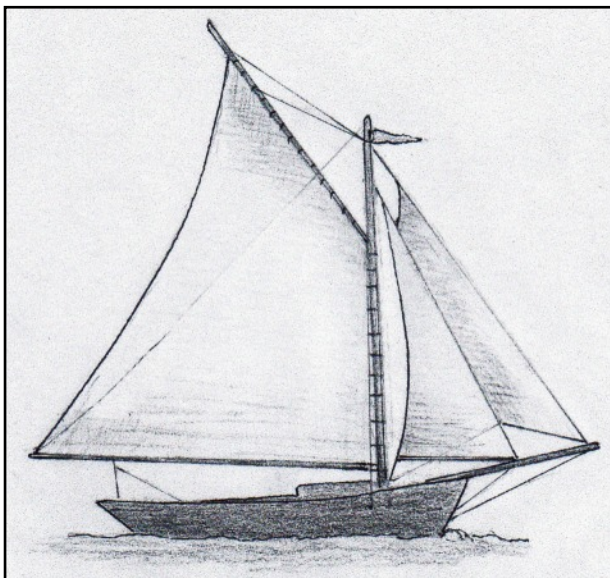
It led to a ferry from Ynyslas to Aberdovey and was a quick way to North Wales. Fresh water for the old cottage came from a brook, now a ditch, the tail race from the Glanlerry Corn Mill plus other small streams. For fuel the cottagers had their own area where they could dig peat on the far side of the River Leri near Ynys Fergi.



LEFT Captain Thomas Jones's land and cottage was Number 20 in 1829 in this detail copied from a Crown Manor map. His cottage was on the northern boundary of his land. (National Archives, LRRO 1/3060)

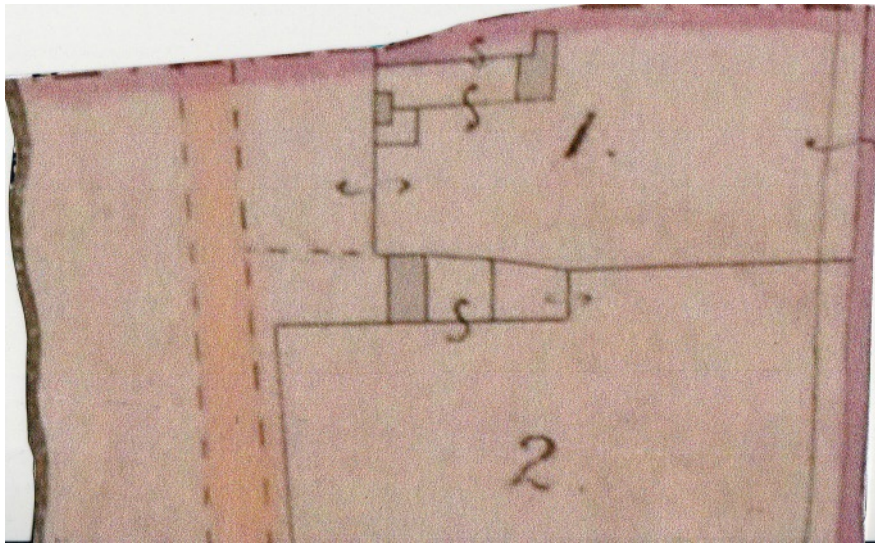
The cottage was called 'Hopewell' after a 27 ton sloop built at

Newquay in 1820. Captain Thomas Jones had 32 of her 64 shares in 1845. As managing owner he would organise her cargoes and her routes, and pay her crew. This should have provided him with a reasonable income, however his 32 shares were mortgaged to a farmer and hatter called James Jones of Llancynfelin. The Captain died on October 22nd 1850 and Catherine his wife inherited the shares. The mortgage was transferred to Thomas Jenkins, a Borth farmer. Commanding the 'Hopewell' sloop in 1851 was Thomas



LEFT A sloop was a small sailing vessel and probably mostly used for the coastal trade and not ocean-going

Richards, and in July 1852 Thomas Jones the young son of Captain Thomas Jones. She was sold to Humphrey Evans of Aberdovey on October 17th 1852 (Aberystwyth Shipping Register, Ceredigion Archives).



