

## *Atgofion*

'Tal-y-bont is the biggest village in Cardiganshire'. Wn i ddim a oedd rhywun wedi nodi nifer y tai neu rifo trigolion y pentre rywbyrd, ai peidio. Ta waeth am hynny, yr oedd yn ffaith o bwys i'r trigolion. Buom ni'r plant yn myfyrio droeon uwch y pwynt ac yn ystyried i ni fod yn ffodus eithriadol nad mewn mannau fel Taliesin neu Benrhyncoch neu'r Borth y gwelsom ni gyntaf olau dydd. Y mae'n wir i athro yn Ysgol Ramadeg Aberystwyth gyfeirio at ein pentref fel 'the place of two pubs, three chapels and a church'. Gŵr ydoedd o ardal fach wasgaredig yng ngwaelod y sir a doedd dim diben inni gollu cwsg ar gownt ei ragfarn drist.

Fe ddylwn i, felly, gyfaddef ar unwaith mai plentyn-dwad oeddwn i'r lle. Dod wnaeth y teulu yn Ionawr rhewllyd 1927 o Gwm Rhondda dros y Bannau i dŷ braf, newydd yn Nhal-y-bont. Codwyd Maesmor i fod yn gartref i weinidog eglwysi Bethel a Phensarn. Ein tad ni, Fred Jones, oedd y gweinidog a ddaeth o Dreorci adre'n ôl i'w hen sir ac i'r tŷ newydd ac i bentref mwya'r sir! Fe arhosodd rhyw gymaint o sawr a sŵn Cymraeg y Rhondda ym mharabl rhai ohonom ni'r plant heb iddo lwyr doddi i mewn i acenion meinach, glanach y gymuned newydd. Er mai yn Nantgaredig y ganwyd fy mam, mae'n wir dweud mai yn Nhreorci y treuliodd y rhan fwyaf o'i hoes, ac iddi hi, yn anad neb arall ohonom, bu'r newid bro yn newid syfrdanol.

Dylanwad anuniongyrchol ar fy mywyd i a gafodd y 'two pubs' tra'r oedd dylanwad y capeli a'r ysgol, yr eglwys a'r neuadd, cartrefi amrywiol y pentref a'r ffermydd, y bryniau a'r coed a'r afon, yn ddylanwad ffurfiannol ac arhosol. Fedra i ddim llai na chredu i mi gael fy magu mewn man cwbl ddelfrydol. Bryd hynny roedd traddodiad a dylanwad crefydd a safonau cymdeithasol yn ddiogelwch o'n cylch ac ni fuont yn ormes gwirioneddol arnaf. Yr oedd y Gymraeg, fel yr afonydd, yn rhedeg yn rhydd ac yn rhwydd drwy'r broydd. Ambell waith mewn capel ac yn y neuadd roedd rhediad yr iaith yn llifeiriol ac yn eithriadol o hardd a dylanwadol. Credaf fod yr iaith yn llifeiriol hefyd bryd hynny yn y ddau dafarn.

## *Memories*

'Tal-y-bont is the biggest village in Cardiganshire'. I do not know whether anybody ever recorded the number of houses or counted the number of residents in the village. However it was an important fact for the residents. We children often wondered about this and considered ourselves extremely fortunate that we did not first encounter daylight in places such as Taliesin or Penrhyncoch or Borth. It is true that a teacher in the Grammar School at Aberystwyth referred to our village as 'the place of two pubs, three chapels and a church'. He came from a small scattered community in the south of the county and there was no point in us losing sleep over his sad prejudice.

I should immediately admit that I was, as a child, a newcomer. The family came during a freezing January in 1927 from the Rhondda Valley over the Beacons to a fine new house at Tal-y-bont. Maesmor was built as a manse for the minister of Bethel and Pensarn chapels. Our father, Fred Jones, was the minister who returned from Treorci to his old county, to a new house and to the largest village in the county! A few of us children maintained the flavour and accent of the Rhondda Welsh and it did not entirely melt into the sharper cleaner accents of the new community. Although my mother was born in Nantgaredig, she had spent most of her life in Treorci and for her, more than for any of us, the move was traumatic.

The 'two pubs' had an indirect influence on my life whilst the chapels, the school, the church, the hall, the various homes in the village, the farms, the hills, the trees and the river were a formative and permanent influence. I cannot less than believe that I was brought up in quite an ideal area. At the time tradition, the influence of religion and social standards were a safeguard around us and they never were a real oppression to me. The Welsh language, like the rivers, was flowing freely and easily through the communities. Sometimes in chapel and in the hall the language flowed in a beautiful and influential manner. I believe that the language flowed also at that time in the two pubs.

## Atgofion Mrs Lilian Jones, Rhos, Pontardawe

Myfi oedd organyddes  
Capel Nasareth pan  
oeddwn yn ifanc iawn  
a'm chwaer Olwen  
oedd yn chwythu imi.  
Roeddem yn eistedd  
un bob ochr i'r galeri  
fach oedd uwchben y  
pulpud pan fyddai'r  
pregethwr yn  
pregethu. Pedwar  
cant o bunnau oedd  
pris yr organ yr adeg  
hynny – rwy'n cofio  
aelodau Nasareth yn  
gwneud 'Sale of  
Work' fawr i godi'r  
arian ac ni fuont yn  
hir cyn talu'r ddyled.

Tynnodd E.O.

Jones lun ohonof fi a'm chwaer yn gwisgo  
hetiau 'crand'. Gofynnodd fy mam i  
'milliner'yr Emporium i wneud het yr un inni  
– gwnaeth hwy o belleni o 'silk straw'glas a  
gwyn, eu 'crochet' rwy'n meddwl. Cafodd fy  
mam ffit pan gafodd y bil – punt yr un. Nid  
oedd fy nhad yn ennill pum punt yr wythnos  
yr adeg honno. Roedd yr hetiau'n bert iawn.  
Ni chawsem eu gwisgo i'r Ysgol Sul, dim ond  
i'r gwasanaeth bore a nos.

Papur Pawb, Chwefror 1983

## Memories of Mrs Lilian Jones, Rhos, Pontardawe



Lilian and Olwen Jones (E.O. Jones)

When I was very  
young I was the  
organist at Capel  
Nasareth and my  
sister Olwen did the  
pumping for me. We  
sat on either side of  
the small gallery  
above the pulpit when  
the preacher was  
preaching. The organ  
cost £400 at that time  
– I remember the  
members at Nasareth  
having a big sale of  
work to raise money  
and it did not take  
long to clear the debt.

E.O. Jones took a  
photograph of me and

my sister wearing grand hats. My mother had  
asked the milliner at the Emporium to make  
them for us. She made them from balls of blue  
and white silk straw and crocheted them, I  
think. My mother had a fit when she received  
the bill – £1 each. My father was earning less  
than £5 at the time. The hats were very pretty.  
We were not allowed to wear them to Sunday  
School, only to the morning and evening  
services.

Papur Pawb, February 1983

Cawsom ni, blant gweinidog Bethel a  
Phensarn, ein magu, hyd y gwelwn i, mewn  
ffordd mor debyg i weddill ein cyfoedion ag  
y medrwn i ei ddirnad. Dyna, o ran hynny,  
yw fy nghred o hyd. Mor debyg yn wir fel y  
byddem, o bryd i'w gilydd, yn cael ein  
barnu'n llymach na hwy am yr un  
gwendidau – oherwydd ein bod 'yn blant y  
gweinidog'. Ta waeth am hynny, o ffenestr  
f'ystafell wely roedd calon y pentref yno yn  
glir i'w weld, sef talcen y ddau gapel, y  
Neuadd Goffa a gorsaf yr heddlu, sef y  
polis-steshon. O stafell-gefn y tŷ tua'r de,  
bron na welwn yr ysgol – yr hen ysgol erbyn  
hyn – ac i gyfeiriad y gogledd-orllewin,  
heibio i goed deri praff y meysydd, gwelwn  
ar draws Cors Fochno amlinell y Borth a'r

We, the children of the minister of Bethel  
and Pensarn, as far as I could see were  
brought up in a similar way to our  
contemporaries. I still believe that. Indeed in  
such a similar way that we were often  
criticised more than them for the same  
weaknesses because we were 'the minister's  
children'. From my bedroom window I  
could see the heart of the village, that is, the  
gable ends of both chapels, the memorial  
hall and the police station. From the south  
facing back room of the house I could almost  
see the school – the old school by now – and  
to the north-west beyond the sturdy oak  
trees in the fields, I could see, across Bochno  
Bog, the outline of Borth and Ynyslas, with  
Aberdovey beyond. I am certain that I heard

