

# 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.*

# NEW STREET

Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

How SABRINA COTTAGE, MORFAN and ANGORFA began.  
They were being built in 1861 for members of the Rees family.

This terrace of three houses is on the east side of the High Street and is under a gable roof parallel to the street. The houses are a bare two storeys high.

*RIGHT* The terrace in 2009. There were once four chimneys, the central ones were shared. Sabrina Cottage has lost the chimney on the north end of the roof.



*RIGHT* In 1909 the end wall of Angorfa nearest the camera shows they were built of rubble stone including round stones from the beach. The four stone chimneys each had room for three chimney pots. The very plain street fronts were rendered and the roofing was probably slate (Postcard courtesy of Peter Fleming)



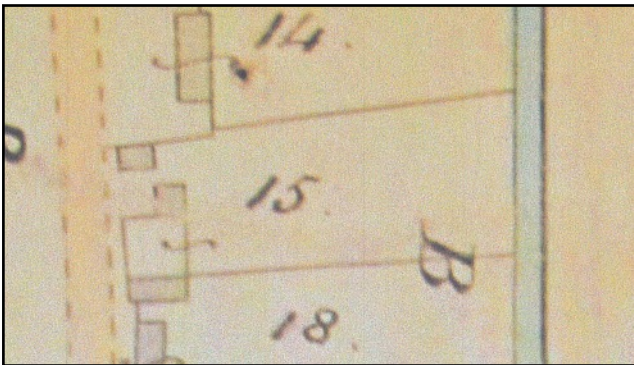
*LEFT* The front windows were sash windows. This one is on Sabrina Cottage and is either original or a modern copy.



*LEFT The rear of the cottages in 2013. Angorfa on the left, and Morfan in the centre, have an attic floor with roof lights. Both have extensions on the rear of the house, Angorfa's is two storey with a brick chimney plus a further lean-to building below. Morfan's is single storey.*

The pebble embankment called 'waste' on which the houses were built was enclosed in 1827 by a member of the Rees family who rented it from the Crown, who owned the manor. It measured 2 rods and 27 perches, that is over half an acre, and on it by 1829 was one cottage set back from the street in the centre of its ground. This extended to a brook. (Map 1829 National Archives. LRRO 1/3060) The owner was a widow, Mary Rees born about 1790 who lived there herself. She was a 'ship owner'. Her late husband and other members of the Rees family owned wooden sailing ships mostly in the coastal trade, and had shares in other vessels. This

would have earned a good living for their families. Mary Rees was still there in 1851.



*LEFT By 1848 there were two cottages on Number 15, the Rees's ground, a new one close to the street and sideways on to it, which was where the Oriel Gallery stands today and the original cottage set back from the street is where Arequipa stands today. There was an enclosure next to the High Street, also owned by the*

*Rees family as shown by the S shape linking the spaces, but no houses stood there yet. (Detail from the Tithe Apportionments Map for Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, C*

In 1861, when the railway was on its way to Borth and two years before the Borth railway station opened, three houses were being built fitted into that enclosure by the High Street (1861 Census). Next door were Mary Rees a 72 year old widow and her unmarried 33 year old daughter Catherine possibly living in the old cottage on the site of Areqipa.

By the 1871 Census Catherine Rees, a widow, was living in Number 2 New Street and Margaret Rees, master mariner Dafydd Rees's wife was aged 50 was living in Sabrina (then Number 1 New Street) and also there were a daughter Jane aged 14 (born about 1857) and a small lodger, John Rees aged 4 (born about 1857). Mrs Rees had holiday visitors staying there and two families at once were put up there in 1880 suggesting these houses were never single storey cottages, but the two storey houses were see today (Cambrian News). Eliza Rees another mariner's wife was living in Number 3 New Street. Why the name 'New Street'?



*LEFT In 1886 the terrace of three cottages is marked in red. I think it was a 'new' bit of street because they edge the street whereas the buildings to the north and south are not along the street edge, and on the north side especially, the buildings have large gaps*

*between them. The remaining old Rees family cottages are still there, and they all share the Rees ground (marked in yellow) extending to the brook. Each house on the terrace had an enclosed yard or small garden but also a walkway into the large garden beyond. The small buildings are likely to have been outside lavatories and possibly pig sties (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888, Cardiganshire NW III.10)*

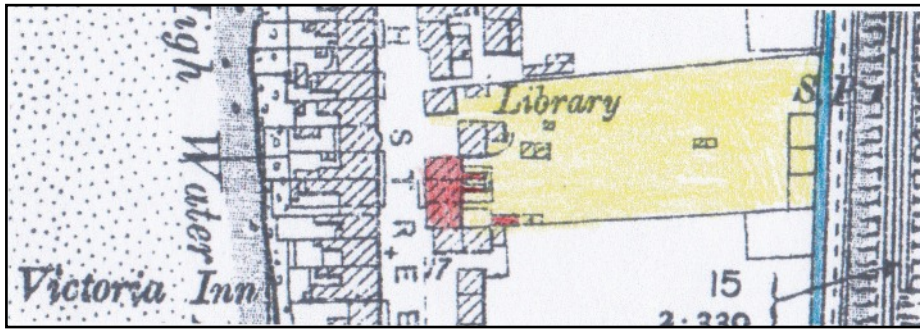


The New Street gardens in 2013 - on the right - a composite photograph.



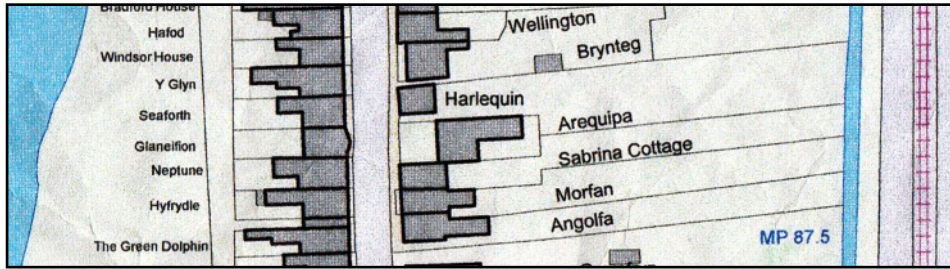
*They are long and narrow, and were then not cultivated and ended in scrub around the old water course which is now a dry ditch. Beyond is the lane and railway line. However the vegetables growing in the gardens in the foreground show this ground can be productive.*

*LEFT The chimneys of the three cottages are rubble stone.*



LEFT The houses in 1904. Arequipa had been built close to the three cottages.

Two had narrow extensions at the back (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey map of



Cardiganshire N.W. revised in 1904 and published in 1905).

ABOVE This is detail from a modern map, each cottage now had a garden of its own reaching down to the ditch.

(Detail from a Council Map courtesy of Councillor Ray Quant who provided it to help with research for a local event).



LEFT This is the rear wall of Morfan and shows the rubble stone walling with rounded beach stones - it is likely that all the three houses have walls like this.

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Hoffem ddiolch i Beryl am fod mor garedig â chaniatáu i ni rannu ei gwaith â'r gynulleidfa ehangaf bosibl.

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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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