



# Darganfod Hen Dai Cymreig

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## Brynmaen Llwyd

Trawsfynydd  
Gwynedd



## House History

A Part History of the House & its Families

Author: Paula Burnett

Updated 28 09 2016

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



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## NORTH WEST WALES DENDROCHRONOLOGY PROJECT

### DATING OLD WELSH HOUSES – MEIRIONNYDD

# BRYNMAENLLWYD

## TRAWSFYNYDD

NGR: SH705332

Height: c.600ft/200m

### HOUSE HISTORY: SUMMARY

Brynmaenllwyd is a Snowdonia-style house<sup>1</sup> of one and a half storeys, with same-height outbuildings in line. Tree-ring dating of its timber has given a precise date of 1588 for the initial building, followed by three distinct phases of essentially minor alteration (1665, 1889, C20). With an earliest documentary record of 1623, its social history illustrates the clan system where relatives lived in close proximity, and reflects the larger histories of religious and political conflict, international expansion, economic growth, and war. Sited on a Bronze Age trackway and named after a standing stone, this small house is close to two gentry houses, Rhiwgoch and Gelli Iorwerth (now Plas Capten), and originally housed minor branches of local interconnected gentry families. As the gentry houses declined in status so did Brynmaenllwyd, becoming a simple farmhouse by the C19, though still housing families who lived close to their relatives. In the earliest documentary evidence its Crown tenant was Richard Evans who held three other properties in the parish. His daughter's son was to live there, but this C17 closeness of freeholder and occupant was to fade as time went on, with proprietors becoming progressively remote from their holdings. Yeomen<sup>2</sup> replaced the 'gentlemen' farmers of the early years, the farm often worked by several generations of the same family, people respected in their community but ultimately remote in status from the freeholders. In the late C19 Brynmaenllwyd became part of the locally extensive Wood estate, accumulated through high-Victorian industrial and financial capital, before being sold in the mid-C20 to the family who actually farmed the land. At the end of the century it was nearly drowned under an extension of Llyn Trawsfynydd, but with the closure of the nuclear power station those plans were abandoned.

Owners: Michael and Paula Burnett

Author: Paula Burnett ©

Meirionnydd (formerly Merioneth)

### HOUSE HISTORY

*Appendices with family trees and maps, etc., may assist readers to follow the story.*

#### **Cambrian Period**

The earliest 'inhabitant' known at Brynmaenllwyd is a worm-like creature that lived 500 million years ago. Its burrow is now a 'trace fossil' in a large slab of stone (c.1m x 1.3m) laid as the

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Smith's typology (usually 2-storeys, chimneys in both gables, mural stair, opposed doors).

<sup>2</sup> The term was used in contexts such as here to mean a tenant farmer 'of respectable standing' (*OED* 4), often an employer, but in this area rarely the freeholder of the land (unlike its use elsewhere).

threshold to the northern barn. Its coils are clearly visible, about 2cm wide and 5m long.<sup>3</sup> Given the slab's size it is unlikely that it was moved far from where it was found, but when it was placed at the barn threshold is unknown.

### Bronze Age

Brynmaenllwyd (*greystone hill*) is named for the Bronze Age standing stone a quarter of a mile away in the field above it, now a **Scheduled Monument**.<sup>4</sup> The stone is about four feet tall but has been sinking slowly into the boggy ground for a long time, so may have stood much higher. It was erected possibly as a way-mark, or as a ceremonial, perhaps funerary, monument (with the smaller stone about 2m from it, to the south-east, it suggests a grave).<sup>5</sup> The track past the house is a Bronze Age track-way, one of a number of routes from the Ardudwy coast to the high inland valleys.<sup>6</sup> The area has several nationally important scheduled monuments of this period, including Bryn Cader Faner. Brynmaenllwyd is just E of the small river Eden, which rises a mile N. Its waters flow S through a glacial valley of peat bog and moorland, overlying boulder clays, moraines and glacial erratics (with the hanging valley of Cefn Clawdd to the W), to join the river Mawddach and enter the sea eventually at Barmouth. The trackway past the house crosses the modern main road close to its highest point, the watershed between the river systems of the Mawddach (S) and the Glaslyn (N), to which the Prysor, 1m. N of Brynmaenllwyd, is a tributary.

### Iron Age

Recent archaeology in the Eden valley has identified several ironworking sites. The area is also well known for the wealth of its Roman remains. The N-S Roman road from the fort at Tomen y Mur to Brithdir lay 1m. E of Brynmaenllwyd, and another crossed E-W from Llyn Tegid to Cwm Prysor and beyond. The unusual dedication of Trawsfynydd parish church to St. Madryn (St. Matrona) may indicate a very early settlement, possibly of the late Roman era. The village name seems to derive from Latin (Trawsfynydd is Welsh for 'across the mountain' – *trans montanum* in Latin).

### Middle Ages onwards

The remains of several fortified 'castles' in the neighbourhood testify to warring clans. Castell Prysor and Tomen y Mur are well known, but the nearest was just 1m. S controlling the Eden valley. The enormous parish had three settlements and extensive commons. The peat at the head of the valley was dug for fuel, possibly from ancient times.<sup>7</sup> Large areas of common still exist on the

<sup>3</sup> Dr Mark Sutton (Palaeontologist, Imperial College, London, email response to photograph, 15.2.12) says it would be 500 to 530 million years old, and that the significant placing of stones with fossils, particularly as lintels, is not unknown, though most contain ammonites or trilobites, not an earlier fossil such as this. The Cambrian period, a term coined in the C19 in relation to the Harlech Dome (on which Brynmaenllwyd sits and of the rocks of which it is constructed), saw the evolution of the first living creatures. It is not possible to know what sort of aquatic animal made the burrow, but it was probably worm-like. (The first snakes evolved much later, about 98 million years ago.) The hard Cambrian rocks of the area are known as greywackes: 'As a rule, greywackes are not fossiliferous, but organic remains may be common in the finer beds associated with them.' Greywacke, Wikipedia, 5.2.12.

<sup>4</sup> CADW: Maen Llwyd, Standing Stone (ME115). Coflein NPRN 302994: 'An erect monolith, 1.4m high by 0.6m by 0.6m. Leaning to the SW and tapering.'

<sup>5</sup> Expert opinion varies as to whether such stones were erected simply as way-marks, or recorded other events such as burial. Their proximity to ancient trackways is conspicuous. Instead of the neolithic communal burials (several survive on the seaward side of the Rhinog mountains), people began to be buried individually at this time.

<sup>6</sup> The Rhinog mountains derive their name from 'threshold' in Welsh. The pass known as the Drws Ardudwy (Ardudwy door, Ardudwy being the area's name) between the two summits of Rhinog Fawr and Rhinog Fach (*Fawr* means 'big', *Fach* 'little') was the main threshold via Cwm Nantcol for west/east travellers between the coast and the uplands inland, with access to routes eastward (and on to England) and north/south. The highest mountain in the range is Y Llethr (not given a 'Rhinog' name because it is not a 'threshold'). Cwm Bychan, N of Cwm Nantcol, carries the paved track known as the Roman Steps, thought to be of medieval origin though possibly much older, leading to Trawsfynydd.

<sup>7</sup> An aerial photograph reveals the traces of peat diggings beside the river Eden at Bryn Re (the farm at the left of the image), with the bridge on the track from Brynmaenllwyd clearly visible. Peat digging was presumably a local turbarry right of common, though the land was subsequently enclosed as part of Bryn Re farm (in existence by 1623, Crown Rental, see below). Coflein: Afon Eden, NPRN 403910.

slopes of the Rhinog mountains. Part of the grassland W of Brynmaenllwyd, known as Crawcwellt, is named Moel y Gwartheg (hill of the cattle). Local farms, including Brynmaenllwyd, still have grazing rights for specified numbers of sheep (and, historically, horses). Most of the farms W of the Eden are the result of relatively modern commons enclosures.

### 1292-3

Among taxpayers in Trawsfynydd a gold factory (*Aurifabro*) is listed, the earliest indication of gold mining in the parish, probably on the Mawddach at Gwynfynydd.<sup>8</sup>

### C14

Tree-ring dating proves that when Owain Glyndwr was young in the late fourteenth century, the oaks from which Brynmaenllwyd was to be built were already growing. Almost no Welsh houses survive from before the warring and destruction of this time.

### 1468

In the Wars of the Roses, Harlech castle the last Lancastrian stronghold in Wales fell.

### 1485

By his defeat of Richard III at Bosworth, Henry VII founded the Tudor dynasty which led to a period of stability, prosperity and national influence for the Welsh. As the young Henry of Richmond he is said to have lain hidden at Ty Gwyn, the oldest building in Barmouth (c.1450) on the Mawddach estuary, a meeting-place for Lancastrians,<sup>9</sup> before being taken by sea to safety in south Wales and then France.

### 1536

Act of Union between England and Wales.

### 1588

The present **Brynmaenllwyd was built** using oak felled in 1588. That summer Elizabeth I, the last Tudor monarch, consolidated her position by defeating the Spanish Armada. Many houses were built in north Wales in this era; some survive.

**Robert Lloyd of Rhiwgoch**, the major gentry house in the locality, just over a mile SE of Brynmaenllwyd, was in the ascendancy in Meirionnydd. He was MP for the county from 1586-8, 1601-4 and 1614-20, and Sheriff of Merioneth for 1595-6, 1601-2, 1614-5 and 1624-5.<sup>10</sup> Rhiwgoch already had intricate connections with the principal families of the county, and of north Wales. Robert Lloyd's widowed mother had married Owen Wynn of Gwydir, Llanrwst, the most important house in the region, who as step-father to the young Robert pursued his interests.<sup>11</sup> Robert was to marry Margaret, daughter of Hugh Nanney of Nannau, Llanfachreth (about 7m. S of Brynmaenllwyd), one of the most important families in the county, second only to the Vaughans of Corsygedol, Llanddwywe. As Robert Lloyd prospered he rebuilt his mansion more grandly. A doorway survives at Rhiwgoch with 'M R Ll 1610' for Margaret and Robert Lloyd (but cf. 1610).

<sup>8</sup> Keith Williams-Jones, ed., *The Merioneth Lay Subsidy Roll 1292-3*, Cardiff: U.Wales Press, 1976, xlvi. This appears to have been overlooked by commentators on Meirionnydd mineral production. While it is noted that the Cymer Abbey monks were granted mineral rights over their land, historians suggest there is no evidence as to whether these were acted on. Accounts of local gold-mining assume the C19 exploitation to be the first. NB The Romans produced gold at Dolaucothi, Carmarthenshire.

<sup>9</sup> Lewis Lloyd, *Wherever Freights May Offer: A Maritime History of Barmouth 1565-1929*, 1993, 4.

<sup>10</sup> J.E. Griffith, *Pedigrees of Anglesey and Carnarvonshire Families*, 1914 (Griff.Ped.), 165, cf. last date as 1626 p.180; here, son of Evan Lloyd, but he is given erroneously as *ap* Jenkin Lloyd on p.200. On 25 July for a five shilling fee Lewys Dwnn recorded Robert Lloyd's arms for his *Heraldic Visitations*: genealogy and heraldry mattered greatly to the gentry at this date. *A History of Trawsfynydd*, Merched y Wawr Trawsfynydd and Traws-Newidd, Y Lolfa, 2012, 88.

<sup>11</sup> NA C3/118/39.

By the time of the 1623 Crown rental Robert Lloyd was chief tenant for 13 holdings in Trawsfynydd parish and 16 in Llanbedr just across the mountains. Probably he had expanded his estate from the proceeds of his high office, and was building houses to lease to his relatives.

### 1599/1600

A Merioneth Subsidy Roll gives names and the sums due to the Crown, including ‘Robertus Lloid arm[iger]. V.li... Robert Morgan arm. XL.S, John ab Morgan XX.S...Robert Evance XL.S’<sup>12</sup> The names feature in the Brynmaenllwyd story.

### 1610

Martyrdom at Tyburn of John Roberts (b. 1577, by tradition at Rhiwgoch), first cousin of Robert Lloyd: Catholic priest and missionary, canonized in 1970. In the same year Henry Prince of Wales, eldest son of James I, stayed at Rhiwgoch.<sup>13</sup>

### 1623

The earliest documentary record for Brynmaenllwyd is the 1623 Crown rental for Ardudwy, which gives its chief tenant as **Richard Evans**<sup>14</sup> (cf. 1650). This may be a brother of Robert Lloyd of Rhiwgoch, whose father was Evan.<sup>15</sup> Griffith gives only Catherine as sibling to Robert Lloyd,<sup>16</sup> but there were a brother Lewis and sister Ellin,<sup>17</sup> and possibly a brother Richard too. So if the Richard Evans of the Crown rental was indeed brother to Robert Lloyd, this places Brynmaenllwyd firmly at the centre of the Rhiwgoch sphere of influence. It was possibly built at Robert’s expense.

### 1639

Gruffydd Lloyd, Rhiwgoch (second son of Robert Lloyd), Sheriff of Merioneth.<sup>18</sup>

### 1642-51 Civil War

Royalists and Parliamentarians battled in parts of Wales. The Meirionnydd gentry were predominantly royalist and, given typically strong clan loyalties, were generally supported by their neighbours and tenants, in many cases their relatives. Harlech castle became the last royalist garrison in Wales, but was finally taken in 1647.

The story of Brynmaenllwyd is bound up not only with that of Rhiwgoch but of another nearby gentry house 1m. E of Brynmaenllwyd, Plas Capten, known before the Civil War as Gelli Iorwerth. Its Crown tenant, John Morgan, son of Morgan Vaughan of Corsygedol and son-in-law of Robert Lloyd, Rhiwgoch, was Sheriff of Merioneth in 1643. Evidently Gelli Iorwerth held a prominent position at the start of the Civil War. John’s son, also John Morgan, became a Royalist soldier. Oral tradition in Trawsfynydd relates that Captain John Morgan hid from Cromwell’s troops in a cave W of the village but was betrayed and killed, and his lands confiscated, and that thereafter Gelli

<sup>12</sup> Armiger: having a coat of arms; V.li: £5; XL.S: 40 shillings, etc.

<sup>13</sup> *A History of Trawsfynydd*, Merched y Wawr, 2012, 88-89.

<sup>14</sup> Rhian Jones, ‘An Ardudwy Crown rental of 1623,’ *Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society* XV.iv, 2009, 378 (ACR): ‘Richard Evans pro Bryn y Maen Lloyd 0s 0d.’ The zero rental may indicate the premises were unoccupied. The next entry is for ‘Bryn yr ef’ (now Bryn Re, accessed by the same trackway), also held by Richard Evans and taxed at 2d. His other holdings, also adjacent to each other in the list, are Frith Cae Kysgod and Frith Rhose Dubach, lands c.2m. S of Brynmaenllwyd.

<sup>15</sup> Robert’s brother Lewis is designated in his will not as Lewis Lloyd but as Lewis ap Evan Lloyd, and his son’s will identifies him as Richard ap Robert ap Evan (‘son of’ was shown by the Welsh *ap* or an *s* on the father’s name), and at this date surnames were almost unknown, except among the gentry e.g. Lloyd, as here, which was being used alongside the patronymics). National Archives, Kew (NA), Probate (PROB) 11/ 160 and 11/159.

<sup>16</sup> *Griff.Ped.*, 180.

<sup>17</sup> NA PROB 11/160.

<sup>18</sup> Morris Davies, ‘Selections on the history of Trawsfynydd’, MSS transcriptions (Morris Davies, ‘Selections’) Merioneth Archive Dolgellau (MAD), Drawer 9 Film 9.



Iorwerth has always been known locally as Plas Capten. The story is well remembered,<sup>19</sup> but whether it all happened is uncertain. However, the family's loss of their land is well documented. Griffith says Captain John Morgan 'suffered severely during the Civil Wars through fines, &c., and was obliged to sell nearly, if not all, his lands to pay the costs.'<sup>20</sup> The Morgans' estate was sold to Richard Lloyd of Esclusham, Denbighshire, a prominent Royalist, whose daughter Jane in 1653 married Lewis Owen of Peniarth (in the Dysynni valley near Tywyn), her 850 acres in Trawsfynydd and Llanddwywe (the latter probably once part of Corsygedol's land) then joining the Peniarth estate.<sup>21</sup> It is a poignant reminder of collective memory and sense of justice that although the Plas and the Captain were forcibly parted, the 'rightful' inheritor was not forgotten. Today the house's name remains Plas Capten.

## 1650

27 Dec: Will written by John Ellis, 'gentleman',<sup>22</sup> whose son Richard was to live at Brynmaenllwyd and marry Elizabeth Nanney of Cefndeuuddwr (see 1660s). In the 1623 Crown rental he is proprietor of Dolwen, about 1m. N of Brynmaenllwyd, now under the S end of Llyn (*lake*) Trawsfynydd<sup>23</sup> (cf. 1685). The will refers to money owed him by John Morgan of Gelli Iorwerth for sums paid on his behalf to meet court actions 'in his absence... Hee beinge then out of the Countrey in the regarde hee raised Armes against the Parliament.' (If the Captain escaped pursuit and fled the country it was perhaps this absence which seeded the local story of his death.) The total owed was the enormous amount of £120, an indication of John Ellis's high social status.<sup>24</sup> Evidently he was a person of some substance to be able to assist a friend, neighbour – possibly a relative – and co-campaigner for the king to this extent. The will also refers to John Ellis's own imprisonment in 1650 at Poole in Dorset, a strategic harbour and stronghold of the Parliamentary forces. He divided his estate between his wife and four of his children – son Robert and three daughters – leaving only twelve pence<sup>25</sup> each to his eldest son Ellis and his son Richard. However, he included both of them among the overseers of the will, while making his heir Robert sole executor. Another of the overseers was 'my welbeloved brother in lawe Ellis ap Richard Evan,' presumably son of the Richard Evans who was crown tenant of Brynmaenllwyd in 1623.<sup>26</sup> From this will it is clear that John Ellis married a daughter of Richard Evans (Margaret *verch*/daughter of<sup>27</sup> Richard), who presumably either settled Brynmaenllwyd on her as a dowry, or made it available as a residence to her and/or her descendents. If so, this accounts for the residence of John Ellis's younger son Richard at Brynmaenllwyd on his marriage to Elizabeth Nanney.<sup>28</sup> Possibly the two sons who were 'cut off

<sup>19</sup> *Hanes Bro Trawsfynydd*, n.d., and pers.comm.

<sup>20</sup> *Griff.Ped.* 316.

<sup>21</sup> National Library of Wales (NLW) catalogue: Peniarth estate.

<sup>22</sup> Probate: 15 May 1651. NA PROB 11/216.

<sup>23</sup> ACR.

<sup>24</sup> 'Item with John Morgan of Gelliorwerth in the said parish and Countie the summe of one hundred poundes beinge moneys paide and laid out by mee wherein I stood bound as a suertie with him in a bond of one hundred and twentie poundes bearinge date the Eighteenth daie of December Anno Domini one Thowsand six hundred fortie fyve as by the said bond appeareth. In satisfaction of the same I paid to the said Hugh Davies after he had Comenced suites in severall Courts And obteyned severall Writts against us And thereuppon apprehended mee in the yeare of our Lord God One Thowsand six hundred fiftie the use and all Charge of suites beinge then unsatisfied, whereby I was forced to paie to the said Hugh Davies the summe of Nynetie fower poundes in Two severall payments as by my acquittances and bonds appeareth, with six poundes for the discharginge of my charge duringe my imprisonment at Poole the said yeare one thowsand six hundred fiftie, Together with the summe of Twentie poundes that I at severall Sessions and elsewhere spent by the said John Morgans diversions to avoid the said Executions, in his absence The summe due to mee in all from him beinge one hundred Twentie poundes, Hee beinge then out of the Countrey in the regarde hee raised Armes against the Parliament.'

<sup>25</sup> A shilling is an unusually small legacy, not encountered so far in the many other wills of the period consulted, and its expression in pence would seem to have added significance.

<sup>26</sup> ACR. Cf. 1664 death of another son, John ap Richard Evan: see NLW bond in favour of Agnes *verch* Humphrey, his widow.

<sup>27</sup> Sometimes '*verch*' means 'wife of.'

<sup>28</sup> The date of the marriage is not known: possibly before the death of John Ellis in 1651.

with a shilling' were disapproved by their father, a Royalist, because they supported Parliament. It is known that the Nanneys of Cefndeuiddwr (Elizabeth Nanney was to be Richard's bride) had Puritan sympathies (unlike their estranged relatives the Nanneys of Nannau). Alternatively it may simply be that they were regarded as having already received their share of the family estate.

## 1652

Correspondence of Ellis Lloyd, son of John, one of the sons of Robert Lloyd, Rhiwgoch, shows him in 1652 returning to Trawsfynydd to visit his uncle, John Morgan.<sup>29</sup> John Morgan senior must be the uncle in question (not his son Captain John Morgan who was Ellis's cousin). His wife was Jane, 6<sup>th</sup> child of Robert Lloyd, whose next younger sister was Gwen, mother of Elizabeth Nanney.<sup>30</sup> The address of Hafod Wen, Cwm Prysor, is an indication of where he lived after most of the family estate had been sequestered (see 1642-51). In the 1623 rental, Hafod Wen was one of his holdings, so it seems he kept this farm, or perhaps rented it back from Peniarth.<sup>31</sup>

## 1660

Restoration of the monarchy. 17 Oct: Execution in London of John Jones 'the regicide,' a signatory to the death warrant of Charles I in 1649 (Jones was born c.1597 at the family seat of Maesygarneidd, Cwm Nantcol, c.5m. SW of Brynmaenllwyd, the first house after crossing the mountains through the Drws Ardudwy pass – *drws* is 'door'). Captain John Morgan having been punished under the Commonwealth for his Royalism by loss of his lands, responded to being on the winning side at the Restoration by attempting in 1661 to take over the executed John Jones's estate, an ironic case of *quid pro quo*.<sup>32</sup> In 1662, however, one of the overseers of the will (damaged) of Richard John Vaughan of Bryncelynog, Cwm Prysor,<sup>33</sup> was '[...?] Morgan of Gelli Iorwerth Esq.,' presumably John Morgan. In the wake of the Restoration it seems he was able to lease back his mansion from the Peniarth estate.<sup>34</sup>

## 1660s

<sup>29</sup> B.E. Howells, ed., *A Calendar of Letters Relating to North Wales*, Cardiff: U. Wales Press, 1967 (Howells, *Letters*), Llanfair-Brynodol Letters, item 199, 13. A significant part of this correspondence relates to him.

<sup>30</sup> The two families had been joined by marriage a couple of generations earlier, too, when Robert Lloyd's aunt Lowry, his father's younger sister, married John ap Morgan of Gelli Iorwerth. *Griff.Ped.* 180. Ellis Lloyd's father John was the 4<sup>th</sup> child of Robert Lloyd.

