



Darganfod Hen Dai Cymreig Discovering Old Welsh Houses

Reports: Welcome to the many Discovering Old Welsh Houses Reports which are available here on our website. All the reports - House Histories, Building Reports and Tree-ring Dating reports - can be accessed - [here](#)

Discovering Old Welsh Houses studies and celebrates the traditional houses of North Wales and the lives of the people who lived in them.

The copyright of most of these reports belongs to Discovering Old Welsh Houses. Where copyright resides with others, we have made every effort to obtain their permission to reproduce reports on our site. Our policy is to allow free access to our research documents as part of the public benefit we provide as a registered charity. You are welcome to reproduce this material but if you do so, please acknowledge the source

If you find the content useful, please consider becoming a [Member](#) to access the many benefits available.



Please note that these reports are being updated as part of an ongoing programme of revision. Older reports sometimes refer to the old names of the Group. Between 2005 and 2012 also known as The Snowdonia Dendrochronology Project, then the N W Wales Dendrochronology Project and then the Dating Old Welsh Houses Group.

New reports will be added from time to time. Keep an eye on our website for updates.



©Discovering Old Welsh Houses Group

Rhif Elusen Gofrestredig: No: 1131782: Registered charity

www.discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk

Darganfod Hen
Dai Cymreig



Discovering Old
Welsh Houses

Plâs uchaf

Llansanffraid Glan Conwy
Conwy LL28 5PD



Researched and written by Tony Schärer
with help from Richard Jones
November 2016

HOUSE HISTORY RESEARCH

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

PLEASE NOTE ALL THE HOUSES IN THIS PROJECT ARE PRIVATE AND
THERE IS NO ADMISSION TO ANY OF THE PROPERTIES



© Discovering Old Welsh Houses Group
Rhif Elusen Gofrestredig: Registered charity No. 1131782
www.discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk



Contents

We have tried to use the spelling of 'Plâs uchaf' throughout this history although the name appears in many forms - 'y Plâs Vcha', 'plasucha', 'place ucha', 'plâs uchâf' etc.

	Page no.
1. Introduction	2
2. House Description & drawings	2
3. Llansanffraid Glan Conwy in the 16 th Century	4
The Williams family	4
Family relationships, disputes and religion	5
Who built Plâs uchaf?	6
4. The Williams family between 1630 and 1700	8
Thomas and Robert Williams	9
Mortgages and a judgement	9
Dame Ellyn Mytton & her connection	9
Hearth Tax records	11
Edward Lhuyd's 'Parochialia'	11
5. Plâs uchaf in the 18 th Century	12
The Ellis family	12
The John Hollands of Teirdan	13
Plâs uchaf becomes part of Coed Coch estate	15
6. Plâs uchaf in the 19 th Century	16
Development of the Bryn Eisteddfod estate	16
The Tithe Return 1840	16
A description of the Parish in 1850	17
Census Information 1841 - 1911	18
APPENDIX 1. Local families 1300 - 1700	21
APPENDIX 2. Four Sheriffs in Denbighshire	22
APPENDIX 3. Will of Thomas Williams 1666	23
APPENDIX 4. Contemporary letters early 17 th century	24
APPENDIX 5. Plâs uchaf marriage settlements 1754 & 1776	25
APPENDIX 6. Hartsheath Estate	26
REFERENCES	27

PLÂS UCHAF, LLANSANFFRAID GLAN CONWY

INTRODUCTION

Cadw Listed grade II* 1 March 1968

The listing statement describes the house as:

“A large and once important house of the Conway family, of late C16 date with alterations internally and externally of late C17. Listed as a grand sub-Medieval house with fine late C17 interior detail”

This is based on information from the previous owner of the estate, Dr. M. Jones Mortimer, and the well-known historian of North Wales, William Bezant-Lowe.¹ However, a note on a photograph held by Conwy Archives² describes the house as:

“A small manor house of the 15th and 16th century, added greatly to in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. It was in this house that John Thomas ap William, High Sheriff of Denbighshire lived in 1564. The house was owned by the Williams’s for a long time. Eleanor Mytton, wife of Sir Peter Mytton and sister of Archbishop John Williams of York, died at the house in 1646”

Both these statements are broadly true: the Conway family and the Williams family shared ancestors, and were part of the wider network of related gentry families who held land and power in the lower Conwy valley, Creuddyn and the coastal parts of Denbighshire in the 16th and early 17th century. This study aims to fill in some of the details about the history of the house that are available online, in local archives and in publications.

HOUSE DESCRIPTION

A full architectural record³ was commissioned as part of this project, a summary of which is printed below.

“Plâs uchaf was originally constructed as a fully-storeyed stone-built house with a single transverse cross-wing, and represents a fine example of a substantial gentry house of the mid-late 16th century..... The hall range is built on the Type A lateral chimney plan, and retains the hall, with great chamber over, at the core of the house. A kitchen is in the outer bay’ beyond a transverse cross-passage, and the ‘high-end’ parlour/service accommodation is within the contemporary cross-wing, again with chambers over.”

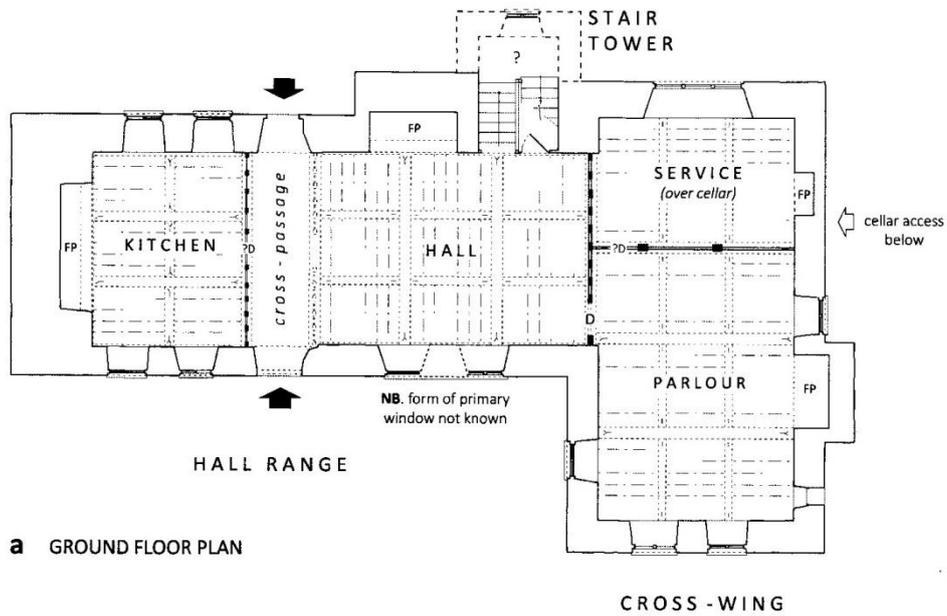
“While incorporating certain innovative architectural elements, such as the fully-ceiled hall, and thus reflecting the most fundamental change in domestic planning of the 16th century, the horizontal arrangements of the house ‘as built’ are nonetheless essentially traditional in form. As such, the house represents something of a ‘transitional’ building, and the construction date of c.1570 indicated by the dendrochronological analysis of the roof timbers places this house in the early stages of this phase of evolution.....”

“The house has evidently undergone subsequent phases of modification in the later 17th or early 18th century, when a number of the extant internal partitions were most probably introduced for the first time. The house retains a number of two-panel doors and a fine dog-leg stair, the latter with a contemporary dog-gate to the lower flight.”

1. Bezant-Lowe, The Heart of Northern Wales, Volume II, pp. 271-4.

2. Conwy Archives Ref. CP395/8/22.

3. Tyler, R. Plâs Uchaf, Architectural Record, 2016.



RIC TYLER
MCIFA, PGCE, Arch Hist (D&A)

0 5 METRES
0 15 FEET
SCALE 1:75 @ A4

Plas Uchaf, Llansanffraid Glan Conwy, Conwy C.B.
Figure 00: Transverse cross-section through hall range

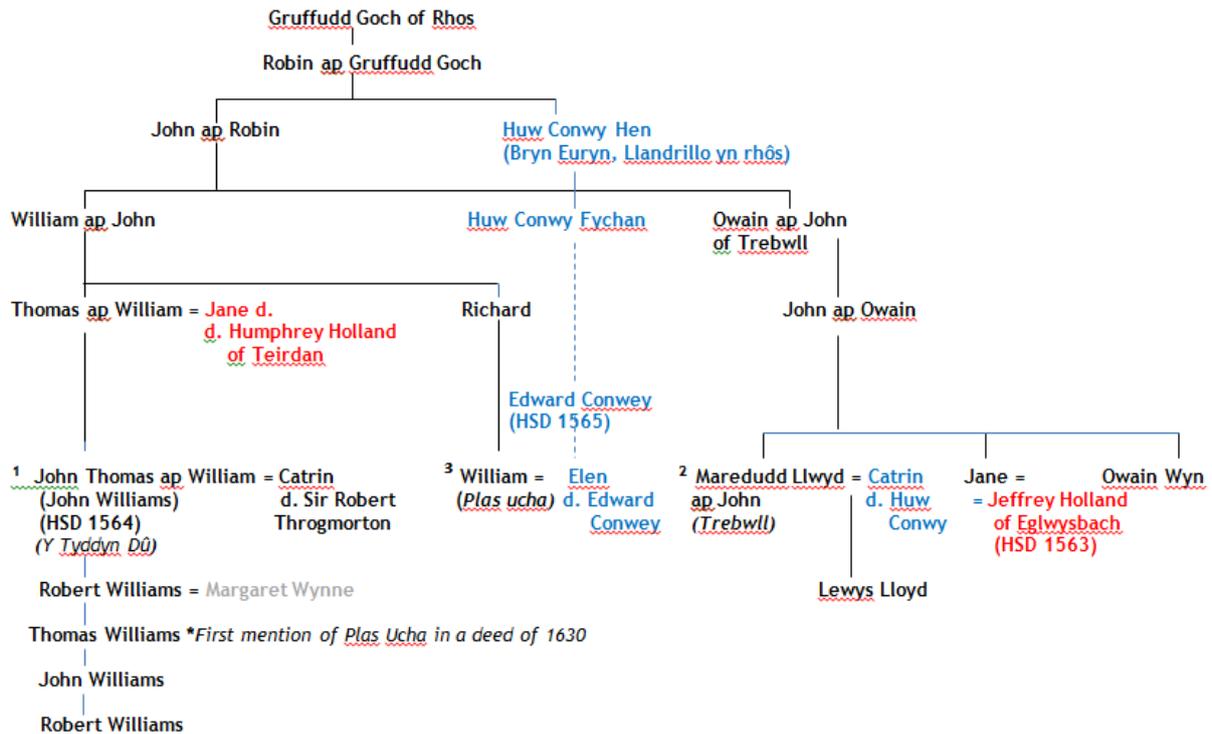
Figure 1. Ground floor plan and cross section showing the staircase¹

1. Tyler, R. Ibid

LLANSANFFRAID GLAN CONWY IN THE 16TH CENTURY

The Williams family

The simplified family tree below shows how both the Williams and the Conways shared common ancestors: Gruffudd Goch of Rhôs, and his son, Robin ap Gruffudd Goch of Graianllyn. The latter took part in the fighting around Conwy Castle during the Wars of the Roses.¹ Of Robin's two sons, John ap Robin's descendants became the 'Williams' family of Trebwl in Llansanffraid Glan Conwy; and his other son, Huw Conwy Hen, was the first to take the name 'Conwy'. He is reputed to have fought at the Battle of Bosworth, for which he was rewarded with lands at Bryn Euryn, Llandrillo yn rhôs.² A larger version of this family tree is shown in [Appendix 1](#).



1. [Lewys Dwnn \(1588\) p. 341](#), clearly places John Williams at [Llansanffraid y Tyddyn Dŵ](#)
2. [Lewys Dwnn \(1588\) same page](#), places Maredudd Llwyd at 'Trebwl in the same parish'
3. [Bartrum \(Welsh Genealogies\)](#) gives William ap Richard as of 'Plas Ucha, Aberconwy'
4. HSD = High Sheriff of Denbighshire

Figure 2. The Conwey and Williams families in the 16th Century

Note how the descendants of Gruffudd Goch of Rhôs gradually changed the style of their names as the old custom of using Welsh patronymics died out. Thus Huw Conwy Hen was the first to adopt the name 'Conwy'; John Thomas ap William became 'John Williams'; and Meredith Llwyd ap John's son became 'Lewys Lloyd'.

