

## CADER IDRIS

This area is dominated by the striking ridge of Cader Idris that curves round and down almost to the sea. Another long ridge, a little to the South of the Cader Idris ridge, leads up from the sea to the top of Tarren Hendre and continues North East towards the Aran group. Also in this area are the hills above Corris and Llanwrin, sometimes known as the Dyfi Forest. There are a fair number of hills named after farms in this part of Eryri and as such their names are not always included as they are not really 'mountain' names, but reflect ownership of upland areas.

### Cader Idris 893m SH 711131

There has been a debate regarding the use of a cader nameform rather than a cadair for many years. Early on, some etymologists accepted that a form such as *\*cader* (or *\*cater*) was probably linked to Old Irish *cathir* 'fort', Middle Irish *cathair* 'stone fort'. This *\*cader* 'fort, stronghold' definition was seen in a number of early dictionaries. It was an element that could be found in a number of mountain names as well as locations where defensive sites were to be found; or, at least reminiscent of such defences. However, at a later stage it was declared that there was no such linguistic connection, it was reasoned that it was a corrupted formation and instead that *cadair* 'chair, throne'; from the Latin *cathedra* 'chair, throne' was correct.

It was also generally stated that *\*cader* was just a local dialect form of the word *cadair*, even though the use of the *\*cader* form was widespread across Wales [before many of the names were changed/corrected(?) e.g. Mynydd y Gader, Brycheiniog; Cader, Denbigh.] there was no apparent linguistic connections to earlier forms. The meaning of *\*cader* 'fort, stronghold' [and perhaps a later 'dwelling'] was taken and attached to *cadair* definition. The early dictionaries *cader* 'stronghold' meaning disappeared.

The Irish *cathair* 'stone fort' is usually anglicised as *caher*, is to be seen in many locations in the Connaught and Munster areas; the mountain name *Caherconree* is derived from *Cathair Conraoi* i.e. 'Cú Roí's stone fort'. In eastern Scotland, even up as far as Aberdeenshire, one finds *Cadder* and *Catter* name-forms as well as Gaelicised *cathair* forms e.g. *Kathermothel* from *Cathair Mhaothail* 'Muthil Fort'. The *cader* forms in Wales are also not just metaphorical, most do have defensive sites on or linked to them; such as the prehistoric *Caer Olau* and later defences at *Cader Ifan Goch*, *Conwy*. Another example is the Iron Age promontory fort above the school in *Pencader*, *Caermarthenshire*. In fact, more of the sites have fort or strongholds on them than topographic features forming *cwm* or *chair* shapes. Those committed to the argument for a metaphoric use of *cadair* 'throne' use could be in place for a summit.

A number of people now find it difficult to see how a Latin loan word such as *cadair* 'chair' would be so rapidly accepted as a term for what are important landscape features, unless there was a similar sounding term, although it might have a differing meaning, already there.

*'Cadeir: 'A chair, a throne'. This is generally taken to be present in the place-names listed below, though a number of problems remain. It seems surprising that a word adopted into 'high-status' British Latin and Brittonic should have been taken up quickly as a term for naming hills or other landscape features, .....'* The Brittonic Language in the Old North (2017) AG James [Scottish Place-name Society Website].

Idris is still a fairly common personal name, to some the Idris here is a legendary giant; although it is probably Idris ap Gwyddno who was King of Meirionnydd that is remembered in the name. He may have died c.632 fighting against Oswald the King of Northumbria in the valley of the Severn. The summit is also known as *Pen y Gadair*; however, the local term for the pointed rock outcrop at the top is *Y Cyn*; the definite article 'y' emphasises the curn 'heap, mound; cone, pyramid, spire; rick'. *Cader ydris* 1573 *Humphrey Llwyd Cambriae Typus*, *Caddorydric* hill 1579 *Saxton*, *Cadeir*

Idris 1586 William Camden, Caddorydrick Hill 1610 Speed, Caddorydrick hill 1645, Kader Idris 1646 Willem Janz, Kader Idris c.1700 Parochialia.

### **Mynydd Moel 855m SH 727136**

*Moel* is generally interpreted as being a 'bare' or 'rounded' and from the South, this usual reasoning would be quite apparent. However, the mountain would not be described as such from the North as it is part of a craggy scarp. Also from this viewpoint the mountain has a prominent point; therefore, the *moel* 'pointed summit, pyramidal' interpretation could be inferred. There is a cairn platform at its top is about 20m in diameter and has a prehistoric origin of unknown date. Y Mynydd Moel c.1700 Parochialia.

### **Cyfrwy 807m SH 703132**

The word *cyfrwy* 'saddle' is a reference to the dip and rise up in crest of the scarp to the West of Cader Idris; the two mountains forming a saddle shape. The word *cyfrwy* is linked to the Breton *kevre* 'saddle' and the Old Irish *cyimrech*. In 13<sup>th</sup> Century Welsh laws, one finds the spelling *kefrwy* 'saddle', which is very similar to the Breton form. Cyfrwy 1783 Thomas Pennant, Cyfrwy 1837 OS.

### **Mynydd Pencoed 791m SH 711121**

Difficult to decide if the mountain has given its name to the farm below or visa versa. It may be that the farm name of *pen* 'top, end' + *coed* 'woods' has travelled uphill to now denote the mountain top. There are no large forests on the lower slopes today. The other name here is Daear Mawr giving a sense of an impressive open area of land. Mynydd Pencoed is the name associated with the mountain today; however, it is possible that the cliff name of Twr Maen was also associated with the peak at one time. Mynydd Pen 'coed 1837 OS.

