

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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SEA BREAKER

At the northern part of the village with the sea over the road. One of a terrace of three houses with Trigfan and Bodlondeb, formerly called Cambrian Place. Occupied by 1871 by a coal merchant and built for the Cambrian Railway Company's Estate who owned all three houses in the terrace. Later called Springfield.



ABOVE Sea Breaker in 2017.

This is the northernmost house of three two storey houses with rendered walls, and on the north side it butts up against a single storey home which has its own back garden and garage. Sea Breaker is under a gable roof at right angles to the road and there is a chimney on both ends of the roof. The upper window on the north is a projecting bay window, its large modern glass giving a good view of the sea over the concrete sea wall. It shelters the front door below it. All the windows and the door are modern. The house fills the width of its site. There is a narrow front garden area enclosed by a low, rendered wall.

At the back there is a garden behind which is some access ground behind the terrace of all four homes, and beyond that are the bungalows of the Cae Gwylan Estate.

The three two storey houses replaced a cottage on the site built by 1848. See Cambrian Place 129A.

Sometime after 1863 when the railway arrived, George Lewis of Oswestry the secretary of the Cambrian Railway Company had bought these cottages together with the Cambrian Hotel, the Cambrian Terrace and other land and cottages. By 1888 this estate was heavily mortgaged and had to be sold. The cottages were Lot 15, put with two roadside pieces of land suitable for building on and were bought for £560 by Thomas Lewis for the Rev. Evan Jones of the Welsh Church in London (Aberystwyth Observer 22 September 1888). Richard Evan Jones OBE, MA and JP who lived at Number 6 Cambrian Terrace. owned them in

1910. (Ceredigion Archives C/DV/18) Early photographs for postcards shows Sea Breaker was two storey and double fronted, and in front of it was the road and then the beach. There was still plenty of open ground to the north of the terrace. The chimneys remain today. Because they were brick – unusual for Borth, it is likely that the terrace was built after the railway arrived in 1863, when the railway station and Cambrian Terrace were built of bricks brought on the train.

The house was there by 1871 and living in it at the Census was a 56 year old coal merchant, Richard Jones, a local man, born in the parish. With him were two daughters; Mary 25 and Jane 18.

In 1881 at the Census in the house was a 57 year old sailor's wife Jane James, with her daughter Jane, a 25 year old servant, and not married. Both were born in Borth. Also there was a twenty year old daughter, Margaret who was born in Aberdovey and Mrs James's sister Margaret Rees aged 45, a local woman who had not married.

Our first view of Sea Breaker is from a map of 1886. The house was the largest of the three and they shared a garden because all three had the same owner. This was enclosed by a wall or a fence. On the south was the pleasure gardens and buildings of the great Cambrian Hotel. There were no other houses nearby, and a gap northwards before Sea View, now Maes Arfor (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888. Cardiganshire III.10)

In the Census of 1891 was another 'James', Catherine James, aged 64 and a widow with her 'own means'. She spoke Welsh and was on her own in the house. She was to move to Otago.

In 1901 at the Census in the house was a Davies family, Mrs Anne Davies aged 41 with three daughters; Jane Elizabeth, aged 19 and a dressmaker working at home, Mary Emily 13 and Gertrude 10. In 1891 they had been living in the house next door (now Trigfan).

In 1905 there were some small buildings in the garden, and the house still opened directly on to the road.

In 1910 for a tax, planned but not levied, the house was valued at £163 with £8.10s to pay and £10 gross. The owner of all the three houses was Richard Evan Jones. Thomas Davies was his tenant.

In 1911 the houses either side had their names, Trigfan and Bodlondeb, but this house is missing in the Census, possibly there was no one there at the time to fill in the form.

In 1925 Richard Evan Jones, the owner, was living in the house. It was still called 'Cambrian Place. Written in pencil in the rates book was the house name 'Springfield' and also the name 'Gertrude Jones'.

R and H. Jones paid the rates in 1957.

Gertrude H James paid the rates for 'Springfield in 1949.

In 1955 an Insurance Inspector, William Trevor Jones had the house. However he bought Sea View (now Maes Arfor) a bigger house, and moved there (Deeds to Maes Arfor - private collection). Paying the rates in 1963 were R. E. L, and H. V. Jones, and the Council's rates book still had the name 'Springfield' for the house. With votes for the house were Owen and Patricia Winifred Rose. The electoral register also had the name 'Springfield'.

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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.

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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