

# 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

*This work is for research and educational purposes only.*

## TYROL HOUSE Morfa Borth

In the middle of the High Street on the beach side. Possibly in 1861 there was a 'Victoria House' on this site built by a carrier, David Jenkins, for himself. The present house is on a map of 1886. By 1891 it was the home of Jenkin Jones, a plasterer who may have been responsible for the rendering on the front.



*Tyrol House in 2015, it was having an overhaul.*

Tyrol House is a detached, double fronted house of two storeys under a gable roof parallel to the street. There are roof lights for an attic floor. The roof has an overhang and there are tall, dark brick chimneys on both ends of it. It is a rubble stone house, its front having some of the most handsome decorated rendering in Borth, similar to that of Ty Canol further south along the street. The size and placing of its windows, and the height of its roof makes it unique - it bears no relation to the houses either side of it.

*LEFT There are dentils (brackets) supporting the overhang of the roof, and there bold quoins made in the rendering on the outer edge of the wall. The deep pitched roof and the overhang suits the eighteenth century look of the building. The chimneys were rebuilt during the overhaul of 2015 and the roof lights were added.*

A string course supported by dentils divides the front into two parts. The rendering has rusticated masonry on the lower section which has no quoins. The sash windows have a frame with an ogee arch at the top. The front door has a cornice and attractive half fans below its brackets. The central motif has random patterning.



*ABOVE Ty Canol*



*LEFT The house in 2009 with its old chimney. The roof did not have roof lights then. That front door which had glass panels to light the hall has been replaced. Despite the apparent symmetry of the front the front door is not quite in the centre. As in many of Borth's old cottages and houses the house is wider on the south side of the front door allowing a larger front room that side. This could also suggest a footprint left from the stone walls of an older building on the site, a double fronted cottage for example, that has been rebuilt.*

*The upper section of the wall enclosing the narrow front garden replaced an earlier balustrade that had been removed.*

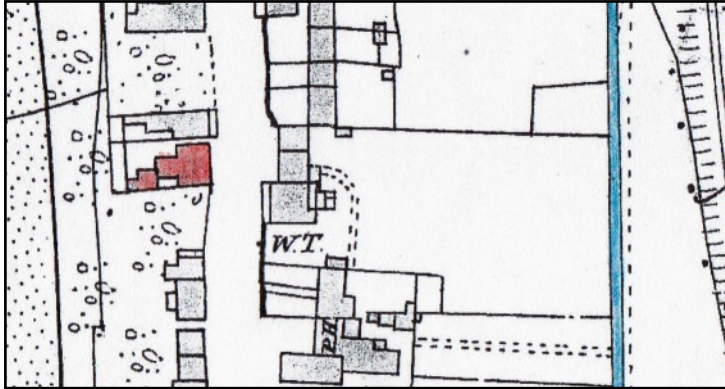


*The rear of the house in 2015 from the beach after the re-building of an extension of 1904, and removing an old building. The present extension is two and a half storeys high, the rooms on the second floor have access to the flat roof of the single storey further extension below for fine views out to sea. This extension has doors to the yard. Local stone was used for the cladding. Inside is the kitchen/breakfast room of the house. There is a metal shutter to protect the wide windows from stones thrown up by the sea during bad storms. Decking is a feature of the yard. On the north side of the house is a passageway from the road.*

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 Tyrol House was still open ground, no-one had enclosed it to build a cottage (Tithe Apportionments Map Llangihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township - on line at CYNEFIN - National Library of Wales).

The Reverend William Christmas Humphreys, whose wife's relatives by marriage had lived in Borth throughout the nineteenth century wrote in 1929 that the homes on the beach side of the High Street were cottages except for the stone built Ty Mawr (Aberceldŷ). Also that David Jenkins had partly built a house opposite Trigfan but had then abandoned it and built another house in the middle of the village 'where now stands Tyrol' (Borth rhwng 100 a 50 flwyddoed yn ô 1929' translated on-line on Terry Davies's website). His 'Victoria House' was next to Richmond in the 1881 Census. David Jenkins was then a very elderly 'carrier' aged 81, his wife Catherine was 78 and both were local, born in Borth. She was from the Melinwern Corn Mill (gone) alongside Glanlerry Farm. Corn millers were prosperous and she may have brought him a useful dowry. They had a daughter Ann born about 1837, and sons Richard born about 1833 who became a mariner, and John born about 1840. The family were in the

Borth Census's from 1841 and David Jenkins was a farm worker who had become a 'carrier' by 1851. It is not possible to know where he was living as cottages had no names. However, by the 1861 Census he had room in his house for two boarders - so he had possibly built his Victoria House by then.

