

# 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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## RICHMOND Morfa Borth

A detached house on the beach side in the middle of Borth High Street. House of a master mariner by 1871. Built after 1848 and before 1871.

*Richmond in 2009 - it was having a chimney repaired.*



Richmond is a generously tall, two storey, single fronted detached house with a dormer window and roof lights for an attic floor. The house is under a gable roof parallel with the street. There is a brick chimney each end of the roof with room for two chimney pots.

The walls are rubble stone and rendered. This house is unique, the spacing of its doors and windows are not related to those of Tyrol House next door. The front door is close to the edge of the building allowing plenty of room for a decent sized living room alongside a hall. There is a single storey porch on the north side of the building under a gable roof with a back



door, and this is beside a drive with room to park a car and beyond gates lead into the yard, and to an outbuilding. A brick wall encloses the front garden.

*LEFT Pairs of dentils (brackets) support the overhanging roof. Houses in the tall terrace at the north end of the High Street dating just after 1859 such as Bradford House also have these.*



*BELOW The decorative rendering on the front of the house is divided into two by a string course (line of moulding) beneath the upper window. Unlike Tyrol House next door which has a rusticated masonry pattern below, the rendering on Richmond today is smooth both above and below this. The windows have shaped frames with a keystone.*





*LEFT* A detail of the rendered decoration around the former front door which is topped by a cornice supported by brackets. The front door was recessed and today there is a glass panel to light the hall with a decorative blind. *BELOW* The main door is now in a porch at the side.

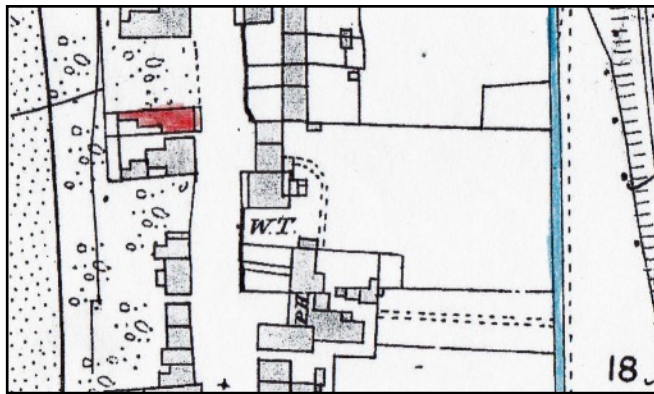


The rear of the house has a two storey extension. Beyond is a single storey section. These were drawn on a map of 1886 and they are rubble stone including rounded stones from the beach. The stone end wall of the extension is plain, no windows or doors to be at risk from stones cast up by the sea in a bad storm. The upper floor of the taller extension is topped by a sun room which opens on to a balcony with fine views of the sea. Below the balcony large windows and a glazed door open into a boarded area of yard. On the north side of the yard is room for an outbuilding. This area of the yard is not as deep, but the defensive fence of sleepers continues around the end of it. The fence has a gateway to the beach at the boarded part of the yard behind the house.





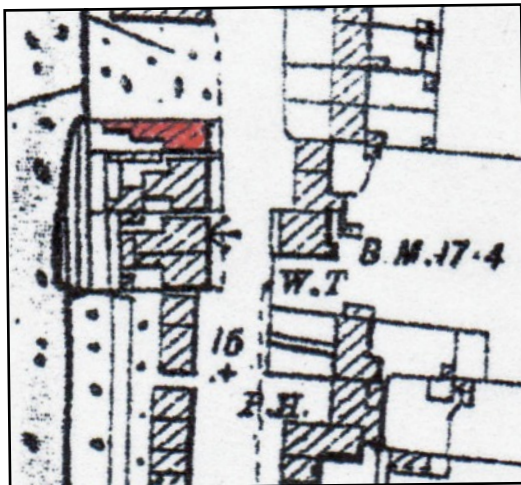
The ground for this house is the stone bank thrown up by the sea and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor Court who owned it as it was no use for farming. It was 'beach' in 1829 no-one had enclosed it to build a cottage. (Map National Archives LRRO 1/3060) The road had been there for centuries, it was used in the twelfth century 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 cottages and houses came from a brook behind the houses on the other side of the road. In 1848 the site of Richmond was still beach (Tithe Apportionments Map Llangihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township - on line at CYNEFIN - National Library of Wales).



*We can see the house, marked in red on this map of 1886. It has its front garden, its extensions at the back, and several fences protecting it from the sea. Somewhere in the extension by the enclosed yard would have been its Ty Bach - lavatory. Tyrol House had been built next door but to the north was still beach. This would have made the house vulnerable in storms. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888. Cardiganshire III.10)*

The house was there by 1871, and in the 1871 and 1881 Census living in 'Richmond House' was a mariner's wife Mary Jones, she was local, born in Borth about 1843, and only 28 years old in 1871. With her in the house was her daughter Martha Jane Jones born in Borth about 1868. In 1881 also in the house were two boarders; a master mariner's wife Anne Jones aged 33 and a mariner John Hughes James aged 28. They were local too. In the 1881 Census the house had its name 'Richmond' - the 1871 Census did not bother with house names.

In the 1891 and 1901 Census the house was was unoccupied.



*LEFT In 1904 the house had not changed. However after a seriously bad storm in 1896 there was an array of sea defensive fences shared with the neighbours. These were usually rows of stakes at an angle, driven into the stone bank. 'Mr Jenkyn Jones' next door was listed at one of the victims of the flood, so there had been damage to Tyrol House, and a man had lost his life in Glasfôr - one of the adjacent terrace of cottages. (Cambrian News article, February 1899. The map is a detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire III.10).*

In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied, the house was valued at £255 - not quite as much as Tyrol at £265. The owner and occupier was Arthur Edwards. The house was not listed in the 1911 Census - possibly no-one was there to fill in the form.

Mr Edwards was still the owner and occupier in 1925 and paid the rates. Kelly's Directory of 1926 lists Mr Edwards as a 'private resident'. Rose Edwards paid the rates in 1934 and 1938 and she had a vote for the house in the General Election of 1945 and paid the rates in 1949 and was still there in 1963. Arthur Stanley Edwards had a vote for the house that year.



*Richmond is the third house from the left on this old photograph on a glass plate. It had no rendering on its south wall and we can see the rubble stone, and there was no dormer window in the front of the roof. The front garden was enclosed. Outside was a street lamp, probably gas. There was a gasometer close to the railway station at the back of the huge Cambrian Hotel (later Pantyfedwen).*







*ABOVE This postcard dated 1936 shows from the right the front door of Ynyswen then Beach Grove, and a walled piece of land alongside and then Richmond which already had its porch and front door at the side but no dormer window.*

*BELOW In 2016 the side of the house is much the same.*



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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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