
NORTH WEST WALES DENDROCHRONOLOGY PROJECT

DATING OLD WELSH HOUSES – CONWY

Llanerch - y - Felin House History

Rowen, Conwy. (formerly Caernarfonshire)

NGR SH 759 722

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Monuments of Wales:
Dating Old Welsh Houses: North West Wales Dendrochronology Project**

House History of Llanerch y Felin, Rowen

Introduction

Llanerch y Felin is reputed to be the oldest house in the village of Rowen. The Royal Commission on Ancient & Historical Monuments Vol (i) East dated the earliest parts of the house as being 1590. An extract from the volume is in the appendix. However research in the Cymryd papers has indicated that this date is either incorrect and or that there was an earlier house or houses on the same site.

The earliest documented record of the property is in the Cymryd Papers in a lease dated 1565, held in Gwynedd Archives. An early photograph of the house indicates that there was a building to the West of the house. There was also evidence of an early building in the yard to Llanerch y Felin. Part constructed of stone this was in use as a garage/store until its demolition in 2011 to make way for a new entrance into the field. It is believed that this was once also a dwelling, and could be one of the two buildings referred to in the Cymryd lease.

This study searches for evidence of the property named Llanerch y Felin from the mid fourteen hundreds through to the present day, and begins with a search of the Bolde Rental.



15th century

The Bolde Rental

This document lists all the land belonging to a late medieval gentleman, Bartholomewe of Bolde Esquire, Burgess of Conwy, and was compiled around 1450 after his thirty year period of land acquisition in the Commote of Arllechwedd Isaf. Arllechwedd Isaf comprises of land along the western side of the Afon Conwy and includes Rowen in the township of Castell.

There are no mentions of Llanerch y Felin / Llannerch y Felin / Llannerch-y-felin / Llannerch-y-felin in the Bolde Rental. There are two Llanerchs mentioned – Llannerch yn Odyn and Llanerch y Stifoley, however there is no evidence that either of them refer to this property, and Llannerch is not an uncommon place name. If it was amongst Bolde's possessions it may have been given to his daughter Alice and her husband William Bulkeley jnr. This document lists an estate of sixty messuages, twenty four tofts, two water mills and a fulling mill, six hundred acres of land, two hundred acres of meadow, forty actress of wood and underwood, and a thousand acres of pasture in Llanbedr y Cennin, Castell, Glyn and Gronant, Erianws, Lledran, Llanfair, Bodsilin and Dwygyfylchi

T. Jones Pierce writes

“Soon after the failure of the Glyndwr rebellion ... holdings were being acquired in Arllechwedd by a number of Conway burgesses, the most prominent case ... being Bartholomewe Bolde, a member of a family also influential in the sister borough of Caernarvon. Between 1422 and 1453 he acquired by purchase and mortgage extensive properties in the hamlets of the two commotes of Arllechwedd mainly in lots of one or two acres, and rarely exceeding twelve acres. ...

Of [*the estate he entailed to his daughter Alice*] approximately two hundred acres of arable and meadow had been acquired in one hamlet. Bolde deeds relating to Castell frequently refer to purchases of land in the medieval hamlet of Llwydfaen [*nr Tal-y-Cafn bridge - tantalisingly close to Rowen but not close enough!*]

Jones-Pierce, T., (1939) *Some Tendencies in the Agrarian History of Caernarfonshire During the Later Middle Ages*. Transactions of the Caernarfonshire Historical Society Vol 1

Landed estates were really starting to come into their own during this late medieval / early modern period and it is not unlikely that the property that became known as Llanerch y Felin may have been part of this buying and selling of land process of the mid-fifteenth century, or it may always have been in the hands of the family at the nearby Cymryd Estate where we find it in 1565. Certainly it would know many changes in owners over the coming four hundred and fifty years.

16th century

This document transcribed below, dated in the mid sixteenth century reveals that Llanerch-y-Felin, by now part of the Cymryd portfolio of holding, was not owner-occupied at this time, although assuming that one of the two houses referred to is the origins of the stone-built property we know today, it can be assumed that Jethyll and Katryn, the occupiers were a couple of reasonably high status in the community; perhaps a cadet branch of a wealthy family. Even though Castell was a free township it does not follow that stone dwellings were the norm for most people.

Llanerch-y-Felin translates as *“the glade or meadow belonging to the mill “*, suggesting that the house was at one time a mill or somehow linked to one.

K Mortimer Hart in his book THE CONWY VALLEY AND THE LANDS OF HISTORY, published in 1987, describes how the river Roe may have changed its path at some point in history leaving any mill at Llanerch-y-Felin high and dry. There is no documented evidence to support his theory of a flood, although the river boulders in the garden do suggest this could be a possibility.

Ioan Glynne Papers (Additional) Cymryd Papers Gwynedd Archive Services 1974

Doc 1

1565 Aug. 10

(1) Thomas ap Robert ap Meredudd of the town of Gastell.

(2) Jethel ap Harry ap Thomas and Katryn verch Ddafydd ap Thomas, his wife.