<sup>31</sup> ACR. Later it was part of the Cors y Gedol estate, as it features in sale particulars of 1908, alongside several other properties in Trawsfynydd, two very close to Brynmaenllwyd: Brynteg and Gorswen. Coflein, NPRN 28328. NB The John Morgan of Bryncelynog, Cwm Prysor, whose will was written on 10 March 1647 (Probate 13 Feb 1649. NA PROB 11/211), was a different namesake, father of Gwen who married Robert Lloyd, Brynhir, but probably related to the Morgans of Gelli Iorwerth (see 1660).

<sup>32</sup> 24 Feb 1661/2 Mary Griffith wrote from Taltreyddyn (Taltreuddyn), Llanenddwyn (Dyffryn Ardudwy), to her brother Richard Griffith at Llanfair, Caerns.: 'Captain Morgan, lately returned from London with a commission to receive the rent of the lands lately of Colonel Jones, as he pretends, upon that account sent for the writer to pay him £12 rent of the £200 upon Taltreyddyn, which she delayed until she could inform recipient and be advised whether to pay him or not....' Howells, *Letters*, Llanfair-Brynodol Letters, item 199, p.120. Ardudwy is the area of Meirionnydd around the Rhinogs.

<sup>33</sup> Will mentions wife Gwen, brother David John Vaughan, sons Thomas ap Richard and Robert ap Richard, executor John Vaughan; appoints as overseers 'my well beloved friends [...?] Morgan of Gelli Iorwerth Esq., John Lloyd of Brynhir, Thomas [ap?] Richard of Nantbudyr and Hughe Lloyd [of?] Nannee[?] gent'. Brynhir was a mile or so N of Brynmaenllwyd, now under the lake, but Nantbudr is still farmed in Cwm Prysor, as is Bryncelynog, by Castell Prysor near the head of the valley. The will was witnessed by a John Ellis, perhaps related to Richard John Ellis of Brynmaenllwyd (NLW). In 1685 administration was granted for the estate of a John Ellis, possibly a son (probably eldest) of Ellis, the eldest son of John Ellis (d.1650), whose son Richard lived at Brynmaenllwyd. It seems to have been the practice of the time for eldest sons to be named alternately in this way. Catherine Ellis, probably his widow, witnessed the document in a shaky hand; in 1690 Catherine Ellis, a widow in her 70s, was buried at Trawsfynydd (NLW 1685 John Ellis, Bond. Bishop's Transcripts, Trawsfynydd (GENUKI). (BT)).

<sup>34</sup> Peniarth continued to hold the Gelli Iorwerth lands at least into the mid C18. See will of Robert Richard, written 1777, probate 1785, which refers to 'the Messuage Tenement and Lands with the Appurtenances which I hold by Lease under the Family of Penniarth called Plas y Captain'. NLW.



The granddaughter of Robert Lloyd, Rhiwgoch, married ‘**Richard ap John Ellis** of Brynmaenllwyd’.<sup>35</sup> She was **Elizabeth Nanney** of Cefndeuddwr, 11<sup>th</sup> child (6<sup>th</sup> to reach adulthood) of Lewis Nanney<sup>36</sup> and Gwen Lloyd (daughter of Robert Lloyd, Rhiwgoch, and Margaret, daughter of Hugh Nanney of Nannau) – further evidence of the intricate intermarriage of the local gentry families. Elizabeth was no doubt proud of her pedigree, and the family’s standing was continuing. Her eldest brother Richard Nanney became Sheriff of Merioneth in 1679-80,<sup>37</sup> and at his death in 1685 the inventory gives a glimpse of his life style. After the farming entries, such as 16 dairy cows, 14 yearlings and a bull valued in total at £42 10s 0d, the list concludes with ‘saddle, bridle, sword, rapier and all other weapons, and his wearing apparel’ given the extraordinarily high valuation of £505.<sup>38</sup> At the family seat of Cefndeuddwr (now a listed building, on a ridge where the river Eden joins the Mawddach at the S extremity of the huge parish of Trawsfynydd) there is even a wig closet which survives,<sup>39</sup> and in the Hearth Tax Richard Nanney is listed with 4 hearths, only 3 households in the parish having more (see 1662-1689). Although now independent of the grander Nanneys of Nannau, the Nanneys of Cefndeuddwr clearly had quite high status. It is not known what Richard’s younger sister Elizabeth’s dowry was when she made her bridal journey 4m. N, but her family may have paid (in a variant of the ‘dower house’ tradition) for the **Restoration restoration at Brynmaenllwyd**: in 1665 2 roof trusses were renewed and the dormers were probably inserted.

### 1662

Death of Jane Lloyd, widow, of Rhiwgoch.<sup>40</sup> She was the daughter of Gruffydd Vaughan of Corsygedol (Sheriff of Merioneth in 1588 and 1603, d. 1616,<sup>41</sup> whose estate on the Ardudwy coast was the greatest in the county at this period), and had married Ellis, son and heir of Robert Lloyd. Their daughter Jane, heiress of Rhiwgoch, married Henry Wynn, a barrister and 4<sup>th</sup> son of Sir John Wynn of Gwydir, Llanrwst, one of the most important men in North Wales at this date, reinforcing a major alliance for the house of Rhiwgoch (Robert Lloyd had had a Wynn as step-father), and shaping its subsequent history. In three generations Rhiwgoch heirs had married into progressively more important households: Nanney, Corsygedol, and Gwydir. As a younger son of Gwydir, it seems Henry joined his wife at Rhiwgoch, dividing his time between his legal practice, his estate and the duties in Merioneth and London which his long service as MP for the county required. From 1661 he was in parliament for the third time, until his death in 1673.<sup>42</sup> However, when the elder Jane died in 1662 it was not her son-in-law Henry but his son, her grandson aged 35, ‘John Wynnes Elis,’ who was sworn in as administrator of her estate. Between them, he and his grandmother presided over the whole of the C17 at Rhiwgoch, but his reach extended into the C18. He was to become Sir John Wynn, and lived until 1718 when he was 91. He united Rhiwgoch with the Watstay estate (later called Wynnstay) by his marriage to Jane Eyton. Tellingly, the 1662 document identifies him as of Watstay, Denbighshire, rather than of Rhiwgoch, which may indicate

<sup>35</sup> Griff.*Ped.* 165. This could mean that either father or son (John or Richard), or both, lived at Brynmaenllwyd. It is assumed here that Richard, at least, lived in the house. The date of the marriage is unknown, possibly earlier, though after 1650.

<sup>36</sup> Died 1661, NLW Lewis Nanney, Kefn y ddauddwr, Bond: administration granted to widow Gwen Lloyd, Robert Lloyd’s daughter, who was literate and signed her name (using the Welsh ‘Llwyd’) – and may have ensured that her daughter Elizabeth Nanney was literate too. For the Hearth Tax (see 1662-1689) Gwen is taxed for 2 hearths having presumably vacated the main house on her husband’s death (Cefndeuddwr had a dower house, perhaps built for her). Griffith has Lewis as living 1655, son of Richard Nanney and Elizabeth, d. of William ap David Llwyd of Gwaenfynydd (Gwynfynydd, a nearby house of modest standing, associated with gold mining later, and possibly earlier). See also Griff.*Ped.* 316. The Cefndeuddwr branch of the Nanney family split off from the main branch of Nannau, Llanfachreth, in the C16, with some animosity (Welsh Biography Online: Nanney/Nannau).

<sup>37</sup> Griff.*Ped.* 165, and H. Richards, *New Kalendars of Gwynedd*, 1994.

<sup>38</sup> NLW 1685 Richard Nanney Esq., Cefendauddwr, Bond: administration granted to widow Anne Nanney, nee Owen.

<sup>39</sup> Richard Haslam, Julian Orbach, Adam Voelcker, *Gwynedd*, New Haven, CT, and London: Yale UP, 2009, 603.

<sup>40</sup> NLW B1662-73B.

<sup>41</sup> Griff.*Ped.* 279.

<sup>42</sup> *Archaelogia Cambrensis* vol.vii, July 1847. Cf. Griff.*Ped.* 180.

that like his father he took up residence on his wife's estate. However, he kept his prominence in Merioneth. In 1675-6 'Sir John Wynn, Rhiwgoch,' was Sheriff of Merioneth, and like his father he also served as MP for Merioneth, for 1679-81 and 1685-95. It seems that despite the Watstay acres, Rhiwgoch was maintaining its centrality in county affairs. Dying in 1718 without children, Sir John bequeathed what, by his marriage, had become one of the biggest estates in Wales to his relative Watkin Williams, who then added Wynn to his name.<sup>43</sup> It was the final phase of the process. The Trawsfynydd lands were to be marginalised as the lords of the manor began to take up residence far away, and the once proud minor branches of gentry families in houses such as Brynmaenllwyd settled into an increasingly peripheral existence as yeoman farmers whose ancestry was forgotten, a process which became marked as the C18 progressed.

### 1662-1679

Hearth Tax for Merioneth, Ardudwy Hundred (n.d). The list for Trawsfynydd parish includes Richard John Ellis (see 1660s) with only one hearth, indicating that he was not at Brynmaenllwyd at the time (cf.1708). His brother Robert John Ellis (the younger brother favoured in their father's will, see 1650) is also down for one hearth, though there is an additional line to the entry, 'ditto one more no hearth,' so it seems he was proprietor of more than one dwelling.<sup>44</sup> The eldest of the brothers, Ellis John Ellis, may have died by the date of this tax as his name does not appear.<sup>45</sup> Ellis Lloyd, who lived at Brynmaenllwyd with its two chimneys at the end of the century (see 1699), appears in the list with two hearths. Perhaps he was already in residence.

### 1679

Richard Nanney, Cefndeuddwr, Sheriff of Merioneth (Elizabeth's brother, see 1660s).

### 1688

25 Nov: Richard John Ellis, once of Brynmaenllwyd, was buried at Trawsfynydd.<sup>46</sup>

### 1699

**Ellis Lloyd** of Brynmaenllwyd was executor for his brother David of Hendre Fawr and heir of two-thirds of his estate.<sup>47</sup> Hendre Fawr is the adjacent farm to the S of Brynmaenllwyd and was the home farm for Rhiwgoch. It was evidently a prosperous time of expansion, as the inventory speaks of 'the new Chamber.' Ellis and David (who seems to have died without children) were grandchildren of John, son of Robert Lloyd, Rhiwgoch, and 'cousins' to Griffith Roberts<sup>48</sup> and Robert Nanney of Cefndeuddwr.<sup>49</sup> The link to the families of both Rhiwgoch and Cefndeuddwr suggests a connection to Richard John Ellis and Elizabeth Nanney of Brynmaenllwyd.

<sup>43</sup> Griff.*Ped.* 180. Boundaries of the estate in several parts of Wales were marked with stones bearing the initials WWW.

<sup>44</sup> Mer.Arch.Dol. E179/222/400A. Although the second house had no hearth, it was still down to be taxed. The tax of a shilling per hearth was payable twice a year. No addresses are given. However, in a different Ardudwy Hearth Tax dated 1662, the list for Trawsfynydd, while seemingly incomplete and confused with Ffestiniog, includes Robert John Ellis and Humffrey Williams at Bedd y Coedwr, in the east of the parish, with 2 hearths, or chimneys (Owen Parry, 'The Hearth Tax of 1662 in Merioneth,' *JMHRC* II, 1953-6, 27). Another (?) Hearth Tax list for parts of Trawsfynydd with addresses includes Robert John Ellis at Bedd y Coediwr (Roll 14 Charles II, transcribed in Morris Davies, 'Selections').

<sup>45</sup> There is an Ellis Jones with 2 hearths, but given the triple style here of other names, and of his brothers, it seems that Ellis John Ellis would have been the form preferred.

<sup>46</sup> BT.

<sup>47</sup> The rest, the 'widow's third,' went to his widow Mary Thomas, plus a bequest of £5 to David, 'one of the sonnes' (presumably not the eldest) of Ellis, godson and namesake of his uncle David. Will of David Lloyd, Hendre Fawr, Trawsfynydd, written 22 Dec 1699, 'lately deceased' 30 Dec, *ibid.* NLW.

<sup>48</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> son of Robert Lloyd, m. Margaret, heiress of Maes y Neuadd, Griff.*Ped.* 180. NB he is designated by patronymic (his father was Robert, hence Roberts) rather than 'Lloyd'.

<sup>49</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> son and heir of Richard Nanney (see 1660s), will proved 1718, Griff.*Ped.* 165.

**1708**

27 Apr: ‘Jonnetta filia Richardi John de gorswen sepulta fuit’ – Jonnett daughter of Richard John of Gorswen (probably a daughter of Richard John Ellis and Elizabeth Nanney) was buried at Trawsfynydd.<sup>50</sup> Gorswen is 1m W of Brynmaenllwyd, a smaller house (now a ruin) with one chimney.<sup>51</sup> It is possible that after John Ellis’s will the family had to move to a lesser house, perhaps the price of their faith.

**1746**

Robert Parry of Goppa, Trawsfynydd, Sheriff of Merioneth (again in 1771). Goppa, immediately N of the village, was being extended in this period, the older house fronted with a new Georgian one. It was to have links with Brynmaenllwyd (cf.1790).

31 Mar Bapt. of Robert son of Ellis Morgan, labourer, and Gwen (Llwyd),<sup>52</sup> probably not yet at Brynmaenllwyd, as the ‘labourer’ designation suggests he was working for someone else, and not yet a ‘yeoman’ managing his own farm.

**1755**

**Ellis Morgan**, of Bryn y Maenllwyd, Yeoman,<sup>53</sup> and Robert Morgan, of Tycerrig, Yeoman, were joint administrators for Morgan William<sup>54</sup> of Hendrefawr, ‘lately deceased,’ presumably their father. The bond was witnessed by ‘Wynne Surrogate, Jane Wynne’ (Sir John’s widow?) which suggests that Hendrefawr, but possibly also Brynmaenllwyd, remained part of the Rhiwgoch (later the Watstay/Wynnstay) estate. Brynmaenllwyd land neighbours that of Hendrefawr to the S and Tycerrig to the W.

**1762**

29 May Burial of **Hugh Ellis Morgan**, labourer (son of Ellis Morgan and Gwen Llwyd of Brynmaenllwyd).<sup>55</sup>

**1767-8**

Tithe 1767: ‘Ellis Morgan - Brun maen Llwyd - £1. 1. 6.’ Then ‘*Anriw Symiau o Arian a ddyrbynryd* [sums paid, includes:] Ellis Morgan - Bryn maen Llwyd - £1. 1. 6.’<sup>56</sup> Again in 1768: Ellis Morgan - Brun maen llwyd - £1. 0. 0; Mrs Roberts - Goppa - £3. 4. 0;<sup>57</sup> William Kadwalad - ralltwud [yr Alltlwyd, Cwm Mawddach] - £0 8. 6.<sup>58</sup>

**1776**

21 Aug: Bapt. of ‘John, the base son of **William Jones** of Bryn y Maenllwyd and Catherine his concubine’<sup>59</sup> – presumably a farm-hand employed by Ellis Morgan.

<sup>50</sup> Trawsfynydd Parish Register, MAD. She may have been born at Brynmaenllwyd.

<sup>51</sup> Gorswen continued to be related to the Brynmaenllwyd story: Richard Owen, whose family farmed Bryn Re and Brynmaenllwyd until 2011, was born there (Pers.comm., Aled Owen, his son). With the felling of the conifers around it in 2011 Gorswen is once again visible from Brynmaenllwyd.

<sup>52</sup> BT.

<sup>53</sup> The term ‘yeoman’ in the legal document indicates a respectable status, next to that of ‘gentleman.’

<sup>54</sup> NLW 1755 Morgan William, Hendrefawr, Bond. The name Morgan, uncommon in Trawsfynydd, may indicate descent from the Morgans of Gelli Iorwerth (Plas Capten).

<sup>55</sup> BT.

<sup>56</sup> Morris Davies, ‘Selections,’ *et seq.*

<sup>57</sup> Ellis Morgan’s daughter Mary Ellis was to marry Robert Roberts of Goppa, see 1790. In 1798 Mary Ellis, presumably now a widow, was responsible for the main tithe at Goppa, while Mrs Roberts was still paying a lesser sum there, perhaps living in the earlier house at the back of the C18 house.

<sup>58</sup> See 1788. The relative standing of different establishments is shown by the differing charges.

<sup>59</sup> BT.

20 Oct: Bapt. of '**Gwen**, daughter of **Thomas Roger** of Brynmaenllwyd and **Anne** his wife.'<sup>60</sup>

Anne was one of the daughters of Ellis Morgan and Gwen Llwyd (see below, 1789/90 wills); later the Rogers were at Bryn Adda, Dolgellau, today a substantial gentry house W of Dolgellau, near the confluence of the rivers Union and Mawddach.

### 1777

Quarter Sessions records refer to 'Sureties: William Jones of the pa. [parish] of Trawsfynydd labourer, £20, Thomas Rogers and Evan Jones, both of the same, labourers, £10 each. Taken before John Vaughan Garnons, clerk, for the said William Jones, who was alleged by Catherine William of the pa. aforesaid, singlewoman, by her voluntary examination "taken in writing and upon oath" before the said John Garnons of being the father of her child likely to be born a bastard and to be chargeable to the pa. aforesaid, to appear at the next G.Q.S. to abide by the court's decision in accordance with an act passed 18 Eliz. I concerning bastards. / At the Foot: Appeared. Cautioned on this recognisance until next Quarter.'<sup>61</sup>

John Vaughan Garnons of Rhiwgoch was Rector of Llanddeiniolen, son of John Garnons, lawyer, and Jane, daughter of Griffith Roberts of Rhiwgoch (2<sup>nd</sup> son of Robert Lloyd), who had taken over as residents at Rhiwgoch (see 1783)<sup>62</sup> The fate of Brynmaenllwyd people was still bound up with Rhiwgoch, though in new ways. Thomas Rogers, son-in-law of Ellis Morgan, William Jones' employer, supported William by standing surety for him in court. As well as working together, both became fathers together. Nothing more is known of Catherine William.

### 1778

'MEMO: NOTE: John Case [mistranscribed for 'base'] son of William John by Catherine William a singlewoman was buried the 26<sup>th</sup> October 1777. / At the Foot: Extracted out of the parochial register of the parish of Trawsfynydd Merionethshire the 13<sup>th</sup> day of January 1778, by me Edward Meyricke, curate, and examined by William Evans. / End: Discharged'<sup>63</sup> – a sad end to a sad story.<sup>64</sup>

### 1783

On 23 Feb Rev. John Vaughan Garnons, A.M., was buried, and likewise on 7 Apr John Garnons, Esq., his father.<sup>65</sup> Thus two generations of Rhiwgoch gentry died within a few weeks of each other, seemingly ending the Garnons family's residence at the estate, which by this time was just a small part of the huge Wynnstay 'empire' with the owner's principal seat elsewhere. Although the heir Richard Garnons became proprietor, it seems he did not live there (see 1798). John Garnons senior was the last of a long line of lawyers at Rhiwgoch. Griffith records that his portrait 'in oil' hung in the Grand Jury Room at Caernarfon.<sup>66</sup> The story of Rhiwgoch illustrates the way that the smaller gentry houses were eclipsed as ever larger estates were accumulated in the C18 by the rising few. Robert Lloyd's heir had been his son Ellis, whose daughter Jane married Henry Wynn, younger son of Sir John Wynn of Gwydir; their son and heir was Sir John Wynn of Rhiwgoch, who died in 1718 in his nineties, passing the estate, now greatly enlarged by his marriage to the Watstay heiress, to his relative Watkin Williams, who did not choose to live there.<sup>67</sup> The Garnons had emerged as principal C18 residents at Rhiwgoch, as the next in line. The elder daughter of Griffith, 2<sup>nd</sup> son of Robert Lloyd, had married into the estate of Glyn, near Harlech, leaving her younger sister, married to John Garnons, to bring him to live at Rhiwgoch.

<sup>60</sup> BT.

<sup>61</sup> Trinity Quarter Sessions MAD ZQS/T1777 13 May.

<sup>62</sup> Griff.*Ped.* 262 and 180, though there seems to be some discrepancy here over Jane.

<sup>63</sup> Hilary Quarter Sessions MAD ZQS/H1778.

<sup>64</sup> It was not unusual, however. Parish records (transcribed Morris Davies, 'Selections' p.1277) include two other 'base' children born in 1775, at the nearby farms of Gorswen and Cefn Clawdd.

<sup>65</sup> BT. Griff.*Ped.* 262.

<sup>66</sup> Griff.*Ped.* 262.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Pennant's editor's indirect dig at absentee landlords, 1810.

**1788**

15 Jun: Bapt. of Cadwalader son of Cadwalader William and Margaret Hugh (m. 1781, of Cefn Clawdd, see 1798), later to be Cadwalader Williams of Brynmaenllwyd, whose story dominates the first half of the C19 (see 1815 *et seq.*). (He is probably grandson of William Cadwaladr, Alltllwyd, see 1768, whose 1773 will refers to ‘my dear beloved father Cadwaladr William.’<sup>68</sup>) The couple subsequently had Robert in 1790, David and William in 1794, Jonett in 1795, and Evan in 1799.<sup>69</sup>

**1789**

28 Feb: Will written by Ellis Morgan of Brynmaenllwyd. He was buried at Trawsfynydd on 14 Mar.<sup>70</sup> Ellis left 5s to each of his surviving children, **Robert, Mary and Ann**, and made his wife **Gwen Llwyd** residuary legatee and executrix. An inventory made on the day of his funeral records:

	£.. S.. D
first 2 Mare & Sadle Valued at	12.. 0.. 0
also 15 Runts <sup>71</sup> Valued	50.. 0.. 0
also 8 Cows & a Bool Valued	40..10..0
also 8 Calves Valued	16.. 0.. 0
also 9 yards of Hay Valued	01..10..0
also 38 Sheeps Valued	12.. 0.. 0
also Implements of Husbandry Valued	04.. 0.. 0
also Houshold Goods Furniture Valued	20..16..0
	<hr/>
	£156..16.0
Depts to take out on above Named Ellis Morgan	20..0.. 0
	<hr/>
Total	£136..16.0
	<hr/>
deduct towards Rent, Tithes, & Wages	40..0..0
	<hr/>
	£96..16..0

Edward Lloyd of Palau (later Palé, cf. 1798), Llandderfel, Sheriff of Merioneth.

French revolution, and subsequently the Napoleonic wars, put a stop to the gentry’s tours of the Continent, indirectly promoting tourism for the picturesque nearer home.

