

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

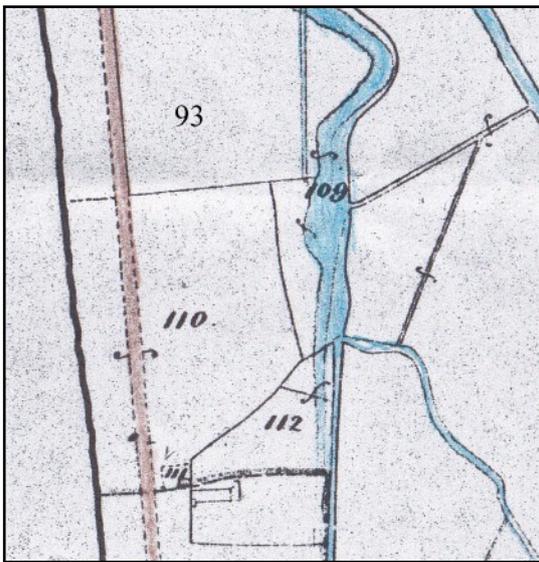
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The NORTH PARADE TERRACE

An Introduction to the houses.

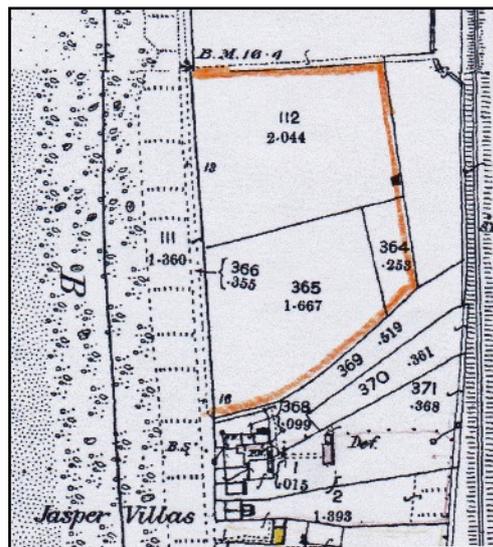
Gwynt-y-mor, Montfort, Trem-y-don, Hazelmere, Ballarah, Marine Court, Picton, Bardsey View, Grosvenor and Neuadd Wen.

The ground on which these houses stand is a stone bank thrown up by the sea and called 'waste' by the Crown Manor who owned it as it was no use for farming. The road had been there for centuries, it was used in the twelfth century 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.

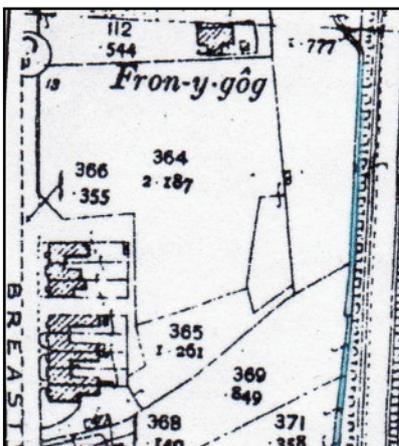


LEFT The terrace stands in a five acre field, number 110 in 1848, and was called an 'allotment' after the 'waste' was enclosed. Pryse Pryse of the Gogerddan Estate had it and used it as pasture. (Tithe Apportionments Map, Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Henllys Township, online at CYNEFIN, National Library of Wales).

RIGHT In 1886 there were no houses in field 110 which is marked in red. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and published in 1888. Cardiganshire III.10)



In 1891 Pryse Pryse sold some of Number 110 to Elsie Cecil Wright, the wife of a Birmingham manufacturer of screws and a keen golfer. She had the bungalow Fron-y-gôg built on a strip of it, and had the four acres of agricultural land to the south of it as well. (Deeds to Morlais, private collection).



LEFT By 1904 the terrace was taking shape in a roadside area of the field, allowing for access to the backs from a lane or track. From the top are Montfort, Tremydon and Hazelmere, Ballarah was not there yet, then Scranton Villa (Marine Court), Sunnyside (Picton), Bardsey View, Grosvenor Villa, and finally Sandmarsh (Neuadd Wen).

(Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire III.10)

The plots with the exception of Neuadd Wen the rear of which had access to and owned the small field (365) behind it, are shown as all the same size by this surveyor, however modern maps show that Montfort, Hazelmere, Ballorah and Grosvenor have wider plots. and today the rear boundaries of Bardsey View, and Grosvenor are deeper. The curving boundary of the old field 110 remained and is still there today.

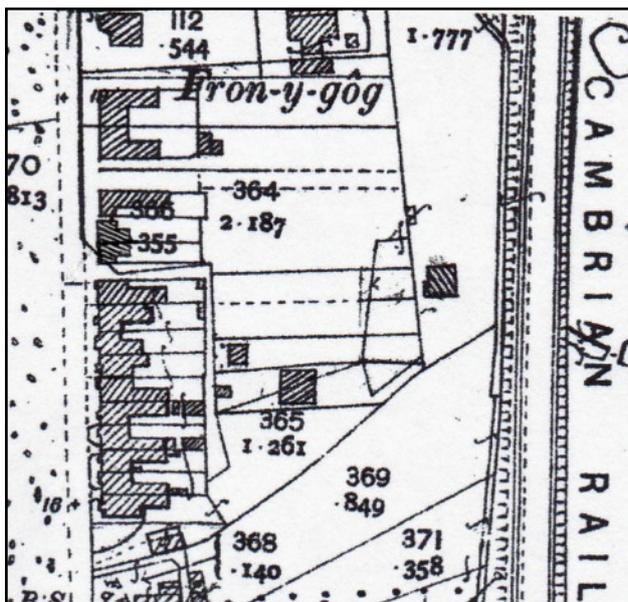
The golf course was already up and running before the Terrace houses were built, a selling point to attract holiday visitors to come to boarding houses on the Terrace.

