

# 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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## INMAN COTTAGE

Formerly Cambridge Cottage. Home of a stonemason Evan Jones and his family by 1871 and still in possession of his descendants in the twentieth century.



The cottage is double fronted with a gable roof parallel to the street with a wing at the rear. The roof has two stone chimneys either end. There is a tall chimney pot arrangement on the southernmost chimney. The roof has red ridge tiles on the top and slates. The walls are rendered. Two gable windows in the front roof light an upper floor. Their barge boards have a curving pattern and end with finials. The windows are slightly recessed because of the thick stone walls, and are sash windows with wooden frames. Their two lights have a diamond pattern of leaded panes. The front door is wooden with one window with a pattern of six lights. The front of the cottage opens directly on to the pavement. The north wall does not have windows and Sea Winds next door butts up to part of it. The south wall has a small window with two lights high up to light a room under the roof, and below is a larger window with a smaller top light and larger one below. Both match the front windows. Joining on to the



*ABOVE Inman photographed in 2015.*

back is a lean to extension from the cottage eaves with a back door beside the cottage rear wall with a window beside it. The wing behind is the same height as the cottage. There are other smaller buildings at the back.

Today the cottage has a back garden and narrow strip of land at its south side where a block wall protects the back garden.



*ABOVE LEFT* The front window on the northern side.

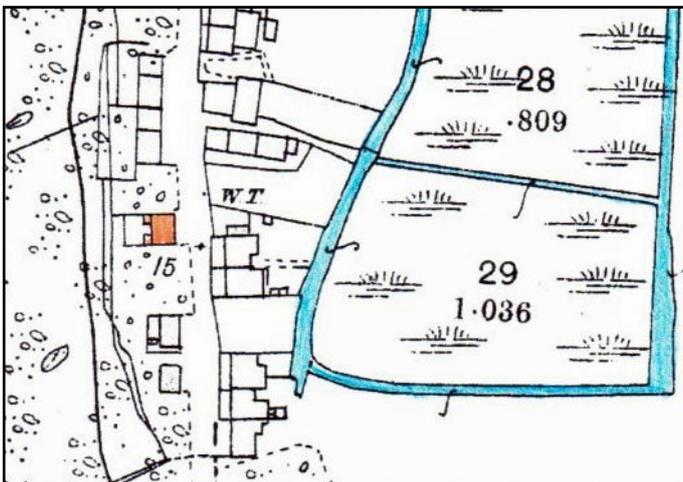
*ABOVE RIGHT* This is the southernmost chimney and it has some nicely squared and coursed stones.

The ground for this house was the pebble embankment thrown up by the sea, which was called 'waste' because it was no use for farming, and was

owned by the manor owned by the Crown. 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. The ground was still beach in 1845.

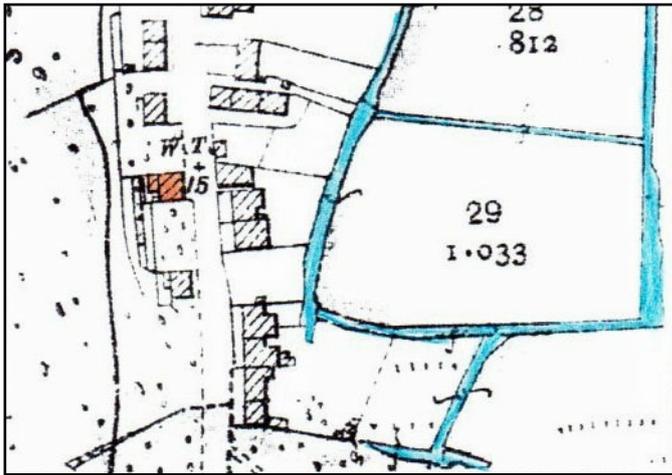
It is not possible to find the family in the 1861 Census.

In the cottage at the 1871 Census was a stonemason Evan Jones, born in Taliesin (Llancynfelin) about 1835, with Elizabeth his wife, born in Borth about 1831. and and a young family, small daughters Sarah Ann 8, Catherine 7, Eliza 5 and John Robert 2. By 1891 Robert had become a mariner. This family spoke only Welsh.



In the 1881 Census at Number 3 Cambridge Place the family was still

*LEFT* We can see the cottage on the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map of 1888, surveyed in 1886. It had two small extensions on the back - one probably its Ty Bach. The cottage opened directly on to the street, but had an enclosed back garden. The map shows some kind of fencing shared by the cottages - possibly wooden sea defences - bundles of sticks.



there, Evan, Eliza and their daughter Sarah Ann.

*LEFT* On the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map of 1905 revised in 1904 there was a bigger extension on the north side at the back of the cottage.

In 1891 at the Census in the address was still Cambridge Place. At the Census of 1901 the address was Cambridge Cottage. Evan had died and his widow

Eliza Jones, aged 70 was there.

In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied the cottage was valued at £51 15s. There would have been £2.16s to pay, £3.10s gross. That was a good quality cottage by Borth standards. The owner and occupier was Eliza Jones. (Ceredigion Archives and the NLW).

At the Census of 1911 the cottage had four main rooms. In the cottage was Eliza Jones, now very elderly, aged 80, with 'private means'.

Paying the Rates in 1925 was John Robert Jones, Eliza's son, as the owner and occupier. Aran Morris remembered him as an 'old mariner who had a dragnet which he lent to the young men to use to fish off the beach - warning then to beware of the old tree stumps. (Terry Davies, Borth, A Seaborn Village page 69.)

With votes for the cottage at the General Election of 1945 were Clifford Jones and Victoria D. Jones.

Paying the Rates in 1949 was Clifford Jones.

In the 1950s and 1960s there was a kitchen on the back, and the cottage had two floors with three bedrooms upstairs. (John and Gwyneth Dickinson)

In 1970 better sea defences were built behind Inman - 'the exposed face of the existing sleeper wall was encased below concrete capping in concrete or timber. The encasement was to be buried about 3 feet below the beach. The plot next to Inman on the north was still open ground as Salt winds had not yet been built.

Is it possible that the stonemason Evan Jones had a hand in building Inman?

*Fresh water for the cottages and houses came from a brook on the far side of the pebble embankment, and for fuel villagers could dig peat on the far side of the River Leri near Ynys Fergi.*

*Usually the old cottages had a central front door and a passage opening on one side into a kitchen/living room with the hearth - the biggest room (on the south side of Inman)) - and opening into a bedroom on the other. A ladder or stairs would lead up to a loft where children slept.*



*LEFT This is the beach side of Inman in 2015. The upper floor of the wing on the north side has french windows opening on to a balcony with views of the sea. Steps lead down into the yard which is a raised platform. Below the balcony is the kitchen.*



*LEFT This was the rear of Inman between 1941 and 1959. There was a chimney with two chimney pots on the wing on the left which was taller than the old cottage. Inside was a back bedroom and on the ground floor a kitchen and back door into the yard. The Ty Bach (lavatory) was on the left, and was free standing. It had a wide seat over a bucket.*



*ABOVE There had been storm damage when this photograph was taken. The Ty Bach (on the left) was damaged and the sea had thrown stones up into the yard. This was Clifford Jones the baker and his family.*

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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-eredigion.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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