

CADER IDRIS

There are a number of important passes in this very mountainous region allowing North-South travel; some of these routeways have lost their importance as modes of travel changes. However, the pass that allows the Pre-mediaeval road of Y Ffordd Ddu to bypass Cader Idris is not named as a bwlch, it is simply known as Trawsfynydd the name has been given to a nearby hill.

Bwlch Aran SH 734136

This pass is little more than a ramp line above the lake named as Llyn Aran; the name is not to be found on the OS maps. Aran is a reference to 'a high place, height'.

Bwlch Cau SH 709125

This is the low point in the ridge between Mynydd Pencoed and Cader Idris; although it is not in the correct position on the OS map at present.

Bwlch Coch SH 749157

This pass name is not on the present maps, though it is seen in the farm name Bwlch Coch. It was on the route of what was an important road at one time, heading to Dolgellau from the South. It is marked on John Evans' 1795 Map of North Wales.

Bwlch Cyfyng SH 672065

This is the name for the narrowing in the valley when heading from Abergynolwyn towards Tywyn; the word cyfyng 'narrow, restricted' defines the site perfectly. Bwlch gyving 1597 Maesyneuadd Manuscripts, Bulch Kyfinge 1600 Elwc vbnmes Manuscripts, Bwlch-y-gyfyng 1837 OS.

Bwlch Llyn Bach SH 755137

Tal-y-llyn Pass is the name generally given to this gap today. However, the old name for the pass was Bwlch y Llyn Bach; the llyn 'lake' + bach 'small' has disappeared with the making of the modern road. An older name for this lake was the Llyn y Tri 'three' + Greynyn 'stones', which are the three huge rocks which can still be seen near the road. Legend has it that the giant Idris felt these stones in his boots and shook them out at this spot.

Bwlch Oerddrws SH 795172

A very common theme in the names for mountain gaps is the prevalence of wind; making them cold spots and not good places to stay. This is another of these, with the descriptors oer 'cold' + drws 'door'. This has been a very important pass for many centuries.

Bwlch Rhiw Gwredydd SH 691135

The name is derived from the fact that this was used as a means of moving livestock at one time; rhiw 'slope' + gyriedydd 'drover'. The local name for the pass has not changed and the original OS map name is correct; one wonders why and how the name changed to Gwredydd. Rhiw'r-gyriedydd 1837 OS.

Bwlch Siglen SH 837137

Siglen 'bog, marsh, swamp', derived from the feeling of siglo 'quaking' when crossing marshy ground; certainly true of this pass.

Bwlch Ty'n y Fach SH 685100

This is named after the farm.

Bwlch y Cwn SH 705131

This bwlch 'pass' seems to have three names, the Bwlch y Cwn 'dogs' and may simply refer to the presence of cwn 'dogs'; in the Parochialia c.1700 Bwlch y Kŵn is recorded as a cliff or rock name.

Another name is Bwlch y Gwynt 'wind' and is a reference to the open and windy slopes here; while the cyfrwy 'saddle' seen in Bwlch Cyfrwy gave its name to the nearby hill, though this name may have moved a little.

Bwlch y Foty SH 669127

This name is not on the OS map, hafod 'summer dwelling' + ty 'house, shelter' became hafoty and this was further abbreviated by vocalisation to become – foty.

Bwlch y Tri Arglwydd SH 809097

The tri 'three' + arglwydd 'lords' is an indication that the area has been disputed for a long time; it is still on a border today.