

3 The principal inhabitants at the beginning of the 17th century

Materials for the history of Newborough during the 17th century are quite rare. After the Government's Survey of 1608, William Owen *gent.* and others, on the basis of letters of title dated 9th February 1568, given to Lewis Owen ap Meyrig, Edward ap John Lloyd and others, claimed the following houses and lands in Hendre Rhosfair and Maerdref:-

	<i>ac.</i>	<i>r.</i>	<i>p</i> ¹
“4-room house called Fron Deg, with 2-room kitchen, garden and orchard, and a field, either arable or for pasture	22	0	0
2 hay meadows	11	0	0
piece of arable land next to Gallt Beder field	3	0	0
piece of arable land for in Cae Eithin	2	0	0
piece of arable land called Cae Dafydd ap Morgan	12	0	0
hay meadow in this field	2	0	0
field called Erw Hirion, and two pieces of land in Carreg y Gwídd	24	0	0
piece of land called Cors Griffith	4	0	0
another piece of pasture-land called Cae cors y llyn	2	0	0
field of arable land called Cae Sych	2	0	0
field of pasture in Nghae Glyb	1	0	0
another piece of pasture land in Cefn Mawr	2	0	0
Rowland Williams holds 3 pieces of arable land near Carreg y Gwídd	1	2	0
another piece of arable land in Cefn Mawr	2	2	0
piece of pasture land in the same spot	2	2	0
Tudur son of Ieuan holds three pieces of arable land in Carreg y Gwídd	1	2	0
Nest daughter of Ieuan, widow [or spinster], holds a 2-room house, a garden, and a piece of arable land in Carreg y Gwídd	1	0	0
John ap William Jenkin and Agnes daughter of William hold a 1-room house with pieces of arable land in Carreg y Gwídd	2	0	0
David son of Llywelyn holds a piece of arable land in Erw Goch	1	1	10
Sundry pieces of arable land in Gallt Peder	1	0	0
Richard son of Ieuan Lloyd holds 2 crofts of arable land beyond Gors llyn	3	0	0
Robert son of David holds a cottage, with a piece of arable land in Cefn Mawr	1	2	0
William son of Hugh holds a cottage, with a piece of arable land in Cefn Mawr	1	0	0
Owen Lewis holds 2 pieces of arable land in the Maerdref	1	0	0
Arthur Morris holds a piece of arable land in the same place	0	1	0

¹ Acres, rods and perches - units of land measure

Rees son of John holds a piece of arable land	1	0	0
Elizabeth Owen, widow [or spinster], holds a 2-room house, and an adjoining field	6	0	0
adjoining hay meadow	5	0	0
field of arable land called Cae allan	4	0	0
another field of arable land called Cae Berth ddu, with 3 small adjacent fields	12	0	0
/21/Arthur Morris holds a 1-room cottage, and a field in Cefn Bychan	2	0	0
4 pieces of arable land and pasture in the same place	4	0	0
Rowland son of William ap Edward ² holds a 1-room house, with a piece of arable land in Cefn Bychan	2	0	0
2 pieces, adjacent, of arable land in Gallt Peder	2	0	0
Richard son of Rhydderch ³ holds a 2-room house, with a piece of arable land in Cefn Bychan	2	2	0
<i>croft</i> of arable and pasture land in the same place	1	3	0
2 other pieces of arable and pasture land in the same place	4	0	0
hay meadow	1	0	0
<i>croft</i> of arable and pasture land in Gallt y Cleifion	3	0	0
John Jones <i>gent.</i> , holds a 2-room house and a field of arable land	8	0	0
7 pieces of arable land in Carreg y Gwídd	8	0	0
5 pieces of arable land in Gallt peder	2	0	0
another piece of arable land by the warren	1	3	0
John David son of Rees holds a field of arable land called Cae dros y Cefn	8	0	0
piece of land in Cefn Bychan near the house of Pirs ap John ap William	2	0	0
field of arable land called Cae newydd	2	0	0
hay meadow in Cefn Bychan called Llanfo	1	2	0
another piece of poor pasture	4	0	0
Owen Morgan holds a 2-room house, with a field of arable land in Ffrwd y Cleifion ⁴	5	0	0
6 scattered pieces of arable land in Gallt Peder	1	0	0
Lewis son of John Hugh holds a 2-room house, with field, in Cerrig Mawr	4	3	0
adjacent hay meadow	1	3	0
David Lloyd son of John and his mother hold a 2-room house, 1-room barn, 1-room bier, garden, and field of arable land called y Cerrig Mawr	19	0	0

