

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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TON-Y-MÔR Morfa Borth

A terrace house on the beach side in the middle of Borth High Street. Formerly Ocean Wave Number 1 and then Number 4 Picton Terrace. Owned together with the present Hafod Heli by Captain John Lewis and the two houses used for his family. By 1891 the home of Borth Congregationalist minister, the Rev. Joseph Llewellyn. The two houses still in the same ownership in 1910.



Ton-y-môr is a single fronted, two storey terrace house with an attic floor in the roof lit by dormer windows. It has a gable roof parallel with the street, and a substantial rendered chimney, probably rubble stone, shared with Hafod Heli next door on the north, each house having three chimney pots. An old map shows that the plan of this house and of Hafod Heli next door was identical though with a mirror image, the front doors on the outer sides of each front, and this ties in the with pair once having the same owner. The walls are stone with rendering. The front is divided into two halves by a string course (line of moulding) under the upper window sills with smooth rendering above, and the pattern of rusticated masonry below. The upper windows have smooth frames with keystones, and the sill of the southernmost window is supported by brackets. On the ground floor is a square bay window. This was not original, but added by 1914. The window frames are modern. The front door is emphasized by a pediment and has pilaster strips either side, with panels broken in the centre by a square shape with a motif. The pediment is the same height as Craiglee next door on the south, but the details are not quite the same, and Ton-y-môr is narrower. The front garden is enclosed by a low wall and gate, with tall rendered gateposts at either end. A photograph dated 1914 of Hafod Heli next door shows the low wall was once topped by railings.

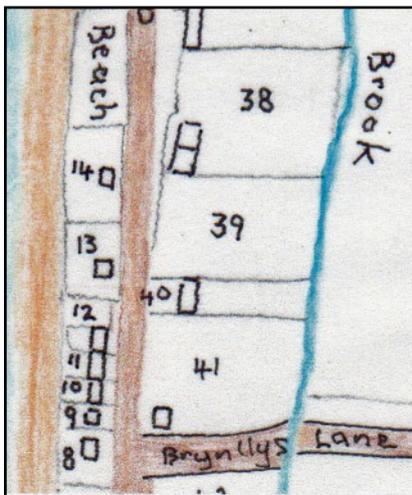


Ton-y-mor in 2015.



The rear of the house has a wide, two storey wing at right angles to the main house but allowing room on the north side for a passageway to the yard. Its upper floor looking over the beach has a large window with a glazed door beside it leading out on to a balcony. Tall rendered stone walls enclose an inner yard, Beyond is a further area of yard enclosed by vertical sleepers and planks. There is a gateway, filled with planks, to access the beach. This is good protection from the sea during storms.

The ground for this house was enclosed in 1824 by Evan Evans from the stone bank thrown up by the sea and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor Court who owned it as it was no use for farming. His ground measured 24 perches and a map of 1829 show a cottage built on it, described as 'cottage and beach'. Evan Evans was a master mariner who owned shares in the sloop 'Liverpool Trader'. 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.



LEFT A detail copied from the map of 1829. Evan Evan's plot was Number 13 and he had plenty of ground around his cottage. (National Archives LRRO 1/3060) Five houses would eventually be fitted into his road frontage, now Aberceldŷ to Gwendon.

By 1848 another cottage had been joined on to the old one on the site of Aberceldŷ, but there were no cottages where Ton-y-môr now stands. (Tithe Apportionments Map, Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township, on-line at CYNEFIN.)

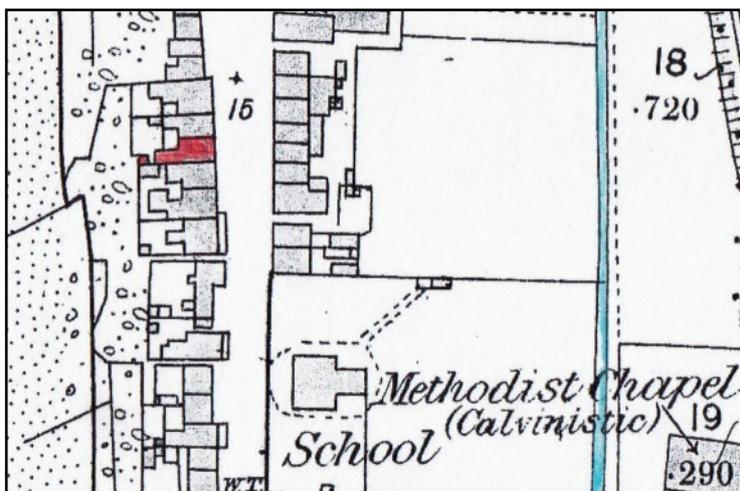
It is not possible to trace the occupants of the old cottages, or the date of the building of the present house at this time. The house was built by a master mariner who could afford to build not one but two good quality homes for his family. He was Captain John Lewis, and he and his family are in the Borth census's in 1851 and 1861, in about the right place in the lists,

but at that time houses did not have names so we do not know if this was this house. It was certainly there in 1871 and the house had a name, Ocean Wave. It had holiday visitors for seven weeks during the summer, with room for three sets of visitors at the same time, single and families (Cambrian News). The Captain had been born in London and was 62. His wife Mary was local, born in the parish. Their daughter Catherine aged 26 had married another master mariner, Captain William Arter (Census)

