

DATING OLD WELSH HOUSES PROJECT

DENDROCHRONOLOGY RESULTS

TŶ MAWR and BARN

Druid. (Edeyrnion, Merioneth) Denbighshire

(SJ 0354 4314)

(a) Primary phase hall house *Felling date range: 1539-69*

(b) Inserted floor *Felling date: Summer 1584*

(c) Cruck BAEN *Felling date range: 1566-96*

(a) Purlin 1537(h/s); Cruck 1522(4);

(b) Transverse beam 1583(15½C); Longitudinal beam (0/1);

(c) Cruck (1/2) 1556(1).

Site Master 1440-1583 DENBY1 (t = 10.2 NORTH; 9.8 SALOP95; 9.6 WALES97).

Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory

House Description:

A cruck-framed hall of 'gentry' type with a two-bayed open hall, a dais partition of post-and-panel type with evidence for a canopy. The central truss is archbraced but not cusped. Tree-ring dating establishes that in or shortly after 1584 the fireplace was inserted against the central truss. The hall was truncated and a storeyed house of end-chimney lobby-entry type created. The adjacent cruck-framed barn is broadly contemporary with the reconstruction of the house. The timbers had been reputed to have been re-used from a local medieval church, but investigation of the frame suggests that the crucks were felled and used primarily for the barn. Detailed survey (2009) commissioned by NWWDP deposited in the NMRW.

Richard Suggett, RCAHMW.

The present list includes sampling commissioned by the Royal Commission (RCAHMW), & the North-West Wales Dendrochronology Project (in association with RCAHMW). The North-West Wales Dendrochronology Project (NWWDP) is a community-based project which aims to date historic houses throughout the historic counties of north-west Wales.

A total of 13 buildings were assessed for dendrochronological potential in Gwynedd – Arfon & Dwyfor (excluding Llŷn). Of these, seven were selected for sampling in this study and results were obtained from 5. Sampling in Gwynedd (Merioneth and Caernarfonshire) is often difficult because of fast-grown timber.

Medieval houses dating from before 1400 remain elusive. Hallhouses that have been dated are within the ranges already established for gentry and peasant halls. The apparently coeval fireplace and hall-truss at **Tyn-Ilan** suggests that some hallhouses may have had enclosed fireplaces in the early sixteenth century. The first generation of storeyed houses of Snowdonian type are surprisingly early, pre-dating the general insertion of fireplaces in hallhouses from about 1575. Several C15th and C16th town-houses were dated in Beaumaris, Caernarfon and Conway, and are a very useful addition to our knowledge of urban buildings.

Detailed surveys of many of the houses sampled are available in the National Monuments Record of Wales (NMRW), the public archive of the Royal Commission.

Daniel Miles, Michael Worthington, Martin Bridge, Richard Suggett, and Margaret Dunn