

# THE BUILDINGS OF MORFA 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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## KIDDERMINSTER HOUSE Morfa Borth

At the southern part of Borth High Street on the beach side. Once an old cottage of the Hughes family. The address was 4 Providence House in 1881 and by then it was a grocer's shop of Margaret Pierce, the wife of John Pierce, a mariner. By 1891 It was called Carnarvon Cottage. The cottage/shop was rebuilt between 1909 and 1911, and it continued as the shops of Mrs Booth, a 'fancy draper', she probably named it Kidderminster House, and then Edith Ann Smith's with Art Needlework and other goods, and then Mrs Bevan's with Clothes..



*Kidderminster House in 2016.*

Kidderminster House is a two storey, semi-detached, single fronted house, a pair with Gwynfa next door on the south. They are under a gable roof parallel to the road. Kidderminster House has a red brick, partly rendered chimney. The house walls too are rendered, and are likely to be a brick. The front door, on the south side, and the two upstairs windows are the same size as Gwynfa's next door, suggesting they were built at the same time. The windows and front door are modern, the upstairs windows keeping the pattern of the old sash windows. A low block wall encloses a



*LEFT The house in April 2009 when it still had a shop front. Mock stone surrounded this and the front door, with smooth rendering below the shop window, and a board above for a shop name and perhaps a blind.*

ramp up to the front door. The north wall of the house ends at a public passage from the road to the beach.



*Gwynfa next door still had the old sash windows with delicate wooden frames. It is likely that Kidderminster House once had these too.*



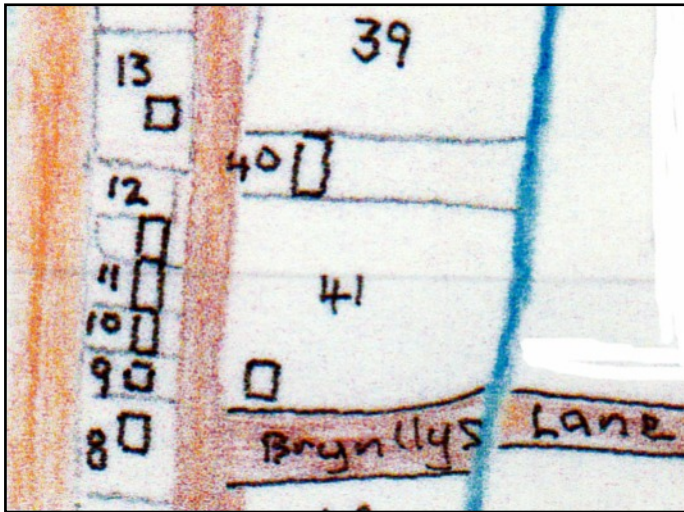
*RIGHT Bricks at an angle make an attractive band along the eaves.*



*The back of the house from the beach in 2015.*

The pair of houses share a two storey wing under a gable roof at right angles to the main house. Kidderminster House has a picture window fitted under the gable for fine views of the sea from the upper floor. The pair of houses share a chimney, probably for a kitchen in the wing. Shared extensions with a chimney were used at the back of Cambrian Terrace about 1870. The yard has a platform for viewing the beach over the sea defensive wall, and a gateway with steps on to the beach which can be blocked to keep the sea out. Tall wooden fences enclose the yard.

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.

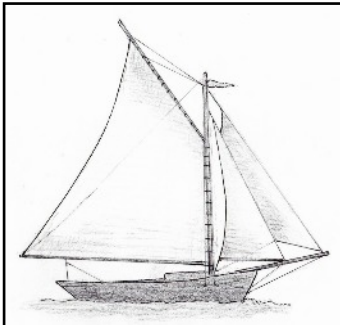


*LEFT* A plot was enclosed in 1826 and Evan Hughes had a cottage on it and an empty plot beside it. His ground measured 24 perches, just over an eighth of an acre. A rent of 16s had to be paid every year, or by paying £4 he could buy the plot (Detail copied from a map National Archives LRRO 1/3060).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

