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NORTH WEST WALES DENDROCHRONOLOGY PROJECT DATING OLD WELSH HOUSES – CONWY

TŶ MAWR, WYBRNANT

Penmachno, Conwy (formerly Caernarfonshire)

NGR SH 7700 5240

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 Dating Old Welsh Houses: North West Wales Dendrochronology Project

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1. House Description

In the late 19th century a coloured description of the house was made by Owen Gethin Jones, the noted local historian, who led a campaign to save Tŷ Mawr from neglect by the Penrhyn estate.

“the house was obviously notable of old as it contains two building styles. It was first made with crucks going down three stones deep into the foundations, and there are pieces of them still to be seen. This shows it was built in the time of Edward II, when high building was forbidden in Wales, for fear castles were built. So they sought curved timber for use as house crucks, and to get them fairly high put massive stones first, the second row were rather smaller, and the higher ones thinner – this was permissible. On completion the eaves were seldom higher than ten/eleven feet.

Restored in a style common in the 16th Century – wide beams laid first, spars likewise, joists laid flat, side by side, small windows, low doors. The following was carved on the door lintel – ‘Heb Dduw heb ddim, Duw a digon’ (Without God there is nothing; with God there is plenty). (Owen Gethin Jones, 1884, Gweithiau Gethin, Llanrwst.

In 1927, W. Bezant-Lowe mentioned the text of the inscription above and also mentioned the existence of a rear door (Bezant-Lowe W., 1927, The Heart of Northern Wales, Vol II.)

In 1950, The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) describe Tŷ Mawr Gwibrnant as:

“the reputed birthplace of Dr. William Morgan (1541-1604), Bishop of St. Asaph, first translator of the entire Bible into Welsh, as commemorated by a modern plaque over the door. It is a long building of two storeys. The walls are built of long slates with well-finished quoins and some large boulders at ground level. They are mostly of one period. The windows are mainly small and square; those at the ground floor have been much altered. The front door is modern, the original entrance being marked by upright slate slabs to the North, now containing a window. The North gable has a projecting chimney carried on three half-round corbels about 5 feet above the ground. It is surmounted by a tall square stack with slate slabs at the shoulders. The South gable is plain, and is surmounted by a squat square chimney stack. The roof is about one-third pitch, and the slates are modern.

Condition: good; The building is not outstanding, only for its historical connection”.

(RCAHMW, 1950, Caernarvonshire Inventory Volume 1, pp. 173-4, Fig. 168, Plate 64)

In 1988, Dr. Peter Smith, writing in the National Trust Guide Book, after the restoration of the house, describes how the fragments of cruck trusses in the east wall and the lower parts of the stone wall on which they stand, are the remains of a single-storeyed hall house, and seemingly all that now exists of the dwelling in which William Morgan was born. According to the latest Dendrochronology and Building Reports (see References in Section 13), the roof was raised in 1564/5, some time after William Morgan’s birth in 1540.

“...this late medieval, primarily single-storied, open-hearth, hall-house was rebuilt as a storeyed house when it assumed much of its present appearance. The reconstruction seems to have followed a sub-medieval pattern of plan which became very characteristic of Snowdonia, that is a house with its fireplaces in the end walls rather than in the middle, as are commonly found in the borderland counties.

At the south end is a large fireplace heating the hall, while at the north end, a smaller fireplace on the first floor heats the chamber. This fireplace is projected outwards on three corbels and forms the most architecturally ambitious feature of the building.....

Over the first floor are three mortised collar-beam trusses carrying flat-trenched purlins, a roof design completely characteristic of Snowdonia. These trusses must have replaced the cruck roof (by then too low) when the house underwent its sub-medieval reconstruction.

(Peter Smith, 1988, Tŷ Mawr, a sub-medieval Caernarvonshire house, National Trust Guide Book, pp. 43-45.

More information about the details of the building can be found in the references above and in a later section of this history which describes how the National Trust restored the house in 1987.

2011 Dendrochronology Sampling: Summary of results.

Tŷ-mawr is a large, three-unit, storeyed house of Snowdonian plan-type famous for its association with Bishop William Morgan (1545-1604), translator of the Bible into Welsh (1588). The stubs of cruck blades cut off flush with the walls suggest that Tŷ-mawr originated as a late-medieval hall-house. These cruck fragments failed to date, but the collar-beam trusses of the Snowdonian house were successfully dated to 1565, showing that Tŷ-mawr was improved during the life-time of Bishop Morgan. A plan and description is in RCAHMW, Caernarvonshire Inventory, Volume I: East (1956), pp. 173-4. The mantel beam of the reconstructed guardian’s cottage adjacent was sampled as it had evidence for reuse and was found to date from 1521-51. However, the provenance of this timber is unknown. (Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory Report 2011/12)

2. Tŷ Mawr Wybrnant in the Middle Ages

We know from the earliest Gwydir estate rental of 1568 that farms in Wybrnant and the northern side of the Glasgwm valley were in the Middle Ages part of the vill or township of Dolwyddelan. (National Library of Wales Llanstephan MS 179, Rentals and estate memoranda of Maurice Wynn of Gwydir, 1568-74).

The Record of Carnarvon describes how, as well as the 10 *ffriddoedd* (rough mountain land) held directly by the Crown, there were two *gafaelion* (areas of land held by kinship groups) of serf-held land, called Gavel Elidir and Gavel Emanagh. The heirs of Gavel Elidir were Blethin ap Jo. Ap Heili and Madoc ap Blethin Loyt. The bondsmen or serfs of Dolwyddelan owed the same services to their lord as those of Penmachno, providing the lord prince at the Feast of All Saints with 3 oxen and 3 cows and 6 crannocks of oats for the feast; they were to be paid 5s for each ox, 3s 4d per cow and 6d per crannock of oats. In addition, they paid a fine of 6s 8d when they inherited their share of land and the same when a bondswoman married or lost her virginity, they had had an obligation to perform carriage service for their lord, providing a man and a horse when called upon, and were required to use and pay for the lord's mill.

(The Record of Caernarvon, London, 1837, pp.8-10.)

In the bond townships, the payment of rent and commuted dues was a communal obligation. As population fell in the wake of the Black Death in the 14th century, the burden on surviving bondsmen increased, and many used the opportunity of the Glyndŵr revolt in the early 15th century to abscond. By the fifteenth century, the Crown was unable to collect any dues from the Nantconwy bond townships, its officials reporting that there were no villeins resident there, and their lands had escheated because of the deficiency of tenants.

