

SNOWDONIA DENDROCHRONOLOGY PROJECT

Y GESAIL GYFARCH,

Penmorfa, Gwynedd

SH 5400175

HOUSE HISTORIES

A summary of the history of the dwellings of Gesail Gyfarch.

There is a sequence of four nearby houses successively linked to the same family – later the Wynn family of Gwydir.

SITE 1: Cefn y Fan. (RCAHMW Caerns II No 890)

The remains of Llys Ynghefn y fan, the home of **Ieuan ap Hywel ap Maredudd** in the 14th century, underlies the stone-built house of the middle of later part of the 14th century associated with his grandson **Maredudd ap Hywel**.

SITE 2: Y Gesail Gyfarch 1. (RCAHMW Caerns II No 988)

The platform houses and enclosures 300 yards NW of the modern house of Y Gesail Gyfarch is said to be one of the most important early house sites in Eifionydd, being thought to be the home of the lords of Penefed. Maredudd ap Hywel dwelt at both Cefn y fan and Gesail Gyfarch.

His sons were 1) **Ieuan ap Maredudd** who died in 1403 in the Glyndwr uprising. Ieuan supported the King and Glyndwr's men burnt down both Cefn y fan and Gesail Gyfarch 1 in 1403. Ieuan ap Maredudd's grandson was the founder of the Clennau estate.

2) **Robert ap Maredudd** from whom the Wynn family of Gwydir were descended. Robert ap Maredudd supported Owain Glyndwr, was pardoned by the Henry V in 1422 and married when he was about 80.

Robert ap Maredudd's son, **Ieuan ap Robert (c1437-1469)**. In 1462 he received y Gesail Gyfarch as his inheritance. This was probably the repaired house on site 2. Between 1462-68 **the hall of Ieuan ap Robert's house** was attacked ... the outlaws were in the **outhouses about and the upper chambers in the lower end of the hall** ... The attackers made **diverse breaches** ... but were driven off from one side of the house **with their arrows**. He was active in the Wars of the Roses until his death of the plague, aged 31.

His eldest son, **Maredudd ap Ieuan ap Robert (1460-1525)** was of Crug, Penamnen and then Gwydir. He was the founder of the Wynne family of Gwydir. His 1528 Eifionydd rental includes Gesail Gyfarch, where he had probably never actually lived.

In 1525 **Humphrey Wynn** his son inherited Gesail Gyfarch, and he further consolidated the holding. He married the heiress of Cwm Bowydd, Ffestiniog,

In 1583 Humphrey Wynn's son **John Wynn ap Humphrey of Gesail Gyfarch** made an entail listing his lands. (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd, p 90)

In 1593 William Maurice of Clennau three times tried to attack John Wynn and his adult son Robert. In 1594 in another attack, John Wynn **retreated into the house but his wife at the door** was harassed and died. (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd, p 91)

Was this at the stone house?

John Wynn then moved to Cwm Bowydd, Ffestiniog, where he died before 1623.

His son, **Robert ap John Wynn** alias Robert Wynn, gentleman, lived at Gesail Gyfarch. *Did he build the stone house on the new site?*

1623: Robert Wynn of Cwm Bowy, Ffestiniog was assessed at 0s 4d; Crown Rental for Ardudwy, (NLW, ms 12732E, D E Jenkins)

3. GESAIL GYFARCH SITE 2: (RCAHMW, Caerns II, No 900a, Visited 1956)

“The present stone house has been built against the SE end of an **earlier two-storied dwelling, probably 16th century**, and a successor to monument no 988. Some original openings with massive stone lintels remain, also some stop chamfered beams for the ground floor ceiling. There are large fireplaces on each floor in the SE gable end. A stair, open to the room, is carried from the floor over the bressummer of the fireplace, to provide access to the attics now destroyed. The roof is modern.

Condition: altered, now outbuilding.

[Dendrochronology results are on p9]

1636: deed drawn up by (his son) **John Wynn of Gesail Gyfarch** & other local landowners with Richard Lewis of Kemin fanydd (Cennin fynydd). (Gresham, Eifionydd, 1973, p 204)

1637: John Wynn died.

In 1660 John Wynn died and his only son **Robert Wynn**, a bachelor barrister inherited. In 1662 Robert Wynn’s widowed mother and unmarried sister **lived with the comfort of three hearths** (the older stone-built house, site 3).

In 1685 Robert Wynn died without issue. Gesail Gyfarch was left to Humphrey Humphreys, eldest son of Robert’s eldest sister Margaret who had married Richard Humphreys of Hendre, Llanfrothen.

Bishop Humphrey Humphreys (1648-1712) was consecrated Bishop of Bangor in 1689 and was the Bishop of Hereford. He was famous as a literary man and historian.

His daughter **Margaret (1683-1759)** married John Lloyd who died young. In 1712 Margaret Lloyd inherited Gesail Gyfarch and lived there with her daughter **Anna Lloyd, who died in 1784**. The Gesail Gyfarch estate was left to a relative, **John Lloyd** who died a young man, leaving it to his father **Robert Lloyd**, who on his death in 1793 left it to his son **Henry Lloyd**.

His young widow sold her life-interest to Robert Lloyd’s remaining son, **Captain Robert Lloyd** who by 1837 was Vice Admiral. In 1820 he had a survey made of Gesail Gyfarch, which recorded that the buildings “**were in a most ruinous state**”.

