

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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MOROLWG

Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

Part of a terrace that was built between 1822 and 1829. In 1881 the terrace was called 'Green Place' and the cottage still had a 'Green' name in 1910.



Morolwg in 2009.

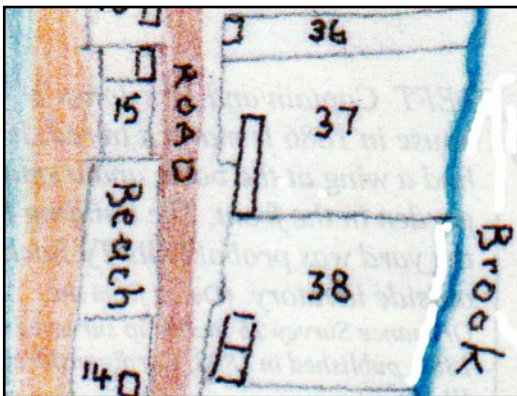


This is a cottage in a terrace with Llys next door on the south, and they have the same roof height. Both have rendered walls but a small area of rubble stone survives on the ground floor of Morolwg suggesting the front is rubble stone. However Llys next door had some clom (mud) walling on a low wall of stones, and it is possible that Morolwg once had this too. Morolwg's front is the same width as Llys next door, but has a timber section at the top to heighten the front and allow for large windows and a good head height for the upper floor. The ground floor window on the south is a canted bay with a flat roof that ends at the upper window above. All the

windows are modern and matching. The glazing bars are thin and delicate. A porch and its deep pitched roof takes up a sizeable space on the façade and it has a large window in its street front and the front door. There is a decorative band of pebble dash rendering across the ground floor to contrast with plain rendering above. The cottage has a gable roof parallel to the street and on the southern side is a red brick chimney with one chimney pot. In front is a garden edged by a low rubble stone wall, many being rounded beach stones, and whitewashed. The cottage north wall joins the tall Gwelfor beside it but is set back a little.

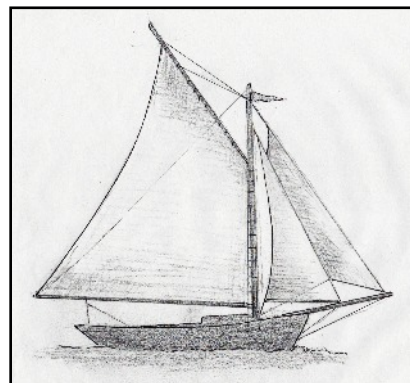
This building stands on a substantial pebble embankment built up by the sea over many centuries, and alongside an ancient highway. Since early medieval times travellers to North Wales came along the highway on their way to cross the River Dovey by boat, later by ferry. By 1770 the highway was important enough to be a turnpike road. So access to a building beside it was easy, and the highway was especially convenient for mariners; for fishermen to reach Aberleri when the River Leri spilled out into the sea where they could moor their vessels, and for mariners to reach the port at Aberdovey to join wooden sailing ships. The River Lerry once flowed along the landward side of the embankment and beyond was the huge Cors Fochno peat bog. By 1790 the river had been re-routed further inland allowing drained pastures to be created. (National Library of Wales Gogerddan Estate Map 232). A water supply for the dwellers on the embankment had been made by 1829 called 'The Brook' and it used the old route of the river. (National Archives LRRO 1/3060) This had fresh water from the River Lerry first used by the Melin-y-wern water mill at Glan Lerry (now gone), plus two small streams.

The pebble embankment was considered to be 'waste' by the manor of Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn as it could not be used for farming. When a plot was enclosed to build a cottage on it - an encroachment - the Crown which owned the manor charged annual rent for it or would sell it for three years rent.

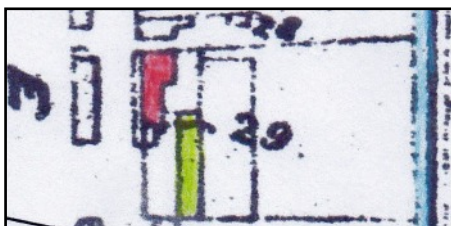


LEFT A Crown Map of 1829 showed a plot of ground, Number 37 with a terrace of cottages set back from the road which is coloured light brown. One of these was Morolwg. The ground was bought in 1822 and the terrace built by 1829. It belonged to John Hughes. He was a master mariner being a captain of wooden sailing vessels in the coastal trade, and with shares in some. This would have earned him a good living. He had enough money to buy this ground, three quarters of an acre, costing £20, quite a large sum in those days. (Detail after the map, National Archives LRRO 1/3060).

In 1824 John Hughes was the captain of the sloop Betsey and had shares in her and also shares in the Eleanor and Betsey, and 16 shares in the sloop 'Friendship'. and eventually 52 of her 64 shares. He mortgaged those. John Hughes was dead by 15 January 1846, and his wife Mary was his executrix. (Ceredigion Archives Shipping Registers Volumes 1 and 2)



RIGHT A Sloop

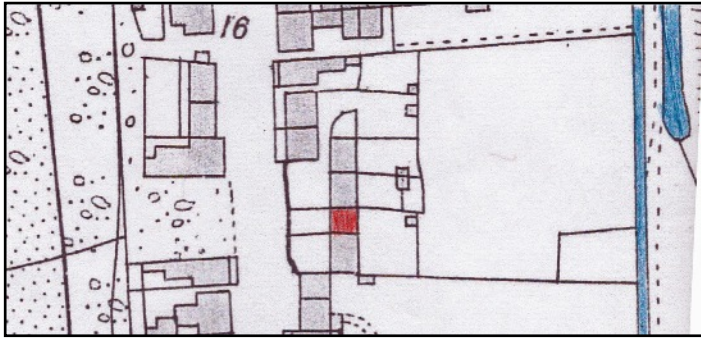


LEFT By 1848 other cottages had been added, marked in red. The old row is marked in green. A garden area was fenced off at the front and the back. Mary Hughes owned all of them.