. LEFT Hopewell Cottage in 1848. It is was Number 2 on the map. There were two enclosed gardens behind the building. The description is clear - Thomas Jones himself, cottage (not cottages) and land, arable and pasture. The land at the front was unenclosed. Number 1 was the cottage and land of

the Thomas family. Detail from the Tithe Apportionments Map of Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township. On line at CYNEFIN).

At the 1841 Census in the Cottage (which did not have a name as was usual for these early Census's) was the Captain's wife Catherine, aged 40 so she was born about 1798-1801, and she was local. Also there was their daughter Catherine aged 14, Phebe 12, Thomas 9, Anne 7 and Richard, a baby of six months. Thomas and Richard would go on to be master mariners like their father.

At the 1851 Census the Captain had died, and his wife and children were in the cottage.

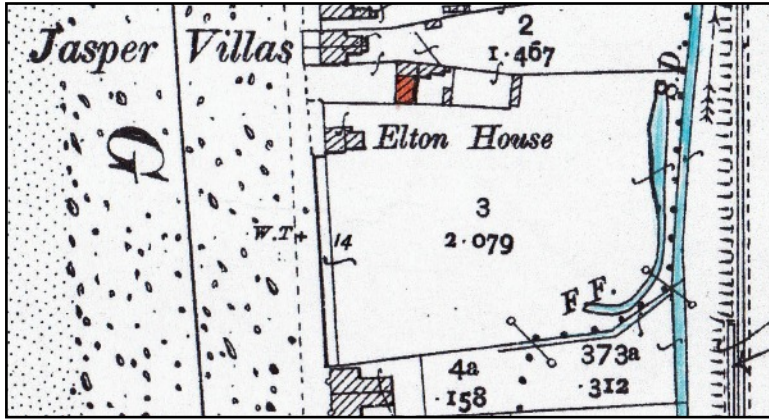
By the 1881 Census Elton House had been built on their land for their son Captain Thomas Jones. Their other son Richard had married Anne, and they had a son Thomas David Jones born about 1879 and all were in Hopewell at the Census. She was to die aged 36, and at her death was living there.



LEFT Hopewell is marked in red. In 1886 the map shows a division of the cottage which would eventually become Otago. The small building at the back by the enclosed garden may have been their Ty Bach - outside lavatory. The cottage had no front garden, 'S' braces indicate that it belonged to the Thomas's old cottage, marked in black on the map. The Jones's two acres was probably being farmed, and an old villager remembered that these reclaimed pastures grew good hay. Elton

House had a footpath to the enclosed garden area. Interestingly Hopewell and Otago are not parallel with the main road, but at a slight angle to it. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888, Cardiganshire NW III.10)

In the 1891 Census the Captain's widow Catherine was still in the cottage, then aged 91, and supported by her 'own means'. Also there was her son Captain Richard, aged 50 and Frances James her married grand daughter, then 33, who was acting as their housekeeper. This Census gives us a name for Hopewell for the first time as 'Hopewell House'. Catherine died in 1892 aged 94 and in the 1901 Census Captain Richard Jones was living at Hopewell.



LEFT Hopewell in 1904 is marked in red. Both the ground and the front and the garden at the back were owned with the old Thomas cottage. An extension had been built at the back of the part of the building that would become Otago though 'Otago' was not yet listed in the 1891 Census. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire

NW III.10)

By the 1901 Census Captain Richard Jones had retired from the sea, aged 60 to live at Hopewell.

In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied, Hopewell was described as a 'cottage and garden' and valued at £74, with £2.16s to pay, £3.10s gross. Compared with other properties this was the value of a well built single storey stone cottage with two main rooms downstairs and a loft in the roof such as Number 1 Glanrhyd. Otago was valued at £136, suggesting it was already the two storey building we see today. The land by Hopewell was valued at £310 with £1.3s.6d to pay, £1.5s gross and was owned and occupied by the Captain.