### **Top Tritiryn 766m SH 705118**

The OS has no name for this peak; this is a late name and the *top* 'summit' is the point where the boundary of three farms meet; *tri* 'three' + *tiryn* – the diminutive of *tir* 'land, property'.

### **Mynydd Gwerngraig 683m SH 744141**

Named after the farm, whose name was probably taken from the name of the *craig* 'rocky ridge' descending from the mountain down to the *gwern* 'alder marsh'. Alder was an important wood at one time, as it is the wood used for making clogs and huge amounts of the wood was shipped to the industrial cities for clog manufacture as the tree only grows well in damp western areas. Gau Graig, with both terms lenited, *cau* 'enclosed' + *craig* 'rock'; refers to the narrow cwm high up on one side of the prominent ridge, also known as Twll y Gwter. However, one sees Gau Graig as the name for the curving mountain ridge on the 1830-80 6" OS maps.

### **Maesglase 674m SH 823152**

Named after the farm nearby, the original name of which was Maesglasfre; *maes* 'open land' + *glas* 'glaucous, grey' + *bre* 'bryn, ucheldir'. The name that is found for this peak on the old 6" OS maps was Maen Du 'black or dark rock'. Maesglasiure 1425, maes y glasseie 1570 Pant yr Aur Manuscripts.

### **Waun Oer 670m SH 785147**

*Gwaun* 'high marshy ground, moorland' + *oer* 'cold; open, windy'; appropriate terms for an exposed area of rough mountain pasture. The term *gwaun* 'moorland, upland', Old Welsh *guoun* is comparable to Cornish *goon*, Breton *geun*.

### **Craig Rhiw Erch 670m SH 817150**

*Craig* 'cliff' + *rhiw* 'slope' + *erch* 'mottled, dark'; or, *erch* 'horrible, hideous'. Both forms of the element *erch* could apply to this location, the slope is very steep indeed.

### **Tarren y Gesail 666m SH 711059**

The word *tarren* is is pretty much a cover-all term it can be seen in the landscape denoting 'hillock, steep hill, scarp, rocky hill, rock, cliff' it has also been used for 'sand dune, a piece of poor land' is a term more usually associated with South Wales. *Gesail* 'armpit, nook, recess' can refer to a valley or a cwm, or even a cave in some cases; in this location it probably refers to the deep cwm of Nant y Darren. Tarren y gessell 1591, Aran y Gesail 1796 Cambrian Register, while Arran y Gessel is the name for the whole of this long ridge, including the top of Tarren Hendre, on the 1834 Greenwood map. The name for this mountain has crept away to the north east on some editions of the modern OS maps. The other name that appears on the 1837 ordnance map, and perhaps the original name, is Y Briddell-arw; *priddell* 'hard lump of soil' + (*g*)*arw* 'rough' or even 'great'.

### **Craig Las 661m SH 677135**

The mountain is named after the dark and shaded cliff on its northern side, this *craig* 'crag' + (*g*)*las* 'grey'. The mountain is also known as Tyrrau Mawr, tyrrau is the plural of *twr* 'heap, pile'; however, this may be a corruption of the term *tyr(i)au*, the plural of *tŵr* 'tower', referring to the large buttresses or towers forming the cliff. There is an old path named as Llwybr Cam Rhedynen that wends its way up to the col just to the East of this hilltop; this was not a Roman road as denoted on the early OS maps.

### **Cribin Fawr 659m SH 795153**

This is the nearest name to the summit. The term *cribin* 'crest, rake', is a diminutive of *crib* because of the *-in* ending, can denote a 'ridge, escarpment' in the landscape. There is indeed a prominent cliff or scarp to be found here, on the old 6" OS maps, the name was far closer to the summit. Using the term *mawr* 'big, larger' would suggest that there was another *cribin* name in the landscape nearby at one time. Ygribin Fawr 1834 Greenwood Map.

### **Tarren Hendre 633m SH 683042**

The original name was Trum Tair Tarren, this is seen on the 1837 OS map; which is *trum* 'ridge' + *tair* 'three- in feminine form' + *tarren* 'bluff, cliff'. The three *tarren* are the cliffs of Tarren Hendre, Tarren Cwm Ewin and Tarren Rhosfarch. *Tarren* can denote a number of features 'hillock, steep hill, slope, rocky hill, cliff'; locally, the meaning is for a cliff. Tarren Hendre is the cliff to the North of the summit; this is named after the farm of Hendrewallog. To those that worked in the slate mines, this was the name for that part of the mountain. Tarren Rhosfarch is to the south, while Tarren Cwm Ewin is at (SH 687040) and not marked on any maps. *Hendre* 'old or original dwelling', Cornish *hendra*; the term *hen* is used for a location that has been cleared for agriculture or settlement at an early stage. There are two large round-barrows at its top and a cairn, dated to the Bronze Age, they point to an important location in the past.

### **Twll yr Ogof 622m SH 659114**

*Twll* 'hole' + *yr* 'the' + *ogof* 'cave', the word *ogof* can also denote enclosed features such as 'cleft, gully'; the Middle Welsh *tull* 'hole, break' could also signify a cleft in the hillside.

### **Carnedd Lwyd 616m SH 684135**

The *carnedd* 'cairn, mound', seen in Cornish as *carneth* 'heap of rocks' + *llwyd* 'grey, dark' has a north facing cliff with a shaded aspect; this being termed 'grey'. The nearby name Tyrrau 'towers' + Mawr 'large' probably refers to the prominent vertical ribs on the northern slopes.

