

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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MANSFIELD Morfa Borth

On the beach side in the southern part of Borth High Street. It replaced one of Borth's old cottages, home of Lewis Jones a master mariner. Formerly Number 1 Florence Place. Mansfield is one of a pair of houses built between 1925 and 1928. The home of Ada Garfield.



Mansfield is a semi-detached and single fronted house of two storeys, with an attic floor served by dormer windows at the back of the roof. It has a gable roof parallel with the road, and there is a central chimney shared with Birchfield, each house with three chimney pots. This is a brick house, and it is built in a style very fashionable in the suburbs of cities in the later 1920s and 1930s. The front has rough cast rendered walls, and like the 1920s and 1930s houses it has canted bay windows for the top and ground floor.

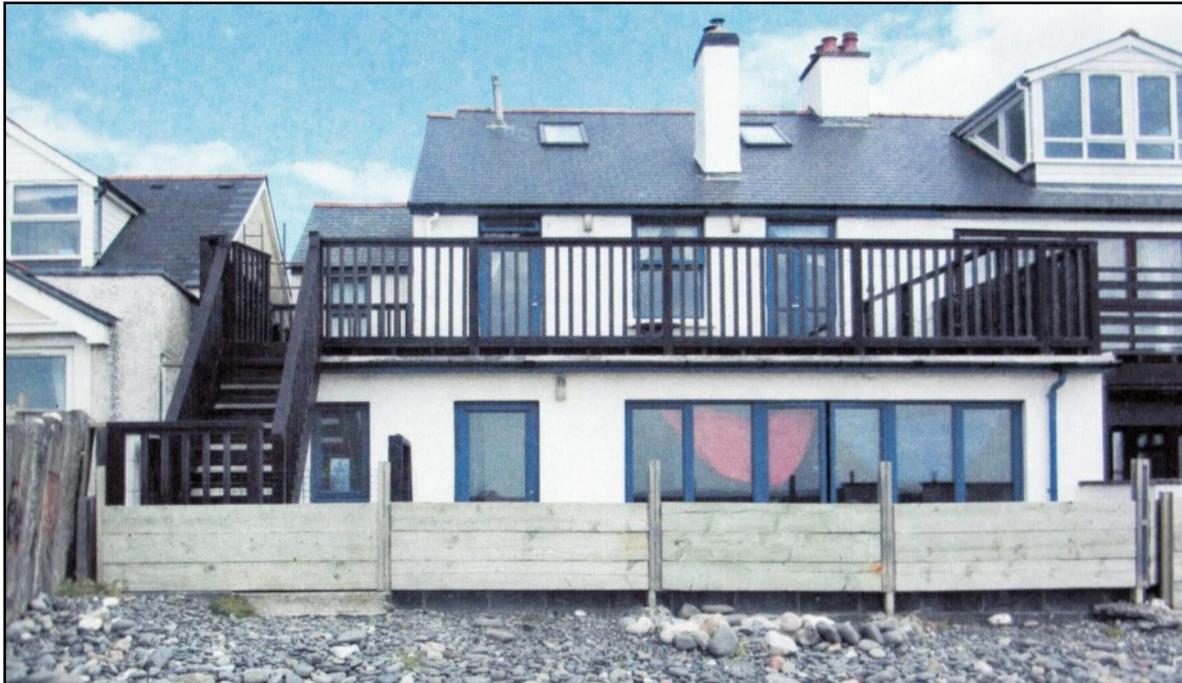


*ABOVE Mansfield in 2009
LEFT The passage beside the house is blocked by another building. It used to lead to the beach.*

Mansfield's top bay is narrower than the one below. Over the top bay is a typical late 1920s, 1930s pediment topped by a finial, and with decorative timbers. Dividing the two parts of the front of the house is a shallow lean-to roof which extends right across both houses, giving a protective roof over the front doors. Slender posts support this roof, and they stand on a wall which ends with a decorative mouldings, like the top of a column, and whose lower moulding exactly matches the line of moulding below the ground floor bay window. There is a plinth below it. The low, rendered wall which encloses the front garden has posts which echo the these columns with their tops. The wall is decorated with a shallow recessed panel which matches the one on the ground floor bay. In 2009 it may have had the original windows. One step at the gateway and then four steps lead up to the front door which has a small window alongside. This is a front door

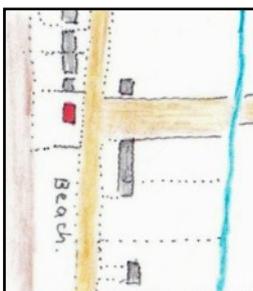
higher up than many other High Street houses. The house extends on the north with a garage and a room above it. It is possible that the lower section of this house was red brick like Birchfield next door, as this was another feature popular in the late 1920s and 1930s. It is

lucky so many original features have survived on this pair of houses, as this is a rare style of house for Borth's High Street.



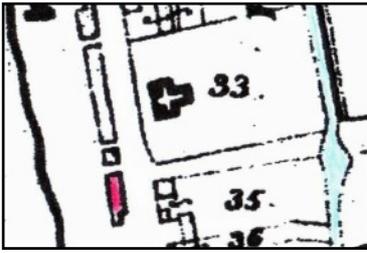
Mansfield from the beach in 2015. At the back the roof has a chimney and roof lights for an attic floor. Like many beach side houses its upper floor opens on to a railed balcony which extends the full width of site, with a staircase down into the yard, the lower floor beneath it is filled in with rooms as far as this staircase. This has a door into the yard, and a wide block of windows for views of the beach. A board fence encloses the yard, in 2105 with no apparent gateway on to the beach though there are some steps down to it.

