bGreen-y-Croft, Greenfields, now Y Bwthyn

258 on the 1841 tithe map

The first mention I can find is in 1699 when lease number 1039 was taken by Edward Lewis from the Earl of Bergavenny for a messuage and parcels of land called Green y Croft and Wayne Vach.

After Edward Lewis, Green-y-Croft was leased to David Thomas from the Hon. George Neville.

Living at Green y Croft in 1737 was yeoman Roger Reynold. Roger was also mentioned the same year as being an overseer of the poor for the parish of Goytrey .

Thirteen years later, Roger Reynold is mentioned again when he takes the lease number 1012 in his name. The description on the lease says a cottage and 3 parcels of land, Green y Croft and Wain Vach at Cross-hoped.

In 1751 the parish records says, Mary, the wife of Roger Reynold died. Roger Reynold died a few years later in 1756. They were both buried in St Peter’s churchyard.

Roger Reynold left a will, written the year he died 1756, in which he leaves to his granddaughter Margarett Williams a field “called by ye name of Ton Glas,” situate and being in the parish of Goytrey, by estimate 2 covers. This is leased land and Margarett is to pay the rent and heriot; should she die then it is left to Roger’s daughter also Margarett on the same conditions.

To Mary (I assume his daughter) he leaves a house on lease called Glan-y-nant, excluding Ton Glas; should she die then the property is left to daughters Martha and Elizabeth to share on the same terms.

Also to the above Mary, he leaves the appurtenances called Pen Cross Hopped, situated in ye parish of Goytre to be enjoyed by them both during the term of the lease.

In 1763, Roger Reynold’s daughter Elizabeth married William Absolom of Llantarnam. They were living at Green y Croft but did not take the lease until 1768 when William Absolom is classed as a yeoman, occupying a cottage and 3 parcels of land at Cross hopped. The lease says for the lives of William Absolom, 38, his wife Elizabeth, 36, and David Thomas of Mynyislwyn aged 2.

The lease also mentions the previous holders, David Thomas and Roger Reynold.

The land tax for 1808 is in the name of Elizabeth Absolom. I assume her husband, William must have died but I cannot find a burial for him.

Elizabeth Absolom died in 1817 at Glan-y-nant when she was 86 years old, she is buried at St Peter’s. In her will, dated 1815, she leaves everything to her nephew William Griffiths and Sarah his wife.

The new occupiers of Green y croft in 1817 were Thomas Williams and Margaret his wife. Thomas was a labourer, and their children are John, Thomas, Elizabeth, Mary Ann and Capel.

On the 1821 Earl of Abergavenny’s parish survey, Thomas Williams was paying 5s land tax.

In February 1832, Richard Pruett from Llanelly married Martha Hall in Aberstruth. Richard was a stonemason, and shortly after his marriage he came to live in the parish. Richard’s name first appeared in the parish overseers’ accounts in 1835 and again the same year when their daughter Mary was baptised and again in 1838 when another daughter Elizabeth was baptised at St Peter’s church.

The tithe of 1841 says the owner is the Earl of Abergavenny, the property containing 1a 3r 3p and paying 6s to the rector.

The census of 1841 living at Green y croft is Richard Pruett he is 35 year old, a stonemason. Martha his wife is also 35.

Two more daughters were born to Richard and Sarah Pruett, Sarah in 1846 and Martha in 1849. Unfortunately their 14 year old daughter Mary died in 1849 and was buried at St Peter’s.

The census of 1851 says Richard Pruett is 45 year old mason, Martha his wife is 46, they were both born in Llanelly, and their children are Elizabeth 12, Sarah 4 and two year old Martha.

In 1852 Richard Pruett senior and Richard Pruett junior were sent to examine the Blaenavon bridge at Llanfoist.

Richard built the Woodlands about 1855/6 for himself. This property is a very short distance from Green y croft. After this date, he moved to The Woodlands and began to sub-let Green y croft.

In 1857, Richard Pruett renewed the lease of Green y croft for the lives of Elizabeth 18, Sarah 10 and Martha 7. The same year he took the lease for The Wharf at a cost of £87 per annum.

Richard Pruett had let Green y croft to Evan Jones in 1860. Evan’s name is mentioned in the parish accounts as he voted for William Harris to become the next parish surveyor of the highways. William Harris lost the vote.

Evan Jones had left Green y croft by the 1861 census when it was occupied by David Morris and his family. David was 25, a woollen spinner (probably working at Gwenffrwd). His wife Mary was 21 and from St Mellons, and they had a son, also called David who was born in Goytre. Living with them is Jane Mathews; Jane Mathews is mentioned in the parish overseers accounts as a pauper. David Morris and his family left Green y croft and moved a short distance to Cae Coed to live.

By the time census of 1871 there is a new occupier, 63 year old John Jones, living at Green y croft. He is a woollen spinner from Cardigan, his wife Elizabeth is 61 and their son Morgan is 31 and(?) was born in Rhymney.

In 1879 Richard Pruett paid the income tax for Green y croft, the cost being 1s 3d.

The lease in 1884 was still in the name of the Pruett girls Elizabeth, Sarah and Martha. Lady Llanover started to make moves against them to release it to her.