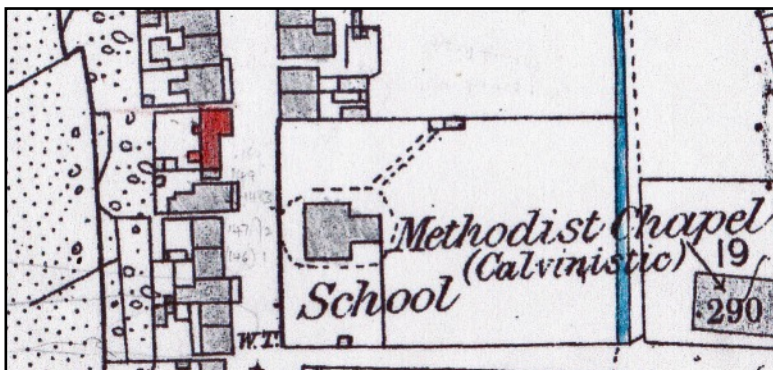
Evan Hughes's plot was number 12 and he had some empty ground to the north of the cottage. Now his cottage has gone and his run of street frontage now has Ardwyn, Beach House, Gwynfa and Kidderminster House built on it. There was only room for these to be single fronted, and Beach House is particularly 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 (Tithe Apportionments Map, Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn)



At the 1881 Census there were four cottages each called Providence House, named after the sloop owned by Evan Hughes. *LEFT* A Sloop

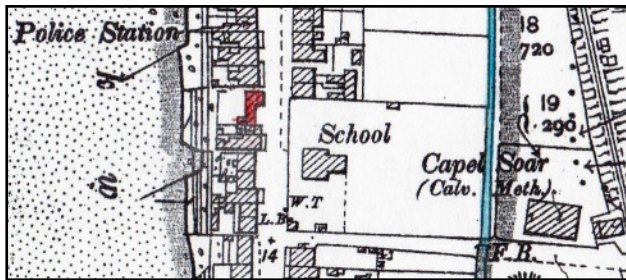
Numbers 1 and 2 belonged to members of the Hughes family - now Y Nyth and Ardwyn, Number 3, where Gwynfa now stands was unoccupied, Number 4 was a grocer's shop of the Pierce family now Kidderminster House.



*LEFT* In 1886 the long building is marked in red. The grocer's on the north was the largest. The buildings in the yard probably had a Ty Bach - outside lavatory. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886, published in 1888, Cardiganshire III.10)

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 there was 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. His son, John D. Pierce wed the girl next door and moved into her much grander Abergeldy House in 1899 when she inherited it. By the 1901 Census Margaret had died and John Pierce was now the 'shop keeper, grocer' and was on his own in the place.

In 1901 for a tax planned but not levied, this was still Carnarvon Cottage, valued at £30. There would have been £3 to pay, £3.15s gross. John Pierce was still living there and Miss H. J. Jukes, but the owner was then T. C. E. Moore.



*LEFT In 1904 the shop and cottage were much the same. The four lines of fences at the back were defences against the sea, rows of stakes driven into the stone bank. There had been a seriously bad storm in 1896. (Ordnance Survey Map, 25 inch, as before, revised in 1904, published in 1905)*

By the 1911 Census Kidderminster House was built. It was the 'Fancy Draper' of Mrs Booth, from Brierley Hill in Worcestershire. The next big town to Brierley Hill is Kidderminster, so Mrs Booth probably chose that name for her shop. The house had six main rooms not including the shop. Martha Louisa Booth was 62 years old. Mrs Booth had already been living in Morfa Borth at one of the terrace of cottages close to the Railway Inn.

By 1922 in Kidderminster House Edith Ann Smith was selling Art Needlework, Fancy China, Stationery, Wools, Baby Linen and did Outfitting (The Illustrated Borth Guide, Price 6d, Aberystwyth Public Library). She owned Kidderminster house and paid the rates in 1925. In 1934 she had been paying the rates, but a new name was written, Thomas Besail (? Bevan).

In 1938 and 1949 Thomas Bevan paid the rates. Edith Bevan had a vote for the shop in the General Election of 1945. Mrs Bevan ran a clothes shop. (Y Tincker, May 1986 page 4). Mr Bevan died in 1955, he was buried at St Matthew's Church, Borth, aged 60, but she was still there in 1963 with a vote for the house, and she paid the rates for the shop and the house. In the late 60s as well as being a draper, she sold beach toys and stationery. (Handbook and Guide to Borth - probably 1968, Ceredigion Archives)

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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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