

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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OTAGO

Morfa Borth

At the northern end of the village, and built on the ground of master mariner Captain Thomas Jones of Hopewell. It was a home for his daughter Catherine and her husband James James, a joiner, and then of their daughter Frances. Later the home of David Jenkins. Developed from an old cottage on the site and extended at the back by 1904.



LEFT Otago in 2015.

BELOW This photograph shows its special relationship with Hopewell Cottage next door. The pair are set back from the road.

Otago is a two storey single fronted, semi-detached house beneath a gable roof. Otago and Hopewell Cottage are not parallel to the road like so many Morfa Borth houses, but at an angle to it. The deeply sloping roof of Otago has roof lights for an attic floor and chimneys at each end of the roof which are rendered and have one chimney pot, but the northernmost chimney has room for two. The front wall of the house is rendered, and the windows are modern. A conservatory is built around the front door. The front garden is enclosed with a low rendered wall with prominent gateposts and these matched those of Hopewell Cottage. A fence encloses an area around the conservatory.

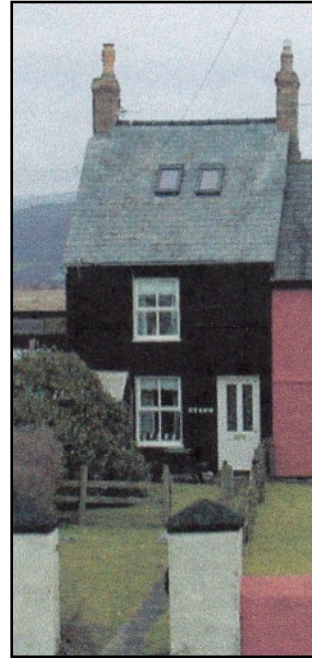




LEFT and BELOW The rear of the house in 2015. The walls are rubble stone with rounded stones from the beach. This roof also has roof lights for the attic floor. There is a single storey extension on the north side of the yard, wider adjacent to the house, and beyond is a garden enclosed on the north side by a bank.

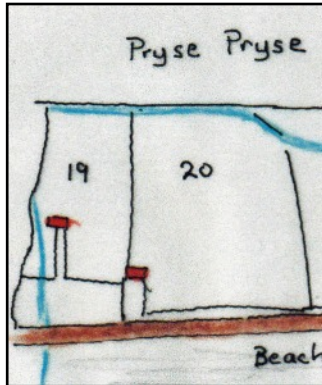
The back door opens into a modern kitchen, but today, hidden behind a wall on the north side of it is a large old fireplace which had an iron range and bread oven.

RIGHT Otago in 2009 with its front door on the other side.



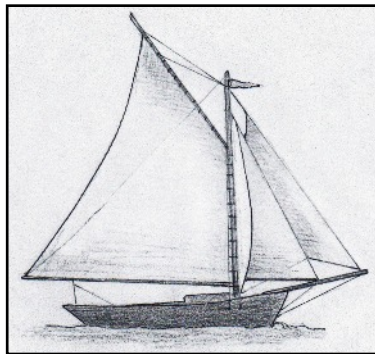
The ground for this house is land reclaimed from the Cors Fochno marsh and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor who owned it as it was no use for farming. It was enclosed in 1824 by Captain Thomas Jones and his ground measured two acres and extended from the road to a

brook. On a map of 1829 it was Number 20 and there was a cottage on it set back from the road. A rent of £3.8s had to be paid to the Crown Manor and the option to buy it for £17. However in 1829 it was still rented. The road had been there for centuries 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 old cottage came from a brook, now a ditch, the tail race from the Glanlerry Corn Mill plus other small streams. For fuel the cottagers had their own area where they could dig peat on the far side of the River Leri near Ynys Fergi.

