

# 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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## TY TWT Morfa Borth – Borth Marsh

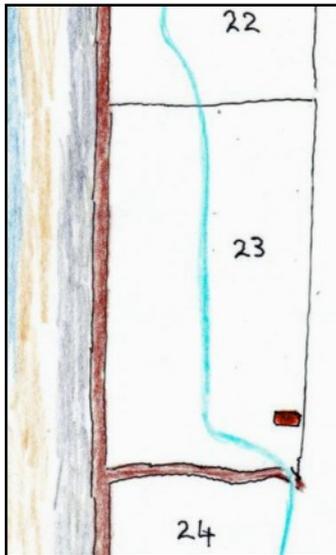
The northernmost bungalow on the east side of the Back Lane, built by 1938 on ground reclaimed from the bog as pasture, with rough grassland at the back.



In Welsh its name means a neat, tidy or smart house. It is a bungalow under a gable roof parallel to the back lane. On the south end of the gable is a chimney. The walls and chimney are rendered. On the north side of the front is an extension with a porch and the front door is on the south side of this. The windows are modern. The front yard is hard standing, with a few plants under the north wooden fence. On the south side of it is a garage under a roof parallel to the back lane with access from the yard. There is an adjacent pair of tall wooden gates painted white. At the back of the bungalow, in the centre, is a considerable extension, and a small single storey brick building. The bungalow has very generously sized ground at the back almost to the railway line. As this is soft ground, formerly the marsh, and being one floor only, a bungalow there will not be too heavy and possibly it has had some kind of raft put beneath it.

On the 1905 Map the dotted line of the township boundary is the ancient route of the River Lerry. This would be at the back of the bungalow but the back lane row is safely to the west of the old river route. However some dampness may remain in the ground. The water was diverted by 1791 and a special stream for the village houses was arranged. Today that water is on the east side of the railway line, well away from the bungalows.

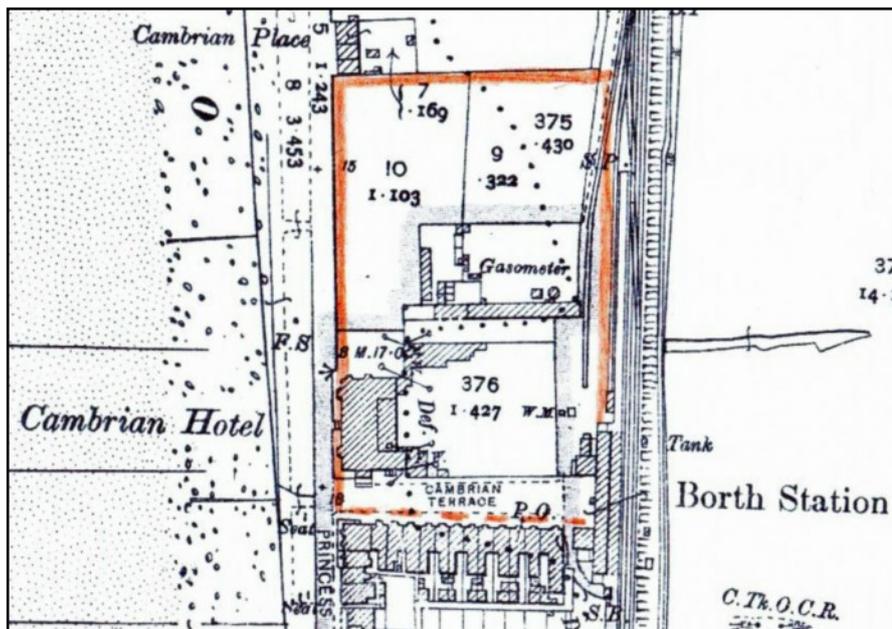
The ground for this house was enclosed in 1809 by a local lawyer called Big John (John Lewis) from the pebble embankment thrown up by the sea, and called 'waste' because it was no use for farming, and the marsh ground beside it (also called 'waste') could be reclaimed for pasture with drainage ditches. 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. John Lewis had a cottage marked in red on it called Terfynau (boundaries) – where the railway station is today. There were no other cottages. On a map of 1829 it the ground was Number 23. A rent of £16 had to be paid every year to the Crown manor who owned



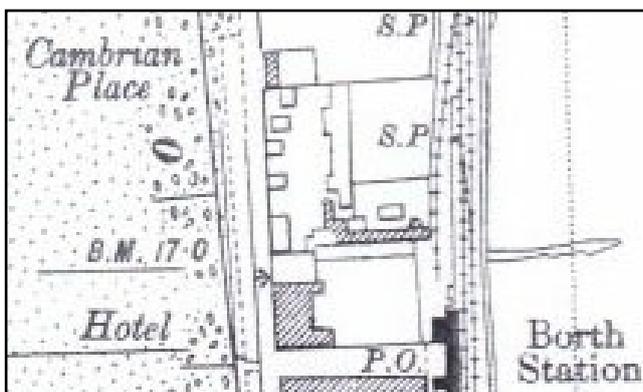
the ground, but there was an option to buy it for twice that, and a note with the map said that John Lewis had bought it at a Manor Court Leet in 1809. The road had been there for centuries and was a turnpike road by the 1770s. It led to a ferry from Ynyslas to Aberdovey and was a quick way to North Wales.

