

DATING OLD WELSH HOUSES PROJECT

DENDROCHRONOLOGY RESULTS

TŶ MAWR

Llandwrog, Caernarfonshire

(SH 5086 5333)

Felling date range: 1536-56

Principal rafters 1535(7), 1520(1), 1518(5), 1515(5²), 1509(h/s).

Site Master 1428-1535 GWYNEDD1 ($t = 8.3$ PLASMAWR; 8.1 GWYDWN; 7.9 NORTH).

Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory

House Description:

Tŷ-mawr is a classic early storeyed house of Snowdonian type. The ground-floor plan is characteristic: a cross-passage separates the ceiled hall with end fireplace from twin outer rooms. A stone fireplace stair (?later) gives access to two intercommunicating first-floor chambers formerly open to the roof. The principal chamber on the first floor has a corbelled end fireplace with the refinement of a latrine shute alongside. The roof of four bays has archbraced trusses with quatrefoiled apexes flanking the cusped partition truss. Tree-ring dating confirmed that this is one of the earlier houses of Snowdonian plan-type and may be compared with Y Garreg Fawr and Caeglas (VA 37, 131). Plan and account: RCAHMW, *Caernarvonshire Inventory III* (1964), p. 184; detailed report (2010) commissioned by NWWDP deposited in the NMRW.

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The present list includes sampling commissioned in 2009-10 by 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. Extra work was carried out at Vaynol Old Hall with funding provided directly from the owner, Mr G Jones, and further results were obtained. 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-llan, Gwyddelwern, 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.

The following buildings were sampled but failed to date: 16A/18 Palace Street, Caernarfon (SH 478 627), Tyn-twr, Bethesda (SH 6220 6690), and Felin Moelfre, Llanaelhaearn (SH 3992 4405) in Caernarfonshire;

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