

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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MURMUR Y MÔR

Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

On Princess Street at the north of the village. In 1871 called 6 Princess Street, in 1891 called Shrewsbury House and called Y Bwthyn (The Cottage) in 1910 and later Oslo.



LEFT Murmur-y-môr in 2015.

This is a two storey building under a gable roof parallel to the road with two storey extensions to the front and the back. There is a chimney on the north end of the rear extension. The roofed balcony has a splendid view of the sea and the windows are modern. All the walls are rendered.



LEFT The house in 2009 before some alterations were made to include the balcony.



LEFT In 2010 the plaster was being removed on the south wall and there were many rounded beach stones in this wall as in old Borth cottages.

RIGHT In July 2014 the south wall had been stripped of plaster. The front extension was brick and more bricks had been used on the extension at the back. The original gable shape of the roof had also been altered.



Today there is a large extension at the back across the whole house. It has to turn at an angle to suit the angle of the old garden and it fills the site. A possible date for this is 1968. The house no longer shares a garden with Pant Gwyn but is very close to it and its north wall is also the wall of Pant Gwyn's front garden.

The house has a covered side porch with a front door to the hall and stairs. On the ground floor is a dining room, kitchen and two bedrooms. On the first floor behind the balcony is a spacious lounge with a wide picture window, and a bedroom at the back opens on to a balcony with a view over the marsh to the hills. There is a bathroom on this floor too.

Outside there is a track to Chapel Lane for a car, and within the rear of the house is a garage. There is also a workshop at the back.



LEFT The extension added on to the old cottage at the rear. This added plenty of extra rooms for the house, and the possibility of a balcony, not then with railings, which would have a fine view across the railway and the marsh to the hills beyond.



LEFT Its garden is a long strip of grass alongside the Capel-y-morfa extending to the ditch - once a brook.

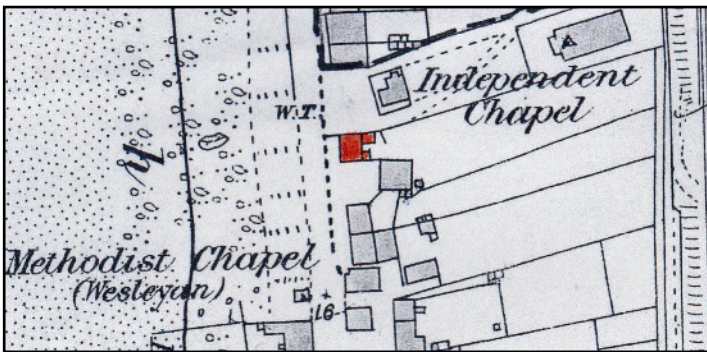
The site was part of a half acre garden around the cottage set back from the road now called Pant Gwyn which belonged to Mary Morgan the widow of a mariner. David Morgan had enclosed it in 1823 from the Crown Manor's 'waste' pebble bank that was no use for farming (Crown Manor 1829 Map National Archives LR-RO 1/3060). In 1848 and 1859 there

was just Pant Gwyn and no other cottage on this site (Crown Manor Map of 1859 and the Tithe Apportionments Map for Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township on line at CYNEFIN)

In 1870 the house was already there, the property of a Richards family, the northern gable end (pine end) along the boundary of the site, and on the other side was made a 15 foot carriage way from Princess Street then a turnpike road, to the newly built Congregational Chapel, the Capel-y-morfa (*Deed at MorAwel*). In 1871 the house for at least six weeks was taking in holiday visitors - from Carmarthen, Kerry, Llanidloes, Trefeglwys Kenmaes, Llanfair and Newtown. It could manage three families at once. Their landlord was Captain John Richards. In 1880 there were two weeks of visitors. Captain John Richards, born in Borth and baptised in 1827 was a master mariner and the son of a mariner. He commanded the schooner Catherine in 1873. His wife Margaret was a dressmaker. The address was then 6 Princess Street (Cambrian News and 1881 Census)



LEFT The house next to what is now 'Pebbles' is in the centre of this photograph from an old glass plate. It had two floors warmed by two chimneys and this was probably how it was first built as it had room for all those holiday makers. There was a narrow walled front garden. (Photograph courtesy of Peter Fleming).