### **Craig Portas 605m SH 802141**

The *craig* 'crag' is the obvious summit cliff; the first series OS map of 1837 has the name simply as Portas on the mountain rather than as the name of a cliff. There is a *portas*, *portais* 'a portable breviary' in the dictionaries, this is a prayer book used in the Middle Ages and the name may refer to the open book shape of the cliff below. Otherwise, one wonders if there is a corruption of *portis*

'door, gap, gateway'; either derived from the Latin *porta* 'gate, door' or Middle English *port(e)* 'gate, gateway' denoting the hill as being named after pass through the hills in this area. Indeed, paths used the crest of this ridge for travel through the hills. Portas 1837 OS.

### **Mynydd Ceiswyn 605m SH 773139**

*Mynydd* 'mountain pasture' of the farm Ceiswyn, that had ownership of the area; the old name was Mwdwl Eithin. The *mwdwl* 'heap, stack, pile' + *eithin* 'furze, gorse' would infer a beacon; the name here may signify a beacon hill or it may also refer to the mountain's shape. At one time if a signal needed to be sent quickly stacks of gorse would be piled up at prominent points, to be lit in times of emergency. Gorse was used because it is easily set alight, even in damp or wet conditions.

### **Mawnogydd Duon 597m SH 729073**

This is the Eastern top of the long ridge of Tarren y Gesail. There is no name on today's maps and it was reduced to just Mawnogydd on the early 6" OS maps of 1887. *Mawnogydd* is the plural of the term *mawnog* 'peat bog'; the peat would be *du* 'dark'. Conifer plantations now conceal any areas of peat. Tarren Cadian was another name for the top on the first series of the OS map. Mawnogydd Duon 1837 OS.

### **Mynydd Dolgoed 576m SH 797137**

This is the mountain pasture for the farm, Dolgoed [*dol* 'meadow' + *coed* 'wood(land)'].

### **Y Graig Goch 574m SH 715085**

Although quite simply termed *y* 'the' + *craig* 'rock' + *coch* 'red', this is probably due to the bilberry and bracken on its rocky slopes rather than the redness of the rocks themselves. The very striking scarp is due to a huge mass of the mountain falling away into the valley below, sometime after the last Ice Age. This created the dammed ribbon lake of Llyn Myngul and it left a kilometre wide recess in the north western scarp of the mountain. The lake is now much lower than it would have been. Y graig Koch c.1700 Parochialia.

### **Boncyn Tyddyn Du 560m SH 726144**

*Boncyn* is the diminutive of the word *bonc* 'hillock'; derived from the Middle English *bonc* 'bank'. The land is named after the farm of Tyddyn Du.

### **Tap Llwyd 550m SH 720065**

Apart from the general use of *tap* 'projecting or overhanging rock; shelf' it can also be used in some areas for the outcrop of rock at the top of a steep slope + *llwyd* 'dark'. However, it is assumed that the word *tap* is derived from an English *tap* word form, a variant of the English word *top*; both can infer a hill or summit feature. This is the name on the old OS 6" maps of 1887, it is part of the long ridge of Tarren y Gesail.

### **Pen y Graien 550m SH 659023**

This name is to be seen on the early 1837 OS map, *graien* is a local variant on the word *graien* 'gravel, scree'. It is marked as Tarren Cwm-ffernol on the modern OS maps; however, the *tarren* 'cliff' with this name is actually a little to the South at SH 660016, it is also the farm name.

### **Braich Ddu 546m SH 645121**

*Braich* 'arm, ridge' is a word borrowed from the Latin *bracchium* 'something that extends out, spur, ridge' + *du* 'black, dark'. Many words in Welsh, as well as in other 'Celtic' languages, were at one time given a cover all default as being Latin loan words; they may not be seen as such now.

### **Mwdwl Eithin 545m SH 745109**

This *mwdwl* 'stack' + *eithin* 'gorse' is a fairly common term in Wales for a hill with a *tall* 'stack'

shape to it. To improve the land, the gorse would have been cut and cleared into a heap and burnt, the ashes then spread over the ground to improve fertility. There are other names here, Mynydd Dol-ffanog and Mynydd Hafotty refers to farms below; Ceiswyn is a farm a little further away. However, on the old 6" OS maps one finds Gallt Ystrad Gwyn.

#### **Trum Gelli 535m SH 656016**

Noted as Trum 'Gelli 1837 OS, the apostrophe shows that the definite article 'y' has disappeared but the consonant lenition remains. *Trum* 'ridge, spur' + *celli* 'grove, woodland'.

#### **Mynydd Cedris 530m SH 708081**

A name taken from the name of the farm, at (SH 689082), a personal name to some Cedris or Cedrys; in the past, a corruption of Cader Idris to others. r. Cedris in 1766 in the Meirioneth Quarter Session Rolls. t. Kedris c.1700 Parochialia, Bwlch Cedris and Pont Cedris 1733; the first name to be found for the mountain on the maps was Cern Cedris 1837 OS.

#### **Mynydd Ty Glas 526m SH 722085**

Ty Glas is the name of the *tyddyn* 'smallholding' or farm below.

#### **Mynydd y Gader 517m SH 715152**

This *mynydd* 'mountain' + *y* 'the' + *cader* 'stronghold' is not recorded on the modern OS maps; however, it is to be found on the 1837 map. In the Welsh Annals, Idris ap Gwyddno, the 7<sup>th</sup> Century King of Meirionnydd was supposed to have a hillfort or defensive site ('kadr') on the flanks of the mountain. According to the *Annales Cambriae* he apparently either died by strangulation or by having his throat cut and not in battle against Oswald of Northumbria. One might regard this as a rather remote place for a possible hillfort; however, one should note the nearby, Craig y Castell 280m (SH 693173) & Craig y Castell 252m (SH 695157). Mynydd y Gader 1837 OS.