Note also the marriages to two branches of the Holland family - that from Eglwysbach, and that from Teirdan, Llanellian yn rhôs. All these families were proud of their lineage, tracing their descent back to medieval times. John ap Thomas ap William of Tyddyn du had his coat of arms recorded by Lewys Dwnn.³

'He beareth 1. The coate of Marchudd 2. Ednyfed fychan 3. Robin ap Gr. Goch viz. Argent a Griffon Gules rampant 4. Madog moel' viz. Argent 2 wolves in saltier Gules.'

1. Williams, [History of Aberconway](#), p. 43
2. Tucker, Denbighshire Historical Society, Vol. 15, 1966
3. Dwnn, [Heraldic Visitation to Wales](#), Vol 2. p. 341
4. Bartrum, [Welsh Genealogies](#), Marchudd 22.

Family relationships, disputes and religion

In the list of sheriffs below, between 1562 and 1565, four local gentry - three of whom were related to each other (see [Figure 1.](#)) - were elected as Sheriff for the whole county of Denbighshire. Edward Conway is from Bryn Eurn, not Bryn Eithin as printed. A short biography for each one is added at [Appendix 2.](#) with a description of their coats of arms. They were obviously men of influence at the time, although why four men from the same locality were appointed over a short period is unclear.

- 1560: Robert Fletcher of Llanfair-Duffryn-Clwyd ^[2]
- 1561: Thomas Morris of Ruthin ^[2]
- 1562: **Robert ap Hugh of Plas Cefn y garleg, Llansantffraid Glan Conway and Creuddin, Caernarvonshire** ^[2]
- 1563: Jeffrey Holland of Eglwfsfach ^[2]
- 1564: John Thomas ap William of Glan Conway ^[2]
- 1565: Edward Conway of Bryn Eithin ^[2]
- 1566: Hugh Puleston of Bersham ^[2]
- 1567: Fulk Lloyd of Foxhall, Henllan ^[2]
- 1568: Evan Lloyd of Yale (Plas yn Iâl) ^[2]
- 1569: Ellis Price of Plas Iolyn ^[2]
- 1570: Robert Puleston of Bersham ^[2]
- 1571: Edward Almer of Pant Iocyn ^[2]
- 1572: Simon Thelwall of Plas-y-Ward ^[2]
- 1573: Ellis Price of Voelas ^[2]
- 1574: Robert Wynne ap Cadwalader of Voelas ^[2]
- 1575: John Salusbury, snr of Lleweni Hall^[1]
- 1576: Edward Jones of Cadwgan ^[2]
- 1577: John Wynne ap William of Melai ^[2]
- 1578: Pierce Holland of Abergele ^[2]
- 1579: Thomas Maurice of Ruthin ^[2]
- 1580: John Price of Derwen

Figure 3. High Sheriffs of Denbighshire 1560-1580¹

Of the four, Thomas Williams stands out by his marriage to an English noblewoman. His wife, Catherine Throckmorton (1532-1580), was the daughter of Sir Robert Throckmorton of Coughton Hall in Warwickshire. ^{2 3} It was her second marriage, and she came from a prominent Catholic family that was later involved with the conspiracies surrounding Mary Queen of Scots - the Babington Plot and, later, the Gunpowder Plot. Were the Williams a Catholic family like some of the neighbouring Pughs and Conways in Creuddyn, and was this why they gradually lost their status in the early years of the 17th Century?

In spite of intermarriage, the families were frequently in dispute over land, dowries and inheritance. A long-running dispute during this period was about a fishing weir on the river Conwy - probably near Garth in the Trallwyn township of Llansantffraid Glan Conway. John Williams opponent was a William ap Meredith ap David ap Grono, of Carwedvynyth, a township in Llanefydd parish. Although John Williams's son, Robert, had married William's daughter in 1581, the dispute was not settled until after 1600 when a detailed deed of arbitration was set down.

1. Original list in [Archeologia Cambrensis](#), Vol LVII, Jan. 1867
2. [Wikipedia](#), Sir Robert Throckmorton
3. Dwnn, L. *ibid.*

1600/1, February 7

Deed whereby John Thomas ap William of Trebwl, co. Denb., al. John Williams, and Hugh Lloid, in part performance of an award dated 20 May 1598, by Moris ap John and Gruffith Williams, and William ap Meredith ap David ap Gronowe of Carwedvynyth, grant to the said William ap Meredith ap Gronowe all fish and profits in the wear and fishing place called Cored bigot alias Cored y Talloyn in every the four tides and ebbings in the River and water of Conwey every Tuesday, Tuesday night, Wednesday and Wednesday night: with power of attorney to David ap Thomas ap Rees and another to deliver seisin. Signatures. Seal, one white wax, one green wax, indistinct. Witnesses: David Kiffinge, Edward Wyn, and others. Endorsed: a deed belonging the ware in Llansaintffraid. Vellum. English. ¹

William ap Meredith, above, was very active in the land market during this period. His house at Llanefydd was also named 'Plâs uchaf', which has complicated some of the research into the Plâs uchaf in Llansanffraid. His family later took the name 'Wynne', and their estate eventually passed by marriage into the hands of the Wynnes of Coed Coch, who thus owned two 'Plâs uchafs' at the same time at the end of the 18th century.

Who built Plâs uchaf in Llansanffraid Glan Conwy?

The map below shows the four townships of the parish which remained largely unaltered over the period of our research. A fifth township of Pen-y-rhôs was sometimes named, but was merged with Tre Deunant in the Tithe Return of 1840.

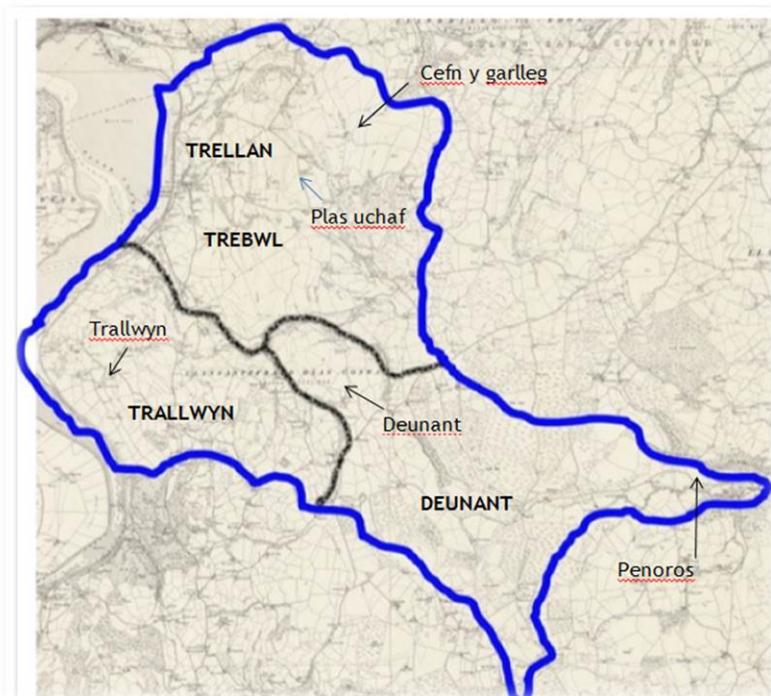


Figure 4. Townships in Llansanffraid Glan Conwy Parish²

There would be a straightforward answer to the question above if there was a direct line of ownership for Plâs uchaf back to the John Williams who was the High Sheriff for Denbighshire in 1564. His status makes him a likely candidate to build such an imposing house, and the dendrochronological dating of the roof timbers to around 1570 fits in well with the peak of his importance.

1. Coed Coch & Trofarth ms. 1322
2. Tithe Map 1840. Parochialia

John Williams is mentioned in early documents dating back to 1561¹ as “*Queens free tenant in the town of Talloyne*” or as “*John Thomas ap William of Trebwill, Co. Denbigh, Esq.*”. He owned land in both the townships of Trebwill and Trallwyn (Talloyne) in Llansanffraid, as well as in Creuddyn, Llandrillo yn rhôs and Llanelian. As was the practice of the time he was only identified in legal documents by the name of the parish, or township where he lived; only gradually did the name of one’s house become written down as well.

When Lewys Dwnn, in his Heraldic Visitation to North Wales ², recorded John Williams’s genealogy in 1588, he was one of two entries for the parish:

“Llansanffraid y Tyddyn Dŷ - John Williams Esguier (sonne and heir to) ap Thomas ap William ap John ap Robin ap Griffith goch.....”

The second entry describes his relative, Meredith, as from the same parish:

“Tre Bwll yn yr un Plwyf - Meredith ap John ap Owain ap John ap Robin ap Griffith Goch.....”

The identification of the two men fits in with the information in Figure 1, but no documentary evidence has been found of any house named ‘Tyddyn Dŷ’ in the parish. It could be an earlier version of the present farm ‘Ty Du’, which lies just above the present village. Or it could be an earlier name for a house on the site of, or near to, Plâs uchaf. It is fairly certain that when Lewys Dwnn made his visitation in 1588, the present house would have been built.

In Figure 2. (above) John Williams’s cousin, Meredith, is clearly named as ‘of Trebwill’ and we have found a key document which grants an unusually large amount of land to Meredith’s son, Lewys Lloyd, in 1574. This was one of several land grants at the time made by Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, who had been given the Lordship of Denbigh by Queen Elizabeth I in 1563. The difference between other similar local grants and that received by Lewys is in the extent of the lands conveyed:

Copy Feoffment - 20 June 1574 ³

1. Robert Earl of Leicester

2. Lewys Lloyd ap Meredith Esq.

1 capital messuage, 1 barn, 1 garden, 1 grain mill, 1 fulling mill, 14 messuages, 300 acres of land, 20 acres of meadow, 200 acres of pasture, 50 acres of wood and underwood, and 5 acres of moor and heath in TREBWLL, county Denbigh.

.... 2 messuages, 17½ acres arable, 1 acre meadow, 17½ acres pasture, furze and wood and underwood in KRUTHYN (Creuddyn).....

.....1 messuage, moiety of a fishpond, 6 acres of land, 2 acres of meadow, 6 acres of pasture, 2 acres of wood and underwood in TALLOYNE .. and other messuages in DYNERTH and MOCHTUDD (Llanrillo yn Rhôs & Mochdre), co. Denbigh.

It is very tempting to guess that the ‘capital messuage’ could be the newly-built Plâs uchaf, and that the other 14 messuages, over 500 acres of land and 2 mills, represented much of the farmed land in Trebwill township under the control of the extended Williams and Lloyd families.

1. Coed Coch & Trofarth ms. 1009

2. Lewys Dwnn, *ibid*

3. Hartsheath Estate Catalogue, Denbigh Archives. Ms.366

THE WILLIAMS FAMILY AT PLÂS UCHAF BETWEEN 1630 AND 1700

Thomas and Robert Williams

The first document which mentions Plâs uchaf by name is an indenture dated 1630, which gives a detailed description of the fields and other property owned by Thomas Williams. This is typical of the legal devices of the time where owners were raising money by mortgaging their property. This process continued until John Williams's son, Robert, lost Plâs uchaf in 1693 by failing in his payments. Note that Edward Wynne of Carwedvynyth (Llanefydd) is still involved in this deed, as is Thomas Williams's neighbour, Hugh Pue of Keven y Garleg.

1630, April 1¹

Indenture tripartite made between 1. Thomas Williams of Trebull, co. Denb., gentleman, John Williams, his son and heir, William Piers of Mochtre, same co., gent., Hugh ap John of Trebull, yeoman, and John ap Ieuan, of the same, yeoman 2.. John Owen of Deynant, same co., gent., and Edward Williams of Carwedvynyth, same co., gent., and 3. Edward Wynne of Carwedvynyth, gent., and Hugh Pue of Keven y Garleg, same co., gent. whereby the first party covenant with the second party to levy a fine to them (the second party) on a messuage in Trebull called y Plâs vcha with its lands ... all formally described in the said fine, to be held in trust by the said J. Owen and E. Williams to the use, etc., of the said E. Wynne and H. Pue, and so to the benefit of W. Piers, with conditions of distribution, reversion and redemption of mortgage, etc. English. Vellum.

The parish registers of Llansanffraid Glan Conwy confirm that a Thomas Williams of Plâs uchâ was buried on 17 April 1666, and a transcription of his will is set out in [Appendix 3](#) . There is no record of his son Robert's marriage, but several children of 'Robert Williams of Plâs ucha, and his wife Margaret', were baptised from 1685 to 1691 in Llansanffraid church.²

By 1685 Robert Williams is recorded selling his land to a new person in the story : Robert Davies of Llanerch (near Denbigh):

1685³

Grant, bargain, and sale by Robert Williams of Place Vcha in Trebwill, co. Denbigh, gentleman, to Robert Davies of Llanerch, same co., Esqre., for five shillings, of a messuage in Trebwill aforesaid, held by David Shion, and lands there called ffreeth y mynydd, a ffreeth ty hwynt ir nant, Core glare vcha, Cae glare issa, Cory yr pant, Cay yr Skybor, Cory yr wern, y Cay hir, y mores, Aber y were bach, & pen yr Rhiwie, and a cottage there held by Edward ap Hugh Shion, to hold for six months to enable the said Rob. Davies to take a conveyance thereof in due course. Signature of the vendor. Seal lost. Witnesses: John Salusbury, Thomas Carter, Edward Williams, John Lloyd, Thomas Roberts. English. Vellum.