(T. Jones Pierce, Medieval Welsh Society (Cardiff, 1972), p.46).

Around 1500, Meredudd ab Ieuan ap Robert, founder of the Gwydir estate which came to dominate Nantconwy, moved from his inherited lands in west Caernarvonshire to settle in Dolwyddelan. He took a sub-lease of the Crown *ffriddoedd* and vill of Dolwyddelan, residing initially in the semi-ruined castle of Dolwyddelan. Free men had been reluctant to move into the vacant lands at Dolwyddelan as this might lead to them acquiring bond status. This changed in 1507, when Henry VII freed the bondsmen. Meredudd now introduced his followers into various vacant holdings in the *ffriddoedd* and vill of Dolwyddelan, as well as at Garth and the Crown *ffridd* of Brynturch in Capel Curig, and at Pencraig above the Llugwy valley. The existing bond tenants of Dolwyddelan in Meredudd's time continued after 1507 as free tenants paying suit of court and quit rents like freeholders. A further problem arose from the bandits who claimed sanctuary at Ysbytty Ifan, so that no place within twenty miles was safe from their incursions and robbery. Writing around 1620, Sir John Wynn of Gwydir told how "*these helping the former desolations of Nantconway and prayinge upon that countrey as their near neighboures kept most p'te of that countrey all wast and without inhabitant*", until his great-grandfather Meredudd ap Ieuan subdued the bandits.

(J. Gwynfor Jones, Sir John Wynn of Gwydir and his Tenants, Welsh History Review 11 (1982), pp.1-30, p.3; J. Wynn, The History of the Gwydir Family, (Cardiff, 1927), pp.53-54 and Appendix 1, Wynne pedigree)

3. Ownership of the Crown lease of Dolwyddelan

The early Gwydir estate in Dolwyddelan was built on Crown leases, which were usually for 21 years, and these formed a somewhat precarious basis for an estate. Crown grants were often used as a way of rewarding royal servants, their widows, and Crown creditors. This, together with the practice of granting leases in reversion, (for the period after the expiry of the current one), enabled the grantees to make considerable profits by selling on their lease to the sitting tenant, typically for 7 to 9 times the customary rent charged by the Crown.

(D. Thomas, 'Leases of Crown lands in the reign of Elizabeth I', in R. W. Hoyle (ed.), The Estates of the English Crown 1558-1640, Cambridge, (1992), pp. 169-190, pp.169-171, p.186.)

Land transactions for the Vill of Dolwyddelan in the 16th and early 17th century include:

- 1530, John Wynn ap Meredith ap Ieuan ap Robert (son of Meredith, founder of the Gwydir estate)
- 1548, further lease to John Wynn ap Meredith for 21 years.
- 1549, lease reassigned to Robert Wynn ap Meredith and his son Robert
- 1557, a 30 year lease by letters patent to John Wynn ap Meredith ap Ieuan ap Robert and Robert Wynn (his son)
- 1564/6, lease by letters patent to run from 1587 or the expiry of the previous lease, to Thomas Leighton Esq., who assigned it to Robert Wynn to hold for 40 years
- 1574, reassignment of lease to Robert Wynn
- 1595, lease to Edward Blofield for 40 years.
- 1626, Sir John Wynn of Gwydir purchased Dolwyddelan from the Crown.

Disputes arose between different members of the Gwydir family over the leasehold of Dolwyddelan. John Wynn ap Meredith established his third son Robert on lands in Dolwyddelan and Nantgwynant. According to Robert's nephew Sir John Wynn, long before the 1549 lease had expired, his father had given Robert £60 to obtain a reversion of the lands but it was alleged that he betrayed his father's trust and obtained the lands in his own name. Because of this he was obliged to assign most of the *ffriddoedd* and part of the vill of Dolwyddelan to his brother Morys. Robert prospered at Dolwyddelan, and built himself a house there at Bryn Moel c1572 and built Plas Mawr in Conwy in 1576. Legal cases over rights in Dolwyddelan between Maurice Wynn's son Sir John Wynn and Robert's son John Wynn of Conwy rumbled on for many years till Sir John Wynn eventually bought Dolwyddelan from the Crown.

(National Library of Wales [MS 9054E.513](#); J. Gwynfor Jones, [The Wynn family of Gwydir : origins, growth and development c.1490-1674](#) (Aberystwyth, 1995), p.121.)

4. Wybrnant in the 16th century

Although the Wybrnant valley may seem inaccessible today, during the sixteenth century the drovers' road from Llŷn wound through Dolwyddelan and the Wybrnant to the major cattle fairs of England.

William Morgan was born at Tŷ Mawr Wybrnant in 1545, the son of John ap Morgan and his wife Lowri. Although the 18th Century Antiquary, Phillip Yorke of Erddig, gives his lineage as of the Royal Tribes of Nefydd Hardd and Hedd Molwynog, John ap Morgan was a tenant of Maurice Wynn of Gwydir. When William Morgan was born, the house may have been called Tyddyn Mawr ym Mlaen Wybrnant ('*the large croft at the head of the Wybrnant valley*'). John and Lowri Morgan had five children, and William was the second son, so not expected to take over the farm after his father.

An interesting description of rural society at that period states how it was divided into three main classes. The gentry numbered up to 5% of the population, yeomen farmers (whether freeholders or tenants) some 40%, while smallholders and cottagers accounted for most of the rest. Substantial farmhouses, like Tŷ Mawr, belonged to the wealthiest yeomen and minor gentry, for the hearth tax records of the mid 17th Century show that eight out of ten houses had only one fireplace. 14% of houses had two fireplaces, but only 6% had three or more hearths. Tŷ Mawr, with two hearths, was clearly the home of people who belonged to the top fifth of society: its very name indicates gentry status". (Eurwyn Williams, *Upland Life in 16th Century Caernarvonshire*, National Trust Guide Book, p. 42)

The freeing of the bondsmen and the restoration of peace in the Dolwyddelan area in the early sixteenth century created the conditions for building new houses. The first documented reference

comes in 1568, when Maurice Wynn of Gwydir listed his 21 tenements in the township and *ffriddoedd* of Dolwyddelan and described how many cattle each could sustain each year.

