

# 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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# YNYS FERGI FARM

Henllys Township, Borth

A farm established at the beginning of the twentieth century from a Brynlllys Farm farm workers home. The farmhouse stands on the south face of one of the rocky islands once surrounded by the Cors Fochno Bog, and is sheltered from the north winds.

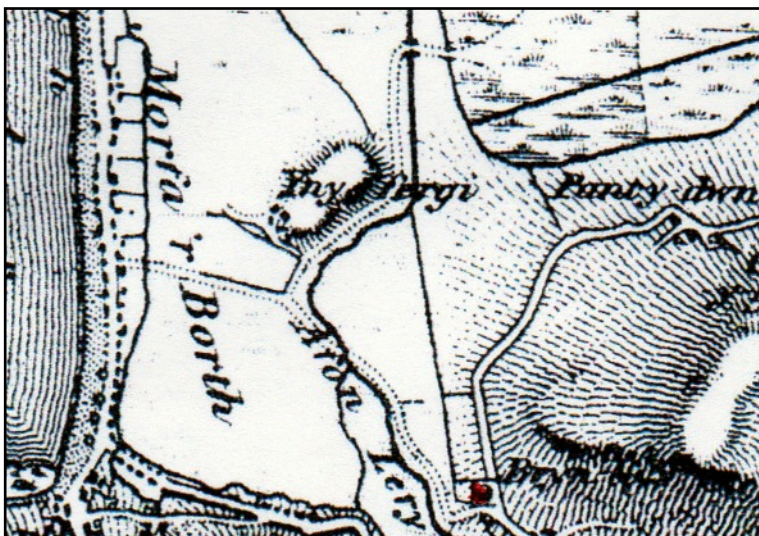


*ABOVE* The farm in 2019. The section on the left is a separate home rented from the farmer.

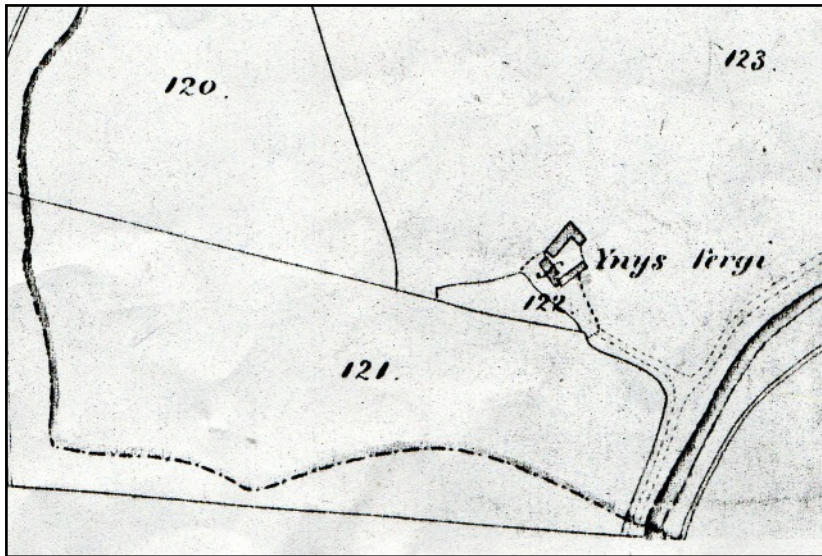
This farm name is very interesting because Owen Gwynffre suggests it has altered over the centuries from the Irish ‘Murphy’ ( Murchú - Mergi) so it was ‘Murphy’s Island’. If an Irishman owned it or had a home there this would be many centuries ago (Place Names, Vol 111 p.126).

The presence of a spring would enable a cottage to be built there.

John George was living there in 1820, and he was a poor man - one of his sons was given free schooling at Talybont - chosen by ballot.



*LEFT* In 1837 it was part of Brynlllys Farm which is marked in red, and the dotted lane to reach it crossed the river probably by a ford, and was unfenced. Another lane led out from the High Street to Brynlllys Farm owned by PrysePryse of Gogerddan. The lane going north and crossing the Leri was to the village’s fawnog (place to dig peat also called a turbary). The hatching was a way of showing hillside.



LEFT In 1848 it was part of Brynlllys Farm farmed by Richard James. It was described as 'buildings and a yard' and measured 2 rods and 36 perches, which is almost three quarters of an acre. The field 123 was a large 'Yr Ynys' pasture of thirty-one and a half acres, and field 121 in front of the farm was meadow, part of Cae Drywn (Trwyn a nose shaped or pointed field) of eleven and a half

acres. (Tithe Apportionments Map for Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Henllys Township).

