

CARNEDDAU

This is an area of remote cliffs and bare upland slopes, the forbidding stepped bands of Ysgolion Duon cleft by huge gullies and the vast Craig yr Ysfa are particularly memorable cliffs. Apart from over-deepening the valleys and creating the cliffs, glaciation would have also affected the tops, forming the nunataks or rocky tors of the Carneddau. Also, at the end of the last Ice Age, the high gravel strewn slopes would show the result of frost heave, leaving curious patterns in the ground.

Carreg Frân SH 651627

High up on Braich Ty Du this *carreg* 'cliff' has one of the fairly common cliff names of *brân* 'crow'. This large bird is a common feature in Welsh mythology and its appearance has a number of quite broad connotations. It was mainly associated with portents of doom as well as a precursor of death because of its colouring and the tendency to scavenge on carrion.

Carreg y Gath SH 676659

Carreg 'rock' + *y* 'the' + *cath* 'cat'; may record the presence, at one time, of wildcats. They were quite common throughout the countryside, similar to the Scottish wildcat and larger and fiercer than their domesticated brethren. There is also a legendary cat creature in Welsh mythology (also in French poetry as Capalu/Chapalu); this creature was a weird fish-cat, and was always associated with water.

Carreg y Gwalch SH 797596

This *carreg* 'rock' + *y* 'the' + *gwalch* 'falcon' is a little more specific than a generalised name. Though the *gwalch* could be a Merlin or a Hobby; though the bird most likely to occupy a valley side cliff, looking out for prey is the *Gwalch Glas* 'Peregrine Falcon': *Falco peregrines*.

Carreg Mianog SH 686619

This is a rather problematic name in many ways, as it has been used as Carreg Mianog in local usage and by climbers for many years. However, on the OS maps it suddenly appears as Carreg Minianog on the OS Outdoor Leisure map of 1977. The OS seem to have very little idea as to why they first put this form on the map; with the minianog form then spreading in use.

Even without the introduced difficulties it is rather challenging to be certain about the name mianog for this *carreg* 'rock' without any early examples of the toponym. However, even if one finds an early written example one cannot be certain that the form given was the correct interpretation or spelling. There could be quite a number of possible elements linked to the name Mianog. To begin with, it must be noted that the local vocalised form is perhaps closer to a minog spelling than mianog.

At one time there was a local suggestion that Mianog was a corruption of the word miniog 'sharp'; or, linked to the element *min-* a. 'sharp', b. 'edge, rim', c. 'lip'. Also, that the initial element in the name is a mian (or mean) form and is simply as a mis-spelling of the word *maen* 'rock, stone'. This is sometimes seen in some other names such as Caer Blaen Minog and Pant Minog, both of which had maenog name-forms originally.

One could argue that the second element is either an *-og* 'abounding in, full of; place of; likeness to' ending; or, the word *annog* 'urging; gathering (of animals?)'. Other possible elements could be supported by this train of thought: *myn-* 'young goat, kid' cognate with Irish *min* 'young goat'; perhaps even a corrupted plural of this word. There is also a very similar sounding element, that of *myn* 'place, spot, location' (linked to *man, men*) coupled to *annog/hannog* 'an urging, exhortation' as in the gathering of animals.

One of the first climbers on the cliff wrote a letter to Sir Ifor Williams, now kept at the Archives in Bangor University, attempting to find the meaning of the name. They noted that the nearest farm had Mianog as the name but that '..... *On inquiring at a nearby farm, the name was written as Carreg Mihannog, with the suggestion that mihannog might be associated with the idea of something broken. This fits in fairly well as the crag stands on a hillside strewn with broken rocks ...*' E. Moss 1944. Instead of implying a sense of broken rock, this could certainly allow one to put forward a *mu* (= *bu*) 'cow, ox' + *annog/hannog* 'an urging, exhortation; gathering'.

Clogwyn Castell SH 649618

There is no actual *castell* 'castle' here, or any other defensive form; it is a figurative comparison of the steep cliffs to the walls of a castle. Previously, the whole area of cliff was named Craig yr Ysfa on the 1838 OS map.

Clogwyn Cyrau SH 790572

Cyrau is a plural from the word *cwr* 'edge, brim, brink'; although the plural should be *cyrrau*. This cliff is well named as it is to be found along the top edge of an escarpment overlooking Betws-y-Coed.

Clogwyn Dinas SH 782573

There may have been some form of local, if small scale, fortification around a defensive knoll above the cliff.

Clogwyn Du SH 727633

This cliff is not North facing, the usual *du* 'shaded, dark' meanings may not really apply. The rocks are quite dark and the heather and scree slopes also give this hillside a rather forbidding outlook, which may conform to another sense of the word *du* 'bitter; lowering', perhaps as in difficult terrain.

Clogwyn Grugog SH 649621

The name for this cliff appears on 1840-80 6" OS map, though the main name Craig yr Ysfa remains, this was later removed. The term *grug* 'heather' + *-og* 'associated with, pertaining to' is a very common form seen throughout Wales on any form of rough ground, particularly if the rocks are acidic. The word *grug* 'heather, ling': *Calluna vulgaris* is derived from Old Welsh *gwrug*, itself from the Celtic **uroico*.

Clogwyn Llys SH 649613

The term *llys* is probably a mis-spelling of *llus* 'bilberry' *Vaccinium myrtillus* rather than a corruption of *llys(iog)* 'vegetated' cliff. The name for this cliff appears for the first time on the 1840-80 6" OS map.

Clogwyn Mawr SH 729582, SH 669619

The first of these two *clogwyn* 'cliff' + *mawr* 'large' was known as Marian Clogwyne 1718 Nannau Manuscripts, Clogwyn-mawr 1838 OS.