LEASE for lives of two houses with their appurtenances belonging to t'ment called Llannerch y Velin, t'ship Castell, paying a rent one penny p. a.

Thys Indemnity made the tenth daye of August in the seventh yeare of the reign of our *** Lady Elizabeth by the grace of god of England, Ffrance and Yrland giver and provider of the faith. Wyttnessyth here I Thomas ap Robert ap Med of the towne of Castell in the Commote of Isaph and County of Carnarvon give sett and to *** lett unto Jethell ap Harry ap Thomas & Katryn verch dd ap Thomas his wyff too certayne houses wth thappurtenance as Joynng to my tenement callyd Llannerch y Velin lying in the sayd town of Castell now in the tenyr of the said Jethyll and Katryn to have and to hold the said too hohses wth thappurtenance unto the said Jethell ap Harry & Katryn vr dd his wyffe to (bothe?) of them [the sayde *** of]during the onile and tym of all their natryall lyffes and to the [longer liver?] of them paying yearly y fees unto the said Thomas ap Robert ap Med his heyres and assynes one penny of lawful money of Yngland at the feast of Saynt Mychell the Archangel paying all the said *** and *** *** then said Annual Rent to be him paid at the Feast Aforesaid or within *** daiys after the said feast yt *** to be paid out yt then it so do *** for me that land *** my heyres and assigns to enjoyment (?) for the said rent of *** *** of the said annual rent to be unpaid by a *** and a daye and no sufficient(?) *** *** to be found in the said too hohses yt from it to be *** soe and the said Thomas my heyres and assigns the rents unto the said too hohses with appurtenances the same to hold and kepe as in one *** ***** indemnity not withstanding And I the said Thomas ap Robert ap Med my heyres and assigns *** *** too hohses with thappurtenances unto the said Jethell ap Harry ap Thomas and his wyff during theyre natryll lyffes and to the heires bying of theyre enjoymynt all mannr(?) of people shall inhyrit and defend by these proofes in wytness thereof by the pty to other hayth put to their Oathes ye *** daye and yeare aforesaid.

17th century

The next time Llanerch-y-Felin appears in the Cymryd papers is in the seventeenth century, a marriage settlement. Although the property is (and will remain for over two hundred years) still not owner occupied, the settlement reveals that Llanerch-y-Felin is a significant property, with ‘messuage¹, lands and tenements²’ and with additional named closes of land belonging to it, considered with enough status to be included in the settlement. This is the first time we see that Llanerch-y-Felin has another name by which it is also known; Tu yn Cae, or house in the enclosed area or field. One of the named closes of land is Kefn Cae – in English we might say ridge field. Cefn Cae is now the farm next door, but was clearly an original part of Llanerch-y-Felin’s holdings.

Ioan Glynn Papers (Additional) Cymryd Papers Gwynedd Archive Services 1974

Doc 11

1673 Aug. 9

(1) David Lloyd of Cymryd, Gent.; Henry Lloyd of the same, Gent., his son and heir; and Lowry verch David of Caerhyn, widow.

(2) Rees Lloyd of Dwygyfylche, Gent.; and David Lloyd of Merchlyn, Gent.

MARRIAGE SETTLEMENT in consideration of the marriage solemnized between Henry Lloyd and Katherine Lloyd his wife, a sister of Rees Lloyd, and of the sum of £140, touching capital messuages, lands and t’ments called Tythin Ucha, pa. Cyffin, where David Lloyd dwells, and messuages, lands, and t’ments called y Tythin issa; y Bryn Mawr, pa. Cyffin; y ffryth in Caerhyn; six messuages in Castell, pa. Caerhyn; messuage, lands and t’ments called Llanerch y velyn or Tu yn Cae, in Caerhyn; and Pengwern in Caerhyn; closes or pieces of land belonging to y Tythin issa in Cymryd, called y Cae tan y Tu, y Cae Ty Hwyn yr Eskibor, Nestyr Gronw. Dryll y Munkwrn, y Berllan Newydd, y Tir Glas, Bryn r Odyn, r Erw Wenith. y Llandirie, y Wern Issa and Gwern Corne Royle; closes of land belonging to Llanerch y Velyn called Gweirglodd Lancaster and Kefn y Cae; and closes of lands called Kae Tir Hayed, Kae ty Hwyt yr Eskybor, Kae Tan y Berllan, Kae Evan, y Wern and y Ddole bach.

¹ A messuage describes the principal house, its outbuildings, gardens and orchards – the domestic lands which surround it.

