



Darganfod Hen Dai Cymreig

Discovering Old Welsh Houses

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6 PALACE STREET

Caernarfon
Gwynedd



House History

Authors:

Malcom Roberts & Chris Rees

Updated 21-01-2006

Written in the language chosen by the volunteers and researchers & including information so far discovered

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6 PALACE STREET

Malcolm Roberts and Chris Rees,

Caernarfon, Gwynedd

Parish: Llanbeblig

NGR: SH 4786 6278

HOUSE DETAILS:

This is one of the very few timber-framed structures surviving within the walled borough of Caernarvon. The plan with cellar suggests a dwelling-and-shop range. The late-medieval timber-framed building survives behind a Georgian front. The range has four storeyed bays, with a cellar (with broach-stopped beam) under the front two bays. The building is box-framed with evidence for a jettied gable facing the street; a section of wall-framing survives, with large two-tiered panels above and below the mid-rail. The three closed trusses all have jowled posts with up-braces to the tiebeams; central posts link tiebeams and collars. It is unclear if the range was part of a larger structure. The original room functions are unknown, but the bay with cellar fronting the street may have been a shop, as it is today. No published account; detailed survey (2010) and other surveys in National Monuments Record of Wales (NPRN 16637). A similar range at 16A/18 Palace Street was sampled but did not date (Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory [ODL]; R.F. Suggett, RCAHMW 2010). Brief note RCAHMW *Caernarvonshire* Vol. II no.1113.

Cantref: Arfon Commote: Is Gwyrfa (Atlas of Caernarvonshire p 71).

Dendrochronology results: *Felling date:* Winter 1506/7. Principal rafters 1506 (18C, 15C); Tiebeams (0/3); King post (0/1). *Site Master* 1431-1506 GWYNEDD3 (t = 7.3 PLASMAWR; 5.7 GWYDWN; 5.4 DENBY4). Four timbers were felled in winter 1506/7, with a further two having likely felling date ranges incorporating this date. The dated timbers come from both the front and rear of the three extant trusses, showing that the whole present building was most likely constructed in 1506/7 or within a year or two after this date. In short, a timber-framed town-house built from timber felled in 1506/7 (ODL; RCAHMW; summary result published in *Vernacular Architecture* vol. 41 (2010) p 113).

SUMMARY:

A much altered late medieval townhouse. There are two ranges. The southern, No. 6a, is thought to occupy the site of the original hall. The northern, No. 6, was originally a two storey, four bay, timber framed cross wing, jettied to the street. The basement may be an original feature. This house occupied a double burgage plot and would have been a prestigious residence. The house was subsequently rebuilt in stone and the present street fronts are eighteenth century, with some later features. Both sections now had attics. Later in the century the house was acquired by the Vaynol estate and by 1844 it was the Vaynol Arms. By 1957 it was a shop. It fell into dereliction and was restored in the dying years of the twentieth century. At the rear



A report commissioned by The North West Wales Dendrochronology Project in partnership with The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales (RCAHMW).

are or were, a range of service buildings associated with the inn. These include a single storey kitchen attached to the end of the cross wing, and a possible stable (RCAHMW).

