

# 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

*This work is for research and educational purposes only.*

## MOOR HOUSE Morfa Borth

The house is built on the beach side in the middle of Borth High Street. Formerly part of St David's Place, then called Woodville House by 1891. It was later called Sandy Cottage and Number 5 Maglona Terrace.

*Moor House in 2016.*



Moor House is a two storey, single fronted, semi-detached house. Maps show it has quite a wide front compared with its neighbours. It has a gable roof parallel to the street, and the pitch of this, and of Golf Cottage's roofs are not as steep as the terrace alongside with Glasfôr to Bwthyn Bach. The chimney on the north side is shared with Golf Cottage and is rendered, its width suggests it is stone, and an old photograph shows it had room for three chimney pots. The walls are rubble stone and have a pebble dash rendering with no decoration. A feature of the front are the upper windows which have a hood above them built into the roof.



The ground floor has a canted bay window. All these have almost flat roofs. The front door has a flat roof above it supported on slender posts. An individual 'modern' look has been created with the front of this house - it is so different from the house in 1914 - see page 4. The narrow front garden is enclosed by a rendered wall with a gate. The south wall of the house is beside a passage to the beach.

*Moor House and Golf Cottage*



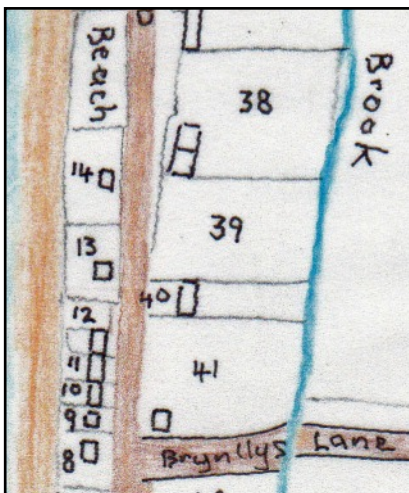


*The rear of the house from the beach in 2015.*



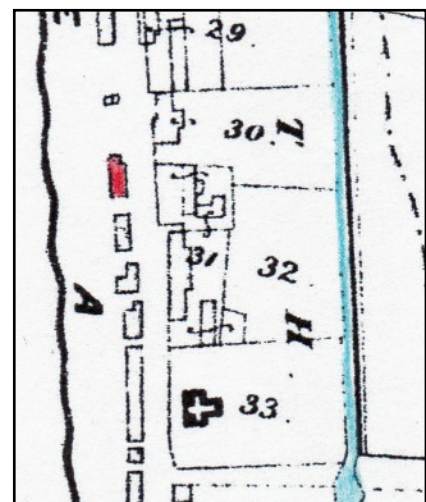
At the back is a long two storey extension on the south side of its yard whose windows facing the beach will have a good view of the sea. A flat roof extends from a single storey building in the yard and the back door has a small roof above it. The fence of planks at the rear of the yard has a low area to allow good views of the beach, and a tall fence gives privacy from the passage to the beach.

The ground for this house was enclosed in 1825 by Moses Jones from the stone bank thrown up by the sea and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor Court who owned it as it was no use for farming. His ground measured 20 perches and a map of 1829 shows a cottage built on it, described as 'cottage and beach'. Moses Jones was a master mariner with a daughter born in 1818 (Parish Register Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Ceredigion Archives) 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.



*LEFT A detail copied from the map of 1829. Moses Jones's plot was Number 14 and he had*

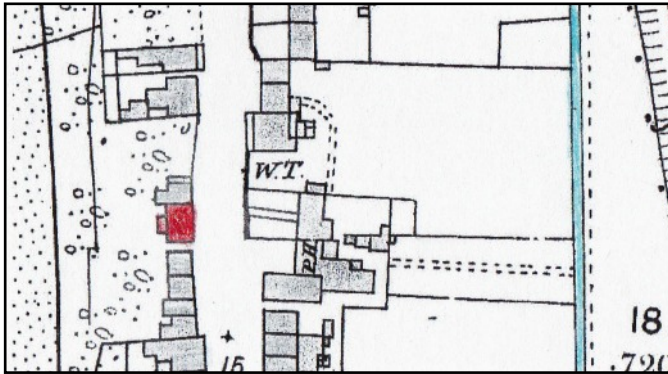
*plenty of ground around his cottage. (National Archives LRRO 1/3060) Six houses would eventually be fitted into his road frontage, Glasfôr to Golf Cottage. RIGHT By 1848 more buildings had been built on Moses Jones's ground. Marked in red are where Moor House and Golf Cottage stand on that site today. We have no details of these*





