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## NORTH WEST WALES DENDROCHRONOLOGY PROJECT

### DATING OLD WELSH HOUSES

## VAYNOL OLD HALL,

Pentir, near Bangor, Gwynedd (formerly Caernarfonshire)

Parish: Pentir.

NGR: SH 5384 6953

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#### HOUSE DETAILS:

An 'important sub-medieval house which appears to be constructed in at least three or four phases, beginning in the early-mid C16 as a 2-unit house with lateral chimney, consisting of the ground floor of hall, passage and small outer room. It reached the present E-shaped plan in the early-mid C17, with the addition of a storeyed porch over the entrance, and a similar oriel bay at the E end: rear stair wing dated on close-studding, 1638. The E-plan was completed towards the end of the C17 with the addition of a larger N wing on the W side [...]. Outbuildings attached to the W end are later, mostly C19.' (CADW listing description). 'Lavish version of Snowdonia plan-type with projecting oriel, porch and later kitchen (?1660s) giving a busy front elevation. House has a contemporary rear parlour wing. Service rooms were in basement under the hall. Hall has a lateral chimney, framed ceiling, 16 panels; broad chamfered beams with curved stops with a torus' (Richard Suggett, RCAHMW). Description in RCAHMW *Caernarvonshire* Vol. II, no. 1387a.

**Cantref:** Arfon.

**Commote:** Maenol Bangor (*Atlas of Caernarvonshire* p 71).

**Dendrochronology results:** (a) Hall Range – *falling dates:* **Winter 1557/8 and Summer 1562**. Lower purlin 1561 (30½C); Principal rafters (3/4) 1557(52C), 1551(19+8C NM); 1536(17¼C NM); Tiebeams (0/2); Strut (0/1); Collar (0/1); (b, c) Middle Range and Rear Range – *falling date:* **Winter 1628/9**. (b) Collar 1628 (39C); Principal rafters (2/3) 1595(h/s+30C NM), 1585 (h/s); (c) Collars 1593(3+30C NM); Principal rafter 1587(h/s); Lower purlin 1601(1). *Site Master* 1448-1628 GWYNEDD2 ( $t = 10.3$  PLASMWR1; 8.3 BDGLERT17; 9.4 BRONFOEL) (Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory).

**Spelling:** The spelling of names was very variable. Variants include Gruffydd/Griffith, Ellen/Elin/Elinor/Eleanor, Katerine/Katherine/Katharine/Catherine, Dafydd/David, and so on. The spelling used in any source is generally followed here, particularly in quotations; otherwise, 'Vaynol' is used for Vaenol, Faenol and Vaynoll; 'Caernarfon' for Carnarvon and Caernarvon.

#### SUMMARY:

The land on which Vaynol Demesne is sited was originally part of the Medieval Maenol Bangor, a landed possession of the Bishops of Bangor. It was alienated in the sixteenth century, and what is now the Old Hall was begun in the 1560s and extended around 1630 and later as the centre of a growing estate. It passed in 1696 to new owners with large estates elsewhere, and this, combined with its supersession by the new house a century later, led to its survival relatively unaltered.



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).

## CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

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Date	Summary of Information (reference in brackets)
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During the medieval period the Bishop of Bangor owned the land now called Vaynol Park, which with the area where the two manor houses now lie was in an area called Farchwel (*A Short History of Vaynol* –leaflet [by K. Lench] produced for an open day at Vaynol).

C14th Reference in Caernarfon court rolls to William de Haunton commissioning a cellar to be built at his house ‘at Vaynol’ (might be Maenol Bangor) (K Withersby Lench *The Origins of the Faenol Estate: A rumbustious tale* 2010 p 23).

1485-1500 **William ap Gruffydd** of Penrhyn, Sheriff for life, co Caernarfon. He brought a troop of horse to Bosworth to assist Henry VII against Richard III. He married Angharad, d of Dafydd ap Ifan ap Einion, Constable of Harlech Castle 1461, the gallant defender of the castle during the Wars of the Roses; will dated May 9 1546 (JE Griffith *Pedigrees* p 186).

Earlier 1500s: considerable amounts of land had been sold off by the Bangor bishopric from within the episcopal home manor ‘Maenol Bangor’ (Lench p 17).