Ynyslas a'r tu hwnt iddynt hwy gwelwn Aberdyfi. Rwy'n siwr i mi glywed y clychau'n canu yno ar lawer nos ddi-stŵr! Yn nes atom yr oedd Allt y Grib a'r goedwig lle tyfai'r llus-duon-bach yn llwyni iraidd llawn. Hyd llwybrau'r coed y rhedem ac yn y coed y cuddiem ac yno ar lawr yr oedd twmpathau mawr y morgrug prysur, annymunol eu sawr. Hyd fedd mi gofia'r morgrug ar lawer nos o stŵr am iddynt ddod gen i i'r gwely a nythu yn fy ngwallt. Adeg eu cynhaeaf yr oedd gwagedd a phlant Tal-y-bont yn prysur gasglu'r llus oedd yno rhwng y coed. Gyda bws cyntaf y bore aent hwy'r gwagedd i siopau Aberystwyth i'w gwerthu. Mewn potiau jam y byddai'r plant yn crynhoi'r cyfoeth ond rhan yn unig ohono oedd ar ôl wedi'r gwledda a'r dwylo duon bach. Yr oedd John Morgan, y gof, yn barod ei grefft i lunio cylchoedd o haearn gyda bachyn-llaw i ni fedru arwain y cylchoedd hyn hyd y ffordd fawr a hyd llwybrau troellog, anturus y coed. Pan fyddai trwr y cylchoedd a bloeddio plant yn fyddarol nes distewi gweddill synau'r cread, un ffordd yn unig oedd yna o gyrraedd clustiau plant. Y

the bells tolling on quiet nights! Closer to home there was Allt y Crib and the woods where lush bushes of whinberries grew. We used to run along the paths through the woods and hide in the trees and on the ground were the large hills of the busy ants with their unpleasant smell. I shall remember until I die bringing the ants with me to bed and they would nestle in my hair. When it was time to harvest them Tal-y-bont women and children would be busy gathering the whinberries in the woods. The women would catch the first bus in the morning to take them to sell in Aberystwyth shops. The children would gather these riches in jam jars but only some would remain after feasting with little black hands. John Morgan, the blacksmith used to make iron hoops with a hook so that we could take these hoops along the main road and along the winding, exciting paths in the woods. When the noise of the hoops and the shouts of the children were so deafening that they silenced other sounds of creation, there was only one way of being heard by the children. That was the echo stone. It was a huge stone. It sat like Queen Victoria

### *Atgofion Etholiadol*

*Un o atgofion cynharaf Caledfryn Evans o firi etholiadol oedd mynd i gyfarfod cyhoeddus yn yr Hen Ysgol yn Nhal-y-bont pan oedd yn fachgen ifanc iawn i wrando ar yr ymgeisydd Ceidwadol yn yr Etholiad Cyffredinol. Roedd llanciau ifanc yno wedi paratoi croeso tywysogaidd i'r siaradwr erbyn y byddai'n cerdded i mewn i gyntedd yr ysgol. Roedd gan bob un fag blawd bychan a phan ymddangosodd y Tori dyma nhw'n anelu'r bagiau at begiau cotiau'r plant ar fur y cyntedd. Y canlyniad oedd fod blawd ar lawr a'r llwch blawd dros bopeth gan gynnwys dillad yr ymgeisydd.*

*Arglwydd Ystwyth oedd yr Aelod Seneddol dros Geredigion am gyfnod. Yn ôl pob sôn wnaeth o erioed siarad ar lawr y Tŷ Cyffredin a byddai'n dweud y nesa peth i ddim chwaith yn ystod ymgyrchoedd etholiadol. Un stori dda roedd Caledfryn Evans yn ei gofio mewn cyswllt â'r Arglwydd oedd y Parch. Fred Jones yn dweud amdano mewn cyfarfod cyhoeddus ryw dro – 'Base'n well petaech wedi anfon llo i'r Senedd, o leiaf byddai'r llo wedi brefu ar lawr y Tŷ.'*

Papur Pawb, Mai, 1977

### *Election Memories*

*One of Caledfryn Evans' earliest recollections of the fun of electioneering was going, when a very young man, to a public meeting in the Old School at Tal-y-bont to listen to the Conservative candidate in the General Election. There were young lads there who had prepared a princely reception for the speaker when he walked into the school hall. Each one had a small bag of flour and when the Tory appeared they aimed the bags at the children's coat hooks. The result was that there was flour everywhere including the candidate's clothing.*

*For a time Lord Ystwyth was the Member of Parliament for Ceredigion. According to rumour he never made a speech in the House of Commons and neither did he say much during election campaigns. One good story relating to Lord Ystwyth which Caledfryn remembers was the occasion in a public meeting when the Rev. Fred Jones said, 'It would have been better to send a calf to Parliament, at least the calf would have lowed on the floor of the House'.*

Papur Pawb, May, 1977

garreg-ateb oedd honno. Carreg enfawr ydoedd. Eisteddai'n debyg i'r frenhines Fictoria, yng nghanol llwyni coed a thwmpathau, yn lân ei hwyneb a choron o rug ar ei phen. Medrem ddringo dros lwybr rownd iddi nes cyrraedd ei phen ac yna eistedd a sglefrio i'w godre. Meddai hi ar y ddawn i fwrw sŵn a'i gryfhau gymaint nes maeddu synau eraill y fro – y garreg ateb. Arfer ambell fam oedd gweiddi o gefn y tŷ ar blant y goedwig draw ac i'r garreg-ateb dderbyn y gri a'i nerthu yn ei blaen. Y fath ramant oedd cael byw a bod yno.

Fe hoffwn i fedru cyfleu mewn darluniau bach fel yma y sylw mai'r cartref oedd canolbwynt ein bywyd. Gweld y cyfan o ffenest neu o ddrws y tŷ a wnaem. Oddi yno yr aem ac yno y dychwelem i roi cyfrif o'n helyntion. Aem yn hyf i dai ein gilydd heb amau a oedd i ni groeso yno. Yn anaml y byddai teuluoedd yn symud o'r pentref. Siom i ni oedd colli cwmni teulu E.R. Morgan y siop a'r gegin groesawgar i blant a'u cyffro diniwed. Aethant i Gaerdydd a llwyddo yno hefyd. Yr oedd siopau'r pentre yn fannau cyfarfod ac i bob un ohonyn nhw ei nodweddion cynnes. Yn yr ysgol Mr Harry Evans a gofiau fi yn bennaeth byd addysg i mi. Mae'n wir fod Miss Jenkins yno hefyd a'i llais dwfn a mwynder ei llygaid yn cau amdanom ac yn ein gwarchod a Miss Morgan, Miss Edwards ac Enid, fy chwaer, sef Miss Jones, yn gosod y sylfeini. Penllanw profiadau dysg oedd bod yn nosbarth Mr Evans a'i hoffter o fathemateg ac o lenyddiaeth a gramadeg Saesneg a Chymraeg. Paratoi hefyd at y 'scholarship' ar gyfer Ysgol Ramadeg Ardwyn, Aberystwyth. Mae'n chwith meddwl na chafodd rhai plant galluog mo'r cyfle i fwynhau ac i fanteisio ar y cyfle hwnnw i barhau a'u haddysg ffurfiol. Yr oedd 'Mishtir' yn ŵr o ddylanwad yn ein cymdeithas – yn areithydd a fedrai swyno cynulleidfaoedd. Ato ef y deuai yr Athro T.H. Parry Williams yn gyson i fwynhau cyfeillgarwch. Mae'n wir i ddoniau cerddorol gael rhyw gymaint o gyfle i ddatblygu yn yr ysgol. Yr oedd hen alawon Cymru i'w clywed yn felys yno ac alawon y Saeson hefyd er i mi fethu â chymryd at John Peel a'i gŵn a'r campau atodol a briodolwyd iddo. Y mae lle Miss Hughes ynghlwm â'r ysgol hon hefyd. Yr oedd ei chartref gerllaw'r ysgol ac rwy'n ei chysylltu hi a Miss Lewis â pharatoi cawl ar

amongst the bushes, trees, and mounds: an unblemished face, with a crown of heather on its head. We were able to climb a path around it until we reached the top, and then we would slide down it. It had the ability to reflect sounds and augment them until it overpowered other sounds in the locality – the echo stone. Some mothers would shout from the back of the house to the children in the woods and the echo stone would bounce off the sound and augment it. It was so romantic to be there.

I would like to be able to convey through cameos such as these how the home was the focal point of our lives. We could see everything from a window, or from the door of the house. We set out from there and returned there to give an account of our adventures. We would visit one another's houses without doubting whether we were welcome. Families would rarely leave the village. It was disappointing when we lost the company of E.R. Morgan the shop and his family where there was always a welcome in their kitchen for children and their innocent fun. They went to Cardiff and prospered there. The village shops were meeting places and each one had its own warm characteristics. At school I remember Mr Harry Evans as the head of my educational world. It is true that Miss Jenkins was also there with her deep voice and kind eyes protecting us with Miss Morgan, Miss Edwards and Enid my sister, that is, Miss Jones, laying the foundations. The highlight of our education was being in Mr Evans' class with his love of mathematics and of English and Welsh literature and grammar. We were immersed in these. We also prepared for the scholarship for Ardwyn Grammar School, Aberystwyth. It is sad to think that some able children did not have the opportunity to enjoy and take advantage of the opportunity to continue their formal education. The 'Master' was a man of influence in our society. He was an orator who could bewitch audiences. Professor T.H. Parry Williams would often visit him and enjoy his friendship. It is true to say that musical talents had some opportunity to be nurtured in the school. The beautiful old Welsh melodies could be heard there and English ones as well although I could never take to John Peel and his dogs and the feats attributed to him. Miss Hughes was also

gyfer plant na fedrent fynd adre i ginio ganol dydd. Rai troeon yn unig y cefais i'r cyfle i brofi'r lluniaeth iachusol hwnnw. Ond i blant tebyg i deulu talentog Nantynod, a oedd yn cerdded milltiroedd, y bore a'r hwyr, yr oedd yn ddarpariaeth cwbl allweddol i'w hiechyd hwy.