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

Date	Summary of Information (reference in brackets)
1284-5	Town walls of Caernarfon constructed (Richard Haslam, Julian Orbach and Adam Voelcker <i>The Buildings of Wales: Gwynedd</i> 2009, p 289). Burgage plots in the town were about 24m (80') deep x 18m (60') wide (Ian Soulsby <i>The Towns of Medieval Wales</i> 1983, p 40). This would match a rectangle including the present nos 6, 6A and 8 (annotated OS plan of the street, thought to be part of RCAHMW records for 16a and 18 Palace St).
1507	Probable date of construction of the timber-framed part of 6 Palace St, from dendrochronological evidence. See above for detail.
1696	Earliest surviving rent-roll of the Vaynol estate. It does not give sufficient detail to establish whether the estate owned 6 Palace St at this date, and neither do other early rent-rolls (Gwynedd Archive Service [GAS]: Vaynol [or XV] 3744).
1777	First identifiable tenant: Mr. Alexander Green, House and Garden (Vaynol Estate: Surveys and Valuations. GAS: XV 4056).
1778	Lease to Mr. Alexander Green for 3 lives, wife Margaret (46), son Ralph (10), daughter Mary (7). Now living also Ralph Green (65) in London (from 1833 rentals). The absence of the Vaynol Arms public house from the Alehouse Recognizances in the 1820 Poole (solicitor's) papers and the 1828/9 <i>Pigot's Directory</i> , when other premises in Palace Street were included, indicates that the premises were not used as a public house during the Green family tenure.
1788	Rates for poor-relief: Mr. Green for a house and shop (W.H. Jones <i>Old Carnarvon</i>).
1794	The 'Census of Carnarvon' (thought to have been taken perhaps for purposes related to poor-relief) does not identify which house is which, but in Red Lion St (the previous name for Palace St) it lists a Mrs Green and daughter with one servant (GAS: XD1/745, transcribed on www.carnarvontraders.com/census1794.html).
1817	Rent for house, Miss Green (GAS: Vaynol Rentals XV 3769).
1820	Sept Alehouse recognizances give details for four public houses in Palace Street, but not the Vaynol Arms (GAS: Poole papers 422-448).
1823	Rental paid by Ralph Green (GAS: Vaynol Rentals XV 3789).
1830	'In lease' House and Premises Ralph Green (GAS: XV 3809).
1830	March 17th: Burial at Llanbeblig of Owen Jones aged 2, Vaenol Arms. In 1824 there were Vaynol Arms at Bangor and Llanberis (Nant Peris) but not at Caernarfon – though there were several licensees who were named personally rather than by an inn-sign – so it is not obvious that this child came from Palace St (www.carnarvontraders.com/burxpe2527.html , viewed 21/08/2012; GAS: XQA/L/1).
1833	Annual rental for 2 houses, shop and yard, Dr. Green (GAS: XV 3815).
1835	Mr. Green, for house and premises (GAS: XV 3824). 10th Oct: burial of Catherine Jones, Vaynol Arms, at Llanbeblig, aged 9 weeks. Again, this may have been another public house of the same name (www.carnarvontraders.com/burxpe2528.html , viewed 30/08/2012).

1835 James Porter Rowlands, publican, Vaynol Arms (*Pigot's Directory*). He may well be the James Rowlands listed as Pork Butcher in the *Pigot's 1828/9 Directory*.

1838 Robert Hughes, House and Premises (GAS: XV 3831).

1840 William Hughes, House and Premises (GAS: XV 3834). The William who was Robert's son would not be an adult at this time if the age given in the 1841 census was approximately correct. Robert Hughes licensee of the Vaynol Arms (www.carnarvontraders.com/publicans.html, viewed 30/08/2012).

1841 Census 'Palace St'

<i>Name</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Profession, trade, employment or of Independent Means</i>	<i>Whether born in this county</i>
Robert Hughes	40		Hair Dresser	Yes
Margaret Hughes		40	-	Yes
William Hughes	15		[Illegible]	Yes
Henry Hughes	13		-	Yes
John Hughes	9		-	Yes
Hugh Hughes	8		-	Yes
Catherine Hughes		20	-	Yes
Sarah Hughes		15	-	Yes
Ellin Hughes		15	-	Yes
Elizabeth Hughes		10	-	Yes
Elizabeth Williams		29	Female Servant	Yes

1842-44 Letters from Robert Hughes, Vaynol Arms Palace Street to Lord Newborough, referring to supplies of stone. Hughes has a connexion in England from whom he is aware of the demand for Welsh stone for macadamizing, and asks to be allowed to take stone from a quarry at Plas Llanfaglan which is exhausted of building-stone. He has an order from the Corporation of Manchester, and two gentlemen from Manchester as partners (GAS: XD2/20036, 20491, 20951; XD2/21399 may also be connected).

1844 *Pigot's Directory*, two entries for Robert Hughes, Vaynol Arms under 'publicans' and Robert Hughes, hairdresser.