#### **Moel y Geifr 515m SH 716051**

The name for this mountain relates to the *geifr* 'goats' that would have been found in the area. Geifr is the plural of *gafr* 'goat' and is linked to Breton *gavr*; *gaor*; Old Breton *gabr*; Old Irish *gabor*. The name is now some way away on modern maps; also, on the early 6" OS maps it was noted as Moel y Geifr.

#### **Mynydd Fron Fraith 514m SH 747117**

The name of this mountain refers to a *bron* 'hillside, slope' which, due to differences in vegetation and or rocks appears to be *braith* 'pied or speckled'. This is the feminine form of the word *brith* 'mottled, variegated'.

#### **Pen Trum Gwr 511m SH 651029**

*Trum* 'ridge, spur' is linked to Old Welsh *drum*; Cornish *trum*; Irish *druimm* 'ridge, slope, mountain'. The term can denote a hill as well as a ridge or spur reaching out from a hill, the word *cwr* 'the part that narrows to a point', gives the sense of a tapered ridge, which rather suits this landscape feature.

#### **Moel Cwm yr Eglwys 508m SH 827157**

Craig Buarth Glas is the name of the cliff on the northern slopes as well as the hill for some; or, this *moel* 'hill' takes its name from *cwm* 'valley' + *yr* 'the' + *eglwys* 'church'.

#### **Crach Fynydd 508m SH 769127**

*Crach* 'scabby, poor area of ground' + *mynydd* 'hill', a name that transferred down to the farmstead of Crach Fynydd.

#### **Godre Fynydd 508m SH 756097**

This is not a hill that is *go(r)* 'above' + *dre* 'settlement'; rather, *godre* 'base of a hill'; or, 'border, edge' with a figurative use for 'outlying area'. Another name for the hill is found on the old 6" OS maps as Y Garnedd Wen. Godre Vynydh c.1700 Parochialia.

### **Mynydd Rugog 504m SH 728093**

The term here may be a lenited form of the word *grugog* 'heathery'; from *grug* 'heather' + *-og* 'a likeness to, association with'. Written as Mynydd Rigog on the early 6" OS maps, but only as Rigog on the 1837 map. Rugog Fawr c.1700 Parochialia; it may be that the hill was originally named after the cliff along its northern flank, namely Craig Goch. However, the 'mountain' i.e. upland pasture is probably named after the farm Rugog (at SH 733097), as are many of the uplands in this particular area, this would allow an alternative interpretation. Locally, the name is interpreted as being Rhygog, a place where *rhyg* 'rye' is grown.

### **Trawsfynydd 493m SH 641109**

The descriptor is the term *traws* 'across, athwart, transverse; through' + *mynydd* 'upland'. This hill lies above the ancient trackway of Y Ffordd Ddu, which follows a route weaving through the mountains with reasonable ease and keeping away from the steep coastal slopes.

### **Mynydd Braich Goch 486m SH 729073**

Mynydd Braich Goch is the name given on this ridge line top. However, the name seen on the 1837 first series map is Cloddfa'r Geuwern. *Cloddfa* 'quarry, mine' + *r* 'the' + *geuwern* 'enclosed alder-marsh'.

### **Moel Dinas 478m SH 842143**

Above Dinas Mawddwy, later marked as Foel Dinas, this hill does not seem to have any indication that there was a *dinas* 'hill-fort, stronghold' on it. However, due to the steep slopes on almost all sides it would have been a good site to gather, in times of trouble herds and flocks were driven to rough enclosures on hilltops.

### **Mynydd Rhyd-galed 475m SH 703041**

This is named after the farm below; *rhyd* 'ford' + *caled* 'difficult, hard rough' and probably refers to a difficult crossing point on one of the rivers or streams nearby.

### **Mynydd Llwydiarth 470m SH 792127**

This is probably the Moyllywydyath recorded in the boundary description for a portion of land owned by Cymer Abbey in a 1209 Charter. Note that the later Llwydiarth Hall is nearby. Moel Llwydiarth 1837 OS.

### **Mynydd Cwmcelli 469m SH 804099**

Cwmcelli was the name of a small farmstead on the slopes of this hill, with its name taken from the *cwm* 'valley' + *celli* 'groves'. The name was further up on the higher of two tops at one time. Cumkelly 1209 Cymer Abbey Charter, Ffridd Cwm Celli 1837 OS.

### **Mynydd Pennant 463m SH 665105**

*Pen* 'end, head' + *nant* 'vale, valley'. Another hill named after the farm and/or the parish in which it is situated, the parish is named Llanfihangel y Pennant. Ffridd Newydd is the local name for the mountain.

### **Pen y Garn 458m SH 626108**

The term *carn* 'a heap of stones' can indicate more than a man made feature such as a cairn. In the landscape the term can refer to a rocky top, a crag strewn hill or scree features or even a cairn shaped mountain. The word *carn* 'a heap of stones, cairn' is linked to Breton *karn*; Cornish *karn*;

Irish *carn* 'pile of stones' and Latin *cornu* 'horn'. Pen y Crug was the other name for this spot on the early OS maps; *crug* 'hillock, knoll; cairn'. There is an old triangulation pillar on top of what was probably an ancient cairn. Pengarn 1837 OS.