Wybrnant was not mentioned in Morys Wynn's accounts, which covered only rent due from the *ffriddoedd* and tenements without a hereditary tenant; on these, the Wynns were able to charge market rent, or to pasture their own cattle. John ap Morgan appears to have been a major farmer in the area, renting several farms, timber and fishing rights from Maurice Wynn of Gwydir:

- Blaen glasgwm & Llygallt y vynnye (Upper Llygallt) shared with Evan ap Morgan, (possibly a brother) and capable of holding 148 cattle. (The name Llygallt y vynnye does not survive as a field name in 18th century estate maps but may have been the rough pasture of yr Allt shared in the 18th century between Tai Isa and Blaen Glasgwm; these lands adjoined Ty Mawr Wybrnant.)
- Wayn ddofn (a 50 acre holding probably split between Plas yn Glasgwm and Ty'n ddol in the c1800 reorganisation of Glasgwm farms), kay lloyd and other lands, leased jointly with Robert ap Richard of Penmachno for 46s 8d a year in 1568; Robert's daughter Elizabeth was the second wife of John ap Morgan's son Morgan ap John (brother of Bishop William Morgan).
- Glyn Lledr in Dolwyddelan for a rent of 40s 6d.
- To keep the woods, viz y glyn, 30s 8d
- Tyddyn rutta for 20d
- Llyn y Cymmer and the water of the River Conwey, 3s 4d
- Y gigvran, 3s 4d.

(See map of 16th century Glasgwm.)

John ap Morgan may also have acted as Maurice Wynn of Gwydir's local steward in Dolwyddelan and Penmachno, for Morys Wynn records him paying in on 1st October 1569 various rents for Penmachno and elsewhere, as well as the tithes of Abergele. It was usual at this time for rents and other dues to be collected by a major tenant. Ty Mawr is therefore the house of a very prosperous farmer, which explains why it is more like the local minor gentry houses than those of most of the descendants of the bondsmen.

(NLW Llanstephan MS 179, 'Rentals and estate memoranda of Maurice Wynn of Gwydir', (1568-74); Griffith's Pedigrees, p.318.)

5. Sir John Wynn of Gwydir's dispute with his tenants

The market in Crown lands led to the growth of intermediaries, and Crown leases could pass through four pairs of hands before reaching the local landowner and grantees or intermediaries could demand exorbitant sums to allow the sitting tenant to remain in possession. When in 1595 Edward Blofield obtained (at the request of William Stalie, valet of the woodward), a 40 year lease of the township of Dolwyddelan, which the Wynns of Gwydir had held for nearly a century, John Wynn was forced to bring an Exchequer suit to retain possession. Blofield had paid an entry fine of only £15, but refused to accept an award of arbitration by the Bishop of St. Asaph to demise the vill to Wynn at a realistic rent.

(NA LR15/206, 'Letters patent leasing Dolwyddelan to Edward Blofield' (1595); T. I. Jeffreys Jones, Exchequer Proceedings Concerning Wales in Tempore James I (Cardiff, 1955), p.46, E112/147/3 Jac. I.)

Whilst the earlier generations of Wynns had been content to covenant that they would allow the use of the Crown lands to the tenants at customary rents, the high price paid by the local landowners in the late 16th century encouraged them to seek to pass on the cost in the form of higher rents. An attempt by John Wynn of Gwydir to raise rents to more commercial levels provoked his ancient native Dolwyddelan tenants to bring a suit in the Court of Exchequer in 1590 claiming that their lands were freehold under the terms of Henry VII's charter enfranchising the bondsmen, and that they could only be required to pay customary rents. (The term 'natives' derives from the Latin '*nativae*', meaning bond tenants.) The court found that there was an imperfection in the charter so

that the land remained in the ownership of the Crown, but decreed that the tenants should hold their lands by leases for 21 years in perpetuity, at the customary rents and with an entry fine of four years' rent. The Court ordered a survey of Dolwyddelan to identify who the ancient native tenants were and what their customary rents, but it is unfortunately too faint to read.

(Jeffreys Jones Exchequer Proceedings. pp. 47-48; National Archives E178/3383, Special Commission of Inquiry, Dolwyddelan. Award as to the rents to be paid by the native tenants of the township)

Further problems arose at the expiry of the leases. Ritherch ap Richard and other ancient native tenants of the township of Dolwyddelan brought a further bill of complaint in the Court of Exchequer against Sir John Wynn of Gwydir, his cousin John Wynn (Sir John's cousin, son of Robert Wynn), Robert's widow Dorothy and her new husband William Williams. The tenants alleged that the Wynns had refused to grant them new leases or accept the entry fine of four years rent, intending to take possession of the premises themselves. Sir John Wynn's defence was that he had no objection to making new leases, but that the Crown lease had been demised jointly to him and his uncle Robert, who was now dead. Robert's heir, John Wynn was still under-age and therefore not able to answer in court. He also challenged whether all of the complainants were in fact ancient native tenants. Eventually the case was settled with the court reconfirming the previous decree requiring the Crown 'farmers', i.e. those who held the Crown lease or those to whom it was devolved, to grant the ancient native tenants leases for 21 years at the customary rents, with an entry fine of 4 years rent. The leases were to be renewed every 21 years to the tenants, their heirs, wives, executors or assigns.

The court ordered a further survey of the township of Dolwyddelan, to be carried out by the Bishop of Bangor, Robert Wynn ap Cadwaladr Esq. and John Heames, gent. This identified 14 messuages and tenements held by the ancient native tenants or their heirs or assigns. Amongst them, the survey recorded:

“William Morgan doctor of divinity was at the time of the said survey and decree [i.e. in 1590] ancient native tenant of one messuage and tenement and lands within the said township called Wybrnant now in the occupation of Jevan Morgan, Master of Arts, cousin and heir and assignee thereof to the said William Morgan.”

(NA E126/1 (1616) 'Court of Exchequer order in the case of Ritherch ap Richard and others, ancient native tenants of Dolwethelan'.)

This appears to confirm Sir John Wynn's claim that “Wm. Morgan DD born in Dolwyddelan [was] descended of ye race of ye bondsmen of ye Town, servants (both he and his Ancestors) to ye house of Gwydir”, though Bishop Morgan himself strenuously denied having bond ancestry. However, if Griffith's Pedigrees is correct in suggesting that Bishop Morgan was descended from Madoc ap Bleddyn Llwyd, (one of the heirs of the bond Gafael Elidir mentioned in the Record of Caernarvon), this further confirms William Morgan's bond ancestry. (NLW Gwydir BRA 5; Sir John Wynn, 'History of the Gwydir Family', publ. London, 1927, p.65.)