1533 Vaynol was made over to the Cochwillan family by Bishop Skevington (CADW Listed Building Detail Report, record no. 4166).

1554 Sale of land and mill at Maes y Bont, in Maenol Bangor to Thomas Williams, alias Thomas ap Williams ap William (Lench p 17).

1558 June 22: **William Williams** of Cochwillan, his son, made a will; proved 3 June 1589. He married Lowry, d of Henry Salesbury, of Llanrhaiadr, younger son of Thomas Salesbury, of Llyweni. They had issue (*Pedigrees* p 186):

1. William Williams, Cochwillan, will proved 1610
2. Robert Williams alias Wynn of Conwy, will proved 1550
3. **Thomas Williams of Vaynol**, will proved 1592
4. Capt Edward Williams of Maes y Castell, living 1601
5. John Williams of Bodlew
6. Henry Williams of Llangoed, alias Henry Wynn of Penmon
7. Elin
8. Grace
9. Ann
10. Margaret.

1558 Inherited by **Thomas Williams** of Vaynol who married **Jane**, d of Sir William Stanley, Kt, of Hooton, Cheshire; she died 25 May 1579 (*Pedigrees* p 190). (1580s William Stanley (Thomas’ father-in-law) was involved in the Babington Plot; he died 1630, exiled for Catholic tendencies, in the Low Countries (Lench p 16).) Thomas and Jane Williams had issue:

1. Sir **William Williams** (see below, 1592)
2. Simon Williams of Wîg
3. Elin married Lewis Owen Meyrick, of Frondeg, Llangaffo; widowed by 1592 (Lench p 18)
4. Catherine married William Glynne of Plas Newydd (*Pedigrees* p 266).

1558 Thomas Wynn ap William of Vaynol’s uncle, Thomas Gethin, LL.D., living 1556, left him his lands in Bangor (*Pedigrees* p 186, Lench p 15).

1560’s One Hugh Bangor’s family’s C16 hold on lands centred on the medieval townships of Aberpwll and Farchwell loosened (Lench p 17).

- 1562 **Approximate date of first phase of present house** (or within a few years afterwards). Winter 1557/8 and summer 1562: Dendro dates from the hall range (details above). Photo of roof timbers assigned to this date. Ref. to provincial building styles (Lench pp 15, 23, 24, 25). Maybe this was a new house, or one on a former house site, built when Thomas Williams inherited Vaynol and in preparation of his marriage to Jane Stanley.
- 1572 Thomas Williams recorded as having fishing rights on Menai Straits (Lench p 17).
- 1579 Death of Jane Williams 'Iana ejus Uxor obiit May 25th' (Inscription on Thomas and Jane Williams' tomb in Bangor Cathedral, fragments of which are now displayed in the south-west corner: Lench p 32).
- 1580s Thomas Williams was Her Majesty's Crown Fermor (i.e. rent-collector) in the manor of Dinorwic (Lench p 19).
- 1587 Thomas Williams took his cousins Maurice and Rowland Gruffydd, Plas Newydd, to court (Lench p 21).
- 1588 The genealogist and poet Lewys Dwnn visited (Dwnn *Heraldic Visitations of Wales and part of the Marches* II, pp 168-9).
- 1592 Preamble to Thomas Williams' will (date written in full in letters) (Lench pp 29, 126). **Thomas Williams** of Vaynol died 27 May 1592; will proved 1592 (*Pedigrees* p 190, Lench p 32). The traveller Browne Willis saw their tomb in Bangor Cathedral in 1721; 1809 tomb also seen by Edmund Hyde Hall (Lench pp 31-2).
- 1592 Vaynol inherited by **Sir William Williams**, Bart, created 15 June 1622, will 7 May 1625; proved 20 May 1630; he married 1. Ellen, d of William Williams, of Cochwillan. He was her uncle (*Pedigrees* 190, 186). She died c1600 (Lench p 8). They had issue:
1. **Thomas (1586-1636)**
  2. Henry of Maes y Castell, died 1658 (Lench p 43). 1582 date stone at Maes-y-Castell (Lench p 42)
  3. Jane
  4. Grace
  5. Elizabeth (*Pedigrees* p 190; Lench p 37).
- 1596 Date stone on St. Mary's Chapel, close to the Old Hall (Lench p 37).
- 1598 - 1605 William Williams' 2nd marriage, to Dorothy Dimock, of Hanmer, relict of Robert Wynn of Conwy. They had Margaret and Ellen, named in his will (*Pedigrees* p 190, Lench pp 37, 131).
- 1605 Date stone over door to Great Barn at Vaynol with their initials: W D W (Lench p 38).
- c1610 Marriage of Thomas Williams (the heir) to Katherine, d of Robert Wynn of Conwy (1578-1639). They had issue (*Pedigrees* p 190-1):
1. (Sir) William Williams
  2. Thomas Williams of Dinas, High Sheriff of Caernarfonshire [HSC] 1646. In 1645 he married Jane, daughter and co-heiress of Griffith Jones of Castellmarch
  3. Magdalen (1611-?); in 1634 she became second wife of Lewis Anwyl of Park (1596-?); no children.
- 1620s Poor weather and famines led to reduction in rent (Lench p 35).
- 1620s William Williams of Vaynol and others were challenged in court for quarrying for millstones and slatestones (Lench p 36).
- 1620 Dorothy of Vaynol and oath of allegiance – it was questioned whether she had used the proper form of words (Lench p 43).
- 1622 William Williams bought baronetcy (Lench p 44).
- 1624 Death of Dame Dorothy (Lench p 49).
- 1625 May: William made his will; he died. Will proved 1630 (Lench p 52).
- 1625 Inherited by Sir Thomas Williams, 2nd Bart., HSC 1626 (Lench p 52).**
- 1627 Lawsuit over Robert Williams Wynn's will (Lench p 52).