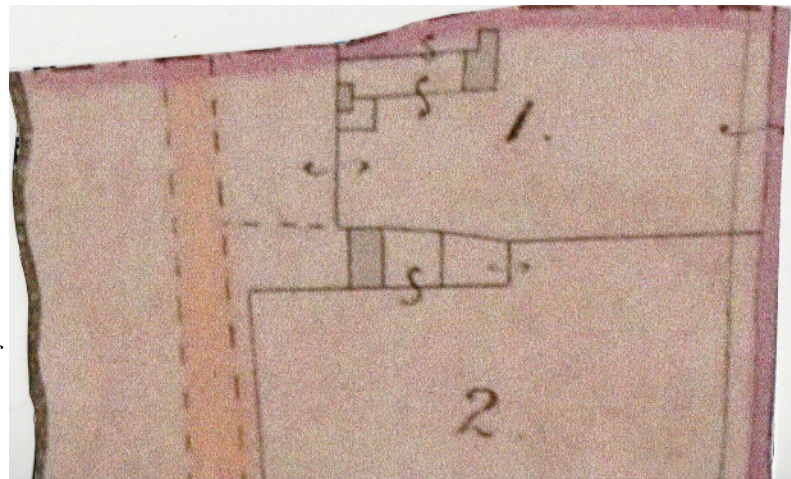


LEFT Captain Thomas Jones's land and cottage was Number 20 in 1829 on this detail copied from a Crown Manor map. It was the second cottage from the Cyfoeth Township boundary. (LRRO 1/3060)

Captain Jones called his cottage 'Hopewell' after a 27 ton sloop built at Newquay in 1820. The Captain had 32 of her 64 shares in 1845. As managing owner he would organise her cargoes and her routes, and pay her crew. (Aberystwyth Shipping Register, Ceredigion Archives).



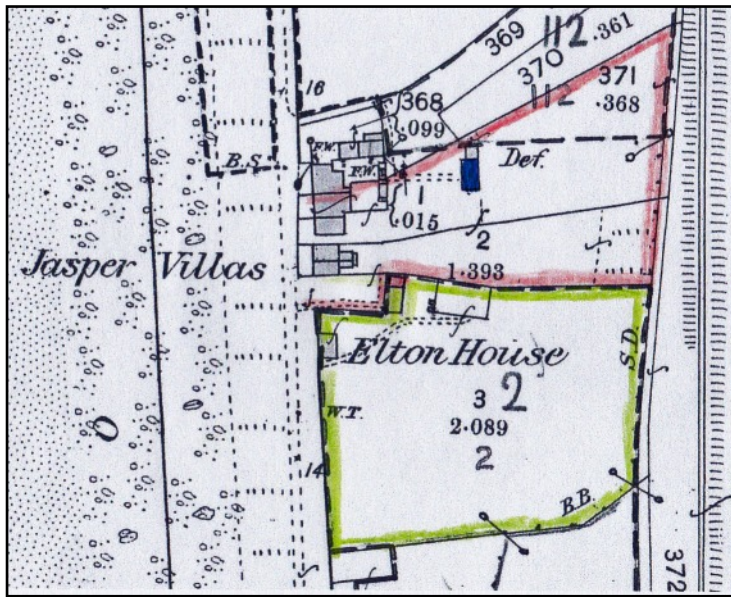
LEFT A sloop was a small sailing vessel and probably mostly used for the coastal trade and not ocean-going.



RIGHT In 1848 Hopewell Cottage was Number 2 on the Tithe Apportionments Map of Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township. Once again the surveyor drew Hopewell Cottage reaching to the boundary. There were two enclosed gardens behind the building. The description is clear "Thomas Jones himself, cottage (not cottages) and land, arable and pasture". The land at the front was unenclosed and the 'S' brace shows it belonged to the Thomas family's cottage on Number 1. The land was able to grow crops as well as used for pasture. The line of dashes edging the top of the map is because that was the boundary of the Cyfoeth Township. Interestingly these cottages were well set back from the road on the stone embankment, and a map of 1791 shows the River Leri had been diverted at Ynys Fergi and a large area of pasture created by drainage which was in the possession of the estate of Pryse Pryse of Goggerdan. The old course of the river remained and a water course is on the right of this detail from the Tithe Map so cottages at Number 1 and 2 would have had access to water, possibly making this ground suitable to be kept drained and farmed. (Map T. Lewis, National Library of Wales).