The earliest dissenting chapel in the neighbourhood was incorporated at Penstryd.<sup>72</sup>

**1790**

12 Feb: Will written by Gwen Llwyd<sup>73</sup> (i.e. Lloyd: the retention of the Welsh spelling in a legal document is unusual, but cf. 1660s n.32), widow of Ellis Morgan of Brynmaenllwyd. She is possibly descended from namesake Gwen Lloyd, Rhiwgoch, daughter of Robert Lloyd and mother of Elizabeth Nanney who married Richard ap John Ellis and lived at Brynmaenllwyd in C17. Each of her three children named a daughter Gwen after her. She made her will as the first anniversary of

<sup>68</sup> The name is of long standing in the parish. Cf. 1667 will of Cadwalader ap William of Trawsfynydd, which refers to two sons called Richard and a sister Laurye; witnesses include a Robert Ellis.

<sup>69</sup> BT. The twins were baptised several months apart, presumably one weaker than the other.

<sup>70</sup> BT. He was illiterate; he signed with a cross. 14 Mar: Inventory. Assets: £96 16s 0d (Probate fees payable related to the value of the estate so a total under £100 was preferable: ‘Rece’d towards Probate of within Will £1..6..3d. Assets above £20, under £100’). 18 Apr: Will presented and administration granted; 9 Mar 1790: Probate granted at Bangor to Gwen Llwyd.

<sup>71</sup> Runts were immature black cattle. Drovers took them in large herds as far as Essex, for London.

<sup>72</sup> *A History of Trawsfynydd*, Merched y Wawr, 2012, 123-125.

<sup>73</sup> NLW. Probate 20 May 1793, ext[ension?] 12 Aug 1793.

Ellis's death approached, though she herself was not to die for a couple of years and, unusually, the will does not indicate she was ill. She leaves most of her grandchildren substantial sums of money, and bequeaths large items of furniture, a dresser, a clothes press and a *cwppwrth tridarn* (3-part cupboard/dresser), to two of the granddaughters (Ann was now 13). Her son Robert, of Brynmaenllwyd, is residuary legatee and executor:

In the name of God Amen.

I Gwen Llwyd of Brynmaenllwyd in the Parish of Trawsfynydd and the County of Merioneth being of a sound Mind Memory and understanding and considering the uncertainty of Human Life do make and ordain my last Will and Testament in the manner and Form following. –

First of all I give and bequeath unto Gwen eldest Daughter of Robert Roberts (of Goppa in the Parish of Trawsfynydd and County aforesaid) by Mary his Wife<sup>74</sup> the sum of Ten pounds of Lawfull Brittish money<sup>75</sup> – I also give and bequeath unto Robert son of the aforesaid Robert Roberts and Mary his Wife the sum of Five pounds of Lawfull Brittish money – I also give and bequeath unto Ann youngest Daughter of the aforesaid Robert Roberts and Mary his Wife a Dresser and Cloath Press – I also give and bequeath unto Gwen Daughter of Thomas Roger<sup>76</sup> and Ann his Wife of Bryn adda of the Parish of Dolgelley and County of Merioneth the sum of Ten pounds of Lawfull Brittish money besides a cupboard, commonly call'd Cwppwrth Tridarn. – I also give and bequeath unto Gwen Daughter of my son Robert Ellis and Margaret his Wife of Bryn y maenllwyd of the Parish of Trawsfynydd and County of Merioneth the sum of Ten pounds of Lawfull Brittish money.

All the rest Residue and remainder of my personal Estate of what kind soever, after the payment of my just Debts I give and bequeath unto my Son Robert Ellis of Brynmaenllwyd of ye Parish of Trawsfynydd and County of Merioneth hereby constitute and appoint him the aforesaid Robert Ellis Executor and residuary Legatee of this my last Will and Testament, revoking and nulling all and every Will or Wills by me heretofore made and declaring this to be my last.

In Wittness Whereof I hereunto set my Hand and Seal this Twelfth Day of February 1790

G The mark of Gwen Llwyd

## 1792

22 Oct: Gwen Llwyd buried at Trawsfynydd.<sup>77</sup> Robert Ellis (son/heir of Gwen Llwyd and Ellis Morgan) took charge of Brynmaenllwyd on his mother's death.

## 1794

Robert Ellis was Petty Constable (a respected member of the parish with responsibility for law and order) for Trawsfynydd. The address given is Bryn Re, the nearest farm to Brynmaenllwyd, the two possibly run together as in the late C20. In 1807 he was again Constable, from another holding, Tyntwll (W of the lake).<sup>78</sup>

## 1795

Death of Robert Morgan, Ty Cerrig, brother of Ellis Morgan of Brynmaenllwyd.<sup>79</sup>

## 1796-97

Tithe: Ellis Morgan brun maun llwud £0 2 2 ½ (Since Ellis Morgan died in 1789 this is presumably an error for Robert Ellis: perhaps father and son were alike.) It was correct by 1797 when tithe arrears include 'Robert Ellis £1.17.0.'<sup>80</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Mary, their daughter, had married into an important local family at Goppa, with JPs and a Sheriff.

<sup>75</sup> Since enterprises such as the Anglesey copper mine were using their own coinage, this was needed.

<sup>76</sup> In 1796 Thomas Roger was collecting rent for William Lloyd Esq., taking £16 for the year from Robert Lewis for Bryn y Gath on behalf of the estate's agent, John Jones. Bryn y Gath Papers, transcribed Morris Davies, 'Selections,' p.941.

<sup>77</sup> BT.

<sup>78</sup> Morris Davies, 'Selections.' It seems he held several farms (see 1798), though possibly a namesake.

<sup>79</sup> BT.

<sup>80</sup> Morris Davies, 'Selections.'



Burial of William Cadwalader,<sup>81</sup> probably grandfather of Cadwalader Williams, b. 1788, later of Brynmaenllwyd.

Will of Robert Roberts of Goppa shows him putting things to rights for his daughter Gwen, named for grandmother Gwen Llwyd of Brynmaenllwyd: 'I do hereby give and bequeath unto my daughter Gwen Roberts to make up what her two Grand Mother left her in the sum of twenty five pounds of good lawfull British Money....'<sup>82</sup>

### 1798

Merioneth Land Tax Assessment: Trawsfynydd Uwch.<sup>83</sup> Which entry relates to Brynmaenllwyd is uncertain as addresses are not given. However, Robert Ellis (see 1792, 1794) is given as occupier in 3 places, two with the proprietor given as 'Mr Pale & Co', the third in the ownership of 'Mr Dd. Davies.'<sup>84</sup> The 'sums assessed' were £1, £1 8s and £1 8s. Alone on a page are two entries: 'proprietor Mr Pale & Co, occupier Robt. Ellis,' and 'proprietor Richd. Garnons Esq., occupier Robt. Richard,' the latter most likely to be Rhiwgoch. Several entries give Richard Roberts as occupier, one of them adjacent to a Robert Ellis entry, suggesting possibly Bryn Re adjacent to Brynmaenllwyd. By 1840 the proprietor of Brynmaenllwyd was listed as Richard Roberts: it seems the family based at Pantmawr alternated names of eldest sons between Robert and Richard over several generations (see below, 1810, for a link between Pantmawr, Gelli Iorwerth and Brynmaenllwyd). 'Mr Pale & Co' may be a reference to Palé Hall, Llandderfel. Edward Lloyd of Palau was Sheriff of Merioneth for 1789-90.<sup>85</sup> Robert Roberts (possibly son of Robert Roberts of Goppa, son-in-law of Ellis Morgan, see 1790, and cf. 1746, d. 1797), unusually, is an owner-occupier.

19 Jun: Entry in the Tithe book:

Robert Ellis Prunmainllwy <sup>86</sup>	
For his Tythe in full	£1.17.0
Reced	£1.1.0
	- 16.0

For comparison, Mr Roberts of Rhiwgoch had to pay a tithe of 7 guineas.

25 Nov: Tithe: 'Cadwalader William o Cefn Clawdd in Debt to me £1.11.0' (cf. 1788, 1797, 1800). Cefn Clawdd is less than 2m W of Brynmaenllwyd and adjacent to Wernbach where Cadwalader Williams his son lived before going to Brynmaenllwyd. It seems it was hard to extract the tithe, no doubt a resented tax, from the farmers. A series of entries seems to record payments of small sums in arrears over the Easter period, including: '**Mark Jones** Brunymaenllwyd £0.0.9d'<sup>87</sup> This is a 'new' person at Brynmaenllwyd, possibly related to Robert Jones (see 1806).

### 1800

16 Jul: Bapt. of Jane daughter of Robert Ellis and Catherine (of Brynmaenllwyd? Robert's wife in Gwen Llwyd's 1790 will was Margaret, who may have died).

<sup>81</sup> BT.

<sup>82</sup> NLW. Will written 2 Jan 1797, probate 14 March 1797. He was literate, as he signed it. Inventory: value £198.1.6 ('British' as opposed to local currency such as that of the Anglesey copper mine).

<sup>83</sup> MAD.

<sup>84</sup> A David Davies of Rhiwgoch 'gentleman' had been buried in 1784. This may have been a son. 'Mr.' indicated a social standing only just below that of 'gentleman,' unlike its recent general usage. In 1840 'Rev. D. Davies' was listed as proprietor at Nantlliwgus for the Poor Rate. Morris Davies, 'Selections.'

<sup>85</sup> *New Kalendars of Gwynedd*, 1994.

<sup>86</sup> The phonetic spelling of 'Brynmaenllwyd' indicates the limited literacy of some parish officials.

<sup>87</sup> Morris Davies, 'Selections.'

7 Dec: Burial of Cadwaladr (or Cadwalader) William<sup>88</sup> (of Cefn Clawdd).

### 1805

A Robert Ellis (possibly of Brynmaenllwyd) witnessed the will of Richard Ellis, Coed y Rhygen,<sup>89</sup> W of Trawsfynydd lake. Burial of Richard Ellis 23 Mar 1806.<sup>90</sup>

### 1806

19 Apr **Robert Jones** of the Parish of Ffestiniog and **Gwen Roberts** of this parish of Trawsfynydd were married in this church by licence<sup>91</sup> – an indication of the social connections between the parishes of Trawsfynydd and Ffestiniog. Gwen was the daughter of Robert Ellis of Brynmaenllwyd, as this is where their children were born (see next and 1814). Another Gwen Roberts died in 1798, possibly her cousin, the daughter of Robert Roberts of Goppa (d.1797) and Mary, daughter of Ellis Morgan and Gwen Llwyd. At this date dissenting communities could not perform marriages, hence the April wedding in St.Madryn's, but could baptise. Marriage by licence often indicated nonconformity.<sup>92</sup> Evidently Gwen was already pregnant as on 24 August Robert, their son (great-grandchild of Ellis Morgan and Gwen Llwyd), was baptised at Capel Penstryd, an Independent chapel 1m. E of Brynmaenllwyd,<sup>93</sup> as the rise of non-conformism becomes evident. Their daughter Ellin was also baptised there in 1814.<sup>94</sup>

### 1810

Death of Richard Roberts, Pantmawr, son of Robert Richard, Plas Capten, d.1785 (his will, written 1777 because though 'in good Health' he was 'far advanced in Years,' refers to his lease on 'Plas y Captain' from 'the Family of Penniarth'<sup>95</sup>). It seems Robert was nephew of John Robert, who held Gelli Iorwerth before him, and d. 1740 without issue.<sup>96</sup> (See 1798, 1840 for the Brynmaenllwyd connection.)

### 1815

26 Dec: Marriage of Cadwalader Williams and Jane Roberts both of the parish of Trawsfynydd. Witns: William Williams and Robert Roberts.<sup>97</sup> (Cf.1788) Jane, b. in Ffestiniog, daughter of Robert Roberts of Cae Canol, was presumably in domestic work in Trawsfynydd and chose the Boxing Day holiday for her wedding.

### 1821

23 Sep Bapt: Robert son of Cadwalader Williams and Jane Roberts, Wernbach, farmer.<sup>98</sup> (Wernbach is a small farmhouse, now unoccupied, about 1m W of Brynmaenllwyd on the edge of the Crawcwellt common and probably an enclosure from the common,<sup>99</sup> very close to Cadwalader's family home of Cefn Clawdd.)

### 1823

<sup>88</sup> BT.

<sup>89</sup> NLW Richard Ellis, Coed y Rhygen, Will. Cf.1806.

<sup>90</sup> BT.

<sup>91</sup> BT.

<sup>92</sup> From 1754 to 1837 all marriages (except for Quakers and Jews) had to take place in the parish church. Society of Genealogists: [sog.org.uk/leaflets/nonconformists](http://sog.org.uk/leaflets/nonconformists).

<sup>93</sup> Actually 'Brynmallwyd': in 'Transcript of baptisms, Capel Penstryd, Trawsfynydd (Annibynwyr/ Independent), 1790-1837,' by Gwendoline Hough, 2000: MAD.

<sup>94</sup> Actually 'Brynllwydmawr': in Hough, *ibid*. Variation of oral usage is becoming recorded in writing.

<sup>95</sup> NLW. Probate 1785.

<sup>96</sup> NLW Will of John Robert of Celly Erwarth, 1740.

<sup>97</sup> BT.

<sup>98</sup> BT.

<sup>99</sup> The small-holding's field shapes suggest this, as at Blaen y Cae, 1m. S, also a common enclosure. Wern Bach was built by the mid C18. *A History of Trawsfynydd*, Merched y Wawr, 2012, 160, cf.65.

Completion of turnpike between Dolgellau and Trawsfynydd. The new highway cut across the upper Brynmaenllwyd fields. Field shapes alongside the road to W suggest that they and their barn were created in response to it, possibly to accommodate drove herds overnight for a fee. The land thus isolated E of the road was separated in C20.

### 1824

12 Dec Bapt: William son of Cadwalader Williams and Jane Roberts, Wernbach.<sup>100</sup>

### 1828

Bapt. of **Evan**, son of **John Owen** and **Mary**, 'Brynmaen' (presumably Brynmaenllwyd, as no other similar name in parish).<sup>101</sup> Cf. 1806. Since one of the granddaughters of Ellis Morgan and Gwen Llwyd of Brynmaenllwyd married Evan Owen in 1790, John Owen was presumably their son, taking on Brynmaenllwyd from his cousins. Naming their son Evan supports this, as does the Capel Penstryd baptism.

### 1829

13 Oct Bapt: Dorothy dr. of Cadwalader Williams and Jane, Wernbach, farmer.<sup>102</sup>

### 1832

30 Sep Bapt: William, son of Lewis Lloyd and Elenor, Tan y Bwlch Inn, at Capel Penstryd, Trawsfynydd.<sup>103</sup> (Cf. 1806, 1814, 1828 and Pre 1885.) Their elder son David Llewellyn Lloyd (see 1885), who spent much of his childhood at what is now the Oakeley Arms where his father in 1832 was the new publican, was to own Brynmaenllwyd, but this is the only hint of his parents' connection with Trawsfynydd. Eight miles was quite a way to come from Tan y Bwlch for the baptism otherwise.

### 1836

Cadwalader Williams, Jane and their three children have moved (presumably to Brynmaenllwyd) from Wernbach: the baptismal record shows another family there.<sup>104</sup>

### 1838 and 1839

**Cadwalader Williams**, Brynmaenllwyd, was a Petty Constable for Trawsfynydd<sup>105</sup> like Robert Ellis before him (see 1794). Brynmaenllwyd seems to have been a farm to move up to, and attracted men of some standing in the community.

### 1840

24 May Poor Rate (parish dues to support the poor)<sup>106</sup> for Brynmaenllwyd shows 'Cadr. Williams' as tenant and **Robert Roberts** as proprietor (rental £49 15s 0d, rateable value £45 10s 0d, rate at 6d in £ £1 2s 9d).<sup>107</sup> However, the tithe record for Brynmaenllwyd<sup>108</sup> gives the owner as **Richard Roberts**, probably descendent of Richard Roberts d.1810 (cf. 1798, 1865, 1885). The alternation of

<sup>100</sup> BT.

<sup>101</sup> 'Transcript of baptisms, Capel Penstryd, Trawsfynydd,' Hough, 2000: MAD.

<sup>102</sup> BT. Jane was previously recorded by her own family name of Roberts. The use of English-style surnames was evidently spreading, though even after the introduction of the census which gave the use of family surnames a huge boost, the old Welsh tradition of patronymics continued. Note the use of 'farmer'; with his Wernbach smallholding Cadwalader was not a labourer, but not a yeoman either.

<sup>103</sup> 'Transcript of baptisms, Capel Penstryd, Trawsfynydd (Independent), 1790-1837,' by Gwendoline Hough, 2000: MAD.

<sup>104</sup> BT: 'John son of Evan Thomas and Elin Thomas, Wernbach, farmer.'

<sup>105</sup> This is the earliest direct evidence of Cadwalader Williams' family at Brynmaenllwyd. Morris Davies, 'Selections.' Census data for 1841, 1851 and 1861 show their continuance.

<sup>106</sup> The parish tithe had perhaps been renamed as Poor Rate to make it more acceptable to those taxed.

<sup>107</sup> Morris Davies, 'Selections.'

<sup>108</sup> MAD.

the names Richard and Robert in this family is demonstrable over 4 generations by 1810, and probably continued. They had leased Gelli Iorwerth/Plas Capten from the Peniarth estate,<sup>109</sup> and held Pantmawr, 1m. N of it, which was to remain linked to Brynmaenllwyd. The occupier is Cadwalader Williams. Field names with the tithe map suggest other houses on the farm, both now the sites of field barns: *Cae tu hwnt ir drain* (Field of the house beyond the thorn [hedge]), and *Cae ty'n y buarth* (Field of the house and yard), the latter now in ruins, always referred to by Aled Owen<sup>110</sup> as the 'new barn.'

### 1841

24 May: Poor Rate for Brynmaenllwyd shows 'Cadr. Williams' as tenant and 'Mr. R. Roberts' as proprietor.<sup>111</sup> (See 1840: either Robert or Richard, probably relatives.)

The first census<sup>112</sup> shows 'Cadwalader William' and '**Jane William**' at Brynmaenllwyd, both aged 50, with children **Robert William** 15, **William William** 13, and **Dorothy William** 11, a servant **Jane Roberts** 20, and **Robert Evans** 10.

### 1840s

Era of the 'hungry forties' and the Rebecca riots sparked by the turnpikes:

In 1839 and 1842-3, atrocious weather leading to scarcity and starvation drew the disenchanted and disadvantaged into the "hosts of Rebecca." In 1846, the potato crop... failed and the high prices of all articles of food in local markets prevented people from obtaining the necessities of life.... [M]any shop windows displayed advertisements for sailings to America.... Poverty was the power that prised people from paradise.... People... never looked before they leaped and moved in their thousands to work in industries in Wales, England, America and anywhere in the world which offered them the prospect of an end to their suffering. It is this which explains the docile equanimity and good cheer with which these simple people, irrevocably uprooted, set out to encounter a strange and unknown destiny. They left the bounds of the land which composed the entire smell and substance and geography of their lives, the fields, meadows and shimmering woodland dwindling away behind them, remembered only in a person's darkest hours of *hiraeth*.<sup>113</sup>

### 1842, 1845

Two letters, one from Brynmaenllwyd, to relatives in America (NY) survive:<sup>114</sup>

a) 5 July 1842, letter from Cadwalader and Jane Williams at Brynmaenllwyd to Catherine Roberts Meredith (1795-1882),<sup>115</sup> Jane's sister, recently widowed, in Rome, New York state; the letter in Welsh, dictated by his (illiterate) parents and written by their son Robert Williams (aged 20), gives news of the family and details of the farm's production with a view to emigration. They had had a run of wet summers, and the cost of buying in food was crippling: 'it is likely the price for pigs and butter will be low for the country is quite riotous with the removal of the duty from the corn and meat and butter that is to be imported from other countries at a price lower than we can sell for here.' The farm's production is impressive: 'We have 10 cows and a bull, 7 calves, about 100 sheep, 2 pigs and about 600-700 lbs of butter that we churn and 400-500 lbs of cheese. We have 18 geese. Our farm is quite expensive, the rent being £50 [per year] and the rates each time is £13 and that 10 or 12 times a year, and we are looking for a cheaper place.'

<sup>109</sup> NLW Will of Robert Richard, Probate 1785.

<sup>110</sup> Farmer of Brynmaenllwyd and Bryn Re, d. 2008.

<sup>111</sup> Morris Davies, 'Selections.'

<sup>112</sup> Note the effect of the census on surnames: hitherto patronymics would have been used.

<sup>113</sup> Russell Davies, *Hope and Heartbreak*, 185, citing *Seren Gomer*, February 1819, 166-9.

<sup>114</sup> Originals are in the possession of Robert Jones, Chesterville, Ontario, Canada (ref. online 1.10.2010, obituary notice of Olwen Jones of Trawsfynydd, widow of Bryn Jones, died aged 94 in Ottawa 2010, plus comments). Telephone contact with Robert Jones (27 September 2011) who kindly supplied translations (by Maureen Scarratt, 1984, Ontario) and copies of original documents.

<sup>115</sup> The great-great-great-grandmother of Robert Jones.

b) 12 July 1845, letter preserved with the preceding, but evidently from the sisters' brother Robert Roberts of Ffestiniog (of Cae Canol,<sup>116</sup> the family farm on the slopes of Manod with a C16 farmhouse which survives), namesake of his father Robert Roberts<sup>117</sup> (Robert Lewis as scribe); it gives news of friends and family, particularly in Blaenau Ffestiniog, and is sent with someone leaving for America. As well as farming, Robert Roberts had also worked in the Ffestiniog slate quarries but, now deaf, had retired from quarrying to cart coal. He also looked after his mother Margaret Evans. The letter from Cadwalader and Jane reports, 'Your mother is well. Robert Roberts your brother, as is the custom of the parish, cares for her in his own home.' In his own letter of 3 years later, when there was less hardship, at least in the Ffestiniog area, Robert reports that his mother 'is in fairly good health but not often able to leave the house but gets about a little. She dearly wishes to be remembered to the children.' (1841 census: she is 80; Robert, 'quarryman', is 55; his wife Catherine Davies is 60.)

Copies of further family documents sent by Robert Jones enlarge the picture. Robert Meredith (b. Maentwrog, 28 April 1793), referred to as Rev. Meredith, and Catherine Roberts (b. Ffestiniog, 12 May 1795 and named after her aunt Catherine Davies) were married on 13 October 1819 by Mr Jones, Episcopal Clergyman. Their first child, born in 1821 on her father's 28<sup>th</sup> birthday, was named Jane after her aunt, of Brynmaenllwyd. The second, born in 1824, was named after his father, and the third, born 3 years later, was Meredith J. Meredith. The last to be born in Wales was John in 1829. The family emigrated in the spring of 1831, but two of the children died on the voyage, the youngest first, then the eldest; the document records their burial place as 'Atlantic Ocean.' Catherine was evidently pregnant during this traumatic voyage, as her first American child was born in May 1831 in Utica, Oneida Co., NY, and named John after his dead brother. Two more children followed: Jane Ruth Meredith in 1832 (named after her dead sister) and Margaret Ellen Meredith in 1835. In the 1840 US census the family were at Trenton, Oneida Co., with the eldest son, now 16, evidently working the land with his father. In 1841, however, the father Robert died at Holland Patent, Oneida Co., aged only 48. This news triggered a letter from his widow to her sister at Brynmaenllwyd, whose reply of July 1842 survives. By the 1850 census, Catherine had remarried and was living at Westmoreland, Oneida Co., with Moses L. Jones, a Welsh-born farmer 3 years younger than herself, and his two children, Margaret, 14, and Jacob, 28. She lived to be 87, dying at Rome, New York in 1882.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> 1841 Census.