*buildings as they had no gardens and paid no tithe. (Tithe Apportionments Map, Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township, on-line at CYNEFIN.)*

It is not possible to find the families living in the house in the earlier Census's as houses did not have names. Even by the 1881 Census this house was among nine other St David's Place cottages and these were on both sides of the High Street. St David's Diocese (the Vicar) had owned the plot marked on the 1829 map above as Number 41, and the National School would be built on it (replaced by our Meddygfa), and a row of cottages would be built adjoining it, number 31 on the Tithe Map. It is not known at present if the Church originally owned the plot they were built on. They later belonged with the Railway Inn - P.H. on the map in 1886 and the inn was then in Brookfield.

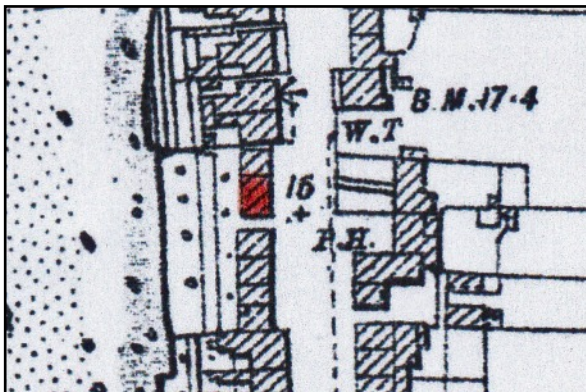


*LEFT Moor House was built by 1884 when we can see it on an Ordnance Survey 25 inch map. The house is marked in red. Unlike its neighbours on the south whose frontages are at an angle, this house was parallel to the street. It had a small extension, like a porch at the back. The front opened on to the street and it was a pair with what is now Golf Cottage next door. The stones drawn on the map show that*

*there was beach at the back with just fences to protect it from the sea during storms. The fences were usually sloping rows of stakes driven into the stone bank. The surveyor has drawn the whole row of all six houses in the same ownership, as they still were in 1910. (Map surveyed in 1886, published in 1888, Cardiganshire III.10)*

At the 1891 Census the house was called Woodville House, and in the house was a 59 year old retired and blind mariner, John Davies, his wife Jane was 55. They were both local, born in Borth. With them was their 13 year old son David Davies, also local. The family did not speak English.

In the 1901 Census the house had a new name, Sandy Cottage. In the house was a 43 year old fishmonger, Thomas Davies, working from home. He was born in Llandeilo, Monmouthshire. His wife, 34 year old Alice Rose Davies was from Melbourne, Australia. With them were their four children; Frances Gertrude Davies 10 born in Shropshire, Herbert Garstine Davies 7, Thomas Stanley Davies 4 and Sarah Davies aged 3, and these were all born in Manchester. This suggests they had not been living in Sandy Cottage very long. They could afford a servant, Jane Williams aged 18, unmarried and born in Llanfyllin.



*LEFT The Davies house in 1904 is marked in red. It had lost its extension on the back. There had been seriously bad storm in 1896 with damage to the back of these houses - a tenant in Glasfôr lost his life. Two new sea defensive fences had been built a well as the one at the edge of the sand. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905. Cardiganshire III.10, also an article in the Cambrian News February 1899).*

In 1910 for a tax planned but not levied the house, then listed as Number 5 Maglenn (Maglona) Terrace was valued at £90. There would have been £3. 10s to pay, £4.7s 6d. gross. The occupier was Cecil Butt and Joseph Davies owned it with all the others in the terrace. £90 was not the value of a small cottage, more likely it was the house we see on an old photograph.



*On this photograph dated 1914 we can see both Moor House on the far left and Golf Cottage. The side of the house and the front looks like stone. There is a large board above one of the downstairs windows - a signboard perhaps? The house opened directly on to the street. In the foreground on the right was the Railway Inn. (Photograph courtesy of Mrs F. H. B. Renny)*

The house was omitted from the 1911 Census, possibly there was no-one there to fill in the form.

