

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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MAESTEG

Morfa Borth

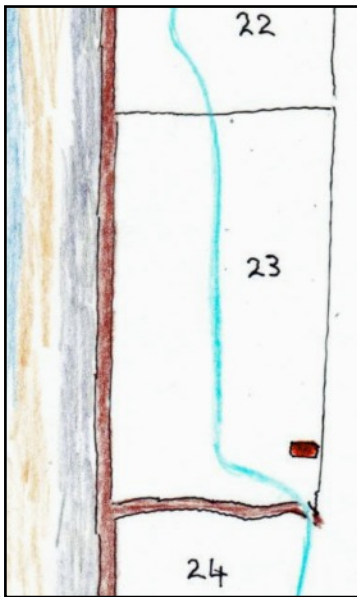
A house and garage at the northern end of the village with the sea over the road. Built by a retired sea captain Captain John Davies for himself and his wife Margaret Catherine 1871-1964. Their former house also called Maesteg is now part of the YHA Morlais. Maesteg was built on ground formerly the garden of the Cambrian Hotel. His granddaughter says the Captain had it built in 1937/1938.



The name is Welsh and means 'fair field'. Maesteg is a two storey house under a hipped roof at right angles to the street. The walls are rendered, and the roof is edged with red ridge tiles. It has two slender brick chimneys with cowls. All the barge boards are plain. The front of the house is divided into two parts by a sloping roof supported by posts. This roof protects a ground floor bay window and possibly a former front door. The windows are modern, and on the north side of the ground floor the tall window has the shape of a front door. On the north wall of the house is an extension with today's front door. The narrow front garden is planted, and enclosed from the road by a rendered wall with gateposts and a front gate. The house almost fills its plot. There is a narrow passage at the rear. Beyond is a sizeable bungalow, Sandicot, which is accessed from the lane at the back.

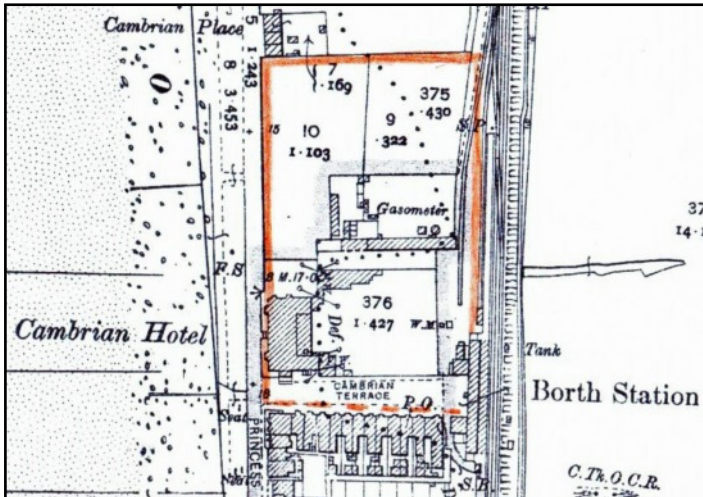


LEFT The rear of Maesteg in 2016, which is in the background. The area of its yard is small as in the foreground is Sandicot. On Maesteg's ground floor is a porch like extension with a lean to roof. The north side of the house has both an upper window, and a bay window. Trysordy next door was built much later and there would have been open ground there when Maesteg was built. Both homes have garages alongside the end of Sandicot.