² A tenement is land associated with the property on which a free man pays taxes to the crown

18th century

At some point in the 18th Century a single-storey extension was built to the rear of the house at Llanerch-y-felin. In the early part of this century a new staircase was built with turned balusters and moulded newel caps, replacing the earlier (blocked) spiral stair next to the fireplace. (source: Voelcker, Adam. (2009) *The Buildings of Wales GWYNEDD*)

1700-1710

1702 Caerhun Parish register
Elizabeth the daughter of Simon Williams Ty'n y Cae and Mary parry baptised January 6th.

1710 – 1720

1720 – 1730

1730 – 1740

1740 – 1750

1746	Land tax		£	S	d
	Robert Roberts	Llanerch-y-felin	0	4	8
		Berth Cherw	0	7	0
1747	Land tax				
	Ditto	Ditto			Ditto
1748	Land tax				
	William Roberts	Llanerch-y-felin	0	4	8
		Berth Cherw	0	7	0

1750 – 1760

1751	Land tax				
	William Roberts	Llanerch-y-felin	0	3	6
		Berth Cherw	0	5	3

1760 – 1770

1760	Land tax				
	William Roberts	Llanerch-y-felin	0	4	8

Ioan Glynn Papers (Additional) Cymryd Papers Gwynedd Archive Services 1974**Doc 17****Dec. 14 1763**

- (1) Robert Lloyd of Conway, Gent (son and heir of Henry Lloyd late of Cymryd, Gent., deed.)
- (2) John Foulkes of Henblas, pa. Eglwys fach, co. Denbs., Gent.
- (3) Grace Jones of Conway, widow.

COPY ASSIGNMENT OF MORTGAGE of messuage, lands and t'ments in Gyffin, called Tythin ucha; messuage in Cymryd called Tythin Issa; messuage in Gyffin called Bryn Mair; messuage, pa. Caerhun called Frith; messuage in Castell pa. Caerhyn; messuage, pa. Caerhyn called Llanerch y felin alias Tu yn y Cae for the securing of £400 with interest.

Also Tyn y Cae? Or Tynycae?

1770 – 1780**Ioan Glynn Papers (Additional) Cymryd Papers Gwynedd Archive Services 1974****Doc 18****1772 March 1**

- (1) Rowland Jones of t. of Conway, Gent.
- (2) Hugh Evans of the Abbey, Gent.

LEASE OF POSSESSION of a moiety of messuages, t'ments and lands called Cymryd issa, Cymryd ucha, Bryn Mawr, Tu yn y Cae and Werglodd Lancaster, pas. Gyffin and Caerhyn; and a moiety of two cottages in Roe, pa. Caerhyn, in oco. of William Evans, gardener, and John Lloyd, mason.

Ioan Glynn Papers (Additional) Cymryd Papers Gwynedd Archive Services 1974**Doc 19****1772 March 2**

- (1) Rowland Jones of Conway, Gent.
- (2) Hugh Evans of the Abbey, Gent.
- (3) William Owen of Conway, Gent.

DEED TO LEAD THE USES of a Common Recovery [Release] concerning one moiety of messuages, t'ments and lands called Cymryd Issa, Cymryd Ucha, Bryn Mawr, Tynycae and Werglodd Lancaster, pas. Gyffin and Caerhyn; and one moiety of two cottages in Roe, pa. Caerhyn
Consideration: 10/=.

1775	Land tax		£	S	d
	Elin Jones	Llanerchyfelin	0	3	6
		Berth Cherw	0	5	3

1776 William⁽ⁱ⁾ the son of Robert Williams⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ of Ro by Alice Pierce his wife, was baptized the 13th day of November 1776.

⁽ⁱ⁾ Right birth year for him to become the William Roberts of the 1841 census.

⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Possibly the same Robert Williams who will shortly become tenant farmer of Llanerch-y-felin? Robert also possibly the son of the William Roberts who was the tenant farmer in the 1740s-60s???

1776	Land tax		£	S	d
	Elin Jones	Llanerchyfelin	0	4	8
		Berth Cherw	0	7	0

1780 – 1790

A note about title deeds: The majority of title deeds found in deed bundles are in the form of a lease and release. The lease and release was the most popular and widespread way to record simple sales of property from the seventeenth century up to 1845. The lease and release format was also used to convey property for the purposes of mortgages and settlements.

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/researchguidance/deedsindepth/freehold/easerelease.aspx> They come in two parts – the Lease and Release and the Bargain and Sale.

Llandudno Record Office CX89/2-4

1791 October 19 & 20 **Lease and Release of a farm called Lanerchyfelin, pa. Caerhun**
Consideration: £200

- 1 William Williams of Caernarvon, gent.
- 2 Lewis Lloyd of Holyhead
- 3 The Governors of the Bounty of Queen Anne
- 4 Rev. Richard Thomas, clerk, Curate of Penmon
- 5 Robert Britain of Chester, clothier
- 6 Richard Richards of Lincoln's Inn
- 7 Edmund Chalmer of the Middle Temple, gent.