Taith munudau yn unig i mi oedd mynd i'r ysgol ond er ei lleied nid oedd heb gyffyrddiadau rhamantus. Cerdded neu redeg hyd y Lôn Fach a wnawn. Hi oedd yn gwahanu rhwng ein tŷ ni a Mertyn y drws nesaf. Rhes o dai a oedd yn hanner adfeilion oedd nesaf ar y daith fer. Gweithdy oedd un ohonynt i Meth Evans, perchen siop Walsall Stores. Saer coed ydoedd ac fe'i gwelais ef a D.J. Davies lawer tro yn gwneud eirch yno. Llifio'r pren derw i lun arch gan lifio rhigolau ynddo at ei blygu i'r siâp iawn. Arllwys pitch ar hyd ei waelod i gadw dŵr allan ohono a gwneud clawr iddo. Droeon pan oedd cloch yr ysgol yn galw tua'r tasgau y cefais fy rhoi mewn arch rhyw gymaint cyn f'amser. Yn y tŷ pellaf o'r rhes y cadwai Tom Jenkins gaseg a'r march enwog a feddai. Mewn tŷ yn ymyl yr oedd ei fam ac yntau'n byw. Y mae llawer o ramant y pentref yn troi o gylch y ddau annwyl yma. Cyfnod y ci, Spring, a gofiaf orau. Ci hytrach yn wyllt ydoedd a pharod i gnoi ac i ymladd. Fe briodolai Tom gampau goruwch-naturiol i'r Spring hwn. Ai yn ddamweiniol ai o fwriad, wn i ddim, ond ar yr adeg y byddai'r plant a'r athrawon yn cyrchu'r ysgol, yno, weithiau ar ganol y ffordd y safai'r march a chaseg, tra roedd Tom yn cymell pawb i aros ac i ryfeddu Ac yr wyf yn dal i ryfeddu at amrywiaeth syfrdanol cwricwlwm cymdeithasol y pentref.

Fel yr awgrymais eisoes yr oedd y capeli hefyd o fewn cyrraedd hwylus i'n tŷ ni – dau gapel yn wir. Safent yno fel dau frawd a llygaid eu ffenestri yn gwyltio holl bererinion y pentref yn mynd a dod. Y Tabernacl a Bethel oedd y rhain. Dipyn yn nes i lawr wrtho'i hun y safai Nasareth tra roedd Eglwys Dewi Sant i fyny ym Mhenlôn ac yn agos i'r pistyll sydd ar y ffordd tua Phlas Penpompren, Rhydfach, Penrhiw, Cwmslaid a Thy'ngraig, cartrefi teuloedd a berchid gennyf. Pen draw'r ffordd hon oedd capel Pensarn a bedd bardd cynnar Cymru sef Taliesin. Roedd yna nifer o ffermdai hefyd y tu hwnt i'r capel bach ac islaw iddo draw yn y pellter swatiai Tre-Taliesin a

associated with this school. She lived by the school and I associate her and Miss Lewis with the preparation of 'cawl' for the children who could not go home for lunch. Only rarely did I have the opportunity to taste that healthy fare. But it was vital for the health of the children, such as those of the talented Nantynod family, who walked for miles every morning and afternoon.

The journey to school took me minutes only, but although short it wasn't without its romantic touches. I would walk or run along the Little Lane which separated our house from Mertyn, the house next door. The next thing I encountered on the short journey was a row of semi-derelict houses. One was a workshop belonging to Meth Evans, the owner of Walsall Stores. He was a carpenter, and I often saw him and D.J. Davies making coffins there. They would saw the oak into a coffin shape and form grooves in it so that it would fold into the correct shape. Pitch would be placed at the bottom to keep water out and a lid would be made. Often when the school bell would be calling me to my tasks I would be put in a coffin before my time. At the end house of the row Tom Jenkins kept a mare and the famous stallion he owned. He lived along with his mother in a nearby house. A lot of the village's romance is associated with these two. I remember best of all Spring, the dog. He was a rather wild dog, ready to bite and fight. Tom professed that the dog could perform supernatural feats. I don't know if it was accidental or intentional but at times when children and teachers were making their way to the school, Tom, along with his stallion and mare, would encourage everyone to stop and admire them. I am still surprised at the amazing variety of the social curriculum of the village.

As I previously suggested the chapels were also within easy reach of our house – indeed two chapels. They stood there like two brothers, the eyes of their windows watching all pilgrims in the village come and go. These were Tabernacl and Bethel. A little further down on its own stood Nazareth, whilst St. David's Church was in Penlôn and close to the spring on the way to Penpompren Hall, Rhydfach, Penrhiw, Cwmslaid and Ty'ngraig, homes to families whom I greatly respected. At the end of this road was Pensarn Chapel and the grave of an early Welsh poet, Taliesin. There were several farmhouses also beyond this little



*Capel Pensarn*

*Pensarn Chapel*

Thre'rddôl. Roedd y lle yn drwm o sŵn hiraethlon brefiadau defaid brynhawniau Sul yr haf a chwmni prin y capel yn gwegian hyd at gwsg. Daeth y dydd y petrusodd dafad drwy'r iet a drws agored y capel bach hyd at odre'r pulpud. Gŵr agos a bod yn ddall oedd Fred Jones, y bugail. Brefodd y ddafad, tawodd y proffwyd a deffrodd y cwmni selog. Ymadawodd y ddafad cyn canu'r emyn ond mae iddi ei lle yn hanes Tŷ Cwrdd Pensarn.

Tasg anodd ar y gorau fyddai i neb geisio profi maint dylanwad crefydd ar fywyd Tal-y-bont yn fwy na'r un lle arall ond fe deimlem ei afael arnom yn ddigon siwr. I mi, y capel oedd cartre crefydd. I mi, hefyd, enw arall ar deyrngarwch oedd crefydd. Roedd hyn yr un mor wir am yr Eglwys Esgobol a'i phlant hithau. Ar wahân i fedydd y Bedyddwyr ni wyddem ni fawr am arbenigrwydd yr eglwysi gwahanol. Ond roedden ni'n deyrngar bob un i'w gapel. Nid oedd i atgasedd le yn hyn o beth. Ni chofiaf i'r un eglwys fod yn llai na chroesawgar ar yr adegau prin hynny pan ymwelem â chapel ar wahân i'n capel 'ni'. Buom yn paratoi at 'gonsert bach y Llan' yn nhŷ Mr Williams y postmon lawer gwaith. Ymwelem â Nasareth hefyd o bryd i'w gilydd i ymuno mewn ymdrech gorawl ac

chapel and below in the distance nestled the villages of Tre Taliesin and Tre'rddôl. The air was heavy with the sound of braying sheep on Sunday afternoons in summer and the sparse congregation in Pensarn would be almost nodding off. One day a sheep came through the gate and the open door of the little chapel and up to the pulpit. Fred Jones, the shepherd was almost blind. The sheep brayed. The prophet was silenced and the congregation woke up. The sheep departed before the hymn was sung but it has its place in the history of Pensarn Chapel.

It would be a difficult task for anyone to prove the influence religion had on life in Tal-y-bont, more than anywhere else, but we certainly felt its influence. To me, the chapel was the home of religion. To me also religion was another name for loyalty. This was true also of the Episcopal Church and its flock. With the exception of the Baptists we knew very little about the differences between the various churches. But everybody was loyal to his own chapel. There was no dislike involved. I have no recollection of any church being less welcome on those rare occasions when we would visit another chapel which wasn't 'ours'. We, on several occasions prepared for 'the Church's little concert' at Mr Williams the postman's house.

i'r un perwyl fe'n gwelid yn festri'r Tabernacl yn paratoi. Ni wyddem fwy na hynny am fanylion crefyddol ein cyd-Gristnogion. Roedden ni wedi sylwi hefyd mor rhwydd yr oeddem yn cymysgu drwyddi draw ymhobman arall.

