

Penyclawdd Farm



Penyclawdd Farm in 2023.

Penyclawdd is a farmhouse of the early to mid 17th century. It has a lobby-entry plan with rear wing on the right, and a later wing on the left. A date of 1631 occurs on the fireplace lintel of the north room, and 1693 above a first floor door lintel, with the number 3 written backwards.



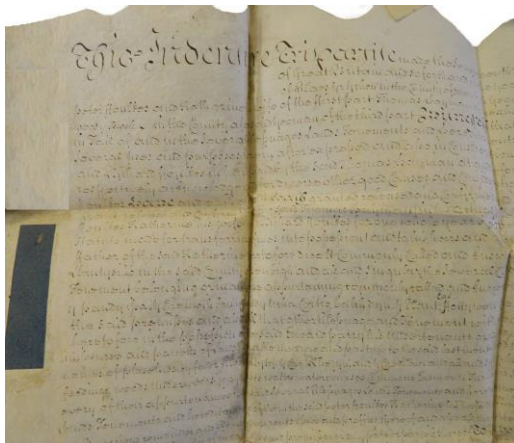
The 1693 date on an upstairs door lintel at Penyclawdd. Writing the number 3 backwards was thought to confuse the devil.



Today Penyclawdd Farm is accessed from a lane that leads off the old pass, going down into the valley and past Hen Bandy. However, looking at an aerial view of the farm, a track (now a bridleway) leading from the old pass could indicate a previous entrance into the farm, or possibly even an earlier route of the old pass road.

A bridleway, highlighted here in blue, could mark an earlier entrance to the farm.

It is not until a hundred years after the earlier of the two dates, however, that we begin to find out about the families who lived at Penyclawdd. The details come from a document of 1748 which was created by Peter Ffoulkes and his wife Katherine of Penyclawdd, to ensure that their son Richard would inherit the freehold of the farm. The indenture describes the property as:-



An indenture dating from 1748 in which the Ffoulkeses and Parrys of Penyclawdd are named. Courtesy North East Wales Archives, Ref. D/BC/5494.

‘all that message and tenement, with the appurtenances, wherein Edward Parry late father of the said Katherine heretofore dwelt, commonly called and known by the name of Penyclawdd, situate, lying and being in Maes yr Ychen in the parish of Llantysilio’.

From this we can see that Penyclawdd Farm had previously been the home of Edward Parry and that, when he died in 1735, the property had passed to his daughter Katherine and her husband Peter Ffoulkes (or Foulkes). And so began the ownership of the Penyclawdd estate by the Foulkes family, a partnership that would continue for nearly one hundred and fifty years. From 1740 until 1798 the land tax records show members of the family as being freeholders in Maesyrychen.

Male Hundred		94	
Township	Townships in the Parish of Llantysilio	1740	1798
<u>Maes y Ychen</u>			
Peter Foulkes	Freeholder	10	1:12:6
John Jones	Freeholder	10	0:11:4 1/2
John Morris, Junr. to Mr. Price of Ael	Freeholder	10	0:17:10 1/2

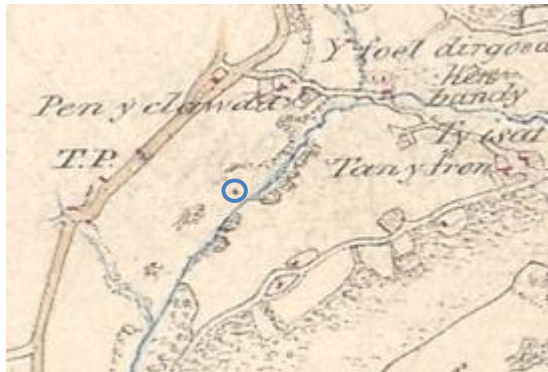
Selected entries from the 1740 (above) and 1798 (right) land tax records. In 1740 Peter Foulkes was paying £1 12s 6d for the freehold of Penyclawdd. Nearly 60 years later in 1798 Edward Foulkes was paying 5d less at £1 12s 1d.

Courtesy North East Wales Archives, QSD/DK/1/57.

The Year 1798.