1846 Robert Hughes licensee of the Vaynol Arms (www.carnarvontraders.com/publicans.html, viewed 30/08/2012).

1848 Nov 8th: death of Margaret Hughes Vaynol Arms, age 51 (Llanbeblig *Memorial Inscriptions* C047 – recorded by Gwynedd Family History Society, and available at Caernarfon Record Office).

1850 William Hughes House and Premises (until late 1855) (GAS: XV 3856). Samuel Edwards licensee of the Vaynol Arms (www.carnarvontraders.com/publicans.html, viewed 30/08/2012).

1851 Census* 'Palace St'

<i>Name and surname</i>	<i>Relationship to head of family</i>	<i>Con</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Where born</i>
Owen Jones	Head	M	44		Stone Mason	Anglesea Llanfechell
Elizabeth Jones	Wife	M		39	Wife	Llanfechell Anglesea
John Jones	Son	U	15		Son	Llanfechell Anglesea
Michael Jones	Son	U	12		Son	Llanfechell Anglesea
Owen Jones	Son	U	9		Son	Llanfechell Anglesea
William Jones	Son	U	7		Son	Llanfechell Anglesea
Elizabeth Jones	Daughter	U		10	Daughter	Llanfechell Anglesea
Alice Jones	Daughter	U		2	Daughter	Llanfechell Anglesea
Margaret Parry	Servant	U		18	House Servant	Carnarvon Llanbeblig

*NB the early censuses for Palace Street have been cross-correlated with later censuses to infer the routes taken by enumerators and hence addresses and occupants. This household may be that at No 6, but William Hughes appears in the Vaynol rentals at this time. The only Hughes in the Palace St census is Evan Hughes, corn merchant, but there is no evidence that he was connected with No 6. Samuel Edwards does not seem to appear in Palace St.

1853 Samuel Edwards licensee of the Vaynol Arms (www.carnarvontraders.com/publicans.html, viewed 30/08/2012).

1855 Michaelmas. Thomas Windsor now the tenant (GAS: XV 3867).

1856 Thomas Windsor licensee of the Vaynol Arms (www.carnarvontraders.com/publicans.html, viewed 30/08/2012).

1858 Thomas Windsor licensee of the Vaynol Arms (www.carnarvontraders.com/publicans.html, viewed 30/08/2012).

1859 Thomas Windsor, publican, Vaynol Arms (*Slater's Directory*).

1860 Rental paid by Thomas Windsor (GAS: XV 3879).

1861 Census 'Palace St'

<i>Name and surname</i>	<i>Relationship to head of family</i>	<i>Con</i>	<i>Age of males</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Where born</i>
Thomas Windsor	Head	M	34		Inn Keeper & Agent	Salop – Whittington
Margaret Windsor	Wife	M		34	-	Flintshire – Holywell
Thomas Windsor	Son	U	[?8]		Scholar	Lancashire – Liverpool
Margaret Windsor	Servant	U		35	General Servant	Flintshire – Holywell

- 1863 May 7th: death of Mary Ann, wife of Thomas Windsor, aged 36 (Llanbeblig *Memorial Inscriptions* G051). ‘Mary Ann’ is perhaps a transcription error for Margaret (or *vice versa*).
- 1865 John Davies, Thomas Windsor’s representative; ‘this new lot to John Davies, nephew in law of Mr. Windsor, giving up his living’ (GAS: XV 3889).
- 1865 Jan 16th: death of Thomas Windsor aged 38 (Llanbeblig *Memorial Inscriptions* G051). The 3rd Company of the Carnarvonshire Rifle Volunteers attended the funeral, as Mr Windsor had been a member of the Corps from its commencement. The funeral was at Llanbeblig (*Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* Jan 21st – this and other references from the paper are transcribed from www.carnarvontraders.com).
- 1865 A Newcastle Prize Plough arrived at Miss Slack’s Agricultural Implement Depot at the Vaynol Arms Inn. March 1st: St David’s Day dinner held at the ‘Vaenol Arms’. The hostess was Miss Slack (*Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* February 25th; March 4th).
- 1866 April 9th: death of Robert Hughes, aged 69, at Tanybryn Cottage, Menai Bridge (Llanbeblig *Memorial Inscriptions* C047; *Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* April 14th).
- 1868 John Davies, Vaynol Arms and Auctioneer and Valuer (*Slater’s Directory*).
- 1868 May 2nd: death of John Davies, late of Vaynol Arms, aged 35 (Llanbeblig *Memorial Inscriptions* G051 – same stone as Thomas and Margaret Windsor; *Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* May 9th).
- 1868 November: [John Davies, representative of Thomas Windsor (crossed out)] Thomas Roberts New Valuation of £25 p.a. to be applied next rental (GAS: XV 3897).
- 1869 15 March: Indenture signed between Thomas Roberts and John Astley (Ansley Hall, Works.) Trustee of the Vaynol Estate, belonging to George William Duff-Assheton-Smith (GAS: Vaynol 1006).