1791 October 20 **Bargain and Sale of a farm called Llanerchyfelin, pa. Caerhun**
Consideration: £200

- 1 William Williams of Caernarvon, gent.
- 2 Lewis Lloyd of Holyhead
- 3 The Governors of the Bounty of Queen Anne
- 4 Rev. Richard Thomas, clerk, Curate of Penmon

1792	Land Tax	Proprietor: Robert Thomas of Ffrithoedd	Tenant: Robert Williams		
			£	S	d
		Llanerchyfelin	0	4	8
		Dolyr Odyn	0	1	9
		Berth Cherw	0	7	0

1793	Land Tax	Tyddyn William John Ellis Proprietor: Robert Thomas of Ffrithoedd	0	0	6	Tenant: Robert Williams
			£	S	d	
		Llanerchyfelin	0	4	0	
		Dol y Rodyn	0	1	9	
		Berth Cherw	0	7	0	
		Tyddyn William John Ellis	0	3	6	
1794	Land Tax	Proprietor: Robert Thomas of Ffrithoedd				Tenant: Robert Williams
		Llanerchyfelin	0	4	0	
		Dol yr Odyn	0	1	9	
		Borth Cherw	0	7	0	
		Tyddyn William John Ellis	0	3	6	
1795	Land Tax	Proprietor: James Foulks				Tenant: Robert Williams
		Llanerchyfelin	0	4	8	
		Dol yr Odyn	0	1	9	
		Berth Cherw	0	7	0	

1790 - 1800

19th century

1800 - 1810

Doc 20

1803 May 23

(1) Samuel Foulkes of Cymryd, Gent.

(2) Hugh Williams of Bodidda, yeoman.

MORTGAGE [LEASE for a term of 500 years] of messuages, t'ments etc. called Cymryd Issa, Cymryd Ucha, Bryn Mawr, Ty yn y Cae and Werglodd Lancaster, pas. Gyffin and Caerhyn; , and 3 cottages with gardens, pa. Caerhyn for the securing of £700 and interest, (with BOND in the sum of £140 for the repayment of the mortgage).

1810	Land Tax	Proprietor: Robert Thomas of Ffrithoedd	Tenant: Robert Williams		
			<u>£</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>d</u>
		Llanerchfelin	0	4	8
		Dol yr Odyn	0	1	9
		Borth Cherw	0	5	10
		Tyddyn William John Ellis	0	3	6

1810 – 1820

1820 – 1830

1830 - 1840

1840 - 1850

1840 Tithe Map

Records the owner of the land as being Rev. Owen Davies and the occupier as William Roberts. Land assessed at 34 acres, 3 roods and 15 perches worth £5 in tithe rent charges. *These tithe rent charges "were not subject to local variation, but varied according to the price of corn calculated on a septennial average for the whole country."* <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/tithe-records.htm>

1841 census Llanerchfelin

Name	M	F	Occupation
William Roberts	65		Farmer
Catherine Roberts		55	
Hugh Roberts	30		Blacksmith
Alice Roberts		20	
Richard Robts	15		
William Robts	15		

Jane Roberts 10

1850 – 1860

1851 census Llanerchfelin

Name	M	F	Occupation	Where born
William Roberts	77		Farmer	Caerhun
Catherine Roberts		68		Eglwysbach
Hugh Roberts	42		Blacksmith	Llanbedr
Alice Roberts		31	Housemaid	Llanbedr
Jane Roberts	21			Llanbedr

1860 - 1870

1861 census Llanerchfelin

Name	Relation to head of family	Condition	M	F	Rank Profession Occupation	Where born	Spks
Catherine Hughes*	Head	Widow		79	Farmer of 34	Eglwysbach	Welsh
Hugh Roberts	Son	Unmarried	51		Blacksmith	Caerhun	Welsh
Alice Roberts	Daughter	Ditto		41	Hse servant	Ditto	Ditto
Jane Roberts	Ditto	Ditto		33	Dressmaker	Ditto	Ditto

* Possibly remarried and widowed again?

1870 - 1880

1871 census Llanerchfelin

Name	Relation to head of family	Condition	M	F	Rank Profession Occupation	Where born	Spks
Hugh Roberts	Head	Unmarried	60		Farmer	Llanbedr	Welsh
Alice Roberts	Sister	Ditto		50	Housekeeper	Caerhun	Ditto
Jane Roberts	Ditto	Ditto		41	Gen servant	Caerhun	Ditto
Richard Jones	Servant	Ditto	14		Farm servant	Caerhun	Ditto

1880 - 1890

1881 census Llanerchfelin

Name	Relation to head of family	Condition	M	F	Rank Profession Occupation	Where born	Spks
Hugh Roberts	Head	Unmarried	71		Farmer(12 acres)	Llanbedr	Welsh
Alice Roberts	Sister	Ditto		60	Dom Servant	Caerhun	Ditto

Poor Rates Conwy Archives Service CPC/1/4/1 – May 1889

Occupier	Owner	Description	Estimated Extent			Gross Est Rental			Rateable Value		
			A	R	P	£	S	d	£	S	d
Hugh Roberts	E.E.Edwards of Coed Mawr	House & Land	13	2	-	20	3	-			

1890 - 1900

1891 census Llanerchfelin

Name	Relation to head of family	Condition	M	F	Rank Profession Occupation	Where born	Spks
Hugh Roberts	Head	Unmarried	82		Farmer	Llanbedrycenin	Welsh
Alice Roberts	Sister	Ditto		70	Fmr's sister	Caerhun	Ditto