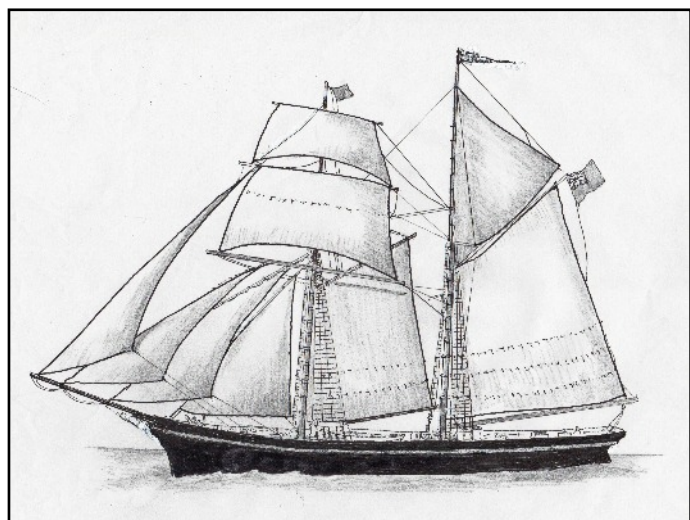
In 1925 called 'Maglona' the owner was still Joseph Davies, and the occupier had been Margaret Jane Humphreys. This was crossed out and Mary E. Vale added. She was Mary Ellen Vale and she also paid the rates in 1934 and 1938. The name of the house had changed to Moor House.

Paying the rates in 1949 was S. G. Griffiths.

Paying the rates in 1963 was Leslie Charles Hackett, and he had a vote for the house that year. (Rates and Register of Electors, Ceredigion Archives).

*The schooner Maglona from a drawing based on the painting of her when her commander was David Richards of Aberdovey.*

Maglona was a splendid schooner, brand new in April 1876, registered with 144 tonnes, and built at Aberdovey by Thomas Richards. She was commanded by Owen Williams and had two masts, and a figure head of a woman. Her owners were Morgan



Owens, an Aberystwyth ship owner, he had 52 shares and Richard Owens a timber merchant from Machynlleth who had 12. She was totally wrecked off Newfoundland in 1887 (Shipping Register, Aberystwyth Ceredigion Archives). Besides Aberystwyth, people in Aberaeron and New Quay eventually had shares in the schooner, and all these have houses called Maglona.

The connection of Maglona Terrace in Morfa Borth to the ship was probably from her first master Captain Owen Williams who wed a Borth girl Elizabeth Davies on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1859. She was the daughter of a Morfa Borth mariner David Davies and his wife Anne who are in the 1841 Census for Morfa Borth. The Captain and his wife lived in Aberdovey (Captain Owen Williams family tree, on-line). The shipping register suggests that he and the rest of his crew were drowned when she was lost in 1887.

Who remembered the schooner with pride in this Morfa Borth terrace? At the 1891 Census the name of four of the houses was Maglona Place. The map showed that all the houses had the same owner in 1886. In 1910 it was a member of a Davies Family Joseph Davies. There were some Davies living in the terrace in the 1891 Census. Was there a connection to Elizabeth Davies who married the Captain and to her parents David and Anne Davies of Morfa Borth? Was the blind mariner in Woodville (Moor House) Elizabeth's brother? David and Anne Davies had a son John who was born about 1836 said the 1841 Census, and the blind mariner John Davies who was in Woodville (Moor House) in the 1891 Census was said to be born about 1832, and he named his son David, his father's name. There is a four year difference but the Census's are not always accurate with their dates. There was also a mariner's widow Jane Davies aged 27 in Number 1, (Glasfôr).

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gan/by Beryl Lewis  
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Mae **Tai'r Borth** yn cynnwys dros 350 hanes sy'n ymwneud ag adeiladau unigol ac mae'r hanesion wedi'u darlunio â chyfoeth o ffotograffau, mapiau a dogfennau. Mae'r ffeiliau ar gael ar ein gwefan: <https://www.archifdy-eredigion.org.uk/tairborth.php?lang=cy>

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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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