She and other family members lived in the cottages or she rented them out. (This detail from the Tithe Apportionments Map for Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township on-line at CYNEFIN)

It is not possible to trace the people living in the cottage that is now Morolwg in the 1841, 1851, 1861, or 1871 Census.

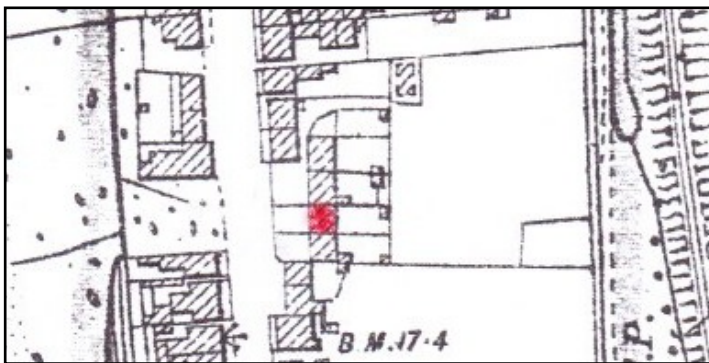
At the Census of 1881 this terrace was called Green Place. Living at the cottage that became Morolwg was a mariner John Davies aged 57, born in Borth about 1824. His wife Jane was from Talybont and there was a son James aged 12 at school and a daughter Ann Ellen aged 19 who was earning a living as a dressmaker. John Davies's father Evan Davies was also a mariner and John was born on 16 March 1823. (Parish Register - Ceredigion Archives)



LEFT In this detail from a map surveyed in 1886 we can see all the terrace. John Davies's cottage is marked in red. It was drawn smaller than the others, and shared an owner and back garden with Llys. The tiny building was probably its Ty Bach - outside lavatory (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map published in 1888, Cardiganshire NW III.10)

In 1891 the terrace was called Pwll Mawr, but the family were away or the cottage was unoccupied when the Census takers called. The Pwll Mawr - big pool is marked.

In 1901 the cottage was again unoccupied. It was the only cottage to keep the name 'Green' and was called Green Cottage.



Left By 1904 there was a change - the cottage is drawn the same size as Llys. It then had its own back garden

In 1910 for a tax planned but not levied, this was 'Green Place' owned by Elizabeth Davies, and with a tenant, John Kent. It was valued at £76, paying £3.4s, gross £4, and it was less valuable than Llys then Rhona House next door, as that was valued at £102 and was to pay £4, £5 gross. The cottage was not in the 1911 Census. Was it empty again perhaps? The 'Green' name was probably because there was a stable in the field behind and a dairy farmer lived in the cottage today rebuilt as Gwelfor. There would have been a green pasture with cows behind the terrace.

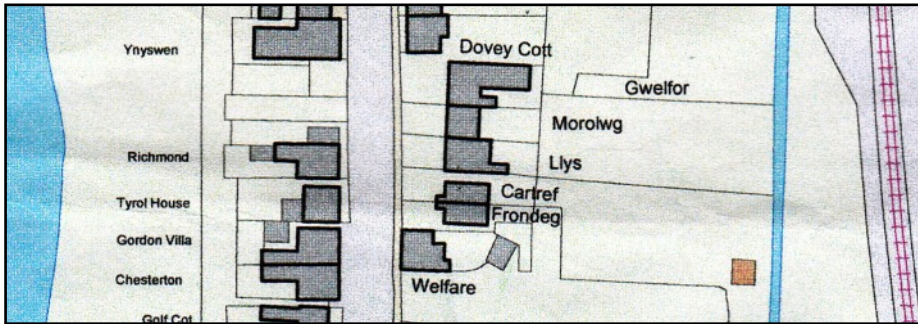
In 1925 the house had its name Morolwg - Sea View - and in the Rates list the owner was Hughes - the Council did not know his full name. Living there was Evan Davies. Was he a descendant of the Davies family who were there in 1881 and had owned it in 1910?

In 1934 the owner was Nash and David Jenkins had paid the rates, but this was altered to F. Trevor Humphreys. He paid the rates in 1938.

In 1949 Glyn Jones paid the rates.

In 1957 Mr Wilde paid the rates.

In 1975 little had changed, the cottage was still as it had been in 1904 though the small building in the garden had gone (Historical Maps On-line)



LEFT A detail from a modern Council Map shows the present shape of the cottage (Map courtesy of Councillor Ray Quant who provided it for research for a village event).

Today the porch and front door open into a living room the entire width of the cottage. A passage with stairs and a cloakroom runs along behind it, and on the rear of the cottage is now a modern kitchen and a conservatory opening into the garden which has a shed. Upstairs are two bedrooms, a small store room and a bathroom. The rear garden is a patio which is fenced.

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yn cyflwyno / presents
Tai'r Borth / Houses of Borth
gan/by Beryl Lewis
[cyf/ref ADX/1629]

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-ceredigion.org.uk/tairborth.php?lang=cy>

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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