William Morgan however had taken a 40 year lease of his ancestral home from Wynn. This may have been *before* the 1590 Exchequer Court ruling, which would have entitled him to a 21 year lease at the ancient rent. In a letter written by John Wynn of Gwydir, 13 March 1603, to Thomas Martin, (who John Wynn had asked to mediate in his dispute with Bishop Morgan over tithes), Wynn accused Morgan of being ungrateful for all the patronage and help Wynn had given him over the years:

“Fyrst, I let him have a Lease upon hys farme of Wybrnant, parte of the township of Doluthelan for forty years, for forty pounds in money. The farme he hathe sett att the rent of

twenty four pounds per ann[um] and yeldethe of the kyngs rent viii s. too pence yerly, as far as I remember.”

(Reproduced in J. Gwynfor Jones, ‘Bishop Morgan’s dispute with John Wynn of Gwydir in 1603 – 1604’, in *Journal of the Historical Society of the Church in Wales*, Vol. XXII, (1972), pp.49-78.)

If William Morgan paid the £40 for a 40 year lease, he clearly made a considerable profit by sub-letting Wybrnant for £24 pa.

In 1626, Sir John Wynn of Gwydir used the opportunity of a sale of Crown lands by James I to purchase the township of Dolwyddelan in fee farm at 50 years’ purchase for £350. He paid dearly to gain the security of ownership, for the average sale price was around 30 years’ rent.

(R. W. Hoyle, ‘Introduction’, in Hoyle (ed.) Estates of the English Crown, p.19.)

6. Wybrnant in the 17th century

Bishop Morgan and his cousin let Wybrnant to under-tenants. It is not yet known who most of these were, though in **1625**, Gruffith Roberts was living at Wybrnant and acted as arbitrator between two neighbouring yeomen over the right of passage over a field.

(NLW Gwydir BRA Deeds 46, Arbitration award, 1625)

In 1648, Tŷ Mawr, then called Y tythyn mawr in Blayn Wybrnant, was in the occupation of Agnes verch Richard, widow, when Robert Hughes, gent., agent to Sir Richard Wynn of Gwydir, entered in his name into a meadow called Y gylchwynog which was part of Wybrnant. (NLW Gwydir BRA 1863, 1648).

Wybrnant was one of the properties granted in **1655** by Sir Owen Wynn of Gwydir as part of a pre-nuptial settlement between his son and heir apparent Richard Wynn and Sarah Middleton, daughter of Sir Thomas Middleton of Chirk Castle. In the 1650s, trouble seems to have arisen when Symon Morgan and Anne Morgan, brought a bill of complaint against Sir Owen Wynn, over renewal of the lease of Wybrnant, but Symon Morgan appears to have died shortly afterwards. Sir Richard Wynn later recorded that Owen Wynn bought Wybrnant from Anne Morgan and her children. In 1562, Sir Owen Wynn was arranging for payment of £120 to Mistress Anne Morgan of Flint, widow, John her son and Owen David Lloyd of Matherbrod under a bond. Anne Morgan clearly did not live at Wybrnant, but sub-let it. (It is possible that this episode refers to buying out the lease, for occupants of Wybrnant were still recorded as paying customary rent as ‘Natives of Dolwyddelan’ until 1767.) (NLW Elwes MS 880, ‘Pre-nuptial settlement on the marriage of Richard Wynn and Sarah Middleton, 1655; NLW Gwydir BRA 113, ‘Plea, demurrer and answer of Sir Owen Wynn re renewal of a lease of Wybrnant’; NLW Add. MS 468E)

7. A fight at Tŷ Mawr during the Commonwealth period

About a year before Charles II came to the throne, **1659**, Rhodri Llwyd, a staunch Royal supporter lived in hiding at Tŷ’n y Berth in the Lledr valley. Having seen vegetables from the Low Countries growing in the King’s gardens, Rhodri grew them successfully at Tŷ’n y Berth and having rented land from his neighbours he was also a better farmer than most. However, he had moments of depression and his friends in the Lledr and Wybrnant valleys decided to hold a Noson Llawn at Tŷ Mawr and raise his spirits.

They had invited musicians and poets to the feast including Sion Owen, the harpist; Twm Betti, the fiddler; and William Pirs, a poet from Beddgelert, who unbeknown to them had changed sides and was now giving his allegiance to Cromwell.

The evening had started well but William Pirs stood up and recited his poems which were very spiteful to the King’s followers. The harpist stood up and told him to shut up and said

“Shame on you coming to spoil the feast of John the Baptist. I will cut out your tongue - better you were buried in your Parish with your Dog.” (Gelert)

William Pirs called back that the harpist should speak more respectfully and went on about calves and goats, but the friends of Rhodri showed him the door. It was now about ten o'clock at night and everyone had drunk well and were feeling merry.

Suddenly, they heard a commotion outside and voices swearing and threatening to blow Rhodri's brains away, he and his abominable company – Traitors of the Lord Defender! The door was struck with a sledgehammer and it split in two, and with that a beast of a drunkard fell into the house. Two gigantic men followed him in, walking on his body as if he was dirt and a battle ensued. Rhodri, through whose veins ran the blood of Captain Ellis Prys of Plas Iolyn, a warrior, the Red Doctor, for he was a Doctor of Law, drew his sword from its scabbard and pulled out his dagger and struck the tall men, and they lay at his feet on the earth floor. The noise outside grew, and they realised that there must be a big crowd of people come to camp, to kill, and to take prisoners. Rhodri saw that it was pointless to fight such a majority, so he gave the word for all to flee through the backdoor, as the Roundheads were waiting for orders at the front of the house. (They went the way the monk fled in William Morgan's day).

Having gone a hundred yards, Sion Owain, the harpist, climbed up a strong oak tree and hid there. To this day the field is still known as the 'field of Owain's tree'. The Royalists carried on up past Talar Gerwin and a battle was fought and many were killed including Rhodri's daughter, Barbara, and Twm Beti the fiddler.

(Translation of Jones, Owen, 1876, Ceinion Llenyddiaeth Gymreig. London, pp.296-7)

8. Wybrnant becomes part of the Ancaster estate

From **1678**, the Gwydir estate became a minor outpost of the vast Ancaster estate centred on Grimthorpe Castle in Lincolnshire, following the marriage of the sole Gwydir heiress, Mary Wynn, to Robert Bertie, Baron Willoughby de Eresby, (later Duke of Ancaster & Kesteven). The Welsh lands continued to be known locally as the Gwydir estate, but were rarely visited by the owners. Although the marriage articles required the couple to spend at least a month at Gwydir Castle each year, this did not happen, possibly due to Mary's frequent pregnancies, and after Mary's death in 1689, at the young age of 28, and Robert's remarriage, Gwydir was mothballed and neglected.