4. GESAIL GYFARCH 3.

This may be when **Gesail Gyfarch (site 4)** was built adjacent to site 3. By 1858 Gesail Gyfarch had been willed to Thomas Parry Jones-Parry of Llwyn Onn, Denbighshire.

CEFN Y FAN and GESAIL GYFARCH, EIFIONYDD

A compilation of information concerning the owners, occupiers and buildings.

Moreiddig Warwyn,

Gruffydd ap Moreiddig Warwyn

Gryffydd Fychan ap Gruffydd, Lord of Penyfed (probably lived at end of 13th century).

His heiress Eva married Dafydd ap Gruffydd descended from Rhodri ab Owain Gwynedd, whose ancestors had been moved from Eifionydd to the cantref of Rhos. (J Gwynfor Jones, 1995, *The Wynn Family of Gwydir*, [WFG] p 8)

Their son Hywel ap Dafydd married Eva principal heiress of Ieuan ap Hywel ap Maredudd of Cefn y fan, a descendant of Collwyn ap Tangno.

The remains of the 'Platform' house, Y Llys Ynghefn-y-fan, the home of Ieuan ap Hywel ap Maredudd in the first half of the 14th century, underlies the stone-built house of the middle or later part of the 14th century associated with their son Maredudd ap Hywel. (C A Gresham, 1973, *Eifionydd* p 17-18; WFG p 9)

His brother David had Robert Vaughan whose daughter Catherine married Rhys, ancestor of Edmund Prys, Tyddyn Du, Maentwrog 1673 will of Mary Williams, unmarried, Kessal Gyfarch, Penmorfa. (T C Griffith Achau ac Ewyllysiau Teuleodd De Sir Gaernarfon, 1989, [73])

Maredudd ap Hywel is mentioned in the 1352 Extent entry for Penyfed, amongst the heirs of Gwely Wyrion Gruffydd, who had two mills of their own - Melin Clennau & Melin Aberdunant. (C A Gresham, 1973, *Eifionydd* p 80-81)

Maredudd ap Hywel thus owned an exception concentration of gwely land. He lived in his new stone-built house at Cefn-y-fan, his wife's ancestral lands for his father would have been living at the family house in Penyfed (Y Gesail Gyfarch) (C A Gresham, 1973, *Eifionydd* p 81)

"Three hundred yards north west of the modern house of Gesail Gyfarch are the remains of one of the most important early house sites in Eifionydd There are visible the foundations of three rectangular buildings of platform house type, the largest being fifty by twenty feet, and several must have existed beside it. The associated enclosures and banks cover an area of several acres. There can be little doubt that this was the home of the lords of Penyfed and the house of Hywel ap Dafydd. There is no trace of a stone-built hall-house of the fourteenth century type, and this would fit with the theory that Maredudd ap Hywel built his new house at Cefn-y-fan and then remained there after his father's death, not returning to the out-of-date family mansion on the ancestral lands in Penyfed. (C A Gresham, 1973, *Eifionydd* p 81)

Platform Houses and Enclosures near Gesail Gyfarch, at 550 ft. above O.D. on ground falling gently to the N.W. The site is probably that of the old house of Cesail Gyfarch, destroyed by Owain Glyndwr in 1403. The remains have been damaged by partial clearance and cultivation; they now comprise the foundations of at least three rectangular buildings, and associated enclosures. The walls now appear as grassy banks but those of the buildings were originally of roughly rectangular stone blocks. There is no trace of mortar.

(i) The principal building, probably the Hall, lies near the center of the site. It measures 50 ft. N.W.-S.E. by 21 ft. Its N.W. end lies under a modern shelter-wall, and retains some stonework. The modern wall is built of stone blocks of better quality than is usual in field walling; they are probably derived from the earlier building.

There appear to have been further buildings N. of this wall, covering an area ca. 59 ft. square. Starting ca. 15 ft. S. of (i), a carved hood-wall extends for ca. 40 yds. E. by N. There were probably two or three further buildings, now vanished, on its N. side. Beyond the end of this hood-wall, 45 yds. E. of (i), is Hut (ii), 44 ft N. by W. to S. by E. by 19 ft. N. of (i) and (ii) is an enclosure ca. 70 yds. N.E.-S.W. by 40 yds. Hut (iii), 30 yds S.S.W. of (i) is ca. 37 ft. W.N.W.-E.S.E. by 21 ft, with an enclosure at its N.W. end, 60 ft. N.W. to S.E. by 50 ft.

30 yds E. of (iii) is a line of stones ca. 20 ft. long, which is perhaps the N.W. end of a destroyed house (iv). This forms part of the S. side of an oval enclosure, 30 yds. E.-W. by 13 yds., connecting it with the E. end of (iii).

On the S. side the whole site is bounded by a slight bank, on a steep natural slope, forming roughly an arc of 90 degrees and radius 70 yds. about the S.E. end of (i). (RCAHM-Wales, visited 1955, Caerns II No 988, p 89)

Maredudd ap Hywel dwelt in Eifionydd at his houses Cefn-y-fan and Y Gesail Gyfarch, ... and married Morfydd the daughter of Ieuan ap Dafydd ap Trahaearn Goch of Llyn, who was descended of the house of Rhys ap Tewdwr. (History of the Gwydir Family, Sir John Wynn [HGF], 1990, Gomer Press, Ed. J Gwynfor Jones, p 17 lines 28-37).