Robert Davies, with the title 'Esqre.', had a slightly higher social status than Robert Williams, who was a mere 'Gent.' Robert Davies owned the estate of Gwysanney, near Mold, and had married Anne, the co-heiress of Sir Peter Mutton and his wife Ellyn, (See [Figure 4](#). below). The latter's brief stay as a widow at Plâs uchâ, and her relationship with the Williams family will be discussed shortly, but it seems clear that by this time, the Williams family were mortgaging and selling their land in Trebwill. The complexity of the legal mechanisms used, exemplified in the three deeds below on page 8, make it hard to know whether these were a collusive action between parties to raise money, or whether Robert Williams really did default on his mortgage payments and lose Plâs uchâ for the Williams family.

-
1. Coed Coch & Trofarth MS 1879
 2. Transcription of Parish Registers, Conwy Archives.
 3. Coed Coch & Trofarth MS 1976

Mortgages and a judgement involving Robert Williams

1688 and 1693 ¹

Deed whereby Anne Lloyd of Bewmares, co. Anglesey, spinster, reciting the terms of an indenture tripartite of feoffment, dated 6 December 1688, between 1. Robert Davies of Llanerch, co. Denb., Esq., and Robert Williams of Plâs uchâ, same co., township of Trebwill, gentleman, 2, the said Anne Lloyd, of Rhosmor, and Edmund Glynne of the same, co. Anglesey, gentleman, and 3. Hugh Griffith of Carnarvon, co. Carn., gentleman, whereby Davies sold to A. Lloyd and E. Glynne for £212 a messuage and lands in Trebwill aforesaid, then held by David ap Hugh Shone and called ffrith y Mynith, y ffrith Ty Hwyt ir Nant, Cae glas uchâ, Cae glas Issa, Cae (r) Pant, Cae (r) Skybor, Cae r Werne, y Cae Hir, y Maes, Aber y Werne Bach, and Pen yr Rhiwie, etc.

... and of another indenture of feoffment, dated 10 December 1688, made between 1. R. Williams, and 2. A. Lloyd and E. Glynne aforesaid, whereby Williams sold to Lloyd and Glynne the messuage called Plâs uchâ in Trebwill, with lands called Cae Coed, Cae (r) fffynnon, Cae Bach, alias Cae Richard, ffreeth y Mynyth y ffreeth Tu' Hwyt yr Nant, Cae Glas uchâ, cae Glas Issa, cae (r) Pant,' etc. as above, to the use of the said A. Lloyd, for £88, with condition of payment to her of £372 on appointed dates, which have not been paid (she the said A. Lloyd) assigns to Anne Wood of Rhosmor, co. Anglesey, widow, all the premises above mentioned.

Signature and seal, a monogram. Witnesses: John Owen, William Jones, William Owen Edmund Glynne. Endorsed: "Mrs. Anne Anne Lloyd to Mrs. Anne Wood, Release, etc.. Assignment of Mr. Robert Williams his mortgage, etc., for 300 li. etc. Dat. 30 Dec. 1693". English. Vellum.

The final piece of evidence in the story is the court judgment against Robert Williams, reproduced below. He is described as 'Robert Williams of Conway'. Does this mean he had moved there after losing Plâs uchaf ; or, was it a short name for 'Llansanffraid Glan Conwy'? Perhaps he lost the house, but had already invested the money from the mortgage, and got away with a small fine.

1694/5 ²

Bond of Robert Williams of Conway, co. Carnarvon, gentleman, to Anne Wood of Rhosmor, co. Anglesey, widow, in the sum of £14 to ensure due payment of £7. Signed and sealed, a monogram. Witnesses: John Owen, Gryffyth Parry, Blanch Lloyd. Memorandum that judgement was obtained on this bond at Ruthyn. Sessions, March 7 1694/5 or before. Latin bond, English conditions. Paper.

Dame Ellyn Mytton and her connection with Plâs uchaf

Although only in residence as a widow between 1637-43, Ellyn was the sister of the famous Archbishop John Williams (1582-1650), who was descended from another Williams family, that of Cochwillan and Penrhyn in Caernarvonshire. His father, Edmund Williams, lived in Conwy, and his mother was Mary Owen, the sole heiress of Owain Wyn, a brother of Maredudd Llywyd (Lloyd), and a cousin of the Williams family of Plâs uchaf (see below) ³

Archbishop Williams² was at the centre of political power in London as Lord Keeper (Lord Chancellor) under James I, but although he lost his influence and was imprisoned in the Tower for a while, he remained a staunch supporter of Charles I in the Civil War, and returned to North Wales to hold Conwy Castle for the King. He later transferred his support to the Parliamentary cause to end the exhausting war, and died at Gloddaeth, the home of his favourite cousin, Mary, a sister of Sir Owen Wynn of Gwydir. He took an interest in his sister's marriage, and there seems to have been some rivalry between Sir Owen Wynn and Sir Peter Mytton for her hand (see letters in [Appendix 4.](#)) Sir Peter was an important lawyer ³, who became Chief Justice of North Wales but died in 1637 before the start of the Civil War. His wife died in 1643 before her brother returned to Conwy.

1. Coed Coch & Trofarth MS no. 2004

2. Ibid MS. 2005

3. Pennant, T. A Tour in Wales, Vol 2 p.316

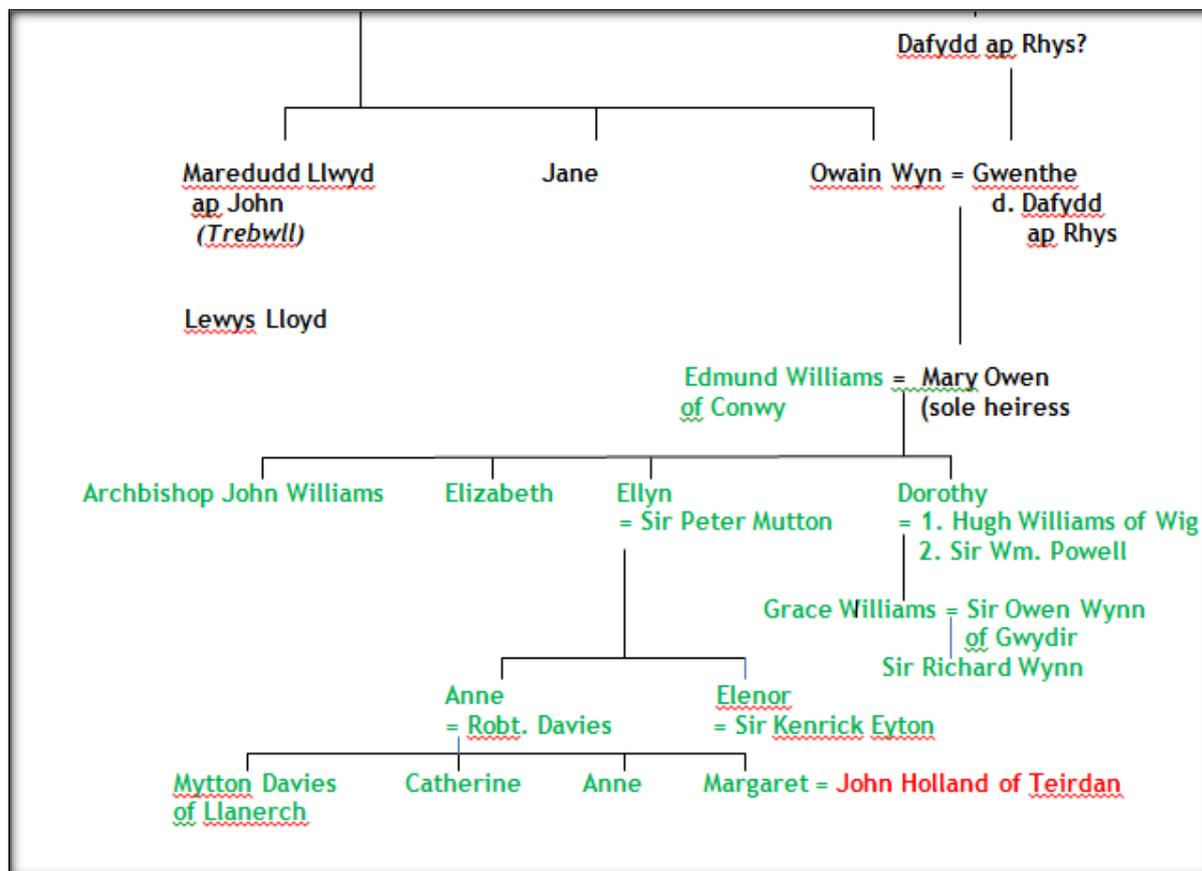


Figure 5. Early 17th Century family relationships - the Mytton and Davies families¹

Ellyn Mytton probably chose to live at Plâs uchaf because of its links to her mother's family, and because it was close to her other relatives. Her niece, Grace Williams, was married to Sir Owen Wynn of Gwydir; and her aunt, Mary, lived at Gloddaeth. Perhaps she preferred to live in the lower Conwy valley rather than at her late husband's house at Lleweni near Denbigh. A copy of her will is in the National Library of Wales but is not available online.⁴

Of more lasting importance for land ownership in Llansanffraid Glan Conwy, was Ellyn's daughter's marriage to Robert Davies of Gwysanney, near Mold, who eventually inherited Llannerch Hall, near Denbigh from his wife, and started to buy land from the Williams family in Llansanffraid Glan Conwy (see the deed of 1685 above). Both the Hearth Tax return of 1666 and Edward Lhuyd's survey of 1699 show Robert Davies and his son, Mytton Davies, owning, and possibly improving Plâs issa, the house in the parish below Plâs uchaf.

At some time during this period, the interior of Plâs uchaf was improved with new panelling, partitions, ceilings, and the fine decorative staircase. Whether this was done by the last members of the Williams family who lived there; by Ellyn Mytton during her short stay; by Robert Trygarn; or by the Ellis family in the early 18th century, is unknown. An inscription of 1722 on a re-used piece of timber by the porch, may be a clue.⁵

1. Griffiths, Pedigrees of Caernarvonshire and Anglesey families, 1914.
2. Dictionary of Welsh Biography
3. History of Parliament online, Sir Peter Mytton.
4. Will, Dame Ellyn Mytton, NLW SA/1643/47 and SA/1643/R8/28V
5. Tyler, R. Plate 5.

Hearth Tax Records of 1666

The hearth tax was introduced by Charles II in 1662 to raise much-needed money for his government. Always unpopular, it was later repealed, but the records that were kept for each parish in Denbighshire for the year 1666, give an excellent picture of the number of houses and their status.¹

In Llansanffraid Glan Conwy, the township of Tyboole (Trebwll) had a total of 85 hearths, whereas the township of Tralloon (Trallwyn) only recorded 24. Since only the names of the owners are recorded, it is not always easy to match these to the smaller houses. But the larger houses present no problem, and, in Trebwill, the entries for Mr. Thomas Williams with 6 hearths, and Mr. Robert Pugh, with 5 hearths, obviously relate to Plâs uchaf and Cefn-y-garllleg. There is also a record for Mr. Robert Davies, who has a house with 8 hearths, but a note alongside the entry says 'vacant supposed'. A guess for this could be a new building, or improvements to a property recently acquired by the family? This vacant house with eight hearths was probably Plâs Issa, where there are two separate old buildings. The property was still in the ownership of descendants of the Davies family at time of the Tithe Map in 1840.

Edward Lhuyd's Parochialia returns c. 1699

These were the first 'questionnaire survey' of the parishes of Wales carried out by the famous antiquarian Edward Lhuyd (1660-1709).² The information about Llansanffraid is shown below, and definitely shows Plâs Issa in the ownership of Mr. Robert Davies. There are five townships in the parish, including Tre Benyrros (Penorros) which remained in Glan Conwy parish until the last century.

