



# DARGANFOD HEN DAI CYMREIG DISCOVERING OLD WELSH HOUSES



NODDWYR/PATRONS

Syr/Sir Simon Jenkins, FSA, FRSL; Dr Eurwyn Wiliam, MA, PhD

Dathlu Treftadaeth Cymru drwy astudio tai  
traddodiadol a bywydau'r bobl oedd yn byw ynddyn nhw.

Celebrating Welsh Heritage through the study of traditional  
houses and the lives of the people who lived in them.

## CYLCHLYTHYR 43 Rhagfyr 2022

## NEWSLETTER 43 December 2022

**GWEFAN:** <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> yw prif sianel cyfathrebu'r Grŵp. Ewch i'r wefan i weld ein llyfrgell sy'n tyfu a nodweddion eraill. Fel arfer mae'n cynnwys manylion digwyddiadau diweddar a digwyddiadau sydd ar y gweill. Cyhoeddir fersiynau Cymraeg a Saesneg y Cylchlythyr hwn ar wahân ond anfonir y ddwy fersiwn i bob aelod

**OUR WEBSITE** <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> is the Group's main channel of communication. Please visit it to look at our growing library and other features. Normally it contains details of recent and forthcoming events. The Welsh and English versions of this Newsletter are printed separately but both are circulated to all members

### FROM THE CHAIR by Janice Dale

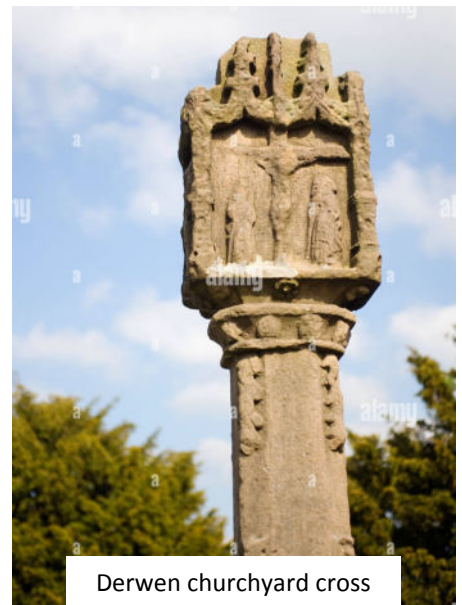
December already, with frosts for the first time this week after what has been the warmest year on record, so no doubt like me you will be driven indoors - a chance to catch up with some house histories! I am currently looking at the parish of Derwen in Denbighshire following an invitation to *Tai Teg Canol* - one of three houses in a farm complex. Researching is proving tricky as records don't differentiate between the houses. Looking at the Tithe, I think Derwen is unusual in having so many independent owners rather than finding the majority of properties owned by one of the large estates, I think this is going to take some time to unravel.

It is good to know that branches are getting out and about now, complemented by interesting zoom lectures covering a wide range of subjects; big thank you to Martin for arranging and Peter for sorting out all the techy bits. Our winter programme started with Michael Freeman on tourists impressions of Wales; we forget, today with our easy forms of transport and getting about, how adventurous these early tourists were.

It was a pleasure to see Frances Richardson who gave a lecture on the early shops and shopkeepers of 19<sup>th</sup> C Wales - I still remember the first lecture she gave the group many years ago on Penmachno. Looking at the work she has done over the years I am sure there might be possibly more talks from Frances.

Our third lecture will be Andy Hyde, and by the time you read this, no doubt we will have enjoyed it. Some years in Llansilin, he gave us a practical session on the work of early carpenters, which gave an insight into the skill of these men - I am always in awe of the abilities of the men who built the houses which are the focus of our group.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year.



### NEWS UPDATE FROM THE SECRETARY by Margaret Dunn

**Membership** Fiona Gale and branch secretaries will be contacting branch members with incorrect or overdue subscriptions or with Gift Aid queries. She can be contacted by email on [membership@discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk](mailto:membership@discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk).

**DOWH Insurance** Branch secretaries have the details of our insurance cover. The personal accident cover decreases for those aged over 75. Some members may select to independently provide their own personal insurance cover.

**COVID-19** Members may wear masks at any meetings. Notice will be given should hosts or organisers request that masks be worn.

**Parishes Project co-ordinator** We are delighted to welcome Gareth Davies as he starts in this role, working closely with Jane Parry Evans. We thank John Townsend for the immense amount of work he undertook to initiate the project, much of

it with Peter Masters. Unfortunately Covid-19 halted all but the armchair research aspect of this important project. Hopefully, in the New Year Gareth will be able to liaise with branches and assist / advise on initial research on so far untouched parishes as well as widen the scope of research in those parishes where work has been started.

**CAN YOU HELP?** One of our members who writes out her research longhand has recently completed an interesting House History on another Merioneth house and is asking if any member could possibly undertake the typing over the next few months. The author lives near Harlech. If you are interested in knowing more about this project, please contact [secretary@discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk](mailto:secretary@discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk).

**Gwynedd Family History Society Resources Centre** This is located in the same building as the Caernarfon Library, Pavilion Hill, Caernarfon LL55 1AS. Google maps link - <https://goo.gl/maps/jP7NhCJW1esBhJ8X8>. The centre is open to GFHS members and visitors on every third Saturday afternoon between 2 and 5 p.m. Experienced volunteers are there to offer help and general advice on researching family trees. For more information please see: <https://www.chtgwyneddfhs.cymru/en/resources>.

### Dr Eurwyn Williams' Presidential Address to the CAA, 2021

Dr Eurwyn Wilam was elected President of the Cambrian Archaeological Association for 2021-2022. His presidential address, given in July 2021, was printed in the 2022 volume 172 of Archaeologia Cambrensis. The title is '**Let use be preferred to uniformity': the study of vernacular architecture in Wales**' and it covers a very enlightening personal view on this topic. He is much appreciated as one of our DOWH patrons and the address includes several comments on our work over the years. It is available on YouTube. The URL address is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RXdkliiNZY>

### OBITUARIES



#### Eryl Rothwell Hughes pictured left

We are very sad to report the death in September 2022 of the very well known Anglesey branch member Mr Eryl Rothwell Hughes, aged 87. Eryl had been a physics teacher prior to working in Continuing & Adult Education where his gifts as a charismatic speaker and brilliant photographer led to his evening classes on all aspects of Welsh history and archaeology being very popular. He was much sought after as a speaker at field events such as the former annual Criccieth Festival and numerous local history society meetings. In the 1980s he introduced me to many early houses in the Abergele hinterland where he had many relations and we also crawled around roof spaces at Egryn, Merioneth in the 1990s, now run by the National Trust, and together explored many other old properties. He was an adviser to the infant DOWH and willingly shared his considerable expertise. Even after his eyesight deteriorated, his outstanding memory and determination enabled him, with the assistance of his wife, Esperanza, to continue to deliver well-attended illustrated lectures, especially on Anglesey where he had lived for most of his life. He must have introduced hundreds of people to the joys of studying houses - both vernacular and greater mansions.

#### Ann Rhydderch-Dart

We are very sad to report the death in August 2021, aged 70, of Ann Rhydderch-Dart, a distinguished Caernarfonshire branch member. Many will have known her during her time as the Dolgellau Record Office archivist and then as the senior archivist for Gwynedd based in Caernarfon. Her great depth of knowledge of North Wales was readily shared with all who requested information. She was also a trustee for the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust. Ann became a DOWH trustee in 2009 having earlier been a member of the DOWH Advisory Group of professionals who worked alongside the volunteers. Her calm wisdom and clear-sighted approach were a great asset and we will miss her. We send our deep condolences to her husband and son.

## Mr Dewi Williams

We are very sad to hear of the recent death of Dewi Williams of Penmorfa, Caernarfonshire Branch. He was one of the earliest local Welsh people involved with the first project in the Beddgelert and Snowdon area and also undertook house histories. He was a very well known local historian and history teacher in Pwllheli and was very humble about his extensive knowledge of the area. He will be greatly missed.

## Mr Peter Rock of Porthmadog and Mrs Dorothy Parry of Maentwrog

We also report with much regret, the passing of two more active local historians who attended activities in the Caernarfonshire and other branches. We will miss their company and their insights into many aspects of local history.

## NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

### CONWY BRANCH

#### Glossary of terms used in land deeds and other legal documents by Gill Jones (Part One)

##### Patronymics

Patronymics describes the process of giving a child the father's given, or forename, as a surname. This means that a family's name changes in successive generations. The Welsh patronymic system describes family trees in terms of the male line only and records the family association in the 'ap' or 'ab' prefix ('ap' is a contraction of the Welsh word *mab*, which means son). For example, Rhys ap Dafydd translates as 'Rhys, son of David'. Modern Welsh surnames such as Powell, Price and Prichard are the result of this contraction and a progressive tendency to Anglicise Welsh names: under the patronymic system they would have been ap Hywel, ap Rhys and ap Richard.

Girls were sometimes *verch* or *ferch* meaning 'daughter of' and abbreviated to 'vch' or 'vz'. Traditionally women kept their maiden names when they married as there was no surname for them to adopt. This practice continued up until the early 1800s in some areas, with rural areas clinging to the patronymic system longer than urban areas. Areas where English influence was strong abandoned patronymics earlier as did town families and the wealthy.

##### diem clausit extremum

The phrase *diem clausit extremum* means 'he closed his last day', that is, he had died. After the death of a *tenant in capite* (tenant in chief who held directly from the crown), a writ of **diem clausit extremum** would usually be issued by the heirs to the local escheator, the official responsible for taking possession of the dead tenant's estate on behalf of the king who was the *ultimus haeres* (last heir). A jury would be convened and an Inquisition Post Mortem held.

##### Inquisition Post Mortem

The extent of the crown's rights was determined by the holding of the *Inquisition Post Mortem*. The resultant outcome gave details of the lands/properties held by the deceased tenant *in capite*, the date of his death and the name and age of his heir. If there was a rightful heir, he paid relief (a sum of money) to the crown in order to take possession of the estate; if he was under age, the crown had the right of wardship and marriage. i.e. it was entitled to the revenue of the estate, and to select the heir's bride. This information was sent to the Court of Chancery. N.B. If the land was part of a Lordship e.g. Denbigh, Conwy, Caernarvon the 'Lord' held the right of wardship and received the relief rather than the Crown.

##### The Court of Wards and Liveries

Lands held of the king in chief were subject to wardship if they fell by inheritance into the hands of a minor. The king was entitled to the profits of the estate during the minority; He had the right to choose the ward's marriage partner and to enter his inheritance. In practice, the king usually sold these rights to the highest bidder. The Court of Wards and Liveries was established in the early 1540s, to take over the administration of wardship from the Court of Chancery.

### Medieval Welsh Land Division - Cantref

Land was divided into *cantrefi*, which were themselves divided into smaller *cymydau* (commotes). The name *cantref* is derived from *Cant* ("a hundred") and *tref* (town in modern Welsh but formerly used for much smaller settlements). The *cantref* is thought to be the original unit, with the commotes being a later division. *Cantrefi* could vary considerably in size; most were divided into two or three commotes.

### Medieval Welsh Land Division - Commote

Welsh *cwmwd*, sometimes spelt in older documents as *cymwd*, plural *cymydau*). A secular division of land in medieval Wales.

### Demesne

Those parts of the land and rights of a manor that the lord retained for himself, as distinct from those used by his tenants. What might now be called the 'home farm'.

### Gavelkind

In Wales there was a custom of inheritance similar to that of gavelkind in England which, in Welsh, was known as *cyfran*. Under Welsh common law on a landowner's death the land would be divided equally among all his sons, including illegitimate sons.

### Gwele (+ person's name)

The land of that person

### Inheritance of property/estates

Heirs only had a life interest in the estate/property; they could not sell the freehold.

### Settlements

Most big landed estates in England and Wales were settled in order to preserve the estate intact for future generations and to make provision for family members. 'Strict settlement' was the most usual form of settlement from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. It had the following benefits: It put obstacles in the way of selling the land. The landowner was given only a life interest in the property. He was designated the 'tenant for life' or the 'tenant in possession'. He could not sell the estate without the agreement of various heirs and trustees. It put limitations on who could inherit the estate. It was usual for a new entail (see below) to be created with each new generation. The new entail would name the person who would inherit the estate, usually the eldest son of the tenant for life. He was designated the 'tenant in tail'. A strict entail in tail male would avoid the estate descending to more distant relatives such as cousins. It spelt out the amount of land or money which was available to support younger sons and female members of the family.

Settlements could not be broken (except by Act of Parliament) until the tenant in tail came of age and was able to agree to any changes. Until then, his estate was guaranteed by trustees. Technically, the trustees were the owners of the landed estate on behalf of the family. They were responsible for ensuring that all receipts and payments from the estate were paid to the various members of the family who were entitled to them.

### Entails

These enabled landowners to ensure that family land remained in the hands of the family. Freehold estates could descend (be passed on) in one of two ways:

**'Fee simple'.** Freehold ownership. There were no limitations on this estate. It could pass to any descendent (sons, daughters or grandchildren), or to collateral relatives (brothers, sisters or cousins).

**'Fee tail'.** Estates in fee tail were deliberately limited to descend only to specified people. They were 'entailed'. The most usual fee tail was 'tail male'. This limited the descent to the legitimate male heirs 'of the body' of the owner, i.e. sons and grandsons of the owner's marriage. 'Tail general' was similar, but included females. In tail male meant that males would take precedence over females. i.e. A younger son would inherit before an elder daughter. Entails ceased to be effective in 1833.



**Disentail** (disentail)

To release an estate from an entail i.e. when there are no direct heirs.

**Uses**

The terms of settlements and entails were guaranteed by having trustees involved. These were usually lawyers or family friends. The word 'use' is another word for 'trust'.

**Annuities** or yearly rent

Family members could be provided for by annuities i.e. annual payments out of the estate. The annuitants could be widows of the landowner, heirs who had not yet inherited, unmarried female relatives etc. If this money is paid out of lands it is called a rent charge. If it is paid out of properties it is known as an annuity.

**Moiety**

Half, one of two parts into which an estate or inheritance is to be divided.

**Abstract of Title**

The written evidence of ownership that followed the public act of transferring land. It usually shows a detailed list of deeds showing descent of property to the present owner.

**Hereditaments**

Any kind of property which can be inherited. e.g. land, property, titles, coats of arms etc ... but not moveable property (i.e. goods and chattels).

**Indenture**

Legal agreement between 2 parties that reflects a debt or purchase obligation.

**Land Transactions - Freehold Land**

Gift (12th-15th centuries)  
 Feoffment (12th-19th centuries)  
 Quitclaim (12th-19th centuries)  
 Letters Patent (13th-19th centuries)  
 Bargain and Sale (16th-19th centuries) Lease and Release (16th-19th centuries)  
 Final Concord (12th century-1833)  
 Common Recovery (15th century-1833)  
 Deed of Covenant for the production of title deeds (18th-19th centuries)  
 Grant or Conveyance (1845-1925)

**Land Transactions - Gifts**

This was the most common deed recording the sale of land in the medieval period. Despite the name, a deed of gift was not a means of giving something for free. Gifts were generally replaced by feoffments around the 15th century. These nearly always left some rights to the giver. Often this meant that the property could only be inherited by heirs of a certain class, in particular by receiver's ancestors.

**Land Transactions - Feoffment**

A feoffment is similar to a deed of gift, recording the sale of real property (land or buildings) from one party to another, for a monetary consideration. The amount of money involved is not usually specified until around the sixteenth century. It developed in the Middle Ages. The actual transfer of property took place through a ceremony of 'livery of seisin'. The feoffment merely confirmed the seisin.

**Land Transactions - Livery of Seizin**

Legal possession i.e. 'the son and heir of ... has obtained seisin of his inheritance'. It applied only to freehold tenures which were inheritable.

### Land Transactions - Quitclaim

This was a formal renunciation of any claim to property which is not in the possession of the person making the quitclaim.

### Land Transactions - Bond for quiet possession

These were usually connected with other deeds, especially conveyances or leases. They strengthened the warranty clause in the deed.

### Land Transactions - Letters Patent

Grants of land or rights from the monarch to a private individual were made by letters patent. These documents are very impressive, written on big sheets of parchment. They are often illuminated at the top with enormous initial letters, decorations, and a portrait of the King or Queen. The Great Seal was attached at the bottom of the deed.

### Land Transactions - Bargain and Sale

Purpose - Sale of real property (land or buildings) from one party to another, for a monetary consideration. This form of conveyance had existed since the fifteenth century, but came into its own in 1535 under the Statute of Enrolments, as an alternative to the feoffment. Bargain and sales of freehold property were supposed to be enrolled (registered) in one of the royal courts at Westminster, or in a county court.