Hopewell Cottage did not have a name at the 1881 Census, only important houses and inns were given their names. In the cottage was Captain Thomas Jones's widow. He had died in

1850. Catherine Jones was then aged 80 and looking after her was her grand-daughter Frances James. She would live on to 1892 (Churchyard memorial, Llandre).



LEFT By 1886 the old cottage had been divided up, and the section where Otago is today is marked in red. It shared the land behind outlined in green on which an enclosure, probably a garden had been made. The building still had no front garden and the Thomas's cottage marked in black still owned that ground. By 1886 Elton House had been built on Captain's land for his eldest son, another Captain Thomas Jones (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed

in 1886 and published in 1888, Cardiganshire III.10)



LEFT The Thomas cottage is on the far left. Just behind Elton House in the foreground is part of the Hopewell Cottage building, likely to be the end that had been divided off and would be rebuilt as Otago. It was single storey and the front door was on the right. The date of this picture is not known but may be around 1900. (Photograph

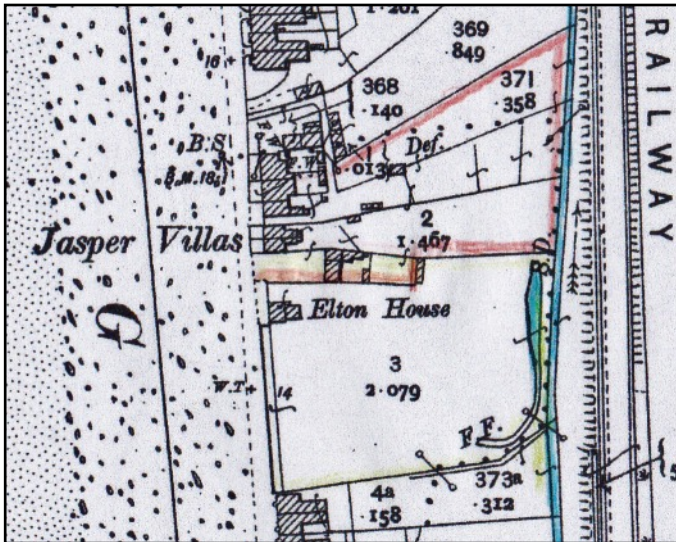
courtesy of Mr and Mrs David Matthews)

Later Council rates indicate that the two acres in the rear of Otago, Hopewell Cottage and Elton House were farmed (Ceredigion Archives).

In the 1891 Census when houses and cottages were given names, Otago is not listed, though Hopewell Cottage was there, and in the cottage was Catherine, the Captain's widow then 92 and her master mariner younger son Captain Richard Jones. Acting as their housekeeper was Frances James, unmarried and aged 33 the Captain's grand daughter.

In the 1901 Census the house had its name 'Otago', and in the house was an elderly widow Catherine James aged 75, the Captain's eldest daughter. With her was her daughter Frances, still unmarried and aged 44. Both ladies only spoke Welsh.

In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied, Otago was valued at £136. There would have been £4.8s to pay, £3.10s gross. This was not the valuation of a small cottage,



of a small two storey house so the house we see today was probably built. The owner and living there was Frances James. (Ceredigion Archives T/DV/18 and map at the National Library of Wales).

LEFT By 1904 Otago had been extended at the back and shared a back garden with Hopewell Cottage. There was still no front garden. The braces show the ownership of both Otago and Hopewell Cottage and the garden behind them was with the ground to the north. However, the rest

of the Captain's two acres was in the ownership of his son's Elton House (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire III.10)

Otago was not listed in the 1911 Census, but that year, buried at St Michael's Llandre was Thomas James, the brother of Frances. He had been living at Otago.

Frances James paid the rates in 1925 . Miss James died on July 6th 1930 and was buried at Llandre. Her gravestone is in Welsh.

Paying the rates in 1938 and 1949 was David Jenkins, and he had a vote for the house in 1945. He paid the rates in 1957.

