

# 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 9 CAMBRIAN TERRACE

Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour.

Built as a seaside boarding house, with various owners and tenants. The home of a doctor and a coal merchant. 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 9 in 2014. There were no front garden areas when the houses were first built - they opened directly on to the street, and the dormer window has been added. The house shares a slab brick chimney with Number 8.*

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.



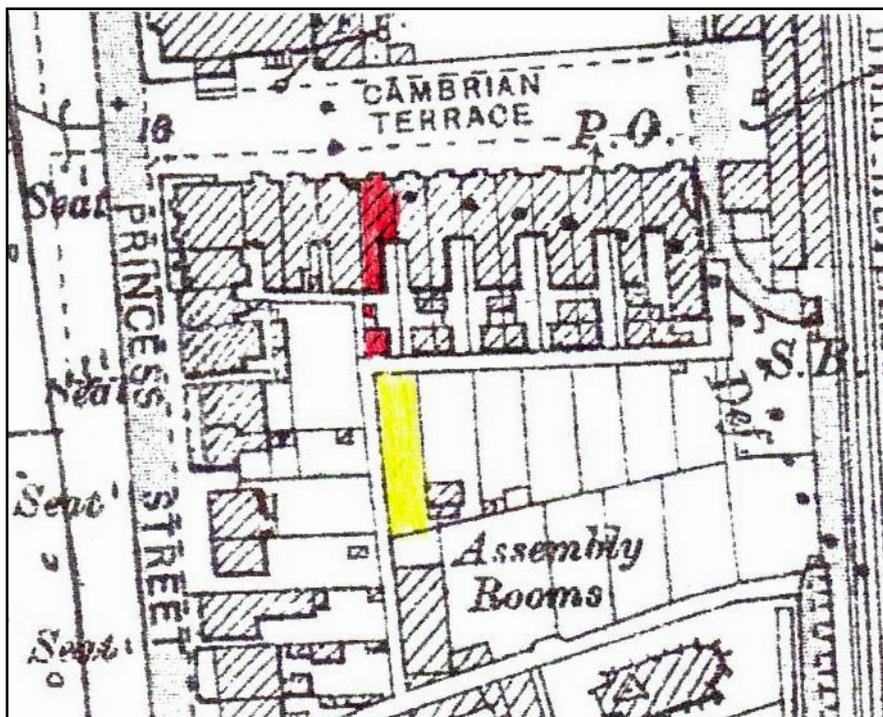
In 1871 the Cambrian News listed holiday visitors staying at Number 9 for two weeks, from Oswestry, Wolverhampton, Liverpool and Aberdovey. Their landlady was Mrs Peters. The house would have been fairly new.

At the 1881 Census in the house was a cooper, John Evans, aged 60 and born in Talybont. His wife Maria was also 60 and born in Pembrey, Carmarthenshire. Also in the house were their three unmarried daughters, Eleanor Ann, 28, Maria Jane 24 and Elizabeth 22. They had all been born in Aberystwyth. Later in the year for six weeks from July to the beginning of September holiday visitors were staying in the house. Their landlord was Mr Evans. They included a clergyman and a Captain, and a family from as far away as Nottingham.

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 1891 at the Census in the house was a doctor, Dr John Harden Jones, a Borth man, aged 36, possibly a mariner's son from Morfa Borth. (His parents were John and Margaret Jones, and John was baptised on 15th March 1855). His wife Mary Anne was older, aged 42, and born in Newquay. They had a twenty-year old stepdaughter Elizabeth-Anne Norris who was

a music student, and who had been born in Chelsea. Looking after them were two servants, Mary Thomas, 24 from Borth and David Evans 26 from Pont Robert Montgomeryshire. Dr Jones was the physician for the Hydropathic treatments in the Cambrian Hotel. Details are in 'The Cambrian Hotel' page 7.



The house in 1905, marked in red, its garden in yellow. Ordnance Survey 25 inch Map.

In 1901 at the Census the house was unoccupied.

In 1910 the owner of the house was Richard Hughes, junior, and the house was valued at £445 the same as Number 8 and Number 6. The occupier was a coal merchant Richard Roberts. (Ceredigion

Archives). At the Census of 1911 he was aged 44, born in Bethesda, North Wales, and running his own business. His wife Elizabeth was also from North Wales. They had had five children, one having died. Also in Number 9 was their two year old son Harold Prosper Roberts. The house like many in the Terrace had ten main rooms.

Sometime after 1922 five bedrooms and two sitting rooms were advertised in 'The Illustrated Borth Guide' (Aberystwyth Public Library).

In 1926 and 1934 the house was owned by Jenkin. R. Evans, and occupying it were E. E. and D. O. Morris. The Rate to pay was £17, £22 gross in 1926, £21, £28 gross in 1934. (Ceredigion Archives). Thomas John Williams paid the Rates in 1938/9, of £21. In 1949 with a votes for the house in the General Election were Edith E. Derrick, Annie Payne, Gwesta Williams, Thomas Williams, Alice Watson and Walter Bernard Watson. Paying the Rates that year was Gwesta M. Williams.

About 1950 an apartment was advertised to let by Miss Williams, with three bedrooms, one sitting room, a bath, and hot and cold water. Number 9 was also a Boarding House. (Guide to Borth, Aberystwyth Public Library). In 1968 Miss Williams advertised two bedrooms for holiday visitors. ('Handbook and Guide to Borth', Ceredigion Archives) Miss Williams was still paying the Rates in 1963, by then increased to £27. (Rates and Electoral Register information is from the Ceredigion Archives.) A garage was added at the end of the yard, it opens on to the small lane behind the houses. The garden of Number 9 has been sold, and the bungalows Wennol and Gwylan have been built on it. The front of the house is hard standing and open to the street, as all the houses were when they were built.

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'.

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**Tai'r Borth / Houses of Borth**  
gan/by Beryl Lewis  
[cyf/ref ADX/1629]

Mae **Tai'r Borth** yn cynnwys dros 350 hanes sy'n ymwneud ag adeiladau unigol ac mae'r hanesion wedi'u darlunio â chyfoeth o ffotograffau, mapiau a dogfennau. Mae'r ffeiliau ar gael ar ein gwefan: <https://www.archifdy-ceredigion.org.uk/tairborth.php?lang=cy>

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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