<p>Y trevydth Degwm 1. Tre y llan 2. Tre Bwlh 3. Tre Dheynant 4. Tre Benyrros 5. Y Trallwyn</p> <p>Tai kyvrivol</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Y plâs issaf belongs to Mr. Davies of Llannerch2. Y plâs ucha belongs to Mr. Robert Williams3. Kevn y garllleg belongs to Mr. Robert Pugh4. Pant y gangen5. Rhyd y gwingi?6. Y Krygvryn7. Bryn meyrlic8. Nant y Konat9. Rhyd Ivan10. Y Goetre11. Dowlwyd vel Dolwyd12. Kîl Glasen

Figure 6. - From 'Parochialia', Parish Return for Llansanffraid Glan Conwy

1. Hearth Tax records, Denbighshire Archives, Ruthin
2. Edward Lhuyd, Parochialia, ed. Morris 1909

PLÂS UCHAF IN THE 18TH CENTURY

Throughout Wales, the 18th century was a period when successful and ambitious landowners enlarged their estates, often at the expense of lesser gentry from the older Welsh families. The history of Plâs uchaf shows this process in action. Firstly, it passed from the Williams family, possibly through other hands, to a near neighbour - the Ellis family from Glanywern, Mochdre. It then passed by marriage to the Hollands of Teirdan, Llanellian; and, within a generation, another marriage took it into the hands of the Wynnes of Coed Coch and Trofarth.

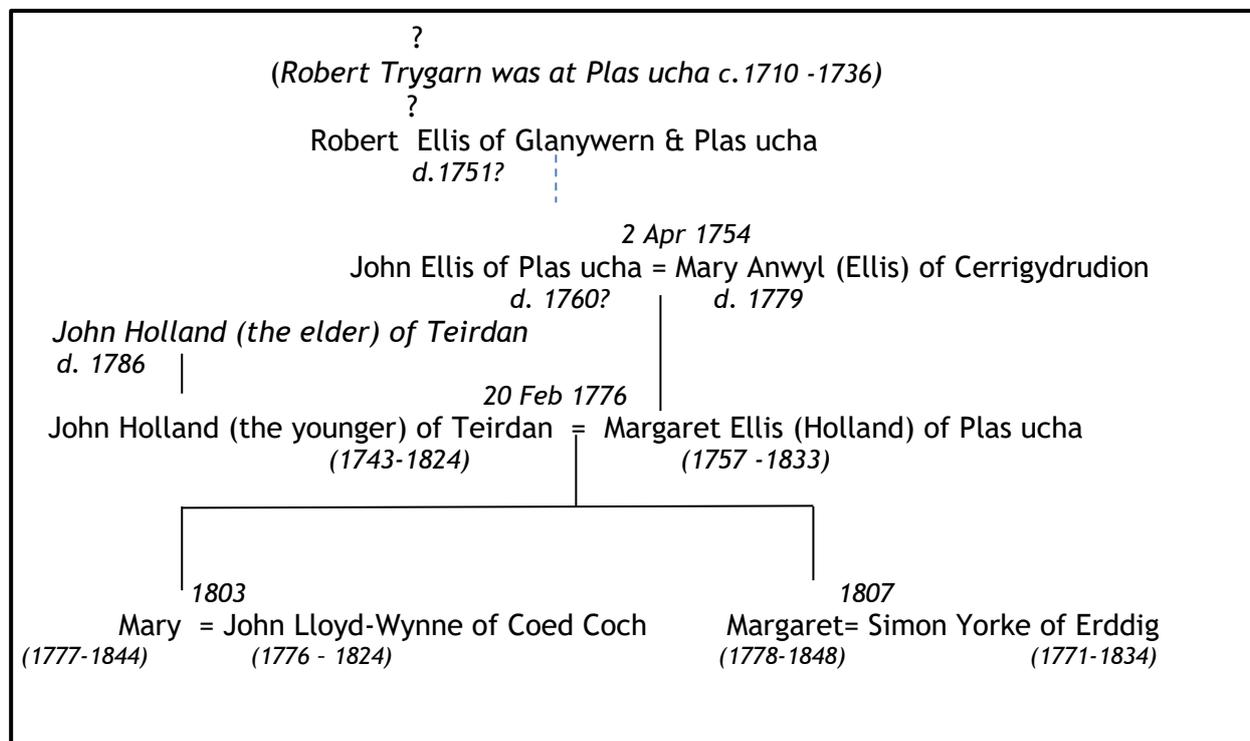


Figure 7. - Marriages between the Ellis, Holland and Wynne families 1754 - 1803 ¹

The Ellis family - an acquisition and a marriage

The Ellis family acquired Plâs uchaf sometime after 1736, probably after Robert Trygarn, the lawyer (see below), had dealt with the Anglesey mortgagees who were involved in Robert Williams's land deals of the late 1600s, described on page 8 above. A manuscript records that the Ellis coat of arms was 'ermine, a lion passant gules'.³

The first deed which names one of the Ellis family at Plâs uchaf is in 1747: ²

*Anne Roberts of Llysfan, co. Caernarvon, spinster, assigns to Robert Ellis of Plâs uchâ in the parish of Llansaintffraid, co. Denbigh, gentleman, a messuage or tenement with its lands in the parish of Eglwysfâch, co. Denbigh, ..., held by Edward Pierce, and late by Robert Trygarn of Plâs Uchâ, gent., deceased, in the same parish, subject to redemption on payment of £500 on an appointed day, etc.
Mark signature of Anne Roberts, seal, a dove holding in its beak a branch. Witnesses: David Hughes, Will. Vaughan. English. Vellum.*

1. Various sources. Note that Griffiths Pedigrees (p.102) give Margaret Ellis's mother as John Ellis's second wife, Ann, but the parish records and marriage settlements seem to confirm the information in Figure 7.
2. Coed Coch & Trofarth MS 2322
3. Coed Coch & Trofarth MS 3227

The reference to ‘*Robert Trygarn of Plâs uchâ, gent, deceased*’ is interesting. **Robert Trygarn** and his father, Maurice, were attorneys to the local gentry and their names appear on many land deeds of the period. They were from a Llŷn family, and Maurice Trygarn lived at Henblas,¹ above Llanrwst for nearly 50 years until he died in 1721. His son, Robert, carried on as a lawyer after his father’s death and was engaged in lawsuits in London against the Voelas estate and may have bought Plâs uchaf in the period around 1710 after the Williams family ran into problems with their mortgage (see page 8. above). In his will of 1736 ², he disposes of Plâs uchaf land with the familiar names of Pant Clyd, Kil Lidiart, Ffrith y mynydd etc, so perhaps the Ellis family acquired Plâs uchaf from his family.

Robert Ellis was probably the son of a ‘*Mr. John Ellis of Glan y wern*’ whose burial is recorded in the Llandrillo yn rhôs parish register for 1757. A deed of 1751, bearing Robert Ellis’s name mortgages some of the Plâs uchaf land to a Hugh Peake of Denbigh.³

However, later in the same year, a lease and an important marriage settlement were made in the name of a **John Ellis of Plâs uchaf**. A Robert Ellis was buried in Llansanffraid church on 16 September 1751, so John Ellis could be Robert’s son, or brother?

The two deeds of the marriage settlement are reproduced in [Appendix 5](#). and concern the ⁴ marriage of:

“Mary Anwyl spinster and only daughter of Lewis Anwyl of Tai yn y voel, in the Parish of Cerrigydrudion”.

The marriage was recorded in the Cerrigydrudion parish register in 1754 :

“John Ellis, Gent. marries Mary Anwyl 2 April 1754”

Mary Ellis gave birth to a daughter, Margaret, in 1757, and there is a record of “*Mr. John Ellis*” being buried in Llansanffraid Glan Conwy church in 1760. The young Margaret Ellis now became the sole heiress to John Ellis’s property around Mochdre and Glan Conwy, as well as her father’s lands in Cerrigydrudion and Merioneth. At some time, her mother retired to Ruthin, where a deed of 1776 relates to an agreement with “*Mrs. Mary Ellis, widow, of Ruthin*” about the marriage of her daughter, under the age of 21, with John Holland (the younger) of Teirdan. As a widow, Mary Ellis continued to live in Ruthin, and was buried in Cerrigydrudion as “*Mrs. Mary Anwyl of Ruthin*” on 6 May 1779. A bond ordering her daughter to make an inventory of her effects is dated 1789.²

John Holland of Teirdan and Plâs uchaf - 1776-1815

William Bezant-Lowe summarises his advantageous marriage. ⁵

“Plâs Uchaf came into the Coed Coch family through the marriage at Llanelian of John Holland of Teyrdan (d. 1824) with Mary Ellis, daughter of John Ellis of Plâs Uchaf from whom he inherited a fortune of £20,000. There were two daughters to this marriage, who were (also) co-heiresses: the elder, Mary, married at Llanelian church to John Lloyd-Wynne of Coed Coch, and thus carried the Plâs uchaf estate to the Coed Coch estate; the other daughter, Margaret, also married at Llanelian church, Simon Yorke of Erddig.”

Bezant Lowe quotes a passage from the [Garthewin Diaries](#): ⁶

“20 February 1776 -Hear Jack Holland of Teyrdan was married to Miss Ellis of Plâs ucha - fortune £20,000!”

1. Griffiths J, p.276

2. NLW, Will of Robert Trygarn of Plâsucha, SA/1736/95, Mary Ellis Bond SA/1789/97

3. Coed Coch & Trofarth MS 2368

4. Coed Coch & Trofarth MSS 2498, 2499

5. Bezant-Lowe, pp. 271-4 . 6. Appendix to Vol. 2.

The marriage settlement is set out in full in [Appendix 5](#). and shows how within a generation, two successful marriages greatly extended the value and extent of lands associated with Plâs uchaf. It was an irony that after 1776, John Holland the younger, and his father, who had been a trustee for John Ellis's marriage back in 1754, started to raise money on the land brought to them through the two marriages, and Plâs uchaf itself declined in importance, and was no longer the principal residence of its owners.

The deeds below give an idea of how money was raised on the properties:

1778 ¹

Deed whereby John Holland the younger of Ruthin, co. Denbigh, and Margaret, his wife, lease to Hugh Evans of the Abbey, co. Carnarvon, gentleman, for one year, the capital messuage called Plâs Uchâ in the parish of Llansaintfraid Glan Conway, co. Denbigh; a cottage called Pant clud and land called Ffrith y mynydd in Llansantfraid; a rent of 5/- out of a messuage called Penyrhiw; messuages called Meddiant issa, Meddiant uchâ, Bryn derw, Bryn rhydd and Ffrith lwyd in the parish of Eglwysfach, same co.; (6 messuages and; a house called Tan y bryn and another house in Pentre Melin y Coed, in Llanrwst; land in Talysarn in the town of Ruthin; other holdings there in Street yr Rhos; rent of ash. 4d out of the freehold estate of Edward Edwards of Ruthin, grocer, deceased; rent of 25sh. out of lands in the parish of Llanfoorog; for one year, at peppercorn rent, with view to a grant thereof.

1780 ²

Deed of five parts, made between 1. John Holland the elder of Teyrdan, co. Denbigh, and Anne his wife. 2. John Holland the younger, eldest son of the above and Margaret his wife.... (and other gentlemen), trustees for the term of 1000 years for raising £3000 for portioning the younger children of the abovesaid John and Margaret Holland, and other gentlemen, trustees of the term of 500 years for raising £2,000 for portioning the younger children of the abovesaid John and Anne Holland setting forth the intents of certain Articles of Agreement, made 15 February 1776, concerning messuages and lands in Llanellian, Llysfaen, Bettws Abergeley, Llansaintffraid, Llandrillo in Rhos, cos. Denb., Flint, and Carn.....and other deeds, dealing with the settlement on the marriage of John and Margaret aforesaid, the second parties,

The three schedules appended to this deed are printed in [Appendix 5](#). and show a familiar list of properties accumulated as a result of the two marriages. A note at the end of the document above gives John Holland the Elder some recompense for his foresight in arranging both marriages.

Receipt on the dors by John Holland the elder from Mary Ellis, (Mother of Margaret, wife of John Holland the younger), widow, for £3000, the whole consideration money payable to him,

Land transactions continued through the 1780s and 90s, with John Holland the younger sometimes styling himself as 'John Holland of Brynsteddfod', where the couple must have lived sometimes, but more often as 'John Holland of Teyrdan', where he took over his father's house and position. John Holland the Elder, who had done so much to improve his son's financial status, died in 1786.

1. & 2. Coed Coch & Trofarth MSS 2934, 2935, 2520,2521,2522

Plâs uchaf becomes part of the coed coch estate

In 1803, John & Margaret Holland's daughter, Mary, married John Lloyd Wynne of Coed Coch (see [Figure 7.](#)) It is not easy to pinpoint an exact date when Plâs uchaf became part of the Coed Coch estate as it was already held in a complex series of trusts and mortgages for the benefit of John and Margaret Holland's children. The document below shows a sale in 1803 to an Edward Oldfield, but this was probably a short-term legal device in the game of estate management : Edward Oldfield was a trusted gentleman attorney, like the Trygarn family in earlier documents, and with his son, John Oldfield, was employed in later years by the Wynnes of Coed Coch as their lawyer to help manage their expanding estate.

