



## Find out about Maesyronnen Chapel's past...

Hello! Welcome to **Maesyronnen Chapel!** It's the 1940's and my name is Bernard Lewis, most people call me Bernie, you can if you like!

I'm eleven and I live here in the cottage next to the Chapel. My Mam's the caretaker of the Chapel, she's called Annie, and my Dad is George. I love living here and playing games with all my brothers and sisters – even if it is a bit crowded in this little cottage! Have a look at the old photo below – that's me when I was a tiny baby sitting on my Mam's lap in front of the chapel. You can see that there are four children older than me, but in the end there were fifteen of us Lewis's living here – that's thirteen children! Can you imagine having twelve brothers and sisters? That's a whole football team – including a sub!

### Welsh Words:

**Maesyronnen** (say *Mise-er-ron-nen*) means the Meadow of the Ash Tree

The chapel and the cottage next to it are both really old. Mam says the chapel was built at the end of the seventeenth century – that's over three hundred and thirty years ago for you! The cottage where you're staying was built early in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.



### Why was Maesyronnen Chapel built?

Mam says that the chapel is the oldest **Nonconformist** [see over] chapel surviving in Wales. It was registered in 1697! It was built here because there were people here who wanted a place to meet and worship that wasn't the big church in town **and** there was a Landowner, Charles Lloyd, who was willing to provide land.

### Why was the caretaker's cottage built?

The cottage where you're staying now was built for someone to look after the chapel, like my Mam. It's built right next door to the chapel so that it's easy for Mam to be on site to look after the building and to welcome visitors.



As the caretaker my Mam has lots of jobs to do. She keeps the chapel clean and tidy, she lights the black stove before the services so that the chapel is a bit warmer for the services and she opens the door for everyone!

Keeping the stove alight is really important in the cold weather because there isn't any other kind of heating in the chapel. There's no central heating, and no electricity. Brrrr!

She also works really hard in the cottage, looking after all my little sisters and brothers. We don't have any running water here so she gets us to carry all the water we need from a stand tap at the bottom of the lane.



The cottage when I lived in it- with the chapel on the right.

## Fact:

**Nonconformist:** Maesyronnen is a Nonconformist chapel. From about 1650, many people were fed up with the main Christian church, run by bishops and with prayers led by priests. They wanted to read the Bible and talk to God directly themselves, without all the fuss. So they didn't conform to the official version of Christianity. Instead, they met in each other's houses to pray, and then started to build Nonconformist chapels like Maesyronnen.

The cottage is really small, isn't it? And my Mam keeps on having babies, so next year when I'm twelve I've got to move out to live at one of the local farms. I'll still go to school of course but will have to help out on the farm before and after school milking the cows to earn my keep. When I get a job I'll send money home to help Mam and Dad with the bills.

Of course, I already help out as much as I can and give all the money to my Mam. I work on the Maesllwch estate: hoeing the little plants so that the weeds don't get them and keeping the crows off the corn- a real living breathing scarecrow, I am!

# Unruly Rulers

## Who were the Tudor and Stuart kings and queens?

This lot were a blood thirsty bunch, always chopping off heads. **Tudor** and **Stuart** are the family names of the kings and queens. The first Tudor was Henry VII in 1485 and they lasted till Elizabeth I. Then the Tudors' cousins, the Stuarts, ruled from James I to Anne.



### King Edward VI

Henry VIII's only son, he had some big shoes (and clothes) to fill! King at nine and dead at 16. Poor Eddie.

1509

### King Henry VIII

6 wives, only 1 son. Angry at the Pope horrible Henry made himself Head of the Church destroying all the Catholics churches.



1547

### Lady Jane Grey

Only 16 when she became Queen for just 9 days before Mary Tudor took the throne. Off with her head!



1553

### Queen Mary I

Back to Catholics again. Bloody Mary was her name, burning Protestants was her game.

1553

### Queen Elizabeth I

Good Queen Bess knew leaving religion alone was best. (Unless the Catholics attacked!) Had lots of boyfriends but married none.



1558

### King James I

What a silly king, he kept thinking witches were trying to kill him! He even wrote a book on witches.

1603

### King Charles I

Bad King Charlie wanted to rule without Parliament. That started a civil war which he lost. Onto the block went Charlie's head. One chop and he was dead.



1625

### Oliver Cromwell

Not a king but still a ruler. He didn't like the royals and made himself Lord Protector of England. He didn't last too long.