Yr oedd Bethel a dirgelwch crefydd wedi cau amdanaf yn fore ac yn gysurus. Dyna sydd wir am y Betheliaid ifanc hynny o'r bron. Wedi i Tom, sef Thomas Lewis Owen, prifathro'r festri, afael yn ein byd tyner ni roedden ni fel cywion dan iâr. Roedd y capel mawr, hardd yn fwy o ryfeddod i ni nag yw tir-Disney i blant heddiw, dybia i. Yn lled fuan ni oedd yn gofalu am y drysau ym Methel: eu hagor a'u cau i hwyluso ffordd pobl i'r capel ac allan drachefn. Wedi hynny ni oedd yn mynd y tu hwnt i'r llen yn ystlys yr organ i beri iddi anadlu – chwythu'r gwynt i'r behemoth. Chwysem i gadw'r blwmen rhag disgyn i'r lle nad oedd miwsig mwyach. Hebom ni, ofer i Phyllis Edwards a Ruffina Owen, yr organyddion, ymdrechu ac i arweinydd cymanfa fwrw'i freichiau ar led. Dyna beth yw bod â rhan yn y gymdeithas! Ar gyfer eisteddfod dydd Nadolig rhaid codi llwyfan dros y sedd-fawr. I ddisgwyl y flwyddyn newydd byddid yn berwi dŵr mewn bwthyn adfail yng nghefn y capel a'i gario i'r festri a'i byrddau llawn. Parti mawr oedd yno – sŵn a stêm dros bob man. Wedi'r wledd trefnid cyfarfod ar lun penny-reading yn y capel – darn heb atalnodau, canu emyn ar y pryd, araith ddifyfyr, her adroddiadau heb rhyw lawer o her. Hwyl anferth a chyfle i blant wynebu cynulleidfa a'i fwynhau. Ar fin canol nos gafaelai rhywun ohonom yng nghot y gweinidog i ddweud fod y flwyddyn yn y drws. Ei fraint ef oedd dweud, 'Blwyddyn Newydd Dda' wrthym a ninnau i ymateb â bonllef gyfeillgar iddo yntau. Ni chlywsom mohono yn grwgnach ei ddallineb o ben blwyddyn i'r llall. Ar hynny mynd adre i godi'n fore a wnai y plant a chanu am galennig hyd a lled y pentre:

*Mi godais heddiw'n fore i ddyfod at eich tai  
I mofyn am y geiniog a chymryd pres sy'n llai  
a.y.b.*

Cael ceiniog newydd oedd y pleser mawr. Roedd y 'pres sy'n llai' hefyd yn werthfawr. Mynd yn gwmni lluosog i'r nos a wnai y

We would occasionally visit Nazareth as well to join in the choral efforts, and to the same effect we would be seen practising in the vestry of Tabernacl. We knew no more than that of the details of our fellow Christians' religion. We had also noticed how easily we mixed in other places.

Bethel and the mystery of religion had wrapped itself around me comfortably and from the early days that was true of all young people at Bethel. Tom, that is, Thomas Lewis Owen, the headteacher in the vestry, was the mother hen and we were the chicks. I imagine that the large beautiful chapel was a greater source of wonder to us than Disneyland is to children of today. Quite early on *we* were in charge of the Bethel doors: we would open and close them as people entered and left the chapel. After that *we* would go behind the curtain beside the organ to enable it to breathe – pumping air into the behemoth. We would perspire to keep the plumb from falling to the place where it no longer produced music. Without us the efforts of Phyllis Edwards and Ruffina Owen, the organists, would be futile, as would those of the cymanfa's conductor waving his arms around. That is what being a part of a community is all about! For the Christmas Day Eisteddfod a stage had to be erected over the 'big seat'. To see the New Year in, water would be boiled in a run-down cottage behind the chapel and carried to the vestry with its laden tables. There would be a big party. Noise and steam everywhere. After feasting there would be a meeting in the form of a penny-reading in the chapel: a piece to read without punctuation, singing a hymn on the spot, impromptu speeches, the challenge recitation without much challenge. Great fun, and an opportunity for children to face an audience and enjoy it. When it was almost midnight someone would get hold of the minister's coat to say that the New Year was approaching. He would then greet us with, 'A Happy New Year' and we would respond with a friendly cheer. We never heard him complaining about his blindness from one year to the next. After that the children would return home ready to get up early to go and sing for 'calennig' in the village:

*Mi godais heddiw'n fore i ddyfod at eich tai  
I mofyn am y geiniog a chymryd pres s'yn llai  
a.y.b.*

bobl ifanc i ganu i ffermdai – cerdded, canu, cwmnia a chroeso. Y mae ambell nos olau leuad a'r tir yn wyn o lwydrew wedi glynu yn wefr yn y cof. Arferai Syr Lewis Price, Gogerddan a'i gyfeillion a'i helgwn gwrdd ger y ddau dafarn yn y bore cyn mynd ati i geisio Sion Blewyn Coch druan dros bant a bryn a sŵn oer y cynydd ar yr awel.

Clywais ŵr busnes praff ei sylwadau ar fywyd yn gyffredinol ac ar arferion pobl yn arbennig yn dweud fel hyn, 'Mae'r Beibl yn dweud shwt y dylai pobl fyw; mae'r llyfr cownt yma yn dweud shwt y mae nhw'n byw'. Roedd gorsaf yr heddlu a'r Neuadd Goffa yn Nhal-y-bont fel tae nhw, i raddau, yn cyfateb i lyfr cownt y gwron hwnnw. Yng ngorsaf yr heddlu y cynhelid y 'petty sessions'. Yno, yn llys yr heddlu, y trafodwyd 'achos' yn y Gymraeg am y tro

*(I got up early today to come to your house  
To ask for a penny and to accept less etc.)*

It was a great pleasure to receive new pennies. The smaller change was also valuable. At night the young people would go in a crowd to sing around the farmhouses: walking, singing, socialising and being welcomed. A few moonlit nights with a white sheet of frost remain a thrilling memory. Sir Lewis Price, Gogerddan and his friends and hounds would meet by the two pubs in the morning before setting off to chase the poor fox across the hills and vales with the cold sound of the horn in the air.

I heard a businessman, who had many wise comments on life in general and people's customs in particular, say as follows, 'The Bible says how people should

### *Atgofion y dau a'r tri degau gan Mrs Margaret E. Jones, Cricieth*

*Treuliais fy mhentyndod ym Mhentrebach ar gwr Cors Fochno ac mae gen i atgofion melys am y lle a'r cymdogion. Yno y dysgais ystyr gwir gymwynasgarwch a chymdogaeth dda. Roedd mam a'i chwaer, y diweddar Mrs Richard Owen, Ynyscapel yn addurn i'w cymdeithas am eu buchedd lân a charedig.*

*Deuthum yn ôl am dro i'r hen fro beth amser yn ôl a loes i mi a'm chwaer oedd gweld fod entw'r bwthyn henafol ym Mhentrebach wedi cael yr anghenfil o air Saesneg, 'Primrose Cottage'. Ni roed entw ar unrhyw dŷ yn y pentre dim ond Tŷ Ann, Tŷ Meri, Tŷ Rosi neu Tŷ Sal fel byddai entwau y tenantiaid yn gweddu.*

*Rwy'n cofio y 'Living Pictures' yn dod i Dal-y-bont gyntaf.*

*Lewis Morris y Ffactri yn cael rhywun i ddod yno a'r 'Cinema' yn yr awyr agored ar dalcen yr Emporium, a'r peiriant yn torri lawr bob yn ail a pheidio ymhell cyn bod sôn am y 'Talkies'.*

*Coffa da hefyd am Ysgol Sul fach Pen Lefel sydd wedi ei addasu yn dŷ erbyn hyn, ac amdanom yn mynd i lawr i Gors Fochno i gynaeafu'r mawr a'u cario mewn cewyll ar ein hysgwyddau. Hefyd hel llus yng nghoed Allt y Crib a'u cario yr holl ffordd i'w gwerthu yn Borth i'r gwestai yno.*

Papur Pawb, Ebrill 1975 a Medi 1981

### *Memories of the 1920s and 1930s by Mrs Margaret E. Jones, Cricieth*

*I spent my childhood in Pentrebach on the edge of Cors Fochno and I have sweet memories of the place and the neighbours. It was the place where I learnt the true meaning of kindness and good neighbourliness. My mother and her sister, Mrs Richard Owen, Ynyscapel, were a credit to their society for their purity and kindness. Some time ago I returned to the old district. My sister and I were hurt when we saw that the old cottage had the monstrous English name of Primrose Cottage. No name was given to any house in the village only Ann's house, Mary's house, Rosy's house or Sal's house according to the names of the tenants.*

*I remember when 'Living pictures' first came to Tal-y-bont.*

*Long before any mention of the 'Talkies' Lewis Morris, the factory, arranged for someone to bring open air cinema to the Emporium wall; the machine kept breaking down.*

*I also remember well the little Sunday School at Pen Lefel which has now been adapted as a dwelling and of going down to Cors Fochno to harvest peat and carry it in a cradle on our shoulders. Also, collecting whinberries in the Allt y Crib forest and carrying them all the way to Borth to sell to the hotels there.*

Papur Pawb, April 1975 and Sept. 1981

cyntaf. Yn groes graen i gyfreithiwr di-Gymraeg, a oedd yn mynnu ei ffordd Seisnig ei hun, y gwnaed hynny. Sgwn i ai dyna pam y gelwid hwy yn 'petty sessions'? Teimlwn fod arlliw o ddydd-barn ynglŷn â'r cadarnle hwn.

