

RHINOGAU

The geology of this area is quite unique, with its horizontal bedding a huge number of small cliffs and outcrops. At one time most of the larger; or, more striking rock features would have been known to the shepherds who would have had to tend the flocks and gather them; many of these names have now been lost.

Clogwyn Pot SH 654309

The name may simply be one that refers to the shape of a cliff being similar to a pot 'cooking vessel' of some kind; the form of which we may never know. However, the size and shape of the crag might be referred to; pot is a variant of *pwt* 'a bit, scrap, small', one also has *poten* 'stomach, large belly'. Also, Spot is a common dog name and there is a Clogwyn Spot near Dolwyddelan; could there be a link to *pothan* 'wolf cub'.

Craig Aberserw SH 695265

Aberserw is the name of a farm to the North East, the river Afon Serw is over on the other side to the hill to this name (SH 7027). Here, the *craig* 'rocky ground' name denotes the land as the mountain pasture of the farm.

Craig Fawr SH 679355

This is not really one big cliff as the name might suggest but a large number of little cliffs forming a large bluff or hillside which would very difficult to ascend.

Craig Wion SH 662321

This could simply be the personal name Gwion. However, as there was a small dwelling called Hafotty Craig Wion (SH 673324) below, on the early maps and because of the early spellings, one could infer that *wion*, is derived from *hwi* 'urging, driving' the sound used when driving sheep or cattle or urging dogs to hunt. Ffridd Craigwyon 1641 unknown, Graig-weon 1831 OS, Craig Wion 1838 OS.

Craig y Cae SH 708235

The name for this cliff is now *craig* 'crag' + *cae* 'enclosure, field'; however, the 1840-80 6" OS map has the name as Craig Cau, the *cau* 'enclosed' descriptor would seem to be more in keeping with the cliff form, but they were interchangeable at one time.

Craig y Grut SH 636213

Grut 'grit' borrowed from the Middle English *grit*, *gryt*. There are a number of little cliffs in this area, the rock is very similar in structure to Millstone Grit, and one wonders whether this local stone was also used in local mills for grinding grain.

Craig y Merched SH 693231

Merched is the plural of *merch* 'girl, young woman' linked to Middle Cornish *myrgh*, *mergh*, Middle Breton *merch*, There are a great many stories linking maidens or women to the landscape and to lakes in particular. However, one should be aware of the plant name *mers*, *merts* 'smallage, wild celery' from the Middle English *merch(e)* 'smallage'.

Llawlech SH 633221

This is the name now given for the cliff, but at one time it was the ridge/ hill name; an explanation is given in that section. 'Llywllach, the guide of drifts, a mountain.' 1796 Cambrian Register.