1803 ¹

Lease for possession on a sale by John Holland of Teyrdan, esq., to Edward Oldfield of Farm, co. Denbigh, gent., of the messuage, demesne etc. called Plâsuchâ, in Llansaintffraid Glan Conway, co. Denbigh; land called Frith y mynydd, and dwelling houses called Pantclyd and Tyn y Llidiart, all in Llansaintffraid; a chief or fee farm rent of a tenement called Penrhin; a messuage called Meddiant Uchâ, in the parish of Eglwysfach, co. Denbigh; messuages called Brynderw, Meddiant Issa, Brynrhydd, Frithlwyd, all in Eglwysfach; Tai yn y Foel in Cerrigydruidion, co. Denbigh, and other messuages there; Plâs Llanelian, Fownog, Dolwen and Pendaral, all in Llanelian. Signed: 'J. Holland'; seal.

There is a wealth of documentary evidence available for this period in the [Coed Coch & Trofarth Archive](#) at The National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth. These include estate rentals, maps, and documents concerning the many legal disputes about entailed land, and inheritance issues for the two the estates - Teyrdan (which included the Llansanffraid Glan Conwy land), and also Plâs ucha, Llanefydd, both of which the Wynnes of Coed Coch had acquired by marriage.

PLÂS UCHAF IN THE 19TH CENTURY

Development of the Bryn Eisteddfod estate

Whilst Plâs uchaf, Llansanffraid Glan Conwy, continued as a tenanted farm on the Coed Coch estate, other landowners were consolidating their holdings in the parish. One of these was John Chambres-Jones (1750-1833), who was descended from Thomas Jones of Cilglasyn in the parish. The former was a successful Liverpool Merchant, with an interest in the slave-trade (amongst other business opportunities), who returned to his home parish and began to lease land around the Holland's holding of Brynsteddfod. His son, Hugh, had a successful career in the church and eventually retired to Brynsteddfod as the Venerable Archdeacon Hugh Chambres-Jones. He managed to buy the house, which he re-built, and began to acquire a considerable estate (and status) in the parish. (See [Appendix 7.](#) for family relationships)

Archdeacon Chambres-Jones died in 1869 without leaving any heirs, so the estate passed to his half-sister Miss Margaret Grace Jones, who lived in some style at Bryn Eisteddfod (as it was now called) until her death in 1902. Her heir was Wilson Cuthbert Bevan Jones-Mortimer (1872-1965) from a distant branch of the family who had inherited the Hartsheath estate near Mold, and owned other estates near Landegla and Llanfair DC, Ruthin. The Hartsheath estate still owns a number of farms in Llansanffraid Glan Conwy but did not acquire Plâs uchaf until after the First World War, when a land exchange was made with the Coed Coch estate.

1. Coed Coch & Trofarth MSS 2633

Tithe Return of 1840 ¹

By an enclosure act of 1831 the principal landowners had divided up most of the remaining common grazing land in the higher parts of the in the parish so that by the time of the Tithe Return of 1840, most of the land was owned by the local gentry. [Figure 8.](#) shows how they controlled most of the farms in the parish, and that the amount of owner-occupied land was small.

LLANSANFFRAID GLAN CONWY		
<u>Main landowners on the Tithe Return c.1840</u>		
		Total acreage
Mrs Anne Elizabeth Allanson Broughton Hall, Mold	12 holdings	1086 acres
Ven. Hugh Chambres-Jones Bryn Eisteddfod	15 holdings	970 acres
John Lloyd Wynne, Esq. Coed Coch	11 holdings	585 acres
Hon. Edward Lloyd Mostyn	5 holdings	414 acres
<u>10 'gentry' holding land</u>		784 acres
<u>2 Clergy holding land</u>		195 acres
<u>22 other inhabitants holding land</u>		784 acres

Figure 8. - Land ownership in Llansanffraid Glan Conwy c. 1840

Plâs uchaf was the largest farm owned by John Lloyd-Wynne in the parish, with 207 acres of land. But he was by no means the largest landowner, and Plâs uchaf was only the fifth largest farm in the parish, behind Cefn y garlleg (214 acres), Pennard (268 acres), Gofre (249 acres) and Croesengen (224 acres). The principal landowner was Mrs. Anne Elizabeth Allanson, a widow from Broughton near Mold, who was an heiress to the Davies family of Gwysanney, near Mold. We saw previously how the Davies family started buying land from the original Williams family in the 1680s, and the tithe shows that farms like Plâs issa had remained in their ownership for over 150 years.

Poor Rate Books 1838-42 ²

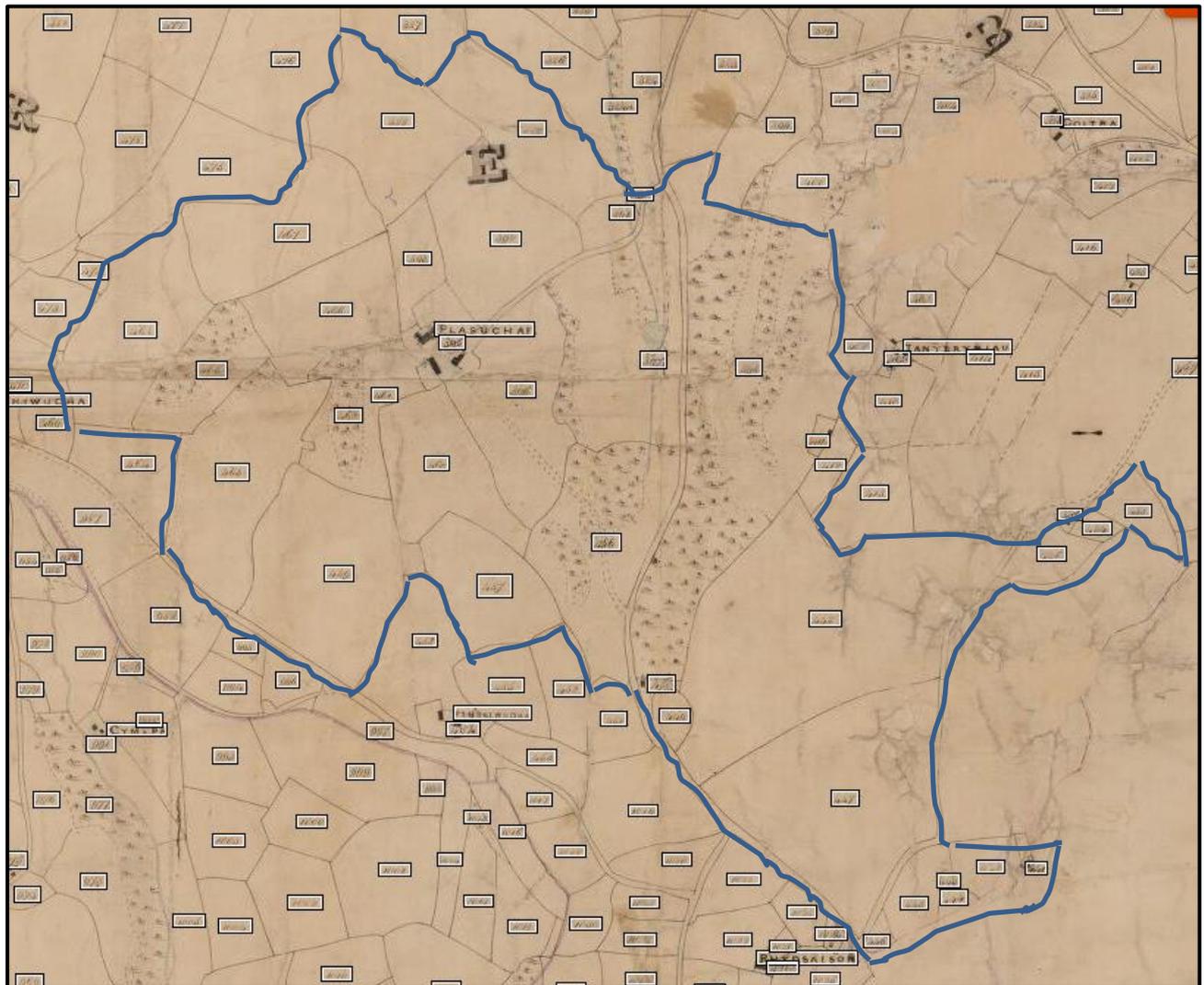
These books, which are conserved in Conwy Archives, show how every property in the parish had to contribute to the needs of the poor. A rateable value was set for each holding, and Plâs uchaf, as one of the larger farms with 195 acres, had a rateable value of £110, which, with a poor rate of 6d in the £, made the farm liable for 5 payments a year of £2-15s-2d. Only Cefn- y- garlleg, with 295 acres, was a larger farm. The rateable values remained the same for this period but the poor rate increased to 9d in the £ by 1842.

A Description of the Parish - 1850

“ ..it is principally arable land. The surface is generally hilly, and the scenery is in many places beautiful, the higher grounds commanding a fine view of St. George’s Channel. The agricultural produce is chiefly wheat & barley, and the timber is for the most part oak. Hendre waelod, an ancient family mansion, is pleasantly situated on the banks of the Conway. Plâs-uchâ, another fine old house, now inhabited by a farmer, was formerly occupied by a landed proprietor named Holland: and Bryn-‘steddvod is the paternal residence of the Venerable Hugh Chambres-Jones, Archdeacon of Essex.”

1. Tithe information from [Cynefin](#), National Library of Wales website
2. Conwy Archives, [Poor rate books 1838-1842](#), CPC 8/1/1-3
3. Lewis, S., [A Topographical Dictionary of Wales](#), 1850, Vol 2, p95

Figure 9. Plâs uchaf Tithe Map c. 1840 . There are more detailed maps with the names for each field in Maps 1 to 3. Many of the field names still correspond to those on the deeds of the 17th and 18th centuries.



Census Information during the 19th Century

After the Conwy embankment and bridges were built in the early years of the century, Llansanffraid Glan Conwy began to lose some of its importance as a small shipbuilding and chandlery village for the busier port of Conwy. Its population declined from 1306 inhabitants in 1831 to a population of 977 in 1901.

The first enumeration return for Plâs ucha was in 1841, and confirms that the tenant farmer was Thomas Hughes, who ran the farm with his daughter and three nephews.

1841 Census

PLÂS UCHAF

	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Age</i>
Thomas Hughes	Farmer	50?
Mary Hughes		45?
Margaret Jones		26
Elisabeth		
Hughes		15
Evan Hughes		20
Thomas Hughes		15

By 1851, more detailed information was collected:

1851 Census				
PLÂS UCHAF				
	<i>Relation</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Where born</i>
Thomas Hughes	Head	Farmer employing four labourers	61	Flintshire Llan?
Mary Hughes	Sister	House Keeper	58	
James Hughes	Nephew	Ag. Labourer	41	
Margaret Hughes	Niece	(Writing illegible)	40	
David Knowles	Servant	Farm Servant	17?	Denbigh, Llandrillo
Thomas Jones	Ditto	Ditto	13	?
Jane Jones	Ditto	House Servant	20?	Denbigh Eglwysfach

By 1861, the Hughes family had moved on and a new family were running the farm.

1861 Census				
PLÂS UCHAF				
<i>Name</i>	<i>Relation</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Where born?</i>
Ellen Owen	Head	Farms 220 acres	70	Denbigh Eglwysfach
Jane Owen	Daughter	Farmer	30	Caerhun
Thomas Owen	Son	Farmer	30	Caerhun
Ellen Owen	Grand-daughter		6	Caerhun
Meredith ? Roberts	Servant	Carter?	21	Denbigh Eglwysfach
Robert Roberts	Servant	Carter?	20	Denbigh Eglwysfach
Daniel ?	Servant	Carter?	30	Denbigh Llan?
Richard Williams	Servant	Farm Boy	17	Denbigh Llan?
Anne Williams	Servant	House Servant	18	Denbigh Eglwysfach

By 1871, the 80 year old Ellen Owen was still head of the household

1871 Census				
PLÂS UCHAF				
<i>Name</i>	<i>Relation</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Where born?</i>
Ellen Owen	Head - Widow	Farms 220 acres	80	Caernarvon Caerhun
Thomas Owen	Son	Farmer	41	Caernarvon Caerhun
Ellen Owen (?) Williams	Grand-daughter	At home	16	Caernarvon Caerhun
Jane Jones	Servant	General	48?	Denbigh Eglwysfach
? Parry (Female)	Servant	General	16	Denbigh Betws
John Hughes	Ag Servant	Farm servant	23	Denbigh Llansantffraidd
David Hughes	?	Farm servant	20	Denbigh Llansantffraidd
Robert Jones	?	Farm servant	17	Denbigh Llansantffraidd
William Jones	?	Farm servant	16	Caernarvon Llandudno

By 1881, Ellen Owen had died and her son and a new wife, are farming the land.