Clogwyn Pryfed SH 751599

Pryfed is the plural of *pryf*, when the word *pryfed* is used today it is generally a term for insects and larva; however, *pryfed* was previously used to describe all manner of creatures such as reptiles and serpents, and even dragons.

Clogwyn Twll Du SH 650624

Clogwyn 'cliff' + *twll* 'hole' + *du* 'black', there is a dark gully at the back of this crag. The reason for so many names in the mountains for what some might think as not being very important features is that livestock herders or shepherds needed to know where to go to find an animal in difficulty or

which area to cover in bringing in their flocks

Clogwyn yr Eryr SH 734605

There were *eryr* 'eagles' in the mountains up until the c.1700; once again a mythical creature in Welsh folklore. The apparent presence of eagles, able to whisk away men in the mountains, were a good ploy used by local guides to bump up the fee charged to early travelers in the region.

Clogwyn Mannod SH 749597

On the early OS maps, the cliff name is further north on the edge of the steep ground; the mine on this steep ground has the name is Chwarel Manod. If *man* 'place' + *ôd* 'snow', this would be a good descriptor for North facing slopes that would keep their mantle of snow for a long time. Clogwyn Manod 1838 OS.

Craig Eigiau SH 715648

Another cliff named after a lake Llyn Eigiau: for some the Eigiau is a reference to the plural of *aig* 'shoal (of fish)'; others prefer it to be for flocks, linked to the more usual meaning of the *aig* 'host, troop' being used. The large numbers of sheepfolds in the upper valley would support this. Linne Yge 1539/9 Leland, llynyga 1645 Janzs map, Llyn Eigiau 1722 Camden.

Craig Fawr SH 698655

Very simply *craig* 'crag' + *mawr* 'big, large'

Craig Ffynnon SH 728637

Craig 'crag' + *ffynnon* 'spring', the word *ffynnon* is cognate to Old Cornish *funten*, Old Breton *funton*. Because of local geology, certain cliffs could produce springs quite high up, such as the spring on Tryfan, even though there was no apparent or obvious source.

Craig Lloer SH 638620

The *lloer* 'moon' element in this name, is linked to Old Cornish *luir*, Old Breton *loir*, and is derived from the Brittonic **lug-rā*; itself from the Indo-European **leuk-* 'goleuni'. Lug was probably the main Celtic god, he was known in Irish as *Lugh* and in Welsh as *Lleu*; the Romans assimilated Lug/Lugh/Lleu into their pantheon of gods as Mercury.

Craig Llugwy SH 681629

The cliff is named after the river name, a name that certainly has mythical connotations, as the *llug* 'light' element is linked to Old Irish *luchair* 'shine; shining', from the root **leuk-* 'bright, shining'. Once again a name that is linked to Lug/Lleu, it is very close to the crag above.

Craig y Dulyn SH 695663

Named after the lake in this high cwm; the Dulyn; *du* 'black, dark' + (*l*)*lyn* 'lake'. Due to its forbidding nature, the lake has a local legend that no swans or ducks will be found there; this is a common theme for mountain tarns. There are a number of other legends associating the lake with the underworld.

Craig y Llyn SH 689627

Very simply *craig* 'crag' + *y* 'the' + *llyn* 'lake', the lake in question is Ffynnon Llugwy.

Craig yr Ogof SH 687635

This *craig* 'crag' + *yr* 'the' + *ogof* 'cave' was previously known as Craig y Tri Marchog 'Crag the Three Horsemen'; then, at a later date one finds Craig Eryl Farchog 'Crag Watchers (on) Horseback'.

Craig yr Ysfa SH 694637

On the mountain sheep were gathered by whistling to direct the dogs; general shouting and driving the sheep along using a hissing and shushing sound; this is called *hysian* 'to incite, to urge on, to hiss'. The same sounds were used when hunting. The (*h*)*ysfa* would be the place where the driving or urging took place.

Creigiau Gleision SH 734624

The word *gleision* here, the plural of *glas*, is very much a reflection of the greyness of the rocks, and the cliffs are covered with a particularly grey lichen that seems to love growing here.

Creigiau Hirion SH 684625

This is the name for a extensive ridge of *creigiau* 'rocky ground' + *hirion* 'long' leading uphill, not for a rock or rocks that are particularly long in themselves.

Creigiau Malwod SH 673627

Malwod 'slugs, snails' is the plural of *malwen*; sometimes a large number of black slugs can be seen on the upland vegetation. One wonders if this area was a particular favoured by the creatures; or, did the rocks remind one of snails.

Gallt Cedryn SH 714630

The *gallt* 'wooded slope, cliff' is named after the farm Cedryn. It is also written as Carrec-gwenolyod on the Aberconwy Charter 1198, this is one plural of the word *gwennol* 'swallow'; it was still known locally as Braich y Gwennoliaid.

Llech Ddu SH 666636

This *llech* 'cliff, slab' + *du* 'black' due to its northerly aspect and also the tremendous amount of seepage it receives.

Y Graig Lwyd SH 735611

This could actually refer to the *llwyd* 'grey' rock of this *craig* 'crag' rather than another colour where in Welsh *llwyd* 'red, brown, pale yellow' could also be used.

Y Pincin SH 724581

This is a corruption of the word *poncyn* 'knoll'; however, in Arfon it is sometimes used for a rock or cliff that juts out.

Ysgolion Duon SH 670632

There are large horizontal ledges strung out across this dark set of cliffs and these may look like benches or steps on a ladder, hence the term *ysgolion* 'ladders'. *ysgolion duon* 1722 Britannia, E Lhuyd.