1649

### King Charles II

A merry monarch who brought back fun and games Oliver had banned!



1660

### King James II

A bit dim was this king. He tried to make everyone Catholic again, then ran away when they said no.

1685

### Queen Mary II & William III

She and her husband took her dad, James II's throne in the Glorious Revolution. Not so glorious for James.



1688

### Queen Anne

A sickly queen who loved to eat!

1702-1714





## **Meet King William III** **– who ruled when Maesronnen Chapel** **was built.**



### **Hi William!**

#### **So when did you become king?**

Myself and my dear wife Mary jointly took the throne 1689 but Mary sadly died in 1694 so I reigned solo after that.

#### **What are you most famous for?**

Stealing the crown from Mary's father, James II, in the 'Glorious Revolution'!

#### **What is your favourite thing to do?**

I love horse riding, although I am prone to falling off! (This ultimately led to Williams's death in 1702 after he fell off and broke his collar bone!)

#### **What is the naughtiest thing you've ever done?**

I'm not proud of it but I had an affair with one of Mary's ladies in waiting!



## What does Maesyronnen Chapel and its cottage look like?

Can you walk all the way around it?

Can you use any of these words to describe the building? Draw a circle around the ones that do. Use the dictionary on the bookshelf to look up the meanings of any words you're not sure of.

A castle

Pretty

Stone

Symmetrical

Square

Flamboyant

Tall

Industrial

Brick

Humble

Elegant

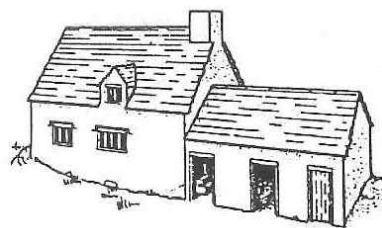
Friendly

The Chapel and the cottage were adapted from an earlier building; a traditional timber-framed **longhouse**. The cruck-truss, that's two curved beams that have been cut from the trunk of one tree, survives between the chapel and the cottage. You can read a little more on Cruck-frames on the next page.

Did you know that the floor was originally just earth? The flagstones that you see now were laid in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to make things much more comfortable. Could you imagine how dirty your feet would get if the floor was still made from mud!

### Fact:

A **longhouse** is a type of dwelling that housed people at the high end, and cattle in the low end or byre. Can you imagine living in the same house as your cows – it'd be a bit smelly don't you think?



Have you seen the wooden partition between the kitchen and the storeroom? This is called a post and panel partition and is from the original building, although it's in a different position now.