A memorandum of enrolment almost always appears on the back of the deed - headed 'Irotulatur' in Latin. Some deeds from the sixteenth century onwards were hybrid documents combining elements of the feoffment with elements from a deed of bargain and sale. These are described in archival catalogues variously as 'feoffment', 'bargain and sale with feoffment', or 'bargain and sale with livery of seizin'. They use the form of words from a bargain and sale, but lack an enrolment. Instead, they include a memorandum of livery of seizin.

### Lease and Release

This was a method of conveyancing intended to avoid 'livery of seizin or enrolment on a court roll. The purchaser first took a one year lease of the property; the vendor, on the following day, granted the reversion of the lease to the purchaser. The purpose of Lease and Release agreements was:-

1. Sale of real property (land or buildings) for a monetary consideration.
2. Mortgage of a real property in order to raise money.
3. Settlement of a real property from owners to trustees in order to limit descent to specified people.

*To be continued*

## ANGLESEY BRANCH

### Future events by Susan Hurst

The following programme has now been arranged for early 2023.

**Tues Jan 10th 2pm.** Joint Zoom meeting with the Caernarfonshire branch. Jane Parry-Evans will talk about the Society's Houses Database.

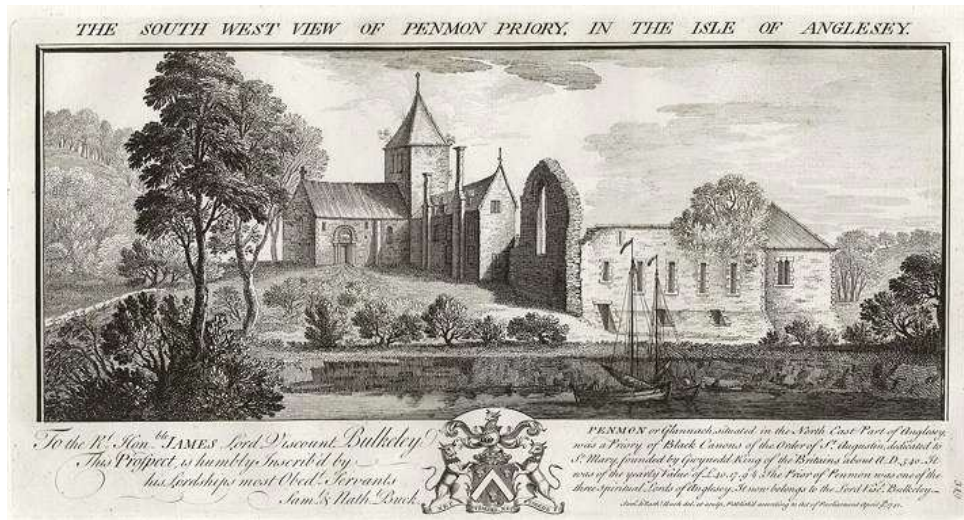
**Tues Feb 28th 2pm.** Church visit to either Llanbabo/Llantrisant or Llangristiolus with Andrew Davidson chief archaeologist at Gwynedd Archaeological Trust. Cost £3.

**Thurs March 30th 2pm** at the Archives in Llangefni. Terry Williams will give an informal slideshow with commentary on some 'Lost Houses of Anglesey'. Light refreshments available. Cost £3.

**Wed April 26 2pm.** A visit to Plas Bodafon with the kind permission of Mrs Olwen Green. Light refreshments available. Cost £3.

Details of Zoom talks will be announced when known. For the





period May - Sept 2023 (no meeting in Aug) a couple of walks, with Andrew Davidson and Rhys Mwyn, and a couple of house visits are in the pipeline.

**Branch outdoor meetings**  
by Margaret Dunn

### Penmon Priory

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, a lovely sunny day, twenty members and guests met to be led around the Penmon site by Andrew Davidson, Chief Archaeologist of the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust. We first visited the oldest part of the church and

the remains of the priory, the former containing two crosses and decorated font which pre-date the church, and the latter having a fine example of a thirteenth century window. We then moved on to the later built dovecote, which has a very fine corbelled roof, and then on to St. Seiriol's Well passing the fish pond on the way. The afternoon was completed by travelling along the toll road to Penmon Point where we looked briefly at the Lighthouse Keepers' Cottages, the Trwyn Du lighthouse and Puffin Island. It was a most enjoyable and informative afternoon.

### Beaumaris Urban

Seven of us met in Beaumaris on 8th September 2022 for a guided walk along Castle Street and Church Street led by Margaret Dunn. It is likely that many of the houses fronting Castle Street contain remnants of early timber framed houses. We thank the owners for access to The Tudor Rose (front wing dated to 1485-6; first floor to 1549), the Red Boat (roof timbers dated to 1482-3, first floor to 1709); The Gate House (dated to c.1625 and from where we saw the town walls); external view of 60 Castle Street (dated to 1496 and 1516); and the George and Dragon, Church Street (ground floor dated to 1540; lateral chimney and jetted first storey). A leaflet was circulated giving details of these and other early Beaumaris buildings.



Tudor Rose, Castle St. Beaumaris

### CAERNARFONSHIRE BRANCH

**Reports on autumn activities** by Margaret Dunn

### Pwllheli 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022



Thirteen of us gathered in the **Penlan Fawr Inn, Pwllheli**, for a guided walk of some of the now hidden historical sites of the town. Iwan Edgar, a well-known local historian first outlined the history of the Inn as a townhouse of the Vaughan family of Llwyndwrys and Corsygedol, near Barmouth. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to obtain a tree felling date for the building, but it was a Snowdonia-plan house of the late 1500 – early 1600s, with a large inglenook fireplace and a spiral stair, now removed. (See the DOWH website). A 1630s storeyed porch has RV incised into it indicating Richard Vaughan of Corsygedol. Mathan House, another similar building along Penlan Street was also undated. These are probably the oldest surviving Pwllheli houses following the devastation during the wars of Owain Glyndwr, from which Pwllheli was slow in



recovering.

Iwan Edgar summarized the earlier layout of Pwllheli which was greatly altered in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by the cobs and sluice gates. Formerly the ancient church of Deneio, inland and uphill, was the centre of the community. The Welsh Princes established Y Gadlys on the higher ground opposite the old cinema, now a car park and an ideal spot for future excavation. We walked there from Penlan Fawr and then went downhill to the present site of Asda where a small stream once entered this low-lying area forming the salt pool at high tide, giving the name to modern Pwllheli. At the end of Kings Head Street we saw the site of the Market Cross. We then walked to Penmount Chapel and saw the remains of the motte and bailey castle in a back garden. Finally, we walked alongside the twentieth century last section of the railway to the 1909 station and back to Penlan Fawr for refreshment and discussion. Our donation to our speaker will be used towards the 2023 Eisteddfod being held near Pwllheli. This was the last of the four summer meetings, some arranged jointly with Cymdeithas Hanes Beddgelert.



### House visit to Hafod Ruffydd Uchaf, Beddgelert 28<sup>th</sup> November



Ten members visited **Hafod Ruffydd Uchaf, Beddgelert**, by kind permission of the owners. It is an early Snowdonia-type house, probably a transitional style of building, erected 1531 - 1546, before the traditional Snowdonia-type house became very popular. We looked at the original timbers in the house and outbuilding and discussed the information given about the house in the 2014 publication "Discovering the Historic Houses of Snowdonia" (pp. 154-158). We also discussed the house history (see the website) which traces the history of the mountain land holding from when it was part of the Augustinian priory at Beddgelert. A repeat visit has been arranged in January 2023 to enable additional members visit this unusual house.

### Future events

- Dec 13<sup>th</sup> **Christmas Social** with two illustrated talks: "**The first houses visited in the area**" and "**What's new on the DOWH website**". 2 p.m. in Beddgelert Village Hall; bring and share refreshments. £3 per head. Open to all.
- Jan 23<sup>rd</sup>: Repeat House visit to **Hafod Ruffydd Uchaf, Beddgelert** Dated 1531-46; an early transitional Snowdonia house. 2 p.m. £3. Max: 10.
- Jan 10<sup>th</sup> **Exploring the Houses Database** with Jane Parry Evans. 2 p.m. Zoom meeting for members.



Feb 9<sup>th</sup> House visit to **Rhos, Minffordd** (Dated 1572). 2 p.m. £3. Max 10.

