

## THE EARLY HISTORY OF BETHEL CHAPEL, LLANARMON

Around the 1765 a poor man from Llanarmon-yn-Ial known as Sinn Llwyd or John Lloyd travelled as far as South Wales to look for work. On his travels he came into contact with the Methodists and was much influenced by their preaching. He returned to Llanarmon and around 1770 we hear of services being held in his small house. Later he moved to another house known as *The Bog* and services were held there also. Many famous preachers came to Llanarmon and one of the people who came to hear them was Margaret, called Peggi by those who knew her. She was a maid to Mr and Mrs Samuel Davies in Bryn-y-mywion. She asked permission from her employers to attend the meetings in Sinn Llwyd's house. Mr and Mrs Davies were not pleased that their maid was associating with the Methodists and they gave her a month's notice. During that month her mistress tried to find fault with her, but failed and so the month's notice became two. Many months later Mr and Mrs Davies discussed the matter and saw that Peggi was an excellent maid and of a serene disposition who had found fulfilment in her faith. Indeed they were envious of her peace of mind and were intrigued to know what went on in Sinn Llwyd's house, but their standing in society and the dire poverty of Sinn's household prevented them from going there. An opportunity arose for them to hear a famous preacher who came to visit Llanarmon and as he preached in the open air Peggi persuaded her master and mistress to come to listen to him. Mrs Davies felt that God was speaking directly to her through the preacher and both she and her husband became sympathetic to the cause and regular listeners to the preachers. They soon joined the group that met in Sinn Llwyd's house.

One day a preacher called William Evans, Fedwarian, came from Bala to preach to Llanarmon and got lost. He happened to call at Bryn-y-mywion to ask the way to Sinn Llwyd's house but was clearly too exhausted to travel further. A message was sent to Sion asking him and the congregation to come to Bryn-y-mywion to hear the preacher. As the house was so much bigger and more convenient than Sinn's the meetings were held there regularly after that. In 1783 Samuel Davies bought a piece of land at Rhiw !al and built a house for himself there. He and Mrs Davies moved to live there in that year. The house had an upper meeting room attached to it. Below the meeting room was a room where the preachers could sleep and where they could go through an adjoining door to the stable to see to their horse. In 1786 land on the other side of the house was used to build the chapel. The family were generous in their support of the chapel which they presented to the Calvinistic Methodists. After Samuel's death his widow continued to work for the cause. She journeyed into South Wales in search of preachers to come to Llanarmon and spread the good news. Bethel chapel owes its existence to the kindness of the Davies family from Bryn-y-mywion.

(Taken from *Hanes Methodistiaeth Sir y Fflint*- Griffith Owen (1913))