² See “Wills”, chapter xvii.

³ See [original] p.26

⁴ Compare “Clafdy” half a mile from Aberffraw in the Tí Croes direction, said to have been a *hospitium* [lazer-house or leper-colony] in the time of the Princes of Aberffraw.

poor pasture land	13	0	0
hay meadow	7	0	0
piece of arable land in the field called Carreg y Gwŷdd.	0	3	0
2 pieces of arable land in Gallt Peder	1	0	0
Richard Meredith holds a piece of arable land in Cerrig Mawr	0	3	0
Alicia Owen holds a piece of arable land	2	0	0
Pirs son of John son of William holds a 1-room house, with a piece of arable land in Cefn Bychan	2	0	0
Jonet Owen holds a field near Gardd y toppan	1	0	0
Ellen daughter of Ieuan holds a croft called Cae crwn	1	0	0
/22/Hugh Lewis Jeffrey holds a field of arable land called cae cedor y wrach (Eng. burdock)	3	0	0
Hugh son of Hugh <i>gent.</i> , holds a field of arable land jointly with Croise Griffith	0	2	0
Ifan Meredith holds a piece of arable land in Cefn Hirion in Gallt Peder	0	2	0
hay meadow in the same place	1	0	0
another piece of arable land in Cefn Mawr	0	3	0
6 other pieces of arable land in Cefn Hirion	1	0	0
another piece of arable land in Carreg y Gwŷdd	0	2	0
William Humfrey, Esq., holds a 3-room house, garden, with a croft and house called Cae gardd	1	0	0
field of arable land in the same place	4	0	0
hay meadow in the same field	1	2	0
hay meadow called Gwerglodd gron	2	0	0
field of pasture called Cae helig	12	0	0
sundry small fields and <i>crofts</i> of arable land in Cefn Mawr	26	0	0
piece of arable land in Cefn Bychan	0	3	0
field of arable land called Cae Glan y traeth	6	0	0
<i>croft</i> of arable land in Cefn Bychan	1	2	0
another <i>croft</i> of arble land	3	0	0
another field of arable land called Cae William Meurig	1	2	0
2 pieces of arable land in a field called Cae Lewis ap John	2	0	0
Hugh son of Hugh <i>uchod</i> holds a field of pasture in Cefn Mawr	4	0	0
Henry son of Ieuan the tailor holds a field of pasture	3	0	0
Jeffrey son of John holds a field of pasture	4	0	0
Lewis son of Hugh Kenrick holds a 1-room house with 4 <i>crofts</i> in stony land, and a piece of land called Ffridd Tegwared Lloyd	13	0	0
Rhys son of John son of Edward holds 3 scattered pieces of arable land in Gallt Peder	1	0	0
a small house called Tyddyn Gronw bach by Rhos ddu lake, with 5 pieces of arable and pasture land	22	0	0