On the 8th January 1885 Daniel Lewis, butler at Llanover Hall, obtained the lease paying £184 to the Earl of Abergavenny. While living at Llanover House, he was married to Caroline who lived with their children Mary and Arthur at The Woodlands (source: censuses – at Llanover House and Woodlands, tracking birthplace and date, and marriage certificate)

The census of 1891 shows 46 year old jobbing gardener Thomas Jones and his family living at Greenfields, with his wife Ruth 49 from Monkswood. Sons William 11 and John 9 were born in Hereford as was Thomas; the younger children, Christiana 4, Florence 2 and 7 month old Ethel were born in Goytre.

Thomas Jones and his family had moved to no. 2 Chapel Edd cottages by the 1901 census.

the property being split into two dwellings by 1901. At number one is 47 year old widow Dorothy, the family having come to Goytre from Carmarthenshire. Living with her are children, Dorothy, 27, Edward 23, a plumber, 18 year old Thomas, a gardener, Jeanet 8 and 3 year old William.

At number two in 1911 Greenfield is George Roberts. George is 82 years old, a retired general labourer who was born in Llantrissent, Usk. George was still in occupation until his death in 1919 and is buried in Monkswood church.

The original lease is still held by the Pruett girls, the following article is written about the time Lady Llanover starts her purchase of Greenfields about 1918

**I, William Richardson** of the Estate Office, Eridge Green, Sussex Estate, clerk, do solemnly declare and sincerely declare as follows:-

1. I have for twenty years and upwards been a Clerk in the Estate Office for the Abergavenny Estate having been employed in that capacity by the Most Honourable the first Marquees of Abergavenny up to the time of his death on the twelfth day of December one thousand nine hundred and fifteen and since that date and up to the present time by the Most Honourable the Second Marquis of Abergavenny and in the course of my duties as such I have become well acquainted with the pieces of land forming part of those estates which are more particularly described in the schedule hereto which as I am informed and believe have lately been agreed to be sold to the Trustees of the Will of the late Lady Llanover.
2. The said pieces of land other than the piece of land numbered 211 is the said schedule have been in the interrupted enjoyment of and the rents and profits thereof have been received without interruption by the Marquis of Abergavenny for the time being for upwards of twenty years prior to the month of October One thousand nine hundred and fifteen being by his committee in the full and undisturbed receipt of the rent and profits of the said pieces of land other than as aforesaid.
3. As regards the said piece of land numbered 211 in the said schedule it is doubtful whether this piece of land forms part of the Abergavenny settled Estates or of the Llanover settled Estates but if and so far as it is not part of the Llanover settled Estates it may be part of the Abergavenny Settled Estates.
4. As regards the pieces of land nos. 257, 258 and 260 in the said schedule stated to be let on lease for the lives of Elizabeth Pruett, Sarah Brains (formerly Pruett) and Martha Pruett the said Martha Brains and Martha Pruett are to the best of my knowledge still alive but the said Elizabeth Pruett is I believe now dead.

On the 26th March 1918 Mary Lewis, the daughter of Daniel Lewis of the Woodlands, applied on his behalf to purchase Greenfield Cottages from the Earl of Abergavenny. Mary Lewis mentions that two of Pruett’s daughters are still living. She also refers to Greenfield as the two old cottages and 11/4  acres that adjoins ours. She also wrote to the Earl’s solicitor about the state of the property and her view of a fair price but the offer was rejected.

The property was sold to Lady Llanover’s trustees in 1918.

Lady Llanover’s trustees sold Greenfields to the said Mary Lewis on the 26th November 1920, being a cottage and land of 1.422 acres, for the sum of £170. Her father Daniel, who had for many years served Lady Llanover as butler, may have died that autumn. The trustees kept one of the three plots which had been part of Greenfields and is situated on the other side of the Old Abergavenny Road.

The electoral register of 1920 shows William Redwood in occupation. William was born in 1899 in Llanover, the son of Thomas and Mary ( nee Langford.) William married Elizabeth Maud Lewis, the daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth Lewis of Ynys y bwlch in April 1920 ( I would suggest in Saron Chapel as the Lewis families of the parish attended Saron ). William and Elizabeth remained at Greenfields for several years before moving up to Bwrgwm.

By 1927, John and Eva Williams were in residence, followed in 1930 by William, Alice and Mary Williams. This had changed again in 1935 to Lewis and Amy Bennett.

On the 2nd April 1936, Greenfields and one of its remaining two plots was sold by Arthur Daniel Lewis (son of Daniel Lewis) to Edwin James and Irene Elizabeth Williams for the sum of £370. Edwin and Irene are still in residence on the 1939 register. Edwin was a steel furnaceman/heavy worker at that time.

In 1956, the other adjoining plot which had been part of Greenfields was sold to Edwin and Irene by Plezze Alexander. Edwin was now a market gardener and, according to a visitor in 2013 who remembered him, had a stall at Pontypool Market.

0n 5th Dec 1968, William Clifford John James purchased Greenfields.

In 1985, William died and David Charles James and John Arthur James, who had probate, sold the property to Robert George and Joan Margaret Evans. The property is said to have been in a poor condition. Robert Evans extensively updated and extended it but died suddenly in 1987.

The house was left empty and sold by his widow Joan to Glanville George and Dorothy Celia Jehu in 1991. They renamed it Y Bwthyn and carried out further developments.

In 2013, Y Bwthyn (previously Greenfields, previously Green y croft) was purchased by David and Jacqueline Warren.

Thank you, Jacqui, for letting me have the modern records of Y Bwthyn to complete a record of your home and beautiful garden.