Ar fur y Neuadd Goffa y mae rhestr faith o enwau bechgyn na chawson nhw ddim byw cyn marw dros eu gwlad a'i brenin. Ofnadwy yw pris rhyfeloedd. Mor fyr yw cof. Y mae'r adeilad wedi rhoi cyfle i dalentau lleol, a rhai o draw, i ymarfer eu doniau. Yno y llwyfannwyd y ddrama, 'Rwth' gan nifer o aelodau Bethel ac yno hefyd y deuai cwmnioedd drama enwog o bob rhan o'r wlad. Yno y gwelais i lofruddiaeth gyhoeddus gyntaf a hynny gan un o gwmnioedd teithiol Saesneg sef, 'Murder in the Red Barn'. Cynhelid eisteddfodau yno dan nawdd Yr Urdd a rhai eglwysi lleol; cyngherddau o safon ac urddas a gyrfaoedd chwist a'r llawr yn llawn byrddau bach a chadeiriau. Bob yn hyn a hyn cynhelid 'hop' yn y neuadd. Rhywbeth rhwng dawns a gêm rygbi oedd hop ym marn rhai trigolion ac nid heb hir ystyriaeth y cyfeirid ati mewn termau lled-dderbynol. Yr oedd swyn i'r bobl ifanc yn y gerddoriaeth oedd yn galon i'r hopiau. Dyddiau mentrus yn hanes y neuadd oedd y rhain. Trefnwyd noson yno yn y tri-degau i'r Parchedig Lewis Valentine i annerch. Newydd symud o Wormwood Scrubs oedd Mr Valentine ar y pryd. Neuadd lawn oedd

live; this accounts book says how they *do* live'. The police station and the Memorial Hall in Tal-y-bont appeared to reflect this gentleman's accounts book to a degree. The petty sessions were held in the police station. There a 'case' was discussed for the first time in Welsh. This was done without the seal of approval of the non-Welsh speaking solicitor who wanted things done in English. I wonder if this is why they called them 'petty sessions'? I felt that there was a flavour of the day of judgement about this place.

On the wall of the Memorial Hall there is a long list of young men who did not have the chance to live before dying for their king and country. The price of war is dreadfully high. How short is our memory. The building has provided an opportunity for local talent and for others from further afield to practise their talents. Here the drama, 'Ruth', was performed by several Bethel members and here also came famous drama companies from every part of the country. Here I witnessed my first public murder, that is, 'Murder in the Red Barn' performed by an English travelling company. Eisteddfodau were held there by the Urdd and local churches. There were dignified concerts of a high standard. Whist drives were held with small tables and chairs covering the floor. Every now and then a 'hop' was held in the hall. In the opinion of some residents this was a cross between a dance and a rugby



*Grŵp biliards yn y tri-degau.*

*The billiards group in the 1930s.*

yno ar ei gyfer. Y Parchedig Fred Jones oedd yn y gadair. Yn fuan wedi iddo godi a chychwyn siarad clywid ffrwydriadau Guto Ffowcaidd o'r tu allan i'r neuadd a'r dorf, a oedd eisoes yn ansicr ei chefnogaeth iddo, yn anesmwytho. 'Ewch allan atyn nhw,' meddai Mr Valentine, 'Dwedwch wrthyn nhw am ddod i mewn. Fe ddangosaf fi iddyn nhw sut mae cynnau tan.' Cynhesodd y dorf ato.

Lle ar gyfer bwrdd biliards, yn bennaf, oedd stafell isaf y neuadd a'r fath fwynhad oedd llithro'n dawel o'r tŷ i ymuno yn hwyl y stafell honno. Buom yn swatio droeon dan y bwrdd cadarn hwnnw pan oedd sŵn trwm-ac-ysgafn awyrennau'r Almaen uwchben ar eu ffordd i niweidio Lerpwl. Yn wir yr oedd plant o Lerpwl yn y stafell gyda ni – y ffoaduriaid bach a oedd erbyn hynny yn gymaint rhan o fywyd y pentre ac yn siarad Cymraeg cyfoethog Ceredigion. Gwelid Gwenallt yn arwain dosbarth yn y stafell a T.H. Parry-Williams yntau. Yno hefyd y byddai Sefydliad y Merched a phwyllgorau cymunedol yn dod ynghyd.

Led cae o gefn y Neuadd Goffa rhed y 'transh'. Ffrwd o'r afon Ceulan ydi hi. Gerllaw iddi roedd Llety'r Gof. John Morgan oedd y gof bryd hynny. Yn sŵn yr eingingion caem gyffwrdd ceffyl ufudd a gweld gof yn naddu carn a llunio pedol a'i gosod ar droed. Teimlad Wild-Westaidd cyhyrog ydoedd i ni. Yn aros o hyd yn y ffroen mae arogl mwg yn codi o'r carn; stêm pedol dros ei phen eirias mewn dŵr cyn cyrraedd carn a chwythu tân golosg oedd yn anodd ei weld ac anodd ei ddiffodd hefyd. Gyda chaniatâd gof caredig, hyn oedd ein byd a'n braint ni yno. Fel yr aeth traed ceffylau yn brin yn y tir felly hefyd y bu trai mor amlwg ar grefft a chwys y gof yntau.

Troi dŵr i rod ffatri Ceulan – dyna oedd diben y transh. Yn nhroedfedd ei dyfnder hi y gwelodd y mwyafrif ohonom bysgod bach bywiog gyntaf erioed. Gorwedd yr oeddem bob un ar ei fol yn syllu yn ffenestr eu byd cyfrin. Heb draed na dwylo rhyfeddem atynt ac at eu medrau symudol anhygoel. Roedd brogaod yno a thrychfilod ac ambell sliwen oeraidd a'r pryfed hirgoes hynny oedd yn disgyn ar y dŵr ac yn cerdded arno heb arwydd o ofn neu o ansicrwydd. Ceisiodd y cyfaill Alwyn gystadlu â hwy ond heb ddim mwy na thraed glanach na chynt!

match and it took a long time for it to be referred to in quasi acceptable terms. The young people were enchanted by the music played in these hops. These were daring events in the history of the hall. An evening was arranged in the nineteen thirties for an address by the Reverend Lewis Valentine. Mr Valentine had only just moved from Wormwood Scrubs at the time. He addressed a full hall. Reverend Fred Jones was in the chair. Soon after he had got up and begun his speech, firework explosions were heard outside the hall and the crowd, who were already uncertain of their support, began to show discomfort. 'Go out to them,' said Mr Valentine, 'Tell them to come in. I will show them how to light a fire.' The crowd warmed to him.

The lower room in the hall was mainly used for billiards and I had such pleasure slipping quietly from the house in order to join the fun there. We often hid under that firm table when we heard the heavy and light sounds of German aeroplanes on their way to bomb Liverpool. Indeed children from Liverpool were with us in that very room – those little evacuees who by now were such a part of the village life and who spoke the rich Welsh of Ceredigion. Gwenallt and T.H. Parry-Williams held classes in that room. The Women's Institute and community committees also met there.

Across the field from the back of the hall was the 'trench'. It is a stream from the river Ceulan. Llety'r Gof was close by. John Morgan was the blacksmith at the time. To the sound of the anvil we could stroke a quiet horse and watch the blacksmith filing hooves and making a horseshoe and fixing it to a hoof. It appeared to us like the Wild West. I can still recall the smell of smoke coming from a hoof and steam from a white hot horseshoe immersed in water before being put on the hoof and blowing a charcoal fire which was difficult to see as well as to put out. With the permission of a kind blacksmith this was our world and our privilege. As the number of horses diminished so also did the blacksmith's craft.

The purpose of the trench was to divert water to the water mill of Ceulan factory. In that one foot depth of water most of us saw lively little fish for the first time. We used to lie on our stomachs and look through the window of their mystical world. Without hands and feet, we would wonder at their



*Lewis Morris wrth ei waith.*

*Lewis Morris at work.*

Lewis Morris oedd y gŵr a gofiau yn berchen ffatri wllân Ceulan. Gŵr cadarn di-rodres ydoedd. Gyda chaniatâd fe gaem ni'r plant sefyll y tu mewn i drothwy drws y ffatri. Rhuo a grwgnach yn fygythiol a wnai y rhod wrth droi ei chwpanau i ddŵr y transh. Yna, gan sefyll yn ei unfan o flaen rhes hir o beiriannau, symudai'r cyfan ar olwynion tuag at Mr Morris. Yr oedd cyffro hefyd yn rhannau unigol amrywiol yr anghenfil – bobinau yn chwyrlio a wenoliaid yn gwibio nôl a blaen a phatrwm carthen yn raddol dyfu o ferfedd y cyfan. Cyfraniad pellach y rhod hon oedd creu pŵer trydan ac oddi yno y goleuwyd capel, neuadd, tai annedd a'r ffordd fawr. Wyndham, y mab, oedd wrth law o hyd i gynnal y goleuni hwnnw. Yng ngwaelod y pentref ac ar lan afon Eleri yr oedd ffatri Eleri. Pobl ddieithr i ni'r plant oedd y perchenogion ond yr oedd cynnyrch y ffatri hon hefyd yn enwog. Yr oedd naws a swyn i blant yn Ffordd y Cwm ac amgylchedd

amazing ability to move. There were frogs and insects there and an occasional creepy eel and those long legged insects which descended upon the water and walked on it showing no signs of fear or uncertainty. Our friend Alwyn tried to compete and the result was cleaner feet than before.

I remember Lewis Morris as the owner of the Ceulan woollen factory. He was a strong no nonsense man. We children were given permission to stand inside the threshold of the factory. The wheel would roar and complain as it turned in the trench water. Then, as Mr Morris stood still in front of a long row of machines, all would move on wheels towards him. There was movement in the various individual parts of the monster. Bobbings would whirl and jennies would dart back and forth and gradually a patterned blanket would be formed from the inside of the machine. Another contribution from this wheel was power for electricity. The chapel, the hall and dwelling houses

Eleri. Gerllaw yr oedd Llyn Priad na wyddai neb ei ddyfnder ac yno hefyd oedd cartrefi Hector Jenkins a Sinnet a Glyn Harker a gweddill eu teuloedd ac i'r ffordd dawel hon y dychwelodd y Parchedig a Mrs. Glanant Davies i ymddeol wedi cyfnod maith yn Lloegr. Un a gofiau o'u hwyron hwy oedd Douglas Cleverdon a fu yn amlwg ym maes cyfathrebu y BBC yn Lloegr.