<sup>117</sup> Information from a descendent, and present-day resident of Ffestiniog, Ann Watt.

<sup>118</sup> The port of arrival usually determined where immigrants went: if the ship docked in New York they joined the Oneida County settlement, centred on 'what became in time Steuben and Remsen townships [both names feature in the Meredith family record], although practically from the beginning a small number remained in Fort Schuyler to become some of the first settlers of Utica as it was soon renamed.' The new arrivals 'set to work at once engaging in the typical pioneer activities of building log cabins, clearing enough land for the sowing of the first crops, and then continuing the process of clearing the forests until sufficient acreage had been provided for their sustenance. In time, provision was made for a schoolhouse, and of course dear to the hearts of the religious-minded Welsh, the inevitable chapel.' In 1801 a Welsh Baptist church was the first church to be established in Utica, NY [and Utica is the name of one of the oldest dissenting chapels serving Trawsfynydd, half way to Ffestiniog; a plaque on the house next to the present chapel of 1897 records that it was the original chapel, erected in 1829 by William Jones]. Edward Hartman continues: 'The surrounding Oneida County area reminded the Welsh of their old homeland with the Steuben Hills in the background. ... The land was heavily forested and proved to be far from fertile. Summers were short; winters exceedingly harsh. With the fortitude of a people long used to hardships, however, the Welsh pioneered. It soon became evident that land and climatic conditions were not conducive to large-scale growing of grain. The Welsh therefore turned to dairying due to the abundance of good grazing land, and began to specialize in the by-products of this industry – butter and cheese-making. In certain areas of the settlement, an abundance of limestone formations encouraged quarrying – an activity with which the Welsh had been very familiar in their homeland.' [For Trawsfynydd and Ffestiniog farmers and quarrymen this was ideal.] An 1812 survey found that in an area fifteen miles by ten, centred on the village of Steuben, there were 700 Welsh settlers. The early settlers not only put down roots, they attracted newcomers. Some made return visits to Wales: 'The effect of such visits in stimulating emigration was far from insignificant.' By 1900, while the Welsh of upstate New York were not as widespread as the Welsh communities of Philadelphia and Ohio, Oneida Co.,

It seems that the family, who had once been familiar visitors to their relatives at Brynmaenllwyd, became respected members of the American community. Robert and Catherine's eldest son, Robert R. Meredith, born in Ffestiniog in 1824, became Rev. Robert R. Meredith, a printer and publisher of Rome, NY (the address on Cadwalader and Jane's letter), who produced the fortnightly religious journal *Yr Arweinydd* (*The Guide*), edited by Rev. Thomas T. Evans of Floyd, NY, from 1858-61.<sup>119</sup> Other cultural habits crossed the Atlantic too: early eisteddfods on record include one on New Year's Day 1858, at Utica, NY.<sup>120</sup> What persuaded Cadwalader and Jane Williams and their children not, in the end, to leave Brynmaenllwyd and follow Jane's sister Catherine to the New World can only be imagined.

### 1847

**Enclosure of a small part of Crawwellt common** presumably by Cadwalader Williams. A barn to store rushes was erected, with a small walled yard. A similar plot immediately N, but larger, was enclosed by the farmer of Tyddyn Sais (see 1909).

### 1851

Cadwalader Williams (62), Jane (61, b. Ffestiniog), and their children Robert (29, married), William (26, unm.) and Dorothy (21, unm.), are recorded in the census at Brynmaenllwyd, a farm of 128 acres, with a month-old granddaughter, **Anne Davies**, Dorothy's child, also a servant **Jane Jones** (18, unm.), b. Trawsfynydd. It was usual for children in such circumstances as Anne's to be given the father's surname. Later Anne acquired her stepfather's surname, Jones (see 1865).

### 1855

19 Feb: Burial of William Williams, Brynmaenllwyd, aged 30, second son of Cadwalader Williams and Jane<sup>121</sup> (cf. Ellis Morgan and Gwen's loss, in 1762).

### 1861

The census shows Cadwaladr Williams (73) and Jane (72) still at Brynmaenllwyd, now with **Thomas Jones** their son-in-law (25, b. Llanycil [Bala]), Dorothy his wife (31) and 3 grandchildren: Anne (10, formerly Davies, now at school), **Jane** (3) and **Margaret** (2). There were also 2 servants, **Mary Williams** (15, unm. b. Llandecwyn) a house servant, and **Morris Roberts** (17, unm. b. Trawsfynydd), a cowman. Their son Robert (39) now had a separate establishment at Muriau Uchaf, barely 1m NW of Brynmaenllwyd, with his wife Jane and 4 children (Jane 9, Catherine 8, Cadwaladr 6 and Margaret 4), and one house servant (20).

### 1863

20 Jan: Burial of Jane Williams, Brynmaenllwyd, aged 73, wife of Cadwalader.<sup>122</sup>

### 1865

15 Jun: Burial of Cadwaladr Williams, aged 77,<sup>123</sup> after three decades as head at Brynmaenllwyd. His son Robert and daughter Dorothy both named a child after him, just as both had a daughter Jane, their mother's name. Thomas Jones, his son-in-law, took over Brynmaenllwyd, from where he

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NY, was, after 3 counties in Pennsylvania, the county with the fourth highest number of Welsh-born people in the USA. Edward George Hartman, *Americans from Wales*, Boston: Christopher Publishing House, 1967, 55-6, 74.

<sup>119</sup> Hartman, 134. Cf. Lewis W. Lloyd, 'A Merioneth Family of Printers in Wales and the USA,' *JMHRC* XII iv, 1997, 384, though this is about a family which moved on from New York to California and makes no mention of Robert Meredith.

<sup>120</sup> Hartman, 146.

<sup>121</sup> Parish register transcriptions: Morris Davies, 'Selections.'

<sup>122</sup> Parish register transcriptions: Morris Davies, 'Selections.'

<sup>123</sup> Parish register transcriptions: Morris Davies, 'Selections.' BMD spells it 'Cadwaldr.'



contributed 2/6 to the British School fund (set up to educate the children of nonconformists, excluded from church schools).<sup>124</sup>

### 1871

The census shows Thomas Jones head at Brynmaenllwyd, down with 240 acres (possibly 2 farms run together). Thomas was 37, his wife Dorothy, 42. Anne was now 20, unmarried, Jane 13, Margaret 12, and there were 3 more children: **Cadwalader** 9, and twins **Ellis** and **Dorothy**, 6. The household included two farm-hands, **Evan Morgan** (17, unm. b. Llanelltyd) and **Thomas Roberts** (15, b. Trawsfynydd). There was also a boarder, **Elizabeth Evans**, a spinster of 74, recorded as a pauper.

Robert Williams, eldest child of Cadwalader Williams and Jane, had now moved to the adjacent farm of Aber, hitherto held by Pughs, about 1m S of Brynmaenllwyd, which he farmed until the end of the century. He and his wife Jane (45) now had a family of 6, with 2 more born in the last decade: Anne (7), and Dorothy (2). Robert farmed Aber's 120 acres with the help of one farm-hand, William Richard (20).

At Bryn Crwn, c.1m. N of Brynmaenllwyd, were David Pugh, 57, his wife Elizabeth (59, b.Maentwrog) and their son Richard (21, unmarr.) (See 1878 *et seq.*)

### 1874

2 Apr: Burial of **Elizabeth Jones**, Brynmaenllwyd, 75,<sup>125</sup> probably Thomas's mother.

### Pre 1875

Possible ownership of Brynmaenllwyd by Lewis Lloyd (c.1801-1875, b. Dolgelley) before his son (see 1832, 1885). He married Ellin Lloyd, daughter of David and Elizabeth Lloyd of Plasmeini, Ffestiniog. They had 2 sons, David Llewelyn Lloyd (see 1885), and William (see 1832). Lewis Lloyd was a shopkeeper in Pwllheli until appointed in 1832 by William Gryffydd Oakeley, of Plas Tan y Bwlch, the principal quarry owner of Blaenau Ffestiniog, to be landlord of Tan y Bwlch Inn and lands, later known as the Oakeley Arms (also Postmaster of Tanybwllch Post Office).<sup>126</sup> The 1841 census shows the family at Tanybwllch (but by 1849 Lewis Lloyd was back in Pwllheli, as innkeeper of the Crown and Anchor<sup>127</sup>). It was a responsible job. In 1841, as well as employing a farm-hand, he was managing a business with 5 male servants, a cook, and 6 other female servants. On census night there were 6 guests, including one couple with their own footman. The Oakeley Arms was where much of the global slate business must have been conducted, and where travellers between the quarries at the head of the Vale of Ffestiniog and the quays on the coast at Porthmadog would have refreshed themselves. It still makes an imposing sight above the river Dwyryd. Census returns show him in 1851 as a 'retired innkeeper' living opposite the Pengwern Arms in Ffestiniog, but by 1861 he had been transformed to a 'landed proprietor' in Rhyl on the north coast. He died at Rhyl in 1875, with considerable assets approaching £6000, including stocks and shares, though no land is mentioned in the will. His main heirs were his sister Ellen Lloyd and cousin William Wynne of Rhyl, a wine merchant.<sup>128</sup> The will mentions neither of his sons. It is possible that Lewis had been proprietor of Brynmaenllwyd, and passed it to his son. It is also possible that there had been a rift, perhaps over alcohol, between publican father and staunchly Methodist, probably teetotal, son.<sup>129</sup> The will of his wife's mother, Elizabeth Lloyd of Plas Meini, Ffestiniog (a gentry estate),

<sup>124</sup> British School fund record, NA; Census; BMD.

<sup>125</sup> Parish register transcriptions: Morris Davies, 'Selections.'

<sup>126</sup> In the parish of Ffestiniog. The contract, a jt. tenancy with David Lloyd, shopkeeper of Ffestiniog (a relative?), was for 7 years at £175 p.a. MAD, Z/DV/3/177; also 1840 Lease and Release, Z/DQ/17.

<sup>127</sup> Caerns.Arch.,Caernarfon. Item 2/24 1849 Apr 6; item 2/25 1849 Nov 10.

<sup>128</sup> Probate Registry. 1875, 'Effects under £6000, No Leaseholds.' A third executor was a chemist.

<sup>129</sup> 'From the late 1830s, temperance and teetotal campaigners increased their hold on many Welsh communities.' Russell Davies, *Hope and Heartbreak*, 345.

was careful to give personal control over her inheritance to her daughter, not her son-in-law.<sup>130</sup> Since the couple's second son, William, was baptized in an independent chapel in Trawsfynydd, it may indicate that the family exemplified the changing religious affiliations of the times, with the wife being the main dissenter. Lewis Lloyd's will reaffirms him as a member of the Anglican community with a major bequest of £100 to the local church.

### 1878

**Richard Pugh** (1850-1927) had come from Bryn Crwn<sup>131</sup> to take over as head at Brynmaenllwyd. In the 1878 parish rate book the farm was given an annual value of £36, rated at 6s.<sup>132</sup> The 1881 census shows him with his widowed mother **Elizabeth** (1812-90), (see 1871, 1890, 1891), his sister **Gwen** (24, unm.) and a three-year-old niece, **Elizabeth Roberts**. Richard and Gwen were among the younger children of Elizabeth and David Pugh (d.1874) of Bryn Crwn.<sup>133</sup> Brynmaenllwyd was now recorded as 140 acres, employing 3. The farm-hand was **Robert Roberts** (18, unm.).

### 1885

23 Jan: Valuation List: Trawsfynydd Parish. Brynmaenllwyd.

Estimated extent: 123 acres; rental £47; rateable value £42.

Owner: **D[avid]. Ll[ewelyn]. Lloyd** Esq. [also owner of Pantmawr (162 acres), Brynre (124), Tyddyn Sais (102), Brynrcrwn (114), ?Wernbach (19) ditto.]

Tenant: E<sup>th</sup>. Pugh & Son.<sup>134</sup>

Feb 27: Death of David Llewelyn Lloyd (1831-1885, b. Pwllheli, d. Ffestiniog). Born where his father Lewis Lloyd (see Pre 1875) was a shopkeeper, he was taken as a baby to life at the Tan y Bwlch Inn (Oakeley Arms), and was still there in 1841 aged 10. By 1851 he was apprenticed to a chemist at Llanbeblig, Caernarfon, learning a prestigious career. At the 1861 census, he was with his parents in Rhyl, as a 'chemist/not in business.' In 1865 'D.Ll. Lloyd Esq.' ('Esquire' was reserved for gentlemen) contributed £10 to the Trawsfynydd British School Fund; the address recorded is 'for Pantmawr,' as if he didn't live there but was owner.<sup>135</sup> In 1867 in his mid-thirties he married 21 year-old Dorothy Philips of Towyn (Tywyn).<sup>136</sup> Like his father, however, his status was suddenly transformed, as in 1871 he is down as a 'landowner' in Towyn (living with a baby daughter and a servant in High St, Faenol, with middle-class neighbours), his estate probably already including Brynmaenllwyd and his other 1885 holdings in Trawsfynydd parish. In 1881 he was at Plas Meini, Ffestiniog, a minor gentry house inherited from his mother, as 'Chairman of Ffestiniog Parish School.' (In 1871 and 1881 his mother-in-law Margaret Edwards, 'Independent Minister's Wife,' was resident with them. She died at Ffestiniog later in 1881, aged 58.) He had seen the industrial world of the slate quarries (owned by the Oakeleys and others) cause a population explosion which overtook the ancient rural centre of Ffestiniog with the new town, Blaenau Ffestiniog, at the head of the valley, bringing its new opportunities and new challenges. He became a prominent member of the Calvinistic Methodist community, and, from 1880, one of the founders and trustees of Capel Brynbowydd, Blaenau Ffestiniog, one of the largest of the town's many chapels.<sup>137</sup> He died at Plasmeini, Ffestiniog, in 1885, a Justice of the Peace and pillar of the community. It was thought at first he had not left a will as his widow Dorothy applied for

<sup>130</sup> NLW. See Elizabeth's will, written 1849, d.1851, daughter Ellin as executrix. Elizabeth was perhaps reacting to the male-dominated will of her late husband, David Lloyd (NLW written 1834, probate 1847). A legacy of £80 to his grandson David (Llewelyn Lloyd) may have paid for his apprenticeship. There was in 1834 also a sister Elizabeth who presumably died young as she is not in the 1841 census.

<sup>131</sup> Like Brynmaenllwyd, part of David Llewelyn Lloyd's estate in Trawsfynydd (see 1885).

<sup>132</sup> Morris Davies, 'Selections,' p.3192.

<sup>133</sup> For further genealogy see Teulu Ni website.

<sup>134</sup> MAD ZM/4728.

<sup>135</sup> NA.

<sup>136</sup> BMD: Machynlleth (registration district for Towyn).

<sup>137</sup> MAD: Chapels catalogue; Z/DCB.

administration, but one was subsequently found. Written in 1868 when he was newly married (living at College Green, Towyn), it left everything to his wife, appointing her as executrix. His estate (including Brynmaenllwyd) was valued at £749, a fraction of the sum left by his father. He is commemorated by the tallest monument in the churchyard of St. Michael, Ffestiniog, a pink granite obelisk<sup>138</sup> with an effusive inscription which praises him, among other things, as a landlord.<sup>139</sup>

In affectionate remembrance of David Llewelyn Lloyd Esq<sup>re</sup> J.P. of Plas Meini who fell on sleep the 27<sup>th</sup> day of Feb, 1885 aged 54 years, a most devoted husband, affectionate father and a true friend. His public life was adorned by various solid virtues whether viewed as a neighbour, landlord, magistrate, chairman of boards and committees, or as a deacon of a Christian church. His wisdom, tact, conscientiousness, and unsullied purity of character were strikingly apparent throughout. To his family he left a fragrant memory and to the world a bright example of integrity and active usefulness. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

Ownership of Brynmaenllwyd passed to **Dorothea (Dorothy) Jane Lloyd** (c.1846-1927, b. Towyn, d. Colwyn Bay), his widow. After 2 years she decided to sell it.<sup>140</sup> She lived subsequently in Bangor (where one of her two daughters was married to a lecturer at the Normal College, then the principal educator of nonconformist pastors), and spent the last part of her life accompanied by her unmarried daughter on the north coast, in the house at Colwyn Bay she presumably had built, as she named it Moelwyn after the mountain which fills the view from Plas Meini.<sup>141</sup> When she died in 1927 at the age of 81, after 42 years as a widow, Dorothy Jane Philips of Towyn, had become Dorothea Jane Lloyd of Moelwyn, Llanerch Road, Colwyn Bay, with a personal estate reported in the *Times* of £8,127.<sup>142</sup> She is commemorated on her husband's monument, as is their married daughter.

## 1887

12 Nov: Purchase of Brynmaenllwyd by **Richard Henry Wood**,<sup>143</sup> (1820-1908) high-Victorian industrialist, capitalist, philanthropist, and another 'saintly' proprietor, though this time a High Church Anglican. Between 1873 and 1898 he bought a score of farms in Trawsfynydd parish, several thousand acres, still spoken of locally as 'the Wood estate.'<sup>144</sup> It was not just that he wanted a country estate (he made Pant Glas, Abergeirw, on the upper Mawddach his rural seat), he also took out precious-metal mining licences from the Crown.<sup>145</sup> Born in central Manchester in 1820, the son of a lawyer, by the 1851 census he was a 'Stock Broker' visiting 'James Hatton, Iron Merchant,' (a major industrialist) in Salford, Lancs. In 1854 he married the childless Hatton's niece, **Elizabeth Hatton** (b. 1826, Aston, Warrington, Cheshire). The Hattons of Hatton, Cheshire, were aristocratic, descended from Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord Chancellor to Elizabeth I, and related to the Earls of Winchelsea. By the 1861 census Richard Henry Wood was down as an 'Iron Merchant' in Crumpsall. When his wife's uncle James died in 1879, the Woods were principal heirs of a princely estate (probate value 'under £700,000'). They lived also for many years in Rugby (at Penrhos House now part of a school), where they donated the St Cross Hospital and library,<sup>146</sup> and retired to a house by the sea, Belmont, in Sidmouth, Devon, now a hotel. They funded the building of Sidmouth parish church, just as they had made major contributions to Elizabeth's ancestral

<sup>138</sup> North of the church. Nonconformists' graves were often marked with 'non-idolatrous' monuments such as obelisks with their classical associations. See appendix.

<sup>139</sup> Probate Registry: 1885 Will of David Llewelyn Lloyd, and Brynmaenllwyd deeds.

<sup>140</sup> Brynmaenllwyd deeds.

<sup>141</sup> BMD; Census; Probate Registry.

<sup>142</sup> *Times* 11 June 1927 15c.

<sup>143</sup> Brynmaenllwyd deeds.

<sup>144</sup> Pers.comm: Mr Tudor Ellis, Cefn Clawdd/Ty Cerrig, March 2011, *et al.*

<sup>145</sup> NA.

<sup>146</sup> Their house in Little Church Street bears a blue commemorative plaque.

church, Daresbury, Cheshire, and to St. Madryn's, Trawsfynydd, from a near-Catholic, post-Oxford Movement faith. Richard was also a historian and a sportsman<sup>147</sup> (see 1904, 1908).

This appears to be the first point at which ownership of Brynmaenllwyd passed to English people. Although, from early on, there had been a division between owners and occupiers, with yeoman tenants farming the land and paying rent to a landlord, until now the proprietors were all, to judge by their names, Welsh, and in most cases demonstrably local. It was also the first time that seriously rich people were involved.

### 1888

Lord Winchelsea, a relative of Elizabeth Hatton Wood, was the first chairman of Pritchard Morgan's latest gold mining company in Ardudwy.<sup>148</sup> Gwynfynydd, at the southern tip of Trawsfynydd parish had been at the centre of a gold rush.

### 1889

Richard Henry Wood (though a relative newcomer) was High Sheriff of Merioneth.<sup>149</sup>

**Alteration: commemorated by recessed slate plaque above Brynmaenllwyd front door: WHE 1889**<sup>150</sup> – presumably W[ood] above + H[atton], possibly E[estate], or perhaps H[enry] E[lizabeth] on the pattern of the Vaughan inscriptions on the Nannau estate (if Wood was known as Henry rather than Richard). Spiral stone staircase (and possibly back door) blocked up, central wooden stair, pine partitions, etc. Outbuilding doors until 2012 bore traces of the red paint used presumably on all the Wood premises in the parish (cf. similar seen at Pant Glas, Bryn Re and Wern Cyfrdwy).

Official Crown papers<sup>151</sup> and a MS transcription of the Crown Lease (undated) show that Richard Henry Wood took out royal mining licences for his Welsh estate from the Crown (which controlled mining for gold and silver everywhere, unlike base metals):

No on Crown Rental 292. County Merioneth.  
Name of Mine Pantglas Estate  
 Description of Premises  
 and Substances demised; from  
 Lease.

**Gold & gold ore silver & silver ore** in Lands (belonging to the Lessee) known as Trawsnant & Glanllyn y forwyn Llanelltyd, Cefncam, Llanddywe [sic] uwch y graig; Pantglas, Clyppiau, Brynygath **Brynmaenllwyd** Beddcoedwr Tyddynbach, Erwddwfr, Tyddynsais. Bryn yre. Bryncrwn, Caerhys, Wern y frony. Caegwyn Ffridd y grugle Trawsfynydd. Cwmbychan Llanbedr & Llanfair Abergeirw Mawr Llanfachrdu Gellia & Murfoeden in Llanaelhaiarn, Co Carnarvon.<sup>152</sup>

While the lease appears to be a catch-all involving all of Wood's holdings in North Wales at the time and does not mean that Brynmaenllwyd was specifically expected to yield gold, it may reveal his general intentions in becoming a Welsh landowner.

<sup>147</sup> In her will Elizabeth left a portrait of Cardinal Newman by Roden, inherited from her uncle, to the city of Manchester. Weighing under 9 stone, Richard was a keen steeplechaser and horseman (*Baily's Magazine*, June 1907, 494-5, where at 87 he is described as 'still very hale and hearty'). See appendix.

<sup>148</sup> G. W. Hall, *The Gold Mines of Merioneth*, Gloucester: Griffin Publications, n.d., 91.