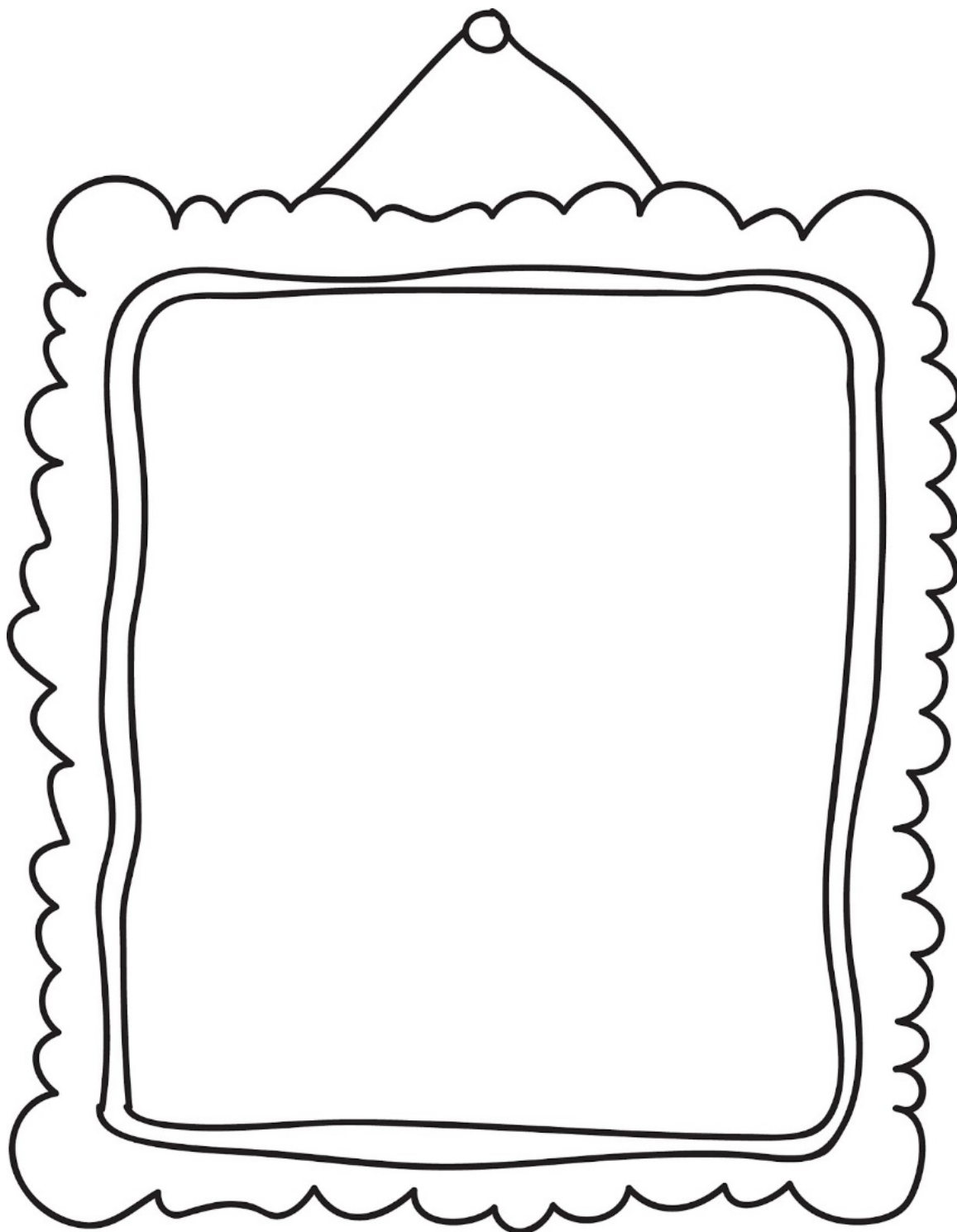




Buildings are quite easy to draw. They are usually made up of lots of geometric shapes, like squares, triangles and circles.

**Have a go at drawing the front of the Chapel and the cottage.**

Please tell an adult where you are going so they don't worry about where you are!



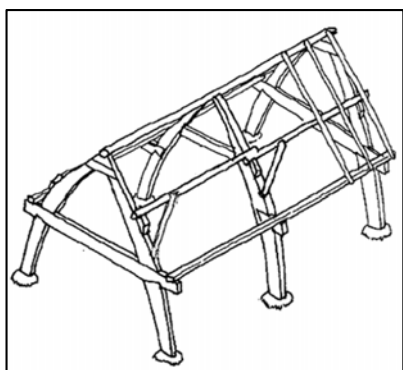


## Maesyronnen Chapel and its cottage are both built from wood (But . . . you can't see the wood from the outside!)

### Fact:

The simplest house frame was a Cruck. A curved tree was cut in two pieces along its length. You needed one cruck at each end of the building and one in the middle. This created your frame, which you then added to and filled in with mud walls and a straw thatched roof.

A Cruck frame was quick to build but it didn't have much room upstairs. There is a Cruck frame in the chapel and you can see it upstairs in the cottage.



If you look upstairs in the cottage or next door in the chapel you can see they are built with wood.

Timber is wood used for building. Today buildings with wooden frames are quite rare.

Most were pulled down to make way for more modern buildings. They caught fire easily too. Timber houses were quick and cheap to build. Remember the story of the Three Little Pigs!

The timber from oak trees is the best for building with because it is very hard. Oak is a common tree in Britain, and it was grown specially to supply timber for building. Oak trees They look like this, and they have wiggly leaves and acorns in the autumn.



Over time, timber framed houses started to look more like boxes, with a triangle for the roof. People wanted to have proper rooms upstairs.

Turn the page to find out more about how we can tell how old a wooden beam is.