Y mae i 'bont-fawr' y pentre dros afon Eleri ei stôr arbennig o hanesion hyd at farchogaeth beisicl ar hyd ei chanllaw carreg. Pur anodd i seiclwyr ar dywydd gwlyb oedd llwyddo i gymryd tro'r bont heb daro iddi a throsti i ddyfroedd Eleri. Yn anfwriadol y bu hyn lawer tro. Ond y mae hanes gwahanol iawn. Cyhoeddwyd llyfryn gan y Dr. Tom Richards, cyn Lyfrgellydd Prifysgol Cymru, Bangor â'r teitl, 'Colofnau'r Tabernacl'. Ynddo enwir rhai o enwogion Tal-y-bont a hanes gwiw y Tabernacl. Braint cyfranwyr eraill i'r gyfrol hon fydd cynnwys hanes yr enwogion hynny. Cyfeirio a fynnaf fi at y ffaith i Avarina Morgan fynnu cael torri twll yn rhew yr afon dan y bont-fawr ar gyfer ei bedydd hi. Rhwng un peth a'r llall y mae i'r bont ei lle yn rhamant y pentref.

Ymhellach i fyny'r afon i gyfeiriad Braichgarw, cartref John Meredydd ac Elis Jones, ar hwyr o haf, aem i ymdrochi yn gwmni brwd di-ddillad. Gwyddem pe bai i ddyfrgi afael mewn coes â'i ddannedd llym mai gafael mewn darn o bren oedd raid a'i dorri i dwyllo'r ymosodwr fod asgwrn wedi ei dorri. Suddo 'nôl yn fodlon i'w gynefin a wnai yntau wedyn. Rhan o gymorth-cyntaf yr afon oedd hyn. Y tu hwnt i Fraichgarw ar dir comin agored ar lan yr afon i gyfeiriad fferm Penpompren deuai sipsiwn a'u carafanau lliwgar a'u cŵn a'u ceffylau, eu plant a'u nwyddau am gyfnodau yn y flwyddyn. Deuai'r plant atom i'r ysgol ac aem ninnau draw atynt hwythau foreau Sadwrn i chwarae ac i ddysgu rhai o'u harferion a'u disgyblaethau hwy. Hwy a Shoni Winwns oedd ymwelwyr tramor rheolaidd pennaf y wlad bryd hynny.

Bron na fedrwn nodi yn fy hanes i mai symud ysgol oedd y newid a'r toriad mwyaf pendant o bob un yn fy mywyd. Dal bws y bore i Aberystwyth ac yn ôl adre tua phump o'r gloch neu'n hwyrach. Roedd fy nghyfoedion, gan fwyaf, yn gafael mewn gwaith a chyfrifoldeb. Cael cyfeillion

along with the main road were lit in this way. Wyndham, the son, was on hand to provide this light. At the bottom of the village, on the bank of the river Eleri was the Eleri factory. The owners were strangers to us children but the produce of this factory was also famous. There was a special atmosphere and magic for children in Cwm Lane and around the Eleri. Nearby was Priad Lake with its unknown depth, and also the homes of Hector Jenkins and Sinnet and Glyn Harker and the rest of their families and it was to this quiet lane that the Reverend and Mrs Glannant Davies came to retire after a long period in England. One of their grandchildren was Douglas Cleverdon who was prominent with the BBC in England.

The village's 'big bridge' across the river Eleri has its own special stories which include riding bicycles along its stone walls. When the weather was wet it was quite difficult for cyclists to take the corner on the bridge without hitting it and landing in the river. This was often done unintentionally. But there were very different stories. Dr Tom Richards, the past Librarian at the University of Wales, Bangor published a booklet called 'Colofnau'r Tabernacl'. In this book there are references to some famous people of Tal-y-bont, and the history of the Tabernacl. Other contributors to this book will give an account of these famous people. But I shall refer to the fact that Avarina Morgan insisted on making a hole in the ice in the river under the bridge for her baptism. In many ways the bridge has its place in the romance of the village.

Further up the river towards Braichgarw, the home of John Meredydd and Elis Jones, an enthusiastic crowd would gather to go swimming in the nude. We knew that if an otter happened to get hold of us by the leg with its sharp teeth we would have to get hold of a piece of wood and break it in order to fool the attacker that a bone had been broken. He would then sink back into the water with satisfaction. This was part of the river's first aid. Beyond Braichgarw on the open common land by the river and not far from Penpompren farm, the gypsies would come along with their colourful caravans, their dogs and horses, their children and goods and stay for periods in the year. The children would join us in school and we would join them on Saturday mornings to play and learn about their customs and

newydd o bentrefi eraill wnaethon ni yn yr ysgol newydd. Hen, hen hanes yw hyn, onide! Dyna pryd y cefais i ffocws newydd ar fywyd i gyd ac ar Dal-y-bont yn anad unlle arall a phlwyfi Ceulanamaesmawr, Llancynfelin a Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn. Y mae gwerthoedd cyffredinol y diwylliant hwnnw wedi aros gen i. Dyna oedd yn ein cydio ni, y brodorion, wrth ein gilydd. Rwy'n cymryd ein bod ni, y rhai a fagwyd yno, wedi caniatáu i'r gwerthoedd hynny ddylanwadu i raddau ar ddatblygiad ein cymeriad unigol ni bob un. Rwy wedi rhoi y sylw i gyd, bron, i gyfnod ein plentyndod oherwydd mod i'n credu mai felly y medrwn i orau roi i'r fro a'r gymdeithas a'i thraddodiadau eu priod lle yn natblygiad cymeriad fy nghenedlaeth – fel sydd wir am genedlaethau a fu o'n blaen ni. Yn ddiarwybod i ni roedden ni'r plant o'r cychwyn cyntaf yn cyfrannu i'r broses ddiwylliannol hon ac felly yn sicrhau ei pharhad.

Wrth i ni edrych a gweld y pentre o ucheldir–deall yr ardegau-cynnar yn ysgol Ardwyn, Aberystwyth aeth y pentre 'mwyaf' yn llai o dipyn na chynt. Er hynny yr oedd hi eto yn ddigon i lenwi fy nghalon! Trwy gydol blynyddoedd ifanc yr arbrofi mewn amryw feysydd, pan oedd teimladau personol yn amrwd ac yn agored i siom a dolur ymhlith pobl nad oeddynt o gorlan Tal-y-bont, daliodd y diwylliant dyngarol hwnnw droeon yn gefn ac yn gysur. Y mae gan y cof lygaid da sydd yn medru gweld hyd yn oed yr anweladwy: gweld ffydd mewn pobl a gobaith mewn sefyllfa ac yn sylwi, o'r diwedd, mai gorlif cariad ydyw hyn s'yn llifo o'r cwlwm clos a grewyd gan y gymdeithas y magwyd fi ynddi a'r diwylliant a osododd Mr Evans, y Woodlands a'r gwas William Evans, Afon Valley i eistedd ochr yn ochr yn sedd-fawr y chapel. Diwylliant Cristnogol oedd yn caniatáu i'r afradlon ymroi i lawer math o benchwibandod a chadw golwg o hyd ar y gorwel i erfyn croeso adre. Roedd pobl yn siarad a'i gilydd; yn medru cwmpo mas a chwmpo mewn; nabod ei gilydd a herio'i gilydd.

Digon tebyg oedd hi yn y pentrefi eraill a barnu oddi wrth siarad yr ysgol yn Aberystwyth. Doedd y gair 'boring' ddim wedi cyrraedd bryd hynny ond doedden ni ddim yn brin o eiriau i ddweud ein dweud. Roedd math o storïau sy'n dod o

disciplines. They, along with Johnny Onions, were the main regular foreign visitors to the country at that time.

I can almost say that changing schools was the biggest change in my life. I would catch the bus every morning into Aberystwyth and return home around five o'clock or later. Most of my contemporaries got a job and responsibilities. We made new friends from other villages in the new school. This is the old, old story isn't it? This is when I obtained a new focus on life and on Tal-y-bont especially and on the parishes of Ceulanamaesmawr, Llancynfelin and Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn. The values of that culture have remained with me. That is what bound us natives together. I assume that we, who were brought up here, have allowed those values to influence to a degree the development of our characters. I have given almost my whole attention to the time of our childhood as I believe that that is how I can best convey the part that the area, the community and its traditions played in forming the character of my generation – this is also true of the generations before us. Without us being aware we children were contributing to this cultural process and therefore ensuring its continuation.

As we observed the village from the intellectual highlands of our early teenage years at Ardwyn School, Aberystwyth, the 'big' village appeared quite a bit smaller than before. Yet it was still big enough to fill my heart! Throughout those young days when one would experiment in several fields, when personal feelings were raw and one was susceptible to be disappointed and hurt amongst people who were not from Tal-y-bont, that humanitarian culture was often a comfort and something upon which to fall back. The memory has good eyes which can even see the invisible: see faith in people and hope in a situation and notice at last that it was love that flowed from the tight knot created by the community in which I was brought up and the culture which placed Mr Evans the Woodlands and the servant William Evans, Afon Valley to sit side by side in the big seat in chapel – a Christian culture that allowed the prodigal to indulge in all kinds of capriciousness and look towards the horizon for a welcome home. People would talk to each other, they would fall out and make up, get to know each other and challenge each other.

