

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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TAN Y BRYN Glanwern Village, Borth.

Part of a terrace built by 1886 probably by Hugh Williams, blacksmith of Gwastad on ground where the family had an old cottage in 1848. Still in the ownership of Hugh Williams in 1910.



LEFT Tan-y-bryn in 2009 shared a roof line with Camddwr on the left.

The house name means 'under the hill' in Welsh, which describes its position very well. It is a full two storeys high under a gable roof of a slate colour. The walls are rendered and the upper windows are not at the same height as in the next door houses, but higher, and they are modern in the style of casement windows. On the ground floor the front door is on the west of the front and there is a porch. The garden is at the front of the house.

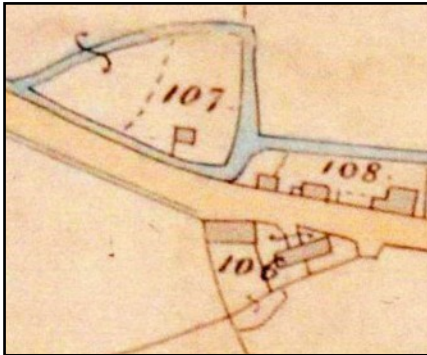
At the rear the house has an extension on the west side which in many Morfa Borth houses may have as the footpath and steep

hillside are very close. had the kitchen with a room above. There is only a small yard



LEFT On this view it is the second tall house along and it has a distinctive yellow brick slab chimney with two chimney pots.

The reason a small settlement could grow up at Glanwern was the presence of the tailrace from the Felinwern Mill at Glanlerry, which was fresh water from the River Lerry. It was joined by a small stream down the valley behind Ty Gwyn too, and it also helped drain the marsh on the north. After passing Glanwern the tailrace ran seawards then turned along behind Borth High Street, providing a brook' with fresh water for the houses and cottages there. This 'brook' is marked on a map of 1829. Today the water flows out to sea from a pipe near the Lifeboat House. To the north of Glanwern Village was the marsh whose old name was Wern Leri. (1859 Crown Manor map National Archives LRRO 1/3060). There was already a settlement at Glanwern by 1804 when John Williams, a shoemaker, said he was born there for the Census of 1851. The road was there too, it was shown on a map of 1829 and led down to three lime kilns beginning where the road opened on to the beach. Later another was built. Lime would be carried to farms inland and the road connected to an important road, as today, at Rhyd-y-pennau. The High Street road at Borth was very ancient as in Norman times it was a quick way to north Wales along the shingle bank and high sand dune area at Ynyslas and then across the River Dovey on a ferry to Aberdovey.



LEFT The ground, Number 106 where the present terrace stands was 34 perches, just short of a quarter of an acre enclosed from the 'waste' which was land not suitable for farming because it was a small area between the road and a steep hillside. When men enclosed and built cottages on it they had to pay a rent to the Crown Manor who owned it, and they had the option of buying it for two year's rent. On a map of 1848 this had two blocks of cottages and gardens on it and John Williams and others lived there and owned it or rented it from the Manor. The enclosures for gardens at the back of the buildings suggest

three families there. John Williams was a shoemaker.

In the 1881 Census the house did not have a name. At present it is not clear who was living there.



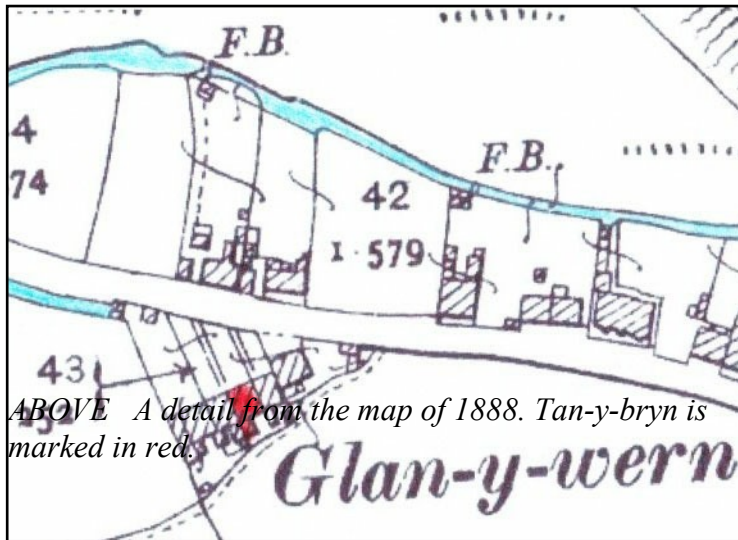
LEFT By 1886 the old blocks of cottages had gone except for the Little Cot. A new terrace had been built at the rear of the plot, Tan-y-bryn is the same size as its two neighbours. In order to fit several houses into the space, the builder, perhaps Hugh Williams was obliged to butt the terrace up against Little Cot, so they had to line up at the same angle. Tanybryn had a drive to the road on the west side of its garden. There was very little room under the hill at the back, but there was a fat extension on the back of the house. Beyond the back wall or fence was a footpath that led to Bryn Owen Farm. There was water in

a ditch by the road, but it is not clear if it was any use for drinking. There was probably access to the tailrace stream behind the houses over the road (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map of Cardiganshire surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888).

Hugh Williams, a blacksmith from Gwastad almost certainly built the present terrace. The houses were to let, the rents to support his family. He still owned them in 1910.

At the 1891 Census in the house was master mariner John Rees, born in Borth about 1858 and his wife Frances also local, and a small daughter Mary who was 6.

John Rees was in the house at the 1901 Census too. He was then aged 43 and born in Borth about 1858. Also there was his wife Frances aged 40, she too was local, and their daughter Annie Eleanor who was 6. This family spoke both Welsh and English.



ABOVE A detail from the map of 1888. Tan-y-bryn is marked in red.

LEFT On the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map of 1905 revised in 1904 nothing had changed. Tan-y-bryn is marked in red.

In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied this house was valued at £130. There would have been £6.7s.6d to pay, £7.10s gross. The owner was Hugh Williams and living there was John Jones (Ceredigion Archives T/DV/18 and map at the National Library of Wales).

Mr Jones was a sailor. At the 1911 Census his wife Elizabeth was in the house. She was 60 and had been born in Oswestry. They had been married for 30 years (since 1881) and had seven children. Two had died. In the house was their son William Josiah Jones who was a sailor like his father and was 19. He had been born in Borth in 1892. Also there was a nephew William Devon Phillips aged 12 and born in Swansea. The house had six main rooms.

In 1925, for the Rates the owner was James Williams and the occupier was Thomas Owen James.

Mr James paid the Rates in 1932 and 1938.

Paying the Rates for the house in 1949 was Thomas W. James.

Paying the Rates in 1963 was Mr David Owen Bowyer, the valuation was £26. He had a vote for the house as did also Alun Derek Wynn Owen (Electoral Registers and Rates Ceredigion Archives).

In 1975 the place was the same (Ordnance Survey 25 inch Map of Cardiganshire).

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yn cyflwyno / presents
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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