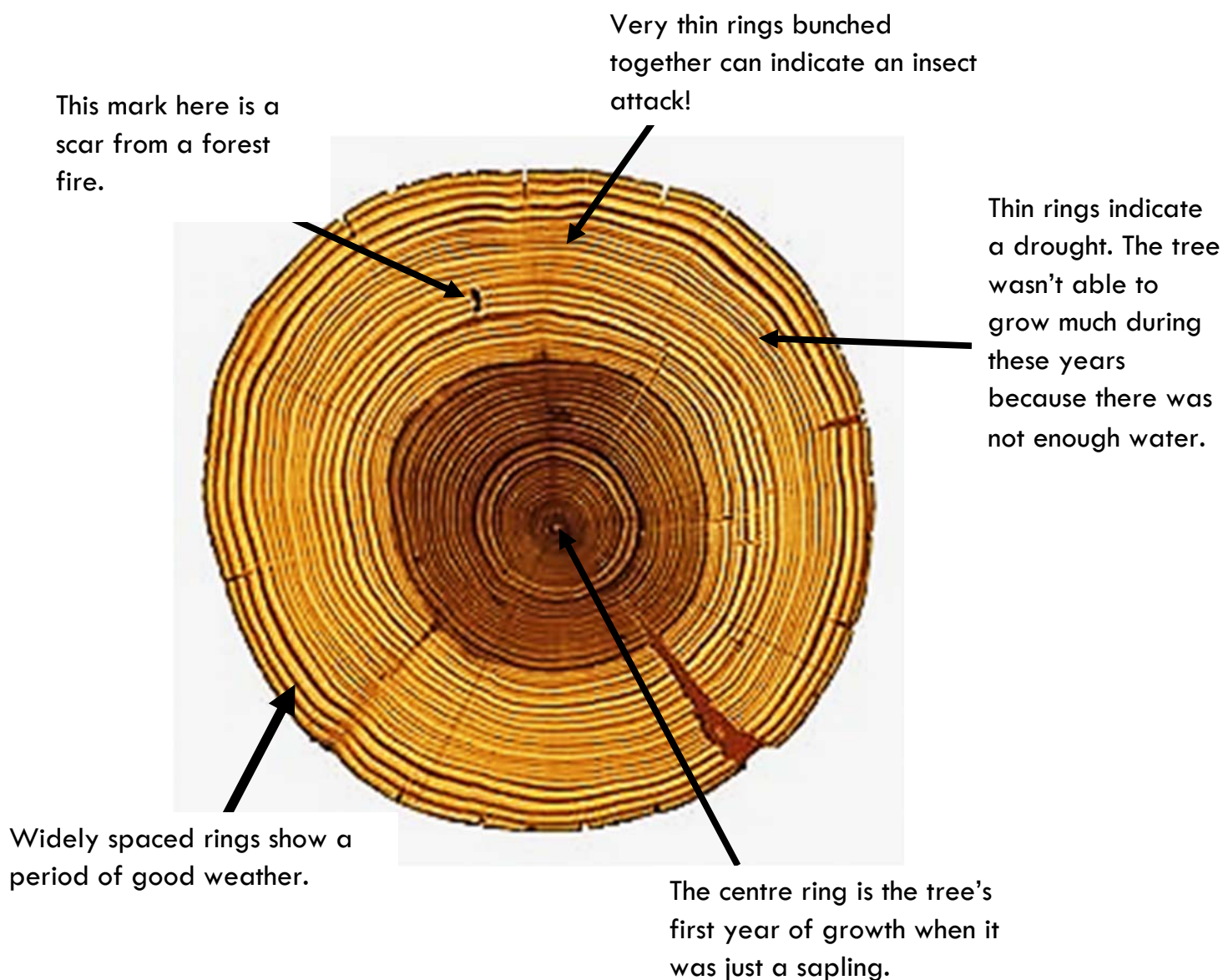


## Dendrochronology: What is it and why is it important?

**Dendrochronology** is the science of dating something by the wood it's made of. Normally you count the growth rings in timber and tree trunks. Each ring is a year in growth: in wet years, the tree grows faster than in dry years.

Have you ever counted the rings on a branch or tree stump to see how old the tree was? It's the same technique!

Looking at a cross-section of a tree can teach us a lot about what was happening in the environment around it at certain times.





# Quest



## Discover more about Maesyronnen Chapel

Maesyronnen Chapel and the cottage where you've staying haven't seen very many changes since they were first built. Few things have changed both inside and outside the building. Follow this quest to discover more.

### Can you find the place where this photo was taken?

You'll have to go outside. Make sure you tell your adults that you're going outside so they know where you are.

Maesyronnen Chapel is on the right hand side of the photo, it looks white on the outside and the cottage is on the left hand side and its covered in stone.



Below you can see a photo of the cottage and the chapel **before** it was restored by the Landmark Trust. It's taken from about the same place. Yes, you saw it in the History section too.



