

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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THE CRAFT CABIN shop and flat

Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

This replaced an old cottage built by 1829 and a wooden butcher's shop of Trevor Humphreys at the street edge in the twentieth century.



LEFT The shop in the summer of 2009.

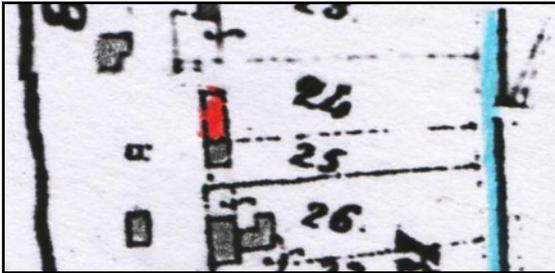
The shop has two sections, the front is single storey and is under a gabled roof sideways on to the street, the rear is two storeys high. Above the rear of the shop is a flat under a gable roof parallel to the street with rendered walls and modern windows. The building butts against The Adrift shop and on the other side its rear section butts against Min-y-don cottage.



LEFT The ground on which it stands is an embankment of pebbles thrown up by the sea and considered by the Manor court as 'waste' as it was no use for farming. A plot, number 33 was enclosed in 1822 and measured 1 rod and 16 perches - that is just over a quarter of an acre. The owner was John Benjamin. At the end of the garden was a brook. By 1829 there were a block of two cottages built there. The larger right hand cottage was John Benjamin's home and was on the site of the Craft Cabin (Map coloured in watercolour, National Archives LRRO/1/3060).

At the Census of 1841 John Benjamin, was a joiner - from a family of carpenters at Ty Gwyn (formerly Cwm Cethin) Glanwern.]He was 32 born in 1809. His wife Susanna was 35. It is likely that John's father (also called John Benjamin) enclosed the plot and built the cottages, it

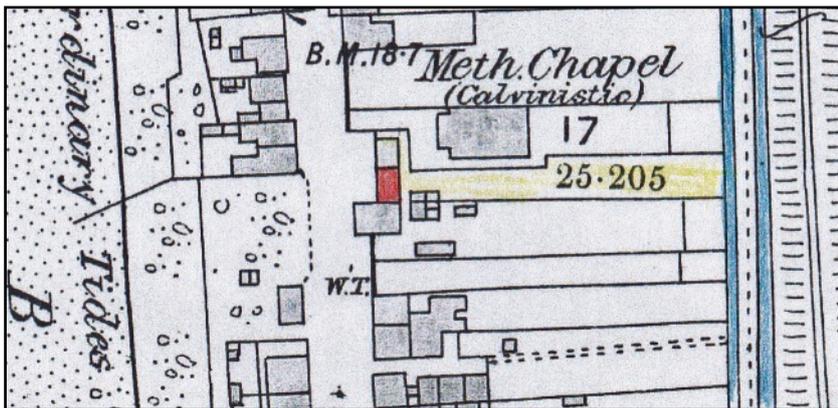
eventually became a home for his son John - possibly when he married. John was born in about 1809, his wife about 1806. They married in January 1839. He could write his name. Susannah was the daughter of William Lewis, a labourer, from Troedrhicwrt. She could not write her name.



LEFT Marked in red are the cottages in 1848 in number 24. John Benjamin had one and in the other cottage was a widow called Margaret Morgan aged 34 with young children, two sons and a daughter (Tithe Apportionments Map for Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township on-line at CYNEFIN)

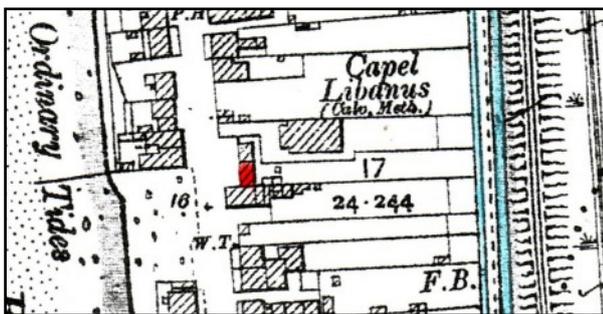
In 1851 at the Census the Benjamins had a five year old daughter Elizabeth. In 1871 Susanna Benjamin was still there, a widow of 59 and a lunatic being looked after by her daughter Elizabeth.

After 1881 the cottage was part of a group called Libanus Place after the Chapel. In 1881 Elizabeth was earning her living as a laundress, she had not married, and she had boarders in the cottage, John F. Jones, born in Borth about 1836 and a carrier, and his wife Jane. At the 1891 Census Elizabeth was still living there.