**1628/9 Dendrochronology dating for mid rear range; outer room altered for a store; rear wing added.**

**(ODL report) This was soon after Thomas Williams inherited.**

- 1630 Conclusion of lawsuits by decree of Court of Chancery (Lench p 52).
- 1633 Date stone on Old Hall garden gateway - Sir Thomas and Lady Katherine (Lench p 54).
- 1633 Date stone in porch wall of Plas Dinorwic (19C house above dock at Y Felinheli); stone possibly moved from tide-mill nearby (Lench p 56).
- 1634 Walled garden; further extensions to the Hall before Sir Thomas's death (oak staircase and another room at each level) (Lench p 50).
- 1636 Nov 14, death of Sir Thomas Williams aged 51 (*Pedigrees* p 190; Lench pp 58-9).
- 1639 Nov 14 Katherine Williams died at Pryscol near Caethro, aged 51/52, buried Bangor (Lench p 134).

**1636 Inherited by Sir William Williams, 3rd Bart, HSC 1639, 1654.** He returned to Vaynol from France (Lench p 59).

**1638 1628/9 alterations carry a graffiti date of 1638** (building recording). Maybe this was in preparation for the marriage of 1640.

- 1640 Marriage of Sir William to 1. Margaret Jones, d and co-heiress of Griffith Jones, of Castellmarch; she died June 1647. They had issue: Sir Griffith Williams, Bart. (*Pedigrees* p 190, Lench pp 59-60, 66).
- 1640s Extent of Vaynol estate increased in these years (Lench p 68).
- 1642 Archbishop John Williams referred to social life at Vaynol; Christmas feasts at Vaynol; satirical drawing of Archbishop John Williams (Lench pp 62, 65, 66).
- 1642 Civil War spread throughout Wales. Sir William was included in Charles I's Commission of Array Repeated requests from Charles I for men, money and arms (Lench p 63).
- 1644 Sir William and the Sheriff appointed to raise horse and foot (Lench p 64).
- 1646 Parliamentarians in Caernarfonshire. Spring: royalist Lord Byron raising money in the county. Sir William with Parliamentarians who laid siege to Caernarfon Castle (Lench p 64-6).
- 1647 Sir William pardoned by Parliamentarians for Royalist sympathies, but condemned by John Carter (Governor of Conway) for secret support of Royalists (Lench p 66-7).
- 1647 Death of Sir William's first wife Margaret Jones (Lench p 68).
- 1648 Few Parliamentarian gentry in Caernarfonshire; Sir William fought with Royalists at battle of Y Dalar Hir (Lench p 67).
- 1652 Sir William Williams married 2. Margaret, d of Robert Wynn, of Melai. No children. She lived at Pryscol after her husband's death in 1658 and was buried at Llanwnda in 1698 (*Pedigrees* p 190).
- 1654 Sir William became High Sheriff under Cromwell (Lench p 67).
- 1658 Death of Sir William; detailed will (Lench pp 67, 135).