Hollywood yn awr yn bod yma bryd hynny.

Er i mi wrando areithiau o bryd i'w gilydd, mewn cyfarfodydd a gyfrifid yn rhai pwysig, gan ferched a bechgyn a godwyd mewn cymunedau tebyg i'n pentre ni ac wedi llwyddo'n academiaidd mor fynych y byddent yn dilorni'r Sul a'r orfodaeth i fynd deirgwaith i'r capel. Sŵn cadwyni'n torri ydoedd. Wyddwn i ddim yn iawn faint y niwed a wnaed i'r bobl lwyddiannus hynny. Roedd y ddau dafarn yn Nhal-y-bont ynghau ar y Sul. Syndod a rhyfeddod i ymwelwyr o ddiwylliannau eraill oedd tawelwch y dydd. Pe bae graddfa gwarineb yn bod sgwn i ymhle ar y raddfa honno y byddai'r pentre i'w weld bryd hynny. Yr oeddem am osgoi cael yr enw o fod yn dduwiol – yn enwedig plant gweinidogion. Ac eto fyth, yr oedd parch dwfn i Mr R. Hughes Edwards, gweinidog Nasareth, i Mr J.D. Evans, y Tabernacl, i Mr Davies, y curad ac i Fred Jones, fel yr oedd hefyd i Sarjant Jones. Yr oedd beirdd o fri hefyd yn codi – Huw Huws, Ty'nrhelyg a'i gymydog J.R. Jones, Werndeg. Englynwr cywrain oedd y Parch. J.D. Evans, cyfaill mawr i'r archdderwydd Gwili. Prin oedd y meddygon a chlodfawr eu gwasanaeth. Pwyllgor y Nyrs a drefnodd i Nyrs Edwards ac yna i Nyrs Morgan ddod atom i fod o gysur mawr i bawb. Dyna fel yr oedd pethau cyn geni'r Ddeddf Iechyd. Yr oedd T.E. Nicholas ar gylchdaith o Aberystwyth wrth law i dynnu dannedd. Yr oedd yn wleidydd, yn bregethwr ac yn fardd o bwys anghyffredin. Daeth Gerallt Jones o'r môr i'r pulpud ac yr oedd dau fachgen arall, cyn hir, i ymgymryd â gwaith y weinidogaeth sef John G.E. Watkin a D. Gwylfa Evans. O eglwys gynnes y Tabernacl y cododd W.H. Rowlands yn olyniaeth S.J. Leeke a Sidney Jenkins i'r un perwyl.

Roedd y 'wireless' wedi dod i Dal-y-bont a pholion tal mewn gerddi yn arwain sŵn i'r tŷ ac yn gymharol fuan wedyn darlledwyd gwasanaeth o gapel Bethel yn cynnwys y cyhoeddiadau gan Tom L. Owen. Ar war y gymuned bentrefol disgynnodd cyhoeddiad y rhyfel ym 1939 a gafaelodd ynddi a'i hysgwyd a'i niweidio. O dipyn i beth aeth fy ffrindiau i'r lluoedd: Ronald James, Alwyn Morris a Jack Rodd Williams ac ni ddaeth Jack yn ei ôl atom o'r awyr uwchben yr Almaen. Roedd angen y ffrindiau eraill ar ffermydd i godi bwyd ac i gynnal

From what I heard in the school at Aberystwyth other villages were similar. The word 'boring' had not arrived at that time but we were not short of words to express ourselves. The type of stories that come from Hollywood now, existed here at that time.

I listened to addresses occasionally, in what were considered to be important meetings, by men and women brought up in similar communities and who had succeeded academically. How often they would rile against Sundays and being made to attend chapel three times. It was the sound of chains breaking. I don't fully know how much damage this did to those successful people. The two pubs in Tal-y-bont closed on Sundays. Visitors from other cultures were amazed at how quiet the day was. If there were a graph of civilised behaviour I wonder where the village would have been at that time. We wanted to avoid being given the label holy – especially the minister's children. And yet there was great respect for Mr R. Hughes Edwards, the minister at Nazareth, for Mr J.D. Evans the Tabernacl, for Mr Davies the curate and for Fred Jones, as there was also for Sergeant Jones. There were also very good poets emerging – Huw Huws, Ty'nrhelyg and his neighbour J.R. Jones, Werndeg. The Reverend J.D. Evans was an accomplished 'englynwr' and a great friend of the Archdruid Gwili. The doctors were few and gave commendable service. The Nurse Committee arranged for Nurse Edwards and then Nurse Morgan to come to us – a source of great comfort to all. That is how things were before the Health Act. T.E. Nicholas came on a round trip from Aberystwyth to extract teeth. He was a politician, preacher and a noted poet. Gerallt Jones left the sea for the pulpit, and two other young men, John G.E. Watkin and D. Gwylfa Evans before long became ministers. From the warmth of the Tabernacl chapel came W. H. Rowlands following S.J. Leeke and Sidney Jenkins for the same purpose.

The wireless came to Tal-y-bont with tall poles in gardens bringing the sound into the house and quite soon afterwards a service, including the announcements by Tom L. Owen, was broadcast from Bethel Chapel. War was declared in 1939 and the village community was shaken and injured. Gradually my friends joined up – Ronald

cymdeithas. Fedra i ddim cynnwys enwau'r bechgyn a'r merched i gyd ond pobl ifanc oedden nhw – plant a brodyr a chwiorydd i ni oll. Cofrestru fel gwrthwynebwy'r a wnaeth David, fy mrawd a minnau. Gwasanaethu dan nawdd y Crynwyr mewn ysbytai a chael gofalu am gleifion o'r lluoedd ag ati oedd ein rhan. Cefais gwmni'r ffrindiau yn lled gyson yn ystod y cyfnod trist. I rywrai, yn eu gofid, roedd ein dewis ffordd ni ein dau yn anathema iddynt.

'Wedi'r elwch, tawelwch', medd y bardd. Y mae dylanwad y gymuned a'r diwylliant cartrefol wedi bod yn drech hyd yn oed na'r brwydro a'r casineb ac y mae goleuni blaen y wawr yn Nhal-y-bont yn argoeli tywydd teg.

*F.M. Jones*

James, Alwyn Morris and Jack Rodd Williams. Jack failed to return home, shot down over Germany. Other friends were needed on farms to produce food and maintain the community. I cannot name all the boys and girls, but they were all young. They were children, brothers and sisters to us all. My brother David and myself registered as conscientious objectors. Under the Quakers we helped in hospitals taking care of the injured from the forces etc. I had the company of friends quite regularly during this sad time. To some of those grieving, our chosen way was anathema.

'Wedi'r elwch, tawelwch', ('After the jubulations, tranquillity',) said the poet. The influence of the community and the homely culture overcame the fighting and the hatred and the light before the dawn in Tal-y-bont promises good weather.

*F.M. Jones*

## Atgofion am Eisteddfodau'r dau-ddegau

Roedd rhain yn eu bri pan nad oedd trydan na theledu na radio i'w cael yng nghartrefi'r fro. Ar ddydd Nadolig y cynhelid Eisteddfod Bethel Tal-y-bont, ac Eisteddfod Soar, Tre'r Ddôl y dydd canlynol. Roedd eisteddfod Tre'r Ddôl yn un gadeiriol a byddai'r capel yn orlawn gyda phlismon ar bob drws i reoli'r dyrfa! Rhyw fis yn ddiweddarach, yn ystod mis Ionawr, y cynhelid eisteddfodau Tŷ Nant a Bontgoch, a chofiaf yn dda fynd yno i gystadlu. O edrych yn ôl, dim ond ar nosweithiau golau lleuad braf y cynhelid yr eisteddfodau. Ni chofiaf law trwm fel y cawn nawr – a doedd neb yn cerdded ar y lleuad bryd hynny, chwaith! Byddai capel bach Tŷ Nant eto'n orlawn, a'r muriau'n chwysu yn y gwres. Doedd amser yn cyfri dim, ac yno yr arhosai pawb hyd oriau mân y bore. Caem swper a phaned cyn dychwelyd adref – y rhan fwyaf ohonom yn cerdded, gydag ambell un ar feic neu gyda merlyn a thrap. Doedd problem parcio ddim yn bod bryd hynny!

Eileen Evans, Maesglas, Tal-y-bont  
Papur Pawb, Mehefin 1976

## Memories of Eisteddfodau in the 1920s

These were popular when there was no electricity, no television nor radio in the homes of the district. Bethel's eisteddfod was held on Christmas day with Soar, Tre'r Ddôl's the following day. The Eisteddfod at Tre'r Ddôl was a chairing eisteddfod and the chapel was full with a policeman at each door to control the crowd. About a month later, during January, the Tŷ Nant and Bontgoch eisteddfodau were held and I remember going there to compete. Looking back, the eisteddfodau were held only on fine, moonlit nights. I do not remember heavy rain as we have now – and there was no one walking on the moon at that time, either. Tŷ Nant chapel would be full with the walls sweating in the heat. Time did not matter, everyone stayed until the early hours. We would have supper and a cuppa before returning home – most of us walking, a few on bikes or with a cart and pony. Parking problems did not exist at that time.