The Cambrian News of 13 January 1899 reported that “several new houses of substantial dimensions are now being built at the north end (of Borth). It would pay a speculative builder to build houses of from £15 to £30 rental”. These were built by the 1901 Census; Sandmarsh (Neuadd Wen), Grosvenor House, Bardsey View, Sunnyside (Picton), Scranton Villa, Hazelmere, Tremydon and Montfort.

Two, Sandmarsh (Neuadd Wen) and Grosvenor were built by Gregson, a speculative builder who was developing Ynyslas. He put tenants into them. The others in 1910 all had individual owners. The rates represented a year’s rent, and £20, £25 and £26.10s would have had to be paid by the houses there in a 1910 valuation for a tax planned but not levied (Ceredigion Archives T/DV/18 and Map at the National Library of Wales).

The Cambrian News of 8 February 1907 reported that Mr Jenkin Jones of Tyrol was building one at the north end which was Gwynt-y-môr then called Caradog, and Captain John Jones of Rodney House (now Belair) was building Bardsey View. The newspaper was late with that one and should have written - ‘was already built’ as it was built and occupied at the 1901 Census.

Terry Davies has written that Ballarah and other houses in the north of the village were built by sea captains many of whom worked on steam ships (Borth, A Seaborne Village page 80). Some built homes to retire into, some as assets for rent. Ballarah was built by 1910.



LEFT The completed terrace is shown on this map of the Aberystwyth Rural District Council who had taken the 1905 25 inch map and drawn later buildings on it. It dates from after 1935 because Brockhill is shown at the roadside of Fron-y-gôg, and the two houses now Morlais had also been built. On the north end of the terrace was Gwynt-y-môr, Ballarah had filled the gap between Hazelmere and Marine Court, and Grasmere had been built behind the terrace (Ceredigion Archives)

The over-riding fact about this terrace is that with the exception of Gwynt-y-môr the style of the houses was the same - even though Montfort, Tremydon and Hazelmere have wider front doors. This echoes the Cambrian Terrace which was all built by the Cambrian Railway

Company. The three southernmost pairs of houses of North Parade have similar ground plans - two of these we know in 1910 had been built by the speculative builder Gregson for tenants. However the backs of the other houses vary, and so do the number of rooms inside. In the 1911 Census some houses had 14 rooms, some only 11. Perhaps the builder of the first houses there kept his architect's plans and sources of materials, and was employed by later owners to build their houses and he adjusted the rear extensions to suit each customer? There is only about eight years between the building of all of them.



The completed terrace, six chimneys long ending at Gwynt - mor with a dark coloured front, and Ballarah is there. This postcard is dated before 1935 (Brockhill was not built yet). The strong lines of the string courses link the houses together and we can see how they looked before modern alterations to the tops of the bay windows. Over the road was some grass and the beach. The low building at the far end was the 'Pavilion' of the golf club with another building beyond it. (Postcard Amgueddfa Ceredigion Museum)



LEFT Above the tops of the bays was a small wall with a half circle to hide the roofs, and edged with a line of moulding. This is the only one that has survived, and it is on Ballarah.

RIGHT Mock columns were made on the walls between the bay windows. These are on Tremydon.



The terrace front walls are all rendered so we cannot see the walling material. It is likely the 1899 houses were local rubble stone.



LEFT The back of the main house of Bardsey View. Using yellow bricks to edge the walls was fashionable at the latter part of the 19th century. Several High Street houses have it -in particular Gordon Villa and Chesterfield dated about 1891, and London House. However the stones on the back of Bardsey are poor quality random rubble.



LEFT There is a small area of stonework on the extension on the north side of Montfort but the edges of the window do not look like yellow bricks. This window may have been inserted later. Brickwork slab chimneys, shared between houses with six chimney pots (flues) for each house were a feature of the terrace. There were six. The smaller chimney served a kitchen below, and the rear extensions of the terrace houses are likely to have had one of these as they still had in an aerial photograph of 1956-1961.



LEFT The extension on the north side of the back of Hazelmere has a brick wall.



LEFT This detail of the front of Marine Court shows the curving barge board with its finial with little knobs top and bottom. The second floor window had a moulded frame with a keystone, and the front door was given importance by pilaster strips with inset panels each side, and over it an entablature held up by decorated brackets. It is likely that the houses from Montfort to Neuadd Wen once had these features.



TOP RIGHT The bracket on Montfort.

LOWER RIGHT The keystone above the front door on Tremydon.



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LEFT Gwynt-y-môr built later than the other houses - in 1907 for Jenkin Jones a plasterer of Tyrol, has a different front door though it too has been made to look important. (Cambrian News, February 8th.)

BELOW The terrace in about 1921 seen from its northern end shows the difference in design of Gwynt-y-môr from the other nine houses. It too has a large chimney and continues the line of the roof, but it does not have dormer windows.

(Detail from a postcard, private collection)



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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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