

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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OCEAN COTTAGE Morfa Borth

A cottage at the southern end of Borth High Street, on the beach side. Formerly Britannia Place, then one of two Ocean Cottages, also called Ocean Villa and Ocean House. Probably built by 1841.



ABOVE Ocean Cottage in 2015. Maps and the photographs show that it is one of a pair of cottages. The size and spacing of the ground floor windows match.

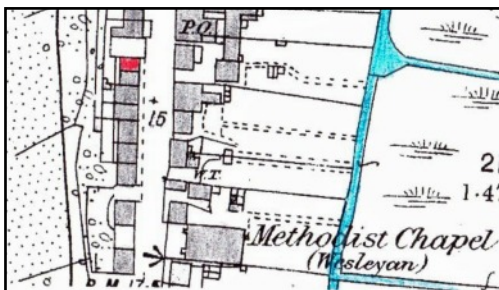
Ocean Cottage is on the northern end of a terrace and is built of rubble stone with rounded stones from the beach. It is a bare two storeys high, and is under a gable roof parallel to the road. On the north side of the roof is a rubble stone chimney, but rendered. The cottage is single fronted, but its front door is in a lean to extension along the north side. It is likely the door was once on the main front, but moving it enables a larger front room. It is likely there were once two upper windows as in Waterfront next door. The windows are sash windows in wooden frames. They have a shallow arch above them of brick shaped stones. The low front wall is shared with Water's Edge next door, and Ocean Cottage has a wooden gate. Though the extension is rubble stone, the top of the door which is inset does not have an arch. The building fills its plot and has more depth than some old cottages. Access to the rear would be from the beach. It seems that Water's Edge and Ocean Cottage were a pair of cottages, the size and spacing of their ground floor windows match.

The ground for this cottage was still open 'beach' in 1829. The Crown Manor who owned it called it 'waste' because it was no use for farming (Crown Manor Map, National Archive LRRO 1/3060).

The road had been there for centuries and was a turnpike road in the 1770s. It led to a ferry from Ynyslas to Aberdovey and was a quick way to North Wales. Fresh water for the cottages came from a brook behind the houses on the other side of the street, the tailrace from the corn mill at Glanlerry (Felinwern) now gone plus two small streams. Villagers had their own area to dig peat on the other side of the River Leri just north of Ynys Fergi.

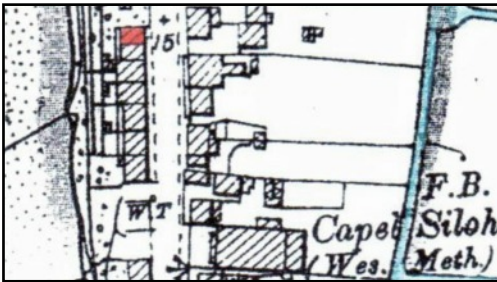


By 1848 both of the cottages were on a map, drawn just as a small block, and marked in red. Because they did not have gardens they did not pay any tithe we do not know who owned Ocean Cottage. A master mariner David Daniel was living in Water's Edge next door in the 1841 Census, so it is likely they were built by then. Coloured purple is the Chapel. (Tithe Apportionments Map, Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township, on-line at CYNEFIN National Library of Wales).



ABOVE Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888.

BELOW There was little change on the map of 1905. London Cottage had not yet been built yet. Cardiganshire III.10



In 1886 the cottage, marked in red on the map (left), opened directly on to the street. There was empty ground on the north side of it. It appears it shared a back yard with Waterfront, suggesting the same owner for both. The double fences at the back were sea defences, usually bundles of brushwood at an angle anchored into the stone bank.

It is not possible to find the occupiers in the cottage in the early census's, but its address was Britannia Place after Britannia House over the road. In the 1891 Census the cottage was called Ocean House, and living there was a deep sea mariner, John Edwards. He was 37, born in Borth and the son of a mariner, also called John Edwards. His wife Elizabeth was also local, born in Borth about 1863. They had a six year old son William J. Edwards.

At the 1901 Census the cottage was empty. In 1910 for a tax planned but not levied, the cottage then called Ocean Villa, was valued at £95. There would have been £2.8s to pay, £3 gross. The owner and occupier was Harriet Beetlestone of Birmingham (Ceredigion Archives T/DV18 and map at the National Library of Wales). This was a very good cottage, Borth's

humble cottages were only £30 or £40. There was no entry for it in the 1911 Census, suggesting no one was there to fill in the form. Harriet Beetlestone paid the rates again in 1925. The name was Ocean Cottage in 1934 when C. U. Beetlestone paid the rates. It would either have been a second home, or rented out. In 1938 and 1949 M. A. Joy paid the rates. In 1963 F. M. Weller paid the rates. (Rates, Ceredigion Archives).



The cottage from the beach in 2015. The extension with the front door continues out into the yard and under a hipped roof. It is lit by a roof lights. On the south side of the yard is a tall wall with an outbuilding alongside which gives privacy to the yard. A platform extending from a wall at the rear of the yard gives a seating area with a view out to sea, and this may also protect the back from the sea during storms.

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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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