Maredudd ap Hywel had two sons by Eva, *Robert from whom Sir John Wynn of Gwydir* was descended, and **Ieuan who inherited all the large estate, most of which in Pennant had come from his grandmother, Eva.** Ieuan ap Maredudd married Lleuci daughter of Hywel of Nannau. (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p 18-19)

"Ieuan ap Maredudd having matched his son (Maredudd ap Ieuan)... to (Margaret) Einion ab Ithel's daughter [who belonged to the house of Lancaster] so he clave fast to that house in that time when Owain Glyndwr rebelled in Wales. In the time of that war he and Maredudd ap Hwlcyn Llwyd of Glynllifon had the charge of the town of Caernarfon and an English captain was over the castle; in revenge whereof Owain **burnt his two houses, Cefn-y-fan and Y Gesail Gyfarch in Eifionydd.**" (pre 1403) (History of the Gwydir Family, Sir John Wynn, 1990, Gomer Press, Ed J Gwynfor Jones, p 22 lines 10124)

(The timber structure of Y Gesail Gyfarch was probably not replaced but rebuilt. [Eifionydd pp 1-2, 86; Platform Houses in North-West Wales, AC 1954, 36-73)

"In the time of that war **Ieuan died at Caernarfon, (4 November 1403** when Caernarfon was besieged by French ships) and was brought by sea [for the passages by land were shut up by Owain's forces] to Penmorfa, his parish church, to be buried. *Robert ap Maredudd ap Hywel his brother, taking a clear contrary course, was out with Owain Glyndwr" (pardoned by Henry V in 1422)* (History of the Gwydir Family, Sir John Wynn, 1990, Gomer Press, Ed. J Gwynfor Jones, p 22 lines 10-24) Probably as a result of this Robert seems to have made no claim to a half share of his father's possessions and large holding of land in Pennant and Penyfed, so the whole passed undivided from Maredudd, through the prematurely dead Ieuan, to Maredudd ap Ieuan (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p.28).

At a tender age **Maredudd ap Ieuan** had married Margaret, heiress of Ieuan ab Ithel of Rhiwaedog. Einion ab Ithel was Esquire of the Body of John of Gaunt in 1395, and his daughter brought to her husband the whole of the Rhiwaedog estate. These may have included holdings in Eifionydd. Of Maredudd ap Ieuan little is known. It is

certain that he **did not rebuild either Cefn-y-fan or Gesail Gyfarch on the original sites**, and the probability is that he built the new house of Ystumcegid about half a mile south-west of Cefn-y-fan in a far more salubrious position. (Eifionydd p 18-19) Maredudd ap Ieuan had two sons, John ap Maredudd and Robert ap Maredudd, Abbot of Bardsey. **Maredudd ap Ieuan probably died about 1460**, and John ap Maredudd would have come into a very substantial inheritance of land in Penyfed and Pennant, and also in Abercain, Trefan, Treflys and Treferthyr, with some in Merioneth on the far side of Traeth Mawr, in Llanfrothen and Nanmor. (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p 20)

John ap Maredudd's long life spanned most of the fifteenth century; he was probably born in its first decade in Ystumcegid, and was presented by Owain Tudor to Queen Catherine. He may have set up his home on the ancestral lands in the rhandir of Y Clennau. In the Wars of the Roses he took up arms in support of his kinsman Owain Tudor, and his son Robert was killed fighting near Ruthin. (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p 20)

John ap Maredudd's great-uncle, Robert ap Maredudd, who had not claimed his share of the inheritance, remained unmarried until he was nearly eighty years of age when he took Angharad of Cefnmelcoed in Cardiganshire as his wife and by her had a son, Ifan ap Robert, and several daughters.

Ifan ap Robert was born about 1437, just at the time when John's sons were being born, and after his father died, being still a child he was placed in John's care, with his mother, and was brought up as one of the family, probably at Clennau.

In 1462, Ifan ap Robert then aged about twenty-five, claimed half his guardian's inheritance, according to Welsh law. The lands were divided by splitting it into the original parts of the two holding of *Y Gesail Gyfarch* and Cefn-y-fan. John ap Maredudd chose to retain Ystumcegid and the lands of Pennant that went with it, thus retaining his father's capital messuage at Ystumcegid, and some holding in Penyfed including those in the rhandir of Y Clennau surrounding the house in which he had lived until about this time. John ap Maredudd died around 1486; his son Evan had Bryncir, Gruffydd had Isallt, Moris the eldest, had Clennau and Owen the youngest had Ystumcegid. (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p 22-23)

Mawd of Gesail Gyfarch married Rhys, whose son Rhydderch was living in 1535, whose son John Prydderch of Tregaian, Anglesey married Elizabeth of Isallt. (T C Griffith, Achau rhai o deuleodd hen siroedd Caernarfon, Meirionnydd a Threfaldwyn, 2003, [253])

In 1462 Ifan ap Robert received Y Gesail Gyfarch and its surrounding lands in Penyfed. He continued the fight on behalf of the Lancastrians till his death. (of plague aged 31 in 1468/9) (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p22)