Names of Proprietors.	Names of Occupiers.	Sums Affixed.		
		£	s	d
<u>Township of Maesyrychen</u>				
to William W.W. Dool. The Tyle Farms		4	19	5
Mr. Middleton	Rob ^o Hughes	2	12	11 1/2
Henry Jones	Self	6	5	
D ^o	D ^o	12	10	
Edw ^o Foulkes	Self	1	12	1

The Penyclawdd Estate encompassed a number of other nearby properties, including the land on which Siloh Chapel was built, Tan y Capel, Bryn Goleu and Pen y Clawdd Cottage, which we think was built by the Foulkeses in the early 19th century. Intriguingly the 1748 indenture lists the names of fields on the estate and mentions ‘all that



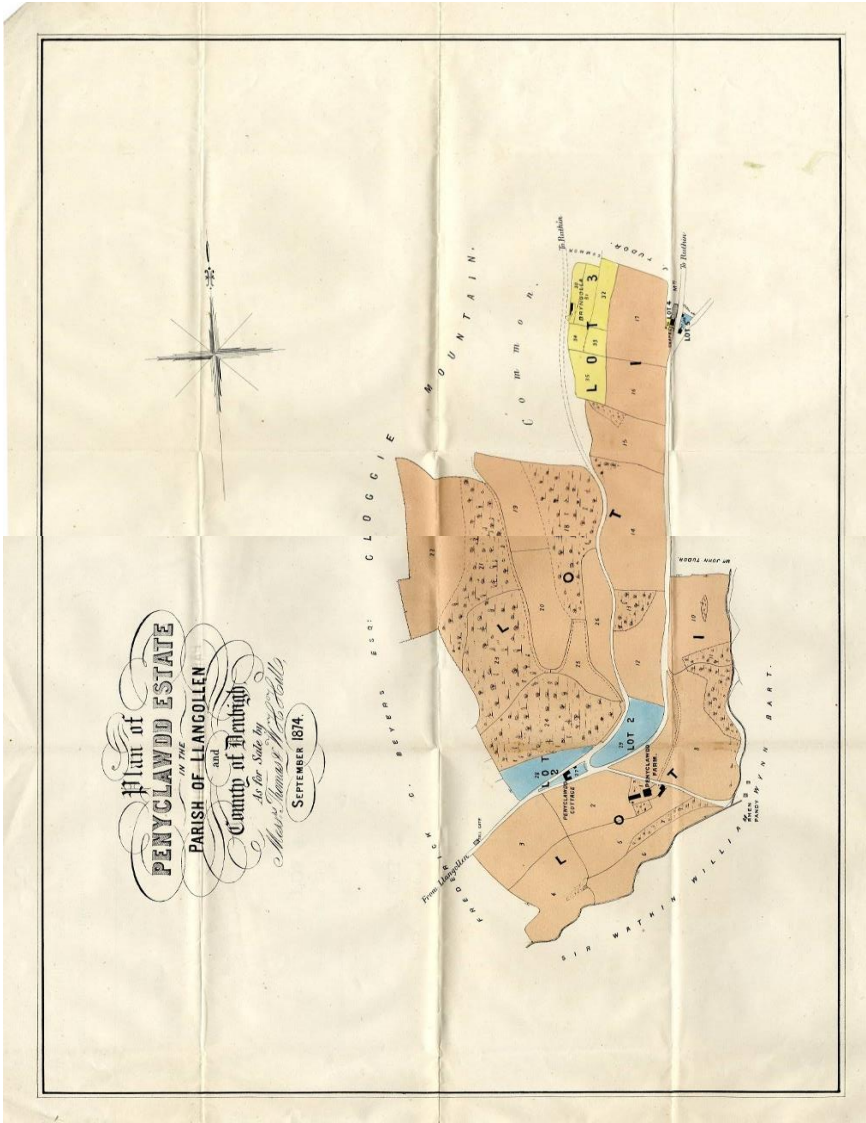
An Ordnance Survey map drawn in 1835, with the possible location of the ‘missing’ pandy highlighted in blue.

fulling mill lately erected upon part of the said premises’. It cannot be referring to Hen Bandy, the Old Fulling Mill located just below Penyclawdd, as that had existed many years before and was located on Wynnstay Estate land. A bit further downstream was the pandy that had belonged to Valle Crucis Abbey, but again that had been working for centuries and was certainly not

‘lately erected’. The only contender for this now missing fulling mill is a small building marked on an 1835 Ordnance Survey plan, close to the Eglwyseg Stream in one of the fields below Penyclawdd Farm. It was marked on the 1874 auction plan but was hatched in grey, indicating that it was disused by that date. The building continued to appear on the Ordnance Survey maps until 1900 – it had totally gone by 1912.