1871 Census ‘Palace St’

<i>Name and surname</i>	<i>Relationship to head of family</i>	<i>Con</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Where born</i>
Thomas Roberts	Head	M	39		Quarryman	Carnarvon Llanrug
Margaret Roberts	Wife	M		37	Publican	Carnarvon Carnarvon
Sarah Anne Roberts	Daur	-		13	Scholar	Carnarvon Carnarvon
Margaret Roberts	Daur	-		11	Scholar	Carnarvon Carnarvon
Barbra [?E.] Roberts	Daur	-		8	Scholar	Carnarvon Carnarvon
Mary E. Roberts	Daur	-		6	Scholar	Carnarvon Carnarvon
Thomas Roberts	Son	-	5		Scholar	Carnarvon Carnarvon
Jane Roberts	Daur	-		1	-	Carnarvon Carnarvon
Barbra Williams	Sister in law	U		30	General Servant	Carnarvon Carnarvon

1881 Census ‘6 Palace St’

<i>Name and surname</i>	<i>Relation to head of family</i>	<i>Con</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Where born</i>
Thomas Roberts	Head	M	49		Quarryman	Carnarvon Llanrug
Margaret Roberts	Wife	M		47	-	Carnarvon Carnarvon
Sarah A. Roberts	Daur	U		23	-	Carnarvon Carnarvon
Margaret Roberts	Daur	U		21	-	Carnarvon Carnarvon
Barbara C. Roberts	Daur	U		19	-	Carnarvon Carnarvon
Mary E. Roberts	Daur	U		17	Scholar	Carnarvon Carnarvon
Thomas Roberts	Son	U	16		Printer	Carnarvon Carnarvon
Jane Roberts	Daur	U		12	Scholar	Carnarvon Carnarvon
Catherine Roberts	Daur	U		8	Scholar	Carnarvon Carnarvon
Lewis W. Roberts	Son	-	3		-	Carnarvon Carnarvon

1885-6 Prolonged lock-out and strike in the Dinorwic quarry, embittered by feelings that the quarry owner and management were showing favouritism to Conservatives and Anglicans (*Atlas of Caernarfonshire* 136; R. Merfyn Jones *The North Wales Quarrymen 1874-1922* 142-162).

1889/90 Queries in respect of each licensed house.

Thomas Roberts, age 57, licensee.

One outside door, good stable, 15 rooms of which 3 reserved exclusively for customer. 1 sitting room, 1 coffee room, 5 bars/smoking rooms.

Thomas spends part of his time at Llanberis slate quarry, wife & family in charge (of Vaynol Arms) ('efficient'). 8 permanent residents in the house.

Premises in thoroughly good condition and repair, the family have improved the premises at a large expense and have a certain lease, though the original and general terms of tenancy were on an annual basis.

Not a tied house (GAS: XQA/L/9/47).

1889 Flags and candles were displayed at the Vaynol Arms, the Conservative Club, the *Herald* office, the Guild Hall and various tradesmen's in order to celebrate the birth of a daughter at Vaynol (*Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* Feb 15th).