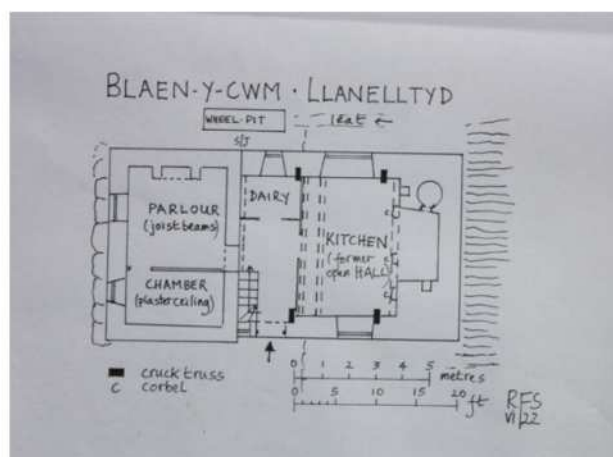
Mar tbc **Caernarfonshire Parishes Project: where we are and what to do next.** Details later.

Apr 27<sup>th</sup> House visit to **Ty Mawr, Criccieth** Snowdonia house, dated post 1527. 2 p.m. £3. Max: 12.

May 17<sup>th</sup> Introductory visit about **Using the Gwynedd Record Office, Caernarfon**, led by Archive staff. Details later.

Jun 12<sup>th</sup> House visit to **Ffridd Isaf, Rhyd Ddu** (Dated 1599 - 1600). A Snowdonia house with water wheel and barns. 2 p.m. £3. Max: 12.

## MERIONETH BRANCH



Top left: the downward-sloping cruck range to the left and the Victorian modernisation to the right; bottom left: the hall, originally open, with cruck blade visible to the right, with integral fireplace and inserted hall ceiling; top right: plan (Crown Copyright, RCAHMW); bottom right: the apex carpentry of the cruck between the hall and the cross passage.

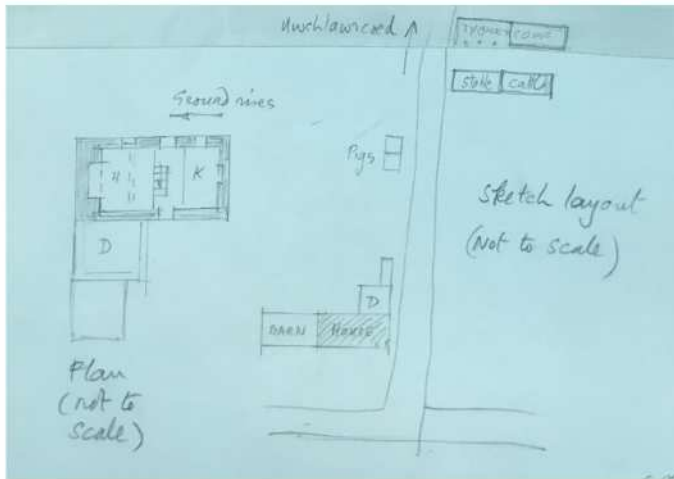
## Report of House Visits Autumn 2022 by Martin Cherry

About a dozen members visited two houses this autumn: one (Blaen-y-cwm in a remote part of Llanelltyd parish) is an 'unknown' sixteenth-century cruck-framed house, probably dating from around 1550 - unlisted and not on Coflein - brought to our attention of our member, Richard Suggett, by the owner; the other (Tyddyn Lliidiart, deep in the hill country of Llanenddwyn parish), probably seventeenth century that at first glance looks straightforward but turns out not to be! We're very grateful, as ever, to the owners for allowing us access to their homes.

The earliest documentary reference to Blaen-y-cwm is in Edward Lhuyd's *Parochialia* of c. 1696. A Victorian addition faces down the valley and it isn't until one gets quite close that the low rear cruck range comes into view. Its siting is instructive:

the older house has the downslope siting characteristic of medieval houses. It is sited on the edge of the *ffridd* for the exploitation of the upland pasture but overlooks the enclosed fields of the farm. Two full cruck-trusses survive in the former hall which was open to the roof and always heated by the substantial end chimney. In a second phase a ceiling was inserted into the open hall, c. 1700. The 'new' ceiling beam, set on corbels above the fireplace, appears to be the re-used former head beam of the partition that originally divided the open hall from the cross passage. The addition of a parlour at the lower end was a characteristic Victorian development. The passage area was replanned with the addition of a new stair, and a dairy was partitioned off at the far end of the passage. The pit for the dairy wheel is visible on the outside along with the former course of the leat. The plan was drawn by Richard Suggett and Dinah Pickard is compiling a house history.

Tyddyn Llidiart appears on the Ardudwy Crown Rental of 1623 as being held by William Vaughan, esquire (*armiger*) at a rent of 1s. 9d. This was William Vaughan of Corsygedol who held widespread estates in the parish and elsewhere as did his



Sketch plan drawn by Peter Smith (Crown copyright, RCAHMW) with the house as now: the roof line of the original house can be seen on the gable end facing the road. The old eaves level of the house is roughly the same as the present eaves level of the shippon (to left).

son, Richard who succeeded to the estate in 1638. At the time of the tithe assessment in 1842 it comprised just over 65 acres, mainly pasture (72%), with some arable (21%) and pasture (17%). Peter Smith's sketch plan (below) reinforces the impression that this was primarily a livestock farm, with a dairy, cattle and cow houses as well as a barn and pigsty. The OS map (below) suggests that the suffix (*Llidiart*) may indicate a house or holding at the gateway to rough pastures (originally on the boundary between cultivated land and rough grazing).

The development of the house is not as simple as it appears at first sight and some queries will only be answered when we measure it up. So, here is a possible sequence of events:

- . A farmstead on the edge of the cultivated and waste land. It may have been a longhouse (the land slopes slightly away from the heated hall and the eaves line of the former house and the shippon carry through quite closely).
- . The roof of this house (later raised) may originally have been of queen-strut type.
- . The earliest surviving features look later-seventeenth century (the stops on the bressummer) but this might have been an adaptation of something earlier which involved changing the roof configuration. By the 18th century (probably before this) the farmer was of yeoman status.
- . Modernisation in the nineteenth century involved raising the roof (using the principal timbers but with new purlins) making it into a fully-storeyed house. A centrally-sited stair replaced a ladder stair that might have been in the hall.
- . By this time there was a complex of farm buildings, including a barn (marked 'cows' on the site plan) that looks eighteenth century; the other buildings look Victorian although the Dutch-style barn is known to date from the 1920s.

The two houses show how much there is still to be discovered and explained in the remote countryside of west Merioneth.

Gill Jones's very useful note and transcription of the Denbighshire and Flintshire entries in George Owen's *Survey of Wales* 1602, published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1823 prompted me to see if he had covered other counties, too. He did and I hoped to repeat Gill's exercise for Anglesey, Caernarfonshire and Merioneth but ran out of time. But the relevant pages can be easily downloaded at:

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nyp.33433081131462&view=1up&seq=634&skin=2021>

Unfortunately the source needs to be treated carefully since, according to the Dictionary of National Biography entry for Owen, the *Gentleman's Magazine* material was based on an 'inaccurate transcript' and various errors have crept in. But it's a useful list to compare with Lhuyd's lists in *Parochialia*.

Accurate or not, Owen's views on the characteristics of the local people are worthy of record: Anglesey was very populous, the people 'not very personable; quiet and civil' with 'little or no theft'. Both Caernarfonshire and Merioneth natives appeared to him to be 'tall and personable', the counties 'well governed' with 'little or no theft' - rather surprising for Merioneth which had been considered by many to have been unruly, violent and ungovernable in the sixteenth century. The state of rural Denbighshire goes unrecorded but the towns are interestingly graded: Denbigh 'a good town but much given to quarrelling and suits at law' and Ruthin 'not much inferior in goodness'; Wrexham was 'a good town, and civilly governed, yet no corporation'. Last, but clearly not least, Flintshire folk were 'tall, personable and withall very civil'. Owen was a very experienced and astute judge of social behaviour and norms but whether he was particularly short in stature (and easily intimidated by the lofty inhabitants of Flint) I know not.

## DENBIGHSHIRE BRANCH



Post-and-panel *dais* partition at Henfaes isaf: Courtesy Moyra James

### Report by Jenny Lees

Adopting the role of Branch Secretary from September has been very rewarding, especially now that DOWH members can once again enjoy 'live' the results of our research! In October the owners of *Henfaes isaf*, Cynwyd, kindly hosted our local group and proved excellent 'tour guides' for the outstanding architectural features assessed by our DOWH historians in 2021. Our full house history is pending publication, as dendrochronology samples failed to date and we await hopeful isotope dating, as *Henfaes isaf* is of special architectural interest.