1892 June - Poor Rates Conwy Archives Service CPC/1/4/2 – Llanerchfelin

Occupier	Owner	Description	Estimated Extent			Gross Est Rental			Rateable Value		
			A	R	P	£	S	d	£	S	d
R. Roberts	E.E.Edwards of Coed Mawr	House & Land	13	2	-	20	3	-	17	2	6

1893 June - Poor Rates Conwy Archives Service CPC/1/4/3 – Llanerchfelin

Occupier	Owner	Description	Estimated Extent			Gross Est Rental			Rateable Value		
			A	R	P	£	S	d	£	S	d
Hugh Roberts	E.E.Edwards of Coed Mawr	House & Land	13	2	-	20	3	-	17	2	6
Robert Roberts	<i>Ditto</i>	Land				21	-	-	20	3	6

1894 July - Poor Rates Conwy Archives Service CPC/1/4/4 – Llanerchfelin

Occupier	Owner	Description	Estimated Extent			Gross Est Rental			Rateable Value		
			A	R	P	£	S	d	£	S	d
Hugh Roberts	E.E.Edwards of Coed Mawr	House & Land	13	2	-	20	3	-	17	2	6
<i>Richard</i> Robert Roberts	<i>Ditto</i>	Land				21	-	-	20	3	6

Poor Rates for July 1895 and Dec 1896 remain the same as 1894. Edward Ellis Edwards Esq. was a wealthy cotton merchant from Sefton Park in Liverpool and the original partner of Samuel Smith in the

cotton broking firm Smith, Edwards and Co, until his death, at the age of 88, in 1906.³ He was clearly buying up land and property in Caerhun parish, as an 1870s land document shows, and made Coed Mawr Hall (just up above Rowen village to the north) his home when he was in the area. There are no further surviving Poor Rates records after 1896 until 1903, however a will in the possession of Meirion Jones of Cefn Cae farm informs that during the late 1890's Llanerch-y-Felin was in the ownership of Alice Roberts who died of old age aged 91 in the house on 23rd April 1911. The property is described as being 'ex late Hugh Roberts' on the 1903 Poor Rates ownership record, so it seem that Alice's brother Hugh must have bought Llanerch-y-Felin from Edward Edwards shortly before he (Hugh) died. Alice Roberts was the daughter of William Roberts (farmer) and her death certificate records her death as having been informed by her niece Anne Hughes. Alice Roberts signed her mark on a will leaving monies to her niece Anne Hughes, wife of Richard Hughes (farmer) and upon her subsequent death to Anne's sons Obediah Hughes and his brother Richard Hughes.

³ <http://www.thefreelibrary.com>

20th Century

1900 - 1910

Construction of the roof at Llanerch y Felin is referred to in the book OLD COTTAGES OF SNOWDONIA by Harold Hughes and Herbert L North, published in 1908. The book describes the base of the house as being built of very large stones, uncut and projecting in all directions. It describes the whole of the back roof of the house as being covered with stone slates ½ inch to ¾ inch thick and measuring 5 inches by 10 inches on average, with one peg-hole in the head of the slate where they are hooked onto the wattling. The author goes on to explain how such a roof would have been terribly draughty and would have required regular visits from the moss-man who would have come round to stuff sphagnum moss, with an iron rod flattened at the end, up under the slates to keep out the wind and snow.

1901 census Llanerchfelin

Name	Relation to head of family	Condition	M	F	Rank Profession Occupation	Where born	Spks
Robert Hughes*	Head	Married	71		farmer		Welsh
Annie Hughes	Wife	Married		65	Farmer's wife		Ditto
Robert Obadiah Hughes	Son	Single	23		Gardener (dom)		Ditto
Alice Roberts	Aunt	Single		80	Living on own means		Ditto

*In 1881 census Robert and Annie had been living somewhere unspecified in Caerhun. Robert was a farm labourer.

In 1891 census Obadiah was living at Gorswen Farm as a farm servant.

1903 July - Poor Rates Conwy Archives Service CB/10/2/1 – Llanerchfelin

Occupier	Owner	Description	Estimated Extent			Gross Est Rental			Rateable Value		
			A	R	P	£	S	d	£	S	d
Obadiah Hughes	Ex late Hugh Roberts	House & Land (Llanerchfelin)	13	2	-	20	3	-	14	2	6
William Roberts (Bont)	<i>Ditto</i>	Land (allotment)	45	2	0	0	6	4	6	-	-
John Roberts	<i>Ditto</i>	House (Swan*)				4	-	-			
Robert Roberts	Self	Land (Llanerchfelin)	21	-	-	20	3	-	17	2	6

*Now Swan Cottage – at one time the Swan Inn

1907-8 - Poor Rates Conwy Archives Service CB/10/2/2 – Llanerchyfelin

Occupier	Owner	Description	Estimated Extent			Gross Est Rental			Rateable Value		
			A	R	P	£	S	d	£	S	d
Obadiah Hughes	Ann Hughes*	House & Land (Llanerchyfelin)	13	3	-	20	13	-	14	11	-
William Roberts	Self	Land (allotment)	45	2	0	6	14	-	6	-	-
Robert Roberts	William Roberts	Land (Ffrith)	13	-	-	5	-	-	4	15	-
John Roberts	Ann Hughes	House (Swan)				4	-	-	3	-	-
Moses Jones <i>*Obadiah's mother</i>	William Roberts	Land (Llanerchyfelin)	21	-	-	20	3	-	17	2	6

