

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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POMONA HOUSE

Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

Built by a master mariner's family by 1861 on ground they had enclosed in 1811, and owned by the Jones family and their descendants a Williams family. Borth's policemen lived there from 1881 until the early years of the twentieth century. The house was probably named after Pomona Island in central Manchester between the River Irwell and the Manchester Ship Canal. This was once thriving dockland and Captain Richard Williams (1849-1932) was the first Dockmaster of the Manchester Ship Canal and when a name was needed for his smaller house (he had retired to live in Britannia) he probably suggested Pomona. It was not named in 1881, or 1891, but had this name by 1901.



Pomona is semi-detached and barely two storeys high, under a gable roof, and is double fronted. There is a substantial chimney on the southern end of the roof of good quality squared stones with one chimney pot. Inside a fireplace now not used suggests there was once a chimney at both ends of the roof. The lower front windows, which are sash windows are taller than the pair above. The narrow front garden has railings and a gate.

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LEFT Pomona House butts against the tall Britannia. Access to the rear is on the south, between Pomona House and Eltham.

The house has rubble stone walls - the rear wall which is not rendered has many round stones from the beach. The rear windows are sash windows and three have small lights.

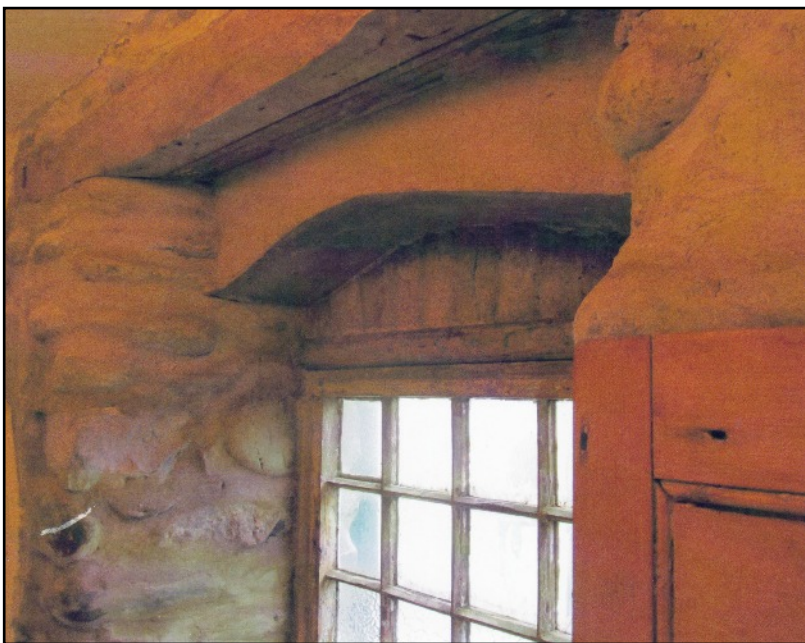


LEFT The rear of the house in February 2015. Some large stones support the outer wall on the left. The back door is wooden and looks old. The door and passage are not central and the spacing of the windows leaves larger rooms on the south side. Some alterations have been made for the top of the left hand ground floor window and over the front door which has a very square top edged by bricks.



LEFT Dark red bricks with the remains of whitewash left on them make a shallow arch above the right hand ground floor window.

NEXT PAGE TOP RIGHT These windows, ground floor left and right with many small lights are some of the oldest surviving in Morfa Borth.



LEFT Inside the right hand ground floor window now of a cloakroom, showing the bricks above the window frame and an arch supporting the upper wall.

The house plan today on the ground floor has a passage from the front door through to the rear door and the ceilings are low. On the south side at the street front is the living room with the present fireplace. On the other side at the front is a bedroom with storage and this room has a blocked fireplace. Behind the living room on the south side of the back is the kitchen, and on the other side of the passage is a cloakroom.



LEFT The panelled partition and door between the living room and the passage.

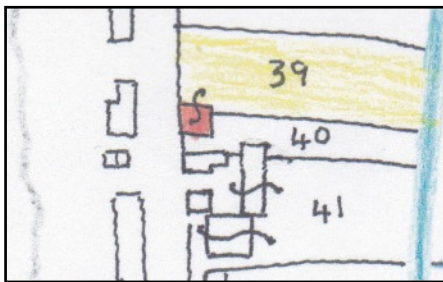


LEFT Pine floorboards in the living room. All the photographs were taken in 2015.

The ground for this house was enclosed in 1811 from the pebble embankment thrown up by the sea, and called 'waste' because it was no use for farming. The ground measured

1 rod and 19 and a half perches, that is nearly a quarter of an acre. It extended to a brook. A rent of £1.2s. had to be paid every year to the Crown manor who owned the ground. In 1829 the owner was Catherine Jones, a widow. (National Archives LRRO 1/3060) She had shares in the 45 ton sloop Swallow, and was a managing owner who had a say in what cargoes it carried (Shipping Register Aberystwyth, Ceredigion Archives) The road was centuries old being quick way to North Wales via a ferry to Aberdovey.