We learn some useful information about the two houses in 1880. There was to be a Sale of property at the Friendship Inn on Friday 20th October. For Sale were,

“a substantially built and commodious freehold dwelling house known as Ocean Wave in the main street of Borth in the occupation of Captain Thomas Lewis (son of Captain John) containing a parlour, kitchen, back kitchen, cellar and six bedrooms. Also the adjacent house occupied by Captain William Arter and containing precisely the same accommodation with the exception of one bedroom. Also small yards and gardens at the back communicating with the Sea Beach. Also two plots of garden ground at present held with the houses, each measuring about 20 yards by 11 yards, and situate at the back of the house of Captain John Lewis (Cambrian Villa - and another son of the Captain) and formerly known as the Nag’s Head.”

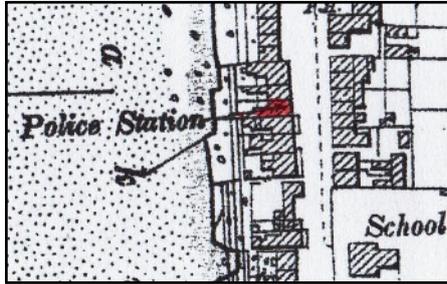
Did they sell? Members of the Lewis family were still there at the Census of 1881. Both houses were called Ocean Wave, Ton-y-mor was Number 1 and in the house was Captain Thomas Lewis’s wife Mary, aged 36 and born in 1844 in Llancynfelin, and their six year old son Owen (Parish Register, Llanfihangel Genau’r Glyn, Ceredigion Archives). Captain John Lewis by then a retired mariner of 77 was living next door at Number 2 with his wife.



LEFT This was Captain Thomas Lewis’s house in 1886, marked in red. It opened directly on to the street. A wall or fence enclosed the yard which was shared with Ocean Wave Number 2. The small detached building was probably their Ty Bach - outside lavatory. There is a second fence, possibly a sea defence of stakes driven into the stone bank, and another one at the edge of the sand - shown by small dots. (A detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map, surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888. Cardiganshire III.10.

A new young family were there by the 1891 Census. The house was then called Number 4 Picton Terrace, and it was the home of the Rev. Joseph Llewellyn, a minister of the Borth congregational Chapel and other Chapels in the area. In the house was his wife Mary Jane Llewellyn with a four month old baby, John Aeronwy Llewellyn. At the 1901 Census the minister was at home, and there were two more children, a son Richard Penry Llewellyn and a daughter Rhodwen. Also in the house was their niece Elizabeth Jane Llewellyn who was 19 and was a dressmaker. A young minister, the Rev Richard Evans was visiting them. The Rev. Llewellyn was a very useful and valued member of the community. In 1896 he was a juror at the Inquest on the murder of Mary Davies of London Place (Ceredigion Journal, Vol. XVI, No. 2, pp. 11-40). In 1895 Kelly’s Directory gave his address as ‘Picton Terrace’. He was secretary to the Jubilee Borth

Eisteddfod of 1897 (Cambrian News, July 2nd.) He became chairman of Borth's Reading Room and Library Committee (Newspaper Cutting, Aberystwyth Library). He moved off to the bigger and newer house, 'Bronheulyn' by 1911 (Census) and in 1926 he became Borth's Postmaster. (A John Thomas photograph of him is on-line, National Library of Wales).



LEFT This was the house in 1904, fenced off at the back from Ocean Wave (Hafod Heli). Next door was the Police Station of Constable Davies. A Jones family of Ty Canol had a sailing ship called after the famous General Picton who died at Waterloo, and this gave the name Picton to the terrace. (Ordnance Survey map as before, revised in 1904, published in 1905)

In 1901 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied the house was valued at £300. There would have been £7 to pay, £8.5s 7d gross. The address was still Number 4 Picton Terrace. The owner and occupier was A. C. de Boinville. He also owned and 'occupied' Ocean Wave next door. At the 1911 Census, when filling in the form de Boinville was living next door in Ocean Wave which he called Ocean House. He did not bother with details of Number 4 Picton Terrace (Ton-y-môr) so it was left out of the list. Alexander Chester de Boinville was French but naturalised British in 1875. He was 59 and a retired 'commercial agent' who spoke English. His wife Melinda Maud was 53, and English, born in Cheltenham. They had been married for 21 years but had no children. They had a general servant, Emma Jane Thompson, born in West Bromwich, and aged 28.

In 1925 someone called 'Cope' paid the rates as owner and occupier. In 1934, 1938 and 1949 the owner of the house, was T. Campbell James and the occupier was L. James. With votes for the house in the General Election of 1945 were Joyce E. Chalk, Rosa and Stanley M. Mason and Edith A Deex. Probably these were tenants of the Campbell James's.

In 1963 paying the rates was Doctor Phillip Arthur Clarke, and he had a vote for the house which suggests he was living there (Rates and Electoral Rolls, Ceredigion Archives). The present house name is Welsh and means 'a wave of the sea' or 'sea breaker.'



On this photograph by John Thomas of the last quarter of the nineteenth century the house is the fourth from the left. It, and its pair both were rendered, and you can see their big chimney. There were no front gardens

(On-line, National Library of Wales).

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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