In 1911 at the Census Hopewell was listed with just two main rooms but this would not include a scullery at the back. Possibly this is what was left of the cottage after the section that had been rebuilt as Otago had been divided off, and it was probably not yet the two storey house we see today. There would have been a living room with the hearth and the other ground floor room would have been a bedroom for Captain Richard. He was still there in October 1924 aged 84 (Cambrian News). He paid the rates in 1925, and still owned the land, and died in 1934 aged 93 (Memorial Llandre Churchyard) This site produced members of the Jones family who lived to a ripe old age.

From the 16th March 1936 paying the rates was E. M. Morris. The rate of £4 was up to £6 and £6 up to £10. This indicates a improvement in the property - it paid the same amount as the two storey Elton house (see the photograph) which suggests that Hopewell too, by then, had the upper storey we see today.

Richard Rees Davies and Catherine Davies had a vote for the house in the 1945 General Election. In 1949 Mr Davies paid the rates. He was the treasurer of Borth's Soar Chapel (by the level crossing and now converted into houses). In the 1950s and 1960s Mrs Davies ran a boarding house and a bed and breakfast offering one bedroom and one sitting room. The house had no telephone yet (Borth Guide Book, 1968 Ceredigion Archives, and a 1950 Borth Guide Book). Mr Davies was still there in 1976/7 (Electoral Registers and Rates, Ceredigion Archives)

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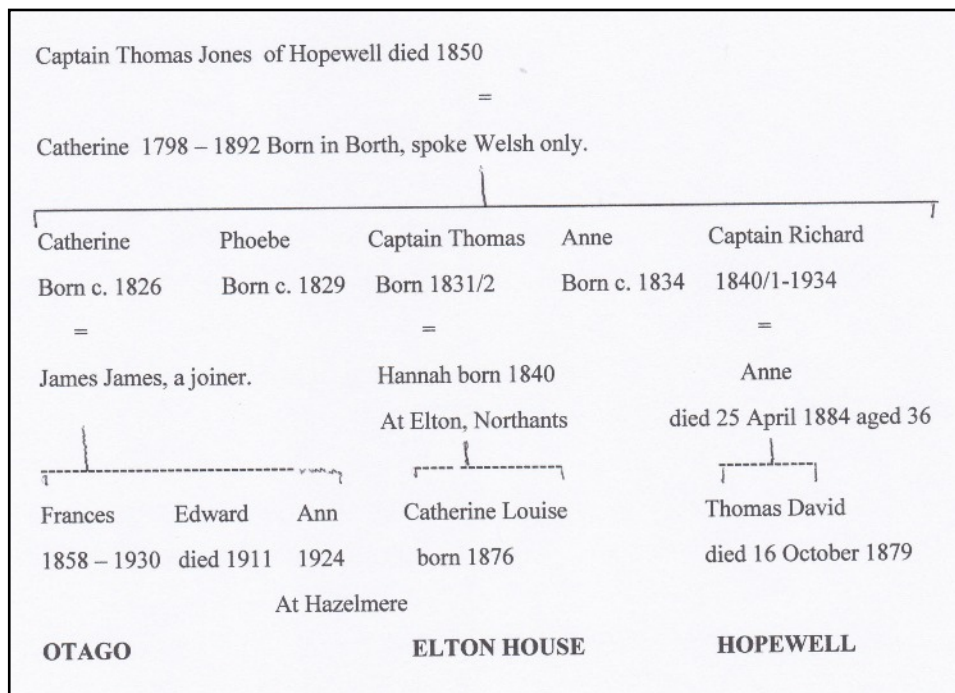
In 1979 the property was up for sale, described as a freehold, semi-detached, double fronted house with three bedrooms set in about one third of an acre. There was no porch then. A photograph shows that the present smart gateposts were there. (Cambrian News, Friday January 12th)

Today the house has a back garden plot of land extending to the dry ditch by the railway line and shares it with Otago.



LEFT and ABOVE Hopewell in 2018. It has single storey extensions all across the back. The chimney is on the southern end of the roof and is rendered.

The family tree of the Jones family and their houses.



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Tai'r Borth / Houses of Borth
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-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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