Eileen Evans, Maesglas, Tal-y-bont  
Papur Pawb, June 1976



Capel Tŷ Nant

Tŷ Nant Chapel

## Atgofion am y Dyddiau Gynt

*Cefais fy addysg gynnar yn yr ysgol leol. E.D. Davies oedd y prifathro, brodor o Capel Cynon, ger Ffostrasol. Yr athrawesau oedd Mrs O.D. Owen, Berthlwyd gynt; Mrs Phoebe Pugh, Eglwysfach; Miss Dorothy Owen; Miss Morgan, Bow Street am gyfnod; Miss Jenkins efo'r babanod ac, wrth gwrs, Miss Lilian Edwards.*

*Mynychwn yr Ysgol Sul ym Methel, yn y festri i ddechrau gyda T.R. Owen, Nantllain (tadcu John Ellis Owen), a dyna lle dysgais yr ABC. Ar ôl hynny, symud i'r capel, lle roedd dau ddosbarth oedolion a'r canol oed ar y llofft, a'r ifanc i lawr. Y Parch. Fred Jones oedd y gweinidog bryd hynny, ac fe'm derbyniodd yn aelod gyda fy ffrindiau. Capel oedd tynfa'r oes bryd hynny – y Band of Hope, y Seiat a chyrddau eraill. Doedd dim angen perswâd ar blant yr oes honno, a phawb yn mynd yn hapus. Doedd dim colled am yr hyn na welid.*

*Oes y canhwyllau a'r lampau oedd hi bryd hynny. Roedd yna siopau bob yn ail ddrws, bron, yn y pentref, dwy ffatri wlân, melin flawd, tair siop gig, banciau, a siop pysgod a sglodion. Roedd gweision y ffermydd wrth eu bodd yn y siop sglodion ar nos Sadwrn, o amgylch y ford gron, a phawb a'i stori ddifyr cyn troi am adref dan ganu yng ngolau'r lleuad. Perchenogion y siop bryd hynny oedd Mr a Mrs Dick Rees ac roedd Mrs Rees yn gyfnither i Defi Preis a Johnny Morgan.*

*Cynhelid y sioe ar y dydd cyntaf o Fedi yr adeg honno a haul didor bob amser. Roedd yna ffair hefyd ym mis Hydref. Doedd dim angen poeni am y plant – roeddynt yn berffaith ddiogel yn y tywyllwch. Ac os oedd hi'n oer a'r dwylo'n rhewi dyna fynd at stondinau Vaughaniaid, Machynlleth i gynhesu wrth y lampau!*

*Ar ddydd Llun roedd rhywbeth tebyg i fws-mini yn mynd â'r gwragedd i'r dre ac roedd angen rhoi eich enw i mewn o flaen llaw. D.H. Jones oedd perchen un o'r rhain a Dic James (tad Doris Pierce) yn gyrru. Felix oedd â'r llall.*

*Eileen Evans, Maesglas, Tal-y-bont  
Papur Pawb, Ebrill, 1999*

## Memories of the Old Days

*I received my early education at the local school. E.D. Davies of Capel Cynon, near Ffostrasol, was the headmaster. The teachers were Mrs O.D. Owen, formerly of Berthlwyd; Mrs Phoebe Pugh, Eglwysfach; Miss Dorothy Owen; Miss Morgan, Bow Street for a time; Miss Jenkins with the babies and, of course, Miss Lilian Edwards.*

*I attended Sunday School at Bethel, in the vestry at first with T.R. Owen, Nantllain (John Ellis Owen's grandfather) where I learnt the ABC. After that I moved to the chapel where there were two adult classes upstairs and the young people downstairs. The Rev. Fred Jones was the minister at the time when my friends and I were accepted as members. At that time the chapel was the attraction of the day – the Band of Hope, the Fellowship and other meetings. The children needed no persuasion; everyone attended happily. You did not miss what you had not seen.*

*It was the time of candles and oil lamps. In the village there were shops almost every other door, two woollen factories, a flour mill, three butcher shops, banks and a fish and chip shop. The farm labourers were in their element at the round table at the chip shop on Saturday nights, everyone with an interesting tale to tell before the journey home, singing in the moonlight. The owners of the shop at the time were Mr and Mrs Dick Rees; Mrs Rees was a cousin of Defi Preis and Johnny Morgan.*

*The show was held on the first of September at that time and always with uninterrupted sunshine. There was also a fair in October. There was no need to worry about the children – they were perfectly safe in the dark. And if it was cold and one's hands were freezing one could get warm at the lamps on the stands of the Vaughan's of Machynlleth.*

*On Mondays something like a mini-bus took the women to town; it was necessary to give your name in before hand. D.J. Jones owned one of these with Dic James (Doris Pierce's father) driving. Felix had the other.*

*Eileen Evans, Maesglas, Tal-y-bont  
Papur Pawb, April, 1999*

## Nyrs Bro

O ddechrau'r ganrif hyd at y tri degau cynnar yr oedd galw mawr am wasanaeth gwraig o'r enw Hanna Maria Lloyd, Birkenhead Street i weinyddu ar y claf, i ddod â phlant i'r byd ac i roi cymorth lle byddai marwolaeth. Byddai'n gorfod cerdded i bobman a byddai'r teulu yn talu iddi am ei gwasanaeth.

Yn nechrau'r tri degau sefydlwyd Cymdeithas Nyrsio Ardal Tal-y-bont a'r un gyntaf i'w phenodi yn nyrs oedd Nan Jones (Edwards) o Gastell Newydd Emlyn. Y Gymdeithas oedd yn gyfrifol am ei chynnal. Yr oedd ganddi hi feic at ei gwasanaeth.

Y mae cyfrifon y Gymdeithas am y flwyddyn yn gorffen ym Mawrth 1941 yn enwi tri o swyddogion a nyrs M.N. Davies, Tal-y-bont a phwyllgor o 15. Gwelir fod cyfanswm y cyfraniadau, o ddeg cylch, yn dod i £49 a 2 swllt oddiworth 260 o gyfranwyr, ar gyfartaledd tua 3s.6d. (3 swllt a 6 cheiniog) y teulu. Yn ychwanegol i'r cyfraniadau ceid grant o £188.11s.6d. (£188, 11 swllt a 6 cheiniog) oddiworth Gyngor Sir Ceredigion, £10 oddiworth Cymdeithas Nyrsio'r Sir a mân symiau eraill.

Wedi tynnu allan £5 ar gyfer ei phensiwn derbyniai'r nyrs gyflog o £155 a £50 o lwfans teithio. Byddai'r Gymdeithas yn gyfrifol am dalu i'r Gronfa Pensiwn, yr Yswiriant Iechyd Cenedlaethol a'r Yswiriant Damwain.

Wedi cyfrif y gost o weinyddu a gwaith y trysorydd deuai'r cyfan yn £276.15s.3d.

Y nyrs bro olaf o dan y gyfundrefn hon oedd Miss M.N. Davies a ddaeth yn briod â Mr D.P. Morgan, Davmor.

Yr oedd ganddi gar bach (Morris 1000) ond, ar nifer o achlysuron, byddai'r ffordd at y tŷ mor ddrwg a chul fel y byddai rhaid cerdded beth o'r ffordd, neu fynd ar sêl ôl beic modur cyfaill a ddaeth yn tŵr iddi!

Yn 1948 diddymwyd y Gymdeithas a daeth gwasanaeth Nyrs Morgan yn gyfrifoldeb y Gwasanaeth Iechyd Cenedlaethol hyd at ei hymddeoliad.

## District Nurse

From the beginning of the century until the early thirties, a woman named Hanna Maria Lloyd of Birkenhead Street was in great demand for her services in treating patients, midwifery and helping at the time of death. She had to walk everywhere and her services were paid for by the family.

Early in the thirties the Tal-y-bont and District Nursing Association was formed and the first nurse to be appointed was Nan Jones (Edwards) from Newcastle Emlyn. The Association was responsible for her maintenance. She was provided with a bicycle.

The accounts of the Association for the year ending March 1941 names three officers, nurse M.N. Davies, Tal-y-bont and a committee of 15. A collection

total from 10 local districts came to £49 and 2 shillings from 260 contributors, an average of 3s.6d. (3 shillings and 6 pence) per family. In addition to the contributions, a grant of £188.11s.6d. (£188, 11 shillings and 6 pence) was received from the Ceredigion County Council, £10 from the County Nursing Association and other small sums.

After a deduction of £5 towards her pension, the nurse received a salary of £155 and £50 travelling allowance. The Association was responsible for payments to the Pension Fund, the National Health Insurance and the Accident Insurance.

After taking into account administrative costs and the work of the treasurer the grand total came to £276.15s.3d.

The last nurse employed by the Association was Miss M.N. Davies who married Mr D.P. Morgan, Davmor. She drove a small car (a Morris 1000) but, on many occasions, the road to the house was so narrow and rough that she would have to walk part of the way or ride pillion on the motorbike of a friend who later became her husband!

In 1948 the Association was wound up and until retirement Nurse Morgan was employed by the National Health Service.



Valma Jones

Valma Jones