

## HEBOG & NANTLLE

Most of the big cliffs in this area are all rather broken and vegetated, not really any good for climbing apart from Craig Cwm Silyn; however, the spectacular and spectacularly loose cliff of Craig y Bera is probably one of the most impressive mountain flanks in Eryri. A number of cliff names in this area have been taken as names for the hills themselves; this is because a number of the hills have rocky tops, continuations of the rocks themselves. However, one wonders what the old name for the hill now termed Craig Cwm Silyn, and others like it, would have been.

### Castell SH 561494

The Welsh *castell* 'castle' is linked to the Middle Breton *castell*, Middle Irish *caisel*, all borrowed from the Latin *castellum*. The name was sometimes used figuratively to describe a rocky knoll with no actual defences.

### Castell Cidwm SH 551554

The word *cidwm* 'wolf' could also be used figuratively for a wild warrior. It was here, according to legend, that a giant called Cidwm was jealous of Elen's son Cwstennin, and as Elen's army moved through the valley he ambushed it and killed Cwstennin with an arrow. Another story associated with the place was that it was a stronghold for a group of deadly marauders and thieves. Caer Gidwm 1757, Castell Cidwm 1838 OS.

### Cerrig Henon SH 562518

It is probable that *henon* is a mistaken transcription of the *heunon* forms seen on early OS maps, another version of the name for these rocks is *huon*. It was thought that the derivation may be from the word *huo*, which was the act of shouting and urging cattle forward when driving, rather than *hen* 'old' + *on(nen)* 'ash tree'. However, *heunon* is one form of the word *euon* 'bots, bot fly'; these are insects that can trouble horses and cattle. Cerig-heunon 1838 OS, Cerrig Heunon 1840-80 6" OS.

### Clogwyn y Barcut SH 542532

At one time, the Barcut Coch or Cudyll Coch 'Red Kite': *Milvus milvus* was a very common bird; usually seen scavenging and playing an important part in clearing up any carcasses. Indeed, in the medieval period it was a common feature on the streets of London and other cities. Up until quite recently it was only to be found in some areas of West Wales after years of persecution.

### Clogwyn y Cysgod SH 514500

This very apt name for the *clogwyn* 'cliff' + *y* 'the' + *cysgod* 'shadow'; which may have been used locally, though it first appears in a rock-climbing guide-book Cwm Silyn and Cwellyn (1971) could be older. It is not seen on the early OS maps.

### Clogwyn Dirwest SH 531482

The term *dirwest* 'abstinence' may be an indication of a lack of food in the sense of there not being much in the way of pasture for animals in the area. Alternatively, though difficult to decipher, it may indicate a place of retreat for fasting and meditation.

### Clogwyn y Garreg SH 557538

The rock in the description of this *clogwyn* 'cliff' + *y* 'the' + *carreg* 'rock' shows that this was a remarkable feature for some in the area. It is a hill top, but it deserves to be in this section as well; the *carreg* was also noted as Carreg Lefain 'Echo Rock' on a 1777 Estate map.

### Clogwyn Marchnad SH 519501

This is a curious name for a cliff if it is *marchnad* 'market'; what makes it even odder is the fact that there is a cwm or valley name over on the other side of the ridge which is called Cwm Marchnad [Cwm Merchaid in 1777]. One early name for this side of the hill was Cwm Llechog. One should

note that there is an example of a *march* 'horse' + *nant* 'stream' name changing to Marchnad in Montgomery.

'Tradition says that the Welsh people, after their submission to English rule, were persuaded to establish periodical fairs at this place in order to exchange commodities, and to enable the new settlers to secure what they needed in the way of food and cattle. In the rude pastoral districts of the island, before it could boast of any flourishing towns, commodities of every kind were brought periodically to fairs, to which the people resorted that they might make provision for the ensuing year. The a semicircular approach to perfectly round spaces. Four such spaces are connected by enclosures of the same kind as that approach.' Bedd Gelert - its facts, fairies and folk-lore, DE Jenkins, WB Jones (1899).

### **Craig Bwlch y Moch SH 580407**

The word *bwlch* can also define a shoulder of a hill with an obvious route through difficult ground; or, a way round an obstacle such as this line of cliffs.

### **Craig Gyfyng SH 527451**

This *craig* 'crag' above Pont Cyfyng is not itself *cyfyng* 'narrow', it is a descriptor of the narrow or confined gap, under the cliff, that needs to be passed through to reach the upper part of Cwm Pennant.

### **Craig Isallt SH 532451**

A *craig* 'cliff' that has a location that is *is* 'lower than, below' + (*g*)*allt* 'wooded slope, bluff'. The sense of the word (*g*)*allt* 'wooded slope' is still relevant at this location, though the cliff is above.

### **Craig Las SH 521495**

Colour is sometimes a problem in landscape as one can't be certain as to which tint or hue that is being described. Also, with some colours the meaning word has changed over time. All this is certainly true of the word *glas*. Today one associates the *glas* with a bright sea blue or a sky blue colouring and less so with what was once a common usage of *glas* 'verdant' as of pasture. The *glas* 'grey-green or glaucous' meaning has almost disappeared from usage, as has the *glas* 'grey' – seen in the saying *ar ben bore glas* 'at the grey of dawn'.

### **Craig Pant Ifan SH 567407**

This *craig* 'cliff' + *pant* 'hollow' + Ifan: a personal name, is named after a farm Pant Ifan in the little vale above the cliff to the North.

### **Craig Trum y Ddysgl SH 544518**

The name of this crag describes the *trum* 'ridge' creating the top of the *dysgl* 'bowl', which is the glaciated cwm.

### **Craig y Bera SH 544541**

For this *craig* 'rock', one must choose between *bera* 'pile, heap, pyramid' to denote the mountain; or, *bera*, *bere* 'bird of prey, kite'. Apparently, there were still eagles soaring over the mountains of Eryri in the early 1700s.

### **Craig y Castell SH 559404**

Whether there is or was a *castell* 'castle' atop a crag is sometimes difficult to ascertain. In this case there was some form of fortification; however, they are much disturbed, making it very difficult to age this particular defensive site.

### **Craig y Gesail SH 545412**

This *craig* 'rock' does have a *cesail* 'recess, nook' feature.

### **Craig yr Ogof SH 517502**

*Craig* 'cliff' + *yr* 'the' + *ogof* 'cave, cleft', the cave is the obvious horizontal gash about half way up.

### **Trwyn y Graig SH 524506**

*Trwyn* 'end, nose' + *y* 'the' + *craig* 'crag' is a good descriptor for the huge prow of this cliff.

### **Muriau Gleision SH 586454**

*Muriau* is the plural of *mur* 'wall, rampart' and the same meanings are found in Middle Cornish *mur* and Old Irish *múr*. One sees many words of similar meaning in European languages derived from the Proto Indo-European *\*mei-* 'to fix; to build fences or fortifications'. *Gleision* is the plural of *glas* probably meaning grey in this instance, the plural is needed to match the plural of *mur* 'wall'.

### **Y Diffwys SH 566475**

*Diffwys* 'steep slope, abyss, precipice'; it is here, on this cliff, that Owain Glyndwr's cave is supposedly to be found. Previously, it had been thought to be upon the slopes of Moel yr Ogof, though this is disputed.

### **Y Grisiau SH 566473**

*Y* 'the' + *grisiau* 'steps' refers to the stepped outcrops of rock here. They are prominent, one can imply greater importance for a feature by the use of the definite article at the start of the name. Note the Cornish *grisyow* 'steps'.