

Pen yr Erw



The ruins of Pen yr Erw in 2020.

The tithe map and apportionment for Eglwyseg recorded Pen yr Erw as being owned by Thomas Roberts and lived in by Edward Lloyd. At that time the property encompassed an area of 2 roods and 23 perches, for which the tithe was 1s 5d. We have been unable to discover any mention of the property before that date, which then (1851 census) appears to have been known as Bryn y Ffynnon (Hill of the Well). Edward Lloyd was a sixty eight year old agricultural labourer and lived at the cottage with his wife Catherine and their children Enoch and Catherine and granddaughter Elizabeth. Seventeen year old Enoch was recorded as a quarryman. Twenty years later (1871) the cottage, now called Pen Rhiw (Top of the Hill) was occupied by an 82 year old labourer, Thomas Hughes, his wife Harriet and 3 children.

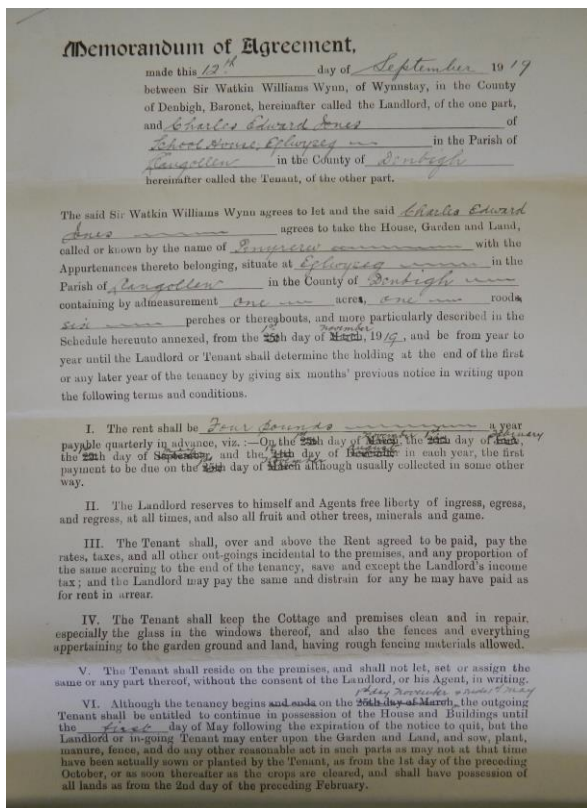


The tithe map of 1844, showing Pen Yr Erw.

In 1881 Pen yr Erw was unoccupied, but ten years later 43 year old farm labourer George Roberts, his wife Elizabeth (also 43), and their three children, Edward, Ellen and James had moved in. However, by 1901 it lay empty again.

At some point Pen yr Erw had been purchased by the Wynnstay Estate, and in 1907 Catherine Jones was paying £1 for 2 roods and 8 perches. Sixty eight year old Catherine was still living alone there in 1911, although she was registered as being married not widowed, so possibly her husband was away on the day of the census.

Local folklore had it that the lady who moved in after Thomas Hughes was a witch. People said, when their butter refused to congeal, that she had 'turned their butter'. Whether this was a tale about Elizabeth Roberts or Catherine Jones is not clear.



The rental agreement of 1919.

In 1919 Pen yr Erw was rented out by the Wynnstay Estate to Charles Edward Jones of the School House in Eglwysyg. His rent was £4 per year, but the area had increased to 1 acre, 1 rood and 6 perches. Whether Charles actually lived in the cottage or just used the land is not clear. The agreement includes a clause saying that 'the tenant shall keep the cottage and premises clean and in repair, especially the glass in the windows thereof', although that may have just been a standard clause in the Wynnstay rental agreements of the time.

Pen yr Erw was not included in the 1939 lectoral register and so was possibly already empty by then. It continued to be marked and named on the Ordnance Survey maps until 1953, although had disappeared by 1963 and so was almost certainly going into ruin by then.



The 1953 OS map marks and names Pen yr Erw (left), but by 1963 (below) it had gone.



We hope to have a more complete story of Pen Yr Erw available soon.