Ifan ap Robert had married 1st Catherine, daughter of Rhys ap Hywel Vychan of Bron y Foel by whom he had Meredydd (1460 - 1525) of Crug, Cwm Penanmaen and Gwydir, Robert and John. Ifan had three children by 2nd wife Gwenthwyfer daughter of Madog Vychan of Llwyndurys, Abererch, whose daughter Gwynhwyfer married Thomas ap Robin who was beheaded at Conway in 1466 for being firm to King Henry VI. (Pedigrees p 280, 186) NOTE 1: If Meredydd born c 1460 was Ifan's first of six children by two consecutive wives & Ifan died in 1468/9? Or did Robert & John not survive childhood? NOTE 2: If Gwynhwyfer, ?last child of Ifan, was born

around his death in 1468/9, how was she married to Thomas ap Robin who was beheaded in 1466? (Ped p186,280)

“ ... In the wars between the houses of York and Lancaster he (Ieuan ap Robert ap Maredudd) (and all his kin) were Lancastrians, and he was one of the captains of them that burnt the Duke of York's lands of Denbighland, in revenge whereof the King sent William Herbert earl of Pembroke, in Edward the Fourth's time, ... to recover the castle of Harlech ... and wasted with fire and sword all Nanconwy and all the country lying between Conwy and Dyfi.

... He (Ieuan ap Robert ap Maredudd) was a most goodly man of personage, of great stature, as may appear by the Welsh songs made unto him, and most valiant withal. (Poets sang to him at Y Gesail Gyfarch and drew attention to his martial prowess and generous hospitality.) Besides the turmoils abroad he sustained deadly feud (as the northern man terms it) at home in his door, a war far more dangerous than the other. (History of the Gwydir Family, Sir John Wynn 1990, Gomer Press, Ed J Gwynfor Jones, p 28 line 17-p 29 line 15)

c 1462-1468 : "Hywel ap Rhys, (of Bron-y-foel) understanding that Ieuan ap Robert and his people had occasion to go to Caernarfon to the assize, thought it a fit time by force to enter upon his house in his absence and to apprehend all these (outlaws) ... And so suddenly came in a morning to *the hall of Ieuan ap Robert's house* where there were not many people to be seen for the outlaws were in the outhouses about and upper chambers in the lower end of the hall stowed and none were to be seen. Those people of Ieuan ap Robert that were in the hall raised a cry and took themselves to their weapons whereon the outlaws awakened, arose, betook themselves to their weapons and bestired themselves handsomely. It happened the same time that Ieuan ap Robert's wife stood at the fireside looking on her maid boiling of wort to make metheglin, which seething wort was bestowed liberally among the assailants and did help the defendants to thrust back them that were entered and afterwards to defend the house. The house was assaulted with all force and **pierced in diverse places**, and was well defended by those who were within for, **having made diverse breaches**, they dared not enter, few resolute men being able to make a breach good against many. Upon the cry the country did rise and Ieuan ap Robert's tenants and friends assembled in great numbers, wherof Robin ab Inco was captain who fought with the besiegers who, in the end with their arrows did drive the besiegers from one side of the house who continually assaulted the other side.

After they had continued all that day and all night in that manner, the next morning seeing they could prevail little to enter the house, they came to a parley with Robin ab Inco who advised them to be gone in time for, he said 'as soon as the water at Traeth Mawr will give leave Ieuan Grach, my master's kinsman, will be here with Ardudwy men, and then you shall be all slain'. (History of the Gwydir Family, Sir John Wynn 1990, Gomer Press, Ed J Gwynfor Jones, p 41-42)

"It is not known whether a new house had ever been built in the hamlet of Penedef to replace the one destroyed by Owain Glyndwr - as Ystumcegid replaced Cefn-y-fan. It is possible that the old building had merely been repaired, for the description of the home of Ifan ap Robert that Sir John Wynn gives is consistent with this since it **indicates a detached timber building with a number of smaller structures round it. This sounds as if it were a wooden rather than a stone building for narrow openings could be burst through timber walls rather than a stone building by an**

attacking force, but a stone wall could hardly be pulled down in the same way. If Ifan's dwelling was on the ancient site described above, excavation may one day settle these points. (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p 86)

Maud, Gesail Gyfarch, married Rhys whose son Rhydderch was living in 1535. Rhydderch's son John Prydderch, Tregaian, Anglesey, married Elizabeth of Isallt, Eifionydd. (T C Griffith, *Achau rhai o deuleodd hen Siroedd Caernarfon, Meirionnydd a Threfaldwyn*, 2003, [153])

GESAIL GYFARCH, Dolbenmaen, Gwynedd 12-4-08

NGR SH 5404 4175

NOT LISTED

RCAHMW, Caernarvonshire, Vol II, 1960, p 73 (900a) visited **1956**

The present house has been built against the SE end of an earlier two-storied building, probably C16, and a successor to No 988. Some original openings with massive stone lintels remain, also some of the stop-chamfered beams for the ground-floor ceiling. There are large fireplaces on each floor in the SE gable end. The stair, open to the room, is carried up from the first floor over the bressummer of the fireplace, to provide access to attics now destroyed. The roof is modern.

(RCAHM-Wales, visited 1956, Caerns II, No 900a, p 73)

HISTORY of FAMILY (continued)

Ieuan (*Ifan ap Robert ap Maredudd*) died being but one and thirty years old of the plague at Y Gesail Gyfarch, his house." (History of the Gwydir Family, Sir John Wynn, 1990, Gomer Press, Ed. J Gwynfor Jones, p 28 line 17-19).