<sup>149</sup> *The New Kalendars of Gwynedd*, 1994.

<sup>150</sup> There are similar plaques on Bryn Re and Wern Cyfrdwy (near Brynmaenllwyd), and the Woods' seat at Pant Glas, and Bryn y Gath, both at Abergeirw (5m E of the village, in parish of Trawsfynydd).

<sup>151</sup> NA CRES 49/3509-3511. Ref. to Department letter on Lease of Mines Royal, 6 Feb 1889.

<sup>152</sup> MAD Z/DAV/65. As an industrialist in charge of iron works, Wood would have been interested in sources of manganese, too, which had recently become vital in steel production. The Rhinog mountains were becoming a key site for manganese mines (cf. 1906), as was Llanaelhaiarn on the Llyn peninsula.

**1890**

Elizabeth Pugh, widow of David Pugh, Bryn-crwn, died at Brynmaenllwyd, 30 July, aged 79<sup>153</sup> (see 1881, 1885). She had endured the major building works of 1889.

**1891**

By the time of the census the tenancy of Brynmaenllwyd had been handed on to another branch of the Pugh family, **David Evans** (42, b. Ffestiniog), and his wife **Jane** (36, b. Trawsfynydd), sister to Richard Pugh (see 1878), who had grown up at Bryn Crwn, 1m N of Brynmaenllwyd. They had come (after 1887) from Ffestiniog with a young family: **David** 10, **Elizabeth** 8, **Robert** 7, and **Anne** 4; the baby, **Gwen**, was born in Trawsfynydd. On their mother's death Richard vacated Brynmaenllwyd for his sister and her family. David Evans, however, had grown up in the village of Ffestiniog and worked as a quarryman, and it seems did not take to farming as his wife may have hoped, as by 1901 the family had moved into Station Road in Trawsfynydd village, with David and a son working as quarrymen (presumably at the quarry next to the station). In 1911 they were still in Station Road with the youngest of their seven children and a toddler grandson, and four lodgers all working on the railway, a new kind of work for the area. Richard Pugh remained a bachelor, working in Ffestiniog in 1991 and in Maentwrog in 1901, for two Trawsfynydd-born farmers. He died in 1927<sup>154</sup> but although he had left Brynmaenllwyd some 40 years earlier, was put in the parish register as '*Brynmaenllwyd gynt*' – 'formerly of Brynmaenllwyd.' It speaks of the pride and affection for the land of those who lived and worked on it. He died at 77, in the same year as Dorothea Jane Lloyd (see 1885), but the two sides of the Brynmaenllwyd story, of owner and tenant, had become worlds apart.

Robert Williams was still head at Aber, but now a widower of 59, living with two daughters, Margaret (34 married), his housekeeper, and Dorothy (22 unm.), and 2 farm hands, Evan Tudor (24), and Owen Williams (15), both b. Trawsfynydd.

The Owen family were resident by this date at the neighbouring farm of Bryn Re.<sup>155</sup> They were to farm Brynmaenllwyd fields too, and were not to leave until 2011.

**1895**

Gold mining was begun to the north of Cwm Prysor, Trawsfynydd, at a site referred to as Moel Croesau or Bwlch y Llu, 3m NE of Brynmaenllwyd. Pritchard Morgan took this over from 1910. Another of his gold mines was at Cefndeuddwr (from where Elizabeth Nanney had come as a bride to Brynmaenllwyd in the C17) above the confluence of the Mawddach and Eden, at the southern tip of Trawsfynydd parish.<sup>156</sup>

**1899**

The **Tudors** of Cefnclawdd took over at Brynmaenllwyd: in the government farm survey completed in 1943 David Tudor's return shows he had been there 44 years.<sup>157</sup>

**1901**

The census shows the tenant at Brynmaenllwyd was **Ellis Tudor** (1874-1935) living with siblings **David** (1875-1951) and **Catherine** (23), all unmarried, children of David and Anne Tudor of

<sup>153</sup> Gravestone in St. Madryn's churchyard, Trawsfynydd. This is curiously at odds with Morris Davies' parish register transcription which records her burial as on 6 August 1889, aged 89, an error, as census records show she would have been only 79. Morris Davies, 'Selections.'

<sup>154</sup> Parish register transcriptions: Morris Davies, 'Selections.'

<sup>155</sup> Census. Owen Owens, Bryn Re, witnessed the will of David Tudor, Cefn Clawdd, and was executor with his wife Anne. Probate Registry. See 1901.

<sup>156</sup> G. W. Hall, *The Gold Mines of Merioneth*, Gloucester: Griffin Publications, n.d., 58,117,56.

<sup>157</sup> NA MAF/32/1279/13/88. See appendix for images of the Tudor family.

Cefnclawdd, a farm 2m W, visible from Brynmaenllwyd. They had a servant, **Mary Ann Ellis** (19, unm. b. Llangynog, Montgomery).

Anne, the daughter of Robert Williams of Aber and granddaughter of Cadwalader and Jane of Brynmaenllwyd, married Evan Tudor (not of the Cefn Clawdd Tudors), who was a farm servant at Aber in 1891. By 1901 he had become head there, taking over the farm from his ageing father-in-law, just as Thomas Jones had done at Brynmaenllwyd. Robert was still living with them, now a 'retired farmer' of 79. He was 87 when he died at Aber in 1908.<sup>158</sup> Anne (37) and Evan Tudor (34) had several children by 1901: Jane Catherine (born 1895), Robert William (1897, named after his grandfather), and David (1899). Later they would have William (1902) and Annie (1905).<sup>159</sup> Evan lived until 1939. The Tudor family still farms at Aber in 2012.

## 1902

The War Office came to Trawsfynydd in search of artillery ranges. It was initially at Bryn Goleu, then from 1904 a much larger military encampment was set up round Rhiwgoch, Robert Lloyd's fine manor house which was commandeered for officers (and damaged), with a huge firing range to the east in the Gain valley and the hills around. The range eventually covered over 13,000 acres (bought from the Wynnstay estate), causing the evacuation of many ancient farms, which were then destroyed by the artillery. The settlement which grew up to service the military on the main road, largely in corrugated iron buildings, was dubbed Tin Town, though known formally as Bronaber as it is above the farm called Aber. The incoming personnel, the hardware, the explosions,<sup>160</sup> the unexploded ordnance, all changed the parish in dramatic ways for half a century, with the last still having an effect in 2012. By the 1911 census, Rhiwgoch with all its history had all but disappeared, swallowed up in the address 'Military Camp' with its occupant 'The Government'. Along the new 'Camp Road' the addresses mark how much the area had changed: Chip Potat [sic], Tea Rooms (3 of them), Stationery Shop and Restaurant. For a time shells were fired W over Crawcwellt; Cefn Clawdd was evacuated, and at Brynmaenllwyd David Tudor was not amused to find soldiers peering in his window as he was eating.<sup>161</sup>

## 1904

Elizabeth Hatton Wood donated the alms-houses and the rectory in Trawsfynydd, as commemorated on a plaque on the alms-houses:

These Six Cottages In  
MAENGWYN STREET  
ONE, being the *CHURCH HOUSE*, the  
other FIVE, *ALMS HOUSES* are the gift  
of Mrs HATTON WOOD, of PANTGLAS,  
to the CHURCH of *S<sup>t</sup>. MADRYN*.  
A. D. 1904

She was also the donor of the font and cover in St Madryn's church. The Gwynedd Pevsner describes its cover: a 'tall crocketed pinnacle intricately carved in oak, almost reaches the roof; more fit for a cathedral.'<sup>162</sup>

<sup>158</sup> Morris Davies, Transcriptions of cemetery records, in 'Selections.'

<sup>159</sup> Census (all are down as Welsh speakers); BMD.

<sup>160</sup> The ranges were then leased for grazing to farmers who had to put up a flag where a sheep had been killed. Compensation of 14 shillings per ewe and 7 shillings per lamb was paid, market price at first but it was never increased. Pers.comm. Gwyn Jones, husband of Kit, whose family leased Gain valley land.

<sup>161</sup> Pers.comm. Kit Price Jones, his niece. The camp was a valuable source of jobs for local people, too.

<sup>162</sup> Haslam, etc., *Gwynedd*, 713. It is said locally to have been carved by a Japanese craftsman: *A History of Trawsfynydd*, Merched y Wawr, 2012, 113. See [www.pbase.com/gefailgof/st\\_madryn](http://www.pbase.com/gefailgof/st_madryn). It is virtually identical to the one she donated to the church at Daresbury, Cheshire, associated with the Hatton family from ancient times. The booklet about the church's history mentions that the font was the gift of 'Miss Elizabeth Wood' (the stone carving round the



14 Jul: Death of Elizabeth Hatton Wood at the Woods' residence of Belmont,<sup>163</sup> Sidmouth, Devon. Her estate was valued at £82,000 (gross estate £83,478). Among her legatees were her relatives the Finch Hattons, who received £10,000, which presumably facilitated their acquisition in 1905<sup>164</sup> of the Plas, the principal house in the centre of Harlech, now the Plas Café.<sup>165</sup> Her husband commemorated her with a stained glass window in St Madryn's church, Trawsfynydd, portraying her as a pious elderly woman robed in the Hatton and Wood arms,<sup>166</sup> praying before St David.

Also in 1904 Richard Henry Wood sublet some of the precious minerals mining rights, taken out from the Crown in 1889 on his Merioneth lands. He leased out Wenallt, some of his land at Beddycoedwr on the upper Mawddach, adjacent to Pritchard Morgan's successful gold mine at Gwynfynydd, for gold mining. Henry Miles, of the Cambrian Stores, Dolgellau, and Edward Jones, tenant farmer of Beddycoedwr, paid him £100 for two years' licence.<sup>167</sup> Account books and assay results show Wenallt mine at first giving a high yield (the contract gave Wood a share). Between 1907 and 1911 35oz of gold were produced from just 2.5 tons of ore, a very high figure.<sup>168</sup> Later returns, however, were less profitable, though the lease was not left to lapse until 1928.<sup>169</sup> In 1910 a letter from Henry Miles relates,

We have several reefs of visible gold & our property has not been worked for gold even during the great boom of 20 years ago, as it was a sort of havotty vineyard the owner was a wealthy old gentleman & scorned the idea of any working for gold on his property although offered £10,000 for a few acres & he wrote back to the party that if they offered £20,000 that he would not sell.<sup>170</sup>

While no doubt a fair representation of Miles' experience, it does not square with evidence that Wood took out royal licences here in 1889. Whether his wife was aware of this is not known, but it may be significant that it was only at the end of her life that he initiated the gold mine just below his seat at Pantglas.

## 1906

1 Aug: Burial of David Tudor, Cefn Clawdd, aged 70, father of the three Tudors at Brynmaenllwyd. His widow Ann was to die in 1910, aged 69.<sup>171</sup> His son and heir Edward Tudor was to initiate manganese mining (1919-1925, which did not require a royal licence), employing at peak 7 men on

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base has it in Latin) but says the cover was the gift of Mrs Greenall of the rival gentry family with a grand house nearby, whose money came from breweries. This is the only mention of the Woods or Hattons in the book and suggests that their story has been for some reason obscured. The substantial and handsome church at Daresbury (rainheads dated 1871) is likely to have been rebuilt at Elizabeth's expense and incorporates several windows to her family, including one to her father, with a medieval scene of construction showing the builders being conspicuously paid. The font at the Sidmouth church built by the Woods is similar. All that survives of the original font, its wooden cover, was dedicated at St Madryn's in 2010 to mark the martyrdom in 1610 of St John Roberts, baptised there. *A History of Trawsfynydd*, 2012, 159.

<sup>163</sup> Parish register transcriptions: Morris Davies, 'Selections.'

<sup>164</sup> Dewi Roberts, *Towns and Villages of Snowdonia*, Llanrwst, 2006, 67.

<sup>165</sup> The 1930s colonial life of Denys Finch Hatton later acquired international fame when it formed the basis of the film *Out of Africa* (1985, dir. Sydney Pollack) starring Robert Redford and Meryl Streep.

<sup>166</sup> The Hatton family had had their arms, a chevron with wheat sheaves in blue and gold, since the Norman Conquest – they can be seen in London at the Holborn end of Hatton Garden as the sign for the pub *Sir Christopher Hatton*, named after their ancestor, Lord Chancellor to Elizabeth I, whose house stood there – but Richard Henry Wood had taken out his coat of arms, a lion rampant, only in 1871. *Grantees of Arms II*, k-2, 1687-1898, Harleian Society, 1917. See appendix.

<sup>167</sup> Wood signed the contract in Devon, and his Trawsfynydd-born housekeeper Gwen Owen witnessed it. She received a bequest in his will and bought a house in the village, but lived out her days in Devon.

<sup>168</sup> G. W. Hall, *The Gold Mines of Merioneth*, 57, 117.

<sup>169</sup> MS letter. MAD Z/DAV/69.

<sup>170</sup> MS on verso of letter of 23 March 1910. MAD Z/DAV/74. It seems the Woods had tried to grow vines on the steep south-facing slopes of the Mawddach below Pantglas (*hafotty* is 'summerhouse').

<sup>171</sup> Parish register transcriptions: Morris Davies, 'Selections.'

an opencast cut above the farm, which helped cement its prosperity.<sup>172</sup> A small slate quarry was also opened near the house.

## 1908

21 Jan: Burial of Robert Williams, Aber, aged 87, son of Cadwalader Williams.

25 Apr: Death of Richard Henry Wood (88) at Belmont, Sidmouth, Devon. His estate was valued at over £500,000 (gross estate £675,997). At his death he was JP and Deputy Lieutenant for both Merioneth and Warwickshire, and Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries (he was an expert in pre-Reformation religious houses and collected their seals and documents<sup>173</sup>). He and his wife (d.1904) are buried at Daresbury, Cheshire, the Hatton family's parish church. Their polished granite tomb is in the churchyard W of the tower, next to the similar one of James Hatton, the uncle whose wealth, principally from Lancashire ironworks, they inherited. Among its inscriptions are the words, 'Make them to be numbered with thy saints.' Inside, the W wall bears a brass memorial to them with their coats of arms. Similarly there is a brass plaque to them in St Madryn's, Trawsfynydd, mentioning that they are buried at Daresbury.

**Stanley Rose Wood** (d.1920), bank manager of Nantwich, Cheshire, nephew and principal heir of Richard Henry Wood, inherited Brynmaenllwyd.<sup>174</sup> He is one of 3 benefactors commemorated on the foundation stone for the parish hall in 1911.<sup>175</sup>

## 1909

Catherine Tudor of Brynmaenllwyd (also registered as Kate) married David Roberts. Her brothers Ellis and David continued at Brynmaenllwyd.

10 Feb: Crown commissioners sold Stanley Rose Wood, for the princely sum of £12 10s, a plot of land (1 rod 20 poles) across the Eden river: **a barn to store rushes** (for cattle bedding) in a small walled enclosure, now ruined. It had been enclosed from the common (or 'Crown waste'). It seems Cadwalader Williams was responsible, if the date of 1847 carved on the barn doorway is accurate. He had spent many years at Wern Bach, the nearest farm, itself once enclosed, before moving to Brynmaenllwyd. It is the subject of a revealing set of notes from 1908, when Richard Henry Wood's estate was scrutinized for probate and the anomaly revealed.<sup>176</sup> It is reported that the plot had '**always been considered to belong to Brynmaenllwyd Farm.**' If 60 years elapsed before an enclosure was challenged, the Crown could not contest it, though it could charge, so the testimony of a man of 66, William Davies,<sup>177</sup> who remembered the building of it as a child of 4 or 5, was crucial (it seems that the Crown agent's local knowledge was limited as the carved date is not mentioned). Although told that 'the land is not of much value to fight for,' the Crown was unhappy to relinquish control of this and a larger plot nearby, largely because base-metal mineral rights would pass with the ownership. The agent's notes describe Richard Henry Wood as 'a very rich man who has recently died and he sublet the land to humble people.' After the 1909 sale, Stanley Rose Wood charged Ellis and David Tudor, tenants of Brynmaenllwyd, an annual rent of 15s for the tiny plot. The government's 1910 survey allocates it clearly to Brynmaenllwyd. This has not been forgotten locally. Though the plot appears today to be just a part of the Moel y Gwartheg common, it was spoken of in 2011 as belonging to Brynmaenllwyd by Mr Tudor Ellis (descendent of the Cefn

<sup>172</sup> See [www.davel.f2s.com/hendrecoed/Merioneth-Manganese/mines/cefnYClawdd](http://www.davel.f2s.com/hendrecoed/Merioneth-Manganese/mines/cefnYClawdd), accessed 2012.

<sup>173</sup> The Hatton Wood Collection is an archive of 1500 such items now at Keele University.

<sup>174</sup> Brynmaenllwyd deeds. Will of Richard Henry Wood, Probate Registry.

<sup>175</sup> Foundation stone on Neuadd Trawsfynydd.

<sup>176</sup> NA CRES 49/3509-3511 plus map, File No. W.4295, 3386/08. Litigation over such enclosures had been frequent since Tudor times. See appendix for a 1910 map and images.

<sup>177</sup> At the time he was interviewed by the Crown agent and gave his crucial evidence, he was lying ill at Plas Capten and not expected to live. He was presumably father or grandfather of Morris Davies, 'Moi Plas' (of Plas Capten), whose research into local history has been invaluable for this study.

Clawdd Tudors, now retired at neighbouring Ty Cerrig) – likewise, about 2000, by the late owner of Brynmaenllwyd farm, Aled Owen (d.2008).<sup>178</sup>

## 1910

*Valuation Office Survey*

Owner: S[tanley]. R[ose]. Wood (Belmont, Sidmouth)

Tenants: David and Ellis Tudor<sup>179</sup> [a different Ellis Tudor was tenant at Tyddyn Sais]

Rent: £45 [i.e. less than in 1842]

Farm: 127 acres (including land to east of main road). Rent £45 (yearly tenancy). Expenditure since 1887 sale, £120 [the cost of the 1889 work?]. Gross value £1125.

P[arlour], K[itche]n, D[air]y, P[antr]y, 3 B[ed]rooms, St[one] & Sl[ate], good.

S. 3S. Peat Sh[e]d. 10 T[ie] C[ow] H[ouse]. Calf Kit.<sup>180</sup> P[ig] S[ty]. 9 T[ie] C[ow] H[ouse], 8 T[ie] C[ow] H[ouse], 8 T[ie] C[ow] H[ouse].

3 Bay B[arn] ‘(on Crawswellt)’<sup>181</sup> [all:] S[tone] & Slate, fair.

3 Bay D[utch?] i.e. open-sided. B[arn]. J. [or T.?] & C[hurn?]. 1. good.

P.R. [Pasture Rights? i.e. common grazing] for 240 Sheep on Crawswellt. D[itt]o. 4 Ponies on d[itt]o.

P[ublic] F[ootpath] to Brynre. Cart Rd. to D[itt]o – Par[ish] Rd. up to Brynmaenllwyd. P[ublic] F[ootpath] to Tynllain across land above Main Rd. [etc.]<sup>182</sup>

## 1911

At Brynmaenllwyd the census shows the brothers Ellis (35) and David (34) Tudor, both single, with a dairymaid **Lizzi Roberts** (27, b. Trawsfynydd).<sup>183</sup> Their two elder brothers, Edward and Morgan, had now taken over Cefn Clawdd from their parents.

At Hendre Fawr were John Williams (56) and Ellen his wife (33); also William Roberts (*gwas*/farm-hand) and his wife Jane (both 27), with two children, the eldest down as Gwilym Lloyd Roberts (3). This Gwilym (or William) Lloyd Roberts was to marry Annie, widow of Ellis Tudor, later owner of Brynmaenllwyd (see 1949, 1965).

## 1918

Ellis Tudor of Brynmaenllwyd married Gwennie Tudor. Their daughter Anwen P. Tudor was born in 1920, but in 1925 Gwennie died in childbirth aged 31.

## 1920

Owner: **Elizabeth Anne Wood** (d.1927), widow of Stanley Rose Wood.<sup>184</sup>

## 1924

Trawsfynydd lake formed by damming the Afon Prysor to serve the turbines at Maentwrog Power Station. Many farms were flooded including some of great age.

## 1927

<sup>178</sup> Every summer Aled drove part of his flock over the Eden to the common, a practice now disused. Moel y Gwartheg (Cattle Hill) is part of the wider Crawswellt common of boggy grassland slopes.

<sup>179</sup> Tyddyn Sais is the neighbouring farm NE (106 acres, belonging to the Woods). A different David Tudor (not their father) was at Tyntwll Uchaf & Isaf (120 acres, not the Woods) d.1910, widow Anne.

<sup>180</sup> ‘Calf Kit’ is an Anglo-Welsh term in that *cut* (pronounced ‘kit’) is Welsh for ‘hut’ or ‘house.’ The lean-to end of the N barn comprises this calf house (where calves were weaned) and a pigsty.

<sup>181</sup> The map too shows the barn as belonging to Brynmaenllwyd, just as in the 1908 CRES documents.

<sup>182</sup> NA Valuation Office Survey (Lloyd George Domesday). See appendix.

<sup>183</sup> The address is not filled in on the form, but the Summary identifies them as at Brynmaenllwyd.

<sup>184</sup> Brynmaenllwyd deeds.

Owners: **James Hatton Wood and Richard Stanley Wood** (sons/heirs/trustees of Elizabeth Anne Wood).<sup>185</sup> A 1930 vesting deed left James Hatton Wood in control.