#### **Moel Grochan 450m SH 769107**

Scarred by slate quarries, which probably does not have a bearing on the name, this hill has the descriptor *crochan* 'crock, pot, cauldron'. However, the hill is noted as Moel Grychan in the Melville Richards Archive and in the archive as Kraig Mael grychan c.1700 Parochialia. Therefore, there may otherwise be a link to *crych* 'wrinkled, curly, rough', perhaps connected to the numerous rocky outcrops that can still be seen on the hillside outside of the quarried areas..

#### **Y Foel Ddu 448m SH 697095**

Another *moel* 'hill'; either with an aspect that is shaded or rocks that are *du* 'black' or 'dark'.

#### **Cwr Bach 443m SH 647033**

The name on the 1837 OS map was Tarren y Barcut 'Kite Cliff', a name to be seen today is a little to the North, just below the top named Pen Trum-gwr. On the 1887 map it was recorded as Cwr Fach; this *cwr* 'the part that tapers to a point, extremity' is probably the correct form rather than the name seen today as Gŵr-bach; *gŵr* 'man, person' + *bach* 'lesser'.

#### **Mynydd y Tri Arglwydd 442m SH 813094**

This hill of the *tri* 'three' + *arglwydd* 'lord(s)' may refer to the area being on the bounds of three principalities Gwynedd, Powys and Deheubarth. The lordships of the early middle ages were not necessarily ruled by benevolence; the speed with which some of them changed hands is an indicator of the conflicts and infighting taking place.

#### **Esgair Berfa 430m SH 637095**

This *esgair* 'ridge, spur' is cognate to Breton *esker*, Old Cornish *escher*, Middle Irish *escir*. The word describes a long ridge of a mountain similar to a *braich* 'ridge' and this hill does have a long thin form. It has developed a peculiar second word or element in its OS name. It should not be translated as being the word *berfa* 'wheelbarrow'. In looking at the earlier forms one sees that this top is being located amid others by the use of the term *perfedd* 'centre, middle, at the heart of'. Esgair berveth 1576/7 Maesyneuadd Manuscripts, Esger berveth 1632 and Esker perfedd 1650/1 Peniarth Manuscripts, Esgair Berfa 1837 OS.

#### **Craig y Gamell 424m SH 850133**

Named after the stream Nant y Gamell. Craig-'gamell 1836 OS.

#### **Y Fedw-lwyd 424 SH 805094**

The term *bedw* 'birch' can also refer to a grove or area of birch. Bedw Lwyd c.1700 Parochialia, Y Fedw-lwyd 1837 OS.

#### **Bwlch y Cefn 410m SH 812129**

The name on the early maps of the area was *bwlch* 'col, pass' + *y* 'the' + *cefn* 'back, ridge'; Mynydd Gartheinog is the one seen now, named after Gartheiniog farm.

#### **Mynydd Ty'n y Fach 409m SH 688097**

Named after the farm Ty'n y Fach 1837 OS. The term *fach* here is probably linked to *bach* 'bent, hooked, enclosed' rather than *bach* 'small'. Mynydd Nant yr Eira is the local name given to the hill, this time it is taken from the farm to the South.

#### **Tarren Cadian 408m SH 745069**

Cadian is probably a local variant on the personal name Cadien. There is a Nant Cadian and Cwm Cadian below this *tarren* 'bluff'. Cwmcadyen 1292 PRO, Taren Cadian 1837 OS.

#### **Moel Maes y Wern Goch 405m SH 714044**

This is not *moel* 'bare rounded hill', rather a later usage of *moel* 'upland pasture, mountain'; it is more of a spur than a top, named after the farm. *Maes* 'field' + *y* 'the' + (*g*)*wern* 'marsh' which has a *goch* 'brown, red, sallow' tinge to it.

#### **Moel Heulen 403m SH 776082**

*Heulen* is an old personal name, it may be a rather tenuous variation on Heilyn; *heulen* is also a singular diminutive of *haul* 'sun, sunlight'. One should note that there is a Coed Rhyd y Biswail below, at SH 786074, this was a *rhyd* 'ford' that was somewhat reminiscent of *biswail* 'dung, slurry'. Could the element/word *eulon*, *eulan* 'dung, excrement' have a connection with the hill name, showing a connection to its origin?

#### **Corlan Fraith 401m SN 631000**

*Corlan* 'fold, pen' is generally a term where an area has been enclosed to retain livestock. *Fraith* is the lenited feminine form of *braith* 'mottled, speckled'. There are a number of prehistoric remains on its slopes and at the top is a ruined cairn with a dilapidated trig point. The exact age of this cairn is unknown. Corlan fraith 1837 OS.

#### **Mynydd Cymerau 400m SH 786116**

The use of the term *cymerau* is quite apt hereabouts, it is the plural of *cymer* 'meeting of waters/valleys', and refers the joining of a number of streams near the farm Cymerau. The terms are quite common in the Welsh landscape and are cognate with Breton *kemer* [which gave the placename Quimper]; Middle Irish *commar* 'meeting of valleys, of rivers'.

#### **Ffridd Llwydiarth 393m SH 796121**

*Ffridd* 'intake, mountain pasture', borrowed from the Middle English *frith*, Old English *fyrhoðe* 'wood, wooded slope'. Llwydyrath 1209 Cymer Abbey Charter.

#### **Allt Lwyd 392m SH 614078**

*Allt* 'bluff, crag, slope', Old Welsh *alt* + *llwyd* 'grey', comparable to Old Cornish *luit*; Old Breton *loit*. Unfortunately, one cannot expect colour names in the landscape to be consistent in their application, the element *llwyd* 'grey, faint; pale, wan; russet, brown' is probably one of the most varied in the range of landscape colours. Irallthuyt 1209 Cymer Abbey Charter, Pen y Gorlan 1837 OS.

