

# 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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## MÔRLAN Morfa Borth

On the beach side in the northern part of Borth High Street. It replaced a 'Mariner's Cottage'. Built after 1910 but by 1921.



Môrlan is the northern half of a pair of tall semi detached houses of two storeys with an attic floor under the roof. They are single fronted and under a gable roof parallel to the street, but with bold gables at right angles to the roof with a pair of windows. Each has a chimney on the outer edge of its roof with room for four chimney pots (flues). The walls are brick and rendered. Arches top the windows in the gable and are echoed by an arch over the front door. The upper windows are sash windows with small lights in their top sections and a pattern of

small lights is echoed on the front door. The ground floor has a square bay window with delicate framing. Around the front door is a plain frame. The hall is lit by a generously sized window above the front door. The narrow front garden is enclosed by a red brick wall topped by some very pretty railings and it has a front gate. A tiled path leads to the front door. This house front is more modern and plain than Morwylfa next door but despite the changes it

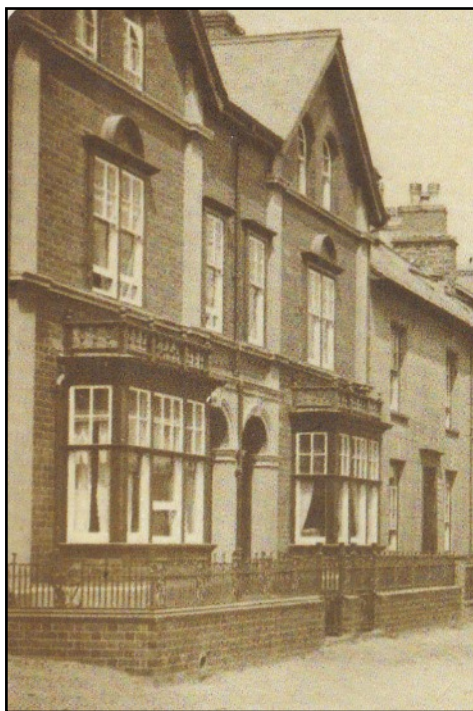
remains a handsome house.

*ABOVE The pair of houses in 2016, Môrlan is on the right.*

*LEFT The simple frame round the front door has lost the classical details that it once had.*





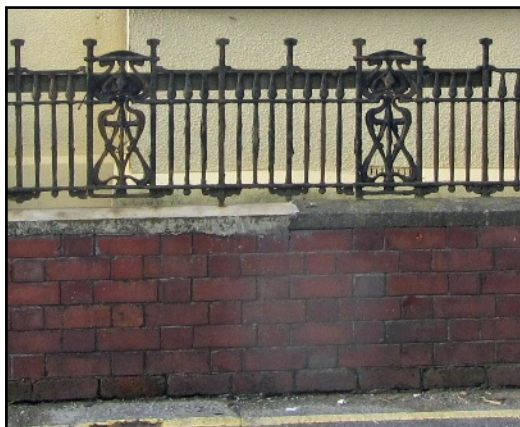


The Welsh name for this house means ‘bank of the sea’.

*LEFT This detail from a postcard sent in 1921 shows us the original front of the building. There were bold string courses (lines of moulding) below the top and second floor windows, and bold moulding on the top of the windows. Another arch shape is over the second floor’s large window. The bay windows were topped by a balustrade with knobs on its pillars. The houses were quite likely red brick as bricks can just be seen in the photograph. Pale coloured rendering showed up pilaster strips framing each house, and the decoration round the front doors. Some care was taken with the decoration of the fronts of these houses.*

*RIGHT The houses in about 1955. The little knobs decorating the balustrade can be seen better in this photograph. (Details from Postcards in a Private Collection)*

*BELOW The railings are in the ‘Art Nouveau’ style, and were there in 1921.*



It is not known at present if this house was built by the Davies family of mariners next door to bring them in some income by letting it. It had plenty of rooms.

In 1925 paying the rates was the owner and occupier H. E. Littler. However this was altered to David Evans. He also paid the rates in 1934 and 1938 when they were increased from £9 to £16 (Morwylfa paid £15).

In 1941 a small baby three weeks old living in the house, Margaret Joyce Olivia Galby died.





With votes for the house in the General Election of 1945 were Gladys Seel, Mary M. Redding and Marjorie Reese. Arthur Seel paid the rates in 1949.

Paying the rates in 1963 was Mr Woolley. He did not have a vote for the house so probably did not live there.

The pair of houses replaced a 'Mariner's Cottage'.

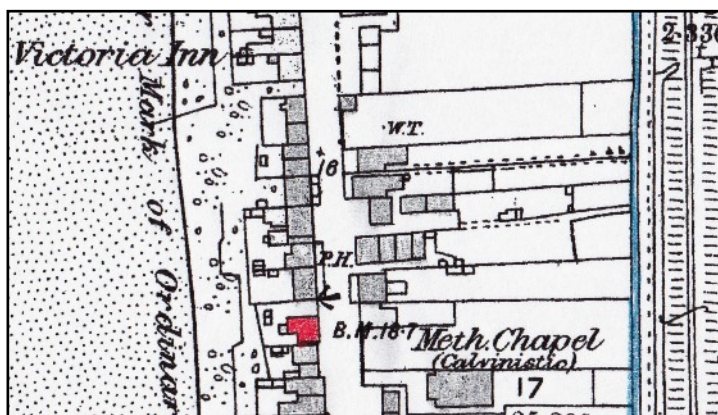


*LEFT In about 1895 the first house from the right was the Mariner's Cottage. It was a rubble stone building - the stones are visible through the whitewash on the gable end. It was a much grander than the much older small cottage next to it which is now the site of Ystwyth.*

The ground for this house is the stone bank thrown up by the sea and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor who owned it as it was no use for farming. On a map of 1829 it was beach (National Archives LRRO 1/3060) 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. Fresh water for the cottages and houses came from a brook behind the buildings on the other side of the road. In 1848 the site was still open ground. (Tithe Apportionments Map Llangihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township - on line at CYNEFIN - National Library of Wales).

However on a map of encroachments belonging to the Crown Manor in 1859 the cottage is marked, and next to it on the south was another cottage which became Ystwyth. There was a passage to the beach in between them (Number 18b, Map, National Archives LRRO 1/3060) It was a decently wide plot for this cottage with ground to spare on the north.



*LEFT This was the cottage in 1886 marked in red. It still had ground beside it so that the two new houses had enough room to fit in when the cottage was taken down and they were built. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888).*



*ABOVE This is the rear of Môrlan from the beach in 2016. There is a dormer window for an attic room to have a view of the sea. The sloping roof of the extension is interesting as many of the older houses had extensions of this shape, but shared with the house next door under a gable roof at right angles to the main house. These extensions often had chimneys and contained the kitchen. For example several of these survive at the rear of the Cambrian Terrace. Môrlan's extension opens on to a balcony with fine views out to sea. The house faces west so would enjoy the sunsets. There is a smaller extension also with a balcony for another second floor room, and the house has been extended below both the balconies. The rear of the house has two yards, the inner has a wall, and both have gateways to reach the beach, the outer one boarded to protect the house from the sea during bad storms.*

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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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