### 1930s

David Tudor of Brynmaenllwyd shot off his own arm by accident but became very dexterous with the other, as is still remembered widely in the district and confirmed by his niece Catherine, now Kit Price Jones or 'Kit Tyddyn Sais.' After advertising for a housekeeper his widowed brother Ellis, now at Tyddyn Sais, the adjacent farm NE of Brynmaenllwyd, took on Ann Jones from Corwen, who in 1930 became his second wife (later owner of Brynmaenllwyd, see 1965). Ellis and Annie's daughter Kitty (or Kit, b.1931), who in 2012 still lives in Trawsfynydd,<sup>186</sup> grew up at Tyddyn Sais but was constantly with her young cousin **Sarah (Sal) Jones** at Brynmaenllwyd, daughter of uncle David's sister **Laura** who kept house for him for a time after her own house was demolished to make way for the bypass. Kit often stayed the night there, and has vivid memories of the house from the 1930s onwards. There was 'no back door,' and the staircase was central (she was not aware of the inglé's spiral stair, closed since 1889). Both main rooms (*cegin fawr*, big kitchen, and *siambr*, chamber or parlour) had open fires, as now. There was a *gwely wenscot* (box bed) in the *siambr* (a typical arrangement for centuries) where she slept with her cousin. Upstairs there were two bedrooms (no bathroom), and she remembers stepping over the beam into the big bedroom S which her uncle shared with a farm-hand, each with a curtained box bed (the other bedroom not used). Outside, the horse was stabled in the S barn. There was a water-wheel powering the churn (the wheel pit is still visible W of the house, its gearing there till recently). Kit's husband Gwyn (Gwynfor Jones, b.1928) says that on the farm where he grew up, Dol Prysor, they had a reservoir which had to fill with water, so that on churning day once a week a sluice could be lifted to let the water down to power the wheel. This was done mid-week, ready to take the butter to Blaenau Ffestiniog by rail to sell in the market on Fridays.<sup>187</sup> Tyddyn Sais was similar, with a reservoir across the road. The wheel was also used to power a chaff-cutter for feed for the horses. Ellis Tudor had a milk round in the village, selling milk from a measure. Above Brynmaenllwyd below the present water intake there is a small walled and dammed former reservoir to power their wheel too. Children had a lot of freedom but some hazards too. Kit remembers as a child falling off the granary steps S where the long blades for the hay-cutting machine were propped in the corner and was lucky not to be seriously hurt, just bumping her head on a stone. The brothers helped each other. One time, she said, when she was a young mother, they were getting the hay in at Brynmaenllwyd so she told her father she would milk the cows. She got on with the job, not aware that her 4-year-old daughter had put the hose-pipe into the churn. All the milk had to be thrown away. Most farms kept a pig, calling in the local slaughterman, and sharing the meat with their neighbours. Kitchen gardens provided some fruit and vegetables. The hollow opposite the house, possibly the site of an earlier house or building, was a flourishing rhubarb patch in the early C20, and damsons still line the N paddock. The Wood Estate used to give tenants a Michaelmas party at Highgate. Gwyn remembers going with his mother to pay their rent.<sup>188</sup>

### 1934

The wedding ring of Princess Marina of Kent on her marriage to the Duke of Kent was made of gold from Beddycoedwr, on the Wood estate, a mine initiated by Richard Henry Wood, thereafter known as Marina.<sup>189</sup> (See 1904)

### 1935

<sup>185</sup> Brynmaenllwyd deeds.

<sup>186</sup> BMD; Pers.comm: Kit Price Jones, 1.4.2012.

<sup>187</sup> Gwyn's mother also made cheese, but most farms just made butter (today no dairying locally).

<sup>188</sup> Pers.comm: Kit Price Jones and Edmwnd Gwynfor Jones, 1.4.2012. Earlier the 2000 acre Goppa estate had done likewise. *A History of Trawsfynydd*, Merched y Wawr, 2012, 66-7.

<sup>189</sup> Hugh J. Owen, *The Treasures of the Mawddach*, Bala: Robert Evans and Son, 1950, 54. Royal wedding rings have continued to be made from Meirionnydd gold.

Death of Ellis Tudor, Tyddyn Sais, at 61, leaving widow Annie Tudor with two girls.

### 1940

27 Sep: Crash of a German plane adjacent to Brynmaenllwyd fields, on Tyddyn Sais pasture, one of only three German planes brought down in the Snowdonia National Park throughout the war. It had been spotted at great height over Liverpool docks, was shot at and crippled, and made a descending flight over Snowdonia to Trawsfynydd, followed by the RAF Spitfire pilot who brought it down. It clipped a chimney at Plas Capten before ploughing into a field beside the track to the farm and coming to rest against a stone wall (the chimney was rebuilt in brick not stone in accordance with wartime regulations, which is still deplored by the Williams who live there).<sup>190</sup> One of the four crew members died but the others survived. RAF Spitfire pilot Dennis A. Adams reported that the Luftwaffe pilot (Rolf Book) had 'kept on flying west and losing height until he made a forced landing in a small field.' As the Dornier 17 touched down 'it did a ground loop to starboard and then the port wing bashed into the west wall of the field. I opened the hood and did a few slow circuits, and the pilot gave me some sort of salute, Nazi or otherwise I would not know. My last recollection is of the village Bobby in full uniform pedalling manfully up the rise to get to the wreck. I wagged my wings and set off back for Ringway.'<sup>191</sup> It was a Saturday and Kit Price Jones<sup>192</sup> was gathering blackberries at Tyddyn Sais when the plane came down. Her mother Annie thought she was under the plane and came rushing out with the frying pan ready to tackle the 'enemy'. Kit was sent for a blanket to cover the body of Gustav Pelzer, aged 26, who was buried at Pwllheli.<sup>193</sup> She saw another man with blood running down his face. Her husband-to-be, Gwyn, had been in the fields a few miles away at home in Cwm Prysor and saw the plane come in extremely low, trailing smoke, followed by the Spitfire. He was amazed that it flew on so far before crash-landing (the pilot was evidently very skilful, minimizing the impact and saving most of his crew). The relatives from Brynmaenllwyd would have been among the first on the scene, but Kit said the first person to arrive was not the policeman in the RAF pilot's account but someone from Bryn Crwn who came running. Because of fears there might be a bomb, they had to spend two nights at Hendre Fawr (the family farm of William Lloyd Roberts, now married to Annie, Ellis Tudor's widow). A great many people came to view the wreckage afterwards, and someone from Llys Awel (on the main road north of Bronaber) fashioned rings from the perspex of the aircraft (a novel material), which were very popular.<sup>194</sup>

### 1943

*Ministry of Agriculture Survey* (1941), visited October 1943:<sup>195</sup>

Brynmaenllwyd Freeholder: Pant Glas Estate [Wood estate], Agent: Hugh Jones, Moranedd, Ffestiniog<sup>196</sup>

Brynmaenllwyd Tenant (for 44 years): David Tudor

26 cattle; 263 sheep; 1 pig; 15 chickens; 2 horses; 11 ½ acres oats; 1 acre potatoes; ½ acre turnips; 6 acres sown for mowing (clover etc.); 26 acres permanent grass for mowing. 1 water wheel of 1 horsepower. No tractor. No electricity. One farm-hand.

### 1949

<sup>190</sup> Pers.comm. 22.11.2010.

<sup>191</sup> Edward Doylerush, *No Landing Place, vol.2: More Tales of Aircraft Crashes in Snowdonia*, Leicester: Midland Publishing, 1999, 34-44; with photographs. (The dates given are conflicting and not correct.) The crash is still widely remembered. In December 2011 a man met over a counter in Tremadog immediately came up with the story on hearing where we were from.

<sup>192</sup> Pers.comm. 1 April 2012. Annie was later freeholder of Brynmaenllwyd: see 1949, 1965.

<sup>193</sup> Edward Doylerush, *No Landing Place*.

<sup>194</sup> A small piece of clear perspex from the plane about ¼ inch thick is held in MAD.

<sup>195</sup> NA MAF/32/1279/13/88. See appendix.

<sup>196</sup> The estate held 21 farms in the parish.

National Parks Act. Brynmaenllwyd included within the Snowdonia National Park.

Freeholder: **Annie Roberts** (+ deeds' inked insertion: **William Lloyd Roberts**). The Wood estate finally relinquished its six-decade hold on Brynmaenllwyd, selling it to the person whose life was intimately connected with it.

### 1951

Death of David Tudor aged 76 (cared for at the end by his brother David at Cefn Clawdd) after half a century at Brynmaenllwyd (then left empty for some years). In 1951 another David Tudor of Dilwyn, Trawsfynydd, was High Sheriff of Merioneth.

Electricity came to Brynmaenllwyd at about this time.

### 1959

Work began on Trawsfynydd Nuclear Power Station 3m N, the incoming workforce housed principally in the vacated army camp at Bronaber. It is unique in the UK in that it is built inland with cooling provided by a lake, enlarged to be the second biggest in Wales. The twin reactor buildings, just visible from Brynmaenllwyd land, were designed by Sir Basil Spence, more famous as the architect of the rebuilt Coventry Cathedral. The intention was 'to display the buildings in the landscape, replicating the mass of a medieval castle, rising dramatically, uncluttered by surrounding structures.'<sup>197</sup> Trawsfynydd railway station was closed in 1961, but the line N from the power station was reopened in 1964 to transport radioactive material.

### 1965

Trawsfynydd Nuclear Power Station began to generate electricity.

Brynmaenllwyd house, S barn and small garden sold separately from surrounding farm and buildings. Water supply and septic tank arrangements in place. Seller: Annie Lloyd Roberts (see 1930s, 1935, 1940, 1949), formerly Annie Tudor. She was still living at Tyddyn Sais. Purchasers: **Thomas Gwynrhys Charles Moreleigh** and **Pauline Mary Moreleigh** of London House, Ffestiniog. They sold in 1968 to **Richard Wiseman Rycroft** of Wigan, Lancs. In 1971 it was again sold, to a Londoner, **Reginald John Watts**, by now a holiday cottage. The Owens of Bryn Re continued to farm the Brynmaenllwyd land: Richard and sons Gwyndaf and Aled. Edwyn, son of Kit and Gwyn Jones, took over the Brynmaenllwyd land E of the main road when the family disposed of *Tyddyn Sais* after William Lloyd Roberts died.

### 1977

Sale of Brynmaenllwyd to **Dr. John Timothy Green** of Cambridge. Renovation included rebuilding of dormers, slate hood in fireplace, ground-floor pine partitions, kitchen, central heating, reconstruction of E wall of S barn, improved water intake.<sup>198</sup>

### 1988

Sale of Brynmaenllwyd to the **Central Electricity Generating Board** (devolution of title to Magnox Electric Plc, 1996), acquired with other properties S of Trawsfynydd with a view to extending the lake to increase cooling capacity for the nuclear power station. However, these proposals, including drowning Brynmaenllwyd, were abandoned when in 1991 both reactors at Trawsfynydd, one of the Magnox stations, now ageing, were shut down. Decommissioning continues at great cost in 2012, though it is an important source of local employment. Brynmaenllwyd is between a rock - a scheduled monument thousands of years old and harmless - and a hard place, a modern installation obsolete after less than thirty years, yet leaving an enduring

<sup>197</sup> *Stori Traws*, Trawsfynydd Heritage Strategy Group, 2012, 14. See appendix.

<sup>198</sup> Pers.comm: Dr. J. T. Green, 29.2.12. Getting pipework through the ingle was hardest. See appendix.



contaminant legacy. The house was then let to various tenants. Alterations included a new staircase, stripping of plaster from most ground floor walls, and lowering of the path along the house front. Vacant from 1995, it was used as a sheep shelter.

### 1998

Brynmaenllwyd sold by CEGB to **Michael and Paula Burnett** of London.<sup>199</sup>

### 2001

National Park put **Brynmaenllwyd on Local List** (buildings of traditional interest).

### 2002

**Eden Valley Site of Special Scientific Interest** affects Cors Goch between Bryn Re and Brynmaenllwyd (from a few yards W of the house). It extends N as far as Llyn Trawsfynydd S dam, and S as far as Abereden. The SSSI protects a special habitat, in particular a site of European importance for the endangered fresh-water pearl mussel.

### 2011

Restoration of all adjacent buildings and surrounding acre of fields at Brynmaenllwyd to one holding through purchase by Michael and Paula Burnett from **Shirley Owen**, widow of **Aled Owen** (d.2008), owner/occupier of Brynmaenllwyd farm and Bryn Re farm and farmhouse after his father and brother (the Owens had refused to sell to the CEGB). Aled's widow two years after his death decided to sell, a pattern just like that of Dorothea Jane Lloyd 120 years earlier. The purchasers of Brynmaenllwyd land and Bryn Re land and farmhouse in 2011, **Gwyn and Buddug Jones**, farm for the National Trust at Dolmelynlyn, Ganllwyd – from 1796 the seat of William Madocks, pioneer of the picturesque,<sup>200</sup> renowned for founding Tremadog and Porthmadog and building the Cob, the embankment now carrying tourists rather than slates on the Ffestiniog railway across the Glaslyn estuary. The area is central to the history of Meirionnydd. Dolmelynlyn, visited since the C18 for the nearby waterfalls, is just across the river from Cefnduddwr, from where Elizabeth Nanney made her bridal journey, the long climb up to Brynmaenllwyd, three and a half centuries ago.

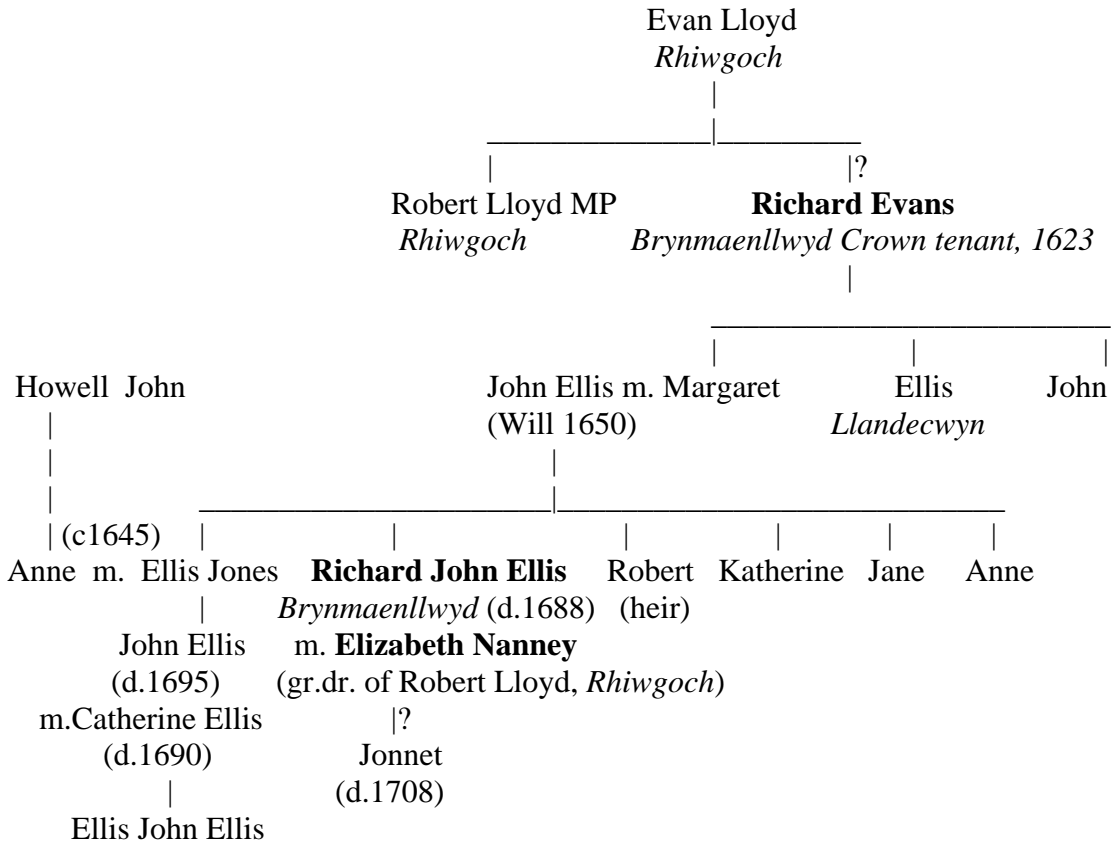
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<sup>199</sup> See appendix for images of Brynmaenllwyd in 1998.

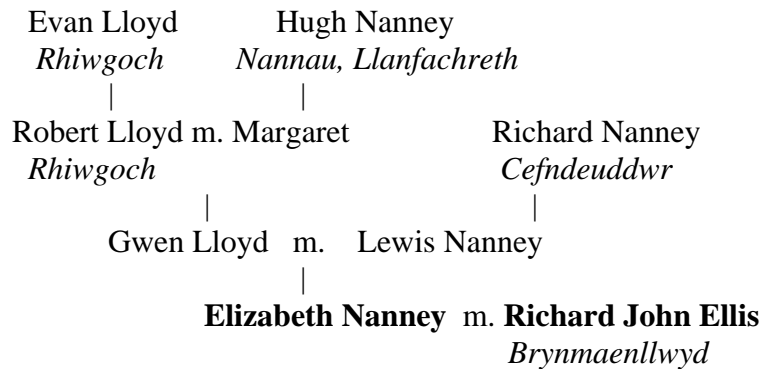
<sup>200</sup> Haslam, etc. *Gwynedd*, 602.

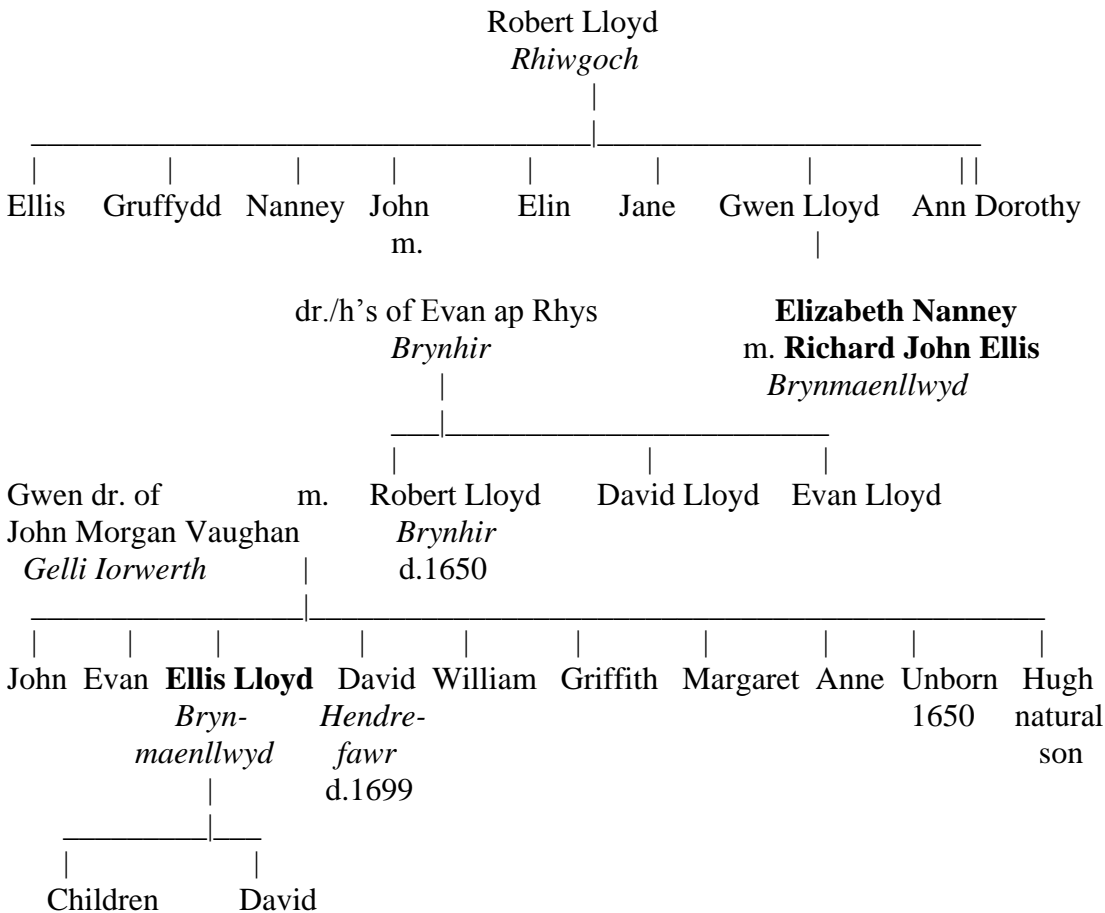
**BRYNMAENLLWYD FAMILY TREES**

**Brynmaenllwyd – C16 and C17**



**Elizabeth Nanney**



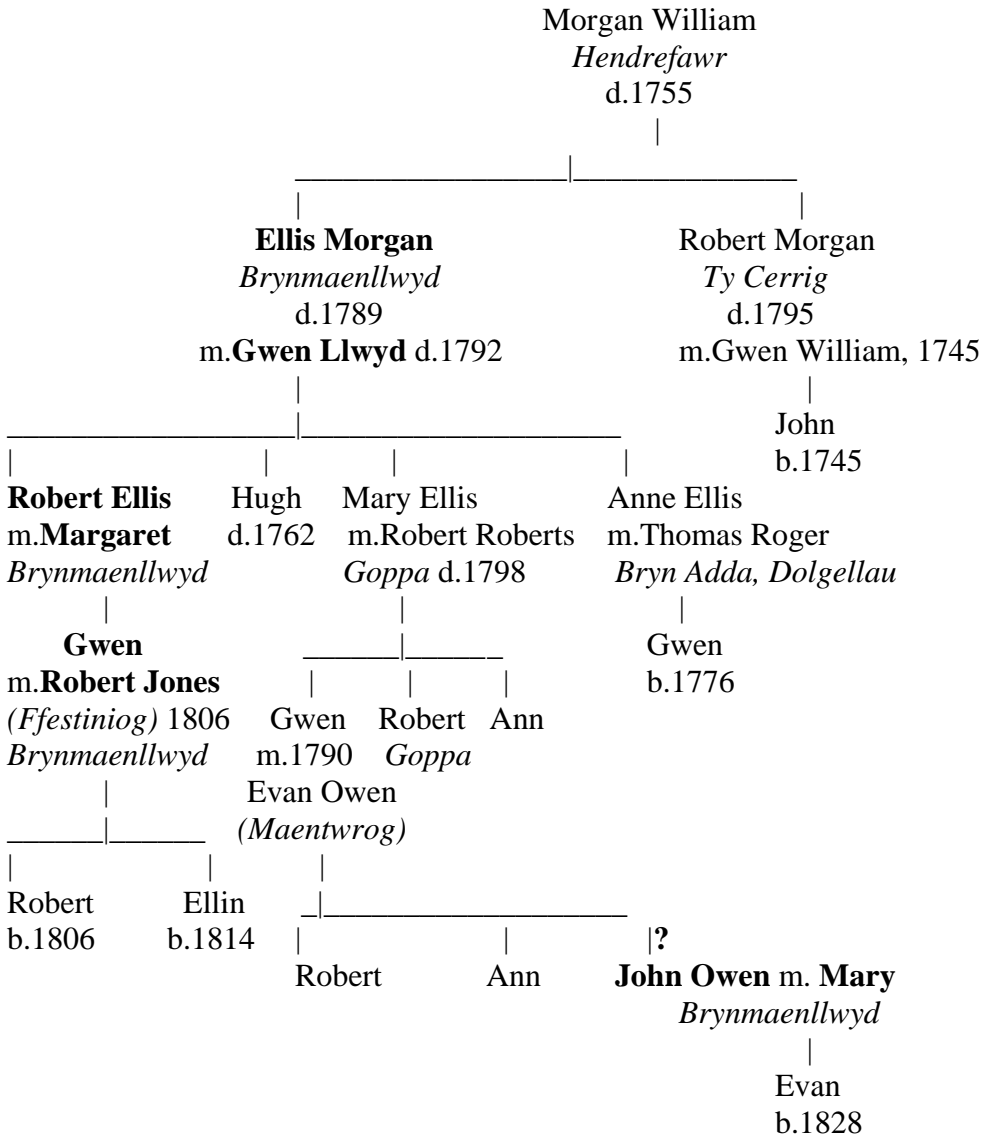
**Brynmaenllwyd and the Lloyds**

NB Children of Robert Lloyd, Brynhir, are in Will sequence, probably age order within gender groups.

