

## Holly Cottage



*Holly Cottage in 2023, photographed from across the valley.*

Holly Cottage doesn't seem to be included on John Evans' 1795 map of North Wales, although it was marked (though not named) on an Ordnance Survey map of the area from 1835, so possibly (although by no means certainly) it was built sometime in that forty year period.



*The 1835 Ordnance Survey map.  
© The British Library Board.*



*The tithe map of 1844. Holly Cottage is number 283, along with the field number 284.*

*Courtesy The National Library of Wales.*

On the 1844 tithe survey the property comprised numbers 283 and 284. It was owned and occupied by Thomas Davies, who also owned and occupied what is now Craig yr Aderyn on the other side of Fron Fawr. Note that there was no building on the site of 284, where the house Fron Fawr now stands.

## The House

This property which appears on records from as early as 1835 has a history of not being named, changing names and completely disappearing on many OS maps, even up to recent times. A summary timeline of the building, taken from censuses, the tithe survey and maps, shows the variations in name and how it was recorded.

1795 – Not marked on John Evans' map of North Wales.

1835 – OS drawing shows building but not named.

1841 – Called Tŷn Fron.

1844 – Tithe survey in 1844 - No. 283 and 284. Not named.

1851 – Called Fron Fawr.

1871 – Called Tŷ Issa Fron.

1874 – Holly Cottage & Fron Fawr marked on 1874 OS map.

1881 – Called Fron Eglwyseg.

1891 – Called Tŷ Issa Fron.

1900 – Holly Cottage marked but not named on 1900 OS map.

1901 – Called Vron Cottage.

1911 – Not mentioned in 1911 Census.

1921 – Called Holly Cottage.

1939 – Property vacant.

1963 – Holly Cottage marked but not named on 1963 OS map.



*As late as 1963, just the original building was marked on the site of Holly Cottage, with no sign of any additions.*

On the title map, the building of Holly Cottage is marked as a single building, with its long axis pointing across the valley. This coincides with the building that can be seen with the gable towards us in a photograph from 1932, although an extension



*Holly Cottage in 1932.*

can be seen to have been added by that time behind the original house. Curiously it remained (incorrectly) marked as a single building on the Ordnance Survey maps up until the latter part of the 20th century. Since that time Holly Cottage has been enlarged and extended by successive owners to form the much larger house that it is today.



*The building added behind the original cottage can be seen in this photograph of 1934.*

### The People

Holly Cottage has been owned by many people with varied ranges of occupations, from farm labourer to weaver and pension clerk to decorator.

Noticeable in the records of the occupants are the number of (relatively young) widows who have lived at Holly Cottage. This could reflect the severity of working conditions for the men at the time, the poorer health care available or, in the case of the 1921 Census, the effect of the First World War and possibly the movement of family members eager to relocate to be with other relatives who had also experienced family loss.

## Owners and Occupiers

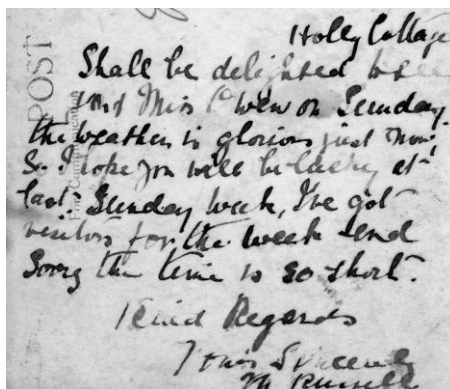
1841 is the earliest that we can say with certainty who was living in Holly Cottage (then Tŷn Fron), when Thomas Davies and his family were recorded on the Census. When their eldest daughter Elizabeth was born nine years earlier, however, Thomas and Elinor were already living in Eglwyseg and so it seems very likely that they were in Tŷn Fron already at that date.

BAPTISMS solemnized in the Parish of <i>Stangollen.</i> in the County of <i>Denbigh</i> in the Year 18 <i>32.</i>						
When Baptized.	Child's Christian Name.	Parents Name.		Abode.	Quality, Trade, or Profession.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
		Christian.	Surname.			
1832. <i>Elizabeth</i> <i>August</i> <i>26</i> No. 1321.	<i>Elizabeth</i> <i>daughter</i> <i>of Elinor</i>	<i>Thomas</i>	<i>Davies.</i>	<i>Eglwyseg.</i>	<i>Weaver.</i>	<i>Richard Prosser.</i> <i>Curate.</i>

*The baptism of Elizabeth Davies in August 1832.*

- 1841 Thomas Davies (55, weaver), Elinor Davies (45, wife), Elizabeth Davies (9, daughter) and Mary Davies (6, daughter).
- 1844 Thomas Davies.
- 1851 Thomas Davies (67, weaver), Elinor Davies (58, wife), Elizabeth Davies (18, daughter), Margaret Davies (15, daughter).
- 1871 Jane Jones (57, widow), Elizabeth Jones (6, daughter).
- 1881 David Davies (27, labourer), Ellen Davies (26, wife), Edward Davies (3, son), Catherine Davies (9m, daughter).
- 1891 Mary Griffiths (40, dressmaker, widow), Emily Griffiths (13), Jane Griffiths (11).
- 1901 Elizabeth Smith (42, widow), Catherine Smith (13, daughter), William Smith (10, son).
- 1911 Not included in Census.
- 1921 Mary Emma Russell (53, widow), her son John Norman Russell (33, a war pensions clerk) and her sister Annie Newbold (56, also a widow).
- 1932 Mary Russell was still living at Holly Cottage.

*Postcard written by Mary Russell to a friend in Widnes in 1932.*



1937 Mary Russell died and was buried in Liverpool.

Corporation of Liverpool							Allerton Cemetery			
REGISTER OF							BURIALS.			
Register No.	Division	Date of Burial	NAME	Age	Rank or Profession	Last Abode	Parish or Township	Mode of Burial	Order No.	Section
42190	RC	13 Dec 1937	Juba Martin	47 years		76 Holly Street	Liverpool	Public	40693	18
42191	Con	13	Patricia Jones	2yrs	Infant	62 Rochford St	Liverpool	Public	40694	8
42192	RC	23	Samuel Jane Thompson	15 hrs		126 Smithdown Road	Liverpool	Public	1964	1
42193	Con	14	Mary Emma Russell	69 years	Widow	Holly Cottage Fronaglwyseg	Allerton	Sub.	40685	9

*Mary Russell's burial at Allerton Cemetery, Liverpool in 1937.  
Her address was recorded as Holly Cottage, Fronaglwyseg.*

1939 Holly Cottage was marked as empty.

1986 Joseph William Mills, Margaret Mills (wife).

1996 Nicholas Stoner, Angela Stoner (wife), Francesca Stoner (daughter).

## Conclusions

It would appear that over the past 200 years many paper census records have been lost or destroyed. OS map surveys were disrupted by wars and lack of resource, hence the disappearance of buildings such as Holly Cottage on public record.

## Holly Cottage 2023

The property is now permanently on the OS maps and has been substantially developed since the time of Thomas Davies. More residents have moved here from further afield and the reliance on agriculture diminished. How different it must be from the time of the holidaying family from Liverpool in 1943.

*By Nicholas and Angela Stoner.*