

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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GLANRHYD COTTAGE

Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

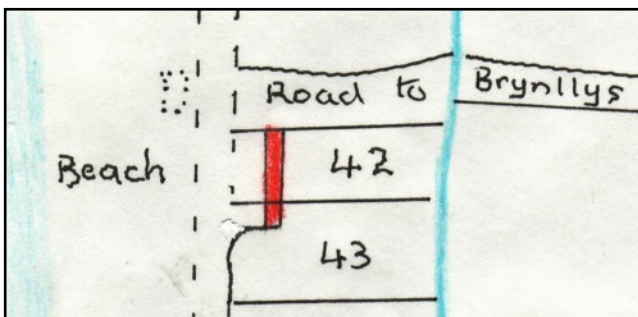
This began life as one of Borth's oldest cottages - a special survival. It was built by 1829 by Lewis Lewis, a weaver and one of his family was still there in 1925 possibly as late as 1949. The old cottages alongside are gone and alterations were made after 1904. It has the name 'Glanrhyd' - meaning 'by the ford' - because there was a ford nearby on the lane to Ynysfergi and Brynlllys where the brook that ran at the end of the gardens behind the High Street houses crossed the lane. There is a ditch there today.



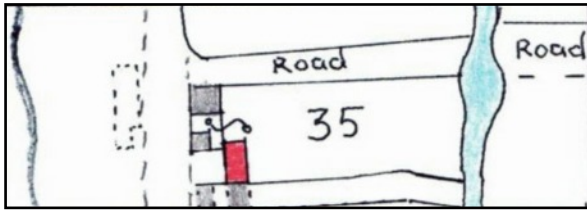
The ground on which this cottage stands was enclosed by Lewis Lewis, a weaver, in 1823 from the pebble embankment thrown up by the sea, and called 'waste' because it was no use for farming. Lewis's ground measured 1 rod - a quarter of an acre - and extended to a brook. Lewis built a terrace of cottages on it, and in 1929 he was living in one of them. The road was centuries old a quick way to North Wales via a ferry across to Aberdovey.

In the Census of 1841 Lewis Lewis, the weaver and his wife Jane were born about 1791, he in Llandre, she at the Ty Du farm close to Upper Borth. He was aged 50 and still weaving. With them in their cottage were their children Catherine born about 1811, Evan born about 1826, Lewis born about 1829 and

Margaret born about 1833.



LEFT Lewis Lewis's cottages in 1829. Number 42 was his ground (Detail copied from a Map in the National Archives, LRRO 1/3060)



LEFT We can see the cottage in 1848, marked in red. Number 35 was his ground and Lewis had enclosed a strip of the lane to Brynlllys and added some other cottages by the High Street. Interestingly the surveyor described these homes as 'houses' and gardens, suggesting

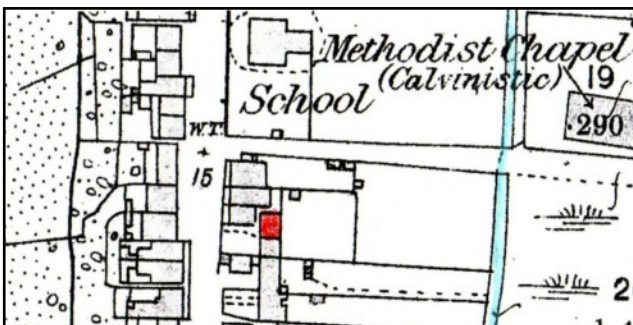
they were well built (A detail copied from the Tithe Apportionments Map for Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township, on-line at Cynefin)

In the 1851 Census in the cottage were Lewis, his wife Jane and daughter Margaret, and a grandson John Richards aged 5.

By the 1861 Census Lewis the weaver had died and Catherine was a widow aged 73. Her daughter Elizabeth was there too, aged 36 so born about 1825. She was the eldest of their children and had not married.

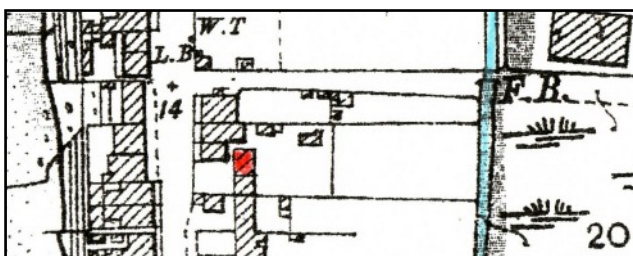
By the Census of 1871 the next generation of the family had inherited the cottage. In the cottage was a mariner's wife Catherine Lewis aged 42, She was local, born in Borth about 1831. With her were her children, Jane 16, born about 1855, Evan 11, born about 1860, Catherine 8, born about 1863, and Mary 2, born about 1869.

The mariner himself was in the cottage at the 1881 and 1891 Census's, Lewis Lewis, the son of Lewis Lewis the weaver who had built the cottage. His wife and three daughters were at home in 1881, Jane, Catherine, and Mary.



LEFT The cottage in 1886 marked in red, as it is today behind Ynys Deri (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888, Cardiganshire NW III.10).

By the Census of 1901 Lewis Lewis had retired from the sea and was elderly, aged 73. He spoke both Welsh and English, his 72 year old wife Catherine spoke Welsh. Also in the cottage was their daughter Jane. She had not married and was 46 years old.



LEFT The cottage in 1904 marked in red. It still shared an owner and garden with two roadside cottages and one alongside it (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1886 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire NW III.10).

In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied this cottage and garden was valued at only £38. There would have been £2 to pay, £2.10s gross. This was a very humble cottage by Borth standards, similar in value to the clom (mud) cottages of the Railway Terrace, though these did have rubble stone walls around their fireplaces. The owner and occupier was Catherine Lewis. (Ceredigion Archives T/DV/18 and map at the National Library of Wales).

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In the 1911 Census the cottage was listed with three rooms. This would not include any back scullery. Usually such cottages had a central front door and a passage, opening into a kirchen/living room on one side, the side with the hearth, and opening into the best bedroom the other. A ladder or stairs would lead up to the loft where children slept. Jane Lewis was there aged 56. She had 'private means' so her mariner husband had provided for her. She also paid the Rates in 1925 for the cottage and garden.

In 1934 William James had been paying the rates as owner and occupier, but this was altered to Mary James. She was still paying Rates in 1949. Whether this was Lewis the mariner's daughter Mary I do not know at present. She also paid the rates and had a vote for the cottage in 1963 (Electoral Registers and Rates, Ceredigion Archives).

According to a Crown Plan map of 1975 the cottage was joined to Ynys Deri - suggesting the same owner for both. At the back it opened on to the field extending down to the ditch - the former brook. The cottage already had a substantial addition at the back making it much wider than the 1829 cottage (Historic Maps Online)

Today the front of the cottage seen from the street still has the shape of one of Borth's oldest cottages, but I would expect some improvements to the side walls when the old cottages either side were taken down, and since 1904 a substantial wing was added on the back. The back garden or yard is small and 'L' shaped and another home has been built behind it.

ABOVE The rear of Glanrhyd Cottage in 2019.



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Tai'r Borth / Houses of Borth
gan/by Beryl Lewis
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Hoffem ddiolch i Beryl am fod mor garedig â chaniatáu i ni rannu ei gwaith â'r gynulleidfa ehangaf bosibl.

Ceidw Beryl Lewis yr hawlfraint yn ei gwaith ac mae'r hanesion yn cael eu rhannu at ddibenion preifat ac ymchwil yn unig.

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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