In 1861 in the cottage was a farm worker Thomas Oliver aged 50 who would be working for Brynlllys Farm, his wife Catherine aged 48 and his daughter Anne who was earning money as a 'mantua maker'. This was an over gown originally a loose coat, made from a single length of fabric, worn over a petticoat or under dress and old fashioned by 1861. She would probably be working with a wool fabric such as woven at local mills at Talybont.

By 1881 there was a small farm there of eighteen acres, the farmer was David Jones, aged 46, born in Llangwryfon, his wife Mary 46 was born in Llanilar. They had come from Llanilar where their eldest children, Catherine (Kate) aged 19 and John aged 18 were born. Four younger children, aged three to eight years old were born in Llanbadarn Fawr, Ellen, Eliza, Leah and Susannah. The farm produced 60 mows of 'prime barley' being sold in 1880 on the orders of Sir Pryse Pryse so David Jones was his tenant. His daughter Ellen would marry David Benjamin of Pantydwn Farm. David Jones and his wife were still at the farm in 1901, and Kate then 40 who had a job as a maid, and Eliza then 25 - and they had not married (Census 1881, 1901).

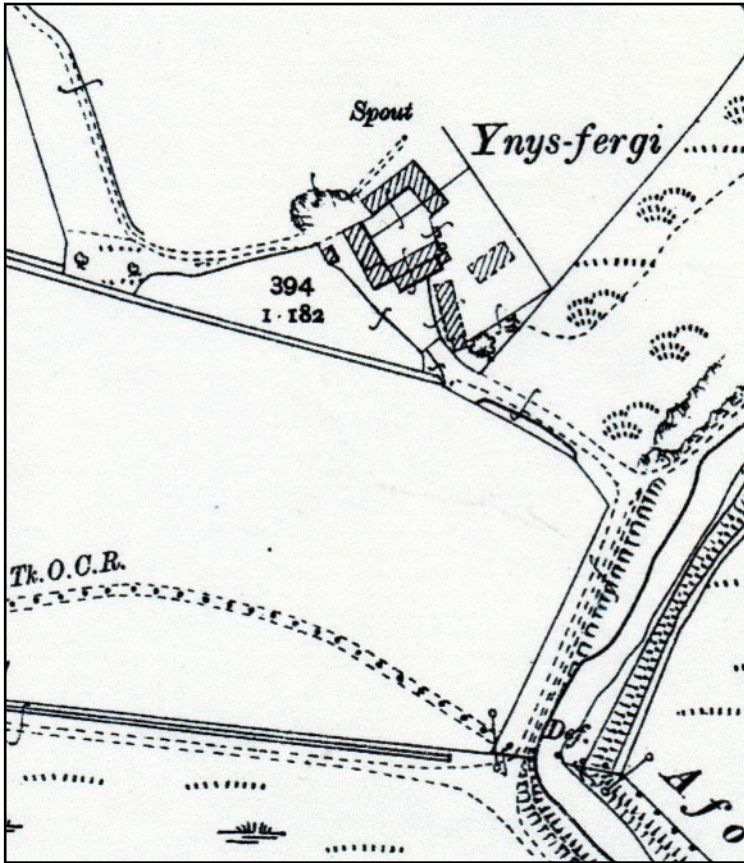
In 1910 for a tax planned but not levied, Sir Pryse Pryse still owned Ynys Fergi, which had two acres and a quarter in the Cyfoeth township. David Benjamin was his tenant. This was now a substantial farm of just over 193 and a half acres, taxed at £76.12s.6d to pay, gross £69.

By 1928 Pryse Pryse was still the owner and the farmer was Evan Lewis. He called the place 'Ynys Farm, The Old Borth Dairy', and supplied fresh milk twice daily and new laid eggs. So Borth villagers would have seen cows and hens around the farm and there would have been a horse and cart to deliver the milk.

With votes for the place in 1945 were Annie L. Lewis and Margaret A Lewis. One of these ladies had given a recipe in August 1934 for a St Matthew's Church Bazaar.

Elizabeth Jones paid the rates in 1957 for a 'house and garden'.

With a votes for the house in 1963 was John William Howdle and Evan Tudor and Mr Howdle paid the rates for 'a house and garden'.



*LEFT The farm in 1904 when it was farming 193 acres. There are some additional buildings since 1848. The spring is labelled 'spout'. The farm is surrounded by rising hillside, except on the south side where flat former marsh land has been reclaimed (Detail from a 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire NW)*

In the later twentieth century the farm set up a caravan site on some of its flat land to the south, and a lane was created for access by caravans following the line of the old ditch and a building remains beside it. Today the caravan site has gone and there is a metalled lane leading to St Matthew's Church and the Community Gardens which was once a farm track with a bridge over the drainage ditch and up quite steep hillside.

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Hoffem ddiolch i Beryl am fod mor garedig â chaniatáu i ni rannu ei gwaith â'r gynulleidfa ehangaf bosibl.

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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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