ABOVE A detail copied from the map of 1829 National Archives LRRO 1/3060

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 was a Hotel and Land Development Company Ltd.



ABOVE A detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map of 1905. The red line is the former land of John Lewis.

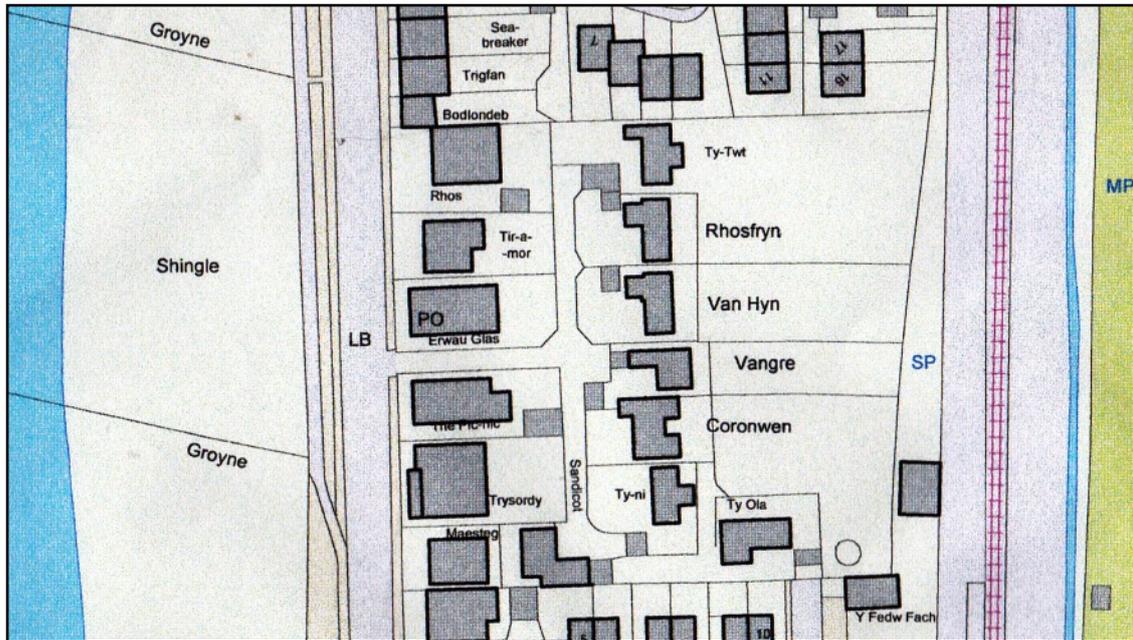


LEFT On this detail from a six inch map of 1948 the place for the row of bungalows is sketched in, but there was no back lane and no details of houses or gardens.

The granddaughter of Captain Davies who built Maesteg remembers that the ground behind it was owned by Mary Roberts. She was the owner of the Garibaldi Draper's shop (now the Premier Stores) and other properties in

Morfa Borth. They were an enterprising family. By 1924 her son Howard Llewellyn Roberts had set up lawn tennis courts on former Hotel land (Cambrian News, May 30<sup>th</sup>) and by 1934 the family had five bungalows in the Back Lane for themselves and for tenants. There is no mention of a bungalow there then called Ty Twt. however Miss Roberts and Howard Llewellyn Roberts were paying the rates for the tennis courts, and Miss Roberts also paid for a bungalow and a 'shelter'. This bungalow had no name then. At that time there was a was a Ty Twt at the back of the villa called Ballarah. By 1934 this became called 'Grasmere' but the rates office still called it Ty Twt in 1949 so it is not possible to trace the beginnings of this Ty Twt name on the bungalow in the Back Lane with the help of the rates.

Ty Twt rates in 1963 were paid by Geoffrey Edwin Piper and he had a vote for the bungalow (£12 rateable value) (Electoral Registers and Rates, Ceredigion Archives).



ABOVE A detail from a modern Council Map showing the row of bungalows.

(Map courtesy of Councillor Ray Quant who provided it for research for a village event)

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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-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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