

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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LITTLE COT Glanwern Village, Borth

A cottage that probably dates back to pre-1848. Probably once the home of a farm worker Richard Edwards, then of a lead miner David Morris who wed his daughter. At retirement age he and his wife set up as greengrocers. Their son Richard, a blind basket maker continued to live there. It was once called 'Hendaile' and 'The Cottage'.



Little Cot in 2015. It is in the foreground and joins on to the terrace behind. BELOW The east end of the cottage.

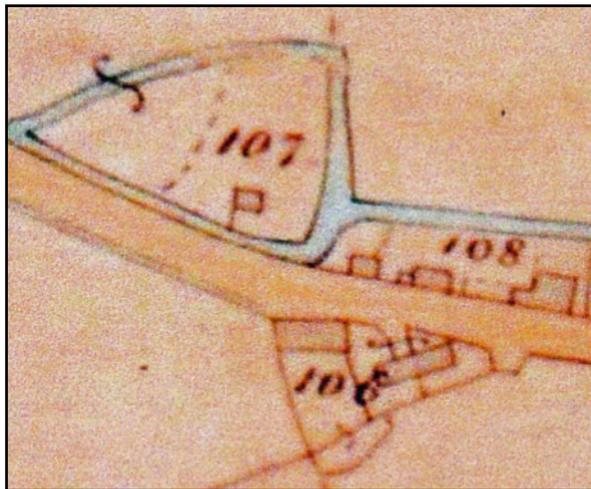


This is a single storey cottage under a deep gable roof of slate or a slate colour that is at an angle to the street. The roof is deep enough to have had thatch. Two dormer windows light a second floor under the roof. The chimney is on the east end of the roof and is rendered. It is probably stone and has one chimney pot. The dormer windows are modern in the style of casements. The walls of

this cottage are likely to be rubble stone and they are rendered. On the east side of the ground floor at the front is a modern canted bay window and a porch with a slated gable roof at right angles to the house, its base has rendered walls, and above it are narrow lights between wooden posts. The front door is modern with a small square light. It is likely that the front door once opened into a passage, with the room on the east with the chimney being the main

living room/kitchen and the room on the other side being the bedroom of the occupiers. This makes the front door of the cottage right of centre. Today the garden is enclosed by hedges and planted. A gateway in the front hedge leads to a path to the front door. At the back is a lean to extension in two heights, the taller having a back door opening on the east side to an area of hard standing that leads out to the road. There is a wooden farm style gate. The cottage has only a narrow area at the back with a tall hedge, behind is a footpath, and behind that the land rises up steeply.

The reason a small settlement could grow up at Glanwern was the presence of the tailrace from the Felinwern Mill at Glanlerry, which was fresh water from the River Lerry. It was joined by a small stream down the valley behind Ty Gwyn too, and it also helped drain the marsh on the north. After passing Glanwern the tailrace ran seawards then turned along behind Borth High Street, providing a brook' with fresh water for the houses and cottages there. This 'brook' is marked on a map of 1829. Today the water flows out to sea from a pipe near the Lifeboat House. To the north of Glanwern Village was the marsh whose old name was Wern Leri. (1859 Crown Manor map NA LRRO 1/3060). There was already a settlement at Glanwern by 1803 when John Williams said he was born there for the Census of 1851. The road was there too, it was shown on a map of 1829 and led down to three lime kilns beginning where the road opened on to the beach. Later another was built. Lime would be carried to farms inland and the road connected to an important road, as today, at Rhyd-y-pennau. The High Street road at Borth was very ancient as in Norman times it was a quick way to north Wales along the shingle bank to the high sand dune area at Ynyslas and then across the River Dovey by ferry to Aberdovey.



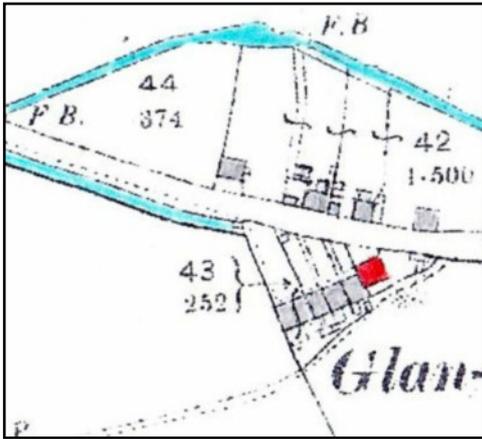
LEFT In 1848 the ground on which the cottage and the adjacent terrace stands, number 106, was 34 perches, just short of a quarter of an acre enclosed from the 'waste' which was land not suitable for farming, because it was between steep hillside and the road. When men enclosed and built cottages on it they had to pay a rent to the Crown Manor who owned it, and they had the option of buying their cottages and ground for two year's rent. Number 106 had cottages and gardens on it and John Williams and others lived there and owned it or rented it from the Manor. The end of

the easternmost block of cottages is where Little Cot stands today (*A detail from the the Tithe Apportionments Map of 1848 for Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township on-line at CYNEFIN*).