Robert Lloyd, Brynhir, named after his famous grandfather, left his young family in the care of his ‘cousins’ John Wynn, Rhiwgoch (1627-1718, later Sir John, great-grandson of Robert Lloyd MP, in that he was heir-to-be of his father Henry Wynn, who was son-in-law of Ellis, the son and heir of Robert Lloyd, Rhiwgoch), and Lewis Nanney of Cefndeuddwr (his uncle), father of Elizabeth Nanney of Brynmaenllwyd. Names mentioned in his will enable this tree to be constructed. Evidently the surname Lloyd was in use for all the family except Gwen the wife. She and her brothers Richard and David used the patronymic John Vaughan (the will has him once as John Morgan Vaughan, clarifying who he was). It is presented here as if all the children were Gwen’s, though as she is mentioned as ‘my now wife’ it may be some were children of a first wife, and obviously Hugh had a different mother (and may have been the eldest). Evidently none of the children was married at the time of their father’s death, though the eldest was required to have married within ten years. The presumably early death of Robert Lloyd may be related to fighting in the Civil War (cf. Will of John Ellis, also 1650). John Brinker (Brynkir), whose name is also mentioned in the will, is recorded in the Civil War context.

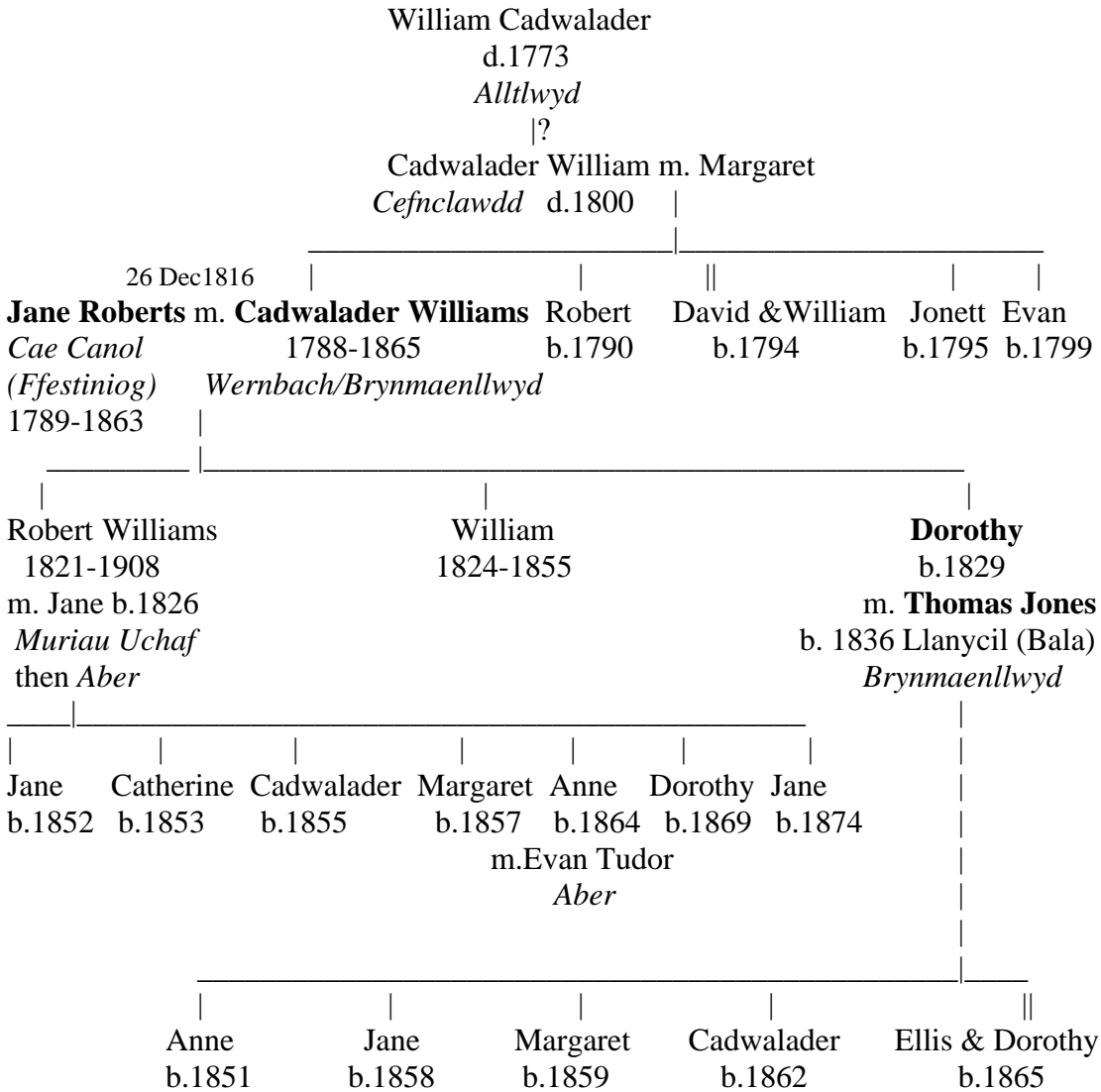
Gwen Llwyd, wife of Ellis Morgan, who lived at Brynmaenllwyd from the mid-C18, may have been a daughter or granddaughter of Ellis Lloyd, Brynmaenllwyd, who was alive in 1699. She was a namesake of Gwen Lloyd, daughter of Robert Lloyd and mother of Elizabeth Nanney, Brynmaenllwyd.

**Brynmaenllwyd and Ellis Morgan – C18 to early C19**

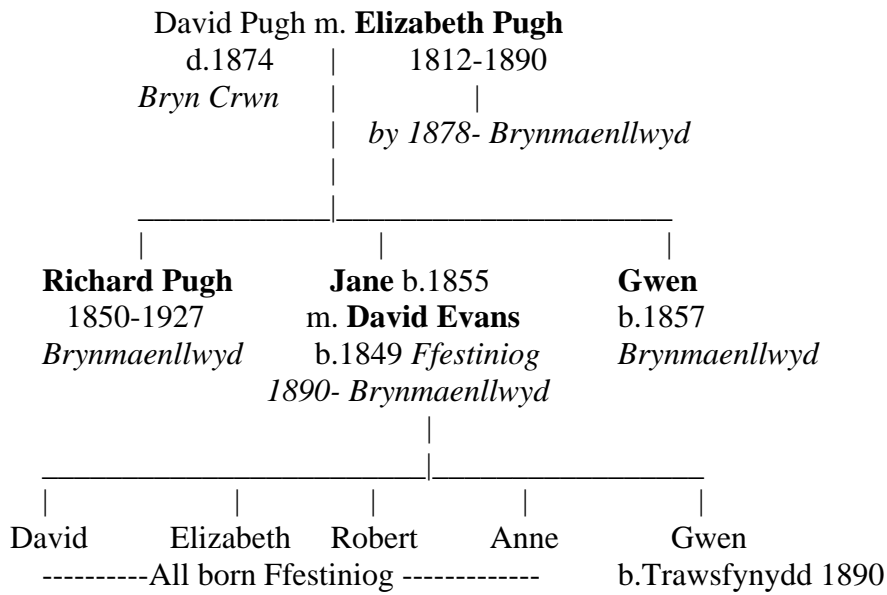


**Brynmaenllwyd and Cadwalader Williams – C19**

NB Birth dates derived from census data after 1841 are approximate. The census resulted in most Welsh families using surnames as we now do, as opposed to patronymics, for the first time.

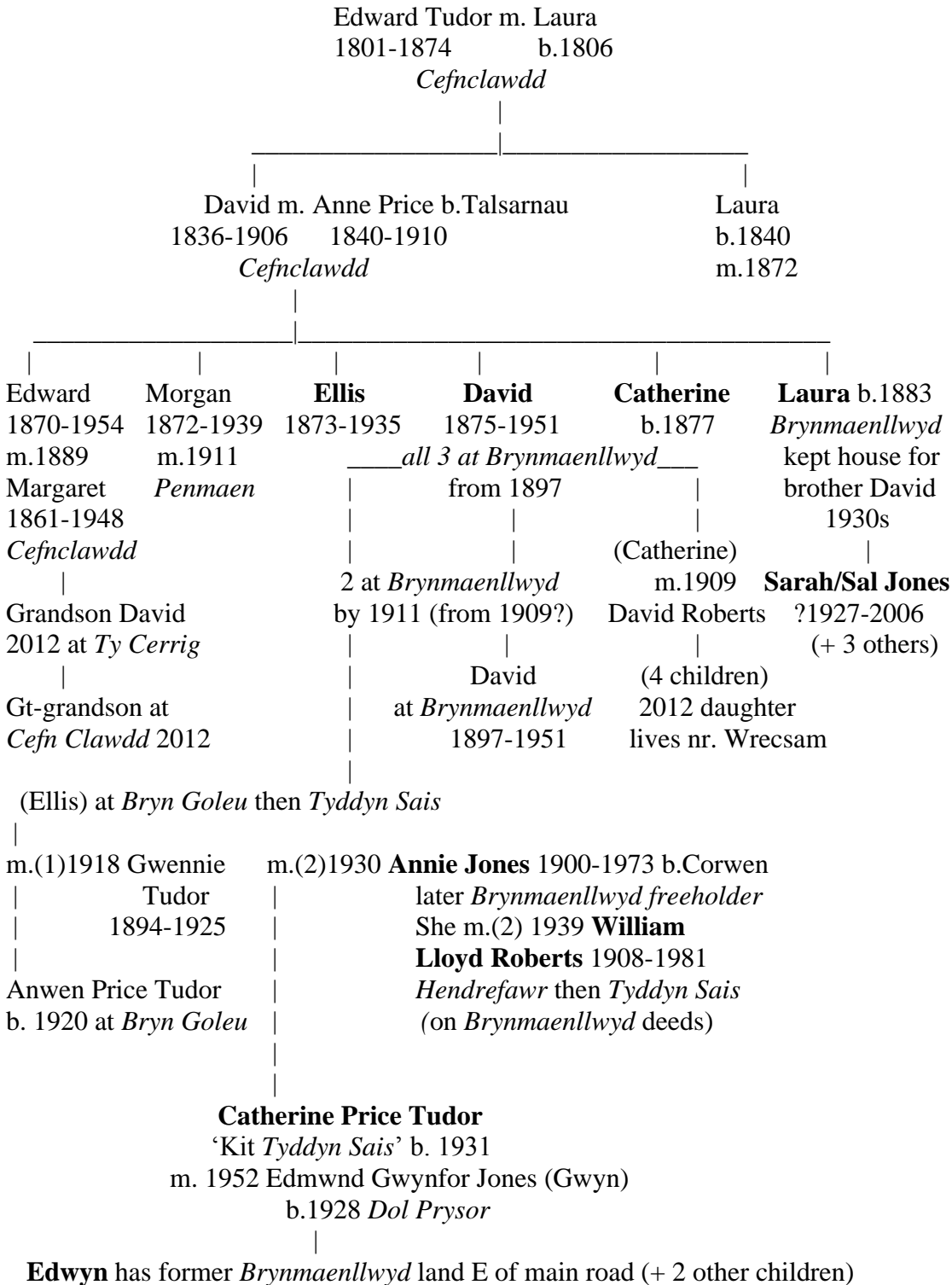


**Brynmaenllwyd and the Pughs – late C19**



The Pugh family were well connected in the area. They had taken over Rhiwgoch after the Roberts who had followed the Lloyds.

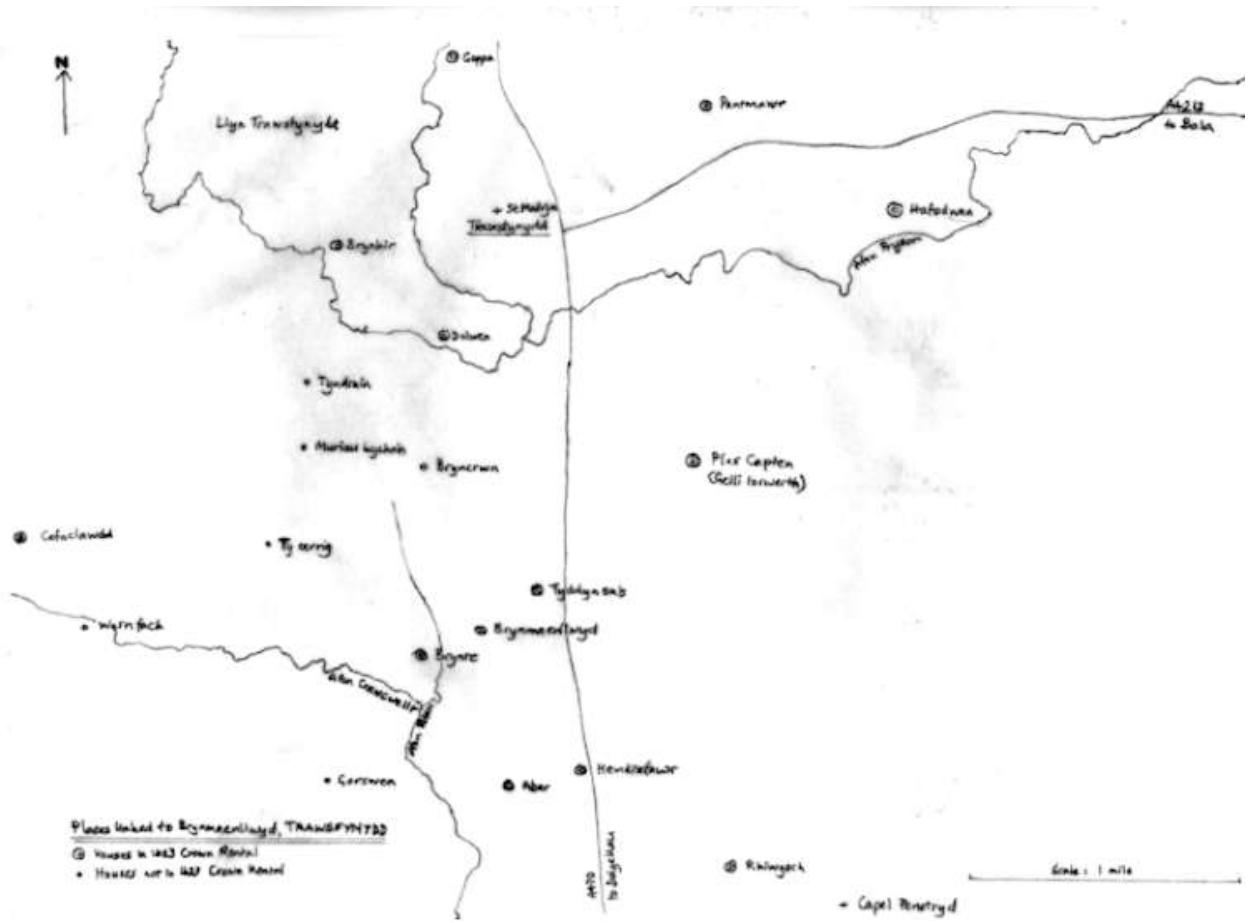
**Brynmaenllwyd and the Tudors – C19, C20 and C21**



2012 Kit and Gwyn live in Trawsfynydd village

APPENDIX 2

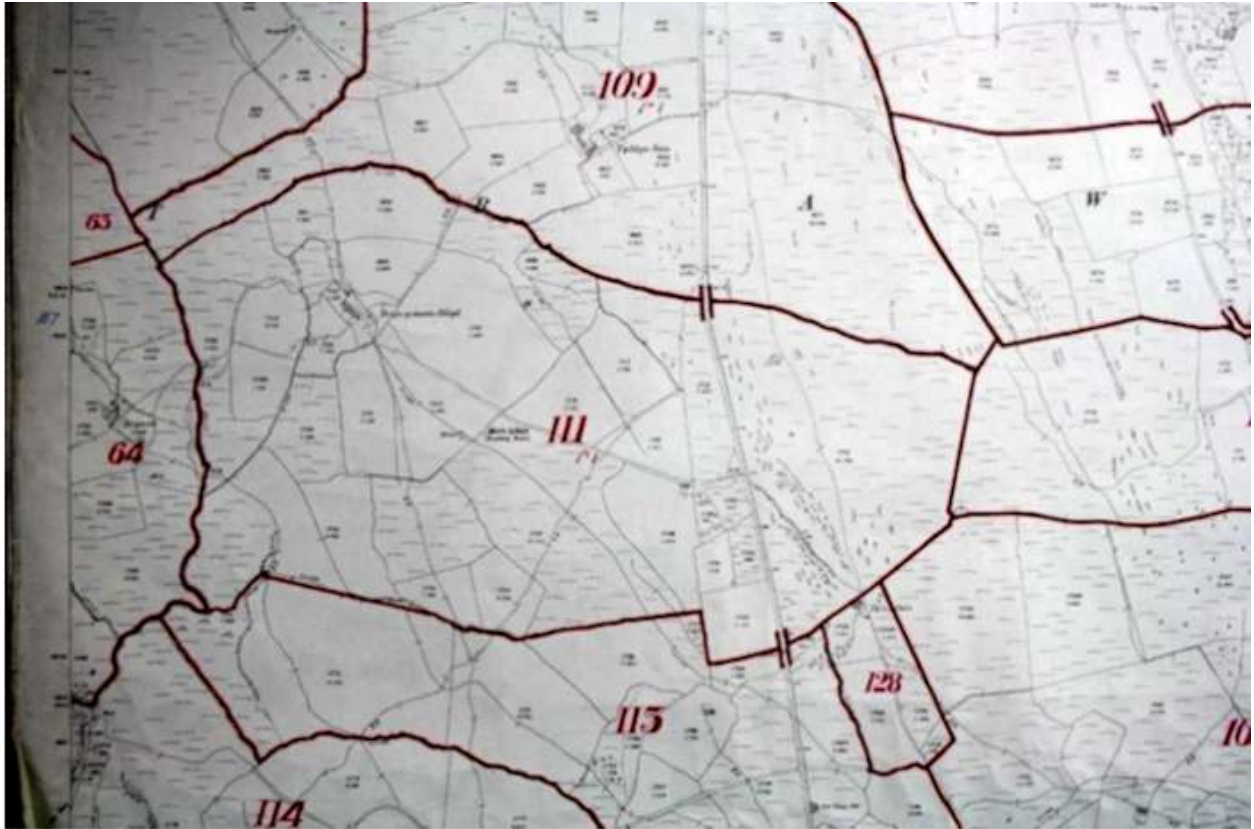
A Plan of Nearby Houses – in the Brynmaenllwyd story





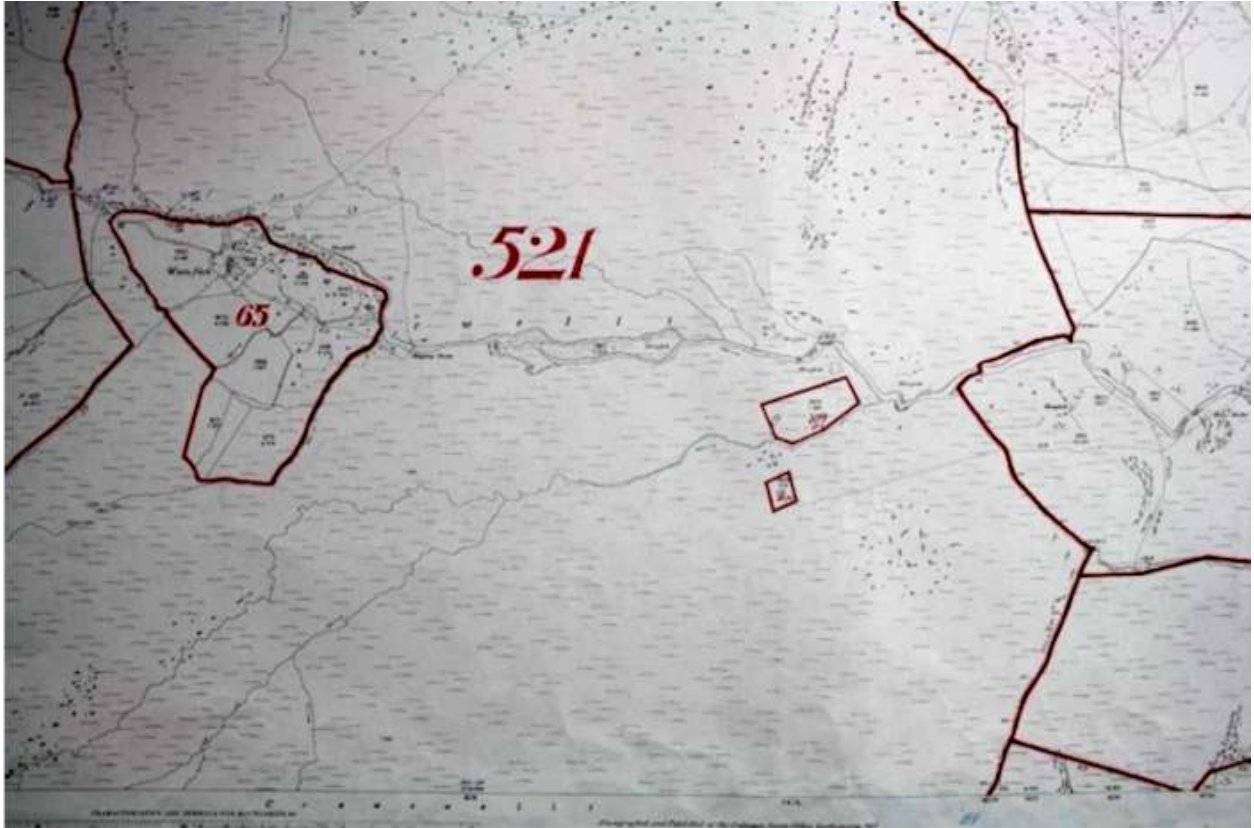
1910 – Government Valuation Office Survey (“Lloyd George Survey”)

Map of Brynmaenllwyd



**APPENDIX 3(ii)**

Map of Crawcwellt common showing Brynmaenllwyd barn and yard (see 1908)



1943 – Ministry of Agriculture Survey (1941)

**S.F.**

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES**  
**Y WEINYDDIAETH AMAETHYDDOL A PHYSYODFEYDD**  
**AGRICULTURAL RETURN 4th JUNE, 1941**  
**ADRODDIAD AMAETHYDDOL 4ydd MEHEFIN, 1941**

**LABOUR on 4th June. (Supplementary Questions.) GWEITHWYR at y 4ydd o Fehfin**  
**(Cwestiynau Atodol).**

(Of the Regular workers returned on page 1 (Questions 22-24) - O'r gweithwyr rheolaidd a roddir ar dudalen 1 (Cwestiynau 22-24) - Of the part-time workers - WHOLE TIME FAMILY WORKERS O'r weithwyr rhan-amser - GYMRANWYR AR Y FHEIN		(Other: mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, wife of occupier or his wife, boy, girl, other relations - (Eraill: mam, mab, merch, brodyr, chwaer a deulau eraill o'r teulu a dim gwrthwynebu eraill)	Number - Nifer
29	How many are -		male - gwryw
30	Female -		female - fenyw
(Of the Casual workers returned on page 1 (Questions 27-29) - O'r gweithwyr amser-fwrdd a roddir ar dudalen 1 (Cwestiynau 27-29) - EMPLOYED ON THE HOLDING THROUGHOUT THE YEAR BUT FOR ONE OR TWO PARTS OF THEIR TIME - GWEITHWYR AR Y GWYBODAETH YN YNDYDDIEN YN UNIG			male - gwryw female - fenyw
31	How many are -		
32	Female -		

**MOTIVE POWER on Holding on 4th June. PWERAU PEIRIANNOL ar y daliad ar y 4ydd o Fehfin.**

FIXED OR PORTABLE ENGINES - PEIRIANNAU SEFTDLG NEU SYMUDOL (Excluding Motor Tractors)	Number in figures - Nifer Mewn Ffigurau	Horse Power of each - Pŵer Ceffyl pob un
13 Water Wheels or Turbines in present use - Olwynnau Dwr Neu Dwrbinâu a ddefnyddir ar hyn o bryd	1	1
14 Water Wheels not in use, but easily repairable - Olwynnau Dwr heb fod yn cael eu defnyddio ond a ellir yn haws eu haddysgu		
15 Steam Engines - Peirannau Affer		
16 Gas Engines - Peirannau Nwy		
17 Oil or Petrol Engines - Peirannau Oilw neu Seolol		
18 Electric Motors - Motorau Trydan		
19 Others (state kind) - Eraill (enwch y mathau)		

TRACTORS - TRACTORION	Number in figures - Nifer Mewn Ffigurau	Horse Power of each - Pŵer Ceffyl pob un	Make or Model of Tractor - Y Math Neu'r Model a Dractar
20 Wheel Tractors for field work, or Tractorion Olwyn at waith cae	1	1	
21 Wheel Tractors for stationary work only - Tractorion Olwyn at waith sefydlog yn unig			
22 Track-laying Tractors - Tractorion Caterpillar			

**NOTE.** - Subject to the special Question No. 134 engines or tractors that have been discarded or worn out should not be included.  
**NDIAD.** - Ac eiddo mewn atodiad i'r Cwestiwn Arbennig Rhif 134 ni ddylid cynnwys peirannau a thractoriau sydd wedi eu trai hebilio neu wedi treulio allan.