LEFT This was the cottage in 1886, marked in red. The railway had come, and the Libanus Chapel had been built. The cottage had the same owner as Min-y-don and they shared a garden. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map, surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888 Cardiganshire NW III.10)

At the 1901 Census it is not possible to know who was there.

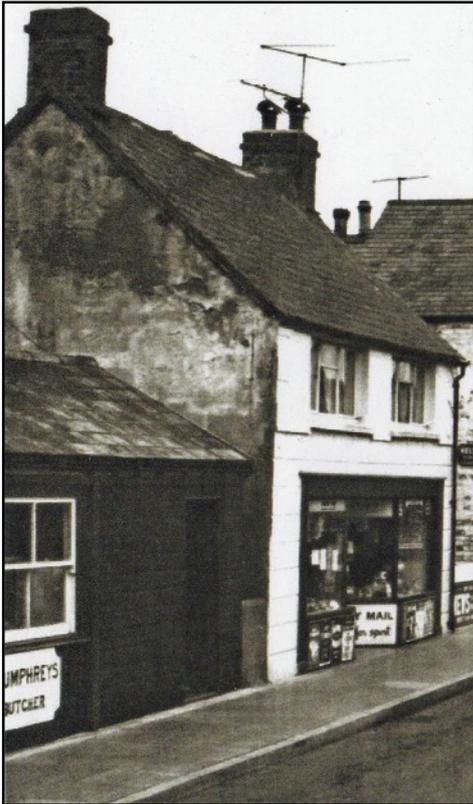


LEFT In 1905 there was still a small cottage on this site, set back from the street. The ownership and shared garden was the same (25 inch Ordnance Survey Map as before, revised in 1904 and published in 1905)

In 1910 for a tax planned but not levied, the cottage was valued at only £40, and the rates would have been £1.12s and £2 gross. The owner was Elizabeth Lloyd of Cwm, (Cwm Cethin now Ty Gwyn, Glanwern a descendant of John Benjamin) and living there was David John Richards. This was the value of the poorest cottages in Borth - often ones with mud (clom) walls.

In the 1911 Census the cottage cannot be traced for certain as several of them were omitted - either because they were empty or the inhabitants were away.

In 1925 Thomas Lloyd paid the Rates and it was still a cottage. I

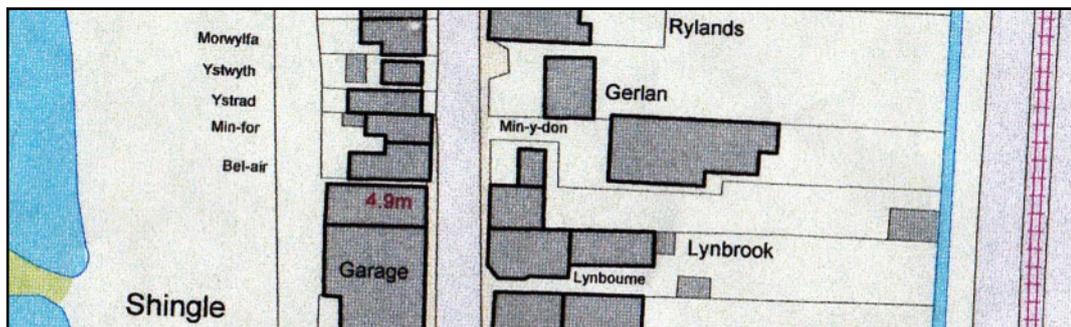


By 1934 Trevor Humphreys, a butcher had a wooden shop there in the front garden of the old cottage. He was still there in 1964. The Humphreys family did not live there, it was just a shop.

LEFT There is a glimpse of Mr Humphrey's wooden shop on the left hand side of this detail from a postcard of 1964.

In 1975 the old cottage was still standing and had the wooden shop in front of it (Historic Maps on-line)

When the Craft Cabin was set up the butcher's wooden stall was taken down, the old cottage was demolished and it was found that its party wall with Min-y-don was clom (mud) on a low wall of beach stones. The Craft Cabin was built to extend backwards and over it was a flat, so the rear is now two storeys high. The shop fills the width of its plot.



ABOVE A detail from a modern Council Map shows the Craft Cabin as a neat rectangle shape at the edge of the pavement between Min-y-don and its front garden, and what was then called 'Lynbrook' but became the 'Adrift Gallery'. It was not named as it was a commercial premises. The back garden is a long strip, and at the time of this map shared it with Min-y-don (Map courtesy of Councillor Ray Quant who provided it for research for a village event).

Today the Craft Cabin closes during the cold winter months.

(The author would like to thank the present owner of the property who set up the Craft Cabin for his help).

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

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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-eredigion.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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