### What's different and what's the same?

Different:

Same:

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### Back inside the cottage, see if you can find the fire and the oven on the left next to it?

What do you think the hook is for?

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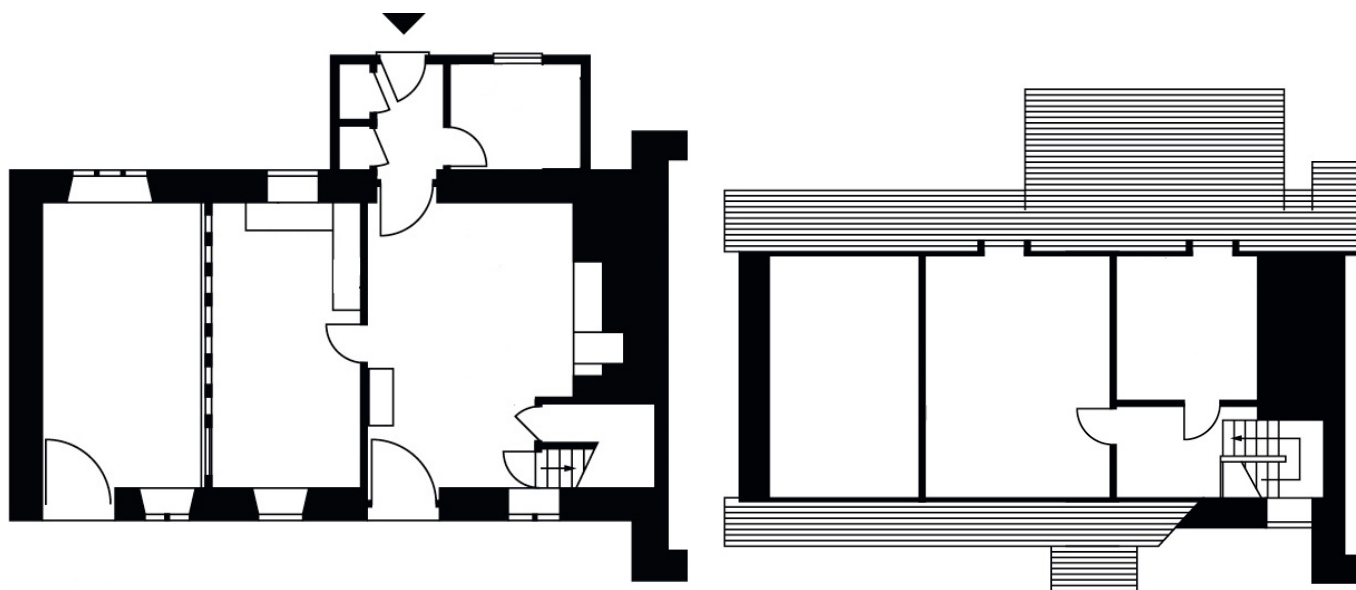
The oven was for making bread. It's a bit different from today's ovens. To use it, you stuffed in loads of dry twigs and branches and lit them. They burned very hot, so they heated the brick walls of the oven. Then you raked out the ashes and popped your bread in. The hot walls had enough heat to bake your bread. All a bit more complicated than turning a dial to turn on the cooker!





## Living in Maesyronnen Chapel

The floorplan of a building is a map of the rooms. The cottage next to Maesyronnen Chapel has two floors: Ground floor on the left, First floor on the right. The plans below show you the shape of each room. Take a walk around. **Can you identify the rooms and write on the plan how they are used today?**

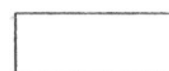


We use these symbols to show where beds, tables and bathrooms are. Add the symbols on to the floorplans to show where the furniture is.

**When you've drawn all the beds, put a star, like this, ★ on the bed you're sleeping in!**



Bed



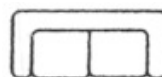
Rectangular (or a round) table



Bathroom



Cooker



Sofa



Kitchen sink



**Can you find an example of each of these things inside Maesyronnen Chapel's cottage?  
Describe, or draw the object when you find it.**

Your favourite piece of furniture

The fireplace (is it an open fire or does it have a stove?)

The pattern of a rug on the floor

### Fact:

Have you been inside the chapel? Some of the furniture in there dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The congregation had to add bits of furniture as and when they could afford it so it's all a little mismatched.

In the space below, **draw the view from your bedroom window.** What can you see in the distance? Are there any animals in the fields or any trees that look very old and interesting?