The enclosures for gardens at the back of the buildings suggest three families there. John Williams was a shoemaker. In the 1841 Census there was an Edwards family at Glanwern and possibly at Little Cot cottage. Richard Edwards was a farm worker. He and his wife Margaret had a daughter Margaret born in 1834 and she was in the 1841 Census, then one of three daughters. The Edwards family were not in the 1851 Census. However her mother Margaret, by then a widow, is listed in the 1861 Census for Glanwern. She was 53 and earning a living as a dressmaker. With her was a daughter Elizabeth aged 12 and son Richard aged 10. Margaret the daughter had already married her lead miner husband David Morris but they were not in the cottage at the time of the census. However her husband was there when they married in June 1857. David Morris was 28 years old, the son of a labourer of Derwenlas, and Margaret Edwards was aged 23 (Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn Church Register,

Ceredigion Archives). I suggest that she and her husband took over the Edwards family's cottage, now Little Cot.

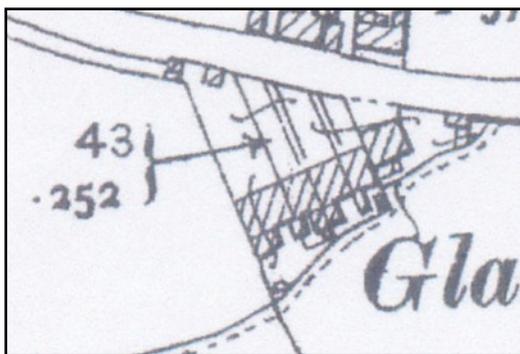
David and Margaret were in the cottage at the 1871 Census. With them were their children Elizabeth 11, Richard 9, John 8, David 6, Margaretta 3 and Anne Jane a baby of 10 months. As the cottage still had only three main rooms in 1911 the older children went up some stairs or up a ladder to sleep in the room under the roof



LEFT In 1886 the Little Cot cottage, marked in red was there. It had lost the old cottage next to it and the 1848 other cottages had gone. Hugh Williams a blacksmith from Gwastad had built the present terrace of four houses alongside. He fitted them tightly into the space and so was obliged to keep the same angle from the road as Little Cot. In Little Cot's garden was a tiny building by the road, possibly its Ty Bach -outside lavatory. The garden ended as today at a footpath to Bryn Owen Farm (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map for Cardiganshire surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888).

At the 1888 Census in the cottage was David Morris, then 49, and he was still a lead miner. His wife Margaret was 45. With them were Margaretta, 13, Anne Jane 10, Mary 8 and Sarah 5. They had all been born at Glanwern. Often men who had been lead miners had short lives. David Morris was lucky. At the 1891 Census he was 61 and he had changed his occupation and set up as a green grocer. Also in the cottage was his wife Margaret, and their son Richard, aged 34, born at Glanwern about 1862. He had not married and was a basketmaker. He was blind.

At the 1901 Census Margaret Morris was in the cottage, now head of the household and the greengrocer, aged 67. Her son Richard continued to make baskets working at home. Also there was her daughter Margaret, (Margaretta) then about 32. She had not married.



LEFT In 1904 the cottage had a tiny piece on the back possibly an extension, if this was a scullery it would not have counted in the three main rooms of the 1911 Census (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map for Cardiganshire of 1905 revised in 1904)

In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied the cottage and garden was valued at £45. There would have been £2.8s to pay, £3 gross. This was considered a good cottage, there were cottages

in Borth in terraces with little or no gardens valued at as little as £18 or £22. Richard Morris the basket maker owned it, and living there was his sister Margaret. (Ceredigion Archives T/DV/18 and a NLW map).

At the 1911 Census the cottage had just three main rooms. Richard Morris was still making baskets, then aged 49, working for himself at home. He spoke both Welsh and English.

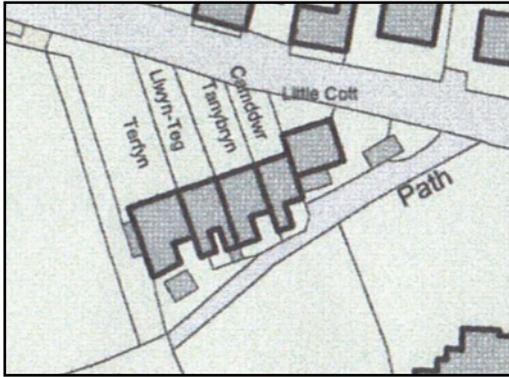
In 1925, the cottage was called Hendaile, and for the Rates, the owner was Samuel Morris, a retired artist, painter, who lived over the road in Craigmor. Richard Morris was his tenant. The rates to pay were the same.

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Paying the Rates in 1932 was M. E. Wood, and this owner gave the cottage the name 'Little Cot'.

By 1938 H. H. Blower was paying the Rates for the cottage, and he still was still there in 1949

Paying the Rates in 1963 for Little Cot was D. Clews (Ceredigion Archives).



LEFT The cottage and its site in 1975, it had a larger piece on the rear and the tiny buildings on the old maps had been replaced by a detached building with its own garden (Detail from an Ordnance Survey 25 inch map of the Council, courtesy of Councillor Ray Quant when assisting research for a local event).

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

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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-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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