**1666 Sir Griffith Williams, 4th Bart.** (c1641–1669) married Penelope, d of Thomas, Lord Bulkeley of Baron Hill (who married secondly Col Hugh Wynn, Bodysgallen) (Lench p 142). They had issue (*Pedigrees* p 190):

1. Sir Thomas Williams, 5th Bart, died young
2. Sir William Williams, 6th Bart. (c1661- died 23 Dec 1696).

1660s Extension to Great Barn (Lench p 39).

- 1669 Death of Sir Griffith Williams; detailed inventory of Old Hall and its ancillary buildings (Lench p 107).
- 1671 September. Parts of Vaynol were let to Ellis Yonge, of Bryn Iorkin, Flintshire (Lench pp 76-7).
- 1673 Penelope died (Lench p 74).

c1685 **Sir William Williams, 6th Bart.** married Ellen, d of Robert, Lord Viscount Bulkeley of Baron Hill, (c1668 -10 Sept 1729, aged 61; buried at Llanwnda. No children (*Pedigrees* p 190).

- 1688 J.P. and Deputy Lieutenant of Caernarfonshire; appointed vice-admiral of Wales in October (Lench p 81).
- 1689 Sir William Williams gained the county seat (of Caernarfonshire); re-elected (Tory) 1690 and 1695 (Lench p 80-1).
- 1695 Will (Lench p 148).
- 1696 Commissioned a sea chart of the Menai Strait (Lench p 81).

- 1696 Dec 23 death of the last Baronet of the line, Sir William Williams, in London aged c 30, possibly from wounds from a duel (Lench p 82).
- 1697 Jan: William White was employed to oversee the estate for the executors of the will, and resided at Vaynol. April: forcible entry by Arthur Owen of Orierton, Pembrokeshire and Bodeon, Anglesey, M.P. and pretended heir-at-law of the Vaynol estate; eviction of William White. Arthur Owen was ejected in December, but forcibly returned in Jan 1698 (Lench pp 86-91).
- 1698 Feb: Parliament agreed that the Wrey family had right of possession (Lench pp 91-92). Sir William Williams had bequeathed his property and estates to Sir Bouchier Wrey, then of Tavistock, Devon, Baronet, for his natural life; with remainder to his son Bouchier Wrey for his natural life; with remainder to Chichester Wrey, second son of Bouchier Wrey, for his natural life; with remainder to his Majesty King William III, his heirs etc for ever. The Wrey family employed an agent to run the farm and estate (Lench p 93).
- 1698 March: by letters patent, the crown granted the manors of Vaynol and Dinorwic and all other estates .... to **John Gore** (*Pedigrees* p 368).
- 1699 Feb 9 Deed poll: John Gore declared that the land had been granted to him in trust for **John Smith, of Tedworth**, Hants, Esquire and his heirs. John Gore confirmed the same in 1720 (*Pedigrees* p 368). The estate was left to Thomas Smith, heir of **John Smith I**, but he died without issue, and Vaynol went to his brother, **John Smith II** (Speaker of the House of Commons c1703), who left Vaynol to his son **Capt William Smith**, HSC 1739, High Sheriff of Anglesey [HSA] 1769-70, who died without issue.
- 1725 Thomas Smith commissioned a report on matters at Vaynol, showing that the Smith family was taking an interest in the estate well before they inherited (*Pedigrees* p 368; Lench p 93).
- 1756 The Smith / Assheton-Smith family came into possession of the Vaynol estate (*A Short History of Vaynol*).
- 1764 The will of William Smith devised the estate to **Thomas Assheton**, son of his sister Harriet, who by Act of Parliament took the name **Smith**; he was Lord-Lieutenant of Caernarfonshire and MP for the county for many years (*Pedigrees* p 368).
- 1774 His son **Thomas Assheton-Smith (1752-1828)** inherited Vaynol; he married and had eight children (*Pedigrees* p 368).
- 1777 Survey of the estate (Lench pp 33, 93).
- 1793 **Vaynol New Hall** designed by James Defferd of Bangor, and completed in 1795 (Lench p 94; Pevsner, *Gwynedd* p 373).
- 1785-1792 William Jones, estate under-manager, was tenant of the Old Hall (Lench p 94).
- 1792-c1808 William Lloyd, under-manager (d 1808), was tenant, with his wife Eleanor and seven children (Lench p 94).
- 1808 Their son Morgan Lloyd farmed there to 1830 (Lench p 94).
- 1828 **Thomas Assheton-Smith (1776-1858)**, the celebrated fox-hunter, inherited Vaynol; he married in 1827; no children are recorded. He devised to his wife and she devised the Welsh Estates to George William Duff, eldest son of Mrs Duff, daughter of Mrs Astley, a sister of her husband (*Pedigrees* p 368).
- 1831 'Tom' Smith revamped the Old Hall, re-roofing it, modernising and panelling it (Lench pp 95-6). He then installed a new tenant: the retiring cook from the new Vaynol Hall, Betty Hughes and her husband (Lench p 96).
- 1831 The wall of the Old Hall walled garden collapsed in a storm (Lench p 97).
- c1839 Edward Roberts was tenant, with his wife and daughter. His wife died, and he arranged for his sister's son, Ellis James, a farmer in Llanberis, to take over the farm and bring up his daughter. Mr Roberts died in 1840 (Lench p 97).
- 1841 Census: 'Vaynol Farm'