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for drawing the view from the bedroom window.





## Can you answer these questions correctly? (To find the answers, skip a page.)

### 1. What does Maesyronnen mean?

Holly Tree Meadow	Ash Tree Wood	Meadow of the Oak Tree	Meadow of the Ash Tree
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### 2. What was Bernie's family name?

Lewis	Jones	Davies	Thomas
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### 3. What job did Bernie's Mam, Mrs Annie Lewis, do?

Beekeeper	Housekeeper	Caretaker	Vicar
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### 4. When was Maesyronnen Chapel built?

At the beginning of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century	At the end of the 17 <sup>th</sup> century	After the 18 <sup>th</sup> century	In 2000
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### 5. What job did Mrs Lewis not do?

Keep the chapel clean and tidy	Lead the chapel service	Light the stove and keep it alight	Open the door for everyone
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### 6. Which estate did Bernie work on scaring crows and hoeing crops?

Mackintosh	Maesllwch	Maesyronnen	Glasbury
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### 7. Which capital city is Maesyronnen Chapel closest to?

Cardiff	Edinburgh	London	Belfast
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### 8. What colour is the outside of the Chapel?

Brown	Blue	White	Green
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### 9. What material is the outside of the cottage made from?

Stone	Flint	Metal	Brick
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### 10. What is a congregation?

An extensive fire which destroys a great deal of land and property	A group of people who come together to sing	A group of people who come together for religious worship	A group of people living in the same place
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## Maesyronnen Chapel Word Search

Now have a go at the word search. The words to find are at the bottom of the page.

C	A	R	E	T	A	K	E	R	R	S	G
O	L	A	S	T	Y	E	C	A	E	P	O
T	E	U	E	N	L	E	E	L	A	Q	T
T	P	V	R	E	L	D	A	R	L	U	Y
A	A	K	O	C	I	W	R	E	V	I	R
G	H	R	D	T	H	O	A	A	W	E	U
E	C	A	D	O	S	O	E	L	T	T	B
T	T	M	Y	N	R	D	A	B	K	L	W
T	T	D	W	E	G	F	N	L	U	S	O
N	L	N	Y	R	I	A	N	E	T	O	D
O	E	A	Y	E	S	E	I	W	R	H	A
F	R	L	T	P	R	I	E	I	E	S	E
P	N	E	N	N	O	R	Y	S	E	A	M

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RIVER	ASH	ANNIE	MAESYRONNEN
LANDMARK	TREE	LEWIS	CHAPEL
PEACE	MEADOW	LAST	COTTAGE
QUIET	WALES	CARETAKER	HILLY
PRAYER	WOOD	STOVE	WALKS

How many of these words did you find? Put your score in the box.

/
20

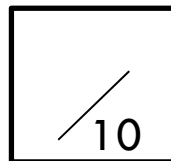


## Answer sheet:

### Quiz answers:

1. Meadow of the Ash Tree
2. Lewis
3. Caretaker
4. At the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century
5. Lead the chapel service
6. Maesyronnen
7. Cardiff
8. White
9. Stone
10. A group of people who come together for religious worship

How many did you get right?



## Challenge: Making Words

How many words can you make using the letters MAESYRONNEN? You can use the letters in any order! Can you make ten different words? **Well Done** if you make ten!

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.







## Make some Welsh cakes (Picau ar y maen)

These spiced cakes are also known as bakestones in Wales because they were traditionally cooked on a flat stone over a fire (less effort than lighting the bread oven!). When spices became available in the 17th century these were added for extra flavour. You can use a frying pan instead of a bakestone! Ask an adult to help you.

### Ingredients

225 g self-raising flour

110g g unsalted Welsh butter

1 large egg, beaten

1 tbsp raisins or currants

85 g golden caster sugar

A little milk if needed

### Fact:

**Picau ar y maen** (say  
'Pikay air ee mine')

These are traditional Welsh tea cakes popular in Wales for the last 200 years.

- In a large bowl, rub the butter into the flour until it looks like fine breadcrumbs.
- Add the sugar, dried fruit and then the egg. Mix to combine, and then push together to make a dough. If the mixture feels a little dry, add a little milk.
- Lightly flour your work surface. Roll out the dough until it is about 5mm thick. Cut into rounds about 10 cm wide. If you don't have a cookie cutter, use a drinking glass instead.
- Rub a frying pan with a little unsalted butter.
- Place over a low-medium heat, and cook the Welshcakes slowly until golden underneath and slightly puffed.
- Turn them over and cook the other side until golden. They need about 2-3 minutes on each side.
- Remove from the pan and dust with caster sugar while still warm. You can eat them warm or cold!

