

THE BUILDINGS OF MOREFA BORTH

- the Marsh Harbour

Ceredigion



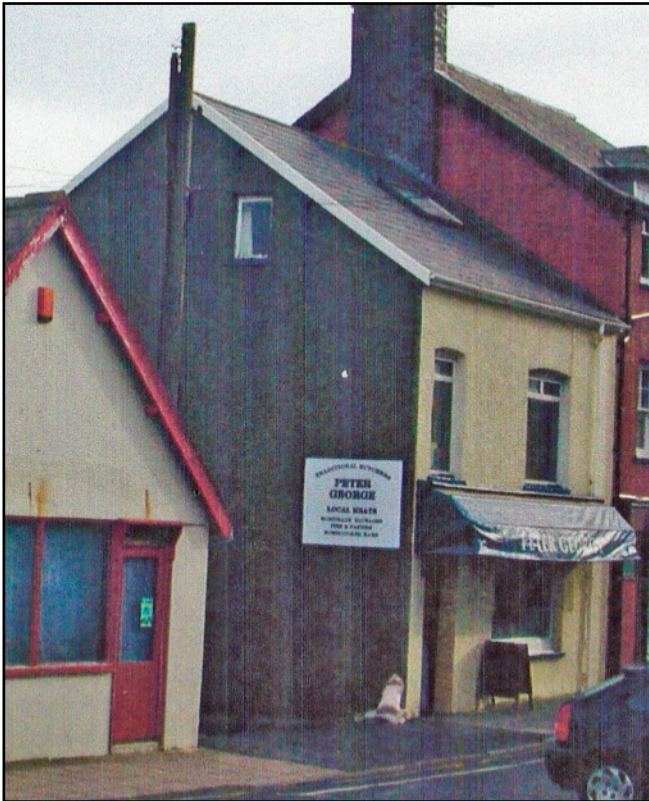
That part of Borth Village on a pebble bank with the sea on one side and the Cors Fochno marsh some reclaimed and the railway on the other. In the distance is the River Dyfi. Photograph Michael Lewis

Photographs and History by BERYL LEWIS

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LERONIAN HOUSE

Built in 1880 on open ground at the north end of the High Street in front of Wellington Place a terrace of old cottages set back from the street. Owned by the Davies and Matthews families.



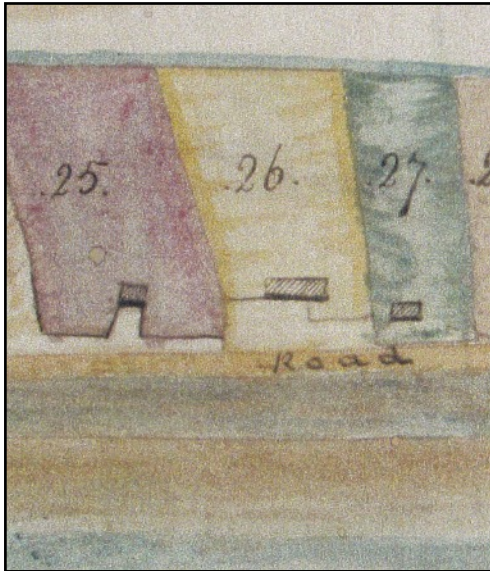
LEFT As Peter George's butcher's shop in 2009.

Leronian House is two storeys with a rendered surface, abutting the J. R. Bridal Wear shop alongside. It is under a gable roof parallel to the street and also has an attic floor. The windows are modern and the walls are rendered. There is a door into the shop on the left.



LEFT The side wall on the north which opens on to a lane is divided into five vertical sections. Almost joined to it is a barely two storey section with a roof at right angles to the main road which has a tall red brick chimney.

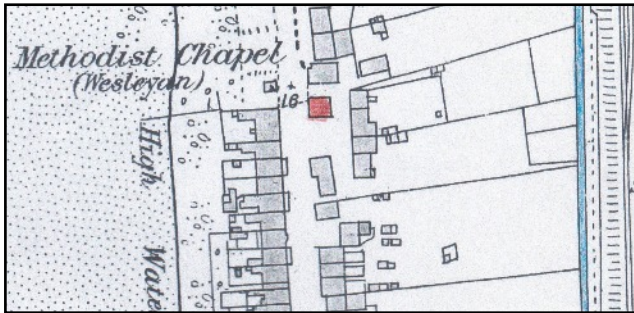
Walking round this there is a yard of hard standing with a rear entrance to the shop opening on to an area with a cold store and a place for the butchers to prepare meat.



LEFT In 1823 the ground on which Leronian would be built was enclosed from the pebble bank which the Crown manor who owned it considered was 'waste' because it was no use for farming. It was the front ground of two cottages set back from the road on plot number 26 coloured yellow which would develop into the row of old cottages behind Leronian House. It was three quarters of an acre owned by a John Lewis (Detail from a hand painted map, National Archives LRRO 1/3060)

There was still open ground by the road in front of the cottages in 1848 (Number 14 on the Tithe Apportionments Map Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth township, on-line at CYNEFIN)

Leronian was built on this open ground beside the street in front of the row of old cottages. It was not listed in the 1881 Census, but Peter Matthews says it was built in 1880.