(A. Chilvers, The Berties of Grimthorpe Castle, Bloomington, 2010, p.139.)

In the **1684** Rental of the Gwydir Estate, seven occupants are recorded as 'Natives of Dolwyddelan', paying rents considerably below market value, including:

Elizabeth verch John ap Richard (from the 1724 rental we can tell this was Wybrnant) Elizabeth's father John ap Richard farmed Vedw and Penarduch in Dolwyddelan at the time of the 1616 survey.	£4 4s 7 1/2d
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(NLW MS 9720D, Rental of the Gwydir estate, 1684)

In a **1724** Gwydir rental, John Roger is shown as one of the Natives of Dolwyddelan, paying £4 4s 7d for his tenement in Wybrnant, with Richard Williams taking over in 1727.

(BUAWL Bangor Mostyn MS 5782)

In **1758**, Richard William paid the same rent for Wybrnant as a Native of Dolwyddelan.

(Gwynedd Archives XD/38/234, Rent Collection book of the Gwydir Estate)

1761 - Penmachno Land Tax - Tu Mawr & Talar Gerwin - £1 6s 3d. Tenant Richard William?

In **1766**, the Gwydir Estate was revalued and rents increased significantly. Richard William was still one of the Natives of Dolwyddelan paying the same rent out of Wybrnant. The revaluation raised questions about the status of the Natives, and the reasons for their low rents. One person (probably the central Ancaster agent) records:

“The several people who are here called natives hold land in this parish which they claim to be their own freeholds and that these sums are in the nature of quit rents or chief rents. The report in the county with respect to their lands (as related by Mr. Royle [the Gwydir agent in Caernarvonshire]) is that in former times when the estate of the Wynn family was disturbed by incursions of the neighbourhood several were stationed in different parts upon the outskirts of the estate as sentinels, to give notice when the enemy was approaching; and that for this service these lands were assigned to them, but whether in fee after life does not appear... Mr. Royle when he surveyed the estate did not think himself at liberty to make any alterations to these rents which are not near the yearly value of the lands out of which they are issuing.”

This was annotated by another hand (possibly the Duke of Ancaster’s):

“The nature of these rents should be fully inquired into.”

(NLW Gwydir MS 2 ‘Survey of the Welsh Estates’ 1766, p.58.)

This exchange further demonstrates the confusion that had arisen over the status of the lands held by the ‘natives’ of Dolwyddelan. The explanation given by Mr. Royle clearly derives from Sir John Wynn’s ‘The History of the Gwydir Family’. It appears that the descendants of the bond tenants had continued to maintain their claim to be freeholders and that all parties appeared to have lost sight of the real cause of their low rents – the customary rents for descendants of former bond tenants imposed by the 1590 Exchequer Court ruling. The upshot was that the ‘natives’ succeeded in persuading the Ancaster estate that they were freeholders. The 1779 Gwydir rental continues to record the natives of Dolwyddelan paying their customary rents, with Richard William still paying rent out of Wybrnant. (GA Gwydir MS XD/38/235, ‘Gwydir rental’, 1779.)

9. Brief ownership by Sir Watkin Williams Wynn

1770 March 28: Marriage of Griffith Prichard and Jane Jones, both of this Parish. Married by Joseph Jones, Minister (from Penmachno Parish Register)

1775 - Penmachno Land Tax - Tu Mawr & Talar Gerwin 19s 6d

1776 - Penmachno Land Tax - Tu Mawr & Talar Gerwin 13s 1½d

1777 - January 14: Baptism of Rees, son of Griffith Prichard & Jane Jones his wife of Tŷ Mawr (from Penmachno Parish Register)

At some stage after 1779, Wybrnant must have been sold, for on a 1784 Gwydir estate map the land Tu Mawr lands to the south of Pwll y gath farm in the Wybrnant valley is shown as belonging to Sir Watkin Williams Wynn of Wynnstay, the largest landowner in Wales.

1781 - Penmachno Land Tax - Tŷ Mawr Wybrnant & Talar Gerwin, £1 8s 9d

1782, May 26: Baptism of Richard William, son of Griffith Prichard by Jane Jones his wife of Tŷ Mawr. (from Penmachno Parish Register)

1785 November 13: Baptism of Elizabeth, daughter of Cadwalader Lewis of Tŷ Mawr and Mary Griffiths. (from Penmachno Parish Register)

1792 - Penmachno Land Tax - Tŷ Mawr £1 6s 3d, Tenant - Griffith Prichard.

1793 - Penmachno Land Tax - Tŷ Mawr & Talar Gerwin, £1 6s 3d. Owner, Sir W W Wynne, Tenant, Griffith Prichard.

1794 - Penmachno Land Tax - Tŷ Mawr & Talar Gerwin, £1 6s 0d.

In the 1796 Land Tax record, the holding is confirmed as in Sir Watkin's ownership, but has been divided into Tu Mawr, tenant Griffith Prichard, and Talar Gerwin, tenant John Ellis.

1796 - Penmachno Land Tax - Tŷ Mawr, £1 13s 1½d, Tenant, Griffith Prichard.
- Talar Gerwin, £1 13s 1½d, Tenant, John Ellis.

1797 – Penmachno Land Tax - Tŷ Mawr, £1 13s 1½d, Tenant Griffith Prichard.
- Talar Gerwin, £1 13s 1½d, Tenant, John Ellis.

10. Personalities at Tŷ Mawr in the 18th Century

In the 18th Century there was a small cottage on the south gable end of Tŷ Mawr Wybrnant called Tŷ Mawr Bach or Tŷ Bychan, Wybrnant. It is remembered because Nanws ach Robert was born there in 1747.

As a baby she was given a bible and her mother was keen for her to learn to read it. They moved to the Trefriw area so she could attend school there. The school was closed when the vicar realised the curate was teaching Nonconformists. Nanws was taken by her mother to Trefecca to continue her education at the religious community established there by Hywel Harris. Within a year, on the death of her mother, Nanws was brought back by her father to live at Dolwyddelan with her grandmother.

She eventually became a leading light of the Nonconformists in the area. She was involved in raising funds to build the first chapel in Dolwyddelan. Her contribution - £9 – was the value of 30 Pecks of burnt bracken ashes, sold for making soap, and transported by ship from Trefriw.