The ground for this house, a bank of stones thrown up by the sea, was called 'waste' by the Crown Manor who owned it as it was no use for farming (National Archive Crown Manor Map LRRO 1/3060). When a villager enclosed this plot to build on he would have either paid a rent for it, or bought it. 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. Fresh water for the cottages and houses came from a brook on the other side of the road - the tailrace from the Glanlerry Corn Mill (Felinwern) plus two small streams. Taps in the street with spring water had arrived by 1883 (Cambrian News 9th November). For fuel villagers had their own area to dig peat on the other side of the River Leri just north of Ynys Fergi (Tithe Apportionments Map, Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Henllys Township, on-line at CYNEFIN National Library of Wales). By the time Mansfield was built coal came by train, and electricity had either arrived in the village or was just about to arrive. There was no sewage scheme, and houses had outdoor lavatories, their seats over stone lined holes in the stony bank which had to be cleaned out at intervals.

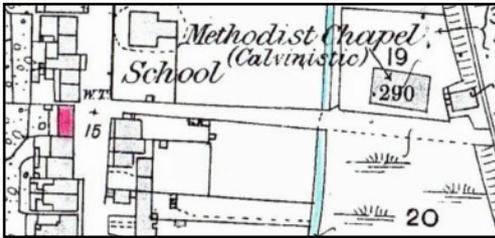


LEFT There was a cottage on this site in 1829, marked in red - the home of Lewis Jones a master mariner who enclosed the plot in 1825, and who had shares in the sloop Emmett and later all the shares in the schooner Success and commanded them. The lane to Brynllys (today to the Animalarium) was much wider then, It was to become narrower when a Glanrhyd cottage was built on part of it (Copied from a Map of 1829, Crown Manor, National Archives, LRRO 1/3060, plot Number 8)

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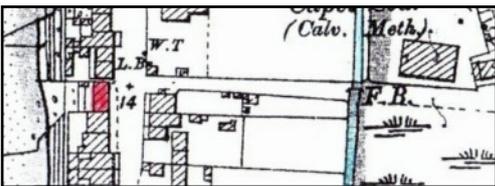


LEFT By 1848 another cottage had been added alongside it on the south, on the plot where Birchfield now stands. Marked in red are the cottages in 1848. Buildings on this beach side of the road were only sketched in as they paid no tithe. Number 33, then the National School, now has the Meddygfa on the site. (Tithe Apportionments Map, Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Henllys Township, on-line at CYNEFIN National Library)



LEFT These were the cottages in 1886, and three made up 'Florence Place'. Mansfield is the northernmost on the site of Number 1, then the cottage of Richard and Anne Jones which had a wider plot than Number 2 where Birchfield stands today. Number 3 survives today as The Cottage. Behind Number 1 were some small buildings and there would have been a Ty Bach (outside lavatory). (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888. Cardiganshire)

In Number 1 at the 1861 Census was Anne Jones, aged 29, married and born in the parish and with a small sons Thomas Jones 5, and Richard Lewis Jones 2. Anne's husband Richard Jones was at home at the 1871 Census, he was a master mariner aged 39, and also in the cottage were their sons, Thomas and Richard. In 1881 they were looking after an orphan Emma Jane Hunter, born in London. By the 1901 Census Richard Jones was 68, he had retired from the sea and was working as a 'railway carter'.



LEFT Number 1 Florence Place in 1904. It did not have many lines of sea defensive fences like its neighbours. (Detail from the 25 inch map, 1905)
BELOW It is the furthest cottage on this postcard dated 1907 ('Breezy Borth' Guide Book, Aberystwyth Public Library).



In 1910 for a tax planned but not levied, the cottage was valued at £17.1s. This was very little, suggesting it was in a poor state, as was also the cottage next door only £11.1s whereas Number 3, 'The Cottage' was valued at £100. Richard Jones owned and occupied the cottage and would have had £2,12s to pay, £3.5s gross.

(Ceredigion Archives, T/DV/18 and a map at the National Library of Wales).

In 1925 no-one is listed as paying the rates. Was the cottage in a poor state and uninhabited?

By 1928 Mansfield was built on the site, and paying the rates of £20 in 1934 for the house and garage was Ada Garfield. Because of its wider plot and garage it paid more than Birchfield

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at £16 which was also built. With votes for the house at the General Election of 1945 were Ada, and Adela Llewellyn Robinson. Ada was still paying the rates in 1949.

Paying the rates in 1963 was Hedley C. Wooldridge who was 'resident' there. He had a vote for the house and so did Jessie Evelyn Wooldridge (Rates and Electoral Registers, Ceredigion Archives).



The pair of houses, it is possible that the lower section of Mansfield on the right was once exposed red brick as that was the fashion in the late 1920s and 1930s.

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gan/by Beryl Lewis
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Hoffem ddiolch i Beryl am fod mor garedig â chaniatáu i ni rannu ei gwaith â'r gynulleidfa ehangaf bosibl.

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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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