LEFT The house in 1886 is marked in red. It had two extensions on the back, one was probably its Ty Bach - outside lavatory. Houses at this time often had pigs or chickens at the back too. The front was open to the street and the surveyor has drawn it sharing the back garden with Pant Gwyn and so was probably in the same ownership. The long garden stretched all the way

to a brook of fresh water now a ditch (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888. Cardiganshire NW III.10)

'Mr Richards' was the landlord for holiday visitors in 1880 (Cambrian News). In 1891 the 'carriage way' alongside was sold by the Trustees of the Chapel to Mrs Martha Roberts of the draper's shop Garibaldi (now the Premier Stores) who owned Murmur-y-mor as well as other cottages in which she had tenants (*Deed Mor Awel*) In 1895 the house had the name 'Shrewsbury House'. In 1901 the Richards were still living there, both elderly - John 73 and Margaret 68.



LEFT In 1904 the house is marked in red and the garden was narrow as it is today, with a small enclosed section at the railway line end. It still shared this with Pant Gwyn. There was a longer extension on the back - perhaps with its kitchen.



In 1910 for the Rates the house was called Y Bwthyn and valued at £225, with £4.16s to pay and £6 gross. The owner and occupiers were Martha Roberts and Son then a very successful family. The site was valued at £45.

LEFT This detail from a post-card called 'Rough Sea at Borth' dated 1912 shows Murmur-y-môr on the right, and how the sea could sweep up to it. The present concrete promenade and sea wall was not built until 1956. The front of the house was rendered, but the side wall was not and the stones are easy to see.

In 1925 for Rates there was a new owner A. Auster for Y Bwthyn, who lived there. Some improvements had been made because the Rate had increased, with £6.16s to pay, and gross £8. Pencilled in was a new name - D. H. Carver.

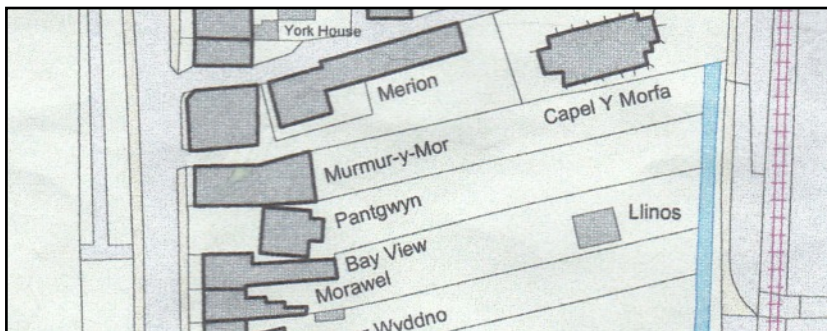
In 1934 D. H. Carver was the owner, but living there was A. E. Taylor and the house had a new name 'Oslo'.

A. E. Taylor paid the rates in 1949.

Living there in 1957 was a Doctor, Doctor Douglas Lloyd Davies who was an executor for the Will of Jesse Matthews the butcher of Leronian (24 September. Deeds to No. 8 Cambrian Terrace, private collection). Dr Davies paid the rates that year.

H. Showell paid the rates in 1963 and with votes for the house that year were Henry and Cecilia Lily Showell. The house was still called Oslo (Electoral Registers and Rates Ceredigion Archives).

A 25 inch map of 1975 showed the present extension at the rear of the house (Old-maps.co. Uk.)



LEFT This modern Council Map shows the extension on the rear fills the width of the plot (Detail from an Ordnance Survey 25 inch Map of the Council, courtesy of Councillor Ray Quant when assisting research for a local event).

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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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