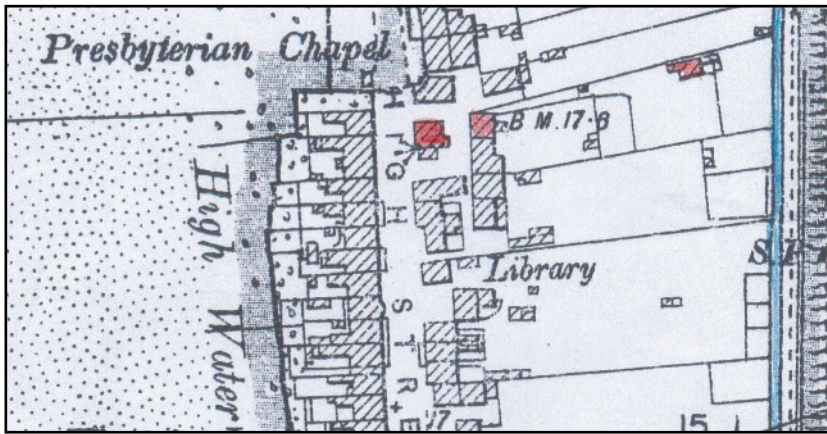
LEFT This is how the surveyor drew it in 1886 - I have marked it in red. The old cottages are still behind it - then called Wellington Place after Wellington House (now part is Ysbryd-y-gors) which was a large house beside the road to the south. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888, Cardiganshire NW III.10)

Leronian may have begun as just a house, as Peter Matthews said the Davies family had a wooden stall to sell their meat over the road between Boston and Glyngarth. John Davies the butcher and his wife Margaret were living in Wellington House in 1881 (Census)

In Leronian in 1901 was a young woman, Mary S. Davies, single, aged 24, born in Borth and running the butchery. She was the eldest daughter of John Davies who by 1891 had moved away from Wellington House. In Leronian in 1901 were also Mary's sister Margaret Jane Davies aged 19, and her cousin Kate Ann Davies aged 14 and a young 'butchery worker' called Jesse Matthews, aged 23, born in Newtown, Montgomeryshire in 1878 (Census).

Jesse married his employer, Mary S. Davies, about 1901, and was listed therefore as the 'owner' of the place in 1910. The young couple had three children, John Leslie Matthews, born about 1903, Jesse Cecil Matthews born about 1906 and Margaret Gwendoline Matthews born about 1907. Their housekeeper who probably was needed to help with the small children was Mary's sister Margaret, aged 29 in 1901 and not married. The family spoke both Welsh and English. Jesse also owned the cottage behind, and 10 acres, 2 rods 17 perches of ground at Ynys Fergi, probably to pasture animals to be slaughtered for his shop. There was a slaughter house on land at the rear of the cottage.

The description of the house in 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied was a cottage and premises, valued at £250, with £6.16s to pay, gross £8. (Ceredigion Archives T/DV/18). In the 1911 Census it was listed with seven main rooms. In 1910, Jesse was also a tenant of the Trustees of the ex Methodist later Presbyterian chapel next door which he converted into a billiard room.



LEFT In 1904 a small piece had been added at the rear. There was a garden behind the old cottage at the back of Leronian, which was owned by it. The small building marked in red now an office was said to have been the butcher's slaughter house (Detail from the 1905 25 inch

Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire NW III.10)

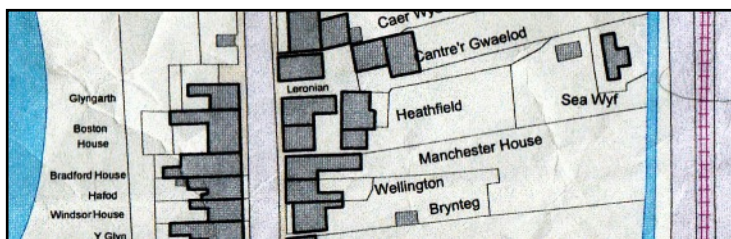
In the 1925 Rates, (no. 323) Leronian is listed as a 'house and shop' but with the same amount of Rates to pay. It was owned and occupied by Jesse Matthews (Ceredigion Archives). In August 1934 Miss M. Matthews of Leronian gave a recipe for crumpets for a St Matthew's Church Bazaar, Mrs Matthews gave a recipe for a birthday cake and Mr J.(Jesse) C. Matthews a recipe for lemon curd (Booklet published by the Cambrian News, Ceredigion Archives)



LEFT Leronian House on a postcard posted in 1937. The signs on the former chapel in the foreground said R. Davies and 'Billiards' The front of Leronian House was stone with pale coloured sandstone edges and decorated eaves - popular in 1880 so the front was designed to be seen as stone. However the north side in 1937 had been rendered. (Private collection)

Mr Matthews and his wife Mary had votes for Leronian House in the General Election of 1945, and in 1949 Mr Matthews paid the Rates. Mr Jesse Matthews died in 1957 and his wife Mary in 1956.

In the late 1960s Mrs Matthews the wife of the next member of the family was offering bed and breakfast for three persons, and the place had a telephone, 219. (Handbook and Guide to Borth, private collection). Mr J. L. Matthews was the butcher. Leronian House still includes a shop.



LEFT By 1975 Leronian had a different extension at the back, as shown on this modern Council Map (Detail from Historical Maps on-line, and detail from the Council Map courtesy of Councillor Ray Quant who provided the map for research for a village event)

The rubble stone building in the garden at the rear of Leronian House and Heathfield, which may have been the slaughter house for the butchers, today is built as an old cottage warmed by a fire or stove below the chimney on the west end of the roof. See 'J.R. Bridal Wear Office and Cottage'.

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yn cyflwyno / presents
Tai'r Borth / Houses of Borth
gan/by Beryl Lewis
[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-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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