A Prayer Meeting at Tŷ Mawr

In the autumn it was customary to 'drown the harvest' – an excuse for consuming a lot of beer or whatever they drank. When the Methodist revival was gaining strength at the end of the 18th Century and Dolwyddelan had opened the first chapel in the area on Christmas Day **1783**, Gruffydd Prisiat, Tŷ Coch, went to visit his brother Pys at Tan y Clogwyn and told him he would like to adopt a new way of 'drowning the harvest'. He suggested that they invite to Tŷ Mawr Wybrnant, Morys Huws, Pen y Bont, Rhisiart Owen, the church bellringer of Penmachno, the two Sions of Dolwyddelan - Sion Williams and Sion Jones – and of course, Nanws, Cae Du, to read the scriptures and pray, and so they did.

At the beginning of the meeting, Nanws asked Rhisiart Owen to give the congregation a little lesson on how to conduct themselves, and these are the points.

1. All to take their hats off on entering but the women to put them on again.
2. To sit if there is room, while the sister reads, and the others chat a little!
3. Before each prayer, a verse will be read, and they were expected to stand and sing.
4. To kneel when someone is praying and stay on your knees to the end of the prayer.

The meeting began with singing followed by Nanws reading from the Prophet Elijah, making explanatory comments – very impressive!

(Translation of Ellis O'r Nant, 1880, Nanws ach Robert - neu helyntion cymdeithasol, moesol, a chrefyddol y dyddiau gynt (Nanws daughter of Robert, or Social, Ethical and Religious tribulations of bygone days) , Cwmni'r Wasg Genedlaethol Gymreig, Caernarfon.

This dwelling place, as is noted, was built on the banks of a substantial stream, as every family who could find a suitable site did at that time. This was also the case with the Monasteries and Abbeys. This was to ensure ample provision of fish to the residents, which was important to our Catholic forefathers, and Glan'rafon (Riverside) was a sacred name to their ears, and a home that everyone would aspire to. This was considered as golden advantage that would enable them to live a pure life without sin, as far as what they ate went! There were many fasting days and holy days when the eating of meat was not allowed, and these days were far more numerous than they are for present-day Catholics.

The chimney at Tŷ Mawr was woven with wattle and daub to stop the smoke from filling the house. It was high – similar to a furnace chimney – at the higher gable end, with another similar chimney at the lower gable end. The original chimneys were shorter, but they proved inefficient, and were extended by more than a yard each at the higher gable end. Secret rooms were built upstairs on either side of the chimney, large enough for one or two to hide if they were being persecuted, ensuring that anyone hiding would not easily be discovered.

(Translation of Ellis o'r Nant, 1880 , Gwilym Morgan pp. 6 &7)

Early Parish Records for Tŷ Mawr Wybrnant

The Gruffydd Prisiat (Griffith Prichard) mentioned in the prayer meeting of 1783, was born in 1747, married Jane Jones in 1770, aged 23, and died at the old age of 78 in 1825. Although his two little daughters were buried in the same month – July 1813 - at the ages of 2 and 4, his two sons, Rees (Rice) and Richard William, both lived at Tŷ Mawr, Tŷ Coch or Talar Gerwin for most of their lives. Richard William died in 1849 at the age of 67, but his age does not tally with the Richard Williams, a farm labourer living at Tŷ Mawr 2 in the 1841 census.

12. Wybrnant in the 19th Century

1800 Sir Watkin's financial difficulties forced him to put a number of several scattered properties in Caernarvonshire up for sale in 1800, including Wybrnant (309 acres) and Talar Gerwyn (212 acres). It appears that these two farms did not sell, for a sale was finally concluded with Sir Edward Pryce-Lloyd (who later became Lord Mostyn), in 1827, for £1,950.

(Gwynedd Archives XQA/LT 2/5, Penmachno Land Tax (1748-1810))

Grimthorpe Castle, private collection, 'Plan of an Estate lying in the Several Parishes of Llanrwst, Llanrhychwyn, Trefriw, Bettws and Dolwyddelan, belonging to Sir Peter Burrell and the Right Honorable Lady Willoughby de Eresby', (1784-6). NLW Sale Catalogue Caer. 199 (1800).

1804 August 30: baptism of William, son of Rice Griffiths, Tŷ Mawr, and Jane his wife.
(Penmachno Parish Register)

1806 October 27: Baptism of Jane, daughter of Rice Griffiths, Tŷ Mawr Wybrnant and Jane his wife. (Penmachno Parish Register)

1809 May 7: baptism of Ann, daughter of Rice Griffiths, Tŷ Mawr Wybrnant and Jane his wife.
(Penmachno Parish Register)

1810 - Penmachno Land Tax - Tŷ Mawr & Talargerwin £1 6s 5d, Tenant - Griffith Prichard.

1812 - Penmachno Land Tax - Tŷ Mawr & Talargerwin £1 6s 5d, Tenant - Griffith Prichard.

1813 July 22: burial of Ann Griffith, Tŷ Mawr, age 4 years. (Penmachno Parish Register)

1813 July 24: Burial of Jane Griffith, Tŷ Mawr, age 2 years. (Penmachno Parish Register)

1825 June 18: Burial of Griffith Prichard, Tŷ Mawr Wybrnant, age 78 years. (Penmachno parish Register)

In 1827 a sale was finally concluded with Sir Edward Pryce-Lloyd (who later became Lord Mostyn), for £1,950. By this time, Tŷ Mawr ceased to be used as a farmhouse, for the Wybrnant farm had been renamed Tŷ Coch; a map of Talar Gerwin and Tŷ Coch (undated but probably c1830) shows Tŷ Mawr as a croft on Tŷ Coch lands, with its outbuildings used by Talar Gerwin. (Gwynedd Archives XQA/LT 2/5, [Penmachno Land Tax\(1748-1810\)](#); Grimthorpe Castle, private collection, '[Plan of an Estate lying in the Several Parishes of Llanrwst, Llanrhychwyn, Trefriw, Bettws and Dolwyddelan, belonging to Sir Peter Burrell and the Right Honorable Lady Willoughby de Eresby](#)', (1784-6); NLW, [Sale Catalogue Caer. 199 \(1800\)](#); Denbighshire Archives, [Wynnstay Deeds, Penmachno 47](#), Release by Sir Watkin Williams Wynne to Sir Edward Pryce Lloyd of Pengwern, Flintshire, of Ty Coch and Talar y gerwin in Penmachno, (1827); (BUAWL Bangor Mostyn MS 8499, '[Plan of Ty Coch and Talar y Gerwin](#)').