This Jones family of master mariners from Borth went back to the turn of the century. Captain Richard Jones of the *Britannia's* son John, aged 2 was buried in 1814 at Llandre, aged 3. Captain Richard Jones had been master of the sloop *Britannia* in February 1826. She was built in Cardigan in 1797. *Britannia* under Captain Hugh Rees was lost in October 1859 (Shipping Register Aberystwyth, Ceredigion Archives).

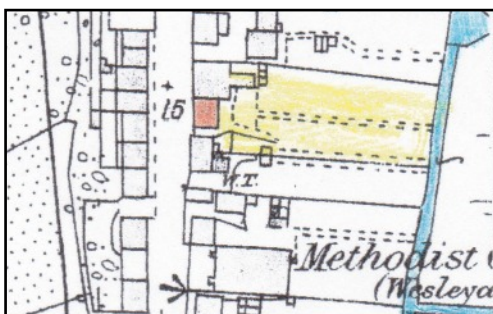


*LEFT In 1848 the Jones family ground is number 39 on this map. By then Captain Richard Jones had built a small cottage for himself at the roadside of his ground but mostly on the plot of land next door, it is coloured red. Today Eltham stands on that site, but there was no building on 39 where *Pomona* and *Britannia* would be built. (Detail from a photocopy of the Tithe Apportionments Map for Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township on-line at CYNEFIN).*

Captain Richard is in the 1861 Census aged 71 with his family This is who were there; the Captain born in Borth about 1810, his wife Jane born about 1787, also in Borth, their daughter Jane who was 43 and born in Borth about 1818, and their eldest daughter Margaret who had married a Williams but was a widow aged 46. She was born in Borth about 1815. There was also their niece Suzanne Jones, 22, single and born in Tre'r'dol and their 8 year old grand-daughter Jane Jones.

Pomona is said to have been built before the large *Britannia* was built alongside and is said to have had one room below and one above. Both were there by 1871.

A Jones daughter wed a master mariner Williams - and he inherited their houses and ground. Tenants of the Williams family, in-comers and keepers of law and order moved into *Pomona*. In the 1871 and 1881 Census's John James, a widower, and police constable, born in Pembrokeshire about 1817 was in the house with his daughter Martha Hughes, also born in Pembrokeshire.



LEFT Pomona in 1886 coloured red, Britannia was there too, both built on Number 39 above. They shared the back garden as the Williams family at Britannia owned Pomona. They had a path down to the brook. Both houses opened directly on to the street (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888, Cardiganshire NW III.10).

In the 1891 Census the house did not have a name but another police constable was living there. He was 44 year old David Davies born in Llandysul in 1847. With him was his wife Margaret, and their children James A. Davies, 9, born about 1882, William A. Davies, 2, and a baby Albert of seven months. James was born in Llanon, and the family may have moved to Borth from there, as William and the baby were born in Borth.

At the Census in 1901 was Lewis Davies, a police officer born in Llanwenog, Cardiganshire about 1848. With him was his wife Margaret, born in Llancynfelin. They wed in 1873 and had one child still living in 1911 but not with them at Pomona. He spoke both Welsh and English, she spoke Welsh.

The Ordnance Survey 25 inch Map of 1905 shows Pomona unchanged from 1886.

In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied this house, then called a cottage and garden was valued at £127. There would have been £4.6s to pay, gross £6. The owner was Captain Richard Williams of Lerydale, Manchester (he was also the owner of Britannia House) and still living there was Lewis Davies. (Ceredigion Archives T/DV/18 and Map National Library of Wales).

In the 1911 Census the name of the house was 'Pomona House' and the people living there declared to the Census takers they had 6 rooms. It suggests that the ground floor had been divided into two rooms at the front with a passage between, and a fireplace to heat both of them, and two small rooms at the back as today. A ladder probably led up to upstairs rooms - possibly two of them then. Lewis Davies was still there, by then aged 63 and a retired police officer on a pension. He was still there in 1925 paying the Rates in 1925 for Pomona. In April 1924 Lewis Davies was a Deacon at the Libanus Chapel. (Cambrian News).

In 1934 Richard P. Evans was the owner and occupier and he was still paying the rates in 1949 (Ceredigion Archives) Mr Evans was the chairman of the Borth Football Club in 1949 (Borth Review, National Library of Wales).

In 1957 Richard Evans had died and Miss Elizabeth E. Evans paid the rates. She also paid the rates in 1963 and she had a vote for the house as did also Albert Evans (Electoral Registers and Rates Ceredigion Archives).

On a map of 1975 the plan of the house was unchanged and it still shared a back garden with Britannia (Historical Maps On-line).

(The author would like to thank the owner of Pomona House in 2015 for help with this article)

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gan/by Beryl Lewis
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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-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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