

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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GWINNETT

Formerly a 'Wesleyan Place' cottage, built after 1832 and by 1848. It was called Spinell in 2009.



This cottage is part of a terrace and has a gable roof parallel to the High Street. Its roof is slightly lower than Westward Ho's - the cottage on the north. These roofs are steeply sloping and could once have had reed thatch. The taller extension built on the back of Gwinnett can be seen on the left. Two large dormer windows in the style of casements light an upper floor. The gables above the dormer windows are timbered. All the windows are modern but the pattern of diamond leaded panes suits an old cottage. This is a double fronted cottage, but like almost all the old cottages the front door is not



central. One side is wider to allow a larger room on the south side, and this would once have had a chimney and been the kitchen/living room of the old cottage. The front door opens on to the street. The walls are all rendered with a smooth finish.

TOP Gwinnett in 2015.
BELOW It is part of a former row of cottages.

At the rear is a wide yellow brick extension with a hipped roof. Lines of darker bricks are used to outline the main features of the building. The upper room's large window gives a good view over the beach, and a french window at the side opens on to a

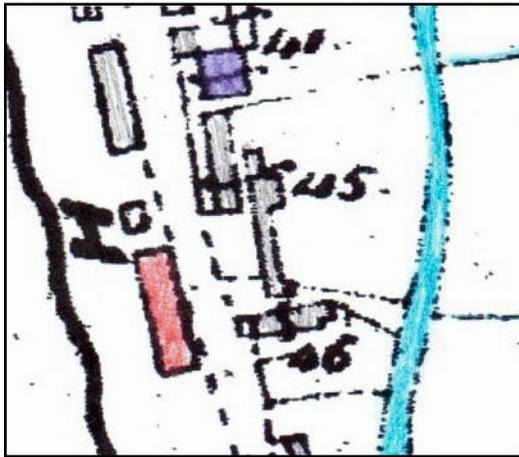


balcony with steps down into the yard. This would be a good living room. For the lower floor tall walls on both sides give privacy to the yard. A platform in the yard gives a view over the wall to the beach. The roof of the old cottage has a roof light for its upper floor.

Gwinnett from the beach in 2015.

The ground beneath the cottage is a wide bank of stones thrown up by the sea and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor who

owned it as it was no good for farming. A road had run along it for centuries and was a turnpike road by the 1770s. It led to a ferry from Ynyslas to Aberdovey and was a quick way to reach North Wales. The ground was enclosed in 1827 and on it was a Richard Hughes cottage surrounded by beach. Mr Hughes had 1 rod and 10 perches, just over a quarter of an acre, for which he paid rent to the Crown Manor. It was an isolated cottage, with beach and then four limekilns to the south of it extending to the road junction with the road to Llandre (NA LRRO 1/3060). However his cottage was the southernmost of a later row of four cottages, extending northwards, Gwinnett would be the third in the row.

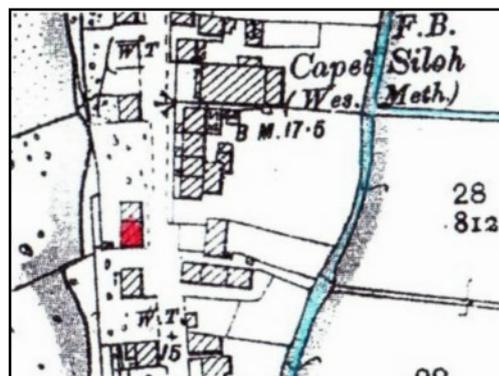
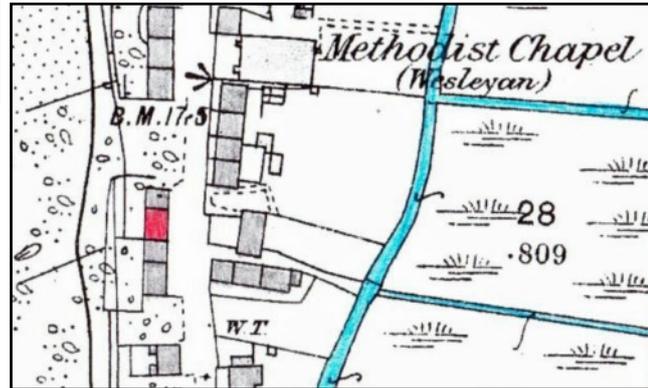


This detail from a map of 1848 shows the block of cottages. Because they had no gardens they did not have to pay tithe so we do not know the names of the villagers living there. Marked in purple is the Wesleyan Chapel which was much smaller then.

Tithe Apportionments Map for Llanfihangel Geuau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township. On-line at CYNEFIN, NLW)

RIGHT This map shows the four cottages in 1886. Gwinnett is marked in red and was a good size. As today it opened on to the street.

25 Inch Ordnance Survey Map of 1888, surveyed in 1886. Cardiganshire III.10.



LEFT This was the cottage in 1904, the cottage to the south of it had gone. Penro would be built there. There is still rough ground marked around Gwinnett, and it may have been in the same ownership as Westward Ho next door. Both maps show some fences had been built to protect the cottages from the sea.