1891 Census '6 Palace St (Vaynol Arms)'

<i>Name and surname</i>	<i>Relation to head of family</i>	<i>Con</i>	<i>Age of males</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Where born</i>	<i>Language</i>
Thomas Roberts	Head	M	59		Slate Quarryman	Carnarvon Llanrug	Welsh
M. Roberts	Wife	M	57	-		Carnarvon Carnarvon	Welsh
Sarah A. Roberts	Daur	S	32		Barmaid	Carnarvon Carnarvon	Welsh
B.C. Roberts	Daur	S	28	-		Carnarvon Carnarvon	Welsh
M.E. Roberts	Daur	S	26	-		Carnarvon Carnarvon	Welsh
Jane Roberts	Daur	S	21		Dress Maker	Carnarvon Carnarvon	Welsh
Kate Roberts	Daur	S	17		Milliner	Carnarvon Carnarvon	Welsh
Lewis Willie Roberts	Son	S	12	-		Carnarvon Carnarvon	Welsh

Sarah Roberts is marked as 'employed', there being no entry for the others in the columns indicating whether they were employer, employed, or neither.

1895 The Vaynol estate rentals were still being paid by Thomas Roberts.

1900 May 12: rent was paid by J. Marston Thompson & Co., the brewers.

1901 Census '6 Palace St'

<i>Name and surname</i>	<i>Relation to head of family</i>	<i>Con</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Employer, Worker, or Own account</i>	<i>If Working at Home</i>	<i>Where born</i>	<i>Language</i>
Thomas Roberts	Head	M	69		Retired slate quarryman, now a publican	Own account	At home	Carnarvon Llanrug	Welsh
Margret Roberts	Wife	M	67	-		-		Carnarvon Llanrug	Both
Barbra G. Roberts	Daur	S	38	-		-		Carnarvon Llanrug	Both
Mary E. Roberts	Daur	S	36	-		-		Carnarvon Llanrug	Both
Thomas Roberts	Son	S	35		Printer	Worker		Carnarvon Llanrug	Both
Jenny Roberts	Daur	S	31	-		-		Carnarvon Llanrug	Both

NB: the birthplaces of most of the family are recorded differently (?wrongly) this time.

1903 Dec: Margaret Roberts died aged 70. She was the daughter of the late Mr Lewis Williams, contractor (*Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* Jan 1st 1904).

1905 January: Thomas Roberts died; he was 72, and had been a faithful member of St Mary's Church. Obituary in *Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* Jan 13th.

1911 Census 'Vaynol Arms, 6 Palace St, Carnarvon NW'. Thirteen rooms in this dwelling.

Name and surname	Relationship to head of family	Age of	Age of	Con	Occupation	Indu stry	Employer, worker, or working on own account	Whether working at home	Birthplace	Langu age
Frederick Richardson	Head	41		M	Hotel proprietor	-	Own account	At home	Farndale Yorkshire	Eng
Lizzie Richardson	Wife		51	M	Assisting in the business	-	-	-	Glasfryn Denbighshire	Both
Ethel Mildred Evans	Step daughter		21	S	Assisting in the business	-	-	-	Saltburn Yorkshire	Eng
Frederick Ward Richardson	Son	16		S	Assisting in the business	-	-	-	Saltburn Yorkshire	Eng
Robert Richardson	Son	15		S	Assisting in the business	-	-	-	Saltburn Yorkshire	Eng
Bailey Richardson	Son	14		-	Painter (house)	-	Worker	-	Saltburn Yorkshire	Eng
Olive Ward Richardson	Daughter		11	-	School	-	-	-	Saltburn Yorkshire	Eng
James William Richardson	Son	8		-	School	-	-	-	Saltburn Yorkshire	Eng

Mrs Richardson had completed 17 years in this marriage and borne six children in it, of whom five survived.

1925 The Brewery still rented Vaynol Arms from the Vaynol estate (GAS: XV 3960).

1935 Mr Ellis licensee of the Vaynol Arms (www.carnarvontraders.com/publicans.html, viewed 30/08/2012; this source gives no names for the licensees between Thomas Roberts and Mr Ellis. The address is sometimes given as 8 Palace St rather than no. 6).