1841 census

Tŷ Mawr 1:	Wm. Williams, quarryman,	age 40 (All born in Caernarfonshire)
	Elen Williams	age 55
	Robert Williams	age 15
	William Williams	age 5
Tŷ Mawr 2:	Richard Williams, agricultural labourer,	age 55
	Jane Williams	age 50
	Pierce Williams, quarryman	age 17
	John Williams	age 12
	Robert Roberts, quarryman	age 25
	Elizabeth Roberts	age 22

1842: In the Penmachno tithe commutation records, Tŷ Mawr house and yard was still part of Ty Coch farm to the east. ([Schedule: Owner & Tenants](#), NA IR 18/14152, Penmachno Tithe Map.)

1844 May 15: Burial of Ellen Owens, Tŷ Mawr, age 62 years. (Penmachno Parish Register)

1849 June 29: Burial of Richard Williams, Tŷ Mawr, age 67 years. (Penmachno parish register)

1850 Baptism of Margaret, daughter of Humphrey Williams and Catherine (from Internet information)

1851 census - Tŷ Mawr was occupied by John Hughes, 42, Quarry slater; his wife, Catherine, 41; and one daughter aged 4. All born in Penmachno. One house is noted as uninhabited – probably the smaller Tŷ Mawr bach (Tŷ Mawr 1 or 2) noted in 1841.

In **1854** the house was acquired by Edward Gordon Douglas-Pennant, later the 1st Lord Penrhyn, and seems to have been neglected by the estate.

1855 William Evans, tenant at Tŷ Mawr. Rent due 25 March: £26 0s 0d. No arrears. Property Tax £1 2s 9d. (Bangor University Archives, [Penrhyn Estate Rentals](#), Ysbyty & Penmachno PFA/4/228)

1856 William Evans, tenant at Tŷ Mawr. Rent due 25 March: £26 0s 0d. No arrears. Property Tax £1 12s 6d. (Bangor University Archives, [Penrhyn Estate Rentals](#), Ysbyty & Penmachno PFA/4/228)

1856 Elizabeth Prichard & son, tenant at Talargerwin. Rent due 25 March: £30 0s 0d. No arrears. (Bangor University Archives, [Penrhyn Estate Rentals](#), Ysbyty & Penmachno PFA/4/228)

1857 Elizabeth Prichard & son, tenant at Talargerwin. Rent due 25 March: £30 0s 0d. £14 arrears. (Bangor University Archives, Penrhyn Estate Rentals, Ysbyty & Penmachno PFA/4/228)

18?? Elizabeth Prichard & son, tenant at Talargerwin. Rent due 25 March: £30 0s 0d. £15 arrears. (Bangor University Archives, Penrhyn Estate Rentals, Ysbyty & Penmachno PFA/4/228)

1861 census Tŷ Mawr was occupied by William Williams, 28, Slate Quarrier (sic); Jane Williams, his wife, 23; and two daughters aged 4 and 2. All born in Ffestiniog, Merioneth.

1866 Elizabeth Prichard & son, tenant at Talargerwin. Rent due 25 March: £30 0s 0d. £14 11s 3d arrears. (Bangor University Archives, Penrhyn Estate Rentals, Ysbyty & Penmachno PFA/4/228)

1871 census - Tŷ Mawr was not occupied

1875 November 10: Burial of Jane Williams

Er Cof am Richard Williams, Tŷ Mawr, a gladdwyd Mefefin 26, 1849 yn 67 oed

Hefyd Jane Williams ei graig, a gladdwyd Tachwedd 10, 1875 yn 85 oed. (Gwynedd Family History Society, Memorial Inscriptions, St Tudclud, Penmachno)

Owain Gethin Jones and the campaign to improve Tŷ Mawr

In **1854** the house was acquired by Edward Gordon Douglas-Pennant, later the 1st Lord Penrhyn and seems to have been neglected by the estate.

Local historian, Owen Gethin Jones, was very enthusiastic about raising a memorial at Tŷ Mawr Wybrnant to commemorate the first translator of the whole bible into Welsh. On St. David's Day **1872** a strong contingent of enthusiastic pilgrims, led by Owen Gethin Jones, went to that sacred spot. These pilgrims started from Glan Aber, Betws-y-coed. He led them along the Conwy river and past Coed y Ffynnon, where they feasted on oatcakes and cheese. They walked on past Fedw Deg and Bwlch y Maen, and on arriving at Tŷ Mawr they searched the house thoroughly before holding a patriotic meeting outside ending with the Welsh National Anthem and wishing the Queen a long life.

1881: Nine years later, Gethin was still fervently involved, organising a huge festival outside Tŷ Mawr Wybrnant to raise a memorial to the translator of the Bible by every Welsh reader contributing one penny to this worthy cause. The speakers used Tŷ Coch's cart as a platform.

From the first visit, we gather the house was not inhabited, and a photograph was taken during the second visit which shows Tŷ Mawr in a very ruinous state – which put the Penrhyn Estate to shame. The house was then renovated and was occupied in 1891.

1881 census - Tŷ Mawr not occupied

1891 census - Tŷ Mawr occupied by John Roberts, 68, General labourer; Mary Roberts, 63, his wife; and Elizabeth Roberts, 33, daughter, single. All born in Penmachno, speaking Welsh.

13. Tŷ Mawr in the 20th Century

1901 census - Tŷ Mawr occupied by Mary Roberts, 76, widow (living on her own means); and Elizabeth Roberts, daughter, 42.

1911 census - Tŷ Mawr was not occupied.

29th Century inhabitants from Chapel Records 1900 -1993

1900/1901/1906	Mary Roberts	Tŷ Mawr, Wybrnant
1907	No entry for Tŷ Mawr, Wybrnant	