A safe-conduct was issued on 4 October 1468. He *died late 1468 or early 1469*, probably having caught the plague in the course of campaigning. His inheritance was divided between his five sons. (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p 86-87)

1460-1525: Maredudd ap Ieuan an Robert was his eldest son, of Crug, Penamnen & Gwydir. (History of the Gwydir Family, Sir John Wynn, 1990, Gomer Press, Ed J Gwynfor Jones, p 28 line 14 - notes on p 126)

Mareduddd ab Ifan ap Robert bought land in Eifionydd and probably began consolidating the rhandir of Penyfed into the demesne of Y Gesail Gyfarch.

A 1528 copy of a late fifteenth century rental of his Eifionydd lands survives and includes Gesail Gyfarch at 6s 3d (and Tir yn Llystyn Rhun at 3s 2d. which was left to John Wynn ap Maredudd) (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p 87-88)

Humphrey Wynn: inherited 1525 – died ?

1525: Maredudd ap Ieuan ap Robert left Gesail Gyfairch to Humphrey Wynn, his son by Margaret, daughter of Moris ap John ap Maredudd of Clennau who co-habited with him (Pedigrees p 280). Humphrey Wynn further consolidated the farm of Gesail Gyfarch (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p 87-89)

By 1545 Elise completed the consolidation of the Clenennau estate with a lease from his nephew & neighbour *Humphrey ap Maredudd ab Ifan of Gesail Gyfarch* of lands in Y Clenenny. (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd, p104-5)

Humphrey Wynn married Catherine, daughter & heiress of Evan ap Gruffydd ap Meredudd ap Gwilym Powys, of Cwm Bowydd, Ffestiniog. (Ped p 281) They had:

*1. **John Wynn ap Humphrey**, buried at Ffestiniog, = Catherine, d of William Wynn ap William of Cochwillan, she was buried at Penmorfa c 1594 (Ped p 186)

*2. Evan Lloyd of Havod Lwyfog (1600-1668) buried at Beddgelert,
=1 Catherine, daughter of Gruffydd Wynn of Penyberth & had John Lloyd
=2 Lowry, d of William ap Robert of Beddgelert (Ped p 25, 62, 263)

*3. William = Ann d of John Wynn Morris (Ped p 382) & had Robert Wynn

*4. Thomas = Margaret, d of Eliza ap William Lloyd of Rhiwgoch (Ped p 180)

*5. Gwen = Evan ap Robert ap Evan ap Iorwerth of Tan y Bwlch (Ped p 252, 373)

*6. Margaret = William ap Gruffydd ap John of Castellmarch (Ped p 191, 395)

John Wynn ap Humphrey & Catherine had 16 children:

-1. Robert Wynn died 1637 at Penmorfa, = Margaret, d of Ellis Cadwalader, of Ystumllyn, she died 1639 buried at Criccieth (Ped p 264). They had many children.

-2. William – no heirs; -3. Edward – no heirs; -4. Thomas; -5. Humphrey;

-6. Rowland = ?, d of Rhys William of Cochwillam (Ped p186)

-7. Meredydd; -8. Henry; -9. Arthur; -10. Gabriel – no heirs; -11. Evan; -12. John;

-13. Ellen; -14. Dorothy = Owen Ellis of Ystumllyn died 1662; -15. Mary; -16. Gwen.

1583 Humphrey's son **John Wynn ap Humphrey of Gesail Gyfarch** made a deed of entail listing the lands. (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p 90)

In 1585 **David Lloyd ap Hywel ap Rhys** of Beddgelert was a trustee of an entail (release in trust) of the estate of John Wynn ap Humphrey of Gesail Gyfarch. (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd, p 47-9)

1593 William Maurice of Clenennau three times tried to brutally attack John Wynn of Gesail Gyfarch, and his adult son Robert (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p 91)

1594 Twenty six men came to catch him unaware but he was out in the fields with his servants and saw them coming and was **able to retreat into the house**. His pregnant wife (Catherine) at the door was harassed and died. *Was this the new stone house?*

John Wynn left to live in Cwm Bowydd, Ffestiniog, where he died before 1623.

Eliz I: H 69/7 (36):

Complainant: Jno ap Humffrey of Geselgirach & Ieuan ap Jno Lloyd of Nanthoynen.

Defendant: Wm Maurice, J P. of Clenny, Robert Wynne ap Eliza, also Robert Brynkir, J.P.

Contexts: Causing an assault by diverse ruffians upon cpls on the highway near the church of Penmorfa; harbouring the culprit. (B; Addit – H 71/37, I, Dn) (Cal of Star Chamber Proceedings Relating to Wales, Edwards, 1929, Caernarvon Eliz 1 p 31)

His son **Robert ap John Wynn lived at Gesail Gyfarch** with many of his ten younger brothers. *Did he build the stone house on the new site?*

GESAIL GYFARCH SITE 2: (RCAHMW, Caerns II, No 900a, Visited 1956)

“The present stone house has been built against the SE end of an **earlier two-storied dwelling, probably 16th century**, and a successor to monument no 988. Some original openings with massive stone lintels remain, also some stop chamfered beams for the ground floor ceiling. There are large fireplaces on each floor in the SE gable end. A stair, open to the room, is carried from the floor over the bressumer of the fireplace, to provide access to the attics now destroyed. The roof is modern. Condition: altered, now outbuilding.

DENDROCHRONOLOGY results were as follows:

Transverse / partition beam *felling date range 1580-1610*
12th joist from the front in the LH bay *felling date winter 1609-10*
However the 5th joist from the front in the RH bay was felled between 1479-1509, and may have been re-used from a repaired part of the hall-house.

