

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 have 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 Fran SH 651627

High up on Braich Ty Du this carreg 'cliff' has one of the fairly common cliff names of bran 'crow'. The bran is a common feature in Welsh mythology and quite broad in its connotations; however, it was mainly associated with portents of doom as well as death because of their colouring and also their scavenging on carrion.

Carreg y Gath SH 676659

Carreg + 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 a legendary cat creature also in Welsh mythology (in French poetry Capalu/Chapalu) it was a weird fish-cat, 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 locally 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; the minianog form is spreading in use.

Even without the introduced difficulties it is difficult to be certain about the name mianog for this carreg 'rock' without early examples of the toponym. However, even if one finds an 'historic' written example one cannot be certain that the form given was the correct interpretation or spelling. Also, as seen in some of the names provided in Lhuyd's Parochialia c.1700, some toponyms have changed markedly, while others have been lost and replaced by later names.

There could be quite a number of possible elements linked to the name Mianog; however, with no early name forms one has a difficult task with such toponyms. It must be noted that the local vocalised form can be closer to a minog form. 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'. Alternatively, 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 have maenog name-forms.

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). Alternatively, one could find a possible mei- 'mid, middle' being used. There could be a number of other possibilities.

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'; perhaps as in gathering the animals.

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 derived from the word cwr 'edge, brim, brink'; although the plural form should be cyrrau, these cliffs are well named as they are 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', 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, the lake name Eigiau: for some it is a reference to the plural of aig 'shoal (of fish)'; others prefer it to be for flocks, with the more usual meaning of the aig plural '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 in all probability, 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; generally shouting and by 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 seem to love growing here.

Creigiau Hirion SH 684625

This is the name for a extensive ridge of rocky ground 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 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' looks 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 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'.