1926	Arthur Pierce Williams Gwenllian Williams	
1913	John Jones	Tŷ Mawr (from Cyfyng admission register)
1920/21	John Evans Lizzie Evans	Tŷ Mawr
1922	Arthur Williams	Tŷ Mawr (from Cyfyng admission register)
1925	Arthur Pierce Williams Gwenllian Williams	Tŷ Mawr
1926	Arthur Pierce Williams Gwenllian Williams	
1927	David Ellis Gwen Ellis	Tŷ Mawr, Wybrnant
1928	David Ellis Gwen Ellis	
1931	David Ellis Gwen Ellis	
1936	David Ellis Gwen Ellis	
1939 - 46	David Ellis Gwen Ellis Gomer Ellis Katie Ellis	Tŷ Mawr, Dolwyddelan
No other records during Second World War		
1946	Evan O. Evans Frances M. McGoldrick	Tŷ Mawr
1949	Evan O. Evans Edith W. Evans	Tŷ Mawr, Cyfyng
1951	Evan O. Evans Edith W. Evans	Tŷ Mawr, Cyfyng
1953/4/55	Evan O. Evans Edith Wynn Evans	Tŷ Mawr, Wybrnant
1956	David Ellis Gwen Ellis Glenys Ellis	Tŷ Mawr, Wybrnant
1960/61	Gwilym Thomas Lewis Margaret Ellen Lewis	Tŷ Mawr, Wybrnant
1967/68	Gwilym Thomas Lewis Margaret Ellen Lewis	Tŷ Mawr, Cyfyng
1969-73	Alun Jones Jenny Meryl Jones	Tŷ Mawr, Wybrnant
1974/5, 1977	Victor T. Evans Phyllis R. Evans	Tŷ Mawr ŶWybrnant, Dolwyddelan
1979-80	No record	
1980-93	Joseph Wyn Jones Iola Wyn Jones	
(from Chapel Registers, Penmachno)		

Inhabitants from the 1935-1942 Land Tax Assessment

		Rent	Tax
1935	David Ellis <i>Forestry Commission House</i>	3	7d
1936	David Ellis <i>Forestry Commission House</i>	3	7d

1937	David Ellis	5	10d?
	<i>Forestry Commission House</i>		
1938	David Ellis	<i>Included in Assessment 42</i>	
	<i>Forestry Commission House</i>		
1939	David Ellis		
	<i>Ty Mawr Cyfyng, House</i>		
1940	David Ellis		
	<i>Forestry Commission</i>		
1941	David Ellis	<i>10d to be collected</i>	
	<i>Forestry Commission</i>		
1942	David Ellis	11p?	2s 3d rates
	<i>Forestry Commission House</i>		

(Source - Conwy Archives, Llandudno, Ref. CLTA 2/8)

Inhabitants from the Nant Conwy Rural District Council Rate Book 1947 - 72

		Rateable Value	Annual Rates
1947	David Ellis	£ 3	£3 - 3 - 6
1948	David Ellis	£ 3	£3 - 8 - 9
The National Trust took over on 29 September 1951			
1952	David Ellis	£ 3	£3 - 19 - 0
1957	R. Ellis T. or G? Lewis	£ 8	£8 - 6 - 8
1962	The National Trust - House	£ 3	£ 2 - 13 - 0
	Agricultural premises	£ 11	£14- 11 - 6
1966	The National Trust - Museum	£ 3	£ 1 - 14- 0
1967	The National Trust	£ 3	£ 1 - 18- 3
1972	The National Trust - Museum	£ 3	£ 3 - 12- 0
	House agricultural	£ 24	£ 22 - 6- 8

(Nant Conwy Rural District Council Rate Book - Conwy Archives, Llandudno)

Establishment of a one-room museum at Tŷ Mawr in 1951

1951 Tŷ Mawr was acquired by the National trust through the National Land Fund procedures, [part of the vast agricultural and sporting estates of Penrhyn Castle] A local committee was formed and Miss Myfanwy Williams of Glaschw m was the driving force behind the movement to open a one-room museum at Tŷ Mawr. In 1960 the museum was opened to the public. (National Trust Guide Book p. 33)

“Miss Williams, a member of a large number of organisations in the area, took an active part in the restoration of the property owned by the National Trust, including the birthplace of Bishop Morgan at Tŷ Mawr, Penmachno, and the 15th Century cottage Tŷ Hwnt i’r Bont”.(Obituary)

In 1988, To mark the fourth centenary of the Welsh Bible it was decided that the whole house should be restored and furnished, and presented as near as possible to its original state. To do this it was decided to provide new accommodation close at hand for the curator, who had previously lived at Tŷ Mawr. During 1987 the restoration therefore began with the rebuilding of the cottage on the opposite side of the Wybrnant, which is called Glan-yr-afon and had been ruined for many years. The cow byre or beudy that adjoins it was left unaltered.

Successive alterations to the interior of Tŷ Mawr since the 19th Century had obscured all the evidence of its original layout. The first stage of the restoration therefore was to remove all the 20th century internal partitions, water pipes and electric wiring. It was decided that nothing of the 19th and 20th centuries should be preserved, a departure from normal practice, but essential in providing as clear as possible an impression of the house in Bishop Morgan’s time.

The roofing slates provided from the Penrhyn quarry in 1888 were removed and replaced with random Ffestiniog slates salvaged from a farm building on a neighbouring estate. The sawn ridge-plate and rafters provided by Lord Penrhyn have been replaced with a beam and rafters of the original dimensions made in new oak. The slates are fixed with pegs on oak battens.

During the stripping-out, a number of features were exposed, including a large fireplace on the first floor, the two truncated crucks, the cupboards at either side of the bed, the stone slab floor in the parlour and service room (found underneath two later floors) and the heads of several early timber window frames. Most of the windows in the entrance front have been reconstructed from the evidence in these timbers. Although the original floor slabs in the hall had been removed earlier, they have been replaced with similar stones to those found at the other end of the house.

Since the apparent collapse of the main chimney beam possibly as early as the 17th century, it had been supported by a stone pier which divided the hearth opening into two parts, giving rise to suggestions that one half may have been a hiding place for persecuted Catholics. To dispel this misleading impression and to restore the fireplace to its full dimensions, the stone pier has been removed. The timber beam is now suspended on steel rods from a new, concrete beam obscured by the masonry above and behind it.

Where new oak timber has been used, this has been provided from the National Trust’s woodlands on the Yspty Estate, and has been left in its natural colour to differentiate it from the original timbers. The screen partitions on the ground floor have been located by reference to the tie beam to the right, and an old foundation wall on the left. The interior walls have been pointed in the generous fashion of the area, and lime-washed. This finish, previously obscured beneath later plaster, was identified after stripping-out.

When new masonry has been required, only second-hand stone from the immediate vicinity has been used. The building mortar is composed of quicklime slaked in pits in the adjacent field, mixed in a roller mill with slate chippings and sand, which closely approximates the mortars used in the 16th century.

The walled area around the house has been reinstated to the extent shown in a photograph of around 1870. Only those plants known to have been grown in Britain in the 16th century have been introduced. The area of the former car park has been planted with old fruit trees, including apples, pears, plums and quinces.

(The National Trust, 1988, Tŷ Mawr Guide Book, pp. 47- 48)

13. Tŷ Mawr Wybrnant - References

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