<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>
Ellis James	28		Farmer	y
Robert Williams	23		Agricultural Labourer	y
John Pritchard	44		Agricultural Labourer	y
John Pritchard	25		Agricultural Labourer	n
John Pritchard	12		Agricultural Labourer	n
Owen Thomas	21		Agricultural Labourer	n
Evan Hughes	18		Agricultural Labourer	n
Ellinor Hughes		26	Female Servant	y
Pierce Jones	13		Agricultural Labourer	y
Catherine Evans		25	Female Servant	n
Ellinor Richard		24	Female Servant	y

1846 Ellis James became secretary of the Arfon Methodist Monthly meetings (Lench pp 98-101).

1850 Ellis James married Jane Griffith, Edern, Pen Llŷn. They had Catherine in 1852 and Robert Ellis in 1855 (Lench pp 97-98; date of Robert Ellis's birth corrected by his grandson, Mr Struan James-Robertson).

1851 Census: 'Vaynol Farm'

<i>Name and surname</i>	<i>Relationship to head of family</i>	<i>Condition</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Where born</i>
Ellis James	Head	M	38		Farmer of 320 acres employing 5 men	Caerns. Capel Curig
Jane James	Wife	M		32	Farmer's wife	Caerns. Llaniestyn
Richard Williams	Servant	U	33		Farm Servant	Caerns. Edeyrn
John Hughes	Servant	M	42		Farm Servant	Caerns. Abereirch
William Roberts	Servant	U	21		Farm Servant	Caerns. Tudweiliog
Evan Roberts	Servant	U	27		Farm Servant	Caerns. Llanbedrog
Anne Jones	Servant	U		23	House servant	Caerns. Tudweiliog
Elizabeth Griffiths	Servant	U		20	House servant	Caerns. Tudweiliog
John Thomas	Visitor	[?M]	30		Joiner	Caerns. [?Llanengan]
John Owens	Servant	U	16		Farm Servant	Anglesey Llansadwrn

1859 **George William Duff** (1848-1904) assumed the name Assheton-Smith and succeeded to the estate in 1869 on attaining 21 years of age. HSA 1872, HSC 1878. He married in 1888 and had a daughter (*Pedigrees* p 368).

