

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 12 CAMBRIAN TERRACE

Morfa Borth, the Marsh Harbour.

Built as a seaside boarding house, with various owners and tenants but also a family home. 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.



The house in 2014. A dormer window has been added to the roof since it was built. Number 12 was rendered the same colour as the taller building next door on the right that became the Grand Hotel. They have had the same owner.

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 overreached 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

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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 11 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. Number 11's narrow yard can open on to the tiny passage that connects to the back yard of the large corner house, formerly Hafra, formerly the Grand Hotel, formerly Taliesin House. However the house had a garden across the little lane at the back like the other houses in the Terrace.

Number 12 may have been unoccupied in 1871 as the Cambrian News listed no seaside holiday makers staying there.

In 1880 visitors stayed in the house for six weeks in the Summer. They were mostly from Welshpool. Their landlady was Miss M. Richards. However at the 1881 Census there was no-one there.

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.

In the house at the 1891 Census were English people, Annie Taylor, a widow of 68, born in Northampton and with her 'own means'. Also in the house were her two unmarried daughters, Jane Marion Taylor 28 and Annie Harriet Taylor, 32. Jane had been born in Somerset, her sister at Doulling.

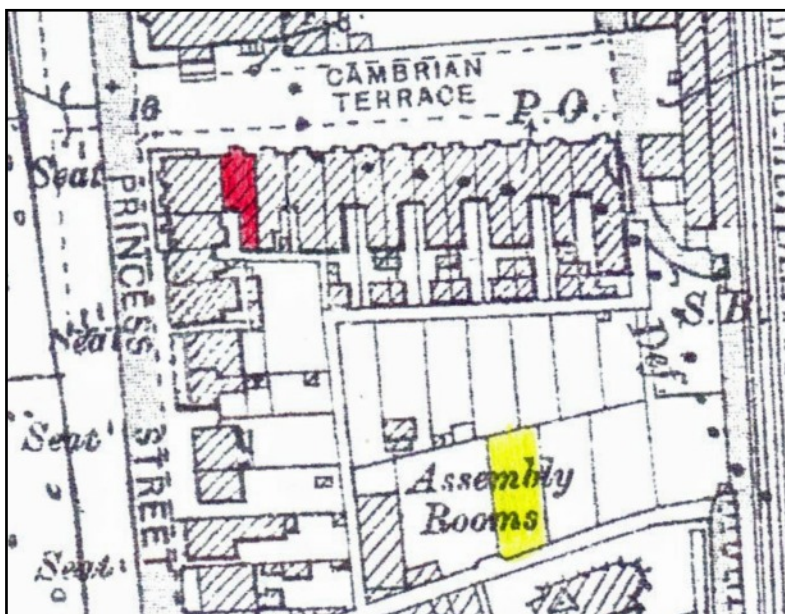
In 1895 Kelly's directory listed a 'private resident' in the house, Mrs Proston.

The house in 1901 was unoccupied and there was no entry for the house in the 1911 Census so Mrs Proston was not there to fill in the form.

In 1910 for a tax planned but not levied, the house was owned by Mrs Proston, but no occupier was given. It was valued at £405 the same as Number 11. There would have been £17 to pay, £20 gross.

In 1925 Mrs Proston paid the Rates, and occupying the house was Phyllis D. Goring Thomas. On January 19th 1927 the Rate increased from £15 to £22. The Rates in 1934 and 1938 were paid by C.E. F. Goring Thomas, and the house was listed with a garage, explaining the increase in the Rates.

With votes for the house in 1949 at the General Election were Joseph Henry and Mary K. Briscoe-Smith. The house had a new owner and occupier Mrs Bennet. She was the owner of the Grand Hotel (formerly Taliesin House) next door. The valuation for both was £58 in 1949.



In 1963 Number 12 was Rated with the Grand Hotel, and paying the Rate was D. Fleet.(Rates and Electoral Register from the Ceredigion Archives). At some time the ground floor window alongside the bay window has been blocked up. A postcard dated about 1907 shows the window still there, and a shop on the ground floor next door with a wall between them. (RCHMW D 12012, C567013 - on line)

The house in 1905 is coloured red, its garden is green. The 'seats' on the sea front that people in the house had rights to use are clearly marked. The Assembly Rooms is re-built as a large garage.

Detail from the Ordnance Survey 25 inch Map Ceredigion III.10

called Charene in Chapel Lane has been built on its garden.

Today (2016) Number 12 is three flats, and its windows and front door are modern. On the roof at the back is another dormer with a pair of small windows. The bungalow

The history of the ground on which the Terrace was built with maps, and details of the architecture are in the 'Introduction to the Cambrian Terrace'.

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Tai'r Borth / Houses of Borth
gan/by Beryl Lewis
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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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