piece of arable land called Cae yn yr hendre	4	0	0
hay meadow	4	0	0
Margaret daughter of Ieuan holds a 3-room house and adjacent small <i>croft</i> and 6 small surrounding fields	9	0	0
6 other pieces of arable land in Gallt Peder	1	0	0
3 other pieces of arable land in Carreg y Gwydd	1	2	0
1 piece of arable land next to the road to Caernarfon	0	1	0
piece of hay meadow	0	1	0
Thomas son of Thomas holds a piece of arable land called Cae yn yr hendre	4	0	0
1 piece of arable land	1	0	0
another piece of arable land	1	2	0
/23/Price Prydderch, <i>gent.</i> , holds a field of arable land called Cae Llel goch	2	2	0
6 scattered pieces of arable land in Gallt Peder	2	0	0
another piece of arable land in Carreg y Gwŷdd	2	3	0
Humfrey Rowland holds a 2-room house, by St. Peter's Church in Rhosfair, with a field of arable land called Cae yn yr hendre	1	0	0
pasture land	1	0	0
hay meadow	1	0	0
piece of arable land	0	3	0
another piece of arable land in Gallt Peder	0	1	0
Humfrey Ieuan holds a 2-room house, with 1-room <i>horreum</i> , with pieces of arable land in Cae yr hendre	4	0	0
cottage with pieces of arable land called gardd y toppan	0	0	10
piece of arable land in Gallt Peder	0	2	0
3 scattered pieces of arable land in Gallt gwta	0	1	20
2 pieces of arable land by Carreg Carnan with another piece called Cae Sioned	0	2	10
another piece of arable land by Cerrig yr eithin	0	1	0
another piece of arable land by Croes faen	0	1	0
Richard Hampton, <i>gent.</i> , holds 8 pieces of arable land in Gallt Peder	4	0	0
Tudur son of Ieuan holds 6 pieces of arable land in Gallt Peder	1	0	0
Elizabeth daughter of William holds 4 pieces of arable land	2	0	0
Humfrey Thomas holds a cottage with a small arable field	3	0	0
piece of arable land called Y Faerdref	0	1	0
Edward son of Hugh holds 6 scattered pieces of arable land in Gallt Peder	2	0	0
Jane Owen, widow [or spinster], holds a field of arable land called Cae Ieuan grach	1	0	0
piece of arable land by Cae'r berllan	2	3	0
another piece of arable land	0	2	10

another piece of arable land by Carreg y Gwídd	0	1	20
piece of arable land in Yr Erw goch	2	3	0
<i>croft</i> of arable land called Yr Erw goch	2	0	0
5 scattered pieces of land in Gallt Peder	3	0	0
field of arable land called Cae Pirs Gibbon	2	3	0
3 scattered <i>crofts</i> by Cors y Llyn	3	0	0
piece of arable land in Y Faerdref	0	3	0
piece of pasture and plough-land [<i>boveri</i> ⁵] in Cefn Mawr	5	0	0
Owen son of John Lewis holds a piece of arable land	1	0	0
Jonett Owen holds a piece of arable land in Y Faerdref	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total of Hendref, Rhosfair and Maerdref	464	3	0
Taxes in Hendref, Rhosfair and Maerdref	12	9	62

Owen Wood Esq., in virtue of letters of title dated 13th November 1573, gave to one William Howard (deceased, however, without heirs and whose land thus reverted to the Crown) who held a house with a newly-erected water mill⁶ and a plot of arable land in Gallt y Clefion, according to Lewis ap William Morgan (valued at 16d [7p]). The mill is worth 50 shillings per annum [£2-50p] on lease. ⁷4a. 2r. 0p.”

From the above survey, we may see who, at the start of the 17th century, held lands in Newborough which were Crown property. Welsh names appear rarely. The list includes one house with four rooms and a 2-room kitchen (Fron Deg), two 3-room houses, nine 2-room houses, five 1-room houses, a house with a water mill and four cottages, one single-roomed.⁸

There are a number of properties named, still to be found in the parish today: *Fron Deg*, *Cerrig y gw dd*, *Cefn-mawr*, *Cefn-bychan*, *Cerrig-mawr*, *Hendre*, one near the Church [or the *Llys?*], and *Melin-y-ffrwd*. There is no mention of the names of the older *plasau* of non-descript aspect, of which there are a considerable number in the village such as *Plas-uchaf*, *Plas-newydd*, *Plas-pydwau*, *Hen-blas* and others less noteworthy. There is evidence that at least three rather important houses were built in Newborough in the 17th century, viz. *Tyn Coed* 1621, *Plas Uchaf* 1645 and *Hendre* 1679.⁹

⁵ A *boverum* was as much land as could be ploughed by a pair of oxen in a year.

