

THE BUILDINGS OF MORFA 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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LLWYNT EG Glanwern Village, Borth.

A terrace house built by 1886 probably by Hugh Williams blacksmith of Gwastad on ground his family had had a cottage on since 1848 and built for family or to let. Still in the ownership of the Williams family in 1925. Formerly called 'Evelyn Villa' or 'Evelyn House'. Mariner's families lived there.



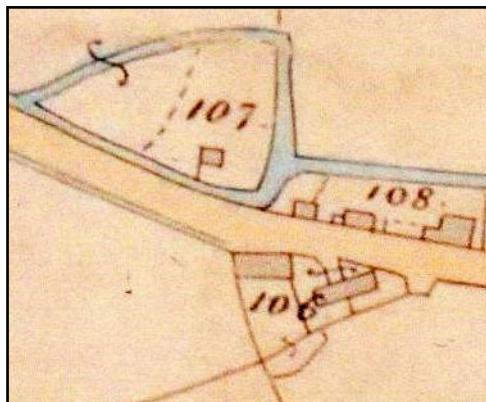
LEFT This picture was taken in 2009.

Llwynteg is a two storey single fronted house under a gable roof in a terrace at an angle to the road. Two large dormer windows light a third floor under the roof. On the west end of the roof is a slab chimney which looks as though it is rubble stone. It has a double row of three chimney pots, which suggests that this chimney is shared with Terfyn next door. The roof is deeper than Llwynteg's on one side and almost but not quite as deep as the roof of Terfyn on the west which may have been the original roof.

The walls are rendered, and it is likely they are rubble stone. The two upper front windows reach up to the eaves. All the windows are modern. The porch has its front door on the east. A stone wall encloses the garden with Terfyn, and on the other side is a low wall and a hedge. The garden is hard standing. At the road end is an interesting round stone container full of soil and plants. This lies across the boundary with Tan-y-bryn.

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 National Archives LRRO 1/3060). There was already a settlement at Glanwern by 1804 when John Williams, a shoemaker, 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 and high sand dune area at Ynyslas and then across the River Dovey on a ferry to Aberdovey.



LEFT In 1848 the ground Number 106 on which the house stands 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 a small area between the road and a steep hillside. 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 it for two year's rent. It had two blocks of cottages and gardens on it and John Williams and others lived there and owned it or rented it from the Manor. The enclosures for gardens at the back of the buildings suggest three families were there (A detail from the Tithe Apportionments Map of 1845 for Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township on-line at CYNEFIN)

John Williams was a shoemaker. He was still there in 1871 at the Census, an elderly man. It is possible he was still living in his old cottage, and it is likely that the Williams family owned all the old ground.

The ground came into the ownership of Hugh Williams, a blacksmith at Gwastad (Borth) who rented his smithy from an estate. He was a renowned poacher. The Gogerddan gamekeepers were continually frustrated in attempts to catch him, he hid his gun and catch on neighbours' haystacks (Terry Davies, Borth, A Seaborn Village, p. 83) At the 1881 Census there were three empty houses – and it is possible from where they appear in the list that he had recently built the terrace and was waiting for tenants.

In October 1883 living in Evelyn House was Captain Lewis Williams. He was at a public meeting about storm damage and flooding in Borth. He and some others were to approach the owners of the common to see if it could be sold and the money used for sea defences. (Cambrian News, 26 October)

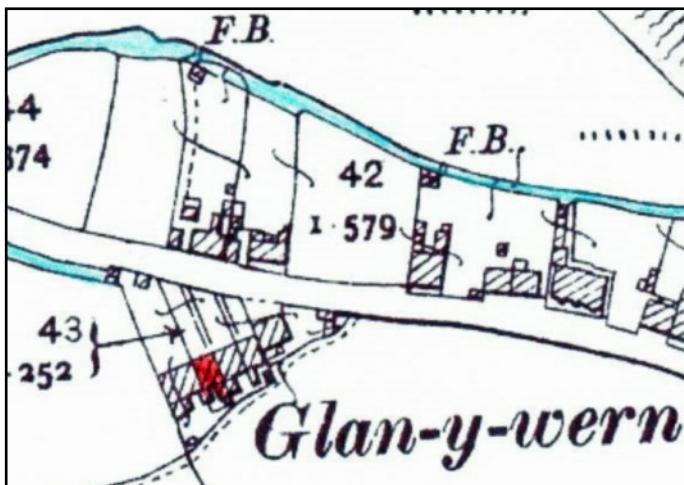


LEFT In 1886 the blocks of old cottages had gone. The present terrace had been built fitted very tightly into the space, butting up against Little Cot and ending on the boundary of the field, Bryn Owen's Ddol Ucha (Upper Meadow) next door (now caravans). To fit the four houses in they had to be at the same angle from the road as Little Cot. The house (second from the left) was the same size as Tan-y-bryn and Camddwr. Like them it had an extension on the back. It was quite close to the footpath to Bryn Owen Farm and the steep hillside above (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map of Cardiganshire surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888).

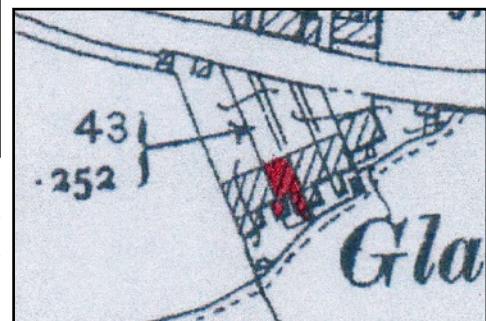
At the 1891 Census in the house was Margaret Davies, the 49 year old wife of a mariner. She had been born at Llanfihangel-y-Creuddyn about 1842. With her was her daughter Margaretta aged 23, born at Ysybyty Ywyth, her mariner son Thomas aged 21, her son Enoch who was

apprenticed to a blacksmith (not very difficult as Hugh Williams the Gwasted blacksmith owned the house) and Evan who was 11. Mrs Davies spoke only Welsh but her children all spoke English as well.

At the 1901 Census the house may have been unoccupied.



LEFT On the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map of 1905 revised in 1904 the house is easier to see. It had an extension on the east side of the back reaching to the back fence. There was a tiny courtyard and a small building that was probably its Ty Bach. It seems to share a driveway to the road.



In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied this house was valued at £130. There would have been £6.7s.6d. to pay, £7.10s. gross. The owner was Hugh Williams and the occupier was Elizabeth Rees. (Ceredigion Archives T/DV/18 and a map at the National Library of Wales map). The house was called Evelyn Villa.

Elizabeth Jane Rees was in the house at the 1911 Census. She was the widow of a ‘Berthing Master’. She was 41 and had been born in Talybont about 1870. She had been married for 14 years, and had had eight children. One had died. With her in the house was her 17 year old son Evan Jones Rees born about 1894. Evelyn Villa had five main rooms.

In 1925, for the Rates, the owner was Mary Williams and the occupier was William David Jones .

Paying the Rates for the house in 1949 was Thomas A. Tibbott. He was a mariner, in 1920 going to Middlesborough to join his ship (Cambrian News) His father was a joiner and cabinet maker at Bradford House, Borth High Street. The house had changed its name from Evelyn to Llwynteg – ‘Fair Grove’ in Welsh.

In 1963 Frances C. Davies had a vote for the house. Paying the rates for Llwynteg had been E. K. Davies, but was then Mr Harker (Electoral Registers and Rates Ceredigion Archives).

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gan/by Beryl Lewis
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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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