

# 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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# NUMBER 10 CAMBRIAN TERRACE

## Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

Built as a seaside boarding house, with various owners and tenants. Like all the houses in The Terrace it had rights to enjoy a piece or parcel of the foreshore between the High Street and the sea. From an old painting in the Borth Railway Museum this looked like a strip of grass and a gravel 'esplanade' with seats raised up from the beach and supported by a stone wall. The house also had rights to use the small lane behind the Terrace.



*Number 10 in 2014. It is special because it still has the original roof above the bays. In the roof two roof lights give light to an attic floor. The house shares a brick slab chimney with Number 11.*

This house is part of the terrace built when the railway had arrived in Borth, it opened to passengers in 1863. The Terrace was a private venture by Mr Thomas Savin who with David Davies built the Railway. He wanted to make Borth a good seaside resort to encourage visitors to travel there on their Cambrian Railway trains. A water supply was put in for the Terrace from a reservoir especially built for the station, the trains and his large Cambrian Hotel. Beside the railway Savin built hotels in Aberystwyth and Aberdovey and developed a market garden with houses at Ynyslas. He eventually over-reached himself and became bankrupt by February 1866. There is evidence all the rooms Savin had provided for Borth in his great hotel were not filled when Uppingham School was moved to Borth from 1876 to 1877, and there were also plenty of rooms available for the school to use in The Terrace.

The Cambrian Terrace houses were built about 1865 to 1870. The architect was possibly W. H. Spaul of Oswestry (Pevsner Architectural Guides, the Buildings of Wales, Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion, 2006). A beginning date of 1864 has also been suggested. The houses were originally red brick with cream coloured sandstone details and matched the railway station. A good example is the side of Rutland House (Number 1) now in 2014 - it having been cleaned. The columns framing and supporting the bay windows are iron, and in the Gothic style. The houses were probably owned by the Railway Company to begin with, and let to tenants.

Number 10 has only a tiny narrow yard. There was not room at the rear for the longer yard with outbuildings given to Numbers 1 to 9. This was because the building, now the Premier Stores and house beside it (formerly called Garibaldi and Robert's Stores) were already there when the Terrace was built.

In 1880 holiday visitors stayed at the house for six weeks, they came from Bristol, Llandoverly and Newtown. Their landlady was Mrs Lloyd (Cambrian News).

At the Census of 1881 the house was unoccupied.

The Terrace houses were freehold and had been owned by the Cambrian Railway Company and rented out. By 1888 the hotel and Terrace houses were all mortgaged, and the mortgagees put them up for sale on September 20th 1888. They were in separate lots so each house could have a new owner. The Cambrian News commented that “even though Borth had grown considerably since the railway was made -- the idea of converting Borth into a large and prosperous watering place has not been realised.” A coloured Plan in the Borth Railway Museum shows the estate. There was a ‘garden’ for the house behind The Terrace which it still had in 1910.

At the 1891 and 1901 Census’s the house was unoccupied. In 1910 for a tax planned but not levied the house was owned by Llewellyn Rees. He lived Taliesin House (later the Grand Hotel) at the sea end of the Terrace, and he also owned Number 5 Cambrian Terrace. His tenant in Number 10 was Seymour. The house was valued at £405 with £17 to pay, £20 gross.

In the house at the 1911 Census was the sixty eight year old widow of a farmer, Winifred Jones. She spoke only Welsh. She had been married for 37 years, and had ten children, seven of whom were still living. In the house with her was her daughter Margaret Jane Evans who was 29, the wife of a mariner, and born at Llanrhystud, Cardiganshire. She could speak English as well. With her were her children, Winifred Willie Evans, 9, William Jenkyn Evans, 6, and Thomas Sidney Evans, 2. They had all been born in Cardigan. Looking after them was a domestic servant, Elizabeth Anne Evans who was 27 and born in Aberystwyth. The house had ten main rooms.

In July 1924 Mrs Williams of Number 10 was helping at a W.I. Sale of Work at the National School. Paying the Rates in 1925 was Lewis Williams, who was the owner and occupier of Number 10. Sometime after 1922 five bedrooms and 2 sitting rooms were advertised for holiday makers (‘The Illustrated Borth Guide’, Aberystwyth Public Library).

*BELOW The house in 2016. The house originally opened on to the street. The front garden area enclosed by a little wall and gateposts has been added.*



Paying the Rates in 1934 was Evan Lewis Williams who paid £21, £28 gross. Mr Williams was still there in 1949, and he was an Elder at the Libanus Chapel. (Borth Review, National Library of Wales). With votes for the house at the General Election that year were Mr Williams and Mary E. Lewis. Sometime after 1950 Mrs Williams advertised a flat to let there, with three bedrooms

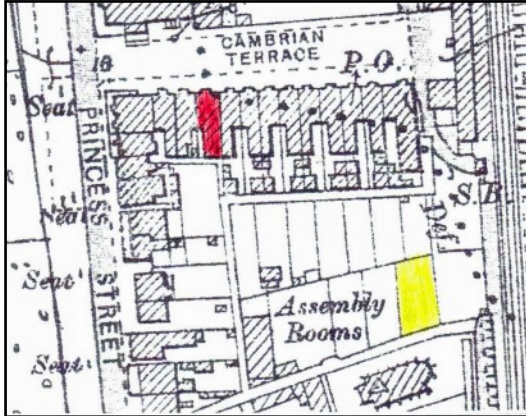
and one sitting room, and electricity. There was no telephone yet (Guide to Borth, Aberystwyth Library). Mrs Williams died in 1956, and Evan Lewis Williams in 1958 (Parish Register).

Paying the Rates in 1963 was Mrs Paine, and she paid £27 (All the Rates information, and the Electoral Register are from the Ceredigion Archives).

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Today the house is three flats, and its garden is sold and the Pant-Tawel bungalow by Church Lane has been built on it.

The ground for this house and its garden was part of land reclaimed from the marsh for pasture and cottages, and bought by Savin when the railway came. The story and maps are in the 'Introduction to the Terrace'.



*LEFT The house marked in red and its garden in green on a detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map of 1905, Cardiganshire III.10.*



*LEFT The carving of the sandstone dressings around the window has survived better than on other houses in the Terrace, and shows the craftsmanship used for these houses. The columns are iron.*

*This photograph was taken in 2014.*

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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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