

## MYNYDD DU

There are some areas of very steep ground, especially the sandstone scarps formed on the northern and eastern flanks of the highest peaks; these were mainly the result of glaciation and their dark slopes the reasoning behind the name. However, what is striking on the gentler southern slopes of these hills is the large amount of outcropping of the rocks, in particular the limestone areas at the southern and western edges of this massif.

### Carn Cennen SN 705188

Carn Cennen is to be found near the source of the river Afon Cennen, this is an area of both boggy ground and of lichenous rocks. If Cennen is not a personal name one may find an alternative meaning in the *cen(n)*- element, perhaps through *cen* 'skin, peel, film, membrane'. Note the possible use of the Mediaeval word *kennen* 'dispute' (today *cynnen* 'battle, conflict, strife') – perhaps seen in the name Carreg Cennen, see below.

### Carn Fatho SN 717187

*Fatho* is probably the lenited form of the word *batho(r)* 'fieldmouse'; the round cairn perhaps reminiscent of the mouse curled up in winter hibernation, one should also note that the naming of landscape features with a slightly mocking term is a fairly common occurrence. *Batho(r)* is also a nickname for a lazy person. In times of need the bathor was collected as a food by some. There is a 4m diameter Bronze Age ring cairn near the top of Carn Pen y Clogau nearby, this could also be the more correct name for this upland area.

### Carn Fawr SN 702185

This *carn* 'cairn, heap' + *mawr* 'large' was once identified as a Bronze Age cairn; of which, there is no apparent trace left.

### Carn Pica SN 704184

The meaning of the term *carn* 'cairn' is straightforward while *pica* 'peaked' is an adjective of the word *pîg* 'peak', a word borrowed from the Middle English *pic* 'pike, spike, peak'. There are other sites with the name Carn Pica in South Wales and they usually refer to a cairn feature.

### Carn Powell SN 684221

The word *carn* 'cairn' is the same as Breton *karn*, Cornish *karn*, Irish *carn* 'pile of stones' and Latin *cornu* 'horn'. Its meaning in Welsh is a cairn, barrow, tumulus or mound. Usually *carn* is used in the names of hills and mountains where there is (or may have been) a pile of rough stones stacked up to form a pre-Christian burial mound. Powell is a personal name.

### Carreg Cennen SN 668191

The name of this crag was recorded a great many times because of the famous castle at its top. Just some early examples can be seen as Karekennyl in 1277, in the Littere Wallia 1279 Karrekenyn, in 1331/2 one finds Karreckennen, and 1413 one finds Karekennyn, by the 1729 Bowen map the name was Caerkennen. In this vale, Carreg Cennen Castle (SN 668190) boasts a very strong defensive location for a medieval castle on above a 90m high limestone cliff. It has been postulated in the past that the name Cennen, as given for the river Afon Cennen and the outcrop at Carn Cennen (SN 705188) is a personal name; similar to Cennin.

One may prefer the *cen(n)*- element as being derived from the Welsh word *cen* 'skin' is comparable to Cornish *cen* 'skin, peel, membrane, surface', Old Breton *cennen*, Irish *cennen*, Old Irish *ceinn* 'skin'; deriving from Celtic *\*kend-n-* itself from the root *\*(s)gen* 'splitting'. This root also gave the word *skin* to the English language. *Cen y Cerrig* is the Welsh term for lichen and one could propose that because of the lichens on the cliff that was how the rock got its name. However, because of the river Afon Cennen, which flows out from an area of upland which at one time would have had a

number of marshy areas, particularly near Carn Cennen. Could the cennen here refer to the crust sometimes found on the surface wet boggy ground.

However, if the name is a reference to the castle; or, an earlier defensive stronghold, one should note that the 13<sup>th</sup> Century Welsh laws one can find the word *kennen* 'dispute'. Today the word has the spelling *cynnen* 'battle, conflict, strife'. It is often difficult to ensure a correctness of one interpretation over another; also, one should always be open to the possibility that later research could overturn previous 'absolutes'. Note that the letter *k* was often used by scribes to denote a Welsh letter *c* in many mediaeval scripts.

