

# 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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# MONTFORT

## North Parade, Morfa Borth

At the north end of the village, facing the sea. Built after 1891 and by 1901. Named after a ship of Captain W. F. Jones whose house it was.



*ABOVE Montfort in 2015.*

Montfort 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 Tremydon. This has room for six chimney pots for each house, so plenty of rooms were warmed. The two dormer windows are very decorative, the barge boards are shaped and each has a finial. 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.

A moulding tops the pair of canted bay windows on the front, and there is a decorative front door.



*LEFT* The front door is very wide, and stained glass panels light the hall. The house name is picked out in gold. 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.



*RIGHT* The brackets have attractive details.

The house opens on to a hard standing and the street. Some care and expense was taken with the front of



this house. The house with Tremydon and Hazelmere 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. An old postcard shows the houses with the bay windows having 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 still has this feature - even though it was built after the rest of the terrace, but obviously designed to match its neighbours.





*LEFT The bay windows on Ballarah.*

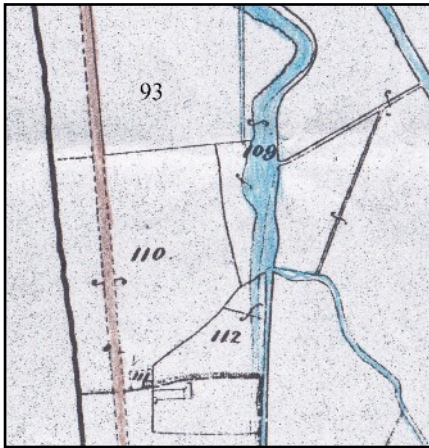
*LEFT A glimpse of an exposed wall on the north side of the house shows that it is rubble stone and stone above the window. This is a double hung sash window, perhaps an original. A brick chimney ends this section of wall. The bands of coloured bricks in the chimneys are very decorative.*



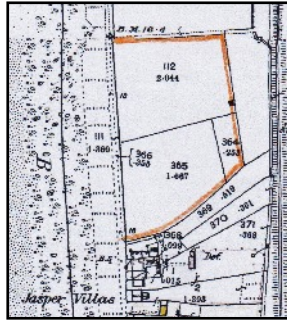
*LEFT The back of the house from the small lane behind the terrace. The house extends on the north side so the roof is wider to cover this, and on the northern tip is the brick chimney. The extension has one dormer window with all the decoration of those on the front of the house. Its frame is modern with the pattern of a two light sash window. There is another dormer window to match on the back of the main building with a delicate frame. On the second floor is a glass roofed sun room with a small balcony and this extends on the north side to another*

*balcony with stairs down into the yard, the balconies all safely inside lattice fences. This sun room fits against the side wall of the extension on Gwynt -y-mor. The views look eastwards, over the railway over reclaimed pasture and the Cors Fochno to the hills. The yard begins narrow, but broadens out with hard standing to park cars on.*

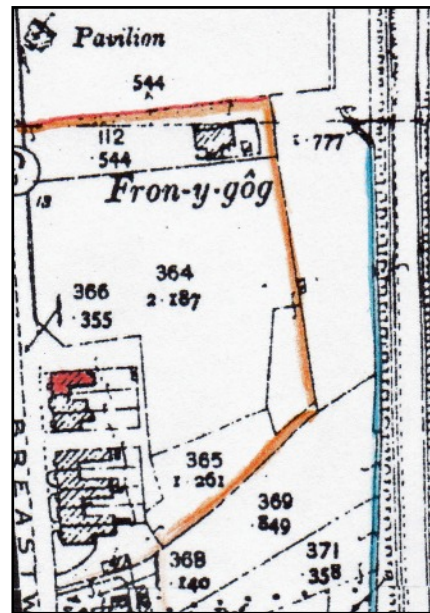
The ground on which Gwynt-y-môr stands is a stone bank thrown up by the sea and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor who owned it as it was no use for farming. The road had been there for centuries, it was used in the twelfth century and was a turnpike road by the 1770s. It led to a ferry from Ynyslas to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



ABOVE 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 owned it after the enclosure of the 'waste' and used it as pasture. (Tithes Apportionments Map, Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Henllys Township, online at CYNEFIN, National Library of Wales).



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



ABOVE In 1904 Montfort was there and is marked in red. 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 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). The golf course was already up and running on the field to the north, and its pavilion is on the 1904 map.

By the 1901 Census Montfort was built. In the house was Mrs Lizzie Jones aged 36, born in Borth, with a five year old daughter, Vida Claire Jones, and a 23 year old servant, Mary Daniel also local, and not married. The house was then called 'Montfort House'.

In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied, Montfort was valued at £632, and (Captain) William D. Jones was the owner and occupier. There would have been £17 to pay, £20 gross. This was considered a good house. Captain Jones had a yard behind it, in the possession of Lizzie Jones valued at £12, and land by the house valued at £50 for which he would have had to pay £4.6s, £5 gross. In 1911 at the Census Captain Jones was not at home. Jessie Augusta Jones his seven year old daughter was, and she had been born in Montfort in 1904. Also in the house was five year old John Hubert Hughes, also born in Montfort. The Census said 'son' and then crossed it out and said 'brother'. Looking after them was a 33 year old, unmarried cousin, Mary Daniel a domestic servant of London Place Borth. Montfort had eleven main rooms.

Sometime after 1922 furnished apartments in the house with five bedrooms with seven beds and three sitting rooms were to let. (Illustrated Borth Guide, Aberystwyth Public Library). In 1925

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Lizzie Jones, (Mrs Elizabeth Jones, wife of Captain Jones), was the owner and occupier of Montfort and paid the rates. In 1926 Mrs W. D. Jones was letting apartments in her 'modern house facing the sea, near the station and the golf links'. She offered five bedrooms, three recreation rooms and a bath with hot and cold running water. She paid the rates in 1934 and 1938 and 1949. With a vote for the house in the General Election of 1945 was Stuart Norman Shrimpton. It is likely he was a tenant.

In 1957 there is a change. Paying the rates was F. L. Wilding. Mrs Bessie Augusta Wilding paid the rates for the house and garden in 1963, and had a vote for the house and so probably was living there. (Electoral Registers and Rates, Ceredigion Archives).



*ABOVE The Terrace completed - Gwynt-y-mor (with a dark front) had been added on the north, and Ballarah after the first three houses that included Montfort. This gives an idea of the depth of the buildings, and how important those string course lines were to link them all together. Today only five of the great slab chimneys remain - Gwynt-y-mor had one on the north end of its roof.*

*(Postcard courtesy of the Amgueddfa Ceredigion Museum).*

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gan/by Beryl Lewis  
[cyf/ref ADX/1629]

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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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