#### **Mynydd Tymawr 390m SH 770075**

This is the *mynydd* 'sheepwalk, mountain pasture' for the farm Tymawr [*ty* 'house' + *mawr* 'large'].

#### **Mynydd Hendre Ddu 383m SH 803120**

The mountain pasture of the farm Hendre Ddu. The *hendre* 'old dwelling' was the winter residence for the family and animals after the summer up in the hafod. Yr Hendre Ddu c.1700 Parochialia.

#### **Bryn Brith 383m SH 664154**

*Brith* 'speckled, mottled, multicoloured' is a good term for a *bryn* 'hill' with rock outcrops; or, a patchwork of vegetation. It is therefore a common term, not just in the Welsh landscape; linked to Breton *breiz* from the Celtic *\*mrikta* 'mottled'.

#### **Mynydd Penlan 380m SH 793088**

The *mynydd* 'mountain pasture' of Penlan, the farmstead can still be seen.

### **Mynydd Fron Felen 380m SH 764075**

This would have been the mountain pasture of Fron Felen farm. *Bron* 'breast, brow', while the *felen* element shows a local vocalisation of *felyn* [*melyn*] 'yellow, sallow'.

### **Pared y Cefn Hir 380m SH 664154**

On the early OS map, this is the name for the whole length of this long ridge; however, the name today is a little mis-placed, to the North East of the prominent ridge. *Pared* 'wall, cliff' + *cefn* 'back, ridge' + *hir* 'long' describes this long c.600m ridge with a complex hillfort along it, very well. The hillfort uses the natural outcrops to create a very strong defensive site. *Pared*, or sometimes *parwyd*, is a rather obscure Welsh word; it is a term borrowed from the Latin *parēt*, sometimes seen in French and Spanish cliff names as *paret(e)*.

### **Coed Mawr 378m SH 815119**

*Coed* 'wood(s)' + *mawr* 'great, large' is another name that hints to the greater presence of woodland in the past.

### **Y Grug 376m SH 809103**

The term *grug* 'heather, ling' can refer just to the vegetation or an area 'heath, heathland'. Its covering of heather must have made it stand out as inferred by the definite article 'Y'. It is now covered by a conifer plantations.

### **Mynydd y Foel 374m SH 802112**

*Mynydd* 'mountain pasture' + *y* 'the' + *foel* [*moel*] 'round hill'; this hill-name construction seems quite odd. This would usually take place to a when naming the pasture or sheepwalk of a farm or smallholding that has itself been named after a *moel* 'rounded hill'. However there is no farm or smallholding with a name such as 'Y Foel' to be seen on the OS maps.

### **Mynydd Cefn Caer 358m SH 702033**

*Cefn* 'back, ridge' + *caer* 'fort, stronghold' is a name that conjures up a similarity to a defensive site. The word *caer* is linked to Cornish *ker* 'town', from the Brittonic word *\*kagro* 'a settlement within an enclosure'. Therefore, there may have been a settlement rather than a fortification of some kind in the area at one time. Keven Caer 1603, Mynydd Cefn-caer 1837 OS.

### **Camlan 353m SH 849125**

Here one finds *cam* 'curved' + *glan* 'river bank, slope, mountain' perhaps describing the curve in the river around the farm Camlan Uchaf, but any of the *cam* elements might suit. The element *cam* is quite a common one in the landscape; it is cognate with Cornish *cam*; Breton *kam*; Old Irish *cam* 'curved'. One sees the name Rhiw Pen-hafan for the hill on the 1887 6" OS; also, the hill was common land at one time.

### **Bryn Dinas 346m SN 646999**

*Bryn* 'hill' + *dinas* 'stronghold', Old Welsh *din* 'a fort', Brittonic/Gaulish *\*duno*. There are a number of prehistoric remnants on this hill ranging from a barrow to cairns, cists and tumulii; their exact number and location have not yet been defined.

### **Mynydd y Foel 342m SH 631022**

This is the name seen on the 1837 OS map, it is not named on the modern maps. Also see Mynydd y Foel 374m SH 802112 above.

### **Moel y Ffridd 342m SH 833118**

The *ffridd* 'intake' is the lower enclosed part of the mountain, Welsh *ffridd* is borrowed from Middle

English *frith*.

### **Mynydd Esgairneiriau 340m SH 789094**

Esgairneirion has also been suggested for the name in the past. The *esgair* 'spur' can be seen running down, past the farmstead of the same name. The name is probably derived from a linked to a corruption of *anner*, *annair* 'heifer' (or one of its plurals *anneiredd*), rather than a personal name similar to Aneirin; or, the word *aneiriau* 'shame'? Esgeyrannered [Esgeyranner] 1200 Record of Caernarfon, Esgeiraneryn 1209 Cymer Abbey Charter, Escair aire c.1700 Parochialia, Mynydd Esgair-Aneurin 1887 6" OS.

### **Mynydd Cwmgerwyn 333m SH 807109**

The valley below is labelled Cwm Gerwyn on the present OS maps and one would initially assume that it is the personal name Gerwyn that is to be found here. However, the name may be derived from a *cerwyn* 'bowl, tub' that refers to the shape of the steep sided and enclosed valley. Otherwise, the word *gerwin* 'rough, severe, harsh; terrible' might be closer to the original meaning. Looking at the form noted as Cwm Garwrhyn on the 1887 6" OS, one might even offer *garw* 'rough, difficult' + *rhyn* 'stiff, rough, fierce'; or, the element *rhyn* 'promontory' (seen in the word *penrhyn* 'headland') cognate with Old Irish *rind*, *rinn* 'point, peak, summit, promontory'. Kinnygerhwyn 1209 Cymer Abbey Charter.