1881 Census				
PLÂS UCHAF				
<i>Name</i>	<i>Relation</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Where born?</i>
Thomas Owen	Head	Farmer of 200 acres Employs 6 people	55	Caernarvon Caerhun
Jane Owen	Wife		48	Caernarvon - Llanrhos
Ellen Williams	Niece		26	Caernarvon Caerhun
Mary Jones	Servant		24	Caernarvon Kyffin
Hugh Davies	Servant		22	Denbigh Llandrillo
John Davies	Servant		17	Denbigh Llandrillo
David Davies	Servant		26	Denbigh Llansantffraid
Robert Williams	Servant		64	Denbigh Llansantffraid
Richard Rowlands	Servant		14	Anglesea Llanddona

By 1891, there are only 8 people involved in the farm.

1891 Census				
PLÂS UCHAF				
<i>Name</i>	<i>Relation</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Where born?</i>
Thomas Owen	Head	Farmer	63	Caernarvon Caerhun
Jane Owen	Wife		58	Caernarvon Llanrhos
Margaret Roberts	Servant	General Servant	20	Denbigh Llansantffraid
Owen Jones	Servant	Farm servant	23	Denbigh Llansantffraid
William Jones	Servant	Farm servant	18	Denbigh Llansantffraid
William Jones	Servant	Farm servant	18	Denbigh Llansantffraid
? Davies (Male)	Servant	Farm servant	14	Denbigh Llansantffraid
Robert Griffiths	Servant	Farm servant	22	Denbigh Llanrwst

By the turn of the century, Thomas Owen is still head of the family but his wife has died and the numbers in the household have decreased to 5 people.

1901 Census				
PLÂS UCHAF				
<i>Name</i>	<i>Relation</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Where born?</i>
Thomas Owen	Head	Farmer	75	Caernarvon Caerhun
Esther Owen	Niece	Housekeeper	38	Caernarvon Caerhun
Winnie Morris	Servant	Domestic Servant	18	Denbigh Gwtherin Denbigh
David Jones	Servant	? on farm	24	Llansantffraidd Denbigh
Elias Williams	Servant	? on farm	18	Llansantffraidd

By 1911, Thomas Owen has been on the farm for over 50 years, and we see a mention of the two ‘teamsmen’, who were responsible for the horses needed to work what was still a largely arable farm. There was also a Petty Sessions record from 6th July 1903 of Thomas Owen being fined for moving five pigs from the county of Denbighshire to Caernarvonshire ¹

1911 Census

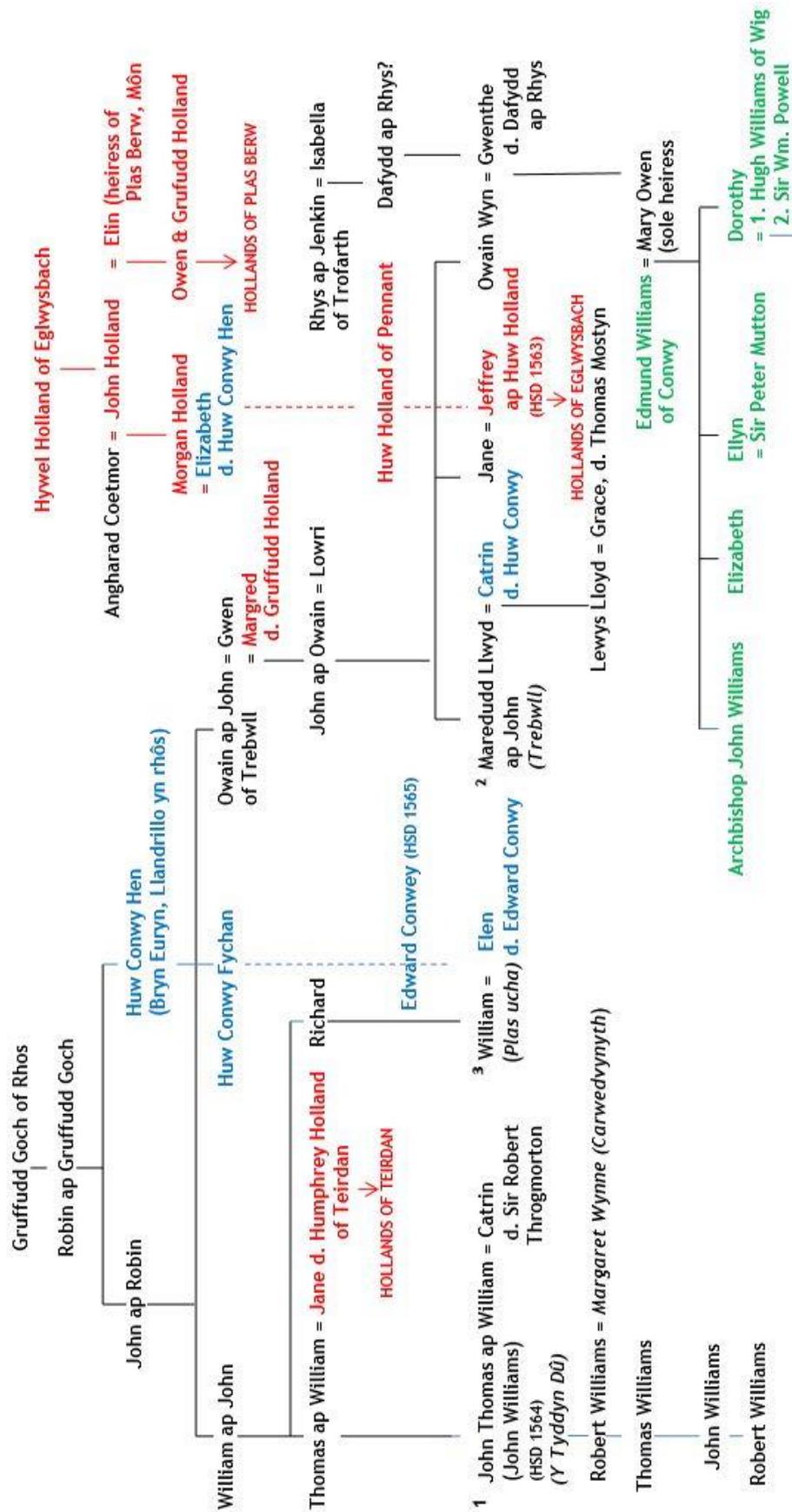
PLÂS UCHAF

<i>Name</i>	<i>Relation</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Where born?</i>
Thomas Owen	Head	Farmer	85	Caernarfon Hwysfaen Isa Caernarfon Hwysfaen
Esther Owen	Niece	Housekeeper General Servant	49	Hwysfaen ? Uchâ
Mary Evans	Servant	(Domestic)	19	Denbigh Tan Lan
Robert Hughes	Servant	1st Teamsman	22	Caernarfon Maenfynydd
David Morris	Servant	2nd Teamsman	23	Denbigh Lannidfydd
William Jones	Servant	Cowman	28	Caernarfon Aber
John Roberts	Servant	Cowman	26	Caernarfon Conway

More research is needed to piece together the 20th Century history of Plâs uchaf, and much this is available in Conwy County Archives, and in the memory of people still living in the Parish. ³

-
1. Conwy archives - CPS1/2/3/51/6
 2. Conwy Archives - Census Enumeration Records
 3. I am grateful to Mr. Gwyn Davies of Cefn y garlleg, and formerly, Plas Issa, for interesting information about the Parish.

APPENDIX 1 - FAMILIES IN LOWER CONWY VALLEY AREA 1300 -1700



1. Lewys Dwnn (1588) p. 341, clearly places John Williams at 'Llansanffraid y Tyddyn Du'
 2. Lewys Dwnn (1588) same page, places Maredudd Llwyd at 'Trebwl in the same parish'
 3. Bartrum (Welsh Genealogies) gives William ap Richard as of 'Plas Ucha, Aberconwy'
- HSD = High Sheriff of Denbighshire

SEE FIGURE 5. FOR LATER DESCENDANTS

APPENDIX 2. - FOUR SHERIFFS OF DENBIGHSHIRE - 1562-65

1562.—*Robert ab Hugh of Creuddin, Esq.*, was the eldest son of William Pugh of Penrhyn Creuddin, Esq., by Elizabeth, his wife, daughter of William Mostyn of Talacre, Maesglas, and Basingwerk Abbey, Esq. Robert ab Hugh represented the co. of Denbigh in the first Parliament of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, in 1558. He married Margaret, daughter of John Lewis, of Presadded in Anglesey, Esq.; descended from Hwfa ab Cynddelw, chief of one of the noble tribes of North Wales, who held his estate in fee by attending the prince's coronation, and bearing up the right side of the canopy over the prince's head at that solemnity. (*Rowland's Mona Antiqua.*) He bore *gules*, a chev. inter three lions rampant. *or*. The Creuddin family is descended from Marchudd, lord of Uwchdulas, baron of Brynffanigl, and chief of one of the noble tribes of Gwynedd and Powys.

1563.—*Jeffrey Holland of Eglwysfach, Esq.*, was the son of Hugh Holland, of Plas-yn-Pennant in the parish of Eglwysfach, Esq., and Alice, his wife, daughter of Robert ab Ieuan ab Meurig, of Bodsilin in Anglesey, Esq. He married Jane, daughter of Ieuan Owen, of Trebwill in the parish of Llansantffraid, Esq., ab John ab Robin ab Gruffydd Goch, lord of Rhôs.

Arms.—*Azure*, semé de fleurs-de-lys, a lion rampant gardant *or*.

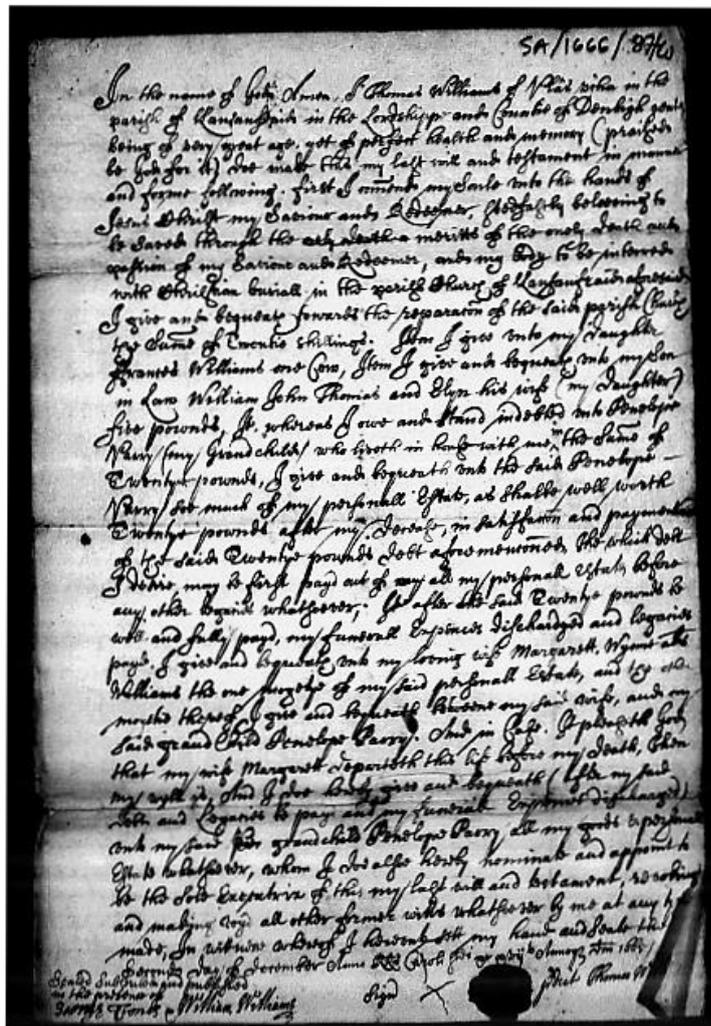
1564.—*John Thomas ab William of Glan Conway, Esq.*, was the eldest son of Thomas ab William, of Y Tyddyn Du in the parish of Llansantffraid-Glan Conway, Esq., son of John ab Robin ab Gruffydd Goch, lord of Rhôs. He married Catherine, daughter of Sir Robert Throgmorton, Knt., by whom he had issue, *Robert*, his heir, and seven other children. This family is descended from Marchudd, lord of Uwchdulas, and founder of the eighth noble tribe of North Wales and Powys.

Arms.—1 and 4, *or*, a gryffon segreant *gules*, for Gruffydd Goch; 2 and 3, *gules*, a Saracen's head erased at the neck ppr., wreathed about the temples *argent* and *sable* for Marchudd.

