

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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RYELANDS

Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

Formerly a Libanus Cottage. A house developed from the old cottage of a mariner and which became a home for Evan Lewis and other mariners. Later rented out.



Ryelands in 2009

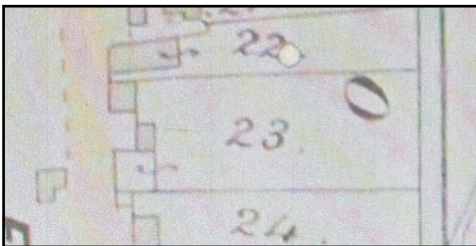
Ryelands is a two storey house under a gable roof with a substantial rear section. It is semi-detached, abutting the tall Cambrian Villa on the north. The front door is on the far left of the front, allowing for two small windows to flank a larger window on the ground floor. Above are two large windows. All the windows are in a casement style and have modern plastic frames. There is a second floor window in the gable end on the south. This wall is pebble dash but the front of the house is smoothly rendered and very plain with no decoration. The chimney on the south of the roof is slender and there is a further chimney for the single storey kitchen at the back. A low wall encloses a narrow front garden and protects the front of the house from passers by on the pavement. Posts and a gate edge the wall at a path to the modern front door. At the side of the house is another wall protecting an entry into Gerlan House's garden. Ryelands house fills its plot and there is no access to the back garden from the street.

The ground floor has an entrance hall, and the living room is 'L' shaped inside the old stone cottage. A passage leads down a step into an extension with a modern kitchen. Upstairs are two bedrooms overlooking the street and a bathroom (Sale details 1993 Ceredigion Archives).



ABOVE The back of the house in 2018. It has substantial single storey lean-to extensions lit by roof lights as well as by the glazed doors to a small garden. The chimney in 1993 was for a Rayburn stove in the kitchen.

The ground for the present building 1 rod and 20 perches, just over a quarter of an acre and leading down to a brook of fresh water was enclosed on the embankment of stones thrown up by the sea in 1822, and in 1829 David Jenkins, a middle aged mariner had a cottage on it but there was no building where Ryelands stands today. (Map 1829 Plot 32, National Archives LRRO 1/3060)



LEFT By 1848 the cottage was built, the southernmost on Number 23, but with it was a larger piece of ground, over half an acre, 2 rods and 12 perches. David Griffiths had what developed into Ryelands and John Roberts had a the roadside cottage which was thatched and later the site of Cambrian Villa (Tithe

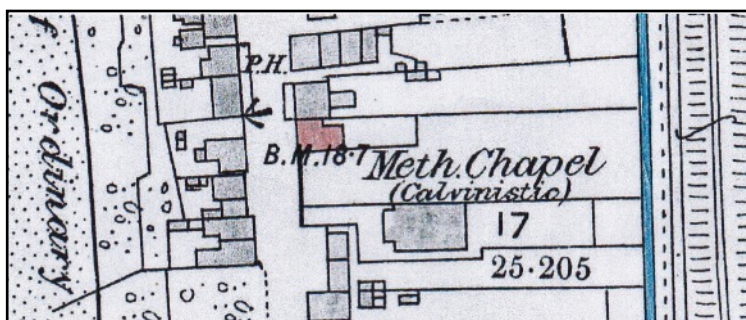
Apportionments Map for Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township, on-line at CYNEFIN)

According to a history of Borth written by John Ellis in 1929 John Roberts owned both the cottages. (Terry Davies Borth Marine History website).

In the 1851 Census the cottage was empty.

In the 1861 Census possibly living there was John Pryse, a Borth merchant seaman aged 50 (born about 1811) with his wife Laura aged 48 and from Aberdovey (born about 1813). They had a daughter Anne aged 9 born in Borth.

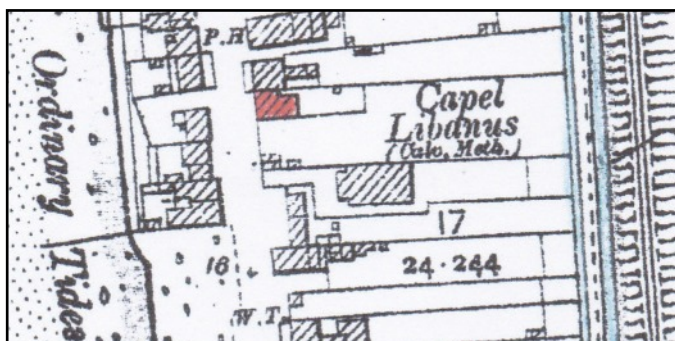
In the 1871 Census in the cottage was Margaret Lewis, a local girl, nee Griffiths with a baby daughter aged five months. Her husband was listed as a 'mariner'. He was home for the 1881 Census and was Evan Lewis, born about 1846 in Borth. Evan's wife Margaret's sister was also there, aged 12 in 1871 and 22 in 1881. Her name was Anne Griffiths. Perhaps a family connection to David Griffiths whose cottage was there in 1848? It was a house large enough to to earn some money taking in holiday visitors. In August 1880 the Cambrian News listed holiday visitors staying there. Their landlady was Evan's wife Mrs Lewis and the address was 'Libanus Terrace' as the Chapel had been built next door in 1877. Margaret's sister Anne Griffiths was still there as a general servant.