The transverse partition (felled c1580-1610) was integral to the building of the house; it is possible that joists may have been re-used and also replaced.

It is hoped to survey the house, which is not listed, and is in need of some repair.

It is built chimney-gable end into a steep slope at 175m above O.D. The external ground level at the front of the old house has been modified, probably when the 19th century house was added at right angles across its upper end.

Aspect..... Water supply

Dolbenmaen, Y Gesail Gyfarch (SH 5404 4175) felling date winter 1609/10
A large Snowdonia house of gentry status, superseded by an attached farmhouse of c1830 and subsequently used as an outhouse. The tall, fully-storeyed house is of classic two-unit Snowdonia plan-type with end chimney and (lost) fireplace stair. Timber detail includes an ovolo-moulded mullioned window and the head-beam of a lost post-and-panel partition. The roof trusses have been replaced. The house is associated with the family of Wynn of Gwydir. Account in RCAHMW, Caernarvonshire II, 73. (Vernacular Architecture, Vol 37, 2006, List 181: Welsh Dendrochronology Project – Phase 10)

Y Gesail Gyfarch, Dolbenmaen, Gwynedd

*A Snowdonian house of gentry status associated with the Wynne family, **previously surveyed** by the Royal Commission in Caernarvonshire II, p 73, Tree-ring dating established that the beams were from trees felled during the winter of 1609/10. NPRN 26489 (R Suggett, RCAHMW Annual Review, 2005-6, p 48) =NOT SO!*

Robert Wynn (died 1637) & **Margaret** married c 1605 and had 8 children:

- *1. John Wynn, died 1660, buried at Penmorfa = Jane, d of Evan Lloyd of Dulassau, relict of Edmund Vaughan of Bronheulog;
- *2. Ellis Wynn, A.M. Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge; died before his father.
- *3. Owen Wynn, (1610-1675) A.M., mat Oxon April 13, 1632 aged 22. Bar. at law, Inner Temple, 1640; died 1675 without heirs.
- *4. (?–1664) Humphrey Wynn, Vicar of Oswestry & Master of the Free School, = Barbara, d of Richard Williams of Ruthin.
- *5. Lowry died 1663 unmarried
- *6. Gwen died 1659 unmarried
- *7. Ellen died 1683 unmarried
- *8. Catherine died 1658.

1610 he reclaimed land in Cefn Perfedd taken by Sir William Maurice of Clennau. (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p 92-95)

1623: Robert Wynn of Cwm Bowy, Ffestiniog was assessed at 0s 4d; Crown Rental for Ardudwy, (NLW, ms 12732E, D E Jenkins)

1631 Eifionydd rental: From Robert Wynn, gentleman for his land called Gesail Gyfarch: 13s. (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p 96)

1637 Robert Wynn died.

1637-1660 His son **John Wynn** inherited the estate.

1636: deed drawn up by **John Wynn of Gesail Gyfarch** & other local landowners with Richard Lewis of Kemin fanydd (Cennin fynydd). (C A Gresham, Eifionydd, 1973, p 204)

John Wynn & Jane had:

-1. (1622-85/6) Robert Wynn, Bar. at law, died unmarried in 1685/6 aged 63 years; buried at Llanfairtalhaiarn. He left Gesail Gyfarch to Bishop Humphreys, being his sister Margaret's son.

-2. Mary died 1663.

1664/5 Feb 3: will of Mary Wynn, spinster, Ceselgyfarch, Penmorfa. (NLW, Bangor, wills 1664/81) (T C Griffith Achau ac Ewyllysiau Teuleodd De Sir Gaernarfon, 1989, p 118)

-3. Margaret (5 Dec 1618-18 May 1679) = Richard Humphreys of Gwenllian, Penrhyndeudraeth, died 19 Feb 1699 (Ped p 235); they had Humphrey, John – without heirs & Catherine – without heirs.

Richard = 2 Ann, d of John Wynn of Penyberth (Ped p 263, 357) & had John & Catherine.

-4. Dorothy = John Lloyd of Tyddyn Bychan & had Elin, Lowry & Catherine, who was 1st wife of Henry Lloyd (1686-1766) of Gwynus, Pistyll. (Ped p 297, 129)

Henry Lloyd married 2nd Sydney Griffith of Cefn Llanfair, and had Robert Lloyd (1715-1793) who married Margaret (1733-1784) heiress of Tregayan; they had Henry Lloyd (1754-1794 no heirs) and *John Lloyd* “of Gesail Gyfarch” (1758-1787 no heirs) and *Vice-Admiral Robert Lloyd* (1766-1846). In 1811 his daughter Margaret Hooper Lloyd (1790-1858) married *Thomas Parry Jones-Parry* (1784-1845) of Llwyn Onn & Aberdunant (Ped p 224)

In 1660 their only son **Robert Wynn**, (1622-1685/6) a bachelor barrister, inherited.

1662 Robert Wynn's widowed mother (Mrs Jane Wynne) & unmarried sister (Mary Wynne 1618-1679) lived at Gesail Gyfarch with the comfort of three hearths [the earlier stone house has three hearths].

1673 will of Mary Williams, unmarried, Kessal Gyfarch, Penmorfa. (T C Griffith Achau ac Ewyllysiau Teuleodd De Sir Gaernarfon, 1989, p 120)

1685 **Robert Wynn** died, without issue.

1685-1712 Gesail Gyfarch was left to Humphrey Humphreys, eldest son of Robert's eldest sister Margaret who had married Richard Humphreys of Llanfrothen & also had John (no heirs) & Catherine (no heirs).