⁶ *Melin Ffrwd*, it would appear.

⁷ P.R.O. Exchequer, Land Revenue, Miscellaneous Books, vol. 205, m.43

⁸ The most notable feature of the farmhouse was the kitchen with its stone-flagged floor; also the living room with its roof of dark oak beams from which hung sidearms and tools of different kinds. In the kitchen lived the farmer, his wife and family, with maids and man-servants all taking their meals together, seated at a narrow oak table ten feet long. The master and mistress sat at either end in arm-chairs while the others sat along either side.

⁹ See Chapter xi.

From a study of the names of the gentry who purchased land for enclosure after the Land Enclosure Act of 1815,¹⁰ they are seen to be very numerous; every landowner of any importance in Anglesey at that time, in fact; Lord Boston, Newborough, Mostyn and Dinorben, the Marquis of Anglesey, Sir Richard Bulkeley and Sir John Thomas Stanley. It is reasonable to assume that the same was true of other lands before 1815.

How can we account for such quite large houses, viz the gentry mansions, being built in so small and, before 1800, so poor a parish? Was it social fashion or perhaps, politically motivated?

On examining the register of Members of Parliament representing the County and Boroughs of Anglesey between 1554 and 1730 - when the quarrel and debate ended between the voters of Beaumaris and the nobility, who each strove hard to reacquire the inhabitants of Newborough's borough privileges - it can be seen that the influence of the Bulkeley family was pre-eminent in both county and borough. They were the 'authorities' in the years 1554-58, 1563-72, 1588-93, 1604-21, 1626-40, 1660-61, 1679-1715 and 1722-25.

If the names of the families were not always the same, nevertheless when different, the name was usually that of a close relative. But strong resentment arose against them among the other Anglesey families, together with opposition in Beaumaris itself, because there, no one was allowed to vote save the twenty-five members of the Corporation. The easiest way to counteract the influence of the Bulkeleys in borough elections was to re-establish the old borough of Newborough and to bring burgesses from there to support the Beaumaris opposition. However, by the start of the 17th century Newborough was in a depressed state economically. To overcome this difficulty, the Anglesey gentry purchased plots and quillies in Newborough and erected houses and *plasau* thereon, according to their social station, to establish themselves as new burgesses and thus gain voting rights in the elections.

According to the Bodorgan Estate Papers,¹¹ William Bold of *Tre'r ddôl* purchased *Rofft yr Odyn* and *Dryll y Goetten* from one John Owen John for £25 in April 1665 (No. 583). *Tyddyn y Cae Hen* alias *Tyddyn y Cefn Bychan*, together with other parcels of land in Newborough, passed into the possession of William Bold of *Tre'r ddôl* in 1688 (nos. 584-5). Within twelve years after this, Owen Bold had secured *Cae'r Sgubor*, *Cae'r Gors*, *Cae Eithin*, *Buarth Gae Ucha* and *Isa*, as well as *T Ucha* alias *Tyddyn Richard John ap Evan*, *Llain Bach y T*, *Llain y Garreg Lwyd* and *Llain Pen-y-waun* (Nos. 586-9).

During the Commonwealth of Oliver Cromwell, in 1658, suitable persons were deputed as agents charged with expelling from office such ministers of religion and school masters as were deemed unacceptable by the authorities. There were two such singled out in Anglesey, one of whom was John Lloyd of Newborough.¹²

¹⁰ See [original] pp.40-42

¹¹ In Bangor University Archives.

¹² *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic* 1658-9 p.110