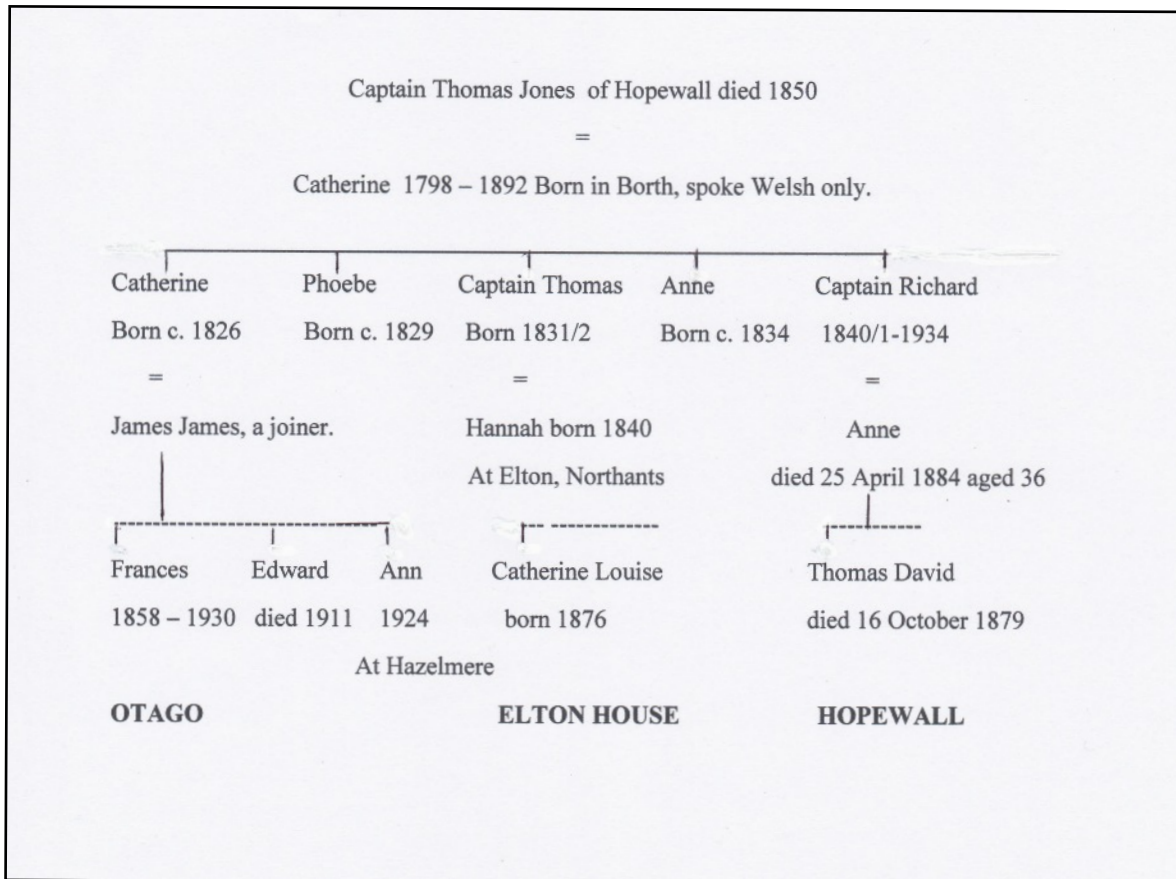
Edward Jenkins of Otago was in the Royal Navy in the second world war, but after the war moved away to become a painter and decorator at Llanidloes. (Terry Davies Borth, A Maritime History page 74).

Mrs Mary Jenkins paid the rates in 1963 and had a vote for the house (Electoral Rolls and Rates, Ceredigion Archives).



LEFT The fireplace in the living room has rounded beach stones. The walls of this room and the room upstairs are tongue and groove timber. Beneath the ground floor is a two foot air space with stony ground below. Behind the living room are the stairs and beyond is the kitchen with a back door to the garden. The earlier house ended there at a rubble stone wall.

(Details of the inside of this house courtesy of the present owner)



ABOVE The family tree of Captain Thomas Jones of Hopewall.

Archifdy Ceredigion Archives
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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