

YR ARAN

A very large and remote area, apart from the large crags of Cwm Cywarch and the glaciated cwms of the Aran, the cliffs are generally quite small. The geology of the area is different to that found on the other side of the Bala Fault and the rocks are not generally resistant to erosion. The use of tap, probably borrowed from an old obscure English usage of tap 'top', it is also quite peculiar as a cliff name, but here it is seen a number of times. Once again one can note that there is no use of the word clogwyn 'cliff' as a term to be found for any cliff names in this area.

Craig Cwm Du SH 879230

The craig 'cliff' probably gets its name from the dark northerly aspect of this cwm. However, not only is the word du associated with the actual colour of the rock or if an area was shaded and gloomy; the word du could also be used to convey foreboding.

Craig Cwm Lloi SH 910154

The Craig 'crag' name is taken from the name of the cwm; the use of lloi 'calves' in the name may represent a good sheltered valley for them to be nurtured.

Craig Cywarch SH 8418/8419

The Cywarch 'hemp' was at one time, a very useful plant, it was mainly used in the making of ropes and sacks. A great deal of water was required for its treatment and whether this valley was a location for hemp processing or if the plant also grew in the valley is difficult to decide. Hemp was once known as Gallow Grass because of the ropes used for hanging people on the gallows.

Craig Pymylau SH 921199

This may be a corruption due to the mis-spelling of panylau, pan(h)ylau 'hollow, small valleys' (also seen in the name Moel y Panylau), the plural of panawl.

Craig y Ffynnon SH 833198

Craig 'crag' + y 'the + ffynnon 'spring, fountain', the word ffynnon is linked to Old Cornish *funten*, Old Breton *funton*.

Craig y Geifr SH 874269

Clogwyn arall a enwir ar ôl y geifr a welir yno. Daethpwyd â geifr i Brydain tua diwedd y Neolithig, tua 3000 o flynyddoedd CCC ac maent yn achosi difrod mawr i lystyfiant, gan eu bod yn gallu cyrraedd planhigion mynydd sy'n tyfu ar ardaloedd o glogwyn yn rhy beryglus i ddefaid bori.

Craig y Pant SH 915223

This craig 'crag' + y 'the + pant 'hollow' is the first cliff one comes to after the relatively flat moorland.

Craig yr Ogof SH 914247

This craig 'crag' + y 'the + ogof 'cave' may not have a cavern, any form of depression or cleft could be defined by the word ogof; an overhang in the cliff or a niche at its base would be a reasoning for the term.

Creigiau Brithion SH 839204

The creigiau 'rocks' here are in an area of rocks, scree and differing patches of vegetation; this mixture is what brithion, the plural of brith 'mottled', is trying to describe.

Creigiau Camddwr SH 849199

This area of creigiau 'rocks' is above a stream named Camddwr; although the stream does dry out at times the reference in the name is probably cam 'leap' + dŵr 'water' to describe a stream tumbling

down a steep hillside such as this. The cam 'bent, crooked' interpretation could apply to the upper course of the stream.

Esgair Felen SH 847193

Esgair 'ridge, spur' + felen 'yellow'; however, it denotes a sallow or pale brownish colour rather than true yellow. Esgair is quite often referred to being melyn 'yellow' because the commonly used reference to an esgair was in using a descriptive term Esgair Geiliog 'Cockrel's Spur'; the feet of the cockerel and its back spur are yellow.

Ffenestr y Graig SH 847195

Named as ffenestr 'window' + y 'the' + graig 'crag' because at a certain spot, a hole or 'window' could be seen in the skyline, formed by a fallen block.

Gallt Ceiniogau SH 914216

Gallt 'bluff, slope' + ceiniogau 'pennies'; the ceiniogau plural of the word ceiniog 'penny' is probably a comment on the common mountain plant named Ceiniog y Gors or Dail y Geiniog 'Pennywort': *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*. Most other ceiniog or ceiniogau names to be found refer to the worth or some form of payment relating to a field or the land. However, one explanation given was that the small fine screes perhaps resemble coins; or, that the tinkling noise of the scree when walking across it, resembles the noise of coins landing on the ground.