Although now externally resembling a C19th farmhouse of 'central-entry' type, internally *Henfaes isaf* retains beautifully preserved evidence of

originally being a cruck-framed four bay medieval 'peasant' hall-house<sup>1</sup> of around 1500. From about early C17th it became a 'Snowdonian' end-chimney type house, with stone mostly replacing timber walls but crucks remaining, and a fireplace inserted in the wide passage bay between an original downslope 'cow bay' and an upper hall. This hall would have been arranged like a smaller version of a gentry 'great hall', with raised '*dais* bench' at the upper end. Skilled restoration by the owners' family from 1961 onwards has preserved not only original crucks, but also the splendid oak 'post-and-panel' *dais* partition, with even the mortices into which the bench ends once slotted still visible! Exciting documentary references exist from as early as 1470 onwards, when Margaret verch Grono ap David ap Plethyn leased to Jevan ap Madog ap David a tenement at *Henvaes* on the 'Vigil of St. Michael the Archangel'.<sup>2</sup>

A tenement named *tiddyn yr henvaes alias tiddyn Gruffith ap Jollyn* was gifted by Dominus [Reverend or Sir] David ap Jevan ap Gruffith in 1521, at which time the Barons of Edeirnion descended from Madog ap Maredudd, the last Welsh

<sup>1</sup> For crucks, see R. Suggett, '*Crucks in Wales*', and Martin Cherry and P. Thompson, '*The Afterlife of Cruck Houses: Modernisation and Obsolescence in North Wales*'; in '*Cruck Building: A Survey*' (2019).

<sup>2</sup> Bangor University Archives (GB 222 MN/193).



Prince ruling the whole of ancient Powys, were still prominent landowners in the area.<sup>3</sup> As they once held a court at Cynwyd, with court hearings apparently sometimes moving between gentry houses, it is interesting that two *Henfaes isaf* fields were once called *Cae'r ustus ucha* and *Cae'r ustus isaf*; upper and lower fields of the magistrate or judge. A short history of *Henfaes isaf* is already available.<sup>4</sup>

Less than two miles along the fertile valley of *Afon Dyfrdwy* from *Henfaes isaf* are two more cruck hall-houses dating from a similar period and lying just fields away from each other; *Hendre* dendro-dated to 1502-03 and *Llanerch* to 1501-03. These may have once been inhabited by tenants of another branch of the Barons of Edeirnia who once owned 'grander' properties such as *Hendwr*, *Crogen* and *Branas*, and in late October our group was invited to *Branas uchaf*,<sup>5</sup> where we received another very warm welcome and fascinating tour!



Branas uchaf, front of main range. Image Jenny Lees, courtesy of present occupant.

Robert ap Rheinallt, born about 1470, is believed to have built *Branas Uchaf* as a hall house in 1508-9, possibly on the site of an earlier house,<sup>6</sup> and as he was closely related to the Barons of Cymer who built the mediaeval hall house of *Plas Uchaf*,<sup>7</sup> dated 1435-6, it is interesting that these buildings share some similar features. Such homes were not only centres of power but also places for feasting and entertainment, whose owners became patrons of bards praising the hosts and their lineages in their poetry. A book of C15th-17th Welsh poetry<sup>8</sup> includes poems by bards visiting both *Branas* and *Gwerclas*; the garden of which our group visited in September. The Barons of Cymer had moved from *Plas Uchaf* to *Gwerclas* by around 1600, and poems praising its hosts and their garden are translated in our DOWH house history.<sup>9</sup>

Our branch also held three research meetings; one kindly hosted by *Bryn Berllan* where members were amazed by its magnificent timbers. Unlike most other local surviving timber-framed houses, *Bryn Berllan* was already a two storey house with 'box-framed' construction when first built in around 1553, and its decorative framing and 'close studding' are said to denote a building of some status.<sup>10</sup> A house history of *Bryn Berllan* is featured in *Cynwyd Scrapbook Three*, downloadable from: <https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/page13.html>

Two research meetings were also held at *Hafod y calch*, situated within half a mile of both *Plas uchaf* and *Gwerclas*. In November members much appreciated the free expert tuition from DOWH member Pam Buttrey on negotiating the updated websites so essential to our research. In addition to a planned training session with an archivist at Denbighshire archives [date to be arranged], these meetings provide a chance to 'network' together in a relaxed informal setting; sharing research findings and 'alerting' each other to new possibly ancient dwellings to consider. A programme of further house visits is also being arranged for the

<sup>3</sup> A. D. Carr, 'The Barons of Edeyrnia, 1282-1485, Part One', Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society, (JMHRs) Vol.4, 1963, pp.187-93; see also Jenny Lees, 'A Quest for Cymer in Edeirnia and its Barons. Part I: c.1200-c.1700', JMHRs, Vol. XV111 (II), 2019, pp.129-40.

<sup>4</sup> [https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Publications/Cynwyd\\_Scrapbook-4.pdf](https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Publications/Cynwyd_Scrapbook-4.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.peoplescollection.wales/content/branas-ucha-%E2%80%93-house-history>, and [https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/den%20007\\_HH\\_17\\_Branas-Uchaf.pdf](https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/den%20007_HH_17_Branas-Uchaf.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> R. Suggett and Margaret Dunn, 'Discovering the Historic Houses of Snowdonia', 2014, pp.96-100.

<sup>7</sup> [https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/den%20023\\_HH\\_32\\_Plas\\_Uchaf.pdf](https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/den%20023_HH_32_Plas_Uchaf.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Glenys Davies, 1974, 'Nodwyr Beirdd ym Meirion'.

<sup>9</sup> [https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/den%20110\\_HH\\_27\\_Gwerclas-2019.pdf](https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/den%20110_HH_27_Gwerclas-2019.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> [https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/ABR/den%20027\\_ABR\\_19\\_Bryn%20Berllan.pdf](https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/ABR/den%20027_ABR_19_Bryn%20Berllan.pdf)



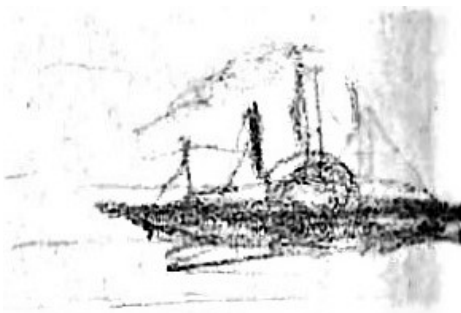
Beside the Georgian 'banqueting hall' at Gwerclas garden: Image courtesy of Janice Dale.

## FLINTSHIRE BRANCH

### Journey to Paris, October 1841 to June 1842 - Extracts from the journal of Joseph Iron, aged 33 by Tim Biddle

*Joseph Iron devised his own version of the Grand Tour of Europe without the opulence of the nobility. His family, my relatives, from Bury St. Edmunds were tradesmen yet he describes himself in the 1861 census as an author. He was clearly well educated and keen to expand his learning. This journey, the longest account from his many journals, included an extensive stay in Paris where he attended numerous lectures at the Sorbonne and several other institutions. He also documents his daily life, personal impressions and prejudices along with detailed records of his studies in philosophy, poetry literature, history and science. The words and sketches are his own.*

### Departure



Thumbnail sketch of steamer Margaret by the author

We at length reached the wharf at London Bridge, and almost before we could alight, our luggage was seized and borne away by an attendant porter. Stepping on board the Margaret steamer we followed the porter between what appeared to be immense bales of merchandise, but on nearer approach I was startled at coming in contact with one of the many horses heads which on either side projected from the covering, apparently in very social contemplation of each other's frontispieces. I had no apprehension of being gobbled up, yet in the obscurity which prevailed I did not feel quite so certain of being secure from a kick and felt no regret when we had wound our way to the depository of our luggage. We saw it descend and that half a dozen horses heads overtopped the entrance and felt assured that if watchful eyes were sufficient to protect our property here it was safe.

New Year and will include a daytime visit to *Berain* on 20th March. Please contact me on [leesjenny@gmail.com](mailto:leesjenny@gmail.com) for further details if you would like to register an interest- or to possibly host a Denbighshire branch visit to your own historic residence?

Finally, I must make a request for possible help with DOWH Parishes Project research for houses in the more northern parts of Denbighshire. Most of our current branch researchers, living in what was once part of Merionethshire, are more familiar with that area than with the further reaches of our 'own' county (for recording purposes), and the number of our branch members in a position to continue research is greatly reduced by new caring responsibilities and several sad deaths. So, if you would like to contribute current information on pre-1750 but still extant Denbighshire dwellings known to you in the areas north of Ruthin, please email me and I can add it to our proformas for the relevant Parish.