LEFT On the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map of 1888 surveyed in 1886 this was a substantial house, it had spread forwards to the street from the original cottage. A back garden had been enclosed for it. It opened on to the street, there was no front garden.

In the 1891 Census the house was still called 'Libanus Cottage' and living there was a mariner's wife, 25 years old Margaret J. Hughes. She was a local girl born in Borth about 1866, and spoke only Welsh. With her was a two month old baby girl, Esther

In the 1901 Census the house had the grand name 'Libanus Villa' but it was empty.



LEFT Little had changed in this detail from the 25 inch map of 1905 revised in 1904. There was still no front garden. and Evan Lewis owned the ground alongside the back garden reaching to the brook. Today the 'brook' is a ditch as the water has been diverted to flow out by the Lifeboat House (Map Cardiganshire NW III.10).



LEFT In the foreground is the cottage in 1906. This is from a postcard, 'Libanus Place'. It had the central doorway and four windows of a cottage, and was one and a half storeys high - the upper windows serving rooms mostly under the roof. The chimney was possibly rubble stone and there were sash windows.



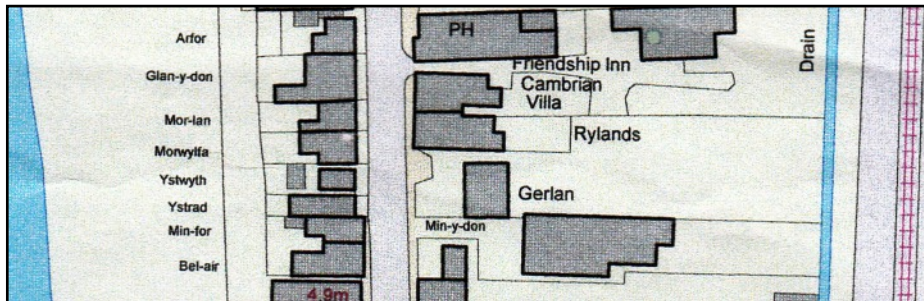
LEFT This detail from a postcard sent in 1896 has a better view of the front of the (then) Libanus Cottage with its sash windows, and central front doorway. In the foreground is the tall Cambrian Villa

In a tax planned but not levied in 1910 Evan Lewis owned the cottage, and still owned and occupied the land alongside it. The house was valued at £110 and the Rate to pay was £4.8s, £5 gross. Evan Lewis had put a tenant in the house, Elizabeth Taylor. The house was not listed in the 1911 Census, it was empty or the occupants were away.

In 1925 for the Rates Evan Lewis still had the land. The house was then owned by John Hugh Jones who lived there. In 1949 the Rates were paid by Jane Jones. The house then had the name 'Ryelands'.

From December 1957 R. J. Jones paid the rates.

Mrs Jones paid the rates in 1963 and Clara M. Jones had a vote for the house (Electoral Registers and Rates, Ceredigion Archives).



ABOVE This detail from a Council Crown map shows how the house had extended back into its plot of ground as we see today. It was already this shape in 1975. (Historical Maps on-line, and the detail from the Council Map courtesy of Councillor Ray Quant who provided it for a village event.)

Details of the house in 1993 when it was up for sale explained that the old house was rubble stone, but the lean to rear extension had a roof partly of corrugated asbestos and partly of mineral felt. The walling of this was brick/block and rendered. Also at the back was a storeroom and a lavatory. The living room had a tiled fireplace served by the brick chimney in the roof. There was room on the upstairs landing for an airing cupboard and the bathroom had room for a bath, a hand wash basin and a lavatory (1993 Sale details, Ceredigion Archives).



The front door in 2018 has a glass panel with an ocean going sailing ship a reminder of the mariners who were involved at the beginning of its history.

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Tai'r Borth / Houses of Borth
gan/by Beryl Lewis
[cyf/ref ADX/1629]

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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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