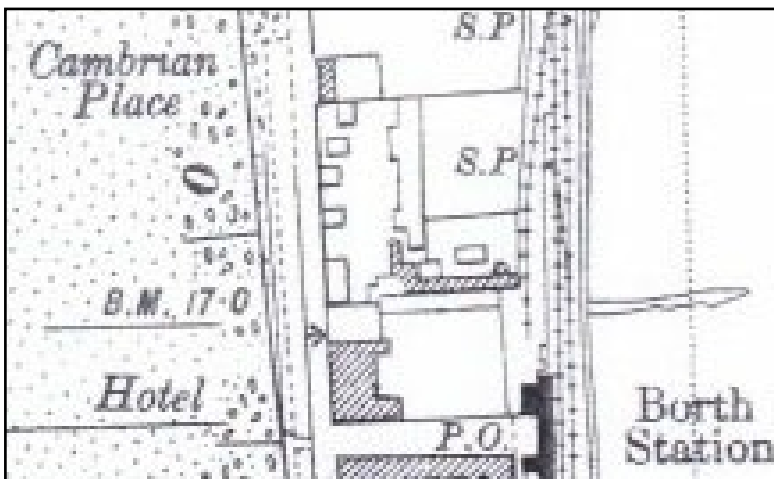
LEFT The ground for this house was enclosed in 1809 by a local lawyer called Big John (John Lewis) from the pebble embankment thrown up by the sea, and called 'waste' because it was no use for farming, and the marsh ground beside it (also called 'waste') could be reclaimed for pasture with drainage ditches. It was a field of 4 acres, 3 rods and 20 perches, that is almost five acres, and across it ran a brook on the old course of the River Leri. On a map of 1829 the ground was Number 23. John Lewis had a cottage on it marked in red called Terfynau (boundaries) – where the railway station is today. There were no other cottages. A rent of £16 had to be paid every year to the Crown manor who owned the ground, but there was an option to buy it for twice that, and a note with the map said that John Lewis had bought it at a Manor Court Leet in 1809. (Detail copied from a map, National Archives, LRRO 1/3060)

The road had been there 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 North Wales.



ABOVE The Cambrian Hotel in 1905 from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map. John Lewis's former ground is marked in red (Cardiganshire III.10)

John Lewis's land was sold to the developer Thomas Savin who brought the railway and built the Railway Station, the great Cambrian Hotel and Cambrian Terrace. The Hotel had large grounds (nearly two acres) for tennis, croquet, pleasure gardens, a bowling green, and possibly a walled garden. However, the Hotel did not do well, it had a hundred rooms, but often many were empty. It is likely that by the 1920s and 1930s it needed to raise money by either selling off its roadside land to build the bungalows and houses, or having them built itself to sell.



The owner of the then 'Grand Hotel' in 1930 called himself a Land Development Company Ltd (Rates, Ceredigion Archives). When Maesteg was built about 1936/7 it would have had piped water, and coal for heating came on the train.

LEFT By 1948 bungalows and houses by the road had been built and the back lane bungalows are sketched in. Maesteg and Benfleet are shown as one block next to the Hotel (Ordnance Survey Six Inch map, 1948, Ceredigion Archives)

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There is a photograph of the first Sandicot bungalow taken in June 1933. It then 'faced the sea'. So it is possible that it was there before Maesteg was built. The Sandicot we see today was built at the back of Maesteg and is sideways on to the sea.

Maesteg first appears in the Rates in 1938. Captain John Davies paid them and the house was valued at £28 - it was considered a good property. The Captain also paid £1 for a 'garden'. In 1949 it was listed with a garage and his daughter Meiriona E. Herbert paid the Rates.

In 1963 paying the Rates was Noel Glanville Smith and it was called a 'house and garden'. With votes for the house were Mr Smith and Margaret Cynthia Smith. Sandicot's Rates were paid by Mrs Elizabeth Hughes (Electoral Registers and Rates, Ceredigion Archives).

The story of Captain Davies who sailed in wooden and steam vessels, who was a ship owner and a valuable member of the village community when he retired, can be found in Dr Terry Davies's book 'Borth; A Maritime History' pages 37 and 38.



ABOVE An old photograph of Maesteg which was decorated for a carnival, and had the old - possibly original windows.

(Photograph courtesy of Jean Caswell)

The author would like to thank Mrs Jean Caswell née Herbert for her help.

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

Mae **Tai'r Borth** yn cynnwys dros 350 hanes sy'n ymwneud ag adeiladau unigol ac mae'r hanesion wedi'u darlunio â chyfoeth o ffotograffau, mapiau a dogfennau. Mae'r ffeiliau ar gael ar ein gwefan: <https://www.archifdy-ceredigion.org.uk/tairborth.php?lang=cy>

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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