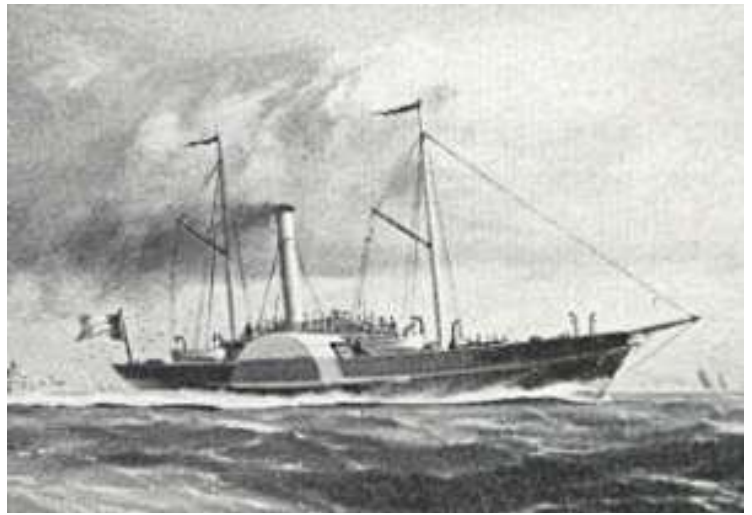
Llangar church, with Hafod y calch beyond Afon Dyfrdwy and Gwerclas fields to the left



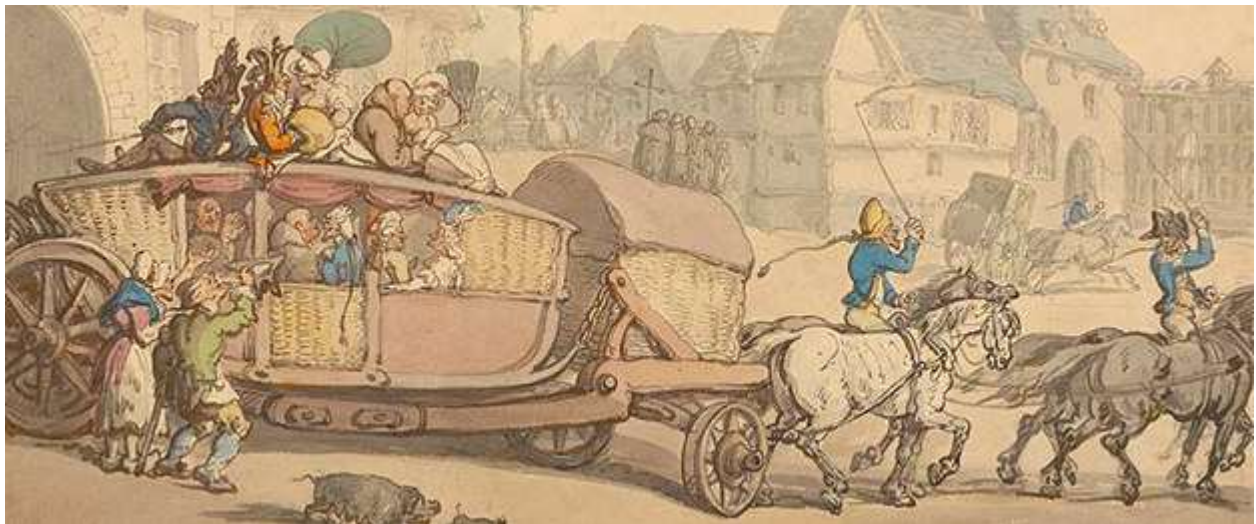
During our silent course down the river, I also felt an inclination to make one of the drowsy group (below deck) and threw myself on the little mattress beside me. Sleep however was out of the question as though a sort of general stillness prevailed, yet the minor noises of our slumbering company forbade it. At one time the stentorian breathing of an apparently Italian officer, the long-drawn sigh of some dismal dreamer, and anon the cough of some asthmatic sufferer.

At length the barking of the steward's dog, alarmed by the motion of someone as little able to slumber as myself, aroused the entire company from their sleep, and with a 'Sacre!' or two a few rose to promenade on deck., to witness the first streaks of the opening dawn as morning was dawning; the others seemed less inclined to quit their pillow. At six however nearly all were on deck, and, by half past seven the temporary bedsteads were converted into a well-furnished breakfast table. To this ample justice was

done for no 'mal de mer' could at present be dreamt of, so extremely placid was the face of Father Thames. This calmness was continued so long and was so contrary to what I had expected that I could not help remarking to one of the sailors my satisfaction at the pleasantness of the voyage to Boulogne for the season of the year. 'Yes, Sir' was the laconic reply, 'at present but we are not there yet'. 'You apprehend rough weather still then?' '----'Assuredly' he replied 'I see it in the distance.' And thus my hopes were somewhat dampened. The sea on our rounding the Foreland had gradually become less calm, and I was standing pleasantly chatting with a Frenchman half protected by the recess in the paddle box, when dark came an impetuous wave over and wetted us half through, covering the entire deck with spray. The undulations now became considerable for me to withdraw. I just managed to reel into the cabin, and there remained indifferent to everything, excepting that twice such a thundering was made above that I imagined some of quadruped passengers, 21 in number must have broken their fastenings. They were all kept secure however and I remained in my temporary illness quite insensible to all around me until told that we had arrived in Calais! 'Calais!' thought I 'tis Boulogne I want.



This is *Chermin-de-Fer* in 1846, the first Belgium steam Packet on the Channel run. The *Margaret* will have been similar. By Gordon Ellis (detail) 1949



Thomas Rowlandson's "The Paris Diligence." The French diligence coach was the Frenchman's main public conveyance

## Journey to Paris

The luggage at last arrived, and after paying the commissaire his charge of 3 frcs 78, for my portion of his trouble, we seated ourselves in the long waiting Berline - a very comfortable carriage for four and were soon en route to Boulogne. I am proceeding however very slowly with my narrative, almost as slow as my progress to Boulogne, the 21 miles from Calais thither occupying from 5½ to 11.

(Next day.) And now on entering the coachyard was first presented to my view the cumbrous machine called a Diligence - so termed I imagine by the rule of contrariety, its diligence being displayed in the extraordinary rate of or six



miles an hour. So heavy and lumbering a machine must be seen to be imagined, and it ought certainly to be called an omnibus. As the passengers began to arrive it was found necessary to keep off the 'oi polloi' crowding around. I now witnessed two men kissing and embracing each other previously to separation, a practice quite common in France. Crack went the whip and the ponderous mass was put into motion.

Our course hitherto tho' slow had been safe, but a few miles beyond Beauvais, the 'ever terror of our way' was fated to meet with an interruption. The rain had been considerable, and we were slowly progressing up an inconsiderable hill when suddenly our course was arrested. The wheels had become set fair in the mud, and notwithstanding the 'sacre' maledictions whipping and warmth of the conductor and driver, persisted in remaining in the soft bed they had found. Every exertion of men and horses being unavailing the only course that remained was to lighten the vehicle; and in a drenching rain at midnight we were compelled to alight from our warm and comfortable corners. To me it was of little importance, but for the gentler portion of our company it must have been no trifling matter, in these luxurious times, to be compelled to remain upwards for an hour in a muddy road during a heavy rain to witness the ineffectual efforts to release the massive machine.

Unfortunately in jumping out my foot became entangled in some of the endless rope trappings of our steers, and falling on my umbrella in the mire, broke it. And thus we were deprived of this shelter also. How long we might have continued in this quandary I know not, as we had almost begun to despair when fortunately at this juncture the tinkling of the bells of another Diligence, with which the horses heads are furnished, was heard in the distance. When it approached, was stopped, and an embargo laid on the horses, and after much exertion of the united equestrian and animal strength of the two Diligences, ours slowly yielded to the increased power, and we were once more permitted to resume our seats now miserably wet and continued our journey.



'Arrivée de la diligence dans la cour de la Messagerie, rue Notre-Dame des Victoires (1803)'. *Painting by Louis Léopold Boilly.*

Our journey terminated at the Messageries Royales, rue De Notre Dame des Victoires. I thus at last found myself in the centre of the city which for so long a period had drawn upon itself the attention of the world - the capital of that ambitious conqueror whose who insatiate desire whole hecatombs of victims could not satisfy in spite of the lapse of time. It is to Bonaparte and to the eventful period of the Revolution and his reign that the thoughts of an English visitor will constantly revert, when viewing for the first time this theatre of incidents once of such high import to our own country.