### **Carreg Dwfn SN 654171**

Also seen as Carregydwfn. *Carreg* 'stone, lump of rock' is similar to the Cornish *carrek* and Breton *karrek* 'stone'. The meaning of *dwfn* 'deep' in a topographic name may refer to the sense of depth more akin to 'abyss, void'; or, simply a 'steep slope'. However, on the 1831 OS map, the name is given as Carregydwfan; this could give *dwyf* 'god' + (*m*)*an* 'place' and may infer a sacred site – perhaps linked to the Bronze Age cairn found atop this little hill.

### **Castell y Geifr SN 826166**

*Castell* 'castle' + *y* 'the' + *geifr* 'goats', there is no actual castle; however, the huge outcropping tiers of rocks may have had a resemblance to fortifications. Defences that would be patrolled only by the *geifr* 'goats', a rather derisive name.

### **Clogau Mawr SN 714192**

This is the plural of the word *clog* 'crag, steep cliff', compatible to the Irish *cloch* 'rock, stone'; it is from this word that the *clogwyn* 'cliff' is derived, as well as the word *clegyr* 'a rocky place'. Clogau Bach is to be found nearby, at (SN 719194); these were written as Clogaumawr and Clogaubach in the 1831 OS.

### **Craig Cwm-Clyd SN 798295**

This *craig* 'cliff' is named after the rocky ravine in back of this *cwm* 'valley' which was thought to be *clyd* 'sheltered'.

### **Craig Derlwyn SN 721157**

The word *derlwyn* in this name is a combination of *der(w)* 'oak' + *llwyn* 'grove, bush' is a common landscape name throughout Wales. Craig-y-derlwyn 1831 OS.

### **Craig Ddu SN 797274**

This *craig* 'cliff' has a fairly common name, the *du* element is here because the cliff faces North and is in a deep valley, which means it is in the shade for most of the time. Wet cliffs and rocks are also often deemed to be dark or black because of the staining.

### **Craig y Sawrwg SN 761194**

One explanation is that the word *sawrwg* may have the element *sawr* 'smell, stench' in the name of this *craig* 'cliff'; perhaps describing the foul smell of a mountain bog? However, looking at the 1831 OS map, one can see the name *Craig y 'Sgwrwg*; the apostrophe helps to show that the word is *ysgwrwg*, this is a local variant on *sgorog*, *ysgyrog* 'carcass, dead body'.

### **Cribarth SN 831144**

*Crib* 'ridge, spur, crest' + *garth* 'ridge, promontory, spur'; this doubling of the name to strengthens the overall meaning of the feature and there certainly is a prominent ridge at this point.

### **Y Fagl Bengam SN 794207**

The meaning of the word *bagl* is 'crozier, staff' - here lenited to *fagl*; the *pen* 'head' + *gam* 'bent' reinforces the idea of a staff with a curved head. A Bishop's Crozier may have been seen as a mark on a cross, pole or even a stone, to show the boundary of ecclesiastic land.

### **Y Garreg Las SN 677179**

A *carreg* 'rock, stone', from the Brittonic *\*carreci-* 'stone', that has probably been termed (*g*)*las* 'grey' due to the pale grey colouring of the limestone rock. Above the source of Afon Llwchwr, there is a great deal of prehistoric land use taking place in the landscape. There is a settlement, a number of hut circles, field systems, enclosures and pillow mounds. The area would have been seen as a dry and attractive place, below the open moorland but above the damp and densely wooded valleys. Carreg Las 1832 OS.

### **Y Garreg Lwyd SN 738171**

The lenited form of the word *llwyd* 'grey' in this name, once again refers to the colour of the limestone *carreg* 'rock'. This was a cairn, and it was seemingly reused as a marker in a boundary.

### **Crug Glas SN 689239**

*Crug* 'cairn, mound' + *glas* probably 'grey' rather than 'glaucous' overlooked by the hilltop fort of Y Gaer Fawr. This very extensive hillfort, its outlier and the area surrounding it, would have seen activity quite late on in its history; there is also a Bronze Age cairn on the slopes outside the hillfort. The word *crug* is cognate with Old Cornish *cruc*, Breton *cruc*, Old Irish *cruach* 'hillock, knoll, mound, cairn'.