1861 Census: 'Vaenol Farm'

<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>
Ellis James	Head of family	M	48		Farmer of 850 acres employing 5 labourers and 2 boys	Dyffryn Mymbyr Llandegai Caerns.
Jane James	Wife	M	43		Farmer's wife	Llaniestyn Caerns.
Robert Ellis James	Son	U	5		Farmer's son schollar	Bangor Caerns.
Cathrine [?Grace] James	Daughter	U	9		Schollar	Bangor Caerns.
John Jones	Visitor	U	29		Calvinistic Methodist Preacher	[?Llaneghedd] Angleseyshire
Elizabeth Roberts	Servant	U	44		Dairy maid	Edern Caerns.
Jane Owens	Servant	U	24		House servant	Nevin Caerns.
Evan Jones	Servant	U	27		Cartman [i.e. agricultural labourer]	Llanerchmedd Angleseyshire
John Jones	Servant	U	21		Cartman	Nevin Caerns.
Robert Williams	Servant	U	19		Cartman	Edern Caerns.
Henry Jones	Servant	U	18		Labourer	Llanddeiniol Anglesey
William Williams	Servant	U	15		Cowman	Bangor Caerns.
William Jones	Servant	U	14		Labourer	Bangor Caerns.
John Owen	Servant	U	11		Labourer	[?Seller] Bangor Caerns.

1868 General Election in which the Vaynol Estate supported, and expected all its tenants to support, the Tory candidate, who lost (*Atlas of Caernarfonshire* 136).

1869 Ellis James and his family were asked to leave Vaynol Old Hall and move to Ty'n Llwyn, Pentir, where the tenant John Owen had been evicted after supporting the Liberal candidate (John Jones Plas Tirion *Hanes Bywyd y Diweddar Ellis James, Ty'n Llwyn, Bangor* by courtesy of Mr Struan James-Robertson; *Atlas of Caernarfonshire* 136).

1871 Census: 'Vaenol Farm'



<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>
John Reed	Head	M	46		Farm steward	Scotland
Susannah McD. Reed	Wife	M		38	-	Norfolk England
Joseph J. Reed	Son	U	14		Scholar	Scotland
Helen Evans	Servant	U		25	Domestic servant	North Wales Co [sic]
[?Margaret] Roberts	Servant	U		19	Dairy Maid	North Wales Do
Peter Stiward	Servant	U	20		[?Shepherd]	Scotland
Rodrick Stiward	Servant	U	21		Gardener	Scotland

1881 Census: 'Vaynol Farm'

<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>
James Kent	Head	M	50		Farmer of 300 acres	Isle of Wight
Caroline Kent	Wife	M		50	-	Isle of Wight
Benjamin Kent	Son	U	20		Farmer's son	Kent

1891 Census: 'Old Hall, Vaynol'

<i>Name and surname</i>	<i>Relation to head of family</i>	<i>Condit ion</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Where born</i>	<i>Langu age</i>
William Lort	Head	[?W or M]	66		Private secretary	Warwickshire England	Eng
Laisters Lort	Son	S	26	-		King's Norton England	Eng
Eurgain Lort	Daughter	S		21	-	King's Norton England	Eng
Vincent Phillip Lort	Son	S	20	-		King's Norton England	Eng
Bessie Granville	Visitor	S		8	-	Isle of Wight	Eng
Evan Watkins	Servant	S	25		Butler domestic	Llanfair Montgomeryshire Wales	Both
Ann Hinson	Servant	S		40	Cook	Rowington Warks.	Eng
Ellen Jones	Servant	S		35	Housemaid	Bangor N. Wales	Both

William Lort was Mr Assheton-Smith's friend and private secretary, and after he died his son Thomas became the estate agent (Lench p 102).

#### 1901 Census: 'Vaynol Old Hall'

<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>Where born</i>	<i>Langu age</i>
Thomas A.H. Lort	Head	S	39		Estate Agent ['Auct' added in a different hand]	Employer	Worcester King's Norton	Eng
Laisters W. Lort	Brother	S	37		Living own means	-	Worcester King's Norton	Eng
Emily H. Hunting	Servant	S		30	Dairy maid	[?Employer]	Presteigne S. Wales	Eng
Ellin Evans	Servant	S		51	General servant	Worker	Carnarvon Bangor	Both
Ribbecca Jones	Servant	S		17	General servant	Worker	Carnarvon Port Dinorwic	Both
Ellen Jones	Servant	S		20	General servant	Worker	Carnarvon Bangor	Both

1903 G.W. Duff-Assheton-Smith's nephew, (**Sir**) Robert (**Robin**) George Vivian **Duff**, 2nd Bt, Lieut, 2<sup>nd</sup> Life Guards (1876-1914) married Lady Juliet Lowther. They had issue:

1. Victoria Maud Veronica, who married Lt-Col John Edward Tennant

2. Michael Robert Vivian (*Pedigrees* p 368; *Kelly's Handbook to the Titled, Landed and Official Classes* 1926; *Burke's Peerage* 2003).