25 inch map Ordnance Survey Map of 1905 revised in 1904.

Census's of 1891 and 1901 listed these cottages as 'Cambridge Place, which applied to homes across the street too. It is not possible to be certain which family lived in which cottage.

In 1910 for a valuation for a tax, planned but not levied, this cottage was valued at £41. This is more than a Morfa Borth clom (cob) cottage, suggesting Gwinnett may be stone built. There would have been £2 to pay £2.10s gross. The owner was Hugh Williams and the occupier was Richard Davies. At the 1911 Census Richard was a general labourer who worked from home. He and his wife Mary were local. They had been married for 23 years, having eight children, six of whom were still alive. With them in the cottage were David, 14, Thomas James 9, and a daughter Mary Myfanwy 6. The cottage had three main rooms - probably two rooms downstairs and a loft.

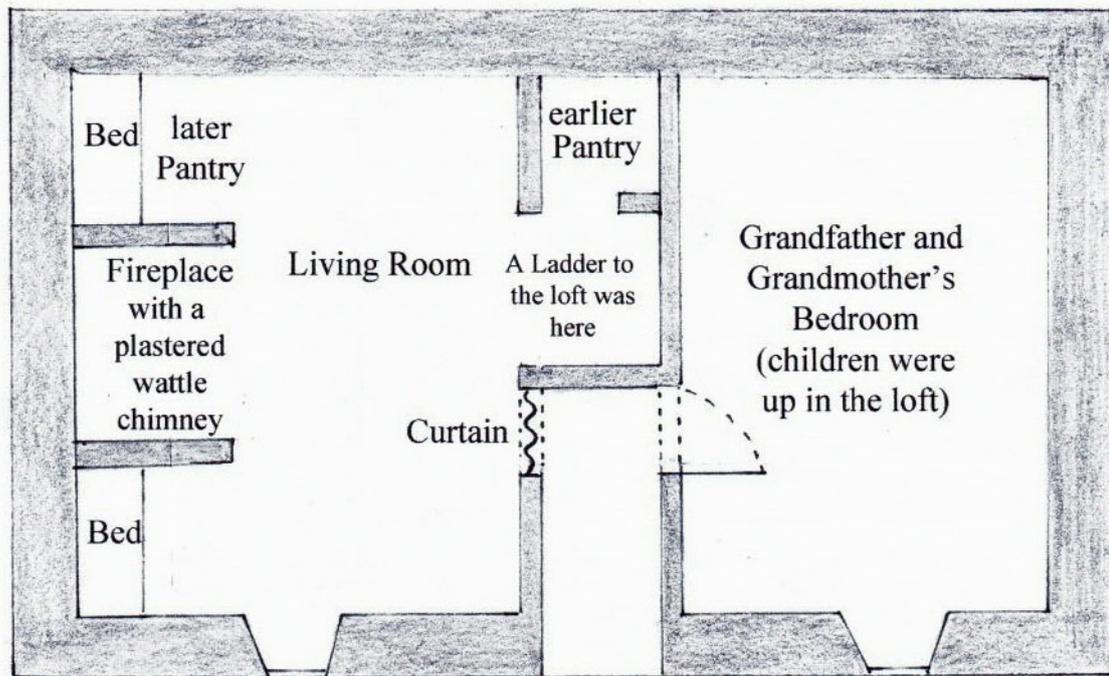
Mary Davies paid the rates in 1925. The owners then were M. A. O. Jenkins and D. F. Jenkins. In 1938 Jenkins and Owen were the owners, and Mary Davies was still there in 1945 with a vote for the cottage. The cottage had no name, and the address was simply 'Wesleyan Place'. Colonel Malcolm Parry-Davies remembers there were no doors or windows on this beach side of this cottage, and there were no internal facilities, Mary had a 'khazi' on the stones behind her cottage to which she repaired every morning. Called 'Old Mrs Dick Davies was a nice old thing who sat for hours on a chair outside her front door watching the world go by - she dressed in a close approximation to national dress, including a high hat on high days and holidays, and was available for a photo in exchange for a 'consideration'. She and

Annie Granville Williams of Auckland House would pass the time of day, speaking Welsh exclusively.

In 1963 the cottage had its name Gwinnett and paying the rates was Mrs Marion R. Hayes. She paid 10s for the half year - Westward Ho paid 12s. 6d.

Sometime after 1968 the owner was Miss Treece of 8 Ascot Road Birmingham. She owned Westward Ho too.

Gwinnett today is the result of alterations to provide seaside accommodation and views of the sea. The original cottage opened on to the street and from the street the front door opened into a passage between two rooms, an important living room/kitchen with the hearth, and on the other side the owner's bedroom. Further warm beds were often tucked in either side of the living room fire. Up steep stairs, or a ladder was a loft inside the roof in which the children slept. The diagram below shows a clom (cob) cottage not far from Aberystwyth at Glasmor near Rhydyfelin as remembered by an old man who used to visit his grandparents there.



(Memories of Gwinnett courtesy of Colonel Malcolm Parry-Davies, a grandson of Annie Granville Williams).

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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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