Graig Ty Nant SH 898218

Named after the farm, one also sees the name Gallt y Maen for this area of rocks. The track below was part of a popular way through for drovers and shepherds at one time.

Llam y Lladron SH 756136

Llam 'leap' + y 'the' + lladron 'thieves, robbers'; the cliffs overlook the pass and could have provided a hidden spot and a lookout for bandits to rush down onto the unwary travellers below.

Ogof Ddu SH 894214

The word ogof can denote a cleft in the rocks, an overhang in an area of cliff, not just a cave or grotto.

Pared yr Ychain SH 847226

Pared 'precipice, cliff; wall' + yr 'the' + ychain 'oxen'. Pared, sometimes seen as parwyd, is quite a rare word, it is usually used as a term for walls in a building; borrowed from the vulgar Latin *paret*, it is also seen as a cliff name in France as well as Spain as parete. The word ychain is another plural form of ych 'ox'. Pared yr ychen c.1700 Parochialia, Pared-yr-ychain 1838 OS.

Sawdl y Graig SH 848194

The sawdl 'heel' + y 'the' + graig 'crag' probably denotes the change in direction of the cliff at this point. The named section of the cliff forms the outward corner or prow, where it changes from being a south-facing cliff to a darker north-easterly aspect.

Tap Hafn Mawr SH 848193

The tap 'crag' does have a hafn 'gash, cleft, chasm' + mawr 'large' here is the huge cleft or gully running up the rock face. Tap 'projecting cliff' may have been derived from the English tap 'top'; or, it may be a local corruption of the word. A similar use is found in the name Mither Tap, Aberdeenshire; here the meaning has remained for a top.

Tap Mawr SH 845188

Tap 'projecting cliff' + mawr 'large'; the word tap is quite common in southern Meirionnydd and into

the north western area of Montgomery. The cliff does not have to be projecting over its base, just to seem to be so is enough.

Tap Nyth yr Eryr SH 906217

An eagle's nest would have been an obvious feature at one time; though, a mythological eagle would be equally possible. Each area would have its own set of legends and stories; stories that would be similar if not the same as those in neighbouring areas, it would just be the 'named' locations of the stories that would change. Yr Eryr 1838 OS.

Tap Pant Cae SH 844185

Tap 'cliff' + pant 'hollow' + cau 'enclosed', rather than a cae 'field'; this is the result of local pronunciation of the word cau.

Tap Rhygan Ddu SH 843189

The original name for this cliff was Yr Hugu Ddu. Hugu 'hood, cloak' is derived from the Latin *huca*, seen in Cornish *hug(k)*, English *huke* 'cow'. The rock is certainly reminiscent of a cloaked or hooded figure.

Tapiau Gwlybion SH 841184

Tapiau is the plural of the word tap 'projecting cliff'; because the feature being described is in the plural, it is usual that the following descriptor is also a plural, gwlybion is the plural of gwlyb 'wet'.

Tap y Gigfran SH 844188

Tap 'cliff' + y 'the' + cigfran 'raven'. The raven's nest would be quite obvious and in a favoured spot high up over the valley, if there were ravens there. A potentially dangerous cliff where animals could fall to their deaths could also be denoted by a name such as this as a warning.

Tap y Graig SH 847189

Tap 'cliff' + y 'the' + craig 'rock'. One wonders what the particular feature was here.

Y Gist Ddu SH 873270

This large and remote cliff is named cist 'chest, coffin' + ddu 'black dark'; very similar forms are seen in: Latin *cist-a*, Old Norse *kista* and many other European languages; it can be used for any general box shape. One would suspect that the name refers to the tall rectangular central buttress, above the stone wall leading up from the lake, resembling a coffin.