### **Mynydd Crwper 333m SH 800068**

*Crwper* is borrowed from the Middle English *croupere*, *crouper* 'crupper, hind quarters, rump'; this may have been reminiscent of a rump.

### **Craig Ysgiog 325m SH 684104**

The hill is probably named after the stream Nant Ysgiog, that flows down its Western slopes. There is another location with the name Ysgiog in Breconshire, on the tithe map and the OS map of 1837 the name of this farm was given as Ysgoiog. The *-iog* is an adjectival suffix, while the word *ysgo* has two possibilities here 'slope, slant'; or, 'bent, curved'. Does either meaning relate to the topographically to the stream Nant Ysgiog? Opposite the farm of Gwastadfryn, the stream (unnamed on the OS maps) curves round in a big arc; heading down North-west to turn gradually to a South-west flow. If not *ysgo*, there may be a hidden shortening or corruption of a word such as *llysg* 'slime, mucus' + *-iog* in the name.

### **Y Darren 324m SH 825078**

Of the many meanings for the word *tarren*, here the meanings would probably be one from 'knoll, steep hill, slope'.

### **Pen Moelyn 320m SH 670155**

Here the *pen* 'head' + *moelyn* 'bare, bald'; probably referred to a hilltop that was particularly bare of trees. Most hills of this height, would have been wooded at one time; cutting wood for fuel, clearing and burning for grazing would have changed this.

### **Bryn Dinas 320m SH 642997**

There are cairns and a tumulus on this *bryn* 'hill'; however, no *dinas* 'stronghold' has been found. It was labeled as Mynydd Bychan 1837 OS.

### **Ffridd Cocyn 313m SH 625043**

Here is a hill with a name that certainly reflects its shape. *Ffridd* 'moorland, rough mountain pasture', but one that is shaped in the form of a *cocyn* 'heap, pile, stack'.

### **Ffridd Rhyd y Biswail 312m SH 793068**

Named after what was once the smallholding Rhyd y Biswail [*rhyd* 'ford' (of)the *biswail* 'dung/slurry'], which is no longer there, but is to be seen on early maps.

### **Mynydd Pant Coch 312m SH 781059**

A *mynydd* 'sheepwalk, upland pasture' named after a farm Pant Coch [*pant* 'hollow' + *coch* 'red, brown'].

### **Ffridd y Glyn 306m SH 816081**

The word *ffridd* 'intake' is the lower part of mountain pasture but is enclosed, usually by stone walls. The term is borrowed from the Middle English *frith* 'to enclose'.

### **Llanfechan 304m SH 772056**

Instead of *llan* 'church enclosure', it is probable that the name here was a corruption of *llain* 'strip, patch (of land)' along with *fechan* the feminine form for *bychan* 'small'.

### **Craig y Merwydd 296m SH 645135**

The element *merwydd* is probably a corrupted form of the word *morwydd* 'mulberry'; however, it may well have been a personal name, as seen in Merwydd fab Moridred.

### **Mynydd Rhiwerfa 288m SH 665067**

Today the *mynydd* 'mountain pasture' name is that of the nearby farm Rhiwerfa; although (Y) Gamallt can be seen to the North. Gamallt is made up of the elements *cam* 'crooked, curved, bent' + *allt* 'slope', an apt name because of the big bend in the northern slope of the hill. Gamallt was the only name in the 1837 map.

### **Y Foel Wyllt 288m SH 633046**

It is likely that the word (*g*)*wyllt* 'wild, tempestuous' in this name probably refers to an uncultivated area rather than other dictionary meanings. The hill was called Moel Craig Eryr, this 'Eagle Rock' gives an inkling that there were eagles to be found in the area at one time. At one time eagles were to be found across the Brittonic Isles, including White Tailed Eagles. 'Foel-wyllt 1837 OS.

### **Trefcaereinion 282m SH 830091**

This toponym is made up of three elements, *tref* 'dwelling' + *caer* 'fort' coupled to the personal name Einion. There is little evidence of a tref or a caer.

### **Craig y Castell 280m SH 693173 & Craig y Castell 252m SH 695157**

*Craig* 'rock' + *y* 'the' + *castell* 'castle'; a common name in the landscape in general throughout Wales. There are two defensive sites and they are in fairly close proximity to each other, Castell Craig y Waun is another name for the higher of the two. Both have double stone walls and both are likely to be Iron Age sites and one would have expected them to be termed *caer* 'fort' rather than the later word *castell* 'castle'. A gold torque was found near Llyn Gwernan (SH 706160) in 1823, it was a spiral twisted rod of nearly 107cm in length and weighed 248grams. Was one of these two sites the actual *\*cader* 'stronghold' of Idris.

### **Cefn Llwyd 279m SH 824076**

The *cefn* 'back, ridge' + *llwyd* 'grey' would have been shaded on its northern slopes.

### **Moel Ty'r Gawen 279m SH 623076**

This is the *moel* 'mountain pasture' for the farm Ty'r Gawen; the last element refers to either *cawen* 'bur-reed'; or, a variant form of *cawnen* 'reed, reed-grass'. There has been a corruption of *tŷ*'r 'house (of) the' to read as *tyr*, which is incorrect. Tyddyn y Gawen 1647, Tir y Gawen 1683 a Tuergawen 1771 Peniath Manuscripts, Foel Ty'r Gawen 1837 OS. The form recorded as Foel Tyr

Gawen, seen on the present OS map series is incorrect.