Humphrey Humphreys, born 1648, was consecrated Bishop of Bangor in 1689 and died in 1712 when Bishop of Hereford. He married Elizabeth, (1661-1683/4) daughter of Robert Morgan, Bishop of Bangor. One daughter Ann died 1699.

His other daughter Margaret, (1683-1759), married John Lloyd, a barrister of the Inner Temple and son of the Bishop of Norwich. (Ped p221) They had a daughter Anna Lloyd. John Lloyd died young.

1694 Cadwalader Griffith (?tenant Gesail Gyfarch) Wrote/Proved his will at Gesail Gyfarch; details in Latin; died in an accident. His wife was Ann John. (T C Griffith Achau ac Ewyllysiau Teuleodd De Sir Gaernarfon, 1989, p 123)

1712-1759 The widowed **Margaret Lloyd** inherited Gesail Gyfarch from her father Bishop Humphreys. She and her daughter Anna settled permanently at Gesail Gyfarch and with the help of a bailiff and servants they farmed their land

1713 Howell Williams, Gesail Gyfarch 43/-. (T C Griffith Achau ac Ewyllysiau Teuleodd De Sir Gaernarfon, 1989, p 72)

1732 - 41 the feuding over land boundaries with Clennau re-emerged.

1759 Margaret Lloyd died

1759-1784 **Anna Lloyd** owned Gesail Gyfarch and then the family was quite extinct. (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p 96-101)

1769 Gesail Gyfarch Land Tax Ms Lloyd £3-10-6 (GAS, XQA/LT/7/8)

1784-1787: Anna Lloyd left the estate of Gesail Gyfarch to **John Lloyd**, a descendant of Dorothy Wynn, sister to Robert Wynn who had died in 1585.

Gesail Gyfarch, in a somewhat dilapidated condition, was let as a farm house. (C A Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p 96)

1784 Gesail Gyfarch Land Tax John Lloyd Esq. £4-14-0 (GAS, XQA/LT/7/8)

1785 Gesail Gyfarch Land Tax Owner John Lloyd; tenant William Griffith £4-14-0 (GAS, XQA/LT/7/8)

1787 John Lloyd (1758-1787, aged 29) died and Gesail Gyfarch went to his father Robert Lloyd.

1787-1793: **Robert Lloyd**, who died in 1793 aged 78.

1789 Owner Robert Lloyd Esq; Tenant Humphrey Jones £4-14-0 (GAS XQA/LT/7/8)

1790 Owner Robert Lloyd Esq; Tenant Humphrey Jones £4-14-0 (GAS XQA/LT/7/8)

1793 Death of Robert Lloyd; Gesail Gyfarch was left to another of his sons, Henry Lloyd.

1793-1794: **Henry Lloyd**. He died in 1794 and left his estate to his young widow Emma, as they had no children. She agreed to sell her life-interest to Robert Lloyd's remaining son -

1794-1846: **Captain Robert Lloyd**. He married in Portsmouth and by 1837 he was Vice-admiral.

1794-1818 Owner Robert Lloyd; Tenant Humphrey Jones £4-14-0 (GAS XQA/LT 7/8)

1801 Humphrey Jones, Gesail Gyfarch, mentioned in will of William Prichard, Rhwyngddwyrud, Dolbenmarn. (T C Griffith Achau ac Ewyllysiau Teuleodd De Sir Gaernarfon, 1989, p 109)

1805 Howell Griffith's, Brithdir Mawr, granddaughter Ann Jones of Gesail Gyfarch was to have his "chester drawer". (T C Griffith Achau ac Ewyllysiau Teuleodd De Sir Gaernarfon, 1989, p 91)

1819 Owner Robert Lloyd; Tenant Mrs Jones £4-14-0 (GAS XQA/LT/7/8)

Gesailgyfarch estate 1820-1828. Rental, valuation, letters, distress papers & particulars of an allotment of common. (UWB, Porth yr Aur ms 15,625-15,671)

1820 Jan Rent Roll (UWB, Porth yr Aur, ms 15,625)

In October 1820 he had a survey made of Gesail Gyfarch by Robert Williams who recorded that the buildings were “in a most ruinous state and the walls and fences much out of repair. It will take a large sum to lace the building and walls in tenatable repair” (UWB Porth yr Aur 15,1626).

WAS THIS WHEN THE NEW HOUSE WAS BUILT?

1821 Jan Rentroll: Gesail – Mrs Jones £150 p.a. (UWB Porth yr Aur 15,1626).

1821 “Account of the Gesail Gyfarch rents received for 1821 and of the **money laid out in repairs** together with the vouchers for payments made – Griffith Griffith flatters himself although that the money laid out in the repairs is very great taking into consideration the great deal of work that has been done that you will find that the whole work was done in common ... and in such substantial manner that it will require no great repairs again for half a century to come. ...” (UWB, Porth yr Aur ms 15,629)

1822 May Rent No 8: Gesail – Mr Griffith Griffith £160. Land Tax £4-14-0. Owner Captain Lloyd. £40 repairs + £21 timbers; £186 cash paid out for various work. (UWB Porth yr Aur 15,1627).