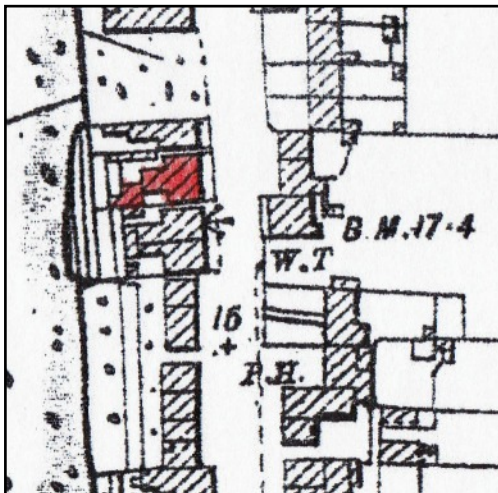


*LEFT This was David Jenkins Victoria House in 1886 marked in red. The house had an extension at the back, and the other building probably contained the Ty Bach - outside lavatory. There were two fences at the back, and a further one out on the stones. To the south was still beach, Gordon Villa and Chesterton had not yet been built. Richmond however was already*

*there. (A detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888, Cardiganshire III.10)*

By the 1891 Census the house was called Tyrol House. In the house at the Census were two families, firstly Jenkin Jones, a plasterer aged 34 and born in Aberystwyth with his 31 year old wife Margaret who was local, born in Borth. With them were their children, Jane E. Jones 9, Daniel E. Jones 5, Elizabeth Jones 4, and William Jones nine months. Secondly a mariner's wife, 34 year old Ann Davies with her children Evan John Davies 5 and Mary Anne Davies 4. They were local, born in Borth.

In 1901 at the Census Jenkin and his wife had more children, two more daughter, Edith 8 and Gladys 4. There was no mention of the Davies.



*LEFT The house had changed very little. 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 Jenkin Jones' was listed at one of the victims of the flood, so there had been damage to Tyrol House. 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 tax planned but not levied, the house was valued at £265 - more than Gordon Villa at £240. This was considered a good house. There would have been £7.13s to pay, £9 gross. There was a new owner and occupier, H. Barker (Ceredigion Archives T/DV/18 and a map at the National Library of Wales). In the 1911 Census the house was not on the list - no-one there to fill in the form perhaps.

Sometime in the 1920s furnished accommodation was offered of six bedrooms and two sitting rooms in the 'Illustrated Borth Guide' (Aberystwyth Public Library).

In 1925 paying the rates was H. H. Barker, but a new name was added, Joseph Blackham. In 1934 Mr Blackham was the occupier and J. H. Barker the owner. Mr Blackham paid the rates in 1938.

In 1949 paying the rates was F. A. Evans.

Paying the rates in 1963 was George H. N. Nation. With votes for the house that year were George and Muriel Edith Nation.



In 1970 Aberystwyth Rural Council were improving the sea defences behind the houses, a primary low level defence, a secondary high level defence and groynes. A new access scupper was planned for Tyrol House.

*LEFT and BELOW Tyrol House is second from the left on this detail from an old photograph on a glass plate. It shows the sash windows. Details on the rendering were picked out in a dark colour, and the front door was also dark. The front garden was enclosed by a handsome balustrade. This was unusual for Borth houses. Someone cared very much about the appearance of this house. Possibly the plasterer was advertising his skills. The passage to the beach had the advantage of a street lamp, probably gas. The gas holder (now gone) was near the railway station and the big Cambrian Hotel (Pant-y-fedwen) now gone.*

*We do not know the date when this photograph was taken.*

*Photograph courtesy of Peter Fleming.*



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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-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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