I proposed engaging a fiacre to convey my luggage, but an officious porter would take no denial, threw the trunk and bag on his shoulder, and

whilst I stopped for an instant to remonstrate the man in whose charge they had been deposited, turned a corner and was out of sight. I pursued as I thought the way he had taken but looked in vain for my property. Seriously alarmed at my indiscretion in thus entrusting it to a strange man I almost began to despair of my luggage and returned to the office. They sent a man with me to follow the porter and find him which after some time was accomplished and I recovered my biens and my composure.

### Life in Paris

Attempting to widen his circle of acquaintances Joseph frequently moved from hotel to pension sometimes experiencing great loneliness: Many people sitting outside the cafes in the open-air eating ice creams and - ladies as well as gentlemen, and who, while reading the newspapers, laughing, enjoying the pleasure of the moment - Oh how I envy the light spirit that I see on the face of the carefree crowd that surrounds me! Lord please help me!

He also had strong religious opinions: Fine morning thought would go to Notre Dame - shops nearly all open as usual and workmen pursuing their employment - how revolting does this desecration of the Sabbath seem to me! - I trust I shall not get accustomed to regard it with indifference, my attention drawn by a sort of apple stall in the very portal, but instead of apples an old woman was disposing of rosaries, crosses, bijouterie, books, etc. All these things may have appertained to the Catholic religion, but how revolting that a traffic in these should be conducted at the doors, and at the very time appropriated to Divine worship.

Despite such harsh judgements he delighted in new experiences: What a heart sickening sight have I witnessed today and yet how many women and children were regarding it with indifference! My casual acquaintance Dr --- conducted me to the morgue where were two corpses extended on marble slabs - both of females - one quite black in face from decomposition, having doubtless been some time in water - the other with features fixed in the agonies of death - clothes hanging around them - and this is one of the sights of the Parisians.

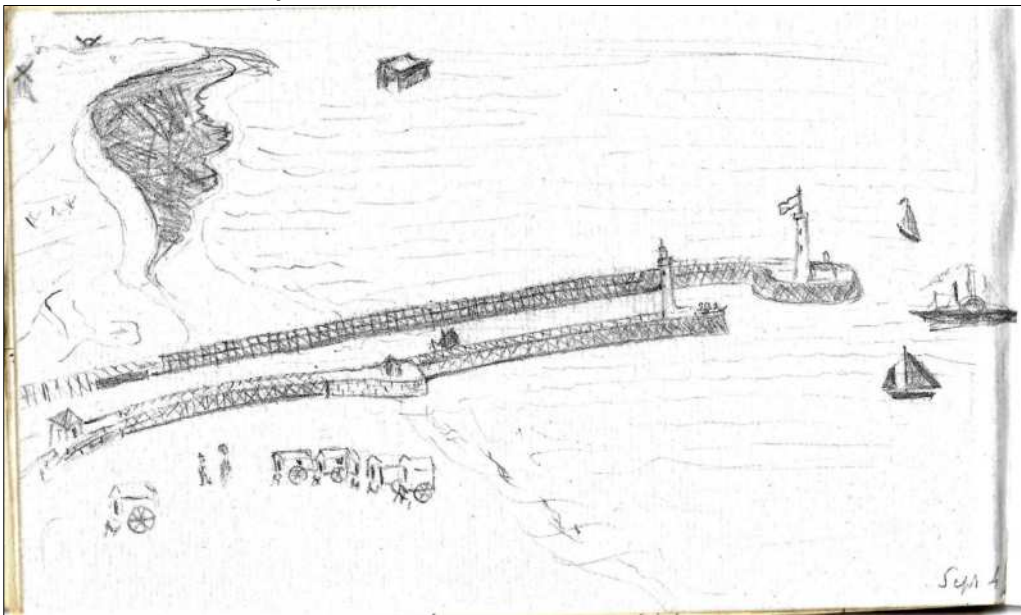
Went to see the procession of boef gras at the Pont Neuf started in 1711. The procession was held with a huge bull's head pushed along on wheels by 16 men, followed by a real bull, draped in white and signalling the coming Lenten meat fast. This commemorated Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday). After traversing two or three streets arrived in the courtyard of the Tuileries at the Place du Carrousel, and here agreeably surprised to find that the boeuf gras was about to receive the hour of a presentation to Royalty itself. The King was not tardy in presenting himself and advanced hat in hand to receive the salutation of his 'loving' subjects - and of the bull. He was accompanied by Queen, Dukes and the Duchess of Orleans, and also the Queen of Spain. King Louis Philippe is a fine portly robust looking personage: excellent view being close under balcony.

In my opinion the picturesque beauty of Pere la Chaise (cemetery) will decrease every year, because of the great increase in the monuments which, too close, hide much of their interest and beauty. Finally I find some of these places look very similar to our churchyards. - Last words like 'Dying so young and so happy (Inscriptions) touch us when we read them - I wanted to copy several of the most touching but left it until now as I have no more time. Then t the heights of Montmartre, near the windmills. Here we have a very beautiful view of all Paris.

### Homeward bound

His adventures concluded on 2<sup>nd</sup> June: We leave Paris by the Barriere de Route which I have never previously crossed, running parallel with the Champs Elysée - Quite a pleasant route but nothing special - the middle of the road paved, with dirt on both sides kicked up on every bump particularly when following another diligence which we could not pass. Crossed a bridge through quite a large wood. Went through two or three pretty miserable villages and in the evening were stopped by two armed men who climbed up onto the vehicle to go to a place where an unfortunate had fallen from his cart and sustained head a body injuries. Soon we arrived and in truth the mysterious corpse was resting exactly in the middle of the road as it happened. The diligence stopped immediately - the armed men stepped down along with the conductor to satisfy their curiosity with a closer examination - thus having seen some terrible things in Paris, on the eve of my departure I encounter another - a final tableau of death exceeding all the scenes I have encountered - 'What a miserable death!' - In one hour we arrive at Rouen which seemed a beautiful town particularly the harbour but the darkness prevented a complete view - We crossed the place where Joan d'Orleans was burned. From Rouen to Le Havre the country is much more varied, interesting and offers beautiful views - around six o'clock we arrive at Harfleur and in three hours or more there is Le Havre (where he boarded a steamboat and disembarked at Greenwich).

### Back in the old country



Sketch by the author presumaby intended to be his port of embarkation for England

Having been away for so long, listening once again to the English language I must adjust from French to my mother tongue. I don't want to completely leave the French language behind but without occasion to speak it what can I do? True I can speak to myself but such a monologue would be very tedious. No I must seek French conversation having lived so long with the French particularly a Parisian like M.. enabling me to speak naturally, purely and elegantly. While I am able to continue to write in French, I fear writing alone will not stop my facility for speaking French from declining. But I think I should be



able to carry on thinking in French, shouldn't it? I doubt it because the thoughts which now come to me in French will little by little revert to those in English. All in good time. I have found the language very useful in France and if it is of no use here then nothing is lost. Beside I am not the first person who has taken a lot of trouble for nothing.

**FROM THE WEBMASTER** by Peter Masters



## Creating Pictures out of numbers

One of the many interesting things about having a large collection of information, gathered over the past twenty years is the ability to filter some of that information into a meaningful visualisation.

In order to find and identify houses suitable for dendrochronology many houses have been selected and visited across north Wales. These visits and outcomes such as their suitability for tree-ring dating or the existence of significant features along the results of any surveys are all embedded in the database. But a row of tables can look bland and does not give any perspective of what has been achieved, which is where data interrogation and modern programmes come to the fore to provide a picture of events. Map references become GPS coordinate's, these in turn can be added to maps and they can then create a picture of that data.

When we look at the map of North Wales overlain with pins denoting the locations of the houses visited, we can see the enormity of the task undertaken. Not just the size of the area covered but the density of coverage as well. Over one thousand properties identified, checked, visited and "dendro'd" where possible, House histories written, Building surveyed. Reports compiled, filed and put on a website. A considerable achievement by a largely amateur voluntary group of dedicated people who value their heritage and history,

## Formatting Zoom talks

One of the drawbacks of recording our zoom talks is being able to present them in a format without drastic editing detracting from the content, but to create a more professional look to the recordings to enhance the video and put our logo or "Brand" in a prominent position at the opening and closing of our recorded talks.