1823 July: Invoice £8-0-6d for making stone walls at Gesail Gyfarch:

25 roods – 8yds at 3s per foot £3-15-0

19 roods at 4/6d per foot £4-5-6

£8-0-6 (UWB, Porth yr Aur, ms 15,644)

1823 Aug 27: Capt Lloyd to Mr Jones Esq, solicitor, Caernarvon re Robert Lloyd. Quit rents due. Capt Lloyd says “having the Gesail estate 37 years”. (UWB, Porth yr Aur, ms 15,645)

1826 death of Humphrey Jones, Gent, Gesail Gyfarch. His parents were John Humphrey, Gent., Erwsuran & Rhwngddwyafon & Jane; his wife was Dorothy & their daughter Ann married Rev Griffith Owen, Ymlwch Fawr & she died 1851.

(T C Griffith Achau ac Ewyllysiau Teuleodd De Sir Gaernarfon, 1989, p 151, [30])

Vice-Admiral Robert Lloyd died in 1846, entailing his property to his grandson Robert Lloyd Jones-Parry (1816-1870) after the death of his second wife.

1841 census

1844 Penmorfa Tithe map & schedule

Gesail Gyfarch Owner Robert Lloyd Esq tenant Owen Humphrey 352a 3r 2p

1846-1858: Robert's **mother Margaret Jones-Parry** (1790-1858) managed to get the trustees to release to her the Gesail Gyfarch estate. She died in 1858 and willed Gesail Gyfarch to her second son.

1851 census

1858-?: Thomas Parry Jones-Parry (1823-?), who also inherited Llwyn Onn in Denbighshire and Tregaeon.

Robert Parry Jones-Parry, the eldest son inherited only Aberdunant, bought in 1835 from Major Wardle. Robert's eldest son Thomas in 1877 tried unsuccessfully to obtain the title of Gesail Gyfarch. (CA Gresham, 1973, Eifionydd p 131-133)

1861 census

1871 census

1881 census

1802-1889 Owen Humphreys, Gesail Gyfarch =1st Ellen Owen, (1811-1860) & had Owen (1835-?); William (1836-?); Margaret (1839-64); Eleanor (1846-?); Martha (1847-67); Jane (1849-?). (T C Griffith Achau ac Ewyllysiau Teuleodd De Sir Gaernarfon, 1989, [98]; T C Griffith, Achau rhai o deuleodd hen Siroedd Caernarfon, Meirionnydd a Threfaldwyn, 2003, [152])

1891 census

1893 Morris Llewelyn (1828-1893) Gesail Gyfarch. (T C Griffith, Achau rhai o deuleodd hen Siroedd Caernarfon, Meirionnydd a Threfaldwyn, 2003, [150])

Ellen Llewelyn (1913-) = William Williams, Gesail Gyfarch; their daughter Elizabeth married Dewi Williams, Tyddyn Deucwm Uchaf.

1901 census

1900s: Gesail Gyfarch: a daughter of Edward (1852-1904) & Sudney Griffith (1854-1924), Braich. (T C Griffith Achau ac Ewyllysiau Teuleodd De Sir Gaernarfon, 1989, [93])

(1878-1955) John Williams, Maesyllech, Dolwgan & Gesail Gyfarch married Margaret Griffith (1887-1934), Braich.

One of their sons, Edward Williams (died 1982/3), married Gwyneth Roberts & had Gwyndaf Williams, Gesail Gyfarch, who married Myfanwy, and had two children. The other son, John Williams, Gesail Gyfarch married Margaret and had children (T C Griffith, Achau rhai o deuleodd hen siroedd Caernarfon, Meirionnydd a Threfaldwyn, 2003, [109])

See house deeds; local memories; church & chapel records

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Research by Margaret Dunn
16 April 2008

APPROXIMATE CHRONOLOGY at CEFNYFAN & GESAIL GYFARCH

Gruffydd Fychan ap Gruffydd Rhodri ap Owain Gwynedd Collwyn ap Tangno
 Lord of Penyfed (late 13th C) living 1188

Eva = Dafydd ap Gruffydd Ieuan ap Hywel ap Maredudd
 Y Llys Yngefn y fan (early C14th)

Hywel ap Dafydd = Eva
 Y Gesail Gyfarch Cefn y fan

I

Maredudd ap Hywel (alive 1352)
 Probably built mid-C14th stone house at Cefn y fan

I

Robert ap Maredudd
 supported Owain Glyndwr
 1422 pardoned by Henry V
 aged c 80 when married

I

I

I

I

I

Ieuan ap Robert c1437-1469
 active in Wars of Roses
 1462 received Gesail Gyfarch
 1460s Gesail Gyfarch attacked
 1468 died of plague at GG

I

I

Maredudd ap Ieuan ap Robert
 1460-1525
 of Crug, Penamnen & Gwydir
 probably began to consolidate
 Gesail Gyfarch holding

I

Humphrey Wynn his eldest son by Margaret, daughter of Moris ap John ap
 Maredudd. ? built the (probably 16th C) house on a new site at Gesail Gyfarch

I

John Wynn alive 1585

1593-4: confrontation with William Maurice (great grandson of Moris) of Clennau

I

Robert Wynn adult 1593-4 & 1610: confrontation with William Maurice of
 Clennau 1631 : in Eifionydd rental; died 1637 at Gesail Gyfarch

I

John Wynn - died 1660 at Gesail Gyfarch

I

Robert Wynn (1622-1685/6 no heirs) In 1662: Three hearths at Gesail Gyfarch.

1685: Bishop Humphrey Humphreys, son of Robert's sister Margaret inherited GG.