

YR ARAN

A number of important drover's passes in to be found; not only for getting animals from one valley into another; or, to the local livestock markets, but also to herd them to the East into England. The trackways over passes such as Bwlch y Pawl were shown on the John Evans map of North Wales 1795, which was an important drover's road at one time as was Bwlch y Groes.

Bwlch Cam SH 975274

The name for this pass is probably cam 'wrong, false' as there are two ways out of the top of the valley. However, on some maps the name is over the upper course of the Afon Cedig, which is bent, curving round to the East. On the early 6" maps the name for the pass was Bwlch Garn, with carn 'cairn'.

Bwlch Coediog Uchaf SH 88155

The pass is not named on the map, it is the name of a farm; at one time the area was coediog 'wooded', the uchaf 'upper' is in reference to the lower farm of Bwlchcoediogisaf.

Bwlch Sirddyn SH 885230

Bwlch Maes-yr-hirddyn sydd ar y map OS 6" 1840-80 series. Maes 'open land' + yr 'the' + hirddyn 'small ram – also figuratively for a man'

Bwlch Sycan SH 877175

Some may think that the word sycan 'flummery', is the name on the map. However, on the 1838 OS maps the name is given as Bwlch y Sugyn; a corruption of the word sygnyn 'marsh, mire', from sugn 'suction, suck' + -yn a diminutive ending, would make more sense.

Bwlch y Cribwr SH 923303

Cribwr 'comber or carder of wool' and their dwelling may have been nearby; the name may have a figurative use in describing a scouring or raking. However, one should also remember that the plant Llysiau Cribau, Llysiau'r Cribwr: Wild Teasel, *Dipsacus fullonum* was not only used for fulling, the dried heads of the plant were also used to lift up the nap on woolen cloth.

Bwlch y Dŵr SH 991298

Dŵr 'water' may seem quite an odd term to use for the name of a col or pass without a lake or pool; however, this is an extremely damp area of peat bog.

Bwlch y Fedwen SH 931139

The term bedwen 'birch' – here mutated to fedwen is to be seen in many landscape names because of its prevalence as a pioneer species, the word is linked to Cornish *besow*, Middle Cornish *bedou* 'birch trees', Irish *brethe*, Celtic **betu*. The birch was regarded as one of the most sacred trees, symbolizing new beginnings. It was also a symbol of good luck, birch branches would be placed around doors at Midsummer, to protect themselves against misfortune.

Bwlch y Fenni SH 973333

Named after the small river Nant y Feni. Bwlch-y-feni 1838 OS.

Bwlch y Fign SH 882186

Very simply mign 'marsh, bog, swamp'; from the Celtic **mūkinā*, itself from the Indo European **meug-*, **meuk-* 'slimy, slippery'. As clear as muck?

Bwlch y Fwlet SH 906301

Although the present name of this pass translates as Pass of the Bullet, the name may derive from bwlacts, a Welsh word for the blackthorn; borrowed from the English bullace 'sloe tree'. However, it

may be bowlyd, a vocalised form of bawlyd 'dirty, foul'; but which at one time could also mean 'poor, shabby' Bwlchyfwlet 1835 Jones-Williams manuscript, Bwlch-y-fwled 1838 OS, Bwlchyfowlet 1874.

Bwlch y Gesail SH 835188

There is no actual col here as such, though there is one a little lower than where the name is on the maps linking Glasgwm to Y Gribin; otherwise it could denote the way round the top of Craig Cywarch. Cesail 'nook, recess'.

Bwlch y Groes SH 913233

It is probable that the boundary crossing this pass has been marked with a croes 'cross' rather than a pole. There was usually a mark on the pole to denote the landowner.

Bwlch y Groes Fagl SH 921264

The shape of a bishop's crozier was probably marked on the rock, cross or pole in place to show the boundary of ecclesiastical land.

Bwlch y Pawl SH 921264

The word pawl 'post' is used here as a post was sometime used as a boundary marker rather than a cross; the word is borrowed from the English pole 'post'. 'i ben bwlch y Pawl' c.1700 Parochialia, Bwlch y Pawl 1795 Evans Map of North Wales.

Bwlch yr Anges SH 853172

One sees the farm name Nant yr Henfaes below in Cwm Cywarch (858173) on the present day maps. On the OS 1840-80 one finds Bwlch yr Henfaes and Nant-yr-henfaes for the farm; however, the map of the 1888-1915 series shows the name of the col as Bwlch yr Anges and the farm as Nant-yr-Anges. Nant yr Hanges 1780 Merioneth County Records Office. However, on the 1836 OS one finds Nant-yr Angau as the name; angau 'death, demise'. However, the old word hang, ang 'narrow, thin' is probably the important element in the stream name.