To achieve this, a template has been created which provides a solid colour background. Our Logo. The title, Discovering Old Welsh Houses appears superimposed in moveable script, with a subtle musical background. This is followed by an



introductory Title and description of the talk and the name of the speaker. This is then repeated as a fade out at the end of video

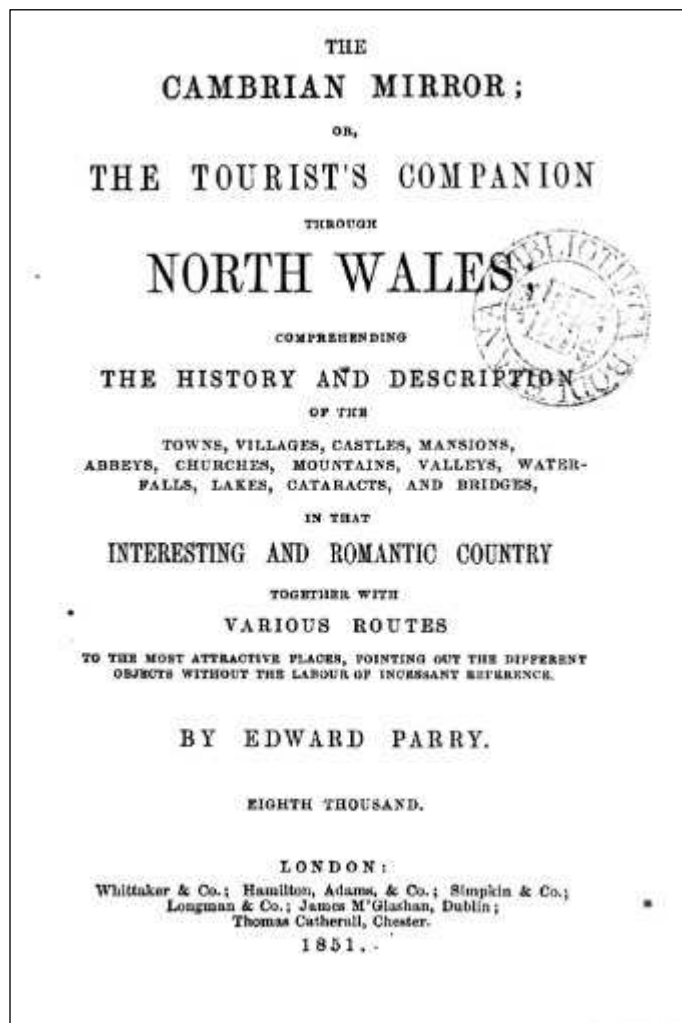
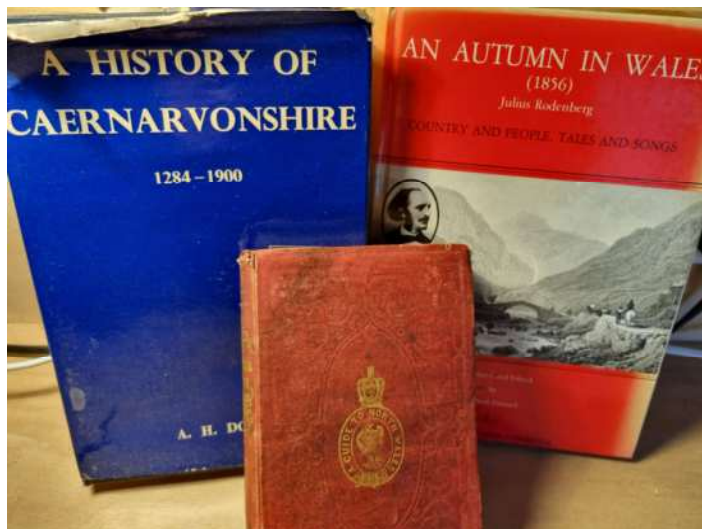
The actual recorded talks have been “trimmed” to remove the chit chat around the beginning and end. The Video images have had the black bars removed and resized to fit the screen and the final output converted to 16: 9 ratio at 720p and compressed to a smaller file size suitable for export/import into *Youtube*. This will ensure that the video is of a good quality, can be viewed via the browsers without the need for separate video players and allowing for those with low broadband speeds.

The website: membership/zoom talks page where all the Talks are available have had the links reset to the revised *Youtube* videos. It is not necessary to view all the videos as they are about an hour long ! just skip through sections to get a feel for it [unless you have the time to spare].

## ON MY BOOKSHELF by Janice Dale

Back in October, following the lecture by Michael Freeman and his talk on early tourists, we went to Barmouth - the weather being showery, one very heavy shower coincided with us finding ourselves outside the Walter Lloyd Jones saleroom - not that I needed much persuasion to call in - they have a great selection of old books. I came out with just three, the first being *A History of Caernarvonshire* by Professor A.H. Dodd, a book I have borrowed and read previously and an immensely easy read.

The other two books were inspired by Michael Freeman's talk. *An Autumn in Wales 1856* by Julius Rodenberg, translated into English. Rodenberg came to Wales to study



the country and its people, staying with a farming family, travelling around by rail, stagecoach and on foot. He makes illuminating and entertaining observations on Welsh customs and traditions. He also includes a collection of over sixty Welsh fairy stories.

The third book is *The Cambrian Mirror - The Tourist's Companion through North Wales*, dated 1851. The author promotes his book as a condensed, accurate, amusing and pocket sized volume. He suggests six excursions ranging from 3 to 18 days and assures his readers he has, with very few exceptions visited every town, village and place mentioned and being acquainted with the language, manners and habits of his countrymen he has been able to draw his observations from sources inaccessible to a mere compiler. I particularly liked his modes of transport giving prices of a one horse car which could hold four people, and cost one shilling a mile, or a two horse car at eighteen pence a mile - no doubt this means of travelling must have restricted it to those of some considerable means. I also like his reference to the new road from Llanberis to Capel Curig - next time you drive that route just imagine what it must have been like then. This small book certainly gives an insight to our North Wales of 170 years ago.

## STOP PRESS

### Queen Anne's Bounty - 1704 by Gill Jones Conwy Branch

This was a scheme established to augment the incomes of the poorer clergy of the Church of England whose income amounted

to less than £50 a year. From the 13th century onwards, 'first fruits' or 'annates' were the first year profits taken by the Pope in the year after a benefice was newly filled. Tenth's were an ecclesiastical tax originally destined to fund expeditions to recover the Holy Land. This system lasted until the Reformation. Afterwards, Henry VIII annexed the money to the Crown. This continued until 1704 when a series of Acts empowered Queen Anne to establish a corporation in which the revenues of 'first fruits' and 'tenth's' would be invested. This became known as Queen Anne's Bounty. It enabled the governors of the Bounty to receive the money previously paid to the Crown to be used for the benefit of poor clergy. At first it was not paid directly to incumbents, but instead it was used to purchase land, the income of which augmented the living. Later, the purchase money was held by the Bounty rather than being used to purchase land and invested so that the governors could pay a guaranteed rate of interest to the recipients. Evidence of this fund being used in Cerrigydrudion appears in records of the Rural Dean's Report in 1729. Further references to the scheme have been found in other documents but unfortunately none of the properties in the village are named.

In 1729, the Rhos Rural Dean's report records that, the Rector at the time was Mr. John Wynne, and his resident curate was Mr. Maurice Anwyl who received £30 a year, £15 in cash and the rest in surplice fees. It also recorded that there was a parsonage house which was occupied by John Roberts who rented most of the glebe land for which he paid £20 per annum to the church. There were three more dwellings with their respective outhouses in the village that belonged to the Parson. One house was inhabited by John Lawrence, an alehouse keeper, who paid, "for his house & two fields of ye Glebe land, three pounds fourteen shillings per annum." Gwen Jones, a widow, who sold ale, rented two houses and one little quillet, for which she paid yearly two pounds ten shillings. An under-tenant lived in one of the houses. John Jones had a quillet of Glebeland and paid five shilling per year for it.

"All ye Houses & outhouses in this village belonging to the parson consist of twenty bays of building, which are all in tenantable repair excepting one little hovel in ye holding of Gwen Jones widdow (*sic*), which wants some repair."

In the Rural Dean's report of 1749, one of the church houses was occupied by Robert Robert, a victualler and blacksmith, and Robert Williams, also a victualler lived in another and had a yard for turning horses; and the curate lived in the third one.

**Margaret Dunn** has supplied two more illustrations from Anglesey excursions.



Left: roof timbers from 34 Castle St. Beaumaris. Above: party at Penmon Priory