1565.—*Edward Conway of Bryn Euryn, Esq.*, otherwise called Llys Bryn Euryn, in the parish of Llandrillo Uwchdulas, was the eldest son of Hugh Conway, Esq., by Elen, his wife, daughter of Sir William Gruffydd of Penrhyn, Knt. Hugh Conway of Llys Bryn Euryn was the son of Reinallt Conway ab Hugh Conway ab Robin ab Gruffydd Goch, lord of Rhôs. Edward Conway married Anne, daughter of Sir John Puleston, Knt., high sheriff in 1543, by Janet, his wife, and had issue, *Hugh Conway* of Llys Bryn Euryn, his heir; another son, *Robert*, and six daughters.

Arms.—Quarterly, first and fourth, Gruffydd Goch; second and third, Marchudd.

APPENDIX 3. - WILL OF THOMAS WILLIAMS, PLÂS UCHA, DIED 1666



Transcription

In the name of God Amen. I Thomas Williams of Plâs ũcha in the parish of Llansanffraid in the Lordship and Countie of Denbigh, being of.. great age, yet of perfect health and memory (praise to God for it) do make this my last will and testament....First I commend my soul into the hands of Jesus Christ my saviour and redeemer.... and my body to be interred with christian burial in the church of Llansanffraid. I give and bequeath towards the reparation? of the said parish church the sum of twenty shillings.

Item. I give unto my daughter Frances Williams one cow.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my son-in- law William John Thomas and Elyn his wife (my daughter) five pounds

Item. Whereas I owe and stand indebted unto Penelope Parry (my grandchild) who liveth in house with me the sum of twenty pounds. I give and bequeath unto the said Penelope Parry so much of my personal estate as shall be well worth twenty pounds after my.....and after said twenty pounds debt aforementioned.

Item. may be first payed out of my personal debts before any other.... Whatsoever

Item. After the first twenty pounds are fully paid, my funeral expenses fully discharged and bargains? payed I give and bequeath unto my loving wife Margaret Wynne (alias Williams) the residue? of my said personal estate and other.. thereof. I give and bequeathto my said wife and my said grandchild Penelope Parry. And in case it pleaseth God that my wife Margaret departeth this life before my death, thenI do order and bequeath (after my debts and bargains are paid and funeral expenses discharged)..do give? unto my grandchild Penelope Parry all my goods and personal estate...and do appoint to be the sole executrix of this my last will and testament.....

Reference - National Library of Wales - Wills, SA/1666/87, (available to view online)

APPENDIX 4. - CONTEMPORARY LETTERS - EARLY 17TH CENTURY

1. Extract from The History of Parliament - Sir Peter Mutton 1562-1637

'By then (1622) Owen Wynn and Mutton had become rivals for the hand of the lord keeper's widowed sister. Williams (Archbishop John Williams), who was probably reluctant to offend either man, temporized for several months, and the issue was eventually decided by his sister, who accepted Mutton's proposal and was married at St. Asaph on 26 Mar. 1623'.

2. Letters from the sons of Sir John Wynn to their father at Gwydir between 1622/3.

Sir John Wynn of Gwydir was very interested in making a match between his heir, Owen Wynn, and the sister of his relative, Archbishop John Williams, in this brief window of opportunity before Sir John died in 1627, and the Archbishop lost his position as Lord Keeper under the new King, Charles I, who came to the throne in 1625.

1622/3 - Jan 13 - Letter from William Wynn at Whitehall to his father Sir John at Gwydir:

'The report is that Sir Peter Mytton is married to my Lord's sister. Encloses a letter from Sir William Jones. My Lord is in very good health and firm in his place'.

1622/3 - Jan 29 - Letter from Owen Wynn in London to his father Sir John at Gwydir:

'My Lord has promised his sister [Elen, widow of Elis Griffith of Pengwern] to the writer in marriage. Sir Peter Mytton is come to town and brought a letter from the lady to my Lord. John Gruffith sues for peace in the Star Chamber suit. Sir Thomas Chamberleyne stands firm in the King's favour, and is not likely to be removed unless the Archbishop of York, who is lusty and well, dies. The marriage with Spain is likely to go forward'.

1622/3 - Feb 18 - Letter from William Wynn at Westminster College to his father Sir John:

'Sir William Jones is to exchange the Shropshire circuit for the Yorkshire with Sir Thomas Chamberlayne. Sir Peter Mytton has concluded with my Lord about his sister, persuading him that he is already contracted, whereat my Lord was not very well pleased. My Lord promises to do great things for brother Owen, of whom he has a very good opinion. Foreign news'.

1622/3, Feb 19 - Letter from Owen Wynn in London to his father Sir John Wynn:

'Concerning purchases made for Sir John in London. Sir William Jones has promised that the writer shall have satisfaction in his dispute with John Gruffith who aims at Albert Morton's place as Clerk of the Council; but he must first clear himself in the Star Chamber. My Lord's sister has written saying she would sooner have Sir Peter Mytton than the writer, which is clean contrary to what she told him. The business of the greenwax for north Wales either passes in lease tomorrow to the writer's brother, or does not; they are secretly opposed by the auditor. (May maby brenyn wedy mynd yn ddyrgell dros y more, y bryody merch y brennyn Spayne, dw llwne dywaetha; heb neb ond pedwar gyda ffo, dyma r newydd mwya sydd y rowan, ac nyd yddy rchwedl yma etto yn cyffredynoll) may r gayre may in post drwy ffraynke y rayth ef. Dw a troddo pethe yr gore; obligyd may ofn mawr, ar neb dyhaldws, beth y daw hwn yddo yn y dywedd.' English, Welsh'.

-
1. History of Parliament Online - Sir Peter Mutton
 2. NLW - Wynn (of Gwydir) Papers MS 9058E/1063
 3. *ibid.* MS 9058E/1967
 4. *ibid.* MS 9058E/1069
 5. *ibid.* MS 9058E/1070

APPENDIX 5. - PLAS UCHAF MARRIAGE SETTLEMENTS OF 1754 AND 1776

1. Marriage of John Ellis and Mary Anwyl 1754

“Lease by John Ellis of Plas Ucha in the Parish of Llansaintffraid Glan Conway, co. Denb., gentleman, and Robert Wynne of Garthmeilio, same co. Esq., to John Holland of Teirdarn, same co. Esq., for 5sh., of the capital messuage, tenement, demesne lands and appurtenances called Plas Ucha aforesaid, Frith y Mynydd, farm rent in Pen y Rhiw, messuages called Meddiant issa in Eglwysfach, Meddiant ucha, Bryn Derw, Bryn Rhydd, reversion of ffrith lwyd; Tyddyn Ucha, in the Parish of Llanrwst, Garth yr Hwylbren, Tyddyn Tomlyn, Coed Llydan, Tai Candrell, Cae Dafydd Lwyd, Pentre Melin y Coed, Tan y Bryn, all in Llanrwst; land in TalySarn in the Town and liberties of Ruthin, a rent there, a rent in Llanfoorog, same co., for a year at a pepper-corn rent, with view to a grant thereof (no. 2404 below)”
(Coed Coch MS No. 2403)

“Deed tripartite made between (1) John Ellis of Plas Ucha. (ii) John Holland of Teirdarn (see No. 2403) and Robert Wynne of Garthmeilio, and (iii) Lewis Anwyl of Tai yn y foel, in the Parish of Cerrig yn Druidion, same co., and Mary Anwyl spinster, only daughters of the said Lewis Anwyl, being a settlement on the approaching marriage between the said J. Ellis and M. Anwyl, whereby the said J. Ellis conveys to the second party, for the benefit of the marrying parties, the capital messuage called Plas Ucha, and other properties as described in detail in the abovesaid deed (no. 2403), subject to specified reversions, remainders and conditions set forth at length. The marriage portion is £700, paid by J. Ellis to L. Anwyl. Signed by the 1st. Ellis, Lewis Anwyl and Mary Anwyl. Heraldic seal. Witnesses: Thomas Morgan, Havod Lea; Hugh Roberts Cerniego. John Ellis, Kyffdu. Endorsed with J. Ellis's receipt to L. Anwyl for £700 consideration money.”

(Coed Coch MS 2404)

2. Marriage of John Holland and Margaret Ellis 1776

“ The first schedule referred to by this deed of Release, relates to Tenements in the Parish of Llaneilian, called. Teyrdan Demesne and Ysgubor Newydd. Llan Nant yr Efail and Ty nesa ir Eglwys. Llan Elian Smithy. Llan and Tytwntir Llan. Cae yn y Llan. Bryn y person. Nant. Tu Newydd Llaneilian. Gloddaeth. Plas Jolyn. Nant Ithel fychan. Gloddfa. Tu yn y Celun, Tyddun y Gwynt and Cottage. Caer Pwll. In the Township of Bodlennin: Y Figinn. Llettu'r Adar. Brynn Elian. Derwas. Dolwen House Farm and Geyfronnydd. Dolwen Mill. Dolwen Smithy. Township of Twnnon: Bryn dansi. Nanty cochol. Pennant. Ffridd hen. Bryna bras. Pencraig. Tu Mawr and Gwerglodd to yn y Ddol. Bryn. Fron Ucha. Fron Hwfa. Tu yn y Ddol. In the Township of Llaethfan: A Chieftly out of Cefn Llaethfan of two capons and two shillings. A Chieftly out of Tu yn pwll of two capons and five shillings. In the Parish of Llansaintffraid: Casbwl. Ty ucha yr Bettws, Smithy and Lands and a Cottage. In the Parish of Bettws abergely

The Second Schedule referred to by this deed: Plas Ucha Demesne Lands, and Ffridd y Mynydd. Pant clyd cottage and Tu yn y Lliardiard. Fee farm rent of five shillings issuing out of Penrhiw, the lands of do. In the Parish of Llansantffraid Glan Conway: Meddiant Ucha and Bryn derw. Eglwys fach. Meddiant Issa and Cottages. Brynrhydd. Ffrithlwyd (all in Eglwys fach). Tyddun Ucha. Garth yr Hwylbren. Pentre Melin y Coed Cottage. Tyddun Tomlyn. Coed llydaen issa. Tai Candryll. Cae Dafydd lwyd and Cottage. Tan y bryn Cottage garden and Orchards (all in Llanrwst). A yard garden or croft in Talysarn. A Burgage, Dwelling house and Garden in Ruthin. A Cott or Smithy in Ruthin. A Garden or ground in Stryd y Rhos. A chief or fee farm rent of twenty five shillings, issuing out of the freehold of David Davies, gent. A like rent of twenty shillings, issuing out of the freehold of David Davies, gent. The like rent of twenty shillings issuing out of Houses and Lands in Llanfwrog formerly the freehold of Edward Jones of Pool Park deceased. The like rent of three shillings and four pence issuing out of the Freehold Estate of Edward Edwards late of Ruthin aforesaid gentleman deceased. Ruthin and Llanfwrog and in the Town and Liberty of Ruthin.

The Third Schedule referred to by this deed: In the Parish of Cerrigydruidion: Tai yn y Foel and Cottages, etc. In the Parish of Marchwiell: Bryndeilwydd.....

Receipt on the dors by John Holland the elder from Mary Ellis, (Mother of Margaret, wife of John Holland the younger), widow, for £3000, the whole consideration money payable to him..”