1936 Vaynol Arms: A. Ellis (*Bennett's Business Directory*); E.H. Britton (*Cope's Trade Directory* (exact title not given), quoted on www.carnarvontraders.com/publicans.html, viewed 30/08/2012).

1930s-40s No 6 was the Vaynol Arms, kept by a lady and her son, who lived at the back. Later it was an upholsterer's shop. 6A was a hairdresser's, kept by Harold Ellis, a bachelor who lived away (recollections of Mrs Catherine Vevar).

1940s 6A was a barber's, kept by Dafydd Ellis; there was a large garden (recollections of Mr T Meirion Hughes).

1950 Proposed alterations to the Vaynol Arms put forward by Marston, Thompson & Evershed Ltd, including the removal of the screen between the entrance-lobby and the bar and the insertion of a service-hatch between the servery and the smoke-room, and the removal of the stillage to the cellar. The building had a lounge at the front and a snug at the rear of the present No 6A, a bar at the front of

the present No 6, with the servery behind it and then the smoke-room. Beyond the large chimney-stack were the kitchen and scullery. The yard and store-rooms in the south-west corner of the property extended some way behind no 8 (GAS: X/Vaynol/7025).

1958 May 12: 6/6A Palace Street was sold by Vaynol estate to Marston, Thompson & Evershed (later taken over by Wolverhampton & Dudley PLC, and now part of Marston's PLC) who had previously leased the property (information from Mr Eric Jones, Bryn Teg, Ysguborwen Road, Caernarfon).

1962 April 15: Marstons Brewery sold to Mr George Alfred Parkinson, with a covenant not to sell alcohol.

1962-c1983 Mr Parkinson ran an upholstering shop. The property became neglected and in a dangerous condition.

c1983 Gwynedd Council/ Arfon BC acquired some of the land at the rear of the plot for their new Council Offices.

1983 Listed as Grade II* building.

1988 Photographs of Parkinson's household stores and upholsterers in Palace St. Catalogued as previously 'the Newborough [?Vaynol] Arms' (GAS: XS 3319/20).

1989 One of its large front windows fell out into the street.

1992 Dec 16: Survey undertaken by A Parkinson, RCAHMW.

1994 June 16: Further recording undertaken by A Parkinson, RCAHMW.

1995 Arfon Borough Council was about to demolish the building in January. Establishment of the Caernarfon Heritage Trust to purchase the building from the Council, to restore its original layout and re-sell it as a shop, office and tourist attraction. Cost £214,560. Grants from the National Heritage Memorial Fund (£55,760 from HLF); Save Britain's Heritage, etc. Reports at the time of the building's rescue ascribed the timberwork to the fifteenth century, but the dendrochronological dating puts it a little later (article by Sophie Jones at www.savebritainsheritage.org/6palace.htm, viewed 22/07/2006; now (2012) www.savebritainsheritage.org/information/achievement.php?id=20).

1999 Oct 15: Caernarfon Heritage Trust sold to Susan Ann Prytherch, wife of Geraint Prytherch who ran No 6 as an Antique Shop, which was called 'Days Gone By' in 2002. They lived in No 6A which had an upstairs flat.

..... to 2005 The ground floor of 6A was a Ladies' Clothes Shop, Manon.

2004 Nov 11: the Prytherchs sold Nos 6 & 6A to Mr Eric Jones. The Prytherchs continued as tenants until 2007 Nov 26.

2007 to present: No 6 leased by Geraint Thomas as PANORAMA photographers.

2005 to 2008 No 6A was Escape Health & Beauty Salon (run by Lorna Gannon; now at Llys Llywelyn, 14 Palace Street).

2008 – present: ground floor of No 6A vacant; upper storeys in residential use (information from Geraint Thomas).

Research by Malcolm Roberts and Chris Rees, with notes from Eric Jones, from RCAHMW and CADW files, and others. Edited by Tom David, August 2012.