1904 G.W.D. Assheton-Smith's brother, (**Sir**) **Charles Garden Duff** (1851-1914) JP, DL, HSA 1885, assumed the name Assheton-Smith instead of Duff and succeeded to the estate on the death of his brother. He was HSC 1908. He married 1. in 1876 Hon Maud Frances (1845-1893) one son; 2. in 1894 Mary Elizabeth, no children; he married 3. in 1902 Sybil Mary (*Pedigrees* p 368).

1905 The Lorts held a big sale of their possessions from the Old Hall before they moved away (Lench pp 100-104).

Edwardian era: Old Hall garden designed by Lady (Sybil) Assheton-Smith (Lench p 56).

1910 Land Tax Assessment: Vaynol Farm was occupied and owned by C.G.A. Smith [i.e. Assheton-Smith], with a gross annual value of £288 (Gwynedd Archives: XLTD/1, Volume II, p 179).

1911 Census: 'Old Hall, Vaynol.' Eleven rooms, seven occupied.

<i>Name and surname</i>	<i>Relationship to head of family</i>	<i>Age of</i>	<i>Con</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Employer, worker, or working on own account</i>	<i>Industry or service with which worker is connected</i>	<i>Birthplace</i>	<i>Language</i>
Florence Emily John	Head servant	29	S	Head dairy maid domestic	Worker	At Vaynol	Steynton Pembs.	Eng
Annie Dorothy Leech	Servant	21	S	Poultry manageress	Worker	At Vaynol	London Kensington	Eng
Dorothy Weetman	Servant	23	S	Under Dairymaid	Worker	At Vaynol	Bayford Bury Herts.	Eng
Jane Ellen Roddick	Servant	17	S	Under Dairymaid	Worker	At Vaynol	Pentir Caerns.	Both
Ellen Evans	Servant	58	S	General servant (domestic)	Worker	At Vaynol	Pentir Caerns.	Both

1911 C.G. Assheton-Smith was created a baronet (*Pedigrees* p 368).

1914 Sir Robin Duff inherited Vaynol on 24th September 1914 and was killed in action at Oostnieuwkerke near Ypres on 16th October in the same year (2nd Life Guards War Diary, The National Archives WO95/1155, transcribed at <http://secondlifeguards.wordpress.com/category/191410/> viewed 17/08/2012).

For most of the twentieth century the Old Hall was home to a variety of farm managers and estate staff, including in the 1960s, Rachel Williams and the late David Gladstone and his family (Lench p 105).

1914 Sir Robin Duff's son, **Sir Michael Duff** 3rd Bt (1907-1980) (**Duff-Assheton-Smith** between 1928 and 1945) inherited the Vaynol estate as a minor. He was Mayor of Caernarfon, HSC 1932, HSA 1950, Lord Lieutenant of Caernarfonshire 1960-74, Lord Lieutenant of Gwynedd 1974-80.

1934 RCAHMW plan; account revised 28 November 1956 (*Caernarvonshire Inventory*, Vol II, monument 1387 (a), RCAHMW).

1952 February 22: Vaynol Old Hall listed Grade I by Cadw. Amended 1997 Sept 22.

- 1984 Death duties forced Sir Michael's heir **Andrew Duff Tennant** to sell Vaynol Park at auction. The majority of the lots were bought by **Glan Gwna Estates Ltd**, a family business from Caernarfon. Mr and Mrs Jones remain the current owners (*A Short History of Vaynol*). They have extensively restored the Old Hall and it is again a family home.
- 2001 The parlour and bedroom were furnished in seventeenth-century style for a TV production (Lench pp 47-8).

*Notes taken from K. Withersby Lench The Origins of the Faenol Estate: A rumbustious tale 2010. Summary undertaken by Mary Dodd and Margaret Dunn; revised by K. Lench Sept 2011. Final revision by Tom David, August 2012.*