(Quoted in Coed Coch MSs 2521,2522)

HARTSHEATH ESTATE

Hartsheath house is at Pontblyddyn near Mold. The estate was originally owned by the Lloyds, an old Flintshire family who intermarried with the Wynnes of Leeswood & Nerquis & Davies of Gwysamey. It was sold by a grandson of Gwilym Lloyd-Wardle MP (1762-1833) in 1830 to:

JOHN CARSTAIRS of Stratford, Essex

his daughter Cecil (1797-1880) = Wilson-Jones (1795-1864)

of Gelligynan & Cefn Coch

Hugh Maurice Jones-Mortimer (1829-92)

(the name Mortimer was adopted by deed poll in 1874)

Wilson Cuthbert Bevan Jones-Mortimer (1872-1965)

(inherited Bryn Eisteddfod estate in 1902)

Hugh Maurice Carstairs Jones-Mortimer (1908 -

Maurice Carstairs Jones-Mortimer (1940-2006)

MAURICE JONES of Emral & Cefn Coch
John Jones (1754-97)

CHAMBRES family of Plas Chambres, Denbigh
Grace Chambres = John Jones (1714-1778)
(sole heiress d. 1778) Rector of Llanvst & Glan Conwy

Jane (d. 1777) 1. = Sarah 3. = John Chambres-Jones (1750-1833)

Edwards (Liverpool Merchant who leased Brynsteddfod)

Hugh Chambres-Jones = Helen daughter of John Carstairs

(1783 - 1869)

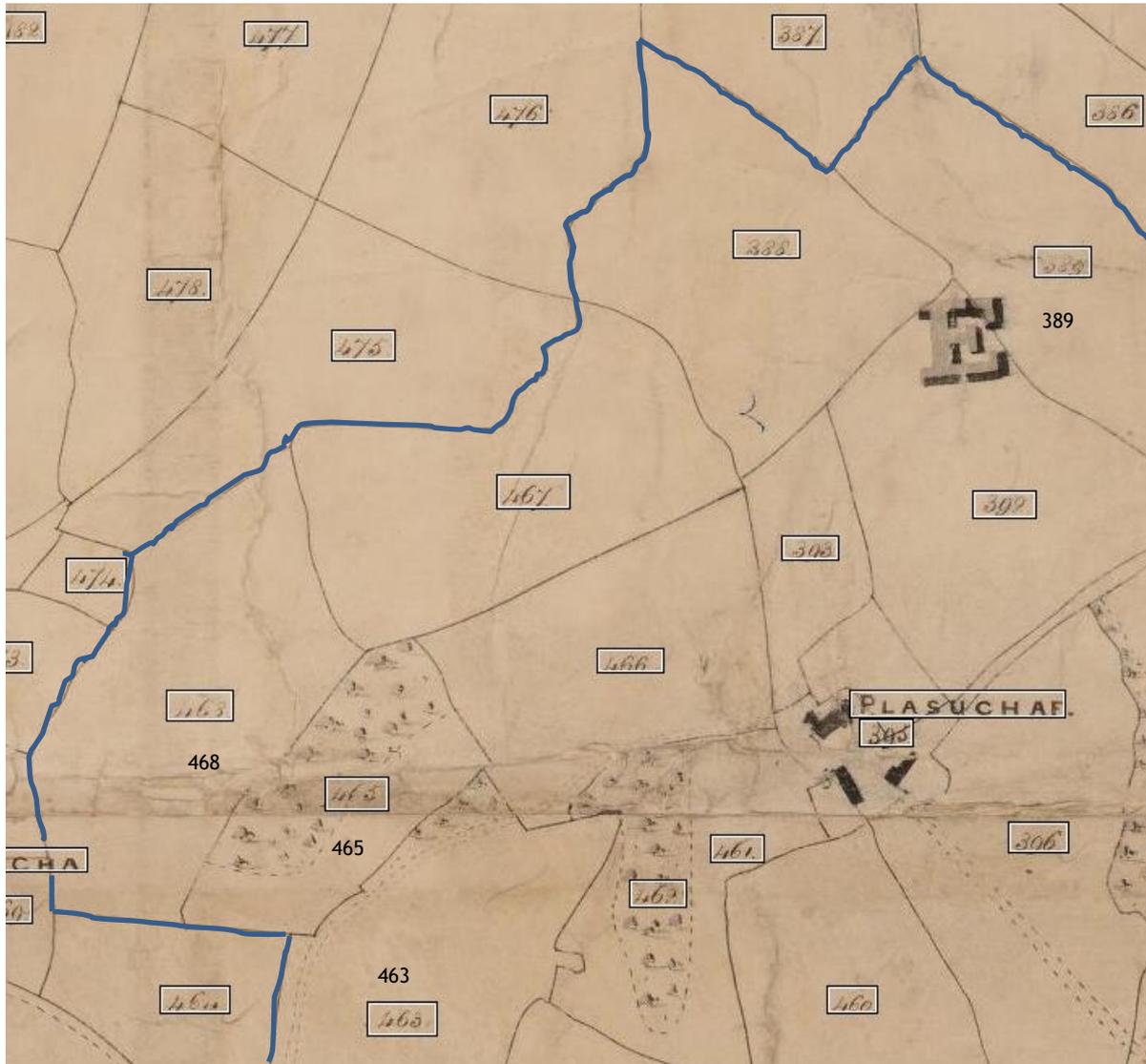
(Archdeacon of Essex who bought up farms in Glan Conwy to form the Brynsteddfod estate)

Margaret Grace Jones

(Sole heiress of Bryn Eisteddfod d. 1902.)

APPENDIX 6. - HARTSHEATH ESTATE

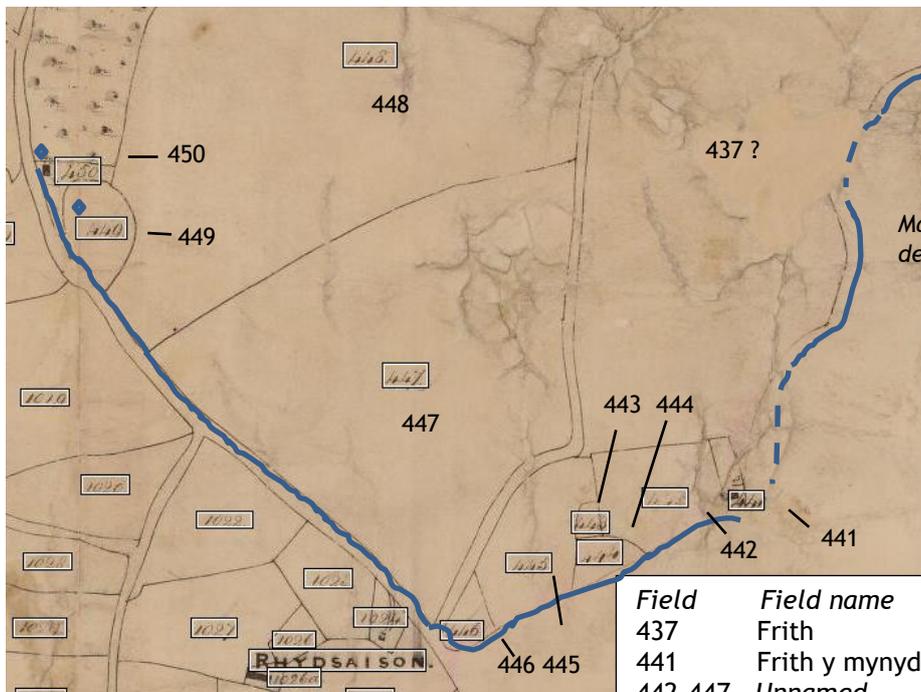
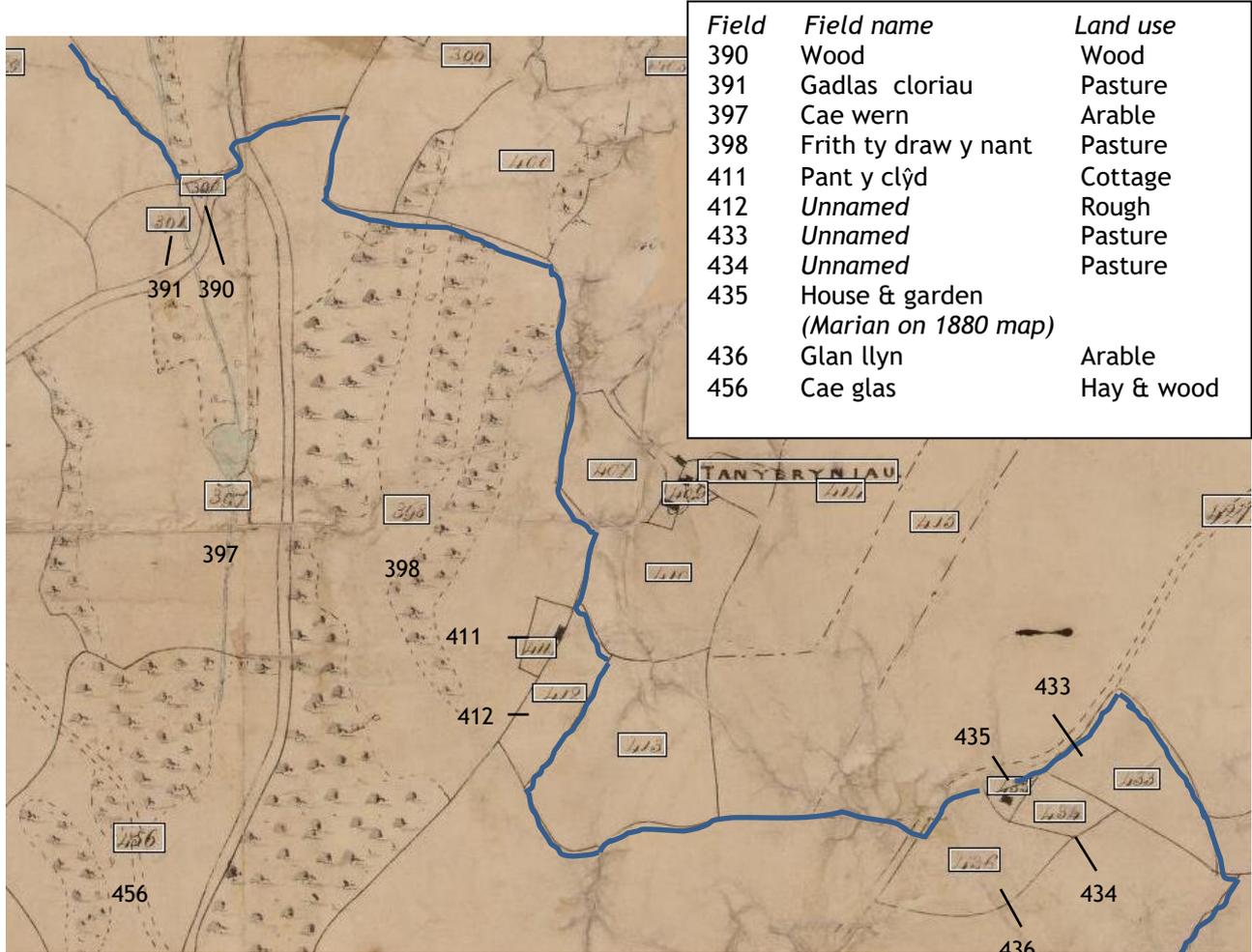
MAP 1. - Tithe map with field numbers and names - Plas Uchaf (north)



Field numbers	388	Cae tan y berllan	Arable
	389	Cae hir	Arable
	392	Y maes	Hay
	393	Cae bach tan y berllan	Hay
	395	Plas uchaf house etc	
	396	Cae beudy	Hay
	460	Cae defaid	Hay
	461	Coed uchaf	Pasture & wood
	462	<i>Unnamed</i>	Wood
	463	Pen y chrisiau? bach	Arable
	465	Pant y wrach?	Arable
	466	Cae tan y ty	Arable
	467	Coed isaf	Arable
	468	Cae'r fynnon	Arable

Farm boundary 

MAP 3 - Tithe map with field numbers and names - Plas Uchaf (east)



Map edge destroyed here

Farm boundary



Field	Field name	Land use
437	Frith	Gorse
441	Frith y mynydd	Cottage
442-447	Unnamed	Pasture
448	G. mynydd	Wood & gorse
449	Unnamed	Wood
450	Cil llidiart	Cottage
456	Cae glas	Hay & wood

PLAS UCHAF, LLANSANFFRAID GLAN CONWY - REFERENCES

Books

Bezant-Lowe, W. (1927). *The Heart of Northern Wales*, Vol. 2. Llanfairfechan:

Dwnn, Lewys (ed. Meyrick (1846)). '*Heraldic Visitations of Wales*', Volume 21, Llandovery.

Griffiths J E (1914). *Pedigrees of Anglesey and Carnarvonshire Families etc.*

Lewis, Samuel (1850). *A Topographical Dictionary of Wales*, Vol 2.

Lhuyd, Edward(1699). *Parochialia: .. Answers to "Parochial Queries in Order to a Geographical Dictionary, etc., of Wales"*, Cambrian Archaeological Association, 1909.

Lloyd, J.Y.W. (1887). *The history of the princes, the lords marcher, and the ancient nobility of Powys Fadog etc.*, London.

Pennant, Thomas (1810). *A Tour of Wales*, Vol. 2. London. Williams, Rev. Robert (1835). *The History and antiquities of the town of Aberconwy and its neighbourhood*. Denbigh, Thomas Gee.

Archives

National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
Coed Coch & Trofarth Estate Records
Wynn (of Gwydir) papers
Plas-yn-cefn Papers and Documents
Wills
Dictionary of Welsh Biography

Denbighshire Archives, Ruthin
Catalogue of Hartsheath Estate Documents

Conwy Archives, Llandudno

University of Bangor Archives
Maenan Manuscripts

Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, Aberystwyth

Journals

Archaeologia Cambrensis
Denbighshire Historical Society

Internet sites

Bartrum, P.C. *An electronic Version of Welsh Genealogies AD 300-1500*. Aberystwyth University, Cadair Open Access Repository, www.cadair.aber.ac.uk

History of Parliament online, www.historyofparliamentonline.org/

Discovering Old Welsh Houses Group, www.discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk
Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory Report 2016/21 Plas uchaf
Tyler, R. *Architectural Record for Plas uchaf*, 2016.

National Library of Wales, Cynefin, Tithe Map Digitisation Project
www.cynefin.archiveswales.org.uk/