**RENT - RHENT**

**ANNUAL RENT PAYABLE FOR THE HOLDING TO WHICH THIS RETURN RELATES**  
**Y RHENT A DELIR YN FLYNYDDOL AM Y DALIAD I BA UN Y PERTHYN YR ADRODDIAD HWN**

23 State the actual rent payable during the current year (i.e., the contract rate less any abatements, but including any interest payable on improvements) - Rhoddwch y rhent gwirioneddol i'r daliad yn ystod y flwyddyn bresennol (i.e., y rhent yn at y cyfandeb wedi ddigymu unrhyw atgwybodaeth a wneir ond yn cynnwys unrhyw lag a delir o'r wellaennau).	43-0-0
24 If the holding is owned by you, give the best estimate you can of the annual rental value - Os mai chi ydych chi chi eiddo y daliad rhoddwch amcangyfrif o'r gwerth rhentol blynyddol gor-ogor a fu'n bosibl.	
25 If the holding is partly owned and partly rented by you - Os mai'r eiddo yn rhannol yn eiddo i chi a'r rhannol yn cael ei rentu gan ych chi. State - Acreage of land which you own and so estimate rental value. Nodwch - Yr awyrenhedd tydd yn eiddo i chi a'r rhannol amcangyfrifwch y gwerth rhentol blynyddol gor-ogor a fu'n bosibl.	132
26 If the holding is wholly or partly tenanted and the rent payable (for definition of rent see Question 143) - Os eiddo'n hollol neu'n rhannol yn cael ei rentu gan ych chi a'r rhannol amcangyfrifwch y gwerth rhentol blynyddol gor-ogor a fu'n bosibl.	

**LENGTH OF OCCUPATION OF HOLDING - NIFER Y BLYNYDDOEDD Y BUOCH YN DAL Y FFERM**

27 How many years have you been the occupier of the Holding to which this Return relates? - Sawt blynyddoedd yr ydych chi wedi bod yn ddeliwr a daliad i ba un y pertbyn yr Adroddiad hwn	Years - blynyddoedd 44
28 If you have occupied parts of the holding for different periods, give length of occupation for each - Os ydych chi wedi bod yn ddeliwr rhannol o'r daliad am wahanol gyfnodau nodwch yr ystod am bob un.	Part 1 ..... AD76 ..... years Rhann 1 ..... AD76 ..... blynyddoedd Part 2 ..... AD76 ..... years Rhann 2 ..... AD76 ..... blynyddoedd Part 3 ..... AD76 ..... years Rhann 3 ..... AD76 ..... blynyddoedd

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY - AT WAIANAETH SWYDDOGOL YN UNIG

**Cambrian Period** - Trace fossil at north barn threshold.





**APPENDIX 6**

**Bronze Age** - The *maenllwyd*, standing stone, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, in the field above the house.



**APPENDIX 7**

**1806, 1832** - Capel Penstryd, Trawsfynydd, an Independent chapel where the families of Brynmaenllwyd tenants and owners were baptised (rebuilt in later C19)



**APPENDIX 8**

**1842 & 1845 - Translations of two letters sent to relatives in America.** The letter of July 1842 was sent by Cadwalader Williams' family from Brynmaenllwyd (*kindly supplied by Robert Jones, Ottawa, descendent of the recipient*). The later one is from his wife Jane's brother, of Cae Canol Mawr, Ffestiniog.

To:

Mrs. Catherine (Roberts) Meredith  
Rome, New York  
North America

From:

Cadwallader & Jane Williams  
Brynmaenllwyd  
near Trawsfynydd. (a town in north Wales)

July 5, 1842.

Dear Sister,

We are hoping these lines reach you enjoying your usual good health, in the same way as they leave us. To the Provider of all things, and the Sustainer of all things be the thanks for His mercies towards us. We hope you will forgive us for being this while in writing to you, but you can be well assured that it was a matter of lack of opportunity and in no way of our forgetting you, nor a reluctance [on our part] to write. We received your letter and were pleased to see it. Your mother is well. Robert Roberts your brother, as is the custom of the parish, cares for her in his own home. Robert Roberts and Catherine Davies and their family are well. Evan Roberts and Jane Griffiths and their family are well. The seasons, here, for the past three or four summers have been very wet. The corn [a grain, not a cob] and potatoes look good this year. We had a little heat last June. There is the buying of much food throughout the country; all in all a fairly poor world over here. A shortage of money on account of the buying of so much food, how prices for animals this year, namely cattle, horses and sheep, and it is likely the price for pigs and butter will be low for the country is quite riotous with the removal of the duty from the corn and meat and butter that is to be imported from other countries at a price lower than we can sell for here. We live in *Brynmaenllwd* [Greystone Hill]. We have ten cows and a bull, seven calves, about a hundred sheep, two pigs and about 600-700 [pounds] butter that we make [churn] and 400-500 pounds of cheese. We have 18 geese. Our farm is quite expensive, the rent being £50 [per year] and the rates each time is £13 and that 10 or 12 times a year, and we are looking for a cheaper place. We sometimes think of coming over there if we could be assured of a comfortable living, for things look bad here. We would like you to send us [information] what kind of farm we could get for the same rent as this; we are all a healthy family. Cadwallader Williams and Jane Williams in particular wish to be remembered to you and we are very sorry to hear of your loss but are pleased he left you, at his passing, with a comfortable living. Robert and William wish to be remembered to you and especially, I, Dorothy wish to be remembered to my aunt and my two cousins [female] and we would all love to see you. There is here but little increase in religion [?]. A few more burials than usual. We are sorry that Meredith is lame;

we have no advice for him but to bathe an inflammation with sea water is the custom of this country, and it will heal. Morris Lloyd and family are well and wish to be remembered to you. The writer of this letter is Robert, our eldest son, aged 20. William 17, Dorothy 12. We wish to hear from you as soon as possible. This short and clumsy letter from your brother and sister Cadwallader Williams and Jane Williams.

Translation by Maureen Scarratt,

September, 1984,

Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

To:  
Mrs. Cathrine Meredith,  
Holland Patent,  
Oneida County  
State of New York  
North America

From:  
Cadwallader Williams,  
Brynmaenllwyd,  
near Trawsfynydd  
Merionethshire,  
North Wales

Ffestiniog. July 12, 1845.

My Dear Sister Cathrin Meredith:

We are taking this opportunity to send word to you, hoping you are well as we are all well at this time. We received your letter July 10<sup>th</sup>, and we are sending with Robert Williams and Lowri [*Laura*] James who are coming there with their family. My mother wishes to be remembered to you very dearly and she was well pleased to receive your letter; she is in fairly good health but not often able to leave the house but gets about a little, she dearly wishes to be remembered to the children, she received the gift brought by Pierce Jones. I was happy to hear that the world [*state of things*] was recovering in your country. My brother Evan Roberts (Glan y Pwll [*by the pond*]) and Jane Griffith and their family are well and wish to be remembered very dearly to you. Robert Roberts (Glan y Pwll) was married about a month ago. Cadwaladr Williams and Jane Roberts my sister and their family are well. (*end of page 1*)

Cadwaladr Lewis and Gwen my daughter and their children are well and wish to be dearly remembered to you. Owen Owens and Margaret my daughter and their children are well and wish to be dearly remembered to you. We don't have much news for you from the old country. Our land [*fields*] is looking good this year and we are starting on the hay today. Those whom we have buried are too numerous to mention: William James (Tambryn [*bottom of the hill*]), Beti Richards (Glan y Pwll [*by the pond*]), Robert Owen (Tai Newyddion [*new houses*] Diphwys [*mountain ridge*]). Robert Owen (Neuadd Ddu [*Black*



*Hall*] had his leg amputated but is now recovered. If you know anything about Cathrin Williams (the) niece of Cathrin David (Cae Canol [*middle field*]) we would love to hear if she is well; we heard she married. Things are good in this country and there is a great need for many people to work in the iron works. Produce sells for a good price--about 30 shillings a load; also good prices for cattle (maybe a good cow between £8 and £10. Wool between 4 shillings and a crown [5 shillings]. (*end of page 2*)

We had a good summer after a hard winter with a shortage of animal feed. I have not been to the quarry for years. I have become very hard of hearing and I have plenty of work at home. I have a mare and a cart carrying from the coal house [?]. There is but little growth in religion these past years. Thomas Williams Bethesda has come over there to you; he was a much respected man here, and I hope he will be the same there. Our work is but poor and clumsy and we see many of our neighbours leaving and joining you. You will get much better news chatting face to face. It is I Robert Lewis that writes and I wish to be remembered to you.(???) I am becoming more familiar [better acquainted] with you by writing to you and reading letters from you. Forgive me my failings; my penmanship is poor to look upon. This briefly from your old [*term of endearment*] brother Robert Roberts.

=====

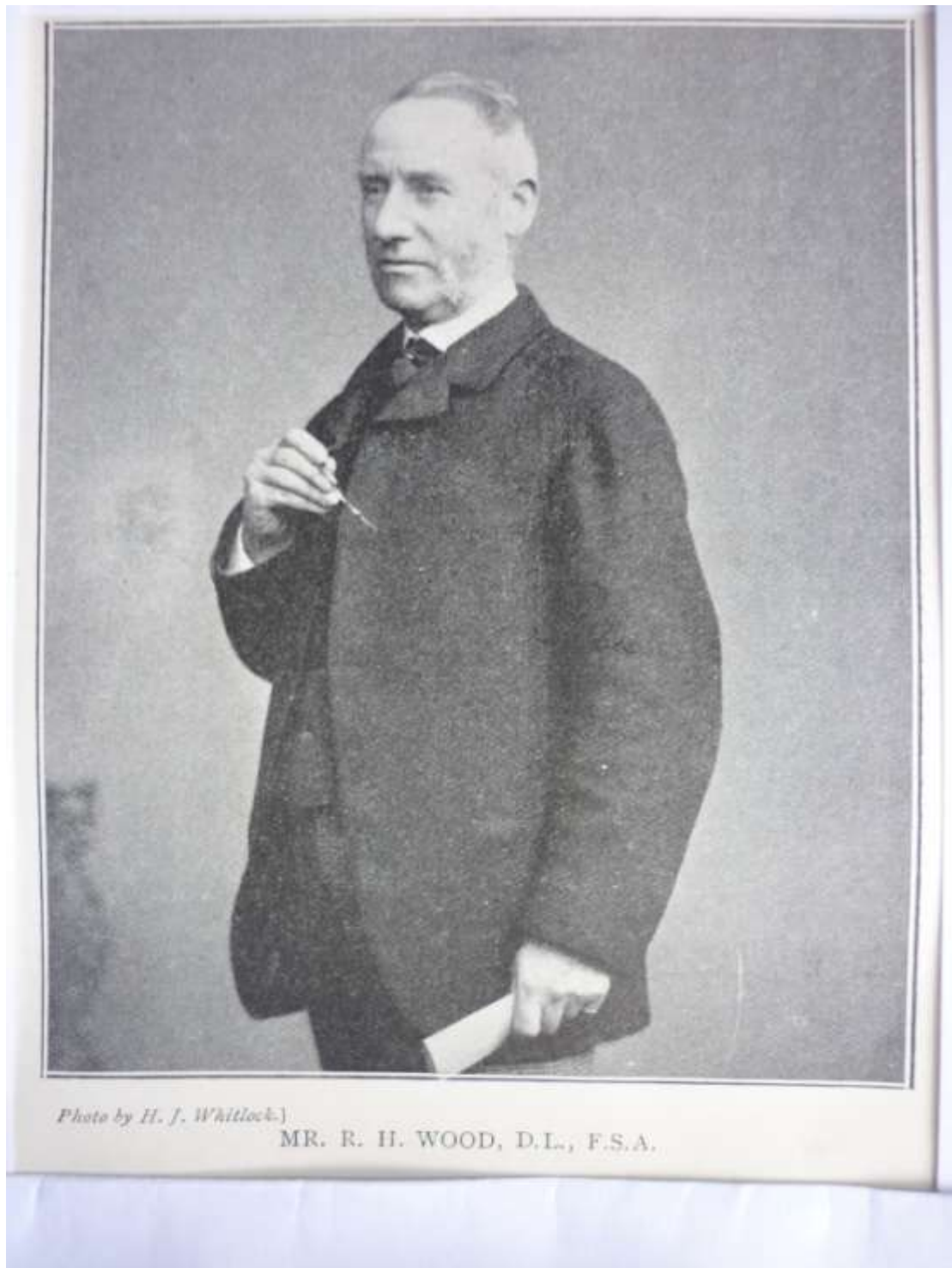
These letters were written to Catherine Roberts Meredith (1795-1882), who was the mother of Jane Ruth Meredith (1832-1909) , who was the mother of Catherine Owens (1854-1940), who was the mother of Ellis H. Jones (1878-1972) who was the father of Ellis Meredith Jones (1917-1999), who was the father of Robert Jones (born 1955).

**1885** - The monument to David Llewellyn Lloyd, Brynmaenllwyd proprietor, at St Michael's Church, Ffestiniog.



**APPENDIX 10**

**1887-1908** - Richard Henry Wood, Brynmaenllwyd proprietor, responsible for the 1889 renovation. *Photo:* H.J. Whitlock in *Baily's Magazine of Sports and Pastimes*, June 1907, p.494.





APPENDIX 11(i)

**1904** - Elizabeth Hatton Wood (d.1904) commemorated by her husband Richard Henry Wood in stained glass at St.Madryn's Church, Trawsfynydd. The window shows her in prayer before St.David, patron saint of Wales. Her robe displays the gold wheat sheaves and chevrons on blue of the Hatton family's coat of arms, and her cloak has the white lion rampant and anvils of her husband's arms.

*Photo: Keith O'Brien.*



The font and cover in St.Madryn's Church, Trawsfynydd, the gift of Elizabeth Hatton Wood.  
*Photo: Keith O'Brien.*





**APPENDIX 12(i)**

**1908** - Brynmaenllwyd's barn and yard enclosed from the Crawwellt common in 1847 and sold by the Crown to Richard Henry Wood's heirs after his death in 1908:

The now ruined barn for storing rushes and its small yard.



The date carved in the doorway, 1847.





**APPENDIX 12(iii)**

The doorway faces directly towards Brynmaenllwyd about a mile away, and hidden by trees in the centre of the image.





**APPENDIX 12(iv)**

The barn on the common seen from Brynmaenllwyd. It is to the right of the red arrow.



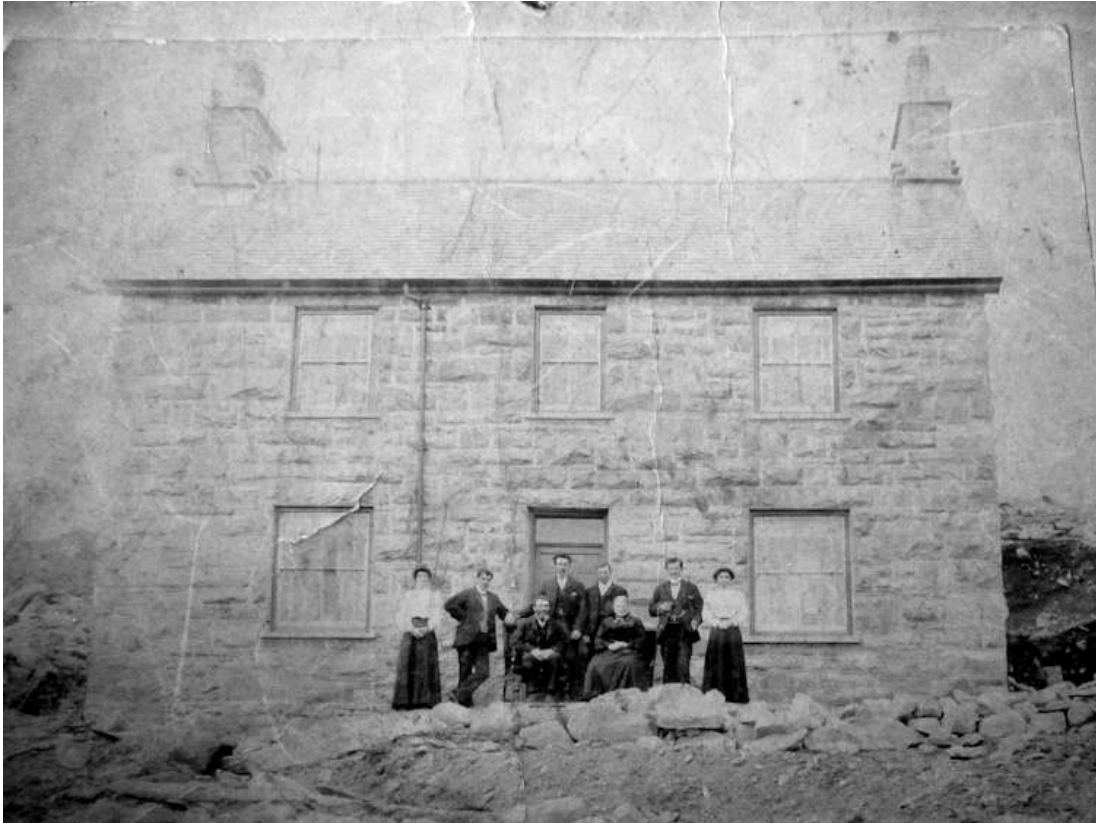
APPENDIX 13(i)

**1899 et seq. Tudor Family Photographs** (*kindly supplied by Kit Price Jones*):

The Tudors in front of their new bigger house at Cefn Clawdd c.1900 (*the four who were to be at Brynmaenllwyd highlighted; David was there for 50 years*):

*From left, standing: **Laura, David**, Edward, Morgan, **Ellis, Catherine**;*

*Seated: parents, David and Anne.*



**APPENDIX 13(ii)**

The Methodist congregation at Capel Cae Adda c.1900. The elderly lady in a cape, left, is Anne Tudor, nee Price, of Cefn Clawdd (grandmother of Kit Price Jones of Trawsfynydd, 2012). Her husband David is fourth from left, back row.



**APPENDIX 13(iii)**

Threshing at Tyddyn Sais c.1910: Ellis Tudor, father of Kit Price Jones, in the centre head on hand.





**APPENDIX 13(iv)**

Kit Price Jones, nee Tudor, and her husband Edmwnd Gwynfor Jones at Brynmaenllwyd in 2012.



**APPENDIX 14(i)**

**1959** - 'The decommissioned nuclear power station in the 21st century seen from Brynmaenllwyd fields.

In the distance



Closer





**APPENDIX 15(i)**

**Brynmaenllwyd in the 1970s and 1980s.**

*Kindly sent by Robert Jones, Ottawa.*





*The following photographs kindly supplied by Dr J.T. Green:*

Brynmaenllwyd in the late 1970s with part of the south barn wall demolished to install the oil tank: inset, a youthful Dr Green.



**APPENDIX 15(iii)**

Brynmaenllwyd in the 1980s after the dormers were rebuilt.



**APPENDIX 15(iv)**

A view of the house front showing the old slab paving to the door, lost when the path was lowered in the 1990s.





**APPENDIX 15(v)**

When Dr Green took over the ingle was closed off with a back-boiler stove



**APPENDIX 15(vi)**

Dr Green opened up the ingle and built a raised fire bed below a slate hood, with a metal flue inserted in the wide chimney.





**APPENDIX 15(vii)**

Richard Owen, Bryn Re, who also farmed Brynmaenllwyd land with his sons, taking the milk from his cows up to the road.



**Brynmaenllwyd in 1998** after being empty for three years:

Front view





South view





Front door, open for sheep



**Brynmaenllwyd in 2012:**

Winter



Summer



Corrections:

1951 Death of David Tudor aged 76 (cared for at the end by his brother David at Cefn Clawdd) after half a century at Brynmaenllwyd (then left empty for some years). In 1951 another David Tudor of Dilwyn, Trawsfynydd, was High Sheriff of Merioneth

the entry for 1951. David Tudor, it says, was cared for at the end by his brother David this should read **his brother Edward**

28 September 2016 Paula Burnett