The Foulkes family continued to farm at Penyclawdd until the middle of the 19th century. Peter Foulkes, his wife Elizabeth and their six children, Edward, Robert, Sarah, Peter, Richard and John were the last to farm there, having taken over from Peter’s father and mother Edward and Mary when they died, Mary in 1843 and Edward in 1844.

Around 1860, however, with Peter moving into his 70s, they decided to give up farming and moved up to live in Pen y Clawdd Cottage, where they became shopkeepers. They still owned the farm and let it out to tenant farmers, the first being widower David Davies, who worked the farm with his son and daughter Thomas and Anne. They didn’t remain at Penyclawdd for very long, however, as around 1865, 46 year old Joseph Jones and his family took over the tenancy at the farm. Joseph was originally from Llangollen and Margaret, his wife, from Beaumaris on Anglesey. They had been living in Llangollen before moving out to Llantysilio. With them in 1871 were their four daughters, Margaret, Sarah, Jane and Elizabeth.



A map of the Penyclawdd Estate at the time of its auction in 1874.

Although Joseph and his family would continue to lease Penyclawdd into the start of the 20th century, their landlords changed in 1874. Following the death of Peter Foulkes in 1869, and then four years later that of Elizabeth in 1873, the Estate was put up for auction. Split into five lots

Penyclawdd Farm was Lot 1 and contained by far the most land. The whole estate was purchased by Frederick C. Beyer of Llantysilio Hall, whose existing property bordered the Pen y Clawdd estate on the northern side. Fortunately for Joseph and his family the Llantysilio Estate honoured their existing tenancy and the 1886 rental record showed them still in residence, paying an annual rent of £103 2s for the farm.

The 1886 Llantysilio Hall rental book shows Joseph Jones renting Penyclawdd.

Llantysilio Estate
Rental Account Year Ending 31st March 1886

Name	Address	Rental	Remarks
A. B. Releton	Hall, Berwyn, Pwllheli	500	In hand this season
John Jones	Hall Farm	220	do do
Edward Jones	Pen-y-bryn	56 0	do do
Edward Jones (son)	Cae Dowllyn	42	do do
do	Cae Nela	42	do do
Thomas Jones	Frygoed	38	do do
do	Pen-y-felin Hill	30	do do
Thomas Evans	Gyffellie	57 0	do do
Edward Lloyd	Mangeruan	22	do do
David Jones	Dynia, Llantysilio	42	Part of 1887
Mary Watkins	Llandysnan	33	do do
John Davies	Bwlch	30	Part of 1887
Thomas Jones	Bwlch	40 0	do do
Charles Evans	Coed-y-Gedfa	12	do do
Joseph Jones	Pen-y-Clawdd	103 2	do do
Anna Roberts	Pen-y-gella	9	do do
Carried forward		1231 0 6	

Joseph and Margaret's second daughter Sarah sadly died in 1883 aged just twenty years old. Buried in Llantysilio Graveyard, she was joined twelve years later by her mother Margaret.



Sarah and Margaret Jones' gravestone in Llantysilio Churchyard (above) and Joseph's burial record (left).

In 1901, seventy seven year old Joseph was still farming at Penyclawdd, now just with his youngest daughter Elizabeth and her husband of eight years Edward Henry Jones, along with seventy year old farm servant Thomas Davies. However, in 1903 Joseph also passed away and Elizabeth and Edward Henry moved across the valley to Fron Cottage.

Joseph Jones	Penyclawdd Farm	Aug. 14	80 70	L. L. Jones Vicar.
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No. 759

Henry and Mary Ann Davies moved into Penyclawdd Farm. Henry was originally from Llantysilio but Mary was born in Llandrillo. Previously they had lived in Glanrafon, Rhewl, where Henry had been a labourer, but they had evidently decided to try their hand at farming. However, by 1921 they had moved on and sixty three year old farmer David Ellis leased the farm from the Llantysilio Estate, along with his wife Jane, his daughter Annie Maria and his son John, along with John's wife Ellen Mary and their three children. David was originally from Llangadwaladr and Jane from Llanarmon DC, but the family had been farming at Coed y Gadfa in Llansilin, near Oswestry, before moving to Pentredŵr. They had two other children, Margaret Jane Ellis and David Foulkes Ellis. The Foulkes in David's name came from a familial connection with the Foulkes family of Llangedwyn, but whether they were connected to the Foulkeses that had previously owned the Penyclawdd Estate is not known. The Ellises remained at Penyclawdd for fifteen more years, but then in 1936, David died.

