

# 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

*This work is for research and educational purposes only.*

# ISGAER

Morfa Borth

At the northern end of the village with the beach over the road. Home of a Borth Welseyan Methodist Minister, the Rev. William Christmas Humphreys. Built after 1925 but by 1934, and influenced by Art Deco. Later a bed and breakfast with a chalet or bungalow. The house stands on part of two acres of land enclosed by Captain Thomas Jones in 1824 which he built a cottage on, 'Hopewell'.



*LEFT Isgaer in 2009.*



This is a one and a half storey house with a gable roof with hipped ends parallel to the road. Finials decorate the tops of the hipped sections. There are no chimneys. At the eaves are ends of beams. The house almost fills its plot and is very close to the White House next door on the south. It is almost in line with its neighbours. This is a brick house as the rendering on the walls leaves some brick areas showing. The balcony and front wall makes some of the geometrical shapes loved in the 1930s - see also the pattern in Brockhill's front wall. This house was designed for

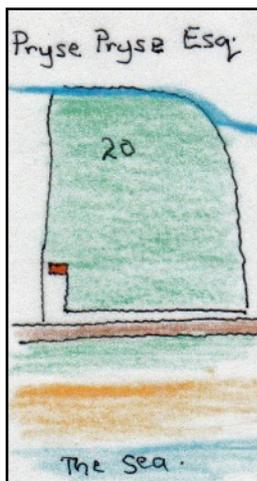
an owner with a car as there is a passageway built into the front of it wide enough to drive a car through to a garage. The upper front windows with their balcony will have a good view

of the sea. The lower front windows are very large and very plain. A coloured band links them and is continued on the end wall. A wall protects the house front from a hard standing parking area by the road. There is no front entrance to this house.

*BELOW The front door is edged with exposed brick, and this is the driveway to the garage.*



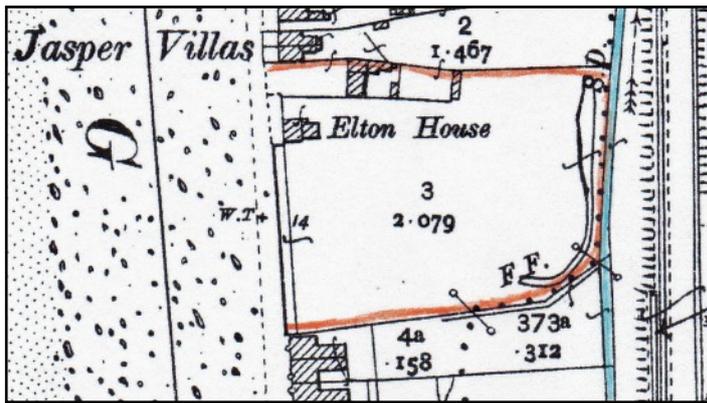
The ground on part of which Isgaer stands was two acres enclosed in 1824 by Captain Thomas Jones. Part was the embankment of stones built up by the sea, and part was reclaimed marsh. It was called 'waste' by the Crown Manor who owned it, and the Captain could pay a rent for it, or buy it for two years rent.



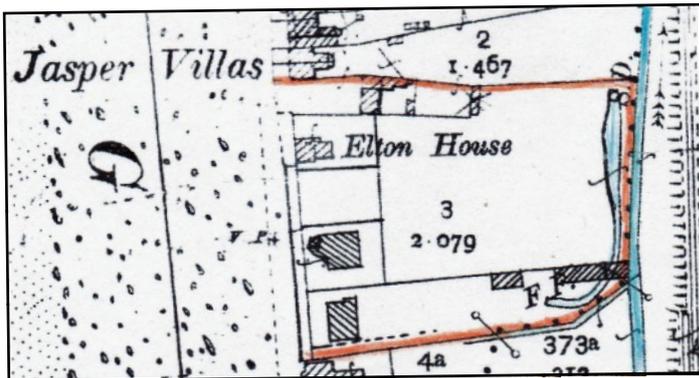
*LEFT On a Crown Manor Map of 1829 the ground was Number 20 and extended to a brook - now a dry ditch. The cottage set back from the road was Hopewell, named after a sloop many shares of which were owned by Captain Jones of Hopewell, and sailed by him and his son (Copied from National Archives Map LRRO 1/3060)*

The road was centuries old 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 avoiding the thousands of acres of the Cors Fochno and travellers could continue up the coast, avoiding mountains. The brook supplied the cottages with fresh water, the out flow from the Glan Lerry Corn Mill plus some little streams, and for fuel the cottagers had an area of peat near Ynys Fergi.