1910 - 1920

1911 census Llanerchyfelin

Name	Relation to head of family	Condition	M	F	Rank Profession Occupation	Where born	Spks
Robert Hughes	Head	Married	82		OAP		Welsh
Annie Hughes	Wife	Married		86(?)	OAP		W & E
Robert Obadiah Hughes	Son	Single	34		Farmer		W & E
Jane Hughes	Dtr	Single		36	Dairy work		W & E
Alice Roberts	Aunt	Single		91	Living on own means		Welsh

1911-12 - Poor Rates Conwy Archives Service CB/10/2/3 – Llanerchyfelin

Occupier	Owner	Description	Estimated Extent			Gross Est Rental			Rateable Value		
			A	R	P	£	S	d	£	S	d
Obadiah Hughes	Ann Hughes	House & Land (Llanerchyfelin)	13	3	-	20	13	-	14	11	-(land) 3 (for house)
William Roberts	Self	Land (allotment)	45	2	0	6	14	-	6	-	-
Robert Roberts jnr	Robert Roberts	Land (Ffrith)	13	-	-	5	-	-	4	15	-
Joseph Edwards	Joseph Edwards	Land (Cae Groesffordd)	4	-	-	10	-	-	9	10	-
Owen Griffith	Alice Roberts	House (Swan)				4	-	-	3		(for house)
John Hughes*	William Roberts	Land (Llanerchyfelin)	10	-	-	10	2	6	8	12	6

* Possibly Obadiah's brother?

1912 -13 same as above except that Owen Griffith now rents Swan from Robert Roberts instead of the late Alice.

1913 – 14 same as above

1914-15 - Poor Rates Conwy Archives Service CB/10/2/6 – Llanerchfelin

Occupier	Owner	Description	Estimated Extent			Gross Est Rental			Rateable Value		
			A	R	P	£	S	d	£	S	d
Obadiah Hughes	Ann Hughes	House & Buildings (Llanerchfelin)							3		
Obadiah Hughes	Ann Hughes	Land (Llanerchfelin)	13	3	-	24	-	-	17	8	-
William Roberts	Self	Land (allotment)	45	2	0	6	-	-	5	14	-
Robert Roberts jnr	Robert Roberts	Land (Ffrith)	13	-	-	5	-	-	4	15	-
David Williams	Joseph Edwards	Land (Cae Groesffordd)	4	-	-	10	-	-	9	10	-
Owen Griffith	Robt Roberts	House (Swan)				4	-	-	4		
John Hughes	?	Land (Llanerchfelin)	10	2	-	8	10	-	8	2	6

During the Great War Obediah Hughes was reported by his grandson John Davies to have left the house and moved into Y Gorlan following concern over the bulge on the North gable wall of Llanerch-y-Felin. The house was remained empty for the next twenty years until it was purchased as a second home by the **Hamer** family around 1938.

Mr John Davies of Cefn Cae recounted to the current owners how he remembered the house being reroofed in the 1940s and remnants of the old slates were later found by his nephew during the construction of the new house on the field next door. John Davies also said that the roof had a crow-stepped edge but that this had to be filled in when the roof was replaced.

Karina was an orphan victim of the Chilean earthquake in January 1939 which killed and injured over one hundred thousand people. She was brought to the UK to work as a family maid for the Hamer family. Upon their deaths, Karina retained the right to live in the house until her death. She earned an income from looking after local children, offering bed and breakfast in the house and helping in the kitchen of the Ty Gwyn Hotel. She was a keen gardener and created a cottage-style garden around the house. Karina died in 1984 and the house was put up for sale by auction.

During Karina's residence, the house was used in the BBC series Family at War and also as a photo shoot location for an edition of Paris Match magazine. The former landlady of the Ty Gwyn Hotel recalls that a large painting was discovered in the outhouse and was taken by the family for authentication.

The house was purchased in 1984 by John French, a local plumber. Pictures taken at the time of his moving into the house with his family show it to be in a very bad state of repair with the garden completely overgrown. John fitted a new bathroom, fitted a kitchen and restored the attic rooms as bedrooms for his children. During the latter work, it is reported that a brown envelope of documents relating to Karina's right of residency in the UK during the 2nd world war, fell from the ceiling where they had been concealed. The whereabouts of the papers is unknown.

In 2000, Llanerch-y-Felin was purchased by Georgina Mason who also bought the neighbouring Barn from John Davies of Cefn Cae Farm. Miss Mason had lived as a child at Tremorfa Farm, Tal-y-Cafn and purchased Llanerch-y-Felin upon her retirement as a violinist in the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. She focused on the interior of the house, replacing internal 60's doors with oak brace doors, carpeting the upstairs with Jute flooring, furnishing with rich wool embroidered or heavy silk curtains and acquiring antique welsh oak furniture to suit the character and age of the house. Sadly, Georgina was unable to enjoy the beautiful home she had created as she died from cancer in 2003.

