

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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MIRAMAR Morfa Borth

On the east side of the street at the north end of the village and a 'pair' with Ael-y-môr. Built between 1904 and 1910. Home of Captain Richard Jones.



ABOVE Miramar in 2105. It is the right hand house, on the left is Ael-y-môr.

Miramar is a single fronted, semi-detached house, two and a half storeys high. The main house is under a gable roof parallel to the road, but the front has an extension with a gable dormer and below are two square bay windows. There are no chimneys on the roof. The walls are rendered. There are traces of a bold quoin pattern on the edges of the extension, and traces of a keystone over the front door. Across the front gable is a strip of wood, and there are strong lines of moulding beneath the windows and over the front door. This string course continues round the side of the house. The windows are modern. The narrow front is enclosed by a low rubble stone wall with railings.

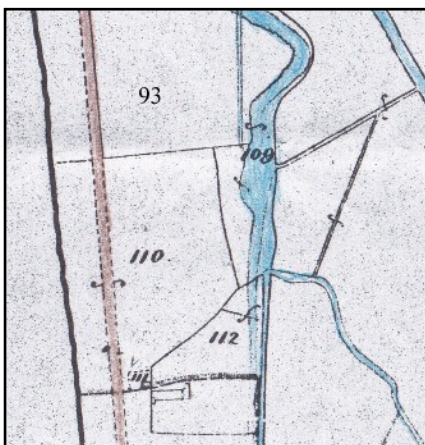


LEFT The railings are some of the prettiest in Morfa Borth, and were there in 1921.



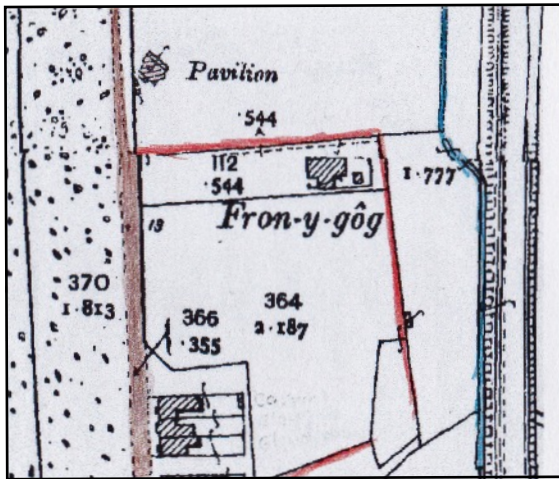
ABOVE The back of the pair of houses which are on the left. Miramar has a roof light and a dormer window to light its attic floor. The houses share a one and a half storey extension under a gable roof at right angles to the main house. This has a red brick chimney, now with one chimney pot - possibly once with two. It is likely there was a kitchen below. This extension continues with a single storey section which has the back door with a path and gap in the enclosing wall to the lane. The yard is divided from Ael-y-môr by a red brick wall and there is a red brick lean to detached building against it. Similar buildings contained the Ty Bach - outside lavatory. The enclosing walls and a further shed can be seen in the photograph. In the foreground is a useful parking area.

The ground on which Miramar 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.



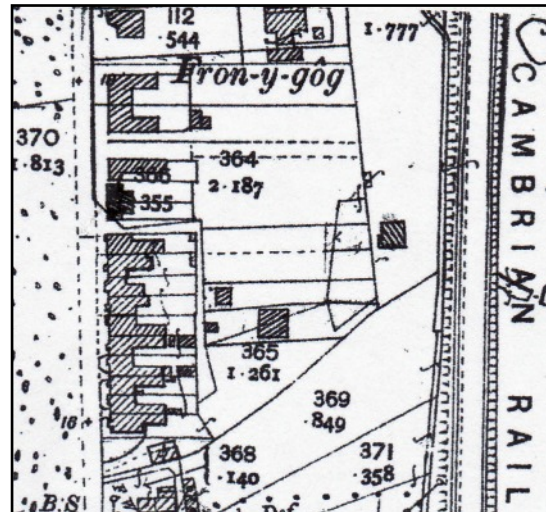
LEFT The house stands on a five acre field called an 'allotment' which was number 110 on a map of 1848. Pryse Pryse of the Gogerddan Estate received it after the enclosure of the 'waste' and used it as pasture. Number 93 to the north was the property of the Jones family of the Gwynfryn Estate at Taliesin and had become an eighteen hole golf course before this pair of houses were built. (Tithe Apportionments Map, Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Henllys Township, online at CYNEFIN, NLW).

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)



LEFT In 1904 there were no other buildings on the part of Number 110 where the pair of houses stand today. Some of the houses in the terrace had already been built. The red line shows the boundary of the old Field 110. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire III.10)

RIGHT The Council used the 1905 map and drew in newly built houses - this map dates from after 1935 because Brockhill had been built in the garden of Fron-y-gôg. Ael-y-môr and Miramar are drawn in a dark colour. They had the same length of garden with no other buildings in them. (Map Ceredigion Archives)



In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied, the house was valued at £550, the same as Ael-y-môr. This was considered a good new house. The owner and occupier was (Captain) Richard Jones. Next door the owner was Jenkin Jones and he had a tenant in it - I wonder if they were related and the Jones family built one house for themselves and the other one to rent out? In the 1911 Census the house had ten rooms. In the house was the Captain's wife Mary Elizabeth Jones who was 43 years old and from Suffolk. They had been wed 14 years since 1897, and had two children. With her in the house was their nine year old son, Richard James Donald Jones. Also in the house was their 'general domestic' servant, nineteen year old Mabel Margaret Davies, born in Maesteg, Glamorganshire. In February 1918 their daughter Miss Jones was at home (Cambrian News)

In an 'Illustrated Borth Guide' of the 1920s the Captain offered furnished accommodation of six bedrooms and three sitting rooms for holiday makers (Aberystwyth Public Library). In November 1924 he sold poppies on Remembrance Day and he supported the Borth Nursing Association (Cambrian News). In 1925 and 1934 the Captain paid the rates as owner and occupier, and they had increased from £15 to £18 gross - so perhaps some improvements had been carried out. Captain Jones died on June 21st 1937 and is buried in the churchyard at Llandre.



LEFT A glimpse of the pair of houses in about 1921 a detail from a postcard. The string courses (lines of moulding) around and across the bays are very prominent - and are on both of the pair of houses, and link them together. There were sash windows - some of them were partly open. Miramar's walls appear to be rubble stone. (Detail from a postcard, Private Collection)

In 1949 paying the rates was A.W. Blunt. The house was still called Miramar.

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In 1963 the Council had been given a new name for the house 'Myrtle Dene'. Paying the rates was a Mr Butt. In 1968 Mrs Butt ran a bed and breakfast there (Handbook and Guide to Borth, Private Collection).

In the late 1960s a furnished flat had been made in the house with two bedrooms, and the owner, B. D. M. Sandy lived at Oldfield, Walton, Staffordshire, and one had to apply to him to rent it. (Handbook and Guide to Borth, private collection)

Today the house has its original name again, Miramar. It is Spanish and means 'looking at the sea' which is exactly what the house does, though today the 1960s sea wall and promenade restricts the view from the ground floor. Miramar is a city in Florida near Miami, and also an area of San Diego in California.



ABOVE This photograph of some of the Herbert family outside Gwynt-y-mor in the 1930s or 1940s shows the south side of Miramar which then had a chimney. There is a glimpse of another chimney.

(Photograph courtesy of Mrs Jean Caswell)

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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-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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