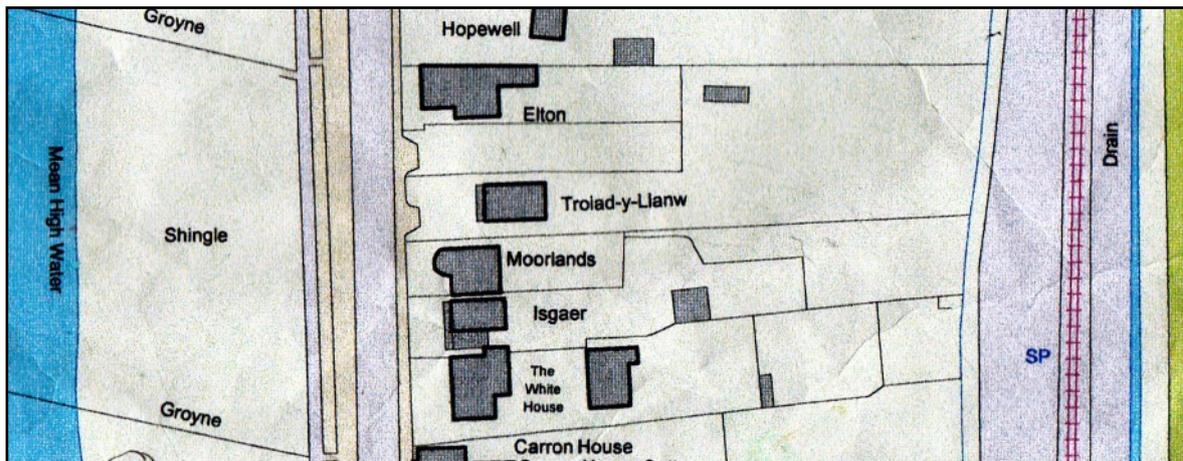
However by 1934 Isgaer had its own water supply and possibly electricity too. The Shiloh Chapel had it by 1932, Borth St Matthew's Church, the Vicarage and the National School by 1934, and the railway station by 1936 (*Advertisement by A.W. Miller E.C.A. of Aberystwyth in a Recipe Book in aid of Borth's St Matthew's Church .and the Coastlines of the Cambrian Railways, C. C. Green*)



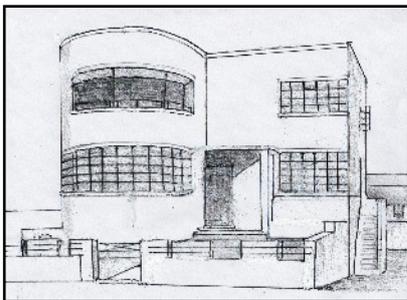
LEFT This was the Jones's ground in 1904 outlined in red. Hopewell is on the northern boundary and Elton House had been built for Captain Thomas Jones's son, also a Captain Thomas Jones. No other houses had been built there. (Detail from the Ordnance survey 25 inch map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire NW).



LEFT The Council drew in new houses on their copy of the 1905 Ordnance Survey Map but Isgaer was not there yet. Moorlands and The White House are already built. Isgaer will later be fitted in between them. (Detail from the map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire NW)



ABOVE This detail from a modern Council Map shows how Isgaer fits in, taking up almost all the width of its plot, so access to its garage at the rear is within the front of the present house (Map courtesy of Councillor Ray Quant).



LEFT This is a sketch of Bockhill when it was new. Isgaer's balcony at the front makes the same pattern as the front wall of Brockhill but with transparent panels and no railings.

Isgaer was built after 1925 but by 1934, and paying the rates then was the Rev. William Christmas Humphreys, a minister at Borth's Shiloh Chapel. He was 51 years old and had been born in Port Dinorwic. He had wed a local girl, Margaret

Ellis, the daughter of John Ellis a shoemaker and Mary Ellis who ran a boarding house at Carron a few doors along the road (Ceredigion Archives). In 1934 Mrs Humphreys gave a recipe for Steamed Semolina or Ground Rice Pudding for a recipe book published by the Cambrian

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News in aid of Borth's St Matthew's Church. In 1926 the Rev. Humphreys had moved to Carron (Kelly's Directory, Ceredigion Archives). In December 1929 he wrote a history of Borth; 'Borth rhwng 100a 50 flywyddoed un ôl' (Borth one hundred and fifty years ago) which has been translated into English on Terry Davies's website.

The Rev. Humphreys still had a vote for Isgaer at the 1945 General Election, as also did Anne J. Hughes, Kenneth S. Jones, Ralph G. Jones and Rowland H. Ellis. He paid the rates for the house in 1949 when it was valued at £21. The Rev. Humphreys paid the rates in 1957.

In 1963 Mrs Humphreys paid the rates, then £56. It was considered a valuable house. (Electoral Registers and Rates Ceredigion Archives).

In 1964 Mrs Tompkinson was advertising bed and breakfast there, she had room for twelve people and mentions a bungalow or chalet and a restaurant serving 'grills'.

Today Isgaer's garden no longer extends to the old ditch but it has extra ground behind Moorlands.

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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>

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