In June 2005, Llanerch-y-Felin and its Barn was purchased by Frank Chambers & Jane Parry-Evans. The new owners purchased much of the interior furnishing created by Miss Mason but soon realised urgent action was required to address the structure and externals of the house. The windows were in an extremely poor state and the outhouse roof was collapsing. Advice was sought from the listed planning officer for the Snowdonia National Park Officer. Llanerch -y-Felin had been listed in the mid-1960s and there had been no applications made for any changes since that date. Photographs retained at the offices highlighted what changes had taken place without the required permission having been sought. Plans were drawn up by Jonathan Knox of Bowen Dann Knox, Colwyn Bay in order to obtain retrospective approval for the four skylights, replacement of the windows and conversion of the outhouse into a bedroom and bathroom. To comply with CADW specifications, windows were copied from the oldest remaining window and were to be single glazed. This work was completed in Summer 2006.

During removal of a 70's fitted kitchen and installation of a free-standing Victorian replacement, three bread ovens were discovered. Two are circular, the left hand being lined with bricks and the right hand with stone. Above the left hand side was a third square brick built construction. The presence of the three ovens supports a story that local people would bring their bread here for baking. It was also reported that the house was the first in the village to have electricity and a telephone.

Externally, the layout of the garden to the North of the house and the vegetable garden were restored and to the West, the ground levelled in order to create a new parterre, lawn and wide herbaceous border. At some time since the listing of the house in the 60's, ground had been cleared from the rear of the house and concrete buttress walls faced with boulders built to support the living room and kitchen wing walls. The Snowdonia National Park planning officer said that ideally this should now be removed and the house under-pinned, but a compromise solution was agreed to cover up the unsightly buttress walls by a new extension. Permission was granted for a steel framed structure connecting to the old part of the house with lead parapet, the ridge of the extension to be in line with the main roof with a new chimney for a wood burning stove on the South gable. The West of the garden room was to have French doors, windows were to be in the style of the main house but double -glazed and the East side of the roof was to have three large skylights. The garden room extension along with re-slating of the kitchen wing was completed in summer 2008.

During 2008, the house was visited by Adam Voelker and is described in *The Buildings of Wales GWYNEDD*, published in 2009, as follows:

LLANERCH-Y-FELIN, a double-fronted late Elizabethan Snowdonia-type house, of two storeys and attic, with an C18 single-storey extension behind. Rough rubble walls on large boulders, largish windows with oak

lintels, chimney at S. end. Well-preserved interior, with large fireplace, heavy oak beams and joists with ogee-stopped chamfering, oak window seats and post-and-panel partitions to both storeys. Early C18 stair, with turned balusters and moulded newel caps, replacing the earlier (blocked) spiral stair next to the fireplace. This may have extended, probably in timber, up to the attic. If so, the house is an early example of one with a ceiled upper storey, the first being Plas Mawr, Conwy (q.v.). Substantial roof trusses, with high collars and struts, and wattle-and-daub below.

In 2011, the owners purchased the turning circle in front of the house and commenced on a project to convert the neighbouring Barn into self-catering accommodation. The Barn had an asbestos roof, metal framed windows and was in a serious state of disrepair. Plans were drawn for the conversion by local architect Dianne Williams. The roof was removed and replaced by an oak frame construction with slate roof. The window and door openings were not altered but were fitted with new wood framed cottage-style windows and doors and a cupola was added to the centre of roof as a bat roost and to break up the long roofline. The project was completed in Summer 2011.

Myths and Legends

When undertaking the ground works in 2008, Frank Chambers was asked by a couple of local residents whether he had found anything interesting. A visit by a member of the Hamer family who had stayed at the house as a child might shed light on the reason behind this question. During the 2nd world war, the owner had been concerned about invading Germans and is reported to have buried several rounds of ammunition with the family silver somewhere in the garden. The old man died before the end of the war having not told anyone where his stash had been buried!

Llanerch y Felin is reputed to be haunted by two ghosts. EC Bryan in THE STORY OF THE PARISH OF CAERHUN with particular reference to the VILLAGE of ROWEN writes, *“It is reputed to have a ghost in the firms if a young lady who it is alleged has been seen wandering about in the upper floor occasionally at night.”* More recently, local residents told stories of an old lady to sit on the first floor landing.