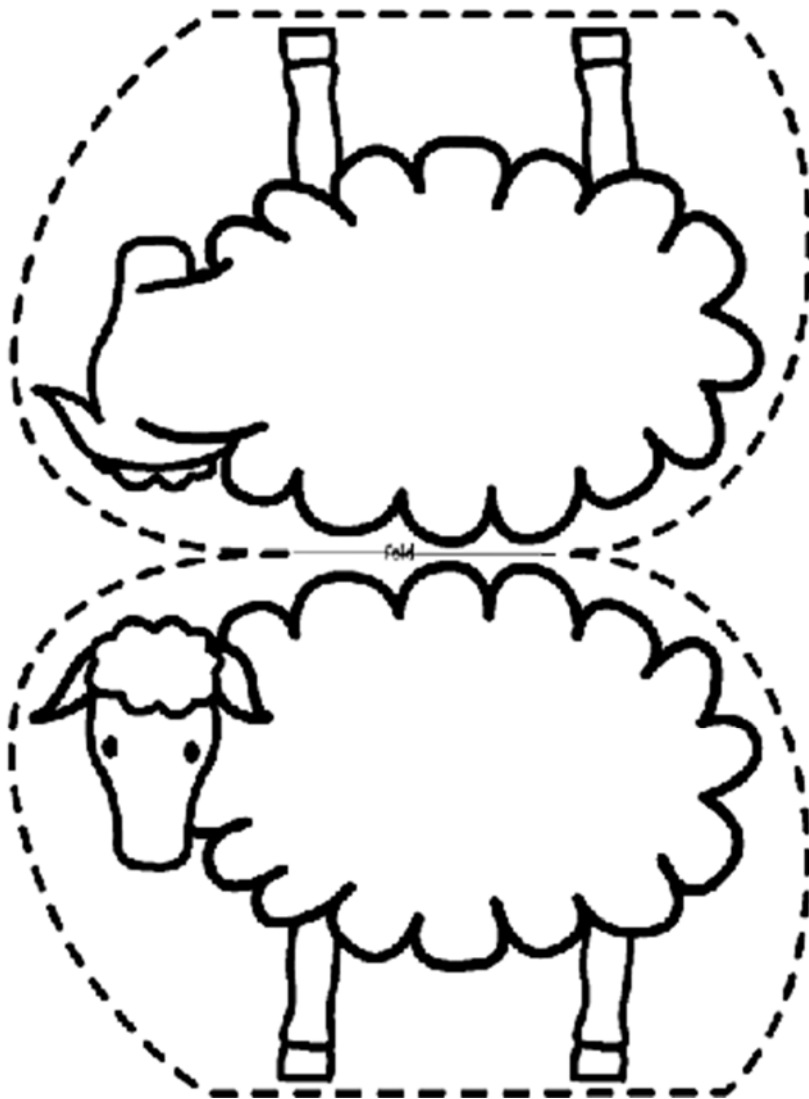






## Make a sheep, or your own flock of sheep

1. Colour in the sheep.
2. Glue the sheep onto a piece of thin cardboard, such as the inside of a cereal box.
3. When the glue has dried, cut along the dotted lines.
4. Fold in half along the solid line, so that your sheep stands up.
5. If you want to you could draw a picture of a field or farm on the rest of the cereal box and use it as a background for your sheep. Or use it to make more sheep by copying this one!





## Learn a little Welsh...

Impress the people you are staying with by learning a little bit of Welsh.

Welsh can be tricky to learn as some of the letters sound different from how they would in English.

<u>English</u>	<u>Welsh</u>	<u>Pronunciation</u>
Hello	Sut mai	Sit mae
My name's ....	Fy enw i yw	Vuh an-oo ee yu
Goodbye	Hwyl fawr	Hueyl vowrr
You're welcome	Croeso	Kroy-ssoh
Please	Os gwelwch ynnda	Os gewl-ookh uhn thah
Thank you	Diolch	Dee-olkh
How are you?	Sut ydych chi?	Sit uh-deekh khee?

Have you seen any Welsh words whilst you've been staying here? Next time you go out, see if you can spot the word 'Araf' on the roads. This means 'slow-down'.

Write down any others you've seen in the space below and then look them up when you get home.