Farming at Penyclawdd was continued by Barnett Williams, his wife Margaret and their two daughters Jane Eluned and Alice Ceridwen. Margaret was, in fact, David and Jane Ellis' daughter, which explains why, in the 1939 electoral roll, her mother and sister were still living at Penyclawdd Farm

Penyclawdd Farm	116	1	William Barnett W.	M	21 Jul 85	M	General Farmer
do	117	2	William Margaret	F	14 Jul 88	M	Unpaid Domestic Duties
do	Mzd 117	3	William Jane E.	F	28 Jul 19	S	Shop Assistant (Tobacco)
do	215-30	117	William Alice C.	F	28 Dec 22	S	Dairy maid with relatives
do	1-85	117	Alice Annie M.	F	14 Aug 92	S	Unpaid Domestic Duties
do	236	117	Ellice Jane	F	25 Nov 87	W	Retired Farmer

The 1939 electoral roll for Penyclawdd Farm

Barnett Williams was the son of Edwin and Catherine Williams of Pentredŵr Farm (Eglwyseg), and had married Margaret Jane Ellis in 1916, with the couple (and their children) initially continuing to live at Pentredŵr Farm. So when Margaret's father died it would have been natural for them to move down the road to help Jane and Annie continue to farm at Penyclawdd.

Barnett and Margaret's two daughters, Eluned and Ceridwen, married Eddie and Richard, sons of William and Annie Evans at neighbouring Tan y Fron Farm. Eluned and Eddie were married in 1945 and Ceridwen and Richard in 1950. Ceridwen and Richard took over farming at Tan y Fron, whilst, when Barnett died in 1951, Eluned and Eddie continued to run Penyclawdd. With an eye on the future, some years later, Eluned and Eddie bought Pandy, just down the road by Valle Crucis Abbey, renting it out to tenants, to give a second income. When they gave up farming in 1984 they retired there.



Barnett and Margaret Williams' gravestone in Llantysilio Churchyard.

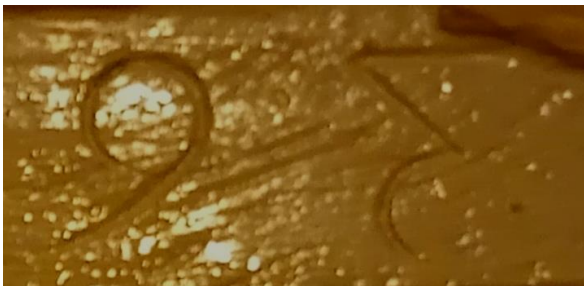
It was at Pandy, in September 1990 that Eluned's mother Margaret Jane passed away, aged 102 years. She was buried alongside Barnett in Llantysilio graveyard. Very sadly it was just three months later that her husband Eddie also died, aged 71.

Following Eluned and Eddie's departure from Penyclawdd the Llantysilio Estate leased out the house to Tony and Helen Wilson, who had previously lived at Tŷ Brith in the Eglwyseg Valley. For over thirty five

years Tony and Helen made Penyclawdd their home, raising their four children and using the farm as a base for their groundworks business. They stayed at Penyclawdd until 2020 when, because most of their equipment was stored at a site in Ruabon, it became easier to move there rather than travel across every morning.

The Llantysilio Estate, now part of the Tate sugar empire, and having had Llantysilio Hall sold away from the estate in 2007, rented Penyclawdd out to the present tenants, Iwan and Carol Lewis. Since

moving in there have been some unexplained events – doors opening by themselves, keys swinging in locks and then suddenly stopping – that has made them wonder whether or not the reversed numbers in the date on the upstairs door lintel are effective in keeping away the spirits!



The reversed number 3 in the date on the upstairs door lintel was designed to confuse the devil and evil spirits. But does it work?

By David Crane and Iwan and Caroline Lewis.