Appendix

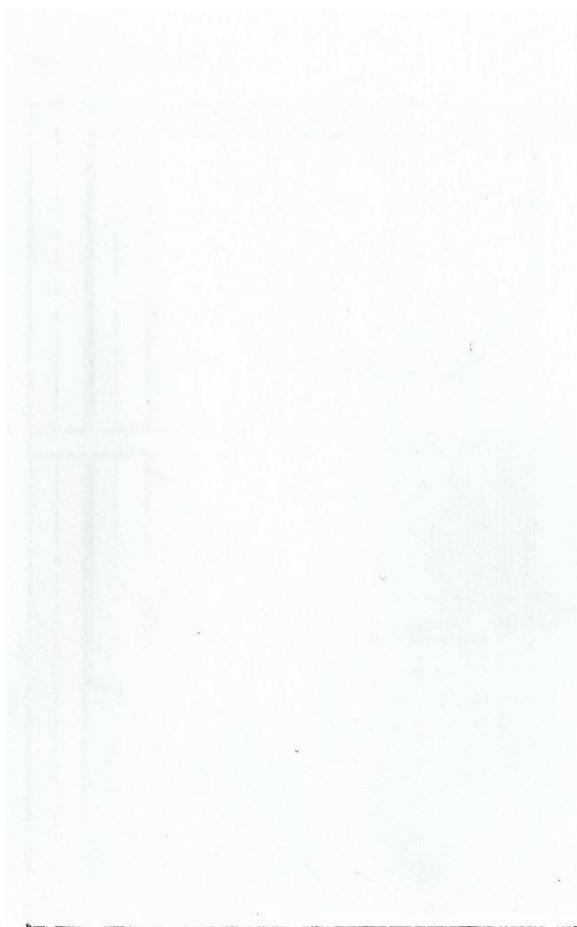


FIG. 42

(94) LLANNERCH-Y-FELIN, house at Roc Wen (Fig. 43, Plates 64, 94).

The original house, of the late 16th century, consists of a rectangular block, of two floors with attics. Later, probably in the 18th century, a single-storey wing was added on the W. and a new staircase inserted in the original block. The house has been partly modernised and about a third of the W. slope of the roof re-slated.

The walls, 3 ft. thick, are of rubble composed of very large stones with smaller packings. The roofs are of slate in diminishing courses from eaves to ridge.

The windows and entrance (on the E.) are plain undressed openings spanned by heavy oak lintels. All are fitted with modern frames. The entrance has been narrowed on the N. by about 1 ft. The ground floor consists of two rooms, that on the S. being the larger. It contains the original entrance in the E. wall and a doorway has been broken through the W. wall to gain access to the W. wing. It is lighted by a window on the E., probably narrowed to some extent, panelled up to the sill and containing a seat. At the S. end is a large open fireplace (Plate 94) with a heavy chamfered oak lintel, and in the chimney breast to the W. of this is the original curved newel

stair, now blocked. In the N.W. corner of the room is an inserted early 18th-century staircase with turned balusters, moulded handrail and square newels with moulded cappings; against the newels are half-balusters.

The partition between the two rooms is original and consists of vertical posts 9 ins. wide, with moulded edges, and plain panels 10 ins. wide. An original doorway, with flattened-pointed head, was blocked by the staircase in the 18th century, when the present doorway, since modernised, was fitted in the centre of the partition.

The N. room is lighted by a window in the E. wall, similar to that in the larger room, and a smaller and later one in the N. end wall. This room formerly contained a partition towards the W. end, probably inserted at the same time as the N. window; the mortised headpiece remains in position.

The first floor is carried on two main beams, chamfered with moulded stops. The joists are chamfered with similar stops; some have been cut away to accommodate the 18th-century staircase. The floorboards are modern. This floor originally contained two rooms corresponding with those below. A portion only of the original partition remains, adjoining the staircase. This is similar to the partition on the ground floor but the posts have only a narrow chamfer. The fireplace in the larger room has a plain oak lintel supported on small rounded stone corbels. The beams and joists supporting the attic floor are similar to those below; the attic floorboards are modern. The attic floor formerly contained three rooms separated by wattle-and-daub partitions inserted in the roof trusses. The N. partition has been removed. At the head of the stair in the chimney breast is an original doorway with oak frame and flat-pointed head. The 18th-century staircase has been partly reconstructed between first floor and attics.

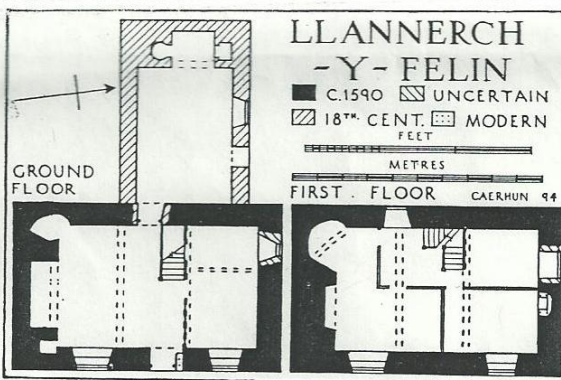


FIG. 43

The roof is of three bays. The trusses have cambered collar-beams and raking-struts. The purlins, rafters and laths are original apart from the repaired portion of the W. slope. The roof has gable copings formed of long thin stones (removed from the W. slope of the N. gable), and the eaves finish on a projecting chamfered course.

The W. wing has a large fireplace with side ovens at the W. end, but is otherwise of little interest.



Figure 1 Obediah Hughes



Figure 2: 1939



Figure 3: Car outside Llanerch-y-Felin



Figure 4: Hamer Family Wedding 1940s



Figure 5: Karina