**Tyddyn Briddell 270m SN 650983**

Named directly from the farm below; the *tyddyn* 'homestead with a small landholding' + *priddell* 'hardened soil, sod'.

**Mynydd Llwyn Gwern 270m SH 767047**

The *mynydd* 'mountain pasture' of a farm named Llwyn-gwern [*llwyn* 'copse, grove' + *gwern* 'alder'].

**Mynydd Gwyn 269m SH 834090**

Apart from the colour *gwyn* 'white', the word could infer a number of other meanings *gwyn* 'pale, grey, wan; bright'. As one sees the valley of Cwm Llechwedd Gwyn below one would suspect that the sunlight slopes would be termed as *gwyn* 'bright'. Mynydd-gwyn 1836 OS.

**Mynydd Glandulas 264m SH 761040**

This *mynydd* is a 'sheepwalk, upland pasture' and is named after a farm Glandulas [*glan* 'shore, bank' + the Dulas river].

**Y Foel Goch 263m SH 727023**

Once again the common occurrence of *moel* 'hill' and *coch* 'red, brown'. Moel Goch 1837 OS.

**Y Foel Lwyd 261m SN 627974**

The *foel* 'bare topped hill' + *llwyd* 'grey, dark'; however, at some sites the colour could be a reddish brown, at one time *cochlwyd* was one term for a brown colour in Welsh.

**Cefn Llandybo 259m SH 834098**

This *cefn* 'back, ridge' does not have an ecclesiastical *llan* 'church'; however, the original meaning of the term *llan* 'enclosure' may be present or *llain* 'strip', both denoting a field. Dybo is sometimes seen as a variant form of the name Dyfan, linked to the Irish form of the name Dubán.

**Mynydd y Llyn 256m SN 656986**

The hill is named after the nearby *llyn* 'lake', Llyn Barfog.

**Mynydd Graig Wen 254m SH 615116**

There is a pre-historic enclosure to be found at the top, these enclosures would not necessarily be defensive sites, although they may be viewed as being similar. In many cases enclosures were places where the gathering of livestock would take place, whether at night or in times of danger of attack by others. The hill is the pasturage of Craig Wen.

**Moel Eirin 253m SH 740046**

The name here could easily be a corruption of the personal name Eurin, Euryn rather than referring to the presence of *eirin* 'plum, damson, sloe' on its slopes. *esgair valyryn* 1550/1 & *Eskair velyrin* 1560/1 *Esgair/Pantperthyn* Records.

**Craig yr Aderyn 233m SH 640544**

The name *craig* 'rock' + *y* 'the' + *aderyn* 'bird' shows that this rocky spur is a spot where birds nest, or, resembles a bird with outstretched wings to some. This little hilltop has a striking area of cliffs; the hill is also topped by an Iron Age hillfort, what would have been a commanding location. Craig Aderyn 1837 OS.

**Y Graig Fach-goch 214m SH 608013**

Fach Goch is the name of the farm, at (SH 607016), the *craig* 'rock' name refers to the rocky

outcrop near the summit. The farm name probably refers to *bach* 'nook, angle, corner, bend'; rather than *bach* 'small' + *coch* 'red, brown'.

### **Braich y Golwydd 200m SH 709012**

*Braich* 'arm, ridge' is a very common term across Wales, the descriptor *colwydd* could derive from an old form of *coel*, *côl* 'pole' + (*g*)*wydd* 'tree, wood', with *coel* linked to Irish *cuaille* 'post, stake'; not *colwydd*, the plural of *colwydden* 'neck of venison'. Otherwise, a corruption of *collwydd* 'hazel' could provide a better alternative, the Old Cornish *colwiden* 'hazel trees' may be seen to be close. Braich-y-golwydd 1837 OS.

### **Craig y Barcut 198m SH 606003**

As can be seen, the term *barcud*, *barcut* 'kite, red kite, buzzard' can refer to a number of birds. The European Red Kite: *Milvus milvus* is once again quite a common bird in the area after being persecuted to near extinction. In the 1970ies the last stronghold of these birds was in the uplands of Ceredigion.

### **Cefn y Gader 192m SH 824062**

Once again the use of an element with a *cader* spelling is to be seen in the name. It may refer to a possible *\*cader* 'stronghold' term in use, as there could have been some form of defensive site here. The hilltop is above very steep slopes looking out over the Dyfi valley where a number of important route ways met. However, it could be argued that a corruption of the spelling of *cadair* 'chair' or *cadair* 'dwelling' has taken place. There is a shallow 'cwm' in the *cefn* 'ridge', this may be the possible landscape feature forming the chair leading up to a farm of that name.

### **Pen y Clipiau 180m SH 845106**

*Clipiau* is the plural of the *clip* 'steep slope'; a word borrowed from the English *clip* and is cognate with the German *klippe* cliff. Pen-y-clipiau 1836 OS.

### **Tâl y Gareg 178m SH 574035**

*Tâl* 'end, front' + *y* 'the' + *garreg* 'stone' - *carreg* in its lenited form; note Cornish *tal*, *tol* 'brow, front'. This is the prominent hill to the North of Tywyn, and the name is seen on the 1887 OS map. There was no earlier reference on the 1837 map; however, one sees Tal y Cerrig as the farm name. The 1887 map also records the presence of a beacon and the summit is named Beacon Tâl y Gareg; this gave rise to the English name Beacon Hill. Talegarrek 1308, Tallygarreg 1610 Peniarth Manuscripts.

### **Moel Caethle 169m SN 607987**

There is a small iron age hillfort at the summit and the *moel* 'hill' is named after Caethle farm below. Catheleigh 1509 PRO, Mowl Caethle 1837 OS.